



Class 6



*Stellar*  
*English*

Literature Reader



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# 1

## The Real Crusoe



*Let us read the true story behind Robinson Crusoe, an adventurous novel, by Daniel Defoe.*

*Robinson Crusoe* by Daniel Defoe is one of the most well-known and widely-read books ever written. It was published in 1719, and by the end of the eighteenth century, more than 800 versions, translations, **sequels**, and imitations had been published worldwide.

*Robinson Crusoe* is a fascinating adventure tale of a man who is, shipwrecked on an island and he survives until he is rescued twenty-eight years later. There is no doubt that Defoe was an imaginative and gifted storyteller, but the idea for the fictional character of Crusoe didn't come solely from Defoe's imagination. That is why it is believed that the story of Robinson Crusoe was actually based on the real-life adventures of Alexander Selkirk.

Selkirk was a Scottish sailor on a ship called the *Cinque Ports*. He had had frequent disagreements with the ship's captain, William Dampier, about the safety of the craft and the decisions the captain had made during the **expedition**. Selkirk demanded to be left ashore at the Juan Fernandez Islands (about 400 miles off the coast of Chile) when he became convinced that the *Cinque Ports* was **no longer seaworthy**.

Captain Dampier was not sorry to see Selkirk go and happily left him on one of the islands. Selkirk seemed to have had a moment of regret as the ship left, but it was too late; no one heard his cries for the ship to return.

**sequels:** a story followed by/based on another story  
**expedition:** (here) voyage  
**no longer seaworthy:** not worthy to take a voyage  
**musket:** a fire arm

Selkirk quickly learned what he needed to do to survive on the uninhabited island. He had brought several items with him from the ship, including a **musket**, gunpowder, a knife, carpenter's tools, clothing, and a few books.



Selkirk used native trees and his tools to construct two huts for shelter, which he then covered with long grasses. There were plenty of goats on the island, so he was assured a steady supply of milk and meat. There were even vegetables that had been planted by Spanish sailors who had stopped at the island in years past.



At first, Selkirk had a serious problem with the island's rats, which gnawed at him at night while he slept. However, sailors had also left cats on the island. Selkirk found that he could easily control the rat population by using meat to **entice** the cats to remain nearby.

**entice:** to attract

Selkirk managed to survive on the island for four years. Loneliness and depression were as much a problem for him as food and shelter. Eventually, though, Selkirk came to enjoy living alone with only his books, cats, and goats for company.

When he was finally rescued by a ship called the *Duke*, Selkirk found that it was difficult to adjust to being around people again and that he had lost some of his language skills. He became accustomed to living in society again, but a part of him always missed the peace of the island.

In 1712, Woodes Rogers, captain of the *Duke*, published *A Cruising Voyage Round the World*, which included an account of Alexander Selkirk's experiences in the Juan Fernandez Islands. This book, as well as Defoe's

*Robinson Crusoe*, has given readers a chance to experience the life and adventures of an island castaway—adventures they could otherwise only imagine.

## UNDERSTANDING THE STORY

### A. Tick (✓) the right answers.

1. Who is the author of *Robinson Crusoe*?

(a) Daniel Defoe.

(b) Selkirk.

(c) Woodes Rogers.

2. Alexander Selkirk was a

(a) novelist.

(b) sailor.

(c) captain of a ship.

3. Captain Dampier was the captain of

(a) *Cinque Ports*.

(b) *Duke*.

(c) *Titanic*.

4. Who published *A Cruising Voyage Round the World*?

(a) Daniel Defoe.

(b) Captain Dampier.

(c) Captain Woodes Rogers.

### B. Fill in the blanks with information from the text.

1. *Robinson Crusoe* was published in \_\_\_\_\_.

2. *Robinson Crusoe* is an \_\_\_\_\_ type of novel.

3. Selkirk was a \_\_\_\_\_ sailor.

4. Selkirk was dropped at \_\_\_\_\_.

5. The island was full of \_\_\_\_\_.

**C. Answer these questions.**

1. Why did Selkirk want to be dropped at Juan Fernandez Island?
2. What did Selkirk bring with him?
3. Who rescued Selkirk from the island?
4. Where was the story of Selkirk published?



**LANGUAGE SKILLS**

**D. Find words from the text that mean the following.**

1. a writing that is rewritten in other languages (paragraph 1)
2. something that is not real (paragraph 2)
3. the land bordering a sea (paragraph 3)
4. a mixture of chemicals that can explode (paragraph 5)
5. a state or feeling of hopelessness and worthlessness (paragraph 8)

**E. What are the following people called?**

**Example:** people of Scotland → Scottish

1. people of Nepal \_\_\_\_\_
2. people of Bhutan \_\_\_\_\_
3. people of China \_\_\_\_\_
4. people of France \_\_\_\_\_
5. people of Russia \_\_\_\_\_



**WRITING SKILLS**

- F.** What would you do if you were in place of Selkirk? Imagine the very first day of your stay at such an island. Write a diary entry.



**DISCUSS**

- G.** Discuss the imaginary situation of the meeting between Selkirk and Woodes Rogers, the captain who rescued Selkirk. Do it in the class.

# 2

## Huck Saves the Life of Widow Douglas



*This extract has been taken from The Adventures of Tom Sawyer written by Mark Twain whose real name was Samuel Langhorne Clemens. He is considered the 'Father of American Literature'. Huckleberry Finn or 'Huck', as he is called in the book, is an orphan and a friend of Tom. In this extract, Huck is about to go to sleep when he hears a faint sound. What happened next? Let's read ...*

That night Huck was hiding in that side street behind the inn. At eleven o'clock, all the lights in the inn went out. 'Everybody's asleep now,' thought Huck. 'I'm going to sleep too.' At that moment, he heard a **faint** sound from the inn. Somebody had closed a door softly and was coming very quietly down the street. Huck quickly returned to his hiding place. **faint:** very light

Two men passed by. One of them was carrying a heavy box. 'That's the treasure,' Huck thought. 'They're taking it away. They're going to hide it somewhere else. I'll have to follow them. There's no time to tell Tom. I'll have to follow them by myself.'

The two men walked for a time beside the river. Then they turned and walked up the hill. Huck followed them all the way. It was a moonless night and that helped Huck.

The men came to Widow Douglas's house. They stopped. Huck stopped. He was quite near the men and could hear every word they spoke.

"There are lights in three rooms. Somebody must be there with her," Red Joe said angrily.

"You can't do anything tonight," the other man said.

"Come on! Let's go! Leave her alone. Forget it!"

"Forget it!" exclaimed Red Joe. "Never! I'll never forget it! Her husband sent me to prison. When I came out, I came here to kill him. But he'd died before

I got here. It doesn't matter. She'll have to pay instead of him. I'm going to kill her tonight!"



"There's somebody there!"

Red Joe was not listening. He turned to his companion, "You got to help me. If you don't, I'll kill you too."

"Hurry up then! What are you waiting for?" the other man said.

"I'm waiting till the lights **go out.**"

**go out:** off

The two men were silent. They stood there, waiting for the lights to go out.

Huck was very frightened. He crept away very quietly.

Then he began to run. He ran fast till he came to a house. This was the house of Mr Jones, a brave and honest old man. There Huck stopped. He knocked at the door. "Let me in! Please! Please let me in!" he cried.

"What's the matter?" the old man called from his bedroom window. Then he came downstairs with his two strong sons. All three stood there in the doorway.



“Why! It’s Huckleberry Finn,” the old man said.

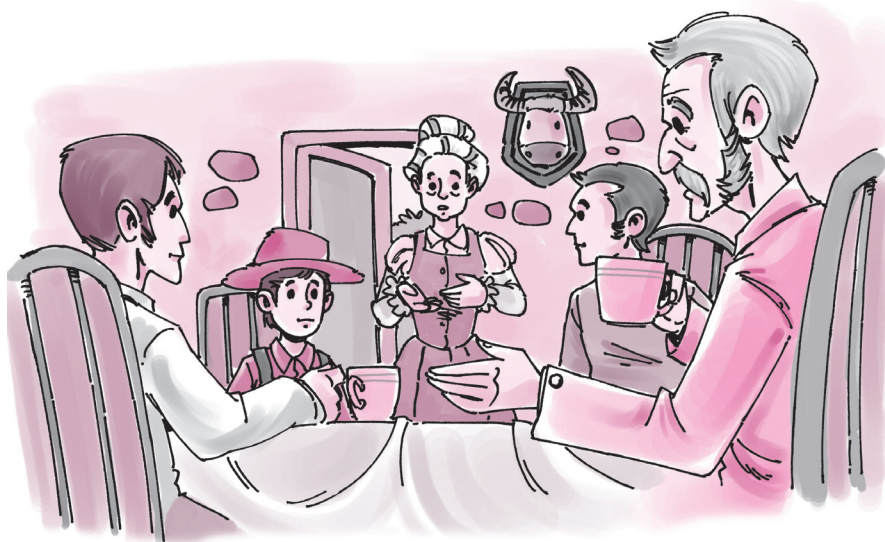
“Please let me in!” Huck begged. “Something terrible is going to happen!”

“Come in! Come in, and tell us!” Huck went inside and told his story.

Two minutes later, Mr Jones and his two strong sons were running towards Widow Douglas’s house. Each of them was carrying a gun. Huck did not go with them. He hid himself and he waited. Suddenly he heard a shot. They were shooting! Huck jumped up from his hiding place. He ran away as fast as he could.

Very early the next morning, Huck was again knocking at Mr Jones’s door. “Come in, my boy! Come in!” the old man said, very kindly. “You’re a brave fellow, Huck. You’ll always be welcome here. Come in and have some breakfast with us!” Huck sat down at the table but he could not eat anything. “You look ill, Huck,” said Mr Jones. “Drink this cup of tea!” Then the old man told Huck what had happened that night. “We weren’t able to catch them,” he said, “but one of them was wounded. He can’t be far away. We’ve told the men in the village. They’re going to search the woods for those criminals. Can you tell me what they looked like?” “Well,” said Huck slowly, “one of them is that Spaniard. You’ve seen him about the village. He has got long white hair and he’s dumb. The other fellow is a **stranger**. He’s tall and thin and he’s wearing old clothes.”

**stranger:** an unknown person to the speaker



“I know them both,” Mr Jones said. Then he asked, “What made you follow them?” “Well, ... I couldn’t sleep. I went out for a walk. I saw those two. One of them was carrying a heavy box. ‘He’s stolen something,’ I thought. ‘I’ll follow him.’ They went towards the river, then they turned right and went up the path that leads to Widow Douglas’s place. I was close behind them all the time. I could hear almost every word they said. When they reached Widow Douglas’s, they stopped. They began talking.

“But isn’t that Spaniard dumb?” asked Mr Jones.

“Oh! No, he isn’t! He’s ... Huck suddenly stopped. He was telling the old man too much. He did not want to get into more trouble. He had had enough!

“Who is he?” the old man asked. “Tell me, my boy! Don’t be afraid! We’re your friends and you can trust us.” He spoke so kindly that Huck answered, “He’s Red Joe!”

“Red Joe!” The old man nearly **jumped off** his chair in his excitement.

**jumped off:** to  
be very surprised

“Red Joe!” he repeated. He could not believe his ears.

“Yes, Red Joe!”

“Are you sure?”

“Yes, I recognized his voice.”

“Well!” the old man could find no words to say what he thought. His sons had stopped eating. They were looking at Huck with their mouths wide open. Their eyes were as big and round as saucers.

“Ah!” said the old man at last. “Now I understand ...”

At that moment, Widow Douglas came in. She came to ask for news about the robbers. She wanted to know what had happened to them. Mr Jones and his sons told her the story. When they had finished, Widow Douglas was trembling with fear and excitement. “How can I thank you?” she asked, with tears in her eyes. “You saved my life!”

“You mustn’t thank me,” the old man said. “It wasn’t me.



It was ...” He stopped. He wanted to say, “It was Huck who saved you from Red Joe.” But he had promised Huck to keep his name out of the story. He did not want Huck to get into more trouble.

—Mark Twain

## UNDERSTANDING THE STORY

### A. Tick (✓) the right answers.

1. The story starts at

(a) 11 a.m.

(b) 11 p.m.

(c) afternoon

2. One of the two men was carrying a

(a) gun.

(b) light.

(c) box.

3. Who was a prisoner?

(a) Huck.

(b) Red Joe.

(c) Widow Douglas.

4. Huck ran to

(a) Tom.

(b) Mr Jones.

(c) Widow Douglas.

5. Who did not want Huck to get into trouble?

(a) Widow Douglas.

(b) the companion of Red Joe.

(c) Mr Jones.

### B. Who are the speakers of the following lines?

1. I'm going to sleep too.

2. Somebody must be there with her.

3. Hurry up then!
4. Come in, my boy!
5. How can I thank you?

**C. Answer these questions.**

1. Why did Red Joe want to kill Widow Douglas?
2. Why did Huck run to Mr Jones's house?
3. Whom did Mr Jones thank?
4. Who do you think is the hero of this story?



## LANGUAGE SKILLS

**D. Fill in the blanks with suitable form of adjectives.**

1. Are you \_\_\_\_\_ than Joe? (strong)
2. I think, you are not as \_\_\_\_\_ as Joe. (strong)
3. Who is the \_\_\_\_\_ boy in your class? (strong)

**E. Write the antonyms of the following words.**

- |           |       |           |       |
|-----------|-------|-----------|-------|
| 1. heavy  | _____ | 2. near   | _____ |
| 3. silent | _____ | 4. brave  | _____ |
| 5. ill    | _____ | 6. almost | _____ |



## WRITING SKILLS

- F.** Do you think Huck was happy at the end of the story? Explain your answer.



## DISCUSS

- G.** Discuss the brave act of Huck in your class.

# 3

## The Comet and the Moon

*This is a poem that expresses the moon's misfortune. The moon is not free to move in space like a comet.*

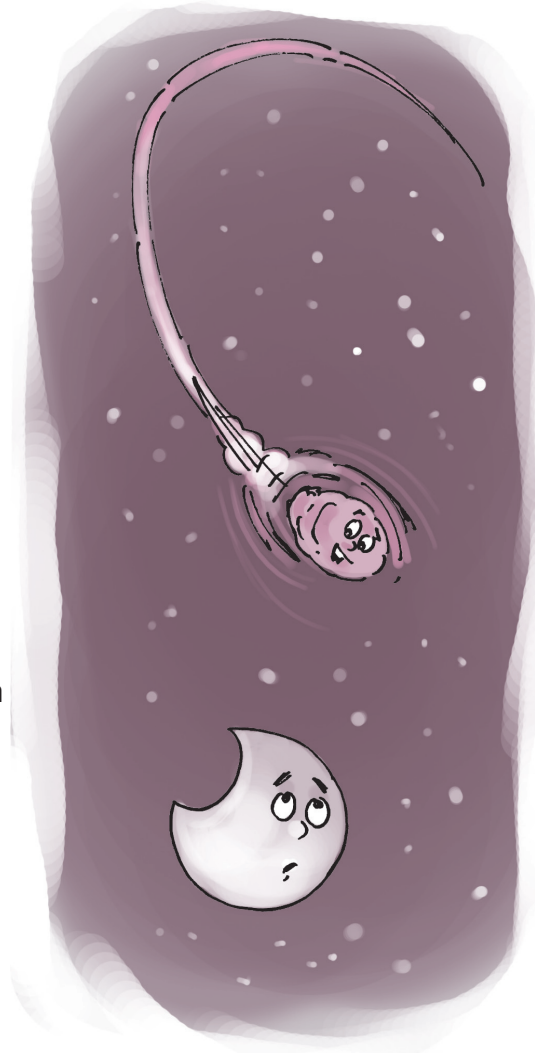
"Tell me," said the comet,  
As it **whooshed** past the  
moon's pale face,  
"Why do you look so **sulky**  
As you make your way  
through space?"

"You'd sulk as well," the moon said,  
"If you were **doomed**, like me,  
To always **plod** the same path  
In the chains of gravity.

You're free to **flare** and **sizzle**,  
You roam like rockets do,  
While I'm stuck here in orbit  
Of the Earth ... I envy you.

Once things were better—spacemen  
Came up to float and walk  
And scratch my back.  
Now life's too dull,  
So, comet, stay and talk."

The comet didn't answer,  
Already it had gone  
To wag its tail round Venus  
While the moon **trudged on**.



—Richard Edwards

## NEW WORDS

**whooshed:** moved

**sulky:** silent and bad tempered

**doomed:** here, fall in very unfortunate situation

**plod:** walk slowly

**flare:** to burn brightly for a short time

**sizzle:** to be very hot

**trudged on:** to move slowly

## UNDERSTANDING THE POEM

### A. Tick (✓) the right answers.

1. Whose face is pale?

(a) the comet's.  (b) the moon's.  (c) the sun's.

2. Who whooshed past the moon?

(a) a comet.  (b) the sun.  (c) a star.

3. Who is doomed?

(a) the moon.   
(b) a comet.   
(c) the Venus.

4. Whose back was scratched?

(a) the sun's.   
(b) the Venus's.   
(c) the moon's.

5. Whose tail is referred to here?

(a) Venus's.   
(b) the moon's.   
(c) the comet's.

**B. Answer these questions.**

1. Why is the moon's face so pale?
2. Who according to the poem is not a part of the chains of gravity?
3. Who envies whom and why?
4. Why did the comet not answer?
5. Which character in the poem is happier than the other? Explain.



**LANGUAGE SKILLS**

**C. Write any four pairs of rhyming words from the poem.**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

**D. Fill in the blanks with words from the poem as they are hinted.**

1. As soon as he learned that he was talking to a detective, he turned \_\_\_\_\_ . (a word from the first stanza)
2. If you fight with him, you will be \_\_\_\_\_. (a word from the second stanza)
3. There is no easy \_\_\_\_\_ to success. (a word from the second stanza)
4. She saw a boat \_\_\_\_\_ aimlessly at night on the river. (a word from the fourth stanza)
5. The magistrate noticed the dog \_\_\_\_\_ its tail seeing its real master. (a word from the fifth stanza)



**ACTIVITY**

- E.** Why is the moon doomed? Write your answer briefly.
- F.** '... And scratch my back.'

Explain the line with reference to the incident.

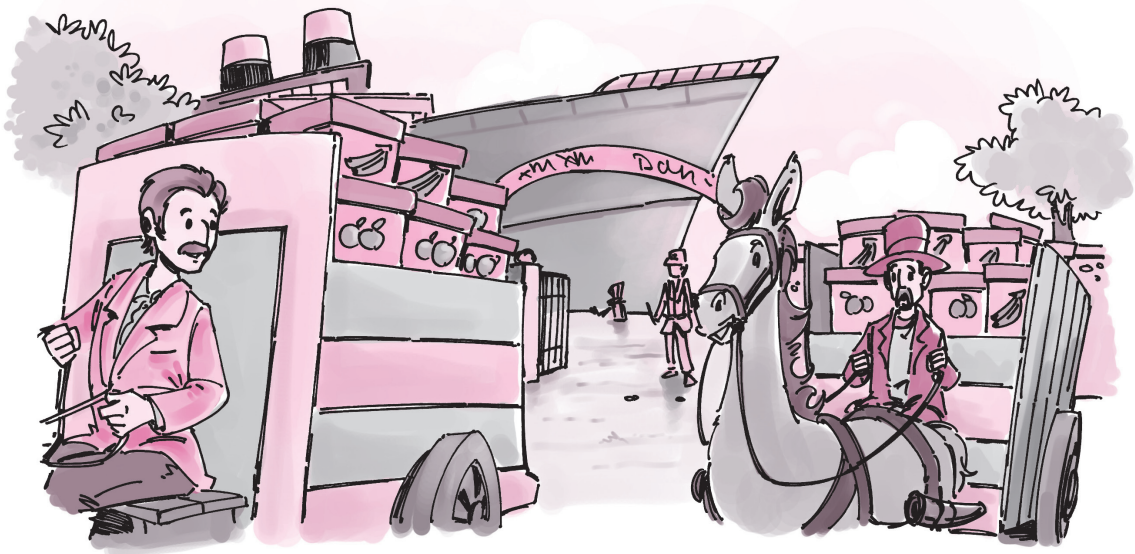
# 4 Seventeen Oranges

*The following story, **Seventeen Oranges**, was written by Bill Naughton. Bill Naughton was a British writer. He wrote many books for children. He was born in 1910 in Ireland. The present story is about a poor labourer, who ate seventeen oranges to escape punishment!*

I used to drive a little pony-and-cart for the Swift Delivery Company in those days, and a lot of my pick-ups were at the **docks**. I would put on a handy sample load and be back at the depot before the other carters had watered their mares.

Now I was not what you would call a thief and I did not make a practice of **knocking things off** just because they didn't belong to me. Nevertheless, it was very rarely that I came away from the docks without something to chew during the day.

**docks:** parts of the port where goods are put onto ships or taken off them.  
**knocking things off:** stealing goods





**Say** they were unloading a banana box; well, I used to draw my little cart alongside. There were often loose bunches that had dropped off the main stalks. And when the chance came, I would either grab some quickly, or some friendly foot would push them towards me. Then I used to hide them under my brat. The brat was an **apron** made from a sugar-bag, supposed to be a good protection against rain, but I used mine mostly for **concealing** things. And for the rest of the day, I would be **munching** away at bananas.'

I must tell you about my friend, Clem Jones. Clem once came out of the gates carrying a box.

"What have you got in that box?" asked Pongo, who was the policeman on duty. "A cat," said Clem, "but don't ask me to open it, or the fellow will get away."

"A cat?" said Pongo. "I'm not a fool to believe you. Come on, open the box." Clem wouldn't open the box at first, but when Pongo insisted, he got angry and flung the lid open. Out leapt a ship's cat which ran back into the docks with Clem running after it, shouting. Two minutes later, Clem came out with the same box, holding the lid down tight and looking angrily at the grinning Pongo. He looked angry all the way home, until in the privacy of his own kitchen he opened the box and took out a full-sized Dutch cheese.

I got caught because the string of my brat broke. Pongo, after looking over my load, noticed my somewhat bulging pockets. He made me go into his cabin and searched my pockets. There were seventeen oranges in all, and he placed them carefully on the table.

"An example has to be made," he said, "of somebody or other ... and I think you're the unlucky one. Now, my lad, what have you to say for yourself?" I said nothing. I was very **frightened**,

**say:** suppose  
**apron:** a loose coat-type dress  
**concealing:** hiding  
**munching:** to make sound while eating  
**frightened:** afraid  
**babbling:** talking too much

but I forced myself to keep my mouth shut. I had read too many detective stories to make the mistake of **babbling**. Anything you say may be used as evidence against you. Pongo, who did not care for my attitude, said, "Right then, I'll go off and bring a colleague as a witness." And then he went, carefully locking the door behind him.



I felt **awful** then. I looked at the walls, I looked at the door, I looked at the seventeen oranges, and I looked at my brat with a broken string. I thought of how I would get sacked and get sentenced, of what my mother would say and my father would do.

There was no escape. I was there, the evidence was there before me on the table and Pongo had gone to call his mate to be witness. I was ruined for life .

“Oh, my God,” I moaned in **anguish**, “whatever shall I do?”

“Eat them!” spoke a voice in my head.

“Eh?” I asked, “Eat them?”

“Yes, that’s right,” replied this inner voice, “and then the evidence will be gone. But be quick about it.”

I thought for half a second. Then I snatched an orange, peeled it, and popped it into my mouth. I crushed the juice out, and swallowed it and the orange. I was just about to spit **out** the **pips** when the voice cried:

**awful:** sad  
**anguish:** mental suffering  
**out:** throw  
**pips:** seeds



“No!”

“Eh?”

“You have to swallow them too!”

“What? The pips!”

“Yes, peel and all! Evidence.”

“Oh, oh, of course,” and I pushed the pips to the back of my mouth and took a handful of peel to get them down my throat.

“Don’t bother to chew,” said the voice, “it’s a race against time.”

It certainly was a race against time. After that first orange, I took out my penknife, slashed the rest of the oranges into chunks and gulped them down as fast as I could.

I still had three oranges left to be eaten, when I heard Pongo and his mate coming back. With a sigh I gave up, but the voice in my head warned me to continue, saying that the more I ate the less evidence there would be. And as luck would have it, Pongo and his mate were detained over checking some outgoing vehicles. I set about finishing off those last few oranges, and by the time the key turned in the lock, I was **consuming** the final piece of the seventeen oranges.

“This is him,” said Pongo to his mate, “I caught him with his pockets full of oranges.” Then he looked at the table. “Hi, where are they?”

“Whew,” sniffed his mate. “I can smell them.”

I did not say a word.

Pongo began to search. He looked high and low, went through my pockets, felt at my brat, but of course he found no trace of an orange. Finally he **figured out** what must have happened, but even then he couldn’t believe it. “Seventeen oranges,” he kept murmuring, “big ones at that! How has he managed it?”

But I said nothing.

**consuming:** eating  
**figured out:**  
understand



I could not be charged with stealing because Pongo had no **evidence**, and because I suppose he did not want to be laughed at. So all he could do was curse, while I kept my lips shut tight, and then he had to let me go. But it was days and days before I could stand really still and think clearly, because those seventeen oranges, peels, pips and all, kept working away in my inside something shocking.

**evidence:** proof

—*Bill Naughton*

## UNDERSTANDING THE STORY

### A. Tick (✓) the right answers.

- The narrator of the story used to work for
  - Swift Dock Company.
  - Bluedart Company.
  - Swift Delivery Company.
- The narrator filled his brat with
  - bananas.
  - oranges.
  - cats.
- Pongo was a
  - detective.
  - policeman.
  - cart-man.
- The narrator was let off without any charge being framed because
  - he bribed the policeman.
  - he really did not steal any orange.
  - there was no evidence against him.
- The narrator was \_\_\_\_\_ during the investigation.
  - silent
  - talkative
  - dumb

### B. Who did the following actions? Write the names of the persons.

- watered their mares: \_\_\_\_\_
- carried a cat in a box: \_\_\_\_\_
- carried a full-sized Dutch cheese: \_\_\_\_\_
- wiped all evidence: \_\_\_\_\_

**C. Answer these questions.**

1. Who is the narrator of this story?
2. What was the profession of the narrator?
3. Why did Clem carry a cat in his box?
4. What happened to the narrator in the end?

**LANGUAGE SKILLS**

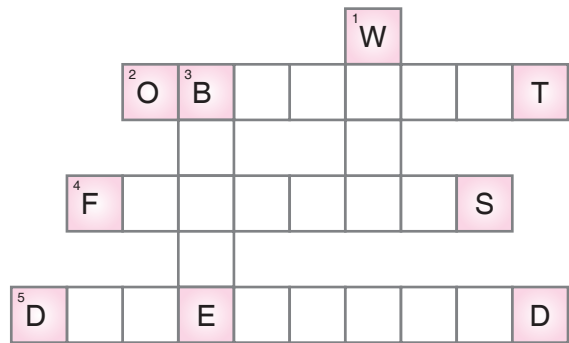
**D. Complete the crossword puzzle with the help of the clues.**

**Across**

2. well-behaved
4. not afraid
5. will-power

**Down**

1. intelligent
3. showing courage



**WRITING SKILLS**

**E. Write antonyms of the following words.**

- |           |       |              |       |
|-----------|-------|--------------|-------|
| 1. afraid | _____ | 2. grab      | _____ |
| 3. angry  | _____ | 4. carefully | _____ |
| 5. ruined | _____ | 6. more      | _____ |

**F. Write a funny incident from your life in about 50–60 words.**

**DISCUSS**

**G. Discuss in the class about the dutifulness of Pongo, the policeman.**

## 5 Vikram Sarabhai— A Visionary Scientist

*Vikram Sarabhai was one of the greatest scientists of India. He is considered the Father of the Indian Space Programme. Apart from being a scientist, he was a rare combination of an innovator, industrialist and visionary. Let us learn about him.*

Vikram Ambalal Sarabhai was born on 12 August 1919 at Ahmedabad in an **affluent** family of progressive industrialists. He had his early education in a private school, *Retreat*, which was run by his parents on Montessori lines. Some of great men of India such as Rabindranath Tagore, Motilal Nehru, V. S. Srinivasa Shastri, Jawaharlal Nehru, Sarojini Naidu, Maulana Azad, C. F. Andrews, C. V. Raman and others used to stay with the Sarabhai family when they visited Ahmedabad. Visits of such great men, left a lasting impression on Vikram Sarabhai.



**affluent:** rich

After his matriculation, Vikram Sarabhai proceeded to Cambridge, England for his college education. He took the tripods degree from St John's College in 1940. When the World War II began, he returned home and joined as a research scholar under Sir C. V. Raman at the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore. His interest in solar physics and cosmic ray led him to set up many observation stations around the country. He built the necessary equipment with which he took measurements at Bangalore, Pune and the Himalayas.

In 1945, after the World War II was over, he returned to, Cambridge and completed his Ph.D in 1947. His thesis was 'Cosmic Ray investigation in Tropical Latitudes'. After that he returned to India.

Vikram Sarabhai was instrumental in establishing the Physical Research Laboratory (PRL) in Ahmedabad in November 1947. The laboratory was

established in a few rooms in M.G. Science Institute of the Ahmedabad Education Society, which was founded by his parents. Vikram Sarabhai did research on the time variations of cosmic rays.



The year 1957-1958 was designated as International Geophysical Year (IGY). The Indian programme for the IGY had been one of the most significant **ventures** of

Sarabhai. It exposed him to a new **vista** of space science with the launching of Sputnik-I in 1957. Subsequently, the Indian National Committee for Space Research was created. Vikram Sarabhai became its Chairman.

With active support from Homi Jehangir Bhabha, Vikram Sarabhai, set up the Thumba Equatorial Rocket Launching Station (TERLS) at Thumba near Thiruvananthapuram on the Arabian coast. It was the first rocket launching station in India. The first rocket with sodium vapour payload was launched on 21 November 1963. In 1965, the UN General Assembly gave recognition to TERLS as an international facility.

After the death of Homi Jehangir Bhabha in January 1966, Sarabhai was asked to **assume** the responsibilities of the office of the Chairman, Atomic Energy Commission. At that time, he was deeply involved in three major areas. What he wrote in his own words to the Prime Minister accepting the offer is:

**ventures:** (here) contribution  
**vista:** aspect  
**assume:** accept  
**segment:** branch

“Currently I have substantive responsibilities in three areas. Firstly, at the Physical Research Laboratory as Director and Professor of Cosmic Ray Physics, where I continue my research and the supervision of doctoral candidates. Second, as Chairman of the Indian National Committee for Space Research Programme as well as the project for the development of rockets and space technology. Thirdly, I have been concerned with policy making, operations, research planning and evaluation of a significant **segment** of

the family business interests, particularly centered around chemicals and **pharmaceuticals.**”

Vikram Sarabhai had also regular association with the Laboratory of Nuclear Science of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), USA. But all these did not deter Sarabhai from assuming the new responsibility in the interest of the country. He had to disassociate himself from the family business. He was at the **helm** of both atomic energy and space research programmes in India from May 1966 till his death.

Sarabhai had realised the enormous potentialities inherent in space science and technology for a wide range of social and economic development activities—communication, meteorology or weather forecasting, and exploration for natural resources, to name only a few.

He wanted the practical application of science to reach the common man. He decided to acquire competence in advance technology for the solution of country’s problems based on technical and economic evaluation of its real resources.

**pharmaceuticals:**  
production of medicine  
**helm:** in charge  
**drugs:** medicines

Sarabhai was also a pioneer of the pharmaceutical industry in India. He was among the very few in the pharmaceutical industry who recognised that the highest standards of quality should be established and maintained at any cost. It was Sarabhai who first implemented Electronic Data Processing and Operations and Research Techniques in the pharmaceutical industry. He played an important role in making India’s pharmaceutical industry self-reliant and manufacturer of many **drugs** and equipment in the country.

Sarabhai was a man of deep cultural interests. He was interested in music, photography, archaeology, fine arts and so on. With his wife Mrinalini, he established Darpana, an institution devoted to the performing arts.

Dr Vikram Sarabhai was awarded the Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar Medal in 1962 and the Padma Bhushan in 1966. Vikram Sarabhai passed away in his sleep on December 1971 at Kovalam, Kerala.

In 1974, the International Astronomical Union (IAU) at Sydney decided that a Moon Crater BESSEL in the Sea of Serenity will be known as the Sarabhai Crater.



## UNDERSTANDING THE STORY

### A. Tick (✓) the right answers.

- Vikram Sarabhai was born at
  - Thiruvanthapuram.
  - Kochi.
  - Ahmedabad.
- Vikram Sarabhai was educated at
  - Oxford University.
  - Massachussetts Insititute of Technology.
  - Cambridge University.
- Who was the Chairman of the Indian National Committee for Space Research?
  - Vikram Sarabhai.
  - Homi J. Bhabha.
  - C.V. Raman.
- In which of the following sectors was Sarabhai a pioneer?
  - Aviation Industry.
  - Pharmaceutical Industry.
  - Electrical Industry.
- Which institution did Sarabhai establish for performing arts?
  - Darpana.
  - Kalamandir.
  - Art Gallery.

### B. Fill in the blanks. Choose the right word from the box.

Padma Bhushan CV Raman 1947 Thumba International Geophysical Year

- Vikram Sarabhai completed his Ph.D. in \_\_\_\_\_.
- Vikram Sarabhai worked under \_\_\_\_\_ at the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore.
- The year 1957–58 was designated as \_\_\_\_\_.

4. The first rocket launching station in the country was set up at \_\_\_\_\_.
5. In 1966, Vikram Sarabhai was awarded the \_\_\_\_\_.

**C. Answer these questions.**

1. What was the thesis of Vikram Sarabhai for his Ph.D?
2. Where did Vikram Sarabhai establish the Physical Research Laboratory?
3. How was Vikram Sarabhai honoured by the International Astronomical Union?



## LANGUAGE SKILLS

**D. Join the following sentences.**

1. Vikram Sarabhai was one of the greatest scientists of India. Vikram Sarabhai established PRL.
2. The World War II was about to start. Vikram Sarabhai left Cambridge University.

**E. Write antonyms of the following words.**

- |                 |       |             |       |
|-----------------|-------|-------------|-------|
| 1. early        | _____ | 2. proceed  | _____ |
| 3. global       | _____ | 4. helm     | _____ |
| 5. self-reliant | _____ | 6. serenity | _____ |



## WRITING SKILLS

- F.** After reading this biographical sketch of Vikram Sarabhai, you feel interested in space research. Now, write a letter to the director of the Physical Research Laboratory, Ahmedabad requesting him/her to guide you, so that you can enter the said institute and serve the nation.



## DISCUSS

- G.** Discuss the contribution of Homi Jehangir Bhabha in the field of science.

# 6 Gull

*This poem paints an environmental disaster caused by human beings.  
The poem ends with 'why'. Do you have any answer?*

The oil-stricken **gull**  
has struggled ashore,  
and although full-grown,  
looks like a **bewildered**  
**scraggy fledgling**.

Her oil-tarred wings  
seem heavy as lead  
as she totters slightly,  
stiff-legged.

Staring out at us  
with an unblinking  
atomic, almost  
comic surprise.

She hasn't taken any sides  
but she's lost her natural home  
and more. An unanswerable cry  
is stuck in her throat.

Why?

Why?

Why?

— Grace Nichols



## NEW WORDS

**gull:** a kind of sea bird

**bewildered:** puzzled

**scraggy:** thin; weak

**fledgling:** a young bird that has just learnt to fly

## UNDERSTANDING THE POEM

### A. Tick (✓) the right answers.

1. An oil-stricken gull tried to reach

(a) the shore.

(b) the mid-sea.

(c) the sky.

2. Why is the gull bewildered?

(a) The water is too salty.

(b) The water is too cold.

(c) The water has become oily.

3. Which question does the gull want to ask?

(a) Which.

(b) Why.

(c) Who.

### B. Answer these questions.

1. What happened to the gull?

2. Why did the gull totter slightly?

3. Who are responsible for gull's condition?

## LANGUAGE SKILLS

**C. Write a rhyming word for each of the given words on your own.**

- |           |       |           |       |
|-----------|-------|-----------|-------|
| 1. gull   | _____ | 2. grown  | _____ |
| 3. string | _____ | 4. atomic | _____ |
| 5. cry    | _____ | 6. throat | _____ |

**D. Add a suffix or a prefix to each word and make a new word.**

- |             |       |              |       |
|-------------|-------|--------------|-------|
| 1. oil      | _____ | 2. full      | _____ |
| 3. comic    | _____ | 4. home      | _____ |
| 5. shore    | _____ | 6. nature    | _____ |
| 7. response | _____ | 8. slight    | _____ |
| 9. atom     | _____ | 10. possible | _____ |

## ACTIVITY

- E.** Hold a discussion in the class on the 'Progress and its Consequences for the Environment'.
- F.** Make a list of five endangered birds of India.

# 7

## A Speech to Save Environment

*The survival of our planet is at stake. We should wake up NOW otherwise it would be too late.*

Hello. I'm Severn Suzuki, speaking for ECO, the Environmental Children's Organisation. We are a group of 12- and 13-year-olds trying to make a difference: Vanessa Suttie, Morgan Geisler, Michelle Quigg, and me. We've raised all the money to come here ourselves, to come 5,000 miles to tell you adults you must change your ways.



**Coming up here today, I have no hidden agenda. I am fighting for my future.** Losing my future is not like losing an election or a few points on the stock market. I am here to speak for all generations to come. I am here to speak on behalf of the starving children around the world whose cries go unheard. I am here to speak for the countless animals dying across this planet because they have nowhere left to go. I am afraid to go out in the sun now because of the holes in our ozone. I am afraid to breathe the air because I don't know what chemicals are in it. I used to go fishing in Vancouver—my home—with my dad, until just a few years ago we found the fish full of cancers. And now we hear of animals and plants going extinct every day, vanishing forever.

In my life, I have dreamt of seeing the great herds of wild animals, jungles and rainforests, full of birds and butterflies, but now I wonder if they will even exist for my children to see. Did you have to worry of these things when you were my age? All this is happening before our eyes and yet we act as if we have all the time we want and all the solutions. I'm only a child, and I don't have all the solutions. I want you to realize, neither do you. You don't know

how to fix the holes in our ozone layer. You don't know how to bring the salmon back up a dead stream. You don't know how to bring back an animal now extinct. And you can't bring back the forest that once grew where there is now a desert.

**If you don't know how to fix it, please stop breaking it.**

Here you may be delegates of your government, businesspeople, organizers, reporters or politicians. But really you are mothers and fathers, sisters and brothers, aunts and uncles, and all of you are someone's child. I am only a child, yet I know we are all part of a family 5 billion strong. In fact, 30 million species strong. And borders and governments will never change that. I am only a child, yet I know that we're all in this together and should act as one single world towards one single goal. In my anger, I am not blind, and in my fear, I am not afraid of telling the world how I feel. In my country, we make so much waste. We buy and throw away, buy and throw away, buy and throw away, and yet Northern countries will not share with the needy. Even when we have more than enough, we are afraid to share. We are afraid to let go of some of our wealth.

In Canada, we live the privileged life with plenty of food, water and shelter. We have watches, bicycles, computers and television sets. The list could go on for two days. Two days ago here in Brazil, we were shocked when we spent time with some children living on the streets. This is what one child told us, "I wish I was rich. And if I were, I would give all the street children food, clothes, medicines, shelter, and love and affection. If a child on the streets who has nothing is willing to share, why are we who have everything still so greedy? I can't stop thinking that these are children my own age; that it makes a tremendous difference where you are born; that I could be one of the children living in the favelas of Rio. I could be a child starving in Somalia, or a victim of war in the Middle East or a beggar in India. I am only a child, yet I know that if all the money spent on war was spent on finding environmental answers, ending poverty and finding treaties, what a wonderful place this Earth would be.

At school, even in kindergarten, you teach us how to behave in the world. You teach us to not fight with others. To work things out. To respect others. To clean up our mess. Not to hurt other creatures. To share, not be greedy.

Then why do you go out and do the things you tell us not to do? Do not forget why you are attending these conferences—who you are doing this for. We are your own children. You are deciding what kind of world we are growing up in.

Parents should be able to comfort their children by saying “Everything’s going to be all right. It’s not the end of the world. And we’re doing the best we can.” But I don’t think you can say that to us anymore. Are we even on your list of priorities? My dad always says “You are what you do, not what you say.” Well, what you do makes me cry at night. You grown ups say you love us, but I challenge you, please make your actions reflect your words.

Thank you.

## UNDERSTANDING THE STORY

### A. Tick (✓) the right answers.

1. Severn Suzuki is speaking for which organisation?  
(a) UN.  (b) ECO.  (c) FAO.
2. Severn Suzuki is fighting for the  
(a) past.   
(b) present.   
(c) future.
3. Plants and animals are becoming  
(a) extinct.   
(b) endangered.   
(c) surplus.

### B. Write true or false.

1. Severn Suzuki wants to speak for all generations to come. \_\_\_\_\_
2. The air we breathe is good for our health. \_\_\_\_\_
3. The money spent on war can be spent on improving the condition of environment. \_\_\_\_\_



4. At school, we are taught how to behave in the world. \_\_\_\_\_
5. We should not hurt other creatures. \_\_\_\_\_

**C. Answer these questions.**

1. Highlight three environmental problems we are facing these days.
2. How can we utilise the waste material?
3. How can the money we spend be better utilised?

## LANGUAGE SKILLS

**D. Write the full forms of the following abbreviations. One has been done for you.**

1. ECO                      Environmental Children's Organisation
2. UN                      \_\_\_\_\_
3. WHO                    \_\_\_\_\_
4. BBC                     \_\_\_\_\_
5. UNICEF                \_\_\_\_\_
6. WWF                    \_\_\_\_\_
7. TERI                    \_\_\_\_\_
8. UNESCO               \_\_\_\_\_

## WRITING SKILLS

- E.** Write a paragraph on the 'Greenhouse Effect'.

## DISCUSS

- F.** Discuss in the class the role children can play in saving the environment.
- G.** How can wastage be reduced? Discuss the ways in the class.

## 8

## Where the Mind is Without Fear

*In this poem, the poet prays to God that there should be an atmosphere of fearlessness in our country. Knowledge should be free from prejudice. The countrymen should not be divided over petty issues.*

Where the mind is without fear and the head  
is held high;

Where knowledge is free;

Where the world has not been  
broken up into fragments by narrow  
domestic walls;

Where words come out from the  
depth of truth;

Where tireless striving stretches its  
arms towards perfection;

Where the clear stream of reason  
has not lost its way into the dreary  
desert sand of dead habit;

Where the mind is led forward  
by thee into ever-widening  
thought and action—

Into that heaven of  
freedom, my **Father**, let  
my country awake.

—**Rabindranath Tagore**



## NEW WORD

**Father:** God

## UNDERSTANDING THE POEM

### A. Tick (✓) the right answers.

1. The poet prays for

(a) the world.

(b) his country.

(c) his neighbours.

2. 'Head is held high' means

(a) One is proud.

(b) One's head is always straight.

(c) One has self-respect.

3. The poem is addressed to

(a) God.

(b) the poet's father.

(c) all the people.

### B. Answer these questions.

1. What do you mean by, 'knowledge is free'?

2. What are 'domestic walls'?

3. What does the phrase, 'ever-widening' mean?

## LANGUAGE SKILLS

### C. Write rhyming word for each of the following words.

1. mind

\_\_\_\_\_

2. head

\_\_\_\_\_

3. come \_\_\_\_\_ 4. truth \_\_\_\_\_  
5. stream \_\_\_\_\_ 6. freedom \_\_\_\_\_

**D. Fill in the blanks with the words in the brackets in suitable form.**

1. The soldier fought \_\_\_\_\_. (fear)
2. Can you jump \_\_\_\_\_ than me? (high)
3. You cannot \_\_\_\_\_ such a wild animal. (domestic)
4. It is not easy to walk on a \_\_\_\_\_ path. (sand)
5. He \_\_\_\_\_ the vase. (break)



**ACTIVITY**

- E.** Discuss five negative things we should avoid in order to make our country great.

# 9 The Swan King

*Here is a Jataka tale for you. The tale relates the greatness of the Swan King, the chief of his army and a hunter called Nishad.*

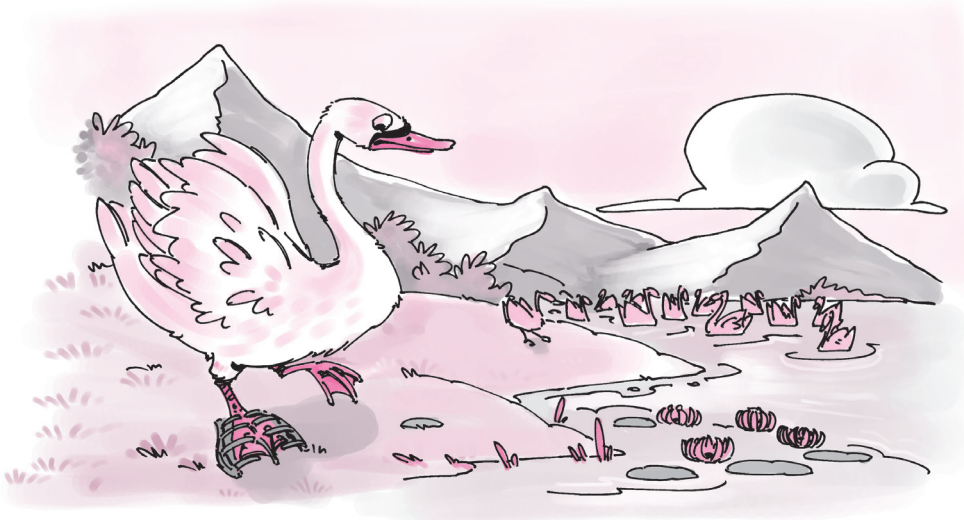
The kingdom of Mahimsak was ruled by king Sakula. He was a kind and noble king. The people of Mahimsak were happy and at peace.

Nishad was a hunter who lived in this kingdom. He used to catch birds and sell them to earn his living.

One day, in search of birds, he went to a far-off place. He came to a lake. It was a beautiful lake—full of lotuses of different colours. He saw a **marshy** land and thought, “This is a suitable place to catch swans.” He spread his net and hid himself behind thick bushes.

**marshy:** shallow land filled with water

The Swan king, Dhritarashtra, used to live in golden cave on the mountain Chitrakoot. His clan had thousands of beautiful swans. The chief of his army was Sumukh. He was a very dutiful and devoted soldier.



One day, a flock of swans came to the Swan King and said, “We have heard that there is a beautiful place for grazing at the Lotus Lake. It is close to the kingdom of Sakula. Shall we go there today?”

The Swan King knew that since it was close to a human habitat, there may be a hunter. He did not want his swans to be trapped by human beings. He tried to **dissuade** them, “It is better to keep away from human beings. They are dangerous. They can trap us any time.”

But the swans were lured by the beautiful description of the Lotus Lake and insisted on going there. Dhritarashtra ultimately agreed and they all flew towards the Lotus Lake. The flock of swans, as they flew in the sky, looked like a pearl necklace gliding among the clouds!

But as soon as the Swan King descended on the ground, his feet got **entangled** in the net spread by Nishad. He tried to get his feet out but he could not. He got bruises and his feet began to bleed. In spite of all that pain, the Swan King stood there quietly. He thought if he raised an alarm all the swans would be scared and would run away without eating. If they did not get anything to eat, they would become weak. Without adequate strength they would not be able to fly for long, They might fall into the sea and become a prey of the sharks. For the sake of their safety, the Swan King stood silently **enduring** the pain of his bleeding feet. All the swans grazed to their hearts’ content. Only then did he scream, “I am trapped!” Frightened of being trapped, all the swans quickly flew up and headed towards Chitrakoot.

Suddenly, Sumukh noticed that the king was missing. He searched the flock very well. With fear in his heart, he returned to the Lotus Lake and saw the king standing on the marshy land.

**dissuade:** divert attention  
**entangled:** caught  
**enduring:** to deal with something painful

He was not able to fly because his feet were caught up in the net. As Sumukh tried to go closer, the Swan King warned him, “Stay away, There is a trap here. You will be caught in it.”

But Sumukh was too loyal to stay away. He came to the king and very carefully stood by him. His feet were free. He said, “Whoever comes to take you will have to fight with me first. I will protect you at the cost of my life.”



The Swan King tried the best to dissuade him, “You will have to protect our innocent clan. Please go with them. You cannot help me in this situation. Please leave me.”

Sumukh replied firmly, “I have served you in your good times. How can I leave you alone when you are in trouble? Instead of living a life without you, I would rather die with you.” .

Dhrutarashtra was proud of Sumukh, but he did not want him to die. He said, “I know Sumukh, you are devoted to me. You are very dutiful. I do appreciate it, but I am now asking you to go. Please return to Chitrakoot. Our clan needs you.”

Just then they saw Nishad coming towards them. Both stood still and silent. Nishad came closer. He found the feet of a swan trapped in his net. They were wounded and bleeding but the other **robust-looking** swan was not trapped and yet it did not fly away! Nishad was quite surprised to see this. He asked Sumukh, “This swan cannot fly. I can understand. But why aren’t you flying off?”

**robust-looking:** strong  
**relish:** like

Sumukh replied with pride, “He is my king and also my very dear friend. You are a kind-hearted person. I am sure you will let us go back to Chitrakoot.”

Nishad replied with a smile, “You are free. You can certainly go.”

“I will not go without my king,” said Sumukh. And he added, “You can keep me instead. But please, let my king go. I am almost of the same size. You will **relish** my flesh as much. Please believe me. You can tie me up first and then set him free. I beg you.”

Nishad was astonished to see Sumukh’s devotion towards the king. He had never seen such a good heart in human beings. He decided to let both of them go back to Chitrakoot. He went to Dhrutarashtra, loosened the net around his feet. Then he took him to the lake to wash his wounds.

Nishad picked up medicinal grass from the bank of the lake. He made the Swan King sit on it. And then very gently, with a lot of love and care he started washing the blood and wounds on his feet. As Nishad started washing the wounds, in an instant they got healed and new fur appeared! The feet looked perfect, as if nothing had ever happened! All the three were very happy.



Sumukh realised the fact that by setting them free Nishad was losing his income. He would have earned a lot of money if both the swans were purchased by the king for his garden; or he could have sold their flesh. Sumukh told Dhritarashtra, “We are grateful to Nishad for his kind act but it would not be fair on our part to deprive him of his living. After all, he has his family to look after.”

Then he asked Nishad, “Tell me, friend, why did you spread the net?”

“To catch birds and earn money by selling them,” said Nishad.

“In that case you take both of us to your king. Tell him that one of us is the king and the other is the chief of the Army. Your king will be very happy to see us and will give a big reward.”

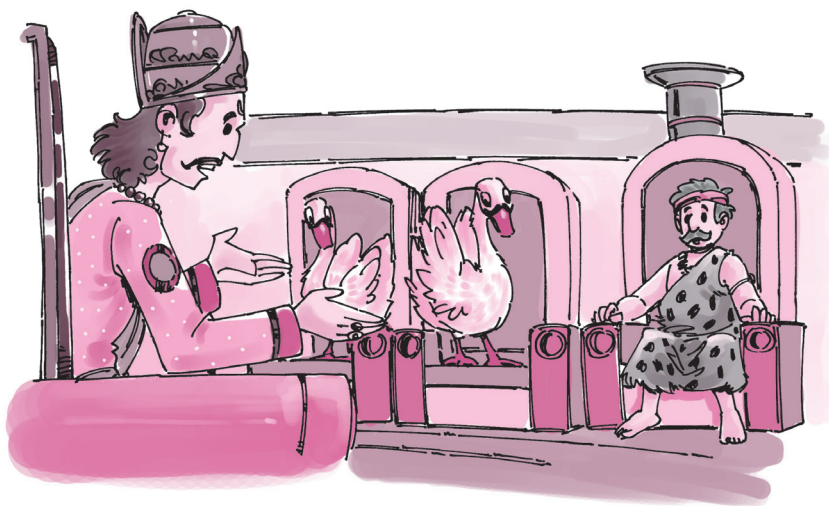
Nishad did not approve of this idea. He said, “Please don’t insist on meeting the king. You can never know about his mood, he may decide to capture you or kill you. No, I will not take that risk.”

Sumukh **appreciated** Nishad’s concern but explained, “A person can be won over by love and respect. Even your king will display kindness. Do take us to him.”

**appreciated:** praised

After a lot of persuasion, Nishad agreed. They reached the king’s palace. Nishad bowed to the king and said, “I have brought very special guests for the great king. Both these swans belong to the Dhritarashtra clan. One is the king and the other is the chief of the Army.” The king got up from his throne

and gave a golden throne to the Swan King to sit on. He gave a golden seat to Sumukh and Nishad also. Now the king wanted to know how did Nishad find such divine-looking swans. Nishad narrated





the whole story. The king was overjoyed to have such special guests in his court. He was also pleased with Nishad who had given greater importance to their precious lives instead of his own monetary gain.

The king ordered his attendants to dress Nishad in the best of clothes and ornaments. He gifted him a big village from where he could earn **revenue** and also gave him a **palatial** house, a chariot and lots of gold.

The king then requested the Swan King to give him a **sermon** which he did.

He told him how to take care of his people and his kingdom with love and generosity. And then requested the king to let them go to Chitrakoot because their swans would be worrying about them.

**revenue:** tax  
**palatial:** palace-like  
**sermon:** religious-talk

The king bade them goodbye. Dhruatarashtra and Sumukh returned safely to Chitrakoot.

## UNDERSTANDING THE STORY

### A. Tick (✓) the right answers.

1. Where did the hunter live?

- (a) Mahimsak.
- (b) Chitrakoot.
- (c) Lotus Lake.

2. Who was the king of the swans?

- (a) Sakula.
- (b) Sumukh.
- (c) Dhruatarashtra.

3. Who endured pain?

- (a) Nishad.
- (b) Sumukh.
- (c) Dhruatarashtra.

4. Who was very loyal to his king?

(a) Nishad.

(b) Sumukh.

(c) a swan.

5. How can a person be won over?

(a) by using punishment.

(b) by love and respect.

(c) by fear.

**B. Write about the nobleness and generosity shown by the following characters.**

1. Sakula: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Nishad: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Dhritarashtra: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Sumukh: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**C. Answer these questions.**

1. Why did the swans want to go to the Lotus Lake?

2. Why did the Swan King endure pain silently?

3. Why did the king allow the Swan King and Sumukh to return to Chitrakoot?

**LANGUAGE SKILLS**

**D. Fill in the blanks with suitable words from the box.**

gliding descended scared clan generosity

1. Which \_\_\_\_\_ did Karna belong to?

2. How can I repay your \_\_\_\_\_?
3. People saw Wright Brothers \_\_\_\_\_ in the sky.
4. His parachute \_\_\_\_\_ on a rock.
5. Are you \_\_\_\_\_ of your teacher?

**E. Write the collective nouns for the following. One has been done for you.**

**Example:** an army of soldiers

- |                         |                       |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. A _____ of hunters   | 2. A _____ of flowers |
| 3. A _____ of mountains | 4. A _____ of birds   |
| 5. A _____ of lions     | 6. A _____ of wolves  |
| 7. A _____ of ants      |                       |

## WRITING SKILLS

**F.** Write a paragraph on 'Honesty is the best policy'.

## DISCUSS

**G.** Discuss the golden rule, 'Do unto others as you wish others to do unto you'.

# 10 William Tell

*Many years ago, a part of Switzerland called Uri was dominated by the Hapsurg emperor of Austria. Gessler was the Governor of Uri. He was very cruel. Once, he put up an Austrian coloured cap on a pole and raised it in the village's central square ordering people to salute it while passing below it. His soldiers guarded it. The offenders were punished. William Tell refused to salute the hat. What happened next? Read on.*

One morning, William Tell said to his son, Walter, "I am going to Altorf to see your grandfather. Would you like to come?"

"Oh, may I? May I, Mother?"

"Yes, dear, if you like you may go with your father," said Hedwig, Walter's mother. "And you will be careful, won't you?" she added, turning to Tell.

"Yes, I will," he replied and set off merrily together.

It was a great thing for Walter to go with his father and Walter was so happy that he chattered all the way, asking questions about everything he saw. In answering Walter, Tell forgot all about the hat upon the pole. Instead of taking another way to avoid

it, as he had meant to do, he went straight through the marketplace without bowing before it. The evil governor Gessler had placed a hat upon a pole in the marketplace as a symbol of the emperor and anybody who passed by, was ordered to bow before it. Gessler stationed a soldier to guard it and see



that people bowed while passing. The soldier raised his sword at Tell. “Stand and bow in the Emperor’s name,” he cried.

“Let be friends,” said Tell, “let me pass.”

“Not until you obey the Emperor’s command. Not till you bow to the hat,” he roared.

“It is no **command** of the Emperor,” said Tell. “It is Gessler’s wish and tyranny. I must not bow before Gessler’s hat,” he added.

“Nay, but you must not speak of My Lord, the Governor in such terms. You shall not pass until you bow to the hat. And if you do not bow, I shall take you to prison. Such is My Lord’s command.”

“Why should I bow to a hat?” said Tell, his voice now shaking with **rage**. William Tell will never bow before a foreign ruler and his hat,” he spoke. And he tried to force his way past Heinz, the soldier. But Heinz would not let him pass and kept his sword pointed at Tell.

Hearing loud and angry voices, many people gathered to see what the cause might be. Soon there was quite a crowd around the two. Everyone talked at once and the noise and confusion were great. Heinz tried to arrest and take Tell to the prison. The people tried to take him away. ‘Help! Help!’ shouted Heinz, hoping that some of his fellow soldiers would hear him and come to his aid.

Then, over all the noise of the shouting, there sounded the tramp of horses’ hoofs and the clang and **jangle** of swords and armour.

“Room for the Governor,” cried a herald.

The shouting ceased and the crowd silently parted as Gessler, richly dressed, haughty and gloomy, rode through it, followed by his friends and soldiers. He slowed his horse and **gazing** angrily round the crowd, “What is going on?” he asked.

**command:** order  
**rage:** anger  
**jangle:** the sound produced by arms made of iron  
**gazing:** looking at

“My Lord,” said Heinz, stepping forward, “this man here will not bow to the hat, according to My Lordship’s command.”

“What?” said Gessler angrily.

“Who dares disobey my orders? Who is that rebel?” He shouted.

“It’s William Tell of Burglen, My Lord.”

“Tell,” said Gessler, turning in his saddle and looking at Tell as he stood among the people, holding little Walter by the hand.

There was silence for a few minutes while Gessler gazed at Tell in anger.

“I have heard that you are a great shot, Tell,” said Gessler at last, laughing **scornfully**, “people say you never miss.”

“That is quite true,” said little Walter eagerly, for he was very proud of his father’s shooting. “He can hit an apple on a tree a hundred yards off.”

“Is that your boy?” said Gessler, looking at him with an ugly smile.

“Yes,” answered Tell sharply.

“Do you love your child, Tell?”

“Yes, of course.”

“Ah,” said Gessler and thought a minute. “Well, Tell,” he said after a pause. “I have heard so much of this boast of yours about hitting apples that I would like to see something of it. You shall shoot an apple off your boy’s head at a hundred yards’ distance. If you succeed, you can go without bowing to the hat.”

“My Lord,” said Tell, turning pale, “you do not mean that? It is horrible. I will do anything rather than that.”

“You will shoot an apple off your boy’s head,” repeated Gessler in a slow and scornful voice. “I want to see your wonderful skill and I command you to do it at once. Tell, see that you aim well, for if you miss you will pay for it with your life,” he laughed meaningfully and friends joined him.

Tell turned pale. His voice **trembled** as he replied, “My Lord, Forgive me and I will always bow to the hat in future.” Proud and brave although he was, Tell could not bear the thought that he might kill his own child with his crossbow.

“Have done with this without delay,” said Gessler, growing yet angrier. “Heinz, bring me an apple.”

The soldier hurried away.

**scornfully:** sarcastically  
**trembled:** shook



“Take the boy to that tree,” said Gessler, pointing to a tall lime-tree nearby.

Two soldiers seized Walter and took him to the tree. They placed him under the tree. He was not in the least afraid, but stood up against the trunk straight and quiet. Then, when the apple was brought, Gessler rode up to him and bending from the saddle, himself placed the apple upon his head.

All this time the people crowded round, silent and wondering and Tell stood among them as if in a dream, watching everything with a look of horror in his eyes.

“Clear a path there,” shouted Gessler and the soldiers charged among the people, **scattering** them right and left.

When a path had been cleared, two soldiers, starting from the tree to which Walter was placed, marched over the ground measuring one hundred yards and halted. ‘One hundred yards, My Lord,’ they said, turning to Gessler.



Gessler rode to the spot, calling out, “Come, Tell, from here you shall shoot the apple.”

Tell took his place. He drew an arrow from his **quiver** but instead of fitting it to the bow, he stuck it in his belt. Then, still carefully, he chose another arrow and fitted it to his bow.

A deep silence fell upon everyone as Tell took one step forward. He raised his bow. His arm trembled, his arrow dropped from his hand. He could not shoot. The fear that he might kill his son took away all his skill and courage.

Gessler said, “Do it.”

‘I will die first,’ said Tell crying.

“Very well,” said Gessler, “but you need not think in that way to save your boy. He shall die with you. Shoot or die both of you.”

**scattering:** moving  
**quiver:** a case for  
keeping arrows

A groan broke from the people as they watched. Then, from far away, under the lime tree came Walter's voice, "Shoot, Father, I am not afraid. You cannot miss."

Once more Tell raised his bow. The silence seemed deeper than ever. The people loved Tell. They watched and waited with heavy hearts and anxious faces.

"Huss!" went the arrow a second later, the silence was broken by cheer after cheer. The apple lay upon the ground **pierced** right through the centre. Walter ran to his father with half of the apple and hug his father.

"He has really done it!" exclaimed Gessler in astonishment as he turned the apple round and round in his hand. "Who would have thought it? Right in the centre too."

**pierced:** cut

Gessler, then asked Tell, "What is the second arrow for?" Tell remained silent. But, Gessler said, "If you tell me the truth, your life will be saved!"

William Tell firmly replied, "It was to pierce your heart, if my first arrow killed my son."

## UNDERSTANDING THE STORY

### A. Tick (✓) the right answers.

1. What did William Tell carry with him?

(a) a sword.

(b) a spear.

(c) a crossbow.

2. Who put up a hat on the pole?

(a) Heinz.

(b) Gessler.

(c) Walter.



3. Gessler was a/an

- (a) emperor.
- (b) governor.
- (c) soldier.

4. Who disobeyed the order?

- (a) William Tell.
- (b) Heinz.
- (c) people.

5. Why did William Tell draw two arrows?

- (a) to kill Walter.
- (b) to kill Heinz.
- (c) to kill Gessler.

**B. Write true or false.**

1. William Tell was a skilled archer.

---

2. Walter was a brave boy.

---

3. William Tell missed his mark.

---

4. Gessler was a cruel person.

---

5. Gessler was astonished on seeing Tell's skill.

---

6. William Tell killed Gessler.

---

**C. Answer these questions.**

1. What order did Gessler give to the people regarding the hat?

2. Why did William Tell not bow before the hat?

3. What did Walter say about his father's archery?

4. What question did Gessler ask Tell in the end?

**LANGUAGE SKILLS**

**D. Circle the words in the sentences as directed. One has been done for you.**

1. Yes, dear, (if) you like. You may go. (conjunction)

2. They set off merrily together. (adverb)
3. Such is my Lord's command. (abstract noun)
4. The bat was lying on the sofa. (preposition)
5. Walter was a brave boy. (adjective)
6. He drew an arrow from his quiver. (article)
7. The soldier raised his sword at Tell. (preposition)

**E. Change the following words as directed.**

1. great (superlative)
2. obey (past)
3. prison (add a suitable prefix)
4. loud (adverb)
5. shoot (past participle)



## WRITING SKILLS

- F.** Which quality of William Tell do you admire the most? Why?



## DISCUSS

- G.** Choose an incident from the history of freedom struggle of India. Discuss it in the class.

# 11 Invictus

*William Ernest Henley was an English poet, critic and editor. He was born on 23 August 1849. His left leg was cut off below the knee because of bone tuberculosis. Later, his right leg also developed the same disease and he was hospitalised for three years. While in hospital, he wrote an anthology of poems called *In Hospital*. *Invictus* is his most famous poem.*

Out of the night that covers me,  
Black as the Pit from pole to pole,  
I thank whatever gods may be  
For my **unconquerable** soul.  
In the fell **clutch** of circumstance  
I have not **winc**ed nor cried aloud.  
Under the **bludgeonings** of chance  
My head is bloody, but unbowed.  
Beyond this place of wrath and tears  
Looms but the Horror of the shade,  
And yet the **menace** of the years  
Finds, and shall find, me unafraid.  
It matters not how **strait** the gate,  
How charged with punishments the scroll.  
I am the master of my fate:  
I am the captain of my soul.

— *William Ernest Henley*



## NEW WORDS

**unconquerable:** that cannot be conquered

**clutch:** grip

**wincing:** expression on the face that shows pain

**bludgeonings:** heavy blows

**menace:** threat

**strait:** narrow

## UNDERSTANDING THE POEM

### A. Tick (✓) the right answers.

1. The poem is a/an \_\_\_\_\_ one.

- (a) tragic
- (b) inspirational
- (c) comic

2. The poet thanks

- (a) gods.
- (b) doctors.
- (c) people.

3. What type of soul does the poet have?

- (a) coward.
- (b) envious.
- (c) unconquerable.

4. The poet says that no pain or trouble can

- (a) bow his head.
- (b) cut his leg.
- (c) kill him.

5. Who is the master of the poet's fate?
- (a) God
  - (b) the doctor
  - (c) he himself

**B. Answer these questions.**

1. What does the second line of the poem mean?
2. What does the poet mean by 'unconquerable soul'?
3. What does the poet mean by 'this place'?
4. Why is the poet not afraid?

**LANGUAGE SKILLS**

**C. Write a synonym for each of the following words.**

- |          |       |                 |       |
|----------|-------|-----------------|-------|
| 1. pit   | _____ | 2. circumstance | _____ |
| 3. cried | _____ | 4. wrath        | _____ |

**D. Make a sentence with each word.**

1. unconquerable \_\_\_\_\_
2. soul \_\_\_\_\_
3. unbowed \_\_\_\_\_
4. menace \_\_\_\_\_
5. captain \_\_\_\_\_

**ACTIVITY**

- E.** Collect pictures of five people who suffered tragedies but were able to overcome them. Paste these pictures in your notebook and write five lines about each of them.

# 12 A Feast on the Train

*The story you are going to read is about a group of young boys returning to school after holidays. They are travelling in a train. They are making fun of their new teacher at school. An old man in the compartment overhears them. He says nothing, but he has a surprise in store for the boys.*

“This is unfair!” the boys complained. “We refuse to be taught by a new **pundit**.”

The new pundit they were expecting was Kalikumar Tarkalankar.

After the holidays, the boys were returning to school by train, from their respective homes. One of them, a witty fellow, had composed a poem against the new pundit, called ‘Kalo Kumror Balidan’—‘The Sacrificial Death of the Black Pumpkin’—which all of them were reciting at the top of their voices. Just then, an old gentleman boarded the train at Arkhol Station. With him he carried his **kantha**-wrapped bedding roll, two or three earthen **handis** sealed with rags, a tin trunk and a few bundles. A tough-

**pundit:** teacher  
**kantha:** wrapped in a blanket  
**handis:** pots made out of clay



looking boy, known to everyone as Bichkun, called out, “There’s no room for you here, old man. Go, find another carriage.”

“It’s too crowded,” the old man replied. “There’s no room anywhere. I’ll just take this little corner; I won’t bother you at all.” With these words, he left the bench to them and moved to a corner of the floor, where he had spread his bedding.

“**Baba**” he asked the boys, “where are you all going, and for what purpose?”

“To perform a **shraddh**,” Bichkun declared.

“Whose shraddh is it?” the old man enquired.

“**Kalo-Kumro-Tatka-Lanka’s**,” was the reply.

The boys chorused in a loud, sing-song chant,

*“Kalo-Kumro-Tatka-Lanka,  
Black-Pumpkin-Green-Chilli,  
We’ll teach you a lesson,  
And make you look silly!”*

The train halted at Asansol. The old man got off to have a bath. As soon as he returned to the carriage afterwards, Bichkun warned him: “Don’t remain in this carriage, sir!”

“Why, may I ask?”

“It’s **infested** with rats.”

“Rats! How’s that possible?”

“Just look at the mess they made when they got into those *handis* of yours.”

The gentleman found that the *handi* full of sugary **kodmas** was now completely empty, and the one containing **khoichur** had not a grain left in it.

“And they even ran off with whatever was inside your rag bundle,” Bichkun added.

**Baba:** a Bengali word for a ‘boy’

**shraddh:** funeral ceremony

**Kalo-Kumro-Tatka-Lanka’s:** Black-Pumpkin-Green-Chilli’s

**infested:** full of something that causes problems

**kodmas:** round Bengali sweets

**khoichur:** balls of jaggery and rice cereal

That bundle had contained four or five ripe mangoes from his garden.

“The rats are **famished**, I see,” remarked the gentleman with a faint smile.

“No, no, it’s their nature to devour things even if they’re not hungry,” replied Bichkun.

The boys laughed heartily. “Yes, **moshai**,” they **guffawed**, “if there were more, they’d have eaten it up as well.”

“I made a mistake,” the gentleman observed. “Had I known there would be so many rats travelling together in the train, I would have carried some more stuff.”

The boys were disheartened to find that the old man did not lose his temper in spite of so much teasing. If he had been **provoked**; it would have been fun.

The train stopped at Burdwan. It would halt there for about an hour, to switch tracks.

“*Baba*,” said the gentleman, “I won’t trouble you anymore. There will be room for me in another compartment.”

“No, no, that won’t do, you must travel in the same coach with us. If there’s anything left inside your bundles, we will guard it together, all of us. Nothing will be lost.”

“All right,” the gentleman **assented**. Get into the carriage, all of you. I’ll join you in a little while.”

So the boys got into the carriage. A little later, the sweet-seller’s cart came and halted before their compartment, accompanied by the gentleman.

Handing a paper bag to each of the boys, he said:

“Now there will be no shortage of food at the rats’ feast.”

“Hurrah!” shouted the boys, jumping in glee. The mangoseller also arrived there, with his basket of mangoes. There was no **dearth** of mangoes either at their feast.

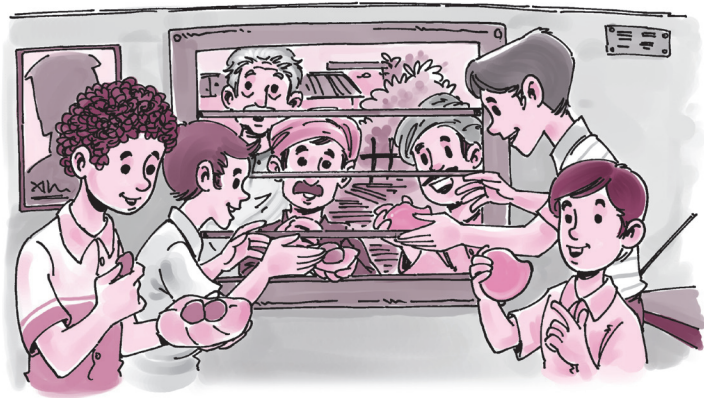
**famished:** starved  
**moshai:** a Bengali word for ‘sir’  
**guffawed:** laughed loudly  
**provoked:** made angry on purpose  
**assented:** agreed  
**dearth:** shortage



“Tell us,” the boys asked the gentleman, “Where are you going? What will you do there?”

“I am going in search of work,” he replied. “I’ll get off wherever I find work.”

They clapped their hands, all of them, and said, “Come to our school then.”



“Why would your school authorities want to keep me?”

“They must. We won’t let *Kalo-Kumro-Tatka-Lanka* set foot in our neighbourhood.”

“You have put me in a difficult position, I must say! What if the secretary doesn’t approve of me?”

“He must approve—else we shall all leave the school.”

“All right, then take me with you.”

The train arrived at their station. The secretary was present there in person. Seeing the old man, he cried, “Welcome, welcome, *Tarkalankar moshai!*” Your house is ready and waiting.” With these words, he bowed at the old man’s feet to offer his respects.

## UNDERSTANDING THE STORY

### A. Tick (✓) the right answers.

1. Who was the new pundit (teacher)?
  - (a) Kalo Kumro.
  - (b) Kalikumar Tarakalankar.
  - (c) Mosai.

2. Who ate the sweets and mangoes of the old man?

(a) rats.

(b) the boys.

(c) some co-passengers.

3. What did the boys want to do with the old man?

(a) to provoke.

(b) to please.

(c) to cheat.

4. "I made a mistake." Who made a mistake?

(a) the old man.

(b) Bichkun.

(c) a co-passenger.

5. Who was the old man in fact?

(a) an old unemployed man.

(b) a mad man.

(c) the pundit who was supposed to join the school.

**B. Answer these questions.**

1. Where were the boys going?

2. What did the boys plan?

3. Why did the boys tell the old man the story of rats?

4. Why did the boys invite the old man to join their school?

**LANGUAGE SKILLS**

**C.** A few non-English (Bengali) words are used in this story. Make a list of such words. Write any three such types of words which are used in your mother language as well as in English.

**D. Fill in the blanks with the most suitable words from the brackets.**

1. I have an \_\_\_\_\_ plan in case we are not allowed to go swimming today. (alternate, alternative)
2. Should I \_\_\_\_\_ the red shirt with my jeans? (dress, wear)
3. Can I \_\_\_\_\_ in bed a little longer? (lay, lie)
4. It was \_\_\_\_\_ that she had forgotten to buy the medicine I needed. (plane, plain)
5. He asked to management to \_\_\_\_\_ his salary. (rise, raise)

**E. Do as directed.**

1. opposite of 'witty' \_\_\_\_\_
2. 'at the top of the voice' (rewrite in one word) \_\_\_\_\_
3. noun form of 'recite' \_\_\_\_\_
4. a synonym of 'halted' \_\_\_\_\_



**WRITING SKILLS**

- F.** Do you see any irony in the story? Write it in brief.
- G.** Analyse the character of the old man.



**DISCUSS**

- H.** Discuss the pathshala education system in your class.

# 13 Abou Ben Adhem

*James Henry Leigh Hunt was an English critic, essayist, poet and writer. His poem Abou Ben Adhem tells that God rates those people very high who love and serve their fellowmen.*

Abou Ben Adhem (may his **tribe** increase!)

Awoke one night from a deep dream of peace,

And saw, within the moonlight in his room,

Making it rich, and like a lily in bloom,

An angel writing in a book of gold:

Exceeding peace had made Ben Adhem bold,

And to the presence in the room he said,

“What writest thou?”

The vision raised its head,

And with a look made of all **sweet accord**,

Answered, “The names of those who love the Lord.”

“And is mine one?” said Abou. “Nay, not so,”

Replied the angel. Abou spoke more low,



But cheerily still; and said, "I pray thee then,  
Write me as one that loves his fellow-men."  
The angel wrote, and vanished. The next night  
It came again with a great **wakening** light,  
And showed the names whom love of God had blessed,  
And lo! Ben Adhem's name led all the rest.

—*Leigh Hunt*

## NEW WORDS

**tribe:** people

**sweet:** pleasant look

**accord:** pleasant look

**wakening:** glittering but soothing

## UNDERSTANDING THE STORY

### A. Tick (✓) the right answers.

1. The incident takes place

- (a) during mid-day.
- (b) during early morning.
- (c) at night.

2. Who was writing in a book?

- (a) Abou Ben Adhem.
- (b) an angel.
- (c) the fellow men.

3. What made Abou Ben Adhem bold?

- (a) exceeding peace.
- (b) exceeding moonlight.
- (c) his fellowmen.

4. Whom does Abou Ben Adhem love?

(a) God.

(b) angel.

(c) fellowmen.

**B. Fill in the blanks with information from the poem.**

1. Abou Ben Adhem saw an angel in his \_\_\_\_\_.
2. The angel was writing the names who love the \_\_\_\_\_.
3. The angel appeared on \_\_\_\_\_.

**C. Answer these questions.**

1. What did Abou Ben Adhem want to know from the angel?
2. What did the angel reply?
3. What made Abou Ben Adhem's name lead all the rest?



**LANGUAGE SKILLS**

**D. Write any four pairs of rhyming words from the poem.**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

**E. Find antonyms of the following words from the poem.**

- |             |       |            |       |
|-------------|-------|------------|-------|
| 1. decrease | _____ | 2. war     | _____ |
| 3. wither   | _____ | 4. absence | _____ |
| 5. faintly  | _____ | 6. cursed  | _____ |



**ACTIVITY**

- F.** Write the theme of the poem in your own words.
- G.** How can you show your love to your fellowmen? Discuss it in your class.

# 14 Philemon and Baucis

*The present play is based on Ovid's Metamorphoses VIII which is based on Greek mythology and Roman mythology.*

*Zeus and Hermes (in Roman Mythology, Jupiter and Mercury respectively) once wanted to test people's hospitality on the earth. They disguised themselves as tired travellers and knocked at the doors of people. The people refused to give them shelter. At last, the travellers were given shelter and food by old Baucis and Philemon. Gradually, the travellers revealed their identity. They, then, destroyed the hostile people with a flood and made poor hut of Philemon and Baucis into a marble temple. The gods granted their wish—they became priest and priestess and died at the same moment.*

**Characters:** Philemon, an old man; Baucis, his wife;  
Young traveller; Old traveller; Jupiter

## Scene i

*(It is evening. Old Philemon and old Baucis sit at their cottage door.)*

**Philemon:** Come, good wife, the day's work is over. Let us watch this calm and beautiful sunset.

**Baucis:** I have milked the cow and washed the supper dishes. You shall have some fine cheese tomorrow with your bread.

**Philemon:** How pleasantly the birds chirp in the quiet evening! Yes, there is always something to eat with our bread and milk. Indeed, the gods are kind to us. We have vegetables that grow in the garden and the milk that the cow gives us. And now the grapes are turning purple on the vine.

**Baucis:** Listen! What is that noise in the village? I can hear the shouts of children and barking of dogs.

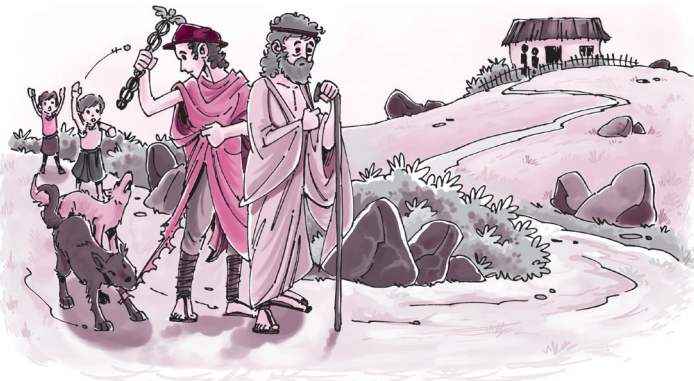
**Philemon:** Ah, wife, I fear that some poor traveller is looking for shelter in the village. But instead of giving him food and shelter, our neighbours have set their dogs upon him. Never was there a more fertile and rich valley, yet the people in it are so rude and selfish!

**Baucis:** Indeed, they are hard-hearted. They keep these fierce dogs, and if a poor stranger comes they turn their dogs upon him.

**Philemon:** (*shaking his head*) Indeed, wife. As for you and me, as long as fate gives us a crust of bread, let us share it with any poor homeless stranger who comes to us in need.

**Baucis:** So we will, husband. We will go without our supper, but we will not refuse the weary traveller a piece of the brown bread that I bake and a cup of fresh milk.

**Philemon:** The noise comes nearer and nearer.



(Two travellers approach the foot of the little hill on which the cottage stands. They are chased by a pack of barking dogs and some children shouting and throwing mud balls at them. One of the travellers is very young and active. His

companion is old. They walk calmly along, without noticing either the children or the dogs. They come to the hut of the old man.)

**Philemon:** Welcome, strangers, welcome!

**Young Traveller:** Thank you, sir, this is a very different greeting from what we got in the village. Sir, why do you live in such a bad neighbourhood?

**Philemon:** I think fate put me here so that I can make up for the unkindness of my neighbours.

**Young Traveller:** (*laughing loudly*) Well said, old father. And indeed, we need some comfort. Those children have covered us finely with their mud



balls; and one of the dogs has torn my **cloak**, which was ragged enough already.

**Philemon:** I am glad to see you so cheerful. Indeed, you do not look as if you were weary after a long journey. I used to be light-footed in my youth, but by night I was tired enough.

**Young Traveller:** A good **staff** helps one along, and I have an excellent one, you see.

**Philemon:** It is a curious piece of work, a staff with wings. It would be a fine stick for a little boy to ride on. But come, friends, sit down and rest on this couch. My old wife, Baucis, will call us in when she has something ready for your supper. We are poor people, but you are welcome to whatever we have in the hut.

*(They sit down on the couch. The elder traveller speaks for the first time, in a deep and loud voice.)*

**Elder Traveller:** Was there not a lake in olden times covering the valley where the village stands now?

**Philemon:** Not in my day, friend, and yet I am an old man. There were always fields and old trees, and the little stream **murmuring** through the valley. Neither my father, nor his father before him, saw anything different. Doubtless it will still be the same when old Philemon is gone and forgotten.

**cloak:** coat  
**staff:** short stick  
**murmuring:** flow with a quiet continuous sound  
**gravely:** seriously

**Elder Traveller:** *(speaking gravely, with a frown)* That is not so certain. If the people in that village have forgotten all pity and sympathy, the lake may swallow up their homes with a great flood.

*(The evening grows darker and thunder rumbles. Old Philemon is frightened, but the stranger's face grows very kind and mild.)*

**Young Traveller:** Tell me now about yourself and your good wife.

**Philemon:** There is not much to tell. We have lived here all our lives and have never been twenty miles away from this spot. We have been most happy in our little cottage, working hard, but very contented. My old wife,



Baucis, is always busy with her spinning, and you should see the good cheese and milk she makes. I grow vegetables in my garden; the soil is poor on the hill, not rich as in the village, and yet we get good vegetables, green and fresh. We lead a happy life.

*(Baucis comes out to call them in.)*

**Baucis:** Come for supper, my guests. I wish I had a better supper to give you. If we had known you were coming, we would gladly have gone without supper. But I took the best part of today's milk to make cheese; and our last loaf is half-eaten. Here are some olives and cherries and radish and **chicories**. I only feel our poverty, alas! When a poor traveller knocks at our door.

**chicories:** small pale green plants with bitter leaves that are eaten raw or cooked as a vegetable

**Elder Traveller:** All will be well, good lady. An honest hearty welcome can turn any meal into heavenly food and drink.

**Baucis:** A welcome you shall have. And a little milk also that we have left, and a bunch of purple grapes from our vine.

**Young Traveller:** Why, Mother Baucis, it is a feast! A perfect feast! And I shall eat well. I never felt hungrier in my life.

**Baucis:** *(whispers to her husband)* Mercy on us! If the young man is so hungry, I fear there won't be enough supper!

## Scene ii

*(The single room of the cottage. It is a very simple meal for two hungry travellers. There is less than half a brown loaf, with a piece of cheese on one side of it and a dish of honey on the other. There is a bunch of grapes for each guest and a pitcher of milk from which Baucis fills two bowls. There is very little milk left at the bottom of the pitcher.)*

**Young Traveller:** *(drinking his bowl of milk quickly)* A little more milk, kind Mother Baucis, if you please. The day has been hot and I am very thirsty.



**Baucis:** *(very troubled)* My dear people, I am so sorry and ashamed. But there is hardly a drop of milk in the pitcher. Oh, husband, husband! Why did not we go without our supper?

*(Young Traveller jumps up and takes the pitcher.)*

**Young Traveller:** Things are not so bad, dear Mother Baucis. There is certainly more milk in the pitcher.

*(He fills his own bowl and his companion's also.)*

**Baucis:** I thought the pitcher was nearly empty; but I am old and forgetful. I must have made a mistake. Certainly the pitcher must be empty now, since it has filled the bowls twice.

**Young Traveller:** *(drinking the second bowl)* What excellent milk! I must really ask you for a little more.

**Baucis:** I don't think that there is any left.

*(She lifts the pitcher and turns it upside down into young traveller's bowl. Milk pours out, fills the bowl.)*

**Young Traveller:** And now, a slice of your brown loaf, Mother Baucis, and a little of that cheese.

*(As Baucis gives him the cheese, the scent of it fills the air. It seems as if they are in a garden full of flowers.)*

**Baucis:** *(with wonder)* Did you ever see anything like this?

**Philemon:** *(also full of wonder)* No, I never did. I think you have been dreaming. There happened to be a little more than you thought. That is all.

**Baucis:** Ah, husband, say what you will; but these are very unusual people.

**Philemon:** Well, well, perhaps they are. But I am very glad to see them enjoying a good supper.

**Young Traveller:** Very fine grapes, these. Where did you gather them, good host?

**Philemon:** From my own vine. You can see one of its branches across the window. But my wife and I never thought the grapes very fine.



**Baucis:** (*amazed*) But look husband! The grapes grow larger and are full of juice!

**Young Traveller:** I never tasted better grapes. Another cup of this excellent milk, if you please; and then I shall have had a better supper than any prince.

**Philemon:** (*looking into his empty pitcher*) What is this? See! A little white fountain has started at the bottom of the pitcher. And now it is full of milk! Who are you strangers?

**Elder Traveller:** (*in a mild, deep voice*) Give me a cup of milk too; and may your pitcher never be empty.

**Philemon:** Good. Young traveller, please tell me how a fountain of milk could come from an empty pitcher?

**Young Traveller:** (*pointing to his staff*) There's the secret. This staff of mine is always doing something strange.

*(The travellers finish their supper and rise to go on their way. Baucis and Philemon go out with them.)*

**Philemon:** Oh, dear! I wish our neighbours knew the happiness that comes from kindness to strangers. Then they would tie up their dogs, and never allow their children to throw mud balls.

**Baucis:** They behave very badly indeed, and I shall go down to the village tomorrow and tell them so.

**Young Traveller:** I fear you will not find them at home.

**Elder Traveller:** (*gravely*) The earth is the home of the great human brotherhood. If men do not welcome humblest stranger, they are not fit to live on the earth.

**Young Traveller:** And, my dear old people, where is the village? On which side does it lie? You said it was at the foot of the hill, but I do not see it.

(*Philemon and Baucis turn to the valley. They gasp and cry out in surprise.*)

**gasp:** to take a quick breath with your mouth

**Baucis:** Oh, where are the fields and trees, the houses and streets, the gardens and children?

**Philemon:** I can see neither the village nor the valley. I see only a great flood which covers everything and reflects the hills and the sky.

**Baucis:** Alas, what has become of our poor neighbours?

(*The elder traveller speaks in his grand deep voice, like the thunder rumbling in the sky.*)

**Elder Traveller:** They live no longer as men and women. There was neither use nor beauty in their lives, so the lake, which was there in the old days, flooded itself again to reflect the sky.

**Young Traveller:** And as for those foolish people, they are all turned into fish.

(*Philemon and Baucis speak with great reverence.*)

**Philemon:** Surely this can be no other than the great Jupiter, king of the gods.

**Baucis:** And kind Young Traveller, he must be the swiftfooted Mercury, messenger of the gods. We are lucky to have such guests!

**Jupiter:** (*kindly*) You, good Philemon, and you, kind Baucis, you have shown great kindness to homeless strangers and thus you have served the gods themselves, therefore ask for whatever you wish and you shall have it.

**Philemon and Baucis:** Let us live together and leave the world together when we die, for we have always loved each other.



**Jupiter:** Be it so. And now, look towards your cottage.

*(They do so. A fine house of white marble stands with its great doors wide open, in place of their cottage.)*

**Jupiter:** There is your home. Welcome your guests to your new house as you welcomed us to the little hut.

*(The old people fall on their knees to thank him, but both Jupiter and Mercury disappear.)*

## UNDERSTANDING THE PLAY

### A. Tick (✓) the right answers.

1. Baucis heard the noise of

- (a) flood.
- (b) travellers.
- (c) barking dogs.

2. Who were happy, though they were poor?

- (a) Philemon and Baucis.
- (b) the villagers.
- (c) the travellers.

3. What can turn any meal into heavenly food?

- (a) an honest hearty welcome.
- (b) a good dish.
- (c) a beautiful house.

4. What happened to the village?

- (a) A flood swallowed it.
- (b) An earthquake destroyed it.
- (c) A landslide levelled it.

5. Kindness to strangers brings us
- (a) happiness.
  - (b) wealth.
  - (c) sorrow.



**B.** List three strange things that are described in the play.

**C. Answer these questions.**

1. Who were Philemon and Baucis?
2. How did the people of the village behave with the strangers?
3. Why did the gods punish the villagers?
4. What was the wish of Philemon and Baucis?

## LANGUAGE SKILLS

**D. Match the words with their meanings.**

Words	Meanings
1. shelter	(a) very unfriendly
2. ragged	(b) a pot to store any liquid
3. hostile	(c) a place to stay
4. pitcher	(d) very old and dirty
5. supper	(e) seriously
6. gravely	(f) the last meal of the day

**E. Make sentences with the following words.**

1. Stranger \_\_\_\_\_
2. Feast \_\_\_\_\_
3. Reflect \_\_\_\_\_
4. Heavenly \_\_\_\_\_
5. Sympathy \_\_\_\_\_

6. Strange \_\_\_\_\_
7. Excellent \_\_\_\_\_
8. Homeless \_\_\_\_\_
9. Gravely \_\_\_\_\_
10. Brotherhood \_\_\_\_\_



## WRITING SKILLS

- F.** Write a paragraph (of 50–60 words) on the good deeds of Philemon and Baucis.



## DISCUSS

- G.** Discuss the following phrase in the class.  
'Athithi Devo Bhava (Guest is our God)'.