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ONLINE DEGREE

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# **READING- UNIT 1**

**KARTHIKA SATHYANATHAN**

The objective of this module is to

- Improve our reading skills
- Work on a few grammar exercises (related to word class) from the context of the passage.

# WHY READING?

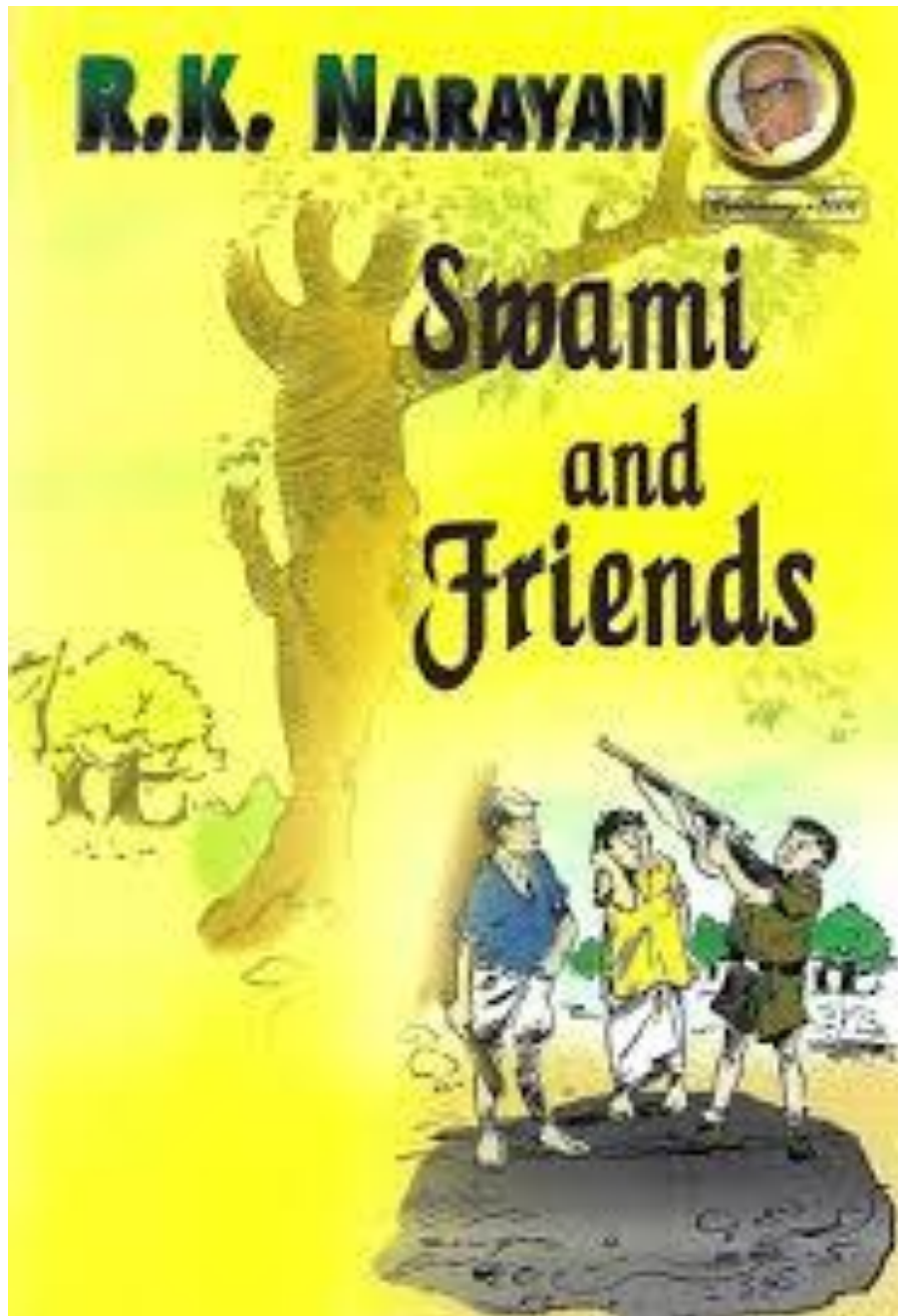
- It gives great ideas and authentic language.
- Books are easily available.
- It is easy to use , re-use and re-re use.
- It is considered one of the best ways to learn and improve any language.

**Do a bit of research on the benefits of reading and share some interesting facts in the discussion forum!**

# WHY READING?

If you think that you do not like reading books, then, perhaps, you are yet to find your personal style – but keep trying and keep searching for what is right for you.

Remember, a book is one of the most powerful things in the world, offering you new opportunities to learn, grow and be inspired!



**SWAMI AND  
FRIENDS  
by  
R.K. Narayan**

**Unit 1**

R K Narayan is a great storyteller, he tells the story of common things around common people in their daily life. Here, who do you think Swami is? Who are his friends? What may be there about them to read? Discover here. The story looks at the world of adults from the point of view of young people.

- **What in your opinion is one that young people dislike most and that they like most?**

# READ ALOUD AT A SLOW TEMPO

## Chapter – 1 Monday Morning

It was Monday morning. Swaminathan was **reluctant** to open his eyes. He **considered** Monday specially unpleasant in the calendar. After the **delicious** freedom of Saturday and Sunday, it was difficult to get into the Monday mood of work and discipline. He **shuddered** at the very thought of school: that **dismal** yellow building; the fire-eyed Vedanayagam, his class teacher; and the Head Master with his thin long cane. ... By eight he was at his desk in his 'room', which was only a corner in his father's dressing-room. He had a table on which all his things, his coat, cap, slate, ink-bottle, and books, were thrown in a **confused** heap.





# ACTIVITY 1

- Words for Special Attention: Try and replace these words with simpler words and phrases: reluctant, considered, delicious, unpleasant, shuddered, confused.
- Difference between : Discipline & Freedom
- The story refers to a certain period of time. Which period? Is there anything in the preceding paragraph that indicates when it was written?

# ANSWERS TO ACTIVITY 1

1. Reluctant- unwilling, considered-thought, delicious-tasty, unpleasant-boring/sad, shuddered-feared, unsure-confused
2. Discipline cuts freedom.
3. The story relates to India during the British Rule between 1920 and 1945. Students then used to go to school wearing caps; they wrote with ink kept in a pot. Swami has all that on his table.

# READ AT A SLOW TEMPO

He sat on his stool and shut his eyes to recollect what work he had for the day : first of course there was Arithmetic—those five puzzles in Profit and Loss; then there was English—he had to copy down a page from his Eighth Lesson, and write dictionary meanings of difficult words; and then there was Geography. And only two hours before him to do all this heap of work and get ready for the school!

Fire-eyed Vedanayagam was presiding over the class with his back to the long window. Through its bars one saw a bit of the drill ground and a corner of the veranda of the Infant Standards. There were huge windows on the left showing vast open grounds bound at the other extreme by the railway embankment.

## ACTIVITY 2

- Some words occur again and again. Make a list of these words.
- Some other words come only once or twice. Make a list of these words as well. Do you see any difference between the two lists?
- Find the meaning of 1) is 2) was 3) the 4) of 5) and 6) chair 7) smile 8) slowly 9) beautiful 10) angry
- How old do you think Swami is?

## ANSWERS TO ACTIVITY 2

1. Some Words that recur: He, his, to, what, had, for, the, of, was, in, and, then, a, from, of, before, over, with, a, were, on, at, by, the, etc.
2. Other Words: sat, stool, shut, eyes, recollect, work, day, first, course, Arithmetic, hose, five, puzzles, Profit, Loss, English, copy, page, Eighth Lesson, write, dictionary, meanings, difficult, words, Geography, two, hours, do, all, this, heap, work, get, ready, school, Fire-eyed, Vedanayagam, presiding, class, back, long, window, its, bars, one, saw, bit, drill, ground, corner, veranda, Infant, Standards, huge, windows, left, showing, vast, open, grounds, bound, other, extreme, railway, embankment.

- The first list : pronouns, determiners, prepositions, conjunctions, auxiliary verbs etc. The second list : verbs, nouns, adjectives and adverbs.
- The second list has a greater number of words than the first list. All the words belonging to pronouns, determiners, prepositions, conjunctions and auxiliary verbs put together is lesser than all the words belonging to verbs, nouns, descriptive adjectives and adverbs put together.
- The class of words that is present in the second list readily accepts new words. One can add infinite number of words to this list. Whereas the class of words in the first list do not accept new words. ( Read about open class words and closed class words)

- It is difficult to describe the meaning of the first five words whereas one can easily describe the meaning of the next 5 words. The words whose meaning can be easily described fall into the open category while the words whose meaning cannot be described easily fall into the closed class. Words can also be classified as functional words and lexical words. (Read more about lexical words and functional words)
- Swami is taught profit and loss, etc. So, he may be in class seven, which means he may be about 12 or 13.



# READ AT A SLOW TEMPO

To Swaminathan existence in the classroom was possible only because he could watch the toddlers of the Infant Standards falling over one another, and through the windows on the left see the 12.30 mail gliding over the embankment, booming and rattling while passing over the Sarayu Bridge. The first hour passed off quietly. The second they had Arithmetic. Vedanayagam went out and returned in a few minutes in the role of an Arithmetic teacher. He droned on monotonously. Swaminathan was terribly bored. His teacher's voice was beginning to get on his nerves. He felt sleepy. The teacher called for home exercises. Swaminathan left his seat, jumped on the platform, and placed his note-book on the table. While the teacher was scrutinizing the sums, Swaminathan was gazing on his face, which seemed so tame at close quarters. His criticism of the teacher's face was that his eyes were too near each other, that there was more hair on his chin than one saw from the bench, and that he was very very bad-looking. His reverie was disturbed. He felt a terrible pain in the soft flesh above his left elbow.

# ACTIVITY 3

In the following paragraph, write within brackets (A) after adjectives, (Av) against adverbs, (N) after nouns, and (V) after verbs. Consult a dictionary if required.

To Swaminathan existence in the classroom was possible only because he could watch the toddlers of the Infant Standards falling over one another, and through the windows on the left see the 12.30 mail gliding over the embankment, booming and rattling while passing over the Sarayu Bridge. The first hour passed off quietly. The second they had Arithmetic. Vedanayagam went out and returned in a few minutes in the role of an Arithmetic teacher. He droned on monotonously.

## ANSWERS TO ACTIVITY 3

To Swaminathan (N), existence (N) in the classroom (N), was possible (A) only because he could watch (V) the toddlers(N) of the Infant Standards (N) falling (V) over one another, and through the windows (N) on the left see (V) the 12.30 mail gliding (V) over the embankment, booming (V) and rattling (V) while passing over the Sarayu (N) Bridge. The first hour passed off quietly. The second they had Arithmetic (N). Vedanayagam (N) went out and returned in a few minutes in the role of an Arithmetic (N) teacher (N). He droned (V) on monotonously.

## **READ AT A SLOW TEMPO**

The teacher was pinching him with one hand, and with the other, crossing out all the sums. He wrote 'Very Bad' at the bottom of the page, flung the note-book in Swaminathan's face, and drove him back to his seat. Next period they had History. The boys looked forward to it eagerly. It was taken by D. Pillai, who had earned a name in the school for kindness and good humour. He was reputed to have never frowned or sworn at the boys at any time. His method of teaching History conformed to no canon of education. He told the boys with a wealth of detail the private histories of Vasco da Gama, Clive, Hastings, and others.

# **READ AT A SLOW TEMPO**

When he described the various fights in History, one heard the clash of arms and the groans of the slain. He was the despair of the head-master whenever the latter stole along the corridor with noiseless steps on his rounds of inspection. The Scripture period was the last in the morning. It was not such a dull hour after all. There were moments in it that brought stirring pictures before one: the Red Sea cleaving and making way for the Israelites; the physical feats of Samson; Jesus rising from the grave; and so on. The only trouble was that the Scripture master, Mr Ebenezar, was a fanatic.

## Scripture master: Mr. Ebenezer



# ACTIVITY 4

On the basis what you have read, fill in the blanks in the box (below).

<b>NAME OF THE TEACHER</b>	<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>LOOKS</b>	<b>OTHER ASPECTS</b>
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## ANSWERS TO ACTIVITY 4

On the basis what you have read, fill in the blanks in the box (below).

NAME OF THE TEACHER	SUBJECT	LOOKS	OTHER THINGS
1. D. Pillai	History	Never frowned	Kindness and good humour
2. Mr. Ebenezar	Scripture		Fanatic



# Swaminathan

30/09/2024 - Episode 1 - Swami And Friends

