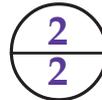


**KERALA READER**  
**ENGLISH**  
**STANDARD X**

**PART - II**



**GOVERNMENT OF KERALA**  
**DEPARTMENT OF GENERAL EDUCATION**

State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT, Kerala)

**2019**

## PLEDGE

India is my country. All Indians are my brothers and sisters. I love my country, and I am proud of its rich and varied heritage. I shall always strive to be worthy of it.

I shall give my parents, teachers and all elders respect, and treat everyone with courtesy.

To my country and my people, I pledge my devotion. In their well-being and prosperity alone lies my happiness.

## THE NATIONAL ANTHEM

Jana-gana-mana-adhinayaka, jaya he  
Bharata-bhagya-vidhata.

Punjab-Sindh-Gujarat-Maratha

Dravida-Utkala-Banga

Vindhya-Himachala-Yamuna-Ganga

Uchchala-Jaladhi-taranga.

Tava shubha name jage,

Tava shubha asisa mage,

Gahe tava jaya gatha,

Jana-gana-mangala-dayaka jaya he

Bharata-bhagya-vidhata.

Jaya he, jaya he, jaya he,

Jaya jaya jaya, jaya he!

---

### **Kerala Reader - English**

#### **Standard X**

Prepared by:

**State Council of Educational Research & Training (SCERT)**

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**Government of Kerala**

**Department of Education**

**2019**

My dear students,

The life of children at school must also be linked to their life outside the school. This principle marks a departure from the legacy of bookish learning which continues to shape our system and creates a gap between the school, home and community. The syllabi and textbooks developed on the basis of Kerala School Curriculum is an attempt to implement this idea, discourage rote learning and maintain sharp boundaries between different subject areas.

The success of disseminating this Reader depends on the steps that teachers in schools take to encourage children to reflect on their own learning and to pursue imaginative activities and questions.

The children generate new knowledge from the information passed on to them by adults. Inculcating creativity and initiative is possible if we perceive and treat children as participants in learning, not as receivers of knowledge.

The methods used for teaching and evaluation also determine how effective this Reader will be in making the life of children at school a truly happy experience. The Reader attempts to give priority and space for contemplation and reflection, discussion in small groups, and activities requiring hands-on experience.

The Reader has five units. Each unit contains a number of activities for the development of language skills, vocabulary, grammar and mastery over the language. QR codes are given throughout the Textbooks to connect the printed version to the wealth of digital assets. Disaster risk reduction factors and various skills in association with National Skill Qualification Frame Work are incorporated in the Textbook. I am sure you will be more confident in using English with the help of the revised version of this Reader.

The State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT) appreciates the hard work done by the textbook development team in bringing out this Reader. Several teachers from schools and colleges have contributed to the development of this book.

As an organisation committed to systemic reform and continuous improvement in the quality of its products, SCERT welcomes comments and suggestions which will enable us to undertake further revision and refinements.

Let's make learning of English a joyful experience.

**Dr. J. Prasad**  
Director  
SCERT

# CONSTITUTION OF INDIA

## Part IV A

### FUNDAMENTAL DUTIES OF CITIZENS

#### ARTICLE 51 A

*Fundamental Duties- It shall be the duty of every citizen of India:*

- (a) to abide by the Constitution and respect its ideals and institutions, the National Flag and the National Anthem;
- (b) to cherish and follow the noble ideals which inspired our national struggle for freedom;
- (c) to uphold and protect the sovereignty, unity and integrity of India;
- (d) to defend the country and render national service when called upon to do so;
- (e) to promote harmony and the spirit of common brotherhood amongst all the people of India transcending religious, linguistic and regional or sectional diversities; to renounce practices derogatory to the dignity of women;
- (f) to value and preserve the rich heritage of our composite culture;
- (g) to protect and improve the natural environment including forests, lakes, rivers, wild life and to have compassion for living creatures;
- (h) to develop the scientific temper, humanism and the spirit of inquiry and reform;
- (i) to safeguard public property and to abjure violence;
- (j) to strive towards excellence in all spheres of individual and collective activity so that the nation constantly rises to higher levels of endeavour and achievements;
- (k) who is a parent or guardian to provide opportunities for education to his child or, as the case may be, ward between age of six and fourteen years.

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# CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

*Dear Children,*

*Wouldn't you like to know about your rights? Awareness about your rights will inspire and motivate you to ensure your protection and participation, thereby making social justice a reality. You may know that a commission for child rights is functioning in our state called the **Kerala State Commission for Protection of Child Rights**.*

*Let's see what your rights are:*

- Right to freedom of speech and expression.
- Right to life and liberty.
- Right to maximum survival and development.
- Right to be respected and accepted regardless of caste, creed and colour.
- Right to protection and care against physical, mental and sexual abuse.
- Right to participation.
- Protection from child labour and hazardous work.
- Protection against child marriage.
- Right to know one's culture and live accordingly.
- Protection against neglect.
- Right to free and compulsory education.
- Right to learn, rest and leisure.
- Right to parental and societal care, and protection.

---

### Major Responsibilities

---

- Protect school and public facilities.
- Observe punctuality in learning and activities of the school.
- Accept and respect school authorities, teachers, parents and fellow students.
- Readiness to accept and respect others regardless of caste, creed or colour.

*Contact Address:*



### **Kerala State Commission for Protection of Child Rights**

'Sree Ganesh', T. C. 14/2036, Vanross Junction

Kerala University P. O., Thiruvananthapuram - 34, Phone : 0471 - 2326603

Email: [childrights.cpcr@kerala.gov.in](mailto:childrights.cpcr@kerala.gov.in), [rte.cpcr@kerala.gov.in](mailto:rte.cpcr@kerala.gov.in)

Website : [www.kescpcr.kerala.gov.in](http://www.kescpcr.kerala.gov.in)

**Child Helpline - 1098, Crime Stopper - 1090, Nirbhaya - 1800 425 1400**

**Kerala Police Helpline - 0471 - 3243000/44000/45000**

**Online R. T. E Monitoring : [www.nireekshana.org.in](http://www.nireekshana.org.in)**



## UNIT IV

# FLIGHTS OF FANCY

### Prose:

**The Scholarship Jacket** - Marta Salinas (Short Story)

**The Never-Never Nest** - Cedric Mount

(One-Act Play)

### Poem:

**Poetry** - Pablo Neruda

Read the excerpts given below.

'I do not come out of a literary tradition. I come from a tiny mining town in the rainforest in an island at the end of the world. My grandparents were illiterate. And I never expected to stand here before you in this grand hall in London as a writer being so honoured.'

— *Richard Flanagan*

*Winner of the Man Booker Prize for Fiction*

This moment is so much bigger than me. This is for every nameless, faceless woman of colour that now has a chance because this door has opened.

— *Halle Berry*

*Winner of the Oscar Award for the Best Actress*

'...to be trusted is an ennobling experience, and poetry is a peerless proficiency of the imagination. I praise it but am myself an observer.'

— *Marianne Moore*

*Winner of the Poetry Award*

'For a true writer each book should be a new beginning where he tries again for something that is beyond attainment. He should always try for something that has never been done or that others have tried and failed. Then sometimes, with great luck he will succeed.'

— *Ernest Hemingway*

*Winner of Nobel Prize for Literature*

- Guess the contexts in which these words were spoken.
- Who are the speakers? What might have helped them achieve the recognition?
- What are the popular awards and honours you are familiar with?
- Name the eminent personalities of your country who have won such international awards.
- How does your school honour achievers among students?

*An award is a mark of recognition given in honour of one's excellence in a certain field. Do you dream of getting such awards? If so, what stands in the way of your dreams?*

*Here, in this story the narrator speaks about the obstacles she had to encounter to make her dream come true.*

## The Scholarship Jacket

**1** The small Texas school that I went to, had a **tradition** carried out every year during the eighth-grade graduation: a beautiful gold and green Jacket was awarded to the class valedictorian, the student who had maintained the highest grades for eight years. The scholarship Jacket had a big gold 'S' on the left front side and your name written in gold letters on the pocket.

**2** My oldest sister, Rosie, had won the Jacket a few years back, and I fully expected to also. I was fourteen and in the eighth grade. I had been a straight 'A' student since the first grade and this last year had looked forward very much to owning that Jacket. My father was a farm labourer who couldn't earn enough money to feed eight children. So when I was six I was given to my grandparents to raise.

1. What was the tradition followed in the small Texas school?

2. What do you think the letter 'S' on the Jacket represent?



**Marta Salinas** (born 1949) is a native of Coalinga, California. She graduated in creative writing from the University of California at Irvine. *The Scholarship Jacket* is one of the several short stories Salinas has published in journals and collections.



**3** We couldn't participate in sports at school because there were registration fees, uniform costs, and trips out of town; so, even though our family was quite agile and athletic there would never be a school sports Jacket for us. This one, the scholarship Jacket, was our only chance.

**4** In May, close to graduation, spring fever had struck as usual **with a vengeance**. No one paid any attention in class; instead we stared out of the windows and at each other, wanting to speed up the last few weeks of school. I **despaired** every time I looked in the mirror. Pencil thin, not a curve anywhere. I was called 'beanpole' and 'string bean' and I knew that's what I looked like. That really wasn't much for a fourteen-year-old to work with, I thought, as I absent-mindedly wandered from my history class to the gym. Another hour of sweating in basketball and displaying my toothpick legs was coming up. Then I remembered my P.E. shorts were still in a bag under my desk where I'd forgotten them. I had to walk all the way back and get them. Coach Thompson was a real bear if someone wasn't dressed for P.E. She had said I was a good forward and even tried to talk Grandma into letting me join the team once. Of course Grandma said no.

**5** I was almost back at my classroom door when I heard voices raised in anger as if in some sort of **argument**. I stopped. I didn't mean to **eavesdrop**, I just hesitated, not knowing what to do. I needed those shorts and I was going to be late, but I didn't want to interrupt an argument between my teachers. I recognised the voices: Mr. Schmidt, my History teacher and Mr. Boone, my Math teacher. They seemed to be arguing about me. I couldn't believe it. I still remember the feeling of shock that rooted me flat against the wall as if I were trying to blend in with the **graffiti** written there.

'I refuse to do it! I don't care who her father is, her grades don't even begin to compare to Martha's. I won't lie or **falsify** records. Martha has a straight A-plus average and you know it.' That was Mr. Schmidt and he sounded very angry. Mr. Boone's voice sounded calm



3. 'This one, the Scholarship Jacket, was our only chance.' Why does Martha say so?

4. How does Martha describe herself?

5. What were Martha's teachers arguing about?

and quiet.

‘Look. Joann's father is not only on the Board, he owns the only store in town. We could say it was a close tie and-’

6 The pounding in my ears drowned out the rest of the words, only a word here and there filtered through.

‘Martha is Mexican . . . resign . . . won't do it . . .’

Mr. Schmidt came rushing out and luckily for me went down the opposite way towards the auditorium, so he didn't see me.

Shaking, I waited a few minutes and then went in and grabbed my bag and fled from the room. Mr Boone looked up when I came in but didn't say anything. To this day I don't remember if I got in trouble in P.E. for being late or how I made it through the rest of the afternoon. I went home very sad and cried into my pillow that night so Grandmother wouldn't hear me.

7 It seemed a cruel **coincidence** that I had overheard that conversation. The next day when the principal called me into his office I knew what it would be about. He looked uncomfortable and unhappy. I decided I wasn't going to make it any easier for him, so I looked him straight in the eyes. He looked away and **fidged** with the papers on his desk.

‘Martha,’ he said, ‘there’s been a change in policy this year regarding the scholarship Jacket. As you know, it has always been free.’ He cleared his throat and continued. ‘This year the Board has decided to charge fifteen dollars, which still won't cover the complete cost of the Jacket.’

8 I stared at him in shock, and a small sound of **dismay** escaped my throat. I hadn't expected this. He still avoided looking in my eyes.

‘So if you are unable to pay the fifteen dollars for the Jacket, it will be given to the next one in line.’ I didn't need to ask who that was.

9 Standing with all the dignity I could muster, I said, ‘I'll speak to my grandfather about it, sir, and let you know tomorrow.’ I cried on the walk home from the bus stop. The dirt road was a quarter mile from the highway. So

6. Why was Mr. Boone arguing in Joann's favour?

7. ‘It seemed a cruel coincidence...’ Why did Martha say so?

8. Why was the principal ‘uncomfortable and unhappy’?

9. Why was Martha shocked?

by the time I got home, my eyes were red and **puffy**.

‘Where's Grandpa?’ I asked Grandma, looking down at the floor so she wouldn't ask me why I'd been crying. She was sewing on a quilt as usual and didn't look up.

‘I think he's out back working in the bean field.’

10 I went outside and looked out at the fields. There he was. I could see him walking between the rows, his body bent over the little plants, **hoe** in hand. I walked slowly out to him, trying to think how I could best ask him for the money. There was a cool breeze blowing and a sweet smell of **mesquite** fruit in the air, but I didn't appreciate it. I kicked at a dirt **clod**. I wanted that Jacket so much. It was more than just being a valedictorian and giving a little thank you speech for the Jacket on graduation night. It represented eight years of hard work and expectation.

I knew I had to be honest with Grandpa; it was my only chance. He saw my shadow and looked up.

11 He waited for me to speak. I cleared my throat nervously and clasped my hands behind my back so he wouldn't see them shaking. ‘Grandpa, I have a big favour to ask you,’ I said in Spanish, the only language he knew.

12 He still waited silently. I tried again. ‘Grandpa, this year the principal said the scholarship Jacket is not going to be free. It's going to cost fifteen dollars, and I have to take the money in tomorrow, otherwise it'll be given to someone else.’ The last words came out in an eager rush. Grandpa straightened up tiredly and leaned his chin on the hoe handle. He looked out over the field that was filled with the tiny green bean plants. I waited, desperately hoping he'd say I could have the money. He turned to me and asked quietly, ‘What does a scholarship Jacket mean?’

13 I answered quickly; maybe there was a chance. ‘It means you've earned it by having the highest grades for eight years and that's why they're giving it to you.’ Too late I realized the significance of my words.

Grandpa knew that I understood it was not a matter of money. It wasn't that. He went back to hoeing the weeds that sprang up between the delicate little bean plants.

10. Why was winning the Scholarship Jacket important to Martha?

11. Why did Martha's grandfather refuse to pay the money?

It was a time-consuming job; sometimes the small shoots were right next to each other. Finally he spoke again as I turned to leave, crying.

‘Then if you pay for it, Martha, it’s not a scholarship Jacket, is it? Tell your principal I will not pay the fifteen dollars.’

14 I walked back to the house and locked myself in the bathroom for a long time. I was angry with Grandfather even though I knew he was right, and I was angry with the Board, whoever they were. Why did they have to change the rules just when it was my turn to win the Jacket?

Those were the days of belief and innocence.

It was a very sad and withdrawn girl who dragged into the principal’s office the next day. This time he did look me in the eyes.

‘What did your grandfather say?’

I sat very straight in my chair.

‘He said to tell you he won’t pay the fifteen dollars.’

15 The principal muttered something I couldn’t understand under his breath and walked over to the window. He stood looking at something outside. He looked bigger than usual when he stood up; he was a tall, **gaunt** man with gray hair, and I watched the back of his head while I waited for him to speak.

‘Why?’ he finally asked. ‘Your grandfather has the money. He owns a two-hundred acre **ranch**.’

16 I looked at him, forcing my eyes to stay dry. ‘I know, sir, but he said if I had to pay for it, then it wouldn’t be a scholarship Jacket.’ I stood up to leave. ‘I guess you’ll just have to give it to Joann.’ I hadn’t meant to say that, it had just slipped out. I was almost to the door when he stopped me. ‘Martha-wait.’



12. Why was the principal disturbed when Martha’s grandfather refused to pay the money?

17 I turned and looked at him, waiting. What did he want now? I could feel my heart pounding loudly in my chest. Something bitter and **vile** tasting was coming up in my mouth; I was afraid I was going to be sick. I didn't need any sympathy speeches. He sighed loudly and went back to his big desk.

He watched me, biting his lip. 'Okay. We'll make an exception in your case. I'll tell the Board, you'll get your Jacket.'

18 I could hardly believe my ears. I spoke in a trembling rush. 'Oh, thank you, sir!' Suddenly I felt great. I didn't know about **adrenalin** in those days, but I knew something was pumping through me, making me feel as tall as the sky. I wanted to yell, jump, run the mile, do something.

I ran out so I could cry in the hall where there was no one to see me.

At the end of the day, Mr. Schmidt winked at me and said, 'I hear you're getting the scholarship Jacket this year.'

19 His face looked as happy and innocent as a baby's, but I knew better. Without answering I gave him a quick hug and ran to the bus. I cried on the walk home again, but this time because I was so happy. I couldn't wait to tell Grandpa and ran straight to the field. I joined him in the row where he was working, and without saying anything I **crouched** down and started pulling up the weeds with my hands. Grandpa worked alongside me for a few minutes, and he didn't ask what had happened. After I had a little **pile** of weeds between the rows, I stood up and faced him.

'The principal said he's making an exception for me, Grandpa, and I'm getting the Jacket after all. That's after I told him what you said.'

20 Grandpa didn't say anything; he just gave me a pat on the shoulder and a smile. He pulled out the **crumpled** red handkerchief that he always carried in his back pocket and wiped the sweat off his forehead.

'Better go see if your grandmother needs any help with supper.'

I gave him a big grin. He didn't fool me. I skipped and ran back to the house whistling some silly tune.

*(Slightly adapted)*

13. Why did the principal change his mind?

14. How did Martha wish to express her joy?

15. Who really helped Martha get the scholarship Jacket? How?

16. 'His face looked as happy and innocent as a baby's, but I knew better.' What does the expression 'but I knew better' suggest here?

## Let's revisit

## Activity 1

Read the following sentence from the story.

The pounding in my ears drowned out the rest of the words, only a word here and there filtered through. 'Martha is Mexican ... resign ... won't do it ...'

**What did the teacher mean by the statement 'Martha is Mexican'?**

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## Activity 2

Joann was recommended by Mr. Boone for the Scholarship Jacket. Eventually, it was Martha who won the Jacket.

**Narrate the events that led to Martha's winning the Scholarship Jacket.**

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## Activity 3

Martha is the protagonist of the story. There are other characters who contribute to the main events in the story.

**Pick out instances from the story that reveal the role played by them and complete the table given.**

| The grandfather | The principal | Mr. Boone | Mr. Schmidt |
|-----------------|---------------|-----------|-------------|
|                 |               |           |             |

Now, write a paragraph about each of the above characters and present before the class.

### Activity 4

After receiving the Scholarship Jacket, Martha delivers a speech.

**Prepare the speech and present it before the class.**

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### Activity 5

The management decides to change the policy regarding the Scholarship Jacket. The principal feels uncomfortable and unhappy about this change. He expresses his resentment in a letter to the management. **Write the likely letter.** *You can refer to the format given in Unit II.*

### Activity 6

Here Martha tells her own story. Imagine that you are a friend of Martha and you know everything that happened in her life in connection with the issue of the Scholarship Jacket. If you narrate the story, how would you do it? Write the likely **narrative**.

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### Activity 7

Martha is awarded the Scholarship Jacket by the Vice - Chancellor of the University. Prepare a **news report** of the award ceremony.

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## Let's learn more about words

## Activity 1

Some words from the story are given in Column A. Match the words in Column A with their appropriate meaning in Column B.

| Column A      | Column B  |
|---------------|---|
| valedictorian | to give up  |
| agile         | to behave nervously or restlessly                   |
| despair       | slang for a tall, thin person                       |
| falsify       | to gather; to summon up                             |
| resign        | to listen secretly to a private conversation        |
| coincidence   | loss of courage in the face of trouble              |
| fidget        | able to move quickly and easily                     |
| dismay        | disgusting; unpleasant                              |
| muster        | to make false by adding or changing                 |
| vile          | an accidental sequence of events                    |
| eavesdrop     | a student with the highest academic rank in a class |
| beanpole      | to lose hope  |

## Activity 2

Write the word that best completes each sentence. You may use the words given in Column A of Activity 1.

- \_\_\_\_\_ people are usually good athletes.
- Martha tried not to \_\_\_\_\_ over the bad news.
- 'What a \_\_\_\_\_! I wasn't expecting to see you here,' the principal said to Martha.

4. She could not help but \_\_\_\_\_.
5. Mr. Schmidt was not ready to \_\_\_\_\_ the records to hide the truth.
6. The thought that she may lose the Jacket was the reason for her \_\_\_\_\_.
7. The \_\_\_\_\_ comments of Mr. Boone made her upset.
8. She couldn't \_\_\_\_\_ enough courage to ask her grandfather for the money.

### Activity 3

Read the following sentence from the story.

The small Texas school that I went to had a tradition carried out every year during the eighth-grade graduation: a beautiful gold and green Jacket was awarded to the class valedictorian, the student who had maintained the highest grades for eight years.

What does the word 'valedictorian' mean? You can get the meaning of the word from the definition given by the writer.

Look at the examples given below and try to find out the meanings of the words highlighted from the contextual clues given in the sentences.

1. Manu is a **polyglot**. He knows several languages.  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. The hurricane began as an **amorphous** mass - a shapeless group of clouds.  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. When I **disparaged** him, he put me down in the same way.  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. She was not simply happy to receive the gift; she was **euphoric**.  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. The sleep clinic treats **somnambulists**, people who walk in their sleep.  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Activity 4

Read the following sentences from the story.

- (i) The principal muttered something I couldn't understand **under his breath** and walked over to the window.

Idiomatic expressions are phrases whose meaning is different from the meanings of the individual words.

Here the idiom 'under the breath' means speaking very softly or in a low voice.

- (ii) His face looked as happy and innocent as a baby's, but I **knew better**.

Here the idiom 'knew better' means to be wise enough to recognise something as wrong or not possible.

Let's look at some more examples.

1. The actor *cut a sorry figure* (to make a poor impression).
2. The subject is *Greek and Latin* to me (new, strange).
3. I am *at my wit's end* on how to make some money (puzzled).
4. When a crisis comes, you must *rise to the occasion* (perform one's role well).
5. The prices are rising *by leaps and bounds* (rapidly).
6. *At the eleventh hour*, he decided to apply for the post (at the last moment).
7. If you work by *fits and starts*, you won't succeed (unsteadily).
8. I will stand by you through *thick and thin* (during good and bad times).

Given below are sentences which contain certain idiomatic expressions. Read the sentences and write the meaning of the idioms.

1. We can argue on the issue **till the cows come home**. \_\_\_\_\_
2. Oh! It is **raining cats and dogs**. \_\_\_\_\_
3. Radhika was **tickled pink** by the good news. \_\_\_\_\_
4. This dress costs **an arm and a leg**. \_\_\_\_\_
5. We all are **in the same boat**. \_\_\_\_\_
6. I'll clean the toilet **when pigs fly**. \_\_\_\_\_

*When does a poet feel the urge to write? Where do poets get inspiration from?*

*In this poem, the poet shares his experience of being embraced by creativity and finding his own passion and calling. Now, read the poem.*

## Poetry

And it was at that age ... Poetry arrived  
in search of me. I don't know, I don't know where  
it came from, from winter or a river.  
I don't know how or when,  
no they were not voices, they were not  
words, nor silence,  
but from a street I was **summoned**,  
from the branches of night,  
**abruptly** from the others,

1. Do you think the speaker in the poem earnestly wishes to be a poet? Which line says so?
2. What is the figure of speech used in the expression 'poetry arrived'.
3. Winter is a season when everything seems frozen and lifeless whereas the river represents the flow of life. Find out a similar expression of contrast from the poem.



**Neftalí Ricardo Reyes Basoalto** (1904 – 1973), who is popularly known by his pen name **Pablo Neruda** was a Chilean poet, diplomat and politician. He wrote in a variety of styles and his works include surrealist poems, historical epics, political manifestos and a prose autobiography. He often wrote in green ink, which was his personal symbol for desire and hope. He won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1971.





among violent fires  
 or returning alone,  
 there I was without a face  
 and it touched me.

I did not know what to say, my mouth  
 had no way  
 with names,  
 my eyes were blind,  
 and something started in my soul,  
 fever or forgotten wings,  
 and I made my own way,  
**deciphering**  
 that fire,



4. What was the poet's condition before 'poetry arrived'?
5. What happened to the poet when 'poetry arrived'?
6. How did the poet show that after the arrival of poetry his imagination knew no bounds?
7. Poetic intuition is like seeing without eyes. Which line says so?
8. What does 'fever or forgotten wings' indicate?

and I wrote the first faint line,  
 faint, without substance, pure  
 nonsense,  
 pure wisdom  
 of someone who knows nothing,  
 and suddenly I saw  
 the heavens  
**unfastened** and open,  
 planets,  
**palpitating** plantations,  
 shadow **perforated**,  
 riddled  
 with arrows, fire and flowers,  
 the winding night, the universe.



And I, **infinitesimal** being,  
 drunk with the great starry  
 void,  
 likeness, image of  
 mystery,  
 felt myself a pure part  
 of the **abyss**,  
 I wheeled with the stars,  
 my heart broke loose on the wind.



1. What is the theme of the poem?
2. What are the expressions used by the poet to show the inspired moments?
3. What is the tone of the poem? (Choose and tick the relevant answer from the options given below.)  
 i) cheerful    ii) sarcastic    iii) ecstatic    iv) melancholic

9. How does the vast, infinite and complex universe unfold itself before the poet in the poem?

10. What do you think is referred to as 'fire' and 'flowers'?

11. 'I wheeled with the stars.' What does the poet mean by this?

12. How does the poet express his delight of writing the first line of poetry?

Let's revisit

## Activity 1

The poem is an example of free verse and does not have end rhymes. The poet has made use of instances of alliteration to give rhythm to the poem.

Underline the initial sounds repeated in the given lines.

... something started in my soul,

Identify similar lines having alliteration.

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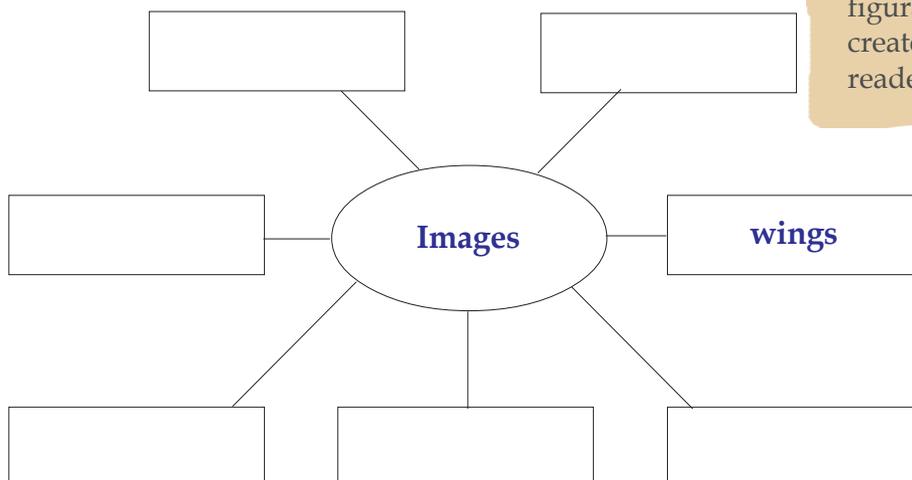
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**Alliteration** is the repetition of initial consonant sounds of a series of words within a phrase or line.

## Activity 2

Good poetry can paint a vivid portrait of a scene or an emotion with words. Neruda uses many images in his poem. Read the poem and identify the images used in it.

Complete the following word web by selecting appropriate images from the poem.



Words used to create pictures are called images. Imagery is the use of figurative language to create a picture in the reader's mind.

### Activity 3

Following is the review of the poem written by one of the students in Std X. Some parts of it are missing. Supply suitable words from those given in the brackets below.

Pablo Neruda's poem titled *Poetry* is taken from the poet's collection of \_\_\_\_\_ **a** \_\_\_\_\_ poems which appeared under the title *Isla Negra*; the name of his place of residence in Chile.

*Poetry* is the inner evolution of a poet in the making. It is as abrupt and unexpected as if summoned by a mysterious poet whose origins are unknown. 'Where does it come from?' The poet doesn't know whether it is from \_\_\_\_\_ **b** \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_ **c** \_\_\_\_\_. Perhaps it came from the \_\_\_\_\_ **d** \_\_\_\_\_ which symbolises obscurity and mystery. The poet is trying to express the inexpressible. It is like \_\_\_\_\_ **e** \_\_\_\_\_. The fire is an inner fire - the fire of poetic inspiration. Similar images occur at many places in the poem. It is something that started in his soul like \_\_\_\_\_ **f** \_\_\_\_\_. Wings also stand for the same inspired state of mind when the poet will be able to take a flight of imagination. When he started to write, the first line seemed to be pure nonsense. Then the poet saw the \_\_\_\_\_ **g** \_\_\_\_\_ plantations and \_\_\_\_\_ **h** \_\_\_\_\_ shadows. In Keat's poem *Ode to a Nightingale*, we come across a similar expression, 'viewless wings of Poesy'. Through creativity the poet experiences a kind of inner expansion which discloses the vast expanse of the universe before his inner eyes. It is like being drunk with the \_\_\_\_\_ **i** \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_ **j** \_\_\_\_\_ with the stars.

**starry void, deciphering the fire, autobiographical, palpitating, winter, wheeling, a river, forgotten wings, branches of night, perforated**

*Have you ever purchased things on instalment? Buying things on instalment and leading a luxurious life seems to be happy and pleasing. But if it's not properly dealt with, .....*

*Read and enjoy the one-act play.*

# The Never-Never Nest

## Characters

|           |                |
|-----------|----------------|
| Jack      | Jill, his wife |
| Aunt Jane | Nurse          |

## SCENE 1



The lounge of JACK and JILL'S Villa at New Hampstead. The essential furniture consists of a table on which are writing materials, and two chairs. As the curtain rises the lounge is empty, but JACK and JILL come immediately, followed by AUNT JANE .

JILL: And this is the lounge.

**Cedric Mount** is a considerably distinguished playwright of his age. He wrote some thoughtful plays, which include *Twentieth Century Lullaby*, *To cut a Long Short Story Short* and *Nature Abhors a Vacuum*. His one act plays are easy to perform, satirical, witty and insightful. These one act plays expose the shams of contemporary society besides delicately admonishing the guilty.

AUNT JANE: Charming! Charming! Such a cosy little room! and such pretty

JACK (modestly): We like it, you know, handy place to sit in and listen to the radiogram.

AUNT JANE: Oh, have you got a radiogram as well as a car and a piano?

JACK: Why, of course, Aunt Jane. You simply must have a radio set nowadays.

JILL: And it's so nice for me when Jack's away at business. I even make him move it into the kitchen, so that I can listen to it while I cook.

JACK: Sit down, Aunt Jane, You must be tired—and we've shown you everything now.

JILL: What do you think of our little nest, Aunt Jane?

AUNT JANE: I think it's wonderful, my dears. The furniture—and the car—and the piano—and the refrigerator and the radio—what's it—it's wonderful, really wonderful.

JACK: And we owe it all to you.

AUNT JANE: Yes, Jack, that's what's worrying me.

JACK: Worrying you, Aunt Jane?

AUNT JANE: Yes. That cheque I gave you for your wedding present—it was only two hundred pounds, wasn't it? I—didn't put two thousand by mistake?

JILL: Why no, Aunt Jane. What on earth made you think that?

AUNT JANE (relieved): Well, that's all right. But I still don't altogether understand.

This house—it's very lovely—but doesn't it cost a great deal for rent?

JACK: Rent? Oh, no, we don't pay rent.

AUNT JANE: But, Jack, if you don't pay rent, you'll get turned out—into the street. And that would never do. You've Jill and the baby to think of now, you know.

JACK: No, no, Aunt Jane. You misunderstood me. We don't pay rent because the house is ours.

AUNT JANE: YOURS?

JILL: Why, yes; you just pay ten pounds and it's yours.

JACK: You see, Aunt Jane, we realized how uneconomic it is

1. Why did Aunt Jane exclaim 'charming'?

2. What was really wonderful according to Aunt Jane?

3. What made Aunt Jane worry about her gift cheque?



to go on paying rent year after year, when you can buy and enjoy a home of your own for ten pounds—and a few quarterly payments, of course. Why be Mr Tenant when you can be Mr Owner?

AUNT JANE: I see. Yes, there's something in that. Even so, you must be getting on very well to keep up a place like this.

JILL: Oh, he is, Aunt Jane. Why, only last year he had a five shilling rise—didn't you, Jack?

JACK (modestly): Of course that was nothing, really. I'm expecting ten this Christmas.

AUNT JANE (suddenly): Jack ! I've just thought of something. That car—is it yours?

JILL: Of course it's ours.

AUNT JANE: All yours?

JACK: Well, no. Not exactly all.

AUNT JANE: How much of it?

JILL: Oh, I should say the steering wheel—and one of the tyres – and about two of the cylinders. But don't you see, that's the wonderful thing about it.

AUNT JANE: I don't see anything wonderful about it.

JILL: But there is, Aunt Jane. You see, although we could never buy a car outright, we can enjoy all the pleasures of motoring for a mere five pounds down.

AUNT JANE: And the rest by easy instalments, I suppose.

JILL: Exactly.

AUNT JANE: Exactly. And what about the radio-what's it?

JACK: Well, that's the—

AUNT JANE: And the piano?

JILL: Well, of course—

AUNT JANE: And the furniture?

JACK: I—I'm afraid so—

AUNT JANE: I suppose all you own is this leg. (She points to one)

JILL: Well, no, as a matter of fact, it's that one. (She points to another.)

4. What arguments did Jack give in support of purchasing a house on instalment basis?

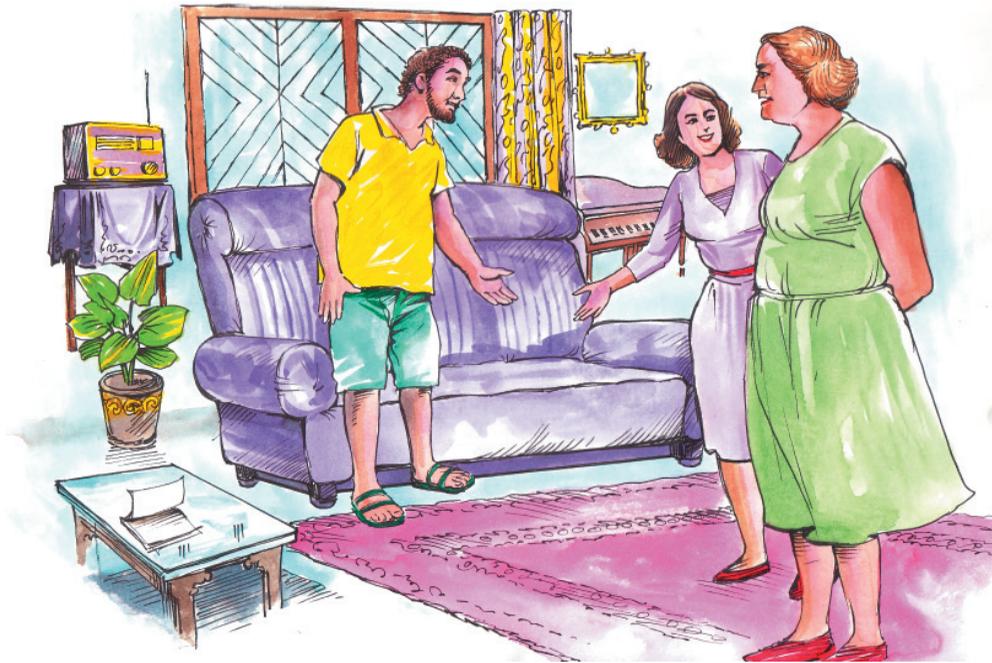
5. According to Jack, which parts of the car does he really own now?

AUNT JANE: And the rest belongs to Mr Sage, I suppose?

JILL: Er—Yes.

AUNT JANE: Well. I'm not going to sit on—Mr Sage's part for any one.

(She stands up.) Now, tell me, how much do all these instalments come to?



JACK: Well, actually—(He takes out his pocket-book and consults it.)—actually to seven pounds eight and eight pence a week.

AUNT JANE: Good heavens! And how much do you earn?

JACK: As a matter of fact—er—that is—six pounds.

AUNT JANE: But that's absurd! How can you pay seven pounds eight and eight pence out of six pounds?

JACK: Oh, that's easy. You see, all you have to do is to borrow the rest of the money for the payments from the Thrift and Providence Trust Corporation.

JILL: They're only too glad to loan you any amount you like, on note of hand alone.

AUNT JANE: And how do you propose to pay that back?

JACK: Oh, that's easy, too. You just pay it back in instalments.

AUNT JANE: Instalments! (She claps her hand to her forehead and sinks back weakly into the chair. Then realises

6. Why did Aunt Jane refuse to sit on the furniture?

7. How did they plan to pay their instalments?

that she is sitting on Mr. Sage's piece and leaps to her feet again with a little shriek.)

JACK: Aunt Jane! Is anything the matter? Would you like to lie down?

AUNT JANE: Lie down? Do you suppose I'm going to trust myself in a bed that belongs to Mr Sage, or Marks and Spencer, or somebody? No, I am going home.

JILL: Oh, must you really go?

AUNT JANE: I think I'd better.

JACK: I'll drive you to the station.

AUNT JANE: What! Travel in a car that has only one tyre and two thingummies! No thank you—I'll take the bus.

JACK: Well, of course, if you feel like that about it....



AUNT JANE (relenting a little): Now, I'm sorry if I sounded rude, but really I'm shocked to find the way you're living. I've never owed a penny in my life—cash down, that's my motto and I want you to do the same. (She opens her handbag.) Now look, here's a little cheque I was meaning to give you, anyway. (She hands it to JILL .) Suppose you take it and pay off just one of your bills— so that you can say one thing at least really belongs to you.

JILL (awkwardly): Er—thank you. Aunt Jane. It's very nice of you.

AUNT JANE (patting her arm): There! Now I must be going.

8. Why did Aunt Jane hesitate to travel in Jack's car?

9. What did Aunt Jane want them to do with the cheque?

JACK: I'll see you to the bus anyway.

JILL: Good-bye, Aunt Jane—and thanks so much for the present.

AUNT JANE (kissing her): Good-bye, my dear. (She and Jack go out. Jill looks at the cheque and exclaims 'Ten pounds!' Then she hurries to the table, addresses an envelope, endorses the cheque and slips it inside with a bill which she takes from the bag and seals the envelope. Then she rings the bell. In a moment the NURSE comes in with the baby in her arms.)

JILL: Oh, nurse. I want you to run and post this for me. I'll look after the baby while you're gone.

NURSE: Certainly, madam. (She hands the baby to Jill, takes the letter, and goes.)

(A second later JACK comes in again.)

JACK: Well, she's gone! What a tartar! Still, she did leave us a bit on account—how much was it?

JILL: Ten pounds.

JACK (with a whistle): Phew! That's great! We can pay off the next two months on the car with that.

JILL: I—I'm afraid we can't—

JACK: Why ever not?

JILL: You see, I—I've already sent it off for something else. Nurse has just gone to post it.

JACK : Well that's all right. Who have you sent it to?

JILL: Dr. Martin.

JACK: Dr Martin! What on earth possessed you to do that?

JILL (nearly in tears): There! Now you're going to be angry with me.

JACK: I'm not angry! But why waste good money on the doctor? Doctors don't expect to get paid anyway.

JILL (sobbing a little): Bu—but you don't understand —

JACK: Understand what?

JILL: Why; just one more instalment and the BABY'S REALLY OURS!

(She is holding out the infant a little pathetically, as we black out.)

10. What did Jill do with the cheque?

11. Why did Jill send the cheque to Dr Martin?

- Cedric Mount



## Let's revisit

## Activity 1

A. Let's reflect on the one act play and complete the table given.

|                                       |  |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Title<br>Significance of the title    |  |
| Characters<br>Characteristics of each | 1. Jack - a representative of consumer society<br>2.<br>3.<br>4. |
| Settings                              |  |
| Plot                                  |  |
| Message of the play                   |  |

B. Prepare a review of the drama based on the table.

## Activity 2

Based on your understanding of the play 'The Never - Never Nest', organise a classroom debate on the topic: 'Is Equated Monthly Instalment Scheme - a boon or bane to middle-class families?'

## Activity 3

Discuss the features of a script or a play.

Prepare a script based on the story 'The Scholarship Jacket', highlighting the following scenes.

1. The argument between Mr. Schmidt and Mr. Boon.
2. The first meeting of Martha with the Principal.
3. Conversation between Martha and grandfather.
4. Second meeting of Martha with the Principal.
5. Presentation of the Scholarship Jacket.

## Let's perform

Let's try to enact the play, 'The Never - Never Nest'  
Role play the script of 'The Scholarship Jacket'.

## Let's find out how language elements work

## Activity 1

Read the following sentence.

My father was a farm labourer who couldn't earn enough money to feed eight children.

In the above sentence, 'enough' is placed before the noun 'money' and it means 'as much as we need or want'.

Look at the sentences given below.

Set I He is tall **enough** to touch the ceiling.

She didn't run fast **enough** to win the prize.

Some tablet computers are small **enough** to fit inside your pocket.

Set II There isn't **enough** sugar at home to make a cake.

There is **enough** food for everyone.

- Identify the words modified by 'enough'.
- What class of words are they?
- In which position is the word 'enough' used in each set of sentences?

Now, complete the following sentences adding 'enough' with a suitable word from the box given and identify the parts of speech of the word modified by 'enough'.

old, loud, high, courage, thick

- He didn't jump \_\_\_\_\_ to win the prize. \_\_\_\_\_
- She is \_\_\_\_\_ to travel by herself. \_\_\_\_\_
- He had \_\_\_\_\_ to admit his mistake. \_\_\_\_\_
- The ice had \_\_\_\_\_ to walk on. \_\_\_\_\_
- He spoke \_\_\_\_\_ to be heard. \_\_\_\_\_

## Activity 2

Read the following sentences from the story.

The small Texas school **that** I went to had a tradition carried out every year during the eighth-grade graduation.

The student **who** had maintained the highest grades for eight years was awarded the Scholarship Jacket.

...my P.E. shorts were still in a bag under my desk **where** I'd forgotten them.

I was almost back at my classroom door **when** I heard voices raised in anger as if in some sort of argument.

What is the function of the words given in bold?

What do we call these words?

Complete the following sentences using appropriate relative pronouns.

**Relative clauses** are clauses starting with the relative pronouns **who, that, which, whose, where** and **when**.

### Who, When, Which, Where, Whom, Whose, That

1. Do you know the man \_\_\_\_\_ climbed the mountain yesterday?
2. Can I have the pencil \_\_\_\_\_ I gave you today morning?
3. A notebook is a computer \_\_\_\_\_ can be carried around.
4. I won't eat in a restaurant \_\_\_\_\_ is not clean.
5. I want to live in a place \_\_\_\_\_ there are lots of shops.
6. Yesterday was a day \_\_\_\_\_ everything went wrong!
7. He is a teacher \_\_\_\_\_ we all respect.
8. He \_\_\_\_\_ never climbs never falls.

Examine the above sentences and find how relative pronouns are used. Complete the table.

|                    | Subject   | Object  | Possessive   |
|--------------------|---|---|--|
| <b>For persons</b> | <p>who/that</p> <p>Eg: The man who robbed has been arrested.</p> <p>1.</p> <p>2.</p>                | <p>whom/who/that</p> <p>Eg: The man whom you gave the car is my friend.</p> <p>1.</p> <p>2.</p> | <p>whose</p> <p>Eg: The film is about a king whose ministers betray him.</p> <p>1.</p> <p>2.</p> |
| <b>For things</b>  | <p>which/that</p> <p>Eg: This is the picture which/that caused a sensation.</p> <p>1.</p> <p>2.</p> | <p>which/that</p> <p>Eg: The car which/that I hired broke down.</p> <p>1.</p> <p>2.</p>         | <p>of which</p> <p>Eg: This is an achievement of which I am proud.</p> <p>1.</p> <p>2.</p>       |

### Activity 3

Read the following sentences from the story.

It's not a scholarship Jacket, **is it?**

The principal has changed his decision, **hasn't he?**

Your grandfather has the money, **doesn't he?**

You must have learnt how to frame **question tags** earlier. Let's see how they work.

Identify the correct question tag and fill in the blanks.

1. He sometimes reads the newspaper, \_\_\_\_\_ ? (don't he?/ doesn't he?/ does he?)
2. I think he's from Maldives, \_\_\_\_\_ ? (doesn't he?/ don't I?/ isn't he?)
3. Don't talk while I am teaching, \_\_\_\_\_ ? (do you?/ amn't you?/ will you?)
4. Let's go swimming, \_\_\_\_\_ ? (aren't we?/ let we?/ shall we?)
5. Pass me the salt, \_\_\_\_\_ ? (do you?/ won't you?/ are you?)
6. He could have bought a new car, \_\_\_\_\_ ? (couldn't he?/ haven't he?/ could he?)
7. The girl won't sing in the party, \_\_\_\_\_ ? (does she?/ will she?/ do she?)
8. He went on a tour, \_\_\_\_\_ ? (aren't he? / didn't he?/ don't he?)

Now, fill in the blanks.

1. You are an Indian, \_\_\_\_\_ ?
2. I'm late, \_\_\_\_\_ ?
3. The boy is from Kottayam, \_\_\_\_\_ ?
4. He'll never know, \_\_\_\_\_ ?
5. Ann has cleaned the plates, \_\_\_\_\_ ?
6. Anu and Manu will arrive tomorrow, \_\_\_\_\_ ?
7. Vivek played football yesterday, \_\_\_\_\_ ?

Read the dialogue between two friends and fill in the blanks appropriately.

Rajeev : Good morning Madhav, I'm not too early, \_\_\_\_\_?

Madhav : No, not at all. You have brought all the documents, \_\_\_\_\_?

Rajeev : I'll get ready soon. You wouldn't mind waiting for five minutes, \_\_\_\_\_?

Madhav : Ok. No problem. At what time shall we leave?

Rajeev : By 9 o' clock. I think we will reach the bank in time, \_\_\_\_\_?

Madhav : Ok then. Please get ready. I'll have a talk with your father.

Rajeev : Yes, please do.

## Activity 4

Read the following sentences.

- a) 'Where's Grandpa?' I asked Grandma.
- b) I asked Grandma where Grandpa was.
  - What type of a sentence is reported?
  - Which reporting word is used here?
  - Which word is used as a linker?
  - What kind of changes are made in the sentence in direct speech?
  - Are there changes in punctuation?

Let's analyse another case of reporting.

- "Will you pay fifteen dollars for me?" Martha asked grandfather.
- Martha asked grandfather if he would pay fifteen dollars for her.
- What differences do you notice when comparing it with the previous sentences?
- What changes will you make while reporting Wh- questions, Yes/No questions, commands and requests?

Report the following sentences and analyse the changes you make while reporting them.

1. 'What are you doing in America?' he asked the man.

---

2. 'Have you met your friends?' he asked her.

---

3. 'Can you help me?' she asked the boy.

---

4. 'Watch him carefully,' she said to her mother.

---

5. 'Why did you come late?' the teacher asked her.

---

6. 'Please don't touch it,' he said to her.

---

7. 'What did your grandfather say?' asked the principal.

---

8. 'I am not going to sit here,' said Aunt Jain.

---

9. 'Let us pay the hospital bill with this money. ,' said Jill.

---

10. ....

---



**Let's edit**

**Read the following summary of the story written by a student of Std X. There are some errors in it which are given in bold letters. Edit the passage and rewrite it.**

'The Scholarship Jacket' is a story by Marta Salinas and is about a Mexican girl named Martha. Every year in the Texas school, a scholarship Jacket **were** (a) presented to the class valedictorian. This scholarship Jacket was the only object in **Marthas** (b) mind. She was a skinny girl **which** (c) was not very pretty. However, she was **enough smart** (d) and had maintained an A plus average in her eight years of school. One day, she overheard two teachers arguing on why the Jacket should be **give** (e) to Joann. The next day the principal told her that the scholarship Jacket was going to cost fifteen dollars, and if she **couldn'd** (f) pay for it, it would be given to the runner-up. Martha left **a** (g) school in tears, and was even more heartbroken when her grandfather said she couldn't have the money. The next day, she told the principal dejectedly that she couldn't have the scholarship Jacket and explained **what** (h). As she was about to exit the office she mentioned Joann's name. The principal, feeling guilty told Martha **why** (i) she would have the scholarship Jacket. Finally, Martha realised that she had earned her Jacket, and **hadnt** (j) purchased it.

## Glossary

|                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| abruptly (adv)           | : unexpectedly  |
| abyss (n)                | : a very deep wide space or hole that seems to have no bottom                                 |
| adrenalin (n)            | : a secretion in the body when you are excited, afraid or angry                               |
| argument (n)             | : a conversation or discussion in which two or more people disagree, often angrily            |
| clod (n)                 | : a lump of earth or clay   |
| coincidence (n)          | : the fact of two things happening at the same time by chance                                 |
| crouch (v)               | : to stoop especially with the knees bent   |
| crumple (v)              | : to crush something into folds   |
| decipher (v)             | : to succeed in finding the meaning of something that is difficult to read or understand      |
| despair (v)              | : to lose hope  |
| dismay (n)               | : distress caused by trouble or something unexpected  |
| eavesdrop (v)            | : to listen secretly to a private conversation  |
| exit                     | : a way out   |
| falsify (v)              | : to make something false by adding to or changing it   |
| fidget (v)               | : to keep moving your body, hands or feet because you are nervous, bored, excited, etc.       |
| gaunt (adj)              | : extremely thin and bony   |
| graffiti (n)             | : writings on the wall  |
| hoe (n)                  | : a garden tool with a long handle and a blade, used for breaking up soil                     |
| infinitesimal (adj)      | : extremely small   |
| mesquite (n)             | : a North American tree   |
| palpitate (v)            | : (in heart) to beat rapidly and in an irregular way especially because of fear or excitement |
| perforate (v)            | : to make a hole or holes through something   |
| pile (n)                 | : a number of things that have been placed on top of each other                               |
| puffy (adj)              | : looking larger, rounder, etc. than usual  |
| ranch (n)                | : a large farm where cows or sheep are bred   |
| reputation               | : good name   |
| shank                    | : a person's leg  |
| summon (v)               | : to order to come  |
| tradition (n)            | : a belief, custom or way of doing something that has existed for a long time                 |
| unfasten (v)             | : to untie something that is tied   |
| vile (adj)               | : unpleasant  |
| with a vengeance (idiom) | : to a greater degree than expected   |



## UNIT V

# RAY OF HOPE

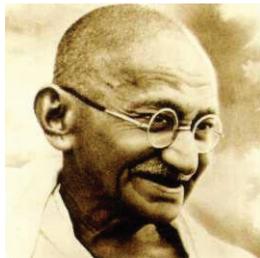
**Prose:**

**Vanka** - Anton Chekhov (Short Story)

**The Castaway** - Rabindranath Tagore (Short Story)

**Poem:**

**Mother to Son** - James Mercer Langston Hughes



**‘You must not lose faith in humanity. Humanity is an ocean; if a few drops of the ocean are dirty, the ocean does not become dirty.’**

*- Mahatma Gandhi*

#### **DISCUSS**

- What do you think are the ‘few drops of dirt’ in the ocean of humanity?
  - Can we consider child labour and racism as ‘drops of dirt’?
  - What can we do to cleanse the ‘ocean of humanity’?
-

Read the citation given by the Norwegian Nobel Committee to the two Nobel Laureates who shared the Nobel Peace Prize for the year 2014 for their struggle against child labour and for the right to education.

*The Norwegian Nobel Committee has decided that the Nobel Peace Prize for 2014 is to be awarded to **Kailash Satyarthi** and **Malala Yousafzai** for their struggle against the suppression of children and young people and for the right of all children to education. Children must go to school and not be financially exploited. In the poor countries of the world, 60% of the present population is under 25 years of age. It is a prerequisite for peaceful global development that the rights of children and young people be respected. In conflict-ridden areas in particular, the violation of children's rights leads to the continuation of violence from generation to generation.*

*Showing great personal courage, Kailash Satyarthi, maintaining Gandhi's tradition, has headed various forms of protests and demonstrations, all peaceful, focusing on the grave exploitation of children for financial gain. He has also contributed to the development of important international conventions on children's rights.*

*Despite her youth, Malala Yousafzai has already fought for several years for the right of girls to education, and has shown by example that children and young people, too, can contribute to improving their own situations. This she has done under the most dangerous circumstances. Through her heroic struggle she has become a leading spokesperson for girls' rights to education.*

*The Nobel Committee regards it as an important point for an Indian and a Pakistani, to join in a common struggle for education and against extremism. Many other individuals and institutions in the international community have also contributed. It has been calculated that there are 168 million child labourers around the world today. In 2000 the figure was 78 million higher. The world has come closer to the goal of eliminating child labour.*

*The struggle against suppression and for the rights of children and adolescents contributes to the realization of the 'fraternity between nations' that Alfred Nobel mentions in his will as one of the criteria for the Nobel Peace Prize.*

**Oslo, 10 October 2014**



You may also refer to <https://www.ted.com> to watch the speeches of Kailash Satyarthi and Malala Yousafzai to know more about their vision and work.

All children have rights, no matter who they are, where they live, what their parents do, what language they speak, what their religion is, whether they are boys or girls, what their culture is, whether they have disability, whether they are rich or poor. But a majority of them are denied their rights in many ways.

Here is the story of a boy who faced a lot of difficulties and was forced to leave his grandfather to work as an apprentice to a shoemaker in Moscow.

## Vanka

1 Nine year old Vanka Zhukov, who had been **apprenticed** three months ago to Alyakhin the shoemaker, did not go to bed on Christmas eve. He waited till his master and mistress and the senior apprentices had gone to church, and then took from the cupboard a bottle of ink and a pen with a rusty nib, spread out a crumpled sheet of paper, and was all ready to write. Before tracing the first letter, he glanced several times anxiously at the door and window, peered at the dark **icon**, with shelves holding cobbler's **lasts** stretching on either side of it, and gave a quivering sigh. The paper lay on the bench, and Vanka knelt on the floor at the bench.

2 'Dear Grandad Konstantin Makarich,' he wrote. 'I am writing a letter to you. I send you Christmas greetings and hope God will send you his blessings. I have no Father and no Mummie and you are all I have left.'



1. On the basis of your reading of the first two paragraphs of the story complete the following table.

|                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| Protagonist of the story |  |
| Place                    |  |
| Time                     |  |
| His family               |  |
| His mental state         |  |
| His actions              |  |



**Anton Chekhov (1860-1904)**, a major Russian playwright is one of the masters of modern short story. His works explore the entire range of the human spirit. They provoke the readers to ask questions. Moreover, he is an outstanding representative of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century Russian realist school. His famous works include *Three Sisters*, *The Cherry Orchard* and *The Lady with the Dog*.





3 Vanka raised his eyes to the dark window -pane, in which the reflection of the candle flickered. In his imagination he distinctly saw his grand dad, Konstantin Makarich. He was a night watchman on the estate of some gentle folk called Zhivarev. He was small, lean, old, man about sixtyfive, but remarkably lively and agile with a smiling face and eyes bleary with drink. In the day time he either slept at the kitchen or sat joking with the cook and kitchen-maids. In the night he wrapped himself in a great sheepskin coat, walked round and round the estate, sounding his **rattle**. Two dogs, Eel and Kashtanka would follow him **with drooping heads**. Eel was named on account of his black coat and long weasel-like body. He was wonderfully respectful and **insinuating**. He had the same appealing glance on friends and strangers alike, but he inspired confidence in no one. His **deferential** manner and **docility** were pretexts for his cunningness and hostility. He was **adept** at stealing up to snap at a foot, creeping into the ice - house, or snatching a peasant's chicken. His hind legs had been slashed again and again twice he had been strung up, he was beaten with an inch of his life every week, but he survived it all.

2. What were the specialties of the dog, Eel?

4 Grandad was probably standing at the gate at this moment, screwing up his eyes to look at the bright red light coming from the church windows, or stumping about in his felt boots, fooling with the servants. His rattle would be fastened to his belt. He would be throwing out his arms and hugging himself against the cold, or, with his old man's titter, pinching a maid, or one of the cooks. 'Have a nip,' he would say, holding out his snuffbox to the women. The women would take a pinch and sneeze. Grandfather would be overcome with delight, breaking out into jolly laughter, and shouting:

'Good for frozen noses!'

5 Even the dogs would be given snuff. Kashtanka would sneeze, shake her head and walk away, offended. But Eel, too polite to sneeze, would wag his tail. And the weather was glorious. The air still, transparent and fresh. It was a dark night, but the whole village with its white roofs, the smoke rising from the chimneys, the trees, silver with **rime**, the snow-drifts, could be seen distinctly. The sky was sprinkled with **gaily** twinkling stars, and the Milky Way stood out as clearly as if newly scrubbed for the holiday and polished with snow....

6 Vanka sighed, dipped his pen in the ink, and went on writing: 'And yesterday I had such a **hiding**. The master took me by the hair and dragged me out into the yard and beat me with the stirrup-strap because by mistake I went to sleep while rocking their baby. And one day last week the mistress told me to **gut** a herring and I began from the tail and she picked up the herring and rubbed my face with the head. The other apprentices make fun of me, they send me to the **tavern** for vodka and make me steal the master's cucumbers and the master beats me with the first thing he finds. And there is nothing to eat. They give me bread in the morning and **gruel** for dinner and in the evening bread again, but I never get tea or cabbage soup. They **gobble** it all up themselves. And they make me sleep in the passage and when their baby cries, I don't get any sleep at all. I have to rock it. Dear Grandad, for the dear Lord's sake take me away from here. Take me home to the village. I can't bear it any longer. Oh! Grandad, I beg and implore you and I

3. Is there a shift in the setting of the story in paragraphs 3 & 4? Where do the events take place?

4. How does grandfather create an atmosphere of fun and laughter?

5. Pick out words and phrases used to describe the night.

6. What sort of a life did Vanka lead at the shoemaker's place?

will always pray for you, do take me away from here or I'll die. . . .’

7 Vanka's lips **twitched**, he rubbed his eyes with a black fist and gave a sob.

‘I will grind your snuff for you,’ he went on. ‘I will pray for you and you can **flog** me as hard as you like if I am naughty. And if you think there is nothing for me to do I will ask the steward to take pity on me and let me clean the boots or I will go as a shepherd-boy instead of Fedya. Dear Grandad I can't stand it. It is killing me. I thought I would run away on foot to the village but I have no boots and I am afraid of the frost. And when I grow up to be a man I will look after you and I will not let anyone hurt you and when you die I will pray for your soul like I do for my Mummie.’

8 Moscow is such a big town. There are so many gentlemen's houses and such a lot of horses and no sheep and the dogs are not a bit fierce. The boys in the town don't roam the streets with stars and they don't allow one to sing in church at Christmas. They were also seen selling fishing hooks that could even hold a sheat fish weighing thirty pounds. There are shops that have all sorts of guns just like the ones the master has at home. They must cost a hundred roubles each. In the butchers' shops they sell **grouse**, wood-cock and hares about which they don't say where they were shot.

9 ‘Dear Grandad when they have a Christmas tree at the big house take a **gilded** nut for me and put it away in the green chest. Ask Miss Olga Ignatyevna, tell her it's for Vanka.’

10 Vanka gave a sharp sigh and once more gazed at the windowpane. He remembered his grandfather going to get a Christmas tree for the **gentry**, and taking his grandson with him. Oh, what happy times those had been! Grandfather would give a chuckle, and the frost-bound wood chuckled, and Vanka, following their example, chuckled, too. Before chopping down the fir-tree, Grandfather would smoke a pipe, take a long pinch

7. What, according to Vanka, would happen to him if his grandfather didn't take him back home? Why did he think so?

8. Why couldn't Vanka run away from the home of the shoemaker?

9. Vanka is working for a shoemaker; but he doesn't have boots. What do you understand from this?

10. What promises does Vanka make to his grandfather so that he would take him back home?

11. What beautiful memories of Christmas does Vanka cherish?

of snuff, and laugh at the shivering Vanka... The young fir-trees, coated with frost, stood motionless, waiting to see which one of them was to die. And suddenly a hare would come leaping over a snow-drift, swift as an arrow. Grandfather could never help shouting:

‘Stop it, stop it . . . stop it! Oh, you stub-tailed devil!’

11 Grandfather would drag the tree to the big house, and they would start decorating it... Miss Olga Ignatyevna, Vanka's favourite, was the busiest of all. While Pelageya, Vanka's mother, was alive and in service at the big house, Olga Ignatyevna used to give Vanka sweets, and amuse herself by teaching him to read, write and count to a hundred, and even to dance the **quadrille**. But when Pelageya died, the orphaned Vanka was sent down to the back kitchen to his grandfather, and from there to Moscow, to Alyakhin the shoemaker...

12 ‘Come to me dear Grandad,’ continued Vanka. ‘I beg you for Christ's sake take me away from here. Pity me unhappy orphan they beat me all the time and I am always hungry and I am so miserable here. I can't tell you I cry all the time. And one day the master hit me over the head with a last and I fell down and thought I would never get up again. I have such a miserable life worse than a dog's. And I send my love to Alyona, one-eyed Yegor and the coachman and don't give my **concertina** to anyone. I remain, your grandson Ivan Zhukov. Dear Grandad, do come.’

13 Vanka folded the sheet of paper in four and put it into an envelope which he had bought the day before for a **kopek**. Then he paused to think, dipped his pen into the ink-pot and wrote: ‘To Grandfather in the village,’ scratched his head, thought again, then added:

‘TO KONSTANTIN MAKARICH’.

14 Pleased that no one had prevented him from writing, he put on his cap and ran out into the street without putting his coat on over his shirt. The men at the butcher's told him, when he asked them the day before,

12. Who was Vanka's favourite? Why did he like her?

13. How did Vanka reach Moscow?

14. ‘I have such a miserable life worse than a dog's.’ What made Vanka say so?



that letters are put into letter-boxes, and from these boxes sent all over the world on mail coaches with three horses and drunken drivers and jingling bells. Vanka ran as far as the nearest letter-box and dropped his precious letter into the slit.

15 An hour later, **lulled** by rosy hopes, he was fast asleep. He dreamed of a stove. On the stove-ledge sat his grandfather, his bare feet **dangling**, reading the letter to the cooks.... Eel was walking backwards and forwards in front of the stove, wagging his tail....

(Translated by Ivy Litvinov)

15. Do you think Vanka's letter will reach his grandfather? Why?

16. What did Vanka dream about in his sleep?

17. Does the reference to Eel have any significance in the story? How?



Let's revisit

### Activity 1

According to Vanka, what kind of a person is Konstantin Makarich?

**Do you justify Makarich's decision to send Vanka away to Moscow? Why?**

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### Activity 2

How did the people in Alyakhin's workplace treat Vanka?

**Complete the following table using appropriate phrases/clauses from the story.**

| Alyakhin, the Master | The Mistress | Other Apprentices |
|----------------------|--------------|-------------------|
|                      |              |                   |
|                      |              |                   |
|                      |              |                   |
|                      |              |                   |
|                      |              |                   |

### Activity 3

How is Moscow, the big town, contrasted with the village where Vanka lived?

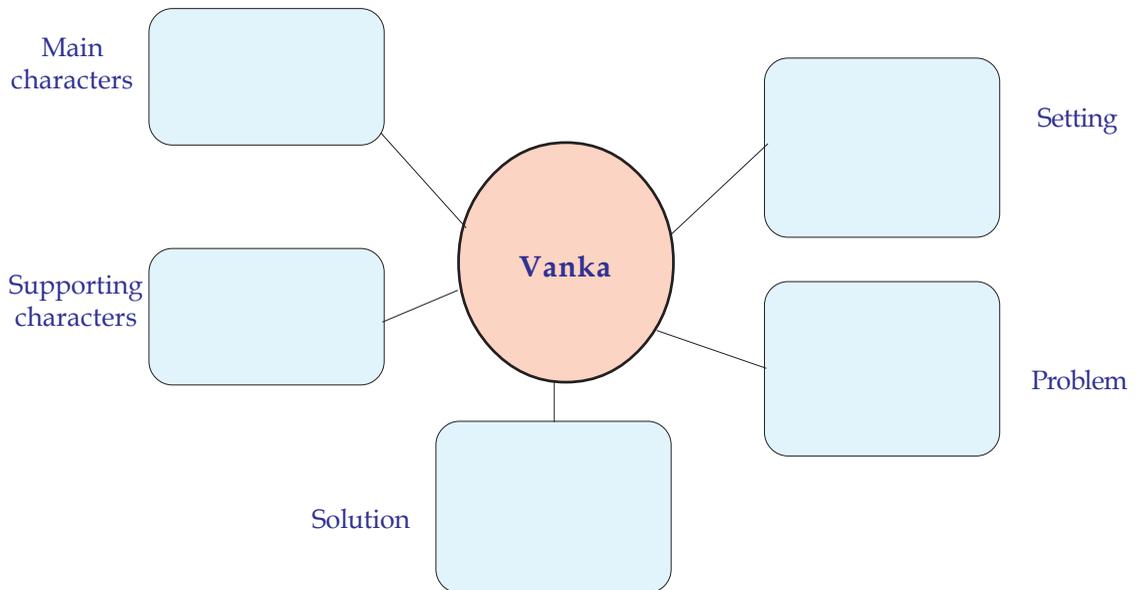
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### Activity 4

Now, prepare a story map of Vanka.



### Activity 5

Attempt a **character sketch** of Grandfather in the story *Vanka*.

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## Activity 6

Let's reread the story and complete the table given.

|   |                 |
|---|-----------------|
| <b>Characterisation</b><br>Personality traits of each character   | 1.              |
|   | 2.              |
| <b>Theme</b><br>The main idea/ideas in the story  |                 |
| <b>Tone</b><br>Changes in feelings as you read the story  |                 |
| <b>Style</b><br>Choice of words, use of language, imagery, sentence construction, etc.  |                 |
| <b>Point of View</b><br>From whose perspective is the story being told  |                 |
| <b>Conflict</b><br>The different types of conflicts that the protagonist faces. Which of them are internal (self vs self) and which are external (self vs others, society or nature)? | <b>Internal</b> |
|   | <b>External</b> |

Now, prepare an analysis based on the table. You may begin like this:

*Anton Chekhov's 'Vanka' is a story that haunts the reader for long \_\_\_\_\_*

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### Activity 7

Usually stories featuring orphans like David Copperfield, Oliver Twist or Cinderella end with their escape from the horrid surroundings to find love and happiness. A story can have more than one ending. You can think of many alternatives like Vanka joining his grandfather or running away from the shoemaker's house and so on.

Suggest an **alternative ending** to the story and write it in your own words.

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### Activity 8

Imagine that there are many children in your locality who have similar experiences like that of Vanka. Write a **letter** to the editor of a newspaper describing the sad plight of such children and the need to uplift them.

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### Activity 9

The story *Vanka* makes a powerful statement against the terrible consequences of the denial of child rights - child labour. The United Nation's General Assembly established 20 November as International Child Right Day. Do you want to become a 'Change Maker' in the society to save children from child labour, child trafficking and other child abuses? How will you organise a campaign for child rights? You can think of publishing a magazine to create awareness among the people of your locality. The magazine should include:

- a) Editor's foreword
- b) Features with photographs of child labour
- c) Cartoons
- d) Poems
- e) Stories
- f) Short skits and Street plays
- g) Speeches
- h) Essays highlighting the evils of child labour

You may think of publishing it as a manuscript/digital/print magazine.

### Let's learn more about words

#### Activity 1

Look at the following sentence.

Vanka **put on** his hat and ran out into the street.

What does the phrasal verb 'put on' in this sentence mean? When the verb 'put' is used along with the preposition 'on', it attains a different meaning, 'to wear'.

What are the other prepositions frequently used with 'put' to get different phrasal verbs?

**a. Prepare a list of such phrasal verbs and use each of them in sentences of your own.**

Phrasal verb \_\_\_\_\_ Meaning \_\_\_\_\_

Sentence \_\_\_\_\_

Phrasal verb \_\_\_\_\_ Meaning \_\_\_\_\_

Sentence \_\_\_\_\_

Phrasal verb \_\_\_\_\_ Meaning \_\_\_\_\_

Sentence \_\_\_\_\_

- b. Re-write the paragraph given below replacing the underlined words with suitable phrasal verbs from the table.

Vanka began his letter wishing his grandfather a happy Christmas. Even though he was conscious about his master's arrival he continued writing. He wanted to return to his village where he lived peacefully. He could not tolerate the cruelties of his masters any more. He begged his grandfather to care him. He never wished to visit Moscow again. He finished the letter soon and read the letter once again. He wore his court and went out to drop his letter in the post box.

go on, get back, call at, put on, go through, look after, put up with

### Activity 3

Imagine that Grandfather receives the letter written by Vanka. The paragraph given below describes his thoughts and feelings.

**Complete the paragraph using appropriate words from the box below.**

Grandfather's hands shivered as he opened the letter. Vanka's face appeared \_\_\_\_\_(a)\_\_\_\_\_ before him. The candle \_\_\_\_\_(b)\_\_\_\_\_ but the letters were \_\_\_\_\_(c)\_\_\_\_\_ clear to him. The old man who was \_\_\_\_\_(d)\_\_\_\_\_ at hiding his emotions could not stop the tears from flowing down. \_\_\_\_\_(e)\_\_\_\_\_ eyed, he recollected with warmth the \_\_\_\_\_(f)\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_(g)\_\_\_\_\_ manner of his grandson. He longed to bring him back. The \_\_\_\_\_(h)\_\_\_\_\_ eyes of the boy seemed to haunt him. They could enjoy the \_\_\_\_\_(i)\_\_\_\_\_ Christmas together. But the helpless old man gave a deep sigh!

remarkably, bleary, distinctly, glorious, docility,

flickered, insinuating, adept, imploring

Did Vanka get the love and affection of his mother? What, do you think, is the role of a mother in a family? How can she give love, care and advice to her children?

Go through the following poem 'Mother to Son' by Langston Hughes.

## Mother to Son



3LAY8F

Well, son, I'll tell you:  
Life for me ain't been no crystal stair.  
It's had **tacks** in it,  
And **splinters**,  
And boards torn up,

1. Who is the speaker in the poem? Do you feel the presence of a listener? How?
2. What does the expression 'no crystal stair' mean?
3. Was life easy for the narrator? Pick out evidence from this stanza to support your answer.



**James Mercer Langston Hughes** (1902 - 1967) was an American poet, social activist, novelist, playwright and columnist from Joplin, Missouri. He is one of the earliest innovators of the literary art form called *jazz poetry*. Hughes is best known as a leader of the Harlem Renaissance. *Montage of a Dream Deferred*, *The Negro Speaks of Rivers*, *Let America Be America Again*, etc. are some of his known works.



3L236S

And places with no carpet on the floor—  
 Bare.  
 But all the time  
 I've been a-climbin' on,  
 And reachin' landin's,  
 And turnin' corners,  
 And sometimes goin' in the dark  
 Where there ain't been no light.  
 So, boy, don't you turn back.  
 Don't you set down on the steps.  
 'Cause you finds it's kinder hard.  
 Don't you fall now—  
 For I've still goin', honey,  
 I've still climbin',  
 And life for me ain't been no crystal stair.



4. The first stanza ends with the word 'bare'. What does the speaker mean by the word 'bare'?

5. When life becomes challenging, does the speaker give up? How do you know?

6. What do the phrases 'turnin' corners' and 'set down on the steps' mean?

7. The speaker speaks of the 'dark times'. What does the poet refer to here?

8. What advice does the speaker give? Pick out the relevant lines from the poem.

9. With what message does the poem end?

### Let's revisit

**Read the poem again and answer the questions choosing the most appropriate answer from the options given below.**

- In the first seven lines, a stairway with 'tacks in it and splinters' is being compared to
  - the carpet on the stairway
  - the other people who live in the run-down housing
  - the son
  - life
- In this poem, boards with 'tacks and splinters' and 'boards torn up' are symbols for-
  - run-down housing
  - a life with many difficulties and challenges

- c. the ungrateful manner in which the mother's son treats her
  - d. the lack of compassion for fellow beings
3. What does 'reachin' landin's' symbolise in the mother's life?
- a. difficult situations in her life
  - b. phases in her life that seemed magical to her
  - c. compassionate forces in her life
  - d. places devoid of light
4. Why do you think the word 'bare' is used in the poem?
- a. to emphasize the son's brutality
  - b. because Hughes couldn't think of anything else to add to that line
  - c. to emphasize how difficult and 'bare' of luxuries the mother's life had been
  - d. because it rhymes with the word 'stair'
5. Which of the following is the most suitable meaning for 'turnin' corners' in the poem?
- a. phases in her life where she tried to solve problems on her own
  - b. phases in her life where she felt she had failed
  - c. moments in her life when she knew her son would be successful
  - d. her need to find a father figure for her son
6. What is the theme of the poem?
- a. One shouldn't be over confident.
  - b. When you are in trouble, look to your mother for advice.
  - c. Don't give up; reach out to the goals you have set for yourself.
  - d. Love for mankind.
7. The 'crystal stair' is a metaphor used in the poem. Why do you think Hughes is referring to the stairway as 'crystal'?
- a. Crystals are beautiful, but they are also fragile and slippery.
  - b. Crystals sparkle in the sunlight.
  - c. Crystals have different colours in them depending on how the light hits them.
  - d. You can almost see through a crystal.

8. Why is 'stairway' used as an appropriate metaphor to describe the wisdom the mother is trying to impart to her son?

- a. Stairways are always dirty and rough.
- b. One has to clean and wax a stairway to make it look good.
- c. One requires steady persistence to go up and down a stairway.
- d. Stairways are often found in expensive houses.

9. What is the most likely age of the son?

- a. Old age
- b. Infancy
- c. Middle age
- d. Teenage

10. The language used in the poem, pertaining to a particular culture or geographic area is known as a:

- a. dialogue
- b. dialect
- c. diction
- d. idiom

**Activity 1**

The metaphor '... life for me ain't been no crystal stair' is an extended metaphor. It is seen throughout the poem. Do you think that the poem can convey the right idea without this metaphor? Why?

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The poem uses an extended metaphor, dialect and imagery to convey the theme that life is difficult and one has to work hard and be persistent to face the challenges of life.

## Activity 2

What literary elements does Langston Hughes use to convey the message in the poem *Mother to Son*?

Consider the following:

1. What is the relevance of the metaphor 'crystal stair'?
2. Why does the poet use the Afro-American dialect in the poem? A dialect is a form of language that is spoken in one area with grammar, words and pronunciation that may be different from other forms of the same language. Does the dialect give you any clue regarding the social status of the speaker in the poem? Pick out the examples of the dialect from the poem.
3. How does the poem effectively make use of the familiar things as word pictures or images such as *tacks*, *splinters*, etc.?

## Activity 3

The poem is in the form of an advice given by a mother to son. Have you come across similar poems in your mother tongue? Consider the following lines from the eminent Malayalam poet Kadammanitta Ramakrishnan's poem *Kozhi*.

കണ്ണുവേണം ഇരുപുറം എപ്പോഴും  
കണ്ണുവേണം മുകളിലും താഴെയും  
കണ്ണിലെപ്പോഴും കത്തിജ്വലിക്കും  
ഉൾക്കണ്ണുവേണം അണയാത്ത കണ്ണ്

Work out the **thematic parallels** between these two poems and present your ideas before the class.

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In the story *Vanka* we see the pathetic plight of a little boy and feel sympathy towards him. Shouldn't we empathise with others in such situations. Let us read a story written by Tagore.

## THE CASTAWAY



The battle of the gods and demons began in the evening. The roaring storm, the pouring rain, the bludgeoning thunder and lightning and the black clouds all took their part. The Ganges was furious and one could hear nature's screams, sighs and groans everywhere.

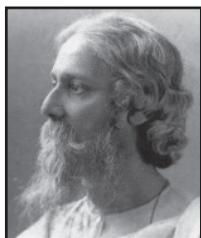
In one of the river side houses of Chandernagore, an endless verbal battle was going on between Sharat and his wife Kiran about her staying in the house. Kiran fell seriously ill making everyone in her native village terribly anxious. The whole village advocated for a change necessary for her and to be taken to her own home. But Sharat and his mother gave more importance to their darling than the wisdom of the village.

"The doctor also thinks that you should stay here a few more days to return home strong again."



1. What really is the battle of gods and demons mentioned here?

2. What made the native of Chandernagore terribly anxious? What was their solution to that?



**Rabindranath Tagore** (1861-1941) is a Bengali writer who reshaped Bengali literature and music as well as Indian art in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. He became the first non-European to win the Nobel Prize for Literature for his celebrated work *Gitanjali*, famous for its 'profoundly sensitive, fresh and beautiful verse'.

*The Golden Boat*, *Cabuliwalah*, *The Post Office* and *The Broken Nest* are some of his notable works. This is an extract from his autobiographical work *My Boyhood Days*.



"Ah! Your doctor knows everything. Let him know that a recovered person never needs further medicated recovery. I can go home right now."

"No, now you know that all sorts of illness have eluded from here."

"Mm. Now I suppose everyone here would be perfectly well in this storm."

Sharat looked at her face. She still appeared to be very weak. His heart sank at the thought of how narrowly she had escaped death.

Kiran had enjoyed being with the villagers steaming with fun. But here in the riverside, she could not tolerate with the heavy burden of doing nothing. That was their point of discussion. He lost his spirit when she suddenly stopped responding and turned her head away.

He heard a call and went outside to see a young boy in the garden, a survivor from an upturned boat in the storm. Immediately, Kiran showed her hospitality giving him dry clothes to change and milk to drink. After he had settled down, she asked his whereabouts. His name was Nilkanta, belonged to a theatrical group. Their boat perished in the storm while they were going to stage a play in a neighbouring villa. He said he had no idea about the others.

The boy turned out to be a boon to everyone there. Kiran had a warm interest in him as he swam out from the clutches of death. Sharat and his mother were happy as Kiran would stay longer there. Nilkanta also was delighted to escape from his master and be a part of that wealthy family.

But in a short while Sharat and his mother began to rethink and longed for his departure. He developed a vast friendship band of naughty boys which didn't allow any fruits to get ripen in the neighbourhood. His friendship with the village mongrel dog turned the house upside down. But Kiran alone found happiness in supporting the boy. All the warnings of Sharat went in vain. She provided him clothes in abundance. She would always call him for his theatrical presentations and the afternoon hours passed merrily. Sharat had a cordial dislike towards the boy. Though the boy often got his ears boxed and pulled by Sharat, there was no notable change. He strongly believed the world was made

3. "... a recovered person never needs further recovery." What did Kiran mean by that?

4. Kiran enjoyed interacting with people and hated being inactive. Pick out the sentences which give this sense.

5. Who was the new guest to the riverside house? How did he come there? How did Kiran treat him?

6. The boy's entry was a boon to everyone. How?

7. Why did Sharat and his mother long for the departure of Nilkanta?

up of eatings and beatings in which beatings played the predominant part.

It was hard to tell his age from his face and his acts. His hairless innocent face said he was about fourteen but the smoke and words gushed out from his mouth suggested he was beyond seventeen. But everyone treated him as a small boy. He showed the first signs of adulthood when he hesitated to be a lady companion to Kiran and to play the earlier feminine roles he had played. But his role as an acolyte to Kiran defended anything that came against him in the house. He had nothing to think about other than entertaining Kiran with his diverse performances.

Kiran's efforts to inculcate some scholastic elements in him turned into ashes as the destitute youth figured out that even the alphabets were dancing in the mist in front of his eyes. But he developed the skill of casting his eyes blank on a page in the book for hours as if reading it. He would read it aloud when a hint of human presence is somewhere around him. Even though it sounded perfect with full of trifling alliteration, the feeblest meaning was beyond his comprehension.

He felt everything to become music around him. The past life of the theatrical slave before the storm had completely faded out from his memory. The enchanting nature and the soothing presence of Kiran, who took up the roles of his sister and mother combined, became the music of his song. And off from her, he would bring dozens of fresh complaints from his neighbours that eventually led to Sharat cuffing him. His spoilt followers would then come in search of him for some new ways of mischief.

At that time Sharat's younger brother Satish came to spend vacation with them. Kiran was overjoyed by the presence of her brother-in-law of the same age, both always on the move, rollicking with pearls of laughter. She would write monkey with vermilion on his back and he, put pepper among her betel.

Meanwhile no one knew how, a cloud of unexplained wilderness hovered over Nilkanta. He would thrash his devotees for no reason and kick his pet mongrel or smash the leaves and twigs harshly with canes.

After Satish's arrival, Kiran had seldom got much time to spare serving Nilkanta's meals which she had been doing so

8. Though Sharat punished him for his naughtiness, Nilkanta did not change his behaviour. What was the reason behind that?

9. What was the confusion about Nilkanta's age with his face and deeds?

10. Nilkanta turned out to be a failure in his studies. How did his studies go on?

11. The care and affection of Kiran changed the boy's miserable life to a happy one. How did he behave when he was away from Kiran's presence?

generously as he had an immense capacity of eating. After that he left the hall without eating much. He would repeatedly say, "I am not hungry" thinking that it would bring Kiran to press him to finish. That didn't happen. Soaking the pillow with his sobs became a usual occurrence. He jumped into the conclusion that some venomous trick of Satish had made her angry against him.

Satish didn't notice his covert ways of avenge even though his soap disappeared from the steps of the bathing-place or his dress floated past him as if blown by the wind. One day Kiran called Nilkanta to entertain Satish. He kept mum and said that he couldn't remember anything.

The decision to return home made everyone busy packing up. Satish was going with them, but Nilkanta remained unasked. Later, Kiran's proposal of taking him with them was strongly opposed by the other members of the family. Finally Kiran softly advised him to go back to his own home. This unexpected kindness made him burst into tears. Kiran couldn't stop joining him. But Satish was terribly annoyed at the sight of this and said, "That brat has cleverly discovered a way to soften your heart with a tear or two. Because you are too good and trustful." Nilkanta left the spot with a bleeding heart seriously thinking about how to burn Satish into ashes.

Satish had brought a grand inkstand with him, his great favourite, from Calcutta. The inkpot was set on a pearl boat drawn by a silver goose supporting a pen-holder. Everyday he cleaned it with added care.

The day before they were about to depart, the inkstand was missing. Satish was furious and pounced upon the boy shouting, "You have stolen my inkstand, you thief!" Nilkanta wobbled towards the wall with a swollen heart and head. Kiran was greatly distressed at the scene and took him to another room and suggested, "Nilu, if you have taken it, I shall keep it there and block anyone making further fuss." To this, Nilkanta knelt down weeping bitterly. A fierce battle of words followed between Kiran on one side and Sharat and Satish on the other. Satish wanted to search his room and she responded violently with tears: "You dare?" That at once settled the matter.

Kiran's heart overflowed with pity on the homeless lad. She got two new suits of clothes, a pair of shoes and a bank note and wanted to place them into his box as a surprise gift.

12. What was the difference in Nilkanta's behaviour after Satish came to the house? To Nilkanta, why was Kiran angry with him?

13. How did Nilkanta avenge Satish in his own way?

14. What grave problem did Kiran and family have when they were about to move to their house in the village?

15. Why did Nilkanta think about burning Satish into ashes?

16. "Nilkanta wobbled towards the wall with swollen heart and head." Why?

17. What was the battle of words for?

When she unlocked the box, the lid suddenly sprang up with all those petty things jumbling. The gift would not go in. She started pulling out everything to place them in order. There at the bottom came a layer of linen and under it emerged the missing inkstand, goose and all. Kiran stood helplessly with the inkstand, puzzled.

Behind Kiran stood Nilkanta shocked as if he was hit by a



heavy hammer on his head. His last hope of proving him not a thief hit the dust. Actually he took the inkstand as a revenge to throw it into the river. Now there is no way of convincing his mistress. He somehow managed to leave the room without Kiran noticing him. Kiran, with a deep sigh, placed them back in the box well, the gift on top of all and closed the box.

The next day the boy was nowhere to be found. Even the police couldn't find him. Sharat urged for searching in his box to know more about him but Kiran's refusal forced him to withdraw. She took the missing things and threw them in the river. Though the family returned to their own home, Nilkanta's starving mongrel prowled along the river-bank with heart-breaking whines.

*(Adapted)*

18. What did Kiran do to console Nilkanta? What puzzled her when she unlocked his box?

19. 'His last hope of proving him not a thief hit the dust.' How?

20. What might be the mystery behind the missing of Nilkanta?

## Let's revisit

## Activity 1

The story 'Castaway' is full of conflicts. Nilkanta's behaviour and actions, responses of Satish and Sarat and arguments of Kiran for Nilkanta make the main plot of the story. Make a revisit to the story and complete the following table.

| Character | Remarkable qualities | Supporting instances |
|-----------|----------------------|----------------------|
|           |                      |                      |
|           |                      |                      |
|           |                      |                      |
|           |                      |                      |

## Activity 2

a. In the story 'Castaway', we came across a young boy, Nilkanta, who escaped from a storm.

How did he manage to save himself?

If you are in his place what will you do? Discuss.

It is better to have such skills to save ourselves and others in critical situations.

Can you suggest some of those skills?

- Awareness about first aid
- Trekking
- Rock climbing
- .....
- .....

- b. Even though Nilkanta escaped from the storm he failed to get the acceptance of the people who were kind to him. Kiran's family could have utilised his theatrical skills to create a better artist out of him. As a well-wisher of Nilkanta, what can you do to support in grooming the boy into a successful man? Discuss.

Discussion points:

- Identifying his abilities
- Encouraging
- .....
- .....
- .....
- .....
- .....

**On the basis of the discussion, prepare a write-up on 'The role of society in moulding a person'.**

- c. Have you identified your skills and talents?

How can we nourish them?

Let us conduct a talent search competition in our school under the auspice of the English club.

What are the competitions?

- Recitation
- Mono-act
- Extempore
- .....
- .....
- .....

Prepare a notice for the event which include all the details.

Conduct the competition in your school as a part of the English club activities.

## Let's find out how language elements work

### Activity 1

In the story, we can see that Vanka's earlier life in the village is in sharp contrast with his present life in Moscow. Pick out sentences from the story describing the past and the present life of Vanka and complete the table given.

| Past life   | Present life  |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• He remembered his grandfather going to get a Christmas tree.</li> <li>•</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I am writing a letter to you.</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> </ul> |

- Underline the words that helped you to classify the events as past and present.

### Activity 2

Read the following sentences from the story *Vanka*.

- The letter was wrapped in an envelope.
- Vanka was cruelly beaten with the stirr up strap.

**Discuss:**

Who performs the action in each of these sentences?

Why isn't the doer of the action mentioned?

These sentences emphasise the action rather than the agent, mainly for dramatic effect.

- It is not always necessary to mention the agent especially if the agent is known from the context, or is unknown or unimportant.

**a. Read the following sentences.**

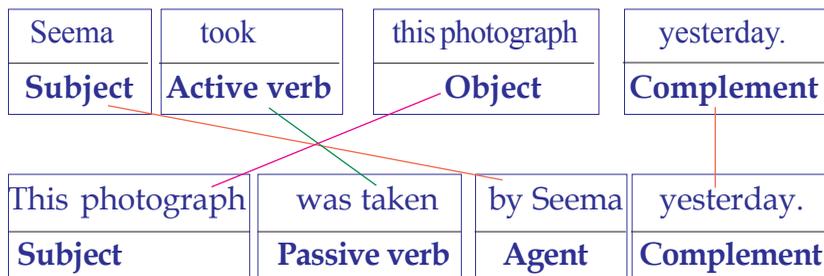
1. Navin wrote the letter.  
The letter was written by Navin.
2. He washes the clothes.  
The clothes are washed by him.

**Discuss**

- Are the sentences the same in each set?
- What difference do you notice?
- What changes occurred to the first sentence when it was changed to passive voice?

To change a sentence from the active voice to the passive:

- The object of the active voice sentence becomes the subject of the passive sentence.
- The subject of the sentence in the active voice becomes the agent of the passive sentence and is preceded by the preposition 'by'.
- What changes occurred to the verb in the sentence when it was changed to passive voice?



List out the active verbs and passive verbs from the above examples.

| <b>Active verbs</b> | <b>Passive verbs</b> |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| wrote               | was written          |

**Change the following sentences from active to passive voice.**

1. Vanka is writing a letter.

---

2. Aliakhin beats Vanka everyday.

---

3. Grandfather would give the dogs suff.

---

4. Satish had brought a grand inkstand.

---

5. Nilkanta stole the inkstand.

---

6. Grandfather will save Vanka.

---

### Activity 3

a) Read the following sentences from the story:

- Eel and Kashtanka would follow him with drooping head.
- The unexpected kindness made him burst into tears.

In the above sentences the adjectives, 'drooping' and 'unexpected' describe the nouns 'head' and 'kindness' respectively. The adjective 'drooping' ends in '-ing' and 'unexpected' ends in '-ed'.

**Pick out sentences with similar adjectives from the story and complete the table given below.**

| Sentences with adjectives ending in '-ing' | Sentences with adjectives ending in '-ed' |
|--|---|
|  |   |

**Discuss:**

What difference do you notice between the adjectives ending in '-ed' and adjectives ending in '-ing'?

b) Now, sit in pairs and construct sentences using the following adjectives. One is given as an example.

interested – interesting

- a) He had an interested look on his face.
- b) These books contain interesting stories.

Adjectives ending in ‘-ed’ usually describe people’s feelings whereas adjectives ending in ‘-ing’ describe the characteristics of a person or thing.

frightened – frightening

---

---

thrilled – thrilling

---

---

tired – tiring

---

---

bored – boring

---

---

shocked – shocking

---

---

### Activity 4

**‘Sentence pattern’ is just another way to talk about, the way a sentence is put together; the order of the elements in the sentence; sentence construction.**

Identify the pattern of these sentences.

- 1. John / laughed.
- 2. John / kissed / Jane.
- 3. John / is / tall.
- 4. John / gave / Jane / a present.
- 5. John / made / Jane / angry.
- 6. John / sat / up.
- 7. John / put / the bag / down.

All these sentences have different patterns; SV, SVO, SVC, SVOO, SVOC, SVA, SVOA.

These are the seven basic sentence (or clause) patterns in English Language.

**EXERCISE**

**Identify the sentence pattern of the following sentences.**

1. He bought his girlfriend a ring.
2. She sings and dances.
3. She made the problem complicated.
4. She goes to school.
5. John and Marry are swimming.
6. He brought me a cup of tea.
7. The company has been very successful.
8. They are in class.
9. He is brave.
10. I called my dog Dodo

**Now, construct sentences according to the seven basic sentence patterns.**

### Activity 5

**Let's Analyse the following sentences. Pick out NP, VP, Pre.P, Adv.P, Adj.P etc. from them. Identify the constituents of each phrase.**

1. The poor boy Vanka was cruelly beaten by his master.
2. His Grand father Konstantin Makarich was an old man of sixty five.
3. The beautiful Christmas tree in front of the house came to his memory.
4. Vanka dropped the letter into the slit of the letter box.
5. Young boys sold fishing hooks that can hold a fish weighing thirty pounds.



## Let's edit

Read the following summary of the story written by a student of Std X. There are some errors in it which are underlined. Edit the passage and rewrite it.

Vanka is an unhappy orphan who **have** (a) been apprenticed to the shoemaker Alyakhin in Moscow. On Christmas Eve, **where** (b) his master and the others are at church, Vanka sits down to **writing** (c) a letter to his grandfather Konstantin Makarich in his native village where Vanka **lived** (d) before being sent to the city. After the death of **her** (e) mother, Vanka was dispatched to the shoemaker. He **thoughts** (f) about the Grandfather's dogs Kashtanka and Eel. Kashtanka is too old for mischief, **or** (g) the wily Eel—is sly and treacherous. **Vankas** (h) homesickness and **misary** (i) emerge heartbreakingly as he **written** (j) his letter.

## Glossary

|                   |   |   |
|-------------------|---|---|
| abundance         | : | in large quantity   |
| acolyte(n)        | : | an attendant ; an assistant   |
| adept (adj)       | : | good at doing something that is quite difficult   |
| agile (adj)       | : | able to move quickly and easily   |
| apprentice (v)    | : | to put under the care of a master to learn a craft                                      |
| avenge(v)         | : | revenge   |
| bedeck (v)        | : | to decorate with flowers or jewels  |
| Bludgeoning (adj) | : | an assault with a club or similar weapon  |
| clutches(n)       | : | grasp;possession  |
| concertina (n)    | : | a small musical instrument  |
| cordial (adj)     | : | sincere;heartfelt   |
| covert(adj)       | : | secret,hidden   |
| dangle (v)        | : | to hang or swing freely   |
| deferential (adj) | : | behaviour that shows you respect somebody   |
| delectation (n)   | : | enjoyment or entertainment  |
| destitute         | : | lacking something   |
| dispel (v)        | : | to make a feeling go away or disappear  |
| disposition (n)   | : | the natural qualities of a person   |
| docility (n)      | : | ready to accept instructions  |
| doggerel (n)      | : | poetry that is ridiculous, usually because the writer has not intended it to be serious |
| elude(v)          | : | to escape   |
| flit (v)          | : | to move lightly and quickly   |
| flog (v)          | : | to beat or strike with a rod or a whip  |
| furious(v)        | : | angry and violent   |
| gaily (adv)       | : | in a bright and attractive way  |
| gentry (n)        | : | people belonging to a high social class   |
| gilded (adj)      | : | covered with a thin layer of gold or gold paint   |
| gobble (v)        | : | to eat or drink very fast as if greedy  |
| grouse (n)        | : | a bird with a fat body and feathers on its legs, which people shoot for sport and food  |
| gruel (n)         | : | a simple dish made by boiling oats in milk or water (kanji)                             |
| gut (v)           | : | to remove the organs from inside a fish or an animal to prepare it for cooking          |
| hesitate(v)       | : | To stop or pause respecting decision or action  |
| hiding (n)        | : | physical punishment usually involving being hit hard many times                         |
| hostility (n)     | : | unfriendly or aggressive behaviour towards people or idea                               |
| icon (n)          | : | painting or carving on wood   |
| impending (adj)   | : | feeling the shadow of an unpleasant event yet to come                                   |
| inculcate(v)      | : | to teach by repeated instructions   |
| insinuating (v)   | : | to succeed in gaining somebody's affection  |
| kopek (n)         | : | a unit of Russian currency; 1 rouble = 100 kopek  |
| last (n)          | : | a block of wood shaped like a foot, used in making and repairing shoes                  |
| lull (v)          | : | to make somebody relaxed and calm   |
| mongrel(n)        | : | a thuggish or contemptible person   |
| perish(v)         | : | to pass away;to disappear   |
| pounced(v)        | : | to attack suddenly by leaping   |

## Std X

|                    |   |   |
|--------------------|---|---|
| prophecy (n)       | : | a statement that something will happen in future  |
| quadrille (n)      | : | a dance with four or more couples   |
| rattle (n)         | : | a wooden object that makes a series of short loud sounds when you spin it round         |
| relentless (adj)   | : | merciless   |
| rime (n)           | : | frost   |
| rollicking         | : | To behave in a carefree and playful manner  |
| serrated (adj)     | : | having a series of sharp points on the edge like a saw                                  |
| splinter (n)       | : | a small thin sharp piece of wood, metal, glass, etc. that has broken off a larger piece |
| tack (n)           | : | a small nail with a sharp point and a flat head   |
| tavern (n)         | : | inn; a place where people can stay at night   |
| thrash(v)          | : | to beat mercilessly   |
| twitch (v)         | : | to make a sudden movement   |
| urged(v)           | : | a strong desire to do something   |
| vague (adj)        | : | not clear   |
| venomous(adj)      | : | evil,spiteful   |
| vogue (n)          | : | a fashion for something   |
| wax intense (phr.) | : | to become stronger  |
| whine              | : | a high-pitched cry  |