

SPLENDOUR

English Textbook for Class IX (First Language)

The Government of West Bengal has borne the cost of publication of the book for free distribution only to the Students of Government, Government Sponsored and Government aided Schools.



West Bengal Board of Secondary Education
77 / 2, Park Street, Kolkata - 700016

According to New Syllabus
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THE CONSTITUTION OF INDIA PREAMBLE

WE, THE PEOPLE OF INDIA, having solemnly resolved to constitute India into a SOVEREIGN SOCIALIST SECULAR DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC and to secure to all its citizens : JUSTICE, social, economic and political; LIBERTY of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship; EQUALITY of status and of opportunity and to promote among them all – FRATERNITY assuring the dignity of the individual and the unity and integrity of the Nation; IN OUR CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY this twenty-sixth day of November 1949, do HEREBY ADOPT, ENACT AND GIVE TO OURSELVES THIS CONSTITUTION.

ভারতের সংবিধান

প্রস্তাবনা

আমরা, ভারতের জনগণ, ভারতকে একটি সার্বভৌম সমাজতান্ত্রিক ধর্মনিরপেক্ষ গণতান্ত্রিক সাধারণতন্ত্র রূপে গড়ে তুলতে সত্যনিষ্ঠার সঙ্গে শপথ গ্রহণ করছি এবং তার সকল নাগরিক যাতে : সামাজিক, অর্থনৈতিক ও রাজনৈতিক ন্যায়বিচার; চিন্তা, মতপ্রকাশ, বিশ্বাস, ধর্ম এবং উপাসনার স্বাধীনতা; সামাজিক প্রতিষ্ঠা অর্জন ও সুযোগের সমতা প্রতিষ্ঠা করতে পারে এবং তাদের সকলের মধ্যে ব্যক্তি-সম্মত ও জাতীয় ঐক্য এবং সংহতি সুনিশ্চিত করে সৌভ্রাতৃত্ব গড়ে তুলতে; আমাদের গণপরিষদে, আজ, ১৯৪৯ সালের ২৬ নভেম্বর, এতদ্বারা এই সংবিধান গ্রহণ করছি, বিধিবদ্ধ করছি এবং নিজেদের অর্পণ করছি।

PREFACE

Secondary Education is meant for the students who have entered the arena of education from the Upper-Primary level. At this stage the utmost need is to help the young buds to flower, to extend their knowledge and to explore their aptitudes and potentials towards different streams of learning for their further education. Keeping this concept in mind the new series of textbooks for English (First Language) for Secondary level is named 'SPLENDOUR'. This series of textbooks is based on the new curriculum and syllabus framed and recommended by the 'Expert Committee' comprising of eminent academicians.

English as First Language is expected to foster an aesthetic and cultural sensitivity in the learners. The teaching-learning process of English as First Language seeks to nourish literary sensibility through a systematic and progressive exposure through different literary genres. Apart from Cognitively Advanced Language Proficiency (CALP) in the basic use of the language, the book is meant to stimulate critical and creative thinking of the students. It is hoped that the new series of textbooks would effectively serve to hone the linguistic competency of the learners by exploring diverse paradigms of literature.

In materialising this project Hon'ble Education Minister Dr. Partha Chatterjee, Govt of West Bengal, the School Education Department, Directorate of School Education, Government of West Bengal – all have extended their valued help and their role has been indisputably momentous in all respect.

A group of eminent educationists, teachers and subject experts worked hard to develop the textbook.

All suggestions to improve the series are welcome.

December, 2014
77/2, Park Street,
Kolkata - 700 016



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West Bengal Board
of
Secondary Education

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under
Expert Committee

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FOREWORD

The Hon'ble Chief Minister of West Bengal Smt. Mamata Banerjee constituted an 'Expert Committee' to review the entire aspects of school level curriculum, syllabus and textbooks in 2011. The new curriculum, syllabus, and textbooks are developed according to the recommendations of the Committee. The new textbooks for English (First Language) for the Secondary level fall under a newly named series, 'Splendour'.

We are sure this textbook shall convey a splendid message to the students. The textbook contains works of fine writers of different time-period and from different corners of the world. We have consciously tried to enrich the students with various shades of exposure and experience through the texts. We believe that the students of English (First Language) should savour the delicacy of the best writings of English language, so that their taste of literature can grow to the finest extent.

We extend our heartiest thanks to Mr. Debabrata Ghosh whose illustrations have enhanced the aesthetic appeal of the texts.

We thank the West Bengal Board of Secondary Education and School Education Department, Government of West Bengal for their active support. The West Bengal Board of Secondary Education has obliged us by giving their approval for this textbook. A chosen group of educationists, teachers and subject experts developed this book in a very short period of time. If the book can help learners to apply the language in real-life situations, we will consider our initiative successful.

The Hon'ble Education Minister Dr. Partha Chatterjee has enriched us with his views and comments, We express our gratitude to him.

We invite all people who love education to convey their views for the improvement of the book.

Thank You.

December, 2014
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Lesson 1

The Coral Island

—R. M. Ballantyne

It was a bright, beautiful, warm day when our ship spread her canvas to the breeze, and sailed for the regions of the south. Oh, how my heart bounded with delight as I listened to the merry chorus of the sailors, while they hauled at the ropes and got in the anchor! The captain shouted—the men ran to obey—the noble ship bent over to the breeze, and the shore gradually faded from my view. I stood looking on with a kind of feeling that the whole was a delightful dream.

There were a number of boys in the ship, but two of them were my special favourites. Jack Martin was a tall, strapping, broad-shouldered youth of eighteen, with a handsome, good-humoured, firm face. My other companion was Peterkin Gay. He was little, quick, funny, decidedly mischievous, and about fourteen years old. But Peterkin's mischief was almost always harmless, else he could not have been so much beloved as he was.

"Hello! Youngster," cried Jack Martin, giving me a slap on the shoulder, the day I joined the ship, "come below and I'll show you your berth. You and I are to be mess-mates, and I think we shall be good friends, for I like the look o' you."

Jack was right. He and I and Peterkin afterwards became the best and **staunchest** friends that ever tossed together on the stormy waves.



I shall say little about the first part of our voyage. We had the usual amount of rough weather and calm. When we approached Cape Horn, at the southern extremity of America, the weather became very cold and stormy, and the sailors began to tell stories about the furious gales and the dangers of that terrible cape. Nevertheless, we passed the dreaded cape without much rough weather, and, in the course of a few weeks afterwards, were sailing gently, before a warm tropical breeze, over the Pacific Ocean. At last we came among the Coral Islands of the Pacific, and I shall never forget the delight with which I gazed at the pure, white, dazzling shores, and the **verdant** palm-trees, which looked bright and beautiful in the sunshine.

One night, soon after we entered the tropics, an awful storm burst upon our ship. The first squall of wind carried away two of our masts; and left only the **foremast** standing. For five days the tempest raged in all its fury. The captain said that he had no idea where we were, as we had been blown far out of our course; and we feared much that we might get among the dangerous coral reefs which are so numerous in the Pacific. At day-break on the sixth morning of the gale we saw land ahead. It was an island encircled by a reef of coral on which the waves broke in fury. There was calm water within this reef, but we could only see one narrow opening into it. For this opening we steered, but, ere we reached it, a tremendous wave broke on our stern, tore the **rudder** completely off, and left us at the mercy of the winds and waves. "It's all over with us now, lads," said the captain to the men; "get the boat ready to launch; we shall be on the rocks in less than half an hour."

The men obeyed in gloomy silence, for they felt that there was little hope of so small a boat living in such a sea.

"Come boys," said Jack Martin, in a grave tone, to me and Peterkin, as we stood on the quarterdeck awaiting our fate— "I see through the telescope that the ship will strike at the tail of the reef, where the waves break into the quiet water inside; so, if we manage to cling to the oar till it is driven over the breakers, we may perhaps gain the shore. What say you; will you join me?"



We gladly agreed to follow Jack, for he inspired us with confidence, although I could perceive, by the sad tone of his voice, that he had little hope; and, indeed, when I looked at the white waves that lashed the reef and boiled against the rocks as if in fury, I felt that there was but a step between us and death. My heart sank within me. The ship was now very near the rocks. The men were ready with the

boat, and the captain beside them giving orders, when a tremendous wave came towards us. We three ran towards the bow to lay hold of our oar, and had barely reached it when the wave fell on the deck with a crash like thunder. At the same moment the ship struck, the foremast broke off close to the deck and went over the side, carrying the boat and men along with it. Our oar got entangled with the wreck, and Jack seized an axe to cut it free. Another wave washed it clear of the wreck. We all seized hold of it, and the next instant we were struggling in the wild sea. The last thing I saw was the boat whirling in the surf, and all the sailors tossed into the foaming waves. Then I became insensible.

On recovering from my swoon, I found myself lying on a bank of soft grass, under the shelter of an overhanging rock, with Peterkin on his knees by my side, tenderly bathing my temples with water, and endeavouring to stop the blood that flowed from a wound in my forehead.

Word Nest :

staunchest	— strongest of opinion
verdant	— fresh and green
foremast	— a mast on the front part of a ship
rudder	— an instrument for controlling the boat's direction

About the author :

Robert Michael Ballantyne (1825—1894) was a Scottish fiction writer famous for his adventure story *The Coral Island*. Most of his stories were written from personal experience. The heroes of his books are models of self-reliance and moral uprightness. His most popular stories include *The Young Fur-Traders*, *The World of Ice*, *Ungava: a Tale of Eskimo Land* etc. Ballantyne was also an accomplished artist and exhibited some of his water-colours at the Royal Scottish Academy. The above text is an extract from Ballantyne's *The Coral Island*.

Lesson 2

How it Happened

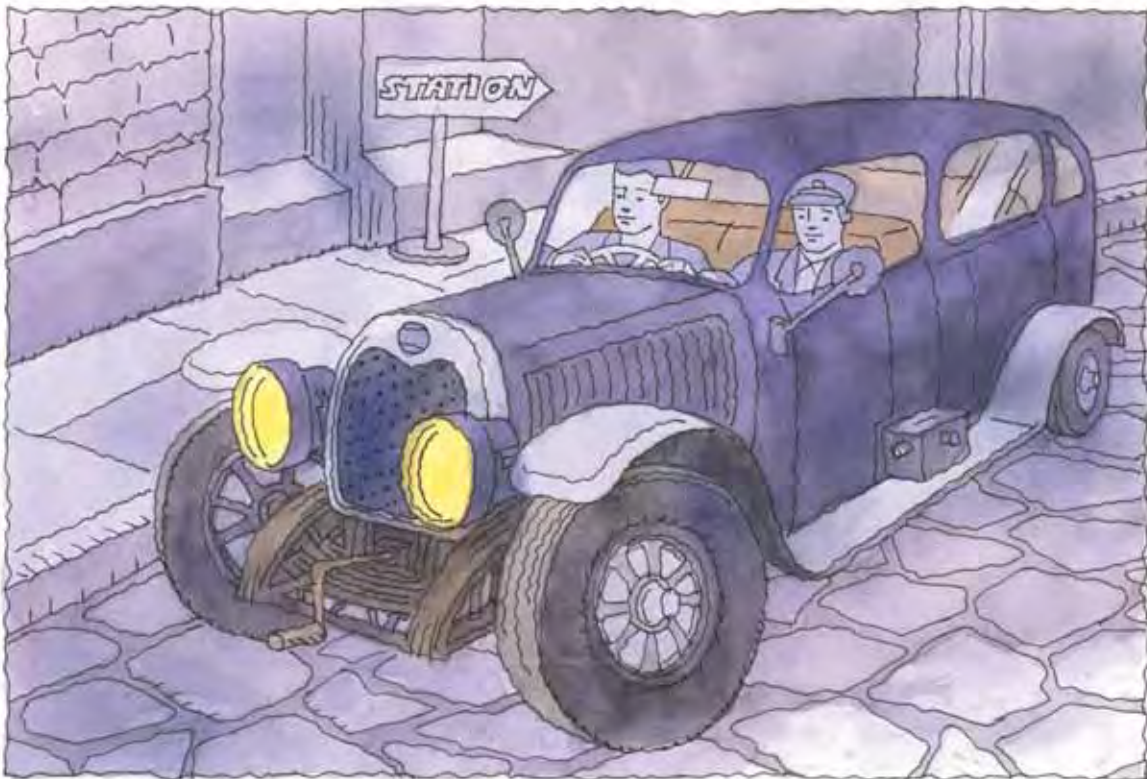
—Arthur Conan Doyle

The clock in the little country station read eleven. I had come back late from London. Outside the country station waited my big motor car. It had glaring headlights and a glitter of polished brass. It was my new thirty horse power Robur. The car had only been delivered that day. Perkins, my chauffeur, said that he thought the car was excellent.

"I'll drive the car myself," I said and climbed into the driver's seat.

Perkins said, "Perhaps, Sir, I had better drive."

"No; I should like to try myself," said I.



So we started on the five-mile drive for home. I got along very well until I came to Claystall Hill. It is one of the worst hills in England. It is a mile and half long with three fairly sharp curves. My park gate stood at the very foot of the hill.

We were just over the brow of this hill, where the grade is steepest, when trouble began. I was driving at top speed, but suddenly the gears stuck. The car was going at great rate, so I clapped on both brakes. One after other they gave way. I didn't mind so much when I felt my footbrake snap. I put all my weight on the emergency brake. It did not work. The situation brought cold sweat out of me.

By this time we were fairly tearing down the slope. The lights were brilliant and I brought round the first curve all right. Then we did the second one. There was a mile of straight road, then came the third curve. After that came the gate of the park.

We were still running at a fearful pace. Perkins was perfectly cool and alert. He laid his hand on the wheel.

"We can never get round that curve. Better jump, Sir."

"No," said I, "I'll stick it out. You can jump if you like."

"I'll stick it with you, Sir," said he.

The wheels were **whirring** like a high wind and the big body was groaning. It was a narrow road and we were a great, roaring, golden death to anyone who came in our path. There was only the park gate left to clear now. It was about twenty yards to the left of the road we ran on. I turned the wheel with all the strength of my wrists. My right wheel struck full on the right hand pillar of my own gate. I heard the crash. I was conscious of flying through the air and then— and then—!

When I became aware of my own existence once more, I was among the shadow of oak trees. A man was standing beside me. I saw it was Stanley, a man whom I had known at college. I had a genuine affection for him. At the present moment I was quite surprised to see him, but I felt giddy and shaken.



"What a smash!" I said. "Good Lord, what a smash!"

Stanley nodded with his familiar gentle, **wistful** smile.

I was quite unable to move. But my senses were exceedingly alert. I saw the wrecked car lit up by moving lanterns. I saw the little group of people and heard the hushed voices around the car. No one took any notice of me.

Then suddenly I heard a cry of pain.

"The weight is on him. Lift it easy," cried a voice.

"It's only my leg!" said another, which I recognized as Perkins's.

"Where's master?" he cried.

“Here I am, “ I answered, but they did not seem to hear me.

They were all bending over something which lay in front of the car.

Stanley laid his hand upon my shoulder. His touch was strangely soothing. I felt light and happy, in spite of all.

“No pain, of course?” said he.

“None,” said I.

“There never is,” said he.

And then suddenly a wave of amazement passed over me.

Stanley! Stanley! Why, Stanley had surely died at Bloomfontein in the Boer War!

“Stanley!” I cried. The words seemed to choke my throat, “Stanley, you are dead”.

He looked at me with the same old gentle, wistful smile.

“So are you,” he answered.

Word Nest :

whirring – revolving rapidly

wistful – pensive

About the author :

Arthur Ignatius Conan Doyle (1859-1930) was a Scottish physician and writer who is most noted for his crime-fictions. His creation, detective Sherlock Holmes and his assistant Dr.Watson, had won the hearts of millions of readers. Some of his most famous crime stories of Holmes and Watson are *A Study in Scarlet*, *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, *The Sign of Four* etc. He is also known for the fictional adventures of another character he invented, the irascible scientist Professor Challenger, and for popularizing the mystery of *Mary Celeste*. He was a prolific writer whose other works include fantasy and science fiction stories, plays, romances, poetry, non-fiction, and historical novels. The above text is adapted from his short story *How it happened*.

Lesson 3

I Want to Write

—Margaret Walker

I want to write

I want to write the songs of my people.

I want to hear them singing melodies in the dark.

I want to catch the last floating strains from their sob-torn throats.

I want to frame their dreams into words; their souls into notes.

I want to catch their sunshine laughter in a bowl;

fling dark hands to a darker sky

and fill them full of stars

then crush and mix such lights till they become

a mirrored pool of brilliance in the dawn.



About the poet :

Margaret Walker (1915-1998) was an American poet and writer. She was part of the African-American literary movement in Chicago. Her notable works include the award-winning poem *For My People* and the novel *Jubilee*, set in the South during the American Civil War. This book is considered notable in African-American literature and Walker is an influential figure for younger authors. Walker became a literature professor at what is today Jackson State University, a historically 'Black' college, where she taught from 1949 to 1979. In 1968, Walker founded the Institute for the Study of History, Life, and Culture of Black People (now the Margaret Walker Center).

Lesson 4

Seasons and Time

—William Barnes

A while in the dead of the winter,
The wind hurries keen through the sunshine,
But finds no more leaves that may linger
On tree-boughs to strew on the ground.
Long streaks of bright snow-drift, bank shaded,
Yet lie on the slopes, under hedges;
But still on the road out to Thorndon
Would not wet a shoe on the ground.
The days, through the cold seems to strengthen,
Outlengthen their span, and the evening
Seeks later its westing,
To cast its dim hue on the ground.
Till tree-heads shall thicken their shadow
With leaves of a glittering greenness,
And daisies shall fold up their blossoms
At evening, in due on the ground.
And then, in the plum-warding garden,
Or shadowy orchard, the house-man
Shall smile at his fruit, really blushing,
Where sunheat shoots through on the ground.

What season do you feel the fairest
The season of sowing or growing,
Or season of mowing and ripeness,
When hay may lie new on the ground?

And like you the glittering morning,
And short-shaded noon, or the coming
Of slant-lighted evening, or moon,
When footsteps are few on the ground?



About the poet :

William Barnes (1801 – 1886) was an English poet, writer and philologist. Amongst his most noted books of poetry are *Poems of Rural Life in the Dorset Dialect* and *Hwomely Rhymes*. His poems are characterized by a singular sweetness and tenderness of feeling, deep insight into humble country life and character, and an exquisite feeling for local scenery.

Lesson 5

On the Way to Pretoria

—M. K. Gandhi

On the seventh or eighth day after my arrival, I left Durban. A first class seat was booked for me. It was usual there to pay five shillings extra, if one needed a bedding. Abdulla Sheth insisted that I should book one bedding but, out of obstinacy and pride and with a view to saving five shillings, I declined. Abdulla Sheth warned me. "Look, now," said he, "this is a different country from India. Thank God, we have enough and to spare. Please do not stint yourself in anything that you may need." I thanked him and asked him not to be anxious.

The train reached Maritzburg, the capital of Natal, at about 9 p.m. Beddings used to be provided at this station. A railway servant came and asked me if I wanted one. "No," said I, "I have one with me." He went away. But a passenger came next, and looked me up and down. He saw that I was a 'coloured' man. This disturbed him. Out he went and came in again with one or two officials. They all kept quiet, when another official came to me and said, "Come along, you must go to the van compartment."



"But I have a first class ticket," said I.

"That doesn't matter," rejoined the other. "I tell you, you must go to the van compartment."

"I tell you, I was permitted to travel in this compartment at Durban, and I insist on going on in it."

"No, you won't," said the official. "You must leave this compartment, or else I shall have to call a police constable to push you out."

"Yes, you may. I refuse to get out voluntarily."

The constable came. He took me by the hand and pushed me out. My luggage was also taken out. I refused to go to the other compartment and the train steamed away. I went and sat in the waiting room, keeping my hand-bag with me, leaving the other luggage where it was. The railway authorities had taken charge of it.

It was winter, and winter in the higher regions of South Africa is severely cold. Maritzburg being at a high altitude, the cold was extremely bitter. My over-coat



was in my luggage, but I did not dare to ask for it lest I should be insulted again, so I sat and shivered. There was no light in the room. A passenger came in at about midnight and possibly wanted to talk to me. But I was in no mood to talk. I began to think of my duty. Should I fight for my rights, or go back to India, or should I go on to Pretoria without minding the insults and return to India after finishing the case? It would be cowardice to run back to India without fulfilling my obligation. The hardship to which I was subjected was superficial, only a symptom of the deep disease of colour prejudice. I should try, if possible, to root out the disease and suffer hardships in the process. Redress for wrongs I should seek only to the extent that would be necessary for the removal of the colour prejudice. So I decided to take the next available train to Pretoria.

The following morning I sent a long telegram to the General Manager of the Railway and also informed Abdulla Sheth, who immediately met the General Manager. The Manager justified the conduct of the railway authorities, but informed him that he had already instructed the Station Master to see that I reached my destination safely. Abdulla Sheth wired to the Indian merchants in Maritzburg and to friends in other places to meet me and look after me. The merchants came to see me at the station and tried to comfort me by narrating their own hardships and explaining that what had happened to me was nothing unusual. They also said that Indians travelling first or second class had to expect trouble from railway officials and white passengers. The day was thus spent in listening to these tales of woe. The evening train arrived. There was a reserved berth for me. I now purchased at Maritzburg the bedding ticket I had refused to book at Durban.

The train took me to Charlestown.

About the author :

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi (1869–1948) was one of the foremost leaders of Indian nationalist movement in British ruled India. He had great belief in non-violent freedom movement. In South Africa he led the resident Indian community's struggle against oppression and social exploitation. He was called 'Mahatma' worldwide for his selfless sacrifices and devotion to the nation. Gandhi was a prolific writer. He edited several newspapers including *Indian Opinion* while staying in South Africa. He also wrote several pamphlets and books like *The Story of My Experiments with Truth*, *Satyagraha in South Africa* etc. The above text is an extract from M.K.Gandhi's *The Story of My Experiments with Truth*, Chapter 8, translated by Mahadev Desai.

Lesson 6

The Boy, the Dog and the Spaceship

—Nicholas Fisk

There was a spaceship hurtling through nothingness. It was making a desperate attempt to land on a strange planet.

There was a boy and his dog, running and rolling and chasing in a field. The boy's name was Billy. He was nine. His dog was called Scamp. They understood each other perfectly. Billy shouted at Scamp. He chased Scamp. The dog rolled his eyes, **yelped** with delight and ran.

In the spaceship, the Captain contacted the robot engineer. The Captain barked, "Make your report"



The engineer spoke, "Captain, we're going to be smashed."

The Captain pressed a button and immediately padded arms enfolded him. Soon he was completely encased in a puffy softness.

The ship hurtled on. In the control centre, the screens showed a green and blue planet with seas, clouds and land masses. The ship entered the earth's atmosphere. Its metal skin drove against the air and glowed dull red with heat.

The boy whistled for his dog. "Come on, Scamp." He was proud of having such a well-trained dog. A minute later, they were wrestling in the grass. They stopped their wrestling-match and looked about them. "You heard it! It went sort of wheeeeeoosh!" Billy said to Scamp. Scamp had located the noise; over there, by the dark trees.

The Captain had never before experienced a smash landing. "So that's what it's like," he thought. "I am alone, but I'm here as a conqueror. I will conquer this planet. If there is a ruling species on this planet, I'll invade a creature of that species and thus become a ruler of all," the Captain said to himself. The spaceship opened up and the new conqueror of planet earth looked out.

Billy's mother was calling him back home. Billy called at Scamp. The dog's ears were pricked; his tail was high, his body alert.

The Captain found the planet's air breathable. He was wearing a special suit. When the Captain said, "run", the suit would run endlessly; if the Captain said, "climb", the suit would keep climbing for him.

The Captain had seen many worlds, explored many planets. He had never seen one like this. This world was bursting with life. The Captain saw something move, very fast, on several legs. Where he stood, the Captain was surrounded by vegetable richness. A vast green trunk sprang from the very soil near him. The Captain began to climb the trunk.

Scamp gave a yelp of ecstasy as he caught on to a smell. Scamp's black nostrils widened. He bounded towards the source of the smell. Billy's mother called, "Come on, now! Billy, come home and eat your supper." Billy yelled at Scamp. But Scamp did not hear.

The Captain was in a dense forest of green columns, all very much the same. He adjusted his helmet to take in air from outside. The air was perfumed and moist. On his own planet he had tasted such air and water only in laboratories. The



Captain was struck by the inexhaustible richness of the planet. The Captain was pleased to think he was to be the conqueror of it.

Scamp had run over to where the Flying Object landed. There was a bad stench. Scamp licked the source of the smell. It was cold and hard. He picked up the object between his jaws.

Inside the spaceship, the Captain was terrified. He saw a huge monster, white, brown and black with legs, bite into the spaceship. The monster's face opened. It was pink inside and had pointed white mountains above and below.

The Captain instantly decided that the body of the monster must be entered. The Captain could then take over the control of its brain. After that, the invasion would follow its normal course. All species would eventually follow the Captain. Then the Captain would contact his home planet. Many more spaceships would come. The Captain's race would have found a safe and permanent home.

The Captain slipped out of the spaceship and began climbing the neck of the monster. The brain of the monster was above its face. He came to a tunnel leading into the monster's head. He made himself comfortable at the entrance of the tunnel. He was beginning to control the monster's brain signals. "You will obey me," the Captain said. "You will obey me always."

Billy was puzzled, looking at Scamp. Scamp kept shaking his head and he was running. "He's got an insect in his ear," thought Billy, "or an itch." Scamp ran left and right and straight. He looked weird in the moonlight. Billy began to be frightened.

The Captain instructed the white, brown and black monster to halt. The Captain was surprised. "This upright monster just now arrived seems a superior creature, though they are almost the same size," thought the Captain. "The upright creature is making audio signals and expects to be obeyed."

Billy shouted, "Scamp! Come here when I call you." Scamp sat at a distance in the moonlight, motionless. His eyes looked strange.

"Which monster is the master?" the Captain asked himself. "I must get them to fight to see who wins." The Captain spoke to the dog's brain, "Attack! Attack the other creature there."

Scamp ran towards Billy. “Scamp!” Billy yelled, “Scamp!”

Scamp charged him snarling. Billy was hurled to the ground. The dog stood over him, jaws open, teeth bared. Billy was terrified. “Scamp!” he cried out. Inside the dog’s head two voices boomed. One said, “Attack”; the other was an old, loved familiar voice, asking for help.

The dog paused. Billy had struck out his arms in fear. His fist hit the dog’s ear. Something small fell to the ground unseen. Scamp said, “Whoof!” and licked the boy’s face. He wagged his tail and got off Billy’s chest.

The boy and the dog ran off together across the moonlit field. Billy’s mother was calling, “Billy! Come home for supper!”

The Captain lay beside his spaceship at the edge of the trees. The spaceship was little, but marvelously made. Soon it would rust in the dew. The Captain lay vanquished with his dream of conquering the planet Earth.

Word Nest :

yelped — gave a sudden, short cry

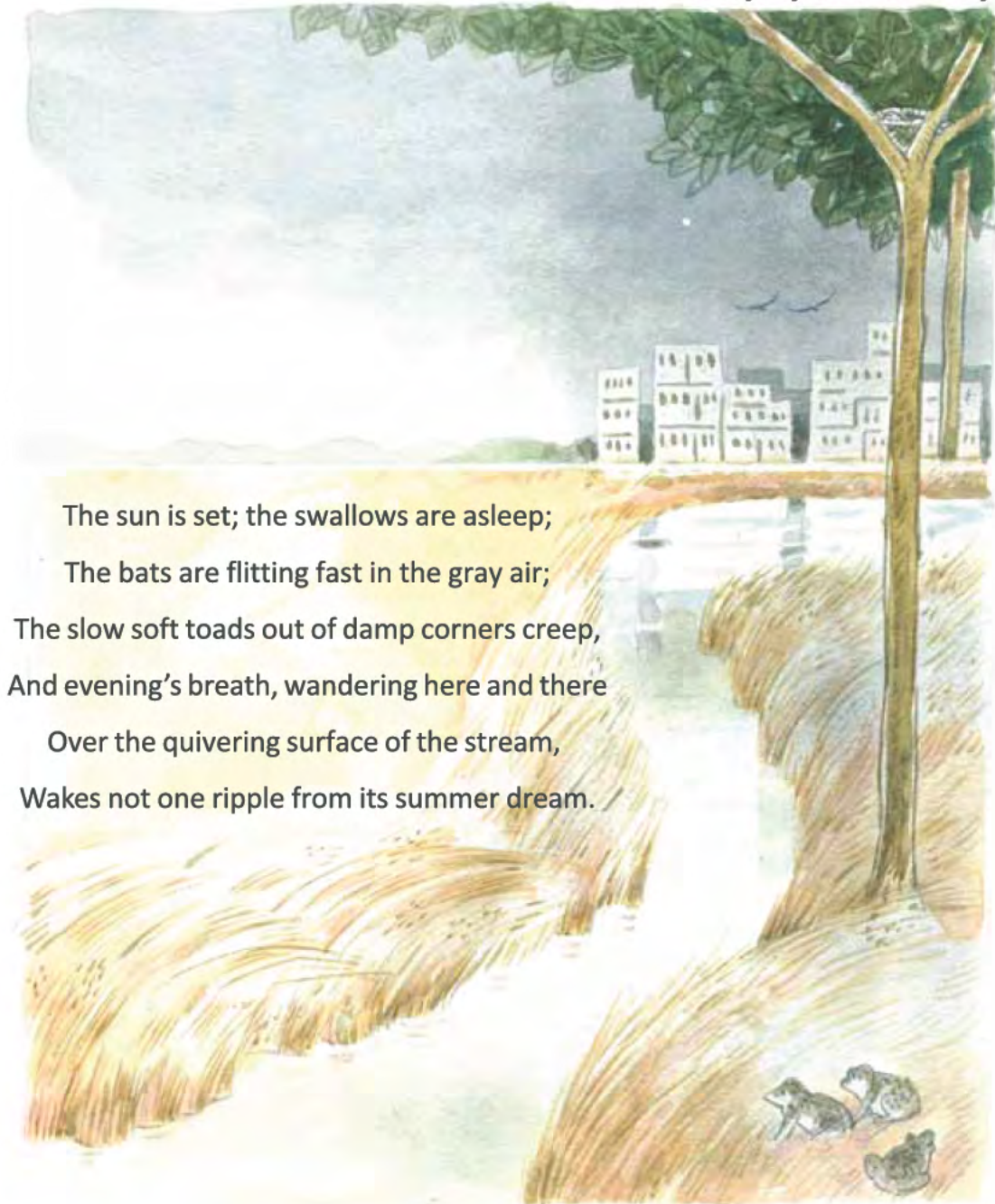
About the author :

Nicholas Fisk, the pseudonym of **David Higginbottom** (1923-), is a British writer of science fiction, who wrote mainly for children. His works include *Grinny*, *You Remember Me*, *Space Hostages* and *Trillions*. His autobiography, *Pig Ignorant* covers the years of World War when he served in the Royal Air Force. After the World War, Fisk worked as a musician, journalist, and publisher. His most impressive work, *A Rag, a Bone, and a Hank of Hair* is a thrilling futuristic novel set at the end of the 22nd century. The above text is adapted from his short story *The boy, the dog and the spaceship*.

Lesson 7

Evening : Ponte Al Mare, Pisa

—Percy Bysshe Shelley



The sun is set; the swallows are asleep;
The bats are flitting fast in the gray air;
The slow soft toads out of damp corners creep,
And evening's breath, wandering here and there
Over the quivering surface of the stream,
Wakes not one ripple from its summer dream.

There is no dew on the dry grass to-night,
Nor damp within the shadow of the trees;
The wind is intermitting, dry, and light;
And in the inconstant motion of the breeze
The dust and straws are driven up and down,
And whirled about the pavement of the town.
Within the surface of the fleeting river
The wrinkled image of the city lay,
Immovably unquiet, and forever
It trembles, but it never fades away.

About the poet :

Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792 –1822) was one of the major English Romantic poets, famous for his immortal lyrics. A radical in his poetry as well as his political and social views, Shelley did not achieve fame during his lifetime, but recognition for his poetry grew steadily following his death. Shelley is perhaps best known for such poems as *Ozymandias*, *Ode to the West Wind*, *To a Skylark*, *The Cloud* and *The Masque of Anarchy*. His other major works include long, visionary poems such as *Queen Mab*, *Alastor*, *The Revolt of Islam*, *Adonais* and the visionary verse dramas *The Cenci* and *Prometheus Unbound*. The text is a part of a poem published posthumously by Mrs. Shelley (1824).

Lesson 8

Night Journey

—Theodore Roethke

Now as the train bears west,
Its rhythm rocks the earth,
And from my Pullman berth
I stare into the night
While others take their rest.

Bridges of iron lace,
A suddenness of trees,
A lap of mountain mist
All cross my line of sight,
Then a bleak wasted place,
And a lake below my knees.

Full on my neck I feel
The straining at a curve;
My muscles move with steel,
I wake in every nerve.

I watch a **beacon** swing
From dark to blazing bright;
We thunder through ravines
And **gullies** washed with light.

Beyond the mountain pass
Mist deepens on the pane;
We rush into a rain
That rattles double glass.
Wheels shake the roadbed stone,
The **pistons** jerk and shove,
I stay up half the night
To see the land I love.

Word Nest :

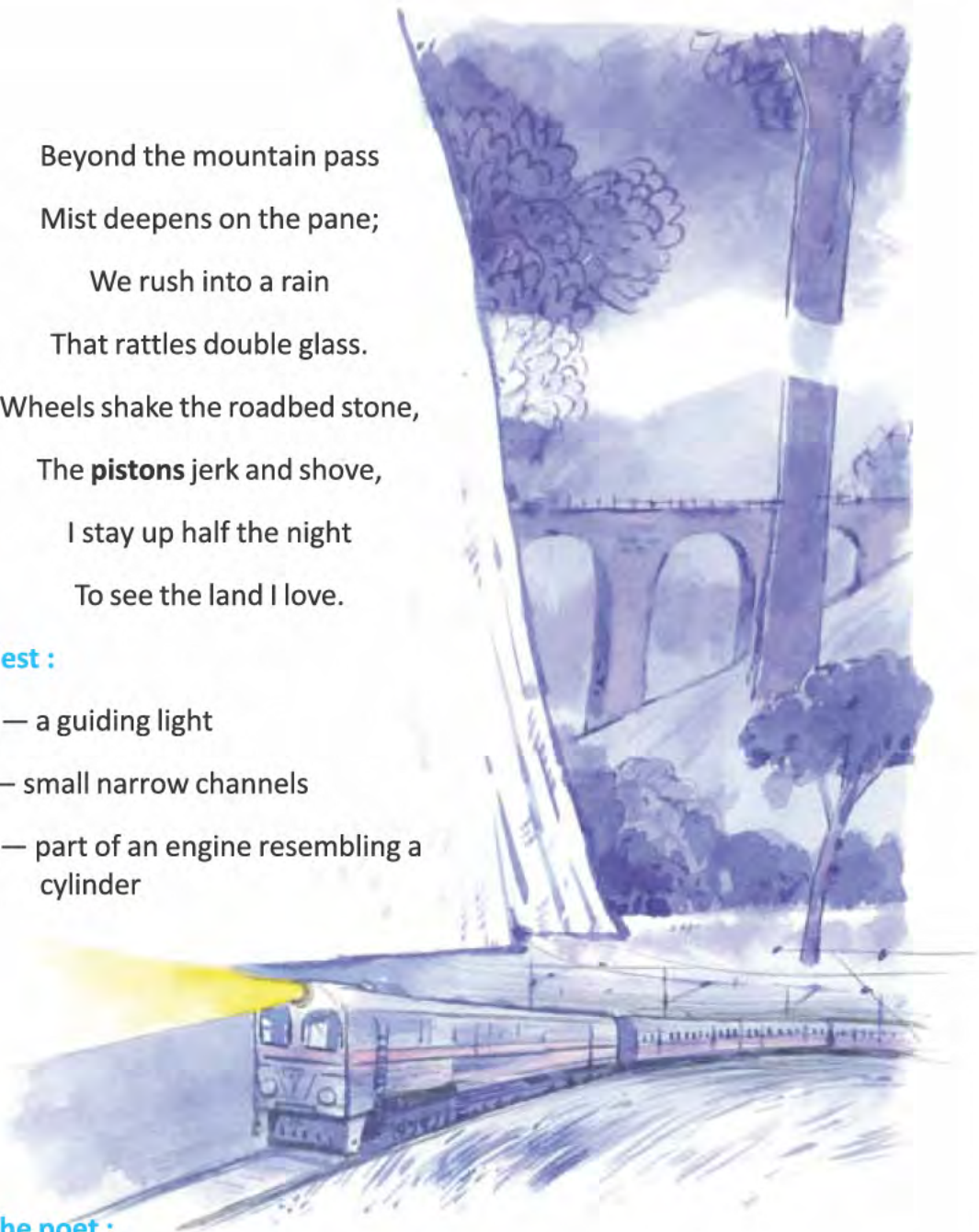
beacon — a guiding light

gullies — small narrow channels

pistons — part of an engine resembling a cylinder

About the poet :

Theodore Huebner Roethke (1908 – 1963) was an American poet who published several volumes of critically acclaimed verse. He is widely regarded as among the most accomplished and influential poets of his generation. Roethke's work is characterized by its introspection, rhythm and natural imagery. He was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for poetry in 1954 for his book *The Waking*. His other important works include *Words for the Wind*, *The Far Field* etc.



Lesson 9

The Taste of Watermelon

—Borden Deal

When I think of the summer I was 16, a lot of things come crowding in to be thought about.

We were all afraid of Mr. Wills. He had bright, fierce eyes under heavy brows. Mr. Wills was the best farmer in the community. Mr. Wills always planted the little field directly behind his barn with watermelons. But they were Mr. Wills' melons; he didn't have any idea of sharing them with the boys of the neighborhood. He was fiercer about his melons than anything else. That summer I was 16. Mr. Wills raised the greatest watermelon ever seen in that country. Men came from miles around to look at it. Mr. Wills wouldn't let them go into the melon patch. They had to stand around the edge.

Just like all other daredevil boys in that country, I guess, my friends Freddy Gray and J.D. and I had talked idly about stealing that giant watermelon. But we all knew that it was just talk. It was his seed melon. He meant to plant next year's crop out of that great one. Wills was in a frenzy of fear that somebody would steal it.

About the time the great watermelon was due to come ripe, there was a night of a full moon. J.D. and Freddy Gray and I had decided we'd go swimming in the creek, so I left the house when the moon rose and went to meet them. We reached the swimming hole in the creek. The water was cold, and the shock of it struck a chill into us.

We climbed out finally to rest and sat on the bank.

"Old Man Wills won't have to worry about anybody stealing his melon tonight, anyway," Freddy Gray said. "Wouldn't anybody dare try it, bright as day like it is."

Suddenly there came into my mouth the taste of watermelon. I could taste the sweet, red juices oozing over my tongue. I stood up. "As a matter of fact," I said, "I'm going after it right now."



We came opposite the watermelon patch and ducked down the bank. We could see Mr. Wills very plainly. It seemed to take forever to reach the great melon in the middle of the field. With every move, I expected Mr. Wills to see me. Fortunately the grass was high enough to cover me. At last the melon loomed up before me, deep green in the moonlight, and I gasped at the size of it. I lay still for a moment, panting. I didn't have the faintest idea how to get it out of the field. It was not a long melon, but a fat, round one. Besides, I didn't dare stand up. It took about a hundred years to push that melon out of the field.

When my little knife penetrated the thick, green rind, the melon split perfectly down the middle. It was still warm from the day's sun. Just as in my anticipation, I felt the sweet juice trickle into my throat. I had never tasted watermelon so delicious. The two boys were watching me savour the first bite. I opened my eyes. "Dive in," I said graciously. "Help yourselves." We gorged ourselves until we were heavy.

We gazed with **sated** eyes at the left-over melon. We were depressed suddenly. It was such a waste, after all the struggle and the danger, that we could not eat every bite. The depression went with us toward home, and I did not feel triumph or victory, as I had expected.

"Where have you been?" my father asked as I stepped up on the porch.

"Swimming," I said.

I looked toward Mr. Wills' barn. My breath caught in my throat when I saw him in the field. He reached the place where the melon should have been. I saw him hesitate, looking around; then he bent, and I knew he was looking at the depression in the earth where the melon had lain. He straightened, a great, strangled cry tearing out of his throat.

"What's come over you?" My father said. "What's the matter, man?"

"They've stolen my seed melon," he yelled. "They took it right out from under me." I saw that tears stood on his cheeks, and I couldn't look at him anymore.

I didn't sleep that night. I don't know all the things I thought. Mostly it was about the terrible thing I had committed so lightly. I knew that it was up to me, at whatever risk, to repair as well as I could the damage I had done.

When it was daylight I rose from my bed and went out into the fresh world. I had found a paper sack in the kitchen, and I carried it in my hand as I walked toward the swimming hole. I stopped there and looked down at the **wanton** waste we had made of the part of the melon we had not been able to eat. I knelt down on the ground, opened the paper sack and began picking up the black seeds. They nearly filled the paper sack. I went back to the house. Father was standing on the porch.

"Father," I said, "I've got to go talk to Mr. Wills. Right now. I wish you would come with me."

He stopped, watching me. "What's the matter?" he said. "Did you steal that seed melon of his?"

"Will you come with me?" I said. My father watched me for a moment. "Yes," he



said quietly. We walked the short distance between our house and his. I knocked on the porch door. In a moment Mr. Wills appeared in the doorway.

"What do you want, boy?" he said.

I held out the paper bag. "Mr. Wills," I said, "here are the seeds from your seed melon. That's all I could bring back."

"Did you steal it?" he said.

"Yes, sir," I said.

"Why did you steal it?" he said.

"I don't know," I said.

"Didn't you know it was my seed melon?"

“Yes, sir,” I said. “I knew it.” I hung my head. “I’m sorry,” I said.

He stopped still then, watching me. “So you brought me the seeds,” he said softly. “That’s not much, boy.” I lifted my head. “It was all I could think to do,” I said. “The melon is gone. But the seeds are for next year. That’s why I brought them to you.”

“But you ruined this year,” he said.

“Yes, sir,” I said. “I ruined it.” I looked at him humbly. “I’ll help you plant them, Mr. Wills. I’ll work hard.”

Mr. Wills looked at my father for the first time. There was a small, hard smile on his face; his eyes didn’t look as fierce as before.

“A man with a big farm like mine needs a son,” he said. I do wish I had me a boy like that.”

He came close to me then, put his hand on my shoulder. “We can’t do anything about this year,” he said. “But we’ll grow next year, won’t we? We’ll grow it together.”

“Yes, sir,” I said.

Word Nest :

sated — having had maximum food

wanton — carelessly cruel

About the author :

Borden Deal (1922–1985) was a famous American novelist and short story writer. A prolific writer, Deal wrote twenty-one novels and more than one hundred short stories. A major theme in his canon is man’s mystical attachment to the earth and his quest for land, inspired by his family’s loss of their property during the period of the Great Depression. The majority of his work is set in the small hamlets of the South. His most important stories are *The Insolent Breed*, *Dunbar’s Cove*, *Blue grass* etc. The above text is an adaptation from his famous short story *The Taste of Watermelons*.

Lesson 10

After Twenty Years

—O. Henry

The policeman on the beat moved up the avenue impressively. The impressiveness was habitual and not for show, for spectators were few. The time was barely 10 o'clock at night, but chilly gusts of wind with a taste of rain in them had well **nigh** de-peopled the streets.

Trying doors as he went, twirling his club with many intricate and artful movements, turning now and then to cast his watchful eye down the pacific thoroughfare, the officer, with his **stalwart** form and slight **swagger**, made a fine picture of a guardian of the peace. The vicinity was one that kept early hours. Now and then you might see the lights of a cigar store or of an all-night lunch counter; but the majority of the doors belonged to business places that had long since been closed.

When about midway of a certain block, the policeman suddenly slowed his walk. In the doorway of a darkened hardware store, a man leaned. As the policeman walked up to him, the man spoke up quickly:

"It's all right, officer," he said, reassuringly. "I'm just waiting for a friend. It's an appointment made twenty years ago. Sounds a little funny to you, doesn't it? Well, I'll explain if you'd like to make certain it's all straight. About that long ago there used to be a restaurant where this store stands—'Big Joe' Brady's restaurant.

"Until five years ago," said the policeman. "It was torn down then."

The man in the doorway struck match and lit his cigar. The light showed a pale, square-jawed face with keen eyes, and a little white scar near his right eyebrow. His scarf pin was a large diamond, oddly set.

"Twenty years ago tonight," said the man. "I dined here at 'Big Joe' Brady's with Jimmy Wells, my best **chum**, and the finest chap in the world. He and I were raised



here in New York, just like two brothers, together. I was eighteen and Jimmy was twenty. The next morning I was to start for the West to make my fortune. You couldn't have dragged Jimmy out of New York; he thought it was the only place on earth. Well, we agreed that night that we would meet here again exactly twenty years from that date and time, no matter what our conditions might be or from what distance we might have to come. We figured that in twenty years each of us ought to have our destiny worked out and our fortunes made, whatever they were going to be."

"It sounds pretty interesting," said the policeman. "Rather a long time between meets, though, it seems to me. Haven't you heard from your friend since you left?"

"Well, yes, for a time we corresponded," said the other. "But after a year or two we lost track of each other. You see, the West is a pretty big proposition, and I kept hustling around over it pretty lively. But I know Jimmy will meet me here if

he's alive, for always was the truest, staunchest old chap in the world. He'll never forget. I came a thousand miles to stand in this door tonight, and it's worth it if my old partner turns up."

The waiting man pulled out a handsome watch, the lids of it set with small diamonds.

"Three minutes to ten," he announced. "It was exactly ten o' clock when we parted here at the restaurant door."

"Did pretty well out West, didn't you?" asked the policeman.

"You bet! I hope Jimmy has done half as well. He was a kind of plodder, though, good fellow as he was. I've had to compete with some of the sharpest wits going to get my pile. A man gets in a groove in New York. It takes the West to put a razor-edge on him."

The policeman twirled his club and took a step or two. "I'll be on my way. Hope your friend comes around all right. Going to call time on him sharp?"

"I should say not!" said the other. "I'll give him half an hour at least. If Jimmy is alive on earth he'll be here by that time. So long, officer."

"Goodnight, sir," said the policeman, passing on along his beat, trying doors as he went.

There was now a fine, cold drizzle falling, and the wind had risen from its uncertain puffs into a steady blow. The few foot passengers astir in that quarter, hurried dismally and silently along with coat collars turned high and pocketed hands. In the door of the hardware store the man who had come a thousand miles to fill an appointment, uncertain almost to absurdity, with the friend of his youth, waited.

About twenty minutes he waited, and then a tall man in a long overcoat, with collar turned up to his ears, hurried across from the opposite side of the street. He went directly to the waiting man.

"Is that you, Bob?" he asked, doubtfully.

"Is that you, Jimmy Wells?" cried the man in the door.

"Bless my heart!" exclaimed the new arrival, grasping both the other's hands with his own. "It's Bob, sure as fate. I was certain I'd find you here if you were still in existence. Well, well, well! – twenty years is a long time. The old restaurant's gone, Bob; I wish it had lasted, so we could have had another dinner there. How has the West treated you, old man?"

"Bully; it has given me everything I asked it for. You've changed lots, Jimmy. I never thought you were so tall by two or three inches."

"Oh, I grew a bit after I was twenty."

"Doing well in New York, Jimmy?"

"Moderately. I have a position in one of the city departments. Come on, Bob; we'll go round to a place I know of, and have a good long talk about old times."

The two men started up the street, arm in arm. The man from the West, his **egotism** enlarged by success, was beginning to outline the history of his career. The other, submerged in his overcoat, listened with interest.

At the corner stood a drug store, brilliant with electric lights. When they came into this glare each of them simultaneously gazed upon the other's face.

The man from the West stopped suddenly and released his arm. "You're not Jimmy Wells," he snapped. "Twenty years is a long time but not long enough to change a man's nose from a Roman to a pug."

"It sometimes changes a good man into a bad man," said the tall man. "You've been under arrest for ten minutes, 'Silky' Bob. Chicago thinks you may have dropped over our way and wires us that they want to have a chat with you. Going quietly, are you? That's sensible. Now, before we go on to the station here's the note I was asked to hand you. You may read it here at the window. It's from Patrolman Wells."



The man from the West unfolded the little piece of paper handed to him. His hand was steady when he began to read, but it trembled a little by the time he had finished. The note was rather short:

“Bob,

I was at the appointed place on time. When you struck the match, I saw it was the face of the man wanted in Chicago. Somehow I couldn’t do it myself so I went around and got a plain clothes man to do the job.

JIMMY”.

Word Nest :

stalwart — an accomplished and dependable person

swagger— to walk in an extremely proud way

egotism — a self-conceited attitude

About the author :

O. Henry (1862-1910), the pseudonym of William Sidney Porter, was a prolific American short story writer, well known for his wit, wordplay, warm characterization, and twist endings. Most of his stories are set in his own time, the early 20th century. Many take place in New York City and deal for the most part with ordinary people. O. Henry had an inimitable hand for isolating some element of society and describing it with an incredible economy and grace of language. Some of his well known stories are *The Gift of the Magi*, *The Last Leaf*, *The Cop and the Anthem*, *Jimmy Valentine* etc. The above text is adapted from O. Henry's short story *After Twenty Years*.

Lesson 11

At The Railway Station, Upways

—Thomas Hardy

‘There is not much that I can do,
For I’ve no money that’s quite my own!’
Spoke up the pitying child—
A little boy with a violin
At the station before the train came in,—
‘But I can play my **fiddle** to you,
And a nice one ’tis, and good in tone!’
The man in the handcuffs smiled;
The constable looked, and he smiled too,
As the fiddle began to twang;
And the man in the handcuffs suddenly sang
With grimful glee:
‘This life so free
Is the thing for me!’
And the constable smiled, and said no word,
As if unconscious of what he heard;
And so they went on till the train came in—
The convict, and boy with the violin.



About the poet :

Thomas Hardy (1840 –1928) was a renowned English poet and novelist. Some of his famous novels are *Return of the Native*, *Under the Greenwood Tree* and *Mayor of Casterbridge*. His collections of poetry includes *Wessex Poems and Other Verses*, *Poems of the Past and the Present*, *Satires of Circumstance* etc. He also wrote an epic drama *The Dynasts*.

Lesson 12

The Money Box

—Robert Lynd

The elder of my nieces had brought home a money-box. It was a charming thing in the shape of a house, with long painted windows on the front.

“How does one open it?” she asked me, tugging at the floor, **gable-ends** and roof in turn, in the hope that something would give away.

“Yes,” I said, taking it from her and examining it, “that is the important thing to know about a money-box.”



She took it back from me. Just then, as if by a miracle, the floor of the money-box turned gently round in her hand. The great secret was revealed. "Good," she cried. "A money-box is useless if you can't take out at will the money you put into."

The money-box, I fancy, is not a natural inhabitant of the nursery. I doubt if any child, on being asked to choose a gift, ever asked a money-box. Not that, children dislike money-boxes when they get them. As a child I remember enjoying the look of a new money-box. I dreamt it was already full before I had dropped the first penny into it.

In my childhood, as a rule, the money-box was a small tin drum. When once the pennies were in, you might hold the box upside down and shake it for an hour and yet not a single coin would fall out. Then you got a knife and tried to ease out one of the pennies. It is immensely exasperating to have almost got out a penny and then to see it disappear again into the box.

I went over to the cupboard, took out a box of tools and armed myself with a **chisel**. With a chisel you can either prise the top of the box off; better still, you can widen the slit on top. Then the pennies fall as easily as pigeons fly out of a pigeon-loft. Now it is a highly serviceable money-box. You can either put pennies into it, or take out pennies as you please.

Obviously, each of us consists of two selves: one that wishes to save, and one that wishes to spend. One differs as much from the other as a man does from his first cousin. Not only this, but each of the selves are hostile to the other. The self that spends, is irritated by the knowledge that the self that saves is grudging every penny in its fingers. When the spending-self sees the self that saves slipping pennies into the money-box, it cries: "Stop, thief! That belongs to me." When the self that saves sees the spending-self forcing pennies out of the money-box with a chisel, it's anguished. It too cries out: "Stop, thief! Everything there belongs to me."

As for myself, the spending-self has won complete victory over me. It is talent for saving money. The only money I ever saved was the money that I had no time to spend within twenty-four hours of a day. I wanted to become rich. I did not hope



I would become rich by saving. It seemed to me meanness to deny my stomach a chocolate bar, so that in some future date I might be prosperous. Why, after all, should the stomach suffer in the interest of the pocket? The stomach is human, sensitive and warm. The pocket is inhuman, unfeeling and cold. It is better that the pocket serve the stomach than that the stomach should serve the pocket.

There must be some pleasure yet, in saving money. Many people would rather do this than go to the theatre, or travel, or buy books. Probably the best people like

doing it because they are thinking of their children's future. It may be also because they want to help some cause that they have at heart. There are also people who enjoy saving money for no other reason than the pleasure of saving money. Does it usually begin, I wonder, with a money-box?

A man can grow up, learning to save like a miser. By the age of forty, he has a substantial banking account. Nevertheless, he persuades himself that he is so poor that he never rides a taxi, and never invites a friend to dinner. It is a sad story and may have begun with a benevolent grandfather gifting a harmless tin money-box to the infant.

A money-box is a **perilous** gift, unless accompanied by a chisel. The only money-box of virtue is a box out of which one can get money when one wants it.

Word Nest :

gable - ends — upper part of the end - wall of a building

chisel — a tool with a sharp edge

perilous — dangerous

About the author :

Robert Wilson Lynd (1879-1949) was a famous Irish writer, who is remembered for his essays which he wrote over a period of more than forty years. These essays never fall below a high level of elegance and fluency. His most famous essays include *Forgetting*, *The Money Box*, *The Orange Tree*, *The Gold fish*, *Rain Rain go to Spain etc.* He used the pseudonym 'Y.Y.' while writing for the *New Statesman*. The above text is an adaptation from Lynd's essay *The Money Box*.

Lesson 13

Petals

—Amy Lowell

Life is a stream
On which we strew
Petal by petal the flower of our heart;
The end lost in dream,
They float past our view,
We only watch their glad, early start.
Freighted with hope,
Crimsoned with joy,
We scatter the leaves of our opening rose;
Their widening scope,
Their distant employ,
We never shall know. And the stream as it flows
Sweeps them away,



Each one is gone
Ever beyond into infinite ways.
We alone stay
While years hurry on,
The flower fared forth, though its fragrance still stays.

Word Nest :

freighted — burdened

About the poet :

Amy Lawrence Lowell (1874–1925) was an American poet of the imagist school from Brooklyn, Massachusetts, who posthumously won the Pulitzer Prize for Poetry in 1926. Though she sometimes wrote sonnets, Lowell was an early adherent to the “free verse” method of poetry. She dispensed with line breaks, so that the work looks like prose on the page. Her book *Fir-Flower Poets* was a poetical re-working of literal translations of the works of ancient Chinese poets. Her writing also included critical works on French literature. At the time of her death, she was attempting to complete her two-volume biography of John Keats.

Lesson 14

The Absent-minded Man

—Jerome K. Jerome

You ask him to dine with you on Thursday to meet a few people who are anxious to know him.

“Now don’t make a muddle of it,” you say, recollectful of former mishaps, “and come on Wednesday.”

He laughs good-naturedly as he hunts through the room for his diary.

You stand over him while he writes the appointment down on a sheet of foolscap, and watch him pin it up over his desk. Then you come away contented.

“I do hope he’ll turn up,” you say to your wife on the Thursday evening, while dressing.

“Are you sure you made it clear to him?” she replies, suspiciously.

Eight o’clock arrives, and with it the other guests. During the soup and the fish you recount anecdotes of his unpunctuality and the empty chair begins to cast a gloom over the dinner.

On Friday, at a quarter past eight, he dashes to the door and rings violently. Hearing his voice in the hall, you go to meet him.

“Sorry I’m late,” he sings out cheerily.

“Well, what do you want now?” you interrupt, feeling anything but genially inclined towards him.

He laughs, and slaps you on the shoulder.

“Why, my dinner, my dear boy, I’m starving.”



"Oh," you grunt in reply. "Well, you go and get it somewhere else, then. You're not going to have it here."

"What do you mean?" he says. "You asked me to dinner."

"I did nothing of the kind," you tell him. "I asked you to dinner on Thursday, not on Friday."

He stares at you incredulously.

"How did I get Friday fixed in my mind?"

"Because yours is the sort of mind that would get Friday firmly fixed into it, when Thursday was the day," you explain.

Matters work out still more awkwardly when it is he who is the host. I remember being with him on his house-boat one day. It was a little after twelve, and we were sitting on the edge of the boat, dangling our feet in the river.

Suddenly round the bend appeared two **skiffs**, each one containing six elaborately-dressed persons. As soon as they caught sight of us they began waving handkerchiefs and parasols.

“Hullo!” I said, “Here are some people hailing you.”

“Oh, they all do that about here,” he answered, without looking up.

The boats draw nearer. When about two hundred yards off an elderly gentleman raised himself up in the prow of the leading one and shouted to us.

My companion heard his voice, and gave a start that all but pitched him into the water.

“Good God!” he cried, “I’d forgotten all about it.”

“About what?” I asked.

“Why, it’s the Palmers and the Grahams and the Hendersons. I’ve asked them all over to lunch, and there’s not a blessed thing on board but two mutton chops and a pound of potatoes!”

Everybody said he never would get married; that it was absurd to suppose he ever would remember the day, the church, and the girl, all in one morning. But by some miraculous means the ceremony got itself accomplished.

I had not seen him since his marriage, which had happened in the spring. Working my way back from Scotland, I stopped for a few days at Scarborough. After dinner I put on my **mackintosh**, and went out for a walk. Struggling along the dark beach with my head against the wind, I stumbled over a crouching figure, seeking to shelter itself a little from the storm.



"I beg your pardon," I said. "I did not see you."

At the sound of my voice it started to its feet.

"Is that you, old man?" it cried.

"McQuae!" I exclaimed.

"By Jove!" he said, "I was never so glad to see a man in all my life before."

And he nearly shook my hand off.

"But what are you doing here? Why, you're drenched to the skin."

"Yes," he answered. "I never thought it would rain. It was a lovely morning."

I began to fear he had overworked himself into a brain fever.

“Why don’t you go home?” I asked.

“I can’t,” he replied. “I don’t know where I live. I’ve forgotten the address.”

“Haven’t you any money?” I asked him, as we turned towards the hotel.

“Not a **sou**,” he answered. “We got in here from York, my wife and I, about eleven. We left our things at the station, and started to hunt for apartments. As soon as we were fixed, I changed my clothes and came out for a walk, telling Maud I should be back for lunch. Like a fool, I never took the address, and never noticed the way I was going.

“It’s an awful business,” he continued. “I don’t see how I’m ever going to find her.

“But have you no notion of the sort of street or the kind of house it was?” I enquired.

“Not a ghost,” he replied. “I left it all to Maud, and didn’t trouble.”

“Have you tried any of the lodging-houses?” I asked.

“Tried!” he exclaimed bitterly. “I’ve been knocking at doors, and asking if Mrs. McQuae lives there steadily all the afternoon, and they slam the door in my face, mostly without answering. I told a policeman—I thought perhaps he might suggest something—but the idiot only burst out laughing. I think I’d have drowned myself if you hadn’t turned up.”

After a change of clothes and some supper, he discussed the case more calmly, but it was really a serious affair. They had shut up their flat, and his wife’s relatives were travelling abroad. There was no one to whom he could send a letter to be forwarded; there was no one with whom she would be likely to communicate. Their chance of meeting again in this world appeared remote.

“She will think it strange,” he murmured reflectively, sitting on the edge of the bed, and thoughtfully pulling off his socks. “She is sure to think it strange.”

The following day, which was Wednesday, we went to a solicitor, and laid the case before him, and he instituted inquiries among all the lodging-house keepers in Scarborough, with the result that on Thursday afternoon McQuae was restored to his home and wife.

I asked him next time I met him what she had said.

“Oh, much what I expected,” he replied.

But he never told me what he had expected.

Word Nest :

skiffs — rowboats

mackintosh — raincoat

sou — a small piece

About the author :

Jerome Klapka Jerome (1859–1927) was born in Staffordshire, England. He was an actor and teacher before becoming a popular writer and humorist, best known for the comic travelogue *Three Men in a Boat* (1889) which recounted an expedition on the Thames. He served as an editor of the publication *The Idler* and wrote many other books like *Three Men on the Brummel* (a sequel to *Three Men in a Boat*), *Idle Thoughts of an Idle Fellow*, *Second Thoughts of an Idle Fellow* etc. The above text is an adaptation from Jerome’s *An Absent minded Man*.

Lesson 15

In A Disused Graveyard

—Robert Frost

The living come with grassy tread
To read the gravestones on the hill;
The graveyard draws the living still,
But never anymore the dead.

The verses in it say and say:
“The ones who living come today
To read the stones and go away
Tomorrow dead will come to stay.”
So sure of death the marbles rhyme,
Yet can’t help marking all the time
How no one dead will seem to come.
What is it men are shrinking from?
It would be easy to be clever
And tell the stones: Men hate to die
And have stopped dying now forever.
I think they would believe the lie.

About the poet :

Robert Lee Frost (1874 –1963) was an American poet who is highly regarded for his realistic depictions of rural life. His work frequently employed settings from rural life in New England in the early twentieth century, using them to examine complex social and philosophical themes. One of the most popular and respected American poets of the twentieth century, Frost was honored frequently during his lifetime. His most important publications include *A Boy’s Will*, *North of Boston*, *Mountain Interval*, *West-Running Brook* and *Fire and Ice*. In total, there are over 30 collections of Frost’s poems.



Transformation of Sentences

Read the following sets of sentences:

Set-A

1. They were going to school. (assertive sentence)
2. Were they going to school? (interrogative sentence)

Set-B

1. He ran fast.(assertive sentence)
2. Did he run fast? (interrogative sentence)

Assertive sentences are transformed into interrogative sentences by placing the auxiliary verb before the subject and the main verb immediately after the subject. (Ref. set-A)

Assertive sentences that do not carry an auxiliary verb are transformed into interrogative sentences by providing auxiliary verbs according to the sense of the sentence. (Ref. set-B)

Read the following sets of sentences:

Set-A

1. How beautiful is the rainbow! (exclamatory sentence)
2. The rainbow is very beautiful. (assertive sentence)

Set-B

1. The old man said “Robin, do not run in the sun.” (imperative sentence)
2. The old man advised Robin not to run in the sun. (assertive sentence)

Exclamatory sentences are transformed into assertive sentences by decreasing the emotional content of the sentence and removing the exclamation mark to give the sentence the form of a statement. (Ref. set-A)

Imperative sentences are transformed into assertive sentences by removing the sense of order, command, advice, request etc. and by giving the sentence the form of a statement. (Ref. set-B)

Read the following sets of sentences:

Set-A

1. He wished that he was absent. (affirmative sentence)
2. He wished that he was not present. (negative sentence)

Set-B

1. She will not sleep. (negative sentence)
2. She will remain awake. (affirmative sentence)

Affirmative sentences are transformed into negative sentences with certain modifications like using words as 'not', 'no', 'never' etc. without making any change in the meaning. (Ref. set-A)

Negative sentences are transformed into affirmative sentences by removing words like 'not', 'no', 'never' etc. without making any changes in the meaning. (Ref. set-B)

Read the following sets of sentences:

Set-A

1. This is a **beautiful** painting. (adjective)
2. This painting is **beautifully** done. (adverb)

Set-B

1. They have a very big house. (simple sentence)
2. They have a house which is very big. (complex sentence)

We can transform a sentence by changing the part of speech of the said word into another without changing its meaning. (Ref. set-A)

Note:

(1) A simple sentence can be changed into a complex sentence by expanding a word or a phrase into a subordinate or dependent clause which may be a noun clause, an adjective clause or an adverb clause.

(2) A simple sentence can be changed into a compound sentence by expanding a word or a phrase into a main clause and the two clauses are joined by a coordinating conjunction.

(3) A complex sentence can be changed into a simple sentence by contracting the subordinate clause (noun clause, adjective clause and adverb clause) into words or phrases.

(4) A complex sentence can be changed into a compound sentence by replacing the subordinate clause with a main clause and adding a coordinating conjunction. (Ref. set-B)

Exercise 1

Do as directed:

- (a) It is certain that he will win the prize. (change into a simple sentence)
- (b) Leaving the room he went to the park. (change into a compound sentence)
- (c) Three girls were playing in the field. (change into an interrogative sentence)
- (d) He never tells a lie. (change into an affirmative sentence)
- (e) We take pride in our country. (use 'proud')
- (f) She is too weak to walk. (remove 'too')
- (g) If you do not come, I will not go. (begin with 'unless')
- (h) The company has installed new computers. (end with 'company')

Synthesis of Sentences

Read the following pairs of sentences:

1. He was tired. He fell asleep.
2. This is my friend. Her name is Rima.
3. Rima is weak. She cannot play.
4. The bell rang. The lessons began.
5. The sun set. They had not finished their journey.
6. He found the brush. He started painting.

Read the following sentences:

1. **Being** tired, he fell asleep. (participle)
2. This is **my friend, Rina**. (phrase in apposition)
3. Rima is too weak **to play**. (infinitive)
4. **The bell having rung**, the lessons began. (nominative absolute)
5. They had not finished their journey **by sunset**. (adverbial phrase)
6. **On finding** the brush, he started painting. (preposition with a gerund)

Two or more simple sentences can be joined into a single simple sentence by using participle, noun or phrase in apposition, infinitive, nominative absolute, adverb or adverbial phrase and preposition with a gerund.

Exercise 1

Join the following pairs of sentences into single simple sentences as directed:

1. I received no answer. I called a second time. (use participle)
2. He must speak the truth. He will escape punishment. (use preposition with gerund)
3. Coal is an important mineral. It is hard and black. (use noun in apposition)
4. She has some money. She can buy some ice-creams. (use infinitive)

5. The rain fell. The buds blossomed into flowers. (use nominative absolute)
6. The student answered the question. Her answer was correct. (use adverbial phrase)

Read the following pairs of sentences:

1. He is intelligent. He is hardworking.
2. He is slow. He is steady.
3. Read the book. Listen to the song.
4. He saved the child. He was rewarded.

Read the following sentences:

1. He is **not only** intelligent, **but also** hardworking. (cumulative conjunctions)
2. He is slow **but** steady. (adversative conjunction)
3. **Either** read the book **or** listen to the song. (alternative conjunctions)
4. He was rewarded, **for** he saved the child. (illative conjunction)

Two or more simple sentences are joined into a single compound sentence by using cumulative conjunctions (adding one statement to the other), adversative conjunctions (express contrast), alternative conjunctions (express a choice between two alternatives) and illative conjunctions based upon drawing inferences from two or more statements).

Note:

‘Both’, ‘and’, ‘not only’, ‘but also’ are cumulative conjunctions. ‘but’, ‘still’, ‘yet’, ‘nevertheless’, ‘however’ are adversative conjunctions. ‘Or’, ‘either...or’, ‘neither...nor’ are alternative conjunctions. ‘Therefore’, ‘for’, ‘so’, ‘as’, ‘because’, ‘since’ are illative conjunctions.

Exercise 2

Join the following pairs of sentences into a single compound sentence as directed:

1. She is sick. She cannot come to school. (use illative conjunction)
2. She is kind. She is noble. (use cumulative conjunctions)
3. He did not achieve success. He kept on trying. (use adversative conjunction)
4. Come quickly. You will be late. (use alternative conjunctions)

Read the following pairs of sentences:

1. He will arrive. That is certain.
2. I saw my friend. He is wearing a green shirt.
3. We eat. We wish to live.

Read the following sentences:

1. It is certain **that he will arrive**. (noun clause)
2. I saw my friend **who was wearing a green shirt**. (adjective clause)
3. We eat **so that we may live**. (adverb clause)

Two or more simple sentences are joined into a single complex sentence by using noun, adjective or adverb clauses. Note, these clauses act as dependent clauses in the joined sentences.

Exercise 3

Join the following pairs of sentences into complex sentences:

1. The teacher will ask a question. I thought so. (use noun clause)
2. He is very old. He is in good health. (use adverb clause)
3. Mr. Sen works in a bank. He is my neighbor. (use adjective clause)

Exercise 4

Join the following pairs of sentences into a single sentence as directed:

1. He is not a fool. He is not a coward. (compound sentence)
2. He finished the dinner. He went out for a walk. (simple sentence)
3. This is the garden. The most beautiful flowers grow here. (complex sentence)
4. The student gave the correct answer. She knew it. (complex sentence)
5. Do not borrow. Do not lend. (compound sentence)
6. A crow was very thirsty. It flew to a pitcher. (simple sentence)

Analysis of Sentences

Read the following sentences:

1. Unless he goes to the market, he will not find a cake of soap.
2. It was Rita who knew that her friend was sick.

In sentence 1, the principal clause is 'he will not find a cake of soap.' The dependent clause is 'unless he goes to the market'. The dependent clause modifies the verb 'find' by expressing a condition. Therefore, the dependent clause is an adverb clause of condition.

In sentence 2, the principal clause is 'It was Rita.' The first dependent clause is 'who knew'. The second dependent clause is 'that her friend is sick'. The first dependent clause modifies the noun 'Rita'. Therefore, it is an adjective clause. The second dependent clause is the object of the verb 'knew'. Therefore, it is a noun clause.

In analyzing a complex sentence, the following points are to be noted:

- i) Identification of the principal clause.
- ii) Identification of the dependent clause or clauses.
- iii) Showing how each dependent clause is related to the principal clause.
- iv) Identifying each dependent clause as noun clause, adjective clause or adverb clause.

Exercise 1

Analyze the following complex sentences:

1. My friend found the pen that I had lost.
2. When the signal light turned red, all traffic came to a stop.
3. I know the wise man who said that this would happen.
4. He answered that he would work whenever he liked.
5. I came to know that my neighbour was the rich man who owned the hotel.

Now, read the following sentences carefully:

1. The sun rose and the fog disappeared.
2. You must not be late or you will be fined.

In sentence 1, there are two principal clauses. The first principal clause is 'the fog disappeared'. These two principal clauses are joined by the conjunction 'and'.

In sentence 2, there are two principal clauses. The first principal clause is 'You must not be late'. The second principal clause is 'you will be fined'. The two principal clauses are joined by the conjunction 'or'.

In analyzing a compound sentence, the following points are to be noted:

- i) Identification of the principal clauses.
- ii) Identification of the conjunction.

Note: In the sentence 'I came, I saw, I conquered', there are three principal clauses- 'I came', 'I saw', 'I conquered'. These three principal clauses are joined by commas (,) that do the work of conjunctions.

Exercise 2

Analyze the following compound sentences:

1. Jhimli is my friend and she is very honest.
2. He is thin, but strong.
3. He tried hard, nevertheless he could not complete the race.
4. It is raining, so I will not go to the market.
5. Neither did he write a letter nor send a message.

Reporting a Conversation

Read the following conversation carefully:

“You don’t seem in a very good temper,” said Gortsby.

“You wouldn’t be in a good temper if you were in the fix I’m in,” the young man said. He further added, “I’ve done the silliest thing I’ve ever done in my life.”

“Yes?” said Gortsby.

“Come up this afternoon, meaning to stay at the Patagonian Hotel in Berkshire Square,” continued the young man. “When I got there I found that it had been pulled down some weeks ago and a cinema theatre runs up on the site.”

The above conversation can be reported in the following way:

Gortsby told the young man that he did not seem to be in a very good temper. The young man retorted that Gortsby would also not be in a good temper had he been in the fix he was in. He further continued that he had done the silliest thing in his life. To Gortsby’s enquiry, the young man dejectedly said that he had come up that afternoon meaning to stay at the Patagonian Hotel but when he had gone there he had found that it had been pulled down some weeks ago and a cinema theatre had been running on the site.

Note:

While reporting a conversation you must keep in mind the following principles:

- The general rules for changing from direct to indirect speech must be followed.
- Reported verbs like ‘asked’, ‘replied’, ‘suggested’, ‘enquired of’, ‘retorted’ etc. are to be used.
- Expressions like ‘replied in the affirmative’, ‘replied in the negative’ are to be avoided.
- The moods of the speeches should be reflected in the report.

Exercise

Report the following conversations:

1. "Oh, Teresa, you have no pressing business, I hope?" said Mr. Jones.

"No. Why do you ask?"

Mr. Jones continued, "I was going to ask you to write another letter."

"Very well! To Peter, eh?" asked Teresa.

"No, this time it is from him. I want you to draft a reply," said Mr. Jones.

2. "Can I check your tickets, sir?" said the conductor.

"My what?" said Henry.

"Your tickets," said the conductor, conscious he was addressing a foreigner.

"In the past I have always made the arrangements on the train, my good man."

"Not nowadays, sir. You'll have to go to the booking office and buy your tickets like everyone else," said the conductor.

Henry, in disbelief, asked, "I assume my wife may rest in the train while I go and purchase the tickets?"

"No, I'm sorry, Sir. No one is allowed to board the train without a valid ticket," said the conductor.

Figures of Speech

Read the following sentences carefully:

1. Hours heave like sea waves.
2. The curfew tolls the knell of parting day.

Note that the above sentences are not only grammatically correct, they also carry a sense of force and persuasion, adding to the beauty of the language. Such expressions are called rhetorical expressions.

‘Rhetoric’ is literally the art of the orator but the word is now generally used to mean the whole art of elegant composition.

The use of different types of rhetorical or ornamental expressions make language more effective. Different types of rhetorical devices are known as **Figures of Speech**.

There are many kinds of figures of speech used in English literature. However, in this section, we will discuss only on some of them. They are:

- a) Figures based on similarity: Simile and metaphor
- b) Figures based on perception of human attributes: Personification
- c) Figures based on sound: Alliteration

(a) Figures based on similarity

Now, read the following sentences carefully:

- 1) The child shows the man **as** morning shows the day.
- 2) His eyes twinkled **like** stars.

3) Variety is the spice of life.

4) All the world is a stage.

In sentences 1 and 2, the words 'as' and 'like' are used for comparison. In sentence 1, morning (i.e. the early stage of the day) is compared with a child (i.e. the early stage of man) by using the word 'as'. Again, in sentence 2, the twinkling of the stars is compared to the twinkle of his eyes by using the word 'like'.

The figure of speech, where two things are directly compared by using the word 'as' or 'like' because they share a common feature, is known as **Simile**. Hence, in sentence 1 and 2, the figure of speech that is used is the Simile.

The essential elements of a simile are as follows:

- The similarity between the two things must be distinctly stated by using the words 'as', 'like', 'such', 'so' etc.
- The two things compared in a simile must be different in kind. For example, any general comparison between Alexander and Napoleon is not a simile but the comparison between Napoleon and a meteor is a simile; e.g. Napoleon swept over France like a meteor.

Now, in sentences 3 and 4, there are comparisons between two things but without using 'as' or 'like'. The comparisons are therefore implicit. In sentence 3, the varied experiences of life are compared with the varieties of spices, but this comparison is not explicitly stated by using the word 'as' or 'like'. Similarly, in sentence 4, worldly life is implicitly compared with that of a theatre. Such implicit comparisons are known as **Metaphor**. Thus, a metaphor differs from a simile only in form, not in substance. It is a more pleasing and lively mode of expression than a simile. As for instance,

- A camel is like the ship of the desert. (simile)
- A camel is the ship of the desert. (metaphor)

Exercise 1

Identify which of the following sentences are similes or metaphors:

- (i) I will drink life to the lees.
- (ii) Gandhi was a pillar of the state.
- (iii) The thunder was as loud as furnace.
- (iv) Promit slept like a log.
- (v) The cat's fur was a blanket of warmth.

(b) Figure based on perception of human attributes

Now, read the following sentences carefully:

- 1) The thirsty earth soaks up the rain.
- 2) The news took me by surprise.
- 3) The hare laughed at the tortoise.

In the above three sentences an inanimate object (i.e. 'earth'), an abstract idea (i.e. 'news') and an animal (i.e. 'bird') are given the attributes of a human being. The non-human objects are portrayed in such a way that we feel they have the ability to act like human beings. Hence, the figure of speech used here is called **Personification**. Personification is not merely a decorative device. It serves the purpose of giving deeper meanings to literary texts. It adds vividness to expressions as we always look at the world from a human perspective. It is used in imaginative and impassioned writing.

c) Figures based on sound

Read aloud the following sentences:

- 1) Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers.
- 2) Sana's seven sisters slept soundly.
- 3) Around the rugged rock the ragged rascal ran.

In each of these sentences the initial consonantal sounds (e.g. 'p' in sentence 1) keep repeating. When a series of words in a row or close to a row have the same consonantal sounds, we call it **Alliteration**. Tolkien observed that alliteration "depends not on letters but on sounds." Thus, the phrase 'know nothing' is alliterative but 'climate change' is not.

Exercise 2

Identify the figures of speech in the following sentences:

- (i) Time and tide waits for none.
- (ii) The music was as soothing as rain.
- (iii) Nita's nephew needed new notebooks.
- (iv) The sun played hide and seek with the clouds.
- (v) She froze with fear.
- (vi) Mita's mobile phone makes much music.

Phrasal Verbs and Idiomatic Expressions

Read the following sentences:

1. Take off your coat! It's too hot here.
2. I'll catch up with you later.

In sentence 1, the verb 'take' carries with it the particle 'off'.

In sentence 2, the verb 'catch' carries with it the preposition 'up'.

The expressions 'take off' and 'catch up' are **Phrasal verbs**. The term 'phrasal verb' is commonly applied to two or three distinct but related constructions in English: a verb and a particle and/or a preposition co-occur forming a meaningful unit in a sentence. Some Phrasal verbs are formed by a verb-adverb combination.

Exercise 1

Match the following phrasal verbs with their meanings :

Phrasal Verbs	Meanings
carry on	arrive unexpectedly
find out	start a journey
get along	continue
grow up	like being with
turn up	learn, discover
settle down	live in one place
set off	attain adulthood

Exercise 2

Complete the following sentences using the correct forms of the phrasal verbs given in the list below. There is one extra phrasal verb:

1. The party _____ till 4a.m.
2. My five year old daughter wants to be a scientist when she _____
3. We have got a long way to drive, so we ought to _____ as early as possible.

4. Oh dear, I've just _____ that I've lost my book.
5. She _____ at 9 o'clock for the meeting.
6. Don't ask me to talk to him, we don't _____ at all.

List: carry on, set off, find out, settle down, turn up, grow up, get along

Read the following sentences:

1. It is known to all that Shakespeare is a man of letters.
2. You were hands down the best player of the team.
3. I've been feeling pretty down in the dumps lately.

In sentence 1, the expression 'a man of letters' refers to a person who is a scholar.

In sentence 2, the expression 'hands down' means without any competition.

In sentence 3, the expression 'down in the dumps' means sad or depressed.

The expressions 'a man of letters', 'hands down', and 'down in the dumps' are idiomatic expressions.

An idiomatic expression is a phrase where the words taken together have a meaning that is different from the dictionary definition of the individual words.

Exercise 3

Identify the idiomatic expressions in the following sentences and write their meanings:

1. That sound is driving me up the wall.
2. This assignment is a piece of cake for me.
3. In spite of his best efforts, he was destined to miss the bus.
4. It is Greek to me, can't understand a thing.
5. No, I was just pulling your leg.
6. The boy wants to achieve success in the examination by hook or by crook.
7. We are all in the same boat; we must face the consequences together.
8. We should not indulge in washing our dirty linen in public.

Précis Writing

Read the following passage carefully:

In a hole in the ground there lived a hobbit. Not a nasty, dirty, wet hole filled with the ends of worms and an oozy smell, not yet a dry, bare, sandy hole with nothing in it to sit down on or to eat; it was a hobbit-hole, and that means comfort.

It had a perfectly round door like a porthole, painted green, with a shiny yellow brass knob in the exact middle. The door opened on to a tube-shaped hall like a tunnel: a very comfortable tunnel without smoke, with panelled walls, and floors tiled and carpeted, provided with polished chairs, and lots and lots of pegs for hats and coats. The hobbit was fond of visitors. The tunnel wound on and on, going fairly but not quite straight into the side of the hill. The Hill, as all the people for many miles round called it, had many little round doors opened out of it, first on one side and then on another. No going upstairs for the hobbit: bedrooms, bathrooms, cellars, pantries (lots of these), wardrobes (he had whole rooms devoted to clothes), kitchens, dining-rooms, all were on the same floor, and indeed on the same passage. The best rooms were all on the left-hand side, for these were the only ones to have windows, deep-set round windows looking over his garden, and meadows beyond, sloping down to the river. (233 words.)

The above passage can be written in a precise manner :

The hobbit-hole

In a hole in the ground lived a hobbit. The door had a round hole which opened into a smokeless tunnel. The tunnel went into the side of a hill. Many little round doors opened out of the hill. All the rooms were on the same floor. The best rooms were all on the left-hand side. These had round windows overlooking gardens, meadows and the river. The hobbit was fond of visitors . (76 words)

Note, while writing a précis of a given passage the following points are to be followed:

- To begin with, the passage must be read well to get the general meaning
- The passage must be re-read carefully to identify the important information
- The important points should then be organized to form a concise version of the given passage

- As far as possible one's own language has to be used
- Colloquial expressions, figures of speech, examples, spurious information should be avoided
- A rough draft of the précis must precede the final draft
- The précis should be one-third the length of the given passage
- The précis must carry a suitable title

Thus, **Précis writing** means bringing out the gist of the given passage in as few words as possible, discarding all redundant matter in the process, and retaining only that which is essential to the central theme.

Exercise

Read the following passages and make a précis of each:

1) Sometimes when I am idle, my mind fills with a vivid memory. Some old night at sea, or in a tavern, or on the roads, or some adventure half-forgotten, rises up in sharp detail, alive with meaning. The thing or image, whatever it may be, comes back to me so clearly outlined, under such strong light that it is as though the act were playing before me on a lighted stage. Such a memory always appears to me significant like certain dreams. I find myself thinking of an old adventure, a day in a boat, a walk by still waters, the crying of the curlews, or the call of the wild swans, as though such memories, rather than the great events in life, were the things deeply significant. I think of a day beside a pool where the tattered reeds were shaking, and a fish leapt, making rings, as though the day were a great poem which I had written. I can think of a walk by twilight, among bracken and slowly moving deer, under a September moonrise, till I am almost startled to find indoors. For the most part, my significant memories are of the sea. Three such memories, constantly recurring, appear to me as direct revelations of something too great for human comprehension. The deeds or events they image were little in themselves, however pleasant in the doing, and I know no reason why they should haunt me so strangely, so many years after they occurred.

(249 words)

2) The saving of certain wild animals from extinction has for many years been a problem for zoologists and other specialists; but more recently the problem has

become so acute, and has received so much publicity, that most people are now concerned about it. This may at first seem strange because one of the most gratifying developments of the last few years has been the passing of strict laws to protect wild animals and the consequent decline in the hunting of big game for sport. Why is it then that some rare wild animals are still threatened with extinction and even some of the less rare ones are rapidly declining in number?

One reason is the 'march of civilization'. When an area is wholly cleared of vegetation to make room for new towns, factory sites or hydroelectric plants, the natural home of several species is destroyed. The displaced animals must either migrate to another area or perish. Even the clearing of land for a road or an airfield may involve 'pushing back' the jungle, and the smaller the area in which wild animals compete for a living, the smaller the number that can hope to survive.

Civilization brings, too, swift and easy transport and so assists those who are determined to break the various protective laws. Thieves can elude the game wardens, shoot an elephant for its tusk, a rhinoceros for its horns, or a deer for its meat, and be miles away from the site of the crime before the dead or dying victim is even discovered.

It is sad to reflect that civilization which can bring so many benefits to people who have previously known only hunger and misery, brings also facilities for the heartless criminals who, for material gain, will slaughter some harmless animals and threaten the disappearance of its kind from the earth forever.

(307 words)

Paraphrasing a Poem

Read the following poem carefully:

We are as Clouds

P.B. Shelley

I

We are as clouds that veil the midnight moon;
How restlessly they speed and gleam and quiver,
 Streaking the darkness radiantly! yet soon
Night closes round, and they are lost forever—

II

Or like forgotten lyres whose dissonant strings
 Give various response to each varying blast,
To whose frail frame no second motion brings
 One mood or modulation like the last.

III

We rest—a dream has power to poison sleep;
We rise—one wandering thought pollutes the day;
 We feel, conceive or reason, laugh or weep,
Embrace fond woe, or cast our cares away—

IV

It is the same!—For, be it joy or sorrow,
 The path of its departure still is free;
Man's yesterday may ne'er be like his morrow;
 Nought may endure but Mutability.

Now let us rewrite the poem in prose form:

Stanza 1 (lines 1-4):

We are like the clouds that cover the midnight moon. These clouds are continuously in motion. They move fast, shine and tremble in the radiance of the moon. The dark sky glimmers with their streaks. But once the night is over and the moon is lost, they are invisible. Human life is also short and transient like the clouds.

Stanza 2 (lines 5-8):

Next, human life is compared to forgotten lyres. Each person is different from the other just as each blast of wind produces its own note. Two notes are never alike. Every person experiences a certain situation differently from the other. Moods and modulation of each human being is different.

Stanza 3 (lines 9-12):

We lie down to take rest but a single bad dream is enough to spoil our sound sleep. We wake up but one sad thought can harm our happy state of mind. Our emotions, ideas, feelings, joys, woes, reasoning are all temporary and different from others.

Stanza 4 (lines 13-16):

Everything is transient on earth. We almost always experience different kinds of joys and sorrows; of course, we can never have our todays exactly like our yesterdays. But they are the same at one point, in being transient. Nothing remains unchanging except mutability.

Note that we have put the entire poem into prose changing all keywords, but, at the same time, we have retained all original ideas and images. This is called **Paraphrasing a poem.**

While paraphrasing a poem, remember:

- A paraphrase is a restatement or re-wording of a text that retains the basic meaning in another form. A paraphrase often clarifies the original statement by putting it into words that are more easily understood.
- We must take into account what the poet's words and phrases mean in relation to each other.

- A paraphrase will never try to offer an opinion as to what the words in the poem might symbolize or what the figurative meaning might be.
- A paraphrase considers every phrase in the poem. It is almost always longer than the original.
- A paraphrase also stays in the same voice as the poem. It never contains phrases like 'the poet says that' or change first person ('I') to third person ('he' or 'she'). So if the poem says 'I travelled lonely as cloud', the paraphrase would be like this: 'I travelled alone like a cloud'.
- A paraphrase must read naturally and smoothly like a well-constructed prose piece.

Thus the goal in paraphrasing a poem is to clarify the content by re-seeing and re-creating each word in every line. A good paraphrase never merely repeats parts of the original using the same words. It might reorder the lines slightly to improve understanding.

Exercise

Paraphrase the following poems:

1. Dreams

Hold fast to dreams
For if dreams die
Life is a broken-winged bird
That cannot fly.

Hold fast to dreams
For when dreams go
Life is a barren field
Frozen with snow.

-Langston Hughes

2. **Travel**

The railroad track is miles away,
And the day is loud with voices speaking,
Yet there isn't a train goes by all day
But I hear its whistle shrieking.

All night there isn't a train goes by,
Though the night is still for sleep and dreaming,
But I see its cinders red on the sky,
And hear its engine steaming.

My heart is warm with friends I make,
And better friends I'll not be knowing;
Yet there isn't a train I wouldn't take,
No matter where it's going.

-Edna St. Vincent Millay

Essay Writing

The word 'essay' literally means an attempt; and hence 'essay' is the name given to the form of composition which is a short attempt to write on a given subject. It focuses on one general topic and expresses the opinion or experiences of the writer.

Now, read the following essay titled 'A visit to a Hill Station':

A Visit to a Hill Station

Vacations are always looked forward to, by most of us as a means of shedding our daily drudgery. Like almost every year, this year also I went on a trip with my family. My father suggested that we might take a trip to Shimla, and we readily agreed.

We started our journey on 26th May 2014 from Howrah station and reached Shimla on 28th morning. I was spellbound to witness the Himalayas in all its snow-capped beauty and splendor. The cool weather and the still yet animating ambience of the famous hill station captured my imagination. We were lodged in a hotel on the Mall Road. We hired a private car and visited all the places worth seeing in and around Shimla like the Kali temple, Kufri and Naldehra.

Being one of the most beautiful hill stations, Shimla was made the summer capital of the Government of India by the British. By following a flight of steep steps surrounded by tall trees, we reached 'Jhaku', a mountain peak. Throughout we could see monkeys in great numbers. The Mall Road leads to a skating ground thronged with enthusiasts.

After staying in Shimla for three days we visited Manali. I felt sad as our trip was drawing towards its end. The serenity of the Himalayas seemed to have cast a spell on my mind as I felt like staying there forever. I returned home but could feel that I had left a part of me somewhere amidst the misty hills.

The above essay describes the writer's experience of visiting Shimla, a beautiful hill station. It is a **descriptive essay**. Descriptive essays mainly consist of the description of some events, circumstances, of some place or thing. For example, essays attempted on topics like 'Motor-cars', 'Mobile-phones', 'A Street Quarrel', 'A journey by Boat' etc. are descriptive essays.

Note:

- A) A descriptive essay should have —
 - i) a suitable title
 - ii) an introduction (ref. para 1)
 - iii) a body (ref. para 2 & para 3)
 - iv) a conclusion (ref. para 4)
- B) It is important to remember that
 - i) the subject matter should be clearly defined in the introduction.
 - ii) the description should be coherent and the specific focus of the topic should be maintained
 - iii) personal feeling and opinions are to be incorporated, where required
 - iv) the style should be simple, direct and clear.

Now, let's read another essay:

Environmental Pollution

Environmental pollution is one of the most important issues of concern for the modern world since it deals with the processes, phenomena and effects of contaminating our surrounding with impurities. Our world gets polluted due to our own callous attitudes towards the environment.

Air pollution is one of the most common types of environmental pollution that

affects our right to breathe fresh air. Impure air, poisonous gases and smoke add to air pollution and victimise us by populating the list of deadly diseases like asthma, lung-cancer, tuberculosis etc. The smoke discharged from factories, automobiles and kitchen is a mixture of poisonous gases like carbon monoxide, carbon dioxide and methane.

Sound pollution is caused by indiscriminate use of horns by different sorts of vehicles. A large number of people nowadays are on the verge of losing their power of hearing due to these ever-increasing effects of sound pollution.

The different water bodies of this earth are getting polluted due to various chemical and harmful wastes which are disposed of thoughtlessly. Again, reckless use of chemical fertilizers, insecticides and pesticides pollute the soil and render the vegetables and crops unfit for consumption.

To save us from the menace of different types of environmental pollution, we need to plant more trees, purify the contaminated water and recycle it for purposes of irrigation. But above everything, we need to be self-conscious, realizing our need and duty to save all forms of life from the brink of extinction.

As we can see, the above essay explores the theme of 'Environmental Pollution' single-mindedly by focusing on its harmful effects. The writer's reason for denouncing all forms of environmental pollution is quite clear, and is justified on the grounds of sound logic and common sense. This essay on 'Environmental Pollution' serves the purpose of justifying the writer's opinion regarding a particular issue. It is a **reflective essay**.

A reflective essay is written in a way to make the reader think deeply about the contained topic (which can often be abstract ideas like nature, time, happiness, family etc.) and contain the author's feelings and emotions on the subject. For

example, essays on topics like 'Man and Trees', 'Liberty', 'Child Abuse', 'Responsibilities of Students' etc. are generally reflective in style and manner.

If it is purely a point of debate that we try to resolve through a reflective essay, it should provide a clear rationale to justify our views. Needless to say that like a descriptive essay, a reflective essay is generally written in well defined paragraphs, having an 'introduction', a 'body' and a 'conclusion'.

We also need to understand that despite categorizing essays into different types, we can write one type of essay in another form. Since the personal treatment of a topic varies from person to person, an essay written in a descriptive way can be written reflectively too. Both these forms can be written in the first person, but it is not an essential feature. The difference shows in the focus and treatment of the individual essays.

Exercise

Write essays on the following topics:

- a) A star-lit night
- b) Your duties as a citizen of India
- c) Eco-tourism
- d) A memorable evening

Model Questions : 1

The Boy, the Dog and the Spaceship

1. **Choose the correct answer from the given alternatives:**
 - a) When the Captain of the spaceship pressed a button
 - (i) he was tied to the seat with iron straps
 - (ii) he was enfolded immediately by padded arms
 - (iii) the speed of the spaceship increased
 - (iv) the spaceship came to a halt
 - b) Billy and Scamp stopped their wrestling match because
 - (i) they heard a strange noise
 - (ii) they saw an Unidentified Flying Object
 - (iii) it began to rain
 - (iv) Billy's mother called out to him
 - c) The Captain decided to enter the body of the monster as he wanted to
 - (i) get help from the monster
 - (ii) play with the monster
 - (iii) take the monster back to the spaceship
 - (iv) take control of the monster's brain
 - d) Billy was terrified because
 - (i) the Captain of the spaceship was about to attack him
 - (ii) his mother shouted at him angrily
 - (iii) Scamp stood over him with jaws open and teeth bared
 - (iv) he found Scamp lying unconscious
2. **Answer the following questions within 15 words:**
 - a) How did the planet appear from inside the spaceship?
 - b) Why did the Captain find Earth to be different from other planets?
3. **Answer the following question within 150 words:**

"The Captain lay vanquished with his dream of conquering the planet Earth."

Why do you think the Captain's dream remained unfulfilled?

Model Questions : 2

Evening:Ponte Al Mare, Pisa

1. Choose the correct answer from the given alternatives:

- a) In the evening city of Pisa, the bats were
 - (i) falling asleep
 - (ii) creeping out of damp corners
 - (iii) flitting fast in the grey air
 - (iv) wandering here and there
- b) The wrinkled image of the city on the fleeting river
 - (i) remains unchanged
 - (ii) changes with the passage of time
 - (iii) changes according to the change of seasons
 - (iv) changes with the change in human nature
- c) The motion of the breeze was
 - (i) inconstant
 - (ii) mild
 - (iii) violent
 - (iv) slow

2. Answer the following question within 15 words:

Pick out an example of personification from the poem and explain it.

3. Answer the following question within 25 words:

Why does Shelley use the words 'immovably unquiet' to describe the image of the city?

4. Answer the following question within 150 words:

How does Shelley describe the city of Pisa in the evening?

Teachers' Guidelines

India is a multicultural, multilingual nation. With the development of information technology (ICT), English has become an essential medium of communication. And although most of our learners learn English as Second language, many of them opt to take English as their First language. Their objective is not merely to read, write and speak English fluently, but to gain literary sensibility as well.

It is through the acquisition of the language that these learners develop their creative and higher order thinking skills (HOTS). In other words, the students seek to develop Cognitively Advanced Language Proficiency (CALP) by learning English as First language. In this regard, National Curriculum Framework (NCF) 2005 observed that the 'literature can also be a spur to children's own creativity. After hearing a story, poem or song, children can be encouraged to write something of their own. They can also be encouraged to integrate various forms of creative expression.'

On the basis of these observations WBBSE has introduced the syllabus of English as First language to foster an aesthetic and cultural sensitivity in the learners. The teaching of English as First Language would seek to refine literary sensibility and enrich the aesthetic sense of the learners through exposure to different literary genres. Apart from gaining Cognitively Advanced Language Proficiency (CALP) in the basic use of the language and being conversant with the proper forms of address, lexicon, register and idioms, it is desired that English as First Language learners would nourish their critical and creative thinking ability.

The new textbook for first language English, *Splendour*, aims to develop the literary and creative aspects of the learner through their exposure to different genres of English literature. Besides, the learners are given exposure to certain figures of speech and idiomatic expressions to enrich their mode of expression. Other grammatical items, like synthesis and analysis of sentences, are taught to consolidate their grammatical knowledge. The syllabus provides enough scope to the learners for written work. Essay writing, précis writing, paraphrasing a poem and reporting a conversation are to be taught for the development of Cognitively Advanced Language proficiency of the learners. Thus, it is hoped the new English textbook for first language English, *Splendour*, will instill in the learners an awareness of the world experienced through literature in English.

