



# Unit 3

## Prose Forgetting

Robert Lynd



### Warm Up

#### How forgetful are you?

We are all forgetful at times and would like to find ways of improving our memories.

#### A. How sharp is your memory?

Take this five-minute memory test. The teacher will read out a series of 30 words, one by one. Some of them will be repeated. Whenever you hear a word for the first time, write 'N' (for New) in the corresponding box and when you hear a repeated word write 'R'. After completing this task, check your results. Compare it with your friends and see where you stand.

|    |   |    |  |    |  |
|----|---|----|--|----|--|
| 1  | N | 11 |  | 21 |  |
| 2  |   | 12 |  | 22 |  |
| 3  |   | 13 |  | 23 |  |
| 4  |   | 14 |  | 24 |  |
| 5  |   | 15 |  | 25 |  |
| 6  |   | 16 |  | 26 |  |
| 7  |   | 17 |  | 27 |  |
| 8  |   | 18 |  | 28 |  |
| 9  |   | 19 |  | 29 |  |
| 10 |   | 20 |  | 30 |  |

#### B. Have you ever lost or misplaced anything of value due to forgetfulness?

At times, instances of forgetfulness may land us in a tight spot or in a difficult situation. Therefore, we need to find ways to remember what we have to do or carry with us. One such way is to make a mental check-list that we can verify before starting any activity.

Now discuss with your partner and think of some practical ideas to overcome forgetfulness, in your day-to-day activities.

e.g. setting an alarm

#### C. Discuss and share your views with the class on the following.

Is forgetfulness a result of carelessness or preoccupation?

Now read the humorous essay 'Forgetting' by Robert Lynd and his analysis of the fundamental reasons for forgetfulness in humans.

A list of articles lost by railway travellers and now on sale at a great London station has been published, and many people who read it have been astonished at the absent-mindedness of their fellows. If statistical records were available on the subject, however, I doubt whether it would be found that absent-



mindfulness is common. It is the efficiency rather than the inefficiency of human memory that compels my wonder. Modern man remembers even telephone numbers. He remembers the addresses of his friends. He remembers the dates of good **vintages**.



medicine his doctor has prescribed for him. This is the more surprising because medicine should be one of the easiest things to remember. As a rule, it is supposed to be taken before during, or after meals and the meal itself should be a reminder of it. The fact remains, however, that few but the moral giants remember to take their medicine regularly. Certain psychologists tell us that we forget things because we wish to forget them, and it may be that it is because of their **antipathy** to pills and potions; that many people fail to remember them at the appointed hours.

He remembers appointments for lunch and dinner. His memory is crowded with the names of actors and actresses and cricketers and footballers and murderers. He can tell you what the weather was like in a long-past August and the name of the provincial hotel at which he had a vile meal during the summer. In his ordinary life, again, he remembers almost everything that he is expected to remember. How many men in all London forget a single item of their clothing when dressing in the morning? Not one in a hundred. Perhaps not one in ten thousand. How many of them forget to shut the front door when leaving the house? Scarcely more. And so it goes on through the day, almost everybody remembering to do the right things at the right moment till it is time to go to bed, and then the ordinary man seldom forgets to turn off the lights before going upstairs.

There are, it must be admitted, some matters in regard to which the memory works with less than its usual perfection. It is only a very methodical man, I imagine, who can always remember to take the

This does not explain, however, how it is that a life-long devotee of medicines like myself is as forgetful of them as those who take them most unwillingly. The very prospect of a new and widely advertised cure-all delights me. Yet, even if I have the stuff in my pockets, I forget about it as soon as the hour approaches at which I ought to swallow it. Chemists make their **fortunes** out of the medicines people forget to take.

The commonest form of forgetfulness, I suppose, occurs in the matter of posting letters. So common is it that I am always **reluctant** to trust a departing visitor to post an important letter. So little do I rely on his memory that I put him on his oath before handing the letter to him. As for myself, anyone who asks me to post a letter is a poor judge of character. Even if I carry the letter in my hand I am always past the first pillar-box before I remember that I ought to have posted it. Weary of holding it in my hand, I then put it for safety into one of my pockets and forget all about it. After that, it has an unadventurous life till



a long chain of circumstances leads to a number of embarrassing questions being asked, and I am compelled to produce the evidence of my guilt from my pocket. This, it might be thought, must be due to a lack of interest in other people's letters; but that cannot be the explanation, for I forget to post some even of the few letters that I myself remember to write.

As for leaving articles in trains and in taxies, I am no great **delinquent** in such matters. I can remember almost anything except books and walking-sticks and I can often remember even books. Walking-sticks I find it quite impossible to keep. I have an old-fashioned taste for them, and I buy them frequently but no-sooner do I pay a visit to a friend's house or go a journey in a train, than another stick is on its way into the world of the lost. I dare not carry an umbrella for fear of losing it. To go through life without ever having lost an umbrella—has even the grimmest—jawed umbrella-carrier ever achieved this?

Few of us, however, have lost much property on our travels through forgetfulness. The ordinary man arrives at his destination with all his bags and trunks safe. The list of articles lost in trains during the year suggests that it is the young rather than the adult who forget things, and that sportsmen have worse memories than their ordinary serious-minded fellows. A considerable number of footballs and cricket-bats, for instance, were forgotten. This is easy to understand, for boys, returning from the games, have their imaginations still filled with a vision of the playing-field, and their heads are among the stars — or their hearts in their

boots — as they recall their **exploits** or their errors. They are **abstracted** from the world outside them. Memories prevent them from remembering to do such small **prosaic** things as take the ball or the bat with them when they leave the train.

For the rest of the day, they are citizens of dreamland. The same may be said, no doubt, of anglers who forget their fishing-rods. Anglers are generally said — I do not know with what justification— to be the most imaginative of men, and the man who is inventing magnificent lies on the journey home after a day's fishing is bound to be a little absent-minded in his behaviour. The fishing-rod of reality is forgotten by him as he day-dreams over the fears of the fishing-rod of Utopia. His loss of memory is really a tribute to the intensity of his enjoyment in thinking about his day's sport. He may forget his fishing-rod, as the poet may forget to post a letter, because his mind is filled with matter more glorious.

Absent-mindedness of this kind seems to me all but a virtue. The absent-minded man is often a man who is making the best of life and therefore has no time to remember the **mediocre**. Who would have trusted Socrates or Coleridge to post a letter? They had souls above such things.

The question whether the possession of a good memory is altogether desirable has often been discussed, and men with **fallible** memories have sometimes tried to make out a case for their superiority. A man, they say, who is a perfect remembering machine is seldom a man of the first intelligence, and they quote



various cases of children or men who had marvellous memories and who yet had no intellect to speak of. I imagine, however, that on the whole the great writers and the great composers of music have been men with exceptional powers of memory. The poets I have known have had better memories than the stockbrokers I have known. Memory, indeed, is half the substance of their art.

On the other hand, statesmen seem to have extraordinarily bad memories. Let two statesmen attempt to recall the same event — what happened, for example, at some Cabinet meeting — and each of them will tell you that the other's story is so inaccurate that either he has a memory like a **sieve** or is an **audacious** perverter of the truth. The frequency with which the facts in the autobiographies and speeches of statesmen are challenged, suggests that the world has not yet begun to produce ideal statesmen—men who, like great poets, have the genius of memory and of intellect combined.

At the same time, ordinarily good memory is so common that we regard a man who does not possess it as **eccentric**. I have heard of a father who, having offered to take the baby out in a perambulator, was tempted by the sunny morning to pause on his journey and slip into a public-house for a glass of beer. Leaving the perambulator outside, he disappeared through the door of the saloon bar. A little later, his wife had to do some shopping which took her past the public-house, where to her horror, she discovered her sleeping baby. **Indignant** at her husband's behaviour, she decided to teach him a lesson.



She wheeled away the perambulator, picturing to herself his terror when he would come out and find the baby gone. She arrived home, anticipating with angry relish the white face and **quivering** lips that would soon appear with the news that the baby had been stolen. What was her **vexation**, however, when just before lunch her husband came in smiling cheerfully and asking: "Well, my dear, what's for lunch today?" having forgotten all about the baby and the fact that he had taken it out with him. How many men below the rank of a philosopher would be capable of such absent-mindedness as this? Most of us, I fear, are born with prosaically efficient memories. If it were not so, the institution of the family could not survive in any great modern city.



Human memory begins to work when the foetus is just 20 weeks old in the mother's womb.







### About the Author

Robert Wilson Lynd (1879 – 1949), an Irish writer, is one of the greatest essayists of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. He began his career as a journalist. He penned numerous articles for the leading newspapers and magazines like Daily News, The New Statesman and Nation. He wrote under the pseudonym ‘Y.Y.’ His essays cover a wide range of simple and interesting topics. They are humorous, delightful, ironical and satirical. Robert Lynd was awarded with an honorary literary Doctorate by Queen’s University, Belfast in 1947. He was also honoured by the Royal Society of Literature with a silver medal and by The Sunday Times with a gold medal for *Belles Lettres*. In his essay ‘*Forgetting*’, Robert Lynd takes a humorous look at the nature and effects of forgetfulness.



### Glossary

|                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| <b>vintage</b>    | - wine of high quality produced in a particular year     |
| <b>antipathy</b>  | - strong dislike   |
| <b>fortunes</b>   | - huge sums of money                                     |
| <b>reluctant</b>  | - unwilling  |
| <b>delinquent</b> | - a young person who is regularly involved in wrongdoing |
| <b>exploits</b>   | - daring or heroic acts or actions, feats                |
| <b>abstracted</b> | - lacking concentration on what is happening around      |
| <b>prosaic</b>    | - dull   |
| <b>mediocre</b>   | - not very good, ordinary                                |
| <b>fallible</b>   | - capable of making mistakes                             |
| <b>sieve</b>      | - strainer or filter                                     |
| <b>audacious</b>  | - bold and daring  |

|                  |                            |
|------------------|----------------------------|
| <b>eccentric</b> | - tending to act strangely |
| <b>indignant</b> | - being very angry         |
| <b>quivering</b> | - trembling, shivering     |
| <b>vexation</b>  | - irritation, annoyance    |

1. Based on your understanding of the essay, answer the following questions in one or two sentences each.

- What does Lynd actually wonder at?
- Name a few things that a person remembers easily.
- How do psychologists interpret forgetfulness?
- What is the commonest type of forgetfulness, according to Lynd?
- What does the author mean when he says the letter in his pocket leads an unadventurous life?
- What are the articles the writer forgets most often?
- Who are the citizens of ‘dreamland’? Why?
- What is common about the ‘angler’ and the ‘poet’?



2. Based on your reading, answer the following questions in two to four sentences each.

- a) What made people wonder about the absentmindedness of their fellow-beings?
- b) What are our memories filled with?
- c) When does human memory work with less than its usual capacity?
- d) Why, according to Lynd, should taking medicines be one of the easiest actions to remember?
- e) How do the chemists make fortunes out of the medicines people forget to take?
- f) The list of articles lost in trains suggest that sportsmen have worse memories than their ordinary serious-minded fellows. Why does Lynd say this?
- g) What kind of absent-mindedness is regarded as a virtue by Lynd?
- h) Narrate the plight of the baby on its day out.

3. Answer the following in a paragraph of about 100–150 words each.

- a) You have borrowed a branded cricket bat from your reluctant friend for an outstation match. After returning home you realize you have absent-mindedly left it in the hotel room. Write a letter of apology and regret to your friend.
- b) Kahlil Gibran states 'Forgetfulness is a form of freedom.' Write an article for your school magazine, linking your ideas logically and giving appropriate examples.
- c) Will you sympathise or ridicule someone who is intensely forgetful? Write an essay justifying your point of view.



## Vocabulary

### A. Homonyms and Heteronyms

**Homonyms** are two or more words that have same pronunciation but different meanings. They are of two types:

#### i. Homographs

Homographs are words with same spelling and same sound but different in meanings.

e.g. **park** – a piece of public land for recreation / **park** – to leave a vehicle in a particular place

**bat** – a sport equipment for hitting the ball / **bat** – a mammal

#### ii. Homophones

Homophones are two or more words with the same sound but with different spellings and meanings.

e.g. **dear** – a loved one / **deer** – a wild animal

**Heteronyms** also known as heterophones are two or more words with same spelling but different sounds and meanings.

e.g. **lead** – a metal / **lead** – guide

**minute** – a period of time / **minute** – very small

Complete the sentences by choosing a suitable word from those given in the brackets.



- i) Nobody can say \_\_\_\_\_ there will be an improvement in the \_\_\_\_\_. (whether / weather)
- ii) Your ring is \_\_\_\_\_. Do not \_\_\_\_\_ it. (loose / lose)
- iii) We found a \_\_\_\_\_ of biscuits in the old man's shirt \_\_\_\_\_. (pocket / packet)
- iv) When the pole vaulter cleared 28 \_\_\_\_\_, it was declared a record \_\_\_\_\_. (feet / feat)
- v) Explain the \_\_\_\_\_ 'Cut your \_\_\_\_\_ according to your cloth.' (coat / quote)
- vi) The stranger \_\_\_\_\_ for a few minutes before he \_\_\_\_\_ my house. (paused / passed)
- vii) The \_\_\_\_\_ dancer turned \_\_\_\_\_ after the final performance. (weary / wiry)
- viii) The chain that I presented to my sister was not made of gold; it was just \_\_\_\_\_. I am suffering from a sense of \_\_\_\_\_. (guilt / gilt)

Form meaningful sentences using the given words to bring out at least two different meanings.

- |          |          |
|----------|----------|
| 1. train | 4. light |
| 2. tear  | 5. file  |
| 3. wind  | 6. bear  |

### B. Clipped Words

We came across the word 'perambulator' in the last paragraph of the story. The word 'perambulator' can also be expressed as 'pram' in short. The

word 'perambulator' is an **unclipped word** and the word 'pram' is a **clipped word**.

What are clipped words?

Clipped words are words that are formed by dropping one or more syllables from longer words without changing the meaning. Clipping is forming new words by shortening long words. We usually use them while speaking or in informal speech.

- e.g. **aeroplane** – plane  
**examination** – exam  
**demarcate** – mark

Now, write the clipped and unclipped forms of the given words and complete the table.

| UNCLIPPED     | CLIPPED |
|---------------|---------|
| chimpanzee    |         |
|               | photo   |
|               | mike    |
| cafeteria     |         |
|               | gas     |
| helicopter    |         |
| telephone     |         |
|               | varsity |
|               | memo    |
| influenza     |         |
|               | hippo   |
| bridegroom    |         |
|               | fan     |
| demonstration |         |
|               | pram    |
| refrigerator  |         |

- c. 'Certain **psychologists** tell us that we forget things because we wish to forget them.' Who is a **psychologist**?

One who studies the human mind and behaviour is a psychologist.

Now, refer to a dictionary and match the professions with their relevant job descriptions.

| A                 | B   |
|-------------------|---|
| 1. pathologist    | studies languages and their structure         |
| 2. ornithologist  | studies atmosphere, weather and climate       |
| 3. entomologist   | studies the matter that constitutes the earth |
| 4. archaeologist  | studies earthquakes                           |
| 5. sociologist    | studies reptiles and amphibians               |
| 6. geologist      | studies functioning of human society          |
| 7. linguist       | studies artefacts and physical remains        |
| 8. seismologist   | studies birds                                 |
| 9. herpetologist  | studies insects                               |
| 10. meteorologist | studies diseases                              |

Fill in the blanks choosing the words from the box. Refer to a dictionary if required. One has been done for you.

thespian, sadist, polyglot,  
ambidextrous, philanthropist,  
misanthrope, bibliophile,  
nonagenarian, teetotaler,  
globetrotter, optimist

e.g. My brother buys a load of books at the book fair every year. He is a great lover of books and has a huge collection at home. He is a **bibliophile**.

i. Peter always refuses alcohol, when it is offered to him at parties and takes a soft drink instead. He says he always has

abstained and will always abstain from alcohol as it is a matter of principle for him. We can call Peter a \_\_\_\_\_.

ii. Aruna always looks at the bright side of things. Even in the face of misfortune, she firmly believes that everything will work out for the best in the end. Aruna is an \_\_\_\_\_.

iii. The rich industrialist donated a huge sum of money to set up a public library in his native village. He is a \_\_\_\_\_ and a social reformer.

iv. The Chairperson of our company keeps travelling all over the world to attend conferences and we call her a \_\_\_\_\_.

v. Antony has the amazing ability to use both his hands, equally well. He can write, draw and perform various other tasks with equal speed and efficiency with his left as well as his right hand. Antony is \_\_\_\_\_.

vi. Due to some disturbing incidents in her childhood, Neetu grew into a reclusive adult. She tends to keep aloof and avoids all kinds of social activities. Neetu is a \_\_\_\_\_.

vii. Tharini acts as an interpreter at meetings between statesmen from different countries. She is also a much sought-after tour guide, as she is well-versed and fluent in multiple languages. Tharini is a \_\_\_\_\_.

viii. My grandparents are in their nineties. I am glad that this \_\_\_\_\_ couple is active, cheerful and in good health.





ix. Richard Burton was a gifted theatre artist. He donned several roles with ease and is especially famous for the Shakespearean parts he played on stage. Mr. Burton is a born \_\_\_\_\_.

x. The Chairman of this concern seems to derive pleasure from inflicting pain on others. He humiliates and hurts his subordinates for no reason. He is a real \_\_\_\_\_.

d) Find the antonyms of the following words in the puzzle and shade them with a pencil. The first one has been done for you.

**seldom, admitted, methodical, reality, virtue, vile, indignant, relish, fact**

### Spot the word

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Y | V | P | I | N | X | T | F | I | Y | L | M | I | J | I | G | D | W | K | R |
| H | O | X | J | W | F | K | R | L | W | I | A | Q | M | Z | Y | H | H | M | X |
| F | A | N | T | A | S | Y | R | E | J | S | R | D | M | C | Q | E | S | N | C |
| T | M | C | X | A | U | E | E | Y | L | H | A | T | E | E | P | D | E | F | F |
| O | H | Z | V | C | D | T | Q | V | J | A | F | I | N | A | E | E | D | Q | N |
| U | F | H | C | R | L | D | D | X | D | O | O | G | N | F | N | N | G | C | G |
| L | B | I | O | R | O | F | M | G | Q | A | E | X | I | N | Z | I | A | F | D |
| V | L | S | C | O | N | F | C | L | T | Q | H | E | E | M | Y | E | L | M | T |
| R | I | U | G | T | O | N | O | P | T | M | D | W | C | Q | J | D | E | G | C |
| D | K | L | Y | Z | I | L | D | L | H | Q | G | Q | I | D | L | E | G | T | O |
| E | F | D | L | R | T | O | D | E | K | B | V | M | V | A | S | P | H | M | V |
| L | N | X | T | M | C | C | N | A | E | V | I | R | R | A | F | R | W | S | F |
| I | X | M | N | H | I | H | F | S | E | N | C | L | J | P | A | K | R | O | P |
| G | M | N | E | X | F | C | A | C | K | Y | S | F | G | U | O | T | J | Y | N |
| H | M | P | U | X | P | Q | I | D | K | C | Q | J | I | Q | F | C | F | G | U |
| T | O | A | Q | J | H | V | D | Q | Z | R | D | I | F | N | T | X | O | I | I |
| E | W | P | E | L | X | Q | N | J | E | X | S | Y | B | K | E | W | A | W | O |
| D | I | N | R | B | U | M | Z | H | U | V | H | V | D | J | N | X | O | D | G |
| U | C | H | A | P | H | A | Z | A | R | D | D | I | A | V | Q | N | I | F | S |
| W | W | D | N | W | X | J | D | K | L | I | O | L | Q | H | H | Q | D | X | U |



### Listening Activity

A. First, read the incomplete sentences given below. Listen to two interesting anecdotes about two scientists, that your teacher will read aloud or play on the recorder. Then, based on your understanding, complete the sentences suitably.

- i. Edison travelled to New Jersey by \_\_\_\_\_.
- ii. The station master enquired Edison if \_\_\_\_\_.
- iii. Edison raced back to the car, when he saw \_\_\_\_\_.
- iv. Albert Einstein was working in \_\_\_\_\_.
- v. One day, when he was going back home, he \_\_\_\_\_.
- vi. Einstein asked the cab driver if he knew \_\_\_\_\_.
- vii. The driver was so good that he \_\_\_\_\_.



### Speaking Activity

Work with a partner and take turns to share your views and suggestions with the class.

- i) You are travelling by train. When the Train Ticket Examiner enters your compartment, much to your shock, you realize you have forgotten to bring your

train ticket. How will you handle the situation?

- ii) You forget to wish your best friend on his/her birthday. He gets very angry. How will you try to pacify him/her? Construct a dialogue of about 4 to 5 exchanges and enact a role play.
- iii) 'Forgetfulness is the beginning of happiness'- Do you agree or disagree? Discuss in class.
- iv) Is there a link between intelligence and absent-mindedness? Share your views on this subject, with the class.



### Reading

Do you read books and novels? Do you buy them or borrow them from a library?

When you go to a library, you will see different genres of books. Libraries classify books following the **Dewey Decimal System** or the **Library of Congress System**.

The important sections of a library are: (i) The Reference Section where Dictionaries, Encyclopaedias, Yearbooks, Atlases and Gazetteers are kept; (ii) The Stack where all books except those in the Reference Section are kept; (iii) The Journal Section

"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 to be read wholly, and with diligence and attention."

Francis Bacon "Of Studies"



where journals, both current and back issues are kept; (iv) The Electronic Section where Computers, Xerox machines (reprography), DVDs and CDs are kept.

Most libraries have an online catalogue of holdings (e.g. books, journals, electronic publications and audio-visual materials) available with them. An online catalogue is a list of the materials available in the library, and this list can be accessed through the computer.

You can make use of the online catalogue to locate books and other materials. The most common ways of locating a book are by (i) the author's name (ii) the title (iii) the subject. If you type the author's name, e.g. **Shakespeare, William**, the computer produces a list of all works written by Shakespeare that are available in that library.

Genres of literature are important to learn about. The two main categories separating the different genres of literature are Fiction and Non-fiction.

Non-fiction includes **Narratives Non-fictional essays, Biographies, Autobiographies etc.**

Fiction includes **Drama, Poetry, Fantasy, Humour, Fables, Science fiction, Short Story etc.**

Now, read the following biographical extract on Sujatha Rangarajan, a Science-fiction writer, and answer the questions that follow.

1. Sujatha is the **allonym** of the Tamil author S. Rangarajan and it is this name

that is recognised at once by the Tamil Sci-Fi reading community. You might have seen the Tamil movie 'Endiran' where the robot Chitti exhibits extraordinary talents in an incredible manner. The robot could excel a human being in any act, beyond one's imagination. Jeeno, a robotic dog which appeared in Sujatha's science fiction novel "En Iniya Iyandhira" (My Dear Robot) formed the basis of Chitti's character. Like Chitti, Jeeno was an all-rounder who could cook, clean and fight. High-tech computer technology terms are used in the story. Jeeno, a pet robot, plays an important role throughout the story. As the story proceeds, it behaves and starts to think on its own like a human and instructs Nila, a human being, on how to proceed further in her crises.

2. In the preface of 'En Iniya Iyandhira', the writer states the reason for his attraction to the genre: "Science gives us the wonderful freedom to analyse thousands and thousands of alternative possibilities. While using it, and while playing with its new games, a writer needs to be cautious only about one thing. The story should draw some parallels or association from the emotions and desires of the present humankind. Only then it becomes interesting. Jeeno, the robot dog, was intelligent. But the character became popular only because of the robot's frequently displayed human tendencies." It is no wonder that all his works echo these words and will remain etched in the minds of the readers who enjoy reading his novels to have a wonderful lifetime experience.



3. It was Sujatha, who set the trend for sci-fi stories. He had tracked the origin from Mary Shelly's Frankenstein to his short stories. He has written 50 sci-fi short stories and these were published in various Tamil magazines. His stories have inspired many readers to extend their reading to English sci-fi writers like Isaac Asimov. The themes were bold, even if there was a dependence on very well - established characterisation of English fiction. Sujatha opened up a new world to us with his writings on holograms, computers and works like 'En Iniya Iyanthira' inspire many to study computer science.

4. He has been one of the greatest writers for more than four decades. He combined reasoning and science in his writings. Being a multifaceted hi-fi and sci-fi humanistic author, he expressed his views distinctively. He was the one who took Tamil novels to the next level. As an MIT alumnus and an engineer at BHEL, he was very good at technology. He could narrate sci-fi stories impressively. His readers always enjoyed reading all his detective and sci-fi novels which featured the most famous duo 'Ganesh' and 'Vasanth'.

5. Sujatha has played a crucial role as a playwright for various Tamil movies which have fascinated movie lovers. Hence, it is fathomable that the writer's perspective of future India enthuses every reader and paves a new way to reading sci-fi stories in English.

**Allonym** is a name that is assumed by an author but that actually belongs to another person.

**A. Answer the following questions in a sentence or two.**

- i) How was Jeeno different from other robots?
- ii) What precaution should one take while writing Science fiction stories?
- iii) What inspired Sujatha's themes?
- iv) Why were Sujatha's sci-fi stories impressive?

**B. Find words from the passage which mean the same as the following.**

- i) difficult to believe (para 1)
- ii) a style or category of art, music or literature (para 2)
- iii) having many sides (para 4)
- iv) capable of being understood (para 5)



**PASSIVISATION**



We use the active form to say what the subject does.





For example— I speak English everyday.

We use the passive form to say what happens to people and things - to say what is done to them. For example—English is spoken by me everyday.

Read the following sentences. Give reasons for the use of Passive construction.

We use Passive Voice.....

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| i) The cave paintings of Ajantha were made in the Gupta period.     | ✦ when the doer of the action is unknown ( impersonal passive) |
| ii) Waste is collected from the garbage containers on the streets.  | ✦ when the doer of the action is irrelevant                    |
| iii) Ground level ozone and fine particles are released in the air. | ✦ when a general truth is being stated                         |
| iv) Smog is formed purely by air pollution.                         | ✦ while writing reports and scientific research papers         |

A. Identify the changes in these pairs of active and passive constructions.

1. The pilot flew the airplane to Bengaluru.  
The airplane was flown to Bengaluru by the pilot.
2. The bananas were eaten by the monkey.  
The monkeys ate the bananas.

B. Change the voice of the following sentences.

1. Mohammed follows the rules.
2. Mohan has completed the course.
3. Magdalene is singing the prayer.
4. Who wrote this complaint?
5. May God bless you with happiness!
6. A house is being constructed by them.
7. Let the door not be slammed.
8. The team was trained by the coach.

C. Make sentences using the passive forms of the verbs.

1. Tagore/ award/ Nobel prize/
2. IIM Ahmedabad / establish /1961
3. Chattisgarh/ form / 2000
4. First passenger train /inaugurated / India /1853
5. Indian Airlines /set up / 1953

D. Look at the newspaper items given below. Use the information in the headlines to complete the sentence.

1. **HEAVY RAINS LASH CHENNAI**  
..... threw normal life out of gear.
2. **NEET CLASSES TO BEGIN ON SEP. 20<sup>TH</sup>**  
The Centre co-ordinator informed the candidates ..... Sept. 20<sup>th</sup>.





### 3) 12 INJURED AS BUSES COLLIDE

About .....at the Dindigul bus terminus here today.

#### E. Expand the following news headlines in a sentence each.

1. Municipal elections in December
2. Telephone customers to get video phone
3. Card license to replace paper driving license
4. ATMs without security guard to close

#### F. Describing a process

Anu and her little brother wish to refresh themselves with a hot cup of tea during study time. Help them prepare tea. Given below are the steps/instructions to make two cups of tea.

- ✦ Boil two glasses of water in a vessel.
- ✦ Add two tea-spoons of tea leaves and half-a-cup of milk.
- ✦ Cover the vessel with a lid.
- ✦ Filter the tea and pour it in cups.
- ✦ Add 2 teaspoons of sugar and stir well.
- ✦ Serve hot.



#### 1. Complete the passage by filling the blanks with the passive forms of the verbs.

The water should be boiled in a vessel. Then tea leaves and milk \_\_\_\_\_ to the water. The vessel \_\_\_\_\_ with a lid. The tea \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ into the cups. Sugar \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ well. The tea \_\_\_\_\_ hot.

2. Here is a recipe to make a chocolate cake in a pressure cooker. Rewrite the instructions in the passive voice. The first one has been done for you.

#### Ingredients

- ✦ 1 cup flour
- ✦ 1/4 cup cocoa powder
- ✦ 1 1/4 tsp baking powder
- ✦ 1/4 cup butter
- ✦ 3/4 cup castor sugar
- ✦ 1/4 cup water
- ✦ 2 eggs
- ✦ 1/2 tsp vanilla essence
- ✦ 1/8 tsp salt

#### Method

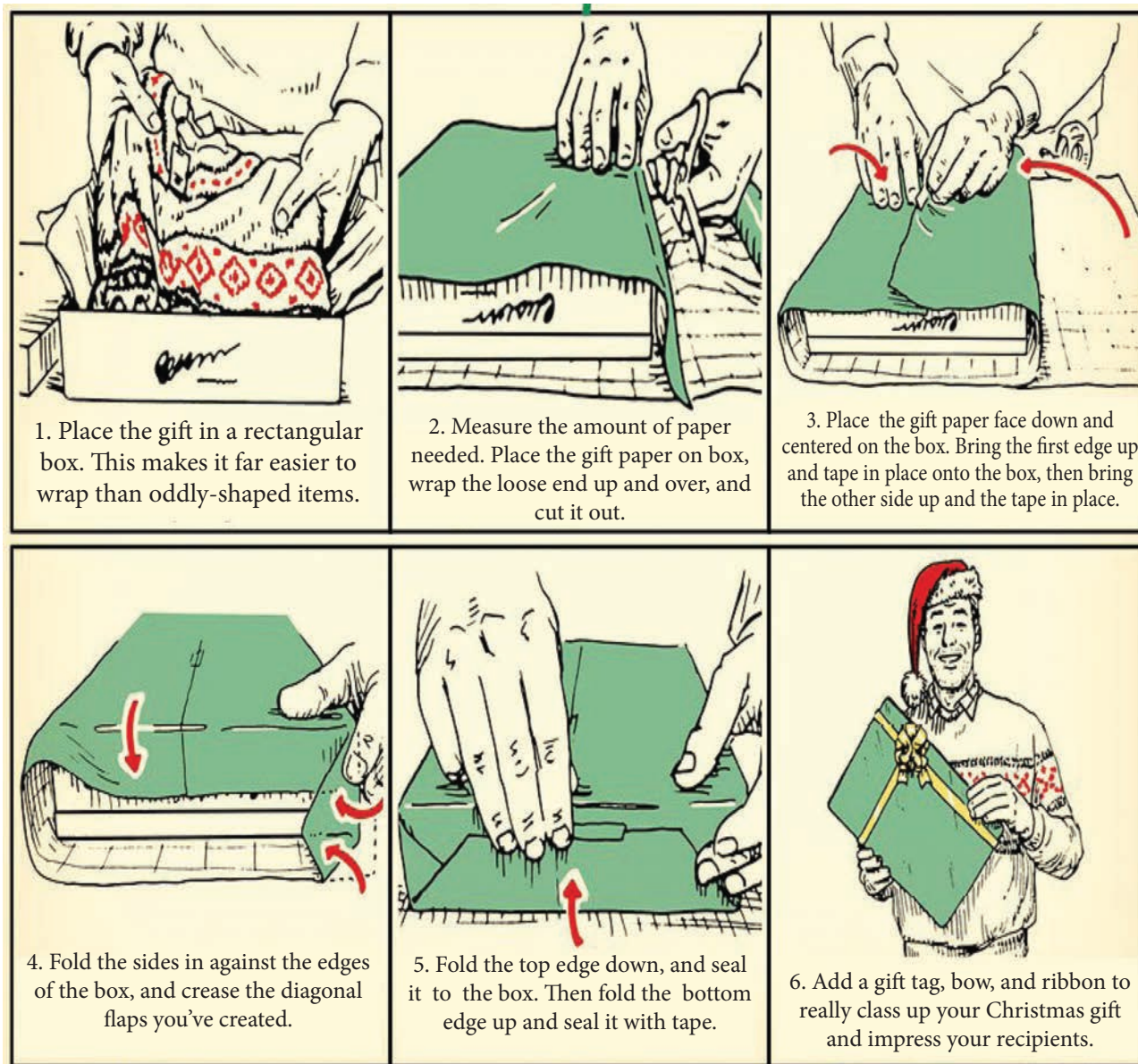
- i. First sift the flour, cocoa powder and baking powder in a mixing bowl.
- ii. Add butter, sugar, salt, water and vanilla and beat the ingredients using a whisk.
- iii. Add the eggs and beat the batter until it is smooth.
- iv. Transfer the batter into the baking tin.
- v. Heat the pressure cooker, covered with the lid, but without the pressure, for 3-4 minutes on high heat. Then place the cake tin in the empty cooker (Do not add water in the cooker).
- vi. Close the lid (without the pressure), lower the flame and cook for about 30 minutes.

#### Rewrite in passive voice:

*The flour, cocoa powder and baking powder are first sifted in a mixing bowl.*

.....

3. Write the process of wrapping a Christmas gift in a paragraph in passive form, with the help of the pictures given below.



### Subject and Verb Agreement (Concord)

When you write a sentence you must make sure that the subject and the verb agree.

Subject—verb agreement is the correspondence of a verb with its subject in person and number. The basic rule states that a singular subject takes a singular verb, while a plural subject takes a plural verb.

### Always Plural

- ✦ the verb after people, police, cattle, a number of, a group of
- ✦ when the subject consists of two nouns joined by 'and'
- ✦ after few, many, several, both, all, some
- ✦ after the words - scissors, tweezers, trousers, shorts, jeans, glasses



### Always Singular

- ✦ the verb after 'one of, a kind of, a type of'
- ✦ units of measurement and mathematical expressions
- ✦ when the subject has two singular nouns joined by 'or'
- ✦ nouns connected with each of, each one, either of, neither of, someone, something, anybody, anything, no one, nothing, everybody, everything
- ✦ names of subjects: mathematics, politics, civics, economics, physics etc.

#### A. Underline the correct verb in these sentences.

1. Rekha and her sisters (watch, watches) television everyday.
2. Ravi (doesn't, don't) like sports.
3. My classmates (study, studies) before a test.
4. One of the cookies (is, are) missing.
5. A lady with ten cats (live, lives) in that big house.
6. Measles (is, are) very serious.
7. The committee (decide, decides) when to adjourn.
8. Our team (is, are) the best.
9. Everybody (enjoy, enjoys) a good song.
10. Either of these (is, are) suitable.

#### B. Correct the following passage.

Where does the deer and the antelope play? One place is Yellowstone National

Park. It were created in 1872. Parts of the park is in Wyoming, Montana and Idaho. The park are a safe place for many animals. Bears, moose, buffalo, deer and antelope lives there. Beavers, otters, fish and eagles also enjoys the park. For them, Yellowstone be 'home sweet home.'



### Writing

#### Biographical sketch

A biographical sketch is a brief summary of a person's life and his achievements. It should include a description of the person's physical appearance, education, work, achievements and other special traits. The main focus of a biographical sketch is to portray the person in an admirable way.

#### Here are the steps to write a bio-sketch.

1. Use the third person in your description.
2. Write down personal details like name, age, physical appearance etc.
3. Highlight his/her education and work.
4. Mention his/her special contribution.
5. Make a list of the person's achievements.

#### A sample is given below.

Write the biography of R.K. Narayan in a paragraph, using the information given below:

R.K. Narayan—Rasipuram Krishnaswami Narayan – born—October 10, 1906—Chennai—author—Indian writing

in English completed education 1930–teacher–writer–Swami and Friends – first novel – 1935 – narrative of adventures of schoolboys – most of his stories—set in fictitious town—Malgudi – themes – peculiar human relationships – clash of modern and ancient traditions – style – graceful – humorous—elegant – simple—34 novels – prose version – The Ramayana – The Mahabharata – died May 13, 2001 – Chennai

R.K. Narayan, whose full name is Rasipuram Krishnaswami Narayan was born on October 10, 1906, at Chennai in Tamil Nadu. He is one of the finest authors of Indian writing in English. He completed

his education in 1930 and worked as a teacher before he became an author. His first novel, ‘Swami and Friends’ written in 1935, is a narrative, recounting the adventures of a group of schoolboys. Most of Narayan’s works are set in the fictitious South Indian town of Malgudi. Narayan typically portrays the peculiarities of human relationships and the ironies of Indian daily life, in which modern urban existence clashes with ancient tradition. His style is graceful, marked by genial humour, elegance, and simplicity. He has written about 34 novels in addition to the prose versions of the two Indian epics, The Ramayana and The Mahabharata. He died on May 13, 2001 in Chennai.

- a. Given below are hints about a renowned British science-fiction writer Arthur C. Clarke. Write a biographical sketch on the author in not more than 80–100 words based on the information given below.

|                    |   |
|--------------------|---|
| Name               | Arthur C. Clarke  |
| Pen names          | Charles Willis, E.G.O’Brien   |
| Birth              | 16 Dec 1917, England  |
| Career             | novelist, television host, inventor and film screen writer.   |
| Genre              | Science-Fiction, Television series, Film screenplay   |
| Awards and Honours | 1961, Kalinga Prize – an award given by UNESCO for popularising science<br>Hugo and Nebula Awards<br>Chairman of the Interplanetary Society<br>Highest Civil Honour of Sri Lanka – ‘Sri Lankabhimanya 2005’ |
| Titles             | Clarke, Robert Heinlein and Isaac Asimov – ‘Big Three’ of Science Fiction<br>‘The Prophet of the Space Age’   |
| Famous Works       | Childhood’s End<br>2001: A Space Odyssey<br>Rendezvous with Rama  |





## Report Writing

- ✦ A report is written for a clear purpose.
- ✦ Reports can be academic, technical or business related.
- ✦ The first step is to collect relevant material or information.
- ✦ The next step is to organize the collected information and put it together in an outline.
- ✦ Proper planning will make it easier to write a report.
- ✦ A report can be written about an incident, accident, a natural calamity, coverage of an official function, the visit of a dignitary etc.

While collecting facts and writing a report, remember the following points:

- ✦ Correctness of facts (authenticity) or accuracy should be ensured to avoid legal complications.
- ✦ Be concise, factual and clear.
- ✦ Give the title and name of reporter.
- ✦ Mention place and date of event.
- ✦ Use reported speech for narrations.
- ✦ Style should be engrossing, to sustain the interest of the reader.
- ✦ Main text should include three components – introduction, discussion and conclusion.
- ✦ Use the active voice to make writing flow smoothly and easily.

The main parts of the report are:

- ✦ Title
- ✦ Introduction
- ✦ The scope
- ✦ Duration, data collection, detailed discussion and their analysis
- ✦ Conclusion

Read the following report by Dinesh on the 50<sup>th</sup> Annual Day of his school.

### REPORT

#### GOLDEN JUBILEE CELEBRATION

V. R. Dinesh Kumar

11<sup>th</sup> August, 2018.

On 10<sup>th</sup> August, 2018, a colourful and memorable Golden Jubilee Annual Day event was organized in our school. This event was held in the auditorium of our school. Many eminent personalities and educationists graced the occasion. The District Collector, who was the Chief Guest, inaugurated the function. It began with a prayer, hailing the goddess of knowledge and wisdom. This was followed by a colourful welcome dance by the students of kindergarten. The Principal welcomed the gathering, after which all the invitees were felicitated. The cultural programme, which followed, was a truly mesmerizing show. The cultural programme included items such as singing, dancing, poetry recitation, skits, mimicry and mono act shows. The audience sat enthralled by the show. In his address, the Chief Guest praised the efforts of the students and teachers alike. This was followed by prize distribution to teachers and students, for their achievements. The programme





concluded with the vote of thanks by the School Pupil Leader.

a. You have recently attended a seminar on 'Science and Literature' in which writers presented papers on Science Fiction and Literature and focused on the creativity of young writers. Write a short report about it for a leading newspaper in about 100–120 words.

b. You are the School Pupil Leader. Your school organised an Inter-School Sports event at Nehru Stadium. Write a report on the special events conducted, in about 100–120 words for the school souvenir.





## Unit

# 3

## Poem

### Lines Written in the Early Spring

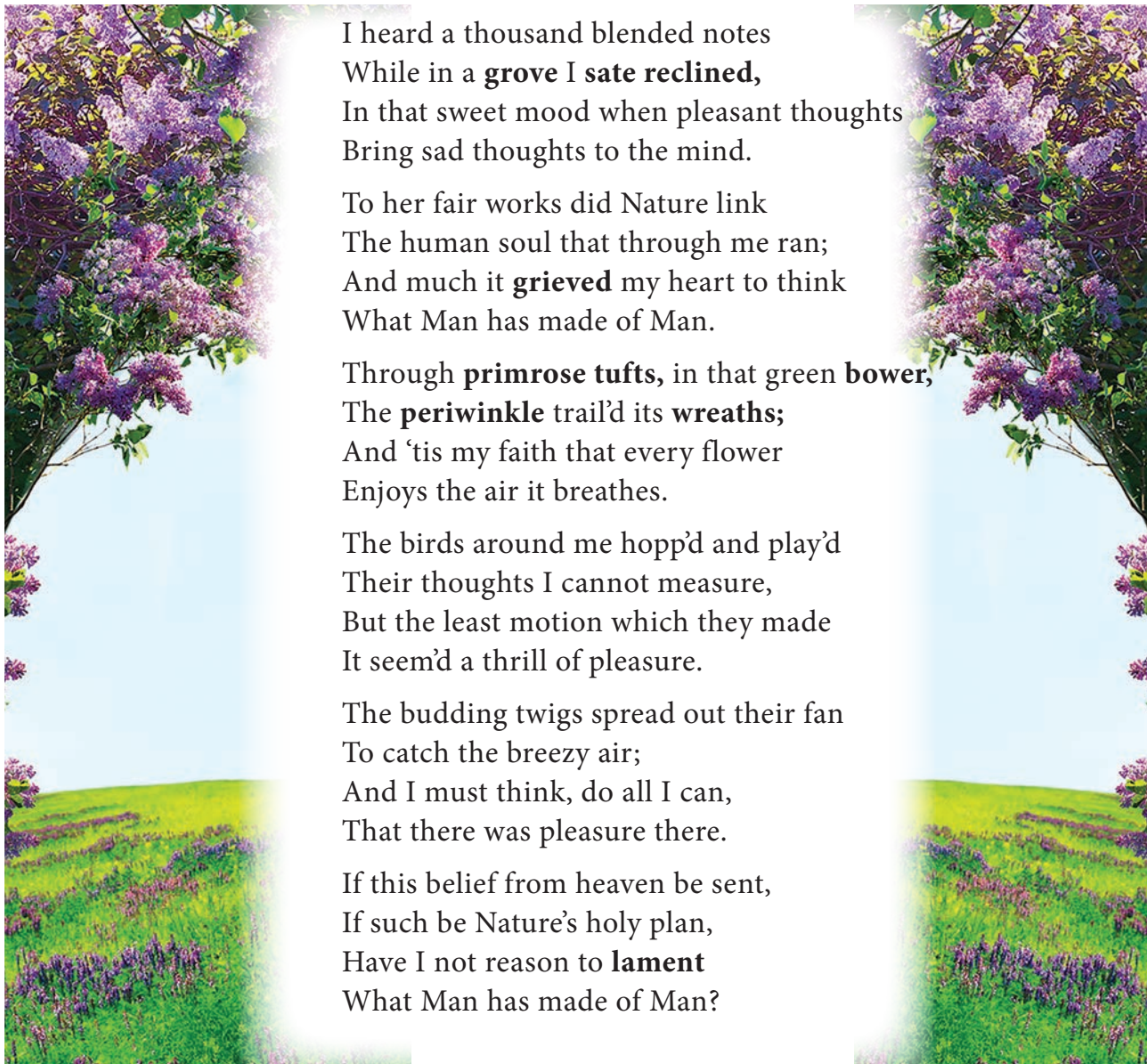
William Wordsworth



#### Warm Up:

- Do you go for leisurely walks? If you are a city-dweller, what or who would you expect to see on your way?
- If you go to a village, what scenes would you observe?

Now, read the poem 'Lines Written in Early Spring', which expresses the poet's feelings towards Nature and the lessons he has learnt from it.



I heard a thousand blended notes  
While in a **grove** I **sate reclined**,  
In that sweet mood when pleasant thoughts  
Bring sad thoughts to the mind.

To her fair works did Nature link  
The human soul that through me ran;  
And much it **grieved** my heart to think  
What Man has made of Man.

Through **primrose tufts**, in that green **bower**,  
The **periwinkle** trail'd its **wreaths**;  
And 'tis my faith that every flower  
Enjoys the air it breathes.

The birds around me hopp'd and play'd  
Their thoughts I cannot measure,  
But the least motion which they made  
It seem'd a thrill of pleasure.

The budding twigs spread out their fan  
To catch the breezy air;  
And I must think, do all I can,  
That there was pleasure there.

If this belief from heaven be sent,  
If such be Nature's holy plan,  
Have I not reason to **lament**  
What Man has made of Man?

## About the Author

William Wordsworth (1770 – 1850) was a major English poet who, with Samuel Taylor Coleridge, helped to launch the Romantic Age in English Literature with their joint publication- Lyrical Ballads.



Wordsworth was Britain's Poet Laureate from 1843 until his death. He was popularly known as a Nature Poet. Some of his famous poems are *Daffodils*, *The Solitary Reaper*, *To the Cuckoo*, *The Tables Turned* and *Lines Composed a Few Miles above Tintern Abbey*.

## Glossary:

|                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| <b>grove</b>      | – a small area of land with a group of trees         |
| <b>sate</b>       | – old-fashioned spelling for sat                     |
| <b>recline</b>    | – lean back in a position of rest                    |
| <b>grieve</b>     | – mourn or to feel intense sorrow                    |
| <b>primrose</b>   | – a wild plant with yellow flowers                   |
| <b>tufts</b>      | – bunches  |
| <b>bower</b>      | – a pleasant shady place under trees                 |
| <b>periwinkle</b> | – a trailing plant with large blue flowers           |
| <b>wreaths</b>    | – an arrangement of flowers in the shape of a circle |
| <b>lament</b>     | – to express sorrow or unhappiness about something   |

1. Find words from the poem that convey the following ideas:

- connected together
- spread over the surface of the ground in a straggling manner
- make out or understand
- slender woody shoots growing from branches or stems of trees

2. Complete the summary of the poem by filling in the blanks with the words given below.

The poet, in a relaxed state of mind, is sitting in a (1) \_\_\_\_\_. He reflects on how his mood brings (2) \_\_\_\_\_ thoughts, which are inevitably followed by (3) \_\_\_\_\_ ones. He feels connected to all of nature, and senses an inherent joy in all (4) \_\_\_\_\_. He has faith in the fact that all the primroses and periwinkles around him (5) \_\_\_\_\_ the air they breathe. He feels that every bird in the grove moves with (6) \_\_\_\_\_. As the twigs catch the breezy air, they do so with the same pleasure (7) \_\_\_\_\_ all life on earth. This joy of nature seems to be heaven-sent. Nature's holy plan is to offer joy and peace to all forms of life on earth. The poet's pleasant train of thought slowly leads to the sad reflection of how mankind alone has wrought sorrow and (8) \_\_\_\_\_ upon itself. He firmly believes that man is meant to spend his days blissfully taking part in the vitality and joy surrounding him in (9) \_\_\_\_\_. He therefore concludes rhetorically, emphasizing that he has good reason to (10) \_\_\_\_\_ the distress, man unnecessarily brings upon himself.



|           |           |           |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| creations | abundance | savour    |
| pleasant  | suffering | grove     |
| lament    | pervading | sorrowful |
| ecstasy   |           |           |

3. Read the lines given below and answer the questions that follow.

(i) *And 'tis my faith that every flower  
Enjoys the air it breathes...*

- (a) What is the poet's faith?
- (b) What trait of Nature do we see here?

(ii) *And I must think, do all I can,  
That there was pleasure there...*

- (a) What did the poet notice about the twigs?
- (b) What was the poet's thought about then?

(iii) *If this belief from heaven be sent,  
If such be Nature's holy plan.*

- (a) What does 'heaven' refer to?
- (b) Why does the poet call it 'holy'?

4. Explain the following lines with reference to the context in about four to five sentences each.

- a. *In that sweet mood when pleasant thoughts  
Bring sad thoughts to the mind.*
- b. *The birds around me hopp'd and play'd,  
Their thoughts I cannot measure.*
- c. *Have I not reason to lament  
What Man has made of Man?*

5. A. Read the following lines and identify the figures of speech used in each extract.

- a. *To her fair works did Nature link  
The human soul that through me ran.*
- b. *And 'tis my faith that every flower  
Enjoys the air it breathes.*
- c. *What Man has made of Man?*

B. Read the poem once again. Identify the rhyme scheme and pick out the rhyming pairs of words.

6. Based on your reading of the poem, answer the following questions in a sentence or two each.

- a. How does the poet feel while enjoying the beauty of Nature?
- b. Does Nature affect a person's thoughts and feelings? Explain.
- c. How do people bring grief and sorrow to one another?
- d. Why does the poet think that the birds were happy?
- e. The poet finds joy in various objects of Nature. Explain.
- f. Bring out the poet's thoughts, while comparing Nature with human behaviour.

7. Complete the following sentences by choosing the best options.

- a. The poet experiences sadness because \_\_\_\_\_.
  - i) the blended notes are jarring
  - ii) Nature is filled with negativity
  - iii) he is worried about the destruction caused to Nature
  - iv) natural calamities occur frequently
- b. The poem is set in a \_\_\_\_\_.
  - i) city
  - ii) village
  - iii) grove
  - iv) park
- c. The poem speaks of \_\_\_\_\_.
  - i) Man's plan to shape destiny
  - ii) Man seeking pleasure and riches
  - iii) Man indulging in wars and acts of destruction
  - iv) Man's fear of Nature

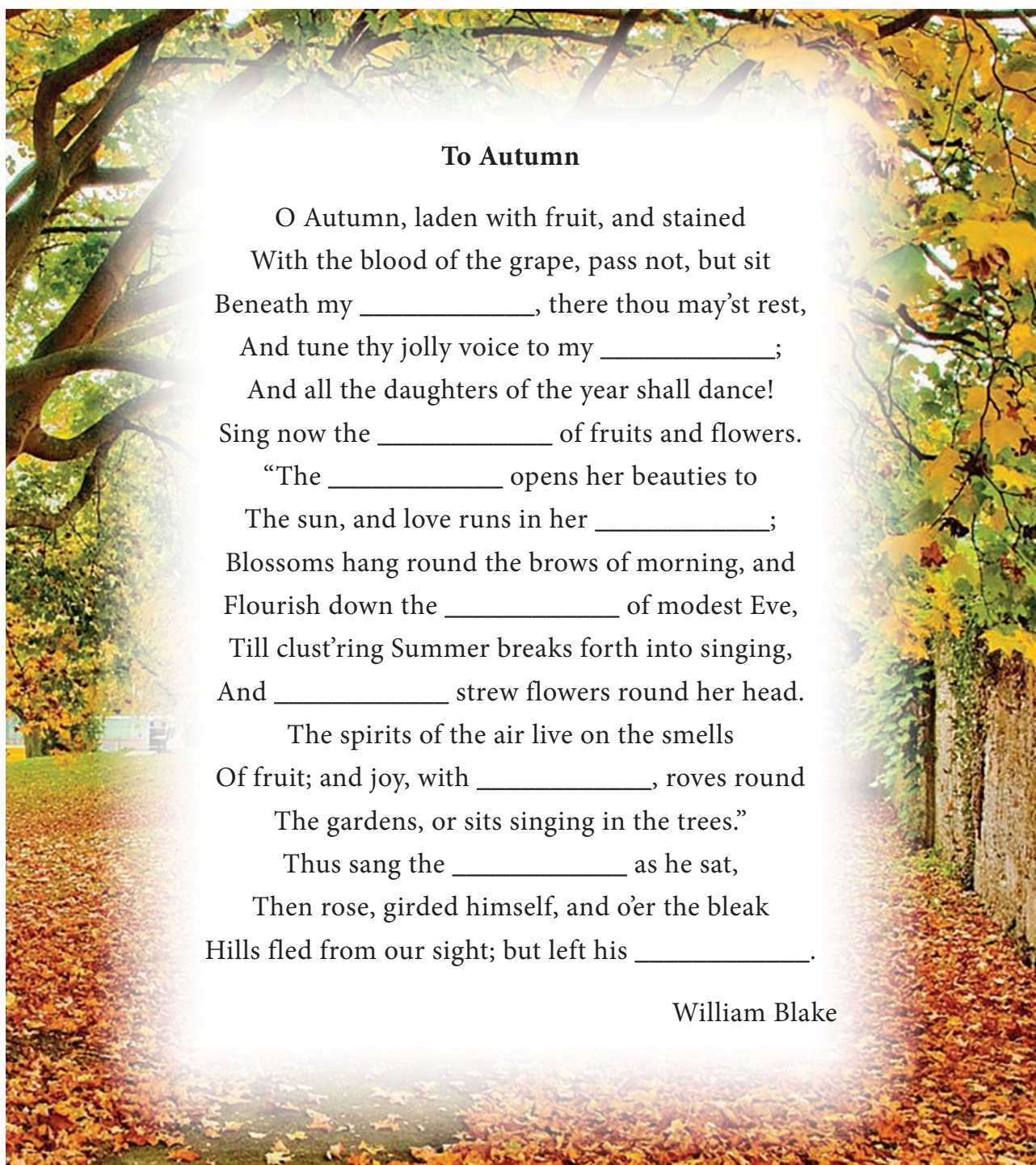


8. Answer in a paragraph of about 100–150 words.

Do you think the poet wants to say that man is unhappy because he has lost his link with nature and forgotten how to enjoy nature, or because man is cruel to other men?

9. Listening Activity

Some phrases have been left out in the poem below. First, read the poem. Then, fill in the missing words on listening to the reading or the recording of it in full. You may listen again, if required.



**To Autumn**

O Autumn, laden with fruit, and stained  
With the blood of the grape, pass not, but sit  
Beneath my \_\_\_\_\_, there thou may'st rest,  
And tune thy jolly voice to my \_\_\_\_\_;  
And all the daughters of the year shall dance!  
Sing now the \_\_\_\_\_ of fruits and flowers.  
“The \_\_\_\_\_ opens her beauties to  
The sun, and love runs in her \_\_\_\_\_;  
Blossoms hang round the brows of morning, and  
Flourish down the \_\_\_\_\_ of modest Eve,  
Till clust'ring Summer breaks forth into singing,  
And \_\_\_\_\_ strew flowers round her head.  
The spirits of the air live on the smells  
Of fruit; and joy, with \_\_\_\_\_, roves round  
The gardens, or sits singing in the trees.”  
Thus sang the \_\_\_\_\_ as he sat,  
Then rose, girded himself, and o'er the bleak  
Hills fled from our sight; but left his \_\_\_\_\_.

William Blake





## 10. Speaking Activity

- a. What scene in nature gives you pleasure?  
Talk for a minute describing a natural scene that gave you a lot of joy. What did you see, hear, smell or feel, that gave you joy?
- b. Work in groups of 4–6. Discuss how you would preserve the environment and protect Nature. One or two representatives may share their ideas with the class.

## 11. Answer the following in a paragraph of 100–150 words each:

- a. 'Nature can nurture'. Describe how this process happens.
- b. When humanity fails to live in harmony with Nature, its effects are felt around the world. Why and how?
- c. Write a letter to the Councillor of your Ward, explaining why a park is necessary in your locality.

## 12. Parallel Reading

### Summer Sun

Great is the sun, and wide he goes  
Through empty heaven without repose;  
And in the blue and glowing days  
More thick than rain he showers his rays.

Though closer still the blinds we pull  
To keep the shady parlour cool,  
Yet he will find a chink or two  
To slip his golden fingers through.

The dusty attic spider-clad,  
He, through the keyhole, maketh glad;  
And through the broken edge of tiles,  
Into the laddered hay-loft smiles.

Meantime his golden face around  
He bares to all the garden ground,  
And sheds a warm and glittering look  
Among the ivy's inmost nook.

Above the hills, along the blue,  
Round the bright air with footing true,  
To please the child, to paint the rose,  
The gardener of the World, he goes.

**Robert Louis Stevenson**





## Warm Up

Given below is a list of tools and equipment. Associate them with the appropriate profession and complete the table.

plough, hammer, oven, thermometer, voltmeter, wood, chisel, seed drill, voltage, detector, cutting boards, stone picker, spatula, cultivator, nail puller, wire strippers, framing square, fork, flashlight

| Farmer | Carpenter | Electrician | Chef |
|--------|-----------|-------------|------|
| plough | hammer    |             |      |
|        |           |             |      |
|        |           |             |      |
|        |           |             |      |

Play the role of any character, read aloud to enjoy this amusing play, where the unexpected turn of events along with wild imagination add humour to the situation in a dentist's clinic.



## Characters

- Men: 1–8
- Women: 1–8
- Dentist
- Nurse
- Little Girl
- Small Boy

**Scene:** When the curtain rises the following characters are seated in a dentist's waiting room: Women 1–8 and Men 1–8. Some of them are reading magazines or newspapers. Man 4 has a rough bandage tied round his jaw. He is holding the bandage and **groaning**. Man 3, Woman 5 and Woman 6 are just entering the waiting-room.

**Woman 5:**

We'll have some time to wait before the dentist sees us, dear.



Woman 6: So I see.

Woman 5:

But I'll show you some of my holiday photographs to pass the time.

*(Man 3, Woman 5, and Woman 6 sit. Woman 5 takes a packet of photographs from her handbag. Throughout the play she concentrates on showing her photographs.)*

Man 5:

What time do you make it, Jack?

Man 6:

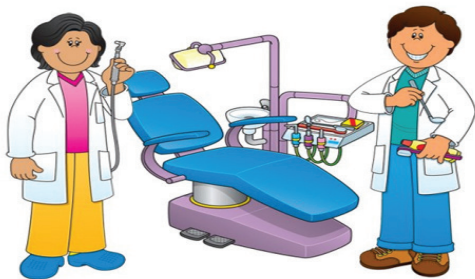
Almost eight-thirty. The dentist should be along any moment now.

Woman 6:

Isn't it a **dreadful** hour of the morning to see a Dentist! I'm not half awake yet.

Man 5:

I hope he won't be long. I'm going to be late for work anyway.



Man 6:

Something should be done about dental hours. I've always said so and I'll go on saying so.

*(Enter Nurse.)*

Woman 6:

Good, the dentist shouldn't be long now.

Woman 5:

And this is one of the boarding houses at Waddling-on-sea. Our boarding house. Those are the steps I fell up. We nearly died laughing.

Woman 6:

It looks quite a nice place.

Woman 5:

Oh, it was, it was. And the landlady was a dear.

*(Woman 5 shows another photograph.)*

This is one of hers. You can't quite see her face.

You see, my finger got in the way, but she has such a nice face.

Woman 6: I'm sure she has.

*(Enter Woman 7 and the Little Girl.)*

Woman 7:

Oh, do come along, Dorothea.

Little Girl:

I don't want to see the dentist. I won't! I won't!

Woman 7:

Now, Dorothea, remember what your daddy said. If you won't have your teeth seen to, no more **ice-lollies**.

Little Girl:

I don't want any ice-lollies.

*(The Little Girl is dragged to her seat by Woman 7. She sits weeping. Man 4 groans loudly.)*

Woman 4: Here's the dentist.

Woman 3: And about time, too.



*(Enter Dentist.)*

**Dentist:**

Could I have the first patient, please?

*(Exit Dentist into surgery.)*

**Woman 1:** That's you, Joe.

*(Man 1 and Woman 1 stand.)*

**Man 1:** Yes, that's me.

**Woman 1:**

Now, make sure he pulls out the right one, Joe.

**Man 1:** I will.

**Woman 1:**

Good-bye, Joe, I'll wait for you.

*(Exit Man 1 into surgery. Woman 1 sits.)*

**Woman 2:**

I believe the Dentist is ever so good.

**Woman 3:**

Yes, he took out six for Mrs. Johnstone, and she never felt a thing.

*(Enter Woman 8 with the Small Boy.)*

**Woman 8:**

Now Maurice, there's nothing to be afraid of.

**Small Boy:** I'm not afraid.



**Woman 8**

Just a little pull, and ever such a **weeny tug**, and all the pain will be gone.

**Small Boy:**

There is no need to treat me like a baby. I'm not afraid of a dentist.

**Woman 8:**

Now sit down quietly, Maurice, and I'm sure the nice dentist won't be long.

**Small Boy:**

I think I'll get a magazine, I feel like reading.

*(The small boy goes to the table and looks through the pile of magazines and newspapers.)*

**Woman 8:**

All right, dear, just as you like.

*(Woman 8 sits.)*

**Man 5:**

I'm going to ask for **gas**. I'll never forget the last time.

**Man 1:**

I knew a chap once. He asked for gas. It was the last time he ever asked for anything.

**Man 2:** Is that a fact?

*(Enter Nurse from the surgery. She walks across the stage and exits left.)*

**Man 4:**

I shouldn't ask for gas, or any of these drugs either. It's unnatural I say. Give me the old-fashioned methods.

**Man 5:**

You can have them. I'll have it without the pain.



Woman 5:

And you'll love this one, dear.

Woman 6: I'm sure I will.

Woman 5:

It's one of me riding a donkey along the sands.

Woman 6: Oh, I say!

Woman 5:

Isn't it a **scream**, dear? I sat on it the wrong way round, just for the laugh.

*(Enter Nurse left, ferrying a large hammer. She crosses the stage and goes into the surgery.)*

Man 6:

Was that a hammer she was carrying?

Man 7:

I've seen dentists use some **queer** tools.

Man 6:

Well, if it wasn't a hammer, I should be attending an eye specialist and not a dentist.

Woman 5:

I hope he isn't going to use it.

Man 3:

It's a peculiar thing to have in a surgery.

*(The sound of hammering is heard from the surgery. Everyone looks at the surgery door and then at one another.)*

Woman 1:

Oh! Joe! My poor Joe! Oh, what will I do?  
(Standing)

Woman 2:

I shouldn't worry. The dentist probably knows what he's doing.

Woman 1:

Yes, but does Joe? Surely he's not hammering on poor Joe's tooth.

Woman 2:

Now, sit down and don't excite yourself. I'm sure Joe is quite all right.

*(Woman 1 sits. There is more hammering from the surgery. Woman 1 is about to stand but Woman 2 restrains her.)*

Woman 2:

There, there, dear, do sit down quietly.

Man 5: I don't like the sound of that.

Man 4:

I shouldn't worry. These dentists know what they're doing. I hope.

*(Nurse enters from the surgery and walks across the stage and out left. Everyone watches her in silence.)*

Woman 7:

She didn't look very worried, anyway.

Woman 8: No, it's the patient who worries.

Woman 7:

I say let him worry. Worry is natural. It never did anyone any harm.

Woman 1:

I wish you wouldn't talk like that, with my poor Joe in there, may be **writhing** in agony.

*(Enter Nurse left. She is carrying a large pair of pliers. She walks across the stage and into the surgery. Man 4 groans and everyone groans after him. Woman 1 watches in horror. She stands as the Nurse exits into the surgery.)*





Woman 1: No, no, it can't be true! They can't do this to Joe. Not to my Joe.

*(Woman 2 forces Woman 1 back into her seat.)*

Woman 2:  
There, there, don't upset yourself, dear. There's nothing to worry about.

*(Woman 1 starts weeping and sobbing.)*

Man 3: A bit big, wasn't it?

Man 4:  
Nothing to what they used in the old days. I heard of a chap once the roots of whose teeth were wrapped round his jaw-bone. He was five hours in the chair.

Man 3:  
None the worse for it, I'll bet.

*(There is a sudden screech of metal from the surgery. Woman 1 gasps with horror and is about to make a dash for the surgery door when she is dragged back by Woman 2. Man 4 groans loudly. The Small Boy and the Little Girl at the table start a fight about a magazine they both want. Woman 8 and Woman 7 attempt to separate them. Through all this noise Woman 5 is still trying to show her photographs.)*

Little Girl: It's mine! It's mine!

Small Boy:  
No, it's mine! I saw it first.

Woman 7:  
Sit down, Dorothea. Sit down and be quiet. I'll tell your daddy about this. Then there'll be trouble. Really, it's the last time I'll bring you anywhere.

Little Girl: See if I care.

Woman 6:  
I wish some people would keep their children under control.

Woman 7: Well, really!

*(At last the little girl and the small boy settle into their seats. They are both sulking.)*

Man 2:  
There should be a special waiting-room for children.

*(The metallic screech is heard again from the surgery. Fresh sobs from Woman 1.)*



Woman 1:  
I can't stand it. Oh, Joe! Joe! Joe!

*(Man 4 groans.)*

Small Boy:  
What was that noise, Mummy?

Woman 8:  
Don't ask awkward questions, Maurice.

Man 7:  
I'll tell you, little boy. That noise was a man having a tooth out. That's how it's going to sound when you have yours out, only much, much louder, because then it'll be inside your head.



Woman 6:

What a thing to tell a small boy!

Man 6: Disgusting!

Man 7: It'll do the lad good. Bring 'em up natural, I always say.

Small Boy:

Oh, Mummy, Mummy, take me to school! Quick, take me to school!

Woman 8:

Take you to school? What on earth do you mean?

Small Boy:

I haven't got toothache at all. I was only joking. I just wanted to get off school. Take me to school. Mummy, please.

*(Everyone laughs.)*

Woman 8:

I'll take you to school all right (*Woman 8 takes the Small Boy by the ear. She drags him out.*) and I'll get the headmaster to give you a good thrashing.

*(Exit Woman 8 and the Small Boy. The Small Boy is yelling.)*

Man 5:

A little discipline, that's what he wants.

*(Woman 5 is still showing her photographs.)*

Woman 5:

This one should make quite an impression on you, dear.

*(There is a loud hammering from the surgery.)*

Woman 6: Yes, it does.

*(Enter Nurse from the surgery.)*

Dentist's Voice *(off)*:

Do hurry, Nurse or we'll never get this thing shift.

*(Nurse walks across the stage and off left.)*



Man 6:

Well, really, I don't think I can wait.

*(Standing)*

Man 5:

Neither can I. I'll be very late for work.

*(Standing)*

*(Exit Man 5 and Man 6.)*

Woman 6:

But surely, they can't really be using those tools to take out a tooth.

Woman 4:

You heard what the Man said.

Woman 6:

And those men have gone, too.

Man 7:

Cowards, every one of them. They can't take it.

Little Girl:

Mummy, I was only joking about my toothache, too. I haven't really got one. I was only trying to get off school.



Woman 7:

Nonsense, Dorothea, you know your tooth is as black as the kitchen range. You're only trying to get out of it.

*(The Little Girl breaks into a howl.)*

Man 2:

I can't stand howling children. I'm off.  
*(Standing)*

Man 3:

And I can't stand them either. I'm coming with you.

*(Standing)*

*(Exit Man 2 and Man 3.)*

Woman 7:

Now, see what you've done, Dorothea, you've chased those men away.

Little Girl: They're lucky.

*(The Little Girl howls again. The Nurse enters, this time with a hacksaw.)*

Woman 1:

Oh, Joe! Joe! He'll never stand it. The sound of sawing always did put his teeth on edge.

Man 7:

This time the saw will be on the edge of his teeth.

Woman 2: Oh, you horrible Man!

Man 7: Can't I even make a joke?

Man 8: We need something to cheer us up.

Woman 4:

Surely it's against the law for a dentist to use a saw like that.

*(The sound of violent sawing is heard from the surgery. Man 4 groans loudly.)*

Woman 1: Oh no, Joe! No, Joe!

*(Woman 1 makes a dash for the door but is prevented from opening it by Woman 2 and Woman 6.)*

Woman 3:

You really must control yourself.

Woman 2:

There, there, dear. I'm sure it's not as bad as it sounds.

*(They place Woman 1 back in her seat.)*

Woman 1:

I'm not waiting to find out. I've heard enough.

Woman 3:

I prefer to keep my toothache.

Woman 4:

So do I. Me too. Those pliers would never fit my mouth, anyway. It's better than being murdered, anyway.

*(Standing)*

*(Exit Woman 3, Woman 4 and Woman 6.)*

Man 7:

Just watch them go, cowards every one of them.

Woman 2:

It's all very well you talking this way. You don't seem to have any nerves at all.

Man 7:

This is nothing to some of the things I've heard of. I could tell you things that would make your hair stand on end. There was once...

Woman 2:

I'm sure we don't want to hear it. My hair is standing on end already.

*(The sawing is heard again, even louder and harsher this time. Woman 1 wails and Man 4 groans.)*



Woman 5:

Don't you want to see any more of my holiday photos?

*(Exit Man 8.)*

Well, really, how rude!

*(Woman 5 moves to Woman 7.)*

Would you like to see some of my holiday photos?

Woman 7:

Well, I don't really...

Woman 5:

Now, now, don't be shy. Now, this one is a bit **blurred**, but down in the corner you can see my sister-in-law's little boy.

*(Woman 7 takes the offered photograph reluctantly and looks at it vacantly. The surgery door opens and the Dentist enters. He looks very hot and bothered. He stands in the doorway.)*

Dentist:

I'm fed up with this. I'm off to get someone who knows something about the job.

*(The Dentist strides across the stage and exits left. For a moment Woman 2, Man 4, and Woman 5 sit gaping. Then Woman 1 wails, as Woman 2, Woman 7 and the Little Girl stand and make for the door left.)*

Man 7: This is the end. I'm off.

*(There are cries of "Me too", "So am I", "Here I go", etc., and all except Woman 1 and Woman 5 go out in a hurry.)*

Woman 5:

Well, really, people are very rude.

*(Woman 5 looks at the wailing Woman 1.)*

Whatever is the matter, my dear?

Woman 1:

It's Joe! Poor Joe! Goodness knows what state he's in now.

Woman 5:

Joe? Who's Joe? And what's the matter with him?

Woman 1:

I'm afraid to go in. I'm afraid to look. Joe's my husband and that awful dentist has been working on him. He's in there.

*(Woman 1 points to the surgery.)*

Woman 5:

Well, I don't suppose he has come to any harm.

*(Woman 5 sits beside Woman 1.)*

I tell you what, dear, you need cheering up. Here, you just have a look at my holiday photos. They're ever so cheerful.

*(Woman 1 breaks into fresh sobs.)*

Woman 5:

Oh, dear me! Where's that very amusing one?

*(Woman 5 looks through her photographs.)*

I must have lost it. Ah, yes! It'll probably be over there.

*(Woman 5 walks across to her previous position and starts looking for the lost photograph. Woman 1 continues sobbing. Enter Man 1 from the surgery.)*

Man 1:

Why, whatever is the matter, Emily?

Woman 1:

Joe, Joe, are you all right? Let me look at you, Joe!



Man 1:

Of course I'm all right. Why shouldn't I be all right?

Woman 1:

But, Joe, all that hammering and sawing.

Man 1:

Oh, that! That was only the dentist trying to force open his instrument cabinet.

Woman 1: His cabinet?

Man 1: Yes, you see he lost the key.

Woman 1:

So he hasn't done anything to you, Joe!

Man 1:

Not a thing, and I can't wait any longer this morning. I've made an appointment with him for this evening instead. The nurse gave me some pills to deaden the pain in the meantime.

Woman 1: Oh, Joe, I was so upset.

Man 1 :

Well, it's all right now, Emily, so let's go.

*(Woman 1 and Man 1 go out left. A moment later the Nurse enters from the surgery. She is walking across the stage when the Dentist enters left. The Dentist is waving a key.)*

Dentist:

I found it. Believe it or not, but it was under the telephone directory. What an awful waste of time!

Nurse:

I'm afraid the first patient couldn't wait. However, he made an appointment for this evening.

Dentist:

Fair enough. I'll take the next patient.

*(Dentist goes into the surgery. Nurse turns to Woman 5 who is still looking at her photographs.)*

Nurse :

Now, madam, the dentist is ready.

*(Woman 5 looks up.)*

Woman 5: Do you mean me, Miss?

Nurse:

Yes, would you step into the surgery, please?

*(Nurse goes into the surgery.)*

Woman 5:

Dear me, that long queue did move quickly, didn't it?

*(Woman 5 follows the Nurse into the surgery.)* CURTAIN

#### About the Author

**Christopher Victor Burgess**

is known as C.V Burgess. He is a humorous playwright. His situational humour intensifies the emotions of the characters in the play. His plays usually accommodate a number of characters. His famous works are 'Short Plays for Large Classes', 'Teach yourself Speech Training' and 'Classroom Playhouse Verse in Action'.





## Glossary

|                    |   |
|--------------------|---|
| <b>groaning</b>    | – crying in pain                        |
| <b>dreadful</b>    | – extremely bad                         |
| <b>ice-lollies</b> | – flavoured ice or ice cream on a stick |
| <b>weeny tug</b>   | – small pull                            |
| <b>gas</b>         | – anesthesia                            |
| <b>scream</b>      | – a very funny thing                    |
| <b>ferrying</b>    | – carrying                              |
| <b>queer</b>       | – strange                               |
| <b>writhing</b>    | – twisting the body from side to side   |
| <b>agony</b>       | – severe pain                           |
| <b>sulking</b>     | – being sad and silent                  |
| <b>blurred</b>     | – hazy, not clear                       |

1. Complete the summary of the play, choosing the appropriate words from the list given below the passage.

A number of patients wait at the (1) \_\_\_\_\_ of a dentist's clinic. Everybody is tensed at the thought of a painful (2) \_\_\_\_\_ being extracted. One of the women is bent on showing everyone her (3) \_\_\_\_\_. After the arrival of the dentist, Joe, the first (4) \_\_\_\_\_ is called in. Sometime later, the nurse comes out and goes in with a (5) \_\_\_\_\_. Everyone is (6) \_\_\_\_\_ at this, imagining Joe being subjected to a lot of hammering

in the process of his tooth being pulled out. Once again the nurse comes out to fetch a large pair of (7) \_\_\_\_\_ and later on she takes in a (8) \_\_\_\_\_. A little boy confesses that he pretended to have (9) \_\_\_\_\_, because he did not wish to go to school. The loud (10) \_\_\_\_\_ and screeching from within the room makes everyone leave the (11) \_\_\_\_\_, one by one. Finally there are only two women in the waiting room, one of them being Joe's wife. She weeps (12) \_\_\_\_\_ about her husband. But Joe comes out and explains that he had shifted his (13) \_\_\_\_\_ to the evening and had been given some pills for the pain. After they leave, the dentist comes out and locates the key of his tool (14) \_\_\_\_\_. He had been trying to open it using the hammer, the pliers and the hacksaw only in vain. The woman with the photographs is surprised to see that the (15) \_\_\_\_\_ had moved quickly and she was the next patient to go in.

|                    |                     |
|--------------------|---------------------|
| <b>hammer</b>      | <b>patient</b>      |
| <b>hacksaw</b>     | <b>cabinet</b>      |
| <b>frightened</b>  | <b>queue</b>        |
| <b>worried</b>     | <b>waiting room</b> |
| <b>pliers</b>      | <b>tooth</b>        |
| <b>photographs</b> | <b>clinic</b>       |
| <b>toothache</b>   | <b>sawing</b>       |
| <b>appointment</b> |                     |



2. Based on your understanding of the play, complete the Graphic Organiser (GO) suitably.

**Settings:**

**Characters:**

**Title:**

**Author:**

**Climax:**

**Humorous elements:**

3. Based on your understanding of the play, answer the following questions in about three or four sentences each.

- a) Who were the patients waiting for?
- b) How did Woman 5 spend her time in the waiting hall?
- c) How did the other Women react to Woman 5?
- d) Are children afraid of visiting the dentist? Give reasons.
- e) What were the strange instruments the nurse carried to the surgery? How did the waiting patients interpret her act?

- f) Bring out the people's reaction to the noises from the surgery.
- g) Why did they sympathize with the first patient?
- h) Why did Woman 1 panic more than the others?
- i) Woman 5 was not aware of what was happening. Why?
- j) How did Woman 5 move ahead in the waiting list of patients?
- k) Why do patients leave the clinic without meeting the dentist?
- l) What had really happened in the dentist's room?



## Vocabulary

4. The play starts with the following dialogue.

**Woman 5:** We'll have some time to wait before the *dentist* sees us, dear.

Here, the italicized word *dentist* refers to a person whose job is treating people's dental problems. Often the words ending with the suffix 'ist' denote a person who practises, is an expert in, or holds certain principles.

Now, read the descriptions given under Column A and match them with their correct (-ist words) describing specialists in the various fields of medicine given under column B.

| No. | A   | B                  |
|-----|---|--------------------|
| 1   | one who specializes in lung problems                        | gynaecologist      |
| 2   | one who specializes in skin problems                        | gastroenterologist |
| 3   | one who treats diseases specific to women                   | dermatologist      |
| 4   | one who treats kidney diseases                              | neurologist        |
| 5   | one who treats diseases and disorders of the nervous system | pulmonologist      |
| 6   | one who treats stomach disorders                            | cardiologist       |
| 7   | one who treats vision problems                              | nephrologist       |
| 8   | one who specializes in critical infants                     | otolaryngologist   |
| 9   | one who treats heart problems                               | ophthalmologist    |
| 10  | one who treats the problems of ear, nose, tongue            | neonatologist      |



-logy is a suffix used in the names of science or bodies of knowledge, e.g. ecology. The suffix -logy is most frequently found preceded by the connective vowel 'o' so that many words end in -ology. e.g. Technology, Pathology. Interestingly, Cynology is the study of dog training; Ichthyology is the study of fish; Ornithology is the study of birds and Oology is the study of birds' eggs.



## Listening

Read the following statements. Now, listen to the talk on the importance of humour and laughter for good physical and mental health. You may listen to the text again if required, to help you choose the correct option.

i) Humour has the power to motivate and \_\_\_\_\_ stress and pain.

- |            |              |
|------------|--------------|
| a) improve | b) intensify |
| c) reduce  | d) increase  |

ii) It seems generally \_\_\_\_\_ that our bodies respond in a positive way to a hearty laugh.

- |             |             |
|-------------|-------------|
| a) accepted | b) denied   |
| c) improved | d) confused |

iii) The \_\_\_\_\_ is stocked with books, comics, funny posters, audiotapes, and videos.

- |                 |                |
|-----------------|----------------|
| a) waiting room | b) humour room |
| c) ICU          | d) reception   |

iv) One can plan to use humour yet rely on \_\_\_\_\_ opportunities to employ it.

- |           |                |
|-----------|----------------|
| a) late   | b) better      |
| c) future | d) spontaneous |

v) Humour is called a way of \_\_\_\_\_, not a part of living.

- |               |               |
|---------------|---------------|
| a) living     | b) playing    |
| c) nourishing | d) developing |



## Speaking

Complete the following dialogue between a doctor and a patient with ten sets of utterances for the following situation in which a person goes to a doctor for treatment. The doctor wishes to give him/her an injection. The person is scared. The doctor convinces the patient and administers the injection. Now, in pairs, enact the dialogue in the classroom.

5. Answer the following questions in a paragraph of about 80–100 words each.

i) Based on your understanding of the play, explain how a mistaken understanding of events can lead to confusion. How has the author used this unexpected combination of events in the situation to create humour?

ii) Have you ever found yourself in such a situation? Discuss in groups and act out such a situation.