

Bihar Board Class 12 English Book Solutions Chapter 8

How Free is the Press

B. 1.1. Read the following sentences and write 'T' for true and 'F' for false statements

(i) Press is free everywhere.

(ii) There is no internal censorship on the press.

(iii) Proprietors have their personal interests as well.

(iv) Advertisers contribute to the revenue of the newspapers.

Answer:

(i) F, (ii) F, (iii) T, (iv) T.

B. 1.2. Answer the following questions briefly

Question 1.

What do free 'people' take for granted?

Answer:

Free people take it for granted that without a free press there can be no freedom.

Question 2.

Are there restrictions on Press in time of war?

Answer:

Yes, there are restrictions on Press during the time of war. In fact all liberties are restricted in time of war.

Question 3.

What do you mean by the term 'free press'?

Answer:

By free press we mean that the press is free from direction and censorship by the government.

Question 4.

Who is the master the state or the people?

Answer:

The people are the masters. The state is the servant of the people.

Question 5.

What does the unofficial censorship seek to do?

Answer:

The unofficial censorship does not so much seek to express public opinion as to manufacture it.

Question 6.

Name two sources of revenue newspapers usually survive on.

Answer:

The two chief sources of revenue of a newspaper are

- (i) advertisers.
- (ii) the wealth of the company or the man that owns the newspaper.

B.2.1. Complete the following sentences on the basis of the unit you have just studied

- (a) Accurate reporting has given place to reporting which is at best slipshod and at worst tendentious because it is assumed that
- (b) Sensational headlines, false emphasis and supposition of context are some of the ways to
- (c) is the special accomplishment of the Press interviewer.
- (d) The date in the newspaper report had to be changed to

Answer:

- (a) public has not the wit to distinguish between truth and falsehood, secondly public does not care if a statement is false provided it is titillating. Both mean that public can be made to believe anything,
- (b) distort both fact and opinion,
- (c) Garbling,
- (d) conceal the fact that the news was already 'cold'.

B.2.3. Answer the following questions briefly

Question 1.

What are the two basic assumptions about the public?

Answer:

The two basic assumptions about the public are : (a) that they have not the intelligence to distinguish truth from falsehood and (b) that they don't care at all that a statement is false provided it is titillating.

Question 2.

What is suppression of context?

Answer:

Suppression of context is choosing only apart from the whole so that the meanings are distorted and give a different impression than what was actually intended.

Question 3.

Name two things that make the reports unreliable reading.

Answer:

The interviewer's playful habit of making statements himself and attributing them to the interviewer makes the reports unreliable reading.

B.3.1. Read the following sentences and write 'T' for true and 'F' for false statement

- (i) The author was very fond of gardening and keeping cats.
- (ii) The author had delivered 20,000 words in the space of an hour and a quarter.
- (iii) To misrepresent a man's attitude and opinion is no offence.
- (iv) To get misleading statements corrected is very easy.
- (v) Any public person is subtly made to feel that if he offends the press he will suffer for it.
- (vi) The press can make or break reputation.

Answer:

(i) F, (ii) F, (iii) T, (iv) F, (v) T, (vi) T.

B. 3.2. Answer the following questions briefly

Question 1.

Why do books rarely criticise the Press?

Answer:

A book rarely dares to criticise the Press because the press can either ignore the book all together, or publish sneering comments in its gossip column about it.

Question 2.

How do the newspapers greet the slightest efforts to hinder the irresponsible dissemination of nonsense?

Answer:

The slightest effort to hinder the irresponsible dissemination of nonsense is greeted by a concerted howl: This is a threat to the freedom of the press.'

Question 3.

Name the seven charges the author makes against die Press.

Answer:

The seven charges the author has made against the press are

- (i) False Emphasis, (ii) Garbling, (iii) Inaccuracy, (iv) Reversal of facts,
- (v) Random Invention, (vi) Miracle Mongering, (vii) Flat Suppression

Question 1.

The editorial policy of a popular daily is controlled by two chief factors. Which are they? Explain.

Answer:

The editorial policy of a popular daily is controlled by two factors, namely, the vested interests of its advertisers and the personal whims and ambitions of the man, or company that owns it. All newspapers get their revenue from their advertisers. To justify their rates of advertisements they have to have a large circulation. If they do so, they will have to sell their copies at a lower rate. No popular daily can meet its expenses by the sale of copies.

Major part of their revenue comes from advertisements so the daily has either to subserve the interest of the advertisers, or lose their revenue and go bankrupt. So no newspaper can support any policy, however good in national interest if it goes against the vested interest of its advertisers. Secondly, the editorial policy is determined by a wealthy man or company that own the paper. It is decided by the interests and ambitions of that man or company, who have sufficient means to carry on without any support from advertisers.

Question 2.

What is garbling? How does Sayers illustrate this form of distortion?

Answer:

Garbling, according to Miss Sayers, is a special accomplishment of the press interviewer's distorting what the interviewee said. He is in the playful habit of making statements himself and attributing them to the interviewee. Miss Sayers illustrates this with an accident concerning herself. During the production of her latest play, the press interviewer had asked her about her future plans. She had replied that she never made plans.

Though novels paid better than plays, she preferred writing plays. She had added that if she got another commission for the Canterbury Festival, she would surely write it. Her reply duly appeared in the press. But it was garbled. It said, 'Miss Sayers said that she would write no more plays, except on commission.' Such playful distortion by the press interviewers makes the reported interviewees unreliable. One should not believe that public men have said all that appears in the press.

Question 3.

Describe in your own words the instances of deliberate miracle* mongering.

Answer:

Miss Sayers has given an interesting instance of deliberate miracle- mongering by the press. The miracle was attributed to her. Miss Sayers made a public speech. It comprised of 8000 words. The full text of her speech was in the hands of the reporter. But it was reported that she delivered about 20,000 words in the space of an hour and a quarter. This was impossible. It would have been a miracle if any person could deliver 20,000 words in such a short space of time. But the press indulges in such miracle-mongering.

Question 4.

How are letters of protest treated by the newspapers? Describe in your own words.

Answer:

If a speaker's words are misquoted in the newspaper, he/she may write a letter of protest. But it is almost impossible to have the impression created to be corrected. In many cases letters of protest are ignored. Sometimes they print the whole letter, with the editor's comments. No apology is offered. The comments simply assert that the actual words were printed. But the speaker must not expect to monopolise the whole of paper's valuable space. The editors adopt another strategy too. They write a private letter in reply regretting the mistake. But such a letter does not remove the false impression formed on the readers. Rarely a newspaper prints an apology. Miss Sayers recalls old times when the editors had high moral courage to print an apology. But it is no longer the practice.

Question 5.

Have you ever written a letter of protest to any newspaper? What was the fate of this letter?

Answer:

No, I do not ever written a letter of protest to any newspaper, flat suppression letters of protest man be written these may be (a) England, (b) printed in full or in part, accompanied by an editorial comment to the effect that the words reported were actually said, and that the speaker must not expect to monoponse are paper's valuable space (c) answered privately by the editora manoeuvefe that does nothing to correct the false impression left in the public mind only occasionally and usually form a provincial paper, does one receive full apology and correction let me quote honoris cause, a not written to me from an editor of the loder school.

Question 6.

'He that is unfaithful in little is unfaithful also in much.'

How does Dorothy L. Sayers cite trivial personal examples to prove that the newspapers misrepresent in various ways? Do you agree with her?

Answer:

Miss Sayers gives a few instances to prove that the newspapers misrepresented even trivial incidents. I don't say that Miss Sayers is wrong in her judgement. But her views represent only one side of the coin. Press, no doubt, is a powerful organ. In our young democracy we have begun to feel the power of the press. The press brings to light many ills and cases of corruption, misuse of power, mistakes, etc in high places. If there was no press people would never learn about them. Despite some shortcomings, press is the watchdog of democracy. Of course, press needs to develop a code of high conduct for itself. As it claims to be the servant of the people, it ought to be a good servant.

Question 7.

What is the author's attitude to the freedom of Press? Do you agree with her?

Answer:

The author is of the opinion that the press is very powerful and uses its freedom with impunity. Even the ministers are scared of the press because the press can make or mark reputation. The press is in most and even trivial, matters careless. It misquotes facts that look true. Press can give a colour to reports so as to form public opinion the way it likes. In

the author's opinion there is no way to control the irresponsible behaviour of the press. Any effort to correct the press is greeted with a howl: "There is a threat to the freedom of the press.' Every newspaper has its editorial policy. This policy is determined by some vested interests, which may not subserve public good.

The press lets people know only what it wants them to know. It is assumed that people can be made to believe anything. Press has several ways in which it can distort and suppress facts. It presents facts in a way that it creates an impression on public mind as intended by the press. People have no way to get at the truth. Their only source of information is the press. Even if some of the readers can find out that the reports in the press are inaccurate, or misrepresented, there is no way to have them corrected. In fact, press can make and mar reputation and mould and manufacture public opinion.

Question 8.

'Indeed, we may say that the heaviest restriction upon the freedom of public opinion is not the official censorship of the Press, but the unofficial censorship by a Press which exists not so much to express opinion as to manufacture it.' How does the writer view the relationship between the press and the public opinion? Explain.

Answer:

The writer is of the view that in a free country, and especial, in times of peace, press is free and most powerful organ to influence public opinion. The press is supposed to reflect public opinion, and force the governments to make or change their policies accordingly. But the author believes that the press does not so much reflect public opinion, as it manufactures it. Once when she was away, her house was broken into. The thief was disturbed by the newsboy. But the newspaper reported the incident after a few days. They changed the date of the incident so that the report did not look cold. They also said that the burglar ran away because she had returned home in time.

In fact, all the details about the incident were incorrect. She also speaks of another incident. She received a summons from the court for unshaded lights. She explained that her servant had carefully drawn the curtains but unfortunately there was a defect in the curtains. She did not find fault with her servant. But the newspapers reported that she had told the court that her servant had forgotten to draw the curtain. Naturally, it must have distressed her servant. She tells about these trivial incidents just to emphasise her point that if the press can misrepresent such minor incidents it cannot be expected to report important matters faithfully.

C. 3. Composition

1. Write a letter to the Editor of an English daily highlighting the poor sanitation in your locality.

Answer:

305, Sector 21 ' J. P. Colony,
Gopalganj 27th June 20
The Editor
Bihar Times
Patna

Sir,

Subject: Poor Sanitation

Through the columns of your esteemed paper, I would like to draw the attention of civic authorities to the poor sanitation in our sector.

The worst menace is caused by stray cows. In fact, the cows belong to the milkmen who live across the road. Every morning they drive the cows into our sector. They roam about in large numbers all over the sector. Since people are religious minded, they offer cows chapatis, vegetables, etc. In turn, the cows litter the lanes with cow dung. They are seen incumbent on the streets. In addition to insanitation, they cause traffic hazards. The problem is years old. But the civic authorities seem to have no will to tackle it. Secondly, the roads are pocked with potholes. Just after two light showers, the roads are full of puddles. The drainage system is chocked, and no action has been taken to clear it. The rainy season has already set in. This poor sanitation is sure to cause epidemics if measures are not taken promptly.

Yours faithfully,
Ashish

2. Write a summary of the lesson is about 150 words.

Answer:

No doubt freedom of the press is essential to safeguard the freedom of the people. The press must be free from any control or censorship by the government. But no newspaper can be entirely free. Since newspapers depend on advertisers for their revenue, they can support no policy that is against their vested interests. But there is unofficial censorship that the press itself imposes on public opinion. It does not so much reflect public opinion as it manufactures it. There are several ways like false emphasis, garbling, inaccuracy, a reversal of facts, random invention, miracle-mongering, and flat suppression with which the press distorts facts to give a different or false impression to the readers. Press has the power to make or mar companies and public men. It is the tyranny of the press and there is no machinery to check it. The slightest effort to correct its irresponsible reporting is greeted by a concerted cry: This is a threat to the freedom of the press.

D. WORD STUDY

D. 1. Dictionary Use

Ex. 1. Correct the spelling of the following words:

Ans. srewd	—	shrewd
proprieter	—	proprietor
precarius	—	precarious
restricsion	—	restriction
disastrus	—	disastrous
bankrupcy	—	bankruptcy
insite	—	incite
censorsip	—	ensorship
titilating	—	titillating

Ex. 2. Lookup a dictionary and write two meanings of the following words—the one in which it is used in the lesson and the other which is more common.

Ans. denounced	:	(i) condemned vehemently (ii) accused
resolute	:	(i) determined (ii) steadfast
precarious	:	(i) dangerous (ii) liable to failure
gratuitous	:	(i) intentional (ii) unjustified
dissemination	:	(i) spreading (ii) distribution
cynical	:	(i) sceptical (ii) sarcastic
withheld	:	(i) keep back (ii) restrain

D. 2. Word-formation

Make as many words as possible from the words given below

Answer:

resolve — resolved, resolvable, resolvability, resolving

allude — alluded, alluding, allusion, allusive

invoke — invoked, invoking, invocation, invocable

restrict — restricted, restricting, restriction, restrictable, restrictive

renew — renewed, renewal, renewing, renewable.

D. 3. Word-meaning

Ex. 1. Find from the lesson words the meanings of which have been given in Column-A. The last part of each word is given in Column-B

Ans. Column-A

the policy of suppressing publication
of any item.

causing great loss

the state of being without money

cause the downfall

pleasantly stimulating

stir to action

the proprietor of anything

Column-B

censorship

disastrous

bankruptcy

subvert

titillating

incite

owner

Ex. 2. Fill in the blanks with suitable options given in the brackets

(a) We all become very..... by the news reporting. (excited, exciting)

(b) I do not..... the incident (recollect, recollects)

(c) You may..... between the two English dailies. (chose, choose)

(d) Unfavorable season crop..... (effect, affects)

(e) The press should not be..... (monopolized, monopolize)

The report was (distorting, distorted)

Answer:

(a) excited, (b) recollect, (c) choose, (d) affects, (e) monopolised, (f) distorted

D. 4. Phrases

Ex. 1. Read the lesson carefully and find out the sentences

in which the following phrases have been used. Then use these phrases in sentences of your own.

at such time, so far on occasion, placed upon, keep up, driven off, to bear upon creeping into, make of.

Answer:

at such time: At such time as this, when terrorism is on the increase, we must be united against all disruptive forces.

so far: So far as India is concerned, her position on Kashmir is crystal clear.

On occasion: She is very sensible. But on occasion, she behaves most stupidly.

placed upon: Heavy responsibility was placed upon her young shoulders after her husband's death.

keep up: You have achieved a high position. Keep it up with hard work, driven off: After my meeting with my uncle, all fears were driven off my mind.

to bear upon: The rising global temperature will heavily bear upon on our climate.

creeping into: Western lifestyle is creeping into our society, make of: I don't know what they will make of your remarks.

E. Grammar

Write ten more sentences on this sentence, based on this structure:

If+(S+were) + S+would/should + V1

Answer:

1. If she were rich, she would buy a big car.
2. If I were the editor, I would apologize.
3. If you were strong, you would overpower him.
4. If they were honest, they would return the money.
5. If I were you, I should help them.
6. If he were wise, he would solve this problem.
7. If you were cautious, you would not risk it.
8. If she were beautiful, she would marry a prince.
9. If you were present, you would know better.
10. If they were mad, they would not behave like this.