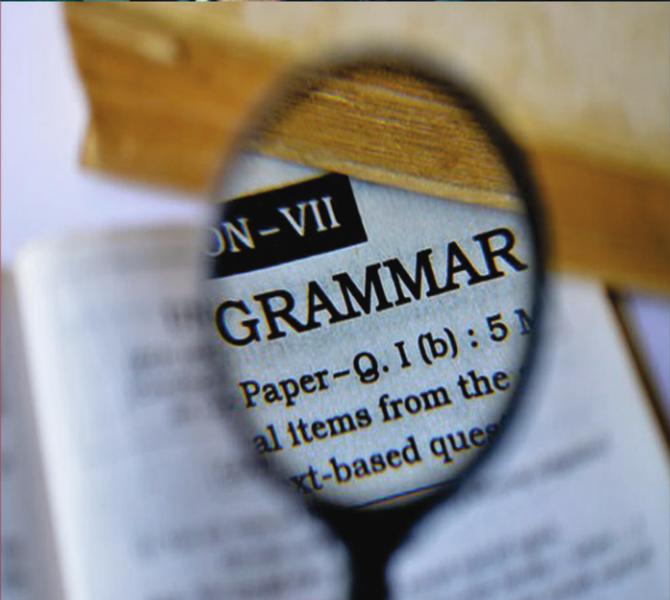
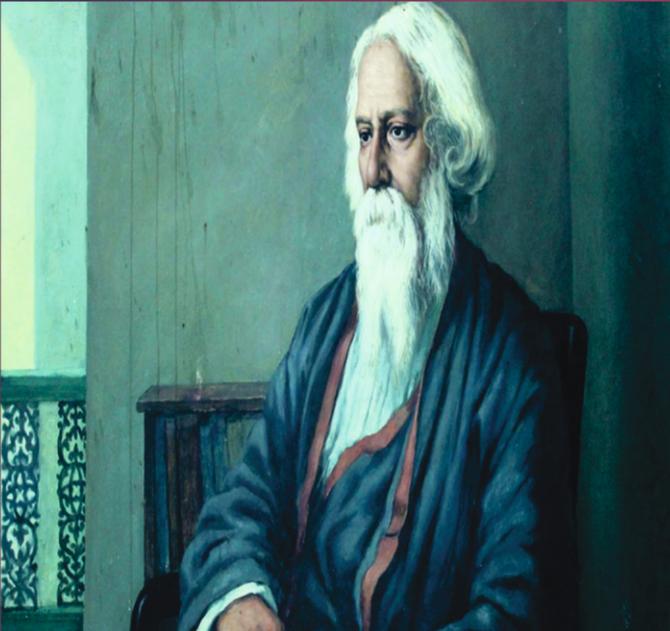


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Compulsory English BCENG102



Message for the Students

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Block

1

Unit 1

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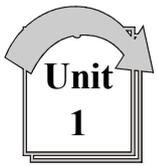
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WHERE THE MIND IS WITHOUT FEAR
- RABINDRANATH TAGORE

: STRUCTURE :

- 1.0 Objectives**
- 1.1 Introduction**
- 1.2 About the Poem**
- 1.3 Text of the Poem**
- 1.4 Key Words**
- 1.5 Summary of the Poem**
- 1.6 Analysis and Explanation of the Poem**
- 1.7 Tone of the Poem**
- 1.8 Themes of the Poem**
- 1.9 Questions (answer in brief)**
- 1.10 Multiple Choice Questions**
- 1.11 Let Us Sum Up**
- 1.12 Books Suggested**

Answers

1.0 OBJECTIVES

In this unit we shall

- be getting an introductory information about the present Poem and Poet
- be having a firsthand experience of the text of the poem
- be getting an overview of the analysis and explanation of the poem
- be learning about the tone and theme of the poem

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Rabindranath Tagore was a great poet, novelist, dramatist, educationist and a multi-faceted artist. He reshaped Bengali literature and music extending its influence on Indian art and music. He was born on May 7, 1861. His collection of poems *Gitanjali* is profoundly fresh, beautiful and spiritual. He was the first non-European to win the prestigious Nobel Prize for literature in 1913.

He was a great humanist, Universalist and internationalist who always believed in the ancient maxim of India “VasudhaivKutumbakam” (The entire world is one family). He was against narrow-minded nationalism and therefore he differed from Mahatma Gandhi on several issues like, Swadeshi movement, spinning of charkha, boycott of foreign goods, etc. Tagore and Gandhiji respected and loved each other deeply despite their difference of opinions. He too denounced the British Rule in India and advocated independence from the British Raj. He founded a famous institution of education ‘VishwaBharati’ that sought to bridge India and the world.

Tagore's major literary works include *Gitanjali*, *Gora*, *GhareBaire* (The Home and the world), etc. He had composed 'Jana GanaMana' which was chosen as the national anthem of India. 'Amar Sonar Bangla' the national anthem of Bangladesh was also composed by Tagore. Tagore died at the age of 80 on August 7, 1941.

1.2 ABOUT THE POEM

The poem *Where the Mind is Without Fear* is taken from the English *Gitanjali* 'Song Offerings'. It is a collection of his 103 poems translated by Tagore himself from Bengali into English. It was published first in November 1912 by the Indian Society of London. It contained translations of 53 poems from Bengali *Gitanjali* and 50 poems from other Bengali collections of his poems *Gitimaya*, *Naivedya* and *Kheya*. The *Gitanjali* became quite popular in the West and was widely translated.

The poem *Where the Mind Is without Fear* is a prayer to the universal father, God Almighty. The poem displays Tagore's vision of true freedom and new enlightened India. The original poem titled "Prarthana" (Prayer) was included in an anthology called *Naivedya*. The poem was translated into English by the poet himself in 1911. It was included in the *Gitanjali* as poem 35 which was published in 1912. Tagore recited its English version at the Indian National Congress Session in Calcutta, 1917.

Rabindranath Tagore envisages an ideal nation in the poem. An ideal nation should be free in true sense, liberal in outlook, united in strength but free from narrow-mindedness. It should be an ideal combination of sensitivity and rational outlook. The people of an ideal nation should be hard working and dynamic. They should always strive for peace, progress and prosperity.

The prayer transcends both time and space, achieving the quality of a universal prayer.

1.3 TEXT OF THE POEM

Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high.

Where knowledge is free.

Where the world has not been broken up into
fragments By narrow domestic walls.

Where words come out from the depth of truth.

Where tireless striving stretches its arms towards perfection;

Where the clear stream of reason has not lost its way
into the dreary desert sand of dead habit;

Where the mind is led forward by thee into ever-widening
thought and action

Into that heaven of freedom, my Father, let my country awake.

- Rabindranath Tagore

1.4 KEY WORDS

Fragments : Pieces, divisions

Domestic : Household, pertaining to home or family

Striving : Trying hard

Tireless	: Without getting tired, indefatigably
Head held high	: with self-respect and dignity
Stream	: Flow, river, brook
Dreary	: Dull
Reason	: Logic, intellect, rationality
Desert	: Dry, sandy area of land
Awake	: to wake up, stretch, extend, to get up from slumber/ sleep
Dead habit	: Conditioning, superstitious temperament, ritualistic mind
Ever -widening	: Always expanding, getting larger and larger

1.5 SUMMARY OF THE POEM

The poet prays to God Almighty that the people of his country should be fearless and their heads should be held high with self-respect and human dignity. They should be free from fear, repression and coercion. The poet dreams of a nation where knowledge is free and education is available to all. Education must not be confined to rich and the elite people only but to all. Children should learn from nature and the world around them. They should be curious enough to learn new things all the time. Tagore's concept of education was quite liberal and therefore he believed that education should not be confined only to four walls of classrooms.

Tagore says that people should be united not only with the people of his country but with the entire world. He thinks that there should not be divisions among people on the basis of caste, creed, religion, colour, and race. Tagore believed that the whole world should be like one extended family. He was against narrow-minded nationalism. Tagore says that people of his country should be truthful. Their words should come out from the depth of their hearts.

Tagore further says that the people of his country should continuously endeavor to stretch their arms towards perfection. All should work hard to achieve their goals. These goals should not be materialistic alone but the realization of the self. Tagore believes that sensitivity is very important in life but one must not be superstitious and irrational. Clear stream of reason must not be lost into the desert of false beliefs, superstitions, prejudices and evil customs. Reason and intellect should always rule over dead traditions and beliefs.

The poet says that the people of his country should be progressive liberal and broad minded. He says that the minds of people should be led towards "ever widening thought and action" by the Lord Almighty. Broad minded people's actions are always generous and humane. They rise above narrow-mindedness and superstitious beliefs. In the final line of the poem, the poet addresses God as father and prays to awaken his country into the heaven of freedom.

Tagore was a mystic poet with profound faith in the Unknown power that operates in the entire Universe. For him, God is not just an incarnation but the Inner self within all of us. He invokes the Inner self to awaken ourselves into the Utopian world of peace, freedom and love.

1.6 ANALYSIS AND EXPLANATION OF THE POEM

Where the Mind is Without Fear was written during the British rule before India achieved independence. Tagore died in 1941, a few years before Independence in 1947. He wrote this poem when India was under the colonial rule and the people of India had become mentally enslaved. They felt that they would never be free. They had lost their self-confidence and dignity. Their spirit had been completely drained and depressed. They lived in poverty and ignorance. They were denied proper education and equal rights. Majority of them were illiterate, irrational and superstitious. The British Government employed the strategy of “Divide and Rule” in India and divided the country into fragments based on caste, creed, religion and economic status. Under the British Rule, the erstwhile Indian princely states fought among themselves and acted like the stooge of the British rulers.

Rabindranath Tagore was profoundly aware of the problems India was facing during the British Rule. He dreamt of free India. For Tagore, mere political freedom was not an end but a means to true inner freedom of the people of India. In this poem, Tagore envisions the “heaven of freedom” for India where the people of the country would live in fearlessness, harmony, love the world of knowledge and persistent efforts for perfection.

Where the Mind is Without Fear is a prayer to God almighty to awaken India into the heaven of freedom. The poem has been composed in simple diction, beautiful vivid images and other poetic devices. The verse form of the poem is free verse with no metrical patterns or rhymes. Though it has no meters and rhymes, it has natural musical flow. It can be called a prose poem too. The poem contains eleven lines with no ending rhymes. However the poem contains only one sentence that ends with the last line.

The poem implies freedom from the shackles that kept the people of India chained and enslaved during the British rule. The people of India were full of fear and their heads were bent in servility. They were ignorant and access to knowledge was limited. Therefore the poet wanted to reverse the prevalent condition of the people under the colonial domination.

Tagore wanted the minds of people to be fearless and free from oppression, narrow-mindedness and despair. He wanted their heads held high with self-confidence and dignity. In the first line the poet prays to God that the countrymen should be free from fear, oppression and slavishness. Their heads should be held high in dignity. They should have a deep sense of self-respect and equality. Bent head symbolizes slavishness and servility, raised head denotes honour and self-respect.

In the second line, the poet says that knowledge should be accessible to all without any restrictions and class distinctions. There the poet refers to education which is a means of providing knowledge to the people. The poet is a strong supporter of free knowledge and therefore he believes that education should not be restricted to the rich and the upper class people only. It should be open and available to all. The doors of the temples of learning should be open for all. Children should learn not only within the confine of classrooms but also from nature and the world around them. Tagore, like Wordsworth, believed that one could learn more from nature than from books. As an educationist, Tagore believed in Gurukul pattern of education of Ancient India

where students learnt directly from nature in a natural way instead of rote learning and bookish instruction. It was Tagore's concept of education which he put into practice in his educational institutions Shantiniketan and Vishvabharati University.

In the next two lines, the poet says that the people of his nation should live unitedly and harmoniously. For Tagore, unity and harmony is not important for the nation only but the entire human world. Therefore he says that the world should not be broken up into divisions based on caste, creed, religion, race etc. The greatest problem of human world is lack of unity, harmony and equality. People of the world are divided on the basis of nationality, religion and race. Every nation thinks that they are the best and others are inferior to them. People are usually intolerant towards others, their religions, beliefs and cultures. If we look at the history of humankind, we realize that most of the wars were fought because of intolerance, hatred towards others and rejection of the other people's religions, race, and colour of their skin. Prejudices and false assumptions about other people create enmity and conflict among people.

Tagore says that these are narrow domestic walls that divide people. India is a country with immense diversity of castes, religions, creeds and cultures. However there is a common thread of secular outlook (SarvaDharmSambhav) that binds all together. Even in Hinduism there are many gods, goddesses and practices of worship. The very idea of multiplicity of beliefs is the acceptance of other's beliefs cultures, religions etc. Unfortunately British Rule in India divided the nation by creating disharmony and conflicts among them. Therefore Tagore wants India to be undivided and united.

In the fifth line, Tagore wishes that the people of his nation are truthful and their words should come out from the depth of their hearts. There should be harmony among one's thought, speech and action. For Tagore, truth is not a remote ideal but it must be essentially human. Tagore says, "What we call truth lies in the rational harmony between the subjective and objective aspects of reality."

Tagore and Albert Einstein met in 1930 and discussed what Truth is. Tagore believed that the Divine is not isolated from the world and it proves that the Truth of the Universe is human Truth. It is interesting to note that for Tagore, Truth is not an inaccessible ideal but the part of human consciousness. One can practice it if one follows the voice from within. This inner voice connects all human world and the entire Universe.

In the sixth line, Tagore wants everyone to strive to achieve their goals and reach perfection. He says that people should continue to work ceaselessly for achieving perfection in all directions whether it is material or spiritual. However, true perfection is always spiritual because it is the flowering of one's inner self. Tagore wants people of his nation to be free from lethargy and laziness.

In the seventh line, Tagore compares 'reason' to a clear stream and 'dead habits' to dreary desert. He says that logical thinking should be clear and unaffected by superstitious beliefs and dull, dry customs and rituals. Tagore always stood for sensitivity but for him rational, intellectual attitude was equally important. If emotions are not monitored by reason, they turn into superstitious beliefs and dull rituals. This passion for freedom underlies his

firm rejection of irrational traditionalism which make people the prisoners of dead past. Tagore stood for modern development and scientific advancement. He differed from Mahatma Gandhi on spinningkhadi, charkha, and boycott of foreign goods. He believed that people should not be dominated by machines but he was in favour of reasonable use of modern technology.

In lines 9 and 10, the poet wants the people of his country to be liberal, broad minded and progressive. He wants minds to be “led forward” into ever widening thought and action by the God Almighty. He wants people of free India to overcome the narrow mindedness and bigotry. He prays to the Divine power to lead the people of India towards the world of liberal outlook and altruistic actions.

In the final line, the poet prays to God to awaken his country into such a heaven of freedom as described in the earlier lines of the poem. He prays to the Universal Father to raise his nation to the heights where freedom could be realized in its culmination. According to Tagore, God is not separate from the world and human heart. Tagore wants to awaken the God within us to free our minds from all shackles and bondages. Finally, the message of the poet is very clear. He wants the people of his country to be free mentally and spiritually. He wants them to be united, fearless, compassionate, self-dignified and truthful. He wants them to be curious to learn and know more with open mindedness. According to Tagore, this is the true freedom which the people of his country should achieve.

Tagore’s attitude toward politics culture, nationalism, internationalism, tradition and modernity is reflected in the poem. His concept of patriotism was quite different. He wanted India to be free from colonial rule but he did not want India to be confined to narrow domestic walls of traditions customs and rituals. He wanted the people of India to be global citizens with liberal outlook and compassion for entire world.

1.7 TONE OF THE POEM

Tone in literary writing refers to the methods by which writers and speakers reveal their attitudes or feelings. As tone is equated with attitude, it is important to realize the techniques and modes of revealing the attitudes. As a literary concept, it is adapted from the phrase ‘tone of voice’ in speech. Tone of voice reflects attitudes toward a particular experience or situation and also toward listeners.

In Tagore’s poem *Where the Mind is Without Fear*, there is a tone of longing or yearning for a free nation where there would be freedom from fear, narrow-mindedness, superstitions and irrational attitude. The first eight lines envision Utopian world of freedom which the poet calls “Heaven of freedom” in which he wants his country awake. He prays to the Universal Father to awaken India where there is peace, harmony, liberalism and equal opportunities for all. The poem was written several decades before independence and it inspired freedom fighters of India guiding them about what kind of freedom India should achieve. Tagore’s concept of freedom is quite radical and the message of the poem is highly relevant even today.

1.8 THEMES OF THE POEM

Themes can be defined as a main idea or an underlining meaning of any literary work which can be stated directly or indirectly. A major theme is an idea

that a writer repeats theme in his literary work making it the most significant idea. A minor theme is an idea that appears in the literary work briefly. Theme and subject are two different categories as subject is a topic of the literary work and theme is an opinion expressed on the subject.

The following are the important themes of the poem “Where the Mind is Without Fear”.

- (1) **Division of Bengal:** In 1905, the Indian State of Bengal was divided into two states West Bengal and East Bengal according to the divisive policy of the British Government known as ‘Divide and Rule’. It was divided on the basis of religion. In West Bengal the majority of population was Hindu while in East Bengal, the majority of people were Muslims. East Bengal came to be known as East Pakistan after partition. In 1971, it became Bangladesh. Tagore wrote this poem in around 1910, five years after Banga-bhanga (division of Bengal). He was profoundly saddened by the division of Bengal and therefore he referred to it in the poem, where he speaks of the nation broken into fragments. Tagore wants the nation undivided, unfragmented and united. He protests against the division based on religion, caste, race or creed. This is one of the major themes of the poem.
- (2) **East and West:** Tagore loved India and her culture profoundly but he was not a narrow-minded nationalist. He believed that both East and West have their own merits which should be incorporated into each other. There are several practices of the West that the East should adopt and the West should also learn certain good things from the East. In his novels *Gora* and *GhareBaire*, Tagore advocates the synthesis of the two cultures. Tagore was influenced by English poets and poetry. He was a great admirer of the Romantic poets. He also used similar themes employed by the Romantic poets in his own poems. He experimented with Bengali lyrics influenced by the Western poetry and their forms. Tagore was highly sensitive poet but he rejected sentimentalism and irrational attitude. He firmly believed the people of India should cultivate intellectual and rational attitude to free themselves from superstitions and blind faith. He was deeply influenced by the Age of Enlightenment that took place in England in 18th century. He believed that the people of India should adopt rational outlook and become open minded and liberal. He believed that India could achieve independence from the colonial rule through rational and intellectual attitude only. To encounter the British rule, India needed to adopt and employ intellectual stance. According to Tagore the ideal combination of the Eastern and the Western values would certainly improve the quality of life and make India a true heaven of freedom.
- (3) **Confluence of Cultures:** Rabindranath Tagore came from a Hindu family of landed gentry. He was against the clash of civilizations and stood for confluence of three cultures: Hindu, Islam and British. Tagore was brought up in a family where the knowledge of Sanskrit, Bengali, English and Persian was essential part of the family tradition. This outlook was non-sectarian and liberal. The greatest example of how Tagore was respected by independent Bangladesh was

the choice of its national anthem ‘Amar Sonar Bangla’ from Tagore’s songs.

- (4) **True Freedom:** Tagore dreamt of free India with rational attitude and broadmindedness. His attitude towards politics, culture, nationalism, internationalism, tradition and modernity is clearly expressed in the poem *Where the Mind is Without Fear*. He was a nationalist with a difference. He rejected unreasoned traditionalism which made people the prisoners of past. For him, humanity was above all beliefs and faiths. He abhorred untouchability but disapproved Gandhiji’s statement that the Bihar earthquake in 1924 was a divine chastisement for the sin of untouchability.
- (5) **Knowledge:** Tagore firmly believed that knowledge should be accessible to all. All people should be educated and knowledgeable. Education leads to true freedom, intellectual life and nation building. Tagore’s views on education are liberal and aim at creating global citizens. He believed that learning should not be confined to four walls of classrooms but rooted in nature and immediate surroundings. For Tagore, true education should aim at self-realization, intellectual development, and physical development, love for humanity, freedom and spiritual development. He advocated nature centered education rejecting bookish rote learning.
- (6) **Structure, Diction and Style :** The poem *Where the Mind is Without Fear* is written in free verse. It has no rhyme scheme or particular metrical pattern. It contains eleven lines. The whole poem is only a single complex sentence with one main clause at the end and several sub-ordinate clauses beginning with ‘where’. The style of the poem seems to have the influence of the Bauls of Bengal and their soulful rendition. The Bauls of Bengal were known for their mendicant’s life and their views on spiritual salvation.

The diction of the poem is simple lucid and rhythmical. Tagore has used several figures of speech that enhance the beauty of the poem. The poet uses the poetic device of metaphor in line 7-8 where he compares ‘reason’ with a stream of water and ‘habit’ with desert. The poet addresses God as ‘Father’ and prays to him to awaken India into the heaven of freedom. Here the poet uses the poetic device called ‘Apostrophe’. There are also several examples of alliteration in the poem such as “the head is held high”, “tireless striving stretches” and “the dreary desert sand of dead habit” etc. Anaphora runs throughout the poem as there is a repetition of ‘where’ at the beginning of seven lines in the poem “Tireless striving stretches its arms towards perfection” is a fine example of personification.

Check Your Progress 1

1.9 ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS IN BRIEF.

- (i) What kind of freedom does Tagore envisage?

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(ii) What does Tagore mean by “narrow domestic walls”?

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(iii) When can people hold their heads high according to Tagore?

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(iv) Where does the clear stream of reason lose its way?

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(v) What does dead habit imply?

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(vi) What does the poet pray to God for?

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(vii) What does Tagore mean by “Where knowledge is free”?

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Check Your Progress: 2

1.10 CHOOSE THE CORRECT OPTION FROM GIVEN BELOW.

1. *Where the Mind is Without Fear* is taken from
 - (a) Gitanjali
 - (b) Tagore’s collection of poetry
 - (c) GhareBaire
 - (d) Gora
2. Tagore received the Nobel Prize in _____
 - (a) 1913
 - (b) 1941
 - (c) 1907
 - (d) 1947
3. *Amar sonar Bangla* was composed by _____
 - (a) Bankimchandra
 - (b) Sharatchandra
 - (c) R.C. Dutt
 - (d) Rabindranath Tagore
4. *Where the Mind is Without Fear* is
 - (a) A Prayer to God
 - (b) A eulogy to God
 - (c) A Complaint to God
 - (d) A Sermon
5. *Where the Mind is Without Fear* was included as poem _____ in Gitanjali.
 - (a) 12
 - (b) 15
 - (c) 35
 - (d) 100
6. The original title of the poem in Bengali was
 - (a) Naivedya
 - (b) Prasad
 - (c) Prarthna
 - (d) Mukti
7. The poem was translated from Bengali into English by
 - (a) The poet himself
 - (b) Isherwood
 - (c) W. B. Yeats
 - (d) KshitimohanSen
8. The British Rule divided India by using the strategy of
 - (a) “bribe and win”
 - (b) “educate to enslave”
 - (c) “divide and rule”
 - (d) “destroy the native culture”
9. The poem *Where the Mind is Without Fear* contains
 - (a) 10 lines
 - (b) 11 lines
 - (c) 14 lines
 - (d) 5 Couplets
10. Tagore founded educational institution called
 - (a) PremNiketan
 - (b) Shanti Niketan

- (c) Gram Vidyalaya (d) MuktiVidyalaya
11. Tagore believed in _____ education
(a) Knowledge centered (b) Nature-centered
(c) Village-centered (d) Skill centered
12. Tagore compares reason to
(a) a clear stream (b) a river
(c) the ocean (d) the lake
13. Bengal was divided into East Bengal and West Bengal in
(a) 1905 (b) 1910
(c) 1943 (d) 1947
14. Tagore advocated the synthesis of
(a) spirit and matter (b) man and machine
(c) art and science (d) East and West
15. *Amar Sonar Bangla* written by Tagore is the national anthem of
(a) Bangladesh (b) Nepal
(c) Bhutan (d) Brahma Desh

1.11 LET US SUM UP

In this unit, we studied the famous poem of Rabindranath Tagore which is highly relevant today. It tells us what a true freedom is. It reflects Tagore's liberal views on education, culture, freedom and rational outlook. It is interesting to note that he has presented the vision of free India but the poem contains an important message for all free democratic and secular nations.

1.12 BOOKS SUGGESTED

Das Gupta T. *Social Thought of Rabindranath Tagore: A Historical Analysis*. AbhinavPrakashan, 1993.

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Guha, Ramachandra. *Makers of Modern India*. Cambridge, 2011.

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Tagore, Rabindranath. "Song Offerings", Translated by Joe Wirter, Writers Workshop, 1998.

W. B. Yeats. *Gitanjali*. Dover Publications, 2000.

Answers

Check Your Progress: 2

1.(a) 2.(a) 3.(d) 4.(a) 5.(a) 6.(c) 7.(c) 8.(a) 9.(c) 10.(b) 11.(b)
12.(a) 13.(a) 14.(d) 15.(a)



STOPPING BY WOODS ON A SNOWY EVENING

- ROBERT FROST

: STRUCTURE :

- 2.0 Objectives
 - 2.1 Introduction
 - 2.1.1 About the Poet
 - 2.2.2 About the Poem
 - 2.2 Text of the Poem
 - 2.3 Key Words
 - 2.4 Summary of the Poem
 - 2.5 Analysis and Explanation of the Poem
 - 2.6 Tone of the Poem
 - 2.7 Theme of the Poem
 - 2.8 Structure/Diction/Style of the Poem
 - 2.9 Questions (answer in brief)
 - 2.10 Multiple Choice Questions
 - 2.11 Let Us Sum Up
 - 2.12 Books Suggested
- Answers

2.1 OBJECTIVES

In this unit, we shall

- be getting preliminary information about the Poem and Poet
- be getting an overview of the analysis and explanation of the poem
- be learning about the tone and theme of the poem

2.1 INTRODUCTION

2.1.1 About the Poet

Robert Frost (1874-1963) was a great American poet known for his realistic portrayal of rural life and immense love for nature. He depicted the rural life of New England in the early twentieth century. His famous poems include:

1. *Home Burial*
2. *The Witch of Coos*
3. *A Servant to Servant*
4. *Directive*
5. *Neither out Too Far nor in Too Deep*
6. *Provide, Provide*
7. *Acquainted with The Night*
8. *After Apple Picking*

9. *Mending Wall*
10. *Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening*
11. *Birches*
12. *Death of a Hired Man*
13. *The Road Not Taken*
14. *Fire and Ice*

Frost's best poems explore fundamental questions of existence depicting stark loneliness of an individual in the indifferent universe. Frost stood at the crossroads of 19th century American poetry and modernism. He developed modern idiom, sense of directness and economy that reflect the imagism of Ezra Pound. Frost's theory of poetry links him to both 19th and 20th centuries. He wrote about poetry that, "It begins as a lump in the throat a sense of wrong, a homesickness, a loneliness." Like T.S. Eliot he believed that the man who suffers and the artist who creates are totally separate".

Robert Frost made use of New England dialect which is often discussed as provincialism or regionalism. His regionalism is not political but realistic. Frost had received more than forty honorary degrees and in 1924, he received his first of four Pulitzer Prizes. In 1960, Congress awarded Frost the first congressional Gold Medal. A year later, at the age of 86 Frost was honored to write and recite a poem for President John Kennedy's inauguration ceremony.

The following are the notable qualities of Robert Frost's poetry:-

- (i) Tenderness, sadness and humour
- (ii) Sad acceptance of things as they are
- (iii) Love for nature and rural life.
- (iv) Classical understatement and restraint
- (v) Clarity and simplicity
- (vi) Democratic spirit
- (vii) Realistic depiction of life and nature
- (viii) Pastoral element
- (ix) Picturesque quality
- (x) Lyrical quality

Robert Frost's style is lucid, simple and rhythmical. He often employs dialogues in his poems. He uses colloquial diction of New England. There is vivid imagery in his poetry that creates visual pictures in the minds of the readers. His poetry is often symbolic and metaphorical.

2.1.2 About the Poem

Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening is one of the most popular poems by Robert Frost. It was published in 1923 and soon it became a poem that people recited, quoted and kept in memory. On the surface, the poem is simple, at metaphorical level. It tells of a man's temptation to answer the call of beauty and his ultimate decision to respond to the call of duty.

"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”

This concluding stanza of the poem has a deeper meaning. It has an interesting allegory of life and death, of duty and irresistible temptation and pleasures of life. The poem begins with a traveller passing through woods on a beautiful snowy evening. Woods are dark, deep and lonely. The traveller is tempted by the solitude of dark woods and snow-laden land. The enchanted traveller stops his little horse to watch woods fill up with snow. The little horse thinks it strange as there is no farmhouse nearby. It was the darkest evening of the year. On one side, there was a frozen lake and on the other dark, lonely but lovely woods.

The horse shakes his bell to ask if there was any mistake. The traveler wakes up from his dreamy state of mind. He remembers that it is necessary for him to go home and keep his promise. He has still to travel many miles before he reaches home and sleep. In the final stanza, there are three words that signify deep, philosophical meaning ‘Promise’ indicate one’s duties in life; be it physical or spiritual. ‘Miles’ refer to a journey of life, the period of time to live in years or decades. ‘Sleep’ signifies eternal slumber, the death, the end of the journey of life. Life’s journey includes pleasures, hardship, duties and distances.

In life, we make promises to ourselves and to others. These promises have to be fulfilled before we cover the long distance of the journey of life and yield to our final commitment: eternal slumber i.e death. In our life and the world around us, we face many temptations and distractions. These temptations can be material and physical pleasures, worldly success, fame and wealth. If these things become our center of focus, we miss the true goal of our life. The true goal of human life is self-actualization, the realization of one’s potential. We should strive to reach our true goal before we meet our final destination of our life-Death.

The poem can be interpreted in several ways but the central idea of the poem is commitment to duty. Louisa May Alcott has summed up this philosophy in a very poetic manner she wrote:

“I slept, and I dreamed that life was beauty;
I woke, and found that life was duty.”

2.2 TEXT OF THE POEM

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.

– Robert Frost

2.3 KEY WORDS

Woods	:	forest
Queer	:	strange
Harness	:	a set of strap by which a horse or other animal is fastened to a cart plough etc.
Sweep	:	long swift curving movement
Downy	:	covered with soft hair or feathers
Easy wind:		slow breeze of wind
Flake	:	a small flat, very thin piece of something (Downy flake' refers to soft layer of snow)

2.4 SUMMARY OF THE POEM

The speaker in the poem is passing through woods on a cold snowy evening. He is riding on his little horse. It is a lovely dark wood that enchants the speaker by its beauty and silence. The speaker says that he probably knows the owner of the woods. He lives in a nearby village. As he is not there in the woods, he will not see the speaker trespassing. The little horse of the speaker shakes his harness bell to ask if there is any mistake. The horse does not understand why the speaker has stopped here. He thinks that there is no reason to stop in the woods. Even a farmhouse is nowhere nearby.

The place was between dark woods and frozen lake and it was the darkest evening of the year (probably in the month of December). Little horse shakes his harness bells to awaken the speaker from his dreamy state of mind. He seems to have lost in the beauty and silence of the beautiful woods. Deep silence mesmerizes the speaker. There are only sounds of cold, slow breeze and falling snow like white feathers. The speaker is suddenly awakened by the sound of the harness bells of the horse. He does not like to leave this beautiful place as it is so quiet and beautiful. However, he is reminded of his promises that he had to fulfill. He realizes that he should move ahead and reach home in time. He has to perform certain duties before he could rest his head on the pillow.

The poem ends with a message that life and the world may be full of temptations. They may compel us to stop and hinder our journey but we must remember that before we 'sleep' we have to fulfill our duties and keep our promises. We have our duties towards our family, society and the world. We also have duties towards ourselves and to God. Before we die, we should try to fulfill them all. Therefore we should avoid temptations of worldly pleasures and focus our attention on performing our duties. We should focus more on DUTY than BEAUTY.

2.5 ANALYSIS AND EXPLANATION OF THE POEM

Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening is a well-known poem by Robert Frost. It was written in 1922 and published in 1923 in his collection of poems "New Hampshire". He had written this poem when he lived in the village Franconia in New Hampshire.

The poem consists of four stanzas of quatrains (four lines) each. In each stanza, the first, second and fourth lines rhyme but the third does not. However, the third line is a connection link to the other stanzas. It determines the rhymes of the other line of the stanza. For example, in the first stanza the first, the second and the fourth line rhyme with words 'know', 'though' and 'snow'. The third line ends with 'here' which does not rhyme with other lines. The rhyme scheme of the poem is aaba, bbcd, ccde, dddd. There are no punctuations to create pauses and therefore all lines have a nice smooth flow. Let us now discuss the poem in detail.

Lines 1-4

The speaker (may be the poet himself) is passing through the woods on a dark, chilly winter evening on his little horse. He stops amidst the beautiful woods. He says that he probably knows the owner of the woods. He lives in a village nearby. He is not present in the woods therefore he will not be able to see the speaker's trespassing in the woods. He is so enchanted by the beauty of the woods and the entire surrounding that he stops there with his horse and watches the natural beauty of snow covered woods. It is snowing filling up woods with white layers of snow.

Here the dark woods symbolize the mystery of life. Like dark woods, life is impenetrable and mysterious. Snow is a cold destructive force called Death. The mystery is always lurking and so the speaker has an irresistible urge to stop there and watch the mysterious beauty and solitude of the woods.

Lines 5-8

In the second stanza, the speaker says that his little horse thinks it strange that they have stopped at the wrong place. There is no farmhouse nearby or any other reason to stop there. The speaker has stopped his horse between the woods and the frozen lake. The weather is very cold and the lake is frozen. It is also the darkest evening of the year, probably 22nd December when the winter solstice occurs in the northern hemisphere. The speaker says that his horse is little. It suggests that it is an ordinary horse or probably a pony. He loves his little horse who is quite loyal and obedient. The speaker is not a wealthy man and therefore he does not have an expensive horse. Though he is an ordinary man with limited financial resources, he is a great lover of nature. He is a highly sensitive person who is mesmerized by the beauty and mystery of nature.

The speaker's strange behavior creates a surprise to his little horse. The 'little horse' stands for common sense and pragmatism. He thinks that his master has probably made a mistake by stopping at the wrong place and wrong time.

Lines 9-12

The little horse shakes its harness bells to ask the speaker if there is some mistake or any problem. The horse thinks that there is no reason to stop at such a dark and chilly place. He wants to draw the attention of the speaker

and correct his mistake, There are only two kinds of sounds slow cold wind and falling of white feather like snow. For the horse, these sounds were strange and scaring but for the speaker, it was mysterious and enchantingly beautiful. He was spell bound by the solitude of the woods and frozen lake.

Lines-13-16

The last stanza is an epitome of Frost's philosophy of life. These four lines are popular among readers. Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of India liked these lines so much that he kept them under the glass top of his table in the Prime Minister's office.

The speaker in the last stanza says that the woods are lovely dark and deep. They fascinate the speaker with its beauty and mystery. 'lovely', 'dark' and 'deep' are suggestive of 'beauty', 'mystery' and 'profundity'. Very often beauty is inexplicable, incomprehensible and impenetrable. It enchants the speaker and he stops there lost in the beauty and mystery of the woods.

The horse's intrusion into his meditative state makes him aware of his duties and responsibilities. He realizes that he has to fulfill promises after travelling many miles. Therefore, he cannot stay there. He must move on and reach his home in time. He can rest only after keeping his promises and fulfilling his duties. Here 'sleep' refers to death. Before we die, we have to fulfill our duties. We have to play various roles in our life such as the role of a son or daughter, husband or wife, father, mother and so on. We have to maintain family relationships and social relations. We have duties towards family, society, nation and the world. We should fulfill them sincerely before we meet the final destination of our life i.e 'Death'.

In our life, we make 'Promises' to ourselves, to society and the nation. People also make 'promises' to us. Fulfilling mutual promises is equally important in life. It is the duty of an ideal individual towards himself and to the world.

We know that the journey of life is never smooth. There are distractions, temptations and innumerable obstacles on the path of life. We are often distracted by such temptations and forget our duties and commitments. Worldly pleasures and beauty of nature are alluring. We indulge in them and we want to continue to enjoy them forever. Failure in performing our duties is the failure of our life.

The speaker realizes this and decides to move on hurriedly. He thinks that keeping promises must be his priority. He must reach home, complete his tasks and then go to bed. This is the surface idea of the poem. The inner meaning is profoundly philosophical. It reminds us of the great message of the 'Bhagavad Gita' about duty, the importance of Karma (action). Life is beautiful and full of enchanting pleasures but the ultimate aim of life is to do one's duties and not to indulge in material pleasures of life.

The famous poem by Louisa May Alcott beautifully sums up the message of this poem.

"I slept and I dreamed that life was beauty.

I woke and found that life was duty."

Robert Frost uses symbols and imagery very beautifully in his poems. The imagery of the poem *Stopping by woods on a Snowy Evening* is vivid and picturesque. His language and diction are simple and colloquial. He creates

rhythm and music using short and simple words. In this poem, he has employed only monosyllabic and disyllabic words often repeating them as in the last stanza of the poem.

“And miles to go before I sleep
And miles to go before I sleep”

For Frost sound was equally important as the meaning of the words. He emphasized on dramatic element and metaphor in poetry.

2.6 TONE OF THE POEM

Frost's *Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening* conjures a tone of quiet reflection and remembrance of a winter evening. The narrator passes through the forest with his little horse on a chilly winter evening. He stops amidst the forest which is laden with fine feathery snow. It was the darkest evening of the year. The narrator is mesmerized by the beauty and mystery of the lovely dark surrounding. On one side, there is deep forest and on the other, there is a white frozen lake. The deep solitude affects the meditative mood of the narrator. There are only two sounds slow breeze of cold wind and downy flakes of falling snow. The narrator reflects upon the mysterious beauty and solitude of the lovely, dark and deep woods.

The little horse reminds the narrator posing the question why he stopped in the forest. There was no farm house nearby. He shook this harness bells disrupting the reflective mood of the narrator. The narrator wakes up to the job at hand and realizes that he has certain promises to keep, some duties to perform before he would go to sleep. Here the word 'sleep' indicates 'Death' which always makes us aware of uncertainty of life, and duties to be performed within that short span of life.

The tone of the poem is not sad or painful but the meditative realization of duties, to be performed and promises to keep.

2.7 THEMES OF THE POEM

At the literal level, the poem tells us about the speaker's passing through the dark and deep woods on a cold wintry evening. He stops amidst the dark and mysterious surrounding. The little horse finds the narrator's stopping by the woods quite queer and shakes his harness bells to alert the narrator. The narrator realizes that he should move on and reach home in time to complete his tasks and fulfill the obligations on hand before going to bed. However, the poem has deeper symbolic meaning. There are serious themes like death, duty, choices, obligations, isolation and beauty etc. in the poem. Let us discuss the major themes of the poem briefly.

- (1) **Beauty:** The beauty of nature is enchanting. It attracts human beings making them negligent towards their duties. Beauty creates repudiation of action and obligation. The darkness of woods is mesmerizing and mysterious but it is treacherous. It cuts itself off from action. The peace and solitude of the woods move one forget one's duties and obligation. The poet says that such beauty and solitude must be left behind to fulfill one's promises. According to Indian philosophy, beauty of the world creates illusion, maya that entraps human beings creating amnesia about their duties.
- (2) **Loneliness and Isolation:** The speaker finds himself lonely in the

dark and deep woods. He is far away from hustle and bustle of human world. Even the owner of the woods is not there. So his trespasses into his woods and enjoys the loneliness and isolation. He likes to stay there enjoying the solitude of the woods and the frozen lake. There are no sounds except slow cold breeze of wind and falling of snow.

- (3) **Choices:** The speaker in the poem stops in the woods. He enjoys the beauty and solitude of dark woods. He has choice to stay or go home. At first, he feels that he should stay there and relish the beauty and peace of the forest and frozen lake. However, his little horse reminds him of his mistake. Now the speaker is torn between two choices to stay in the woods or go home. It was difficult to take the decision but finally, the speaker decides to go home and keep his promises. He feels that it is necessary for him to fulfill his obligations before sleep. In human life, we often face such choices but to make the right choice is not an easy task. It is the test of life that symbolizes our attitude towards beauty, duty, life and death etc.
- (4) **Man and Nature:** Human beings are part of nature. They feel enticed towards the beauty of nature because man is also the creation of nature. Civilized men have tried to separate themselves from nature but when they are amidst nature, they become captivated by its beautiful beauty and peace. Nature is not always soothing and beautiful. It is scary and fierce too. The speaker in the poem likes, to stay in dark woods laden with snow but it is not safe to be there for long. The horse is a practical animal and he reminds the speaker to move on. The narrator also realizes that it is more important to reach home and perform his duties before going to bed. It is also safer to be at home in its cozy environment and warmth of the family.
- (5) **Duty and Obligations:** All human being have duties and responsibilities towards family, society and the world at large. We are not islands separated from one another. We are all connected with one another. We have duties towards the earth we live in. If we do not care for environment, time would soon come when the earth would be depleted of all its resources. It would ultimately destroy all lives. Therefore duties are important for the survival of mankind. We have to play roles as sons, daughters, husbands, wives, brothers and soon. We have obligations and responsibilities towards our country, our state and our city or town. In India, we believe that we have duties towards the Creator (God) who has created us as human beings, the highest species on earth. 'The Bhagavad Gita' says that we should perform our duties. First we should not think of the results but of action only. Lord Krishna says that Karma (actions) alone must be the priority of all human beings.
- (6) **Death:** Death has always been an enigma. Is it the end of life or transition to another life? We, in India believe that death is not the end of life. It is like changing clothes. The Gita says that life is eternal. Soul does not die, it is the body that dies. The soul exists forever, it has no beginning or end only body is born and it is the body that dies and is reborn.

Death is often compared with sleep in literature, philosophy and psychology. Sleep and death are brothers according to old Greek proverb. In sleep, we experience temporary death. We experience peace and rest in sleep. It relieves us from stress and pain of our hectic schedule. Death, like sleep also liberates us from pain and stressful journey of life. Robert Frost uses the theme of Death by calling it ‘sleep’.

“And miles to go before I sleep
And miles to go before I sleep”

2.8 STRUCTURE/DICTION/STYLE OF THE POEM

The poem ‘*Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening*’ has four stanzas of four lines each. All quatrains have metrical pattern of iambic tetrameter. Each line has four iambic feet which are made up of one unstressed syllable followed by stressed syllable.

U/ | U/ | U/ | U/
U/ | U/ | U/ | U/

The woods | are love | ly dark | and deep

Syllable:

Note : (U) indicates unstressed syllable and (/) indicates stressed syllable.

Unstressed syllable is a low beat and the stressed one is high beat. In Iambic Tetrameter, there are four feet with rising rhythm.

The rhyme scheme of the poem is aaba, bbcd, ccde, dddd

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

(‘Know’, ‘though’ and ‘snow’ rhyme while the third line does not rhyme)

Robert Frost’s diction is simple and often colloquial. The poem contains simple images from rural life like horse, woods, darkness, freezing cold, snow, promises, distance and sleep etc. These simple images are symbolic, for example, ‘dark wood’ symbolize mystery of life, promises stand for obligations and ‘sleep’ stands for death. The poet has used several poetic devices like alliteration, metaphors and personification. The horse ‘thinks’ and ‘asks’ the speaker like a human being and therefore the ‘horse’ is an example of personification. The examples of alliteration are; whose woods/his house/ watch his woods fill up with/ he gives his harness/dark and deep.

The repetition of final line reiterates and reaffirms the idea of promises and obligations the narrator has to fulfill.

Check Your Progress: 1

2.9 ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS IN BRIEF.

1. Where does the speaker stop? Why?

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2. Does the speaker know about the owner of the woods? Where does the owner of the woods live?

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3. Why does the horse think the speaker's stopping by the woods queer?

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4. Describe the place where the speaker stops in the woods.

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5. Why does the horse give his harness bells a shake?

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6. In silence of woods, what are the two sounds the speaker hears?

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7. Why does the speaker decide to move on?

8. Explain the message of the poem in brief.

Check Your Progres: 2

2.10 CHOOSE THE CORRECT OPTION FROM GIVEN BELOW.

1. *Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening* is poem by
 (a) Robert Frost (b) John Keats
 (c) William Wordsworth (d) Emily Dickinson
2. *Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening* was published in
 (a) 1921 (b) 1923
 (c) 1947 (d) 1950
3. *Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening* has
 (a) five stanzas (b) four stanzas
 (c) three stanzas (d) two stanzas
4. Quatrain contains _____lines
 (a) five (b) four
 (c) three (d) two
5. The horse is puzzled why the speaker
 (a) is unhappy (b) is shocked
 (c) stopped by the woods (d) stopped by the lake
6. The horse gives his harness bells a shake
 (a) to awaken him (b) to caution him
 (c) to ask him if there was any mistake
 (d) to ask him to move on
7. It was the _____ evening of the year.
 (a) hottest (b) coldest
 (c) darkest (d) the most fearful

8. The speaker was enticed by
 - (a) the beauty of woods
 - (b) the dark evening
 - (c) deep forest
 - (d) frozen lake
9. The speaker finally decides
 - (a) to stay in the forest
 - (b) to rest amidst woods
 - (c) to move on
 - (d) to go to a farm house
10. To keep promises means
 - (a) to obey orders
 - (b) to follow rules
 - (c) to live honestly
 - (d) to fulfill one's obligations
11. 'Sleep' symbolizes
 - (a) death
 - (b) suicide
 - (c) life
 - (d) uncertainty
12. The speaker finally realizes that
 - (a) life is mysterious
 - (b) life is full of beauty.
 - (c) life is full of temptations
 - (d) life is not just beauty but it is duty.

2.11 LET US SUM UP

In this unit, we have learnt that poetry is the most compact and meaningful form of literature. Great poetry is always profoundly philosophical, reflective and meditative. Poetry deals with the issues of life aesthetically. As we have stated earlier, a single stanza of a poem can epitomize the philosophy of life that a volume of prose work can do. It holds mirror up to nature and the world vividly.

2.12 BOOKS SUGGESTED

1. Works by Robert Frost at Project Gutenberg
2. Robert Frost, Poetry Foundation
3. Robert Frost (1995) Poirier, Richard, Richardson, Mark eds. Collected poems.
4. Deirdre, J. Fagan (1 January 2009) critical companion to Robert Frost: A Literary Reference to its life and work.
5. www.britannica.com
6. Wikipedia.org
7. <https://www.aresearchguide.com/>
8. www.enotes.com
9. <http://study.com>

Answers

1. (a), 2. (b), 3. (a), 4. (b), 5. (c), 6. (c), 7. (c), 8. (a), 9. (c), 10. (a), 11. (a), 12. (d)



Unit

3

THE EYES ARE NOT HERE
- RUSKIN BOND

: STRUCTURE :

- 3.0 Objectives**
 - 3.1 About the Author**
 - 3.2 About the Short Story**
 - 3.3 Text of the Story**
 - 3.4 Key Words**
 - 3.5 Summary of the Short Story**
 - 3.6 Critical Analysis and Appreciation of the Story**
 - 3.7 Tone of the Story**
 - 3.8 Themes of the Story**
 - 3.9 Style and Diction of the Story**
 - 3.10 The title of the Story**
 - 3.11 Questions (answer In brief)**
 - 3.12 Multiple Choice Questions**
 - 3.13 Let Us Sum Up**
 - 3.14 Books Suggested**
- Answers**

3.0 OBJECTIVES

In this unit, you will be introduced

- to one of the most popular forms of literature i.e. Short story.
- to a brief prose narrative.
- to a single episode with limited characters.
- to five important elements namely; plot, characters, setting, conflict and resolution.

Here you will study a beautiful short story by Ruskin Bond one of the greatest short story writers in Indian writing in English.

3.1 ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Ruskin Bond is an Indian author of British descent. He was born on May 19, 1934 in Kasauli, Himachal Pradesh. He spent his early childhood in Jamnagar (Gujarat) and Shimla. After his father's death he went to live at his grandmother's place in Dehradun. He was raised by his mother and step father. He studied at Bishop Cotton School in Shimla. After his high school education, he went to his aunt's place in the Channel Islands (U.K.) in 1951 and stayed there for two years. In London, he wrote his first novel *The Room on the Roof*, semi-autobiographical story of an orphaned Anglo Indian boy 'Rusty'. He won the John Llewellyn Rhys Prize in 1957. He returned to India and settled in Dehradun.

Ruskin Bond went to live in Mussoorie in 1963. He became fulltime writer

who wrote novels, short stories, poems, essays, ghost stories and autobiographical works and travelogues. He has written over five hundred short stories, fifty books for children, novels and two volumes of autobiography. Presently he lives in Landour, Mussoorie's Ivy Cottage with his adopted family. He started writing at the age of 17 and he still writes regularly even at the age of 83.

The Major works of Ruskin Bond include:

1. *The Room on the Roof* (1956)
2. *The Blue Umbrella* (1974)
3. *The Night Train at Deoli* (1988)
4. *A Flight of Pigeons* (1978)
5. *Delhi is Not Far* (1994)
6. *Our Trees still Grow in Dehra* (1991)
7. *Cherry Tree* (1980)
8. *Angry River* (1972)
9. *Rusty, the Boy from the Hills* (2002)
10. *A Season of Ghosts* (1999)
11. *Panther's Moon* (1969)
12. *Vagrants in the Valley* (2016)
13. *Landour Days* (2002)
14. *The Adventures of Rusty*
15. *The Lamp is Lit* (1998)

Ruskin Bond received the Sahitya Akademi Award in 1992 for *Our Trees Still Grow in Dehra*. He was awarded the Padma Shri in 1999 and Padma Bhushan in 2014. His several works have been adapted into films. The Bollywood film *Junoon* was based on his historical novella *A Flight of Pigeon*. In 2005, the famous film director Vishal Bhardwaj made a film based on his popular novel for children *The Blue Umbrella* which won the National Award for Best Children's film.

Ruskin Bond says that writing is his passion. He loves words and putting them together and creating a beautiful sentence. Nature always inspires him to write. He loves India so much that he would like to be reborn in India and nowhere else and be a writer.

3.2 ABOUT THE SHORT STORY

The Eyes Are Not Here is a marvellous story by Ruskin Bond. He has used the first person narrative technique in the story. The narrator is a blind person who narrates the story from his perspectives. His eyes are sensitive only to light and darkness. While he is travelling by train to Dehradun, he comes across a girl who enters his compartment. He hears the sound of her slippers and imagines about her beautiful face. He liked her voice as they began to converse. Gradually, he gets interested in her. He tries to hide his blindness tactfully from the girl. He tries to impress her by describing the trees that seem to be moving. The girl asked him if he saw any animals. The narrator replied that there were hardly any animals left in the forests near Dehra.

Daringly, the narrator told the girl that she had an interesting face. She laughed

and said that she was tired of people telling her about her pretty face. The narrator could now realize that she had a pretty face. The girl called her a gallant young man. Soon, the girl's destination Saharanpur arrived where her aunt had come to receive her. The girl stood up to collect her luggage. The narrator wondered whether she wore her hair in a bun or it was plaited or it hang loose over her shoulders or it was very short.

As the girl stood very close to the narrator the perfume from hair tantalized his sense of smell. As she moved away, the perfume still lingered where she had stood. The girl bade good bye to the narrator and got down on the platform of the railway station. The train started again and a new male passenger entered the compartment. The narrator asked him whether the girl had a long or short hair. The man said that he had not noticed her hair but he noticed her eyes. He said that her eyes were beautiful but they were of no use to her as she was completely blind. The revelation shocked the narrator and he felt that he had deceived himself. The ironical twist at the end makes the story highly appealing.

The story *The Eyes Have It* was originally published in *Contemporary Indian English Stories*. Later it was included in several other collections with different titles such as *The Eyes Are Not Here* and *The Girl on the Train*, etc. The story has only three characters the narrator, the girl and the new male passenger. It is an ideal short story that can be read in one go. Ruskin Bond's art of story-telling is simple and striking. It shows the author's deep insight into human psychology. The plot is well knit and coherent. The story ends with a striking discovery like O.Henry's short stories.

There are ironical twists and turns in the story as the narrator tries to hide his blindness but at the end he realizes that the girl is also blind. He realizes that the eyes are neither here nor there. Ruskin Bond deals with the theme of blindness showing that the blind people are more sensitive than those with eyes "The people with good eyesight fail to see what is right in front of them. Whereas the blind people take in only the essentials, whatever registers most tellingly on their remaining senses" remarks Ruskin Bond in the story. We are reminded of beautiful words of Helen Keller's *Three Days to See* where she says, "only the deaf appreciate hearing, only the blind realize the manifold blessings that lie in sight".

3.3 TEXT OF THE STORY

I had the compartment to myself up to Rohana, and then a girl got in. the couple who saw her off were probably her parents; they seemed very anxious about her comfort, and the women gave the girl detailed instructions as to where to keep her things, when not to lean out of the windows, and how to avoid speaking to strangers. They said their good-byes; the train pulled out of the station.

As I was totally blind at the time, my eyes sensitive only to light and darkness, I was unable to tell what the girl looked like; but I knew she wore slippers from the way they slapped against her heels. It would take me some time to discover something about her looks and perhaps I never would. But I liked the sound of her voice, and even the sound of her slippers.

'Are you going all the way to Dehra?' I asked. I must have been sitting in a dark corner because my voice started her. She gave a little exclamation and

said, 'I didn't know anyone else was here.'

Well, it often happens that people with good eyesight fail to see what is right in front of them. They have too much to take in, I suppose. Whereas people who cannot see (or see very little) have to take in only the essentials, whatever registers most tellingly on their remaining senses.

'I didn't if I would be able to prevent her from discovering that I was blind, I thought. 'Provided I keep to my seat, it shouldn't be too difficult.'

The girl said, 'I'm getting down at Saharanpur. My aunt is meeting me there.' Then I had better not be too familiar. I said, 'Aunts are usually formidable creatures.'

'Where are you going?' she asked.

'To Dehra, and then to Mussoorie.'

'Oh, how lucky you are, I wish I were going to Mussoorie. I love the hills. Especially in October.'

'Yes this is the best time, 'I said calling on my memories. The hills are covered with wild dahlias, the sun is delicious, and at night you can sit in front of a log-fire and drink a little brandy. Most of the tourists have gone, and the roads are quite and almost deserted. Yes October is the best time.'

She was silent, and I wondered if my words had touched her, or whether she thought me a romantic fool. Then I made a mistake.

'What is it like?' I asked.

She seemed to find nothing strange in the question. Had she noticed already that I could not see? But her next question removed my doubts.

'Why don't you look out the window?' she asked.

I moved easily along the berth and felt for the window-ledge. The window was open, and I faced it, making pretence, of studying the landscape. I heard the panting of the engine, the rumble of the wheels, and in my mind's eye, I could see the telegraph-posts flashing by.

'Have you noticed,' I ventured, that the trees seem to be moving while we seem to be standing still?

'That always happens,' she said. 'Do you see any animals?

Hardly any animals left in the forests near Dehra.'

I turned from the window and faced the girl, and for a while we sat in silence.

'You have an interesting face,' I remarked. I was becoming quite daring, but it was a safe remark. Few girls can resist flattery.

She laughed pleasantly, a clear ringing laugh.

'It's nice to be told I have an Interesting face. I am tired of people telling me I have a pretty face.'

'Oh, so you do have a pretty face.' Thought I, and aloud I said:

'You are very gallant young man,' she said. 'But why are you so serious?

I thought then, that I would try to laugh for her,' but the thought of laughter only made me feel troubled and lonely.

'We'll soon be at your station,' I said.

'Thank goodness it's a short journey. I can bear to sit in a train for more than

two or three hours.’

Yet I was prepared to sit there for almost any length of time,

Just to listen to her talking. Her voice had the sparkle of a mountain stream. As soon as she left the train, she would forget our brief encounter; but it would stay with me for the rest of the journey and for some time after.

The engine’s whistle shrieked, the carriage wheels changed their sound and rhythm.

The girl got up and began to collect her things. I wondered if she wore her hair in a bun, or if it was plaited, or if it hung loose over her shoulders, or if it was cut very short.

The train drew slowly into the station. Outside, there was the shouting of porters and vendors and a high-pitched female voice near the carriage door which must have belonged to the girl’s aunt.

‘Good-bye,’ said the girl.

She was standing very close to me, so close that the perfume from her hair was tantalizing. I wanted to raise my hand and touch her hair,’ but she moved away, and only the perfume still lingered where she had stood.

‘You may break, you may shatter the vase if you will, but the scent of the roses will linger there still.....

There was some confusion in the doorway. A man, getting into the compartment, stammered an apology. Then the door banged shut, and the world was shut out again. I returned to my berth. The guard blew his whistle and we off. Once again, I had a game to play with a new fellow- traveler.

The train gathered speed, the wheels took up their song, the carriage groaned and shook. I found the window and sat in front of it, staring into the daylight that was darkness form me. So many things were happening outside the window. It could be a fascinating game, guessing what went on out there.

The man who had entered the compartment broke into my reverie. ‘You must be disappointed,’ he said,’ I’m not as attractive a travelling companion as the one who just left.’

‘She was an interesting girl,’ I said.’ Can you tell me –did she keep her hair long or short?’

‘I don’t remember,’ he said, sounding puzzled.’ it was her eyes I noticed, not her hair. She had beautiful eyes but they were of no use to her, she was completely blind. Didn’t you notice?’

- Ruskin Bond

3.4 KEY WORDS

Anxious	: Eager, Concerned, worried
Instructions	: Information about how to do, make or use something
Slap	: Hit, Strike, Smack
Startle	: Surprise, alarm, frighten
Essentials	: Necessary or important things
Register	: Express or convey an opinion or emotion
Tellingly	: Significantly, strikingly, effectively

Formidable	: Frightening, dreadful, threatening
Dahlia	: A flower plant with bright coloured flowers
Log fire	: Wood fire
Tantalizing	: Something that is tempting or alluring but unlikely to provide a way of satisfying that desire
Deserted	: Empty of people
Romantic fool	: Passionate stupid person
Berth	: A fixed bunk on train, ship or other means of transport
Window-ledge	: Windowsill
Telegraph post	: Telegraph pole
Flash by	: Shine, sparkle, blaze, glimmer
Resist	: Counter, combat, try to prevent, defy.
Flattery	: Excessive and insincere praise
Pleasantly	: Happily, Joyfully
Gallant	: Brave, Courageous
Brief	: Short
Encounter	: To come in contact, come across, confront
Shriek	: Scream, Screech, Cry out loudly
Vendors	: Sellers, traders in the street
Linger	: Remain, stay, wait around, stick around
Perfume	: Fragrance, fragrant liquid, Scent
Confusion	: Disorder, chaos, turmoil
Stammer	: Stutter, speak haltingly, falter, fumble
Apology	: Expression of regret, beg pardon
Bang	: A sudden, loud, sharp noise
Fellow-traveler	: Companion in travelling
Groan	: Moan, whine, whimper (painful sound)
Fascinating	: Attractive, Charming
Reverie	: Day-dream
Bun	: A hairstyle drawn back into a tight tail at the back of the head
Rumble	: Continuous deep, resonant sound
In mind's eye	: In one's imagination or visualization
Plaited	: Hair formed into a plait
Puzzled	: Confused, perplexed, unable to understand
Guess	: Estimate, speculate, surmise, reckon

3.5 SUMMARY OF THE STORY

The narrator was travelling to Dehra by train. He was alone in the compartment. He was a blind man whose eyes were sensitive to light and darkness only. At Rohana railway station, a girl gets into the compartment. Her par-

ents give her many instructions about her luggage, safety and her well-being as she takes her seat in the compartment. They advise her to take care, not to lean out of the window and to avoid talking to strangers.

The train starts and narrator begins to talk with the girl. The voice of the narrator startles her as she thought that she was alone in the compartment. The girl told him that she was going to Saharanpur where her aunt would come to receive her. The narrator tells her that he was going to Mussoorie a lovely hill station which was full of colorful flowers in October. The girl says that she too loved hills, particularly in October. The narrator's description of Mussoorie touches her heart.

The narrator is blind but he tries to hide his blindness from the girl. After some talk, the narrator tells her quite daringly that she has an interesting face. The girl replies happily that people generally said that she had a pretty face. Soon the destination of the girl arrives and she bids goodbye to the narrator. The narrator wonders whether she had a long hair or short hair. He wonders if her hair was plaited or tied in a bun. She stood up near the narrator and filled his sense of smell with lovely, tantalizing perfume from her hair. She moved away but the perfume still lingered where she was standing.

The girl gets down from the carriage and another male passenger enters the compartment. He apologizes to the narrator for not being an attractive travelling companion as the previous one. The narrator asks him about the girl's hair whether it was long, short, plaited or tied in bun. The man replies that he had not noticed her hair but he saw the eyes of the girl which were really beautiful but of no use to her as she was completely blind. The man asks the narrator if he had not noticed her blindness. The narrator felt that he tried to cheat her but he too was cheated. The train moved on and the narrator continued to pretend that he was a man with normal eye-sight.

3.6 CRITICAL ANALYSIS AND APPRECIATION OF THE STORY

The Eyes Are Not Here is one of the most appealing stories by Ruskin Bond. It has other two titles too- *The Eyes Have it* and *The Girl on the Train*. The story is in first person narrative by the narrator who is blind. He is travelling to Dehra by train. He is alone in the compartment. He is blind but his eyes are sensitive to light and darkness. At Rohana, a girl enters the compartment. Her parents had come to see her off. They were giving her detailed instructions about her safety and well-being. They told her not to lean out of the window and avoid talking to the strangers. They said goodbye and the train moved on.

The narrator was curious to know about the girl's appearance. He was naturally unable to tell what the girl looked like. He liked the slapping sound of her shippers. He began to talk to her asking her whether she was going all the way to Dehra. She was surprised and exclaimed that she thought that there was nobody else in the compartment. The narrator liked her voice which was like sparkling mountain stream. The narrator wanted to hide his blindness from the girl and therefore he behaved and talked like a man with a normal vision.

The narrator remarks that people with good eyesight fail to see what is right in front of them as they have so many things to see. Whereas the blind people

or people with weak eyesight have to take in only the essentials that their remaining senses register most effectively.

Here we are reminded of the famous essay *Three Days to See* by Helen Keller who was deaf and blind but she overcame her disabilities with the help of her great teacher Ann Sullivan. In her essay "Three Days to See" she describes how she would feel and do if she was blessed with three days to see. She remarks that people with ability to see, hear and talk take such privileges for granted. She suggests that darkness makes one appreciative of light and sight. The voice and sounds make one appreciate the ability of hearing. People with normal eyes and ears take all sights and sounds hazily without concentration and with little appreciation.

The narrator who is blind understands the importance of eyesight and other senses. He suggests that those with eyes are often blind towards beauty and sights around them. The narrator is very curious to know about the appearance of the girl. During their conversation, the narrator comes to know that the girl was going to Saharanpur where her aunt was to come to railway station to receive her. She asked the narrator where he was going. The narrator replied that he was going to Dehradun and then to Mussoorie. The girl exclaimed that he was very lucky and wished that she were also going to Mussoorie. She added that she loved hills especially in October. The narrator described the beauty of the hills covered with wild dahlias in October. He said that in October, the sun was delicious and at night people would sit in front of log-fire and drink a little brandy. He added that as most of the tourists had left the hill station, the roads were quiet and desecrated. The narrator agreed with the girl that October was the best time to visit Mussoorie.

The girl was impressed by the words of the narrator. She probably thought that the narrator was a romantic fool. The narrator thought that probably she had come to know that he was not blind. However, soon she said that he should sit near that window to see things outside. The narrator moved near the window and pretended to see things outside. He could only feel the telegraph-poles flashing by. The girl asked him if he saw any animals. The narrator replied that hardly any animals could be sighted in the forests near Dehra.

The narrator then moved away from the window and sat facing the girl. For a while, silence prevailed. Then the narrator daringly remarked that she had an interesting face. She laughed pleasantly and said that it was nice to be told that she had an interesting face because she was tired of hearing that she had a pretty face. The narrator then realized that she was a pretty girl. The girl called him a gallant young man.

The narrator told her that they would soon be at her station. The girl said that she preferred short journey as she could not bear to travel for more than two or three hours. The narrator liked to travel for any length of time, hearing the sweet voice of the girl. Soon, the train whistled and arrived at Saharanpur Railway station. The girl got up and began to collect her luggage. The narrator wondered whether she had a long hair or short hair, or they were plaited or tied in a bun. As the train drew into the station, there were shouting of the porters and vendors and a high pitched voice of the girl's aunt who had come to receive her.

The girl bid good bye to the narrator. She was standing quite close to her and the perfume from her hair tantalized him. He had a desire to touch her hair

but then she moved away leaving the fragrance lingering behind. He remembered the words of a beautiful verse that said.

“You may break; you may shatter the vase if you will,
but the scent of the roses will linger there still.....”

The girl left and a male passenger got into the compartment. The door banged shut and the narrator returned to his berth. The guard blew the whistle and the train started again. The narrator decided to hide his blindness from the fellow traveler once again. The man said to the narrator, “You must be disappointed. I’m not as attractive a travelling companion as the one who just left.”

The narrator asked the man whether the girl had a long or a short hair. The fellow traveler said that he had not noticed her hair but he had noticed her beautiful eyes. Though her eyes were beautiful, they were of no use to her. He added that she was completely blind. He asked the narrator if he had not noticed it. The story ends with an ironical twist which makes it very appealing and effective. Like O. Henry, Ruskin Bond has employed the technique of abrupt and surprising ending. The narrator feels that he tried to deceive the girl and the fellow traveler but in fact it was he who was deceived in the end.

The Eyes Are Not Here is an ideal short story that can be finished in a short single sitting. The story contains only three characters, the narrator, the girl and the new passenger. The setting is a train compartment with no other passengers except the narrator, the girl and the new passenger who enters after the girl gets down at Saharanpur. The time span of the story is a few hours of travelling between Rohana and Saharanpur though the narrator was travelling all the way to Dehra. It was the month of October when Mussoorie looked enchantingly beautiful.

Ruskin Bond’s art of storytelling is simple and poetic. His style of narration is lucid and appealing with profound insight into human psychology, particularly the thought processes of the blind people. Ruskin Bond very aptly describes the narrator’s sharp sense of hearing and smell. The blind people’s senses of hearing, smell, taste and touch are far more powerful than the people with a normal eye-sight.

The plot of the story is well-knit without any frills. The language and writing style of Ruskin Bond is quite precise and compact. The description of beautiful Mussoorie in October is vivid and picturesque. Bond uses the word ‘delicious’ for the warmth of the sun in October creating sensuous appeal. The story ends strikingly with ironical twist. The narrator’s attempt to hide his blindness is humorous but it ends ironically at the end of the story. Ruskin Bond does not pity the blind but highlights their profound curiosity and sensitivity towards life and nature.

The story is about limited human perception even if a person has eyes or not. Eyes can see things but what one sees is not whole. Human perception or understanding is often limited by assumptions. The narrator in the story hides his blindness but realizes at the end that the girl was also blind. The girl proves herself more intelligent and smarter than the narrator. The narrator tried to deceive the girl by pretending that he was not blind but at the end, he felt that not only the girl but he too was deceived. It is like “hunter was hunted”.

3.7 TONE OF THE STORY

Tone is the opinion about characters and events conveyed by the narrator. When the narrative is first person and participant in the story, tone and mood can overlap. Mood is an emotional quality of the story which is related to setting and also influenced by the narrator's psychological states.

The tone of the narrator in *The Eyes Are Not Here* is observational. The narrator plays the game of hiding his blindness as pastime. Though the tone strives to be objective, it slips into subjective sometimes. Ruskin Bond's story is more focused on narrator's efforts to prevent his fellow passengers from discovering his blindness.

3.8 THEMES OF THE STORY

There are several themes, in the short story *The Eyes Are Not Here* by Ruskin Bond. The major theme is blindness which the writer sees from a different angle. Blindness is generally taken as a disability but it is a fact that those with normal eyesight take things for granted. They do not see many things as their eyes take in everything. On the other hand those who are blind take in only essentials through their other senses such as touch, hearing, smell and taste. Their perception is more sensitive and profound.

This story by Ruskin Bond is quite brief but also quite intriguing and complex. It deals mainly with the theme of human perception. In this story, there are three characters that prove to be imperceptive in various ways. Human perception is usually limited by assumptions. As J. Krishnamurti used to say, our seeing is conditioned and limited by our assumptions thinking or conditioning. When we look at a rose, we forget to see its real beauty but compare it with our previous experience of seeing the rose.

The story begins with a blind man sitting in a compartment of the train which is heading towards Dehra. At Rohana, a girl enters the compartment. She does not notice that her companion was blind. The blind man and the girl converse pleasantly while the man tries to hide his blindness. At Saharanpur, the girl gets off the train and another male passenger enters the compartment who tells the blind man that the girl who just left the compartment was blind. The male passenger too fails to see that his fellow passenger was blind. Thus the game of hiding goes on but the blind man realizes that he tried to deceive the girl but in fact, he too was deceived. The eyes were neither here nor there.

Ruskin Bond suggests that we take our assumptions as reality and they influence our perceptions turning them into illusions. The joke of the narrator about people with eyes turns into a joke about the narrator too. At the end, we all learn a very important lesson that our assumptions mar the perception of the reality whether we are blind or people with normal eyes. Both the real blind and the people with normal vision turn in to 'blind' people as they fail to see reality an account of false assumptions. The eyes are the means to see but the mind and thoughts determine how we "see" things around us.

3.9 STYLE AND DICTION OF THE STORY

Ruskin Bond's writing style reflected his lonely childhood and love for nature. Many of his stories are based on his personal experience of Dehradun and Mussoorie where he grew up and lived for major part of his life. His

language is lucid, simple and engaging. His sentences are well formed, descriptive and often poetic. Sharing his secrets of a writer's life, Ruskin Bond gives a few useful tips for growing writers. He says that writing is a craft that requires discipline and rigour. One must write regularly to make one's conscience clear.

Ruskin Bond further adds that "Solitude is something you seek as a writer." As a writer he has kept away from modern technology like laptops, cell-phones etc. He also shuns the company of people at various times. Instead, he chooses to spend his time having regular siestas that beget dreams and push his imagination into creativity. He finds joy in different aspects of nature and they have become the part of his writing.

Ruskin Bond says that a writer must be an avid reader of good literature and study the style of great writers. For him, writing is therapeutic that heals the wounds of difficult and lonely childhood. "The Eyes Are Not Here" reflects Ruskin Bond's views on writing and his love for language.

Ruskin Bond is gifted with exceptional power of minute observation and curiosity. For him, characters play an important role in shaping the plot structure of the stories. His stories are nostalgic, vivid and full of poetic imagination.

3.10 TITLE OF THE STORY

The story *The Eyes Are Not Here* has two other titles: *The Girl on the Train* and *The Eyes Have It*. At the beginning of the story, we learn that the man in the compartment of the train is blind. He can only distinguish between light and darkness. It is true that "the eyes are not here". The girl who enters the compartment is also blind. When she enters, the narrator takes her as a girl with normal eyesight. The narrator also tries to hide his blindness from the girl who takes him as a man with normal eyes. The true realization takes place only when the next passenger enters and apologizes for not being as attractive as the girl who had just got off the train at Sahranpur. The narrator asks him about the girl's hair (whether it was long or short) the new passenger replies that he had not noticed her hair but he had seen her beautiful eyes which were of no use to her because she was blind.

So, the passenger with good eyesight fails to see what is right in front of him. He fails to notice that the man in the compartment was also blind. The title of the story shows that the eyes of the girl and the man "are not here" because both are blind. The irony of the story is that even people who can see are often blind.

Check Your Progress: 1

3.11 ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS IN BRIEF.

- (i) What are the other titles of the short story *The Eyes Are Not Here* by Ruskin Bond?

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(ii) Who are the three main characters in the story?
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(iii) How did the narrator pretend to hide his blindness?
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(iv) Describe the conversation between the narrator and the girl?
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(v) What did the narrator remark about the girl's face? What was her reaction?
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(vi) What did the narrator want to know about the girl's hair?
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- (vii) What is the ironical twist at the end of the story?
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- (viii) What did the new male passenger say about the girl's eyes?
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- (ix) Discuss briefly the author's remark about people with eyes and without eyes ?
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-
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-

Check Your Progress: 2

3.12 CHOOSE THE CORRECT OPTION FROM GIVEN BELOW.

1. *The Eyes Are Not Here* is written by _____

(a) John Ruskin	(b) Ruskin Bond
(c) O. Henry	(d) Somerset Maugham
2. The narrator was a _____ man.

(a) deaf	(b) lame
(c) blind	(d) lumb
3. The girl entered the compartment at _____

(a) Saharanpur	(b) Dehra
(c) Meerut	(d) Rohana
4. The blind narrator was travelling to _____

(a) Dehra	(b) Haridwar
(c) Ronana	(d) Delhi

5. The girl was travelling to _____
 (a) Rohana (b) Saharanpur
 (c) Haridwar (d) Rishikesh
6. The girl said that she loved hills during the month of _____
 (a) April (b) May
 (c) October (d) December
7. The girl's _____ was to come to receive her.
 (a) uncle (b) aunt
 (c) brother (d) father
8. The narrator said that the girl had _____ face.
 (a) an interesting (b) an attractive
 (c) a pretty (d) a lovely
9. The narrator remarks that people with normal eyesight fail _____
 (a) to see everything (b) to hear everything
 (c) to understand everything
 (d) to see what is right in front of them
10. The girl probably thought that the narrator was
 (a) a romantic man (b) a foolish man
 (c) a talkative man (d) a romantic fool
11. The narrator was curious to know about _____
 (a) the girl's face (b) the girl's appearance
 (c) the girl's clothes (d) the girl's hair
12. The narrator compares the voice of the girl with
 (a) the ringing of the bell (b) the music
 (c) the sparkle of the mountain stream
 (d) the murmur of the flowing river
13. After the girl got off the train, a new passenger who entered was
 (a) a beautiful girl (b) a blind girl
 (c) a new man (d) a new woman
14. The new passenger told the narrator that
 (a) the girl had a nice long hair
 (b) the girl had a short hair
 (c) the girl had a plaited hair
 (d) the girl was blind
15. Another title of the story *The Eyes Are Not Here* is _____
 (a) *The Girl Traveller* (b) *The Eyes Are Everywhere*
 (c) *The Eyes Have It* (d) *The Eyes Are Not here*

3.13 LET US SUM UP

In this unit we have studied a very appealing story by Ruskin Bond. This short story is an example of an ideal story that contains only three characters,

short span of time, compact plot and universal theme of limited human perception. It ends with an ironical twist which is one of the important characteristics of a good short story. Though the story has been written in a simple lucid, style, it has a complex plot that ends in a striking manner.

3.14 BOOKS SUGGESTED

Bond, Ruskin. *Scenes from a Writer's Life*, Penguin Random House India, 2010. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ruskin_Bond

Pant, Neha. "At 81, Ruskin Bond's tryst with his tireless pen continues" <https://www.hindustantimes.com/books/at-81-ruskin-bond-s-tryst-with-his-tireless-pen-continues/story-6st8jXIEz5EWadwoBGfWNP.html>

Answers

Check Your Progress: 2

1.(b) 2.(c) 3.(d) 4.(a) 5.(b) 6.(c) 7.(b) 8.(a) 9.(d) 10.(d) 11.(d)
12.(c) 13.(c) 14.(d) 15.(c)

: STRUCTURE :

- 4.0 Objectives
- 4.1 About the Author
- 4.2 About the Story
- 4.3 Text of the Story
- 4.4 Key Words
- 4.5 The Summary of the Story
- 4.6 Critical Analysis of the Story
- 4.7 Tone of the Story
- 4.8 Theme of the Story
- 4.9 Diction and Style of the Story
- 4.10 The title of the Story
- 4.11 Questions (answer in brief)
- 4.12 Multiple Choice Questions
- 4.13 Let Us Sum Up
- 4.14 Books Suggested

Answers

4.0 OBJECTIVES

In this unit, we shall study

- The famous short story *The Last Leaf* by O. Henry.
- The characters' analysis of the story.
- An introductory information about the present Poem and Poet
- The text of the story
- The critical analysis and tone of the story
- The diction and style of the story
- The plot, setting and characters of the story

4.1 ABOUT THE AUTHOR

O. Henry (1862-1910) was born under the name William Sydney Porter in North Carolina in 1862. His father was a physician. He lost his mother when he was only three years old. After his mother's death he and his father went to live with his paternal grandmother. As a student, he was an avid reader and read classics. He was also a skilled guitar and mandolin player. He began to work in a drugstore of his uncle in 1879. Then in 1881, he became a licensed pharmacist.

O. Henry moved to Texas in 1882 hoping to get rid of persistent cough that he had developed. He began to live in a sheep ranch, learned shepherding, cooking and baby-sitting. He tried different jobs from pharmacy to drafting, journalism and banking. In 1891, he joined the First National Bank in Austin

as a book-keeper and teller. In 1894, he was charged with embezzlement of funds and he lost his job.

After losing his bank job, he devoted full time to the weekly *The Rolling Stone* that published his sketches and short stories. He relocated to Houston with his family in 1895 and began working as a columnist, reporter and cartoonist at *The Houston Post* drawing monthly remuneration of 25 dollars. In 1896, he was arrested for embezzlement at the First National Bank. He took an impetuous step and escaped on July 6, 1896 a day before his trial to Honduras.

Sydney Porter stayed in a hotel in Peru and wrote *Cabbages and Kings* which was published in 1904. It is one of his notable works that included his short stories that displayed facets of life in a crippled town of Central America. He had coined a word 'banana republic' to depict unstable Country of Latin America. In 1897, he heard the news of his wife dying of tuberculosis, so he returned to Austin to be with his wife and family. His father-in-law posted a bail so that he could remain with his wife until her death in 1897. Then he was sentenced to five years imprisonment. At the prison hospital, he worked as a pharmacist and he did not have to live in a cell in the jail.

During this period, he wrote stories which made him quite popular. In 1902, he was released from the jail and went to New York City where he began writing short stories under the pen name O. Henry. He wrote one short story every week for a newspaper in addition to other stories for magazines. His popular collections of short stories include: *The Four Million* (1906) *Heart of the West* (1907) *The Trimmed Lamp* (1907) *The Gentle Grafter* (1908) *The Voice of the City* (1908) *Options* (1909) *Whirligigs* (1910) and *Strictly Business* (1910).

O. Henry's representative collection of short stories was *The Four Million* which stood for New York City and its people. Many stories of this collection depict the everyday lives of the Manhattan inhabitants. O. Henry was skilled in plotting short stories writing in humorous, witty style with surprise endings. Even after his death, O. Henry's stories continued to be collected under the following titles.

1. *Sixes and Sevens* (1911)
2. *Rolling Stones* (1912)
3. *Waifs and Strays* (1917)
4. *O. Henryana* (1920)
5. *Letter to Lithopolis* (1922)
6. *Postscripts* (1923)
7. *O. Henry Encore* (1939)

O. Henry's stories are witty and often lightly humorous. They have twisted endings, life-like characters and realistic setting. His famous story *The Gift of the Magi* is about a young married couple who want to buy Christmas gifts for each other. The wife sells her long beautiful hair to buy a nice chain for her husband's watch. The husband sells the watch to buy lively combs for his wife. *A Retrieved Reformation* is about a safecracker Jimmy Valentine who saves the life of a girl by using his safe cracking expertise. *The Cop and the Anthem* is about New York City hobo who attempts to save himself from

terrible cold by getting arrested and sent to jail. He hears the Church anthem that makes him decide to get out of criminal life. But the police officer arrested him for his suspicious wandering near the Church gate. The court sends him to jail for three months the very next morning.

O. Henry's writing has vivacity, variety and interest. He employs simple, day-to-day speech patterns and rhythm of common folks. His diction is pungent and glittering with an eccentric symbolism. His vocabulary contains a lot of slang words and phrases. His was the most original talent. There is a fine blending of technical excellence, sparkling, wit, abundant humour and fertile imagination.

Towards the end of his life, things began to fallout. His last years were darkened by alcoholism, ill-health and financial problems. In 1907, he married Sara Lindsay Coleman but the marriage was not a happy one and they separated after one year. O. Henry died of cirrhosis of liver on June 5, 1910 in New York. The funeral was held in New York city but he was buried in North Carolina, the state of his birth.

The 'O. Henry Award' is given every year for remarkable short stories in his memory. The federal court house where he was convicted is named as O. Henry Hall. A film was made in 1952 featuring his five stories called *O. Henry's Full House*. The episode based on *The Cop and the Anthem* earned high critical acclaim. It was started by Charles Laughton and Marilyn Monroe. The other stories included in the films were, *The Clarion Call*, *The Last Leaf*, *The Ransom of Redchief* and *The Gift of the Magi*.

In 1962, The Soviet Postal Service issued a stamp commemorating O. Henry's 100th birthday. In 2012, the US Postal service issued a stamp commemorating the 150th anniversary of O. Henry's birth.

4.2 ABOUT THE STORY

The Last Leaf by O. Henry is one of the most acclaimed and widely read short stories. The story begins with sketchy background of the old Greenwich Village where artists have their studios in crisscrossing streets. A traveller would lose his way in these mazy streets. The description of the streets reflects queer, psychological morbidity of the place.

Then the story focuses on the main theme of artist duo Sue and Johnsy. They had met at a hotel and found themselves sharing certain common tastes. Both were aspiring painters who had come to try their luck in New York. They decided to share the apartment living together. Then comes winter with extreme cold, rain and wind Johnsy becomes the victim of pneumonia. The doctor examines her and tells Sue that Johnsy won't have much chance of survival if she does not have a strong will to live, Johnsy had already lost hope to live. She awaited her death watching the falling leaves of an ivy vine on a brick wall nearby. She watched and counts the leaves thinking that she would die with the fall of the last leaf.

Sue scolds her for her stupid belief but Johnsy's mind is gripped by the falling of the last leaf and her death. Sue tells this to Behrman, an old painter who had nurtured the dream of painting a masterpiece. He was a frustrated artist who survived by painting ads and posters. To save young Johnsy, the old Behrman painted the last leaf on the wall after all the leaves had fallen. It was a rainy night and he climbed the ladder with a lantern in his hand and painted his masterpiece.

The painted leaf inspired Johnsy to live and she began to recover soon. Sue told Johnsy that old Behrman had died of pneumonia as he had painted the moveless last leaf on the brick wall on a rainy and windy cold night. She said that it was his real masterpiece.

Behrman sacrificed his own life to save Johnsy, proving that art triumphs over death. The ironical twist to the plot makes the story very interesting. It comes unexpectedly resulting into tragic-comic note.

The Last Leaf is a perfect short story with brevity compactness and neatness. All the elements of the story-plot, characters, dialogue, setting and description are organically connected with one another. There is an ironical twist at the end of the story which is both surprising and convincing. The story epitomizes the Christian parable of Resurrection and sacrifice. The story *The Last Leaf* displays O. Henry's writing skills compact plot, terse dialogues that suit the speakers and twisted ending. Behrman's chivalric action forms the main theme of the short story. Sue and Johnsy's close bonding represents true and sincere friendship. O. Henry has employed sound imagery and sight imagery very effectively. Howling wind and beating rain express sound imagery while Johnsy's watching of the falling leaves from the ivy vine through the window displays sight imagery. *The Last Leaf* is a story of passion, hope and sacrifice with a message that real art is human love and sacrifice.

4.3 TEXT OF THE STORY

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

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

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

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

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

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

"She has one chance in - let us say, ten," he said, as he shook down the

mercury in his clinical thermometer. "And that chance is for her to want to live. This way people have of lining-u on the side of the undertaker makes the entire pharmacopoeia look silly. Your little lady has made up her mind that she's not going to get well. Has she anything on her mind?"

"She - she wanted to paint the Bay of Naples someday." said Sue.

"Paint? - bosh! Has she anything on her mind worth thinking twice - a man for instance?"

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

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

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

Johnsy lay, scarcely making a ripple under the bedclothes, with her face toward the window. Sue stopped whistling, thinking she was asleep.

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

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

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

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

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

"What is it, dear?" asked Sue.

"Six," said Johnsy, in almost a whisper. "They're falling faster now. Three days ago there were almost a hundred. It made my head ache to count them. But now it's easy. There goes another one. There are only five left now."

"Five what, dear? Tell your Sudie."

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

"Oh, I never heard of such nonsense," complained Sue, with magnificent scorn. "What have old ivy leaves to do with your getting well? And you used to love that vine so, you naughty girl. Don't be a goosey. Why, the doctor

told me this morning that your chances for getting well real soon were - let's see exactly what he said - he said the chances were ten to one! Why, that's almost as good a chance as we have in New York when we ride on the street cars or walk past a new building. Try to take some broth now, and let Sudie go back to her drawing, so she can sell the editor man with it, and buy port wine for her sick child, and pork chops for her greedy self."

"You needn't get any more wine," said Johnsy, keeping her eyes fixed out the window. "There goes another. No, I don't want any broth. That leaves just four. I want to see the last one fall before it gets dark. Then I'll go, too."

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

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

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

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

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

Old Behrman was a painter who lived on the ground floor beneath them. He was past sixty and had a Michael Angelo's Moses beard curling down from the head of a satyr along with the body of an imp. Behrman was a failure in art. Forty years he had wielded the brush without getting near enough to touch the hem of his Mistress's robe. He had been always about to paint a masterpiece, but had never yet begun it. For several years he had painted nothing except now and then a daub in the line of commerce or advertising. He earned a little by serving as a model to those young artists in the colony who could not pay the price of a professional. He drank gin to excess, and still talked of his coming masterpiece. For the rest he was a fierce little old man, who scoffed terribly at softness in any one, and who regarded himself as especial mastiff-in-waiting to protect the two young artists in the studio above.

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

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

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

"She is very ill and weak," said Sue, "and the fever has left her mind morbid

and full of strange fancies. Very well, Mr. Behrman, if you do not care to pose for me, you needn't. But I think you are a horrid old - old flibbertigibbet."

"You are just like a woman!" yelled Behrman. "Who said I will not pose? Go on. I come with you. For half an hour I have been trying to say that I am ready to pose. Gott! this is not any place in which one so good as Miss Yohnsy shall lie sick. Someday I will paint a masterpiece, and we shall all go away. Gott! yes."

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

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

"Pull it up; I want to see," she ordered, in a whisper.

Wearily Sue obeyed.

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

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

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

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

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

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

The ivy leaf was still there.

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

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

And hour later she said:

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

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

“Even chances,” said the doctor, taking Sue’s thin shaking hand in his. “With good nursing you’ll win. And now I must see another case I have downstairs. Behrman, his name is—some kind of artist, I believe. Pneumonia, too. He is old, weak man, and the attack is acute. There is no hope for him; but he goes to the hospital today to be made more comfortable.”

The next day the doctor said to Sue: “She’s out of danger. You’ve won. Nutrition and care now— that’s all.”

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

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

- O. Henry

4.4 KEY WORDS

Quaint	: odd strange and attractive.
Greenwich Village	: District of Lower Manhattan borough in New York City, the home of painters and writers
Tabled ‘note	: Meal at fixed price.
Gables	: triangular part of the house below the roof.
Chicory salad	: Dish of uncooked herbs quite popular in America.
Bishop Sleeves	: Full Sleeves in lady’s dresses.
Mite	: Very small in size
Zephyr	: Gentle wind
Undertaker	: A person who arranges funerals and burials.
Pharmacopeia	: Book of medicinal prescriptions and directions for use
Ivy Vine	: Every green plant with dark shiny leaves.
Goosey	: Foolish person
Satyr	: Greek god of woods, represented as partly man and partly goat.
Juniper Berries	: Berries that give its characteristic flavor to gin.
Serrated	: Having a toothed edge like a saw.
Janitor	: A person hired to take care of a building.
Palette	: A painter’s dish for mixing colours.
Crazy	: mad, passionate

Traverse	: Travel across, go across
Prowl	: move about restlessly, slink, sneak
Congenial	: like-minded, kindred, compatible
Ravager	: Destroyer, destructive
Smite	: Strike with a firm blow
Chivalric	: Characteristic of the time of chivalry and knight hood.
Shaggy	: long, thick and unkempt
Pulp	: soft, wet, shapeless mass of material, mash
Illustrate	: to serve as an example, show demonstrate, adorn
Solicitously	: Carefully, attentively with concern
Bare	: open, uncovered
Dreary	: dull, drab, uninteresting, wearisome
Gnarled	: Rough, twisted and knotty
Imp	: a small, mischievous devil or sprite
Fierce	: ferocious, vicious, and untamed
Confounded	: confused, perplexed, befuddled
Flibbertigibbet	: frivolous, excessively talkative, chatterer
Peer	: look minutely with concentration.
Persistent	: continuous, tenacious, untiring, and unrelenting
Endure	: suffer, undergo, and remain in existence
Dissolution	: Ending an assembly or partnership
Decay	: decompose, rot, perish, and deteriorate.
Acute	: severe, drastic, dreadful, grave, serious.
Nutrition	: nourishment, sustenance, food.
Contented by	: satisfied and happy, gratified.
Dreadful	: terrible, frightful, appalling, horrible.
Drag	: haul, pull, tug.
Scatter	: throw in various random directions, toss, fling.
Flutter	: flap, fly unsteadily, quiver, hover.

4.5 SUMMARY OF THE STORY

The Last Leaf takes place in Greenwich Village, a place where artists live in New York City. The story centers around two young women artists-Sue and Johnsy who share a studio at the top of an old apartment building. When winter comes Johnsy becomes seriously ill with pneumonia. The doctor who examines her says that Johnsy will not survive if she does not have a will to live. He says that Johnsy has already left hope for life and she awaits death. The doctor asks Sue if Johnsy has any unfulfilled ambition or a passion for a man. She says that Johnsy wanted to paint the Bay of Naples but the doctor says that it is not a great cause that would inspire her to live.

Johnsy watches leaves falling from the ivy vine that clings to the brick-wall nearby. She begins to count leaves thinking that she would die with the fall of

the last leaf. It was a stormy and rainy night. Leaves keep falling and Johnsy is waiting for her death. Sue is deeply worried and she tells their old neighbour Mr. Behrman who was an unsuccessful artist about Johnsy's illness and her obsession about imminent death. Behrman always hoped to paint a masterpiece which he never did. However, Behrman stays out on a rainy, chilly night to paint a realistic-looking leaf on the wall. Seeing the unmoved leaf, Johnsy gathers courage and hope and begins to recover. Behrman catches pneumonia from exposure to the rain and cold and dies a few days later. She tells Johnsy about the cause of Behrman's death and remarks that Behrman's masterpiece was the last leaf that saved her life.

4.6 CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE STORY

The Last Leaf is one of the most appealing short stories by O. Henry. Its setting is Greenwich Village which is a heaven of aspiring artists and bohemian people. O. Henry depicts the place as the vibrant colony of artists who live in poverty and starvation. Many of them are starving artists who suffer from shortage of food and expose to sickness, cold and hunger. Greenwich Village had been a home for lesbians and gay people in New York a fact which becomes significant in the story as two female characters are romantically involved like true lovers.

The story centers around two young women artists Sue and Johnsy. They meet in a restaurant and discover that they had some common interests in art and food. They decide to work together and share an apartment at the top of a run-down old building. The basis of the friendship of Sue and Johnsy was a shared interest in art and creativity. They soon became emotionally attached. O. Henry describes the dreadful visit of Mr. Pneumonia to the neighbourhood and Johnsy becomes the victim of the fatal disease. O. Henry describes pneumonia as a strange male visitor to depict man as an antagonistic presence in the lives of Sue and Johnsy.

A doctor visits and tells Sue that Johnsy had a one in ten chance of living. He adds that only her passion to live will help her to survive. If she loses hope to live, no medicines will help her in recovery. The doctor asks her if Johnsy is depressed over a man. She tells him that there is no man in the Johnsy's life. The doctor's diagnosis reveals the fact that there is always a strong link between hope and health. She firmly rejects the doctor's suspicion about Johnsy's involvement with any man. She knew that Johnsy was focused only on travelling and developing her talent as an artist. She was quite sure that Johnsy was not interested in man, marriage and children.

Sue sits beside Johnsy's bed and works on an illustration for a magazine. She notices that Johnsy looked out of the window and counted falling leaves from an ivy vine on the brick wall nearby. When she asks her what she was counting, she replies that she would die when the last leaf would fall to the ground. Sue tells her that it was a silly thought as the doctor had already told her that there was a good chance of her recovery. Sue promises Johnsy to buy more food and wine after she sells her illustration for the magazine. However, Johnsy remains unaffected and she says that she wants to turn loose "her hold on everything and go sailing down, down just like one of those poor, tired, leaves".

Sue's work for the magazine shows her poor economic condition. She struggled as an artist and earned a meager income from her work. However,

her promise to buy more food and wine shows her care and love for Johnsy. She looks after all household work in addition to drawing and painting. She tells a lie about the doctor's remark about her health and recovery to motivate her to live. However, Johnsy's desire to die like the falling of the last leaf shows her fading hope to live.

She then goes downstairs to visit her neighbor, Mr. Behrman who was an old, unsuccessful artist. He had tried to paint a masterpiece all his life but in vain. He was a frustrated artist who had turned alcoholic smelling of gin all the time. He was very protective of Sue and Johnsy and cared a lot for them. When Sue told him about Johnsy's crazy obsession about the falling of the last leaf connecting it to her death; he was a bit angry and called her foolish. Sue asked him to pose as model for her drawing; he agreed and came to Sue's studio. While Johnsy was asleep, Behrman kept looking solemnly at the ivy vine.

Behrman was a failure as an artist but he was a man with a milk of human kindness. His angry words about Johnsy displayed his profound concern for her. Under his gruff exterior, there throbbed a sensitive heart. His solemn look at the ivy vine made him worried about the fading life of a nice young Johnsy. He probably decided then to paint the last leaf on the wall that night.

It was a stormy, windy and rainy night. But the next morning, she saw that the last leaf clung tenaciously to the vine. Johnsy was sure that the last leaf would have fallen that night but she found it clinging to the vine bravely. Naturally she was surprised but she still believed that it would certainly fall that day. She was also convinced that pneumonia would take her away from Sue and the world.

Another night was also windy and rainy but the last leaf remained unmoved. Johnsy sat up and asked for soup and a mirror. She said that the last leaf showed her that it was a sin to want to die. She told Sue that she would soon paint the Bay of Naples. The doctor visits again and tells Johnsy that she would soon be all right. Her request for food and a mirror suggests her reclamation of desire to live. The mirror symbolizes her rebonding with herself. Her desire to paint the Bay of Naples demonstrates that her hope had returned with her health. This underscores the story's central idea that life and hope are inseparably intertwined.

The doctor tells Sue and Johnsy that he has to visit another patient Mr. Behrman. He has caught pneumonia and needs to be hospitalized. The next day, Sue tells Johnsy that Behrman has died. The janitor found him sick in his room with wet clothes as if he has been out on a stormy night. In his room, Behrman had a ladder, and painting materials which revealed that he had been out all night to paint the last leaf on the brick wall. The leaf that saved Johnsy's life was not real but it was the masterpiece painted by Behrman.

The story ends with surprising ending that the 'last leaf' was in fact a painting by Behrman who sacrificed his own life to save Johnsy. He knew that the survival of the leaf alone would rekindle Johnsy's hope to live. He always wanted to paint a masterpiece which he could never do but his selfless act of sacrifice made the painting of the last leaf his true masterpiece.

4.7 TONE OF THE STORY

The general tone of the story *The Last Leaf* is bit sarcastic and serious. Though the themes of the story are sickness, poverty and death, the author treats them in less serious manner. He makes fun of the residents of Greenwich Village which serves as the setting of the story. The story begins with sarcastic tone describing cross streets in Greenwich Village where poor artists struggle to survive. O. Henry makes fun of his characters and their shallowness and frivolous temperament. The story is an ideal example of the third person omniscient point of view in which the author shows the attitude thoughts and emotions of the characters clearly and realistically. The story depicts the mood of hopelessness as Johnsy abandons her hope to live waiting for imminent death with the falling of leaves from the ivy vine.

4.8 THEMES OF THE STORY

There are several themes in the story *The Last Leaf*. Let us discuss them in detail:

- (i) **Hope and Health :** Johnsy becomes victim of pneumonia during cold winter. She connects her life with the falling of ivy leaves on the brickwall nearby. It rained heavily and cold wind blew all the time. Leaves kept falling from the vine. Johnsy's obsession that she would soon die when the last leaf would fall down was quite obstinate. The leaf symbolizes life and death. The old artist Behrman paints the last leaf on the brick wall on a rainy night. It gives her hope to live but Behrman dies of pneumonia which he catches because of staying outside on a chilly, rainy night. The doctor tells Sue that the real problem with Johnsy was that she had lost the desire to live. He says that if she had some unfulfilled desires for future, her chances for life would be better. However Johnsy has already abandoned her desire to live and she wants to go sailing down like those poor tired ivy leaves.

When Johnsy sees that the last leaf has remained moveless and clung tenaciously, she is motivated to live. She realizes that it is a sin to want to die. Johnsy begins to recover soon sitting on bed, eating food and hoping to paint the Bay of Naples. Behrman used his art to transfer his hope to Johnsy proving that the last leaf painted by him was his real masterpiece.

O. Henry suggests that physical health is always connected with hope for the future. For restoring physical health, hope is the most powerful cure. Thus hope and health are inextricably inseparable.

- (ii) **Death:** The title of the story *The Last Leaf* conveys the theme of death. The word 'last' signifies close to end or close to death. The life of a tree is connected with the growth and health of branches and leaves. In the story, ivy leaves keep falling due to autumn. Autumn is the season of death of leaves. Johnsy becomes the victim of pneumonia which symbolizes death. Johnsy regains her hope to live and restores her health but Behrman who painted the last leaf to save Johnsy died of pneumonia.
- (iii) **Optimism and Pessimism:** Life is made of dualities such as life and death, hope and despair, day and night, spring and autumn, hot and cold etc. Here there is a theme of pessimism and optimism. Pessimism

deals with gloomy aspects of life; optimism deals with positive aspects of life. Johnsy had plunged into deep abyss of pessimism, waiting for death. She counted the falling leaves. She thought that she would die when the last leaf falls down. However, when she saw that the last leaf clung to the wall moveless, she was inspired to live. Restoration of her hope makes her fill with desire to live and soon she begins to recover. O. Henry conveys the message that one should never lose hope and optimistic approach to life as it is a sin to want to die.

- (iv) **Self-sacrifice:** One of the important themes in the story *The Last Leaf* is self-sacrifice. Behrman risked his life to save Johnsy from death. He painted the last leaf on the brick wall on a rainy and stormy night. He caught pneumonia due to cold and rain and died in a few days. This alludes to Christian doctrine of self-sacrifice that epitomizes the noblest human deed. Behrman always wanted to paint a masterpiece which he could never do. However, the last leaf that he painted on the brick wall proved to be his masterpiece. O. Henry suggests that kindness and passion are far greater than art.
- (v) **Gender and Sexuality:** O. Henry depicts Sue and Johnsy as young female artists who struggle to make way in male dominated world of art. Their behaviour can be termed as feminist in the sense that they challenge accepted notions of women's roles in the society. It is generally believed that women are destined to marry, produce children and devote their energy to domestic duties. Sue and Johnsy thought out of the box and wanted to live independent life in the pursuit of art. They were aspiring artists who struggled a lot leading financially precarious life. They met in a restaurant and discovered that they shared common interests in art and food. They decided to live together in the same apartment confronting the disapproval of the prevalent society.

In the story, we come across several examples where men belittle Sue and Johnsy. For example when the doctor diagnoses Johnsy's pneumonia, he asserts that art is "not anything worth thinking about". The doctor asks Sue if Johnsy was upset over a man. Sue contradicts the doctor's view by saying that for Johnsy no man was so important as her love for art. This shows that both Sue and Johnsy were career-oriented and professional. During the 20th century women struggled to rise above their female sexuality and protested against gender bias and social norms fixed by male dominated society.

- (vi) **The Prevalent Condition of the Artists:** *The Last Leaf* by O. Henry is set in Greenwich Village, a bohemian neighbourhood in New York city. It was famous as a gathering place and residential colony of the painters and writers. The place had criss-cross streets with strange curves and angles. The artists who lived here led financially precarious life earning a very little income. The building in the area was old and dilapidated with low house rent. The place was overcrowded and with lack of proper sanitation. It was exposed to cold weather and outbreak of diseases like pneumonia.

Sue, Johnsy and Behrman tried to make a living by painting but could hardly make both ends meet. Poverty, alcoholism and diseases prevailed in the area making people weak and sick. Behrman always dreamt of painting a masterpiece but he never succeeded in doing so all his life. He made a small income as a model for the artists. Sue also earned a little by painting illustrations for magazines. Johnsy nurtured a dream of painting the Bay of Naples but her poor health and poverty made her trip to Italy almost impossible.

The Last Leaf suggests that even starving artists have stronger social bonding with their neighbours. For them, painting is not only a personal achievement and source of income. O. Henry suggests that a great art is always imbued with humanistic attitude, compassion and love. The friendship between Sue and Johnsy displays sincerity, love and loyalty. Behrman was careless about his health but he was profoundly concerned about Johnsy's deteriorating health. He painted the last leaf to save Johnsy's life which finally resulted into his true masterpiece.

4.9 DICTION AND STYLE OF THE STORY

O. Henry's style of writing is sarcastic and funny. He used diction with colloquialism and slangs. He used literary devices like metaphors, personification and similes. The story also contains symbolism and imagery. There is a lot of colour imagery in the story. O. Henry's stories have surprising ending with ironical twist. His dialogues have speech patterns and rhythms of the language of the common folks with vivacity, variety and vibrancy. His narration in the story is in third person omniscient narrator mode. His description is picturesque and colourful. His style is also humorous just like his plot and characters. In his plots, co-incidences play a very important role creating humorous situations. There is a beautiful combination of wit humour and irony in his writing style.

4.10 TITLE OF THE STORY

The title of the story *The Last Leaf* is quite appropriate as it is the last leaf painted by Behrman saves the life of a young artist Johnsy. Johnsy suffered from pneumonia losing hope to live. She thought that she would die when the last leaf from the ivy vine falls down. It was a stormy rainy weather and the leaves kept falling rapidly. The old painter who lived downstairs painted the last leaf on the wall when he saw that the last leaf (the real one) fell down. He caught pneumonia due to rain and chilly wind. Soon he died but the last leaf that remained unmoved filled Johnsy with a new hope to live. Behrman had a dream of painting a masterpiece which he could never do all his life but the last leaf that saved Johnsy's life proved to be his real masterpiece. The last leaf suggests both desire for death and hope for life.

Check Your Progress: 1

4.11 ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS IN BRIEF.

(i) Describe the visit of Mr. Pneumonia to Greenwich Village.

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(ii) What is the significance of ivy leaves in *The Last Leaf*?

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(iii) Describe the friendship between Sue and Johnsy.

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(iv) What is the twist in the ending of the story *The Last Leaf*?

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(v) How did Behrman catch pneumonia?

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(vi) Why is the last leaf painted by Behrman his true masterpiece?

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(vii) What does the title *The Last Leaf* suggest?

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(viii) How did Johnsy's hope for life revive?

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Check your Progress 2

4.12 CHOOSE THE CORRECT OPTION FROM GIVEN BELOW.

1. *The Last Leaf* is a _____
(a) poem (b) novel
(c) epic (d) short story
2. *The Last Leaf* is penned by _____
(a) O. Henry (b) Somerset Maugham
(c) Guy de Maupassant (d) Ruskin Bond
3. Greenwich village was inhabited by _____
(a) farmers (b) labourers
(c) teachers (d) artists
4. Sue was from _____
(a) Philadelphia (b) Florida
(c) California (d) Maine
5. Johnsy was from _____
(a) Maine (b) New York
(c) California (d) Canada
6. Sue and Johnsy shared common interests in _____
(a) poetry (b) clothes and fashion
(c) food and art (d) sports
7. "Mr. Pneumonia" is the example of _____
(a) simile (b) metaphor
(c) personification (d) climax

8. The doctor said that there was one chance in _____ for Johnsy's recovery from pneumonia.
- (a) 100 (b) 10
(c) 20 (d) 50
9. Johnsy wanted to paint _____
- (a) The Tajmahal (b) The Leaning Tower of Pisa
(c) The Bay of Naples (d) The Dal Lake of Kashmir
10. Behrman was a _____ artist.
- (a) successful (b) rich
(c) matured (d) frustrated
11. Behrman had a dream of painting _____
- (a) a masterpiece (b) a portrait of Sue
(c) a portrait of Johnsy (d) a natural scene of Italy
12. Behrman died of _____
- (a) pneumonia (b) cholera
(c) typhoid (d) cancer
13. The last leaf painted by Behrman inspired Johnsy.
- (a) to die (b) to live
(c) to work (d) to paint
14. The last leaf painted by Behrman proved to be his.
- (a) real masterpiece (b) passion for life
(c) monumental work (d) piece of art
15. O. Henry was famous for _____ in his stories.
- (a) figurative language (b) simple diction
(c) twisted ending (d) rustic characters

4.13 LET US SUM UP

In this unit, you have studied one of the most famous stories by O. Henry. The story depicts the important features of an ideal short-story such as single compact plot, small number of characters, realistic dialogues, twisted ending and universal themes. You should have realized how a novel differs from a short-story. A novel has detailed narrator, a large number of characters, multiple setting, dialogues and detailed description of characters and setting. A novel is like a movie while a short story is like a snapshot. O. Henry's short stories have twisted ending that makes his short stories very appealing and effective.

4.14 BOOKS SUGGESTED

Smith, C. Alphonso "The Strange Case of Sydney Porter And O. Henry". *The World's Work: A History of Our Time*, 1916.

<http://www.eastoftheweb.com/short-stories/UBooks/LasLea.shtml#7>

<http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/author/634>.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Last_Leaf

<https://www.enotes.com>

<https://www.litcharts.com/>

Answers

Check Your Progress: 2

1.(d) 2.(d) 3.(c) 4.(a) 5.(c) 6.(c) 7.(b) 8.(c) 9.(a) 10.(a) 11.(a)
12.(b) 13.(a) 14.(c)

: STRUCTURE :

- 5.0 Objectives**
- 5.1 About the Author**
- 5.2 About the Story**
- 5.3 Text of the Story**
- 5.4 Key Words**
- 5.5 Summary of the Short Story**
- 5.6 Critical Analysis of the Story**
- 5.7 The Tone of the Story**
- 5.8 The Themes of the Story**
- 5.9 Style and Diction of the Story**
- 5.10 The Title of the Story**
- 5.11 Maugham's Views on Short Story**
- 5.12 Question (answer in brief)**
- 5.13 Multiple Choice Questions**
- 5.14 Let Us Sum Up**
- 5.15 Books Suggested**

Answers

5.0 OBJECTIVES

In this unit, we shall

- learn the most popular form of literature
- discuss the plot, characters, setting and themes of the story

5.1 ABOUT THE AUTHOR

William Somerset Maugham was a great novelist playwright and short story writer. He was born on January 25, 1874 in Paris, France. His father was a lawyer handling the legal affairs of the British Embassy in Paris. He lost his mother at the age of eight. His father died of cancer two years later. He was sent back to England to be cared by his uncle. He boarded at King's school, Centerburg where he was teased for his short stature, stammering and shy introvert nature. At the age of 16, he went to Germany where he studied literature, philosophy and German language at Heidelberg University. Then he studied in London and qualified as a surgeon, at St. Thomas Hospital. In his novel *Of Human Bondage* he has recounted his unhappy childhood and experiences as a medical student.

During the World wars I and II, Maugham served in the British Intelligence service. In 1914, he was the member of Red Cross Unit in France. Later, he acted as a secret agent in Geneva. Maugham's travels filled his interest in the orient and South Sea Islands. His novel *The Moon and the Six Pence* (1919) is based on the life of the famous painter Paul Gauguin. His novel *The Painted*

Veil was originally set in Hongkong which he later changed into fictional Tching-Yen.

As a short story writer Maugham was influenced by Anton Chekhov, the famous Russian short-story writer who conveyed an over-whelming sense of the mystery of life in his stories. However, unlike he knows he was focused on story-telling in a dramatic manner. He believed that dramatization intensifies the lives of characters in the stories. Thus, Maugham stands as a great modern exponent of the art of the literary narrated stories. This characteristic method is to tell the story himself in the first person using spoken style and verbal clichés to unfold a scene or character. In Maugham's stories the narrating 'I' is objective.

Maugham's major collections of short stories include *Orientation*, *The Casuarina Tree*. First Person singular *cosmopolitans*, *The Mixture as Before*, *The creatures of circumstances* etc. Maugham was a versatile writer who wrote 20 novels 16 collections of short stories, 25 plays and 189 articles.

Somerset Maugham achieved commercial success with high sales of his books, successful productions of plays and film adaptations of his novels. Despite his success on a writer, he could not attract much respect from the critics and his peers. He lacked *Lyrical quality* and the use of metaphor in his works. Anthony Burgess and George Orwell were influenced by Maugham's writing style. Maugham died on 16, December 1965 at the age of 91.

Maugham's stories are marked by irony, satire and wit. His style was simple and economical. His novel *The Razor's Edge* is considered his magnum opus. In 1938, Maugham had met the great spiritual holy man Sri Raman Maharshi in his ashram. His novel *The Razor's Edge* is the story of an American Spiritual seeker who meets the Guru Shri Ganesha and undergoes ecstatic mystical experience. The novel portrays Maugham's personal spiritual experience in the presence of Sri Raman Maharshi through the American protagonist of the novel Larry Darrell who was traumatized by his experiences of World War I and sets off in search of some transcendent meaning of life. The novel shows Maugham's spiritual inclination and belief that true happiness lies within and not outside in the material world.

5.2 ABOUT THE STORY

The Verger is a story with an unexpected twist at the end. The protagonist Albert Edward Foreman was a Verger at St Peter's Church, Neville

Square. He had been the verger there for sixteen years never thinking or imagining that he might lose his job because of his ignorance of reading and writing. He was an illiterate man who could not read or write but as a verger, he worked quite successfully never entertaining any complaint about his work and behavior. However, everything in the World is not what it looks like. A new Vicar is appointed at St.Peters who comes to know that Foreman could not read or write. He called Foreman and made an unpleasant announcement that he should either learn to read or write soon or resign from his job.

The new Vicar believed that illiteracy can be dangerous at a church like St.Peters. The new vicar was a red-faced energetic man in his early forties who always fussed over everything in the church with his finger in every pie. The new Vicar admitted that Foreman had managed his work quite well de-

spite his lack of literacy but now it was necessary for him to learn to read and write as it was a matter of prudence as well as of principle.

Foreman politely replied that it was too late for him to learn to read and write. He said

“I’m too old a dog to learn new tricks”. Foreman lost his job and walking along the street, he had an intense desire to smoke to relieve his depressive mood. He could not find any tobacco shops in the street. An idea came to his mind to open a tobacco shop in the street. Soon he opened his first shop and within a few years, he had a number of shops and lot of money. He became a successful business man as a tobacconist.

Maugham introduces irony at the end of the story. The irony makes the story reach its climax. Foreman had already become a successful businessman with more than 10 tobacco shops of his ownership. He went to the bank for his regular depositing of earned money. The bank manager told him that he had already deposited around thirty thousand pounds with the bank. The bank manager advised him to invest his money to earn a better rate of interest. Foreman said that he did not want to invest in stocks and shares but he had a full trust in the banker. He added that he would leave it all in his hands. The manager told him that Foreman required to sign some papers for transfer.

Foreman told the manager that he did not know how to read and write. The manager was utterly surprised thinking it was the most extraordinary thing he had ever heard. He started at Foreman as if he were a prehistoric monster. He asked: “Good God, man, what would you be now if you had been able to?” Foreman replied, “I’d be verger of St. Peter’s, Melville Square.

The reply hardly contains ten words but all of them are sharp and thought-provoking. Had Foreman been, literate, he would have been nothing but the verger at St. Peter’s all his life. It is generally taken for granted that literacy brings success but in case of Foreman, had he accepted the new vicar’s order to read and write, he would still have been a verger, success and literacy have no connection at all. Educated persons turn out to be officers, clerks, teachers, or employees in general. Uneducated even illiterate persons turn out to be successful businessmen, industrialists and powerful politicians. In fact, it is the uneducated people who rule the entire society. It is an irony that knowledge is always enslaved to power and wealth.

Somerset Maugham never tried to teach moral lessons in his stories. On the contrary, he always turned the moral lessons upside down in ironical endings of his stories.

5.3 TEXT OF THE STORY

There had been a christening that afternoon at St. Peter’s, Neville

Square, and Albert Edward Foreman still wore his verger’s gown. He kept his new one, its folds as full and stiff though it were made not of alpaca but of perennial bronze, for funerals and weddings (St. Peter’s, Neville Square, was a church much favoured by the fashionable for these ceremonies) and now he wore only his second-best. He wore it with complacency for it was the dignified symbol of his office, and without it (when he took it off to go home) he had the disconcerting sensation of being somewhat insufficiently clad. He took pains with it; he pressed it and ironed it himself. During the sixteen years he had been verger of this church he had had a succession of such gowns, but he had never been able to throw them away when they were

worn out and the complete series, neatly wrapped up in brown paper, lay in the bottom drawers of the wardrobe in his bedroom.

The vergger busied himself quietly, replacing the painted wooden cover on the marble font, taking away a chair that had been brought for an infirm old lady, and waited for the vicar to have finished in the vestry so that he could tidy up in there and go home. Presently he saw him walk across the chancel, genuflect in front of the high altar and come down the aisle; but he still wore his cassock.

“What’s he ‘anging about for?” the vergger said to himself “Don’t ‘e know I want my tea?”

The vicar had been but recently appointed, a red-faced energetic man in the early forties, and Albert Edward still regretted his redecessor, a clergyman of the old school who preached leisurely sermons in a silvery voice and dined out a great deal with his more aristocratic parishioners. He liked things in church to be just so, but he never fussed; he was not like this new man who wanted to have his finger in every pie. But Albert Edward was tolerant. St. Peter’s was in a very good neighbourhood and the parishioners were a very nice class of people. The new vicar had come from the East End and he couldn’t be expected to fall in all at once with the discreet ways of his fashionable congregation.

“All this ‘ustle,” said Albert Edward. “But give ‘im time, he’ll learn.”

When the vicar had walked down the aisle so far that he could address the vergger without raising his voice more than was becoming in a place of worship he stopped.

“Foreman, will you come into the vestry for a minute. I have something to say to you.”

“Very good, sir.”

The vicar waited for him to come up and they walked up the church together.

“A very nice christening, I thought sir. Funny ‘ow the baby stopped cryin’ the moment you took him.”

“I’ve noticed they very often do,” said the vicar, with a little smile.

“After all I’ve had a good deal of practice with them.”

It was a source of subdued pride to him that he could nearly always quiet a whimpering infant by the manner in which he held it and he was not unconscious of the amused admiration with which mothers and nurses watched him settle the baby in the crook of his surpliced arm. The vergger knew that it pleased him to be complimented on his talent.

The vicar preceded Albert Edward into the vestry. Albert Edward was a trifle surprised to find the two churchwardens there. He had not seen them come in. They gave him pleasant nods.

“Good afternoon, my lord. Good afternoon, sir,” he said to one after the other.

They were elderly men, both of them and they had been churchwardens almost as long as Albert Edward had been vergger. They were sitting now at a handsome refectory table that the old vicar had brought many years before from Italy and the vicar sat down in the vacant chair between them. Albert

Edward faced them, the table between him and them and wondered with slight uneasiness what was the matter. He remembered still the occasion on which the organist had got in trouble and the bother they had all had to hush things up. In a church like St. Peter's, Neville Square, they couldn't afford scandal. On the vicar's red face was a look of resolute benignity but the others bore an expression that was slightly troubled.

"He's been naggin' them he 'as," said the vergger to himself. "He's jockeyed them into doin' something, but they don't like it. That's what it is, you mark my words."

But his thoughts did not appear on Albert Edward's clean cut and distinguished features. He stood in a respectful but not obsequious attitude. He had been in service before he was appointed to his ecclesiastical office, but only in very good houses, and his deportment was irreproachable. Starting as a page-boy in the household of a merchant-prince he had risen by due degrees from the position of fourth to first footman, for a year he had been single-handed butler to a widowed peeress and, till the vacancy occurred at St. Peter's, butler with two men under him in the house of a retired ambassador. He was tall, spare, grave and dignified. He looked, if not like a duke, at least like an actor of the old school who specialised in dukes' parts. He had tact, firmness and self-assurance. His character was unimpeachable.

The vicar began briskly. "Foreman, we've got something rather unpleasant to say to you. You've been here a great many years and I think his lordship and the general agree with me that you've fulfilled the duties of your office to the satisfaction of everybody concerned."

The two churchwardens nodded.

"But a most extraordinary circumstance came to my knowledge the other day and I felt it my duty to impart it to the churchwardens. I discovered to my astonishment that you could neither read nor write."

The vergger's face betrayed no sign of embarrassment.

"The last vicar knew that, sir," he replied. "He said it didn't make no difference. He always said there was a great deal too much education in the world for 'is taste."

"It's the most amazing thing I ever heard," cried the general. "Do you mean to say that you've been vergger of this church for sixteen years and never learned to read or write?"

"I went into service when I was twelve sir. The cook in the first place tried to teach me once, but I didn't seem to 'ave the knack for it, and then what with one thing and another I never seemed to 'ave the time. I've never really found the want of it. I think a lot of these young fellows waste a rare lot of time readin' when they might be doin' something useful."

"But don't you want to know the news?" said the other churchwarden.

"Don't you ever want to write a letter?"

"No, me lord, I seem to manage very well without. And of late years now they've all these pictures in the papers I get to know what's goin' on pretty well. Me wife's quite a scholar and if I want to write a letter she writes it for me. It's not as if I was a bettin' man."

The two churchwardens gave the vicar a troubled glance and then looked

down at the table.

“Well, Foreman, I’ve talked the matter over with these gentlemen and they quite agree with me that the situation is impossible. At a church like St. Peter’s Neville Square, we cannot have a verger who can neither read nor write.”

Albert Edward’s thin, sallow face reddened and he moved uneasily on his feet, but he made no reply.

“Understand me, Foreman, I have no complaint to make against you. You do your work quite satisfactorily; I have the highest opinion both of your character and of your capacity; but we haven’t the right to take the risk of some accident that might happen owing to your lamentable ignorance. It’s a matter of prudence as well as of principle.”

“But couldn’t you learn, Foreman?” asked the general.

“No, sir, I’m afraid I couldn’t, not now. You see, I’m not as young as I was and if I couldn’t seem able to get the letters in me ‘ead when I was a nipper I don’t think there’s much chance of it now.”

“We don’t want to be harsh with you, Foreman,” said the vicar. “But the churchwardens and I have quite made up our minds. We’ll give you three months and if at the end of that time you cannot read and write I’m afraid you’ll have to go.”

Albert Edward had never liked the new vicar. He’d said from the beginning that they’d made a mistake when they gave him St. Peter’s. He wasn’t the type of man they wanted with a classy congregation like that. And now he straightened himself a little. He knew his value and he wasn’t going to allow himself to be put upon.

“I’m very sorry sir, I’m afraid it’s no good. I’m too old a dog to learn new tricks. I’ve lived a good many years without knowin’ ‘ow to read and write, and without wishin’ to praise myself, self-praise is no recommendation, I don’t mind sayin’ I’ve done my duty in that state of life in which it ‘as pleased a merciful providence to place me, and if I could learn now I don’t know as I’d want to.”

“In that case, Foreman, I’m afraid you must go.”

“Yes sir, I quite understand. I shall be ‘appy to ‘and in my resignation as soon as you’ve found somebody to take my place.”

But when Albert Edward with his usual politeness had closed the church door behind the vicar and the two churchwardens he could not sustain the air of unruffled dignity with which he had borne the blow inflicted upon him and his lips quivered. He walked slowly back to the vestry and hung up on its proper peg his verger’s gown. He sighed as he thought of all the grand funerals and smart weddings it had seen. He tidied everything up, put on his coat, and hat in hand walked down the aisle. He locked the church door behind him. He strolled across the square, but deep in his sad thoughts he did not take the street that led him home, where a nice strong cup of tea awaited; he took the wrong turning. He walked slowly along. His heart was heavy. He did not know what he should do with himself. He did not fancy the notion of going back to domestic service; after being his own master for so many years, for the vicar and churchwardens could say what they liked, it was he that had run St. Peter’s, Neville Square, he could scarcely demean himself by accept-

ing a situation. He had saved a tidy sum, but not enough to live on without doing something, and life seemed to cost more every year. He had never thought to be troubled with such questions.

The vergers of St. Peter's, like the popes Rome, were there for life. He had often thought of the pleasant reference the vicar would make in his sermon at evensong the first Sunday after his death to the long and faithful service, and the exemplary character of their late verger, Albert Edward Foreman. He sighed deeply. Albert Edward was a non-smoker and a total abstainer, but with a certain latitude; that is to say he liked a glass of beer with his dinner and when he was tired he enjoyed a cigarette. It occurred to him now that one would comfort him and since he did not carry them he looked about him for a shop where he could buy a packet of Gold Flakes. He did not at once see one and walked on a little. It was a long street with all sorts of shops in it, but there was not a single one where you could buy cigarettes.

"That's strange," said Albert Edward. To make sure he walked right up the street again. No, there was no doubt about it. He stopped and looked reflectively up and down.

"I can't be the only man as walks along this street and wants a fag," he said. "I shouldn't wonder but what a fellow might do very well with a little shop here. Tobacco and sweets, you know."

He gave a sudden start.

"That's an idea," he said. "Strange 'ow things come to you when you least expect it."

He turned, walked home, and had his tea.

"You're very silent this afternoon, Albert," his wife remarked.

"I'm thinkin'," he said.

He considered the matter from every point of view and next day he went along the street and by good luck found a little shop to let that looked as though it would exactly suit him. Twenty-four hours later he had taken it and when a month after that he left St. Peter's, Neville Square, for ever, Albert Edward Foreman set up in business as a tobacconist and newsagent. His wife said it was a dreadful come-down after being verger of St. Peter's, but he answered that you had to move with the times, the church wasn't what it was, and 'enceforward he was going to render unto Caesar what was Caesar's.

Albert Edward did very well. He did so well that in a year or so it struck him that he might take a second shop and put a manager in. He looked for another long street that hadn't got a tobacconist in it and when he found it and a shop to let, took it and stocked it. This was a success too. Then it occurred to him that if he could run two he could run half a dozen, so he began walking about London, and whenever he found a long street that had no tobacconist and a shop to let he took it. In the course of ten years he had acquired no less than ten shops and he was making money hand over fist. He went round to all of them himself every Monday, collected the week's takings and took them to the bank.

One morning when he was there paying in a bundle of notes and a heavy bag of silver the cashier told him that the manager would like to see him. He was shown into an office and the manager shook hands with him.

“Mr. Foreman, I wanted to have a talk to you about the money you’ve got on deposit with us. D’you know exactly how much it is?”

“Not within a pound or two, sir; but I’ve got a pretty rough idea.”

“Apart from what you paid in this morning it’s a little over thirty thousand pounds. That’s a very large sum to have on deposit and I should havethought you’d do better to invest it.”

“I wouldn’t want to take no risk, sir. I know it’s safe in the bank.”

“You needn’t have the least anxiety. We’ll make you out a list of absolutely gilt-edged securities. They’ll bring you in a better rate of interest than we can possibly afford to give you.”

A troubled look settled on Mr. Foreman’s distinguished face. “I’ve never ‘ad anything to do with stocks and shares and I’d ‘ave to leave it all in your ‘ands,” he said.

The manager smiled. “We’ll do everything. All you’ll have to do next time you come in is just to sign the transfers.”

“I could do that all right, said Albert uncertainly. “But ‘ow should I know what I was signin’?”

“I suppose you can read,” said the manager a trifle sharply.

Mr. Foreman gave him a disarming smile.

“Well, sir, that’s just it. I can’t. I know it sounds funny-like but there it is, I can’t read or write, only me name, an’ I only learnt to do that when I went into business.”

The manager was so surprised that he jumped up from his chair.

“That’s the most extraordinary thing I ever heard.”

“You see it’s like this, sir, I never ‘ad the opportunity until it was too late and then some’ow I wouldn’t. I got obstinate-like.”

The manager stared at him as though he were a prehistoric monster.

“And do you mean to say that you’ve built up this important business and amassed a fortune of thirty thousand pounds without being able to read or write? Good God, an, what would you be now if you had been able to?”

“I can tell you that sir,” said Mr. Foreman, a little smile on his still aristocratic features. “I’d be verger of St. Peter’s, Neville Square.”

- W. Somerset Maugham

5.4 KEY WORDS

Verger	: an official in a church who acts as an attendant
Alpaca	: a long haired domesticated animal valued for wool
Perennial	: Everlasting, ceaseless
Complacence	: Self-satisfaction, contentment
Disconcerting	: Disturbing, perturbing
Clad	: Clothed, dressed
Wrapped	: Covered, overjoyed, delighted
Succession	: Sequence, series, progression
Infirm	: Frail, weak, debilitated

Vestry	: A room attached to a church used as an office
Genuflect	: To bend, to lower one's body for worship
Aisle	: Passage between rows of seats in a church, theatre train or aircraft
Cassock	: Full length gown worn by Christian clergy
Energetic	: Full of Vigour, Energy
Predecessor	: Former, previous holder post, precursor
Aristocratic	: High-born, well-bred, elite
Parishioner	: An inhabitant of a particular church parish
Fuss	: A display of unnecessary excitement, activity or interest
Finger in every Pie	: Interference in all matters.
Tolerant	: Open minded, unprejudiced, broad-minded
Congregation	: A group of people assembled for religions work-shop
Whimper	: Cry, moan, groan, wail
Amuse	: Entertain, gladden, make laugh
Crook	: A bend in something, curve/wicked person
Surplice	: A loose linen vestment worn over a cassock by the clergy
Hush up	: Silenced, quieted, gagged
Scandal	: Unethical behavior, outrageous, wrongdoing
Resolute	: Determined, purposeful, firm
Be dignity	: Kindness or tolerance toward others.
Slightly	: a little, moderately to a small degree
Jockeyed	: Struggle by every available means to achieve something
Obsequious	: Servile, submissive
Ecclesiastical	: Related to church or clergy
Deportment	: Posture, gait, way of standing
Inapproachable	: not accessible, difficult to approach
Page-boy	: a page in a hotel or attending a bride at wedding
Footman	: A servant whose duty is to admit visitor and wait at a table
Butler	: Chief servant of house
Peeress	: a woman holding the rank of a peer
Unimpeachable	: Not able to be doubted/unquestionable
Embarrassment	: a feeling of self-consciousness or shame/uneasiness
Knack	: talent , skill, ability, capability, aptness
Glance	: a brief, hurried look, take a quick look
Lamentable	: deplorable, unfortunate, regrettable

Ignorance	: Lack of knowledge, unfamiliarity with
Prudence	: Wisdom, understanding
Principle	: proposition, concept, idea, system of belief
Brash	: Unpleasantly rough or jarring to the senses
Providence	: Fate, destiny, nemesis, God's will
tidy up	: An act of tidying something
Stroll	: Wander, roam, amble, saunter
Notion	: Idea, belief, concept, thought
Abstainer	: One who keeps away from one who refrains from doing something
Reflectively	: Thoughtfully in pondering state
Tobacconist	: tobacco-seller
Dreadful	: Terrible, frightful, horrible
Come-down	: loss of status, mortification, demotion
Anxiety	: Feeling of worry, apprehension, unease
Gilt-edged	: Reliable stocks for investment
Distinguished	: Famed, renowned, dignified
Disarming	: Famed, renowned, dignified
Trifle	: unimportant thing/trivial matter, inessential
Obstinate	: Stubborn, headstrong, unyielding
Prehistoric	: Primitive, primeval, ante-diluvia
Monster	: Large, ugly, frightening imaginary creature
Amass	: accumulate, collect, stockpile

5.5 SUMMARY OF THE STORY

Albert Edward Foreman was a Verger at St. Peter's church, Neville Square. He started his career as a foot-man rising to the position of the verger. He was an honest, sincere and hard-working man. He loved his work and took pride in his position. People of the parish respected him for his sincerity and positive attitude. He was self-confident but with humility. However, a new vicar who was appointed at the church told him that he should learn to read and write as it was necessary for every churchman to be literate. Foreman said that it was too late for him to learn to read and write. The Vicar told him that in that case, he would lose his job. Foreman lost his job and while walking home from church, he had a desire to smoke. He could not find a single tobacconist shop. He found a vacant shop on rent. He started his new career as a tobacconist and newsagent. The shop ran quite well and he took another shop in a lane where there was no tobacco shop. Then he walked down the streets of London and started tobacco shops wherever he noticed that there was no tobacco shop. In ten years, he became the owner of ten tobacco shops earning huge income.

One day, he went to the bank to deposit money. The bank manager suggested to him to invest some of his money in stocks and shares for higher rate of returns. Foreman said that he knew nothing about share market and he wanted his money to be safe. The bank manager was a trust worthy man who assured

Foreman that he would manage his investment in such a way that he would get higher rate of returns without any risk. Foreman agreed and the manager requested him to sign some papers. Foreman replied that he was illiterate and did not know how to read and write.

The bank manager was shocked and surprised because he had never seen a person who had earned so much money despite total lack of literacy. He asked Foreman what he would here become if he had been a literate man. Foreman replied that he would have been the verges of St.Peter's church.

5.6 CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE STORY

Somerset Maugham (1874-1965) was a well-known novelist, playwright and short story writer. His works are characterized by clear unadorned style, cosmopolitan settings and a shrewd understanding of human nature. He travelled extensively and during the World War I he worked as a secret agent. His reputation rests, mainly on his novels *of Human Bondage* (1915), *The Moon and the Sixpence* (1919), *Cakes and Ale* (1930) and *The Razor's Edge* (1944). *The Razor's Edge* is considered his magnum opus. It is a novel about a young American war Veteran who goes to India in search of a satisfying way of life. He met a great spiritual saint Shri Ganesha from whom he achieved peace and inner harmony. He was profoundly impressed by his silence, tranquility, renunciation and resignation.

Somerset Maugham's short-stories often have twisted ending in an ironical manner Maugham often presented funny sides of life which is full of contradictions. Generally we believe that honest people prosper and the wicked suffer but in his famous story *Ant and the Grasshopper*, he depicts Tom who led prodigal life become a rich man at the end of the story as he marries a wealthy widow who dies and leaves all her property and luxurious mansions in inheritance to her husband. Tom lived like a grasshopper enjoying life extravagantly. His elder brother George lived an honest and hard-working life like an industrious ant. He retires from his work and lives a mediocre life. Maugham takes a different turn from the famous fable of Aesop that bad deeds might not always be punished and good deeds many often go unrewarded.

The Verger is a story of Albert Edward Foreman who had been the Verger at St.Peter's Church, Neville square for 16 years. One day, a new Vicar was appointed there who fired Foreman for being illiterate. He told him to learn to read and write but Foreman refused to do so saying that he was too old to learn new tricks. Finally he left his job and while walking back home, he had an intense desire to smoke a cigarette. There were no tobacco shops in the streets. An idea came to his mind that he should open a tobacco shop in the street. Soon he opened a tobacco shop which ran very well. In a few years, he opened other shops and learned a lot of money. Within ten years he had as many as ten shops in London. He deposited his accumulated income in a bank which rose to thirty thousand pounds or more.

Foreman became a successful business man. Once he visited the bank and the bank manager suggested that he should invest his money into shares and stocks to get higher returns. Foreman wanted to take no risk but the bank manager told him that he would manage his investment prudentially incurring no risk. Foreman trusted the bank manager and told him to undertake

necessary procedure. The bank manager said that he would have to sign some papers. The climax in the story comes when Foreman said that he was quite illiterate and he could neither read nor write. The bank manager was shocked and surprised. He told Foreman that he had become a wealthy businessman despite his being illiterate. He asked him what he would have been if he had been a literate man. Foreman replied that he would have been nothing but a vergger at St. Peter's church had he been a literate person. Foreman's reply can be taken as denouement in the story.

The author wants to suggest that illiteracy is not equal to ignorance. It is a sarcastic remark which carries a proven truth that formal education literacy has nothing to do with practical success in the world. There is a story that the topper in the class became a teacher and his classmate who was a back bencher became the minister of education. We find many such examples in the world around us.

The story is about church wardens and therefore we find many words related to church such as vicar, vestry, cassock, surplice, congregation, parishioners, ecclesiastical etc.

The story has been told from the third person singular, the omniscient narrator. The tone of the narrator is detached and impassive. The over-all mood of the story is peaceful without any tension or conflict. Even when Foreman is dismissed from the job, he remains calm and composed and soon finds out what he should do to maintain his family. As the vergger, he had done his job honestly and sincerely never entertaining any complaint from the parishioners. He loved his job and his positive attitude made him quite popular. He was fired from his job but soon he became a successful businessman on account of his practical, calm and placid temperament. He was quite egoless, gentle and agreeable. These qualities place him on a higher pedestal than the vicar and other church people. The story even poses a question whether so-called religious people possess spiritual virtues like love, compassion equanimity and sobriety.

The author has used the simple past and past perfect tenses in his narration. There are themes like appearance, opportunity, dedication, independence and humility. The author highlights the strength of human spirit that can triumph over obstacles through courage, determination and dedication.

Somerset Maugham wrote more than hundred stories and burnt about fourteen as Winston Churchill warned that they violated the official secrets Act. Maugham's writing career extended over 65 years and he insisted that a writer should be judged by his best work. He placed himself in the first of the second-raters.

In Maugham's essay on the short story he says that the essence of short story is story telling. Maugham preferred to tell stories that were sparked by incidents he had witnessed or heard about. Many of his stories are like dramatized maxims. He had skeptical world view that turns popular beliefs upside down. He was fascinated by men and women who were destroyed by code of honor, an appetite or a passion. He liked characters who were gay amusing and unscrupulous.

The narrator in Maugham's short stories is uninvolved and impersonal. He often presents cynical or pessimistic world view quite dispassionately.

Maugham believed religion was an illusion to help humanbeing endure the accident of existence. Maugham was a great traveler who sojourned in the most parts of the world. His extensive travel gave him wider experiences of human nature. He wrote ordinarily like a speaker in prose. He had gone the renders authentic pleasure in words, settings and depiction of his characters. His dialogues are realistic and befitting the characters and situations. Twisted ending makes his stories entertaining and pleasurable. Even if all things perish, there will remain story tellers who will entertain the listeners near the fireplace at home or campfire in the forest. Maugham firmly held that true beauty of short stories lies in story telling that entertains and shocks the readers with a surprising, ironical twist.

5.7 THE TONE OF THE STORY

Somerset Maugham was a great story teller. Good story telling requires dispassionate and impersonal tone. In his stories there is always a predominant tone of irony and objective treatment of characters and incidents. In his theory and practice of the short story, Maugham shifts the whole emphasis of craftsmanship away from the point of ‘single effect’ to the other basic question of who is the narrator. The typical Maugham situation is built around a sense of disillusion which comes from “Seeing through” the veil of outward appearances. The underlying theme of most of his stories is that the reality is usually different from outward appearances.

The over-all mood of the story is free of conflict or tension. Foreman loses the job of the Verger but he is not utterly depressive. He remains calm and composed and solved the problem of the loss of job by starting a tobacco shop. Even after earning a lot of money, he shuns arrogance, vanity and ambitiousness. Maugham was a rational man who looked at things unemotionally and intellectually. Though he was interested in spirituality, his attitude always remained analytic and dispassionate. This is a true of his treatment of themes, character and incidents.

5.8 THEMES OF THE STORY

In *The Verger* there are themes of appearance opportunity, dedication, independence and humility. Foreman is a dedicated verger who is quite conscious about appearance. For example, he prefers to keep his new verger’s gown for occasions like wedding and funerals. The new vicar too thinks that appearance is important. He believes that literacy is important for church officials and other church people. He thinks that the ability to read and write for the church people reflects the reputation and prestige of St.Peter church. Foreman who is unable to read and write had to lose his job as the Verger, despite his honestly, sincerity and hard work. For the Vicar, literacy is important because it adds to the appearance of cultured and sophisticated behaviors.

Another important theme in *The Verger* is opportunity. Foreman loses his job but he remains calm and composed turning the loss of job into an opportunity for new enterprise. He sets up, tobacco a successful businessman owning ten tobacco shops in London. He seized the opportunity turning defeat into victory. He was a dedicated verger who earned the love and respect of the parishioners. His deep sense of sincerity and dedication makes his successful as a businessman also. Maugham seems to suggest that mere literally

is not an asset. It is dedication and steadfastness that earn success and reputation.

After losing his job, Foreman decided to set up an independent business. He became his own boss with no servility to anyone. He decided to be and wearable to nobody but himself. When the new Vicar told him to learn to read and write, he politely refused to do so. He said that he was too old a dog to learn new tricks. The new Vicar told him that if he failed to learn to read and write, he would have to lose his job. Foreman abandoned his job without blaming the new Vicar. However he shows his independent, free-willed nature.

Despite his independence and freewill, Foreman is never arrogant and vain. Humility is one of his greatest virtues. Though he amasses a lot of wealth, his healthiness and success never go to his head. When the bank manager asks him to sign papers, he says that he did not know how to read and write. The bank manager was utterly shocked and surprised. He asked Foreman what he would have been if he had been a literate man. Foreman humbly replied that he would be the Verger at St. Peter's Church if he had been able to read and write. He does not ridicule literacy but shows his humility about his past life and the present worldly success. He displays his ingenuity and flexibility in his life.

5.9 STYLE AND DICTION OF THE STORY

The style of Somerset Maugham in his stories is simple, lucid and ironic. He usually wrote in the prose without figurative language. His style lacked poetic beauty but its dominating trait was effective story-telling. He avoided romantic and emotional narration. He relied more on rational attitude towards life and the world. He said about himself that. "I have never pretended to be anything but a story teller". Most of his stories are narrated in third person singular in an impersonal and dispassionate manner.

5.10 THE TITLE OF THE STORY

The title of the story is *The Verger* the church official who worked dedicatedly. He is illiterate man without formal education. He does not claim to be intelligent or knowledgeable. He believes in performing his duties honestly and sincerely. He is quite popular as the Verger among the parishioners. When the new Vicar insists that he should learn to read and write, he refuses to do so politely. He had to lose his job and he starts his tobacco shop earning huge amount of money. When he goes to the bank, the bank manager asks him to sign papers for transfer of money into better investment schemes. He says that he did not know how to read and write. The bank manager was surprised and he asked what he would have been if he had been literate. He replied "I would still be the Verger at St. Peters".

5.11 MAUGHAM'S VIEWS ON SHORT STORY

Maugham believed that the literature finds truest and fullest expression in the essayer the short story. He says in his essay on the short story that it is an innate nature of men to tell tales. Regarding the form Maugham says that he liked stories with beginning, middle and end. For him, lucidity, euphony and simplicity were the important traits of a good short story. He stressed on reality rather than imagination. He wrote his stories based on what he had seen or heard. He dramatized maxims and popular proverbs turning them upside down these characters are suggested by someone he had known.

In his short stories, the narrator is a thin disguise for the author. In his book *The Summing Up*, he wrote about topic related to writing and his life. The book reflects his deep insights about his career as a writer and his views on writing.

Maugham studies medicine and worked in hospital where he came in contact with suffering people. This has a profound effect on his life and writing. Many writers wrote about the virtue of self-suffering and how it ennobled the suffers. Maugham did not agree to it. He fell it was exactly the opposite and he wrote about its negative impact.

Regarding creative process, he wrote that he let things simmer in his brain for longtime before putting them on paper. The ultimate aim of literature is to entertain and not to teach. He believed that no reading is worthwhile unless one enjoy it. Maugham said that a good short-story must represent expression on the following levels.

1. Narrative level of characters and events.
2. Emotional level: nature of emotional experience.
3. Interpretative level: Meaning beneath the apparent conflict
4. Cultural level: elements that generalize the events and make them applicable to the world of realities.

Check Your Progress: 1

5.12 ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS IN BRIEF.

- (i) What was Albert Foreman’s profession?
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- (ii) What kind of person was Albert Foreman?
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- (iii) What were the feelings of Foreman about the new Vicar?
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(iv) Why did the new Vicar want Foreman to leave his job?

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(v) What happened to Foreman when he walked out of the church?

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(vi) How did Foreman turn into a successful businessman?

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(vii) How was the bank manager surprised?

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(viii) What did foreman say to the bank manager in the end of the story?

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(ix) What is ironic twist in the end of the story?

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(x) Why did Foreman refuse to learn to read and write?

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(xi) What are the virtues of Albert Foreman that made him successful verger and then a wealthy business man?

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Check Your Progress: 2

5.13 CHOOSE THE CORRECT OPTION FROM GIVEN BELOW.

- (1) Albert Edward Foreman was a _____ at St. Peter's.
(a) Vicar (b) Priest
(c) Warden (d) Verger
- (2) Foreman had been the verger at St. Peter's for
(a) ten years (b) fifteen years
(c) sixteen years (d) twenty years
- (3) Foreman kept his new gown for _____
(a) Weddings (b) Funerals
(c) christening (d) weddings and funerals
- (4) The new Vicar was in his early _____
(a) forties (b) fifties
(c) thirties (d) sixties
- (5) Foreman had started his career as a _____
(a) warden (b) vicar
(c) verger (d) pageboy
- (6) The new vicar told Foreman that he should learn
(a) To address the audience

- (b) to look after the church
 (c) to read and write
 (d) To help the vicar
- (7) The new vicar told Foreman that if he did not learn to read and write.
 (a) he would have to suffer
 (b) he would have to leave the job
 (c) he would be punished
 (d) he would be transferred to another church
- (8) Albert Edward was _____
 (a) a smoker (b) a teetotaler
 (c) a non-smoker (d) a vegetarian
- (9) As Foreman walked out of the church he had a desire _____
 (a) to drink (b) to eat
 (c) to erg (d) to smoke
- (10) As Foreman found no tobacco shop in the streets, he decided to open _____ there
 (a) a medical store (b) a shoe store
 (c) a tobacco shop (d) a sweet shop
- (11) Within ten years, Foreman could set up _____ tobacco shop in London.
 (a) ten (b) twenty
 (c) hundred (d) fifty
- (12) During ten year, Foreman earned _____
 (a) ten thousand pound (b) twenty thousand pound
 (c) forty thousand pound (d) thirty thousand pound

5.14 Let Us Sum Up

In this unit you have,

- learn the most popular form of Literature
- learn the importance of plot, setting in the story

5.15 BOOKS SUGGESTED

Damon Knight *Creating Short Fiction: The Classic Guide to Writing Short Fiction*

Sharon Sorenson *How to Write Short Stories* 1991

Nancy Day *How to Write Winning Short Stories* 2015

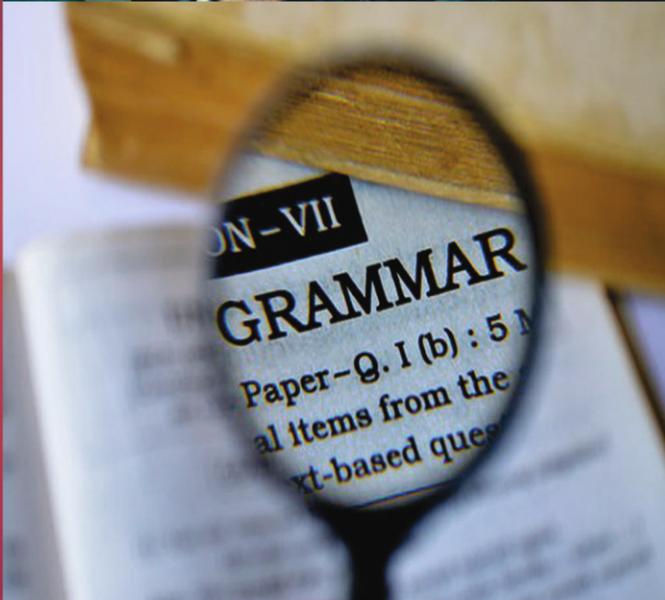
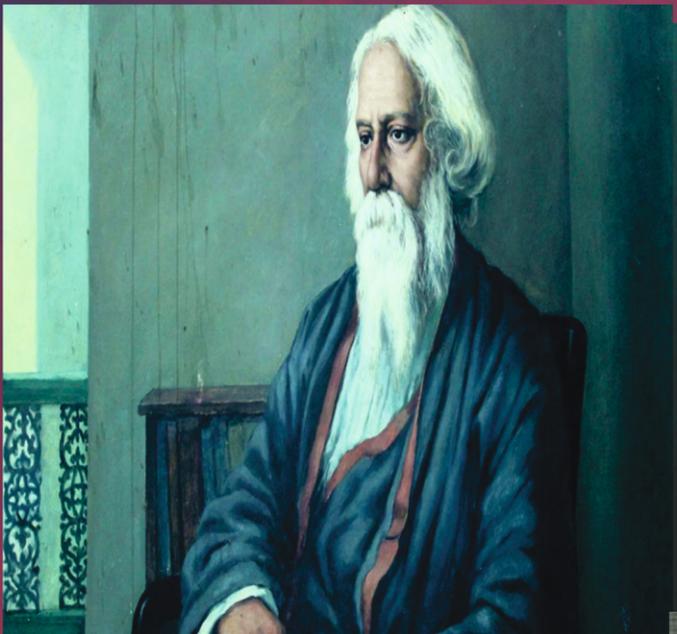
Answers

Check Your Progress: 2

1. (D), 2. (C), 3. (D), 4. (A), 5. (C), 6. (C), 7. (B), 8. (C), 9. (D),
 10. (C), 11. (A), 12. (D)

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Message for the Students

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Open University is the only state Open University, established by the Government of Gujarat by the Act No. 14 of 1994 passed by the Gujarat State Legislature; in the memory of the creator of Indian Constitution and Bharat Ratna Dr. Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar. We stand at the seventh position in terms of establishment of the Open Universities in the country. The University provides as many as 54 courses including various Certificates, Diplomas, UG, PG, as well as Doctoral degree, to strengthen Higher Education across the state.



On the occasion of the birth anniversary of Babasaheb Ambedkar, the Gujarat government secured a quiet place with the latest convenience for University, and erected a building with all the modern amenities named 'Jyotirmay' Parisar. The Board of Management of the University has greatly contributed to the making of the University and will continue to this by all the means.

Education is the perceived capital investment. Education can contribute more to improving the quality of the people. Here I remember the educational philosophy laid down by Shri. Swami Vivekananda:

“We want the education by which, the character is formed, strength of mind is increased, the intellect is expand and by which one can stand on one's own feet”.

In order to provide students with qualitative, skill and life oriented education at their threshold, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Open University is dedicated to this very manifestation of education. The university is incessantly working to provide higher education to the wider mass across the state of Gujarat and prepare them to face day to day challenges and lead their lives with all the capacity for the upliftment of the society in general and the nation in particular.

The university, following the core motto 'स्वध्यायः परमम् तपः' does believe in offering enriched curriculum to the student. The university has come up with lucid material for the better understanding of the students in their concerned subjects. With this, the university has widened scope for those students who are not able to continue with their education in regular/conventional mode. In every subject a dedicated team for Self Learning Material, comprising of Programme advisory committee members, content writers and content and language reviewers, has been formed to cater the needs of the students.

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Prof. (Dr.) Ami Upadhyay
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THE SHROUD
- MUNSHI PREMCHAND
(TRANSLATED FROM URDU BY FRANCES W. PRITCHETT)

: STRUCTURE :

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- 6.2 About the Story**
- 6.3 Text of the Story**
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- 6.6 Critical Analysis of the Story**
- 6.7 Tone of the Story**
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- 6.13 Let Us Sum Up**
- 6.14 Books Suggested**
- Answers**

6.0 OBJECTIVES

In this Unit, We shall

- Learn famous story of the prominent Writer Munshi Premchand
- Themes, style, tone and critical analysis of the story
- Cultural elements of the story

6.1 ABOUT THE SHORT STORY WRITER

Munshi Premchand whose original name was Dhanpat Rai was born on 31 July 1886 in a village Lamhi near Varanasi in the present state of Uttar Pradesh. His father was a clerk in the post office. Premchand's parents died young: his mother died when Dhanpat was seven and his father died when he was fourteen. Premchand was left responsible for his stepmother and step siblings. He was married at the age of fifteen but the marriage did not succeed. His wife and his step mother quarreled frequently. His stepmother was also very quarrelsome and she created discord in the family.

As Premchand's first marriage failed, he married again to a child widow named Shivarani. She supported Premchand in his struggles for life and creative writing. Premchand faced financial problems all his life. He tutored students and worked as a teacher in different schools in various towns and cities. He passed his B.A. with English, Persian and history. Later, he worked as a school inspector.

Premchand wrote in Urdu contributing to various magazines and literary journals. He was a voracious reader and also worked as a book seller, editor

and press owner. He began to write under the pen name *Nawab Rai* in Urdu but in 1909, his book *Soz-e-Watan* was banned by the British Government as a seditious work. Then he started writing under the pen name 'Premchand'. In 1914, he switched to Hindi from Urdu writing as it was difficult to find publishers in Urdu.

By 1919, Premchand had published four novels which included his first novel *Seva Sadan*. In 1921 he attended a meeting at Gorakhpur where Mahatma Gandhi asked people to resign from government jobs as protest against the British rule.

In 1923, he quit his job and decided to focus on his literary career. He started a printing press called *Sarswati Press*. In 1924, his novel *Rangbhumi* was published, followed by *Nirmala* in 1925, *Pratigya* in 1927 and *Gaban* in 1928. As his printing press suffered a great financial loss, he went to Bombay to try his luck in Hindi Film Industry. He wrote script for the film *Mazdoor* but he did not like commercial environment of Bombay Film Industry. He therefore left Mumbai and returned to Banaras. Premchand was elected as the first President of the Progressive writers Association in Lucknow in 1936. He died on October 8, 1936.

Munshi Premchand wrote more than three hundred short-stories, fourteen novels many essays, letters, plays and translated works. Some of his works have been translated into English and Russian after his death. His major works include: *Seva Sadan*, *Rangbhumi*, *Nirmala*, *Gaban*, *Karmabhoomi*, *Godan* and collection of short stories. His notable short stories include *Kafan*, *Gupt Dhan*, *Poos ki Raat*, *Lottery*, *Do Bail ki Katha*, *Idgah*, *Thakur ka Kuan*, *Boodhi Kaaki*, *Namak Ka Daroga*, *Bade Bhai Sahab*, *Nasha*, *Panch Parmeshwar* etc.

Premchand's works are marked by his profound social concern and social realism. His works depict a rationalistic outlook. He exposed so-called religious hypocrites and wealthy exploiters of Indian society. His novels and short stories focused on national and social issues like child widows, prostitution, poverty, feudal system, corruption and freedom movement. He was influenced by Gopal Krishna Gokhle, Lok Manya Tilak and Mahatma Gandhi.

Munshi Premchand lifted contemporary literature from emotionalism and romanticism to realistic representation of social problems of rural India.

6.2 ABOUT THE STORY

The Shroud (1936) is the last story by Munshi Premchand. The title of the story is *Kafan* in original Hindi story. The story we shall study here is translated version in English by Frances W. Pritchett. This is one of the most appealing stories by Premchand that depicts the harshness and morbid comic effect. The story is about two Dalits Ghisu, the father and his son Madhav. The only female character is Budhia, Madhav's pregnant wife who undergoes intense labour pain and dies. This Dalit family is utterly poor and suffers from abject poverty and starvation. Premchand has presented a vivid heart rending picture of rural India which is devastated by cruel, inhuman caste system and untouchability.

The story starts with conversation between Ghisu and Madhav who are utterly lazy pain idlers. They are talking about Budhia who is undergoing a severe labour pain inside the hut. Ghisu and Madhav are sitting outside the

hut greedily devouring stolen potatoes. Madhav is unwilling to go inside the hut and help his wife fearing that his father might devour a larger share of roasted potatoes. Ghisu then recounts in detail a feast that he had attended twenty years ago at a landowner's house. It was a wedding procession of the landowner's daughter. The family fed all invitees with puris, raita, chutney, vegetables, sweets, yogurt and paan at the end. Ghisu had eaten so much that he could not stand up and staggered off lying on his blanket. Ghisu remarks that new people do not spend much on weddings and religious festivals as they have turned economic and thrifty.

Madhav listens to his father's vivid account of the feast with vicarious pleasure. Budhia writhes in pain while the father son duo sleeps unconcerned about her. The next morning Budhia dies and both start crying. The arrangements for the cremation are to be made but they had no money to arrange for the funeral rites. They go to the zamindar who gives them two rupees contemptuously deriding them for their laziness. The landlord flung money towards Ghisu without even looking at him. Other people also gave them some money for cremation and the amount went up to five rupees.

They went to buy the cloth to wrap the dead body of Budhia for cremation but they thought that it was of no use to burn the shroud with the dead body, as when she was alive, she did not have even a rag to cover her body. They went to a wine shop, ordered for puris, meat stew, spiced liver and fried fish along with a bottle of wine. They drank a lot getting fully intoxicated. They said that Budhia would certainly go to heaven because even though she died, she fulfilled the greatest desire of their lives, the desire of drinking wine and eating the best food. Ghisu consoled his son by saying that Budhia was liberated from the net of illusion of worldly pain and pleasures.

At the end, they start singing, dancing and then collapse on the ground due to over drunkenness.

The Shroud is a controversial story that has been interpreted from different perspectives. Munshi Premchand understates the miseries of the down trodden hiding his own personal opinions. The story is descriptive and analytical rather than prescriptive and didactic.

6.3 TEXT OF THE STORY

At the door of the hut father and son sat silently by a burnt-out fire; inside, the son's young wife Budhiya lay in labor, writhing with pain. And from time to time such a heart-rending scream emerged from her lips that they both pressed their hands to their hearts. It was a winter night; everything was drowned in desolation. The whole village had been absorbed into the darkness.

Ghisu said, "It seems she won't live. She's been writhing in pain the whole day. Go on – see how she is."

Madhav said in a pained tone, "If she's going to die, then why doesn't she go ahead and die? What's the use of going to see?"

"You're pretty hard-hearted! You've enjoyed life with her for a whole year – such faithlessness to her?"

"Well, I can't stand to see her writhing and thrashing around."

It was a family of Chamars, and notorious in the whole village. If Ghisu

worked for one day, then he rested for three. Madhav was such a slacker that if he worked for an hour, then he smoked his chilam for an hour. Thus nobody hired them on. If there was even a handful of grain in the house, they both swore off working. When they'd fasted for a couple of days, then Ghisu climbed trees and broke off branches, and Madhav sold the wood in the market; and as long as that money lasted, they both spent their time wandering idly around. *When their hunger grew intense, they again broke off branches, or looked for some work.* There was no shortage of work in the village. It was a village of farmers; for a hard-working man there were fifty jobs. But people only sent for those two when they were forced to content themselves with getting out of two men the work of one.

If only the two had been ascetics, then they wouldn't have needed any exercises in self-discipline to achieve contentment and patience. This was their very nature. Theirs was a strange life. Except for two or three clay pots, they had no goods at all in the house. Covering their nakedness with torn rags, free from the cares of the world, laden with debt – they suffered abuse, they suffered blows too, but not grief. They were so poor that without the smallest hope of repayment, people used to lend them something or other. When peas or potatoes were in season, they would dig up peas or potatoes from the fields and roast and eat them, or break off five or ten stalks of sugarcane and suck them at night. Ghisu had spent 60 years of his life in this pious manner, and Madhav, like a dutiful son, was following in his father's footsteps – or rather, was making his name even more radiant.

This time too, both were seated by the fire, roasting potatoes that they had dug up from somebody's field. Ghisu's wife had passed away long ago. Madhav's marriage had taken place the year before. Since this woman had come, she had laid the foundations of civilization in the family. *Grinding grain, cutting grass, she arranged for a couple of pounds of flour,* and kept filling the stomachs of those two shameless ones. After she came, they both grew even more lazy and indolent; indeed, they even began to swagger a bit. If someone sent for them to work, then with splendid indifference they demanded double wages. That woman was dying today in childbirth. And these two were perhaps waiting for her to die, so they could sleep in peace.

Pulling out a potato and peeling it, Ghisu said, "Go see what shape she's in. We'll have the fuss over a ghost-witch – what else! And here even the exorcist demands a rupee – *from whose house would we get one?*"

Madhav suspected that if he went into the hut, Ghisu would finish off most of the potatoes. He said, "I'm afraid to go in."

"What are you afraid of? I'm here, after all."

"Then you go and see, all right?"

"When my wife died, for three days I never even left her side. And then, won't she be ashamed in front of me? I've never seen her face – and today I should see her naked body? She won't even have bodily ease: if she sees me, she won't be able to thrash around freely."

"I'm thinking, if a child is born – what then? Dried ginger, brown sugar, oil – there's nothing at all in the house."

"Everything will come. If Bhagwan gives a child – those people who now aren't giving a paisa, will send for us and give us things. I've had nine sons.

There was never anything in the house, but this is how we managed every time.”

A society in which those who labored night and day were not in much better shape than these two; a society in which compared to the peasants, those who knew how to exploit the peasants’ weaknesses were much better off – in such a society, the birth of this kind of mentality was no cause for surprise. We’ll say that compared to the peasants, Ghisu was more insightful; and instead of joining the mindless group of peasants, he had joined the group of clever, scheming tricksters. Though indeed, he wasn’t skillful in following the rules and customs of the tricksters. Thus while other members of his group became chiefs and headmen of villages, at him the whole village wagged its finger. But still, he did have the consolation that if he was in bad shape, at least he wasn’t forced to do the back-breaking labor of the peasants, and others didn’t take improper advantage of his simplicity and voicelessness.

Pulling out the potatoes, they both began to eat them burning hot. They had eaten nothing since the day before. They were too impatient to wait till the potatoes cooled. Both burned their tongues repeatedly. When the potatoes were peeled, their outer parts didn’t seem so extremely hot. But the moment the teeth bit into them, the inner part burned the tongue and throat and roof of the mouth. Rather than keep that ember in the mouth, it was better to send it quickly along inward, where there was plenty of equipment for cooling it down. So they both swallowed very fast, although the attempt brought tears to their eyes.

Then Ghisu remembered a landowner’s wedding procession, in which he had taken part 20 years before. The repelion that had been vouchsafed to him in that feast was a memorable event in his life, and even today its memory was fresh. He said, “I’ll never forget that feast. Never since then have I had that kind of food, or such a full stomach. The girl’s family fed puris to everyone. As much as they wanted! Great and small, everyone ate puris – ones made with real ghi! Chutney, raita, three kinds of green vegetables, a flavorful stew, yoghurt, chutney, sweets. How can I tell you now what relish there was in that feast! There was no limit. Whatever thing you want, just ask! And however much you want, eat! People ate so much, ate so much, that nobody could even drink any water. And there the servers were setting hot, round, sweet-smelling pastries before you! You refuse, saying you don’t want it. You push away the tray with your hand. But that’s how they are – they just keep on giving it. And when everybody had wiped their mouths, then everybody got a pan as well. But how could I be in any shape for a pan? I couldn’t stand up. I just staggered off and lay down on my blanket. He had a heart as big as the ocean, that landowner!”

Enjoying the story of these grand festivities, Madhav said, “If only somebody would give us such a feast now!”

“As if anybody would feast anybody now! That was a different time. Now everybody thinks about economy – ‘don’t spend money on weddings, don’t spend money on religious festivals!’. Ask them – what’s this ‘saving’ of the poor people’s wealth? There’s no lack of ‘saving’. But when it comes to spending, they think about economy!”

“You must have eaten 20 or so puris?”

“I ate more than 20.”

“I would have eaten up 50.”

“I couldn’t have eaten less than 50. I was hale and hearty. You’re not half of what I was!”

After eating, they drank some water, covered themselves with their dhotis, curled up, and went to sleep right there by the fire, as if two gigantic serpents lay coiled there.

And Budhiya was still moaning.

In the morning, when Madhav went into the hut and looked, his wife had grown cold. Flies were buzzing on her face. Her stony eyes had rolled upward. Her whole body was covered with dust. In her stomach, the baby had died.

Madhav came running to Ghisu. Then they both together began loudly lamenting and beating their breasts. When the neighbors heard the weeping and wailing, they came running. And following the ancient custom, they began to console the bereaved.

But this wasn’t the occasion for an excessive show of grief. They had to worry about the shroud, and the wood. Money was as scarce in their house as meat in a raptor’s nest.

Father and son went weeping to the village landlord. He hated the very sight of their faces. A number of times he had beaten them with his own hands – for theft, or for not coming to work as they had promised. He asked, “What is it, Ghisu, why do you weep? Nowadays we don’t even see you around. It seems that you no longer want to live in the village.”

Ghisu fell prostrate on the ground, and said with tear-filled eyes, “Master, I’m in great trouble! Madhav’s wife passed away last night. All day she was writhing in pain, Master; we two sat by her bed till midnight. Whatever medicines we could give her, we did. But she slipped away. Now we have no one to care for us, Master – we’re devastated – our house is destroyed! I’m your slave. Now who but you will take care of her final rites? Whatever money we had at hand was used up on medicines. If the Master will show mercy, then she’ll have the proper rites. To whose door should I come except yours?”

The Landlord Sahib was a compassionate man. But to show compassion to Ghisu was to try to dye a black blanket. He felt like saying, “Get out of here! *Keep the corpse in your house and let it rot!* Usually you don’t come even when you’re called – now when you want something, you come and flatter me! You treacherous bastard! You villain!” But this was not the occasion for anger or revenge. Willingly or not, he pulled out two rupees and flung them down. But he didn’t open his lips to say a single word of consolation. He didn’t even look in Ghisu’s direction – as if he’d discharged a duty.

When the Landlord Sahib gave two rupees, then how could the village merchants and money-lenders have the nerve to refuse? Ghisu knew how to beat the drum of the landlord’s name. One gave two paisas, another gave four paisas. In an hour, Ghisu had collected the sum of five rupees in ready cash. Someone gave grain, someone else gave wood. And in the afternoon Ghisu and Madhav went to the market to get a shroud. Meanwhile, people began to cut the bamboo poles, and so on.

The sensitive-hearted women of the village came and looked at the body. They shed a few tears at its helplessness, and went away.

When they reached the market, Ghisu said, “We’ve got enough wood to burn her, haven’t we, Madhav?”

Madhav said, “Yes, there’s plenty of wood. Now we need a shroud.”

“So let’s buy a light kind of shroud.”

“Sure, what else! While the body is being carried along, night will come. At night, who sees a shroud?”

“What a bad custom it is that someone who didn’t even get a rag to cover her body when she was alive, needs a new shroud when she’s dead.”

“After all, the shroud burns along with the body.”

“What else is it good for? If we’d had these five rupees earlier, we would have given her some medicine.”

Each of them inwardly guessed what the other was thinking. They kept wandering here and there in the market, until eventually evening came. [Sometimes they went to one cloth-seller’s shop, sometimes to another. They looked at various kinds of fabric, they looked at silk and cotton, but nothing suited them.] The two arrived, by chance or deliberately, before a wine-house; and as if according to some prearranged decision, they went inside. For a little while they both stood there in a state of uncertainty. [Then Ghisu went to the counter and said, “Sir, please give us a bottle too.”] *Ghisu bought one bottle of liquor, and some sesame sweets.* [After this some snacks came, fried fish came]. And they both sat down on the verandah and [peacefully] began to drink.

After drinking a number of cups in a row, both became elevated.

Ghisu said, “What’s the use of wrapping her in a shroud? After all, it would only be burned. Nothing would go with her.”

Looking toward the sky as if persuading the angels of his innocence, Madhav said, “It’s the custom of the world – why do these same people give thousands of rupees to the Brahmins? Who can tell whether a reward does or doesn’t reach them in another world?”

“Rich people have wealth – let them waste it! What do we have to waste?”

“But what will you tell people? Won’t people ask where the shroud is?”

Ghisu laughed. “We’ll say the money slipped out of my waistband – we searched and searched for it, but it didn’t turn up. [People won’t believe it, but they’ll still give the same sum again.]”

Madhav too laughed at this unexpected good fortune, *at defeating destiny in this way*. He said, “She was very good, the poor thing. Even as she died, she gave us a fine meal.”

More than half the bottle had been finished. Ghisu ordered two sers of puris, a meat stew, and spiced liver and fried fish. There was a shop right next to the wine-house. Madhav ran over and brought everything back on two leaf-plates. The cost was fully one and a half rupees. Only a few paisa were left.

Both then sat eating puris, with all the majesty of a tiger in the jungle pursuing his prey. They had no fear of being called to account, nor any concern about disgrace. They had passed through these stages of weakness long ago.

Ghisu said in a philosophical manner, “If my soul is being pleased, then won’t she receive religious merit?”

Madhav bowed his head in pious confirmation. “Certainly she’ll certainly receive it. Bhagwan, you are the knower of hearts – take her to Heaven! We’re both giving her our heartfelt blessing. The feast I’ve had today – I haven’t had its equal in my whole life!”

After a moment a doubt arose in Madhav’s heart. He said, “How about it – we’ll go there too someday, won’t we?”

Ghisu gave no answer to this childish question. *He looked reproachfully at Madhav.* [He didn’t want the thought of heavenly matters to interfere with this bliss.]

“When she asks us, there, why we didn’t give her a shroud, what will you say?”

“Oh, shut up!”

“She’ll certainly ask.”

“How do you know that she won’t get a shroud? Do you consider me such a donkey? I’ve lived in this world for 60 years – and have I just been loitering around? She’ll get a shroud, and [a very good one] – *a much better than we would have given*.”

Madhav was not convinced. He said, “Who will give it? You’ve gobbled up the rupees! [It’s me she’ll ask – I’m the one who put the sindur in the parting of her hair.]”

Ghisu grew irritated. “I tell you, she’ll get a shroud. Why don’t you believe me?”

“Who will give the money – why don’t you tell me?”

“The same people will give it who gave it this time. But they won’t put the rupees into our hands. *And if somehow we get our hands on them, we’ll sit here and drink again just like this, and they’ll give the shroud a third time.*”

As the darkness deepened and the stars glittered more sharply, the tumult in the wine-house also increased. One person sang, another babbled, another embraced his companion, another pressed a glass to his friend’s lips. Joy was in the atmosphere there. Intoxication was in the air. How many people becomes “an ass with a glass”! *They came here only to taste the pleasure of self-forgetfulness.* More than liquor, the air here elevated their spirits. The disaster of life seized them and dragged them here. And for a while they forgot whether they were alive or dead – or half-alive.

And these two, father and son, were still sipping with relish. Everyone’s eyes had settled on them. How fortunate they were! They had a whole bottle between them.

After he had finished eating, Madhav picked up the leaf-plate of leftover puris and gave it to a beggar who was standing there looking at them with hungry eyes. And for the first time in his life he felt the pride and delight and thrill of giving.

Ghisu said, “Take it – eat your fill, and give her your blessing. She whose earnings these are has died, but your blessing will certainly reach her. Bless her with every hair on your body – these are the payment for very hard labor.”

Madhav again looked toward the sky and said, “She’ll go to Heaven – she’ll become the Queen of Heaven!”

Ghisu stood up, and as if swimming in waves of joy he said, “Yes, son, she’ll go to Heaven! She never tormented anyone, she never oppressed anyone; even while dying, she fulfilled the greatest desire of our lives. If she doesn’t go to Heaven, then will those fat rich people go – who loot the poor with both hands, and go to the Ganges to wash away their sin, and offer holy water in temples?”

This mood of piety too changed; variability is the special quality of intoxication. It was the turn of despair and grief. Madhav said, “But the poor thing suffered a great deal in her life. Even her death was so painful!” Covering his eyes with his hands, he began to weep, [and sobbed loudly].

Ghisu consoled him: “Why do you weep, son? Be happy that she’s been liberated from this net of illusion. She’s escaped from the snare; she was very fortunate that she was able to break the bonds of worldly illusion so quickly.”

And both, standing there, began to sing, “Temptress! Why do your eyes flash, temptress?”

The whole wine-house was absorbed in the spectacle, and these two drinkers, deep in intoxication, kept on singing. Then they both began to dance – they leaped and jumped, fell down, flounced about, gesticulated, [strutted around]; and finally, overcome by drunkenness, they collapsed.

- Translated by Frances. W. Pritchett

6.4 KEY WORDS

Writhe	: Wriggle, jolt, make twisting of body (in pain)
Desolation	: a state of complete emptiness, barrenness
Absorbed	: engrossed, fully occupied, gripped
Hard-hearted	: cruel, merciless
Notorious	: infamous, ill-famed, known for bad qualities
Slacker	: idler, one who avoids work, lazybone
Chilam	: smoking pipe made of clay
Swear off	: abjure, promise to abstain from
Idly	: lazily/ in an aimless, lazy manner
Intense	: very powerful, acute, potent, profound
Ascetic	: austere, self-denying, non-indulgent, self-disciplined, self-controlled, one who controls one’s feelings in contentment, satisfaction
Laden with debt	: debt-ridden, burdened with debt
Stalks	: stems, twigs (To stalk: pursue stealthily)
Pious	: sacred, holy, virtuous
Radiant	: brilliant, illuminated, shining, luminous
Roast	: cook by prolonged exposure to heat in an oven or over fire
Shameless	: barefaced, brazen
Swagger	: stride, walk or behave in an arrogant manner

Exorcist	: one who is able to cast out the evil
Suspect	: doubt, have suspicion, to be skeptical
Thrash ground	: to make wild movements
Peasant	: farmer, farm-worker
Insightful	: perceptive, intuitive, penetrative
Trickster	: A person who cheats or swindles other
Consolation	: give condolences to, comfort at a time of grief
Peel	: remove the outer cover of fruit, vegetables etc.
Ember	: live coal, cinder, burning coal or wood
Swallow	: gulp down, gobble up, stuff down
Repletion	: the state of being full, well supplied
Vouchsafe	: give someone in a gracious manner, favour with
Stew	: a dish of meat or vegetables cooked in liquid.
Yogurt	: semi solid Souris food prepared from milk fermented
Relish	: enjoy, delight in, be pleased by
Pastries	: baked dishes of cream, flour, jam, fruits etc.
Stagger off	: lurch, walk unsteadily, stumble, falter
Feast	: celebration meal, banquet, large celebratory meal
Moan	: groan, cry in pain, lament
Buzz	: low humming, continuous sound, murmuring sound
Wail	: lament, cry loudly, whine, high-pitched sound
Lament	: cry loudly, a passionate expression of sorrow
Bereaved	: to be deprived of a close relation or friend though death
Prostrate	: lying stretched on the ground with face downward
Corpse	: dead body of a human being
Flatter	: over-praise, lavish praise or compliments to some one
Rag	: torn piece of cloth, old tattered clothes
Fabric	: cloth, textile material
Liquor	: wine spirit, alcoholic beverage
Snacks	: small quick meal or something eaten between meals
Waistband	: a strip of cloth round the waist sewn on trousers or skirt, girdle, sash
Ser	: old weight measurement of almost half a kilo
Pursue	: follow, chase, trail, track
Prey	: quarry, game, kill
Confirmation	: verification, testimony, authentication
Reproachfully	: disappointedly, disparagingly
Interfere	: get in the way of, disrupt, stand in the way of

Gobble up	: eat greedily or hastily in large pieces
Sindur	: Red lead powder applied on forehead and on the partings of hair by Hindu woman
Tumult	: disorderly agitation, hubbub, din, confused state.
Intoxication	: a strong feeling of excitement or happiness the condition of being drunk
Sip	: drink slowly in small portions
Thrill	: excitement, exhilaration, stimulation
Torment	: agony, suffering, torture, anguish, distress
Oppress	: maltreat, abuse, tyrannize, persecute
Variability	: lack of consistency or fixed pattern
Liberate	: make free, emancipate, rescue, release from slavery
Illusion	: hallucination, fantasy, deceptive appearance
Flounce	: March, strut, move in exaggerated manner
Gesticulate	: Use gestures, make signs or signals
Strut around	: walk around in a stiff manner swagger
Overcome	: to conquer, win, overpower
Collapse	: fall down, crumble, slump down

6.5 SUMMARY OF THE STORY

The Shroud is a famous story by Munshi Premchand. It is about two chamars (Dalits) Ghisu and Madhav. Ghisu is the father and Madhav is the son. Both are great idlers who do not like to work. They always avoided work and rested all the time. Madhav's wife Budhia was pregnant and suddenly she had the labour pain that made her cry loudly whole night. Ghisu and Madhav sat outside the hut eating stolen potatoes after roasting them in fire. They had no money or food or clothes. They were clad in rags. Poverty had made them quite indifferent and insensitive. Budhia's constant whining did not affect them much. In fact they thought that her death would liberate her from suffering. They probably thought that her death would also relieve them from their problems.

The next morning, Budhia died and they began to lament loudly. Soon, people came to console them. Ghisu and Madhav had no money to arrange for Budhia's funeral rites. They went to the local Zamindar to beg money. The Zamindar reproached them for their laziness but gave them two rupees. Other people also gave some money. Thus they could collect five rupees which was quite a good amount for them. They went to purchase Kafan (shroud) but they found it quite costly and unnecessary. They thought that it was an evil custom to wrap a dead woman in such a cloth who had not been able to wear any proper clothes all her life.

So, they decided to spend money on wine and food. They drank a lot of wine and ate nice food which they had never enjoyed during their life. They ate puris, meat stew spiced liver and fried fish. Intoxicated and over-drunk, they sang, danced and collapsed on the ground. They said that Budhia's soul would

go to heaven as she had earned great punya (virtue or merit) by providing them the best food and drink at the time of her death. Though she died, it was due to her death that they could enjoy the most delicious food and strong intoxicating wine that made them forget all the miseries of the world.

The story ends in a shocking manner depicting the realistic picture of poverty-ridden people of rural India. Poverty is a curse that makes people cruel, heartless and inhuman. In Sanskrit, it is said “Budhukshito Kim Na Karoti Paapam” (The hungry and starving people commit heinous crimes)

6.6 CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE STORY

The Shroud (Kafan) was the last story written by Munshi Premchand. It was published in 1936. The story we are dealing with is a translated version in English by Frances W. Pritchett. Frances W. Pritchett has taught South Asia Literature at Columbia University since 1982. She had taught and written about South Asian literature especially Urdu poetry. She has written about Ghalib of Mirza Ghalib and Urdu poetry. There are several English translation of *Kafan* by Munshi Premchand but Frances W. Pritchett’s translation is more authentic which does justice to the original short story.

Translation is a complex process and it involves translating cultural elements like proverbs, idioms, metaphor, colloquial language etc. of the source language to the target language. Premchand’s writing style is simple and he used dialect and colloquial expressions. Most of his stories deal with rural India and the poor, deprived people that inhabit there. Pritchett’s translation has succeeded in carrying the cultural elements of the original story *Kafan*. The characters of the story are from deprived class called charmars. They were treated as untouchables who lived in a small hut outside the village. They were poverty ridden and sustained themselves by begging left over food.

Though they were poor and starving, they did not like to work. They worked very little resting all the time. The farmers of the village needed them for labour work in their fields. They were ready to pay reasonable charges but they shunned work by making some excuses. Probably, utter poverty had made them quite indifferent, careless and insensitive Ghisu and Madhav are father son duo. They are very lazy and negligent. They are victims of caste discrimination which is the greatest evil in India. Their poverty is the result of this evil. Munshi Premchand has presented social reality of India dispassionately without censoring or favoring anyone or anything.

The story begins with Madhav’s wife Budhia writhing in labour pain inside the hut while Ghisu and Madhav are sitting outside the hut talking and devouring roasted potatoes which they have stolen from someone’s field. Ghisu recalls and recounts a wonderful feast he had enjoyed twenty years ago. While Budhia is crying in unbearable agony, Madhav and Ghisu are lost in the world of vicarious pleasure.

The next morning, they find Budhia dead with flies buzzing around her dead body. Ghisu and Madhav start lamenting loudly. The neighbours come and console them. Ghisu and Madhav have no money to arrange for Budhia’s funeral. Therefore they go to Zamindar to beg for money. The Zamindar gives them two rupees deriding their laziness contemptuously. Other people also give them some money for Budhia’s cremation. The amount they receive goes up to five rupees and they go to purchase the shroud. They look for

cheap shroud but they feel that it was no use to waste money on shroud as it was to be burnt with the dead body of Budhia who had always covered her body in rags all her life.

In the evening, they go to a wine shop and buy a bottle of liquor and snacks. They sat down on the verandah and began to drink. They ate puris, meat stew, spiced liver and fried fish relishing delicious spicy food with strong, intoxicating liquor.

Madhav remarked that even as she died, she gave them a nice meal. Ghisu remarked in a philosophical manner that Buddha had earned religions merit (punya) by feeding them after the end of her life and therefore her soul would certainly go to heaven. Soon darkness descended and stars began to shine in the sky. The father son duo sang, danced and babbled out of intoxication. Ghisu said that Budhia had liberated herself from the net of illusion of worldly sufferings. The people witnessed the spectacle absorbingly as the duo leaped and jumped madly. Finally, they collapsed on the ground losing their consciousness in inebriated state.

Kafan (The Shroud) is the most controversial story that invited numerous interpretations by the critics. Premchand keeps his own opinions hidden. His objective and impassioned outlook makes the story highly impressive. The story raises questions that go unanswered. The story is more descriptive than prescriptive. There is no derision of Ghisu and Madhav's laziness because in a caste ridden society, hard work and honest labour do not raise the depressed people from animal level. Readers dare not condemn them because their behavior and attitude are shaped by the evils of caste system and exploitative society. There is bestiality on one side and hypocrisy on the other. Premchand's style is totally devoid of poetic quality. It is full of colonialism and slangs. Bhisma Sahni finds the story as one that strikes "the note of deep anguish and tragedy" Premchand's stories depict stark realities of oppressed classes of rural India. There are no comments, sermons or rhetorical embellishments. The story is both realistic as well as symbolic. It raises several questions about contemporary social economic and cultural systems that prevailed in India.

Munshi Premchand's stories depict the oppressed lives of the Dalits have been interpreted by Dalit writers and critics from the Dalit point of view. Like Mahatma Gandhi, Premchand had profound sympathy for the deprived people but at the same time he favoured 'Varna' (caste) system which was the root cause of untouchability and exploitation of the oppressed people. Many Dalit critics feel that *Kafan* was an anti-Dalit story which derided and ridiculed the life of Dalits in the story. During 1930's North India was amply influenced by Gandhian ideology rather than Ambedkar's discourse on Dalits and caste system. Munshi Premchand was profoundly influenced by Gandhian ideology of political liberation and social equality. Mahatma Gandhi prescribed transformation of hearts to remove untouchability and inequality. He made untouchability a moral issue rather than social and political issue.

However Munshi Premchand was the first writer among the upper caste writers who voiced the sufferings of the Dalits and their liberation from the evil of untouchability and poverty. *Kafan* (the shroud) depicts exploitation, dehumanization and isolation suffered by the Dalits in rural India. Their weaknesses were the result of stark poverty and starvation they underwent rather

than vices nurtured deliberately. Their laziness and insensitivity can be juxtaposed with the hypocrisy and exploitative attitude of the upper-class Hindu society. In *Kafan* the responsibility towards Budhia is bracketed against hunger and desire for intoxication and drunkenness. Ghisu and Madhav forget all sufferings and miseries of their life as they sing and dance in abandoned manner with amnesia caused by heavy drinking.

Munshi Premchand presented his views on fiction in his essay *Upanyas* in 1925. His views reflect the naturalistic views of Balzac the famous French writer. Premchand believed that fiction as a form of literature explores the variety of human species. He said that all human beings are made from the same mould but environment creates a variety. Individuals differ from one another in degrees. A fiction writer needs to understand human psychology and represent their peculiarities. He remarked, "The splendor of the novelist lies in the creation of characters that captivate readers with their good conduct and ideas."

For Munshi Premchand plot is equally important as characters. An ideal character is not just an abstraction but real and life-like. The ideal character must have a realistic narrative that constitutes a good coherent plot. Therefore an ideal must exist beside the real on a parallel ground. Though Ghisu and Madhav are low caste people, they are also the part of the Hindu Caste system. Premchand has used religious vocabulary in the story in the conversation between Ghisu and Madhav. They refer to heaven (swarg), religious merit (punya), Bhagwan (God) etc. in their conversation. Even the name *Madhav* is the name of Lord Krishna according to the Hindu customs and rituals. All these things show that the Dalits were the part of the Hindu society but the caste hierarchy placed them at the lowest level turning them into untouchable outcasts. The satiric barbs are not directed only at Hindu religious hypocrisy and exploitation but at religious hypocrisy and exploitation in general.

Munshi Premchand gives a vivid picture of the poverty-ridden family of Ghisu, Madhav and Budhia. He avoids sentimentalism in his description of their poverty, starvation and miserable life. There is a realistic blending of tragic and comic elements in the story that make the readers spell-bound.

6.7 TONE OF THE STORY

Tone in literature refers to the attitude of the writer towards the subject and audience (readers). Tone is generally conveyed through the choice of words or the view point of a writer on a particular subject. The tone can be formal, informal, serious, comic, sarcastic, sad or cheerful. Premchand's general tone is realistic and sarcastic. In the story *Kafan* (The shroud) the tone is morbid and borders on disgusting. From the point of view of the famous Indian theory of 'Rasa' the story is dominated by *Bibhatsa Rasa* (the emotion of disgust), *Karuna Rasa* (Tragic) and *Hasya* (comic). Munshi Premchand is a realistic writer who always avoided emotionalism and imagination in his writing. He dealt with realities of life of the poor and the deprived. Ghisu and Madhav are low caste father and son who do not like to work. They suffer from poverty and starvation. Madhav's wife dies of labour pain because of the negligence of her husband and her father-in-law. While she was dying, they were talking about food. After Budhia's death they beg for money to arrange for her funeral rites. They get five rupees which they spend on food and wine. Budhia's dead body lay unattended inside the hut and Ghisu and Madhav sign and

dance in drunken state. At the end of the story, they collapse on the ground unconsciously falling in an abyss of amnesia of the miseries they experienced throughout their life.

6.8 THEMES OF THE STORY

The themes of *The Shroud* are poverty starvation inhuman caste system, untouchability, feudalism, hypocrisy of the upper-class people, indolence and idleness of the poor people etc. Munshi Premchand presents the vivid picture of rural India where caste system dominates lives of the people. Ghisu and Madhav are Chamars-the low caste people who live in a hut outside the village. The author depicts them as slothful duo who always shirks work and labour. The upper caste people always exploited the poor low caste people by paying them cheap wages for their Ghisu and Madhav were labeled as useless crooked fellows as they defied the upper caste people's demand for their labour work.

Even if they had a handful of grain in the house, they swore off work. After spending two or three days without food, Ghisu would climb a tree and break some twigs for firewood. Madhav would go into the village and sell it to arrange for some food. Ghisu and Madhav never worried about future. Ghisu said that the peasants exploited them more if they surrendered to them in a servile manner therefore; they never allowed the peasants to take undue advantage of their simplicity and innocence. They suffered from poverty and deprivation but they were free from worries and wants. They had nothing except two pots of clay as worldly possessions in their house. They covered nakedness of their bodies with tattered rags. Madhav was married a year ago and his wife Budhia was pregnant. She suffered from labour pain thrashing and screaming in intense agony. Ghisu and Madhav sat outside the hut eating roasted potatoes without caring for Budhia who writhed in pain inside the hut. Even Madhav did not go inside the hut to see his wife thinking that his father would devour his share of roasted potatoes. Here we can see the de-humanizing effect of poverty.

While they were eating potatoes, Ghisu described his memorable experience of eating delicious dishes twenty years ago in a wedding party of a wealthy man's daughter. He had entered so much that he collapsed on the ground at the end. Food is a source of pleasure for everyone. Even the description of food by Ghisu made Madhav's mouth water giving him a vicarious pleasure. Food and drink, always made them forget all the miseries of their life. Poverty is directly connected with lack of food and starvation. Ghisu and Madhav had become negligent and insensitive because of starvation and hunger. Their attitude is inhuman and beastly but Munshi Premchand does not condemn their animalistic behavior as their vice. He treats it as the inscrutable outcome of poverty and starvation. Thus, food and hunger also constitute an important theme of the story.

Caste system is the greatest evil India has been facing for thousands of years. In India, caste system is not based on occupation or work but on birth. A son of a Brahmin is entitled to social prestige and reputation while the son of a shudra (low caste) has to suffer from social discrimination, public humiliation or even untouchability. As the low caste people were denied education and opportunities for growth, they remained poor and oppressed. They faced poverty, deprivation and starvation. They were ostracized from the main-

stream society. Munshi Premchand depicts the social evil of caste system in India quite vividly and dispassionately. He treats the theme of caste system without favoring or condemning it. The upper caste people were often cruel, exploitative and insensitive. They oppressed the low caste people treating them as subalterns. The low caste people could never rise above their dismal position and therefore they became lazy, dirty and depressive. They ate dirty food like flesh of dead animals or left-over given by the upper class people. The rich people were often hypocritical snobs with arrogant attitude, loose character and immoral practices. Indolence of the lower caste people kept them in poverty and servility. Munshi Premchand in many of his stories has successfully presented this evil of caste system very realistically.

Munshi Premchand was a progressive writer who was against imperialistic exploitation and colonialism. He also fought against poverty and caste system that plagued the oppressed people. Some of his later writings show the influences of Gandhian ideology and the Russian Revolution. He often dealt with the themes of corruption, caste system, problem of the landless labourers and social and economic inequalities in his stories and novels. Munshi Premchand was elected as the first president of all India writers' body of Progressive Writers. He believed that good literature should be the vehicle of truth, beauty, freedom and humanity. True literature should reflect present society and the age.

6.9 STYLE AND DICTION IN THE STORY

Premchand wrote in Hindi and Urdu. His language and diction are quite simple and lucid. He used slangs and colloquial diction in his dialogues. His power of description is quite vivid and realistic. In translation too, the language is quite simple and descriptive. Premchand's narration is quite engrossing. The readers are lost in rapt attention as the story moves on *The Shroud* is a story with a sarcastic and comic tone and therefore there is ironic stance in his diction. As he believed in realism, he avoided romantic, imaginative and poetic language and style of narration.

6.10 THE TITLE OF THE STORY

The title of the original story by Premchand is *Kafan* ('The Shroud'). It is an Urdu word derived from Persian and Arabian languages. It refers to a cloth wrapped round the dead body for burial or cremation. In English, it is called *Shroud*. Munshi Premchand's original story has the title *Kafan* and in English it is *The Shroud*. The title epitomizes the tragi-comic story that deals with a low caste woman who dies of labour pain. Her husband Madhav and his father Ghisu are negligent, insensitive idlers. They collect money for her shroud from the Zamindar and other people of the village and instead of buying the shroud, they buy food and a bottle of wine. They gorge food madly and get overdrunk. Finally, they collapse on the ground in drunken state. The story has a morbid and yet comical stance that depicts the tragic fact that for the poor people, life and death are synonymous. The entire story is wrapped in the shroud of poverty and starvation.

Check Your Progress: 1

6.11 ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS IN BRIEF.

1. Why was Budhia waiting with pain?

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2. Why did Madhav not go inside the hut to help his wife?

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3. Discuss the indolent nature of Ghisu and Madhav briefly.

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4. Describe the poverty of Ghisu and Madhav.

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5. How did Budhia help the family?

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6. What did Ghisu tell Madhav about food he had enjoyed twenty years ago at a wedding procession of landowner's daughter?

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7. What happened to Budhia next morning?

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8. Whom did Ghisu and Madhav approach for money to arrange the funeral rite for Budhia?

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9. Describe the landlord's attitude towards Ghisu and Madhav.

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10. What did Ghisu say about buying the shroud? Discuss his remark about the useless custom.

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11. What did Ghisu and Madhav buy instead of shroud?

12. Why did Madhav and Ghisu believe that Budhia would go to heaven?

13. Describe the end of the story *The Shroud*.

14. Discuss briefly Munshi Premchand's attitude towards the down trodden.

Check Your Progress: 2

6.12 CHOOSE THE CORRECT OPTION FROM GIVEN BELOW.

- (1) Munshi Premchand was a _____ writer.
 (a) Realistic (b) Romantic
 (c) Surrealist (d) Classical
- (2) *The Shroud* focuses on
 (a) the condition of women
 (b) the condition of old people
 (c) caste system and poverty (d) corrupt society

- (3) Ghisu and Madhav were
- (a) land lords (b) poor peasants
(c) corrupt people (d) low caste chamar
- (4) Budhia was writhing in the pain of
- (a) stomach (b) labour
(c) fever (d) pneumonia
- (5) Ghisu and Madhav were
- (a) hard working (b) honest
(c) lazy (d) skilled workers
- (6) Ghisu and Madhav sat outside the hut and ate.
- (a) Sweets (b) Sweet potatoes
(c) Puris (d) Roasted potatoes
- (7) Madhav did not go inside the hut because
- (a) he thought that his father would eat his share of potatoes.
(b) he thought that his father would hide potatoes.
(c) he thought that his wife would have died
(d) he thought that his father would leave him
- (8) Ghisu worked for a day and rested for
- (a) three days (b) one day
(c) a week (d) five days
- (9) Madhav and Ghisu went to _____ for money to buy shroud for Budhia.
- (a) Tehsildar (b) Money lender
(c) land lord (d) Goldsmith
- (10) Ghisu remembered a great feast at a landowner's daughter's wedding procession Ghisu
- (a) ten years ago (b) twenty years ago
(c) one year ago (d) five years ago
- (11) Ghisu said to Madhav that people did not spend money on feasts because of
- (a) poverty (b) miserliness
(c) lack of saving (d) economy
- (12) The Zamindar gave _____ rupees to Ghisu and Madhav for buying the shroud.
- (a) five (b) three
(c) two (d) ten
- (13) Ghisu remarked that it was no use to cover Budhia's dead body in the shroud as
- (a) they had enough wood to burn her dead body.
(b) they had no money
(c) they did not want to spend money on it.
(d) she did not get a rag to cover her body when she was alive

- (14) Ghisu and Madhav spent money for.
(a) the shroud (b) the funeral rites
(c) feeding poor people (d) wine and food
- (15) At the end of the story Ghisu and Madhav
(a) sing bhajans (b) lament loudly
(c) collapse in drunken state (d) fall and die

6.13 LET US SUM UP

In this unit, you have studied Munshi Premchand's famous story *Kafan* translated into English by Frances. W. Pritchett titled *The Shroud*. Premchand was a progressive writer profoundly influenced by socialist ideology and Gandhian values. He has presented a very realistic picture of Indian caste system poverty, social and economic condition of rural India.

Translation by Frances Pritchett is quite effective as it provides realistic picture of the poor and deprived Dalits who suffer from poverty and exploitation but they do not suffer mutely. They protest in their own way subverting the general expectation of the upper class people.

You are advised to see the film based on Premchand's famous story *Kafan*. You can also watch the videos on 'YouTube' related to the story.

6.15 BOOKS SUGGESTED

1. Plot & Structure: Techniques and Exercises for Crafting a Plot that Grips Readers from Start to Finish By James Scott Bell
2. On Writing Well: An Informal Guide to Writing Nonfiction By William Zinsser
3. <http://www.columbia.edu>

Answers

Check Your Progress: 2

1. (A), 2. (C), 3. (D), 4. (B), 5. (C), 6. (D), 7. (A), 8. (A), 9. (C),
10. (B), 11. (A), 12. (B), 13. (D), 14. (D), 15. (C)

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: STRUCTURE :
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- 7.0 Objectives
- 7.1 About the Author
- 7.2 About the Short Story
- 7.3 Text of the Story
- 7.4 Key Words
- 7.5 Summary of the Story
- 7.6 Critical Analysis of the Story
- 7.7 Tone of the Short Story
- 7.8 Theme of the Short Story
- 7.9 Styles and Diction of the Story
- 7.10 The Title of the Story
- 7.11 Question (Answer in brief)
- 7.12 Multiple Choice Questions
- 7.13 Let Us Sum Up
- 7.14 Books Suggested

Answers

7.0 OBJECTIVES

In this story, we shall learn

- well-known short story of Gaurishankar Govardhanram Joshi (Dhumketu)
- theme, character, content and tone of the story
- critical analysis of the story
- the fact how a good story tones human emotions through the realistic portrayal of universal emotions of human love and relations.

7.1 ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Gaurishankar Govardhanram Joshi known as ‘Dhumketu’ was born in 1892 and died in 1965. He was one of the versatile Gujarati writers who wrote one of the major pioneers of Gujarati short stories (Navlika). He published 24 collections of short stories and thirty two novels plays and travelogues. His novels dealt with social and historical subjects. His major works include.

1. *Tankha* (Four Volumes of short stories) (1926)
2. *Avashesh* (1922) collection of short stories
3. *Pradeep* (Collection of short stories) (1933)
4. *Mallika Ane Biji vartao* (1937)
5. *Tribheto* (Collection of short stories) (1938)
6. *Aakashdeep* (collection of short stories) (1947)

7. *Parivesh* (collection of short stories) (1949)
8. *Anamika* (Collection of short story) (1949)
9. *Vanchhaya* (Collection of short story) (1949)
10. *Pratibimba* (Collection of short story) (1951)
11. *Vanrekha* (Collection of short story) (1942)
12. *Jaldeep* (Collection of short story) (1953)
13. *Vankunj* (Collection of short story) (1954)
14. *Vanrenu* (Collection of short story) (1956)
15. *Mangaldeep* (Collection of short story) (1957)
16. *Chandralekha* (Collection of short story) (1959)
17. *Nikunj* (Collection of short story) (1960)
18. *Sandhyarang* (Collection of short story) (1961)
19. *Sandhyatej* (Collection of short story) (1962)
20. *Vasantkunj* (Collection of short story) (1964)
21. *Chhelo Jhabakaro* (Collection of short story) (1964)

He wrote 492 short stories and 29 historical and social novels. He dealt with Chalukya Yuga and Gupta Yuga in his historical novels. He wrote a biographical work on Hemchandracharya a famous Jain scholar, critical, thinker and poet. He wrote two autobiographical works *Jivan Panth* and *Jivan Ranga* that give a vivid glimpse of his personal life and his journey as a creative writer.

In 1935, he was awarded Ranjitram Suvarna Chandrak which he refused to accept. In 1949, he received Narmad Suvarna Chandrak. He served as an adviser to the Sahitya Akademi, Delhi, for Gujarati literature in 1957. The story 'The Letter' was included in the collection of the best stories from 60 countries. This story was also included in 'Contemporary Indian Short Stories' published by Sahitya Akademi, Delhi. It was also included in the book 'The Best Loved Indian Stories of the Century' published by Penguin Books.

7.2 ABOUT THE SHORT STORY

The Letter is a remarkable story by Dhumketu. The story tells the readers how the feelings and emotions of a man should be taken care of and what would be the consequences if someone's emotions are hurt. It is the story of an old coachman waiting for the letter from his daughter with indomitable patience till he dies.

The story begins with old Coachman Ali walking towards a post office on a cold morning in tattered clothes to inquire whether the letter from his daughter has arrived. It was a cold winter dawn with chilling winds. There was a deafening silence interrupted by barks of a dog, squeal of birds and the sounds of grinding mills and women singing. People were still sleeping cozily in warm blankets movelessly but at such a time, Ali, the coachman walked toward the post office with a walking stick as his sole companion.

Ali reached the post office and sat down on the verandah as he heard the muffled chatter of the postal employees in side. For Ali, the post office was like a holy place of pilgrimage. He used to visit the post office every morning for the last four years. The postal clerk sorted letters calling the names of the

addressees and flinging the letters to the postmen. Ali had been waiting for the call of his daughter Miriam.

Then someone from inside calls his name and Ali sprang to his feet even though old age had weakened his energy. His faith and hope still energized him. However there was no letter for Ali. The postal employees often made fun of him. Disappointed; he went back to the bench. He had undergone such an ordeal for many years but he had never lost his hope.

Ali in his younger days was a skilled hunter. He never missed his aim and killed his prey. He also enjoyed fishing. As he grew older, his passion for hunting vanished and he stopped hunting. His ruthless spirit of hunting disappeared forever when his dear daughter Miriam married to a soldier and left him accompanying her husband. The agony of parting from his daughter changed him completely. He suffered a lot realizing the pangs of separation from his daughter. He always waited for the letter from his daughter hoping that she would at least write a letter to him someday. Therefore, he visited the post office every morning but so far, no letter had come. His failure to receive the letter did not kill his hope. He went home empty handed every day to return to the post office the next-day.

The post office staff poked fun and laughed at him calling him an old foolish man. They thought that he was a mad man who vainly waited for the letter from his daughter. Once, Ali did not come to the post office for several days. The post office staff was curious to know the reason. But after a few days, he came again. He had become weaker and breathed with great difficulty. There were clear signs of approaching end of his life.

Ali met the post master and asked about Miriam's letter. The post master was in a hurry and he behaved quite haughtily with the old man. Ali called a clerk and gave him five golden coins requesting him to deliver Miriam's letter to his grave if the letter arrived and if he was no more. Ali left him and he was not seen by anyone after that. One day the post master's daughter fell ill and he was eager to hear from her. He was also waiting for his daughter's letter. As he searched for his daughter's letter from the pile of letters, he saw a letter addressed to Coachman Ali.

Now he could realize his mistake. He felt that his rude behavior towards Ali was inhuman. He called Lakshmi Das, a clerk and asked him to find out Ali. The post master did not receive the letter from his own daughter, so he decided that he would hand over Ali's letter to him personally, the next morning. The next morning when he opened the door of the post office, he saw Ali leaning on his stick with tears in his eyes. There was a strange unearthly light in his eyes and the post master felt frightened suddenly, Ali disappeared and the post master was bewildered. Lakshmi Das told the post master that Ali had died three months back. That evening the post master himself went to Ali's grave and placed it on his tomb.

The post master's attitude changed. He was not sure whether Ali's spirit had come to the post office or it was his illusion only. But he realized that letters are not just pieces of papers but carriers of human hearts. He, for the first time, realized the essential human worth of a letter. He could understand Ali's plight because he too underwent the same agony of anxiety about his daughter's health. Empathy towards Ali mellowed his heart making him a better human being.

7.3 TEXT OF THE STORY

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

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

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

"Police Superintendent," a voice called sharply. The old man started at the sound, but composed himself again to wait. But for the faith and love, that warmed him, he could not have borne the bitter cold. Name after name rang out from within as the clerk read out the English addresses in the letters and flung them to the waiting postmen. From long practice he had acquired great speed at reading out the titles - Commissioner, Superintendent, Diwan Sahib, Librarian - and in flinging the letters out. In the midst of this procedure a jesting voice from inside called, "Coachman Ali!" The old man got up, raised his eyes to heaven in gratitude and stepping forward put his hands to the door.

"Gokul Bhai!"

"Yes who is there?"

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

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

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

Ali had been a clever shikari. As his skill increased so did his love for the hunt, till at last it was as impossible for him to pass a day without hunting as it is for the opium-eater to forgo his daily portion. When Ali sighted the

earth-brown partridge, almost invisible to other eyes, the poor bird, they said, was as good as in his bag. His sharp eyes saw the hare crouching. Even when the dogs failed to see the creature cunningly hidden in the yellow brown scrub, Ali's eyes would catch the sight of his ears; and in another moment it was dead. Besides this he would often go out with his friends, the fishermen. But when the evening of his life was drawing in, he left his old ways and suddenly took a new turn. His only child, Miriam married and left him. She went off with a soldier into his regiment in the Punjab, and for the last five years he had no news of this daughter for whose sake alone he dragged along a cheerless existence. Now he understood the meaning of love and separation. He could no longer enjoy the sportsman's pleasure and laughter at the bewildered terror of the young partridges bereft of their parents.

Although the hunter's instinct was in his very blood and bones, such loneliness had come into his life since the day Miriam had gone away, that now, forgetting his sport, he would become lost in the admiration of the green cornfield. He reflected deeply, and came to the conclusion that the whole universe is built up through love and that the grief of separation is inescapable. And seeing this, he sat down under a tree and wept bitterly. From that day he had risen each morning at 4 o'clock to walk to the post-office. In his whole life he had never received a letter, but with a devout serenity born of hope and faith, he persevered and was always the first to arrive.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

“Mad-men are strange people,” the postmaster said.

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

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

And everyone in the post office began to talk of lunacy. All working class people have the habit of taking periodic rests by joining in general discussion for a few minutes. After listening a while, the postmaster got up and said, “It seems as though the mad live in a world of their own making. To them perhaps we too appear mad. The mad-man’s world is rather like the poet’s, I should think!”

He laughed as he spoke the last words, looking at one of the clerks who wrote indifferent verse. Then he went out and the office became still again.

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

“Master Sahib”, he begged the post-master, “have you a letter from my Miriam?”

The postmaster wanted to get out to the country, and was in a hurry.

“What a pest you are, brother!” he exclaimed.

“My name is Ali,” answered Ali absent-mindedly.

“I know! I know! But do you think we’ve got your Miriam’s name registered?”

“Then please note it down, brother. It will be useful if a letter should come when I am not here.” For how should the villager who had spent three-quarters of his life hunting know that Miriam’s name was not worth a piece to anyone but her father?

The postmaster was beginning to lose his temper. “Have you no sense?” he cried.

“Get away! Do you think we’re going to eat your letter when it comes?” and he walked off hastily. Ali came out very slowly, turning after every few steps to gaze at the post office. His eyes were filled with tears of helplessness, for his patience was exhausted, even though he still had faith. Yet how could he still hope to hear from Miriam?

Ali heard one of the clerks coming up behind him, and turned to him.

“Brother!” he said

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

"Here, look at this!" and Ali produced an old tin box and emptied five golden guineas into the surprised clerk's hands. "Do not look so startled," he continued "They will be useful to you, and they can never be to me. But will you do one thing?"

"What?"

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

"Heaven."

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

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

"To my grave."

"What?"

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

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

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

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

money.

"Yes, sir?"

"This is for your old coachman, Ali. Where is he now?"

"I will find out, sir."

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

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

"Come in, brother Ali," he cried, handing the letter to the meek old man, bent double with age, who was standing outside. Ali was leaning on a stick, and

the tears were wet on his face as they had been when the clerk left him. But his features had been hard then, and now they were softened by lines of kindness. He lifted his eyes and in them was a light so unearthly that the postmaster shrank back in fear and astonishment.

Lakshmi Das had heard the postmaster's words as he came towards the office from another quarter. "Who

was that, sir? Old Ali?" he asked. But the postmaster took no notice of him. He was staring with wide-open eyes at the doorway from which Ali had disappeared. Where could he have gone? At last he turned to

Lakshmi Das. "Yes, I was speaking to Ali," he said.

"Old Ali is dead, sir. But give me his letter."

"What! But when? Are you sure, Lakshmi Das?"

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

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

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

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

That evening you could have seen Lakshmi Das and the postmaster walking with slow steps to Ali's grave.

They laid the letter on it and turned back.

"Lakshmi Das, were you indeed the first to come to the office this morning?"

"Yes, sir, I was the first

"Then how.... No. I don't understand...."

"What, sir?"

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

- Dhum Ketu

7.4 KEY WORDS

Dawn	: early morning
Grind	: crush, pulverize, reduce to small particles crushin
Distant	: far off
Pace	: walk at a steady speed, stride, tread
Support	: help, assist, holdup
Staff	: club

Behold	: see, look
Gleam	: shine, glimmer
Pilgrim	: a person who journeys to a sacred place
Jest	: to joke, to mock
Crouch	: adopt a position with bent knees and the upper body brought forward
Regiment	: a unit of an army
Cornfield	: a field where corn is being grown.
Reflect	: throw back, shine back, give back / to ponder
Infinite	: endless, limitless
Glimmer	: shine, gleam
Creak	: sharp sound, squeak, grate, groan
Briskly	: speedily, quickly
Relic	: artifact, historical object, antique
Declaim	: make a speech, give a lecture, make an oration
Exhausted	: tired, worn-out, fatigued
Anxiety	: worry, nervousness, apprehension
Muse	: to think over, to ponder
Astonishment	: surprise, amazement
Essential	: extremely important, basic, inherent, intrinsic
Reproach	: scold, rebuke, reprimand
Tortured	: pained, agonized, tormented
Remorse	: repentance, penitence, self- condemnation
Glow	: radiate, burn without flames

7.5 SUMMARY OF THE STORY

Dhumketu's moving story *The Letter* is about human emotions and their importance in human life. The central character of the story is Ali the Coachman who had been a skilled hunter in his younger days. He had a daughter named Miriam whom he loved profoundly. When she grew young, she was married to a soldier who served in the Punjab regiment. Miriam left Ali with her husband and there was no communication between the father and the daughter for many years. Ali waited for Miriam's letter and went to the post office every morning to inquire whether the letter from his daughter had arrived. For him the post office became a place of pilgrimage and every morning, he sat in a corner of the post office verandah. The postal staff made fun of him treating him like a madman. The postal clerk called out his name jokingly even though there was no letter for him. The staff of the post office discussed about lunatics and lunacy of different kinds.

For several days Ali did not come to the post office. Naturally, all employees of the post office were curious to know the reason. At last, he came but he

looked older and weaker. He could breathe with great difficulty. It seemed as if he were nearing the end of his life. When he asked the post master about Miriam's letter the post master behaved rudely with him. Ali met the clerk and gave him five gold coins telling him to deliver his letter to his grave if he was no more. He left and no one saw him after that.

One day, the post master's daughter fell ill and he was anxious to hear the news about her health. He deeply worried. He searched for the letter from his daughter from the pile of letters.

There was no letter from his daughter but he found a letter addressed to Coachman Ali. Now he realized his mistake. He felt remorse for his haughty behavior towards Ali. He called the postal clerk Lakshmi Das and asked him to find out Ali. He decided to hand over the letter personally to Ali.

Next morning when he opened the door of the post office, he saw Ali leaning on his stick with tears in his eyes. He saw unearthly light in his eyes. He was scared. And suddenly, Ali disappeared. When he asked Lakshmi Das, he told him that Ali had died three months back. The post master was bewildered and puzzled. He still had Miriam's letter in his hand. That evening, he went to the grave yard and placed Miriam's letter on Ali's grave.

The post master's attitude changed completely. He realized for the first time that letters were not only pieces of papers but carriers of emotions of human hearts. He understood the essential human worth of letters and the importance of human relationships.

7.6 CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE STORY

'Dhumketu' was the pen name of Gaurishankar Joshi who was one of the pioneers of Gujarati short story. He was a prolific writer whose writings are characterized by poetic style, romanticism and highly effective depiction of human emotions. *The Letter* is one of his most popular short stories. It is the story about Coachman Ali who was once a skilled hunter. After the marriage of his only daughter Miriam, he realized the pain of separation from his daughter. He understood the meaning of love and separation and gave up hunting forever. He waited for a letter from his daughter with boundless patience visiting the post office of the town every morning. He walked to the building of the post office every day in all seasons and sat in a corner as the postal clerks read out the names of the addresses of the letters loudly. The postal clerks often teased him by announcing his name even though the letter had not arrived. He returned home with despair only to go to the post office the next day.

The post master behaved rudely with Ali calling him a mad man. However, when his own daughter fell ill, he waited for the news about his daughter's health. He was extremely worried and restless. Then he could realize Coachman Ali's miserable condition. When he saw Miriam's letter he was shocked. He decided to hand over the letter to Ali personally. His attitude towards letters changed for the first time. His attitude towards letters changed for the first time. He realized that letters were not mere pieces of papers but they

carried human worth of a letter. He saw Ali's ghost who had come to collect his letter. Ali had died three months ago. The post master did not know about Ali's death but Lakshmi Das, the postal clerk told him that Ali was no more. The post master went to the grave yard and offered the letter of Miriam at the grave of Ali.

Dhumketu's narration is very captivating and effective. It keeps the readers fully engrossed till the story ends. His understanding of human emotions is quite profound. The story begins when Coachman Ali slowly plods on his way to the post office. It was a cold, chilly morning and people were still asleep. Ali is in tattered clothes and biting cold wind blows on the winter morning. He searched the post office and sit in a corner waiting for his daughter's letter. The postal staff often mocked at him calling him a mad man. They thought that Ali would never receive his daughter's letter.

In his younger days, Ali was a skilled hunter. He killed his prey and never missed his aim. When Miriam married and left him, his life changed completely. Miriam's husband was an army man and she left with him to Punjab the distant part of the country. Ali waited for her letter for years always visiting the post office. He grew older and his heart was filled with compassion for all living creature. He gave up hunting and began to admire green fields and beauty of nature. He felt that entire universe was built on love and separation. Loneliness filled his life but love for his daughter made him wait for her letter endlessly.

The postmaster behaved arrogantly ridiculing his foolish waiting. Ali remained absent from the post office for several days but one day, he came there breathing with great difficulty. He went straight to the post master and requested him to note down his address. The post master lost his temper and called him a pest. Ali left the post office with tears in his eyes. His patience was almost exhausted. Yet he hoped to hear something from Miriam.

Dhumketu describes the insensitive behavior of postal officials. Their inhuman attitude is criticized by the author in a subtle manner. The postal staff found Ali's presence irritating even though he never disturbed any one or complained about anything. After several days of absence, Ali came and offered five gold guineas to the clerk named Lakshmi Das. He requested him to forward his daughter Miriam's letter to his grave. Lakshmi Das was quite shocked but he put the money in his pocket without any emotion of compassion. He thought that Ali was a mad man who vainly hoped for the letter from his daughter. Just then the post master's daughter who lived in another town fell ill. He was waiting anxiously for the news about her health. He saw an envelope in the pile of letter addressed to Ali. The letter dropped from his hand as if he had undergone an electric shock. Soon there was a change in his heart. He could understand Ali's feelings as he too experienced the same kind of feelings. His hot temper disappeared and his heart was mellowed down.

The post master could not sleep that night due to anxiety about his daughter's ill health. He came to the post office at four O'clock in the morning hoping to receive some news from his daughter. At five O'clock, he heard the soft knock

on the door. He opened the door and saw Ali leaning on against his stick. His eyes were full of tears. The post master saw queer light in Ali's eyes. He looked unhealthy and the post master experienced a strange feeling of fear and astonishment. He handed over the letter to Ali quietly but soon he saw the letter lying on the floor near the door. The clerk and the postman told him that Ali had died three months ago. He was puzzled about his meeting with Ali. He was confused whether it was Ali's ghost or his illusion. He went to Ali's grave with Lakshmi Das that evening to offer the Miriam's letter at his grave. He placed the letter on his grave with profound sympathy for Ali. He could understand the agonies of a father's heart as he too was undergoing the same kind of pain.

Ali's character is full of feelings of love and separation. He is a simple, ordinary man but his heart is highly sensitive and soft. He is an epitome of patience and perseverance. The postmaster is an educated man but he is stubborn and without human emotions. However, when he experiences the same kind of pain of separation and anxiety, his heart changes completely. He treated people without emotions and sympathy. He saw letters as pieces of papers but he realized that letters are the carriers of human emotions and human relationships.

Dhumketu does not moralize directly but he provides important lessons through this story. However high the status of a person may be, one must treat elders with love and respect. In our society, elders are often neglected and treated as pests. One must remember that old age is inevitable part of life. One who is young and energetic today will turn into an old weakling when he is old.

Another important lesson is that God will treat you with love if you love other. How you treat others decides how God will treat you. If one wants to earn God's love and mercy one must be kind, loving and sympathetic towards, others. At the center of the story there is an irony that people do not understand the pain and sufferings of other people and treat them harshly. They forget that God is watching their behavior and attitude towards others. Love, compassion and kindness are the true human virtues that people should cultivate and practice in their lives. True religion is not just worship but love and compassion for all living creatures. It is an irony that educated people often become quite cruel and heartless. True education must focus not only on cultivation of skill and intelligence but also on the cultivation of love, sympathy and compassion.

In the short stories before Dhumketu, the life of the upper middle class and well-to-do people was the general subject matter in Gujarati short stories. Dhumketu broadened its horizons depicting the life of all the human beings of society. He drew incidents and characters from all walks of life ranging from history, mythology to the lives of common people. His favorite theme was the life of the artists who sacrificed their lives at the altar of art. He also represented the life of the poor, ordinary and illiterate people and their joys and sorrows. He depicted their passions, emotions love, longings, generosity, magnanimity and innate humanity.

Dhumketu set a new dimension to Gujarati short story by broadening the horizons of content and form of Gujarati short story. He filled his short stories with his creative upsurge and power of imagination. He added a new sensibility and a new vision of life in his short stories. Dhumketu portrayed the realities of life through his lively imagination, romantic idealism and vibrant, profound emotions. His style of writing is marked by racy, style and varied rhythm. His style is full of poetic qualities like figurative language, lucidity, rhythmic diction and vivid narration. “The Letter” is one of his most popular short stories that enthrall the readers by its artistic beauty and aesthetic exuberance.

7.7 TONE OF THE SHORT STORY

The tone of the short-story *The Letter* by Dhumketu is loneliness and grief. The author portrays the character of Coachman Ali who was once a skilled hunter. He loved his daughter Miriam so deeply that when she left him after her marriage with a soldier, Ali felt utterly lonely and miserable. He waited for her letter for many years always visiting the post office in the morning. The letter never came and he died. The post master saw the letter addressed to Ali three months after Ali’s death. The post master, who had behaved very rudely with Ali, realized his mistake when he too had to wait for the news about his own daughter’s health. He went to Ali’s grave and placed the letter on it. The overall tone of the story is pain of separation and loneliness.

7.8 THEME OF THE SHORT STORY

There are several important themes in the story *The Letter* by Dhumketu. The major theme of the story is love and the pain of separation. Ali the coachman is the central character of the story. He was a skilled hunter in his younger days. He killed his prey deftly never missing his aim. However his heart changed completely when his only daughter Miriam left him after her marriage with a soldier in Punjab. He waited for her letter for many years always visiting the post office like a place of worship. The letter never came till he lived. It arrived only after his death. The post master who had insulted and humiliated him realized his mistake and placed the letter on his grave.

Dhumketu provides cold, chilly weather as a back ground in the beginning of the story when Ali goes to the post office on a chilly, windy morning. Cold atmosphere symbolizes inhuman attitude of the postal staff and other people who always humiliated and teased him. They ignored the sufferings of the old Ali. The post master understands his agonies only when he too undergoes the same kind of pain of separation and anxiety.

Another theme of the story *The Letter* by Dhumketu is that human beings are transformed into better human beings by sufferings only. Ali was a cruel hunter who enjoyed killing birds and animals. But when he separated from his daughter, his heart was changed completely. His brutality turned into sensitivity. The post master who humiliated Ali realized his mistake when he too underwent the suffering and pain of separation from his daughter. He too had to wait for the news about his daughter’s health quite anxiously. In Gujarat, it is said that “Rambaan vagya hoy te jane” (only those who suffer pain know

what pain is) Sufferings alone make human beings more sensitive and sympathetic towards others.

Dhumketu also suggests that our good deeds or evil deeds are rewarded or punished during our life on this earth. He gives an important message that we live in an organized universe where our deeds are recorded and their knocking is done in the present life only. When one passes through sufferings one undergoes the change in heart. When suffering comes one repents for one's misdeeds. Repentance is like a holy stream that purities the person who repents. In this story, Ali is punished for killing innocent birds and animal and the post master is punished for his heartless behavior towards Ali. Poetic justice operates in this universe rewarding the good and punishing the Evil in all human beings.

Another important message that Dhumketu conveys through the story is that we should respect old and sick people. Old age is the part of life and no one can escape it. Therefore all people should love, help and respect the people. Helping the old and the needy is a great virtue which is rewarded by God during our present life. The law of Karma operates here and now. Heaven and hell exist here in our life and the world we live in.

7.9 STYLES AND DICTION OF THE STORY

Dhumketu's style and diction are packed with emotions and imagination. His language is charged with poetic qualities. This description is vivid and highly picturesque. His understanding human emotions is remarkable. His expression of emotions is unique. The settings and characterization make his stories memorable. There is a profound philosophical message in the story. Dhumketu introduced new content and form in Gujarati short stories. His stories are marked by varied experience of life, creative urge and power of imagination. His style and diction are characterized by romantic qualities. His language is poetic and rhythmical. In this story he creates the atmosphere of loneliness and grief with symbolic language. He employs some figures of speech very effectively.

7.10 TITLE OF THE STORY

The title of the story is *The Letter*. The title is very appropriate because the story is all about the letter for which coachman Ali waited all his life. Ali was a skilled hunter in his younger days but he gave up hunting after the marriage of his only daughter Miriam. Miriam left him and went to Punjab with her husband who was a soldier in the Indian Army. He understood the true meaning of love and separation. He waited for Miriam's letter visiting the post office every morning for five year. The postal staff mocked at him calling him a mad man.

The post master once behaved rudely with him but when his own daughter fell ill, he realized the pain of separation. His attitude towards letters changed until then, letters were just pieces of papers for him. He realized that letters contained throbbing hearts. He could understand the human worth of a letter. Hence the title is appropriate as it sensitizes the readers to the importance of a letter that carries the promise of hope, joy and love.

Check Your Progress: 1

7.11 ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS IN BRIEF.

1. What kind of life did Ali lead as a young man?

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2. Why did Ali give up hunting?

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3. Why did Ali visit the post office every morning?

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4. How did Ali's attitude change? Why?

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5. Describe the post master's behavior towards Ali?

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6 Why did the postal staff call Ali a madman?

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7 What did Ali request to Lakshmi Das? What did he offer to him?

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8 How was the postmaster a changed person in the end?

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9 “Ali’s patience was exhausted but not his faith” Explain

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10 What important lesson did the postmaster’s experience teach him?

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2. The post master called Ali
 - (a) an inset
 - (b) a fool
 - (c) a rascal
 - (d) a pest
3. Ali gave up hunting after
 - (a) an accident
 - (b) his daughter's marriage
 - (c) his daughter's death
 - (d) a bad experience
4. The story begins with Ali's walking towards.
 - (a) a temple
 - (b) a mosque
 - (c) a post office
 - (d) a railway station
5. For Ali the post office became a place of _____
 - (a) loneliness
 - (b) pilgrimage
 - (c) joy
 - (d) sorrow
6. Ali waited for a letter from
 - (a) his son
 - (b) his daughter
 - (c) his friend
 - (d) his brother
7. The post office is referred as a place of pilgrimage for Ali because.
 - (a) he visited it daily
 - (b) he came to pray for his daughter
 - (c) he thought that God would bless him if he went there
 - (d) he went there with faith and hope
8. The post master rudeness towards Ali displays
 - (a) his ego
 - (b) his lack of empathy
 - (c) Sensitivity
 - (d) preoccupation with the work
9. Ali did not come to the post office for several days as _____
 - (a) he had lost hope
 - (b) he was unwell
 - (c) he was busy
 - (d) he was upset by behavior of the post man.
10. The post master was anxious to receive the news about
 - (a) Miriam
 - (b) Ali
 - (c) his own daughter
 - (d) his own son
11. The post master realized his mistake when
 - (a) he underwent the agony of love and separation
 - (b) he underwent the pain of anger and sorrow
 - (c) he saw Ali's ghost
 - (d) he could not sleep for the whole night
12. Ali gave five guineas to Lakshmi Das and requested him _____
 - (a) to bury him when he died

- (b) to take him to hospital when he was sick
 (c) to place Miriam's letter on his grave
 (d) to place flowers on his grave
13. The main theme of the story *The Letter* is
 (a) loneliness and grief
 (b) the change of heart
 (c) insensitive postal official
 (d) poverty and hunger
14. Dhumketu believed that human deeds are rewarded or punished
 (a) punished (b) in the other world
 (c) here and now only (d) during the old age

7.13 LET US SUM UP

In this unit, we studied one of the most touching stories by Dhumketu. Dhumketu was one of the pioneers of Gujarati short stories. He was the first writer who explained the horizon of Gujarati short stories by introducing new form and content. He also introduced characters from lower strata of society in his short stories highlighting the fact that very often the poor and the illiterate people are better human beings than the rich and the educated. Dhumketu's style is poetic and captivating. His stories always carry messages of love, humanity and compassion. Literature is criticism of life and it teaches us how to live life meaningfully.

7.14 BOOKS SUGGESTED

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3. Sisir Kumar Das. History of English Literature 1911-1956. Sahitya Akademi
4. Tankha Mandal part 1,2,3,4 (Collection of Short Stories by Dhumketu)
5. <https://successcds.net/english>
6. <https://brainly.in>. English
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Answers

Check Your Progress 2

1. (d), 2. (d), 3. (b), 4. (c), 5. (b), 6. (b), 7. (a), 8. (b), 9. (b), 10. (c), 11. (a), 12. (c), 13. (a), 14. (c).

: STRUCTURE :

- 8.0 Objectives**
- 8.1 About the Author (Essayist)**
- 8.2 About the Essay**
- 8.3 The text of the Essay**
- 8.4 Key Words**
- 8.5 The Summary of the Essay**
- 8.6 Critical Analysis of the Essay**
- 8.7 Tone of the Essay**
- 8.8 Themes of the Essay**
- 8.9 Bacon’s Style and Diction**
- 8.10 Questions (answer in brief)**
- 8.11 Multiple Choice Questions**
- 8.12 Bacon’s Famous Quotes**
- 8.13 Let Us Sum Up**
- 8.14 Books Suggested**

Answers

8.0 OBJECTIVES

In this unit, we shall

- learn one of the important forms of literature i.e Essay
- in this unit you will study the famous essay ‘Of Studies’ by Francis Bacon.
- themes, tone and critical analysis of the essay

8.1 ABOUT THE AUTHOR (ESSAYIST)

Francis Bacon (1561-1626) was a great lawyer, thinker statesman, historian and essayist. He claimed that “all knowledge was his province”. He introduced a new system of thinking based on empiricism. His ultimate goal was to spread practical knowledge for the benefit of mankind. Bacon was knighted in 1603 and rose to the high positions like solicitor General, Attorney General and Lord Chancellor. Later he was forced to leave his post on the charge of bribery. After retirement he devoted himself to literary and philosophical work until he died in 1626.

Bacon’s major works include:

1. *The New Atlantis* (A narrative fiction) (1627)
2. *The Advancement of Learning* (A philosophical work) (1605)
3. *The Idea of Progress* (A philosophical work)
4. *Essays* (First edition) 1597

5. *Norum Ogranum* (1620)

6. *Essays* (Third edition) 1625

Bacon was influenced by Plato, Aristotle, Cicero Machiavelli and Montaigne. He influenced Philosophers of later period such as Thomas Hobbes, Isaac Newton, John Locke, Thomas Jefferson, Robert Boyle etc. Bacon is regarded as the father of empiricism who argued that true knowledge should be based on inductive reasoning and careful observation of natural events. Bacon's philosophical works can be divided into three main branches scientific works religious and literary works and judicial works.

Bacon's 'Essays' are written on variety of topics like truth, death, adversity, marriage, love, envy, atheism, superstitions, friendship and so on. His style is terse and epigrammatic. Bacon was a great phrasemaker who coined many phrases and aphorisms. He is frequently quoted by orators, writers and thinkers. In 1999 edition of "The Oxford Dictionary of Quotations" there are around 91 quotations from Bacon's Essays'.

Bacon's essays are like 'dispersed meditations'. He was a great scholar and he quoted famous proverbs in Latin, French, Italian and Spanish. He often quoted directly from The Bible. Bacon's style of writing is masculine and plain. He was not a poet but his style also carries poetic touches. He had a rare gift of seeing analogies in ordinary things of life. His style is characterized by brevity, wisdom and picturesqueness.

8.2 ABOUT THE ESSAY

The Elizabethan Age was the most creative period in English literature. Just at that time, Renaissance took place in England. It was the period of revival of learning in England. Bacon said "Time is the greatest innovator." Bacon was a great thinker, scientist, innovator, statesman and essayist. This essays deal with various philosophical topics like love, friendship, marriage, wisdom, death and so on. These essays are "dispersed meditations" in true sense. They are crafted in terse aphoristic style.

This essay *Of Studies* is one of his most popular and widely read essays. Bacon's language is simple brief and clear. In this essay, he says that there are three main benefits of study delight, cultivation of better communication and a powerful means to solve problems of life. Bacon uses the words delight, ornament and ability for these three benefits of studies. However studies have disadvantage also. Too much study leads to laziness. Sometimes those who study too much become pedantic and show off their pedantry here and there. In true and genuine studies, affectation should always be avoided. The bookish knowledge has no meaning unless it is supported by practical experience of life. Practical experience helps us in applying the knowledge we have achieved from studies to real life situations.

Bacon says that studies are not for mere arguments or contradicting others. One should also keep open mind but not believe blindly whatever one reads or studies. One must cultivate critical attitude to evaluate the views of the thinkers and writers.

According to Bacon, there are different types of books that need to be read in different ways. Some books are to be read in parts skipping through the pages. Some books need to be read completely without missing any part of it. Some books should be studied very carefully and the reader should ponder over its

content with deep concentration. Such books have form and content that can be useful in our practical life.

Then Bacon tells readers about the remedies studies can provide for the diseases of mind. Every subject has its importance and use. For example, history enhances wisdom. It makes readers wise and understanding. Poetry makes the readers more creative and imaginative. Mathematics helps in acquiring subtlety. Natural philosophy makes people grave and serious. Logic and rhetoric teach them how to argue and debate.

These studies make people more civilized and sophisticated. As physical exercises cure the defects of the body, studies can cure the defects of mind. For example, bowling is good for kidneys, shooting for lungs and walking for digestion. In the same way mathematics is a strong cure for wandering, inconsistent minds. The study of laws is an effective remedy for developing good memory and curing bad memory. This essay by Bacon discusses the uses and benefits of the studies and knowledge of different subjects in human life.

8.3 TEXT OF THE ESSAY

STUDIES serve the delight, for ornament, and for ability. Their chief use for delight is in privateness and retiring; for ornament, is in discourse; and for ability is in the judgment and disposition of business. For expert men can execute and perhaps judge of particulars, one by one; but the general counsels and the plots and marshaling of affairs, come best from those that are learned. To spend too much time in studies is sloth; to make judgment wholly by their rules, is the humor of a scholar. They perfect nature, and are perfected by experience: for natural abilities are like natural plants, that need pruning by study; and studies themselves do give forth directions too much at large, except they are bounded in by experience. Crafty men contemn studies, simple men admire them, and wise men use them: for they teach not their own use; but that is wisdom without them and above them, won by observation. Read not to contradict and confute; nor to believe and take for granted; nor to find talk and discourse; but to weigh and consider. Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested; that is some books are to be read only in parts; others to be read, but not curiously; and some few to be read wholly and with diligence and attention. Some books also may be read by deputy, and extracts made of them by others; but that would be only in the less important arguments, and the meaner sort of books; else distilled books are like common distilled waters flashy things. Reading maketh a full man; conference a ready man; and writing an exact man. And therefore if a man write little, he had need have a great memory; if he confer little, he had need have a present wit: and if he read little, he had need have much cunning, to seem to know that he doth not. Histories make men wise; poets witty; the mathematics subtle; natural philosophy deep; moral grave, logic and rhetoric able to contend. Absent studies in mores. Nay there is no stound or impediment in the wit, but may be wrought out by fit studies: like as diseases of the body may have appropriate exercises. Bowling is good for the stone and reins; shooting for the lungs and breast; gentle walking for the stomach; riding for head; and the like. So if a man's wit be wandering let him study the mathematics; for in demonstrations, if his wit be called away never so little, he must begin again. If his wit

be not apt to distinguish or find differences, let him study the schoolmen; for they are *cyminisectors*. If he be not apt to beat over matters, and to call up one thing to prove and illustrate another, let him study the lawyers' cases. So every defect of the mind may have a special receipt. **- Francis Bacon**

8.4 KEY WORDS

Delight	: pleasure, joy, happiness
Discourse	: written or spoken communication debate, discussion
Execute	: to implement, to put into practice
Counsel	: advice , guidance, instruction
Marshall	: to bring to gather, to organize people or things to achieve some aim
Sloth	: Laziness
Affectation	: pretension, show, pretense, snobbery
Crafty	: Cunning, tricky, wily, sly
Contemn	: to treat with contempt, despise, disdain
contradict	: deny, refute, dispute, counter
Confute	: prove a person or an assertion wrong
Swallow	: gulp down, devour, eat up
Diligence	: persistent work, effort, industriousness
Deputy	: inordinate, assistant, proxy, adjutant
Extract	: to squeeze out pluck out draw out
Distilled	: purified, refined, processed
Flashy	: showy, flamboyant, expensive, brightly-coloured.
Conference	: meeting , formal meeting for discussion
Confer	: to grant a title degree or right
Wit	: intelligence, cleverness, humour, good sense
Grave	: serious, solemn sober
Rhetoric	: oratory , art of effective speaking
Contend	: struggle to surmount difficulty
Stond	: hindrance, halt, post, stand
Impediment	: obstruction, obstacle, barrier
Abeunt studia	:
in Mores	: (Latin) Studies determine character
Wrought	: Shaped by hammering, fashioned in a certain way
Demonstration	: proof, confirmation, display, presentation
Apt	: suitable, appropriate
Distinguish	: differentiate, separate
Cymini sectores	: hairsplitters/ dividers of cumin seeds, skilled in analysis
To call up	: to call someone to do something, to invite
Defect	: shortcoming

8.5 SUMMARY OF THE ESSAY

The Essay *Of Studies* by Bacon is regarded as his masterpiece which possesses rich vocabulary, fresh ideas and highly useful and relevant themes. It appeals to people of all times. Bacon highlights the importance of Studies in the beginning of the essay. Studies have three main benefits delight, better communication and a remedy for solving problems of life, studies without practical application is meaningless. True learned people execute plans quite efficiently. Bacon further says that reading makes a full man; conference a ready man and writing makes an exact man.

Bacon states that too much study leads to laziness. Pedantry and affectation are the blemishes of superfluous studies. Studies are not for arguments and contradicting others. One should be open minded in order to learn but one must not accept everything blindly. Critical attitude is necessary in genuine study. Bacon further says that some books are shallow: some are packed with meaning. Therefore some books can be read in parts and some need to be read carefully and with deep concentration. Bacon says that studies help in removing certain defects in a person and make one wise and understanding. Studies also make a person civilized and refined in behavior and attitude.

8.6 CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE ESSAY

Of Studies is one of the most popular essays of Francis Bacon. It is formal essay with a serious tone. It is an intellectual discourse that appeals seriously to the intellectual readers. It is also didactic in nature. It is full of wisdom and knowledge. It aims at a teaching the readers the value of knowledge in pragmatic manner.

Francis Bacon uses the methods of comparison and contrast showing similarities and differences in the topics discussed in the essay. He also uses the method of illustration giving example for explaining his arguments and statements. For example, he compares and contrasts different types of books and how they should be read. He says “Some books are to be tasted, other to be swallowed and a few to be chewed and digested”.

Bacon’s essays are reflective in nature. They are short pieces with profound philosophical ideas written in aphoristic style. Like a lawyer, he tries to convince the readers and prove his points.

Of Studies deals with the themes of studies. He says that three important purposes of studies are providing pleasure more effective communication and enhancing our capabilities. Bacon also briefly states that excessive studies lead to laziness, vanity and hypocrisy. True education and knowledge should be backed by practical experience. He says that knowledge without practical experience and application is harmful and worthless. Experience makes us wise and judicious. We learn to choose the essence and eliminate the unnecessary things.

Bacon says that cunning and crafty people abhor studies. Simple and ordinary people admire studies while wise people use them wisely to solve the problems of life. They observe and analyze ideas and filter them coming to conclusions quite impersonally.

About reading, Bacon says that one should read not to refute others’ ideas or contradict them. It should not be used for pointless discussion or debate.

True study should be analytical and rational devoid of biased attitude. Bacon says that there are different types of books that require different modes of reading. Some books can be given cursory reading only. Some others can be read quickly and in parts. Important books need to be read slowly, minutely and with deep contemplation. Some books can be read by others who provide synoptic view of the books.

Bacon further says that reading makes a full man; conference a ready man; writing an exact man. Reading adds perfection to the personality of an individual. Conference gives a person the skill of arguing and debating. Writing makes a person exact by removing his weaknesses and ignorance. It also helps in enhancing one's memory.

Bacon discusses the uses and importance of studying history, poetry, mathematics, philosophy and logic. History makes a person wise. Poetry makes one more creative and imaginative. Mathematics provides one logical sense and philosophy makes a person serious and moralistic in attitude. Studies are useful in removing certain defects of mind as physical exercises remove physical defects.

Bacon has used some archaic words, some figures of speech and Latin phrases in this essay. This style is straightforward, direct and assertive.

8.7 TONE OF THE ESSAY

Bacon's essays are reflective and philosophical in nature. His essays always appeal to the intellect. *Of Studies* is an essay with a serious, reflective tone. It discusses the uses and benefits of studies. It also discusses its disadvantages. The essay very aptly explains how different types of books should be read and how different fields of study help the readers by curing certain types of mental problems of the readers. The essay is didactic and expository in tone.

8.8 THEMES OF THE ESSAY

Of Studies is the first essay of the first collection of ten essays by Francis Bacon published in 1597. In the edition of 1612, it was revised adding new sentences and changing some words. The theme of the essay is "Studies" Bacon was a thinker and pragmatic philosopher. He believed that one must put one's theoretical knowledge into practice. Knowledge without practical experience is meaningless. He says "Studies serve for delight and aesthetic pleasure. They also help in decoration of speech and effective communication. Studies also help in developing and sharpening one's ability".

Bacon advocated scientific enquiry in studies. He says that studies "perfect nature, and are perfected by experience: for natural abilities are like natural plants that need proyning (pruning) by study".

Bacon also discusses the disadvantages of superfluous and pedantic studies. He says that too much study makes a man lazy. Superfluous study makes a person snobbish and pedantic. Crafty men condemn studies; simple admire them while the wise make use of it wisely. True wisdom can be achieved through keen observation and critical analysis. Bacon makes a very systematic classification of different types of books. He says that some books are shallow and they can be read in parts skipping some parts of them. There are some books that need to be chewed and digested. Bacon says that different fields of study help in different ways" history makes men wise; poets witty;

mathematics subtle; natural philosophy deep; moral grave; logic and rhetoric able to contend”.

Studies also remove certain defect of human mind as physical exercises remove physical ailments or defects. *Of Studies* deals with the theme of benefits of study uses of study, disadvantages of study, knowledge, wisdom and how different kinds books should be read. The essay is full of profound wisdom, experience and observation.

8.9 BACON’S STYLE AND DICTION

Bacon’s style is full of vitality and clarity of thought and language. Bacon’s essays are often didactic and expository. He used the method of comparison and contrast in his essays. He borrowed references and quotes from great Greek and Latin thinkers, philosophers and writers. He also quoted from the Bible quite frequently. In *Of Studies*, he used figures of speech like similes and litotes. Litotes is an understatement in which positive statement is expressed by negating its opposite for example; “To spend too much time in studies is sloth”.

Bacon used archaic words like “maketh” (makes) “doth” (does) nay (no), stonnd (hindrance) etc. In this essay Bacon has used Latin phrases(i) (cumini sectaries (skilled in qualities) and a Abuent studia in Mores in mores (studies determine character)

Bacon made use of parallelism by using parallel sentences, structures, phrases, clauses and words. He often used colon, semi colon and comma to juxtapose parallel or opposite sentences, phrases clauses etc. His technique is straightforward and assertive. There is a fine combination of thought and brevity and picturesqueness. His style is aphoristic and his words, phrases and quote are often quoted. His quotes are like gems of wisdom.

Check Your Progress: 1

8.10 ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS IN BRIEF.

1. What are the uses of studies according to Bacon?
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2. How do the expert men use studies?
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3. What are the disadvantages of too much studies?

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4. What does Bacon compare natural abilities with natural plants?

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5. What is the importance of practical experience in studies?

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6. Why do crooked and crafty men contemn (condemn) studies?

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7. What is the right way of reading or studying?

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8. How should one read different types of books?

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9. "Some books are to be chewed and digested" Elucidate the statement.

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10. Explain : "Reading make the full man; conference a ready man, and writing an exactman".

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11. How does the study of history poetry, mathematics philosophy and logic and rhetoric help individuals?

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12. How does the study of certain subjects cure mental problems in an individual?

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13. What are the characteristics of Bacon's style of writing?

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Check Your Progress: 2

8.11 CHOOSE THE CORRECT OPTION FROM GIVEN BELOW.

1. Francis Bacon belonged to _____ period.
(a) Renaissance (b) Reformation
(c) Augustan (d) Romantic
2. Francis Bacon is mainly known for his _____.
(a) plays (b) novels
(c) essays (d) scientific works
3. Bacon rose to the position of _____.
(a) Prime Minister (b) Education Minister
(c) Treasurer (d) Lord Chancellor
4. Bacon introduced new system of thinking based on _____.
(a) logic (b) spirituality
(c) empiricism (d) emotion
5. 'The Advancement of learning is a _____ work by Bacon
(a) empirical (b) philosophical
(c) scientific (d) literary
6. Bacon believed that knowledge should be based on _____.
(a) inductive reasoning (b) deductive reasoning
(c) philosophy (d) morality
7. Francis Bacon's style is called _____.
(a) romantic (b) logical
(c) epigrammatic (d) lucid
8. Bacon's essays are called _____.
(a) jottings (b) contemplative
(c) dispersed meditations (d) philosophical reflections
9. According to Bacon studies have three benefits viz.
(a) happiness, love and compassion
(b) truth, love and mercy
(c) delight, ornament and ability
(d) entertainment, wisdom and understanding
10. Too much study leads to _____.
(a) stupidity (b) hypocrisy
(c) wavering of mind (d) laziness
11. Bacon says that in true studies _____ must be avoided.
(a) laziness (b) seriousness
(c) affectation (d) sensitivity

12. True knowledge, according to Bacon should be supported by _____
 (a) practical experience (b) hard work
 (c) sincerity (d) emotional attitude
13. Good books require _____
 (a) deep concentration (b) speedy reading
 (c) repeated reading (d) reading of reference books
14. Bacon says that history makes men _____
 (a) noble (b) good
 (c) emotional (d) wise
15. Bacon says that study of mathematics cures _____
 (a) wandering mind (b) silly mind
 (c) sick mind (d) sad mind
16. According to Bacon, scholastic philosophy is good for _____
 (a) sad mind (b) nervous mind
 (c) muddled mind (d) inconsistent mind

8.12 BACON'S FAMOUS QUOTES

- ❖ Reading maketh a full man; conference a ready and writing an exact man.
- ❖ A bachelor's life is a fine breakfast, a flat lunch and a miserable dinner.
- ❖ Knowledge is power
- ❖ In order for the light to shine so brightly, the darkness must be present.
- ❖ Truth is the daughter of time not of authority.
- ❖ Some books should be tasted, some devoured but only a few should be chewed and digested thoroughly.
- ❖ Read not to contradict and confute, not to believe and take for granted; nor to find talk and discourse, but to weigh and consider.
- ❖ Imagination was given to man to compensate him for what he is not; a sense of humour to console him for what he is.
- ❖ It is sad fate for man to die too well known to everybody else, and still unknown to himself.
- ❖ Money is a great servant but a bad master.
- ❖ Wonder is the seed of knowledge.
- ❖ The job of the artist is always to deepen the mystery.
- ❖ There are two ways of spreading light to be the candle or the mirror that reflects it.
- ❖ Silence is the sleep that nourishes wisdom.
- ❖ Men fear death as children fear to go in the dark and as that natural fear in children is increased with tales, so is the other.
- ❖ Nuptial love maketh mankind, friendly love perfecteth it; but wanton love corrupteth and embaseth it.

8.13 LET US SUM UP

In this unit, we have studied one of the most thoughtful essays by Francis Bacon. Bacon's views on studies are quite relevant today also. Bacon believes that true knowledge must be supported by practical experience. Mere knowledge without practical experience is shallow and useless. Mahatma Gandhi always emphasized on practical knowledge and skills. He said that in true education, three should be developed. Three "H's" mean head hands and heart. Head stands for intellectual development hands for skill development, and manual labour and heart for emotional enhancement.

Bacon's views on studies are not only thoughtful but pragmatic. To understand Bacon's pragmatism you are recommended to read his essays on love, death, adversity, religion, atheism and so on. You are also advised to read and learn his famous quotes.

8.14 BOOKS SUGGESTED

1. "Understanding the Essay" Edited by: Patricia Foster; Jeff Porter
2. <https://www.thoughtco.com/of-studies-by-francis-bacon-1688771>
3. <https://www.enotes.com>

Answers

Check Your Progress: 2

1. (A), 2. (D), 3. (D), 4. (C), 5. (C), 6. (A), 7. (C), 8. (D), 9. (C), 10. (D),
11. (C), 12. (A), 13. (C), 14. (D), 15. (A), 16. ()



ON THE RULE OF THE ROAD
- A. G. GARDINER

: **STRUCTURE** :

- 9.0 Objectives
- 9.1 Introduction
 - 9.1.1 About the Author
 - 9.1.2 About the Essay
- 9.2 The Text of the Essay
- 9.3 Key Words
- 9.4 Summary of the Essay
- 9.5 Critical Analysis of the Essay
- 9.6 Tone of the Essay
- 9.7 Theme of the Essay
- 9.8 A.G. Gardiner's Style and Diction
- 9.9 Questions (answer in brief)
- 9.10 Multiple Choice Questions
- 9.11 Modern Essay and A.G.Gardiner's Contribution to it
- 9.12 Let Us Sum Up
- 9.13 Books Suggested

Answers

9.0 OBJECTIVES

In this unit we shall learn

- one of the thought provoking essays by A. G. Gardiner.
- a prose lyric that appeals to the reader's emotions.
- theme, style, tone and critical analysis of the essay.

9.1 INTRODUCTION

9.1.1 About the Author

Alfred George Gardiner was a British Journalist, essayist and editor. He wrote his essay under the pen name 'Alpha of the Plough'. He was born in 1865 and died in 1946. He was born in Chelmsford. His father was a cabinet maker and alcoholic. As a boy, he worked at the Chelmsford chronicle. In 1887, he joined the Northern Daily Telegraph. In 1899, he was appointed as the editor of the Blackburn Weekly Telegraph. In 1902, he was appointed as the editor of 'Daily News' Under Gardiner's editorship the circulation of the Journal rose remarkably making it one of the leading English journals.

From 1915, Gardiner contributed to *The Star* under the pseudonym 'Alpha of the plough'. He chose the pseudonym that refers to the brightest star (alpha) in the constellation called 'The Plough'. Gardiner's major works include *Prophets, Priests and Kings* (1908), *Pillars of Society* (1913) *Pebbles On the Shore* (1916), *Leaves in The Wind* (1920) etc.

Gardiner's essays are graceful and humorous. He wrote essays on variety of subjects and focused on teaching the basic truths of life in an amusing manner. A. G. Gardiner was a liberal democrat who believed that personal liberty should be curtailed in order to bring about social harmony. Gardiner raised the standard of journalistic prose adding literary flavor to it. Some of his most popular essays are- *On Saying Please*, *On Superstitions*, *On Habits On the Rule of the Road*, *On Shaking hands* etc. Gardiner's style is full of charm, grace and picturesqueness.

9.1.2 About the Essay

A.G. Gardiner is one of the major English essayists of modern times. He was a journalist, editor and writer. He was a prolific writer and his contribution to the modern essay is remarkable. His essays are personal and chatty in nature. He deals with variety of subjects driving home some important philosophical or social message. In the essay *On the Rule of the Road*, he discusses a very relevant subject of personal liberty versus universal liberty Gardiner says that liberty is not a personal affair, it is a social contract. We can enjoy certain liberty but we need to curtail some of our liberties to provide liberties to other people.

A.G. Gardiner gives a very apt example to elucidate his point. A fat old lady was walking down in the middle of a street in Petrograd. She cause a lot of confusion in the traffic when she was asked why she walked in the middle of the street, she replied that as a free citizen, she had liberty to walk wherever she liked. Gardiner points out that if the pedestrian walked in the middle of the street, the cabdriver would drive his cab on the pavement. Naturally, if all people behaved as they liked, there would be universal chaos. We often see such sights on our roads. The author here points out that such kind of individual liberty would result into social anarchy. The rule of the road teaches us that to preserve individual liberty, one has to curtail and adjust his or her own liberties. When a policeman stops us on the crossing of the road, he is not violating our liberty. In fact, he is helping us to use our liberty in a reasonable manner. If the policeman would not interfere, no one would be able to cross the road safely. Curtailment of private liberty is a precondition to enjoy social order and harmony. Our liberty becomes a reality only when it is adjusted with the liberty of others.

There are certain things in which we don't require other people's permissions. For example, having a long hair, walking barefoot, dyeing on hair going to bed early or late etc. But if one practices playing in a trombone from midnight to morning, people in the neighborhood could not sleep and they would remind the person that his liberty to play on the musical instrument interferes with their liberty to have a quiet sleep. A. G. Gardiner describes his own experience in a railway carriage. He started reading blue book but some men were talking loudly. The author closed the book and looked out of window. Gardiner says that the rights of quiet people are as important as the rights of the minorities or small nationalities. We can listen to gramophone or play on trombone but without disturbing others.

Finally, the author concludes the essay by saying that we need to be the combination of both anarchist and socialist. We must preserve individual liberty and social liberty. How we observe the simple rules of the road determines whether we are civilized or uncivilized. Little habits of social adjustment are

far more important than great sacrifices. Such little habits sweeten the journey of our life. Gardiner says that we often see the faults of others conniving at our own. He says that consideration of rights of others is the foundation of social discipline and harmony which makes an ideal society.

9.2 TEXT OF THE ESSAY

That was a jolly story which Mr. Arthur Ransome told the other day in one of his messages from Petrograd. A stout old lady was walking with her basket down the middle of a street in Petrograd to the great confusion of the traffic and with no small peril to herself. It was pointed out to her that the pavement was the place for foot-passengers, but she replied: "I'm going to walk where I like. We've got liberty now." It did not occur to the dear old lady that if liberty entitled the foot-passenger to walk down the middle of the road it also entitled the cab-driver to drive on the pavement, and that the end of such liberty would be universal chaos. Everybody would be getting in everybody else's way and nobody would get anywhere. Individual liberty would have become social anarchy.

There is a danger of the world getting liberty-drunk in these days like the old lady with the basket, and it is just as well to remind ourselves of what the rule of the road means. It means that in order that the liberties of all may be preserved the liberties of everybody must be curtailed. When the policeman, say, at Piccadilly Circus steps into the middle of the road and puts up his hand, he is the symbol not of tyranny, but of liberty. You may not think so. You may, being in a hurry and seeing your motor-car pulled up by this insolence of office, feel that your liberty has been outraged. How dare this fellow interfere with your free use of the public highway? Then, if you are a reasonable person, you will reflect that if he did not, incidentally, interfere with you he would interfere with no one, and the result would be that Piccadilly Circus would be a maelstrom that you would never cross at all. You have submitted to a curtailment of private liberty in order that you may enjoy a social order which makes your liberty a reality.

Liberty is not a personal affair only, but a social contract. It is an accommodation of interests. In matters which do not touch anybody else's liberty, of course, I may be as free as I like. If I choose to go down the Strand in a dressing-gown, with long hair and bare feet, who shall say me nay? You have liberty to laugh at me, but I have liberty to be indifferent to you. And if I have a fancy for dyeing my hair, or waxing my moustache (which heaven forbid), or wearing a tall hat, a frock-coat and sandals, or going to bed late or getting up early, I shall follow my fancy and ask no man's permission. I shall not inquire of you whether I may eat mustard with my mutton. I may like mustard with my mutton. And you will not ask me whether you may be a Protestant or a Catholic, whether you may marry the dark lady or the fair lady, whether you may prefer Ella Wheeler Wilcox to Wordsworth, or champagne to shandygaff.

In all these and a thousand other details you and I please ourselves and ask no one's leave. We have a whole kingdom in which we rule alone, can do what we choose, be wise or ridiculous, harsh or easy, conventional or odd. But directly we step out of that kingdom our personal liberty of action becomes qualified by other people's liberty. I might like to practise on the trombone from midnight till three in the morning. If I went on to the top of Helvellyn

to do it I could please myself, but if I do it in my bedroom my family will object, and if I do it out in the streets the neighbours will remind me that my liberty to blow the trombone must not interfere with their liberty to sleep in quiet. There are a lot of people in the world, and I have to accommodate my liberty to their liberties.

We are all liable to forget this, and unfortunately we are much more conscious of the imperfections of others in this respect than of our own.

I got into a railway carriage at a country station the other morning and settled down for what the schoolboys would call an hour's "swot" at a Blue-book. I was not reading it for pleasure. The truth is that I never do read Blue-books for pleasure. I read them as a barrister reads a brief, for the very humble purpose of turning an honest penny out of them. Now, if you are reading a book for pleasure it doesn't matter what is going on around you. I think I could enjoy "Tristram Shandy" or "Treasure Island" in the midst of an earthquake.

But when you are reading a thing as a task you need reasonable quiet, and that is what I didn't get, for at the next station in came a couple of men, one of whom talked to his friend for the rest of the journey in a loud and pompous voice. He was one of those people who remind one of that story of Home Tooke who, meeting a person of immense swagger in the street, stopped him and said, "Excuse me, sir, but are you someone in particular?" This gentleman was someone in particular. As I wrestled with clauses and sections, his voice rose like a gale, and his family history, the deeds of his sons in the war, and his criticisms of the generals and the politicians submerged my poor attempts to hang on to my job. I shut up the Blue-book, looked out of the window, and listened wearily while the voice thundered on with themes like these: "Now what French ought to have done..." "The mistake the Germans made..." "If only Asquith had..." You know the sort of stuff. I had heard it all before, oh, so often. It was like a barrel-organ groaning out some banal song of long ago.

If I had asked him to be good enough to talk in a lower tone I daresay he would have thought I was a very rude fellow. It did not occur to him that anybody could have anything better to do than to listen to him, and I have no doubt he left the carriage convinced that everybody in it had, thanks to him, had a very illuminating journey, and would carry away a pleasing impression of his encyclopædic range. He was obviously a well-intentioned person. The thing that was wrong with him was that he had not the social sense. He was not "a clubbable man."

A reasonable consideration for the rights or feelings of others is the foundation of social conduct. It is commonly alleged against women that in this respect they are less civilised than men, and I am bound to confess that in my experience it is the woman—the well-dressed woman—who thrusts herself in front of you at the ticket office. The man would not attempt it, partly because he knows the thing would not be tolerated from him, but also because he has been better drilled in the small give-and-take of social relationships. He has lived more in the broad current of the world, where you have to learn to accommodate yourself to the general standard of conduct, and his school life, his club life, and his games have in this respect given him a training that women are only now beginning to enjoy.

I believe that the rights of small people and quiet people are as important to preserve as the rights of small nationalities. When I hear the aggressive, bullying horn which some motorists deliberately use, I confess that I feel something boiling up in me which is very like what I felt when Germany came trampling like a bully over Belgium. By what right, my dear sir, do you go along our highways uttering that hideous curse on all who impede your path? Cannot you announce your coming like a gentleman? Cannot you take your turn? Are you someone in particular or are you simply a hot gospeller of the prophet Nietzsche? I find myself wondering what sort of a person it is who can sit behind that hog-like outrage without realising that he is the spirit of Prussia incarnate, and a very ugly spectacle in a civilised world.

And there is the more harmless person who has bought a very blatant gramophone, and on Sunday afternoon sets the thing going, opens the windows and fills the street with "Keep the Home Fires Burning" or some similar banality. What are the right limits of social behaviour in a matter of this sort? Let us take the trombone as an illustration again. Hazlitt said that a man who wanted to learn that fearsome instrument was entitled to learn it in his own house, even though he was a nuisance to his neighbours, but it was his business to make the nuisance as slight as possible. He must practise in the attic, and shut the window. He had no right to sit in his front room, open the window, and blow his noise into his neighbours' ears with the maximum of violence. And so with the gramophone. If you like the gramophone you are entitled to have it, but you are interfering with the liberties of your neighbours if you don't do what you can to limit the noise to your own household. Your neighbours may not like "Keep the Home Fires Burning." They may prefer to have their Sunday afternoon undisturbed, and it is as great an impertinence for you to wilfully trespass on their peace as it would be to go, unasked, into their gardens and trample on their flower beds.

There are cases, of course, where the clash of liberties seems to defy compromise. My dear old friend X., who lives in a West End square and who is an amazing mixture of good nature and irascibility, flies into a passion when he hears a street piano, and rushes out to order it away. But near by lives a distinguished lady of romantic picaresque tastes, who dotes on street pianos, and attracts them as wasps are attracted to a jar of jam. Whose liberty in this case should surrender to the other? For the life of me I cannot say. It is as reasonable to like street pianos as to dislike them—and vice versa. I would give much to hear Sancho Panza's solution of such a nice riddle.

I suppose the fact is that we can be neither complete anarchists nor complete Socialists in this complex world—or rather we must be a judicious mixture of both. We have both liberties to preserve—our individual liberty and our social liberty. We must watch the bureaucrat on the one side and warn off the anarchist on the other. I am neither a Marxist, nor a Tolstoyan, but a compromise. I shall not permit any authority to say that my child must go to this school or that, shall specialize in science or arts, shall play rigger or soccer. These things are personal. But if I proceed to say that my child shall have no education at all, that he shall be brought up as a primeval savage, or at Mr. Fagin's academy for pickpockets, then Society will politely but firmly tell me that it has no use for primeval savages and a very stern objection to pickpockets, and that my child must have a certain minimum of education whether

I like it or not. I cannot have the liberty to be a nuisance to my neighbours or make my child a burden and a danger to the commonwealth.

It is in the small matters of conduct, in the observance of the rule of the road, that we pass judgment upon ourselves, and declare that we are civilised or uncivilised. The great moments of heroism and sacrifice are rare. It is the little habits of commonplace intercourse that make up the great sum of life and sweeten or make bitter the journey. I hope my friend in the railway carriage will reflect on this. Then he will not cease, I am sure, to explain to his neighbour where French went wrong and where the Germans went ditto; but he will do it in a way that will permit me to read my blue-book undisturbed.

9.3 KEY WORDS

Jolly	: happy, cheerful
Stout	: fat, plump
Petrograd	: Leningrad (formerly St. Peters burg)
Peril	: Risk
Pavement	: Footpath
Entitled	: qualified for
Curtail	: restrict, limit, cut down
Preserve	: Maintain, protect, conserve
Insolence	: rudeness, impudence
Piccadilly circus	: London thoroughfare
Accommodation	: Arrangement
Bare	: open, naked, barren church
Protestant	: Related to Protestant
Catholic	: Old Roman Catholic Christianity
Ella Wheeler Wilcox	: American author
Conventional	: Traditional, old
Odd	: Strange, new, uneven
Helvellyn	: Second highest mountain
trombone	: Musical instrument
Conscious	: Aware
Imperfection	: Shortcoming, defect
Swot	: Strategic planning
Blue book	: A Book of Government report
Home Tooke	: English politician
Gale	: Strong wind, outburst of laughter
Swagger	: arrogant manner
submerge	: Deluge, engulf, drown
Wearily	: With extreme tiredness
Illuminating	: Full of light brightness
Encyclopedic	: Comprehensive, in depth
Allege	: Claim, assert, charge, accuse

Tolerate	: undergo, bear, endure
Current	: Stream, flow
Aggressive	: Hostile, combative, ready to attack
Bullying	: oppressive, tyrannizing
Nietzsche	: A German philosopher
Strand	: edge of the sea or river
Incarnate	: Embodied in human form
Gospeller	: One who professes faith in gospel
Spectacle	: scene , sight
Blatant	: Shameless, unabashed
Impertinence	: Rudeness, lack of respect
Trespass	: intrude , encroach
Trample	: Crush, tread stamp
Defy	: openly resist, protest
Sancho panza	: A character in Don Quixote
Bureaucrat	: Officer official
Mr. Fagin's Academy	: Pick pocketing school
Intercourse	: Communication
Ditto	: the same, as above
Civilized	: cultured, refined
Nuisance	: Annoyance, inconvenience
Maelstrom	: Utter confusion

9.4 SUMMARY OF THE ESSAY

A. G. Gardiner's essay *On the Rule of the Road* is highly relevant in modern times, particularly in a country like India. India is a democratic country where people enjoy personal liberty. However people do not care for the liberty and rights of other people. This kind of attitude creates chaotic condition in the country. A. G. Gardiner says that liberty and freedom are watch words of the people in modern society. They claim that they have freedom to do whatever they like. They forget that other people too have the liberty of the same kind. If liberties of the people confront, there would be nothing but chaos.

A. G. Gardiner begins his essay with an anecdote of a fat old lady who was walking the middle of the road. Naturally, the traffic was confused and the condition became chaotic. When someone asked her, she said that she had freedom to walk wherever she liked. She did not understand the simple fact that other people also had the freedom to walk. If pedestrians walked in the middle of the road, where would the cabs, car, and taxies go? Can they be driven on the footpath?

A. G. Gardiner says that there are limits to personal liberty. In modern times, people have become liberty-drunk. He says that to preserve personal liberty, liberties of all have to be preserved and to do so, individual liberty must be curtailed. Many people think that traffic police is a nuisance but in fact, he is a blessing. If everybody drove or walked wherever they wanted, there would be utter chaos and nobody would ever reach their destination. Therefore

make liberty a reality, personal liberty must be restricted. The author introduces liberty as a social contract. He says that it is an adjustment that everyone has to accommodate. He says that there are several private liberties for which we need no permission from others. One can eat, wear or live privately as he wants. But once, a person comes out in the open street he must follow the rules of the society. If one wants to play on trombone, one can do it on a lonely mountain but he cannot play it at midnight disturbing the sleep of the neighbors. People should remember that they are not the only people in the world. There are others with whom they should adjust and accommodate. Gardiner says that adjustment is the key to liberty and harmony.

Gardiner says that people are prone to see the faults of others ignoring their own shortcomings. We should always remember that consideration of others rights or feelings is the foundation of social harmony. We do not require great sacrifices in day-to-day life but small acts of adjustment determine whether we are civilized or not.

9.5 CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE ESSAY

A. G. Gardiner was one of the most popular essayists of 20th century. E. V. Lucas, A. G. Gardiner and Robert Lynd were the trio who wrote beautiful essays on variety of relevant topics. A. G. Gardiner's essay *On the Rule of the Road* is an essay on personal liberty versus social liberty. The topic is highly relevant in modern times particularly in a country like India. The essay was the part of the book "Leaves in the Wind".

A. G. Gardiner says that liberty is not a personal affair but a social contract. It is an accommodation of the interests of other people. Gardiner says that if there were no rules of the road, there would have been chaotic situation on the public roads. A stout lady walked in the middle of the street, claiming that she had right to walk wherever she liked. She did not understand a simple rule that other people also had the same rights and if they walked or drove wherever they liked, there would be such a chaos that no one would ever reach their destination. People would die on the road due to accidents.

A traffic policeman is not a nuisance but the promise of safety and security. People often think that the traffic police man is an annoyance but if he did not stop the drivers at the cross-roads, all drivers would push their vehicles and create confusion. We often see such sights on the cross roads in big cities. We should therefore obey the rules of the road to smoothen the traffic and avoid accidents and chaos.

A. G. Gardiner says that we have certain private liberties and we do not require permissions of the other people in such private matters. We can choose our food, clothes and hobbies. However as soon as we come out in public, we need to follow social rules and consider the rights and freedom of other people. There is an anecdote that a man was walking moving his hand wildly. His hand hit the nose of a fellow pedestrian. When he was asked to walk properly, he replied that he had a freedom to walk as he wanted. The man said, "Yes you have the freedom but your freedom ends where my nose begins". This means that personal liberties have to be accommodated with social liberties.

A. G. Gardiner gives the example of playing on a trombone. He says that one can blow it on a lonely mountain but not his home at midnight because it would disturb other people's sleep. If parents say that their child will have no

education and he will be taught how to pick-pocket, society can interfere because the child would become a criminal and harm society in the long run. A.G. Gardiner says that some people talk loudly in a train or public places. They disturb other people. They do not understand that they are a nuisance for social peace and order. At the end of the essay, Gardiner says that in our day-to-day life, there is no need for sacrifices or heroism. Our small acts of curtailing our personal freedom and adjustment with the freedom of other people determine how civilized we are. The rights of simple, quiet people are as important as the rights of small nationalities and minorities. We should be neither complete anarchists nor socialists.

We should preserve personal liberty and also maintain social liberty. One cannot force the parent of a child to send his child to certain school only or make him study certain subjects compulsorily. However if the parents deprive the child of education he would turn into a savage and in such a case, society can interfere in one's personal liberty. We must also discriminate between whose personal liberties we should respect and whose personal liberties should be defied. Good tranquil music should be respected but loud deafening music must be rejected if it disturbs general public. In India, DJ music during wedding procession or on certain festivals is a great nuisance.

In this essay literally, A. G. Gardiner refers to the rule of the road but symbolically, it is about personal liberty and social liberty. Gardiner uses the traffic rules as a metaphor for the rules for social harmony and social discipline. The rules of the road are the rules of adjustment acceptance of other people's liberty and curtailment of one's personal liberty for social liberty. A harmonious combination of personal liberty and social liberty. A harmonious combination of personal liberty and social liberty is the foundation of sound democracy and sane, healthy society.

9.6 TONE OF THE ESSAY

A. G Gardiner's essay *On the Rule of the Road* has a serious message given in a lighter vein. Gardiner was an advocate of freedom with responsibility. The tone of the essay is didactic and reflective. However, Gardiner deals with the serious theme of personal and social liberty in a humorous manner. He gives an example of old fat woman who walks in the middle of the street creating traffic jam and chaos. He gives another example of a loud-mouthed passenger in the train who disturbed all other fellow passengers with his swagger and loud voiced talk. The essay is about personal liberty versus social liberty. He conveys the message that liberty is not a personal affair but a social contract.

The overall tone of the essay is didactic, argumentative and serious but A.G. Gardiner's treatment of the subject is quite light humorous and witty.

9.7 THEME OF THE ESSAY

Essay has been defined as the loose sally of mind. Its themes and subject range from dust to the star. A.G. Gardiner was an essayist who wrote reflective essay in a light manner. The theme of the essay *The Rule of the Road* is personal liberty versus social liberty. A. G. Gardiner discusses the theme of personal liberty in the context of social liberty. He has used the title *On the Rule of the Road* to symbolize adjustment of personal freedom with freedom

of other people.

Liberty and responsibility are inseparable. We have certain areas in which we are completely free. Personal responsibility cannot exist without liberty and liberty cannot endure without responsibility. The survival of liberty requires personal responsibility. Liberty and responsibility towards others are the two sides of a coin. A. G. Gardiner highlights the fact that to enjoy personal liberty it needs to be curtailed. Liberty is not a monopoly; it is a sharing. There are certain things in which we require no permission of other people. For example we can eat the food we like, put on clothes of our choice etc. However when we come out of our private world, we have to think of other people and their freedom. While walking on the road, we have to obey the rules of the road. These rules are not difficult to follow. They are small acts and not great sacrifices. If we follow them, life would be smoother and easier for all. If we do not follow them, there would be anarchy.

That is the reason why we must choose the middle path. We must be neither complete anarchists nor complete socialists. We must preserve our personal liberty but also maintain the liberties of the society in general. Individual rights are connected inseparably with the liberties of all people in the society. The theme of the essay is highly relevant in modern context. We must remember that we are all part and parcel of the society. We are like islands but we are connected by the ocean around us. Each individual is a part of a larger community. Family, village, city, state, region and country form a larger community. All members of society have certain responsibilities towards society,

Individual liberty should not be suppressed by the state or society but it must not be misused. Very often we find that in free societies, there is a constant tension between rights and responsibilities. In order to bring harmony and peace in the society, all individuals should be responsible towards society. They must curtail their freedom so that others can also enjoy their liberties. Common good is attainable only through mutual accommodation and adjustment.

9.8 A.G. GARDINER'S STYLE AND DICTION

A.G. Gardiner belongs to the school of Montaigne and Lamb. He was a prolific writer who wrote essays on various subjects ranging from serious topics like personal liberty and civil liberty to mosquito. His greatness as an essayist lies in the fact that he brought out profound significance of the most ordinary or petty things. He communicated knowledge and wisdom in a delightful and humorous manner. His essays are personal and conversational in nature.

Gardiner's style is clear, simple, lucid and flexible. His prose is reflective and full of minute observation of day-to-day life. A. G. Gardiner was a liberal minded democrat who emphasized on curtailment of personal liberty for liberty for all. His vocabulary is drawn from everyday speech. However his language is quite dignified and solemn. His words are full of beauty, mystery and picturesqueness. The images he presents in his essays are vivid and concrete.

A.G. Gardiner always avoided mannerism and verbal pomposity. He referred to history, politics and contemporary events in his essays. Primarily, he was a journalist and therefore his language has a journalistic touch. Simplicity is the key feature of his style. His economy of words makes his essays compact and

packed with highly effective ideas. He also uses anecdotes and illustrations to elucidate his views. His essays often contain terse and wisdom packed quotes. Like Bacon, his style is sometimes epigrammatic and aphoristic.

Check Your Progress: 1

9.9 ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS IN BRIEF.

1. What does A.G. Gardiner say about personal liberty?
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2. What created chaos on the street in Petrograd?
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3. What did the old fat lady say about freedom?
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4. What would happen if all people drove or walked as they wanted?
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5. Why does A.G. Gardiner call people liberty-drink?
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6. Why should personal liberty be curtailed?

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7. Is a traffic police symbol of tyranny?

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8. "Liberty is a social contract" Explain the statement.

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9. What are the personal liberties where we require no permission from other?

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10. "When we step out of our personal world, our personal liberty is qualified by other people's liberty" Explain the statement in brief.

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3. Alpha of the plough suggests _____
 (a) the biggest star in the cluster
 (b) the brightest star in the cluster
 (c) the smallest star in the cluster
 (d) the nearest star in the cluster
4. Alpha in Greek means _____
 (a) the last letter in alphabet. (b) the first letter in alphabet
 (c) the 10th letter in alphabet (d) the 20th letter in alphabet
5. A.G. Gardiner was the editor of
 (a) Daily News (b) Washington Post
 (c) New York Times (d) Time Magazine
6. A.G. Gardiner's father was
 (a) a lawyer (b) a journalist
 (c) a writer (d) a wood-worker
7. A.G. Gardiner was an essayist of _____
 (a) Victorian Age (b) Augustan Age.
 (c) Modern Age. (d) Romantic Age.
8. According to A.G. Gardiner, liberty is not a _____
 (a) personal affair (b) universal affair
 (c) social affair (d) political affair
9. A traffic policeman is not a _____
 (a) promise of safety (b) promise of security
 (c) promise of discipline (d) symbol of nuisance and tyranny
10. A fat old lady walked in the middle of the road in _____
 (a) London (b) Petrograd
 (c) Moscow (d) Paris
11. Fagin Academy represents _____
 (a) modern education' (b) training of pick pocketing
 (c) artistic activity (d) journalistic activity
12. In order to provide liberties to all, individual liberty should be
 (a) eliminated (b) implemented
 (c) curtailed (d) enhanced
13. Trombone is a _____
 (a) machine (b) musical instrument
 (c) educational tool (d) vehicle

9.11 MODERN ESSAY AND A.G.GARDINER'S CONTRIBUTION TO IT

The essay continued to flourish in modern age as a part of journalistic writing. It attained vigor, charm and variety during the 20th century. During this age, there were many dailies magazines and periodicals which provide unlimited scope for essay. There were major essayists like E. V. Lucas, Robert Lynd, G.K. Chesterton, A.G. Gardiner, Hilaire Belloc, J. B. Priestley, George Orwell

and Max Beerbohm etc. The following are the characteristics of modern essay.

- (i) Modern essays are often personal in nature. Many essayists followed personal essays of Charles Lamb who revealed his life and reminiscences in his essays. In modern essays, many essayists reveal their feelings and thoughts before the readers. Modern essay is chatty and conversational in nature.
- (ii) Modern essay can be called prose lyric as it is full of personal feelings, imagination and lyrical writing style. A. G. Gardiner's style is often poetical and lucid.
- (iii) Modern essay deals with a variety of themes ranging from political themes to day-to-day topics. A. G. Gardiner wrote an essay on 'Mosquito' in a reflective manner. A. G. Gardiner's essays are often thought-provoking and contemplative.
- (iv) Modern essay like true literature is a criticism of life. There is a spirit of questioning in modern essays. The essayists do not take things for granted but think profoundly and search for meaning of life. A.G. Gardiner often dealt with current issues like liberty, freedom, discipline, fear, defense of ignorance, clothes, early rising, word magic, sleep and thoughts etc. His range of themes is quite wide and full of variety.
- (v) Modern essayists employed simple, journalistic style. They presented their views in such a language that even ordinary readers can understand them. A.G. Gardiner often employed funny examples, anecdotes and humorous stories to elucidate his views.
- (vi) Modern essayists used simple and effective prose style. They avoided pompous ornamental style. They used languages of day-to-day speech. Wit and humour in modern essays enhance their appeal. A.G. Gardiner's keen observation made his essays very appealing. Gardiner belonged to the school of Montaigne and Charles Lamb who popularized personal essays. They laid bare their hearts before the readers like close friends. Gardiner's essays also have personal touch that makes them reader friendly.

9.12 LET US SUM UP

In this unit, we studied A.G. Gardiner famous essay *On the Rule of the Road*. It is about personal liberty versus social liberty. Liberty is not just a personal affair, it is accommodation of personal liberty with public liberty and social order. The essay is relevant in modern context as people often take their liberties as monopoly neglecting other people rights, liberties and interests. The essay teaches us that in order to provide liberties to all, personal liberties have to be curtailed.

Gardiner's essays are contemplative and yet entertaining. You are advised to read some of his popular essays which you will find in project Gutenberg (free e-books). This essay *On the Rule of the Road* is included in Gutenberg famous collection of essays titled *Leaves in the Wind*.

9.13 BOOKS SUGGESTED

Hugh Walker, *The English Essay and Essayists* (1915)

Gardiner, Alfred George, 1865-1946. Author and Journalist

Works by Alfred George Gardiner at Project Gutenberg. (2009)

Alfred George Gardiner: Wikipedia.org.

On the Rule of the Road by A.G.Gardiner. www.enotes.com

A.G.Gardiner: [https://open library.org](https://open.library.org)

Answers

1. (b), 2. (c), 3. (b), 4. (b), 5. (a), 6. (d), 7. (a), 8. (a), 9. (a & b), 10. (b),
11. (b), 12. (c), 13. (b)

: STRUCTURE :

- 10.0 Objectives
- 10.1 About the Author (Speaker)
- 10.2 J. Krishnamurti's Philosophy
- 10.3 About the Speech/Talk by J. Krishnamurti
- 10.4 Text of the Essay
- 10.5 Key Words
- 10.6 Critical Analysis and Explanation of the Talk
- 10.7 Tone of the Talk (Speech)
- 10.8 Theme of the Talk
- 10.9 Language and Style
- 10.10 Questions (answer in brief)
- 10.11 Multiple Choice Questions
- 10.12 Some Famous Quotes of J. Krishnamurti
- 10.13 Let Us Sum Up
- 10.14 Books Suggested

Answers

10.0 OBJECTIVES

In this unit we shall learn

- *The Purpose of life* essay by Jiddu Krishnamurti
- Tone, theme and language of the essay

10.1 ABOUT THE AUTHOR (SPEAKER)

J. Krishnamurti was born in 1895 in a town called Madanapalle in Madras Presidency. His father was a Telugu Brahmin named Jiddu Narayaniah. He was the eight child of Narayaniah and Sanjeevamma. Krishnamurti's parents followed traditional rituals and retained their orthodox roots. Krishnamurti father was an officer in the Revenue Department and he had to remain away from home most of the time. Krishnamurti's mother was a simple, religious woman with generous heart and love for the family. Krishnamurti's eldest sister and mother created a warm and loving atmosphere in the family.

Nityananda was Krishnamurti's younger brother whom he loved profoundly. When Krishnamurti was ten years old, his mother died and his beloved sister also passed away when he was hardly ten years old. Young Krishnamurti felt lonely and unhappy as no one was there in the family to look after him.

Annie Besant, the President of the Theosophical society adopted Krishnamurti and his brother Nitya in their youth. Dr. Besant and other theosophists proclaimed that Krishnamurti was the world teacher whose coming the Theosophists had predicted. Annie Besant and Lead-beater, trained J. Krishnamurti preparing him as the world teacher. They introduced Krishnamurti to occult

powers. Krishnamurti was made the Head of the organization called the Order of the Star in the East.

In 1925, Nitya died which made him deeply shattered and shocked. This sad event proved to be the turning point in the life of J. Krishnamurti. He revolted against the teachings of Theosophical society. He renounced the role he was expected to play and dissolved the Order of the Star in 1929. He proclaimed openly that truth was a pathless land and one has to search for the truth individually.

J. Krishnamurti died on 7th February, 1986. All his life he travelled throughout the world talking to large audiences not like a Guru but as a fellow traveller. Krishnamurti was regarded as one of the greatest thinkers of our time. He belonged to no school of philosophy or thought. He encouraged questioning to find out the truth. He dealt with problems of modern society analyzing them critically. He wanted people to free themselves from fear, anger, sorrow and the bondage of conditioning. His teaching transcended belief systems, nationalism sectarianism and institutional religions. He explained the working of human mind with great precision and analysis. He told people repeatedly that we are all human beings and not Hindus, Muslims, Christians and so on. His teachings are highly relevant to the modern times.

Krishnamurti left a large body of literature in the form of public talks, writings, discussions with teachers and students. He established several schools in India, England and America which taught the students to question themselves and search for truth.

Major works of J. Krishnamurti are as follows:-

1. *At the Feet of the Master*
2. *Awakening*
3. *The Song of Life*
4. *The First and Last Freedom*
5. *Early Talks*
6. *Freedom from the Known*
7. *Meditations*
8. *Commentaries on Living* (First, Second, Third series)
9. *Krishnamurti Journal* (1982)
10. *Poems and Parables* (1981)
11. *Last Talks* (1992)
12. *Tradition and Revolution* (1990)

10.2 J. KRISHNAMURTI'S PHILOSOPHY

(The core ideas of J. Krishnamurti's teachings)

To understand J. Krishnamurti, it is necessary to understand his core ideas. First of all, he believed that truth is a pathless land and there is no fixed path to truth. He was opposed to Gurudom, organizations, institutions, and followers. He also always questioned authority of scripture and so called shastras. He believed that religion was "a frozen thought of man".

According to J. Krishnamurti, people do not know how to listen and see. Usually when people listen, their minds either blindly accept or reject what is

said. The same is true of seeing. When people seeing something, they compare it with past experience or seeing. Thought is past and it always hinders present experience of seeing. J. Krishnamurti said that one must be totally attentive where is nor hindrance of past or ego. He called it choiceless awareness.

J. Krishnamurti said that the unconscious mind is a storehouse of desires, hopes, fears, worries, prejudices and so on. We give name to each experience and it is stored in our memory. When we experience or feel something, the past memory hinders it marring the present experience. Thinker is not different from thought and “I” is an illusion that always deprives us of pure perception and happiness.

J. Krishnamurti said that suffering is the greatest problem of mankind. He believed that suffering arises out of fear and insecurity. Fear exists in relationships and not in isolation. It is usually about past or future. If one is free from past or future, there would be no fear. Fear is born out of conflicts of mind. Desire is also the cause of fear. To be free from desire, one must understand the process of ego.

J. Krishnamurti’s idea on death is unique. To die means to be free from all attachments, fears and sufferings. In fact, we die every day, every moment. Love and death are synonymous. In true love, one is free from all attachments and fears. Love can exist only when there is total freedom. If individual is free and happy, the world too would free and happy.

J. Krishnamurti was against traditions of dead past. He said that traditions are sterile and stagnant without freshness. He was also opposed to narrow minded chauvinism, nationalism, war and violence of all kinds. At the core of his thinking there is the problem of conditioning. We are conditioned by our cultural social, political and religious milieu. Until, we are free from conditioning, we cannot be free and happy. The purpose of life is to de-condition ourselves and live in ‘Present’ - Here and Now.

10.3 ABOUT THE SPEECH/TALK BY J. KRISHNAMURTI

J. Krishnamurti was a great spiritual teacher of our times. He was a revolutionary thinker who rejected dead traditions, customs and beliefs. He said that truth is not a ready-made road. It is a pathless land and one has to carve one’s path. He opposed the tradition of Gurudom and accepted the famous dictum of Lord Buddha “Be your own light”.

The Purpose of Life is a part of J. Krishnamurti’s Talks *Life in Freedom* in Benares, Ojai and Ommen in 1928. J. Krishnamurti describes an eagle descending from the mountain tops. It came down into the valley without fluttering of the wings. It disappeared into shadows of the dark mountains. At the end of the day, it returned to its abode in the mountains.

J. Krishnamurti compares the man who has seen the vision of Truth with an eagle. One who has seen the vision of Truth may wander among the transient things of the world but his life is guided by his goal. Like the eagle, he returns to his abode of eternal peace and joy.

J. Krishnamurti says that the establishment of eternal goals is necessary if one wants to disentangle himself from the complications of life. It should not be the goal shown or suggested by someone else but it should be born of his

own experiences and understanding. Once such a goal is set, it will remove all confusions and make clear the purpose of life.

As the ship is lost in the sea without a compass, the man without the goal would be lost in the world of confusion. The man with knowledge of his goal can guide himself by the compass of his understanding.

If the individual does not know his purpose, he would be in a state of uncertainty and chaos. If the person has not solved his problem, the problem of the world will not be solved. If the person is unhappy and discontented, the world around him would be full of sorrow, discontent and ignorance. This means that the individual and the world are inseparable. Therefore J. Krishnamurti used to say “You are the World”.

To give understanding to others, the person should have understanding for himself first. J. Krishnamurti says that all people are in search of happiness through religion, scriptures, rituals, yoga, meditation etc. All people are seeking something all the time. The seeking is goaded by desires, passions and longings. When a person sets the goal, he is free from desires, fears and sorrows.

Such a condition exists throughout the world. Man is unconsciously trying to free himself from pettiness, and narrowness. The end of this search is freedom and eternal happiness. Man wanders from life to life, temples to temples, from one creed to another. He accepts, rejects and accepts again. The process of accumulation and rejection entangles him like a butterfly against the windowpane.

Life is molded by one’s desires of his heart. If the desire is for a noble life, the life of the person becomes beautiful. Like earthen vessels beautiful or ugly life is fashioned according to the purpose which one has established for himself. If the goal for happiness and freedom is established, life becomes simple. Time is a binder of life but the moment one is free, he is beyond time. Then one can guide himself without any outside authority. The person would be free from fear and his only ultimate goal would be absolute truth.

10.4 TEXT OF THE ESSAY

For the well-being of the mind and heart, understanding is as essential as a warm fire on a cold night.

People imagine that they can attain by some miraculous process, that they can find Truth by the mere outward form of worship, that they can discover their goal by the continual repetition of prayers and chants, or by the performance of yoga, puja and other rites. You can only discover that which you desire, that for which your heart longs, and for which your mind craves, by yourself, through the purification of the heart and mind.

If you would understand Truth you must remove from your heart those stones and weeds which strangle its full growth.

Where there is narrowness of mind and limitation of heart, Truth cannot enter. If you would climb to that height where there are eternal snows, you must leave behind you the accumulation of your possessions, you must be hardened and well trained; and your heart must be filled with the desire of attainment.

For those who have no fixed purpose there is renunciation and self-sacrifice; there is sorrow, grief and pain, endless struggle and violent dissatisfaction.

But for those who have the fixed purpose to attain the Truth which is the unfoldment of life -though they may dwell in the valley of the shadows- there is no sacrifice, there is no struggle.

Because you have no fixed purpose all the shadows of the valley entice you, wrap you in their soft fogs, so that you lose the ecstasy of life. But if you have established your goal, which is the goal of the world -the attainment of the Kingdom of Happiness through freedom from all experience- then you can control the future, then you are the creator of that which you desire. If you can pass through the valley of the shadows with eyes eternally fixed upon the mountain-top, then you can have all experiences without creating barriers between yourself and the goal. This is the understanding of life which will bring order out of chaos and it is for that purpose that the Beloved has come. As the true artist, who by his imagination creates beauty out of the chaos around him, out of the confusion which exists in the world, so the Beloved, Truth, creates order in the mind and heart of those who understand. When you understand, you will have solved the problem of your daily life. If there is no struggle within to free yourself from the cage of sorrow and pain, from the limitations which cause confusion, then, however much I may knock at the door of your heart, there will be no response. But the moment you yourself are dissatisfied, the moment you yourself desire to escape and to attain liberation, then you yourself seek the source of Truth.

Those who seek for an understanding of life must fix their inward perception on eternal Truth which is the unfolding of life.

To those who live and have their being in the valley, the mountains are mysterious, hard, cruel, and eternally aloof. The mountains never change; they are ever constant, never yielding. So it is with Truth. To those who live in the valley of shadows, of transient things, Truth seems terrible, hard and cruel.

Everywhere, among all people, there is a search for something hidden, for some realization, which will give wisdom, greater knowledge, greater vision, greater understanding; this the people call Truth.

They think that Truth lies hidden in some distant place, away from life, away from joy, away from sorrow. But Truth is life, and with an understanding of life there is born an understanding of Truth. When you are fulfilling life with understanding you are the master of Truth.

Though there is at the present time a revolt against tradition and the established order of things, against morality in the narrow sense, yet the majority of people still judge and try to understand life from the prejudiced point of view of a limited and settled mind. A Hindu will only recognize Truth when it is presented to him through the medium of Hinduism, and so it is with the Christian and the Buddhist. But Truth is never contained in a particular form or medium. Truth can only be understood with an unbiased mind, capable of detachment and pure judgment.

As every human being is divine, so every individual in the world should be his own master, his own absolute ruler and guide. But if he would guide himself intelligently, he must be able to judge all things with an open mind and not reject what he does not understand because he is prejudiced.

Truth is the power within each one of you which urges you on to attainment. It is the consummation of all intelligence. It is Absolute. There is no god

except the man who has purified himself and so has attained to Truth.

When you bind life to beliefs and traditions, to codes of morality, you kill life. In order to keep alive, vital, ever changing, ever growing, as the tree that is ever putting out new leaves, you must give to life the opportunities, the nourishment which will strengthen it and make it grow. When life desires to find its freedom the only way by which it can attain is through experience.

There can be no understanding of life, which is Truth, when there is not the thrill, the agony, the suffering, the continual upheaval, discouragement and encouragement of life.

In the olden days, especially in India, those who desired to find Truth imagined that they could discover the way by withdrawing from the aching world, from the transient things, from the shadow of the real, by the destruction of the physical. But now you have to face life as it is, for you can only conquer life when you have a complete and not a partial understanding of it.

Once there was a man who kept all the windows of his house well closed except one, hoping that through that window alone the sunlight would come, but it never came. That is what those people are doing who are bound by tradition, by narrow sectarian beliefs, and who think that Truth is contained in any of those beliefs. You cannot bind life, which is the Truth, by anything, for life must be free and untrammelled. If you do not understand that the purpose of life is freedom, then you are only gilding the bars of your cage by the invention of theories, of creeds, of philosophies and religions.

The basis of all these innumerable beliefs is fear. You are afraid for your salvation, you are afraid to test your own knowledge, and hence you rely on the assertions, on the authority of another.

In order to be happy need we have religions? In order to love need we build temples? In order to fulfill the self need we worship a personal god?

You must give to the suffering world, not beliefs, creeds, dogmas, but new understanding which comes from intelligent cooperation with Nature, through observation of all the events of daily life.

Those who would understand Truth, who would give of their heart and their mind to that Truth, must first have grown in experience. Then experience will guide them, for experience gives intelligence, and intelligence is the accumulation of all experience. The web of life is spun out of common things and the common things are experience.

Learn from every event, from every activity in daily life, and assimilate the experience every moment of the day.

You go to temples or to churches or to other places of worship and there you imagine that you are purified. But does that purification stand the test of daily life?

Your theories, your superficial knowledge of life, do not help you at moments of crisis. When death comes and takes away your friend, your beliefs and theories do not help you to overcome your loneliness and the sense of separation. You will only overcome it if the poison of separation has been destroyed, and you can only destroy that sense of separation by observing others in sorrow, in pain and in pleasure like yourself, and finding that in suffering as well as in pleasure there is unity.

No one can develop that power which dwells within you but yourself, for that power grows by experience. But experience alone, undirected by the goal you would attain, produces chaos, the chaos which prevails in the world at present. Without the understanding of the purpose of life there is bound to be chaos.

The first demand upon those who would seek the understanding of true happiness, is that they should have the burning longing to be free from all things, to gain that freedom which comes when you are beyond the need for further experience because you have passed through all experience.

If you would understand what I mean by the freedom of life, you must establish for yourself the goal which is liberation even from life itself.

For the understanding of life you must have revolt, dissatisfaction and great discontentment. Many people in the world imagine that they have found Truth by adopting some theory or other, and hence that they have solved the whole problem of life.

Contentment without understanding is like a pool covered with green scum, which does not reflect the bare eye of heaven. It is very easy to be ignorantly discontented, but to be discontented and to revolt intelligently is a divine gift. Revolt with intelligence, with understanding, is as a great river that is full of power.

Revolt is essential in order to escape from the narrowness of tradition, from the binding influences of belief, of theories. If you would understand the Truth, you must be in revolt so that you may escape from all these -from books, from theories, from gods, from superstitions- from everything which is not of your own.

If you would understand the meaning of my words, then throw aside all your mental conceptions of life and begin again from the very beginning. Then you will see for yourself how life works, how life which is the accumulation of all experience speaks through that voice which we call intuition, which guides you and helps you on the onward path.

I would urge you to be free -free from the very gods whom you worship, from the very beings whom you hold dear, because freedom is necessary for the growth of the soul and without freedom there is decay.

Because you do not wish to be free, you seek comfort, and comfort is like the shadow of a tree, it varies according to the sun from moment to moment, and those who seek comfort must move from one abode to another. Comfort cannot dwell with understanding.

The man who seeks comfort, who searches for the satisfaction of the moment, will never find real and lasting joy, for the momentary comfort is as transitory as the flower that is born of a morning and withers at the ending of the day.

When a pond is not touched with the breath of air, the waters become stagnant, and no animal comes to it to slake its thirst. But when the fresh winds come and breathe on its face, then animals and human beings alike can quench their thirst.

So if there is not in you the fresh wind of desire for freedom from all things, you will not find the Truth which alone can remove the thirst of the world.

When you are free, as the bird in the skies, your life becomes simple. Life is complicated only when there is limitation. Then you need traditions and beliefs to uphold you.

But when you desire to be free from all things, then you break away from the old order and enter upon that new life which will lead you towards perfection which is liberation and happiness.

When you are able to become a flame of revolt, then the means to reach the Kingdom will be found.

We have to create a miracle of order in this century of chaos and superstition. But first we have to create order in ourselves, a lasting order which is not based on fear or on authority.

I have found and established for myself that which is eternal, and it is my work to create order in your mind, so that you will no longer depend on outward authority, no longer be the slave of superstition or of those trivialities which hold life in bondage, and divide you from your goal.

Because you have no true purpose in life there is chaos within you; there is misery without understanding, strife without purpose, and struggle in ignorance. But when you have established the goal of the Beloved in your heart and mind there is understanding in your life. There may still be struggle but it will be with understanding, and there will be greater love and greater happiness. Establish, therefore, within you that which is eternal, and the present shadows will pass away.

When you have established the Beloved in your heart, the source and the end are united and time no longer exists, for you hold eternity within you.

When you have established the Beloved in your heart, you are ready to face the open seas, where there are great storms, and the strong breezes which quicken life.

Because you have the Beloved in your heart, you must be a lighthouse on a dark shore, to guide those who are still enshrouded in their own darkness.

Of what value is your understanding, of what value are your high and noble thoughts, your pure life, if you do not help those who are in constant pain, who are in darkness, and in confusion? Of what value is the Truth you have seen if you are not able to give of that Truth to those who are hungering and thirsting after the eternal?

Because you have understood, be courageous with that understanding, and give of your life to those who are in darkness.

- J. KRISHNAMURTI

10.5 KEY WORDS

breeze	: gust of wind, gentle wind
awaken	: rouse from sleep
peak	: summit, top
jostle	: push, elbow, bump roughly
strife	: struggle, conflict, discord
transient	: temporary, short-lived, momentary
abode	: residence, a place of living
soar	: fly high in the air

establishment	: initiation, formation, foundation/founding
disentangle	: extricate, disengage, untwine
confusion	: chaos, muddle, puzzle
complication	: difficulty, obstacle, impediment
compass	: an instrument which shows directions
perception	: realization, ability to see. here etc. through senses
discontented	: dissatisfied, one who is not is satisfied
ignorance	: lack of knowledge
eternally	: lack of knowledge
eternally	: perpetually, endlessly
attainment	: Achievement
current	: Stream, flow, prevalent, present
ecstasy	: joyful excitement, euphoria, bliss
unconsciously	: unknowingly, with unawareness
complexities	: complication, convolution, entanglement
mould/ mold	: cast, die, hollow container used to give shape to metal
absolute	: Complete total perfect
overshadow	: Cast shadow over something
seek	: Search, attempt to find

10.6 SUMMARY OF THE TALK (SPEECH)

J. Krishnamurti was a seer with a profound vision of life. He rejected stereotype traditions and taboos. He believed that truth is a pathless land and every individual has to seek truth individually. To follow scriptures and Guru would make the person muddle headed. He would be lost in the world of confusion. The person conditioned by religion, scriptures and Guru would never be able to attain truth which is true freedom and happiness.

The Purpose of Life is a Talk by J. Krishnamurti given in Benares, Ojai and Ommen in 1928. It is the part of the series *Life in Freedom*. J. Krishnamurti says that a man without goal would be chaotic condition. He would never be able to attain freedom and happiness. He would be like a ship without a compass.

J. Krishnamurti describes eagle descending from the mountain top into the valley without a flutter of wings. It disappears in the darkness of deep valley. However it returns to its abode in the evening. During the day, it might have struggled a lot but at the end of the day, it is free from jostle of the world. The some it true of a person with a goal of the person has established a goal of life, he would be out of confusion and sufferings.

J. Krishnamurti says that the goal must be set by the person himself and not by others. It must be born out of his own experience. If the person does not know his purpose, he would be in a state of uncertainly and chaos. In fact, the individual is the world. If he is unhappy, there would be sufferings in the world if he is happy and peaceful so will be the world.

J. Krishnamurti says that all people are in search of happiness. Some worship

idols, some meditate and some perform rites and rituals. They repeat mantras. Like a boat in the current of water man is pulled by desires, passion and longings such a person has no goal established goal and so he is in permanent confusion and chaos. Such a condition exists everywhere in the world.

All people want to be free from confusion and sorrows of life. They want to be free from fear and enjoy true freedom but they have no fixed goal and therefore, they never be free from complexities of life. They are like a butterfly that knocks against the windowpane.

J. Krishnamurti says that a man can mold his life through the establishment of his purpose. Life would be beautiful or ugly as it depends upon the purpose one has established for himself. The true goal of is happiness and happiness comes from freedom Time freedom is freedom from fear and past. It is freedom from conditioning if one lives in present with choice less awareness, one would be eternally happy. J. Krishnamurti believed that one has to be the Light unto oneself. Lord Buddha said “ App Deepo Bhava” (Be your own Light)

J. Krishnamurti’s talks are highly appealing and thought provoking. He did not advise or guide people like a Guru but communicated with the people like a friend or companion. He called himself a follow traveller. He encourages people to question all kinds of traditions, customs, established religions, scriptures and authorities. He believed that without total freedom, there would be no happiness and peace in the world.

10.7 CRITICAL ANALYSIS AND EXPLANATION OF THE TALK

J. Krishnamurti was one of the greatest thinkers of modern times. He was a great mystic and seer. He was a revolutionary spiritual thinker who rejected old traditions, taboos and rituals. For him, truth was a pathless land. He never claimed to be a teacher or Guru. He rejected the concept of Gurudom. He said that he had no Guru and he was nobody’s Guru.

Krishnamurti said that one has to be free from “the known” which denotes conditioning by the past experiences and impressions. He was always against the idea of image making. When we see someone, we do not see the person but judge him by our past experiences and impressions.

According to J. Krishnamurti, our unconscious mind is the store house of desires, hopes, fears, worries, prejudices, likes and dislikes. Our thinking is propelled by our past experiences and impressions. He always emphasized on pure perception. He said that when one sees a rose, his mind interferes with his seeing. Therefore, he thinks about rose, compares it with other roses he had seen in the past but fails to see it as it is. True seeing must be without interference of mind.

J. Krishnamurti said that the greatest problem of mankind is suffering. Physical sufferings are natural but psychological sufferings are created by people the selves. It is born out of fear, insecurity, ego and conflict within the mind.

People are unhappy because of conditioning which is created by social and cultural environment. We always identify ourselves with our country, culture, religions etc. Freedom from conditioning is possible by the freedom from thinking. When mind is totally still and thoughtless there is freedom for the real To BE. Krishnamurti said that thought is made of past. It breeds the sense of ownership. It creates jealousy and possessiveness. The process of

thought creates insecurity and conflict. It is a hindrance to love. Thought creates division between what is and what should be.

Knowledge is the result of thought. Thought is past. Past is ‘known’. The response of the past always overshadows the present, the unknown. Only the understanding of the self is freedom from knowledge.

The Purpose of Life is a part of the Talk *Life in Freedom* on which J. Krishnamurti tells the audiences about freedom and the goal of life. He says that a person without a goal in life is like a ship without a compass. It is pulled by the current of thoughts, traditions and so called religions. J. Krishnamurti describes an eagle descending in to the valley without fluttering its wings. Soon it disappears into the dark shadows of the valley. At the end of the day, it returns to its abode. It goes through strife and struggle during the day but returns to its home in the evening. The same is true of a man. With the vision of the Truth one who has established an eternal goal in life he may undergo the strife and struggle in the world only to return to the abode of peace and happiness. His life is guided by the goal which is established by himself and not by others.

If a person has no established purpose of life, he is in a state of uncertainty and chaos. If the person has not solved his own problem, the problem of the world would never be solved. In fact, the individual is the world. One cannot separate the individual from the world. The world and the individual are one. If the problem, of an individual is solved by understanding, the problem of the world would be solved.

People try to seek happiness in religions, traditions, rituals, customs, yoga and meditation. Some people chant mantras but they are all carried away by desires. Desires make people insecure and unhappy. That is the reason why true freedom is the freedom from desires, thoughts, fears and insecurity. One keeps wandering from one shrine to another, one Guru to another but he remains unhappy because he has not established the goal of his life.

There are many interpreters of truth. There many conflicting paths and religions. So, people remain entangled in complexities. The purpose of life should be freedom from knowledge, thought and desires. Time is a binder of life and so, once the person is free, he is beyond time. One should guide himself never depending on others or any authority. If the person is free from fear there will no conflicts, no fear, no insecurity. There will be only peace, happiness and absolute Truth.

Regarding education, J. Krishnamurti said that we create stereotype humanbeing through education. We teach them to be insecure, ambitious and fall into retrace. We destroy their curiosity, creativity and spontaneity. The education should be to make students creative curious and free from fear. They should be free to doubt and question. Then only they will be able to live happily and fearlessly.

10.8 TONE OF THE TALK (SPEECH)

J. Krishnamurti was a great thinker, philosopher and mystic. His views are profoundly thought provoking and contemplative. This style was conversational and directed to the hearts and minds of the listeners. He always said that he did not teach people but shared his views with his audience in a friendly manner. He called his talk’s dialogues. He often asked his audience‘

“Do you understand what I said?” He said that he was a fellow-traveller of his guidance on the path of truth. The overall tone of the talk is reflective analytical and contemplative.

10.9 THEME OF THE TALK

The theme of the Talk *The Purpose of Life* is the goal of life which is search for freedom. J.Krishnamurti said that people who have no fixed goals of life are like lost ships without compass. Those who know the purpose of their life are free from conflict, fear and ego. They go through the turmoil’s of the world but in a stoical manner. Like an eagle that returns home in the evening at the end of the day, the person with a purpose of life returns to peace and joy even though he goes through the worldly worries and conflicts.

According to J. Krishnamurti the purpose of life is to be free from fear, conflicts and conditioning. True education should focus on inner freedom rather than material gain and worldly success.

10.10 LANGUAGE AND STYLE

J. Krishnamurti prose is chaste, simple and poetic. Very often it has an element of sensuous appeal. He described beauty and peace in nature juxtaposing it against the turmoil and strife in the human world. His description of nature displays his keen observation without interference of past and conditioning. He often describes elements of nature like earth, wind, trees, mountains, flowers, birds etc. There are images of light and shadows in his writings and talks. It is believed that if one has a pure perception, the colours of nature are perceived in their purest forms.

In J. Krishnamurti’s talks and writings valley and mountains are described frequently. For him, mountains symbolize self-realization and the valley symbolizes the mundane world of gloom and strife. The sea, waves, rivers, trees also recur in J.Krishnamurti’s talks and writings. The merging of the river with the ocean is symbolic of the union of the individual with the universal.

J. Krishnamurti’s images appeal to all out senses of sight, smell, touch, hearing and taste. He does not reject is the perception of senses. He always acknowledges what is. His prose is full of imagery and figures of speech. In his talk *The Purpose of Life*, he describes the flight of the eagle in the beginning. Later he describes the people on the Ganga Ghat performing rituals, Yoga or reciting mantras. This power of description is vivid and appealing. There is no artificiality or deliberate craftsmanship in his style. It is natural and spontaneous.

Check Your Progress: 1

10.11 ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS IN BRIEF.

1. How does J. Krishnamurti describe the flight of the eagle in the valley?

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2. How does J. Krishnamurti compare a man with the vision of Truth to an eagle?

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3. How should one set one's goal of life?

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4. Why is a man without goal like a ship without compass?

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5. How is the individual problem's the problem of the world?

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6. What did J. Krishnamurti see when he was going down the sacred Ganges in a boat?

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7. What is the end of search for all humanbeings?

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8. How can life be shaped beautiful according to J. Krishnamurti?

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9. What happens when a goal of life is established in one's life?

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10. What is true freedom according to J. Krishnamurti?

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Check Your Progress: 2

10.12 CHOOSE THE CORRECT OPTION FROM GIVEN BELOW

1. J. Krishnamurti believed that
 - (a) truth is a pathless land
 - (b) truth is a readymade road
 - (c) truth is the goal of life
 - (d) truth can be achieved through scriptures
2. At the end of the day, an eagle returns to
 - (a) a hill
 - (b) a mountain top
 - (c) its abode
 - (d) its goal
3. A man with an established goal also returns to
 - (a) truth
 - (b) freedom

- (c) peace and happiness (d) confused state
4. J. Krishnamurti says that one should set one's goal of life according to
 - (a) shastras
 - (b) one's religion
 - (c) the guidance of the Guru
 - (d) one's own experience and understanding
 5. According to J. Krishnamurti, a man without established goal of life is like
 - (a) steer less ship (b) lost ship
 - (c) wrecked ship (d) ship without compass
 6. If the individual problem is not solved
 - (a) the problem of the world will not be solved
 - (b) the problem of society will not be solved
 - (c) there would be chaos
 - (d) there would be no peace
 7. One can give understanding to others only if one
 - (a) understands the world
 - (b) is religious
 - (c) is happy and free
 - (d) understands himself first
 8. J. Krishnamurti says that all people in the world are in search of
 - (a) freedom (b) happiness
 - (c) love (d) money
 9. The purpose of life according to J. Krishnamurti is
 - (a) wealth (b) health
 - (c) freedom and happiness (d) God

10.13 SOME FAMOUS QUOTES OF J. KRISHNAMURTI

- * The ability to observe without evaluating is the highest form of intelligence
- * It is truth that liberates, not your effort to be free.
- * Real learning comes about when the competitive spirit has ceased
- * Tradition becomes our security, and when the mind is secure, it is in decay.
- * To understand the immeasurable, the mind must be extraordinarily quiet
- * Happiness is strange; it comes when you are not seeking
- * I maintain that Truth is a pathless land and you cannot approach it by any path whatever by any religion by any sect. The moment you follow someone you cease to follow truth.
- * Thought is cunning so clever that it distorts everything for its own convenience.
- * Acquiring knowledge is a form of imitation.

- * Be a light unto yourself
- * To understand life is to understand ourselves and that is both the beginning and the end of education.
- * The only freedom is the freedom from the known

10.14 LET US SUM UP

In this unit, you studied a very thought provoking talk by Jiddu Krishnamurti. J. Krishnamurti was a revolutionary thinker who never claimed to be a Guru. He shunned all the frills of the so called seers, saints and Gurus. He asked his audience to seek their own path of truth as he believed that Truth is not a readymade road. It is to be searched by an individual without following any Guru, saint or scriptures.

J. Krishnamurti's views on education are amazingly original and fresh. He wanted the students to be free from all kinds of conditioning, not learning and competitiveness. You are advised to listen to J. Krishnamurti's videos on YouTube and read the books of his talks and writings.

10.14 BOOKS SUGGESTED

- Jiddu Krishnamurti, *Life in Freedom*. Talks in Benares, Ojai and Ommen, 1928.
- Jiddu Krishnamurti *Does Life Have A Purpose?* gathering at Oomen, Holland, 1930
- Rudolf Steiner *The Philosophy of Freedom: The Basis for a Modern World Conception*, 2011

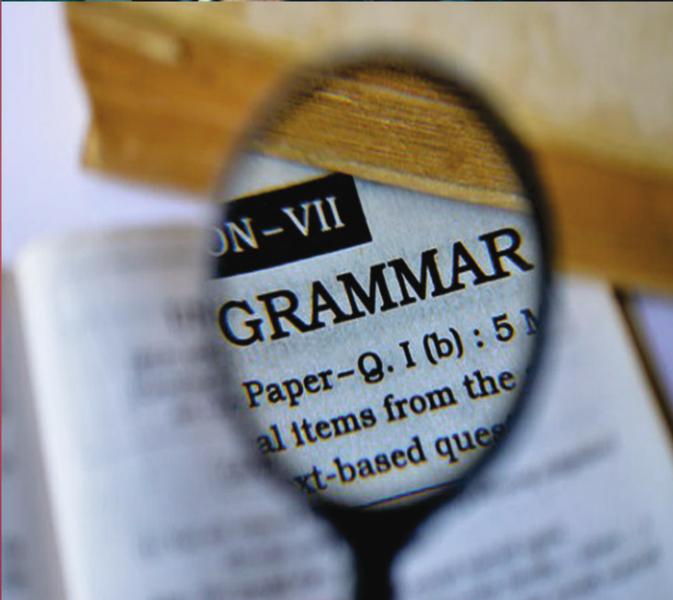
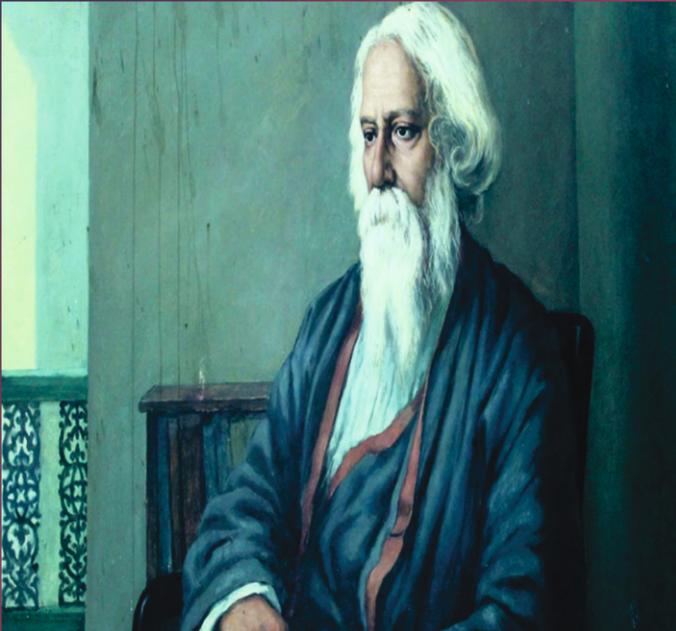
Answers

Check Your Progress: 2

1. (A), 2. (C), 3. (C), 4. (D), 5. (D), 6. (A), 7. (D), 8. (B), 9. (C)

F. Y. B. A.
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Message for the Students

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Open University is the only state Open University, established by the Government of Gujarat by the Act No. 14 of 1994 passed by the Gujarat State Legislature; in the memory of the creator of Indian Constitution and Bharat Ratna Dr. Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar. We stand at the seventh position in terms of establishment of the Open Universities in the country. The University provides as many as 54 courses including various Certificates, Diplomas, UG, PG, as well as Doctoral degree, to strengthen Higher Education across the state.



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Block

3

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— — — — —
: STRUCTURE :
— — — — —

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 - 11.2 Kinds of Articles
 - 11.2.1 The Selection of Article ‘A’ or ‘An’
 - 11.2.2 Use of Indefinite Article
 - 11.2.3 Omission of Indefinite Article
 - 11.3 Definite Article
 - 11.3.1 Use of Definite Article
 - 11.3.2 Omission of Article ‘The’
 - 11.3.3 Repetition of Article ‘The’
 - 11.4 Let Us Sum Up
 - 11.5 Key Words
 - 11.6 Books Suggested
- Answers

11.0 OBJECTIVES

In this unit we shall talk about:

- the meaning and type of articles
- the selection between articles ‘a’ and ‘an’
- omission of indefinite article
- use and omission of definite article

On completing this unit, you should be able to:

- distinguish between definite and indefinite article
- know where to omit articles
- master the topic articles

11.1 INTRODUCTION

An Article is a word used to modify a noun, which is a person, place, object, or idea. Usually adjectives modify nouns through description, but articles are used instead to point out or refer to nouns. The adjectives ‘a’ or ‘an’ and ‘the’ are called articles. They play a very important role in language. They are basically demonstrative adjectives and give information about nouns. Articles make it clear whether one is talking about a specific person or thing or something in general.

11.2 KINDS OF ARTICLES

There are two types of articles.

- (1) **Indefinite Article:** An article which does not refer to any particular person or thing is known as the indefinite article.

Ex. a, an

It is used before a singular noun only.

- (2) **Definite Article:** An article which refers to a particular person or thing is known as the definite article. It can be used before a singular as well as a plural noun.

Ex. The

11.2.1 The Selection of Article 'A' or 'An'

The choice between 'a' or 'an' is determined by sound. If a word begins with a vowel sound, article 'an' is used. Some students follow the first letter of a word which leads them to make a mistake. They must follow the sound.

Ex: An honest man, an umbrella, an honourable person, an enemy, an orange, an ass, a one way street.

It should be noticed that the words honest, honourable begin with a vowel sound, as the initial consonant 'h' is not pronounced.

Before individual letters spoken with a vowel sound, article 'an' is used.

Ex. an MLA, an NSS student, an MP

If a word begins a consonant sound, article 'a' is used.

Ex : A girl, a boy, a house, a union, a European, a one way street, a unicorn, a reindeer, a one eyed man, a university.

It should be noticed that the words like union, university, and unicorn though begin with a vowel, having a consonant sound. Similarly the words one way street, one eyed man takes article 'a' because 'one' begins with consonant sound 'w'

11.2.2 Use of Indefinite Article:

1. In exclamatory sentences.

Ex.: What a beautiful flower the rose is!

Ex.: what a brave soldier he was

Ex.: what a hot day it is.

2. In expressions of price, speed, ratio etc.

Ex.: Ten thousand a month

Ten rupees a dozen

Four times a day

Sixty kilometres an hour

3. With words like little and few

Ex.: a few days

A little petrol

4. In certain expressions of quantity.

Ex.: a dozen, a couple, a quarter, a million, a thousand, a lot of, a great deal of, a great number of

5. In the sense of one.

Ex.: a pen, a book.

6. In the sense of one of a.

Ex. I read a book.

She attended a meeting

7. In the sense of all or any.

Ex.: A vehicle is to be serviced in time. Meaning all vehicles or any vehicle is to be serviced

8. To convert a proper noun in to a common noun.

Ex.: He is a Vajpayee (a great political leader)

11.2.3 Omission of Indefinite Article:

1. With a plural noun.

Ex. chairs, tables, books, boys

2. With uncountable nouns.

Ex. furniture, advice, news, baggage, luggage, business, knowledge

3. With material noun.

Ex. paper, sugar, wheat, rice, iron, wood, tea, coffee

4. With the names of meals.

Ex. breakfast, lunch, dinner

5. With abstract nouns.

Ex. fear, joy, sorrow, happiness, pleasure, love

Check Your Progress : 1

FILL IN THE BLANKS WITH ARTICLE 'A' OR 'AN'

1. Shwetang is—— M.Com from the Bombay University.
2. I met —— European yesterday.
3. Copper is ——useful metal.
4. Rustom is—— young Parsee
5. —— Honest man speaks truth.
6. Benares is—— holy city.
7. He is not—— honourable man.
8. The Ganga is—— sacred river.
9. He looks as stupid as—— owl.
10. She is ——untidy girl.
11. Vadodara is——very dear place to live in.
12. Ceylon is—— island.
13. He has been elected as—— M.P.
14. The dog is—— faithful animal.
15. She came—— hour late.

11.3 DEFINITE ARTICLE

'The' is called the definite article, because it points out some particular person or thing.

Ex: I met the teacher; meaning some particular teacher.

11.3.1 Use of Definite Article:

The definite article 'the' is used

1. When the object or group of objects is unique or thought to be unique:
Ex: The Sun, the Stars, the Sea, the Earth
2. with certain proper names of seas, rivers, group of islands, chains of mountains and oceans
Ex: The Himalaya lie to the North of India,
The Ganga is considered holy by the Hindus.
The Atlantic | the Red Sea | the Indian Ocean
London is on the Thames
The Atlantic Ocean
The Himalayas, the Alps, the Aravalli
3. Before directions.
Ex: The North | South Pole
The East, the West, the North, the South.
4. When we speak of a particular person or thing.
Ex: The hotel in which you want to stay is closed.
The book you want is out of print
Let us go to the seminar.
5. With persons or things mentioned for the second time.
Ex. I met a soldier. The soldier was very brave
I have a pen. The pen writes very smoothly
6. When a singular noun is meant to represent a whole class:
Ex: The reindeer is the ship of desert
The horse is a noble animal
The cow is a useful animal
The rose is the king of flowers
7. Before the names of certain books:
Ex.: The Mahabharata, the Quran, the Geeta, the Bible, the Puranas, the Vedas
8. With superlatives
Ex: The Ganga is the longest river of India
Simla is the coolest hill station
The darkest cloud has a silver lining.
9. As an adverb with comparatives or to make a sentence of double comparison, 'the' is used twice.
Ex: The more I see you, the more I love you,
The harder you work, the better results you get.
The more the expectations are, the more the frustrations are.
10. Before an adjective when the noun is understood:
Ex: We should help the poor
The brave should be respected

The rich should help the needy

11. With ordinals:

Ex: We were the first to dare to live there

The fifth chapter is very difficult

12. Before musical instruments:

Ex: Darshan plays the guitar

She can play the flute very nicely

13. With historical buildings:

Ex. the Red Fort, the White House, the Great Wall of China, the United Kingdom, the Taj Mahal

14. With some news papers and magazines.

Ex.: The Times of India, the Hindu, and the Indian Express

15. With nationalities, sects and communities.

Ex.: The Indians, the Japanese, the Americans, the Eskimos.

16. With names of trains, ships and aeroplanes.

Ex.: the Rajdhani Express, the Titanic, the Sagar Samrat, the Spice Jet

17. With the persons or things understood from the context.

Ex.: She returned the book. (That I gave her)

I called the typist. (That is in my office)

18. With proper noun used as common noun

Ex. Ahmedabad was the Manchester of India

Kashmir is the Switzerland of India

19. Before famous historical events.

Ex. The Independence Day, the Republic Day, the Industrial Revolution.

11.3.2 Omission of Article 'The':

Article 'The' cannot be used:

1. Before proper nouns

Ex. America, Narendra Modi, India, Newton, Amitabh, Tagore, Sachin Tendulkar

2. Before abstract nouns

Ex.: virtue, honesty, pleasure, beauty, poetry, essay, grammar, childhood

But Article The can be used if the above qualities are assigned to people.

Ex.: The childhood of Amitabh

The honesty of political leaders

The poetry of Tagore

3. Before common nouns

Ex. man, woman, book, flower, house

4. Before names of materials

Ex.: gold, cotton glass, bread, marble, copper, silver

5. Before languages
Ex.: English, Hindi, Gujarati, French
6. Before names of buildings
Ex. school, college, university, hospital, church, temple, market, prison
But Article the can be used if one refers them as definite place
Ex. The college is very far from my house.
7. Before names of relations
Ex. father, mother, sister, uncle, aunt, brother
8. Before names of colours.
Ex. white, green, yellow
9. Before phrases which take a preposition before
Ex. in debt, at evening, at sight, by train, on demand, on foot, in hurry, at lunch, above ground, by day, at sunset
10. Before those phrases consisting of a transitive verb followed by its object
Ex.: to give battle, to bring word, to leave office, to lose heart
11. Before names of meals.
EX. breakfast, lunch, supper, dinner
12. Before names of games
EX. cricket, football, tennis, chess
13. Before names of diseases
Ex. cancer, AIDS, malaria

11.3.3 Repetition of Article 'The':

- (1) When two or more adjectives qualify one noun and are connected by 'and', article 'the' is used with the first adjective only
Ex.: I have a black and blue pen.
It means I have a pen that is partly black and partly blue.
- (2) When two adjectives qualify different nouns, article 'the' is used before both adjectives
Ex.: I have a black and a blue pen.
It means two Pen. One black and the other blue.
- (3) When two or more nouns refer to the same person or things, 'the' article is used before the first
Ex.: I met the Director and Registrar.
It means both posts are held by one person.
- (4) When two or more nouns refer to different persons or things, 'the' article is used before each.
Ex.: I met the Director and the Registrar.
It means the two posts are held by two persons.

Check Your Progress : 2

INSERT ARTICLE 'THE' WHERE NECESSARY

1. European whom I met was in need of my help.
2. Sun shines brightly.
3. Reindeer is a native of Norway.
4. French defeated Germans.
5. Let us discuss matter in detail.
6. Japanese are the peace loving people.
7. We should not hate handicapped.
8. The feet of Indian are washed by Indian Ocean.
9. Manek chauri is busiest street in Ahmedabad.
10. If you meet him, give him message.
11. Boy you want to meet today is absent.

Check Your Progress : 3

(A) INSERT ARTICLES WHERE NECESSARY.

1. My mother reads Bhagvat Gita every day.
2. Banyan is kind of fig tree.
3. Cat loves comfort.
4. Rose is sweetest of all flowers.
5. His car struck tree, you can still see the mark on tree.
6. Less one speaks, more he can impress.
7. Higher the speed of your vehicle is, more the chances of accidents are.
8. The guide knows way
9. John got best price.
10. You are fool to say that.
11. The brave soldier lost arm in battle.
12. Sun sets in West and rises in East.
13. The doctor says it is hopeless case.
14. Have you never seen elephant?
15. What nice child Mitesh is!
16. Who wishes to take walk with me?
17. Get pound of sugar from nearest shop.
18. Draw map of India.
19. The musician was old Parsee.
20. Only best quality is sold by us.
21. Man cannot live by bread alone.
22. April is fourth month of year.
23. It was proudest moment of my life.
24. Time makes worst enemies friends.

(B) FILL IN THE BLANKS WITH SUITABLE ARTICLES.

1. Iron is.....a useful metal
2. He reads.....Bible daily
3. We never saw suchterrible accident
4. Shirisha is.....attractive girl.
5. Which is.....tallest tower in our city.
6. Sanskrit is.....difficult language.
7. My friend isEuropean.
8. I met Mr. Kumaryear ago.
9. Do you look atblue sky?
10. Tirupathy isholy place.
11. I bought pair of shoes.
12. I saw movie last night.
13. They are staying at hotel.
14. Look at woman over there! She is a famous actress.
15. I do not like basketball.
16. That is girl I told you about.
17. night is quiet. Let's take a walk!
18. price of gas keeps rising.
19. Juan is Spanish.
20. I read amazing story yesterday.
21. love is such beautiful thing.
22. I live in apartment. apartment is new.
23. I would like piece of cake.
24. I was in Japanese restaurant. restaurant served good food.
25. Sara can play guitar.

11.4 LET US SUM UP

In this unit you have learnt

- The meaning and two types of articles
- To distinguish between articles a and an
- To omit articles where not necessary

11.5 KEY WORDS

Adjective: a word that expresses an attribute of something.

Noun: a word that can be used to refer to a person, place, thing, quality or action.

Vowel: a speech sound made with the vocal tract open.

Consonant: a speech sound that is not a vowel.

11.6 BOOKS SUGGESTED

1. Raymond Murphy : Murphy's English Grammar:Cambridge University Press, 2004

2. Jayanthi Dakshina Murthy:Contemporary English Grammar:Book Palace, 2003
3. A.J.Thomson & A.V.Martinet:A Practical English Grammar:Oxford University Press,1997
4. Wren and Martin:High School English Grammar:Oxford University Press

Answers

Check Your Progress 1.

- | | | | | |
|-------|--------|--------|-------|--------|
| 1. an | 2. a | 3. a | 4. a | 5. an |
| 6. a | 7. an | 8. a | 9. an | 10. an |
| 11. a | 12. an | 13. an | 14. a | 15. an |

Check Your Progress 2.

1. The European
2. The sun
3. The reindeer
4. The French, the Germans
5. The matter
6. The Japanese
7. The handicapped
8. The Indian Ocean
9. The busiest
10. The message
11. The boy

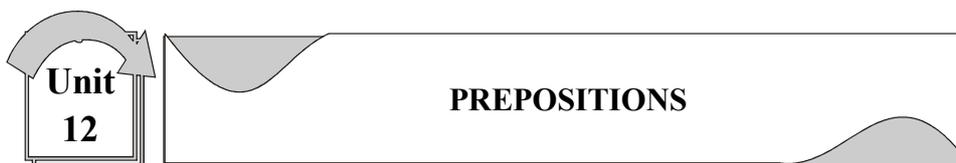
Check Your Progress 3. (A)

1. The Bhagvat Gita
2. A kind
3. The cat
4. The rose, the sweetest
5. A tree, the tree
6. The less, the more
7. The higher, the more
8. The way
9. The best
10. A fool
11. An arm
12. The sun, the west, the east
13. A hopeless case
14. The elephant
15. A nice child
16. A walk
17. A pound, the nearest shop

18. The map
19. An old Parsee
20. The best
21. A bread
22. The fourth
23. The proudest
24. The worst

Check Your Progress 3. (B)

1. a
2. the
3. a
4. an
5. the
6. a
7. a
8. a
9. the
10. a
11. a
12. a
13. the
14. the
15. the
16. the
17. the
18. the
19. a
20. a
21. the, a
22. an, the
23. a
24. a, the
25. the



: STRUCTURE :

- 12.0 Objectives**
- 12.1 Introduction**
- 12.2 Definition of Preposition**
- 12.3 What are prepositions exactly?**
- 12.4 Key Words**
- 12.5 Exercises with Answers**
- 12.6 Assignments**
- 12.7 Books Suggested and E-Resources**

Answers

12.0 OBJECTIVES

Learning Prepositions enables the learner to understand the language in a better manner. The following are the objectives of learning prepositions.

Students will be able to:

- identify prepositions.
- define prepositions and will be able to understand the significance of learning the topic.
- recognize and utilize the prepositional phrases.
- distinguish between the preposition of time and place.
- use prepositions correctly and efficiently in real context when they need to use in their day today conversations.

12.1 INTRODUCTION

Preposition is a very important part of speech in English language. Without prepositions sentences cannot be complete and comprehensible. In general terms they describe and add to the verb and often function as a part of adverb. (foreg. He drove towards home in full speed.) Prepositions show direction, time and place. All prepositions have objects. Generally prepositions are followed by objects. Object of a preposition can be a word or a phrase it relates to. A preposition and its objects together are called prepositional phrase. For example, “look for”, “look into” or “look after”- English language has number of prepositional phrases which make the language interesting. The preposition behind the verb changes the meaning. So, let us learn prepositions first.

12.2 DEFINITION OF PREPOSITION

It is described as “a word governing, and usually preceding, a noun or pronoun or adjective and expressing a relation to another word or element in the clause,” as in ‘the man on the platform’, ‘she arrived after dinner’, ‘what did you do it for?’

Merriam Webster defines it as, “a function word that typically combines with

a noun phrase to form a phrase which usually expresses a modification or predication”

It is also defined by Dictionary.com as “any member of a class of words found in many languages that are used before nouns, pronouns, or other substantives to form phrases functioning as modifiers of verbs, nouns, or adjectives, and that typically express a spatial, temporal, or other relationship, as in, on, by, to, since, etc.”

12.3 WHAT ARE PREPOSITIONS EXACTLY ?

Prepositions are words that show the relationship between other words in the sentence. They come before nouns and pronouns and sometimes, (rarely) before other words like adjectives and verbs. They do not change their form with gender or case differences as do other words. Let us take a few self-explanatory examples.

Example: What are you doing **after** school today? (time)

Example: What did you do that **for**? (why did you do that?)

Example: I grew up **beside** that famous international school. (place, right next door)

As it can be seen from the examples above, there are prepositions of place, time and reason.. There are also prepositions of position, movement, ways and means, directions, group relationships and comparisons to name a few.

Prepositions can be classified largely on the basis of time and place. Some other prepositions are also important to learn which can make your communication clear and precise. Prepositions are short words (on, in, to) that usually stand in front of nouns (sometimes also in front of gerund verbs). Even advanced learners of English find prepositions difficult, as exact translation or other word is usually not available in any Indian language. One preposition in your native language might have several translations depending on the situation. There are hardly any rules as to when to use which particular preposition. The only way to learn prepositions is looking them up in a dictionary, reading a lot many stories in English literature. Literature always helps learning useful phrases which take prepositions after them and hence they are called prepositional phrases. Let us have a look at the table which will make it quite clear how prepositions are used in various situations.

Prepositions in relation to Time:

Preposition	Explanation	Example
on	days of the week	on Monday
in	months / seasons time of day year after a certain period of time (<i>when?</i>)	in August / in winter in the morning in 2006 in an hour
at	for <i>night</i> for <i>weekend</i> a certain point of time (<i>when?</i>)	at night at the weekend at half past nine
since	from a certain point of time (past till now)	since 1980
for	over a certain period of time (past till now)	for 2 years
ago	a certain time in the past	2 years ago
before	earlier than a certain point of time	before 2004
to	telling the time	ten to six (5:50)
past	telling the time	ten past six (6:10)
to / till / until	marking the beginning and end of a period of time	from Monday to/till Friday
till / until	in the sense of <i>how long something is going to last</i>	He is on holiday until Friday.
by	in the sense of <i>at the latest</i> up to a certain time	I will be back by 6 o'clock. By 11 o'clock, I had read five pages.

Prepositions in relation to Place (Position and Direction)

Preposition	Explanation	Example
in	room, building, street, town, country book, paper etc. car, taxi picture, world	in the kitchen, in London in the book in the car, in a taxi in the picture, in the world
at	meaning <i>next to, by an object</i> for <i>table</i> for events place where you are to do something typical (watch a film, study, work)	at the door, at the station at the table at a concert, at the party at the cinema, at school, at work at the railway station/ hotel
on	attached for a place with a river being on a surface for a certain side (left, right) for a floor in a house for public transport for <i>television, radio</i>	the picture on the wall London lies on the Thames. on the table on the left on the first floor on the bus, on a plane on TV, on the radio
by, next to, beside	left or right of somebody or something	Jane is standing by / next to / beside the car.
under	on the ground, lower than (or covered by) something else	the bag is under the table
below	lower than something else but above ground	the fish are below the surface
over	covered by something else meaning <i>more than</i> getting to the other side (also <i>across</i>) overcoming an obstacle	put a jacket over your shirt over 16 years of age walk over the bridge climb over the wall a fan over our head
above	higher than something else, but not directly over it	a path above the lake a picture above the window
across	getting to the other side (also <i>over</i>) getting to the other side	walk across the bridge/forest/dessert swim across the lake/river
through	something with limits on top, bottom and the sides	drive through the tunnel
to	movement to person or building movement to a place or country for <i>bed</i>	go to the cinema go to London / Ireland go to bed/ go to the office
into	enter a room / a building	go into the kitchen / the house jump into the flushing water
towards	movement in the direction of something (but not directly to it)	go 5 steps towards the house
▪ onto	movement to the top of something	jump onto the table
▪ from	in the sense of <i>where from</i>	a flower from the garden a student from rural area

Other important Prepositions

Preposition	Explanation	Example
from	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> used to show the origin of something or someone used to show the material of which something is made used to show a change in the state of someone or something 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Where are you from?" "I'm from India." The desk is made from pine. Things went from bad to worse.
of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> used to show possession, belonging or origin used after words or phrases expressing amount, number or particular unit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a friend of mine a dozen of apples
by	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> used to show the person or thing that does something: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I'm reading some short stories (written) by Rabindranath Tagore.
on	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> used for showing some methods of travelling entering a public transport vehicle 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It'd be quicker to get there on foot / on horse get on the train She boarded on flight.
in	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> entering a car / Taxi 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> She got in the car and drove fast.
off	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> leaving a public transport vehicle 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> She got off the bus.
out of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> leaving a closed vehicle, building... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> She got out of the car She went out of the Hall/ office/classroom.
by	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> used to show measurements or amounts travelling (other than walking or horse riding) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Their wages were increased by 12%. She went by car, by bus, by train, by air
at	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> age 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In theory, women can still have children at the age of 50. At the age of 80, she is still young.
about	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> on the subject of; connected with 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What's that book about?

12.4 KEY WORDS

- 1) Object: Any preposition has an object either before or after it. (Generally Noun or Pronoun are object to the preposition) For example, "I wanted to share an idea with you."
- 2) Prepositional Phrase: A phrase (a group of words) containing a preposition at the end and change the meaning of the verb is called a prepositional phrase. English language has numerous such phrases which enrich and enhance the meanings in sentence. For example, the verb

'ask' takes a preposition 'for' behind it, it changes the meaning which is 'to demand'. There are plenty of examples of prepositional phrases, such as, 'look for', 'look after', 'look into' etc.

- 3) Directional words: Prepositions are called directional words as they show directions and relations of words in the sentence.
- 4) Noun: a word used to name any of a class or thing or a person. The types of nouns are- Common Nouns, Abstract Nouns, Proper Nouns, Agent Nouns, etc.
- 5) Pronouns: A word used in a place of noun. Types of pronouns are- Demonstrative Pronoun, Personal pronoun, Interrogative Pronoun, Possessive pronoun, Relative pronoun etc. Pronouns are also object to prepositions. For example, "Can you lend your pen to me?" Here preposition is place before the pronoun.

12.5 EXERCISES WITH ANSWERS

Check Your Progress 1

HERE ARE SOME EASY EXAMPLES FOR THE BEGINNERS WHICH WILL HELP THEM UNDERSTAND HOW PREPOSITIONS ARE FREQUENTLY USED IN DAY TO DAY COMMUNICATION. THE FOLLOWING SENTENCES CAN SHOW THE PLACE OF PREPOSITIONS. THE BOLD OPTION INDICATES THE CORRECT ANSWER IN THE BRACKET.

1. This material is different that. (**from**/ to / with)
2. You should explain this them. (**to** / at / with)
3. He has been absent Monday. (**since**/for / from)
4. I haven't been to the theatre a long time. (since / **for** /from)
5. He goes school by car. (**to** / at / on)
6. This is a comfortable house to live (on / at / **in**)
7. They are called different names. (**by**/ with / for)
8. We should not spend money luxuries. (for / **on** / with)
9. I gave him a chair to sit (**on** / at / in)
10. The new term begins June 1st. (on / in / **from**)
11. He poured the teathe mug. (**into** / on / in)
12. He said that he was very pleased my work. (**with** / on / at)

It is important to notice the difference in the usage of 'since' and 'for'. Although both the prepositions are used in reference of time, they cannot be used abruptly. 'Since' is used always when the time is mentioned by a particular day, month or the year. (for example, Since January, or since 1984, or since 8am.etc.) 'For' is used when no specific point of time is mentioned. (for example, for one month, for two weeks or for ten years.)

The beginner requires to make a practice of learning prepositions through easy and simple sentences which make the context clear. So we provide an extensive practice to the learners of English.

12.6 ASSIGNMENTS

Check Your Progress : 2

A. FILL IN THE BLANKS WITH APPROPRIATE PREPOSITIONS.

- 1) Sheela paid ___ hotel rooms ___ advance, as she had booked the rooms online.
- 2) The professor went to the wrong classroom ___ mistake.
- 3) Please make sure that you are ___ time for the Rajdhani train.
- 4) I was looking ___ my book and ___ chance I saw a hundred rupee note ___ my table.
- 5) The bike rider suddenly stopped the bike and got _____ to collect his glove that had fallen ___ the road.
- 6) I love eating ___ Ahmedabad streets.
- 7) Youngsters prefer fast food, ___ instance Pizza and Sandwiches.
- 8) We saw the cat running _____ the terrace.
- 9) As I picked up my laptop, ___ my surprise, it fell _____ in my hand.
- 10) Isha has a lot ___ common with her friend.
- 11) If the baby starts crying, pick her up ___ once.
- 12) Did you forget your wallet _____ purpose, so you wouldn't have to pay?
- 13) People go to Ambaji ___ foot before "BhadrapadiPoornima".
- 14) What do a whale and a dolphin have ___ common?
- 15) Now people prefer party plots _____ banquets for wedding purpose.
- 16) I would take coffee instead ___ tea today.
- 17) He added jiggery instead ___ sugar in the pudding to make it healthier.
- 18) What do you prefer to do ___ the weekends?
- 19) The books were ___ a high shelf. They are _____ reach of children.
- 20) I wish to go to Mahabaleshwer ___ a change.
- 21) Please inform us ___ advance, if you are not joining us for the picnic.
- 22) She often goes to her Office ___ foot as it is very close.
- 23) Do you always wash your hand ___ a soap _____ your meal _____ fail?
- 24) The kid broke the toy and threw it _____ from the window.
- 25) Shreya worked very hard for CAFinals. ___ last, she could clear it.
- 26) Poorva should reach home ___ time or her grandmother would start worrying _____ her.
- 27) For poor people, owning a house was _____ reach but now with Government Affordable Housing scheme, they can buy it.
- 28) She was roaming _____ in the garden and ___ chance she met an old friend.
- 29) Udayan was _____ danger in a high tide sea, but soon a lifeguard saw him.
- 30) Parag drinks a liter of water every morning _____ fail. He is very health conscious.

B. PREPOSITIONS AFTER VERBS

Some verbs take a preposition before the object. These prepositions are called dependent prepositions. They are usually followed by a noun or an 'ing' form. There are several such verb+ preposition combinations which are necessary to know if the student wants to master the language.

Here are some illustrations.

Check Your Progress: 3

FILL IN THE BLANKS WITH APPROPRIATE PREPOSITIONS.

1. We faced some problems when we checked ____ the hotel.
2. He did not allow us to check ____ after lunch. He said their check out time is 10 am in their hotel.
3. My friend's father passed ____ last week.
4. When Lata went to Delhi last week, I reached the airport to see her ____.
5. The butterfly flew ____ as I approached it.
6. Before the plane took ____, the airhostess instructed to fasten __ the belts.
7. We take ____ our shoes as we enter our house.
8. The police chased the robber ____ the forest.
9. We are looking ____ a sea facing apartment.
10. When Anil's cheque was dishonoured, he wrote a letter to the manager to look ____ the matter.
11. The lawyer advised us to go ____ the papers before we sign it.
12. Positive media can help bring ____ the change in society.
13. My mother told me to look ____ my younger brother when she was going out.
14. Please turn ____ all the switches before you leave your home.
15. When you are not satisfied with the work done, speak it ____ to your colleagues.
16. Take care ____ yourself.
17. Gunjan looks ____ his younger brother as his mother is working
18. Milan goes ____ every detail of expenses before he writes accounts.
19. Gautam has never associated himself ____ any political party.
20. Mr. Rane made serious charges ____ his boss.

Check your progress: 4

1.5 C. Prepositions after Adjectives/ Nouns:

- 1) India is famous ____ her diversity.
- 2) Indians are proud ____ their traditions.
- 3) I am proud ____ my grandfather. He is an octogenarian but still very active.
- 4) Alap is not really interested ____ getting married.
- 5) Abhay is very much pleased ____ his exam results.

- 6) Maya is very angry ___ her servant as she did not turn up for work.
- 7) Hemang is very anxious ___ his son's arrival.
- 8) Sheela is very excited ___ the Kite Festival in Ahmedabad.
- 9) Mamata is very different ___ her sister ___ nature.
- 10) Punit is afraid ___ street dogs.
- 11) She is interested ___ Jazz music and her husband has a liking ___ classical music.
- 12) My brother has a bike that is similar ___ yours.
- 13) Kamal is very excited ___ buying a new car.
- 14) The teacher was pleased ___ his correct answer.
- 15) The engineer has drawn this graph ___ great precision.
- 16) They were tense because of the breach ___ agreement ___ their partner.
- 17) You will always succeed if you have done your part ___ good intentions.
- 18) Lata is extremely good ___ all European languages.
- 19) Sanjeev is very good ___ painting.
- 20) Pavan is not afraid ___ anything.

Do it Yourself

Exercise:

Fill in the blanks using proper Prepositions of Time/ Place:

- 1) Shyama is arriving ___ February ___ 13th early ___ the morning.
- 2) The weather is terrible ___ January ___ Kandala.
- 3) It is better to hire Uber ___ night if you are alone.
- 4) Purva is getting married ___ 26th May. It will be very hot ___ May.
- 5) They usually go ___ Calcotta ___ the summer ___ their daughters place.
- 6) People lived very simple life ___ 19th century.
- 7) Bhuvan graduated from University ___ 2010.
- 8) We usually go ___ our parents' house ___ Diwali and we take dinner ___ the terrace.
- 9) We generally go ___ a picnic ___ Sunday ___ the morning.
- 10) We take our lunch ___ the tree ___ 3 pm.
- 11) We met in the restaurant ___ 8pm. My friend was waiting ___ me ___ the lounge.
- 12) I like to take tea ___ the morning and Coffee ___ night.
- 13) We arranged my birthday party ___ the seventh floor ___ the building which is close ___ the hospital.
- 14) The Lilavati hospital is ___ front ___ the railway station.
- 15) Mr. Jadhav is imprisoned ___ more than a year ___ no valid reason.
- 16) Omkar picked ___ a bus from the terminus and left it ___ catch a train ___ the nearby railway station.
- 17) I take care ___ my son. My son is similar ___ me. He's quite different ___ my wife.

- 18) India is going _____ participate _____ the global economic forum.
- 19) My husband spent the milk money _____ cigarettes.
- 20) There has been a slight decrease _____ gas prices lately.
- 21) The Central Government has provided free gas cylinders ___ the BPL card holders.
- 22) He does not understand the difference _____ CNG and PNG.
- 23) In the beginning, Udayan was not accustomed _____ working in such a big company.
- 24) My favorite Indian philosopher is AdiShankaracharya. Most Westerners have never heard _____ him.
- 25) John's wife accused him _____ cheating. She thinks he is bored _____ her.
- 26) My boss told me to finish the report _____ 5 pm. After that, I could go _____ vacation.
- 27) Kate apologized _____ her son's poor behavior.
- 28) If you've got a problem, then do something _____ it!
- 29) Everyone _____ the HR department was surprised _____ the news.
- 30) Paul is very good _____ telling jokes. He reminds me _____ his father.
- 31) I'm not familiar _____ this neighborhood.
- 32) If I had to choose _____ going to heaven or hell, I'd choose heaven.
- 33) Hosni Mubarak was _____ power in Egypt for 30 years.
- 34) Alap is a fan _____ Manchester United.
- 35) NOTA stands _____ the Not Anyof the Above.
- 36) ___s company specializes _____ the management of young musicians.
- 37) I will go _____ vacation next month.
- 38) The couple ordered soup - one _____ two.
- 39) Vadodara is not bigger _____ Surat.
- 40) Krishna has to finish the project _____ 4 pm tonight.
- 41) ISCON is spreading Krishna consciousness _____ the world.
- 42) The movie was inspired _____ a book written 50 years ago.
- 43) I was able to return the product because it was still _____ warranty.
- 44) The little boy hit his friend _____ a stick.
- 45) I plan to work _____ I am 65 years old.
- 46) I wasnot able to focus _____ my work because of the loud construction work outside my window.
- 47) Fortunately, I getmany opportunities to go ___ long business trips ___ India.
- 48) This commercial was designed to appeal young women ___ their twenties and thirties.
- 49) I don't know the reason _____ ending the relationship.

- 50) As Mr. Swami had graduated _____ Harvard ____ a degree in political science, he writes articles ___ newspapers ____ politics.
- 51) I am very proud _____ my son's accomplishments.
- 52) Laura can't concentrate _____ her job because she is stressed _____ her marriage.
- 53) I don't care _____ baseball. I never watch it.
- 54) I am allergic _____ spicy food.
- 55) We are looking for someone who is skilled _____ giving presentations.
- 56) He is responsible _____ our branch in Singapore. He looks _____ everything there.
- 57) I have a question to ask related _____ your profession.
- 58) You can have a view _____ sea _____ my apartment.
- 59) The company executive didn't want to comment _____ that scandal.
- 60) You reminded me _____ my old college days.
- 61) After graduation, Joan will apply _____ some local companies _____ a job as a graphic designer.
- 62) There was much damage _____ the car.
- 63) These boots were _____ sale last week.
- 64) The United Nations has supplied the rebels _____ weapons.
- 65) I have too many problems to deal _____.
- 66) This product should appeal _____ girls in their teens.
- 67) I've never heard _____ Lyle Whitfield.
- 68) I was surprised _____ the size of her nose.
- 69) Grace is _____ her forties. She spends all her money _____ luxury goods.
- 70) Greg is involved _____ organized crime.
- 71) _____ the time, the terrorist could understand the plan, the Indian Regiment rushed _____ their abode and shot them.
- 72) There's always a risk _____ an earthquake in Japan. It's difficult to concentrate _____ your work, when you know there could be a disaster any minute.
- 73) Tina studied _____ Charles University for one year, but she graduated _____ Harvard. She is snobby. She looks _____ on people who haven't graduated college.
- 74) I need to take care _____ my little brother. He is discriminated _____ school because he has red hair. Yesterday, a bully punched him. However, my brother didn't tell _____ the bully.
- 75) The doctor elaborated _____ the patient's condition. It turns out that the rash was actually brought _____ food he ate while his stay in Malaysia.

On the basis of whatever you have learnt earlier in this chapter, you can take up this exercise which will help you master this topic.

12.7 BOOKS SUGGESTED AND E-RESOURCES:

Eastwood, John. *Oxford Practice Grammar Intermediate*. Oxford UP, 2014.

<https://www.instructorweb.com>

<https://www.lessonscorner.com>

<https://www.lessonsnips.com>

Lester, Mark & Larry Beason. *Handbook of English Grammar and Usage*. The McGraw- Hill, 2005.

Murphy, Raymond. *English Grammar in Use*. Cambridge UP, 2001.

Yule, George. *Oxford Practice Grammar Advanced*. Oxford UP, 2006.

Answers**Check Your Progress: 2**

1- up- in/ 2 by /3 in /4 by, on/ 5 down, on, /6 out on, /7 for / 8 towards //9 to, apart 10 in /11 at /12 with / 13 on /14 in /15 to /16 of /17 of /18 on /19 out of //20 for/ 21 in /22 on/ 23 before, without / 24 away / 25 at/ 26 in, about/ 27 out of/ 28 under/ 29 around, by / 30 without.

Check Your Progress: 3

1-In/ 2- out/ 3- away/ 4-off/ 5-away/ 6- off, up/ 7- off/ 8- throughout/ 9- for/ into/ 11 – through/ 12- out/ 13- after/ 14- off/ 15- out./16-of/17-after/ 18-through/ 19-with/ 20-against

Check Your Progress: 4

1-for/ 2- of/ 3-of/ 4- in/ 5- with/ 6- with/ 7- about/ 8-about/ 9-from-by/ 10- of/11-in-for/ 12- to 13- about/ 14- with/ 15- with/ 16-in-with/ 17- with/ 18-at/ 19-at/ 20-of

: STRUCTURE :

- 13.0 Objectives**
- 13.1 Introduction**
- 13.2 Present Tense**
 - 13.2.1 Simple Present Tense**
 - 13.2.2 Present Continuous Tense**
 - 13.2.3 Present Perfect Tense**
 - 13.2.4 Present Perfect Continuous Tense**
- 13.3 Past Tense**
 - 13.3.1 Simple Past Tense**
 - 13.3.2 Past Continuous Tense**
 - 13.3.3 Past Perfect Tense**
 - 13.3.4 Past Perfect Continuous Tense**
- 13.4 Future Tense**
 - 13.4.1 Simple Future Tense**
 - 13.4.2 Future Continuous Tense**
 - 13.4.3 Future Perfect Tense**
 - 13.4.4 Future Perfect Continuous Tense**
- 13.5 Let Us Sum Up**
- 13.6 Key Words**
- 13.7 Books Suggested**

Answers

13.0 OBJECTIVES

In this Unit we shall

- To look at the difference among three major tenses in English language
- Enable learners of English to explore different exercises that will tell how to use the past, present, and future tenses, and, to write a sentence using a tense.

On Completing the unit, you should be able to

- Identify the past, present, and future tenses of regular and irregular verbs.
- Confident to assemble and enhance self-confidence through risk taking and carrying out independent tasks and support self learning, testing and evaluation.
- Learn about the difference between each tense and how to structure sentences by using them.

13.1 INTRODUCTION

In English, a verb is not used in the same way all the time. It changes in

different situation to show **WHEN** something happens. This is called the **TENSE** of the verb. It is interesting to note that the word “Tense” itself comes from the Latin word “tempus”, which means “Time”. So, Tense means Time. It is one of the basic concepts in English grammar. Achieving command in English language it is compulsory to study and learn tenses. We point out the time by changing verbs accordingly. E.g., There is the verb ‘‘ To Play’’, if you want to talk about a game arranged in the past you have to change it into “Played”. So you say: “I played very hard yesterday.”In this sentence “played” is in the past tense. The tense of a verb tells you **when something happened, if something is happening, or if something will happen**. English tenses include major two components: Time and Aspects

- i) Time expresses:
 - Past -Before Now
 - Present -Now
 - Future – After Now
- ii) Aspect can be:
 - Progressive – Uncompleted action
 - Perfective – Completed action or state

Source: www.englishclub.com/grammar/tense-what.html

There are four aspects associated with each of these tenses. An aspect here refers to the nature of action performed by the verb. Such actions should be framed under rules of grammar which help us to understand language. Different kinds of grammar are concerned with rules to express ourselves. Study of grammar makes you learn how to create sentence/message correctly. Communicative Grammar puts the accent on the actual act of communication. It gives the speaker all the tools for an effective transmission of the intended message. It involves only two major tenses: Past Tense and Present Tense. There is no future tense recognizes in it, though there are set of rules indicate futurity. In Traditional Grammar the words are categorized into parts of speech, which you combine in sentences, by following certain rules of tenses. These tenses can be broadly classified into three broad categories:

- 1) Present Tense
- 2) Past Tense
- 3) Future Tense

Each is further divided in to 4(four) sub-categories:Simple, Continuous,Perfect, and Perfect Continuous

Tense		
Present Tense	Past Tense	Future Tense
Simple Present Tense	Simple Past Tense	Simple Future Tense
Present Continuous Tense	Past Continuous Tense	Future Continuous Tense
Present Perfect Tense	Past Perfect Tense	Future Perfect Tense
Present Perfect Continuous Tense	Past Perfect Continuous Tense	Future Perfect Continuous Tense

13.2 PRESENT TENSE

13.2.1 Simple Present Tense/Indefinite Present Tense

The simple present tense is used:

- **To express a habitual action**-this tense tells us the action is not being performed at the moment of speaking.

E.g. Simple Present: I **eat** an apple every day.
 My mother **gets** up at five o'clock every day.
 S/He works, It works
 I work, you work,
 He Smokes – They smoke,
 Dog barks - Dogs bark

- To express general truth

E.g. The sun sets in the west.
 Honey is Sweet.

- To express a future event that is part of a fixed timetable or programme

E.g. The match starts at 9 o'clock tomorrow.
 The Sabarmati express leaves at 5.20

- The Simple Present tense has the same form as the infinitive but adds an 's' and 'es' to a verb following/ the third person singular.
- If sentence with Present form of 'To be' (am/is/are), 'To Have' (have/has) is used.

- **Tense Indicating Words**

Always	Often	Daily	Seldom	Every Week
Usually	Generally	Normally	Never	Every Year
Regularly	Rarely	Sometimes	Everyday	On Sundays

Exercise:

1. My brother a Doctor. (Be)
2. Exercise blood circulation. (Improve)
3. Trees the environment clean and pure. (Keep)
4. I always the window at night because it is cold. (Close)
5. In November birds often to the south. (Fly)

1.2.2 Present Continuous Tense/Progressive Present Tense

- The present continuous tense is formed with the present tense of the auxiliary verb.

(The Infinitive **verb+ ing**)

Present Continuous Tense is used:

- For an action going on at the time of speaking

E.g. It is raining. (Now)
 Look, what is the baby doing?

- For a temporary action which may not be actually happening at the time of speaking.

E.g. I am reading biography of Mahatma Gandhi.
 He is teaching English and learning French language. (He may not be doing at the moment of speaking)

- For a planned arrangement in the near future(most usual way of expressing one's immediate plans)

E.g. I am going to the theater tonight. (It means this plan certainly implies that the tickets have been bought)

My father is going to Mumbai tomorrow.

- **Tense Indicating Words**

At the moment/at this time At present/Presently/currently
Next week/
Tomorrow(For future arrangement)

Look,see,watch,listen Now Today evening

Exercise:

1. I an apple now. (eat)
2. Someone at the door. (Knock)
3. Look, the bus(Leave)
4. We this evening at the hotel. (meet)
5. Vicky about bus services. (Complain)

13.2.3 Present Perfect Tense

- The Present Perfect Tense is formed with the present tense of **to have/has + the past participle.**

E.g. I have worked.

The Past Participle in regular verbs has exactly the same form as the simple past. i.e loved, walked etc.

The Present Perfect Tense is used:

- To indicate completed activity in the immediate past (Just)

E.g. I have just finished my work.

She has just gone out.

- To express past actions whose time is not given and not definite

E.g. Mr Patel has been to Japan.

Have you read the ‘Satya Na Prayogo’?

- For an action beginning in the past which continues up to present moment (often with ‘Since and ‘for’ phrases)

E.g. He has been in the army for two years. (He is still in the army)

Ravi has been ill since last Sunday.

- An activity completed in the past but its effect is still going on.

E.g. I have cut my finger.

Urvashi has eaten all biscuits.

The Present Perfect Tense is often used in newspapers and broadcasts to introduce an action which will then be described in the simple past tense. The time of the action is very often given in the second sentence.

E.g. The PM has decided to continue with the same scheme. This decision was announced yesterday.

- **Tense Indicating Words**

Already	Just	Ever	Never	So far
For	Since	Just Now	Recently	Yet

Exercise:

1. Wenotnews since Wednesday. (see)
2. Theyalreadythe list of their purchases. (Make)
3. Younotnewspaper yet. (read)
4.you Your lunch? (eat)
5. Ia carrot cake. (Bake)

13.2.4 Present Perfect Continuous Tense/ Progressive Present Perfect Tense

- The Present Perfect Continuous Tense is formed with **Have /has + been+ Verb with ‘Ing’**
- The Present Perfect Continuous Tense is used

An action which began at some time in the past and is still continuing or is likely to continue at some time in future

E.g. Mr.Rathod has been sleeping for five hours.

They have been playing chess since four o'clock.

They have been building the bridge for several months.

- **Tense Indicating Words**

For

Since

Exercise:

1. Theyto this Nation for two years. (serve)
2. Teacherthe concept of Physics for an hour. (explain)
3. The clerk letters since she arrived. (write)
4. He in this company since 1985. (work)
5. Montee in America since 2008. (live)

13.3 PAST TENSE

13.3.1 Simple Past Tense

- Simple Past Tense is used to indicate an action completed in the past.
- In The Simple Past Tense regular verbs are formed by adding **ed** to the infinitive, Irregular verbs are vary considerably in their simple past form.
- The interrogative of regular and irregular verbs are formed with **did + Subject+ Infinitive.**

E.g. Did you complete the task?

- The Simple Past Tense is used for actions completed in the past at a definite point in time. It is therefore used for a past action when time is given.

E.g. I met him yesterday.

- When the action is clearly took place at a definite time even though this time is not mentioned.

E.g. The train was ten minute late.

I bought this car in January. (That is sometime in January)

Pratap defeated the Mughals in Haldighati.

- The sentence with past form of ‘To be’ (was /were) or ‘To have’ (had).

- **Tense Indicating Words**

Yesterday Last Night Week Month Year/Many years ago

Exercise:

1. I my wallet at the Central Mall yesterday. (Lose)
2. The guestnot its taste, because it was salty.
(Like)
3. The Golden Temple by us last Month. (Visit)
4. My Grandfather in army. (be)
5. he you on his birthday party? (Invite)

13.3.2 Past Continuous Tense/ Progressive Past Tense

- Past Continuous Tense is formed by the Past Tense of the verb **to be (was/were)** + the present participle (**ing**).
- The Past Continuous tense is used to denote an action going on at some-time in the past.

E.g. We were watching T V all evening.

When I saw him he was eating an apple.

- The Past Continuous use for Long Term Habit in the Past.
E.g. He was always grumbling.

- **Tense Indicating Words**

At that time Then At O'clock yesterday
When, While, Last week

Exercise:

1. I Cricket when you called. (Play)
2. They exercises in morning. (Do)
3. Summit for this firm in the 1990s. (Work)
4. What you last night at seven? (Do)
5. I the office when my boss called me back. (Leave)

13.3.3 Past Perfect Tense

- This tense is formed with **had + the Past Participle**.
- The Past Perfect describes an action completed before a certain moment in the past.

E.g. She had spoken nice about you.

I had eaten an apple.

I met her at Mount Abu in 2015. I had seen her last four years before.

- If two actions happened in the past, it may be necessary to show which action happened earlier or first than the other. The Past Perfect is mainly used in such situations. The simple past is used in one clause and the past perfect in the other.

E.g. When I reached the station, the train had left.

She had written the letter before I reached to class.

Exercise:

1. If he passes the exam, he very happy. (Be)
2. The meetingplace at 6pm. (Take)
3. If you eat all of that cake, you sick. (Feel)
4. After lunch, I to the theater to watch new movie. (Go)
5. If we finish our homework weoutside tonight. (Go)

13.4.2 Future Continuous Tense/Progressive Future Tense

- The tense is formed with future tense usingshall/will + **be + verb** with ‘**ing.**’
- We use future continuous tense to talk about actions which will be in progress at a time in the future.

E.g. I shall be working tomorrow.

I will be watching the match on TV at this time tomorrow.

- We also use this tense to talk about action in the future which are already planned or which are expected to happen in normal course of things.

E.g. The plane will be arriving soon.

I will be enjoying the beauty of nature next week.

- **Tense Indicating Words**

Tomorrow at this time Next week At this time

Exercise:

1. At midnight we (Sleep)
2. In an hour, I in front of my TV. (Sit)
3. Tomorrow at this time, I my French language exam. (Take)
4. The farmers the crops at next time. (Cut)
5. weat Agra? (Reach)

1.4.3 Perfect Future Tense

- The Perfect Future tense can be formed **shall/will + have + Past Participle.**
- The Perfect Future Tense is used to talk about an event that has not yet happened but which is expected or planned to happen by certain time in the future.

E.g. I shall have written my exercise by tomorrow.

By the end of the month, your new servant will have broken all your cups.

- When the main clause is in the future tense, we use Present Tense in the second clause to refer to the future.

E.g. The patient **will have died** before they **reach** the hospital.

- **Tense Indicating Words**

By the time Before

Exercise:

1. Anitathe task by the end of this month. (Finish)
2. The firethe whole building before the firemen arrive. (Destroy)
3. Weback all our debts before we leave this city. (Pay)
4. By the 9 O'clock we.....dinner. (Cook)
5. The resultby the end of this month. (Declare)

1.4.4. Future Perfect Continuous Tense/ Progressive Perfect Future Tense

- Future Perfect Continuous Tense is formed **shall/will + have +been+ verb 'ing'**.
- Future Perfect Continuous Tense is used when an action beginning at some-time in future and continuing up to certain time in the future.
- Mostly this tense is not used.

E.g. We shall have been reading story books.
 We shall have been saving money for many years.
 The hermit will have been preaching for four days.

• **Tense Indicating Words**

By the time	For
-------------	-----

Exercise:

1. We for an hour by the time Tushar arrives. (Discuss)
2. By the end of this month, she money for her trip. (Save)
3. The saintfor 3 hours. (Preach)
4. In the summer, Milan.....to find a new job for five months. (Try)
5. We4 hours by the time we get home. (Drive)

13.5 LET SUM UP

- In this unit you have learnt
- Verbs change form depending on their relationship to time.
- To identify the Present, Past, and Future tenses of regular and irregular verbs.

13.6 KEY WORDS

Infinitive : The simple or basic form of the verb
 Implies : Express Something Indirectly
 Definite : Fixed
 Grumbling : speaking low, to muttering
 Crop : Cultivated produce of the ground
 Hermit : A person living alone as a religious disciple
 Preaching : The art of delivering religious instruction

13.7 BOOKS SUGGESTED

1. English Grammar in Use by Raymond Murphy

2. Advance Grammar in Use: A Self study reference and Practice Book for Advances Learners of English by Martin Hewings
3. English Grammar & Composition by Wren & Martin
4. A Practical English Grammar by A J Thomson and AV Martinet

Answers:

1.2.1	1. Is 4. Close	2. Improves 5. Flies	3. Keep
1.2.2	1. am eating 4. are meeting	2. is knocking 5. is complaining	3. is leaving
1.2.3	1. have, seen 4. have, eaten	2. have, made 5. have baked	3. have, read
1.2.4	1. have been serving 3. has been writing 5. has been living	2. has been explaining 4. has been working	
1.3.1.	1. lost 4. was	2. did, like 5. Did, invite	3. was visited
1.3.2	1. was playing 4. were doing	2. were doing 5. was leaving	3. was working
1.3.3.	1. had stared 4. had eaten	2. had lived 5. had died	3. had studied
1.3.4.	1. had been sleeping 3. had been living 5. had been learning	2. had been looking for 4. had been studying	
1.4.1.	1. will be 4. shall go	2. will take 5. shall go	3. will feel
1.4.2.	1. shall be sleeping 3. shall be taking 5. shall be reaching	2. shall be sitting 4. will be cutting	
1.4.3.	1. will have finished 3. will have paid 5. will have declared	2. will have destroy 4. will have cooked	
1.4.4.	1. will have been discussing 3. will have been preaching 5. will have been driving	2. will have been saving 4. Will have been trying	

: STRUCTURE :

- 14.0 Objectives
- 14.1 Introduction
- 14.2 Modal Auxiliaries
 - 14.2.1 Shall
 - 14.2.2 Will
 - 14.2.3 Should
 - 14.2.4 Would
 - 14.2.5 Can
 - 14.2.6 Could
 - 14.2.7 May
 - 14.2.8 Might
 - 14.2.9 Must
 - 14.2.10 Ought
 - 14.2.11 Need
 - 14.2.12 Dare
- 14.3 Let Us Sum up
- 14.4 Key Words
- 14.5 Books Suggested

Answers

14.0 OBJECTIVES

In this unit we shall

- Receive instructions using modals.
- Differentiate between the models used for possibility, obligation and necessity by identifying these types of modals in the language around us.
- Demonstrate an ability to reason deductively using modal forms.

14.1 INTRODUCTION

Shall, Should, will, would, can, could, may, might, must, ought, need, dare are called modal auxiliaries. These are also termed as defective verbs, because some parts are lacking in them. They have no-s in the third person singular; they have no infinitive and *ing* forms. These modal auxiliaries have three common characteristics.

1. They are never used alone. A principal verb is either present or implied.
 - I can fly a plane.
 - He should learn swimming.

2. The modal auxiliaries have a single form through the present tense, whatever be the person.
 - I can swim.
 - He can swim.
3. The modal auxiliaries do not have the infinitive or participle forms.
You cannot say: to shall, to must, to may, etc.

14.2 MODAL AUXILIARIES

Let us try to understand the usage of different modal auxiliaries.

14.2.1 Shall

- With the first person:

1. I shall leave for Calcutta tomorrow.
2. We shall discuss the matter with the principal.
3. We shall invite them to dinner.

Here, shall expresses the strong possibility or near certainty of an action or event which is to take place in the future.

- With the second and third person:

1. Shall in the second and third persons may express a command.
 - Thou shall not steal.
 - You shall go at once.
2. Sometimes it is used to make promise.
 - He shall be given a present if he passes this year.
 - You shall get a medal if you stand first.
3. It is also used to express a threat.
 - You shall regret this.
 - They shall pay for this in due course.
4. It sometimes expresses determination.
 - You shall apologies.
 - You shall obey me, as long as you work here.

14.2.2 Will

- With the first person:

Will expresses determination on the part of the speaker, or a promise, threat or willingness.

1. Determination:
 - I will do it, whatever happens.
 - We will not surrender.
2. Promise:
 - I will do whatever I can do to help you.
 - I will try to get you a job in bank.
3. Threat:
 - I will teach him a lesson.
 - We will dismiss you from service.

4. Willingness:
 - All right, I will come with you.
 - We will attend the meeting.
 - With the second and third person:
 - The train will leave at 7:30 P.M.
 - I am sure you will pass this time.

Here, will expresses simple future. The action or event which is almost certain to take place.

Note:The distinction between shall and will have been breaking down to some extent and are now strictly observed only by precise speakers. Shall has been steadily losing ground in the second and third persons. In the first person, shall is still being used to indicate the simple future.

14.2.3 Should

1. Should is the past tense of shall and is used as such in Indirect speech.
 - The captain said that players should assemble at college at 4 P.M.
2. Should expresses duty or obligation in all the three persons.
 - I should not be unfair to him.
 - We should have given him a helping hand.
3. Should is used in conditional clauses expressing possibilities, suppositions, etc.
 - If he should come, ask him to wait.
 - Should it rain, there will be no panic.
4. Should express less possibility than shall.
 - I should be happy to meet Raj.
5. Should is used in main clauses which are preceded or followed by a clause expressing unreal conditions.
 - If I were you, I should accept the post.
 - No, Hari, I shouldn't do that, if I were you.
6. Should is the only Auxiliary that may be used after lest.
 - Watch and pray lest you should fall into temptation.
 - The police surrounded the house lest the criminal should escape.
7. Should is also used in the expression 'should like to' which is a polite form of making a statement.
 - I should like to congratulate the speakers on the high level of the debate we have had.
8. Should also express possibility or likelihood.
 - I should be able to beat him.
 - You should be able to finish this work in time.

14.2.4 Would

1. Would is the past tense of will and is used as such in Indirect speech.
 - The manager said that the office would be closed on Friday.

2. Would express willingness.
 - The doctor said he would visit the patient.
 - He said he would try his best to help me.
3. Would express a customary action in the past.
 - After dinner the students would sit in the common room and chat for a while.
4. Would and would like to express a wish.
 - I would know what my duty is.
 - I would like to know what my duty is.
5. Would rather express choice or preference.
 - I would rather read a novel than see that useless picture.
 - She would rather die than marry him.
6. Would is used for asking polite questions.
 - Would you like a cup of coffee?
 - Would you, please, call me a taxi?
7. Would is used in the main clause, when preceded or followed by a subordinate clause expressing an impossible or improbable condition.
 - If I were a king, I would make you my queen.

14.2.5 Can

1. Can express ability.
 - He can run a mile in four minutes.
 - She can play tennis very well.
2. Can is also used in the sense of may to give permission, though may is more correct.
 - You can take one of those books, if you like.
 - You can go now.

14.2.6 Could

1. Could is the past tense of can and is used to indicate ability that existed in the past.
 - In my younger days I could run four miles at a stretch.
 - Why couldn't you attend the meeting yesterday?
2. Could is used as the past tense of can in Indirect speech.
 - She said that she couldn't climb up the hill.
3. Could is used to express possibility, or uncertainty or something dependent on unreal conditions.
 - You could do it, if you tried hard.
4. Could is also used to ask polite questions.
 - Could I have a word with you?
 - Could you, please, take me to the principal?

14.2.7 May

1. May is used to express permission.
 - May I come in, please?
 - May I go home now?
2. May is also used to express possibility.
 - She may agree or she may not.
 - The war may come to an end soon.
3. May is used for expressing wish.
 - May his soul rest in peace.
 - May God bless you!
4. May is used in subordinate clauses that express purpose.
 - Eat that you may live, don't live that you may eat.

14.2.8 Might

1. Might is the past tense of may and is used as such in Indirect speech.
 - He said that he might stand for election to the assembly.
2. Might is used to indicate a more doubtful possibility than may.
 - I might pass.
 - The patient might recover.
3. Might is used when you want to be extremely polite during a discussion or when you wish to express gentle reproach or admonition.
 - If I might interrupt you for a moment, Sir, how is this new scheme going to help restore normalcy?

14.2.9 Must

Must remain unchanged, or uninflected in form, whatever be its tense or the number and person of the subject. It can point to the present or future. It can refer to the past only when it is with the present perfect of the principal verb.

- He must have gone home.
 - We must be loyal to our country.
1. Must express compulsion or strong obligation or duty. It is much stronger than should.
 - He must apologise for his mistake.
 - We must be loyal to our country.
 2. It expresses necessity.
 - We must get up early and start on our way.
 3. It expresses probability or likelihood.
 - He must be mad to do this.
 - That must have been a shooting star.
 4. It signifies strong determination.
 - I must go to Kashmir in the summer, whatever happens.

14.2.10 Ought

Ought was originally the past tense of owe; but now it generally points to present and future time. It differs from other auxiliaries in being followed by the to-form of the infinitive and not the simple form. Ought is not as forceful as must, but is stronger than should. Ought to express duty, necessity, fitness, moral obligation, etc.

- They ought to help him.
- He ought to attend office regularly.
- You ought to obey your parent.

When ought to refers to past time, it is followed by the perfect infinitive.

- He ought to have helped him.
- We have done things which we ought not to have done.

14.2.11 Need

1. Need is used both as a principal verb and as an auxiliary. As a principal verb it is used in the sense of requirement.
 - He needs my help.
 - We need two more players for the team.
2. But as an auxiliary need is uninflected and is commonly used with not.
 - He need not ask my permission.
 - You need not mention this to anyone else.
3. Sometimes it is used with hardly.
 - I need hardly say that I am very grateful.
4. It can be used with only.
 - He need only say what he wants.
5. Need is usually used in questions without not.
 - Need he wait any longer?
 - Need I come again?
6. Need without not is also used in the following kinds of statements.
 - You need pay only RS. 50/- as the first installment.
 - I don't think we need copy all these figures.
7. When referring to past time, need is followed by the perfect infinitive.
 - He need not have lost his temper.
 - They need not have come all this way.

14.2.12 Dare

1. Dare is used both as a principal verb and as an auxiliary. As a regular verb it is used in the sense of defy, challenge or face boldly and is regularly inflected.
 - He does not dare to swim the channel.
 - He dares you to do it.
2. As an auxiliary, dare is uninflected and is commonly used with not, or

in interrogative sentences, and only occasionally in positive statements.

- He dare not do so.
- I dare not take such a risk.
- Dare he say that to the boss?
- How dare he do such a thing?

Check Your Progress : 1

• CHOOSE THE CORRECT OPTION

1. My grandmother is eighty-five, but she still read and write without glasses. (Ability)
A. Can B. Could C. May
2. I come with you?
A. Can B. Will C. Would
3. you help me with the housework, please?(Polite request)
A. Could B. Will C. Should
4. There was a time when I stay up very late.(Past ability)
A. Would B. Could C. Can
5. You not lose any more weight. You are already slim.(Necessity)
6. We not make the first move.(Prohibition)
A. Must not B. Will not C. Can not
7. It is snowing outside so I stay at home.(Intention)
A. May B. Will C. Can
8. I get you a shawl from Kashmir.(Promise)
A. Will B. Would C. Can
9. you mind if I borrowed your car?(Permission)
A. Will B. Would C. Should
10. you take care of my dog for a day?(Polite request)
A. Will B. Shall C. Should
11. Our country become a super power by 2025.(possibility)
A. May B. Might C. Will
12. She sell her home because she needs money.(weak possibility)
A. May B. Might C. Could

Check Your Progress : 2

• CHOOSE THE CORRECT OPTION

1. Jonathan ski really well and he often wins his races.
A. Will B. Would C. Can
2. I go to the party but I'm still not sure.
A. May B. Might C. Could
3. I think you go out more and meet new people.
A. Will B. Shall C. Should

4. This is a secret between you and me, so we tell anyone.
A. Must not B. Will not C. Can not
5. It's dangerous to go into deep water if you swim.
A. Must not B. Will not C. Can not
6. I go out later with my parents but I don't really know.
A. May B. Might C. Could
7. All passengers remain in their seats and not use their mobile phones.
A. May B. Need C. Must
8. you please phone me in the evening?
A. May B. Might C. Could
9. You wear a uniform when you're in the army.
A. May B. Need C. Must
10. You not come with me. I can handle it alone.
A. May B. Need C. Must

Check Your Progress : 3

• Use 'Can', 'Can't', 'Could', or 'Couldn't'.

1. you swim when you were 10?
2. We get to the meeting on time yesterday because the train was delayed by one hour.
3. He's amazing, he speak 5 languages including Chinese.
4. I drive a car until I was 34, then I moved to the countryside so I had to learn.
5. I looked everywhere for my glasses but I find them anywhere.
6. She's 7 years old but she read yet – her parents are getting her extra lessons.
7. I read the book three times but I understand it.
8. James speak Japanese when he lived in Japan, but he's forgotten most of it now.
9. I understand the chapter we had to read for homework. It was so difficult.
10. I lift this box – it's too heavy! Would you help me?
11. Lucy make it to our meeting after all. She's stuck in traffic at the moment.
12. John play tennis really well. He's champion of his club.
13. Unfortunately, I really sing at all! No-one in my family is musical either.
14. I open this window. I think it's stuck!
15. Gill play the piano. She's never studied it.

Check Your Progress : 4

• Put in 'must + infinitive' or 'must + have + past participle'.

1. Keiko always does really well on exams. She _____ (study) a lot.
2. That woman drives a very expensive car. She _____ (have) a lot of money.
3. You _____ (practise) a lot before you gave your speech. It was really great.
4. When Lizzie got home yesterday, there were flowers on the table. Her husband _____ (buy) them.
5. Where is my purse? I saw it earlier, so it _____ (be) in this room.
6. Sarah couldn't find her glasses. She thought she _____ (leave) them at her office.
7. It _____ (be) cold outside. That man in the street is wearing a coat.
8. All my plants _____ (be) dead! I forgot to water them before I left for my holiday.
9. Susie is so late! She _____ (miss) the train.
10. There's rubbish all over my garden! A fox _____ (be) in the bin.
11. Anna has a huge library in her house. She _____ (love) books.
12. Oh no, I don't have my keys! I _____ (leave) them in the taxi.
13. When Lucy got home she found the ice cream had melted. It _____ (be) too hot in the car.
14. If you haven't eaten all day, you _____ (be) hungry.
15. Jimmy and Louisa _____ (be) very tired. They have a new baby.
16. It _____ (rain) a lot in the night. There are puddles everywhere.
17. David _____ (be) happy. His girlfriend just agreed to marry him.
18. What an amazing kitchen you've got! You _____ (like) cooking.
19. John _____ (eat) all the biscuits! There are none left.
20. When I got up this morning, the kitchen was spotless. Lily _____ (tidy) it before she went to bed last night.

Check Your Progress : 5

• Put in 'can't' or 'must'.

1. Why is that man looking around like that? He _____ be lost.
2. That woman _____ be a doctor! She looks far too young.
3. John always fails the tests, even though he's clever. He _____ study enough.

4. The food is really good at that restaurant. They _____ have a great chef.
5. Who's that at the door? It _____ be Susie – she'll still be at work now.
6. This _____ be John's house. This house has a red door, and it's number 24, just like he said.
7. Julie _____ have much money, or she would buy a new car. Her old one is falling apart.
8. He _____ be at work now, can he? It's nearly midnight.
9. What a lot of lovely flowers you have! You _____ really like gardening.
10. David _____ drink a lot of coffee. He's finished two packets already this week!
11. This _____ be Jamie's coat. He's very tall, and this is tiny.
12. Her life _____ be easy. She has four children and very little money.
13. Where's Lucy? She _____ be at the library, as she often goes there at this time.
14. This bill _____ be right! Rs 50 for two cups of coffee!
15. Emma's amazingly good at the piano. She _____ practise a lot.
16. The car in front is driving so slowly that I think they _____ be looking for something.
17. You've already eaten enough for three people! You _____ still be hungry!
18. This book _____ belong to the library. It's certainly not mine.
19. It only takes three hours to fly from London to Sydney? That _____ be correct!
20. There _____ be something wrong with the fridge! It's making a very unusual noise.

14.3 LET US SUM UP

In this Unit, we have got the information and use of Modal Auxiliaries. These verbs can be used as helping verbs also; they decide the intention of many verbs. Modals are used in language to make language effective and semantically coherent.

14.4 KEY WORDS

Surrender: stop resisting to an enemy or opponent and submit to their authority.

Distinction: a difference or contrast between similar things or people.

14.5 BOOKS SUGGESTED

1. Contemporary English Grammar Structures and Composition by David Green. Macmillan.
2. High School English Grammar and Composition by P.C. Wren and H. Martin. S Chand & Company Limited, 1995.

3. Learners English Grammar And Composition by N.D.V. Prasada
Rao .S. Chand Publishing, 2000

Answers:

Check Your Progress 1:

1 A	2 A	3 A	4 B	5 B	6 A
7 B	8 A	9 B	10 A	11 A	12 B

Check Your Progress 2:

1 C	2 B	3 C	4 A	5 C	6 B
7 C	8 C	9 C	10 B		

Check Your Progress 3:

1 Could	2 Couldn't	3 Can	4 Couldn't	5 Couldn't
6 Can't	7 Couldn't	8 Could	9 Couldn't	10 Can't
11 Can't	12 Can	13 Can't	14 Can't	15 Can't

Check Your Progress 4:

1 must study	2 must have	3 must have practiced
4 must have bought	5 must be	6 must have left
7 must be	8 must be	9 must have missed
10 must have been	11 must love	12 must have left
13 must have been	14 must be	15 must be
16 must have rained	17 must be	18 must like
19 must have eaten	20 must have tidied	

Check Your Progress 5:

1 Must	2 Can't	3 Can't	4 Must	5 Can't
6 Must	7 Can't	8 Can't	9 Must	10 Must
11 Can't	12 Can't	13 Must	14 Can't	15 Must
16 Must	17 Can't	18 Must	19 Can't	20 Must

યુનિવર્સિટી ગીત

સ્વાધ્યાય: પરમં તપ:

સ્વાધ્યાય: પરમં તપ:

સ્વાધ્યાય: પરમં તપ:

શિક્ષણ, સંસ્કૃતિ, સદ્ભાવ, દિવ્યબોધનું ધામ
ડૉ. બાબાસાહેબ આંબેડકર ઓપન યુનિવર્સિટી નામ;
સૌને સૌની પાંખ મળે, ને સૌને સૌનું આભ,
દશે દિશામાં સ્મિત વહે હો દશે દિશે શુભ-લાભ.

અભણ રહી અજ્ઞાનના શાને, અંધકારને પીવો ?
કહે બુદ્ધ આંબેડકર કહે, તું થા તારો દીવો;
શારદીય અજવાળા પહોંચ્યાં ગુર્જર ગામે ગામ
ધ્રુવ તારકની જેમ ઝળહળે એકલવ્યની શાન.

સરસ્વતીના મયૂર તમારે ફળિયે આવી ગહેકે
અંધકારને હડસેલીને ઉજાસના ફૂલ મહેકે;
બંધન નહીં કો સ્થાન સમયના જવું ન ઘરથી દૂર
ઘર આવી મા હરે શારદા દૈન્ય તિમિરના પૂર.

સંસ્કારોની સુગંધ મહેકે, મન મંદિરને ધામે
સુખની ટપાલ પહોંચે સૌને પોતાને સરનામે;
સમાજ કેરે દરિયે હાંકી શિક્ષણ કેરું વહાણ,
આવો કરીયે આપણ સૌ
ભવ્ય રાષ્ટ્ર નિર્માણ...
દિવ્ય રાષ્ટ્ર નિર્માણ...
ભવ્ય રાષ્ટ્ર નિર્માણ



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