

IS WATER REALLY BLUE?

Six-year-old Max was a very inquisitive little boy. He was always found asking a variety of questions to everyone around him. His friends and family had even nicknamed him “MY-MY Max, WHY-WHY Max”, but Max couldn’t help it – because, you see, questions kept popping up in his mind.

What did he like doing – apart from asking questions? Well, his most favourite place in the world was the ocean. But sadly, Max had never actually been to a beach. You see, they lived in a city full of tall buildings and crowded roads.

So then, you may ask: what made him love the ocean so much? It was when he saw a movie about pirates that his fascination for the ocean first began. In that movie, the pirates got to live on huge ships and they would spend the whole day sailing on the beautiful blue water. Max couldn’t take his eyes off the beautiful blue ocean: he saw that movie at least twenty times! How beautiful the water looked when the light reflected off it! He recalled the muddy brown puddles on the roads here during the monsoon: water was such a dull colour here! Oh, how gorgeous it was in the ocean! If only he could get some blue water home!

Ever since watching that movie, he longed to visit the beach. So you can imagine Max’s excitement when summer arrived and Max’s family said that they were taking him to Uncle John’s house in Chennai! You see, his parents had decided to surprise him with a visit to Marina Beach. But Max already knew that Chennai was close to the sea, and so it was no surprise for him! He was so excited that he simply couldn’t wait for the day to come. Oh, how long it was taking for school term to end and for the holidays to start! How long would the journey be? Would they ever get to the beautiful blue sea?

When the big day finally arrived, Max’s family set out on their road trip to the beach early in the morning. As they neared Chennai, Max popped his head out of the car window and smelt the sea breeze. He saw the clear blue water in the distance and was very happy. As soon as they reached Uncle John’s house on the coast, he put on his swimming shorts and ran into the water to play.

He then wanted to build a sand castle and so he asked his parents for help, but they said that they were going to the ice cream parlor. His mother told him to go and fetch some water from the ocean before they returned, to build the sand castle. Well, this is exactly what Max was waiting for! So Max took a little jug to collect some water. On reaching the ocean, he bent down and dipped the jug into the pale blue water – but when he took the jug back, he realized that the water inside wasn’t the beautiful blue colour anymore. He wondered how this was so. He thought: “If the ocean is blue then, surely, the water from the ocean must also be blue?”

Max was left very curious and waited impatiently for his parents to come back. Why did the water become colourless inside his jug?