



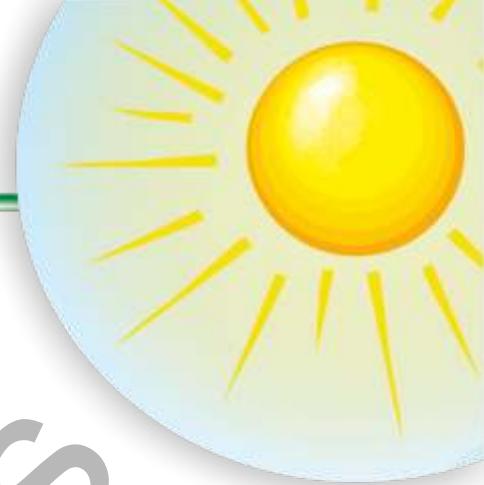
Crunchy
Books

Crunchy *English* Reader

Main Course Book



According to the National Education Policy (NEP)



Crunchy English Reader

An Integrated Course in English

Main Coursebook

VI



- By -

Mrs. Vinita Jain
MA (University of Delhi)
ELT Course Designer

Mrs. Harsh Ahuja
B.Ed (MD University)
ELT Course Designer



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Corporate Office : 516-517, Lane 16, Joshi Rd, Karol Bagh, New Delhi - 110005, Mob. 09212111747

Regd. Office : 22, Jawahar Park, P.B. 36, Saharanpur-247 001 (U.P.)

Mob : 9027891426

Email : navprakashanbin@gmail.com ; salesnbpindia@gmail.com

Website : www.bansalpublishers.com

Preface...



Crunchy English Reader, *an Integrated Course in English* is a series of carefully graded text books intended to guide the students. It is a series of 8 books for classes I to VIII. In this series students are guided to work out language related problems in a practical manner through activities and writing after imagining. The book in this series mainly focus on interactive language. This series is innovative resource which will give them a sense of achievement and extend their English reading in as natural way as possible.

Key Features of Course books of the Series

- ◆ Text helps in enhancement of students' aptitude for language. A pre-reading before each text is intended to make the learner conscious of the theme concerned.
- ◆ **Warm up** to check the students eye-sense from the picture.
- ◆ **Test your knowledge** section contains objective type questions that forces the students to read between the lines, interpret, analyse and arrive at conclusion.
- ◆ The section '**Vocabulary**' as well as offering them opportunities for vocabulary expansion.
- ◆ Grammar under the section '**Grammar Skills**' has been presented in a systematic manner using the contexts in the texts. Abstract explanations have been kept to a minimum. Interesting and meaningful grammar practice help the learners to have a better command over English.
- ◆ The section '**Writing Skills**' is extremely important for learners. The tasks in this section are both interesting and challenging. These tasks provide learners guidance and prompts to produce a range of functional and imaginative written texts.
- ◆ The section '**Speaking Skills**' offers highly interesting classroom material by encouraging learners to do oral tasks that highlight the use of English in dynamic and functional contexts.
- ◆ The section '**Listening Skills**' helps children to add to their own ideas to increase social awareness and to become accustomed to correct usage and to listen for desired information.

We hope that **Crunchy English Reader**, *an Integrated Course in English* will encourage pupils to become more successful language learners by attempting extrapolatory questions and hence by becoming better thinkers. Not only this but a sense of self-worth will also be developed in learners. Besides this series will engage learners effectively as well as cognitively.

—Publisher



Contents...



S.No.	Chapter	Page No.
1.	Gulliver's Travels <i>The Hero</i>	05
2.	Paper Boats <i>If</i>	13
3.	APJ Abdul Kalam <i>Journey of Life</i>	18
4.	Stop Child Labour <i>Fences</i>	26
5.	The Cherry Tree <i>Skills</i>	29
6.	Bravery of Rahul <i>Value of Friends</i>	36
7.	Sundar and Spotted Tail <i>Game of Life</i>	39
8.	Kabuliwala - A Man of Wonders <i>Wind</i>	49
9.	Tansen : The Magical Musician <i>Come out with Me</i>	53
10.	Competition or Friendship <i>Dear Grown-Ups</i>	64
	Model Test Paper - I	78
	Model Test Paper - II	93
	Text For Listening Skills	96
		105
		108
		119
		124
		136
		141
		142
		143





Gulliver's Travels

Pre-Reading



We all imagine travelling to different places and dream of seeing new places. Do you also dream of travelling far away places?



Yes, travelling and seeing new places is a dream of many people. We all want to go on adventure.

Warm Up

Look at the picture given below. Write the name of the story and describe it in few lines.





Read and Enjoy

Let's read the story of Gulliver who travelled to different places and discovered new places and people.

Jonathan Swift's famous novel, Gulliver's Travel, is just a novel about the main character, Gulliver who goes on many journeys.

He begins as a **naive** Englishman and by the end of the book he has **Antonym**
a strong **hatred** for the human race. **hatred – love**

On a **voyage** to the South Sea Island in the Pacific Ocean, Gulliver's ship crashed into some rock and sinks. He was lucky to swim safely. When he reached to the dry land he was so hungry and tired that he fell asleep at once. His journey leads him to the land of the Lilliputians.

Let's Talk

Do you wish to travel to a far away land? Discuss where do you want to travel and why.

I slept very well for several hours. When I woke up, I tried to get onto my feet, but I could not move. My arms and legs and my long thick hair were tied to the ground. I could feel several thin pieces of string across my body from my neck down to the bottom of my legs. The only part of my body that I could move was my eyes.

I could hear a lot of noise around me. Many things were moving about. But I could not see them. After a while I felt something on my left leg. It was alive and it moved gently over my body towards my chin.

Suddenly I saw, in front of me, standing on my body, a very, very small man. He was only about six inches tall. He held a bow and an arrow. Then I felt about forty more little people climbing over me.



WORD-MEANING

naive - a person showing lack of experience of life or knowledge, **hatred** - intense feeling of dislike, **voyage** - a long journey by sea or in space





I could not believe it. I was so surprised that I shouted very loudly and all the little people ran away in fright. Many jumped to the ground and some were badly hurt when they fell off my body.

Be Moral

How should we behave with people who came to our country as travellers? Discuss.

But they returned soon. One of them came very close and called out in a high clear voice, but I could not understand his language.

Lying there made me feel very uncomfortable. I tried to free myself by breaking some of the strings which had been tied to stakes in the ground.

I managed to free my left arm and tried to pull hard on the left side of my head. It was very painful but I **succeeded** in loosening some more stakes. Now I was able to turn my head about two inches.

As I was doing this, the little people ran away. I heard someone shout an order and all at once about one hundred arrows shot through the air at me. Those that landed on my face and hand felt like sharp needles.

I shouted with pain. I covered my face with my left hand and tried to break all the strings. I wanted to get free but the little men shot more arrows. Some tried to push their spears into me. Luckily my jacket was made of strong cloth and their **spears** were not sharp enough to go through that.

Think Out of Box

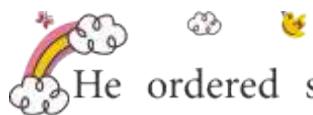
Imagine you reach a place where you do not understand the language. Think of some signs you will use to convey your message. Enact in classroom.

I decided to lie still. When the little people saw me lying still, they stopped shooting. Then they built a little **platform**. Its top was about eighteen inches from the ground. One of the little men climbed onto the platform and began to speak but I could not understand anything that he said. I was thirsty as it was very hot. I opened my mouth and pointed to it because I was hungry. He understood.

WORD-MEANING

succeeded - to achieve the desired aim or result, **spears** - a weapon with a pointed tip, **platform** - a raised flat surface raised above the level of the ground where people can stand,





He ordered some people to place ladders against my sides and they did this at once. More than a hundred men climbed the ladder carrying baskets of bread and meat. Their loaves of bread were so small that I ate three of them at a time.

When I was thirsty they rolled a barrel close to my head. It held about half a **pint** of wine.

The little people were pleased because I had eaten their food. But when I wanted to be free they made it clear that I could have food but not my freedom.



From the Real World

Christopher Columbus was an Italian explorer and discovered America in 1492. It is commonly said that Christopher Columbus discovered America but there were plenty of people already there when he arrived. He called the natural people 'Indian' as he believed he has thought he has reached India after a long voyage.

Do you think discovering new lands in the early times was different?

Yes, discovering new lands without the help of proper equipments and basic navigating skills, and campus was very difficult, many voyagers miscalculated their journeys and got lost in the sea.

WORD MEANING

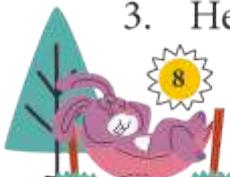
pint - a unit for measuring liquids equal eight pints equal to one gallon.

Test Your Knowledge

As per NEP 2020

A. Complete the following sentences in your own words :

1. Gulliver could feel thin _____ across his body.
2. He was unable to see the things that were moving because his _____ to the ground.
3. He was very surprised by _____ of the men.





Paper Boats

Pre-Reading



We all travel from one place to another by different means of transport. Do you know what are water transport?

Yes, boat, ship, ferry, etc. are water transport. We use them to travel by water bodies.



Warm Up

Look at the pictures of water transport and complete their names :



S



Y C T



S B M N



S L B T



K Y



F R R



Read and Enjoy

Let's read the story of Ana how she can learn to share and care strangers with a boy.

Bent over a stream of muddy rainwater, Ana gently launched a paper boat. Like the two earlier ones, this boat, too, sailed down the stream swiftly and proudly. And each time that happened Ana would shriek with delight. But this time something horrible happened. A big boy **pounced** on her boat and pulled it out. He wiped off the water and turned the boat upside down.

Ana stared at the boy. He was huge and dirty. And so engrossed was he in inspecting the boat that he did not notice Ana's angry stare. She turned and ran into the house. Aunt Avanti was sitting in an armchair watching the newly washed trees and the beautiful sky, when Ana **barged** in, her face red and lips **pouting**. "That awful boy, he snatched away my boat," she said.

"Don't worry. I will make another for you," Aunt Avanti tried to console her. "What if he takes that one also?" "Then ... I will make some more boats." "And supposing he takes all of them?" "No. He won't because I will make two for him as well." "But why should you make any for him?"

"Because I don't think he has an Aunt Avanti who will make boats for him." "Then ... can't he make them himself? He is so big." "Yes, Ana, but maybe no one has taught him how to make boats." "Why didn't he go to school? He is so bad, he could not have."

WORD-MEANING

pounced – move down on as if in an attack,
barged – push one's way, **pouting** – make a sad face with a thrust out lower lip





Aunt Avanti just smiled. She had cut some papers into squares and was already folding one. In no time a boat was ready. Then she made a few more. Finally, she gave all the boats to Ana and said, "Here, now run along and have fun."

Ana did not move. She was still **sulking**. She did not want to have anything to do with that boy. But there was no choice. The rain had just stopped and the **gurgling** and swirling muddy rainwater flowing through the open drain looked so inviting. Clutching the boats tight, Ana started walking **hesitantly** towards the stream. The boy was still there. He looked at her **curiously**. Ana took out two not-so-good boats and held them out for the boy.

He could hardly believe that this pretty girl in the blue frock was calling him. He almost ran to her. "Take," she said without the trace of a smile. The boy took them and just stood there quietly. He did not know what to say. Chin up in the air, Ana turned her back and gently launched her boat. Swiftly the boat sailed down the stream. The boy stood there watching it, a faint smile dancing on his lips. Ana knew that he had no intention of pulling it out of the water. Happily she watched the swiftly moving boat as it sailed beautifully!

Think Out of Box

Find out what do we call an art of making things with paper. What things can you make from paper?



Be Moral

One of your classmate forgot to bring lunch to school. He/She continuously watching you when you are enjoying your lunch with your friends. When you notice watching her/him what will you do?

Phrase

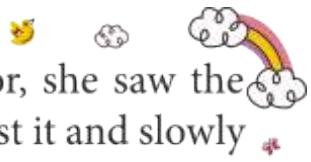
chin-up- to tell someone to make an effort to stay brave and confident when they are in a difficult situation

WORD-MEANING



sulking – a mood or display of displeasure, **gurgling** – flow in an irregular current with a bubbling noise, **hesitantly** – in a manner of holding back, **curiously** – inquisitiveness (wanting to know).





Ana was about to shriek with delight once again when, to her horror, she saw the boat getting caught in a lump of mud and stones. Water splashed against it and slowly flooded the boat. In a flash, the boy dashed right through the stream and pulled the boat out of the water. He turned the boat upside down to drain off the water and without a word held it out to Ana. Ana took the boat and smiled. The boy smiled back a beautiful smile. Ana turned round and gently left the boat in the stream. It sailed swiftly and drifted past the big lump of stones, mud, and grass. Soon it was out of sight. Ana and the boy looked at each other and smiled.

From the Real World

Mother Teresa was born in Skopje. After having lived in Macedonia for eighteen years, she moved to Ireland and then to India, where she lived for most of her life devoted to help poor or sick people. These people are strangers to her but still she devoted her life completely serving these people.

Do you think she is right? We should also help poor or needy people if we don't know them. Yes, she is right. It is not important that we should only help known people. We should always help and care poor or needy people.

Test Your Knowledge

A. Tick (✓) the correct answers :

1. The big boy pounced on Ana's :
 - a. third paper boat
 - b. first paper boat
 - c. second paper boat

2. Ana became happy when :
 - a. the boat got stuck in mud and stones
 - b. the boat sailed swiftly in water
 - c. the boat overturned and drowned

3. The big boy took Ana's boat because :
 - a. he had never been to school
 - b. he did not have an Aunt Avanti
 - c. he did not know how to make it

As per NEP 2020





APJ Abdul Kalam

Pre-Reading



Have you heard about APJ Abdul Kalam? Do you know why was he loved by people?

APJ Abdul Kalam was the eleventh President of India. He was a great scientist, teacher, and people and students loved him for his simplicity.



Warm Up

Look at the picture below and write a few lines on it :







Read and Enjoy

Let us read the biography of Dr APJ Abdul Kalaam.

I was born into a middle-class Tamil family on the island town of Rameswaram. My father, Jainulabdeen had neither much formal education nor much wealth. Despite these disadvantages, he **possessed** great innate wisdom and a true generosity of spirit. He had a perfect helpmate in my mother, Ashiamma. I do not recall the exact number of people she fed every day, but I am quite certain that far more outsiders ate with us than all the members of our own family put together.



My parents were widely regarded as an ideal couple. My mother's lineage was the more distinguished, one of her **forbears** having been **bestowed** the title of 'Bahadur' by the British.

I was one of many children – a short boy with rather undistinguished looks, born to tall and handsome parents. We lived in our ancestral house, which was built in the middle of 19th century. It was a fairly large pucca house made of limestone and bricks, on the Mosque Street in Rameswaram. My strict father used to avoid all inessential comforts and luxuries. However, all necessities were provided for, in terms of food, medicines or clothes. In fact, I would say mine was a very secured childhood, both materially and emotionally.

Let's Talk

Do you know what are our houses made of? What is a pucca house and a kutchha house? Discuss.

I normally ate with my mother, sitting on the floor of the kitchen. She would place a banana leaf before me, on which she had **ladled** rice and **aromatic** sambhar, a variety of sharp home-made pickles and a dollop of fresh coconut chutney.

The famous Shiva temple, which made Rameswaram so sacred to pilgrims was about a ten-minute walk from our house. Our locality was mainly Muslim, but

WORD-MEANING

possessed - to have a particular quality, **forbears** - a person in your family who lived a long time ago, **bestowed** - to give something to somebody, **ladled** - to place food on a plate, **aromatic** - a pleasant smell



there were quite a few Hindu families too, living in friendly manner with their Muslim neighbours. There was a very old mosque in our locality where my father would take me for evening prayers. I had not the faintest idea of the meaning of the Arabic prayers song but I was totally convinced that they reached God. When my father came out of the mosque after the prayers, people of different religions would be sitting outside, waiting for him. Many of them offered bowls of water to my father who would dip his fingers in them and say a prayer. This water was then carried home for invalids. I also remember people visiting our home to offer thanks after being cured. My father always smiled and asked them to thank Allah, the kind and merciful.

The high priest of Rameswaram Temple, Pakshi Lakshmana, was a very close friend of my father. One of the most clear memories of my childhood is of the two men, each in his traditional clothing, discussing spiritual matters. When I was old enough to ask questions, I asked my father about the **relevance** of prayer. "When you pray," he said, "you **transcend** your body and become a part of the **cosmos**, which knows no division of wealth, age, caste or creed."

-An extract from 'Wings of Fire', an Autobiography of Dr A.P.J. Abdul Kalam



Be Moral

Do you drink we should spend our money on non-essential things or save it for any emergency situation.

Think Out of Box

- Make a list of different religious that are followed in India. What do you understand by unity in diversity?

From the Real World

Omnists are people who respect and recognise all religions equally. People who follow omnism believe and follow various religions.

Do you think we should respect the beliefs of every religions equally?

Yes, we should respect every religion equally and treat everyone as our brothers and sisters.

WORD-MEANING

relevance - a close connection with the subject, **transcend** - to go beyond the range or limit of something, **cosmos** - the universe





4 Stop Child Labour

Pre-Reading



Child labour is the biggest problem in India. Many children forced to work in extreme conditions. Do you know what is the main cause of child labour?

Poverty is the main reason behind it.
Poverty is the cause of illiteracy in India.



Warm Up

Colour the given picture of child working in tea stall and write three lines about child labour in the space provided.







Read and Enjoy

Let's read the story of a boy Jai and know how children get involved in child labour due to poverty.

Jai was travelling to Mumbai by a train with his family to spend his summer holidays there. He was very excited about it. He had made lots of plans about what he was going to do in his break. He was dreaming of sleeping and waking up late. He thought about the good treats that his grandmother was going to prepare for him. At night when his parents were fast asleep on their berths, he heard a whisper near his lower berth. Jai flashed his small torch to see what was happening. He suddenly saw a little boy trying to sleep on the floor in the small place between the two berths. The boy looked **scared** and hungry. Jai **offered** him a biscuit and they started talking.



Let's Talk

What kind of life do working children lead?



Jai asked, "What is your name? How old are you? Why are you sleeping on the floor?" The boy replied, "My name is Shantu. I'm ten years old. I want to go to Mumbai." "But where are your parents?" asked Jai. "I don't know where they are. I don't remember them," replied Shantu. "What do you mean you don't remember your parents?" asked Jai. "My father left me on a train while I was sleeping many

WORD-MEANING



scare - a feeling of being frightened,
offered - gave



years back," came the reply. Shocked, Jai asked, "How could your father leave you behind?"

"You see, I come from a very small village, I don't even remember its name. I had three brothers and two sisters. We were very poor and did not have enough to eat. One day my father told me that we were going to the big city to find a job to bring back some money. I was very excited because that was my first train ride. When we left, my mother hugged me and was crying very hard. Then my father and I sat on a train. When I woke up in the morning, I was all alone, I could not find my father."

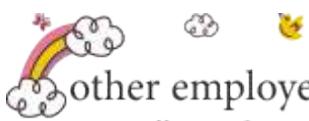
Jai was taken aback, "What! How could your father leave you like that? What did you do?" "I got off the train and started looking for my father at the station. Night came, and I still could not find him. Then I started crying and sat in a corner to hide from the stationmaster. I was hungry and lost. Next day I met another small boy who was selling paper soap on the railway platform," said Shantu. With a little sigh Shantu continued, "His name was Dhruv. He found me, took me to a place where there were many children like me. Some of them had got lost, some ran away from their families and some were left behind by their families."

"Why would a family do that to their own child?" asked Jai. "There are many reasons. Many of us come from villages. Some of us were sold by our own parents, who didn't have the money to look after a big family. Some parents are tricked into it," replied Shantu. "But how can the parents be tricked?" "I have eight friends to whom this has happened! Their father or an aunt was contacted by someone they knew. This person promised their family a better life for the children. They promised to send the children to school or give them houses to live in. My friends were then taken away by that person. He later forced them to work in factories. Three of them were simply sold to

Be Moral

Imagine if you see any children working in your father's factory. What will you do for her/him?





other employers. I have two other friends whose fathers just left them behind on the train," explained Shantu.

"What happens to them?" asked Jai. "A lot of things; and often bad things happen to us. Some of us are made to sing and dance on streets. You can see children dancing in the middle of the road or selling things at traffic signals." "At times children get lost. To survive they join other children who work," continued Shantu.

"But what kind of work can small children do?" asked a shocked Jai. With a sad smile Shantu said, "Many things, but most of them are illegal. I started working in a factory where they made silk. We are made to work in factories that make crackers, at construction sites and sari factories." "But isn't it dangerous?" enquired Jai. "Yes, it's very dangerous. We are forced to work under horrible conditions. We work for long hours, sometimes for 16 hours a day. There are times when we are not given fresh food to eat. I hated being punished if I did something wrong or was not working fast! But we can't do anything. We are all alone in this world, so we stay wherever we get some money, food and a place to stay. When things get bad, we run away to another place," explained Shantu.

Think Out of Box

Where do you see small children working mostly?

From the Real World

Vishnu and Rohan are two kids who wander from place to place in a group of small families. They perform on the streets for local entertainment shows. They travel from place to place with their families and fall under the category of fixed child labour. Such kids are talented and have good skills as compared to other children. But they need to travel and work in order to keep their family tradition alive.

Do you think we should appreciate their talent and skills?

Yes, we should appreciate their talent and skills and help them in any form.

"I have heard that it is against the law to make small children work, but it still happens. Nobody cares for us!" he finished. "What do you eat?" Jai asked. "Well it depends on where I am. Sometimes I go hungry. If I'm working at a tea stall, then the owner usually gives me **leftovers**. Sometimes I even have to look for food in the garbage," replied Shantu. "Don't you feel lonely?" asked Jai. With tears in his eyes Shantu replied, "Very much. I miss

WORD-MEANING

leftovers - the food that has not been eaten at the end of a meal



my family. I hardly remember what they looked like. For a long time I tried to find them, but I don't remember where they lived. I miss my mother's hugs." "What are you going to do in Mumbai?" Jai asked curiously. "Mumbai is a big city. When it gets cold in Delhi some of us go to Mumbai. There are millions of children like us you know! We'll find something to do." Soon it was morning and Jai's parents were going to wake up. Shantu could be caught for travelling without ticket and thrown out of the train; so he had to leave. Before Shantu escaped, Jai gave him some food that he had in his bag and his favourite toy to remember him by.

In the few hours of the night the whole world of Jai had changed. He was suddenly aware of many things that he had taken for granted and was also grateful to God for giving him such loving and caring parents who could fulfill all his desires. He knew that whenever he saw another poor kid on the street he would remember Shantu so he vowed to do something for the homeless and working kids as soon as he became independent.

Test Your Knowledge

As per NEP 2020

A. Tick (✓) the correct answers :

1. What were Jai's plans for the holidays?
 - a. He was going to play a lot
 - b. He was going to eat a lot
 - c. He was going to visit many places
2. Who was Shantu?
 - a. He was an abandoned boy, ten years of age
 - b. He was travelling with his family on the same train as Jai
 - c. He was a boy who had got lost on the train
3. Why was Shantu left behind by his own father?
 - a. He was not loved/wanted by his family members
 - b. His family was so poor that his parents could not look after all the children
 - c. His family wanted him to work as he was a lazy boy





5 The Cherry Tree

Pre-Reading



Cherry trees are tough trees that endure climate change and grow in tough terrain.

They are one of the most popular landscape trees for their beautiful spring flowers.



Cherry trees grow in cold weather and grow up to 35 feet. They are so yummy to eat.

Warm Up

Identify the trees given below and write their names :



Read and Enjoy

Let us read the story of a boy and his grandfather who plant a cherry tree and take care of it.

One day, when Rahul was six, he walked at the Mussoorie bazaar eating cherries. They were a little sweet, a little sour; small, bright red cherries, that had come all the way from the Kashmir valley.

Here in the Himalayan **foothills** where Rahul lived, there were not many fruit trees. The soil was stony, and the dry cold winds **stunted** the growth of most plants. But on the more sheltered slopes there were forests of oak and deodar.

Rahul lived with his grandfather on the **outskirts** of Mussoorie, just where the forest began. Grandfather was a retired forest ranger. He had a little cottage outside the town.

Let's Talk

Do you know in which season and where do your favourite fruits grow? Discuss.

Rahul was on his way to home from school when he bought the cherries. He paid fifty paisa for the bunch. It took him about half an hour to walk home, and by the time he reached the cottage, there were only three cherries left.

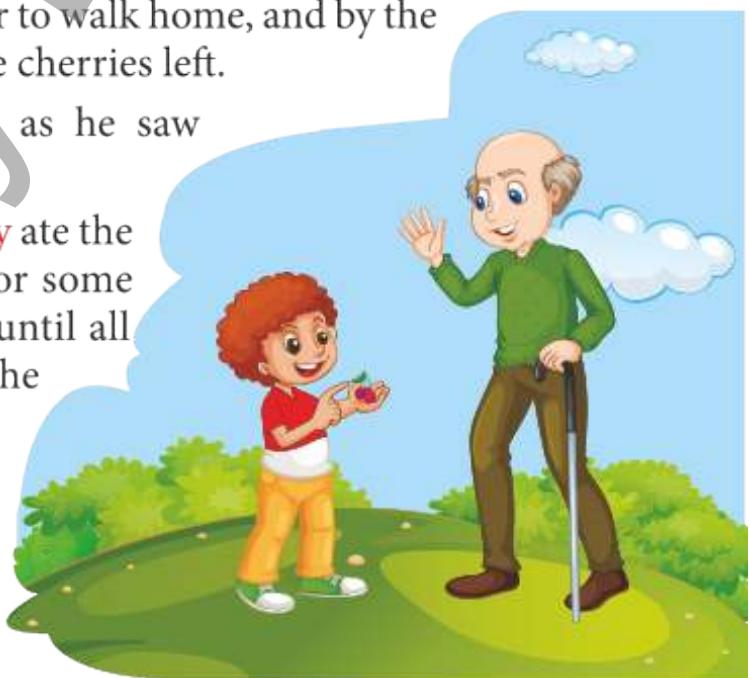
'Have a cherry, Grandfather,' he said, as soon as he saw grandfather in the garden.

Grandfather took one cherry and Rahul **promptly** ate the other two. He kept the last seed in his mouth for some time, rolling it round and round on his tongue until all the tang had gone. Then he placed the seed on the palm of his hand and studied it.

'Are cherry seeds lucky?' asked Rahul.

'Of course,' said grandfather.

'Nothing is lucky if you put it away. If you want luck, you must put it to some use.'



WORD-MEANING



foothills - a low hill at the base of a higher mountain, **stunted** - that has not been able to grow, **outskirts** - the outer part of a town or city, **promptly** - with little or no delay



'What can I do with a seed?' asked Rahul.

'Plant it,' replied Grandfather.

So Rahul found a small **spade** and began to dig up a flower bed.

'Hey, not there,' said Grandfather. 'I've sown mustard seeds in that bed. Plant it in that shady corner, where it won't be disturbed.'

Be Moral

Why do you think we should take care of trees and plants? Do you think trees are good for us? Why?

Rahul went to a corner of the garden where the earth was soft and yielding. He did not have to dig. He pressed the seed into the soil with his thumb and it went right in. Then he had his lunch and ran off to play cricket with his friends and forgot all about the cherry seed.

When it was winter in the hills, a cold wind blew down from the snows and went whoo-whoo-whoo in the deodar trees, and the garden was dry and **bare**. In the evenings Grandfather and Rahul sat over a charcoal fire, and Grandfather told Rahul stories – stories about people who turned into animals and ghosts who lived in trees, and beans that jumped, and stones that wept, and in turn Rahul would read news to him from the newspaper, as Grandfather's eyesight being rather weak. Rahul found the newspaper very dull – especially after the stories – but grandfather wanted all the news...

They knew it was spring when the wild duck flew north again, to Siberia. Early in the morning, when he got up to chop wood and light a fire, Rahul saw the V shaped formation **streaming northwards** and heard the calls of birds clearly through the thin mountain air.

One morning in the garden he bent to pick up what he thought was a small twig and found to his surprise that it was well rooted. He stared at it for a moment, then ran to fetch grandfather, calling, 'Dada, come and look, the cherry tree has come up!'

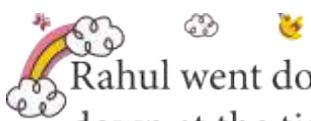
'What cherry tree?' asked Grandfather, who had forgotten about it.

'The seed we planted last year – look, it's come up!' said Rahul.

WORD-MEANING

spade - a garden tool with a broad metal part and a long handle used for digging, **bare** - not covered, **streaming** - to flow, **northwards** - towards the north





Rahul went down on his **haunches**, while Grandfather bent almost double and **peered** down at the tiny tree. It was about four inches high.

'Yes, it's a cherry tree,' said Grandfather. 'You should water it now and then.'

Rahul ran indoors and came back with a bucket of water.

'Don't drown it!' said Grandfather.

Rahul gave it a **sprinkling** and circled it with pebbles. 'What are the pebbles for?' asked Grandfather.

'For privacy,' said Rahul.

He looked at the tree every morning but it did not seem to be growing very fast. So he stopped looking at it – except quickly, out of the corner of his eye. After a week or two, when he allowed himself to look at it properly, he found that it had grown – at least an inch!

That year the monsoon rains came early and Rahul **plodded** to and from school in raincoat and gumboots. **Ferns** sprang from the trunks of trees, strange looking lilies came up in the long grass, and even when it wasn't raining the trees dripped and mist came curling up the valley. The cherry tree grew quickly in this season.

It was about two feet high when a goat entered the garden and ate all the leaves. Only the main stem and two thin branches remained.

'Never mind,' said Grandfather, seeing that Rahul was upset. 'It will grow again, cherry trees are tough.'

Towards the end of the rainy season new leaves appeared on the tree. Then a woman cutting the grass cut the cherry tree into two.

Idioms

corner of the eye - glancing casually; to look sideways



Think Out of Box

Imagine you have a big garden, which five trees you want to plant and why?

WORD-MEANING



haunches - a person's bottom, **peered** - to look closely or carefully, **sprinkling** - to throw drops of water over a surface, **plodded** - to walk slowly with heavy steps, **ferns** - a flowerless plant with feathery fronds



When grandfather saw what had happened, he went after the woman and scolded her; but the damage could not be repaired.



'Maybe it will die now,' said Rahul.

'Maybe,' said Grandfather.

But the cherry tree had no **intention** of dying.

By the time summer came round again, it had sent several new shoots with tender green leaves. Rahul had grown taller too. He was eight now, a sturdy boy with curly black hair and deep black eyes. 'Blackberry,' Grandfather called him.

That monsoon Rahul went home to his village, to help his father and mother with the planting and **ploughing** and sowing. He was thinner but stronger when he came back to his Grandfather's house at the end of the rains, to find that the cherry tree had grown another foot. It was now up to his chest.

Even when there was rain, Rahul would sometimes water the tree. He wanted it to know that he was there.

One day he found a bright green praying mantis perched on a branch, peering at him with bulging eyes. Rahul let it remain there. It was the cherry tree's first visitor.

The next visitor was a hairy caterpillar, who started making a meal of the leaves. Rahul removed it quickly and dropped it on a **heap** of dry leaves.

'Come back when you are a butterfly,' he said.

Winter came early. The cherry tree bent low with the weight of snow. Field mice sought shelter in the roof of the cottage. The road from the valley was blocked, and for several days there was no newspaper, and this made grandfather quite **grumpy**. His stories began to have unhappy endings.

In February, it was Rahul's birthday. He was nine – and the tree was four, but almost as tall as Rahul.

One morning, when the sun came out, Grandfather came into the garden. 'Let some warmth get into my bones,' he said. He stopped in front of the cherry tree, stared at it for a few moments and then called out, 'Rahul! Come and look! Come quickly before it falls!'

Rahul and grandfather gazed at the tree as though it had performed a miracle. There was a pale pink blossom at the end of a branch.

WORD-MEANING



intention - what you plan to do, **ploughing** - to dig or turn over the field with a plough,
heap - a pile of objects, **grumpy** - in a bad mood





From the Real World

Jadav Molai Payeng also called the Forest man, started planting bamboo trees and other plants in Assam after nothing had in that area. He started planting trees in 1980s and now the forest, which is named after his name 'Molai' stretches over 1360 acres. Animals like the Bengal Tiger, Indian Rhinoceros and a variety of birds live in that area.

How are animals affected by the lack of trees in the forest due to cutting?

When trees and other plantation is cut in an area where animals live, they face shortage of food and water as well as lack of tree leads to a decrease in the number of animals.

The following year there were more blossoms. And suddenly the tree was taller than Rahul, even though it was less than half his age. Then it was taller than grandfather, who was older than some of the oak trees.

But Rahul had grown too. He could run and jump and climb trees as well as most boys, and he read a lot of books, although he still liked listening grandfather's tales.

In the cherry tree, bees came to feed on the nectar in the blossoms, and tiny birds **pecked** at the blossoms and broke them off. But the tree kept blossoming right through the spring, and there were always more blossoms than birds.

That summer there were small cherries on the tree. Rahul tasted one and **spat** it out.

'It's too sour,' he said.

'They'll be better next year,' said Grandfather.

But the birds liked them – especially the bigger birds, such as the bulbuls and scarlet minivets – and they **flitted** in and out of the **foliage**, feasting on the cherries.

On a warm sunny afternoon, when even the bees looked sleepy, Rahul was looking for grandfather without finding him in any of his favourite places around the house. Then he looked out of the bedroom window and saw grandfather reclining on a cane chair under the cherry tree.

'There is just the right amount of shade here,' said Grandfather. 'And I like looking at the leaves.'

'They're pretty leaves,' said Rahul. 'They are always ready to dance, if there's a breeze.'

WORD-MEANING



pecked - bite of a bird, **spat** - a light blow, **flitted** - to move lightly and quickly from one place to another, **foliage** - plant leaves



After Grandfather had come indoors, Rahul went into the garden and lay down on the grass beneath the tree. He **gazed** up through the leaves at the great blue sky; and turning on his side, he could see the mountain **striding** away into the clouds. He was still lying beneath the tree when the evening shadows crept across the garden. Grandfather came back and sat down beside the Rahul, and they waited in silence until it was dark.

'There are so many trees in the forest,' said Rahul. 'What's so special about this tree? Why do we like it so much?'

'We planted it ourselves,' said Grandfather. 'That's why it's special.'

'Just one small seed,' said Rahul, and he touched the smooth bark of the tree that had grown. He ran his hand along the trunk of the tree and put his finger to the tip of a leaf. 'I wonder,' he whispered.

'Is this what it feels to be God?'

WORD-MEANING

gazed - to look steadily and intently, **striding** - to walk with long, decisive steps in a specified direction

Test Your Knowledge

As per NEP 2020

A. Tick (✓) the correct answers :

1. Rahul walked at the Mussoorie bazaar:

- a. eating blackberries b. eating mangoes
c. eating cherries

2. They know it was spring when :

- a. crows cowed in garden b. wild duck flew north again
c. woodpeckers started pecking woods

3. The next visitor was a hairy :

- a. caterpillar b. sparrow
c. insect

4. There was a _____ blossom at the end of a branch.

- a. pale yellow b. pale pink
c. bright orange





6

Bravery of Rahul

Pre-Reading



Bravery is the quality that allows someone to do things that are dangerous or frightening.

Not only adults but children also have quality of being brave and come out from dangerous situations.



Warm Up

On Republic Day many brave children of our country receive Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar. Here are pictures of some recipients of this award in 2022. Complete their names.



D _ i _ aj
K _ m _ r



S _ iv _ n _ i
K _ l _



G _ r _ g _
Hi _ a _ ri _ a



Read and Enjoy



Let's read the story of a boy who bravely save a family from the robbers despite being so small in age.

While playing in the lawn, Rahul saw Sunil coming out of the house with his bat, wickets and ball. He ran towards him and asked, "Sunil Bhaiya, are you going to play cricket?" "Yes." "Can I come with you?" asked Rahul eagerly. "Oh, no, you are small and we, grown-up boys, play a very rough game." "Please, Bhaiya, even if I can't play, at least I can do something. I can collect the ball for you people." Rahul insisted.

He was not ready to give up easily. "No. We play with a cork ball and it is very hard. You may get hurt," said Sunil as he put his cricket gear on his bicycle and rode off at top speed.

Rahul watched him with admiration 'Oh, how fast he can cycle!' he thought. Sunil was his hero and he adored him. His sour point was that Sunil always treated him as a kid which he



Let's Talk

- Is it right to get inspired by someone?
How is it useful for our growth and development?

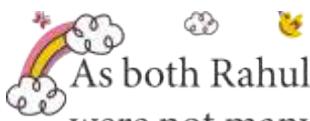
hated. He talked to himself, 'I am no more a child. I am going to be nine next month. I walk alone from the bus stop to the house. Mother sends me to Mother Dairy booth to fetch milk sometimes and, above all, I can climb a tree which even Sunil Bhaiya cannot.' Rahul lived on the first floor while Sunil lived on the ground floor of the same bungalow. Rahul lived with his parents and grandmother. Sunil, who was fourteen, lived with his parents, grandparents, and a grown-up brother. His father owned a big jewellery shop in the city.



WORD-MEANING

insisted – take a firm stand, admiration – a feeling of delighted approval and liking,
adored – love intensely





As both Rahul's parents worked he spent most of the day with his grandmother. There were not many children of Rahul's age in the neighbourhood. Sunil played with Rahul sometimes. One day Sunil said in confidence to Rahul, "I won a tennis ball in the school fete yesterday. I have kept it for you. It is safe enough for you to play cricket with it." "But Bhaiya, I am no more a little child," blurted out Rahul **indignantly**.

"OK., OK., don't get so worked up." Sunil had the outburst. "I am free in the afternoon. Come, we will play monopoly. You can have lunch with me." "Oh, good. I will just go upstairs and change my clothes." Rahul **dashed up** the stairs, threw the school bag off and changed his clothes. As he was putting on his T-shirt and shorts, he shouted, "Dadi, I am going to Sunil Bhaiya's house to play monopoly. I will have my lunch there."

The whole exercise took a few minutes and he was at the front door of Sunil's house. He pressed the bell and waited but no one opened the door. He again pressed the bell for a longer period. He pressed his ears against the door and heard footsteps behind the closed door. The door was still closed. 'Strange,' thought Rahul, 'only five minutes earlier Sunil Bhaiya invited me and now he is not opening the door'. He ran to the back and found that door also bolted from inside. Then he ran towards the left side of Sunil's room. He went to the window, which was closed, its panes covered with black paper. Suddenly he heard a voice, "Who, who is there?" It was Sunil's voice but he was speaking in whispers.



Be Moral

We should consider other feelings and emotions. We should always be careful that our any action will not cause inconvenience or hurt to others. Share your opinions in class.

"It is me, Rahul, you invited me and now..." "Shhsh..." interrupted Sunil quickly. "Rahul, you will have to help us. Robbers are here inside." "Robbers, have they got pistols?" "Yes, they have. They were here when I came. As soon as I entered, they overpowered me and locked me in this room with my grandmother. Are you scared?" "Oh, no, not at all," said Rahul. "Then inform the police. Can you manage?" "Oh, certainly."

WORD-MEANING

indignantly - *in an angry manner, dashed up* - *run or move very quickly*



Keeping to the hedge, Rahul quietly walked out of the gate, then ran with all his might. He was breathless when he reached the Police Assistance Booth. He found the policemen and started speaking at once. "Sir, please come with me. My house is being robbed, I mean my friend's. I mean Sunil Bhaiya's house..." "What are you **blabbering**, child? Don't waste our time, we are too busy for your pranks. Instead of roaming around in this heat, go back to your house," said one of the policemen and started writing in his register. Another policeman was talking on the telephone. 'Every minute is precious,' thought Rahul **desperately**. He looked around and noticed a watch lying at the counter. He grabbed the watch and started running. The policemen were **bewildered** for a minute. Two policemen ran after Rahul shouting, "Hey, you thief. Give back the watch or we will lock you in the jail. The road was empty, therefore, no one else joined the chase.

By the time Rahul reached the gate of the house, the policemen caught him. "Please, sirs, don't get angry. I never **intended** to steal your watch. I only played this trick to bring you here," said Rahul. Now the policeman looked less **hostile**. One took out the notebook and pen from his pocket and wrote something. Then he tore the page from the notebook and gave it to Rahul and said, "Son, run back to the booth again as fast as you can and give this to the policeman there. Tell me, which the house is."

"Go straight to the left side of the house and knock on the window there. Sunil Bhaiya is there," Rahul spoke and ran back to the Police Booth at top speed. Within minutes he was there again. The policeman shouted as he saw Rahul, "You naughty boy, where is the watch?" "Oh believe me, I am not a thief. Read this quickly. Your friend has sent it."

WORD-MEANING



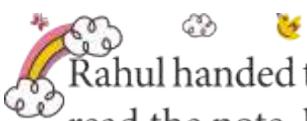
blabbering – reveal confidential information in return for money, **desperately** – with great urgency, **bewildered** – be a mystery or puzzle, **intended** – have in mind as a purpose, **hostile** – very unfavourable or characterized by enmity



Think Out of Box

Is it right to judge any person maturity or strength from its age?





Rahul handed the note to the policeman and waited impatiently. As soon as the policeman read the note, he swung into action. He gave some message on the walkie-talkie. Soon a flying-squad arrived. Rahul and the other policeman also climbed into the jeep. When they reached Sunil's house, the policemen who were there already joined them and informed, "Robbers are still inside, two of them are armed with pistols. In all there are four."

The police quietly surrounded the house. After a while the front door opened and a man holding a pistol came out. **Cautiously**, he looked around and finding no one he signalled to his friends to come out. Three more persons came out. One was holding a canvas bag, the other a pistol, and the third was empty-handed. As they started moving towards the gate, the inspector shouted "Catch!" and the police party attacked.

Thoroughly unprepared for this sudden attack, the robbers lost their wits. They were soon overpowered and **disarmed**. The police arrested them and **herded** them into a jeep. The policemen accompanying the robbers left in the jeep, and the rest of the men went inside. They untied Sunil and his grandmother. Then they went into the other bedroom where they untied Sunil's mother and grandfather. His grandfather was badly injured in the **scuffle** with the robbers. The ambulance was called through wireless since the robbers had cut the telephone line at Sunil's house.

Antonym

Cautiously : Incautiously

From the Real World

Priyanshu Joshi, 10-year-old boy, was returning home with his sister after school when suddenly a leopard attacked them. Desperate to save his sister he fought off the leopard scaring it away. He hit the leopard with his hands and school bag and lived to tell the tale. Does this incident make Priyanshu hate wild animals?

No, Priyanshu still loves wild animals despite this incident. This shows his maturity and courage.

Meanwhile they all assembled in the drawing room. Rahul narrated the whole story. Gaps were filled by Sunil and his mother. The police inspector patted Rahul and said, "You all must thank this small boy for your rescue. It was his presence of mind which saved you."

WORD-MEANING

cautiously – carefully or in a prudent manner, **disarmed** – take away the weapons from, **herded** – move together, like a herd, **scuffle** – to fight or struggle in a rough confused manner



Sunil came to Rahul said “Hey, I always treated you as a small kid. But you are a very brave boy. You really did a man’s job.”

For Rahul this was the happiest moment. He was no more a small child for Sunil Bhaiya. His face beamed with joy. “Sunil Bhaiya, can I come to play cricket with you now?” he asked shyly. Sunil nodded with a smile.

Test Your Knowledge

NEP 2020

A. Tick (✓) the correct answers :

1. Sunil came out of his house with his :
a. bat, pads and bails b. bat, ball and pads
c. bat, ball and wickets
2. Sunil and his friends used to play cricket with a :
a. cork ball b. tennis ball c. leather ball
3. Rahul was a kid aged :
a. fourteen b. eleven
c. two months less than nine
4. Rahul was going to Sunil’s house :
a. to meet his grandfather b. to complain to his mother
c. to play Monopoly
5. The window panes in Sunil’s home were covered with :
a. black paper b. newspaper c. white paper
6. To bring the policemen to Sunil’s house Rahul :
a. shouted at them b. picked up a watch and ran
c. explained the situation to them
7. There were :
a. four robbers in Sunil’s house b. two robbers in Sunil’s house
c. three robbers inside and two outside
8. The policemen untied :
a. Sunil’s mother and grandmother firstly
b. Sunil and his grandfather firstly
c. Sunil and his grandmother firstly





Grammar Skills

Learning Based

Past Perfect Tense – Usage (had + 3rd form of verb)

Past Perfect is used to express something that happened before another action in the past. When two events take place in the past, one earlier than the other, we use the past perfect tense.

Example :

The visitor had already left by the time I reached home.

She had discussed the matter with her friends before she spoke to her mother.

The later event is expressed in the simple past while the earlier event is expressed in the past perfect tense.

Past Perfect Continuous Tense – Usage (had been + '-ing' form of the verb)

Past Perfect Continuous is used to express something that started in the past and continued until another time (the time it was spoken about) in the past.

Example :

He had been living in Mumbai for five years when he came to Delhi.

She had been walking for four hours when they found her.

Fill in the blanks, with the past perfect continuous tense of the verb given in brackets.

1. His interview was quite good because he _____ (prepare) for it for two weeks. He _____ also _____ (work) on the questions that might be asked.
2. The boys came into the house two hours later with their clothes dirty and their hair in a mess. I knew that they _____. (fight)
3. I was exhausted at the end of the journey, as I had _____ (drive) the whole day.
4. The teacher reprimanded him when she realized that he _____ (not pay) attention in class.
5. He looked at her and it seemed to him that she _____. (cry)
6. They _____ (talk) for over an hour before Tony arrived.





Sundar and Spotted Tail

Pre-Reading



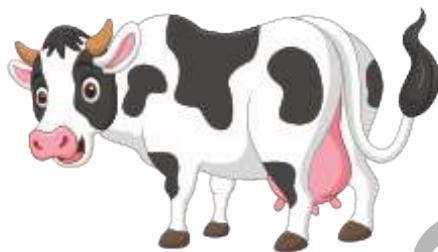
Domestic animals are animals that can be reared or cared by human beings. These animals are reared for food, clothing, paper, timber, work, transport and many other uses.

Domestic animals are greatly devoted to their masters. They are quite friendly to us.



Warm Up

Identify these domestic animals and write their names in the space given below :



Read and Enjoy

Let us read the story that explores the relationship between a cow heard and cow which describes how animals care about their masters.

Twelve-year-old Sundar looked after the village cows. He was given rice and curry for his labour. Early one summer he took out three cows for grazing. He had named them 'Curly Horned', 'Dark Eyed', and 'Spotted Tail'. He had his meal packed in his bag which he **slung** across his shoulders. In the bag he also carried his penknife and pipe. With a stick he **goaded** the cows towards the pastureland nearly a mile away.

The pastureland was a vast area overgrown with a variety of trees and bushes. At the time we are talking of, there had been a drought, everything had dried up and there was little for the cattle, just a few leaves to **nibble** at.

It was not often Sundar was asked to take out the cattle. If it rained, the cattle stayed in their sheds. If the harvest was good there was no need for his services because the cattle could feed themselves on the paddy **stubble**. It was only during the summer months there was very little for the cattle that Sundar was asked to take them out to pasture. This was seldom for more than a fortnight. But in these two weeks he really got attached to the cattle.

Alongside the grazing ground was a **lush** forest full of trees of all varieties which gave shelter to all kinds of animals – jackals, monkeys, porcupines, hares, wild pigs and deer. Occasionally, even elephants could be seen. But the forest was a government preserve and no grazing was allowed there. That morning Sundar allowed the cows to go into the forbidden territory.

Let's Talk

How difficult it is for cattle to find food for themselves during droughts ?



WORD-MEANING

slung – to hurl or hang loosely, **goaded** – drive (an animal) with a stick, **nibble** – a small gentle bite, **stubble** – small pieces of stem or leaves that have been separated from seeds, **lush** – produced or growing in extreme abundance



He perched himself on a cashew tree and helped himself to a few kernels. He imitated bird calls and made flower wreaths for the cows. When his cows strayed towards the forest, he played his pipe to draw them back. He patted their flanks and admonished them gently against losing themselves in the jungle. Sundar cut a slender reed and inserted a nut in its hollow tube. When he blew into one end, the nut shot out like a bullet from a gun. He used it against lizards and squirrels. He clambered over trees, peering into bird nests and made leaf-caps by pinning them with thorns. Sometimes he would dance the Garuda dance he had seen at the temple festival.

A stream ran between the pastureland and the forest. There was little water in it – not enough to bathe the cattle and barely enough for them to slake their thirst and him to wash down his meal of rice and tapioca stew. In the afternoon the cow lay in the shade chewing the cud while Sundar reclined in the shadow of a rock. A monkey came near and he shot a pebble through his reed gun and frightened it away. He felt very drowsy so he stretched himself out on a carpet of leaves and made up for the sleep he had lost at night.

Sundar's deep slumber was broken by a pack of jackals howling near him. He woke up with a start. Night had fallen and it was pitch dark. He could not see his three

cows; probably the jackals had frightened them away; or had they been dismembered by the jackals? Had the jackals bitten off their ears and udders-and left them to die? Jackals often had rabies.



Be Moral

Why do you think we should not get terrified with wild animals and try to deal with them patiently and with courage?



WORD-MEANING

flanks - the side between ribs and hipbone,
admonished - advise regarding behaviour, **slender** - being of delicate/lean build; **reed** - tall woody perennial grasses with hollow slender stems, **clambered** - climb awkwardly, **tapioca** - cassava with long tuberous edible roots and soft brittle stems, **cud** - food of a ruminant animal regurgitated to be chewed again, **drowsy** - half asleep, **slumber** - sleep, **udders** - mammary glands of cows/sheep/goat



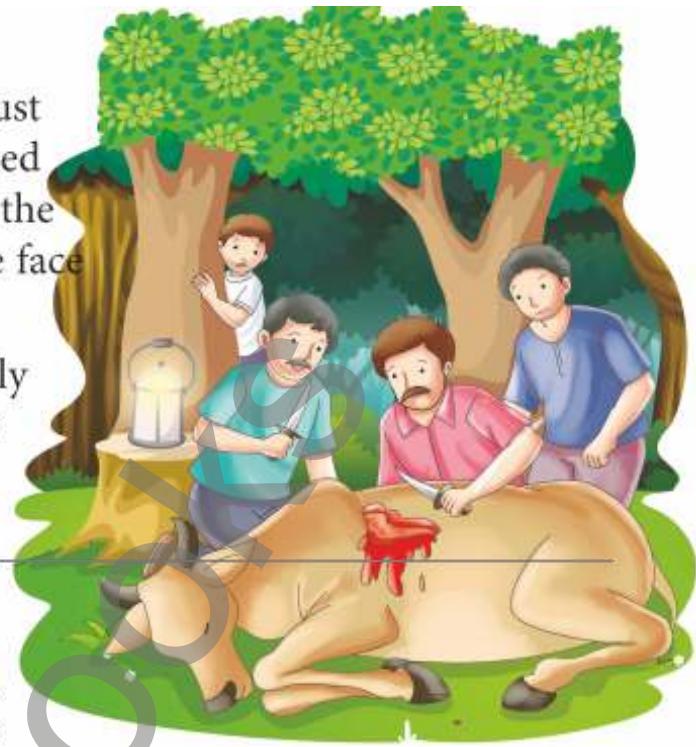


Dogs bitten by jackals became mad – the same must be true of cows. It was said that anyone who touched a mad cow became mad too. Or had they run into the forest and been **devoured** by a tiger? How would he face his elders? Would the jackals attack him?

Sundar was terrified but he kept his cool. He quietly slipped over to the other side of the rock and with his hands and feet felt the ground till he was able to find three stones which he put in the bag. He crept up to the top of the rock and flung the largest stone in the direction of the jackals. The stone found its mark for he heard a thud and a jackal howl in agony. He followed the first shot with two more through his reed gun, and again found his mark. The jackals **scurried** away and began to howl at a distance.

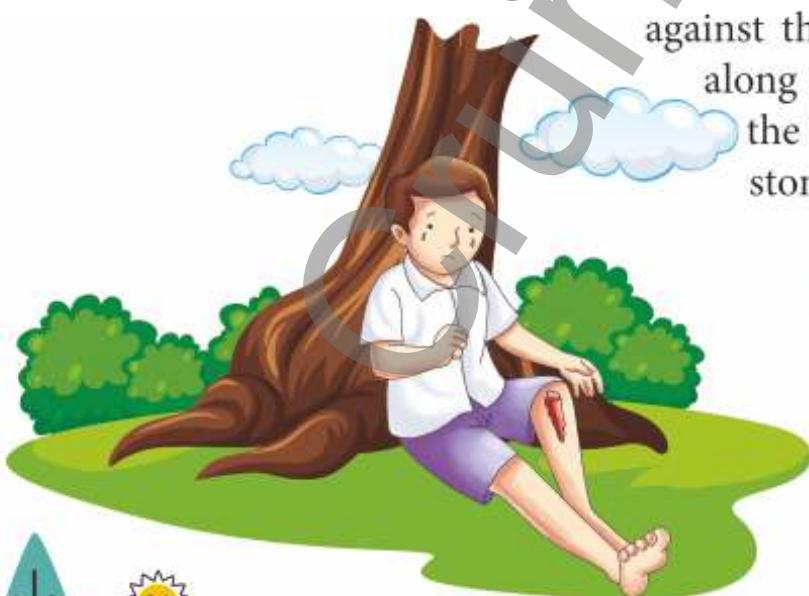
Sundar slipped down the rock. He had walked no more than five or six paces when his feet were caught in the roots of a tree. He felt its **bole** with his hands and discovered that a **sturdy** creeper was twined round the tree. He **hauled** himself up on to a branch and felt safe. Suddenly, the Night Jar (known to the locals as the Death Bird) called, “Burn him down!” This terrified him all the more. Then he **reassured** himself that God was there to help him. A crescent moon shed its faint light and he was able to see better.

He spied what looked like the form of a monkey **recumbent** against the bole of a tree. He moved stealthily along the branches till he was exactly above the monkey, then dropped his sack-full of stones on its head. The monkey screamed



Think Out of Box

Your father bought a farm. Which animals you want to keep in your farm and why?



WORD-MEANING

devoured – destroy completely; **scurried** – to move hurriedly; **bole** – the main stem of a tree, **sturdy** – having good physical strength, **hauled** – draw slowly or heavily, **reassured** – free from anxiety, **recumbent** – lying down



and ran. Its companions perched on other branches also screamed and scampered down the tree. That was Sundar's chance to get away. He slid down the tree, cut a long stick with his penknife and used it to clear his way through the reeds. He made his way back to the rock, clambered up it and lay down for a short respite. By now the crescent moon had gone down and only a few stars twinkled in the sky.

Sundar's thoughts were on his cows. The poor creatures must be lost in the dark. They were so helpless. Their terror and suffering would be far greater than his. He had played his pipe but the jackal's howling had drowned its notes. Hunger and thirst were gnawing at him. If only he could pluck some fruit, but he could hardly see in the dark. Then he saw a light. Could it be humans or evil spirits? Sundar broke into a cold sweat. The light was very faint. A sudden sound broke the silence. Sundar pricked up his ears. It was not the sound of trees being felled.

Mustering up all his courage Sundar once again slid down the rock on all fours and went towards the light. He saw four or five men skinning a dead animal. It was his spot-tailed cow who had delivered a calf only four months earlier. Sundar stole behind a tree to watch the goings on. The men had a bottle full of glowworms as their lamp. He noticed the severed head of the cow and realized that it was not his favourite Spotted Tail but an old white bull. He sighed with relief. The discovery also made him bold. All he had to do was to steal the bottle full of glowworms. The thieves had covered it with sacking and only exposed a side when they needed it. While they were engaged in their nefarious work, Sundar quietly picked up the bottle along with the gunny sack and went back to the tree.

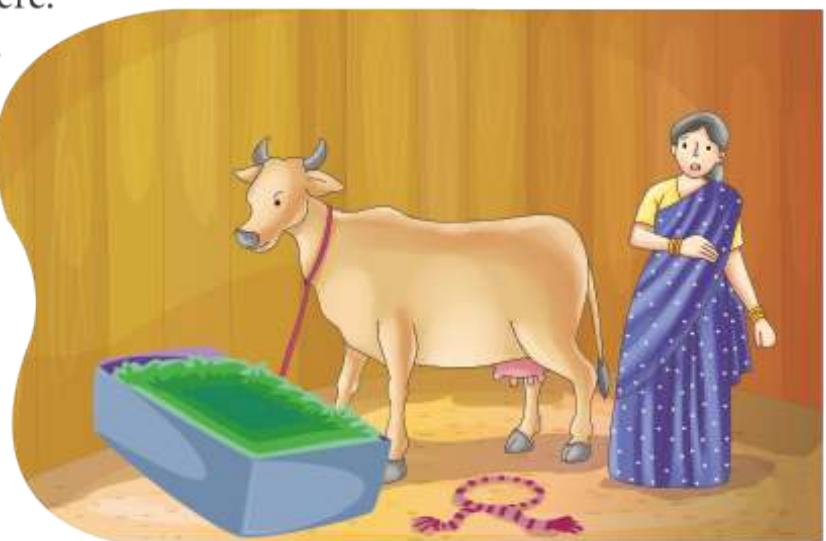
He heard one of the gang shout, "A little light here." Another turned to get the bottle he had put on the stone. It was gone. Where had the bottle disappeared? They began to argue and quarrel. "I'm sure I left it here."

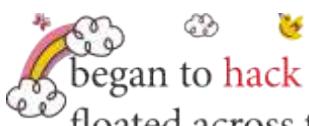
"Look carefully! It must be there." "I'm sure I left it on the stone." "Someone has surely seen us. We will be caught red-handed. Let's escape." They decided to get whatever they could of the meat and beat a hasty retreat. They

WORD-MEANING



scampered – to move hurriedly, **respite** – a temporary relief from harm/discomfort, **gnawing** – bit or chew with teeth, **mustering** – gather or bring together, **nefarious** – extremely wicked,





began to **hack** frantically at the **carcass**. Suddenly, they froze as the notes of a reed pipe floated across the dark. The men dropped their knives and ran to climb up a tree.

From the Real World

Maneka Gandhi is an environmentalist and animal rights leader in India. She started the organisation People for Animals in 1992 with an aim to establish various animal welfare centres across India's 600 districts. It is India's largest organisation for animal rights and welfare.

What do you learn from such environmentalist or leader ?

If we all put little efforts towards animal's welfare we can save them from sufferings and provide them good and healthy life.

The notes of a pipe fell on the ears of a jackal. It raised its head and began to howl. Others in the pack joined in a chorus. They smelt meat and came scampering to the carcass and fell upon it. From the tree-top the gang of thieves helplessly and sorrowfully watched the jackals devour the bull they had butchered. Sundar had by now recovered his **composure** and his eyes had got accustomed to seeing in the dark. He started calling to his cows and playing on his reed pipe.

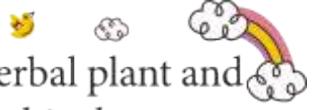
The birds and beasts of the jungle appeared agitated. Birds tittered and chirped, little animals scurried past him, and the anxious chill cry of deer filled the air. But there was no sign of his cows. Fear lent wings to his feet and he began to run. Thorns and **bramble** caught at his arms and legs, scratching and bruising him. Suddenly, he tripped over a tree-root and fell headlong. Fortunately, his bottle of glowworms did not break. By its faint light he saw that below the knee he had a deep cut which was bleeding **profusely**. To stop the bleeding he tied the sack's string above the wound. He was in great pain and could not stand up.

WORD-MEANING

retreat – the act of withdrawing or going backwards, **hack** – a tool used for breaking up a surface, **frantically** – in an uncontrolled manner, **carcass** – the dead body of an animal, **composure** – stability of mind under stress, **bramble** – any rough thorny shrubs/vines, **profusely** – in an abundant manner

Sundar was filled with terror at the thought that the smell of his blood would attract some wild animal and he would be eaten alive. Or else ants would gather and make a





meal of him! What horror! He cleansed his bruises with the leaves of a herbal plant and with his last ounce of strength called out to his favourite Spotted Tail. But his shout was no more than a faint whisper. Utterly exhausted Sundar fell asleep where he was.

What had happened was very simple. The cows had grazed their fill; chewed the cud and then bellowed to Sundar to tell him it was time to go home. Sundar slept through their **bellowing** and when Spotted Tail licked his leg, rewarded her by a resounding kick. The cows went back to the village without Sundar. They were tied up in their **byres**.

When Sundar had not returned home even after nightfall, his father went looking for him. When he learned that the cows were back he decided that Sundar must have gone to see the festival at the temple, and returned home. The next morning Spotted Tail would not let anyone milk her. She bucked and kicked anyone who came near her. The villagers thought she was sick. Everyone offered their diagnoses : "She has been bitten by a snake." "She must have eaten some venomous plant in the forest."

The mistress of the house finally ordered Spotted Tail to be fed only with salt in her **gruel** instead of its usual fare of oil-cakes and bran-water. She was not to be milked and her calf also kept hungry and the two tied separately in the byre. A little later she went to the cowshed with the gruel- salted rice water. Spotted Tail had vanished.

The mistress was very upset and began to **berate** everyone. "Didn't I tell you not to let the cow out of the byre? Why did that boy Sundar take her out against my orders?" They noticed the broken end of the rope tied to the stake. "Look, she's broken loose. She couldn't have gone very far." They looked for Spotted Tail everywhere. There was no sign of the cow or cowherd, Sundar. Sundar's father and Spotted Tail mistress set out towards the forest to look for them. Others joined them in their search.

Spotted Tail found her way to the spot where she had left Sundar sleeping the night before. He was no longer there. Spotted Tail began to search frantically. She came upon Sundar's bag, now dirty and torn and at last, after further searching, upon Sundar himself. He was bruised all over but fast asleep. The cow let out a deep bellow and began licking the boy all over his body : she licked away the ants and

Antonym

vanish – appear

WORD-MEANING

bellow – a very loud animal utterance, **byres** – a barn for cows, **gruel** – a thin porridge, **berate** – rebuke angrily





flies that had **clustered** over the boy's wounds. It was strange that the cow's udders became heavy and began to ooze with milk. She lay down exposing her wet udders close to Sundar's face so he could reach them. The boy took the cow's udders in his mouth exactly as would a calf and began to suck. Slowly strength came back to his limbs. He rested his head on the cow's **dewlaps** and nestled against her body. That is how the search party found Spotted Tail and Sundar, the cow and the cowherd.

WORD-MEANING

clustered – gather or cause to gather into a flock, **dewlaps** – a hanging fold of loose skin

Test Your Knowledge

As per NEP 2020

A. Tick (✓) the correct answers :

1. In his bag, Sundar carried :
 - a. a pen, a pipe, slender reed
 - b. stones, a torch, slender reed
 - c. a penknife, pipe and a stick in his hand
2. Sundar had to take the cows to graze :
 - a. during monsoon
 - b. during winter
 - c. during summer
3. The stream ran between :
 - a. the farmland and the forest
 - b. the jungle and the byre
 - c. the pastureland and the forest
4. Sundar was feeling drowsy because :
 - a. he had lost sleep at night
 - b. he was tired
 - c. he didn't have anything to eat
5. Sundar's first hit at the jackals was with :
 - a. a pebble shot through his reed gun
 - b. a sack full of stones
 - c. the largest stone that he could throw





Kabuliwala - A Man of Wonders

Pre-Reading



We all see many peddlars and vendors selling various goods from house to house.

Some peddlers sell vegetables, fruits and things of daily use.



Warm Up

Look at the picture below. Describe the scene in a few lines :





Read and Enjoy



Let us read the story of Kabuliwala who has beautifully portrayed the friendship of an Afghan and Mini.

Kabuliwala is one of the finest stories of Rabindranath Tagore.

Kabuliwala, a **pedlar** from Kabul, is the main character of this story who becomes very fond of Mini. She reminds him of his own little daughter whom he left in his home country. Thus, the story reflects a father's love for his daughter. It is this **unconditional** love that **transcends** all boundaries.

My daughter Mini, who is five years old cannot live without talking. She has not wasted a minute in her life in silence. Her mother gets **vexed** at this, and would stop her from **prattle**, but I would not. I can never bear to see her quiet, it seems unnatural. And so my own talk with her is always lively.

Let's Talk

- Do you see vendors and pedlars near your home selling different things? Discuss what all things do these pedlars sell.

One morning when I was writing the seventeenth chapter of my new novel, she came in and putting her hand into mine asked many questions. "Father! Ramdayal, the doorkeeper calls a crow, a krow! He doesn't know anything, does he?" "What do you think father? Bhola says there is an elephant in the clouds, blowing water out of his trunk and that is why it rains!" "Father, what is the relation between mother and you?" Before I could answer any of these, she was sitting at my feet and drumming her knees. I was in the middle of the seventeenth chapter when she suddenly ran to the window and shouted "A Kabuliwala! A Kabuliwala!" She started to call him loudly. He was in the street wearing loose **soiled** clothing of his people and a tall turban with a big bag on his back and boxes of grapes in his hand.

Be Moral

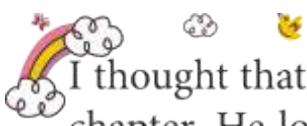
Do you think we should buy things from these pedlars or from supermarket? Discuss.

WORD-MEANING



pedlar - a person who travels from place to place trying to sell small objects, **unconditional** - without any conditions, **transcends** - go beyond the usual limits of something, **vexed** - a problem that is difficult to deal with, **prattle** - lot of talk about unimportant things, **soiled** - dirty





I thought that if he would come in and I would not be able to finish the seventeenth chapter. He looked up and saw Mini. She ran away to her mother's protection, and disappeared. She had a blind belief that inside the bag, which the big man carried, were perhaps two or three children like herself. The pedlar entered my doorway and smiled. I bought a few things and we talked about Abdur Rahman, the Russians, the English, and the Frontier Policy.

Before leaving he asked, "And where is the little girl, sir?" I wanted Mini to get rid of her false fear, and had her brought out.

Synonyms

Refused : accepted

She stood close to my chair and looked at the Kabuliwala and his bag. She refused to take the nuts and raisins he offered.

This was their first meeting.

One morning, a few days later, I was shocked to see Mini seated on a bench near the door, laughing and talking, with the great Kabuliwala sitting at her feet. The corner of her little sari was stuffed with almonds and raisins. She had never found a patient listener like him, says her father. I gave him an eight anna coin and said, "Why did you give her those?" He accepted the money without **demur**, and put it in his pocket. When I returned an hour later, Mini's mother was upset that she had accepted almonds and raisins from the Kabuliwala. She said, "Oh, Mini! How could you take it from him?" I saved Mini from an **impending** disaster and made a few enquiries.

Now, Mini and Kabuliwala became great friends. The Kabuliwala had overcome the child's fear by a **judicious** bribe of nuts and almonds. They would often share **quaint** jokes. Whenever she asked what his big bag contained, he would reply in a nasal accent, "An elephant!" Mini would look at his huge frame in all her **dignity** and burst out laughing. He would ask her, "Well, little one, and when are you going to your father-in-law's house?"

Now, most Bengali maidens are familiar with the term 'father in-law's house', but we, being little **newfangled**, had kept these things from Mini. She must have been a confused at this but did not show it. She would ask, "Are you going there?"

WORD-MEANING

demur - the action of objecting to or hesitating, **impending** - about to happen, **judicious** - careful and sensible, or done with good judgement, **quaint** - attractive in an unusual way, **dignity** - the quality of being worthy, **newfangled** - different from what one is used to



Among the people of Kabuliwala's class 'father-in-law's house' meant the 'jail', where can stay free of cost. He would say, "I will thrash my father-in-law." They would

burst into **peals** of laughter imagining the predicament of an unknown creature named father-in-law. Mini's mother would often put in a word of caution, "Beware of that man."

Mini and Kabuliwala spent much time together. Once in a year, in January, Rahman, the Kabuliwala, used to go to his country. And he would be busy collecting debts from house to house. But he would always find time to come and meet Mini.



One morning there was an **uproar** in the street and looking out, I saw Rahman being led away bound between two policemen with blood-stains on his clothes, and one of the policeman carrying a knife.

I **enquired** what had happened and learnt that a certain neighbour owed Rahman some money for a Rampuri shawl, but falsely denied having bought it. In the **ensuring** quarrel, Rahman had struck him. Mini shouted, "O Kabuliwala! Are you going to the father-in-law's house?" His face lit up and he said, "Just where I am going, little one!" He was sentenced to some years' imprisonment on the charge of murderous assault.

Years passed away, and he was not remembered. It was autumn and Mini was to be married that night and the preparations were in full swing.

Since dawn the shehnai had been sounding and at each beat my heart throbbed. I felt the pain of approaching separation from Mini.

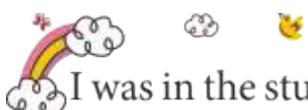
Think Out of Box

Do you have aunts or uncles who enjoy spending time with you. Discuss the activities you like to do with them.

WORD-MEANING

peals - a loud sound or series of sound, **uproar** - a situation in which people make a lot of noise, **enquired** - ask for some information, **ensuring** - to make sure something happens





I was in the study when someone entered and saluted respectfully. I could not recognise him but when he smiled, I knew him again. He had brought a few almonds, raisins and grapes wrapped in a paper. He had been released from jail the previous day and had come to see Mini. I told him that it was not possible to meet anyone because all were busy with the ceremonies. I was about to pay him but he said, "You have a little girl, I too have one like her in my home. I think of her and bring fruits for your child." He took out a small and dirty piece of paper and unfolded it on my table. It bore the impression of a little ink smeared hand. This touch of his own little daughter he always carried with him as he came to Calcutta to sell his **wares** every year.

From the Real World

Indira Gandhi was 10 years old when her father, Jawaharlal Nehru, was in prison in Allahabad. He wrote 30 letters from the prison to Indira. The letters inspired Indira to learn while he was away in prison. He also taught her about the different parts of the world and culture. Indira learnt many new things and got inspired by the letters from her father.

Do you think we can learn many new things from others' experiences?

Yes, if we pay attention to what others have experienced in life, we can learn many new valuable lessons from them.

Tears came to my eyes. I realised that he was also a father separated from his dear little daughter.

I sent for Mini. She was **clad** in red silk with sandal paste on her forehead, adorned as a bride. Kabuliwala had imagined her to be the same little girl who would come running to him. He said, "Little one, are you going to your father-in-law's house?" Mini understood the meaning of the word father-in-law. She **flushed up** at the question and turned down her face.

After she left, Rahman sat on the floor. He



WORD-MEANING

wares - objects made of the material, **clad** - wearing a particular type of clothing, **flushed up** - red in anger



suddenly realised that his daughter too must have grown up. He would have to make friends with her again. I took out a bank note and gave it to him. I told him to go back to his country and meet his daughter. I wished that the happiness of his meeting might bring good **fortune** to my child. I had to reduce some festivities, having made this present. I could not have the decoration of electric lights, nor the military band and the ladies of the family were **despondent** at it. But the wedding feast seemed brighter to me because of the thought that in a distant land, a long-lost father met again with his only child.

WORD-MEANING

fortune - chance or luck

despondent - sad, without much hope

Test Your Knowledge

As per NEP 2020

A. Tick (✓) the correct answers :

1. Kabuliwala was a patient listener :
 - a. but often snubbed Mini and would stop her prattle.
 - b. but found it difficult to listen to Mini's stories.
 - c. and listened to all that Mini would tell him when they spent time together.
2. When Kabuliwala came back from jail and saw Mini :
 - a. she was dressed up as a bride and had grown up.
 - b. she had not changed at all.
 - c. she ran to him, as she would as a child.

B. Answer the following questions :

1. Who was Mini? Describe her personality.

2. What was the first thought and impression of Mini on meeting Kabuliwala?

3. Why was Mini's father shocked after few days? With what was her sari stuffed?

4. Why was Kabuliwala sent to jail? Describe the incident?





Tansen : The Magical Musician

Pre-Reading



Do you know why music has often been called "the food of the soul"?

Yes, because music can cheer up when we are sad, invoke memories, inspire our creativity, give us energy for a better work. It relaxes and calms our mind when we are stressed.



Warm Up

Find out terms related to music in the given word grid and circle them with different colours :

A	L	A	P	Q	L	I	Z
F	K	B	B	W	N	X	R
R	T	A	A	L	C	Y	A
T	J	N	N	E	V	S	G
U	G	D	H	U	N	K	A
P	F	I	X	T	O	L	F
Q	A	S	A	R	G	A	M
W	S	H	Z	U	I	P	D



Read and Enjoy

Let's read the story of Tansen, a magical musician, how his hard work and determination make him famous.

Almost exactly in the centre of India is a town called Gwalior. In this town is the tomb of Tansen, one of the greatest musicians that ever lived. Next to his beautifully **carved** stone tomb stands a little tamarind tree. It is believed that by eating a leaf of this tree and touching the tomb, a singer can improve his voice.

If this sounds like magic, the story of Tansen is equally magical. Even today, many famous musicians follow the style of music created by Tansen known as the "Gwalior Gharana".

About four hundred years ago, in a village near Gwalior, lived a wealthy poet, Mukand Mishra, and his wife. Their only sorrow was that they had no children. On the suggestion of a friend, Mishra went to Gwalior to seek the blessings of the famous saint and musician, Mohammad Ghaus. He tied a holy thread on Mishra's arm, saying, "May God bless you with a son." And so it came to pass. A child was born and named Tansen. As Tansen grew up his father engaged teachers to teach him to read and write. Tansen, however, was more interested in going to the nearby forest with his friends, where he would imitate bird and animal sounds.

Once a group of singers were passing through the forest. Tansen hid himself in some bushes and roared like a tiger. So life-like was the sound that the singers became frightened. When the boy showed himself, the leader of the group praised his tiger-like roar. Encouraged, Tansen made more animal and bird sounds.



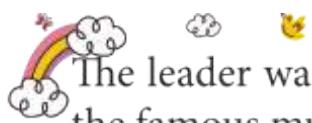
Think Out of Box

Find out the names of different sounds make by different animals.

WORD-MEANING

carved – engrave or cut by chipping away at a surface





The leader was greatly impressed by Tansen's performance. He was none other than the famous music teacher, Haridas.

Haridas offered to take Tansen as his **disciple**. "He has great musical talent," said Haridas to Tansen's father. Most **reluctantly**, Tansen's mother agreed to let her only child go away to Brindaban to study under Haridas. For almost ten years Tansen studied music from Haridas. Starting with the basic musical notes SA RE GA MA PA DHA NI SA, he learnt the basics of singing and playing the tanpura. He learnt about the different ragas of Indian music and how each raga creates a different mood. A raga can make you so happy that you want to dance, or it can make you so sad that it brings tears to your eyes.

Then one day there was a message from home that his father was very ill. When Tansen

arrived home he found his father on his death-bed.



"I am happy that you have become a musician. Go and see Mohammad Ghaus," were his father's last words to him.

Tansen remained at home to look after his mother, but within a year she too, died.

Let's Talk

- *Getting success is not an easy phenomenon; it needs knowledge, skill and most importantly the regular practice.*

Now Tansen was free to keep his promise to his father to go to Mohammad Ghaus and be trained by him. But, in keeping with Indian tradition, he went to seek permission to learn under a new guru from his first guru, Haridas.

"You must obey your father's wishes, but you will always be welcome here. You are like a son to me," said Haridas. And he gave him his blessings.

WORD-MEANING



disciple - someone who spreads the teachings of another; **reluctantly** - with unwillingness





Tansen studied under Mohammad Ghaus for three years, developing his musical talent.

During
t h a t
time

Homonym

ruler : a person who rules or governs, a piece of wood, plastic or metal used to measure or drawing straight lines.

Mohammad Ghaus introduced Tansen to the ruler of Gwalior. They became good friends and Tansen would often visit the ruler's palace, where he would listen to other musicians.

on the ruler.

During his visits to the palace, Tansen met Husani, one of the women who attended

beautiful. Tansen fell in love with her and married her.

Like her name "the beautiful one", Husani was truly

A few years later Mohammad Ghaus died, leaving his property and money to Tansen. Tansen settled in Mohammad Ghaus's house and his family was raised there. One day a messenger arrived from the court of Rewa, near Gwalior. The messenger opened the **scroll** and read : "King Ramchandra of Rewa would like you to be a musician at his court."

This was a great honour and the first step in Tansen's rise to fame.

Be Moral

Do you think that one should not be jealous of other talents because each one of us are born with some talents? Discuss.

King Ramchandra admired Tansen's singing and **lavished** many expensive gifts on him. Once he gave him a thousand gold coins.

Then one day the Emperor, Akbar, went on a visit to Rewa. King Ramchandra arranged for Tansen to entertain his royal guest.

The emperor was greatly impressed by Tansen's music and, soon after his return, sent a message to Ramchandra requesting him to send Tansen to his court.

WORD-MEANING

scroll - a document that can be rolled up, **lavished** - expand profusely/widespread





King Ramchandra did not want to part with Tansen, but he could not afford to displease the powerful Akbar. After all, Akbar was the Emperor of India, and Ramchandra was only the king of a small state in Akbar's empire.

So, reluctantly, King Ramchandra sent Tansen as a royal gift from one court to another **escorted** by his own men.

Tansen received a royal welcome in the capital city of Agra. Akbar was so impressed by Tansen's music that he **bestowed** on him the highest honour of the land. Tansen was included among his navratnas, nine jewels – the nine most outstanding talents of the royal court.

Besides performing in the court, Tansen would often sing alone for the Emperor. At night he sang ragas that would **soothe** and help Akbar fall asleep, and in the morning Tansen sang special ragas that would gently awaken the Emperor.

There are many stories told about the power of Tansen's music. It is said that when Tansen sang, birds and animals would gather to hear him.

From the Real World

Lata Mangeshkar is also known as Queen of Melody. Her life was also full of struggles. At the age of 13, the shadow of her father had risen from her head. Due to the responsibility of the family she started working and made singing her profession.

Do you think circumstances and challenges play an important role in our success?

Yes, challenges make us strong and help us to find different ways to get successful in life. It produces resistance which develops inner fortitude.

Tansen sang and taught music in Emperor Akbar's court for many years. He was not only a musician, but also a poet. He wrote the words for his music and composed many new ragas.

When Tansen died Emperor Akbar was at his bedside. The Emperor was filled with great sorrow. He knew that India had lost her greatest musician and singer. But Tansen's music has lived on and been passed on from guru to disciple.

And every year in Gwalior, near Tansen's tomb, a music festival is held. Musicians come here from all over India to perform and pay homage to Tansen.

WORD-MEANING

escorted - the act of accompanying someone/something in order to protect them,

bestowed - give as a gift, **soothe** - cause to feel better





10

Competition or Friendship

Pre-Reading



India's rich cultural diversity has greatly contributed to various forms of folk music.



Do you know almost every region of India has its own folk music, which reflects the culture or life of people.

Warm Up

Match the folk music forms to their respective states :

Folk music

Lavani

Bihugeet

Kajri

Nattupura Pattu

Maand

Baul

States

Uttar Pradesh

Rajasthan

Tamil Nadu

Assam

Bengal

Maharashtra



Read and Enjoy



Let's read the story of two girls who take courage to overcome the spirit of competition * and replace it with the spirit of friendship.

"Ouch! Who is it?" cried Tara as she **bumped** into somebody. Quickly she regained her balance and gazed into the dark. A pair of big eyes stared back. "Who are you?" she said again. "Vasanthi," said a soft voice.

"Oh, I am sorry. I was looking for my tent," explained Tara. The electric power came back and in the **fluorescent** light she looked at Vasanthi, a slim girl dressed in a green, short-silk skirt and a loose mustard blouse. She had a glowing brown complexion, fine features and attractive dark eyes. Vasanthi looked at Tara and smiled. Tara smiled back.



"Er... I was only looking for my tent," Tara repeated. Obviously Vasanthi did not understand what Tara was saying. Quickly she uttered, "Yen per Vasanthi" (My name is Vasanthi). Tara nodded with a weak smile. She understood only the word 'Vasanthi'. Both giggled as they took different paths to join their groups. They had come to participate in the Inter-State School Cultural Festival.

Tara was from Bulandshahr, a small town of UP which she was representing in the light music competition. At the district level as well as the State level she had won hands down. For her age, Tara sang with utmost ease. Singing came to her as naturally as walking to a child. Going all the way to Chennai to participate in the grand event had been an exciting experience. The only thing she missed was a companion of her age.

The next day all the participants got together for the **preliminary** music session in the auditorium. Once again Tara **encountered** Vasanthi who stood with her group, near the stage. They exchanged smiles.

Let's Talk

Becoming friends is a coincidence or does it take a lot of time? How important is a smile to form a friendship?

WORD-MEANING



bumped - knock against with force, **fluorescent** – emitting light during exposure to radiation from an external source, **preliminary** – denoting an action or event preparation for something more important, **encountered** – come together as an opponent





Vasanthi pointed to herself and grinned. "Yen per Vasanthi," she said. "Me, Tara." "Nee Delhi-wallah (you are from Delhi)?" she asked. "No. From Bulandshahr. Where do you come from?" asked Tara. Vasanthi looked confused and blurted out 'Woorayoor'. It was the name of her home town. Tara tried to repeat it, but her tongue refused to twist accordingly. Vasanthi laughed aloud exposing an even row of teeth. Tara asked again, "Do you speak Hindi?" "Ille," Vasanthi shook both her thumbs and her head. "English?" asked Tara although she herself was not very fluent with the language. "Ille," Vasanthi repeated the gestures.



Be Moral

Being competitive and facing challenges is a part of life. Discuss.

Each participant sang a folk song from her or his state. When Tara burst out with a full-throated 'kajri' of eastern UP the hall resounded with applause. A little while later Vasanthi's 'kummi pattu' - a folk song from Tamil Nadu **enraptured** the audience. She sang effortlessly at a high pitch and filled the hall with her singing. Everyone applauded vigorously. Meera, another participant from UP and a classical music expert, whispered, "Tara, watch out, you have stiff competition."

"Yes, Meeradi," admitted Tara, "She sings very well, but I will practise hard. We must win." "I am quite sure you will," Meera patted her shoulders reassuringly. Vasanthi for her part, had realized that her chief rival was Tara with whom she had sincerely wanted to be friends only a short while ago. Outside the auditorium Tara stood with her group. Vasanthi came there but the minute their eyes met Tara turned her face and Vasanthi too moved away hurriedly. They were now potential rivals contesting for the same award.

All day long Tara practised for the final performance while Vasanthi spent longer hours on the Veena in the privacy of her tent. They met in the dining hall at mealtime, but avoided each other the rest of the time. The day before the grand finale, all the participants went on an **excursion** to Mahabalipuram.

WORD-MEANING



enraptured - hold spellbound, **excursion** - a journey taken for pleasure



The silver sands, the glittering blue water of the sea and the cool breeze were almost bewitching and Tara quite forgot about the next day's contest. She walked towards the far edge of the temple precincts where gentle waves lapped the walls. She left Meeradi, Bahenji- her teacher, and others behind. She turned and looked up at the glorious structure of the temple against the blue sky. Slowly she walked backwards staring up at the pinnacle. All of a sudden she heard a scream. Tara shrieked and stumbled. She fell into someone's strong grip. The roaring waves sent a light spray on her face. She was very close to the edge.



"Oh God! I would have fallen if..." she realized as she looked up. It was Vasanthi, and she was still holding her. Tara regained her composure. She smiled weakly. "Thank you," she muttered softly. "Uh?" Vasanthi raised one eyebrow, then shook her head vigorously.

Think Out of Box

If you have to participate in singing competition which song would you like to sing? Sing in a class.

"Thank you," she beamed. Tara reciprocated as both Meeradi and Bahenji came running. "Thank God, if Vasanthi wasn't sitting here, you...." Meeradi gasped but Bahenji interrupted her, "You should be careful, Tara," Bahenji patted Vasanthi's head and said, "Thank you." Colour rose to Vasanthi's cheeks and she ran away waving her hand. "Thank you," she turned and shouted from a distance and laughed aloud. Her laughter sounded like temple bells. It erased all feelings of rivalry in Tara's heart. Once again Tara wanted to be friends with her. But how could she repay Vasanthi for saving her life?

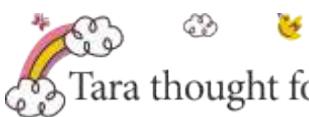
Tara was quiet and aloof that day. "I will not sing for the contest tomorrow," she confided to Meeradi. "Don't be silly," Meeradi sounded shocked. "If I don't sing, Vasanthi will win. After all she saved my life," Tara pleaded. "Hmm!" Meeradi peered at Tara's face. "I understand. But remember a true artist will not like to accept charity even if it is the title of 'Best Singer,'" she explained.

WORD-MEANING



bewitching - capturing interest as if by a spell, **precincts** - a district of town/city marked out for administrative purposes, **pinnacle** - the highest level or degree attainable, **composure** - steadiness under stress, **muttered** - talk indistinctly, **gasped** - intake of breath with a sound due to exhaustion or fear, **rivalry** - the act of competing for profit or a prize





Tara thought for a moment. "Yes, you are right," she agreed. "But...then what shall I do?" Tara banged her fist against the window pane of the bus. "I will **stammer**, I will go out of tune, Meeradi," Tara said in desperation. "No. Everyone knows how well you sing," Meeradi argued. "Then...?" wondered Tara. A minute later she yelled with excitement. Calming down, she whispered in Meeradi's ear.

"Think again. Don't be rash. It means **forsaking** your prestige not only for yourself but for your school and your State too." Tara was determined. After all she would remain second only to her friend. At long last the competition began. A glance at Meeradi's face and Tara knew she wanted her to be the first. Tara sang a bhajan set in Raag Kalyan. When she stepped down amidst loud cheers, Meeradi hugged her. One-by-one all the participants gave their best performances. The atmosphere turned tense as the eager audience awaited the results. Vasanthi and Tara had tied for the top position.

"The trophy is one and there are two equally good contenders. I request them now to sing a song each for a final decision. Tara from Uttar Pradesh," one of the judges announced clapping all the while to welcome Tara on the stage. "Good luck, Tara," Meeradi clasped Tara's hand. Tara climbed up the stage confidently and she was completely at ease as the audience gave her a hearty welcome. Once in front of the mike, Tara looked sideways at Vasanthi. Vasanthi smiled at her. She raised her folded palms and waved them high in the air to say 'good luck'.



Idiom

One by one- separately and in order

Tara acknowledged the gesture with a nod. For a while she was silent, creating suspense in the auditorium. Then in a soft whispered melody Tara burst into a Tamil song she had learnt in school... "Odi vilayad papa, nee oindirikkalagath papa..." (Child, you must be active, you should not be lazy). She sang gradually building up the tempo into vigorous beats. The stunned audience broke into thunderous applause when Tara finished.

WORD-MEANING

stammer – speak haltingly, **forsaking** – leave someone who needs or counts on you



On her way down Tara crossed Vasanthi. Vasanthi's large dark eyes smiled at Tara with great affection. Meeradi rushed towards Tara. Disappointment was writ large on her face. Her set smile soon froze into a frown. "Why a Tamil song? You know you can sing better in your mother tongue," she whispered angrily. "I know that very well," replied Tara with a 'you-know-why' look in her eyes. Quickly she took her place in the audience, Vasanthi was ready at the mike. With a slight gesture of her hand she requested the musician to start playing. Vasanthi sang loud and clear in her high pitched voice a Hindi song she had learnt at school...

From the Real World

Sarwar Khan—12-year-old boy and Sartaj Khan—11 years old boy—a traditional folk artist who gave their intense voice to very powerful song “bapu sehat ke liye tu to hanikarak hai” of movie ‘Dangal’ and become sensational overnight. At the age of 3 he started learning singing from his grandfather. Their hard work and dedication make them singing sensation.

What do you learn from such young stars of India?

"Hum honge kamyab, hum honge kamyab ek din..." (We will be successful one day...) Once again the audience was dumb-struck, especially Tara. She began to hum softly along with Vasanthi. The audience broke into loud cheers. A long burst of clapping followed. The **compere** ran out to the judges. They seem to have come to a decision. Finally, one of them walked up to the stage and announced, "Tara and Vasanthi." Both went up slowly and stood on either side of him. He took their hands in his and held them up together. "Both sang beautifully and both – Tara and Vasanthi, are the winners."

Tara and Vasanthi smiled at each other holding their hands as a deafening applause resounded. In the doorway stood the compere with a trophy in his hand identical to the one on the table.

WORD MEANING

compere – British term for someone who acts like an anchor/host of an event.



Crunchy English Reader

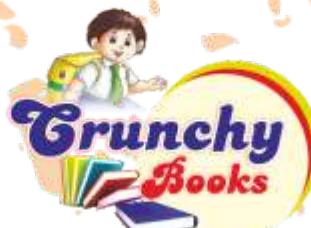
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