

## 2.6 The Past in the Present

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### ■ ■ ■ Warming up! ■ ■ ■

#### Components of a Play

1. We find the following in the script of a skit or play. Rearrange these steps in the proper order and write them down in the form of a flow chart.

Climax .....

Dialogues .....

Title .....

Scene .....

Curtain .....

Characters .....

2. Think of a play/skit which you have seen enacted on the stage and which has impressed you. Write the following details about it.

- Name of the play/skit : .....
- Important characters : .....
- Any famous actors/actresses : .....
- Theme : .....
- Climax : .....
- Ending : .....
- Use of lights and special effects if any : .....
- Use of background music and sound effects if any.: .....
- Use of sets : .....
- The costumes, make up, etc. of the characters : .....
- How well the actors present the play : .....  
and behave on the stage.
- Your own opinion about the play : .....  
: .....

3. Present these points in the form of a review, and give it a suitable title.
4. Prepare a 'power point' presentation, using one slide for each of the above points. Present your review in a PPT format in the classroom.

# The Past in the Present

## A Skit

### Characters

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| ★ <i>Neel</i> - A young teenager   | ★ <i>Mom</i> - Neel's mother                              |
| ★ <i>A boy from 1950s</i> - Neel's Grandpa   | ★ <i>A lady from 1950s</i> – The boy's (Grandpa's) mother |
| ★ <i>A 1910 boy</i> - Neel's great-great grandfather                               | ★ <i>A lady from 1910</i> - The boy's mother              |
| ★ <i>An 1800 boy</i> - Double great-great ... Grandpa                              | ★ <i>A lady from 1800</i> – The boy's mother              |
| ★ <i>A 1500 boy</i> - Double double great-great ... Grandpa                        | ★ <i>A lady from 1500</i> – The boy's mother              |
| ★ <i>A 1000 boy</i> - Triple great-great-great ... Grandpa                         | ★ <i>A lady from 1000</i> - The boy's mother              |
| ★ <i>A 100 CE boy</i> - Triple great, triple great, triple great-great ... Grandpa | ★ <i>A lady from the first century</i> – The boy's mother |
| ★ <i>An ancestor from 3000 BC</i> - Neel's ancestor 5000 years ago.                | ★ <i>A lady from 3000 BC</i> - The ancestor's mother      |

**Scene** - *A typical teenage boy's room, in a messed up state.*

- Neel** : Mom, I put the dishes in the dishwasher, just as you asked me to. Now I am going out to meet my friends. (*Enter Mom in a mod outfit.*)
- Mom** : You haven't cleaned up your room.
- Neel** : Awww ! I cleaned it only 2 days ago.
- Mom** : You have to clean it up every day.
- Neel** : (*Picking up his books, clothes, head phones, etc. from the floor and bed and putting them in their places.*) Is it necessary to clean up every day? What difference does it make?
- Mom** : It does ! It builds up the right habits, the right attitude.....
- Neel** : (*Cuts her short*) All right! All right! I get enough of lectures when school is on.
- Mom** : (*After Neel finishes his chores*) That looks much better now. But you forgot to make your bed. Do that and you may go out.
- Neel** : (*Irritated*) Mom! It's getting late! The bed is going to be messed up again, when I sleep after lunch. Why do I have to make my bed? Why?
- Mom** : Hmmm..... That reminds me of something I heard about your Grandpa,

when he was in his teens. He had many more daily chores to finish and much tougher ones too.

**Mom :** On that day his mom had told him firmly -----

*(A teenage boy from 1950s wearing loose trousers and shirt, enters with his mother in a silk saree.)*

**The Boy's Mother :** Make your bed, before going out.

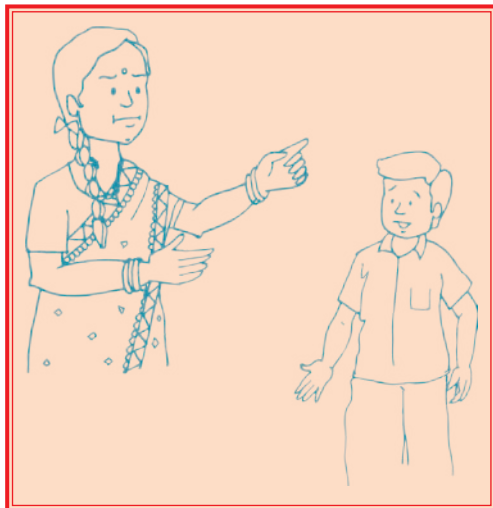
**1950s Boy :** But Mama I have already watered the garden, brought home the groceries, dusted the living room, cleaned my bicycle. Now why do I need to make my bed?

**The Boy's Mother :** *(To her son)* Let me tell you about your grand-father in his teens.

*(1950s boy and mother recede and stand behind and 1910 boy enters dressed in kurta-pyjamas and cap with his mother in a nine-yard saree, nose ring and jewellery)*

**1910 Mother :** You can't go out unless you make your bed.

**1910 Boy :** Mummy, I fetched water and filled up the pots, swept the terrace, collected wood for the stove, cleaned the grinding stones.



**Neel :** *(To his mom)* What are grinding stones? Ahhh! Yes! They didn't have any electric grinders in those days!

**Mom :** No electricity either in most towns and cities, in India, then.

*(Neel looks surprised)*

**1910 Boy :** I promised to go to the riverside with my friends. Why do I have to make my bed now ?

**The Boy's Mother :** *(To her son)* Let me tell you about your great-grandfather who lived in the 19th century. When he was young...

*(1910 boy and mother recede to where the previous pair stands. 1800 boy enters in dhoti, kurta and small turban with his mother in a nine-yard saree and traditional jewellery)*

**1800 Mother :** Son, make everyone's beds.

**1800 Boy :** Mother dear, I have washed clothes at the river and put them up to dry. I also chopped the wood, fixed the broken fence, took the goats up the hill to graze. I want to play atya-patya with my friends. Why do I have to make the beds?

**The Boy's Mother :** That's your daily work. Your great, great grandfather did even more. Now go and make the beds.

*(1800 boy and mother recede to where the previous pairs stand. Enters 1500 boy dressed in a loose sleeveless V-neck top and short dhoti with his mother in a nine-yard saree.)*

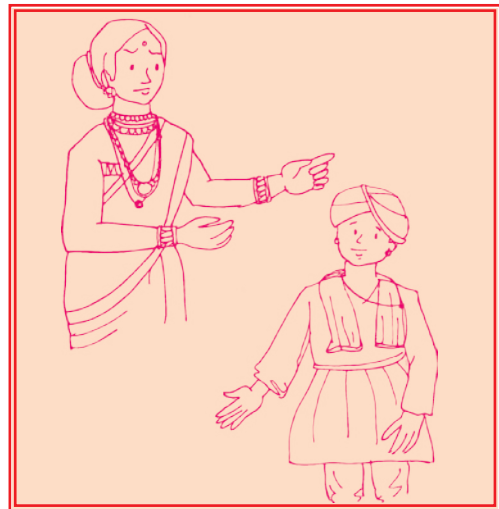
**Neel :** And this forefather of mine is from—?

**Mom :** The 16th century.

**1500 Boy :** My dear mother, I have already milked the cows, taken them to graze, fetched vegetables from our farm, stacked them, swept the back yard and front yard. Now may I please go to play Ashtapada with Sampatbhau and Mahadevbhau. Why should I make my bed now?

**The Boy's Mother :** Why? Don't talk back. Think of your double great-great-great grandfather when he was about 14 years old.

*(1500 boy and his mother recede. Enters 1000 boy in a flare tunic and churidar, waist band and turban with his mother in a saree, upper garment and plenty of jewellery)*



**1000 Boy :** Most revered mother, I have fetched water from the lake and poured it into the farm channels to water our crops, I cleared the blocked channels and pulled out weeds. At home I patched the mud walls, where there were cracks. Now I have no time for anything else. I wish to go to watch the puppet show. Why do I have to make my bed?

**The Boy's Mother :** Do not grumble, dear son. Your triple great, triple great, triple great grandfather; had to do much more when he was your age.

*(1000 boy and his mother recede. Enters 1st century CE boy dressed in a dhoti and a waist band – no shirt, and his mother in a saree and an upper garment, and beads jewellery.)*

**100 CE Boy :** Matadevi, I fed the poultry, tended the sheep, kept the birds away for four hours in our field using a sling, also plastered the yard with dung.

**100 CE Boy :** I wish to go and play Bagh-chal with my friends now. Why do you wish me to make the beds, right now?

**The Boy's Mother :** Because that is what boys have to do. Let me tell you about your ancestor 3000 years ago.

*(1st Century boy and mother recede. Enter boy from 3000 BCE. A cloth around the waist held by a cord, long hair in a bun or ponytail and his mother, saree, a veil, stone and beads jewellery.)*

**3000 BCE Boy :** Me bow to thee ! Me hunted down the food for our family. Me helped father to carve stone bricks for our new house. Me dusted our leather clothes, moulded mud pots for cooking and put them to dry. Me need your kind permission to go and play Chaupar with me friends. Why dost thou needs me to make me bed ?

**The Boy's Mother :** Because me say so! Do it now.

*(All mothers to their sons in turn repeat, 'Do it now', with the boys answering 'Yes, mother'.)*

**Neel :** Ok, so young teenage boys have had chores to do outdoors as well as in their homes.

**Mom :** Very much so ! Absolutely right.

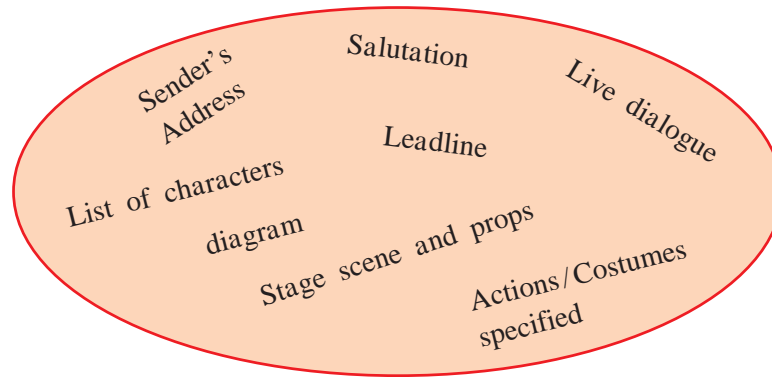
**Neel :** I wish I had a robot to make my bed and tidy up my room.

**Mom :** Nothing is impossible. If you try you can make such a robot. But even for that you need to work hard ! The bottom line is Go and make your bed.

*(Curtain)*



1. In the diagram below encircle the various features that make the script of a skit/ play. List the other words and mention the form of writing of which it is a feature.



2. Choose the proper alternative to complete the following.
- (i) The skit covers a period of about ..... in the past.  
 (a) 3000 years (b) 1000 years (c) 5000 years (d) 1800 years
- (ii) ..... characters from Neel's ancestral lineage make an appearance in the play.  
 (a) Fourteen (b) Seven (c) Sixteen (d) Twelve
- (iii) The task that all boys abhorred was .....  
 (a) cleaning up their room (b) farm-work (c) filling up water (d) making their beds.
- (iv) The skit conveys that doing your daily chores at home .....  
 (a) makes you stronger (b) sharpens your intellect (c) saves a lot of expenses (d) inculcates a sense of responsibility.

3. Fill in the table.

Period	Way of Addressing a Mother	Boy's Costume	Lady's Costume	Daily Chores	Games
1950s			silk saree		
1910		Kurta pyjama and cap			
1800s					
1500s					
1000					
100 CE				feed poultry tend sheep keep away birds plaster the yard	
3000 BCE					Chaupar

4. Answer in your own words.
  - (a) What excuses did Neel give to avoid cleaning his room?
  - (b) Why does mother tell Neel about his Grandpa?
  - (c) What task did Grandpa wish to avoid?
  - (d) What did the ancestor from 1910 wish to do instead of making his bed?
  - (e) How many chores did the ancestor from 1800 have to do?
  - (f) How is the boy from 1500s dressed?
  - (g) What chores did the boys from 1000 CE and 1st Century CE, do on their farms/fields?
  - (h) What did Neel realise from his encounter with his ancestors?
5. In the play two devices that make use of wheels are given.  
 The devices are (1) ----- (2) -----  
 From the internet or other sources, trace the history of the use of the wheel. Write 'An Autobiography of a Wheel'.
6. Imagine that the ancestor from 1910 (CE) visits Neel in his dream. Compose a dialogue between the two about the various gadgets the visitor sees in Neel's room.
7. Imagine and compare an argumentative dialogue between the mothers of the 20th/21st century and those of the earlier era, about which life was better for women.
8. Read the entry about 'voice' in the 'Language Study' pages. Note that the speeches of all the boys are in the 'active' voice. Turn them into passive constructions.  
 Example :  
**Neel -** I put the dishes in the dishwasher. (active)  
           Dishes have been put in the dishwasher. (passive)  
**1950s Boy -** I have watered the garden  
                   -----  
                   brought home the groceries  
                   -----  
                   dusted the living room  
                   -----  
                   cleaned my bicycle...
9. Think of suitable names for the boys from the earlier centuries.
10. Form groups of 5-8. Translate the play into your mother tongue (or Hindi) as a group activity. Enact the translation in the classroom.
11. **Read** 'The Story of the Amulet' by E. Nesbit.

