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READING COMPREHENSION

TEXT I

Read the passage given below and answer the questions that follow.

Vishav Driman (65 year old) and her husband Kamal Jeet (69 year old) set out to discover the hidden treasure of Uttarakhand by bicycle. Vishav shares their post-retirement adventure.

Pedalling through the Golden Years

At a time when our peers were slowing down, relaxing and watching sunsets from their front porch, we found a new passion—cycling. We started out with short daily rides, but found ourselves looking forward to them more and more, so much that we decided to venture further and cover more ground. There were obvious health concerns—the risk of performing a physically strenuous activity at a high altitude, the most obvious of them. But it helped that we had lived in Uttarakhand's capital, Dehradun, our entire lives, and were therefore acclimatised to the cold winds and narrow winding roads that characterise this beautiful state. We were also familiar with almost all the scenic mountain trails it had to offer.

Short rides extended to longer ones as we started falling deeper in love with not just the sport, but the very idea of discovering a world we had always been a part of, but never had the time to explore. Soon, a simple hobby turned into a project of sorts, and we started participating in cyclotrons and other cycling events being held in the city. Admiration and encouragement poured in from family members, friends and neighbours along the way, sparking a new thought—was it possible to travel across the state on our bicycles? It seemed daunting at first, but we knew we had to try. Our gear in place, our bikes serviced, and our minds set, we set off on an adventure we would remember for the rest of our lives.



Words

Sentences

LOOK UP
AND
UNDERSTAND

acclimatised
cyclotrons
extended
strenuous
venture



caressing
daunting
encapsulates
inexplicable
picturesque



In my opinion, there are very few ways to enjoy and appreciate the beauty of Uttarakhand and cycling is the most thrilling of them all. Sunlight filtering through the trees and a cool breeze gently caressing your faces as you ride, coupled with breathtaking views of sal forests spread like a green cover on the mountains and surrounding valleys, the experience of pedalling across the state is truly inexplicable. Of the many trails we navigated, there is one that occupies a special place in our hearts. It began from *Ghanta Ghar*, a popular tourist attraction in Dehradun, it took us through

some of the most picturesque locations of the state such as Kimadi, Hathi Paon, Mussoorie and Chaar Dukaan, right up to George Everest point. This 100km ride (approximately) is also one of the few routes in Uttarakhand that encapsulates all the element that one expects while cycling here—steep slopes, sharp curves, endless hills, lush forests, and off-road experiences.

(Source: By Vishav Driman, India Travel 360)

Q.1. What is the meaning of the expression “when our peers were slowing down, relaxing and watching sunsets from their front porch” and in what context has the author used this?

Q.2. What made Vishav and her husband confident to venture into Uttarakhand on their bicycles?

Q.3. What was the strong passion that prompted the retired couple to take up this adventurous journey?

Q.4. What, according to the author, is the most thrilling way to enjoy and appreciate Uttarakhand? Why does she say so?

Q.5. Which trail occupies a special place in the couple's heart?

Q.6. What are the expectations of a cyclist from such an adventurous trip through the mountains? Did Vishav and Kamal Jeet get these experiences from the 100 km ride?

TEXT II

Read the poem given below and answer the questions that follow.

Going Down Hill on a Bicycle, A Boy's Song

With lifted feet, hands still,
I am poised, and down the hill
Dart, with heedful mind;
The air goes by in a wind.

Swifter and yet more swift,
Till the heart with a mighty lift

LOOK UP AND UNDERSTAND

heedful
poised
slackens
treadles
vale



Makes the lungs laugh, the throat cry:—

“O bird, see; see, bird, I fly.

“Is this, is this your joy?

O bird, then I, though a boy,

For a golden moment share

Your feathery life in air!”

Say, heart, is there aught like this

In a world that is full of bliss?

‘Tis more than skating, bound

Steel-shod to the level ground.

Speed slackens now, I float

Awhile in my airy boat;

Till, when the wheels scarce crawl,

My feet to the treadles fall.

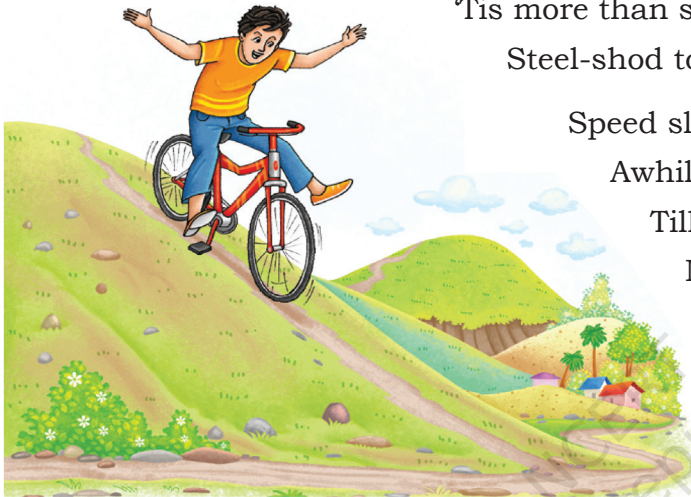
Alas, that the longest hill

Must end in a vale; but still,

Who climbs with toil, wheresoe’er,

Shall find wings waiting there.

Henry Charles Beeching



Q.1. The poem describes the _____ of going downhill on a bicycle.

- (a) enjoyment
- (b) happiness
- (c) excitement
- (d) satisfaction

Q.2. Which line(s) depict the freedom like that of a bird that the poet enjoys?

Q.3. Which is the experience the boy is sharing with the bird? What is the golden moment he is referring to?

Q.4. What is the meaning of 'full of bliss' here? Can the boy find this kind of bliss in the world where he lives?

Q.5. There is a comparison in the third stanza. What is it?

Q.6. What is the meaning of the last two lines of the poem? Does "toil" mean dedication, determination, and will power to climb the hill? What is the reward here?

VOCABULARY

1. Find out the words from the text 'Madam rides the Bus' that match with the given meanings.

- (a) inquisitive _____
- (b) intricate _____
- (c) mesmerizing _____
- (d) immense _____
- (e) hardly _____



FUN FACTS

Allusion — a reference
 Illusion — a mirage, hallucination, or magic trick

Editing



GRAMMAR

1. Read the two sentences given below. The groups of words in *italics* are phrasal verbs.

This way she *picked up* various small details.

Valli said, "I am the one to *get on*."

The verbs *picked* and *get* are combined with *up* and *on* respectively. Together they make phrasal verbs.

Now, complete each sentence using a verb from box A and a word from box B (by making a phrasal verb). Use the correct form of the verb wherever necessary.

A	B
break, drive, get, fill, wake, turn	out, down, off, on, in, up

- (a) It was evening. She _____ the light.
- (b) Do not _____ Ramesh. He was studying late at night yesterday.
- (c) The school bus _____ and had to be towed to the garage for repair.
- (d) They got in the car and _____.
- (e) She hurt herself as she was _____ of the car.
- (f) You have to _____ the form yourself.

EDITING

1. Use capital letters and full stops wherever necessary and correct the spelling errors as well, in the following paragraph.

An exciting boat journey gliding crosswise the river from Godkhali jetty will take to a place of incredible mystic beauty of Nature.

The sundarbans a unesco World Heritage Site is located at the South eastern tip of the 24 Paraganas district about 110 km

from Kolkata it got its name from one of the mangrove plants known as Sundari (Heritiera Minor) Sundarbans are a part of the world's largest delta, formed by the mighty rivers Ganga, Brahmaputra and Meghna. It is one of the most attractive and alluring places remaining on earth, a truly undiscovered paradise. The Sundarbans is the largest single block of tidal, halophytic mangrove forests in the world. It is the largest tiger reserve and National Park.

apart from being a unique largest mangrove eco-system of the world, the Sundarbans has the world's largest deltaic mangrove forests and is also home to one of India's most iconic wildlife species - the royal Bengal tiger. The Sundarbans also serves as a crucial protective barrier for the inhabitants in and around Kolkata against the floods that result from the cyclones which are a regular occurrence. The Sundarbans have also been enlisted amongst the finalists in the New 7 Wonders of Nature.

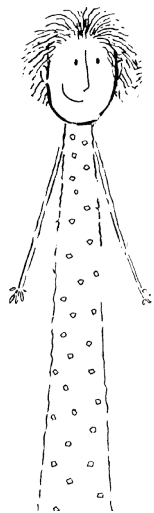
LISTENING

1. Following is a passage on Mizoram and its people. When one visits this place, one is enchanted by its natural beauty and the vibrant culture of the state. Listen to the passage carefully and answer the questions that follow. You can listen to the recorded story or ask your teacher, sibling or friend to read the story aloud.

Mizoram

Once a tourist remarked, "I visited the Eastern States this time—where the people talk in songs and they always dance."





The eastern region of India is no doubt charmingly novel in many of its features. Mizoram, literally the land of Mizos is an expanse of blue-green hills. Mizoram is broken up lengthwise into five major mountain ranges gradually descending from the south to the north. The hills are rugged and their heights uneven. The name of the state Mizoram is made of two words. 'Mi' means human beings, 'Zo' means a hill. So, a 'Mizo' is a human dweller of a hill; Mizoram means the land of the hill-dwellers. Aizawl is the capital town of the State built in tiers along the hill.

The Mizos have three main festivals—Mim Kut, Chapchar Kut and Pawl Kut. These festivals are associated with their agricultural activities during which they enjoy life by singing and dancing. The Mizos, blessed as they are with a beautiful environment and rich culture, are a vibrant and social people. They love to dance as much as they love to sing. They boast a number of folk and community dances handed down from one generation to the other through the ages. The dances are expressions of the gay, carefree spirit of the Mizos. It should be noted here that these dances are not intended for stage performance, rather they have been evolved for community involvement and participation.

English with a Purpose
A Textbook for Class XII (Core Course)
NCERT, 2003

1. The land of Mizo is a large open area of _____.
The hills are _____ and _____.
2. The state referred here is made of two names—
 - (a) 'Mi' means _____.
 - (b) 'Zo' means _____.
 - (c) and Mizoram means _____.
3. Which activities are associated with Mizo festivals? How do Mizos enjoy these festivals?

4. What are the special features of a Mizo dance?

5. The following statements characterise Mizo people. Tick the one which is not true.

- (a) Mizos have a beautiful culture. ()
- (b) They live in a beautiful natural environment. ()
- (c) They are a protective people. ()
- (d) They are a vibrant people. ()
- (e) They love to dance and not so much to sing. ()
- (f) They have a number of community and folk dances. ()
- (g) The community involvement and participation is always there. ()

SPEAKING

1. Read Part II of the story 'Madam Rides the Bus'. There are many conversations between Valli, the conductor, and some elderly people in the bus. Convert the conversations into dialogues between the characters. Many words like commandingly, haughtily, loudly (shouted), smilingly, irritably, curtly etc. have been used in this part. These are the different ways in which the characters have spoken. These show the mood, emotion, and intention of the characters.

Now, write the dialogues and then in groups of three, enact it as a skit in the class.

It was a fine spring afternoon. The bus was just on the verge of leaving the village. Valli, a small eight year old girl, wanted to go on a bus ride.

Valli (loudly): Stop the bus! Stop the bus!

Conductor (without looking up): Who is it? Hurry then!

Valli (loudly): It's me, I am the one who has to get on the bus.

Conductor (smilingly): Oh. really! _____

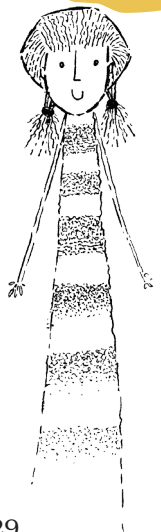
FUN FACTS

TONGUE TWISTER

We surely shall
see the sun shine
soon

Words

Sentences



Valli (commandingly): I have to _____

Here is _____.

(Conductor stretched out his hand to help her up.)

Valli (smartly): I can _____

Conductor (jokingly): Oh, please _____

(The bus started to move forward with a roar. Valli stood up on the seat to see the outside world clearly.)

A voice (anxiously): Listen, child _____

Valli (haughtily): There is nobody _____

Conductor (smilingly): Oh, sir _____

Valli (angrily): I am _____

Conductor (mimicking her): _____

Valli (steadfastly): Because I _____

A voice (with concern): If you _____

Valli (irritably): I'm not _____

2. Two communicative tasks are given below. Practice with your partner.

Communicative Task I

(Offering, accepting and refusing help)

Role Play

Chaman : Hello Prem. You look tired. Is there anything I can do to help you?

Prem : Thank you very much. I think I can manage. I am preparing a chart on Children's Rights.

Chaman : It's a lot of work. Let me help you.

Prem : Thank you. But I've already collected all the necessary information.

Chaman : I can help you in illustrating some of the rights.

Prem : Oh, can you? That sounds wonderful.

Chaman : Could you tell me the themes to be illustrated?

Prem : Here you are. I'm really thankful to you.

Chaman : What about children's duties?

Prem : Oh, yes. It's a good suggestion. I'll list their duties also.

Chaman : Thank you.

Pair or Group Work

Write conversations like the one above imagining you are in the classroom. Use the clues given below.

- Excuse me...
- Yes?
- I wonder if you could lend me our dictionary. I'm doing my class work.
- I'm sorry. I'm using it right now. May be later.
- That's okay. Thanks anyway.

Write similar conversations imagining you are in the following situations: in the kitchen; at the railway station; asking somebody to open the door; in a hospital; in the playground.

Communicative Task II

(Asking for information, indirect questions and question tags)

Role Play

Vineet : Could you get me some warm clothes from the cupboard, please?

Ashima : Are you feeling cold?

Vineet : It's cold today, isn't it?

Ashima : Yes, it is. I shall have to light the fire soon.

Vineet : Oh, you have coal-fires, do you?

Ashima : Yes. We don't have a room heater. You have room heaters, don't you?

Vineet : Yes. We do. But coal-fires are nice. They are more comforting than a radiator, aren't they?

Ashima : Yes, but there is a lot more work than just switching on a heater. We keep talking about getting room heaters.

Vineet : I suppose coal-fires aren't very convenient, are they?

Ashima : They certainly aren't



FUN FACTS

IDIOM

Turn a blind eye — to ignore situations, facts, reality

WRITING

1. In the text, seeing Valli travelling alone in the bus, some of the characters showed concerns.

An elderly woman asked, “Are you alone, dear?”

The Conductor questioned, “Won’t your mother be looking for you?”

The old woman continued asking, “Is it proper for such a young person to travel alone? Do you exactly know where you’re going in town? What’s the street? What’s the house number?”

Do you think that the concerns of the elderly lady and the conductor are apt and genuine? Will you say that it is applicable to young boys as well? Discuss in groups, make note and then arrange a debate competition. You can consider the following points for discussion or debate. Then write a paragraph considering these issues and give your opinion as well.

- Girls and boys of Valli’s age can travel alone in a bus or auto rickshaw, etc.
- Freedom should be given to them to move around.
- Safety of the young children is of utmost concern.
- What type of education should be given to them?
- This is a vulnerable age and children are innocent.

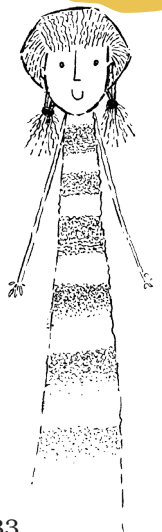


Handwriting practice lines (10 lines).

2. You have read that on her return journey, Valli saw the young cow lying dead by the roadside. This young cow was running very fast in front of the bus and had given Valli unbound happiness when she was travelling to the town.

Now, write a paragraph on 'Should the domestic animals be let loose to walk on the roads freely' where the vehicles are plying? Who is responsible for the death of the young cow?

Handwriting practice lines (15 lines).



PROJECT

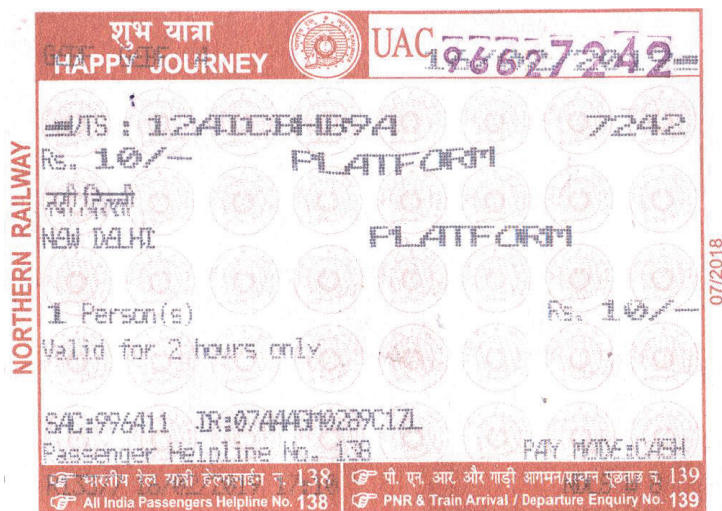
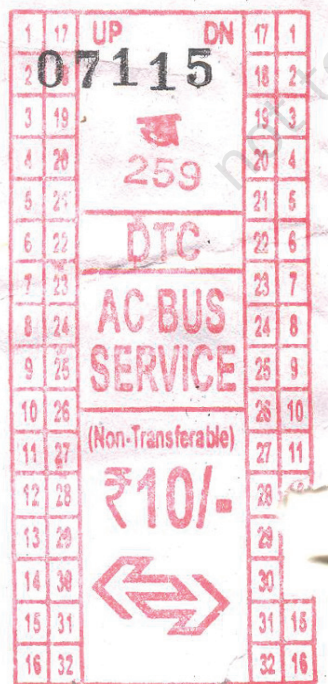
1. Read the quick tips for travelling by a bike given below.

When you travel by a bike, Vishav says that the frame and tyres of the bike should be according to the rider's height. One should carry a hand pump, extra tubes, and a puncture kit for emergency situations. Right accessories such as sweat-resistant gloves, helmets, knee and elbow pads, and a pair of shoes is of utmost importance. It is also necessary to carry essentials like dry food, water, and Oral Rehydration Salts (ORS). A first-aid kit with pain killers, muscle relaxing balms, and band-aids are also advisable.

Now, prepare a list of things that you would like to suggest to people who want to travel by:

- a train
- a bus
- a boat
- a motorbike
- on foot (for example a trek)

2. A. copies of some tickets are given here. Collect some more train tickets, bus tickets, flight tickets, platform tickets, entry tickets for the zoo, cinema hall, metro rail etc.



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