



Prose



INTRODUCTION TO PROSE: NON-FICTION & FICTION

According to 'The History of Reading' by Alberto Manguel '*... books were a marvelous escape. We can hear our compadres outside, playing baseball and laughing and running. And yet, as we read, at the back of our minds, we're thinking that they may be out there, having a great and noisy time, but I'm here in my room, by myself, reading, and that's a much better thing, because someday I'll start writing books too, and they'll be sorry that they ignored me, laughed at me, paid no attention to me.*' He also suggests, *giving books as meals, food-for-thought, writers cooking up a story, rehashing a text, having half-baked ideas for a plot, spicing up a scene or garnishing the bare-bones of an argument...a slice of life peppered with allusions into which readers can sink their teeth....'*

There are several studies that have highlighted the many benefits of reading and reading volume. It should be quite obvious that the more students read, the more they know. Research has even found that reading volume has a direct influence on human cognitive functions. Therefore, reading directly affects a students' intellectual development. Reading is an active skill which involves inferencing, guessing, predicting etc. It also has, more often than not, a communicative function. We rarely answer questions after reading a text except in a language class, but we do write answers to letters, follow directions, choose restaurants and holidays, solve problems and compare the information to our previous knowledge or the knowledge of others.

Literature educates the whole person. By examining values in literary texts, teachers encourage students to develop attitudes towards them. These values and attitudes relate to the world outside the classroom, and therefore, hold a high status in many cultures and countries. For this reason, students can feel a real sense of achievement at understanding a piece of highly respected literature.

Texts have been drawn from the students' areas of interest and which they can relate to intellectually and emotionally at ages 17+ to 18+, such as: friendship, heroism, sacrifice, filial love, loss, freedom, respect, empathy, social responsibility etc. They are authentic, require intensive reading, tend to be highly motivating, provide good vocabulary coverage and additionally, integrate naturally with the development of speaking and writing skills.

A familiarity with effective reading strategies can help the teacher look for effective reading behaviours in students and encourage wider use of these strategies. An effective reader is one

who can select the correct strategy for the purpose and text. Studies have shown that the most effective readers:

- discover the distinctive features in letters, words and meaning
- try to identify meaning rather than letters or words
- use their knowledge of the world
- eliminate unlikely alternatives through inference and prediction
- have a clearly defined purpose
- locate topic sentences
- distinguish main points from subordinate ones, and fact from opinion
- are aware of cohesion and reference
- are aware of explicit and implied relationships between sentences and paragraphs
- are aware of the importance of argument, tone and function
- are able to work out the meaning of unfamiliar vocabulary from context
- have confidence in their own ability and take chances

There are many good reasons for using literature in the classroom. Literature is authentic material. It is good to expose learners to this source of unmodified language in the classroom because the skills they acquire in dealing with difficult or unknown language can be used outside the class. Literary texts are often rich in multiple layers of meaning, and can be effectively exploited for discussions and sharing feelings or opinions. Directing learners *to examine sophisticated or non-standard examples of language which can occur in literary texts makes them more aware of the norms of language use* (Widdowson, 1975 quoted by Lazar 1993).

The literature class following the Functional English curriculum has three phases:

Warm up:

- ✓ introducing and stimulating interest in the theme of the prose/ fiction
- ✓ motivating students by providing a reason for reading
- ✓ providing language preparation for the prose/ fiction

This sets students thinking about the theme of the text. This could take several forms: a short discussion that students do in pairs, a whole class discussion, a guessing game between the

teacher and the class or a brainstorming of vocabulary around the theme. Students may look at the source of the literature and share what they already know about the author or the times he/she was writing in. Students may be given some brief background information to read, and discuss in what way that piece of literature is well-known, maybe, it is often quoted in modern films by speakers or unifiers.

Stage two:

- ✓ clarifying content and vocabulary of the text/s
- ✓ helping students understand the writer's purpose
- ✓ helping students understand the structure of the prose/fiction

Often it is a good idea for students to listen to the reading aloud of the prose/fiction, so that, they can get more of a "feel" for the text. With very evocative pieces of literature or poetry, this can be quite powerful. Then students read it to themselves. It is important to let students approach a piece of literature the first time without giving them any specific task other than to simply read it. One of the aims of teaching literature is to evoke interest and pleasure from the language. If students have to do a task at every stage of a literature lesson, the pleasure can be lost. When the students have read it once, they answer a set of comprehension questions or explain the significance of certain key words of the text. Another way of checking comprehension is to ask students to explain to each other (in pairs) what they have understood. This could be followed up by more subjective questions from the teacher (e.g. *Why do you think 'A' said this? How do you think the man/woman/girl/boy feels? What made him/her act that way?*)

Stage three:

- ✓ consolidating and reflect upon prose/fiction the that has been read
- ✓ relating the text to the students' own knowledge, interests or views
- ✓ providing a stimulus for further language activities such as speaking and writing

At this stage the teachers may focus on the more difficult words in the text. Encourage students to find as many of the unfamiliar words they can. Give them clues. The teacher could also look at certain elements of style that the author has used, and distinguish from and understand the non-standard forms of language to understand the standard. If appropriate to the text, the connotation of words which the author has chosen may be also examined.

Novels:

Literary novels offer a great range of choice and flexibility. They are authentic, often require less preparation and can be used effectively with extensive reading exercises. Two novels have been selected to encourage effective reading through careful selection. Some difficulty with new vocabulary in the novels would not be an obstacle to its comprehension. Learners would already be trained to infer meaning of difficult words from context through the tasks set for reading literary texts in the Literature Reader.

Research has proposed compelling reasons for students being motivated to read novels, as they are: enjoyable, authentic, help students understand another culture, are a stimulus for language acquisition, develop their interpretative abilities, expand their language awareness, motivate them to talk/write about their opinions and feelings and foster personal involvement in the language learning process.

A note: The novels must not simply be assigned to students as is sometimes done in mainstream literature courses. The teacher may:

- use a reading schedule
- have students lead class discussions
- exploit the creative possibilities of each novel (*bring in period music, historic photographs, film versions on DVD*)
- encourage the use of a high-quality dictionary
- promote careful reading of the text
- have students keep a reading journal. Berthoff (1981) suggests having students keep a double-entry notebook. Students select a quote from the reading and write it on the left-hand page. On the opposite page they write their response to it. The response may include an explanation of what the quote says and why the student chose it.
- assignments may be given only when the students have finished reading the novel.
- enthusiasm about the novels can be enriching for both teachers and students alike.

What's Your Dream?

by Ruskin Bond

Warm up:

If you have built castles in the air, your work need not be lost, that is where they should be. Now put foundations under them.

- Henry David Thoreau

What message does Thoreau's words convey?

- What do the following expressions mean? Work with your partner and choose the best answer.

a) to gather wool

- i) to gather information
- ii) to collect wool
- iii) to be absent-minded.

b) to build castles in the air

- i) to hope for something which is unlikely to be realized
- ii) to plan for the future
- iii) to build high-rise structures.

c) utopian ideals

- i) ideals of the people of Utopia
- ii) impractical ideals
- iii) ideals that can be followed.

d) a dream come true

- i) an idea becoming a reality
- ii) something that one wanted very much, but did not expect to happen
- iii) an honest dream

A chance encounter with a person often leaves an indelible impression on us. Ruskin Bond's narrative provides an interesting episode, where an old wise beggar draws a playful youth into a conversation. Can you guess what the outcome would be?

1. An old man, a beggar man, bent double, with a flowing white beard and piercing grey eyes, stopped on the road on the other side of the garden wall and looked up at me, where I perched on the branch of a litchi tree.

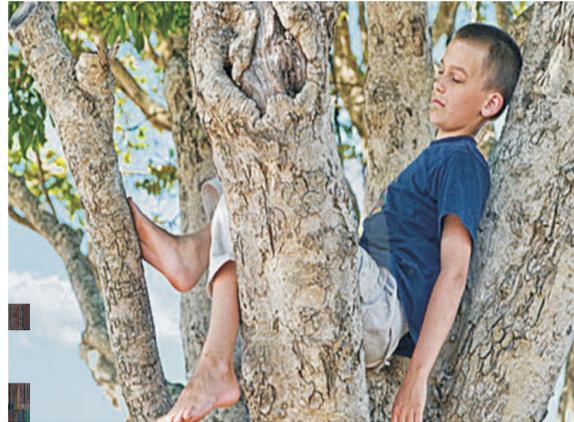
2. 'What's your dream?' he asked.

It was a startling question coming from that ragged old man on the street; even more startling that it should have been made in English. English-speaking beggars were a rarity in those days.

'What's your dream?' he repeated.

'I don't remember,' I said. 'I don't think I had a dream last night.'

'That's not what I mean. You know it isn't what I mean. I can see you're a dreamer. It's not the litchi season, but you sit on that tree all afternoon, dreaming.'



'I just like sitting here,' I said. I refused to admit that I was a dreamer. Other boys didn't dream, they had catapults.

'A dream, my boy, is what you want most in life. Isn't there something you want more than anything else?'

'Yes,' I said promptly. 'A room of my own.'

'Ah! A room of your own, a tree of your own, it's the same thing.'

'Not many people can have their own rooms you know in a land as crowded as ours. Just a small room.'

3. 'And what kind of room do you live in at present?'

'It's a big room, but I have to share it with my brothers and sisters and even my aunt when she visits.'

'I see. What you really want is freedom. Your own tree, your own room, your own small place under the sun.'

'Yes, that's all.'

'That's all? That's everything! When you have all that, you'll have found your dream.'

4. 'Tell me how to find it!'

There's no magic formula, my friend. If I was a godman, would I be wasting my time here with you? You must work for your dream, and move towards it all the time, and discard all those things that come in the way of finding it, and then, if you don't expect too much too quickly, you'll find your freedom, a room of your own. The difficult time comes afterwards.'

'Afterwards?'

Yes, because it's so easy to lose it all, to let someone take it away from you. Or you become greedy, or careless, and start taking everything for granted, and -Poof! - suddenly the dream has gone, vanished!'

5. 'How do you know all this?' I asked.

'Because I had my dream and lost it.'

'Did you lose everything?'

'Yes, just look at me now, my friend. Do I look like a king or a godman? I had everything I wanted, but then I wanted more and more. You get your room, and then you want a building, and when you have your building you want your own territory and when you have your own territory you want your kingdom and all the time it's getting harder to keep everything. And when you lose it in the end, all the kingdoms are lost-you don't even have your room anymore.'

6. 'Did you have a kingdom?'

'Something like that.,, .Follow your own dream, boy, but don't take other people's dreams, don't stand in anyone's way, don't take from another man his room or his faith or his song.'

And he turned and shuffled away, intoning the following verse, which I have never heard elsewhere, so it must have been his own:

'Live long, my friend, be wise and strong, but do not take from any man his song.'

I remained in the litchi tree, pondering over his wisdom and wondering how a man so wise could be so poor. Perhaps he became wise afterwards. Anyway, he was free, and I was free, and I went back to the house and demanded (and got) a room of my own. Freedom. I was beginning to realise, is something you have to insist upon.

Ruskin Bond was born in Kasauli, Himachal Pradesh, in 1934, and grew up in Jamnagar (Gujarat), Dehradun and Shimla. In the course of a writing career spanning thirty-five years, he has written over a hundred short stories, essays, novels and more than thirty books for children. Three collections of short stories, *The Night Train at Deoli*, *Time Stops at Shamli* and *Our Trees Still Grow in Dehra* have been published by Penguin India. He has also edited two anthologies, *The Penguin Book of Indian Ghost Stories* and *The Penguin Book of Indian Railway Stories*.

The Room on the Roof was his first novel, written when he was seventeen, and it received the John Llewellyn Rhys Memorial Prize in 1957. *Vagrant in the Valley* was also written in his teens and picks up from where *The Room on the Roof* leaves off. These two novels were published in one volume by Penguin India in 1993 as was a much-acclaimed collection of his non-fiction writing, *Rain in the Mountains*.

Ruskin Bond received the Sahitya Akademi Award for English Writing in India in 1992, for *Our Trees Still Grow in Dehra*.



1. Understanding the text

1.1 Answer the question briefly:

- What does the narrator mean by 'dream' in the story?
- There was something 'unusual' about the beggar. Explain

- c) Why did the boy want a room of his own?
- d) How, according to the beggar, can one realize one's dream?
- e) The beggar's wisdom and his present state of penury seem to be contradictory. Why?
- f) The boy in the story was out of the ordinary. How?

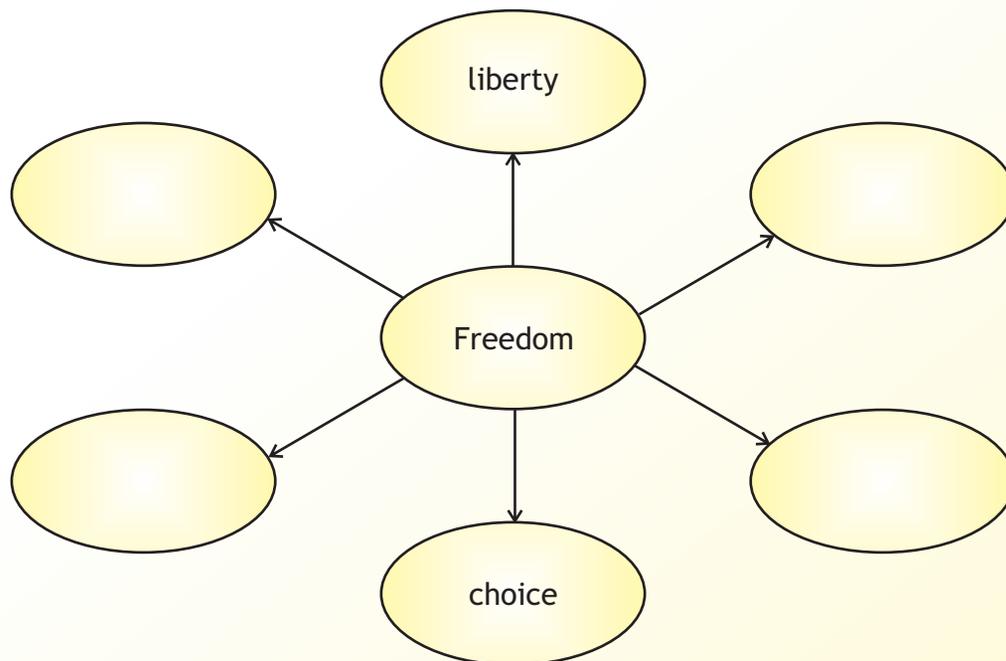
1.2 Read the extracts and answer the questions that follow:

- a) "Yes, because it's so easy to lose it all, to let someone take it away from you."
 - 1. What does the speaker refer to as 'it'?
 - 2. When does one lose 'it'?
 - 3. How had the speaker gained such profound knowledge about it?
- b) "It was a startling question coming from that ragged old man on the street"
 - 1. Where was the narrator when he was drawn into the conversation?
 - 2. Give a brief description of the old man
 - 3. Why was the narrator perplexed by the question?
- c) "It was a starting question coming from that ragged old man on the street"
 - 1. Where was the narrator when he was drawn into the conversation?
 - 2. Give a brief description of the old man.
 - 3. Why was the narrator perplexed by the question?
- d) "Other boys didn't dream, they had catapults".
 - 1. What does the narrator mean by saying that the other boys have catapults ?
 - 2. Why does the narrator refuse to admit that he is a dreamer ?
 - 3. It is advisable to be a dreamer ? Why / Why not ?
- e) "There's no magic formula, my friend.
If I was a godman would I be wasting my time here with you ?"
 - 1. What does the beggar refer to as 'magic formula'?
 - 2. Who is a godman ?
 - 3. Why does he say, 'I wouldn't be wasting my time ?'
- f) "Yes, because it's so easy to lose it all, to let someone take it away from you."
 - 1. What does the speaker refer to as 'it' ?
 - 2. When does one lose 'it'?
 - 3. How had the speaker gained such profound knowledge about 'it'?

- g) "Live long, my friend, be wise and strong
But do not take from any man his song."
1. Who sang these lines?
2. What does 'song' refer to in the second line?
- h) "I remained in the litchi tree, pondering over his wisdom and wondering how a man so wise could be so poor."
1. What surprised the narrator?
2. What were the poor man's pearls of wisdom?
- i) '..... And discard all those things that come in the way of finding it.'
1. Identify the speaker
2. What does the speaker want the narrator to discard?
3. What does 'it' in the second line refer to?
4. Use the expression 'come in the way' in a sentence of your own.

2. Vocabulary:

2.1 Complete the web with suitable synonyms to describe what having a 'room of your own means'.



2.2 Explain the following expressions.

- a) It was a startling question coming from that ragged old man...
- b) 'I refused to admit that I was a dreamer.'
- c) 'There is no magic formula, my friend.'
- d) 'Do not take away from any man, his song.'
- e) 'Taking everything for granted'
- f) 'Freedom is something you have to insist upon'
- g) 'Follow your own dream'

2.3 Identify five most important qualities essential to turn a dream into a reality. Support your view in a paragraph of about 120 words.

3. Speaking Skills:

- a) Two friends meet after 25 years at the Alumni Meet of their school. One is a Manager in a multinational firm, and the other is a Professor at the university. Imagine a conversation between the two. You may include the following:
 - Their 'dream job'
 - Nature of their chosen career
 - Rewards or regrets

4. Writing Skills:

Listen to an extract from Abdul Kalam's motivational speech and take notes for your reference. You may some of use the ideas to write your answers.

<http://www.theorchidschool.org/orchid-special/616-dr-apj-abdul-kalam-speech-at-the-orchid-school.html>

- a) Dream is not something that you get in sleep. It is something that will not allow you to sleep'. Justify Dr. Abdul Kalam's views in a paragraph of 120-150 words.
- b) Write a letter to your friend, sharing the simple tips you followed to sustain the dream you achieved. Include the beggar's advice to the boy.
- c) The boy in the story wanted a room of his own, which means freedom and space. Identify one such dream of yours and the purpose associated with it. Write a short composition on 'The Adventurous Journey' undertaken by you. (e.g. -*achieving excellence in academics, comfortable life or service to society*).
- d) Write the script for a speech on 'India of my Dreams' in about 150-200 words, to be delivered during the school assembly on Independence Day.
- e) As a part of an admission formality to a degree course in an internationally reputed university,

you are expected to write an essay about, yourself, your strengths and weaknesses, your idea of success and ways of realizing your dream in life. Use some of the ideas from Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam's speech. Write the essay on **Realizing One's Dream is no Magic**, in about 150-200 words.

5. Listening Skills:

Script: 01

Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam Speech The Science Expo on 9 Feb 2012

Creative minds lead to evolution of great sciences

Inventions and discoveries have emanated from creative minds that have been constantly working and imaging the outcome in the mind. With imaging and constant effort, all the forces of the universe work for that inspired mind, thereby leading to inventions or discoveries.

I am delighted to address and interact with Students present here. I am very happy to know that the School is celebrating the Science Week in order to expose children to scientific concepts and applications. Friends, I would like to share a few thoughts on "Creative minds lead to evolution of great sciences".

First let us see a few unique scientists, who are always remembered and celebrated by humanity for their unique contribution to society.

Unique You

Dear friends, look up, what do you see, the light, the electric bulbs. Immediately, our thoughts go to the inventor *Thomas Alva Edison*, for his unique contribution towards the invention of electric bulb and his electrical lighting system.

When you hear the sound of an aeroplane going over your house, whom do you think of? *Wright Brothers* proved that man could fly, of course at heavy risk and cost.

Whom does the telephone remind you of? Of course, *Alexander Graham Bell*.

When everybody considered a sea travel as an experience or a voyage, a unique person questioned during his sea travel from United Kingdom to India. He was pondering on why the horizon where the sky and sea meet looks blue? His research resulted in the phenomena of scattering of light. Of course, *Sir CV Raman* was awarded the Nobel Prize.

Friends, there was a great scientific lady who is known for discovering Radium. She won not one, but two Nobel Prizes, one for physics and another for chemistry. Who is she? She is *Madam Curie*. Madam Curie discovered radium and she was doing research on the effect of radiation on human system. The same radiation which she discovered, affected her and she sacrificed her life for removing the pain of human life.

Young friends, can you join such unique performers of scientific history? Yes, you can. Definitely, you can. Let us study together, how it can be made possible?

Friends, I have, so far, met 13 million youth in a decade's time. I learnt, "every youth wants to be unique, that is, YOU! But the world all around you, is doing its best, day and night, to make you just

"everybody else". At home, dear young friends, you are asked by your parents to be like neighbours' children for scoring good marks. When you go to school, your teacher says, "Why don't you become like the first five rankers in the class?". Wherever you go, they are saying "you have to be somebody else or everybody else".

The challenge, my young friends, is that you have to fight the hardest battle, which any human being can ever imagine to fight; and never stop fighting until you arrive at your destined place, that is, a UNIQUE YOU! Friends, what will be your tools to fight this battle, what are they: have a great aim in life, continuously acquire the knowledge, work hard and persevere to realize the great achievement.

What Science can give you

Dear friends, since I am with students who are shortly going to decide on what stream they should carve out for their career, I would like to share with you one question, what is the uniqueness of being a scientist? Science gives you better eyes because science can remove the mental blinkers and it gives your brain a challenge to solve many scientific problems that are yet to be solved. Science indeed will connect you the brains of many smart people who were there before you. Hence, science makes you feel good to stand on the shoulders of the giants like Issac Newton, Albert Einstein, Stephen Hawkings, Sir CV Raman, Chandrasekhar Subramanyam, and Srinivasa Ramanujam.

Science always provides challenging problems. Look at the southern sky, bright clouds lit by light. That is our galaxy, we belong to the milky way. Millions and millions of stars are there. We belong to a small star, what is that star - Sun. The Solar system has eight planets. Our planet earth has six billion people, and millions and millions of species. Can you imagine what science has revealed to all of us? Our galaxy and our sun and its characteristics have been identified. The exact location with respect of sun and galaxy has been discovered.

You take our human body. Science has revealed that the human body is made up of millions and millions of atoms. The difference between one human being and another is determined by the sequencing of the atoms.

The recent human genome programme reveals that human genome contains 23 pairs of chromosomes, which centres in the nucleus of every cell in the body. Each chromosome consists of a DNA double helix, that is wrapped around spool like proteins called histones. It is estimated that the human body has three hundred thousand to 2 million proteins. The unraveling of the genomic mystery will ultimately allow the bio-medical community to create a new evolutionary future for the human race.

Building Confidence

Dear friends, during the last few years, I have seen, how India Vision 2020 has inspired the people, particularly the youth of the nation, which has resulted in many taking up many missions directed towards Vision 2020. Now I recall a situation in 1990 beginning when I was interacting with the youth of Ahmedabad, one girl asked me a question "When can I sing a song of India?" At that time, her brother who was in the United States, was always talking about the best in the United States. This girl sitting in India was fed up about her brother's stories and in her quest to find an answer she asked me "When can I sing a song of India?" How do I answer, I have explained the Developed India Vision 2020, and advised her to have confidence and certainly she can sing a song of India by 2020. The same spirit echoed

everywhere during that time. But for the last few years, while interacting with the youth, I had seen a marked change in the thinking of the youth. They have always been asking me "What can I give to the nation?" That means youth are ready to contribute for the national development. Recently, during the last one year, I see further change, they tell me "*I can do it*", "*We can do it*" and the "*Nation will do it*". With the 600 million youth of the nation whom you represent, actively participating in the development process, I am sure that India will be transformed into a developed nation before the year 2020.

My greetings and best wishes to all the students assembled here for success in their educational mission.

May God bless you.

A Devoted Son

by Anita Desai

1. Warm up

- In a conservative society, what qualities would you associate with a son or daughter? Discuss with your partner.
- Is there a difference between what a family expects from a son and daughter? Share your ideas with the class.



2. What do these idioms mean?

a	blood is thicker than water	
b	chip of the old block	
c	at your mother's knee	
d	at death's door	
e	alive and kicking	

Read the story

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

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

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

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

To everyone who came to him to say '*Mubarak*', "Varmaji, your son has brought you glory," the father said, "Yes, and do you know what is the first thing he did when he saw the results this morning? He bowed down and touched my feet." This moved many of the women in the crowd so much that they were seen to raise the ends of their saris and dab at their tears while the men reached out for the betel-leaves and sweetmeats that were offered around on trays and shook their heads in wonder and approval of such exemplary filial behaviour. "One does not often see such behaviour in sons any more," they all agreed, a little enviously, perhaps. Leaving the house, some of the women said,

Halwa: Traditional sweet

Mubarak: Hindi for 'congratulate'

sniffing, "At least on such an occasion they might have served pure ghee sweets," and some of the men said, "Don't you think old Varma was giving himself airs? He needn't think we don't remember that he comes from the vegetable market himself, his father used to sell vegetables, and he has never seen the inside of a school." But there was more envy than rancour in their voices and it was, of course, inevitable-not every son in that shabby little colony at the edge of the city was destined to shine as Rakesh shone, and who knew that better than the parents themselves?

3. And that was only the beginning, the first step in a great, sweeping ascent to the radiant heights of fame and fortune. The thesis he wrote for his M.D. brought Rakesh still greater glory, if only in select medical circles. He won a scholarship. He went to the USA (that was what his father learnt to call it and taught the whole family to say-not America, which was what the ignorant neighbours called it, but, with a grand familiarity, "the USA") where he pursued his career in the most prestigious of all hospitals and won **encomiums** from his American colleagues which were relayed to his admiring and glowing family. What was more, he came back, he actually returned to that small yellow house in the once-new but increasingly shabby colony, right at the end of the road where the rubbish vans tipped out their stinking contents for pigs to nose in and rag-pickers to build their shacks on, all steaming and smoking just outside the neat wire fences and well tended gardens. To this, Rakesh returned and the first thing he did on entering the house was to slip out of the embraces of his sisters and brothers and bow down and touch his father's feet.
4. As for his mother, she gloated chiefly over the strange fact that he had not married in America, had not brought home a foreign wife as all her neighbours had warned her he would, for wasn't that what all Indian boys went abroad for? Instead he agreed, almost without argument, to marry a girl she had picked out for him in her own village, the daughter of a childhood friend, so old-fashioned, so placid, so complaisant that she slipped into the household and settled in like a charm, seemingly too lazy and too good-natured to even try and make Rakesh leave home and set up independently, as any other girl might have done. What was more, she was pretty-really pretty, in a plump, pudding way that only gave way to fat-after the birth of their first baby, a son, and then what did it matter?

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

5. At the time he set up his clinic his father had grown into an old man and retired from his post at the kerosene dealer's depot at which he had worked for forty years, and his mother died soon after, giving up the ghost with a sigh that sounded positively happy, for it was her own son who ministered to her in her last illness and who sat pressing her feet at the last moment-such a son as few women had borne.

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

encomium: high or glowing praise

He did this once too often: After sometime no one much cared if he sat up crosslegged on his bed or lay down flat. Except, of course, for that pearl amongst pearls, his son Rakesh.

6. It was Rakesh who brought him his morning tea, not in one of the china cups from which the rest of the family drank, but in the old man's favourite brass tumbler, and sat at the edge of his bed, comfortable and relaxed, and discussed or, rather, read out the morning news to his father. It made no difference to him that his father made no response. It was Rakesh, too, who, on returning from the clinic in the evening, persuaded the old man to come out of his room and take the evening air out in the garden, beautifully arranging the pillows and bolsters on the divan in the corner of the open verandah. Him down for a night under the stars.
7. All this was very gratifying for the old man. What was not so gratifying was that he even undertook to supervise his father's diet. One day when the father was really sick, having ordered his daughter-in-law to make him a dish of *soojie halwa* and eaten it with a saucerful of cream, Rakesh marched into the room, not with his usual respectful step but with the confident and rather contemptuous stride of the famous doctor, and declared, "No more *halwa* for you, papa. We must be sensible, at your age. If you must have something sweet, Veena will cook you a little *kheer*, that's light, just a little rice and milk. But nothing fried, nothing rich. We can't have this happening again."
8. He stared at his son with disbelief that darkened quickly to reproach. A son who actually refused his father the food he craved? But Rakesh had turned his back to him and was cleaning up the litter of bottles and packets on the medicine shelf and did not notice while Veena slipped silently out of the room with a little smirk that only the old man saw, and hated.
9. *Halwa* was only the first item to be crossed off the old man's diet. The meals that arrived for him on the shining stainless steel tray twice a day were frugal to say the least—dry bread, boiled lentils, boiled vegetables and, if there were a bit of chicken or fish, that was boiled too. If he called for another helping—in a cracked voice that quavered theatrically—Rakesh himself would come to the door, gaze at him sadly and shake his head, saying, "Now, papa, we must be careful, we can't risk another illness, you know," and although the daughter-in-law kept tactfully out of the way, the old man could just see her smirk sliding merrily through the air. He tried to bribe his grandchildren into buying him sweets (and how he missed his wife now), whispering, "Here's fifty paise," as he stuffed the coins into a tight, hot fist. "Run down to the shop at the crossroads and buy me thirty paise worth of *jalebis*, and you can spend the remaining twenty paise on yourself. Eh? Understand? Will you do that?" He got away with it once or twice but then was found out, the conspirator was scolded by his father and smacked by his mother and Rakesh came storming into the room, almost tearing his hair as he shouted through compressed lips, "Now papa, are you trying to turn my little son into a liar? Quite apart from spoiling your own stomach, you are spoiling him as well—you are encouraging him to lie to his own parents. You should have heard the lies he told his mother when she saw him bringing back those *jalebis* wrapped up in filthy newspaper. I don't allow anyone in my house to buy sweets in the bazaar, papa, surely you know that. There's cholera in the city, typhoid, gastroenteritis—I see these cases daily in the hospital, how can I allow my own family to run such risks?" The old man sighed and lay down in the corpse position. But that worried no one any longer.
10. Old Bhatia, next door, however, who was still spry enough to refuse adamantly to bathe in the tiled bathroom indoors and to insist on carrying out his brass mug and towel, in all seasons and usually at impossible hours, into the yard and bathe noisily under the garden tap, would look over the hedge to

Soojie Halwa: a sweet dish made of semolina

Jalebies: a traditional sweet

see if Varma were out on his verandah and would call to him and talk while he wrapped his *dhoti* about him and dried the sparse hair on his head, shivering with enjoyable exaggeration. Of course these conversations, bawled across the hedge by two rather deaf old men conscious of having their entire households overhearing them, were not very satisfactory but Bhatia occasionally came out of his yard, walked down the bit of road and came in at Varma's gate to collapse onto the stone plinth built under the temple tree.

"At least you have a doctor in the house to look after you," sighed Bhatia.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

"Papa, be reasonable."

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

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

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

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

atta: flour
drongo: a bird

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

"Papa, I'm home."

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

"How are you feeling, papa? I've brought you a new tonic to make you feel better. You must take it, it will make you feel stronger again. Here it is. Promise me you will take it regularly, papa."

Then he spat out some words, as sharp and bitter as poison, into his son's face. "Keep your tonic-I want none-I want none-I won't take any more of-of your medicines. None. Never," and he swept the bottle out of his son's hand with a wave of his own, suddenly grand, suddenly effective.

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

About the author:



Anita Desai was born in 1937 in Mussoorie, India. She was educated at Delhi University. She has been shortlisted three times for the Booker Prize, with *Clear Light of Day* (1980), *In Custody* (1994) and *Fasting, Feasting* (1999). She has published several novels, children's books and short stories. She is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature, the American Academy of Arts and Letters and Girton College, Cambridge. She teaches in the Writing Program at MIT. Anita Desai lives in Massachusetts.

Born to a German mother and Bengali father, Desai grew up speaking German, Hindi, and English. She received a B.A. in English from the University of Delhi in 1957. The suppression and oppression of Indian women were the subjects of her first novel, *Cry, the Peacock* (1963), and a later novel, *Where Shall We Go This Summer?* (1975). *Fire on the Mountain* (1977) was criticized as relying too heavily on imagery at the expense of plot and characterization, but it was praised for its poetic symbolism and use of sounds. *Clear Light of Day* (1980), considered the author's most successful work, is praised for its highly evocative portrait of two sisters caught in the lassitude of Indian life. Its characters are revealed not only through imagery but through gesture, dialogue, and reflection.

I. Understanding the text:

1. Answer the following briefly.

- Why were the members of the Varmaji household in a celebratory mood?
- Why was Rakesh's achievement a glorious one for his family?
- Why was his family happy about their son's return from the US?
- How did Rakesh's talents benefit his father?
- Why did Rakesh's achievements lose their shine in due time?
- Why did Varmaji bribe his grandchildren? How did Rakesh react to his behaviour?
- What was Varmaji's complaint to Bhatia?
- What events led to Varmaji's wishing to be left alone?

2. Read the given extracts and answer the questions that follow.

- 1) "Yes and do you know what is the first thing he did when he saw the results this morning? He bowed and touched my feet."
 - a) What is the 'result' referred to?
 - b) Other than his son's achievement, what else is the speaker proud of?
 - c) Identify the traditional values conveyed here.
- 2) 'Instead, he agreed, almost without argument, to marry a girl she had picked out for him in her own village.'
 - a) Rakesh lived up to his mother's expectation. How?
 - b) What had she feared?
 - c) Rakesh was a truly 'devoted' son. Why?
- 3) "This is how he treats me after I have brought him up, given him education, made him a great doctor."
 - a) Why is the speaker unhappy?
 - b) Was Rakesh a devoted son? Give instances to support your answer.
 - c) Is there a generation gap between the father and son? Give reasons.
- 4) "I won't take any more of your medicines." "No. Never" and he swept the bottle out of his son's hand.
 - a) What caused Mr. Varma to react in this manner?
 - b) Is Rakesh responsible for it? Give a reason.
 - c) Which of the options given below best describes Mr. Varma's state of mind in the given extract.
 - (i) helpless (ii) spiteful (iii) angry (iv) frustrated

3. Vocabulary:

a) Match the words with the meaning

S.No.	Word	Meaning
1.	spry	mocking
2.	filial	lofty praise
3.	encomiums	deep-seated ill will
4.	rancor	pertaining to son/daughter
5.	reproach	vigorous
6.	derisive	blame, censure

4.1 Writing Skills:

- a) The son's personality and character underwent a sea change. What were the changes in Rakesh as observed by Varma.
- b) A sense of *bonhomie* is seen among the villagers. Describe two incidents that reflect this.
- c) Though Rakesh was a well established doctor and busy running his own clinic, how does he show his filial devotion?

- d) Veena is a dutiful daughter-in-law. Do you agree/disagree? Justify.
- e) What impression do you get about Rakesh's life? Illustrate with suitable textual references.
- f) As Veena, Rakesh's wife, write a letter to your sister expressing how bad you feel that your husband's concern for his father is being misconstrued as being heartless.
- g) How does the story reflect the Indian cultural values of respect for parents, in-laws and close knit communities. Give your views in about 150-200 words
- h) Do you sympathise with Rakesh for what he gets in the end for his devotion? Justify your views in about 150-200 words.
- i) Rakesh is acting more like a doctor than a son, and that ruins the quality of his father's last days. Do you think he is justified in doing so? Express your views in about 150-200 words.

4.2 Appreciation:

- a) A *static character* in a story does not change during the development of the plot while a dynamic character does. How are Varma and Rakesh examples of these? Substantiate with examples.
- b) Do you think Varma and of Bhatia are a contrast to each other? Give reasons.
- c) Anitha Desai's writing style is embellished by the wonderful phrases that she has used to convey the character's, feelings and to make the descriptions vivid. Substantiate this observation.
- d)
 - Read the following sentences from the story focussing on the italicised phrases.
 1. 'The whole day long visitors *streamed into* the small yellow house.'
 2. 'All in a *multicoloured whirl of pride*.'
 3. 'When it is merely a *peevish whim*.'
 4. The old man could just see her *smirk sliding merrily*.'
 5. 'His authority was only *tyranny in disguise*.'
 - Now read the following situations and match the above phrases with the situations.
 - i) Anvita received a string of awards for her innovation in Science. She was flooded with congratulatory messages. She was swimming in a _____.
 - ii) The party workers came to greet their leader on his birthday. They _____ the party office from 5 am in the morning.
 - iii) Mr. Rao lost the argument to his wife. His teenaged son observed his father getting into the car sheepishly. As he got into the car he saw him _____.
 - iv) Sanjay often threw tantrums and cried for everything. His patient mother could never make out whether it was genuine or if it was _____.
 - v) Rohit was a Class 12 student studying in Delhi. As his parents worked abroad, Rohit's uncle was his local guardian. He laid down many restrictions on Rohit, out of sheer concern. Rohit felt it was _____.
 - Pick out four more expressions from the text that enhance the description of people or events, as in given the examples in '4.2.d'.
 1. _____

2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

5. Speaking Skills:

Role Play: As the village head you meet Varma who has become senile. Tell him about Rakesh's sacrifice and how he should cooperate with his son and not criticise him.

6. Values-based question:

In today's world, parents like Varma struggle a lot to educate their children. The latter, after their education, become successful professionals who leave their parents and go abroad or to the cities seeking greener pastures. Finally, the parents in their old age, are sent to old age homes where they are taken care of quite well. The basic health care is provided but they are emotionally parched. What can be done to avoid this pathetic situation?

The Hum of Insects

by Robert Lynd

Warm Up:

- Given below is a list of words. Find a suitable word to describe each word, with the unique sound associated with it. Then classify the sounds as 'natural' and those caused by human activity. Work in pairs.

Eg.: the *roaring* of waves

bee	birds	saw mill	wheels
car horn	jet engine	thunder	bell
musical notes	stream	lion	waterfall

- Given below is a list of words that describe sounds. Categorise them as positive or negative. Work in pairs.

jarring	lilting	melodious	discordant
resonant	mellifluous	cacophonic	raucous

- Onomatopoeic words are a combination of sounds that suggest what the words refer to. Hum, buzz, hiss, sizzle etc are a few examples. List at least ten words that you know.

The most common human response to insects is that of revulsion combined with fear. Is it possible that these creatures that annoy us so much can also delight us? Read this delightful essay written by Robert Lynd to know how this is possible.

- It makes all the difference whether you hear an insect in the bedroom or in the garden. In the garden the voice of the insect *soothes*; in the bedroom it irritates. In the garden it is the hum of spring; in the bedroom it seems to belong to the same school of music as the buzz of the dentist's *drill* or the saw-mill. It may be that it is not the right sort of insect that invades the bedroom. Even in the garden we wave away a mosquito. Either its note is in itself offensive or we dislike it as the voice of an unscrupulous enemy. By an unscrupulous enemy, I mean



soothes: comforts and calms

drill: a tool with a detachable pointed end for making holes

an enemy that attacks without waiting to be attacked. The mosquito is a beast of prey; it is out for blood, whether one is as gentle as *Tom Pinch* or uses violence. The bee and the wasp are, in comparison, noble creatures. They will, so it is said, never injure a human being unless a human being has injured them. The worst of it is they do not discriminate between one human being and another, and the bee that floats over the wall into our garden may turn out to have been exasperated by the behaviour of a retired policeman five miles away who struck at it with a spade and roused in it a blind passion for *reprisals*. That or something like it is, probably, the explanation of the stings perfectly innocent persons receive from an insect that is said never to touch you if you leave it alone. As a matter of fact, when a bee loses its head, it does not even wait for a human being in order to relieve its feelings, I have seen a dog racing round a field in terror as a result of a sting from an angry bee. I have seen a turkey racing round a farmyard in terror as a result of the same thing. All the trouble arose from a human being's having very properly removed a large quantity of honey from a row of hives. I do not admit that the bee would have been justified in stinging even the human being-who, after all, is master on this partially civilised planet. Yet in spite of such things, and of the fact that some breeds of bees are notorious for their crossness, especially when there is thunder in the air, the bee is morally far higher in the scale than the mosquito. Not only does it give you honey instead of malaria, and help your apples and strawberries to multiply, but it aims at living a quiet, inoffensive life, at peace with everybody, except when it is annoyed. The mosquito does what it does in cold blood. That is why it is so unwelcome a bedroom visitor.

2. But even a bee or a wasp, I fancy, would seem *tedious* company at two in the morning, especially if it came and buzzed near the pillow. It is not so much that you would be frightened: if the wasp alighted on your cheek, you could always lie still and hold your breath till it had finished trying to sting-that is an **infallible** preventive. But there is a limit to the amount of your night's rest that you are willing to sacrifice in this way. You cannot hold your breath while you are asleep, and yet you dare not cease holding your breath while a wasp is walking over your face. Besides, it might crawl into your ear, and what would you do then? Luckily, the question does not often arise in practice owing to the fact that the wasp and the bee are more like human beings than mosquitoes and have more or less the same habits of nocturnal rest. As we sit in the garden, however, the mind is bound to *speculate*, and to revolve such questions as whether this hum of insects that delights us is in itself delightful, whether its delightfulness depends on its surroundings, or whether it depends on its associations with past springs.
3. Certainly, in a garden, the noise of insects seems as essentially beautiful a thing as the noise of birds or the noise of the sea. Even these have been criticised, especially by persons who suffer from sleeplessness, but their beauty is *affirmed* by the general voice of mankind. These three noises appear to have an infinite capacity for giving us pleasure-a capacity, probably, beyond that of any music of instruments. It may be that, on hearing them, we become a part of some universal music, and that the rhythm of wave, bird and insect echoes in some way the rhythm of our own breath and blood. Man is in love with life and these are the millionfold chorus of life-the magnified echo of his



Tom Pinch: a lovable character in Charles Dickens' novel *Martin Chuzzlewit*
reprisals: retaliation
tedious: boring
infallible: certain to succeed
speculate: wonder
affirmed: asserted

own pleasure in being alive. At the same time, our pleasure in the hum of insects is also, I think, a pleasure of *reminiscence*. It reminds us of other springs and summers in other gardens. It reminds us of the infinite peace of childhood when, on a fine day, the world hardly existed beyond the garden-gate. We can smell moss-roses-how we loved them as children!-as a bee swings by. Insect after insect dances through the air, each dying away like a note of music, and we see again the border of *pinks* and the strawberries, and the garden paths edged with *box* and the old dilapidated wooden seat under the tree, and an apple-tree, and all those things that made us infinitely happy as children when we were in the country-happier than we were ever made by toys, for we do not remember any toys so intensely as we remember the garden and the farm. We had the illusion in those days that it was going to last for ever. There was no past or future. There was nothing real except the present in which we lived, a present in which all the human beings were kind. in which a dim-sighted grandfather sang songs (especially a song in which the chorus began "Free and easy"), in which aunts brought us animal biscuits out of town, in which there was neither man-servant nor maid-servant, neither ox nor ass, that did not seem to go about with a bright face.



4. It would be unfair to human beings, however, to suggest that they are less lavish with their smiles than they were thirty years or so ago. Everybody-or almost everybody-still smiles. We cannot open an illustrated paper without seeing smiling statesmen, cricketers, jockeys, oarsmen, bridegrooms, clergymen, actresses and undergraduates. Yet somehow we are no longer made happy by a smile. We no longer take it, as we used to take it, as evidence that the person smiling is either happy or kind. It then seemed to come from the heart. It now seems a formula. It is, we may admit, a pleasant and useful formula.
5. To children, for all we know, the world may still seem to be full of people who laugh because they are happy and smile because they are kind. The world will always remain to a child the chief of toys, and the hum of insects as enchanting as the hum of a musical top. Even those of us who are grown up can recover this *enchantment*, not only through the pleasures of memory but through the endless pleasures of watching the things that inhabit the earth. It is probably the child in us that responds most wholeheartedly to such pleasures. They, like the hum of insects, help to restore the illusion of a world that is perfectly happy because it is such a *Noah's Ark* of a spectacle and everybody is kind. But, even as we submit to the illusion in the garden, we become restive in our deck-chairs and remember the telephone or the daily paper or a letter that has to be written. And reality weighs on us, like a hand laid on a top, making an end of the spinning, making an end of the music. The world is no longer a toy dancing round and round. It is a problem, a *run-down* machine, a stuffy room full of little stabbing creatures that make an irritating noise.

reminiscence: thinking about past experiences, especially pleasant ones

pinks: garden flowers

box: an evergreen shrub often used to border garden-walks

enchantment: feeling of great delight

Noah's Ark: a large ship built by Noah to save his family and others from the flood

run-down: not in good working condition

Robery Lynd was born in Belfast and educated at Royal Belfast Academical Institution, studying at Queen's University. His background was Protestant, his father being a Presbyterian Church Moderator.

He began as a journalist on "The Northern Whig" in Belfast. He moved to London in 1901, via Manchester, sharing accommodation with his friend the artist Paul Henry. Firstly he wrote drama criticism, for "Today", edited by Jerome K. Jerome. He also wrote for the "Daily News" (later the News Chronicle), being its literary editor 1912 to 1947.

He settled in Hampstead, in Keats Grove near the John Keats house. The Lynds were well known as literary hosts, in the group including J. B. Priestley. They were on good terms also with Hugh Walpole; Priestley, Walpole and Sylvia Lynd were founding committee members of the Book Society.



I. Understanding the text:

1. Answer the questions briefly:

- a) Insects can annoy us as much as they delight. How does the writer explain this contrast?
- b) Why does the author refer to the mosquito as a 'beast of prey'?
- c) To what does the author compare the humming of insects in the bedroom? Why?
- d) Why are some called the 'noble insects'?
- e) Who are the victims of the angry bee?
- f) How does the author justify the statement that the bee is 'morally higher in the scale than the mosquito'?
- g) What is the best way to avoid a wasp sting?
- h) What are the other sounds that bring delight?
- i) How does the author express the joy of listening to natural melodies?
- j) What reminiscences does the hum of insects bring to the author?
- k) Why does he observe that 'a smile now seems a formula'?

2. Read the extracts and answer the questions that follow:

- a) 'Either its note is in itself offensive or we dislike it as the voice of an unscrupulous enemy.'
(Para 1)
 - i) Identify 'it' in the line.
 - ii) Why is 'it' referred to as an 'unscrupulous enemy'?
 - iii) Give the opposite of 'offensive'.
- b) 'I do not admit that the bee would have been justified in stinging even the human being - who after all, is master of this partially civilized planet.'
(Para 1)
 - i) Who is 'the human being' mentioned here?
 - ii) Explain the reference to a 'partially civilized planet'?
 - iii) Why does he describe it as 'partially civilized'?

- c) 'Luckily, the question does not often arise in practice owing to the fact that the wasp and bee have more or less the same habits of nocturnal rest.' (Para 2)
- What is the question?
 - Why does the author use 'luckily' in this context?
 - Give the meaning of 'nocturnal'.
- d) '... and these are the millionfold chorus of life-the magnified echo of his own pleasure in being alive.' (Para 3)
- What does the author refer to as the 'millionfold chorus of life'?
 - What do the sounds in nature echo?
 - Give the adjectival form of 'chorus'.
- e) 'We had the illusion in those days that it was going to last for ever' (Para 3)
- Identify 'we'. What does 'those days' mean?
 - What illusion did they nurse?
 - Why does he call it an 'illusion'?
- f) 'The world will always remain to a child the chief toy, and the hum of insects as enhancing as the hum of a musical top' (Para 4)
- Why is the world the chief toy to a child?
 - What enchants the child as much as the hum of a musical top?
 - Give another word for 'enchancing'.
- g) 'It is a problem, a run - down machine, a stuffy room, full of little stabbing creatures that make an irritating noise.' (Para 5)
- What has turned into a stuffy room now? Why?
 - Explain 'stabbing'.
 - Explain: 'a run-down machine'.

II. Vocabulary:

1. Match the words in column A with their meaning in column B.

A	B
unscrupulous	falling to pieces
notorious	impressive sight
infallible	well-known for a bad deed
spectacle	incapable of making mistakes
dilapidated	without principles

2. Use Prefixes to form opposites. A prefix is placed at the beginning of a word.

'ir', 'il', 'im', 'in', 'un', 'dis' are the prefixes used to change the meaning of the root word to its opposite.

Add a suitable prefix to each of the words given below.

Discreet, legal, continue, regular, equal, usual, advantage, mobile, correct, pleasant, logical, relevant

III. Appreciation:

a) Given below are the features that make the essay humorous:

- i) the theme
 - ii) the choice of words used to describe the insects
 - iii) the style of narration - the exalting the status of insects and exaggerating their powers of both sound and performance
- With your partner, pick out words and phrases from the text as examples of features (ii) and (iii)
 - Based on the above, write a paragraph of 150-200 words on the use of humour with reference to "The Hum of Insects"

IV. Writing Skills:

- a) '.... for we do not remember any toys so intensely as we remember the garden and the farm'. Do you share the opinion of the author regarding your childhood? Write a paragraph of 120 - 150 words on **The Sweet Reminiscences of My Childhood** for your school magazine.
- b) Read paragraph 2 again. The author vividly describes the strategies he adopts to avoid a wasp bite. Write a letter to your friend about how you cleverly escaped from being attacked / bitten by an animal / insect. Describe an imaginary incident in about 150-200 words.
- c) Suppose that insects can understand human language. Write a humorous notice in about 40-50 words to be put up in the garden / living / dining room for the benefit of fellow insects.

V. Conversation Skills:

- a) i) Have you ever been enchanted by music? Share your experience with your partner.
ii) Organise your thoughts to deliver a two-minute speech on the theme '**The Magic of Music**'.
- b) Towards the end of the essay, the tone of the author changes. How does it change and why? Discuss in groups of four. The group secretary will share the group's thoughts with the class.

The Judgement of Paris

by Leonard Merrick

Warm Up:

Find out what these words mean: farce, parody, satire, spoof. Share with the class.

When two professional comedians fall in love with the same lady the situation is more than comic. Who should the lady choose? How should the talent of each, so similar to each other's, be tested, and by whom? To win the lady's hand one must outwit the other. And one does, who is the lucky one?

Now, read the story.

1. In the summer of the memorable year -, but the date doesn't matter, Robichon and Quinquart both paid court to mademoiselle Brouette. Mademoiselle Brouette was a captivating actress, Robichon and Quinquart were the most comic of comedians, and all three were members of the Théâtre Suprême.

Robichon was such an idol of the public's that they used to laugh before he uttered the first word of his rôle; and Quinquart was so vastly popular that his silence threw the audience into convulsions.

Professional rivalry apart, the two were good friends, although they were suitors for the same lady, and this was doubtless due to the fact that the lady favoured the robust Robichon no more than she favoured the skinny Quinquart. She flirted with them equally, she approved them equally and at last, when each of them had plagued her beyond endurance, she promised in a pet that she would marry the one that was the better actor.

Not a player on the stage, not a critic on the Press could quite make up his mind which the better actor was. Only Suzanne Brouette could have said anything so tantalising.

"But how shall we decide the point, Suzanne?" stammered Robichon helplessly. "Whose pronouncement will you accept?"

"How can the question be settled?" queried Quinquart, dismayed. "Who shall be the judge?"

The Judgement of Paris was a mythological contest among Aphrodite, Hera and Athena for the prize of a golden apple addressed to "the fairest". They laid claim to the apple. Zeus was asked to mediate and he commanded Hermes to lead the three to Paris of Troy to decide the issue. The three appearing before the shepherd prince, each offering him gifts for favour. Paris chose Aphrodite, swayed by her promise to bestow upon him Helene, the most beautiful woman, for wife.

"Paris shall be the judge," affirmed Suzanne. "We are the servants of the public. I will take the public's word!"

Of course she was as pretty as a picture, or she couldn't have done these things.

2. Then poor Quinquart withdrew, plunged in *reverie*. So did Robichon. Quinquart reflected that she had been talking through her expensive hat. Robichon was of the same opinion. The public lauded them both, was no less generous to one than to the other. To wait for the judgment of Paris appeared equivalent to postponing the matter *sine die*. No way out presented itself to Quinquart. None occurred to Robichon.

They sat on the terrace of their favourite café a day or two before the annual vacation, "Let us discuss this amicably", said Robichon. "Have a cigarette! You are an actor, therefore you consider yourself more talented than I. I, too, am an actor, therefore I regard you as less gifted than myself. So much for our artistic standpoints! But we are also men of the world, and it must be obvious to both of us that we might go on being funny until we reached our death-beds without demonstrating the supremacy of either. Our only hope lies in *versatility* the conqueror must distinguish himself in a solemn part!" He viewed the other with complacency, for the quaint Quinquart had been designed for a *droll* by Nature.

"Right!" said Quinquart. He contemplated his colleague with satisfaction, for it was impossible to fancy the fat Robichon in a tragedy.

"I perceive only one drawback to the plan," continued Robichon, "the Management will never consent to accord us a chance. Is it not always so in the theatre? One succeeds in a certain line of business and one must be resigned to play that line as long as one lives. If my earliest success had been scored as a villain of melodrama, it would be believed that I was competent to enact nothing but villains of melodrama; it happened that I made a hit as a comedian, wherefore nobody will credit that I am capable of anything but being comic."

"Same here!" concurred Quinquart. "Well, then, what do you propose?"

Robichon mused. "Since we shall not be allowed to do ourselves justice on the stage, we must find an opportunity off it!"

"A private performance? Good! Yet, if it is a private performance, how is Paris to be the judge?"

"Ah," murmured Robichon, "that is certainly a stumbling-block."

3. They sipped their *apéritifs* moodily. Many heads were turned towards the little table where they sat. "There are Quinquart and Robichon, how amusing they always are!" said passers-by, little guessing the anxiety in the laughter-makers' hearts.

"What's to be done?" sighed Quinquart at last.

Robichon shrugged his fat shoulders, with a frown.

Both were too absorbed to notice that, after a glance of recognition, one of the pedestrians had paused, and was still regarding them irresolutely. He was a tall, burly man, clad in rusty black and next moment, as if finding courage, he stepped forward and spoke:

reverie: deep thought

sine die: indefinitely

versatility: interest in and cleverness in many different things

droll: odd and amusing

apéritifs: beverages taken before a meal

"Gentlemen, I ask pardon for the liberty I take - impulse urges me to seek your professional advice! I am in a position to pay a moderate fee. Will you permit me to explain myself?"

"Monsieur," returned Robichon, "we are in deep consideration of our latest parts. We shall be pleased to give you our attention at some other time."

"Alas!" persisted the newcomer, "with me time presses. I, too, am considering my latest part and it will be the only speaking part I have ever played, though I have been 'appearing' for twenty years."

"What? You have been a super for twenty years?" said Quinquart, with a grimace.

"No, monsieur," replied the stranger grimly. "I have been the public executioner; and I am going to lecture on the horrors of the post I have resigned."

The two comedians stared at him aghast. Across the sunlit terrace seemed to have fallen the black shadow of the *guillotine*.

"I am Jacques Roux," the man went on, "I am 'trying it on the dog' at Appeville-sous-Bois next week, and I have what you gentlemen call 'stage fright' - I, who never knew what nervousness meant before! Is it not queer? As often as I rehearse walking on to the platform, I feel myself to be all arms and legs-I don't know what to do with them. Formerly, I scarcely remembered my arms and legs; but, of course, my attention used to be engaged by the other fellow's head. Well, it struck me that you might consent to give me a few hints in *deportment*. Probably one lesson would suffice."

4. "Sit down," said Robichon. "Why did you abandon your official position?"

"Because I awakened to the truth," Roux answered. "I no longer agree with capital punishment: it is a crime that should be abolished."

"The scruples of conscience, eh?"

"That is it."

"Fine!" said Robichon. "What dramatic lines such a lecture might contain! And of what is it to consist?"

"It is to consist of the history of my life-my youth, my poverty, my experiences as Executioner, and my remorse."

"Magnificent!" said Robichon. "The spectres of your victims pursue you even to the platform. Your voice fails you, your eyes start from your head in terror. You gasp for mercy- and imagination splashes your outstretched hands with *gore*. The audience thrill, women swoon, strong men are breathless with emotion." Suddenly he smote the table with his big fist, and little Quinquart nearly fell off his chair, for he divined the inspiration of his rival. "Listen!" cried Robichon, "are you known at Appeville-sous-Bois?"

"My name is known, yes."

"Bah! I mean are you known personally, have you acquaintances there?"

"Oh, no. But why?"

"There will be nobody to recognize you?"

guillotine: machine used in France in the eighteenth century for beheading criminals
deportment: behaviour, way of carrying oneself
gore: blood

"It is very unlikely in such a place."

"What do you estimate that your profits will amount to?"

"It is only a small hall, and the prices are very cheap. Perhaps two hundred and fifty francs."

"And you are nervous, you would like to postpone your *début*?"

"I should not be sorry, I admit. But, again, why?"

"I will tell you why-I offer you five hundred francs to let me take your place!"

"Monsieur!"

"Is it a bargain?"

"I do not understand!"

"I have a whim to figure in a solemn part. You can explain the next day that you missed your train-that you were ill, there are a dozen explanations that can be made; you will not be supposed to know that I personated you-the responsibility for that is mine. What do you say?"

"It is worth double the money," demurred the man.

"Not a bit of it! All the press will shout the story of my practical joke-Paris will be astounded that I, Robichon, lectured as Jacques Roux and curdled an audience's blood. Millions will speak of your intended lecture tour who otherwise would never have heard of it. I am giving you the grandest advertisement, and paying you for it, besides. Is it agreed?"

"Agreed, monsieur!" said Roux.

Oh, the *trepidation* of Quinquart! Who could eclipse Robichon if his performance of the part equalled his conception of it? At the theatre that evening Quinquart followed Suzanne about the wings pathetically. He was garbed like a buffoon, but he felt like Romeo. The throng that applauded his *capers* were far from suspecting the romantic longings under his magenta wig. For the first time in his life he was thankful that the author hadn't given him more to do.

And, oh, the excitement of Robichon! He was to put his powers to a tremendous test, and if he made the effect that he anticipated, he had no fear of Quinquart's going one better. Suzanne, to whom he whispered his project proudly, announced an intention of being present to "see the fun." Quinquart also promised to be there. Robichon sat up all night preparing his lecture.

If you wish to know whether Suzanne rejoiced at the prospect of his winning her, history is not definite on the point; but some chroniclers assert that at this period she made more than usual of Quinquart, who had developed a hump as big as the Panthéon.

And they all went to Appeville-sous-Bois.

.....

Though no one in the town was likely to know the features of the Executioner, it was to be remembered that people there might know the actor's, and Robichon had made up to resemble Roux as closely as possible. Arriving at the humble hall, he was greeted by the lessee, heard that a "good house" was expected, and smoked a cigarette in the retiring-room while the audience assembled.

trepidation: alarmed / excited state of mind
capers: jumping or acting foolishly

At eight o'clock the lessee reappeared.

"All is ready, monsieur Roux," he said.

Robichon rose.

He saw Suzanne and Quinquart in the third row, and was tempted to wink at them.

5. "Ladies and gentlemen-"

All eyes were riveted on him as he began; even the voice of the "Executioner" exercised a morbid fascination over the crowd. The men nudged their neighbours appreciatively, and women gazed at him, half horrified, half charmed.

The opening of his address was quiet enough-there was even a humorous element in it, as he narrated imaginary experiences of his boyhood. People tittered, and then glanced at one another with an apologetic air, as if shocked at such a monster's daring to amuse them. Suzanne whispered to Quinquart: "Too cheerful; he hasn't struck the right note." Quinquart whispered back gloomily: "Wait; he may be playing for the contrast!"

And Quinquart's assumption was correct. Gradually the cheerfulness faded from the speaker's voice, the humorous incidents were past. Gruesome, hideous, grew the anecdotes, The hall shivered. Necks were craned, and white faces twitched suspensively. He dwelt on the agonies of the condemned, he recited crimes in detail, he mirrored the last moments before the blade fell. He shrieked his remorse, his *lacerating* remorse. "I am a murderer," he sobbed; and in the hall one might have heard a pin drop.

There was no applause when he finished-that set the seal on his success; he bowed and withdrew amid tense silence. Still none moved in the hall, until, with a rush, the representatives of the Press sped forth to proclaim Jacques Roux an unparalleled sensation.

The triumph of Robichon! How generous were the congratulations of Quinquart, and how sweet the admiring tributes of Suzanne! And there was another compliment to come-nothing less than a card from the Marquis de Thevenin, requesting an interview at his home.

"Ah!" exclaimed Robichon, enraptured, "an invitation from a noble! That proves the effect I made, eh?"

"Who may he be?" inquired Quinquart. "I never heard of the Marquis de Thevenin!"

"It is immaterial whether you have heard of him," replied Robichon. "He is a marquis, and he desires to converse with me! It is an honour that one must appreciate. I shall assuredly go."

And, being a bit of a snob, he sought a *fiacre* in high feather.

The drive was short, and when the cab stopped he was distinctly taken aback to perceive the unpretentious aspect of the nobleman's abode. It was, indeed, nothing better than a lodging. A peasant admitted him, and the room to which he was ushered boasted no warmer hospitality than a



lacerating: tearing flesh
fiacre: carriage

couple of candles and a decanter of wine. However, the sconces were massive silver. Monsieur le marquis, he was informed, had been suddenly compelled to summon his physician, and begged that monsieur Roux would allow him a few minutes' grace.

Robichon ardently admired the candlesticks, but began to think he might have supped more cozily with Suzanne.

6. It was a long time before the door opened.

The Marquis de Thevenin was old-so old that he seemed to be falling to pieces as he tottered forward. His skin was yellow and shrivelled, his mouth sunken, his hair sparse and grey; and from this weird face peered strange eyes-the eyes of a fanatic.

"Monsieur, I owe you many apologies for my delay," he wheezed. "My unaccustomed exertion this evening fatigued me, and on my return from the hall I found it necessary to see my doctor. Your lecture was wonderful, monsieur Roux-most interesting and instructive; I shall never forget it."

Robichon bowed his acknowledgments.

"Sit down, monsieur Roux, do not stand! Let me offer you some wine. I am forbidden to touch it myself. I am a poor host, but my age must be my excuse."

"To be the guest of monsieur le Marquis," murmured Robichon, "is a privilege, an honour, which-er-"

"Ah," sighed the Marquis. "I shall very soon be in the Republic where all men are really equals and the only masters are the worms. My reason for requesting you to come was to speak of your unfortunate experiences-of a certain unfortunate experience in particular. You referred in your lecture to the execution of one called 'Victor Lesueur.' He died game, eh?"

"As plucky a soul as I ever dispatched!" said Robichon, savouring the burgundy.

"Ah! Not a tremor? He strode to the guillotine like a man?"

"Like a hero!" said Robichon, who knew nothing about him.

"That was fine," said the Marquis; "that was as it should be! You have never known a prisoner to die more bravely?" There was a note of pride in his voice that was unmistakable.

"I shall always recall his courage with respect," declared Robichon, mystified.

"Did you respect it at the time?"

"Pardon, Monsieur le Marquis?"

"I inquire if you respected it at the time; did you spare him all needless suffering?"

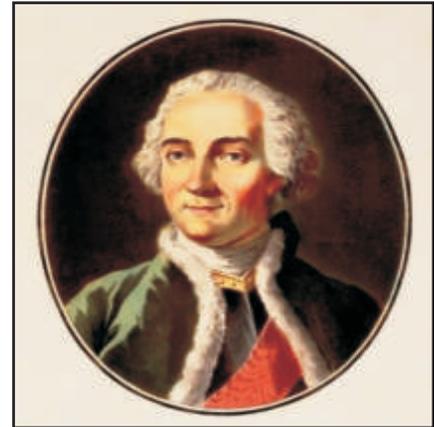
"There is no suffering," said Robichon. "So swift is the knife"

The host made a gesture of impatience. "I refer to mental suffering. Cannot you realise the emotions of an innocent man condemned to a shameful death!"

"Innocent! As for that, they all say that they are innocent."

"I do not doubt it. Victor, however, spoke the truth. I know it. He was my son."

"Your son?" faltered Robichon, aghast.



"My only son-the only soul I loved on earth. Yes; he was innocent, monsieur Roux. And it was you who butchered him-he died by your hands."

"I-I was but the instrument of the law," stammered Robichon. "I was not responsible for his fate, myself."

"You have given a masterly lecture, Monsieur Roux," said the Marquis musingly; "I find myself in agreement with that you said in it-you are his murderer,' I hope the wine is to your taste, Monsieur Roux? Do not spare it!"

"The wine?" gasped the actor. He started to his feet, trembling-he understood.

"It is poisoned," said the old man calmly, "In an hour you will be dead."

"Great Heavens!" moaned Robichon. Already he was conscious of a strange sensation-his blood was chilled, his limbs were weighted, there were shadows before his eyes.

"Ah, I have no fear of you!" continued the other; "I am feeble, I could not defend myself; but your violence would avail you nothing. Fight, or faint, as you please-you are doomed."

For some seconds they stared at each other dumbly-the actor paralysed by terror, the host wearing the smile of a lunatic. And then the "lunatic" slowly peeled court-plaster from his teeth, and removed features, and lifted a wig.

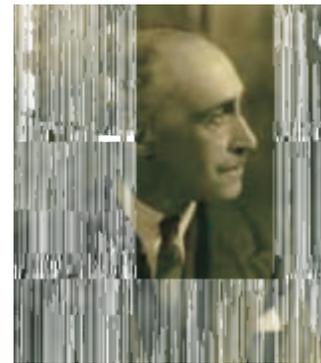
And when the whole story was published, a delighted Paris awarded the palm to Quinquart without a dissenting voice, for while Robichon had duped an audience, Quinquart had duped Robichon himself.

Robichon bought the silver candlesticks, which had been hired for the occasion, and he presented them to Quinquart and Suzanne on their wedding-day.

About the Author

Leonard Merrick was an English novelist. Born Leonard Miller, he worked as an actor and actor-manager under the stage name of Leonard Merrick. He was widely admired by his peers, J.M. Barrie calling him the 'novelist's novelist'.

He was born as Leonard Miller in Belsize Park, London. After schooling at Brighton College, he studied to be a solicitor in Brighton and studied law at Heidelberg, but he was forced to travel to South Africa at the age of eighteen after his father suffered a serious financial loss. There he worked as an overseer in the Kimberley diamond mine and in a solicitors office. After surviving a near-fatal case of "camp fever," he returned to London in the late 1880s and worked as an actor and actor-manager under the stage name of Leonard Merrick.



Merrick was well regarded by other writers of his era. In 1918 fifteen writers, including famous authors such as H. G. Wells, J. M. Barrie, G. K. Chesterton and William Dean Howells, collaborated with publisher, E. P. Dutton, to issue *The Works of Leonard Merrick* in fifteen volumes, which were published between 1918 and 1922. At least eleven of Merrick's stories have been adapted to screen, most in the 1920s, including *Conrad in Quest of His Youth* (1920) directed by William C. de Mille. Merrick died at the age of 75, in a London nursing home on 7 August 1939, just 12 days before the start of World War II.

I. Understanding the text:

1. Answer the following questions briefly:

- a) Who are Robichon, Quinquart and Suzanne and for whom did they work?
- b) Both Robichon and Quinquart loved Brouette equally. How did Suzanne react to this situation?
- c) Why did the public Executioner approach the comedians at the café?
- d) What was the nature of his work?
- e) Robichon decides to help himself by helping Jaques Roux. How?
- f) Why did the public Executioner agree to give his role to Robichon?
- g) Why was there no applause in the hall, at the end of Robichon's performance?
- h) What is the main theme of Robichon's speech?
- i) Why did Robichon accept the Marquis' invitation?
- j) At what point does it become clear that the nobleman's hospitality was a trap?
- k) Which is the most dramatic moment in the whole story? Give reasons.
- l) Who won Suzanne Brouette's hand at the end. How did he achieve this?

2. Read the following extracts and answer the questions that follow:

- a) "Paris shall be the judge," affirmed Suzanne. "We are the servants of the public. I will take the public's word!" Why does Suzanne say that Paris shall be the judge? What will the Parisians decide?
- b) "... The conqueror must distinguish himself in a solemn part." Why did the two actors decide to perform on a solemn role?
- c) "Monsieur," returned Robichon, "We are in deep consideration of our latest parts. We shall be pleased to give you our attention at some other time." To what 'part' is Robichon referring?
- d) "I feel myself to be all arms and legs. I don't know what to do with them." Explain the public Executioner's state of mind.
- e) "Listen!" cried Robichon, "are you known at Appeville-sous-Bois?" What is the significance of this question put to Roux?
- f) "Who may he be?" inquired Quinquart. "I never heard of the Marquis de Thevenin!" Why does Quinquart inquire about the Marquis de Thevenin?
- g) "... a delighted Paris awarded the palm to Quinquart without a dissenting voice ..." Why did Paris award the 'palm' to Quinquart?

II. Vocabulary:

1. Match the words in column A with their meanings in column B

Column A	Column B
versatility	first performance
irresolutely	laugh quietly

scruples	ability to do different things
spectred	unable to take decisions
debut	doubt about the rightness of an action
trepidation	ghost
suspensively	state of uncertainty
tittered	state of anxiety about something bad that might happen

2. Study the examples of idioms

- 1) Jacques Roux felt *all arms and legs*.
- 2) Suzanne talked through *her expensive hat*.

The idioms mean

1. nervous
2. impractical

Complete the statements with suitable idioms from the box:

nose in the air	pull the wool over	without batting an eye-lid	hit the headlines
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- a) The audience at Appeville-sous-Bois listened to Robichon
- b) Quinquart as the Marquis was able to his friend's eyes.
- c) Suzanne was beautiful but quite arrogant. She had her
- d) Robichon delivered a a terrific speech and

III. Writing skills:

- a) Robichon and Quinquart both loved Suzanne. Of the two, who do you think really deserved to win Suzanne Brouette? Why?
- b) What do you think about the condition stipulated by Suzanne in choosing her life partner?
- c) As Jacques Roux, write a letter to Robichon thanking him for helping you become a successful motivational speaker now. Also console him on his losing the challenge.
- d) As Robichon, narrate how you felt to be outwitted by Quinquart.
- e) As Suzanne Brouette, narrate how you felt when you had to settle for Quinquart in order to honour your word.
- f) Suggest a few criteria to be kept in mind while choosing a life partner. Discuss this based on Suzanne's attitude towards her suitors.

IV. Appreciation:

- a) Attempt an anlysis of Suzanne Brouette's character.
- b) Contrast Robichon's and Quinquart's personality.

- c) What are your impressions of Jacques Roux? Give suitable references from the story.
- d) The story is replete with humour. Bring out at least three humorous instances in the story.

V. Speaking Skills:

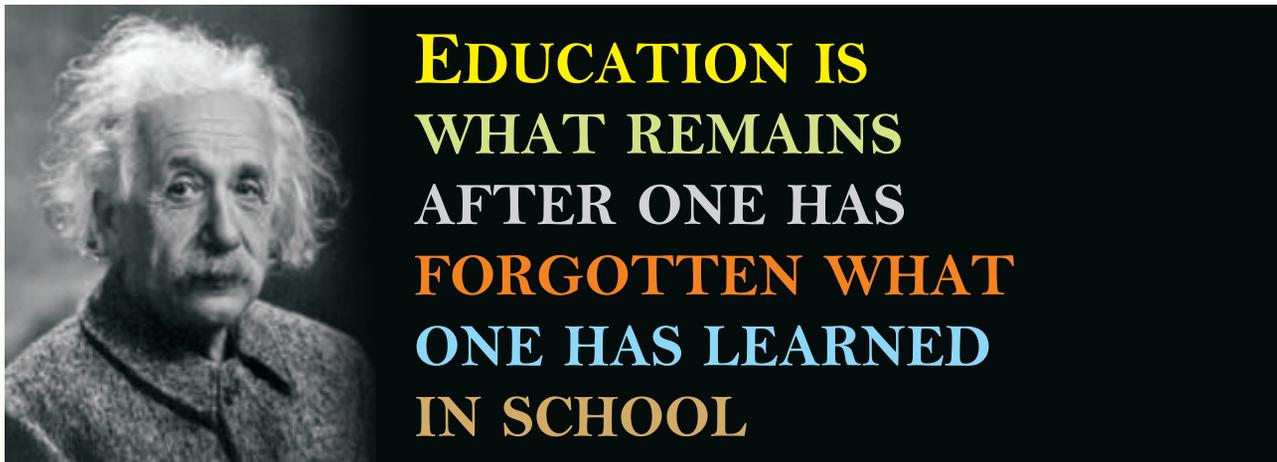
In most of the countries in the world, the capital punishment has been abolished. In India, there have been crimes for which capital punishment has been awarded. Discuss in groups of four whether capital punishment should be abolished. Reach a consensus and a representative presents your group's views to the class.

On Education

by Albert Einstein

Warm up:

- Working individually, write down what you like about school life.
- Give a few suggestions for making education more enjoyable and fruitful.



Read an excerpt from a famous address made by the great scientist, Albert Einstein, at Albany, New York on October 15, 1936 on the three-hundredth anniversary of higher education in America.

1. A day of celebration generally is in the first place dedicated to *retrospect*, especially to the memory of personages who have gained special distinction for the development of the cultural life. This friendly service for our predecessors must indeed not be neglected, particularly as such a memory of the best of the past is proper to stimulate the well-disposed of today to a courageous effort. But this should be done by someone who, from his youth, has been connected with this State and is familiar with its past, not by one who like a gypsy has wandered about and gathered his experiences in all kinds of countries.
2. Thus, there is nothing else left for me but to speak about such questions as, independently of space and time, always have been and will be connected with educational matters. In this attempt I cannot lay any claim to being an authority, especially as intelligent and well-meaning men of all times have dealt with educational problems and have certainly repeatedly expressed their views clearly about these matters. From what source shall I, as a partial layman in the realm of *pedagogy*, derive courage to expound opinions with no foundations except personal experience and personal conviction? If it were really a scientific matter, one would probably be tempted to silence by such considerations.
3. However, with the affairs of active human beings it is different. Here, knowledge of truth alone does not suffice; on the contrary this knowledge must continually be renewed by ceaseless effort, if it is not to be lost. It resembles a statue of marble which stands in the desert and is continuously threatened with burial by the shifting sand. The hands of service must ever be at work, in order that

retrospect: thinking back to the past from the present

pedagogy: the study of teaching practices

the marble continue lastingly to shine in the sun. To these serving hands mine also shall belong.

The school has always been the most important means of transferring the wealth of tradition from one generation to the next. This applies today in an even higher degree than in former times, for through modern development of the economic life, the family as a bearer of tradition and education has been weakened. The continuance and health of human society is therefore in a still higher degree dependent on the school than formerly.

4. Sometimes one sees in the school simply the instrument for transferring a certain maximum quantity of knowledge to the growing generation. But that is not right. Knowledge is dead; the school, however, serves the living. It should develop in the young individuals those qualities and capabilities which are of value for the welfare of the Commonwealth. But that does not mean that individuality should be destroyed and the individual become a mere tool of the community, like a bee or an ant. A community of standardized individuals without personal originality and personal aims will result in a poor community with no scope for development. On the contrary, the aim must be the training of independently acting and thinking individuals, who, however, see in the service of the community their highest life problem.
5. But how shall one try to attain this ideal? Should one perhaps try to realize this aim by moralizing? Not at all. Words are and remain an empty sound, and the road to *perdition* has ever been accompanied by lip service to an ideal. But personalities are not formed by what is heard and said, but by labour and activity.
6. The most important method of education accordingly always has consisted of that in which the pupil was urged to actual performance. This applies as well to the first attempts at writing of the primary boy as to the doctor's *thesis* on graduation from the university, or as to the mere memorizing of a poem, the writing of a composition, the interpretation and translation of a text, the solving of a mathematical problem or the practice of physical sport.
7. But behind every achievement exists the motivation which is at the foundation of it and which in turn is strengthened and nourished by the accomplishment of the undertaking. Here there are the greatest differences and they are of greatest importance to the educational value of the school. The same work may owe its origin to fear and compulsion, ambitious desire for authority and distinction, or loving interest in the object and a desire for truth and understanding, and thus to that divine curiosity which every healthy child possesses, but which so often is weakened early. The educational influence which is exercised upon the pupil by the accomplishment of one and the same work may be widely different, depending upon whether fear of hurt, egoistic passion, or desire for pleasure and satisfaction is at the bottom of this work. And nobody will maintain that the administration of the school and the attitude of the teachers do not have an influence upon the molding of the psychological foundation for pupils.

Give into the power of the teacher the fewest possible *coercive* measures, so that the only source of the pupil's respect for the teacher is the human and intellectual qualities of the latter.

8. The second-named motive, ambition or, in milder terms, the aiming at recognition and consideration, lies firmly fixed in human nature. With absence of mental stimulus of this kind, human cooperation would be entirely impossible; the desire for the approval of one's fellow-man certainly is one of the

perdition: complete destruction

thesis: a long piece of writing based on original work written for a university degree

coercive: using force

important binding powers of society. In this complex feelings, constructive and destructive forces lie closely together. Desire for approval and recognition is a healthy motive; but the desire to be acknowledged as better, stronger, or more intelligent than a fellow being or fellow scholar easily leads to an excessively, egoistic psychological adjustment, which may become injurious for the individual and for the community. Therefore the school and the teacher must guard against employing the easy method of creating individual ambition, in order to induce the pupils to diligent work.

9. Darwin's theory of the struggle for existence and the selectivity connected with it has by many people been cited as authorization of the encouragement of the spirit of competition. Some people also in such a way have tried to prove *pseudo-scientifically* the necessity of the destructive economic struggle of competition between individuals. But this is wrong, because man owes his strength in the struggle for existence to the fact that he is a socially living animal. As little as a battle between single ants of an ant hill is essential for survival, just so little is the case with the individual members of a human community.
10. Therefore one should guard against preaching to the young man success in the customary sense as the aim of life. For a successful man is he who receives a great deal from his fellow-men, usually incomparably more than corresponds to his service to them. The value of a man, however, should be seen in what he gives and not in what he able to receive.
11. The most important motive for work in the school and in life is the pleasure in work, pleasure in its result, and the knowledge of the value of the result to the community. In the awakening and strengthening of these psychological forces in the young man, I see the most important task given by the school. Such a psychological foundation alone leads to a joyous desire for the highest possessions of men, knowledge and artist-like workmanship.
12. The awakening of these productive psychological powers is certainly less easy than the practice of force or the awakening of individual ambition but is the more valuable for it. The point is to develop the childlike inclination for play and the childlike desire for recognition and guide the child over to important fields for society; it is that education which in the main is founded upon the desire for successful activity and acknowledgement. If the school succeeds in working successfully from such points of view, it will be highly honoured by the rising generation and the tasks given by the school will be submitted to as a sort of gift. I have known children who preferred school-time to vacation.
13. Such a school demands from the teacher that he be a kind of artist in his province. What can be done that this spirit be gained in the school? For this there is just as little a universal remedy as there is for an individual to remain well. But there are certain necessary conditions which can be met. First, teachers should grow up in such schools. Second the teacher should be given extensive liberty in the selection of the material to be taught and the methods of teaching employed by him. For it is true also of him that pleasure in the shaping of his work is killed by force and exterior pressure.
14. If you have followed attentively my meditations up to this point, you will probably wonder about one thing. I have spoken fully about in what spirit, according to my opinion, youth should be instructed. But I have said nothing yet about the choice of subjects for instruction, nor about the method of teaching. Should language predominate or technical education in science?

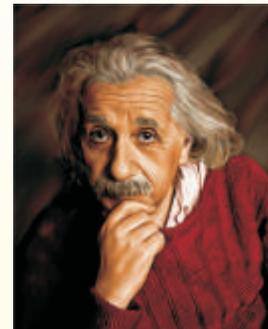
pseudo-scientifically: in a manner which is not true to the methods of science

15. To this I answer: in my opinion all this is of secondary importance. If a young man has trained his muscles and physical endurance by gymnastics and walking, he will later be fitted for every physical work. This is also *analogous* to the training of the mind and the exercising of the mental and manual skill. Thus the *wit* was not wrong who defined education in this way; "Education is that which remains, if one has forgotten everything he learned in school." For this reason I am not at all trying to take sides in the struggle between the followers of the total *philologic-historical education* and the education more devoted to natural science.
16. On the other hand, I want to oppose the idea that the school has to teach directly that special knowledge and those accomplishments which one has to use later directly in life. The demands of life are much too manifold to let such a specialized training in school appear possible. Apart from that, it seems to me, moreover, objectionable to treat the individual like a dead tool. The school should always have as its aim that the young man leave it as a harmonious personality, not as a specialist. This in my opinion is true in a certain sense even for technical schools, whose students will devote themselves to a quite definite profession. The development of general ability for independent thinking and judgment should always be placed foremost, not the acquisition of special knowledge. If a person masters the fundamentals of his subject and has learned to think and work independently, he will surely find his way and besides will better be able to adapt himself to progress and changes than the person whose training principally consists in the acquiring of detailed knowledge.
17. Finally, I wish to emphasize once more that what has been said here in a somewhat categorical form does not claim to mean more than the personal opinion of a man, which is founded upon nothing but his own personal experience, which he has gathered as a student and as a teacher.

You can motivate by fear. you can motivate by reward. But both of these methods are only temporary. The only lasting thing is self motivation.

About the Author:

Albert Einstein was born on 14 March 1879 in Ulm, Wurttemberg, Germany. The future scientist began his school career in Munich. He studied Mathematics, in particular calculus, beginning around 1891. In 1894 his family moved to Milan but he stayed on in Munich. In 1895, the future Nobel Prize Winner for Physics failed an entrance examination that would have allowed him to study for a diploma as an electrical engineer in Zurich. He renounced German citizenship in 1896 and became a Swiss citizen in 1901. The great scientist, who began his career as a teacher of Mathematics and Physics in 1900, earned a doctorate from the University of Zurich in 1905 for his thesis, *On a new determination of molecular dimensions*. It was also in 1905 that he wrote his second paper which is today better known as *the Special Theory of Relativity*. He was awarded the Nobel Prize in 1921. He died on 18 April 1955 in Princeton, New Jersey, USA.



analogous: similar

wit: person who is clever

philologic-historical education: education which lays emphasis on the study of language and history

I. Understanding the text:

1. Answer the following questions briefly:

- a) What are Einstein's views on education based on?
- b) According to Albert Einstein, what is the basic difference between scientific matter and matters pertaining to education?
- c) Explain the comparison that Einstein makes between knowledge regarding human affairs and a marble statue standing in the desert.
- d) In what way has the role of the family been passed on to the school in modern times?
- e) How does Einstein strike a balance between individual development and the development of the whole society?
- f) Which method of education is an important or successful one? Cite some of the examples that Einstein gives to prove his point.
- g) What sort of environment should a school provide to a student to make him/her perform well?
- h) According to Einstein, what should be the basis of the respect that teachers receive from students? Do you agree? Give reasons.
- i) Does Einstein give importance to the choice of subjects in education? Why/why not?

2. Read the extracts and answer the questions that follow:

- a) "It is not right to see the school simply as the instrument for transferring a certain maximum quantity of knowledge to the growing generation." (para 4) How does Einstein justify this statement?
- b) "With absence of mental stimulus of this kind, human co-operation would be entirely impossible" (para 8). Explain the "mental stimulus" that is referred to? When can it become very dangerous to society?
- c) "Therefore, one should guard against preaching to the young man success in the customary sense as the aim of life" (para 10). What is 'success' here in the customary sense? Who, according to Einstein, is a truly successful person?
- d) "In the awakening and strengthening of these psychological forces in the young man, I see the most important task given by the school" (para 11). Which 'psychological forces' is Einstein referring to?
- e) "I have known children who preferred school-time to vacation" (para 12). Describe some of the characteristics of schools that would make children prefer to go to school even during vacation time.
- f) "If a young man has trained his muscles and physical endurance by gymnastics and walking, he will later be fitted for every physical work" (para 15). In what context does the renowned scientist make this statement? What is his opinion on the issue?
- g) "Education is that which remains if one has forgotten everything he learned in school" (para 15). What does Einstein mean by saying this? What is your opinion on the issue?

II. Vocabulary:

Choose the option which, according to you, is closer to the meaning of the word given in Column A. Also, try to give one word for the meaning in Column B which you didn't choose or tick. (*Hint: These words sound similar to the words already given.*)

A	=	B
a) retrospect	=	i) reference to conditions in the past ii) examine one's own mental or emotional processes _____
b) distinction	=	i) something that takes away one's attention ii) a special honour or recognition _____
c) accomplish	=	i) partner in a crime ii) complete a task _____
d) extensive	=	i) covering a large area ii) through and detailed, directed to a limited area or subject _____
e) conviction	=	i) based on firm belief ii) customary practice _____

2. Fill in the blanks with the words from Column A to complete the sentences. (You may change the form of the word.)

- a) Steve Waugh scored a century against Bangladesh and equalled Sachin Tendulkar's record of thirty-one test centuries. However, the Indian batting maestro _____ the feat in fewer tests than the Australian skipper.
- b) His speech was very theatrical. It did not seem to carry much _____.
- c) The _____ knowledge about cricket, tennis and badminton that Seema exhibits, comes as a surprise to most of her friends.
- d) While bidding farewell to his PA, the boss thanked him for serving the organisation with _____.
- e) In _____, it was not too difficult for him to realize where he had gone wrong.

III. Conversation Skills:

Read the opinions given in the speech bubbles below:

Darwin's theory of the survival of the fittest promotes unhealthy competition.

Unless renewed, knowledge is a dead thing.

The success of a school must not be assessed in terms of the number of IAS officers, CAs, doctors, engineers, etc. its ex-students eventually become.

Our society is putting too much of pressure on young minds by making them too ambitious and career-conscious a bit too soon.

Parents and teachers should not preach to youngsters about success as the aim of life in its customary sense.

Teachers should be given freedom in the selection of material to be taught and the teaching methods to be employed by them.

Take up any topic your group feels strongly about. Or, your teacher may assign each group a topic from the above. Each member of the group should express his or her opinion about it within the group. Keep jotting down each other's points. Then, choose a secretary-cum-spokesperson of the group. Help him or her to bring all the points together. Each group's spokesperson will then present the views of the group on the topic before the whole class for two or three minutes.

IV. Writing Skills:

- a) Working in groups of four or five, write a speech for a formal debate on Einstein's view.

Education is that which remains, if one has forgotten everything one learned in school.

Tips for writing the speech:

- Address the Chairman or President respectfully.
- Mention the topic and state clearly whether you are supporting the motion or speaking against it.
- Explain the topic focussing on the key words. Try to interpret the key words in a way that suits your perspective or standpoint.
- Use examples of actual persons or from real life situations to strengthen your views.
- Use the language of debating such as : in my humble opinion, I strongly feel that..... it is my firm conviction... an exception or two does not make the rule.... etc.
- Conclude your speech with the confident hope that you have succeeded in convincing the house and even the members of the opposition.

- b) **Project work:** Refer to some books in your school library by or on famous Indian educators like Mahatma Gandhi, Rabindranath Tagore, Swami Vivekananda, Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, Dr. Zakir Hussain, Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam or any other. Focus mainly on their views on an ideal school. Compare these with the views expressed by Albert Einstein. (*You may record each great educationist's views under his/her picture on a chart to be displayed on your school display board*). Then, write an article entitled **On School Education** for your school magazine.

I Can Play Schools

by May C. Jenkins

Warm-up: What do you understand about the world of children from the pictures?



- In pairs, discuss what is the difference between the usual indoor and outdoor games and fantasy games? Which is more interesting?

1. Now read the story

1. I was writing to my mother, one sunny afternoon in the school holidays, while my daughter, Marian sat on the grass, just outside the French window. She was playing 'schools' with her dolls. Annoyed because they were 'not attending', she was scolding them, making expressive gestures with her hands, as her teacher might have done; it was interesting to watch her.

What would I write about Marian? It was never easy to find something new to say, and I did not want to use the same phrases as last week and - probably - the week before. Mother was in Canada, eager for news of home; she would scan the lines for news of Marian, for whom she had an anxious love.

2. Studying the child now, as if for inspiration, I thought for the thousandth time how lovely she was, with dark curls framing her small pointed face, dark serious eyes - too serious perhaps, for a seven-year-old - and full, sensitive lips. Deep, loving pride in her stirred in me. She was such a dear, intelligent girl. But I felt disappointment too, for I had dreamed of a different child. I had seen a golden girl, golden voiced, moving with confidence through the world.

'Anne, you're being very stupid,' my husband had said, when, in the months before she was born, I drew this picture for him. 'You don't even know that you'll have a girl - and, supposing you do, you can't order one to a pattern like that. You're just heading for trouble.'

3. He was right, of course; the baby was a girl, but not as I had imagined her. I still thought wistfully, sometimes, of the child that might have been, and never would be, now. For my husband had been killed in a car crash, shortly before Marian was born. I did not have him now, to share my days, to comfort me.

Sometimes my friends spoke of re-marriage. But I had loved Tom so much that our days together, alight with love, were still too close to me. Then there was Marian, step-parents - in fiction and fact - were apt to cause disharmony that might have deep, far-reaching consequences. She had to come first.

This afternoon her game did not satisfy her. Without being told, I knew what was wrong; she wanted Christabel. This was her favourite doll, left that morning in the attic. The game was lifeless without her, Marian decided, and rose, shaking the grass off her blue cotton dress.

4. Turning, she saw the amusement in my eyes; her own lit up with rare and lovely laughter. 'I know it's silly,' they seemed to say, 'but I can't help it. I must have her.' She went off; the garden seemed cold with her absence, the dolls forgotten. She is my love, my lamb, my darling, after all, I thought; we understand each other, words are unnecessary; how many parents can say that? And, my spirits lighter, I bent again over the desk.

'As you know, Marian is at home just now. It is wonderful to have her. I wish the holidays were longer'

5. A shadow passed in front of the French window, dulling the sunny garden. For a moment, foolishly, I expected to see Marian. But it was a long way up to the attic; besides once there, she would probably become interested in something else. I looked up. It was the little girl from next door. She was tossing an orange into the air and catching it again. 'You'd think this was her garden!' I said inwardly. 'No shyness there!'

Her family had come only two short weeks before, but already it seemed a long time to me. I had not yet 'called on' the mother - in our small town it is still considered friendly to visit new neighbours - but I could not count the number of times that her daughters had appeared in the garden saying.

'Please may I play with your little girl today?'

6. She was perhaps a year or two older than Marian. Slim and fair-skinned, her hair was like ripe corn in sunlight, her eyes a sparkling, vivid blue. As if this were not enough, she had a voice as clear and careless as a mountain stream. I suppressed that ever-recurring envious ache.

'I've come again,' she announced.

'Is that so?' I was amused, in spite of annoyance.

(When would I get back to my letter? Mother would be looking for it, would worry if it did not come. That was the worst of agreeing to send mail at a certain time.)

'I saw your little girl in the garden. I can play "Schools" too, I love it.'

How often have I told you -

'But she plays all by herself, all the time. She'll be lonely.'

'Marian likes to play by herself.' It was true, I reflected sadly. She shrank from children in the neighbourhood, thinking she could not play their games properly; feared their laughter, thinking it was at her expense; did not understand their jolly, slangy conversations.

'Still, she must be lonely,' the other child said shrewdly. She was, but knew no way to avoid it; all the avenues which she had tried had led her further away, if anything, from that carefree, shouting world. 'I am too. I haven't got brothers or sisters. And I don't know anyone here yet.'

Well, you won't be long before you do, I thought grimly, wishing that Marian had one quarter of the self-confidence which this child scattered so blithely to the four winds. In the face of her stubborn persistence I almost gave way. But what was the use? It had been tried so often before. The result was always the same. Marian would come home as soon as she could, her drooping shoulders expressing a despair that went to my heart.

7. With me, she was quite different. We played together contentedly, or went for walks. It was always a pleasure to go for a walk with Marian. She loved to see small, delightful things; a new bud, a wild rose, or thistle-down floating like magic through the air, would bring a dreamy softness to her eyes, a lightness to her feet. Released, enchanted, she would run over springy grass, among kindly trees; it was her unassailable world. What was that poem, left by an unknown writer in an air-raid shelter, during the war? 'Beauty has ramparts nothing can destroy.' Marian had already discovered that.
8. I pulled myself together. 'It's no use, dear.' All the irritation had left me; I felt only gentleness. 'It's very good of you to say you'll play with Marian. It's good of all the children to come. But the thing is - you just don't know what it means. You get tired of her and then she thinks you don't like her - she doesn't understand. For a child like her you need so much patience.'

Evidently at a loss, she stared at me, 'Why? What's wrong with her?'

9. 'Didn't you know?' Of course, she had been next door for a very short time. But I had assumed that she knew, that someone would have told her. I had thought, as we are apt to do, that my private tragedy was large and important to others, too.

'No. What is it?'

'She is deaf and dumb.'

After a minute she said, 'Does she speak on her fingers?'

'A bit.... And in other ways as well... she goes away to a school.' Suddenly I was immensely tired. 'So you see why; I can't play with her, child.'

'Don't call me Child, my name's Freda,' she said impudently. Then she moved from the window. 'Give this to Marian, I brought it for her.' She handed me the orange and was gone, walking with a lazy grace down the path, her yellow pig-tails swinging.

10. I thought, it never does to open your heart to a child. Try it and she slaps your face. 'Give her the orange,' Freda had said, salving her conscience; she did not want to play with Marian, now. Well, what had I expected? I had tried to discourage her, hadn't I?'

Turning, I saw Marian. How long had she been there? How much had she understood? Her eyes were following Freda - for a moment, surprised, I thought she was sorry to see the gate open and close. But I decided I had been mistaken. She never wanted to play with other children.

Then, speaking rapidly 'on her fingers' as Freda had put it, Marian said,

'Mother, would you rather have her than me?'

11. Deeply shocked, I put my arms round her. She had sensed my desire for a child without her handicaps... she had been bitterly hurt... Did that account, partly for her great unhappiness, her sense of inadequacy, in the world of other children? Oh, my darling, my best-loved - and this time I did not add, after all. It came to me at last how much my love meant to her - so much more than it would have meant to Freda, who was so well-equipped to look after herself. I pressed my lips on the shining dark hair, and finally and forever my foolish longings died.

12. When I released her, she looked at me intently for a minute. Then, seemingly satisfied, she ran outside with Christabel. I finished my letter - cheerfully, in spite of the chaos of my thoughts - and went upstairs, to prepare for the afternoon shopping.

When I came down, half-an-hour later, Freda was in the garden with Marian. She had brought her own dolls over; the 'class' seemed larger and brighter, and had a comfortable air. Marian, the Headmistress, sat in her 'office'; Freda, as Assistant Teacher, pretended to consult her, and made notes in a little book. She looked up, carelessly, when she saw me.

'I said I could play "Schools",' she remarked.

I. Understanding the text:

1.1 Answer the questions briefly.

- a) What hints do you get that Anne's feelings for Marian were mixed?
- b) Give two reasons why she felt that way.
- c) Why didn't Anne approve of re-marriage?
- d) What was Freda's request to Anne? Did she concede to her request? Why?
- e) How did Marian discover that 'Beauty has ramparts nothing can destroy'?
- f) How did Marian react to her mother's conversation with Freda?

1.2 Read the extracts and answer the questions that follow:

1. 'You can't order one to a pattern like that. You're just heading for trouble'
 - a) What is the speaker reacting to?
 - b) How was he proved right?
 - c) What 'trouble' did the other person face?
2. 'I suppressed that ever recurring envious ache'.
 - a) What had caused the 'ache' in the speaker?
 - b) Why was it an envious one?
 - c) Bring out the speaker's attitude.
3. 'Did that account partly for her great unhappiness, her sense of inadequacy, in the world of other children?'
 - a) Why did Marian feel inadequate?
 - b) In what way was Anne responsible for Marian's unhappiness?
 - c) Was Anne aware of her role in this regard?
4. 'Marian, the headmistress sat in her office. Freda, an Assistant teacher, pretended to consult her.'
 - a) Who were the students for Marian and Freda?
 - b) What insights does the reader gain from the situation?
 - c) What was Anne's reaction?

2. Match the excerpts from the story with the attitude or feelings conveyed by the given lines.

S.No.	Excerpts	Attitude/ Feelings conveyed
1.	She would scan the lines for news of Marian	as a widow, her child is her priority
2.	She had to come first	confident
3.	You'd think it was her garden	true concern for Marian
4.	I still thought wistfully	sensitive, longing for her mother's love
5.	Don't call me child, call me Freda	sense of longing or regret
6.	Mother, would you rather have her than me?	strong-willed, determined

3. Vocabulary:

a) Match the words with their meaning:

S.No.	Words	Meanings
1.	grimly	rudely
2.	unassailable	seriously
3.	wistfully	happily
4.	blithely	a high wide , wall of protection
5.	impudently	cannot be destroyed
6.	ramparts	sadly longing for something

b) Read the following sentences from the story.

i) *I had not yet 'called on' the mother.*

ii) *I pulled myself together.*

Call on means to visit. *Pulling myself together* means to take control of one's feelings.

The expressions are phrasal verbs. Phrasal verbs have a verb and a preposition (particle).

Refer to a standard dictionary and find more phrasal verbs with 'call' that match the meanings given below

S.No.	Meanings	Phrasal Verb
1.	Cancel	
2.	Formally invite to speak	
3.	Recall	
4.	Order for the return of something	
5.	Telephone	

4. Appreciation:

a) Given below are a few words that describe Marian and Freda. Put them in the right column.

Extrovert	confident	insecure	sure of herself	introvert	serious
stubborn in tune with Nature		Not at ease with peers		hesitant	self confident.

MARIAN	FREDA

b) How to analyse a short story:

An analysis of a short story requires basic knowledge of literary elements.

- 1) **Setting:** It is a description of where and when the story takes place. What role does setting play in this story?
- 2) **Characterization:** In short stories there are usually fewer characters compared to a novel. We get to know about the characters through his/her words, actions, Reactions, feelings, thoughts and movements.
3. **Plot and structure:** The plot is usually centred around one experience.
4. **Narrator and point of view:** The narrator is the person telling the story.
By point of view we mean through whose eyes the story is being told. Short stories tend to be told through one character's point of view.
5. **Conflict:** In a short story there is one main struggle. It could be internal/external.
6. **Climax:** It is the turning point where events take a major turn as the story reaches its conclusion.
7. Theme - is the main message
8. **Style:** The writer's style is seen in language, vocabulary and tone. The style conveys the writer's attitude towards the theme

Based on the guidelines given, write a 200-250 word analysis of the story, giving your opinion at the end.

5. Writing Skills:

- a) Using the inputs in b), write a paragraph comparing Marian and Freda in about 150-200 words.
- b) There is a difference in the way "School" was being played at the beginning and at the end. What is the change?
- c) Why did Anne discourage Freda from playing with Marian?
- d) How does Anne's attitude towards her child change?
- e) Is the mother's attitude to her child natural? Give reasons.

- f) Did Marian's different abilities affect Freda's desire to befriend her? Give instances.
- g) When did Anne's foolish longings go away?
- h) Anne writes a letter during the story. Explain what is the purpose of that letter?
- i) As Freda, write a letter to your friend about your happy times with Marian and the games you play with her.

6. Speaking Skills:

- a) **Pair work:** One student plays the role of an anchor of a TV channel and the other has recently visited a school for the visually challenged. Let the anchor begin the programme with a few questions to the student. The objective of this programme is to highlight the fact that the visually challenged are capable of great achievements and how students should empathise with them.
- b) Parents are expected to shower unconditional love on their children. Do children reciprocate the same? Why / Why not. Discuss in groups of four. The group secretary shares your ideas with the class.

7. Project Work:

Collect information from the biographies of Helen Keller, Thomas Edison, Beethoven etc. who have made a mark, despite being differently abled. Present a power point entitled **The Right Attitude Works Wonders**. Use suitable illustrative examples from the story.

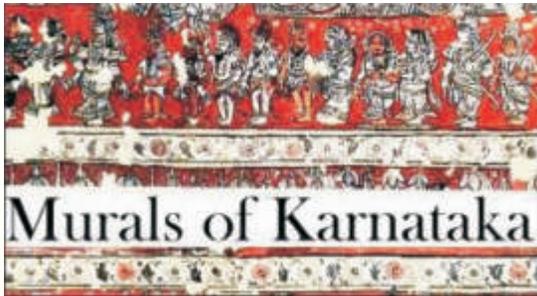
The Last Letter

by Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru

Glimpses of World History by Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of India is a collection of 196 letters on world history. **The Last Letter** is the last in the series of letters written by Jawaharlal Nehru from various prisons between 1930-33. The letters were written to his young daughter, Indira, to introduce her to world history.

Warm up:

1. a) Given below are pictures of a few artefacts. Study them carefully. How are they to be classified? What insights do they give? Discuss with your partner.



- b) Identify other sources of history and share your ideas.

2. Read the letter

1. We have finished, my dear; the long story has ended, I need write no more, but the desire to end off with a kind of flourish induces me to write another letter - the Last Letter!

What a mountain of letters I have written!

Benjamin Disraeli, the great statesman of the nineteenth century, has written: "Other men condemned to exile and captivity, if they survive, despair; the man of letters may reckon those days as the sweetest of his life."

2. I am not a man of letters, and I am not prepared to say that the many years I have spent in gaol have been the sweetest in my life, but I must say that reading and writing have helped me

wonderfully to get through them. I am not a literary man, and I am not a historian; what, indeed, am I? I find it difficult to answer that question. I have been a dabbler in many things; I began with science at college, and then took to the law, and, after developing various other interests in life, finally adopted the popular and widely practised profession of gaol-going in India!

3. A prison, with no libraries or reference books at hand, is not the most suitable place in which to write on historical subjects. I have had to rely very largely on the many note-books which I have accumulated since I began my visits to gaol twelve years ago. Many books have also come to me here; they have come and gone, for I could not collect a library here.
4. I have given you the barest outline ; this is not history ; they are just fleeting glimpses of our long past. If history interests you, if you feel some of the fascination of history, you will find your way to many books which will help you to unravel the threads of past ages. But reading books alone will not help. If you would know the past you must look upon it with sympathy and with understanding. To understand a person who lived long ago, you will have to understand his environment, the conditions under which he lived, the ideas that filled his mind. It is absurd for us to judge of past people as if they lived now and thought as we do.
5. If, then, you look upon past history with the eye of sympathy, the dry bones will fill up with flesh and blood, and you will see a mighty procession of living men and women and children in every age and every clime, different from us and yet very like us, with much the same human virtues and human failings. History is not a magic show, but there is plenty of magic in it for those who have eyes to see.
6. Innumerable pictures from the gallery of history crowd our minds. Egypt - *Babylon* - *Nineveh* - the old Indian civilizations - the coming of the Aryans to India and their spreading out over Europe and Asia - the wonderful record of Chinese culture - the coming of Islam to India and the Mughal Empire - the *Renaissance* of learning and art in western Europe - the discovery of America and the sea-routes to the East - the coming of the big machine and the development of capitalism - the spread of industrialism and European domination and imperialism - and the wonders of science in the modern world.

Great empires have risen and fallen and been forgotten by man for thousands of years, till their remains were dug up again by patient explorers from under the sands that covered them. And yet many an idea, many a fancy, has survived and proved stronger and more persistent than the empire.

7. The past brings us many gifts; indeed, all that we have today of culture, civilization, science, or knowledge of some aspects of the truth, is a gift of the distant or recent past to us. It is right that we acknowledge our obligation to the past. But the past does not exhaust our duty or obligation. We owe a duty to the future also, and perhaps that obligation is even greater than the one we owe to the past. For the past is past and done with, we cannot change it; the future is yet to come, and perhaps we may be able to shape it a little. If the past has given us some part of the truth, the future also hides many aspects of the truth, and invites us to search for them. But often the past is jealous of the future and holds us in a terrible grip, and we have to struggle with it to get free to face and advance towards the future.
8. History it is said, has many lessons to teach us, and there is another saying that history never

Babylon: An ancient city state of Mesopotamia

Nineveh: An ancient Assyrian city on the eastern bank of the Tigris river

Renaissance: ('to be reborn') was a cultural movement that spanned the period from 14th to 17th century.

repeats itself. Both are true, for we cannot learn anything from it by slavishly trying to copy it, or by expecting it to repeat itself or remain stagnant; but we can learn something from it by prying behind it and trying to discover the forces that move it. Even so, what we get is seldom a straight answer. "History," says Karl Marx, "has no other way of answering old questions than by putting new ones".

9. The old days were days of faith, blind, unquestioning faith. The wonderful temples and mosques and cathedrals of past centuries could never have been built but for the overpowering faith of the architects and builders and people generally. The very stones that they reverently put one on top of the other, or carved into beautiful designs, tell us of this faith.
10. Our age is a different one; it is an age of disillusion, of doubt and uncertainty and questioning. We can no longer accept many of the ancient beliefs and customs; we have no more faith in them, in Asia or in Europe or America. So we search for new ways, new aspects of the truth more in harmony with our environment. And we question each other and debate and quarrel and evolve any number of "isms" and philosophies. As in the days of Socrates, we live in an age of questioning, but that questioning is not confined to a city like Athens; it is world-wide. Sometimes the injustice, the unhappiness, the brutality of the world oppress us and darken our minds, and we see no way out.
11. And yet if we take such a dismal view we have not learnt aright the lesson of life or of history. For history teaches us of growth and progress and of the possibility of an infinite advance for man. And life is rich and varied, and though it has many swamps and marshes and muddy places, it has also the great sea, and the mountains, and snow, and glaciers, and wonderful starlit nights (especially in gaol), and the love of family and friends, and the comradeship of workers in a common cause, and music, and books and the empire of ideas. So that each one of us may well say:
12. It is easy to admire the beauties of the universe and so live in a world of thought and imagination. But to try to escape in this way from the unhappiness of others, caring little what happens to them, is no sign of, courage or fellow-feeling. Thought, in order to justify itself, must lead to action. "Action is the end of thought", says our friend *Romain Rolland*. "All thought which does not look towards action, is a treachery. If then we are the servants of thought, we must be the servants of action.
13. People avoid action often because they are afraid of the consequences, for action means risk and danger. Danger seems terrible from a distance; it is not too bad if you have a close look at it. And often it is a pleasant companion, adding to the zest and delight of life. The ordinary course of life becomes dull at times, and we take too many things for granted and have no joy in them. And yet how we appreciate these common things of life when we have lived without them for a while! Many people go up high mountains and risk life and limb for the joy of the climb and the exhilaration that comes from a difficulty surmounted, a danger overcome; and because of the danger that hovers all around them, their perceptions get keener, their joy of the life which hangs by a thread, the more intense.
14. All of us have our choice of living in the valleys below; with their unhealthy mists and fogs, but giving a measure of bodily security; or of climbing the high mountains, with risk and danger for companions, so breathe the pure air above, and take joy in the distant views, and welcome the rising sun.

Romain Rolland: a French writer, was awarded a Nobel prize for literature in 1915

1a. Understanding the text:

1.1 Answer the following questions briefly:

- a) What prompts the author to write the last letter?
- b) How does Nehru reflect on Benjamin Disraeli's thoughts?
- c) What sources did Nehru depend on while writing from prison?
- d) How should one view the past?
- e) What is common about people both past and present?
- f) Mention a few striking pictures from the gallery of history.
- g) Assess the relative importance of the past and the future.
- h) How does Karl Marx define history?
- i) What is the most important lesson that history teaches us?
- j) Explain Romain Rolland's view on 'thought' and 'action'.

1.2 Read the following extracts and answer the questions:

- a) 'Other men condemned to exile and captivity, if they survive, despair: the man of letters may reckon those days as the sweetest of his life.' Bring out the contrast in the reactions of the two types of individuals in captivity.
- b) 'It is absurd for us to judge past people as if they lived now and thought as we do'. Why is it absurd to do so?
- c) 'The past brings us many gifts.' What are the gifts received from our past?
- d) 'Danger seems terrible from a distance; it is not so bad if you have a close look at it.' Explain, with an example, how 'danger' adds zest to life.
- e) 'People avoid action often because they are afraid of the consequences, for action means risk and damages.' Explain this attitude to action? Is this appropriate in day to day life? Give reasons.

2. Vocabulary:

- a) Match the words and phrases with their meaning.

Words / Phrases	Meaning
1. unravel	sad
2. a man of letters	disentangle
3. exhilaration	overcame
4. dismal	thrill
5. surmounted	scholar

2.1 Using Suffixes: Nouns can be formed using suffixes.

Example:

Oblige is a verb by adding the *suffix-tion*, the word becomes *obligation*.

The word *brutal* is an adjective. when the *suffix-ity* is added we get the noun form *brutality*.

Form nouns by adding ' -tion' or '-ity' to each of the following words.

ambiguous, celebrate, compatible, ethnic, frugal, assume, declare, depreciate, fumigate, exaggerate

2.3 Replace each of the words in italics with the appropriate word.

treachery

unquestioning

disillusion

reverently

glimpse

- The members welcomed the chairman *respectfully*.
- In olden days, students in the Gurukula system had *implicit* faith in what their teachers said.
- On witnessing the dance drama, the foreigner got a *peek* at Indian culture.
- Kohli's trip to the U.S. turned out to be a *disenchanted one*.
- The award winning short story was on *betrayal* and revenge.

3. Writing Skills:

Answer in about 100 - 120 words.

- How, according to Nehru, is the present different from the past?
- While it is important to understand the past, it is more important to value the future. Why?
- "Actions justify thoughts." Elaborate.
- History is not a magic show, but there is plenty of magic in it for those who have eyes to see. Explain.
- History, it is said, has many lessons to teach us; and there is another saying that *history never repeats itself*. Explain the message conveyed by the two sayings?
- As a historian, write a paragraph based on Nehru's views, on the path breaking events of the 21st century that have significantly contributed to the growth and progress of humanity.

4. Conversation Skills:

- 'Thought, in order to justify itself, must lead to action'. In groups of four think of a significant event in history that substantiates these words of Nehru.
- Read this famous letter: **Abraham Lincoln's Letter to His Son's Teacher**

Respected Teacher,

My son will have to learn I know that all men are not just, all men are not true. But teach him also that for every scoundrel there is a hero; that for every selfish politician, there is a dedicated leader. Teach him that for every enemy there is a friend.

It will take time, I know; but teach him, if you can, that a dollar earned is far more valuable than five found.

Teach him to learn to lose and also to enjoy winning.

Steer him away from envy, if you can.

Teach him the secret of quiet laughter. Let him learn early that the bullies are the easiest to lick.

Teach him, if you can, the wonder of books... but also give him quiet time to ponder over the eternal mystery of birds in the sky, bees in the sun, and flowers on a green hill -side.

In school teach him it is far more honourable to fail than to cheat.

Teach him to have faith in his own ideas, even if every one tells him they are wrong.

Teach him to be gentle with gentle people and tough with the tough.

Try to give my son the strength not to follow the crowd when every one is getting on the bandwagon.

Teach him to listen to all men but teach him also to filter all he hears on a screen of truth and take only the good that comes through.

Teach him, if you can, how to laugh when he is sad. Teach him there is no shame in tears. Teach him to scoff at cynics and to beware of too much sweetness.

Teach him to sell his brawn and brain to the highest bidders; but never to put a price tag on his heart and soul.

Teach him to close his ears to a howling mob... and to stand and fight if he thinks he's right.

Treat him gently; but do not cuddle him because only the test of fire makes fine steel.

Let him have the courage to be impatient, let him have the patience to be brave. Teach him always to have sublime faith in himself because then he will always have sublime faith in mankind.

This is a big order; but see what you can do. He is such a fine little fellow, my son.

Abraham Lincoln.

Think and discuss:

1. What message does Lincoln's letter give the reader? Discuss with your partner
2. Compare the purpose of Lincoln's letter with "The Last Letter" by Pt. Nehru.