



# ST. LAWRENCE HIGH SCHOOL

A JESUIT CHRISTIAN MINORITY INSTITUTION



## STUDY MATERIAL 7

**Sub: ENGLISH 'B'**

**Class: XII**

**Topic : STRONG ROOTS**

**Date: 12.06.2020**

**About the Author:** We all know Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam as an eminent Indian scientist. He was born in a Tamil Muslim family at Rameshwaram in Tamil Nadu. He is fondly called 'the Missile Man of India' for his contribution to the development of many missiles. He became the 11<sup>th</sup> President of India from 2002 – 2007. During his term in office, he was referred to as the 'People's President'. He has received many prestigious awards, including the Padma Bhushan in 1981, the Padma Vibhushan in 1990 and the Bharat Ratna in 1997. His 79<sup>th</sup> birthday was celebrated as 'World Students Day' by the United Nations.

**Synopsis of the Chapter:** Strong Roots is taken from Kalam's autobiography called Wings of Fire. It is written jointly by Dr. Kalam and Arun Tiwari. As an autobiographical writing, it gives us glimpses into Kalam's personal life and upbringing in a middle-class Tamil family in Rameshwaram. It begins with Kalam's childhood and family background and ends with his reflections on spiritual growth and the quest for inner peace, happiness and freedom. In this chapter, Kalam focuses on his birth, locality, food habits, communal harmony, his father's spiritual ideas and influence on him and his own personal views of destiny and self-actualization.

**Critical Appreciation of the chapter:** In "Strong Roots" APJ Abdul Kalam speaks of the days of his childhood. His mother and father, though not much formally educated, were in all aspects wise and generous than many. His father's simple lifestyle was filled with comfort and satisfaction, and was devoid of luxuries and his mother's regular feeding of numerous unknown people instilled in Kalam the traits of humbleness and simplicity. The locality where he lived, Rameshwaram, was famous for the Shiva temple. There, both Hindus and Muslims lived together in an amiable environment. Thus Kalam learned the lesson of communal harmony from his birthplace. Kalam's father was his role model. Throughout his life, Kalam endeavoured to follow his father's philosophy and ideals. His father led a disciplined, religious and healthy life. People respected him and considered him to be a divine being. They came to him whenever they were in trouble as they believed him to be a medium in their effort to pacify the demonic forces. When Kalam asked his father the relevance of all these, he made young Kalam realise that everything in this world is somehow connected, or is a part of the eternal power. Challenges and struggles shouldn't be feared, rather should be considered as an ideal time for introspection. But people usually fail to understand this and seek company which was given by Kalam's father who provided mental strength and support to them. He forbade Kalam to follow the same path and told him, in hard times, every person should analyse what deed has brought them to this place and try to overcome those obstacles with courage. Fear is simply a hindrance to our path of spiritual fulfilment. Kalam followed his father's teachings throughout his life and realised that a divine power exists that can lead one through all confusions and misery to eternity.

**Significance of the Title:** "Strong Roots" is the story of an eminent personality who recounts the roots of all morals, knowledge and philosophy of life. His failures, his successes and the unexpected

and unprecedented glory he achieved, inspire us to believe that with hard work and self-confidence we can control our destiny. Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam's inclination to highlight the role of his family, relatives and mentors in shaping up his career, reflects his gratitude towards them. It is a narrative where Dr. Kalam recollects the secure days of his childhood. The ascetic life led by his parents, his mother's benevolent nature and the spiritual and moralistic lessons he received from his father, helped him to stay rooted to his homeland, to his country even after achieving exemplary success. His father's view as to how to face the adversities in life enabled him to believe in the omnipresence of a divine power that can guide one to one's actual destination. The strong foundation of his character made by his parents brought him success in every step of his later life. Thus, the title of the story becomes absolutely appropriate.

### Textual Words & Meanings :

WORDS	MEANINGS
1. Erstwhile	1. Former
2. Innate	2. Inborn
3. Wisdom	3. Knowledge
4. Lineage	4. Direct descent from an ancestor; ancestry or pedigree.
5. Forebears	5. Ancestors
6. Austere	6. Severe or strict in manner or attitude.
7. Ladle	7. A large long-handled spoon with a cup shaped bowl, used for serving food.
8. Dollop	8. A large shapeless mass of something, especially soft food.
9. Amicably	9. Cordially ; in a friendly manner.
10. Convinced	10. Completely certain about something.
11. Relevance	11. The quality or state of being closely connected or appropriate.
12. Attire	12. Dress
13. Communion	13. Exchanging thoughts and feelings.
14. Transcend	14. Go beyond
15. Cosmos	15. Universe
16. Adversity	16. Hostile circumstances.
17. Introspection	17. Examination of one's own thoughts feelings and behavior.
18. Comprehend	18. Understand fully.
19. Impasse	19. Deadlock
20. Recurrent	20. Occurring again and again.
21. Anguish	21. Intense pain.
22. Longing	22. Craving.
23. Propitiate	23. Appease.
24. Demonic	24. Relating to or characteristic of demons or evil spirits.
25. Grove	25. A group of trees
26. Fear ridden	26. Haunted by fear.

- 27. Emulate
- 28. Endeavour
- 29. Melancholy
- 30. Manifest

- 27. Imitate.
- 28. Try hard to do or achieve something.
- 29. A feeling of pensive sadness, typically with no obvious cause.
- 30. Evident.