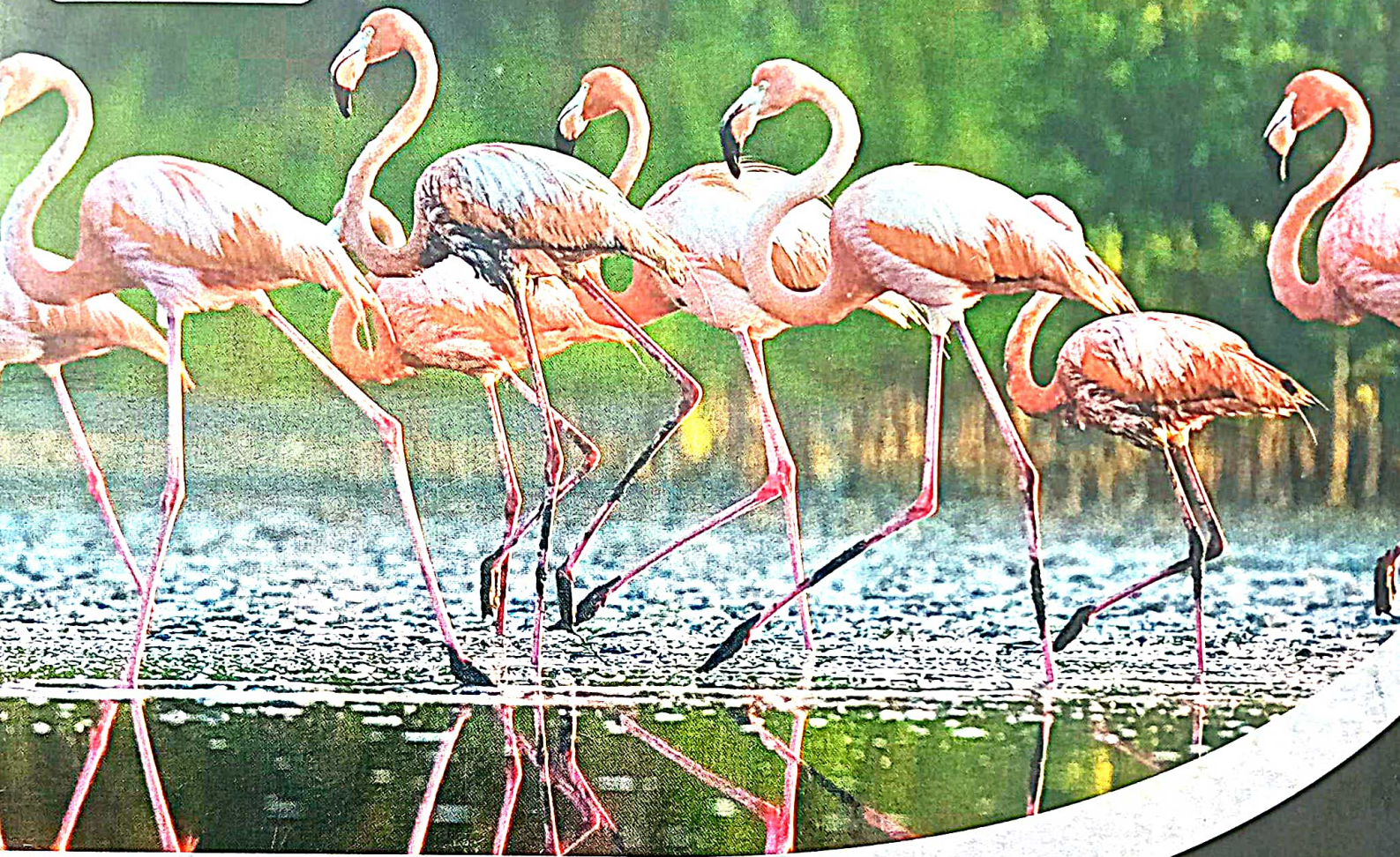


 macmillan
education



Flamingo

Prescribed Textbook for the First Year Foundation Course in the
Universities of Chhattisgarh as per Central Board of Studies, CG

Dr. Jagdish Joshi
Dr. Hitesh Raviya
Dr. Kamlesh Budhbhatti

Dr. Kashmira Mehta
Dr. Rajesh V Basiya

Flamingo

an e-zine for college students

Flamingo

A Textbook for College Students

Dr. Jagdish Joshi

Director, UGC Human Resource Development Centre,
Gujarat University, Ahmedabad, Gujarat.

Dr. Hitesh Raviya

Associate Professor, Department of English, M S University of Baroda,
Vadodara, Gujarat.

Dr. Kamlesh Budhbhatti

Associate Professor Department of English, Shri R R Lalan Arts college
Bhuj, Gujarat.

Dr. Kashmira Mehta

Associate Professor, Department of English, Shri J B Thakkar Comm. College,
Bhuj, Gujarat.

Dr. Rajesh V Basiya

Associate Professor, Seth S V Arts & Comm. College, Mandvi,
Kutch, Gujarat.



Preface

Flamingo: A Textbook for College Students is a comprehensive textbook for undergraduate students of all disciplines. It aims to teach English by developing listening, speaking, reading, writing, and thinking skills of undergraduate students. While creating the book, the editors aimed at bringing together some of the finest models of prose writing in English from across the globe. The book also aims at making students comprehend the variety and vitality of life. The emphasis in all the units is on individuality and enhancing the quest for knowledge and wisdom. All the units have been selected keeping the diverse background of the learners in mind. Each lesson imparts values to mould the character of the students. The units are selected to ensure that students gain an understanding of the basic features and structures of the English language before they progress to more complex ways of using the language. We hope that the stories will stimulate students to pursue master of arts, thereby increasing their competence in the use of the English language. The exercises included in the book at the end of each unit are samples of possible tasks only; the teachers should not hesitate to go beyond the text and design similar exercises for their students.

The objective of the book is to help students attain an excellent command over the English language and also imbibe the values that build strength of character to face the challenges of life.

We hope that the teachers and students will enjoy teaching and reading it. Suggestions and comments for improving the textbook are welcome.

Editors

Contents

Preface

v

SECTION 1: PROSE AND POETRY

1. *Baa – My Mother – A Person, A Woman*
Darshana Dholakia, translated by Ashok Vaishnava 3
2. *A Devoted Son*
Anita Desai 10
3. *The Home Coming*
Rabindranath Tagore 20
4. *The Solitary Reaper*
William Wordsworth 28
5. *Stopping by the Woods on a Snowy Evening*
Robert Lee Frost 32

SECTION 2: DEVELOPING WRITING SKILLS

1. *Word Formation* 37
2. *Idioms and Phrases* 47
3. *Coordination and Subordination* 52
4. *One Word Substitutes* 57

SECTION 3: COMPOSITION

1. *Describing a Place or a Person* 66
2. *Writing a Biographical Sketch* 71
3. *Narrating an Event or Experience* 76

SECTION 1

PROSE AND POETRY

1 Baa – My Mother – A Person, A Woman

Darshana Dholakia

Translated by Ashok Vaishnava

PRE-READING

Discuss:

- What are some of the good things that you have learned from your parents?
 - Think about the way your parents teach you things, are you fond of them?
-

About the Author

Darshana Dholakia is a well-known contemporary Gujarati writer and critic. She has many essays to her credit. She has published 17 books in Gujarati including the translation of the Konkni novel *Karmelin*. Her books *Narsinha Charitra Vimarsha*, *Narsinh Mehta*, and *Gujaratna Sarjakonu Prathmik Shukshna* have been awarded by the Gujarati Sahitya Parishad. She is also the recipient of the prestigious Rashtriya Sahitya Akademi Award in the Best Translation Category in 2011 for *Karmelin*. Besides, she has received Dr. Jayant Khatri – Bakulesh Award for her notable contribution to Gujarati literature. She works as the Professor and Head of Department of Gujarati, KSKV Kachchh University in Bhuj - Kachchh (Gujarat, India).

About the Translator

Mr. Ashok Vaishnav is an Ahmedabad based retired management professional. In his long career spanning over 38 years he worked in small-to-medium-to-large engineering companies as freelance trainer and process facilitator.

About the Article

The present article is taken from her book *Parichayparv* (A Festival of Relationships) which is a bouquet of introductory pen-portraits—an anthology of short characterizations of great

personalities, close relatives and friends, distilled from subtle observations of their lives made by the author. This article portrays the author's mother—Rasikbala Dholakia. The author delineates her mother's way of instilling the sense of self-respect and self-esteem in her. It brings out the significance of a mother's role in the process of socialization of children in the context of the Indian family system. It also defines mother as the person in whom life receives a form suitable for living in this world.

Baa—My Mother, A Person, A Woman is a beautiful account of a girl talking about her late mother and fondly remembering everything about her. It is a story about parents, who are our heroes; Baa, the woman in context here was a real legend—a perfect wife, daughter, sister and mother. Baa was not just the centre of the family, but when it came to the author, she was the centre of her world. This story is a testimony of the daily hard work, challenges and the triumph of the author's mother. The story talks about everlasting values, affection and love as Darshana Dholakia introduces the readers to Baa.

Baa – My Mother – A Person, A Woman

(Translation by Ashok Vaishnava of an originally Gujarati
article written by Darshana Dholakia)

During the course of my life, I have met many people, getting acquainted with some and knowing others intimately. Whenever I go down memory lane I see all these faces. But, there is one face that stays uppermost in my memory - that of my mother, Baa. It has been over a decade since she passed away, but even today I look back to see her, as a person, as a woman. In fact, my current perspective of her is far more objective than it was then. Now that she is physically not besides me, the different facets of her personality, at different levels, keep unfolding in front of me.

I was born when Baa was thirty nine years old. In the context of the period, when child marriage was a common convention, that age could fairly be termed as old age. My two elder brothers were much older than me. I carry dim memories of my beautifully dressed mother. Widowhood descended upon Baa at the age of forty four when I was merely five years old. Memory of that sad evening is still fresh in my mind. It was the last evening of *Bhaa's* (Father's) life. In the hospital's gloomy light of electric lamps, the light of Bhaa's lamp of life was slowly, but inevitably, fading out. The pathos of the impending parting was 'spreading on Baa's face. Engulfed in a sense of impending tragedy, I stood there, clinging to the partition of the hospital room.

From the very next morning until her death, Baa remained clad in a borderless black saree, light blue blouse, unadorned hands, nose and ears, bare feet and unruly, oil free, dry hair! More than conformance to the social convention, this state of being, expressed Baa's silent revolt against her fate! However, this never affected Baa's positive attitude towards life. Baa's unwavering commitment to life was all for her three children, particularly me. Despite being emotionally shattered by the death of her husband, Baa remained composed

till the end of her life. As a skillful homemaker and caring mother, she kept herself busy with embroidering, sewing, and weaving, to instill all these skills in me. I remember an incident when Dr. Chandra Joshi, a renowned academician of Kutch was visiting our home - Baa had embroidered 'Welcome' and 'Please Be Seated' on the cushion covers. While taking a seat on that chair Dr. Joshi joyfully commented, "Now, nothing remains to be done by anyone to welcome guests in your house."

Growing up in a society riddled with dogma and traditions, seeds of aspiration and awareness of being a woman were instinctively sown by the silent firmness of my mother. Whenever Baa perceived pity or sympathy for me in the eyes of others, she would tenderly take away the pain of the absence of my father from those moments. This was her way of instilling a sense of self-respect and self-esteem in me. In that orthodox and conservative period, widows had to confine themselves to dark and dingy rooms wherein not a single ray of sun would touch their feet. Every evening, Baa would hold my hand and take me to the main gate of our house that opened onto the public road to sit there for a while. Today I take even more pride in Baa's revolt against dogmas and conventions of her time than I did then.

As I grew up, Baa's persona too grew like a huge tree in my mind. Taking me to school, putting covers on my new notebooks, affectionately caressing them while doing so, teaching me not to shed tears on minor disappointments in life, inspiring faith in God to seek solutions to any unforeseen challenges; Baa nurtured me with love, affection and care.

Helping her in the kitchen was a lesson in humility - I could never ask her what she needed, I was supposed to not only anticipate her needs but also fulfill them instantly. Any slip in manners, or in work, was punished by her refusal to speak with me. After much cajoling, she would start to converse but in short crisp sentences. No choice of food was ever entertained in meals. Whatever was served, had to be consumed. Her response to my refusal to eat certain foods was "If you eat less now, your stomach will be better." Upon returning home from a trip outside we were expected to immediately change from formal dress to routine casual wear. The formal clothes had to be folded correctly and put under the mattress for pressing. Not a moment's delay was accepted for this task. And if at all I delayed the task, Baa would not scold me, but would take it upon herself to complete the task. The resulting humiliation was her way of punishment. Baa's simple maxim was, "In our absence too, our existence should be felt and noticed. That is what a disciplined life is all about."

Following traditions of her time, in the presence of elder members of the family, Baa would not exchange a single word with her children. We were expected to remain standing in front of the elders or be seated on the floor; Baa too did the same. Chairs or sofas were beyond imagination. She was an inspiration for us, and her method of teaching was "Practice before you preach." I don't remember a single time when Baa made anyone

sit and listen to her. According to her, learning was an instinctive and involuntary process; and teaching, was not a process of 'imposing' but that of 'instilling'.

Baa was brought up in a rustic ambience, her education ended after grade seven. After her marriage she moved to Bhuj, considered a big city then, her life revolved around domestic chores. Despite this, she contributed positively to every sphere of her family's life. Baa had innate confidence which remained unshaken till the end. I recall an incident where she was called to my school for a minor transgression of mine. As Baa and I waited outside the Principal's chamber, my eyes were filled with tears. The Principal came out of his chamber and upon seeing me, ordered me to stand up. As I struggled to get up Baa boldly told the Principal, "The school hours are now over, so she shall not stand up. You have called us to complain, please tell us what you have to." The principal was stunned. Thereafter, The Principal always told me, "Don't bring your grandma to school. I am scared of her!"

Baa always wanted me to have a high self-esteem yet never be arrogant. While addressing any elderly person in writing, Baa insisted upon the use of the word *murabbi*(respected) in salutation and *pranaam*(obeisance)in the complimentary closure of the letter. I have invariably followed this practice thereafter in all my correspondence. Her maxim was: "One who bows is liked by God." Seeing the complex patterns of relations in the family, sometimes I would get agitated, Baa would soothe me by saying, "We should never change our colors, and should be faithful to the relation till the end". In spite of suffering disillusionments in relationships, Baa continued to put in more than her share to sustain the relationships.

Baa, performed all roles assigned to her wonderfully and conscientiously. With unflinching devotion, she served my ailing grandmother in the last stage of her life. She tried to fill the loneliness of her widowed elder brother with love and companionship. Baa showered her care and love on all – be they knowns, unknowns, or neighbors. My father's maternal family was close to us and lived with us. Baa looked after all her brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law with motherly affection. Wit, irony and humour flowed naturally in the family and enriched our lower middle class household.

With sweet innocence Baa shared memories of her marital life. For all of the thirty-two years my father showered love upon Baa without a tinge of male dominance. An unspoken understanding between my parents was the need for family planning, they both walked together in life hand-in-hand, in perfect harmony. Such was Baa's devotion to my father that she avoided family occasions if she had to attend them without her husband, and consequently she had earned the title 'madly in love with her husband'. She accepted it with pleasure. She rarely visited her father's house, which was just a short distance away and it was a rare occasion on which she agreed to stay back at her father's house. My father would dutifully turn up to take her home and Baa would happily return

with him. Both, my father and Baa confessed with great pleasure that this happened every time, and that too, without any prior understanding!

When Baa was 33, tragedy struck in the family and my father's favorite niece lost her husband. My father was heartbroken, Baa stood by my father like a true companion, and they both supported his niece in rebuilding her life. Her empathetic nature came to the fore and along with my father's niece Baa renounced wearing colorful clothes and ornaments instinctively sharing norms of widowhood.

My father passed away at the age of just fifty five when the family was preparing for my elder brother's marriage. Both my brothers were still struggling to stand upon their feet, and I was yet to enroll in school. The wedding ceremony was postponed, and gloom descended upon the family. After six months, the marriage was performed without much celebration. Baa, pushing aside sadness, cooked traditional sweets and welcomed my brother's bride as she stepped into our house for her new life.

Baa always chose to stand at the fringe, to facilitate sufficient space for others. And because of this virtue, Baa always remained at the center of our family. In her absence too, no one could ever escape her tender influence. Of course, Baa never felt attached to such feelings, not even remotely!

Despite being brought up in an orthodox society, Baa's modernity astonished me many a times. For the purpose of study and service, I often had to travel out of station; Baa once said, "Now your life is similar to a man's life. The world is what it is! God forbid but if you become pregnant, never think about committing suicide. Life is very precious, give birth to the child and bring it up with pride." Today, when I think of her bold and proud approach to life, I wonder how far ahead of her time she was.

Baa never praised or eulogized us despite her deepest love for us. It was an implicit manifestation of her detachment from emotion. She listened silently when anyone eulogized us, this unshaken detachment stood by her even at the time of death. She suffered a severe heart-attack while doing household work on the night preceding the day of Mahashivratri (The Night of Lord Shiv's Birth). She endured unbearable pain for a full sixty minutes, but she continued to chant her prayers. Her last words to us were "I have no worries about you. You are now grown up. The unrest I experience is that of death. Now, I leave...." Her last breath brought our twenty five year long journey of togetherness to an end. On the dawn of Shivratri, I relived the same sorrow which I had experienced, at the age of five, on the demise of my father.

Now, the years are passing away sans Baa.... Yet her clarity of thought and deep understanding of life are a part of my inner self. She had negligible education, yet, she made so much of her simple life and gave confidence to those around her. Baa lived an open life devoid of pomposity, she inculcated in us a rich legacy of values. Every night, memories of Baa gently come and sit upon my eye-lids, Baa asks me, "Are you asleep?"

This is not done! There are many things still untold". I am engulfed by Baa's absence. I feel privileged to be Baa's daughter, I got her, and then I lost her too. But did I? No. The bond between us remains intact to this day. She continues to live within me. 'I am very proud. I have slept in thy womb.'

GLOSSARY

Objective: impartial, unbiased
Perspective: outlook, view, viewpoint
Unfolding: revealing
Conventional: normal, standard
Clad: dressed, clothed
Conform: obey, observe, follow
Estrange: alienate, antagonize
Shattered: very upset
Aspiration: desire, hope, yearning
Instinctively: intuitive, natural
Confine: enclose, impound
Dogma: belief, conviction, tenet
Nurture: foster, parent
Anticipate: foresee, predict
Cease: finish, halt, end
Humiliation: embarrassment, shame
Imposing: impressive, striking

Instilling: inculcate
Recluse: ascetic, hermit
Reticent: reserved, withdrawn, introvert
Elixir: magical or medical potion
Confess: admit, concede
Shunned: avoid, evade
Mundane: dull, boring, tedious
Rustic: plain, simple, unsophisticated
Consonance: agreement, concord, accord
Meek: patient, long suffering
Astonished: amazed, surprised
Shudder: shake, shiver
Eulogized: rave about, heap praise on
Pious: religious, holy, godly
Appeasement: pacification, conciliation
Sans: without

COMPREHENSION

Q.1 Answer the following questions in 3-4 sentences.

1. Why does the author say that, "My present picture of her is far more objective than it was then"?
2. Why did Dr. Chandra say that "Now nothing ever remains to be done by anyone to welcome the guests in your house"?
3. How did Baa behave in the presence of the elder members of the family?
4. How did Baa earn the title 'madly in love with her husband'?

Q.2 Write short notes to answer the following questions.

1. Describe the scene at the hospital the night the Author's father died.
2. Comment on the relationship between the author's parents.
3. Why did the author say "Baa remains to stay at the center of the family"?

4. The author believes that her mother was a modern woman. Give examples from the article to support your answer.

Q.3 Answer the following questions.

1. Give instances from the article depicting Baa's revolt against the dogmas and conventions of her time?
2. Do you think the author is grateful to her mother? Why/Why not?

Q.4 Choose the correct option to answer the following questions.

1. This article was originally written in Gujarati by:
 - a) Darshana Dholakia
 - b) Varsha Adalija
 - c) Saumya Joshi
 - d) Kaajal Oza Vaidya
2. How much time had passed since the death of the author's mother when this article was written?
 - a) Over 2 decades
 - b) Over 3 decades
 - c) Over a decade and a half
 - d) Over 2 decades and a half
3. How old was the author's mother when the author was born?
 - a) 19
 - b) 29
 - c) 39
 - d) 49
4. What was the author's age when her father died?
 - a) 2
 - b) 3
 - c) 4
 - d) 5
5. The author's mother had completed her education up till which level?
 - a) 7th standard
 - b) 10th Standard
 - c) 12th standard
 - d) Graduate
6. Who said these lines?
 "Now, nothing ever remains to be done by anyone to welcome the guests in your house".
 - a) Dr. Chandra Joshi
 - b) Dr. Vikash Sharma
 - c) Dr. Giriraj Singh
 - d) Keshubhai
7. What was the color of the borderless saree which Baa always wore after her husband's death?
 - a) White
 - b) Black
 - c) Blue
 - d) Grey
8. How old was the author's father when he passed away?
 - a) 50
 - b) 55
 - c) 60
 - d) 65
9. How many brothers did the author have?
 - a) 2
 - b) 3
 - c) 4
 - d) 5
10. Baa inspired the author to have faith into seek solution to any unforeseen events in life.
 - a) Rama
 - b) Shiva
 - c) Ganesha
 - d) Vishnu

2 A Devoted Son

Anita Desai

PRE-READING

- Do you think old age is second childhood?
 - Have you thought how hard it would have been for your parents to raise you as a child? Are you willing to go to the same extent for them when they get old?
-

About the Author

Anita Desai, born in 1937, was educated in Delhi. She is widely acclaimed in India and abroad for her novels and short stories with their delicate sensitivity and gentle irony. Her primary interest has been the emotional and social struggles of middle-class Indian people. She has received many international awards and three of her novels *Clear Light of Day* (1980), *In Custody* (1984) and *Fasting, Feasting* (1999) have been shortlisted for the Booker Prize.

About the Story

In this wonderful short story, Anita Desai presents the delicate nuances of a father-son relationship of a typical Indian family.

The story depicts how the son of a humble and undistinguished family becomes a successful doctor, marries and raises a family, prospers in his career and looks after his ailing father till his last days.

A Devoted Son

When the results appeared in the morning papers, Rakesh scanned them, barefoot and in his pyjamas, at the garden gate, then went up the steps to the verandah where his father sat sipping his morning tea and bowed down to touch his feet.

'A first division, son?' his father asked, beaming, reaching for the papers.

'At the top of the list, papa,' Rakesh murmured, as if awed. 'First in the country.'

Bedlam broke loose then. The family whooped and danced. The whole day long visitors streamed to the small yellow house at the end of the road, to congratulate the parents of this *underkind*, to slap Rakesh on the back and fill the house and garden with the sounds and colours of a festival. There were garlands and *halwa*, party clothes and gifts (enough fountain pens to last years, even a watch or two), nerves and temper and joy, all in a multi coloured whirl of pride and great shining vistas newly opened: Rakesh was the first son in the family to receive an education, so much had been sacrificed in order to send him to school and then medical college, and at last the fruits of their sacrifice had arrived, golden and glorious.

To everyone who came to him to say, 'Mubarak, Varmaji, your son has brought you glory,' the father said, 'Yes, and do you know what is the first thing he did when he saw the results this morning? He came and touched my feet. He bowed down and touched my feet.' This moved many of the women in the crowd so much that they were seen to raise the ends of their saris and dab at their tears while the men reached out for the betel-leaves and sweetmeats that were offered around on trays and shook their heads in wonder and approval of such exemplary filial behaviour. 'One does not often see such behaviour in sons any more,' they all agreed, a little enviously perhaps. Leaving the house, some of the women said, sniffing, 'At least on such an occasion they might have served pure *ghee* sweets,' and some of the men said, 'Don't you think old Varma was giving himself airs? He needn't think we don't remember that he comes from the vegetable market himself, his father used to sell vegetables, and he has never seen the inside of a school.' But there was more envy than rancour in their voices and it was, of course, inevitable—not every son in that shabby little colony at the edge of the city was destined to shine as Rakesh shone, and who knew that better than the parents themselves?

And that was only the beginning, the first step in a great, sweeping ascent to the radiant heights of fame and fortune. The thesis he wrote for his MD brought Rakesh still greater glory, if only in select medical circles. He won a scholarship. He went to the USA (that was what his father learnt to call it and taught the whole family to say—not America, which was what the ignorant neighbours called it, but, with a grand familiarity, 'the USA') where he pursued his career in the most prestigious of all hospitals and won encomiums from his American colleagues which were relayed to his admiring and glowing family. What was more, he came *back*, he actually returned to that small yellow house in the once-new but increasingly shabby colony, right at the end of the road where the rubbish vans tipped out their stinking contents for pigs to nose in and rag-pickers to build their shacks on, all steaming and smoking just outside the neat wire fences and welltended gardens. To this Rakesh returned and the first thing he did on entering the house was to slip out of the embraces of his sisters and brothers and bow down and touch his father's feet.

As for his mother, she gloated chiefly over the strange fact that he had not married in America, had not brought home a foreign wife as all her neighbours had warned her he would, for wasn't that what all Indian boys went abroad for? Instead he agreed, almost without argument, to marry a girl she had picked out for him in her own village, the daughter of a childhood friend, a plump and uneducated girl, it was true, but so old-fashioned, so placid, so complaisant that she slipped into the household and settled in like a charm, seemingly too lazy and too good-natured to even try and make Rakesh leave home and set up independently, as any other girl might have done. What was more, she was pretty—really pretty, in a plump, pudding way that only gave way to fat—soft spreading fat, like warm wax—after the birth of their first baby, a son, and then what did it matter?

For some years Rakesh worked in the city hospital, quickly rising to the top of the administrative organisation, and was made a director before he left to set up his own clinic. He took his parents in his car—a new, sky-blue Ambassador with a rear window full of stickers and charms revolving on strings—to see the clinic when it was built, and the large sign-board over the door on which his name was printed in letters of red, with a row of degrees and qualifications to follow it like so many little black slaves of the regent. Thereafter his fame seemed to grow just a little dimmer—or maybe it was only that everyone in town had grown accustomed to it at last—but it was also the beginning of his fortune for he now became known not only as the best but also the richest doctor in town.

However, all this was not accomplished in the wink of an eye. Naturally not. It was the achievement of a lifetime and it took up Rakesh's whole life. At the time he set up his clinic his father had grown into an old man and retired from his post at the kerosene dealer's depot at which he had worked for forty years, and his mother died soon after, giving up the ghost with a sigh that sounded positively happy, for it was her own son who ministered to her in her last illness and who sat pressing her feet at the last moment—such a son as few women had borne.

For it had to be admitted—and the most unsuccessful and most rancorous of neighbours eventually did so—that Rakesh was not only a devoted son and a miraculously good-natured man who contrived some how to obey his parents and humour his wife and show concern equally for his children and his patients, but there was actually a brain inside this beautifully polished and formed body of good manners and kind nature and, in between ministering to his family and playing host to many friends and coaxing them all into feeling happy and grateful and content, he had actually trained his hands as well and emerged an excellent doctor, a really fine surgeon. How one man—and a man born to illiterate parents, his father having worked for a kerosene dealer and his mother having spent her life in a kitchen—had achieved, combined and conducted such a medley of virtues, no one could fathom, but all acknowledged his talent and skill.

It was a strange fact, however, that talent and skill, if displayed for too long, cease to dazzle. It came to pass that the most admiring of all eyes eventually faded and no longer blinked at his glory. Having retired from work and having lost his wife, the old father very quickly went to pieces, as they say. He developed so many complaints and fell ill so frequently and with such mysterious diseases that even his son could no longer make out when it was something of significance and when it was merely a peevish whim. He sat huddled on his string bed most of the day and developed an exasperating habit of stretching out suddenly and lying absolutely still, allowing the whole family to fly around him in a flap, wailing and weeping, and then suddenly sitting up, stiff and gaunt, and spitting out a big gob of betel-juice as if to mock their behaviour.

He did this once too often: there had been a big party in the house, a birthday party for the youngest son, and the celebrations had to be suddenly hushed, covered up and hustled out of the way when the daughter-in-law discovered, or thought she discovered, that the old man, stretched out from end to end of his string bed, had lost his pulse; the party broke up, dissolved, even turned into a band of mourners when the old man sat up and the distraught daughter-in-law received a gob of red spittle right on the hem of her new organza sari. After that no one much cared if he sat up cross-legged on his bed, hawking and spitting, or lay down flat and turned grey as a corpse. Except, of course, for that pearl amongst pearls, his son Rakesh.

It was Rakesh who brought him his morning tea, not in one of the china cups from which the rest of the family drank, but in the old man's favourite brass tumbler, and sat at the edge of his bed, comfortable and relaxed with the string of his pyjamas dangling out from under his fine lawn night-shirt, and discussed or, rather, read out the morning news to his father. It made no difference to him that his father made no response apart from spitting. It was Rakesh, too, who, on returning from the clinic in the evening, persuaded the old man to come out of his room, as bare and desolate as a cell, and take the evening air out in the garden, beautifully arranging the pillows and bolsters on the *divan* in the corner of the open verandah. On summer nights he saw to it that the servants carried out the old man's bed onto the lawn and himself helped his father down the steps and onto the bed, soothing him and settling him down for a night under the stars.

All this was very gratifying for the old man. What was not so gratifying was that he even undertook to supervise his father's diet. One day when the father was really sick, having ordered his daughter-in-law to make him a dish of *soojie halwa* and eaten it with a saucerful of cream, Rakesh marched into the room, not with his usual respectful step but with the confident and rather contemptuous stride of the famous doctor, and declared, 'No more *halwa* for you, papa. We must be sensible, at your age. If you must have something sweet, Veena will cook you a little *kheer*, that's light, just a little rice and milk. But nothing fried, nothing rich. We can't have this happening again.'

The old man who had been lying stretched out on his bed, weak and feeble after a day's illness, gave a start at the very sound, the tone of these words. He opened his eyes—rather, they fell open with shock—and he stared at his son with disbelief that darkened quickly to reproach. A son who actually refused his father the food he craved? No, it was unheard of, it was incredible. But Rakesh had turned his back to him and was cleaning up the litter of bottles and packets on the medicine shelf and did not notice while Veena slipped silently out of the room with a little smirk that only the old man saw, and hated.

Halwa was only the first item to be crossed off the old man's diet. One delicacy after the other went—everything fried to begin with, then everything sweet, and eventually everything, everything that the old man enjoyed. The meals that arrived for him on the shining stainless steel tray twice a day were frugal to say the least—dry bread, boiled lentils, boiled vegetables and, if there was a bit of chicken or fish, that was boiled too. If he called for another helping—in a cracked voice that quavered theatrically—Rakesh himself would come to the door, gaze at him sadly and shake his head, saying, 'Now, papa, we must be careful, we can't risk another illness, you know,' and although the daughter-in-law kept tactfully out of the way, the old man could just see her smirk sliding merrily through the air. He tried to bribe his grand children into buying him sweets (and how he missed his wife now, that generous, indulgent and illiterate cook), whispering, 'Here's fifty paise,' as he stuffed the coins into a tight, hot fist. 'Run down to the shop at the crossroads and buy me thirty paise worth of *jalebis*, and you can spend the remaining twenty paise on yourself. Eh? Understand? Will you do that?' He got away with it once or twice but then was found out, the conspirator was scolded by his father and smacked by his mother and Rakesh came storming into the room, almost tearing his hair as he shouted through compressed lips, 'Now, papa, are you trying to turn my little son into a liar? Quite apart from spoiling your own stomach, you are spoiling him as well—you are encouraging him to lie to his own parents. You should have heard the lies he told his mother when she saw him bringing back those *jalebis* wrapped up in filthy newspaper. I don't allow anyone in my house to buy sweets in the bazaar, papa, surely you know that. There's cholera in the city, typhoid, gastroenteritis—I see these cases daily in the hospital, how can I allow my own family to run such risks?' The old man sighed and lay down in the corpse position. But that worried no one any longer.

There was only one pleasure left to the old man now (his son's early morning visits and readings from the newspaper could no longer be called that) and those were visits from elderly neighbours. These were not frequent as his contemporaries were mostly as decrepit and helpless as him and few could walk the length of the road to visit him any more. Old Bhatia, next door, however, who was still spry enough to refuse, adamantly, to bathe in the tiled bathroom indoors and to insist on carrying out his brass mug and towel, in all seasons and usually at impossible hours, into the yard and bathe noisily under the

garden tap, would look over the hedge to see if Varma was out on his verandah and would call to him and talk while he wrapped his *dhoti* about him and dried the sparse hair on his head, shivering with enjoyable exaggeration. Of course these conversations, bawled across the hedge by two rather deaf old men conscious of having their entire households overhearing them, were not very satisfactory but Bhatia occasionally came out of his yard, walked down the bit of road and came in at Varma's gate to collapse onto the stone plinth built under the temple tree. If Rakesh was at home he would help his father down the steps into the garden and arrange him on his night bed under the tree and leave the two old men to chew betel-leaves and discuss the ills of their individual bodies with combined passion.

'At least you have a doctor in the house to look after you,' sighed Bhatia, having vividly

described his martyrdom to piles.

'Look after me?' cried Varma, his voice cracking like an ancient clay jar. 'He—he does not even give me enough to eat.'

'What?' said Bhatia, the white hairs in his ears twitching. 'Doesn't give you enough to eat? Your own son?'

'My own son. If I ask him for one more piece of bread, he says no, papa, I weighed out the *ata* myself and I can't allow you to have more than two hundred grams of cereal a day. He *weighs* the food he gives me, Bhatia—he has scales to weigh it on. That is what it has come to.'

'Never,' murmured Bhatia in disbelief. 'Is it possible, even in this evil age, for a son to refuse his father food?'

'Let me tell you,' Varma whispered eagerly. 'Today the family was having fried fish—I could smell it. I called to my daughter-in-law to bring me a piece. She came to the door and said no'

'Said no?' It was Bhatia's voice that cracked. A *drongo* shot out of the tree and sped away. 'No?'

'No, she said no, Rakesh has ordered her to give me nothing fried. No butter, he says, no oil'

'No butter? No oil? How does he expect his father to *live*?'

Old Varma nodded with melancholy triumph. 'That is how he treats me—after I have brought him up, given him an education, made him a great doctor. Great doctor! This is the way great doctors treat their fathers, Bhatia,' for the son's sterling personality and character now underwent a curious sea change. Outwardly all might be the same but the interpretation had altered: his masterly efficiency was nothing but cold heartlessness, his authority was only tyranny in disguise.

There was cold comfort in complaining to neighbours and, on such a miserable diet, Varma found himself slipping, weakening and soon becoming a genuinely sick man.

Powders and pills and mixtures were not only brought in when dealing with a crisis like an upset stomach but became a regular part of his diet—became his diet, complained Varma, supplanting the natural foods he craved. There were pills to regulate his bowel movements, pills to bring down his blood pressure, pills to deal with his arthritis and, eventually, pills to keep his heart beating. In between there were panicky rushes to the hospital, some humiliating experiences with the stomach pump and enema, which left him frightened and helpless. He cried easily, shrivelling up on his bed, but if he complained of a pain or even a vague, grey fear in the night, Rakesh would simply open another bottle of pills and force him to take one. 'I have my duty to you papa,' he said when his father begged to be let off.

'Let me be,' Varma begged, turning his face away from the pills on the outstretched hand. 'Let me die. It would be better. I do not want to live only to eat your medicines.'

'Papa, be reasonable.'

'I leave that to you,' the father cried with sudden spirit. 'Leave me alone, let me die now, I cannot live like this.'

'Lying all day on his pillows, fed every few hours by his daughter-in-law's own hands, visited by every member of his family daily—and then he says he does not want to live "like this",' Rakesh was heard to say, laughing, to someone outside the door.

'Deprived of food,' screamed the old man on the bed, 'his wishes ignored, taunted by his daughter-in-law, laughed at by his grandchildren—that is how I live.' But he was very old and weak and all anyone heard was an incoherent croak, some expressive grunts and cries of genuine pain. Only once, when old Bhatia had come to see him and they sat together under the temple tree, they heard him cry, 'God is calling me—and they won't let me go.'

The quantities of vitamins and tonics he was made to take were not altogether useless. They kept him alive and even gave him a kind of strength that made him hang on long after he ceased to wish to hang on. It was as though he were straining at a rope, trying to break it, and it would not break, it was still strong. He only hurt himself, trying.

In the evening, that summer, the servants would come into his cell, grip his bed, one at each end, and carry it out to the verandah, there setting it down with a thump that jarred every tooth in his head. In answer to his agonised complaints they said the doctor sahib had told them he must take the evening air and the evening air they would make him take—thump. Then Veena, that smiling, hypocritical pudding in a rustling sari, would appear and pile up the pillows under his head till he was propped up stiffly into a sitting position that made his head swim and his back ache.

'Let me lie down,' he begged. 'I can't sit up any more.'

'Try, papa, Rakesh said you can if you try,' she said, and drifted away to the other end of the verandah where her transistor radio vibrated to the lovesick tunes from the cinema that she listened to all day.

So there he sat, like some stiff corpse, terrified, gazing out on the lawn where his grandsons played cricket, in danger of getting one of their hard-spun balls in his eye, and at the gate that opened onto the dusty and rubbish-heaped lane but still bore, proudly, a newly touched-up signboard that bore his son's name and qualifications, his own name having vanished from the gate long ago.

At last the sky-blue Ambassador arrived, the cricket game broke up in haste, the car drove in smartly and the doctor, the great doctor, all in white, stepped out. Someone ran up to take his bag from him, others to escort him up the steps. 'Will you have tea?' his wife called, turning down the transistor set. 'Or a Coca-Cola? Shall I fry you some *samosas*?' But he did not reply or even glance in her direction. Ever a devoted son, he went first to the corner where his father sat gazing, stricken, at some undefined spot in the dusty yellow air that swam before him. He did not turn his head to look at his son. But he stopped gobbling air with his uncontrolled lips and set his jaw as hard as a sick and very old man could set it.

'Papa,' his son said, tenderly, sitting down on the edge of the bed and reaching out to press his feet.

Old Varma tucked his feet under him, out of the way, and continued to gaze stubbornly into the yellow air of the summer evening.

'Papa, I'm home.'

Varma's hand jerked suddenly, in a sharp, derisive movement, but he did not speak.

'How are you feeling, papa?'

Then Varma turned and looked at his son. His face was so out of control and all in pieces, that the multitude of expressions that crossed it could not make up a whole and convey to the famous man exactly what his father thought of him, his skill, his art.

'I'm dying,' he croaked. 'Let me die, I tell you.'

'Papa, you're joking,' his son smiled at him, lovingly. 'I've brought you a new tonic to make you feel better. You must take it, it will make you feel stronger again. Here it is. Promise me you will take it regularly, papa.'

Varma's mouth worked as hard as though he still had a gob of betel in it (his supply of betel had been cut off years ago). Then he spat out some words, as sharp and bitter as poison, into his son's face. 'Keep your tonic—I want none—I want none—I won't take any more of—of your medicines. None. Never,' and he swept the bottle out of his son's hand with a wave of his own, suddenly grand, suddenly effective.

His son jumped, for the bottle was smashed and thick brown syrup had splashed up, staining his white trousers. His wife let out a cry and came running. All around the old man was hubbub once again, noise, attention.

He gave one push to the pillows at his back and dislodged them so he could sink down on his back, quite flat again. He closed his eyes and pointed his chin at the ceiling, like some dire prophet, groaning, 'God is calling me—now let me go.'

GLOSSARY

- devoted:** dedicated, sincere
- bedlam:** a noisy and confusing situation
- wunderkind:** child prodigy, child with remarkable talents
- exemplary:** excellent
- filial:** of a son or daughter
- rancour:** intense and bitter hatred
- encomiums:** formal praise
- complaisant:** easy-going, accommodating
- minister:** help or look after
- medley:** mixture
- fathom:** understand
- went to pieces:** lost his mental and emotional composure
- peevish:** easily annoyed
- in a flap:** worried, nervous and agitated
- gaunt:** lean and haggard
- distraught:** extremely worried
- gratifying:** satisfying, pleasing
- contemptuous:**
- scornful, arrogant reproach:** criticism and disappointment
- smirk:** a self-satisfied smile
- quavered:** shook, trembled
- conspirator:** someone who plots with another person or group to do something bad or illegal
- decrepit:** old and in poor condition
- spry:** healthy, energetic
- plinth:** a square piece of stone that forms the bottom of a column or pillar
- piles:** a condition in which the anal tissue swells up and aches or itches
- drongo:** a kind of bird
- sterling:** of the highest quality
- enema:** a procedure of injecting liquid into the rectum to cleanse the bowels
- incoherent:** not clear, confused
- hypocritical:** pretending to have feelings or virtues that one does not have
- derisive:** mocking
- dire:** causing dread or terror

COMPREHENSION

Q.1 Answer the following questions in 3-4 sentences.

1. "This is how great doctors treat their fathers". What did Mr. Varma mean by this comment?
2. Give an example from the story to support the fact that a few of the guests at Varmaji's house were jealous of his happiness.
3. Mr. Varma's perception of his son's greatness and love changed as he grew old. Comment.
4. How did Mr. Varma handle life after his wife's death and his retirement?

Q.2 Write short notes to answer the following questions.

1. How did Mr. Varma try and use his grandchildren for getting sweets?
2. Why were a few female guests seen wiping their tears at Rakesh's high school celebratory function?

3. Discuss the irony in the title of the story 'A Devoted Son'.
4. Why do you think the old man hated the smirk on Veena's face?

Q.3 Answer the following questions:

1. 'It was the achievement of a lifetime and it took up Rakesh's whole life.' Justify the truth of the above statement with close reference to the story.
2. 'The son's sterling personality and character now underwent a curious sea change.' With close reference to the story, illustrate the changes in the son and consequently his father.

Q.4 Answer the following questions by choosing the correct option.

1. Which of the following novels by Anita Desai was not shortlisted for the Booker Prize?
 - a) Clear Light of Day
 - b) In Custody
 - c) Fasting Feasting
 - d) Fire on the mountain
2. Rakesh's father used to work at the:
 - a) Kerosene Dealer's Depot
 - b) Bus Depot
 - c) Petrol Pump
 - d) Ration Depot
3. Rakesh's father loved his tea in his favorite:
 - a) China Cup
 - b) Brass Tumbler
 - c) Glass Tumbler
 - d) Steel Glass
4. Which was the first item to be crossed of the Old man's (Rakesh's father's) diet:
 - a) Halwa
 - b) Kheer
 - c) Fried Fish
 - d) Chicken Tikka
5. How much money did Rakesh's father give his grandchildren to buy his sweets including 20 paise as their bribe:
 - a) 50 Paise
 - b) 60 Paise
 - c) 70 Paise
 - d) 80 Paise
6. Which sweet did the grandchildren used to buy for the old man?
 - a) Rabdi
 - b) Jalebi
 - c) Kheer
 - d) Halwa
7. Who was Mr. Varma's old friend living next door?
 - a) Mr. Sharma
 - b) Mr. Varma
 - c) Mr. Prajapati
 - d) Mr. Bhatia
8. What was the color of Rakesh's Ambassador car?
 - a) White
 - b) Black
 - c) Sky Blue
 - d) Brown
9. Rakesh weighed out the Atta for his father, what amount did he decide was the maximum cereal he could give his father?
 - a) 100gm
 - b) 200gm
 - c) 250gm
 - d) 150gm

3 The Home Coming

Rabindranath Tagore

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES

Discuss in pairs:

- Have you ever lived away from your family? Did you find it tough?
 - Have you ever felt that parents can be biased towards one sibling in the family?
-

About the Author

Rabindranath Tagore (7 May 1861 – 7 August 1941) was a Bengali polymath who reshaped Bengali literature and music, as well as Indian art with Contextual Modernism in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Author of *Gitanjali* and its “profoundly sensitive, fresh and beautiful verse”, he became the first non-European to win the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1913. In translation his poetry was viewed as spiritual and mercurial; however, his “elegant prose and magical poetry” remained/remains largely unknown outside Bengal. Sometimes referred to as “the Bard of Bengal”, Tagore introduced new prose and verse forms and the use of colloquial language into Bengali literature, thereby freeing it from traditional models based on classical Sanskrit. He was highly influential in introducing the best of Indian culture to the West and vice versa, and he is generally regarded as the outstanding creative artist of the modern Indian subcontinent.

About the Story

The Homecoming is a story of every fourteen year old boy who loves to have fun and dreams about going to a big city away from his village, a village that he takes for granted. It's a story about a single parent who is trying to protect her son in this hard world, a son that often creates trouble for her. When Phatik, the protagonist of the story is presented the idea of going away to Kolkata by his mother and his uncle, his excitement knew no bounds, he couldn't wait to reach there, but once he did, he realized that the gulf between dreams and reality is a big one. Read this wonderfully nostalgic masterpiece by Tagore taking us through

the heart and mind of a young boy, as you move forward in his life, Tagore's brilliant expression will force you to delve into your own past.

The Homecoming

Phatik Chakravorti was ringleader among the boys of the village. A new mischief got into his head. There was a heavy log lying on the mud-flat of the river waiting to be shaped into a mast for a boat. He decided that they should all work together to shift the log by main force from its place and roll it away. The owner of the log would be angry and surprised, and they would all enjoy the fun. Every one seconded the proposal, and it was carried unanimously.

But just as the fun was about to begin, Makhan, Phatik's younger brother, sauntered up, and sat down on the log in front of them all without a word. The boys were puzzled for a moment. He was pushed, rather timidly, by one of the boys and told to get up but he remained quite unconcerned. He appeared like a young philosopher meditating on the futility of games. Phatik was furious. "Makhan," he cried, "if you don't get down this minute I'll thrash you!" Makhan only moved to a more comfortable position.

Now, if Phatik was to keep his regal dignity before the public, it was clear he ought to carry out his threat. But his courage failed him at the crisis. His fertile brain, however, rapidly seized upon a new manoeuvre which would discomfit his brother and afford his followers an added amusement. He gave the word of command to roll the log and Makhan over together. Makhan heard the order, and made it a point of honour to stick on. But he overlooked the fact, like those who attempt earthly fame in other matters, that there was peril in it.

The boys began to heave at the log with all their might, calling out, "One, two, three, go," At the word "go" the log went; and with it went Makhan's philosophy, glory and all.

All the other boys shouted themselves hoarse with delight. But Phatik was a little frightened. He knew what was coming. And, sure enough, Makhan rose from Mother Earth, blind as Fate and screaming like the Furies. He rushed at Phatik and scratched his face and beat him and kicked him, and then went crying home. The first act of the drama was over.

Phatik wiped his face, and sat down on the edge of a sunken barge on the river bank, and began to chew a piece of grass. A boat came up to the landing, and a middle-aged man, with grey hair and dark moustache, stepped on shore. He saw the boy sitting there doing nothing, and asked him where the Chakravortis lived. Phatik went on chewing the grass, and said: "Over there," but it was quite impossible to tell where he pointed. The stranger asked him again. He swung his legs to and fro on the side of the barge, and said; "Go and find out," and continued to chew the grass as before.

But now a servant came down from the house, and told Phatik his mother wanted him. Phatik refused to move. But the servant was the master on this occasion. He took Phatik up roughly, and carried him, kicking and struggling in impotent rage.

When Phatik came into the house, his mother saw him. She called out angrily: "So you have been hitting Makhan again?"

Phatik answered indignantly: "No, I haven't; who told you that?"

His mother shouted: "Don't tell lies! You have."

Phatik said suddenly: "I tell you, I haven't. You ask Makhan!" But Makhan thought it best to stick to his previous statement. He said: "Yes, mother. Phatik did hit me."

Phatik's patience was already exhausted. He could not hear this injustice. He rushed at Makhan, and hammered him with blows: "Take that" he cried, "and that, and that, for telling lies."

His mother took Makhan's side in a moment, and pulled Phatik away, beating him with her hands. When Phatik pushed her aside, she shouted out: "What! You little villain! Would you hit your own mother?"

It was just at this critical juncture that the grey-haired stranger arrived. He asked what the matter was. Phatik looked sheepish and ashamed.

But when his mother stepped back and looked at the stranger, her anger was changed to surprise. For she recognised her brother, and cried: "Why, Dada! Where have you come from?" As she said these words, she bowed to the ground and touched his feet. Her brother had gone away soon after she had married, and he had started business in Bombay. His sister had lost her husband while he was in Bombay. Bishamber had now come back to Calcutta, and had at once made enquiries about his sister. He had then hastened to see her as soon as he found out where she was.

The next few days were full of rejoicing. The brother asked after the education of the two boys. He was told by his sister that Phatik was a perpetual nuisance. He was lazy, disobedient, and wild. But Makhan was as good as gold, as quiet as a lamb, and very fond of reading, Bishamber kindly offered to take Phatik off his sister's hands, and educate him with his own children in Calcutta. The widowed mother readily agreed. When his uncle asked Phatik if he would like to go to Calcutta with him, his joy knew no bounds, and he said; "Oh, yes, uncle!" In a way that made it quite clear that he meant it.

It was an immense relief to the mother to get rid of Phatik. She had a prejudice against the boy, and no love was lost between the two brothers. She was in daily fear that he would either drown Makhan some day in the river, or break his head in a fight, or run him into some danger or other. At the same time she was somewhat distressed to see Phatik's extreme eagerness to get away.

Phatik, as soon as all was settled, kept asking his uncle every minute when they were to start. He was on pins and needles all day long with excitement, and lay awake most of

the night. He bequeathed to Makhan, in perpetuity, his fishing-rod, his big kite and his marbles. Indeed, at this time of departure his generosity towards Makhan was unbounded.

When they reached Calcutta, Phatik made the acquaintance of his aunt for the first time. She was by no means pleased with this unnecessary addition to her family. She found her own three boys quite enough to manage without taking any one else. And to bring a village lad of fourteen into their midst was terribly upsetting. Bishamber should really have thought twice before committing such an indiscretion.

In this world of human affairs there is no worse nuisance than a boy at the age of fourteen. He is neither ornamental, nor useful. It is impossible to shower affection on him as on a little boy; and he is always getting in the way. If he talks with a childish lisp he is called a baby, and if he answers in a grown-up way he is called impertinent. In fact any talk at all from him is resented. Then he is at the unattractive, growing age. He grows out of his clothes with indecent haste; his voice grows hoarse and breaks and quavers; his face grows suddenly angular and unsightly. It is easy to excuse the shortcomings of early childhood, but it is hard to tolerate even unavoidable lapses in a boy of fourteen. The lad himself becomes painfully self-conscious. When he talks with elderly people he is either unduly forward, or else so unduly shy that he appears ashamed of his very existence.

Yet it is at this very age when in his heart of hearts a young lad most craves for recognition and love; and he becomes the devoted slave of any one who shows him consideration. But none dare openly love him, for that would be regarded as undue indulgence, and therefore bad for the boy. So, what with scolding and chiding, he becomes very much like a stray dog that has lost his master.

For a boy of fourteen his own home is the only Paradise. To live in a strange house with strange people is little short of torture, while the height of bliss is to receive the kind looks of women, and never to be slighted by them.

It was anguish to Phatik to be the unwelcome guest in his aunt's house, despised by this elderly woman, and slighted, on every occasion. If she ever asked him to do anything for her, he would be so overjoyed that he would overdo it; and then she would tell him not to be so stupid, but to get on with his lessons.

The cramped atmosphere of neglect in his aunt's house oppressed Phatik so much that he felt that he could hardly breathe. He wanted to go out into the open country and fill his lungs and breathe freely. But there was no open country to go to. Surrounded on all sides by Calcutta houses and walls, he would dream night after night of his village home, and long to be back there. He remembered the glorious meadow where he used to fly his kite all day long; the broad river-banks where he would wander about the livelong day singing and shouting for joy; the narrow brook where he could go and dive and swim at any time he liked. He thought of his band of boy companions over whom he was despot; and, above all, the memory of that tyrant mother of his, who had such a prejudice against

him, occupied him day and night. A kind of physical love like that of animals; a longing to be in the presence of the one who is loved; an inexpressible wistfulness during absence; a silent cry of the inmost heart for the mother, like the lowing of a calf in the twilight; -this love, which was almost an animal instinct, agitated the shy, nervous, lean, uncouth and ugly boy. No one could understand it, but it preyed upon his mind continually.

There was no more backward boy in the whole school than Phatik. He gaped and remained silent when the teacher asked him a question, and like an overladen ass patiently suffered all the blows that came down on his back. When other boys were out at play, he stood wistfully by the window and gazed at the roofs of the distant houses. And if by chance he espied children playing on the open terrace of any roof, his heart would ache with longing.

One day he summoned up all his courage, and asked his uncle: "Uncle, when can I go home?"

His uncle answered; "Wait till the holidays come." But the holidays would not come till November, and there was a long time still to wait.

One day Phatik lost his lesson-book. Even with the help of books he had found it very difficult indeed to prepare his lesson. Now it was impossible. Day after day the teacher would cane him unmercifully. His condition became so abjectly miserable that even his cousins were ashamed to own him. They began to jeer and insult him more than the other boys. He went to his aunt at last, and told her that he had lost his book.

His aunt pursed her lips in contempt, and said: "You great clumsy, country lout. How can I afford, with all my family, to buy you new books five times a month?"

That night, on his way back from school, Phatik had a bad headache with a fit of shivering. He felt he was going to have an attack of malarial fever. His one great fear was that he would be a nuisance to his aunt.

The next morning Phatik was nowhere to be seen. All searches in the neighbourhood proved futile. The rain had been pouring in torrents all night, and those who went out in search of the boy got drenched through to the skin. At last Bishamber asked help from the police.

At the end of the day a police van stopped at the door before the house. It was still raining and the streets were all flooded. Two constables brought out Phatik in their arms and placed him before Bishamber. He was wet through from head to foot, muddy all over, his face and eyes flushed red with fever, and his limbs all trembling. Bishamber carried him in his arms, and took him into the inner apartments. When his wife saw him, she exclaimed; "What a heap of trouble this boy has given us. Hadn't you better send him home?"

Phatik heard her words, and sobbed out loud: "Uncle, I was just going home; but they dragged me back again."

The fever rose very high, and all that night the boy was delirious. Bishamber brought in a doctor. Phatik opened his eyes flushed with fever, and looked up to the ceiling, and said vacantly: "Uncle, have the holidays come yet? May I go home?"

Bishamber wiped the tears from his own eyes, and took Phatik's lean and burning hands in his own, and sat by him through the night. The boy began again to mutter. At last his voice became excited: "Mother," he cried, "don't beat me like that! Mother! I am telling the truth!"

The next day Phatik became conscious for a short time. He turned his eyes about the room, as if expecting some one to come. At last, with an air of disappointment, his head sank back on the pillow. He turned his face to the wall with a deep sigh.

Bishamber knew his thoughts, and, bending down his head, whispered: "Phatik, I have sent for your mother." The day went by. The doctor said in a troubled voice that the boy's condition was very critical.

Phatik began to cry out; "By the mark! —three fathoms. By the mark— four fathoms. By the mark-." He had heard the sailor on the riversteamer calling out the mark on the plumb-line. Now he was himself plumbing an unfathomable sea.

Later in the day Phatik's mother burst into the room like a whirlwind, and began to toss from side to side and moan and cry in a loud voice.

Bishamber tried to calm her agitation, but she flung herself on the bed, and cried:

"Phatik, my darling, my darling."

Phatik stopped his restless movements for a moment. His hands ceased beating up and down. He said: "Eh?"

The mother cried again: "Phatik, my darling, my darling."

Phatik very slowly turned his head and, without seeing anybody, said: "Mother, the holidays have come."

-THE END

GLOSSARY

Ringleader: (here) head of the group

Mast: tall upright post, spar, or other structure on a ship or boat

Unanimously: without opposition

Maneuver: movement, operation, exercise

Heave: lift, haul, pull

Hoarse: rough, harsh

Barge: push, shove,

Ceased: finish

Mutter: whisper, murmur, mumble

Unfathomable: incalculable, incomprehensible

Lout: thug, hooligan, rowdy

Futile: useless

Delirious: hysterical, euphoric

Despise: detest, hate

Chiding: scold, rebuke

COMPREHENSION**Q.1 Answer the following questions in 3-4 sentences.**

1. Do you think Phatik was a mischievous young village boy? Support your answer with instances from the story.
2. Why was Phatik a little frightened when the boys tumbled the log along with Makhan?
3. Why do you think Phatik's mother readily agree to her brother's proposal of taking Phatik with him?
4. What gifts did Phatik give Makhan before he left for Kolkata?

Q.2 Write short notes to answer the following questions.

1. The author says that Phatik's mother had a prejudice against the boy? Do you agree?
2. Describe the character of Makhan.
3. Why was Phatik's aunt not happy at his arrival in the family?
4. What do you understand by the last words of the story spoken by Phatik, "Mother, the holidays have come"?

Q.3 Answer the following questions.

1. Contrast the life of Phatik back in the village and in Kolkata.
2. "In this world of human affairs there is no worse nuisance than a boy at the age of fourteen". Discuss.

Q.4 Choose the correct option to answer the following questions.

1. Who opposed Phatik's idea of shifting the log lying on the mud flat of the river to irritate the owner?
a) Phatik's cousin from Kolkata b) Phatik's younger brother
c) Phatik's Uncle d) Phatik's mother
2. After Makhan left the scene crying, who came down from the house to take Phatik home?
a) Makhan b) Phatik's Mother
c) A servant d) A boy from the village
3. The brother of Phatik's mother had gone away soon after she got married and had started a business in
a) Bombay b) Kolkata c) Haldia d) Durgapur
4. Who was the grey haired stranger that arrived at Phatik's house?
a) His long lost friend b) His uncle
c) His father d) The log owner
5. Which of these things did Phatik not give to his brother before he left for Kolkata?
a) Fishing-rod b) Big Kite c) Marbles d) Sea shells

6. When Phatik asked his uncle when he could go home, what answer did he get from him?
 - a) That he would go home tomorrow
 - b) That he would go home next month
 - c) That he would go home in the holidays
 - d) That he would never go home now
7. Rabindranath Tagore won the Nobel prize for Literature in the year:
 - a) 1912
 - b) 1913
 - c) 1914
 - d) 1915
8. Where was Bishamber when his sister lost her husband?
 - a) Bombay
 - b) Kolkata
 - c) Haldia
 - d) Durgapur
9. Who was the 'grey-haired stranger'?
 - a) Bishamber
 - b) Phatik's father
 - c) Village Doctor
 - d) Village Sarpanch
10. According to the author, what is the 'only paradise' for a boy of fourteen?
 - a) His mother's love
 - b) His freedom
 - c) His friends
 - d) His home

4 The Solitary Reaper

William Wordsworth

PRE-READING

Discuss in pairs:

- Do you like music?
 - Have you ever enjoyed a song that was in a language that you didn't understand?
 - Discuss with your partner why you enjoyed that song despite not knowing the meaning of the lyrics.
-

About the Poet

William Wordsworth (1770–1850) was born at Cockermouth in Cumberland, England. He is regarded as one of the foremost English Romantic poets and along with Samuel Taylor Coleridge, is credited with launching the Romantic Age in English literature. Wordsworth was educated at Hawkshead School and St. John's College, Cambridge. His meeting with Coleridge in 1795 was a turning point in life. He decided to devote his life completely to poetry and composed many notable poems. He was given the honour of being Britain's Poet Laureate from 1843 till his death. Wordsworth and Coleridge together published *The Lyrical Ballads* in 1798.

About the Poem

The Solitary Reaper is probably one of Wordsworth's most famous poems. Written in first person, the lyrical ballad depicts the theme of ironic beauty of melancholy as against the more positive emotions such as delight and joy. The words of the reaper's song are not understood by the speaker, but its beauty is such that his attention is focused on the tone, the expression, and the blissful mood it creates in him. The poet concludes that even if he cannot grasp the meaning of the song, the tune has touched his heart. He further states that the melody has filled the entire valley with its beauty. The impact of the song long lingers in his mind giving him joy despite its melancholic nature. The poet has used this poem to depict the universal nature of the beauty of music that respects no boundaries and is not captive to any limitations of language and comprehension.

The Solitary Reaper

Behold her, single in the field,
 Yon solitary Highland Lass
 Reaping and singing by herself;
 Stop here, or gently pass!
 Alone she cuts and binds the grain, 5
 And sings a melancholy strain;
 O listen! For the vale profound
 Is overflowing with the sound.

No nightingale did ever chant
 More welcome notes to weary band 10
 Of travellers in some shady haunt,
 Among Arabian sands:
 A voice so thrilling never was heard
 In spring-time from the cuckoo-bird,
 Breaking the silence of the seas 15
 Among the farthest Hebrides.
 Will no one tell me what she sings?
 Perhaps the plaintive numbers flow
 For old, unhappy, far-off things,
 And battles long ago: 20
 Or is it some more humble lay,
 Familiar matter of to-day?
 Some natural sorrow, loss or pain,
 That has been, and may be again!

Whatever the theme, the maiden sang 25
 As if her song could have no ending;
 I saw her singing at her work,
 And over the sickle bending;
 I listen'd motionless and still;
 And, as I mounted up the hill, 30
 The music in my heart I bore
 Long after it was heard no more.

GLOSSARY

- Highland girl:** Girl belonging to high mountainous country
- Stop here or gently pass:** either stop here and listen or pass by quietly
- Strain:** Song
- Shady haunt:** An oasis in the Arabian Desert
- Hebrides:** A group of islands to the west of Scotland
- Plaintive numbers:** Sorrowful musical notes
- Natural sorrow:** Pain that can be experienced by every person
- Solitary:** Lone
- Reaper:** One who harvests grain
- Binds:** Ties in convenient bundles
- Melancholy:** Sadness, gloom
- Strain:** (Here) A passage from a tune
- Nightingale:** A small thrush (bird), the male of which sings melodiously
- Shady haunt:** A shaded place for travellers to rest
- Arabian sands:** The desert in Arabia
- Weary band:** A group of tired travellers
- Humble lay:** A matter of mundane, day-to-day relevance
- Motionless:** Not making any movement

COMPREHENSION

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

- Who was Wordsworth's close associate in the world of literature?
 - Lord Byron
 - Oscar Wilde
 - Samuel Taylor Coleridge
 - John Keats
- What is the reaper doing in the field?
 - Cutting and binding grain
 - Applying manure to the crops
 - Sitting under a shady tree, singing
 - Planting rice saplings
- The poet has compared the singing of the reaper with which bird(s)?
 - Cuckoo
 - Nightingale
 - Both of the above
 - None of the above
- Which line in the poem indicates that the poet does not understand the lyrics of the song?
 - A voice so thrilling never was heard
 - Will no one tell me what she sings?
 - And sings a melancholy strain
 - Long after it was heard no more
- Which agricultural implement was the reaper using?
 - Spade
 - Thresher
 - Plough
 - Sickle

6. 'Stop here, or gently pass.' Who does the poet address this line to?
 - a) Travellers who may happen to be passing
 - b) Residents of the nearest village
 - c) Farmers working in adjoining fields
 - d) Children playing in the valley
7. Which word(s) in the poem indicate that the reaper was singing a sad song?
 - a) Melancholic b) Plaintive c) Unhappy d) All of the above
8. What impact did the reaper's song have on the poet?
 - a) He decided to become a musician
 - b) He bore the music in his heart for a long time
 - c) He sponsored the reaper to a music academy
 - d) He decided to stay on in the valley

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

1. Describe the image of the reaper as depicted by the poet.
2. What impact is the reaper's song having on the valley? Why does he say so?
3. How do we know that the poet cannot understand the lyrics of the song?
4. What are the various themes that the poet speculates about the song?
5. Did the reaper realise that someone was appreciating her singing? Give reasons for your answer.

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

1. The beauty of the reaper's song
2. The poet's love of nature

D. Answer in detail in 120–140 words.

1. 'As if her song could have no ending.' Discuss the significance of this line in the overall context of the poem.
2. After reading this poem, what can you say about the nature of the poet?

E. Language in Use

1. Identify at least three words from the poem that indicate that the reaper was alone in the field.
2. Which word in the poem has the same meaning as
 - a) Very deep b) Tired c) Mundane d) Beginning
3. Identify at least two words from the poem that indicate that the reaper is a female.
4. Fill in the blanks with appropriate prepositions.
 - a) O listen! For the vale profound is overflowing _____ the sound.
 - b) Of travellers in some shady haunt, _____ Arabian sands.
 - c) I saw her singing at her work, and _____ the sickle bending.
 - d) I listen'd motionless and still; And, as I mounted _____ the hill.

5 Stopping by the Woods on a Snowy Evening

Robert Lee Frost

PRE-READING

- Describe a moment in your life when you have had to take a difficult choice.
 - Think about a 'promise' that you need to make to yourself and write briefly about how you propose to keep it through your life.
-

About the poet

Robert Lee Frost (1874 –1963) was an American poet. His work was initially published in England before it was published in America. He is highly regarded for his realistic depictions of rural life and his command of American colloquial speech. Some of his most famous poems include, 'After Apple-Picking', 'The Road Not Taken', 'Home Burial' and 'Mending Wall'. One of the most popular and critically respected American poets of the twentieth century, Frost was honoured frequently during his lifetime, receiving four Pulitzer Prizes for Poetry. He was awarded the Congressional Gold Medal in 1960 for his poetic works. In 1961, Frost was named Poet laureate of Vermont.

About the poem

This is easily one of the most famous, as well as one of the most anthologised, of Robert Frost's poems. The poem is a dramatic monologue. Its central narrative is simple, and the scene is understated, bare of elaboration or detail. A traveller pauses late one snowy evening to admire the woods by which he passes. He reflects upon the owner of the woods, who lives in the village. Something about the woods compels the speaker's interest, and by the poem's end, one has the sense that there is more to these woods than meets the eye.

Whose woods these are I think I know.
 His house is in the village though;
 He will not see me stopping here
 To watch his woods fill up with snow.

My little horse must think it queer
 To stop without a farmhouse near
 Between the woods and frozen lake
 The darkest evening of the year.
 He gives his harness bells a shake
 To ask if there is some mistake.

The only other sound's the sweep
 Of easy wind and downy flake.
 The woods are lovely, dark and deep,
 But I have promises to keep,
 And miles to go before I sleep,
 And miles to go before I sleep.

GLOSSARY

Woods: an area of land, smaller than a forest, that is covered with growing trees

Queer: strange, odd

Harness: a set of straps and fittings by which a horse or other draught animal is fastened to a cart, plough, etc. and is controlled by its driver

Downy: (here) soft and fluffy

Flake: a small, flat, very thin piece of something, typically one which has broken away or been peeled off from a larger piece.

COMPREHENSION

I. Answer the following questions, choosing from the options given.

1. Frost is highly regarded for his
 - a) realistic depictions of rural life
 - b) realistic depictions of city life
 - c) realistic dramatic dialogues
 - d) formal speech

2. The poem is a
 - a) dramatic dialogue
 - b) dramatic narrative
 - c) dramatic monologue
 - d) dramatic conversation
3. Where has the poet stopped?
 - a) By a farmer's house
 - b) By a farmhouse
 - c) Between the woods and a frozen lake
 - d) Between a frozen lake and the farmhouse
4. Where does the owner of the woods live?
 - a) In a house deep within the woods
 - b) In the farmhouse near the lake
 - c) In the village
 - d) In the city
5. What according to the poet does the 'darkest evening of the year' refer to?
 - a) Autumn equinox
 - b) Winter equinox
 - c) Summer solstice
 - d) Winter solstice

II. Answer the following questions in three-four sentences each.

1. Describe the climate in the first stanza.
2. To what is the poet referring when he says his 'horse must think it queer'?
3. What does 'lovely, dark and deep' suggest?
4. Why has the poet repeated the last lines?
5. What rhyme scheme has been used in this poem?

III. Write short notes on the following in 40-50 words.

1. What is the theme of this poem?
2. The imagery used in the poem.

IV. Answer in detail.

1. How is there a play of opposites in this poem?
2. How does Frost create an atmosphere of isolation and silence in the poem?

SECTION 2

DEVELOPING WRITING SKILLS

1 Word Formation

Word formation is the creation of a new word. Word formation processes are basically how new words are created and become part of the language. There are quite a few of them, and we will now learn about the most important ones.

There are four main kinds of word formation: prefixes, suffixes, conversion, and compounds. Let us all study them in detail.

Prefixes

We add prefixes before the base or stem of a word.

| Examples | Prefixes |
|------------------------------------|---|
| <i>monorail, monolingual</i> | <i>mono-</i> means 'one' |
| <i>multipurpose, multicultural</i> | <i>multi-</i> means 'many' |
| <i>post-war, postgraduate</i> | <i>post-</i> means 'after' |
| <i>unusual, undemocratic</i> | <i>un-</i> means 'not' or 'opposite to' |

Prefixes are letters that we add to the **beginning** of a word to make a new word with a **different** meaning from that of the root word. Prefixes can, for example, create a new word opposite in meaning to the word the prefix is attached to. They can also make a word negative or express relations of time, place or manner. Here are some examples:

| Base word | Prefixed word | Type of meaning |
|--------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| <i>possible</i> | <i>Impossible</i> | opposite |
| <i>able</i> | <i>Unable</i> | opposite/negation |
| <i>payment</i> | <i>non-payment</i> | negation |
| <i>war</i> | <i>pre-war</i> | time (before) |
| <i>terrestrial</i> | <i>extraterrestrial</i> | place (outside of/beyond) |
| <i>cook</i> | <i>Overcook</i> | manner (too much) |

The most common prefixes

| Prefix | Meaning | Examples |
|---------------------------|----------------------|---|
| <i>anti-</i> | against/opposed to | <i>anti-government, anti racism, anti-war</i> |
| <i>auto-</i> | Self | <i>autobiography, automobile</i> |
| <i>de-</i> | reverse or change | <i>de-classify, decontaminate, demotivate</i> |
| <i>dis-</i> | reverse or remove | <i>disagree, displeasure, disqualify</i> |
| <i>down-</i> | reduce or lower | <i>downgrade, downhearted</i> |
| <i>extra-</i> | Beyond | <i>extraordinary, extraterrestrial</i> |
| <i>hyper-</i> | Extreme | <i>hyperactive, hypertension</i> |
| <i>il-, im-, in-, ir-</i> | Not | <i>illegal, impossible, insecure, irregular</i> |
| <i>inter-</i> | Between | <i>interactive, international</i> |
| <i>mega-</i> | very big, important | <i>megabyte, mega-deal, megaton</i> |
| <i>mid-</i> | Middle | <i>midday, midnight, mid-October</i> |
| <i>mis-</i> | incorrectly, badly | <i>misaligned, mislead, misspelt</i> |
| <i>non-</i> | Not | <i>non-payment, non-smoking</i> |
| <i>over-</i> | too much | <i>overcook, overcharge, overrate</i> |
| <i>out-</i> | go beyond | <i>outdo, out-perform, outrun</i> |
| <i>post-</i> | After | <i>post-election, post-war</i> |
| <i>pre-</i> | Before | <i>prehistoric, pre-war</i> |
| <i>pro-</i> | in favour of | <i>pro-communist, pro-democracy</i> |
| <i>re-</i> | Again | <i>reconsider, redo, rewrite</i> |
| <i>semi-</i> | Half | <i>semicircle, semi-retired</i> |
| <i>sub-</i> | under, below | <i>submarine, sub-Saharan</i> |
| <i>super-</i> | above, beyond | <i>super-hero, supermodel</i> |
| <i>tele-</i> | at a distance | <i>television, telepathic</i> |
| <i>trans-</i> | Across | <i>transatlantic, transfer</i> |
| <i>ultra-</i> | Extremely | <i>ultra-compact, ultrasound</i> |
| <i>un-</i> | remove, reverse, not | <i>undo, unpack, unhappy</i> |
| <i>under-</i> | less than, beneath | <i>undercook, underestimate</i> |
| <i>up-</i> | make or move higher | <i>upgrade, uphill</i> |

Suffixes

We add suffixes after the base or stem of a word. The main purpose of a suffix is to show what class of word it is (e.g., noun or adjective).

| Examples | Suffixes |
|---------------------------------|---|
| <i>terrorism, sexism</i> | <i>-ism</i> and <i>-dom</i> are used to form nouns |
| <i>employer, actor</i> | <i>-er</i> and <i>-or</i> are used to form nouns to describe people who do things |
| <i>widen, simplify</i> | <i>-en</i> and <i>-ify</i> are used to form verbs |
| <i>reasonable, unprofitable</i> | <i>-able</i> is used to form adjectives |
| <i>unhappily, naturally</i> | <i>-ly</i> is a common suffix used to form adverbs |

Let us look at a few more examples of how suffixes are added to words to form new words.

| Words | Suffix | New words |
|---------------------------|--------------|-------------------------------|
| <i>forget, use</i> | <i>-ful</i> | <i>forgetful, useful</i> |
| <i>state, govern</i> | <i>-ment</i> | <i>statement, government</i> |
| <i>complicate, create</i> | <i>-ion</i> | <i>complication, creation</i> |

The new word is most often a different word class from the original word. In the table above, the suffix *-ful* has changed verbs to adjectives, *-ment*, and *-ion* have changed verbs to nouns. If you see a word ending in *-ment*, for example, it is likely to be a noun (e.g., *commitment, contentment*).

Common suffixes and examples

Noun suffixes

| Suffix | Examples of nouns |
|--------------------|--|
| <i>-age</i> | <i>baggage, village, postage</i> |
| <i>-al</i> | <i>arrival, burial, deferral</i> |
| <i>-ance/-ence</i> | <i>reliance, defence, insistence</i> |
| <i>-dom</i> | <i>boredom, freedom, kingdom</i> |
| <i>-ee</i> | <i>employee, payee, trainee</i> |
| <i>-er/-or</i> | <i>driver, writer, director</i> |
| <i>-hood</i> | <i>brotherhood, childhood, neighbourhood</i> |
| <i>-ism</i> | <i>capitalism, Marxism, socialism (philosophies)</i> |

| Suffix | Examples of nouns |
|----------|---|
| -ist | <i>capitalist, Marxist, socialist</i> (followers of philosophies) |
| -ity/-ty | <i>brutality, equality, cruelty</i> |
| -ment | <i>amazement, disappointment, parliament</i> |
| -ness | <i>happiness, kindness, usefulness</i> |
| -ry | <i>entry, ministry, robbery</i> |

Adjective suffixes

| Suffix | Examples of adjectives |
|-------------|--------------------------------------|
| -able/-ible | <i>drinkable, portable, flexible</i> |
| -al | <i>brutal, formal, postal</i> |
| -en | <i>broken, golden, wooden</i> |
| -ese | <i>Chinese, Japanese, Vietnamese</i> |
| -ful | <i>forgetful, helpful, useful</i> |
| -i | <i>Iraqi, Pakistani, Yemeni</i> |
| -ic | <i>classic, Islamic, poetic</i> |
| -ish | <i>British, childish, Spanish</i> |
| -ive | <i>active, passive, productive</i> |
| -ian | <i>Canadian, Malaysian, Peruvian</i> |
| -less | <i>homeless, hopeless, useless</i> |
| -ly | <i>daily, monthly, yearly</i> |
| -ous | <i>cautious, famous, nervous</i> |
| -y | <i>cloudy, rainy, windy</i> |

Verb suffixes

| Suffix | Examples of Verbs |
|-----------|--|
| -ate | <i>complicate, dominate, irritate</i> |
| -en | <i>harden, soften, shorten</i> |
| -ify | <i>beautify, clarify, identify</i> |
| -ise/-ize | <i>economise, realise, industrialize</i> (-ise is most common in British English; -ize is most common in American English) |

Adverb suffixes

| Suffix | Examples of Adverbs |
|----------|--|
| -ly | <i>calmly, easily, quickly</i> |
| -ward(s) | <i>downwards, homeward(s), upwards</i> |
| -wise | <i>anti-clockwise, clockwise, edgewise</i> |

Conversion

Conversion is the word formation process in which a word of one grammatical form becomes a word of another grammatical form without any changes to spelling or pronunciation. For example, the noun *email* appeared in English before the verb: a decade ago, a person would *send* an email (noun) to someone whereas now a person can either *send* an email (noun) or simply email (verb) someone. The original noun *email* experienced conversion, thus resulting in the new verb *email*. Conversion is also referred to as zero derivation or null derivation with the assumption that the formal change between words results in the addition of an invisible morpheme (A meaningful linguistic unit that cannot be divided into smaller meaningful parts. The word *man* and the suffixed (as in *walked*) are morphemes.)

Examples of conversion:

1. *Can you text her?* (verb from noun *text*, meaning *to send a text-message*)
2. *They are always jetting somewhere.* (verb from noun *jet*)
3. *If you're not careful, some downloads can damage your computer.* (noun from verb *download*)
4. *OK, so the meeting's on Tuesday. That's a definite.* (noun from adjective)
5. *It's a very big if and I'm not at all sure we can afford it.* (noun from conjunction, meaning 'it's not at all certain')
6. *All companies have their ups and downs.* (nouns from prepositions)

We also use conversion when we change a proper noun into a common noun:

Has anybody seen my Dickens? (copy of a book by Dickens)

Compounding

Compounding forms a word out of two or more root morphemes. The words are called compounds or compound words. In Linguistics, compounds can be either native or borrowed. Native English roots are typically free morphemes, so that means native compounds are made out of independent words that can occur by themselves.

Examples:

1. *mailman* (composed of free root *mail* and free root *man*)
2. *dog house*
3. *fireplace*
4. *fireplug* (a regional word for 'fire hydrant')
5. *fire hydrant*
6. *dry run*
7. *pick-up truck*
8. *talking-to*

Note that compounds are written in various ways in English: with a space between the elements; with a hyphen between the elements; or simply with the two roots run together with no separation. The way the word is written does not affect its status as a compound. Over time, the convention for writing compounds can change, usually in the direction from separate words (e.g., *clock work*), to hyphenated words (*clock-work*), to one word with no break (*clockwork*). If you read older literature you might see some compound words that are now written as one word appearing with unfamiliar spaces or hyphens between the components.

Another thing to note about compounds is that they can combine words of different parts of speech. The list above shows mostly noun-noun compounds, which is probably the most common part of speech combination, but there are others, such as adjective-noun (*dry run, blackbird, hard drive*), verb-noun (*pick-pocket, cut-purse, lick-spittle*) and even verb-particle (where 'particle' means a word basically designating spatial expression that functions to complete a literal or metaphorical path), as in *run-through, hold-over*. Sometimes these compounds are different in the part of speech of the whole compound vs. the part of speech of its components. Note that the last two are actually nouns, despite their components.

Some compounds have more than two component words. These are formed by successively combining words into compounds, e.g., *pick-up truck*, formed from *pick-up* and *truck*, where the first component, *pick-up* is itself a compound formed from *pick* and *up*. Other examples are *ice-cream cone, no-fault insurance* and even more complex compounds like *top-rack dishwasher safe*.

There are a number of subtypes of compounds that do not have to do with part of speech, but rather the sound characteristics of the words. These subtypes are not mutually exclusive.

1. Rhyming compounds

These words are compounded from two rhyming words.

Examples:

lovey-dovey, chiller-killer

There are words that are formally very similar to rhyming compounds, but are not quite compounds in English because the second element is not really a word--it is just a random item added to a root word to form a rhyme.

Examples:

higgledy-piggledy, tootsie-wootsie

This formation process is associated in English with child talk (and talk addressed to children), technically called hypocoristic language.

Examples:

bunnie-wunnie, Henny Penny, snuggly-wuggly, Georgie Porgie, Piggie-Wiggie

Another word type that looks a bit like rhyming compounds comprises words that are formed of two elements that almost match, but differ in their vowels. Again, the second element is typically a nonsense form:

pitter-patter, zigzag, tick-tock, riffraff, flipflop

2. Derivation

Derivation is the creation of words by modifying a root without adding other roots. Often, the effect of derivation is a change in some part of speech.

Examples:

outpatient, darkness

3. Blending

Blending is one of the most beloved of word formation processes in English. It is especially creative in that speakers take two words and merge them based not on morpheme structure but on sound structure. The resulting words are called blends.

Usually in word formation we combine roots or affixes along their edges: one morpheme comes to an end before the next one starts. For example, we form *derivation* out of the sequence of morphemes *de+riv+at(e)+ion*. One morpheme follows the next and each one has identifiable boundaries. The morphemes do not overlap.

But in blending, part of one word is stitched onto another word, without any regard for where one morpheme ends and another begins. For example, the word *swooshtika* 'Nike swoosh as a logo symbolising corporate power and hegemony' was formed from *swoosh* and *swastika*. The *swoosh* part remains whole and recognizable in the blend, but the *tika* part is not a morpheme, either in the word *swastika* or in the blend. The blend is a perfect merger of form, and also of content. The meaning contains an implicit analogy between the *swastika* and the *swoosh*, and thus conceptually blends them into one new kind of thing having properties of both, but also combined properties of neither source. Other examples include *glitterati* (blending *glitter* and *literati*) 'Hollywood social set', *mockumentary* (*mock* and *documentary*) 'spoof documentary'.

The earliest blends in English only go back to the 19th century, with wordplay coinages by Lewis Carroll in *Jabberwocky*. For example, he introduced to the language *slithy*, formed from *lithe* and *slimy*) and *galumph*, (from *gallop* and *triumph*. Interestingly *galumph* has survived as a word in English, but it now seems to mean 'walk in a stomping, ungainly way'.

When we use compounding, we link together two or more bases to create a new word. Normally, the first item identifies a key feature of the second word. For example, the two bases *back* and *ache* can combine to form the compound noun *backache*, and the two bases *post* and *card* combine to form the compound noun *postcard*.

Compounds are found in all word classes. The most common types of compounds are as follows:

1. Nouns: *car park*, *rock band*
2. Adjectives: *heartbreaking*, *sugar-free*, *airsick*
3. Verbs: *oven-bake*, *baby-sit*, *chain-smoke*
4. Adverbs: *good-naturedly*, *nevertheless*

It is sometimes difficult to know where to put hyphens in words that are compounded. It is also difficult to know whether to separate words (e.g., *post box*) or to join the words (e.g., *postbox*). In such cases, it is best to check in a good learner's dictionary.

Exercises

I. Add a prefix to each of the words to make new words.

Prefixes: *trans-*, *dis-*, *re-*, *anti-*, *non-*, *over-*, *sub-*, *im-*, *un-*, *in-*

- | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| 1. _____ climax | 2. _____ due |
| 3. _____ cooked | 4. _____ possible |
| 5. _____ fer | 6. _____ arrange |
| 7. _____ toxic | 8. _____ connect |
| 9. _____ merge | 10. _____ capable |

II. Select and write the correct suffix in the blank.

- The teach___ (er, or) passed out the test paper___ (s, es), hop___ (ing, ed) the student___ (s, es) were cap___ (ible, able) of getting good marks.
- Although the rain cloud___ (s, es) were gathering, the carpent___ (or, er) kept work___ (ing, ed).
- Alex open___ (ing, ed) the cupboards so the switch___ (s, es) were access___ (able, ible).
- It is reason___ (able, ible) to expect student___ (s, es) to be respons___ (able, ible).
- The town may___ (er, or) welcom___ (ing, ed) the visit___ (ers, ors).

III. Match the common suffixes on the left to the explanation on the right.

Put the letter of the correct explanation in the final column. The first one has been done as an example

- | | | |
|------------------|-----------------------------|----------|
| 1. -s, -es | a. without | <u>f</u> |
| 2. -able, -ible | b. a study of something | — |
| 3. -less | c. full of | — |
| 4. -ment | d. can be done | — |
| 5. -ology | e. sound | — |
| 6. -ful | f. more than one | — |
| 7. -er, -or, ist | g. superlative, the most | — |
| 8. -phone | h. an action or process | — |
| 9. -graph | i. one who does something | — |
| 10. -est | j. a written or drawn thing | — |

IV. Look at the following italicised words and mention in what way they have been converted.

- Don't *talk* the *talk* if you can't *walk* the *walk*.
- Be who you are and say what you feel because those who mind don't matter and those who *matter* don't *mind*.
- Gary showed no *sign* of pain or remorse.
- He doesn't have the necessary *know-how*.

5. You'd have domestic production falling, whole cities *blacked* out, whole industries threatened.
6. I get distracted whenever mobile phones begin to *buzz* and *beep*.
7. They *breakfasted* together in the usual way upon bacon and eggs, toast, marmalade and coffee.
8. Have you, by any stroke of luck, seen my *Christie*?
9. Can you *google* this for me, please?
10. I had a good *read*.

V. Read the sentences below and underline the compound words in the sentences.

1. In the afternoon, I will immediately arrange a meeting with my friend.
2. I went to the skateboard park in the forenoon.
3. The thunderstorm arrived early in the morning.
4. The gardener dragged the wheelbarrow out of the backyard.
5. Where is the lifeguard? A man seems to be drowning.
6. Does anyone have a telephone I can use?
7. I had butterflies in my stomach when I went for the school championship event.
8. Meanwhile, can you wait for me outside the school?
9. I have a concern because the zipper on my backpack got stuck.
10. I agree that watching too much television may hurt your eyeballs.

2 Idioms and Phrases

In this chapter, we will familiarise ourselves with idioms and phrases.

Idioms are words, phrases or expressions that are commonly used in everyday conversation by native speakers of English. They are often *metaphorical* expressions and make the language more colourful. People use them to express something more vividly and often more briefly. They serve as an image or mental picture.

Example:

Let the cat out of the bag

Meaning: If you let the cat out of the bag, you reveal a secret.

It is important to remember that idiomatic expressions are used when speaking informally. They are **not** used in formal exchanges. Knowing idioms is useful in at least two ways:

1. The more idioms you know, the more native-like your language will sound;
2. By learning idioms, you learn a lot about the culture of the community speaking the language you are learning.

A phrase is a small group of words standing together as a conceptual unit. It is different from an idiom in that an idiom is 'a group of words established by usage as having a meaning not deducible from those of the individual words'. So, the difference is that an idiom has an **established meaning not directly linked to the individual words**. Any idiom is a phrase.

As an example, 'raining cats and dogs' is both an idiom and a phrase. 'A herd of cats' is a phrase but not an idiom.

Let us learn the meaning of the a few idioms and phrases.

1. To give up: cease making an effort; admit defeat
2. To look into: investigate something; check *into* something
3. To bring to light: make widely known or evident; reveal; disclose
4. To go into something: become interested in an activity or subject, or start being involved in an activity
5. To break down: 1. lose control of one's emotions when in a state of distress 2. cease to continue; collapse

6. To call on: pay a visit to (someone)
7. To break into: 1. enter or open (a place, vehicle, or container) forcibly, especially for the purposes of theft 2. suddenly or unexpectedly burst forth into (laughter or song)
8. Be at daggers drawn: (of two people) be bitterly hostile towards each other
9. To carry something out: to do or complete something, especially that you have said you would do or that you have been told to do
10. To feel at home: to be at one's ease
11. At wit's end: at the limits of one's mental resource; so upset that you don't know what to do
12. Read between the lines: look for or discover a meaning that is implied rather than explicitly stated
13. To rain cats and dogs: rain very hard
14. To keep in touch with: maintain communication with someone
15. To keep up: move or progress at the same rate as someone or something else
16. In full swing: at the peak of height of activity
17. To go through: 1. undergo (a difficult period or experience) 2. search through or examine methodically
18. To stand by somebody: support and be loyal to someone
19. To call for: 1. announce 2. make necessary
20. To run out: be used up, exhausted
21. To bring up: to start to talk about a particular subject
22. To fuss about: a show of anger, worry, or excitement that is unnecessary or greater than the situation deserves
23. To find fault with: make an adverse criticism or objection, sometimes unfairly
24. To get rid of: take action so as to be free of (a troublesome or unwanted person or thing)
25. To live in a fool's paradise: to be happy because you do not know or will not accept how bad a situation really is
26. Nip in the bud: to stop something soon after it has begun
27. Out of question: Not worth considering because of being too difficult or impossible
28. To drop into: 1. call casually and informally at (a place) 2. pass quickly and easily into (a habitual state or manner)
29. To take to task: censure severely or angrily
30. To turn a deaf ear to: to ignore what someone is saying
31. To blow one's own trumpet: talk boastfully about one's achievements
32. A bird's eye view: a general view from above

33. A cry in wilderness: a voice in the wilderness if you're expressing an unpopular opinion or insight; unheeded advice
34. To fall flat: fail completely to produce the intended or expected effect
35. To leave no stone unturned: try every possible course of action in order to achieve something
36. To make both ends meet: earn just enough money to live on.
37. Through thick and thin: under all circumstances, however difficult
38. To make a mountain of a molehill: to over-react; refers to histrionic behaviour where a person makes too much of a minor issue
39. To put in a nutshell: to say something very concisely
40. To cut a joke: crack a joke, say something humorous
41. To lend a hand: assist in an action or enterprise
42. To hold one's tongue: remain silent
43. To cast the first stone at: to make the first criticism; to be the first to attack
44. To face music: to accept the unpleasant consequences of one's actions.
45. To come to terms: to begin to deal with and accept something that is unpleasant and difficult
46. To take into account: to remember to consider something to be an important factor in a decision
47. To eat one's words: be forced to retract something someone has said; admit what one has said was wrong
48. To look down upon: to consider someone or something of no importance or value
49. In black and white: an absolutely clear choice that causes no confusion
50. Off and on: now and then; intermittently

Exercises

- I. Read the sentences carefully and fill in the blanks with appropriate idioms or phrases.
1. The mother scolded the child severely for entering a stranger's car. She took _____.
 2. The poor manager has been kidnapped. The police hopes that they will not _____ to kill him.
 3. Her toddler refuses to eat food, no matter what she gives her to eat. She is terribly upset; and is at her _____.
 4. Desperate times _____ desperate measures.
 5. Wow! It's _____. I wish I had brought an umbrella or a raincoat along.

6. The band is playing and everyone is having a great time. Who would want to leave the party now? It's in _____.
7. Come on! It's not as important as you are making it out to be. Don't make _____.
8. I have three weeks of vacation every year. I made the office write it in _____.
9. If this problem is not _____, it will get out of hand really fast.
10. Tara is a kind girl. She always _____ with any work, no matter how small or large.

II. Choose the correct meaning of proverb/idiom from the options given below.

1. At dagger's drawn
 - a) to be friendly
 - b) to be bitter enemies
 - c) to be unknown
 - d) to be familiar
2. Face the music
 - a) dance at a party
 - b) compose a song
 - c) deal with unpleasant consequences
 - d) bear with pleasant situations
3. Give up
 - a) make no further effort
 - b) to have fears
 - c) pass away
 - d) rest for sometime before picking up again
4. Run out
 - a) step out
 - b) feeling tired
 - c) out of the game
 - d) used up
5. Turn a deaf ear
 - a) not able to hear what someone is saying
 - b) to turn the ear that hears less towards someone
 - c) to ignore deliberately
 - d) hit someone so hard on the ear that they turn deaf
6. Fall flat
 - a) fail to produce desired effect
 - b) to hit the floor on the face
 - c) go astray
 - d) feel miserable

3 Coordination and Subordination

Coordination and Subordination are ways of combining words, phrases, and clauses into more complex forms. The discussion below examines coordination and subordination of clauses.

Coordination

Coordination uses coordinating conjunctions (and, but, for, nor, or, so, yet), conjunctive adverbs (with appropriate punctuation), or punctuation to combine short independent clauses into a single sentence. Coordination implies the balance of elements that are of equal semantic value in the sentence. Remember that both clauses *could* stand alone. When joined by a coordinating conjunction, they get equal attention. You can also coordinate with a semicolon.

Example

The football game has been postponed. We'll have to do something else.

These are two simple sentences with no coordination or subordination, but note how coordination occurs below.

1. The football game has been postponed *so* we'll have to do something else.
2. The football game has been postponed; we'll have to do something else.

In sentence 1, 'so' is used as a coordinating conjunction. In sentence 2, a ';' has been used as a coordinating conjunction.

1. A little more about Coordinating Conjunctions

The term 'fanboys' is a memory aid for the seven coordinating conjunctions, words that, used with a comma, can link two independent clauses, i.e., two sentences.

1. For—expresses a causal relationship; one element is a cause of the other.
2. And—joins elements in order to stress what they have in common.
3. Nor—is used when the alternative is negative.

4. But—is used to emphasize the difference between the elements it joins.
5. Or—is used to indicate an alternate.
6. Yet—like 'but', emphasises the differences. It also suggests that the second element is something not ordinarily expected.
7. So— suggests a purpose; the second element is needed because of the first.

Notice that these words do not always act as coordinating conjunctions. Sometimes these conjunctions are simply used to link two subjects, two verbs, or two objects – rather than two independent clauses.

Examples

1. My brother loves to eat ham and eggs.
2. I can't decide whether to go with Jatin or to do my homework.

Subordination

Subordination uses subordinating conjunctions (after, although, as, as if, because, before, even if, even though, if, if only, rather than, since, that, though, unless, until, when, where, whereas, wherever, whether, which, and while) or relative pronouns to transform independent clauses (main clauses or ideas) into dependent clauses (subordinate clauses or ideas). Subordinate clauses are subordinate to (and thus hold less semantic value than) the independent clause(s) to which they are linked. In other words, subordination gives *less attention to one idea* so that the *other* has emphasis.

Example

1. The football game has been postponed. We'll have to do something else.

These are two simple sentences that have no coordination or subordination but note how subordination occurs below.

Because the football game has been postponed, we will have to do something else.

2. The lab results confirm our diagnosis. They have been sent to the attending physician.

The two simple sentences have no coordination or subordination but note how subordination occurs below.

The lab results *that* confirm our diagnosis have been sent to the attending physician.

2. A little more about subordinating conjunctions

A subordinate clause is introduced by a subordinating conjunction, a connecting word that relates the meaning of the dependent clause to the meaning of the independent clause.

1. To show contrast, use a subordinator like 'although' or 'even though.'
2. To show one event as the cause of another, try a subordinator like 'because' or 'since.'
3. Other subordinators specify time, place, condition, and degree:

| Contrast | Condition | Time | Alternative Condition |
|--|---|--|-----------------------|
| Although Even Though While Whereas | If When Provided that In case Assuming that | When Whenever While Once Before after since Until As long as | |
| Cause | Negative condition | Degree | Place |
| Because Since as | Unless | Inasmuch as Insofar as | Where wherever |

Two principles to be kept in mind are as follows:

1. By combining words and groups of words, you avoid repetition which steals energy from what you write; and
2. By combining whole sentences, you reveal the relationships between the thoughts.

Example

Over the past decade many African American students have chosen to complete their formal education at Southern colleges and now in the city of Atlanta there is a major educational centre built expressly to accommodate this upsurge of interest in the New South.

Two main clauses have been given equal emphasis and connected by the coordinating conjunction 'and'.

Exercises

- I. Join the two independent clauses to make a compound sentence. Use one of the coordinating conjunctions. You may need to rewrite parts of sentences. Make sure the change is minimal.
1. He enjoys walking through the country. He often goes backpacking on his vacations.
 2. He often watched TV when there were only reruns. She preferred to read instead.
 3. I didn't know which job I wanted. I decided to wait to decide.
 4. Div switched on to his favourite TV channel. Deepti said she wanted to go for a walk.
 5. I had told him I was exhausted. He wanted to go to a party.
 6. We can go for a walk. We can go to a mall.
 7. Eman does not want to see a therapist. Latika does not want to see a therapist.
 8. Neither side made a decision. The committee had to postpone the matter.
 9. The group felt obligated. The leader did not.
 10. The class should leave. I will leave.
- II. Join the two independent clauses to make a complex sentence. Use one of the subordinating conjunctions. Remember to use a comma if the subordinating conjunction comes at the beginning of the sentence.
1. I stayed up all night studying for my Algebra exam. I was so tired all day today.
 2. They made plans to go. They ended up not being able to make it.
 3. Don't give me a hard time. We've been close friends for so long.
 4. 'Mad Season' is a great band. They only put out one album.
 5. The two weren't always this close. When she died, they became closer.
 6. I simply cannot get out of bed. I am too tired.
 7. Dr Gupta ate a big meal. He went to work afterward.
 8. We don't believe the way you do. Our culture is very different from yours.
 9. What we've accomplished is a milestone. Let's raise our glasses for a toast.
 10. Some say that dogs are friendlier than cats. Cats can also be extremely loving.
- III. In the sentences that follow, choose the most effective word or phrase within the context suggested by the sentence(s).
1. To impress Deepa, his date, Rustom labored over the chicken stir fry; _____, she took offense that he was serving meat after she had explained her vegetarianism.
a) furthermore b) moreover c) however d) additionally
 2. _____ Soham scores a 100 on the final exam, he cannot pass College Algebra, a class he is taking for the third time.
a) Because b) Since c) As a result, d) Unless

3. The Clinton family breathed a sigh of relief when the giant oak withstood the hurricane winds; _____, they gave thanks that crews restored electricity in twelve short hours.
a) as a result b) moreover
c) however d) on the other hand
4. Manita's clarinet squealed like a startled puppy, _____ she hadn't practiced in weeks.
a) because b) for c) since d) unless
5. _____ Grandma tasted the sauce, she declared that it needed more masala and salt.
a) Unless b) Although c) Whereas d) After

IV. In the sentences that follow, choose the sentence that expresses the thought most clearly and effectively and that has no errors in structure.

1. a) We decided to skip breakfast, for a spider crawled out of the cereal box.
b) We decided to skip breakfast, and a spider crawled out of the cereal box.
c) We decided to skip breakfast, so a spider crawled out of the cereal box.
2. a) Mintu and I decided to eat ice cream for dinner so that we had burned enough calories earlier at the gym.
b) Mintu and I decided to eat ice cream for dinner because we had burned enough calories earlier at the gym.
c) Although Mintu and I decided to eat ice cream for dinner, we had burned enough calories earlier at the gym.
3. a) Even though Harshad vacuumed the rental car, he failed to remove all the hair of Bindy, his golden retriever.
b) Unless Harshad vacuumed the rental car, he failed to remove all the hair of Bindy, his golden retriever.
c) Since Harshad vacuumed the rental car, he failed to remove all the hair of Bindy, his golden retriever.
4. a) Muffin retrieves anything round, but put away those CDs if you don't want teeth marks on them.
b) Muffin retrieves anything round, and put away those CDs if you don't want teeth marks on them.
c) Muffin retrieves anything round, so put away those CDs if you don't want teeth marks on them.
5. a) Anita cleaned the rooms while Charita watched soap operas on television.
b) While Anita cleaned the rooms Charita watched soap operas on television.
c) While Anita cleaned the rooms Charita, on the other hand, watched soap operas on television

4 One Word Substitutes

'One word substitution' as the phrase suggests, are the words that replace groups of words or a full sentence effectively without any ambiguity in the meaning of the sentences. For example, the word, 'autobiography' can be used in place of 'the life story of a man written by himself.'

The importance of one word substitution cannot be undermined. It is important to speak and write precisely and in a single word. Precise words are understood by everyone without a doubt. This makes the language beautiful and easily comprehensible. These words also bring an effect of compression in writing, especially in business communication where there is a limitation of time and space. One word substitutions come in handy.

In English, there are a lot of single words for a group of words that can be used effectively to make the writing 'to the point' without any loss to context. Let us learn these single word substitutions and improve our writing and speaking.

1. **Audience:** the assembled spectators or listeners at a public event such as a play, film, concert, or meeting
2. **Altruist:** one who considers the happiness and well-being of others first
3. **Atheist:** a person who does not believe in God
4. **Anthropologist:** one who studies the evolution of humankind
5. **Autocracy:** government by one person
6. **Autobiography:** the life history of a person written by himself
7. **Amputate:** to cut off a part of a person's body which is infected
8. **Arsenal:** a place for ammunition and weapons
9. **Archives:** a place where government or public records are kept
10. **Amateur:** a person who engages in a pursuit, especially a sport, on an unpaid basis
11. **Aristocracy:** government by the nobles
12. **Aquatic:** animals/plants which live in water
13. **Amphibian:** animals which live both on land and in sea
14. **Ambidextrous:** one who can use both left and right hands with equal ease
15. **Alimony:** allowance paid to wife on legal separation
16. **Anthology:** a collection of poems or other pieces of writing
17. **Abdication:** renouncing or giving up of throne in favour of someone

18. **Arbitrator:** a person appointed by two parties to solve a dispute
19. **Astronomer:** a person who studies stars, planets, and other heavenly bodies
20. **Astrologer:** a person who studies the influence of heavenly bodies on human beings
21. **Axiom:** a statement which is accepted as self-evidently true
22. **Agenda:** a list of items of the business to be discussed at a formal meeting
23. **Anarchist:** one who is out to destroy all governance, law and order
24. **Almanac:** an annual calendar with positions of stars
25. **Bigamy:** the practice? of marrying someone while already married to another person
26. **Bibliophile:** a lover and collector of books
27. **Bouquet:** a collection of flowers
28. **Bureaucracy:** excessively complicated administrative procedure
29. **Belligerent:** a person, nation that is involved in war conflict, hostile
30. **Biennial:** an event which happens once in two years
31. **Blasphemy:** the act of speaking disrespectfully about sacred things
32. **Centenarian:** A person who is more than a hundred years old
33. **Creche:** a nursery where children are cared for while their parents are at work
34. **Cosmopolitan:** familiar with and at ease in many different countries and cultures
35. **Chauffeur:** one who is employed to drive a motor car
36. **Curator:** a keeper or custodian of a museum or other collection
37. **Carnivorous:** (of an animal) feeding on other animals
38. **Cannibal:** one who feeds on human flesh
39. **Contemporary:** a person or thing living or existing at the same time as another.
40. **Cloak room:** a place for luggage at railway station
41. **Cynosure:** a person or thing that is the centre of attention or admiration
42. **Connoisseur:** a critical judge of any art and craft
43. **Crusade:** lead or take part in a vigorous campaign for social, political, or religious change
44. **Choreographer:** a person who creates dance compositions and plans and arranges dance movements and patterns for dances
45. **Cacographer:** a person who has bad handwriting and is poor with spellings
46. **Calligraphist:** a person who has beautiful handwriting
47. **Cynic:** a person who believes that people are motivated purely by self-interest rather than acting for honourable or unselfish reason
48. **Convalescent:** one who is recovering health after illness
49. **Cavalry:** (in the past) soldiers who fought on horseback; modern soldiers who fight in armoured vehicles

50. **Cardiologist:** a specialist in heart diseases
51. **Cartographer:** a person who creates maps, whether they're of the world, the local bus routes, or buried pirate treasure
52. **Dormitory:** the sleeping rooms with several beds especially in a college or institution
53. **Drawn:** a game that results neither in victory nor in defeat for either contestant
54. **Elegy:** a poem of lamentation
55. **Epitaph:** words which are inscribed on the grave or the tomb in the memory of the buried
56. **Ephemeral:** lasting for a very short time
57. **Effeminate:** (of a man) having characteristics regarded as typical of a woman; unmanly
58. **Emigrant:** a person who leaves his own country and goes to settle in another country forever
59. **Edible:** fit to be eaten
60. **Egotism:** the fact of being excessively conceited or absorbed in oneself
61. **Encyclopaedia:** a book or set of books giving information on many subjects or on many aspects of one subject and typically arranged alphabetically
62. **Epicure:** one who takes a particular pleasure in food and drink
63. **Florist:** one who deals-in and sells flowers
64. **Fastidious:** very attentive to and concerned about accuracy and detail
65. **Fanatic:** a person filled with excessive and single-minded zeal, especially for an extreme religious or political cause
66. **Fatal:** causing death
67. **Fatalist:** one who believes in the acceptance of all things and events as inevitable
68. **Facsimile:** an exact copy of handwriting, printing, etc.
69. **Fauna:** the animals of a particular region, habitat, or geological period
70. **Flora:** the plants of a particular region, habitat, or geological period
71. **Fratricide:** murder of brother
72. **Fugitive:** a person who has escaped from captivity or is in hiding
73. **Fragile:** easily broken
74. **Feminist:** one who supports welfare of the women
75. **Granary:** a place for grains
76. **Genocide:** murder of a race
77. **Gregarious:** (of a person) fond of company; sociable
78. **Hangar:** a place for housing aeroplanes
79. **Hive:** a place for bees
80. **Horticulture:** the art of cultivating and managing gardens

81. **Homicide:** the killing of one person by another
82. **Hearse:** a vehicle which is used to carry a dead body
83. **Hedonist:** a person who believes that the pursuit of pleasure is the most important thing in life; a pleasure-seeker
84. **Horizon:** a line at which the earth and the sky seem to meet
85. **Honorary:** holding office without any remuneration; conferred as an honour, without the usual requirements or functions
86. **Heretic:** one who acts against religion; a person holding an opinion at odds with what is generally accepted
87. **Herbivorous:** one who eats only plants
88. **Insolvent/Bankrupt:** a person who is unable to pay his debts
89. **Inaudible:** a sound that cannot be heard
90. **Inaccessible:** that cannot be easily approached
91. **Incorrigible:** incapable of being corrected
92. **Irreparable:** incapable of being repaired
93. **Illegible:** incapable of being read
94. **Inevitable:** incapable of being avoided
95. **Impracticable:** incapable of being practised
96. **Immigrant:** a person who comes to one country from another in order to settle there
97. **Invincible:** too powerful to be defeated or overcome
98. **Indelible:** (of ink or a pen) making marks that cannot be removed; not able to be forgotten
99. **Incognito:** (of a person) assumed or false identity
100. **Indefatigable:** (of a person or their efforts) persisting tirelessly
101. **Infallible:** incapable of making mistakes or being wrong
102. **Invigilator:** one who supervises and watches over people, particularly in the examination hall
103. **Itinerant:** one who journeys from place to place
104. **Infirmary:** a home or room used for ill or injured people
105. **Infanticide:** murder of an infant
106. **Infantry:** soldiers on foot
107. **Inflammable:** liable to catch fire easily
108. **Interregnum:** a period of interval between two reigns or governments
109. **Kennel:** a place for dogs
110. **Lunatic asylum:** a psychiatric hospital
111. **Lexicographer:** one who compiles a dictionary
112. **Loquacious:** one who talks a great deal

113. **Lapidist:** one who is skilled in working with precious stones
114. **Misanthrope:** a hater of mankind
115. **Misogamist:** one who hates marriage
116. **Mortuary:** a place where dead bodies are kept for post mortem
117. **Mercenary:** primarily concerned with making money at the expense of ethics
118. **Matricide:** murder of mother
119. **Martyr:** one who dies for a noble cause
120. **Maiden speech:** the first speech delivered by a person
121. **Mint:** a place where coins are made
122. **Misogynist:** a hater of womankind
123. **Morgue:** a place, where dead bodies are kept for identification
124. **Mammals:** a warm-blooded vertebrate animal of a class that is distinguished by the possession of hair or fur, females that secrete milk for the nourishment of the young, and (typically) the birth of live young
125. **Monogamy:** the practice of marrying one at a time
126. **Missionary:** a person who is sent to propagate religion
127. **Numismatics:** the study of coins
128. **Namesake:** a person having same name as another
129. **Nostalgia:** a sentimental longing or wistful affection for a period in the past.
130. **Novice or Tyro:** one new to a job or situation; inexperienced
131. **Narcotic:** an addictive drug affecting mood or behaviour, especially an illegal one.
132. **Optimist:** a person who always looks at the brighter side of things
133. **Orphan:** one who has lost both parents
134. **Omnipresent:** one who is present everywhere
135. **Omnipotent:** one who is all powerful
136. **Omniscient:** one who knows everything
137. **Opaque:** not transparent
138. **Obituary:** an account in the newspaper of the funeral of the one deceased
139. **Orphanage:** a home for orphans
140. **Obstetrician:** a doctor with special training in how to care for pregnant women and help in the birth of babies
141. **Ostler:** one who is employed to look after horses of people staying at an inn
142. **Omnivorous:** (of an animal or person) feeding on a variety of food of both plant and animal origin
143. **Pessimist:** someone who feels that bad things are more likely to happen than good things
144. **Potable:** fit to drink

145. **Post mortem:** an examination of dead body
146. **Philanthropist:** a lover of mankind
147. **Patricide:** murder of father
148. **Philatelist:** one who loves and collects stamps
149. **Plagiarism:** the practice of taking someone else's work or ideas and passing them off as one's own
150. **Polygamy:** the practice of marrying more than one wife at a time
151. **Polyandry:** the practice of marrying more than one husband at a time
152. **Philogynist:** a person who likes or admires women
153. **Plebiscite:** (a decision made by) votes of all qualified citizens
154. **Philanderer:** a womaniser
155. **Philistine:** (without a capital 'p') a person who is hostile or indifferent to culture and the arts
156. **Plutocracy:** government by the wealthy
157. **Pseudonym:** an imaginary name assumed by an author for disguise
158. **Posthumous:** occurring, awarded, or appearing after the death of the originator
159. **Panacea:** a remedy for all diseases
160. **Paediatrician:** a medical practitioner specializing in children and their diseases
161. **Platitude:** a remark or statement, especially one with a moral content, that has been used too often to be interesting or thoughtful
162. **Pedant:** one who makes a vain display of his knowledge
163. **Polyglot:** one who speaks many languages
164. **Paleography:** the study of ancient writing systems and the deciphering and dating of historical manuscripts
165. **Posse:** (chiefly US) a body of men summoned by a sheriff to enforce the law.
166. **Parole:** the temporary or permanent release of a prisoner before the expiry of a sentence, on the promise of good behaviour
167. **Pedestrian:** one who goes on foot
168. **Portable:** something that can be carried easily
169. **Quarantine:** state, period, or place of isolation in which people or animals that have arrived from elsewhere or been exposed to infectious or contagious disease are placed.
170. **Rhetoric:** the art of elegant speech or writing
171. **Regicide:** murder of King or Queen
172. **Sacrilege:** violating or profaning religious things / places
173. **Sculptor:** an artist who cuts stones into shape to represent a thing, person, idea, etc.
174. **Suicide:** murder of oneself
175. **Stable:** a place for horses

176. **Somnambulist:** a person who walks in sleep
177. **Somniloquist:** a person who talks in sleep
178. **Souvenir:** a thing kept as a reminder of a person, place or event
179. **Swan song:** the last work (literary) of a writer
180. **Sot, Toper:** one who is a habitual drunkard
181. **Sinecure:** a position requiring little or no work but giving the holder status or financial benefit
182. **Stoic:** a person who is indifferent to pleasure and pain and has control over his passions
183. **Sanatorium:** a place for the sick to recover health
184. **Sororicide:** killing of one's sister
185. **Triennial:** an event which happens once in three years
186. **Truant:** a person/student who absents himself from class or duty without permission
187. **Teetotaller:** one who does not take any intoxicating drink
188. **Transparent:** that which can be seen through
189. **Theocracy:** government by religious principles
190. **Uxorious:** having or showing a great or excessive fondness for one's wife
191. **Utopia:** an imaginary perfect social and political system
192. **Uxoricide:** murder of wife
193. **Verbatim:** repetition of speech or writing word for word
194. **Volunteer:** one who offers one's services
195. **Vicarious:** experienced in the imagination through the feelings or actions of another person
196. **Versatile:** interested in and clever at many different things
197. **Veteran:** one who has a long experience of any occupation
198. **Venial:** a fault that may be forgiven; denoting a sin that is not regarded as depriving the soul of divine grace
199. **Wardrobe:** a place for clothes

Exercises

- I. From the options given below, choose the correct option.
1. One who loves to read or collect books
 - a) stoic
 - b) biophile
 - c) bibliophile
 - d) androgynous
 2. Safe to drink
 - a) potable
 - b) interregnum
 - c) posse
 - d) portable
 3. A person who engages in a pursuit on an unpaid basis

- a) emigrant b) artist c) professional d) amateur
4. Someone who is the centre of attention
a) optimist b) cynosure c) cynic d) admiral
5. Unmanly
a) effeminate b) foppish c) opportunist d) woman
6. A pleasure-seeker
a) heretic b) gregarious c) hedonist d) volunteer
7. One who talks a lot
a) fragile b) impracticable c) feminist d) loquacious
8. Someone who walks in sleep
a) somnambulist b) somniloquist c) omniscient d) pedant
9. A sin that is considered pardonable
a) regicide b) venial c) matricide d) suicide
10. Second-hand or derivate feeling
a) vicarious b) opaque c) uxoricide d) transparency

II. Use the following words in sentences of your own.

1. Sacrilege
2. Polyglot
3. Cynic
4. Altruist
5. Curator
6. Pedestrian
7. Fatal
8. Itinerant
9. Panacea
10. Truant
11. Infallible
12. Linguist
13. Mercenary
14. Platitute
15. Fastidious
16. Epitaph
17. Belligerent
18. Invincible
19. Plagiarism
20. Connoisseur

SECTION 3

COMPOSITION

1 Describing a Place or a Person

The Descriptive Paragraph

A descriptive technique is a useful device used in both fiction and non-fiction. Narrative paragraphs describe a sequence of events or tell a story. The logical arrangement of ideas and sentences in a narrative paragraph is chronological—according to time order. But what if you were asked to describe how something looks—a place, a thing, or a person? How should you arrange your ideas and sentences in the paragraph? Obviously, time order would not be logical. When you are describing the way something looks, i.e., its physical appearance, it is not time but space that is important. Therefore, it is important to arrange sentences and details according to where the objects being described are located. This type of organisation is called **spatial** organisation. In a descriptive paragraph, you must make the location of the objects being described very clear.

1. Describing People

A person's appearance can be described in many ways. It is possible to tell about the person's style of clothing, manner of walking, colour and style of hair, facial appearance, body shape, and expression or even the person's way of talking. Just what a writer selects to describe, depends on the writer's chosen topic and purpose. No matter what the topic, the writer is a painter with words, so the description must be vivid but also coherent—logically arranged—so that the reader can clearly envision who is being described. The following paragraph describes a person's face with a spatial organisation. Look at the description and see if you can get a good image of what Mili looks like.

'Mili is as beautiful as a Bollywood star. Her thick, wavy, long black hair gracefully fall down to her shoulders and encircles her diamond-shaped face. A golden suntan usually brings out her smooth, clear complexion and high cheek bones. Her slightly arched chestnut brown eyebrows highlight her emotions by moving up and down as she reacts to her world around her. Her curved nose gives her a little girl look that makes me want to smile when she talks. And her mouth is a small mouth outlined by

puffy lips that she often accentuates with glossy pink lipstick. When she smiles, which is often, her well-formed and even, white teeth brighten up her whole face. I guess you can tell that I am head over heels in love with Mili.'

In this paragraph the reader can not only tell what Mili looks like but also what the author's attitude about her outer appearance is.

More about describing people

Let's start looking at what we shouldn't do. Read this text:

My Best Friend (250-300 words)

'My best friend's name is Sathyarth. He is tall and thin. He is strong. He has got brown eyes and dark hair and his hair is quite short and curly. Sathyarth is my friend because he is a good person, he is happy and he helps me. He broke his leg once and he cried but he is usually a happy person.

He has got two sisters-one older than him and one younger than him and he lives in the same town as me. We went to the same school together and he was very naughty, like me. Now he goes to the University because he is very clever. He is bad sometimes but sometimes he is quiet and shy.

I met Sathyarth at school when I was six years old. At the beginning we weren't friends but now we are because he is a good person and we always have a good time when we see each other. He smiles a lot but we don't see each other very much now because he is at university and I am still in our town. It's a bit sad I don't see him so much but when we see each other we meet and have a drink and talk about things together and I like that.'

(215 words)

What do you think of this description? Grammatically, it is perfect. Yet, it is not a great description. Here is why:

1. Basic Vocabulary
2. Basic Grammar
3. No structure
4. Repetition
5. Doesn't explain (Good? Bad? Clever? Quiet? Naughty? Shy? Doesn't give examples to support his statement.)
6. Badly used punctuation

Basically, this fails because it does not tell what is most important: we don't come to know anything real about Sathyarth because he has not been described.

This is how it may be effectively begun:

My Best Friend (250-300 words)

'I met Sathyarth on the first day of primary school. Although we live in the same town we had gone to different preschools and we hadn't known each other since then.....'

Now, we have a structure, which means we know what we are going to say, which is essential. A structure is basically a washing line where we can hang all our grammar, vocabulary and so on. If we don't have a structure and we don't know where the composition is going we're going to repeat ourselves and the text will be very basic. Here, for example, we have already used three tenses (Present Simple, Past Simple and Past Perfect) which is more than the whole first text, and now we can go on to use Past Continuous.

'It was raining outside when we went into the classroom. I was feeling nervous and I wanted to sit next to my cousin Parth, but Sathyarth – who knew him from preschool school—was already there. I don't remember what we said to each other but we were both punished. What a way to start school and start a friendship!'

This is far more specific in its detail than the first text, which makes it much easier to write more, automatically using a wider range of grammar and vocabulary:

'Now me, Parth, and Sathyarth are best friends: we've had a lot of fun times together, and we've done a lot of things we shouldn't have—knocking on people's doors and running away, changing people's hung-out washed clothes with their neighbours'—doing what kids do everywhere. We've had some bad times too. Sathyarth once broke his leg when we wanted to see who could climb a tree the fastest!'

Now, we have a much better idea of Sathyarth—the image is becoming clearer. Grammatically we have now used the Present Perfect and put a Modal (should) in the past.

We have started from the beginning, using Past Perfect, Past Simple and Past Continuous. We have moved on in time to use the Present Perfect. Now we are going to use the Present tense and finish off with a Future or/and a Conditional. A structure does not have to be complicated.

'Although we were (and still are) quite naughty together, Sathyarth is in fact quite shy; especially when he meets a girl! He's good-looking: tall, slim with wavy, light brown hair and brown eyes, and I think girls like him because he has a very warm and friendly smile. We always make fun of him because he acts very politely. Really, Sathyarth is the type of person you can go to when you have a problem. He has helped me hundreds of times, lending me money, bringing and taking me to places, giving me good advice.'

In a nutshell, the descriptive composition should be divided in three parts:

a. Introduction

You briefly set the scene giving general information about the person, saying *how*, *when*, or *where* you first saw, met or were introduced to that person.

b. Main body

You describe physical appearance, character (personal qualities), hobbies/interest. You should write a paragraph for each topic.

- i. To describe physical appearance, you should give details of the person's age, height/build, facial features, hair, clothing, etc., moving from the most general aspects to the details.
- ii. To describe character (personal qualities) you can support them with examples or manner and mannerism (the way they speak, the gestures a particular habit) and/or justifications.
- iii. To describe hobbies/interests, lifestyle and beliefs, you should talk about the person's habits, interests, daily routines.

c. Conclusion

You write your feelings and/or comments.

2. Describing Places

Let us look at a poorly described beginning of a place.

'Barcelona is my favourite city. It is in the north-east of Spain on the coast and it is very big. It has got beaches, cathedrals and museums. You can see Gaudí's architecture. The Sagrada Familia is very...'

Basically, the idea of describing a place is the same as describing a person, and you should follow the same guidelines:

1. Think of a Structure (Past-Present-Future)
2. Try to include some comparisons.
3. Don't just use a list of adjectives: Justify and demonstrate each one with examples.
4. Repeat as little as possible, and never in the same paragraph.
5. Use your paragraphs and punctuation to make reading easier.
6. You can give a better idea if you explain your relationship with the place, and what it means to you personally.

My Favourite Place (250-300 words)

'I had been born just one month before when my family packed their bags and we drove to Cornwall to visit my gran. Every year and every summer of my childhood this was repeated, and this county has always been a second home for me.

As a child, Cornwall meant wide beaches with terrific waves that knocked you over when you went into the sea, or smaller coves flanked by rocks, leaving pools at low tide where you could look for crabs and shellfish. When I was a bit older my parents often left me with my brothers to walk along the coast, and in the evenings we used to eat pastries? and ice creams at the fishing ports on the South coast.

As my parents now live in this county, it is still an important part of my life. I love the rough and wild landscape of the North side; up on the cliffs by the empty tin mine chimneys, looking down at the lines of white surf. I have got to know the South coast more too- its softer lines and quieter coast, the impressive Falmouth bay, and the genteel elegance of the capital, Truro.

Cornwall isn't for everybody. It is the rainiest region of a rainy Island, and you can feel far away from the action and the events of England's big cities. Everything seems slower, quieter, more in the past. If I was asked if I wanted to live there, at the moment my answer would be 'no'; but I will always return to Cornwall, and Cornwall will always be with me.'

(266 words)

Notice, in particular, the division of paragraphs:

Short introduction–Past–Present–Comparison/Conditional/Future (including passive)

A native English speaker will have an advantage with the language—'smaller coves flanked by rocks', 'up on the cliffs by the empty tin mine chimneys'. Such phrases are not likely to be written by anyone who isn't a native English speaker; but this can't be used as an excuse, because the general guidelines discussed can be applied to any level.

When writing about a place, the writer should include distinguishable features of the area. However, it is not enough to just write about what the place looks like, the writer should endeavour to incorporate the 5 Ws into the paper: who, what, when, where, and why. If all of these are included, the reader will not only understand why the location was chosen but what it means to the writer.

Exercise

- I. Write descriptive paragraphs of about 250-300 words on the following topics.
1. Someone who is an example for me.
 2. A person who frightens me. (No need to write actual names)
 3. A favourite actor or musician.
 4. A friend I have lost touch with.
 5. An industry leader.
 6. My best holiday destination.
 7. An admirable building.
 8. A place that inspires me.
 9. The site of a natural disaster.
 10. A favourite place to eat.

2 Writing a Biographical Sketch

A biography tells the story of a person's character, life, and achievements. A biographical sketch is shorter and much more specific. The sketch should provide readers with basic information about the person, and give them a sense of the person's character. A biographical sketch can vary depending on who it is being written for and about. It can be written to give people more information about a figure—historical or otherwise.

The focus of a sketch written about other people is to explain who the person is and provide an overview of the person's life. If the biographical sketch is written about you from your own point of view, the same criteria apply plus the goal is usually to present yourself in a positive light. When a person writes their own biographical sketch it is called an autobiography. Writing an autobiography is something that many people do. There are many famous people who have published autobiographies to either share their life story or to counteract an unauthorised biographical sketch that was written about them.

Purpose of a Biographical Sketch

There are a few reasons why you would write a biographical sketch.

1. In instances where the biographical sketch is written about someone else, it is mainly for the purpose of informing an audience about that person's life. These types of biographical sketches usually provide a very detailed account of a person's life and will include such information as the person's full name, occupation and their life's activities.
2. If you are considering writing one for yourself perhaps you need a biographical sketch for a book or maybe you are making a presentation and it was requested that you provide a biographical sketch to be included in a program.

Most of the time when you are writing a biographical sketch about yourself it is for self promotion such as when seeking employment. Sometimes people will make professional portfolios that include a resume, pieces of their professional works and a biographical sketch. Since this lesson is mainly about biographical sketches, we will avoid discussing autobiographical writing in detail.

When writing a biographical sketch, it is important to consider why you are writing such a piece as this will help you to decide what information to add to complete the sketch.

Writing a Biographical Sketch

Here are a few tips to help you compile and format all the information which is needed.

1. *Get basic information about the subject.* In order to effectively write a biographical sketch about a person, you need to obtain basic information about that individual. Such information as the person's full name, date and place of birth and family background are some examples of basic information that can be used in a biographical sketch.
2. *List Achievements and Influences.* When writing a biographical sketch about an individual, you should mention his or her personal achievements and how accomplishing certain feats affected his or her life. Likewise, you can also incorporate any personal influences into the autobiographical sketch. There are many people who have a number of personal influences.
3. *Verify Information.* Before publishing or presenting a biographical sketch on an individual, it is very important that the information is confirmed as being accurate. If you are writing a biographical sketch, the subject is the best person to provide information about him or herself. If you obtain information about your subject from other sources make sure to verify its veracity.

Most biographical sketches not only present facts, but also tell what those facts mean. The following points must be included in a biographical sketch:

1. Name and age
2. Main personality traits
3. Special interests
4. Education and training
5. Special contribution or research, if any
6. Why people like the person.

Now, let us take a look at a few solved examples of biographical sketches.

Question

1. On the basis of the given profile, write a short biographical sketch of Dr S C Sharma in about 50-60 words.

- Dr S C Sharma
- DM, FRCS, Cardiac Surgeon

- Father's name: R C Sharma
- Presently working as: Director, Heart Care Institute, Patiala, Punjab
- Achievements: Government of India honour, Padma Vibhushan (conducted 300 successful bypass surgeries and five human transplants)

Answer

Dr S C Sharma is a renowned cardiac surgeon of world repute. Son of Mr R C Sharma, he is presently Director at Heart Care Institute at Patiala, Punjab.

Dr Sharma has been awarded with the prestigious Padma Vibhushan, India's greatest honour, for conducting 300 successful bypass surgeries and five human transplants, etc.

Question

2. With the help of the given clues, write a biographical sketch of Subhas Chandra Bose in not more than a 130 words.

- Name: Subhas Chandra Bose / Netaji
- Contribution: immense. Freedom fighter
- Born: 23/01/1897, Cuttack, Odisha
- Career: Civil services
- Achievements: joined freedom struggle, established Indian National Army (supported by Japan and Germany)
- Famous motto: Give me blood and I will give you freedom
- Setback: Retreat after the defeat of Japan and Germany in the World War
- Death: Air crash over Taipei, Taiwan (Formosa), 18/08/1945

Answer

Subhas Chandra Bose, affectionately called 'Netaji', was born in Cuttack, Odisha on 23 January 1897. He was one of the most prominent leaders in the Indian struggle for freedom. Deeply moved by the massacre at Jallianwala Bagh, he gave up a promising career in the Civil Services and joined the Freedom Movement. His famous motto was, 'Give me your blood and I will give you freedom.' He founded the Indian National Army (INA), supported by Japan and Germany in a bid to overthrow the British Empire. However, the defeat of Japan and Germany from the World War, forced the INA to retreat and it could not achieve its objective. Subhas Chandra Bose was reportedly killed in an air-crash over Taipei, Taiwan (Formosa) on 18 August 1945. (126 words)

Exercise

I. On the basis of the following information, write a biographical sketch of your English teacher in not more than 150 words.

- Name: Prof Rajeshwari Patel
- Profession: English teacher
- Birth: 11/11/1965, Kampala, East Africa
- Experience: 20 years as post graduate teacher
- Qualification: PhD in English with a degree in teaching
- Special areas of expertise: Modern and contemporary literature
- Traits: excellent teacher, great writer, works for an NGO that supports old and infirm in her leisure time
- Other: Head of Department
- Reasons for popularity: calm, composed, compassionate, helpful, brilliant

I. Based on the information given below of ace shooter Abhinav Bindra, write a biographical sketch in 100 words.

- Birth: 28/09/1983, Dehradun
- Education: Doon School, Dehradun (till grade 8); St Stephen's School, Chandigarh, BBA from Colorado University
- Achievements: Youngest contributor at the Olympics Games, 2000; Bronze Medal in Munich World Cup, 2001; Gold Medal in Manchester Commonwealth Games, 2002; Gold Medal in Rifle Shooting in Beijing Olympics, 2008
- Awards: Arjun Award, 2000; Padma Bhushan, 2009

I. Given below is a profile of Vijay, a gardener at your college. Write a short biographical sketch in 100 words.

- Age: 35
- Height/physical details: 5.7", dark, slim, muscular, receding hairline
- Family: two sons and a wife
- Education: Middle school
- Likes: nursery plants, organic plantation, manure
- Reason for popularity: kind, gentle, involves interested students in planting saplings and tutoring them about how to care for plants.

Read the information below about Shri V V Giri, the former President of India. Write a biographical sketch in 100-150 words.

- Birth: 10/08/1894
- Education: Behrampur, Odisha and Dublin, Ireland. Practised Law for some time
- Official posts held: Labour Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru ministry; Governor of Uttar Pradesh, Kerala, and Karnataka; Vice President of India; President of India

- Other: Ardent fighter for the rights of labour President of All India Railway Men's Federation; Joint Secretary, 1929-36; Represented AITUC at ILO, Geneva, 1927; Represented labour at RTC, 1930-31.
- V. **Given below are details of Mr Terry Raison, star detective of New York City. Write a biographical sketch of 100 words.**
- Birth: 07/05/1980, New York City, USA
 - Education: High School
 - Achievements: Successfully helps the local police to flush out criminal and illegal immigrants; fight against drug mafia
 - Awards: NY State Police 'Special Star', 2000; NYPD 'Detective of the Year', 2003; 'Most Original Detective', 2007; 'Special Force Amateur', 2010.

3 Narrating an Event or Experience

Narration may serve a variety of purposes in writing. It may serve as the primary mode in writing? Narration may also be used just like reasons and examples to support a thesis, based on either fact or invention. Often, it is used to increase reader interest or dramatise a point the writer wants to make. For example, Aesop wrote fables for his clients to use in their legal defence. They were short, easy to remember, and illustrated the client's argument.

Traditionally, narration was used to recount the facts of a legal case, in order to put them into context and structure them in the best possible light for the speaker's purpose. Plutarch used narration as the basis for his comparison of Greek and Roman notables. In his 1989 history of the Civil War, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, James MacPherson uses narration to support the theme of the contingency of history. In short, narration has been used as proof for a long time.

In this chapter, we are going to discuss narration used to describe events and experiences. In writing or speech, narration is the process of recounting a sequence of events, real or imagined. It is also called *storytelling*.

The person who recounts the events is called a narrator. The account itself is called a narrative. The perspective from which a speaker or writer recounts a narrative is called point of view.

The Purpose of Narrative Writing

The purpose of narrative writing is to tell stories. Any time you tell a story to a friend or family member about an event or incident in your day (experience), however small or insignificant, you engage in a form of narration. In addition, a narrative can be factual or fictional. A factual story is one that is based on, and tries to be faithful to, actual events as they unfolded in real life. A fictional story is a made-up, or imagined, story; the writer of a fictional story can create characters and events as he or she sees fit.

The distinction between factual and fictional narratives is based on a writer's purpose. The writers of factual stories try to recount events as they actually happened, but writers of fictional stories can depart from real people and events because the

writers' intents are not to retell a real-life event. Biographies and memoirs are examples of factual stories, whereas novels and short stories are examples of fictional stories.

The most successful narratives usually share these three basic traits. They—

1. make a central point
2. contain specific details in support of that point, and
3. are clearly organised in time.

When we are telling our friends about a past event in our lives—a past event, such as a party we went to, or a past experience, such as a trip we made; or an anecdote, like a childhood memory, a fun memory of a meeting or lesson, we have to keep the following pointers in mind:

1. How many different tenses do we use?
2. When do we switch from the past to the present?

Listen to yourself and to other people when you/they are doing this. Notice the use of tenses. It is important to stick to one tense. In a narrative, remember to be logical. Follow a chronological sequence in narrating events.

Types of narratives

The following are the main types of narratives used.

1. **First Person Narrative:** A mode of narration where a story is told by one character at a time, speaking from their own perspective only. 'I' 'My'
2. **Second Person Narrative:** A mode of narration where a story is told with the use of 'You' 'Your'. For example, 'You went to the store before you bought yourself a flower.'
3. **Third Person Narrative:** A mode of narration where a story is told with the use of 'She' 'He' 'They' 'They'll'.

Requirement of a Narrative

The minimum requirements of narration include:

1. A beginning, middle, and end.
2. A main character, perhaps others as well.
3. A setting in time and place.

Other Components of a Narrative

Other basic components of a narrative are:

1. **Plot:** The events as they unfold in sequence.
2. **Characters:** The people who inhabit the story and move it forward. Typically, there are minor characters and main characters. The minor characters generally play supporting roles to the main character, or the protagonist.
3. **Conflict:** The primary problem or obstacle that unfolds in the plot that the protagonist must solve or overcome by the end of the narrative. The way in which the protagonist resolves the conflict of the plot results in the theme of the narrative.
4. **Theme:** The ultimate message the narrative is trying to express; it can be either explicit or implicit.

For an effective and interesting narrative, remember the following points:

1. **Introduction hook:** This simply means that there must be a 'hook' sentence that catches attention. This sentence says what the topic (event or experience) is and either describes it or says your feelings about it.

Example,

'Have you ever felt happiness and worry in the same day?'

2. **Background information:** Provide **small** pieces of information about 'who / when / where'.

Example,

'I lived one of the strangest moments of my life when I went to a summer course with other people. The teachers in this course took us to visit the Gajendra zoo, and that day was very strange. This was a time when students weren't used to having personal mobile phones.'

3. **Thesis statement:** In this sentence, we give the main idea.

Example,

'A day full of fun turned into worry because our bus broke down.'

4. **Body:** This is where we give details—sensory, emotional. Remember, time order (signaling words, such as after, soon, before, as soon as, then, next time, finally, at last, meanwhile, suddenly, etc.) is important here. Sensory (sight, hearing, taste, touch, smell) and emotional details make a narrative interesting.

Example of an emotional detail,

We were in the middle of nowhere. It was just a long stretch and not a soul was in sight. We were school children and this sudden turn of events made us feel insecure.

Example of a sensory detail,

As we got off the bus, I noticed the sky had turned from orange to grey. It looked like it was about to rain. Soon enough, I felt raindrops on my face.

Example of time order,

'Suddenly, we saw a private vehicle approaching us. It stopped and the driver got out of the car.'

5. Conclusion: Describe the outcome of the event or experience. Comment on the experience/event and why it is important to you or how it changed your life. Explain what lessons you learnt.

Example,

'We were thankful to the driver of that private vehicle because he helped in fixing our bus and we could continue on our journey. I learnt that it is important to not panic and remain calm in any situation and things work out. We have to be positive and look for solutions, not lament over the problem.'

Now, let us look at points of to write a simple, logical narrative of your High school graduation.

1. The main character: you. (who)
2. Name of the school: Andrews Pvt. School (where)
3. Year of graduation: Winter/summer 2011 (when)
4. People: They were excited, dressed well, etc. Many people were assembled for the graduation.
6. Main event: You approached the Principal when you were called and received the diploma. (what happened, development)
7. How you felt: People applauded. It was the coronation of 3 difficult years, etc. (how it ended)

Exercise

- I. Write narrative paragraphs, not exceeding more than 450-500 words.
 1. My first day at college.
 2. The strangest day of my life.
 3. An encounter that changed my life.
 4. A strange interview.
 5. An embarrassing experience.
 6. My first visit to a fair.
 7. A vacation trip from my childhood.
 8. An unforgettable event from high school.
 9. An experience that helped me to grow up.

10. A memorable wedding.
11. The last day of school.
12. A dangerous day.
13. How a stranger turned into a friend.
14. A scary night.
15. When I received the 'Best Speaker' award.
16. A nightmare that turned real.
17. The best game I have played. (You may write about any indoor/outdoor game)
18. The day I survived a massive earthquake.
19. What I value about myself.
20. A hard but valuable experience.