

ગુજરાત રાજ્યના શિક્ષણવિભાગના પત્ર-ક્રમાંક  
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# ENGLISH

(First Language)

Standard XII

## PLEDGE

India is my country.

All Indians are my brothers and sisters.

I love my country and I am proud of its rich and varied heritage.

I shall always strive to be worthy of it.

I shall respect my parents, teachers and all my elders and treat everyone with courtesy.

I pledge my devotion to my country and its people.

My happiness lies in their well-being and prosperity.

રાજ્ય સરકારની વિનામૂલ્યે યોજના હેઠળનું પુસ્તક



**Gujarat State Board of School Textbooks**  
**‘Vidyayan’, Sector 10-A, Gandhinagar-382010**

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**PREFACE**

Gujarat State Board of School Textbooks has prepared new textbooks as per the new curricula developed by the Gujarat State Secondary and Higher Secondary Education Board and which has been sanctioned by the Education Department of the Government of Gujarat. A panel of experts from Universities/Colleges, Teachers Training Colleges and Schools have put in a lot of efforts in preparing the manuscript of the subject. It is then reviewed by another panel of experts to suggest changes and weed out the mistakes, if any. The suggestions of the reviewers are considered thoroughly and necessary changes are made in the manuscript. Thus, the Textbook Board takes sufficient care in preparing an error free manuscript. The Board is vigilant even while printing the textbooks.

The Board has pleasure in publishing the Textbook of **English, First Language for Std. 12**. The Textbook Board is thankful to all those who have helped us in preparing this textbook. However, we welcome suggestions to enhance the quality of the textbook.

**H. N. Chavda**

Director

Date : 25-01-2017

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## FUNDAMENTAL DUTIES

It shall be the duty of every citizen of India : \*

- (a) to abide by the Constitution and respect its ideals and institutions, the National Flag and the National Anthem;
- (b) to cherish and follow the noble ideals which inspired our national struggle for freedom;
- (c) to uphold and protect the sovereignty, unity and integrity of India;
- (d) to defend the country and render national service when called upon to do so;
- (e) to promote harmony and the spirit of common brotherhood amongst all the people of India transcending religious, linguistic and regional or sectional diversities; to renounce practices derogatory to the dignity of women;
- (f) to value and preserve the rich heritage of our composite culture;
- (g) to protect and improve the natural environment including forests, lakes, rivers and wild life, and to have compassion for living creatures;
- (h) to develop the scientific temper, humanism and the spirit of inquiry and reform;
- (i) to safeguard public property and to abjure violence;
- (j) to strive towards excellence in all spheres of individual and collective activity so that the nation constantly rises to higher levels of endeavour and achievement;
- (k) to provide opportunities for education by the parent or the guardian, to his child or, as the case may be, ward between the age of six and fourteen years.

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\* Constitution of India : Section 51-A

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## About the Textbook...

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### Introduction to the Textbook

We are happy to place the Standard XII (FL) textbook in your hands. The aim of this textbook is to offer students “comprehensible input” through a wide range of language varieties and activities that involve all the four skills – listening, reading, speaking and writing. However, the textbook also endeavours to develop critical thinking, a key component of the National Curriculum Framework (NCF) document, along with the skills mentioned above. It has been the constant effort of the Gujarat State Board of School Textbooks, Gandhinagar to incorporate the most recent ideas, approaches and methods in its textbooks and this textbook too has been a step in that direction.

### The Content

The texts included in this book have been sourced from a variety of genres, that has both the thematic range as well as the appropriate level of language suitable for students of Standard XII. Thus, while the themes include Indian ethos and values, national heroes, gender awareness, issues of the differently-abled, national achievements, national integration, social interaction, development of a scientific and enquiring spirit, the language used ranges from Indian English to British and American English. The texts have been especially selected keeping in mind the age and interests of the learners. The textbook is divided into 12 prose, 10 poems and 4 supplementary readings.

The prose units have been chosen from genres like newspaper reports, film dialogues, plays, short stories, letters, popular talks and essays. As is amply clear, the variety of genres will expose the learners to not only a variety of topics but would also expose them to the genre-specific register that is intrinsic to English.

The selection of poems has been done keeping in mind the specific form of the poetic genre. It includes sonnets, lyrics, narrative poems and more modern forms like *verslibre*. The selection is also representative of the themes that have been mentioned above. The array of genres, we hope, will help the learners to appreciate not only the transformation of the English language but also the nuances and shades of meaning that are inherent in it.

It is well established that reading as a skill can develop through exposure to longer texts. The supplementary reading units are intended to inculcate extensive reading habits among students. The units are also lengthier than the prose units and it is hoped that it will cultivate habits of independent reading.

### The Activities

The activities included in the textbook have been largely based on the principles of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). CLT aims at the following principles:

- ‘meaning’ and ‘form’ are equally important
- ‘contextualisation’ is important since all language–use is context-based
- ‘appropriacy’ and ‘accuracy’ are both important factors
- judicious use of native language translation is accepted when feasible
- the skills (LSRW) are seen as ‘integrated’ rather than isolated
- ‘struggling’ with the language is essential to communicate
- ‘communicative competence’ is the desired goal – ‘grammatical’ (structures of the language), ‘sociolinguistic’ (the social appropriateness of language), ‘discourse’ (how the language is organised within the text), ‘strategic’ (how a learner uses different strategies to learn the language)

- the teachers' task is to motivate use of language by encouraging classroom interaction through pair and group interaction / collaboration
- using the knowledge of the student is important for learning – pre-tasks and post-tasks are developed within a collaborative framework.

The activities in the Prose Reading Units have been divided into six sections:

**Activity I :** This is a pre-reading activity. The aim of this activity is to use the previous knowledge of the students and brainstorm in a collaborative mode. The activity is meant for eliciting as many responses from the learners as possible. The pre-reading activity is also intrinsically linked to the lesson that the learner is going to read and therefore, provides a bridge between what s/he knows and what s/he is going to learn.

**Activity II :** These are reading comprehension activities and are meant to test the understanding of the learner after reading the text. They have been sub-divided into three sections: A, B and C. While Section A is primarily meant for skimming and scanning to answer multiple-choice questions, Section B is meant for long answers. Section C is meant for re-reading the text and writing in detail. Please note that all the activities should allow the learner to re-visit the text again and again.

**Important note :** The activities are not mechanical and are meant to encourage the learners to think through their answers.

**Activity III :** The vocabulary activity is to help the students learn words in context as well as to use them in other contexts. These activities not only provide practice for the words that have been learnt during the lesson but also lead to an expansion of the word kit of the students.

**Activity IV :** The grammar activities are intended to make students understand the structure of the language. For this purpose, a range of grammar activities are included. The focus is on making the students 'notice' the structure in the text and use them in a context. Focus has been on both accuracy as well as the appropriacy of a structure.

**Activity V :** The speaking activity is intended for the production of the language and uses the "comprehensible input" of the previous activities to encourage the learners to speak. The learners are encouraged to speak individually, in pairs and in groups on topics related to the lesson.

**Activity VI :** The writing activities have been designed keeping the learners' real-life needs in mind. A variety of styles and genres have been included in this activity so that the learner not only practises what has been learnt in the lesson but also extends it to writing beyond the classroom.

**Important note :** Writing as a skill can succeed only if feedback is given to the learners.

### **Poems and Supplementary Readings**

The poems in the textbook start with a short biographical note on the poet as well as a brief introduction to the poem.

The activities that follow the poem are divided into two sections: A and B. While A is a multiple-choice exercise meant to help the learner to skim through the poem to locate the answers, B is meant as a comprehension activity and to appreciate the poem for its literariness.

The Supplementary readings are followed by multiple choice exercise and comprehension questions.

### **Finally...**

One of the major tenets of Communicative Language Teaching is the empowering of the learner where a motivated teacher and an autonomous learner can co-develop. For this purpose, CLT encourages the use of all tools that can achieve this goal. This textbook is one such tool. We hope that it is an adequate one and can lead on to more motivated teachers and independent learners.



## Prose

# UNIT 1

### Activity I

You may be interested in joining a profession of your choice. According to you, which qualities will make you the best person in that profession? Narrate it to the class.

### Introduction

**Sir Arthur Ignatius Conan Doyle** (1859 – 1930), a Scottish writer and physician, is best known for creating the fictional detective Sherlock Holmes. He is recognized as a reputed contributor to the genre of crime fiction.

**How Watson Learned the Trick** is about Doctor Watson attempting to demonstrate to Holmes how he has learned the latter's 'superficial trick' of logical deduction. Read on to find out about every single one of Watson's deductions.

### How Watson Learned the Trick

Watson had been watching his companion intently ever since he had sat down to the breakfast table. Holmes happened to look up and catch his eye.

'Well, Watson, what are you thinking about?' he asked.

'About you.'

'Me?'

'Yes, Holmes. I was thinking how superficial are these tricks of yours, and how wonderful it is that the public should continue to show interest in them.'

'I quite agree,' said Holmes. 'In fact, I have a recollection that I have myself made a similar remark.'

'Your methods,' said Watson severely, 'are really easily acquired.'

'No doubt,' Holmes answered with a smile. 'Perhaps you will yourself give an example of this method of reasoning.'

'With pleasure,' said Watson. 'I am able to say that you were greatly preoccupied when you got up this morning.'

'Excellent!' said Holmes. 'How could you possibly know that?'

'Because you are usually a very tidy man and yet you have forgotten to shave.'

'Dear me! How very clever!' said Holmes. 'I had no idea, Watson, that you were so apt a pupil. Has your eagle eye detected anything more?'

'Yes, Holmes. You have a client named Barlow, and you have not been successful with his case.'

'Dear me, how could you know that?'

'I saw the name outside his envelope. When you opened it you gave a groan and thrust it into your pocket with a frown on your face.'

‘Admirable! You are indeed observant. Any other points?’

‘I fear, Holmes, that you have taken to financial speculation.’

‘How could you tell that, Watson?’

‘You opened the paper, turned to the financial page, and gave a loud exclamation of interest.’

‘Well, that is very clever of you, Watson. Any more?’

‘Yes, Holmes, you have put on your black coat, instead of your dressing gown, which proves that you are expecting some important visitor at once.’

‘Anything more?’

‘I have no doubt that I could find other points, Holmes, but I only give you these few, in order to show you that there are other people in the world who can be as clever as you.’

‘And some not so clever,’ said Holmes. ‘I admit that they are few, but I am afraid, my dear Watson, that I must count you among them.’

‘What do you mean, Holmes?’

‘Well, my dear fellow, I fear your deductions have not been so happy as I should have wished.’

‘You mean that I was mistaken.’

‘Just a little that way, I fear. Let us take the points in their order: I did not shave because I have sent my razor to be sharpened. I put on my coat because I have, worse luck, an early meeting with my dentist. His name is Barlow, and the letter was to confirm the appointment. The cricket page is beside the financial one, and I turned to it to find if Surrey was holding its own against Kent. But go on, Watson, go on! It’s a very superficial trick, and no doubt you will soon acquire it.’

### Glossary

**superficial** (adj.) trivial, petty **speculation** (n) (here) risky investment **deductions** (n) (here) inferences

### Activity II

**Read the lesson carefully.**

**A. Choose the correct option and rewrite the complete sentence.**

- ‘Catch his eye’ means \_\_\_\_\_ .
  - draw a picture
  - draw his attention
  - draw the eye
  - hold the eye
- The story proves that Sherlock Holmes can \_\_\_\_\_ anyone.
  - influence
  - impress
  - outwit
  - please



3. When Sherlock Holmes says that Watson was just a little mistaken he ironically means \_\_\_\_\_ .
  - (a) Holmes was absolutely wrong
  - (b) Holmes was slightly wrong
  - (c) Watson was absolutely wrong
  - (d) Watson was slightly wrong
4. What made Watson think that Holmes was very preoccupied?
  - (a) He had forgotten to shave.
  - (b) He got up late.
  - (c) He forgot to have his tea.
  - (d) He wasn't listening attentively.
5. According to Watson, Holmes's methods were \_\_\_\_\_ .
  - (a) acquired by interest
  - (b) acquired with difficulty
  - (c) easily acquired
  - (d) easily forgotten

**B. Answer the following questions in brief.**

1. Why did Watson wonder at the interest of the public?
2. Comment on Watson's speculations about Holmes.
3. What made Watson think that others could be as clever as Holmes?
4. How did Holmes refute each one of Watson's deductions?
5. Do you think Watson learned the trick? Why?

**C. Write in detail on:**

1. Doctor Watson
2. Sherlock Holmes

**Activity III**

**A. Given below is a list of homonyms. Use them in meaningful sentences so as to bring about the different meanings.**

For example:

1. *Admit-I was wrong and I admit it.*  
*Admit-I am pleased to admit you to this course.*

2. Deduction
3. Thrust
4. Exclamation
5. Interest
6. Cricket

**B. Generally we use interjections to show emotions. In the lesson, exclamations like 'Dear me!' etc. are used. Now frame sentences that begin with the following interjections.**

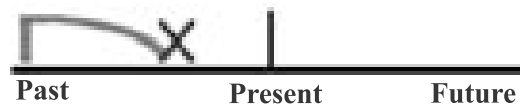
1. Ouch! \_\_\_\_\_
2. Good Gracious! \_\_\_\_\_
3. Wow! \_\_\_\_\_
4. Hurrah! \_\_\_\_\_
5. Alas! \_\_\_\_\_
6. Tut Tut! \_\_\_\_\_
7. Phew! \_\_\_\_\_
8. Yippee! \_\_\_\_\_
9. O'Dear! \_\_\_\_\_
10. Aww! \_\_\_\_\_

#### Activity IV

**A. Read the opening sentence from the story. Notice how different times are indicated.**

*Watson had been watching his companion intently ever since he had sat down to the breakfast table.*

Now look at this picture.



The structure 'had been + watching' is used to indicate something that started in the past and continued until another time in the past. The 'had', on the other hand, indicates a completed action in the past.

**Complete the following sentences using 'had been' or 'had' as shown in the example. Use the correct form of the verb given in brackets.**

1. They \_\_\_\_\_ (talk) for over an hour before Salman arrived.
2. Babasaheb Ambedkar \_\_\_\_\_(live) in Baroda before he went to England.
3. How long \_\_\_\_\_ you \_\_\_\_\_ (wait) to get on the bus?
4. After they \_\_\_\_\_ (eat) the sandwich, they began to feel sick.
5. Rachel wanted to sit down because she \_\_\_\_\_ (stand) all day at work.
6. If you \_\_\_\_\_ (listen) to me, you would have got the job.
7. Kuntal \_\_\_\_\_ (teach) at the university for more than a year before she left for America.



8. A: How long \_\_\_\_\_ you \_\_\_\_\_ (study) Sanskrit before you moved to India?
9. She \_\_\_\_\_ (work) at that company for three years when it went out of business.
10. When I arrived at the Sardar memorial, the film on Sardar \_\_\_\_\_ (start).

**B. The structure ‘had been + -ing’ is also used to indicate a cause and effect relationship in a sentence.**

For example,

*She was very tired because she had been working since morning.*

**Write five sentences using the ‘had been + ing’ structure to indicate cause and effect relationships.**

**Activity V**

Vyomkesh Bakshi, Sherlock Holmes, James Bond, Hercule Poirot and Nancy Drew are some of the prominent detective characters who have fascinated us with their sharp skills and creative thinking. What do you think are the skills required to become a good detective ? Discuss with your partner.

**Activity VI**

**A.** An **acronym** is a word or name formed as an abbreviation from the initial components in a phrase or a word, usually individual letters and sometimes syllables. For example GIFT city is an acronym of Gujarat International Finance Tec – city.

An acronym is different from an abbreviation(which is shortening of words).For example **Ltd.** is an abbreviation of limited.

Now consider your name as an acronym and expand it to show your qualities. For example-  
*AJIT*

**A-Adorable**

**J-Jovial**

**I- Intelligent**

**T-Talented**

**B.** Think and write a dialogue on a situation where you outwitted your brother/sister.



## UNIT 2

### Activity I

Most of us feel upset sometimes. Have you ever felt so? What do you do then? Talk to the class for a minute about it.

#### Introduction

**Mariellen Ward** is an award winning Canadian professional travel writer and blogger who writes for international newspapers, magazines, online sites etc. Her writings are inspired by her extensive travels in India.

**The River** is an e-story about the liltng waters of India’s most sacred river. An advocate of solo woman travel, she takes us in this travelogue through the journey of her transformation on the banks of the Ganga.

#### The River

*On January 12, 1998, I discovered my mother had died in the night of heart failure. This story is for her, on the anniversary of her death. It was originally published in Homemaker’s Magazine.*

At dusk, the liltng waters of the jewel-green Ganges River take on a more hushed tone as they flow through the holy city of Rishikesh in northern India. Hindus lovingly refer to this sacred river as Ganga Mata-ji, the mother river. Ganga meets Rishikesh shortly after tumbling out of the high Himalayas, and then flows through a peaceful valley, that has been luring sages since before recorded time. I went in the spring of 2006, to be and to heal.

As darkness descended one evening, I joined pilgrims, yoga students, tourists and town residents making their way to the *aarti* (a ceremony to honour the sacred river), held each evening on the banks of the Ganga under an enormous white statue of the Hindu god Shiva seated blissfully in lotus pose.

After taking off my shoes (a necessity for any sacred Hindu ritual), I decided to dive into the crowd gathering on the platform at the river’s edge – though I noticed the other foreigners were standing way up on the *ghats* (steps), away from the action. Immediately, a family of Indian women surrounded me. Three generations of smiling women encouraged me to chant, clap and sway along, to the uplifting rhythms of the devotional music. They paid as much attention to me as they did to the *aarti*, making sure that I felt included and knew what to do to follow along with the unfolding ritual.

Towards the end of the ceremony, the women encouraged me to buy a *diya* – a little boat made of leaves and filled with flowers, incense and a candle that signifies divine energy, the light of spiritual truth and the imperishable nature of the soul.

While the festival atmosphere swirled around me, I imbued my *diya* with hope for personal transformation. I had come to India because a river of loss had run through my life, and I had struggled with grief, despair and depression for eight years. I felt I was clinging to the bank, but the effort was wearing me out. Deciding to leave my life and go to India was like letting go off the bank and going with the flow of the river. I had no idea where it would lead me, what I would learn or how I would change. I only knew that it was going to be big.

Eight years before, on a crisp cold January morning in Toronto, I drove with my sister, Victoria, and her husband, Gary, to my mother's small apartment. Mother had been bedridden for a week with a terrible chest cold, but did not want to see a doctor. When we reached her building, Gary went to get a wheelchair while Victoria and I went upstairs. I knew the minute I opened the unlocked door that something was terribly wrong. I couldn't feel my mother's presence. I held out my arms in a spontaneous gesture of protection – my little sister was behind me – as I realized my mother was lying in bed, dead.

In that moment a powerful force hit my stomach, chest and throat, and my back muscles locked up. I felt hit so hard, it was almost like being cleaved into two. And I knew that my mother was not in that room. I didn't know where she went, but I knew she wasn't there.

We learned later that she had died in the night of heart failure. She was 67 years old.

My heart failed too, in a way. It felt as though mother's love had been suddenly turned off – dammed up, parching the river. I felt joyless, afraid of being 'alone' on the planet without her. And her death ushered in a devastating period of loss. My fiancé left me (with an expensive wedding dress hanging in the closet). In the December of 2003, my father was diagnosed with cancer; he died three months later. As this river of loss swept through my life, I rarely went out, saw few friends, cried myself to sleep most nights. In despair, I wondered why these misfortunes had happened to me – what had I done to deserve this series of blows? And I wondered if I would be able to live through them.

To help get me out of the depression, I threw my faith into yoga. I had been going to yoga classes, on and off, and intuitively realized the healing and transformative power of this ancient art and science. I made a decision: no matter how I felt or what happened, I would go to class three times per week.

After a while, I started to feel better. I still couldn't do downward dog – there was too much tension around my broken heart – but I was starting to move and breathe again. It was like early spring. The melting ice in my veins turned to water and began to flow, giving me the energy and courage to enroll in a yoga teacher's training program. One of the teachers had recently returned from two years of yoga study in India. His teachings carried the elixir of India, which ignited in me a compulsion to live one of my dreams and go to India.

I put my things in storage, gave away my apartment, left my cat with a friend and went to India for six months.

Near the end of my trip, a friend in Delhi suggested I go to an ashram near Rishikesh. At the peaceful garden ashram near the Ganga, I meditated daily, walked by the river and listened to the teachings of the founder, Swami Brahmdev, under a mango tree on the ashram grounds.

This reflective time was heaven sent. I realized that traveling in India had taught me how to surrender, relax, and go with the flow. It had reinvigorated my enthusiasm for life. ‘All journeys have secret destinations of which the traveler is unaware,’ said philosopher Martin Buber, and mine brought me one day to Rishikesh, and the evening *aarti*.

As I lit the *diya* I thought of my mother. I poured into the little boat my love for her and my feelings of intractable loss. With tears in my eyes, I sent the *diya* out into the current, watching as it cleared the shoal and skimmed lightly along the glossy black surface of the Ganga, a tiny retreating light in the darkness, swept along by the currents of the mighty river.

And as I watched, I allowed the magic of the ritual to transform me. I thought of the millions of people, over thousands of years, who had stood by this long, life-giving river, invoking the mother’s love it symbolizes.

I felt connected – to my mother, to mother earth, to the unending cycle of life, death and rebirth that runs through the lives of every creature on this planet. Like a river a sense of calm washed over me as I realized that my mother and I are part of this natural cycle. Her sudden death was not a tragedy, not a cause for suffering or grief, not something terrible that “happened to me.” It was part of the natural pattern of life.

I felt reminded of something I always knew, but forgot. I realized we are not apart after all, my mother and I. In that moment I felt the truth of eternity open up within me. I knew that beyond the apparent reality of everyday life, something much bigger than me runs through and unites all of life. Death is an illusion.

I breathed in the primordial scene. I could feel the breath fill my lungs, and life course through me. I felt a complete sense of contentment and the warmth of quiet joy descend upon me, like the mist that drapes the distant foothills of the Himalayas. I felt love.

During the rest of my time in India I gradually and gladly embraced this shift in perception and awareness. India’s gift to the world is an ancient and abiding wisdom built on the realization that reality is shaped in the mind and that the only lasting path to happiness is internal. From being the “worse thing that ever happened to me,” I saw my mother’s death as the catalyst for my spiritual growth and understanding. “Suffering is a gift,” Swami had said. I understood.

**Glossary**

**lilting** (adj.) (here) lively singing **imbued with** filled with **devastating** (adj.) traumatic **downward dog** (n) a yoga pose known as ‘*Adho Mukha Shvanasana*’ **elixir** (n) magical potion **intractable** (adj.) loss difficult to cope with **shoal** (n) a sand bank, stretch of shallow water **primordial** (adj.) ancient

**Activity II**

**Read the lesson carefully.**

**A. Choose the correct option and rewrite the complete sentence.**

1. \_\_\_\_\_ encouraged the writer to chant, clap and sway along with the uplifting rhythm of devotional music.
 

(a) Her mother	(b) Indian hospitality
(c) River Ganga	(d) The crowd
2. Yoga is important to the author because of its \_\_\_\_\_ power.
 

(a) healing and transformative	(b) philosophical and scientific
(c) philosophical and supernatural	(d) scientific and supernatural
3. The diya signifies \_\_\_\_\_ to the author.
 

(a) hope	(b) purity
(c) truth	(d) wisdom
4. The river Ganga symbolizes \_\_\_\_\_.
 

(a) Guru’s love	(b) love for one’s own country
(c) mother’s love	(d) search for the soul
5. Travelling in India taught the writer to \_\_\_\_\_.
 

(a) forget the past	(b) go with the flow
(c) hold on to the past	(d) hold on to the path

**B. Answer the following questions in brief.**

1. What made the author visit the river Ganga?
2. What does the author refer to as ‘river of loss’? Why?
3. How did yoga help the author?
4. Describe the transformation that overtook the author after performing the ‘diya ritual’.

**C. Write in detail on:**

1. The River Ganga
2. 'Suffering is a Gift'

**Activity III**

**A. Find words from the lesson which best describe the given words. The first one is done as an example.**

<i>enormous</i> statue	_____ rhythms	_____ music
_____ transformation	_____ truth	_____ nature
_____ apartment	_____ gesture	_____ heart
_____ spring	_____ garden	_____ loss
_____ river	_____ cycle	_____ pattern
_____ death	_____ scene	_____ joy
_____ sense	_____ foothills	_____ growth
_____ wisdom	_____ reality	_____ life

**B. Use the given sets of words in meaningful sentences. The first one is done as an example.**

1. chant, clap and sway

*At the Rathayatra, I have seen Bhaktas chant, clap and sway along the procession.*

2. grief, despair and depression

\_\_\_\_\_

3. energy, truth and nature

\_\_\_\_\_

4. surrender, relax and go

\_\_\_\_\_

5. life, death and rebirth

\_\_\_\_\_

**Activity IV**

**A. Read the following expressions. Think of what they indicate.**

*On January 12, 1998, I discovered...*

*At dusk, the lilting waters...take...*

*As darkness descended one evening, I joined...*

*After taking off my shoes, ... I decided...*

*While the festival atmosphere swirled around me, I imbued...*

*In that moment a powerful force hit...*

*After a while, I started...*

The initial part of the sentences indicates time and are called 'time expressions'. Notice that time expression decides the tense of the sentence.

For example,

*As darkness descended one evening, I joined...*

*After taking off my shoes, ... I decided...*

Complete the following sentences with the help of the options given below. Decide on the tense after reading the time expressions.

1. Only on very rare occasions \_\_\_\_\_ an appearance before midday.  
a. the old lady has being making                      b. the old lady make  
c. the old lady has making                                d. the old lady would make
2. Capital punishment was \_\_\_\_\_ away with, in many countries nearly half a century ago.  
a. being done    b. did  
c. done    d. have done
3. This time next week, I won't be at school. \_\_\_\_\_ on a beach in Goa.  
a. I'll be lying    b. I'll have lain  
c. I'll lie    d. I'm lying
4. Ravi is \_\_\_\_\_ with my family while he is in Surat.  
a. being stay    b. stayed  
c. staying    d. to be staying
5. Unfortunately, their house \_\_\_\_\_ while they were at the restaurant celebrating their daughter's birthday.  
a. burgled    b. got burgled  
c. had burgled    d. have burgled

**B. Read the following sentence carefully. Notice how punctuation marks are used to create meanings.**

*I put my things in storage, gave away my apartment, left my cat with a friend and went to India for six months.*



**Now read the sentence without the punctuation marks:**

*I put my things in storage gave away my apartment left my cat with a friend and went to India for six months.*

Isn't it more difficult to understand?

Punctuation marks are important since they create meaning. Here is a fun activity for you.

**Correct the following sentences using appropriately punctuation marks;**

1. A panda eats, shoots, and leaves.
2. I saw a man-eating ice-cream.
3. The man stood in the doorway; and called the candidates names.
4. Theres' no place like home.

### **Activity V**

Rivers are cradles of civilization, commonly called 'Lokmata.' Water is an invaluable source of nature. However, human activities have led to water scarcity / pollution.

Divide the class into groups of five and discuss :

- (i) As a concerned citizen what measures will you take to reduce scarcity of water ?
- (ii) Steps to stop pollution in rivers.

### **Activity VI**

- A.** Have you ever fallen in love with a new destination, tradition or language ? Tell the world about it in your blog.
- B.** In order to solve your school's recent litter problem, your Principal had asked students to take better care of the campus, but the litter problem continued.

Your Principal's reaction is to cancel all extracurricular activities until the problem is resolved. Do you agree or disagree with his reaction ? Use specific reasons and examples to support your position. Write a paragraph on it.





## UNIT 3

### Activity I

When your laptop stopped working, you gave it to your friend to have it repaired. S/he has updated certain programmes which you are unable to use. Has help become a hurdle here? Discuss in groups.

#### Introduction

**William Sydney Porter** (1862 -1910), known by his pen name **O. Henry**, was an American short story writer. His short stories are known for their wit, wordplay, characterization, and unusual endings. Some of his best known short stories are *The Last Leaf*, *The Romance of a Busy Broker*, *The Gift of the Magi* and *The Ransom of the Red Chief*.

Like many other stories of O. Henry, the title **Witches' Loaves** is ironic. Read on to find out the response to unsolicited help.

#### Witches' Loaves

Miss Martha Meacham kept the little bakery on the corner (the one where you go up three steps, and the bell tinkles when you open the door).

Miss Martha was forty, her bank-book showed a credit of two thousand dollars, and she possessed two false teeth and a sympathetic heart. Many people have married, whose chances to do so were much inferior to Miss Martha's.

Two or three times a week, a customer came in whom she began to take an interest in. He was a middle-aged man, wearing spectacles and a brown beard trimmed to a careful point.

He spoke English with a strong German accent. His clothes were worn and darned in places, and wrinkled and baggy in others. But he looked neat and had very good manners.

He always bought two loaves of stale bread. Fresh bread was five cents a loaf. Stale ones were two for five. Never did he call for anything but stale bread.

Once Miss Martha saw a red and brown stain on his fingers. She was sure then that he was an artist and very poor. No doubt he lived in a garret, where he painted pictures and ate stale bread and thought of the good things to eat in Miss Martha's bakery.

Often when Miss Martha sat down to her chops and light rolls and jam and tea she would sigh and wish that the gentle-mannered artist might share her tasty meal instead of eating his dry crust in that draughty attic. Miss Martha's heart, as you have been told, was a sympathetic one.

In order to test her theory as to his occupation, she brought from her room one day a painting that she had bought at a sale, and set it against the shelves behind the bread counter.

It was a Venetian scene. A splendid marble palazzio (so it said on the picture) stood in the foreground—or rather forewater. For the rest there were gondolas (with the lady trailing her hand in the water), clouds, sky, and chiaroscuro in plenty. No artist could fail to notice it.

Two days afterward the customer came in.

“Two loafs of stale bread, if you please.”

“You haf here a fine bicture, madame,” he said while she was wrapping up the bread.

“Yes?” said Miss Martha, reveling in her own cunning. “I do so admire art and” (no, it would not do to say “artists” thus early) “and paintings,” she substituted. “You think it is a good picture?”

“Der balance,” said the customer, “is not in good drawing. Der bairspective of it is not true. Goot morning, madame.”

He took his bread, bowed, and hurried out.

Yes, he must be an artist. Miss Martha took the picture back to her room.

How gentle and kindly his eyes shone behind his spectacles! What a broad brow he had! To be able to judge perspective at a glance – and to live on stale bread! But genius often has to struggle before it is recognized.

What a thing it would be for art and perspective if genius were backed by two thousand dollars in bank, a bakery, and a sympathetic heart to – But these were day-dreams, Miss Martha.

Often now when he came he would chat for a while across the showcase. He seemed to crave Miss Martha’s cheerful words.

He kept on buying stale bread. Never a cake, never a pie, never one of her delicious Sally Lunn’s.

She thought he began to look thinner and discouraged. Her heart ached to add something good to eat to his meagre purchase, but her courage failed at the act. She did not dare affront him. She knew the pride of artists.

Miss Martha took to wearing her blue-dotted silk waist behind the counter. In the back room she cooked a mysterious compound of quince seeds and borax. Ever so many people use it for the complexion.

One day the customer came in as usual, laid his nickel on the showcase, and called for his stale loaves. While Miss Martha was reaching for them there was a great tooting and clanging, and a fire-engine came lumbering past.

The customer hurried to the door to look, as anyone will. Suddenly inspired, Miss Martha seized the opportunity.

On the bottom shelf, behind the counter was a pound of fresh butter that the dairyman had left ten minutes before. With a bread knife Miss Martha made a deep slash in each of the stale loaves, inserted a generous quantity of butter, and pressed the loaves tight again.

When the customer turned once more she was tying the paper around them.

When he had gone, after an unusually pleasant little chat, Miss Martha smiled to herself, but not without a slight fluttering of the heart.

Had she been too bold? Would he take offense? But surely not. There was no language of edibles. Butter was no emblem of unmaidenly forwardness.

For a long time that day her mind dwelt on the subject. She imagined the scene when he should discover her little deception.

He would lay down his brushes and palette. There would stand his easel with the picture he was painting in which the perspective was beyond criticism.

He would prepare for his luncheon of dry bread and water. He would slice into a loaf – ah!

Miss Martha blushed. Would he think of the hand that placed it there as he ate? Would he –

The front door bell jangled viciously. Somebody was coming in, making a great deal of noise.

Miss Martha hurried to the front. Two men were there. One was a young man smoking a pipe – a man she had never seen before. The other was her artist.

His face was very red, his hat was on the back of his head, his hair was wildly ruffled. He clinched his two fists and shook them ferociously at Miss Martha. At Miss Martha !

“Dummkopf !” he shouted with extreme loudness; and then “Tausendonfer !” or something like it in German.

The young man tried to draw him away.

“I will not go,” he said angrily, “else I shall told her.”

He made a bass drum of Miss Martha’s counter.

“You haf shpoilt me,” he cried, his blue eyes blazing behind his spectacles. “I will tell you. You vas von meddingsome old cat !”

Miss Martha leaned weakly against the shelves and laid one hand on her blue-dotted silk waist. The young man took the other by the collar.

“Come on,” he said, “you’ve said enough.” He dragged the angry one out at the door to the sidewalk, and then came back.

“Guess you ought to be told, ma’am,” he said, “what the row is about. That’s Blumberger. He’s an architectural draftsman. I work in the same office with him.

“He’s been working hard for three months drawing a plan for a new city hall. It was a prize competition. He finished inking the lines yesterday. You know, a draftsman always makes his drawing in pencil first. When it’s done he rubs out the pencil lines with handfuls of stale bread crumbs. That’s better than India rubber.

“Blumberger’s been buying the bread here. Well, to-day – well, you know, ma’am, that butter isn’t – well, Blumberger’s plan isn’t good for anything now except to cut up into railroad sandwiches.”

Miss Martha went into the back room. She took off the blue-dotted silk waist and put on the old brown serge she used to wear. Then she poured the quince seed and borax mixture out of the window into the ash can.

### Glossary

**darned** (adj.) patched in stitching **garret** (n) attic, room on the top **palazzio** (n) a palatial building specially found in Italy **gondolas** (n) long narrow flat-bottomed boats **chiaroscuro** (n) effect of contrasted light and shadow **Sally Lunns** (n) sweet large bun or teacake **affront** (n) insult **quince** (n) a pear shaped fruit **borax** (n) mineral, cleansing agent **nickel** (n) United States coin worth one twentieth of a dollar **Dummkopf** (n) a stupid person **to cut up into railroad sandwiches** object of ridicule

### Activity II

**Read the lesson carefully.**

**A. Choose the correct option and rewrite the complete sentence.**

1. Miss Martha's 'compound of quince seeds and borax' suggests her \_\_\_\_\_ .
  - (a) desire for a romantic relationship
  - (b) dissatisfaction with her appearance
  - (c) fear of growing old and ill
  - (d) pride in being a successful woman
2. According to Miss Martha, Blumberger always buys only stale bread because he \_\_\_\_\_ .
  - (a) is too poor to afford anything better
  - (b) needs an excuse to go and see her
  - (c) needs it for his pets
  - (d) needs it for his work
3. The conclusion drawn about Blumberger at the end of the story could be that he \_\_\_\_\_ .
  - (a) felt insulted as Miss Martha pitied him
  - (b) was angry as his drawing was ruined
  - (c) was happy as his drawing was considered the best
  - (d) was happy to be a draftsman
4. About Miss Martha's character, we can infer that she \_\_\_\_\_ .
  - (a) felt superior to artists
  - (b) had a tendency to jump to conclusions
  - (c) sympathised with all poor artists
  - (d) was proud of being rich

5. \_\_\_\_\_ , best describes the main theme of the story.
- (a) ‘It is best not to have sympathy for people’
  - (b) ‘It takes only one mistake to ruin the work of a genius’
  - (c) ‘People are sometimes too proud to accept gifts from strangers’
  - (d) ‘People sometimes let their desires affect the way they see the world’

**B. Answer the following questions in brief.**

1. Bring out the contrast between the appearance and manners of Blumberger.
2. What speculations did Miss Martha have about Blumberger?
3. Why did Miss Martha display the painting? What was Blumberger’s comment on it?
4. How did Miss Martha try to attract Blumberger’s attention?
5. Comment on Miss Martha’s stale loaves turning into the witches’ loaves.

**C. Write in detail on:**

1. Blumberger
2. Miss Martha’s Shattered Hopes

**Activity III**

Use the following expressions in meaningful sentences.

- |                           |              |                               |                  |
|---------------------------|--------------|-------------------------------|------------------|
| bread and butter          | buttering up | piece of cake                 | brown as a berry |
| cake not worth the candle |              | icing on the cake             |                  |
| sell like hot cakes       |              | have your cake and eat it too |                  |
| slice of the cake         |              | like chalk and cheese         |                  |

**Activity IV**

**A. Read the following sentences from the story. This is what Miss Martha is imagining about Blumberger.**

- *He **would** lay down his brushes and palette. There **would** stand his easel with the picture he **was** painting in which the perspective **was** beyond criticism.*
- *He **would** prepare for his luncheon of dry bread and water. He **would** slice into a loaf – ah !*

The time that Miss Martha is dreaming of has not yet happened. It is something that she is imagining or ‘hypothetically’ speaking about.

**In pairs, imagine that you have been asked to steer a rocket into a far-off planet. Discuss and write at least five sentences on how you would do it.**

**B. Read the following sentences from the story. What kind of emotions do they show?**

‘How gentle and kindly his eyes shone behind his spectacles! What a broad brow he had! To be able to judge perspective at a glance – and to live on stale bread!’

‘What’ and ‘How’ are often used to express emotions along with the exclamation mark (!). They are used to show varied emotions.

**In pairs, see if you can identify the emotion associated with the following sentences. The first one has been done for you.**

- *What exceptional gifts these are!* - appreciation
- How beautiful a girl she is! - \_\_\_\_\_
- No, you did not have permission to stay out this late! - \_\_\_\_\_
- I can't figure this out! - \_\_\_\_\_
- Our team won the championship! - \_\_\_\_\_
- I don't know what happened here! - \_\_\_\_\_
- I just won the lottery! - \_\_\_\_\_
- My life will never be the same without you! - \_\_\_\_\_
- Oh, I didn't see you come in! - \_\_\_\_\_

**Activity V**

Have you ever experienced that even a well-intentioned assistance to your sibling, family member or friend may have boomeranged and backfired, on you? Share your experience with your partner and analyse the reasons.

**Activity VI**

- A.** At times we judge someone first and then realize that our judgement was wrong about that person. There was a newcomer in your class, whom you judged wrongly and behaved rudely with him/her. Write a letter of apology to him/her.
- B.** Think of an incident where help given by one led to a positive chain reaction of helping others. Make a diary entry.



## UNIT 4

### Activity I

SWOT means an analysis of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats. Think of your SWOT. Fill in the table given below. Discuss with your partner the measures you should take to convert your Weaknesses to Strengths and Threats to Opportunities.

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats

### Introduction

**Prakash Padukone** (1955- ), known as the *gentle tiger* on the court, was the first Indian badminton player to win the All England Championship. He was awarded the Arjuna Award in 1972 and the Padma Shri in 1982. Prakash Padukone's life story has been chronicled in the biography *Touch Play*. The book is only the second biography of any badminton player.

In **Letter from a Father**, Prakash Padukone writes to his daughters, Deepika (well known Indian actor) and Anisha (golfer), about the importance of family bonding and human values.

### Letter from a Father

Dear Deepika & Anisha,

As you stand on the threshold of life's journey, I want to share with you some lessons that life has taught me. Decades ago, as a little boy growing up in Bangalore, I started my tryst with badminton. In those days, there were no stadiums and courts where sports people could train. Our badminton court was the wedding hall of a bank near our house, and it was there that I learned everything about the game. Every day, we would wait to see if there was a function in the hall, and if there was none, we would rush there after school to play to our hearts' content. Looking back, I realise that the most important thing about my childhood and adolescent years was my refusal to complain about a lot in life. I was thankful for the few hours a week we had the opportunity to hit the shuttle back and forth. In fact, the foundation on which I based my career and my life was the refusal to whinge or whine about anything. And that is what I want to tell you my children, that there is no substitute for perseverance, hardwork, determination and passion for what you choose to do. If you love what you do, nothing else matters — neither awards nor compensation, not even the gratification of seeing your face in newspapers or television. When I won the All England Championship, the prize money in badminton became significant — £3,000 — a huge amount in those days.



But that did not distract me from the sheer joy of having been instrumental in putting India on the global map of this game. Deepika, at eighteen, when you told us that you wanted to shift to Mumbai for a career in modeling, we felt you were too young and too inexperienced to be alone in a big city and in an industry we knew nothing about. In the end, we decided to let you follow your heart and thought it would be cruel to not give our child the opportunity to go after a dream that she lived and breathed for. If you succeeded, it would make us proud, but even if you didn't, you would not have any regrets that you did not try. Deepika, I have learned that you can't always win in life, that everything you want might not come your way. That events don't always turn out as you want them to. To win some, you have to lose some. You have to learn to take life's ups and downs in your stride. The amount of effort that I put in my game never varied from the first day till my retirement. Even during my toughest times, I focused on what I had, instead of dwelling on what I did not. I had the ability to make the best of the worst circumstances and remain steadfast to my goal.

Remember how I constantly tell you both about the importance of making your way up in the world without waiting for your parents to pull strings? I believe it is best for children to work hard to make their dreams come true and to not have things handed to them on a platter. When you are home visiting us, Deepika, you make your own bed, clear the table after meals, and sleep on the floor if there are guests at home. If you occasionally wonder why we refuse to treat you like a star, it is because you are our daughter first and a film star later. The cameras that follow you everywhere and the arc lights will eventually fade and what will remain is the real world. Strive to generate positivity around you even though you are too new and too small a player to effect a big change. You are in an industry where there's always going to be big money, but I believe that it is important to try to be the best in whatever you do regardless of the money.

The things that really matter in life are relationships, honesty, respect for your parents and elders. Material success is important, not fundamental to happiness and peace of mind. I can't tell you enough about the rejuvenating power of prayers and a little faith. Spare a few minutes of your day to close your eyes and meditate, to think about God and you will see how much faith in His power will strengthen you. In the end, when your career is behind you, what remains is family, the friends that you have made. Live a life that is healthy and one that will allow you to live with your own conscience. Everything else is transient. And remember, no matter what, we are always going to be there for you.

Lovingly,

Pappa

### Glossary

**tryst** (n) (here) close association **whinge/ whine** (v) complain **rejuvenating** (adj.) reviving **steadfast** (adj.) firm

### Activity II

**Read the lesson carefully.**

**A. Choose the correct option and rewrite the complete sentence.**

1. That \_\_\_\_\_ was the most important thing about Prakash Padukone's childhood and adolescent years.



- (a) he was a well known actor in his town
  - (b) he was an artist
  - (c) he refused to complain about a lot in life
  - (d) he was very good in academics
2. According to Prakash Padukone, there is no substitute to \_\_\_\_\_.
- (a) good looks, money, influence, and hard work
  - (b) hard work, determination, high qualifications and honesty
  - (c) honesty, political influence, high qualifications and money
  - (d) perseverance, hard work, determination and passion
3. Prakash Padukone won a prize money of £3,000 in the \_\_\_\_\_ .
- (a) All England Championship
  - (b) Great England Championship
  - (c) New England Championship
  - (d) Open England Championship
4. Deepika and Anisha have to learn that \_\_\_\_\_ .
- (a) hard work always leads to victory
  - (b) to win some, you have to lose some
  - (c) winning is the only important thing in life
  - (d) you should always be a winner come what may
5. Padukone tells parents that \_\_\_\_\_ .
- (a) children should be left to take their own decisions
  - (b) they should interfere in all decisions of their children
  - (c) they should provide all facilities to their children
  - (d) things should not be handed to the children on a platter

**B. Answer the following questions in brief.**

- 1. What is meant by being on the ‘threshold of life’s journey’?
- 2. What reasons does Prakash Padukone give for not complaining about a lot in life?
- 3. Describe the qualities Prakash Padukone wants to inculcate in his daughters.
- 4. List any three points of advice given by Prakash Padukone that inspired you the most.

**C. Write in detail on:**

- 1. Prakash Padukone: A Father
- 2. Things That Really Matter in Life

### Activity III

A. Use the following compound words and make meaningful sentences.

1. ups and downs
2. whinge and whine
3. back and forth
4. lived and breathed
5. parents and elders

B. Fill in the blanks in the given passage with the help of the words below :

(relationships, faith, meditate, strengthen, fundamental, rejuvenating, strengthen, peace)

The things that really matter in life are \_\_\_\_\_, honesty, respect for your parents and elders. Material success is important, not \_\_\_\_\_ to happiness and \_\_\_\_\_ of mind. I can't tell you enough about the \_\_\_\_\_ power of prayers and a little \_\_\_\_\_. Spare a few minutes of your day to \_\_\_\_\_ your eyes and \_\_\_\_\_, to think about God and you will see how much faith in his power will \_\_\_\_\_ you.

### Activity IV

A. Read the following sentences from the letter. What do you think the words 'too' and 'enough' mean in the context?

*you were **too** young and **too** inexperienced...*

*Strive to generate positivity around you even though you are **too** new and **too** small a player to effect a big change.*

*I can't tell you **enough** about the rejuvenating power of prayers and a little faith.*

'Too' and 'enough' indicate degree. They are generally used with adjectives. 'Too' is used to mean 'more than needed' while 'enough' is used to mean 'sufficient'.

**Example:**

You can say "The film was good enough" to mean that the film was sufficiently good but cannot say "The film was too good" to mean the same. "The film was too good" shows that the sentence is still incomplete and you need to say something more. For instance, "The film was too good to be true" or "The film was too good to be missed".

**Read the lesson again. List the sentences where 'too' and 'enough' are used. In pairs, discuss what the words mean in the letter.**

Now, complete the following sentences using 'too' and 'enough'.

1. He is \_\_\_\_\_ old to play football with the kids.
2. She is intelligent \_\_\_\_\_ to do the right thing.
3. You're not working fast \_\_\_\_\_ .
4. I don't have \_\_\_\_\_ time.
5. He has \_\_\_\_\_ many friends to be of any use.
6. She has got \_\_\_\_\_ patience to wait for her results.
7. It's \_\_\_\_\_ hot to be wearing that coat.
8. The book is \_\_\_\_\_ interesting to be unread.
9. We have \_\_\_\_\_ money.
10. I have not got \_\_\_\_\_ money to buy this computer.

**B. In groups, identify the verbs in the lesson and mention the tense in which they have been used.**

#### Activity V

Team up with your partner and present in a role play, in about two minutes, an imaginary conversation between a parent and child about the best holiday destination after the board exams.

#### Activity VI

- A. Write an email to your parents requesting them to talk unhesitatingly about 'Taboo Topics.'
- B. Write a letter of thanks to your parents for all the guidance and support they have provided you whenever required.



## UNIT 5

### Activity I

There are some people in this world who are disabled by birth or due to an accident. Today we refer to them as differently-abled individuals. Make a list of organizations they can be inducted into depending on their ability to perform the tasks assigned to them. Now check the list and see whether you have mentioned the armed forces. Surprised?

#### Introduction

**Flying Officer M.P. Anil Kumar** (1964 – 2014) was a MiG-21 pilot in the Indian Air Force; after he became a quadriplegic as a result of a motor-cycle accident, he became a writer and historian. Anil Kumar learned to write with a pen held in his mouth. His essay, *Airborne to Chairborne*, was widely read and appreciated.

Adapting to disability is perhaps one of the greatest triumphs of human evolution. Flight Cadet Herojit Rajkumar Singh is a living example of this. Read on to find out how determination of one man changed rules by 360°.

### The Flight Cadet Who Never Gave Up

Not long ago, donning the Indian Air Force uniform was a mere flight of fancy for Flight Cadet Herojit Rajkumar Singh (nicknamed Hero, so apparent!). This lad forsook B.Tech. (Computer Technology) to join the National Defence Academy (Pune) to chase his cherished desire of blazing across the horizon in a fighter aircraft.

And blaze he did at NDA – *inter alia*, appointed Battalion Cadet Adjutant, he was awarded the Academy Blazer for swimming, Sports Insignia for excellence in sports and the silver medal for the best cadet in physical training.

Having stood third in flying through the basic stage at Air Force Academy (Hyderabad), he proceeded to the Fighter Training Wing (Hakimpet, Secunderabad) to undergo the second stage of flying training.

On August 22, 2011, an emergency during a Kiran solo sortie forced him to eject. During the short parachute-assisted descent, he realised that he could not control his legs. Luckily, he didn't pick up landing injuries.

Unluckily, the force of ejection snapped his lumbar spine.

The consequence was life-numbing: The spinal cord injury he sustained had paralysed him waist down. A new word – paraplegia – barged into his vocabulary.

He listened to the medical officer at the Military Hospital, Kirkee (Pune), with rapt, hopeful ears.

The prognosis of lifelong wheelchair mobility obviously deflated him. Then the killer kick landed: he would be invalided out in due course.

‘Sir, I know I can’t be a pilot, but my upper body is okay, so can’t I serve the IAF in a non-flying capacity?’

‘You are a flight cadet son, four months short of commissioning. A nobody. So, off to Civvy Street, I am afraid that is the letter of the rule.’

He heard a big bang; not only his ambition to stand out as an outstanding flyer, but even the secondary dream of serving the IAF in another capacity too had crashed.

A solitary thought tormented him: Had I been untouched by this catastrophe, I would have been commissioned as a fighter pilot along with my course mates, which would have been an occasion to rejoice for not just my parents and siblings but for my home village Singjamei in Manipur as well.

The youngest of the brood of five, he knew how strenuous it would be for a paraplegic to bounce back, to eke out in the dog-eat-dog environment; naturally his worst fear was that if he flunked, he might turn into a burden to his aged parents, and he dreaded to even contemplate becoming a liability to anyone.

Very mindful of the onus, he began cramming for CAT and sundry tests, but even while poring over the study material, his monomaniacal mind drifted into its habitual reverie – a rebirth: A career in the IAF in a non-flying capacity. He knew he had nothing to lose by dispatching an entreaty to the air chief for retention in the service.

As he began conditioning his mind to a life outside the IAF, last August, a godsend landed on his lap – an opportunity to present his case in person to Air Chief Marshal N A K Browne, Chief of the Air Staff.

The air chief felt the plight merited his intervention as this extraordinary instance involved a flying mishap, ejection injury and a youngster with tip-top track record.

He told Hero that the IAF had no problem in embracing him but since he was a flight cadet, the Ministry of Defence (MoD) would be the final arbiter of his fate. Hero sighed, his hope took wing, but refrained from exulting as he was aware that a ‘stickler for rules’ was at the helm of the ministry.

And the path was paved with stumbling-blocks. His file began the customary back-and-forth between fine-tooth comb-armed MoD and air headquarters, the latter having to respond to the clarifications sought by the former. It redounds to the credit of the air chief that he bypassed the normally nay saying bureaucrats by reasoning with the Defence Minister directly.

The defence minister signed and stamped the imprimatur of Hero’s retention in the third week of December.

Meanwhile, the brass in air headquarters had deliberated and concluded that the accounts branch would be the most appropriate line for Hero (usually an NDA alumnus is not given this branch).

Air HQ worked overtime to ensure that the formalities and paperwork were completed and he was there at the Air Force Academy in the first week of January, in time for the fresh course.

Today, the IAF and Flying Officer Herojit Rajkumar Singh have made history. Hero is perhaps the first wheelchair-bound cadet to be commissioned by any of the armed forces in the world.

Hero's commissioning is not a surprise, for the IAF has been a pioneer, and boasts a notable history of compassion.

Given the nature of their profession, soldiers, sailors and airmen are prone to physical injuries, the severest form being spinal cord injury. This could mean a life of disability. While the practice was to discharge the spinal-cord-injured servicemen, in the early 1990s, realising the worth of his experience and utility to the service, the IAF reversed the trend and retained Wing Commander Ashok Limaye, a paraplegic, in the service.

The Indian Army dittoed later by absorbing Major Pallav Desai and Lieutenant Colonel S K Razdan, thus commencing the employment and rehab of wheelchair-bound officers within the services itself. (And the 15-odd officers retained hitherto have been worth their salt. For example, S K Razdan served with distinction and retired as Major General.)

Mind you, this IAF initiative began years before the Parliament 'ayed' its approval to the Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995, an Act that bestowed equal opportunities on the disabled employees in Centre and all state governments.

Even though the armed forces need to maintain a fit profile, not every soldier needs to be on the front; the organisation has to deploy hundreds in the offices. That is, instead of throwing disabled soldiers to the wolves, they can be retrained for sedentary tasks, especially for the computer-driven workplace, and be made useful cogs in the organisation.

### Glossary

**donning** (v) wearing, putting on **inter alia** among other things **insignia** (n) badge worn to show official position **sortie** (n) operational flight by a single aircraft (as in a military operation) **paraplegia** (n) paralysis of the lower half of the body **prognosis** (n) medical prediction **Civvy Street** (n) civilian life **brood** (n) (here) children **eke out** (v) live with hardship **onus** (n) responsibility **sundry** (adj.) various **monomaniacal** (adj.) obsessive zeal for or interest in a single thing **redounds** (v) comes back upon **imprimatur** (n) sanction **brass** (n) (here) officers **'ayed'** (v) answered affirmative, especially in voting **cogs** (n) (here) subordinates

### Activity II

**Read the lesson carefully.**

**A. Choose the correct option and rewrite the complete sentence.**

- One of the greatest triumphs of human evolution is adapting to \_\_\_\_\_ .  
(a) disability (b) illiteracy  
(c) poverty (d) sickness
- Herojit left B.Tech. in order to become a/an \_\_\_\_\_ .  
(a) army officer (b) fighter pilot  
(c) medical practitioner (d) sports instructor

3. As a consequence of one of his parachute assisted descents, he became \_\_\_\_\_ .  
(a) blind (b) brain dead  
(c) paralytic (d) paraplegic
4. The thought of \_\_\_\_\_ deflated him.  
(a) joining civil services (b) lifelong wheelchair mobility  
(c) not getting enough leave to visit home (d) resigning from the force
5. In the sentence ‘the IAF had no problem in embracing him’, embracing him means \_\_\_\_\_ .  
(a) adopting him (b) embarrassing him  
(c) loving him (d) taking him in

**B. Answer the following questions in brief.**

1. Why did Herojit Rajkumar Singh join NDA?
2. Give an account of Herojit’s performance at NDA.
3. How did Herojit become a paraplegic?
4. Describe the ‘rebirth’ that Herojit achieved.
5. ‘IAF boasts a notable history of compassion.’ Justify.

**C. Write in detail on :**

1. Herojit’s Journey : From Airborne to Chairborne
2. ‘Not every soldier needs to be on the front.’

**Activity III**

**A. Given below is a list of phrases from the lesson. Use them in meaningful sentences.**

- |                            |                               |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. passed into ages        | 2. not long ago               |
| 3. at the helm             | 4. blazing across the horizon |
| 5. dog-eat-dog environment | 6. conditioning one’s mind    |
| 7. stickler for rules      | 8. pave the path              |
| 9. killer kick             | 10. cogs in the organization  |

**B. The suffix *-plegia* means paralysis. Find three words which end with *plegia*.**

\_\_\_\_\_

**The word *mania* means madness. Find three words which end with *mania*.**

\_\_\_\_\_



The word *phobia* means persistent, irrational fear. Find three words which end with *phobia*.

**Activity IV**

**A. Read the following sentence carefully.**

*'On August 22, 2011, during a Kiran solo sortie he was forced to eject.'*

However, this can be re-written as

*On August 22, 2011, he ejected during an emergency in a Kiran solo sortie.*

The first sentence is in the passive voice; the second in active.

**Here are some more examples of active and passive voice:**

Tense	Active	Passive
Simple Present	Once a week, Jayesh <b>cleans</b> the house.	Once a week, the house <b>is cleaned</b> by Jayesh. However, This can also be written as : Once a week, the house <b>is cleaned</b> .
Present Continuous	Right now, Mana <b>is writing</b> the e-mail.	Right now, the e-mail <b>is being written</b> by Mana. Or-Right now, the e-mail <b>is being written</b> .
Past Continuous	The salesman <b>was helping</b> the customer when the lights went off.	The customer <b>was being helped</b> by the salesman when the lights went off. Or- The customer <b>was being helped</b> when the lights went off.
Present Perfect	Many tourists <b>have visited</b> the Taj Mahal.	The Taj Mahal <b>has been visited</b> by many tourists.
Simple Future <i>will</i>	Someone <b>will finish</b> the work by 5:00 PM.	The work <b>will be finished</b> by 5:00 PM.
Future Perfect <i>will</i>	They <b>will have completed</b> the project before the deadline.	The project <b>will have been completed</b> before the deadline.
Used to	I <b>used to pay</b> the bills.	The bills <b>used to be paid</b> by me.
Would Always	My mother <b>would always make</b> the pickles.	The pickles <b>would always be made</b> by my mother.

**Important note:** Notice how in some of the sentences, it is possible to remove the subject in the passive.



**Now, change the following active sentences into their passive forms:**

1. By this time tomorrow we will have finished the science assignment.
2. The traffic might have delayed Rakesh.
3. They are building a new stadium near the station.
4. Somebody has stolen my purse.
5. An engineer will repair the computer tomorrow.

**B. Read the following sentence from the story.**

**Having stood third** in flying through the basic stage at Air Force Academy (Hyderabad), he proceeded to the Fighter Training Wing (Hakimpet, Secunderabad) to undergo the second stage of flying training.

The first part of the sentence indicates an action that has just been completed. ‘Having stood third in flying’ is thus called a perfect participle.

**In pairs, correct and rewrite the following sentences with the help of the example given above. Use the perfect participle to change the sentence.**

1. Reading the instructions, he picked up the computer game.
2. Being her own boss for such a long time, she found it hard to take orders from others.
3. Completing his homework, he now decided to go out and play.
4. Seeing all these people, he decided to go to the mountains to find some peace.

### Activity V

Divide yourselves into groups of four or five. Each group should discuss real or imaginary incidents about people or characters who, despite physical limitations, have emerged victorious. After the discussion, a representative from each group will present the group’s views in about three minutes to the class.

### Activity VI

- A.** You had an opportunity to attend Army/Navy/Air Force Day. Make a diary entry on your experience.
- B.** The President of India is the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces.

Given below is a table which shows the Officer Rank structure of the armed forces in India. Find out the in-between ranks and complete the table.

<b>Army</b>	<b>Navy</b>	<b>Air Force</b>
Field Marshal	Admiral of the Fleet	Marshal of the Air Force
Lieutenant	Sub Lieutenant	Flying Officer

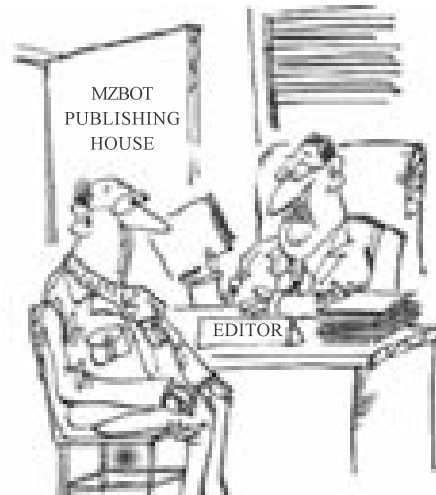


## UNIT 6

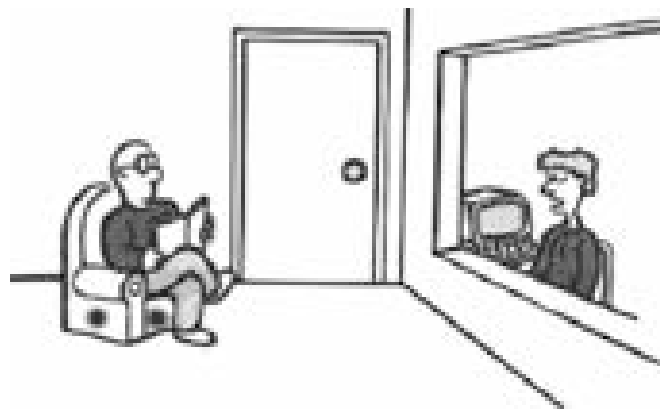
### Activity I

Between auto correct and typing, people often text a message that is inappropriate which may result in hilarious misunderstanding. There is no limit as to how funny these text exchanges can be. The following sketches create humour due to misunderstanding.

Identify the mistakes and discuss with your partner.



“When I suggested you adopt a pen name, I didn’t mean ‘Ballpoint’!”



“The doctor will acknowledge your existence now.”

### Introduction

**Anton Chekhov** (1860 - 1904) is recognised as a master of the modern short story and a leading playwright of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Through stories such as *The Steppe* and *The Lady with the Dog* and plays such as *The Seagull* and *Uncle Vanya*, this prolific writer emphasized the depths of human nature, the hidden significance of everyday events and the fine line between comedy and tragedy.

**A Marriage Proposal**, is a fast-paced one-act farce with dialogue-based action and situational humour. Is a marriage proposal only about love or...?

Read on to find out.

## A Marriage Proposal

### Characters:

**Stepan Stepanovitch Tschubukov** - a country farmer

**Natalia Stepanovna** - his daughter (aged 25)

**Ivan Vassiliyitch Lomov**- Tschubukov's neighbour

### Scene

The reception room in Tschubukov's country home in Russia. Tschubukov discovered as the curtain rises. Enter Lomov, wearing a dress suit.

**Tschubukov** (*going toward him and greeting him*) : Who is this I see? My dear fellow! Ivan Vassiliyitch! I'm so glad to see you! (*shakes hands*) But this is a surprise! How are you?

**Lomov** : Thank you! And how are you?

**Tschubukov** : Oh, so-so, my friend. Please sit down. It isn't right to forget one's neighbour. But tell me, why all this ceremony? Dress clothes, white gloves, and all? Are you on your way to some engagement, my good fellow?

**Lomov** : No, I have no engagement except with you, Stepan Stepanovitch.

**Tschubukov** : But why in evening clothes, my friend? This isn't New Year's!

**Lomov** : You see, it's simply this, that— (*composing himself*) I have come to you, Stepan Stepanovitch, to trouble you with a request. It is not the first time I have had the honour of turning to you for assistance, and you have always, that is—I beg your pardon, I am a bit excited! I'll take a drink of water first, dear Stepan Stepanovitch. (*He drinks.*)

**Tschubukov** (*aside*) : He's come to borrow money! I won't give him any! (*to Lomov*) What is it, then, dear Lomov?

**Lomov** : You see—dear—Stepanovitch, pardon me, Stepan—Stepan—dearvitch—I mean—I am terribly nervous, as you will be so good as to see—! What I mean to say—you are the only one who can help me, though I don't deserve it, and—and I have no right whatever to make this request of you.

**Tschubukov** : Oh, don't beat about the bush, my dear fellow. Tell me!

**Lomov** : Immediately—in a moment. Here it is, then: I have come to ask for the hand of your daughter, Natalia Stepanovna.

**Tschubukov** (*joyfully*): Angel! Ivan Vassiliyitch! Say that once again! I didn't quite hear it!

**Lomov** : I have the honour to beg—

**Tschubukov** (*interrupting*) : My dear, dear man. I am so happy that everything is so—everything! (*embraces and kisses him*) I have wanted this to happen for so long. It has been my dearest wish! (*He represses a tear.*) And I have always loved you, my dear fellow, as my own son! May God give you his blessings and his grace and—I always wanted it to happen. But why am I standing here like a blockhead? I am completely dumbfounded with pleasure, completely dumbfounded. My whole being—! I'll call Natalia—

**Lomov** : Dear Stepan Stepanovitch, what do you think? May I hope for Natalia Stepanovna's acceptance?

**Tschubukov** : Really! A fine boy like you— and you think she won't accept on the minute? Lovesick as a cat and all that—! (*He goes out, right.*)

**Lomov** : I'm cold. My whole body is trembling as though I was going to take my examination! But the chief thing is to settle matters! If a person meditates too much, or hesitates, or talks about it, waits for an ideal or for true love, he never gets it. Brrr! It's cold! Natalia is an excellent housekeeper; not at all bad looking, well educated—what more could I ask? I'm so excited my ears are roaring! (*He drinks water.*) And not to marry, that won't do! In the first place, I'm thirty-five—a critical age, you might say. In the second place, I must live a well-regulated life. I have a weak heart, continual palpitation, and I am very sensitive and always getting excited. My lips begin to tremble and the pulse in my right temple throbs terribly. But the worst of all is sleep! I hardly lie down and begin to doze before something in my left side begins to pull and tug, and something begins to hammer in my left shoulder—and in my head, too! I jump up like a madman, walk about a little, lie down again, but the moment I fall asleep I have a terrible cramp in the side. And so it is all night long! (*Enter Natalia Stepanovna.*)

**Natalia** : Ah! It's you. Papa said to go in: there was a dealer in there who'd come to buy something. Good afternoon, Ivan Vassiliyitch.

**Lomov** : Good day, my dear Natalia Stepanovna.

**Natalia** : You must pardon me for wearing my apron and this old dress: we are working today. Why haven't you come to see us oftener? You've not been here for so long! Sit down (*They sit down.*) Won't you have something to eat?

**Lomov** : Thank you, I have just had lunch.

**Natalia** : Smoke, do, there are the matches. Today it is beautiful, and only yesterday it rained so hard that the workmen couldn't do a stroke of work. How many bricks have you cut? Think of it! I was so anxious that I had the whole field mowed, and now I'm

sorry I did it, because I'm afraid the hay will rot. It would have been better if I had waited. But what on earth is this? You are in evening clothes! The latest cut! Are you on your way to a ball? And you seem to be looking better, too—really. Why are you dressed up so gorgeously?

**Lomov** (*excited*) : You see, my dear Natalia Stepanovna—it's simply this: I have decided to ask you to listen to me—of course it will be a surprise, and indeed you'll be angry, but!—  
(*aside*) How fearfully cold it is!

**Natalia** : What is it? (*a pause*) Well?

**Lomov** : I'll try to be brief. My dear Natalia Stepanovna, as you know, for many years, since my childhood, I have had the honour to know your family. My poor aunt and her husband, from whom, as you know, I inherited the estate, always had the greatest respect for your father and your poor mother. The Lomovs and the Tschubukovs have been for decades on the friendliest, indeed the closest, terms with each other, and furthermore my property, as you know, adjoins your own. If you will be so good as to remember, my meadows touch your birch woods.

**Natalia** : Pardon the interruption. You said "my meadows"—but are they yours?

**Lomov** : Yes, they belong to me.

**Natalia** : What nonsense! The meadows belong to us—not to you!

**Lomov** : No, to me! Now, my dear Natalia Stepanovna!

**Natalia** : Well, that is certainly news to me. How do they belong to you?

**Lomov** : How? I am speaking of the meadows lying between your birch woods and my brick earth.

**Natalia** : Yes, exactly. They belong to us.

**Lomov** : No, you are mistaken, my dear Natalia Stepanovna, they belong to me.

**Natalia** : Try to remember exactly, Ivan Vassiliyitch. Is it so long ago that you inherited them?

**Lomov** : Long ago! As far back as I can remember they have always belonged to us.

**Natalia** : But that isn't true! You'll pardon my saying so.

**Lomov** : It is all a matter of record, my dear Natalia Stepanovna. It is true that at one time the title to the meadows was disputed, but now everyone knows they belong to me. There is no room for discussion. Be so good as to listen: my aunt's grandmother put these meadows, free from all costs, into the hands of your father's grandfather's peasants for a certain time while they were making bricks for my grandmother. These people used the meadows free of cost for about forty years, living there as they would on their own property. Later, however, when—

- Natalia** : There's not a word of truth in that! My grandfather, and my great grandfather, too, knew that their estate reached back to the swamp, so that the meadows belong to us. What further discussion can there be? I can't understand it. It is really most annoying.
- Lomov** : I'll show you the papers, Natalia Stepanovna.
- Natalia** : No, either you are joking or trying to lead me into a discussion. That's not at all nice! We have owned this property for nearly three hundred years, and now all at once we hear that it doesn't belong to us. Ivan Vassiliyitch, you will pardon me, but I really can't believe my ears. So far as I'm concerned, the meadows are worth very little. In all they don't contain more than five acres, and they are worth only a few hundred rubles, say three hundred, but the injustice of the thing is what affects me. Say what you will, I can't bear injustice.
- Lomov** : Only listen until I have finished, please! The peasants of your respected father's grandfather, as I have already had the honour to tell you, baked bricks for my grandmother. My aunt's grandmother wished to do them a favour—
- Natalia** : Grandfather! Grandmother! Aunt! I know nothing of them. All I know is that the meadows belong to us, and that ends the matter.
- Lomov** : No, they belong to me!
- Natalia** : And if you keep on explaining it for two days and put on five suits of evening clothes, the meadows are still ours, ours, ours! I don't want to take your property, but I refuse to give up what belongs to us!
- Lomov** : Natalia Stepanovna, I don't need the meadows, I am only concerned with the principle. If you are agreeable, I beg of you, accept them as a gift from me!
- Natalia** : But I can give them to you, because they belong to me! That is very peculiar, Ivan Vassiliyitch! Until now we have considered you as a good neighbour and a good friend; only last year we lent you our threshing machine so that we couldn't thresh until November, and you treat us like thieves! You offer to give me my own land. Excuse me, but neighbours don't treat each other that way. In my opinion, it's a very low trick—to speak frankly—
- Lomov** : According to you I'm a usurper, then, am I? My dear lady, I have never appropriated other people's property, and I shall permit no one to accuse me of such a thing! (*He goes quickly to the bottle and drinks water.*) The meadows are mine!
- Natalia** : That's not the truth! They are mine!
- Lomov** : Mine!
- Natalia** : Eh? I'll prove it to you! This afternoon I'll send my reapers into the meadows.



- Lomov** : W—h—a—t?
- Natalia** : My reapers will be there today!
- Lomov** : And I'll chase them off!
- Natalia** : If you dare!
- Lomov** : The meadows are mine, you understand? Mine!
- Natalia** : Really, you don't need to scream so! If you want to scream and snort and rage you may do it at home, but here please keep yourself within the limits of common decency.
- Lomov** : My dear lady, if it weren't that I were suffering from palpitation of the heart and hammering of the arteries in my temples, I would deal with you very differently! (*in a loud voice*) The meadows belong to me!
- Natalia** : Us!
- Lomov** : Me! (*Enter Tschubukov, right.*)
- Tschubukov** : What's going on here? What is he yelling about?
- Natalia** : Papa, please tell this gentleman to whom the meadows belong, to us or to him?
- Tschubukov** (*to Lomov*) : My dear fellow, the meadows are ours.
- Lomov** : But, merciful heavens, Stepan Stepanovitch, how do you make that out? You at least must be reasonable. My aunt's grandmother gave the use of the meadows free of cost to your grandfather's peasants; the peasants lived on the land for forty years and used it as their own, but later when—
- Tschubukov** : Permit me, my dear friend. You forget that your grandfather's peasants never paid, because there had been a lawsuit over the meadows, and everyone knows that the meadows belong to us. You haven't looked at the map.
- Lomov** : I'll prove to you that they belong to me!
- Tschubukov** : Don't try to prove it, my dear fellow.
- Lomov** : I will!
- Tschubukov** : My good fellow, what are you shrieking about? You can't prove anything by yelling, you know. I don't ask for anything that belongs to you, nor do I intend to give up anything of my own. Why should I? If it has gone so far, my dear man, that you really intend to claim the meadows, I'd rather give them to the peasants than you, and I certainly shall!
- Lomov** : I can't believe it! By what right can you give away property that doesn't belong to you?



- Tschubukov** : Really, you must allow me to decide what I am to do with my own land! I'm not accustomed, young man, to have people address me in that tone of voice. I, young man, am twice your age, and I beg you to address me respectfully.
- Lomov** : No! No! You think I'm a fool! You're making fun of me! You call my property yours and then you expect me to stand quietly by and talk to you like a human being. That isn't the way a good neighbour behaves, Stepan Stepanovitch! You are no neighbour, you're no better than a land grabber. That's what you are!
- Tschubukov** : Wh—at? What did he say?
- Natalia** : Papa, send the reapers into the meadows this minute!
- Tschubukov** (*to Lomov*) : What was that you said, sir?
- Natalia** : The meadows belong to us, and I won't give them up! I won't give them up! I won't give them up!
- Lomov** : We'll see about that! I'll prove in court that they belong to me.
- Tschubukov** : In court! You may sue in court, sir, if you like! Oh, I know you; you are only waiting to find an excuse to go to law! You're an intriguer, that's what you are! Your whole family were always looking for quarrels. The whole lot!
- Lomov** : Kindly refrain from insulting my family. The entire race of Lomov has always been honourable! And never has one been brought to trial for embezzlement, as your dear uncle was!
- Tschubukov** : And the whole Lomov family were insane!
- Natalia** : Every one of them!
- Tschubukov** : Your grandmother was a dipsomaniac, and the younger aunt, Nastasia Michailovna, ran off with an architect.
- Lomov** : And your mother limped. (*He puts his hand over his heart.*) Oh, my side pains! My temples are bursting! Lord in heaven! Water!!
- Tschubukov** : And your dear father was a gambler—and a glutton!
- Natalia** : And your aunt was a gossip like few others.
- Lomov** : And you are an intriguer. Oh, my heart! And it's an open secret that you cheated at the elections—my eyes are blurred! Where is my hat?
- Natalia** : Oh, how low! Liar! Disgusting thing!
- Lomov** : Where's my hat? My heart! Where shall I go? Where is the door? Oh— it seems—as though I were dying! I can't—my legs won't hold me— (*goes to the door*)
- Tschubukov** (*following him*) : May you never darken my door again!

- Natalia** : Bring your suit to court! We'll see! (Lomov *staggers out, center.*)
- Tschubukov** (*angrily*) : The devil!
- Natalia** : Such a good-for-nothing! And then they talk about being good neighbours!
- Tschubukov** : Loafer! Scarecrow! Monster!
- Natalia** : A swindler like that takes over a piece of property that doesn't belong to him and then dares to argue about it!
- Tschubukov** : And to think that this fool dares to make a proposal of marriage!
- Natalia** : What? A proposal of marriage?
- Tschubukov** : Why, yes! He came here to make you a proposal of marriage.
- Natalia** : Why didn't you tell me that before?
- Tschubukov** : That's why he had worn his evening clothes! The poor fool!
- Natalia** : Proposal for me? (*falls into an armchair and groans*) Bring him back! Bring him back!
- Tschubukov** : Bring whom back!
- Natalia** : Faster, faster, I'm sinking! Bring him back! (*She becomes hysterical.*)
- Tschubukov** : What is it? What's wrong with you? (*his hands to his head*) I'm cursed with bad luck! I'll shoot myself! I'll hang myself!
- Natalia** : I'm dying! Bring him back!
- Tschubukov** : Bah! In a minute! Don't bawl! (*He rushes out, enter.*)
- Natalia** (*groaning*) : What have they done to me? Bring him back! Bring him back!
- Tschubukov** (*comes running in*) : He's coming at once! The devil take him! Ugh! Talk to him yourself, I can't!
- Natalia** (*groaning*) : Bring him back!
- Tschubukov** : He's coming, I tell you! "Oh, Lord! What a task it is to be the father of a grown daughter!" I'll cut my throat! I really will cut my throat! We've argued with the fellow, insulted him, and now you've thrown him out!—and you did it all, you!
- Natalia** : No, you! You haven't any manners, you are brutal! If it weren't for you, he wouldn't have gone!
- Tschubukov** : Oh, yes, I'm to blame! If I shoot or hang myself, remember you'll be to blame. You forced me to do it! (Lomov *appears in the doorway.*) There, talk to him yourself! (*He goes out.*)
- Lomov** : Terrible palpitation! My leg is lamed! My side hurts me—

- Natalia** : Pardon us, we were angry, Ivan Vassiliyitch. I remember now—the meadows really belong to you.
- Lomov** : My heart is beating terribly! My meadows—my eyelids tremble— (*They sit down.*) We were wrong. It was only the principle of the thing—the property isn't worth much to me, but the principle is worth a great deal.
- Natalia** : Exactly, the principle! Let us talk about something else.
- Lomov** : Because I have proofs that my aunt's grandmother had, with the peasants of your good father—
- Natalia** : Enough, enough. (*aside*) I don't know how to begin. (*to Lomov*) Are you going hunting soon?
- Lomov** : Yes, heath cock shooting, respected Natalia Stepanovna. I expect to begin after the harvest. Oh, did you hear? My dog, Ugadi, you know him—limps!
- Natalia** : What a shame! How did that happen?
- Lomov** : I don't know. Perhaps it's a dislocation, or maybe he was bitten by some other dog. (*He sighs.*) The best dog I ever had—to say nothing of the price! I paid Mironov a hundred and twenty-five rubles for him.
- Natalia** : That was too much to pay, Ivan Vassiliyitch.
- Lomov** : In my opinion it was very cheap. A wonderful dog!
- Natalia** : Papa paid eighty-five rubles for his Otkatai, and Otkatai is much better than your Ugadi!
- Lomov** : Really? Otkatai is better than Ugadi? What an idea! (*He laughs.*) Otkatai better than Ugadi!
- Natalia** : Of course he is better. It is true Otkatai is still young; he isn't full grown yet, but in the pack or on the leash with two or three, there is no better than he, even—
- Lomov** : I really beg your pardon, Natalia Stepanovna, but you quite overlooked the fact that he has a short lower jaw, and a dog with a short lower jaw can't snap.
- Natalia** : Short lower jaw? That's the first I ever heard that!
- Lomov** : I assure you, his lower jaw is shorter than the upper.
- Natalia** : Have you measured it?
- Lomov** : I have measured it. He is good at running though.
- Natalia** : In the first place, our Otkatai is pure-bred, a full-blooded son of Sapravagas and Stameskis, and as for your mongrel, nobody could ever figure out his pedigree; he's old and ugly and skinny as an old hag.

- Lomov** : Old, certainly! I wouldn't take five of your Otkatais for him! Ugadi is a dog, and Otkatai is—it is laughable to argue about it! Dogs like your Otkatai can be found by the dozens at any dog dealer's, a whole pound full!
- Natalia** : Ivan Vassiliyitch, you are very contrary today. First our meadows belong to you, and then Ugadi is better than Otkatai. I don't like it when a person doesn't say what he really thinks. You know perfectly well that Otkatai is a hundred times better than your silly Ugadi. What makes you keep on saying he isn't?
- Lomov** : I can see, Natalia Stepanovna, that you consider me either a blind man or a fool. But at least you may as well admit that Otkatai has a short lower jaw!
- Natalia** : It isn't so!
- Lomov** : Yes, a short lower jaw!
- Natalia** (*loudly*) : It's not so!
- Lomov** : What makes you scream, my dear lady?
- Natalia** : What makes you talk such nonsense? It's disgusting! It is high time that Ugadi was shot, and you compare him with Otkatai!
- Lomov** : Pardon me, but I can't carry on this argument any longer. I have palpitation of the heart!
- Natalia** : I have always noticed that the hunters who do the most talking know the least about hunting.
- Lomov** : My dear lady, I beg of you to be still. My heart is bursting! (*He shouts.*) Be still!
- Natalia** : I won't be still until you admit that Otkatai is better! (*Enter Tschubukov.*)
- Tschubukov** : Well, has it begun again?
- Natalia** : Papa, say frankly, on your honour, which dog is better: Otkatai or Ugadi?
- Lomov** : Stepan Stepanovitch, I beg of you, just answer this: has your dog a short lower jaw or not? Yes or no?
- Tschubukov** : And what if he has? Is it of such importance? There is no better dog in the whole country.
- Lomov** : My Ugadi is better. Tell the truth now!
- Tschubukov** : Don't get so excited, my dear fellow! Permit me. Your Ugadi certainly has his good points. He is from a good breed, has a good stride, strong haunches, and so forth. But the dog, if you really want to know, has two faults; he is old and he has a short lower jaw.

- Lomov** : Pardon me, I have a palpitation of the heart!—Let us keep to facts—just remember in Maruskins’s meadows, my Ugadi kept ear to ear with Count Rasvachai and your dog was left behind.
- Tschubukov** : He was behind, because the count struck him with his whip.
- Lomov** : Quite right. All the other dogs were on the fox’s scent, but Otkatai found it necessary to bite a sheep.
- Tschubukov** : That isn’t so!—I am sensitive about that and beg you to stop this argument. He struck him because everybody looks on a strange dog of good blood with envy. Even you, sir, aren’t free from sin. No sooner do you find a dog better than Ugadi than you begin to—this, that—his, mine—and so forth! I remember distinctly.
- Lomov** : I remember something, too!
- Tschubukov** (*mimicking him*) : I remember something, too! What do you remember?
- Lomov** : Palpitation! My leg is lame—I can’t—
- Natalia** : Palpitation! What kind of hunter are you? You ought to stay in the kitchen by the stove and wrestle with the potato peelings and not go fox hunting! Palpitation!
- Tschubukov** : And what kind of hunter are you? A man with your disease ought to stay at home and not jolt around in the saddle. If you were a hunter! But you only ride round in order to find out about other people’s dogs and make trouble for everyone. I am sensitive! Let’s drop the subject. Besides, you’re no hunter.
- Lomov** : You only ride around to flatter the count! My heart! You intriguer! Swindler!
- Tschubukov** : And what of it? (*shouting*) Be still!
- Lomov** : Intriguer!
- Tschubukov** : Baby! Puppy! Walking drugstore!
- Lomov** : Old rat! Oh, I know you!
- Tschubukov** : Be still! Or I’ll shoot you—with my worst gun, like a partridge! Fool! Loafer!
- Lomov** : Everyone knows that—oh, my heart!—that your poor late wife beat you. My leg—my temples—heavens—I’m dying—I—
- Tschubukov** : And your housekeeper wears the pants in your house!
- Lomov** : Here—here—there—there—my heart has burst! My shoulder is torn apart. Where is my shoulder? I’m dying! (*He falls into a chair.*) The doctor! (*faints*)
- Tschubukov** : Baby! Half-baked clam! Fool!
- Natalia** : Nice sort of hunter you are! You can’t even sit on a horse. (*to Tschubukov*) Papa, what’s the matter with him? (*She screams.*) Ivan Vassiliyitch! He is dead!
- Lomov** : I’m ill! I can’t breathe! Air!

- Natalia** : He is dead! (*She shakes Lomov in the chair.*) Ivan Vassiliyitch! What have we done!  
He is dead! (*She sinks into a chair.*) The doctor–doctor! (*She goes into hysterics.*)
- Tschubukov** : Ahh! What is it? What’s the matter with you?
- Natalia** (*groaning*) : He’s dead! Dead!
- Tschubukov** : Who is dead? Who? (*looking at Lomov*) Yes, he is dead! Good God! Water! The doctor! (*holding the glass to Lomov’s lips*) Drink! No, he won’t drink! He’s dead! What a terrible situation! Why didn’t I shoot myself? Why have I never cut my throat? What am I waiting for now? Only give me a knife! Give me a pistol! (*Lomov moves.*) He’s coming to! Drink some water–there!
- Lomov** : Sparks! Mists! Where am I?
- Tschubukov** : Get married! Quick, and then go to the devil! She’s willing! (*He joins the hands of Lomov and Natalia.*) She’s agreed! Only leave me in peace!
- Lomov** : Wh–what? (*getting up*) Whom?
- Tschubukov** : She’s willing! Well? Kiss each other and–the devil take you both!
- Natalia** (*groans*) : He lives! Yes, yes, I’m willing!
- Tschubukov** : Kiss each other!
- Lomov** : Eh? Whom? (*Natalia and Lomov kiss.*) Very nice! Pardon me, but what is this for? Oh, yes, I understand! My heart–sparks–I am happy. Natalia Stepanovna. (*He kisses her hand.*) My leg is lame!
- Natalia** : I’m happy too!
- Tschubukov** : Ahhh! A load off my shoulders! Ahh!
- Natalia** : And now at least you’ll admit that Ugadi is worse than Otkatai!
- Lomov** : Better!
- Natalia** : Worse!
- Tschubukov** : Now the domestic joys have begun. Champagne!
- Lomov** : Better!
- Natalia** : Worse, worse, worse!
- Tschubukov** (*trying to drown them out*) : Champagne, champagne!

### Glossary

**brickearth** (n) windblown deposits **rubles** (n) (AmE) Russian currency **usurper** (n) person who illegally seizes power from another **snort** (v) make noise indicating contempt **intriguer** (n) conspirer **embezzlement** (n) fraud of funds or property **dipsomaniac** (n) drunkard **glutton** (n) person who eats and drinks excessively **swindler** (n) fraudster of money or property **bawl** (v) shout loudly **pedigree** (n) ancestry, lineage **haunches** (n) back side

### Activity II

Read the lesson carefully.

#### A. Choose the correct option and rewrite the complete sentence.

- Lomov had palpitations when he was \_\_\_\_\_ .  
(a) angry (b) lazy  
(c) nervous (d) sleepy
- Lomov wanted to get married because \_\_\_\_\_ .  
(a) he was interested in property (b) he wanted to settle down  
(c) his friend was getting married (d) Natalia was his childhood love
- Tschubukov at first suspected that Lomov has come to \_\_\_\_\_ .  
(a) ask for Natalia's hand (b) borrow money  
(c) discuss property matters (d) have tea
- Tschubukov paid \_\_\_\_\_ rubles for Otkatai.  
(a) eighty-five (b) fifty-five  
(c) seventy-five (d) twenty-five
- A farce is a play that uses \_\_\_\_\_ .  
(a) exaggeration for humor (b) love as the theme  
(c) serious characters (d) tragic endings

#### B. Answer the following questions in brief.

- Mention the reasons offered by Ivan Lomov for marrying Natalia Stepanovna.
- How did Ivan Lomov's proposal to Natalia lead to an argument about meadows?
- Why did Ivan Lomov call Stepan Tschubukov a land grabber?
- What made Natalia ask her father to call Ivan Lomov back?
- Describe the argument between Ivan Lomov and Natalia that led on to the subject of dogs.
- Do you observe any change in Ivan Lomov's and Natalia's behaviour before and after the marriage proposal was made? Note down your views.
- What is referred to as 'domestic joys' by Stepan Tschubukov?

#### C. Write in detail on:

- Stepan Tschubukov's Contradictory Speculations about Ivan Lomov
- Humour in the Play

### Activity III

Read the following sentences to note how different forms of the same word can be used.

- I propose that school holidays should be shortened.
- The proposal should be acceptable to the Principal of the school.



3. “Who is the proposer of this motion?” asked the Principal.
4. I am proposing on behalf of all the students.
5. The Principal is considering the proposition.

**A. Fill in the blanks using different forms of the same word :**

1. Frequent and unnecessary agitation is a symptom of stress. Yoga and meditation make one feel calm and \_\_\_\_\_ .
2. What are coral reefs \_\_\_\_\_ of?
3. Lyricists \_\_\_\_\_ songs.
4. Pharmacists use various \_\_\_\_\_ to make life saving drugs.

**B. Find words from the lesson which are**

1. Nouns of: engage, assist, please, discuss
2. Adjectives of: excel, gamble, honour
3. Antonyms of: complimentary, gratify, penalty

**C. Use these Nouns, Adjectives and Antonyms in sentences of your own.**

**Activity IV**

**A. The following expressions have been used in the play. What do you think is the purpose ?**

*I beg your pardon...*

*Pardon me...*

*What I mean to say...*

*I'm sorry I did it...*

*I'm afraid...*

*It would have been better...*

*Would you mind...*

*Don't you think...*

Example : *You must pardon me for wearing my apron and this old dress...*

*It would have been better if I had waited.*

These are expressions that are commonly used to indicate politeness.

- (i) **In pairs, make a list of other such expressions from the play [notice how these expressions become less and less frequent as the play progresses].**
- (ii) **Imagine that you are discussing with your friend about which film to watch. Use some of the expressions from your list to indicate politeness.**

**B. Read the following sentences from the play. What do the words in bold indicate?**

1. *It is true that at one time the title to the meadows was disputed, **but** now everyone knows they belong to me.*
2. *It was only the principle of the thing—the property isn't worth much to me, **but** the principle is worth a great deal.*

**We often use contrasting ideas in the same sentence. This is indicated by many words in English:**

although, even though, though, whereas, while, either . . . or, however, instead, on the one hand . . . on the other hand, by contrast, nevertheless

**Complete the following sentences using one of the words from the list given above (remember that there can be more than one correct answer)**

1. He's a student of this school \_\_\_\_\_ not a very good one.
2. My friend's dog is quite big \_\_\_\_\_ friendly.
3. He plans to opt for \_\_\_\_\_ cricket \_\_\_\_\_ football in the coaching camp.
4. Shimla is known for its natural beauty, \_\_\_\_\_ the Thar desert for its starkness.
5. Sheetal wanted to go dancing this weekend; \_\_\_\_\_, she's changed her mind because of the weather.
6. \_\_\_\_\_, sales have increased; \_\_\_\_\_, profits have declined.

**Activity V**

Every aspect has its pros and cons. However, the argumentative individual argues for the sake of winning an argument and not always for the truth. Such a person may be called an eristic. With the help of your teacher, choose a debatable topic (Something that affects you/your generation) from society/school/surrounding/news/media etc. Form four teams comprising of three students in each. A team of two or more students may conduct the debate as moderators. Rest of the class may intervene as participating audience. The debate may be for 10-15 minutes.

**Activity VI**

- A. Imagine that Lomov and Natalia have just got married. Write a dialogue in which they discuss the behaviour of their relatives at the wedding.
- B. 'Beating about the bush' is a proverb used in the text. Now write a paragraph on 'A bird in hand is worth two in the bush'.



## UNIT 7

### Activity I

What are the important aspects of a good speech? Discuss with your partner.

#### Introduction

**Sir Charles Spencer** (1889-1977), '**Charlie Chaplin**' '*Knight of British Empire*', was an English comic actor, film maker and composer who rose to fame in the era of silent films.

**Towards a New World** is a speech delivered by Charlie Chaplin in the 1940 American film *The Great Dictator*. This political satire was written, directed and produced by Charlie Chaplin himself. This speech at the end of the film provides an excellent road map of how a citizenry can conquer the issues that divide it and how a selfless leader should view the world.

#### Towards a New World

I'm sorry, but I don't want to be an emperor. That's not my business. I don't want to rule or conquer anyone. I should like to help everyone if possible— Jew, Gentile, black men, white...

We all want to help one another. Human beings are like that. We want to live by each other's happiness, not by each other's misery. We don't want to hate and despise one another. In this world there is room for everyone. And the good earth is rich and can provide for everyone. The way of life can be free and beautiful, but we have lost the way.

Greed has poisoned men's souls; has barricaded the world with hate; has goose-stepped us into misery and bloodshed. We have developed speed, but we have shut ourselves in. Machinery that gives abundance has left us in want. Our knowledge has made us cynical; our cleverness, hard and unkind.

We think too much and feel too little. More than machinery, we need humanity. More than cleverness, we need kindness and gentleness. Without these qualities, life will be violent and all will be lost. The aeroplane and the radio have brought us closer together. The very nature of these inventions cries out for the goodness in man; cries out for universal brotherhood; for the unity of us all.

Even now my voice is reaching millions throughout the world, millions of despairing men, women, and little children, victims of a system that makes men torture and imprison innocent people.

To those who can hear me, I say "Do not despair."

The misery that is now upon us is but the passing of greed, the bitterness of men who fear the way of human progress. The hate of men will pass, and dictators die, and the power they took from the people will return to the people. And so long as men live, liberty will never perish.

Soldiers! Don't give yourselves to brutes, men who despise you and enslave you; who regiment your lives, tell you what to do, what to think and what to feel! Who drill you, diet you, treat you like cattle, use you as cannon fodder!

Don't give yourselves to these unnatural men—machine men with machine minds and machine hearts! You are not machines! You are not cattle! You are men! You have a love of humanity in your hearts! You don't hate!

Only the unloved hate; the unloved and the unnatural.

Soldiers! Don't fight for slavery! Fight for liberty!

In the seventeenth chapter of St. Luke, it's written "the kingdom of God is within man", not one man nor a group of men, but in all men! In you! You, the people, have the power, the power to create machines, the power to create happiness! You, the people, have the power to make this life free and beautiful, to make this life a wonderful adventure. Then in the name of democracy, let us use that power.

Let us all unite.

Let us fight for a new world, a decent world that will give men a chance to work, that will give youth a future and old age a security. By the promise of these things, brutes have risen to power. But they lie! They do not fulfill their promise. They never will!

Dictators free themselves but they enslave the people!

Now let us fight to fulfill that promise! Let us fight to free the world! To do away with national barriers! To do away with greed, with hate and intolerance!

Let us fight for a world of reason, a world where science and progress will lead to all men's happiness.

Soldiers, in the name of democracy, let us all unite!

### Glossary

**goose-stepped** (v) marched (refers to military marching) **cynical** (adj.) distrustful **cannon fodder** soldiers regarded merely as material to be expended in war

### Activity II

**Read the lesson carefully.**

**A. Choose the correct option and rewrite the complete sentence.**

- What has corrupted human conscience according to the speaker?  
a) Greed (b) Happiness  
(c) Money (d) Power
- As long as humanity exists, \_\_\_\_\_ will be sustained.  
(a) greed (b) happiness  
(c) liberty (d) virtue
- Life will be violent without \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) adaptability, cleverness, wisdom (b) cleverness, greed, intelligence  
(c) humanity, kindness, gentleness (d) innocence, bitterness, happiness
- Dictators by freeing themselves \_\_\_\_\_ others.  
(a) capture (b) enslave  
(c) free (d) torture
- What is the message conveyed through the speech?  
(a) Fight for a world full of happiness (b) Fight for your personal happiness  
(c) Need for the democratic way of life (d) Need for the dictatorial way of life

**B . Answer the following questions in brief.**

1. Differentiate between the feelings of being helpful to others and ruling over others.
2. How could the way of life be free and beautiful?
3. Comment on the statement: ‘More than machinery we need humanity.’
4. In what ways do machines help in developing universal brotherhood?
5. Why, according to the speaker, is the unity of all human beings important?
6. List out the positive as well as negative facets mentioned by Charlie Chaplin that engulf human beings.
7. What is Charlie Chaplin’s advice to humanity?

**C. Write in detail on :**

1. ‘The Kingdom of God is Within Us.’
2. The Power of Machines

**Activity III**

**Look at the following sentence.**

The patient rolled up the cuff on the sleeve while the doctor wrapped the blood pressure cuff around his arm.

The underlined words have same spellings and pronunciation but different meanings.

**Use each of the following words twice in a single sentence in order to bring out two different meanings.**

address                  bark                  current                  fold                  light

**Activity IV**

**A. Read the following sentences from the speech. What do you think is the function of these sentences?**

*do not despair...*

*don't give yourselves to brutes...*

*let us use that power - let us all unite...*

These sentences are examples of ‘imperatives’. An imperative sentence can be used for requesting, advising, instructing or commanding someone. Remember that imperatives can be considered impolite at times.

**In pairs, find out the imperative sentences from the speech and discuss their meanings. Think of ways to turn the imperative sentences into more polite sentences.**

**Example:** “Do not do this” can be made more polite by adding “please” or changing it to “I hope you don’t do this”.

**B. Read the following sentences from the speech.**

*In this world there is room for everyone.*

*We think too much and feel too little.*

*I don't want to be an emperor.*

*More than cleverness we need kindness and gentleness.*

**However, these sentences can also be expressed as**

In this world there is room for everyone, isn't there?

We think too much and feel too little, don't we?

I don't want to be an emperor, do I ?

More than cleverness we need kindness and gentleness, don't we?

We can thus add a 'question tag' at the end of a sentence sometimes to turn it into a question.

[Remember that a positive statement generally will have a negative tag and a negative statement, a positive tag.]

**In pairs, complete the following sentences using question tags :**

1. Arefa is still sleeping, \_\_\_\_\_?
2. Nobody came, \_\_\_\_\_?
3. Let's go for a game of cricket, \_\_\_\_\_?
4. They will come tomorrow, \_\_\_\_\_?
5. It won't be easy, \_\_\_\_\_?
6. They will clean the room, \_\_\_\_\_?
7. We must help the poor, \_\_\_\_\_?
8. So you bought a computer, \_\_\_\_\_?
9. You wouldn't like to call him, \_\_\_\_\_?
10. I should finish this work, \_\_\_\_\_?

**Activity V**

Aphorism means a pithy observation which contains a general truth. The present lesson is full of aphoristic statements. Example (1) 'We want to live by each other's happiness – not by each other's misery.' (2) 'In this world there is room for everyone.'

Choose an aphorism from the lesson and use it to deliver a two minute speech in front of the class.

**Activity VI**

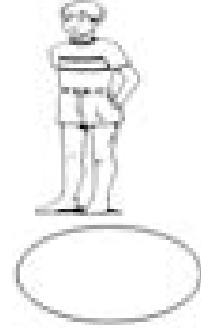
- A. Imagine yourself as one of the national freedom fighters invited to speak at the Independence Day celebration to be held in your school. Write a speech for the occasion.
- B. Write an essay in about 250 words on 'To me Democracy means...'



## UNIT 8

### Activity I

It is generally believed that there is a difference in the traditional upbringing of girls and boys. List your arguments in the bubbles given below. Discuss with your partner.



### Introduction

**Mrinal Pande** (1946–) is an Indian television personality, journalist and author, and until 2009 Chief Editor of *Hindustan*— a Hindi daily. She has also written a few short stories. She was awarded the Padma Shri in 2006. Pande’s works highlight the condition of women in India and issues of gender.

**Girls** is told from the viewpoint of an eight-year-old girl. It highlights how society for centuries has taken women for granted and conditioned them to accept a secondary role. The mother, here, being a product of this society unfortunately views the girl child as a burden and treats her as an inferior. However, times are changing and so is the approach of society towards gender.

### Girls

The day we left with Ma for Nani’s house, Babu broke a surahi. I don’t know whether he did it on purpose or by accident, but anyway the floor was flooded with water. Ma held up her sari and called Saru’s mother – who was trying to eavesdrop from the adjacent room – to mop up the water, because if someone were to slip and break the bones it would be yet another problem. To Ma, everything in life was a problem. As far as she was concerned, whether we were at home or at school, ill or just playing around, we were a problem. While mopping the floor, Saru’s mother looked up at Ma and asked, “This time you’ll be away for at least three months, won’t you?” Ma squatted down and said, “Yes, they won’t allow me to come back sooner.” She turned to me and ordered me to go out and play. I always seemed to turn up at the wrong time and at the wrong place. As I was leaving the room, I managed to pick up a piece of the broken surahi which I enjoyed sucking, and I overheard Ma addressing either Saru’s mother or the cobwebs hanging from the roof: “I hope it’s a boy this time. It will relieve me of the nuisance of going through another pregnancy.” I could just imagine Saru’s mother, in her usual manner, shaking her head and saying, “Why not?.... Why not?...”



When we reached the station, I scrambled on to the train, fought my way through people and luggage and secured a place next to the window. Triumphantly I stuck my tongue out at everyone and went “Eee.... Eee.” But when I noticed Ma’s gaze turning towards me, I immediately started chanting the alphabet, “Eee for Imli, Ee for Eekh.” Ma was actually not looking at me though, because she was preoccupied with all her problems. She had to mind the luggage, the wobbling surahi, the three of us, and cope with the exhaustion of pregnancy as well. At one of the stations, we bought a lot of samosas filled with chillies. Just when we were buying them, a woman was making her child urinate through the next window. The sight made me feel quite nauseous and I couldn’t eat my samosa, so I gave it to Ma instead. Meanwhile I crushed a piece of potato which was lying on the seat into the shape of an insect to frighten my younger sister. She screamed, Ma smacked me and I started to cry as well. My elder sister was irritated and said, “Oh, what a nuisance you are!” Despite her irritation, I knew that it was only my elder sister who really loved me, everyone else was horrible.

Mama was waiting to receive us at the station. On the way to Nani’s, I sat next to Mami and noticed the rubies in her ear lobes bobbing up and down while she chewed paan. Every time the driver pressed the jeep’s horn, my sisters and I would scream in unison, “Poo....Poo.” The driver was amused at our screaming, and when we reached the house, he lifted me and my younger sister out of the jeep. He had a huge moustache which smelt of tea and bidis, and wore a uniform made of coarse wool which tickled me and made me feel sleepy. When the surahi was lifted out of the jeep it overturned and once again there was water everywhere. This incident reminded me so much of Babu that, absent-mindedly, I trod hard on my younger sister’s sandal, nearly tripping her up. “You are the cause of all my problems!” Ma hissed at me through tightly clenched teeth so that no one could hear. She then grabbed hold of my arm as if to prevent me from falling over but actually pressed it so hard that my shoulder hurt.

I thought of Babu because whenever we came to Nani’s house, he never accompanied us. And as soon as we arrived, Ma would be lost in the company of Masis, Mamis, Nani and old maidservants. If you tried going near her during the day, someone or other would say, “Let the poor thing have some rest at least while she is here.” Ma, too, would put on a pathetic act as if we always harassed her at home. I felt disgusted at the thought of entering Nani’s house, so I deliberately loitered near the bushes. Then I heard someone mentioning my name inside the house and saying, “Now where has she disappeared?”

I entered the house along with the dog and saw Nani sitting with Mama’s son on her lap. As soon as she saw the dog, she shooed it away because to her all animals were as untouchables. The dog, used to being reprimanded, tucked its tail between its legs and went out. I was told to bend down and touch Nani’s feet. Someone from the family said, “Not like that... bend properly. You are born a girl and you will have to bend for the rest of your life, so you might as well learn.” Nani blessed me by waving her hand over my bowed back and said, “This girl hasn’t grown taller. Who would believe she is eight years old?”

“Oh, what a nuisance this is,” Ma kept complaining. The old lady from the neighbourhood who had come to see Ma told Nani, “This time Lali will definitely have a boy. Just look at her complexion – when she was expecting the girls it was pink, but now it has a tinge of yellow. I am sure it will be a boy this time.”

“Who knows, perhaps even this time....” moaned Ma as she put on a pathetic expression and began paring her nails.

“Is there anyone to cook for your husband?” asked the old lady. Her question set me thinking about Babu, how good he smelt and the softness of his lap. And how when we came here Ma did not allow us to lie in her lap for too long and complained, “Ugh! Oh! My bones are aching, my sari is all crushed. Get up now. I have such a lot of work to do, and to top it all there is this huge nuisance. Come on, get up.”

Nani folded her hands and prayed : “Oh Goddess, protect my honour! At least this time let her take a son back from her parents’ home”. At the end of her prayer, she dried her tears with her pallav.

From the corner of my eyes I could see that my sisters were fast asleep. All the lights had been switched off and the room was flooded with moonlight. Tulsa Dai was applying oil to the soles of Ma’s feet and saying, “If it’s a boy this time, I will demand a sari with stainless steel zari.”

“If I have a boy this time, then I will be relieved of this burden forever,” she tells Tulsa Dai, and then adds, “You can go home now, your children must be waiting for you. Be sure you put the oil vessel under the bed, otherwise one of these kids will kick it over in the morning...” Ah, a bad omen. Whenever Ma left a sentence unfinished it seemed to loom in the air, like the ticking of the clock. I wonder why grown-ups always complete their sentences when they are talking about pleasant things, but always leave them unfinished if it is something unpleasant. Like, “Ah, a woman’s fate...” Or “Oh, three girls...” There’s always a silence after these half statements.

There’s a bright star in the sky. Is that the Dhruva star? Babu used to say that if I worked hard I could become anything I wanted, just as Dhruva became a star. “But I can’t become a boy, can I?” I once asked obstinately. I was surprised at Babu’s reaction when he put on a serious look and said sternly, “Don’t argue with your elders now.” I find it difficult to understand them. My elder sister says one should never trust grown-ups because if they want to know something they will prise it out of you by hook or by crook, but they themselves will never tell you a thing.

It’s true, nobody ever tells us anything. In this place, it’s when we go to sleep that the world of the elders awakens, opening like a magic casket. I want to stay awake and listen; I don’t know why I fall asleep halfway through. I wonder whose voice it is now; it seems as if someone is crying in suppressed tones. Is it Chotti Masi? “I don’t get as much respect as a dog does in that house,” she tells Ma. I wonder where she is treated worse than a dog; then I hear Ma telling her, “All of us suffer like that, one just has to endure it.” My eyes shut and I fall asleep.

The next morning, when everyone is having breakfast, I ask Ma what “endure” means. I remind her by asking, what does Chotti Masi have to endure? I get one tight slap, then another, but before Ma strikes me again Mami saves me and says, “Let it be. She is only a child, after all.” “She is no child, she is a witch,” says Ma as her stomach wobbles in anger. “She’s always listening on the sly to elders talking. Heaven knows what will become of her.”

When I go into the garden, my elder sister throws the flowers she has gathered, at me. “Oh... you! I have told you a hundred times not to question grown-ups. If you keep on like this, one day these people will beat you so hard you will die.” “I will ask questions. I will. I will,” I answer crying. “Then go and die,” says my elder sister and continues to thread a garland for Nani’s Gopalji. Nani stands by her and says loudly, “You are my precious Lakshmi,” with the intention that I should hear. In the afternoons, I tell the younger children horror stories of ghosts and demons who lived in the walnut tree. I tell them that if they should wake

up at twelve O'clock on a full-moon night they would see children being bathed in blood. They would also hear the ghosts speaking through their noses which at first is difficult to follow. The children follow me all over the house like mice following the Pied Piper.

“Move aside,” says Hari’s mother, who is carrying a tray laden with glasses of tea into the room. “Move. This is not for you, it’s for the grown-ups. Move out of my way.” Hari’s mother’s nose is like a frog’s and her eyebrows meet above her nose. Whenever she laughs, her cheeks hang loose like bats. “Do move aside,” she says to me again. “I won’t,” I say, and try to block her way. “I’ll only move if you say girls are nice.” “All right, all right, I have said it, so now move out of the way,” says Hari’s mother. She knits her thick eyebrows together and says, “This Lali’s middle daughter won’t let me...” She starts laughing, and as she does so her frog like nose bobs up and down. I can hear Ma naming me and saying, “That girl must be harassing her. She was born only to plague my life.” Someone in the room advises her that she should not get angry in her condition.

For a long time I sit outside the house watching the birds flying and wishing that I had been born a bird. “Do mother birds too think their girl birds are inferior?” I wonder. Then I hear a voice calling, “Where has she gone?” and I know someone is searching for me. I hide behind the wall where no one can ever find me. I wish that somewhere, anywhere, I could find that magic betel nut which would make me invisible as soon as I put it in my mouth. What wonderful fun that would be!

“Where are you? Girls?” calls Nani with a tray of crimson powder in her hands. In front of her there is a dish of halwa and a plate filled with puris she has prepared as offerings to the Devi on Ashtami day. A mat has been spread in front of her for us to sit on. “Come on girls, let me put the teeka on your foreheads.” She lights the camphor for aarti. “Come now, let me do aarti to all of you.” My two sisters and Maama’s beautiful daughters sit cross legged in front of Nani. She puts a teeka on each forehead and then rings a bell. Exactly like the guard on the train. After the bell rings, she blows the conch. “Poo...ooo”. I am suddenly transformed into a railway engine and race around the ledge of the courtyard. I shout, “Come on, pay your fares to go to Calcutta. Pooo....oooo”

In the background I hear Nani saying, “Come on dear, let me put the teeka on you. You are my Kanyakumari, aren’t you?”

“No,” I retort, “I am an engine.” Mami’s son claps his hands with excitement and says, “Have you gone mad, Lali?” She signals to me to obey and adds, “She’s after all a child, a Kanyakumari. Today is Ashtami, the Devi’s day; you mustn’t hit a Kanyakumari, it is a sin.”

I jump down from the ledge with a thud and see Nani serving the other girls halwa-puri with the tightly clenched mouth.

“Go on. Take the prasad from Nani. Why do you make your mother cry when she is in this condition?” Masi asked me irritably.

“When you people don’t love girls, why do you pretend to worship them?” My voice breaks into a sob and I feel so furious with myself that I want to swallow the burning camphor to choke my treacherous throat. I want to ask “Why” again but don’t risk it because I am afraid I will start to cry. I don’t want to cry in front of them.

Hari’s mother addresses the wall saying, “Just listen to her. What a temper for a girl to show!”

Nani is distributing a rupee and a quarter to each girl. I notice the mark of the crimson powder on the tip of her thumb, like bloodstain.

I start moving back towards the wall and screaming, “I don’t want all the halwa-puri, teeka or money. I don’t want to be a goddess.” I screamed so loudly that the pigeons pecking at the scattered grain in the courtyard took off in a flurry, as if a bullet had been fired somewhere.

### Glossary

**surahi** (n) generally a clay pot with a long neck, used for storing water **eavesdrop** (v) listen without the speaker’s knowledge **smacked** (v) delivered a hard blow **unison** (n) together **trod** (v) walked heavily or roughly **loom** (v) (here) to appear in a large, strange or frightening form **prize it out** force it out **Gopalji** (n) infant/child form of Lord Krishna **plague** (v) (here) annoy continually or chronically **clenched mouth** tightly closed or squeezed mouth (in anger)

### Activity II

**Read the lesson carefully.**

#### A. Choose the correct option and rewrite the complete sentence.

- The mother asked Lali to go out and play because \_\_\_\_\_ .
  - her mother wanted her to look for her elder sister
  - her mother wanted her to play
  - she was mischievous
  - she was not supposed to listen to elder’s talking
- Ma hopes that \_\_\_\_\_ .
  - her daughter will become a doctor
  - her health will be fine
  - she will have a girl child again
  - she will have a male child this time
- The mother was irritated with Lali because \_\_\_\_\_ .
  - she did not perform well in academics
  - she was very naughty
  - she was a girl not a boy
  - she was very lazy
- \_\_\_\_\_ never accompanied Lali, her sisters and their mother to Nani’s house.
  - Babu
  - Gopalji
  - Hari
  - Saru
- \_\_\_\_\_ does not mean reprimand.
  - admonish
  - appease
  - chide
  - rebuke

#### B. Answer the following questions in brief.

- What was the mother’s approach towards her children at Nani’s house?
- How was the mother’s fourth pregnancy viewed by different people?
- According to the mother, who should learn to endure? Why?

4. When do the grown-ups complete their sentences and when do they leave them incomplete?
5. Differentiate between the author's and her elder sister's outlook and approach towards their elders.
6. Comment on the author's outburst: 'When you people don't love girls, why do you pretend to worship them?'

**C. Write in detail on:**

1. Lali
2. Ending of the Story

**Activity III**

**A. Add one word or phrase from the lesson that is similar in meaning to the two given below. The first one is done as an example.**

- |     |               |              |                     |
|-----|---------------|--------------|---------------------|
| 1.  | successfully  | victoriously | <i>triumphantly</i> |
| 2.  | promptly      | presently    | _____               |
| 3.  | firmly        | soundly      | _____               |
| 4.  | truly         | really       | _____               |
| 5.  | calculatingly | purposively  | _____               |
| 6.  | correctly     | suitably     | _____               |
| 7.  | decidedly     | absolutely   | _____               |
| 8.  | noisily       | deafeningly  | _____               |
| 9.  | annoyingly    | disturbingly | _____               |
| 10. | precisely     | absolutely   | _____               |

**B. Nani and surahi are words from Indian languages. Make a list of other such words used in the lesson. Try to find English equivalents for them.**

**Activity IV**

**You must have noticed that the story often indicates different times – sometimes the present, sometimes the past.**

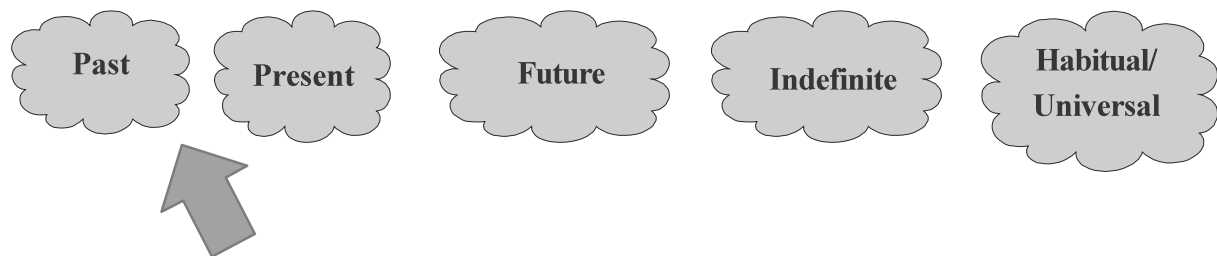
**Read the following sentences from the story carefully. They indicate different times within the story. Underline the words or phrases that indicate time.**

1. *The day we left with Ma for Nani's house, Babu broke a Surahi.*
2. *"I hope it's a boy this time..."*
3. *When we reached the station, I scrambled on to the train, fought my way through people and luggage and secured a place next to the window.*
4. *Mama was waiting to receive us at the station. On the way to Nani's, I sat next to Mami and noticed the rubies in her ear lobes bobbing up and down while she chewed paan.*
5. *I thought of Babu because whenever we came to Nani's house, he never accompanied us.*
6. *If you tried going near her during the day, someone or other would say, "Let the poor thing have some rest at least while she is here."*



7. *“If I have a boy this time, then I will be relieved of this burden forever,”*
8. *There’s a bright star in the sky. Is that the Dhruva star?*
9. *Babu used to say that if I worked hard I could become anything I wanted, just as Dhruva became a star.*
10. *My elder sister says one should never trust grown-ups because if they want to know something they will prise it out of you by hook or by crook, but they themselves will never tell you a thing.*
11. *It’s true, nobody ever tells us anything.*
12. *For a long time I sit outside the house watching the birds flying and wishing that I had been born a bird.*
13. *I start moving back towards the wall and screaming, “I don’t want all the halwa-puri, teeka or money. I don’t want to be a goddess.”*

**In pairs, complete the time map of the sentences 1-13 with the help of the diagram below. The first one is done for you.**



1. *The day we left with Ma for Nani’s house, Babu broke a surahi.*

**B. Now, make a list of words that helped you to determine the time in the sentences above. Discuss in groups.**

#### Activity V

- A. Do parents have different expectations from their sons and their daughters? Should boys and girls be raised with different social roles and expectations? Why? Why not? Express your views in front of the class in about two minutes.
- B. Why, do you think, the mother behaved the way she did with Lali in this lesson? Discuss with your partner.

#### Activity VI

- A. Write a newspaper article on ‘The Changing Status of Women in Indian Society’.
- B. Write a paragraph on ‘Role of Women in Globalization’.



## UNIT 9

### Activity I

Many a time you must have been fussy about the food that you eat. But have you thought of its journey from field to table? Discuss with your partner.

#### Introduction

**George Bernard Shaw** (1856–1950), an Irish playwright and critic, wrote more than sixty plays, such as *Man and Superman*, *Pygmalion* and *Saint Joan*. Shaw incorporated both contemporary satire and historical allegory in his writings. He was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature.

**How Wealth Accumulates and Men Decay** is a scathing comment on the socio-economic condition of the world.

### How Wealth Accumulates and Men Decay

I want to stress this personal helplessness we are all stricken with in the face of a system that has passed beyond our knowledge and control. To bring it nearer home, I propose that we switch off from the big things like empires and their wars to little familiar things. Take pins for example! I do not know why it is that I so seldom use a pin when my wife cannot get on without boxes of them at hand; but it is so; and I will therefore take pins as being for some reason specially important to women.

There was a time when pinmakers could buy the material; shape it; make the head and the point; ornament it; and take it to market or to your door and sell it to you. They had to know three trades; buying, making, and selling; and the making required skill in several operations. They not only knew how the thing was done from beginning to end but could do it. But they could not afford to sell you a paper of pins for a farthing. Pins cost so much that a woman's dress allowance was called pin money.

By the end of the eighteenth century Adam Smith boasted that it took eighteen men to make a pin, each man doing a little bit of the job and passing the pin on to the next, and none of them being able to make a whole pin or to buy the materials or to sell it when it was made. The most you could say for them was that at least they had some idea of how it was made, though they could not make it. Now as this meant that they were clearly less capable and knowledgeable men than the old pinmakers, you may ask why Adam Smith boasted of it as a triumph of civilization when its effect was so clearly a degrading effect. The reason was that by setting each man to do just one little bit of work and nothing but that, over and over again, he became very quick at it. The men, it is said, could turn out nearly five thousand pins a day each; and thus pins became plentiful and cheap. The country was supposed to be richer because it had more pins, though it had turned capable men into mere machines doing their work without intelligence, and being fed by spare food of the capitalist as an engine is fed with coals and oil. That was why the poet Goldsmith, who was a farsighted economist as well as a poet, complained that "wealth accumulates and men decay".



Nowadays Adam Smith's eighteen men are as extinct as the diplodocus. The eighteen flesh-and-blood machines are replaced by machines of steel which spout out pins by the hundred million. Even sticking them into pink papers is done by machinery. The result is that with the exception of a few people who design the machines, nobody knows how to make a pin or how a pin is made: that is to say, the modern worker in pin manufacture need not be one-tenth intelligent and skilful and accomplished as the old pinmaker; and the only compensation we have for this deterioration is that pins are so cheap that a single pin has no expressible value at all. Even with a big profit stuck on to the cost price you can buy dozens for a farthing; and pins are so recklessly thrown away and wasted that verses have to be written to persuade children (without success) that it is a sin to steal a pin.

Many serious thinkers, like John Ruskin and William Morris, have been greatly troubled by this, just as Goldsmith was, and have asked whether we really believe that it is an advance in wealth to lose out skill and degrade our workers for the sake of being able to waste pins by the ton. We shall see later on, when we come to consider the Distribution of Leisure, that the cure for this is not to go back to the old ways; for if the saving of time by modern machinery were equally divided among us, it would set us all free for higher work than pinmaking or the like. But in the meantime the fact remains that pins are now made by men and women who cannot make anything by themselves, and could not arrange between themselves to make anything even in little bits. They are ignorant and helpless, and cannot lift their finger to begin their day's work until it has all been arranged for them by their employers, who themselves do not understand the machines that buy, and simply pay other people to set them going by carrying out the machine maker's direction.

The same is true of clothes. Formerly the whole work of making clothes, from the shearing of the sheep to the turning out of the finished and washed garment ready to put on, had to be done in the country by the men and women of the household, especially the women; so that to this day an unmarried woman is called a spinster. Nowadays nothing is left of all this but the sheep-shearing; and even that, like the milking of cows, being done by machinery, as the sewing is. Give a woman a sheep today and ask her to produce a woollen dress for you; and not only will she be quite unable to do it, but you are likely to find that she is not even aware of any connection between sheep and clothes. When she gets her clothes, which she does by buying them at a shop, she knows that there is a difference between wool and cotton and silk, between flannel and merino, perhaps even between stockinet and other wefts; but as to how they are made, or what they are made of, or how they came to be in the shop ready for her to buy, she knows hardly anything. And the shop assistant from whom she buys is no wiser. The people engaged in the making of them know even less; for many of them are too poor to have much choice of materials when they buy their own clothes.

Thus the capitalist system has produced an almost universal ignorance of how things are made and done, whilst at the same time it has caused them to be made and done, whilst at the same time it has caused them to be made and done on a gigantic scale. We have to buy books and encyclopaedias to find out what

it is we are doing all day; and as the books are written by people who are not doing it, and who get their information from other books, what they tell us is from twenty to fifty years out of date, and unpractical at that. And of course most of us are too tired of our work when we come home to want to read about it: what we need is a cinema to take our minds off it and feed our imagination.

It is a funny place, this world of Capitalism, with its astonishing spread of ignorance and helplessness, boasting all the time of its spread of education and enlightenment. There stand the thousands of property owners and the millions of wage workers, none of them able to make anything, none of them knowing what to do until somebody tells them, none of them having the least notion of how it is that they find people paying them money, and things in the shops to buy with it. And when they travel they are surprised to find that savages and Esquimaux and villagers who have to make everything for themselves are more intelligent and resourceful! The wonder would be if they are anything else. We should die of idiocy through disuse of our mental faculties if we did not fill our heads with romantic nonsense out of illustrated newspaper and novels and plays and films. Such stuff keeps us alive; but it falsifies everything for us so absurdly that it leaves us more or less dangerous lunatics in the real world.

Excuse my going on like this; but as I am a writer of books and plays myself, I know the folly and peril of it better than you do. And when I see this moment of our utmost ignorance and helplessness, delusion and folly, has been stumbled on by the blind forces of Capitalism as the moment for giving votes to everybody, so that the few wise are hopelessly overruled by the thousands whose political minds at all, have been formed in the cinema, I realize that I had better stop writing plays for a while to discuss political and social realities in this book with those who are intelligent enough to listen to me.

### Glossary

**pin** (n) (here) decorative garment pin **farthing** (n) quarter of a penny **diplodocus** (n) dinosaur with long neck and tail **flannel and merino** (n) kinds of woollen fabric **stockinette** (n) knitted fabric **wefts** (n) horizontal thread in weaving **Esquimaux** (n) plural of Eskimos

### Activity II

**Read the lesson carefully.**

**A. Choose the correct option and rewrite the complete sentence.**

1. Woman's dress allowance was called pin money because \_\_\_\_\_ .  
(a) money was in plenty (b) money was scarce  
(c) pins were cheap (d) pins were expensive
2. The phrase 'wealth accumulates and men decay' was coined by \_\_\_\_\_ .  
(a) Adam Smith (b) Bernard Shaw  
(c) John Ruskin (d) Oliver Goldsmith

3. G. B. Shaw bemoans the fact that \_\_\_\_\_ .
  - (a) machine and men may have the same needs
  - (b) machines may be more intelligent than men
  - (c) men may do the job of machines
  - (d) men may be turned into machines
4. In this essay Shaw talks about distribution of \_\_\_\_\_ .
  - (a) labour
  - (b) leisure
  - (c) profit
  - (d) wealth
5. According to G. B. Shaw capitalism has made men \_\_\_\_\_ .
  - (a) enlightened
  - (b) ignorant
  - (c) illiterate
  - (d) knowledgeable

**B. Answer the following questions in brief.**

1. What does G. B. Shaw want us to think about?
2. Differentiate between the process of pinmaking in the earlier and modern times.
3. G. B. Shaw says, ‘Capitalist men may be turned into mere machines.’ Elaborate.
4. ‘The capitalist system has produced an almost universal ignorance of how things are made and done.’ Justify.
5. Who makes us ‘dangerous lunatics’ in the real world? How?

**C. Write in detail on :**

1. ‘How Wealth Accumulates and Men Decay’
2. The World of Capitalism

**Activity III**

**Look at the following words from the lesson.**

**Set A**

**disuse, overruled, unmarried**

Now find three words with the prefix **auto-** and **tele-** and frame meaningful sentences using them.

**Set B**

**knowledgeable, resourceful, helplessness**

Now find three words with the suffix **-ion** and **-ism** and frame meaningful sentences using them.

**Activity IV**

**A. Read the following sentences from the essay carefully. What do you think is the function of the highlighted words?**

1. I will **therefore** take pins as being for some reason specially important to women...

2. *The result is that* with the exception of a few people who design the machines, nobody knows how to make a pin or how a pin is made...
3. *But in the meantime* the fact remains that pins are now made by men and women...
4. *Thus* the capitalist system has produced an almost universal ignorance of how things are made and done, whilst at the same time it has caused them to be made and done...
5. *And* when I see this moment of our utmost ignorance and helplessness, delusion and folly...

These are words that are often used to create links between sentences. There are different ways in which links can be created:

- You can add to a given idea.

**For example:** *And* when I see this moment of our utmost ignorance and helplessness, delusion and folly...

- You can argue against an idea or set up an opposition with a previous idea.

**For example:** *But in the meantime* the fact remains that pins are now made by men and women...

**Similarly,**

- You can indicate a time to establish a linkage between ideas.
- Or, you can say that an idea is a result of another.

**B. Which of the sentences (1-5), if any, exemplify the four linkages ?**

**Here are some words that are often used to add, contrast, indicate a time sequence, or to indicate a result.**

afterwards, also, as a result, conversely, consequently, even so, for, example, for instance, furthermore, hence, however, meanwhile, moreover, therefore, thus, simultaneously, nevertheless, subsequently

**Group these words in categories that have been mentioned above (that is, whether they can add to an idea or can be used to contrast an idea etc.) in the table below:**

Word to add to an idea	Word to create a contrast	Word indicating time linkage between ideas	Word indicating a relation of cause and effect between ideas

**C. Write a paragraph of about 150 words using words from each of the categories above on any ONE of the following topics. Make sure that you use the words to link ideas between sentences.**

1. Your Favourite Book
  - a. what the book is about
  - b. why you like the book
  - c. any particular thing that you do not like about the book
2. A Vacation that you Enjoyed
  - a. where you went
  - b. why you liked the vacation
  - c. any particular thing that you did not like about the vacation

#### **Activity V**

Today, the world seems to revolve around economic activity. Countries are looking for markets to buy and sell their goods. People adopt and adapt to newer lands for better prospects. Familial bonds are fast losing their physical touch. People are exploring virtual relations. But still all is not bleak for those who know how to strike a balance between personal aspirations and social responsibilities.

Interview your partner about his/her economic aspirations and ways in which a balance can be struck between one's ambitions and responsibilities.

#### **Activity VI**

- A. Early technological developments helped ordinary people and changed their lives more than recent developments. Do you agree? Why? Draft a speech.
- B. Excess wealth can end in decay. This could lead to bad habits. Addiction is one of them. Your school is organising a lecture by an expert on World No Tobacco Day. As Head Boy / Girl, draft a notice for the school notice board.



## UNIT 10

### Activity I

How will you react to the following situations?

1. Your friend keeps boasting about non-existent achievements.
2. Your mobile phone functions erratically.

Discuss with your partner.

### Introduction

**Jerome Klapka Jerome** (1859 – 1927), an English writer and humourist, is best known for the comic travelogue *Three Men in a Boat*. His other works include the essay collections *Idle Thoughts of an Idle Fellow* and *Second Thoughts of an Idle Fellow*.

**The Dancing Partner** is about a group of young girls who are talking about the difficulty in finding the perfect dance partner. The story is about the surprise that the father of one of the girls has for them.

### The Dancing Partner

‘This story,’ commenced MacShaugnassy, ‘comes from Furtwangen, a small town in the Black Forest. There lived there a very wonderful old fellow named Nicholas Geibel. His business was the making of mechanical toys, at which work he had acquired an almost European reputation. He made rabbits that would emerge from the heart of a cabbage, flop their ears, smooth their whiskers, and disappear again; cats that would wash their faces, and mew so naturally that dogs would mistake them for real cats and fly at them; dolls with phonographs concealed within them, that would raise their hats and say, ‘Good morning; how do you do?’ and some that would even sing a song.

‘But, he was something more than a mere mechanic; he was an artist. His work was with him a hobby, almost a passion. His shop was filled with all manner of strange things that never would, or could, be sold – things he had made for the pure love of making them. He had contrived a mechanical donkey that would trot for two hours by means of stored electricity, and trot, too, much faster than the live article, and with less need for exertion on the part of the driver, a bird that would shoot up into the air, fly round and round in a circle, and drop to earth at the exact spot from where it started; a skeleton that, supported by an upright iron bar, would dance a hornpipe, and a life-size lady doll that could play the fiddle.

‘Indeed, it was the belief of the town that old Geibel could make a man capable of doing everything that a respectable man need want to do. One day he made a man who did too much, and it came about in this way : Young Doctor Follen had a baby, and the baby had a birthday. Its first birthday put Doctor Follen’s household into somewhat of a flurry, but on the occasion of its second birthday, Mrs. Doctor Follen gave a ball in honour of the event. Old Geibel and his daughter Olga were among the guests.



‘During the afternoon of the next day some three or four of Olga’s bosom friends, who had also been present at the ball, dropped in to have a chat about it. They naturally fell to discussing the men, and to criticizing their dancing. Old Geibel was in the room, but he appeared to be absorbed in his newspaper, and the girls took no notice of him.’

‘There seem to be fewer men who can dance at every ball you go to,’ said one of the girls.

‘Yes, and don’t the ones who can give themselves airs,’ said another; ‘they make quite a favour of asking you.’

‘And how stupidly they talk,’ added a third. ‘They always say exactly the same things: ‘How charming you are looking to-night.’ ‘Do you often go to Vienna? Oh, you should, it’s delightful.’ ‘What a charming dress you have on.’ ‘What a warm day it has been.’ ‘Do you like Wagner?’ ‘I do wish they’d think of something new.’

‘Oh, I never mind how they talk,’ said a fourth. ‘If a man dances well, he may be a fool for all I care.’

‘He generally is,’ slipped in a thin girl, rather spitefully.

‘I go to a ball to dance,’ continued the previous speaker, not noticing the interruption. ‘All I ask is that he shall hold me firmly, take me round steadily, and not get tired before I do.’

‘A clockwork figure would be the thing for you,’ said the girl who had interrupted.

‘Bravo!’ cried one of the others, clapping her hands, ‘what a capital idea!’

‘What’s a capital idea?’ they asked.

‘Why, a clockwork dancer, or, better still, one that would go by electricity and never run down.’

The girls took up the idea with enthusiasm.

‘Oh, what a lovely partner he would make,’ said one; ‘he would never kick you, or tread on your toes.’

‘Or tear your dress,’ said another.

‘Or get out of step.’

‘Or get giddy and lean on you.’

‘And he would never want to mop his face with his handkerchief. I do hate to see a man do that after every dance.’

‘And wouldn’t want to spend the whole evening in the supper-room.’

‘Why, with a phonograph inside him to grind out all the stock remarks, you would not be able to tell him from a real man,’ said the girl who had first suggested the idea.

‘Oh yes, you would,’ said the thin girl, ‘he would be so much nicer.’

‘Old Geibel had laid down his paper, and was listening with both his ears. On one of the girls glancing in his direction, however, he hurriedly hid himself again behind it.

‘After the girls were gone, he went into his workshop, where Olga heard him walking up and down, and every now and then chuckling to himself; and that night he talked to her a good deal about dancing and dancing men – asked what dances were most popular – what steps were gone through, with many other questions bearing on the subject.



‘Then for a couple of weeks he kept much to his factory, and was very thoughtful and busy, though prone at unexpected moments to break into a quiet low laugh, as if enjoying a joke that nobody else knew of.

‘A month later another ball took place in Furtwangen. On this occasion it was given by old Wenzel, the wealthy timber merchant, to celebrate his niece’s betrothal, and Geibel and his daughter were again among the invited.

‘When the hour arrived to set out, Olga sought her father. Not finding him in the house, she tapped at the door of his workshop. He appeared in his shirt-sleeves, looking hot but radiant.’

‘Don’t wait for me,’ he said, ‘you go on, I’ll follow you. I’ve got something to finish.’

‘As she turned to obey he called after her, ‘Tell them I’m going to bring a young man with me – such a nice young man, and an excellent dancer. All the girls will like him.’ Then he laughed and closed the door.

‘Her father generally kept his doings secret from everybody, but she had a pretty shrewd suspicion of what he had been planning, and so, to a certain extent, was able to prepare the guests for what was coming. Anticipation ran high, and the arrival of the famous mechanist was eagerly awaited.

‘At length the sound of wheels was heard outside, followed by a great commotion in the passage, and old Wenzel himself, his jolly face red with excitement and suppressed laughter, burst into the room and announced in stentorian tones:

‘Herr Geibel – and a friend.’

‘Herr Geibel and his ‘friend’ entered, greeted with shouts of laughter and applause, and advanced to the centre of the room.

‘Allow me, ladies and gentlemen,’ said Herr Geibel, ‘to introduce you to my friend, Lieutenant Fritz. Fritz, my dear fellow, bow to the ladies and gentlemen.’

‘Geibel placed his hand encouragingly on Fritz’s shoulder, and the Lieutenant bowed low, accompanying the action with a harsh clicking noise in his throat, unpleasantly suggestive of a death-rattle. But that was only a detail.’

‘He walks a little stiffly’ (old Geibel took his arm and walked him forward a few steps. He certainly did walk stiffly), ‘but then, walking is not his forte. He is essentially a dancing man. I have only been able to teach him the waltz as yet, but at that he is faultless. Come, which of you ladies may I introduce him to as a partner? He keeps perfect time; he never gets tired; he won’t kick you or tread on your dress; he will hold you as firmly as you like, and go as quickly or as slowly as you please; he never gets giddy; and he is full of conversation. Come, speak up for yourself, my boy.’

‘The old gentleman twisted one of the buttons at the back of his coat, and immediately Fritz opened his mouth, and in thin tones that appeared to proceed from the back of his head, remarked suddenly, ‘May I have the pleasure?’ and then shut his mouth again with a snap.’

‘That Lieutenant Fritz had made a strong impression on the company was undoubted, yet none of the girls seemed inclined to dance with him. They looked askance at his waxen face, with its staring eyes and fixed smile, and shuddered. At last old Geibel came to the girl who had conceived the idea.

‘It is your own suggestion, carried out to the letter,’ said Geibel, ‘an electric dancer. You owe it to the gentleman to give him a trial.’

‘She was a bright, saucy little girl, fond of a frolic. Her host added his entreaties, and she consented.

Herr Geibel fixed the figure to her. Its right arm was screwed round her waist, and held her firmly; its delicately jointed left hand was made to fasten upon her right. The old toymaker showed her how to regulate its speed, and how to stop it, and release herself.

‘It will take you round in a complete circle,’ he explained; ‘be careful that no one knocks against you, and alters its course.’

‘The music struck up. Old Geibel put the current in motion, and Annette and her strange partner began to dance.

‘For a while everyone stood watching them. The figure performed its purpose admirably. Keeping perfect time and step, and holding its little partner tight clasped in an unyielding embrace, it revolved steadily, pouring forth at the same time a constant flow of squeaky conversation, broken by brief intervals of grinding silence.

‘How charming you are looking tonight,’ it remarked in its thin, far-away voice. ‘What a lovely day it has been. Do you like dancing? How well our steps agree. You will give me another, won’t you? Oh, don’t be so cruel. What a charming gown you have on. Isn’t waltzing delightful? I could go on dancing for ever – with you. Have you had supper?’

‘As she grew more familiar with the uncanny creature, the girl’s nervousness wore off, and she entered into the fun of the thing.

‘Oh, he’s just lovely,’ she cried, laughing; ‘I could go on dancing with him all my life.’

‘Couple after couple now joined them, and soon all the dancers in the room were whirling round behind them. Nicholas Geibel stood looking on, beaming with childish delight at his success.

‘Old Wenzel approached him, and whispered something in his ear. Geibel laughed and nodded, and the two worked their way quietly towards the door.

‘This is the young people’s house to-night,’ said Wenzel, as soon as they were outside; ‘you and I will have a quiet pipe and glass of hock, over in the counting-house.’

‘Meanwhile the dancing grew more fast and furious. Little Annette loosened the screw regulating her partner’s rate of progress, and the figure flew round with her swifter and swifter. Couple after couple dropped out exhausted, but they only went the faster, till at length they remained dancing alone.

‘Madder and madder became the waltz. The music lagged behind: the musicians, unable to keep pace, ceased, and sat staring. The younger guests applauded, but the older faces began to grow anxious.

‘Hadn’t you better stop, dear,’ said one of the women, ‘you’ll make yourself so tired.’

‘But Annette did not answer.

‘I believe she’s fainted,’ cried out a girl who had caught sight of her face as it was swept by.

‘One of the men sprang forward and clutched at the figure, but its impetus threw him down on to the floor, where its steel-cased feet laid bare his cheek. The thing evidently did not intend to part with its prize so easily.

‘Had any one retained a cool head, the figure, one cannot help thinking, might easily have been stopped. Two or three men acting in concert might have lifted it bodily off the floor, or have jammed it into a corner. But few human heads are capable of remaining cool under excitement. Those who are not present think how stupid must have been those who were; those who are reflect afterwards how simple it would have been to do this, that, or the other, if only they had thought of it at the time.

‘The women grew hysterical. The men shouted contradictory directions to one another. Two of them made a bungling rush at the figure, which had the end result of forcing it out of its orbit at the centre of the room, and sending it crashing against the walls and furniture. A stream of blood showed itself down the girl’s white frock, and followed her along the floor. The affair was becoming horrible. The women rushed screaming from the room. The men followed them.

‘One sensible suggestion was made: ‘Find Geibel – fetch Geibel.’

‘No one had noticed him leave the room, no one knew where he was. A party went in search of him. The others, too unnerved to go back into the ballroom, crowded outside the door and listened. They could hear the steady whir of the wheels upon the polished floor as the thing spun round and round; the dull thud as every now and again it dashed itself and its burden against some opposing object and ricocheted off in a new direction.

‘And everlastingly it talked in that thin ghostly voice, repeating over and over the same formula: ‘How charming you look to-night. What a lovely day it has been. Oh, don’t be so cruel. I could go on dancing for ever – with you. Have you had supper?’

‘Of course they sought Geibel everywhere but where he was. They looked in every room in the house, then they rushed off in a body to his own place, and spent precious minutes waking up his deaf old housekeeper. At last it occurred to one of the party that Wenzel was missing also, and then the idea of the counting-house across the yard presented itself to them, and there they found him.

‘He rose up, very pale, and followed them; and he and old Wenzel forced their way through the crowd of guests gathered outside, and entered the room, and locked the door behind them.

‘From within there came the muffled sound of low voices and quick steps, followed by a confused scuffling noise, then silence, then the low voices again.

‘After a time the door opened, and those near it pressed forward to enter, but old Wenzel’s broad head and shoulders barred the way.

‘I want you – and you, Bekler,’ he said, addressing a couple of the elder men. His voice was calm, but his face was deadly white. ‘The rest of you, please go – get the women away as quickly as you can.

‘From that day old Nicholas Geibel confined himself to the making of mechanical rabbits, and cats that mewed and washed their faces.’

**Glossary**

**contrived** (v) devised **dance a hornpipe** solo dance performed by sailors **fiddle** (n) violin **Wagner** Wilhelm Richard Wagner, German composer primarily known for his operas **grind out** produce in a routine or monotonous manner **betrothal** (n) engagement **stentorian** (adj.) resonant and powerful **forte** (n) speciality **waltz** (n) ballroom dance **hock** (n) a kind of white wine **counting house** (n) accounts office **ricocheted** (v) bounced

**Activity II**

**Read the lesson carefully.**

**A. Choose the correct option and rewrite the complete sentence.**

1. The author describes Geibel as \_\_\_\_\_ .
 

(a) an artist	(b) a dancing partner
(c) a mechanic	(d) a robot
2. Mrs. Doctor Follen gave a ball in honour of her \_\_\_\_\_ .
 

(a) anniversary	(b) baby's birthday
(c) friend's wedding	(d) house-warming party
3. Olga's father had a capital idea of making a \_\_\_\_\_ .
 

(a) clockwork dancer	(b) driver
(c) moving skeleton	(d) talking clock
4. The chaos at the ball could have been stopped if \_\_\_\_\_ .
 

(a) all the guests had left	(b) any one had retained a cool head
(c) the girls had stopped dancing	(d) the music had stopped
5. Why did Fritz start dancing faster and faster?
 

(a) He got very excited with the music.	(b) He was programmed to do so.
(c) His partner was dancing very fast.	(d) His screws got loosened.

**B. Answer the following questions in brief.**

1. Write about the mechanical wonders created by Nicholas Geibel.
2. What criticism was levelled against men in the conversation between Olga and her friends?
3. List the essential qualities of a dancing partner as described by the girls.
4. How, according to Geibel, is Fritz a faultless dancing partner?
5. Why were the girls not eager to dance with Fritz?
6. How did the people in the ballroom react when the dancing went out of control?
7. Can a machine replace a human being? Discuss with reference to 'The Dancing Partner'.

**C. Write in detail on :**

1. Annette's Dancing Experience with Fritz
2. Nicholas Geibel

**Activity III**

**A. Find words from the text which mean the following.**

1. *strong and barely controllable emotions*— passion
2. moved by sudden gusts of wind— \_\_\_\_\_
3. used to express approval, satisfaction or delight— \_\_\_\_\_
4. shining or glowing brightly— \_\_\_\_\_
5. having or showing sharp powers of judgement— \_\_\_\_\_
6. strange or mysterious, especially in an unsettling way— \_\_\_\_\_
7. the force or energy with which a body moves— \_\_\_\_\_

**B. Given below is a list of some well known dance forms of India and abroad. Write two sentences about each of them.**

Mohiniattam, Manipuri, Kuchipudi, Odissi, Flamenco, Foxtrot, Hip Hop, Tanoura

**Activity IV**

**A. Read the following sentence taken from the story.**

1. *Old Geibel could make a man capable of doing everything that a respectable man need want to do.*

This sentence consists of two clauses :

2. Old Geibel could make a man capable of doing everything
3. A respectable man need want to do

The two clauses are connected together by the word 'that'. 'That' is a subordinator also called Subordinating Conjunction that joins the subordinate clause ('a respectable man need want to do') to the main clause ('Old Geibel could make a man capable of doing everything'). Remember that subordinate clauses cannot stand alone as a sentence and they are generally a part of complex sentences.

Here are some common subordinators in English:

after, although, as if, because, even if, if, in case, since, though, until, unless, when, wherever, while, who

**B. Use the two subordinators in the brackets to form two sentences each. Make necessary changes wherever required.**

1. Wearing seatbelts can increase drivers' safety. Many drivers prefer not to use them. (although; though)
2. In cold climates water evaporates slowly. It evaporates rapidly in hot climates. (while; whereas)
3. I cannot go to the movies. I finish my homework. (unless; if)

4. It's raining. We cannot play football. (since; because)
5. I study all night. I'll not be prepared for tomorrow's test. (even if; even though)
6. I have to quit smoking. I cannot sing. (unless; if)

**C. Read the following sentences from the story.**

*How charming you are looking tonight!*

*What a lovely day it has been!*

*What a charming gown you have on!*

These can be re-written as

*You are indeed looking charming tonight.*

*It has really been a lovely day.*

*You have truly a charming gown on.*

The former are examples of exclamatory sentences while the latter are assertive sentences. Notice that in the assertive sentences you may need to insert an adverb ('indeed', 'really') to capture the mood of the exclamatory sentences.

**Transform the following exclamatory sentences into assertive sentences.**

1. How kind of you to help him like that!
2. What a glorious morning!
3. O that I were young again!
4. What a delightful function it was!
5. What a lovely partner he would make!

**Activity V**

- A. Machines can do many things more precisely and efficiently than humans. When we look around and count, machines are generally taking over human tasks in the kitchen, hospitals, schools, industry as well as in other workplaces. Humans or machines – Which is more important? Form two groups. One that believes humans will be replaced by machines and second that believes that machines cannot replace humans completely. Discuss the points amongst yourselves and then let two representatives from each group present the group's views before the class.
- B. Malfunctioning of machines which may cause havoc are man-made disasters. But disasters can also be natural. According to you, is fire a natural or man-made disaster? Discuss with your partner the steps you should take in case of a fire at school / home.

**Activity VI**

- A. You attended a lecture on 'The Role of Science and Technology Today'. Note down the important points of the lecture.
- B. Some people believe that today's virtual world leads to human isolation. Do you agree? Why? Write a paragraph.





## UNIT 11

### Activity I

Some of you must have taken part in elocution, debate or declamation competitions. What according to you are the qualities of a good speaker? Share it with the class.

#### Introduction

**Julian Treasure** is a sound and communication expert, TED (Technology, Entertainment, Design) speaker, author of *Sound Business* and a sought-after speaker of international repute.

**How to Speak so that People Want to listen**, is in the rare group of speeches that has more than 10 million views on TED.com. Read on to hone your skills and make the world sound more beautiful.

### How to Speak so that People Want to Listen

The human voice: It's the instrument we all play. It's the most powerful sound in the world, probably. It's the only one that can start a war or say "I love you." And yet many people have the experience that when they speak, people don't listen to them. And why is that? How can we speak powerfully to make change in the world?

What I'd like to suggest, there are a number of habits that we need to move away from. I've assembled for your pleasure here seven deadly sins of speaking. I'm not pretending this is an exhaustive list, but these seven, I think, are pretty large habits that we can all fall into.

First, gossip. Speaking ill of somebody who's not present. Not a nice habit, and we know perfectly well the person gossiping, five minutes later, will be gossiping about us.

Second, judging. We know people who are like this in conversation, and it's very hard to listen to somebody if you know that you're being judged and found wanting at the same time.

Third, negativity. You can fall into this. My mother, in the last years of her life, became very negative, and it's hard to listen. I remember one day, I said to her, "It's October 1 today," and she said, "I know, isn't it dreadful?"

(Laughter)

It's hard to listen when somebody's that negative.

(Laughter)

And another form of negativity, complaining. Well, this is the national art of the U.K. It's our national sport. We complain about the weather, sport, about politics, about everything, but actually, complaining is viral misery. It's not spreading sunshine and lightness in the world.

Excuses. We've all met this guy. May be we've all been this guy. Some people have a blame thrower. They just pass it on to everybody else and don't take responsibility for their actions, and again, hard to listen to somebody who is being like that.

Penultimate, the sixth of the seven, embroidery, exaggeration. It demeans our language, actually, sometimes. For example, if I see something that really is awesome, what do I call it?

(Laughter)



And then, of course, this exaggeration becomes lying, and we don't want to listen to people we know are lying to us.

And finally, dogmatism. The confusion of facts with opinions. When those two things get conflated, you're listening into the wind. You know, somebody is bombarding you with their opinions as if they were true. It's difficult to listen to that.

So here they are: seven deadly sins of speaking. These are things I think we need to avoid. But is there a positive way to think about this? Yes, there is. I'd like to suggest that there are four really powerful cornerstones, foundations that we can stand on if we want our speech to be powerful and to make change in the world. Fortunately, these things spell a word. The word is "HAIL," and it has a great definition as well. I'm not talking about the stuff that falls from the sky and hits you on the head. I'm talking about this definition, to greet or acclaim enthusiastically, which is how I think our words will be received if we stand on these four things.

So what do they stand for? See if you can guess. The 'H', honesty, of course, being true in what you say, being straight and clear. The 'A' is authenticity, just being yourself. A friend of mine described it as standing in your own truth, which I think is a lovely way to put it. The 'I' is integrity, being your word, actually doing what you say, and being somebody people can trust. And the 'L' is love. I don't mean romantic love, but I do mean wishing people well, for two reasons. First of all, I think absolute honesty may not be what we want. I mean, my goodness, you look ugly this morning. Perhaps that's not necessary. Tempered with love, of course, honesty is a great thing. But also, if you're really wishing somebody well, it's very hard to judge them at the same time. I'm not even sure you can do those two things simultaneously. So HAIL.

Also, now that's what you say, and it's like the old song, it is what you say, it's also the way that you say it. You have an amazing toolbox. This instrument is incredible, and yet this is a toolbox that very few people have ever opened. I'd like to have a little rummage in there with you now and just pull a few tools out that you might like to take away and play with, which will increase the power of your speaking.

Register, for example. Now, falsetto register may not be very useful most of the time, but there's a register in between. I'm not going to get very technical about this for any of you who are voice coaches. You can locate your voice, however. So if I talk up here in my nose, you can hear the difference. If I go down here in my throat, which is where most of us speak from most of the time. But if you want weight, you need to go down here to the chest. You hear the difference? We vote for politicians with lower voices, it's true, because we associate depth with power and with authority. That's register.

Then we have timbre. It's the way your voice feels. Again, the research shows that we prefer voices which are rich, smooth and warm, like hot chocolate. Well if that's not you, that's not the end of the world, because you can train. Go and get a voice coach. And there are amazing things you can do with breathing, with posture, and with exercises to improve the timbre of your voice.

Then, prosody. I love prosody. This is the sing-song, the meta-language that we use in order to impart meaning. It's root one for meaning in conversation. People who speak all on one note are really quite hard to listen to if they don't have any prosody at all. That's where the word "monotonic" comes from, or monotonous, monotone. Also, we have repetitive prosody now coming in, where every sentence ends as if it were a question when it's actually not a question, it's a statement?

(Laughter)

And if you repeat that one, it's actually restricting your ability to communicate through prosody, which I think is a shame, so let's try and break that habit.

I can get very excited by saying something really quickly, or I can slow right down to emphasize, and at the end of that, of course, is our old friend silence. There's nothing wrong with a bit of silence in a talk, is there? We don't have to fill it with 'ums' and 'ahs'. It can be very powerful.

Of course, pitch often goes along with pace to indicate arousal, but you can do it just with pitch. Where did you leave my keys? (Higher pitch) Where did you leave my keys? (Lower Pitch) So, slightly different meaning in those two deliveries.

And finally, volume. (Loud) I can get really excited by using volume. Sorry about that, if I startled anybody. Or, I can have you really pay attention by getting very quiet. Some people broadcast the whole time. Try not to do that. That's called sodcasting.

(Laughter)

Imposing your sound on people around you carelessly and inconsiderately. Not nice.

Of course, where this all comes into play most of all is when you've got something really important to do. It might be standing on a stage like this and giving a talk to people. It might be proposing marriage, asking for a raise, a wedding speech. Whatever it is, if it's really important, you owe it to yourself to look at this toolbox and the engine that it's going to work on, and no engine works well without being warmed up. Warm up your voice.

Actually, let me show you how to do that. Would you all like to stand up for a moment? I'm going to show you the six vocal warm-up exercises that I do before every talk I ever do. Any time you're going to talk to anybody important, do these. First, arms up, deep breathe in, and sigh out, ahhhhh, like that. One more time. Ahhhh, very good. Now we're going to warm up our lips, and we're going to go Ba, Ba, Ba, Ba, Ba, Ba, Ba, Ba, Ba. Very good. And now, brrrrrrrrr, just like when you were a kid. Brrrr. Now your lips should be coming alive. We're going to do the tongue next with exaggerated la, la, la, la, la, la, la, la, la. Beautiful. You're getting really good at this. And then, roll an R. Rrrrrrr. That's like champagne for the tongue. Finally, and if I can only do one, the pros call this the siren. It's really good. It starts with 'we' and goes to 'aw.' The 'we' is...

(Applause)

Next time you speak, do those in advance.

Now let me just put this in context to close. This is a serious point here. This is where we are now, right? We speak not very well to people who simply aren't listening in an environment that's all about noise and bad acoustics. I have talked about that on this stage in different phases. What would the world be like if we were speaking powerfully to people who were listening consciously in environments which were actually fit for purpose? Or to make that a bit larger, what would the world be like if we were creating sound consciously and consuming sound consciously and designing all our environments consciously for sound? That would be a world that does sound beautiful, and one where understanding would be the norm, and that is an idea worth spreading.

Thank you.

(Applause)

**Glossary**

**seven deadly sins** also known as the capital vices or cardinal sins : pride, covetousness, lust, anger, gluttony, envy, and sloth **cornerstones** (n) bases **register** (n) (here) a particular style of speaking **falsetto** (adj.) above the normal voice range **timbre** (n) distinctive property of a complex sound **prosody** (n) patterns of stress and intonation in a language, rhythmic pattern **sodcasting** (n) playing music on a mobile phone or other portable device in public, without regard for those around **acoustics** (n) study of the physical properties of sound

**Activity II**

**Read the lesson carefully.**

**A. Choose the correct option and rewrite the complete sentence.**

- The most powerful sound in the world is \_\_\_\_\_ .
  - God's voice
  - human voice
  - voice of nature
  - voice of the soul
- According to the speaker \_\_\_\_\_ is a viral misery.
  - complaining
  - criticizing
  - exaggerating
  - judging
- Dogmatism means \_\_\_\_\_ .
  - confused judgment on opinions
  - confused opinion on principles
  - confusion of facts with opinions
  - confusion with principles of opinion
- Power of your speaking can be improved by \_\_\_\_\_ .
  - opinionated ideas
  - speaking aloud
  - speaking under your breath
  - voice modulation
- According to the author, \_\_\_\_\_ create a world that sounds beautiful.
  - creating and consuming sound consciously
  - creating and sharing sound
  - listening and sharing sound
  - listening and understanding sound consciously

**B. Answer the following questions in brief.**

- What is the significance of the human voice?
- 'With a good speech you can make a change in the world.' Explain.
- Which tools help to increase the impact of speech? How?
- What is an engine according to the author? Why is it necessary to warm it up?
- When could understanding be made a norm?

**C. Write in detail on:**

1. Seven Deadly Sins of Speaking
2. HAIL

**Activity III**

**A. Everyone likes to be appreciated when a job is done well. If you were the speaker what would the following convey to you?**

- Some positive feedback :

**Example:**

- laughter : Your joke has been understood.
- applause : \_\_\_\_\_
- nodding of the head : \_\_\_\_\_
- taking notes : \_\_\_\_\_
- asking questions : \_\_\_\_\_
- smiling : \_\_\_\_\_

- Some negative feedback :

- yawning : \_\_\_\_\_
- dozing off : \_\_\_\_\_
- looking at the watch : \_\_\_\_\_
- playing on the mobile phone : \_\_\_\_\_
- talking to your neighbour : \_\_\_\_\_
- walking out halfway : \_\_\_\_\_

**B. The word *aural* means related to the ear or the sense of hearing. Now, find words that mean the following:**

**Word related to the**

1. eye : \_\_\_\_\_
2. teeth : \_\_\_\_\_
3. nose : \_\_\_\_\_
4. face : \_\_\_\_\_
5. back : \_\_\_\_\_
6. voice : \_\_\_\_\_
7. mouth : \_\_\_\_\_

**Activity IV**

**A. Read the following sentences from the talk. Notice how they seem to be incomplete.**

*First, (...) gossip.*

*Second, (...) judging.*

*Third, (...) negativity.*

*And another form of negativity, (...) complaining.*

The first three sentences can be completed with ‘there is’, and the fourth with ‘is’. In spoken English, it is very common to leave things unsaid or half-said. This is indicated in written English through *ellipsis*.

**The following sentences indicate ‘ellipses’ in English.**

**Fill in the brackets with parts of the sentence that you think have been left unsaid.**

- There were a few sandwiches on the table. He went and took two. ( )
- ‘I’ll help you.’  
‘You can’t’ ( )
- ‘Get up quick and open the door. If you don’t ( ), they’ll start shouting.’
- I ordered the raita, and he ( ) the ice-cream.
- I ordered the buttermilk, ( ) not ( ) milk.
- I’ll go for a vacation this summer, but I’m not sure where ( ).
- I got two bicycles, and Chirag ( ) one.

**B. Notice other examples of ‘unsaid’ things in the talk. In groups, make a list, complete them with the most appropriate words/ phrases.**

#### Activity V

Human beings have developed language to communicate emotions and thoughts. The actual message is still generally lost in the chasm between what is said and what is heard.

Let the teacher whisper a phrase/short message in the ear of the first student. The student then should whisper it in the ear of the second student and so on until the last student. At the end, the last student to hear the phrase/message should come in front of the class and repeat the message aloud. What do you think happened? Discuss in the class.

#### Activity VI

- A.** A tweet is a posting made on a social media website.  
Some say social media is superficial, with no room for expressing complex ideas. Defy these sceptics by describing yourself as fully and accurately as possible in the 140-character limit of a tweet.
- B.** Is it any wonder that we call ourselves the human race? We race against time, against other people, against ourselves. We race for pride, for glory, for freedom, for love. Sometimes we ask ourselves, “Is Winning the Only Goal in Life ?” Draft a speech on what’s important to you.



## UNIT 12

### Activity I

Do you recollect the questions you asked when you began to understand things around you? When you were five, you probably asked your parents ‘Why am I not in your wedding album?’ Recollect some of the questions you asked. Ask your partner to answer them. Do you now feel that they were funny? Why?

#### Introduction

**Lee Carroll** is an American author and a valued self-help spiritual speaker. He has authored many books and compiled a few.

**The Infant’s Questions** is a parable about a magical conversation between a mother and her infant son. Read on...

### The Infant’s Questions

The human mother was startled indeed when the large male angel appeared in her laundry room. ‘What are you doing here?!’

‘You expected me in the kitchen?’ asked the angel.

‘No, I didn’t expect you at all!’ the mother answered. ‘Why are you here?’

‘To grant your request,’ said the angel, as if it were a common thing to appear in a human’s home.

‘I don’t remember any request!’ exclaimed the mother. ‘I hope I asked for something good and that you didn’t just overhear me swearing. I say things all the time when I’m mad.’

‘No, no,’ replied the angel. ‘Remember when you were looking into the eyes of your son and murmured, ‘If only we could talk to each other’? Well, I’m here to arrange that. Tomorrow night when you go into your son’s nursery, I will be there to allow you to speak to him, and he to you. You will have a brief time where he can speak to you with the intellect of an adult and the language of an adult. I’ll tell you more when I see you then.’ And with that, the angel disappeared –slightly to the left of the dryer – and up a vent.

The mother was not frightened. After all, she believed in angels and had been to the local angel shop many times. She had no way of knowing that real angels don’t like angel shops. All the popularity had taken the fun out of appearing before people. Some mothers even wanted to know where the angel got its costume – very insulting to a real live angel.

The mother didn’t sleep much that night, and when she put her six month old infant to bed early in the evening, she looked deep into his eyes and said, ‘Tomorrow you and I will actually get to speak to each other!’ She was excited indeed. He drooled in response.

She carefully crafted what she would say to him. Where does one begin? How long would she have? Would she be able to communicate the difficult things of life? She started by thinking of all the things she wanted to tell a child just starting out in life – about how a stove is hot, and a pretty fire can hurt – but wait! The angel said the child would speak with an adult’s mind. That would change everything! She would need to tell him how to handle girls, and how to treat a broken heart, and how not to trust everyone, and how not to drive too fast. Oh my! There is so much to tell him about being human, she thought.



The next evening, the time for the magic discussion slowly approached. She waited with her infant son at her side in the nursery until the appointed hour, when the angel appeared again.

‘Nice to see the two of you,’ the angel quickly said. ‘Here are the rules of the conversation. Mom, you can only answer. Son, you can only ask three questions. Then it’s over.’ And with that, the angel again disappeared. This changes everything, thought the mother in silence while looking at her son. Perhaps I am hallucinating. I’ll bet my son simply goes to sleep now. Instead, the infant stood up!

‘Mother,’ said the infant. ‘it’s a magical day indeed that brings us together like this. What joy to be able to speak to you at this point in my life!’

The mother stood up at attention – with her mouth dropping in amazement. She even drooled a bit.

‘Only three questions can I ask,’ the boy continued from the crib. ‘I want to know so much!’ The boy was thinking about his first question as his mother was taking it all in. This is real, she thought. My son is talking to me as if he were all grown up! What a miracle. What a gift. She could hardly contain herself waiting for her son’s first question. Would it be about philosophy or religion? Perhaps he would want to know the best advice to guide him into a good career, or maybe he wanted to know how he should choose the best mate—one who would stick around longer than hers did. The boy looked into his mother’s eyes and asked the first question.

‘Mother, I have lain outside this house on my back and was amazed at the sky. Why is it blue?’

It was all the mother could do not to shout: ‘You wasted the first question ! Who cares why the sky is blue!’ But the mother was so in love with her son that she patiently answered the question according to the rules. She explained how the atmosphere and oxygen molecules refract the light of the sun and turn it blue – at least that’s what she believed. It sounded good, anyway. She anxiously waited for the next question. The next one has to be better, she thought. Perhaps he would like to know what he should do with his life in order not to end up homeless or with delinquent friends.

‘Mother, my second question is this. Although I have been here only six months, I notice that sometimes it is hot outside, and sometimes it is cold. Why is that?’

The mother was appalled. Another question wasted on dumb stuff! How could this be, she wondered. Her son was innocent and alert. His question was important to him, and she treasured this magic time they could have together. Slowly, she tried to tell him about the Earth and the Sun, and how the Earth tilts slightly as it orbits the Sun, causing winter and summer, cold and hot. Finally, it was time for the last question. They had been at it for almost 30 minutes, and so little had actually been communicated.

‘Mother, I love you!’ exclaimed the son. ‘But how do I know you are really my mother? Do you have some kind of proof?’

What kind of a question was this? Where did that come from? Who else would be his mother? Hadn’t she cared for him every day of his life? What a disappointment this session had been. She almost wanted to walk away and go back to the laundry room where this had all started. She thought of how she was going to shove the angel in the dryer the next time she saw him. Her son, his innocent eyes wide open and alert, was waiting for a reply.

She started crying, but held out her hands and said, ‘Look at my fingers; they are just like yours. My feet and my face look like yours. My expressions of joy and love are just like yours. I am truly your mother.



We have the same eyes and mouth – look!’ With that, the child was satisfied, and he slowly laid himself down on his mat and went to sleep.

That was it? This miracle of communication had come and gone, and the mother had not had a meaningful conversation with her beautiful son. What happened? What went wrong? She spent a great deal of time thinking about it all, and she mourned the passing of such an event without anything substantive being transferred.

Then the angel appeared again – up through the bathroom drain. ‘Go away,’ the mother said before the angel could say anything. ‘What a disappointment you turned out to be!’

‘I gave you the time,’ the angel said kindly. ‘I did not design the questions.’

‘What good was it? Why didn’t my son ask anything important? You told me he would have the mind of an adult, but he asked the questions of a child. You have tricked me with your so-called miracle.’

‘Dear one,’ the angel replied, ‘Although your son was given the language and the intellect of an adult, he had only the wisdom and experience of the six months he had been on earth. His questions were therefore the most meaningful ones he could think of, and you answered them all. Even the last one, which was postured in fear, you answered correctly. In addition, you transmitted your love to him while you were together, and you were not impatient with him. He did his best and was honest. What more could you ask?’

The mother sat down. She hadn’t thought of that. Her son had mustered up the best questions he could come up with. How could he know what to ask if he didn’t have the wisdom she had? And if he had somehow been given that wisdom, he would not have had to ask anything. Without any more communication, the angel left for the final time – this time out the window.

The mother returned to the crib and spent a long time looking at her precious son. ‘You did your best, my son,’ She said in a quiet voice. ‘Was good that we had time for a talk.’

### Glossary

**son’s nursery** (n) child’s room **hallucinating** (v) experiencing seemingly real perception of something not present **crib** (n) baby bed with high sides made of wooden or metal strips **delinquent** (n) offender **appalled** (v) shocked **substantive** (adj.) important, meaningful **mustered up** (v) gathered

### Activity II

**Read the lesson carefully.**

**A. Choose the correct option and rewrite the sentence.**

- The angel appeared in front of the mother \_\_\_\_\_ .
  - to fulfil her materialistic requirements
  - to grant her request
  - to help her bring up her son
  - to help her with her laundry
- The mother wished to \_\_\_\_\_ .
  - have a talk with her infant
  - make her infant a successful person in life
  - make her infant grow overnight as an adult
  - see her infant’s future

3. The mother was appalled at the second question because \_\_\_\_\_ .
  - (a) she did not know the answer to the question
  - (b) the angel could not answer the question
  - (c) the angel got angry at the question
  - (d) the question was inappropriate
4. \_\_\_\_\_ was the proof, the infant got that she was his mother.
  - (a) A photograph of them together
  - (b) Reminding him of certain incidents in their life as mother and son
  - (c) That mother had already given her introduction
  - (d) The similarity in features and expressions between the two
5. The mother was disappointed with the conversation because \_\_\_\_\_ .
  - (a) no questions were asked
  - (b) the questions were difficult
  - (c) the questions were easy
  - (d) the questions were not upto her expectations

**B. Answer the following questions in brief.**

1. What worldly wisdom did the mother think of imparting to her son?
2. Mention the condition laid down by the angel for the ‘magic discussion’.
3. What questions were expected by the mother from her six-month-old infant?
4. How does the angel justify the infant’s questions ?

**C. Write in detail on:**

1. Son’s Questions and Mother’s Answers
2. Mother’s Realisation

**Activity III**

**A. Find the noun forms of these words from the lesson and use them in meaningful sentences.**

popular    converse    amaze    attentive    disappoint    communicate    discuss

**B. The following words from the lesson express happiness or disappointment. Find their meanings and use them in meaningful sentences.**

startled    excited    appalled    exclaimed    drooled    wondered    amazed

**Activity IV**

**A. Read the sentence below. What do you think is the function of the highlighted word?**

*The next **one** has to be better, she thought.*

Here, the word ‘one’ substitutes certain words/phrases/sentences in the previous sentences of the story. Can you identify what it is?

Substitution in English occurs through words like *one, ones, the same, do, so.*

**Complete the following sentences using the most appropriate word from those mentioned given above.**

1. 'Didn't you ever read Mahatma Gandhi's autobiography? I've often told you to do \_\_\_\_\_ if you want to know something.'
2. I bet you will reach the peak before I \_\_\_\_\_ .
3. 'Don't you think that Sardar Patel was a great administrator?' 'I definitely think \_\_\_\_\_'
4. Rahul: 'I think I'll buy the new book on space adventure.'  
Shweta: 'That's a great idea! I think I'll do \_\_\_\_\_'
5. Maitri: 'Kindle is the best way to read books. All the other \_\_\_\_\_ are a bit old-fashioned now.'  
Sushma: 'I definitely don't think \_\_\_\_\_. I bet that printed books can never be replaced.'

**B. Read the two questions below. Do you think there is a difference?**

*'What are you doing here?'*

*'You expected me in the kitchen?'* asked the angel.

The first question begins with a 'what'. However, the second question does not have a 'what' or 'how' or 'did'. The second question is an example of spoken English where questions are often indicated by the tone. In formal written English, however, the question has to be asked in a certain manner.

**Read the story again and underline the questions. Discuss whether they contain features of spoken English or written English.**

**Give reasons for your answer.**

**Activity V**

We all learn as we grow. Shared experiences, while growing up, may answer many a question that might bother a child.

Work in pairs. Discuss issues that might have bothered you while you were younger. Share your response about overcoming the situation.

**Activity VI**

- A. Write a paragraph on 'If I met an angel...'
- B. Most of us like to ask questions and get answers for them. However, it may not always be possible. Make a list of questions you would like to ask, if given a chance, to your elders.



## Poetry

1

**A Something in a Summer's Day****Introduction**

**Emily Dickinson (1830 – 1889)** was an American poet. Dickinson lived much of her life as an introvert. Despite Dickinson's prolific writing, fewer than a dozen of her poems were published during her lifetime. Dickinson frequently uses humour, puns, irony and satire in her poetry.

**A Something in a Summer's Day** is like an ode to summer – its greatness and wonder. Summer is described as that which solemnizes, transcends and transports a person into the world of nature.

A something in a summer's day,  
 As slow her flambeaux burn away,  
 Which solemnizes me.  
 A something in a summer's noon, –  
 An azure depth, a wordless tune,  
 Transcending ecstasy.  
 And still within a summer's night  
 A something so transporting bright,  
 I clap my hands to see;  
 Then veil my too inspecting face,  
 Lest such a subtle, shimmering grace  
 Flutter too far for me.  
 The wizard-fingers never rest,  
 The purple brook within the breast  
 Still chafes its narrow bed;  
 Still rears the East her amber flag,  
 Guides still the sun along the crag  
 His caravan of red,  
 Like flowers that heard the tale of dews,  
 But never deemed the dripping prize  
 Awaited their low brows;  
 Or bees, that thought the summer's name  
 Some rumor of delirium  
 No summer could for them;  
 Or Arctic creature, dimly stirred

By tropic hint, – some travelled bird  
 Imported to the wood;  
 Or wind's bright signal to the ear,  
 Making that homely and severe,  
 Contented, known, before  
 The heaven unexpected came,  
 To lives that thought their worshipping  
 A too presumptuous psalm.

### Glossary

**flambeaux** (n) large flaming torches **azure** (adj) bright blue colour **subtle** (adj) delicate **chafes** (v) becomes sore by rubbing against something **amber** (adj) dark orange-yellow **crag** (n) steep or rugged cliff  
**delirium** (n) acutely disturbed state of mind

### Activity

**Read the poem carefully.**

#### A. Choose the correct option and rewrite the complete sentence.

- When it's \_\_\_\_\_, the sky and the sea have a resplendent rich blue colour.
 

(a) dusk	(b) morning
(c) night	(d) noon
- Summer nights are lit up with \_\_\_\_\_ apart from the stars.
 

(a) candlelight	(b) fireflies
(c) the moon	(d) torches
- The caravan represents the red chariot of \_\_\_\_\_, a Greek mythological character.
 

(a) Apollo	(b) Demeter
(c) Helen	(d) Zeus
- Identify the figure of speech in 'like flowers that heard the tale of dews.'
 

(a) Personification	(b) Pun
(c) Synecdoche	(d) Transferred Epithet
- 'An azure depth, a wordless tune.' Identify the figure of speech.
 

(a) Metaphor	(b) Oxymoron
(c) Repetition	(d) Synecdoche

#### B. Answer the following questions in brief.

- How does the poet describe a summer's day, noon and night?
- What does the phrase 'wizard fingers' indicate?
- Why is the poet happy even at the end of the day?
- Identify and explain the simile in the poem.
- Comment on the use of colour imagery in the poem.



## Introduction

**Charles Lamb** (1775-1834) was a well-known British essayist. He is best known for his *Essays of Elia* and *Tales from Shakespeare* which he wrote with his sister Mary. He also wrote a few plays and poems. He was part of a literary circle along with Coleridge and Wordsworth.

**The Young Letter Writer** very aptly describes the transformation of a letter writer. In spite of this transformation, does something remain unchanged? Read on to find out.

Dear Sir, Dear Madam, or Dear Friend,  
With ease are written at the top;  
When those two happy words are penned,  
A youthful writer oft will stop,

And bite his pen, and lift his eyes  
As if he thinks to find in air  
The wished-for following words, or tries  
To fix his thoughts by fixed stare.

But haply all in vain—the next  
Two words may be so long before  
They'll come, the writer, sore perplexed,  
Gives in despair the matter o'er;

And when maturer age he sees  
With ready pen so swift inditing,  
With envy he beholds the ease  
Of long-accustomed letter-writing.

Courage, young friend; the time may be  
When you attain maturer age,  
Some young as you are now may see  
You with like ease glide down a page.

Even then when you, to years a debtor,  
 In varied phrase your meanings wrap,  
 The welcomest words in all your letter  
 May be those two kind words at top.

### Glossary

**haply (adv)** possibly **perplex (adj)** confused **inditing (v)** composing

### Activity

**Read the poem carefully.**

**A. Choose the correct option and rewrite the complete sentence.**

1. \_\_\_\_\_ is the easiest part of letter writing.
 

(a) Address	(b) Attention line
(c) Salutation	(d) Subject line
2. The poet makes an attempt to find words in the \_\_\_\_\_.
 

(a) air	(b) book
(c) paper	(d) sky
3. Letter writing becomes an easy task at \_\_\_\_\_ age.
 

(a) a maturer	(b) a younger
(c) an older	(d) no
4. \_\_\_\_\_ is the quality the poet wants his friend to acquire.
 

(a) Courage	(b) Enthusiasm
(c) Motivation	(d) Vision
5. Identify the figure of speech in the line 'with ready pen so swift inditing'.
 

(a) Antithesis	(b) Simile
(c) Synecdoche	(d) Transferred Epithet

**B. Answer the following questions in brief.**

1. Why would the youthful writer stop after writing the two happy words?
2. What is the difference between a young letter writer and a mature letter writer?
3. Which lines in the poem suggest that the craft of letter writing can be developed through practice?
4. Explain the following lines :  
 'Even then when you, to years a debtor,  
 In varied phrase your meanings wrap,  
 The welcomest words in all your letter  
 May be those two kind words at top.'
5. Identify the rhyme scheme used in the poem. Is it the same in all the stanzas?



**Introduction**

**Sir Walter Scott** (1771-1832) was a Scottish historical novelist, playwright, biographer and poet. Scott created and popularized historical novels in a series called *Waverley Novels*. His explorations of the neighbouring countryside developed in him both a love of natural beauty and a deep appreciation of the historic struggles of his Scottish ancestors. *The Lady of the Lake*, *The Lord of the Isles*, *Marmion* and *Lochinvar* are some of his well-known poems.

**The Troubadour**, originally written in French, was translated into English by Sir Walter Scott. In this ballad, the themes of love and war are intricately interwoven. Read on to find out how the Troubadour endeavours to balance love for his lady with observance of duty for his nation.

Glowing with love, on fire for fame  
 A Troubadour that hated sorrow  
 Beneath his lady's window came,  
 And thus he sung his last good-morrow:  
 'My arm it is my country's right,  
 My heart is in my true-love's bower;  
 Gaily for love and fame to fight  
 Befits the gallant Troubadour.'

And while he marched with helm on head  
 And harp in hand, the descant rung,  
 As faithful to his favourite maid,  
 The minstrel-burden still he sung:  
 'My arm it is my country's right,  
 My heart is in my lady's bower;  
 Resolved for love and fame to fight  
 I come, a gallant Troubadour.'

Even when the battle-roar was deep,  
 With dauntless heart he hewed his way,  
 'Mid splintering lance and falchion-sweep,

And still was heard his warrior-lay:

‘My life it is my country’s right,

My heart is in my lady’s bower;

For love to die, for fame to fight,

Becomes the valiant Troubadour.’

Alas! upon the bloody field

He fell beneath the foeman’s glaive,

But still reclining on his shield,

Expiring sung the exulting stave:-

‘My life it is my country’s right,

My heart is in my lady’s bower;

For love and fame to fall in fight

Becomes the valiant Troubadour.’

### Glossary

**Troubadour** (n) travelling singer, balladeer, poet-musician often of knightly rank in medieval Europe

**bower** (n) dwelling place **gallant** (adj) brave **helm** (n) (here) helmet **descant** (n) added music **minstrel-**

**burden** (n) folk singer’s sorrow **dauntless** (adj) fearless **hewed** (v) chopped **splintering lance** spear

breaking into small pieces **falchion** (n) short broad bladed sword **lay** (n) (here) (old English) song

**glaive** (n) sharp pointed sword **stave** (n) (here) song

### Activity

**Read the poem carefully.**

**A. Choose the correct option and rewrite the complete sentence.**

1. What is the Troubadour’s driving force?

(a) Fame

(b) Fight

(c) Happiness

(d) War

2. The Troubadour is not \_\_\_\_\_ .

(a) ‘gaily for love’

(b) ‘in want of fame in love’

(c) ‘ready to die for love’

(d) ‘resolved for love’

3. Definite \_\_\_\_\_ is clearly seen in the Troubadour's song.  
(a) intonation (b) resolve  
(c) sense (d) tone
4. 'My arm it is my country's right, My heart is in my true-love's bower.'  
Find the figure of speech used in these lines.  
(a) Paradox (b) Simile  
(c) Synecdoche (d) Transferred Epithet
5. In which of the following lines is Euphemism used?  
(a) 'And thus he sang his last good-morrow'  
(b) 'Expiring sung the exulting stave'  
(c) 'For love and fame to fall in fight'  
(d) 'I come, a gallant Troubadour'

**B. Answer the following questions in brief.**

1. What emotions are experienced by the Troubadour for his lady love and his country?
2. How did the Troubadour bid farewell to his lady love? Where?
3. Describe the Troubadour's march towards the battlefield.
4. 'For love and fame to fall in fight,  
Becomes the valiant Troubadour.' Explain.
5. Differentiate in meaning between: (a) 'My arm it is my country's right.' and (b) 'My life it is my country's right.'
6. Comment on the feeling of the Troubadour as he lay dying.
7. 'The Troubadour' is a typical ballad. Elucidate.



**Introduction**

**John Milton** (1608—1674), English poet, pamphleteer and historian, is generally considered to be the most significant English writer after William Shakespeare. The most well-known work by Milton is *Paradise Lost*, widely regarded as the greatest epic poem in English, and with *Paradise Regained* and *Samson Agonistes*, confirms Milton's reputation as one of the greatest English poets. Milton also wrote twenty four sonnets.

**How Soon Hath Time**, one of the most celebrated sonnets, deals with youth and the passage of time and seems to reiterate a theme that was close to Milton's heart.

How soon hath Time, the subtle thief of youth,  
 Stol'n on his wing my three and twentieth year!  
 My hasting days fly on with full career,  
 But my late spring no bud or blossom shew'th.  
 Perhaps my semblance might deceive the truth,  
 That I to manhood am arriv'd so near;  
 And inward ripeness doth much less appear,  
 That some more timely-happy spirits endu'th.  
 Yet be it less or more, or soon or slow,  
 It shall be still in strictest measure ev'n  
 To that same lot, however mean or high,  
 Toward which Time leads me, and the will of Heav'n:  
 All is, if I have grace to use it so,  
 As ever in my great Task-Master's eye.

**Glossary**

**hasting** (adj.) quickly passing **late spring** later days of life **shew'th** (v) shows **semblance** (n) appearance **endu'th** (v) withstands

**Activity**

**Read the poem carefully.**

**A. Choose the correct option and rewrite the complete sentence.**

- At what age is the poet writing this poem?
 

(a) 23	(b) 24
(c) 30	(d) not mentioned in the poem

2. What does the poet mean by the phrase 'inward ripeness'?
  - (a) His appearance
  - (b) His belief in God
  - (c) His maturity
  - (d) His old age
3. Though the poem starts with despair, the mood at the end of the poem changes to \_\_\_\_\_ .
  - (a) acceptance
  - (b) anger
  - (c) hope
  - (d) sorrow
4. The word 'Task-Master' at the end of the poem refers to \_\_\_\_\_ .
  - (a) God
  - (b) love
  - (c) spring
  - (d) the poet
5. 'But my late spring no bud or blossom shew' th.' Identify the figure of speech.
  - (a) Simile
  - (b) Metonymy
  - (c) Personification
  - (d) Metaphor

**B. Answer the following questions in brief.**

1. What do you think the poet is referring to through the words 'thief', 'stol'n' and 'fly' at the beginning of the poem?
2. There is a sudden change in tone in the fourth line of the poem. What does this change in tone indicate?
3. The poet says that he is being led by the 'will of heaven'. What arguments does he give for this?
4. Notice the series of negative comparatives that the poet uses: 'no bud or blossom', 'much less appear'. Make a list of such comparatives. Why do you think the poet uses them?
5. Comment on the significance of the title 'How Soon Hath Time'.



## Calling All Grand Mothers

### Introduction

**Alice Malsenior Walker** (1944-) is an African American novelist, short story writer, poet, essayist and activist. Her most famous novel, *The Color Purple*, was awarded the Pulitzer Prize and the National Book Award. Walker's creative vision is rooted in the economic hardship, racial terror and folk wisdom of African American life and culture.

**Calling All Grand Mothers** features in the collection *Hard Times Require Furious Dancing*. Grand Mothers are symbolic of all the women in the world and have an enormous task to accomplish. Read on to know about it.

We have to live  
differently  
or we  
will die  
in the same  
old ways.

Therefore  
I call on all Grand Mothers  
everywhere  
on the planet  
to rise  
and take your place  
in the leadership  
of the world

Come out  
of the kitchen  
out of the  
fields  
out of the  
beauty parlors  
out of the  
television  
Step forward  
& assume  
the role  
for which  
you were  
created:  
To lead humanity

to health, happiness  
& sanity.  
I call on  
all the  
Grand Mothers  
of Earth  
& every person  
who possesses  
the Grand Mother  
spirit  
of respect for  
life  
&  
protection of  
the young  
to rise  
& lead.  
The life of  
our species  
depends  
on it.  
& I call on all men  
of Earth  
to gracefully  
and  
gratefully  
stand aside  
& let them  
(let us)  
do so.

**Glossary**

**sanity** (n) (here) rationality **spirit** (n) (here) essence

**Activity**

**Read the poem carefully.**

**A. Choose the correct option and rewrite the complete sentence.**

1. What role should be assumed by the Grand Mothers?
 

(a) Entrepreneurs	(b) Leaders
(c) Managers	(d) Politicians
2. Alice Walker wants the Grand Mothers to come out of the \_\_\_\_\_ .
 

(a) campus	(b) fields
(c) offices	(d) shops
3. Grand Mothers have the power to lead humanity to \_\_\_\_\_ .
 

(a) development	(b) enhancement
(c) growth	(d) sanity
4. \_\_\_\_\_ is the major theme of the poem.
 

(a) Women Discrimination	(b) Women Education
(c) Women Empowerment	(d) Women Health
5. ‘We have to live/differently/or we/will die/in the same/old ways.’ Identify the figure of speech in this line.
 

(a) Alliteration	(b) Anastrophe
(c) Anti-climax	(d) Antithesis

**B. Answer the following questions in brief.**

1. Why is it necessary for the Grand Mothers to live differently?
2. Where, according to the poet, are the Grand Mothers usually occupied?
3. In what ways can the Grand Mothers contribute to the development of humanity?
4. Who does the poet refer to as ‘our species’ in the poem? How could they be protected?
5. What are the men expected to do gratefully and gracefully? Why?





**Introduction**

**Rabindranath Tagore** (1861 – 1941), also known as Gurudev, was India’s first Nobel Laureate. Author of *Gitanjali* and its “profoundly sensitive, fresh and beautiful verse”, he is generally regarded as an outstanding creative artist of the Indian subcontinent. Artist, writer of various genres of literature, he was also the founder of Shantiniketan.

**The Journey** depicts the poet’s experiences with nature.

The morning sea of silence broke into ripples of bird songs;  
and the flowers were all merry by the roadside;  
and the wealth of gold was scattered through the rift of the clouds  
while we busily went on our way and paid no heed.  
We sang no glad songs nor played;  
we went not to the village for barter;  
we spoke not a word nor smiled;  
we lingered not on the way.  
We quickened our pace more and more as the time sped by.  
The sun rose to the mid sky and doves cooed in the shade.  
Withered leaves danced and whirled in the hot air of noon.  
The shepherd boy drowsed and dreamed in the shadow of the banyan tree,  
and I laid myself down by the water  
and stretched my tired limbs on the grass.  
My companions laughed at me in scorn;  
they held their heads high and hurried on;  
they never looked back nor rested;  
they vanished in the distant blue haze.

They crossed many meadows and hills,  
and passed through strange, far-away countries.  
All honor to you, heroic host of the interminable path!  
Mockery and reproach pricked me to rise,  
but found no response in me.  
I gave myself up for lost  
in the depth of a glad humiliation  
–in the shadow of a dim delight.

The repose of the sun-embroidered green gloom  
 slowly spread over my heart.  
 I forgot for what I had traveled,  
 and I surrendered my mind without struggle  
 to the maze of shadows and songs.  
 At last, when I woke from my slumber and opened my eyes,  
 I saw thee standing by me, flooding my sleep with thy smile.  
 How I had feared that the path was long and wearisome,  
 and the struggle to reach thee was hard!

### Glossary

**ripples** (n) series of waves on the surface of water **rift of the clouds** distance between the clouds **interminable** (adj.) unending **reproach** (v) expression of disapproval or disappointment **repose** (n) rest

### Activity

**Read the poem carefully.**

#### A. Choose the correct option and rewrite the complete sentence.

- What does the poet mean by the wealth of gold being scattered?
 

(a) Gold scattered on earth	(b) Golden glow
(c) Sun's glow on the earth	(d) Wealth of nature
- Who according to the poet is hosting the interminable path?
 

(a) Fellow travellers	(b) God
(c) Poet's father	(d) Poet himself
- 'In the depth of a glad humiliation' indicates that \_\_\_\_\_.
 

(a) he feels lost	(b) he is humiliated
(c) his father got lost	(d) his fellowtravellers were humiliated
- The purpose of the travel seems to be forgotten by the poet because \_\_\_\_\_.
 

(a) he allows his inner self to reach the destination	(b) he enjoys his rest
(c) he gets engaged in other work	(d) he was feeling lazy
- 'The morning sea of silence broke into ripples.' Identify the figure of speech.
 

(a) Litotes	(b) Metaphor
(c) Simile	(d) Synecdoche

#### B. Answer the following questions in brief.

- To what did the travellers pay no heed?
- What did the travellers do till noon?
- How did the poet react on seeing the shepherd boy? How did his companions respond?
- What does the poet mean by 'sun-embroidered'?
- What does the poet realize at the end of his journey?

## Introduction

**Sir Walter Raleigh** (1554–1618) was an English statesman, writer, poet, soldier, politician, courtier, spy and explorer. Some of his well-known works are *The Nymph's Reply to the Shepherd*, *What is Our Life and The Lie* and *The Advice*.

**Song of Myself** is a humorous attempt of a poet trying to describe himself. Read on...

I was a Poet!  
 But I did not know it,  
 Neither did my Mother,  
 Nor my Sister nor my Brother.  
 The Rich were not aware of it;  
 The Poor took no care of it.  
 The Reverend Mr. Drewitt  
 Never knew it.  
 The High did not suspect it;  
 The Low could not detect it.  
 Aunt Sue  
 Said it was obviously untrue.  
 Uncle Ned  
 Said I was off my head:  
 (This from a Colonial  
 Was really a good testimonial.)  
 Still everybody seemed to think  
 That genius owes a good deal to drink.  
 So that is how  
 I am not a poet now,  
 And why

My inspiration has run dry.  
 It is no sort of use  
 To cultivate the Muse  
 If vulgar people  
 Can't tell a village pump from a church steeple.  
 I am merely apologizing  
 For the lack of the surprising  
 In what I write  
 To-night.  
 I am quite well-meaning,  
 But a lot of things are always intervening  
 Between  
 What I mean  
 And what it is said  
 I had in my head.  
 It is all very puzzling.  
 Uncle Ned  
 Says Poets need muzzling.  
 He might  
 Be right.  
 Good-night!

Glossary
----------

**colonial** (adj.) (here) American **testimonial** (n) (here) character certificate **vulgar** (adj.) (here) common  
**church steeple** tall tower of the church **muzzling** (v) silencing, restraining

**Activity****Read the poem carefully.****A. Choose the correct option and rewrite the complete sentence.**

- 'My inspiration has run dry' means \_\_\_\_\_ .
  - his ability to write poetry is exhausted
  - his family members are always quarrelling with each other
  - his finances are in bad shape
  - his mental condition is unstable
- There is a vast gap between what the poet thinks and \_\_\_\_\_ .
 

(a) aunt Sue understands	(b) Mr. Drewitt understands
(c) people understand	(d) the poet understands
- Mr. Drewitt was \_\_\_\_\_ .
 

(a) a clergyman	(b) a critic
(c) the poet's brother	(d) the poet's father
- The poet ironically apologises because \_\_\_\_\_ .
  - common people cannot differentiate between everyday language and poetry
  - he cannot compose poetry
  - his inspiration has run dry
  - the poets need muzzling
- The figure of speech in 'The Rich were not aware of it, The Poor took no care of it;' is \_\_\_\_\_ .
 

(a) Anthithesis	(b) Euphemism
(c) Litotes	(d) Metaphor

**B. Answer the following questions in brief.**

- List the people who were unaware of the poet being what he was.
- Why was the poet unable to convey his ideas?
- Why does the poet say, 'It is all very puzzling'?
- Comment on the ending of the poem.
- Explain the irony in the following lines.

'Uncle Ned

Said I was off my head:

(This from a Colonial

Was really a good testimonial.)'



**Introduction**

**Joseph Rudyard Kipling** (1865 – 1936) was an English journalist, short-story writer, poet and novelist. Kipling’s major works include novels like *The Jungle Book*, *Kim* and poems like *Mandalay*, *Gunga Din* and *The White Man’s Burden*. At the age of 41, he was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature.

**If** is an instructive poem that will help one to lead a meaningful life. The poem is addressed to Kipling’s son, John.

---

If you can keep your head when all about you  
Are losing theirs and blaming it on you;  
If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you,  
But make allowance for their doubting too:  
If you can wait and not be tired by waiting,  
Or, being lied about, don’t deal in lies,  
Or being hated don’t give way to hating,  
And yet don’t look too good, nor talk too wise;  
If you can dream – and not make dreams your master;  
If you can think – and not make thoughts your aim,  
If you can meet with Triumph and Disaster  
And treat those two impostors just the same:  
If you can bear to hear the truth you’ve spoken  
Twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools,  
Or watch the things you gave your life to, broken,  
And stoop and build ‘em up with worn-out tools;  
  
If you can make one heap of all your winnings  
And risk it on one turn of pitch-and-toss,  
And lose, and start again at your beginnings,

And never breathe a word about your loss:  
If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew  
To serve your turn long after they are gone,  
And so hold on when there is nothing in you  
Except the Will which says to them: "Hold on!"

If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue,  
Or walk with Kings — nor lose the common touch,  
If neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you,  
If all men count with you, but none too much:  
If you can fill the unforgiving minute  
With sixty seconds' worth of distance run,  
Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it,  
And which is more: you'll be a Man, my son!

### Glossary

**imposter** (n) pretender **knaves** (n) dishonest, unscrupulous persons **build' em up** (build them up) (here) rebuild the broken parts of your life **pitch-and-toss** a kind of game **sinew** (n) ligament

### Activity

**Read the poem carefully.**

**A. Choose the correct option and rewrite the complete sentence.**

- The poet advises his son on \_\_\_\_\_ .
  - acquiring something that can be perceived as a set of virtues
  - being an outstanding citizen of the community and the world
  - ignoring the advice of others
  - the way to trust oneself
- The poet asks his readers to make themselves strong enough such that they \_\_\_\_\_ .
  - can fight against all
  - can take responsibility for their actions
  - keep up their reputation
  - prove their strength

3. According to the poet, a person should muster enough confidence \_\_\_\_\_ .
  - (a) to become very rich
  - (b) to believe in himself and his potential
  - (c) to fight with his enemies
  - (d) to speak the truth
4. Kipling asks his readers to dream and think and advises them to \_\_\_\_\_ .
  - (a) continue dreaming
  - (b) do anything to achieve their dreams
  - (c) help others also to achieve their dreams
  - (d) prevent dreams from controlling every waking moment
5. In 'If you can fill the unforgiving minute 'the figure of speech used is \_\_\_\_\_ .
  - (a) Litotes
  - (b) Metaphor
  - (c) Oxymoron
  - (d) Personification

**B. Answer the following questions in brief.**

1. Explain the line: 'But make allowance for their doubting too :'
2. Mention the importance of being balanced in the treatment of victory and failure.
3. What should be mended with 'worn out tools'?
4. Why is it necessary to hold on in times of adversity?
5. How does the poet justify the value of balance and detachment in the poem?
6. Find examples of Antithesis in the poem.





**Introduction**

**Jaya Mehta** (1932-) was born in a village in Saurashtra and spent her childhood in Mumbai. Exposure to the world of poetry and research, as a translator, inspired Jaya Mehta to start creative writing.

**When a Stone Is in One's Hands** is a translation from Gujarati into English by Pradip N. Khandwalla. A stone may have many symbolic meanings. Read on to find out.

---

Stone is history  
an edifice  
a sculpture  
of Gandhi, Jesus, Buddha.  
Stone is memory of  
the Taj's opulence  
a memorial stone  
a support  
a weapon.  
When did we learn all this?  
When a stone is in hand  
one experiences power  
and forgets that what gets wounded  
is hide  
whether white or black  
hurt by a sharp pebble.  
When a stone is in hand  
one forgets that  
a fallen person  
can be given water, even an enemy.  
Such amnesia  
When the hand grips a stone....

**Glossary**

**edifice** (n) structure **opulence** (n) wealth **hide** (n) (here) skin **amnesia** (n) forgetfulness

**Activity**

**Read the poem carefully.**

**A. Choose the correct option and rewrite the complete sentence.**

1. When a stone is in one's hand, one experiences \_\_\_\_\_ .  
(a) anger (b) confidence  
(c) fear (d) power
2. When a stone is in hand, one forgets that even an enemy can be \_\_\_\_\_ .  
(a) helped (b) killed  
(c) loved (d) tortured
3. The line, 'one forgets that what gets wounded is hide' means \_\_\_\_\_ .  
(a) everyone feels the same pain (b) many can feel the pain  
(c) only few can feel the pain (d) only the wounded can feel the pain
4. 'Stone' here does not symbolize \_\_\_\_\_ .  
(a) history (b) opulence  
(c) power (d) revolt
5. The figure of speech in the line, 'When a stone is in hand' is \_\_\_\_\_ .  
(a) Metonymy (b) Onomatopoeia  
(c) Oxymoron (d) Tautology

**B. Answer the following questions in brief.**

1. How is the stone described as both constructive and destructive?
2. Describe the different feelings that one experiences when a stone is in hand.
3. 'Stone is history'. Explain.
4. Comment on the significance of the image of forgetfulness in the poem.



## Introduction

**William Butler Yeats** (1865 - 1939), an Irish poet, was one of the foremost figures of 20th century literature. He was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature – the first Irishman so honoured. His works include *The Tower*, *The Winding Stair*, *A Prayer for My Daughter*, *The Second Coming* and *Two Plays for Dancers*.

**The Wild Swans at Coole** takes us to the scene of a placid lake on an autumn evening. The poem symbolically depicts the transition of life.

The trees are in their autumn beauty,  
 The woodland paths are dry,  
 Under the October twilight the water  
 Mirrors a still sky;  
 Upon the brimming water among the stones  
 Are nine-and-fifty swans.  
 The nineteenth autumn has come upon me  
 Since I first made my count;  
 I saw, before I had well finished,  
 All suddenly mount  
 And scatter wheeling in great broken rings  
 Upon their clamorous wings.  
 I have looked upon those brilliant creatures,  
 And now my heart is sore.  
 All's changed since I, hearing at twilight,  
 The first time on this shore,  
 The bell-beat of their wings above my head,  
 Trod with a lighter tread.  
 Unwearied still, lover by lover,  
 They paddle in the cold  
 Companionable streams or climb the air;  
 Their hearts have not grown old;  
 Passion or conquest, wander where they will,  
 Attend upon them still.  
 But now they drift on the still water,  
 Mysterious, beautiful;

Among what rushes will they build,  
 By what lake's edge or pool  
 Delight men's eyes when I awake some day  
 To find they have flown away?

### Glossary

**clamorous** (adj.) noisy, loud **rushes** (n) (here) marsh plants **wheeling** (v) flying in a wide circle or curve

### Activity

**Read the poem carefully.**

**A. Choose the correct option and rewrite the complete sentence.**

1. How many years have passed since the poet first visited Coole Park?
 

(a) 16	(b) 17
(c) 18	(d) 19
2. In spite of ageing the swans are not \_\_\_\_\_ at heart.
 

(a) depressed	(b) old
(c) sore	(d) young
3. The wild swans fly in a \_\_\_\_\_ formation.
 

(a) arrow	(b) circular
(c) straight	(d) triangular
4. In the last stanza, the poet is disturbed because \_\_\_\_\_.
 

(a) he does not know where the swans will nest	(b) the number of swans will decrease
(c) the swans will drift away in water	(d) the swans will not fly anymore
5. Identify the figure of speech in 'Under the October twilight the water, /Mirrors a still sky'
 

(a) Apostrophe	(b) Metaphor
(c) Paradox	(d) Pun

**B. Answer the following questions in brief.**

1. How is autumn described by W. B. Yeats?
2. What makes the poet unhappy?
3. Describe the activities of the swans when they become old.
4. Mention the epithets used to describe the swans.
5. Why would the swans fly away some day?
6. 'The realization that life, in all its wonder, is fragile.' Elucidate with reference to *The Wild Swans at Coole*.

## Supplementary Reading

1

**The Friday Everything Changed****Introduction**

**Anne Hart** (1935- ) is a Canadian author, a biographer and a Member of the Order of Canada. She is best known for *The Life and Times of Miss Jane Marple*, her biography of the Agatha Christie character.

**The Friday Everything Changed** describes how a simple question challenges the unspoken rule and tradition. In the process, it brings people closer.

---

Tradition. In Miss Ralston's class the boys have always carried the water bucket. Until one day, the girls decide it's time to challenge the rule.

The last hour of school on Friday afternoons was for Junior Red Cross. The little kids would get out their Junior Red Cross pins and put them on and us big kids would start elbowing down the aisles to the book cupboard at the back to see who would get the interesting magazines. There was a big pile of them and they were of two kinds: the National Geographic and the Junior Red Cross News. Apart from the magazines for the big kids and may be the teacher reading a story to the little kids, about the only other thing that happened regularly during Red Cross was picking the two boys who would carry water the next week.

In our school the water bucket always stood on a shelf at the front of the room just behind the teacher's desk. First you'd make a paper cup out of a piece of scribbler paper, then you'd grab the teacher's attention from wherever it happened to be and then up you'd go to the front of the room for a drink from the water bucket.

It was kind of interesting to stand at the front of the room behind the teacher's desk and drink water. The school looked different from up there and sometimes you could get just a glimpse of an idea of what the teacher thought she was all about. I mean, from the front, looking down on those rows of kids with their heads bent over their desks and the sun coming in the windows and the blackboards and all that stuff on the walls, you might almost think, at first glance, that you were looking at one of those real city schools—like in the health books—where the kids were all so neat and all the same size. But after the first strange moment it just became our school again, because you had to start adding in things like the coal stove and the scarred old double desks and the kids themselves. I mean, we just didn't look like the kids in those pictures. May be it was because we were so many different sizes—from the kids snuffling in the front rows over their Nan and Dan readers to the big boys hunched over their desks at the back, maybe it was because we wore so many heavy clothes all the time, or may be it was because of something that wasn't even there at all but seemed to be on the faces of the kids in those city pictures: a look as if they liked being where they were.

But all that's a long way from Junior Red Cross and who would carry the water.

The water for our school came from a pump at the railway station, which was about a quarter of a mile away. One day long ago a health inspector had come around and had announced that water must be made available to the school. For a while there had been some talk of digging a well but in the end we got a big, shiny, galvanized water bucket and permission to use the railway station pump. And from that day on—for

all the boys—the most important thing that happened at school, even more important than softball, was who would get to carry the water.

If you were a boy it was something you started dreaming about in Grade I, even though there was not the remotest chance it could ever happen to you before at least Grade 5, and only then if the teacher thought you were big and strong enough. You dreamed about it partly because carrying the water meant you were one of the big guys, and carrying the water meant you could get away from school for maybe half an hour at a time. But mostly you dreamed about it because carrying the water was something real, and had absolutely nothing whatever to do with Nan and Dan and all that stuff. So every Friday afternoon toward the end of Red Cross, when it got to be time for the teacher to pick the two boys who would go for water the next week, all the National Geographics came to rest like huge butterflies folding up their yellow wings and a big hush fell all over the back rows. And that's the way it had always been until one extraordinary afternoon when, right out of the blue, just after the teacher had picked Ernie Chapman and Garnet Dixon to carry the water, my seatmate, Alma Niles, put up her hand and said: "Why can't girls go for the water, too?"

If one of those German planes, like in the war movies, had suddenly appeared over the school and dropped a bomb, we all couldn't have been more surprised. A silence fell over the room and in that silence everyone looked at the teacher.

Now our teacher that year was named Miss Ralston and even though she came from River Hibbert we all liked her quite a lot. She was strict but she was never really mean like some of the teachers we'd had. Because she was young (she'd just finished Grade 11 the year before herself—River Hibbert had fancy things like Grade 11) she'd had quite a rough time the first week of school with the bigger boys. But she was pretty big herself and after she'd strapped most of them up at the front of the room before our very eyes (and even the little kids could see that it really hurt) things had settled down. The boys kind of admired Miss Ralston for strapping so hard, and us girls admired her because she was so pretty and wore nylon stockings and loafers all the time. But the really unusual thing about Miss Ralston was the way she sometimes stopped in the middle of a lesson and looked at us as if we real people, instead of just a lot of kids who had to be pushed through to their next grades. And that was why, on that Friday afternoon when Alma Niles put up her hand and said: "Why can't girls go for the water, too?" we all turned and looked at Miss Ralston first instead of just bursting out laughing at Alma right away.

And Miss Ralston, instead of saying, "Whoever heard of girls going for the water?" or "Are you trying to be saucy, Alma?" like any other teacher would, said nothing at all for a moment but just looked very hard at Alma, who had gone quite white with the shock of dropping such a bombshell.

After a long moment, when she finally spoke, Miss Ralston, instead of saying, "Why that's out of the question, Alma," threw a bombshell of her own: "I'll think about that," she said—as if, you know, she would—"and I'll let you know next Friday."

The trouble started right away as soon as we got into the school yard, because all the boys knew, from the moment Miss Ralston had spoken, that something of theirs was being threatened and that, as long as there was the remotest chance that any girl might get to carry the water, they had to do everything in their power to stop it. Like driving a tractor or playing hockey for the Toronto Maple Leafs, carrying water was real, and because it was real it belonged to them.



So they went right for Alma as soon as she came out of school and that was when another funny thing happened. Instead of just standing back and watching Alma get beaten up, as we usually did when the boys were after someone, the girls rushed right in to try and help her. In the first place we all liked Alma, and in the second place we all had seen, as clearly as the boys, what our carrying the water might mean; that, incredibly, we, too, might get to skip school for half an hour at a time, that we, too, might get to sneak into Rowsell's store on the way back and, most dizzying thought of all, that we too might get to do something real.

And, because we were so intoxicated by the whole idea, and took the boys so much by surprise by standing up to them, we somehow managed to get Alma and ourselves out of the schoolyard with only a few bruises and torn stockings, leaving the boys in possession of the schoolyard where, as we could glimpse over our shoulders as we ran down the hill, they had begun to gather together in a single ominous knot.

And for the rest of that weekend, though of course we never talked about it in front of our parents, all we could think of, both boys and girls, was what was going to happen at school that coming week.

The first thing, clearly evident by recess on Monday morning, was that the boys had decided not to let us girls field at softball any more.

Softball at our school used to go like this: every Monday morning at recess two of the bigger boys—that year it was usually Ernie Chapman and Junior LeBlanc—used to pick their teams for the week. Whoever came out on top in laddering hands up the softball bat got to pick first and the loser second and so it went back and forth—until all the boys who were considered good enough to be on a team had been picked. Then Ernie and Junior laddered the bat again to see which side would get up first and the losing side took to the field to be joined by the little boys who hadn't been picked and us older girls who were allowed to act as sort of permanent supplementary fielders. And for the rest of the week the teams remained locked, at every recess and lunchtime, in one long softball game which had, as we discovered to our surprise several years later when the television came through, some strange rules.

The way we played, for example, every single boy had to get out before the other team could come in. And any boy hitting a homerun not only had the right to bat straight away again but also to bring back into the game any boy who had got out. Which led to kids who couldn't remember their six-times table properly being able to announce—say, by noon on Thursday “The score's now 46 to 39 because, in the last inning starting Tuesday lunchtime, Junior's team was all out except for Irving Snell, who hit three homers in a row off of Lorne Ripley, and brought in Ira and Jim and Elton who brought in the rest except for Austin who got out for the second time on Wednesday with a foul ball one of the girls caught behind third base. . .”

Some days it got so exciting that at noon we couldn't wait to eat our lunches but would rush straight into the schoolyard, gobbling our sandwiches as we ran, toward that aching moment when the ball, snaking across the yellow grass or arching toward us from the marsh sky, might meet our open, eager hands.

So it was a hard blow, Monday morning recess, when Ernie Chapman whirled the bat around his head, slammed it down as hard as he could on home base and announced. “The first girl that goes out to field, we break her neck.” We clustered forlornly around the girls' entry door knowing there was nothing we could really do.



“Oh Alma,” mourned Minnie Halliday, biting the ends of her long, brown braids, “why couldn’t you just have kept your mouth shut?” It was a bad moment. If we’d tried to go out to field they’d have picked us off one by one. We couldn’t even play softball on our own. None of us owned a bat and ball.

If it hadn’t been for Doris Pomeroy, we might have broken rank right there and then. Doris, who was in Grade 9 and had had a home permanent and sometimes wore nail polish and had even, it was rumoured, gone swimming in the quarry all alone with Elton Lawrence, flicked a rock against the schoolhouse wall in the silence following Minnie’s remark and steadied us all by saying: “Don’t be foolish, Minnie. All we have to do is wait. They need us to field and, besides, they kind of like to have us out there looking at them when they get up to bat.”

But it was a long, hard week. Besides not letting us field, the boys picked on us whenever they got the chance. I guess they figured that if they made things bad enough for us, sooner or later we’d go to Miss Ralston and ask her to forget the whole thing. But all their picking on and bullying did was to keep us together. Whenever one of us was tripped going down the aisle or got an ink ball in her hair or got trapped in the outhouse by a bunch of boys it was as if it was happening to all of us. And looking back on that week—when there were so many bad feelings and so many new feelings in the air—it was kind of nice, too, because for the first time us girls found ourselves telling each other our troubles and even our thoughts without worrying about being laughed at. And that was something new at our school.

As for Alma, who kept getting notes thrown on her desk promising her everything awful, we stuck to her like burrs. But maybe Alma’s hardest moment had nothing to do with bullying at all. It was when her cousin Arnold came over to see her Wednesday after school and asked her to drop the whole idea of girls going for the water.

“If they find out about it, Alma,” said Arnold. “they’ll probably take away the water bucket.” “Who’s they?” asked Alma. She and Arnold had played a lot together when they were little kids and she was used to listening to his opinions on most things.

“Well, the health inspector,” said Arnold, “and guys like that.”

“They’ll never take away that water bucket,” said Alma, though she wasn’t all that sure. “They don’t care who carries the water as long as it gets carried.”

“Alma,” said Arnold earnestly, “the other guys would kill me if they ever found out I told you this but sometimes carrying the water isn’t that much fun. On cold days it’s real hard work. You’re better off in the warm school.”

Alma knew what it cost Arnold to tell her this but she stood firm. “I’m sorry, Arnold,” she said. “but I’m used to cold weather. In winter I walk to school the same as you.” So Arnold went away.

If Miss Ralston, as the week wore on, noticed anything unusual going on in her school, she gave little sign of it. She passed out the usual punishments for ink balls, she intercepted threatening notes and tore them up unread, she looked at Alma’s white face, and all she asked about were the principal rivers of Europe. Nor were we surprised. Nothing in our experience had led us to believe the grown-ups had the slightest inkling—or interest—in what really went on with kids.

Only Doris Pomeroy thought differently. “Miss Ralston looks real mad,” said Doris as we trailed in thankfully from Friday morning recess.

“Mad?” a couple of us asked.

“Yeah. Like when she comes out to ring the bell and we’re all hanging around the entry door like a lot of scared chickens. She rings that old hand bell as if she wished all those yelling boys’ heads were under it. Of course they do things differently in River Hibbert. I know for a fact that girls there get to play on softball teams just like the boys.”

“On teams? Just like the boys?” But it was all too much for us to take in at that moment, so preoccupied were we with that after-noon’s decision on the water. All that long, hard week it was as if Friday afternoon and Junior Red Cross would never come again. Now that it was almost upon us most of us forgot, in our excitement, at least for the time being, Doris’ heady remark about softball.

So at lunchtime, just as the boys were winding up their week’s game (“And real great, eh? Without the girls?” Ernie Chapman was gloating loudly from the pitcher’s mound), when Miss Ralston, without her bell, leaped through our clustered huddles at the entry door and headed straight toward the softball field, she took us all completely by surprise. Crunch, crunch, crunch went Miss Ralston’s bright red loafers against the cinders and the next thing we knew she’d grabbed the bat from Irving Snell and, squinting against the sun, was twirling and lining it before our astonished eyes.

“Come on! Come on!” cried Miss Ralston impatiently to Ernie who stood transfixed before her on the pitcher’s mound. “Come on! Come on!” she cried again and she banged the bat against the ground.

“Come on! Come on!” cried Doris Pomeroy and we rushed after her across the cinders. The first ball Ernie threw was pretty wobbly and Miss Ralston hit it at an angle so that it fell sideways, a foul ball, toward George Fowler’s outstretched hands.

“Ah-h-h-h-h,” we moaned from the side-lines and some of us closed our eyes so we wouldn’t have to look. But George jumped too eagerly for such an easy ball and it fell right through his fingers and rolled harmlessly along the ground.

Ernie took a lot more time over his second pitch. He was getting over the first shock of finding Miss Ralston opposite him at bat and by this time he was receiving shouts of encouragement from all over the field.

“Get her! Get her!” the boys yelled recklessly at Ernie and they all fanned out behind the bases. Ernie took aim slowly. None of us had ever seen the pirouettings of professional pitchers but there was a certain awesome ceremony, nevertheless, as Ernie spat savagely on the ball, glared hard at Miss Ralston, slowly swung back his big right arm and, poised for one long moment, his whole body outstretched, threw the ball as hard as he could toward home base where Miss Ralston waited, her body rocking with the bat.

For a fleeting moment we had a glimpse of what life might be like in River Hibbert and then Miss Ralston hit the ball.

“Ah-h-h-h-h-h,” we cried as it rose high in the air, borne by the marsh wind, and flew like a bird against the sun, across the road and out of sight, into the ox pasture on the other side.

“Ah-h-h-h-h-h ...”

We all stared at Miss Ralston. “School’s in,” she announced over her shoulder, walking away.

Hitting the ball into the ox pasture happened maybe once a year.

That afternoon, toward the end of Red Cross, there was a big hush all over the room. "Next week," said Miss Ralston, closing the school register, tidying her books, "next week Alma Niles and Joyce Shipley will go for the water."

She swept her hand over the top of her desk and tiny dust motes danced in the slanting sun.

### Glossary

**snuffling** (v) breathing noisily due to cold or crying **quarry** (n) (here) a large deep pit **burrs** (n) thorny seed or fruit that sticks to grazing animals or clothes **pirouetting** (v) spinning and turning **dust motes** tiny dust particles

### Activity

**Read the lesson carefully.**

#### A. Choose the correct option and rewrite the complete sentence.

- The water at the school came from a pump at the \_\_\_\_\_ .  
(a) bus station (b) gas station  
(c) radio station (d) railway station
- Miss Ralston was a / an \_\_\_\_\_ teacher.  
(a) funny and loyal (b) lazy and calm  
(c) old and ugly (d) young and pretty
- This was something new at the school that \_\_\_\_\_ .  
(a) the boys would fetch the water  
(b) the girls exchanged their troubles and thoughts without worrying  
(c) the girls were bullied by the boys  
(d) the teacher had threatened the boys
- Arnold earnestly told Alma that carrying water was \_\_\_\_\_ .  
(a) a compulsion for the boys (b) a punishment for them  
(c) an alternative to reading books (d) hard work on cold days
- What was Miss Ralston's reply to Alma's question ?  
(a) "Girls need not fetch the water." (b) "How can you make such a demand?"  
(c) "I'll think about that." (d) "It's out of question."

#### B. Answer the following questions in brief.

- Bring out the difference between the city schools and the author's school.
- What did the health inspector announce? What was the impact?
- Why was carrying water an important activity for the boys?
- How did the boys react to the idea of girls carrying the water?
- Describe the experience of girls when they came together.
- How did Arnold try to convince Alma to drop her idea?
- Can Miss Ralston be called a reformer? Why?



**Introduction**

**Richard David Bach** (1936- ), an American writer, is widely known as the author of the very popular 1970s bestseller, *Jonathan Livingston Seagull*. He has also written works of non-fiction like *One* and *Out of My Mind*. Bach is noted for his love of aviation and for his books related to flying in a metaphorical context.

**Jonathan Livingston Seagull** is a fable about a seagull learning about life and flight. Read this excerpt to find out.

It was morning, and the new sun sparkled gold across the ripples of a gentle sea.

A mile from shore a fishing boat chummed the water, and the word for Breakfast Flock flashed through the air, till a crowd of a thousand seagulls came to dodge and fight for bits of food. It was another busy day beginning.

But way off alone, out by himself beyond boat and shore, Jonathan Livingston Seagull was practising. A hundred feet in the sky he lowered his webbed feet, lifted his beak, and strained to hold a painful hard twisting curve through his wings. The curve meant that he would fly slowly, and now he slowed until the wind was a whisper in his face, until the ocean stood still beneath him. He narrowed his eyes in fierce concentration, held his breath, forced one ... single ... more ... inch ... of ... curve ... Then his feathers ruffled, he stalled and fell.

Seagulls, as you know, never falter, never stall. To stall in the air is for them disgrace and it is dishonour.

But Jonathan Livingston Seagull, unashamed, stretching his wings again in that trembling hard curve – slowing, slowing, and stalling once more – was no ordinary bird.

Most gulls don't bother to learn more than the simplest facts of fight – how to get from shore to food and back again. For most gulls, it is not flying that matters, but eating. For this gull, though, it was not eating that mattered, but flight. More than anything else, Jonathan Livingston Seagull loved to fly.

This kind of thinking, he found, is not the way to make one's self popular with other birds. Even his parents were dismayed as Jonathan spent whole days alone, making hundreds of low-level glides, experimenting.

He didn't know why, for instance, but when he flew at altitudes less than half his wingspan above the water, he could stay in the air longer, with less effort. His glides ended not with the usual feet-down splash into the sea, but with a long flat wake as he touched the surface with his feet tightly streamlined against his body. When he began sliding into feet-up landings on the beach, then pacing the length of his slide in the sand, his parents were very much dismayed indeed.

“Why, Jon, why?” his mother asked. “Why is it so hard to be like the rest of the flock, Jon? Why can't you leave low flying to the pelicans, the albatross? Why don't you eat? Jon, you're bone and feathers!”

“I don’t mind being bone and feathers, Mum. I just want to know what I can do in the air and what I can’t, that’s all. I just want to know.”

“See here, Jonathan,” said his father, not unkindly. “Winter isn’t far away. Boats will be few, and the surface fish will be swimming deep. If you must study, then study food, and how to get it. This flying business is all very well, but you can’t eat a glide, you know. Don’t you forget that the reason you fly is to eat.”

Jonathan nodded obediently. For the next few days he tried to behave like the other gulls; he really tried, screeching and fighting with the flock around the piers and fishing boats, diving on scraps of fish and bread. But he couldn’t make it work.

It’s all so pointless, he thought, deliberately dropping a hard-won anchovy to a hungry old gull chasing him. I could be spending all this time learning to fly. There’s so much to learn! It wasn’t long before Jonathan Gull was off by himself again, far out at sea, hungry, happy, learning.

The subject was speed, and in a week’s practice he learned more about speed than the fastest gull alive.

From a thousand feet, flapping his wings as hard as he could, he pushed over into a blazing steep dive toward the waves, and learned why seagulls don’t make blazing steep power-dives. In just six seconds he was moving seventy miles per hour, the speed at which one’s wing goes unstable on the upstroke.

Time after time it happened. Careful as he was, working at the very peak of his ability, he lost control at high speed.

Climb to a thousand feet. Full power straight ahead first, then push over, flapping, to a vertical dive. Then, every time, his left wing stalled on an upstroke, he’d roll violently left, stall his right wing recovering, and flick like fire into a wild tumbling spin to the right.

He couldn’t be careful enough on that upstroke. Ten times he tried, and all ten times, as he passed through seventy miles per hour, he burst into a churning mass of feathers, out of control, crashing down into the water.

The key, he thought at last, dripping wet, must be to hold the wings still at high speeds – to flap up to fifty and then hold the wings still.

From two thousand feet he tried again, rolling into his dive, beak straight down, wings full out and stable from the moment he passed fifty miles per hour. It took tremendous strength, but it worked. In ten seconds he had blurred through ninety miles per hour. Jonathan had set a world speed record for seagulls!

But victory was short-lived. The instant he began his pull-out, the instant he changed the angle of his wings, he snapped into that same terrible uncontrolled disaster, and at ninety miles per hour it hit him like dynamite. Jonathan Seagull exploded in mid-air and smashed down into a brick-hard sea.

When he came to, it was well after dark, and he floated in moonlight on the surface of the ocean. His wings were ragged bars of lead, but the weight of failure was even heavier on his back. He wished, feebly, that the weight could be just enough to drag him gently down to the bottom, and end it all.

As he sank low in the water, a strange hollow voice sounded within him. There’s no way around it. I am a seagull. I am limited by my nature. If I were meant to learn so much about flying, I’d have charts



for brains. If I were meant to fly at speed, I'd have a falcon's short wings, and live on mice instead of fish. My father was right. I must forget this foolishness. I must fly home to the flock and be content as I am, as a poor limited seagull.

The voice faded, and Jonathan agreed. The place for a seagull at night is on shore, and from this moment forth, he vowed, he would be a normal gull. It would make everyone happier.

He pushed wearily away from the dark water and flew toward the land, grateful for what he had learned about work-saving low-altitude flying.

But no, he thought. I am done with the way I was, I am done with everything I learned. I am a seagull like every other seagull, and I will fly like one. So he climbed painfully to a hundred feet and flapped his wings harder, pressing for shore.

He felt better for his decision to be just another one of the flock. There would be no ties now to the force that had driven him to learn, there would be no more challenge and no more failure. And it was pretty, just to stop thinking, and fly through the dark, toward the lights above the beach.

Dark! The hollow voice cracked in alarm. Seagulls never fly in the dark!

Jonathan was not alert to listen. It's pretty, he thought. The moon and the lights twinkling on the water, throwing out little beacon-trails through the night, and all so peaceful and still ...

Get down! Seagulls never fly in the dark! If you were meant to fly in the dark, you'd have the eyes of an owl! You'd have charts for brains! You'd have a falcon's short wings!

There in the night, a hundred feet in the air, Jonathan Livingston Seagull — blinked. His pain, his resolutions, vanished.

Short wings. A falcon's short wings!

That's the answer! What a fool I've been! All I need is a tiny little wing, all I need is to fold most of my wings and fly on just the tips alone! Short wings!

He climbed two thousand feet above the black sea, and without a moment for thought of failure and death, he brought his forewings tightly in to his body, left only the narrow swept daggers of his wingtips extended into the wind, and fell into a vertical dive.

The wind was a monster roar at his head. Seventy miles per hour, ninety, a hundred and twenty and faster still. The wing-strain now at a hundred and forty miles per hour wasn't nearly as hard as it had been before at seventy, and with the faintest twist of his wingtips he eased out of the dive and shot above the waves, a grey cannonball under the moon.

He closed his eyes to slits against the wind and rejoiced. A hundred forty miles per hour! And under control! If I dive from five thousand feet instead of two thousand, I wonder how fast ...

His vows of a moment before were forgotten, swept away in that great swift wind. Yet he felt guiltless, breaking the promises he had made himself. Such promises are only for the gulls that accept the ordinary. One who has touched excellence in his learning has no need of that kind of promise.

By sunup, Jonathan Gull was practising again. From five thousand feet the fishing boats were specks in the flat blue water, Breakfast Flock was a faint cloud of dust motes, circling.

He was alive, trembling ever so slightly with delight, proud that his fear was under control. Then without ceremony he hugged in his forewings, extended his short, angled wingtips, and plunged directly toward the sea. By the time he passed four thousand feet he had reached terminal velocity, the wind was a solid beating wall of sound against which he could move no faster. He was flying now straight down, at two hundred fourteen miles per hour. He swallowed, knowing that if his wings unfolded at that speed he'd be blown into a million tiny shreds of seagull. But the speed was power, and the speed was joy, and the speed was pure beauty.

He began his pullout at a thousand feet, wingtips thudding and blurring in that gigantic wind, the boat and the crowd of gulls tilting and growing meteor-fast, directly in his path.

He couldn't stop; he didn't know yet even how to turn at that speed.

Collision would be instant death. And so he shut his eyes.

It happened that morning, then, just after sunrise, that Jonathan Livingston Seagull fired directly through the centre of Breakfast Flock, ticking off two hundred twelve miles per hour, eyes closed, in a great roaring shriek of wind and feathers. The Gull of Fortune smiled upon him this once, and no one was killed.

By the time he had pulled his beak straight up into the sky he was still scorching along at a hundred and sixty miles per hour. When he had slowed to twenty and stretched his wings again at last, the boat was a crumb on the sea, four thousand feet below.

His thought was triumph. Terminal velocity! A seagull at *two hundred fourteen miles per hour!* It was a breakthrough, the greatest single moment in the history of the Flock, and in that moment a new age opened for Jonathan Gull. Flying out to his lonely practice area, folding his wings for a dive from eight thousand feet, he set himself at once to discover how to turn.

A single wingtip feather, he found, moved a fraction of an inch, gives a smooth sweeping curve at tremendous speed. Before he learned this, however, he found that moving more than one feather at that speed will spin you like a rifle ball ... and Jonathan had flown the first aerobatics of any seagull on earth.

He spared no time that day for talk with other gulls, but flew on past sunset. He discovered the loop, the slow roll, the point roll, the inverted spin, the gull bunt, the pinwheel.

When Jonathan Seagull joined the Flock on the beach, it was full night. He was dizzy and terribly tired. Yet in delight he flew a loop to landing, with a snap roll just before touchdown. When they hear of it, he thought, of the Breakthrough, they'll be wild with joy. How much more there is now to living! Instead of our drab slogging forth and back to the fishing boats, there's a reason to life! We can lift ourselves out of ignorance, we can and ourselves as creatures of excellence and intelligence and skill. We can be free! We can learn to fly!

The years ahead hummed and glowed with promise.

The gulls were flocked into the Council Gathering when he landed, and apparently had been so flocked for some time. They were, in fact, waiting.

"Jonathan Livingston Seagull! Stand to Centre!" The Elder's words sounded in a voice of highest ceremony. Stand to Centre meant only great shame or great honour. Stand to Centre for Honour was the way the gulls' foremost leaders were marked. Of course, he thought, the Breakfast Flock this morning; they saw the Breakthrough! But I want no honours. I have no wish to be leader. I want only to share what I've found, to show those horizons out ahead for us all. He stepped forward.



“Jonathan Livingston Seagull,” said the Elder, “Stand to Centre for shame in the sight of your fellow gulls!”

It felt like being hit with a board. His knees went weak, his feathers sagged, and there was a roaring in his ears. Centred for shame? Impossible! The Breakthrough! They can’t understand! They’re wrong, they’re wrong!

“... for his reckless irresponsibility,” the solemn voice intoned, “violating the dignity and tradition of the Gull Family ...”

To be centred for shame meant that he would be cast out of gull society, banished to a solitary life on the Far Cliffs.

“... one day, Jonathan Livingston Seagull, you shall learn that irresponsibility does not pay. Life is the unknown and the unknowable, except that we are put into this world to eat, to stay alive as long as we possibly can.”

A seagull never speaks back to the Council Flock, but it was Jonathan’s voice raised. “Irresponsibility? My brothers!” he cried. “Who is more responsible than a gull who finds and follows a meaning, a higher purpose for life? For a thousand years we have scabbled after fish heads, but now we have a reason to live – to learn, to discover, to be free! Give me one chance, let me show you what I’ve found ...”

The Flock might as well have been stone.

“The Brotherhood is broken,” the gulls intoned together, and with one accord they solemnly closed their ears and turned their backs upon him.

Jonathan Seagull spent the rest of his days alone, but he flew way out beyond the Far Cliffs. His one sorrow was not solitude, it was that other gulls refused to believe the glory of flight that awaited them; they refused to open their eyes and see.

He learned more each day. He learned that a streamlined high-speed dive could bring him to find the rare and tasty fish that schooled ten feet below the surface of the ocean: he no longer needed fishing boats and stale bread for survival. He learned to sleep in the air, setting a course at night across the offshore wind, covering a hundred miles from sunset to sunrise. With the same inner control, he flew through heavy sea-fogs and climbed above them into dazzling clear skies ... in the very times when every other gull stood on the ground, knowing nothing but mist and rain. He learned to ride the high winds far inland, to dine there on delicate insects.

What he had once hoped for the Flock, he now gained for himself alone; he learned to fly, and was not sorry for the price that he had paid. Jonathan Seagull discovered that boredom and fear and anger are the reasons that a gull’s life is so short, and with these gone from his thought, he lived a long fine life indeed.

They came in the evening, then, and found Jonathan gliding peaceful and alone through his beloved sky. The two gulls that appeared at his wings were pure as starlight, and the glow from them was gentle and friendly in the high night air. But most lovely of all was the skill with which they flew, their wingtips moving a precise and constant inch from his own.

Without a word, Jonathan put them to his test, a test that no gull had ever passed. He twisted his wings, slowed to a single mile per hour above stall. The two radiant birds slowed with him, smoothly, locked in position. They knew about slow flying.

“But you can, Jonathan. For you have learned. One school is finished, and the time has come for another to begin.”

As it had shone across him all his life, so understanding lighted that moment for Jonathan Seagull. They were right. He could fly higher, and it was time to go home.

He gave one last long look across the sky, across that magnificent silver land where he had learned so much.

“I’m ready,” he said at last.

And Jonathan Livingston Seagull rose with the two star-bright gulls to disappear into a perfect dark sky.

He folded his wings, rolled, and dropped in a dive to a hundred ninety miles per hour. They dropped with him, streaking down in flawless formation.

At last he turned that speed straight up into a long vertical slow-roll. They rolled with him, smiling.

He recovered to level flight and was quiet for a time before he spoke. “Very well,” he said, “who are you?”

“We’re from your Flock, Jonathan. We are your brothers.” The words were strong and calm. “We’ve come to take you higher, to take you home.”

“Home I have none. Flock I have none. I am outcast. And we fly now at the peak of the Great Mountain Wind. Beyond a few hundred feet, I can lift this old body no higher.”

“But you can, Jonathan. For you have learned. One school is finished, and the time has come for another to begin.”

As it had shone across him all his life, so understanding lighted that moment for Jonathan Seagull. They were right. He could fly higher, and it was time to go home.

He gave one last long look across the sky, across that magnificent silver land where he had learned so much.

“I’m ready,” he said at last.

And Jonathan Livingston Seagull rose with the two star bright gulls to disappear into a perfect dark sky.

### Glossary

**stalled** (v) stopped **streamlined** (v) well organised **screeching** (v) making loud harsh sound **piers** (n) long narrow structure **anchovy** (n) small fish **speck** (n) dot **mots** (n) tiny pieces of a substance **scorching** (v) (here) moving at high speed **loop/ slow roll/ point roll/ inverted spin/ gull bunt/ pinwheel** types of aerial acrobatics **scrabbled after** grabbed **schooled** (v) (here) travelled in groups **terminal velocity** highest speed attainable by a free falling object **drab** (adj.) monotonous

### Activity

**Read the lesson carefully.**

**A. Choose the correct option and rewrite the complete sentence.**

- Jonathan’s parents were very much dismayed because \_\_\_\_\_ .
  - he ate a lot of food
  - he flew high like the Albatross
  - he wandered here and there aimlessly
  - he was not like the rest of the folk

2. According to Jonathan, the key to landing properly on water was to \_\_\_\_\_ .
  - (a) burst into a churning mass of feathers
  - (b) crash down into the water
  - (c) hold the wings still at high speed
  - (d) roll violently to the left and to the right
3. The boat appeared to be a crumb on the sea when Jonathan was \_\_\_\_\_ .
  - (a) four thousand feet above the sea
  - (b) five thousand feet above the sea
  - (c) pulling out at a hundred feet above the sea
  - (d) two hundred and twelve feet above the sea
4. To be centered for shame also meant \_\_\_\_\_ .
  - (a) to be ashamed
  - (b) to be cast out of one's society
  - (c) to be irresponsible
  - (d) to break the brotherhood
5. The three things that result in the gull's short life are \_\_\_\_\_ .
  - (a) boredom, fear, anger
  - (b) honour, promises, foolishness
  - (c) knowledge, inner control, youth
  - (d) solitude, glory, responsibility

**B. Answer the following questions in brief.**

1. What made Jonathan Livingston a unique seagull?
2. How did Jonathan Livingston react to his parents' advice?
3. In what way did Jonathan Livingston set a world speed record for seagulls?
4. When did Jonathan Livingston decide to live like other seagulls?
5. What new things did Jonathan Livingston learn and realize while experimenting with his flight of glory?
6. Was Jonathan Livingston's passion for flying a self-centred happiness? How was he treated by the other seagulls?
7. Comment on the ending of this fable.
8. Bring out the essential message delivered through the fable of Jonathan Livingston, the seagull.



**Introduction**

**Ruskin Bond** (1934-) is an Indian author of British descent. He has written over five hundred short stories, essays and novels, including *The Room on the Roof*, *The Blue Umbrella*, *Funny Side Up*, *A Flight of Pigeons* etc. He received the Sahitya Akademi Award in 1992 for *Our Trees Still Grow in Dehra*, for his published work in English. He was awarded the Padma Shri in 1999 and Padma Bhushan in 2014.

**From the Primaeval Past** narrates Ruskin Bond's frightening experience with a survivor from our primaeval past. Read on to find about that thrilling incident.

I discovered the pool near Rajpur on a hot summer's day some fifteen years ago. It was shaded by close-growing Sal trees, and looked cool and inviting. I took off my clothes and dived in.

The water was colder than I had expected. It was an icy, glacial cold. The sun never touched it for long, I supposed. Striking out vigorously, I swam to the other end of the pool and pulled myself up on the rocks, shivering.

But I wanted to swim. So I dived in again and did a gentle breast-stroke towards the middle of the pool. Something slid between my legs. Something slimy, pulpy. I could see no one, hear nothing. I swam away, but the floating, slippery thing followed me. I did not like it. Something curled around my leg. Not an underwater plant. Something that sucked at my foot. A long tongue licking at my calf. I struck out wildly, thrust myself away from whatever it was that sought my company. Something lonely, lurking in the shadows. Kicking up spray, I swam like a frightened porpoise fleeing from some terror of the deep.

Safely out of the water, I looked for a warm, sunny rock, and stood there looking down at the water.

Nothing stirred. The surface of the pool was now calm and undisturbed. Just a few fallen leaves floating around. Not a frog, not a fish, not a water bird in sight. And that in itself seemed strange. For you would have expected some sort of pond life to have been in evidence.

But something lived in the pool, of that I was sure. Something very cold-blooded; colder and wetter than the water. Could it have been a corpse trapped in the weeds? I did not want to know; so I dressed and hurried away.

A few days later I left for Delhi, where I went to work in an ad agency, telling people how to beat the summer heat by drinking fizzy drinks that made you thirstier. The pool in the forest was forgotten. And it was ten years before I visited Rajpur again.

Leaving the small hotel where I was staying, I found myself walking through the same old Sal forest, drawn almost irresistibly towards the pool where I had not been able to finish my swim. I was not over-eager to swim there again, but I was curious to know if the pool still existed.

Well, it was there all right, although the surroundings had changed and a number of new houses and buildings had come up where formerly there had only been wilderness. And there was a fair amount of activity in the vicinity of the pool.

A number of labourers were busy with buckets and rubber pipes, doing their best to empty the pool. They had also dammed off and diverted the little stream that fed it.

Overseeing this operation was a well-dressed man in a white safari suit. I thought at first that he was an honorary forest warden, but it turned out that he was the owner of a new school that had come up nearby.

“Do you live in Rajpur?” he asked.

“I used to . . . . Once upon a time . . . Why are you draining the pool?”

“It’s become a hazard,” he said. “Two of my boys were drowned here recently. Both senior students. Of course they weren’t supposed to be swimming here without permission, the pool is off limits. But you know what boys are like. Make a rule and they feel duty-bound to break it.”

He told me his name, Kapoor, and led me back to his house, a newly-build bungalow with a wide cool verandah. His servant brought us glasses of cool sherbet. We sat in cane chairs overlooking the pool and the forest. Across a clearing, a gravelled road led to the school buildings, newly white-washed and glistening in the sun.

“Were the boys there at the same time?” I asked.

“Yes, they were friends. And they must have been attacked by friends. Limbs twisted and broken, face disfigured. But death was due to drowning – that was the verdict of the medical examiner.”

We gazed down at the shallows of the pool, where a couple of men were still at work, the others having gone for their mid-day meal.

“Perhaps it would be better to leave the place alone,” I said. “Put a barbed-wire fence around it. Keep your boys away. Thousands of years ago this valley was an inland sea. A few small pools and streams are all that is left of it.”

“I want to fill it in and build something there. An open air theatre, may be. We can always create an artificial pond somewhere else.”

Presently only one man remained at the pool, knee-deep in muddy, churned up water. And Mr. Kapoor and I both saw what happened next.

Something rose out of the bottom of the pool. It looked like a giant snail, but its head was part human, its body and limbs part squid or octopus. An enormous succubus. It stood taller than the man in the pool. A creature soft and slimy, a survivor from our primaeval past.

With a great sucking motion, it enveloped the man completely, so that only his arms and legs could be seen thrashing about wildly and futilely. The succubus dragged him down under the water.

Kapoor and I left the verandah and ran to the edge of the pool. Bubbles rose from the green scum near the surface. All was still and silent. And, like bubble-gum issuing from the mouth of a child, the mangled body of the man shot out of the water and came spinning towards us.

Dead and drowned and sucked dry of its fluids.

Naturally no more work was done at the pool. A labourer had slipped and fallen to his death on the rocks that was the story that was put out. Kapoor swore me to secrecy. His school would have to close down

if there were too many strange drownings and accidents in its vicinity. But he walled the place off from his property and made it practically inaccessible. The jungle's undergrowth now hides the approach.

The monsoon rains came and the pool filled up again. I can tell you how to get there, if you'd like to see it. But I wouldn't advise you to go for a swim.

### Glossary

**porpoise** (n) fish- that swims alternatively rising above water and then submerging **dammed** (v) built a barrier to obstruct the flow of water

### Activity

**Read the lesson carefully.**

#### A. Choose the correct option and rewrite the complete sentence.

- While swimming in the pool, the author was followed by a \_\_\_\_\_ .  
(a) bunch of weeds (b) floating carcass  
(c) floating, slippery thing (d) sharp edged boat
- 'Calm and undisturbed pool' surprised the author because he expected \_\_\_\_\_ .  
(a) a boat at the bottom of the pool (b) a big stone at the bottom of the pool  
(c) a whirlpool (d) some sort of pond life in existence
- In Delhi, he worked in a/an \_\_\_\_\_ .  
(a) advertising agency (b) bank  
(c) multinational company (d) school
- The owner of the school was getting the pool drained off as \_\_\_\_\_ .  
(a) maintenance work had to be done  
(b) many mosquitoes had started breeding there  
(c) the pool had turned dirty  
(d) two of his students had drowned recently
- After emptying the pool, Mr.Kapoor and the author saw a/an \_\_\_\_\_ rising out of the water.  
(a) enormous succubus (b) giant snail  
(c) monster (d) star fish

#### B. Answer the following questions in brief.

- Describe Ruskin Bond's experience of swimming in the pool near Rajpur.
- Who was Mr. Kapoor? Why did he want the pool to be filled in?
- What horrible sight did Ruskin Bond and Mr. Kapoor witness?
- Why was the secret of the pool never revealed to others?



**Introduction**

You have read a literary work by Ruskin Bond in the previous chapter. Now, know more about him and his writings through this interview. The interviewer is Shobita Dhar, a senior journalist.

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**You turn 80 next month. What's the nicest thing about getting old?**

For a writer the good thing about getting old is that there is so much more to write about, especially for a writer like me who delves into the past. You have so many memories that you never run out of material. When I was 17 or 18, I was left wondering what to write next after my first novel got published. As for regrets, I sometimes wonder why I hurt my mother's feelings or why I was such a bully in school. As a writer, I have no regrets. I may not have become a good writer but I managed to make a living out of writing. I have managed to keep up with inflation.

**Has your writing changed over the years? Does writing for children keep you young at heart?**

My writing has grown older with me. It might be more cynical and tongue-in-cheek now. When I was younger it used to be more emotional and naive. Writing for children may have kept me young at heart. Interestingly, I took to writing for children in the 1970s because my work for adults wasn't getting publishers. But writing for children revived me. What I like about children is that they can be so frank. Recently I was in a school and a teacher asked a little girl what she thought of Mr. Bond. She replied: "He's not a bad writer." I think this will be my epitaph.

**Children today are hooked to edgy fiction for young adults. Is it a challenge to write for them today?**

Children are reading about vampires, wizards and witches. Someone asked me why don't you also write about all this? I said I have been doing that all my life (laughs)! But I am not good at writing about it.

**A best of Ruskin Bond collection to mark your 80th birthday will be out soon. Which work is close to your heart?**

The books that I wrote in my late teens and 20s, the little love stories, they were right from the heart. It's like how you have affection for your first born. Now when I read them I realize how stupid and silly I was. *Room on the Roof*, which I wrote when I was just 17, is full of naive things. But I have never changed these stories.

**Small towns form the backdrop of many of your tales. But urbanization is eating into this world. Is your inspiration under attack?**

Small towns are easier to observe. People know each other well. And characters often originate from real life. Now, villages are turning into towns, towns into cities, and cities into mega cities. A reader once told me that the Dehradun I write about doesn't exist anymore. I say I am writing about the town it used to be 50 years ago. Delhi too has changed so much. In the 1960s I used to travel by bus from Rajouri Garden to town to watch a film. There was hardly any traffic. But even then, as now, I had trouble crossing roads.



**You knew Khushwant Singh well. Any interesting anecdotes?**

I met him socially in the 1960s in Delhi. I was in my late 20s at the time and he was editing *Yojana*, the Planning Commission journal. I was always looking to get my stories published. I'd get Rs 50 for each. So I sent him a few and he quietly put my love stories in *Yojana*. And no one noticed. He was affable and helpful, always.

**What do you think of the boom in Indian writing in English?**

So many authors are being published and selling well. It is very healthy for the publishing industry. At times the quality of writing may vary. But who are we to comment? However, you should respect the language you write in. And try to write something worthwhile. We have good literary writers like Amit Chaudhari and Amitav Ghosh and popular ones like Chetan Bhagat and Amish Tripathi. The more the genres of writing, the better it is. But we don't have good poets. I'd like to see more humorous verse. Girls, though, seem to be writing poetry a lot. Whenever I go down to Cambridge book shop in Mussoorie, girls hand me their poems to read. I walk back home carrying a thick sheaf of papers with poetry about love and family life.

**You still handwrite your manuscripts and your characters too seem rooted in the pre-internet era. Are you a Luddite?**

I am hopeless with machinery. I could never learn to drive a car except into a wall. I remember being very awkward with the telephone. In my writing, I did have a character who is on his cell phone all the time. He keeps it on his pillow when he sleeps. So when he dies, the cell phone is placed in his coffin and it starts to ring when they are burying him.

**Glossary**

**tongue-in-cheek** being ironical **epitaph** (n) inscription on a tombstone **affable** (adj) friendly **Luddite** (n) a person opposed to increased industrialization or new technology

**Activity**

**Read the lesson carefully.**

**A. Choose the correct option and rewrite the complete sentence.**

1. The good thing about getting old, as a writer, for Ruskin Bond is that there are so many \_\_\_\_\_ .
  - (a) awards yet to be won
  - (b) memories that you never run out of material
  - (c) more books to be read
  - (d) places worth visiting that you never run out of material
2. Ruskin Bond started writing for children because he \_\_\_\_\_ .
  - (a) earned more money in writing for children
  - (b) wanted children to get more wisdom
  - (c) was not interested in writing for adults
  - (d) writing for adults wasn't getting publishers

3. Khushwant Singh helped Ruskin Bond by \_\_\_\_\_ .
  - (a) allowing him to stay at his place
  - (b) booking tickets for his travel
  - (c) giving new ideas for writing
  - (d) publishing his short love stories in the *Yojana*
4. Ruskin Bond says that girls write poems about \_\_\_\_\_ .
  - (a) academics
  - (b) fashion
  - (c) love and family life
  - (d) nature
5. Ruskin Bond feels that he has been hopeless with machinery as he \_\_\_\_\_ .
  - (a) did not have a computer at home
  - (b) had never worked on any machinery
  - (c) had not written anything on machinery
  - (d) was awkward even with the telephone and couldn't drive

**B. Answer the following questions in brief.**

1. What does Ruskin Bond say about writing at an older age?
2. 'Small towns are easier to observe.' Explain.
3. Comment on Ruskin Bond's views on contemporary Indian writing in English.
4. Do you think that Ruskin Bond is techno savvy? Why?

