INSIGHTS INTO LITERARY KNOWLEDGE

An Anthology of Short Stories

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Preface

INSIGHTS INTO LITERARY KNOWLEDGE: An Anthology of Short Stories addresses undergraduate students from various disciplines who intend to develop their skills in English. The four major skills – reading, writing, speaking and listening – have been taken into account by the author of this anthology, with the specific purpose of enhancing students' ability of accurately and efficiently applying them both in the academic and more practical, daily context. The selection of the literary texts aims at exposing students to a variety of pieces of writing in English, covering diverse geographical and cultural areas. The heterogeneity of the texts will, therefore, develop the English skills of the students and their open perception of a diversified cultural background. Knowledge of English will thus trigger knowledge of perspectives on life, having in view that students have to develop a fifth skill, namely, the skill of thinking critically based on the assimilation of multiple sources of wisdom and life experiences. The exercises that accompany all units are designed to strengthen students' accumulated knowledge and to make them feel comfortable with the newly acquired information and abilities. Teachers are invited to go beyond the proposed exercises and develop or use more.

The major objective of the book is to make the students attain an excellent command of the English language and create the awareness of a diversity of cultural backgrounds so that they will be able to face all challenges of the contemporary life.

Hitesh D. Raviya
Editor

SECTION II

Indian Prose in English

UNIT 1: A Story and a Song

A K Ramanujan

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Attipat Krishnaswamy Ramanujan (1929–93) was born in Mysore and studied English Literature in the University of Mysore. He went to the United States and obtained a doctorate in folklore and linguistics from Indiana University. He taught at the University of Chicago in the department of South Asian Languages & Civilisations as well as the department of Linguistics. He was a scholar, writer, poet, folklorist, and translator. He was honoured by the title of 'Padma Shri' by the Government of India in 1976. He also received a MacArthur fellowship in 1983. He was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 1990. He wrote in English, Kannada, and Tamil; and was most reputed for his translations from Kannada and Tamil. His works included *Speaking of Siva* (1973), *Hymns for the Drowning* (1981), and *The Collected Essays* (published posthumously), which included his most celebrated essay, *Is There an Indian Way of Thinking?* His folklore translations are found in *Folktales from India: A Selection of Oral Tales from Twenty-two Languages* (1991) and *A Flowering Tree and Other Oral Tales from India* (1997).

ABOUT THE STORY

A Story and a Song is the first story from a collection of Ramanujan's Kannada folktales entitled, *A Flowering Tree and other Oral Tales from India.* Ramanujan begins the collection with this story, thus setting the scene for the rest of the stories that follow. It is a typical folktale about why stories ought to be told. The folk tale is narrated through word of mouth. It is the story of a common person. In the world of this tale, stories and songs as well as lamp flames have been personifi ed and have a life of their own; the stories and songs transform into material things like shoes and coats. The flames of the lamps don't die but go to the temple and return when the householders light the lamps again. The story is short, but the message comes across more through what is left unsaid rather

than what is overtly stated. The characters have no names, we hear their story in the third person, and we do not have insight into their emotions or thoughts. Thus, the narration underlines the universality of the message. The conclusion that may be drawn is that the woman is perhaps totally engrossed in her household life, and has forgotten to share what she knows or probably wanted to share with her husband. Her husband is probably indifferent too, until he discovers the coat and shoes in his house and is shaken. The incident unsettles both of them, and they are forced to think about what was ignored and taken for granted. The story and the song—that the housewife does not share—become the symbol of the suppressed creativity of the woman, which eventually dies due to lack of expression.

A STORY AND A SONG

A housewife knew a story. She also knew a song. But she kept them to herself, never told anyone the story or sang the song. Imprisoned within her, the story and the song were feeling choked. They wanted release, wanted to run away. One day, when the woman was sleeping with her mouth open, the story escaped, fell out of her, took the shape of a pair of shoes, and sat outside the house. The song also escaped, took the shape of something like a man's coat, and hung on a peg.

The woman's husband came home, looked at the coat and shoes, and asked her, 'Who's visiting?'

'No one,' she said.

'But whose coat and shoes are these?' 'I don't know,' she replied.

He wasn't satisfied with her answer. He was suspicious. Their conversation was unpleasant. The unpleasantness led to a quarrel. The husband flew into a rage, picked up his blanket, and went to the Monkey God's temple to sleep.

The woman didn't understand what was happening. She lay down alone that night. She asked the same question over and over: 'Whose coat and shoes are these?' Baffled and unhappy, she put out the lamp and went to sleep.

All the lamp flames of the town, once they were put out, used to come to the Monkey God's temple and spend the night there, gossiping. On this night, all the lamps of all the houses were represented there—all except one, which came late.

The others asked the latecomer, 'Why are you so late tonight?'

'At our house, the couple quarrelled late into the night,' said the flame.

'Why did they quarrel?'

'When the husband wasn't home, a pair of shoes came onto the verandah, and a man's coat somehow got onto a peg. The husband asked her whose they were. The wife said she didn't know. So they quarrelled.'

'Where did the coat and shoes come from?'

'The lady of our house,' said the flame, 'knows a story and a song. She never tells the story, and has never sung the song to anyone. The story and the song got suffocated inside; so they got out and have turned into a coat and a pair of shoes. They took revenge. The woman doesn't even know.'

The husband, lying under his blanket in the temple, heard the lamp's explanation. His suspicions were cleared. When he went home, it was dawn. He asked his wife about her story and her song. But she had forgotten them. 'What story, what song?' she said.

GLOSSARY

Imprisoned: Put or kept in prison
Choked: Not allowed space to breath or move
Release: Being set free
Peg: A short projecting pin or bolt used for hanging things on
Suspicious: Feeling that someone is guilty of a crime or offence
Unpleasant: Not giving satisfaction or enjoyment; disagreeable
Quarrel: An angry argument or disagreement
Flew into a rage: Lost one's temper; got very angry
Baffled: Totally bewildered; perplexed, or confused
Gossiping: Sharing casual conversation or unsubstantiated reports about other people
Revenge: Retaliation for an injury or wrong
Suffocated: Having difficulty in breathing
Cleared: Solved or explained
Dawn: The first appearance of light in the sky before sunrise

COMPREHENSION

A. **Answer the following questions choosing from the options that follow.**

1. A K Ramanujan's essay, *Is There an Indian Way of Thinking* is to be found in
   i. *Folktales of India: A Selection of Oral Tales from Twenty-two Languages*
   ii. The Collected Essays
   iii. Speaking of Siva
   iv. A Flowering Tree and other Oral Tales from India
2. 'The housewife knew a story and a song'. What does this tell you about the housewife?
   i. That she was educated
   ii. That she was talented
   iii. That she was efficient
   iv. That she was a good housewife
3. How did the story and the song feel on being kept secret by the woman?
   i. They felt trapped
   ii. They were happy
   iii. They were sad
   iv. They were indifferent
4. The husband was not satisfied with his wife's answer to his question about the coat and shoes because
   i. He felt she was lying
   ii. Her explanation was not clear
   iii. He was in the mood to quarrel
   iv. She had no idea about the coat and shoes
5. What did the husband suspect?
   i. That his wife was telling the truth
   ii. That she hid her talent for story-telling
   iii. That she was having an affair
   iv. That she knew how to sing
6. Why do you think the author refers to Lord Hanuman as the Monkey God?
   i. To make it sound funny
   ii. To be understood by an English audience
   iii. To make it sound exotic
   iv. To avoid being fanatic
7. How does the man eventually come to realise the truth?
   i. He has a dream about it in the temple
   ii. He listens to the story from the lamp flame
   iii. He thinks about the events of the night with a calm mind
   iv. His wife explains the matter to him in the morning
8. What is the theme or moral of the story?

i. Stories should be told ii. Never jump to conclusions
iii. Beware of strange visitors iv. Honesty is the best policy

B. Answer the following questions in about 30–40 words.

1. 'Imprisoned within her, the story and the song were feeling choked.' Explain the meaning of this statement in your own words.
2. Why did the husband and wife quarrel?
3. Why do you think the man was suspicious?
4. The story is translated from a Kannada folktale. Mention two things from the story that give it a local flavour.
5. What is the core message of the story?

C. Write short notes on the following in about 40–50 words.

1. The revenge of the story and the song.
2. The misunderstanding between the husband and wife.
3. The nightly trip of the lamp flames of the town.
4. The lamp flame's explanation about the appearance of the coat and shoes.

D. Answer in detail in about 120–140 words.

1. Briefly retell the story from the woman's point of view.
2. One of the features of a folk tale is the presence of strange or imaginary elements. Explain in your own words the personification of the imaginary elements in the story and what purpose they serve.

UNIT 2: A Snake in the Grass

R K Narayan

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

R K Narayan (1906–2001) is among the best-known and most-widely-read Indian novelists. He was born in Madras (now Chennai) and graduated from Maharaja's College in Mysore. His first novel, Swami and Friends and its successor, The Bachelor of Arts, are both set in Malgudi—an imaginary town in south India. In 1958, Narayan's work, The Guide won him the 'National Prize of the Indian Literary Academy', the country's highest literary honour. Narayan has also authored five volumes of short stories, including A Horse and Two Goats, Malguidi Days, Gods, Demons and Others, and Under the Banyan Tree; two travel books, two volumes of essays, a volume of memoirs; retold legends of The Ramayana, and the Mahabharata; and a memoir My Days. Narayan wrote for more than 50 years, and published until he was 87. In 1980, he was awarded the 'A.C. Benson Medal by the Royal Society of Literature' and in 1982 he was made an Honorary Member of the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters.

Narayan's work captures many Indian traits. He was sometimes compared to the American writer William Faulkner, whose novels were also grounded in a compassionate humanism and celebrated the humour and energy of ordinary life. A typical regional flavour adds to the picturesqueness and realism of Narayan's work.

ABOUT THE STORY

In this realistic story, Narayan presents us with an insight into the mind of the typical middle class citizens of Madras or Mysore and their environment of petty scoundrels who are out to cheat them. The victims in the story think they are clever, but in reality, they are really gullible. An unlettered work-shirking

gardener is able to successfully fool his much-educated and more intelligent employers.

A SNAKE IN THE GRASS

On a sunny afternoon, when the inmates of the bungalow were at their siesta, a cyclist rang his bell at the gate frantically and announced: 'A big cobra has got into your compound. It crossed my wheel.' He pointed to its track under the gate, and resumed his journey.

The family consisting of the mother and her four sons assembled at the gate in great agitation. The old servant Dasa was sleeping in the shed. They shook him out of his sleep and announced to him the arrival of the cobra. 'There is no cobra,' he replied and tried to dismiss the matter. They swore at him and forced him to take an interest in the cobra. 'The thing is somewhere here. If it is not found before the evening, we will dismiss you. Your neglect of the garden and the lawns is responsible for all these dreadful things coming in.' Some neighbours dropped in. They looked accusingly at Dasa: 'You have the laziest servant on earth,' they said. 'He ought to keep the surroundings tidy.' 'I have been asking for a grass-cutter for months,' Dasa said. In one voice they ordered him to manage with the available things and learn not to make demands. He persisted. They began to speculate much it would cost to buy a grass-cutter. A neighbour declared that you could not think of buying any article made of iron till after the war. He chanted banalities of wartime prices. The second son of the house asserted that he could get anything he wanted at controlled prices. The neighbour became eloquent on black market. A heated debate followed. The rest watched in apathy. At this point the college boy of the house butted in with: 'I read in an American paper that 30,000 people die of snake-bite every year.' Mother threw up her arms in horror and arraigned Dasa. The boy elaborated the statistics. 'I have worked it out, 83 a day. That means every twenty minutes someone is dying of cobra-bite. As we have been talking here, one person has lost his life somewhere': Mother nearly screamed on hearing it. The compound looked sinister. The boys brought in bamboo-sticks and pressed one into the hands of the servant also. He kept desultorily poking it into the foliage with a cynical air. 'The fellow is beating about the bush,' someone cried aptly. They tucked up their dhoties, seized every available knife and crow-bar and began to hack the garden. Creepers, bushes, and lawns, were laid low. What could not be

trimmed was cut to the root. The inner walls of the house brightened with the unobstructed glare streaming, in. When there was nothing more to be done Dasa asked triumphantly, 'Where is the snake?'

An old beggar cried for alms at the gate. They told her not to pester when they were engaged in a snake-hunt. On hearing it the old woman became happy. 'You are fortunate. It is God Subramanya who has come to visit you. Don't kill the snake.' Mother was in hearty agreement: 'You are right. I forgot all about the promised Abhishekam. This is a reminder.' She gave a coin to the beggar, who promised to send down a snake-charmer as she went. Presently an old man appeared at the gate and announced himself as a snake-charmer. They gathered around him. He spoke to them of his life and activities and his power over snakes. They asked admiringly: 'How do you catch them?' 'Thus,' he said, pouncing upon a hypothetical snake on the ground. They pointed the direction in which the cobra had gone and asked him to go ahead. He looked helplessly about and said: 'If you show me the snake, I'll at once catch it. Otherwise what can I do? The moment you see it again, send for me. I live nearby.' He gave his name and address and departed.

At five in the evening, they threw away their sticks and implements and retired to the veranda to rest. They had turned up every stone in the garden and cut down every grass blade and shrub, so that the tiniest insect coming into the garden should have no cover. They were loudly discussing the various measures they would take to protect themselves against reptiles in the future, when Dasa appeared before them carrying a water-pot whose mouth was sealed with a slab of stone. He put the pot down and said: 'I have caught him in this. I saw him peeping out of it...I saw him before he could see me.' He explained at length the strategy he had employed to catch and seal up the snake in the pot. They stood at a safe distance and gazed on the pot. Dasa had the glow of a champion on his face. 'Don't call me an idler hereafter,' he said. Mother complimented him on his sharpness and wished she had placed some milk in the pot as a sort of religious duty. Dasa picked up the pot cautiously and walked off saying that he would leave the pot with its contents with the snake-charmer living nearby. He became the hero of the day. They watched him in great admiration and decided to reward him adequately.

It was five minutes since Dasa was gone when the youngest son cried: 'See there!' Out of a hole in the compound wall a cobra emerged. It glided along

towards the gate, paused for a moment to look at the gathering in the veranda with its hood half-open. It crawled under the gate and disappeared along a drain. When they recovered from the shock they asked. 'Does it mean that there are two snakes here?' The college boy murmured: 'I wish I had taken the risk and knocked the water-pot from Dasa's hand; we might have known what it contained.'

GLOSSARY

Siesta: Afternoon rest or nap, especially one taken during the hottest hours of the day in a hot climate
Frantically: In a manner that is filled with fear or anxiety
Banalities: Dull, so lacking in originality as to be obvious and boring
Eloquent: Fluent
Apathy: Indifference
Arraigned: Find fault with
Sinister: Evil
Desultorily: Lacking a plan, purpose, or enthusiasm
Foliage: Plants and leaves collectively
Aptly: Appropriately
Unobstructed: Free, without our hindrance
Abhishekam: Bathing a divine idol in water, milk or honey, as fulfilment of a vow
Strategy: Plan of operation

COMPREHENSION

A. Answer the questions below, choosing from the options given.

1. What were the inmates of the bungalow doing when the presence of the cobra was announced?
   i. They were reading in the garden
   ii. They were preparing themselves for the *abhishekam*
   iii. They were sleeping
   iv. Nobody was home
2. Who first announced the presence of the cobra?
   i. A neighbour
   ii. Dasa
   iii. The son who had studied abroad
   iv. A cyclist
3. The neighbour accused Dasa of

i. Not tending to the flowers
ii. Being too lazy
iii. Not noticing the snake
iv. Not being fast enough to catch the snake

4. Why did the inner walls of the house brighten up?
   i. The mother got it painted in white
   ii. They installed extra lights to keep reptiles away
   iii. They cleared the extra foliage
   iv. They removed the curtains
5. The old beggar woman became happy on hearing about the snake because she thought that
   i. It was a sign that god Subramanya had come to visit the house
   ii. She would get a chance to earn money by getting rid of the snake
   iii. It was a chance to get the gardener fired and replace him with another gardener she knew
   iv. It was an exciting thing to happen in an otherwise-dull place
6. How did Dasa catch the snake?
   i. He caught it with a stick
   ii. He called the snake charmer to lure the snake into a basket
   iii. He found it lying in the yard and caught it unawares
   iv. He found it peeping out of a water pot and sealed it
7. Who saw the snake again after Dasa had left?
   i. The youngest son
   ii. The mother
   iii. A servant
   iv. All of them spotted it at the same time

B. Answer the following questions in about 30–40 words.

1. When the family announced the arrival of the snake to Dasa, what did he do?
2. Why was Dasa held responsible for the entry of the snake?
3. 'A neighbour declared that you could not think of buying any article made of iron till after the war.' Why couldn't anyone buy articles of iron during the war?

4. The author calls one of the neighbours 'eloquent'. What does he mean by that?
5. Did Dasa actually catch the snake? How do you know?

C. Answer the following questions in about 40–50 words.

1. What do you know about the family living the bungalow?
2. What can you infer about the neighbours? Were they really helpful? Why/why not?
3. Why did no one knock the water pot out of Dasa's hands? What risk was involved?
4. Mention any one example of a superstitious belief in the story.

D. Answer in detail in 120–140 words.

1. Was there really a snake inside the pot which Dasa brought? How do we know? If there was no snake inside the pot, why did Dasa pretend there was?
2. What is the purpose of this story?

E. Language in Use

(Verb, Noun, Pronoun, Adjectives, Adverb, Preposition, Conjunction, Interjection.)

1. **Write down the name of the part of speech highlighted in the blank provided.**
   i. Every twenty minutes someone is dying ***of*** cobra-bite. _____
   ii. Mother complimented him ***on*** his sharpness. _____
   iii. The players ***complained*** to the manager about the food. _____
   iv. My ***brother*** is going on a holiday. _____
   v. The tailor ***quickly*** made the wedding clothes. _____
2. **Complete the following passage by filling in the blanks with suitable prepositions.**

Our neighbourly closeness _____ the sea was not fully realised till he woke one morning and found a sardine _____ his pillow. There was so little room——— cabin that Toru was lying _____ his head _____ the doorway and, if anyone unknowingly trod———his face when going out _____ night, he bit him _____the leg. We consciously drew _____

our legs close together so that Toru should have more room the next night, but then something happened which caused Toru to find himself a sleeping place _____ the top _____ all the kitchen utensils_____ the wireless corner.

3. **Fill out the sentences with appropriate parts of speech. Hints are provided in brackets.**
   i. You have to believe in _____ if you ever expect to be successful at something. (Pronoun)
   ii. We _____ for the mountain just before six in the morning. (Verb)
   iii. We first went _____ the store to buy a few things. (Preposition)
   iv. My friend wasn't strong enough to lift his _____ rucksack. (Adjective)
   v. My friend exclaimed, '_____! What a cold weather!' (Interjection)
4. **Choose the correct conjunction in each question.**
   i. You can come to the meeting _____ you don't say anything.(so that/while/ as long as/as if)
   ii. I'm not leaving _____ I get an apology from you. (until/as if/while/so that)
   iii. You look _____ you've seen a ghost. (as long as/as if/while/so that)
   iv. _____ I don't think she's perfect for the job, she's certainly better qualified than Sunil. (As if/until/while/as long as)
   v. It looks _____ the government has got a lot of problems. (so that/as long as/while/as if)
5. **Fill in the words in brackets as adjective or adverb.**
   i. The bus driver was _____ injured. (serious)
   ii. Kush is _____ clever. (extreme)
   iii. This food tastes _____ awful. (terrible)
   iv. Our basketball team played _____ last evening.(bad)
   v. Madhu opened her gift _____. (slow)

UNIT 3: Living or Dead

Rabindranath Tagore

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Rabindranath Tagore (1861–1941) was the youngest son of Debendranath Tagore, a wealthy Bengali landlord. He was educated at home, and when he was 17, and was sent to England for formal schooling. On his return to India, he immersed himself in literary pursuits, besides managing his family estates. For a time, he participated in the Indian Nationalist Movement. He also founded Shanti Niketan, where he introduced a new style of education. Tagore wrote innumerable books, short stories, poems and plays in Bengali, many of which he translated into English. His *Gitanjali* won him the Nobel Prize for Literature for its profoundly sensitive, fresh, and beautiful verse. Tagore was also knighted by the British in 1915. He wrote and composed the *Jana Gana Mana*, which was chosen as the Indian National Anthem. Besides *Gitanjali*, Tagore is famous for *Kabuliwallah, Kingdom of Cards*, and his short story, *Living or Dead*.

ABOUT THE STORY

Living or Dead? is about Kadambini, a widow living in the house of her brother-in-law and lovingly takes care of her brother-in-law's son. A situation arises where Kadambini is mistaken for dead and her body is brought to the cremation-ground, where, much to the surprise of men who have taken her there, she awakens and the men fl ee. She does not return home, and instead goes to live with a childhood friend, Jogmaya. Things don't go well for her at her friend's house, and she eventually returns to her former residence where her nephew lives. She is regarded by all as a ghost-like creature unaccepted in society. Her trauma of being left alone, and rejected by the society when she returns, brings out the loneliness and misery that widows had to endure in those conservative times in India. She is not noticed as she enters, but on hearing voices from the room of the little child, the family finds Kadambini there. They scream and her sister-in-law faints. Kadambini rushes out saying

that she is not dead but, alive. She then kills herself by jumping into a well, dying to prove that she was alive and part of their world of the 'living' although they treated her as if she were dead.

Tagore depicts relationships and emotional turmoil between the main characters of the story with special emphasis on the experiences of the widow in this setting in rural Bengal. A widow's rejection by society, and her loneliness and despair, are depicted intensely and in a touching manner within this simple plot where widows are treated like the living dead. Tagore's commitment to social realism is depicted with elements of the supernatural and also the peculiar and bizzare.

LIVING OR DEAD?

I

The widow in the house of Saradasankar, the Ranihat zemindar, had no kinsmen of her father's family. One after another all had died. Nor had she in her husband's family any one she could call her own, neither husband nor son. The child of her brother-in-law Saradasankar was her darling. For a long time after his birth, his mother had been very ill, and the widow, his aunt Kadambini, had fostered him. If a woman fosters another's child, her love for him is all the stronger because she has no claim upon him-no claim of kinship, that is, but simply the claim of love. Love cannot prove its claim by any document which society accepts, and does not wish to prove it; it merely worships with double passion its life's uncertain treasure. Thus all the widow's thwarted love went out to wards this little child. One night in Sraban Kadambini died suddenly. For some reason her heart stopped beating. Everywhere else the world held on its course; only m this gentle little breast, suffering with love, the watch of time stood still for ever.

Lest they should be harassed by the poike, four of the zemindar's Brahmin servants took away the body, without ceremony, to be burned. The burning-ground of Ranihat was very far from the village. There was a hut beside a tank, a huge banian near it, and nothing more. Formerly a river, now completely dried up, ran through the ground, and part of the watercourse had been dug out to make a tank for the performance of funeral rites. The people considered the tank as part of the river and reverenced it as such.

Taking the body into the hut, the four men sat down to wait for the wood. The time seemed so long that two of the four grew restless, and went to see why it did not come. Nitai and Gurucharan being gone, Bidhu and Banamali remained to watch over the body.

It was a dark night of Sraban. Heavy clouds hung In a starless sky. The two men sat silent in the dark room. Their matches and lamp were useless. The matches were damp, and would not light, for all their efforts, and the lantern went out.

After a long silence, one said: "Brother, it would be good if we had a bowl of tobacco. In our hurry we brought none."

The other answered: "I can run and bring all we want."

Understanding why Banarnali wanted to go (From fear of ghosts, the burning-ground being considered haunted.), Bidhu said: "I daresay! Meanwhile, I suppose I am to sit here alone!"

Conversation ceased again. Five minutes seemed like an hour. In their minds they cursed the two, who had gone to fetch the wood, and they began to suspect that they sat gossiping in some pleasant nook. There was no sound anywhere, except the incessant noise of frogs and crickets from the tank. Then suddenly they fancied that the bed shook slightly, as if the dead body had turned on its side. Bidhu and Banamali trembled, and began muttering: "Ram, Ram." A deep sigh was heard in the room. In a moment the watchers leapt out of the hut, and raced for the village.

After running aboat three miles, they met their colleagues coming back with a lantern. As a matter of fact, they had gone to smoke, and knew nothing about the wood. But they declared that a tree had been cut down, and that, when it was split up, it would be brought along at once. Then Bidhu and Banamali told them what had happened in the hut. Nitai and Gurucharan scoffed at the story, and abused Bidhu and Banamali angrily for leaving their duty.

Without delay all four returned to the hut. As they entered, they saw at once that the body was gone; nothing but an empty bed remained. They stared at one another. Could a jackal have taken it? But there was no scrap of clothing anywhere. Going outside, they saw that on the mud that had collected at the door of the but there were a woman's tiny footprints, newly made. Saradasankar was no fool, and they could hardly persuade him to believe in

this ghost story. So after much discussion the four decided that it would be best to say that the body had been burnt.

Towards dawn, when the men with the wood arrived they were told that, owing to their delay, the work had been done without them…. No one was likely to question this, since a dead body is not such a valuable property that anyone would steal it.

II

Everyone knows that even when there is no sign, life is often secretly present, and may begin again in an apparently dead body. Kadambini was not dead; only the machine of her life had for some reason suddenly stopped.

When consciousness returned, she saw dense darkness on all sides. It occurred to her that she was not lying in her usual place. She called out "Sister," but no answer came from the darkness. As she sat up, terror-stricken, she remembered her death-bed, the sudden pain at her breast, the beginning of a choking sensation. Her elder sister-in-law was warming some milk for the child, when Kadambini became faint, and fell on the bed, saying with a choking voice: "Sister, bring the child here. I am worried." After that everything was black, as when an inkpot is upset over an exercise-book. Kadambini's memory and consciousness, all the letters of the world's book, in a moment became formless. The widow could not remember whether the child, in the sweet voice of love, called her "Auntie," as if for the last time, or not; she could not remember whether, as she left the world she knew for death's endless unknown journey, she had received a parting gift of affection, love's passage-money for the silent land. At first, I fancy, she thought the lonely dark place was the House of Yama, where there is nothing to see, nothing to hear, nothing to do, only an eternal watch. But when a cold damp wind drove through the open door, and she heard the croaking of frogs, she remembered vividly and in a moment all the rains of her short life, and could feel her kinship with the earth. Then came a flash of lightning, and she saw the tank, the banian, the great plain, the far-off trees. She remembered how at full moon she had sometimes come to bathe in this tank, and how dreadful death had seemed when she saw a corpse on the burning-ground.

Her first thought was to return home. But then she reflected: "I am dead. How can I return home? That would bring disaster on them. I have left the

kingdom of the living; I am my own ghost!" If this were not so, she reasoned, how could she have got out of Saradasankar's well-guarded zenana, and come to this distant burning ground at midnight? Also, if her funeral rites had not been finished, where had the men gone who should burn her? Recalling her death-moment in Saradasankar's brightly-lit house, she now found herself alone in a distant, deserted, dark burning ground. Surely she was no member of earthly society! Surely she was a creature of horror, of ill-omen, her own ghost!

At this thought, all the bonds were snapped which bound her to the world. She felt that she had marvellous strength, endless freedom. She could do what she liked, go where she pleased. Mad with the inspiration of this new idea, she rushed from the but like a gust of wind, and stood upon the burning ground. All trace of shame or fear had left her.

But as she walked on and on, her feet grew tired, her body weak. The plain stretched on endlessly; here and there were paddy-fields; sometimes she found herself standing knee-deep in water.

At the first glimmer of dawn she heard one or two birds cry from the bamboo-clumps 6y the distant houses. Then terror seized her. She could not tell in what new relation she stood to the earth and to living folk. So long as she had been on the plain, on the burning-ground, covered by the dark night of Sraban, so long she had been fearless, a denizen of her own kingdom. By daylight the homes of men filled her with fear. Men and ghosts dread each other, for their tribes inhabit different banks of the river of death.

III

Her clothes were clotted in the mud; strange thoughts and walking by night had given her the aspect of a madwoman; truly, her apparition was such that folk might have been afraid of her, and children might have stoned her or run away. Luckily, the first to catch sight of her was a traveller. He came up, and said: "Mother, you look a respectable woman. Wherever are you going, alone and in this guise?"

Kadambini, unable to collect her thoughts, stared at him in silence. She could not think that she was still in touch with the world, that she looked like a respectable woman, that a traveller was asking her questions.

Again the min said: "Come, mother, I will see you home. Tell me where you live." Kadambini thought. To return to her father-in-law's house would be

absurd, and she had no father's house. Then she remembered the friend of her childhood. She had not seen Jogmaya since the days of her youth, but from time to time they had exchanged letters. Occasionally there had been quarrels between them, as was only right, since Kadambini wished to make it dear that her love for Jogmaya was unbounded, while her friend complained that Kadambini did not return a love equal to her own. They were both sure that, if they once met, they would be inseparable.

Kadambini said to the traveller: "I will go to Sripati's house at Nisindapur."

As he was going to Calcutta, Nisindapur, though not near, was on his way. So he took Kadambini to Sripati s house, and the friends met again. At first they did not recognise one another, but gradually each recognised the features of the other's childhood.

"What luck!" said Jogmaya. "I never dreamt that I should see you again. But how hate you come here, sister? Your father-in-law's folk surely didn't let you go!"

Kadambini remained silent, and at last said: "Sister, do not ask about my father-in-law. Give me a corner, and treat me as a servant: I will do your work."

"What?" cried Jogmaya. "Keep you like a servant! Why, you are my closest friend, you are my –" and so on and so on.

Just then Sripati came in. Kadambini stared at him for some time, and then went out very slowly. She kept her head uncovered, and showed not the slightest modesty or respect. Jogmaya, fearing that Sripati would be prejudiced against her friend, began an elaborate explanation. But Sripati, who readily agreed to anything Jogmaya said, cut short her story, and left his wife uneasy in her mind.

Kadambini had come, but she was not at one with her friend: death was between them. She could feel no intimacy for others so long as her existence perplexed her and consciousness remained. Kadambini would look at Jogmaya, and brood. She would think: "She has her husband and her work, she lives in a world far away from mine. She shares affection and duty with the people of the world; I am an empty shadow. She is among the living; I am in eternity."

Jogmaya also was uneasy, but could not explain why. Women do not love mystery, because, though uncertainty may be transmuted into poetry, into heroism, into scholarship, it cannot be turned to account in household work. So, when a woman cannot understand a thing, she either destroys and forgets it, or

she shapes it anew for her own use; if she fails to deal with it in one of these ways, she loses her temper with it. The greater Kadambini's abstraction became, the more impatient was Jogmaya with her, wondering what trouble weighed upon her mind.

Then a new danger arose. Kadambini was afraid of herself; yet she could not flee from herself. Those who fear ghosts fear those who are behind them; wherever they cannot see there is fear. But Kadambini's chief terror lay in herself, for she dreaded nothing external. At the dead of night, when alone in her room, she screamed; in the evening, when she saw her shadow in the lamp-light, her whole body shook. Watching her fearfulness, the rest of the house fell into a sort of terror. The servants and Jogmaya herself began to see ghosts.

One midnight, Kadambini came out from her bedroom weeping, and wailed at Jogmaya's door: "Sister, sister, let me lie at your feet! Do not put me by myself!"

Jogmaya's anger was no less than her fear. She would have liked to drive Kadambini from the house that very second. The good-natured Sripati, after much effort, succeeded in quieting their guest, and put her in the next room.

Next day Sripati was unexpectedly summoned to his wife's apartments. She began to upbraid him: "You, do you call yourself a man? A woman runs away from her father-in-law, and enters your house; a month passes, and you haven't hinted that she should go away, nor have I heard the slightest protest from you. I should cake it as a favour if you would explain yourself. You men are all alike."

Men, as a race, have a natural partiality for womankind in general, for which women themselves hold them accountable. Although Sripati was prepared to touch Jogmaya's body, and swear that his kind feeling towards the helpless but beautiful Kadambini was no whit greater than it should be, he could not prove it by his behaviour. He thought that her father-in-law's people must have treated this forlorn widow abominably, if she could bear it no longer, and was driven to take refuge with him. As she had neither father nor mother, how could he desert her? So saying, he let the matter drop, far he had no mind to distress Kadambini by asking her unpleasant questions.

His wife, then, tried other means of her sluggish lord, until at last he saw that for the sake of peace, he must send word to Kadambini's father-in-law. The result of a letter, he thought, might not be satisfactory; so he resolved to go to

Ranihat, and act on what he learnt.

So Sripati went, and Jogmaya on her part said to Kadambini "Friend, it hardly seems proper for you to stop here any longer. What will people say? "

Kadambini stared solemnly at Jogmaya, and said: "What have I to do with people?" Jogmaya was astounded. Then she said sharply: "If you have nothing to do with people, we have. How can we explain the detention of a woman belonging to another house?"

Kadambini said: "Where is my father-in-law's house?"

"Confound it!" thought Jogmaya. "What will the wretched woman say next?"

Very slowly Kadambini said: "What have I to do with you? Am I of the earth? You laugh, weep, love; each grips and holds his own; I merely look. You are human, I a shadow. I cannot understand why God has kept me in this world of yours."

So strange were her look and speech that Jogmaya understood something of her drift, though not all. Unable either to dismiss her, or to ask her any more questions, she went away, oppressed with thought.

IV

It was nearly ten o'clock at night when Sripati returned from Ranihat. The earth was drowned in torrents of rain. It seemed that the downpour would never stop, that the night would never end.

Jogmaya asked: "Well?" "I've lots to say, presently."

So saying, Sripati changed his clothes, and sat down to supper; then he lay dawn for a smoke. His mind was perplexed.

His wife stilled her curiosity for a long time; then she came to his couch and demanded: "What did you hear?"

"That you have certainly made a mistake."

Jogmaya was nettled. Women never make mistakes, or, if they do, a sensible man never mentions them; it is better to take them on his own shoulders. Jogmaya snapped: "May I be permitted to hear how?"

Sripati replied: "The woman you have taken into your house is not your Kadambini."

Hearing this, she was greatly annoyed, especially since it was her husband who said it. "What! I don't know my own friend? I must come to you to

recognise her! You are clever, indeed!"

Sripati explained that there was no need to quarrel about his cleverness. He could prove what he said. There was no doubt that Jogmaya's Kadambini was dead.

Jogmaya replied: "Listen! You've certainly made some huge mistake. You've been to the wrong house, or are confused as to what you have heard. Who told you to go yourself? Write a letter, and everything will be cleared up."

Sripati was hurt by his wife's lack of faith in his executive ability; he produced all sorts of proof, without result. Midnight found them still asserting and contradicting. Although they were both agreed now that Kadambini should be got out of the house, although Sripati believed that their guest had deceived his wife all the time by a pretended acquaintance, and Jogmaya that she was a prostitute, yet in the present discussion neither would acknowledge defeat. By degrees their voices became so loud that they forgot that Kadambini was sleeping in the next room.

The one said: "We're in a nice fix! I tell you, I heard it with my own ears!" And the other answered angrily: "What do I care about that? I can see with my own eyes, surely."

At length Jogmaya said: "Very well. Tell me when Kadambini died." She thought that if she could find a discrepancy between the day of death and the date of some letter from Kadambini, she could prove that Sripati erred.

He told her the date of Kadambini's death, and they both saw that it fell on the very day before she came to their house. Jogmaya's heart trembled, even Sripati was not unmoved.

Just then the door flew open; a damp wind swept in and blew the lamp out. The darkness rushed after it, and filled the whole house. Kadambini stood in the room. It was nearly one o'clock, the rain was pelting outside.

Kadambini spoke: "Friend, I am your Kadambini, but I am no longer living. I am dead."

Jogmaya screamed with terror; Sripati could speak.

"But, save in being dead, I have done you no wrong. If I have no place among the living, I have none among the dead. Oh! whither shall I go?"

Crying as if to wake the sleeping Creator in the dense night of rain, she asked again: " Oh! whither shall I go? "

So saying Kadambini left her friend fainting in the dark house, and went

out into the world, seeking her own place.

V

It is hard to say how Kadambini reached Ranihat. At first she showed herself to no one, but spent the whole day in a ruined temple, starving. When the untimely afternoon of the rains was pitch-black, and people huddled into their houses for fear of the impending storm, then Kadambini came forth. Her heart trembled as she reached her father-in- law's house; and when, drawing a thick veil over her face, she entered, none of the doorkeepers objected, since they took her for a servant. And the rain was pouring down, and the wind howled.

The mistress, Saradasankar's wife, was playing cards with her widowed sister. A servant was in the kitchen, the sick child was sleeping in the bedroom. Kadambini, escaping every one's notice, entered this room. I do not know why she had come to her father-in-law's house; she herself did not know; she felt only that she wanted to see her child again. She had no thought where to go next, or what to do.

In the lighted room she saw the child sleeping, his fists clenched, his body wasted with fever. At sight of him, her heart became parched and thirsty. If only she could press that tortured body to her breast! Immediately the thought followed: "I do not exist. Who would see it? His mother loves company, loves gossip and cards. All the time that she left me in charge, she was herself free from anxiety, nor was she troubled about him in the least. Who will look after him now as I did?"

The child turned on his side, and cried, half-asleep: "Auntie, give me water." Her darling had not yet forgotten his auntie! In a fever of excitement, she poured out some water, and, taking him to her breast, she gave it him.

As long as he was asleep, the child felt no strangeness in taking water from the accustomed hand. But when Kadambini satisfied her long-starved longing, and kissed him and began rocking him asleep again, he awoke and embraced her.

"Did you die, Auntie?" he asked.

"Yes, darling."

"And you have come back? Do not die again."

Before she could answer disaster overtook her. One of the maidservants coming in with a cup of sago dropped it, and fell down. At the crash the

mistress left her cards, and entered the room. She stood like a pillar of wood, unable to flee or speak. Seeing all this, the child, too, became terrified, and burst out weeping: " Go away, Auntie," he said, "go away!"

Now at last Kadambini understood that she had not died. The old room, the old things, the same child, the same love, all returned to their living state, without change or difference between her and them. In her friend's house she had felt that her childhood's companion was dead. In her child's room she knew that the boy's "Auntie" was not dead at all. In anguished tones she said: "Sister, why do you dread me? See, I am as you knew me."

Her sister-in-law could endure no longer, and fell into a faint. Saradasankar himself entered the zenana. With folded hands, he said piteously: "Is this right? Satis is my only son. Why do you show yourself to him? Are we not your own kin? Since you went, he has wasted away daily; his fever has been incessant; day and night he cries: `Auntie, Auntie.'

You have left the world; break these bonds of maya (Illusory affection binding a soul to the world). We will perform all funeral honours."

Kadambini could bear no more. She said: "Oh, I am not dead, I am not dead. Oh, how can I persuade you that I am not dead? I am living, living!" She lifted a brass pot from the ground and dashed it against her forehead. The blood ran from her brow. "Look!" she cried, "I am living!" Saradasankar stood like an image; the child screamed with fear, the two fainting women lay still.

Then Kadambini, shouting "I am not dead, I am not dead," went down the steps to the zenana well, and plunged in. From the upper storey Saradasankar heard the splash.

All night the rain poured; it poured next day at dawn, was pouring still at noon. By dying, Kadambini had given proof that she was not dead

GLOSSARY

Zemindar: Landlord
Kinsmen: Family people
Darling: Beloved person
Fostered: Brought up
Thwarted: Prevented
Banian: Variety of a tree
Forlorn: Sad
Abominably: Very unpleasant
Sluggish: Slow moving
Astounded: Greatly surprised
Detention: Keeping back one in custody

Reverenced: Respected
Incessant: Continuous
Yama: Vedic god of the underworld
Vividly: Clearly, brightly
Denizen: Resident, inhabitant
Apparition: A ghostly figure
Prejudiced: Biased, preconceived opinion
Abstraction: Absent-mindedness
Eternity: Without beginning or end
Partiality: Special fondness
Drift: Slow movement
Nettled: Irritated
Executive ability: Decision-making ability
Asserting: With positive force
Contradicting: Conflicting
Impending: About to happen
Parched: Dried out
Anguished: Expressing severe pain
Incessant: continuous
Maya: goddess of illusions
Illusory: imaginative, unreal

COMPREHENSION

A. Answer the questions below, choosing from the options given.

1. Saradasankar was a
   i. Widow
   ii. Kadambini's husband
   iii. Ranihat Zemindar
   iv. Child
2. Kadambini was
   i. The wife of Saradasankar
   ii. A widow in the house of Saradasankar
   iii. A servant in the household
   iv. A visitor
3. The burning ground of Ranihat was
   i. Very far from the village
   ii. Next to the house
   iii. Close to the village
   iv. In the village
4. The people who went in search of the wood supplier for the funeral rites were
   i. Bidhu and Banamali
   ii. Nitai and Banamali

iii. Nitai and Bidhu
iv. Nitai and Gurucharan

5. Outside the hut, the four servants found
   i. Scraps of clothing
   ii. A man's footprint
   iii. A jackal
   iv. A woman's tiny footprints
6. The four servants decided to say
   i. They had burnt the body
   ii. The body had become a ghost
   iii. There was no wood to burn the body
   iv. The body was stolen
7. Sripati was
   i. Brother-in-law of Jogmaya
   ii. Friend of Jogmaya
   iii. Traveller who Kadambini met on the road
   iv. Husband of Jogmaya
8. What did Kadambini do to prove she was alive and not a ghost?
   i. She walked on burning coals
   ii. She crossed over wring of fire
   iii. She jumped from a building
   iv. She jumped into a well

B. Answer the following questions in about 30–40 words.

1. What was Kadambini's relationship with the Saradanskar family?
2. Describe Kadambini 's attachment with her foster child.
3. Why did the servants go back to the house and say that they had burnt Kadmbini's body?
4. Why did Kadambini go to her friend's house?
5. Explain Kadambini's fears about returning to the home of Saradanskar.

C. Answer the following questions in about 40–50 words.

1. The appropriateness of the title of the story.
2. The meeting of Kadambini and her friend Jogmaya
3. Sripati's views on why Kadambini could have left her father-in-law's

house.

4. The dramatic ending of the story.

D. Answer in detail in 100–120 words.

1. Kadambini's plight.
2. The irony and pathos in the story.

E. Language in Use

(Simple Present Tense, Simple Past Tense, Simple Future Tense)

1. **Fill in the table with the correct forms of the verb 'sing'. One instance has been done for you.**

Simple Present Tense	Simple Past Tense	Simple Future Tense
I sing	I sang	I will sing
She/He		
You		
They/We		

2. **Fill in the blanks with appropriate forms of the verbs given in brackets.**

   Last weekend my friends and I _____ (was) at the cinema. We _____ (buy) our tickets, and then we _____ (decide) to _____ (has) a cool drink. As we _____ (sit) down together at the table, we _____ (see) another group of our friends. We _____ (call) out to them and they _____ (join) us.

3. **Fill in the blanks with appropriate form of tenses.**

   The Meteorological Department_____ (forecast) that tomorrow _____(will) a cloudy day. We should _____ (take) our umbrellas with us when we _____ (go) to college. Ramesh _____ (plan) to _____ (met) us there and we _____(go) together to watch the cricket match. It _____ (play) between our College and Bandhu College.

4. **Identify the tense and write down the name of the tense in the blank space provided.**
   i. I go out with my friends to the market._____ tense
   ii. I went out with my parents to a temple. _____ tense
   iii. My brother was asleep. _____ tense
   iv. I will go to college tomorrow. _____ tense
   v. My friend will be coming to stay over tonight. _____ tense

5. **Change tenses in the following table.**

Simple Past Tense	**Simple Present Tense**	**Simple Future Tense**
I liked grammar	I like grammar	I will like grammar
I lived in New York		
		We will meet every Thursday
	Tara is not at home	
Ram was late		

UNIT 4: What We Must Learn from the West

Narayana Murthy

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

N R Narayan Murthy (b. 1946), the co-founder of the company, Infosys, is one of India's most successful businesspeople. Born in Mysore, Karnataka, Murthy graduated with a degree in Electrical Engineering from the National Institute of Engineering, Mysore, in 1967. He followed this up with a Masters from IIT Kanpur. Murthy started Infosys in 1981 and served as its CEO for more than two decades. In 2011, he retired from his position as CEO of Infosys and took the title of Chairman Emeritus. In June 2013, he was appointed as Additional Director and Executive Chairman of the Board for a 5-year period. Today, Infosys is acknowledged as a highly respectable and dynamic company. Murthy is married to Sudha Murthy, who is an author and a social worker. They have two children.

ABOUT THE SPEECH

This speech was delivered by Murthy on 1 October 2001, when he received the 'Lal Bahadur Shastri National Award' for Excellence in Public Administration and Management Sciences. Here, Murthy talks about some of the flaws in the Indian value system that prevent us from achieving greater goals. He argues for the need to incorporate certain western maxims in to the Indian value system for progress and growth.

WHAT WE MUST LEARN FROM THE WEST

The role of Western values in contemporary Indian society is a subject on which I have pondered for years. I come from a company that is built on strong values. Moreover, various stakeholders of our company—employees, investors, customers and vendor-partners—come from across the globe, and in dealing with them over the years, I have come to appreciate several aspects of the West's value system. An organisation is representative of society, and some of

the lessons that I have learnt from the West regarding values are, I think, applicable to us as a nation. Here are some of them.

Respect for the Public Good

Indian culture has deep rooted family values—parents make emormous sacrifices for their children; children consider it their duty to take care of aged parents; and marriage is held to be a sacred union with the husband and wife bonded for life. Unfortunately, our attitude towards the community is very different from our attitude towards the family.

Although we keep our homes spotlessly clean, when we go out we do not think twice before littering. On the other hand, parks in the West are generally free of litter and their streets are clean.

We are also apathetic about community matters. We see serious problems around us but behave as if they are someone else's responsibility. For instance, all of us are aware of the problem of drought in India.

More than 30 years ago, irrigation expert Dr K L Rao suggested solving this problem by creating a water grid interlinking the Ganga and Cauvery and several other Indian rivers. Unfortunately, nothing was done about this.

The story of power shortage in Bangalore is another example. In 1983, it was decided to build a thermal power plant to meet Bangalore's power requirements. Unfortunately, we have still not started it. Five years ago, because of the constant foreign travel required in the software industry, I had suggested a 240 page passport. This would eliminate frequent visits to the passport office. However, I am yet to hear from the Ministry of External Affairs on this.

Could the reason for all this be that we were ruled by foreigners for over a thousand years and thus came to believe that solving public problems was the responsibility of a foreign ruler, not ours? Even our decision-makers look to somebody else to take decisions.

In the West, individuals understand that they have to be responsible to their community. They care for their society and make sacrifices for it. They solve societal problems proactively. This is where we need to learn from the West. Successful societies are those that harmoniously combine loyalty to family and loyalty to community.

Acknowledging the Accomplishments of Others

In my extensive travels, I have not come across another society as contemptuous as we are of countries that have done better. This attitude, incidentally, is nothing new. Even Al-Biruni, the noted 11th century logician and traveller, who spent about 20 years in India, referred to this trait of Indians.

If we want to progress, we must listen to and learn from people who have performed better than us.

Accountability

Another attribute we must learn from the West is accountability. There, you are held responsible for what you do, irrespective of your position. In India, the more 'important' you are, the less answerable you become. For instance a senior politician once declared that, he 'forgot' to file his tax returns for 10 consecutive years, and got away with it. And although there are over a hundred loss-making public sector units belonging to the central government, I have not seen action taken against top managers for bad performance in any of these organisations.

Dignity of Labour

Whereas this is an integral part of the West's value system, in India we revere only supposedly intellectual work. For instance, I have seen many engineers, fresh from college, who only want to do cutting-edge work, and not work that is of relevance to business and the nation. For anything to be run successfully, everyone—-from the CEO to the person who serves tea—must discharge his or her duties in a responsible manner. We, therefore, need a mindset that reveres everyone who puts in honest work, no matter what work it is.

Professionalism

In the West, people do not let personal relations interfere with their professional dealings. They do not hesitate to chastise a colleague for incompetence, even if

he or she is a friend. In India, we tend to view even work interactions from a personal perspective. We are also the most thin-skinned society in the world—we see insults where none is meant.

We extend this lack of professionalism to our sense of punctuality. We do not respect the other person's time. Indian Standard Time always runs late, and deadlines are typically not met.

Intellectual Independence

From the time their children are very young, Western parents teach them to think for themselves. So, these children grow up to be strong, confident adults. But in India, we suffer from feudal thinking. I have seen bright people who prefer to be told what to do by their bosses. We need to overcome this attitude if we are to succeed globally.

Honouring Contracts

The Western value system teaches respect for contractual obligation. In India, we consider it crucial to fulfill personal vows as with family or friends. However, we do not extend this to the public domain. For instance, I had recommended several students for national scholarships for higher studies in American universities. Most of them did not come back to India even though contractually they were obliged to spend five years here after getting their degree: We have to change this attitude. We are all aware of our rights as citizens. But we often fail to acknowledge the duty that accompanies every right. We should keep in mind what former US President Dwight D Eisenhower said: 'A people that values its privileges above its principles soon loses both.' So, let us work towards a society where 'we would do unto others as we would have them do unto us' and make our country great.

GLOSSARY

Ponder: Think carefully about something
Sacred: Something very important
Apathetic: Showing no interest
Harmonious: Peaceful, free from disagreement
Contemptuous: Showing that you have no respect for something

Eliminate: Remove or get rid of
Proactively: Being able to act without waiting for things to happen
Trait: Peculiar quality in your personality
Chastise: To reprimand severely
Crucial: Extremely important

COMPREHENSION

A. **Answer the following questions by choosing the right answer from the options that follow.**

1. What kind of values does the Indian society have?
   i. Materialistic ii. Societal iii. Family iv. Religious
2. Dr D L Rao was
   i. An economist
   ii. A lecturer
   iii. An irrigation expert
   iv. A scientist
3. Narayana Murthy refers to the problem of power shortage in the city of
   i. Bhubaneswar
   ii. Bangalore
   iii. Durgapur
   iv. New Delhi
4. Narayan Murthy requested for a 250-page-passport from the ministry of
   i. trade
   ii. Foreign Affairs
   iii. Defense
   iv. External Affairs
5. Who was Al-Biruni?
   i. Famous ruler
   ii. Historian
   iii. Poet
   iv. Logician and traveler
6. The proposed water grid was meant to link the rivers, Ganga and
   i. Yamuna
   ii. Cauveri
   iii. Krishna

iv. Jhelum

7. Where do people have trouble differentiating between personal and professional relationships?
   i. Southeast Asia
   ii. America
   iii. India
   iv. England
8. Narayana Murthy ends his essay with a quote from this US President
   i. Barrack Obama
   ii. Bill Clinton
   iii. George Bush
   iv. Dwight D Eisenhower

B. Answer the following questions in 30–40 words.

1. On what subject had Narayana Murthy pondered for years?
2. How did Murthy come to appreciate the various aspects of the Western value system?
3. What does the author mean when he says that Indians have deep-rooted family values?
4. How do Indians and Westerners differ in their attitude towards littering?
5. Why does Murthy call Indians 'thin skinned'?

C. Answer the following questions in 40–50 words.

1. Narayana Murthy gives three examples of India's apathy in community matters. Write about any one of them.
2. What did Al-Biruni observe about Indian society? Does Murthy agree or disagree with him?
3. Why does Narayan Murthy say that there is no accountability in public sector units?
4. Why does the author think that Indians have no dignity of labour?
5. The author says that children in the west grow up to be strong and confident adults. How do Indian children differ and why?

D. Answer the following questions in 120–150 words.

1. Murthy observes that India is a nation where we put the personal needs above the needs of community and society. How does the author prove

this in the course of the essay?

2. Murthy feels that a few changes in our value system will enable India to become a greater nation. What are these changes?

UNIT 5: The Night Train at Deoli

Ruskin Bond

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Ruskin Bond (born 1934) was born in Kasauli, Himachal Pradesh, and grew up in Jamnagar (Gujarat), Dehradun, and Shimla. A prolific writer, he has more than a hundred short stories, essays and novels to his credit, many of which are for children. His first novel, *The Room on the Roof*, was written when he was seventeen. He received the Sahitya Akademi Award for English Writing in India, for his book *Our Trees Still Grow in Dehra*. His themes include the joys and pains of childhood, love, nature and the travails of growing up. Written in simple and lucid prose, his stories celebrate ordinary moments and everyday experience. He was awarded a Padmashree in 1999.

ABOUT THE STORY

The Night Train at Deoli is a story of adolescent infatuation presented with great sensitivity. It expresses the narrator's attraction for a poor basket-seller whom he comes across at a small station while on his way to Dehra. The narrator is in his late teens when he travels by train from Delhi to Dehra every summer to spend the vacation with his grandmother. On the way to Dehra, the train stops at a small village called Deoli. The narrator meets a young and attractive girl who sells baskets on the station platform. He is instantly interested and buys a basket from her. On his subsequent visit, he is bolder and strikes up a conversation with her, but every time, he has to rush back into the train so that he does not miss it. He makes plans to take her with him, carried away by his youthful and romantic imagination. The next time however, he does not see her, and he is unable to find out her whereabouts despite enquiring at the station. He meets the girl only twice, never to see her again, but she remains in his memory for a long time.

THE NIGHT TRAIN AT DEOLI

When I was at college I used to spend my summer vacations in Dehra, at my grandmother's place. I would leave the plains early in May and return late in July. Deoli was a small station about thirty miles from Dehra; it marked the beginning of the heavy jungles of the Indian Terai.

The train would reach Deoli at about five in the morning, when the station would be dimly lit with electric bulbs and oil lamps, and the jungle across the railway tracks would just be visible in the faint light of dawn. Deoli had only one platform, an office for the stationmaster and a waiting room. The platform boasted of a tea stall, a fruit vendor, and a few stray dogs; not much else, because the train stopped there for only ten minutes before rushing on into the forests.

Why it stopped at Deoli, I don't know. Nothing ever happened there. Nobody got off the train and nobody got in. There were never coolies on the platform. But the train would halt there a full ten minutes, and then a bell would sound, the guard would blow his whistle, and presently Deoli would be left behind and forgotten.

I used to wonder what happened in Deoli, behind the station walls. I always felt sorry for that lonely little platform, and for the place that nobody wanted to visit. I decided that one day I would get off the train at Deoli, and spend the day there, just to please the town.

I was eighteen, visiting my grandmother, and the night train stopped at Deoli. A girl came down the platform, selling baskets.

It was a cold morning and the girl had a shawl thrown across her shoulders. Her feet were bare and her clothes were old but she was a young girl, walking gracefully and with dignity.

When she came to my window, she stopped. She saw that I was looking at her intently, but at first she pretended not to notice. She had pale skin, set off by shiny black hair, and dark, troubled eyes. And then those eyes, searching and eloquent, met mine.

She stood by my window for some time and neither of us said anything. But when she moved on, I found myself leaving my seat and going to the carriage door, and stood waiting on the platform, looking the other way. I walked across to the tea stall. A kettle was boiling over on a small fire, but the owner of the

stall was busy serving tea somewhere on the train. The girl followed me behind the stall.

"Do you want to buy a basket?" she asked. "They are very strong, made of the finest cane...."

"No," I said, "I don't want a basket."

We stood looking at each other for what seemed a very long time, and she said, "Are you sure you don't want a basket?"

"All right, give me one," I said, and I took the one on top and gave her a rupee, hardly daring to touch her fingers.

As she was about to speak, the guard blew his whistle; she said something, but it was lost in the clanging of the bell and the hissing of the engine. I had to run back to my compartment. The carriage shuddered and jolted forward.

I watched her as the platform slipped away. She was alone on the platform and she did not move, but she was looking at me and smiling. I watched her until the signal-box came in the way, and then the jungle hid the station, but I could still see her standing there alone....

I sat up awake for the rest of the journey. I could not rid my mind of the picture of the girl's face and her dark, smouldering eyes.

But when I reached Dehra the incident became blurred and distant, for there were other things to occupy my mind. It was only when I was making the return journey, two months later that I remembered the girl.

I was looking out for her as the train drew into the station, and I felt an unexpected thrill when I saw her walking up the platform, I sprang off the footboard and waved to her.

When she saw me, she smiled. She was pleased that I remembered her and I was pleased that she remembered me. We were both pleased, and it was almost like a meeting of old friends.

She did not go down the length of the train selling baskets, but came straight to the tea stall; her dark eyes were suddenly filled with light. We said nothing for some time but we couldn't have been more eloquent.

I felt the impulse to put her on the train there and then, and take her away with me. I could not bear the thought of having to watch her recede into the distance of Deoli station. I took the baskets from her hand and put them down on the ground. She put out her hand for one of them, but I caught her hand and held it.

"I have to go to Delhi," I said.

She nodded, "I do not have to go anywhere."

The guard blew his whistle for the train to leave and how I hated the guard for doing that.

"I will come again," I said. "Will you be here?"

She nodded again, and as she nodded, the bell clanged and the train slid forward. I had to wrench my hand away from the girl and run for the moving train.

This time I did not forget her. She was with me for the remainder of the journey, and for long after. All that year she was a bright, living thing. And when the college term finished I packed in haste and left for Dehra earlier than usual. My grandmother would be pleased at my eagerness to see her.

I was nervous and anxious as the train drew into Deoli, because I was wondering what I should say to the girl and what I should do. I was determined that I wouldn't stand helplessly before her, hardly able to speak or do anything about my feelings.

The train came to Deoli, and I looked up and down the platform, but I could not see the girl anywhere.

I opened the door and stepped off the footboard. I was deeply disappointed, and overcome by a sense of foreboding. I felt I had to do something, and so I ran up to the stationmaster and said. "Do you know the girl who used to sell baskets here."

"No, I don't" said the stationmaster. "And you'd better get on the train if you don't want to be left behind."

But I paced up and down the platform, and stared over the railings at the station yard; all I saw was a mango tree and a dusty road leading into the jungle. Where did the road go? The train was moving out of the station, and I had to run up the platform and jump for the door of my compartment. Then, as the train gathered speed and rushed through the forests, I sat brooding in front of the window.

What could I do about finding a girl I had seen only twice, who had hardly spoken to me, and about whom I knew nothing, absolutely nothing – but for whom I felt tenderness and responsibility that I had never felt before?

My grandmother was not pleased with my visit after all, because I didn't stay at her place more than a couple of weeks. I felt restless and ill at ease. So I

took the train back to the plains, meaning to ask further questions to the stationmaster at Deoli.

But at Deoli there was a new stationmaster. The previous man had been transferred to another post within the past week. The new man didn't know anything about the girl who sold baskets. I found the owner of the tea stall, a small, shrivelled-up man.

"Yes, there was such a girl there, I remember quite well," he said. "But she has stopped coming now."

"Why?" I asked, "What happened to her?"

"How should I know?" said the man. "She was nothing to me." And once again I had to run for the train.

As the Deoli platform receded, I decided that one day I would have to break journey there, spend a day in the town, make enquiries, and find the girl who had stolen my heart with nothing but a look from her dark, impatient eyes.

With this thought I consoled myself throughout my last term in college. I went to Dehra again in the summer and when in the early hours of the morning, the night train drew into Deoli station, I looked up and down the platform for signs of the girl, knowing I wouldn't find her but hoping just the same.

Somehow, I couldn't bring myself to break journey at Deoli and spend a day there. (If it was all fiction or a film, I reflected, I would have got down and cleaned up the mystery and reached a suitable ending for the whole thing.) I think I was afraid to do this. I was afraid of discovering what really happened to the girl. Perhaps she was no longer in Deoli, perhaps she was married, perhaps she had fallen ill....

In the last few years I have passed through Deoli many times, and I always look out of the carriage window, half expecting to see the same unchanged face smiling up at me. I wonder what happens in Deoli, behind the station walls. But I will never break my journey there. It may spoil my game. I prefer to keep hoping and dreaming, and looking out of the window up and down the lonely platform, waiting for the girl with the baskets.

I never break my journey at Deoli, but I pass through as often as I can.

GLOSSARY

Terai: Himalayan foothills

Eloquent: Expressive

Slid: Moved

Wrench: Pull sharply

Clanging: Ringing
Shuddered: Shook
Paced: Walked
Brooding: Worrying
Shrivelled-up: Small and shrunken
Break journey: Stop mid-way in one's journey
Recede: Fade away
Foreboding: A feeling that something unpleasant will happen
Jolted: Jerked
Smouldering: Glowing with deep emotion
Blurred and distant: Faded in memory
Sprang: Jumped

COMPREHENSION

A. Answer the following questions choosing from the options that follow.

1. Ruskin Bond received the Sahitya Akademi award for his book
   i. *The Night Train at Deoli*
   ii. *Padmashree*
   iii. *The Room on the Roof*
   iv. *Our Trees Still Grow in Dehra*
2. Where did the narrator's grandmother live?
   i. Deoli
   ii. Dehra
   iii. Terai
   iv. Kasauli
3. Where was Deoli?
   i. In the plains
   ii. In the Hills
   iii. Thirty miles from Dehra
   iv. Kasauli
4. Who was the girl that the narrator met in Deoli station?
   i. His cousin
   ii. A visitor to his grandmother's house
   iii. A basket-seller
   iv. The owner of a tea stall
5. What impulse did the narrator feel when he met the girl the second time?

i. To hold her
ii. To take her with him to Delhi
iii. To talk to her
iv. To run for the train

6. Why did the narrator rush to Dehra when his college term finished?
   i. To please his grandmother
   ii. He had to leave in haste
   iii. He was eager to meet the girl again
   iv. He wanted to meet the station master at Deoli
7. Why didn't the narrator stop over in Deoli?
   i. Deoli was a deserted place and it was not safe
   ii. He was always in a rush and never had time to stop
   iii. He was afraid to find out what really happened to the girl
   iv. His grandmother would have been worried about his whereabouts
8. What does the narrator do whenever he passes through Deoli?
   i. He breaks journey
   ii. He looks out of the window for the basket-seller
   iii. He meets the girl
   iv. He meets his grandmother

B. Answer the following questions in 30–40 words.

1. What were the narrator's feelings about Deoli?
2. How did the girl appear to the narrator the first time he saw her?
3. Why was the narrator's grandmother displeased with his trip?
4. What were the narrator's thoughts during his last term in college?
5. Did the narrator finally break journey in Deoli? Why?

C. Write short notes on the following in 40–50 words.

1. The ambience of Deoli station.
2. The narrator's first meeting with the girl.
3. Why was the narrator's grandmother not pleased with the narrator's visit?
4. The narrator's reasoning about not trying to meet the girl at the end.

D. Answer in detail in 100–120 words.

1. Suppose the narrator of *The Night Train at Deoli* does meet the girl again. Imagine and write a different ending for the story in your own words.
2. Narrate the incidents at Deoli station from the point of view of the basket-seller.

E. Language in Use

(Direct/Indirect, Pronoun, Adjectives)

1. **Identify the objects in the following sentences and state whether they are direct or indirect.**
   i. I used to spend my summer vacations in Dehra.
   ii. Dehra marked the beginning of the jungles of Terai.
   iii. The girl sold me a basket.
   iv. Neither of us said anything.
   v. I watched her as the platform slipped away.
2. **Identify the pronoun subclasses in the following sentences.**
   i. *Who* likes grammar?
   ii. Can *anybody* answer the question?
   iii. *These* are not my books.
   iv. Complete the table by working in pairs. Feel free to consult *each other*.
   v. To the home tutor's surprise, the children completed the homework by *themselves*.
3. **Fill in the blanks in the following passages with suitable pronouns or adjectives from the accompanying lists. Each pronoun may be used only once.**
   i. *each other, ourselves, themselves, them, they, I, it.*

      Listening to my friends' stories about how their parents do not understand _____, and how _____ have to deal with everything by _____, _____ don't feel as alone. _____ doesn't hurt to laugh at _____and share problems with _____.
   ii. *he, they, some, himself, it*

      Vincent Willem van Gogh (March 30, 1853–July 29, 1890) was a Dutch post-Impressionist painter. His work had a far-reaching

influence on 20th century art, since _____ had vivid colours and emotional impact. Suffering from anxiety and increasingly frequent bouts of mental illness throughout his life, _____ died largely unknown at the age of 37. It is believed that he shot _____ with a gun.

Van Gogh did not begin painting until his late twenties, most of his best-known works dating from his last two years. In less than a decade, he produced more than 2,000 artworks. _____ consisted of around 900 paintings and 1,100 drawings and sketches. _____ of his work included self-portraits. He also painted landscapes, portraits and paintings of cypresses, wheat fields and sunflowers

iii. *famous, brilliant, sharp, fictional, difficult, any, forensic*

Sherlock Holmes is a _____ detective created by Scottish author and physician, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. A _____ London-based consulting detective, Holmes is _____ for his _____ logical reasoning, his ability to take almost _____ disguise, and his use of _____ science skills to solve _____ cases.

4. **Underline the adjectives in the following paragraph and identify their subclasses.**

This college is the best in the University. Hundreds of students apply for admission every year. The faculty is excellent and the library has a rare collection of books. Some professors are renowned in the country for their research and extensive publications. Students also have access to a well-equipped gym and a badminton court.

5. **Make comparative sentences from the following. The first one is done for you.**

i. Raghav is 5'6'' and Jyotsna is 5'4''.
Raghav is taller than Jyotsna.

ii. The canteen is next to the English Department. The bus stop is a hundred yards from it.

_____

iii. The Mathematics paper was difficult. The Physics paper was impossible.

iv. Sneha is seventeen years old. Her brother is sixteen.

_____

v. These brushes are long. The ones in the shop are not so long.

_____

UNIT 6: The Letter

'Dhumaketu' Gaurishankar Govardhandas Josh

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

'Dhumaketu' was the pen name of Gaurishankar Govardhandas Josh (1892–1965), a prolific writer, who is considered one of the pioneers of the Gujarati short story. He was born in Virpur, Gujarat. He published 24 collections of short stories, and 32 novels on historical and social subjects, and plays and travelogues. His writing is characterised by a poetic style, romanticism, and powerful depiction of human emotions. In 1935, he was awarded by the famous award of Ranjitram Gold Medal, instituted by the Gujarat Sahitya Sabha for the best contribution to Gujarati literature, which he refused. He was the only one to get 'Kavi Narmad' gold medal for his devoted and clever literary activities. He was an adviser to the Sahitya Academy, Delhi for Gujarat in 1957. He won the rare honour to represent India for a book published in the USA with the title *Stories from Many Lands*. This was a collection of the best stories from 60 countries. His story *The Letter* (Post Office) found a place in it. Dhumaketu can be glorified as a prolifi c writer who has given a very vivid and wonderful description of the village and its people, along with the nature and loneliness of human beings.

ABOUT THE STORY

The title of the story, *The Letter* is quite appropriate. It brings home the value of the letter, a symbol of one's love and concern. The story is about coachman Ali who could not bear the pain of separation when his daughter left after her marriage. His loneliness gained momentum with passage of time in which he desperately waited for a letter from his daughter Miriam. The old man goes to the post office everyday, occupying a particular seat with a fixed purpose—awaiting a letter from his daughter.

The author explains how empathy makes us understand each other and build strong relationships. One can feel the anxiety of other when one finds himself in that particular situation. Towards the end of the story, tortured with

remorse and grief, the postmaster waits for news from his ill daughter, passing a restless night beside the charcoal sigri. The author talks about how the feelings and emotions of a person, especially one who is aging, should be taken care of.

THE LETTER

In the grey sky of early dawn stars still glowed, as happy memories light up a life that is nearing its close. An old man was walking through the town, now and again drawing his tattered clothes tighter to shield his body from the cold and biting wind. From some houses came the sound of grinding mills, and the sweet voices of women singing at their work, and the sounds helped him along his lonely way. Except for the occasional bark of a dog, the distant steps of a workman going early to work, or the screech of a bird disturbed before its time, the whole town was wrapped in deathly silence. Most of its inhabitants were still in the arms of sleep, the sleep which grew more and more profound on account of the intense winter cold; for the cold used sleep to extend its sway over all things even as a false friend lulls his chosen victim with caressing smiles. The old man, shivering at times but fixed of purpose, plodded on till he came out of the town-gate on to a straight road. Along this he now went at a somewhat slower pace, supporting himself on his old staff.

On one side of the road was a row of trees, on the other side the town's public garden. The sky was darker now and the cold more intense, for the wind was blowing straight along the road, on which they fell like frozen snow, only the faint light of the morning star. At the end of the garden stood a handsome building of the newest style, and the light gleamed threw the crevices of its closed doors and windows.

Beholding the wooden arch of this building, the old man was filled with the joy that the pilgrim feels when he first sees the goal of his journey. On the arch hung an old board with the newly painted letters "Post Office." The old man went in quietly and squatted on the veranda. The voices of two or three people busy and their routine work could be faintly heard threw the wall.

"Police Superintendent," a voice called sharply. The old man started at the sound, but composed himself again to wait. But for the faith and love, that warmed him, he could not have borne the bitter cold.

Name after name rang out from within as the clerk read out the English addresses in the letters and flung them to the waiting postmen. From long practise he had acquired great speed at reading out the titles—Commissioner, Superintendent, Diwan Sahib, Librarian—and in flinging the letters out.

In the midst of this procedure a jesting voice from inside called, "Coachman Ali!" The old man got up, raised his eyes to heaven in gratitude and stepping forward put his hands to the door.

"Gokul Bhai!" "Yes who is there?"

"You called out coachman Ali's name didn't you. Here I am I have come for my letter."

"It's a mad man, sir, who worries us by calling everyday for letters that never come," said the clerk to the postmaster.

The old man went back slowly to the bench on which he had been accustomed to sit for five long years.

Ali had been a clever shikari. As his skill increased so did his love for the hunt, till at last it was as impossible for him to pass a day without hunting as it is for the opium-eater to forgo his daily portion. When Ali sighted the earth-brown partridge, almost invisible to other eyes, the poor bird, they said, was as good as in his bag. His sharp eyes saw the hare crouching. Even when the dogs failed to see the creature cunningly hidden in the yellow brown scrub, Ali's eyes would catch the sight of his ears; and in another moment it was dead. Besides this he would often go out with his friends, the fishermen.

But when the evening of his life was drawing in, he left his old ways and suddenly took a new turn. His only child, Miriam married and left him. She went off with a soldier into his regiment in the Punjab, and for the last five years he had no news of this daughter for whose sake alone he dragged along a cheerless existence. Now he understood the meaning of love and separation. He could no longer enjoy the sportsman's pleasure and laughter at the bewildered terror of the young partridges bereft of their parents.

Although the hunter's instinct was in his very blood and bones, such loneliness had come into his life since the day Miriam had gone away, that now, forgetting his sport, he would become lost in the admiration of the green cornfield. He reflected deeply, and came to the conclusion that the whole universe is built up through love and that the grief of separation is inescapable. And seeing this, he sat down under a tree and wept bitterly. From that day he

had risen each morning at 4'oclock to walk to the post -office. In his whole life he had never received a letter, but with a devout serenity born of hope and faith, he persevered and was always the first to arrive.

The post office, one of the uninteresting buildings in the world, became his place of pilgrimage. He always occupied a particular seat in a particular corner of the building, and when the people got to know his habit they laughed at him. The postmen began to make a game of him. Even though there was no letter for him they would call out his name for the fun of seeing him jump up and come to the door. But with a boundless faith and infinite patience, he came everyday, and went away empty-handed.

While Ali waited, peons would come for their firms' letters and he would hear them discussing their masters' scandals. These smart young peons in their spotless turbans and creaking shoes were always eager to express themselves. Meanwhile, the door would be thrown open and the post-master, a man with a face as sad and as inexpressive as a pumpkin, would be seen sitting on his chair inside. There was no glimmer of animation in his features; such men usually prove to be village schoolmasters, office clerks or postmasters.

One day, he was there as usual and did not move from his seat when the door was opened.

"Police Commissioner!" the clerk called out, and a young fellow stepped forward briskly for the letters.

"Superintendent!" Another voice called. Another peon came. And so the clerk, like a worshipper of Vishnu, repeated his customary thousand names.

At last they had all gone. Ali got up too and saluting the post-office as though it housed some precious relic, went off. A pitiable figure, a century behind his time.

"That fellow," asked the post-master "is he mad?"

"Who, sir? Oh, yes," answered the clerk "no matter what the weather is he has been here everyday for the last five years. But he doesn't get many letters."

"I can well understand that! Who does he think will have time to write a letter everyday?"

"But he is a bit touched sir. In the old days he committed many sins; and maybe he shed some blood within sacred precincts and is paying for it now," the postman added in support of his statement.

"Mad-men are strange people," the postmaster said.

"Yes. Once I saw a postman in Ahmedabad who did absolutely nothing but make little heaps of dust. And another had a habit of going to the river bed in order to pour water on a certain stone everyday!"

"Oh! That's nothing" chimed in another. "I knew one madman who paced up and down all day long, another who never ceased declaiming poetry and a third who would slap himself on the cheek and then begin to cry because he was being beaten."

And everyone in the post office began to talk of lunacy. All working class people have the habit of taking periodic rests by joining in general discussion for a few minutes. After listening a while, the postmaster got up and said, "It seems as though the mad live in a world of their own making. To them perhaps we too appear mad. The mad-man's world is rather like the poet's, I should think!" He laughed as he spoke the last words, looking at one of the clerks who wrote indifferent verse. Then he went out and the office became still again.

For several days Ali had not come to the post-office. There was no one with enough sympathy or understanding to guess the reason, but all were curious to know what had stopped the old man. At last he came again; but it was a struggle for him to breathe and on his face were clear signs of approaching end. That day he could not contain his impatience.

"Master Sahib", he begged the post-master, "have you a letter from my Miriam?" The postmaster wanted to get out to the country, and was in a hurry.

"What a pest you are, brother!" he exclaimed. "My name is Ali," answered Ali absent-mindedly.

"I know! I know! But do you think we've got your Miriam's name registered?" "Then please note it down, brother. It will be useful if a letter should come when I am not here." For how should the villager who had spent three-quarters of his life hunting know that Miriam's name was not worth a pice to anyone but her father?

The postmaster was beginning to lose his temper. "Have you no sense?" he cried. "Get away! Do you think we're going to eat your letter when it comes?" and he walked off hastily. Ali came out very slowly, turning after every few steps to gaze at the post office. His eyes were filled with tears of helplessness, for his patience was exhausted, even though he still had faith. Yet how could he still hope to hear from Miriam?

Ali heard one of the clerks coming up behind him, and turned to him. "Brother!" he said.

The clerk was surprised, but being a decent fellow he said, "Well!"

"Here, look at this!" and Ali produced an old tin box and emptied five golden guineas into the surprised clerk's hands. "Do not look so startled," he continued.

"They will be useful to you, and they can never be to me. But will you do one thing?"

"What?"

"What do you see up there?" said Ali, pointing to the sky. "Heaven."

"Allah is there, and in His presence I am giving you this money. When it comes, you must forward my Miriam's letter to me."

"But where—where am I supposed to send it?" asked the utterly bewildered clerk. "To my grave."

"What?"

"Yes. It is true. Today is my last day: my very last, alas! And I have not seen Miriam, I have had no letter from her." There were tears in Ali's eyes as the clerk slowly left him and went on his way with the five golden guineas in his pocket.

Ali was never seen again, and no one troubled to inquire after him.

One day, however, trouble came to the postmaster. His daughter lay ill in another town, and he was anxiously waiting for news of her. The post was brought in, and the letters piled on the table. Seeing an envelope of the colour and shape he expected, the postmaster eagerly snatched it up. It was addressed to Coachman Ali, and he dropped it as though it had given him an electric shock. The haughty temper of the official had quite left him in his sorrow and anxiety, and had laid bare his human heart. He knew at once that this was the letter the old man had been waiting for: it must be from his daughter Miriam.

"Lakshmi Das!" called the postmaster, for such was the name of the clerk to whom Ali had given his money.

"Yes, sir?"

"This is for your old coachman, Ali. Where is he now?" "I will find out, sir."

The postmaster did not receive his own letter all that day. He worried all night, and getting up at three, went to sit in the office. "When Ali comes at four o' clock," he mused, "I will give him the letter myself."

For now the postmaster understood Ali's heart and his very soul. After spending but a single night in suspense, anxiously waiting for news of his daughter, his heart was brimming with sympathy for the poor old man who had spent his nights in the same suspense for the last five years. At the stroke of five he heard a soft knock on the door: he felt sure it was Ali. He rose quickly from his chair, his suffering father's heart recognizing another, and flung the door wide open.

"Come in, brother Ali," he cried, handing the letter to the meek old man, bent double with age, who was standing outside. Ali was leaning on a stick, and the tears were wet on his face as they had been when the clerk left him. But his features had been hard then, and now they were softened by lines of kindliness. He lifted his eyes and in them was a light so unearthly that the postmaster shrank back in fear and astonishment.

Lakshmi Das had heard the postmaster's words as he came towards the office from another quarter. "Who was that, sir? Old Ali?" he asked. But the postmaster took no notice of him. He was staring with wide-open eyes at the doorway from which Ali had disappeared. Where could he have gone? At last he turned to Lakshmi Das. "Yes, I was speaking to Ali," he said.

"Old Ali is dead, sir. But give me his letter." "What! But when? Are you sure, Lakshmi Das?"

"Yes, that is so," broke in a postman who had just arrived. "Ali died three months ago."

The postmaster was bewildered. Miriam's letter was still lying near the door, Ali's image was still before his eyes. He listened to Lakshmi Das's recital of the last interview, but he could still not doubt the reality of the knock on the door and the tears in Ali's eyes. He was perplexed. Had he really seen Ali? Had his imagination deceived him? Or had it perhaps been Lakshmi Das?

The daily routine began. The clerk read out the addresses—Police Commissioner, Superintendent, Librarian—and flung the letters deftly.

But the postmaster now watched them as eagerly as though each contained a warm, beating heart. He no longer thought of them in terms of envelopes and postcards. He saw the essential human worth of a letter.

That evening you could have seen Lakshmi Das and the postmaster walking with slow steps to Ali's grave. They laid the letter on it and turned back.

"Lakshmi Das, were you indeed the first to come to the office this morning?" "Yes, sir, I was the first."

"Then how… No. I don't understand…." "What, sir?"

"Oh, never mind," the postmaster said shortly. At the office he parted from Lakshmi Das and went in. The newly-wakened father's heart in him was reproaching him for having failed to understand Ali's anxiety, for now he himself had to spend another night of restless anxiety. Tortured by doubt and remorse, he sat down in the glow of the charcoal sigri to wait.

GLOSSARY

Beholding: Taking a look at; seeing
Plodded: Walk slowly with heavy steps
Gleamed: Glowed
Squatted: Crouch or sit with one's knees bent and one's heels close to or touching one's buttocks or the back of one's thighs
Started: (Here) Jerk or give a small jump from surprise or alarm
Diwan Sahib: A senior government official
Lunacy: The state of being mad; insanity
Pice: A former monetary unit in the Indian subcontinent, equal to one quarter of an anna
Guineas: A gold coin issued in England worth one pound and one shilling, now out of circulation
Bewildered: To confuse or befuddle, especially with numerous conflicting situations, objects, or statements
Haughty: Having or showing arrogance
Deceived: Mislead
Deftly: Skilfully
Remorse: Repentance; sorrow; regret
Sigri: A type of portable heater consisting of a pan or stand for holding lighted coals used in northern India

COMPREHENSION

A. Answer the questions below, choosing from the options given.

1. In his youth, Ali used to be obsessed with

   i. Eating ii. Sewing

   iii. Hunting iv. Fighting

2. Ali's walking to the Post Office daily even in biting cold weather shows his

i. Courage ii. Optimism

iii. Foolishness iv. Strength of will

3. The post office is referred to as Ali's 'place of pilgrimage; because he
   i. Visited it daily
   ii. Came there to pray for a letter from his daughter
   iii. Went there with faith and hope
   iv. Believed God would bless him if he went there
4. The postmaster likened Ali's mental state to that of a

i. Singer ii. Dramatist

iii. Poet iv. Bard

5. The postmaster's rudeness to Ali reveals his

i. Lack of empathy ii. Preoccupation with his work

iii. Preconceived notions iv. Sensitivity

6. Ali did not come to the post office for several days because
   i. He had given up hope
   ii. He was upset by the postmaster's rebuke
   iii. He was unwell and not able to walk to the post office
   iv. He was busy hunting
7. How much time had lapsed between the arrival of the letter and Ali's death?

i. One day ii. Two weeks

iii. One year iv. Three months

8. What was the postmaster was waiting for towards the end of the story?
   i. A letter from Miriam
   ii. A letter from his own daughter
   iii. A letter from Ali
   iv. Ali to deliver Miriam's letter to him.

B. Answer the following questions in about 30–40 words.

1. Who was Ali? Where did he go daily?
2. 'Ali displays qualities of love and patience.' Give evidence from the story to support the statement.

3. How do you know Ali was a familiar figure at the post office?
4. Why did Ali give up hunting?
5. What impression do you form of the postmaster after reading the story 'The Letter'?

C. Answer the following questions in about 40–50 words.

1. The postmaster says to Ali, 'What a pest you are, brother!' Do you agree with the statement? Give reasons for your answer.
2. 'Ali came out very slowly, turning after every few steps to gaze at the post office. His eyes were filled with tears of helplessness, for his patience was exhausted, even though he still had faith.' Why were Ali's eyes filled with tears of helplessness? What had exhausted his patience but not his faith?
3. Why did Ali go to the post office every day?
4. Tortured by doubt and remorse, he sat down in the glow of the charcoal sigri to wait.' Who is tortured by doubt and remorse? Why? What is he waiting for?

D. Answer in detail in 100–120 words.

1. 'He no longer thought of them in terms of envelopes and postcards. He saw the essential human worth of a letter. The writer carefully builds up an atmosphere of loneliness and grief in the story.' Who is referred to here? What do you understand from this statement? There is a moral in these lines. Explain it in your own words.
2. The writer slowly builds up an atmosphere of grief and sadness in the story. Pick out words/phrases from the story that build up the atmosphere. Write an explanation in your own words. An example has been provided for you:

Example: Grief—The whole town was wrapped in deathly silence

E. Language in Use

(Tenses: Present Perfect Continuous, Past Perfect Continuous, Future Perfect Continuous)

1. **Write down the correct form of present perfect continuous tense**

provided in the bracket.

i. She _____ (write) for two hours every day since last week.
ii. I _____ (live) here since 2001.
iii. You _____ (wait) here for two hours.
iv. Raj _____ (teach) at the university since June.
v. Of late, I _____ (feel) very tired.

2. **Underline the past perfect continuous tense in the sentences given below.**
   i. We had been looking for her ring for two hours before we found it under the almirah.
   ii. How long had she been learning English before she left for Russia?
   iii. They had been talking for over an hour before Tushar arrived.
   iv. Meera wanted to sit down because she had been standing all day at work.
   v. Sameer gained weight because he had been overeating.
3. **Write down the correct form of future perfect continuous tense in the blanks.**
   i. You _____ (wait) for more than two hours when her plane finally arrives.
   ii. They _____ (talk) for over an hour by the time Tania reaches.
   iii. We _____ (drive) for over three days straight when we *get* to south India from Gujarat.
   iv. He will be tired because he _____ (exercise) so hard.
   v. By the time you finish studying the tense exercise, you _____ (master) all types of tenses.
4. **Change the form of tense and write it down in the blank space in the table below. One example has been done for you.**

Past Perfect Continuous	Present Perfect Continuous	Future Perfect Continuous
They had been speaking	They have been speaking	They will have been speaking
	We have been waiting here for over two hours!	
Nila failed the final test because she had not been attending class.		
		How long will you have been studying when you *graduate*?
	Why has Anand not been taking her medicine for the last three days?	
Sheila had been working at that company for three years when it went out of business.		

5. **Identify the type of tense used in the following sentences.**

i. It has been snowing a lot this week. _____ perfect continuous tense.

ii. They had been cycling all day so their legs were sore in the evening. _____ perfect continuous tense.

iii. The famous artist is going to have been painting the mural for over 6 months by the time it is finished. _____ perfect continuous tense.

iv. Janak has been living in Rajkot since May. _____ perfect continuous tense.

v. He caught the flu because he had been walking in the rain for too long. _____ perfect continuous tense.

UNIT 7: Lemon-Yellow and Fig

Manohar Malgonkar

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Manohar Malgonkar(1901–2010) is one of of India's noteworthy writers of English novels, and short stories of action and adventure. He was born in an aristocratic family. After completing his graduation from Bombay University, he joined the Indian Army and has used his experiences there as themes in his writings.

His works are sensitive and very gripping. Apart from history, the army and politics, Malgonkar wrote of human relationships. He also wrote scripts for movies and many newspaper articles. His famous writings are *Spy in Amber*, *Distant Drum,* and *Chatrapatis of Kolhapur. Lemon-Yellow and Fig* is one of Malgonkars's popular short stories.

ABOUT THE STORY

This story depicts a real life situation in the life of a salesman in a sari shop in Bombay (now Mumbai). Mr Ratnam has employed the salesman for his honest face and pleasant manner. One day a charming, young lady, well dressed and well perfumed, came into the shop. She bought a lemon-coloured silk sari and paid the price of Rs 40 for it with a Rs 100 note. Soon after she left, another prosperous lady entered wearing the same perfume. She asked for a fig-coloured sari. The superstitious salesman recollected a story of how two women used a trick with a Rs 100 note to cheat a salesman. Agarwal took certain precautions to ensure that he did not get cheated in similar fashion. But, when his employer Mr Ratnam conducted a surprise check of funds in the cash box that day, he found Rs 100 short. The twist in the tale is that although Agarwal was actually an honest salesman, he found it difficult to justify the missing cash to his boss. As a consequence, Agarwal was accused of being dishonest and lost his job.

There is an ironical twist to this tale as fate seems to have struck a blow

to the overzealous Mr Agarwal. His own honesty and his concern for Mr Ratnam was in fact, the turning point of his relationship with him, resulting in the loss of his job. Mr Ratnam appointed Agarwal on the basis of his 'honest face'. Ironically, it was his honesty that caused Agarwal to lose his prized job.

LEMON-YELLOW AND FIG

I have lost my job. It was a good job, too. All I had to do was sit in the shop throughout the day and sell saris and choli pieces; that was all we sold. They were very good saris and choli pieces, specially woven in Mr. Ratnam's little mill in Bangalore and only sold in Bombay through the shop run by me.

They had begun to catch on and last week I had managed to sell over a thousand rupees' worth of them. I had little doubt that very soon the sales would go even higher. In fact, I had written to Mr. Ratnam to send me more plentiful stocks. If I could sell five thousand rupees' worth of them every month, that would have brought me a monthly income of two hundred and fifty rupees.

Yes, it was a good job, but it didn't last long; it went just as I was beginning to be a good saleman, learning all the little tricks.

I was lucky to get the job. I had no experience of this kind of work. Mr. Ratnam made no secret of the fact that he was employing me purely on a hunch: because he thought I had an honest face.

I had answered an advertisement and was interviewed by Mr. Ratnam who had come from Bangalore.

It was Mr. Ratnam who told me I had an honest face. Hesaid he was looking for honesty. His last salesman in Bombay had run away with some of the cash and six shot-silk saris.

Mr. Ratnam gave me the job on the spot. 'All I want is honesty', he said. 'Honesty and a pleasant manner with cus¬tomers. I will try you out for a few weeks, and if I'm satisfied with your honesty and your handling of customers, you can have the job for good'.

Of course, I am honest. And I am also a hard worker. In the very second week I had made more sales than the previous salesman had made during any week. The fact that this was the week before Diwali, which, as you know, is the time when more saris are bought than at any other time, may have had

something to do with it. On the other hand it may have been due to my salesmanship. Anyway, I had good reason to be satisfied with the way things were going.

That was how it was until this morning. I was beginning to have rosy dreams of getting married and settling down. Bombay is a good place for a refugee from the Punjab to settle down.

I had barely opened the shutters of the shop this morning when the woman came in. She was pretty as a picture and I felt happy that I should be making my first sale of the day to her.

We Agarwal shopkeepers are rather superstitious. Most of us believe that the success of a day depends upon the bohni, the first sale of the day. I felt sure that this customer would bring me good luck. Little did I know!

Shechose a lemon-coloured silk sari, very plain without any gold work on it, and a choli piece to match. She was on the dark side, and I felt the yellow was not her colour. But, of course, it was not my place to tell her that.

As I was wrapping up the bundle, I could smell the perfume she wore. It was quite a strong perfume. In fact, I rememberthinking that it was a little too heavy for the morning. But it was a very good perfume and seemed to fill the little shop.

The bill was forty rupees and she handed me a crisp newhundred-rupee note. I gave her back sixty rupees. Mr. Ratnam had told me that I must make it a point to start the day with a hundred rupees in small notes kept in my cash box.

He was very particular about cash. A hundred rupees was all I was meant to keep in the shop to begin the day with. The rest of the collection from the daily sales was handed over every evening to his munim who called for it.

Before going out the young lady gave me a smile which made me wish that I had been in a position to give her thesari instead of selling it to her. I had hardly replaced the sarisand choli pieces which she had been looking at, when the otherlady came into the shop. She was large and she was nothingtolook at but she was prosperous, for she wore large diamondear-clips, the hexagonal ones which are so popular in the South.

And as soon as she came in, I got a whiff of her perfume.

I have a sensitive nose, but it did not need a sensitive nose to tell me that it was the same perfume that the young woman had used; it was quite unmistakable.

At first it didn't even strike me as being unusual. I put on my best smile and began to show her the saris. She wantedsomething in what is known in the trade as the 'fig'colour. Itis a mixture of red and green threads and very popular amongst South Indian women.

I took out several different saris in the shade she wanted, but as I was explaining to her why there was a difference in the prices, I must have been thinking about the coincidence of her using the same perfume as the other lady who had given me the hundred-rupee note, because suddenly the thought struck me that both the women must belong to the same household.

And that brought to my mind a trick which had been played recently upon a fellow-shopkeeper. A young lady had gone tohis shop early one morning and had given a new hundred¬-rupee note which he had changed for her. Soon after she had gone out, another lady, her accomplice, had gone into the shop, bought one or two little things, and coolly demanded her change.

But she had paid no money, and when the shopkeeper pointed out her mistake she had called in a policeman and complained that she had just given a hundred-rupee note to the shopkeeper which he had put in his cash box and that he refused to give her the change. Oh, yes, she knew the number of the note, and right enough the number tallied with that of the note in the cash box. There was little that the shopkeeper could do about it except hand the note over to her. It all seemed to fit. It was a dirty trick but it had worked and now they seemed to be trying it out on me.

It gave me a shock to think that anyone as pretty as my first customer should be involved in this kind of business. But this was no time to be worrying about it. I had to be quick if I was not going to be caught out.

'Excuse me a moment', I told the lady who was looking intently at the fig-coloured saris. 'I have a few more in the same shade. I will get them for you'.

The cash box was on the table in the corner, hidden from her view by a tall shelf. I opened it and took out the hundred-rupee note given to me by the lady who had come earlier.

I put it in an envelope and addressed the envelope to my brother who worked in a shop hardly a couple of hundred yards away, and calling the chokra from the next shop who did occasional jobs for me I casually handed him the envelope. 'Please take this to Kirpa Ram's shop and give it to my brother'. I told him.

Then, pleased with myself and smiling, I took three of those fig-coloured saris from another rack and went back to my customer. I couldn't have been away from her for more than a minute.

She liked those saris a lot. She kept on looking at two of them as though she couldn't make up her mind which one she liked better. I could scarcely keep myself from grinning at her play¬acting. 'Why don't you buy both? They should suit you equally well', I said to her.

'Yes, I think I will do that', she said, with a broad smile which exposed all her pan-stained teeth.

She took both the saris and paid for them; ninety rupees. She paid it all in ten-rupee notes. I looked at the notes carefully. I wondered if this was a new angle to the old trick. But there was nothing wrong with the notes. It was clear that I had judged her wrongly.

I felt a little ashamed of myself. But I had reason to be pleased with myself too, I had made two good sales within half an hour of opening, and as soon as the chokra returned, I sent him for a cup of coffee and a masala pan.

And then I saw Mr. Ratnam coming towards the shop. I didn't even know he was in Bombay. He lives in Bangalore and looks after the looms. He was looking pleased as punch as he entered the shop, and when he had sat down I told him how well the shop was running and that more stocks would be needed almost immediately.

'You can have all the stocks you want, my boy', he said. 'That is what the shop is here for, to sell as much as we can. It is just that I wanted to make sure that I was not going to be let down like I was by your predecessor'.

I was rather hurt that he should 'be still doubtful of my honesty. I said, 'I was hoping you would be sure of me by now, sir'.

'In business, in this sort of business, one can never take any¬thing for granted', he said. 'There are so many temptations.What the last man used to do was to show that he sold fewer saris than he actually did, and pocket the difference. It could never be found out unless there was a stock-checking'.

'I see', I said.

'I just wanted to check up the stocks before sending you any more. Just a formality, you know. You don't mind, do you?'

It was nice of him to ask me if I minded, but, of course, I didn't mind.

For most of the next hour we did a sort of cursory stock-¬taking. In fact I

did most of the actual checking and if I had needed to, I could have easily given Mr. Ratnam fictitious figures. I was satisfied that all the stock was absolutely correct to the last choli piece.

However, even before I had quite finished counting, Mr. Ratnam called to me. 'I think that will do', he said. 'I am entirely satisfied with you. As soon as I get back, I will send you more pieces, and from next month you had better take on some one to assist you; a little chokra to do the running about'.

Mr. Ratnam paused for a moment and gave me a broad smile. Then he said, 'I am particularly pleased with your way of dealing with customers. I wanted to be personally satisfied about that. So this morning I sent my daughter and sister to make one or two odd purchases. It seems that although you had just opened the shop, you managed to change a hundred¬-rupee note for my daughter. There is nothing more annoying than being kept waiting for change. I also liked the way you sold my sister two saris when she had come with the idea of buying only one. They were full of praise for you. Now let us just check up the cash box, and I will have done with you. A mere formality, you know. You couldn't be having much more in it than your hundred rupees and what my daughter and sister paid'.

I am sure my heart skipped a beat. It suddenly dawned upon me that there was a whole hundred rupees missing from the box, and Mr. Ratnam noticed it too, as soon as he snappedthe lid open.

And that was how I lost my job. I didn't even try to explain.I just stared blankly at him and at the box alternately. I was sure that no explanation I could give would have convincedhim. He did not have that sort of mind. What he recognised was the cold fact that a hundred rupees were missing from thebox.

Anyway, I couldn't tell him that I had taken his daughterand his sister for a pair of confidence tricksters-if that is theword.

He shook his head from side to side, and he looked sad whenhe said to me, 'And you have such an honest face'.

Of course, I am honest. But I am out of job, and if you know of anyone who needs a keen young salesman....

GLOSSARY

Doubt: Uncertainty **Sensitive:** Touchy

Stocks: Goods
Hunch: Strong feeling
Pleasant: Agreeable, pleasing
Refugee: A person forced to leave his country
Superstitious: To believe in magic, not based on reason
Prosperous: Successful financially
Hexagonal: Having six straight sides
Chokra: Young boy
Occassional: Sometimes
Predecessor: The person before the current holder
Temptation: Desire to do something wrong
Formality: Stiffness of behaviour
Cursory: Casual
Fictitious: Imaginary
Cold fact: Unpleasant fact

COMPREHENSION

A. Answer the questions below, choosing from the options that follow.

1. Mr Ratnam's sari mill was located in
   i. Bombay ii. Delhi
   iii. Bangalore iv. Madras
2. Mr Ratnam employed Mr Agarwal as a salesman because he
   i. Well qualified ii. Had accounting experience
   iii. Had an honest face iv. Had previous sales experience
3. Bohni means
   i. Bad luck ii. Lots of money
   iii. The best sale of the day iv. The first sale of the day
4. To start the day, the salesman was required to
   i. Keep lots of change in the cash box ii. Keep Rs 500 in different notes
   iii. Open the shop on time iv. Keep Rs 100 in small notes
5. In the sari trade, fig colour is a
   i. Mixture of red, blue, and white
   ii. Yellow colour
   iii. Mixture of red and yellow colours
   iv. Mixture of red and green threads
6. The salesman knew the second customer was rich because she
   i. Wore large diamond clips ii. Wore strong perfume
   iii. Was large in size iv. Bought two saris

7. The salesman gave an envelope to the ‘chokra’ to

i. Post it in the post office ii. Take it to Kirpa Ram’s shop

iii. Take it to Mr Ratnam iv. Keep it in the cash box

B. Answer the following questions in 30–40 words.

1. In what way had Mr Ratnam been cheated by the previous salesman?
2. What were the qualities that the new salesman ought to have had, according to Mr Ratnam?
3. Why did Mr Ratnam visit the shop?
4. How much did the second woman spend on the saris? Which colour(s) did she choose and why?
5. Explain the title of the story.

C. Write short notes of 40–50 words.

1. Mr Ratnam
2. The dirty trick played by some ladies on a shopkeeper
3. Agarwal, the salesman
4. The importance of the hundred rupee note in this story

D. Answer the following in 100–120 words.

1. What was the role of the two Ratnam women in Agarwal’s test of character and skill? Did Agarwal prove to be a worthy salesman before the arrival of Mr Ratnam?
2. Bring out the irony in the story.

E. Language in Use

(Clauses, Compound sentences)

1. **Separate each sentence into two clauses. Name each type of clause.**
   i. I ate a slice of cake while I waited for you.
   ii. I will lend you my book, but you must return it by Saturday.
   iii. He was so overjoyed that he could not speak.
   iv. Her eyes filled with tears, and she began to cry.
   v. You tell the students that they must stay in class
2. **Write five compound sentences on the topic: *Buying a Present***

i. _____

_____

ii. _____

_____

iii. _____

_____

iv. _____

_____

v. _____

_____

_____

3. **Complete these complex sentences by adding a subordinate clause.**
   Ravi is a good salesman because _____. He comes to work regularly and _____ _____. Many of his customers rely on him since _____ _____. His work is appreciated by the owner as _____. This year, Ravi will be given a bonus for _____.
4. **Identify the dependent clause.**
   i. When Ambika moved to the United States, she was five years old.
   ii. Because the class was so noisy today, we didn't get to have any free time.
   iii. Before the recession started, my father had a good job.
   iv. The election campaign will be over soon, which is a good thing.
   v. We never knew why Mary was hired rather than Ashla.
5. **Use a coordinating conjunction to join each pair of the independent clauses into a compound sentence.**
   i. Spelling is hard for many people. There are techniques for improving spelling.
   ii. Sandeep is an excellent student. He received a scholarship.
   iii. The library is a quiet place to study. Many students prefer to study at home.
   iv. Some rivers are endangered. Many people are working to protect them.
   v. Wear your seatbelt. You might be injured.

SECTION II
English Prose

UNIT 1: The Happy Prince

Oscar Wilde

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Oscar Fingal O'Flahertie Wills Wilde (1854–1900) was an Irish writer and poet. He was born and grew up in Dublin, Ireland. His father, Sir William was a doctor and his mother was a poet. Wilde undertook classical studies in Trinity College, Dublin and won a scholarship to Oxford. While at Oxford, he came under the influence of the aesthetic theories of John Ruskin and Walter Pater, an important critical writer of the Victorian period. After graduating in 1878, he settled in London. He established himself both as a writer and a spokesperson for the school of 'art for art's sake.' Wilde excelled as a critic of literature and society, poet, novelist, and dramatist. His works include an essay on aestheticism entitled

The Critic as Artist, his famous novel, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, and several plays such as *Lady Windermere's Fan, A Woman of No Importance, An Ideal Husband* and his comic masterpiece, *The Importance of Being Earnest*. His short story collection, *The Happy Prince and other Tales* was published in 1888. Wilde had been married to Constance Mary Lloyd for several years and was the father of two children when he met Lord Alfred Douglas, with whom he established a homosexual relationship. He was arrested and sentenced to jail for 2 years with hard labour because homosexuality was considered a criminal offence in those days. After leaving jail, Wilde, a ruined man, migrated to France and died there in relative obscurity and poverty after 3 years.

ABOUT THE STORY

The Happy Prince is a fairy tale. It upholds love for humanity as the ultimate virtue. The prince in the story is not a living prince. He is the statue of a dead prince decorated with gold leaves and precious stones. He is known as the Happy Prince because there is a smile on his lips. But the smile gradually gives way to tears—he cannot help crying over the scenes of misery in the houses of the poor. He decides to help them with his gold leaves and costly stones.

In another part of the country there was a swallow that is left behind by his friends who migrate to Egypt for the oncoming winter. The lone swallow lands in the city of the Happy Prince to spend a night and settles downs to rest on the prince's feet. The little swallow acts as the prince's messenger, and he gives away all his wealth. After helping the prince to give all that he has, the swallow falls dead at his feet, unable to bear the cold. His death breaks the prince's heart into two; the city's authorities don't find the statue attractive any more, since the golden exterior is gone. They dismantle and melt the metallic body. However, the men at the foundry are unable to melt the leaden heart, and it is dumped near the swallow's body. God's angels then pick up the dead swallow and the prince's heart as the most precious things on Earth at His command, and the two attain an everlasting place in heaven. Thus, the story teaches a very useful and very true lesson—that God loves those who love their fellow human beings.

THE HAPPY PRINCE

High above the city, on a tall column, stood the statue of the Happy Prince. He was gilded all over with thin leaves of fine gold, for eyes he had two bright sapphires, and a large red ruby glowed on his sword-hilt.

He was very much admired indeed. 'He is as beautiful as a weathercock,' remarked one of the Town Councillors who wished to gain a reputation for having artistic tastes; 'only not quite so useful,' he added, fearing lest people should think him unpractical, which he really was not.

'Why can't you be like the Happy Prince?' asked a sensible mother of her little boy who was crying for the moon. 'The Happy Prince never dreams of crying for anything.'

'I am glad there is someone in the world who is quite happy,' muttered a disappointed man as he gazed at the wonderful statue.

'He looks just like an angel,' said the Charity Children as they came out of the cathedral in their bright scarlet cloaks, and their clean white pinafores.

'How do you know?' said the Mathematical Master, 'you have never seen one.'

'Ah! but we have, in our dreams,' answered the children; and the Mathematical Master frowned and looked very severe, for he did not approve of children dreaming.

One night there flew over the city a little Swallow. His friends had gone away to Egypt six weeks before, but he had stayed behind, for he was in love with the most beautiful Reed. He had met her early in the spring as he was flying down the river after a big yellow moth, and had been so attracted by her slender waist that he had stopped to talk to her.

'Shall I love you?' said the Swallow, who liked to come to the point at once, and the Reed made him a low bow. So he flew round and round her, touching the water with his wings, and making silver ripples. This was his courtship, and it lasted all through the summer.

'It is a ridiculous attachment,' twittered the other Swallows, 'she has no money, and far too many relations;' and indeed the river was quite full of Reeds. Then, when the autumn came, they all flew away.

After they had gone he felt lonely, and began to tire of his lady-love. 'She has no conversation,' he said, 'and I am afraid that she is a coquette, for she is always flirting with the wind.' And certainly, whenever the wind blew, the Reed made the most graceful curtsies. 'I admit that she is domestic,' he continued, 'but I love travelling, and my wife, consequently, should love travelling also.'

'Will you come away with me?' he said finally to her; but the Reed shook her head, she was so attached to her home.

'You have been trifling with me,' he cried, 'I am off to the Pyramids. Good-bye!' and he flew away.

All day long he flew, and at night-time he arrived at the city. 'Where shall I put up?' he said; 'I hope the town has made preparations.'

Then he saw the statue on the tall column. 'I will put up there,' he cried; 'it is a fine position with plenty of fresh air.' So he alighted just between the feet of the Happy Prince.

'I have a golden bedroom,' he said softly to himself as he looked round, and he prepared to go to sleep; but just as he was putting his head under his wing a large drop of water fell on him. 'What a curious thing!' he cried, 'there is not a single cloud in the sky, the stars are quite clear and bright, and yet it is raining. The climate in the north of Europe is really dreadful. The Reed used to like the rain, but that was merely her selfishness.'

Then another drop fell.

'What is the use of a statue if it cannot keep the rain off?' he said; 'I must look for a good chimney-pot,' and he determined to fly away.

But before he had opened his wings, a third drop fell, and he looked up, and saw - Ah! what did he see?

The eyes of the Happy Prince were filled with tears, and tears were running down his golden cheeks. His face was so beautiful in the moonlight that the little Swallow was filled with pity.

'Who are you?' he said. 'I am the Happy Prince.'

'Why are you weeping then?' asked the Swallow; 'you have quite drenched me.' 'When I was alive and had a human heart,' answered the statue, 'I did not know what tears were, for I lived in the palace of Sans-Souci, where sorrow is not allowed to enter. In the daytime I played with my companions in the garden, and in the evening I led the dance in the Great Hall. Round the garden ran a very lofty wall, but I never cared to ask what lay beyond it, everything about me was so beautiful. My courtiers called me the Happy Prince, and happy indeed I was, if pleasure be happiness. So I lived, and so I died. And now that I am dead they have set me up here so high that I can see all the ugliness and all the misery of my city, and though my heart is made of lead yet I cannot choose but weep.'

'What, is he not solid gold?' said the Swallow to himself. He was too polite to make any personal remarks out loud.

'Far away,' continued the statue in a low musical voice, 'far away in a little street there is a poor house. One of the windows is open, and through it I can see a woman seated at a table. Her face is thin and worn, and she has coarse, red hands, all pricked by the needle, for she is a seamstress. She is embroidering passion-flowers on a satin gown for the loveliest of the Queen's maids-of-honour to wear at the next Court-ball. In a bed in the corner of the room her little boy is lying ill. He has a fever, and is asking for oranges. His mother has nothing to give him but river water, so he is crying. Swallow, Swallow, little Swallow, will you not bring her the ruby out of my sword-hilt? My feet are fastened to this pedestal and I cannot move.'

'I am waited for in Egypt,' said the Swallow. 'My friends are flying up and down the Nile, and talking to the large lotus-flowers. Soon they will go to sleep in the tomb of the great King. The King is there himself in his painted coffin. He

is wrapped in yellow linen, and embalmed with spices. Round his neck is a chain of pale green jade, and his hands are like withered leaves.'

'Swallow, Swallow, little Swallow,' said the Prince, 'will you not stay with me for one night, and be my messenger? The boy is so thirsty, and the mother so sad.'

'I don't think I like boys,' answered the Swallow. 'Last summer, when I was staying on the river, there were two rude boys, the miller's sons, who were always throwing stones at me. They never hit me, of course; we swallows fly far too well for that, and besides, I come of a family famous for its agility; but still, it was a mark of disrespect.'

But the Happy Prince looked so sad that the little Swallow was sorry. 'It is very cold here,' he said; 'but I will stay with you for one night, and be your messenger.'

'Thank you, little Swallow,' said the Prince.

So the Swallow picked out the great ruby from the Prince's sword, and flew away with it in his beak over the roofs of the town.

He passed by the cathedral tower, where the white marble angels were sculptured. He passed by the palace and heard the sound of dancing. A beautiful girl came out on the balcony with her lover. 'How wonderful the stars are,' he said to her, and how wonderful is the power of love!'

'I hope my dress will be ready in time for the State-ball,' she answered; 'I have ordered passion-flowers to be embroidered on it; but the seamstresses are so lazy.'

He passed over the river, and saw the lanterns hanging to the masts of the ships. He passed over the Ghetto, and saw the old jews bargaining with each other, and weighing out money in copper scales. At last he came to the poor house and looked in. The boy was tossing feverishly on his bed, and the mother had fallen asleep, she was so tired. In he hopped, and laid the great ruby on the table beside the woman's thimble. Then he flew gently round the bed, fanning the boy's forehead with his wings. 'How cool I feel,' said the boy, 'I must be getting better;' and he sank into a delicious slumber.

Then the Swallow flew back to the Happy Prince, and told him what he had done. 'It is curious,' he remarked, 'but I feel quite warm now, although it is so cold.'

'That is because you have done a good action,' said the Prince. And the little Swallow began to think, and then he fell asleep. Thinking always made him sleepy.

When day broke he flew down to the river and had a bath. 'What a remarkable phenomenon,' said the Professor of Ornithology as he was passing over the bridge. 'A swallow in winter!' And he wrote a long letter about it to the local newspaper. Every one quoted it, it was full of so many words that they could not understand.

'To-night I go to Egypt,' said the Swallow, and he was in high spirits at the prospect. He visited all the public monuments, and sat a long time on top of the church steeple. Wherever he went the Sparrows chirruped, and said to each other, 'What a distinguished stranger!' so he enjoyed himself very much.

When the moon rose he flew back to the Happy Prince. 'Have you any commissions for Egypt?' he cried; 'I am just starting.'

'Swallow, Swallow, little Swallow,' said the Prince, 'will you not stay with me one night longer?'

'I am waited for in Egypt,' answered the Swallow. 'To-morrow my friends will fly up to the Second Cataract. The river-horse couches there among the bulrushes, and on a great granite throne sits the God Memnon. All night long he watches the stars, and when the morning star shines he utters one cry of joy, and then he is silent. At noon the yellow lions come down to the water's edge to drink. They have eyes like green beryls, and their roar is louder than the roar of the cataract.'

'Swallow, Swallow, little Swallow,' said the prince, 'far away across the city I see a young man in a garret. He is leaning over a desk covered with papers, and in a tumbler by his side there is a bunch of withered violets. His hair is brown and crisp, and his lips are red as a pomegranate, and he has large and dreamy eyes. He is trying to finish a play for the Director of the Theatre, but he is too cold to write any more. There is no fire in the grate, and hunger has made him faint.'

'I will wait with you one night longer,' said the Swallow, who really had a good heart. 'Shall I take him another ruby?'

'Alas! I have no ruby now,' said the Prince; 'my eyes are all that I have left. They are made of rare sapphires, which were brought out of India a thousand

years ago. Pluck out one of them and take it to him. He will sell it to the jeweller, and buy food and firewood, and finish his play.'

'Dear Prince,' said the Swallow, 'I cannot do that;' and he began to weep. 'Swallow, Swallow, little Swallow,' said the Prince, 'do as I command you.'

So the Swallow plucked out the Prince's eye, and flew away to the student's garret. It was easy enough to get in, as there was a hole in the roof. Through this he darted, and came into the room. The young man had his head buried in his hands, so he did not hear the flutter of the bird's wings, and when he looked up he found the beautiful sapphire lying on the withered violets.

'I am beginning to be appreciated,' he cried; 'this is from some great admirer. Now I can finish my play,' and he looked quite happy.

The next day the Swallow flew down to the harbour. He sat on the mast of a large vessel and watched the sailors hauling big chests out of the hold with ropes. 'Heave a-hoy!' they shouted as each chest came up. 'I am going to Egypt!' cried the Swallow, but nobody minded, and when the moon rose he flew back to the Happy Prince.

'I am come to bid you good-bye,' he cried.

'Swallow, Swallow, little Swallow,' said the Prince, 'will you not stay with me one night longer?'

'It is winter,' answered the Swallow, 'and the chill snow will soon be here. In Egypt the sun is warm on the green palm-trees, and the crocodiles lie in the mud and look lazily about them. My companions are building a nest in the Temple of Baalbec, and the pink and white doves are watching them, and cooing to each other. Dear Prince, I must leave you, but I will never forget you, and next spring I will bring you back two beautiful jewels in place of those you have given away. The ruby shall be redder than a red rose, and the sapphire shall be as blue as the great sea.'

'In the square below,' said the Happy Prince, 'there stands a little match-girl. She has let her matches fall in the gutter, and they are all spoiled. Her father will beat her if she does not bring home some money, and she is crying. She has no shoes or stockings, and her little head is bare. Pluck out my other eye, and give it to her, and her father will not beat her.'

'I will stay with you one night longer,' said the Swallow, 'but I cannot pluck out your eye. You would be quite blind then.'

'Swallow, Swallow, little Swallow,' said the Prince, 'do as I command you.'

So he plucked out the Prince's other eye, and darted down with it. He swooped past the match-girl, and slipped the jewel into the palm of her hand. 'What a lovely bit of glass,' cried the little girl; and she ran home, laughing.

Then the Swallow came back to the Prince. 'You are blind now,' he said, 'so I will stay with you always.'

'No, little Swallow,' said the poor Prince, 'you must go away to Egypt.'

'I will stay with you always,' said the Swallow, and he slept at the Prince's feet.

All the next day he sat on the Prince's shoulder, and told him stories of what he had seen in strange lands. He told him of the red ibises, who stand in long rows on the banks of the Nile, and catch gold fish in their beaks; of the Sphinx, who is as old as the world itself and lives in the desert, and knows everything; of the merchants, who walk slowly by the side of their camels, and carry amber beads in their hands; of the King of the Mountains of the Moon, who is as black as ebony, and worships a large crystal; of the great green snake that sleeps in a palm-tree, and has twenty priests to feed it with honey-cakes; and of the pygmies who sail over a big lake on large flat leaves, and are always at war with the butterflies.

'Dear little Swallow,' said the Prince, 'you tell me of marvellous things, but more marvellous than anything is the suffering of men and of women. There is no Mystery so great as Misery. Fly over my city, little Swallow, and tell me what you see there.'

So the Swallow flew over the great city, and saw the rich making merry in their beautiful houses, while the beggars were sitting at the gates. He flew into dark lanes, and saw the white faces of starving children looking out listlessly at the black streets. Under the archway of a bridge two little boys were lying in one another's arms to try and keep themselves warm. 'How hungry we are!' they said. 'You must not lie here,' shouted the Watchman, and they wandered out into the rain.

Then he flew back and told the Prince what he had seen.

'I am covered with fine gold,' said the Prince, 'you must take it off, leaf by leaf, and give it to my poor; the living always think that gold can make them happy.'

Leaf after leaf of the fine gold the Swallow picked off, till the Happy Prince looked quite dull and grey. Leaf after leaf of the fine gold he brought to the

poor, and the children's faces grew rosier, and they laughed and played games in the street. 'We have bread now!' they cried.

Then the snow came, and after the snow came the frost. The streets looked as if they were made of silver, they were so bright and glistening; long icicles like crystal daggers hung down from the eaves of the houses, everybody went about in furs, and the little boys wore scarlet caps and skated on the ice.

The poor little Swallow grew colder and colder, but he would not leave the Prince, he loved him too well. He picked up crumbs outside the baker's door where the baker was not looking, and tried to keep himself warm by flapping his wings.

But at last he knew that he was going to die. He had just strength to fly up to the Prince's shoulder once more. 'Good-bye, dear Prince!' he murmured, 'will you let me kiss your hand?'

'I am glad that you are going to Egypt at last, little Swallow,' said the Prince, 'you have stayed too long here; but you must kiss me on the lips, for I love you.'

'It is not to Egypt that I am going,' said the Swallow. 'I am going to the House of Death. Death is the brother of Sleep, is he not?'

And he kissed the Happy Prince on the lips, and fell down dead at his feet.

At that moment a curious crack sounded inside the statue, as if something had broken. The fact is that the leaden heart had snapped right in two. It certainly was a dreadfully hard frost. Early the next morning the Mayor was walking in the square below in company with the Town Councillors. As they passed the column he looked up at the statue: 'Dear me! how shabby the Happy Prince looks!' he said.

'How shabby indeed!' cried the Town Councillors, who always agreed with the Mayor, and they went up to look at it.

'The ruby has fallen out of his sword, his eyes are gone, and he is golden no longer,' said the Mayor; 'in fact, he is little better than a beggar!'

'Little better than a beggar' said the Town councillors.

'And here is actually a dead bird at his feet!' continued the Mayor. 'We must really issue a proclamation that birds are not to be allowed to die here.' And the Town Clerk made a note of the suggestion.

So they pulled down the statue of the Happy Prince. 'As he is no longer beautiful he is no longer useful,' said the Art Professor at the University.

Then they melted the statue in a furnace, and the Mayor held a meeting of the Corporation to decide what was to be done with the metal. 'We must have another statue, of course,' he said, 'and it shall be a statue of myself.'

'Of myself,' said each of the Town Councillors, and they quarrelled. When I last heard of them they were quarrelling still.

'What a strange thing!' said the overseer of the workmen at the foundry. 'This broken lead heart will not melt in the furnace. We must throw it away.' So they threw it on a dust-heap where the dead Swallow was also lying.

'Bring me the two most precious things in the city,' said God to one of His Angels; and the Angel brought Him the leaden heart and the dead bird.

'You have rightly chosen,' said God, 'for in my garden of Paradise this little bird shall sing for evermore, and in my city of gold the Happy Prince shall praise me.'

GLOSSARY

Column: An upright pillar, typically cylindrical, supporting an arch, entablature, or other structure or standing alone as a monument

Gilded: Covered thinly with gold

Sapphires: A transparent precious stone, typically blue

Lest: With the intention of preventing (something undesirable)

Scarlet: Of a brilliant red colour

Cloak: A sleeveless outdoor overgarment that hangs loosely from the shoulders

Pinafore: A collarless sleeveless dress worn over a blouse or jumper

Swallow: A migratory swift-flying songbird with a forked tail and long pointed wings, feeding on insects in flight

Coarse: Rough or harsh in texture

Seamstress: A woman who sews, especially one who earns her living by sewing

Fasten: Fix or hold in place

Pedestal: The base or support on which a statue, obelisk, or column is mounted

Agility: Ability to move quickly and easily

Ghetto: A part of a city, especially a slum area, occupied by a minority group or groups

Thimble: A small metal or plastic cap with a closed end, worn to protect the finger and push the needle in sewing

Slumber: Sleep

Ornithology: A scientific study of

Reed: A tall, slender-leaved plant of the grass family, which grows in water or on marshy ground

Coquette: A flirtatious woman

Curtsey (plural curtsies): A woman's or girl's formal greeting made by bending the knees with one foot in front of the other

Trifling: Treating without seriousness or respect

Put up: Stay temporarily in accommodation other than one's own home

Alight: (Of a bird) Descend from the air and settle

Drenched: Wet thoroughly; soaked

Lofty: Of imposing height

Chest: A large strong box, typically made of wood and used for storage or transport

Ibis: A large wading bird with a long down curved bill, long neck, and long legs

Ebony: Heavy blackish or very dark brown timber from a mainly tropical tree.

birds **Commission:** An instruction, command, or role given to a person or group

Cataract: (Here) A large waterfall

Bulrush: A tall reed-like water plant with strap-like leaves and a dark brown velvety cylindrical head of numerous tiny flowers. Also called reed mace.

God Memnon: In Greek mythology, an Ethiopian king who went to Troy to help Priam, his uncle, and was killed

Beryls: A transparent pale green, blue, or yellow mineral consisting of a silicate of beryllium and aluminium, sometimes used as a gemstone.

Garret: A top-floor or attic room, especially a small dismal one

Dart: An act of running somewhere suddenly and rapidly

Icicle: A hanging, tapering piece of ice formed by the freezing of dripping water

Eaves: The part of a roof that meets or overhangs the walls of a building.

COMPREHENSION

A. Answer the following questions, choosing from the options that follow.

1. What was the attitude of the Mayor and the town councillors towards the statue of the Happy Prince at the beginning of the story?
   i. They were scornful and wanted to pull it down
   ii. They did not care for it
   iii. They greatly admired the statue

iv. They were afraid of the prince

2. Where did the swallow put up for the night in the city?
   i. In the palace of Sans Souci
   ii. On top of the statue
   iii. At the feet of the Happy Prince
   iv. At the harbour by the sea

3. What was the swallow proud of?
   i. His lady love, the Reed
   ii. His speed in flying
   iii. His friends in Egypt
   iv. His selfless love for the prince
4. Why did the swallow not fly away to Egypt when the Prince bade him to go?
   i. He had befriended the prince and was happy to stay back
   ii. It was too late to fly to Egypt
   iii. He wanted to help more people in the city
   iv. He wanted to help the prince who was now blind
5. What was the response of the prince to the swallow's stories?
   i. He enjoyed the stories and it helped him to forget his sorrow
   ii. He thought the stories were boring
   iii. He heard the stories, but was more interested in the lives of the people in the city
   iv. He told his own stories
6. Why were the town councilors always in agreement with the Mayor?
   i. They had no mind of their own
   ii. The Mayor was a very intelligent and knowledgeable man
   iii. They wanted to flatter him and were perhaps afraid of him
   iv. The Mayor paid them to agree with him always
7. Why were the leaden heart of the prince and the dead swallow chosen by God's angels as the most precious things?
   i. Because the prince and the swallow were chosen by God
   ii. Because the prince and swallow were dead
   iii. Because the prince and swallow selflessly served humanity
   iv. None of the above

8. Which of the following statements can be considered a moral of the story?
    i. There is no point in keeping a lifeless statue when it is no longer beautiful
    ii. True humanity lies in loving all people equally
    iii. Good deeds are often unrecognised by the society but God's justice is all-knowing
    iv. Both ii and iii

B. Answer the following questions in 30–40 words.

1. The prince lived in the palace called Sans Souci, which is a French phrase meaning 'without worry'. Contrast his life in the palace with his existence as a statue.
2. Irony is a technique in literature where the author says something but means the opposite. Explain the irony in the title of this story.
3. The swallow serves as a messenger for the prince to help the people of the city. Give one instance from the story when the swallow contributes on his own, too.
4. What strange thing did the workmen in the foundry notice? What do you think is the reason?
5. The prince was indifferent to his countrymen's misery during his lifetime. How does he atone for his indifference after death?

C. Write short notes on the following in 40–50 words.

1. The swallow's love for the reed
2. The life of the happy prince in the palace.
3. The city as the swallow sees it.
4. The love of the prince and the swallow.

D. Answer in detail in 100–120 words.

1. Wilde glorifies the love for the poor and needy as well as other kinds of love in the story. What other kinds of love do you find in the story?
2. The author makes several satirical references to the authorities in the city as well as the professors of various subjects. Interpret the story as a social satire.

E. Language in Use

(Prepositions, Articles, Conjunctions)

1. **Fill in the blanks in the following passage choosing suitable prepositions.**

   (*below, to, of, towards, during, from, off*)

   The dreaded Indian summer was rather mild in the year 2010. Firstly, it rained heavily starting _____ August and going on till almost the end _____ September. The rains tapered _____ just before the Commonwealth Games began. It was very pleasant _____ the Games. The heat and humidity remained _____ normal for that time of the year and we were gently moving _____ winter. Winter did not hit us suddenly but the temperatures dipped gradually. The smooth transition got us acclimatised _____ the cold season comfortably.

2. **Fill in the blanks in the following sentences using suitable prepositions on your own. You might have to use the same preposition more than once. More than one answer is possible for some of the sentences.**

   i. I was lying _____ bed when the phone call came.
   ii. _____ all the teachers I had, my Maths teacher _____ high school was the best.
   iii. The college reopens _____ 20 July _____ 9.00 AM
   iv. We haven't received any news _____ Raghu _____ he left _____ a holiday.
   v. Ankita has been learning music _____ the age of 5. She has been performing _____ several concerts _____ the last 5 years.
   vi. Many young people read _____ a meal.
   vii. I have a busy day _____ work today. I won't reach home _____ midnight.
   viii. The school is next _____ the metro station and very near _____ the bus stop. You can go there _____ metro or _____ bus.
   ix. Ragini is good _____ Mathematics, but she always had trouble _____ Science.

x. India is famous _____ the Taj Mahal all _____ the world.

3. **Fill in the blanks in these sentences using *a, an, or the*.**
   i. _____ Sun, Moon and _____ stars always fascinated humans.
   ii. Let us all make _____ resolution to remain incorruptible and make our country _____ better place.
   iii. There is _____ enormous amount of competition for admission into _____ colleges of _____ University of Delhi.
   iv. Visva Bharati in Santiniketan is _____ University established by Rabindranath Tagore.
   v. _____ Prime Minister is on _____ visit to London. He'll return to ___ capital on Sunday.
4. **Decide whether to put *a, an, the* or no article in the following sentences in the given blanks. Put a ⊚ mark if no article is required**.
   i. Nowadays, _____ children do not listen to _____ parents and elders. They are independent and have become _____ law unto themselves. _____ ones who follow their parents' advice are ridiculed by _____ others.
   ii. _____ higher _____ marks scored in CBSE, _____ more difficult it is to secure _____ seat in _____ good college. _____ cut off marks for _____Delhi University this year in _____ well-known colleges were very high. _____average student has no chance to get _____ admission in _____ reputed college. God help _____ low scoring _____ candidates, who have _____ tough time finding _____ right combination of _____ subjects.
   iii. All _____ teenagers have one thing in _____ common: they like to make _____ impression on their peers. They dress well, flaunt _____ smart mobile phones, _____ latest cars and laptops, and try to show _____ devil-may-care attitude. They will never agree with me, of course.
   iv. Tomorrow _____ International Film Festival begins. Many film personalities from across _____ globe will be attending. _____ awards ceremony will be a glittering event with _____ celebrity actors and actresses in their best attires. There is _____

unprecedented rush for _____ sale of tickets for _____ show. _____ show will be aired on _____ television in at least six channels. _____ novelty this year is _____ hour long cultural programme featuring _____ Indian performers.

5. **Fill in the blanks with suitable conjunctions.**

(*so, if, although, and, either … or*)

I am free on Wednesday_____ Friday. You can see me _____ first thing in the morning _____ at recess. We can discuss your project _____ the outline can be finalised. There is a lot more work to be done _____ your sketches are ready. _____ you continue to work hard, you can complete the report well in time.

UNIT 2: The Wolves of Cernogratz

'Saki' H H Munro

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Saki was born Hector Hugh Munro (1870–1916) in Burma (now Myanmar) where his father was the Inspector General of Police. Later, when his family settled down in England, Saki became a journalist and also and took to writing stories, historical fiction, and political satires. He adopted the pen name of 'Saki', a character in Omar Khayyam's Rubaiyat. Saki's writing style is a blend of refined style, clever dialogue, wit, mystery, and imagination. Saki's major works were his many short stories, which are considered some of the best in the English language. His collected writings, including his short stories are published in four volumes: *Reginald, Reginald in Russia, The Chronicles of Clovis,* and *Beasts and Super Beasts*. Saki was killed in action in World War I.

ABOUT THE STORY

This story is about an old castle and its owners—the Cernogratz family—who had to sell off their family castle when fortune turned against them. They had to let go of their ancestral family castle in the process. The castle was purchased by the Gruebel family. Saki weaves some clever satire into this interesting story. He shows how Baron and Baroness Gruebel lay claim to a totally undeserved social honour—while they refuse to believe that their old governess could have been a Cernogratz, when she dies, they publish an obituary, where they write about her as one of the old and respected members of the Cernogratz family. This, of course, was a hollow pretension, since they actually despised her.

THE WOLVES OF CERNOGRATZ

'Are there any old legends attached to the castle?' asked Conrad of his sister. Conrad was a prosperous Hamburg merchant, but he was the one poetically-dispositioned member of an essentially practical family.

The Baroness Gruebel shrugged her plump shoulders.

'There are always legends hanging about these old places. They are not difficult to invent and they cost nothing. In this case there is a story that when anyone dies in the castle all the dogs in the village and the wild beasts in the forest howl the night long. It would not be pleasant to listen to, would it?'

'It would be strange and romantic,' said the Hamburg merchant.

'Anyhow, it isn't true,' said the Baroness in a self-satisfied tone; 'since we bought the place we have had proof that nothing of the sort happens. When the old mother-in-law died last springtime we all listened, but there was no howling. It is just a story that lends dignity to the place without costing anything.'

'The story is not as you have told it,' said Amalie, the grey old governess. Every one turned and looked at her in astonishment. It was her custom to sit silent and prim and faded is her place at table, never speaking unless someone spoke to her, and there were few who troubled themselves to make conversation with her. Today a sudden talkativeness had descended on her, she continued to talk, rapidly and nervously, looking straight in front of her and seeming to address no one in particular.

'It is not when *anyone* dies in the castle that the howling is heard. It was when one of the Cernogratz family died here that the wolves came from far and near and howled at the edge of the forest just before the death hour. There were only a few wolves that lived in this part of the forest, but at such a time the keepers say there would be dozens of them, gliding about in the shadows and howling in chorus, and the dogs of the castle and the village and all the farms round would bay and howl in fear and anger at the wolf chorus, and as the soul of the dying one left its body a tree would crash down in the park. That is what happened when a Cernogratz died in his family castle. But for a stranger dying here, of course no wolf would howl and no tree would fall. Oh, no.'

There was a note of defiance, almost of scorn, in her voice as she said the last words. The well-fed, much-too-well-dressed Baroness stared angrily at the poorly dressed old woman who had come forth form her usual and proper position of effacement to speak so disrespectfully.

'You seem to know quite a lot about the von Cernogratz legends, Fraulein Schmidt,' she said sharply; 'I did not know that family histories were among the subjects you are supposed to be expert in.'

The answer to her taunt was even more unexpected and astonishing than

the conversational outbreak which had aroused it.

'I am a von Cernogratz myself,' said the old woman, 'that is why I know the family history.'

'You a von Gernogratz? You!' came in a disbelieving chorus.

'When we became very poor,' she explained, 'and I had to go out and give teaching lessons, I took another name; I thought it would be more fitting. But my grandfather spent much of his time as a boy in this castle, and my father used to tell me many stories about it, and, of course, I knew all the family legends and stories. When one has nothing left to one but memories, one guards and dusts them with especial care. I little thought when I took service with you that I should one day come with you to the old home of my family. I could wish it had been anywhere else.'

There was silence when she finished speaking, and then the Baroness turned the conversation to a less uncomfortable topic than family histories. But afterwards, when the old governess had slipped away quietly to her duties, there arose a clamour of scorn and disbelief.

'It was an impertinence,' said the Baron angrily, his staring eyes taking on a shocked expression; 'fancy the woman talking like that at our table. She almost told us we were nobodies, and I don't believe a word of it. She is just Schmidt and nothing more. She has been talking to some of the peasants about the old Cernogratz family, and raked up their history and their stories.'

'She wants to make herself out of some consequence, said the Baroness; 'she knows she will soon be past work and she wants to appeal to our sympathies. Her grandfather, indeed!'

The Baroness had the usual number of grandfathers, but she never, never boasted about them.

'I dare say her grandfather was a kitchen boy or something of the sort in the castle,' said the Baron with a mocking laugh; 'that part of the story may be true.'

The merchant from Hamburg said nothing; he had seen tears in the old women's eyes when she spoke of guarding her memories—or, being of an imaginative disposition, he thought he had.

'I shall give her notice to go as soon as the New Year celebrations are over,' said the Baroness; 'till then I shall be too busy to manage without her.'

But she had to manage without her all the same, for in the cold biting weather after Christmas, the old governess fell ill and kept to her room.

'It is most irritating, 'said the Baroness, as her guests sat round the fire on one of the last evenings of the dying year; 'all the time that she has been with us I cannot remember that she was ever seriously ill, too ill to go about and do her work, I mean. And now, when I have the house full, and she could be useful in so many ways, she goes and breaks down. One is sorry for her, of course, she looks so dried up and shrunken but it is intensely annoying all the same.'

'Most annoying,' agreed the banker's wife sympathetically; 'it is the intense cold, I expect, it breaks the old people up. It has been unusually cold this year.'

'The frost is the sharpest that has been known in December for many years,' said the Baron.

'And, of course, she is quite old,' said the Baroness; 'I wish I had given her notice some weeks ago, then she would have left before this happened to her. Why, Wappi, what is the matter with you?'

The small, woolly dog had leapt suddenly down from its cushion and crept shivering under the sofa. At the same moment a storm of angry barking came from the dogs in the castle-yard, and other dogs could be heard yapping and barking in the distance.

'What is disturbing the animals?' asked the Baron.

And then the humans, listening intently, heard the sound that had roused the dogs to their demonstrations of fear and rage; heard a long-drawn whining howl, rising and falling, seeming at one moment many miles away, at others sweeping across the snow until it appeared to come from the foot of the castle walls. All the starved, cold misery of a frozen world, all the pitiless hunger-fury of the wild, combined with other mournful and haunting music to which one could give no name, seemed concentrated in that wailing cry.

'Wolves!' cried the Baron.

Their music broke forth in one raging burst, seeming to come from everywhere. 'Hundreds of wolves,' said the Hamburg merchant, who was a man of strong imagination.

Moved by some impulse which she could not have explained, the Baroness left her guests and made her way to the narrow, cheerless room where the old governess lay watching the hours of the dying year slip by. In spite of the biting cold of the winter night, the window stood open. With a scandalized exclamation on her lips, the Baroness rushed forward to close it.

'Leave it open,' said the old woman in a voice that for all its weakness

carried an air of command such as the Baroness had never heard before from her lips.

'But you will die of cold!' she protested.

'I am dying in any case,' said the voice, 'and I want to hear their music. They have come from far and wide to sing the death-music of my family. It is beautiful that they have come; I am the last von Cernogratz that will die in our old castle, and they have come to sing to me. Listen! How loudly they are calling!'

The cry of the wolves rose on the still winter air and floated round the castle walls in long-drawn piercing wails; the old woman lay back on her bed with a look of long-delayed happiness on her face.

'Go away,' she said to the Baroness; 'I am not lonely any more. I am one of a great old family....'

'I think she is dying,' said the Baroness when she had rejoined her guests; 'I suppose we must send for a doctor. And that terrible howling! Not for much money would I have such death-music.'

'That music is not to be bought for any amount of money,' said Conrad.

'Hark! what is that other sound?' asked the Baron, as a noise of splitting and crashing was heard.

It was a true falling in the park.

There was a moment of uncomfortable silence, and then the Banker's wife spoke.

'It is the intense cold that is splitting the trees. It is also the cold that has brought the wolves out in such numbers. It is many years since we have had such a cold winter.'

The Baroness eagerly agreed that the cold was responsible for these things. It was the cold of the open window, too, which caused the heart failure that made the doctor's services unnecessary for the old Fraulein. But the notice in the newspapers looked very well—

'On December 29th, at Schloss Cernogratz, Amalie von Cernogratz, for many years the valued friend of Baron and Baroness Gruebel.'

GLOSSARY

Legend: A story without proof **Taunt:** Sarcastic insult

Prosperous: Wealthy, successful
Dispositioned: Inclined
Castle: A building with thick walls and towers
Custom: A traditional way of doing something
Prim: Stiffly formal and proper
Howling: A loud, wailing sound
Chorus: Sounds made by a group at the same time
Defiance: Resistance
Effacement: To make oneself modestly inconspicuous
Aroused: Awakened
Scorn: To express contempt
Impertinence: Rudeness
Peasants: Farmers
Shrunken: Become smaller
Frost: Ice crystals formed on the ground
Yapping: Sharp, shrill barks
Whining: Long high pitched cries
Wailing: Cry of pain
Impulse: Sudden urge
Scandalised: Shocked by immoral action
Piercing: Shrill sound
Fraulein: (German) An unmarried woman

COMPREHENSION

A. Answer the questions below, choosing from the options given.

1. The real name of the author Saki is

i. Hector Saki ii. Saki Hugh Munro
ii. Hector Hugh Munro iv. Victor Hugh Munro

2. In the story, *The Wolves of Cernogratz*, Conrad is

i. A merchant from Gruebel ii. A Cernogratz
iii. Sister of Baroness Gruebel iv. Brother of Baroness Gruebel

3. The castle of Cernogratz was

i. Formerly a Gruebel castle ii. Sold by the Gruebels
iii. A broken down building iv. Bought by the Gruebels

4. Amelie was

i. Baroness of the Gruebel family ii. Governess of the Cernogratz castle
iii. Sister -in-law of Baroness Gruebel iv. A guest of the Gruebels

5. Fraulein Schmidt was

i. A von Cernogratz ii. A young woman in the castle
iii. Mother of Conrad iv. Sister of Baroness Gruebel

6. The wolves came from far and wide to the castle
   i. To bite the dogs of the castle
   ii. To sing the death-music for the dying governess
   iii. Because it was very cold in the forest
   iv. Because they were hungry
7. Amalie von Cernogratz died on
   i. New year's day ii. 29 December
   iii. 25 December iv. 29 January

B. Answer the following questions in about 30–40 words.

1. Who is Conrad and how is he different from the others?
2. Why did Baroness Gruebel not believe the legend of the castle?
3. Describe the 'death-music' that governess Amalie spoke of.
4. How do you know that the Baroness did not believe Amalie's story?
5. Why was the Baroness annoyed with the governess when the latter was ill?

C. Answer the following questions in about 40–50 words.

1. What was the legend of the castle of Cernogratz.
2. Write the Baroness Gruebel's character sketch in your own words.
3. What was Amelie's story of her life?
4. Why did Amalie ask the Baroness to leave the window open and what did she mean by 'I am not lonely any more'?

D. Answer in detail in 100–120 words.

1. How did the legend about the Cernogratz castle come true at the death of the old governess?
2. What was the role of the old governess in the story?

E. Language in Use

(Tenses: Past perfect, Present perfect, Future perfect)

1. **Fill out the table with correct form of tenses (for the word, 'work'). Some of them have been done for you.**

Present Perfect Tense	Past Perfect Tense	Future Perfect Tense
I have worked	I _____	I shall have worked
She _____	She/He/It had worked	She _____
You _____	You _____	You shall have worked
They/We have worked	They _____	They _____

2. **Complete these sentences by filling in the blanks with verbs in the Present Perfect Tense.**
   I _____ (work) on my computer all day long. My sister _____ (draw) all the diagrams for my Project. We _____ (plan) to work together so I hope to complete my work today.
3. **Complete these sentences by filling in the blanks with verbs in the Past Perfect Tense**:
   Do you know who _____ (come) to visit us yesterday? Mr. Kumar and his wife _____ (visit) us after a very long time. They _____ (be) our neighbours for many years before they _____ (move) to Chennai.
4. **Complete these sentences by filling in the blanks with verbs in the Future Perfect Tense.**
   In ten years, I _____ (travel) to more than ten countries. My friends and I _____ (see) many of the world famous monuments . We also _____ (taste) a variety of international foods. Besides this we _____ (buy) many interesting souvenirs to remind us of our travels.
5. **Identify the tense form and write down what type of tense it is in the blank space provided.**
   i. When I arrived at the cinema, the film had started. _____

tense.

ii. There have been many earthquakes in India. _____ tense.

iii. By next November, I will have received my promotion. _____tense.

iv. He had met her somewhere else before, too. _____ tense.

v. Nobody has ever climbed that mountain. _____ tense.

UNIT 3: The Last Leaf

O' Henry

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

O' Henry is the pen name of American writer, William Sydney Porter (1862–1910). Born to a doctor, he worked for some time at his father's dispensary. Extremely fond of reading and writing since his childhood, O' Henry displayed remarkable talent in relating narratives. At the age of 29, he joined a bank as a clerk. Here, he was charged with misappropriation of funds. He ran away to South America but was arrested and sentenced to 5 years in prison. It is said that he later adopted the pseudonym, O' Henry, in memory of one of the prison guards. After being released from prison, he turned to writing short stories as a means of earning his livelihood. His stories became immensely popular.

O' Henry's stories are remarkable for their astonishing variety of characters, subtle blend of pathos and humour, and the unexpected and often ironic twist at the end. Some of his famous volumes are *Cabbages and Kings*, *Rolling Stones,* and *Sixes and Sevens.*

ABOUT THE STORY

The Last Leaf is one of the most touching short stories of O' Henry. Sue and Johnsy have a joint studio. Johnsy has an attack of pneumonia and starts to believe that when the last leaf falls from an ivy vine that she watches through the window, she would die. One night, in a storm, the last leaf falls. Behrman, a fellow-artist and a friend, paints a leaf on the wall out of compassion for Johnsy. However, having spent the night outdoors, Behrman gets an attack of pneumonia, from which he does not recover. Thinking that the painted leaf is real, Johnsy recovers from her illness. The painted leaf thus becomes Behrman's masterpiece.

The story depicts how at times, irrational beliefs take a firm grip over the human mind. It also intensely and evocatively underscores the fact that a 'masterpiece' need not always be a universally acclaimed piece of work that

adorns the walls of world's famous museums. Behrman's ivy leaf is a much more valuable masterpiece as it helped save a life.

THE LAST LEAF

In a little district west of Washington Square the streets have run crazy and broken themselves into small strips called "places". These "places" make strange angles and curves. One street crosses itself a time or two. An artist once discovered a valuable possibility in this street. Suppose a collector with a bill for paints, paper and canvas should, in traversing this route, suddenly meet himself coming back, without a cent having been paid on account!

So, to quaint old Greenwich Village the art people soon came prowling, hunting for north windows and eighteenth-century gables and Dutch attics and low rents. Then they imported some pewter mugs and chafing dish or two from Sixth Avenue, and became a "colony".

At the top of a squatty, three-storey brick-house Sue and Johnsy had their studio. "Johnsy" was familiar for Joanna. One was from Maine; the other from California. They had met at the *table d'hote* of an Eighth Street "Delmonico's", and found their tastes in art, chicory salad and bishop sleeves so congenial that the joint studio resulted.

That was in May. In November a cold, unseen stranger, whom the doctors called Pneumonia, stalked about the colony, touching one here and there with his icy finger. Over on the East Side this ravager strode boldly, smiting his victims by scores, but his feet trod slowly through the maze of the narrow and moss-grown "places".

Mr. Pneumonia was not what you would call a chivalric old gentleman. A mite of a little woman with blood thinned by California zephyrs was hardly fair game for the red-fisted, short-breathed old duffer. But Johnsy he smote; and she lay, scarcely moving, on her painted iron bedstead, looking through the small Dutch window-panes at the blank side of the next brick house.

One morning the busy doctor invited Sue into the hallway, with a shaggy, grey eyebrow.

"She has one chance in – let us say, ten," he said, as he shook down the mercury in his clinical thermometer. "And that chance is for her to want to live. This way people have of lining-up on the side of the undertaker makes the

entire pharmacopoeia look silly. Your little lady has made up her mind that she's not going to get well. Has she anything on her mind?"

"She – she wanted to paint the Bay of Naples some day," said Sue.

"Paint? – bosh. Has she anything on her mind worth thinking about twice – a man, for instance?"

"A man?" said Sue, with a jew's-harp twang in her voice. "Is a man worth – but, no, doctor; there is nothing of the kind."

"Well, it is the weakness, then," said the doctor.

"I will do all that science, so far as it may filter through my efforts, can accomplish. But whenever my patient begins to count the carriages in her funeral procession I subtract 50 per cent from the curative power of medicines. If you will get her to ask one question about the new winter styles in cloak sleeves I will promise you a one-in-five chance for her, instead of one-in-ten."

After the doctor had gone, Sue went into the workroom and cried a Japanese napkin to a pulp. Then she swaggered into Johnsy's room with her drawing-board, whistling ragtime.

She arranged her board and began a pen-and-ink drawing to illustrate a magazine story. Young artists must pave their way to Art by drawing pictures for magazine stories that young authors write to pave their way to Literature.

As Sue was sketching a pair of elegant horseshow riding trousers and monocle on the hero, an Idaho cowboy, she heard a low sound, several times repeated. She went quickly to the bed-side.

Johnsy's eyes were open wide. She was looking out the window and counting – counting backward.

"Twelve," she said, and a little later, "eleven"; and then "ten," and "nine" and then "eight" and "seven," almost together.

Sue looked solicitously out the window. What was there to count? There was only a bare, dreary yard to be seen, and the blank side of the brick house twenty feet away. An old, old ivy vine, gnarled and decayed at the roots, climbed half-way up the brickwall. The cold breath of autumn had stricken its leaves from the vine until its skeleton branches clung, almost bare, to crumbling bricks.

"What is it, dear?" asked Sue.

"Six," said Johnsy, in almost a whisper. "They're falling faster now. Three days ago there were almost a hundred. It made my head ache to count them.

But now it's easy. There goes another one. There are only five left now."

"Five what, dear? Tell your Sudie."

"Leaves. On the ivy vine. When the last one falls I must go too. I've known that for three days. Didn't the doctor tell you?"

"Oh, I never heard of such nonsense," complained Sue with magnificent scorn. "What have old ivy leaves to do with your getting well? And you used to love that vine so, you naughty girl. Don't be a goosey. Why, the doctor told me this morning that your chances for getting well real soon were – let's see exactly what he said – he said the chances were ten to one. Why, that's almost as good a chance as we have in New York when we ride on the street-cars or walk past a new building. Try to take some broth now, and let Sudie go back to her drawing, so she can sell the editor man with it, and buy port wine for her sick child, and pork chops for her greedy self."

"You needn't get any more wine," said Johnsy, keeping her eyes fixed out the window.

"There goes another. No, I don't want any broth. That leaves just four. I want to see the last one fall before it gets dark. Then I'll go too."

"Johnsy, dear," said Sue, bending over her, "Will you promise me to keep your eyes closed, and not look out the window until I am done working? I must hand those drawings in by tomorrow. I need the light or I would draw the shade down."

"Couldn't you draw in the other room?" asked Johnsy coldly.

"I'd rather be here by you," said Sue. "Besides, I don't want you to keep looking at those silly ivy leaves."

"Tell me as soon as you have finished," said Johnsy, closing her eyes, and lying white and still as a fallen statue, "because I want to see the last one fall. I'm tired of waiting. I'm tired of thinking. I want to turn loose my hold on everything and go sailing down, just like one of those poor, tired leaves."

"Try to sleep," said Sue. "I must call Behrman up to be my model for the old hermit miner. I'll not be gone a minute. Don't try to move till I come back."

Old Behrman was a painter who lived on the ground floor beneath them. He was past sixty and had a Michelangelo's Moses beard curling down from the head of a satyr along the body of an imp. Behrman was a failure in art. Forty years he had wielded the brush without getting near enough to touch the hem of his Mistress's robe. He had been always about to paint a masterpiece, but had

never yet begun it. For several years he had painted nothing except now and then a daub in the line of commerce or advertising. He earned a little by serving as a model to those young artists in the colony who could not pay the price of a professional. He drank gin to excess, and still talked of his coming masterpiece. For the rest he was a fierce little old man, who scoffed terribly at softness in anyone, and who regarded himself as especial mastiff-in-waiting to protect the two young artists in the studio above.

Sue found Behrman smelling strongly of juniper berries in his dimly-lighted den below. In one corner was a blank canvas on an easel that had been waiting there for twenty-five years to receive the first line of the masterpiece. She told him of Johnsy's fancy, and how she feared she would, indeed, light and fragile as a leaf herself, float away when her slight hold upon the world grew weaker.

Old Behrman, with his red eyes plainly streaming, shouted his contempt and derision for such idiotic imaginings.

"Vass!" he cried. "Is dere people in de world mit der foolishness to die because leafs dey drop off from a confounded vine? I haf not heard of such a thing. No, I will not bose as a model for your fool hermit-dunderhead. Vy do you allow dot silly pusiness to come in der brain of her? Ach, dot poor leetle Miss Yohnsy."

"She is very ill and weak," said Sue, "and the fever has left her mind morbid and full of strange fancies. Very well, Mr. Behrman, if you do not care to pose for me, you needn't. But I think you are a horrid old-old flibberti-gibbet."

"You are just like a woman!" yelled Behrman. "Who said I will not bose? Go on. I come mit you. For half an hour I haf been trying to say dot I am ready to bose. Gott! dis is not any blace in which one so goot as Miss Yohnsy shall lie sick. Some day I will baint a masterpiece, and we shall all go away. Gott! yes."

Johnsy was sleeping when they went upstairs. Sue pulled the shade down to the window-sill and motioned Behrman into the other room. In there they peered out the window fearfully at the ivy vine. Then they looked at each other for a moment without speaking. A persistent, cold rain was falling, mingled with snow. Behrman, in his old blue shirt, took his seat as the hermit miner on an upturned kettle for a rock.

When Sue awoke from an hour's sleep the next morning she found Johnsy with dull wide-upon eyes staring at the drawn green shade.

"Put it up" I want to see," she ordered, in a whisper. Wearily Sue obeyed.

But, lo! after the beating rain and fierce gusts of wind that had endured through the livelong night, there yet stood out against the brick wall one ivy leaf. It was the last on the vine. Still dark green near its stem, but with its serrated edges tinted with the yellow of dissolution and decay, it hung bravely from a branch some twenty feet above the ground.

"It is the last one," said Johnsy, "I thought it would surely fall during the night. I heard the wind. It will fall today and I shall die at the same time."

"Dear, dear!" said Sue learning her worn face down to the pillow; "think of me, if you won't think of yourself. What would I do?"

But Johnsy did not answer. The lonesomest thing in the world is a soul when it is making ready to go on its mysterious, far journey. The fancy seemed to possess her more strongly as one by one the ties that bound her more to friendship and to earth were loosed.

The day wore away, and even through the twilight they could see the lone ivy leaf clinging to its stem against the wall. And then, with the coming of the night the north wind was again loosed, while the rain still beat against the windows pattered down from the low Dutch eaves.

When it was light enough, Johnsy, the merciless, commanded that the shade be raised.

The ivy leaf was still there.

Johnsy lay for a long time looking at it. And then she called to Sue, who was stirring her chicken broth over the gas stove.

"I've been a bad girl, Sudie," said Johnsy. "Something has made that last leaf stay there to show me how wicked I was. It is a sin to want to die. You may bring me a little broth now, and some milk with a little port in it, and – no; bring me a hand mirror first; and then pack some pillows about me, and I will sit up and watch you cook."

An hour later she said –

"Sudie, someday I hope to paint the Bay of Naples."

The doctor came in the afternoon, and Sue had an excuse to go into the hallway as he left.

"Even chances," said the doctor, taking Sue's thin, shaking hand in his. "With good nursing you'll win. And now I must see another case I have downstairs. Behrman, his name is – some kind of an artist, I believe. Pneumonia, too. He is an old, weak man, and the attack is acute. There is no

hope for him; but he goes to the hospital today to be made more comfortable."

The next day the doctor said to Sue: "She's out of danger. You've won. Nutrition and care now – that's all."

And that afternoon Sue came to the bed where Johnsy lay contentedly knitting a very blue and very useless woollen shoulder scarf, and put one arm around her, pillows and all.

"I have something to tell you, white mouse," she said.

"Mr. Behrman died of pneumonia today in the hospital. He was ill only two days. The janitor found him on the morning of the first day in his room downstairs helpless with pain. His shoes and clothing were wet through and icy cold. They couldn't imagine where he had been on such a dreadful night. And then they found a lantern, still lighted, and a ladder that had been dragged from its place, and some scattered brushes, and a palette with green and yellow colours mixed on it, and – look out of the window, dear, at the last ivy leaf on the wall. Didn't you wonder why it never fluttered or moved when the wind blew? Ah, darling, it's Behrman's masterpiece – he painted it there the night that the last leaf fell."

GLOSSARY

Quaint: Dainty, odd, attractive because it is unfamiliar or old-fashioned

Greenwich Village: District of Lower Manhattan borough of New York City, home for workshops of artists and writers

Chafing dish: An old-fashioned type of cooking vessel

Table d'hote: Meal at a fixed price

Delmonico's: Name of a restaurant patronised by artists

Chicory salad: Dish of uncooked herbs popular in America

Bishop sleeves: Sleeves for a ladies'

Gables: Triangular part of a house below the roof

Dutch attics: Rooms just below the roof in a house built in the Dutch style

Pewter mug: Vessel with a handle made of lead and tin alloy

Monocle: Single eye-glass

Idaho: A state in America

Cowboy: One who looks after cattle on an American farm

Ivy vine: Climbing, clinging evergreen plant with dark shiny leaves

Goosey: Foolish person (colloquial expression)

Michelangelo's Moses beard: Beard

dress made in a fashion resembling the full sleeves of a bishop's robe

Ravager: Destroyer

Mr Pneumonia: The disease personified; represented as a bully attacking the weak and defenseless

Mite: Very small in size

Zephyr: Gentle wind

Undertaker: A person who arranges funerals

Pharmacopoeia: Book with a list of medicinal preparations and directions for their use

The Bay of Naples: Well-known for its scenic beauty

Jews-harp twang: Sorrowful sound like that of Moses on the statues made by Michelangelo

Satyr: Greek god of woods, represented as part goat part man

Juniper berries: Berries that give gin its characteristic flavour

Dunderhead: Stupid person

Easel: A frame to support a picture

Morbid: Diseased

Serrated: Having a toothed edge, like a saw

Janitor: Person hired to take care of a building

Palette: An artist's board for mixing colours

COMPREHENSION

A. Choose the correct answer for the following questions from the options that follow.

1. O' Henry, the pen name of William Sydney Porter was adopted in memory of

i. A doctor ii. A prison guard iii. A pseudonym iv. A writer

2. The streets in Greenwich Village are divided into

i. Places ii. Curves iii. Strips iv. Angles

3. Johnsy belonged to

i. Washington square
ii. Greenwich Village
iii. Maine
iv. California

4. What according to the doctor did Johnsy need to recover?

i. A man in her life ii. The will to live
iii. Good medicines iv. A painting of the Bay of Naples

5. When the doctor left after informing Sue about Johnsy's chances, she first

i. Whistled ii. Arranged her board for painting

iii. Cried iv. Went to Behrman

6. How old was Behrman?
   i. Very old ii. Above 60 years
   iii. Below 60 years iv. Forty years
7. Sue and Behrman 'peered fearfully at the ivy wine.' They were afraid of
   i. The storm ii. Losing the ivy wine
   iii. Losing Johnsy iv. The icy cold
8. Why does Johnsy say, 'I've been a bad girl'?
   i. Because she was afraid ii. Because she was wicked
   iii. Because she had troubled Sue iv. Because she wanted to die

B. Answer the following questions in 30–40 words.

1. What were the features of Greenwich Village that attracted the artists?
2. What, according to the doctor, were Johnsy's chances of recovering? Why?
3. What are the steps that Sue takes to prevent Johnsy from watching the leaves on the ivy wine?
4. Explain the significance of the title, *The Last Leaf*.
5. Describe Johnsy's recovery.

C. Write short notes on the following in about 40–50 words.

1. Sue and Johnsy's friendship.
2. Johnsy's transformation from despair to hope.
3. Behrman's character.
4. Reason for Johnsy's superstition.

D. Answer in detail in 120–140 words.

1. Discuss Johnsy's psychological state (state of mind) during her illness and recovery.
2. Describe the events leading up to the painting of Behrman's masterpiece.

E. Language in Use

1. **Choose appropriate verbs from the alternatives given and fill in the blanks.**

i. Sue found Behrman _____ strongly of juniper berries. (smelled, smelling, smells)

ii. Johnsy was of the opinion that she would _____ very soon. (dead, dying, die)
iii. Sue _____ solicitously out of the window. (look, looking, looked)
iv. Johnsy was _____ when they went upstairs. (sleeps, sleeping, slept)

2. **Choose the correct synonym from the given alternatives for the words given below.**

i. Traverse (hostile, travel over, misguide)
ii. Twilight (dusk, darkness, dawn)
iii. Fragile (breakable, strong, flexible)
iv. Goosey (like a bird, foolish, wise)

3. **Fill in the blanks with the appropriate article (a, an, the).**

i. Johnsy woke up the next morning to find that _____ ivy leaf was still there.
ii. Behrman earned _____little by serving as _____ model to young artists in _____colony.
iii. 'It is _____ last one.'
iv. 'I have been _____ bad girl.'

4. **Fill in the blanks with the appropriate preposition from the given alternatives.**

i. Pneumonia stalked _____ the colony of young artists. (upon, over, about)
ii. Behrman always scoffed _____ softness in anyone. (at, upon, into)
iii. Over _____ the East Side, this ravager strode boldly. (at, beneath, on)
iv. Old Behrman was a painter who lived on the ground floor _____ them. (on, about, beneath)

UNIT 4: The Fly

Katherine Mansfield Beauchamp

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Katherine Mansfield (1888–1923) was born in Wellington, New Zealand. Her father was a banker. She had two older sisters, a younger sister, and a younger brother. She began writing while in school in New Zealand. She moved to London in 1903 along with her sisters to study in Queen's College. She met fellow writer Ida Baker (also known as Lesley Moore), a South African, at the college, and the pair became lifelong friends.

Mansfield returned to New Zealand where she started writing stories. She is known for her fine modernist short stories in the first quarter of the 20th century. Her sensitive spirit and exquisite mind helped her to bring maturity to the art of story writing in England. Like many other writers of short stories in her time, she was influenced by the Russian master, Anton Chekhov. Mansfield travelled in continental Europe, and returned to England as she continued to write. She was married to John Middleton Murry, who was a prolific writer of the times. Mansfield's life and work were changed forever by the death of her beloved brother, Leslie Heron 'Chummie' Beauchamp in 1915, as a New Zealand soldier in France in World War I. In December 1917 Mansfield became ill, and was diagnosed with tuberculosis. She moved to France and continued to write, even though she was depressed. During her final years, she tried various unconventional treatments for her illness, all to no avail. She suffered a pulmonary hemorrhage and died in January 1923. Many of her works were written in her final years, and they were edited and published by Murry after her death.

Bliss and Other Stories (1920), *The Garden Party and Other Stories* (1922), *The Dove's Nest and Other Stories* (1923) and *Something Childish and Other Stories* (1924) are the four collections upon which her fame as a storywriter rests.

ABOUT THE STORY

The Fly begins with a conversation between Mr Woodfield, an invalid retired old man and his friend, referred to as 'the boss', in the latter's office. Mr Woodfield is on a weekly visit, which is allowed to him by his wife and daughters who otherwise keep him closeted at home. After Mr Woodfield duly admires his friend and his surroundings, the two old men partake of some whisky. Mansfield then reveals that both men had lost their young sons in the First World War. Mr Woodfield seems to be more reconciled to the loss of his son Reggie than the boss, and talks about the recent visit of his daughters to Belgium to the grave of their brother. The boss avoids the topic even though there is a picture of his son in uniform on his desk. After Mr Woodfield leaves, the boss chooses to remain alone in his office, to grieve the death of his only son who had been the apple of his eye. He realises, however, that he cannot weep or grieve any more, and is easily distracted by a fly in the inkpot. He takes out the fly and watches its efforts to survive, as he repeatedly drops ink on it. The fly is eventually dead, and he dumps it in the bin without much feeling although he is seized by a miserable feeling. He orders for more blotting paper, while his mind blanks out on his sense of loss of his only son. The fly and the way it meets its death can be read as a symbol of the way in which young people were sent to World War I and the indifference of the administration to the loss of their lives.

The story arouses a great variety of reactions. While some see it as the representation of human corruption and heartlessness, others see in the fly a resigned representation of human life, which gives in to a cruel God's will after a long and difficult struggle. For some others, the story is just the expression of the writer's feeling of helplessness while she was battling with her life-threatening illness (tuberculosis).

THE FLY

'Y' are very snug in here,' piped old Mr. Woodifield, and he peered out of the great, green-leather armchair by his friend the boss's desk as a baby peers out of its pram. His talk was over; it was time for him to be off. But he did not want to go. Since he had retired, since his...stroke, the wife and the girls kept him boxed

up in the house every day of the week except Tuesday. On Tuesday he was dressed and brushed and allowed to cut back to the City for the day. Though what he did there the wife and girls couldn't imagine. Made a nuisance of himself to his friends, they supposed.... Well, perhaps so. All the same, we cling to our last pleasures as the tree clings to its last leaves. So there sat old Woodifield, smoking a cigar and staring almost greedily at the boss, who rolled in his office chair, stout, rosy, five years older than he, and still going strong, still at the helm. It did one good to see him.

Wistfully, admiringly, the old voice added, 'It's snug in here, upon my word!'

'Yes, it's comfortable enough,' agreed the boss, and he flipped the *Financial Times* with a paper-knife. As a matter of fact he was proud of his room; he liked to have it admired, especially by old Woodifield. It gave him a feeling of deep, solid satisfaction to be planted there in the midst of it in full view of that frail old figure in the muffler.

'I've had it done up lately,' he explained, as he had explained for the past—how many?—weeks. 'New carpet,' and he pointed to the bright red carpet with a pattern of large white rings. 'New furniture,' and he nodded towards the massive bookcase and the table with legs like twisted treacle. 'Electric heating!' He waved almost exultantly towards the five transparent, pearly sausages glowing so softly in the tilted copper pan.

But he did not draw old Woodifield's attention to the photograph over the table of a grave-looking boy in uniform standing in one of those spectral photographers' parks with photographers' storm-clouds behind him. It was not new. It had been there for over six years.

'There was something I wanted to tell you,' said old Woodifield, and his eyes grew dim remembering. 'Now what was it? I had it in my mind when I started out this morning.' His hands began to tremble, and patches of red showed above his beard.

Poor old chap, he's on his last pins, thought the boss. And, feeling kindly, he winked at the old man, and said jokingly, 'I tell you what. I've got a little drop of something here that'll do you good before you go out into the cold again. It's beautiful stuff. It wouldn't hurt a child.' He took a key off his watch-chain, unlocked a cupboard below his desk, and drew forth a dark, squat bottle. 'That's the medicine,' said he. 'And the man from whom I got it told me on the

strict Q.T. it came from the cellars at Windsor Castle.'

Old Woodifield's mouth fell open at the sight. He couldn't have looked more surprised if the boss had produced a rabbit.

'It's whisky, ain't it?' he piped feebly.

The boss turned the bottle and lovingly showed him the label. Whisky it was.

'D' you know,' said he, peering up at the boss wonderingly, 'they won't let me touch it at home.' And he looked as though he was going to cry.

'Ah, that's where we know a bit more than the ladies,' cried the boss, swooping across for two tumblers that stood on the table with the water-bottle, and pouring a generous finger into each. 'Drink it down. It'll do you good. And don't put any water with it. It's sacrilege to tamper with stuff like this. Ah!' He tossed off his, pulled out his handkerchief, hastily wiped his moustaches, and cocked an eye at old Woodifield, who was rolling his in his chaps.

The old man swallowed, was silent a moment, and then said faintly, 'It's nutty!' But it warmed him; it crept into his chill old brain—he remembered.

'That was it,' he said, heaving himself out of his chair. 'I thought you'd like to know. The girls were in Belgium last week having a look at poor Reggie's grave, and they happened to come across your boy's. They're quite near each other, it seems.'

Old Woodifield paused, but the boss made no reply. Only a quiver in his eyelids showed that he heard.

'The girls were delighted with the way the place is kept,' piped the old voice. 'Beautifully looked after. Couldn't be better if they were at home. You've not been across, have yer?'

'No, no!' For various reasons the boss had not been across.

'There's miles of it,' quavered old Woodifield, 'and it's all as neat as a garden. Flowers growing on all the graves. Nice broad paths.' It was plain from his voice how much he liked a nice broad path.

The pause came again. Then the old man brightened wonderfully.

'D'you know what the hotel made the girls pay for a pot of jam?' he piped. 'Ten francs! Robbery, I call it. It was a little pot, so Gertrude says, no bigger than a half-crown. And she hadn't taken more than a spoonful when they charged her ten francs. Gertrude brought the pot away with her to teach 'em a lesson. Quite right, too; it's trading on our feelings. They think because we're over

there having a look round we're ready to pay anything. That's what it is.' And he turned towards the door.

'Quite right, quite right!' cried the boss, though what was quite right he hadn't the least idea. He came round by his desk, followed the shuffling footsteps to the door, and saw the old fellow out. Woodifield was gone.

For a long moment the boss stayed, staring at nothing, while the grey-haired office messenger, watching him, dodged in and out of his cubby-hole like a dog that expects to be taken for a run. Then, 'I'll see nobody for half an hour, Macey,' said the boss. 'Understand? Nobody at all.'

'Very good, sir.'

The door shut, the firm heavy steps recrossed the bright carpet, the fat body plumped down in the spring chair, and leaning forward, the boss covered his face with his hands. He wanted, he intended, he had arranged to weep....

It had been a terrible shock to him when old Woodifield sprang that remark upon him about the boy's grave. It was exactly as though the earth had opened and he had seen the boy lying there with Woodifield's girls staring down at him. For it was strange. Although over six years had passed away, the boss never thought of the boy except as lying unchanged, unblemished in his uniform, asleep forever. 'My son!' groaned the boss. But no tears came yet. In the past, in the first months and even years after the boy's death, he had only to say those words to be overcome by such grief that nothing short of a violent fit of weeping could relieve him. Time, he had declared then, he had told everybody, could make no difference. Other men perhaps might recover, might live their loss down, but not he. How was it possible? His boy was an only son. Ever since his birth the boss had worked at building up this business for him; it had no other meaning if it was not for the boy. Life itself had come to have no other meaning. How on earth could he have slaved, denied himself, kept going all those years without the promise for ever before him of the boy's stepping into his shoes and carrying on where he left off?

And that promise had been so near being fulfilled. The boy had been in the office learning the ropes for a year before the war. Every morning they had started off together; they had come back by the same train. And what congratulations he had received as the boy's father! No wonder; he had taken to it marvellously. As to his popularity with the staff, every man jack of them down to old Macey couldn't make enough of the boy. And he wasn't in the least

spoilt. No, he was just his bright natural self, with the right word for everybody, with that boyish look and his habit of saying, 'Simply splendid!'

But all that was over and done with as though it never had been. The day had come when Macey had handed him the telegram that brought the whole place crashing about his head. 'Deeply regret to inform you....' And he had left the office a broken man, with his life in ruins.

Six years ago, six years.... How quickly time passed! It might have happened yesterday. The boss took his hands from his face: he was puzzled. Something seemed to be wrong with him. He wasn't feeling as he wanted to feel. He decided to get up and have a look at the boy's photograph. But it wasn't a favourite photograph of his; the expression was unnatural. It was cold, even stern-looking. The boy had never looked like that.

At that moment the boss noticed that a fly had fallen into his broad inkpot, and was trying feebly but desperately to clamber out again. Help! help! said those struggling legs. But the sides of the inkpot were wet and slippery; it fell back again and began to swim. The boss took up a pen, picked the fly out of the ink, and shook it on to a piece of blotting-paper. For a fraction of a second it lay still on the dark patch that oozed round it. Then the front legs waved, took hold, and, pulling its small, sodden body up, it began the immense task of cleaning the ink from its wings. Over and under, over and under went a leg along a wing as the stone goes over and under the scythe. Then there was a pause, while the fly, seeming to stand on the tips of its toes, tried to expand first one wing and then the other. It succeeded at last, and, sitting down, it began, like a minute cat, to clean its face. Now one could imagine that the little front legs rubbed against each other lightly, joyfully. The horrible danger was over; it had escaped; it was ready for life again.

But just then the boss had an idea. He plunged his pen back into the ink, leaned his thick wrist on the blotting-paper, and as the fly tried its wings down came a great heavy blot. What would it make of that? What indeed! the little beggar seemed absolutely cowed, stunned, and afraid to move because of what would happen next. But then, as if painfully, it dragged itself forward. The front legs waved, caught hold, and, more slowly this time, the task began from the beginning.

He's a plucky little devil, thought the boss, and he felt a real admiration for the fly's courage. That was the way to tackle things; that was the right spirit.

Never say die; it wasonly a question of... But the fly had again finished its laborious task, and the boss had just time to refill his pen to shake fair and square on the new-cleaned body yet another dark drop. What about it this time? A painful moment of suspense followed. But behold, the front legs were again waving; the boss felt a rush of relief. He leaned over the fly and said to it tenderly, 'You artful little b....' And he actually had the brilliant notion of breathing on it to help the drying process. All the same, there was something timid and weak about its efforts now, and the boss decided that this time should be the last, as he dipped the pen deep into the inkpot.

It was. The last blot fell on the soaked blotting-paper, and the draggled fly lay in it and did not stir. The back legs were stuck to the body; the front legs were not to be seen.

'Come on,' said the boss. 'Look sharp!' And he stirred it with his pen—in vain. Nothing happened or was likely to happen. The fly was dead.

The boss lifted the corpse on the end of the paper-knife and flung it into the wastepaper basket. But such a grinding feeling of wretchedness seized him that he felt positively frightened. He started forward and pressed the bell for Macey.

'Bring me some fresh blotting-paper,' he said sternly, 'and look sharp about it.' And while the old dog padded away he fell to wondering what it was he had been thinking about before. What was it? It was.... He took out his handkerchief and passed it inside his collar. For the life of him he could not remember.

GLOSSARY

Snug: Comfortable
Piped: Spoke in a high-pitched voice
Peers: Looks with half-shut eyes, closely and carefully
Be off: Go
Boxed up: Shut inside the house
Stout: Strong, slightly fat
At the helm: In charge of
Wistfully: Sadly thinking about the past
On his last pins: At the end of his life
Squat: Broad and low in shape
On the q.t.: Abbreviation of quietly and secretly
Cellar: Underground room where wine is stored
Swooping across: Reaching out suddenly
Finger: A measure of spirits in a glass, based on the breadth of a finger

Flipped: Turned something over quickly
Had it done up: Got it furnished; improved its appearance
Treacle: A golden syrup
Exultantly: With great joy
Spectral: Ghostly
Rolling his in his chaps: Enjoying it by keeping it in his mouth
Heaving out: Lifting so as to come out
Quiver: Tremble
Half-crown: An English coin
Shuffling: Moving (the feet) along without lifting them up clearly
Dodged: Shifted about
Cubby-hole: A small comfortable enclosed place
Plumped down: Sat down heavily
Live their loss down: Forget their loss gradually
Learning the ropes: Learning the basics
Every man jack of them: Each one of them
Sacrilege: Behaviour that does not show
respect for a holy place, object or idea
Tamper: Meddle and modify
Tossed off: Drank up
Cocked an eye at: Looked knowingly at
Make enough of: Praise adequately
Clamber out: Climb with difficulty
Oozed: Seeped out slowly
Sodden: Completely wet
Plunged: Dipped, put into
Cowed: Overwhelmed, overcome
Plucky: Courageous
Fair and square: Directly
Timid: Weak
Draggled: Made wet and dirty
Look sharp: Be quick about it
Grinding: Oppressive
Wretchedness: Misery, extreme sorrow
Padded away: Walked away softly, without making any noise

COMPREHENSION

A. Answer the following questions choosing from the options that follow.

1. Why was Mr Woodfield visiting 'the boss'?
    i. He had some business with the boss
    ii. He was on his weekly visit to the city to meet his old friends
    iii. He wanted to have a drink with his friend
    iv. He went to console him on the death of his son
2. Why did Mr Wood field 'look as though he was going to cry'?
    i. He had seen a rabbit

ii. He was overwhelmed at the prospect of having some whisky
iii. He remembered the ill-treatment he received at home
iv. He remembered the good old days

3. What was the name of the boss's son in the story?
   i. Mr Woodfield ii. Mr Macey
   iii. Reggie iv. It is not mentioned
4. What was the promise before the boss during the years that he had spent building his business?
   i. He would make a fortune from his business so that he did not have to work after retirement
   ii. He would be congratulated by everyone on his good fortune
   iii. He would hand over the business to his only son
   iv. He would show off his posh office to all his friends
5. What was the boss's son doing just before joining the war?
   i. He was studying in a college
   ii. He was undergoing training to fight a war
   iii. He was learning to manage the family business
   iv. It is not clear from the story
6. How did the boss take the death of his son?
   i. He was devastated and thought he could never recover from his grief
   ii. He was very brave about it
   iii. He got reconciled to it as had others
   iv. He was proud of his son's contribution
7. How did the boss feel 6 years after his son's death?
   i. His grief had not abated at all
   ii. His life was in ruins
   iii. He did not feel the pain of the loss as he had earlier
   iv. He had completely got over the loss
8. Why do you think the boss fails to remember what he was thinking about at the end of the story?
   i. He gets distracted by the fly
   ii. He is in denial—he does not want to remember his son's death
   iii. He is upset about having killed the fly
   iv. All of the above

B. Answer the following questions in 30–40 words.

1. 'We cling to our last pleasures as a tree clings to its leaves.' Explain the line with reference to the context in the story.
2. Was Mr Woodfield visiting the boss's office for the first time after it was refurbished? How do you know?
3. Briefly outline in your own words the changes made to the boss's office.
4. What do you gather from the story about the boss's son?
5. As Mr Woodfield left the boss's office, the latter was at a loss for words. What do you think was the reason for this?

C. Write short notes on the following in 40–50 words.

1. The character of Mr Woodfield.
2. The significance of the protagonist being called 'the boss'.
3. The symbolism of the fly in the story.
4. 'Time is a great healer' as evident from the story.

D. Answer in detail in 100–120 words.

1. 'As flies to wanton boys are we to the gods,/They kill us for their sport.' These lines are spoken by Gloucester in Shakespeare's *King Lear*. Attempt an explanation of the events and symbolism in the story in terms of these lines.
2. Can you compare the boss's struggle in life with that of the fly? Give reasons for your answer.

E. Language in Use

(Complement, Adverbial, Parts of Speech)

1. **Underline the complement in the following sentences.**
   - i It is beautiful stuff.
   - ii He was just his bright natural self.
   - iii Train travel is great fun.
   - iv The horrible danger was over.
   - v Peter seems sad.
2. **Underline the adverbials in the following sentences.**
   - i The students arrived early.

ii The boss lovingly showed him the label.

iii Only a quiver in his eyelids showed that he heard.

iv The boy learned the ropes for a year.

v The college canteen is next to the library.

3. **Read the following passage and decide whether the italicised words are adjectives or adverbs.**

   Indira, who was influenced by *her* father in *her* love for the environment from a *young* age, realised the difference between being *fully alive* and *just* existing. The *early* letters written by Jawaharlal to Indira from jail gave *vivid* and *sensitive* versions of geology and ecology, which appealed to her. One letter read—'*Every little* stone that you see lying on the road or on the mountainside may be a *little* page in nature's book and may be able to tell you something if you *only* knew how to read it...you must learn the alphabet of nature before you can read *her* story in *her* books of stone and rock. Even *now perhaps* you know a little how to read this. If you see a *little, round, shiny* pebble, does it tell you something? ...It will tell you *its* story if you have *good* eyes to see and ears to hear it.'

4. **Fill in the blanks in the following paragraph with suitable verbs from the options given in brackets.**

   Sunita was unable to bear the heat anymore. The constant power break downs _____ (was/were) not helping her. Her mother _____ (did not like/ liked) her to use the Air Conditioner for too long. It _____ (is/was) impossible for her to prepare for her exam. She kept _____ (sipped/sipping) water and washing her face. It was about 3 o'clock in the afternoon. Suddenly it _____ (turned/turns) cloudy and began to drizzle. _____ (Hears/Hearing) the sound of raindrops, all the children _____ (did run/ran) outdoors to savour the first drops of rain. The rain increased and it _____ (has poured/poured) for about half an hour. Everyone was relieved and cheerful. Sunita was thrilled. She _____(moved/had moved) into the verandah to continue her studies.

5. **Fill in the blanks using suitable auxiliary verbs from the list.**

   (must, has, would, ought, have, could, should, can)

   Computers and the Internet _____ become an integral part of our lives. Technology _____ advanced rapidly and every day, we hear

about new things we _____ do, sitting in the comfort of our desktops. Twenty years ago email was a novelty, while instant messaging or video conferencing were practically unheard of. Who _____ have imagined that we _____ speak to and watch on video, friends and family members in distant countries? We can do this and much more, for free! You _____ be aware of the infinite uses of Google. We _____ to be proud of our country that a lot of the professionals who work on these technological inventions _____ be Indians.

UNIT 5: Lincoln's Letter to his Son's Teacher

Abraham Lincoln

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Abraham Lincoln(1809–65)was the 16th President of the United States, serving from March 1861 until his assassination in April 1865. He was one of the world's great statesmen. His accomplishments included ending slavery, the Emancipation Proclamation and the successful passing of the Thirteenth Amendment which freed slaves forever. He was best known for his stance against violence. Lincoln led the United States through its greatest constitutional, military, and moral crises—the American Civil War—preserving the Union, abolishing slavery, strengthening the national government and modernising the economy. Reared in a poor family on the western frontier, Lincoln was self-educated, and became a country lawyer, a Whig Party leader, Illinois state legislator during the 1830s, and a one-term member of the United States House of Representatives during the 1840s.

In November 1842, Lincoln married Mary Todd, the daughter of a prosperous family from Kentucky. The couple had four sons: Robert Lincoln (1843–1926), Edward Baker Lincoln (1846– 50), William Lincoln (1850–62) and Thomas Lincoln (1853–71). Three of the boys died young and only Robert lived long enough to marry and have children.

Lincoln's many papers, letters, documents and speeches can be found in *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln* and were published in 8 volumes between 1953 and 1955. Two more volumes were added subsequently. More documents of Lincoln continue to be discovered by researchers.

ABOUT THE STORY

Lincoln is said to have written this letter to his son's teacher. It is a touching appeal from the father of a young son, who is anxious for his son to grow up into a virtuous, strong, and noble human being. Through the letter, Lincoln

reveals the importance of discriminating between the good and bad people, making an honest living and taking the ups and downs of life in the stride. Young people should be taught early about how to deal with different kinds of people, how to overcome difficult situations in life and how to remain fi rm and stand by one's principles when one is under pressure from others. Lincoln feels that his son should be taught the importance of reading and to appreciate nature. He can use his talents and strengths to earn money but he should remain righteous and true to his conscience. He would like his son to be treated gently but not too affectionately, because he should grow up to be tough. At the end, Lincoln comments on his own list of expectations that it is a big deal that he wants for his son and leaves it to the teacher to see what can be done for his promising young lad.

LINCOLN'S LETTER TO HIS SON'S TEACHER

He will have to learn, I know, that all men are not just, all men are not true. But teach him also that for every scoundrel there is a hero.

That for every selfish politician, there is a dedicated leader. Teach him that for every enemy there is a friend.

Steer him away from envy, if you can. Teach him the secret of quiet laughter.

Let him learn early that the bullies are the easiest to lick. Teach him, if you can, the wonder of books.

But also give him quiet time to ponder the eternal mystery of birds in the sky, bees in the sun, and the flowers on a green hillside.

In the school teach him it is far honorable to fail than to cheat.

Teach him to have faith in his own ideas even if everyone tells him they are wrong. Teach him to be gentle with gentle people and tough with the tough.

Try to give my son the strength not to follow the crowd when everyone is getting on the band wagon.

Teach him to listen to all men.

But teach him also to filter all he hears on a screen of truth and take only the good that comes through.

Teach him if you can, how to laugh when he is sad. Teach him there is no shame in tears.

Teach him to scoff at cynics and to beware of too much sweetness.

Teach him to sell his brawn and brain to the highest bidders but never to put a price-tag on his heart and soul.

Teach him to close his ears to a howling mob and to stand and fight if he thinks he's right

Treat him gently, but do not cuddle him because only the test of fire makes fine steel.

Let him have the courage to be impatient. Let him have the patience to be brave.

Teach him always to have sublime faith in himself because then he will have sublime faith in mankind.

This is a big order, but see what you can do.

He is such a fine fellow, my son!

GLOSSARY

Just: Behaving according to what is morally right and fair

Scoundrel: A dishonest or unscrupulous person; a rogue

Envy: A feeling of discontented or resentful longing aroused by someone else's possessions, qualities, or luck

Bullies: Persons who use strength or influence to harm or intimidate those who are weaker

Lick: Overcome a person or problem decisively

Ponder: Think about something carefully before reaching a decision or conclusion

Eternal mystery: (Here) The profound everlasting quality of natural phenomena

Scoff: Speak to someone in a scornfully derisive or mocking way

Cynic: A person who believes that people are motivated purely by self-interest rather than acting for honourable or unselfish reasons

Beware: To be careful

Brawn and brain: Muscular strength and intelligence

Bidder: A person who offers a price

Howling: Producing a long doleful cry or wailing sound

Mob: A large crowd of people, especially one that is disorderly and intent on causing trouble or violence

Cuddle: Hold close in one's arms as a way of showing love or affection

Fine steel: Pure metal

Bees in the sun: Dance of the bees in the direction of the sun

Honourable: That which is morally right

Bandwagon: An activity or cause that has suddenly become fashionable or popular

Sublime: Producing an overwhelming sense of awe or other high emotion through being vast or grand

COMPREHENSION

A. Answer the following questions choosing from the options that follow.

1. What does Lincoln know that his son has to learn in the opening lines of the letter?
   i. That there are all kinds of people in the world
   ii. All the people in the world are untruthful
   iii. All the people in the world are fair and just
   iv. All the politicians are selfish
2. Which lines in the letter suggest that one should know how to enjoy life quietly?
   i. Teach him the secret of quiet laughter
   ii. Teach him if you can, the wonder of books
   iii. To ponder over the eternal mystery of birds…hillside
   iv. Teach him if you can, how to laugh when he is sad
3. What are the things that Lincoln wants his son to avoid?
   i. Jealousy and Dishonesty ii. Loss and Failure
   iii. Tears and sadness iv. Faith in himself and faith in mankind
4. What does Lincoln want his son to learn in the lines 'Let him learn early that bullies are the easiest to lick'?
   i. To be careful with bullies
   ii. To avoid bullies if he cannot defeat them
   iii. It is easy to get the better of a bully
   iv. One should strike a bully early to get the better of him
5. What are the things that Lincoln wants his son to enjoy in the lines, 'Teach him if you can, the wonder of books…green hillside'?

i. The pleasure of reading books
ii. The pleasure of watching natural objects

iii. The pleasure of watching the birds and bees
iv. All of the above

6. In which lines in the letter does Lincoln talk about people management?
   i. To have faith in his own ideas even if everyone tells him they are wrong
   ii. To be gentle with gentle people and tough with the tough
   iii. The strength not to follow the crowd when everyone is getting in the bandwagon
   iv. Listen to all men but filter what you hear
7. How does Lincoln want the teacher to handle his son?
   i. Gently ii. Harshly iii. Sweetly iv. He is not clear
8. What does Lincoln mean by the line, 'He's a fine fellow, my son'?
   i. That his son is in good health
   ii. That his son is in good company
   iii. That his son is an excellent boy
   iv. He just expresses his affection for his son

B. Answer the following questions in 30–40 words.

1. What does Lincoln want his son to learn about money?
2. Explain how Lincoln wants his son to be independent in his thinking.
3. 'Only the test of fire makes fine steel. Explain the meaning of the line in reference to the letter.
4. How, according to Lincoln, can anyone have great faith in humanity?
5. How does Lincoln acknowledge the difficulty for the teacher in fulfilling Lincoln's expectations for his son?

C. Write short notes on the following in 40–50 words.

1. Lincoln's ideas on the balance of opposites that are found amongst men
2. The quality that might take a long time to teach or learn
3. The eternal mystery
4. Things that a man can/cannot sell

D. Answer in detail in 120–140 words.

1. Lincoln's request to his son's teacher entails the development of a balanced human being. What are the qualities that make for such a balance?
2. You have just read a letter of a loving father to his son's teacher about the kind of man he wants his son to become. Write in your own words what kind of a man/woman you would like to be when you complete your studies and start life on your own.

UNIT 6: The Verger

W Somerset Maugham

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

William Somerset Maugham (pronounced *Mom*), (1874–1965) one of the most prolific and popular writers of his times, was born in the British Embassy in Paris. William's father, Robert Ormond Maugham, a wealthy solicitor, worked for the Embassy in France. By the time he was 10, both William's parents were dead and he was sent to live with his uncle, the Rev. Henry Maugham, in Whitstable, Kent. After an education at King's School, Canterbury, and Heildelberg University in Germany, Maugham became a medical student at St. Thomas Hospital, London. While training to be a doctor, Maugham worked as an obstetric clerk in the slums of Lambeth. He used these experiences to help him write his first novel, *Liza of Lambeth* (1897). The book sold well and he decided to abandon medicine and become a full-time writer. Maugham achieved fame with his play *Lady Frederick* (1907), a comedy about money and marriage. Maugham served in a Red Cross Ambulance unit in France during World War I and subsequently worked in Russia and Switzerland as a secret service agent for Britain's Military Intelligence (MI16) in France. During and after the war, he visited India and many South East Asian countries. Maugham's varied life experiences contributed to his stories, novels, and plays. During the war, Maugham's best-known novel, *Of Human Bondage* (1915) was published. He also wrote *The Moon and Sixpence* (1919). Maugham also wrote many plays and short stories which were adapted to films. Maugham was made a *Companion of Honour* (an order of the Commonwealth) in 1954. In his later years, Maugham wrote his autobiography, *Summing Up* (1938) and works of fiction such as *The Razor's Edge* (1945), *Catalina* (1948), and *Quartet* (1949).

ABOUT THE STORY

In *The Verger*, Maugham narrates the story of Albert Edward Foreman, who

takes great pride in his position of verger in the prestigious St. Peter's Church. He had been a footman and a butler before joining the church. He discharges his duties sincerely and very effectively even though he cannot read or write. The new vicar of the church is shocked on discovering that the verger is illiterate. On declining to learn to read and write within three months, Albert Edward is dismissed from duty. He is deeply saddened by the dismissal but quite providentially he becomes an entrepreneur, running a huge business dealing in tobacco products. His business grows exponentially and he accumulates a large fortune. When he reveals to the bank manager that he is illiterate, the manager is surprised at how he ran a successful business without any formal education. His illiteracy which results in his dismissal from the church, ironically leads him to become a wealthy businessman.

THE VERGER

There had been a christening that afternoon at St. Peter's, Neville Square, and Albert Edward Foreman still wore his verger's gown. He kept his new one, its folds as full and stiff though it were made not of alpaca but of perennial bronze, for funerals and weddings (St. Peter's, Neville Square, was a church much favoured by the fashionable for these ceremonies) and now he wore only his second-best. He wore it with complacence for it was the dignified symbol of his office, and without it (when he took it off to go home) he had the disconcerting sensation of being somewhat insufficiently clad. He took pains with it; he pressed it and ironed it himself. During the sixteen years he had been verger of this church he had had a succession of such gowns, but he had never been able to throw them away when they were worn out and the complete series, neatly wrapped up in brown paper, lay in the bottom drawers of the wardrobe in his bedroom.

The verger busied himself quietly, replacing the painted wooden cover on the marble font, taking away a chair that had been brought for an infirm old lady, and waited for the vicar to have finished in the vestry so that he could tidy up in there and go home. Presently he saw him walk across the chancel, genuflect in front of the high altar and come down the aisle; but he still wore his cassock.

"What's he 'anging about for?" the verger said to himself "Don't 'e know I

want my tea?"

The vicar had been but recently appointed, a red-faced energetic man in the early forties, and Albert Edward still regretted his predecessor, a clergyman of the old school who preached leisurely sermons in a silvery voice and dined out a great deal with his more aristocratic parishioners. He liked things in church to be just so, but he never fussed; he was not like this new man who wanted to have his finger in every pie. But Albert Edward was tolerant. St. Peter's was in a very good neighbourhood and the parishioners were a very nice class of people. The new vicar had come from the East End and he couldn't be expected to fall in all at once with the discreet ways of his fashionable congregation.

"All this 'ustle," said Albert Edward. "But give 'im time, he'll learn."

When the vicar had walked down the aisle so far that he could address the verger without raising his voice more than was becoming in a place of worship he stopped.

"Foreman, will you come into the vestry for a minute. I have something to say to you." "Very good, sir."

The vicar waited for him to come up and they walked up the church together.

"A very nice christening, I thought sir. Funny 'ow the baby stopped cryin' the moment you took him."

"I've noticed they very often do," said the vicar, with a little smile. "After all I've had a good deal of practice with them."

It was a source of subdued pride to him that he could nearly always quiet a whimpering infant by the manner in which he held it and he was not unconscious of the amused admiration with which mothers and nurses watched him settle the baby in the crook of his surpliced arm. The verger knew that it pleased him to be complimented on his talent.

The vicar preceded Albert Edward into the vestry. Albert Edward was a trifle surprised to find the two churchwardens there. He had not seen them come in. They gave him pleasant nods.

"Good afternoon, my lord. Good afternoon, sir," he said to one after the other.

They were elderly men, both of them and they had been churchwardens almost as long as Albert Edward had been verger. They were sitting now at a handsome refectory table that the old vicar had brought many years before

from Italy and the vicar sat down in the vacant chair between them. Albert Edward faced them, the table between him and them and wondered with slight uneasiness what was the matter. He remembered still the occasion on which the organist had got in trouble and the bother they had all had to hush things up. In a church like St. Peter's, Neville Square, they couldn't afford scandal. On the vicar's red face was a look of resolute benignity but the others bore an expression that was slightly troubled.

"He's been naggin' them he 'as," said the verger to himself. "He's jockeyed them into doin' something, but they don't like it. That's what it is, you mark my words."

But his thoughts did not appear on Albert Edward's clean cut and distinguished features. He stood in a respectful but not obsequious attitude. He had been in service before he was appointed to his ecclesiastical office, but only in very good houses, and his deportment was irreproachable. Starting as a page-boy in the household of a merchant-prince he had risen by due degrees from the position of fourth to first footman, for a year he had been single-handed butler to a widowed peeress and, till the vacancy occurred at St. Peter's, butler with two men under him in the house of a retired ambassador. He was tall, spare, grave and dignified. He looked, if not like a duke, at least like an actor of the old school who specialised in dukes' parts. He had tact, firmness and self-assurance. His character was unimpeachable.

The vicar began briskly.

"Foreman, we've got something rather unpleasant to say to you. You've been here a great many years and I think his lordship and the general agree with me that you've fulfilled the duties of your office to the satisfaction of everybody concerned."

The two churchwardens nodded.

"But a most extraordinary circumstance came to my knowledge the other day and I felt it my duty to impart it to the churchwardens. I discovered to my astonishment that you could neither read nor write."

The verger's face betrayed no sign of embarrassment.

"The last vicar knew that, sir," he replied. "He said it didn't make no difference. He always said there was a great deal too much education in the world for 'is taste."

"It's the most amazing thing I ever heard," cried the general. "Do you mean

to say that you've been verger of this church for sixteen years and never learned to read or write?"

"I went into service when I was twelve sir. The cook in the first place tried to teach me once, but I didn't seem to 'ave the knack for it, and then what with one thing and another I never seemed to 'ave the time. I've never really found the want of it. I think a lot of these young fellows waste a rare lot of time readin' when they might be doin' something useful."

"But don't you want to know the news?" said the other churchwarden. "Don't you ever want to write a letter?"

"No, me lord, I seem to manage very well without. And of late years now they've all these pictures in the papers I get to know what's goin' on pretty well. Me wife's quite a scholar and if I want to write a letter she writes it for me. It's not as if I was a bettin' man."

The two churchwardens gave the vicar a troubled glance and then looked down at the table.

"Well, Foreman, I've talked the matter over with these gentlemen and they quite agree with me that the situation is impossible. At a church like St. Peter's Neville Square, we cannot have a verger who can neither read nor write."

Albert Edward's thin, sallow face reddened and he moved uneasily on his feet, but he made no reply.

"Understand me, Foreman, I have no complaint to make against you. You do your work quite satisfactorily; I have the highest opinion both of your character and of your capacity; but we haven't the right to take the risk of some accident that might happen owing to your lamentable ignorance. It's a matter of prudence as well as of principle."

"But couldn't you learn, Foreman?" asked the general.

"No, sir, I'm afraid I couldn't, not now. You see, I'm not as young as I was and if I couldn't seem able to get the letters in me 'ead when I was a nipper I don't think there's much chance of it now."

"We don't want to be harsh with you, Foreman," said the vicar. "But the churchwardens and I have quite made up our minds. We'll give you three months and if at the end of that time you cannot read and write I'm afraid you'll have to go."

Albert Edward had never liked the new vicar. He'd said from the beginning that they'd made a mistake when they gave him St. Peter's. He wasn't the type

of man they wanted with a classy congregation like that. And now he straightened himself a little. He knew his value and he wasn't going to allow himself to be put upon.

"I'm very sorry sir, I'm afraid it's no good. I'm too old a dog to learn new tricks. I've lived a good many years without knowin' 'ow to read and write, and without wishin' to praise myself, self-praise is no recommendation, I don't mind sayin' I've done my duty in that state of life in which it 'as pleased a merciful providence to place me, and if I could learn now I don't know as I'd want to."

"In that case, Foreman, I'm afraid you must go."

"Yes sir, I quite understand. I shall be 'appy to 'and in my resignation as soon as you've found somebody to take my place."

But when Albert Edward with his usual politeness had closed the church door behind the vicar and the two churchwardens he could not sustain the air of unruffled dignity with which he bad borne the blow inflicted upon him and his lips quivered. He walked slowly back to the vestry and hung up on its proper peg his verger's gown. He sighed as he thought of all the grand funerals and smart weddings it had seen. He tidied everything up, put on his coat, and hat in hand walked down the aisle. He locked the church door behind him. He strolled across the square, but deep in his sad thoughts he did not take the street that led him home, where a nice strong cup of tea awaited; he took the wrong turning. He walked slowly along. His heart was heavy. He did not know what he should do with himself. He did not fancy the notion of going back to domestic service; after being his own master for so many years, for the vicar and churchwardens could say what they liked, it was he that had run St. Peter's, Neville Square, he could scarcely demean himself by accepting a situation. He had saved a tidy sum, but not enough to live on without doing something, and life seemed to cost more every year. He had never thought to be troubled with such questions. The vergers of St. Peter's, like the popes Rome, were there for life. He had often thought of the pleasant reference the vicar would make in his sermon at evensong the first Sunday after his death to the long and faithful service, and the exemplary character of their late verger, Albert Edward Foreman. He sighed deeply. Albert Edward was a non-smoker and a total abstainer, but with a certain latitude; that is to say he liked a glass of beer with his dinner and when he was tired he enjoyed a cigarette. It occurred to him now

that one would comfort him and since he did not carry them he looked about him for a shop where he could buy a packet of Gold Flakes. He did not at once see one and walked on a little. It was a long street with all sorts of shops in it, but there was not a single one where you could buy cigarettes.

"That's strange," said Albert Edward.

To make sure he walked right up the street again. No, there was no doubt about it. He stopped and looked reflectively up and down.

"I can't be the only man as walks along this street and wants a fag," he said. "I shouldn't wonder but what a fellow might do very well with a little shop here. Tobacco and sweets, you know."

He gave a sudden start.

"That's an idea," he said. "Strange 'ow things come to you when you least expect it." He turned, walked home, and had his tea.

"You're very silent this afternoon, Albert," his wife remarked. "I'm thinkin'," he said.

He considered the matter from every point of view and next day he went along the street and by good luck found a little shop to let that looked as though it would exactly suit him. Twenty-four hours later he had taken it and when a month after that he left St. Peter's, Neville Square, for ever, Albert Edward Foreman set up in business as a tobacconist and newsagent. His wife said it was a dreadful come-down after being verger of St. Peter's, but he answered that you had to move with the times, the church wasn't what it was, and 'enceforward he was going to render unto Caesar what was Caesar's. Albert Edward did very well. He did so well that in a year or so it struck him that he might take a second shop and put a manager in. He looked for another long street that hadn't got a tobacconist in it and when he found it and a shop to let, took it and stocked it. This was a success too. Then it occurred to him that if he could run two he could run half a dozen, so he began walking about London, and whenever he found a long street that had no tobacconist and a shop to let he took it. In the course of ten years he had acquired no less than ten shops and he was making money hand over fist. He went round to all of them himself every Monday, collected the week's takings and took them to the bank.

One morning when he was there paying in a bundle of notes and a heavy bag of silver the cashier told him that the manager would like to see him. He was shown into an office and the manager shook hands with him.

"Mr. Foreman, I wanted to have a talk to you about the money you've got on deposit with us. D'you know exactly how much it is?"

"Not within a pound or two, sir; but I've got a pretty rough idea."

"Apart from what you paid in this morning it's a little over thirty thousand pounds. That's a very large sum to have on deposit and I should have thought you'd do better to invest it."

"I wouldn't want to take no risk, sir. I know it's safe in the bank."

"You needn't have the least anxiety. We'll make you out a list of absolutely gilt-edged securities. They'll bring you in a better rate of interest than we can possibly afford to give you."

A troubled look settled on Mr. Foreman's distinguished face. "I've never 'ad anything to do with stocks and shares and I'd 'ave to leave it all in your 'ands," he said.

The manager smiled. "We'll do everything. All you'll have to do next time you come in is just to sign the transfers."

"I could do that all right", said Albert uncertainly. "But 'ow should I know what I was signin'?"

"I suppose you can read," said the manager a trifle sharply. Mr. Foreman gave him a disarming smile.

"Well, sir, that's just it. I can't. I know it sounds funny-like but there it is, I can't read or write, only me name, an' I only learnt to do that when I went into business."

The manager was so surprised that he jumped up from his chair. "That's the most extraordinary thing I ever heard."

"You see it's like this, sir, I never 'ad the opportunity until it was too late and then some'ow I wouldn't. I got obstinate-like."

The manager stared at him as though he were a prehistoric monster.

"And do you mean to say that you've built up this important business and amassed a fortune of thirty thousand pounds without being able to read or write? Good God, man, what would you be now if you had been able to?"

"I can tell you that sir," said Mr. Foreman, a little smile on his still aristocratic features. "I'd be verger of St. Peter's, Neville Square."

GLOSSARY

Verger: An official in a church who acts as a caretaker and attendant

Christening: A Christian ceremony at which a baby is christened; a baptism

Alpaca: The wool of a South American mammal called alpaca

Perennial: Everlasting

Bronze: A yellowish-brown alloy of copper with up to one-third tin

Complacence: A feeling of smug or uncritical satisfaction with oneself or one's achievements

Disconcerting: Causing one to feel unsettled

Wardrobe: A large, tall cupboard in which clothes may be hung or stored

Aristocratic: Of or belonging to the aristocracy (the highest class in certain societies typically comprising persons of noble birth and holding hereditary titles or offices)

Parishioner: An inhabitant of a particular church parish, especially one who is a regular churchgoer

Discreet: Careful and prudent in one's speech or actions, especially in order to keep something confidential or to avoid embarrassment

Congregation: A group of people assembled for religious worship

Refectory: A room used for communal meals in an educational or religious institution

Resolute: Admirably purposeful,

Vicar: A representative or a deputy of a bishop

Vestry: A room or building attached to a church, used as an office and for changing into ceremonial vestments

Chancel: The part of a church near the altar, reserved for the clergy and choir

Genuflect: Lower one's body briefly by bending one knee to the ground, typically in worship or as a sign of respect

Aisle: A passage between rows of seats in a building such as a church or theatre, an aircraft, or train

Cassock: A full-length garment worn by certain Christian clergy, members of church choirs, and others having an office or role in a church.

Deportment: The way a person stands and walks, particularly as an element of etiquette

Irreproachable: Beyond criticism; faultless

Unimpeachable: Not able to be doubted, questioned, or criticized; entirely trustworthy

Sallow: (Of a person's face or complexion) Of an unhealthy yellow or pale brown colour

Nipper: (Informal) A child

Providence: The protective care of God or of nature as a spiritual power

Unruffled: Not disordered or disarranged

determined, and unwavering

Benignity: Gentle and kind manner

Jockeyed: Handle or manipulate (something or someone) in a skillful manner

Ecclesiastical: Relating to the Christian church or its clergy

Inflict: Cause (something unpleasant or painful) to be suffered by someone or something

Exemplary: Serving as a desirable model; very good

Latitude: Scope for freedom of action or thought

Gilt-edged: Relating to or denoting stocks or securities (such as gilts) that are regarded as extremely reliable investments

COMPREHENSION

A. Answer the following questions choosing from the options that follow.

1. What was the occupation of Albert Edward Foreman?

   i. A church warden ii. A verger iii. A foreman iv. A vicar

2. What was the distinguishing feature of St. Peter's church, Neville Square?

   i. It was in the centre of London

   ii. It was attended by the aristocratic and fashionable people of London

   iii. Albert Edward Foreman was the verger

   iv. It was an ancient church

3. What did Albert Edward do with his new verger's gown?

   i. He wore it after his old one got worn out

   ii. He wrapped it neatly and put it in the bottom drawer of his wardrobe

   iii. He wore it for christening ceremonies

   iv. He reserved it for weddings and funerals

4. Why was the verger in a hurry to go home on the evening of the christening ceremony?

   i. He had to wash and iron his gowns

   ii. He had to tidy up the vestry

   iii. He had to go for a walk with the vicar

   iv. He was looking forward to his tea at home

5. Why did the vicar remain at the church long after the christening ceremony?
    i. He was walking down the aisle for a long time
    ii. He wanted to discuss the christening ceremony with the verger
    iii. He wanted to have his finger in every pie
    iv. He was preparing to say something unpleasant to the verger
6. What was it that the verger knew that made the vicar happy?
    i. To be praised for his talent in quietening a child
    ii. To hold an infant in his arms
    iii. The admiration of mothers and nurses
    iv. To have a lot of practice with babies
7. The new vicar was shocked to discover that Albert Edward
    i. Was the verger of St. Peter's for 16 years
    ii. Started working at the age of 12
    iii. Could not read or write
    iv. Was a butler before joining the church
8. Why did the church wardens look troubled according to the verger?
    i. They were elderly men and they were exhausted
    ii. The organist at St. Peter's had got into trouble and they had to hush things up
    iii. They were manipulated by the vicar to do something against their wishes
    iv. They were unhappy because Albert Edward could not read or write
9. What did Albert Edward's wife think of his new profession?
    i. She was happy that he earned a lot of money
    ii. She was unsure if it was the right thing to do
    iii. She thought it was a decline to a lower status
    iv. She was indifferent to his decision
10. Why did the manager of the bank suggest to Albert Edward that he should invest his money?
    i. Albert Edward did not know how to read and write
    ii. He had a large sum of money and it was not safe in the bank
    iii. He did not want to take a risk
    iv. The bank gave him a low rate of interest
11. The manager of the bank was surprised that Albert Edward could not

read or write. So was the vicar of St. Peter's church. What was the difference?

i. The vicar thought that Albert Edward was unfit to work because he was illiterate but the bank manager thought that his achievement was amazing

ii. Both the vicar and the bank manager wished that Albert Edward was literate for different reasons

iii. Both acknowledged that Albert Edward was a talented man but the vicar was jealous of him

iv. The bank manager condemned him whereas the vicar was gentle and kind

B. Answer the following questions in 30–40 words:

1. What was the old vicar's view about Albert Edward's illiteracy?
2. Find reasons from the story to show that Albert Edward's illiteracy did not affect his work at the church as a verger.
3. What choices did Albert Edward have after leaving the church?
4. Did he expect to leave service? Why/why not?
5. What was the strange thing that the verger noticed about the street that he walked on? What idea did he get as a result?

C. Write short notes on the following in 40–50 words.

1. The importance of the verger's gown for Albert Edward.
2. The character of the old vicar at St. Peter's church.
3. Albert Edward's sense of pride in his position of verger at St. Peter's church.
4. Albert Edward's reluctance to learn to read or write.
5. Albert Edward's tobacco business.

D. Answer in detail in 120–140 words.

1. Describe the life and character of Albert Edward Foreman in your own words.
2. *Irony* is a literary technique used by writers when the character in a work makes a statement which might have an implied meaning or layers of meanings understood by the audience but not by the characters. Read the dialogue at the end of the story between the manager of the bank and Albert Edward and discuss the use of irony in the story.

UNIT 7: A Day's Wait

Ernest Miller Hemingway

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Ernest Miller Hemingway (1899–1961) was born in Illinois, USA. At an early age, he became a reporter, and in the First World War, served in the Red Cross with the Italian army. His first novel, *The Sun also Rises* was published in 1926. Based on his war experience, he wrote one of the best war books of all time, *A Farewell to Arms* (1929). In 1936, he went to Spain as a special correspondent to report on the Civil War; and in 1940 published another magnificent war book based on his experience in Spain, *For Whom the Bell Tolls.* In 1954, he won the Nobel Prize for his novel *The Old Man and the Sea.* Hemingway is one of the most widely read authors of modern times. His style is stark, tough, and dramatic. He has also written a number of stories collected under the titles, *Men without Women*, *Winner Takes Nothing,* and *The First Forty-Nine.*

ABOUT THE STORY

A Day's Wait is a brief engaging tale of a boy who thought he was going to die. The story reveals Hemingway's art in holding the reader's attention, even when the subject is as simple as the mistaken notion of a young child. The story is a delightful peek into a young child's mind, which is unable to comprehend the complexities of different (and often unnecessary) standards of measurements devised by adults. A mere misunderstanding about the Fahrenheit and Celsius scales of measuring temperature forces the young boy to spend an entire day in agony, fearing that he is going to die.

A DAY'S WAIT

He came into the room to shut the windows while we were still in bed and I saw he looked ill. He was shivering, his face was white, and he walked slowly

as though it ached to move.

"What's the matter, Schatz?" "I've got a headache."

"You better go back to bed." "No, I'm all right."

"You go to bed. I'll see you when I'm dressed."

But when I came downstairs he was dressed, sitting by the fire, looking a very sick and miserable boy of nine years. When I put my hand on his forehead I knew he had a fever.

"You go up to bed", I said, "you're sick." "I'm all right," he said.

When the doctor came he took the boy's temperature. "What is it?" I asked him.

"One hundred and two."

Downstairs, the doctor left three different medicines in different coloured capsules with instructions for giving them. One was to bring down the fever, another a purgative, the third to overcome an acid condition. The germs of influenza can only exist in an acid condition, he explained. He seemed to know all about influenza and said there was nothing to worry about if the fever did not go above one hundred and four degrees. This was a light epidemic of flu and there was no danger if you avoided pneumonia.

Back in the room I wrote the boy's temperature down and made a note of the time to give the various capsules.

"Do you want me to read to you?"

"All right. If you want to", said the boy. His face was very white and there were dark areas under his eyes. He lay still in the bed and seemed very detached from what was going on.

I read aloud from Howard Pyle's *Book of Pirates*; but I could see he was not following what I was reading.

"How do you feel, Schatz?" I asked him. "Just the same, so far", he said.

I sat at the foot of the bed and read to myself while I waited for it to be time to give another capsule. It would have been natural for him to go to sleep, but when I looked up he was looking at the foot of the bed, looking very strangely.

"Why don't you try to go to sleep? I'll wake you up for the medicine." "I'd rather stay awake."

After a while he said to me, "You don't have to stay in here with me, Papa, if it bothers you."

"It doesn't bother me."

"No, I mean you don't have to stay if it's going to bother you."

I thought perhaps he was a little light-headed and after giving him the prescribed capsules at eleven o'clock I went out for a while.

It was a bright, cold day, the ground covered with a sleet that had frozen so that it seemed as if all the bare trees, the bushes, the cut brush and all the grass and the bare ground had been varnished with ice. I took the young Irish Setter for a little walk up the road along a frozen creek, but it was difficult to stand or walk on the glassy surface and the red dog slipped and slithered and I fell twice, hard, once dropping my gun and having it slide away over the ice.

We flushed a covey of quail under a high clay bank with overhanging brush and I killed two as they went out of sight over the top of the bank. Some of the covey lit in trees, but most of them scattered into brush piles and it was necessary to jump on the ice-coated mounds of brush several times before they would flush. Coming out while you were poised unsteadily on the icy, springy brush they made difficult shooting and I killed two, missed five, and started back pleased to have found a covey close to the house and happy there were so many left to find on another day.

At the house they said the boy had refused to let anyone come into the room. "You can't come", he said, "You mustn't get what I have."

I went up to him and found him in exactly the position I had left him, white-faced, but with the tops of his cheeks flushed by the fever, staring still, as he had stared, at the foot of the bed.

I took his temperature. "What is it?"

"Something like a hundred", I said. It was one hundred and two and four tenths. "It was a hundred and two", he said.

"Who said so?" "The doctor."

"Your temperature is all right", I said. "It's nothing to worry about." "I don't worry", he said, "but I can't keep from thinking."

"Don't think", I said, "Just take it easy."

"I'm taking it easy", he said and looked straight ahead.

He was evidently holding tight on to himself about something. "Take this with water."

"Do you think it will do any good?" "Of course it will."

I sat down and opened the *Pirate* book and commenced to read, but I could see he was not following, so I stopped.

"About what time do you think I'm going to die?" he asked. "What?"

"About how long will it be before I die?"

"You aren't going to die. What's the matter with you?" "Oh, yes, I am, I heard him say a hundred and two."

"People don't die with a fever of one hundred and two. That's a silly way to talk."

"I know they do. At school in France the boys told me you can't live with forty-four degrees. I've got a hundred and two."

He had been waiting to die all day, ever since nine o'clock in the morning.

"You poor Schatz", I said. "Poor old Schatz. It's like miles and kilometers. You aren't going to die. That's a different thermometer. On that thermometer thirty-seven is normal. On this kind it's ninety-eight.

"Are you sure?"

"Absolutely", I said. "It's like miles and kilometers. You know, like how many kilometers we make when we do seventy miles in the car?"

"Oh", he said.

But his gaze at the foot of the bed relaxed slowly. The hold over himself relaxed too, finally, and the next day it was very slack and he cried very easily at little things that were of no importance.

GLOSSARY

Shivering: Trembling (here, perhaps from fear)
Capsule: Shell or container with medicine
Purgative: Substance having the power to cleanse the bowels
Acid condition: (Here) Having more than normal amount of acid in the stomach
Epidemic: A widespread outbreak of a disease affecting many people
Pirate: Robber who loots and attacks ships
Irish Setter: A breed of dog trained as a gun dog
Creek: Narrow inlet of water
Flush: Become red
Covey: Small flock of birds
Quail: Small bird
Take it easy: (Here) Don't worry
Holding tight onto himself: (Here) Trying to hide a secret
Poised: Balanced
Hold over himself: Refers to the way Schatz was controlling his tension
Slithered: Slipped unsteadily

Bother: Cause trouble or worry
Light-headed: Dizzy
Sleet: Falling snow or hail

COMPREHENSION

A. Answer the following questions, choosing from the options below.

1. Ernest Hemingway won the Nobel Prize for the book
   i. *A Farewell to Arms* ii. *The Old Man and the Sea*
   iii. *The First Forty-Nine* iv. *For Whom the Bell Tolls*
2. Where did Schatz go first when he felt unwell?
   i. To the fireside ii. Downstairs
   iii. To his parents' room iv. To the doctor's place
3. What was the narrator's relationship with the boy?
   i. He was the boy's teacher ii. He was the boy's father
   iii. He was the doctor iv. It is not clear from the story
4. How did the narrator know that Schatz had fever?
   i. He took his temperature ii. Schatz told him
   iii. By touching Schatz's forehead iv. The doctor told him
5. What did the doctor say about the germs of influenza?
   i. The germs can overcome an acid condition
   ii. The germs do not exist in an acid condition
   iii. The germs can only exist in an acid condition
   iv. The germs were dangerous

F. What did the narrator do after giving Schatz his capsules at eleven o'clock?
   i. He went to his room ii. He went out
   iii. He went to the doctor iv. He stayed with Schatz

7. Why did the boy refuse to let anyone into his room?
   i. He was sulking ii. He was waiting for his father
   iii. He didn't want anyone to get what he had iv. He was reading a book
8. What was Schatz waiting for since nine o'clock in the morning?
   i. For purgatives to have an effect ii. To finish the book on pirates
   iii. To die iv. To go to the hospital

B. Answer the following questions in 30–40 words.

1. What did the narrator try to do to entertain the boy? Did it help?

2. What did the narrator do when he went outdoors?
3. What was Schatz afraid of? Were his fears justified?
4. 'I'd rather stay awake.' Why do you think the boy said this?
5. 'It's like miles and kilometers.' What does the narrator talk about?

C. Write short notes on the following in about 40–50 words.

1. Significance of the title of the story.
2. Schatz's father.
4. Schatz's character.
5. Schatz's state of mind.

D. Answer in detail in 120–140 words.

Imagine you are Schatz and that you are writing to a friend about the mistake you made about the thermometers. Describe your experience in your own words, including details about how you felt.

E. Language in Use

1. Fill in the blanks with the appropriate verb from the given words.
   a. When the doctor came, he _____ the boy's temperature. (gave, took, undertook)
   b. The doctor gave three medicines, of which one was to _____ down the fever. (brought, climb, bring)
   c. I could see he was not following what I _____. (am reading, was reading, have been reading)
   d. He had _____ to die all day. (wait, was waiting, been waiting)
2. Give the antonyms of the following words:
   a. Detached
   b. Commence
   c. Importance
   d. Silly
3. Fill in the blanks with the correct preposition from the given words.
   a. The boy had dark areas _____ his eyes. (over, above, under)
   b. I read aloud _____ Howard Pyle's *Book of Pirates.* (with, from, along)

c. I will wake you up _____ the medicines. (for, before, upon)
d. The doctor said that there was nothing to worry _____ . (upon, about, on)

4. Pick out words from the text that match the description given below.
   a. Feeling very gloomy
   b. Advised dosage of medicine by a doctor
   c. Cause trouble
   d. Become red

UNIT 8: The Kid

Charlie Chaplin

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Charles Spencer Chaplin (1889–1978) was born in London, England. He was a comedy British actor who became one of the biggest stars of the 20th century's silent-film era. His father was a versatile vocalist and actor; and his mother Lily Harley, had gained a reputation for her work in the light opera field. Charlie was thrown on his own resources before he reached the age of 10 due to the early death of his father and the illness of his mother. When he was about 12, he got his first chance to act in a legitimate stage show, and appeared as 'Billy', the page boy, in *Sherlock Holmes*. Chaplin started a career as a comedian in vaudeville, which eventually took him to the United States in 1910. He scored an immediate hit with American audiences. He became a worldwide icon through his screen persona, *The Tramp*. His career spanned more than 75 years, and encompassed both respect and controversy. His first feature length picture was *The Kid* (1921), followed by *A Woman of Paris* (1923), *The Gold Rush* (1925), and *The Circus* (1928). He refused to move to sound films in the 1930s, instead producing *City Lights* (1931) and *Modern Times* (1936) without dialogue. Chaplin became increasingly political and his next film, *The Great Dictator* (1940), satirised Adolf Hitler. Chaplin wrote, directed, produced, edited, scored, and starred in most of his films. He was a perfectionist; and films are characterised by slapstick combined with pathos, and often feature the Tramp struggling against hardship. Many contain social and political themes, as well as autobiographical elements. In 1972, as part of a renewed appreciation for his work, Chaplin received an Honorary Academy Award. A British citizen, he was domiciled in Switzerland from 1953.

ABOUT THE ARTICLE

'The Kid' is an interesting chapter from Chaplin's own life story entitled *My Autobiography.* He writes how a new idea of a movie struck him. It is the story of the tramp or window-mender, and the little kid going around the streets breaking windows, and the tramp coming by and mending them. The kid and the tramp living together having all sorts of adventures has inimitable charm. He writes how he made the discovery of the kid in Jackie Coogan. Incidentally, a few hints on acting and Chaplin's success story are also seen in the extract.

THE KID

After 'Sunnyside' I was at my wits' end for an idea. It was a relief in this state of despair to go to the Orpheum for distraction, and in this state of mind I saw an eccentric dancer-nothing extraordinary, but at the finish of his act he brought on his little boy, an infant of four, to take a bow with him. After bowing with his father, he suddenly broke into a few amusing steps, then looked knowingly at the audience, waved to them and ran off. The audience went into an uproar, so that the child was made to come on again, this time doing quite a different dance. It could have been obnoxious in another child. But Jackie Coogan was charming and the audience thoroughly enjoyed it. Whatever he did, the little fellow had an engaging personality.

I did not think of him again until a week later when I sat on the open stage with our stock company, still struggling to get an idea for the next picture. In those days I would often sit before theta, because their presence and reactions were a stimulus. That day I was bogged down and listless and in spite of their polite smiles I knew my efforts were tame. My mind wandered, and I talked about the acts I had seen playing at the Orpheum and about the little boy, Jackie Coogan, who came on and bowed with his father.

Someone said that he had read in the morning paper that Jackie Coogan had been signed up by Roscoe Arbuckle for a film. The news struck me like fork-lightning.'My God! Why didn't I think of that?' Of course he would be marvellous in Elms! Then I went on to enumerate his possibilities, the gags and the stories I could do with him.

Ideas flew at me. 'Can you imagine the tramp a window mender, and the

little kid going around the streets breaking windows, and the tramp coming by and mending them? The charm of the kid and the tramp living together, having all sorts of adventures!'

I sat and wasted a whole day elaborating on the story, describing one scene after another, while the cast looked askance, wondering why I was waking so enthusiastic over a lost cause. For hours I went on inventing business and situations. Then I suddenly remembered: 'But what's the use? Arbuckle has signed him up and probably has ideas similar to mine. What an idiot I was not to have thought of it before!'

All that afternoon and all that night I could think of nothing but the possibilities of a story with that boy. The next morning, in a state of depression, I called the company of rehearsals-

God knows for what reason, for I had nothing to rehearse, so I sat around with the cast on the stage in a state of mental doldrums.

Someone suggested that I should try and find another boy-perhaps a little Negro. But I shook my head dubiously. It would be hard to find a kid with as much personality as Jackie.

About eleven-thirty, Carlisle Robinson, our publicity man, came hurrying on to the stage, breathless and excited 'It's not Jackie Coogan that Arbuckle's signed up, it's the father, Jack Coogan!'

I leaped out of my chair. 'Quick! Get the father on the phone and tell hire to come here at once! It's very important!'

The news electrified us all. Some of the cast came up and slapped me on the back, they were so enthused. When the office heard about it, they came on to the stage and congratulated me. But I had not signed Jackie yet; there was still a possibility that Arbuckle might suddenly get the same notion. So I told Robinson to be cautious what he said over the phone, not to mention anything about the kid—'not even to the father until he gets here; just tell him it's very urgent, that we must see him at once within the next half-hour. And if he can't get away, then go to his studio. But tell him nothing until he gets here.' They had difficulty finding the father—he was not at the studio—and for two hours I was in excruciating suspense.

At last, surprised and bewildered, Jackie's father showed up. I grabbed him by the arms. 'He'll he a sensation—the greatest thing that ever happened! All he has to make is this one picture!' I went on raving in this inarticulate way. He

must have thought I was insane, 'This story will give your son the opportunity of his life!'

'My son?'

'Yes, your son, if you will let me have him for this one picture.' 'Why, of course you can have the little punk,' he said.

They say babies and dogs are the best actors in movie. Put a twelve-month-old baby in a bath-tub with a tablet of soap, and when he tries to pick it up he will create a riot of laughter. All children in some form or another have genius; the trick is to bring it out in them. With Jackie it was easy. There were a few basic rules to learn in pantomime and Jackie very soon mastered them. He could apply emotion to the action and action to the emotion and could repeat it time and time again without losing the effect of spontaneity.

There is a scene in 'The Kid' where the boy is about to throw a stone at a window. A policeman steals up behind him, and, as he brings his hand back to throw, it touches the policeman's coat. He looks up at the policeman, then playfully tosses the stone up and catches it, then innocently throws it away and ambles off, suddenly bursting into a sprint.

Having worked out the mechanics of the scene, I told Jackie to watch me, emphasizing the points; 'You have a stone; then you look at the window; then you prepare to throw the stone; you bring your hand back, but you feel the policeman's coat, you feel his buttons, then you look up and discover it's a policeman; you throw the stone playfully in the air, then throw it away, and casually walk off, suddenly bursting into a sprint.'

He rehearsed the scene three or four times. Eventually he was so sure of the mechanics that his emotion came with them. In other words, the mechanics induced the emotion. The scene was one of Jackie's best, and was one of the high spots in the picture.

Of course, not all the scenes were as easily accomplished. The simpler ones often gave him trouble, as simple scenes do. I once wanted him to swing naturally on a door, but, having nothing else on his mind, he became self-conscious so we gave it up.

It is difficult to act naturally if no activity is going on in the mind. Listening on the stage is difficult; the amateur is inclined to be over-attentive. As long as Jackie's mind was at work, he was superb.

Jackie's father's contract with Arbuckle soon terminated, so he was able to

be at our studio with his son, and later played the pickpocket in the flop-house scene. He was very helpful at times. There was a scene in which we wanted Jackie to actually cry when two workhouse officials take him away from me. I told him all sorts of harrowing stories, but Jackie was in a very gay and mischievous mood. After waiting for an hour, the father said: 'I'll make him cry.'

'Don't frighten or hurt the boy,' I said guiltily. 'Oh, no, no,' said the father.

Jackie was in such a gay mood that I had not the courage to stay and watch what the father would do, so I went to my dressing-room. A few moments later I heard Jackie yelling and crying.

'He's all ready,' said the father.

It was a scene where I rescue the boy from the work-house officials and while he is weeping I hug and kiss him. When it was over I asked the father: 'How did you get him to cry?'

'I just told him that if he did not, we'd take him away from the studio and really send him to the workhouse.'

I turned to Jackie and picked him up in my arms to console him. His cheeks were still wet with tears. 'They're not going to take you away,' I said.

'I knew it,' he whispered. 'Daddy was only fooling.'

GLOSSARY

At my (one's) wit's end: Greatly upset, not knowing what to do next

Orpheum: A theatre in Los Angeles

Eccentric: Peculiar behaviour

Obnoxious: Very unpleasant, disagreeable, nasty

Sign up: Sign an agreement about employment

Gags: Actor's interpolations into his part; jokes

To wax enthusiastic over: To speak excitedly on

A lost cause: Cause that has already

An engaging personality: An attractive person (not necessarily physically).

Stimulus: (Here) Anything that rouses to activity

Bogged down: Pulled down

Showed up: Appeared

The opportunity of one's life: The best chance in life

Punk: Wretch

Pantomime: A dramatic performance based on a fairy tale.

Amble off: Move with slow steps.

been defeated or is sure to be defeated

In mental doldrums: In low spirits; depressed

Dubiously: To feel doubtful or uncertain

Excruciating: Extremely severe

Amateur: One who engages in a pursuit, especially a sport, on an unpaid basis

Flop-house: Lodging-house where a bed can be had for a night

Harrowing: Distressing

COMPREHENSION

A. Answer the following questions choosing from the options that follow.

1. Charlie Chaplin started a career as a _____in vaudeville.
   i. Satirist ii. Clown iii. Comedian iv. Tramp
2. Chaplin's first feature length picture was
   i. *The Kid* ii. *A Woman of Paris*
   iii. *The Gold Rush* iv. *The Circus*
3. *The Great Dictator* satirises
   i. Mussolini ii. Saddam Hussein
   iii. Hitler iv. Idi Amin
4. *The Kid* is a story of a
   i. Policeman and a kid ii. A kid and an orphanage
   iii. A kid and a tramp iv. A tramp and a window-mendor
5. Where did Chaplin discover the child artist for 'The Kid'?
   i. In a movie he saw ii. In a local theatre
   iii. In a circus iv. In the Orpheum theatre
6. The name of the child artist in 'The Kid' was
   i. Arbuckle ii. Carlisle Robinson
   iii. Jackie Coogan iv. Jack Coogan
7. In the article, what word best describes 'very unpleasant'?
   i. Doldrums ii. Obnoxious
   iii. Eccentric iv. Tramp
8. Who was able to change the mood of the child artist from gay and cheerful to sad for a critical scene in the movie?
   i. Helper of the child ii. Robinson
   iii. Father of the child iv. Chaplin

B. Answer the following questions in about 30–40 words.

1. What discovery of Jackie Coogan's abilities did Chaplin make at the Orpheum?
2. Why did Chaplin sit before his stock company often?
3. Who is Roscoe Arbuckle and how was he a rival of Chaplin?
4. What was the news brought by the publicity man that electrified Chaplin and his company?
5. What was Jackie's father's reaction to the offer of a film role to his son?

C. Write short notes on the following in 40–50 words.

1. What was the idea behind a new picture featuring four-year-old Jackie Coogan and what were its possibilities?
2. How did Jackie react to his new job?
3. Why couldn't Chaplin shoot Jackie's swing on a door?
4. What part was played by Jackie's father in the flop-house scene and how did it help his son?

D. Answer in detail in 100–120 words.

1. Narrate Chaplin's making of 'The Kid' and the reason for his success.
2. Narrate the scene of the kid with the policeman and how Jackie was asked to play it.