



Class 7



*Stellar*  
*English*

Literature Reader



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# 1 Attila

*R K Narayan, in his inimitable style, writes about the so-called bravery of the dog Attila. Read on to find the real truth.*

The puppy was only a couple of months old; he had square jaws, red eyes, a pug nose and a massive head. The immediate reason for buying him was a series of house-breakings and thefts in the neighbourhood, and our householders decided to put more trust in a dog than in the police. They searched far and wide and met a dog dealer. He held up a month-old puppy and said, "Come and fetch him a month hence. In six months he will do something to be feared and respected."



They were satisfied, paid an advance, returned a month later, put down seventy-five rupees and took the puppy home. Neither did the puppy have a very **prepossessing** appearance, nor was he too playful, but this did not prevent his owners from sitting in a circle around him and admiring him. They debated as to what he should be named.

The youngest one suggested, "Why not call him Tiger?"

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

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

"It is **fantastic**."

**prepossessing:** attractive  
**fantastic:** (here) strange

“Why not Thunder?”

“It is too obvious.”

Then someone suggested **Attila**, and a shout of joy went up to the skies. But as time passed our Attila showed a love of humanity which was sometimes upsetting. He stood up twenty inches high and had a large frame and a **forbidding** appearance on the whole. But that was all. A variety of people entered the gates of the house every day: **mendicants**, bill collectors, postmen, tradesmen and family friends. All of them were warmly welcomed by Attila. The moment the gate clicked he became alert and stood up looking towards the gate. By the time anyone entered the gate Attila ran forward. But that was all. The person had only to stop and smile and Attila would melt. He would behave as if he was sorry for even giving an idea of violence. He would lower his head, curve his body, tuck his tail between his legs, roll his eyes and moan as if to say, ‘How sad that you should have mistaken my gesture! I hurried down only to greet you.’ Till he was patted on the head, stroked and told that he was forgiven, he would be in extreme misery.

Gradually he realized that his bouncing forward caused much unhappy misunderstanding. And so when he heard the gate click he hardly stirred. He merely looked in that direction.

**Attila:** a fierce warrior and king of the horse-riding Huns who harassed the Roman Empire during the fifth century

**forbidding:** unfriendly

**mendicants:** beggars

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

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

“He has better business to do than catch flower thieves replied the youngest one,” the defender of the dog.

“What is the better business?”

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





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

“He does not sleep all night, Mother. I have often seen him going round the house and watching all night.”

“Really? Does he prowl about all night?”

“Of course he does.” said the defender.

“I am quite alarmed to hear it,” said the mother. “Please lock him up in a room at night; otherwise he may call in a burglar and show him round. Left alone, a burglar might after all be less successful. It wouldn’t be so bad if he at least barked.”

The defender was extremely irritated at this. He thought it to be the most unkind view.

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



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

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

**expectantly:** hoping for something

“Don’t you worry. I am not the sort,” the dog tried to say.

“Just a moment. Let me get down from here,” said the burglar. The dog **obligingly** took away his paws and lowered himself.

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

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

He hung his heavy tail down so loosely and looked so miserable that the burglar stroked his head, at which he **revived**. The burglar opened the gate and went out, and the dog followed him. Attila’s greatest ambition in life was to wander in the streets freely. Now was the best opportunity.

**obligingly:** willingly  
**revived:** became recharged  
**implored:** begged

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

This sort of companionship got on Ranga’s nerves.

He **implored**, “Oh, dog! Leave me alone for a moment, won’t you?” Unmoved, Attila sat before him with his eyes glued on his friend.

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

“You are mistaken,” replied the defender. “It is just a coincidence. He must have gone off on his own account. If he had been here no thief would have dared come in.”

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

All this fun came to an end a week later, and Attila rose to the ranks of a hero.

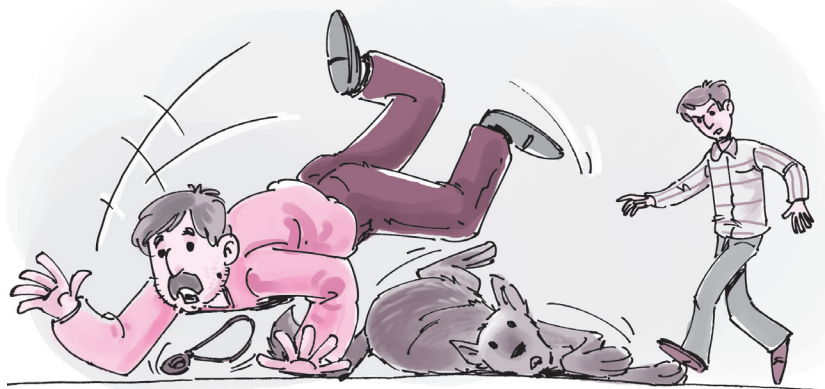
The eldest son of the house was going towards the market one day. He saw Attila trotting behind someone on the road.

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

**desert:** leave

“Hey, Attila!” shouted the young man, and he also started running. Attila wanted to answer the call after making sure of his friend; and so he turned his head for a second and galloped faster. Ranga dreadfully doubled his pace. But Attila was determined to stick to him at any cost. As a result, he ran so fast that he overtook Ranga and clumsily blocked his way, and Ranga stumbled over him and fell. As Ranga rolled on the ground a piece of jewellery (which

he was taking to a receiver of stolen property) flew from his hand. The young man recognized it as belonging to his sister and sat down on Ranga. A crowd collected and the police appeared on the scene.



Attila was the hero of the day. Even the lady of the house softened towards him. She said, “Whatever one might say of Attila, one has to admit that he is a very cunning detective. He is too deep for words.”

It was good that Attila had no powers of speech. Otherwise he would have told his woeful story and lost the position of a hero.

—R K Narayan

## UNDERSTANDING THE STORY

### A. Tick (✓) the right answers.

1. What name was given to the puppy?

- (a) Attila.
- (b) Caesar.
- (c) Thunder.

2. Attila's greatest ambition was to

- (a) catch cats.
- (b) wander in the streets freely.
- (c) catch thieves.

3. As Ranga fell, a piece of

- (a) jewellery fell from his hand.
- (b) cloth fell from his hand.
- (c) rock fell from his hand.

### B. Write true or false.

1. The people of the house had more trust in the dog than in the police.
2. Attila had a very weak appearance.
3. Ranga used to break into houses at night.
4. Attila liked Ranga very much.
5. Attila was a real hero.

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### C. Answer these questions.

1. How did Attila behave when someone smiled at him?
2. Why were some people against Attila? What did they say about him?
3. How did Attila become a hero?

## LANGUAGE SKILLS

### D. Make sentences with the following words.

1. Formidable \_\_\_\_\_
2. Prepossessing \_\_\_\_\_
3. Misery \_\_\_\_\_
4. Burglar \_\_\_\_\_
5. Ambition \_\_\_\_\_

### E. Add a word to complete the series.

1. frog : tadpole :: whale : \_\_\_\_\_
2. deer : fawn :: horse : \_\_\_\_\_
3. dog : bark :: tiger : \_\_\_\_\_
4. whale : mammal :: crocodile : \_\_\_\_\_

## WRITING SKILLS

- F. If Attila could speak, what would he have told the members of the family?

## DISCUSS

- G. Discuss how we should look after our pet animals.

## 2

## Childhood Days

*Satyajit Ray was one of India's greatest film directors. The story you are going to read provides you a glimpse of his childhood.*

My mother had four brothers. The youngest had died before I was born. Two of her other brothers worked as lawyers in Patna and Lucknow. We moved in with her third brother, whom I called Shona Mama. He worked for a big Indian insurance company, which was owned by one of our relatives.

Shona Mama was very good at mathematics. Once, when I was in school, he happened to glance at a very difficult problem on my maths question paper and said casually, "The answer's eight, isn't it?" It seemed like magic to me.

Generally a quiet man, Shona Mama had a rather childlike side to him. He was nearly thirty, but he spent every Sunday playing games like carrom and ludo, and then **bagatelle** with great enthusiasm. He used to be joined by a lot of friends and relatives from his own age group.

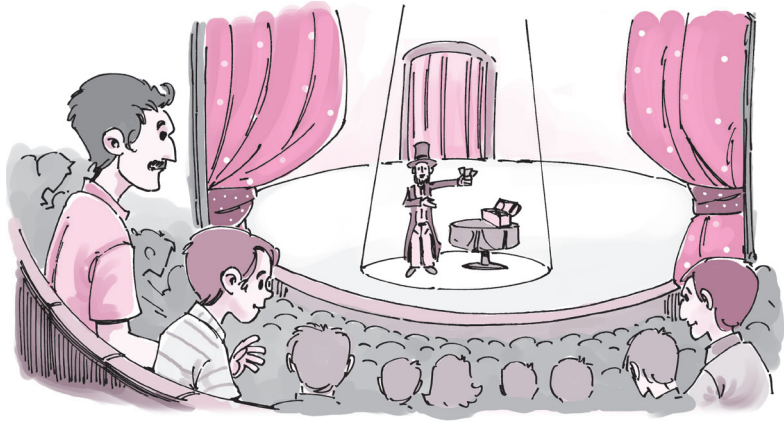
I had to spend much of my time alone, particularly in the afternoon. But I never got bored. There were ten volumes of The Book of Knowledge. I never grew tired of leafing **through** these. Then, later, my mother bought me four volumes of The Romance of Famous Lives.

These were biographies of famous foreigners, packed with illustrations and pictures.

**bagatelle:** French word for a game using small balls  
**through:** turning the pages of  
**pull off:** to succeed in a difficult attempt

Shona Mama was fond of having fun. After moving to his house, I got the chance to go to the circus, magic shows and carnivals. Once, I went to watch a European magician called Shefallo at Empire Theatre (the modern, Roxy). He performed trick after trick, talking all the time. I learnt later that this non-stop chatter from a magician is called 'patter'. It was this patter that made the audience look more at his face than at his hands, which helped him **pull off** all his tricks.

Some time later, I happened to watch a Bengali magician at a wedding party. If a magician is performing on a stage, he can use modern equipment and appropriate lighting to **hoodwink** the audience. The man I saw at this wedding sat on a mattress under a **shamiana**, surrounded by other guests. Even so, he did an amazing number of tricks. Many years later, I used this magician as a character in a short story.



**hoodwink:** trick or deceive  
**shamiana:** a big decorated tent

I saw him spread several matchsticks on the sheet that covered the mattress, and keep an empty matchbox with him. Then he opened the matchbox and called, “Come on now, all of you, one by one!” Each matchstick rolled towards the box and slipped into it. Then he took a silver coin from a gentleman and a ring from another. He placed the coin at least four feet away from the ring. “Go and bring the coin!” he said to the ring, which began rolling towards the coin like a child. It stopped as it reached the coin, then both came back to the magician.

His third trick involved a pack of cards. He handed it to one of the guests, and borrowed a walking stick from someone else. Then he pointed the stick at the pack of cards and said, “Come out then, ace of spades!” The ace of spades slipped out at once and sat fluttering at the end of the stick.

A few days later, I bumped into the magician near my house. He was in his early fifties, clad in a dhoti and a shirt, and looked no different from other ordinary men. I was very interested in magic myself and had already started to think of this man as my guru. “I would like to learn magic from you.” I said to him. “Sure!” he replied, and taking out a pack of cards from his pocket, taught me a simple trick at once. But I never met him again. In my excitement at having run into him so unexpectedly, I had forgotten to take his

address. Later, I bought quite a few books on magic and practised **sleight of hand** standing before a mirror. My interest in magic continued until I went to college.

The circus still comes to Calcutta. But what has disappeared altogether are carnivals. The carnival used to take place on open fields, close to the circus.

It is difficult to explain to modern children what the carnival was like, and why we found it so enjoyable. Like the fairs we have today, it had giant wheels. But, unlike the ones we now get to see, those wheels were as high as a five-storey building. Apart from these wheels, there were merry-go-rounds, **dodgems**, and an **alpine** railway that went up and down, and much else.

When we moved to Bhowanipur, **talkies** were yet to be made. The English cinemas had pianists to provide music throughout a film, instead of words. Only one theatre had something called a cinema organ. It was Madan, or the Palace of Varieties. It is now called Elite. The organ was known as the wurlitzer. It had a glorious sound. The Englishman who played it was called Byron Hopper. The daily papers carried lists of what Mr Hopper was going to play each day.

Among the films I saw at that time, I remember four in particular. They were Ben Hur, The Count of Monte Cristo, The Thief of Baghdad and Uncle Tom's Cabin. The Globe theatre showed not just films, but live songs and dances as well. A piano stood by the screen. The pianist had to play suitable music throughout, in keeping with the mood of the film.

**sleight of hand:** skill and quickness of the hands in doing tricks

**dodgems:** small electric cars driven in pairs

**alpine:** as high as great mountains such as the Alps

**talkies:** films with soundtracks

**jaw hanging open:** watching with great interest

Something funny happened when we went to watch Uncle Tom's Cabin.

The whole family had gone to see it together. In one scene, the black slave, Uncle Tom, rolled down a flight of stairs after being whipped by his cruel master, Simon Legree, and died. We were all furious with Legree. Then, towards the end of the film, Tom's ghost came back to haunt Legree. Legree picked up his whip and lashed out at the ghost, but Tom continued to move forward, laughing. At this point, Kalu Mama, who had been watching the film with his **jaw hanging open**, could not take it any more. He shot up from his





seat and began shouting, **oblivious** to the presence of the large audience, “That man still whipping him? Wait, you devil, you’ll soon get your **just deserts!**”

The first talkie was made in Hollywood in 1928. Calcutta got its first talkie a year later. Some of the films that followed, for a year afterwards, were partially silent. Those that had sound throughout were advertised as ‘100% Talkie’. The first one I saw was probably Tarzan the Ape Man. It was showing at the Globe, but we could not get tickets on the first day. The uncle who had gone with me took one look at my disappointed face and realised I should not be taken home without trying elsewhere.

The Albion Theatre (now called Regal) was not far from the Globe. We found tickets there, but it was for a Bengali film called ‘Kaal Parinay’ (Cursed Marriage). It became obvious pretty soon that it was not a film suitable for young children. My uncle turned to me and asked, more than once, “Want to go home?” But I paid no attention. Having gone all that way, I was not about to return home without watching the whole thing. But the film was so bad that it **put me off** Bengali films for quite a while.

**oblivious:** completely unaware of  
**just deserts:** fitting punishment  
**put me off:** dislike

My maternal grandmother, Didima, lived with us in Bokulbagan. She was beautiful and could also sing very well. Even now I can remember her singing a song from ‘Mymensingh’, Charkar nachon deikhyaja lo fora (Come and see the spinning wheel dance). It was probably in 1926 that all her children visited Calcutta along with their families. This was a rather unusual event.

It was decided, when everyone had arrived, that a family photo would be taken with Didima. Not many houses had cameras in those days. So, on special occasions, people went to studios to have their photos taken. We went to Edna Lorenz, which was a modern studio, and quite well-known. It was situated in Chowringhee Mansions, at the corner of Chowringhee and Park Street. There were eighteen people in our group, including a small baby.

We had informed the studio previously and were expected, so all the necessary arrangements had been made. Six chairs had been placed in a row in a large hall. My grandmother took a chair in the middle. My mother and the other women sat on the other chairs. The men stood in rows behind

them. Two young cousins sat on little stools before the ladies, and I stood between my mother and grandmother. Although the photo was going to be taken inside a room, no flash or artificial light was going to be used. Perhaps that was not the normal practice then. The only light available was what was coming in through a row of windows. The camera was very large, its lens covered by a cap. The cap would be removed for just a couple of seconds, and the photo would be taken in that time. No one was allowed to move during those two seconds.



The English photographer shouted, “Ready!” and everyone became stiff, staring at the camera. There was another man standing next to the photographer, holding a toy in his hand. It was the figure of a clown, **clutching** a pair of cymbals. When its stomach was pressed, it played the **cymbals** noisily.

This was necessary to make sure that the baby, who was seated on his mother’s lap, looked straight at the camera when the photo was taken. Luckily, all went according to plan. The

photographer’s assistant got the clown to work, the baby looked in the right direction and the photographer did his job successfully.

**clutching:** holding tightly  
**cymbals:** a pair of round thin metal plates

—Satyajit Ray

## UNDERSTANDING THE STORY

A. Tick (✓) the right answers.

1. Shona Mama was very good at

(a) English.

(b) Mathematics.

(c) Science.

2. The third trick of magician involved
  - (a) matchsticks.
  - (b) cards.
  - (c) pigeons.
3. The first film the author saw was
  - (a) *Mowgli*.
  - (b) *Godfather*.
  - (c) *Tarzan the Ape Man*.
4. Edna Lorenz was a well-known
  - (a) art studio.
  - (b) photography studio.
  - (c) film studio.
5. Didima could
  - (a) sing very well.
  - (b) dance very well.
  - (c) act very well.

**B. Match the following.**

- |                                    |  |
|------------------------------------|--|
| 1. Shona Mama was                  | (a) when we went to watch <i>Uncle Tom's Cabin</i> . |
| 2. There were ten volumes of       | (b) lived with us in Bokulbagan.                     |
| 3. Something funny happened        | (c) <i>The Book of Knowledge</i> .                   |
| 4. The camera was very large,      | (d) very good at mathematics.                        |
| 5. My maternal grandmother, Didima | (e) its lens covered by a cap.                       |

**C. Answer these questions.**

1. Why was the narrator never bored?
2. What was the carnival like?
3. Which funny incident took place when the whole family went to see *Uncle Tom's Cabin*?
4. Was taking a family photo a big event? State your reasons.

## LANGUAGE SKILLS

**D. Writing about the life of someone else is called biography. Now, find out what the following are called. Take help from the box.**

ghostwrite travelogue reminiscences autobiography journal

1. Writing life-story of one's own \_\_\_\_\_
2. Writing about one's travels \_\_\_\_\_
3. Writing about things one does, sees, etc., every day \_\_\_\_\_
4. Writing about something that one remembers about one's past life \_\_\_\_\_
5. Writing a book, an article, etc., for another person who publishes it as his/her own work \_\_\_\_\_

## WRITING SKILLS

- E.** Write a paragraph on a childhood event which you remember the most.
- F.** Collect information about Satyajit Ray and write a brief paragraph on his life and work.

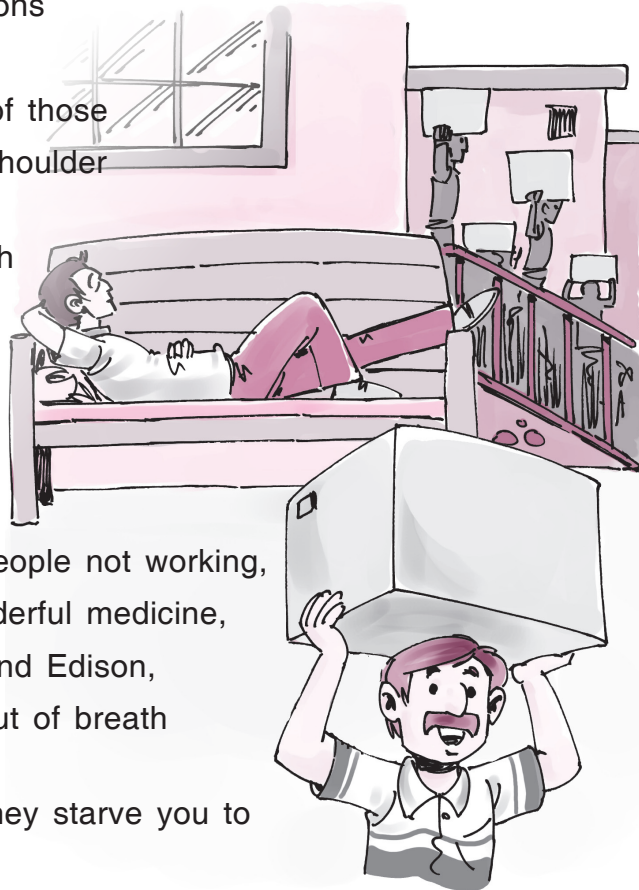
## DISCUSS

- G.** Have you ever taken your photo in a photo studio? How is photo taken there? Discuss the difference.
- H.** During Satyajit Ray's time, only a few families had cameras, but today, almost everyone uses a camera set in his/her mobile phone. Discuss this advancement that we see in technology.

# 3 More About People

*Satire is a kind of writing that criticises a person, an idea or an institution in a humorous way to show their faults or weakness. This poem is a satire. Read this poem to find what it makes fun of.*

When people aren't asking questions  
They're making suggestions.  
And when they're not doing one of those  
They're either looking over your shoulder  
or stepping on your toes.  
And then as if that weren't enough  
to annoy you  
They employ you.  
Anybody at **leisure**  
Incurs everybody's **displeasure**.  
It seems to be very **irking**  
To people at work to see other people not working,  
So they tell you that work is wonderful medicine,  
Just look at Firestone and Ford and Edison,  
And they lecture you till they're out of breath  
or something  
And then if you don't **succumb** they starve you to  
death or something.  
All of which results in a nasty **quirk**:  
That if you don't want to work you have to work to earn enough money  
So that you won't have to work.



—Ogden Nash

## NEW WORDS

**leisure:** free time

**displeasure:** displeases all

**irking:** irritating

**succumb:** to be not be able to fight an attack

**quirk:** strange outcome

## UNDERSTANDING THE POEM

### A. Tick (✓) the right answers.

1. When people are not asking questions, they're making

- (a) suggestions.
- (b) answers.
- (c) outcomes.

2. Work is a wonderful

- (a) pastime.
- (b) medicine.
- (c) exercise.

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

1. It seems to be very \_\_\_\_\_.
2. To people at work to see other people not \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Just look at Firestone and \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
4. And they lecture you till they're out of \_\_\_\_\_ or something.

### C. Answer these questions.

1. List three people mentioned in the poem who are famous. Find out why they are famous.
2. What forces a person to work?



## LANGUAGE SKILLS

**D. Underline the prefix in the following words.**

- |                |                |
|----------------|----------------|
| 1. displeasure | 2. impossible  |
| 3. tricycle    | 4. semicircle  |
| 5. bimonthly   | 6. undone      |
| 7. disappear   | 8. explode     |
| 9. monopoly    | 10. television |



## ACTIVITY

- E.** Write the theme of the poem in brief.



## DISCUSS

- F.** Organise and participate in a debate competition on 'Money Makes the Mare Go'. You can speak in favour of or against the motion.

# 4

## A Sound of Thunder



*Dinosaurs were very big animals that existed in the past. A person named Eckels wants to go into the past with the help of Time Machine and hunt a dinosaur. Read what happens when he goes into the past.*

The sign on the wall read:

**TIME SAFARI, INC.**

SAFARIS TO ANY YEAR IN THE PAST.

YOU NAME THE ANIMAL.

WE TAKE YOU THERE.

YOU SHOOT IT.

Eckels swallowed. He smiled as he waved a cheque for ten thousand dollars at the man behind the desk.

“Does this Safari guarantee I come back alive?”

“We guarantee nothing,” said the official, “except the dinosaurs.” He turned, “This is Mr Travis, your Safari guide to the Past. He will tell you what and where to shoot. Do not disobey.”

“A real Time Machine.” Eckels shook his head.

“Yes,” said the man behind the desk. “All you got to worry about is...”

“Shooting my dinosaur,” Eckels finished it for him.

“A Tyrannosaurus Rex. The Thunder Lizard, the meanest monster in history. Sign this release. Anything happens to you, we are not responsible. Those dinosaurs are hungry.”

Eckels flushed angrily, “Trying to scare me!”

“Frankly, yes. We don’t want anyone going who will panic. We are here to





give you the best thrill a hunter ever asked for. Good luck,” said the man behind the desk.

They moved silently across the room, taking their guns with them, towards the Machine.

First, a day and then a night and then a day and then a night.

A week, a month, a year, a decade! AD 2055 AD 2019! 1999! 1957! Gone! The Machine roared.

They put on their oxygen helmets and tested the intercoms.

Eckels swayed on the padded seat, his face pale. There were four other men in the Machine. Travis, his assistant, and two other hunters, Billings and Kramer.

The Machine **howled**. Time was a film run backward. The Machine slowed; its scream fell to a murmur. The Machine stopped.

The sun stopped in the sky.

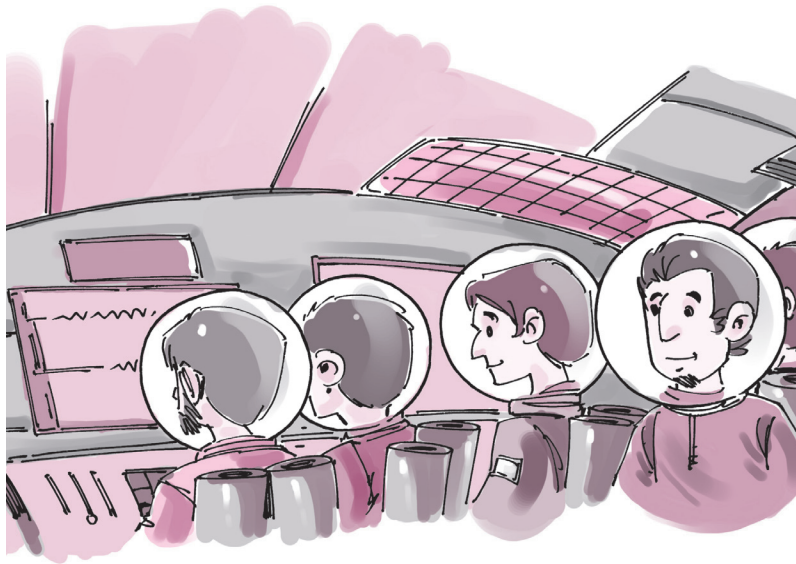
**howled:** made a noise

They were in an old time.

“That is a jungle of sixty million years ago,” said Travis. “And that is the Path, laid by Time Safari for your use. It floats six inches above the Earth. Doesn’t touch so much as one grass blade, flower, or tree. It’s an anti-gravity metal. Its purpose is to keep you from touching this world of the past in any way. Stay on the Path. Don’t go off. For any reason. And don’t shoot any animal we don’t okay.”

“Why?” asked Eckels.

“We don’t want to change the Future. We don’t belong here in the Past. Not



knowing it, we might kill an important animal, a small bird, a **roach**, a flower even, thus destroying an important link in a growing species.”

“That’s not clear,” said Eckels.

“All right,” Travis continued, “say we kill one mouse here. That means all the future families of this one mouse are destroyed, right?”

“Right.”

“With a stamp of your foot, you destroy a billion possible mice!”

“So what?” said Eckels.

“Well, what about the foxes that will need those mice to survive? For want of ten mice, a fox dies. For want of ten foxes, a lion starves. For want of a lion, billions of life forms are thrown into chaos and destruction. By stepping on one single mouse. So be careful. Stay on the Path. Never step off!”

“I see,” said Eckels. “Then it wouldn’t pay for us to touch the grass?”

“Correct. A little error here would multiply in sixty million years. This Machine, this Path, your clothing and bodies, were **sterilized** before the journey. We wear these oxygen helmets so we can’t introduce our bacteria into an ancient atmosphere.”

**roach:** cockroach  
**sterilized:** making germ-free

“How do we know which animals to shoot?”

“They’re marked with red paint,” said Travis. They were ready to leave the Machine.

The jungle was high and the jungle was broad. There were pterodactyls and giant bats soaring. Eckels, balanced on the narrow Path, aimed his rifle playfully.

“Stop that!” said Travis. “Don’t even aim for fun. If your gun should go off ...”

“Where’s our Tyrannosaurus?” Eckels asked.

“Up ahead. We’ll see him in sixty seconds. Look for the red paint. Don’t shoot till we give the word. Stay on the Path. Stay on the Path!”

“I’ve hunted tiger, wild boar, buffalo, elephant, but this is it,” said Eckels.



“I am shaking like a kid.”

Suddenly all sound ceased. Silence.

A sound of thunder.

Out of the mist came Tyrannosaurus Rex.

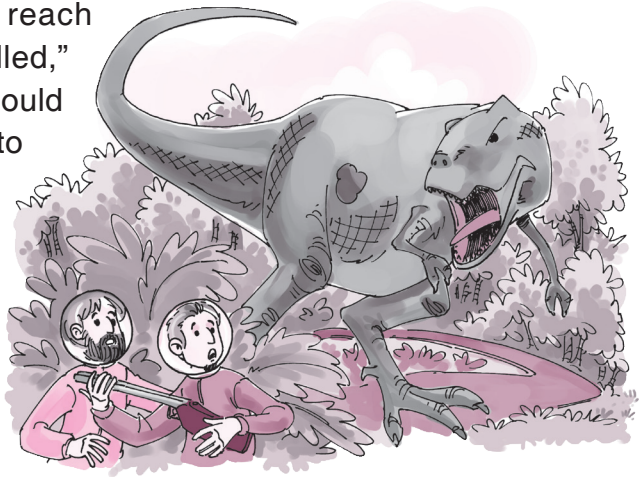
It came on great striding legs. It towered thirty feet above the trees. Its mouth showed teeth like daggers. Its eyes showed hunger.

“My God!” Eckels said. “It could reach and grab the moon. It can’t be killed,” Eckels pronounced quietly. There could be no argument. “We were fools to come. This is impossible.”

“Turn around,” commanded Travis. “Walk quietly to the Machine. We will **remit** half your fee.”

**remit:** refund

—Ray Bradbury



## UNDERSTANDING THE STORY

### A. Tick (✓) the right answers.

1. Thunder Lizard is another name of
  - (a) Tyrannosaurus Rex.
  - (b) Allosaurus.
  - (c) Komodo Dragon.
2. The jungle was
  - (a) fifty million years old.
  - (b) sixty million years old.
  - (c) forty million years old.

**B. Write true or false.**

- 1. The path floated six inches above the Earth. \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. Eckels could shoot any animal he wanted. \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. Tyrannosaurus Rex had teeth like daggers. \_\_\_\_\_
- 4. Eckels killed Tyrannosaurus Rex. \_\_\_\_\_

**C. Answer these questions.**

- 1. Why was the path laid by Time Safari made of anti-gravity metal?
- 2. Why could only certain animals be shot?
- 3. Why did the tourists have to wear oxygen helmets?
- 4. Describe the appearance of Tyrannosaurus Rex.

 **LANGUAGE SKILLS**

**D. Make sentences to bring out the differences between these words.**

- 1. Except \_\_\_\_\_  
Accept \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. Affect \_\_\_\_\_  
Effect \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. Wave \_\_\_\_\_  
Waive \_\_\_\_\_
- 4. Loose \_\_\_\_\_  
Lose \_\_\_\_\_
- 5. Reign \_\_\_\_\_  
Rein \_\_\_\_\_
- 6. Hare \_\_\_\_\_  
Heir \_\_\_\_\_
- 7. Dear \_\_\_\_\_  
Deer \_\_\_\_\_



## WRITING SKILLS

- E.** How does hunting affect the food chain? Write a paragraph on it.



## DISCUSS

- F.** Discuss the era you would like to visit using the Time Machine.
- G.** The story, 'A Sound of Thunder' is science fiction. What is science fiction? Using the library or Internet, collect information about it. Discuss any other science fiction story in your class.
- H.** Discuss 'Is technology a boon or a curse'?

# 5

## Permanent Helpers

*One should be self-reliant and not depend on others for one's work.  
In the story you are going to read, Ravi, a young boy learns the hard  
way that we should not depend on others for our work.*

Ravi and Shravan were classmates. They studied in the seventh class. Their houses were in the same neighbourhood. Though they attended the same school, they never came to school or went back together. This was because the boys belonged to two completely different families. Ravi's father was



very rich and Ravi was his only son. **Petted and pampered** by everyone at home, he grew up to be an arrogant boy. He had a number of helpers at his **beck and call**. They were his personal helpers. His clothes were washed, ironed and put into his cupboard by them. They brought his lunch to school. The driver who dropped him and picked him up from school always had another person sitting in the front seat with him. This person would carry his schoolbag to the class. A helper accompanied him wherever he went. If he was playing, the person sat patiently in the school compound and watched him. Yet he **grumbled** that he didn't have enough help or that they were inefficient. In fact, there was always a scowl of dissatisfaction on his face. He never did well in class or on the games field.

Shravan, on the other hand, belonged to a very poor family. He had five brothers. What little was available was shared by all of them. They had to pack their own

### **Petted and**

**pampered:** to take care of somebody very well

### **beck and call:**

always ready to obey somebody's orders

### **grumbled:**

complained

bags, wash their own clothes and polish their own shoes. Their mother never had enough time to do all the housework. The boys had to help with the household chores. Every Sunday Shravan had to clean the windows and air the mattresses. Each brother had his own set of chores. They found time to do their chores between homework and schoolwork. Yet Shravan was always cheerful. He had a pleasant temperament and a smile for everyone. The whole class loved him. He was liked by the teachers also because he was truthful, studious and intelligent.

One day during recess all the boys were playing in the field. Their class teacher was sitting inside the classroom. He could hear the boys talking.

As usual, Ravi was complaining, "I couldn't get ready on time today because two of my helpers were on leave and the third one was late. Though I have four helpers all to myself, I feel utterly miserable sometimes. How am I to get along with such inefficient, disloyal people? My father pays them a handsome salary, yet they stay away at the slightest excuse. Ramu didn't come to work today only because his son had fever and was in hospital. I am sure his wife could have managed to look after the boy. He should have been there to polish my shoes and take out my school uniform. As it is, I had to ask Bhola to do Ramu's work. Bhola puts out my bathing soap and towel and mixes the hot and cold water for me. I had to do it myself today!" he sulked.

Then he turned to Ravi and asked, "Shravan, what do you do when your helpers run away or go on leave? When some of them are absent do you still have enough people to help you? How do you punish the ones who stay away?" he added mockingly knowing full well that Ravi had no helpers in the house.

He wanted to make fun of Shravan in front of the others. That morning Shravan had been able to answer all the questions the teacher asked. Ravi didn't even know where Assam was on the map of India. But Shravan was unusually intelligent.

He smiled and replied, "I have no such trouble, Ravi. I have ten permanent helpers who never leave me at all. They work for me diligently and serve me faithfully day and night."

The other boys laughed. Ravi felt insulted. He became red in the face and



moved away from the group. The teacher who was inside had also heard the discussion. He also laughed at Shravan's retort. But he felt that Shravan was wrong to lie even for fun. He called Shravan inside. The other boys heard the teacher calling Shravan. They decided to follow him into the class. Ravi had to go in too.

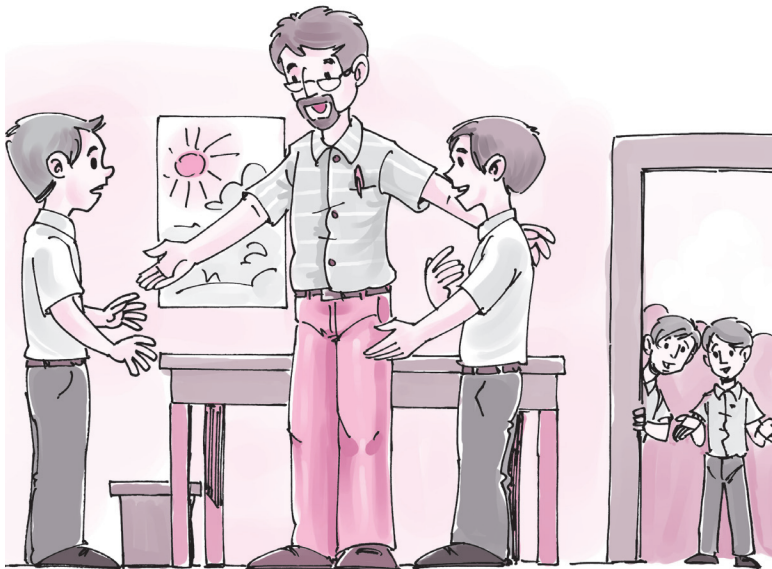
The teacher looked at them all and said, "Shravan, I heard what you said just now. Although I don't blame you for putting Ravi in his place by saying you have ten helpers, I don't approve of lies. You should always speak the truth. What you said just now can be considered a white lie—a lie that doesn't hurt anybody. But, remember, a lie is a lie. You should never lie. Now, you don't really have ten helpers, do you?"

Shravan replied, "No, Sir, I did not lie. I really meant it. I have ten permanent helpers who never leave me."

The teacher stared at him in amazement. Whatever was the boy talking about? Was he lying to him too? Looking at the surprised face of the teacher, Shravan said, "Sir, I can explain why I say I have ten permanent helpers. I have two legs, two hands, a mouth, a nose, two eyes and two ears. These are my ten helpers who are permanently with me. They serve me faithfully and never leave me. Sir, I have four brothers. My father is a clerk in the State Government. His salary is modest. We live carefully and our mother does most of the housework. We learnt the art of self-reliance very early in life. Our

parents taught us to do all our work ourselves. We never depend on others. In fact, because we rely on ourselves we find it easy to look after ourselves and even have time to help others."

"How right he is!" Mahidar exclaimed. "Shravan is always the first one in class





to finish his work. He finds time to help me out whenever I am stuck in Geometry.”

“Yes! He has hit the nail on the head!” Sumant added. “Shravan’s desk is the neatest; he makes most of the charts for the school board and decorates the classroom board too.”

The teacher also smiled. “Yes, you are right. Shravan is always ready with his work on time and is the most helpful student in the school. Most of the teachers rely on him to fetch and carry for them. Shravan, the ten helpers that you counted out are the only reliable ones. They never leave us and go away. Ravi, why don’t you try to use your ten helpers too? Then you will never be late for school. They may even turn out to be better than your present helpers!”

We don’t know what happened, but that afternoon when it was time to go back home, Mahidar and Sumant saw Ravi and Shravan walking home together. Ravi had sent his car away and was carrying his own bag home!

## UNDERSTANDING THE STORY

### A. Tick (✓) the right answers.

1. In which class did Ravi and Shravan study?

(a) seventh.

(b) eighth.

(c) ninth.

2. Shravan was always

(a) sad.

(b) angry.

(c) cheerful.

3. How many permanent helpers did Shravan have?

(a) 8

(b) 5

(c) 10

**B. Match the following.**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. Ravi had a number of helpers          | (a) very early in life.                          |
| 2. My father pays them a handsome salary | (b) rely on him.                                 |
| 3. We learnt the art of self-reliance    | (c) at his beck and call.                        |
| 4. Most of the teachers                  | (d) yet, they stay away at the slightest excuse. |

**C. Answer these questions.**

1. What kind of a boy was Shravan?
2. Why did Ravi want to make fun of Shravan?
3. Why did the teacher scold Shravan?
4. What do you learn from this story?



**LANGUAGE SKILLS**

**D. Tick (✓) the right word.**

1. He reached school in/on time.
2. The teacher stared at/on him in amazement.
3. I don't blame you for/of putting Ravi in his place.
4. How right he is/are!



**WRITING SKILLS**

- E. Write a paragraph on 'Self-help is the best help'.
- F. Imagine your teacher scolded you for something. But you were not responsible for it. Write a diary entry stating your feelings.



**DISCUSS**

- G. Discuss why we should take good care of our body parts.

# 6 The Paper Boat

*Rabindranath Tagore, one of India's greatest poets, through the symbol of paper boat in this poem teaches us that we should not blame the fate for our miseries but take any bad event which happens to us in the right spirit.*

I remember a day in my childhood when  
I floated a paper boat on the stream.  
It was a wet day of July; I was alone and happy over my play.  
I floated my paper boat on the stream.

Suddenly the storm-clouds thickened: the wind  
came in gusts, and rain poured in torrents.  
**Rills** of muddy water rushed and swelled the stream  
and sank my boat.

Bitterly I thought that the storm had come on  
purpose to spoil my happiness; all its  
anger was against me.

All this long cloudy day of July I have been **mus**ing  
over those games in life in which I was the loser.

Just now I am blaming my fate for the many tricks it  
has played on me, when suddenly I remembered the paper boat that sank  
in the stream.

—Rabindranath Tagore

## NEW WORDS

**Rills:** shallow channels cut by water flowing over soil  
**mus**ing: thinking

## UNDERSTANDING THE POEM

### A. Tick (✓) the right answers.

- The poet is talking about his  
(a) youth.  (b) old age.  (c) childhood.
- Where did the poet float his paper boat?  
(a) river.  (b) sea.  (c) stream.
- In which month has the poet been musing?  
(a) June.   
(b) July.   
(c) August.

### B. Write true or false.

- The poet floated a paper boat on the stream. \_\_\_\_\_
- The boat did not sink despite the heavy rain. \_\_\_\_\_
- The poet was happy that his boat sank. \_\_\_\_\_

### C. Answer these questions.

- Why did the boat sink?
- Why was the poet bitter?
- What is the message of the poem?

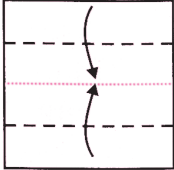
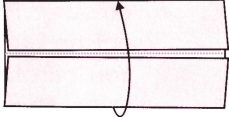
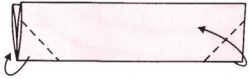
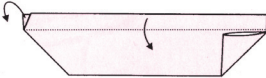
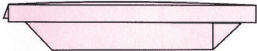
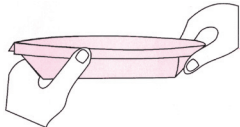
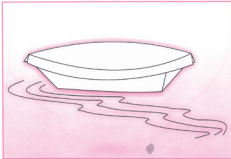
## LANGUAGE SKILLS

### D. Write antonyms of the following words.

- |             |       |            |       |
|-------------|-------|------------|-------|
| 1. bitter   | _____ | 2. loser   | _____ |
| 3. remember | _____ | 4. sank    | _____ |
| 5. happy    | _____ | 6. against | _____ |

## ACTIVITY

E. Make a paper boat. Follow these steps.

		
<p>1. Find the centre line of the paper. Fold the upper and the lower edges to the centre line.</p>	<p>2. Fold in half.</p>	<p>3. Fold the left corner backwards and the right corner forwards.</p>
		
<p>4. Turn both the upper flaps to the outer side and crease.</p>	<p>5. ... Like this.</p>	<p>6. Slide your finger in the pocket and give shape to the boat.</p>
		

# 7 The Model Millionaire

*Handsome is one who handsome does. Hughie Erskine is not only handsome but also has a good heart. Let's read how he takes pity on a beggar and the beggar helps him with money!*

Hughie Erskine was a lovable young man. He was not very intelligent though, we must admit. He never said a clever or even an unpleasant thing in his life. But he was wonderfully good-looking, with a handsome face, curly hair, and grey eyes. He was very popular with everybody, and he had every skill except that of making money. When his father died, he left Hughie no money at all. Hughie lived on a little money that an old aunt gave him. He tried his hand at several jobs but he did not like any of them. Finally he became nothing—a delightful, unsuccessful young man with a handsome face and no job. To make matters worse, he was in love. The girl he loved was Laura Merton, the daughter of a retired Colonel. Laura and Hughie were deeply in love. They were the handsomest couple in London, and did not have a penny between them. The Colonel was very fond of Hughie but would not hear of any marriage.

“Come to me, my boy, when you have got ten thousand pounds of your own, and we will see about it,” he used to say. Hughie looked very unhappy on those days. Only his visits to Laura made him happy.



One morning, he went to see a great friend of his, Alan Trevor. Trevor was a painter whose pictures were eagerly bought by lovers of art. He was very fond of Hughie for his cheerfulness and his good nature.

When Hughie went in, he found Trevor painting a wonderful life-size picture of a beggar man. The beggar himself was standing on a raised platform in a corner of the studio. He was a very old man with a **wrinkled face** and pitiful looks. Over his shoulder he wore a **coarse** brown coat, all torn; his thick boots were patched and mended, and with one hand he leaned on a rough stick, while with the other he held out his torn hat for **alms**.

“What a wonderful **model!**” whispered Hughie, as he shook hands with his friend.

“And how miserable he looks. But I suppose, to you painters, his face is his fortune.”

“Certainly,” replied Trevor, “you don’t want a beggar to look happy, do you?”

“How much does a model get for sitting?” asked Hughie, as he found himself a comfortable seat on a sofa.

“A **shilling** an hour.”

“And how much do you get for your picture, Alan?”

“Oh, for this I get two thousand pounds.”

“Well, I think the model must get a part of it,” cried Hughie, laughing. “They work quite as hard as you do.”

“Nonsense! It’s all very well, Hughie, for you to talk, but look at all the trouble I have getting the paint exactly the right colour and putting it on the **canvas** exactly the right way. It’s not easy work I can tell you. But you mustn’t chatter. I’m very busy. So keep quiet.”

After some time the servant came in, and told Trevor that the frame-maker wanted to speak to him.

“Don’t run away, Hughie,” he said, as he went out. “I will be back in a moment.”

The old beggar sat down for a moment on a wooden bench that was behind him. He looked

**wrinkled face:** lines or folds on your face, that form as you get older

**coarse:** rough (cloth)

**alms:** money that is given to a poor person

**model:** a person who is employed to be painted, drawn, photographed, etc., by an artist or photographer

**shilling:** a British coin in use until 1971 (There were 20 shillings in one pound.)

**canvas:** material used for painting on

so miserable that Hughie felt sad, and searched in his pockets to see what money he had. All he could find was a gold coin, a **sovereign**. “Poor old fellow,” he thought to himself. “He wants it more than I do, but it means no buses for me for a month.” And he walked across the studio and slipped the sovereign into the beggar’s hand.

The old man was surprised, and a smile appeared on his lips. “Thank you, sir,” he said. “Thank you very much!”

Then Trevor came back, and Hughie took his leave, **blushing** a little at what he had done. He spent the day with Laura, got a scolding for giving the beggar all his money, and had to walk home.

That night he met Trevor at the Artist’s Club.

“Well, Alan, did you finish the picture?” he asked.

“Finished and framed, my boy!” answered Trevor. “And by the way, you’ve made a new friend. That old model you saw seems to have become quite fond of you. I had to tell him all about you—who you are, where you live, what your income is, what your hopes are ...”

“My dear Alan,” cried Hughie, “I shall probably find him waiting for me when I go home. But, of course, you are only joking. Poor old man! I wish I could do something for him. I’ve got a lot of old clothes at home. Do you think he would want any of them? Why, his rags were falling to **bits**.”

**sovereign:** an old British gold coin worth one pound

**blushing:** becoming red in the face because (he) was embarrassed

**bits:** turning into small pieces

“I’ll tell him of your offer,” said Trevor, with a smile.

“And now tell me how Laura is. The old model was quite interested in her.”

“You don’t mean to say you talked to him about her?” said Hughie.

“Certainly I did. He knows all about the pitiless Colonel, the lovely Laura, and the ten thousand pounds.”

“You told that old beggar about all that?” cried Hughie, looking very red and angry.





“My dear boy,” said Trevor smiling, “that old beggar, as you call him, is one of the richest men in Europe. He could buy all London tomorrow if he wanted. He has a house in every capital, eats from gold plates, and knows all the great men in the world.”

“What do you mean?” cried Hughie.

“I mean what I say,” said Trevor. “The old man you saw today in the studio was **Baron** Hausberg. He is a great friend of mine, buys all my pictures, and asked me a month ago to paint him as a beggar. It is the wish of a **millionaire**. And I must say he looked wonderful in his rags.”

**Baron:** a person from a family of high social rank  
**millionaire:** a very rich person

“Baron Hausberg!” cried Hughie. “Good heavens! I gave him a sovereign!” He sank into an armchair, looking most unhappy.

“Gave him a sovereign!” shouted Trevor, and burst into a roar of laughter. “My dear boy, you’ll never see it again. His business is with other people’s money. He is a banker.”

“Why didn’t you tell me, Alan,” said Hughie, “and not let me make such a fool of myself?”

“Well, to begin with, Hughie,” said Trevor, “I never knew that you went about giving alms in that careless way. Besides, when you came in I wasn’t sure whether Hausberg would like anyone to know who he was. You remember how he was dressed.”

“What a fool he must think me!” said Hughie.

“Not at all. He seemed very happy. He kept laughing to himself and rubbing his old wrinkled hands together. I didn’t understand why he was so interested to know all about you, but now I do. He’ll put your sovereign



in the bank for you, Hughie, pay you the interest every six months, and have a good story to tell his friends.”

“I’m an unlucky **devil**,” said Hughie. “The best thing I can do is to go to bed. And, my dear Alan, you mustn’t tell anyone. I’m ashamed of myself.”

The next morning, Hughie had a visitor.

Mr Gustave Naudine was an old gentleman with gold spectacles and grey hair.

“I have come from Baron Hausberg,” he said. “The Baron ...”

“I beg, sir, that you will offer him my apologies,” stammered Hughie.

“The Baron,” said the old gentleman with a smile, “has asked me to bring you this letter.” And he held out an envelope.

On the outside was written, “A wedding present to Hughie Erskine and Laura Merton, from an old beggar.” Inside was a cheque for ten thousand pounds.

When they were married Alan Trevor was the **best man**. And the Baron made a speech at the wedding.

**devil:** (here) a person who has behaved badly

**best man:** a male friend or relative of the bridegroom at a wedding, who helps him during the wedding ceremony

**model:** a person who is considered an excellent example (of a millionaire)

“Millionaire models,” remarked Alan, “are rare enough, but **model** millionaires are rarer still!”

—Oscar Wilde

## UNDERSTANDING THE STORY

### A. Tick (✓) the right answers.

1. Hughie Erskine was

- (a) good looking.
- (b) intelligent.
- (c) rich.

2. Trevor was a/an

- (a) actor.
- (b) painter.
- (c) businessman.

3. The old beggar was one of the richest men in

- (a) America.
- (b) Asia.
- (c) Europe.

4. The Baron gifted Hughie a cheque worth

- (a) five thousand pounds.
- (b) ten thousand pounds.
- (c) six thousand pounds.

**B. Write true or false.**

- 1. Hughie Erskine was a rich man.
- 2. The Colonel disliked Hughie.
- 3. Hughie Erskine gave a sovereign to the old beggar.
- 4. The old beggar's name was Baron Hausberg.
- 5. Hughie Erskine could not marry Laura Merton.

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**C. Answer these questions.**

- 1. Describe the appearance of Hughie Erskine.
- 2. Why did Colonel not want to marry his daughter to Hughie Erskine?
- 3. Why did Hughie Erskine feel sorry for the old man?
- 4. Why do you think the old man smiled when Hughie have him a sovereign?
- 5. Why did Alan say 'Millionaire models are rare, but model millionaires are rarer still'?

## LANGUAGE SKILLS

**D. Pound is the currency used in UK. Now match the following countries with their currencies.**

<b>Countries</b>	<b>Currencies</b>
1. USA	(a) Euro
2. Russia	(b) Baht
3. Thailand	(c) Rouble
4. Germany	(d) Dollar
5. Saudi Arabia	(e) Taka
6. Bangladesh	(f) Riyal
7. China	(g) Krone
8. Denmark	(h) Renminbi

## WRITING SKILLS

**E.** Imagine you were the millionaire model. What thoughts went inside your mind, when Hughie Erskine gave you a sovereign.

## DISCUSS

**F.** Discuss in the class how appearances can be deceptive.

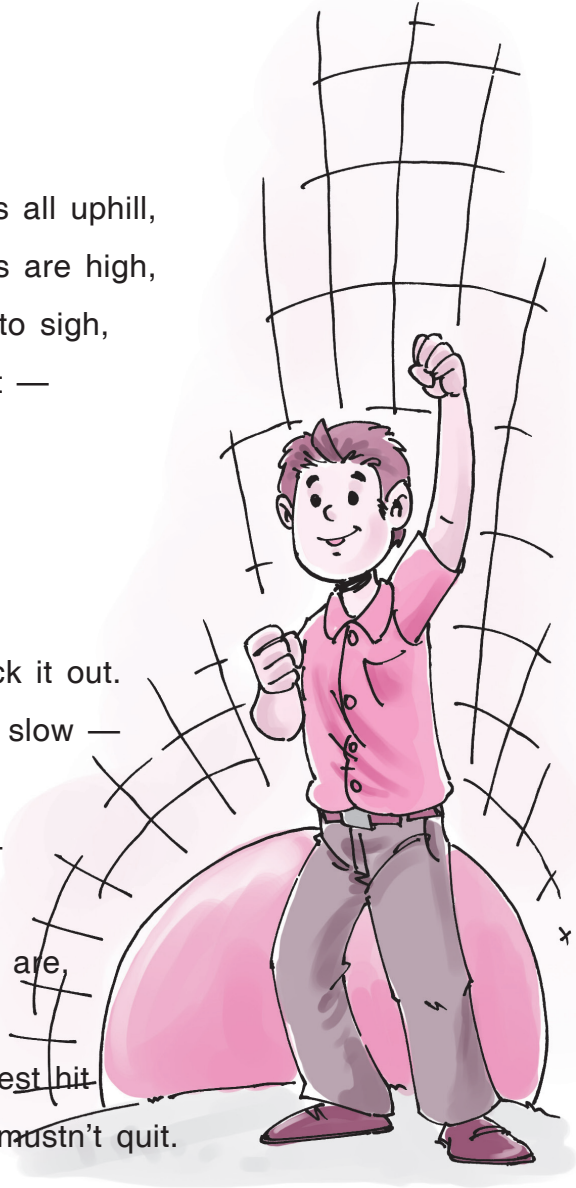
# 8

## Never Quit



*We have to face many problems during the course of our life. But we should never quit whatever the odds. Remember, “A winner never quits and the quitter never wins.”*

When things go wrong,  
As they sometimes will,  
When the road you're **trudging** seems all uphill,  
When the funds are low and the debts are high,  
And you want to smile, but you have to sigh,  
When care is pressing you down a bit —  
Rest if you must, but don't you quit.  
Life is **queer** with its twists and turns,  
As every one of us sometimes learns,  
And many a failure turns about  
When he might have won had he stuck it out.  
Don't give up though the pace seems slow —  
You may succeed with another blow.  
Success is failure turned inside out —  
The silver tint of the clouds of doubt,  
And you never can tell how close you are,  
It may be near when it seems so far;  
So stick to the fight when you're hardest hit.  
It's when things seem worst that you mustn't quit.



## NEW WORDS

**trudging:** climbing

**queer:** strange

## UNDERSTANDING THE POEM

### A. Tick (✓) the right answers.

1. If we are facing many problems, at that time we should

(a) quit.

(b) take rest.

(c) run away.

2. According to the poet, life is

(a) queer.

(b) simple.

(c) normal.

3. We should stick to the fight when we are hit

(a) softly.

(b) hardest.

(c) lightly.

### B. Write true or false.

1. Success is failure turned inside out.

---

2. When things seem best we should quit.

---

3. We should smile when we want to cry.

---

4. To quit is the easiest way to solve all problems.

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### C. Answer these questions.

1. What should we do when we are going to fail in some task?

2. What is the message of the poem?



## LANGUAGE SKILLS

**D.** Given below are some sentences which may be inspirational or demotivating. Write 'I' for the Inspirational sentence and 'D' for Demotivating sentence.

1. Every cloud has a silver lining. \_\_\_\_\_

2. One cannot conquer destiny. \_\_\_\_\_

3. Never give up. \_\_\_\_\_

4. Circumstances can never be changed. \_\_\_\_\_

5. Fortune favours the brave. \_\_\_\_\_



## ACTIVITY

**E.** Collect five quotations based on the theme 'Never Quit'.



## DISCUSS

**F.** Discuss the role of inspiring poems/stories in cheering up our depressed mood.

# 9

## Escape from Paris

*During the French Revolution (1789–1799) common people fought against the rich upper class, or the aristocracy. They demanded more power and more rights.*

*The story is set in the second half of the Revolution. Thousands of upper-class families were being executed at the guillotine (a device used to kill people). Anyone who tried to save them would be killed as well.*

*The Scarlet Pimpernel was the mysterious leader of a group of English nobles who saved French aristocrats.*

**Paris:** September, 1792

Every evening, before the city gates closed, the market carts would leave the city to bring back fruits and vegetables. And, almost every day, some members of a noble family would try to escape in them. In various disguises, they tried to slip out through the barricades that were guarded by soldiers of the Revolution.

But they were nearly always caught. Sergeant Bibot at the West Gate was particularly clever. He could make out a person even in the most perfect disguise.

People gathered near the West Gate every evening to watch Bibot trap his victims.

Recently, many noble families had succeeded in escaping out of France and reaching England safely. People said these escapes were organised by a group of brave English noblemen who risked their lives to save innocent victims from the guillotine. Their leader seemed extraordinarily clever.

No one had seen this mysterious Englishman but they knew his method of working. He would send a piece of paper signed with a tiny, red, star-shaped flower called the Scarlet Pimpernel. Soon after the warning, the sergeants at



the gates would hear that some high-class family had succeeded in escaping to England. Sergeant Grosperre in charge of the North Gate had been **executed** for allowing a noble family to escape.

There was a sum of five thousand francs promised to the person who could capture the Scarlet Pimpernel. People felt that Sergeant Bibot was sure to get the reward. “Bah!” Bibot said to his trusted **corporal**, “Sergeant Grosperre was a fool! If I had been at the North Gate last week, I would never have let them escape.”

The crowd came closer, eager to listen to Bibot’s story. “That evening, the market carts were going through. There was one **laden with** barrels, and driven by an old man. Grosperre thought he was very clever; he looked into some of the barrels and found them empty, and he let the carts go out of the gate.”

**executed:** killed  
**corporal:** here, a person of low rank in the army  
**laden with:** full of

“Half an hour later,” continued Sergeant Bibot, “a captain of the guard comes up with a dozen soldiers with him.

‘Has a cart gone through?’ he asks Grosperre, breathlessly.

‘Yes,’ says Grosperre, ‘about half an hour ago.’

‘And you let them escape?’ shouts the captain angrily. ‘You’ll go to the guillotine for this, sergeant! That cart had hidden the Duke of Chalis and all his family!’

Then the captain of the guard turns to his soldiers, ‘After them, my men,’ he shouts.

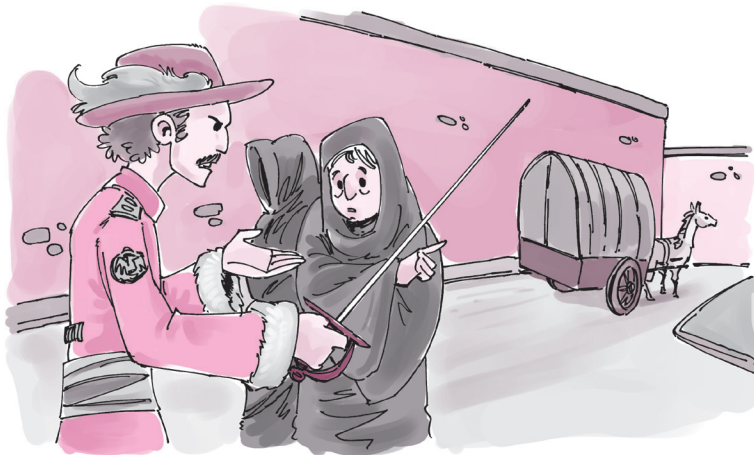
And with that, he rushes through the gate, followed by his soldiers.”

Sergeant Bibot paused for effect, “But alas!” he said at last, “The Duke’s family wasn’t in the cart; the driver wasn’t the Scarlet Pimpernel! No ...! The captain of the guard was the Scarlet Pimpernel and everyone of his soldiers were members of the noble family!”

This time the crowd said nothing. They felt a little scared.

Now the sun was sinking low in the west. Bibot got ready to close the gates.





“Move the carts forward,” he said.

Nearly a dozen covered carts stood in a row. Bibot spoke to a few of the old women driving the carts.

He asked one of them when she was coming back.

“I don’t know when,” the old woman said with a little laugh, “My grandson has the smallpox,” she said, pointing her thumb towards the inside of her cart, “And I won’t be allowed to get into the city tomorrow.”

At the first mention of the word smallpox, Bibot had quickly stepped backwards. The crowd also scattered, leaving the cart standing alone in the middle of the road. Everyone was silent, terrified at the thought of the awful disease.

“Get out of here with your **pox-stricken** family,” ordered Bibot.

“Bah! What a man you are to be scared of some sickness,” said the old woman with a loud laugh, as she drove her cart out of the gate.

**pox-stricken:**  
affected by smallpox

This scene had spoilt the entertainment for the evening.

Soon, as in the case of Gropierre, a captain of the guard appeared suddenly.

But Bibot knew him well. He could not be the Scarlet Pimpernel.

“Did a cart come this way?” he shouted breathlessly.

“What cart?” asked Bibot.

“Driven by an old woman ... A covered cart ...”

“There were a dozen of them.”

“An old woman who said her grandson had the pox?”

“Yes ...”

“You haven’t let them go, have you?”

“Oh!” said Bibot, whose red cheeks had suddenly become white with fear, “Why?”

“Because that cart contained the Countess of Tournay and her two children, all of them condemned to be beheaded,” said the captain.

“And the driver?” whispered Bibot, as a **shudder** ran down his spine.

**shudder:** shiver because of fear

“It was the Englishman—the Scarlet Pimpernel,” replied the captain quietly.

—*Baroness Orczy*

## UNDERSTANDING THE STORY

### A. Tick (✓) the right answers.

- Sergeant Bibot was appointed at the  
(a) north gate.  (b) west gate.  (c) east gate.
- What sum was promised to the person who would capture the Scarlet Pimpernel?  
(a) five thousand francs.   
(b) ten thousand francs.   
(c) twenty thousand francs.
- The cart contained  
(a) Duchess of Tournay.   
(b) Countess of Tournay.   
(c) Princess of Tournay.

### B. Write true or false.

- Sergeant Bibot was very clever. \_\_\_\_\_
- Sergeant GrosPierre was rewarded for arresting Scarlet Pimpernel. \_\_\_\_\_

3. The old woman's grandson had smallpox. \_\_\_\_\_
4. Bibot was able to capture Scarlet Pimpernel. \_\_\_\_\_

**C. Answer these questions.**

1. What was Scarlet Pimpernel's method of working?
2. How was GrosPierre fooled?
3. How was Scarlet Pimpernel able to fool Bibot?



## LANGUAGE SKILLS

**D. 'White with fear' is an idiom. It means to become pale due to fear. Now find out the meaning of these idioms.**

1. To develop cold feet. \_\_\_\_\_
2. Act on the spur of the moment. \_\_\_\_\_
3. Fight tooth and nail. \_\_\_\_\_
4. Give someone the slip. \_\_\_\_\_
5. Smell a rat. \_\_\_\_\_



## WRITING SKILLS

**E. Find out how Shivaji escaped when he was imprisoned by Aurangzeb. Write a paragraph on it.**



## DISCUSS

**F. Discuss the causes of the French Revolution. You can take help of your school library or the Internet.**

# 10 The Man Who Drew Faces

*The story, The Man Who Drew Faces, is an excellent story that tells how day-to-day events affect our faces. The artist in this story very cleverly teaches a little girl to be good and bring beauty and smile on the faces of her parents.*

He was a very, very clever man. All the children knew him well, because he would often draw pictures for them. He could draw animals and toys, and children and engines and ships and aeroplanes, in the **twinkling of an eye**.

One day, little Sally Johnson found him all alone, sitting on a stile. He had his sketch-book on his knee and he was drawing the distant hills. Sally peeped over his arm.

**twinkling of an eye:**  
very quickly

“Can you draw faces?” she asked. “You know, portraits of real people, so that I know who they are?”

“Oh yes,” said the artist, and his eyes twinkled down at Sally. “I’m very good at that, because I can draw what’s in the faces, as well as the faces themselves.”

“What do you mean?” asked Sally.

“Well, now—who shall I draw for you?” asked the man, and he sharpened his pencil.

“You tell me—and you’ll soon see what I mean.”

“Draw my Granny’s face,” said Sally.

The man set his pencil to paper and began to draw a



face. It was a lovely face, sweet and young.

“That’s not my Granny!” said Sally.

“It is—when she was twenty,” said the artist. He put in a line or two—and then some more. He gave the mouth a little twist, and drew wrinkles round the eyes. The face became old and rather sad and tired.

“Yes. That’s my Granny,” said Sally. “You made her into my Granny when you put in those little lines. How funny that those tiny lines should make that face into my Granny’s!”

“That weren’t always in your Granny’s face,” said the artist. “See that one there—that’s a worry line—it came when one of her sons ran away and didn’t write to her for two years. And do you see that one—that little frown line? That came when your Grandpa lost his money, and she was cross and upset because she had to give up her nice house and garden, and hadn’t much money to bring up her children.”

“Yes. Mummy told me about that time,” said Sally.

“Did it really put that line into her face? What’s that one there—at the corner of her mouth? It’s a nice line—it makes her mouth look sweet.”

“Ah, your mother put that there!” said the man. “She was good and sweet and helpful, and your Granny couldn’t help smiling when she was about.”

“Oh, I’m glad,” said Sally. She pointed to the wrinkles. “Look at those lines. How did Granny get those?”

“They came when one of her daughters was very ill,” said the man. “And they got worse when your Granny discovered that a great friend of hers was doing something wrong. And they got worse still when she fell ill, and was always cross with people. It’s a good face, isn’t it, even though it’s a bit tired and sad?”

“Yes,” said Sally. “I didn’t know people’s faces grew like that because of things that happened to them. Now draw my mother’s face. She’s lovely.”

The man drew another face, round and young and unlined. Sally knew it was her mother when she was younger. “You haven’t put in the lines,” she said.



“Mummy hasn’t many, but she’s got a few. Put them in and tell me what they mean.”

“Well, here’s one,” said the artist. “That came when your brother fell off his bicycle and broke his leg very badly. That’s a worry line. And here’s another. That came when your Granny was very ill. And this one came when your Daddy lost his job—that’s a very sad line, isn’t it?”

“Yes. But Daddy’s working again now, so perhaps that will go,” said Sally. “I don’t like it. It makes Mummy’s face look old. What are those little lines round her eyes?”

“Oh, they’re laugh lines,” said the artist. “Your mother’s fond of a joke, isn’t she, and she’s gay and bright. She put those merry little lines there herself. But here’s a bad line, look—now what was that? Yes, it was when your big sister wouldn’t work at school, and almost got expelled for her naughtiness.”

“Yes. I remember that, though I was very small then,” said Sally. “But Janey’s better now—she’s just won a scholarship. That line oughtn’t to be there any more.”

“Janey put it there, and there it will stay,” said the artist. “It’s a good thing Janey doesn’t know it. It would make her sad.”

Sally looked **earnestly** at the picture. Yes, it was her mother’s face, there was no doubt about it. She looked at a dear little curly line by the mouth. “What’s that?” she said. “I like that. What put that **earnestly**: very carefully nice little smiley line there?”

“You did, Sally,” said the artist, and his eyes looked very gentle. “You’re a nice little girl, you know—and I’ve heard you’re sweet-tempered and kind. The only line in your mother’s face that you’ve put there is that little curly one you like—and see—I’ll make it a little bigger—and now your mother’s face is even sweeter.”

“Yes. It is,” said Sally. “I’ll make it bigger on Mummy’s real face. You see if I don’t! I’d like to give Mummy a nice smiley line like that. I’d really love to put that into Mummy’s face. Do you think people know how faces are made—do you think ...?”

“Oh, I can’t answer so many questions!” said the artist, and he got down from the stile. “You want to know too much! I’ve given away a lot of secrets today. Good-bye, Sally. Use my secrets well!”

I’d like to meet that man, wouldn’t you, and see him draw some faces? I wonder what lines you’ve put into your own mother’s face? Some very nice ones, I hope!

—Enid Blyton

## UNDERSTANDING THE STORY

### A. Tick (✓) the right answers.

1. The artist was very

(a) dull.

(b) clever.

(c) idiotic.

2. Sally asked the artist to draw

(a) granny’s face.

(b) mother’s face.

(c) father’s face.

3. The artist called the little lines round mother’s eyes as

(a) laugh lines.

(b) cry lines.

(c) dry lines.

### B. Write true or false.

1. All the children knew the artist, because he would often draw pictures for them.

---

2. Sally was a very naughty girl.

---

3. Janey was almost expelled from school.

---

4. The little curly line on mother’s face was due to Sally.

---



**C. Answer these questions.**

1. Why was the artist popular among children?
2. What was so special about artist's drawing of faces?
3. According to the artist, what do the lines on people's faces suggest?
4. Do you think that children's actions and behaviour have any effect on their parent's faces?



**LANGUAGE SKILLS**

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

<b>Words</b>	<b>Synonyms</b>
1. distant	(a) like
2. cross	(b) depressed
3. fond	(c) angry
4. sad	(d) far
5. lovely	(e) to make something known
6. reveal	(f) beautiful



**WRITING SKILLS**

- E.** Write a paragraph on 'Things I can do to make parents happy'.
- F.** What do you mean by a 'beautiful face'? Answer based on your reading of the story.



**DISCUSS**

- G.** Discuss the proverb, 'Face is the index of the mind' in your class.

# 11 English

*We should be very careful about what we say or write. Words can heal or injure. We should try to master the English language by regular practice.*

As gardens grow with flowers  
English grows with words,  
Words that have secret powers,  
Words that give joy like birds.

Some of the words you say,  
Both in and out of school,  
Are brighter than the day,  
And deeper than a pool.

Some words there are that dance,  
Some words there are that sigh,  
The fool's words come by chance,  
The poet's to heaven fly.

When you are grown, your tongue  
Should give the joys of birds;  
Get while you are young  
The gift of English words.

—*Eleanor Farjeon*



## UNDERSTANDING THE POEM

### A. Tick (✓) the right answers.

1. The beauty of a garden grows with  
(a) flowers.  (b) gate.  (c) wall.
2. What has a secret power?  
(a) garden.  (b) English.  (c) words.
3. Some words are deeper than the  
(a) pond.  (b) river.  (c) pool.

### B. Answer these questions.

1. How does the poet compare a garden with English?
2. What does the second stanza say? Write in brief.

## LANGUAGE SKILLS

### C. Make sentences with the following words.

1. Garden: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Secret: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Pool: \_\_\_\_\_

## WRITING SKILLS

### D. Write a paragraph on

‘Words are the Key to Communication’.

## DISCUSS

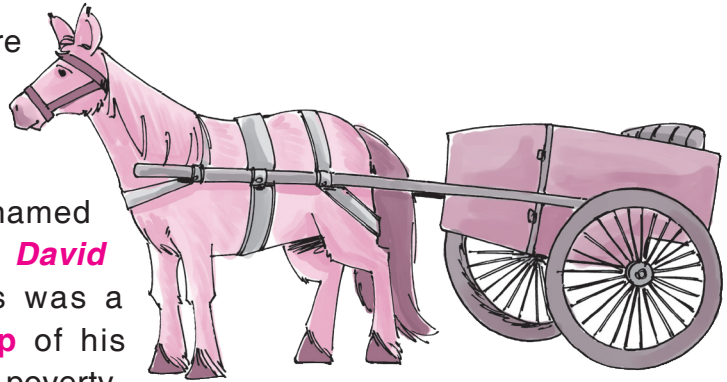
### E. Discuss the importance of English in our everyday life.

# 12 The Night We Won the Buick

*A young boy yearns to have a car. His father wins a car in the lottery. Will the boy now have his own car? Read on to find out.*

It was just before the second World War. We were the only family in our New York town that didn't own a car. I was a **conforming** teenager, and to me 'no car', when most others had one, was shameful.

Our daily shopping trips were made in a **disreputable** two-wheeled basket cart drawn by an ancient Shetland pony that my mother had named Barkis after the character in **David Copperfield**. Bony Barkis was a comic eyesore. Every **cllop** of his **splayed** hoofs **sounded** our poverty.



**conforming:** to behave or think in the same way as most other people in a group or society

**disreputable:** (here) bad-looking

**David Copperfield:** a famous novel by Charles Dickens (1812-1870)

**cllop:** sharp hollow sound, as of a horse's hoof striking pavement

**splayed:** the hoofs were spread wide apart

**sounded:** showed

**mortgaged:** the house was the security or guarantee against which the family had taken a loan

**retort:** reply

**austerity:** (here) a situation in which the family did not have enough money

For poor we were. My father's salary as clerk would have maintained us in modest plenty had not half of it gone for the support and medical expenses of his ill and poor relatives. Even our house was **mortgaged**.

Mother consoled the family by saying, "If you have character, you have the better part of wealth."

My bitter **retort** was, "You can't buy a car with it." Yet she succeeded in making **austerity** bearable in all other

respects. Our home had charm. Mother knew the secret of using a few yards of the bright **chintz** and a little paint in the right places. But the garage still stabled Barkis and not a car.

Suddenly there arrived a soul-igniting moment which was to consume my shame in a blaze of glory.

For weeks, a new Buick Roadmaster had stood in the window of the biggest store on Main Street. Now, on the final gala night of the county fair, it was to be **raffled off**. After watching the fireworks I stayed in the shadows at the edge of the throng till the end when the winning number was to be drawn out. Draped in **bunting** on a special platform, the Buick glittered under a dozen spotlights. The crowd held its breath as the mayor reached into the glass bowl for the lucky ticket.

Never in my most **extravagant yearnings** had it occurred to me that Lady Luck would smile upon the only family in town without a car. But the loudspeaker boomed my father's name! By the time I had wormed my way up to the platform, the mayor had presented my father with the keys, and he had driven off amid cheers.

I reached home in record time, imagining myself at the wheel of the Buick, driving my friends. The house was dark save for lights in the living room. The Buick stood in the driveway, glistening in the glow from the front window. From the garage I heard a **snuffle** from Barkis.

**Panting** from my run, I touched the car's smooth surface, opened the door and got inside. The luxurious interior had that wonderful new-car smell. I studied the gleaming dashboard. Turning my head to admire the back seat, I saw my father's sturdy figure through the rear window. He was pacing along the pavement. I slammed the door and rushed over to him.

"Leave me alone!" he snarled.

I was taken aback, I could not have been more hurt. Shocked, I went into the house.

**chintz:** a type of shiny cotton cloth with a printed design, especially of flowers

**austerity:** (here) a situation in which the family did not have enough money

**chintz:** a type of shiny cotton cloth with a printed design, especially of flowers

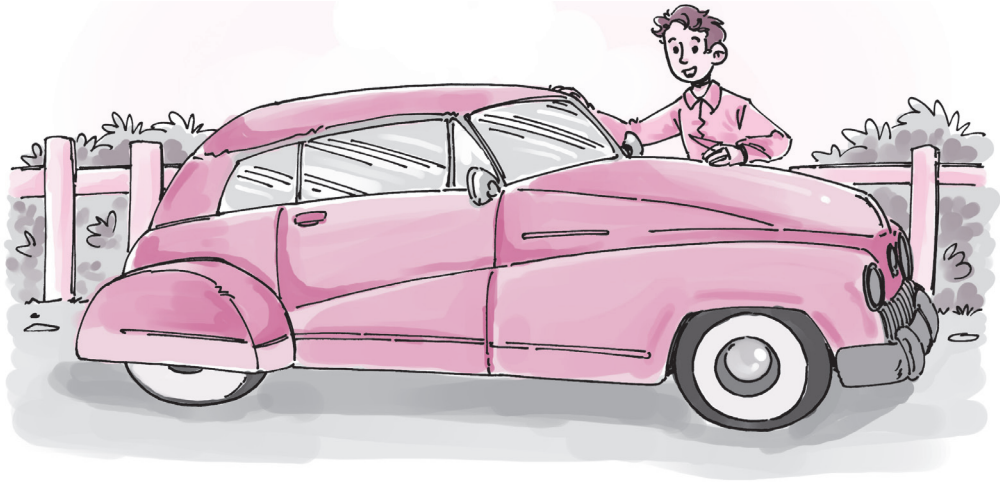
**raffled off:** disposed of in a lottery

**bunting:** decorations

**extravagant yearnings:** extreme desires

**snuffle:** breathe noisily through the nose

**Panting:** breathing heavily



Mother met me in the living room. “Don’t be upset,” she said. “Your father is struggling with an **ethical** problem. We’ll have to wait until he finds the right answer.”

“What’s unethical about winning a Buick?”

“The car may not be ours after all. There’s a question.”

I shouted **hysterically**, “How can there be a question? It was announced over the loudspeaker!”

**ethical:** moral; of principles  
**hysterically:** in a state of extreme excitement

“Come here, son.” On the table under the lamp were two raffle tickets, numbers 348 and 349. The winning number was 348.

“Do you see the difference between the two?” Mother asked.

I looked carefully. “The only difference I can see is that 348 won.” “Hold 348 to the light and look hard.”

It required a lot of looking to see the faint letter K dimly marked in pencil on one corner. “Do you see the K?”

“Just barely.”

“It stands for Kendrick.”

“Jim Kendrick? Dad’s boss?”

“Yes.”

She explained. My father had asked Jim if he wanted to buy a ticket. Jim had mumbled, “Why not?” and turned back to what he was doing. It may never have crossed his mind again. Dad then bought two tickets in his own name with his own money, marking 348 for Kendrick that was hardly visible and could be wiped out by the slightest rub of a thumb.

To me, it was an open-and-shut case. Jim Kendrick was a multimillionaire. He owned a dozen cars. He lived on an estate with a staff of servants, including two **chauffeurs**. Another car meant less to him than a **bridle** on Barkis meant to us. I argued, “Dad’s got to keep it!”

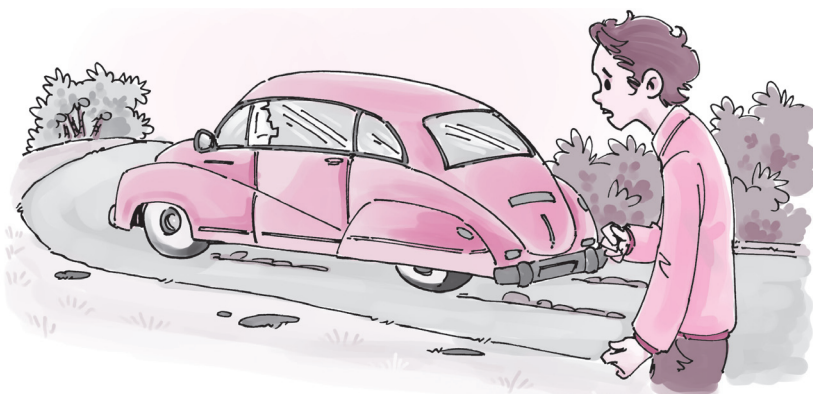
“I know he’ll do what’s right,” Mother said calmly.

At last we heard Dad’s step on the front **porch**. I held my breath. He went straight to the phone in the dining room and dialled. Kendrick’s phone rang for a long time. A servant finally answered. From what Dad said at our end I could tell that Kendrick had to be awakened.

He was annoyed at being roused from sleep. My father had to explain the whole thing from the beginning. The next afternoon Kendrick’s two chauffeurs arrived in a station wagon. Before driving the Buick away, they presented Dad with a box of cigars.

We didn’t get a car until after I was grown. But, as time went on, my mother’s **aphorism**, “If you have character, you have the better part of wealth,” took on a new meaning. Looking back over the years, I know now we were never richer than we were at the moment when Dad made that telephone call.

—John Griggs



**chauffeurs:** drivers  
(chauffeur is pronounced ‘show-fur’ with stress on the first syllable)  
**bridle:** a set of leather bands put around the horse’s head to control it while riding  
**porch:** a small area at the entrance of the house or building  
**aphorism:** saying; quotation

## UNDERSTANDING THE STORY

### A. Tick (✓) the right answers.

1. The pony was named after the character in

- (a) Oliver Twist.
- (b) David Copperfield.
- (c) The Black Beauty.

2. In which town did the author live?

- (a) New York.
- (b) New Jersey.
- (c) New England.

3. What was the winning number of the lottery ticket?

- (a) 348
- (b) 349
- (c) 359

4. Jim Kendrick was a

- (a) poor man.
- (b) multimillionaire.
- (c) billionaire.

5. The two chauffeurs presented Dad with a

- (a) box of cigars.
- (b) box of pens.
- (c) box of diamonds.

### B. Answer these questions.

1. Do you think the author's family was poor? How do you know? Give details.
2. How did mother console the family?
3. Why did author's father not want to keep the car?



4. Why does the author say that we were never richer than we were at the moment when Dad made the telephone call.
5. Who showed more 'character'—Kendrick or the author's father? Why?

## LANGUAGE SKILLS

### C. Tick (✓) the right spellings.

- |                |                          |            |                          |
|----------------|--------------------------|------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Bucik       | <input type="checkbox"/> | Buick      | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Chauffeur   | <input type="checkbox"/> | Chauffer   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Millionaire | <input type="checkbox"/> | Millonaire | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. Mortgaged   | <input type="checkbox"/> | Mortgajed  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. Beginning   | <input type="checkbox"/> | Beginning  | <input type="checkbox"/> |

## WRITING SKILLS

- D. Imagine you were in place of the author's father. What would you have done?
- E. Describe the qualities of the author's mother in 3–5 lines.

## DISCUSS

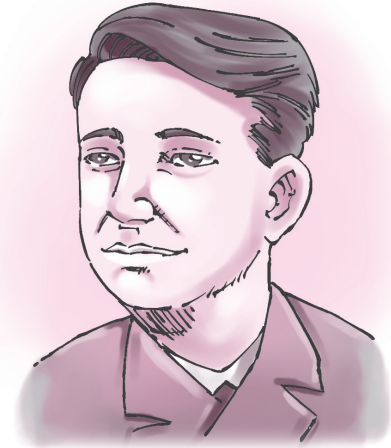
- F. Discuss 'Peace of mind' is more important than worldly possessions.
- G. Organise a debate on the author's observation that he has made at the end of this story.

# 13 Thomas Alva Edison

Thomas Alva Edison,  
A most unusual boy,  
Never really bothered much  
With any childish toy.

His teacher thought he couldn't learn  
And sent him home from school,  
But Tommy's mother knew for sure  
He wasn't any fool.

He worked as newsboy on a train,  
He learned to telegraph.  
The way he concentrated  
Made some people laugh.



Thomas Alva Edison  
Had inventions by the score.  
In his laboratory  
He kept inventing more.

The phonograph, electric light  
(With fuses, sockets, too),  
A super storage battery,  
And movies, were a few.

If not for Mr Edison  
How dull our lives would be!  
We might not have the radio,  
The X-ray, or TV.

—Vivan Gouled

## UNDERSTANDING THE POEM

### A. Tick (✓) the right answer.

1. The poet called Thomas Alva Edison an unusual boy because
  - (a) he played with toys
  - (b) he did not play with toys
  - (c) the poet disliked him
2. In his childhood, Thomas Alva Edison was a
  - (a) newsboy
  - (b) cowboy
  - (c) bearer in an office
3. Write the suffix in 'quarrelsome'.
  - (a) quarrel
  - (b) some
  - (c) elsome
4. Which is the correct spelling?
  - (a) colonel
  - (b) cornel
  - (c) cornell
5. The word 'newsboy' means
  - (a) a boy who collects news
  - (b) a boy who writes news
  - (c) a boy who sells newspapers

### B. Supply information from the text and complete the sentences.

1. Thomas Alva Edison never bothered \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Edison's teacher thought that \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. The way Edison concentrated made \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**C. Answer the questions.**

1. Who praises whom in the poem?

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Why did Edison's teacher think that he could not learn anything?

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Why does the poet say that our life would be dull if there were no Edison?

\_\_\_\_\_

**LANGUAGE SKILLS**

**D. Match the inventions with their inventors.**

**Inventions**

1. Telephone
2. Radio
3. Computer
4. Aeroplane

**Inventors**

- (a) Wright Brothers
- (b) Charles Babbage
- (c) Guglielmo Marconi
- (d) Alexander Graham Bell

**ACTIVITY**

**E.** Make a list of ten most important inventions of the 21st century.

**DISCUSS**

**F.** Discuss how e-mail and the Internet have changed our lives.

# 14 Say the Right Thing

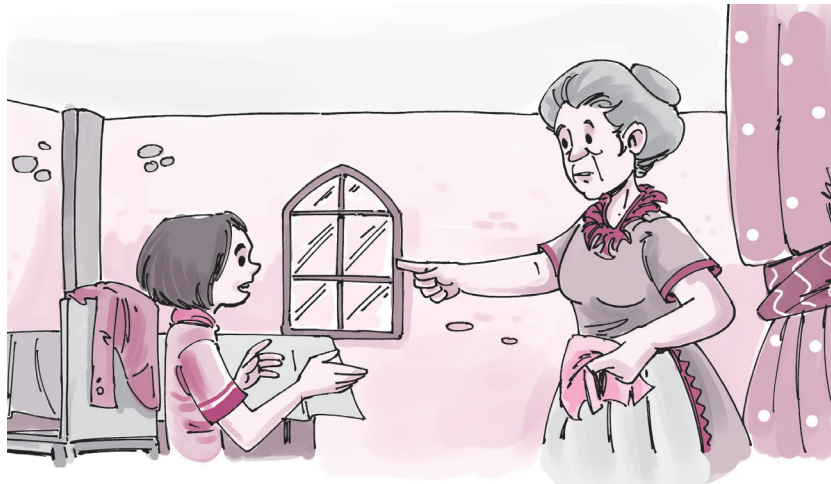
*Sometimes we say or do a thing which is quite embarrassing. Hence, we should think twice before uttering anything. The play you are going to read tells how a young girl embarrasses everyone by her unthinking remarks.*

**Characters:** **Mary Shaw**, A young girl; **Mrs Shaw**, Her mother; **Mrs Harding**, The wife of Mr Harding, a rich man; **Mrs Lee**, Mr Harding's married sister

## Scene i

*(Mary and her mother are standing in the front room of their house in Lanfield. Mrs Shaw has a piece of cloth in her hand. There is a girl's coat over the back of one of the small chairs.)*

**Mrs Shaw:** The room looks cleaner now. Put that coat away in your bedroom. This room isn't the place for coats. Mrs Harding and Mrs Lee will soon be here, and they don't want to see that.



**Mary:** You're always telling me to put things away.

**Mrs Shaw:** Yes, I am. You leave your clothes all over the house.

**Mary:** I'm not a child!

**Mrs Shaw:** No, you're not. So please keep your clothes in your own room.

**Mary:** Why are those two women coming here? Who's Mrs Harding?

**Mrs Shaw:** She's the wife of a rich man. Mr Harding has just bought a big house in Lanfield. They lived in London earlier. She's coming to see me to have a talk. I met her in a shop and asked her to come.

**Mary:** Oh, I've seen her children. They often come along the road. Who's Mrs Lee?

**Mrs Shaw:** She's Mr Harding's sister. She's staying with them.

**Mary:** What are you going to talk about?

**Mrs Shaw:** I don't know. All kinds of things. One day you'll have to go to houses yourself and talk to people. All women have to do it.

**Mary:** I can talk now. I've been able to talk for a long time.

**Mrs Shaw:** Yes, that's true. You always talk too much. But does anyone want to hear the things that you say?

**Mary:** I can talk very well when I like. I'll stay with you today and talk to them when they come.

**Mrs Shaw:** Oh, I don't think so. You can go out for a walk. It will be better if you do that.

**Mary:** Why?

**Mrs Shaw:** If you stay with me, you may not say the right thing.

**Mary:** I know the right things to say: 'Good afternoon' and 'How are you?' and things like that. Let me stay today. I can do it very well. I'll show you. Anyone can talk.

**Mrs Shaw:** You may stay if you like. But take care. I want to know Mrs Harding well. I want her to ask me to go to their house. There isn't much to do here in Lanfield, and I want to know some more people. I want some more friends here. So take care when you say anything.



**Mary:** Tell me what to say.

**Mrs Shaw:** I can't tell you everything, but you'll always be right if you're kind to people. Say things that will please them. Then they'll like you. Laugh a lot, and try to make them laugh too. And if everyone stops talking, say something to make them talk again. They don't want to sit here and look at the floor without speaking. Think of something to say.

**Mary:** I can do that. There's always something to say. Must I do anything else?

**Mrs Shaw:** When they're ready to leave, don't jump out of your chair and look gladly at the door. You must look sorry when they want to leave.

**Mary:** What shall I do when they want to go?

**Mrs Shaw:** Ask them to stay a little longer. Just say, 'Must you go? Can't you stay?' or something like that. You like them and you want them to stay, and you must let them understand that.

**Mary:** That's not very hard, is it? I'll remember that: 'Must you go? Can't you stay? Must you go? Can't you stay?'

**Mrs Shaw:** That's right. Now take that coat to your room and change into a clean dress. You must look nice when they come. And if everyone stops talking, say something kind to make them talk again. And don't say anything that will make them angry.

**Mary:** I'll remember. I've often done harder things than this.

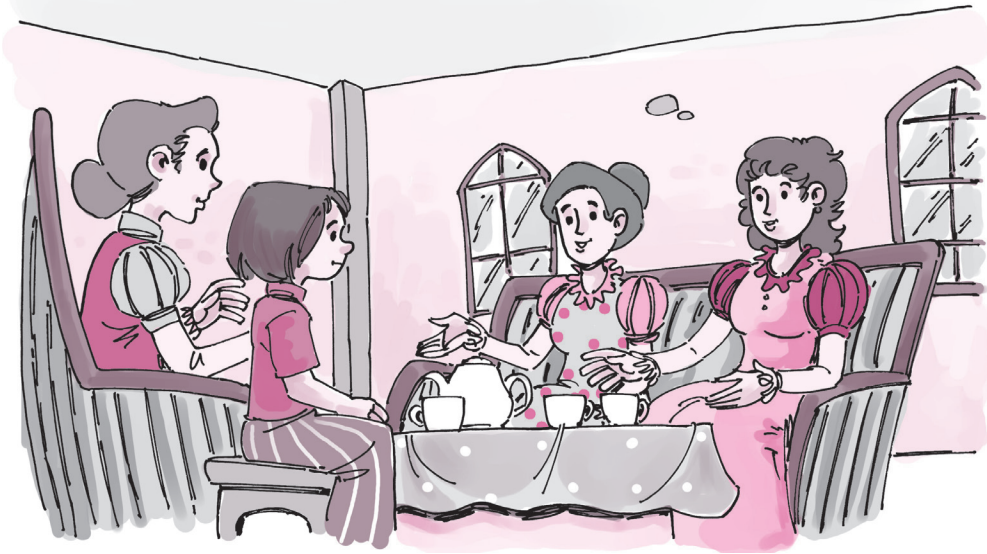
## Scene ii

*(The same room, one hour later. Mrs Harding and Mrs Lee are sitting in the room with Mary and her mother.)*

**Mrs Shaw:** So you like Lanfield, Mrs Harding! I'm very glad.

**Mrs Harding:** Yes, we like it very much. It's not the same as London, but there are some very nice people here, and we've found a good house.

*(No one says anything more, and Mrs Shaw looks at Mary.)*



**Mary:** What beautiful children you have, Mrs Harding! I've often seen them walking along the road.

**Mrs Harding:** Oh! I haven't any children.

**Mary:** Oh yes, you have! I've seen them: a little boy and a little girl.

**Mrs Harding:** (*not very pleased*) I have no children, believe me.

**Mary:** Oh!

**Mrs Shaw:** (*quietly*) They must be someone else's children. Have you met Mr Best? He's a nice man. He lives near you.

**Mary:** Oh, Mr Best! He lives here and he works in London. He goes all the way to London by train every morning, and then he comes all the way back by train every night. He lives in trains! (*She laughs.*) What kind of life is that? Why do people do things like that? They don't know how to live. And he reads two newspapers in the train every day. He never reads a book. But he's only a banker, and bankers can't think.

**Mrs Lee:** My brother's a banker. He goes to London by train every morning and comes back every night. He reads two newspapers in the train in the morning and another every night.

**Mary:** Oh, I'm sorry. I didn't know.



**Mrs Shaw:** Bankers always have to read a lot of newspapers. Do you know Mrs Best? She's a nice woman. I like her.

**Mary:** But have you seen her clothes? She goes out in a blue dress with a red coat over it! *(laughs)*.

**Mrs Harding:** I have a blue dress, and I often put on my red coat at the same time.

**Mrs Shaw:** *(quickly)* I like blue dresses and red coats. *(No one says anything.)*

**Mary:** I saw Mrs Cotter this afternoon. I met her in the street. No one ever sees her in the morning because she always stays in bed then. And she's always asking the doctor to come and see her. I can't understand women who stay in bed in the morning. And why must she always ask for the doctor? I've never been to a doctor in my life.

**Mrs Harding:** I stay in bed in the morning myself.

**Mrs Lee:** I often go to the doctor.

**Mary:** Oh, I'm sorry.

*(No one speaks.)*

**Mrs Shaw:** Do you know Mrs Grantley? She's one of my best friends.

**Mary:** But she's so fat! Fat women aren't very beautiful, are they?

*(She laughs.)*

**Mrs Lee:** My mother's a very fat woman.

**Mary:** Oh, I'm sorry. I didn't know.

*(No one says anything.)*

**Mary:** *(looking out of the window)* Oh, there's that dog again! It always looks very dirty. I don't like dogs. Do you? That dog's always near our house. Why do people keep dogs? Who wants a dog? And why doesn't its owner keep it clean? Have you seen it?

**Mrs Harding:** (*looking out of the window*) Yes, I've seen it. That's' Towzer. It's our dog.

**Mary:** (*with a red face*) Oh, I didn't know!

(*No one speaks.*)

**Mary:** (*still looking out of the window*) There's Mr Pomeroy on his horse. He's always talking about horses. He rides a horse every day, and he shoots birds. It isn't right. Why must the poor birds die? What have they done to Mr Pomeroy? And why do some men like horses more than they like people? It's hard to understand men.

**Mrs Lee:** My brother shoots birds when he has the time, and he rides his horse when he can. He sold his house in London and bought a house here because he wanted to ride and shoot.

**Mrs Harding:** (*looking at Mrs Lee*) It's getting a little late. We must go now, Mrs Shaw. It has been very nice to have a little talk.

(*She looks at Mary.*)

**Mrs Lee:** Very nice. (*She looks at Mary.*)

**Mrs Shaw:** It was very good of you to come to see us. Please stay a little longer.

**Mary:** (*unable to say the right thing even now*) Oh, must you stay? Can't you go?

—G C Thornley

## UNDERSTANDING THE STORY

### A. Tick (✓) the right answers.

1. Which two women were coming to Mrs Shaw's house?

- (a) Mrs Harding and Miss Mary.
- (b) Mrs Harding and Mrs Lee.
- (c) Mrs Harding and Mrs Laurel.

2. Earlier, Mrs Harding lived in

(a) Rome.

(b) Paris.

(c) London.

3. Who was always talking about horses?

(a) Mr Best.

(b) Mr Harding.

(c) Mr Pomeroy.

### B. Write true or false.

1. Mary was very fond of talking.

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2. Mrs Harding had no children.

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3. Mrs Grantley was a fat woman.

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4. Mrs Harding was pleased by Mary's talk.

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### C. Answer these questions.

1. What tips did Mrs Shaw give to Mary on conversation?

2. Mention three of Mary's personality traits. Support your answer with examples from the text.

## LANGUAGE SKILLS

### D. Put your foot in the mouth—it means saying something stupid or embarrassing. Now find out the meaning of these idioms.

1. Eat humble pie

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2. Button your lip

---

3. Shoot from the hip

---

4. Throw caution to the wind

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5. Rub the wrong way

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6. Butterflies in the stomach

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7. Smell a rat
8. Take the bull by horns
9. Every Tom, Dick, and Harry
10. Stick to your guns

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## WRITING SKILLS

- E.** After Mrs Harding and Mrs Lee leave their home, Mary realises her mistake. She wants to apologise to Mrs Harding. Help her by writing a letter for her.



## DISCUSS

- F.** Discuss the role of communication in building up relationships.