

Let's do:

Activity 4

Write 'T' for true and 'F' for false statements in the given boxes. Give supporting statements for each of your answers:

(a) The narrator was the eldest child in the family. ☐

(b) Astri was the favourite child of the narrator's father. ☐

(c) The narrator's father died of appendicitis. ☐

(d) After his father's death, the narrator along with his other family members moved to Llandaff. ☐

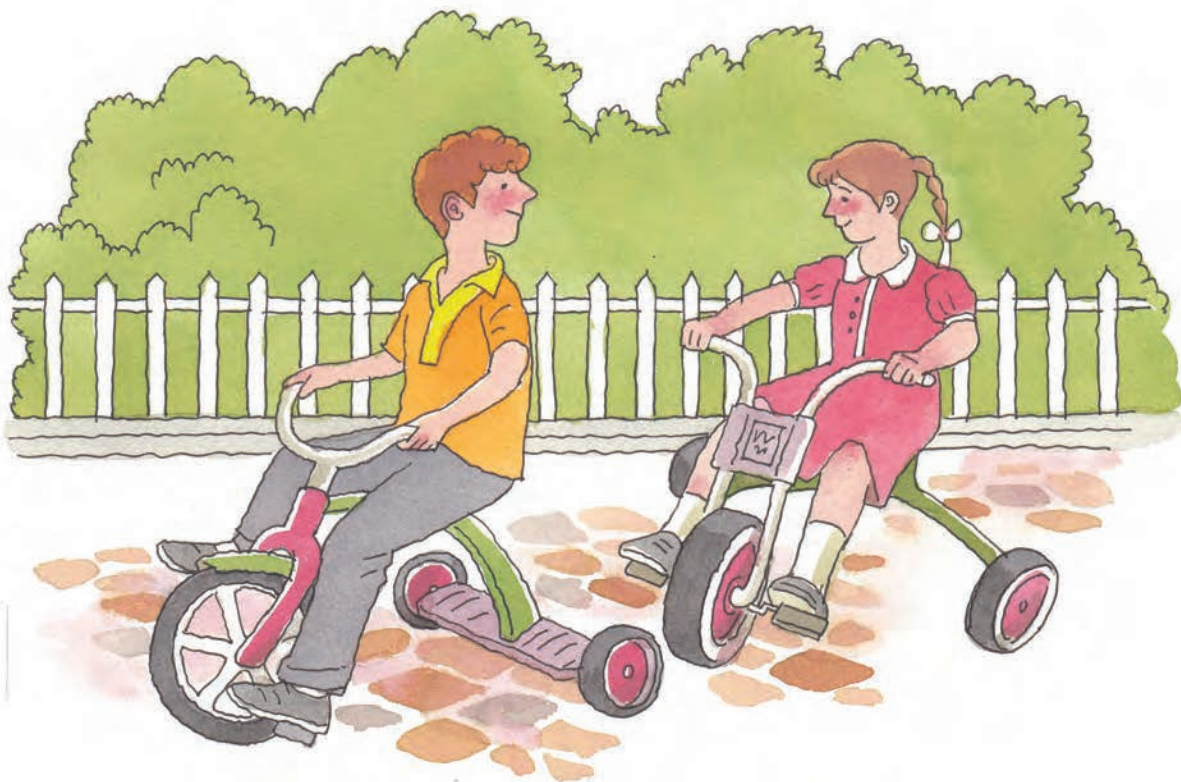
Activity 5

Answer the following questions:

- (a) How old was Astri when she died?
- (b) Why was pneumonia a very dangerous disease?
- (c) What made the narrator's father reluctant to fight against the disease?

Let's continue:

The school was a kindergarten run by two sisters, Mrs Corfield and Miss Tucker, and it was called the Elmtree House. It is astonishing how little one remembers about one's life before the age of seven or eight. I can tell you all sorts of things that happened to me from eight onwards, but only very few before that. I went for a whole year to Elmtree House but I cannot even remember what my classroom looked like. Nor can I picture the faces of Mrs Corfield or Miss Tucker, although I am sure they were sweet and smiling. I do have a **blurred** memory of sitting on the stairs and trying over and over again to tie one of my shoelaces, but that is all that comes back to me at this distance of the school itself.



On the other hand, I can remember very clearly the journeys I made to and from the school because they were so tremendously exciting. Great excitement is probably the only thing that really interests a six-year-old boy and it sticks in his mind. In my case, the excitement centred around my new tricycle. I rode to school on it every day with my eldest sister riding on hers. No grown-ups came with us, and I can remember oh so **vividly** how the two of us used to go racing at enormous speeds down the middle of the road and then, most glorious of all, when we came to a corner, we would lean to one side and take it on two wheels. All this, you must realize, was in the good old days when the sight of a motor car on the street was an event, and it was quite safe for tiny children to go tricycling and whooping their way to school in the centre of the **highway**.

So much, then, for my memories of kindergarten sixty-two years ago. It's not much, but it's all there is left.

Word Nest:

blurred	: not clear
vividly	: clearly
highway	: main road for travelling long distances

Let's do:

Activity 6

Fill in the following chart with information from the text:

Cause	Effect
(i)	The narrator is astonished
(ii)	The narrator cannot picture the faces of Mrs Cornfield or Miss Tucker
(iii) The journeys made to or from the school were tremendously exciting	
(iv) A motor car on the road was an event then	

Activity 6

Answer the following questions:

- What was the name of the narrator's first school?
- Which blurred memory does the narrator have of his early days?
- How did the narrator enjoy his journeys to and from school?
- 'It's not much, but it's all there is left'—Why, according to you, did the narrator make this comment?

Let's learn:

Read the following sets of sentences:

Set 1:

- (a) She **sells** the big house.
- (b) She **sold** the big house.

Set 2:

- (a) The big house **is sold** by her.
- (b) The big house **was sold** by her.

In the first set of sentences, the form of the verbs shows that the person denoted by the Subject **does something**.

In the second set of sentences, the form of the verb shows that **something is done to the person** denoted by the Subject.

Let's do:

Activity 8 (a)

In the following sentences, underline the verb forms which show that the person denoted by the Subject does something. Circle the verb forms which show that something is done to person denoted by the Subject:

- (i) She sings a song.
- (ii) A song is sung by her.
- (iii) He drew a picture.
- (iv) A picture was drawn by him.

Let's learn:

The verb forms that you have underlined are in the **Active Voice**. The verb forms you have circled are in the **Passive Voice**.

The **Active Voice** is the form of the verb which shows that the person denoted by the Subject does something. The **Passive Voice** is the form of the verb which shows that something is done to the person denoted by the Subject.

Let's do:

Activity 8(b)

Identify the voice of the following sentences and fill in the table given below:

- (i) He told a story.
- (ii) The ball was thrown by the boy.
- (iii) I read many books.
- (iv) Football is played by them.

Active voice	Passive voice

Activity 8(c)

Match column A with column B:

A	B
(i) Rumita made a paper boat.	(a) Food is cooked by her.
(ii) I know the man.	(b) A cricket match was watched by us.
(iii) She cooks food.	(c) A paper boat was made by Rumita.
(iv) We watched a cricket match.	(d) The man is known to me.

Activity 8(d)

Change the voice of the following sentences:

- (a) Riya sang a song.
- (b) She knows my brother.
- (c) I wrote a letter.
- (d) They cleaned the classroom.

Activity 9

Make meaningful sentences with the given pairs of words. Use one pair for one sentence:

- (a) met, shop
- (b) remember, days
- (c) moved, place
- (d) fight, country

Let's talk:

Suppose you have been given a chance to return to your early childhood. Tell the class about any two moments which you wish to re-live.

Let's learn:

The text that you have just read is a personal account of the author Roald Dahl. In the text he writes about the events of his own life. This kind of writing is called an **Autobiography**.

Let's do:

Activity 10(a)

Write an autobiography of a broken bicycle.

Activity 10(b)

Suppose recently you had to change your place of residence. Write a page in your diary about the experience of shifting from a familiar neighbourhood to a new place.

Let's work together:

Draw a picture of a bicycle. Now tell the class which are the places you would like to visit once you learn to ride a bicycle.

Lesson-11

Midnight Express

Alfred Noyes

Let's start:

Alfred Noyes (1880-1958) was a renowned English poet who is best known for his ballads, *The Highwayman* and *The Barrel-Organ*. *Midnight Express* is an edited version of one of his most famous short stories of the same name.



Let's share:

- (1) Suppose you are standing before a mirror and you see there a person different from yourself. How would you react in such a situation?
- (2) Suppose you have read about a character in a book. How would you feel if you meet that character in real life?

Let's read:

It was a **battered** old book, bound in red leather. When Mortimer was twelve years old, he found the book in his father's library. When the rest of his large, old house was covered in darkness, he took the book to his bedroom to read by candlelight. The clock ticked in the hall below and the sea roared outside.

Mortimer was **fascinated** by the battered old book. It contained a story called the 'Midnight Express'. There was an illustration on page fifty, which threatened him for some unknown reason. The **illustration** showed an empty railway platform at night lit by a dull, yellow lamp. A single man stood under the lamp, his face

turned towards the black mouth of a tunnel. Mortimer never read beyond page fifty.

Many years passed after that. Mortimer was now a young man. One day, around midnight, he was waiting for a train in a dark, empty junction.



Word nest:

battered : damaged

fascinated : attracted

illustration : picture

Let's do:

Activity 1

Tick the correct alternative:

- (i) Mortimer found the book (a) at a friend's place (b) in a book fair (c) in his father's library
- (ii) The illustration on the page showed (a) a vast sea (b) an empty railway platform (c) a dark library room
- (iii) Mortimer was able to read up to (a) page fifty of the book (b) the last page of the book (c) page fifty five of the book
- (iv) Here Midnight Express is (a) an express train (b) a railway station (c) a book

Activity 2

Rearrange the following sentences in the correct order and put the numbers in the given boxes:

(1) As a young man, Mortimer was waiting for a train in an empty junction.

(2) Mortimer found a battered old book.

(3) He started to read the story by candle light.

(4) Mortimer stopped at page fifty while reading the story.

(5) The illustration of the story frightened Mortimer every time.

(6) Mortimer was fascinated by the battered old book.

Activity 3

Answer the following question :

Why do you think Mortimer never read beyond page fifty of the book?

Let's continue:

There was a single dull lamp glowing. Mortimer, in the lamp light, suddenly noticed a dark and **solitary** figure he knew. It was seen on page fifty of his book in his childhood. The figure faced the black mouth of a tunnel.

Mortimer's **instincts** were aroused. He walked quickly towards the figure and looked into its face. Mortimer was shocked. He was staring into his own face.

A wave of panic surged through Mortimer. He turned, gasped and broke into a wild run. He stumbled out of the platform and rushed down a moonlit road. He could hear the echo of his own footsteps behind him. The footsteps were steadily



gaining on him. Mortimer paused for a moment. He was completely shaken with fear. He began to run again.

Quarter of a mile down, Mortimer saw a small white cottage. Seeking desperate shelter, Mortimer **pounded** on the wooden door. He heard heavy footsteps coming down creaking stairs. The door opened and a shadowy figure stood with a candle. They exchanged no words. The shadowy figure beckoned him inside. They went up the creaking stairs.

Word nest:

solitary	: lonely
instincts	: instant reactions
pounded	: banged

Let's do:

Activity 4

Complete the following sentences with information from the text:

- (a) Mortimer noticed in the lamp light _____
- (b) The solitary figure faced _____
- (c) Walking towards the figure Mortimer _____
- (d) The shadowy figure stood _____

Activity 5

Answer the following questions:

- (a) When had Mortimer seen the 'dark and solitary figure' in his childhood?
- (b) "Mortimer was shocked"- When was Mortimer shocked and why?
- (c) What was "steadily gaining" on Mortimer as he stumbled out of the platform?

Let's continue:

The shadowy figure took him to an upper room where a bright fire was burning. There was an armchair beside the fire. By the armchair was a small, oak table on which lay a battered old book bound in red leather. The shadowy figure put the candle on the table and departed silently.

Mortimer **collapsed** into the armchair and picked up the old book. With a shock he realized it was the same book from his childhood, the book which contained the story of 'Midnight Express'. Mortimer was greatly afraid. He turned the pages with trembling hands. He began to read. The story was about a man who in his childhood had read a book which contained a frightening picture.

Mortimer tried to **grasp** the strange cycle of events he was going through. He was filled with acute dread. "Who is the strange man who asked me into this cottage?," Mortimer asked himself fearfully.

At that very moment the door opened and the strange host came in. His face

was covered in darkness. The candle on the table cast huge shadows on the walls. The shadowy figure stood before Mortimer. Slowly he edged forward.



Mortimer, sitting on the armchair, felt a chill run up his spine. He looked up into the face of the shadowy figure. Mortimer realized he was looking at himself.

The clock ticked in the hall below and sea roared outside. The candlelight **flickered**. The old, battered book bound in red leather lay open on the table.

Word Nest:

collapsed	: fell down
grasp	: understand
flickered	: glowed unsteadily

Let's do:

Activity 6

Write 'T' for true and 'F' for false statements in the given boxes. Give supporting statements for each of your answers:

- (a) Mortimer found the old battered book on the armchair. ☐
-
- (b) Mortimer realized that the book was the same one which he had read in his childhood. ☐
-
- (c) Mortimer felt immensely afraid of the things happening around him. ☐
-
- (d) In the flickering candlelight, the host was seen standing by the table. ☐
-

Activity 7

Answer the following questions:

- (a) To where did Mortimer follow the shadowy figure?
- (b) Why do you think Mortimer's hands trembled when he turned the pages of the book?
- (c) "Mortimer tried to grasp the strange cycle of events he was going through"- what was the strange cycle of events?
- (d) Do you think the strange incidents that happened to Mortimer would not have occurred if he had not read the book?

Let's learn:

Study the following sets of sentences carefully:

Set 1:

- (a) Mortimer **is reading** a book in his father's library.
- (b) He **was hearing** the echo of his own footsteps.

Set 2:

- (a) A book **is being read** by Mortimer in his father's library.
- (b) The echo of his own footsteps **was being heard** by him.

In the first set of sentences, the form of the verbs shows that the person denoted by the Subject **does something**.

In the second set of sentences, the form of the verb shows that **something is done to the person** denoted by the Subject.

Let's do:

Activity 8(a)

In the following sentences, underline the verb forms which show that the person denoted by the Subject is doing something. Circle the verb forms which show that something is being done to the person denoted by the Subject:

- (i) I am writing a letter.
- (ii) A letter is being written by me.
- (iii) The gatekeeper was opening the gate.
- (iv) The gate was being opened by the gatekeeper.

Let's learn:

The verb forms that you have underlined are in the **Active Voice**. The verb forms you have circled are in the **Passive Voice**.

Let's do:

Activity 8(b)

Identify the voice of the following sentences and fill in the chart given below:

- (i) The artist is painting a picture.
- (ii) A song is being sung by Shiela.
- (iii) The boy was flying a kite.
- (iv) Football was being played by the children.

Active voice	Passive voice

Activity 8(c)

Match column A with column B:

A	B
(i) Mother is cooking food for us.	(a) Trees were being planted by the children
(ii) Father is baking a cake.	(b) A lesson was being learnt by the students.
(iii) The children were planting trees.	(c) Food is being cooked by mother for us.
(iv) The students were learning a lesson.	(d) A cake is being baked by father.

Activity 8(d)

Change the voice of the following sentences:

- (a) The girl is watching a film.
- (b) Rahul is driving a car.
- (c) The author was writing a novel.
- (d) The man was buying vegetables.

Activity 9

Find words in the passage which mean the following:

- (a) a passage built underground to allow a railway / bus to go through a hill.
- (b) to be very afraid of something
- (c) shaking of the body
- (d) the sound that a door sometimes makes when we open it

Let's talk:

Do you think the title of this story "Midnight Express" is apt? Can you suggest any other title? Discuss in groups and give reasons.

Let's do:

Activity 10 (a)

Suppose you find yourself alone in a railway station at night. Write a paragraph in about eighty words describing your experience.

Activity 10 (b)

Write an imaginary conversation between you and your friend discussing the advantages of visiting a library regularly.

Let's work together :

Making a Collage

A collage is an artistic composition made by sticking bits of paper, cloth, string, etc to a surface.

Materials required : old magazines / newspapers
glue
a piece of cardboard cut into a square for the background surface
scissors

Method :

- (1) Search through old magazines or newspapers and find pictures relating to any one theme.
- (2) Cut them out.
- (3) Spread a layer of glue on the back of the pictures.
- (4) Lay the pictures and the cardboard piece.
- (5) Let the glue dry.
- (6) See that the pictures to cover the background.
- (7) Your collage is ready.
- (8) Give a title to your collage.

Now present your collage to the class and say a few lines on it.

Lesson 12

Someone

Walter John de la Mare

Let's start:

Walter John de la Mare, (25 April 1873 – 22 June 1956) was an English poet, short story writer and novelist. He is probably best remembered for his works for children and for his poem “The Listeners”. His career as a writer started from about 1895 and he continued to publish to the end of his life. In his poems de la Mare has described the English sea and coast, the secret and hidden world of nature.



Let's share :

- (1) What are the things that make a forest interesting at night?
- (2) Would you prefer staying alone in a forest at night or would you like to have your friends with you? Give reasons for your answer.

Let's read :

Someone came knocking
At my wee, small door;
Someone came knocking;
I'm sure-sure-sure;
I listened, I opened,
I looked to left and right,
But nought there was a stirring
In the still, dark night;
Only the busy beetle
Tap-tapping in the wall,



Only from the forest
The screech-owl's call,
Only the cricket whistling
While the dewdrops fall,
So I know not who came knocking,
At all, at all, at all.

Word Nest:

wee	: very small
nought	: nothing
stirring	: movement

Let's do

Activity 1

Tick the correct alternative:

- (i) The door was (a) big (b) small (c) wide
- (ii) The poet looked (a) backward and forward (b) up and down (c) to left and right
- (iii) The busy beetle was tap-tapping in the (a) wall (b) door (c) window
- (iv) The cricket was (a) singing (b) whistling (c) chirping

Activity 2

Complete the following sentences with information from the text:

- (a) Someone came knocking at _____
- (b) There was no stirring in _____
- (c) The poet heard the screech-owl's call from _____
- (d) The poet did not know _____

Activity 3

Answer the following question:

Who do you think came knocking at the poet's small door?

Activity 4

Fill in the following chart with information from the text:

Who	Did What
(i) Someone	
(ii) Beetle	
(iii) Owl	
(iv) Cricket	

Activity 5

Answer the following questions:

- (a) What did the poet do after he heard the knocking on the door?
- (b) What was the night like?
- (c) Name the insect mentioned in the poem.
- (d) Why does the poet use the expression 'at all' thrice in the last line of the poem?

Activity 6(a)

Fill in the blanks with the correct form of the given verbs in brackets:

- (i) The Mayor _____ to Pune next week. (go)
- (ii) By next December, we _____ here for three years. (stay)
- (iii) Perhaps they _____ Dooars later. (visit)
- (iv) The boy _____ television since morning. (watch)

Activity 6(b)

In the following sentences underline the Phrases and state what kind of Phrases they are:

- (i) He wanted to speak to his teacher.
- (ii) At this moment it's raining hard.
- (iii) To do well in the competition is my aim.
- (iv) They live in a house made of wood.

Activity 6(c)

In the following sentences underline the Clauses and state what kind of Clauses they are:

- (i) The child ran away as soon as she saw the strange man.
- (ii) I saw an old woman who was carrying a child.
- (iii) The dog follows his master wherever he goes.
- (iv) We all thought that it would not rain today.

Activity 6(d)

Change the following sentences from Active to Passive Voice:

- (i) India won the World Cup in cricket recently.
- (ii) The teacher was teaching English.
- (iii) Rani is singing a beautiful song.
- (iv) The wind blew away the rooftops of the houses.

Activity 7

Make meaningful sentences of your own with the following words:

- (i) wee : _____
- (ii) stirring : _____
- (iii) busy : _____
- (iv) dewdrops : _____

Let's talk:

The dawn and the sunset both look beautiful. Discuss with your partner which of them you like better.

Let's do:

Activity 8(a)

Suppose you spent a moonlit night in a forest guest house. Write a paragraph of about eighty words on your experience. Mention the sounds that you heard there.

Activity 8(b)

In about eighty words write an autobiography of an owl enjoying the night.

Let's work together:

Collect pictures of insects and show them to your class. Write four sentences on each type of insect you have collected.

Lesson 13

The Man Who Planted Trees

Jean Giono

Let's start:

Jean Giono (1895 -1970) was a French author who wrote works of fiction mostly set in the Provence region of France. His most noted works are *The Horseman on the Roof*, *Two Riders of the Storm* etc. The present text is adapted from his famous work of the same name, which has been translated into English by Peter Doyle.



Let's share:

1. Do you have any ideas which might help in beautifying your natural surroundings?
Discuss with your partner.
2. When do you think it is possible for a single person to carry out, all by himself, a task which usually requires the participation of many people?

Let's read:

About forty years ago I went on a long **hike**, through hills absolutely unknown to tourists, in that very old region where the Alps **penetrate** into **Provence**. It consisted of **barren** and monotonous lands. Nothing grew there except wild lavender.

I was crossing this country at its widest part, and after walking for three days, I found myself in the most complete **desolation**. I was camped next to an abandoned village. I had used the last of my water the day before and I needed to find more. These ruined houses of the village made me think that there must, at one time, have been a spring or a well there. There was indeed a spring, but it was dry. All life had disappeared.

It was a beautiful June day with plenty of sun, but on these shelterless lands, high up in the sky, the wind whistled continually. Its sound was like that of a wild beast disturbed during its meal.

I had to move my camp. After five hours of walking, I still hadn't found water, and nothing gave me hope of finding any.



Word Nest:

hike	: walking lengthy distances
penetrate	: to enter into the interior of
Provence	: a former province of south-eastern France
barren	: an empty and fruitless piece of land
desolation	: loneliness

Let's do:

Activity 1

Tick the correct alternative:

- (i) The narrator was speaking of his experience (a) of recent times (b) about forty years ago (c) forty years into the future
- (ii) The land could produce only (a) plants of all types (b) wild lavender (c) oak trees
- (iii) The village where he was camped was inhabited by (a) the villagers (b) wild animals (c) none
- (iv) The sound of the wind is compared to (a) a flute (b) drums (c) a wild beast

Activity 2

Rearrange the following sentences in the correct order and put the numbers in the given boxes:

- | | |
|---|----------------------|
| (1) The narrator had been walking for three days. | <input type="text"/> |
| (2) He came across a dry spring. | <input type="text"/> |
| (3) No vegetation grew in the region except wild lavender. | <input type="text"/> |
| (4) The narrator's camp was near an abandoned village. | <input type="text"/> |
| (5) He was in search of water. | <input type="text"/> |
| (6) He lost all hopes of water when his search produced no result after five hours. | <input type="text"/> |

Activity 3

Answer the following question:

Why do you think the village was abandoned?

Let's continue:

Everywhere there was the same dryness, the same stiff, woody plants. I thought I saw in the distance the shadow of a figure. On a chance I headed towards it. It was a shepherd. Thirty lambs or so were resting near him on the **scorching** ground.

He gave me a drink and a little later he led me to his shepherd's cottage. He shared his soup with me. It had been agreed immediately that I would pass the night there, the closest village being still more than a day and a half farther on. There are four or five villages **dispersed** far from one another on the **flanks** of the hills in this area. They are inhabited by woodcutters who make charcoal.

The shepherd took out a bag and poured a pile of **acorns** out onto the table. He began to examine them one after another with a great deal of attention, separating

the good ones from the bad. When he had before him one hundred perfect acorns he stopped, and we went to bed. The company of this man brought me a feeling of peace. He gave me the impression that nothing could disturb him. I was **intrigued** and I wanted to find out more about this man.



Word Nest:

scorching	: hot enough to burn
dispersed	: spread over a wide area
flanks	: sides
acorns	: fruits of the oak tree
intrigued	: puzzled and curious

Let's do:

Activity 4

Complete the following sentences with information from the text:

- (a) In the text, 'I' refers to _____
- (b) The shepherd's cottage would be the narrator's shelter for the night since _____
- (c) With a great deal of attention, the shepherd _____
- (d) The impression provided by the shepherd to the narrator was _____

Activity 5

Answer the following questions:

- (a) Give two examples of the shepherd's hospitality towards the narrator.
- (b) State the profession of the people who inhabited the four or five remote villages.
- (c) "I was intrigued." Why was the narrator 'intrigued'?

Let's continue:

Before going out the next day, he soaked in a bucket of water the acorns that he had so carefully chosen and counted. He carried an iron rod too, as a walking stick. He invited me to come along with him.

Having arrived at the place he had been heading for, he began to pound his iron rod into the ground. This made a hole in which he placed an acorn, and covered over the hole again. He was planting oak trees. In this way, he planted his one hundred acorns with great care.

He told me that for three years now he had been planting trees in this solitary way. He had planted one hundred thousand. Of these one hundred thousand, twenty thousand had come up.

It was at this moment that I began to wonder about his age. He was clearly more than fifty. Fifty-five, he told me. His name was Elzéard Bouffier. He had owned a farm in the plains, where he lived most of his life. He had lost his only son, and then his wife. He had retired into this solitude, where he took pleasure in living slowly, with his flock of sheep and his dog. He had concluded that this country was dying for lack of trees. He added that, having nothing more important to do, he had **resolved** to remedy the situation.

We parted the next day.

The next year the war came, in which I was engaged for five years. With the war behind me, I had a great desire to breathe a little pure air, and I set out again

along the trail through that deserted country. The land had not changed. Ever since the day before, I had been thinking about the shepherd who planted trees. Ten thousand oaks, I had said to myself, must really take up a lot of space.

When I met Elzéard Bouffier this time, I found that the war had not disturbed him at all. He had continued with his planting. The oaks of 1910



were now ten years old and were taller than me and than him. The scene was impressive. I was actually speechless and we passed the whole day in silence, walking through his forest. It was in three sections, eleven kilometers long overall and, at its widest point, three kilometers wide. When I considered that this had all sprung from the hands and from the soul of this one man — without technical **aids** — it struck me that men could be as effective as God in **domains** other than destruction.

Word Nest:

- resolved** : determined to do something
- aids** : devices for help
- domain** : a particular area

Let's do:

Activity 6

Write 'T' for true and 'F' for false statements in the given boxes. Give supporting statements for each of your answers:

- (a) The next morning the shepherd left his house all by himself. ☐
-
- (b) Twenty thousand trees had sprouted from among the trees planted by the shepherd. ☐
-
- (c) The narrator met Elzéard Bouffier after a time span of five years. ☐
-
- (d) The forest had sprung with the combined effort of the villagers and the shepherd. ☐
-

Activity 7

Answer the following questions:

- (a) How did Elzéard Bouffier plant the acorns?
- (b) How many years later did the narrator revisit the country?
- (c) "I found that the war had not disturbed him at all"-Why do you think that the war had not been able to disturb Elzéard Bouffier?
- (d) What was the narrator's reaction on seeing the massive oak trees?

Activity 8(a)

Combine the following pairs of sentences by using Infinitives:

- (i) My mother went to Agra. She wanted to visit the Taj Mahal.
- (ii) The man held a meeting. He wanted to select a manager for the factory.
- (iii) She was too tired. She could not work.
- (iv) The school has appointed a new teacher. He would teach Bengali to the students.

Activity 8(b)

Fill in the blanks with the Present Perfect Continuous tense of the given verbs:

- (i) The dog _____ (bark) since last night.
- (ii) The man _____ (read) the newspaper for two hours.
- (iii) The students _____ (prepare) themselves for the quiz competition for several months.
- (iv) Mother _____ (cook) dinner for all of us throughout the evening.

Activity 8(c)

Change the underlined verbs into the Past Perfect Continuous tense:

- (i) He said that he had tried to contact us over phone since 8 o'clock that day.
- (ii) For a long time they had planned to visit the caves of Ajanta and Ellora.
- (iii) The actor who had played the part of Netaji became ill after the show.
- (iv) My sister explained that she got up late because she had studied till midnight.

Activity 8(d)

Change the following sentences into Indirect speech:

- (i) Mohan said, "My brother will leave tomorrow".
- (ii) My friend said to me, " I will be grateful if you help me now."
- (iii) The child said to his father, " Please give me a toy."
- (iv) "Oh! what a hot day it is today," said Rita.
- (v) "May we save our good earth!" said the teacher

Activity 9

Find words in the third section of the text which mean the following:

- (a) a way of improving an unpleasant or difficult situation
- (b) to repeatedly hit at something
- (c) a place with no people in it
- (d) left with no words

Let's talk:

Trees are an important part of our planet. We are losing a number of trees everyday because of various reasons. Discuss in groups what you can do to prevent the cutting down of trees in your neighbourhood.

Let's do:

Activity 10(a)

Write an imaginary conversation between yourself and a tree which you had planted and which has now grown green and tall.

Activity 10(b)

Suppose your friend, who lives in a hostel, is missing his/her friends and family. He/she is feeling very lonely and sad. Write a letter inspiring him/her to cope with his/her present situation.

Let's work together:

Locate a plot near your school. Collect a bag of seeds. With the help of your friends, plant the seeds and water them. Write four sentences on what you have done.

Teachers' Guidelines

The National Curriculum Framework (NCF) 2005 has observed that the aim of teaching English in India is “the creation of multilinguals who can enrich all our languages; this has been an abiding national vision. The multilingual perspective also addresses concerns of language and culture, and the pedagogical principle of moving from the known to the unknown.” The new English textbook for class VIII, *Blossoms*, has been designed and written abiding by the guidelines and directions of NCF 2005 and RTE 2009. The various areas of learning are used in a combined way as resources for the holistic development of the learner. Life-centric experiences are given optimum emphasis so that the learner is able to co-relate, differentiate and analyse her/his learning through personal experiences comparing them with the experience gathered from the lessons included in the textbook. It is expected that there will be a manifestation of multiple interpretations by the learners. In other words, the new textbook emphasises upon the active participation of the learners thereby ensuring the learners’ autonomy — a vital aspect of constructivism. The new English textbook *Blossoms* thus aims to make learning —

- ✿ activity-based
- ✿ learner-centric
- ✿ joyful
- ✿ integrated with the learners’ experiences

Efforts have been made to ensure that acquisition of various language skills takes place effortlessly. Holistic or top-down approach through story-reading, that promotes visual recognition of whole words or chunks of language, has been complemented by bottom-up approach to letter-sound mapping and print-decoding. Development of lexical knowledge has been given importance as researches show that it is a pivotal aspect in the acquisition and development of Second language for communicative purposes. The rubric ‘Word Nest’ facilitates and encourages the learner to develop her/his skill in language independently. In fact, researches show that greater gains accrue when language is acquired through self-learning than the traditional approach of language learning.

The role of the teacher has also undergone a major shift. The teacher is now supposed to facilitate, support and encourage learning, as instructed by NCF 2005 and RTE 2009. She/he is no longer considered to be the only knowledge resource.

The main thrust should not be on the accumulation of dry information or data but on developing the skills so that the learner herself /himself becomes capable in knowledge construction.

Blossoms for class VIII includes an assortment of prose and poetry. A dramatised version of a popular story has also been included so that the learners are exposed to the various genres of literature. In fact, NCF 2005 has clearly stated that the ‘use of language to develop the imagination is a major aim of later language study’.

The various rubrics that have been used in the textbook for facilitating classroom transaction are briefly explained here:

Let’s start : It is a brief account of the life and works of the author or poet. The objective is that the learner gets a preliminary idea about the writer before reading the text.

Let’s share : It is a Pre-Reading activity that motivates the learner to read the text. This ice-breaking activity facilitates the learner in contextualization.

Let’s read : It emphasizes on reading and comprehending. The learner may be guided in the reading process following the top-down and bottom-up strategies.

Let’s do : It contains activities that facilitates the learner in developing their language competencies. The activities also ensure multiple interpretations by the learner.

Let’s learn : In this section the grammatical competencies are developed with reference to the text.

Let’s talk : It is meant to develop the conversational skill of the learners. It also provides ample scope for multiple interpretations.

Let’s work together : It emphasizes upon collaborative work, thereby developing the creative and aesthetic skills of the learners.

The new English textbook for class VIII, *Blossoms*, contains a collection of selected prose, verse and play with the objective of developing language skills through selections of literary texts. The skills are also developed in a graded manner.

Revision lesson : It is a re-capitulation of the skills developed in class VII. The activities are to be done in pairs or groups so that the slow learners are benefitted through collaborative activities.

Lesson 1 (The Wind Cap): Learning objectives: developing competency to use Present and Past Perfect Continuous tense, writing a paragraph and informal letter.

Lesson 2 (Clouds) Learning objectives: developing the competency to use Future Continuous and Future Perfect tense, writing a paragraph and story writing.

Lesson 3 (An April Day) Learning objectives: reinforcing the competencies developed in the previous lessons, developing the skill to write a paragraph and a story.

Lesson 4 (The Great Escape) Learning objectives: developing competency to use infinitives, writing a summary and writing informal letters.

Lesson 5 (Princess September) Learning objectives : developing competency to use phrase and clause, writing a paragraph and a dialogue.

Lesson 6 (The Sea) Learning objectives : reinforcing the competencies developed in the previous lessons 4 and 5, developing the skill of writing a story and writing informal letter.

Lesson 7 (A King's Tale) Learning objectives: developing competencies to use different types of clauses, writing a summary and paragraph writing.

Lesson 8 (The Happy Prince) Learning objectives: reading and understanding a play, developing the grammatical skill of narration, writing a dialogue and writing informal letter.

Lesson 9 (Summer Friends) Learning objectives: reinforcing the competencies developed in the previous lessons 7 and 8, writing a paragraph and letter writing.

Lesson 10 (Tales of Childhood) Learning objectives: identifying Transitive Verb, change of voice of sentences in Simple Present and Simple Past tense, developing the skill to write an autobiography and diary writing.

Lesson 11 (Midnight Express) Learning objectives : change of voice of sentences in Present and Past Continuous tense, writing a paragraph and a dialogue.

Lesson 12 (Everyone Sang) Learning objectives: reinforcing the competencies developed in the previous lessons 10 and 11, writing an autobiography and a paragraph.

Lesson 13 (The Man Who Planted Trees) Learning objectives: summing up of the grammatical skills of the previous lessons, writing an informal letter and a dialogue.