5. Look at the following sets of sentences.

A	B
It is raining.	It is not raining.
Those men were tall.	Those men were not tall.
She was playing music.	She was not playing music.

The sentences in set A are **affirmative sentences.** They indicate a positive or affirmative statement about a person, object or event. The sentences in set B are **negative sentences.** Affirmative sentences are changed to negative sentences by adding 'not' between the auxiliary verb and the main verb. The affirmative sentence, 'She was playing music' changes to a negative sentence when 'not' is placed between 'was' (the auxiliary verb) and 'playing' (the main verb). In case an affirmative sentence has only a main verb, the auxiliary 'do' is used, keeping in mind its appropriate tense form and agreement with person and number of the subject, followed by 'not' and the stem form of the main verb. For example,

The helicopter *took off* from the roof. (affirmative)
The helicopter *did not take off* from the roof. (negative)

Now turn the following sentences into negative sentences.

a. Ravi plays football.
b. The workers were late today.
c. These questions are difficult.
d. She is going to a party.
e. Syed has done it again.
f. Please wait for me.
g. I have finished reading the book.
h. They like travelling alone.

4. The Refugee

Khwaja Ahmad Abbas

Khwaja Ahmad Abbas (1914–1987) was a distinguished Indian film director, novelist, screenwriter and journalist, born in Panipat, Haryana. He was well-versed in Urdu, Hindi and English and was renowned for his versatility. Having graduated with a B.A. in English literature in 1983 and an LL.B. from Aligarh Muslim University in 1935, he began his career as a journalist first by joining the *National Call*, and then later the *Bombay Chronicle*. He also wrote articles for *Blitz* and for *Mirror*. As a journalist, Abbas brought to the forefront, crucial issues that required attention in Indian politics and social life. As a filmmaker, he is known to represent a generation of playwrights associated with the Indian People's Theatre Association (IPTA). The IPTA would use, as their primary source, folk art forms and idioms, to promote their radical ideas for social change. He founded his production company, Naya Sansar, in 1951. Many of Abbas's works draw upon real life events to draw attention to contemporary concerns. The 1946 script of 'Dr Kotnis Ki Amar Kahani' (The Immortal Story of Dr Kotnis), based on the true story of a young doctor's premature death and his first film, 'Dharti Ke Lal' (Children of the Earth) based on the Bengal famine of 1943 are examples. The Government of India honoured him with the Padma Shri in 1969. *I am not an Island*, an autobiography, was published in 1977.

'Naya Sansar' (New World), 'Awara', 'Munna' and 'Mera Naam Joker' are a few of his famous films. He is also well-known for his two volumes of short stories — *Rice and other Stories* and *One Thousand Nights on a Bed of Stone*.

'The Refugee' tells the story of an old woman from Rawalpindi who becomes a refugee as a consequence of the partition of India in 1947. The old woman, also called *Maanji*, is evacuated from Rawalpindi and then sent hundreds of miles away to a refugee camp in Delhi. She eventually comes to Mumbai with the narrator's mother after learning a bitter lesson about her fellow Indians in Rawalpindi. Neighbours and friends, both Hindu and Muslim, living in perfect harmony, turn against each other after the Partition. *Maanji* can no longer be naive in the belief that politics does not affect her home and hearth. She too must leave what she so far knew as home, and travel like so many other Indians during the partition, into alien lands.

The tragic storm of August – September, 1947, blew away nearly ten million people, like autumn leaves, from one end of the country to the other — from Delhi to Karachi, from Karachi to Bombay, from Lahore to Delhi, from Rawalpindi to Agra, from Noakhali to Calcutta, from Calcutta to Dacca, from Lyallpur to Panipat, from Panipat to Montgomery! The thousand-year-old joint family system was shattered beyond repair. Age-old friends and neighbours were ruthlessly separated. Brother was torn away from brother. Uprooted from their ancestral homes, millions found themselves driven to strange and alien soil.

In October of that year of sorrowful memories, this very storm blew two weak old women into Bombay, hundreds of miles away from their respective home towns. One of them was my own mother and the other was the mother of a Sikh friend and neighbour of mine. One had come from the East Punjab and the other from the West Punjab, one from Panipat and the other from Rawalpindi. By a strange chance they reached Bombay on the same day. My mother, along with other women and children of my family, was evacuated from Panipat in a military truck and brought to Delhi. She stayed there for three weeks crowded in a small room with two other families, and then came to Bombay by plane because it was still unsafe to travel by train. My friend's mother, along with her old husband, came in a refugee caravan from 'Pindi to Amritsar, from there to a refugee camp in Delhi, and finally from there to Bombay.

I called my mother 'Ammaan,' and my friend called his mother *Maanji*. When both of them arrived here, I discovered that, that was about the only difference between these two old women.

Maanji used to live in Rawalpindi in her own house. It was a double-storeyed building, she told me one day. She occupied the upper floor, while down below on the ground floor were shops, mostly tenanted by Muslim shop-keepers or artisans. Many of her neighbours, too, were Muslims.

There was a close bond of good neighbourliness between all of them—Muslim or Hindu or Sikh. The Muslim women of the neighbourhood called the old Sardarni *Behanji* while the younger ones respectfully addressed her *Maanji* or *Chachi*. That was the pattern of living not only in that neighbourhood, not only in Rawalpindi, but all over the Punjab.

The town of Rawalpindi was the whole world for *Maanji*. She had never been elsewhere. Her son worked first in Lahore, then in Calcutta, and finally in Bombay. But to *Maanji* these cities belonged to another, far-off world. If she had her way she would never have allowed her son to go far from home. She often argued with him, 'What's the use of earning money, my son, when in those cities you get neither pure milk nor ghee neither apricots nor peaches, neither grapes nor apples. And *baggoogoshas*? Why, in the city they don't even know what that is!' At home they had a buffalo of their own, giving no less than 10 seers of milk every day. After churning the curds to take out butter, she would distribute the butter-milk to the whole neighbourhood. Everyone would thank her and say, 'May your son live a thousand years, *Maanji*'—but that would remind her of her son, eating hotel food in a city, and that would make her sad.

Not far from 'Pindi they had a bit of their own land leased to some farmers. Twice a year, at harvest time, they would get their share of the produce—wheat or maize or *bajra*. Milk and butter and *ghee* were, of course, available at home. Then there was a small but steady income from the rent of the shops. And thus they lived—a contented old couple, at peace with themselves, their neighbours—and their God!

When in June 1947, the newspapers published the news of the impending Partition, it did not alarm or even worry *Maanji* or the old Sardarji. Politics, they always thought, was no concern of peaceful folk like them. Whether the country was called Hindustan or Pakistan, what did it matter? Their concern was only with their neighbours, and with them their relations had always been friendly, even cordial.

There had been inter-communal riots in the past—'It was a fever of the mind, son, which seized the people now and then'—but never had they been involved in any unpleasant incident. This time the fire of hate and violence raged more fiercely than ever before, but even then *Maanji* was sure that it would soon cool off. Her son wrote from Bombay asking them to come there, but *Maanji* would not agree to abandon her beloved Rawalpindi. Many of her relations and Sikh and Hindu neighbours went away to East Punjab, but she stayed on in her house. Whenever any one said that it was dangerous for Sikhs to live in West Punjab, she would say, 'Who will harass us here? After all the Muslims who live around us are all like my own children – aren't they?'

But then came the Muslim refugees from the East Punjab, with the bitter feeling of revenge and hate. The situation in 'Pindi became increasingly dangerous for Hindus and Sikhs, and some of *Maanji's* own Muslim neighbours came to her and pleaded with her to go away to a place of safety. And yet there were some who reassured her and promised that they would protect her life, honour and property with their own lives. In particular, the old lady remembers the loyal devotion of a Muslim tailor, a tenant of theirs, who kept watch night and day on their house. 'May he live long,' she always blesses him, 'he truly helped us and saved us like a real son.'

Some of the refugees from the East Punjab were staying in their neighbourhood. *Maanji* was so moved by their pitiable condition that she voluntarily sent them donations of foodstuffs, clothes, blankets, and bedding — and it never occurred to her that they were Muslims, supposed to be the enemies of her people, and so she ought not to help them. Nor did she imagine that soon she, too, would be in a plight very similar to theirs.

Then something happened that snapped the last thread of her faith. On the road, in front of her house, a tonga-wallah was stabbed to death. This is how *Maanji* described the

frightful incident and her own feelings to it. 'Son, it was bad enough that the tonga-wallah was killed. They killed him because he was a Hindu—but they did not spare even the horse. You know a horse has neither religion nor caste. And yet they went on stabbing the poor animal with their daggers till the poor, dumb creature bled to death. Then I knew the madness had gone too far, and human beings had become something else, something horrible and evil, that we could no longer feel safe in Rawalpindi.'

And so she locked up her house, leaving everything behind just as it was. She still did not imagine that she was abandoning her hearth and home for ever. The prevalent madness, she hoped, would blow over one day, and then she would return home. 'But by the time we reached Delhi,' she said with a sigh, 'my old eyes saw things—horrible things—both there and here, that told us that we could never again go to 'Pindi. By the time they reached Bombay, the memory of her home in Rawalpindi was only a pain in her aged heart.

In Rawalpindi she used to live in a house with six spacious rooms, wide verandahs, and a big courtyard. In Bombay she and her husband live with their son, in a single room tenement — with a *dhobie* occupying the room on one side, and a coal-shop on the other. There is a small kitchen which also serves as dining-room, bath-room and store-room. When my friend lived there alone the room was always in a mess – books, newspapers, dirty linen and unwashed tea-cups lying about everywhere. But any one who visits the same place now finds it completely changed. Within its narrow limits, everything is spotlessly clean, well-arranged. There are white sheets on the beds, with embroidered pillow-cases, the floor shines with constant scrubbing, and there is not a particle of dust or dirt anywhere. In Rawalpindi *Maanji* had two male-servants and a maid-servant. Here she cooks with her own hands, washes the dishes, sweeps the floor. But she has a maternal smile and a pleasant smile for any friend of her son who happens to drop in and, of course, she

would never let anyone go away without eating something or at least taking a cup of tea. *Maanji* has lost her hearth and home, all her life's savings and possessions; from a prosperous landlady in Rawalpindi she has become a refugee in Bombay but her hospitality has not lost its North Indian flavour and fervour!

Maanji has a fair complexion, a rather short stature and frail body, her hair which was already grey has turned almost completely white since after the partition, and her health is not so good. She gets attacks of asthma and neuralgia. But she never sits idle for a moment, never relaxes or sleeps except for six hours at night. First to get up in the morning, last to go to sleep, throughout the day she is constantly working. Whether it is cooking for her son, or darning and mending her husband's old clothes or making tea or *lassi* for a guest, she insists on doing everything with her own hands. Seeing her you would never imagine that she is a refugee who lost and suffered so much. She never proclaims her tragedy. She never curses or abuses those who made her leave her home. She still remembers her Muslim neighbours with affection, and brightens up whenever her husband reads out a letter received from Rawalpindi. Only very occasionally a soft, cold sigh escapes her lips, as she says: 'Your Bombay may be a great and grand city, son. But we can never forget *our* Rawalpindi—those pears and apricots and apples, those grapes and melons and *baggoogoshas* that you never get in Bombay. . . .'

And suddenly she is silent, tears bubbling up in her tired, old eyes. And it seems that in the intensely human heart of this refugee there is neither anger nor self-pity, but only memories — memories that are soft like ripe apricots and fragrant like *baggoogoshas*. . .

memories
soft like ripe apricots
fragrant like baggoogoshas

Glossary

refugee	:	an immigrant who settles in a foreign land because he/she has been exiled from his/her motherland
ancestral	:	referring to the roots of the family or familial roots
evacuate	:	to remove people from a dangerous or possibly dangerous place to reduce the threat to their lives
churn	:	to stir or beat milk or cream vigorously in order to make butter
impending	:	approaching, in the near future
pitiable	:	unfortunate, to be pitied
snapped the last thread of	:	was the last straw, the defining moment
tenement	:	public housing or building
frail	:	weak
asthma	:	an ailment that affects the lungs and causes difficulty in breathing
neuralgia	:	pain in the nerves
darn	:	to mend with needle and thread
lassi	:	*lassi* is a popular Indian drink that is native to the Punjab region. It is made by blending curd with ice and other spices until frothy.
baggoogosha	:	a soft pear
proclaim	:	to declare
brighten up	:	to make something cheerful or to become cheerful
sigh	:	deep breath indicating sadness

Comprehension

1. 'The thousand-year-old joint family system was shattered beyond repair.' What is the terrible event referred to in these words?

Partition