

DEEP WATER

About the author

William Douglas (1898-1980) was born in Maine, Minnesota. After graduating with a Bachelors of Arts in English and Economics, he spent two years teaching high school in Yakima. However, he got tired of this and decided to pursue a legal career. He met Franklin D. Roosevelt at Yale and became an adviser and friend to the President. Douglas was a leading advocate of individual rights. He retired in 1975 with a term lasting thirty-six years and remains the longest-serving Justice in the history of the court. The following excerpt is taken from *Of Men and Mountains* by William O. Douglas. It reveals how as a young boy William Douglas nearly drowned in a swimming pool. In this essay he talks about his fear of water and thereafter, how he finally overcame it. Notice how the autobiographical part of the selection is used to support his discussion of fear.

Notice these words and expressions in the text. Infer their meaning from the context.

treacherous

subdued my pride

flailed at the surface

fishing for landlocked salmon

misadventure

bob to the surface like a cork

curtain of life fell

back and forth across the pool

It happened when I was ten or eleven years old. I had decided to learn to swim. There was a pool at the Y.M.C.A. in Yakima that offered exactly the opportunity. The Yakima River was treacherous. Mother continually warned against it, and kept fresh in my mind the details of each drowning in the river. But the Y.M.C.A. pool was safe. It was only two or three feet deep at the shallow end; and while it was nine feet deep at the other, the drop was gradual. I got a pair of water wings and went to the pool. I hated to walk naked into it and show my skinny legs. But I subdued my pride and did it. From the beginning, however, I had an aversion to the water when I was in it. This started when I was three or four years old and

THE YAKIMA RIVER

The Yakima river is a tributary of the Columbia river in eastern Washington, U.S.A. The state is named after the indigenous Yakama people.

father took me to the beach in California. He and I stood together in the surf. I hung on to him, yet the waves knocked me down and swept over me. I was buried in water. My breath was gone. I was frightened. Father laughed, but there was terror in my heart at the overpowering force of the waves.

My introduction to the Y.M.C.A. swimming pool revived unpleasant memories and stirred childish fears. But in a little while I gathered confidence. I paddled with my new water wings, watching the other boys and trying to learn by aping them. I did this two or three times on different days and was just beginning to feel at ease in the water when the misadventure happened.

I went to the pool when no one else was there. The place was quiet. The water was still, and the tiled bottom was as white and clean as a bathtub. I was timid about going in alone, so I sat on the side of the pool to wait for others. I had not been there long when in came a big bruiser of a boy, probably eighteen years old. He had thick hair on his chest. He was a beautiful physical specimen, with legs and arms that showed rippling muscles. He yelled, "Hi, Skinny! How'd you like to be ducked?"

With that he picked me up and tossed me into the deep end. I landed in a sitting position, swallowed water, and went at once to the bottom. I was frightened, but not yet frightened out of my wits. On the way down I planned: When my feet hit the bottom, I would make a big jump, come to the surface, lie flat on it, and paddle to the edge of the pool.

It seemed a long way down. Those nine feet were more like ninety, and before I touched bottom my lungs were ready to burst. But when my feet hit bottom I summoned all my strength and made what I thought was a great spring upwards. I imagined I would bob to the surface like a cork. Instead, I came up slowly. I opened my eyes and saw nothing but water — water that had a dirty yellow tinge to it. I grew panicky. I reached up as if to grab a rope and my hands clutched only at water. I was suffocating. I tried to yell but no sound came out. Then my eyes and nose came out of the water — but not my mouth.

I flailed at the surface of the water, swallowed and choked. I tried to bring my legs up, but they hung as dead weights, paralysed and rigid. A great force was pulling me under. I screamed, but only the water heard me. I had started on the long journey back to the bottom of the pool.

I struck at the water as I went down, expending my strength as one in a nightmare fights an irresistible force. I had lost all my breath. My lungs ached, my head throbbed. I was getting dizzy. But I remembered the strategy — I would spring from the bottom of the pool and come like a cork to the surface. I would lie flat on the water, strike out with my arms, and thrash with my legs. Then I would get to the edge of the pool and be safe. I went down, down, endlessly. I opened my eyes. Nothing but water with a yellow glow — dark water that one could not see through.

And then sheer, stark terror seized me, terror that knows no understanding, terror that knows no control, terror that no one can understand who has not experienced it. I was shrieking under water. I was paralysed under water — stiff, rigid with fear. Even the screams in my throat were frozen. Only my heart, and the pounding in my head, said that I was still alive.

And then in the midst of the terror came a touch of reason. I must remember to jump when I hit the bottom. At last I felt the tiles under me. My toes reached out as if to grab them. I jumped with everything I had.

But the jump made no difference. The water was still around me. I looked for ropes, ladders, and water wings. Nothing but water. A mass of yellow water held me. Stark terror took an even deeper hold on me, like a great charge of electricity. I shook and trembled with fright. My arms wouldn't move. My legs wouldn't move. I tried to call for help, to call for mother. Nothing happened. And then,

strangely, there was light. I was coming out of the awful yellow water. At least my eyes were. My nose was almost out too.

Then I started down a third time. I sucked for air and got water. The yellowish light was going out. Then all effort ceased. I relaxed. Even my legs felt limp; and a blackness swept over my brain. It wiped out fear; it wiped out terror. There was no more panic. It was quiet and peaceful. Nothing to be afraid of. This is nice... to be drowsy... to go to sleep... no need to jump... too tired to jump... it's nice to be carried gently...to float along in space... tender arms around me... tender arms like Mother's... now I must go to sleep...I crossed to oblivion, and the curtain of life fell. The next I remember I was lying on my stomach beside the pool, vomiting. The chap that threw me in was saying, "But I was only fooling." Someone said, "The kid nearly died. Be all right now. Let's carry him to the locker room." Several hours later, I walked home. I was weak and trembling. I shook and cried when I lay on my bed. I couldn't eat that night. For days a haunting fear was in my heart. The slightest exertion upset me, making me wobbly in the knees and sick to my stomach. I never went back to the pool. I feared water. I avoided it whenever I could.

A few years later when I came to know the waters of the Cascades, I wanted to get into them. And whenever I did — whether I was wading the Tieton or Bumping River or bathing in Warm Lake of the Goat Rocks — the terror that had seized me in the pool would come back. It would take possession of me completely. My legs would become paralysed. Icy horror would grab my heart. This handicap stayed with me as the years rolled by. In canoes on Maine lakes fishing for landlocked salmon, bass fishing in New Hampshire, trout fishing on the Deschutes and Metolius in Oregon, fishing for salmon on the Columbia, at Bumping Lake in the Cascades — wherever I went, the haunting fear of the water followed me. It ruined my fishing trips; deprived me of the joy of canoeing, boating, and swimming.

I used every way I knew to overcome this fear, but it held me firmly in its grip. Finally, one October, I decided to get an instructor and learn to swim. I went to a pool and practiced five days a week, an hour each day. The instructor put a belt around me. A rope attached to the belt went through a pulley that ran on an overhead cable. He held on to the end of the rope, and we went back and forth, back and forth across the pool, hour after hour, day after day, week after week. On each trip across the pool a bit of the panic seized me. Each time the instructor relaxed his hold on the rope and I went under, some of the old terror returned and my legs froze. It was three months before the tension began to slack. Then he taught me to put my face under water and exhale, and to raise my nose and inhale. I repeated the exercise hundreds of times. Bit by bit I shed part of the panic that seized me when my head went under water.

Next he held me at the side of the pool and had me kick with my legs. For weeks I did just that. At first my legs refused to work. But they gradually relaxed; and finally I could command them. Thus, piece by piece, he built a swimmer. And when he had perfected each piece, he put them together into an integrated whole. In April he said, "Now you can swim. Dive off and swim the length of the pool, crawl stroke." I did. The instructor was finished. But I was not finished.

I still wondered if I would be terror-stricken when I was alone in the pool. I tried it. I swam the length up and down. Tiny vestiges of the old terror would return. But now I could frown and say to that terror, "Trying to scare me, eh? Well, here's to you! Look!" And off I'd go for another length of the pool. This went on until July. But I was still not satisfied. I was not sure that all the terror had left. So I went to Lake Wentworth in New Hampshire, dived off a dock at Triggs Island, and swam two miles across the lake to Stamp Act Island. I swam the crawl, breast stroke, side stroke, and back stroke. Only once did the terror return. When I was in the middle of the lake, I put my face under and saw nothing but bottomless water. The old sensation returned in miniature. I laughed and said, "Well, Mr Terror, what do you think you can do to me?" It fled and I swam on.

Yet I had residual doubts. At my first opportunity I hurried west, went up the Teton to Conrad Meadows, up the Conrad Creek Trail to Meade Glacier, and camped in the high meadow by the side of Warm Lake. The next morning I stripped, dived into the lake, and swam across to the other shore and back — just as Doug Corpron used to do. I shouted with joy, and Gilbert Peak returned the echo. I had conquered my fear of water. The experience had a deep meaning for me, as only those who have known stark terror and conquered it can appreciate.

In death there is peace. There is terror only in the fear of death, as Roosevelt knew when he said, “All we have to fear is fear itself.” Because I had experienced both the sensation of dying and the terror that fear of it can produce, the will to live somehow grew in intensity. At last I felt released — free to walk the trails and climb the peaks and to brush aside fear.

Listen to the story.

Click on the link below to hear the story being read. Note the pronunciation of the words and read along using the subtitles.

[‘Deep Water’ Class 12 - Chapter 3 NCERT English Audiobook](#)

SUMMARY

Deep Water is an autobiographical essay in which William O. Douglas talks about his **childhood fear of water** and how he eventually **overcame it through determination and courage**.

As a young boy, Douglas had two frightening experiences with water:

- A **wave at the beach** knocked him down and terrified him.
- Later, at a **swimming pool**, a big built, older boy threw him into deep water. He nearly drowned and became very afraid of water.

This fear stayed with him for years. However, he decided to overcome it. He:

- **Hired a swimming instructor**
- Learned swimming step by step (floating, breathing, strokes)
- Practiced regularly and built confidence

Even after learning, he still felt fear. To fully conquer it, he challenged himself by

swimming alone in deep waters. Eventually, he succeeded in removing his fear completely.

The mountain path looked easy to climb, but it was **treacherous** after the rains.

3. **Continually**: happening repeatedly without stopping

The parents were exhausted because their baby **continually cried** through the night.

4. **Warned**: told someone about a danger before it happened

The teacher **warned** the students not to copy the answers from each other.

5. **Shallow**: not deep

The lake became **shallow** after months without rain.

6. **Gradual**: happening slowly, a little at a time

He saw a **gradual** improvement in his spoken English skills because of daily practice.

7. **Subdued**: kept under control; quieter

The noisy classroom was **subdued** after the teacher scolded the students.

8. **Aversion**: a strong feeling of dislike towards something

He had such a strong **aversion** to hospitals that he refused to go there even when he was seriously ill.

9. **Knocked down**: pushed or hit so hard that one falls

The speeding bicycle **knocked down** the vegetable vendor's cart, scattering everything across the road.

10. **Swept**: carried away quickly and forcefully by water or wind

The strong winds **swept** the tree away during the storm.

11. **Buried**: covered completely, often as in a burial or pushed under

The small village was **buried** under rubble after the landslide came down the hill.

12. **Terror**: extreme fear that makes it hard to think or move

The children ran home in **terror** when they heard the loud explosion from the factory nearby.

13. **Overpowering**: so strong that it cannot be resisted or controlled

The **overpowering** smell of smoke indicated that the fire had already spread to the next room.

14. **Revived**: brought back to consciousness or got energy after being weak or unconscious

The doctor **revived** the man who had collapsed on the street by giving him immediate first aid.

15. **Unpleasant**: not enjoyable; causing discomfort or distress

The journey in the overcrowded bus was **unpleasant** in the summer heat.

16. **Stirred**: moved slightly; mixed or disturbed; also to build up a feeling inside

Something deep inside her **stirred** when she heard her old school song playing at the farewell ceremony.

17. **Gathered**: collected or brought together; also to build up something like courage

A large crowd **gathered** outside the court to hear the verdict of the famous case.

18. **Paddled**: moved hands or feet gently through water

The children **paddled** in the flooded field after the rains, laughing and splashing at each other.

19. **Aping**: copying or imitating someone, often without understanding

A child learns by **aping** elders.

20. **At ease**: relaxed and comfortable, without worry

She felt completely **at ease** speaking in front of the class after months of practice.

21. **Misadventure**: an unlucky or dangerous accident

His broken arm was the result of a **misadventure** involving a bicycle and a muddy slope.

22. **Still**: not moving; completely quiet and calm

The village was completely **still** before dawn, not even a dog barked in the distance.

23. **Timid**: lacking confidence; easily frightened

She was too **timid** to raise her hand in class even when she knew the answer.

24. **Bruiser**: a big, strong, and tough person

The new watchman at the factory was a real **bruiser** who nobody dared to argue with.

25. **Ducked**: pushed someone's head under water; or lowered oneself quickly

He **ducked** behind the wall when he saw his neighbour coming, not wanting to get into a long conversation.

26. **Frightened**: feeling afraid or scared

The little girl was so **frightened** by the thunderstorm that she hid under her blanket all night.

27. **Out of my wits**: so scared that one cannot think clearly at all

When the truck came rushing toward us on the narrow road, I was frightened **out of my wits**.

28. **Ready to burst**: filled with a feeling so strongly that one is about to break down

She had held back her tears all day and was **ready to burst** by the time she reached home.

29. **Summoned**: called upon or gathered something from within oneself

He **summoned** all his strength to carry his injured friend down the hill to the nearest road.

30. **Spring upwards**: to jump or leap up suddenly with force

The cat seemed to **spring upwards** from a perfectly still position and landed on the high wall with ease.

31. **Bob**: to move up and down lightly on water

The small boat continued to **bob** gently on the lake even after the oarsman had stopped rowing.

32. **Surface**: the top layer of the water; to come up to the top

When the pipe burst, water quickly rose to the **surface** of the road and flooded the street.

33. **Cork**: a light material that floats easily; used here to describe floating without effort

When I threw a ball into the pool, it came back up like a **cork**.

34. **Tinge**: a small amount of a feeling or colour mixed in

There was a **tinge** of sadness in her voice when she spoke about the village she had left behind.

35. **Panicky**: feeling sudden, uncontrolled fear

He became **panicky** when he realised he had left his exam hall ticket at home on the day of the board exam.

36. **Clutched**: held on to something very tightly out of fear or desperation

The old woman **clutched** her bag tightly as she walked through the crowded railway station.

37. **Suffocating**: feeling like one cannot breathe; choking or smothering

The tiny, windowless room was **suffocating** in the middle of summer with six people inside.

38. **Yell**: to shout loudly, usually out of fear, pain, or anger

He began to **yell** from the rooftop to warn the neighbours that the transformer had caught fire.

39. **Flailed**: moved arms and legs wildly in a desperate, uncontrolled way

The young boy **flailed** his arms trying to swat the bees away after accidentally disturbing their nest.

40. **Swallowed**: ate or drank something

I **swallowed** my milk quickly before going to school.

41. **Choked**: was unable to breathe properly because water or a piece of food gets stuck in the throat

He **choked** on a piece of bread and had to be helped by the person sitting next to him.

42. **Dead weights**: limbs or objects that feel completely heavy and useless

After working in the fields all day, his arms felt like **dead weights** by the time he reached home.

43. **Paralysed**: unable to move, either physically or from fear

She was **paralysed** with shock when she heard that her father had met with an accident.

44. **Rigid**: stiff and unable to bend or move

The guard stood **rigid** at the gate, not moving an inch even as the rain poured down on him.

45. **Expending**: using up energy, effort, or strength

She was **expending** so much energy in working out, that she lost a lot of weight.

46. **Irresistible**: too strong to be stopped or fought against

The aroma of halwa from his grandmother's kitchen was completely **irresistible**.

47. **Ached**: felt a dull, continuous pain

Her back **ached** after sitting on the hard bench for three hours during the exam.

48. **Throbbled**: beat with a strong, rhythmic pain

His tooth **throbbled** so painfully that he could not concentrate on anything else.

49. **Dizzy**: feeling like everything is spinning; unsteady

She felt **dizzy** and had to sit down after standing in the scorching sun for over an hour.

50. **Strategy**: a careful plan made to achieve a goal

The team captain explained his **strategy** before the match, assigning each player a specific role.

51. **Strike out**: to start doing something new

After years of working in his father's shop, he finally decided to **strike out** on his own and start a small business.

52. **Thrash**: to move arms and legs wildly and without control, or to beat somebody

The goat began to **thrash** and kick violently when the farmer tried to tie it to the post.

53. **Endlessly**: without stopping; going on for a very long time

The politician spoke **endlessly** at the rally until people in the crowd started quietly leaving.

54. **Sheer**: complete and total, used to emphasise the strength of a feeling

She passed the entrance exam through **sheer** hard work, with no coaching or special support.

55. **Stark**: harsh, bare, and impossible to ignore

The **stark** difference between the rich neighbourhood and the slums in Mumbai is impossible to ignore.

56. **Seized**: grabbed suddenly and forcefully

The police officer **seized** the stolen goods from the back of the vehicle before the thief could escape.

57. **Shrieking**: making a high-pitched, loud cry of fear or pain

The children came running out of the building **shrieking when** they saw a snake near the classroom door.

58. **Pounding**: hitting hard and repeatedly; also used for a fast, hard heartbeat

Her heart was **pounding** as she waited outside the principal's office to hear her result.

59. **Awful**: very bad or extremely unpleasant

The food at the hostel was so **awful** that most students preferred to skip dinner.

60. **Effort**: the use of energy and strength to do something difficult

It took a great deal of **effort** for him to speak calmly after being publicly humiliated.

61. **Ceased**: stopped completely

The heavy rain finally **ceased** just before dawn, and the streets were flooded.

62. **Limp**: having no strength or stiffness; drooping and weak

The flowers in the vase had gone completely **limp** because no one had changed the water for days.

63. **Blackness**: complete darkness; also used to describe losing consciousness

When the power cut hit the entire locality, the street outside was plunged into total **blackness**.

64. **Drowsy**: feeling sleepy and unable to stay alert

The afternoon heat made everyone in the classroom **drowsy**, and even the teacher struggled to stay alert.

65. **Oblivion**: a state of complete unawareness; unconsciousness

He had worked so many nights without rest that he fell into **oblivion** the moment his head touched the pillow.

66. **Haunting**: staying in the mind in a disturbing or persistent way

The image of the homeless family sleeping on the footpath was **haunting** and stayed with me for weeks.

67. **Slightest**: the smallest or least possible amount

He did not show the **slightest** interest in the lesson and spent the whole class staring out of the window.

68. **Exertion**: the use of great physical or mental effort

The elderly man was advised by his doctor to avoid any heavy **exertion** after his heart surgery.

69. **Wobbly**: shaking or unsteady, not firm

The old wooden table was so **wobbly** that they had to put a folded newspaper under one leg to balance it.

70. **Sick to the stomach**: feeling so upset or disgusted that one feels like vomiting

Reading about the conditions in the orphanage made her **sick to the stomach**.

71. **Possession**: control over oneself; having something firmly in one's grasp

He lost **possession** of the ball at a critical moment and the opposing team scored immediately.

72. **Icy horror**: a cold, sudden feeling of extreme fear

She stared at the snake in front of her in **icy horror**.

73. **Deprived**: denied something necessary; kept away from something needed

Millions of people in the country are still **deprived** of access to clean drinking water.

74. **Pulley**: a wheel with a rope used to lift or move objects; here used as part of swimming training

The workers used a **pulley** system to lift heavy bags of grain to the top floor of the warehouse.

75. **Back and forth**: moving in one direction and then the opposite, repeatedly

The two neighbours argued **back and forth** for an hour over where exactly the boundary wall should be built.

76. **Relaxed**: free from tension and worry; calm

He felt completely **relaxed** after a quiet evening walk through the park near his house.

77. **Slack**: loose and without tension; without energy

The new employee became **slack** in his work once he realised the manager rarely checked on him.

78. **Crawl**: a swimming style where arms reach forward one at a time while legs kick ; moving slowly

Traffic slowed to a **crawl** on the highway after a lorry broke down in the middle lane.

79. **Stroke**: a style of swimming ; a gentle movement

The artist finished the painting with one final bold **stroke** of the brush across the canvas.

80. **Vestiges**: small remaining traces of something that was once larger or stronger

Only **vestiges** of the old fort remained, a few broken walls half hidden by overgrown grass.

81. **Frown**: a facial expression showing worry, displeasure, or deep thought

Her father's **frown** deepened as he read through her report card slowly .

82. **Breast stroke**: a swimming style where both arms push forward and out while legs kick like a frog

The swimming coach demonstrated the **breast stroke** to the beginners before asking them to try it themselves.

83. **Side stroke**: a swimming style done lying on one's side

The lifeguard used the **side stroke** to carry the exhausted man safely back to the shore.

84. **Back stroke**: a swimming style done lying on one's back, looking upward

She preferred the **back stroke** because she could look up at the open sky while moving through the water.

85. **Bottomless**: so deep that it seems to have no bottom; endless in depth

The corruption in the system felt **bottomless**, as though no investigation could ever reach the truth.

86. **Sensation**: a feeling or experience noticed through the body or senses

The cool **sensation** of the marble floor under her feet was a relief after walking barefoot on hot tar.

87. **Miniature**: very small; a tiny version of something larger

The architect showed the clients a **miniature** model of the building before construction began.

88. **Fled**: ran away or escaped quickly out of fear

The thief **fled** through the narrow lanes of the market before the shopkeeper could call for help.

89. **Residual**: left over from something that has mostly gone; remaining

There was still some **residual** anger between the two brothers even after they had formally made up.

90. **Stripped**: removed completely; taken away entirely

The cyclone had **stripped** the trees of every leaf and left the whole coastline looking bare and grey.

91. **Echo**: a sound that repeats because it bounces off a surface; a feeling that repeats

His grandfather's words continued to **echo** in his mind long after the old man had passed away.

92. **Conquered**: defeated or overcome completely after a struggle

She **conquered** her stage fright after years of performing in small school plays and local events.

93. **Intensity**: the strength or force of a feeling, experience, or action

The **intensity** of the summer heat in May made it impossible to work outdoors after ten in the morning.

94. **Released**: set free from something that was holding one back

When the exam results were finally announced, she felt **released** from weeks of anxious waiting.

95. **Brush aside**: to dismiss or ignore something as unimportant

He tended to **brush aside** any criticism of his work, which made it difficult for him to improve.

THINK AS YOU READ

Q1. What is the “misadventure ” that William Douglas speaks about?

Q2. What were the series of emotions and fears that Douglas experienced when he was thrown into the pool? What plans did he make to come to the surface?

Q3. How did this experience affect him?

THINK AS YOU READ

Q1. Why was Douglas determined to get over his fear of water?

Q2. How did the instructor “build a swimmer” out of Douglas?

Q3. How did Douglas make sure that he conquered the old terror?

UNDERSTANDING THE TEXT

Q1. How does Douglas make clear to the reader the sense of panic that gripped him as he almost drowned? Describe the details that have made the description vivid.

Q2. How did Douglas overcome his fear of water?

Q3. Why does Douglas as an adult recount a childhood experience of terror and his conquering of it? What larger meaning does he draw from this experience?

TALKING ABOUT THE TEXT

Q1. "All we have to fear is fear itself" Have you ever had a fear that you have now overcome? Share your experience with your partner.

Q2. Find and narrate other stories about conquest of fear and what people have said about courage. For example, you can recall Nelson Mandela's struggle for freedom, his perseverance to achieve his mission, to liberate the oppressed and the oppressor as depicted in his autobiography. The story 'We're Not Afraid To Die,' which you have read in Class XI, is an apt example of how courage and optimism helped a family survive under the direst stress.

THINKING ABOUT LANGUAGE

If someone else had narrated Douglas's experience, how would it have differed from this account? Write out a sample paragraph or paragraphs from this text from the point of view of a third person or observer, to find out which style of narration would you consider to be more effective? Why?

Ans. The third person account or one from the point of view of an observer is detached and objective. Real-life personal account is subjective and focuses more on the person's thoughts, feelings and emotional response. I would consider the first person narrative style more effective as it is quite real and depicts everything faithfully.

SAMPLE PARAGRAPHS

(From the point of view of a third person/observer)

A big bruiser of a boy, yelled, "Hi, Skinny! How'd you like to be ducked?" with that he picked up the 10 year old tiny boy and tossed him into the nine feet deep end of the Y.M.C.A. pool. The kid struck the

surface in a sitting position, swallowed water and at once went to the bottom. .
Watching all this from a distance filled me with anxiety for the kid. I rushed towards the side of the pool. By that time, the boy had risen twice to the surface but he was unable to grab a rope or support on the side wall, and he went down again.
Before I could bail him out he sucked in more water into his lungs and went down a third time. I immediately jumped into the pool. The boy's legs were limp. He had stopped trying or responding . He was unconscious .I carried him on my shoulder and swam to the side of the pool.
I made him lie on his stomach and slapped his back to make him vomit the water he had swallowed. He responded to the first-aid measures and soon regained consciousness.

WRITING

Q1. Doing well in any activity, for example a sport, music, dance or painting, riding a motorcycle or a car, involves a great deal of struggle. Most of us are very nervous to begin with until gradually we overcome our fears and perform well.

Write an essay of about five paragraphs recounting such an experience. Try to recollect minute details of what caused the fear, your feelings, the encouragement you got from others or the criticism.

You could begin with the last sentence of the essay you have just read: "At last I felt released—free to walk the trails and climb the peaks and to brush aside fear."

Q2. Write a short letter to someone you know about your having learnt to do something new.

THINGS TO DO

Q1. Are there any water sports in India? Find out about the areas or places which are known for water sports.

MORE QUESTIONS SOLVED

SHORT ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS

Q1. When did Douglas decide to learn swimming? What options were available to him to swim in? Which one did he choose and why?

Q2. Which factors led Douglas to decide in favour of the Y.M.C.A. pool?

Q3. "I had an aversion to the water when I was in it." says Douglas. When did he start having this aversion and how?

Q4. "I was frightened, but not yet frightened out of my wits," says Douglas. Which qualities of the speaker are highlighted here and how?

Q5. "On the way down I planned," remarks Douglas. What plan had he devised and how far did it succeed?