

Resonance - I

I Semester B.A / B.S.W / B.A. (Music)



Editor :

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**PRASARANGA
BENGALURU CENTRAL UNIVERSITY (BCU)
Bengaluru.**

RESONANCE - I: General English Textbook for I Semester B.A./B.S.W./ B.A.(Music) and other courses coming under Faculty of Arts, is prepared by the Members of the Textbook Committee, Bengaluru Central University (BCU).

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FOREWORD

RESONANCE – I General English Text Book for I Semester B.A/ B.S.W/B.A.(Music) and other courses coming under Faculty of Arts, Bengaluru Central University (BCU) has been designed with the dual-objective of inducing literary sensibility and developing linguistic skills in students. Both of these have been combined in a single text instead of two separate texts. This is the first General English Text Book for Undergraduate students of BCU, Bengaluru, prepared by the Members of the Textbook Committee.

I congratulate the Text Book Committee on its efforts in the preparation of the material, which includes a variety of literary pieces and workbook for honing language skills. I thank the Director of Bengaluru Central University Press and their personnel for bringing out the textbook neatly and on time.

I hope the text will motivate the teachers and the students to make the best use of it and develop literary sensibility as well as linguistic skills.

Prof. S. Japhet
Vice-Chancellor
Bengaluru Central University
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PREFACE

The General English Course book for I Semester B.A., RESONANCE-I, introduces undergraduate students to a spectacular kaleidoscope of literary selections that cover a wide range of subjects and issues. These model pieces of writing cast in different genres and forms are meant not only to cultivate literary sensibilities in students but also to sensitise them to social concerns. It is assumed that the thinking practices and extended activities incorporated as part of every lesson-plan would help students interpret literature as a form of cultural expression.

The Course book has two parts: Part I comprises the literary component; Part II concentrates on language. The language section is designed to perfect and hone the soft skills of students pertaining to effective verbal expression and communication.

It is hoped that students would make the best use of the present anthology and understand the importance of acquiring fine language skills while engaging with a verbal medium like literature.

I would like to thank Poornima.P.S, the Chairperson and her team of teachers, who have put in all their time and effort into the realisation of this textbook. I thank the Vice Chancellor Central University for their consistent support. I also thank the publisher, who helped us bring out the book on time.

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NOTE TO THE TEACHER

The General English Text Book prescribed for the courses coming under the faculty of arts is aimed at exposing the students to various genres. In the process, care is taken to ensure to sensitize the students on current issues. Some of the literary pieces do demand deeper insights. However, the committee felt that it is high time, the students make an attempt to understand and enjoy the same. Certain literary pieces have subtle sensibilities which the students may fail to understand on their own. In such cases, the teachers should guide them which will enable the comprehension in the ensuing semesters.

OBJECTIVES OF THE B.A. STREAM SYLLABUS

1. To reinforce the knowledge of basic grammar.
2. To improve the competencies of correct expression.
3. To introduce various genres like stories, essays, poems, plays and novellas.
4. To acquaint students with film scripts.
5. To motivate students to attempt creative writing.
6. To train students to improve their spoken English and presentation skills.
7. To teach writing of film/drama reviews.

The grammar section follows the literary section. It begins with the basic components to reinforce what has been learnt already. This enables one to go to the advance level later on. In the following semesters, other components which are of practical importance in their day-today affairs will be dealt with. Question-tags, Letters of suggestion are introduced in the first semester. Both the components (literature and grammar) will certainly help the students to analyse the word play and the sensibilities which they need to explore as students of Humanities. The careers related to humanities do demand critical analysis of what they study in their under-graduation course: editing, film reviewing, film-script writing, and creative writing to mention a few. Therefore, it is hoped that the syllabi will hone many of their skills by the end of their under graduate programme. At the end of the text a page is

dedicated to each lesson where in the teachers are requested to give the gist of each lesson. This kind of exercise is felt to be of immense help to language students. The teacher should instruct the students to develop the gist further. Another option is to give the important details of the lesson in the manner of guided composition and allow the students to develop into a full length answer, thereby the teachers can make their students self-reliant. There is a change in the allotment of Internal Assessment marks. Teachers are requested to pay attention to the same given at the end of Model Question Paper.

Poornima. P.S.

Chairperson,
Text Book Committee
BCU, Bengaluru.

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1. VACHANAS OF AKKAMAHADEVI AND SATYAKKA

Translated by: *Dr. C.R. Yaravintelimath.*

Pre-reading Activity:

- *Women are capable of achieving great heights. Discuss.*
- *What is Mysticism? Name some women who reached mystic heights.*

Note on the Author:



Akkamahadevi: (1130–1160) was one of the early women poets of the Kannada language and a prominent personality in the 12th century. Her Vachanas, Mantragopya and the Yogangatrividhi are considered the most notable contributions to Kannada literature. She achieved the height of mysticism, and raised her voice against patriarchy, monarchy, rigid customs

and traditions. She rejected the institution of marriage and accepted the immortal, Omnipresent Lord Chennamallikarjuna as her husband thereby conforming to '*bridal mysticism*', a concept of Bhakti Movement. The intensity of emotion, the difficulties she faces and her longing for Chennamallikarjuna, are the recurring themes.

The Vachana depicts how the poet accepts the immortal Lord as her husband.

*I loved a handsome youth,
Formless, deathless and beyond destruction.
I loved a handsome youth,
Placeless, infinite, entire
And without a sign, O mothers!
I loved a handsome youth,
Who is birthless and fearless and bold,
I loved a youth
Who being boundless is immeasurable.
O Mothers, I loved my husband
Chennamallikarjuna passionately!*

Note on the Author:

Satyakka: (12th Century) was from Hirejamburu near Shiralakoppa of Shimoga district. Hailing from a humble background of a sweeper family, a Dalit woman writer was able to rise to the status of sainthood. It was because of the 12th century Bhakti Movement which gave the right to freedom of expression and equal status to women in the society.

Twenty seven of her Vachanas have been found with the signature, Shambu Jakkeshvara. Apart from the supremacy of Lord Shiva, she focuses on gender equality.

The Vachana is about the formless immortal Lord and the realisation of one's inner-self (ಅಲವೇ ರುರು).

*Thinking that he is outside I talked foolishly.
He lives in my heart Without letting me know it.
I cannot describe the unborn,
Who is everywhere?
I lost my heart in his void.
What shall I do, O mother, O mother,
If I forget, my formless husband reminds me?
Our Sambhu Jakkeshvara
Is good to those who know Him.*

Glossary:

formless	: without a clear or definite shape or structure. Here the abstract God
everywhere	: in various forms of flora and fauna, in every creature
deathless	: eternal
Lord Chennamallikarjuna	: Akkamahadevi's tutelary deity and her signature
Sambhu Jakkeshvara	: presiding deity of Satyakka's native place, Hirejamburu and her signature

Comprehension Questions:**I Answer the following questions in a sentence or two each:**

1. Who is the 'handsome youth' in Akka's Vachana?
2. Why does Akka call him formless and deathless?
3. Who is the 'I' referred to in Satyakka's Vachana?
4. Who does Satyakka refer to as 'the formless'?
5. Why is Satyakka unable to describe the Lord?
6. What does the formless husband of Satyakka remind her of?

II Answer the following questions in about a page each:

1. How does Akkamahadevi express her feelings about her eternal, formless husband?
2. Write about Satyakka's views on the Lord Shiva.

III Answer the following questions in about two pages each:

1. Compare and contrast the concepts of the two Vachanas.
2. The Vachanas exhibit the single-minded devotion to Lord Shiva. Elaborate.
3. The Lord is Omnipresent and formless. Do you agree? Discuss.

2. NINE GOLD MEDALS

- David Roth

Pre-reading Activity:

- *What according to you is sporting spirit?*
- *Compare your opinion at the end of the poem with the opinion you had in the beginning.*

Note on the Author:



David Lee Roth (October 10, 1954) is an American rock vocalist, musician, songwriter, actor, author, and former radio personality. Roth is best known as the original and current lead singer of hard rock band, Van Halen. He is a successful solo artist, releasing numerous RIAA-certified Gold and Platinum albums. In 2012, Roth and Van Halen released the comeback album 'A Different Kind of Truth'. In 2007, he was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame as a member of Van Halen. His autobiography is titled 'Crazy from the Heat'.

Nine Gold Medals is said to be based on a real incident where two athletes helped the fellow athletes who had fallen down. The poem celebrates the spirit of care and compassion, draws our attention to the humane quality of selflessness and conveys the message of co-operation and collaboration.

*The athletes had come from so many countries
to run for the gold and the silver and bronze
Many weeks and months in training
All building up to the games.*

*All round the field spectators were gathered
Cheering on all the young women and men
Then the final event of the day was approaching
.The last race about to begin.*

*The loudspeakers called out the names of the runners
The one hundred metres the race to be run
And nine young athletes stood there determined
And poised for the sound of the gun.*

*The signal was given, the pistol exploded
And so did the runners on hearing the sound
But the youngest among them stumbled and staggered
And he fell on his knees to the ground.*

*He gave out a cry of frustration and anguish
His dreams and his efforts dashed in the dirt
But as sure as I'm standing here telling the story
Now it's a strange one, but here's what occurred.*

*The eight other athletes stopped in their tracks
The ones who had trained for so long to compete
One by one they turned round and came back to help him
And lifted the lad to his feet.*

*Then all nine runners joined hands and continued
The one hundred metres reduced to a walk
And the banner above that said "Special Olympics"
Could not have been nearer the mark.*

*That's how the race ended, with nine gold medals
They came to the finish line holding hands still
And the banner above and nine smiling faces
Said more than these words ever will
Said more than these words ever will.*

Glossary:

- spectator** : a person who watches a show, game, or other event
stumble : trip or momentarily lose one's balance; almost fall
stagger : to walk with weak unsteady steps
dash : to destroy by striking (against)

Comprehension Questions:**I Answer the following questions in a sentence or two each:**

1. Why had the athletes come from different countries?
2. How long had the athletes undergone the training?
3. What was the event?
4. Which athlete fell on his knees to the ground?
5. How did the fallen athlete express his agony?
6. The special Olympics was meant for _____.
7. How did the event end?

II Answer the following questions in about a page each:

1. Describe the zeal of the athletes before the event began.
2. Write briefly about the tone of the poet.
3. How does the poem bring out the camaraderie among the athletes?

III Answer the following questions in about two pages each:

1. Discuss the relevance of the poem in the present day competitive world.
2. The nine athletes made the Special Olympics a special one indeed. Explain.
3. In a competition 'the means are as important as the end'. Discuss.

3. THE ADVENTURES OF HANCHI: A KANNADA CINDERELLA

-A. K. Ramanujan

Pre-reading Activity:

- *Have you read any folk tales? Do you think folktales give wings to the imagination of the readers?*
- *Woman is considered an epitome of sacrifice and forgiveness. What is your opinion?*
- *From time immemorial, women have proved to be resilient and quick witted. Do you agree?*

Note on the Author:



Attipate Krishnaswami Ramanujan (16 March, 1929–13 July, 1993) also known as A. K. Ramanujan, was a poet, scholar, philologist, folklorist, translator, and playwright. His academic research ranged across five languages: English, Kannada, Tamil, Telugu, and Sanskrit. He was awarded the Sahitya Akademi Award posthumously in 1999 for his collection of poems, ‘The Selected Poems’.

The Adventures of Hanchi deals with the trials and tribulations Hanchi faces in her life. It shares the characteristics of a typical Indian folk tale with innumerable twists and turns which keeps the reader engrossed.

Once upon a time there lived an old woman who had two children—a son and a daughter. The girl had golden hair, but the brother had not noticed it. One day, when both of them were grown up and the girl was a lovely young woman with hair of gold, he happened to notice it, and at once fell in love with her.

He went to his mother and begged her to give his sister in marriage to him. The poor old woman was shocked and greatly distressed by this unnatural request. But she hid her feelings and sent him to the nearby town to bring all the rice and flour and pulses necessary for the wedding. As soon as he left

the house she came to her daughter in grief, and said to her, ‘My daughter, the time has come when you must leave me. You are as good as dead to me after this day. You are too beautiful to live here in safety. You have hair of gold on which no one can gaze without desire. So, I shall get a mask made for you, which will hide your face and save you from future danger.’ That very night she went to the potter and gave him a gold vessel and bought a clay mask to fit her daughter’s face. That very night she sent away her daughter with the parting words of advice-’. Never remove the mask from your face, till your situation is better. As soon as her daughter was gone, the poor woman poisoned herself in utter grief. The son came home the next day, found his sister-*bride* gone, and his mother dead; he was crazed in his wits by the double calamity, and became a wandering madman.

The girl wandered from place to place as long as her mother’s parting gift of bread and rice lasted. She changed her name to Hanchi. She would sit by wayside brooks, untie her bundle of bread, and she would lunch in the noon- day sunshine and dine by moonlight. At last she came to a place very far from her home-town and struck up acquaintance with an old woman who gave her food and shelter. One day the old woman came home with the news that a nearby *saukar* (rich man) wanted a maidservant, and that she had arranged to send Hanchi to the place. Hanchi agreed and went to the big house as a maidservant. She was an expert cook and no one could equal her in making dishes of sweet rice. Once, the *saukar* wished to banquet in the orchard and ordered Hanchi to make her dishes of sweet rice. That day, everyone in the household went to the orchard for the grand banquet— everyone, except Hanchi and a younger son of the *saukar*. Hanchi thought she was alone, so she heated water for an oil bath. She wished to finish her bath before they returned; she undid her splendid golden hair and took off her mask and started bathing. Mean- while the young man who had gone out somewhere, came back home, and shouted for the maid. Hanchi did not hear him, as she was in the bathroom. Impatiently, he came in search of her, and saw her in all her beauty. He ran away before she saw him; but he fell deeply in love with the glory that was her hair and resolved at once to make her his wife.

He went to his mother as soon as she returned from the orchard, took her aside, and told her of his resolve. But she was puzzled at her son's fascination for a dark maidservant. She asked him not to make a fool of himself for a dusky unlovely lass, and promised to get him a really good-looking bride from a rich family. But he would not hear of it. At the end of a heated argument, he took her to Hanchi, snatched her mask and dashed it to the ground. There was Hanchi in all her natural loveliness, crowned by her splendid tresses of gold. The mother was struck dumb by this extraordinary beauty, and found her son's infatuation quite understandable. Moreover, she had always liked her modest good natured Hanchi. She took the bashful Hanchi with her to her inner chamber, listened to her strange story, and liked her all the better for it. At the first auspicious moment, Hanchi was married to the young lover.

The newly-weds were as happy as two doves in love. But there was a man named Guruswami in the saukar's house; he was the rich man's chief counsellor, and had a reputation for secret lore and black art of many kinds. This man had an eye on Hanchi and wanted her for himself. So, when one day Hanchi's mother-in-law told him of her eagerness to see a grandson by Hanchi, he had his plan ready. He told her that he could make Hanchi conceive with the help of his magic arts, and asked her to bring him plantains, almonds, betel leaves, nuts, etc.

On an auspicious day Guruswami called Hanchi to him. He had before him all the fruits and nuts over which he had chanted his magical formulae. If she had eaten them, the magic in them would have worked on her, and taken her to him as if by hypnosis. Chanting words of magic, and praying that Hanchi should become his, he gave her a plantain. Hanchi was a clever girl and knew all about these wicked magicians. She secretly dropped the enchanted plantain into a vessel and ate another which she had brought with her. Guruswami went to his room, trusting that his magic would draw her to him and throw her into his waiting arms. While he lay waiting wickedly for her, and dreaming dreams of lust, a buffalo ate the enchanted plantain in the vessel and fell in love with Guruswami. It was in heat and came running to Guruswami's chamber and pushed at his door. Thinking that the Hanchi of his dreams had come to his arms, he hastily opened the door and was badly bruised by the amorous buffalo.

But he did not leave off. On several days he asked Hanchi's gullible mother-in-law to send Hanchi to him for certain rites. When she came, he gave her his enchanted almonds, betel leaves, and nuts. But the clever Hanchi played the same old trick on him, and ate harmless almonds, leaves, and nuts which she had carefully brought with her. She palmed away Guruswami's gifts, and put them into measures and bowls; once, she threw the nuts at a broom stick in the corner. Every time, as Guruswami lay waiting for her in his bedroom, the measures and vessels came and knocked on his door; he hastily opened his door for the long-awaited Hanchi, and instead of her tender caresses, received hard blows from inanimate vessels which were irresistibly drawn to him by his own magic. When, one day, he opened the door and received a thorny broomstick into his greedy arms, he accepted failure: he changed his tactics. He went to his friend. Hanchi's father-in-law, and suggested that he should give another of his magnificent banquets in the garden. The old man agreed. As before, Hanchi prepared her fine dishes of sweet rice, and like a good daughter-in-law stayed back- to look after the house while everyone was away.

When everyone was at the orchard banquet, Guruswami found an excuse to go back home to Hanchi. He told the company that he had left behind his books of chants and prayers, and hurried home. On his way, he took many pieces of men's clothing like coats, shawls and turbans, he entered Hanchi's room secretly and 'planted' all the men's clothing there, threw bits of chewed betel and smoked stubs of cheroot on the floor.

After planting all his false evidence in Hanchi's room, he ran breathlessly to the garden where all the family sat in banquet, and cried, 'Your daughter-in-law is an immoral woman! I surprised her with a paramour, just a moment ago. She has forgotten the dignity of her family, her womanhood. This is sinful; it will bring misfortune to your door! O what wickedness!' At these shocking words from their trusted family-friend, all of them ran to the house in great confusion. With righteous indignation, Guruswami showed them all the hidden clothing, the tell-tale cheroot stubs and betel-pieces, as unquestionable evidence of Hanchi's adultery. Hanchi was as surprised as the rest of them, and all her protests were just a cry in the wilderness. When she accused Guruswami himself of unholy intentions towards her, they were all so enraged that they

beat her till she was blue in the face. When she found that everyone was against her, she was silent and trusted to her fate. They shut her up and starved her for three days, but they got no confession from her. Her resolute silence put her husband and his father into fits of rage. Then, Guruswami, finding that his plot had prospered, put in a timely suggestion; ‘all this will not work with this hard-hearted woman. We must punish her properly for this heinous sin. Put her into a big box and give it to me; I will have it thrown into the river. You are too tender for this sinner. Punish her as she deserves!’

Anger and shame had made them blind. They gave ear to Guruswami’s words and she was soon shut up in a box and handed over to Guruswami. He had it carried out of the house-happy that his plot succeeded without a hitch.

Then he thought of a way of getting rid of the servants. He asked them to carry the box to an old woman’s house nearby and leave it there till next morning, as the river was still a long way off. The old woman was no other than the good friend of Hanchi, with whose help she had first settled down in the town. Guruswami told her that there were mad dogs imprisoned in the box, to be thrown into the river out of harm’s way. He asked her to be mighty careful with it, not to meddle with it, or open it, lest the dogs be let loose. When he left her he had frightened her more than he intended to. He promised that he would soon come back to take the dangerous dogs away.

As soon as he left, the old woman heard peculiar noises coming from the box. At first, she thought it was the dogs; but soon curiosity overcame fear and she could hear her own name being called out in urgent tones. Soon after the box was set down, Hanchi had recognised her old friend, and was calling for help. The old woman cautiously prised open the lid and, to her great astonishment, found Hanchi crouching uncomfortably inside the box! She helped the poor girl out of her little prison, gave her food and drink first, as she appeared to be ravenously hungry. Hanchi told her all about her misfortune and the wicked Guruswami’s villainous plot to have his will with her. The old woman heard her story with sympathy, and her mother soon found a way out of this tangle. She hid Hanchi in an inner room, went into the town, procured a muzzled mad dog, and locked it up in the box. She had taken care to loosen the muzzle, before she locked up the dog.

Guruswami was back very soon. He was eager to taste his new-won power over Hanchi. He came singing. When he examined the locks, the old woman assured him in frightened tones that she did not even dare to touch the box. He asked her to leave him alone in the room for his evening prayers; the clever old woman went out, smiling to herself.

He closed the door carefully and bolted it from the inside. And, calling Hanchi in loving tones, he eagerly threw open the lid of the box. His heart leapt almost to his mouth when he saw a hideous dog foaming at the mouth spring upon him, mangling him horribly with its reckless bites. He cursed his own wickedness and cried that he was served right by the all-seeing God, who had transformed a woman into a dog! Thus cursing himself, he sank down under the dog's savage tearing teeth. The neighbours soon gathered there, drawn by the cries of the wretched man, and killed the dog. But they could not save Guruswami, who was fatally infected with the dog's lunacy.

Hanchi's husband and his family were a little surprised at Guruswami's fate, and pitied him. But one day they were invited by the scheming old woman to her house. The good woman could not rest till she had seen justice done to poor Hanchi. When Hanchi's people came, she served them with wonderful dishes of sweet rice, which no one could prepare but Hanchi. They were all reminded of her and felt sad. They naturally asked who the excellent cook was who had equalled Hanchi. Instead of a reply, the old woman presented Hanchi herself in the flesh. They were amazed and would not believe their eyes. They believed that Hanchi was dead and gone, drowned beyond return in the river; Guruswami had done it for them and the poor fellow had gone mysteriously mad soon after. The old woman cleared up the mystery of Hanchi's resurrection by telling them the true story about her and the villain of the plot, Guruswami.

They were very sorry for Hanchi and were ashamed that they were taken in by such a viper as Guruswami. They cursed him heartily and asked Hanchi to pardon them. Hanchi's good days had begun; her luck turned, and furnished her with every kind of happiness from that day.

Glossary:

- auspicious** : conducive to success; favorable.
amorous : lustful
gullible : easily persuaded to believe something, credulous
‘planted’ : positioned, placed, stationed
resurrection : raising from the dead, restoration to life

Comprehension Questions:**I Answer the following questions in a sentence or two each:**

1. What was unique about Hanchi?
2. What was the demand of her brother?
3. Why was the mother worried?
4. What was Hanchi known for?
5. Where was Hanchi sent to live?
6. What were the things Guruswami gave to Hanchi?
7. Mention the three things that came back to Guruswami by his own magic?

II Answer the following questions in about a page each:

1. What plan did the mother hatch to avoid the marriage of Hanchi with her brother?
2. When was Hanchi’s beauty revealed to *saukar’s* son? What was his reaction?
3. What plans did Guruswami employ to entice Hanchi?
4. How did Hanchi outsmart Guruswami?
5. What was the punishment meted out to Hanchi?
6. How did the old woman rescue the girl at the end of the story?
7. *The Adventures of Hanchi* is a typical folktale. Discuss.

4. A WHITE HERON

- Sarah Orne Jewett

Pre-reading Activity :

- *Industrialization versus return to nature. Discuss the polarity in the present situation.*
- *What are eco-narratives? How can they make you socially responsible towards conservation of your environment?*

Note on the Author:



Sarah Orne Jewett (September 3, 1849 – June 24, 1909) was an American novelist, short story writer and poet, best known for her local color works set along or near the southern seacoast of Maine. Jewett is recognized as an important practitioner of American literary regionalism. At age 19, Jewett published her first important story in the *Atlantic Monthly*, and her reputation grew throughout the 1870s and 1880s. Some

of Jewett's poetry was collected in *'Verses'* (1916), and she also wrote three children's books. Willa Cather described Jewett as a significant influence on her development as a writer. Feminist critics have since championed her writing for its rich account of women's lives and voices. *'A White Heron'* (1886), is a collection of short stories and is one of her finest works.

A White Heron speaks about the strong bond between nature and human beings. The subtle eco-concern of the women is woven dexterously by the author.

I

The woods were already filled with shadows one June evening, just before eight o'clock, though a bright sunset still glimmered faintly among the trunks of the trees. A little girl was driving home her cow, a plodding, dilatory, provoking creature in her behavior, but a valued companion for all that. They

were going away from whatever light there was, and striking deep into the woods, but their feet were familiar with the path, and it was no matter whether their eyes could see it or not.

There was hardly a night the summer through when the old cow could be found waiting at the pasture bars; on the contrary, it was her greatest pleasure to hide herself away among the huckleberry bushes, and though she wore a loud bell she had made the discovery that if one stood perfectly still it would not ring. So Sylvia had to hunt for her until she found her, and call Co'! Co'! With never an answering Moo, until her childish patience was quite spent. If the creature had not given good milk and plenty of it, the case would have seemed very different to her owners. Besides, Sylvia had all the time there was, and very little use to make of it. Sometimes in pleasant weather it was a consolation to look upon the cow's pranks as an intelligent attempt to play hide and seek, and as the child had no playmates she lent herself to this amusement with a good deal of zest. Though this chase had been so long that the wary animal herself had given an unusual signal of her whereabouts, Sylvia had only laughed when she came upon Mistress Moolly at the swamp-side, and urged her affectionately homeward with a twig of birch leaves. The old cow was not inclined to wander farther, she even turned in the right direction for once as they left the pasture, and stepped along the road at a good pace. She was quite ready to be milked now, and seldom stopped to browse. Sylvia wondered what her grandmother would say because they were so late. It was a great while since she had left home at half-past five o'clock, but everybody knew the difficulty of making this errand a short one. Mrs. Tilley had chased the horned torment too many summer evenings herself to blame anyone else for lingering, and was only thankful as she waited that she had Sylvia, nowadays, to give such valuable assistance. The good woman suspected that Sylvia loitered occasionally on her own account; there never was such a child for straying about out-of-doors since the world was made! Everybody said that it was a good change for a little maid who had tried to grow for eight years in a crowded manufacturing town, but, as for Sylvia herself, it seemed as if she never had been alive at all before she came to live at the farm. She thought often with wistful compassion of a wretched geranium that belonged to a town neighbor.

“Afraid of folks,” old Mrs. Tilley said to herself, with a smile, after she had made the unlikely choice of Sylvia from her daughter's houseful of children, and was returning to the farm. “Afraid of folks, they said! I guess she won't be troubled no great with 'em up to the old place!” When they reached the door of the lonely house and stopped to unlock it, and the cat came to purr loudly, and rub against them, a deserted pussy, indeed, but fat with young robins, Sylvia whispered that this was a beautiful place to live in, and she never should wish to go home.

The companions followed the shady wood-road, the cow taking slow steps and the child very fast ones. The cow stopped long at the brook to drink, as if the pasture were not half a swamp, and Sylvia stood still and waited, letting her bare feet cool themselves in the shoal water, while the great twilight moths struck softly against her. She waded on through the brook as the cow moved away, and listened to the thrushes with a heart that beat fast with pleasure. There was a stirring in the great boughs overhead. They were full of little birds and beasts that seemed to be wide awake, and going about their world, or else saying good-night to each other in sleepy twitters. Sylvia herself felt sleepy as she walked along. However, it was not much farther to the house, and the air was soft and sweet. She was not often in the woods so late as this, and it made her feel as if she were a part of the gray shadows and the moving leaves. She was just thinking how long it seemed since she first came to the farm a year ago, and wondering if everything went on in the noisy town just the same as when she was there, the thought of the great red-faced boy who used to chase and frighten her made her hurry along the path to escape from the shadow of the trees.

Suddenly, this little woods-girl is horror-stricken to hear a clear whistle not very far away. Not a bird's-whistle, which would have a sort of friendliness, but a boy's whistle, determined, and somewhat aggressive. Sylvia left the cow to whatever sad fate might await her, and stepped discreetly aside into the bushes, but she was just too late. The enemy had discovered her, and called out in a very cheerful and persuasive tone, “Halloa, little girl, how far is it to the road?” and trembling Sylvia answered almost inaudibly, “A good ways.”

She did not dare to look boldly at the tall young man, who carried a gun over his shoulder, but she came out of her bush and again followed the cow, while he walked alongside.

“I have been hunting for some birds,” the stranger said kindly, “and I have lost my way, and need a friend very much. Don't be afraid,” he added gallantly. “Speak up and tell me what your name is, and whether you think I can spend the night at your house, and go out gunning early in the morning.”

Sylvia was more alarmed than before. Would not her grandmother consider her much to blame? But who could have foreseen such an accident as this? It did not seem to be her fault, and she hung her head as if the stem of it were broken, but managed to answer “Sylvy,” with much effort when her companion again asked her name.

Mrs. Tilley was standing in the doorway when the trio came into view. The cow gave a loud moo by way of explanation.

“Yes, you'd better speak up for yourself, you old trial! Where'd she tucked herself away this time, Sylvy?” But Sylvia kept an awed silence; she knew by instinct that her grandmother did not comprehend the gravity of the situation. She must be mistaking the stranger for one of the farmer-lads of the region.

The young man stood his gun beside the door, and dropped a lumpy game-bag beside it; then he bade Mrs. Tilley good-evening, and repeated his wayfarer's story, and asked if he could have a night's lodging.

“Put me anywhere you like,” he said. “I must be off early in the morning, before day; but I am very hungry, indeed. You can give me some milk at any rate, that's plain.”

“Dear sakes, yes,” responded the hostess, whose long slumbering hospitality seemed to be easily awakened. “You might fare better if you went out to the main road a mile or so, but you're welcome to what we've got. I'll milk right off, and you make yourself at home. You can sleep on husks or feathers,” she proffered graciously. “I raised them all myself. There's good pasturing for geese just below here towards the marsh. Now step round and set a plate for the gentleman, Sylvy!” And Sylvia promptly stepped. She was glad to have something to do, and she was hungry herself.

It was a surprise to find so clean and comfortable a little dwelling in this New England wilderness. The young man had known the horrors of its most primitive housekeeping, and the dreary squalor of that level of society which does not rebel at the companionship of hens. This was the best thrift of an old-fashioned farmstead, though on such a small scale that it seemed like a hermitage. He listened eagerly to the old woman's quaint talk, he watched Sylvia's pale face and shining grey eyes with ever growing enthusiasm, and insisted that this was the best supper he had eaten for a month, and afterward the new-made friends sat down in the door-way together while the moon came up.

Soon it would be berry-time, and Sylvia was a great help at picking. The cow was a good milker, though a plaguy thing to keep track of, the hostess gossiped frankly, adding presently that she had buried four children, so Sylvia's mother, and a son (who might be dead) in California were all the children she had left. "Dan, my boy, was a great hand to go gunning," she explained sadly. "I never wanted for partridges or gray squirrels while he was to home. He's been a great wand'rer, I expect, and he's no hand to write letters. There, I don't blame him, I'd ha' seen the world myself if it had been so I could.

"Sylvy takes after him," the grandmother continued affectionately, after a minute's pause. "There ain't a foot o' ground she don't know her way over, and the wild creatures counts her one o' themselves. Squer'ls she'll tame to come an' feed right out o' her hands, and all sorts o' birds. Last winter she got the jay-birds to bingeing here, and I believe she'd 'a' scanted herself of her own meals to have plenty to throw out amongst 'em, if I hadn't kep' watch. Anything but crows, I tell her, I'm willin' to help support — though Dan he had a tamed one o' them that did seem to have reason same as folks. It was round here a good spell after he went away. Dan an' his father they didn't hitch, — but he never held up his head ag'in after Dan had dared him an' gone off."

The guest did not notice this hint of family sorrows in his eager interest in something else.

"So Sylvy knows all about birds, does she?" he exclaimed, as he looked round at the little girl who sat, very demure but increasingly sleepy, in the

moonlight. "I am making a collection of birds myself. I have been at it ever since I was a boy." (Mrs. Tilley smiled.) "There are two or three very rare ones I have been hunting for these five years. I mean to get them on my own ground if they can be found."

"Do you cage 'em up?" asked Mrs. Tilley doubtfully, in response to this enthusiastic announcement.

"Oh no, they're stuffed and preserved, dozens and dozens of them," said the ornithologist, "and I have shot or snared every one myself. I caught a glimpse of a white heron a few miles from here on Saturday, and I have followed it in this direction. They have never been found in this district at all. The little white heron, it is," and he turned again to look at Sylvia with the hope of discovering that the rare bird was one of her acquaintances.

But Sylvia was watching a hop-toad in the narrow footpath.

"You would know the heron if you saw it," the stranger continued eagerly. "A queer tall white bird with soft feathers and long thin legs. And it would have a nest perhaps in the top of a high tree, made of sticks, something like a hawk's nest."

Sylvia's heart gave a wild beat; she knew that strange white bird, and had once stolen softly near where it stood in some bright green swamp grass, away over at the other side of the woods. There was an open place where the sunshine always seemed strangely yellow and hot, where tall, nodding rushes grew, and her grandmother had warned her that she might sink in the soft black mud underneath and never be heard of more. Not far beyond were the salt marshes just this side the sea itself, which Sylvia wondered and dreamed much about, but never had seen, whose great voice could sometimes be heard above the noise of the woods on stormy nights.

"I can't think of anything I should like so much as to find that heron's nest," the handsome stranger was saying. "I would give ten dollars to anybody who could show it to me," he added desperately, "and I mean to spend my whole vacation hunting for it if need be. Perhaps it was only migrating, or had been chased out of its own region by some bird of prey."

Mrs. Tilley gave amazed attention to all this, but Sylvia still watched the toad, not divining, as she might have done at some calmer time, that the creature wished to get to its hole under the door-step, and was much hindered by the unusual spectators at that hour of the evening. No amount of thought, that night, could decide how many wished—for treasures the ten dollars, so lightly spoken of, would buy.

The next day the young sportsman hovered about the woods, and Sylvia kept him company, having lost her first fear of the friendly lad, who proved to be most kind and sympathetic. He told her many things about the birds and what they knew and where they lived and what they did with themselves. And he gave her a jack-knife, which she thought as great a treasure as if she were a desert-islander. All day long he did not once make her troubled or afraid except when he brought down some unsuspecting singing creature from its bough. Sylvia would have liked him vastly better without his gun; she could not understand why he killed the very birds he seemed to like so much. But as the day waned, Sylvia still watched the young man with loving admiration. She had never seen anybody so charming and delightful; the woman's heart, asleep in the child, was vaguely thrilled by a dream of love. Some premonition of that great power stirred and swayed these young creatures who traversed the solemn woodlands with soft-footed silent care. They stopped to listen to a bird's song; they pressed forward again eagerly, parting the branches — speaking to each other rarely and in whispers; the young man going first and Sylvia following, fascinated, a few steps behind, with her grey eyes dark with excitement.

She grieved because the longed-for white heron was elusive, but she did not lead the guest, she only followed, and there was no such thing as speaking first. The sound of her own unquestioned voice would have terrified her — it was hard enough to answer yes or no when there was need of that. At last evening began to fall, and they drove the cow home together, and Sylvia smiled with pleasure when they came to the place where she heard the whistle and was afraid only the night before.

II.

Half a mile from home, at the farther edge of the woods, where the land was highest, a great pine-tree stood, the last of its generation. Whether it was left for a boundary mark, or for what reason, no one could say; the woodchoppers who had felled its mates were dead and gone long ago, and a whole forest of sturdy trees, pines and oaks and maples, had grown again. But the stately head of this old pine towered above them all and made a landmark for sea and shore miles and miles away. Sylvia knew it well. She had always believed that whoever climbed to the top of it could see the ocean; and the little girl had often laid her hand on the great rough trunk and looked up wistfully at those dark boughs that the wind always stirred, no matter how hot and still the air might be below. Now she thought of the tree with a new excitement, for why, if one climbed it at break of day, could not one see all the world, and easily discover from whence the white heron flew, and mark the place, and find the hidden nest?

What a spirit of adventure, what wild ambition! What fancied triumph and delight and glory for the later morning when she could make known the secret! It was almost too real and too great for the childish heart to bear.

All night the door of the little house stood open and the whippoorwills came and sang upon the very step. The young sportsman and his old hostess were sound asleep, but Sylvia's great design kept her broad awake and watching. She forgot to think of sleep. The short summer night seemed as long as the winter darkness, and at last when the whippoorwills ceased, and she was afraid the morning would after all come too soon, she stole out of the house and followed the pasture path through the woods, hastening toward the open ground beyond, listening with a sense of comfort and companionship to the drowsy twitter of a half-awakened bird, whose perch she had jarred in passing. Alas, if the great wave of human interest which flooded for the first time this dull little life should sweep away the satisfactions of an existence heart to heart with nature and the dumb life of the forest!

There was the huge tree asleep yet in the paling moonlight, and small and silly Sylvia began with utmost bravery to mount to the top of it, with tingling, eager blood coursing the channels of her whole frame, with her bare

feet and fingers, that pinched and held like bird's claws to the monstrous ladder reaching up, up, almost to the sky itself. First, she must mount the white oak tree that grew alongside, where she was almost lost among the dark branches and the green leaves heavy and wet with dew; a bird fluttered off its nest, and a red squirrel ran to and fro and scolded pettishly at the harmless housebreaker. Sylvia felt her way easily. She had often climbed there, and knew that higher still one of the oak's upper branches chafed against the pine trunk, just where its lower boughs were set close together. There, when she made the dangerous pass from one tree to the other, the great enterprise would really begin.

She crept out along the swaying oak limb at last, and took the daring step across into the old pine-tree. The way was harder than she thought; she must reach far and hold fast, the sharp dry twigs caught and held her and scratched her like angry talons, the pitch made her thin little fingers clumsy and stiff as she went round and round the tree's great stem, higher and higher upward. The sparrows and robins in the woods below were beginning to wake and twitter to the dawn, yet it seemed much lighter there aloft in the pine-tree, and the child knew she must hurry if her project were to be of any use.

The tree seemed to lengthen itself out as she went up, and to reach farther and farther upward. It was like a great main-mast to the voyaging earth; it must truly have been amazed that morning through all its ponderous frame as it felt this determined spark of human spirit wending its way from higher branch to branch. Who knows how steadily the least twigs held themselves to advantage this light, weak creature on her way! The old pine must have loved his new dependent. More than all the hawks, and bats, and moths, and even the sweet voiced thrushes, was the brave, beating heart of the solitary gray-eyed child. And the tree stood still and frowned away the winds that June morning while the dawn grew bright in the east.

Sylvia's face was like a pale star, if one had seen it from the ground, when the last thorny bough was past, and she stood trembling and tired but wholly triumphant, high in the tree-top. Yes, there was the sea with the dawning sun making a golden dazzle over it, and toward that glorious east flew two hawks with slow-moving pinions. How low they looked in the air from that height when one had only seen them before far up, and dark against the blue sky. Their gray feathers were as soft as moths; they seemed only a little way from the tree, and Sylvia felt as if she too could go flying away among the clouds.

Westward, the woodlands and farms reached miles and miles into the distance; here and there were church steeples, and white villages, truly it was a vast and awesome world.

The birds sang louder and louder. At last the sun came up bewilderingly bright. Sylvia could see the white sails of ships out at sea, and the clouds that were purple and rose-colored and yellow at first began to fade away. Where was the white heron's nest in the sea of green branches, and was this wonderful sight and pageant of the world the only reward for having climbed to such a giddy height? Now look down again, Sylvia, where the green marsh is set among the shining birches and dark hemlocks; there where you saw the white heron once you will see him again; look, look! a white spot of him like a single floating feather comes up from the dead hemlock and grows larger, and rises, and comes close at last, and goes by the landmark pine with steady sweep of wing and outstretched slender neck and crested head. And wait! Wait! Do not move a foot or a finger, little girl, do not send an arrow of light and consciousness from your two eager eyes, for the heron has perched on a pine bough not far beyond yours, and cries back to his mate on the nest and plumes his feathers for the new day.

The child gives a long sigh a minute later when a company of shouting cat-birds comes also to the tree, and vexed by their fluttering and lawlessness the solemn heron goes away. She knows his secret now, the wild, light, slender bird that floats and wavers, and goes back like an arrow presently to his home in the green world beneath. Then Sylvia, well satisfied, makes her perilous way down again, not daring to look far below the branch she stands on, ready to cry sometimes because her fingers ache and her lamed feet slip. Wondering over and over again what the stranger would say to her, and what he would think when she told him how to find his way straight to the heron's nest.

“Sylvy, Sylvy!” called the busy old grandmother again and again, but nobody answered, and the small husk bed was empty and Sylvia had disappeared.

The guest waked from a dream, and remembering his day's pleasure

hurried to dress himself that might it sooner begin. He was sure from the way the shy little girl looked once or twice yesterday that she had at least seen the white heron, and now she must really be made to tell. Here she comes now, paler than ever, and her worn old frock is torn and tattered, and smeared with pine pitch. The grandmother and the sportsman stand in the door together and question her, and the splendid moment has come to speak of the dead hemlock-tree by the green marsh.

But Sylvia does not speak after all, though the old grandmother fretfully rebukes her, and the young man's kind, appealing eyes are looking straight in her own. He can make them rich with money; he has promised it, and they are poor now. He is so well worth making happy, and he waits to hear the story she can tell.

No, she must keep silence! What is it that suddenly forbids her and makes her dumb? Has she been nine years growing and now, when the great world for the first time puts out a hand to her, must she thrust it aside for a bird's sake? The murmur of the pine's green branches is in her ears, she remembers how the white heron came flying through the golden air and how they watched the sea and the morning together, and Sylvia cannot speak; she cannot tell the heron's secret and give its life away.

Dear loyalty, that suffered a sharp pang as the guest went away disappointed later in the day that could have served and followed him and loved him as a dog loves! Many a night Sylvia heard the echo of his whistle haunting the pasture path as she came home with the loitering cow. She forgot even her sorrow at the sharp report of his gun and the sight of thrushes and sparrows dropping silent to the ground, their songs hushed and their pretty feathers of stained and wet with blood. Were the birds' better friends than their hunter might have been, — who can tell? Whatever treasures were lost to her, wood-lands and summer-time, remember! Bring your gifts and graces and tell your secrets to this lonely country child!

Glossary:

inclined	:	disposed
wistful	:	with longing or unfulfilled desire
ceased	:	stopped or discontinued
ponderous	:	slow
premonition	:	a feeling, not based on reason, that something evil will happen
provoke	:	tending to cause a reaction-typically an emotional reaction such as anger
waned	:	grew smaller (in this context, the amount of day that is left)
twilight	:	the time of day between daylight and darkness, just after sunset
wavers	:	moving back and forth
discreetly	:	inconspicuously a manner unlikely to attract attention
talons	:	sharp hooked claws
wary	:	nervous or distrustful
torment	:	to cause or to experience great mental or physical suffering
wretched	:	very bad
dilatory	:	slow, inclined to cause
delay shoal	:	stretch of shallow water
demure	:	modest, quiet and shy
elusive	:	difficult to get a hold of
proffered	:	offered, in this context a suggestion
rebuke	:	criticize severely
quaint	:	unusual but in an interesting or pleasing way and clumsy because of great weight

Comprehension Questions:**I Answer the following questions in a sentence or two:**

1. Who are Sylvia and Mistress Moolly? How does Sylvia feel about Mistress Moolly?
2. Why is Mistress Moolly considered a ‘valued companion’ of Sylvia?
3. What was the reaction of Sylvia when she heard the whistling sound the stranger?
4. Why does the young man decide to stay at Mrs. Tilley’s cottage?
5. How does living in the farm suit Sylvia’s nature and personality?
6. How does the hunter describe the heron to Sylvia?
7. Why is the hunter determined to add a white heron to his collection? What are the details that show this determination?
8. How would Sylvia’s and her grandmother’s lives change if they had the ten dollars?
9. Why do the grandmother and the hunter suspect that Sylvia has seen the white heron?

II Answer the following questions in about a page:

1. Describe Sylvia’s life in her grandmother’s farm.
2. Bring out the cordiality between Sylvia and her grandmother.
3. Do you think the stranger tries to exploit Sylvia’s fondness for him and Mrs. Tilley’s need for money? Explain.
4. Describe the efforts made by Sylvia to locate the heron’s nest?
5. How does the author bring nature into the story?

III Answer the following questions in about two pages:

1. The writer blends the plot seamlessly with the pristine beauty of nature. Elucidate.
2. Nature nurtures while the hunter destroys. Discuss the reassertion of gender stereotypes in the story.
3. Sylvia's sacrifice shows her undying love for the white heron. Substantiate.
4. Sylvia's love for nature and the hunter's passion for taxidermy are juxtaposed in the story. Discuss.
5. Sylvia is an ecofeminist in her own right. Elaborate.

Suggested Reading:

- ◆ Farmer Finch- Sarah Orne Jewett.
- ◆ The Evacuee (Poem)-R.S. Thomas.
- ◆ On Killing a Tree (Poem)-G. Patel.

Extended Activity:

- ◆ Visit a Bird Sanctuary.
- ◆ Make a list of the endangered birds of India.
- ◆ Volunteer to become a member of the ZED Foundation which runs the Gubbi Goodu (Sparrow's Nest). 'Bring Sparrows back to Bangalore' campaign.

e -source:

- ◆ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saalumarada_Thimmakka

5. THE LAST SONG

-Temsula Ao

Pre-reading Activity:

- *Common people are the soft targets of conflicts and violence. Discuss.*
- *Politics of the state sometimes violates human rights. Discuss in groups.*

Note on the Author:



Dr. Temsula Ao (1945) is a recipient of ‘Sahitya Akademi Award’ in 2013 for her collection of short stories ‘Laburnum for My Head’, is undoubtedly one of the country’s finest writers. She is a retired professor of English from the North-Eastern Hill University, Shillong and has five books of poetry to her credit. Ao traces a detailed, deep and intense narration of North East India through the art of storytelling. She has delineated the agonies and aspirations of her people - the Nagas - with deep understanding and compassion in her fictional work. Her works depict the troublesome life of the Nagas torn between terror and violence fought by various groups for power.

The Last Song illustrates the government forces determined to teach the villagers the consequences of supporting the rebel cause. Even the house of God fails to save them from the atrocities of the army.

It seemed the little girl was born to sing. Her mother often recalled that when she was a baby, she would carry her piggyback to community singing events on festival days. As soon as the singers took up a tune and gradually when their collective voices began to swell in volume and harmony, her daughter would twist herself this way and that and start singing her own version of the song, mostly consisting of loud shrieks and screams. Though amusing at first, her daughter’s antics irritated the spectators and the singers as well, and often, she had to withdraw from the gathering in embarrassment. What the mother considered unreasonable behaviour in a child barely a year old, was actually the first indication of the singing genius she had given birth to.

When Apenyo, as the little girl was called, could walk and talk a little, her mother would take her to church on Sundays because she could not be left alone at home. On other days she was left in the care of her grandmother when the mother went to the fields; but on this day there was no one to take care of her as everyone had gone to church. When the congregation sang together Apenyo would also join, though her little screams were not quite audible because of the group singing. But whenever there was a special number, trouble would begin. Apenyo would try to sing along, much to the embarrassment of the mother. After two or three such mortifying Sunday outings, the mother stopped going to church altogether until Apenyo became older and learnt how to behave.

At home too, Apenyo never kept quiet; she hummed or made up silly songs to sing by herself, which annoyed her mother at times but most often made her become pensive. She was by now convinced that her daughter had inherited her love of singing from her father who had died so unexpectedly away from home. The father, whose name was Zhamben, was a gifted singer both of traditional folk songs as well as Christian hymns at church. Naga traditional songs consist of polyphonic notes and harmonizing is the dominant feature of such community singing. Perhaps because of his experience and expertise in folk songs, Zhamben picked up the new tunes of hymns quite easily and soon became the lead male voice in the church choir. He was a school teacher in the village and at the time of his death was undergoing a teacher-training course in a town in Assam. He was suddenly taken ill and by the time the news reached the village, he was already dead. When his relatives were preparing to go and visit him, his friends from the training school brought his dead body home. Apenyo was only nine months old then. From that time on, it was a lonely struggle for the mother, trying to cultivate a field and bring up a small child on her own. With occasional help from her in-laws and her own relatives, the widow called Libeni was slowly building a future for her daughter and herself. Many of the relatives told her to get married again so that she and little Apenyo would have a man to protect and look after them. But Libeni would not listen and when they repeatedly told her to think about it seriously, she asked them never to bring up the subject again. So mother and daughter lived alone and survived mainly on what was grown in the field.

At the village school Apenyo did well and became the star pupil. When she was old enough to help her mother in spreading the thread on the loom, she would sit nearby and watch her weave the colourful shawls, which would be sold to bring in additional income. Libeni had the reputation of being one of the best weavers in the village and her shawls were in great demand.

By and by Apenyo too learned the art from her mother and became an excellent weaver like her. In the meantime, her love for singing too was growing. People soon realized that not only did she love to sing but also that Apenyo had an exquisite singing voice. She was inducted into the church choir where she soon became the lead soprano. Every time the choir sang it was her voice that made even the commonest song sound heavenly. Along with her singing voice, her beauty also blossomed as Apenyo approached her eighteenth birthday. Her natural beauty seemed to be enhanced by her enchanting voice, which earned her the nickname of 'singing beauty' in the village. Libeni's joy knew no bounds. She was happy that all those years of loneliness and hardship were well rewarded by God through her beautiful and talented daughter.

One particular year, the villagers were in an especially expectant mood because there was a big event coming up in the village church in about six months: the dedication of the new church building. Every member of the church had contributed towards the building fund by donating in cash and kind and it had taken them nearly three years to complete the new structure of tin roof and wooden frames to replace the old one of bamboo and thatch. In every household the womenfolk were planning new clothes for the family, brand new shawls for the men and new skirts or lungis for the women. The whole village was being spruced up for the occasion as some eminent pastors from neighbouring villages were being invited for the dedication service. Pigs earmarked for the feast were given special food to fatten them up. The service was planned for the first week of December, which would ensure that harvesting of the fields would be over and the special celebration would not interfere with the normal Christmas celebrations of the church. The villagers began the preparations with great enthusiasm, often joking among themselves that this year they would have a double Christmas!

These were, however, troubled times for the Nagas. The Independence movement was gaining momentum by the day and even the remotest villages were getting involved, if not directly in terms of their members joining the

underground army, then certainly by paying ‘taxes’ to the underground ‘government’. This particular village was no different. They had been compelled to pay their dues every year, the amount calculated on the number of households in the village. Curiously enough, the collections would be made just before the Christmas holidays, perhaps because travel for the collections was easier through the winter forests or perhaps because they too wanted to celebrate Christmas! In any case, the villagers were prepared for the annual visit from their brethren of the forests and the transaction was carried out without a hitch.

But this year, it was not as simple as in previous years. A recent raid of an underground hideout yielded records of all such collections of the area and the government forces were determined to ‘teach’ all those villages the consequences of ‘supporting’ the rebel cause by paying the ‘taxes’. Unknown to the villagers, a sinister plan was being hatched by the forces to demonstrate to the entire Naga people what happens when you ‘betray’ your own government. It was decided that the army would go to this particular village on the day when they were dedicating the new church building and arrest all the leaders for their ‘crime’ of paying taxes to the underground forces.

In the meanwhile, the villagers, caught up in the hectic activities prior to the appointed day, a Sunday, were happily busy in tidying up their own households, especially the ones where the guests would be lodged. The dedication Sunday dawned bright and cool, it was December after all, and every villager, attired in his or her best, assembled in front of the new church, which was on the same site as the old one. The villagers were undecided about what to do with the old one still standing near the new one. They had postponed any decision until after the dedication. That morning the choir was standing together in the front porch of the new church to lead the congregation in the singing before the formal inauguration, after which they would enter the new building. Apenyo, the lead singer, was standing in the middle of the front row, looking resplendent in her new lungi and shawl. She was going to perform solo on the occasion after the group song of the choir. As the pastor led the congregation in the invocatory prayer, a hush fell on the crowd as though in great expectation: the choir would sing their first number after the prayer. As the song the crowd was waiting to hear began, there was the sound of gunfire in the

distance, it was an ominous sound which meant that the army would certainly disrupt the festivities. But the choir sang on unfazed, though uneasy shuffles could be heard from among the crowd. The pastor too began to look worried; he turned to a deacon and seemed to be consulting with him about something. Just as the singing subsided, another sound reverberated throughout the length and breadth of the village. A frightened Dobashi, with fear and trembling in his voice, was telling the people to stay where they were and not to attempt to run away or fight. There was a stunned silence and the congregation froze in their places, unable to believe that their dedication Sunday was going to be consecrated by the arrogant Indian army.

Very soon the approaching soldiers surrounded the crowd, and the pastor was commanded to come forward and identify himself along with the gaonburas. But before they could do anything, Apenyo burst into her solo number, and not to be outdone by the bravery and foolishness of this young girl, and not wishing to leave her thus exposed, the entire choir burst into song. The soldiers were incensed; it was an act of open defiance and proper retaliation had to be made. They pushed and shoved the pastor and the gaonburas, prodding them with the butts of their guns towards the waiting jeeps below the steps of the church. Some of the villagers tried to argue with the soldiers and they too were kicked and assaulted. There was a feeble attempt by the accompanying Dobashi to restore some semblance of order but no one was listening to him and the crowd, by now overcome by fear and anger, and began to disperse in every direction. Some members of the choir left their singing and were seen trying to run away to safety. Only Apenyo stood her ground. She sang on, oblivious of the situation, as if an unseen presence was guiding her. Her mother, standing with the congregation, saw her daughter singing her heart out as if to withstand the might of the guns with her voice raised to God in heaven. She called out to her to stop but Apenyo did not seem to hear or see anything. In desperation, Libeni rushed forward to pull her daughter away but the leader of the army was quicker. He grabbed Apenyo by the hair and dragged her away from the crowd towards the old church building. All this while, the girl was heard singing the chorus of her song over and over again.

There was chaos everywhere. Villagers trying to flee the scene were either shot at or kicked and clubbed by the soldiers who seemed to be everywhere. The pastor and the gaonburas were tied up

securely for transportation to army headquarters and whatever fate awaited them there. More people were seen running away desperately, some seeking security in the old church and some even entered the new one hoping that at least the house of God would offer them safety from the soldiers. Libeni was now frantic. Calling out her daughter's name loudly, she began to search for her in the direction where she was last seen being dragged away by the leader. When she came upon the scene at last, what she saw turned her stomach: the young captain was raping Apenyo while a few other soldiers were watching the act and seemed to be waiting for their turn. The mother, crazed by what she was witnessing, rushed forward with an animal-like growl as if to haul the man off her daughter's body but a soldier grabbed her and pinned her down on the ground. He too began to unzip his trousers and when Libeni realized what would follow next, she spat on the soldier's face and tried to twist herself free from his grasp. But this only further aroused him; he bashed her head on the ground several times, knocking her unconscious and raped her limp body, using the woman's new lungi afterwards, which he had flung aside, to wipe himself. The small band of soldiers then took their turn, even though by the time the fourth one mounted, the woman was already dead. Apenyo, though terribly bruised and dazed by what was happening to her, was still alive, though barely so. Some of the villagers who had entered the old church saw what happened to mother and daughter and after the soldiers were seen going out towards the village square, came out to help them. As they were trying to lift the limp bodies, the captain happened to look back and seeing that there were witnesses to their despicable act, turned to his soldiers and ordered them to open fire on the people who were now lifting up the bodies of the two women. Amid screams and yells the bodies were dropped as the helpless villagers once again tried to seek shelter inside the church.

Returning towards the scene of their recent orgy, the captain saw the grotesque figures of the two women, both dead. He shouted an order to his men to dump them on the porch of the old church. He then ordered them to take positions around the church and at his signal they emptied their guns into the building. The cries of the wounded and the dying inside the church proved that even the house of God could not provide them security and save them from the bullets of the crazed soldiers. In the distance too, similar atrocities were taking

place. But the savagery was not over yet. Seeing that it would be a waste of time and bullets to kill off all the witnesses inside the church, the order was given to set it on fire. Yelling at the top of his voice, the captain now appeared to have gone mad. He snatched the box of matches from his adjutant and set to work. But his hands were shaking; he thought that he could still hear the tune the young girl was humming as he was ramming himself into her virgin body, while all throughout the girl's unseeing eyes were fixed on his face. He slumped down on the ground and the soldiers made as if to move away, but with renewed anger he once again gave the order and the old church soon burst into flames, reducing the dead and the dying to an unrecognizable black mass. The new church too, standing not so far from the old one, caught the blaze and was badly damaged. Elsewhere in the village, the granaries were the first to go up in flames. The wind carried burning chunks from these structures and scattered them amidst the clusters of houses, which too burnt to the ground.

By the time the marauding soldiers left the village with their prisoners, it was dark and, to compound their misery, it rained the whole night. It was impossible to ascertain how many men and women were missing apart from the pastor and the four gaonburas. Mercifully, the visiting pastors were left alone when it became known that they did not belong to this village. But they were ordered to leave immediately and threatened in no uncertain terms that if they carried the news of what had happened here, their own villages would suffer the same fate. The search for the still missing persons began only the next morning. They found out that among the missing persons were Apenyo and her mother. When a general tally was taken, it was discovered that many villagers sustained bullet wounds as well as injuries from severe beatings. Also, six members of the choir were not accounted for. An old woman whose house was quite close to the church site told the search party that she had seen some people running towards the old church.

When the villagers arrived at the burnt-out site of the old church building, their worst suspicions were confirmed. Among the rain-drenched ashes of the old church they found masses of human bones washed clean by the night's rain. And on what was once the porch of the old church, they found a separate mass and through a twist of fate, a piece of Apenyo's new shawl, still intact beneath the pile of charred bones. Mother and daughter lay together in that pile. The villagers gathered all the bones of the six choir members and put in a common coffin but those of the mother and daughter, they put in a separate one. After a sombre and songless funeral service, the question arose about where to bury them. Though the whole village had embraced Christianity long ago, some of the old superstitions and traditions had not been totally abandoned. The deaths of these unfortunate people were considered to be from unnatural causes and according to tradition they could not be buried in the village graveyard, Christianity or no Christianity. Some younger ones protested, 'How can you say that? They were members of our church and sang in the choir.' The old ones countered this by saying, 'So what, we are still Nagas aren't we? And for us some things never change.' The debate went on for some time until a sort of compromise was reached: they would be buried just outside the boundary of the graveyard to show that their fellow villagers had not abandoned their remains to a remote forest site. But there was a stipulation: no headstones would be erected for them.

Today, these gravesites are two tiny grassy knolls on the perimeter of the village graveyard and if one is not familiar with the history of the village, particularly about what happened on that dreadful Sunday thirty odd years ago, one can easily miss these two mounds trying to stay above ground level. The earth may one day swallow them up or rip them open to reveal the charred bones. No one knows what will happen to these graves without headstones or even to those with elaborately decorated concrete structures inside the hallowed ground of the proper graveyard, housing masses of bones of those who died 'natural' deaths. But the story of what happened to the ones beneath the grassy knolls without the headstones, especially of the young girl whose last song died with her last breath, lived on in the souls of those who survived the darkest day of the village.

And what about the captain and his band of rapists who thought that they had burnt all the evidence of their crime? No one knows for sure. But the underground network, which seems able to ferret out the deadliest of secrets, especially about perpetrators of exceptional cruelty on innocent villagers, managed not only to piece together the events of that black Sunday, but also to ascertain the identity of the captain. After several years of often frustrated intelligence gathering, he was traced to a military hospital in a big city where he was being kept in a maximum-security cell of an insane asylum.

P.S. (Post Script):

It is a cold night in December and in a remote village, an old storyteller is sitting by the hearth-fire with a group of students who have come home for the winter holidays. They love visiting her to listen to her stories, but tonight Granny is not her usual chirpy self; she looks much older and seems to be agitated over something. One of the boys asks her whether she is not feeling well and tells her that if so, they can come back another night. But instead of answering the question, the old woman starts talking and tells them that on certain nights a peculiar wind blows through the village, which seems to start from the region of the graveyard and which sounds like a hymn. She also tells them that tonight is that kind of a night. At first the youngsters are skeptical and tell her that they cannot hear anything and that such things are not possible, but the old woman rebukes them by saying that they are not paying attention to what is happening around them. She tells them that youngsters of today have forgotten how to listen to the voice of the earth and the wind. They feel chastened and make a show of straining their ears to listen more attentively and to their utter surprise, they hear the beginnings of a low hum in the distance. They listen for some time and tell her, almost in triumph, that they can hear only an eerie sound. ‘No,’ the storyteller almost shouts, ‘listen carefully. Tonight is the anniversary of that dreadful Sunday.’ There is a death-like silence in the room and some of them begin to look uneasy because they too had heard vague rumours of army atrocities that took place in the village on a Sunday long before they were born. Storyteller and audience strain to listen more attentively and suddenly a strange thing happens: as the wind whirls past the house, it

increases in volume and for the briefest of moments, seems to hover above the house. Then it resumes whirling as though hurrying away to other regions beyond human habitation. The young people are stunned because they hear the new element in the volume and a certain uncanny lilt lingers on in the wake of its departure. The old woman jumps up from her seat and, looking at each one in turn, asks, ‘You heard it, didn’t you? Didn’t I tell you? It was Apenyo’s last song’, and she hums a tune softly, almost to herself. The youngsters cannot deny that they heard the note but are puzzled because they don’t know what she is talking about. As the old woman stands apart humming the tune, they look at her with wonder. There is a peculiar glow on her face and she seems to have changed into a new self, more alive and animated than earlier. After a while a young girl timidly approaches her and asks, ‘Grandmother, what are you talking about? Whose last song?’

The old storyteller whips around and surveys the group as though seeing them for the first time. She then heaves a deep sigh and with infinite sadness in her voice, spreads her arms wide and whispers, ‘You have not heard about that song? You do not know about Apenyo? Then come and listen carefully....’.

Thus, on a cold December night in a remote village, an old storyteller gathers the young of the land around the leaping flames of a hearth and squats on the bare earth among them to pass on the story of that Black Sunday when a young and beautiful singer sang her last song even as one more Naga village began weeping for her ravaged and ruined children.

Glossary:

- piggyback** : to carry on the back and shoulders (of another person)
- congregation** : a group of people assembled for religious worship
- pensive** : deep or serious thought
- exquisite** : extremely beautiful and delicate
- soprano** : the highest singing voice
- gaonburas** : the village leaders
- dobashi** : a custodian of Customary Law and Practice in Nagaland, a person appointed as an interpreter to translate the local dialect

expectant	: having or showing an excited feeling that something is about to happen, especially something good
spruced	: make someone or something smarter or tidier
sinister	: threatening, frightening
porch	: entrance
unfazed	: not disconcerted or perturbed
deacon	: an ordained minister of an order ranking below that of a priest
consecrated	: (of a church or land) having been made or declared sacred.
prodding	: poke with a finger, foot, or pointed object
incense	: very angry, enraged
semblance	: pretense, guise
oblivious	: unaware, unconscious
orgy	: a wild party characterized by excessive drinking and indiscriminate sexual activity
marauding	: going about in search of people to attack
ferret	: discover, reveal

Comprehension Questions:

I Answer the following questions in a sentence or two each:

1. How does Apenyo indicate that she is a singing genius?
2. Why does Apenyo's mother take her to the church?
3. How did God reward Libeni?
4. Why were the villagers in an expectant mood?
5. What was the plan of the government forces to punish the villagers for their 'crime'?
6. What happened as the formal inauguration began?
7. How did Apenyo defy the government forces the first time?
8. What was the issue about the burial of the mother and the daughter?
9. What happened to the captain after the incident of Black Sunday?

II Answer the following questions in about a page each:

1. Why did Apenyo's mother stop going to church?
2. Write a short note on Zhamben.
3. How did Libeni lead her life as a widow?
4. What preparations did the villagers make for the big event?
5. How were the villagers involved in the Independence Movement?
6. What did the villagers do after they found the charred dead bodies of the two women?
7. What was the debate regarding the burial of the daughter and the mother?

III Answer the following questions in about two pages each:

1. Describe the atmosphere in the village on the day of the dedication of the new church building.
2. Discuss the representation of Ethnic identity with reference to the story.
3. Comment on the theme of violence in 'The Last Song'.
4. Analyse the concept of the 'Collective Unconsciousness' as narrated by the old storyteller.

Suggested Reading:

- ◆ These Hills Called Home: Stories from the War Zone.
- ◆ Zubaan and Laburnum for my Head -Temsula Ao.

Extended Activity:

- ◆ Make a collage on atrocities on women.
- ◆ Organize a talk on the latest Constitutional Amendments on Women's Rights.
- ◆ Have an awareness programme on 'Women's Rights'.

6. BHOLI

- K.A.Abbas

Pre-reading activity:

- *Should girls and boys have the same rights, duties and privileges? What are some of the ways in which society treats them differently?*
- *When we speak of 'human rights', do you differentiate between girls' rights and boys' rights?*
- *How do you think you can contribute towards changing the social attitudes?*

Note on the Author:



Khawaja Ahmad Abbas (7 June, 1914-1 June, 1987) popularly known as K.A. Abbas, was a prolific writer, Indian film director, screenwriter, novelist, and a journalist in Urdu, Hindi and English languages. He won four National Film Awards in India. He is considered one of the pioneers of Indian Parallel or Neo-realistic cinema. The stories of Abbas focus on the much talked about 'common man'.

Bholi highlights the vital role played by a motivational teacher in the life of a student and how education becomes a lifeline for development and helps her stand up for her rights.

HER name was Sulekha, but since her childhood everyone had been calling her Bholi, the simpleton. She was the fourth daughter of Numberdar Ramlal. When she was ten months old, she had fallen off the cot on her head and perhaps it had damaged some part of her brain. That was why she remained a backward child and came to be known as Bholi, the simpleton.

At birth, the child was very fair and pretty. But when she was two years old, she had an attack of small-pox. Only the eyes were saved, but the entire body was permanently disfigured by deep black pockmarks. Little Sulekha could not speak till she was five, and when at last she learnt to speak, she stammered. The other children often made fun of her and mimicked her. As a result, she talked very little.

Ramlal had seven children—three sons and four daughters, and the youngest of them was Bholi. It was a prosperous farmer's household and there was plenty to eat and drink. All the children except Bholi were healthy and strong. The sons had been sent to the city to study in schools and later in colleges. Of the daughters, Radha, the eldest, had already been married. The second daughter Mangla's marriage had also been settled, and when that was done, Ramlal would think of the third, Champa. They were good-looking, healthy girls, and it was not difficult to find bridegrooms for them.

But Ramlal was worried about Bholi. She had neither good looks nor intelligence.

Bholi was seven years old when Mangla was married. The same year a primary school for girls was opened in their village. The Tehsildar sahib came to perform its opening ceremony. He said to Ramlal, "As a revenue official you are the representative of the government in the village and so you must set an example to the villagers. You must send your daughters to school."

That night when Ramlal consulted his wife, she cried, "Are you crazy? If girls go to school, who will marry them?"

But Ramlal did not have the courage to disobey the Tehsildar. At last his wife said, "I will tell you what to do. Send Bholi to school. As it is, there is little chance of her getting married, with her ugly face and lack of sense. Let the teachers at school worry about her."

The next day Ramlal caught Bholi by the hand and said, "Come with me. I will take you to school." Bholi was frightened. She did not know what a school was like. She remembered how a few days ago their old cow, Lakshmi, had been turned out of the house and sold.

"N-n-n-n NO, no-no-no," she shouted in terror and pulled her hand away from her father's grip.

"What's the matter with you, you fool?" shouted Ramlal. "I am only taking you to school." Then he told his wife, "Let her wear some decent clothes today, or else what will the teachers and the other schoolgirls think of us when they see her?"

New clothes had never been made for Bholi. The old dresses of her sisters were passed on to her. No one cared to mend or wash her clothes. But today she was lucky to receive a clean dress which had shrunk after many washings and no longer fitted Champa. She was even bathed and oil was rubbed into her dry and matted hair. Only then did she begin to believe that she was being taken to a place better than her home!

When they reached the school, the children were already in their classrooms. Ramlal handed over his daughter to the headmistress. Left alone, the poor girl looked about her with fear-laden eyes. There were several rooms, and in each room girls like her squatted on mats, reading from books or writing on slates. The headmistress asked Bholi to sit down in a corner in one of the classrooms.

Bholi did not know what exactly a school was like and what happened there, but she was glad to find so many girls almost of her own age present there. She hoped that one of these girls might become her friend. The lady teacher who was in the class was saying something to the girls but Bholi could understand nothing. She looked at the pictures on the wall. The colours fascinated her — the horse was brown just like the horse on which the Tehsildar had come to visit their village; the goat was black like the goat of their neighbour; the parrot was green like the parrots she had seen in the mango orchard; and the cow was just like their Lakshmi. And suddenly Bholi noticed that the teacher was standing by her side, smiling at her.

“What’s your name, little one?”

“Bh-Bho-Bho-.” She could stammer no further than that.

Then she began to cry and tears flowed from her eyes in a helpless flood. She kept her head down as she sat in her corner, not daring to look up at the girls who, she knew, were still laughing at her. When the school bell rang, all the girls scurried out of the classroom, but Bholi dared not leave her corner.

Her head still lowered, she kept on sobbing.

“Bholi.”

The teacher’s voice was so soft and soothing! In all her life she had never been called like that. It touched her heart.

“Get up,” said the teacher. It was not a command, but just a friendly suggestion. Bholi got up.

“Now tell me your name.”

Sweat broke out over her whole body. Would her stammering tongue again disgrace her? For the sake of this kind woman, however, she decided to make an effort.

She had such a soothing voice; she would not laugh at her.

“Bh-Bh-Bho-Bho-,” she began to stammer.

“Well done, well done,” the teacher encouraged her.

“Come on, now — the full name?” “Bh-Bh-Bho-Bholi.”

At last she was able to say it and felt relieved as if it was a great achievement

“Well done.”

The teacher patted her affectionately and said, “Put the fear out of your heart and you will be able to speak like everyone else.” Bholi looked up as if to ask, ‘Really?’

“Yes, yes, it will be very easy. You just come to school every day. Will you come?” Bholi nodded.

“No, say it aloud.” “Ye-Ye-Yes.”

And Bholi herself was astonished that she had been able to say it. “Didn’t I tell you? Now take this book.”

The book was full of nice pictures and the pictures were in colour - dog, cat, goat, horse, parrot, tiger and a cow just like Lakshmi. And with every picture was a word in big black letters.

“In one month, you will be able to read this book. Then I will give you a bigger book, then a still bigger one. In time you will be more learned than anyone else in the village. Then no one will ever be able to laugh at you. People will listen to you with respect and you will be able to speak without the

slightest stammer. Understand? Now go home, and come back early tomorrow morning.”

Bholi felt as if suddenly all the bells in the village temple were ringing and the trees in front of the school-house had blossomed into big red flowers. Her heart was throbbing with a new hope and a new life.

Thus the years passed.

The village became a small town. The little primary school became a high school. There was now a cinema under a tin shed and a cotton ginning mill.

The mail train began to stop at their railway station.

One night, after dinner, Ramlal said to his wife, “Then, shall I accept Bishamber’s proposal?”. “Yes, certainly,” his wife said. “Bholi will be lucky to get such a well-to-do bridegroom. A big shop, a house of his own and I hear several thousand in the bank. Moreover, he is not asking for any dowry.” “That’s right, but he is not so young, you know — almost the same age as I am — and he also limps. Moreover, the children from his first wife are quite grown up.”

“So what does it matter?” his wife replied. “Forty-five or fifty — it is no great age for a man. We are lucky that he is from another village and does not know about her pock-marks and her lack of sense. If we don’t accept this proposal, she may remain unmarried all her life.”

“Yes, but I wonder what Bholi will say.”

“What will that witless one say? She is like a dumb cow.” “May be you are right,” muttered Ramlal. In the other corner of the courtyard, Bholi lay awake on her cot, listening to her parents’ whispered conversation.

Bishamber Nath was a well-to-do grocer. He came with a big party of friends and relations with him for the wedding. A brass-band playing a popular tune from an Indian film headed the procession, with the bridegroom riding a decorated horse. Ramlal was overjoyed to see such pomp and splendor. He had never dreamt that his fourth daughter would have such a grand wedding. Bholi’s elder sisters who had come for the occasion were envious of her luck.

When the auspicious moment came the priest said, “Bring the bride.” Bholi, clad in a red silken bridal dress, was led to the bride’s place near the sacred fire.

“Garland the bride,” one of his friends prompted Bishamber Nath. The bridegroom lifted the garland of yellow marigolds. A woman slipped back the silken veil from the bride’s face. Bishamber took a quick glance. The garland remained poised in his hands. The bride slowly pulled down the veil over her face.

“Have you seen her?” said Bishamber to the friend next to him. “She has pock-marks on her face.” “So what? You are not young either.” “Maybe. But if I am to marry her, her father must give me five thousand rupees.” Ramlal went and placed his turban — his honour — at Bishamber’s feet. “Do not humiliate me so. Take two thousand rupees.”

“No. Five thousand or we go back. Keep your daughter.”

“Be a little considerate, please. If you go back, I can never show my face in the village.” “Then out with five thousand.” Tears streaming down his face, Ramlal went in, opened the safe and counted out the notes. He placed the bundle at the bridegroom’s feet.

On Bishamber’s greedy face appeared a triumphant smile. He had gambled and won. “Give me the garland,” he announced.

Once again, the veil was slipped back from the bride’s face, but this time her eyes were not downcast. She was looking up, looking straight at her prospective husband, and in her eyes, there was neither anger nor hate, only cold contempt.

Bishamber raised the garland to place it round the bride’s neck; but before he could do so, Bholi’s hand struck out like a streak of lightning and the garland was flung into the fire.

She got up and threw away the veil. “Pitaji!” said Bholi in a clear loud voice; and her father, mother, sisters, brothers, relations and neighbors’ were startled to hear her speak without even the slightest stammer.

“Pitaji! Take back your money. I am not going to marry this man.” Ramlal was thunderstruck. The guests began to whisper, “So shameless! So ugly and so shameless!” “Bholi, are you crazy?” shouted Ramlal. “You want to disgrace your family? Have some regard for our izzat!”

“For the sake of your izzat,” said Bholi, “I was willing to marry this lame old man. But I will not have such a mean, greedy and contemptible coward as my husband. I won’t, I won’t, I won’t.”

“What a shameless girl! We all thought she was a harmless dumb cow.” Bholi turned violently on the old woman, “Yes, Aunty, you are right. You all thought I was a dumb-driven cow. That’s why you wanted to hand me over to this heartless creature. But now the dumb cow, the stammering fool, is speaking. Do you want to hear more?”

Bishamber Nath, the grocer, started to go back with his party. The confused bandsmen thought this was the end of the ceremony and struck up a closing song.

Ramlal stood rooted to the ground, his head bowed low with the weight of grief and shame.

The flames of the sacred fire slowly died down. Everyone was gone. Ramlal turned to Bholi and said, “But what about you, no one will ever marry you now. What shall we do with you?”

And Sulekha said in a voice that was calm and steady, “Don’t you worry, Pitaji! In your old age I will serve you and Mother and I will teach in the same school where I learnt so much. Isn’t that right, Ma’am?”

The teacher had all along stood in a corner, watching the drama. “Yes, Bholi, of course,” she replied. And in her smiling eyes was the light of a deep satisfaction that an artist feels when contemplating the completion of her masterpiece.

GLOSSARY:

- simpleton** : a foolish person easily tricked by others
- Numberdar** : an official who collects revenue
- matted** : entangled
- squatted** : sat on their heels
- scurried** : ran or moved hurriedly
- ginning** : separating raw cotton from its seeds
- downcast** : looking downwards

Comprehension Questions:**I Answer the following questions in a sentence or two each:**

1. Why is Bholi's father worried about her?
2. Who was instrumental in influencing Ramlal's decision about Bholi's education? Why?
3. Why was Bholi diffident?
4. What difference does she find between the people at home and her teacher?
5. Why did Bholi's parents accept Bishamber's marriage proposal?
6. Why does Bholi refuse to marry Bishamber?

II Answer the following questions in about a page each:

1. Why did Bholi consider school a better place than home?
2. How did Bholi's teacher play an important role in changing the course of her life?
3. Going to school was a turning point in Bholi's life. Elaborate.
4. Pick up relevant facts from the lesson which suggest that the society was against girls' education.

III Answer the following questions in about two pages each:

1. Bholi's initial acceptance and final rejection of marriage to Bishamber depicts the transformation in her character. Elucidate.
2. Education is empowerment. Explain with reference to 'Bholi'.

Suggested Reading:

- ◆ 'The Brass Gong' - Qazi Abdul Sattar.
- ◆ 'Old Man at the Bridge' - Earnest Hemingway.:
- ◆ 'Gandhiji, the Teacher' - Rajkumari Amrit Kaur. T

Extended Activity:

- ◆ Conduct a debate on the Indian concept of a son and the modern notion of a daughter taking care of the parents.
- ◆ Prepare a PPT and collage on:
 - i) advertisements depicting stereotypical girl/woman.
 - ii) advertisements defying the stereotypical girl/woman.
- ◆ Have a discussion on the views of Manu, M.K. Gandhi and Dr. B.R. Ambedkar on women.

e-source

- ◆ <http://www.theweekendleader.com/Heroism/2659/mission-educate-girls.html>
- ◆ Turning adversity into opportunity/Muniba Mazari/TEDxslamabad YouTube TEDx Talks Sep 21,2015

7. SWAMI VIVEKANANDA'S CHICAGO SPEECH OF 1893

Pre-reading Activity:

- *Mention your favourite motivational speaker who has inspired you to change your personality?*
- *Who do you consider as an icon for the youth in the present times?*
- *'Love for all Religions' -display this ideology through various forms of non-scholastic activities.*

Note on the speaker:



Swami Vivekananda (12 January, 1863- 4 July, 1920) was an Indian Hindu monk, and a chief disciple of Sri Ramakrishna Paramhansa. Vivekananda played a key role in the introduction of Indian Yoga and Vedanta philosophy in the West. He taught a philosophy of traditional meditation and selfless service.

The Chicago Speech of 1893 (an extract) educates us on the cause of variance in religions and overcoming this variance through virtues of tolerance, harmony and peace. Swami Vivekananda had been an inspiration for the youth of his time, and continues to be an inspiration for the youth of today.

Swami Vivekananda heard about the World's Parliament of Religions to be held in Chicago in 1893. His friends and admirers in India wanted him to attend the Parliament. He too felt that the Parliament would provide the right forum to present his master's message to the world, and so he decided to go to America. Another reason which prompted Swami Vivekananda to go to America was to seek financial help for his project of uplifting the masses. Swami Vivekananda, however, wanted to have an inner certitude and divine call regarding his mission. Both of these he got while he sat in deep meditation on the rock-island at Kanyakumari. With the funds partly collected by his Chennai disciples and partly provided by the Raja of Khetri, Swami

Vivekananda left for America from Mumbai on 31 May, 1893. Swami Vivekananda was overwhelmed by the grand welcome accorded to him at the World's Parliament of Religions, to which he responded through his mesmerizing speech.....

RESPONSE TO WELCOME

Sisters and Brothers of America,

It fills my heart with joy unspeakable to rise in response to the warm and cordial welcome which you have given us. I thank you in the name of the most ancient order of monks in the world; I thank you in the name of the mother of religions; and I thank you in the name of millions and millions of Hindu people of all classes and sects. My thanks, also, to some of the speakers on this platform who, referring to the delegates from the Orient, have told you that these men from far-off nations may well claim the honour of bearing to different lands the idea of toleration. I am proud to belong to a religion which has taught the world both tolerance and universal acceptance. We believe not only in universal toleration, but we accept all religions as true. I am proud to belong to a nation which has sheltered the persecuted and the refugees of all religions and all nations of the earth. I am proud to tell you that we have gathered in our bosom the purest remnant of the Israelites, who came to Southern India and took refuge with us in the very year in which their holy temple was shattered to pieces by Roman tyranny....

The present convention, which is one of the most august assemblies ever held, is in itself a vindication, a declaration to the world of the wonderful doctrine preached in the Gita: "Whosoever comes to Me, through whatsoever form, I reach him; all men are struggling through paths which in the end lead to me." Sectarianism, bigotry, and its horrible descendant, fanaticism, have long possessed this beautiful earth. They have filled the earth with violence, drenched it often and often with human blood, destroyed civilisation and sent whole nations to despair. Had it not been for these horrible demons, human society would be far more advanced than it is now. But their time is come;

and I fervently hope that the bell that tolled this morning in honour of this convention may be the death-knell of all fanaticism, of all persecutions with the sword or with the pen, and of all uncharitable feelings between persons wending their way to the same goal.

Why We Disagree 15 September 1893

I will tell you a little story. You have heard the eloquent speaker who has just finished say, “Let us cease from abusing each other,” and he was very sorry that there should be always so much variance. But I think I should tell you a story which would illustrate the cause of this variance.

But I think I should tell you a story which would illustrate the cause of this variance. A frog lived in a well. It had lived there for a long time. It was born there and brought up there, and yet was a little, small frog. Of course, the evolutionists were not there then to tell us whether the frog lost its eyes or not, but, for our story's sake, we must take it for granted that it had its eyes, and that it every day cleansed the water of all the worms and bacilli that lived in it with an energy that would do credit to our modern bacteriologists. In this way it went on and became a little sleek and fat.

Well, one day another frog that lived in the sea came and fell into the well

“Where are you from?”

“I am from the sea.”

“The sea! How big is that? Is it as big as my well?” and he took a leap from one side of the well to the other.

“My friend,” said the frog of the sea, “how do you compare the sea with your little well?”

Then the frog took another leap and asked, “Is your sea so big?”, “What nonsense you speak, to compare the sea with your well!”

“Well, then,” said the frog of the well, “nothing can be bigger than my well; there can be nothing bigger than this; this fellow is a liar, so turn him out.” That has been the difficulty all the while.

I am a Hindu. I am sitting in my own little well and thinking that the whole world is my little well. The Christian sits in his little well and thinks the whole world is his well. The Mohammedan sits in his little well and thinks that is the whole world. I have to thank you of America for the great attempt you are making to break down the barriers of this little world of ours, and hope that, in the future, the Lord will help you to accomplish your purpose.

Paper on Hinduism Read at the Parliament on 19th September, 1893

The Hindus have received their religion through revelation, the Vedas. They hold that the Vedas are without beginning and without end. It may sound ludicrous to this audience, how a book can be without beginning or end. But by the Vedas no books are meant. They mean the accumulated treasury of spiritual laws discovered by different persons in different times. Just as the law of gravitation existed before its discovery, and would exist if all humanity forgot it, so is it with the laws that govern the spiritual world. The moral, ethical, and spiritual relations between soul and soul and between individual spirits and the Father of all spirits, were there before their discovery, and would remain even if we forgot them.

The discoverers of these laws are called Rishis, and we honour them as perfected beings. I am glad to tell this audience that some of the very greatest of them were women. Here it may be said that these laws as laws may be without end, but they must have had a beginning. The Vedas teach us that creation to is without beginning or end. Science is said to have proved that the sum total of cosmic energy is always the same. Then, if there was a time when nothing existed, where was all this manifested energy? Some say it was in a potential form in God. In that case God is sometimes potential and sometimes kinetic, which would make Him mutable. Everything mutable is a compound, and everything compound must undergo that change which is called destruction. So, God would die, which is absurd. Therefore, there never was a time when there was no creation.

Here I stand and if I shut my eyes, and try to conceive my existence, “I”, “I”, “I”, what is the idea before me? The idea of a body. Am I, then, nothing but a combination of material substances?

The Vedas declare, “No”. I am a spirit living in a body. The body

will die, but I shall not die. Here am I in this body; it will fall, but I shall go on living. I had also a past. The soul was not created, for creation means a combination which means a certain future dissolution. If then the soul was created, it must die. Some are born happy; enjoy perfect health, with beautiful body, mental vigor and all wants supplied. Others are born miserable, some are without hands or feet, others again are idiots and only drag on a wretched existence. Why, if they are all created, why does a just and merciful God create one happy and another unhappy, why is He so partial? Nor would God create one happy and another unhappy, why is He so partial? Nor would it mend matters in the least to hold that those who are miserable in this life will be happy in a future one. Why should a man be miserable even here in the reign of a just and merciful God? In the second place, the idea of a creator God does not explain the anomaly, but simply expresses the cruel fate of an all-powerful being. There must have been causes, then, before his birth, to make a man miserable or happy and those were his past actions.

Are not all the tendencies of the mind and the body accounted for by inherited aptitude? Here are two parallel lines of existence--one of the minds, the other of matter. If matter and its transformations answer for all that we have, there is no necessity for supposing the existence of a soul. But it cannot be proved that thought has been evolved out of matter, and if a philosophical monism is inevitable, spiritual monism is certainly logical and no less desirable than a materialistic monism; but neither of these is necessary here.

We cannot deny that bodies acquire certain tendencies from heredity, but those tendencies only mean the physical configuration, through which a peculiar mind alone can act in a peculiar way. There are other tendencies peculiar to a soul caused by its past actions. And a soul with a certain tendency would by the laws of affinity take birth in a body which is the fittest instrument for the display of that tendency. This is in accord with science wants to explain everything by habit, and habit is got through repetitions. So repetitions are necessary to explain the natural habits of a new-born soul. And since they were not obtained in this present life, they must have come down from past lives....

So then the Hindu believes that he is a spirit. For him the sword cannot

pierce-him the fire cannot burn-him the water cannot melt-him the air cannot dry. The Hindu believes that every soul is a circle whose circumference is nowhere, but whose centre is located in the body, and that death means the change of this centre from body to body. Not is the soul bound by the conditions of matter. In its very essence it is free. unbounded. holy, pure, and perfect. But somehow of other it finds itself tied down to matter and thinks of itself as matter.

And what is God's nature? He is everywhere, the pure and formless One, Almighty and the All-merciful. "Thou art our father, Thou art our mother, Thou art our beloved friend, Thou art the source of all strength; give us strength. Thou art He that beareth the burdens of the universe; help me bear the little burden of this life." Thus, sang the Rishis of the Vedas. And how to worship? Through love. "He is to be worshipped as the one beloved, dearer than everything in this and the next life."

This is the doctrine of love declared in the Vedas, and let us see how it is fully developed and taught by Krishna, whom the Hindus believe to have been God incarnate on earth.

He taught that a man ought to live in this world like a lotus leaf, which grows in water but is never moistened by water; so a man ought to live in the world--his heart to God and his hands to work.

It is good to love God for hope of reward in this or the next world, but it is better to love God for love's sake, and the prayer goes: "Lord, I do not want wealth, or children, or learning. If it be Thy will, I shall go from birth to birth, but grant me this, that I may love Thee without the hope of reward-love unselfishly for love's sake." One of the disciples of Krishna, the then Emperor of India, was driven from his kingdom by his enemies and had to take shelter with his queen in a forest in the Himalayas, and there one day the queen asked him, how it was that he, the most virtuous of men, should suffer so grand and beautiful they are; I love them. They do not give me anything, but my nature is to love the grand, the beautiful, therefore I love them. Similarly, I love the Lord. He is the source of all beauty, of all sublimity. He is the only object to be loved; my nature is to love Him, and therefore I love. I do not pray for anything; I do not ask for anything. Let Him place me wherever He likes. I must love Him for love's sake. I cannot trade love."

The Vedas teach that the soul is divine, only held in the bondage of matter; perfection will be reached when this bond will burst, and the word they use for it is therefore, Mukti-freedom, freedom from the bonds of imperfection, freedom from death and misery.

And this bondage can only fall off through the mercy of God, and this mercy comes on the pure. So purity is the condition of His mercy. How does that mercy act? He reveals Himself to the pure heart; the pure and the stainless see God, yea, even in this life; then and then only all the crookedness of the heart is made straight. Then all doubt ceases. He is no more the freak of a terrible law of causation. This is the very centre, the very vital conception of Hinduism.....

Address at the Final Session 27th September, 1893.

The World's Parliament of Religions has become an accomplished fact, and the merciful Father has helped those who laboured to bring it into existence, and crowned with success their most unselfish labour. My thanks to those noble souls whose large hearts and love of truth first dreamed this wonderful dream and then realised it. My thanks to the shower of liberal sentiments that has overflowed this platform. My thanks to this enlightened audience for their uniform kindness to me and for their appreciation of every thought that tends to smooth the friction of religions. A few jarring notes were heard from time to time in this harmony. My special thanks to them, for they have, by their striking contrast, made general harmony the sweeter.

Much has been said of the common ground of religious unity. I am not going just now to venture my own theory. But if anyone here hopes that this unity will come by the triumph of any one of the religions and the destruction of the other, to him I say, "Brother, yours is an impossible hope." Do I wish that the Christian would become Hindu? God forbid. Do I wish that the Hindu or Buddhist would become Christian? God forbid. The seed is put in the ground, and earth and air and water are placed around it. Does the seed become the earth, or the air, or the water? No. It becomes a plant, it develops after the law of its own growth, assimilates the air, the earth, and the water, converts them into plant substance, and grows into a plant.

Similar is the case with religion. The Christian is not to become a Hindu or a Buddhist, nor a Hindu or a Buddhist to become a Christian. But each must assimilate the spirit of the others and yet preserve his individuality and grow according to his own law of growth. If the Parliament of Religions has shown anything to the world it is this: It has proved to the world that holiness, purity and charity are not the exclusive possessions of any church in the world, and that every system has produced men and women of the most exalted character. In the face of this evidence, if anybody dreams of the exclusive survival of his own religion and the destruction of the others, I pity him from the bottom of my heart, and point out to him that upon the banner of every religion will soon be written, in spite of resistance: “Help and not Fight,” “Assimilation and not Destruction,” “Harmony and Peace and not Dissension.”

Glossary:

- affinity** : natural liking or understanding
- ludicrous** : ridiculous, unreasonable
- treasury** : the funds or revenue of a state
- grovelling** : act humbly to obtain forgiveness
- vigour** : physical strength and good health
- delusive** : a mistaken belief
- dissension** : disagreement within a group
- assimilation** : absorb into a larger group
- anomaly** : something differing from what is normal or standard
- revelation** : the act of revealing
- fiat** : an official order

Comprehension Questions:**I Answer the following questions in a sentence or two each:**

1. What has Swami Vivekananda's religion taught the world?
2. What makes Swami Vivekananda proud of his nation?
3. Mukti_____freedom, freedom from the bonds of _____, freedom from_____and misery.
4. What do Vedas teach us?
5. What is the doctrine of love declared in the Vedas?
6. According to Swami Vivekananda, Vedas are_____.

II Answer the following questions in about a page each:

1. How did Swami Vivekananda respond to the welcome at the World's Parliament of Religions Chicago?
2. What story does Swami Vivekananda narrate to illustrate the cause of variance in religions?
3. Discuss Swami Vivekananda's views on creation of body and spirit.
4. What is Swami Vivekananda's perspective of God?
5. How does Swami Vivekananda put forth his views about love of God through the example of Yudhishtira?

III Answer the following questions in about two pages:

1. According to Swami Vivekananda, the banner of all religions will be "Assimilation and not Destruction, Harmony and Peace and not Dissension" – Justify.
2. It is good to love God for hope of reward in this or the next world, but it is better to love God for love's sake-Elucidate.
3. Swami Vivekananda's speech conveys the message of Indian Wisdom to the World. Substantiate.

8. ALL SUMMER IN A DAY

- *Ray Douglas Bradbury*

Pre-reading Activity:

- *What are the characteristics of a Sci-fi?*
- *Can you imagine life on planet Mars?*
- *Is the bombardment of information in the present day education system making the children devoid of compassion to the fellow human beings?*
- *Do you think mere education in science is enough to lead our life?*

Note on the Author:



Ray Douglas Bradbury (August 22, 1920 – June 5, 2012) was an American author and screenwriter. He worked in a variety of genres, including fantasy, science fiction, horror, and mystery. Predominantly known for writing the iconic dystopian novel ‘Fahrenheit 451’ (1953), science-fiction and horror-story collections, ‘The Martian Chronicles’ (1950), ‘The Illustrated Man’ (1951), and ‘I Sing the Body Electric’ (1969). Bradbury was one of the most celebrated 20th and 21st-century American writers. While most of his best known work is in fantasy fiction, he also wrote in other genres, such as the coming-of-age novel ‘Dandelion Wine’ (1957) and the fictionalized memoir, ‘Green Shadows, White Whale’ (1992).’

All Summer in a Day, is set on the planet Venus, and describes in vivid detail, the day when the planet experiences sunshine; an event that occurs only once in seven years. The story explores the darker side of human nature that is manifest even in children as they pick on Margot simply because they see her as different from them. Bradbury’s tale ends on a note of hope, as the children seem to feel shame and remorse for their thoughtlessness.

“Ready.”

“Ready”

“Now?”

“Soon”

“Do the scientists really know? Will it happen today will it?”

“Look, look; see for yourself!” The children pressed to each other like so many roses, so many weeds, intermixed, peering out for a look at the hidden sun.

It rained.

It had been raining for seven years; thousands upon thousands of days compounded and filled from one end to the other with rain, with the drum and gush of water, with the sweet crystal fall of showers and the concussion of storms so heavy they were tidal wave come over the islands. Thousand forests had been crushed under the rain and grown up a thousand times to be crushed again. And this was the way life was forever on the planet Venus, and this was the schoolroom of the children of the rocket men and women who had come to a raining world to set up civilization and live out their lives.

“It’s stopping, it’s stopping!”

“Yes, yes!”

Margot stood apart from them, from these children who could never remember a time when there wasn't rain and rain and rain. They were all nine years old, and if there had been a day, seven years ago, when the sun came out for an hour and showed its face to the stunned world, they could not recall.

Sometimes, at night, she heard them stir, in remembrance, and she knew they were dreaming and remembering gold or a yellow crayon or a coin large enough to buy the world with. She knew they thought they remembered a warmth, like a blushing in the face, in the body, in the arms and legs and trembling hands. But then they always awoke to the tating drum, the endless shaking down of clear bead necklaces upon the roof, the walk, the gardens,

the forests, and their dreams were gone. All day yesterday they had read in class about the sun. About how like a lemon it was, and how hot. And they had written small stories or essays or poems about it. I think the sun is a flower that blooms for just one hour.

That was Margot's poem, read in a quiet voice in the still classroom while the rain was falling outside.

“Aw, you didn't write that!” protested one of the boys.

“I did,” said Margot. “I did”

“William!” said the teacher.

But that was yesterday. Now the rain was slackening, and the children were crushed in the great thick windows.

“Where's teacher?”

“She'll be back.”

“She'd better hurry; we'll miss it!”

They turned on themselves like a feverish wheel, all tumbling spokes. Margot stood alone. She was a very frail girl who looked as if she had been lost in the rain for years and the rain had washed out the blue from her eyes and the red from her mouth and the yellow from her hair. She was an old photograph dusted from an album, whitened away, and if she spoke at all her voice would be a ghost. Now she stood, separate, staring at the rain and the loud wet world beyond the huge glass.

“What're you looking at?” said

William. Margot said nothing.

“Speak when you're spoken to.”

He gave her a shove. But she did not move; rather she let herself be moved only by him and nothing else. They edged away from her; they would not look at her. She felt them go away. And this was because she would play no games with them in the echoing tunnels of the underground city. If they tagged her

and ran, she stood blinking after them and did not follow. When the class sang songs about happiness and life and games, her lips barely moved. Only when they sang about the sun and the summer did her lips move as she watched the drenched windows. And then, of course, the biggest crime of all was that she had come here only five years ago from Earth, and she remembered the Sun and the way the Sun was and the sky was when she was four in Ohio. And they, they had been on Venus all their lives, and they had been only two years old when last the sun came out and had long since forgotten the color and heat of it and the way it really was. But Margot remembered.

“It's like a penny,” she said once, eyes closed.

“No, it's not!” the children cried.

“It's like a fire,” she said, “in the stove.”

“You're lying; you don't remember!” cried the children.

But she remembered and stood quietly apart from all of them and watched the patterning windows. And once, a month ago, she had refused to shower in the school shower rooms, had clutched her hands to her ears and over her head, screaming the water mustn't touch her head. So after that, dimly, dimly, she sensed it, she was different, and they knew her difference and kept away. There was talk that her father and mother were taking her back to Earth next year; it seemed vital to her that they do so, though it would mean the loss of thousands of dollars to her family. And so, the children hated her for all these reasons of big and little consequence. They hated her pale snow face, her waiting silence, her thinness, and her possible future.

“Get away!” The boy gave her another push. “What're you waiting for?”

Then, for the first time, she turned and looked at him. And what she was waiting for was in her eyes.

“Well, don't wait around here!” cried the boy savagely. “You won't see anything!”

Her lips moved.

“Nothing!” he cried. “It was all a joke, wasn't it?” He turned to the other children.

“Nothing's happening today. Is it?”

They all blinked at him and then, understanding, laughed and shook their heads.

“Nothing, nothing!”

“Oh, but,” Margot whispered, her eyes helpless. “But this is the day, the scientists predict, they say, they know, the Sun . . .”

“All a joke!” said the boy, and seized her roughly. “Hey everyone, let's put her in a closet before teacher comes!”

“No,” said Margot, falling back.

They surged about her, caught her up and bore her, protesting, and then pleading, and then crying, back into a tunnel, a room, a closet, where they slammed and locked the door. They stood looking at the door and saw it tremble from her beating and throwing herself against it. They heard her muffled cries. Then, smiling, they turned and went out and back down the tunnel, just as the teacher arrived.

“Ready, children?” She glanced at her watch.

“Yes!” said everyone.

“Are we all here?” “Yes!”

The rain slackened still more.

They crowded to the huge door.

The rain stopped.

It was as if, in the midst of a film concerning an avalanche, a tornado, a hurricane, a volcanic eruption, something had, first, gone wrong with the sound apparatus, thus muffling and finally cutting off all noise, all of the blasts and repercussions and thunders, and then, second, ripped the film from the projector and inserted in its place a peaceful tropical slide which did not move or tremor. The world ground to a standstill. The silence was so immense and unbelievable that you felt your ears had been stuffed or you had lost your

hearing altogether. The children put their hands to their ears. They stood apart. The door slid back and the smell of the silent, waiting world came in to them.

The sun came out.

It was the color of flaming bronze and it was very large. And the sky around it was a blazing blue tile color. And the jungle burned with sunlight as the children, released from their spell, rushed out, yelling, into the springtime.

“Now, don't go too far,” called the teacher after them. “You've only two hours, you know. You wouldn't want to get caught out!”

But they were running and turning their faces up to the sky and feeling the sun on their cheeks like a warm iron; they were taking off their jackets and letting the sun burn their arms.

“Oh, it's better than the sun lamps, isn't it?” “Much, much better!”

They stopped running and stood in the great jungle that covered Venus that grew and never stopped growing, tumultuously, even as you watched it. It was a nest of octopi, clustering up great arms of flesh like weed, wavering, flowering in this brief spring. It was the color of rubber and ash, this jungle, from the many years without sun. It was the color of stones and white cheeses and ink, and it was the color of the moon.

The children lay out, laughing, on the jungle mattress and heard it sigh and squeak under them resilient and alive. They ran among the trees, they slipped and fell, they pushed each other, they played hide-and-seek and tag, but most of all they squinted at the sun until tears ran down their faces; they put their hands up to that yellowness and that amazing blueness and they breathed of the fresh, fresh air and listened and listened to the silence which suspended them in a blessed sea of no sound and no motion. They looked at everything and savored everything. Then, wildly like animals escaped from their caves, they ran and ran in shouting circles. They ran for an hour and did not stop running.

And then - in the midst of their running, one of the girls wailed.

Everyone stopped.

The girl, standing in the open, held out her hand.

“Oh, look, look,” she said, trembling.

They came slowly to look at her opened palm.

In the centre of it, cupped and huge, was a single raindrop. She began to cry, looking at it. They glanced quietly at the sun.

“Oh. Oh.”

A few cold drops fell on their noses and their cheeks and their mouths. The sun faded behind a stir of mist. A wind blew cool around them. They turned and started to walk back toward the underground house, their hands at their sides, their smiles vanishing away. A boom of thunder startled them, and like leaves before a new hurricane, they tumbled upon each other and ran. Lightning struck ten miles away, five miles away, a mile, a half-mile. The sky darkened into midnight in a flash.

They stood in the doorway of the underground for a moment until it was raining hard. Then they closed the door and heard the gigantic sound of the rain falling in tons and avalanches, everywhere and forever.

“Will it be seven more years?”

“Yes. Seven.”

Then one of them gave a little cry.

“Margot!”

“What?”

“She's still in the closet where we locked her.”

“Margot.”

They stood as if someone had driven them, like so many stakes, into the floor.

They looked at each other and then looked away. They glanced out at the world that was raining now and raining and raining steadily. They could not meet each other's glances. Their faces were solemn and pale. They looked at their hands and feet, their faces down.

“Margot.”

One of the girls said, “Well . . . ?” No one moved.

“Go on,” whispered the girl.

They walked slowly down the hall in the sound of cold rain. They turned through the doorway to the room in the sound of the storm and thunder, lightning on their faces, blue and terrible. They walked over to the closet door slowly and stood by it.

Behind the closet door was only silence.

They unlocked the door, even more slowly, and let Margot out.

Glossary:

- compounded** : make something worse by causing further damage or problems
- concussion** : a temporary loss of consciousness caused by a blow to the head
- tatting drums** : beating drums
- slackening** : to become slow gradually
- frail** : physically weak and thin
- shove** : to push somebody/something in a rough way
- surge** : to move quickly and with force in a particular direction
- closet** : a tall cupboard or wardrobe with a door, used for storage
- avalanche** : a mass of snow, falling rapidly down a mountain side
- tornado** : windstorm, typhoon
- repercussions** : consequences, result

octopi	: any octopod of the genus Octopus, having a soft, oval body and eight sucker-bearing arms
resilient	: springing back, rebounding
savour	: to perceive by taste or smell, relish
solemn	: grave, sober

Comprehension questions:

I Answer the following questions in a sentence or two each:

1. Why were the children eager to see the sun?
2. Who had come to live on Venus? Why?
3. How was the way of life on planet Venus?
4. How does Margot depict the sun in her poem?
5. When was the last time the sun had come out?
6. What does the teacher constantly confirm with the children?
7. Why did Margot refuse to shower in the school shower?
8. How was the warmth of the sun felt by the children?

II Answer the following questions in about a page each:

1. What was the imagination of the children about the sun? How did it actually look like?
2. How was Margot different from the other children? Why?
3. How did the children enjoy the unique experience of the appearance of the sun?
4. What does Margot protest about? How do the children treat her?
5. Describe the change in the attitude of the children after they enjoyed 'all summer in a day'.

PART II

GRAMMAR COMPONENTS

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1. ARTICLES

An **Article** is a word used to modify a noun, person, place, object, or an idea. There are two different types of articles: definite and indefinite. We use them in writing and conversation to point out or refer to a noun or group of nouns:

The Definite Article

The is a definite article. It is used to refer to a particular thing or group of things.

For example: Your friend might ask, “Are you going to the party this weekend?”

The definite article tells you that your friend is referring to a specific party that both of you know about. The definite article can be used with singular, plural, or uncountable nouns.

Examples:

Please give me the hammer.

Please give me the red hammer; the blue one is too small.

The man standing behind the counter is my cousin.

Indefinite Articles :

The indefinite article takes two forms.

The article ‘**a**’, when it precedes a word that begins with a consonant.

The article ‘**an**’, when it precedes a word that begins with a vowel. The indefinite article indicates that a noun refers to a general idea rather than a particular thing.

For example:

1. There is a tree in our college premises.
2. There is an old tree next to our class room.

Exceptions:

Choosing 'a' or 'an'. There are a few exceptions to the general rule of using 'a' before words that begin with consonants and 'an' before words that begin with vowels.

Example: 1. an honour.

Here, the first letter of the word honour is a consonant but the article 'an' is used owing to its vowel sound.

Other examples: a L-plate, an MLA, an hour.

2. a European

Here the first and the second letters of the word European are vowels but the article 'a' is used owing to its consonant sound.

Other examples: a U-turn, a Unicorn, a University

I. Fill in the blanks with appropriate articles:

1. He was _____ member of the Board of Directors.
2. He is _____ university student.
3. They bought _____ horse and _____ ox.
4. Which is _____ smallest continent?
5. Spanish is _____ easy language.
6. There are some dark and dense clouds in _____ sky.
7. The navy ship crossed _____ Pacific Ocean.

II. Complete the following with suitable articles where ever necessary:

1. The difference between _____ successful person and _____ others is not _____ lack of strength, not _____ lack of knowledge, but rather lack of confidence.
2. If you really want to do something, you will find _____ way, if you don't, you'll find _____ excuse.
3. _____ best and most beautiful things in _____ world cannot be seen or even touched, they must be felt with _____ heart.

e-sources

- ◆ https://www.learn-english-today.com/lessons/lesson_contents/exercises/a-an-the_print-ex.html

2. PARTS OF SPEECH

Parts of Speech are the categories of words based on their function within a sentence.

There are eight Parts of Speech.

- A. Noun
- B. Pronoun
- C. Verb
- D. Adverb
- E. Adjective
- F. Preposition
- G. Conjunction
- H. Interjection

A) Noun:

Nouns are the names of persons, places and things in order to identify .

There are five kinds of nouns.

They are:

- a. Proper Noun
- b. Common Noun
- c. Collective Noun
- d. Abstract Noun
- e. Concrete/Material Noun

a. Proper Noun:

Proper Noun is the name of a particular person, place or a thing. Besides it names mountains, rivers, seas or oceans. It always begins with a capital letter.

They are:

- Persons – Ravi, Mohan.
 Places – Bangalore, Chennai.
 Mountains – Himalayas, Everest.
 Rivers – Ganga, Krishna.
 Seas – Arabian Sea, Red Sea
 Oceans – Indian Ocean, Pacific Ocean.

For example:

1. The Taj Mahal is one of the wonders of the world.
2. Edmund Hillary climbed the Mount Everest.
3. Bengaluru is an IT city.

b. Common Noun:

The Common noun is a noun in general to name persons, places or things of the same kind or class/ group. They take a proper name when used specifically.

For example: King, city, book, teacher, student, child, animal, house, ship, boy.

They are of two kinds: Countable nouns and Uncountable nouns.

The nouns that we can count are Countable Nouns.

For example: Chair, book, boy, dog, bench (Singular)

Chairs, books, boys, dogs, benches (Plural)

1. I bought a cake.
2. Books are on the shelf.
3. Students sat on the benches.

The nouns that we cannot count are called Uncountable Nouns.

For example: Water, ice, wheat, air, sand, oil.

1. A glass of water.
2. A box of ice.
3. A bag of wheat.

c. Collective Nouns:

A collective noun denotes a number of persons or things grouped together as one complete whole.

They are: family, army, team, nation, committee, herd, school etc.

For example:

A bunch of flowers	A flight of steps	A colony of ants
A bundle of sticks	A pair of shoes	A pile of books
A herd of cattle	A swarm of bees	A team of players
A chain of hills	A heap of sand	A school of whales
A cluster of stars	A library of books	A pack of wolves

d. Abstract Noun:

The Abstract nouns are the words used to express the quality, feeling, action or state of being.

For example:

<u>Quality</u>	<u>Feeling</u>	<u>Action</u>	<u>State</u>
honesty	surprise	theft	boyhood
wisdom	fear	arrival	poverty
courage	joy	growth	childhood
kindness	sorrow	flight	youth
innocence	anger	motion	prosperity

1. History is the sequence of past events.
2. Fine Arts is a hobby of creative individuals.
3. Hard work and dedication are the key to success.

e. Concrete/Material Noun:

a Concrete/ Material nouns denotes the matter or substance of which things are made.

For example :

1. Her necklace is made of gold.
2. The building is built of hollow bricks.
3. The imitation flowers are made up of cotton clothes.

B) Pronoun:

Pronoun is a word that can be used in place of a noun. They are used to avoid the repetitions of the same nouns.

They are: I, me, mine, she, he, it, we and us.

There are different types of pronouns, each serving a different purpose.

For example:

“Jeremy ran so fast, you'd think his life was on the line.” The pronoun saves us from repeating the name Jeremy again.

a. Personal Pronouns:

Personal pronouns are used as a substitute for a person's name. They are of two kinds: subjective and objective pronouns. That is, they either act as the subject of the sentence or the object of the sentence.

They are: I, you, he, she, it, we, they, me, you, her, him, it, us, and them.

For example:

1. **They** went to the store.
2. Heavy rains disturbed **me**.

b. Possessive Pronouns:

Possessive pronouns show ownership or possession of a noun.

They are: My, our, your, his, her, its and their.

For example:

1. Is that my book?
2. No, that's his book.

However, there are also independent possessive pronouns. These pronouns refer to a previously named or understood noun. They stand alone and aren't followed by any other noun.

For example: Mine, ours, yours, his, hers, its, theirs.

1. That's mine.
2. No, it's theirs.

c. Indefinite Pronouns:

Indefinite pronouns don't point to particular nouns. We use them when an object doesn't need to be specifically identified. As such, it can remain indefinite.

For example: Few, everyone, all, some, anything and nobody.

1. Most wealth is held by a select few.
2. Everyone attended the function.

d. Relative Pronouns:

Relative pronouns are used to connect a clause or phrase to a noun or pronoun. We often use them when we need to add more information.

They are: who, whom, which, whoever, whomever, whichever, that.

For example:

1. The driver who saved the child was rewarded.
2. I don't know which pair of shoes you want.

e. Demonstrative Pronouns:

Demonstrative pronouns take the place of a noun that is already been mentioned. They can be singular or plural.

They are: These, those, this, that, such.

For example:

1. These are fragrant flowers.
2. Those are great monuments.

f. Interrogative Pronouns:

Interrogative pronouns are used to ask questions.

They are: Who, whom, which, what, whoever, whomever, whichever,

For example:

1. Who is your English teacher?
2. Which book are you reading?

g. Reflexive Pronouns:

Reflexive pronouns are used when the subject and the object of a sentence refer to the same person or thing. These pronouns end in-self or-selves. They are: Myself, yourself, himself, herself, itself, ourselves, yourselves, themselves.

For example:

1. I told myself not to spend all my money on new shoes.
2. They bought themselves a new car.

Fill in the blanks with appropriate pronouns:

1. Give me the ball. It's _____ ball.
2. Look at the monkey! _____ is big.
3. We clean the house _____ before festivals.
4. The children play games. _____ have fun.
5. The green socks are _____.

C) Verb

Verb is a word that denotes action. It is the most important part of a sentence and indicates the time.

For example:

1. The boy runs.
2. She drinks milk every day.
3. They eat apple every day to stay healthy.

When a noun takes a plural form 's' or 'es' is not added to the verb.

When a verb is singular, in the present tense '-s' or '-es' is added to the verb. Verb can be finite and non- finite.

a. Finite Verb

Finite verb has subject and indicates the tense, person and number. These verbs describe the action of a person, place or thing in the sentence.

For example:

1. They went to the mall today.
2. The sailboat glides over the water.

The finite verb has two forms: Transitive and Intransitive.

Transitive Verb has a direct object in order to complete its meaning.

For example:

1. Jayanth set the documents on the CEO's desk. (Transitive: The documents are the direct object to the verb: set.)
2. Ms. Sunitha manages the accounting department.

(Transitive: The accounting department is the direct object to the verb: manage.)

Intransitive Verb does not need a direct object in order to complete its meaning. Many are followed by an adjective, adverb, preposition or verb complement (gerund or infinitive).

For example:

1. John has had difficulty managing since his wife's death. (Intransitive: Since is a preposition of time. Managing doesn't need a direct object)
2. The sun set low over the Pacific Ocean.
(Intransitive: Low is an adverb. Set doesn't need a direct object.)

b. Non-finite Verb

A Non-finite Verb form does not show person, number or tense. There are three types of non-finite verbs: Gerunds, Infinitives, and Participles.

a. Gerunds

Gerunds end in *-ing*, like *skiing*, *reading*, dancing, singing, etc. They act like nouns and can serve as subjects or objects of sentences using auxiliary or helping verbs.

For example:

1. I like swimming.
2. Smoking is bad for health.
3. My favourite pastime is brisk walking on the weekends.

Participles

A participle is a form of a verb that is used in a sentence to modify a noun, noun phrase, verb, or verb phrase, and plays a role similar to an adjective or adverb.

The two types of participles are:

The present participle (such as writing, singing and raising) and the past participle (such as written, sung and raised)

For example:

1. The gardener was planting saplings.
2. She has written a novel.

Infinitives:

An infinitive is a verb form that acts as other parts of speech in a sentence. It is formed with to + base form of the verb. Infinitives can be used as an object following the verb; a subject at the beginning of a sentence; an adverb modifying a verb and as an adjective modifying a noun.

For example:

1. Jim always forgets to eat.
2. To travel around the world requires a lot of time and money.
3. You promised to buy me a diamond ring.
4. Tara has the ability to succeed.

I. Rewrite the sentences using the verbs in the brackets:

1. He has (work) for his livelihood.
2. She always fails (agree) with her mother.
3. Children love (play) football.
4. The dog wags its tail (show) its affection.

II. Write whether the verbs are Transitive or Intransitive:

1. The lion attacks the tiger. ()
2. Birds fly. ()
3. She laughed aloud. ()
4. She walked elegantly in the show. ()
5. Raju organizes the function. ()

D) Adverb:

An Adverb is a word that modifies a verb, adjective or another adverb. Sometimes they modify the prepositional phrases.

For example: Speak nicely or work hard.

Adverbs can also tell you how much or how many of something you have.

Adverbs provide a deeper description of a verb within a sentence.

There are five types of adverbs:

Adverbs of Time, place, manner, degree and frequency.

a. Adverb of time

An adverb of time provides more information about when an action takes place. They are usually placed at the beginning or end of a sentence.

For example: never, always, rarely, sometimes, normally, seldom, usually, so far.

1. So far, we have found ten new books.
2. I haven't been going to the gym lately.
3. We bought a new car recently.

b. Adverbs of Place

Adverbs of place indicate where the action is taking place. They are usually placed after the main verb or object or at the end of the sentence.

For example: here, there, nowhere, everywhere, out, in, above, below.

1. We went into the cave, and there were bats everywhere!
2. There aren't any Pokémon here, let's look somewhere else.
3. Please close the door when you go out.

c. Adverbs of Manner

Adverbs of manner provide more information about how an action is done. They are probably the most common of all adverbs and most of them will end in-ly.

For example: neatly, slowly, quickly, sadly, calmly, politely, loudly, kindly,

1. The young soldier folded his clothes neatly at the end of the day.
2. I invited the guests politely.
3. A cat rested lazily on the sofa.

d. Adverbs of Degree

Adverbs of degree explain the level or intensity of a verb, adjective, or even another adverb.

For example: almost, quite, nearly, too, enough, just, hardly, simply, so, absolutely.

1. This cake is absolutely wonderful.
2. Aren't you hungry? You've hardly had your dinner.
3. I know them quite well.

e. Adverbs of Frequency

Adverbs of frequency explain how often an action occurs. They're often placed directly before the main verb of a sentence.

For example: never, always, rarely, sometimes, normally, seldom, usually.

1. I rarely eat fast food these days.
2. Tom usually takes his dog for a walk before breakfast.
3. They always go to the same restaurant every Friday.

Adverbs can even describe other adverbs.

For example:

1. Beyoncé sings really loudly.
2. She can sing incredibly beautifully.

E) Adjectives

Adjectives are the words that describe the qualities or modify nouns.

For example:

colourful, big, tall, small, beautiful, intelligent

1. The colourful balloon floated over the treetop.

2. The big dog chased the car.
3. The little waiter is friendly with the customers.
4. A small rat is beside the brown cabinet.

They can also describe the quantity of nouns: many, few, millions, eleven.

1. Many cars are parked in the basement.
2. Bring few of the notebooks from the classroom. prepositions.

F) Preposition

Preposition is a word placed before a noun or pronoun to show the relationship of the position of same noun or pronoun to other words of the sentence.

For example:

1. The players are in the field.
2. There is a small park in front of my house.
3. My watch is on the table.

There are three kinds of prepositions:

1. Simple Preposition:

Simple prepositions are short words placed before a noun or pronoun to express their relationships of position and time.

They are: at, in, of, till, upon, into, with, to, by, on, for, under etc.

For example:

1. The bottle is on the table.
2. He bought up the child very tenderly.
3. I shall wait till tomorrow.

2. Compound Preposition:

Compound preposition is little longer with two or more words and it is used as a single preposition before a noun or a pronoun.

They are: across, about, below without, above, before, underneath, after, behind, amidst, beyond, during, until, around, between, inside, since, against, beside, among, beneath, within, towards, etc.

For example:

1. They discussed the matter among the parties.
2. She worked for there about four years.
3. They travelled around the world.

3. Prepositional phrases:

Prepositional phrases are a group of two or more words that begin with Prepositions.

They are: by way of, by means of, on account of, according to, in place of, with a view, to by reason of, along with, on contrary to, by nature, in accordance with, in front of, for the sake of, etc.

For example:

1. She remitted the amount to her account in accordance with the bank notice
2. The child along with his friends played in the rain.
3. The pet died in front of his master.

Exercises:

I. Fill in the blanks with suitable prepositions:

1. The bowler threw the ball_____the wicket.
2. The children are_____the playground.
3. She was sorry_____the delay.

4. The ball rolled _____ the lawn.
5. The book fell _____ his friend.

II. Fill in the blanks with suitable prepositions given below:

(among, in accordance to, between, since, within, in front of, beyond, through, beside, for)

1. There is a beautiful park _____ my college.
2. We regret _____ the incident that occurred last week.
3. She sat _____ her mother.
4. The bird flew _____ the window.
5. His crime is _____ any excuse.
6. They shared the amount _____ the two parties.
7. She solved the problem _____ two hours.
8. He went missing _____ 2010.

e- source

- ◆ <https://www.englishgrammar.org/parts-speech-exercise-3/>

G) Conjunctions:

A conjunction is a part of speech that acts as a connector. Literally the word conjunction means join (con-) together (junct).

Conjunctions are used to connect clauses, sentences and words. They serve to join together ideas or words.

Examples:

- a. Pavan wanted to ride his bike and he wanted to go to the park.
- b. Sofia did not like bananas, but she loved apples.
- c. He reads books and magazines for pleasure.

Types of Conjunctions:

There are various types of conjunctions, mainly, Co-ordinating conjunctions, Subordinating conjunctions and Correlative conjunctions.

Co-ordinating Conjunctions:

Co-ordinating conjunctions connect words, phrases, and clauses. They link ideas or concepts. A coordinating conjunction gives equal emphasis or importance to clauses, phrases, and words.

Examples: but, for, nor, or, so, yet.

Choose the appropriate co-ordinating conjunctions and fill in the blanks:

1. Maria is not well, ___ she insists to be allowed to practice hand ball.
(if, yet, so, when)
2. The journalist collected enough data for the report ___ his editor compiled it. (and, also, so, far)
3. You must complete the work tomorrow ___ give in your resignation, the first thing in the morning. (or, also, that, for)
4. My car tire has got punctured ___ I will need you to drop me at the railway station. (if, so, nonetheless, but)

Subordinating Conjunctions:

Subordinating conjunctions join two clauses together, but in doing so, they make one clause dependent (or “subordinate”) upon the other.

A subordinating conjunction may appear at the beginning of a sentence or between two clauses in a sentence. The commonly used subordinating conjunctions are:

after, as soon as, because, even though, unless, whether, while, etc. ;

For example:

1. Alex and Sean became my best friends after I got admitted to college.
2. They came to talk to me as soon as I entered the classroom.
3. He values money very much because he is a self-made man.

Fill in the blanks with suitable subordinating conjunctions:

1. He played the match_____he was unwell. (while, even though)
2. Wait here for me _____ I come back. (unless, until)
3. He explained the things to me _____ I did not know anything. (as if, although)
4. Kapil fed his cat_____he left for school. (though, before)
5. We shall start_____you are ready. (when, so that)
6. We won't be allowed to enter_____we don't have passes. (because, unless)

Correlative Conjunctions:

Correlative conjunctions are conjunctions that work in tandem to join clauses or phrases of equal importance.

For example:

- a. My brother will begin either trade school or community college in the future.
- b. He is not only a strong student but also a gifted athlete.

Use a comma before the second correlative conjunction when they join two lengthy independent clauses.

For example:

Not only did she graduate with honours, but she also gave the commencement speech.

Fill in the blanks with Correlative Conjunctions:

1. Ramesh is not only highly qualified_____is a very talented musician. (or, but also, and, then)
2. She is___beautiful and intelligent. (both, only, but, and)

3. Neither is he on time ___ is he sincere in his work. (nor, or, either, none.)
4. If he skips classes today ____ he will be taken to the Principal. (when, then, that, what)
5. Hardly had he left for the journey____it started raining. (when, then, that, what)

e-sources

- ◆ <https://www.gingersoftware.com/content/grammar-rules/conjunctions/subordinating>
- ◆ <https://www.learngrammar.net/a/examples-of-subordinating-conjunction>

3. PUNCTUATION

Punctuation refers to the practice of inserting certain marks or signs in sentences and paragraphs to clarify meaning to the reader. It is the use of symbols to the alphabet of a writing system to indicate aspects of the intonation and meaning not otherwise conveyed in the written language.

They are:

- a. Capital letter
- b. Full stop
- c. Exclamation mark
- d. Comma
- e. Semi- colon
- f. Colon
- g. Hyphen
- h. Brackets (Parentheses)
- i. Dash
- j. Question mark
- k. Apostrophe

a) Capital Letter

Capital Letters are used:

- for beginning a sentence: My cat has five kittens.
- for proper nouns: Bill, Sunday, Japan, July, Easter, Newcastle, Railway Street.
- for adjectives formed from proper nouns: Indian, Japanese, Italian --for school subjects that refer to languages: English, Latin.
- for titles of people: President Reagan.
- for titles of books, plays, etc.: ‘Travels to South America’, ‘A Look at Football.’
- for names of institutions such as schools, colleges, National Public School, A.P.T. Company.

b) Full Stop

A Full stop is used:

- at the end of a sentence, unless a question mark or an exclamation mark is used: My dog has fleas. (.)
- after initials in names, countries, medals, degrees: J.R. Smith, U.S.A., V.C., B.A.
- after shortened forms of words that do not end in the last letter of the word: Fri. (Friday), Jan. (January), Rev. (Reverend)
- to indicate decimal points: 6.75, 25.70 m.

c) Exclamation Mark

Exclamation marks are used:

- at the end of a word or group of words said with feelings: My goodness! What a pity! , Help!
- at the end of a true exclamation or interjection, even if it does not express feeling: Good health! Here's luck!
- at the end of a sentence showing strong feeling: I have actually won!
- at the end of a sentence in brackets to suggest that the statement is silly: Charlie Chaplin was the name of the cat (!)
- to combine humour with surprise: Mum, who works in a chocolate factory, was given a present from aunt Betty - a box of chocolates!

d) Question Mark

Question marks are used:

- at the end of a sentence to ask a direct question: Does your brother ride a horse?
- after one or more words that ask a direct question: Dinner? On the yacht?

e) Comma

Commas are used:

- to separate words in a list: She took a pencil, a ruler, a rubber and some papers.
- to separate adjectives in a sentence: She wore a large, expensive, new coat.
- to show a pause by separating a phrase: The man, flushed with anger, raised his fist.
- to a pause by separating sentences: It was very cold, the water was frozen.
- after participle phrases that begin sentences: Feeling ill, I went to bed.
- to make sense in certain statements which would be silly without a comma:

Let us begin sawing Charlie. (Let us begin sawing, Charlie.)

- when the answers begin with 'Yes' or 'No': Yes, I am going to town. No, it is not late.
- to separate 'please' from other words in a sentence: May I have some cake, please?
- to mark off names of people spoken to: Paul, can you help?

f) Semi-Colon

Semi - colons are used:

- to join sentences with principal clauses not connected by a conjunction: The team was confident; the game was about to start; I felt nervous.
- to separate clauses which already contain commas: Last year, our team, *The Rockets*, won every game; they had scored no goals against us.

g) Colon

Colons are used:

- for map scales and ratios: scale of 1:500, ratio of 4:1
- to introduce a list if a collective word is first given: The shop sold fishing tackle: rods, lines, reels, nets, sinkers and all types of lures.
- to introduce a quotation, although a comma is generally used: The Principal said: 'We are proud of our school.'
- to introduce an explanation: Travelers must be careful: they must boil the drinking water.
- to introduce a statement which tells more about the one that comes before it: A teacher once taught me two golden rules: to do my best and never tell lies.

h) Hyphen

Hyphens are used:

- to connect parts of some compound words: well-written, co-pilot, mother-in-law
- in numbers and fractions: thirty-five, three-quarters
- in compound words beginning with 'non' 'self': non-vegetarian, self-starter, start-up companies
- to indicate stammering: 'C-c-ome h-h-here,' he stammered.
- in words that follow a single letter: X-ray, L-plate.
- when the second part of a compound word begins with a capital; anti-American.
- to join nouns of equal value which are different: owner-builder, maid-servant
- between an adverb ending in 'ly' and a noun: a heavily - laden truck.
- with colour combinations: The sea was blue-green. Her dress was grey:blue.
- in adjectival compound words with 'well', 'ill', 'semi': a well-known actor, an ill-lit room, semi-cooked food.

i) Brackets (Parentheses)

Brackets are used:

- to set off a word, phrase or sentence which explains or qualifies something within a sentence: He felt sick (as the poison was working) and collapsed. Winston Churchill (1874-1965) was Britain's wartime leader.
- to enclose words that tell what is happening when someone is speaking: 'I wish to announce' (loud jeering) 'that I am the new mayor'.

j) Dash

Dashes are used:

- to denote emphasis or suspense: We were pleased – no, delighted with your news.
- to make a comment that is aside: We rode the boat – a flimsy craft –to the shore.
- to indicate surprise ending: The man was lying on the bed –dead. -- to show a break in speech: I felt it – it was slimy –began crawling up my foot.

k) Quotation Mark

Double quotation marks enclose words that are spoken. Single quotation marks are used for quotations within quotations.

- If a punctuation mark is a part of quotation, put it inside the quotation marks: 'Stop the thief!' he yelled. 'Are you coming?' he asked.
- to enclose words actually spoken: 'I am coming,' said Mary.
- to enclose quotations within quotations: The winner said: "My coach says 'Never give up', and so I try hard even when losing."

I) Apostrophe

Apostrophes are used:

- with nouns, to show ownership or possession
- with singular nouns, and with plural nouns not ending in 's'. The apostrophe is followed by 's': a dog's paw, the geese's feathers, the men's room, James's dog.
- to write plurals of numbers and letters of the alphabet: There are two 8's in 4828. There are four s's in 'possession'.
- in expressions using time: a minute's rest, two years' time.
- in names of churches: St Mark's in Sydney.
- to show possession jointly: Tom and Mary's cat.

Rewrite using necessary punctuation:

1. the man who climbed the mountain has died
2. have you read coral island asked Rachel
3. i am going to mysore to visit my father
4. four fifth of the class is from shimoga
5. contact me please before 4 15 in the evening
6. no the fish isnt fresh today said the waiter but we will have fresh fish tomorrow
7. next year I am studying french8. robert said we are going to win

e-source:

- ◆ <https://www.englishgrammar.org/capitalization-punctuation-worksheet/>

4. KINDS OF SENTENCES

A Sentence is a group of words that gives complete sense or a piece of information.

Sentences are broadly classified into four kinds:

1. Assertive / Declarative sentence:

A sentence that states, asserts or declares is called an assertive or declarative sentence.

It can be affirmative, positive or negative.

Subject + Verb + Object.

For example:

- a. Tom is a talented student. - Affirmative
- b. India has a very ancient civilization. - Positive
- c. Shantha cannot work on computers. - Negative

2. Interrogative Sentence:

A sentence that asks, poses a question and ends with a question mark (?) is called an interrogative sentence.

It may be affirmative, positive or negative.

For example:

- a. Who are you? – Affirmative
- b. Don't you want anything? – Negative

Types of Interrogative Sentences:

a) WH – Questions

These questions begin with 'Wh' words.

Who, whom, whose, what, which, where, when, why, how.

Note: Answer to such questions is always in a complete sentence.

For example:

- a. How are you?
- b. Where is the programme scheduled?

b) 'Yes' or 'No' type questions:

These questions begin with an auxiliary verb – Am, Is, Are, Was, Were, Has, Have, Had, Will, Would, Shall, Should, May, Might, Can, Could, etc.

These questions are answered with a 'Yes' or 'No'.

For example:

- i. Have you met him yesterday? Yes/ No
- ii. Will they come home? Yes/ No

Note: Auxiliary + Subject + Verb + Object The negative 'Not' comes just after the subject.

Auxiliary + Subject+ Not + Verb+?

3. Imperative Sentences:

An Imperative Sentence expresses a request, a proposal, a command, an advice, a desire or an instruction.

For example:

- a. Please help me. (request)
- b. Get out of here. (command)
- c. Obey your elders. (advice)

4. Exclamatory Sentence.

An Exclamatory Sentence expresses sudden feelings or emotions. This sentence always has an exclamatory mark (!)

For example:

- a. What a melodious voice! (surprise)
- b. Hurrah! We won the match. (happiness)
- c. Alas! What a tragedy. (feeling / emotion)

Exercise:**Identify the type of sentences:**

First one is done for you:

This route leads to Bandipur - Assertive sentence.

1. How fast she runs! _____
2. She cannot solve this problem. _____
3. Where are they playing cricket? _____
4. Don't disturb! The doctor is in. _____
5. What a beautiful sight! _____
6. Was he a villain to do such a deed? _____
7. Does she get up late every day? _____

5. TENSES

Tense refers to the time at which an action takes place. It consists of two categories indicated by the form of the verb - Present and Past.

1. Past Tense- the sentences in which the verbs indicate that the event has occurred in the past.
2. Present Tense - the sentences in which the verbs indicate an event that is currently occurring in the present.

English has only two tense forms – Past and Present, we refer to only ways of ‘expressing’ the future and not to future ‘tense’.

Future Time- includes verbs that indicate an event that is likely to occur in the future.

Tense	Signal words	Use	Form	Examples
Simple Present or Present Simple	every day, sometimes, always, often, usually, seldom, never, first ... then	something happens repeatedly, how often something happens, one action follows another things in general with the following verbs (to love, to hate, to think, etc.) Future meaning: Timetables, Programmes	infinitiv e (he/she/it) + -s	I work. I go. He goes.
Present Progressive or Present Continuous	now at the moment Look! Listen!	something is happening at the same time of speaking or around it Future meaning: when you have already decided and arranged to do it (a fixed plan, date)	to be (am/are/is) + infinitiv e + -ing	I'm working. He's working. I'm going. He's going.
Simple Past or Past Simple	last Ago in 1990 yesterday	action finished in the past, mostly connected with an expression of time (no connection to the present)	regular: infinitiv e + -ed irregular: 2nd column of table of Irregular verbs	I worked. He worked I went He went.
Past Progressive or Past Continuous	While	an action happened in the middle of another action some one was doing sth at a certain time (in the past) - you do not know whether it was finished or not you say that sth. has happened or is finished in the past and it has a connection to the present -Action started in the past and continues up to the present	was/were+ infinitiv e + -ing	I was working. He was working I was going. He was going
Simple Present Perfect or Present Perfect	just, yet, never, ever, already, so far, up to now, since, For, recently		have/has + past participle*	I have worked. He has worked I have gone. He has gone.

Present Perfect Progressive or Present Perfect Continuous	all day, whole day, how long, since for	action began in the past and has just stopped how long the action has been happening emphasis: length of time of an action	have/has + been + infinitive + -ing I have been working. He has been working I have been going. He has been going.
Simple Past Perfect or Past Perfect (Simple)	Already, just, never	mostly when two actions in a story are related to each other: the action which had already happened is put into Past Perfect, the other action into Simple past of present perfect	had + past participle* He had worked I had gone. He had gone.
Past Perfect Progressive or Past Perfect Continuous	how long, since, for	how long something had been happening before something else happened	had + been + infinitive + ing I had been working. He had been working. I had been going. He had been going.
will - future		predictions about the future (you think that sth. will happen) you decide to do sth. spontaneously at the time of speaking, you haven't made a decision before main clause in type I of the if clauses	will + infinitive I'll work. He'll work. I'll go. He'll go.
going to - future		when you have already decided to do sth. in the future what you think what will happen	to be (am/are/is) + going to + infinitive I'm going to work. He's going to work. I'm going to go. He's going to go.

Future Progressive or Future Continuous	An action will be in progress at a certain time in the future. This action has begun before the certain time. Something happens because it normally happens.	will + be + infinitive + ing	I'll be working. He'll be working. I'll be going. He'll be going.
Simple Future Perfect or Future Perfect Simple	sth will already have happened before a certain time in the future	will + have + past participle*	I'll have worked. He'll have worked. I'll have gone. He'll have gone.
Future Perfect Progressive or Future Perfect Continuous	sth will already have happened before a certain time in the future emphasis: length of time of an action	will + have + been + infinitive + ing	I'll have been working. He'll have been working. I'll have been going. He'll have been going.
Conditional Simple	sth that might happen main clause in type II of the Conditional sentences	would + infinitive	I would work. He would work. I would go. He would go.
Conditional Progressive or Conditional Continuous	sth that might happen emphasis: length of time of an action	would + be + infinitive + ing	I would be working. He would be working. I would be going. He would be going.
Conditional Perfect	sth that might have happened in the past (It's too late now.) main clause in type III of the if clauses	would + have + past participle*	I would have worked. He would have worked. I would have gone. He would have gone.
Conditional Perfect Progressive or Conditional Perfect Continuous	sth that might have happened in the past (It's too late now.) emphasis: length of time of an action	would + have + been + infinitive + ing	I would have been working. He would have been working. I would have been going. He would have been going.

Some more examples:

- i) Each November he goes to Mysuru for a holiday - Simple Present tense.
- ii) The growing number of visitors is damaging the footpaths - Present Continuous tense
- iii) Prices have fallen sharply over the past six months - Present Perfect tense
- iv) We had the bike for six years - Simple Past tense
- v) I was working in a car factory during the summer of 2010 - Past Continuous tense
- vi) Bull fighting has been going on in Spain for centuries.-Present Perfect Continuous tense
- vii) She walked into the railway station only to find that the train had left - Past Perfect tense
- viii) Narayan had been saving since Diwali to buy a new house - Past Perfect Continuous tense

Complete the following sentences with an appropriate tense form:

1. This time tomorrow I on the beach.
 a. am lying b. will lie c. will be lying
2. She said that she.....help me.
 a. will b. Shall c. would
3. Call me when you time.
 a. have b. would have c. will have
4. I will follow you wherever you.....
 a. go b. goes c. will go
5. You an accident if you go on driving like that.
 a. are having b. will have c. would have

6. When you called , I..... in the garage.
a. worked b. am working c. was working
7. I..... all my childhood in South India.
a. was spending b. spend c. spent
8. The phonewhile I was having a bath.
a. rings b. rang c. was ringing
9. I tried a little of the soup to see how it.....
a. tastes b. is tasting c. tasted
10. When we were children we.....our own toys.
a. were making b. made c. had made

e-sources:

- ◆ <https://www.englishgrammar.org/tenses-quiz-2/>
- ◆ <https://www.englishgrammar.org/tenses-worksheet-2/>
- ◆ <https://www.english-grammar.at/worksheets/tenses/t034-all-tenses-multiplechoice.pdf>

6. QUESTION TAGS

It is a common practice in informal conversation, to ask for agreement or confirmation from the listener.

Eg: It is hot today, isn't it?

'isn't it ?' is a part of the statement added to invite or call the listener's attention to the statement made. This type of question form added to the end of a statement is called a Question tag.

The statement should always end with a comma (,) and the tag should begin with a small letter (isn't it ?). The tag must end with the question mark (?)

Note: When the statement is positive, the question tag should be negative.

If the statement is negative, the question tag should be positive.

To make the tag negative, the short form of 'not' (n't) is added.

Auxiliary verbs retain themselves in the question tag.

Other verbs take 'do' forms(do, does, did) in the question tags.

The form of the question tag should be in agreement with the subject and the verb in the statement.

For example:

a. It is going to rain.

The above sentence is a positive statement with 'is' as auxiliary verb. So the question tag should be 'isn't it?'

b. It is not going to rain, is it?

If there is no auxiliary, the main verb takes appropriate 'do' form in the question tag.

c. She sings well, doesn't she?

It is a positive statement with no auxiliary verb. So the question tag should begin the main verb + 'Do' forms.

Sings-----does + sing

Sing----- do + sing

Sang ----- did + sing

2. To make the tag negative, add n't for 'not' contraction to the auxiliary verb.

is + not = isn't

was + not = wasn't

has + not = hasn't

have+ not= haven't

must + not = mustn't

can + not = can't

could + not = couldn't

Exceptions: am + not = aren't

will + not = won't

shall + not = shan't

3. The corresponding pronoun of the subject in the statement is used in the tag.

For example:

a. Shantha is beautiful, isn't she?

b. Sharan likes singing, doesn't he?

4. If the statements begin with Let/s, question tags are as follows:

For example:

a. Let us work together, shall we?

b. Let's sing, shall we?

Exceptions:

The question tags for imperative sentences are as follows:

For example:

1. Open the door, will you?
2. Wait a minute, can you?
3. Everybody should come, shouldn't they?
4. One cannot always cheat others, can one?

Exceptions:

With negatives / semi negatives.

For example:

1. He seldom smiles, does he?
2. Few of them applied to the post, did they?
3. I hardly have any money with me, have I?

Exercise:

Add suitable question tags.

1. I am not depending on him,_____.
2. She recited a few poems,_____.
3. They are not leaving now,_____.
4. I am late,_____.
5. You must speak carefully,_____.
6. You can write legibly,_____.
7. Be happy,_____.
8. Let us play a game, _____

7. HOMOPHONES

(homos = same, phone = sound)

Homophones are the words which sound the same but vary in their meaning and spelling.

For example:

i. meet/meat/mete

ii. write/right/rite

1. I can't bear this pain.

The poor boy had bare feet.

2. He is standing right here.

We did not hear the noise of the drums.

3. The accused was released on bail.

He kept a bale of cotton in the godown.

4. I have a berth reserved in the same compartment.

The birth of the child brought happiness to the family.

5. He seemed so weak at first.

It'll probably happen this week.

Exercises:

I. Fill in the blanks with right homophones in their tense forms:

(whole, hole, steal, steel, check, cheque, accept, except, vein, vain)

1. All her relatives_____the invitation_____her own sister.

2. The doctors looked for the_____to inject medicine, but all their effort was in_____.

3. The thief tried to break the_____lock, to_____.

4. I gave him a _____ to _____ the amount.
5. Alice explored the _____ wonderland after entering through the _____.

II. Use the following homophones in your own words:

Night, knight, root, route, fair, fare, assay, essay, affect, effect.

III. Find the meanings of the following words and use them in your own sentences:

Groan, grown, bite, byte, disease, decease, story, storey.

Space for answers:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

e-source

- ◆ <https://www.superteacherworksheets.com/homophones/homophones-fitb1.pdf> =1466611200

8. HOMONYMS

(Homos = same, onoma = name)

A homonym is a word that has the same spelling and sound (pronunciation) as another word, but with a different meaning.

For example:

Saw (a cutting tool) and saw (the past tense of see) are homonyms.

They have the same spelling and sound but differ in their meanings.

1. The boys are playing with a ball outside.
Cinderella met the prince at the ball.
2. The bat flies around at night.
I lost my baseball bat.
3. This book is very interesting.
I would like to book a flight to Paris.
4. We are trying to train our dog.
The train will be here soon.
5. Be careful not to trip.
They had a wonderful trip to the countryside.

Exercises:

I. Fill in the blanks with appropriate homonyms given in the bracket:

(close, watch, bit, pen, present, page, play)

1. The kids are going to ___TV tonight.
2. Let's ___soccer after school.
3. What time is it? I have to set my_____.
4. Please ___the door.
5. The author wrote a new ____.
6. The boy sat ___to his uncle.

Space for answers:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____

e-source

- ◆ http://www.teach-nology.com/worksheets/language_arts/speech/homonyms.

9. LETTERS OF SUGGESTION

A letter of suggestion is a kind of letter through which a sender attempts to advise or suggest the receiver in the most impressive and influential manner. The letter is written to suggest something useful to a person, institution or company so that they can improve their services or habits.

A letter of suggestion includes subjects ranging from personal issues to improvement in services, business settings, various requirements and practices. While drafting a letter of suggestion, we need to express genuine feelings as well as an appreciation for the opportunity that we are given to express our suggestions or advice. We can always refer to the effectiveness of the previous suggestions.

Points to remember/follow:

- Ensure to go through the suggestion twice before forwarding it.
- Examine all the aspects and analyse the situation properly before presenting a particular point forward.
- Check whether the issue is official or personal. If it is an official issue, the letter should be formal and concise. But if it is personal issue, the letter can be informal in tone.
- Check the address well before writing the letter.
- Avoid grammatical errors.
- Suggest favourable advice to the individual/institution/company in a polite manner. Do not antagonize the receiver by making extreme suggestions.
- Ensure the intended suggestion is mentioned

Templates :

From

Date

To

Dear / Sir / Madam

Subject :

Body of letter

Yours truly

Signature

Name of the person

1. Sample of a formal suggestion letter is given below. It will teach you how to write a suggestion letter to improve the facilities in your college.

xyz

2nd year BA

City College

New Town

Bengaluru.

28th June 2019

The Student Welfare Officer

City College

New Town

Bengaluru.

Dear _____ (Sir or Madam)

Subject: Suggestion Letter

I am writing this letter to _____ (Student Welfare Officer) to suggest some improvements in our college premises. I would like to see our college corridors swept cleanly, dustbins kept near the washrooms and would like the management to look into the drinking water facility in all the floors.

I have been the student of this college for the past one year and of late noticing the discrepancies in services. I would like to suggest improving the above mentioned, so that students can have a good atmosphere to study in future.

Thank you

Yours truly

(Signature)

Name of the person

2. Sample of a formal suggestion letter is given below. It will teach you, how to write a suggestion letter to improve the services of a company.

Shyamlal Pathak
Pathak and Sons
Mumbai.

18th June 2019

Anju Menon
KR Organisation
Lower Parel Mumbai.

Dear Sir

Subject: Suggestion Letter

I have been a client of your company for the past four years, and I am writing this letter to you to suggest some changes in your services. It is observed that the raw materials you supply to construction companies, for quite some time now are not of the best quality. Also, the materials are not delivered on agreed date and time. Moreover, some materials even after constant reminders, are not delivered. Hence, I recommend you to improve your services supplying quality materials on stipulated time and date. You can appoint new workers, manage time and render good service. Make sure to keep a record of goods and materials that are delivered and are yet to be delivered.

I am sure, the little changes in all these aspects, will bring fame to the company in the market. Hope you take the above mentioned suggestions positively and improve your services as soon as possible.

Thank you

Yours truly

Shyamlal Pathak

Exercise:

1. Write a suggestion letter to your class mentor regarding planting saplings in front of the Eco-club.
2. Write a suggestion letter to the Student Welfare Officer, on use of mobiles in your college premises.

Space for exercise :

QUESTION PAPER PATTERN

Time: 3 Hours

Max.Marks:70

PART - I (Grammar Section)**30 marks****I. Articles****3 marks****II. Parts of Speech**

i. Prepositions

3 marks

ii. Conjunction

3 marksiii. Other Components (excluding preposition
and conjunctions)(The question paper setter can use his/her discretion) **3marks****III. Punctuation****3 marks****IV. Tenses****3 marks****V. Question Tags****3 marks****VI. Homophones****2 marks****VII. Homonyms****2 marks****VIII. Letters of Suggestion**

(3 marks for format + 2 marks for content)

5marks

PART-II (Literary Section) (40 Marks)

- IX Answer any FIVE of the following in one or two sentences each: (Five out of eight questions) (2x5=10 Marks)**
- X Answer any FOUR of the following in about 80 to 100 words/a page each: (Four out of seven questions) (4X5 = 20 Marks)**
- XI Answer any ONE of the following in about 200 to 250 words/ two pages: (One out of three questions) (1X10=10Marks)**

NOTE : TEACHERS ARE REQUESTED TO FOLLOW THE PATTERN GIVEN BELOW FOR INTERNAL ASSESSMENT

INTERNAL ASSESSMENT	TOTAL:	30 MARKS
ASSIGNMENT:		15 MARKS
TEST:		10 MARKS
ATTENDANCE:		05 MARKS

MODEL QUESTION PAPER**I SEMESTER****B.A. /B.S.W/B.A.(Music)****Time: 3 Hours****Max.Marks :(70)****Instructions:**

1. Answer all the questions.
2. Write the question number correctly.

PART - I (Grammar Section)**30 Marks****I. Fill in the blanks with suitable articles: (3)**

1. He saw ----- apple on the branch.
2. They just went out for ----- hour to relax.
3. We have to get -----house painted.

II A. Choose the right preposition from the brackets and fill in the blanks: (against, behind, at) (3)

1. Mrs. Reshma stood----- me and my friend.
2. There could be stiff resistance ----- the bill from all quarters.
3. I have a meeting_____ 10 a.m.

B. Choose the right conjunctions from the brackets and fill in the blanks:**(though, but, both,) (3)**

1. Sofia did not like oranges was fond of apples.
2. there were many competitors, he was able to win the championship.
3. Shashi...Sunil are the newly appointed teachers.

C. Identify the part of speech of the underlined words: (3)

1. The table is made up of metal.
2. He is the best student of the class
3. The lady moved quickly towards the boy.

III Rewrite using necessary punctuation: (3)

1. i am going to mysuru to visit my father.
2. the boy was small but strong.
3. Rita asked her, have you read this book?

IV Fill in the blanks with the right tense form of the verb given in the brackets: (3)

1. The children are _____ (listen) to the music.
2. The doctor _____ (feel) his pulse.
3. We _____ (play) tennis for six years.

V. Add suitable question tags: (3)

1. They do not come home early, _____
2. He should write neatly, _____
3. Let us sing together, _____

VI Fill in the blanks choosing a suitable word from the bracket: (2)

1. Their household items were put on _____ in the public. (action / auction)
2. To enter the security room, he had to _____ the seal. (brake / break)

VII Frame two sentences using the homonym given below: (2)

Train

VIII Write a letter of suggestion regarding the quality of food served in your college canteen using the following hints: (5)

- **Poor quality**
- **Unhygienic conditions**
- **Lack of variety**

PART- II (Literary Section)

40 marks

IX Answer any FIVE of the following in a word or two each: (2X5 = 10)

1. Who is the handsome youth in Akka's Vachana?
2. How did the fallen athlete express his agony in the poem, 'Nine Gold Medals'?
3. What was unique about Hanchi?
4. Why does the young man decide to stay at Mrs. Tilley's cottage in the story, 'A White Heron'?
5. What was the reward given by God to Libeni in the story 'The Last Song'?
6. Why is Bholi's father worried about her?
7. What do Vedas teach us?
8. How was the way of life on planet Venus in the story, 'All Summer in a Day'?

X Answer any FOUR the following in about a page each: (4X5 =20)

1. How does the poet bring out the camaraderie among the athletes in the poem, 'Nine Gold Medals'?

2. Describe Sylvia's life in her grandmother's farm.
3. How were the villagers involved in the Independence Movement in the story, 'The Last Song'?
4. How did Bholi's teacher play an important role in changing the course of her life?
5. What story does Swami Vivekananda narrate to illustrate the cause of variance in religions?
6. How was Margot different from the other children in the story, 'All Summer in a Day'? Why?
7. Describe the change in the attitude of the children after they enjoyed all summer in a day?

XI Answer any ONE of the following in about two pages: (1X10 = 10)

1. Compare and contrast the concepts of the two Vacahanas?
2. Bring out the trials and tribulations faced by Hanchi in her life?
3. According to Swami Vivekananda the banner of all religions will be Assimilation and not Destruction, Harmony and Peace and not Dissension. Justify.
