

Lesson 8

The Happy Prince

Oscar Wilde

Let's start:

Oscar Fingal O'Flahertie Wills Wilde (1854-1900) was an Irish writer, poet and playwright. *The Importance of Being Earnest* is one of his most popular plays. He also wrote many short stories like *The Selfish Giant*, *The Happy Prince*, *The Model Millionaire* and so on. The present text has been dramatized from his famous story *The Happy Prince*.



Let's share:

- (1) What, according to you, makes a person truly happy ?
- (2) Why do you think we help people?

Let's read:

Characters:

- ❁ The Happy Prince, a statue
- ❁ Swallow, the bird
- ❁ A woman dressmaker
- ❁ Her son
- ❁ A poor young playwright
- ❁ A poor little girl
- ❁ The Mayor
- ❁ Town Councillors
- ❁ A group of beggars
- ❁ Sundry people
- ❁ Angel

[Curtain goes up. In deep centre stage a high and large square box looking like a pedestal is placed. Upon the box stands the Happy Prince. He stands stiffly resembling a statue. A statue is what the Happy Prince is. He is wearing a golden tunic and stands still with legs apart, his hands resting on the hilt of a sword whose tip rests on the pedestal-shaped box. A large red stone is fixed on the side of the hilt. The open eyes of the Happy Prince are individually covered with blue coloured paper cut in the shape of the eye and lightly glued to hold them in place. The statue of Happy Prince faces the audience. A few young students holding books, bags on their shoulders come out of the left wing, cross the stage talking. The stage is lit in yellow.]

Student 1 : So this is the famous statue of Happy Prince.

[They pause and gather admiringly around the statue of the Happy Prince]

Student 2 : He is very well known in this land. Happy Prince lived in the wonderful palace of Sans - Souci. During the day, he played with his friends in the palace garden. By night, he sang and laughed. He had no idea about the people of this world who live outside his palace.

Student 1 : You mean he never felt sad?

Student 2 : Nothing sad ever entered the door of the prince's palace. Everyone called him the Happy Prince and when he died, the town built this statue and named it the same.

Student 3 : The Happy Prince is built with gold from head to foot. His eyes are two precious **sapphires** and there is a big red **ruby** on his sword **hilt**.

[Student 1 glances up at the Happy Prince with awe. They start walking. Student 2 speaks when they are close to the right wing exit.]

Student 2 : In this town, everyone loves the Happy Prince.

[They go out. A sad, tired-looking man immediately enters the stage from the right. He limps down with an unhappy expression. He stops before the statue of the Happy Prince and looks unhappily for three seconds. He starts limping towards the left wing exit, muttering loudly to himself]

Man : At least , there's one truly happy man in this town. That is something!

[The sad, tired man goes out through the left wing exit. Immediately from the left wing emerges a young mother dragging her little boy by the hand. The boy is crying. Mother is trying to stop the boy from crying. They reach the statue of the Happy Prince. Mother speaks while walking]

Young mother : I can't understand why you keep crying! Why can't you be happy? The Happy Prince never cries for new things.

[Mother and son go out through the left wing exit. The stage light changes to blue. The twittering call of a bird is heard in the background. Swallow, the bird, dressed in a black tunic, cardboard wings attached to its back, enters stage from the right, joyously tripping. The Swallow flaps its hands quickly to indicate flying. Swallow reaches centre stage, before the statue of the Happy Prince.]

Swallow : It's much too cold here. All my friends have left for warm Egypt. I too must fly. But tonight I will rest in this unknown town. The shelter between the feet of this golden statue looks good enough.

[The Swallow perches on the pedestal-shaped box, holding a leg of the statue and resting his head against it. Swallow jerks and jumps up suddenly after five seconds]

Swallow : I thought this golden room was good shelter. But I'm getting wet in the rain.

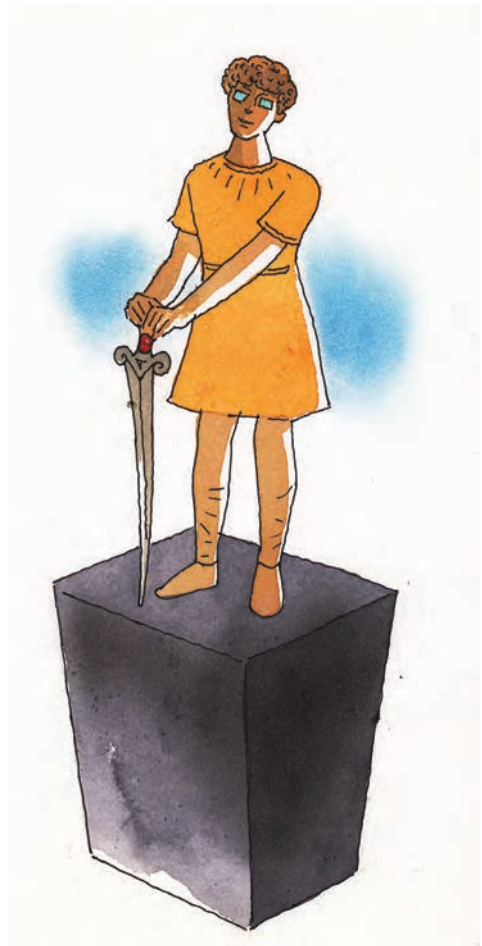
[The Swallow sticks its neck out and looks upwards. He looks puzzled]

Swallow : And yet, the sky is clear. It's not raining.

[Swallow jumps up again as if a second drop of water had fallen. He now looks up at the statue and is amazed to see tear drops beneath its eyes.]

Swallow : Who are you? Why are you crying?

Statue : I'm the Happy Prince. I spent my life in a palace. Now I am dead, and a statue. I stand in the middle of this town. I can see the poor people and all the ugly things in my land.



Swallow : I see you have a golden heart.

Statue : My feet are fixed here. I cannot move. Please help me, little Swallow.

[The stage is darkened. Only the Happy Prince's voice is heard.]

Statue : There is a poor house in a little street. A woman is making a dress for a beautiful, young lady of the palace. The woman is poor and her son is suffering from fever. Swallow, take the ruby from my sword-hilt and give it to her.



[The stage is lit again. The light is blue. Close to the right wing, there stands now an open cottage made of cardboard. There is a backdoor to the cottage for entry from the right wing. A curtain hangs in front of the cottage]

Swallow : But all my friends have flown to Egypt. I cannot delay. It's too cold here.

Statue : Swallow, little Swallow, please stay with me for one night.

Word nest

sapphires : precious, transparent stones of rich blue colour valued as gem stones

ruby : a gem of vivid red colour

hilt : handle of a sword

Let's do:

Activity 1

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

- (1) All the friends of the Swallow had left for warm Egypt.
- (2) The Happy Prince asked the Swallow to take the ruby out of his sword - hilt.
- (3) The Swallow took shelter beneath the statue of the Happy Prince.
- (4) The woman's son was suffering from fever.
- (5) The Happy Prince lived in the wonderful palace of Sans-Souci.
- (6) The town built the statue of the Happy Prince .

Activity 2

Complete the following sentences with information from the text :

- (a) The young mother told her child not to cry because _____.
- (b) The Swallow took shelter beneath the statue of Happy Prince because _____.
- (c) The Swallow mistook _____ for rain.
- (d) The statue of the Happy Prince could see _____.

Activity 3

Answer the following question :

Why does the Swallow think that the statue of the Happy Prince has 'a golden heart'?

Let's continue:

Swallow : I feel sorry looking at you. I don't say no to people. I will help you.

[The Swallow removes the ruby from the hilt with its mouth. He makes a motion of flying with its arms. He goes up to the cottage, removes the curtain. Inside the cottage, mother is tired and has fallen asleep. Her son is tossing in fever. The Swallow puts the ruby down near her hand. Then he comes out and draws the curtain. He flaps his arms in flight and returns to the Happy Prince]

Swallow : It's a cold night. But strange, I am feeling warm.

Statue : That happens when you do something good to help someone.

[Stage light changes to yellow]

Swallow : I will leave for Egypt tonight. I will stay with you through the day.

Statue : Swallow, Swallow, little Swallow, please stay with me for one more night.

Swallow : But all my friends are waiting for me. Tomorrow they are going to fly up River Nile to **Luxor**.

Statue : Far away in a little attic, I see a brown-haired young man. He is unhappy and poor. He is writing a play for the theatre. Little Swallow, take one of my sapphire eyes and give it to him.

Swallow : Dear Prince, I can't do that!

Statue : Swallow, little Swallow, you must.

[The Swallow takes a sapphire from one of the prince's blue eyes and makes the motion of flying, goes to the cardboard cottage. The Swallow removes the curtain. The stage light changes to blue. The playwright is revealed. He sits holding his head in his hands. There is pen and paper by his side. The Swallow quietly leaves the sapphire beside the young playwright. The young playwright discovers the rich stone soon after the Swallow leaves. He is overjoyed.]



Playwright : Someone likes my work a lot! Now I can finish my play.

[The Swallow returns to the Happy Prince. He is resting on the pedestal-shaped box on which stands the Happy Prince. The cottage curtain has been pulled by the young playwright without being visible to the audience. He left through the cottage back-door and the right wing exit.]

Swallow : I'm here to say goodbye.

[The stage light changes to yellow]

Statue : I see a poor little girl in the town square. She has no shoes. Little Swallow, please give her the sapphire remaining in my other eye.

Swallow : Impossible! I can't make you blind.

Word nest:

Luxor : a town in Egypt

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 Swallow didn't want to help the Happy Prince. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
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| (b) The Happy Prince wanted to leave for Egypt. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <hr/> | |
| (c) The Happy Prince asked the Swallow to take a sapphire from one of his eyes to the playwright. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <hr/> | |
| (d) The girl in the Town Square had no shoes. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
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Activity 5

Answer the following questions :

- (a) Why did the Swallow agree to help the Happy Prince?
- (b) Why did the Swallow feel warm ?
- (c) What made the playwright say, 'Now I can finish my play'?

Let's continue:

Statue : Please help me, little Swallow!

[The Swallow plucks the other sapphire from the prince's eye. He goes to the cardboard cottage and removes the curtain. A little girl is discovered weeping inside. The Swallow flaps its arms and goes in. He drops the sapphire into the girl's hand.]

Girl : That's so nice!

[She looks up amazed. The Swallow flies out. He pulls the curtain back, flies to the Happy Prince. The stage light changes to blue]

Swallow : You are blind now, so I must stay with you always. But it's too cold here.

Statue : No, little Swallow, you must fly away to Egypt and the sun.

Swallow : I am staying with you.

Statue : Little Swallow, if you stay, fly over this land. Tell me what you see.

[The stage goes dark. A blue spotlight tracks the Swallow. He is making a flying motion flapping his arms. He runs around the stage in a circle. The stage goes dark again, stays dark for four seconds. A red spotlight falls on a bunch of beggars in front of the stage, their clothes torn, they look hungry and miserable. Running, the Swallow crosses the stage before them flapping its arms, right wing to left wing. Stage darkens again. Blue stage light comes on immediately. The Swallow faces the Happy Prince from the left.]

Swallow : I saw many unhappy and unfed people.

Statue : Take all the gold from my body and give it to the poor people.

[The Swallow makes a plucking motion with its mouth on the Happy Prince's golden tunic. The stage darkens. The same beggars who appeared previously, are seen again clustered on stage. They are wearing good clothes, look better, they are eating and laughing. A single red spot light holds them on the dark stage. The stage darkens briefly, blue light comes on. The Swallow is discovered sitting on the pedestal-shaped box, leaning against the Happy Prince's feet. He is looking unwell and drooping. The Happy Prince has given away all the gold on his body. He is wearing a grey tunic.]

Swallow : Goodbye, my prince.

Statue : Ah, good, you're going to Egypt. I am happy about that.

Swallow : I'm not going to Egypt! I'm going to the house of the brother of Sleep. The cold has got me. I'm dying!

[The Swallow falls down on the pedestal-shaped box, its face expressing sorrow and lies crumpled between the two legs of the Happy Prince. A sad music is played in the background. The stage light changes to yellow. Four people enter from the right wing led by an important-looking man in red coat and trousers. He is the Mayor of the town, he is accompanied by town councillors. They talk as they approach the statue.]

Mayor : A dead bird at the feet of the statue of the Happy Prince! That's very bad. We must make a new law. No bird can die in the town square, or near the Happy Prince.

[One of the Town Councillors wrote this down in a note book. The others looked at the dead bird with great disapproval. The company looked up at the statue]

Mayor : Oh dear! What an ugly thing our prince is these days!

Town Councillor 1 : Where's the ruby in his sword?

Town Councillor 2 : Where are the sapphires in his eyes?

Town Councillor 3 : Where's all his gold?

Mayor : He is no better than a beggar. I find him very ugly.

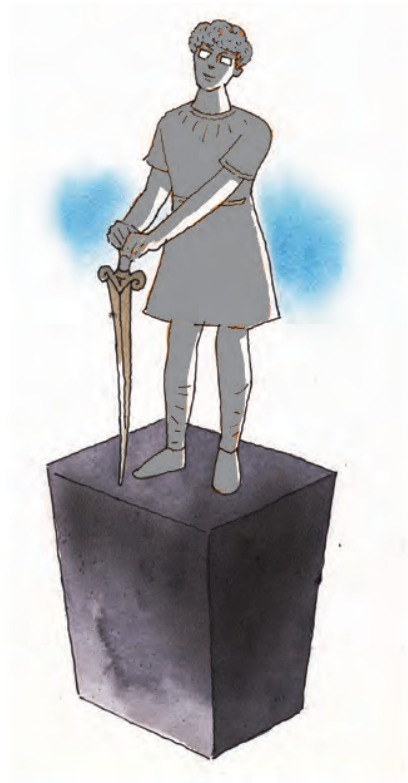
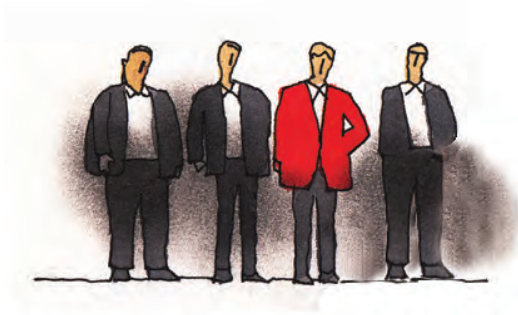
Three Town Councillors (in chorus) : Yes, very ugly.

Mayor : Take the statue away. It isn't beautiful anymore.

[From the right wing comes out two people carrying a stretcher. They come and stop before the Happy Prince. Mayor and the Town Councillors are looking up at the Happy Prince. The stretcher-bearers bring down the statue and put him on the stretcher. Mayor and company look on with great interest. The stretcher-bearers take the grey Happy Prince away.]

Mayor : Take it to the furnace to melt. We will have a new statue.

Three Councillors (in chorus) : A new statue!



Mayor : I want a statue of me.

Three councillors (in chorus) : I want a statue of me.

Mayor : No, no, I want a statue of me.

Three councillors (in chorus) : No, no. I want a statue of me.

[The lights dim on stage. The stage is dark. A yellow spotlight falls on a person in white gown standing upon the pedestal-shaped box. He faces the audience. He is an angel. There are wings attached to his back, a silver crown on his head.]

Angel : Forever will the Swallow now sing in my garden and the Happy Prince
live in my city of gold forever!

[A light music is played in the background. Light dims. Curtain falls.]

Let's do :

Activity 6

Fill in the following chart with information from the text :

Cause	Effect
(i)	The little girl was happy
(ii)	Though it was cold, the Swallow stayed on with the Happy Prince
(iii) The Swallow told the Happy Prince that it saw many unhappy and unfed people.	
(iv) The Mayor didn't find the statue beautiful anymore.	

Activity 7

Answer the following questions:

- (a) What new law did the Mayor propose ?
- (b) Why did the Mayor and the Town Councillors think the statue of the Happy Prince was not beautiful any more?
- (c) Where was the Happy Prince taken?
- (d) Why did the Mayor and the Councillors want statues of themselves?

Let's learn :

Read the following sentences:

- (1) The Swallow said, "Tonight I will rest in this unknown town".
- (2) The Swallow said that it would rest in that unknown town that night.

When sentence (1) is changed to sentence (2), note the changes that take place:

- ❁ inverted commas are omitted
- ❁ 'that' is used before the reported speech

- ❁ 'will' is changed to 'would', Present Tense is changed to Past Tense
- ❁ 'tonight' is changed to 'that night'

In sentence (1), the actual words of the speaker are quoted. The sentence is said to be in **Direct Speech**.

In sentence (2), the words of the speaker are reported. The sentence is said to be in **Indirect speech**.

Let's do:

Activity 8 (a)

Read the following pairs of sentences and write down the changes that have taken place under the appropriate heads in the tables given below. The first one is done for you:

- (i) The child said , "I am going home ."

The child said that he was going home .

		Subject	Verbs	Words	Punctuation Marks
Direct Speech	i(a)	I	am	going home	inverted commas
Indirect Speech	i(b)	he	was	no change	no inverted commas

- (ii) He said to me , "Yesterday was a holiday."

He told me that the previous day had been a holiday.

		Subject	Verbs	Words	Punctuation Marks
Direct Speech	ii(a)				
Indirect Speech	ii(b)				

- (iii) The teacher said to the students , "Tomorrow we will go to the museum."

The teacher told her students that they would go to the museum the next day.

		Subject	Verbs	Other Words	Punctuation Marks
Direct Speech	iii(a)				
Indirect Speech	iii(b)				

Let's learn:

Read the following sets of sentences:

- The young mother said to her little boy, "Why can't you be happy ?"
— **Direct Speech**
 - The young mother asked her little boy why he couldn't be happy.
— **Indirect Speech**

In reporting questions, Indirect Speech is introduced by verbs like 'asked', 'inquired'.

- The statue said to the Swallow, "Please give her the sapphire remaining in my other eye." — **Direct speech**
 - The statue requested the Swallow to give her the sapphire remaining in his other eye. — **Indirect Speech**
- The statue said to the Swallow, "Take all the gold from my body." — **Direct Speech**
 - The statue ordered the Swallow to take all the gold from his body.— **Indirect Speech**

In reporting commands and requests, the Indirect speech is introduced by verbs expressing command or request like 'ordered', 'requested', 'pleaded'.

- Angel : "May the Happy Prince live in my city of gold forever" — **Direct speech**.
 The Angel wished that the Happy Prince might live in his city of gold forever. — **Indirect speech**.

In reporting wishes and prayers the Indirect speech is introduced by verbs like 'wished' and 'prayed'.

- The girl said, "That's so nice!" — **Direct Speech**
 - The girl exclaimed that it was very nice. — **Indirect Speech**

In reporting exclamations and wishes, the Indirect Speech is introduced by verbs like 'exclaimed'.

Let's do

Activity 8 (b)

Change the following sentences from Direct to Indirect Speech:

- (i) The Swallow said to the statue, "I am staying with you."
- (ii) My mother said to me, "Please wait for me here."
- (iii) Raja said, "Oh ! How cold the wind is!"
- (iv) The old man said to the little girl, "May God bless you!"
- (v) The man said to him, "Go away."

Activity 9

Write down the antonyms of the underlined words :

- (a) The Swallow will sing forever.
- (b) The actor enters the stage.
- (c) The student laughed aloud.
- (d) I can see all the beautiful things in my land.

Let's talk :

Make a list of some of the famous statues of the world. Discuss with your partner what you know about them.

Let's do:

Activity 10 (a)

Write an imaginary dialogue in about eighty words between two birds in winter, one of whom is flying away to a warm country and the other who is stuck in a cold land.

Activity 10 (b)

Recently you gave up your seat in a crowded bus to an old, ailing person. Write a letter in about eighty words to your friend describing how you felt after having helped the person.

Let's work together:

Visit your neighbourhood and find out who are in need of help. Discuss with your partner how you would go about helping them.

Lesson 9

Summer Friends

Mary Lamb

Let's start:

Mary Ann Lamb (1764 -1847) was a famous English poet and writer. She is best known today for her collaboration with her brother Charles Lamb on the collection *Tales from Shakespeare*. She and her brother presided over a literary circle in London that included poets like Wordsworth and Coleridge.



Let's share:

1. Match column A with column B:

A	B
(i) peacock	cleans surroundings
(ii) pigeon	dances when the sky is overcast
(iii) crow	used to carry letters

- Which of the birds mentioned above appears to be the closest friend to mankind? Why do you think so?
- How would you feel if you are separated from your friend ?

Let's read:

The Swallow is a summer bird;
He in our chimneys, when the weather
Is fine and warm, may then be heard
Chirping his notes for weeks together.
Come there but one cold wintry day,
Away will fly our guest the Swallow:
And much like him we find the way
Which many a **gay** young friend will follow.

In **dreary** days of snow and frost
Closer to Man will **cling** the Sparrow:
Old friends, although in life we're **crost**,
Their hearts to us will never narrow.

Give me the bird—give me the friend—
Will sing in frost—will love in sorrow—
Whate'er **mischance** to-day may send,
Will greet me with his sight to-morrow.



Word Nest:

gay	: happy
dreary	: dull
cling	: to remain emotionally attached
crost	: the poetical form of the word 'crossed'. Here it means separated
mischance	: misfortune

Let's do:

Activity 1

Tick the correct alternative:

- (i) The swallow comes to the poet in (a) spring (b) summer (c) winter
- (ii) Many young friends follow the behaviour of the (a) sparrow (b) pigeon (c) swallow
- (iii) The sparrow accompanies the poet in times of (a) snow and frost (b) rain and thunder (c) sunshine and warmth
- (iv) The poet wants a friend who will be like (a) swallow (b) sparrow (c) nightingale

Activity 2

Complete the following sentences with information from the text:

- (a) The swallow chirps for weeks together when the weather_____.
- (b) In a cold day the swallow_____.
- (c) Even when old friends are separated, their hearts_____.
- (d) The poet wishes for a bird that will_____.

Activity 3

Answer the following question :

Why do you think the swallow leaves the poet during the winter season?

Activity 4

Fill in the following chart with information from the text:

Who	Does what	When
(i)	chirping his notes	
(ii) The sparrow		
(iii) Old friends		
(iv) A true friend of the poet		the poet had mischance

Activity 5

Answer the following questions:

- (a) What does the swallow do in summer?
- (b) How is the behaviour of a "gay young friend" similar to that of the swallow?
- (c) What type of a friend does the poet want?
- (d) Whom does the poet like—the swallow or the sparrow? Give reasons for your answer.

Activity 6(a)

Read the following sentences. Identify Noun clauses, Adjective clauses and Adverb clauses and fill in the chart given below:

- (i) I expect that I shall get a prize.
- (ii) The umbrella which has a yellow handle is mine.
- (iii) When I was younger I used to fly kites.
- (iv) I remember the house where I was born.

Noun clause	Adjective clause	Adverb clause

Activity 6(b)

Change the following sentences into indirect speech:

- (i) The sailor said to us, "There will be a storm".
- (ii) The teacher said to the student, "Did you come to school yesterday?"
- (iii) The tired guest said to the host, "Please give me a glass of cold water."
- (iv) Rita said, "How happy I am!"
- (v) My grandfather said, "May you live long!"

Activity 7

Make meaningful sentences of your own with the following words:

- (a) guest : _____
- (b) dreary : _____
- (c) narrow : _____
- (d) mischance : _____

Let's talk:

Tell the class about the qualities you look for in a friend. Have you found such a friend?

Let's do:

Activity 8(a)

Write a short story in about eighty words using the following hints. Give a suitable title to the story:

a farmer finds a snake almost dead with cold—brings it home—warms it—saves its life—the snake is about to bite the farmer's son—the farmer chases away the snake

Activity 8(b)

Suppose you have a bird that talks and plays with you. Write a paragraph in about eighty words on how you spent a day with the bird during your summer vacation.

Let's work together:

Take a sheet of chart paper. Draw pictures of a swallow and a sparrow. Colour the pictures. Write four sentences about each of the birds.

Lesson 10

Tales of Childhood

Roald Dahl

Let's start:

Roald Dahl (1916 - 1990) was a British novelist, short story writer, poet, fighter pilot and screenwriter. Dahl rose to prominence in the 1940s, with works for both children and adults, and became one of the world's best-selling authors. His works include *James and the Giant Peach*, *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, *Matilda*, *The Witches* and *George's Marvellous Medicine*. The present text is an excerpt from his autobiography *Boy : Tales of Childhood*.

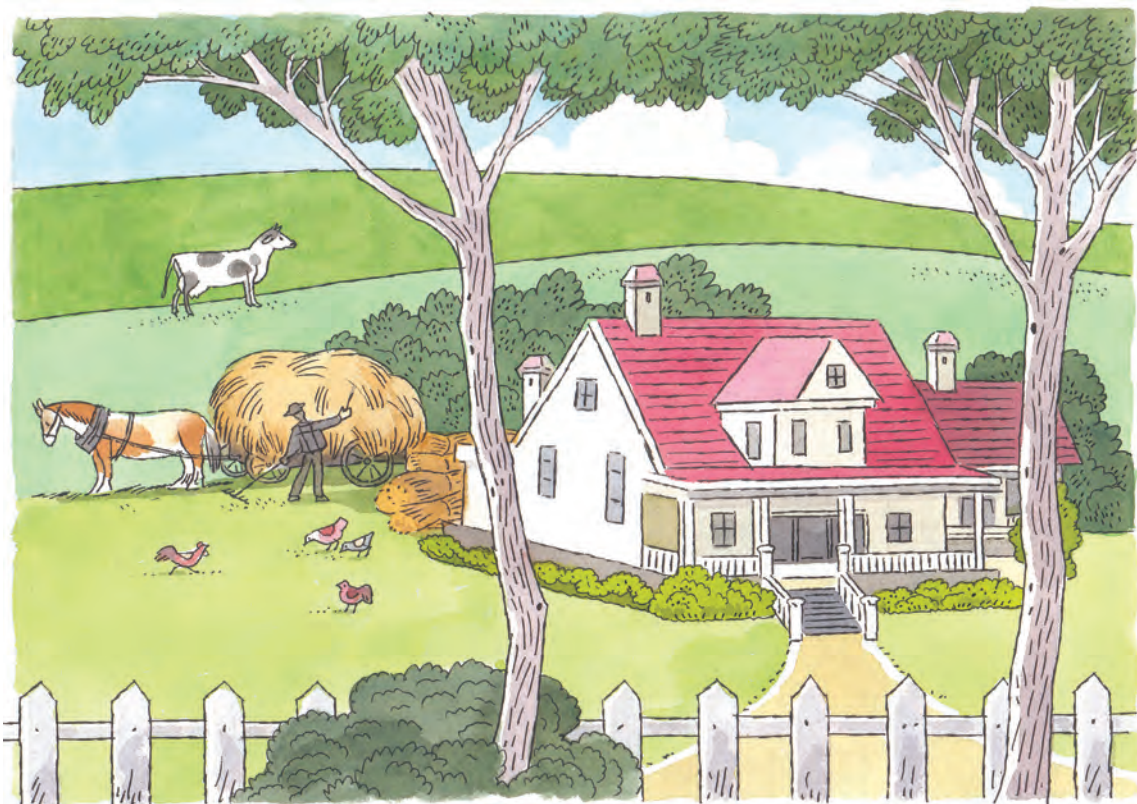


Let's share:

- (1) How would you describe yourself in five words? Tell the class.
- (2) Tell the class about some significant memories of your childhood.

Let's read:

My father, Harold Dahl, was a Norwegian who came from a small town near Oslo, called Sarpsborg. His own father, my grandfather, was a fairly **prosperous** merchant who owned a store in Sarpsborg and traded in just about everything from cheese to chicken-wire. My father had lost an arm when he was fourteen, but had become a successful shipbroker. A shipbroker is a person who supplies the ship with everything it needs when it comes into port—fuel and food, ropes and paint, soap and towels, hammers and nails, and thousands of other little items. A shipbroker is a kind of **enormous** shopkeeper for ships, and by far the most important item he supplies to them is the fuel on which the ship's engines run—in those days, only coal. He set up a shipbroking firm at Cardiff of South Wales. My father met my mother, Sofie Magdalene Hesselberg during the summer of 1911 and were married soon after.



In 1918, when I was two, we all moved into an **imposing** country mansion beside the village of Radyr, about eight miles north of Cardiff. I remember it as a mighty house with **turrets** on its roof and with majestic lawns and terraces all around it. There were many acres of farm and woodland, and a number of cottages for the staff. Very soon, the meadows were full of milking cows and the sties were full of pigs and the chicken-run was full of chickens. There were several horses for pulling the ploughs and the hay-wagons, and there was a ploughman and a cowman and a couple of gardeners and all manner of servants in the house itself.

Word Nest

prosperous	:	rich and successful
enormous	:	big
imposing	:	impressive to look at
turrets	:	small towers on top of buildings

Let's read:

Activity 1

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

- (1) He met Sofie Magdalene Hesselberg in 1911.
- (2) They, along with their family members, moved to Radyr in 1918.
- (3) Harold Dahl became a successful shipbroker and set up a farm at Cardiff.
- (4) They married soon after.
- (5) Harold Dahl lost his arm when he was fourteen.
- (6) The writer's grandfather was a prosperous merchant.

Activity 2

Complete the following sentences with information from the text:

- (a) The narrator's grandfather was _____
- (b) Harold Dahl had lost _____
- (c) A shipbroker is a person who _____
- (d) In the country mansion beside the village of Radyr, there were _____

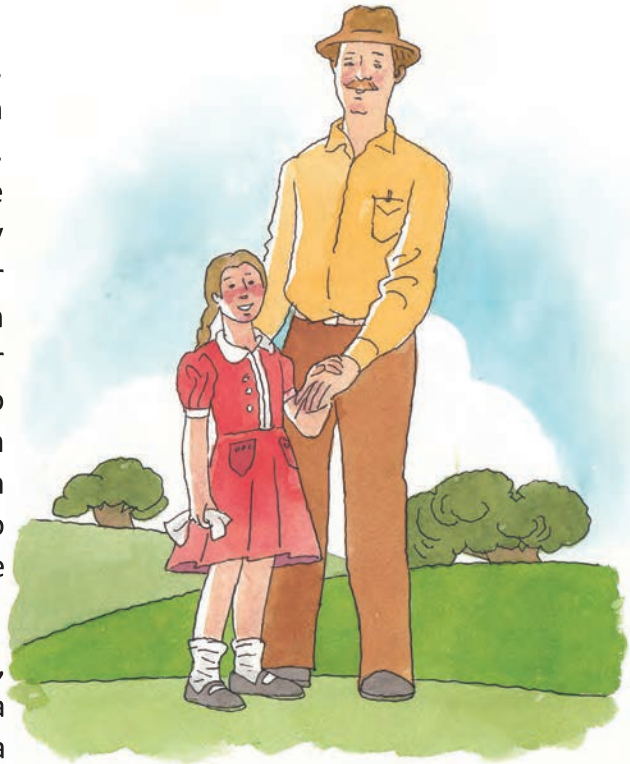
Activity 3

Answer the following question:

Do you think that the narrator was happy living in the imposing mansion?

Let's continue:

In 1920, when I was still only three, my mother's eldest child, my own sister Astri, died from appendicitis. She was seven years old when she died. Astri was far and away my father's favourite. He **adored** her beyond measure and her sudden death left him literally speechless for days afterwards. He was so overwhelmed with grief that when he himself went down with pneumonia a month or so afterwards, he did not much care whether he lived or died.



If they had penicillin in those days, neither appendicitis nor pneumonia would have been so much of a **threat**, but with no penicillin or any other magical antibiotic cures, pneumonia in particular was a very dangerous disease indeed. The patient had to fight to survive. My father refused to fight. He was thinking, I am quite sure, of his beloved daughter, and he was wanting to join her in heaven. So he died. He was fifty-seven years old.

My mother had now lost a daughter and a husband all in the space of a few weeks. Here she was, suddenly having to face all alone the very gravest problems and responsibilities. She had five children to look after. She sold the big house and moved to a smaller one a few miles away in Llandaff. It was called Cumberland Lodge and was nothing more than a pleasant medium-sized **suburban** villa. So it was in Llandaff two years later, when I was six years old, that I went to my first school.

Word Nest:

adored	: loved very much
threat	: danger
suburban	: residential area that is outside the centre of the city

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. ☐

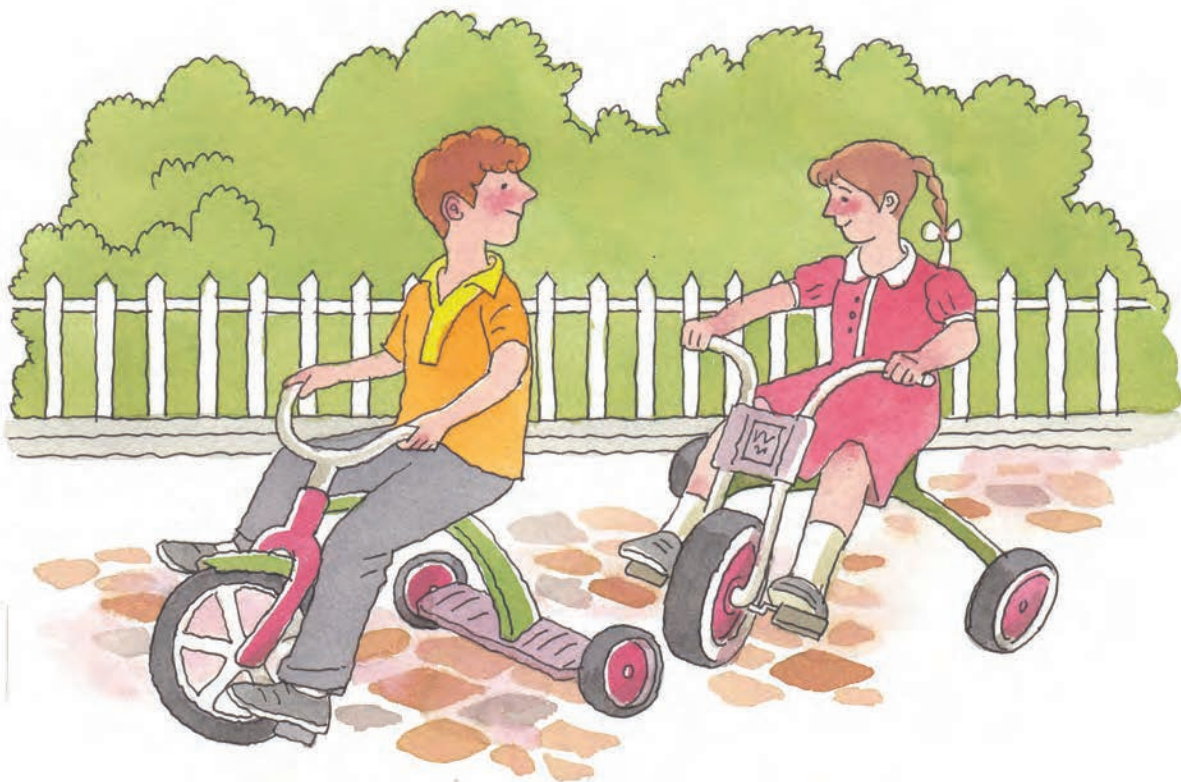
Activity 5

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.