

## Unit 2 Prose

### I Can't Climb Trees Anymore

Ruskin Bond



#### Warm Up

- Have you ever tried swinging from a tree?
- Have you ever climbed up a tree to pluck fruits?
- Think of other occasions when you have climbed up trees, either near your home or outside. Share your reasons with the class.

Read the story given below. Find out why the visitor feels that he can't climb trees anymore.

He stood on the grass verge by the side of the road and looked over the garden wall at the old house. It hadn't changed much. The old house built with solid blocks of granite wasn't altered at all. But there was a new outhouse, and there were fewer trees. He was glad to see that the jackfruit tree still stood at the side of the building casting its shade on the wall.

He remembered his grandmother saying: 'A blessing rests on the house where the shadow of a tree falls.' And so the present owners must also be receiving the tree's blessings. At the spot where he stood there had once been a **turnstile**, and as a boy he would swing on it, going round and round until he was quite dizzy. Now the turnstile was gone, the opening walled up. Tall **hollyhocks** grew on the other side of the wall.

'What are you looking at?'

It was a disembodied voice at first. Moments later a girl stood framed between dark red hollyhocks staring at the man. She was only twelve or thirteen, with lively eyes and long black hair.

'I'm looking at the house. Is it yours?,' he asked.

'No. It's my father's. Why? Do you want to buy it?'

'And what does your father do?'

'He's only a **colonel**.'

'Only a colonel?'

'Well, he should have been a brigadier by now.'

The man burst out laughing.

'It's not funny,' she said. 'Even Mommy says he should have been a **brigadier**.'

It was on the tip of his tongue to make a witty remark ('*Perhaps that's why he's still a colonel*'), but he did not want to give



offence. They stood on either side of the wall, appraising each other.

'Do you want to buy it?'

'No', he said.

'Well' she said, 'If you don't want to buy the house, what are you looking at?'

'I used to live here twenty-five years ago. As a boy. As a young man.... And then my grandmother died, and we sold the house and went away.'

1. What was the old house built with?
2. Does the visitor still live in the house?

She was silent for a while, taking in this information. Then she said, 'And you'd like to buy it back now, but you don't have the money?' He did not look very prosperous.

'No, I wasn't thinking of buying it back, wanted to see it again, that's all. How long have you lived in it?'

'Only three years,' she smiled.

'Would you like to come in and look more closely?'

'Wouldn't your parents mind?'

'They've gone to the club.' They won't mind. I'm allowed to bring my friends home.'

'Even elderly friends like me?'

'How old are you?'

'Oh, just middle aged, but feeling young today.' And to prove it he decided he'd climb over the wall instead of going round to the gate. He got up on the wall all right, but had to rest there, breathing heavily.

'Middle-aged man on the flying trapeze,' he **muttered** to himself.

'I'll help you,' she said, and gave him her hand.

He **slithered** down into a flower-bed, shattering the stem of a hollyhock.

As they walked across the grass he spotted a stone bench under a mango tree. It was the bench on which his grandmother used to rest, when she was tired of **pruning** rose bushes and **bougainvillea**. 'Let's just sit here,' he said. 'I don't want to go inside.'

She sat beside him on the bench.

They were silent for some time. The man closed his eyes and remembered other times - the music of a piano, the **chiming** of a grandfather clock, the constant twitter of **budgerigars** on the veranda, his grandfather **cranking** up the old car....

'I used to climb the jackfruit tree,' he said, opening his eyes.



A flying trapeze is a circus act in which people swing from one end of the circus tent on ropes.



'Do you want to climb it again? My parents won't mind.'

'No, no. Not after climbing the garden wall. Let's just sit here for a few minutes and talk. I mention the jackfruit tree because it was my favourite place. Do you see that thick branch stretching out over the roof? Half way along it there's a small hollow in which I used to keep some of my treasures.'

'What kind of treasures?'

'Oh, nothing very valuable. Marbles I'd won. A book I wasn't supposed to read. A few old coins I'd collected. Things came and went. I was a bit of a crow, you know, collecting bright things and putting them away. There was my grandfather's Iron Cross. Well, not my grandfather's exactly, because he was British and the Iron Cross was a German decoration awarded for bravery during the War - the First World War - when my grandfather fought in France. He got it from a German soldier.'



The Param Vir Chakra is the highest wartime gallantry award, given to soldiers of the Indian Armed Forces, for the display of utmost courage and complete selflessness when facing the enemy. Since its inception in 1950, 21 fearless heroes (14 posthumous) have been awarded the medal till January 2019.



'Do you still have it?'

'No', he said, looking her in the eyes. 'I left it in the jackfruit tree.'

'You left it in the tree?'

'Yes, I was so excited at the time, packing and saying goodbye to people and thinking about the ship I was going to sail on that I simply forgot all about it.'

She quietly said, 'It may still be there. In the hollow part of the branch.'

'Yes', he said. 'It's twenty-five years, but it may still be there. Unless someone else found it....'

'Would you like to go and look?'

'I can't climb trees any more.'

'If you can't, I will go and see. You just sit here and wait for me.'

'I've found it!' she cried. 'I've found something!'

And now, barefoot, she ran breathlessly towards him, in her outstretched hand a rusty old medal.

He took it from her and turned it over on his palm.

'Is it the Iron Cross?' she asked eagerly.

'Yes', he said, 'this is it.'

'Now I know why you came. You wanted to see if it was still in the tree.'

'You may be right. I'm not really sure why I came. But you can keep the Cross. You found it, after all.'



'No, you keep it. It's yours.'

'But it could have remained in the tree for another twenty-five years if you hadn't climbed up to look for it.'

1. What did the visitor hide in the jackfruit tree?
2. When did the visitor actually hide the iron cross?

'But if you hadn't come back again....'

'On the right day, at the right time, and with the right person', he said, getting up and placing the medal in her hands. 'It wasn't the Cross I came for. It was my youth.'

She didn't understand that, but she walked with him to the gate and waited. Where the road turned, he looked back and waved to her. Then he quickened his steps and moved briskly towards the bus stop. There was **sprightliness** in his step, and something cried aloud in his heart.

The mango scented summer breeze made the blood course in his veins, and he forgot, for a moment, that he couldn't climb trees any more....

## Glossary

**turnstile (n) :**

a mechanical gate consisting of revolving horizontal arms fixed to a vertical post, allowing only one person at a time to pass through



### About the author

Ruskin Bond was born on 19th May 1934. He is an award winning Indian author of British descent. He is much renowned for his role in promoting children's literature in India. The Indian council for Child Education has recognized his role in the growth of children's literature in India. He got the Sahitya Akademi Award in 1992 for '*Our Trees Still Grow in Dehra*'. He was awarded the Padmashri in 1999 and Padma Bhushan in 2014. As a prolific writer, he has written over 500 short stories, essays and novels. His popular novel '*The Blue Umbrella*' was made into a Hindi film and was awarded the National Film Award for the best children's film in 2007.



**hollyhocks (n) :**

a tall Eurasian plant of the mallow family, with large showy flowers

**colonel (n) :**

a rank of officer in the army

**brigadier (n) :**

a rank of officer in the British army, above Colonel

**trapeze (n) :**

a horizontal bar hanging by two ropes and free to swing, used by acrobats in a circus



**muttered** (v) :

to utter words in a low tone

**slithered** (v) :

slide or slip unsteadily on a loose or slippery surface

**pruning** (v) : the act of trimming a plant

**bougainvillea** (n) :

an ornamental shrubby climbing plant that is widely cultivated in tropics

**chiming** (v) :

making melodious ringing sounds typically to indicate the time

**budgerigars** (n) :

a small Australian bird of the parrot family, often kept in a cage as a pet

**cranking** (v) : the act of turning a handle to start an engine

**sprightliness** (n) :

lively and full of energy

**A. Based on your understanding of the story, indicate either 'T' (True) or 'F' (False) against the columns.**

S.No.	Statement	T / F
1	The visitor had hidden a few old coins in the tree.	
2	The jack fruit tree was still there.	
3	As a boy the visitor used to swing on the turnstile.	
4	The visitor had sold the house.	
5	A girl came out of the house.	
6	The visitor's grandfather used to sit on the stone bench.	
7	The visitor was able to remember the music of a piano.	
8	The visitor was able to climb the jack fruit tree.	
9	The purpose of the visit of the narrator was to buy his ancestral house back.	
10	The visitor climbed over the wall easily.	



**B. Based on your understanding of the story, answer the following questions by choosing the correct answer.**

- The story **I Can't Climb Trees Anymore** highlights the importance of \_\_\_\_\_.  
a) old age.                      b) youth.                      c) adulthood.                      d) middle age.
- The house which was visited by the man \_\_\_\_\_.  
a) remained unchanged.                      b) was totally changed.  
c) was slightly repaired.                      d) was given a facelift.





3. Who said, "A blessing rests on the house where the shadow of a tree falls"?

- a) Grand mother      b) Uncle  
c) Grand father      d) The visitor

4. The visitor came back to the house because he \_\_\_\_\_

- a) wanted to see the jackfruit tree.  
b) was looking for his lost youth.  
c) wanted to look again at his old house  
d) wanted to buy the house.

5. The visitor gifted the \_\_\_\_\_ to the little girl.

- a) iron cross              b) marbles  
c) bronze medal        d) old coins

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

1. Explain: "Blessings rest on the house where the shadow of a tree falls."
2. What did the writer observe about the house?
3. What was the local superstition about trees?
4. What did the visitor do with the turnstile when he was a boy?
5. Who is the owner of the house now?
6. Why did the visitor return to his old house?
7. How did he get back the Iron Cross?
8. How did the grand father get the iron cross?
9. What did he do with the old Iron Cross?
10. Where had he left his childhood treasures?

**D. Match the words in column A with the meanings in column B by drawing a line as shown.**

S.No.	A	B
1.	pruning	soaked
2.	chiming	shaky
3.	drenched	flourishing,
4.	dizzy	lively
5.	prosperous	ancient
6.	sprightliness	trimming a plant
7.	treasure	emitting a sound
8.	rusty	a collection of precious things

**E. Read these shortened forms of words and write the fullform for the remaining words and complete the table given below.**

won't : will not

I'd : I had/ I would

I'll : I will

1.	you'd	
2.	they've	
3.	he'd	
4.	he's	
5.	wasn't	
6.	isn't	
7.	doesn't	
8.	aren't	
9.	wouldn't	
10.	can't	





## Speaking

**F. You are visiting the primary school where you studied classes *I* to *IV*, after six years. You get a chance to go to your standard two classroom and you are permitted to sit at the same place where you used to sit.**

1. What would you remember?
2. Describe your feelings at that time.
3. Who do you miss very badly, your friends or teachers?
4. Share your thoughts with the class.

## Writing

**G. On seeing these pictures, you would have gone down your memory lane. Write a paragraph in about 50 words describing your favourite sport when you were young.**



**H. Based on the story and your own ideas write your answers in about 80 to 100 words each.**

1. Imagine yourself as the writer. Narrate the story of your visit to your ancestral house.
2. The man who came to the house gave the cross as a gift to the girl. Why did he do this? What do you think would have happened if he had taken back the cross with him?

**I. Write a letter to your friend describing your ancestral house.**

---

---

---

---

---



## Grammar

### Degrees of Comparison

Comparison can be made using the three forms of an adjective.

Adjective is a word that describes or qualifies a noun. It gives more information about a noun.

(e.g.) The tiger is a **strong** animal.

There are three degrees of comparison

- (1) Positive (e.g.) Kumar is a **kind** man.
- (2) Comparative (e.g.) Tsunami is **more destructive** than Cyclone.
- (3) Superlative (e.g.) Mount Everest is the **highest** peak in the world.

Read the following examples.

Positive	Comparative	Superlative
No other girl in the class is as <b>tall</b> as Ramya.	Ramya is <b>taller</b> than any other girl in the class.	Ramya is <b>the tallest</b> girl in the class.
Very few girls in the class are as <b>tall</b> as Ramya.	Ramya is <b>taller</b> than most other girls in the class.	Ramya is <b>one of the tallest</b> girls in the class.

The Positive Degree is used to express or describe a quality.

The **Positive Degree** of an adjective states the characteristic of the noun.

(e.g.) It is a **tall** building.

(e.g.) Mango is **sweet** to taste.

The **Comparative Degree** is used **when two things** (or two sets of things) are compared.

(e.g.) This building is **taller** than any other building.

(e.g.) Mango is **sweeter** than pineapple.

The **Superlative Degree** is used when more than two things are compared.

(e.g.) This is the **tallest** building.

(e.g.) Mango is the **sweetest** fruit.

#### Examples

Prabhu is young. (**Positive Degree**)

Prabhu is younger than Amirtha. (**Comparative Degree**)

Prabhu is the youngest of all. (**Superlative Degree**)







**A. Work with a partner and fill in the table with information about your locality. You may add more information, if necessary. When you finish filling the table, write a short paragraph comparing the two places.**

Locality	Your Place	Your Partner's Place
➤ proximity to the railway station		
➤ proximity to the airport		
➤ number of shopping centres		
➤ number of temples		
➤ important heritage centres		
➤ sea, lakes, rivers or ponds		
➤ traffic		
➤		

**B. Give your opinion and compare the items in each picture using -er, more, less, or an irregular form. Use the words. You may form your sentences in more than one way.**

- 



healthy, wholesome, calorific

(a) \_\_\_\_\_  
(b) \_\_\_\_\_  
(c) \_\_\_\_\_
- 



eco-friendly, economical, safer

(a) \_\_\_\_\_  
(b) \_\_\_\_\_  
(c) \_\_\_\_\_
- 



educational, interesting, trendy

(a) \_\_\_\_\_  
(b) \_\_\_\_\_  
(c) \_\_\_\_\_
- 



safe, comfortable, quick

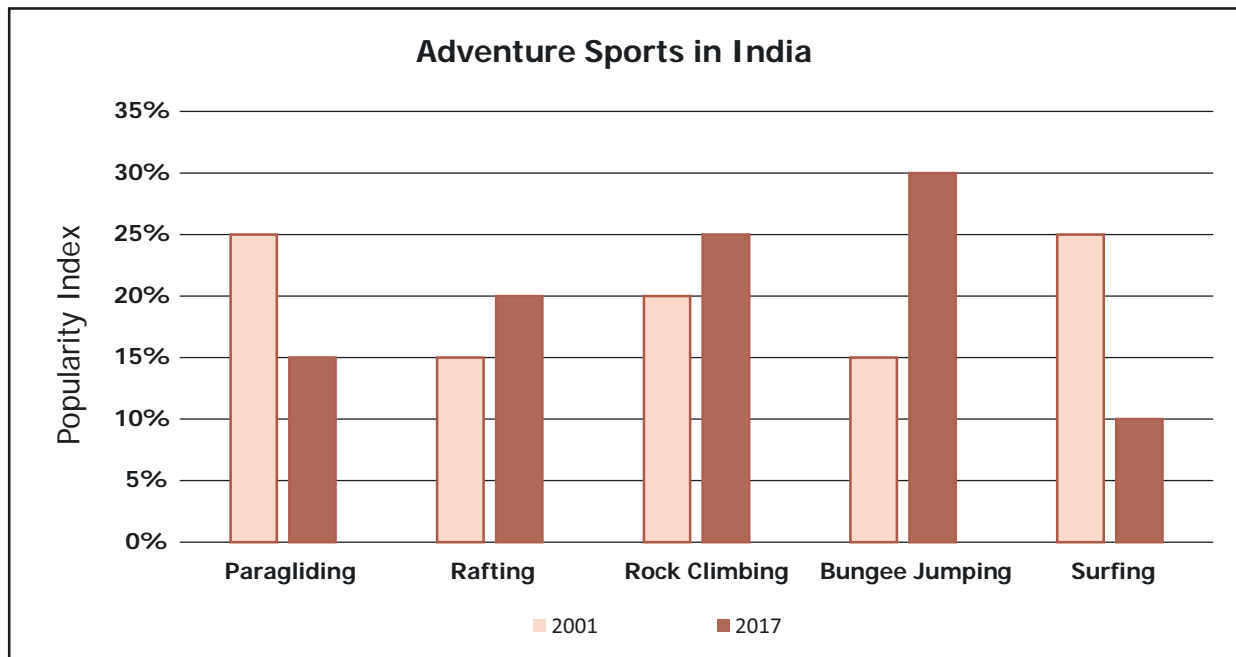
(a) \_\_\_\_\_  
(b) \_\_\_\_\_  
(c) \_\_\_\_\_
- 



cozy, costly, sturdy

(a) \_\_\_\_\_  
(b) \_\_\_\_\_  
(c) \_\_\_\_\_

**C. Look at the bar-graph. Write five sentences using the appropriate degrees of comparison.**



**D. \*Listen to the conversation between Leena and her mother and list down a few new words. Using a dictionary find out the meaning for those words.**

New Word	Meaning
Versatile	able to adapt to different activities

**E. Just a Minute**

The class will be divided into groups of five. Each one of you will get a topic to speak on, which will be related to the theme of the unit. A preparation time of one minute will be given. Then, you have to speak for one minute continuously. The teacher will ring the bell to signal the end of a minute. Next person in the team will take over.

The challenges of the one minute speech are to speak without

- hesitation, stuttering and stammering.
- pauses, gesticulations and repetitions.
- deviating from the topic.

\*Listening text is on Page No. 203



## Unit 2 Poem

### A Poison Tree

William Blake



#### Warm Up

**A. Choose the option that suits your own behavior in the given situations. Compare your answers with your partner's answers.**

1. You overhear a friend talking badly about you. How angry does that make you feel?

- ☐ I don't feel angry at all.
- ☐ I feel moderately angry.
- ☐ I feel slightly annoyed.
- ☐ I feel very angry.
- ☐ I feel a little angry.
- ☐ I feel furious.

2. Your friend persuades you to take help to prepare for the Maths board examination, from a close friend. That person does not turn up at all, as agreed. How angry does that make you feel?

- ☐ I don't feel angry at all.
- ☐ I feel moderately angry.
- ☐ I feel slightly annoyed.
- ☐ I feel very angry.
- ☐ I feel a little angry.
- ☐ I feel furious.

3. You have agreed to pick up some friends at the train station. They are coming to stay with you for a few days. You've arranged with your elder brother/sister to drive the car for the day. You

are about to leave the house when you realise the car is outside but your brother/sister has gone to work, taking the keys!. How angry does that make you feel?

- ☐ I don't feel angry at all.
- ☐ I feel moderately angry.
- ☐ I feel slightly annoyed.
- ☐ I feel very angry.
- ☐ I feel a little angry.
- ☐ I feel furious.

4. During a get together, your friend makes fun of your singing in front of your friends. You thought your singing was fine, but your friend thinks you really need to practise much more. How angry does that make you feel?

- ☐ I don't feel angry at all.
- ☐ I feel moderately angry.
- ☐ I feel slightly annoyed.
- ☐ I feel very angry.
- ☐ I feel a little angry.
- ☐ I feel furious.

**B. Answer the following questions. Share your views with the class**

- Do you argue often with your classmates ?
- Do you forgive them or choose to remain enemies forever?
- How long does your anger last?



Read the poem with your partner and then answer the questions that follow.

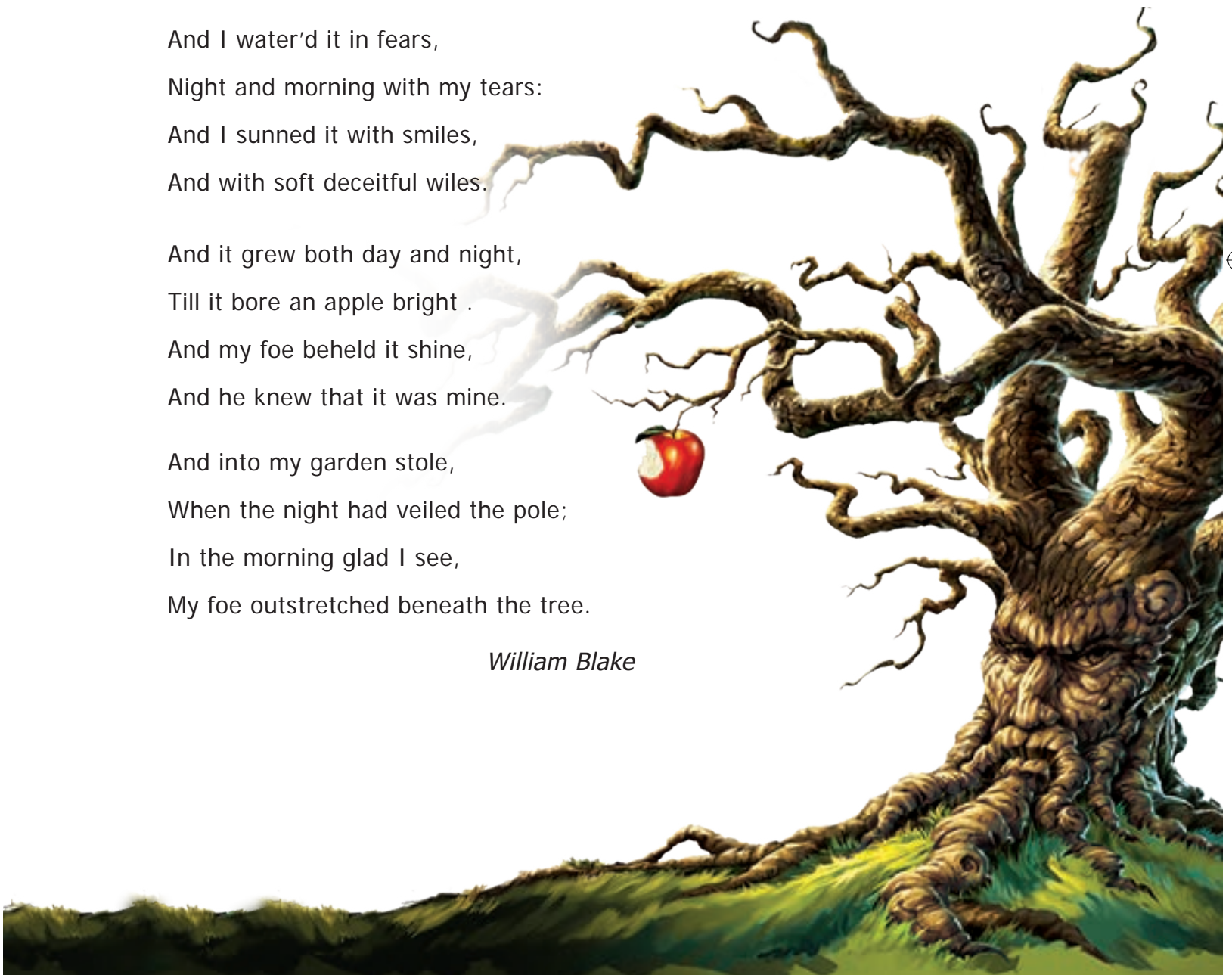
## A Poison Tree

I was angry with my friend;  
I told my wrath, my wrath did end.  
I was angry with my foe:  
I told it not, my wrath did grow.

And I water'd it in fears,  
Night and morning with my tears:  
And I sunned it with smiles,  
And with soft deceitful wiles.

And it grew both day and night,  
Till it bore an apple bright .  
And my foe beheld it shine,  
And he knew that it was mine.  
And into my garden stole,  
When the night had veiled the pole;  
In the morning glad I see,  
My foe outstretched beneath the tree.

*William Blake*





### About the author

**William Blake** (1757 – 1827) was an English Poet, painter and print maker. Blake is now considered a seminal figure in the history of English poetry. He was born in London. He was a boldly imaginative rebel in both his thought and his art. Some of his famous poems are "The Lamb" and "The Tiger".



### Glossary

<b>wrath</b> (n.)	- anger
<b>foe</b> (n.)	- enemy
<b>deceitful</b> (adj.)	- cunning, treacherous
<b>wiles</b> (n.)	- tricks
<b>veiled</b> (v.)	- covered



4. *And it grew both day and night,  
Till it bore an apple bright.*
- What does 'it' refer to?
  - What does 'apple' signify?
  - What grew both day and night?

**B. Complete the summary by filling in the given spaces with suitable words.**



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

- I was angry with my friend  
I told my wrath, my wrath did end.*
  - Whom does 'I' refer to?
  - How did the anger of the poet come to an end?
- And I watered it in fears  
Night and morning with my tears;*
  - What does 'it' refer to?
  - How is 'it' watered?
- In the morning glad I see  
My foe outstretched beneath the tree*
  - How did the poet feel in the morning?
  - Who is the 'foe' referred to here?
  - Why was the 'foe' found lying outstretched beneath the tree?

Once the poet was angry with his friend. He expressed his (i) \_\_\_\_\_ and it ended. They became friends. But when he grew angry with his foe, he (ii) \_\_\_\_\_ it and allowed his anger to grow. Day and night he watered it with his tears and allowed it to grow. He (iii) \_\_\_\_\_ his foe with false smiles and cunning tricks. The tree kept growing and yielded a bright apple which (iv) \_\_\_\_\_ his foe to eat it stealthily during the night. The next morning the poet was happy to see his foe lying (v) \_\_\_\_\_ under the tree.





**C. Answer the following questions in about 80-100 words.**

1. How did the poet's anger with his friend end?
2. Describe how his anger kept growing.
3. Describe the effect of the poisonous fruit on the 'enemy'.

**Poem appreciation**

**D. Figures of Speech**

There is alliteration in the line : *And I sunned it with smiles.*

The sound /s/ is repeated in the words 'sunned' and 'smiles'.

Pick out at least two instances of alliteration from the poem.

**E. Read the following lines from the poem and answer the questions that follow.**

1. *I was angry with my friend;  
I told my wrath, my wrath did end.  
I was angry with my foe  
I told it not, my wrath did grow.*
  - i. Pick out the rhyming words.
  - ii. What is the rhyme scheme of the stanza?
  - iii. Identify the figure of speech in the title of the poem.
2. *And I water'd it in fears  
Night and morning with my tears;*
  - i. What figure of speech is used in 'watered it in fears'?

**\*Listening**

**F. Listen to the passage on 'anger management' and match the sentence parts by drawing a line. The recording can be played more than once if needed.**

1	Meditation is definitely a great technique .....	a) who will take care of the reason why you got angry ?
2	There is a person living inside you .....	b) to know how to handle it is a virtue.
3	Getting angry is natural but .....	c) to calm your inner self.
4	Anger is something that releases the tension .....	d) speak to your self and calm yourself.
5	Close your eyes and .....	e_ who always tells you how to act.

**G. Answer the following in about 80-100 words. Take ideas from the poem and also use your own ideas.**

1. Recall a recent situation when you became angry. What were the consequences of your anger? After listening to the guidelines on anger management, find out how well you could have handled the situation. Write your findings.
2. What might have caused the conflict which led to the poet becoming angry with his enemy? Think of one such situation that you have experienced. Describe how you felt and how the enmity grew and things became worse.

\*Listening text is on Page No. 204



## H. Discuss and Write.



1. Identify five to six qualities which make an ordinary person, loved and respected by all. Work in groups of five or six. Each group has to take up one quality and discuss the methods for imbibing that quality and identify the challenges that need to be faced.
2. Adolescents are often distracted by feelings like anger, disappointment and general helplessness when they face challenges at school or at home. Suggest way to turn such feelings into positive ones.



### Different types of laughter

- |            |                 |            |             |
|------------|-----------------|------------|-------------|
| ✦ Smirk.   | ✦ Laugh         | ✦ Smile.   | ✦ Cackle    |
| ✦ Grin.    | ✦ Guffaw.       | ✦ Snicker. | ✦ Howl.     |
| ✦ Giggle.  | ✦ Shriek.       | ✦ Chuckle. | ✦ Convulse. |
| ✦ Chortle. | ✦ Die laughing. |            |             |

## Read and Enjoy



### The Power of a Smile

The power of a sun can kill  
And the power of foe can burn  
The power of wind can chill  
And the power of mind can learn  
The power of anger can rage  
Inside until it tears you apart  
But the power of a smile  
Especially yours can heal a frozen heart

– Tupac Shakur

## Unit 2 Supplementary

### The Fun They Had

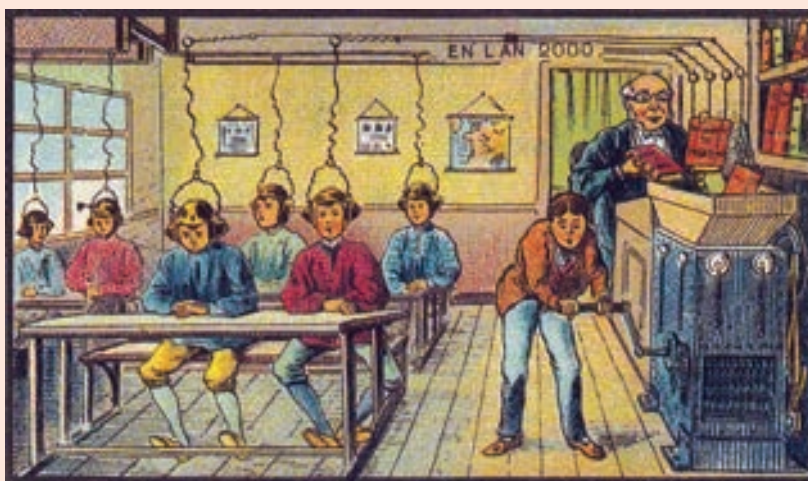
Isaac Asimov



#### Warm Up

Here is an imaginary high school class depicted in a French post card (1901-1910).

- After looking at the post card, what do you think have come true in the present century?
- Now, share your views about the changes that you and your classmates expect in your school and classroom in about 20-50 years.



Read the story to find out how a student like Margie studies in the year 2157.

Margie even wrote about it that night in her diary. On the page headed 17 May 2157, she wrote, "Today Tommy found a real book!"

It was a very old book. Margie's grandfather once said that when he was a little boy his grandfather told him that there was a time when all stories were printed on paper.

They turned the pages, which were yellow and crinkly, and it was awfully funny to read words that stood still instead of moving the way they were supposed to-on a screen, you know. And then when turned back to the page before,

it had the same words on it that it had when they read it the first time.

"Geel!" said Tommy, "What a waste. When you're through with the book, you just throw it away, I guess. Our television screen must have had a million books on it and it's good for plenty more. I wouldn't throw it away."

"Same with mine," said Margie. She was eleven and hadn't seen as many telebooks as Tommy had. He was thirteen.

She said, "Where did you find it?"

"In my house". He pointed without looking, because he was busy reading. "In the attic."

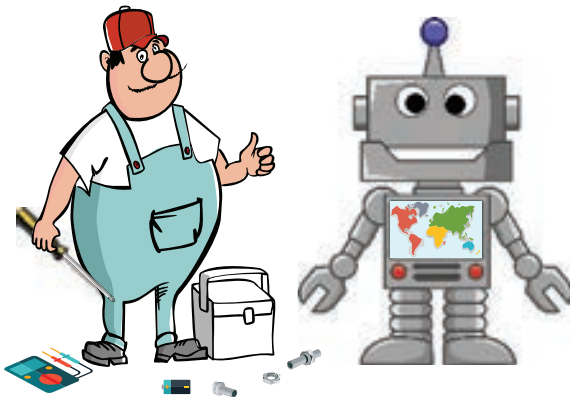


"What's it about?"

"School."

Margie was **scornful**. "School ? What's there to write about school? I hate school."

Margie always hated school, but now she hated it more than ever. The mechanical teacher had been giving her test after test in geography and she had been doing worse and worse until her mother had shaken her head sorrowfully and sent for the county inspector.



He was a round little man with a red face and a whole box of tools with dials and wires. He smiled at Margie and gave her an apple, then took the teacher apart. Margie had hoped he wouldn't know how to put it together again, but he knew how all right, and, after an hour or so, there it was again, large and black and ugly, with a big screen on which all the lessons were shown and the questions were asked. That wasn't so bad. The part Margie hated most was the slot where she had to put homework and test papers. She always had to write them out in a punch code they made her learn when she was six years old, and the mechanical teacher calculated the marks in no time.

The inspector had smiled after he was finished and patted Margie's head. He said to her mother, "It's not the little girl's fault, Mrs. Jones. I think the geography sector was geared a little too quickly. Those things happen sometimes. I've slowed it up to an average ten year level. Actually, the overall pattern of her progress is quite satisfactory." And he patted Margie's head again.

Margie was disappointed. She had been hoping they would take the teacher away altogether. They had once taken Tommy's teacher away for nearly a month because the history sector had blanked out completely.

So she said to Tommy, "Why would anyone write about school?"

Tommy looked at her with very superior eyes. "Because it's not our kind of school, stupid. This is the old kind of school that they had hundreds and hundreds of years ago." He added **loftily** pronouncing the word carefully, "**Centuries** ago."

Margie was hurt. "Well I don't know what kind of school they had all that time ago." She read the book over his shoulder for a while, then said, "Anyway, they had a teacher."

"Sure they had a teacher, but it was not a regular teacher. It was a human."

"A human? How could a human be a teacher?"

"Well, she told boys and girls things and



gave them homework and asked them questions."

"A human isn't smart enough."

"Sure one is."

Margie wasn't prepared to dispute that. She said, "I wouldn't want a stranger in my house to teach me."

Tommy screamed with laughter. "You don't know much, Margie. The teachers didn't live in the house. They had a special building and all the kids went there."

"And all the kids learned the same thing?"

"Sure, if they were the same age."

"But my mother says a teacher has to be adjusted to fit the mind of each boy and girl it teaches and that each kid has to be taught differently."

"Just the same they didn't do it that way then. If you don't like it, you don't have to read the book."

"I didn't say I didn't like it," Margie said quickly. She wanted to read about those funny schools.

They weren't even half finished when Margie's mother called, "Margie! School!"

Margie looked up. "Not yet, Mamma."

"Now!" said Mrs. Jones. "And it's probably time for Tommy, too."

Margie said to Tommy, "Can I read the book some more with you after school?"

"Maybe," he said **nonchalantly**. He walked away whistling, the dusty old book tucked beneath his arm.

Margie went into the schoolroom. It was right next to her bedroom, and the mechanical teacher was on and waiting for her. It was always on at the same time every day except Saturday and Sunday, because her mother said little girls learned better if they learned at regular hours.



In October 2017, the robot became a Saudi Arabian citizen, the first robot to receive citizenship of any country. In November 2017, Sophia was named the United Nations Development Programme's first ever Innovation Champion, and the first non-human to be given any United Nations title.

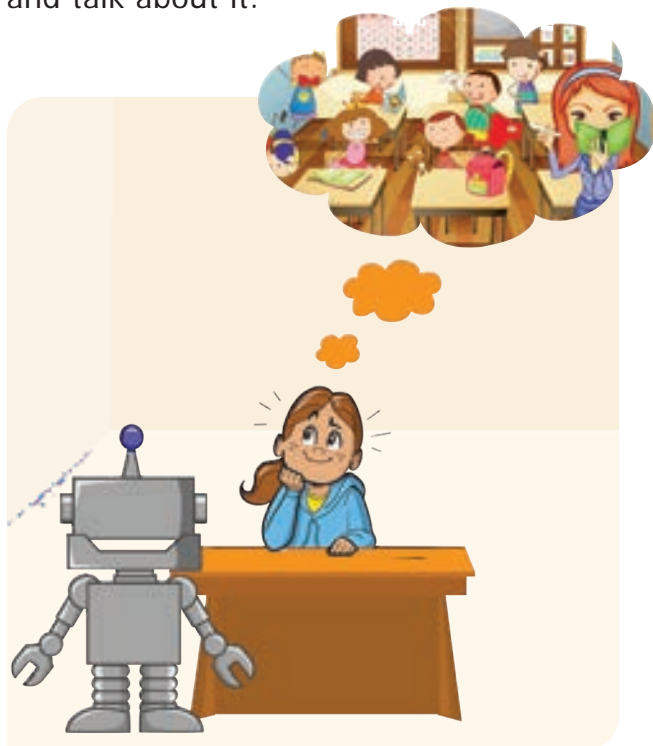
The screen was lit up, and it said: "Today's arithmetic lesson is on the addition of proper fractions. Please insert yesterday's homework in the proper slot."

Margie did so with a sigh. She was thinking about the old schools they had when her grandfather's grandfather was a little boy. All the kids from the whole neighborhood came, laughing and shouting in the schoolyard, sitting together in the schoolroom, going home together at the end of the day. They learned the same things, so they could





help one another with the home work and talk about it.



And the teachers were people...

The mechanical teacher was flashing on the screen: "When we add fractions  $\frac{1}{2}$  and  $\frac{1}{4}$ ... Margie was thinking about how the kids must have loved it in the old days. She was thinking about the fun they had.



Punched tape or perforated paper tape is a form of data storage consisting of a long strip of paper in which holes are punched to store data.

### About the author

**Isaac Asimov,**

born on January 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1920 was an American writer and professor of Biochemistry at Boston University.



He was known for his work of science fiction and 'popular science'. Asimov was a prolific writer and edited more than 500 books, an estimated 90,000 letters and postcards. Asimov wrote 'Hard Science Fiction' along with Robert A. Heinlein and Arthur C. Clarke. He was considered one of the best science fiction writers during his lifetime.

### Glossary

**crinkly** (adj.) : with many folds or lines

**awfully** (adv.) : very extremely

**attic** (n.) :

a space just below the roof used as a store room

**scornful** (adj.) :

feeling or expressing contempt

**loftily** (adv.) :

something done in a proud or haughty manner

**century** (n.) :

a period of one hundred years

**nonchalantly** (adv.) :

in a casually calm and relaxed manner





**A. Identify the character or speaker of the following lines.**



1. She was given test after test in geography.
2. He was a round little man with a red face and a whole box of tools with dials and wires.
3. She had been hoping they would take the teacher away altogether.
4. They learned the same things, so they could help one another with the home work and talk about it.
5. They had a special building and all the kids went there.

**B. Fill in the blanks with the clues given below to complete the paragraph.**

millions of books  
yellow and crinkly  
learning and spending  
geography  
test papers  
attic  
school time

real book  
same thing  
person  
schools  
words  
house

Tommy and Margie found something about the (i) \_\_\_\_\_ of the past. Tommy found a (ii) \_\_\_\_\_ which has been printed on paper. The book was old and the pages were (iii) \_\_\_\_\_. At present, the (iv) \_\_\_\_\_ were moving on a television screen. The television had over (v) \_\_\_\_\_. He had found the old book in the (vi) \_\_\_\_\_ of

his house. While reading Tommy found that it was about the old schools. Margie hated school because she was having problems with learning (vii) \_\_\_\_\_. The mechanical teacher was black and large with a screen. Margie hated the slot where she had to insert her homework or (viii) \_\_\_\_\_. Margie did not understand how a (ix) \_\_\_\_\_ could be a teacher and how the students were taught the (x) \_\_\_\_\_. Then it was (xi) \_\_\_\_\_ for Margie and Tommy. Margie went to the schoolroom in her (xii) \_\_\_\_\_, where the mechanical teacher stood. She was thinking about the old school and how much fun the children had, (xiii) \_\_\_\_\_ time together.

**C. Bring out the difference between your school and Margie's school in the given tabular column. An example is done for you.**

Margie's school	Your school
Teacher is a machine.	Teacher is a human being.
	Books are in printed form.
School is at home.	
There is no playground.	





#### **D. Complete the following statements based on your reading.**

1. The old book was found by \_\_\_\_\_
2. Margie was surprised to see the old book because \_\_\_\_\_
3. The mechanical teacher was giving Margie \_\_\_\_\_
4. Margie had to study always at the same time every day, because her mother said little girls \_\_\_\_\_
5. The geography sector in mechanical teacher was \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Think and Write**

#### **E. On the basis of your reading and using your own ideas, answer the following in about 125-150 words each.**

1. Describe Margie's mechanical teacher and her classroom in your own words.
2. Why did Margie hate her school? What was she thinking about at the end of the story?
3. What was strange about the 'book'? Why did Margie find it strange?



## ICT CORNER

# Language Games

The website "Games to Learn English" is a repository of various language games and activities. The specific link provided here is the home page of the website and the students can access various language related 'Flash Games' in it.

### Demo Steps

1. Type the URL link given below in the browser or scan the QR code.
2. Find the options like Games, Flash, Downloads on the homepage.
3. Click the "Games" option to find the tiles for language games on various topics like 'Hang Man', 'Prepositions', 'Spelling Bee' etc.
4. Click any one of the tiles to play the language game and proceed to different levels of the game.
5. You can play the Flash games on different topics and also can download the games offline to play on your personal computer.



### Download Link

Type the following link in your browser or click or scan the QR code to download the application and install it.

<https://www.gamestolearnenglish.com>