UNIT 2

Attila

For me a house or an apartment becomes a home when you add one set of four legs, a happy tail, and that indescribable measure of love that we call a dog.

Roger Caras

In a mood of optimism they named him 'Attila'. What they wanted of a dog was strength, formidableness and fight, and hence he was named after the 'Scourge of Europe'.

The puppy was only a couple of months old; he had square jaws, red eyes, a pug nose and a massive head, and there was every reason to hope that he would do credit to his name. The immediate reason for buying him was a series of house-breakings and thefts in the neighbourhood, and our householders decided to put more trust in a dog than in the police. They searched far and wide and met a dog fancier. He held up a month-old black-and-white puppy and said, 'Come and fetch him in a month hence. In six months he will be something to be feared and respected.' He spread out before them a pedigree sheet which was stunning. The puppy had running in his veins the choicest and the most ferocious blood.

They were satisfied, paid an advance, returned a month later, put down seventy five rupees and took the puppy home. The puppy, as I have already indicated, did not have a very prepossessing appearance and was none too playful, but this did not prevent his owners from sitting in a circle around him and admiring him. There was a prolonged debate as to what he should be named.

The youngest suggested, 'Why not call him Tiger?'

'Every other street-mongrel is named Tiger,' came the reply. 'Why not Caesar?'

'Caesar! If a census was taken of dogs you would find at least fifteen thousand Caesars in South India alone..... Why not Fire?'

'Why not Thunder?'

'Grip...?'

There was a deadlock. Someone suggested 'Attila' and a shout of joy

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formidableness:	quality of causing fear	ferocious:	savagely fierce
Scourge of Europe:	Attila the Hun, a fierce and dreaded warrior	prepossessing:	impressive
massive:	huge	prolonged:	continued for a long time
pedigree sheet:	list showing ancestry	deadlock:	state where no progress is made

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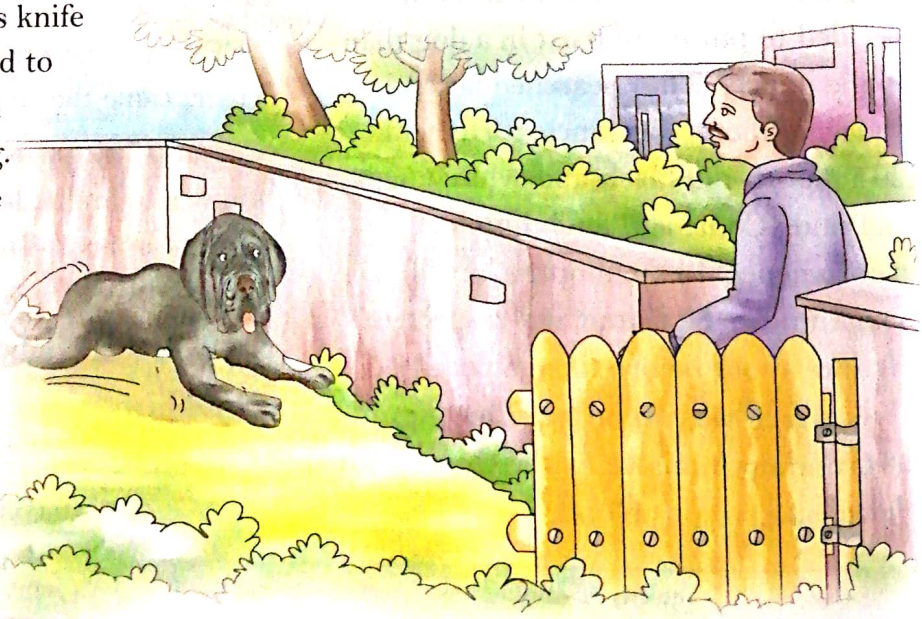
went up to the skies. No more satisfying name was thought of for man or animal.

But as time passed our Attila exhibited a love of humanity which was sometimes disconcerting. The 'Scourge of Europe' – could he ever have been like this? They put it down to his age. What child could not help loving all creatures? In their zeal to establish this fact, they went to the extent of delving into ancient history to find out what the 'Scourge of Europe' was like when he was a child. It was rumoured that as a child he clung to his friends and to his parents' friends so fast that often he had to be beaten and separated from them. But when he was fourteen he showed the first sign of his future: he knocked down and plunged his knife into a fellow who tried to touch his marbles. Ah this was discouraging. Let our dog reach the parallel of fourteen years and people would get to know his real nature.

But this was a vain promise. He stood up twenty inches high, had a large frame and a forbidding appearance on the whole – but that was all. A variety of people entered the gates of the house everyday: mendicants, bill-collectors, postmen, tradesmen and family friends. All of them were warmly received by Attila. The moment the gate clicked he became alert and stood up looking towards the gate. By the time anyone entered the gate Attila went blindly charging forward. But that was all. The person had only to stop and smile and Attila would melt. He would behave as if he apologised for even giving an impression of violence. He would lower his head, curve his body, tuck his tail between his legs, roll his eyes and moan as if to say, 'How sad that



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'What is b

'Well, if s
and takes aw

disconcerting: upsetting
delving: finding more data
forbidding: grim; unfriendly
mendicants: beggars

gesture: us
uncharitable: u
cynicism: d

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you should have mistaken my gesture! I only hurried down to greet you.' Till he was patted on the head, stroked and told that he was forgiven, he would be in extreme misery.

Gradually he realised that his bouncing advances caused much unhappy misunderstandings. And so when he heard the gate click he hardly stirred. He merely looked in that direction and wagged his tail. The people at home did not like this attitude very much. They thought it rather a shame.

'Why not change his name to Blind Worm?' somebody asked.

'He eats like an elephant,' said the mother of the family. 'You can employ two watchmen for the price of the rice and meat he consumes. Somebody comes every morning and steals all the flowers in the garden and Attila won't do anything about it.'

'He has better business to do than catch flower thieves,' replied the youngest, always the defender of the dog.

'What is better business?'

'Well, if somebody comes in at dawn and takes away the flowers, do you expect Attila to be looking out for him even at that hour?'

'Why not? It's what a well-fed dog ought to be doing instead of sleeping. You ought to be ashamed of your dog.'

'He does not sleep all night, Mother. I have often seen him going around the house and watching all night.'

'Really! Does he prowl about all night?'

'Of course he does,' said the defender.

'I am quite alarmed to hear it,' said the mother. 'Please lock him up in a room at night, otherwise he may call in a burglar and show him around. Left alone, a burglar might after all be less successful. It wouldn't be so bad if he at least barked. He is the most noiseless dog I have ever seen in my life.'

The young man was extremely irritated at this. He considered it to be the most uncharitable cynicism, but the dog justified it that very night.

Ranga lived in a hut three miles from town. He was a 'gang coolie' – often employed in road-mending. Occasionally at night he enjoyed the thrill and profit of breaking into houses. At one o'clock that night Ranga removed the bars of a

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gesture: use of bodily movements to express thoughts
uncharitable: unkind
cynicism: doubting and mistrusting the dog's atributes (here)

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window on the eastern side of the house and slipped in. He edged along the wall, searched all the trunks and almirahs in the house and made a neat bundle of all the jewellery and other valuables he could pick up.

He was just starting to go out. He had just put one foot out of the gap he had made in the window when he saw Attila standing below, looking up expectantly. Ranga thought his end had come. He expected the dog to bark: But not Attila. He waited for a moment, grew tired of waiting, stood up and put his forepaws on the lap of the burglar. He put back his ears, licked Ranga's hand and rolled his eyes. Ranga whispered, 'I hope you aren't going to bark.....'

'Don't you worry, I am not the sort,' the dog tried to say.

'Just a moment: Let me get down from here,' said the burglar.

The dog obligingly took away his paws and lowered himself.

'Look there', said Ranga, pointing to the backyard, 'there is a cat.' Attila put up his ears at the mention of the cat and dashed in the direction indicated. One might easily have thought he was going to tear up the cat, but actually he didn't want to miss the pleasure of the company of a cat if there was one.

As soon as the dog left him Ranga made a dash for the gate. Given a second more he would have hopped over it. But the dog turned and saw what was about to happen and in one spring was at the gate. He looked hurt. 'Is this proper? he seemed to ask. 'Do you want to shake me off?'

He hung his heavy tail down so loosely and looked so miserable that the burglar stroked his head, at which he revived. The burglar opened the gate and went out, and the dog followed him. Attila's greatest ambition in life was to wander in the streets freely. Now things seemed to be shaping up ideally.

Attila liked his new friend so much that he wouldn't leave him alone even for a moment. He lay before Ranga when he sat down to eat, sat on the edge of his mat when he slept in his hut, waited patiently at the edge of the pond when Ranga went there now and then for a wash, slept on the roadside when Ranga was at work.

This sort of companionship got on Ranga's nerves. He implored, 'Oh, dog. Leave me alone for a moment, won't you?' Unmoved, Attila sat before him with his eyes glued on his friend.

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'Hey,' shou
young man; a
Ranga turned
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obligingly: willingly; kindly
companionship: relationship with friends
eyes glued on: stared at fixedly
facetiousness:

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Attila's disappearance created a sensation in the bungalow. 'Didn't I tell you,' the mother said, 'to lock him up?' Now some burglar has gone away with him. What a shame! We can hardly mention it to anyone.'

'You are mistaken,' replied the defender. 'He must have gone off on his own account. If he had been here no thief would have dared come in....'

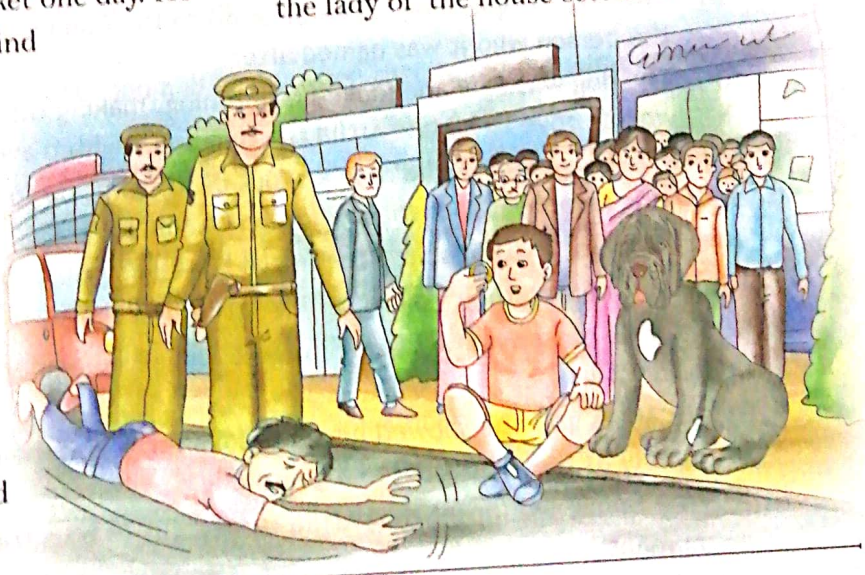
'Whatever it is, I don't know if we should after all thank the thief for taking away the dog. He may keep the jewels as a reward for taking away that dog. Shall we withdraw the police complaint?'

This facetiousness ceased a week later, and Attila rose to the ranks of a hero. The eldest son of the house was going towards the market one day. He saw Attila trotting behind someone on the road.

'Hey,' shouted the young man; at which Ranga turned and broke into a run. Attila, who always suspected that his new friend was waiting for the slightest chance to desert him, galloped behind Ranga.

'Hey Attila!' shouted the young man, and he also started running. Attila wanted to answer the call after making sure of his friend; and so he turned his head for a second and galloped faster. Ranga desperately doubled his pace. Attila was determined to stick to him at any cost. As a result, he ran so fast that he overtook Ranga and clumsily blocked his way, and Ranga stumbled over him and fell. As he rolled on the ground a piece of jewellery (which he was taking to a receiver of stolen property) flew from his hand. The young man recognised it as belonging to his sister and sat down on Ranga. A crowd collected and the police appeared on the scene.

Attila was the hero of the day. Even the lady of the house softened towards



facetiousness: not serious about a serious subject; trying to be clever

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REVISED EDITION

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him. She said, 'Whatever one might say of Attila, one has to admit that he is a very cunning detective. He is too deep for words.'

It was as well that Attila had no powers of speech. Otherwise he would have burst into a lamentation which would have shattered the pedestal under his feet.

R. K. Narayan

READ AND ANSWER

A. 1. What do these quotes from the story mean? Tick (✓) the most appropriate explanations.

a. What they wanted of a dog was strength, formidableness and fight, and hence he was named after the 'Scourge of Europe'.
   (i) They wanted a dog that was as ferocious a fighter as the 'Scourge of Europe'.
   (ii) They wanted a dog that was as strong and ferocious a fighter as Attila, the Hun, the 'Scourge of Europe'.

b. The puppy was only a couple of months old; he had square jaws, red eyes, a pug nose and a massive head, and there was every reason to hope that he would do credit to his name.
   (i) The dog's frightening appearance made the family hope that it would be like the person who it was named after.
   (ii) The dog was ugly and looked frightening, making the family believe that it would prove to be like Attila the Hun and frighten away or attack thieves.

c. Someone suggested 'Attila' and a shout of joy went up to the skies. No more satisfying name was thought of for man or animal.
   (i) The name, Attila, suited the image of the dog they had all wanted to get.
   (ii) They wanted their dog to be like Attila, the Hun.

d. But as time passed our Attila exhibited a love of humanity which was sometimes disconcerting.
   (i) As Attila grew he showed his great love for human beings and this upset the family as they had wanted a guard dog.
   (ii) The family was upset that Attila turned out to be a friendly dog that loved humans.

lamentation: act of expressing grief pedestal: (here) given a place of pride

e. He would beha
   (i) Attila beh apologizin
   (ii) Attila beh

A. 2. Answer the f

a. What made A
b. Why did Attil
c. Why did Rang
d. Why did Attil
e. Why did Attil
f. Give two rea
g. What did the want to tell
h. What had th

A. 3. Think and

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c. Why was t was like a
d. How did A uncharita
e. Who was
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g. Which re

WRITI

B. 1. Write a reacted

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e. He would behave as if he apologised for even giving an impression of violence.
   (i) Attila behaved in a friendly manner towards visitors as though he was apologizing for the fact that he looked so frightening.
   (ii) Attila behaved in a friendly manner with all visitors and tradespersons.

A. 2. Answer the following questions.

a. What made Attila melt? Why?
b. Why did Attila stop running to meet visitors and why did this upset the family?
c. Why did Ranga think that the end had come when he saw Attila?
d. Why did Attila eventually put his forepaws into Ranga's lap?
e. Why did Attila get excited when he heard the word: cat?
f. Give two reasons why Attila went out of the gate when Ranga opened it?
g. What did the lady of the house think had happened to Attila and why did she not want to tell anyone about it?
h. What had the thief stolen from the house?

A. 3. Think and answer the following questions carefully. HOTS

a. What made the family decide to buy the puppy?
b. Why did the family look at the puppy admiringly even though it was not playful or prepossessing?
c. Why was the family both sad and happy when they found out what Attila the Hun was like as a child?
d. How did Attila prove that the lady of the house's remarks about him were neither uncharitable nor cynical?
e. Who was the defender and why do you think he was defending Attila?
f. What sort of companionship got on Ranga's nerves?
g. Which remark was described as being facetious and why?

WRITING

B. 1. Write a paragraph about how the mother of the family, a typical housewife, reacted towards Attila.

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B. 2. Write a paragraph about how Attila became a hero.

B. 3. Write a paragraph about your pet dog or cat. If you don't have a pet, write about an imaginary one.

SPELLING AND PRONUNCIATION

C. 1. Write the Present Participle forms of these words ending with 'e'.

age	ageing	agree	
become		glue	
believe		guarantee	
delve		ride	
flee		eye	

C. 2. Learn how to spell and pronounce these words correctly. The syllable in bold letters is stressed.

a. cynicism
b. disconcerting
c. facetiousness
d. formidableness
e. gesture

1. **sin**-i-si-zim
2. dis-con-**cer**-ting
3. fa-**see**-shus-ness
4. for-**mid**-ible-ness
5. **jes**-cher

f. lamentation
g. mendicant
h. prepossessing
i. scourge

6. la-men-**tay**-shun
7. **men**-di-knt
8. **pre**-po-**zess**-ing
9. **skurj**

VOCABULARY

D. 1. Complete the crossword with compound nouns used in the story, Attila.

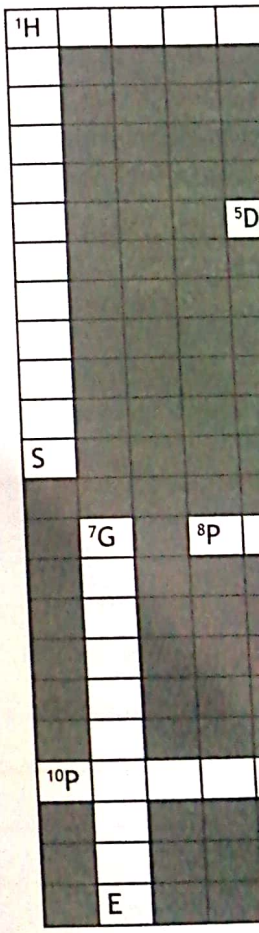
ACROSS

1. Entering a house for unlawful reasons
5. a person who likes dogs
8. Mail deliverers

DOWN

1. Home owners
2. Persons who go to homes to receive money owed
3. People known to all members of a home

9. Street repairing
10. Lodging a report o



D. 2. Fill in the bl

put more tr
their zeal, r

a. The shopkee
shop from be

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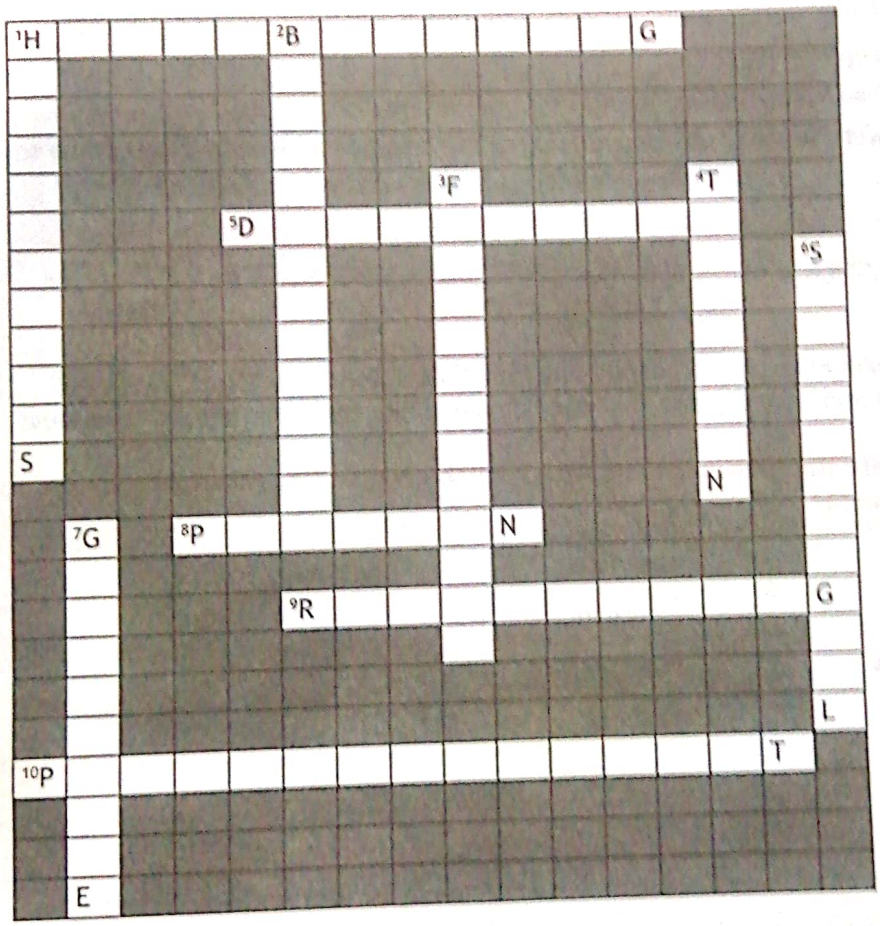
9. Street repairing

10. Lodging a report of a crime

4. People who go from house to house selling things

6. Stray dog

7. Labourers who work in teams



D. 2. Fill in the blanks with the right phrases.

put more trust in, searched far and wide, was...stunning, prolonged debate, in their zeal, made a dash for

a. The shopkeeper began to _____ his employees after they saved his shop from being burgled.

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b. The beauty of the diamond _____ so _____ that the people in the jewellery shop couldn't take their eyes off it.

c. We had a _____ about what to buy Mom for her birthday and finally decided that Grandma would be the best person to advise us.

d. We were so hungry that the minute we saw the dining table laden with all manner of delicious dishes, we _____ it.

e. The people of Hamelin _____, but couldn't find where the Pied Piper had taken their children.

f. They were so particular about being at the cinema hall well in time for the show that _____ they left their youngest brother behind.

GRAMMAR

Common Nouns name people, places, animals, other living and non-living things and anything else that can be named like feelings, thoughts and ideas.

E. 1. Complete the following table with common nouns. One example for each row is provided.

People	barrister
Places	museum
Animals	rhinoceros
Birds	vulture
Objects	keyboard
Metals	iron
Gem Stones	garnet
Feelings	happiness

Common nouns can be concrete or abstract. Concrete nouns are experienced by the senses. We can smell, see, hear, touch, or taste them. We can experience at least one of our senses when in the presence of such nouns.

E. 2. Which of the following app

a. A cheese, tom

b. A bouquet of

c. A radio comes

d. A TV is put or

e. Dinner is serv

Abstract No touched: re

E. 3. Which of th Nouns? All c

marbles, im nature, zeal

Collectiv of nouns underlin **fleet of**

Earlier t fish. To charact

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E. 2. Which of the senses would you experience/would like to experience when the following appear/happen?

a. A cheese, tomato and mushroom pizza: see, smell, touch, taste (when you eat it)
b. A bouquet of roses
c. A radio comes on
d. A TV is put on
e. Dinner is served

Abstract Nouns name things that cannot be smelled, seen, tasted, heard or touched: respect, progress, strength, condition, religion etc.

E. 3. Which of the following are **Concrete Nouns** and which of them are **Abstract Nouns**? All of them have been taken from the story. Find some more if you can.

marbles, impression, mendicants, facetiousness, valuables, forepaws, pedigree, nature, zeal, thief, scourge, property, defender, ambition, detective, cynicism

CONCRETE NOUNS	ABSTRACT NOUNS

Collective Nouns refer to groups: They are often used with plural forms of nouns in phrases: The nouns in bold letters are collective nouns and the underlined nouns are plural nouns: a **posse** of policemen, a **nest** of vipers, a **fleet** of ships, an **array** of bottles, a **cloud** of locusts

Earlier there were fixed expressions like a flock of sheep or a school of fish. Today, you may create your own expressions taking into account the characteristics of the concrete nouns you are talking about.

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E. 4. Match the following collective nouns with the right plural concrete nouns.

a. A leap of	1. bees	e. A brood of	5. ants
b. An army of	2. bacteria	f. A parliament of	6. leopards
c. A nest of	3. elephants	g. A parade of	7. chickens
d. A culture of	4. owls	h. A swarm of	8. mice

Proper Nouns are special names given to particular persons, places, living and non-living things: President, Lieutenant General, Mahatma Gandhi, Niagara Falls, Mount Everest, Lassie (name of a dog) Mickey Mouse, Oliver Twist

E. 5. Give at least two Proper Nouns for each of the following. Do this as a pair activity.

a. The Presidents of India and the United States
b. Two famous cartoon characters
c. Two capital cities of India's neighbours
d. Two States of North East India
e. Two rivers of India
f. Two movies you have really enjoyed
g. Two stories you won't forget in a hurry

Some nouns end with 'ing'. They are called Verbal Nouns/Gerunds/'ing' nouns. They have the same functions as nouns. Don't mix up the **gerund** with the **present participle**. Present participles are used with helping verbs **am, is, are, was, were, will be** to form the present continuous tense. They are **making** a lot of noise. **'are making': present continuous tense of the verb 'make'.**

Always ask the question 'what' to identify a gerund. The gerund maybe used as

The subject of a sentence: Swimming is a good exercise.

The object of the verb: I love roller skating.

The object of a preposition: He is fond of cycling.

E. 6. Identify and underline the gerunds in the following sentences. Mark them as S, subject, O object of the verb and OP object of the preposition. Encircle the verbs and underline the prepositions.

a. He enjoys skiing in the Alps.

b. They are c
c. White wate
d. The immed thefts.
e. He grew t
f. It's what a
g. Dancing is
h. Her sister

Two or
A shop s
A shop s
A card t

E. 7. Rewrite nouns.
a. I'd like a
b. May I se
c. Is he a
d. Is he the
e. The chil

LISTE

F. Listen to t
a. Labrad
b. Labrad
c. The co
d. Labrad
e. Labrad
f. Labrad
g. Labrad
h. Labrad

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b. They are crazy about bungee jumping.
c. White water rafting is an adventure sport.
d. The immediate reason for buying Attila was a series of house-breakings and thefts.
e. He grew tired of waiting, stood up and put his forepaws on the lap of the burglar.
f. It's what a well-fed dog ought to be doing instead of sleeping.
g. Dancing is a passion for Leila.
h. Her sister likes singing.

> Two or more words are often used to form Compound Nouns:
> A shop selling crockery: a crockery shop
> A shop selling groceries: a grocery shop
> A card that gives you credit: a credit card

E. 7. Rewrite the sentences changing the words in bold letters into compound nouns. Make other minor changes if required.

a. I'd like a **seat in the front row.** *I'd like a front row seat.*
b. May I see some **shirts made of cotton**?
c. Is he a **mechanic who fixes refrigerators**?
d. Is he the **man who operates the computer**?
e. The children built **a castle of sand** on the beach.

LISTENING

F. Listen to the piece about Labradors. Mark the following sentences True T or False F.

a. Labradors make good police dogs.
b. Labrador retrievers feel cold in water especially in winter.
c. The coat of a Labrador helps it to keep warm even in very cold water.
d. Labradors make wonderful pets.
e. Labradors can be dangerous around children.
f. Labradors are family dogs.
g. Labradors love to catch balls or Frisbees in their mouths.
h. Labradors are gentle dogs.

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SPEAKING

G. **Noun Games: Get into groups of five and think of concrete nouns and how they can be perceived by the senses of hearing, sight, touch, smell, and taste.**

For example: *Group A thinks of popcorn. The children in the class can ask each member of the group two questions which can be answered with: Yes, it can. No, it can't.*

For example: Can it be seen? Yes, it can. Can it be tasted? Yes, it can. OR Is it salty/bitter/sweet? No/Yes it is/It isn't? Is it soft/hard/red/white/brown? Can we buy it at a shop?

Keep going till the group leader from one of the other groups is ready to take a guess. Each group has five guesses, and each member of the group has one guess.

LIFE SKILLS

H. **Have a classroom discussion about animals you like and those you don't like. Each student may say why he or she likes a particular animal and dislikes another. Your teacher will keep writing the names of the animals in two columns: Animals we like/Animals we don't like. Each one may note down why he/she likes/dislikes certain animals. Now find out what part these animals especially the ones we dislike, play as members of the ecosystem. Remember, you as human beings are also part of the same ecosystem. In fact, man, being the most intelligent of human beings is able to protect or harm the other living creatures in his environment.**

Once you have found out about how the creatures you dislike, actually help us, have a second discussion: It is important to respect all creatures. They are not aliens or monsters. They are earthlings like we are. Put up pictures of these so-called scary creatures on your bulletin board and add interesting information about them. After some time, you will not only have more knowledge about them, you will also begin to appreciate them and save them from being killed. Smile at that house lizard you see or those bees that have built a huge hive in a tree next to your house.

UNIT 3

The

Dr. Salin
revolutio
and beha
his bird

One of the mysteries
head-scratching and
learned beards was
flocks of thousands
and came back a yea
same time, sometim
day. Where did they
they find their way
naturalists believed
in the bottom of th
Phoenix in the Gre

Of course scien
discovery had prog
by the time Salim
scene. By then, nat
many species of b
thousands of mile
cold winters and t
raise their chicks
warm land. After

migration: movemen
naturalist: an expert
Phoenix: a mythic
again fro
Siberia: a vast re
specific: particula
migrants: those wh
exhaustion: extreme

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