

LET'S BEGIN

*Do you know these words? If you don't, find out their meanings: **bandage, crutch, cripple, honour, misfortune, system.***

Look at the pictures in this unit and guess in what way this school may be different from other schools.



I had heard a great deal about Miss Beam's school, but not till last week did the chance come to visit it.

When I arrived there was no one in sight but a girl of about twelve. Her eyes were covered with a bandage and she was being led carefully between the flower beds by a little boy who was about four years younger. She stopped, and it looked like she asked him who had come. He seemed to be describing me to her. Then they passed on.



Miss Beam was all that I had expected — middle-aged, full of authority, yet kind and understanding. Her hair was beginning to turn grey, and she had the kind of plump figure that is likely to be comforting to a homesick child. I asked her some questions about her teaching methods, which I had heard, were simple.

“No more than this is needed to help them to learn how to do things — simple spelling, adding, subtracting, multiplying and writing. The rest is done by reading to them and by interesting talks, during which they have to sit still and keep their hands quiet. There are practically no other lessons.

“The real aim of this school is not so much to teach thought as to teach thoughtfulness — kindness to others, and being responsible citizens. Look out of the window a minute, will you?” Miss Beam said.

I went to the window which overlooked a large garden and a playground at the back. “What do you see?” Miss Beam asked.

“I see some very beautiful grounds,” I said, “and a lot of jolly children. It pains me, though, to see that they are not all so healthy and active-looking. When I came in, I saw one poor little girl being led about. She has some trouble with her eyes. Now I can see two more with the same difficulty. And there’s a girl with a crutch watching the others at play. She seems to be a hopeless cripple.”

Miss Beam laughed. “Oh, no!” she said. “She’s not really lame. This is only her lame day. The others are not blind either. It is only their blind day.”

I must have looked very surprised, for she laughed again.

“This is a very important part of our system. To make our children appreciate and understand misfortune, we make them share in misfortune too. Each term every child has one blind day, one lame day, one deaf day, one injured day and one dumb day. During the blind day, their eyes are bandaged absolutely and they are on their honour not to peep. The bandage is put on overnight so they wake blind. This means



that they need help with everything. Other children are given the duty of helping them and leading them about. They all learn so much this way — both the blind and the helpers.

“There is no misery about it,” Miss Beam continued. “Everyone is very kind, and it is really something of a game. Before the day is over, though, even the most thoughtless child realises what misfortune is.

“The blind day is, of course, really the worst, but some of the children tell me that the dumb day is the most difficult. We cannot bandage the children’s mouths, so they really have to exercise their willpower. Come into the garden and see for yourself how the children feel about it.”

Miss Beam led me to one of the bandaged girls. “Here’s a gentleman who has come to talk to you,” said Miss Beam, and left us.

“Don’t you ever peep?” I asked the girl. “Oh, no!” she exclaimed. “That would be cheating! But I had no idea it was so awful to be blind. You can’t see a thing. You feel you are going to be hit by something every moment. It’s such a relief just to sit down.”

“Are your helpers kind to you?” I asked.

“Fairly. But they are not as careful as I shall be when it is my turn. Those that have been blind already are the best helpers. It’s perfectly ghastly not to see. I wish you’d try.”

“Shall I lead you anywhere?” I asked.

“Oh, yes”, she said. “Let’s go for a little walk. Only you must tell me about things. I shall be so glad when today is over. The other bad days can’t be half as bad as this. Having a leg tied up and hopping about on a crutch is almost fun, I guess. Having an arm tied up is a bit more troublesome, because you can’t eat without help, and things like that. I don’t think I’ll mind being deaf for a day — at least not much. But being blind is so frightening. My head aches all the time just from worrying that I’ll get hurt. Where are we now?”



“In the playground,” I said. “We’re walking towards the house. Miss Beam is walking up and down the garden with a tall girl.”



“What is the girl wearing?” my little friend asked.

“A blue cotton skirt and a pink blouse.”

“I think it’s Millie,” she said. “What colour is her hair?”

“Very light,” I said.

“Yes, that’s Millie. She’s the Head Girl.”



“There’s an old man tying up roses,” I said.

“Yes, that’s Peter. He’s the gardener. He’s hundreds of years old!”

“And here comes a girl with curly red hair. She’s on crutches.”



“That’s Anita,” she said.



And so we walked on. Gradually I discovered that I was ten times more thoughtful than I ever thought I could be. I also realised that if I had to describe people and things to someone else, it made them more interesting to me. When I finally had to leave, I told Miss Beam that I was very sorry to go.

“Ah!” she replied, “Then there is something in my system after all.”

E.V. Lucas
(abridged and simplified)

Glossary

kind:	gentle and considerate towards others
plump:	stout; pleasantly fat
responsible:	aware of one’s duties
at play:	playing
hopeless:	unfortunate; without hope
lame day:	day on which students act as if they were lame



<i>misfortune</i>	:	unfortunate condition; bad luck
<i>their eyes are bandaged</i>	:	they are blindfolded
<i>are on their honour</i>	:	have promised
<i>misery</i>	:	difficulty; unpleasantness
<i>thoughtless</i>	:	careless
<i>awful</i>	:	bad
<i>troublesome</i>	:	difficult
<i>gradually</i>	:	slowly

WORKING WITH THE TEXT

A. Put these sentences, from the story, in the right order and write them out in a paragraph. (Don't refer to the text. Check your memory).

- I shall be so glad when today is over.
- Having a leg tied up and hopping about on a crutch is almost fun, I guess.
- I don't think I'll mind being deaf for a day — at least not much.
- But being blind is so frightening.
- Only you must tell me about things.
- Let's go for a little walk.
- The other bad days can't be half as bad as this.

B. Answer the following questions :

1. Why do you think the writer visited Miss Beam's school?
2. What was the 'game' that every child in the school had to play?



3. “Each term every child has one blind day, one lame day...” Complete the line.
Which day was the hardest? Why was it the hardest?
4. What was the purpose of these special days?

LANGUAGE WORK

A. Match the words and phrases with their meanings in the box below:

- | | |
|----------------|-------|
| 1. homesick | _____ |
| 2. practically | _____ |
| 3. it pains me | _____ |
| 4. jolly | _____ |
| 5. thoughtless | _____ |
| 6. crutch | _____ |
| 7. misfortune | _____ |
| 8. ghastly | _____ |

T shaped support for a lame person fitting under the armpit, it hurts me,
frightful, happy, almost or very nearly, intense feeling of
returning home after being away from it, bad luck, not very caring.

B. Write these lines in order from the story

1. I had heard a great deal about Miss Beam’s school.
2. Miss Beam was all that I had expected — middle-aged, full of authority.
3. I went to the window which overlooked a large garden.



4. “We cannot bandage the children’s mouths, so they really have to exercise their willpower.”

C. 1. Given below is a page from a dictionary. Look at it carefully and;

- (i) find a word which means the same as ‘ghastly’. Write down the word and its two meanings.
- (ii) find a word meaning a part of the school year.
- (iii) find a word that means examination.

term *noun*

1 a fixed length of time: *He was made captain of the football team for a **term** of one year.*

2 a part of the school year: *There are three **terms** in a school year.*

terms *plural nouns* the things you are asking for: *If you agree to my **terms**—free meals and good wages—I will work for you.*

terrace *noun*

1 a level area cut out from the side of a hill

2 a flat area outside a house: *We sat on the **terrace** in the evening.*

3 a row of houses joined together

terraced *adjective*: a **terraced** house

terrible *adjective*

1 causing fear: *We saw a **terrible** storm.*

2 very bad: *Your writing is **terrible**.*

terribly *adverb*: *It is **terribly** (= very) hot.*

terrify *verb*

(present participle **terrifying**, past **terrified**)

*to fill with fear: The animals were **terrified** by the storm.*

terror *noun*

great fear: *a feeling of **terror***

territory *noun*

(plural **territories**)

1 land ruled by one government: *This island is **British territory**.*

test² *noun*

an examination: *I passed my driving **test** today.*

test tube *noun* small thin glass tube: *We put chemicals in **test tubes** in our chemistry class.*

text *noun*

1 the words used in a book

2 a few words from a book

textbook *noun*: A **textbook** is a book we use to learn about something.

than

(used when we compare things, in sentences like these):
*My brother is older **than** me. Mary sings better **than** anyone else in the class.*

thank *verb*

to say we are grateful to someone: ***I thanked** her for the present she sent me.*

***Thank you** for the present you sent me.*

***No, thank you,** I don't want any more tea.*

thankful *adjective* very glad; grateful

thanks *plural noun* word used to show that we are grateful: ***Thanks** for helping me. It was thanks to John (= because of him) that we won the game.*

that

1 (plural **those**) the one over there; the one further away than this one: *This is my bowl; **that** bowl is yours.*

2 (plural **those**) (used to point out someone or something; used to mean the one known or mentioned already): *Did*



2 an area belonging to one person or animal:
*Wild animals will not allow other animals to enter their **territory**.*

test¹ verb

1 to look at something to see if it is correct or will work properly: *Before he bought the car, he drove it to **test** it.*

2 to ask someone questions: *The teacher **tested** the children on their homework.*

*you bring **that** photograph? We played football and **after that** (= next) we went home.*

3 (used instead of **who**, **whom**)

2. Now make lists of;

- (a) all the words on the page (plus any more that you can think of) that begin with *terr-*.
- (b) five words that may follow the last word on the page, *that*.
- (c) write down your own meaning of the word 'thank'. Then write down the meaning given in the dictionary.

D. A poem for you to read

All but blind
In his chambered hole
Gropes for worms
The four-clawed Mole.

All but blind
In the evening sky
The hooded Bat
Twirls softly by.

All but blind
In the burning day
The Barn Owl blunders
On her way.

And blind as are
These three to me,
So, blind to Someone
I must be.

(Walter de la Mare)



GRAMMAR WORK

I. Study the underlined words in the following sentences:

– “Gradually I discovered that I was ten times more thoughtful than I ever thought I could be.”

– “It’s perfectly ghastly not to see.”

These two words tell us ‘how’ things are being talked of. Such words are called adverbs of manner. We usually form an adverb of manner by adding **-ly** to the adjective;

ADJECTIVE

ADVERB

careful

carefully

absolute

absolutely

serious

seriously

But **y** changes to **i** before **ly**:

easy

easily

angry

angrily

Adverbs of manner usually come after the verb:

- Do you always work so neatly?
- We walked slowly towards the school building.

Now, cross out the wrong words in the following sentences:

- i. All the children in Miss Beam’s school took the games serious/ seriously.
- ii. The bandaged girl walked careful/carefully to avoid hitting a thing.
- iii. Miss Beam bandaged the girl complete/completely.
- iv. The visitor felt unhappy/unhappily after leaving the school.
- v. Miss Beam expected her children to arrive punctual/punctually.



II. Study this expression from the passage:

‘What is the girl wearing?’ my friend asked.

You know **is/am/are + verb + ing** is used to form present continuous tense. In making questions in present continuous tense, we use either **is/am/are** in the beginning of the sentence or a **wh-word** before **is/am/are**:

- ‘Is he feeling well?’ ‘Yes, he’s fine.’
- ‘Are you/they/we shifting to a new building?’ ‘No, you/they/we aren’t.’
- ‘Am I wasting your time?’ ‘No, It’s okay.’
- Who is knocking at the door?
- What is Tashi doing in the classroom?

Now, complete the following questions by using is/am/are or a wh-word:

- i) ‘_____ Majid writing a letter to his father?’ ‘No, he isn’t.’
- ii) ‘_____ are you going this morning?’ ‘To my sister’s house.’
- iii) ‘_____ your friends coming to the picnic?’ ‘Only one.’
- iv) ‘_____ Tashi visiting Leh again?’ ‘I think so.’
- v) ‘_____ he planning to go by bus or by air?’ ‘I believe, by air!’



LET’S TALK

A. Make a short list of things you find difficult to do.

For example:

doing a somersault



threading a needle

Compare your list with the others’ in the class. Can you explain why you find these things difficult to do?





- B. Look at your hands carefully. Now, write down for each finger one action for which that finger is particularly important. For example, the second (or index) finger helps to hold the knife down firmly when cutting.



LET'S WRITE

The following sentences make up a complete story, but they are jumbled. Rearrange them to form a meaningful story.

- i. The crow drank the water.
- ii. He hit upon a plan.
- iii. He flew here and there in search of water.
- iv. He tried to reach the water but failed.
- v. He collected pebbles in his beak and dropped them one by one in the pot.
- vi. Once upon a time, there was a crow who was very thirsty.
- vii. He saw a pot in a garden that contained very little water.
- viii. The water level rose up, and he drank it and quenched his thirst.

Write a short paragraph of 100 words on **your classroom**.



DO IT YOURSELF

Collect photographs of two famous personalities (for example, Mother Teresa), one man and one woman, who have done something for the suffering people. Paste them on a sheet of paper and under each photograph write a brief biographical note. Hang the sheet on your classroom wall.