

C. Reading

(You have read an essay on chess. You have also read about some good chess players in India. Here is an interesting passage about one of the greatest women chess players in the world. Read and answer the questions.)

Koneru Humpy

Koneru Humpy is an Indian chess player, and the best woman at the chess board that the nation has ever produced. Among the female chess players of India, she is considered to be on par with Vishwanathan Anand. She holds the World No. 2 rank (Judit Polgar is No.1) among the female chess players.



Early Life and Introduction to the Game of Chess

She was born on the 31st of March, 1987 at Gudivada, Krishna district of Andhra Pradesh. Her father, Koneru Ashok worked as a lecturer in Chemistry. He was a wonderful chess player, who won the South India Open Championship in 1985. Young Humpy got attracted towards the game at a very young age of just 5 years. Her father soon spotted her extraordinary skills in the game and realized she could become a great player if conditioned properly. Ashok took the bold decision of giving up his job to concentrate fully upon Humpy's chess career.

The Impressive Beginning upon the Chess Board

The little Humpy showed her remarkable prowess as an excellent chess player as soon as she began playing the game. She caught everybody's attention for the first time when she won the Under 8 National Chess Championship in the year 1995.

Remarkable Performance at the International Level

Soon after proving her excellence at the national level, Koneru entered the International Chess Circuit. After taking the world by storm and clinching the World Chess titles in the Under 10, Under 12 and Under 14 age groups, Humpy got an International Master title in the year 1999, at the age of 12 years. Further, she achieved her 3rd Grandmaster norm in the Elekes Memorial Grandmaster Tournament held at Budapest, Hungary. Koneru created a world record by earning the International Grandmaster title at the age of 15 years 1 month and 29 days. She broke Judit Polgar's record to achieve the feat, and became the youngest woman ever to have earned the coveted title. Later, Hou Yifan broke Humpy's record by earning the title at the age of 14 years 6 months in the year 2008. Koneru Humpy has been the First Indian Woman to have received an International Grandmaster title in the game of chess.



Performance at the World Chess Championship

In the year 2001 she won the World Junior Chess Championship. She lost in the Second Round of the Women's World Chess Championship 2006. Her performance in 2008 was better. She reached the Semi Final Round, where she lost to Hou Yifan of China. Humpy participated in the FIDE Women's Grand Prix 2009–2011 and finished in overall second position, in turn qualifying as challenger for Women's World Chess Championship 2011.

Pride of the Nation

At Doha Asian Games 2006, Koneru Humpy made the nation proud by bagging two Gold Medals in the Individual as well as Team Event of Chess. She also won the International Open Chess Tournament 2007 held at Kaupthing, Luxembourg. In October 2007, Humpy scored the FIDE rating of 2606 points, just behind the World No. 1 female chess player, Judit Polgar. Humpy has broken the world record set by Susan Polgar who had a rating of 2577 points while she was at the World No. 2 spot. Humpy has also been the second woman ever in the history of chess who has crossed the 2600 points mark. Judit Polgar has done it for the first time.



Awards & Honours

For showing extraordinary talent as a chess player and making the nation proud several times at the international level, Koneru Humpy has been honoured with a number of awards and recognitions. To commend her exceptional skills and achievements, the Government of India bestowed upon her the coveted *Arjuna Award* in the year 2003. Further, in the year 2007 she was awarded with the prestigious *Padma Shri Award*. Humpy was also conferred upon the *Raja-Lakshmi Award* in the year 2008 by Raja-Lakshmi Foundation of Chennai.

I. Answer the following questions:

1. What was Humpy's first remarkable achievement?
2. At present, who do you think is the youngest woman grandmaster? Why?
3. Was Humpy's father right in giving up his job for Humpy? What would you have done if you were her father? Support your answer.
4. What qualities helped Humpy to reach the top in chess? Do they help you in any way? Share your ideas in groups.



Self Assessment

How well have I understood this unit?

Read and tick (✓) in the appropriate box.



Indicators	Yes	Somewhat	No
I was able to talk on, “My favourite game” (Face sheet)			
I read and understood the text:			
A. V.V.S. Laxaman			
B. Chess (poem)			
C. Koneru Humpy			
I was able to classify the sports and games and name the sports items given under ‘Vocabulary’.			
I was able to understand the usage of ‘adjectives, order of adjectives and forms of the verbs’ given under ‘Grammar’.			
I was able to write a profile, a letter and a message given under ‘Writing’.			
I was able to do the activity given under Study Skills.			
I listened to and understood the story “The Olympic Champion and the Ducks” and did the exercises given under ‘Listening and Speaking’.			
I was able to complete the ‘Project Work’ and present it to the class.			

Fun With Language

CHESS

Challenges brains
 Helps them get smarter
 Excites, explores
 Simulates war
 Strengthens wits

Have you noticed? The first letters of these words/phrases make the word ‘chess’. This kind of text or a poem, in which the first letters of each line spell a word or phrase, is called an acrostic. Try to write an acrostic for your favourite game or sport.

