

B.C.A (English) Part-I (Semester I)
General English -I
(For Sessions 2023-2024, 2024-2025 & 2025-2026)

Note: There will be two papers (Semester I & II) of four credits (04) each.
Six periods per week- each will be of 45 minutes duration.
This paper will carry 100 marks.
The paper will be of three hours' duration.

Total Marks: 100
Time: 3 Hours
Credits: 04

Teaching Periods: 75
Pass Marks: 35%
Written Examination: 70 marks
Internal Assessment: 30 marks

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE PAPER -SETTER

The question paper shall consist of three Units. Unit-I shall be of 24 marks; Unit-II shall be of 24 marks; and Unit-III shall carry 22 marks; and shall contain questions from the preceding Units, thus covering the entire syllabus.

COURSE CONTENT

The following texts are prescribed:

(I) ***Prose Parables***, Orient Blackswan Private Limited-2013.

The following six stories from this book are to be studied:

1. "Kabuliwala", *Rabindranath Tagore*
2. "The Eyes are Not Here", *Ruskin Bond*
3. "The Death of a Hero", *Jai Nimbkar*
4. "Grief", *Anton Chekhov*
5. "Uncle Podger Hangs a Picture", *Jerome K. Jerome*
6. "The Doctor's Word", *R.K. Narayan*

(II) Murphy, Raymond. ***English Grammar in Use***. Fourth Edition by Cambridge University Press. Fourth Edition. The following units are to be studied: Units 1-37, 69-81 and Appendices 1 to 4. Additional exercises from the book that are relevant to the prescribed units.

TESTING

UNIT-I

- I. One essay type question with an internal alternative on theme, incident, character or main ideas from the first three prescribed stories (1-3) of ***Prose Parables***. The answer should be in about 450-500 words.

12 marks

- II. One essay type question with an internal alternative on theme, incident, character or main ideas from the last three prescribed stories (4-6) of *Prose Parables*. The answer should be in about 450-500 words.

12 marks

UNIT-II

Note: Attempt any one long question from Question III & IV and any one from Question V & VI.

- III. This question shall comprise of four short-answer questions to be set from the first three prescribed stories (1-3) of *Prose Parables* out of which candidate shall attempt **any three** in 50-60 words each.

4x3=12 marks

- IV. This question shall comprise of four short-answer questions to be set from the first three prescribed stories (4-6) of *Prose Parables* out of which candidate shall attempt **any three** in 50-60 words each.

4x3=12 marks

- V. One passage of 12 sentences to be translated from Punjabi into English.

12x1=12 marks

- VI. The candidate would write the meaning and form sentences of (six out of eight) words selected from *Prose Parables*.

6x2=12 marks

UNIT-III

- VII. (i) **Three** very short-answer questions to be set from *Prose Parables*. Each question is to be attempted in about 30-40 words. Each question shall carry 2 marks.

3x2=6 marks

- (ii) Twelve sentences each of one mark to be set from exercises of the prescribed units of *English Grammar in Use* out of which candidates shall attempt **any 10** sentences.

10x1=10 marks

- (iii) **Six** sentences to be set from the additional exercises relevant to the prescribed units of the book *English Grammar in Use*. All sentences are to be attempted.

6x1=6 marks



BCA - I ENGLISH (COMMUNICATION SKILLS)

SEMESTER-I

UNIT NO. I

**Centre for Distance and Online Education
Punjabi University, Patiala**
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PROSE PARABLES

LESSON NOS.

1. 1 : (i) The Kabuliwallah : Rabindranath Tagore
(ii) The Eyes are Not Here : Ruskin Bond
- 1.2 : (i) The Death of a Hero : Jai Nimbkar
(ii) Grief : Anton Chekov
- 1.3 : (i) Uncle Podger Hangs a Picture :
Jerome K. Jerome
(ii) The Doctor's Word : R.K. Narayan

Note:- The students can download syllabus from departmental website www.dccpbi.com

(I) KABULIWALLAH

1.1.1. Objectives

1.1.2 Introduction

1.1.3 Kabuliwallah : An overview

1.1.3.1 Kabuliwala as a Symphony of Love and Sacrifice

1.1.4 Self Check Activities

1.1.5. Summary

1.1.6 Long Questions

1.1.7 Short Questions

1.1.8 Suggested Readings

1.1.1. Objectives

After having gone through this poem you would be able to:

- To introduce various underlying themes.
- To enable the students to understand the thought and imagination contained in the poem.

1.1.2 Introduction to the Author (1861-1941):

Rabindranath Tagore was born in 1861 in Calcutta. He was a poet, a dramatist, a short story writer, a novelist and a philosopher. He is known as Gurudev and founded Shantiniketan. A nobel laureate in Literature, his devotional poems called 'Gitanjali' are a source of inspiration to millions. He is accredited with modernizing Bengali Literature. He translated his own works into English. He took into cognizance many political and national issues. His novels, stories, songs, dance dramas and essays spoke about topics, political and personal.

He has the distinction of penning national anthem of two countries i.e. India as well as Bangladesh. His style was colloquial, natural and contemplative. Division of class, caste and gender are often deep rooted in the minds of adults; but for children, these barriers are non-existent.

'Kabuliwallah' describes how relationship between a little girl and a salesman breaks the shackles of such barriers.

1.1.3. Kabuliwallah : An Overview

'Kabuliwallah' is a touching story of bond between two persons. The Kabuliwallah is touched by Mini's innocence that seems like reflection of his own daughter whom he had left in Kabul for earning a livelihood in Calcutta. The story shows that children are more pliant in transcending barriers of age and caste. Eight years old Mini forms a bond with the Pathan and her father is able to empathise with the feelings of Rahmun because the father in him is able to feel the depth of affection stirring in the heart of the Pathan.

1.1.3. 1. Kabuliwala as a Symphony of Love and Sacrifice :

The main theme of this story is that humans, no matter what their nationality or background, are all the same, as symbolised by filial affection-the deep love that fathers have for their children. Another theme is , Love triumphs when lovers overcome moral failings or sacrifice their needs for one another.

1.1.4 Self Check Activities

- Who is Mini in Kabuliwala?
- What is the theme of the story Kabuliwala?
- Why was Kabuliwala confused?
- Why was Kabuliwala called?
- Was Kabuliwala a loving father?

1.1.5 Summary

Mini, the five year old daughter of the author, is the central figure in the story. The narrator calls her a 'chatterbox' who does not waste a single minute in silence. Her mother would put a full stop to her prattle but the doting father was more tolerant. He could not refrain from having a lively talk with her. One morning when he was in the midst of the seventeenth chapter of his novel, she came and opened her Pandora's box of questions. The narrator was busy in concluding the chapter of his novel where Pratap Singh, the hero was about to escape with the heroine Kanchan Lata through the third storey window. Suddenly the girl ran to the window shouting 'Kabuliwallah, Kabuliwallah'. She began to call him. The narrator feared that his seventeenth chapter would never be finished as the man would come in to sell his wares. The Kabuliwallah looked up at the child who, out of terror, ran inside. Because she thought that inside his bag, there were two or three children like her. The pedlar came in and greeted the narrator with a smile. As the man had been called in, the

narrator had to make some purchases. A conversation regarding Afganistan and Russians ensued. When he was about to leave, he enquired about Mini, calling her 'the little one'. Mini was called in and Kabuliwallah offered her nuts and raisins. But she was not tempted.

One morning he found Kabuliwallah and Mini seated near the door. They were chatting like friends. Her little sari's corner was stuffed with almonds and raisins gifted to her by the Pathan. He gave the Pathan a coin of eight annas. This coin became a cause of conflict. He found his wife rebuking his daughter for accepting eight annas from Kabuliwallah. The pathan had gifted eight annas to Mini. The narrator intervened and saved the child from the wrath of the mother.

Friendship grew between Mini and the Pathan. Both shared jokes. The most humorous joke was about going to father-in-law's house, which in the case of the girl meant being wed and amongst men of Kabuliwallah class, it was a humourous expression for going to jail. The Kabuliwallah would shake his fist at the invisible relative saying that he would bash his father-in-law. Mini would burst in peals of laughter and her friend would join her.

The narrator was fond of travelling, though he had 'never left Calcutta'. All his journey's were mental. In the presence of Kabuliwallah he would be transported to the foot of arid mountain peaks with narrow little defiles twisting in and out amongst their towering heights. His imaginative journeys would be cut short by warnings of his wife who was distrustful of Kabuliwallah and feared that he would take away her daughter to sell her as a slave in Kabul. She was a timid lady who was perturbed by any sudden occurrence such as noise in the street. She was in the habit of jumping to conclusions.

Rahmun's regular visits startled even the narrator but their jokes and innocent laughter reassured him. One day Rehman was arrested by the police. What had transpired was unfortunate. A certain neighbour, who had bought a shawl from him, tried to evade paying the debt by denying that he had ever bought a shawl. A quarrel broke out between them. Pathan struck him and the police arrested him. Mini asked him if he was going to his father-in-law's house. He said he would have thrashed his father-in-law but his hands were bound.

Rehman's was sentenced. Time passed and he was forgotten. Mini had grown young and developed new interests and new relationships. On the day of her marriage, Rahmun came to see Mini. The narrator wanted to send him away. But the latter showed him hand expression of his daughter which he carried with him lovingly. Rahmun was taken aback on seeing a grown up Mini in a bride's costume. Then the truth dawned upon him that his own daughter

would have grown up by now. The narrator realized the feelings of a father and gave Rahmun a bank note telling him to marry his daughter off. This present meant curtailing some of wedding festivities leaving the ladies despondent. But the narrator's heart was cheerful at the thought of Kabuliwallah's meeting with his long lost daughter.

1.1.6 Long Questions

- Question 1. Comment on the changing relationship between Mini and Rahamat. Why was Rahamat so attached to Mini?
- Question 2. What was Kabuliwallah's reaction when he saw Mini in her bridal attire?

11.7 Short Questions

SOLVED SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS

Q1. Describe Mini's father.

Ans. Mini's father is a writer. He writes novels that are apparently Romantic adventures. In contrast to his wife who is a timid, apprehensive lady; he is rational and is not perturbed by friendship between his daughter and the Kabuliwallah. He can empathise with others. He realizes the feelings of Kabuliwallah. His fatherly instincts make him generous towards him. He gives him some money so that he could go back to his native place and do something for his daughter. This act of generosity provided more satisfaction than a lavish marriage ceremony of his own daughter.

Q2. How does Mini form an affectionate relationship with Kabuliwallah?

Ans. Mini's innocence lent her power to form a friendly bond with the pathan. She was devoid of grown ups ego's resistance to a stranger. Kabuliwallah was attracted towards Mini as he had a daughter as old as Mini. He had come away from home in quest of a livelihood; there was a natural longing for reunion with his daughter. Mini was an emotional substitute...Besides even grown ups are fascinated by guideless innocence of young ones Kabuliwallah.

1.1.8 Suggested Readings:

VOCABULARY

- Chattering : Talkative, one who talks too much
- Prattle : To talk for the sake of talking

Demur	:	One who sells in the streets
Quaint	:	Strange
Gigantic	:	Large, big in size
Witticism	:	Presence of mind
Euphemism:		Phrase used in order to avoid unpleasant
Wander	:	Roaming
Conjure	:	To guess, imagine
Absurd	:	Vague
Ablution	:	To make pure
Dispersed	:	Scattered
Apparition	:	Ghost
Despondent	:	Diasppointed

<https://bdebooks.com/books/kabuliwala-by-rabindranath-tagore/>

(ii) THE EYES ARE NOT HERE

- 1.2.1. Objectives
- 1.2.2 Introduction
- 1.2.3 The Eyes are Not Here : An Overview
 - 1.2.3.1. Realism as the Core of Ruskin's Tale
- 1.2.4 Self Check Activities
- 1.2.5 Summary
- 1.2.6 Long Questions
- 1.2.7 Short Questions
- 1.2.8 Suggested Readings

1.2.1. Objectives

- To familiarise students with the literary term 'Irony'.
- To introduce various underlying themes .

1.2.2 Introduction to the author:

Ruskin Bond was born in Kasauli, Himachal Pradesh, India, but grew up in Jamnagar (Gujrat), Dehradun and Shimla. He is a prolific writer and winner of innumerable literary awards. In a span of about 60 years he has authored more than thirty books for children as well as a hundred short stories, essays, novels and memoirs. 'The Night Train at Deoli', 'Time Stops at Shamli,' and 'Our Trees Still Grow in Dehra' are his famous collections of short stories. He wrote his first novel, 'The Room on the Roof' at the age of 17, which received John Llewellyn Rhys Memorial Prize in 1957. In 1992, he was honored with Sahitya Akademy Award.

Currently he has been editing many anthologies. His historical novel 'A Flight of Pigeons' prompted eminent director Shyam Benegal to produce a movie 'Junoon' in 1978.

1.2.3 The Eyes Are Not Here : An overview

“The Eyes are Not Here” is a beautiful and delightful short story written by Ruskin Bond. The writer narrated the story in first person. The narrator was

a blind young man. He was travelling to Dehra.

1.2.3.1 Realism as the Core of Ruskin's Tale

The story gives a moral that it is better to be a real person than to fake yourself. Our eyes show us what is happening in the world. Through our eyes we can perceive the world. Lack of eyes does not mean that one can't see the inner beauty of the other person. It also highlights various sub themes such as kindness, independent nature and desire.

1.2.4 Self Check Activity

1. What is a short summary of the story the eyes are not here?
2. What is the irony of the eyes are not here?
3. What is the significance of the title the eyes are not here?

1.2.5. Summary

'The Eyes are not Here' also known as 'The girl on the Train' was originally published in *Contemporary Indian English Stories*. The story is about two co-passengers travelling in a train who interact with each other for some time. Both are blind and unaware of the fact that the other one is blind. The narrator deliberately hides this fact and learns from another passenger that the girl with whom he was interacting is blind only after she gets off the train. The story juxtaposes irony and pathos that arouse touching response from the reader. The narrator is alone in a compartment of the train. He is totally blind; but he is in the habit of playing the game of concealment by pretending that he is not blind. A girl boards the same train. The narrator hears her parent's voice instructing the girl how to behave during travel; the usual instructions of the concerned parents : Do not lean out of the window : where things should be kept and how to avoid speaking to the strangers. The narrator cannot see the face of the girl but he is able to judge that she is wearing slippers. He likes her voice and the sound of her slippers. He wants to know what her destination is. His query startles her. The girl says that she is not aware of another passenger's presence. The narrator presumes that she could not see him as he might be occupying a dark corner of the compartment : or probably she has failed to see him because people register only what is essential to notice. The girl tells him that she is getting down at Saharnpur. In response to her inquiry the narrator tells her that his destination is Dehra and then Mussoorie. The girl is excited and feels that he is lucky to visit such a beautiful place, that too, in October. The narrator agrees that October is the best time to visit a hill station. During this period, the hills are covered with wild Dahlias, the sun is delicious; and it is pleasant to sit in front of a log-fire and drink brandy.

The narrator thinks about the effect of his words on her. He wonders if he appears to be a romantic fool to her. Then he makes a mistake by asking about the scenery outside. But his doubts are removed as she tells him to see

it for himself. He moves along the berth and pretends to see through the open window. To sound convincing he tells her that they seem to be stationary while the trees seem to be moving in the opposite direction. The girl asks if he could see any animals and quips in that there are hardly any animals left in the forests near Dehra.

Cautiously, he tells the girl that her face is interesting. The girl expresses relief; for she is tired of being told that she has a pretty face. The narrator interjects that an interesting face can be pretty as well. The next station is about to come, the girl feels relieved as she does not like travelling for long. The narrator is fascinated by her voice and presence in the compartment while she is collecting her things to leave. He starts wondering what is her hair style, if it is tied in a bun, or plaited, or hung loose over her shoulders. Meanwhile the train stops, the girl moves to get down. Perhaps, at the door she brushes against someone. A male voice apologises. She has left leaving behind fragrance of perfume, and an echo good-bye in sweet voice.

The train moves on, the narrator gets another companion to replay the game. The man's voice awakens him from his reverie, "You must be disappointed; he said, 'I'm sorry I'm not as attractive a travelling companion as the one who just left'.

The narrator enquires from new entrant also about the hair style of the girl. He is perplexed and replus that he is unable to recollect her style but she had beautiful eyes which were of no use to her as she was totally blind. The man wonders why her beautiful eyes remained unnoticed.

Some kind of emotion is stirred which is apparent from his statement that he would have liked her to travel for a longer period. His desire to touch her hair is indicative of his tender feelings. The irony is that both of them are unable to judge the blindness of each other. The story presents the loneliness experienced by physically challenged people.

1.2.6 Long Questions

Question 1. The two passengers shared similarities and contrasts.

Comment.

Question 2. How did the narrator find out that his companion was pretty?

1.2.7 Short Questions

Q1. Comment on the use of irony in the story.

Ans. The irony in the story is that both the travellers are blind yet neither of them is able to let the other know. The narrator, who is under the impression of having played the role of a normal sighted person discovers at the end, through the comment of a new passenger that the girl was blind like himself. When the girl says 'I didn't know anyone else as here', the narrator, thinks, even people with good eyesight fail to notice their surroundings fully because

perception is generally a selective phenomena.

Q2. What is the significance of the title 'The Eyes are not Here'?

Ans. The title of the story reflects a deep note of pathos giving a vivid peep into the loneliness of people, cut off from their surrounding when they are not blessed with the gift of vision. The narrator is touched by young traveller's feminine presence. He becomes even sentimental which is apparent from his thought that he would have liked her to travel for long. He is unable to see 'the beauty of the girl.' He keeps imagining about the style of her hair. The girl has been called beautiful by many as she says 'I'm tired of people telling I've a pretty face. It is tragic that she herself cannot see her own beauty in the mirror.'

1.2 8 Suggested Readings

STUDY NOTES

Anxious	:	Worried
Startled	:	Surprised
Essentials	:	Basic necessities
Formidable	:	difficult to deal
Rumble of Wheels	:	Low continuous & throbbing sound
Ventured	:	Endeavoured
Gallant	:	Courageous and honourable
Tantalising	:	Tempting
Reverie	:	A day dream

<https://smartenglishnotes.com/2019/06/01/the-eyes-are-not-here-by-ruskin-bond-summary-explanation-and-question-answers/>

(I) THE DEATH OF A HERO

1.3.1 Objectives

1.3.2 Introduction

1.3.3 The Death of a Hero: An Overview

1.3.3.1 The Worst Death is a Meaningless Life

1.1.4 Self Check Activities

1.3.5 Summary

1.3.6 Long Questions

1.3.7 Short Questions

1.3.8 Suggested Readings

1.3.1 Objectives

- To throw light on the character of Mr. Tagde
- To motivate the students about the qualities of the true hero.

1.3.2 Introduction**Introduction to the Author :**

Jai Nimbkar, born in 1932, is a writer of many interesting stories as well as novels. Her stories have been published in various Indian Journals. In 1970, writer's

Workshop, Calcutta published her stories in a volume titled 'The Lotus Leaf'. In 1974, a novel called 'Separate Prisons' was published. Another short story collection 'Bird and other Stories' came in 1993, alongwith a novel 'Come Rain'. Recently she has been writing in Marathi.

1.3.3 THE DEATH OF A HERO :An Overview

'The Death of a Hero' is about an ordinary school teacher Mr. Tagde whose conscience is awakened by the villainous behavior of a student of his school, who is from a well-connected family. The spoilt boy violates discipline and an outraged Tagde wants to submit a report against him seeking expulsion of the boy. He keeps his heroic and valourous stance throughout the story deriving strength from his morally upright stand; but eventually, influential people compel him to accept a kind of compromise.

1.3.3.1 The Worst Death is a Meaningless Life

The story highlights the age-long and familiar struggle between justice and integrity. Occasionally people from lower working class try to stand up for

what is right but their rebellion does not reach climax as the strength of people from higher social strata make all possible efforts to suppress it. Eventually the heroic effort dissipates into meek submission. Mr. Tagde, who at the fag end of his service career becomes aware of the presence of a hero in him who can fight for the right, suddenly succumbs to the pressure exerted by prestigious class. No one can live forever. Sometimes death is a blessing. If you're sleepwalking through life, you might as well be dead. The worst death is a meaningless life, indeed.

1.3.4 Self Check Activities

- Who is the hero in the story the death of hero?
- What compromise did Mr Tagde make in the story the death of the hero?

1.3.5 Summary

Mr. Tagde is a private school teacher. He has worked in the school without any individual self assertiveness. His conscience is awakened when a student belonging to influential parents behaves in unruly manner. He prepares a report against the boy seeking expulsion of the boy. The principal wants to scuttle it saying that it is too harsh a punishment for the boy's pranks. Mr. Tagde tells him that the boy has damaged school benches with razor blades and a black board with a piece of tin. Breaking of window panes by throwing stones at them, stealing of books and note-books and pens belonging to girl students outside the class are some of his routine outrageous acts. Though the principal is aware of Mr. Tagde's mature uprightness yet he does not want to forward the report. Tagde does not relent. The principal agrees to forward without his endorsement. Later on, on his way back, Tagde becomes aware of his actions. The retaliation would mean a loss of job. But he thinks he can fight for justice without fear of consequences as his children are already settled and his retirement is due in next two years. This rebellion gives him a renewed strength.

In the evening, he is visited by Mr. Thakar a lawyer, on the behest of the Principal Mr. Tagde tells him firmly that he is not going to change his mind. The Lawyer tells him that it is a suicidal act. But he is firm as he is determined to fight against the rotten system. Next morning, a rich Brahmin Vishnupant Joshi comes to his place to persuade him. The latter does not submit to his pressure. He is warned that he may not lose the job but pension also. Tagde stands like a rock. He is even beaten up by the companions of Veerander More.

He takes the boy out of school within three months, provided the report is withdrawn. There is again a turmoil in his mind and the old timid and submissive Tagde falls in line. The hero in him falls from the high pedestal. He nods thus saving three more years of service and retirement benefits.

1.3. 6 Long Questions

Question 1. What is the summary of the story The death of the hero?

Question .2. Draft a Moral of the story .

1.3.7 Short Questions

Question 1: What compromise did Mr Tagde make in the story the death of the hero?

Answer. Tagde to sit down and not to say anything more than the contents of the report he had already placed before him. Mr. Principal Deshpande said that the boy committed any misdeed was just delinquency and a good teacher like Tagde should not charge the boy with serious steps. He advised Tagde to withdraw the report.

Question 2. What is the character sketch of Tagde?

Answer. He is the protagonist of the story and was very strict, decent, fair and rational. He always believed in discipline and wanted his students to be disciplined. He was willing to face and challenges, however never bowed done before injustice He performs his duty with utmost diligence and skill.

1.3.8 Suggested Readings

VOCABULARY

Delinquent	: A young person behaving in illegal or unacceptable manner
Expulsion	: To be expelled from an institute
Rational	: A person guided by reason
Rake-up	: To begin
Extempore	: Without preparation
Manoeuverers	: People who can manipulate anything
Exultation	: State of being proud and gay
Jeopardise	: To put at risk
Measly	: Meagre; small Sparknotes

GRIEF

1.4.1 Objectives

1.4.2 Introduction

1.4.3 GRIEF: An overview

1.4.3.1 Isolation and Dehumanisation of Man

1.4.4 Self Check Activities

1.4.5 Summary

1.4.6 Long Questions

1.4.7 Short Questions

1.4.8 Suggested Readings

1.4.1. Objectives

- To encourage the students to exploit their literary knowledge in the interpretation.

1.4.2 Introduction**About the Author :**

Anton Pavlovich Chekhov (1860-1904) was a Russian writer with immense creative potential. His fame rests on his beautifully written stories and plays. Due to his father's financial losses he left his hometown to enroll in Moscow University Medical School and obtained a degree in Medicine. During his study, he wrote many comic stories for some monetary gains. A novel titled 'The Shooting Party' was translated into English in 1926. His stories highlight mental states of his characters ; often loneliness. He was awarded Pushkin award in 1888. He was a widely read author. His international popularity emerged after First World War when his works were translated into English.

1.4.3 GRIEF : An Overview

The story 'Grief' is a psychological story. It presents man's need to communicate his pain to the others. It also reflects the self centeredness and indifference to the feelings of sorrow of other human beings. Iona, the cab driver is full of grief as he has lost his only son. He does not find a single person in this whole world, who can lend him a patient ear.

1.4.3.1 Isolation and Dehumanisation of Man

The main theme of 'Grief ' is isolation. The protagonist, Iona, is not merely miserable because of his poor working conditions, nor because of his

only son's passing, but due to the reality that nobody is willing to listen to him unburden his sorrows. Grief is a growing story about an individual's personal tragedy, humanity's self centeredness and growing indifference to the feelings of sorrow of others. It is also about the alienation of modern man. Iona, a cabdriver, who can't get respite from drudgery because of poverty tries to give his sorrow concrete shape in the form of words; but people who don't have the heart and time, frustrate all his attempts. Whenever he tries to tell others he has to face indifference. The military officer is more concerned with his safety telling Iona to keep a watch on the road instead of listening to him. The hunchback dismisses him by philosophising with a sigh. 'We shall all die...!' The parcel boy tells him to move on. Ultimately Iona finds a patient listener in his mare. He pours his pain in her front to be relieved. The story is tragic and exposes the hollowness of human beings who are insensitive to the misery of fellow beings. It also deals with isolation, grief, misery, and dehumanisation.

1.4.4 Self Check Activities

What is the other name of the story grief by Anton Chekhov?

Why was Iona in grief?

What does the cab driver want in grief?

1.4.5 Summary

Grief is the portrayal of the despair of a man who, in moment of bereavement, wants a sympathetic listener; but fails to find one and ultimately unburdens his heart in front of the mare that pulls his cab. The very first line echoes his despair, 'To whom shall I tell my grief.' Iona Potapov is a sledge driver who has lost his young son a week ago. He does not even have time to mourn his death because, being poor, he has to go daily to work for earning his bread. He waits in the market for a farer. Snow flakes are falling making him look like a white ghost. His horse, too, is covered with snow, giving the impression of being a half penny ginger bread horse. He is sitting on the box almost doubled, the way a broken spirited man would sit. The horse also seems to be lost in pathetic thoughts as it has been 'torn away from the plough, from the familiar gray landscapes' and has to trudge amidst monstrous lights and constant humdrum of city life.

A military man startles him by announcing that he wants to go to Vyborgskaya. The officer gets into the cab. As they go through the streets, angry voices reprimand Iona for driving carelessly. The officer admonishes him and tells him to keep to the right. Iona seems to be dazed. He wants to say something but his lips fail to produce a sound. The officer enquires what does he want to say with an effort, Iona tells him that his son had died a week ago. The officer responds formally. Iona turns towards the officer to narrate the whole story but is scolded by the officer for not paying attention to the road ahead.

Next time three young men hire his sledge. They want to go to Police bridge. One of them, a hunchback, with cracked voice offers a fare of twenty Kopeck. Though the fare is not adequate but money hardly matters to Iona as long as he has a fare. New travellers are rough and drunk. They use foul language and quarrel among themselves for the seat. As the cab moves, they abuse Iona for being clumsy and slow and eventually slap him on the back of neck telling him to use his whip to spur the mare. Iona laughs off all insults. On being asked if he is married, he says his son is dead; death has chosen a wrong victim.

Iona turns to tell them his tale of woe. They reach the destination and Iona is left alone to experience his loneliness and sadness. He is craving to find one patient listener but people pass past him, unaware of the rising storm in his heart. Spotting a house porter with a parcel, he decides to share his grief with him, but he is told to drive on. Ultimately he comes back to his stable. Back home, he is troubled for earning less, that is not sufficient for him and his horse. He blames himself for his lack of success. He is saddened by the thought that his son would have earned more than him and proved a better cabman.

In the yard, people are snoring. A young man gets up to drink water - Iona tries to tell him how his son had died but the man falls asleep after drinking water. Iona, now, is thirsty for speech. For a week, the burden of his heart is choking him. His loneliness is interrupted by the realisation of having no comrade to listen to his agony. He wants to narrate details of the tragic incident - what were his son's last words; innumerable details regarding his funeral; how he went to hospital to collect his clothes.

Iona wants a listener with a human heart. He desires to elicit a response of sympathy from the lips of a fellow human being, but there is none. He goes into the stable. He addresses his mare as a human being. He even asks her how would she feel the pain of the loss of her imagined colt. He tells her that his son Ionitch Kuzma had gone forever, never to return. He opens his heart to her. The creature does not shun him : 'The little mare munches, listens and breathes on her master's hands.' Iona talks letting out all suppressed sad thoughts that were lying dormant and unexpressed in his heart.

1.4.6 Long Questions

1. What is the main theme in Anton Chekhov's "The Lament," also called "Misery"?
2. Why didn't the people listen to Iona?
3. Discuss the story "Misery" and the characters of Iona and the horse.

1.4.7 Short Questions

Solved Short Answer Questions

Q1. What compels Iona to talk to his mare ?

Ans: Iona, the cabdriver, after the loss of his son is yearning to share his pain with a compassionate listener. All his attempts are frustrated by the insensitive attitude of people who are preoccupied with their own affairs. He finds his mare more sympathetic, so he pours out his choked feelings of sorrow and misery before her.

Q2. Why didn't Iona get time to mourn the death of his son ?

Ans: The type of tragedy Iona had suffered required time and some sympathetic comrades that could lessen the burden of his misery. It is doubly tragic that the old man at the age of retirement and hurt by personal loss had to toil compelled by his poverty. He had to buy fodder for the mare and food for himself, so he had to go on the road in the chilly weather, seeking farers and could not find time to mourn the death of his only son.

1.4 8 Suggested Readings

VOCABULARY

Twilight	:	Time after sunset when getting dark
Budged	:	Give way
Cranes her neck	:	straightens her neck
Pedestrian	:	One who walks on foot
Jocorely	:	Amusing or humourously
Wry	:	Suppressed
Altercation	:	Small quarrel or argument
Disinclined	:	Not interested
Shoving	:	Pushing
Kopecks	:	Currency of Russia
Indignantly	:	Outraged, State of being angry
Deliberation	:	Intentionally
Anguish	:	Too much pain

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(I) UNCLE PODGER HANGS A PICTURE

1.5.1 Objectives

1.5.2 Introduction

1.5.3 UNCLE PODGER HANGS A PICTURE : An Overview

1.5.3.1 Uncel Podger's Character

1.5.4 Self Check Activities

1.5.5 Summary

1.5.6 Long Questions

1.5.7 Short Questions

1.5.8 Suggested Readings

1.5.1 Objectives

- To introduce one of the best hilarious writers.
- To expose the themes of gender roles, responsibility, inequality, control, ignorance and independence.

1.5.2 Introduction to the Author:

Jerome K. Jerome born in Walsall, Staffordshire in 1859, is one of the best humorous writers. Before becoming a writer, he pursued the career of an actor. The volume of humorous pieces 'On the stage-and-off' is based on theatre. Later on his second book 'Idle Thoughts of an Idle Fellow' established him as a writer. But he is best remembered for his travelogue. 'Three Men in a Boat' that he wrote after his honeymoon on the river Thames. The success of this travelogue promoted fashion of rowing in Thames. In 1892, the author and his friend jointly ventured to establish a humorous magazine 'The Idler'. Many writers of high reputation such as Mark Twain contributed to it.

1.5.3 Main Topic: UNCLE PODGER HANGS A PICTURE

'Uncle Podger hangs a picture' is a famous extract from 'Three Men in a Boat'. This piece is full of fun and humour. It presents an interesting picture of a disorganized and inefficient person who takes the responsibility on him to hang a picture on the wall. He makes every member of the family busy in his work. He accomplishes his work by midnight in a very crude way and feels proud of it.

1.5.3.1 Uncel Podger's Character

In Uncle Podger Hangs a Picture by Jerome K. Jerome we have the theme

of gender roles, responsibility, inequality, control, ignorance and independence. Uncle Podger is a man who is difficult to please and who does not allow anyone else to do a job. He is unable to do anything quietly or without creating a mess. The moral of the story is always practice what you preach.

1.5.4 Self Check Activities

Who is Maria in the story Uncle Podger hangs a picture?

What is the meaning of Uncle Podger hangs a picture?

What did Uncle Podger drop first?

1.5.5 Summary

The story centres around Uncle Podger who views himself as a man with great prowess to accomplish routine tasks. A picture once is received from the frame maker and Uncle Podger takes it on him to hang it properly on the wall; but everything becomes messy. He would take off his coat to start the job. He sends his daughter to bring the nails and then the boy is sent after her to tell her the size of the required nails. This unfoldment gradually draws in the entire family into confusing events. He shouts at will to fetch him his hammer; Tom for the rule and step-ladder or the kitchen chair. Jim is asked to bring spirit-level from Mr. Goggles. Maria is asked to be there to hold the ladder and the light.

He tries to lift up the picture and drops it. The picture gets out of the frame. While trying to save the glass he cuts himself. Jumping around the room, he tries to find his handkerchief, which was in the pocket of his coat. The coat is missing as he has forgotten where he has kept it. He asks all others to find the coat. He keeps hindering their search for the coat. He calls them a bunch of idiots who are unable to find the coat put off by him a few minutes ago. He finds it himself because he discovers that he has been sitting on it.

Half an hour is wasted in tying his injured finger. A new glass is brought. All tools and the ladder are assembled again at the site where picture is to be hung. The whole family forms a semi-circle around Uncle Podger to help him. Two people hold the chair, third helps him on it, fourth gives him a nail, and the fifth passes him the hammer. The nail is dropped. All go down on their knees to search the nail. By the time, they find the nail, he loses the hammer. Again he starts shouting at them for not finding the required tools. In this whole row, he loses the sight of the mark, he has made on the wall to hang the picture. Each one of them tries to find the mark but reaches different locations. He takes the rule and tries to remeasure but his mathematical calculation drives him crazy. All the members try to help him, but all in vain. In this commotion, original number is lost Uncle Podger has to remeasure to make another mark. He makes use of a string this time. He tries to reach a point three inches beyond his reach. The string goes off his hand and he falls on the piano creating musical effect.

Eventually, the spot is fixed again. He tries to drive the nail into the wall with a blow of hammer, he smashes his thumb, and drops the hammer with a yell on somebody's toe. He has to make another attempt. Now, the blow is so hard that the nail goes through the plaster clean, hammer goes after it. He hits the wall and his nose gets hurt.

The whole operation of fixing a spot with the string and putting the nail is repeated once again. After so much exertion, around midnight the picture is up slant and insecure. The wall is without plaster. Everyone except Uncle Podger is dead tired. Uncle Podger is proud for the accomplishment of the job.

Comments :

This excerpt from 'Three Men in a Boat' has been a source of delight for the readers for being humorous writing. This describes the confusion caused by the actions of a character who overvalues his ability in handling day to day affairs. Uncle Podger is bossy, billying and a disorganized who turns simple acts into acts that exhaust others making him an object.

1.5.6 Long Questions

- Question 1. How did Uncle Podger get all the family members involved ?
 Question .2. Discuss the theme of the story .

1.5.7 Short Questions

SOLVED ANSWER QUESTIONS

Q1. Draw a pen portrait of Uncle Podger.

Ans. Uncle Podger is the pivotal character, whose actions are used to arouse humour. The story's humour rests primarily on his over confidence and innocent unawareness of his clumsy way of doing things. He is a miniature replica of Don Quixote who thinks himself to be what he is not. When he exercises his so-called 'skills', everything goes wrong. Other characters in the story, too, are instrumental in invoking fun. When the inefficient and disorganized Uncle Podger takes the responsibility of hanging the picture on the wall, the family members that he ropes in also exhibit the same immaturity and inefficiency, as is shown by Uncle Podger. Each of them discovers a different spot on the wall where the nail has to go in. All reach at a different result while calculating mentally the distance from the corner. Thus, poor Uncle Podger has to face the wrath of his wife Maria for hanging the picture on the wall.

1.5 8 Suggested Readings

VOCABULARY

- | | | |
|-----------|---|----------------------|
| Commotion | - | Noise and excitement |
| Penn'orth | - | Worth a penny |

Hinder	-	To create obstacle
Grovel for	-	Search for
Precipitated	-	Struck against
Sneer	-	Make fun
Dead-beat	-	Dead tired

Please do consult glossary of your text-book at page 37.

<https://paragonconventschool.in/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Class-6-chapter-1-English.pdf>

<https://estudypoint.com/uncle-podger-hangs-a-picture-questions-and-answers/>

THE DOCTOR'S WORD

- 1.6.1 Objectives
- 1.6.2 Introduction
- 1.6.3 THE DOCTOR'S WORD : An Overview
 - 1.6.3.1 A Story of Hope and Trust
- 1.6.4 Self Check Activities
- 1.6.5 Summary
- 1.6.6 Long Questions
- 1.6.7 Short Questions
- 1.6 Suggested Readings

1.6 1. Objectives

- To create faith among students about the power of hope and taught strong human relationships.
- To elaborate how encouraging words can do wonders.

1.6.2 Introduction : Introduction to the Author

R.K. Narayan was born in Madras, South India in 1906. He is among the best known and widely read writers of India. 'Malgudi Days', 'Swami and his friends', 'The Guide', 'Vendor of Sweets', 'The English Teacher' are his famous works. The description of characters in 'Malgudi Days', a South Indian town is almost vividly alive because of his descriptive ability to create scenes and characters picturesquely. His stories resonate humour and irony. 'An Astrologer's Days and other Stories', 'Gods, Demons and other Stories' are his well-known collection of short stories.

1.6.3 THE DOCTOR'S WORD: An Overview

The story 'The Doctor's Word' is about a renowned doctor, Dr. Raman who faces a dilemma when he sees his childhood friend dying. From personal and professional experience he knows that the hope of his recovery is negligible; but when the family members enquire about the patient's condition, he evades the answer. On the other hand, when Gopal wants to know the truth about his life, Dr. Raman known for his straight forward nature is caught in emotional turmoil. He negates his professional judgement and assures his friend a long life.

1.6.3.1 A Story of Hope and Trust

'The Doctor's Word' revolves around the ethical question of giving verdict

by a doctor in case of terminal illness of a patient. Is it professional to give a patient false hope of recovery when the doctor knows that the patient is going to die? By not telling the truth the doctor may prevent the patient from taking important decision like preparing the 'will' and by giving conclusive assessment, it may be psychologically damaging because the patient reposes hope in efficiency of the doctor. Gopal reposes all confidence in Dr. Raman. The Doctor's Word' is a story about hope and trust .The story also exposes people's economic limitation to visit a good doctor and their fear of facing the truth about their dear ones condition.

1.6.4 Self Check Activities

Who is the main protagonist in the story The doctor's Word?

What is the summary of Malgudi Days the doctor's Word?

Who is the doctor in the doctor's word story?

What is the character sketch of Dr Raman in doctor's Word?

1.6.5 Summary

Dr. Raman was a renowned doctor. People came to him only when the patient was in a critical condition. He would reprimand them; why could not they come a day early. Actually, two factors were responsible for not paying a visit to the doctor. First, his fee was twenty five rupees, secondly, calling Dr. Raman signified that it was a matter of life and death. His arrival meant a decision this way or that way : either recovery or demise. He would not conceal facts; his verdict was curt and final for the people. His opinion was valued. He did not believe in offering comforting lies. However, whenever he saw a chance to save the patient, he would fight like a hero and save him.

One day he found himself in a position where he needed someone to tell him soothing lies. Gopal, his childhood friend was in a critical condition. His son had called him to save his father's life. Raman and Gopal had not met for many months, usually they would meet on Sundays. Gopal had fallen ill; his family consulted a nearby doctor. But when his condition worsened, there was no other safe option.

As a doctor, Dr. Raman knew that Gopal was on the edge. But it was not an easy affair to tell the truth to Gopal's family. He initiated the treatment, gave the patient an injection and waited for sometime. The sick man's wife asked him for a cup of coffee. Though famished, as he had missed his midday meal, he declined. He instructed her not to disturb Gopal and left in his car. He returned half an hour later accompanied by an assistant and a nurse. He told his wife that he had to perform a small operation so she should go to next house till she was called in. Distraught lady had to be assisted out of the room by the nurse.

At about eight in the morning, Gopal opened his eyes. The assistant was glad, he took it as a sign of recovery. The doctor told him it was a false sign, such things happen in such cases. He observed if his pulse kept same till morning, he would survive; but it was a bleak probability.

The assistant was sent away. Gopal opened his eyes and smiled at his friend. He was able to take in a little food. All felt relieved and swarmed around the doctor to express their gratitude.

Gopal's wife enquired about the condition of her husband. The doctor's evasive approach made her very tense. Her terrified imploring tone failed to elicit a definite response from the doctor. A waiting sound disturbed Gopal. The doctor shut the door to keep the gloomy noises away.

Gopal asked Dr. Raman about his condition and appealed to tell him the truth, so that he could sign his will to make the family secure and thwart the evil designs of his relatives. He implored him to sign as a witness. The doctor knew about his family circumstances. But asking Gopal to sign the will meant putting his life in danger because Dr. Raman's verdict would sound like a death sentence. For the first time in his life, he had to suppress his judgement. He told Gopal not to worry about the will and assured him that he would live up to the age of ninety. It was not easy to state, but the doctor acted confidently for the sake of his friend's life. He came back and on his way to home, he stopped at the hospital and instructed his assistant to go to Lawley Extension, Gopal's house, to take care of the patient as he expected his collapse anytime.

Next morning, he reached Gopal's house in a state of worry. To his surprise, he saw the patient in a better condition. With his stethoscope, he checked his heart and informed the anxious lady that her husband was out of crisis. On his way back, the assistant enquired if it was true that Gopal would survive. He assured in affirmation, but how Gopal had survived that attack, remained a mystery to him.

1.6.6. Long Questions

Q. Was it justified on the part of Dr. Raman to stall the signing of Gopal's will?

1.6.7 Short Questions

SOLVED ANSWER QUESTION

Q1. What is the impact of Dr. Raman's assurance to Gopal?

Ans. Gopal was hanging between life and death. He wanted to know the truth about the chance out of his recovery, from his physician, who is also his dear friend Dr. Raman, contrary to his professional nature, assured him that he would survive so he need not sign any will. This assurance brought a

miraculous recovery which even Dr. Raman had not expected. It remained a mystery to him throughout life.

1.6 8 Suggested Readings WORD MEANINGS

Arena	:	Area, field
Ominous	:	Evil, sinister
Yama's hands	:	Death
Kindergarten	:	Childhood
Sternly	:	In a strict manner
Whimpered	:	Soft crying noises
Enthusiastically	:	With zeal
Wail	:	To cry in agony
Ruminated	:	Thought about
Evasive	:	Dilly dallying
Resumed his seat	:	Took his seat again; Reoccupied

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