

1. The Portrait of a Lady

Worksheet 1

COMPREHENSION

Read the following passage and answer the questions that follow.

When I was a girl of about twelve, I used to stay in a village in north Karnataka with my grandparents. Those days, the transport system was not very good, so we used to get the morning paper only in the afternoon. The weekly magazine used to come one day late. All of us would wait eagerly for the bus, which used to come with the papers, weekly magazines and the post.

At that time, Triveni was a very popular writer in the Kannada language. She was a wonderful writer. Her style was easy to read and very convincing. Her stories usually dealt with complex psychological problems in the lives of ordinary people and were always very interesting. Unfortunately for Kannada literature, she died very young. Even now, after forty years, people continue to appreciate her novels.

One of her novels, called *Kashi Yatre*, was appearing as a serial in the Kannada weekly *Karmaveera* then. It is the story of an old lady and her ardent desire to go to Kashi or Varanasi. Most Hindus believe that going to Kashi and worshipping Lord Vishweshwara is the ultimate *punya*. This old lady also believed in this, and her struggle to go there was described in that novel. In the story, there was also a young orphan girl who falls in love but there was no money for the wedding. In the end, the old lady gives away all her savings without going to Kashi. She says, 'The happiness of this orphan girl is more important than worshipping Lord Vishweshwara at Kashi.'

My grandmother, Krishtakka, never went to school so she could not read. Every Wednesday, the magazine would come and I would read the next episode of this story to her. During that time, she would forget all her work and listen with the greatest concentration. Later, she could repeat the entire text by heart. My grandmother too never went to Kashi, and she identified herself with the novel's protagonist. So, more than anybody else, she was the one most interested in knowing what happened next in the story and used to insist that I read the serial out to her.

A. Fill in the blanks with appropriate words from the passage.

1. When the narrator was a girl of about _____, she used to stay in a _____ with her _____.
2. _____ was a very popular writer in the _____ language.
3. One of her novels, called _____, was appearing as a serial in the Kannada weekly _____.

4. Most Hindus believe that going to _____ and worshipping Lord _____ is the ultimate *punya*.
5. Every Wednesday, the _____ would come and I would read the next episode of the story to her.

B. Answer the following questions.

1. How old was the narrator when she stayed with her grandparents in the village?
2. Why was the morning newspaper delayed in the narrator's village?
3. What is special about Triveni's stories?
4. Why did Grandmother depend on the narrator to know the story?
5. Why is it important to go to Kashi in Hinduism?

C. Find words from the passage that are antonyms of the following.

1. Unpopular _____
2. Simple _____
3. Extraordinary/Special _____
4. Entire _____

D. Use the dictionary to find the meanings of the following words and make sentences of each.

1. Psychological _____

2. Ardent _____

3. Protagonist _____

Worksheet 2

GRAMMAR

A. Transform the following sentences without changing their meanings as directed within the brackets.

1. She is the most beautiful girl in her family. (Change into positive and comparative degrees)

_____ (Positive)

_____ (Comparative)

2. She opened the door and welcomed her daughter and son-in-law. (Change into a simple sentence)

3. He invited his grandparents to bless his newly-wed son and daughter-in-law. (Change into a complex sentence)

4. People are reading Shakespearean plays these days once again. (Change into passive voice)

5. The child is too fat to stand on its feet. (Remove 'too')

6. Human beings are the best creation of God. (Change into an interrogative sentence)

7. Our aunt loves us like her own children. (Change the part of speech of the underlined word)

8. My grandmother is so old that she cannot manage everything on her own. (Add 'too')

9. We shouldn't hate anyone. (Use the antonym of the underlined word)

10. Do small children ever tell a lie? (Change into an assertive sentence)

B. Pick out the most appropriate answer from the given options without changing the original meaning of the sentence.

1. India is one of the most advanced countries in the world.
 - (a) No other country of the world is as advanced as India.
 - (b) Very few countries of the world are as advanced as India.
 - (c) India is more advanced than any other country of the world.
2. Who would like to be insulted like this?
 - (a) Nobody would like to be insulted like this.
 - (b) He would not like to be insulted like this.
 - (c) No one else would like to be insulted like this.
3. She is too ill not to need a doctor.
 - (a) She is ill enough to need a doctor.
 - (b) She is too ill to need a doctor.
 - (c) She is too ill for a doctor.

Worksheet 3

VOCABULARY AND WRITING SKILLS

A. Give synonyms of the following words.

- | | | | |
|---------------|-------|--------------------|-------|
| 1. hazy | _____ | 2. rough (weather) | _____ |
| 3. systematic | _____ | 4. middle | _____ |
| 5. require | _____ | 6. prepare | _____ |
| 7. construct | _____ | 8. contaminated | _____ |

B. Write below what the following abbreviations stand for.

1. RSVP _____
2. FAQ _____
3. UN _____
4. PTO _____
5. NATO _____
6. AIDS _____
7. RBI _____

C. Complete the following analogies.

1. tree : forest :: book : _____
2. student : school :: postman : _____
3. poet : words :: photographer : _____
4. nest : tree :: cave : _____
5. combing : hair :: brushing : _____
6. gentle : lamb :: ferocious : _____

D. Write a story in 150 words that you have been listening to since your childhood. Give that story a new flavour to make it look like an entirely new and interesting story.
