



( 2021-22, 2022-23, 2023-24)

**BC 302: ENGLISH (COMMUNICATION SKILLS)**

Time allowed : 3 hours

Max Marks : 50

Periods per week : 6

External assessment :35

Pass Marks : 35%

Internal Assessment: 15

**COURSE CONTENT AND TESTING**

Popular Short Stories (OUP)

The following stories are not to be studied.

1. The World Renowned Nose by V. M. Bashir
2. The Dying Detective by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle
3. Living or Dead? by Rabindranath Tagore
4. Monal Hunt by Manohar Malgonkar
5. Old Man at the Bridge by Ernest Hemingway

Testing:

Q1. (a) One essay type question with an internal alternative on summary, theme, incident or character in about 250 words.

(b) Five short questions to be attempted out of the given eight from the prescribed text in about 30 words each.

4+5= 9

Q 2. Composition

Paragraph- The student should be asked to write a paragraph on any one of the given four current topics.

6

Q3. Letter Writing

The students should be asked to write a letter with an internal alternative on the following topics:

- a) Official Letter including application for a job.
- b) Letter to a Newspaper Editor on the matters of Public Interest particular by economic, social business and current affairs.

4

Q4 Usage of Language:

Topics to be covered

- a) Transformation of Sentences
- b) Use of Direct and Indirect Speech
- c) Correction of Sentences
- d) Formation of Nouns, Verbs, Adjectives of the given words and their use in illustrative sentences.

4+4+4+4=16

(The students should be asked to attempt any four of the given six from each of the above)

**Books Recommended**

1. The Written Word- Vandana R.Singh
2. Living English Structure- W.Stannard Allen
3. Oxford Practice Grammar- John East Wood



B.COM. PART-II  
SEMESTER-III

ENGLISH  
(COMMUNICATION SKILLS)

UNIT NO. I

**Department of Distance Education**  
**Punjabi University, Patiala**

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### POPULAR SHORT STORIES

LESSON NOS. : 1

- 1: (i) A Cup of Tea  
(ii) The Open Window
- 2: (i) A Work of Art  
(iii) The Gift of the Magi
- 3: (i) The Ant and the Grasshopper  
(iv) The Gateman's Gift
- 4: (i) How Much Land Does a Man Need ?  
(v) The Necklace
- 5: (i) The Reaping Race
- 6: Paragraph Writing
- 7: More about Paragraph Writing
- 8: Letter Writing
- 9: Letter and Application Writing (Contd...)

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LESSON NO. 1

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POPULAR SHORT STORIES

- I. A Cup of Tea
- II. The Open Window

**1.0 Objectives**

- To Introduce students with the popular short stories and their themes.
- To Introduce students with the summaries and characters of the short stories.

**1.1 (i) A CUP OF TEA**

**1.1 Introduction to the Author**

Katherine Mansfield (1841-1923) full name was Kathleen Mansfield Beauchamp. She was born in New Zealand and has been a famous short story writer. In fact, there are critics who hold the view that Katherine Mansfield's genius was almost equal to that of Anton Chekhov, whom she greatly admired.

After a patchy school education Katherine Mansfield went to London, hoping to develop her talent in music and to seek a career in that line. But before long she discovered her genuine bent, namely, the short story when she started writing for the *New Age*. In England, she met and married John Middleton Murry, the well known literary critic, with whom, apparently, she frequently quarrelled. For a time she left for Europe where she did not live long and died of tuberculosis.

Katherine Mansfield published a good number of short stories collected in volumes such as *Bliss and other Stories* (1920), *The Garden Party* (1922), *The Dove's Nest*, (1923), etc. After her death Middleton Murry brought out her letters and her journal.

The chief quality of her short stories is their psychological realism which reminds the reader of Maupassant, the great French short story writer. She writes in a flowing racy style, but brings in a great deal of dramatics in her techniques, taking the reader by surprise. 'A Cup of Tea' deals with an upper - class woman whose life style is a bundle of social snobberies. But Mansfield shows that whatever the status of a woman woman is a woman after all. Mansfield's method makes the best of the medium though limited in its scope.

**1.2 Summary**

Rosemary Fell, the central character in the story, was not exactly beautiful but she was young, brilliant, extremely modern, exquisitely well dressed and amazingly well read in the newest of the new books. Her parties were a grand mixture of really important people and artists, She had been married for two years. She had a handsome son and her husband almost adored her. They were very rich. If she wanted to shop, she would go to Paris for shopping as one would go to Bond Street.

One winter afternoon she had been buying something in a little antique shop in Curzon Street. It was a shop she liked and the shopkeeper was also very fond of serving her. He was filled with joy whenever she came and knew how to flatter her. He showed her a little box which he said, he had been keeping for her and had not shown to anybody

else, Rosemary examined the box, liked it and decided to have it. Its price was twenty guineas. Although it was a very high price for a little box, she showed sign of surprise and asked the shopkeeper to keep it for her. The shopkeeper was too glad to keep it for her, forever.

Rosemary had to cross the pavement to reach her car, but she waited since it was raining. Just then a young, thin and dark girl came from somewhere and she wanted to talk to her. She wanted the price of a cup of tea. Rosemary felt that it wasn't in the least the voice of a beggar since it was so simple and sincere. She suddenly became adventurous. She wondered what would happen if she took the girl home. She had read about such things or seen them on stage. Yet it would be thrilling. She asked the girl to come home to tea with her. The girl was greatly surprised. She feared that she might not take her to the police station but Rosemary assured her that she meant it and asked her to come and sit in her car with her. She told her that she wanted to make her warm and then hear anything she cared to tell her. She wanted to prove to the girl that wonderful things did happen in life, that rich people had hearts and that women were sisters. She had feeling of triumph as she looked at the little captive and she was kind, loving, affectionate and generous to the girl.

Soon they reached her house. The girl stood simply dazed and fascinated by the warm softness inside the house. Rosemary then gently half- pushed the girl into an easy armchair (in her bedroom) near the fire so that she could get warm. Sitting in the chair, the girl looked rather stupid. Rosemary asked her to take off her hat and feel comfortable. She then pushed the girl's coat herself though it was quite an effort. As she was going to take a cigarette off the mantelpiece the girl told her that she was going to faint if she did not have something. Rosemary immediately ordered the maid to get tea and some brandy. The girl told her that she only wanted a cup of tea and no brandy. Saying this, she (the girl) burst into tears. Rosemary tried to console the girl affectionately as she was really touched beyond words. She told her that both of them would have tea first and then she would tell her everything. Thereafter, she served her well at the tea table which had a tremendous effect on the girl. It was after Philip's arrival (Rosemary's husband) that the girl disclosed her identity and introduced herself as Miss Smith. Thereafter, they both (Rosemary and Philip) went into the Library to have a talk. There Rosemary explained to Philip that the girl was a real pick-up. She had asked her for the price of a cup of tea and she had brought her home with her. Now she wanted to be nice to her and look after her and asked Philip also to be nice to her and look after her. But he said that simply could not be done. Rosemary argued that as she wanted to keep Miss Smith, no more was needed. Moreover, she had read about these things in books. At this Philip said that Miss Smith was wonderfully pretty. Rosemary was surprised to hear this as she had not thought about it. Philip remarked that the girl was absolutely lovely and he was bowled over (conquered) as soon she entered the room. He then

asked her if Miss Smith was going to dine with them.

He proceeded to the library to look up a journal giving details about women's head dresses, hats, etc.

At this, Rosemary expressed her disgust and went to her writing- room, her heart beating like a heavy bell as she could not digest Philip's words. She opened a drawer, took out three five - pound notes and went back to her bedroom where Miss Smith was sitting.

Half an hour later, she came to the library again where Philip was sitting. She told Philip that Miss Smith won't dine with them that night. She explained that the girl insisted on going. So she gave her a present of money as she could not keep her against her will. Rosemary also dressed herself up and put on some make up. She asked Philip if he liked her, to which he replied that he liked her awfully. She then told him that she had seen a fascinating little box costing twenty- eight guineas which she wanted to have. Philip called her little wasteful creature, but that was not really what Rosemary wanted him to say. She then asked Philip in a whisper, if she was pretty.

### **1.3 Theme**

'A Cup of Tea' is a story with psychological theme. The writer has beautifully worked out the theme of female jealousy. "Vanity, thy name is woman" appropriately sums up the theme of the story. It deals with an upper middle class woman who is full of social snobberies. Whatever her social position and whatever her desires, she cannot rise above the sense of jealousy. A life of pretensions is not a real life at all. Women, the writer shows, are by nature jealous and cannot bear the praise of another woman or her beauty by men especially by their own husbands (students are advised to describe the story in brief particularly the later part of the story to supplement the theme).

### **1.4 The character of Rosemary**

Rosemary is the central character of the story "A Cup of Tea". She can be called the heroine of the story. It is through Rosemary's ironic exposure that Katherine Mansfield highlights the theme.

There is no doubt that Rosemary has a genuine streak of humanity in her. Despite her riches and status she romanticises about poverty and tries to make herself useful to those who are lesser blessed. Influenced by romantic notions of humanity and charity she brings home a beggar girl with the intention of keeping her. She wants to prove to people that good people are to be found in real life also. They are not to be found in books only. However, the real side of her character surfaces when her husband praises the beauty of the beggar girl. Rosemary feels jealous. She awakens to the practical aspect of her romanticist vision of philanthropy and humanity, She builds Rosemary's character through contrast. Rosemary's romantic notions of men and manners are in contrast with her husband's practical, earthen approach to life. Humaneness can not be an armchair fancy it is a practical programme, Rosemary needs to learn this.

Rosemary is a well-to-do, snobbish and a smug girl who in spite of her pettiness and

jealous nature, impresses the reader to some extent. Rosemary's portrayal reveals Mansfield's insight into the working of human nature and human mind.

### 1.5 Self Check Exercise

- Q1. What did the beggar girl look like?
- Q2. Why did Rosemary take the beggar girl home?
- Q3. What did Rosemary want to prove to the beggar girl?
- Q4. How did Rosemary wish to prove that the great thing was to be natural?
- Q5. How did the girl behave when Rosemary invited her to her "Comfy Chair"?
- Q6. What did Philip mean when he remarked "Sorry, darling, if I am crude and all that?"
- Q7. How did Rosemary finally get rid of the girl?

### 1.6 Answers to the Self Check Exercise

- Ans.1 The beggar girl had big eyes. She was quite young, almost the same age as Rosemary herself. She shivered as though she had just come out of water. She looked tired and exhausted.
- Ans.2 Rosemary took the beggar girl home because she thought it would be thrilling and adventurous to keep the girl at her residence. She felt that her friends would be amazed to see Rosemary behaving kindly with the girl.
- Ans.3 She was going to prove to the beggar girl that wonderful things did happen in life; fairy godmothers were real; that rich people were generous and women were sisters.
- Ans.4 Rosemary wanted to be generous to the girl. As they mounted the stairs she wanted to spare the poor little girl from being stared at by servants. She would carry her things herself and in this way prove that the great thing was to be natural.
- Ans.5 When Rosemary invited the girl to sit on her 'Comfy Chair', she looked dazed, frightened and edged backwards. She never expected that she would be treated so kindly.
- Ans.6 By these remarks Philip meant that he was being very frank and bold and she (Rosemary) should not mind his words. He liked the girl very much and he wanted to tell her about it.
- Ans.7 Rosemary finally got rid of the girl by giving her a present of three five- pound notes and letting her go, telling others that the girl insisted on going and she could not compel her to stay against her will.

### 1.7 Words and Phrases

1. Exquisitely : perfectly  
She was beautiful and was always exquisitely dressed.
2. Amazingly : full of surprise : to create surprise

- Rosemary was amazingly well read. She had read latest books.
3. Staggering : walking unsteadily  
The beggar-girl was staggering due to cold and weakness.
  4. Peer through : to look carefully  
Rosemary peered through the duck and the girl gazed back at her.
  5. Discreet : wise : intelligent  
He is a discreet officer. He does not misbehave with anyone.
  6. Triumph : victory  
Rosemary had a feeling of triumph as she took the beggar girl home.
  7. Take off : take off a shirt or shoes or something.  
He took off his shoes before entering the temple.
  8. Terrible : dangerous  
There was a terrible storm in the sea and a large number of people travelling in the ship were drowned.
  9. Languid : lazy  
The beggar girl was a languid figure.
  10. Enthusiastically : Full of excitement or inspiration  
Rosemary enthusiastically told her husband that she had brought a beggar girl home.
  11. Listless : without energy  
The beggar girl appeared to be a listless creature.
  12. Well off : rich  
He belongs to a well off family.
  13. Out of sight : to disappear  
The deer went out of sight in no time.
  14. As though : as if  
He talks as though he knew all about this.
  15. All the same : yet : nevertheless  
It is all the same to me whether you stay or go.
  16. Give way : to go under  
The bridge gave away under the weight of the tank.
  17. Drew back : to withdraw  
I drew back when the lion pounced upon me.
  18. Do away with : to kill



19. Look after : The dacoits have done away with the businessman.  
 : take care of  
 The mother is looking after the child.

### i. THE OPEN WINDOW

#### 1.8 Introduction to the Author

H.H Munro (1870-1916), known as Saki, is a popular short story writer. He was born in Burma and educated in England. He has written several collections of short stories entitled; *Reginald* (1904), *Reginald in Russia* (1910), *The chronicles of Clovis* (1911), and *Beasts and Super Beasts* (1914). His stories are marked by exuberant wit, humour and satire.

#### 1.9 Summary

A stranger, named Framton Nuttel, visits the residence of a woman, Mrs. Sappleton. He is received by a young girl of fifteen, who is the niece of Mrs. Sappleton. The stranger knows nothing about Mrs. Sappleton except her name and address. He wonders whether Mrs. Sappleton is married or widowed. Now the niece is quite inventive. She can weave all kinds of stories about ordinary facts. In order to impress the stranger Mr. Nuttel, the niece weaves the story of the death of three persons of this very family and associates the story with the open window. Mr. Nuttel is told that Mrs. Sappleton had suffered a great tragedy three years ago. Her husband and her two brothers had gone out of the open window for hunting. It had been a dreadful wet summer and places that were safe gave way suddenly without a warning. As the three were crossing the forest to reach their favourite shooting place, they were engulfed in the treacherous piece of bog (wet and muddy land : **dbdb**). She also informs Nuttel that their dead bodies were never recovered. Mrs. Sappleton, tells the niece, often misses her dead husband, who was wearing his white water proof coat and Ronnie, her younger brother, who always used to sing happy songs, Mrs. Sappleton kept that window open hoping that the dead persons would return some day.

The niece informs Nuttel that the day is third tragic death anniversary of Mrs. Sappleton's husband and her two brothers' death. Mrs. Sappleton is hopeful that the three persons would come back home through the open window. At that moment, the three persons, who are supposed to be dead, return. They are all muddy to the eyes and are also carrying guns under their arms. One of them is carrying a white coat hung over his shoulder. A tired dog is also following them. The dull-witted Nuttel believes that ghosts of the dead persons have returned. He takes fright and runs away. He never knows that the girl has woven a tragic yarn over nothing. No one had died in this house three years ago. In fact the three persons had gone to the forest in the morning for shooting and had returned in the evening.

When Mr. Sappleton wanted to know why the stranger had run away, the niece

spins another yarn only to justify the flight of Nuttel. She tells others that Nuttel was once cornered in a cremation ground by dogs on the banks of the Ganges in India. Since then he had been afraid of the dogs. He ran away from the house because he was afraid of the dog.

She befooled not only Nuttel but all the members of the family also. First, she weaves a tragic story around the open window. Then she invents another story to explain the flight of Nuttel.

### **1.10 The Character of the Young Girl :**

The story 'The Open Window' has been rendered through the imagination of Vera - a fifteen years old girl. Vera is a master narrator-perfect in making her tale plausible and convincing. She weaves two fictitious stories and presents them in a manner that they appear convincing. Not only those who are the immediate listeners but the readers also are made to accept it. The story writer sums up her character by commenting "Romance at short notice was her speciality." Like a master craftsman, she weaves a tale in a manner that the listener/reader is willingly made to suspend his sense of disbelief. She not only has the ability to make a tale, she also has the ingenuity to add tone and create atmosphere to this tale. Vera seems to overtake 'Munro' even.

### **1.11 Theme**

The story highlights the inventive powers of a girl who weaves a false tragic story around the open window. The story is told to one Mr. Nuttel who comes to believe what the girl narrates. The girl invents the ghastly tragedy that took place three years ago. Mrs. Sappleton continuously lives in agony as her husband and two brothers who went out for shooting three years ago have not yet returned. She believes that they have been engulfed in deep dangerous mud. Their bodies have not been recovered so far. Mrs. Sappleton's reminiscences of her husband and brothers are described with depth and understanding. She recalls that her husband would always put on his waterproof coat and Ronnie, her youngest brother, would sing a humorous song, "Bertie, why do you bound"?

Mrs. Sappleton is, however, convinced and hopeful that her husband and brothers would come back home one day. She, therefore, keeps the window wide open particularly on an October afternoon and they turn up exactly, after three years on the day of their supposed tragic anniversary. She also invents an excuse for Nuttel's flight. This time the family comes to believe what the girl tells them. The story highlights how tales are woven around simple objects and how they can create a willing suspension of disbelief.

### **1.12 Self Check Exercise**

- Q.1. Why did Framton Nuttel visit the house of Mrs. Sappleton ?
- Q.2. What did he know about Mrs. Sappleton ?
- Q.3. What kind of tragedy, according to the girl, took place in the life of Mrs. Sappleton?
- Q.4. Why does, according to the girl, Mrs. Sappleton keep the window open ?
- Q.5. When do the missing husband and brothers return ?

**1.13 Answers to the Self Check Exercise**

Ans.1 Framton Nuttel is a stranger. His sister wanted him to visit some people living in rural areas because it would help him to overcome his depression.

Ans.2 He practically knew nothing about Mrs. Sappleton except her name and her address. He even did not know whether Mrs. Sappleton was married or widowed.

Ans.3 Three years ago, her husband and her two young brothers went out for their day's shooting. They never came back. They were all feared to have engulfed in a dangerous bog (mud).

Ans.4 Mrs. Sappleton keeps the window wide open because she thinks that her husband and her brothers would come back some day and walk in through the window as they used to do. That is why, the window is kept open every evening till it is quite dusk.

Ans.5 The missing husband of Mrs. Sappleton along with her brothers return on the day of their supposed tragic anniversary. They all carry guns under their arms and one of them is carrying a white coat hung over his shoulders.

**1.14 Words and Phrases**

- P. 14 Endeavoured : made an attempt.  
He endeavoured not to say anything which could hurt the host.
- P. 14 Migrate : leave one's country/home for some other place.  
He migrated to England to receive good education.
- P. 14 Introduction : to make acquaintance.  
She gave me letters of introduction to some people of England.
- P. 15 Engulfed : trapped  
While they were going to their favourite shooting place, they were engulfed in mud.
- P. 15 Treacherous : dangerous  
They were engulfed in a treacherous mud.
- P. 16 Scarcity : shortage  
There is no scarcity of food grains in India.
- P. 16 Fragment : a little piece, a bit  
She paid me only a fragment of her attention when I visited her.
- P. 16 Coincidence : By chance two events happening at the same time.  
It was a coincidence that he paid her a visit on the tragic anniversary of her husband's death.

## SEMESTER-III

## (COMMUNICATION SKILLS)

## LESSON NO. 2

## POPULAR SHORT STORIES

- I. A Work of Art
- II. The Gift of the Magi

**(i) A WORK OF ART****2.0 Objectives**

- To Introduce students with the popular short stories and their themes.
- To Introduce students with the summaries and characters of the short stories.

**2.1 Introduction to the Author**

Anton Chekhov (1860-1904) was a famous Russian short story writer. He wrote a number of short-stories and plays. He is considered the 'father of the modern short story.' His short stories reflect an atmosphere of loneliness and despair, probably, because he himself suffered tuberculosis and was always under the shadow of death. Humour and humaneness form the hallmark of his writings.

**2.2 The Story**

'A Work of Art' depicts the prudery and manners of modern society which lacks sense of aesthetic appreciation of art. Sasha Smimov, the only son of his mother, is treated by Doctor Koshelkov for his disease. He recovers completely from his ailment and feels grateful to the doctor who has saved his life. He and his mother feel obliged to the doctor. They are extremely poor and are not in a position to pay the doctor's fee. They, therefore, offer him a wonderful piece of art as a token of their gratitude. It is a masterpiece in antique bronze and a rare work of art. It is a relic left by Smimov's dead father and they consider it as a matter of pride and remembrance. It is candle stand made of antique bronze. On the pedestal stand, two figures of women clad in the costume of Mother Eve in poses which orthodox society would not approve of. These figures are smiling conquetishly and are supporting the candle-stick. In fact, there is a harmonious blend of beauty inscribed on the piece of art and it fills the soul with ecstasy (joy). For a lover of art, it is a lovely object.

Doctor Koshelkov does not appreciate the pretty and rare work of art which is worth exhibiting in a museum. Instead he considers it an ugly object which would pollute his house. He, therefore, gives it to his close friend, the lawyer, Ukhov, to whom he was indebted for legal services. Ukhov considers it attractive but does not want to accept it because he feels that if he keeps this piece of art, he will be disgraced in the eyes of his servants. So he reluctantly accepts it but he passes it on to the comedian Shoshkin.

Shoshkin thinks the gift is useless for him, so he sells it to a certain old woman who buys antique bronze. This old woman ironically happens to be Sasha's mother. Sasha sends this art piece again to Dr. Koshelov so that he has not one but two art pieces of the same type. The Doctor is shocked to receive the same art piece again. The author

express the hollowness of society which is indifferent to the beauty of art.

### 2.3 Theme

Chekov's ironical exposure of the hypocrisy of gentle society is revealing. It has been rightly observed that the story is "a perfect miniature specimen of genial satire on provincial prudery and meanness". Chekov does not spare any of these gentle characters when he succinctly observes "were it not for the fact that they were obliged to support the candle stick, they would lean down from their pedestal and exhibit a performance which ..... my dear reader, I am ashamed to think of it." To, the characters, the work of art is only an expression of crude sensuality and a piece of erotica. The crass attitude of these characters reflects the trends in modern societies.

The story thus is a satire on aesthetic hollowness of the society which has no love for art. A beautiful work of art, a relic of antique bronze which gives a real joy, is considered indecent because the figures of women inscribed on it are naked. People are indifferent to art; they do not appreciate the wonderful relic, rather they feel ashamed to have a look at it. They think that it would be disgraceful to keep such works of art at home. The doctor, the lawyer, the comedian represent a section of orthodox society- the society considers a work of art a piece of erotica that will invite the disgrace of their friends and their relatives. Only a lover of art can genuinely appreciate the candle-stand as an object of rare worth a wonderful masterpiece in antique bronze.

### 2.4 Self Check Exercise

- Q.1. Why did Sasha Smimov feel indebted to Doctor Koshekov?
- Q.2. Why does Sasha Smimov offer the doctor the relic left by his dead father?
- Q.3. Describe the relic in thirty words.
- Q.4. Why does the doctor pass the relic on to his lawyer friend?
- Q.5. Why do the lawyer and the comedian not want to keep the relic at home?

### 2.4 Answers to the Self Check Exercise

- Ans.1 Sasha Smimov felt indebted to Doctor Koshekov because he thought that the doctor had saved his life by curing him of a dangerous disease. Being poor, Sasha was not able to pay the doctor's fee.
- Ans.2 Sasha Smimov is cured of a dangerous disease by Doctor Koshekov and he wants to gift the relic to the doctor as a token of gratitude.
- Ans.3 This is very rare work of art'- an antique bronze. It is a relic left by Smimov's dead father. It reminds Smimov of his dead father. It is beautiful and fills us with joy. On the pedestal of this candle stand, two nude woman are smiling coquettishly. The people, however, consider it crude because the female figures are naked.
- Ans.4 The doctor thinks if he keeps the relic at home it will pollute his entire home because the female figures are naked.
- Ans.5 The lawyer and the comedian do not want to keep the relic at home because they think it will be disgraceful to keep it. The relic shows the naked women laughing in coquettish manner.

## 2.6 Words and Phrases

- P.17 Interrupt : To interfere in between when someone else is speaking or working.  
We should not interrupt when the Principal is addressing the audience.
- P.17 Embarrassing : Feel awkward.  
The doctor felt embarrassed when he offered the relic to the lawyer as a gift.
- P18. Gratitude : Thanks or sense of obligation.  
He offers the relic to the doctor as a token of gratitude.
- P.18 Relic : A token of remembrance or memory.  
The candle-stand was relic left by Smimov's dead father.
- P.19. Antique : Model of ancient art; ancient  
The relic was an antique bronze.
- P18. Phantasmagoria : Imagined figures, his novel is nothing but a phantasmagoria.
- P19 Ecstasy : Extreme joy; bliss  
The relic filled the soul with ecstasy.
- P19. Possession : Something owned by someone.  
Smimov offered his dearest possession to the doctor.
- P20. Uproariously : Producing a lot of noise.  
Looking at the relic, the lawyer laughed uproariously.
- P21. Rapture : Joy; happiness  
Quivering with rapture. When Smimov placed the candelabrum before the doctor, he went into a rapture.

### (ii) THE GIFT OF THE MAGI

#### 2.7 Introduction to the Author

O' Henry is the pen-name of William Sydney (1862-1910). When he was in prison on charges of embezzlement, he turned to the business of short story writing. He has written a large number of short stories which are collected in volumes like *Cabbages and King*, *The Four Million*, and *The Voice of the City*. Henry shows sympathy with the people he projects in the stories. Some of his stories reveal the ingenious twist of a surprise-ending.

#### 2.8 The Story

To begin with, "The Gift of The Magi" seems to move in a particular direction. But just

before the close there is a surprising twist given to the narration so that we look at the story from a slightly altered point of view.

'The Gift Of The Magi' reveals in a very sentimental manner, the great love that the Dillinghams have for each other. They are poor but they are happy in each other's love. The gifts they bring are seen to be of no use. Jim cannot use the platinum chain because he has sold his watch. Similarly the combs are of no use to Della since she had sold her hair. Yet they are not foolish. They have wisdom of great love. In this way they are like the three wise men from the East-the Magi who brought gifts for the infant Jesus. The gifts of Dillinghams are as valuable as the gifts of the Magi.

James Dillingham Young and his wife Della lived in a small flat. Once James was earning 30 dollars per week. But his earnings had gradually decreased to 20 dollars per week. Their flat was not well furnished because they were poor. One day before Christmas, Della counted the money that she had saved by observing a strict economy. She had one dollar and eighty seven cents. The money was not enough to enable her to buy a Christmas present for her husband . She shed hopeless tears because she did not know where to get the money from. Then suddenly she had an idea.

The Dillinghams had two things they were proud of. One was the gold watch of James. It had originally belonged to his grandfather. Though James had only a worn out leather strap for the watch, yet he loved it. The second thing was the long, lovely hair of Della. Her hair was remarkably beautiful. Della was very proud of her hair.

Della's love for her husband was very great. So she went to a dealer in "Hair Goods" and sold her hair for 20 dollars. Then she went to a store and bought a beautiful platinum chain for the watch of her husband and went home.

In the evening Della was anxiously waiting for her husband. She did not know whether her husband would be angry with her for having sold her hair. Jim entered the flat and was shocked to see his wife without her hair. Della told him that she had sold her hair to buy him a Christmas present. Then she showed him the platinum chain. James affectionately embraced his wife. Then he pulled out a package from his pocket and said that was his gift for her. Della eagerly opened it and cried with delight when she saw pair of combs made of pure tortoise shell. The next moment she realised that the combs were of no immediate use to her because she had sold her hair. Then Jim gently told her that he had sold his watch to buy her the combs. So Della's present was also of no immediate use; yet the gifts revealed the great love they had for each other.

### **2.9 The Title of the story**

There are no prescribed principles to consider the aptness of a title. But good titles are generally indirect and suggestive. They are closely linked with the theme of the story and there is a direct connection between the title and the aim which the author wants to fulfil by writing a story.

Now let us view the aptness of the title, 'The Gift Of The Magi'. The Magi were a group of

three intelligent persons who came from the East, following a star, to present some offerings to the infant Jesus on his birth. The author has established a close connection between the gifts that Jim and Della offered to each other and the gifts offered by the Magi to Christ. So we feel that the title is indicative and suggestive. It suggests the intelligence of the two devoted lovers who sacrificed their most precious possessions for each other. A hasty judgement of worldly-wise people may consider them fools. But they are sincere lovers for they know that no price is too great to pay if they can please their love. It is in this spirit that they cheerfully sacrifice their most precious belongings (Della sells her beautiful hair and, Jim his golden watch). It is a different matter, if the Destiny has rendered their gifts useless. The author himself defends their action; "Of all who give and receive gifts, such as they are wisest . Everywhere they are the wisest. They are the Magi." They are the true lovers and true lovers deserve praise and not condemnation. Thus the gifts which Jim and Della give each other in a spirit of true love may justly be called, The Gift Of the Magi.

The aim of the author is to suggest that, in love, the wisest course is sincerity and devotion. Thus the sincere lovers are as wise as the Magi. The title of the story is therefore, highly appropriate and suggestive.

### 2.10 Study Notes

P.29.	flop down	: Fall down; sink into
	Shabby	: ugly; dirty
	instigates	: provokes; incites
	sniffles:	sound produced by the running nose. Here it stands for tears and cries.
	predominating	: in great quantity; more in number,
	subsiding	: cooling down
P.30.	to beggar description	: to be beyond the power of description.
	vestibule	: entrance hall
	mortal	: subject to death (Here it means the figure of a human being)
	coax	: persuade, produce
	appertaining	: attached; indicating to
	there unto	: to that
	blurred	: dimmed; not clear
	unassuming	: humble
	hugged	: embraced passionately
	sterling	: of great qualities or real merit
	pier- glass	: a tall mirror hung between windows.
	agile	: swift movement; flexible
	conception	: idea; view



	slender	:	thin
	whirled	:	moved in a swift; circular motion
P.31.	the airshaft	:	a passage for air into a mine. Here it refers to the space that separated Della's flat from the flat on the other side of the street.
	depreciate	:	lower the worth or value
	junior to pluck at	:	a doorkeeper or caretaker
	Cascades	:	waterfall; fountain
	faltered	:	trembled; felt hesitated
	splashed	:	dropped; fell down
	fluttered out	:	moved out hurriedly
	collected herself	:	controlled her agitation; regained poise
	down rippled	:	came down in waves
	tripped by	:	flew away
	hashed	:	old confused
	metaphor	:	a figure of speech in which words denote one kind of object or idea in place of another to suggest likeness between the two. The metaphor used here is the tripping of time on rosy wings.
	chaste	:	pure, sober
	proclaiming	:	declaring
	substance	:	inner worth; the material itself
	on the sly	:	secretly
P.32.	prudence	:	wisdom; discretion
	curling irons	:	iron instrument used for curling the hair
	tremendous	:	big, great
	mammoth	:	huge
	truant	:	one who runs away from school or duty
	quail	:	a game bird
	wriggled off	:	move away with some difficulty
P.33.	laboriously	:	with an effort
	mental labour	:	effort of the mind
	curiously	:	in a strange manner
	idiocy	:	stupidity ; craziness
	trance	:	semi-conscious state
	enfolded	:	embraced
	discreet	:	prudent; tactful
	inconsequential	:	unimportant
	a wit	:	a clever intelligent person

dark assertion	:	observation which is not clear
illuminated	:	thrown light on or explained
why you had me going	:	why you found me agitated or upset
awhile	:	for a short time
nimble	:	swift moving
ecstatic	:	full of intense joy
scream	:	cry
hysterical	:	uncontrollable due to excess of emotion
wails	:	cries
necessitating	:	making it necessary
the lord of the flat	:	her husband i.e. , Jim
craved and yearned	:	had a strong, ardent desire
tresses	:	the beautiful hair
adorned	:	decorated
coveted	:	strongly desired
P34. singed	:	burnt
ardent	:	warm; passionate
dandy	:	beautiful; showy
privilege	:	advantage
chronicle	:	story

### 2.11 Self Check Exercise

- Q.1. How did Della save her one dollar eighty- seven cents?
- Q.2. What were Jim's and Della's most prized possessions?
- Q.3. Why had Jim no use for Della's gift (platinum chain)?
- Q.4. Why had Della no use for the combs?
- Q.5. Why does the author call Jim and Della the Magi?

### 2.12 Answers to the Self Check Exercise

- Ans.1 Della had been saving every penny that she could save for several months. She had curtailed the expenses of her household things and in this way she was able to save one dollar and eighty-seven cents.
- Ans.2 The two possessions consisted of Jim's gold watch that belonged to his grand- father and the other was Della's hair.
- Ans.3 Jim could not use the platinum chain of his watch as he had sold it to buy a Christmas gift for his wife, Della.
- Ans.4 Della couldn't use the beautiful combs as she had sold already her hair to buy a Christmas gift for jim.
- Ans.5 Since Jim and Della sacrificed their most precious possessions to offer Christmas gifts to each other, they are compared with the Magi, the three wise men who offered gifts to infants Jesus out of sincerity and devotion.

**2.13 Words and Phrases**

flop down	:	fall down; sink into She flopped down on the shabby bed and started crying
shabby	:	ugly dirty. My clothes are very shabby.
instigates	:	provokes; incites Pakistan is instigating terrorists to create problems in Kashmir.
reflection	:	thought After a great reflection, he decided to give up his wife for ever.
sniffles	:	sound produced by the running nose He suffers from bad cold in winter and sniffles quite often.
predominating	:	having upper hand He is a hen- pecked husband; his wife is predominating by nature.
to beggar description	:	to be beyond the power of description. The beauty of Taj Mahal beggars description.
mortal	:	subject to death Man is mortal and will leave the world one day.
vestibule	:	entrance hall In the vestibule of the building there was a letter box.
coax	:	persuade She coaxed her son to fetch vegetables from the market.
blurred	:	dimmed; not clear Tears blurred her eyes.
go for	:	opt for Despite the financial constraints, I will go for a new car.
take a mighty pride	:	to be proud of Indians take a mighty pride in their ancient culture.
on the sly	:	in a sly manner, secretly He visits the casino on the sly.
on account of	:	because of He won a scholarship on account of his hard work.
live through	:	to endure He lived through the hard days by dint of his will power.
instead of	:	in place of Shall we have fish instead of meat?

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LESSON NO. 3

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POPULAR SHORT STORIES

- I. The Ant and the Grasshopper
- II. The Gateman's Gift

**3.0 Objectives**

- To Introduce students with the popular short stories and their themes.
- To Introduce students with the summaries and characters of the short stories.

**(i) THE ANT AND THE GRASSHOPPER**

**3.1 The Author**

W. Somerset Maugham was a famous playwright, novelist and short-story writer. He has dealt with a wide variety of themes. He is very good at character delineation. His stories are very interesting and his style is simple, without any decoration but at the same time it is very impressive. *Of Human Bondage* (1915) and *The Moon and Six Pence* (1919) are his famous novels.

**3.2 A Summary of the story**

The author saw George Ramsay eating lunch alone in a restaurant. He seemed to be very unhappy. He reminded the author of the fable; The Ant and the Grasshopper. George was very unhappy because his younger brother Tom was a constant nuisance to him. Tom was married and had two children. One day he declared that he did not like his business. He said that the married life did not suit him. So he left his wife, his business and went abroad. Within two years, he finished all the money he had and started borrowing money from his friends. It shocked his relatives. Tom was very good at borrowing money. In fact, he was so charming and friendly that it was difficult to refuse him a loan. Tom loved to depend on his elder brother George. George was an honourable, respectable, and a serious man. Once or twice, he gave heavy sums of money to Tom with the hope that Tom might settle down in business once again. But with his money Tom bought a motor-car and some jewellery. When George realised that Tom did not mean to settle down in business he refused to give him money. Now Tom began to blackmail George. He exploited the fact that his brother could not see him doing the jobs that he considered below the dignity of the family. George preferred to give money to Tom than to see him doing these odd jobs.

Tom cheated a man called Cronshaw who took the matter to the court and Tom nearly went to prison. It was a great shock to George. He spent five hundred pounds to settle the matter but George got very angry when he came to know that Tom and Cronshaw cashed the cheque and that very minute they went together to Monte Carlo and enjoyed themselves.

Tom had enjoyed life like this for twenty years. He gambled, enjoyed the company of the most beautiful girls, went to the most expensive restaurants and wore beautiful

dresses. He did not look more than thirty-five when he was forty-six. He made a nice company because he was always cheerful. In spite of the fact that every one knew Tom's weakness, one could not help liking him. George, on the other hand, looked much older than his years. He was honest, conscientious, hard-working and respectable. He was faithful to his wife and very kind to his children. He carefully saved some money for the future. George thought that Tom would repent for his idleness but Tom got engaged to a woman who was old enough to be his mother. She died and left him half a million pound, a yacht and two houses. Tom was thus quite happy.

We are told that when the author saw George lunching by himself he was very unhappy because his worthless brother Tom was favoured by luck and he who had been so honest and hard-working throughout his life was not half fortunate as his brother Tom.

#### The Characters

The story depicts a beautiful and sharp contrast between the two brothers. In fact, the beauty of the story lies in the contrast between the characters of the two brothers, George and Tom. George, the elder one, is the proverbial ant, who is working hard for his own survival and for the survival of his family. He is honest, hard working and conscientious. He is very sensitive about his family honour. That is why he prefers giving money to his brother Tom rather than see him bringing disgrace to the family honour. He is a faithful husband and a loving father. He spends his money sensibly. He is worried about the future and saves one third of his income to make his future secure. He is not a selfish soul. He cares for the interest of others and for that he is ready to make sacrifices. He believes in leading a respectable life.

Tom, on the other hand, is an idler. He shirks work and responsibilities. He does not realise his duties towards his wife. He leaves her and goes abroad. He is a happy-go-lucky kind of a person and spends the borrowed money very lavishly. Unlike his brother George, he is selfish, concerned only with his own interest. He is not bothered about the family honour and does not mind bringing bad name to his family. He does not care for what others think of him. Unlike his brother George who is always worried about his future, Tom always lives in the living present. He is not worried about tomorrow. He has no faith in the moral values. He does not feel the prick of conscience. George earns money with the sweat of his brow and Tom spends George's money on luxuries. As George refuses to give him money, he does not hesitate to blackmail him. Tom is a clever fellow who knows how to get money out of others and how to please people where his own interests are involved unlike George who is truthful and straightforward. Tom does not mind cheating others.

### 3.3 The Theme

The common belief is that hard work is rewarded and idleness leads to miseries. But the story, 'The Ant and the Grasshopper' proves just the opposite of it. George the proverbial ant, who is a hard-working fellow, is not to be favoured by fortune. On the

other hand, the idler Tom, who does not take life seriously and does not care to work even for his own survival, gets the property of an old woman to whom he was engaged to be married. The story shows that this is a world where goodness is not rewarded. It is a world in which honesty, or truthfulness or sincerity does not lead one anywhere; it is a world where the clever, the winning, the careless get the best of the life. The younger brother Tom proves that idleness does not necessarily lead to misery. In fact, in this story, it is the idleness, not the hard-work, that leads to prosperity.

In the beginning, only the narrator of the story shares with the reader his disbelief in the lesson being taught by the fable "The Ant and the Grasshopper". The narrator comments "My sympathies were with the grasshopper and for sometime I never saw an ant without putting my foot on it. In this summary (and as I have discovered since entirely human) fashion, I sought to express my disapproval of prudence and common sense."

The student must note that the narrator of the story is not being used by the author to convey a message or lesson. The story writer only presents the facts he does not put his weight on either side. The story does not eulogise the grasshopper. Instead the reader ends up smiling on the uncertainty of any moral position.

### 3.4 Study Notes

devised	:	planned
industry	:	hard work
ascribe	:	assign
prudence	:	careful forethought
gloom	:	sadness
sore trial	:	painful test
profoundly	:	deeply
unscrupulous	:	not guided by conscience
steady	:	constant; regular
discreditable	:	bringing dishonour
wild	:	uncivilized
assuredly	:	surely
convict (verb)	:	declare guilty in a law court
prosecuted	:	brought legal proceeding against
goal	:	jail
scoundrel	:	villain; rascal
infinite	:	endless
rage	:	anger
bandbox	:	light box of a cardboard for hats etc.
incredible	:	unbelievable
grounded	:	unwilling to give
scapegrace	:	good for nothing person who constantly gets in to

	trouble
golf	: an outdoor game
end in the gutter	: end in disaster
thrift	: economy in the use of money or goods
providence	: god
dissolute	: vicious
rogue	: rascal
work-house	: public institution for homeless people in a parish
clenched	: closed tightly
fist	: hand when tightly closed
wrathful	: angry

#### Words and Phrases

perversity	: departure from what is reasonable or normal; abnormality He was not admitted into decent company because of his sexual perversity.
Deficient	: Not having enough of. Being deficient in courage, he couldn't refuse loan to his enemy.
Reconcile	: Accept; agree to. He reconciled himself to the new situation.
Hilarious	: mirthful; joyous. "She stoops to Conquer" is a hilarious comedy.
Expostulation	: Friendly remonstrances; appeals My expostulation with unruly mob had no effect.
Unscrupulous	: Dishonest An unscrupulous man cannot cheat the people for all time.
Qualm	: Scruple; hesitation He felt no qualms about borrowing money from his friends.
Vindictive	: Revengeful. The police became vindictive and implicated him in a false case.
Philander	: Make love without serious attention. Tom neglected his wife and philandered with other women.
Convicted	: Declared guilty of crime. He was convicted of murder.
Incredible	: Unbelievable

		It is an incredible story; nobody believes it.
Scapegrace	:	A good for nothing fellow; a person of reckless or disorderly habits. A scapegrace who shirks work and responsibility is bound to fail in life.
To end in the gutter	:	To be ruined He was extravagant and ultimately ended in the gutter .
Dissolute	:	Evil; vicious. He was leading a dissolute life that marred his reputation.
Wrathful	:	Angry Seeing the children in his garden, the giant looked wrathful.
A black sheep	:	Good for nothing person. Do not trust him, He is a black sheep.
A sore trial	:	A nuisance. His younger brother has been a sore trial to him for his entire life.
Give up	:	To leave; to drop He has given up smoking.
Fell far	:	To choose The rich businessman has fallen for the pretty actress.
Grow red in the face	:	To be angry He grew red in the face when he found his son smoking in the bathroom.

### 3.5 Self Check Exercise

- Q.1. Why was George Ramsay in deep gloom?
- Q.2. What is the moral of a La Fontaine's fable, 'The Ant and the Grasshopper' ?
- Q.3. Why was Tom Ramsay popular with his friends? Explain.
- Q.4. How was Cronshaw associated with Tom?
- Q.5. What does George mean by, 'It is not fair, I tell you, it's not fair?'

### 3.6 Answers to the Self Check Answers

- Ans.1 George Ramsay looked sad as though the burden of the whole world had fallen on his shoulders. He was tired of his younger brother Tom who had been creating trouble for him and for the family for nearly twenty years.
- Ans.2 La Fontaine's fable "The Ant and the Grasshopper" brings home the useful lesson that this world are imperfect. Here hard work is rewarded and laziness and giddiness is punished.
- Ans.3 Tom Ramsay was charming by nature. He made friends easily. He frequently



borrowed money from his brother George and had a good time with his friends in restaurants. He spent money on luxuries.

Ans.4 Tom first cheated Cronshaw who wanted to take the matter to the court. George saved Tom by paying five hundred pounds to settle the matter with Cronshaw. Later Tom and Cronshaw became friends.

Ans.5 George's younger brother Tom had been exploiting him and getting money from him for twenty years. George remained hard working throughout, while Tom remained an idler all his life. Later fortune favoured Tom and he became a millionaire by marrying an old rich woman who died and left a lot of property for him. That is why George says, "It is not fair."

## (ii) THE GATEMAN'S GIFT

### 3.7 Introduction to the Author

R. K. Narayan was one of the most distinguished Indian novelists who wrote in English. He primarily projects the social reality in his fiction. His description is imbued with a tinge of irony. He arouses wit and humour in his writing. His famous novels include *Swamy and Friends*, *Mr. Sampath*, *The Dark Room*, *The Financial Expert*, and *The Guide*. Narayan has also written several short stories collected in two volumes. *An Astrologer's Day and other Stories* and *Lawley Road*. His stories are written in a simple and lucid style.

### 3.8 The Story

*The Gateman's Gift* is an interesting story. It describes a gate-keeper's sense of duty, his childlike delight in his hobby and his oddities in a humorous vein.

Govind Singh served in the army during the First World War from 1914-18. After that he got the job of a gatekeeper. He was given a khaki uniform, a shining band on his shoulder and a short stick. When his chief's car passed through the gate, he stood attention and gave a military salute. The office consisted of over a hundred members of staff and he kept an eye on them. After the manager and the staff left, Govind Singh shut all the doors; locked and sealed the main gate. In this way, he spent twenty-five years of service and then he requested to be retired, because his eyesight had grown weak. The Chief said, "That he was pleased with his service and the company would give him a pension of twelve rupees throughout his life."

Govind Singh's life moved on smoothly. He got the pension from the company and his wife earned some money by washing and sweeping in a couple of houses. After sometime, Govind Singh made a new discovery. He collected clay from the backyard and sawdust from a carpenter's shop; purchased a little paint and began to prepare attractive models of clay and sawdust. He kept these models at his cousin's shop and they sold like hot

cakes. Govind Singh could prepare all kinds of attractive models; a beggar woman coming at midday, the cucumber vendor, all the forms and creatures. When he went to his old office to receive pension, he handed a model of street-scene to the Accountant to be passed on to the manager. Next time, he offered another model (children at play) to the manager. Finally he prepared a masterpiece- a model of his office, with himself at his post, a car at the entrance, and the chief getting down his car. The model was so realistic that it created a great sensation in the whole office; the people wasted a lot of time in discussing it, pleasing over it.

A week later, Govind Singh received a registered letter. He felt upset. He had received only three letters in his life time and each time he had felt disturbed till the contents were read out. For him, a registered letter was a notice from the court or the lawyer. He almost broke down after receiving the letter. Without knowing its content he told his wife that they had perhaps stopped his pension. He developed the impression that by making models and offering them to his office, he had landed himself into trouble. He went to different people to tell him what it contained without opening; He asked them, "Please tell me what is there inside?" The people advised him to open it and see..... But he did not want to open the letter and yet wished to know its contents. The people suggested , "If you don't like to open it, and yet want to know what is inside, you must take it to the X-Ray institute."

The gate- keeper went to the X-Ray institute and asked the assistant. He said "You could tell me what's inside without opening it. The assistant asked him where he came from. Govind Singh explained his life, work and outlook and added," I have lived without remarks all my life. I know trouble was coming". There were tears on his cheeks. The assistant considered him mad and advised him to go home and take rest. On his way home, Govind Singh realized why they were all behaving like this, as if he were a mad man. After some time Govind Singh really started behaving abnormally. He stopped abruptly in the middle of the road and recalled the words people used for him, "Mad: Mad; "He said to himself, "I have been mad and didn't know it ..... " He considered his action of doll- making a whim of a mad man. He felt a tremendous freedom of limbs, he did not feel it possible to walk at an ordinary pace, he wanted to fly and run through the market road.

When Govind Singh saw children coming out of a school, he felt it would be nice to amuse their young hearts by behaving like a tiger. So he fell on his hands and knees and crawled upto them with a growl. As he went home, he told his wife that he was mad as his body was splashed with mud. He prepared the model of a village and then destroyed it in his madness. He, then picked up a pebble and threw it on the bulb of a tall electric lamp. Suddenly, he came across the accountant of his office who saw the registered letter in his hand. The accountant snatched the letter that had come from the General Manager who appreciated Govind Singh for the artistic models he had

made and was pleased to sanction a reward of Rs. 100 for him. The Accountant also assured him that he was not mad. Frustrated by the behaviour of people, Mr. Singh gave up his hobby of clay- modelling for ever.

### **3.9 Govind Singh -A Study of Character**

Govind Singh is a very interesting- character portrayed by R.K. Narayan in his story 'The Gateman's Gift'. He is an honest army man who served during World War First from 1914-18. After his retirement from army, he takes up the job of a Gateman in a private firm. He is given a *Khaki* uniform, a shining band across his shoulders and a short stick. He takes his job very seriously and performs his duty sincerely. He sits down on a stool at the entrance to the office. When the chief's car arrives, he stands up at attention and gives a military salute. The office consists of a hundred members of staff and as they come in and go out, he keeps an eye on them. When the office is closed, he shuts all the doors carefully and locks up and seals up the main door. He looks upon his chief with godly reverence.

As his eye-sight dims, the company orders his retirement and gives him a pension of twelve rupees per month. Govind Singh spends his time happily after retirement. He develops his interest in a hobby of clay- modelling. He gathers clay from the backyard of his house and sawdust from a carpenter's shop situated next to his cousin's cigarette shop. He starts manufacturing showpieces of clay, such as the model of a beggar woman coming at midday, a cucumber vendor, a village or a town. He keeps these models at his cousin's shop and they attract huge crowds of people.

The gateman feels proud of his art. His models are really fascinating. He prepares the model of a street scene and gives it to the Accountant of his old office to be passed on to the chief. He prepares his masterpiece-the model of his office with himself at his post, a car is standing at the entrance and the chief of his ex-office getting down the car

He is an illiterate and simple minded person. As he receives a registered letter, he feels disturbed. He thinks registered letters are always sent by the courts and the Lawyers. He feels afraid of opening the registered letter that he has received. The simple minded Govind Singh thinks that he has himself invited the trouble by presenting the model of the office to the chief. In reality this model has brought him a reward and compensation. R.K. Narayan depicts the folly of Govind Singh as he goes to the X-Ray institute to know the contents of the registered letter without opening it. The registered letter has a bad effect on him. He doesn't let anyone open it. The people think he has gone mad. He literally behaves like a mad man, though he is a lover of art. He says, " I have been mad and I didn't know it". He feels his action of doll-making was mad. "What sane man would make clay dolls after twenty five years of respectable service in an office." He wants to fly. He swings his arms up and down and runs on with a whoop. He runs through the market road. When people watch his odd behaviour intently, he says, " Hey don't laugh at mad man, for who knows you will also be mad when you come to make

clay dolls". When he sees children coming out of schools, he feels behaving like a tiger to amuse them. In brief he is a lovable character who amuses the reader with his oddities.

### 3.10 Self Check Exercise

- Q.1. Why was Govind's sanity doubted ?  
 Q.2. How did Govind Singh pass his time after retirement?  
 Q.3. How did Govind Singh suddenly discover his hobby?  
 Q.4. What registered letter did Govind Singh receive?

### 3.11 Answers to the Self Check Exercise

Ans.1 Govind Singh's sanity was doubted by people because he actually behaved like a mad man. He went to the X-Ray Institute to know about the contents of the letter without opening it. He behaved like a tiger to amuse the children coming out of school.

Ans.2 Govind Singh developed interest in clay-modelling. He collected clay from the backyard of his house and prepared the model of a town, a village, a beggar woman coming at midday, a cucumber vendor. His great masterpiece was the model of his office where he had served as a gateman.

Ans.3 One day, a child in the neighbourhood brought to him a little doll for repair. He not only repaired it but made a new thing of it ..... This discovery pleased him and he felt that he could make fascinating models out of clay and sawdust.

Ans.4 Govind Singh presented an ideal model of his old office where he himself was standing as a gateman at his post, a car was standing at the entrance and the chief was getting down. The chief felt happy and sent him a reward of rupees one hundred in a registered letter.

- P.1. Gratitude : Thanks  
 Govind Singh was full of gratitude as the chief spoke to him.
- P.39. Contemplation : Deep thinking  
 In moments of contemplation, Govind Singh was recalling the words of his chief.
- P.39. Muttered : Spoke slowly  
 The chief muttered that he was pleased with the services of Govind Singh.
- P.40. Miniature : Very small  
 Govind Singh prepared the miniature model of a village.

## POPULAR SHORT STORIES

- I. How Much Land Does a Man Need ?
- II. The Necklace

### 4.0 Objectives

- To Introduce students with the popular short stories and their themes.
- To Introduce students with the summaries and characters of the short stories.

#### (i) HOW MUCH LAND DOES A MAN NEED?

#### 4.1 The Author

"How much Land Does a Man Need?" is written by Count Leo Tolstoy (1828- 1910) who was a great Russian novelist and short story writer. Tolstoy was born in a well-to-do family of Russia. After leading a life of luxury and comfort for some time, he suddenly turned away from riches and became religious minded. He underwent a great spiritual experience and developed reverence for Christ and the holy Bible. It is said that he founded a new religion, Tolstoism which laid emphasis on the renunciation of violence and wealth, and on the development of compassion for all human beings on the earth. Mahatma Gandhi was greatly fascinated by the thought and philosophy of Tolstoy.

As a novelist, Tolstoy enjoys a great reputation and wields a great influence over some of his contemporary writers. His popular works are; *War and Peace*, *Anna Karenina*, *The Death of Ivan Iyitch and other stories* and *Twenty-Three Tales*. Tolstoy's short stories are primarily known as fables; they are imbued with moral conviction and religious fervour.

#### 4.2 The story

'How Much Land Does a Man Need?' is a story which highlights the themes of human greed and temptation. Pahom, a peasant from the countryside, grumbles that he does not possess enough land. "If I had plenty of land. I should not fear the Devil Himself. The Devil took up his challenge and decided to trap the peasant into his authority by giving him enough land.

Soon Pahom got the news that a lady who owned about three hundred acres was going to sell her land and that she had agreed to accept one half of the price in cash and to wait a year for the other half. Pahom and his wife put their heads together to arrange money to purchase the land. He already had one hundred roubles saved from their earnings. They sold a colt and one half of their bees and hired out one of their sons as a labourer and took his wages in advance. They borrowed rest of the money from their brother -in-law, and in this way they were able to raise the required amount for the purchase of land. Now Pahom had land of his own. He borrowed seeds and sowed it on the land he had bought. The harvest was good and within a year he was able to pay off his debts to the lady and his brother-in-law.

After sometime, Pahom, picked up a quarrel with his neighbours. Some herdsmen of his neighbourhood would let the village cows stray into his meadows. One peasant even got into Pahom's wood at night and cut down five young lime trees for their bark. Pahom suspected that Simon must have committed this mischief. So he went against him in court of law. Simon was summoned, tried, but finally acquitted because there was no evidence against him. Pahom, out of frustration, lost temper with the judges and his neighbours.

Then a stranger, who had come from beyond the Volga, informed Pahom that many peasants were purchasing land there. The land was very fertile. Pahom felt tempted and reached down the Volga. There he found that the peasants had plenty of land; every man had twenty five acres of land offered by the cooperative society of farmers and anyone who had money could buy at two shillings an acre as much good freehold land as he wanted. Tempted by the desire to purchase fertile land in Volga, Pahom began selling his belongings. He sold his land in the native village at a profit, sold his homestead and all his family shifted to the new village. He received five shares of "Communal land" for his own and his son's use, that is, 125 acres besides the use of common pastures. Now he was ten times better off than he had been. He had now plenty of fertile land and could keep as many heads of cattle as he liked.

Pahom was still not satisfied. He felt that his land was too far away from the village; it was situated at a distance of ten miles. He wanted to buy more freehold land near home. Fortunately the season turned out well and the crops were good. He had now enough money to buy more land. He bargained with a peasant and committed to pay him 1500 roubles for a large piece of land. Meanwhile a passing dealer who happened to stay with Pahom for the night informed his host that the land of the Bashkirs was very cheap. He himself had bought thirteen thousand acres of land, all for 1000 roubles. He should be-friend of the chief by offering him gifts and wine.

Pahom now reached the place where Bashkirs lived. He offered presents to them. The conversation started between Pahom and Bashkirs. The chief offered to sell his land. He said, "We sell the land by day. As much as you can go round on your feet in a day is yours. And the price is one thousand roubles a day, But if you don't return on the same day to the spot whence you started, your money is lost." Pahom was delighted. The whole night he could not sleep. He kept thinking about the land. Pahom thought that he would mark off a large tract of land because he could easily run thirty five miles in a day. The devil with hoofs and horns was chuckling and laughing at the foolishness of Pahom. But Pahom's eyes glistened at the prospect of all virgin soil. He started with a spade on his shoulder from a particular mark fixed by the chief and ran towards the rising sun. After having gone a thousand yards he stopped to dig a hole, and placed pieces of turf on one another to make a prominent mark. Pahom felt he had walked three miles. The sun got warmer; he took off his under-coat, flung it across his shoulder,

and went on again. Pahom was very thirsty and badly perspiring. But he went on and on . He did not take any rest, though he was tired. He stepped faster and faster. The run was now nearly half-way to the horizon and Pahom thought he was still ten miles away from the goal; he went towards the hillock. He now walked with difficulty; he was exhausted and his bare feet were cut and bruised and his legs began to fail. The sun was setting. It was now too late to return to the destination. Pahom realized that he had committed a blunder covering such a long distance because he couldn't get to the point before the sun set. This fear made him breathless. The bashkirs were yelling and shouting to him to come back. The greedy Pahom fell down and lay dying. He said," All my labour has been in vain. He had ruined himself. The blood was flowing from his mouth and he was dead. The devil laughed in his sleeve".

#### 4.3 Theme

"How much Land Does a Man Need"? is one of the finest examples of human greed. It projects unquenchable desire of a peasant to possess large tract of land. We never feel contented with whatever we already possess and continue clamouring for more. This is fairly explicated from the fable of a Russian peasant, Pahom, who loses his life in the process of fulfilling his desire for more and more land. The protagonist of the story, Pahom abandons his native village , loses membership of the " Commune," picks up quarrels with his neighbours and sues them in the court, and loses all decency for the sake of acquiring more land. However, he never feels contented with large pieces of land which he already owns. He reaches the land of the generous Bashkirs who offer him as much land as he likes. He has only to run, make the mark and return to the destination before the sunset. But the unfortunate Pahom is unable to keep restraint on his greed as he wishes to process the whole earth by running towards the east and the west. In the process of covering large distance, of land before the sunset, he runs fast. But he bruises his feet, grows breathless and finally lies down dead, repentant of his folly. Man needs just six feet of land for his final abode.

#### 4.4 Study Notes

Promenade	:	walk or ride taken in public for pleasure
coarse	:	unpleasant; ugly
surrounded by temptations	:	filled with greed
steward	:	manager
stabled	:	keeping cattle
communal herdsman	:	peasants who belong to a cooperative society or corporation of small farmers.
prosecute	:	arrest; to sue in a court of law
stripped	:	uncovered; naked
summoned	:	called for

acquitted	:	set free
aggrieved	:	resented; unhappy
commune	:	a co-operative; a plot of land held and managed by a corporation of small farmers.
Volga	:	river in Russia
arable land	:	land suitable for ploughing
pasturage	:	place for feeding cattle
Samara	:	a town on the river Volga
Bashkirs	:	a nomadic tribe
clinched the matter	:	settled the issue
tradesman	:	businessman
tilled	:	ploughed
Kumiss	:	mare's fermented milk
turf	:	grass
blacksmith's bellows	:	blacksmith's apparatus for blowing air in to fore.
exclaimed	:	remarked

#### Words and Phrases

Again and again (repeatedly)	:	I flew into anger when he asked my name again and again.
On purpose (deliberately)	:	He misguided my children on purpose
Now and then (off and on)	:	he pays me visits now and then
Pick out (choose)	:	He picked out the best book out of the pile.
On behalf of (for)	:	Don't be uneasy on my behalf.
According to one's means (according to one's capacity)	:	We should live according to our means
To put heads together (thought collectively)	:	We should put our heads together to solve the problems of the locality.
Lay by (to save)	:	We should lay by something for the rainy day.
Rack one's brains (to think deeply)	:	He racked his brain but could not find solution to the vexed problem.
Clinch the matter (to finalise or decide the issue)	:	The land deal was clinched yesterday.
Take off (to remove)	:	I have taken my coat off.
A great deal of (a lot of)	:	A great deal of hard work is required to succeed in life.

#### 4.5 Self Check Exercise

- Q.1. What is the chief trait of the character of Pahom ?
- Q.2. What did Pahom decide to do to gain more land ?
- Q.3. What did the stranger direct Pahom to do in order to acquire land ?
- Q.4. How was Pahom tempted by his greed for more and more land ?
- Q.5. Did Pahom get all the land he wanted ?



#### 4.6 Answers to the Self Check Exercise

Ans.1 The chief trait of Pahom's character is his excessive greed. He wishes to possess more land so that he becomes one of the greatest landlords of the village.

Ans.2 He decided to sell a colt and half of his bees. He hired out one of his sons as a labourer and took his wages in advance. He also decided to borrow the rest of the money from his brother-in-law so that he could buy more land.

Ans.3 The stranger told Pahom that the land of the Bashkirs was very cheap and he advised him to befriend the chief of Bashkirs by offering him gifts and wine to buy land at a cheap price from them.

Ans.4 As he learnt that he would acquire as much land as the area he could cover on his feet in one day, he was tempted to get hold of the land.

Ans.5 No. He couldn't get all the land he wanted as he had become breathless while covering the large distance. And finally he fell down.

### (ii) THE NECKLACE

#### 4.7 Introduction to the Author

Henri Rene Albert guy de, Maupassant (1850-1893) was the son of a wealthy stockbroker of Paris. He could not continue with his government employment as his style was at variance with that of his department. But he made a name in the world of letters. He learnt his art of creative writing at the feet of famous French novelists, Gustav Flaubert. He was known as an admirable writer of prose and a master of short story. Some of his most remarkable short stories are *Boul de Suif*, an audacious tale of an episode in the French-German War; *La Masion Tellie Mademoisells Fife*, *Miss Harriet*, *Monsieur Paren*. Besides collection of short stories, he also wrote six novels. *Pierre Lean* (1881) is a study of havoc caused by jealousy. *Une Ure* (1883) and *Bel Ami* (1885) are also notable. But Maupassant shall always be remembered for his short stories.

#### 4.8 Summary of the Story

"The Necklace" is the story of an ordinary girl who has to pay heavy price for her illogical expectations. Matilda, the heroine of the story, though born into a family of poor clerks, had been endowed with extraordinary beauty. She could not afford a handsome dowry to marry a rich or distinguished person. Eventually, she had to marry a poor clerk, Berton Loisel. She had neither good dresses nor precious jewels. She was also ill at ease with her poor surroundings. Her house, its shabby walls and the worn-out and faded furnishings tortured and angered her. Her miserable lot awoke in her bitter regret and desperate dreams. She longed for tastefully furnished villas and exquisite food served in marvellous dishes in decent drawing rooms. She wanted to be appreciated

and courted but all her hopes were dashed to the ground. As a result, she always remained confined to her narrow and dirty world. She never liked to visit her rich friend Mrs. Jeanne Forestier because that would fill her with despair and disappointment. Breton Loisel was aware of the anguish of his wife but was not in a position to do anything. Once fate smiled on this poor clerk. He was successful in procuring an invitation for the official ball at the Minister's residence. He thought this would give his wife a chance to move in the higher official circle which she always desired. But Matilda became upset on receiving the invitation, because she had no proper dress to wear for the occasion. The poor husband had to part with four hundred francs which he had saved to buy a gun to join a hunting party in summer, in order to procure an impressive dress for his wife. But an unknown anxiety still haunted Matilda. She had no jewels. But this problem was also solved when they borrowed a precious diamond necklace from Mrs. Jeanne Forestier.

The party was a grand success. Matilda attracted everyone with her beauty and elegance. Guests wanted to be introduced to her. Ministers wished to dance with her. The success went to Matilda's head and she found herself on the seventh heaven.

The party broke up at four in the morning. Matilda and Breton sought a carriage. They had to walk upto the *Seine* river to locate a shabby night coupe. They drove happily to their humble dwelling. Before retiring for the night, Matilda stood before the mirror to have a last view of her glory. But to her dismay, she found that the diamond necklace was missing. The poor husband went out searching for the lost necklace, but could not find it anywhere.

The loss of the necklace gave a rude shock to Matilda. She wrote a letter to Mrs. Forestier informing her that the necklace would be returned after necessary repairs. In fact, the harassed couple wanted to buy some time to make necessary arrangements. They went to the jeweller whose name was mentioned on the innerside of the jewel box. But they were dismayed to know that the jeweller had supplied only the casket. They went from jeweller to jeweller to find another diamond necklace like the one they had lost. Luckily they found one in a shop of the Palais – Royal. Though its price was forty thousand francs the jeweller agreed to sell it for thirty six thousand francs. They requested the jeweller not to sell it for three days. They also begged the jeweller to get it back for thirty four thousand francs if they found the lost necklace by the end of February.

Now a frantic search for money began. Loisel had with him eighteen thousand francs which he had inherited from his father. He borrowed money recklessly from friends as well as the money lenders. He compromised his whole existence. He overlooked all future miseries and privations. The necklace was bought and duly returned to Mrs. Forestier.

The tragic circumstances shook Matilda out of her complacency. She met the hopeless situation with a rare determination. She had to pay the debt at all costs. The Loisels

rented poor rooms, dismissed their maid. Matilda did all the household chores herself. She did her own shopping and haggled for low prices. She began to live the life of horrible necessity. Loisel, too, worked overtime. He maintained the account of some merchant in the evening and did copying at night. For full ten years, they led a life of drudgery and repaid the entire debt.

But Matilda lost her youth in the bargain. She had become a hard, unkempt, crude woman of the poor household. She would often sit before the window and think of that evening party where she was so beautiful and so admired. What would have been her fate, if she had not lost necklace? Who can predict? How mysterious was life? Even a minor incident could make or mar it. She had learnt this bitter truth of life after undergoing so many sufferings.

One Sunday, during her walk to the Champs-Elysees, Matilda came across Mrs. Jeanne Forestier and her child. Mrs. Jeanne was still young, beautiful and winsome. Matilda accosted her friend in order to share her misery with her, but Mrs. Forestier failed to recognise her because of her old and common looks. Matilda shared her misery with her friend. She was stunned when Mrs. Forestier told her that the necklace was made of fictitious diamonds.

#### **4.9 The Theme of the Story**

Maupassant was a keen observer of life. Being a naturalist, he mirrors life in his short stories objectively. Maupassant was no social reformer. He never penned down his stories with any ethical purpose. Yet all his stories have implicit messages. "The Necklace" describes an upheaval in the life of the Loisel couple. At the same time the story also demonstrates that life is uncertain and unexpected. It is subjected to sudden changes. A single decision can change the shape of life. One slip in the career of Breton and Matilda seals their fate.

Matilda, a lowly born but beautiful girl, feels ill at ease in the lower strata of the society. Her misery awakes terrible dreams in her. She gets a life's chance when her husband manages an invitation to an official ball. Matilda does not cut her coat according to her cloth. Her husband's savings are wasted on a beautiful dress. In her blind fervour, she borrows a diamond necklace from her friend, Mrs. Jeanne Forestier. The short lived glory and happiness of the ball is consumed by the life-long privation and moral torture caused by the loss of the borrowed necklace. One insignificant incident sours the dreams of the ambitious girl and she and her husband have to work overtime for full ten years to repay the debt incurred by them to buy a new necklace for Mrs. Forestier. They lose their youth as well as their zest for life in order to feed Matilda's craze for moving upward in the social hierarchy. Dreams and wishes are the prime movers for human advancement, but fantasies and day dreams can ruin the human beings. They compel us to overlook the reality of the situation. The fantasy of Matilda turns her life into a nightmare.

But the bitter experience does not go waste. The hardships that the couple face cement their resolve and ennoble their souls. The lesson may be bitter but is well learned.

#### 4.10 Glossary

108	Inborn	:	Inherited
	finesse	:	perfection; elegance
109	suppleness	:	grace
	incessantly	:	continuously
	bric-a-brac	:	small ornaments in a house
	coquettish	:	flirtatious
	tureen	:	a large deep dish with a lid from which soup is served
	Sphinx	:	a creature with the head of man and the body of lion : a mysterious person
110	vexation	:	annoyance
	stupefied	:	stunned
111	vexed	:	annoyed
	ecstasy	:	happiness; bliss
112	nocturnal	:	active at night
	coupe	:	an enclosed four-wheeled horse-driven carriage
114	usurers	:	persons who lend money
	privation	:	want
115	awry	:	not in the correct position or shape
116	perceive	:	see; find

#### 4.11 Self Check Exercise

- Q.1. In what circumstances was Mrs. Matilda born ?
- Q.2. Was Mrs. Matilda happy with her lot ?
- Q.3. What desperate dream did Mrs. Matilda have ?
- Q.4. Why did Mr. Loisel save four hundred francs ?
- Q.5. Why did Matilda not like to visit the house of her friend, Mrs. Forestier ?
- Q.6. What letter did Mrs. Matilda write to Mrs. Forestier ?
- Q.7. How was the money raised by the Loisel couple to buy a new necklace ?
- Q.8. How did Mrs. Forestier act when the necklace was returned to her ?

#### 4.12 Answers to the Self Check Exercise

- Ans.1 Mrs. Matilda Loisel came from a family of clerks. She grew up in poverty and had no dowry, no hopes, and no comfort. Her humble origins had thwarted her ambitions when she had to be married to a petty clerk.
- Ans.2 She was unhappy with her present fate because she was married to a clerk. She led a very wretched and miserable life. She led a life of poverty. Her existence tortured and angered her.
- Ans.3 She dreamt of fully furnished palatial dwellings manned by footmen. She also thought of dainty dinners served in marvellous shining silver. She wanted to be praised and courted.
- Ans.4 Mr. Breton Loisel saved four-hundred francs to buy a gun so that he could join a

hunting party in summer to shoot larks.

Ans.5 Matilda had a rich classmate, Mrs. Jeane Forestier. She did not want to visit her because the visit would cause regret, remorse and dismay in her. She used to cry for the whole day after her return from Mrs. Forestier's house.

Ans.6 Matilda wrote a letter to her friend to the effect that the clasp of the diamond necklace had been loosened and the diamond necklace would be returned only after necessary repairs. This gave Matilda ample time to find a new necklace.

Ans.7 Berton had eighteen thousand francs which he had inherited from his father. He borrowed petty sums of money from his friends. He also borrowed money from the money-lenders at a high rate of interest. Thus he was able to raise thirty six thousand francs to buy a new necklace.

Ans.8 When Matilda returned the necklace to Mrs. Forestier, the latter reprimanded the former in a rigid tone for returning the necklace so late.

B.COM. PART-II  
SEMESTER-III

ENGLISH  
(COMMUNICATION SKILLS)

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LESSON NO. 5

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## POPULAR SHORT STORIES

The Reaping Race

### 5.0 Objectives

- To Introduce students with the popular short stories and their themes.
- To Introduce students with the summaries and characters of the short stories.

### (i) THE REAPING RACE

#### 5.1 The Writer

Liam O' Flaherty (1897-1984) was an Irish nationalist who was born in the Arran Islands. He was a famous short-story writer, play-wright and novelist. His famous novels are; *The Informer* (1935), *The Puritan* (1931) and *Famine* (1937). This master story teller had published many volume of short stories, namely, *Spring Showing* (1926), *The Tent*, (1926), *The Mountain Tavern* (1929), *The Wild Swan* (1936), and *Two Lovely Beas* (1948). His *Shame The Devil* (1934) is an autobiography. His stories mostly deal with incidents from common life of the simple folks.

#### 5.2 Summary of the Story

The story, "The Reaping Race" has been taken from O 'Flaherty's collection, *The Tent* (1926). It describes a rural scene with all its zest and liveliness. It narrates the incident of a reaping contest in a very vivid and dramatic manner. The setting of the story revives the memories of the Punjab rural ethos before the advent of the Green Revolution when physical prowess held sway over everything else in the domain of agriculture and such reaping races were quite common during the harvesting season. The whole story comes to us in the form of a running commentary that gives an eyewitness account of all the stages of the race. The writer/commentator gives an accurate description of the fields that happen to be the venue of the contest. The writer does not forget to comment on the early morning scene and the excitement that is writ large on the faces of the peasants who have assembled there to watch the reaping contest.

The locale of the story is the island of Inverara. The venue of the reaping race is a rye-field that runs along the gentle slope of a hill to the sandy coasts of the island. The owner of the field, James Mc Dara, is a retired engineer, who, out of his love of fun and sports, holds this reaping race and offers a five-pound reward for a field that can be cut for two pounds. Only three couples have volunteered to take part in this harvesting contest. The field was divided into three equal strips. Michael Gill and his wife, Susan, were allotted the left part of the field. Gill has an athletic built, restless and silent, he does not look around and concentrates on the ground waiting for the signal to go. Susan, too, is tall energetic and silent like her husband.

She thinks only of her eight-month old child whom she had left with her mother-in-law.

In the middle stands Johnny Bodkin, talking to his wife, Mary. Bodkin is a well built man, almost a picture of force and restless energy. But this huge person has a receding forehead which shows his age. Unlike Bodkin, Mary is short, thin and sallow faced. On the right is Pat Considine and his wife Kate. Pat is a small, thin, middle aged man with a freckled face. He possesses a lot of experience but lacks energy and movement. Kate, on the other hand, is a manly woman with a marked moustache and a masculine voice. The race begins with a pistol shot. The writer compares the reaping race with the musketry practice at the firing range. The reapers begin in right earnest. Their scythes mow down the bunches of the rye-stalks to be collected not sheafs by the women. All the three are in a hurry to harvest the first sheaf as it is always considered an omen of victory or defeat. It is Johnny Bodkin who harvests the first sheaf and claims credit for it. He reaps in a furious manner and is ahead of others. But he reaps in an untidy manner too and leaves stubbles behind him. Despite this, he is a picture of speed and energy and pushes through the rye-stalks as an elephant rushes through the forest. Considine and his wife are second. He is all strength and agile like a goat. He groans while he reaps, and his wife begins to show signs of wainess as she perspires. Gill and his wife are at the rear. Gill moves at a regular pace with methodic movements of a machine. He harvests neatly, concentrates on his job and never looks around to assure himself. His wife, too, is steady and regular.

It becomes hot as the sun advances. Bodkin is the first to reap half his strip before noon. He celebrates this feat by declaring "This is a proof that there was never a man born in the Island of Inverara as good as Johnny Bodkin." But Kate Considine deflates his boast with the remark, "The day is young yet, Bodkin of the soft flesh." This shows that both Bodkins and Considines are not concentrating on their job. Bodkins are the first to take a heavy mid-day meal consisting of eggs, bread, butter and cold tea as hurriedly as they harvested the crop. And without taking any rest, they resume the harvesting process again. Considine does not want to waste any time. Therefore, he eats while he reaps and is thus able to keep pace with Bodkin. Gill and Susan stop to take their food when they also reach half way. They eat slowly a light meal and also rest for a while. They resume the reaping after twenty minutes. The crowd jeers at them but Gill assures his father that "the race is not finished yet."

Bodkin is sure of winning the race as he is ahead of others. But his supremacy is challenged when Gill begins to work at twice his speed. People cheer Gill which irritates Bodkin. In his nervousness, Bodkin makes mistakes. Heavy meal begins to take its toll and exhaustion overtakes him. Considine feels no better and collapses by four o'clock. Even a swig of brandy fails to rejuvenate him. Kate dismisses her husband and begins to reap all alone in a furious manner. Mc Dara declares a special prize for her.

Now Bodkin and Gill are left in the field. Anger overtakes Bodkin and he makes supreme efforts to maintain his lead. He succeeds to some extent. But when at five o'clock he finds Gill coming up with terrible speed and regularity, he feels demoralised. Weariness

overpowers him in the form of intense thirst. Even a can of cold tea fails to quench it. His senses begin to get dull and he moves in an unconscious manner. As he

reaches one end of his strip, Gill accomplishes his task and wins the reaping race.

### 5.3 Theme of the Story

Liam O' Flaherty is a writer who avoids sermonizing in his writings. The story, "The Reaping Race", offers a realistic account of all the stages of the harvesting contest. At the same time, the story delivers a message also. Success or failure in a sporting event depends not only on the excessive physical energy but also on method, composure and mental make up of the contestants. It is not speed but the steadiness that carries the day. The performance of the three reapers illustrates this beyond any doubt.

Bodkin is the proverbial hare of the story. He is all speed and energy but his method and movements are faulty. His reckless style affects him mentally and physically. His boastful nature demonstrates a false sense of superiority in him and paves the way for his failure. This epitome of brute force knows neither the value of food nor that of leisure. He stuffs himself with food and denies himself any rest. The result exhaustion and dullness. He lacks concentration and allows himself to be distracted by the movements of others. The resultant irritation and nervousness make him lose balance of mind as well as the race.

In the case of Considine, it is less said the better. As compared to Bodkin, this thin and sallow middle-age man is a picture of experience and agility. He prefers speed to method and steadiness. He, too, ignores the importance of rest and pays a heavy price for his indiscretion. He humiliates himself when he collapses in the field for want of rest.

Gill, on the other hand, has the physique, style, and the mental composure of an athlete. He is methodical in his movements. Like Arjuna, the legendary Indian archer, he concentrates on the job in hand. He is so self confident that even the jeers of the crowd in the earlier stages of the race fail to unnerve him. He eats light meal and takes complete rest to recoup his energy. He is regular and steady in his movements. He is the proverbial tortoise of the fable. His slow and steady style shapes his victory in the race.

The reaping race does not justify the display of physical energy only. Style and composure of mind are equally important. Gill wins the race because he has both energy and style. Bodkin fails because he pushes forth like an elephant through the rye-stalks. Considine collapses because he lacks both energy and stamina. Again speed is not everything. It is steadiness that pays. Gill is regular and methodical. He knows the value of leisure. And he wins, because, slow and steady wins the race.

### 5.4 Self Check Exercise

- Q.1. Write in brief the character of McDara.
- Q.2. Comment on the character of Michael Gill.
- Q.3. Comment on the character of Johnny Bodkin.
- Q.4. Write a short note on the character of Kate.
- Q.5. Who cuts the first sheaf? How does he celebrate it?
- Q.6. Why is Johnny Bodkin being compared with an elephant?
- Q.7. Comment on Gill's style of reaping.
- Q.8. Why did the crowd roar in laughter?
- Q.9. Why could Bodkin not answer the taunt of Kate?
- Q.10. What was the ancient method of eating meals during the reaping contests in Inverara?
- Q.11. Why were the people jeering at Gill and his wife?
- Q.12. What happened to Considine just before 4 O' Clock?



Q.13. Why did McDara promise to give a special prize to Kate ?

Q.14. What lesson do you learn from the story ?

### 5.5 Answers to the Self Check Exercise

Ans.1 James McDara, a retired engineer, is a lover of fun and sports. He holds the reaping contest in order to give an opportunity to the best reapers to display their skill at reaping. He is a fair person and adopts a neutral posture of an umpire. He recognises the ability of Kate and offers a special prize to her though she is going to lose the race.

Ans.2 Gill has an athletic physique with a pointed nose, lean jaw and blue eyes. He possesses both energy and style and is regular and methodical in his movements. He concentrates on his job and never allows himself to be distracted by what goes around him. He knows the value of both speed and leisure. His composure and measured pace ensure victory for him.

Ans.3 Johnny Bodkin is a huge man full of physical energy. He is impatient and works in a furious manner. He makes mistakes because of his recklessness. He is a braggart and knows no restraint. Moreover, he is ignorant of the rules of the game. By overstuffing himself with food and by refusing to rest, he mars the chances of his success. He also lacks concentration and allows himself to be unnerved by the shouts and actions of others. He represents animal energy and lacks discipline and style.

Ans.4 Kate Considine is the wife of Pat Considine. She is a manly woman with a marked moustache on her upper lip and masculine voice. She is loud and boastful like Johnny Bodkin. She does not lose heart even when her husband collapses at four o' clock and continues doing her job single-handedly. McDara offers her a special prize.

Ans.5 Johnny Bodkin cuts the first sheaf ahead of others. With a loud cheer he raises his reaping hook in the air and spits on it crying "First Sheaf".

Ans.6 Johnny Bodkin was a huge man full of energy and movement. He reaped in a furious manner. His speed and strength were amazing. His body hurled through the rye-stalks as the huge body of an elephant rushes through the forest. That is why he is being compared with an elephant.

Ans.7 Michael Gill was regular, steady and methodical in his movements. He reaped exactly at the same speed. He always concentrated on his job. His actions were calm, monotonous and accurate. He made no mistakes and his reaping was clean and flawless.

Ans.8 When Bodkin reaped his strip half way, he yelled, "This is a proof that there was never a man born in the island of Inverara as good a Johnny Bodkin." The crowd burst into laughter when Kate taunted Bodkin with the remark "The day is young

yet, Bodkin of the soft flesh."

Ans.9 Though Bodkin was a huge man with the energy of an elephant, yet he was not sharp and intelligent. He could not answer the taunt of Kate because "his wits were not very sharp."

Ans.10 In the ancient contests, the reapers were in a great hurry to finish their job

ahead of others. They could not afford to waste their time on their meals. Hence they continued working while their wives fed them.

Ans.11 When Gill reaped half his strip he and his wife stopped for a light-meal. They also rested for twenty minutes. The crowd jeered at them because they were taking rest while Bodkin and Considine were ahead of them.

Ans.12 Considine ate while he reaped. He took no rest. Constant work without rest exhausted him and he collapsed before 4 O' Clock. Even a swig of whisky failed to revive him.

Ans.13 When Considine collapsed before 4 O' Clock Kate cursed and rebuked him. At the same time, she resumed the reaping activity single handedly. This made McDara promise her a special prize.

Ans.14 The story has a moral that slow and steady wins the race. The slow, methodical and regular Gill wins the race, while the fast, furious and powerful Bodkin loses it.

### 5.6 Words/Phrases

Sweep over	:	(pass over) The wave swept over the deck.
from end to end	:	(from one side to another) The wheat field was cleared from end to end.
cast lots	:	(to draw lots) Lots were cast to choose the
monitor.to take up position	:	(to take stand) No one comes forth to take up
		position against corruption.
commence	:	(begin) Our examination commences from
Monday.crios	:	(a long knitted belt made of wool) The
shepherd		wore a crios around his waist.
wiry	:	(lean and sinewy) Only a wiry man wins the race.
now and again	:	(frequently) He asks me this silly question now
and		again.
plump	:	(rounded) The baby has plump cheeks.
protruded	:	(getting out) His teeth are protruding out of
his		mouth.
freckled	:	(spotted; marked with spots) His face was
		freckled because of the heat of the sun.
lay flat	:	(lie) He lay flat on the ground.
Omen	:	(sign of evil fortune) For some, the sight of a cat is
		abad omen.
pause	:	(stop) He paused before he entered the room.
far ahead	:	(in the lead) He ran far ahead of other athletes.
ponderous	:	(meditative; thoughtful) He was looking at the
book		in a ponderous manner.
agility	:	(quickness; activeness) The leopard is known

		for its agility.
monotonous	:	(dull, wearisome; unchanging) I do not like his voice. It is monotonous.
to take no notice	:	(ignore) He took no notice of me when I called on him.
as soon as	:	(at the same moment) I reached the station as soon as the train arrived.
to come level with	:	(to compete with) It is very difficult for a poor man to come level with the rich people.
handicapped	:	(invalid) He was handicapped by his
poverty.lay down office.	:	(give up, resign) He has laid down his
collapsed	:	(to fall down) The drug addict first staggered and then collapsed.
to gain ground	:	(to gain or achieve something) Pakistani forces could not gain ground against the Indian forces.
send for	:	(call) My brother is ill. Please send for the doctor.

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LESSON NO. 6

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## PARAGRAPH WRITING

### 6.0 Objectives

- In this lesson we propose to discuss and explain the paragraph writing skills.
- This chapter also provide some examples of paragraph writing.

### 6.1 What is a paragraph ?

- (a) "A paragraph is a group of sentences that help to express one idea"—  
Alderton Pink.
- (b) "A paragraph is a number of sentences grouped together which relate  
to one topic; or a group of related sentences that develop one point".—  
Martin.

As is clear from the above definitions, a paragraph is a group of sentences dealing with one main idea or theme. It is a division of a piece of writing, a new line. This division is made whenever a new idea is sought to be conveyed. The division of a piece of writing into paragraph is a convenience as well as a necessity. Essential features of a paragraph :

The essential features of a good paragraph are :

Unity	Order	Emphasis
Variety	Clarity	

Unity : As a paragraph is the expression of one central idea or theme which must have unity : that is, all the sentences employed in a paragraph should help to express or bring out the one main idea or theme of the paragraph. Any sentence which does not develop the thought of the preceding sentences or which does not contribute to the whole effect should be rejected as irrelevant.

Order : This means that the thoughts which a writer seeks to convey in his paragraph should be arranged in a clear and logical manner. There should be no incoherence in presentation. Each sentence should have a natural relation to the next one. All thoughts should be closely connected with the main idea and arranged in order of their importance.

Emphasis : Emphasis is another important feature or principle of paragraph writing. It means giving space and position to a sentence according to its importance in relation to the central idea; in other words, a more important sentence or statement should receive more emphasis than a less important one.

The key-sentence, which has a direct relevance to the topic of the paragraph, should be given the greatest prominence.

This can be done by placing the topic sentence either at the beginning or at the end of a paragraph. And since the beginning of a paragraph has a more emphatic position than the end, it will be advisable to place the topic sentence at the beginning.

Variety : The construction of sentences in a paragraph should be varied. In a good paragraph there is an alternation of long and short sentences. Such

sentences ensure better rhythm and effect in writing. Repetition of words should also be avoided so as not to produce a monotonous effect.

Clarity : All the ideas should be conveyed in a clear and lucid manner. Confusing thoughts and expressions should be avoided.

Length of a paragraph :

There are no rigid rules about the length of a paragraph. Much depends on the nature of the topic. However, fifteen to twenty lines of ten words each should be the appropriate length of a paragraph. Remember, when an argument is developed in a paragraph, sentences should be so arranged as to lead to the climax towards the end. Always avoid digressions and repetitions so that the main idea is not thrown into the background. A paragraph is not a collection of sentences. It should be a coherent composition with proper beginning, middle and ends.

### **6.2 Technique of paragraph writing :**

The writer of a paragraph should explain the subject in the first few lines and then proceed to illustrate it with examples from life and literature. If the paragraph is to be written on a well known saying like 'A little learning is a dangerous thing' or 'A thing of beauty is a joy for ever', the student will do well to trace the source of the quotation (provided he is on a sure ground ) and even explain its context in brief, if necessary.

The opening sentence of a paragraph should preferably be the topic-sentence, that is, one which indicates the topic or theme of the paragraph. It should be crisp and telling. One may, however, begin a paragraph with a suitable quotation or even with a question. But it should be followed by relevant details which contribute effectively to the development of the subject in hand. The concluding sentence should be natural and logical and should have an air of finality about it.

A writer has beautifully summed up the technique of paragraph construction: "Beginning clearly with the main thought of the paragraph; expand your thoughts in a few clear sentences smoothly connected together and close firmly on the keynote of the whole."

### **6.3 Some model paragraphs :**

#### **SILENCE IS GOLD**

'Speech is silver, silence is gold' is an immortal German Proverb. It contains a great deal of wisdom in it. It is a practical tip for success in life. A person who wags his tongue freely in his cheeks may come to grief one day. Certain occasions require restraint and the dignity of silence on our part. If we loosen the brake on our tongue it will land us in awkward situations. Sometimes indiscreet talking leads to disastrous consequences, particularly when one is dealing with one's superiors. One should always be cautious with one's words. A wrong word sometimes proves more dangerous than a sharp edged weapon. A person may forfeit the good

will and confidence of his friend, however informal he may be, by a hasty and impulsive remark. It is always safe, therefore, to speak less and rather be at the listening end. Silence is the hallmark of wisdom. Wise people and philosophers often keep quiet. It has been well said, "Give every one thy ear, but few thy tongue."

#### A LITTLE LEARNING IS A DANGEROUS THING

"A little learning is a dangerous thing", so says Pope in his *An Essay on Criticism*. And Pope is unquestionably right. A quack or pretender with little knowledge may do—in fact it always does, great harm to any society. There is no doubt that a teacher with superficial knowledge and half-baked ideas will misguide his students. Doctor with deficient professional skill will do nothing but 'kill' his patients. Similarly an engineer who is ill-qualified will build defective dams and bridges which can cause accidents resulting in loss of human life and property. An ignorant politician can pervert public mind and mislead the nation. But in any sphere of life - literary, social, economic or religious a little learning is always a dangerous thing. But the irony of it is that the professors of shallow knowledge are generally vain and boastful. On the other hand, true scholars are modest and humble. It is no use being jack of all trades and master of none. One must have perfect mastery over one's subject before one sets out to practise a profession. Besides, true learning gives us genuine satisfaction. It raises us in the estimation of people and enables us to serve the community better.

#### HANDSOME IS THAT HANDSOME DOES

This saying implies that true beauty of a person does not lie in his physical appearance, it is connected with the beauty of the mind of the soul. In other words, a person should be judged by his good and noble actions. What is the good of a person who is beautiful from outside but vicious and venomous from within ? That is why the Greek philosopher Plato and, in our times, Gandhiji insisted on the combination of the truth, the good and the beautiful. According to the latter that person is beautiful in the real sense of the term who is pure both in thought and deed. In English poetry Spenser and Keats are worshippers of beauty which is synonymous with truth. An apple which is attractive to look at but is rotten from within is useless. The same is true of a woman who is beautiful but immoral. In fact, mere physical beauty and glamour become, at times, a cause of serious trouble. Troy was burnt down all for the sake of that beautiful woman, Helen. The world actually honours men of truth, virtue and character. Socrates, though ugly looking, is remembered as a great philosopher. Abraham Lincoln, despite his lean and unimpressive face, will go down in history as a champion of the rights of the down trodden.

Only the actions of the just  
smell sweet and blossom in the dust

#### WHERE THERE'S A WILL THERE'S A WAY

"Impossible is a word only to be found in the dictionary of fools", so said Napoleon, the man of iron will and firm determination. Napoleon found no obstacle too great to be overcome. On the occasion when in the course of his outward march his soldiers told him that there were the Alps on the way, Napoleon emphatically declared: "There shall be no Alps". It is only a weak and irresolute person who throws up his hands in despair. A man with courage, initiative and enterprise wins the battle. He is not daunted by initial failures or temporary set-backs. We have the brilliant example of King Robert Bruce of Scotland before us. His perseverance bore fruit. Great inventors and discoverers of the world could not have made their mark in life but for their steadfastness and strong will power. Lives of great men remind us that they all achieved their goals through continuous efforts. Gandhiji fought a successful bloodless battle against the mighty British Empire. George Washington welded the one time thirteen states of America into a powerful Federal Union. Thus it is clear that once we address ourselves to any task or mission, it lies within us to accomplish it.

#### THE PEN IS MIGHTIER THAN THE SWORD

Time has passed when the sword was mightier than the pen. That was a time of brute force when might was right. But thanks to the advancement of civilization, it is not so now. If we examine the statement under discussion carefully, we shall find that the success achieved with the pen is more constructive and therefore more lasting than that achieved through the sword. After all, what do people gain by wielding the sword? They carry hurricane and fire with them. They shed blood and feel elated over their victories. But such achievements, destructive as they are, are short lived. The vainglorious warriors like Alexander the Great, and Timur would have been forgotten but for the space granted to them in the annals of history by the pens of historians. While the glories of blood are a passing show, the achievements (through the pen) of poets, scientists and philosophers are cherished for ever. Today when ideas rule the world, the importance of the pen can be well understood. By his own single idea (communism) Karl Marx brought about a revolution in the world. While the sword brings us the victories of war, the pen has to its credit the victories of peace. And surely the victories of peace are more renowned than the victories of war.

#### WORK IS WORSHIP

Work is akin to prayer. God created man in His own image. If God himself worked for six days to create this universe, we may be sure that he expects man "who is the roof and crown of things", not to fool away his time. Slothfulness is a sin. An idle man's brain is a devil's workshop. Far from making a headway in life the idlers go down. Work, on the other hand, gives one a distinct edge over others. It adds to one's self-esteem as well. It is given only to a true worker to experience

the glow of satisfaction, the relish of rest and the zest of a holiday. Says the Bhagvad Gita, "If I do not work, the work will perish." We would have had no history of human progress and civilisation worth the name but for sincere workers and toilers. The devoted work of each individual, whatever his vocation, is his worship. How indebted we are to those gifted men who have enriched the stock of knowledge of literature and science and religion, who have alleviated human suffering and who inspired the world to a better and noble life ! It is in their work indeed that the true worship of their Creator lies.

#### A THING OF BEAUTY IS A JOY FOR EVER

It is the opening line of Keats's famous poem "Endymion" revealing the poet's love of beauty. Beauty in any form is a source of great delight and inspiration. A pretty maid with a charming smile and graceful gait, a Venus in sculpture, a beautiful landscape with the sunlit meadows below and a multi-coloured rainbow above these are sights one would love to witness. For such lovely sights are not a source of immediate delight only, they are a storehouse of joy for future as well. Wordsworth once saw a host of golden daffodils and they became for him a permanent source of joy—a "bliss of solitude". Those who go about sight-seeing develop a cheerful outlook. They look refreshed and lively. They have drunk deep of the beauty of the Taj, the Ellora caves and the Golden Temple and this beauty is reflected in their faces. Beauty is not only physical but mental, moral and spiritual as well. A good book, a noble deed, a thrilling movie, a sweet-song are all things of beauty. Beautiful objects and persons make life worth living. The world without beauty would be a dull place to live in.

#### WHAT IS THIS LIFE, IF FULL OF CARE

We have no time to stand and stare ! In these lines, taken from the poem "Leisure", W.H.Davies, a modern poet, expresses a universal truth. He ridicules the life of stress and strain of modern man and emphasizes the importance of leisure. It is a fact that life without leisure will be devoid of pleasure. Life is meant to be enjoyed and lived well. One should not get hopelessly involved in materialistic pursuits that blunt one's aesthetic sense and zest for life. We often find that people in high position have no time for relaxation. They lead a life of high pressure and consequently suffer from mental tension and uneasiness. We must pause to look around. We must breathe leisure. We must stand and stare. Nature has a rich feast to offer to us. Let us partake of this feast. It soothes our nerves. A walk across a landscape will refresh us a great deal. If you are not a nature-enthusiast you may take to reading, painting, music—anything in fact affords you a break or change from normal routine. In modern age of rush and fuss, leisure is of great importance. In the community welfare schemes in the U.S.A., leisure occupies a special place. Let us enjoy leisure and make our life full of pleasure.



### HONESTY IS THE BEST POLICY

It has been rightly said that an honest man is the noblest work of God. Honesty is one of the finest traits of human character. Without it, life would become a mess. All religions lay emphasis on upright conduct. Honesty requires that a person should be fair in all his dealings. In the business world no transaction will be possible without faith, trust and honesty. Actually it is honesty which breeds faith and trust. A dishonest person (like the Artful Dodger) will be found out sooner or later and he must fall and suffer disgrace. Such is the lot of those persons who indulge in hoarding, black marketing and profiteering. They may reap profits and flourish temporarily but they must suffer in the long run. Honesty is as much essential in personal and commercial dealings as in the social and political spheres of life. Gandhiji rightly advocated the practising of morality in politics. By morality he meant clean and honest conduct. Honesty is practical virtue, it ensures us success, peace of mind and happiness. Let honesty be the guiding principle of our life.

### ROME WAS NOT BUILT IN A DAY

The city of Rome, known as a wonder of civilized world, was not created all at once by means of Alladin's lamp. It was step by step that it attained its present beauty and grandeur. The city as it stands to-day, is a testimony to man's patience and perseverance. What is true of Rome is equally true of the modern magnificent city of Chandigarh. The Taj at Agra, it is said took twenty years to be completed with ten thousand men working over it daily. Not only do the buildings, dams, roads and bridges consume time and labour in their construction, in fact, all progress in the domains of art and science has been made by degrees. Man has gradually progressed from Barbarism to civilization. Nations are not built overnight. India herself attained independence after a long period of struggle suffering and sacrifice. For the achievement of a goal what is needed is patience, continuing application and firmness of purpose. A farmer who sows in the evening cannot expect a crop the next morning.

## MORE ABOUT PARAGRAPH WRITING

### 7.0 Objectives

- To introduce students with the skills of paragraph writing with models.

Dear Student,

In the previous lesson we gave you some directions on paragraph writing and also provided you with some model paragraphs. In this lesson we shall give some more model paragraphs on objects, persons, places and events.

### 7.1 Some Model Paragraphs

#### TELEVISION

Television is one of the gifts of science to mankind. There is a television in almost every house these days. It is the most popular form of entertainment which benefits people of all age groups. Many of the T.V. programmes are of great educative value e.g. U.G.C. programmes, documentary films, quiz programmes etc. Besides this, the national network gets us acquainted with the different parts of the country, the people in other states, their culture, dresses, dances etc. Sitting at home we can watch live programmes happening anywhere in the world e.g. important summit meetings, Olympic games, Republic day parade etc.; movies and chitrahaars have a great attraction for the younger generation. The telecast of great epics like “Mahabharata” and “Ramayana” have greatly highlighted out ancient history and mythology. But at the same time television has certain drawbacks. Excessive viewing of the television is certainly harmful especially for the children. Sometimes children watch the T.V. even at the cost of their studies. Some people call the T.V. an idiot-box. But despite its drawback, we must agree that the television is certainly the most educative and informative form of entertainment.

#### NEWSPAPERS

Newspapers are an integral part of modern life. The first thing that a person looks for in the morning is the newspaper. We have a newspaper in almost every language. In fact, it is our main link with the outside world. It provides us with the latest information about the day to day happenings in the world e.g., research in various fields, latest invention, political situation of a country, wars between nations, natural calamity or disaster in a nation etc. The editorials in the newspaper provide a very interesting and informative reading. Moreover, in a democratic country newspapers are a very important platform for voicing public grievances. Almost every newspaper devotes one full page to sports and also brings out supplements on science etc. The newspapers are of great help for persons looking for jobs and also for those who want to buy or dispose off property. Sometimes newspapers also act as match makers through their matrimonial advertisements. Had there been no newspapers we would have been completely cut off from the outside world. Newspapers keep us in the mainstream of the day to day happenings.

#### PT. JAWAHAR LAL NEHRU

Jawahar Lal Nehru was the first Prime Minister of India. He was born in Allahabad. His father Moti Lal Nehru was a lawyer of great repute and wealth. Jawahar Lal Nehru received his higher education in England and returned to India, in 1912, as a barrister. Nehru is said to be the architect of modern India. He was a disciple of Mahatma Gandhi and stood for peace. He struggled for the Independence of India and was elected the President of National Congress several times. He was the author of several books, e.g. Discovery of India, Glimpses of World History, etc. He was an apostle of peace and true lover of humanity. India progressed by leaps and bounds under his leadership. Nehru was one of the founder members of the Non-Aligned Movement and the first Asian Games were also held in Delhi through his efforts. Nehru died on 27th May 1964. Several welfare schemes and programmes have been launched by the Government to commemorate this great leader, e.g., The Nehru Rozgar Yojana. Nehru was indeed a true patriot and a great statesman.

#### THE POSTMAN

The postman is a familiar figure in every town and village. To some he brings joy and others sorrow. But everybody looks forward to his arrival. He is dressed in a Khaki uniform and carries a leather bag over his shoulder. His duty is to deliver letters and parcels and pay money-orders to the addresses. He gets them from the post office in the morning and arranges them according to the situation of the houses and shops of the addresses. He goes from house to house and from shop to shop delivering letters and paying money-orders. His life is hard and busy. He has to walk long distances daily. Despite rain, heat and severe cold he has to be very regular in his work. Besides, he has to do his work carefully because a little mistake on his part might bring him into serious trouble. As compared to his work he is paid very little. He is a very useful government servant. He helps people in all parts of the world to keep in touch with one another through the letters he delivers.

#### OUR COLLEGE LIBRARY

A good library is the soul of an educational institution. My college also has a big library and it is housed in a newly constructed spacious building. Our library is the most well-equipped library in the city and it consists of more than 75000 books. The books are arranged very systematically in different cupboards and students have no problem in locating them. Books are issued to students for a fortnight. Apart from this there is reference section which consists of books required by students for everyday consultation. Almost every journal and newspaper is available in the library. There is perfect silence in the library. Students can be seen sitting in the reading room and going through books and magazines. The library staff is extremely polite to the students and always helps

them in locating the books. Big pictures of great educationists are hung on the walls of the library. Besides this, quotations and important remarks of great people are also written in bold letters on wooden-boards on the walls. All these inculcate a love of reading among the students. A good college library is, indeed, an asset to the students as it adds to their knowledge and widens their outlook.

#### A RAILWAY STATION

A railway station is undoubtedly one of the most exciting and busy places in a city. The whole place is usually full of hustle and bustle. The high roof on the platform contributes to an exciting echoing of all the noises around you; we can hear unintelligible announcements made on the loudspeakers regarding the schedule of the trains. Porters can be seen carrying heavy bundles of luggage and passengers running after them to board the trains. The hawkers' cries take a special turn at the railway station. The choice of thing one might buy is astounding-toys, sweets, books and magazines. The people, of course, form the main attraction at the railway station. A more heterogeneous sample would be difficult to locate anywhere other than at a railway-station of a big city. Some people can be seen sitting on their luggage and waiting for trains. When the train arrives preceded by a whistle growing louder and louder as it approaches, the station is full of commotion as people wish to board the train. After the train departs there is a comparative quiet, the lull is temporary. Soon, another train will come, and the scene will throb with activity again. The noise, bustle, and dirt, all this makes a railway station worth a visit.

#### REPUBLIC DAY CELEBRATIONS

Republic Day, which falls on 26th of January is indeed a red letter day in the history of India. On this day, in 1950, India became a republic. This day is celebrated both, at the state and the national levels. At the national level we have very elaborate celebrations in Delhi. There is a very grand march past by our defence forces, N. C. C. cadets and school children. The president comes in his traditional coach pulled by horses and he takes the salute. In the parade models of our latest weapons, aircrafts and ships are displayed. Different states also represent themselves in their traditional costumes and present their folk dances. People from all walks of life gather there to watch the celebrations whereas some watch the whole programme live on their television sets. We also have speeches by the President and the Prime Minister instilling the feeling of nationalism and patriotism in the people. Several awards like gallantry awards, Padma Bhushan and Arjuna Awards, are also given on this day. The state level function is presided over by the Governor or the Chief Minister. There is a march past by police personnel, boy scouts and girl guides and cultural programmes by school children. 26th January is a public holiday and this day certainly has a message for every Indian.

#### ANNUAL SPORTS DAY IN COLLEGE

Sports day is one event that students in colleges really look forward to. It provides them a healthy break from their studies. Sports Day is usually organized towards the end of the academic session. On this day the whole college hums with activity. The grounds are cleaned up and beautifully decorated. Chairs are arranged on one side for the visitors and normally an eminent sportsman is invited as the Chief guest. There are several races like the 200 m. race, 500 m. race, sack race, hurdle race etc. Many students participate in javelin and discuss throw events. It's a lot of fun watching slow cycling and hurdle race. Many students even fall and hurt themselves. After the various events, students present a cultural programme. In the end prizes and trophies are given to the winners amidst thunderous applause. It is indeed a proud moment for the winners. The Principal reads out the annual sports report highlighting the achievements of students in different sports. Such events keep the atmosphere of a college very lively and active, and they should be a regular feature.

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LESSON NO. 8

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LETTER WRITING

LETTER AND APPLICATION WRITING

**8.0 Objectives**

- In this lesson we propose to discuss and explain the Letter writing skills.
- This chapter also provide some examples of Letter writing.

Dear Students,

In B.Com. I, you learnt how to write business letters of different types. Now in the second year of your course in these two lessons, we shall discuss the writing of :

- (a) official letters ;
- (b) applications including the ones for jobs ;
- (c) letters to newspaper editors on matters of public interest, particularly economic, business and current affairs.

**8.1 Introduction to Letter Writing**

While writing the letters / applications, keep in mind the tips suggested for writing business letters. As these letters / applications are impersonal, use courteous, simple and clear language. They should be dignified and to the point.

**Official Letters :**

Letters to officials like the police inspector, the postmaster, the sanitary inspector, the health officer, the electricity undertaking, the telephone dept. written on personal or public affairs are called official letters. Official letters also include letters from officials to officials and by officials to individuals.

Official letters can pertain to different issues and problems. In our daily life, there are many things which cause some inconvenience to us or we face problems as citizens and we want certain improvements to be made in them. It becomes necessary to write a letter of complaint to the appropriate and concerned person, organization, or department, if we want that a large audience should read, we can also get it published in a newspaper. We can also write letters to the officials making request for the provision of services. While writing the letter of complaint we should keep in mind that the facts of the complaint should be accurate. We should neither be rude / nasty nor apologetic in the letter. It is appropriate to be direct and straightforward while making a complaint-but the language should not be intemperate. Don't use the words like "disgusted", "enraged", "shocked" etc. The tone should be polite but firm.

We are giving here the format of an official letter :

Writer's address	:	2-A, Model Town Ambala.
Address of the person to	:	The Post Master

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whom the letter is addressed	:	General Post Office Ambala
Date	:	Oct. 10, 2019
Salutation	:	Dear Sir /Madam,
Subject	:	Subject : _____
Body of the letter	:	_____
Subscription	:	Yours Faithfully / Sincerely,
Signature	:	Amit Pal
Name	:	(AMIT PAL)

## 8.2 Some Examples

1. Write a letter to the Health Officer of your town, complaining against the insanitary condition of your street.

26, Babar Street  
Sonepat  
Oct.8, 2019

The Health Officer  
Municipal Office  
Sonepat

Subject :- Poor sanitary condition of my street.

Sir,

I wish to draw your kind attention to the insanitary condition of my street. This street is a tiny hell on earth. Heaps of filth and rubbish lie uncovered at every step. There are several pot holes in which rain water collects and mosquitoes breed in large number.

Some residents of the locality allow their children to ease themselves in the drains. So there is foul smell everywhere. Big swarms of flies keep hovering about.

The sweepers seldom visit the streets. They do not clean and wash the drains well. They throw mud along the drains. The pavement in the street is broken. It has not been repaired for the last four years.

The attention of the Sanitary Inspector of this locality was drawn a number of times to this sad state of affairs, but he pays no attention. I, therefore, request you to pay a personal visit to this street and take a prompt action in the matter.

I earnestly hope that you will take necessary action and earn the gratitude of the public.

Yours faithfully,  
Sohan Lal

2. Write a letter to the Superintendent of Police, informing him of the theft of your bicycle.

25, Kotwali Bazar  
Panipat  
Oct 10, 2019

The Superintendent of Police  
Panipat District  
Panipat

Subject : Theft of my bicycle.

Dear Sir,

I wish to report the loss of my bicycle in the Bhairon Bazaar, Panipat. Yesterday, I went to the bazaar for shopping. I placed my bicycle outside Vohra General Stores, locked it properly and went into the shop. When I came out after five minutes the bicycle was missing. I inquired from many persons but none could give any clue.

Its make is Hero. It bears No. 170043 and licence No. is 756. Among accessories it has a bell, a lamp and a gear wheel case. It is of dark blue colour. It is a new bicycle. I bought it only recently.

I earnestly request you to take necessary action in the matter and oblige.

Yours faithfully,  
Prem Nath.

3. Write a letter to the Postmaster, complaining against a postman.

140, Model Town  
Patiala  
Nov. 25, 2019

The Postmaster  
Patiala Circle  
Patiala

Subject : Complaint against the postman of our area

Dear Sir,

I wish to draw your kind attention to the irregular and careless work of the



postman of this locality.

Mohan Lal, the postman of this area does not discharge his duties honestly. He often delivers my letters to wrong persons. He never takes the trouble of delivering the letters in time. Sometimes he throws away the letters carelessly in the passage and does not put them in the letter box. Sometimes he hands over important letters to children who tear them to pieces. Many of my letters have thus been lost.

I have requested him several times to be careful, but he pays no heed to my requests. He has become very careless and doesn't give up his bad practice.

I, therefore, approach you with a request to take necessary steps in order to set matters right.

Thanking you in anticipation.

Yours faithfully,  
Chander Parkash

4. Write a letter to the Deputy Commissioner of your district, requesting him to get a dispensary opened in your village.

21, Railway Road  
Sonapat.  
Oct 25, 2019

The Deputy Commissioner  
Karnal District  
Karnal

Subject : Request for opening a dispensary in our village.

Dear Sir,

We, the residents of village Mahra, lay down the following few lines for your kind and favourable consideration:

Our village is thirty miles from Karnal. There is no dispensary within a radius of twenty miles. We, therefore, are put to much inconvenience while moving patients to the hospital. Sometimes the cases of serious nature meet their end on their way to the hospital.

The sanitary system of our village is poor. Epidemics, therefore, break out every year. They cause a heavy loss of life on account of inadequate medical aid.

Our village is rapidly growing in importance. It is fast developing into an industrial town. Its population is ten thousand. It has two high schools and three

Industrial Training Centres. It is, therefore, of great importance that a dispensary is opened here.

We may, therefore, request you to open a dispensary in our village. We shall most gladly provide a suitable building for this purpose.

Hoping to be favoured with an early reply.

Yours faithfully,

-----  
Distt. Karnal.

5. You have shifted from B-215, Defence Colony, New Delhi to 25, Rajinder Nagar, Delhi. Write an application / a letter to the Post Master, Defence Colony, New Delhi informing him about the change in address.

25, Rajinder Nagar  
Delhi,  
Nov. 20, 2019.

The Post Master  
Defence Colony  
Post Office  
New Delhi.  
Nov. 6, 2019.

Subject : Change of address

Dear Sir,

I, hereby, bring to your notice that I have shifted to a new address : 25, Rajinder Nagar, Delhi. Earlier, I was residing at B-215, Defence Colony, New Delhi.

I shall feel highly obliged if you instruct the concerned persons to redirect all my letters, parcels etc. to my new address.

Yours faithfully,  
Sham Lal.

6. Write a letter to the General Manager, BSNL complaining about the unsatisfactory working of your telephone.

75, Janta Colony  
Karnal  
Oct. 11, 2019

The General Manager  
BSNL  
Karnal

Subject : Complaint against unsatisfactory working of Telephone.

Dear Sir,

I regret to bring to your kind notice that my telephone no. 2254156 has again gone dead. Within two months, this is for the seventh time that my telephone has gone out of order. I am tired of making complaints to the Area Officer of BSNL. Due to the non-functioning of the telephone, I have been put to a great inconvenience and my business has also suffered a lot. Kindly look into the matter personally and get my telephone in working condition. I shall feel obliged.

Yours faithfully,  
Ram Saran  
(RAM SARAN)

7. Draft a letter from the Principal of your college to the Deputy Commissioner for permission to use an open piece of land as playground.

The Principal  
S. M. College  
Ambala

The Deputy Commissioner  
Ambala.

Ref. No. 410/319

Dated : Oct. 14, 2018

Subject : Permission to use an open piece of land.

Dear Sir,

I, hereby, submit the following facts for your kind consideration:

1. Our college had a playground across the road but since last month it has been converted into a public park. Now our students have no playground to play any outdoor game like football, hockey or cricket.
2. There is an open piece of land lying vacant near the District Library which is big enough to serve as playground for the students of our college.

It is, therefore, requested that permission may kindly be granted to use this open piece of land as playground for the students of our college.

Thanking you,

Sincerely yours,  
Rama Jha  
(Principal)

8. Draft a letter sent by the Deputy Commissioner to the Principal of your college who has applied for permission to use an open piece of land as playground.

The Deputy Commissioner  
Ambala.

The Principal  
SM College  
Ambala

Ref. No. 525

Dated : Oct. 20, 2018

Subject : Permission to use an open piece of land.

Dear Sir/Madam,

With reference to your letter No. 410/319 dated June 14, 2015 requesting permission to use the open land near District library as a playground for your college students, I inform you that the land in question belongs to Municipal Committee and not to the government. Hence you had better correspond with the chairperson of the Municipal Committee, Ambala.

Yours faithfully  
M. K. Saran  
Deputy Commissioner

Dear Student, after going through the above examples, you can write letters to different officials to communicate your problems and seek their redressal.

LETTER AND APPLICATION WRITING (CONTD).

**9.0 Objectives**

- In this lesson we propose to discuss and explain the Letter writing skills.
- This chapter also provide some examples of Letter writing.

Dear Student, in this lesson we shall discuss Application Writing, and Letter Writing to the editor of a newspaper.

Applications like business or official letters are written in an informal manner. They should be polite, brief and to the point. The following points should be kept in mind while writing an application:

- i) Subject should be brief.
- ii) While applying for a post, educational qualifications, experience and present job should be briefly mentioned. Avoid self praise.
- iii) A reference to testimonials or Certificates, if any, may also be made.

**9.1 A few samples of applications.**

1. Write an application as the Captain of the Hockey Team requesting the Principal of your college for allowing you to play a friendly match.

The Principal  
D. M. College  
Banga

Subject : Permission for playing a friendly Hockey Match.

Sir,

We shall feel highly obliged if you allow us to play a friendly hockey match against the Hockey Eleven of the Khalsa College, Mahalpur. The match is proposed to be played on our grounds next Monday, i.e. Nov. 10, 2017. Since the college will remain closed on account of the gazzetted holiday the teaching programme will not be disturbed in any way.

I hope you will accede to our request.

Thanking you,

Yours obediently,  
Manoj Sikri,  
(Captain of the college hockey team)  
Class : B. Com. II

Oct. 22, 2019.

2. Write an application to your Principal requesting him to make arrangement for special practical classes of computer.

The Principal  
D. A. V. College  
Amritsar

Subject : Special practical computer classes.

Sir,

With due respect, I wish to bring to you kind notice that our computer course is being taught only theoretically. There are hardly any practical classes held as the computers often remain out of order. Without practicals we fail to understand many things. We are scared of our performance in the approaching final examination. Kindly manage to get the computers repaired and make arrangement for special computer classes.

We shall feel highly obliged.

Thanking you,  
Sincerely yours,  
Ashu Mittal  
Class : B. Com. II  
Oct. 27, 2019

3. Write an application to the Principal of your college stating the reasons for granting you a fee concession.

The Principal  
Arya College  
Ludhiana.

Subject : Grant of fee concession.

Sir,

With due respect I, hereby, inform you that I am a student of B. Com. II of your college. I belong to a very poor family. My father is a small shopkeeper and his monthly income is only about three thousand rupees. He has a large family to support. I have got two younger sisters who also study in school. It is very difficult to make both ends meet with a meagre income in these days of rising prices. Under such circumstances, it has become very difficult for my father to pay my college fee.

I am a bright student and have secured high percentage of marks in almost every examination. I am also a member of the College hockey team and regularly participate in all the extra-curricular activities. I am in the good books of all the

teachers. I was given full fee concession last year also. I hereby request you to grant me full fee concession this year also.

I shall feel highly grateful to you for this special act of kindness.

Thanking you,

Sincerely yours,  
Manmohan Singh

B. Com. II  
Oct 16, 2019

4. Write an application to the Principal of a Technical Institute for admission.

Mandeep Singh  
76, Vikas Colony  
Phagwara.  
Oct. 24, 2019.

The Principal  
Technical Teachers' Institute  
Phagwara.

Subject : Admission to the Institute.

Sir,

With due respect, I wish to apply for the training of an electrician in your prestigious institute. I, hereby, lay down the following facts for your kind consideration and sympathetic action.

- 1) I passed senior Secondary Examination from the CBSE in 2012 in the first division with distinction in science.
- 2) I belong to the family of technicians and want to follow in their footsteps.
- 3) I am a young boy of twenty one, and very industrious.
- 4) I bear an excellent moral character.

The attested copies of my testimonials are being enclosed herewith. I shall feel highly grateful if you allow me to pursue the training in your esteemed college.

Thanking you,  
Sincerely yours,  
Rampal.

### **9.3 More about Applications for Jobs**

While writing an application for a job, you should keep in mind that it should

be direct and straight forward and it should be written in such a way that it catches the attention of your reader favourably; convinces him / her that you are appropriately qualified for the position you have applied for and you are called for an interview.

Your application should not be very long. Confine it to one page and send along with it a copy of your resume / curriculum vitae.

When you are applying for a job which has been advertised, you must mention the job by title and state the source from where you came to know about it.

You can also write an application to explore the possibility of a suitable job in a few organizations. In such an application you should explain the particular kind of job you are seeking; your qualification, potential of experience for the job. You should also clarify that you are writing the application / letter to inquire whether that organization has got any opening for that kind of job. While writing the application / letter your aim should be to convince your reader / person for the job and how, if given a chance, you will be doing the best in the job with your special skills, experience and personal traits.

If you lack experience in the field / job you are applying for, you should frankly admit it. But at the same time, you should present your case in a convincing manner, highlighting your qualifications, skills and personal traits and showing your keen interest in the job area you want to enter.

At the end of the application you should make a request for an interview in a polite but direct way informing about your address, contact no. and special instructions about your availability for interview.

#### **9.4 A few samples of applications for jobs are being given here.**

1. Write an application for the job of a Junior Secretary for a reputed company in response to an advertisement in the newspaper.

The Tribune  
35, Mahesh Nagar  
Ludhiana.  
Oct. 19, 2019

The Personal Manager  
Raman Hosiery Ltd.  
Post Box No. 4326  
Ludhiana.

Subject : Application for the post of a Junior Secretary.  
Dear Sir,



This is in response to your advertisement in The Hindustan Times dated Oct 17, 2019 for the post of a Junior Secretary. I hereby, offer myself as a candidate for the same. My qualifications and experience are given below :

I am twenty three years of age. I passed my senior Secondary Examination in 2004 from Punjab School Education Board. I was placed in Merit list but because of the adverse family circumstances, I could not continue my studies.

I then took a two year course in secretarial training and passed the examination in English shorthand and typewriting at the speed of 75 and 40 words per minute respectively.

I have been working as a private secretary to the manager of MS Atma Trading Company, Ludhiana for the last two years. I am getting Rs. 3500 plus special pay of Rs. 500 per month. I expect a salary of Rs. 4500 per month.

My present employer is very much satisfied with my work but because his business is small, he cannot offer me better salary. He has no objection to my seeking better employment elsewhere.

He has even agreed to act as a referee and promised to relieve me at 15 days notice in case I get selected.

I enclose herewith the testimonial from the Principal of my school and the Director of New Commercial Institute.

In case my application is considered, I will be available for interview at any time as per your convenience.

Thanking your,  
Sincerely yours,  
Ramesh Sahgal.

Encl. : Two testimonials.

2. A dynamic young candidate, a science graduate is to work as a salesman of a reputed firm. Apply with essential bio-data indicating expected salary to Box No. 2563 C/O/ The Manager, Nahan Pharmaceuticals, Ambala.

62, Amin Road  
Rajpura.  
Oct. 14, 2019.

The Manager  
Box No. 2563  
Nahan Pharmaceuticals  
Ambala.

Subject : Application for the post of salesman.

Dear Sir,

With reference to your advertisement in Patiala Newslines dated Oct 12, 2014, I wish to offer my services as a salesman in your firm. I, hereby, enclose my bio-data giving all the particulars about my qualifications and experience. In case I am considered suitable, I am prepared to appear for an interview any day. I can join my duties on ten days' notice. I expect a salary of Rs. 12,000/- per month plus daily allowance of Rs. 200/- as advertised.

Yours faithfully,

Sumit Vohra

Encl. : Bio-Data Sheet.

#### BIO-DATA

Name	:	Sumit Vohra
Father's Name	:	Sh. Ramesh Vohra
Address	:	62, Amin Road, Rajpura
Contact No.	:	98551-12516
Date of Birth	:	Sep 4, 1992
Qualification	:	B. Sc. Medical from Punjab University with honours in chemistry.
Experience	:	5 years as salesman with Mohan Chemicals, Ambala.
Present Salary	:	Rs. 10,000/- plus Rs. 150/- as Daily Allowance.
Reference	:	Prof. Rama Jha, Head of the Deptt. of Chemistry, S. D. College, Ambala.
Languages known	:	English, Hindi, Punjabi

3. Write an application for the post of an Accounts Clerk.

25, Gagan Vihar

Ambala.

Oct 14, 2019

The Manager

Mohan Textile Mills

Ludhiana.

Subject : Application for the post of an Accounts Clerk.

Sir,

With reference to your advertisement in The Hindustan Times dated Oct13, 2017, regarding the recruitment of an Accounts Clerk in your Mill, I am applying for the post. My particulars are given below:

I am twenty five years old. I passed my B. Com. Examination from Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra in 2003 with distinction.

I took training in accountancy at a Commercial Institute for two years and also obtained a diploma in Accountancy. At present I am working as an Accounts Clerk in a private firm on temporary basis. I want to work as a permanent hand in a well-established firm such as yours.

I am enclosing herewith all the necessary testimonials and documents for your kind consideration.

I assure you that if given a chance to work in your firm, I shall come upto your expectations doing my duty with dedication and efficiency.

I can appear for an interview at any time. My Contact No. is 98551-93261.

Sincerely yours,

Navin Kataria

Encl : Certificates and Testimonials.

4. Apply for the post of Sales Executive in Mahesh and Co., Madhopuri, Ludhiana.

14, Model Town

Ludhiana

Nov. 12, 2019

The Manager

Mahesh and Co.

Ludhiana

Subject : Application for the post of a Sales Executive.

Dear Sir,

This is with reference to your advertisement in Ludhiana Newslines dated Nov. 8, 2019 for the post of a sales Executive in your company.

I am enclosing herewith my resume for your kind consideration.

If given a chance to work with your firm, I assure you that I shall work with dedication and sincerity.

Thanking you,

Yours faithfully,

Amit Aggarwal

Encl. : Resume and Testimonials.

#### RESUME

Name : Amit Aggarwal  
 Father's Name : Sh. Navin Aggarwal  
 Address : 14, Model Town, Ludhiana  
 Contact No. : 98662-13215  
 Date of Birth : December 14, 1989  
 Qualification : B. Com. from Punjabi University Patiala with 75% marks. M. Com. from the same university with 73% marks.  
 Experience : has been working as a sales Executive for the past four years in Ramesh & Company, Phagwara.  
 Salary Drawn : Rs. 10,000/- p.m. and conveyance.  
 Salary Expected : Rs.12,000/- and conveyance and accommodation.  
 Hobbies : Working on Computer.

#### 9.5 Letter to Editor :

In order to draw the attention of the concerned authorities to the problems faced by you or the people of your area you can also write to the editor of local, regional or national newspaper. These letters are written on the same pattern as business letters. In the subscription we write 'yours truly'. You can also explain your views on certain issues / problems by writing letter to the Editor. You can also express your reactions to certain articles or news items which appeared in that particular paper.

Here we are giving some examples of letters to Editors.

1. Write a letter to the editor of a daily newspaper regarding the condition of roads and streets in your locality.

46 B, Ram Nagar

Delhi.

Oct 19, 2019.

The Editor

The Indian Express

New Delhi.

Sir,

I would like to bring to the notice of the concerned authorities through the

columns of your paper the miserable condition of the roads and streets of our locality. The roads in Ram Nagar are in a very bad shape. There are pits at every stop which are responsible for frequent accidents. During the rainy season these pits are filled with dirty water and become breeding places for mosquitoes. Not only this, heaps of rubbish are seen scattered everywhere and the foul smell makes it difficult for anyone to pass through the streets.

It is high time the authorities wake up and take effective remedial steps, otherwise some epidemic will break out causing a great loss of the health and life of people.

Your truly,  
Manish Chopra  
(MANISH CHOPRA)

2. Write a letter to the editor of a newspaper on rash driving.

275, Sector 25  
Chandigarh  
Nov 12, 2018.

The Editor  
The Tribune  
Chandigarh.

Sir,

Through the columns of your esteemed paper I wish to draw the attention of the concerned authorities to rash driving in this town.

During the past many months a number of incidents of rash driving have been reported. Even the heavy vehicles are seen running unmindful of the laid speed limit. Cars, vans and taxis pass by you at terrific speeds, even at turnings and road junctions. University boys and girls drive motor bikes and scooters recklessly, knocking down the pedestrians many a times. Nobody is there to check them. The traffic police should monitor the speed limit of the drivers of trucks and motorists and see to it that they observe the traffic rules. The people who break of the traffic rules must be severely dealt with.

Yours truly,  
Mohit Grewal  
(MOHIT GREWAL)

3. Write a letter to the editor of a daily newspaper regarding the frequent power failure in your area.

43 A, Model Town  
Patiala  
Dec 2, 2019.

The Editor  
The Tribune  
Chandigarh.

Subject : Frequent power failures in our area.

Sir,

Through the columns of your newspaper, I wish to draw the attention of Punjab State Electricity Board to frequent power failures in our area.

During the last week electricity failed ten times, each failure lasting for many hours. You can well imagine the problems faced by people especially the students.

Long periods of blackout and shortage of water cause inconvenience to all.

Our repeated requests to the officials of the PSEB have been of no avail.

We hope the members of the Board will look into the matter and take necessary action to set things right to ensure uninterrupted supply of electricity in our area.

Yours truly,  
Ranjan Sharma  
(RANJAN SHARMA)

4. Write a letter to the Editor, The Hindustan Times about inadequate water supply in your locality.

15/25 Gyan Vihar  
Delhi.  
Oct 25, 2018

The Editor  
The Hindustan Times  
New Delhi.

Dear Sir,

Through the columns of your esteemed newspaper, I wish to draw the

attention of the municipal authorities toward the inadequate water supply in our locality. It is very unfortunate that the Corporation is rather unconcerned about the provision of civic amenities to the public. In our area the water supply goes off at the peak hours in the morning when everybody has to get ready for the day in time. If the supply is intact, the pressure is very low. It really irritates and causes much inconvenience to everyone.

May we expect that the water supply will soon be regulated.

Yours sincerely,  
Ramesh Kumar  
(RAMESH KUMAR)

5. Write an letter to the editor of newspaper expressing your views of the problems of indiscipline and unrest among students.

39, Kishan Nagar  
Ambala City  
Oct 15, 2019.

The Editor  
The Indian Express  
Chandigarh.

Sir,

I shall feel obliged if you kindly publish in your newspaper my views regarding the problems of indiscipline and unrest amount students these days.

Increasing indiscipline among the University and College students has become a serious problem which should be paid immediate attention to at all levels. Walking out of their classes and the examination halls, taking out processions, shouting slogans, holding rallies, sitting in dharnas, going on hunger strikes, gheraoing teachers, the Principals or the Vice Chancellors on one pretext or the other have become very common. In a fit of fury during one such incident they damaged the building of their own institution, attacked trains and buses, destroyed public property which was followed by lathi charge, tear gas and firing by police. These incidents are increasing day by day.

But we should al so consider why all t his is happening and w ho is responsible for this indiscipline and unrest among students. Among the various causes of the indiscipline and unrest, the chief ones are the defective system of education and examination, uncertainty about their future, the hold of political parties on student unions; and the absence of check and control by the busy parents etc.

There is an urgent need to look into these problems and seek measures to solve them both by the concerned authorities and the parents. More job avenues should be created for the students. They should realize that indiscipline is not the solution to these problems. They should not allow themselves to be exploited by the politicians and should seek solution to their problems by peaceful means.

Yours truly,  
Manoj Chabra  
(MANOJ CHABRA)

6. Write a letter to the Editor voicing your concern on the usage of unfair means in the exams by the students.

15, Vikas Street  
Sonapat.  
Oct 16, 2019.

The Editor  
The Hindustan Times  
Chandigarh

Dear Sir,

Through the columns of your esteemed paper, I wish to draw the attention of the concerned authorities towards the increasing number of students adopting unfair means in the examination. This problem has increased manifold in the recent years. Reports of mass copying appear in the news everyday. This practice has disastrous effect on the careers of the students who are hardworking and burn midnight oil for their examination. The leakage of question papers of the Board and national competitive exams has become a common practice. These question papers are sold for lakhs of rupees, putting the career of thousands of brilliant students at stake.

Keeping in view the gravity of the matter, the authorities are requested to look into it and take some serious steps to contain the rising problems.

Yours truly,  
Mohan Puri  
(MOHAN PURI)



7. Write a letter to the editor of the newspaper about the steep rise in prices of essential commodities.

22 Ram Nagar  
Panipat  
Oct. 15, 2019

The Editor Dainik  
Bhaskar

Sir,

I shall feel highly obliged if you publish my views regarding the steep rise in the prices of essential commodities.

The rise in the prices of essential articles of daily use has become a serious problem. In some cases, the prices have gone up many times. The poor and the middle class persons are finding it difficult to make both ends meet. Milk, ghee, vegetable oils, wheat, rice, pulses, kerosene oil, diesel, petrol, cooking gas, etc. have become unaffordable. Many a time, they go out of stock and are sold in black market. The profiteers hoard them, create artificial shortage and then sell articles at high prices and exploit the poor.

We know that price line is life line. The government must control the prices and should open more fair price shops and ensure the regular supply of essential articles at fixed rates. Dishonest traders, shopkeepers and officers should be severely dealt with. I hope the government will realize the hardships of the people and take timely and firm action.

Yours truly, Ram  
Niwas (RAM  
NIWAS)



## Mandatory Student Feedback Form

<https://forms.gle/KS5CLhvpwrpgjwN98>

Note: Students, kindly click this google form link, and fill this feedback form once.