

**SASTRI / B.A.II YEAR**

**PART - I / PAPER I**

**(1<sup>ST</sup> LANGUAGE - ENGLISH)**

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**THE POET'S EYE, THREE ONE ACT PLAYS,  
GRAMMAR AND WRITING & SPEAKING SKILLS**

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**Directorate of Distance Education**

Rashtriya Sanskrit Vidyapeetha

*Accredited at A level by NAAC*

Tirupati - 517 507 (A.P.)



## **STRUCTURE OF THE COURSE**

### **Block One: The Poet's Eye – Ed by Jagadisan (OUP)**

Unit One: The Leech Gatherer – William Wordsworth

Unit Two: To a Skylark – P.B. Shelley

Unit Three: Dover Beach – Mathew Arnold

Unit Four: The Darkling Thrush – Thomas Hardy

Unit Five: A prayer to my Daughter – W.B. Yeats

Unit Six: The Unknown Citizen – W.H. Auden

Unit Seven: Night of the Scorpion – Nissim Ezekiel

Unit Eight: Telephone Conversation – Wole Soyinka

### **Block Two: Three One Act Plays – Ed by C. Mahajan**

Unit Nine: The Bishop's Candle sticks – Norman Mckinnel

Unit Ten: The Monkey's Paw – W.W. Jacobson

Unit Eleven: The Dear Departed – Stanley Houghton

### **Block Three: Grammar and Writing Skills**

Unit Twelve: Grammar and Writing Skills

Active – Passive Voice

Direct – Indirect Speech

Report Writing and Elaboration of Hints

### **Block Four: Speaking Skills**

Unit Thirteen: Speaking Skills – Expressing sympathy, congratulations and thanks giving.

## **INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE:**

In the previous year, you have studied a few short stories, some grammar topics and speaking skills also formed part of the course.

This year the course constitutes a poetry text titled ‘The Poet’s Eye’ Ed by S. Jagadisan (OUP) and ‘Three One Act Plays’ ed by C.Mahajan(OUP). Eight poems have been selected from the former text while three plays are included from the latter text to form part of the course.

Besides these, in order to enable you to improve upon your grammar and create grammatically correct sentences, it contains some more grammar topics. Dialogues on various situations in life provide for the development of spoken skills. Other chapters in writing skills allow you to elaborate upon a story given the hints and practice upon writing reports.

## **OBJECTIVES OF THE COURSE:**

The poems selected from “The Poet’s Eye” Ed by S.Jagadisan (OUP) in Block One of the course is intended to

- Introduce you to the joy of reading poetry
- Pick the message of the poet, if any, to humanity
- Appreciate the beauty contained in a poem
- Observe the poet’s anxiety to achieve success by integrating thought and emotion
- Appreciate and understand the use of figures of speech in poems.

A study of the plays in ‘The Three One- Act plays’ Ed by C. Mahajan should lead you to

- Understand the themes of the plays
- Draw a sketch of the different characters and draw comparisons between them
- Identify some characters in reality

Blocks Three and Four should help you to

- Write efficiently
- Equip yourself with functional skills
- Be motivated to communicate in English.

## UNIT – 1

### The Leech-Gatherer (or) Resolution and Independence

- William Wordsworth

Structure:

1.0. Objectives

1.1. Introduction

1.2. Coming to know about the poet

1.3. A Study of the poem- Description of nature.

1.3.1. Rains heavily the previous night.

1.3.2. In the morning-sun rises; pleasant surroundings.

1.3.3. All living creatures enjoy

1.4. The poet a traveller then upon the moon

1.4.1. The poet too enjoys nature.

1.4.2. Thoughts of pain and pleasure.

1.4.3. Realises his idle nature;

1.4.4. Reference to other poets who died young.

1.5. The poet meets an old man, a leech gatherer.

1.5.1. The old man - a Heaven sent gift.

1.5.2. Use of simile to describe the mystery of the appearance of the old man.

1.6. Description of the old man and his occupation.

1.6.1. He appears very very old.

1.6.2. Gathering leeches with his staff - his occupation.

1.7. Conversation between the poet and the old man.

1.7.1. The poet's repeated question - What occupation do you there pursue?

1.7.2. The old man's repeated answer - gathering leeches far and wide

1.8. Effect of the old man on the poet.

1.8.1. The poet feels contempt for his own self.

1.8.2. Learns a lesson - tree source of man's strength – mind

1.8.3. Aptness of the two titles of the poem.

1.9. Prayer to God.

1.10. Summing up.

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## 1.0. Objectives

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- After a reading and understanding of this unit, you should be able
- to recognise Wordsworth's interest in Nature,
- observe and differentiate the occupation and life - style of the poet, a young man from that of the leech gatherer, an old man
- .Pick out the similes in the poem, understand and appreciate them.
- Appreciate the poem's message to humanity

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## 1.1. Introduction

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In this unit, you are going to read a poem titled 'Resolution and Independence', by an English Romantic poet, William Wordsworth. The poem, which is also titled as 'The Leech Gatherer' describes the poet's meeting with an old man and how the latter influences the former. Both the titles appear suitable and add value to the substance of the poem. The significance of the poem lies in the fact that it illustrates the dignity of man. Let us learn more about it in the following pages.

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## 1.2. Coming to know about the poet

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William Wordsworth (1770-1850), the great English Romantic Poet, was born in Cockermouth, a little village on the edge of the famous Lake District. He lived most part of his life at Grasmere, in the beautiful Lake District of north-west England. His poems were the result of inspiration from the English countryside. His excursions as a boy in the Hawkshead country also made a lasting impression upon his mind, and inspired in him a deep and lasting attachment to Nature. He had also come under the influence of the French Revolution.

A Study of the poem

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## 1.3. Description of nature

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1.3.1. There was a roaring in the wind all night, raining heavily.

1.3.2. Yet, in the morning, the sun rises calm and bright. Birds such as the stock dove, the jay, and the magpie raise their voices in a spirit of joy. All the air is filled with the pleasant noise of waters.

1.3.3. All living creatures that love the sun are enjoying outdoors; on the moor, the hare is running about here and there, splashing behind it the plashy earth.

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## 1.4. The poet a traveller then upon the moor

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1.4.1. At such a time, the poet seems to have been travelling upon the moor; he observes the happiness of the various living creatures; he also hears the woods and distant waters roar. Old remembrances and a sudden feeling of dim sadness disturb his mind.

1.4.2. The might of joy in him couldn't move beyond a certain height; similar was the feeling, when he was dejected; this sadness couldn't sink below a certain point; such was his experiences, wherein thoughts of pain and pleasure alternate in his mind. He expects himself to be a happy child of earth, but thoughts of solitude, pain of heart, distress and poverty trouble him.

1.4.3. He realises for himself that he had lived an idle life full of pleasant thoughts and experiences. Therefore, the justification is he cannot expect others to provide for him with what he needs when he himself doesn't bother about others.

1.4.4. The poet makes a reference to other young poets like Thomas Chatterton (1752-70) and Robert Burns (1759-96). Chatterton was young poet of promise who committed suicide in despair because his merit was not recognized. Robert Burns, a poet and farmer too did not get the recognition due to him. The poet feels that people like him made or marred by their own spirits. Poets often, when they are young, are happy but as they grow old and face the harsh realities of life they end up in despair and madness.

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## 1.5. The poet meeting an old man, a leech-gatherer.

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1.5.1. While the poet is walking along the moor, deeply absorbed in his own thoughts, he observes an old man gathering leeches in a pond beside the moor. By personifying the man, he considers the sight of the old man to be a heaven-sent light, a gift from Heaven. The poet feels that he has been sent from Heaven to give him strength by admonishing him for yielding to despair.

SAQ. Why is the old man a heaven sent gift for the poet?

1.5.2. Further, through the use of two similes, he compares the mysterious appearance of the old man to a stone resting on top of a hill and a sea-beast warming itself on the sea-shoe; the implication to the comparison is that the appearance of the stone and the sea-beast in such places also create a sense of wonder to those who see them.

SAQ. What are the two things to which the poet compares the appearance of old man?

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## 1.6. Description of the old man and his occupation.

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16.1. To the poet, the old man appears neither all alive nor dead, as he is very old. His body is bent double as though feet and head are coming together. He seems to be bearing a heavy weight, whether it is emotional or physical, upon his feeble body.

1.6.2. He supports himself upon a long grey staff of shaven wood. He stands motionless as a cloud which even strong winds cannot break. He stirs the pond with his staff and fixedly looks upon the muddy waters, reads it, as if he has been reading in a book. Gathering leeches far and wide is his occupation. The leech, a blood sucking worm is used to suck blood from those suffering from certain diseases. Hence, the gathering of leeches is a means of livelihood which the old man pursues.

SAQ. In what sense is the old man 'neither all alive nor dead? Is this a happy condition?

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## 1.7. Conversation between the old man and the poet

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The poet on seeing the old man gathering leeches, takes strains to begin a conversation with him by talking about the glory that morning has brought in. The



old man gives a gentle answer to the poet's question: 'What occupation do you there pursue?' The words that he utters come one after another and are quite impressive in their effect, though the voice comes from a feeble chest. The speech is lofty and stately, similar to that of the language the religious people in Scotland use. To the poet's questions, he answers that gathering leeches moving from pond to pond, moor to moor is his occupation. The poet feels the voice of the old man sounded like a stream and he looked like a man in a dream or like a man from far off region to be an inspiration to him. But, the old fears of cold, pain and labour of the poet return. So, the poet repeats his question to the old man about his occupation. The old man regrets the fact that the leeches have dwindled; moreover this kind of job is hazardous and wearisome also. Yet he perseveres and finds them where he may. He feels happy, that with God's help, whether it was choice or chance, he could continue to maintain his life in this way, without depending upon others for his livelihood.

SAQ. Comment on the nature of the old man with reference to his occupation.

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## 1.8. The Effect of the old man on the poet

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1.8.1. The old man's shape, speech and actions trouble the poet very much. When the old man ends his speech, the poet feels that he could have laughed at himself to the extent of feeling contempt for his own self. He finds in that weak bodied man, a strong mind. In comparison with the old man, the poet feels ashamed that he, a young, strong man is moving about the moor without pursuing any job. Thus, the poet learns a lesson from the example of the old man.

1.8.2. The poet learns the lesson that the true source of man's strength is his mind; that a man can achieve anything with a weak body. You can observe here, that you can get the clue to the lesson learnt by the poet from the title of the poem also- to be resolute and independent.

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## 1.9. Resolution of the old man

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The old man was resolute and determined in gathering leeches though he knew he had to move from pond to pond, and moor to moor; and independent in leading a life of his own. The title 'Leech Gatherer' also attains significance in that the gathering of leeches acts as a means of livelihood for the old man.

SAQ. What is the old man resolute at?

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## 1.10. Prayer to God

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The poet prays to God to help him and allow him to stay secure whenever he is in needs of it. He promises God that he would think of the leech gatherer on the moor to strengthen his mind.

SAQ. Comment on the contrast you find between the poet and the old man

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## 1.11. Summing Up

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In this unit, you could have enjoyed reading about the beauty of nature as described by the poet. While the previous night, one experiences a heavy downpour, the next morning one can see all living creatures moving out into Nature where they play and enjoy the warm sun-rising. You could probably recognise here Wordsworth's interest in Nature. You see the poet as a young man, full of vigour and energy, a traveller upon the moor but without any particular intention of pursuing a piece of work and full of desperate thoughts about future. But the stranger was an old man, bent double, hand and feet touching each other, appearing neither all alive nor dead. In contrast to his appearance, his speech was stately, orderly and the work he takes upon himself, hazardous and wearisome.

The poet learns that gathering leeches was the old man's profession, who manages that way an honest maintenance. As for the poet, he has no job to pursue, though young in mind and body. He considers the old man a Heaven sent gift to give him a warning about his life. The poet, at last learns the lesson that the true source of man's strength is mind and not body because he finds in that decrepit man, a strong mind to be resolute and independent. The final lesson to humanity perhaps, is to follow the dictum: 'Be with a strong mind in a strong body'.

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### Annotations:

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Explain with reference to the context the following lines

1. As high as we have mounted in delight

In our dejection do we sink low.

- 2 .....and at his call

Love him, who for himself will take no head at all?

3. Now, whether it were by peculiar grace

A leading from above, a something given,  
yet it befell.....

4. Choice word and measured phrase, above the reach of ordinary men ;  
a stately speech ;

- 5.....When he ended

I could have laughed myself to scorn to find

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### Questions

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Answer the following in about 250-300 words.

1. Comment on the suitability of the two titles the Leech Gatherer, and Resolution and Independence to the poem written by William Wordsworth.
2. What was the mental condition of the poet in the beginning? How does the old man's acquaintance change the poet?

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## UNIT - 2 To a Skylark

Percy Bysshe Shelley

### Structure:

2.0. Objectives

2.1. Introduction.

2.2. Coming to know about the poet.

2.3. A Study of the poem - Salutation to the skylark, a singing bird.

2.4. Nature of the lark's song.

2.4.1. Singing, soars high ; soaring, sings high.

2.4.2. The bird unseen; song heard.

2.5. Use of a number of images to express the loveliness of the song.

2.6. Surpassing beauty of the bird.

2.7. Secrets of the lark's inspiration.

2.7.1. Rhetorical questions

2.7.2. The song of the bird is divine.

2.8. Nature of the bird vs human beings.

2.8.1. The poet understands the mysteries of life and death.

2.8.2. Man looks into the past; worries about the future.

2.9. Joy of the bird beyond human reach.

2.10. The skylark - a better source of inspiration.

2.11. The poet's desire - to learn from the bird

2.12. Summing up.

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### 2.0. Objectives

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After a study of the poem you can

- Appreciate and imagine the beauty contained in a bird's song
- Learn how the poet yearns to get inspired by the bird's song
- Appreciate the poet's use of comparisons to describe the loveliness of the song
- Observe the poet's anxiety to understand the eternal truth about the universe and mankind.

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## 2.1. Introduction

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This unit introduces you to a poem titled ‘To a Skylark’ written by Percy Bysshe Shelley, another Romantic poet. It is an ode in which the poet addresses the bird, a skylark as ‘blithe spirit’. For him, the bird symbolises a spirit without body and mind. He is excited by the song of the bird whose song soars high and high. In this joy, he tries to find out the true nature of the song through a number of comparisons and also learn the eternal truth about the Universe and mankind. He searches for factors which inspire the bird to sing. He wishes the bird to inspire him to write poetry.

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## 2.2. Coming to know about the poet

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P.B. Shelley (1792-1822) was another of the English Romantic poets like William Wordsworth. He was a revolutionary poet. His passion was to make the world better, to free mankind and to purify life of its misery and evil. Unfortunately he failed to adjust himself to the customs and laws of his actual surroundings. In Italy, he wrote some matchless lyrics, namely, “The Cloud”, “To a Skylark”, “Ode to the West Wind”. “Adonais” is an elegy; a lament for the early death of the poet, John Keats

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## 2.3. A Study of the poem.

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Salutation to the Skylark, a singing bird.

The poet happens to listen to the song of a skylark as he is walking about in his neighbourhood. He addresses the bird as ‘blithe spirit’. The bird symbolises for him an ethereal spirit without body and mind.

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## 2.4. Nature of the lark’s song.

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2.4.1. The bird is pouring its full in profuse strains effortlessly. It is rising higher and higher like a cloud of fire. As it is singing, it appears soaring high; it is floating over the setting sun; to the poet the bird appears a spirit undertaking a new journey when it is free from the shackles and limitations of the body.

2.4.2. The poet cannot see the bird but he can feel its presence from its melody. As the bird sings in its flight, the sky seems to melt in it. The bird is like Venus

the morning star which disappears with the sunlight. It looks like the moon hidden behind a cloud shedding its beams all over the sky.

SAQ. Give two things to which the poet compares the lark in its presence in absence.

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## 2.5. Use of Images to express the beauty of the song

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The poet compares the bird's nature to a poet, a royal maiden, a glow worm and a rose. Just as the poet is hidden behind the thoughts expressed in his poem, the bird is also hidden behind the song it sings. The bird is also like a royal maiden who is hidden behind her love laden song. Besides these, the comparison next made is to a glow worm scattering its hue everywhere, though it is lost in the grass. Then, finally, there is a reference to a rose which is unseen like the bird, yet spreading its scent.

SAQ. Comment on the use of similes in the poem. What purpose do they serve?

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## 2.6. Surpassing beauty of the bird.

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The poet then describes the beauty of the usual showers, the drops of rain twinkling in the grass, and the rain awakened flowers which bring in a mood of joy. Yet the feeling of the poet is that the joy arising out of listening to the song of the bird surpasses all human beauty and happiness.

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## 2.7. Secrets of the lark's inspiration.

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2.7.1. The poet posing a number of rhetorical questions wants to find out what environment and what objects of nature inspire the bird to produce such a happy strain. The list is never ending - are they the fields, the waves, the mountains, or the plain ; or is it love peculiar to the bird or the result of ignorance of pain?

2.7.2. The song of the bird is considered to be Divine; even a wedding song or a victory song is devoid of something when compared to the song.

SAQ. What do you conclude from the rhetorical questions put by the poet?

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## 2.8. Nature of the bird vs. that of human beings

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2.8.1. In the beauty of the song, there is neither a feeling of fatigue nor anger. The bird has never experienced excess of gratification of love producing disgust for love. The poet is led to imagine that the bird has understood more truly and deeply about the mysteries of life and death than the human beings.

2.8.2. The poet considers the human beings as creatures who look into the past, and worry about the future; moreover, they yearn for those things which are never attainable. He finds some pain and sadness even in the sincerest laughter of man. Even in compositions of verse which are regarded as sweet, there is a strain of sadness.

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## 2.9. Beyond human reach.

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Even if hate, pride, fear and tear were absent from the lives of men, they cannot experience true joy like that of skylark. The joy of the skylark is beyond human reach

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## 2.10. Inspiration

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The Skylark acts as a better source of inspiration than metrical skills or books containing treasures of knowledge.

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## 2.11. The poet's Desire

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The poet concludes the poem by expressing his desire to learn from the joy of the bird the secrets of life, the eternal truth about the universe and mankind, so that he may pass it on to mankind, as he had learnt from the bird.

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## 2.12. Summing Up.

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The song of the skylark over the Italian sky inspires other poets to such an extent that he considers the bird to be a spirit, without body and mind. The poet through a series of comparisons tries to express the hidden nature of the bird though its voice is heard far and wide. However satisfied is the poet with the beauty of the spring, yet the feeling is that the song of the bird surpasses all human beauty and happiness. The poet raises for himself a series of questions to understand better the nature of the bird and its song. According to the poet, the bird understands better the truth about the universe. Finally, he wishes that the bird should inspire him to teach mankind all that he has learnt from the bird.

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## Annotations

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Explain with reference to the context the following lines.

1. From rainbow clouds there flow not  
Drops so bright to see  
As from thy presence showers a rain of melody.
2. All that ever was  
Joyous, and clear, and fresh, thy music  
doth surpass.
3. Or how could thy notes flow in such a crystal stream?

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## Questions

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Answer the following in about 100 words.

1. How does the poet account for the difference in the nature of the bird and human beings?
2. What qualities of the bird inspire the poet?

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**UNIT -3**  
**Dover Beach**

- Matthew Arnold

Structure:

3.0. Objections

3.1. Introduction.

3.2. Coming to Know about the poet.

A Study of the poem.

3.3. Visit to Dover.

3.4. Description of nature near Dover.

3.4.1. The Sea at Dover - calm ; on the French coast the light gleams.

3.4.2. As the waves move, the pebbles also move and fling back.

3.5. Mood created by the grating roar

3.6. Effect of the sound in the past and the present.

-Sophocles, long ago heard it ; in the present, the poet hears it.

3.7. The Sea of Faith

3.7.1. Use of a simile to describe the past.

3.7.2. The present - devoid of religious faith - emptiness in the world;  
shore left naked by the withdrawing pebbles.

3.8. Solution to the future.

3.8.1. Modern world - a land of dreams

3.8.2. Solution to the world devoid of faith - to love and be true to  
each other.

3.9. Summing up.

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### 3.0. Objectives

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After a study of this unit, you should be able to

- observe how ‘the grating roar’ brings in the poet and others like Sophocles, an eternal note of sadness
- appreciate the poet’s use of simile to compare the sea of faith with the folds of a girdle around the earth
- understand the poet’s concern with the social and moral questions in an age wherein the Christian faith has been severely affected.
- understand his anxiety in finding new principles as alternatives to the lost faith.
- observe the poet’s success in achieving a fine and moving integration of thought and emotion.

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### 3.1. Introduction

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In this unit, you are going to read a poem titled ‘Dover Beach’ by Matthew Arnold, a Victorian poet. In this poem, the poet contemplates the state of man’s life which is deprived of any abiding faith in religion and seeks new principles which can act as an alternative to religious faith. The poet scans the past, assesses the present and imagines a probable future.

The nineteenth century saw different movements and currents of thought. Noteworthy among them was the Theory of Evolution proposed by Darwin. This theory questioned the dogmas and values of Christianity which has been accepted unquestioned. The theory which proposed the idea that man is not a chosen creation of God as suggested in the Bible but has evolved over several millions of years through mutation of a simple cell like organism. It also brought in the idea that it is not what is good and what is bad that decides the existence. But fittest survived. This led to intellectuals questioning about the existence of God, soul and immortality. Some retained faith in religion, some turned agnostics and some like Arnold tormented themselves over the question of faith. Traditionally God and religion are sources of our values. People believed that the collapse of

religion may lead to collapse of values too. This fear is given best expression by Arnold in this small poem

Dover is a port on the south eastern coast of Kent, England where it is closest to Calais in France. The poet was on a visit to this place with his wife. He was looking at the night scene in a heightened moment of time from the window.

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### 3.2. Coming to know about the poet.

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Matthew Arnold (1822-88) was the son of Dr. Thomas Arnold, the headmaster of Rugby. He is considered one of the most important poets of the Victorian period. Arnold had felt that the new optimism generated by scientific enquiry did not bear the promise of true happiness. He was concerned about the loss of religious faith which has been overtaken by scientific explorations. The critical question then was, how would life be supported in the absence of such a faith.

The poem you are now going to read was written in 1851 (but published only in 1867) immediately after his marriage to Frances Lucy Wightman on 10th June, 1851 and on a visit to Dover.

A Study of the poem.

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### 3.3. Visit to Dover

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The poet visits Dover Beach along with his newly married wife on their honeymoon in 1851.

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### 3.4. Description of nature near Dover.

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3.4.1. Standing near the window of his room, he describes the beauty of the Dover Beach to his beloved and wishes her also to join him. The sea is calm, the tide is full and the moon lies fair on the straits of Dover. On the French Coast, the light gleams, the cliffs of England too shine brightly.

This beautiful description gives no indication of the trouble that pesters the poet but the change is indicated in the next few lines.

3.4.2. As the waves begin, cease and then again begin, the pebbles too move and fling back at their return.

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### 3.5. Mood created by the grating roar

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This rise and fall of the waves create a grating roar which is heard by the poet. This causes in the poet an eternal note of sadness.

SAQ. In contrast to the beauty of nature described, what shift in image do you find in the succeeding lines?

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### 3.6. Effect of the sound in the past and the present.

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This note of sadness was heard by Sophocles, a Greek dramatist long ago on the Aegean Sea and it brought into his mind the turbid ebb and flow of human misery. In the present, when the poet listens to such a sound, he also feels sad, distressed and disappointed because he senses in its withdrawing roar the withdrawal of the sea of faith.

SAQ. Is there any difference between the poet's reaction to the grating roar and Sophocles' reaction to it?

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### 3.7. The Sea of Faith

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3.7.1 Arnold scans the past, assesses the present and imagines a probable future. Using a metaphor where he compares the sea to faith. Because the faith like the sea was full earlier. Now just as the sea is withdrawing due to geographical changes, faith too is withdrawing from the lives of human beings and leaving them unprotected. Then he uses another simile to beautifully describe the past when the Sea of Faith was full and lay like a girdle around the earth's shore holding together people through happiness and suffering.

3.7.2. In scanning the present, one can observe, that he is concerned about the loss of Christian faith among the people. The situation now is that one can hear its long, melancholic withdrawing roar. The poet makes the point clear to us that now, devoid of religious faith, there is an emptiness similar to the shore left naked by the withdrawing sea.

SAQ. How does the poet compare the past with the present?

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### 3.8. Solution to the future.

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3.8.1. The poet suggests that the modern world lies before us like a land of dreams which seems to be various, beautiful and new. Yet people have neither joy, nor love, nor light, nor certainty, nor peace, nor help for pain. By the use of a simile, he describes a situation wherein man is on a darkling plain swept with confused alarms of struggle; here, ignorant armies clash during night time unable to identify the friend from the foe indicating man's struggle to live in a world devoid of faith.

SAQ. How does the world look like? What does it actually lack in?

3.8.2. With regard to the future, he has his own worries and fears, namely, how the human race could continue to live peacefully in the absence of faith in Christianity. While trying to think of a new principle to tackle such a problem, he seems to suggest that the policy of loving and being true to each other would alone work. At the first in stance, he invites his wife and wishes that they be true

to each other. But the very act that he calls for 'true love' indicates that in the valueless and faithless society even 'true love' may not be possible.

SAQ. What could be a possible alternative to faith?

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### 3.9. Summing up

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A reading of the poem 'Dover Beach' would have allowed you to visualise the picture of a modern man ; a man gradually losing faith in religion in contrast to an earlier man with the Sea of Faith lying to the full and round earth's shore acting like a girdle. Also, you can find the poet's anxiety in finding an alternative to support the human race in the absence of such a faith.

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#### Annotations:

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Explain with reference to the context, the following lines:

1. Listen! you hear the grating roar  
of pebbles which the waves draw back, and fling.
2. ....and it brought  
Into his mind the turbid ebb and flow  
Of human misery ;
- 3 .....to the breath  
of the night - wind, down the vast edges drear  
And naked shingles of the world.

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#### Questions:

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Answer the following questions:

1. Comment on the profound and universal meaning infused in the poem 'Dover Beach' by Matthew Arnold.
2. Dover Beach is an intense expression of loss of faith – comment.
3. How does the image of Sea change in course of the poem? How does it bring in the change of emotion in the poem?

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## UNIT - 4

### The Darkling Thrush

- Thomas Hardy

Structure

4.0. Objectives

4.1. Introduction

4.2. Coming to know about the poet.

A Study of the poem.

4.3. Description of nature.

4.4. Mood of the poet.

4.5. The bird and its song.

4.6. Change in the attitudes of the poet.

4.7. Summing up

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#### 4.0. Objectives

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After the study of this unit, you should be able to

- Understand behind the description of Nature, the feeling of the poet.
- Find out the point of transition in the poem.
- See how this transition brings in the poet, a change in his attitudes.

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#### 4.1. Introduction

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‘The Darkling Thrush’ was written on December 31st, 1900, the last day of the nineteenth century. It was first titled ‘By the Century’s Death - Bed’. This suggests that Hardy saw his poem ‘as an epitaph to the nineteenth century. Hardy evaluates a whole epoch in a short poem and visualises a bygone century’s total landscape. He seems to indirectly refer to the deteriorating faith in religion and morals as well as the consequences of industrialization which was felt in the society. The poet seems to have been in a mood of depression when he composed this poem. As though to disturb his thoughts, he all of a sudden heard a voice, the song of a thrush, which was unseen. It awakens in the poet an important fact.

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## 4.2. Coming to know about the poet.

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Thomas Hardy (1840 -1928) was born in Dorset, England. He was primarily a novelist. *Far from the madding Crowd*, *The Return of the Native*, *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, *Tess of the D'urbervilles* and *Jude the Obscure* are his well - known novels. He turned to poetry late in his life and his collection of poems - Wessex poems appeared in 1898. '*The Darkling Thrush*' reminds us of Shelley's 'To a Skylark' and Keats' '*Ode to a Nightingale*'.

A study of the poem:

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## 4.3. Description of nature

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The poet describes a scene of the forest in winter. He is leaning against the gate leading to a small wood. He observes the frozen dew on the ground appearing as pale as a ghost. The severe part of the winter further weakens the brightness of the sun as it is sitting. There is the woodbine plant moving upwards forming patterns. He compares it to a broken lyre, through this comparison with the broken lyre the poet refers to the woodbine as being broken here and there. Having lost the pattern, the woodbine has lost its beauty, just as a broken lyre loses its music. The poet then refers to men and women who return home after attending to work in the fields. They then seek the fires.

SAQ. What indication does the description give about the poet's mood? Is he happy or sad?

---

## 4.4. Mood of the poet.

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As mentioned in the introduction, this poem is seen to be an epitaph to the nineteenth century. The nineteenth century witnessed obsessive nationalism and questions are raised about science. The poet imagines the dying year to be a dying man. The landscape represents the dead body of the century; the clouds above in the sky are but tomb of the dying year. The sound made by the wind is its



lamentation for the dying year. The natural impulse or urge for creation in the world of nature had come to a standstill; it has been suspended. Every creature upon earth appears as cheerless as the poet is. The lines effectively give expression to the sense of loss of hope, sense of despair that had gripped the poet at the end of the nineteenth century. The poet feels that men's lives are governed by a transcendental power that was irrational and evil in its operation.

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#### 4.5. The bird and its song

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Such a meditative mood of the poet is disturbed by the voice rising from among the branches of the trees; it was a song from the bird thrush. The song comes in full - throated as an evening song flung upon the growing sadness in the country; the joy of the bird is also unlimited. Though the bird is described as being frail, weak, gaunt and having lost its wings, being bowed down by time, the bird is seen as determined to sing, limitless and joyfully.

SAQ. What difference do you find in the nature of the bird and its song?

SAQ. Have you come across any other person in any other poem who is weak in body but very strong in spirit?

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#### 4.6. Change in the attitudes of the poet.

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For the poet, the surroundings are gloomy. The poet cannot see any sign anywhere near or far which acts as a reason for the bird to sing in such a joy. While the bird itself is in a mood of joy, its song brings in beauty and joy to the man who is shattered and crushed. Just as in the case of the bird, it is for man to make his life better and happier.

The song of the bird, probably signifies a bidding farewell to the dying year; it also indicates some blessed hope to come in the new century. The irony is that the bird was aware of it whereas the poet lacked any knowledge. By personifying hope, he implies, it is for man to rise to the occasion, attack evil forces and surge ahead. Thus the bird brings in the poet, a change in its attitudes towards the suffering among humanity

SAQ. How do you account for the original title of the poem, 'By the century's Death bed'?

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#### 4.7. Summing up

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A reading of this unit would have suggested to you the difference in the nature of the bird and man. While the bird has hardly any reason to sing, in its song, man achieves happiness when he is lost in his thoughts, disappointment and sadness. In the description of winter, he seems to call for the cheerless feelings in man including himself. He believed in some power affecting the lives of men. After listening to the song, the words 'I was unaware', mark a significant change in his attitudes. Now he believes there is a Hope of something blessed. He is ashamed as he was unaware of it while the bird could perceive it. The realization achieved is, it is for man to change and create happiness for himself.

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#### Annotations:

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Explain with reference to the context the following lines.

5. □. The tangled bine-stems scored the sky  
like strings of broken lyres
2. Had chosen thus to fling his soul  
Upon the growing gloom.
5. □. Some blessed Hope, where of he knew  
And I was unaware.

---

#### Questions:

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Answer the following.

1. Account for the suitability of the two titles to the poem by Thomas Hardy.
2. How does the bird bring about the change in the attitude and mood of the poet?

\* \* \*

**UNIT -5**  
**A Prayer for My Daughter**

- W.B. Yeats

Structure:

5.0. Objectives

5.1. Introduction

5.2. Coming to know about the poet.

A Study of the poem.

5.3. Title of the poem.

5.4. Storm and Prayer

5.5. Appearance of the storm and the mood of the poet.

5.6. Qualities he wishes his daughter to have.

5.6.1. To have neither too much of beauty nor less.

5.6.2. To flourish like a tree; to spread thoughts like a linnet ; be steady  
in love like a laurel tree.

5.7. Allusions to some women

5.8. Lovable quality –

5.8.1. Definition of courtesy.

5.8.2.-Beauty doesn't count to love someone.

5.9. Allusion to Maud Gonne, her lover.

5.10. Final lesson

5.11. Anne's future home.

5.12. Summing up.

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**5.0. Objectives**

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A study of this unit should enable you to

- note the reason for the poet's anxiety to pray for someone special
- list out the qualities the poet wishes his daughter to have
- relate the purpose of referring to Helen and Aphrodite
- find out the personal element in the poem

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## 5.1. Introduction

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In this unit, you are going to read another of the English poets, viz. W.B. Yeats who was an Irish poet and dramatist. The poem 'A Poem for my Daughter' was written in 1919, soon after the birth of Yeats' daughter Anne. At that time, Yeats was living at the Norman Tower, which he owned at Thoor Ballylee in Western Ireland. The poem contains indirect references to Maud Gonne who he loved. As she married John MacBride, a major Yeats regrets for the past and desires an aristocratic civilization.

---

## 5.2. Coming to know about the poet

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William Butler Yeats (1865 – 1939) was the leading figure in the Irish literary Renaissance. He was a dramatist too. He was awarded the Nobel Prize for literature in 1923. After the foundation of the Irish free state, Yeats became a senator.

Many of his close associates such as Maud Gonne, her husband Major John MacBride, Michael Robartes, Lady Gregory were central figures in the Irish struggle for political and cultural identity. With Lady Gregory, his friend and patroness, he founded the Irish National Theatre. From his earliest poems to his last poems, he was constantly growing in vision and art. His poems are an expression of a whole and intense life. His later ironic poetry emerged in response to his personal life and the political struggle of Ireland.

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## 5.3. Title of the poem

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As the title suggests, the speaker of the poem dons the role of a father praying for the welfare of his daughter. The time of the poem suggests the birth of a daughter, Anne.

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## 5.4. Storm and prayer

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The poem begins with a storm scene. The speaker seems to reveal the fact that he is praying for the young child which is recently born because there is a great gloom in his mind. The description of the storm appears to be an effective background for the prayer considering the gloom in the speaker's mind.

SAQ. Why do you think is the poet praying? And for whom?

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### 5.5. Appearance of the storm and the mood of the poet.

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The storm which appears to have originated from the Atlantic, has its influence on Gregory's wood, (the wood surrounding the estate of Lady Gregory, Yeats' friend and patroness), on the haystack and the roof of the house ; the harsh wind razes everything to the ground in its fury. As the poet is walking and praying for his young child, he hears the sea wind scream upon his tower, (The Norman Tower at Thoor Ballylee), under the arches of the bridge and above the flooded stream. In a state of being lost in dreamy thoughts, he rises, violently excited, imagining that the future years had come out of the murderous innocence of the sea.

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### 5.6. Qualities he wishes his daughter to have

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5.6.1. The poem continues as the poet undertakes to give us a list of the qualities he wishes his daughter to have. He prays that his daughter may be granted with neither too much of beauty nor with less. He is aware of the hazards of beauty. Granted with beauty over and above the sufficient quantity, the poet fears one may lose kindness as also the heart-revealing intimacy by which one can never find a friend.

SAQ. Why doesn't the poet want his daughter to have too much beauty?

The poet alludes to women who are very beautiful but have made unwise choices. Helen, chosen by Paris as the most beautiful woman, found her married life to Menelaus flat and dull and ran away with Paris only to experience much trouble. Fatherless Aphrodite, the great Queen deceived Vulcan, the ugliest of

the Gods, to whom she got married. The speaker feels that these fine women, who acted crazy, made the Horn of plenty bestowed on them, empty.

Horn of plenty: the symbol of abundance.

Helen: Helen of Troy who was married to Menelaus was carried away by Paris.

Queen Aphrodite: also named Venus, the Goddess of beauty. She married Hephaestus (Vulcan), the ugliest of the Gods but was unfaithful to him.

SAQ. What is common to Helen and Aphrodite?

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## 5.8. Lovable Quality.

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5.8.1. The poet would like his daughter to learn perfectly well about what courtesy is, which is considered the chief of all virtues. She must know hearts are not had as a gift, but hearts are earned by those people who are not entirely beautiful.

5.8.2. Many a man, the poet feels who were attracted to the most beautiful women, who had roved, loved and thought themselves beloved of those women, have been made wise, by the charm of glad kindness of not so beautiful women. So that they cannot take their eyes off such women. Thereby the poet makes it clear that one must have lovable qualities in order to be loved and beauty does not count.

5.8.3. The poet, the father refers to objects of nature such as the tree, a linnet and a green laurel and wishes that his daughter may achieve their good qualities and their unchanging nature. He wishes her to flourish like a tree whose beauties are hidden; all her lovable qualities should spread like the linnet whose business is but to dispense the magnanimities of sound and be steady in love rooted to one place like a green laurel tree.

SAQ. List the qualities the father wishes his daughter to have.

The poet regrets that his mind has dried up though he has loved the loveliest woman, Maud Gonne. He cannot love her anymore as he has been deceived by her for ever. The poet experiences a heavy blow inflicted upon him which fact he is unable to reconcile. Yet the poet feels that he should not show any signs of hatred because it is the chief of all evils. He refers to a linnet which can withstand any kind of blow, because it has a mind without hatred.

SAQ. Comment on the comparison made by the speaker to a mind without hatred.

---

### 5.9. Allusion to Maud Gonne, her lover

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The poet desires his daughter to think that opinions are an annoyance because they lead to intellectual hatred. He alludes to his former lady love, Maud Gonne who with her stubborn mind has thrown away the plenty's horn by choosing Mac Bride, whom Yeats thought, was a man of mere words and no action.

SAQ. Who has thrown away horn's plenty in stubbornness?

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### 5.10. Final lesson

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The Final lesson to be learnt is to drive away all hatred when the soul recovers innocence and learns to be delightful in spite of any kind of blow. One has to believe in Heaven's will. The poet feels the daughter can remain happy though many may express anger and hatred against her.

SAQ. How can the soul recover its innocence?

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### 5.11. Anne's future home

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Anne's future home as visualized by Yeats should be accustomed and ceremonious, as arrogance and hatred are items meant only to be sold in the market. He cannot but point out in certainty that innocence and beauty are born out of custom and ceremony. Ceremony is a name for the courteous and custom for the spreading laurel tree

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### 5.12. Summing up :

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The poem's title refers to a father's desire to bless his daughter with fine, lovable qualities. After describing the storm scene, the poet seems to reveal his disturbed mind, as he was praying for the welfare of his daughter.

The poet records the qualities to be acquired by his daughter viz. she should be endowed with neither too much beauty nor too less, as also to acquire the unchanging nature of a tree, a linnet and a laurel ; besides these a lovable quality and a mind without hatred because it is the chief of all evils.

By alluding to women like Helen, Queen Aphrodite and Maud Gonne, he emphasizes the fact that women shouldn't be hasty in making choices. He hopes his daughter would keep herself happy keeping at bay any kind of hatred or anger arising from others. The final wish is her future home must be accustomed and ceremonious.



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## Annotations:

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Explain with reference to the context the following lines:

- 1) Helen being chosen found life flat and dull  
And later had much trouble from a fool.
- 2) While that great Queen, that rose out of the spray,  
Being fatherless could have her way  
Yet chose a bandy legged smith for a man.
- 3) Hearts are not had as a gift but hearts are earned  
By those that are not entirely beautiful;
- 4) Have I not seen the loveliest woman born  
Out of the mouth of Plenty's horn,  
Because of her opinionated mind  
Barter that horn

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## Questions:

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- 1) What is the poet's prayer for his daughter?
- 2) What qualities would Yeats want his daughter to have and why?

\* \* \*

**UNIT -6**  
**The Unknown Citizen (To JS/07/M/378 This marble is  
erected by the State)**

-Wystan Hugh Auden.

Structure:

6.0. Objectives

6.1. Introduction

6.2. Coming to know about the poet.

A Study of the poem.

6.3. Subtitle

6.4. The citizen in the State's view.

6.4.1. The Bureau of Statistics – a saint ; a true man with good  
conduct.

6.4.2. The Social psychology workers – very popular with his mates

6.4.3. The press – a normal man.

6.4.4. fully insured man ; a healthy man ; true to his duties.

6.4.5. On the domestic side – possessed all essential things ; a man  
with 5 children. Children's school – no complaints.

6.4.6. No individuality to a citizen ; state believes a man thinking of  
freedom and happiness, an unusual man.

6.5. Summing up.

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## 6.0. Objectives

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After a study of the poem, you can probably

- observe how the poet satirises the Government by taking up for discussion a model citizen
- understand the poet's concern about the citizen
- sympathise with the citizen who loses his individuality

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## 6.1. Introduction

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'The Unknown Citizen' is a poem by W.H. Auden, a Twentieth century English poet. The speaker exposes the so called benevolent policies of the

government and holds them to ridicule. It was published in 1940. It refers to the citizens who have to conform to rules and regulations in the state thereby losing their individuality.

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## 6.2. Coming to know about the poet.

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W.H. Auden (1907-1973) is one of the most versatile and prolific poets of the century. He is ranked next to T.S. Eliot. He is known for his poetry of social protest. He was sensitive to the social and political problems of the twentieth century. He was concerned about the citizen who was subjected to a series of controls by the State or the Government.

---

## 6.3. Subtitle

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The poet satirically refers to the idea of maintaining records to measure as man in this modern industrialised urban society. In Europe every citizen is referred by a number. He is counted as a mere number rather than as an individual who has a mind of his own. The subtitle of the poem is a number by which an unknown citizen is known in the State.

SAQ. The number in the subtitle shows the citizen to be a) with individuality b) without individuality
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## 6.4. The Citizen in the State's view

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The speaker gives information about the unknown citizen in a tongue in cheek tone. He presents the way how a citizen is seen from the point of view of the state.

6.4.1. The Bureau of Statistics finds the unknown citizen to be a true man with good conduct; in the modern sense, he was considered a saint as he follows all the rules in an industrialised, urban society. There is no official complaint against him. Neither is there a complaint against him from the employers of Fudge Motors Inc where he is employed. Nor is he found to be against the union of which he is a member. He does his work and serves the State.

SAQ. Why is the unknown citizen considered a saint? Is he a saint in the normal sense of the term?

6.4.2. The Social Psychology workers who have assessed his mental health report he was very popular with his mates and likes a drink now and then. They are satisfied because he doesn't show any individual traits.

6.4.3. The press who are yet another influential group in the State are convinced that he is good as he bought a paper everyday and his reactions to advertisements are normal that is as they have expected.

6.4.4. Besides these, following the general trend, he is fully insured with policies in his name; though his health-card shows he was in hospital, later reports say, he left it cured. When there is peace, he is for it; when there is war, he went suggesting his nature of being true to his duties of the State. He is also sensible to the policies of the installment plan

6.4.5. On the domestic side, he is furnished with all necessary things like a tape - recorder, a radio, a car, a frigidaire etc whether he require them or not. He is married and has five children, which number is approved to be the right number for his generation by the Eugenist. At the children's school, teachers report he is good for he has never interfered with the children's education.

SAQ. List out the qualities of a citizen as enumerated by the representative of the state.

Do you think whether the unknown citizen has any individual opinion on any matter?

6.4.6. In a state controlled set up, the state expects every citizen to conform to their social, economic and commercial policies. To them, a citizen has no individuality and to ask such questions as 'Was he free?' 'Was he happy?' appear

absurd because it is assumed by the State that all its policies are for the benefit of the citizen only and all of them indeed bring good for the citizen.

Thus, the poet ironically suggests in modern industrial society where the quality of a model citizen is anonymity and conformity to rules, a man who thought of freedom and happiness is an unusual man and is considered a threat to the society. He may face, the poet suggests, punishment for thinking differently or not conforming to the government's policies.

SAQ. Who considers the questions 'was he free? Was he happy?' as absurd? Why?

---

## 6.5. Summing up

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In this poem; 'The Unknown Citizen' W.H. Auden satirically counts the qualities a citizen is expected to have in a state controlled set up. The poet exposes the various institutions and methods used by the State to force its subjects to live mechanically without individuality or freedom. A citizen is considered a model citizen only if he remains an insignificant individual just the number given to him.

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### Annotations:

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Explain with reference to the context the following lines.

1. Except for the war till the day he retired  
He worked in a factory and never got fired
2. Had anything been wrong, we should certainly have heard.

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### Questions:

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- 1) Consider 'The Unknown Citizen' as a satire.
- 2) Why does the State consider the unknown citizen a model one?

\* \* \*

## UNIT -7

### Night of the Scorpion

- Nissim Ezekiel

Structure:

7.0. Objectives

7.1. Introduction.

7.2. Coming to know about the poet.

A Study of the Poem.

7.3. Childhood memories of the mother's suffering

7.4. Movement of the Scorpion.

7.5. Reactions of the peasants.

7.6. The peasant's belief.

7.7. Prayers of the village to reconcile the mother.

7.8. Actions around mother.

7.9. Different reactions to the mother's suffering.

7.10. Relief to everyone.

7.11. Mother's reaction.

7.12. Summing up.

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### 7.0. Objectives

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After a study of the poem, you can

- Appreciate the unity among the villagers in the cause of a domestic situation
- Understand the typical Indian situation
- Learn the typical quality of a mother or other elders to bless their children and wish that no harm comes to them.
- Probe deeper into the superstitions and their effect on various situations in your household.
- Know various reactions to a situation of pain and suffering.

---

## 7.1. Introduction.

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Earlier you have read poems written by six English poets. This unit introduces you to a poem by one of the most distinguished of Indian English poets, Nissim Ezekiel.

This poem 'Night of the Scorpion' describes different reactions to a mother stung by a scorpion. Here the poet presents a typical Indian situation involving an entire community in a domestic tragedy. Superstitions, rituals and practices are enacted to drive away the evil spirit. The significance of the poem lies in the love of the mother to feel happy that the scorpion has not stung her children but it has picked on her.

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## 7.2. Coming to know about the poet.

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Nissim Ezekiel (1924- 2004) occupies an important place among the Indian English poets who have occupied the limelight after the Second World War. He worked and retired as professor of English in Bombay University.

Poetry became his dominant passion in his life upon which he worked seriously, though he showed interest in the theatre and visual arts as well. His poems show the complexity of the present day civilization as he perceived it in the Indian scene.

His other poetic collections include 'The Exact Name' (1965), The Unfinished Man (1960) Hymns in Darkness (1976) and Latter - Day Psalms (1982). The last collection won him the Sahitya Academy Award.

### A Study of the Poem.

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## 7.3. Childhood memories of the mother's suffering

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The child recalls to his mind the night his mother was stung by a scorpion. The child who is grown up now is the speaker of the poem. The adult speaker remembers a childhood experience.

SAQ. The speaker of the poem is

- a) a child
- b) an adult

---

#### 7.4. Movement of the scorpion

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It is a rainy night. The scorpion hides beneath a sack of rice before stinging the mother and after attacking her, it crawls into the open space.

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#### 7.5. Reactions of the peasants

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The villagers come to the speaker's home like swarms of flies and buzz the name of God to ward off the evil. They search for the scorpion with candles and lanterns making giant scorpion shadows on the walls. They feel the presence of the scorpion everywhere. Such a reaction from the peasants is indicative of their feelings of sympathy with the victim and their commitment to help fellow human beings during a calamity.

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#### 7.6. The peasants' belief

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The peasants believe the more the scorpion moved, the more the poison moved into the mother's blood. So, they click their tongues in disappointment when they do not find the scorpion.

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#### 7.7. Prayers of the villagers to reconcile the mother.

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In their sympathy for the suffering mother the villagers go on to utter various statements as to reconcile the mother to her tragedy to bear the pain calmly. They wish the scorpion to stay still. They console the mother saying that the sins of her previous birth will be burnt away by her suffering. They also wish that the suffering caused to the mother should decrease the misfortunes of her next birth; They say by her suffering, the sum of good and evil in the world would balance; in addition to all this, they say that it would diminish her spirit of ambition and her flesh of desire would be purified.

SAQ. Refrain refers to the oft repeated lines of a song or poem. Point out the refrain in the poem.

SAQ. How do the villagers try to console the mother?



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## 7.8. Actions around mother

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All the actions are centered around the mother as she groans with pain on the mat: More neighbours come with more candles and more lanterns while rain pours down heavily. The mother lay groaning on a mat none of the suggestions working to relieve her of the pain.

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## 7.9. Different reactions to the mother's suffering

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While, on the one hand, the villagers react in this way to the scorpion stinging the mother, on the other, the father reacts differently; he is a sceptic, a rationalist who wants to be guided by reason alone. Yet, when he sees the mother in such pain, he tries every powder, mixture, herb and medicine to cure the sting and pain caused by the poison entering the mother's blood. He even pours paraffin on the bitten part and puts fire to it, thus causing unbearable pain to the victim. The child becomes a silent spectator watching the flame feeding on the mother; the father also brings a holy man to perform the rites setting aside his scepticism for once.

SAQ. Do you consider the father treating harshly the mother's suffering because he is different from the villagers?

---

## 7.10. Relief to everyone

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The villagers, the child and the father heave a sigh of relief when the sting is lost after 24 hours on its own after running its natural course.

SAQ. When was the sting lost? Have the various remedies worked to bring it down?

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### 7.11. Mother's reaction.

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At last, one shouldn't be surprised to observe the mother's reaction when she declares that she feels happy and thanks God that the scorpion picked her and her children have been spared from the sting proving herself to be a typical mother.

SAQ. Why does the mother feel so happy?

In the poem, the mother's unstinted love for her children is contrasted with the actions and reactions of the father and the villagers. Ultimately, the poem seems to suggest before suffering, rational or irrational faith does not stand. It is love, here the love of the mother alone seem to sustain human beings through suffering and tragedy.

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### 7.12. Summing up

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The poem assumes significance from the fact that it describes a typical Indian situation in a language close to that of ordinary speech. The situation refers to the various reactions of the child, the father and the villagers to the mother's suffering when she is stung by a scorpion. Every method the villagers try to cure her, their belief in superstitions, their prayers to God, their trials to reconcile her to the situation, all contribute to the feeling of oneness, a unity created among the villagers during a domestic tragedy. Though the father is projected as a sceptic, a rationalist, he also tries to share the feelings of others and acts accordingly ; it is a situation which the villagers readily accept as it cannot be prevented from happening.

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## Annotations:

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Explain with reference to the context the following lines

1. Parting with his poison - flash  
Of diabolic tail in the dark room
2. With candles and with lanterns  
throwing giant scorpion shadows  
on the sun - baked walls
3. on the floor with my mother in the centre the peace of understanding on  
each face.

---

## Questions:

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Answer the following in about 200-300 words

1. Describe the different reactions to a mother stung by a scorpion.
2. What does the poet want to present through the episode of the mother being stung by the scorpion?

\* \* \*

## UNIT -8

# Telephone Conversation

- Wole Soyinka

Structure:

8.0. Objectives

8.1. Introduction

8.2. Coming to know about the poet.

A Study of the Poem.

8.3. An African's search for a house in London.

8.4. Exposure to racial discrimination.

8.5. The African - helpless.

8.6. The silence

8.7. Sound across the phone

8.8. Feeling of shame.

8.9. Attempt to describe his complexion.

8.10. Summing up.

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### 8.0. Objectives

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After a study of the poem, you should be able to

- pick out the basic problem that is treated in the poem
- pick out the words or lines which describe the character of the lady
- understand the part played by the African in conversing with the lady

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### 8.1. Introduction

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After a study of the poem by one of the Indian English poets, now you would be studying a poem titled 'Telephone Conversation' by Wole Soyinka, a Nigerian. On the surface, the title may suggest to you something simple and amusing. However, a closer look at it, would reveal a deeper meaning; it presents an unpleasant situation in the west, namely, racial discrimination to which the Africans are exposed and due to which they lose their individuality. Let us read the poem to see how the poet succeeds in driving home his point.

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## 8.2. Coming to know about the poet.

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Wole Soyinka (1934 -) is a playwright, actor, producer, teacher and poet born in Nigeria. He was born in Nigeria. He was jailed for two years during the Nigerian civil war of the late 1960s. He contributed much to the development of the Nigerian theatre in which he presents the imposition of western civilisation on Africa, the effect of which is felt by the Africans. Much of his work has reflections of his own political involvement and concerns. Soyinka's poetry is collected in 'Idanre'(1967). The themes include the corruption of men in high places, as well as injustice and exploitation; also from Nigerian folklore and mythology.

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## 8.3. An African's search for a house in London

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The situation that is dealt with in the poem is that of an African searching for a house for rent in London. He telephones to the landlady to know the details of the house. The significant point to note here is that the poet doesn't pay a personal visit to see the house or talk to the lady.

Through the telephone conversation the poet comes to know that the rent fixed for the house is rather reasonable and the location neither good nor bad, just indifferent. The land lady does not live there too

SAQ. What are the very attractive aspects of the house for rent?

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## 8.4. Exposure to racial discrimination

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When the African speaks to the landlady over phone, she puts a volley of questions to make sure that his identity - whether he is black or white. "How dark? .....Are you light or dark"?

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## 8.5. The poet - helpless

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The poet finding himself in a situation of disguised discrimination confesses that he is an African and that he hates a wasted journey ; the point to note is he doesn't want to pay a visit and face the insult personally. In the words " I hate a wasted journey" indicates that such a discrimination is not an isolated instance but quite a common experience for an African in England.

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## 8.6. The Silence

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The silence which follows this conversation informs the reader of the land lady's nature of racial prejudice. Though she may be of good breeding and assume good manners over the phone. It implies that she has second thoughts about giving a house to an African. The poet could easily visualize the white woman with so called sophistication, educated lipstick coated lips and a cigarette in a holder talking to him on the other end.

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## 8.7. Sound across the phone

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Later, a voice is heard over the phone. It was her voice indicating her intentions. She once again asked him how dark or how light he was.

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## 8.8. Feeling of shame

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Speaking from the red public telephone, the poet feels bad and ashamed over such a kind of treatment meted out to him. He is placed in a fix whether to cut off the phone connection. Soon changes his mind, continues the conversation to drive home to her insensitivity.

SAQ. In India also people face various forms of discrimination. Imagine yourself to be in the place of the poet. Explain in what different situation you would be placed in.

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## 8.9. Trials to describe his complexion

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The conversation which continues next reveals the landlady's anxiety to know exactly how dark or how light the African was, and on the part of the African to convince her. In a sarcastic tone the poet says that he is neither dark nor light. The poet's use of images to describe colour add to his reasons to confirm his complexion. He explains to her that facially, he is of the colour of brunette. As for the palm of his hand and soles of his feet, are a peroxide blonde. The humour rests in describing his bottom which is of raven black colour, which has turned out so, because of friction caused by sitting down. As the poet senses that the lady would slam the receiver, the poet humorously and sarcastically suggests to the landlady that it is better if she could see for herself, if still there is a need, after his explanation to her about the colour of his palm and soles of his feet. The sarcasm in the tone of the poet reveals the anger he has at the discrimination shown covertly by the so called polite and educated whites in England.

SAQ. What are the images used to describe colour?

What is the effect of using the images?

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## 8.10. Summing up

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In this unit, you have read the poem 'Telephone Conversation' by Wole Soyinka. The poem deals with a situation wherein an African wants to rent a house in London. The landlady expresses her fears and doubts about the complexion of the African. Though the African feels bad and ashamed at the ill treatment and wished to end the conversation. So, he describes his complexion to her in such sarcastic tones as if to make her as well as the readers aware of his hurt at such colour discrimination. The poem, on the surface, is an amusing one.

Yet the deeper meaning signifies the feeling of racial discrimination - resorted to by the landlady, thereby revealing her character. The poet also succeeds in driving home his anger and hurt.

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### Annotations

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Explain with reference to the context the following lines.

- 1 .....Shamed  
By ill-mannered silence, surrender  
Pushed dumbfounded to beg simplification.
- 2 .....Voice, when it came,  
Lipstick coated, long gold - rolled  
cigarette - holder pipped
- 3 ..... 'Madam'  
I pleaded, 'wouldn't you rather see for yourself?'

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### Questions

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Answer the following question in about 100 words

1. Explain the situation the African was placed in and how he managed it. 2.  
Explain the basic problem that is treated in the poem.

\* \* \*



## BLOCK TWO

(THREE ONE - ACT PLAYS -ED. C.MAHAJAN.)

### UNIT -9:

## THE BISHOP'S CANDLESTICKS

- Norman Mckennel.

Structure:

9.0. Objectives.

9.1. Introduction

9.2. About the author.

A Study of the Play.

9.3. Scene of action

9.4. Broad classification of the play.

9.4.1. Persome and Marie's conversation.

9.4.2. The arrival of the Bishop, later the convict and the events that follow

9.4.3. The conversation between the Bishop and the convict.

9.5. Summing up.

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### 9.0. Objectives

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A reading of this unit, a one -act play should enable you to

- understand the theme of the play
- appreciate the Bishop's role and character who treats the convict in a different way
- contrast the characters of Persome and the Bishop
- gather information about the convict why he dons that role

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### 9.1. Introduction

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This unit, a one -act play 'The Bishops' Candlesticks' by Norman Mckennel introduces you to a theme where a really good man influences a convict to feel 'as if he were a man again and not a wild beast'. The play has the main character of a Bishop and two subsidiary characters Persome and sergeant, who treat the convict in the way the world normally treats him.

A one -act play normally has, as the name implies, only one act, with one or more scenes. It also has only a few characters who play their role close to the theme of the play.

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## 9.2. About the author

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Mr. Norman Mckennel is both an actor and a dramatist, but it is as an actor that he is principally known. ‘The Bishop’s Candlesticks’ is an adaptation from the opening chapters of Victor Hugo’s celebrated novel ‘Les Miserables’.

### A Study of the Play.

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## 9.3. Scene of action

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It takes place in the Kitchen of the Bishop’s Cottage. Persome, the widowed sister of the Bishop is seen taking the help of Marie, a maid servant to maintain the fire and prepare the soup.

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## 9.4. Broad classification of the play.

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### 9.4.1 Conversation between Persome and Marie.

Through the conversation between these two characters, Persome comes to understand that the Bishop has gone to see Marie’s mother Mere Gringoire who was ill and also in need of money to pay the rent. Her owner had pestered her to pay it which she was not able to. Persome, Bishop’s sister, feels that Marie’s mother is not so ill as to make the Bishop stay on with her on such a cold night. She believes that people like her pretend to be ill to have the Bishop call on them; also accuses her of being too lazy to work. The fact that the bishop has sold the salt-cellars to help the old lady is also revealed to us through the conversation.

SAQ. What did the Bishop sell too help Marie’s Mother?

SAQ. We have not seen the Bishop personally on the stage yet. But from the conversation what do you think of the Bishop?

Observe Persome's objection to the Bishop helping the old lady. She acts as normally as any other person in the society, who wishes to be economical and save money and property. In contrast, the Bishop dons his role, and acts as a true bishop, sensing other people's problems and helping them in times of need. In this Scene, you can observe that the Bishop hasn't yet entered the stage. Yet the author allows us to analyse his character.

9.4.2. The arrival of the Bishop, later the convict and the events that follow.

The second section of the play can be taken to be the arrival of the Bishop at the kitchen of his house. Persome reacts angrily to him after offering him a cup of soup. She is upset that the salt-cellars have been sold. She complains that if the Bishop goes on selling the items one after another to help the suffering, they would be left with nothing later. Her argument is that the Bishop's estate has already been sold; his savings and furniture have gone; moreover, she has her own fears that the Bishop might next sell the silver candlesticks, the only precious item left with them.

SAQ. Why is Persome angry with her brother? Is her anger natural?

The Bishop confesses to his actions and promises her that he would not sell the silver candlesticks as it was his mother's death-bed wish; however, he feels it is a sin to store them by without using them, if a necessity arises to help the suffering. Persome believes charity should begin at home insisting on the fact that the Bishop never thinks of the suffering he causes to those who love him best, thereby referring to the suffering he causes to her and the love shown by her.

SAQ. What was the death-bed wish of the Bishop's mother? What are his feelings about it?

The Bishop explains to his sister that he had no money to help Mere Gringoire. Therefore he had to sell the salt-cellars. He tries to convince his sister that one can eat salt out of china also.

Later, the sister retires to her bed bidding goodnight to her brother. The Bishop, stirs the fire, and settles down to read. Here the convict enters the Bishop's cottage stealthily. He seizes the bishop from behind and threatens him with a knife and warns him not to call out for help.

The Bishop unruffled by this sudden development only offers to help him and sees no reason as to why he should call out for help. The convict is taken by surprise at this gesture of the Bishop as no one has ever shown him any kindness and sympathy earlier. The Bishop offers him food also. He calls for his sister to help the convict with the food. She fears that the stranger may take away their only precious articles- silver candle sticks. Though she has her own fears about the convict, at the Bishop's command, she helps him with the food. Later, she retires to her bed again.

SAQ. Why was the convict surprised by the Bishop's behaviour?

#### 9.4.3. Conversation between the Bishop and the convict.

This forms the final section of the play. Here, the convict reveals the circumstances that led him to such a state of affairs; He was not a criminal by nature. He was just a poor man who was in despair. While he was trying to thieve

in order to feed his dying wife, he was caught unawares by the police and put behind the bars suggesting he was innocent. Later, he comes to know through the gaoler his wife Jeanette was dead.

SAQ. What circumstances lead the convict to thieve?

Before committing the theft, he felt he was a man; but later he has suffered a lot. He spent most part of his life in jail for such a petty crime and this has changed him a lot too. He feels he is not a human being at all but is a beast. One day when the police were careless in chaining their 'wild beast', he runs free and thus lands in the Bishop's cottage. When he enters the Bishop's house, he has no qualms about thieving.

As for the Bishop he is kind and sympathetic as ever. He not only gives him food but offers him a cosy bed to sleep, after the food. The Bishop's interest in the thief is to save his soul. But the convict is neither interested in such things nor in religion and church. He doesn't believe in Faith, Hope and Charity.

Surprisingly, after the Bishop goes to bed, the thief plays true to his character and escapes after stealing the silver candlesticks from the Bishop's cottage. This fact comes alive as Persome wakes up on hearing the sound created at the door.

SAQ. Who fears about the convict's actions? Does it come true?

The Bishop even now does not complain. He reconciles to the fact that the convict needs the candlesticks more than him and feels that his mother too would have wished the same if she had been alive.

In the morning, a Sergeant arrives at the Bishop's house along with the convict, to return the candlesticks to him and arrest the thief as he recognises the candlesticks to be the Bishop's. The Bishop understanding the situation, in which the thief is caught, helps him from being arrested by informing the Sergeant that the convict is his friend; he has only given the candlesticks to his friend. He also informs him that the convict has dined with him the previous night.

At this, the Sergeant expresses his apology to the Bishop and retires. This act of the Bishop comes in as a shock to the convict and Persome. Persome regards the convict as a blackguard to steal from his own benefactor. Ignorant of the realization of his wrongs by the convict as result of the Bishop's generosity, she reacts harshly and wishes to leave the room by taking the candlesticks with her.

Observe here the Bishop's actions. He commands Persome to leave the candlesticks behind when she leaves the room. He readily offers once again a bed to the convict in spite of what has happened the previous night. The Bishop makes him believe there is still good in the world ; as he was in hell for many years. Realising the mistake on his part, he expects the Bishop to bless him so that he could get to Paris, where he can be lost; where no one can find him and recognize him for a thief. He takes this decision as there is none to love and care for him.

Observe the nature of the Bishop to refer to the candlesticks as the convict's property. He suggests to him they may be useful to him in future. The Bishop's kindness, polite behaviour and charity allow the convict to realise and feel as if he were a man once again and not a wild beast. The Bishop's last words - 'Remember that this poor body is the Temple of the living God', acts as a blessing upon the convict. He sinks upon his knees and bows his head in prayer and leaves the Bishop's cottage a changed man.

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## 9.5. Summing up

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After studying the three broad classifications of the play, you would be able to understand the Bishop to be a man who acts as a man who has the patience

to probe deeper into the convict's actions, and the charity to treat him as an ordinary member of the society, making him feel as if he was a man and not a wild beast. Persome, on the other hand, reacts in an unkind and impolite manner on the visit of the convict to her house; she treats the convict in the way a normal citizen would treat him because she bothers about her future and her well-being rather than the welfare of the suffering humanity around her.

According to the Bishop, he begins 'charity at home' by helping and saving the convict from going to jail again. But for Persome, 'charity at home' refers to the love to be shown by the Bishop to those who love him best, namely, the love to be bestowed upon her.

The thief is a poor man unable to support his dying wife. In a moment of desperation he steals to feed his wife. But in the process he is caught and put to jail. Though a petty offence he is treated harshly. People do not try to know him and sympathise with his plight. They do not trust him and always suspect him, calling him a beast. Through the jailer's wife he comes to know about his wife's death. The antipathy he faces from the society and his wife death make him forget that once he was a man. The sympathy and understanding that he gets from the makes him realize that he was a man and change for the better.

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### Questions:

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1. Bring out the theme of the play "The Bishop's Candlesticks" through a character study of the Bishop.
2. Comment on the attitude of Persome towards the convict.

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## UNIT - 10

# The Monkey's Paw

- W.W. Jacobs

### Structure

#### 10.0. Objectives

#### 10.1. Introduction

#### 10.2. About the Author

#### 10.3. Father and son at the chessboard

#### 10.4. Arrival of the Sergeant and the narration of the stories

2.4.1. About a man with no clothes on him; a fakir who vanished

2.4.2. About the monkey's paw

#### 10.5. Herbert

2.5.1. His profession

2.5.2. His beliefs

#### 10.6. Use of the paw and the consequences

2.6.1. First Wish – consequence

2.6.2. Second Wish – Consequence

2.6.3. Third Wish – Consequence

#### 10.7. Summing Up

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### 10.0. Objectives

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You should be able to understand the following points from this unit

- the theme of the play
- the actions and reactions of the Whites who work with the paw in spite of the warnings from the Sergeant
- the element of horror in the play

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### 10.1. Introduction.

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In this unit, the one-act play introduces you to a situation wherein a Sergeant brings in an item of magic with a spell on it, a monkey's paw; hands it over to the Whites. Having himself experienced the monkey's paw's reactions, he



fears what might happen if the Whites made a wish with the paw. The theme to be understood is whether or not the hands of a supernatural element are involved in the reactions arising out of the Whites using the monkey's paw.

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## 10.2. About the author

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The Late W.W. Jacobs is known chiefly as a writer of short-stories. 'The Monkey's Paw' was put up on the stage as a play. Many of his stories are very suitable for adaptation into plays.

A Study of the Play

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## 10.3. Father and son at the chess board.

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As the curtain goes up, Mr. White is seen playing chess with his son, Herbert. They are sitting in the living-room of an old-fashioned cottage on the outskirts of Fulham. Constantly, Mr. White tries to divert the attention of his son by talking about the visit of Sergeant Morris, in order to win the game. However, he loses it and Herbert wins it.

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## 10.4. Arrival of the Sergeant and the narration of stories

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As expected by Mr. White, the Sergeant arrives at the house of the Whites. While having the drink offered by Mrs. White, he begins to tell them certain unusual, strange stories. Herbert is not amused for he thinks that the Sergeant is spinning stories.

10.4.1. The Sergeant tells the Whites about a fakir with no clothes on him doing magic. Herbert says that he has seen the basket trick and feels he could do better if he has the practice. But the Sergeant does not agree and continues the story how the old Fakir swarmed up a rope by throwing it into the air. The surprising thing was the rope wasn't hooked onto anything. Moreover, the Fakir vanished out of sight.

Herbert regards the Sergeant's tales of Indian magic and the fakirs, a fake. The Sergeant is hurt by Herbert's reactions. To pacify him Mr. White asks him to tell them about the monkey's paw about which he was telling sometime ago.

10.4.2. The Sergeant seems disturbed by the mention of the paw and on being coaxed by the Whites he starts telling them the horrifying and unbelievable story about the monkey's paw.

The story goes like this:

The monkey's paw, being referred to by the Sergeant, has had a spell put upon it by an old Fakir. He was a very holy man who believed that fate ruled people. By using this, three people could each have three wishes.

Unfortunately, the three people who have used the paw wished they hadn't made use of the paw, thereby indicating its negative effect. He implies it has done enough mischief on him also.

He tells them that some of the people believed the story about the paw to be a fairy-tale; while some others wished to pay him money only after having tried it first. So that, he warns the Whites not to blame him, whatever happens later after finally leaving the paw with them.

SAQ. Why was the sergeant major keeping the monkey's paw, even after he had had the three wishes granted?

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## 10.5. Herbert

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10.5.1 His profession: He works in a company which produces electrical power. He attends to his work during nights.

10.5.2 His beliefs.

As he doesn't believe either in the magic or any supernatural element playing a role in the use of the paw, he sarcastically comments about the family of the Whites becoming rich and famous and happy once they use the paw.

Surprisingly, when the father wishes with the paw, for the first time, asking for 200 pounds, a mysterious movement of the paw is witnessed by Mr. White, because it twists in his hand like a snake. Herbert considers his father's feelings to be just fancy. Moreover, he doesn't see any result arising out of wishing with the paw. So he bets with the parents he never shall see the money. Ironically, he doesn't see it as he dies in the company that night.

SAQ. Comment on Herbert's feelings of the consequences of wishing with the paw, the first time.

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## 10.6. Use of the paw and the consequences.

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10.6.1. Mr. White's First Wish with the paw is to have two hundred pounds to repay the debt pending on his house. This was suggested by Herbert. Later Herbert leaves for his work.

The next morning, the Whites receive an envelope with a receipt for interest on the mortgages of 200 pounds on their house, enclosed in it. While Mr. and Mrs. White argue over the receipt of the contents of the letter, a visitor, by name, Sampson from Herbert's Company arrives. He sorrowfully announces the death of their son, Herbert, who it was thought was caught by the machinery with which he was working; this happens, Sampson tells them, as he was telling his mates about the stories narrated by the sergeant. He also hands them over a sum of two hundred pounds as compensation for the great loss.

10.6.2. If one is to link these incidents to the using of the paw, one has to assume the influence of a supernatural element or magic in it. Yet the Whites don't seem to understand that it might probably have been the effect of using the paw. Instead to make matters worse, Mrs. White insists on her husband to think of the other two wishes which they can ask. She wishes to see her son alive again. It is quite

natural on her part as a mother to wish that way as she cannot bear any more the tragedy caused to her. Therefore she forces her husband to think of the second wish, namely to bring her son back to life again. Overcome by her insistence, he wishes his son alive keeping the paw in his right hand. Nothing happens for a while giving Mr. White some hope that the paw is not working.

As though to make the Whites believe in the role of some supernatural element, a single knock is heard on the street door. Mrs. White runs to the door to open it. Mr. White warns her not to open it as he assumes that the knock on the door is that of his son's ghost.

SAQ. Why doesn't Mr. White want Mrs. White to open the door?

He tries to argue that she couldn't bear to see the mutilated dead body of her son and how could she see the ghost. He too had recognized his son from the clothing. But his pleas are disregarded by Mrs. White.

10.6.3. When Mrs. White tries to open the door the top blot of the door gets struck. Even as she begs her husband to help her with the bolt, Mr. White frantically searched for the Monkey's paw which he had thrown away in disgust when he heard the death news of his son. He believes that it is the ghost of his son that has come, as the knocking on the door becomes more and more louder. He grabs the monkey's paw wishes for the third time that his son should remain dead and at peace.

At once, the paw's magical effect seems to work upon their son. Therefore when Mrs. White opens the door, though there was a flood of moonlight, there was only emptiness. The old man falls down on his knees as though to pray whereas the old woman swooning waits leaning against the door.

SAQ. How could we explain the last scene?

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## 10.7. Summing Up

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A study of the one-act play ‘The Monkey’s Paw’ may have suggested to you the theme involved in it. The title is apt as the subject of the whole play revolves around a monkey’s paw. It involves the influence of probably some external forces, either some supernatural elements or some magic in the use of the paw. You can probably assume from the warning given by the Sergeant the bad effects that may arise in wishing with the paw. Besides the Sergeant, three others have witnessed the reactions. Moreover, people were hesitating to buy it. In spite of these facts, Mr. White innocently receives it from the Sergeant expecting something good to happen; ironically he faces the tragic consequences of losing his only son.

The fact to be understood is, with the use of the paw the three times, the reactions felt have been worse except in the case of the reaction from the first wish where the Whites receive a receipt for 200 pounds on interest to be paid on mortgage of their house. Following this, as though to believe in the influence of some supernatural element or magic, they witness a series of losses- the tragic loss of the son, Herbert, the so called appearance of the ‘ghost’, adding to the happy expectations of the mother to receive her son, and finally the tragic disappearance of the ‘ghost’ Herbert leaving an emptiness around their lives.

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## Questions

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1. Comment on the element of horror and magic in the one act play “the Monkey’s Paw”
2. How does the Monkey’s Paw affect the lives of the Whites?

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## UNIT - 11

# The Dear Departed

-Mr. Stanley Houghton

### Structure

11.0. Objectives

11.1. Introduction

11.2. About the author

A Study of the Play.

11.3. Before the arrival of the Jordons

11.4. Arrival of the Jordans.

11.5. Victoria

11.6. Father.

11.7. Title

11.8. Summing up.

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## 11.0. Objectives

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A reading of this unit, a one - act play, should enable you to

- identify the part played by each one of the characters in the play
- compare and contrast the characters of the two sisters - Amelia and Elizabeth
- understand how the father deals with the situation wherein he is considered 'dead'

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## 11.1. Introduction

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This humorous play leads you to witness the hypocritical nature and behaviour of two sisters Mrs. Amelia Slater and Mrs. Elizabeth Jordon, daughters of Abel Merryweather. Abel Merryweather, who lives in Mrs. Slater's house, is considered 'dead' by her when he doesn't wake up when she calls him. Therefore, she indulges herself in acquiring most of the property belonging to him before the other sister arrives.

Later, the sisters get shocked and disappointed when Victoria, Mrs. Slater's daughter announces that grandpa was getting up from bed and moving about.

The father, on his part, observing the mourning dresses the sisters and their husbands have worn, and the missing things in his room, declares that he was going to live with someone who would love and care for him, thereby allowing us to understand the characters of the two sisters.

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### 11.2. About the author.

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Mr. Stanley Houghton was one of the most distinguished of English dramatists in the early years of this century. This play is based on the story of the celebrated French writer, Guy de Maupassant. It is steeped in Lancashire atmosphere.

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### 11.3. Before the arrival of the Jordans.

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When the curtain rises, Mrs. Slater is seen laying the table. She is in black, but she is not showing any feeling of being mourning. She is a vigorous, plump, red-faced vulgar woman, prepared to do any amount of straight talking to get her own way. Mrs. Slater calls her daughter, Victoria and asks her to change her dress so as to suit the mourning of the death of her grandfather, Abel Merryweather, who she considers is dead.

Mrs. Slater is married to Henry Slater. In her anxiety and tension in outshining the Jordans in their mourning dress she makes her husband wear the new slippers of 'the grandpa' or her father. Henry doesn't like the idea as the slippers do not fit him. But Mrs. Slater would not listen to it. She then plans to replace the old chest of drawers in her room with that of the new and recently bought bureau in 'grandpa's' room, before her sister turns up for mourning. When Henry suggests that Mrs. Jordon may object to it she confidently tells him that it was bought after the last visit of Mrs. Jordon so she would not recognize it to be her father's. Victoria Mrs. Slater's daughter thinks that what her mother is doing is nothing but pinching ie stealing. But Mrs. Slater silences her. As they move the furniture the Jordans arrive and Mrs. Slater warns Victoria not to open the door

till they finish the shifting and also not to tell them anything about what they have been talking about.

These actions of Mrs. Slater reveal her to be more interested in getting for herself her share of what her father possessed rather than mourning the death of her father.

SAQ. How does Mrs. Slater react to father's her 'death'?

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#### 11.4 Arrival of the Jordans:

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Mrs.Slater's sister is Elizabeth who is married to Mr. Jordan. She is a stout, complacent woman with an impassive face and an irritating air of being always right. She is wearing a complete and deadly outfit of mourning crowned by a great black hat. Ben Jordan is also in complete new mourning dress with black gown and a band round his hat. He is a jovial man who is trying to appear sad as the occasion demands.

In the discussion which ensues between the two sisters, Mrs. Slater explains to her sister that father was in good health and had gone out soon after breakfast to pay his insurance returned to rest and did not wake up from sleep. Later they discuss how to announce the death of the father in the newspapers. They argue over the lines to be published in the obituary notice in the papers to pay homage to their father. Mrs.Slater feels putting a whole poem in the obituary column would cost a lot. Then their attention shifts to the other valuables, insurance policy and furniture belonging to father. Both the sisters claim that their father had promised them the gold watch. Meanwhile young Victoria tries to tell them that the grand father did not go to pay the policy. So, both the sisters have now a fear that payment of the premium of the insurance policy would fall on them.

SAQ. Do you find Elizabeth Jordon reacting differently to father's 'death'?



news to that of Mrs. Slater? Why?

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## 11.5 .Victoria

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Victoria doesn't understand what is going on in the house. She is unable to believe the death of her grandfather. Her mother's reactions and instructions to her to wear mourning dress create a feeling of disbelief. She argues that grandpa was only drunk in the morning but not dead. Though a kid she is able to see what her parents are doing is wrong so she calls it pinching.

However, as instructed by her mother, she goes up to grandpa's room to fetch the bunch of keys of the bureau placed on grandpa's dressing table. The sisters intend to get the insurance papers from there. But to their amazement, she brings in the news that grandpa was getting up from bed and moving about.

The two sisters, their husbands stand shell- shocked to see the father moving about.

SAQ. Why was Victoria sent to grandpa's room?

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## 11.6. Father

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It takes sometime for Abel Merryweather, the father to realise what is happening. He cannot understand why they are in mourning dress. The sisters first try to bluff saying that a relative is dead. But slowly in an attempt to come closer to the father they give away each other's secrets. He comes to realise they are considering him dead and are trying to take his things away and he understands the hypocrisy behind the situation.

He watches the shifted bureau and the new clock, the new slippers in the feet of Henry; observes the nature of the daughters in wanting to look after him in turns only if he is willing to part with the property he has. He regrets that neither of them cared to put up with him. Therefore announces to them that he was going away to the Ring of the Bells to marry Mrs. John Shorrocks, who thinks it a pleasure to look after him. He also informs them that he has two other important things to do, namely, to go to the lawyer's to alter his will and to go to the insurance to pay his premium.

SAQ. How does father react to the hypocrisy as revealed by his daughters?

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### 11.7. Title

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The title suggests ironically that the father considered 'dear' and 'dead' by the daughters departs from them permanently only to live with someone who would love him and care for him thus teaching the daughters a lesson.

The comedy behind the last scene is that father thanks the Slaters for having brought the bureau downstairs as it would be handier to carry it across to the Ring of the Bells on Monday.

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### 11.8. Summing Up

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A Study of the play would have enabled you to witness the author's display of characters with a mocking eye. You could sketch the character of the Jordons and the Slaters as well as the part played by Victoria.

The situation introduced in the play is that of two daughters Amelia and Elizabeth who neither wanted to care nor put up with father in his old age. One day, the Slaters, in whose house father lives, consider him 'dead' and inform the Jordons about the death. In the mean time, they take away secretly the property from his room without being least bothered about his death, but only too happy, to acquire the things left over by him.

After the Jordans arrive, Mrs. Jordan behaves nothing short of Amelia, claiming the gold watch for her child, as also the insurance amount, among many other things.

It is only when father comes 'alive' the scene changes to one of amazement and horror. His announcement to go to the lawyers' to alter his will, to go to the insurance to pay his premium and to go to the Church to get married, only act as bitter pills to be swallowed by the two daughters, where neither of them benefit from father's property.

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### Questions:

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- 1) How does the father succeed over the actions of the two daughters who consider him dead'?
- 2) How does the playwright expose the hypocrisy of the daughters?

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## **BLOCK THREE**

### **UNIT – 12**

### **Grammar and Writing Skills**

Structure:

- 12.0. Objectives
- 12.1. Introduction
- 12.2. Active-Passive
- 12.3. Direct Speech – Indirect Speech
- 12.4. Report – Writing
- 12.5. Elaboration of Hints
- 12.6. Summing Up

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## 12.0. Objectives:

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A study of this unit should enable you to learn and understand how

- the sentences are framed
- grammatically correct sentences create meaning
- the information from first person is reported to the third person
- the actions are represented by changing the voice from active to passive and passive to active.
- the hints help you in elaborating upon a story or points.
- the whole unit helps you in the overall development of various language skills.

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## 12.1. Introduction

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This unit deals with grammar topics and some writing skills. The topics dealt with are transformation of sentences from Active-Passive and from Direct Speech - Indirect Speech. The grammar topics cater to your needs of strengthening your ability to form various structures thereby enabling you to create grammatically correct sentences; the section dealing with report - writing and elaboration of hints introduces you to the writing skills. The writing skills act as an aid in providing to you the necessary steps and assist you in the coherence of ideas and provide the means for the creation of pieces of composition.

The following are the topics:

Transformation of sentences

- Active - Passive voice
- Direct Speech - Indirect speech.
- Report - Writing
- Elaboration of hints.

Study of the Unit.

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## 12.2. ACTIVE – PASSIVE

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Let us study first how sentences said to be in Active Voice are changed into Passive Voice. You need to revise the topic on ‘Tenses’ in grammar before you learn this unit. You would be familiar with the following sentences, probably learnt in your earlier years.

a) Rama killed Ravana

b) Ravana was killed by Rama.

In sentence (a) the subject is Rama. That is, he is the agent of the action. The object, namely, the victim of the action is Ravana. While this is so, the verb (viz.the action) is said to be in the past tense. This sentence is considered to be in the Active Voice.

Observe sentence (b). This sentence is in Passive Voice. The object in sentence (a) becomes the subject in sentence (b). Though the tense is maintained, ‘was killed’ is said to be the passive verb.

To deduce the common rule for the transformation, if the verb is simple  
Past Tense in the Active Voice

Active Voice	→	Passive Voice
Verb in Simple	→	was/were +Past Participle
Past Tense		of the given verb.

12.2.1. Based on this, you can easily frame the rule, if the verb is in Simple Present Tense. It would be

Verb in Simple Present → am/is/are + Past Participle of  
of the given verb.

SAQ. We keep all our books in the classroom.  
Identify the subject and the object in the above sentence. In which tense is the verb? Now, write the sentence in the passive voice.

12.2.2. Look at the following sentences:

- c) Pradeep has already paid the carpenter.
- d) The uncle had looked after the little girl well.

The following would be the answer to sentence

(c) The carpenter has been paid already by Pradeep.

You could try transforming sentence (d) into passive voice. Follow the procedure as above.

SAQ. Identify the subject, object, the verb and its tense in sentence (d).

To deduce the common rule.

Present Perfect → has/have +been +Past

Tense Participle of the given verb

Past Perfect Tense → had+been+p.p.of the given verb.

12.2.3. Observe some more sentences and note different tenses of the verbs.

- e) Ramesh is publishing a new book.
- f) The students were shifting the tables to another room.

In sentence (e), the verb is in Present Continuous tense.

In sentence (f), the verb is Past Continuous tense.

As before, after identifying the subjects and the objects, transform them using the following rule.

Present Continuous Tense → am/is/are + being + p.p.of  
the given verb

Past Continuous Tense → was/were+being+ p.p.of  
the given verb.

SAQ. Now following the rule given above transform the sentences (e) and (f)

12.2.4. Watch for yet another rule if the verb is an auxiliary verb or an infinitive.

Then, in such cases, follow the rule given below:

The structure of the verb in Passive Voice would be:

may/ might/

can / could

shall / should

will / would + be + the past participle of

must the given verb

ought to

to + verb

SAQ. Change the following sentences into Passive Voice.

1. People gave the queen a warm welcome.
2. They are telling the new students where to sit.
3. The manager was scolding the clerk.
4. The Inspector will ask you many questions.
5. Someone must repair the car.

6. Nobody has answered my questions properly.
7. The Chief Minister had opened the exhibition.
8. The workers clean the streets everyday.

12.2.5. Look at the following sentences:

- g) They have given him a warm welcome
- h) My uncle has promised me a birthday gift.

Each of these sentences above has two objects. In sentence (g), 'him' and 'a warm welcome' are objects.

In sentence (h) 'me' and 'a birth day gift' are objects.

Applying the rules learnt earlier in the section, both objects can be converted into subjects in the passive voice, and thereby create two answers. 'me' and 'him' are called personal objects.

Sentences (g) and (h) in Passive Voice would be:

- (g) He has been given a warm welcome.  
A warm welcome has been given to him.
- (h) I have been promised a birthday gift by my uncle.  
A birth day gift has been promised by my uncle.

SAQ. Transform the following sentences into passive Voice using the personal object as the subject:

1. Someone has lent her a tape-recorder.
2. They gave me no money.
3. The college will give you a prize.
4. I have asked you a straight question.



5. We should give him some help.
6. The officer offered her a lift.
7. This institute gives foreign students English lessons.
8. Hari showed me how to do the work.
9. Ravi told me the news.
10. The film star donated the college lot of money.

#### 12.2.6. Active Voice - Passive Voice.

##### The Voices - At a Glance

Tenses	Active Voice	Passive Voice
Simple present	Verb <b><u>with/without 's'</u></b> Eg. Kills, catch, grow, drinks, eats.	<b><u>Am/is/are + past participle of the verb.</u></b> Eg. is Killed, am caught, are grown, is drunk, are eaten.
Simple past	<b><u>Verb in the Past Tense</u></b> Eg. Killed, Caught, grown, were eaten.	<b><u>Was/were+p.p of the Verb</u></b> Eg. was Killed, was caught, grew, drank, etc.
Present Continuous	<b><u>Am/is/are/-ing form of</u></b> Eg. am killing, is catching, are growing, is eating.	<b><u>Am/is/are+being+ p.p.of the the verb</u></b> Eg. was being killed, were being caught, was being grown.
Past Continuous	<b><u>Was/were+-ing form of the verb.</u></b> Eg. was killing, were catching, was eating.	<b><u>Was/were + being + p.p.of the verb</u></b> Eg. was being killed, were being caught, was being eaten.
Present perfect	<b><u>Has/have+p.p.of the verb</u></b> Eg. has killed. have caught, has eaten	<b><u>has/have+been+p.p.of the verb</u></b> Eg. has been killed. have

Past perfect	<b><u>Had + p.p. of the verb</u></b> Eg .had killed, had caught, had eaten	been caught, has been eaten. <b><u>had+been +p.p.of the verb.</u></b> Eg. had been killed. Had been caught. had been eaten.
Simple future/ Modal/ Infinitives	<b>Will/would</b> <b>Shall /should +Present tense form of</b> <b>Can/could</b> <b>May/might</b> <b>Ought to, to + verb</b> Eg. Will kill. shall catch. Can eat , ought to grow.	<b>Will/would</b> <b>Shall/should +be+pp.of the verb</b> <b>Can/could</b> <b>May/might the verbs</b> <b>Ought to. to+verb</b> Eg. will be killed. shall be caught. can be eaten. ought to be grown.

Read these examples and understand the topic well.

Tenses	Active Voice	Passive Voice
Simple Present	The priest <u>reads</u> the Ramayana. The police <u>catch</u> the thief	The Ramayana is read by the priest. The thief <u>is caught</u> by the police
Simple past	The priest <u>read</u> the Ramayana. The police <u>caught</u> the thief	The Ramayana <u>was read</u> by the priest. The thief <u>was caught</u> by the police.
Present continuous	The priest <u>is reading</u> the Ramayana. The police <u>are catching</u> the thief	The Ramayana is being read by the priest. The thief is being caught by the police
Past continuous	The priest <u>was reading</u> the Ramayana. The police <u>were the catching</u> thief	The Ramayana <u>was being read</u> by the priest. The thief <u>was being caught</u> by the police
Present perfect	The priest <u>has read</u> the Ramayana. The police <u>have caught</u> the thief.	The Ramayana <u>has been read</u> the priest. The thief <u>has been caught</u> by the police.
Past perfect	The priest <u>had read</u> the Ramayana. The police <u>had caught</u> the thief.	The Ramayana <u>had been read</u> by the priest
Simple future Modal/Infinitives	The priest will read the Ramayana. The police can catch the thief	The Ramayana will be read by the priest. The thief can be caught by the police.

## 12.3. Direct – Indirect Speech

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After a study of the Active-Passive Voice, you are now introduced to a topic termed Direct speech and how it is transformed into Indirect speech.

12.3.1. Assume ‘A’ is speaking to ‘B’ directly. Then his speech is said to be in

### Direct Speech.

For eg: The teacher said to the students, “You will now learn a new lesson.”

If B gives the same information to someone else (C), then that sentence becomes Indirect Speech. The sentence in indirect speech would be

The teacher told the students that they would then learn a new lesson.

Observe how the transformation from Direct to Indirect Speech takes place. In Direct Speech, there are punctuation marks. In Indirect speech, they are absent. Moreover the sentence spoken by the teacher is a statement. In such cases, while transforming into Indirect Speech, the link word ‘that’ is used.

Other changes to be observed are the verb in

- Simple Present Tense becomes Simple Past Tense
- Present Continuous Tense becomes Past Continuous Tense
- Present Perfect Tense becomes Past Perfect Tense
- Simple Past Tense becomes Past Perfect Tense.
- Present Continuous Tense becomes Past Continuous Tense
- Present Perfect Tense becomes Past Perfect Tense
- Simple Past Tense becomes Past Perfect Tense.

Also observe the following changes

- Now becomes then
- Today becomes that day
- Yesterday becomes the previous day
- Tomorrow becomes the next day

SAQ. Transform the following statements into indirect speech.

- 1) Theja said to her, "I am going to Ooty today".
  
- 2) The child said to her mother, "I have completed the work".

12.3.2. Read the following sentences

- 1) My father said to me, "Did you like the film yesterday?"
- 2) Mohan said to Pradeep, "When will the taxi arrive?"

Comparing the sentences in the earlier section here they are different. You can observe them to be questions put by the speaker. Yet again there is one more difference within these two questions if observes keenly.

In the first sentence, the question is said to belong to Yes- No type.

In the second sentence, the question is said to belong to wh-type.

Carefully study the following sentences to see how they are transformed into Indirect Speech.

- 1) My father asked me if /whether I liked the film the day before.
- 2) Mohan asked Pradeep when the taxi would arrive

The changes can be seen in the words which are underlined. The reporting verb in questions can be asked, questioned, inquired, etc.

The common rule to be deduced is

→ if the question is a yes-no type question

--if/whether is used.

-The verb is changed into the corresponding tense.

→ if the question is a wh-question

-The wh-word is retained.

-The verb is changed into the corresponding tense.

12.3.3. Learn in this sub-section, two other categories of sentences used in the Direct Speech namely imperative and exclamatory.

Let us again take an example in each category to see how it can be transformed into Indirect Speech.

1) Prakash said to Malini, "Give me your book."

2) Sheela said, "What a lovely garden!"

In Indirect Speech the sentences would be

1) Prakash asked Malini to give him her book.

2) Sheela exclaimed what a beautiful garden it was.

Note: Whatever the type of sentences used in direct speech, no punctuation marks are used in indirect speech.

SAQ. Transform the following sentences into indirect speech:

1. John said to her brother, "I am going to my uncle's house this evening".

2.. Ramesh said to me, "I tried to climb over the wall."

3. The boy said to his friend, "I don't know what my father will say."

4. The principal said, "Meena, have you any brothers?"

5. I said to the old man, "Did you have anything to eat yesterday?"

6. I said to my teacher, "Pardon me, Sir."

7. The watchman said, "Don't sit here."

8. "Don't eat too much," the doctor advised me.

9. The mother said, "What a beautiful flower!"

10. My friend uttered, "Oh! I've lost my purse!"

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## 12.4. Report Writing

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This section allows you to learn why and when do we report and who and what do report on/about. A particular information is conveyed to some one at a

particular time. You know different groups of people report on different occasions to different people. The following reports all of importance.

- The police report on investigation of cases.
- The scientists report on experiments.

The teachers/ secretaries report on meeting/ celebrations.

The newsmen report on various incidents accidents, interviews, etc.

A study of the last two categories will be taken up in this section.

12.4.1.

(a) You are the Sports Secretary of the Students' union of your college and asked to write a report on the Inter-University Badminton Tournament held in your university.

**Hints** - tournament started on 20th September - many south Indian University students participated - 100 students in all - 15-20 teams - semifinals conducted - Coimbatore University vs S.V. University. Finals S.V. University won - our V.C. gave away the tournament - appreciated and congratulated - a gala event.

→ Read carefully the above question and the hints given. Who has to report to whom he/she has to report, about what. The hints should help you to write the report.

→ The report is about the University Badminton Tournament held in your University. You, as the Sports Secretary, have to write a report, probably to be published in the University magazine.

Begin like this :

The Inter - University Badminton Tournament was held in our university from 20-23 September, 2007. Many South Indian Universities like Kerala University, Cochin University, Calicut University from Kerala, Karnataka University, Bangalore University, Rajiv Gandhi Medical University, from Karnataka, Madras University, Madurai - Kamaraj University, Coimbatore University from Tamil

Nadu and Andhra, Nagarjuna, S.V. and Osmania Universities from Andhra Pradesh participated in the tournament.

→ Observe carefully the tense of the verbs. They have to be in the past - either the active verb or the passive verb because you are talking about an incident which is over / complete.

→ Who has to play with whom? This will be your next point.

Continue like this:

Lots were taken to decide on which team has to play with the other team. The Vice - Chancellor of Andhra University picked up the lots. When this has been done, the preliminary rounds started from the afternoon session of the first day. In the morning the tournament was inaugurated by our Vice- Chancellor. The D.I.G. of Police was the Chief guest of the occasion. There were about 100 students, participating in 15-20 teams. On the second and third day, there was tough competition between the teams. The students of our university encouraged the participants.

→ What would be your next point? - Would it be the activities on the final day?

Continue:

The finals was conducted on the 4th day, in the morning between Coimbatore University, Tamil Nadu and S.V. University, Andhra Pradesh. S.V. University won the tournament.

In the afternoon, the valedictory function was held. Our Vice Chancellor gave away the tournament to the winning team members. He appreciated and congratulated every participant. It was a gala event.

12.4.2. The meetings held in banks/colleges/factories/offices/sports clubs/associations can also be reported. Usually such formal meetings contain an agenda, discussion of the points in the agenda, and minutes/conclusions.

→ The reports of such meetings tell us about who were present / absent, what matters were discussed, what were the decisions made in the meetings. Usually they are made available in the respective magazines.

→ In case of interviews, that is a report interviewing an official of the Government, a film/ sports personality, etc. the interviewer has to prepare the questions, conduct the interview and write a report about it.

SAQ. Where is the report of a Seminar in English conducted in your college, reported?

SAQ. A reporter of “The Hindu” interviews Sachin Tendulkar, the famous cricketer. Write a report for the newspaper, imagining yourself to be the reporter

12.4.3. All over the nation, the Indians celebrate many festivals such as Diwali, Dusshera, Sankranti, Christmas, Ramzan, etc. You can report on these festivals to your, friends about how you celebrated.

**Exercise:** Write reports on the following situations:

1) Your college has organised an exhibition on the theme ‘English made Easy’ in the English department. Hints : Department of English - holds an exhibition - includes language and literature items - some models very illustrative in grammar



topics - literature made easy through charts - many teachers and students from colleges - a grand success.

2) You went home for celebrating Diwali with your family members. When you return to the hostel your friend asks you, how you celebrated it.

Hints: Bought clothes - one week before - all members in the family present - sisters-in-law, brothers - in-law from Kharagpur and Gorakhpur - woke up early - wore new dresses - performed pooja - mother and grandmother prepared special dishes - some visited uncle's house - exchanged greetings and gifts- evening house illuminated - oil lamp - this time no crackers - sympathy with child labourers - instead children played games and made fun - elders enjoyed.

12.4.6. You read everyday in newspapers about bus/car/train/plane accidents. The accidents may be due to collision, fire or bomb blasts. It may also be due to natural disasters.

**Exercise:** Write a report on a car accident.

Hints - car driving slowly - overtake a van - opposite direction a lorry - coming speedily - rammed into the front of the car - driver of the car dead on the spot - passengers injured - Lorry driver jumped and escaped - injured taken to hospital - the village panchayat Officer sanctions Rs.50000 to the dead, Rs.10000 to the injured

Read the hints carefully. They should help you to imagine what actually happens.

→ you can imagine who is writing/ to whom he is writing.

→ A newspaper reporter is reporting to the editor of a newspaper or a magazine.

*Begin like this-* Tirupati. 7th July. An accident took place yesterday on Gandhi road when a lorry collided with a car, overtaking a van.

SAQ. What would be your next point? Who was at mistake?

*Continue:* The car driver was driving slowly but he overtook a van. In the opposite side, a lorry coming speedily hit the car. It rammed into the front of the car.

SAQ. What next? You have to think of the consequences of the collision.

The car driver died on the spot. In all three passengers, two men and a woman were injured.

→ At every stage in writing the report, you need to add more details as per your imagination keeping in mind the situation in the hints. As far as possible each point has to be expanded.

*Next:* The lorry driver jumped and escaped unhurt. The injured passengers have been taken to the hospital for treatment. The village panchayat officer sanctioned Rs.50000 to the dead and Rs.10000 to the injured passengers.

SAQ. You are Ajit Kamal, a reporter for “The Hindu” you interview Anil Kumble. Write how you report to the newspaper.

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## 12.5. Elaboration of Hints:

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This unit helps you in writing on a particular topic or a story by elaborating or expanding the points already given to you. The hints may lead to a topic of interest or a whole story.

→ The following hints should lead you to a story. After completing it, give a title to the story.

Hints : A barber passed a tree - heard a voice - will you accept seven jars of gold - yes -barber's house full of gold - but seventh jar only half full - barber tried to fill it - begged the king to increase his pay - next started begging - reduced rations at home - yet jar not filling up - months passed – barber sad - realized mistake - returned the jars - happy.

→ wherever possible, near each hint given, expand the point.

→ For eg. The hint begins, a barber passed a tree. To elaborate on this point, begin like this:

Once a barber, by name, Thimmappa lived in the village Patali. He had a wife Lakshmi and a son, Bheemappa. One day he was going home late in the evening, after attending to the king's duties.

→ At a later stage in the hints, it is pointed that he asked the king to raise the salary. From this you should understand that he worked with the king.

*Now continue:* He heard a voice coming from a tree. There was no passer by on the road. At once, he was frightened and tried to run. But the voice repeated, "Will you accept seven jars of gold?"

SAQ. What would be your next point? Does he accept or refuse? What is the disappointment?

He accepts the seven jars of gold. When he comes home, he opens them one by one to the feast of his eyes. Alas! The seventh jar contained only half its quantity.

SAQ. How do you think the barber tried to fill it? What are the possibilities?

From that day, the barber tried to fill it by saving money as much as possible. The first thing he did was to beg the king to increase his salary. Next, at home, he sold away his wife's jewellery. The worst of all was, he reduced the rations at home. That is, reduced buying items necessary for preparing food. Last, he went to the extent of begging on the streets because the jar was not getting filled up.

SAQ. What was the barber's condition now? What is the condition of the jar? Take the hint.

*Continue:* 9 Months passed way with the barber thinking of nothing else but to get the seventh jar filled up. When the jar was not getting filled up, he realised his foolishness.

SAQ. What do you think he did at this stage? Take the clue from the question.

He went to the tree and said, "Take back your gold." Soon the seven jars of gold disappeared from the house. Then, onwards he led a happy life.

SAQ. Now think of the characters and the events and try to give a title to the story.

A greedy barber ; a foolish barber

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## 12.6. Summing Up:

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In this block you have been exposed to various grammar topics which will help you in transforming sentences. You have also learnt how to report and elaborate the hints.

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## **BLOCK FOUR**

<h3><b>UNIT-13</b></h3> <h3><b>SPEAKING SKILLS</b></h3>
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Structure:

13.0. Objectives

13.1. Introduction

13.2. A Study of the Skills

13.3. Congratulations

13.4. Sympathy

13.5. Thanksgiving

13.6. Summing Up

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### **13.0. Objectives**

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This unit should enable you to

- provide and practice for the development of spoken skills
- create dialogues on the various situations in life
- equip yourself with functional skills
- comprehend, speak and write the language with ease and comfort
- be motivated to communicate in English

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### **13.1. Introduction**

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Speech and writing act as the two sides of a coin because they occupy an equal importance. With the onset of globalisation, there is a huge demand for the living English speech and writing.

This unit deals with the speaking skills by practising which you get an opportunity to communicate in English. It contains dialogues Which throw light on the various situations in life.

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## 13.2. A Study of the Skills

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You would have already experienced speaking with some individuals in various situations. For eg, you would have spoken to a clerk, may be at the bus or railway station or a cashier in a bank; in addition to these, at times, you need to introduce your brother to a friend, ask for some information, rent a house, offer or reject a help, accept or refuse an invitation, and many more

Speaking to another individual or a group or addressing an audience may involve two different categories of situations - formal and informal.

In the case of formal situations like speaking to a higher official, an elderly person, etc. you need to be polite and respectful, may at times, need to request or please them. You have to address them as sir/madam.

Whereas in the case of informal situations like speaking to your relatives, parents, friends, etc. You can be polite, at times may be rude, jovial, etc. You address them as aunt/uncle or with their respective names.

You would be practising in this unit the following situations for which dialogues are to be created.

- Congratulations
- Sympathy
- Thanksgiving

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## 13.3. Congratulations:

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You may congratulate a higher official at your work spot or an elderly person and create a formal dialogue or a relative of yours at home and create an informal dialogue. You congratulate someone on achieving a good rank / grade in academic circles, winning /receiving a prize or award, getting married, being blessed with a child, winning a match/ competition, getting promoted to a higher cadre, get a job, and many more.

→ Read through the following dialogue care fully. You can understand the situation to belong to the formal category.

The Vice - chancellor of your university has received the National Award for the Best Teacher. The numbers of staff meet him in his chamber to congratulate him.

The Staff : Good morning , Sir.

The Vice Chancellor : Good morning. Nice to see you all here.

The Staff : Hearty Congratulations, Sir.

Vice Chancellor : Thank you very much.

The Staff : We were very excited to hear the news.

Vice Chancellor : It's very kind of you, With out cooperation from all of you, I wouldn't have achieved this.

The Staff : Once again we compliment you, sir and wish you receive many more like this.

Vice Chancellor : Thank you.

The staff : We take leave of you, sir,

Vice Chancellor : All right.

Observe how you should greet a higher official as you meet them. Next you pass on to the duty of congratulating the individual. According to the response from the other person, you have to react and develop your dialogue. The ending of the dialogue is also important. The dialogue cannot end abruptly.

SAQ. In the dialogue with the Vice Chancellor you observed how the dialogue began. Now in the following dialogue, imagine you are speaking to a friend. How do you think you would begin and end? Complete the dialogue.

Swathi : \_\_\_\_\_ I heard from Swapna \_\_\_\_\_ Why didn't you inform me?

Swetha : \_\_\_\_\_ In fact, I didn't inform Swapna also. Unexpectedly, she came to my house yesterday. I had come home from \_\_\_\_\_ hospital by then.

Swathi : \_\_\_\_\_ Congratulations to \_\_\_\_\_

Swetha & Rakesh : Thank you.

Swathi : Where is the \_\_\_\_\_?

Swetha : In the next room with mother.

Swathi : (Seeing the baby) Auntie ! \_\_\_\_\_ . Going back.  
to Swetha's room.

Swetha: By the by, I forgot. My husband \_\_\_\_\_ after my  
daughter was born.

Swathi : Is it? \_\_\_\_\_ to you.

Rakesh : \_\_\_\_\_

Swathi : When are you joining, Sir.

Rakesh :

Swathi : O.K. \_\_\_\_\_

Swetha & Rakesh: \_\_\_\_\_

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### 13.4. Sympathy:

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In contrast to the above section here, in practicing a dialogue expressing sympathy, you need to be very serious expressing sympathy from your heart; reach out, if need be, expressing to offer a help to the person who has suffered, etc.

→Read the following dialogue where Pankaj is expressing sympathy to his friend Nethra on his house having been robbed.

Pankaj: Nethra, is the information I heard about the robbery right?

Nethra: Yes, Pankaj. I'm terribly upset.

Pankaj: How did it happen?

Nethra: The whole family was away from the city for a week the robbers  
have made way through the bath room ventilators.

Pankaj: How much money and materials have you lost?

Nethra: The cash and jewellery may be worth around 1 lakh. The  
important thing is my father has lost his passport and visa.

Pankaj: Oh God! It is really shocking!

Nethra: My mother is dazed.

Pankaj: I don't know how to express my sympathy. Well! Come let's go to the  
police station to give a complaint.

Nethra: O.K. Let's go.



→ Observe expressions such as ‘Oh God’! ‘it’s shocking’ ‘terribly upset’ ‘let’s go’ etc. which offer sympathy to the other individual.

Here is an incomplete dialogue between Ravi and Rakesh’s father consoling the latter on the death of his son Complete the dialogue.

Ravi: It was shocking to \_\_\_\_\_.

Uncle: There is nothing in our hands.

Ravi: \_\_\_\_\_ Uncle. It will take time \_\_\_\_\_.

How did it happen?

Uncle: Actually it was not a major accident. Only an auto hit against his  
bike

Ravi : \_\_\_\_\_ . Then what happened.

Uncle : \_\_\_\_\_ . He suffered a head injury.

Ravi : All friends are \_\_\_\_\_ . Hope I didn’t  
disturb you.

Uncle : No. No.

Ravi : Convey my condolences \_\_\_\_\_.

I promise to come here often \_\_\_\_\_

Uncle : \_\_\_\_\_

SAQ. Do you think in the above incomplete dialogue, the other person’s responses help you in completing it. How do you think Rakesh’s father would like to end the dialogue?

Sympathy is expressed to someone on the death of a near/ dear one, on the loss of property/ house, on not achieving what has been expected, not successful in winning a match / competition, in not achieving a job, when someone falls seriously ill, etc. Usually all these situations become informal, unless you express sympathy to the head of an institution or organisation for any loss, where you need to create a formal dialogue.

For examine imagine one of the buildings in your university has caught fire and many important valuables and documents have been lost. If the Vice - Chancellor of another university speaks to your Vice-Chancellor, then the dialogue becomes a formal one.

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### 13.5.Thanksgiving.

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The dialogues on thanksgiving may involve formal or informal situations.

You may probably thank your teacher, or the head of an institution, the manager of a factory or a bank, for promoting you, offering you a project, for involving you in a team to play a game, create opportunities that may help you in your career, or to a friend/ relative/ classmate who helps you, etc.

a) Read the following incomplete dialogue and complete it.

Student : Sir, I am glad to inform you that I have passed the entrance test for admission into Ph.D degree

Teacher : Oh! Is it so! \_\_\_\_\_

Student : Thank you, \_\_\_\_\_! It was  
very kind of you to have helped me.

Teacher : Your hard work also has helped you.

Student : Sir, without your encouragement, I wouldn't  
have achieved this.

Teacher : Yes, \_\_\_\_\_ O.K. wish you \_\_\_\_\_

Student : \_\_\_\_\_

SAQ. Will the above dialogue belong to the formal or informal category.  
What kind of expressions will you use?

b) Here is another incomplete dialogue. Try completing it.

Madhu : \_\_\_\_\_, Shiva.

Shiva : \_\_\_\_\_, Madhu.

Madhu : \_\_\_\_\_.

Shiva : Why do you thank me?

Madhu : If you hadn't admitted my father in

Hospital, \_\_\_\_\_

Shiva : \_\_\_\_\_

Madhu : Not only that, you had also paid \_\_\_\_\_ My family. members  
are very much thankful to you.

Student : \_\_\_\_\_ we are best friends.

Madhu : \_\_\_\_\_ Now, take the money.

Student : \_\_\_\_\_ Madhu : you are a friend indeed. I can never forget  
your help.

Student : \_\_\_\_\_

You can observe that though it is a dialogue between two friends, yet it  
includes thanksgiving expressions.

13.5.1. Meeting the Vice - Chancellor/ Principal. When you meet a higher  
official, the dialogue becomes a formal one. Your expressions need to be polite,  
the request should be pleasing, etc.

Read the following dialogue carefully.

You are the secretary of the student's union of your college. You meet the  
Vice Chancellor along with the other office - bearers to request him to keep  
the library open all the days for 15 days.

Students : Good morning, Sir.

Vice chancellor : Good morning, What can I do for you ?

Students : Sir, we have a request to make.

Vice Chancellor : Any problem ? What is it ?

Students : We request you to keep the library open on  
all days

Vice chancellor : Why?

Students : Because we don't get time to visit the library  
during the college days.

Vice Chancellor : Oh! I See, Anything else?

Students : Also to extend the working hours to at least  
15 hours every day.

Vice Chancellor : O K. Let me talk to the librarian. I will let you know in  
a week's time.

Students : Thank you, Sir.

You can observe in the above dialogue, how it begins formally with a greeting to the Vice - Chancellor, followed by the request to the students , ending in a thanksgiving. Your expressions/ the words you use should create the feeling that you are polite, humble, etc.

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### 13.6. Summing Up:

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In this Block you have been introduced to the most important functional skill of speaking. You have learnt the formal and informal ways of congratulating expressing sympathy and thanksgiving.

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### Questions

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Write dialogues suitable for the following situations:

1. Your friend has achieved the 10th All India rank in Indian Administrative Service (I A S) examination. Congratulate him/ her. Enquire from him/ her the secret behind the success.
2. Raja hasn't been successful at the interview for a job. Convey your sympathy and wish him better luck next time.
3. The librarian has helped you in tracing a book by using a computer. Thank him for teaching you how to use the computer.
4. You meet the head of Department of English to tell him/ her about your problems. Your teacher may convey sympathy.

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