Class 9 English Kaveri – Chapter 8

Follow That Dream & Believe in Yourself

IMPORTANT QUESTION ANSWERS • 2026–27

Exam-focused answers based on the questions and extracts in the uploaded Chapter 8 textbook.

A. Follow That Dream – Important Questions

1. What do you think Ming must have written to her mother about?

Ming most likely wrote to her mother about a dream or ambition that she wanted to pursue. Her mother's opening response, "By all means follow that dream," shows that Ming had shared an aspiration that mattered deeply to her.

2. How can one attain an international level of skill in any field? Mention any two ways.

One needs to pursue the chosen field with focused and intensive dedication for a long period. The person must also be prepared to invest time, effort, money and sacrifice while remaining committed to the goal.

3. What differentiates mere dreamers from actual achievers?

Actual achievers move beyond wishful thinking and take sustained action. They commit themselves to their goal, accept the necessary effort and sacrifice, and continue despite obstacles. Mere dreamers may wish for something but do not always take the steps needed to realise it.

4. How does Ming's mother use critical questions and personal anecdotes to persuade Ming and convey her message effectively?

She asks Ming to consider the cost of pursuing a dream in terms of years, effort, financial investment and sacrifice. She also uses examples of people whose dreams changed because of war or family responsibilities and gives her own experience of publishing the book. These examples make her advice realistic while retaining an encouraging tone.

5. How does Ming's mother balance encouragement with caution in her advice?

She strongly encourages Ming to follow her dream but does not present the journey as easy. She asks her to consider time, effort, financial investment, sacrifice and possible obstacles before committing herself. Thus, the advice combines emotional support with practical caution.

6. Is Ming's mother's advice about pursuing dreams still relevant in contemporary society? Why?

Yes. The advice remains relevant because pursuing a goal still requires planning, sustained effort, sacrifice and the ability to deal with changing circumstances. At the same time, support from family, teachers, mentors and others can help a person continue towards a goal.

7. What 'costs' in terms of effort, sacrifice and time might a person be willing or unwilling to invest to pursue a goal?

A person may be willing to invest regular practice, years of learning, financial resources and personal time. However, the exact sacrifices depend on the goal and the person's circumstances. The important point is to understand these costs realistically before making a commitment.

B. Critical Reflection – Prose Extracts

8. What does the phrase 'life itself may change a person's dreams' suggest?

It suggests that dreams are not fixed. They can evolve or change because of new experiences, responsibilities, circumstances and opportunities in life.

9. What does the author mean by saying that hopes and aspirations can be 'no less than the original dream'?

She means that a new dream that develops later in life can be just as meaningful and valuable as the dream a person had when younger.

10. Identify the phrase that indicates a complex and challenging journey.

The phrase is "a maze of hurdles." It suggests a complicated path containing many difficulties and obstacles.

11. Why would there be more 'participants' in a person's dreamscape when dreams change with life?

Later-life dreams may involve family members, colleagues, mentors, friends and other people who contribute to or are affected by the new goal. Therefore, more people may become part of the journey.

12. What is the tone of the author in the extract about changing dreams?

The tone is optimistic and encouraging. The author accepts that dreams may change but presents new hopes and aspirations as valuable possibilities.

C. Step up to the challenge – Important Questions

13. What does the line ‘There is no crowd to see’ suggest about facing challenges?

It suggests that important personal challenges are ultimately faced by the individual. There may be no audience to watch or judge the struggle, so the person must make the decision and take responsibility for the journey.

14. What does ‘It’s just you and the future’ suggest?

It suggests that the individual has to think about the future they want and take responsibility for moving towards it. The focus is on personal choice, direction and growth.

15. What is the significance of the metaphor ‘The first step is the hardest’ in the context of personal growth?

The metaphor presents the beginning of change as the most difficult stage. Taking the first step requires courage because the future is uncertain, but once a person begins, they can continue moving towards the goal.

16. What message does the antithesis in the poem convey about personal development?

The contrast between comfort and growth shows that remaining in the status quo may feel easy, but personal development requires movement, change and willingness to face challenges.

17. Is the poet’s message realistic in the context of real-world struggles?

The poem’s message is encouraging, but self-belief alone may not remove every obstacle. Belief can provide motivation and persistence, while practical factors such as planning, resources, skills, guidance, opportunity and support may also be necessary.

18. How can the poem’s message about self-belief apply to someone taking a difficult first step towards a goal?

Self-belief can help the person overcome initial hesitation and fear. It encourages them to begin, remain focused and continue working towards the goal even when the first stage feels difficult.

D. Always Believe in Yourself – Important Questions

19. What is the main message of ‘Always Believe in Yourself’?

The poem encourages readers to believe in their abilities, avoid limiting themselves, remain courageous during difficult times and persist when their endurance is tested. It also encourages them to remain open to the opportunities and gifts of life.

20. How does the poem encourage people when they face difficulties?

It asks them to continue and persist, hold on to courage, and allow laughter and encouragement to surround them. These ideas suggest that positive support and self-belief can help people face challenges.

21. What does ‘Do not limit yourself’ mean in the poem?

It means that a person should not unnecessarily restrict their own possibilities or assume that they cannot achieve something. The poem encourages confidence in one’s intelligence and ability.

22. What does the poem suggest through the image of keeping ‘hands and heart open’?

It suggests remaining receptive to opportunities, experiences, encouragement and the positive possibilities that life offers.

E. Status Quo & Language-Based Questions

23. What is meant by ‘status quo’?

‘Status quo’ means the existing state of affairs or the current situation, especially when things remain unchanged.

24. What does the poem suggest about maintaining the status quo?

It presents the status quo as comfortable but suggests that comfort alone does not lead to growth. Personal development requires willingness to move beyond familiar conditions and face change.

25. What is the meaning of ‘dreamscape’ in the chapter?

‘Dreamscape’ means a world or scene of dreams. In the chapter, it refers to the people and circumstances that form part of a person’s changing aspirations and journey.

F. Exam-Focused Long Answers

26. “The chapter does not simply tell us to dream; it tells us how to approach a dream realistically.” Discuss.

The chapter encourages dreaming but also asks a person to assess the commitment required. Pursuing a dream can involve years of effort, financial investment and sacrifice. The path may contain obstacles and may require support from other people. The mother also explains that circumstances can change dreams. Therefore, the chapter combines inspiration with realistic planning and perseverance.

27. Explain how the chapter presents the relationship between dreams and changing circumstances.

The chapter shows that a person’s original dream may change because of family responsibilities, historical events, financial realities or new experiences. Such changes do not make later aspirations less valuable. A new dream may require a different and longer path, with more hurdles and more people involved. The important idea is to recognise the new aspiration and work towards it with conviction.

28. Explain the importance of self-belief in the poetry section of the chapter.

Self-belief is presented as a source of courage and persistence. In ‘Step up to the challenge’, believing in oneself helps a person take the difficult first step and keep the future on track. ‘Always Believe in Yourself’ similarly encourages persistence, courage and openness to opportunities. However, the chapter’s broader message also recognises the importance of effort, planning and support.

Quick Revision Points

- Follow That Dream: dreams + passion + commitment + effort + sacrifice + realistic planning.
- Mere dreamers: may remain at the stage of wishful thinking.
- Achievers: take sustained action and remain committed despite obstacles.
- Changing dreams: life circumstances can create new hopes and aspirations.
- Step up to the challenge: the first step is difficult, but self-belief supports growth.
- Always Believe in Yourself: believe, persist, remain courageous and stay open to life’s possibilities.

Source note: These answers are based on the textbook’s Chapter 8 questions and extracts. Answers are written in student-friendly form rather than copied verbatim from the textbook.