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## Chapter 1

# ADOLF

*D.H. Lawrence*

### 1. Introduction :

- (A) Do you have a pet – a dog, a cat, or a parrot, or any animal? Write a few lines about it. Also write your relation with it – like whether you love it or whether it obeys you.
- (B) The teacher also should discuss the following points:-
- i. why we should love animals.
  - ii. the pleasure of keeping pets.
  - iii. how each one of us can make life more meaningful by loving the animals.

### 2. Now read a story about some children and a pet.

When we were children our father often worked at night. Once it was springtime and he used to arrive home, black and tired, just as we were downstairs in our nightdresses. Then night met morning face to face, and the meeting was not always happy. Perhaps it was painful to my father to see us gaily entering upon the day into which he dragged himself soiled and weary. He didn't like going to bed in the spring morning sunshine.

But sometimes he was happy, because of his long walk through the fields in the first day break. He loved the open morning after a night down the pit. He watched every bird, every stir in the trembling grass, answering the calls of birds.

One sunny morning we were all sitting at table when we heard his heavy tread. He passed the window darkly, and we heard him go into the scullery. But immediately he came into the kitchen. We felt at once that he had something to tell us. No one spoke. We watched his black face for a second.

'Give me a drink,' he said.



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My mother hastily poured out his tea. He went to pour it out into his saucer. But instead of drinking he suddenly put something on the table among the teacups. A tiny brown rabbit ! A small rabbit, sitting against the bread as still as if it were a made thing.

‘A rabbit! A young one! Who gave it you, father?’

But he laughed and went to take off his coat. We jumped towards the rabbit.

‘Is it alive? Can you feel its heart beat?’

My father came back and sat down heavily in his armchair. He dragged his saucer to him, and blew his tea, pushing out his red lips under his black moustache.

‘Where did you get it, father?’

‘I picked it up,’ he said, wiping his mouth and beard.

‘Where?’

‘It is a wild one!’ Came my mother’s quick voice.

‘Yes, it is.’

‘Then why did you bring it?’ cried my mother.

‘Oh, we wanted it,’ came our cry.

‘Yes, I’ve no doubt you did .....’ answered my mother sharply. But she was drowned in the noise of our questions.

On the field path my father had found a dead mother rabbit and three dead little ones – this one alive, but unmoving.

‘But what killed them, father?’

‘I couldn’t say, my child. I should think she had eaten something.’

‘Why did you bring it?’ again my mother’s voice of blame. ‘You know what it will be.’

My father made no answer, but we were loud in disagreement.

‘He must bring it. It’s not big enough to live by itself. It would die,’ we shouted.

‘Yes, and it will die now. And then there will be another outcry.’

My mother hated the tragedy of dead pets. Our hearts sank.

‘It won’t die, father, will it ? Why will it ? It won’t.’

‘I should think not,’ said my father.

‘You know well enough it will. Haven’t we had it all before ?’ said my mother.

‘They don’t always die,’ said my father angrily.

But my mother reminded him of other little wild animals he had brought, which had sulked and refused to live, and brought storms of tears and trouble into our house.

Trouble fell on us. The little rabbit sat on our lap, unmoving, its eye wide and dark. We brought it milk, warm milk, and held it to its nose. It sat as still as if it was far away, hidden in its hole. We wetted its mouth with drops of milk. It gave no sign, did not even shake off the wet white drops. Somebody began to weep a few secret tears.

‘What did I say?’ cried my mother. ‘Take it and put it down in the field.’

Her command was in vain. We were driven to get dressed for school. There sat the rabbit. It was like a tiny dark cloud. Watching it, the emotions died out of our breast. Useless to love it. It did not want love and affection. A wild little thing, it became more silent when we approached it with love.

Wrapping it in a piece of flannel, I put it in a dark corner of the cold parlour, and put a saucer of milk before its nose. At midday, after school, creeping into the front room, there we saw the rabbit still and unmoving in the piece of flannel. It was a sore problem to us. ‘Why don’t it drink its milk, mother?’ we whispered. Our father was still asleep.

‘It prefers to sulk its life away, silly little thing.’ A great problem. Prefers to sulk its life away! We put some leaves to its nose, but it took no notice. Yet its eye was bright.

At tea-time, however, it had jumped a few inches, out of its flannel, and there it sat again, uncovered, a little solid cloud of silence. Once its side moved slightly with life.

Darkness came; my father set off to work. The rabbit was still motionless. Despair was coming over the sisters, a threat of tears, before bedtime, Clouds of my mother’s anger gathered, as she murmured against my father.

Once more the rabbit was wrapped in the old flannel. But now it was carried into the scullery and put under the copper fireplace, so that it might imagine itself inside a hole. The saucers were placed about, four or five, here and there on the floor, so that if the little creature should chance to jump about, it could not fail to come upon some food. After this my mother was allowed to take from the scullery what she wanted and then she was forbidden to open the door.

When morning came and it was light, I went downstairs. Opening the scullery door, I heard a slight movement. Then I saw drops of milk all over the floor. And there was the rabbit, the tops of his ears showing behind a pair of boots. He sat bright-eyed, moving his nose and looking at me while not looking at me.

He was alive – very much alive.

‘Father!’ My father stopped at the door. ‘Father, the rabbit’s alive.’

‘Of course,’ he said.

‘Mind how you go in.’

By evening, however, the little creature was tame, quite tame.

**3. About the author :**

D.H. Lawrence (1885 – 1930) is one of the great novelists of England. He came from Nottingham in England where there are many coalmines. Lawrence’s father used to work in one of these coalmines. Lawrence was a great animal lover. The story Adolf is biographical and it shows Lawrence’s love for animals.

**4. Word- Notes and Glossary :**

at night	- coal-miners used to work by shifts
black and tired	- because he worked in the coalmine
night dresses	- dresses worn while asleep
night met ..... face to face	- poetic way of saying ‘dawn’
gaily entering.....weary	- the boys looked happy in the morning, but the father looked dirty and tired
heavy tread	- the sound of the father’s heavy boot
scullery	- room near the kitchen for washing utensils, etc.
drowned	- her voice could not be heard
outcry	- tearful protest
sulked	- refused to eat or drink and remained sad
emotions....breast	- all feeling from our heart died
flannel	- rough cloth
parlour	- sitting room
sore	- painful
looking.....at me	- it was difficult to know if the rabbit was looking at the speaker or not

**5. Comprehension:**

**(A) Based on your reading of the story complete the following statements:**

- I. It was painful to the writer’s father to see his children gaily dressed in the morning while \_\_\_\_\_
- II. The father’s face was black because \_\_\_\_\_
- III. In the field path the father came across \_\_\_\_\_
- IV. The sore problem about the rabbit was \_\_\_\_\_

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**(B) Answer the following questions by putting (✓) mark on the correct answer:**

- (I) The mother was against keeping the rabbit because
- it was a wild one.
  - she did not like animals.
  - its death will cause an outcry.
  - it will be additional labour to her.
- (II) The writer wrapped the rabbit in a flannel and put in the cold parlour so that it will
- die peacefully.
  - get warmth.
  - enjoy the cool flannel.
  - be free from household noise.
- (III) The children put the rabbit under the copper fireplace so that it
- will get warmth.
  - will not be disturbed.
  - will not run away.
  - will think it was in a hole.

**(C) Answer the following questions briefly:-**

- (I) Why was the meeting between the children and their father in the early spring morning not happy ?
- (II) One sunny morning why did the children feel that their father had something to tell them ?
- (III) Why was there some excitement among the children one spring morning?
- (IV) Why was the mother worried that the rabbit was a wild one ?
- (V) “He must bring it .....”  
Why did the children cry out their father had to bring the rabbit ?
- (VI) “It won’t die, father, will it ? Why will it ? It won’t”  
Bring out the sentiment expressed by the children in these lines.
- (VII) What was the big problem the children faced at mid-day after school ?
- (VIII) What changes did the children see in the rabbit at tea-time ?
- (IX) Why did the children tell their father to mind how he went in ?

**(D) Answer the following questions in about 80 words :**

- I. Bring out the excitement in the house in the morning the father brought a little rabbit.
- II. What were the reasons for the childrens' mother to object to the rabbit being brought ?
- III. 'Trouble fell on us'. What was the trouble ? How was it solved ?
- IV. Write how everything about the rabbit finally end.
- V. Comment on the attitude of the father and the children towards pets and animals.

**6. Think and Write**

- (I) Write a paragraph about what might have happened to the rabbit and to the boys in the following days and years.
- (II) Suppose the rabbit lived and looked lively and healthy. Do you think the attitude of the mother will be the same to it as it is described in the lesson? Write a few lines.

**7. Discuss**

- (I) Discuss in your group what might have happened to the rabbit and to the boys in the following days and years. Present your ideas to the whole class.

**8. Vocabulary**

**(A) Match the words on the left hand side with their meanings on the right:**

weary	room for washing utensils
skulked	rough cloth
affection	hopelessness
flannel	tired
despair	a feeling of liking or loving
scullery	refused to eat

**(B) Fill in the gaps in the following paragraph with suitable words from the box given:**

tiny	care	welcome	thrilled
expressed	accepted	gloom	finally

The children were \_\_\_\_ to see the little rabbit. They \_\_\_\_\_ great joy, but the mother did not \_\_\_\_\_ the creature. She did so because she thought the \_\_\_\_ creature would die and there would be a \_\_\_\_ of sadness in the family. The children took great \_\_\_\_ of the rabbit \_\_\_\_\_, the rabbit drank some milk. It meant it had \_\_\_\_\_ its new home.

**9. Listening Practice:**

The teacher reads out a piece of news item from the day’s newspaper, and the children writes the summary of it.

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**10. Writing Practice:**

On your way home, you have come across a small birdie on the roadside. Write a diary entry describing your experience with it.

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Chapter 2  
**THANK YOU, MA'AM**

*Langston Hughes*

**1. Introduction :**

- (A) Suppose, someone tries to pick your pocket and you have caught him in the act. What will you do with him ?
- Give him a good beating.
  - Hand him over to the police.
  - Beat him and hand over to the police.
  - Allow him to go with the advise not to do such thing in the future.

**Tick (✓) the thing you will do and write a few lines justifying your action.**

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- (B) Why, do you think, people try to pick pocket or steal?
- They are men of bad character.
  - They do not want to work.
  - Circumstances have compelled them.
  - There are not enough policemen.



**2. Now, read about a woman whose purse was snatched by a boy and find out what she did.**

She was a large woman with a large purse that had everything in it but hammer and nails. It had a long strap, and she carried it slung across her shoulder. It was about eleven o'clock at night, and she was walking alone. When a boy ran up behind her and tried to snatch her purse. The strap broke with the single tug the boy gave it from behind. But the boy's weight and the weight of the purse combined caused him to lose his balance so, instead of taking off full blast as he had hoped, the boy fell on his back on the sidewalk, and his legs flew up. The large woman simply turned around and kicked him right square in his blue-jeaned sitter. Then she reached down, picked the boy up by his shirt front. And shook him until his teeth rattled.

After that the woman said, 'Pick up my pocketbook, boy, and give it here.' She still held him. But she bent down enough to permit him to stoop and pick up her purse. Then she said, 'Now ain't you ashamed of yourself?'

Firmly gripped by his shirt front, the boy said, 'Yes'm.'

The woman said, 'What did you want to do it for?'

The boy said, 'I didn't aim to.'

She said, 'You a lie!'

By that time two or three people passed, stopped, turned to look, and some stood watching.

'If I turn you loose, will you run?' asked the woman.

'Yes'm,' said the boy.

'Then I won't turn you loose,' said the woman. She did not release him.

'I'm very sorry, lady, I'm sorry,' whispered the boy.

"Um-hum! And your face is dirty. I got a great mind to wash your face for you. Ain't you got nobody home to tell you to wash your face?"

"No'm," said the boy.



“Then it will get washed this evening,” said the large woman starting up the street, dragging the frightened boy behind her.

He looked as if he were fourteen or fifteen, frail and willow-wild, in tennis shoes and blue jeans.

The woman said, “You ought to be my son. I would teach you right from wrong. Least I can do right now is to wash your face. Are you hungry?”

“No’m,” said the being dragged boy, “I just want you to turn me loose.”

“Was I bothering you when I turned that corner?” asked the woman.

“No’m.”

“But you put yourself in contact with me,” said the woman, “If you think that contact is not going to last awhile, you got another thought coming. When I get through with you, sir, you are going to remember Mrs. Luella Bates Washington Jones.”

Sweat propped out on the boy’s face and he began to struggle. Mrs. Jones stopped, jerked him around in front of her, put a half-nelson about his neck, and continued to drag him up the street. When she got to her door, she dragged the boy inside, down a hall, and into a large kitchenette furnished room at the rear of the house. She switched on the light and left the door open. The boy could hear other roomers laughing and talking in the large house. Some of their doors were open, too, so he knew he and the woman were not alone. The woman still had him by the neck in the middle of her room.

She said, “What is your name?”

“Roger,” answered the boy.

“Then, Roger, you go to that sink and wash your face,” said the woman, whereupon she turned him loose at last. Roger looked at the door looked at the woman looked at the door and went to the sink.

“Let the water run until it gets warm,” she said. “Here’s a clean towel.”

“You gonna take me to jail?” asked the boy. Bending over the sink.

“Not with that face, I would not take you nowhere,” said the woman. “Here I am trying to get home to cook me a bite to eat and you snatch my pocketbook! Maybe, you arn’t been to your supper either, late as it be. Have you?”

“There’s nobody home at my house.” Said the boy.

“Then we’ll eat,” said the woman. “I believe you’re hungry – or been hungry – to try to snatch my pocketbook.”

“I wanted a pair of blue suede shoes,” said the boy.

“Well, you didn’t have to snatch my pocketbook to get some suede shoes,” said Mrs. Luella Bates Washington Jones. “You could have asked me.”

“M’am?”

The water dripping from his face, the boy looked at her. There was a long pause. A very long pause. After he had dried his face and not knowing what else to do dried it again, the boy turned around, wondering what next. The door was open. He could make a dash for it down the hall. He could run, run, run, run!

The woman was sitting on the day-bed. After a while she said, “I were young once and I wanted things I could not get.”

There was another long pause. The boy’s mouth opened. Then he frowned, but not knowing he frowned.

The woman said, “Um-hum! You thought I was going to say *but*, didn’t you? You thought I was going to say, *but I didn’t snatch people’s pocketbooks*. Well, I wasn’t going to say that.” Pause. Silence. “I have done things, too, which I would not tell you, son neither tell God, if he didn’t already know. So you set down while I fix us something to eat. You might run that comb through your hair so you will look presentable.”

In another corner of the room behind a screen was a gas plate and an icebox. Mrs. Jones got up and went behind the screen. The woman did not watch the boy to see if he was going to run now, nor did she watch her purse which she left behind her on the day-bed. But the boy took care to sit on the far side of the room where he thought she could easily see him out of the corner of her eye, if she wanted to. He did not trust the woman not to trust him. And he did not want to be mistrusted now.

“Do you need somebody to go to the store,” asked the boy, “may be to get some milk or something?”

“Don’t believe I do,” said the woman, “unless you just want sweet milk yourself. I was going to make cocoa out of this canned milk I got here.”

“That will be fine,” said the boy.

She heated some lima beans and ham she had in the icebox, made the cocoa, and set the table. The woman did not ask the boy anything about where he lived, or his folks, or anything

else that would embarrass him. Instead, as they ate, she told him about her job in a hotel beauty-shop that stayed open late, what the work was like, and how all kinds of women came in and out, blondes, red-heads, and Spanish. Then she cut him a half of her ten-cent cake.

“Eat some more, son,” she said.

When they were finished eating she got up and said, “Now, here, take this ten dollars and buy yourself some blue suede shoes. And next time, do not make the mistake of latching onto my pocketbook nor nobody else’s – because shoes come by devilish like will burn your feet. I got to get my rest now. But I wish you would behave yourself, son, from here on in.”

She led him down the hall to the front door and opened it. “Good-night ! Behave yourself, boy!” she said, looking out into the street.

The boy wanted to say something else other than “Thank you, m’am” to Mrs. Luella Bates Washington Jones, but he couldn’t do so as he turned at the barren stoop and looked back at the large woman in the door. He barely managed to say “thank you” before she shut the door. And he never saw her again.

### **3. About the author**

Langston Hughes was a well-known American black writer of poems and stories. He was born on Feb.I, 1902 and died on May 22,1967, at a place called Joplin in Missouri, the USA. At first he worked as a crewman aboard a ship the SS Malone in early adulthood. He wrote many poems reflecting the view points of black Americans. His short stories are known for their pathos and reflect black commitment to the spirit of America.

### **4. WordNotes and Glossary**

taking off full blast	-	run away as fast as one could
sidewalk	-	pavement by the side of the road (American English)
sitter	-	the seat of the trouser
willow-wild	-	wild like a willow tree
sink	-	container for water usually fixed to the wall with pipes to drain water out.
suede	-	kind of leather with soft surface
day-bed	-	bed that can be used as a sofa during day time
set down	-	her way of saying ‘sit down’
lima-bean	-	kind of flat, pale green bean grown in America
embarrass	-	annoy

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beauty-shop	-	shop where face, hair, nail etc. are treated on payment
blondes	-	women or men with golden hair
red- heads	-	women or men with reddish hair
latching	-	holding
devilish like that will burn your feet	}	- the shoes that you are robbing someone will cost you heavily
half-nelson	-	a wrestling hold that makes an opponent difficult to move
stoop	-	raised area outside the door

**5. Comprehension :**

*Now, complete the following statements with information from the text:-*

- (I) Mrs. Washington Jones said she would not turn the boy loose because \_\_\_\_\_
- (II) Mrs. Washington Jones said to the boy that if he were her son she would teach \_\_\_\_\_
- (III) When Roger asked the woman if she was going to take him to the jail she said that she would not take him \_\_\_\_\_
- (III) Mrs. Washington Jones did not ask the boy anything about him because \_\_\_\_\_
- (V) Before he was allowed to leave, Roger wanted to say something more to the woman but only managed to say \_\_\_\_\_

**(B) Answer the following questions in a sentence each:-**

- I. What did the woman do after she picked up the boy by his shirt front ?
- II. What did the woman want to do to the boy's dirty face ?
- III. What did Mrs. Jones tell Roger he should have done to buy his shoes instead of trying to snatch her purse?
- IV. What should Roger do to make him look presentable ?
- V. "Do you need somebody to go to the store," asked the boy ?  
Why did the boy ask so ?

**(C) Answer the following questions briefly:-**

- I. How did the boy fall on the sidewalk?
- II. “If you think that contact is not going to last awhile, you got another thing coming.....”  
Explain what Mrs. Jones meant by it ?
- III. “Roger looked at the door-looked at the woman-looked at the door – and went to the sink”.  
Why did Roger not run away ?
- IV. Do you think Mrs. Jones was completely free from any wrongdoing ? Quote the relevant line from the text to support your answer.
- V. “Eat some more, son,” she said.  
Comment on the significance of the line.

**(D) Answer the following questions in about 80 words:-**

- I. Write how Roger end up in Mrs. Jones' hall ?
- II. Comment on Mrs. Jones’ treatment of Roger at her home.
- III. “Well you didn’t have to snatch my pocket book to get some suede shoes,” said Mrs. Luella Bates Washington Jones. “You could have asked me,” Bring out the character of Mrs. Jones based on her above remark.

**6. Think and Write :**

**(I) Here is a list of names of qualities. Not all of them are applicable to Mrs. Jones. Find out which of them are applicable and which are not and enter them in the columns below:**

- |           |               |              |
|-----------|---------------|--------------|
| rude      | compassionate | easily-angry |
| forgiving | understanding | selfish      |
| proud     | dignified     | generous     |

Applicable	Unapplicable

**(II) Which have stronger influence –**

Kindness  
Or  
Punishment.

Write a few lines.

**(III) Now, suppose a young boy has tried to pick your pocket. Write how will you react. Try to justify your answer.**

**(IV) Suppose you are Roger. What will be the effect of Mrs. Jones' treatment on you ? Write a few lines.**

**7. (I) What do you think is responsible for Roger's wrong doing? Are circumstances in any way responsible for his trying to snatch Mrs. Jones' purse? Discuss it in your group and enumerate them. The first one is done for you.**

I. No one at home to take care of him.

II. \_\_\_\_\_

III. \_\_\_\_\_

**(II) List the various things that Mrs. Jones did to Roger until his release. Work out the points in your group.**

**(III) Discuss in your group what might have been the effect of Mrs. Jones' kindness on Roger. Discuss it and write a few sentences.**

**(IV) Suppose Mrs. Jones had handed over the boy to the police. What would be the effect ? Discuss and write it.**

**8. Vocabulary :**

Fill in the blanks in the following sentences by picking the correct word from the box given at the end.

I. Do not \_\_\_\_\_ at my cloth, son.

II. The thief \_\_\_\_\_ the man's bag.

III. The culprit was \_\_\_\_\_ when he saw the policeman.

IV. She is so \_\_\_\_\_ that she finds it difficult to stand up.

V. Finally, the father could make a \_\_\_\_\_ with his lost son.

VI. Do not \_\_\_\_\_ to call me again.

VII. You look so dirty you are hardly \_\_\_\_\_.

VIII. Let us not \_\_\_\_\_ them by asking unpleasant questions.

IX. Nothing grows in the desert. It is a \_\_\_\_\_ place.

embarrass	bother	barren	frail	snatched
tug	rattled	contact	presentable.	

**9. Writing Practice :**

1. Here is a letter written by Roger to Mrs. Jones a few days after the incident described in the story. Here he describes how he has been effected by her treatment.

There are, however, many gaps in the letter. Fill in the blanks with suitable words from the list given below to make the letter meaningful.

mother	pray	understanding	completely	angry
treated	trying	determined	wrong	

Dear ma'm,

Thank you madam for the way you had treated me the other day. It was the first time that I was treated with love and \_\_\_\_\_ by anyone. I wish I had a \_\_\_\_\_ like you.

I am \_\_\_\_\_ changed. After meeting you, I feel if I do anything \_\_\_\_\_ like I did before God will be \_\_\_\_\_ with me.

I am \_\_\_\_\_ to find a job, any job, maybe in a hotel or a shop. But I am \_\_\_\_\_ I will never do bad things.

Please \_\_\_\_\_ for me. Thank you.

Yours,

Roger.

**11. Listening Practice:**

The teacher should read out a piece of news or a paragraph from a book, and the students write the summary of it.



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Chapter 3

## THE PRINCESS WHO WANTED THE MOON

*James Thurber*

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**1. Introduction:**

- (A) (a) If someone tells you that the moon is a big balloon, will you believe in it? Yes or No.
- \_\_\_\_\_
- (b) But how about your 4/5 years old brother or sister? Will they believe in it? Yes or No.
- \_\_\_\_\_
- (c) Also will they believe when the mother tells them to go to sleep immediately so that the moon will come to him/her in his/her dream? Yes or No.
- (d) All this shows that children have a very innocent and simple mind. Do you agree or disagree.
- (B) Answer the following:-
- All problems become simple
- (a) to a child's mind.
- (b) to an adult's mind.
- (C) Have you ever desired a beautiful thing? How about having a picture or image of it around your neck? Will it not satisfy your longing?

**2. Now read a story about a girl who longed the moon :**

Once upon a time, in a kingdom by the sea, there lived a little Princess named Lenore. She was ten years old, nearly eleven. One day Lenore ate too many raspberry tarts and fell ill.

The Royal Doctor came to see her and took her temperature and felt her pulse and made her stick out her tongue. He was worried, and sent for the King, Lenore's father.

'I will get you anything your heart wants,' the King said. 'Is there anything your heart wants?'



‘Yes,’ said the Princess, ‘I want the moon. If I can have the moon, I will be well again.’

Then the King went to the throne room and rang a bell and then the Lord High Chamberlain came into the room. He was a large, fat man with thick glasses which made his eyes seem twice as large as they really were. This made the Lord High Chamberlain seem twice as wise as he really was.

‘I want you to get the moon for the Princess Lenore,’ said the King. ‘If she can have the moon, she will get well again. Get it tonight, tomorrow at the latest.’

The Lord High Chamberlain wiped his forehead with a handkerchief and then blew his nose loudly. ‘I have got a great many things for you in my time, Your Majesty,’ he said. ‘I have with me a list of those things.’ He looked at

the list frowning. ‘I have got ivory, apes and peacocks; rubies, opals and emeralds; black orchids, pink elephants and blue poodles; hummingbirds’ tongues, angels’ feathers and unicorns’ horns, giants’ midgits and mermaids; frankincense, ambergris and myrrh; a pound of butter, two dozen eggs and a sack of sugar- sorry, my wife wrote that in there.’

‘Never mind,’ said the King. ‘What I want now is the moon.’

‘The moon,’ said the Lord High chamberlain, ‘is out of the question. It is 35,000 miles away, and it is bigger than the Princess’s room. Also it is made of copper. I cannot get the moon for you.’

‘Blue poodles, yes; the moon, no.’

The King was very angry and told the Lord High Chamberlain to leave the room and to send the Royal Wizard to him. The Royal Wizard was a little, thin man with a long face. He wore a high red pointed hat covered with silver stars, and a long blue robe covered with golden owls. He grew very pale when the King told him that he wanted the moon for his little daughter.

‘I have worked a great deal of magic for you in my time, Your Majesty,’ he said. ‘I just happen to have in my pocket a list of all the things I have done for you. Now let’s see. I have squeezed blood out of turnips for you, and turnips out of blood. I have produced rabbits out of silk hats, and silk hats out of rabbits. I have produced flowers, tambourines and doves out of nowhere, and how hare out of flowers, tambourines and doves. I have brought you magic wands, and crystal spheres in which to see the future. I have made you my own special mixture of wolfsbane, nightshade and eagles’ tears, to ward off witches, demons and things that go bump in the night. I have given you

seven-league boots, the golden touch and a cloak of invisibility –’

‘The cloak of invisibility didn’t work,’ said the King. ‘I kept bumping into things the same as ever.’

‘The cloak is supposed to make you invisible,’ said the Royal Wizard. ‘It is not supposed to keep you from bumping into things.’ He looked at his list again. ‘I got you.’ He said, ‘horns from Elfland, sand from the sandman and gold from the rainbow. Also a reel of cotton, a packet of needles and a lump of beeswax – sorry, those are things my wife wrote down for me to get her.’

‘What I want you to do now,’ said the King, ‘is to get me the moon. The Princess Lenore wants the moon, and when she gets it, she will be well again.’

‘Nobody can get the moon,’ said the Royal Wizard. ‘It is 1500,000 miles away, and it is made of green cheese, and it is twice as big as this palace.’

The King was even more angry and sent the Royal Wizard back to his cave. Then he called the Royal Mathematician, a bald-headed, short-sighted man, with a skull-cap on his head and a pencil behind his ear.

‘I don’t want to hear a long list of all the things you have worked out for me since 1907,’ the King said to him. ‘I want you to work out at once how to get the moon for Princess Lenore.’

‘I am glad you mentioned all the things I have worked out for you since 1907,’ said the Royal Mathematician. ‘It happens that I have a list of them with me. I have worked out for you the distance between the horns of a dilemma, night and day, and A and Z. I have calculated how far is Up, how long it takes to get Away, and what becomes of Gone. I have discovered the length of the sea serpent, the price of the priceless, and the square of the hippopotamus. I know where you are when you are at Sixes and Sevens, how much Is you need to make an Are, and how many birds you can catch with the salt in the ocean- 187,796,132, if it would interest you to know.’

‘There aren’t as many birds as that,’ said the King. ‘And anyway, what I want now is the moon.’

‘The moon is 3,000,000 miles away,’ said the Royal Mathematician. ‘It is round and flat like a coin, only it is made of asbestos, and it is half the size of the kingdom. Also it is pasted on the sky. Nobody can get the moon.’ The King was angrier still and sent the Royal Mathematician away. Then he rang for the Court Jester, who came jumping into the room in his cap and bells, and sat at the foot of the throne.

‘What can I do for you, Your Majesty?’

‘The Princess Lenore wants the moon,’ said the King sadly, ‘and she cannot be well again till she gets it, but nobody can get it for her. Every time I ask anybody for the moon, it gets larger and farther away. There is nothing you can do for me except play on your lute. Something sad.’

‘How big do they say the moon is,’ asked the Court Jester, ‘and how far away?’

‘The Lord High Chamberlain says it is 35,000 miles away, and bigger than the Princess Lenore’s room,’ said the King. ‘The Royal Wizard says it is 150,000 miles away, and twice as big as this palace. The Royal Mathematician says it is 3,000,000 miles away, and half the size of this kingdom.’

The Court Jester played on his lute for a while. ‘They are all wise men,’ he said. ‘And so they must all be right. If they are all right, then the moon must be just as large and as far away as each person thinks it is. The thing to do is to find out how big the Princess Lenore thinks it is, and how far away.’

‘I never thought of that,’ said the King.

‘I will go and ask her, Your Majesty.’

The Princess Lenore was glad to see the Court Jester, but her face was very pale and her voice was very weak.

‘Have you brought the moon to me?’ she asked.

‘Not yet,’ said the Court Jester, ‘but I will get it for you at once. How big do you think it is?’

‘It is just a little smaller than my thumb-nail,’ she said. ‘For when I hold my thumb-nail up at the moon it just covers it.’

‘And how far away is it?’ asked the Court Jester. ‘It is not as high as the big tree outside my window,’ said the Princess, ‘for sometimes it gets caught in the top branches.’

‘I will climb the tree tonight when the moon gets caught in the top branches and bring it to you,’ said the Court Jester. Then he thought of something else.

‘What is the moon made of, Princess?’ he asked.

‘Oh,’ she said, ‘It is gold, of course, silly.’

The Court Jester went to see the Royal Goldsmith and asked him to make a tiny round golden moon just a little smaller than the thumb – nail of the Princess Lenore. Then he asked him to hang it on a golden chain so that the Princess could wear it round her neck.

‘What is this thing I have made?’ asked the Royal Goldsmith when he had finished.

‘You have made the moon,’ said the Court Jester. ‘But the moon,’ said the Royal goldsmith, is 500,000 miles away and it is made of bronze and is round like a marble.’

‘That’s what you think,’ said the Court Jester as he went away with the moon.

The Court Jester took the moon to the Princess, and she was overjoyed. The next day she was well again and could get up and go out in the gardens to play.

But the King knew that the moon would shine in the sky again that night, and if the Princess should see it, she would know that the moon she wore on a chain was not the real moon. So he said to the Lord High chamberlain, ‘We must keep the Princess from seeing the moon tonight. Think of something.’

The Lord High Chamberlain tapped his forehead with his fingers. ‘We can make some dark glasses for the Princess.’

This made the king very angry. ‘If she wore dark glasses, she would bump into things,’ he said, ‘and then she would be ill again.’

So he called the Royal Wizard, who stood on his hands and then stood on his head and then stood on his feet again.

‘I know what we can do,’ he said, ‘we can stretch some black velvet curtains on poles to cover all the palace gardens like a circus tent.’

The King was so angry that he waved his arms around. ‘Black curtains would keep out the air,’ he said, ‘and the Princess Lenore would be ill again.’

He summoned the Royal Mathematician.

The Royal Mathematician walked round in a circle, and then he walked round in a square, and then he stood still. ‘I have it!’ he said. ‘We can let off fireworks in the garden every night. We will make a lot of silver fountains and golden cascades. When they go off, they will fill the sky with so many sparks that it will be as light as day and the Princess Lenore will not be able to see the moon.’

The King became so angry that he began jumping up and down. ‘Fireworks would keep the Princess awake,’ he said, ‘and she would be ill again.’ So he sent the Royal Mathematician away.

When he looked up again, it was dark outside and the bright rim of the moon was just peeping over the horizon. He jumped up in a great fright and rang for the Court jester. ‘Play me something very sad.’ He said, ‘for when the Princess sees the moon, she will be ill again.’

The Court Jester played on his lute. ‘What do your wise men say?’

‘They can think of no way to hide the moon that will not make the Princess ill,’ said the King.

The Court Jester played another song very softly. ‘If your wise men cannot hide the moon, then it cannot be hidden,’ he said. ‘But who could explain how to get the moon? It was the Princess Lenore. Therefore the Princess Lenore is wiser than your wise men and knows more about the moon than they do. So I will ask her.’ And before the King could stop him, he slipped quietly out of the throne room and up the wide marble staircase to the Princess Lenore’s bedroom.

The Princess was in bed, but she was wide awake and she was looking out of the window at the moon shining in the sky. Shining in her hand was the moon the Court Jester had got for her. He looked very sad, and there seemed to be tears in her eyes.

‘Tell me, Princess Lenore,’ he said sadly, ‘how can the moon be shining in the sky when it is hanging on a golden chain around your neck?’

The Princess looked at him and laughed. ‘That is easy, silly.’ She said. ‘When I lose a tooth, a new one grows in its place, doesn’t it? And when the Royal Gardener cuts the flowers in the garden, other flowers come to take their place.’

‘I should have thought of that,’ said the Court Jester, ‘for it is the same with the daylight.’

‘And it is the same with the moon,’ said the Princess Lenore. ‘I suppose it is the same with everything.’ Her voice became very low and faded away, and the Court Jester saw that she was asleep. Gently he tucked the sheets in round her.

But before he left the room, he went over to the window and winked at the moon, for it seemed to the Court Jester that the moon had winked at him.

**3. About the author:**

James Thurber(1894 - 1961) is an American Writer and was born in Columbus, Ohio. He was a humorist and even as a student, edited an undergraduate humour magazine published by the Ohio State University. His stories are famous for their wit and delicate beauty. The story ‘The Princess who wanted the Moon’ ends on a soft and delicate note.

**4. Word Notes:**

raspberry	:	kind of fruits like strawberry
tarts	:	kind of sweet dish
lord high Chamberlain	:	kind of official in the king's palace
rubies, opals, emeralds	:	costly stones; gems
black orchids .....etc	:	a list of impossible things. The Lord Chamberlain is showing that he got even impossible things for his king.
unicorn	:	an imaginary animal in ancient Greek mythology with a horse's body and a straight horn
giants	:	huge men
midgets	:	small men; dwarfs
mermaids	:	a mythical creature with a woman's head and body, and a fish's tail instead of legs
frankincense		
myrrh ambergris	:	perfumes; scents myrrh
wizard	:	a man with magic powers
tambourines	:	kind of musical instrument
wands	:	sticks
crystal spheres	:	round crystal balls in which one can see the future
wolfs bane		
nightshade	:	poisons
league	:	unit of measuring distance, equal to about 3 miles
elfland	:	land of the elf. Elf- imaginary small creatures in stories
horns of dilemma	:	(Idiom) between two problems
at sixes and sevens	:	to be in confusion
asbestos	:	mineral which does not burn
lute	:	musical instrument
cascades	:	waterfalls
rim	:	the outer edge

**5. Comprehension:**

**(A) From your understanding of the story answer the following questions:**

- a. To the Lord High Chamberlain the moon was
  - I. 25,000 miles away
  - II. 35,000 miles away
  - III. 55,000 miles away
  - IV. 1,00,000 miles away
  
- b. According to the Royal Wizard, the moon was made of
  - I. gold
  - II. silver
  - III. copper
  - IV. green cheese
  
- c. The Princess said that the moon was
  - I. as short as the little tree outside her door
  - II. as high as the tree outside the palace gate.
  - III. as high as the tree near the palace pond.
  - IV. as high as the tree outside her window.

**(B) Based on your reading of text complete the following statements:**

- I. Princess Lenore fell ill because \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  
- II. The Lord High Chamberlain seemed twice as wise as he really was because \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  
- III. The cloak of invisibility the King wore did not work because \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  
- IV. The King told the Court Jester that every time he asked anybody for the moon \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



- V. The Princess told the Court Jester that the moon was a little smaller than \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- VI. The King was so angry that he waved his arms around and said that black curtains \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- VII. The Court Jester said that the Princess Lenore was wiser than \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**(C) Answer the following questions in a sentence each:**

- I. What will make the Princess well again ?
- II. According to the Lord High Chamberlain, what was the moon made of?
- III. What was the moon made of, according to the Royal Mathematician ?
- IV. What was the moon made of, according to the Princess ?
- V. What was Lord High Chamberlain’s suggestion to keep the Princess from seeing the moon ?

**(D) Answer the following questions briefly:**

- (I) Why did the Lord High Chamberlain say that getting the moon was out of question ?
- (II) What was the moon like, according to the Royal Wizard ?
- (III) “Nobody can get the moon.”  
Why did the Royal Mathematician say so ?
- (IV) Why did the King sent for the Court Jester ?
- (V) What was the King’s problem even after the Princess got the moon ?
- (VI) What was the Princess’s explanation about the presence of the moon ?

**(E) Answer the following questions in about 80 words:**

- (I) Are wise men always capable of solving difficult problems? Justify your answer with examples from the story.
- (II) Write how the Court Jester solve both the King’s problems.

**6. Think and Write :**

The Lord High Chamberlain told the King a list of the things he did for the King. Some of them are possible and some are impossible. Now make two lists – one of the possible things, and other of the impossible things, in the following columns.

Lord High Chamberlain

Possible things	Impossible things
1	1
2	2
3	3
4	4

**7. Discuss :**

*(A) Discuss why the wise men failed to solve the Princess's problems. In the list below some probable causes for their failure is given. Select the right reasons for their failure and write them down.*

- I. They knew it was not possible.
- II. The Princess was not intelligent.
- III. They looked at the Princess' problem from an adult's point of view.
- IV. The Princess was used to demanding impossible things.
- V. They did not look at the problems from a child's point of view.
- VI. The King was not reasonable.

The wise men failed because:-

- |    |    |
|----|----|
| 1. | 3. |
| 2. | 4. |

**(B) Which of the following, do you think, may be the central idea of the story ?**

- I. When a difficult problem comes, it is best to be realistic and practical.
- II. However difficult a problem may be we should not outright say “it is not possible”. There may be some simple solution to it.

**8. Vocabulary:**

(I) Combine the words on the left column with another on the right and make new words. One has been done for you.

radio	men
news	music
court	station
book	vase
fore	paper
country	jester
air	worm
inter	head
flower	bag
pop	net

flower + vase = flower vase

**9. Writing Practice :**

The 4th birthday party of your little brother will be held on 15<sup>th</sup> of April, 20..... Now complete the half- finished draft of the formal invitation on behalf of your parents. The name of your parents are Mr. And Mrs. Jonson Gange of Paradise Village:

Mr. & Mrs. Jonson Gangte  
Of Paradise Village, House No 8

Have the pleasure of inviting you to

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To

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**10. Listening practice :**

Your teacher will play a tape about a speech in English.

Now, write the summary of what you have heard.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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Chapter 4  
**CHILDHOOD SUMMER**

*R.K. Narayan*

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**1. Introduction:**

- (A) Suppose, you are at your maternal grandparents' home and attend school there. What would you like to be done when summer holidays come? Which of the following do you think you will want to do?
- i. Continue to stay at my maternal grandparents' place during the holidays.
  - ii. To be taken to my parents' home, which is in a different city or village and meet my mom and dad.
  - iii. To go on a holiday tour without meeting my parents.
- (B) Do you think you will remember about your grandmother or grandfather when you grow up and become an adult? Write two things that you will remember about your grandfather or grandmother?
- 
- 

**2. Now, read the text, about the writer's childhood summer holidays**

When summer came, the sun hit Madras with a ferocity that made people flee the city. Rich people went away to the hill stations like Kodaikanal and Ootacamund. For me the retreat would be where my parents lived. My father was the headmaster of a government high school at Chennapatna in Mysore State which could be reached by a night's journey on one train to Bangalore, and then on by another one, a slow puffing train which passed through a rocky landscape.

My grandmother generally escorted me to Chennapatna when my school closed for summer, but she wasted nearly three weeks of my vacation in preparation for the trip. Her particular pre-occupation at this time was the making of various sun-dried edibles out of rice and pulses, which would be fried and used as a side dish all through the year. She would also soak certain green legumes in salt water and sun-dry them for use out of season all through the year.

All this was an elaborate ceremony, planned weeks ahead from February, when the air was a little damp. 'In about ten days after the Shiva Ratri festival, there will be no mist and I must get

things ready,' she would say cataloguing several items of preparation. First, shopping for the spices and pulses. Fortunately we had a co-operative consumer store occupying a whole wing of our home, which we could reach by a side door beyond the bathroom. Actually our house was one big unit which my grandmother has partitioned and rented out to different offices and stores and families, keeping only a kitchen, living room, and my uncle's upstairs room, for our own use. I did not realise at that time how much she depended on the rents for our survival.

My grandmother would select a quiet afternoon for visiting the store with her indent. When I returned home from school the floor would be strewn with gunny sacks and paper parcels. Somehow the sight of it filled me with delight. But when my uncle came home from college and noticed that activity, he frowned and made unpleasant comments, which upset my grandmother. She would retort hotly, and my uncle would say something more pointed in reply.

I never made out what they said or argued about, although I watched and studied their faces keenly by turns, and tried to read a meaning. I only understood when she mentioned "Gnana", which was my mother's name. My grandmother would say, "Can't go barehanded, I have to give Gnana something. She can't prepare anything herself; she is so sick and weak." My uncle was a devoted brother to my mother and would not carry his objections further but, murmuring something vaguely, would disappear up the staircase.

My grandmother would soon have a battalion of helpers around the house, pounding and sifting and grinding and mixing and kneading on a large scale – her helpers were her friends, admirers, tenants, and paid servants. The house resounded with a variety of orchestration – the iron-clad pounder crushing, the swish of winnows, the ceaseless roar of the grinding stone, and the chatter of people over it all. Grandmother would have pulled out great rolls of palmyra mats and spread them out on the terrace. Differently shaped edibles would issue from little brass hand-pressers, and be set on the mats, and left there to dry in the blazing sun; she allotted the task by turns to the younger members of her following to watch with stick in hand for crows and to drive them off.

When my turn came, I sat in a strip of shade all afternoon and scared away the crows by screaming at them, and was rewarded with an anna at the end of the day. Apart from the money, I rewarded myself, in the course of my watch, by peeling the half-dry stuff off the mat and eating it raw until I felt ill. My uncle ignored the turmoil in the house, averted his head, and preferred to make no comment whenever he passed the terrace, but my grandmother fried some of her products for him at the end of the day, and he relished it when I carried a plate to his room.

Eventually jars and containers would be filled and stored away for distribution at the appropriate time to various members of the family living far and near. My mother's share would be particularly heavy. "Poor thing, so many child-births, so sickly, can't do a thing for

herself,” my grandmother would keep saying to her friends. “She needs more help than anyone else. She’s helpless if I don’t help.”

My grandmother’s pre-occupation were several and concerned a great many others. She was a key figure in the lives of many. She was versatile and helpful. She was also a match-maker; she poured over horoscopes and gave advice and used her influence to get marriages settled.

I always picture her with a little spade or pruning shears in hand, for all her spare moments were spent in the garden. She could carry on discussions on vital matters with her friends while her hands were busy trimming off unwanted branches.

Some days, mostly in the evening, someone would be brought in howling with pain from a scorpion bite. Granny would first tell the person to remain quiet; then she would go to the backyard and pluck the leaves of a weed growing on an untended wall, crush it between her fingers, squeeze its juice on the spot where the scorpion had stung, and then make the sufferer also chew the bitter leaves. If the victim made a wry face, she would remark, “This leaf is *sanjeevini*, mentioned in the Ramayana. It can save you even from the venom of the darkest cobra. Don’t make that face. Go on, swallow it.”

Sometimes she consulted an exercise book in which she would have noted some special prescription for whooping cough or paralysis. When a neighbour came in a panic over a child having convulsions, she would drop whatever she was doing and hurry away, assuring the visitor again and again, “Nothing to fear. Apply cold pack on the head and hot water at the feet; there will be no trouble unless you reverse the process.”

She had so much to do from morning till night that it was difficult for her to disentangle herself from her activities and escort me to Chennapatna for my vacation. Hence my trip was constantly getting postponed, my grandmother always hoping that she would find some other traveller to escort me. But Chennapatna was a place which normally no one visited. No one had ever heard of it, although for my grandmother it was the most important place on earth, with her daughter and grandchildren living in it.

Eventually, one night, we did find ourselves on the train to Bangalore, travelling in a crowded thirdclass carriage, surrounded by all the tins and baskets in which grandmother carried the gifts for her daughter.

**3. About the author:**

R.K. Narayan is a well-known Indian writer whose novels are read all over the world. He wrote several novels and many short stories. Some of them are – *The Man-Eater of Malgudi*, *The Guide*, *Waiting for the Mahatma*, *The Bachelor of Arts*, etc. Childhood Summer is taken from *My Days*, a book in which the author tells the story of his own childhood. As a child, Narayan lived in Madras with his grandmother and uncle and his parents lived in Chennapatna, a small town. In the text you will find how Narayan re-creates the character of his grandmother.

**4. Word Notes and Glossary :**

ferocity	- with great force (Madras, modern-day Chennai is a hot place)
retreat	- place where one goes away seeking shelter and comfort
puffing train	- train with a steam engine which makes much steam and smoke
escorted	- took or guided (the author)
pre occupation	- something with which one becomes busy
edibles	- things that people eat
legumes	- kind of vegetables like beans, peas, etc.
out of season	- when not in season
cataloguing	- making separate lists of related things
wing	- (here) portion
indent	- list of things needed
strewn	- scattered
gunny- sacks	- jute bags
retort	- answer back angrily
battalion	- large group of people
pounding	- crushing
sifting	- separating things like the good ones from the bad ones
kneading	- preparing dough by pouring a little water on crushed wheat, etc, and pressing it with the hands or other things
resounded	- filled with the echoes of various sounds



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orchestration	- (here)sounds
winnow	- pouring down grains in the air to separate them from their husk or dust
palmyra	- palm leaves
anna	- a unit of small coin in old time
averted	- turned away
relished	- enjoyed eating
versatile	- possessing many skills and interests
matchmaker	- one who arranges marriages between young people
pruning	- cutting off unwanted branches from a flower plant
shears	- large scissors
weed	- plant
untended	- not taken care of
sanjeevani	- herb that would cure ailment
convulsions	- uncontrollable shaking of the body
disentangle	- to make one free from a work or engagement

**5. Based on your reading of the text, answer the following questions by choosing the correct option :**

**(A) *The grandmother's task of making things for her relatives became easier because***

- i. she was an expert.
- ii. the uncle stopped to object to her work.
- iii. there was a co- operative consumer store in a wing of the house.
- iv. the author helped her.

**(B) *The author's uncle stopped objections to the activities of the author's grandmother because***

- i. he loved the author's mother, his sister.
- ii. he did not want to carry on arguing with his mother.
- iii. the author's mother snubbed him.
- iv. he loved the author.

**(C) The author's grandmother was a key-figure in the lives of many because**

- i. she was highly respected.
- ii. she knew how to prepare varieties of edibles.
- iii. she supported many with money.
- iv. she knew many ways to help the people.

**(D) The author had to delay his journey to his parent's house because**

- i. his grandmother was not ready.
- ii. the summer vacation was delayed.
- iii. his grandmother had to help the neighbours..
- iv. his uncle was not ready.

**6. (A) Based on your reading of the text, complete the following statements:-**

- i. As a young boy the author did not realise that his grandmother had to depend much on the money that came from \_\_\_\_\_.
- ii. The author's grandmother was worried because the author's mother was \_\_\_\_\_
- iii. The task of driving off the crows from the drying foodstuffs fell on \_\_\_\_\_
- iv. The author often fail because \_\_\_\_\_
- v. The grandmother spent all her spare time in \_\_\_\_\_

**(B) Answer the following questions in a sentence each :**

- i. How was Shiva Ratri festival relevant to the author's going to his hometown?
- ii. What time did the author's grandmother select to visit the stores?
- iii. How did the author scare away the crows?
- iv. The author's grandmother was often busy trimming off unwanted branches in the

garden. What other activity did she carry on at the same time ?

- v. What was the grandmother's opinion about the curing ability of sanjivini ?

**(C) Answer the following questions briefly :**

- i. Why did the author's uncle dislike his mother's (author's grandmother's) certain summer activity ?
- ii. "She needs more help than anyone else. She's helpless if I don't help." Why did grandmother say so about Gnana ?
- iii. In what sense was the author's grandmother a match-maker ?
- iv. Why did grandmother keep an exercise book ?
- v. Why had the author no one to escort him to Chennapatna other than his grandmother ?

**(D) Answer the following in about 80 words :**

- i. Describe the grandmother's activities prior to her leaving for Chennapatna.
- ii. "She was versatile and helpful." How was the grandmother versatile and helpful?

**7. Think and Write:**

- i. Can you guess if the author's grandmother was a well-to-do woman ? Is there any hint that it was different in the past ?
- ii. Which of the following epithets do you think can be applied to grandmother and which cannot be applied to her ? Put them in separate lists.

She was efficient in her work.

She was not efficient.

She did not care for the author's holidays.

She was helpful to the neighbours.

She made the boys do useless task like guarding the birds.

She was partial to Gnana, which was wrong.

She used to quarrel with her son.

Applicable	Unapplicable

**8. Discuss :**

Suppose you are at your grandparents. Now, discuss in your group why you would look forward to your school summer vacation and write them down for presentation to the class.

**9. Vocabulary :**

- i. Find out from the text words opposite in meaning to the words given below, the number within brackets indicate the para in which the words occur.

mild(1)                  not detailed (3) smile(4)

annoy (4)                  cold (6)                  noisy (11)

- ii. Here is a dialogue between grandmother and uncle. Many words in the dialogue are missing. Fill in these gaps with suitable words from the list given below :

Uncle                  —          Mother, I don't \_\_\_\_\_ these foodstuffs \_\_\_\_\_ everywhere.  
They look so \_\_\_\_\_. There is \_\_\_\_\_ to put my feet on.

Grandmother        —          I'm \_\_\_\_\_ it because I have to.  
I've to \_\_\_\_\_ Narayan to his \_\_\_\_\_  
I cannot go \_\_\_\_\_

bare- handed	ugly	doing	like
home	take	scattered	space

**10. Writing Practice**

Write a letter to a friend about how you spent your summer vacation at your grandmother's place.

Date :

Dear Santosh/Meena,

Do you know, I \_\_\_\_\_ my summer vacation at \_\_\_\_\_ place at Shillong. Shilong has cool \_\_\_\_\_. I enjoyed \_\_\_\_\_ there. The pine trees there \_\_\_\_\_. I wish you \_\_\_\_\_ with me in Shillong. More \_\_\_\_\_.

With \_\_\_\_\_.

Yours Sincerely ,

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Chapter 5

## THE TASTE OF AN HILSA

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**1. Introduction :-**

- (A) I. Have you ever seen fishermen fishing at the river or lakes or ponds? What do you think why they are fishing? Whether for his consumption or for selling.
- II. Have you ever noticed an incident where you have to sacrifice your prized possession for the sake of a greater need.

**2. Now, read a story about a family and an Hilsa fish :**

Stars are twinkling in the ocean of the sky; one or two have fallen at times. The echo of the river Barak reverberates in the ear.

No one has come down so far. It is only the father and the son. The son is holding the oar and the father is mending the net. Turning around, the father has seen the son dozing while also holding the oar, "Aye! Mani, what is this, you are dozing? The sun is about to rise! Will I rub your eyes with hot pepper? Wash your face properly in the water."

Placing the oar inside the skiff, Mani washes his face as ordered by his father. Then after wiping his face with the front hem of his loincloth, he again picks up the oar.

Perhaps he feels pity for his son's predicament. He takes out a bidi stick and a matchstick from the right pocket of his torn vest and says, "Here, here is a stick of bidi! Light it and pass it on to me after a couple of puffs."

Mani tries to strike the match with the bidi in his mouth. But even after striking two or three matchsticks as it has failed to burn, Mani grumbles, "This! If I thrust it in the middle of the river!"

The father says, "Give it to me, and let me try. The matches of these days are coated with chemical on one side only, all tricks for taking money." And coming closer he lights the match.

No sooner has Mani inhaled deeply a longish puff of the bidi than he hears the voice of the sadhu with plaited hair on the ghat on the other side of the bank. "Bom Bholenath, Jai Siva Sambhu."

If this sadhu has awakened, the dawn is not far off. Other people may also be arriving. The father and the son are rowing towards the eddy of Langor Baaba. Many people are reluctant to enter into this area. But generally many fishes are there. If the river is in spate, a lot of porpoises are found here. Sometimes alligators are also seen. Last year an alligator was killed here by shooting.

Sensing a jolt in his fishing net, the father pulls it up but finds nothing. A porpoise jumps up provocatively near the skiff.

After trying in vain in that snaring eddy for a couple of times, the father and son row towards the south. In the meantime, four or five other boats have also appeared, and the morning lights are looming.

Drifting a little further, near the embankment of the Naorem people, they have become lucky. Inside the net, they could see a white Hilsa fish of considerably big size wallowing and wriggling. The faces of the father and the son filled with joy.

Mani, with the nature of a child, suddenly exclaims, “Wah, very nice! Will be tasty, father !”

“Keep silence, it is not good to speak like that,” the father chides. Feeling the presence of somebody coming down the embankment, they look back and see the stout old man of the Naorem family watching them attentively. He calls, “Mani’s father, O Mani’s father.”

Mani’s father pretends not to be listening, as his personal equations are not good with this man. He knows that he would ask to buy the fish. But he would never give the proper price, as others would give. Even though he is rich, he would bargain for a hundred years.

But after persistent calls, he is compelled to answer, “What is the matter, uncle ?”

The old man says – “How many fishes have you caught ? Let me buy one. Since the stoppage of the import of fishes from Pakistan, my tongue has dried and health too, stunted.”

Mani’s father grumbles in annoyance, “So niggardly a man, even picks up crow’s droppings from the road. Why should not your tongue go dry ?” Then he gives the answer in an audible voice, “Not many catches, only this one.”

“Let me buy it.”

“Not today, uncle, I don’t want to sell this only catch.”

Seeing the obstinacy, the old man of Naorem family does not continue.

When the father is mumbling that the meeting of this man will spoil the luck, the son says, “I also don’t like this man. Their son Tomal beat me the day before yesterday. I too .....”

The child's words cannot be completed, as they are interrupted by the father's grumbling when he has seen a fish being caught in the net of Rahimuddin and his son, "For others, see, they catch just after arriving."

Rahimuddin makes a call after keeping the fish, "O brother Chaoba, how many have you caught?"

"Only one."

"But then, the labour is not lost. Yesterday I caught three. I sold them at four rupees. I sold them at four rupees each."

"Yes, if I sell it I may get some money but I won't. My daughter Sanarei is in an advanced stage of pregnancy. I want to give her a treat of a nice meal. It is rather a shame that I have almost forgotten the taste of Hilsa as I always try to sell. Today, I will eat."

When the father and the son arrive at their home, the day has well advanced. The sun's shadow of the eaves of the roof is in the middle of the verandah. While sitting on the verandah and sipping the simple black tea with gur boiled by her daughter, Tampha, Kansam Kanhai makes a call from the gate, "Chaoba, O Chaoba ! Is it true that you have caught an Hilsa ?" Chaoba shudders when he hears the voice of Kanhai. He remembers the amount of two and a quarter of rupees, which he owes to Kanhai.

Before the father can reply, his little son Mukta babbles, "Yes, a very big one."

Chaoba does not know whether Kanhai has heard the reply of the child or not, but he scolds the child, "Hey, you boy, a liar ! What is your duty, here ?" Then he loudly answers, "I haven't caught any, who told you ?"

Kanhai goes back saying, "All right, if you don't catch."

Mukta talks to his playmate Tomchou, "We will eat Hilsa, a short while later," and he measures the size of the fish with his little hands, "This much big, it is caught from the river. Do you have any?" Mukta gestures with eyes and hands while speaking.

Then his sister, Tampha comes out with the hookah for her father; and giving it, she informs, "Father, there is no rice for meal, now. What is to be done ?"

On hearing this, Chaoba stares at his daughter. The desire for hookah has vanished. By that time, the old and mangy dog without fur that looks like a skeleton appears and staggers into the



yard. All the anger of the poverty and of not having even rice at home fell on him. Chaoba, in frenzy, throws the small wooden stool on which he is sitting to the dog. Probably because of its innocence, the dog is not hit. It runs away barking towards the gate.

Chaoba also enters angrily inside the house. It just happened to be the moment of the change of posture by the bed-ridden Tampha's mother, who has been in chronic illness for a long time. Tampha's mother perhaps does not have any idea of the war, which has just ended outside. So the mother says, "Have you heard what the child said, there is no rice. What is to be done?"

The smouldering fire of the rage suddenly flares up, "Yes, I cannot manage it alone. Instead of torturing others, let you die, if you are going to die."

He would have continued a little, but cannot because of somebody's calling, outside.

Chaoba comes out to see the man who is calling and he gathers his composure when he finds Thaninjao, and asks, "What is the matter?"

"Our Thaballei has come. I couldn't find any fish. But I heard that brother Chaoba has caught some Hilsas. That is why I am coming."

"It is only one. Come inside and see," saying that Chaoba leads Thaninjao inside the house and shows the fish.

"What is the price?" asks Thaninjao.

"Give me four rupees; the Hilsa of the Barak is also tasty."

"That is high, I will give three and a half," saying that Thaninjao picks up the fish.

"But you must give the money now. I will buy rice."

"Yes, yes, you can take money or rice as you please," saying that Thaninjao comes out of the house, with the fish.

When he reaches the courtyard, Mukta sees him, and calls his father, and says, "Father, father, our fish has been taken away, the fish has been carried away."

"I am not taking it free! Money will be paid" Thaninjao answers in jest.

The child remains mum. He simply stares at the fish and stays still.

**3. About the Author :**

Nongthombam Kunjamohan Singh (b. 1935) started writing from his early age. After the publication of *Ilisha Amagi Mahao* he became to be known as an established writer. He has travelled home and abroad and was associated with many literary organisations. He has translated the poems of Subhas Mukhopadhyay and Jibanananda Das into Manipuri. Other than Soviet Land Nehru Award (1976), he received Sahitya Akademy Translation Award (2004) for *Gora* by Rabindranath Tagore. His published work include *Chekhlachado* (short story/ 2002), *Sharat – Sandhya* (novel/2005), *Sovietki Leibakta* (travelogue/1997) etc.

*The Taste of Hilsa* is a story about the helplessness that poverty renders a man and the irony of fate. The story has been translated into English by Dr. Thounaojam Ratankumar Singh, a Professor in the Dept. of English, Manipur University.

**4. Word Notes and Glossary**

reverberates	- echo
eddy	- to move fast in circle
spate	- over flowing water
skiff	- small light boat
drifting	- to move slowly with no control over directions
embankment	- an artificial slope on the bank of the river for using the water of the river
wallowing	- roll about slowly in liquid
wriggling	- turning from side to side
personal equations are not good	- not in good in terms
niggardly	- miserly
eaves	- the lower side of a roof that sticks out over the top of a wall
shudders	- to shake suddenly with very unpleasant thought or feeling
babble	- to talk in a quick, confused foolish way
hookah	- a type of pipe which brings smoke through a container of water. (hidakfu in manipuri)

stagger	- to walk or move in a way that shows a lack of balance
mangy	- infection disease that affects the skin
frenzy	- uncontrolled and excited behaviour or emotion which is sometimes violent
composure	- calmness and control
jest	- something which is said or done in order to amuse

**5. Comprehension :**

**(A) Based on your reading of the text, answer the follow up questions by choosing the correct options :**

- I. The morning prayer of the Sadhu indicated
  - a. the approach of dawn.
  - b. the coming of storm.
  - c. that he was awake.
  - d. that the people should awake.
  
- II. Chaoba chides Mani when he exclaims in delight because
  - a. somebody might hear it.
  - b. he felt it was not good to speak like that
  - c. he would disturb the peace of the dawn
  - d. the fish might run away.
  
- III. Chaoba had to sell the fish because
  - a. he wanted a huge profit.
  - b. he had to buy rice.
  - c. he wanted to do Thaninjao a favour.
  - d. he wanted to teach his son a lesson.

**(B) Fill in the blanks:**

- a. The father and the son are rowing towards the eddy of \_\_\_\_\_.
- b. When father and the son arrive at their home, the day has well \_\_\_\_\_.
- c. Probably because of its \_\_\_\_\_ the dog is not hit.
- d. The child remains \_\_\_\_\_. He simply stares at the fish and \_\_\_\_\_ still.

**(C) Answer the following questions briefly :**

- I. Where do Chaoba and Mani set out to fish before dawn ?
- II. What is the prayer of the shadhu in the morning ?
- III. Why is Chaoba reluctant to sell the fish to the old man of the Naorem family ?
- IV. Why did Mani hate to see the old man of Naorem ?
- V. Who were the other fisherman at the river besides Chaoba and Mani ?
- VI. What was the talk between Chaoba and Rahimuddin about ?
- VII. Whom did Chaoba want to feed the fish ?
- VIII. What did Tampha tell his father when he returned home ?
- IX. Why does Chaoba shudder when he hears the voice of Konsam Kanhai ?
- X. Why does Chaoba throw the wooden stool at the dog ?
- XI. How does little Mukta react when he sees the fish being taken away ?

**(D) Answer the following questions in about 80 words each :**

- I. Write a note on the harsh life of a fisherman.
- II. Under what circumstances does Chaoba had to sell the hilsa ?

**6. Think and Answer :**

- I. Do you think that the selling of the fish by Chaoba at the end of the story is justifiable ?  
Give reasons for your answer.

- II. Why does Chaoba say furiously to his wife ?  
“Let you die, if you are going to die”.

**7. Discuss :**

- I. Discuss among yourselves, why do people sometimes blame others when they themselves are suffering ?
- II. Irony refers to a situation when what happens is opposite to what one thinks or plans. In the light of this discuss and bring out the element of irony the story contains.

**8. Vocabulary :**

Fill in the blanks in each sentence with a suitable word from the list given.

predicament	inhale	drift	embankment
	persistent	grumble	treat

- I. \_\_\_\_\_ long and fill your lungs with morning air.
- II. Chaoba gave us a good \_\_\_\_\_ in his birthday party.
- III. You have been lying all the time, and so now you find yourself in a bad \_\_\_\_\_.
- IV. Don't \_\_\_\_\_ all the time. It is a bad habit.
- V. \_\_\_\_\_ rain has made life miserable for everyone.
- VI. I am afraid, the flood water will break the \_\_\_\_\_.
- VII. I saw a boat \_\_\_\_\_ is the current.

**9. Writing Practice :**

You have lost your English Text book in the school. Write a notice to be put up on the 'Lost and Found' bulletin board asking the finder to return it to you.

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Chapter 6  
**THE RICE CAKES**

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**Introduction:-**

1. (A) All of you know that greed and telling lies are negative virtues. You must have heard of the story of the shepherd who made fun of the villagers lying about a tiger.  
(B) Do you know of any incident in which the person who told lies had to suffer some punishment or loss ? Tell about it to your class.

<b>2. Now, read an interesting drama about a boy who told lies out of greed:</b>
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**Cast of characters :**

- KO KO : An eight-year-old Burmese boy ; slightly plump.  
Nyi Nyi : A nine-year-old Burmese boy, friend of Ko Ko.  
Tin Soe : An eight-year-old Burmese boy, friend of Ko Ko.  
Mi Mi : A seven- year-old Burmese girl, friend of Ko Ko.  
U Ba Tun : People’s Shop manager.(This part can be played by a tall boy with a thick false moustache and glasses)

*A simple room with bamboo matting walls and a meat-safe against one wall. On the meat-safe are a radio, a teapot, some tea bowls, and an empty pink flower vase. A bamboo mat is on the floor in the centre of the room, with a low, round table on top of it. Two doors, one in the wall serving as a backdrop, another at the side in one of the wings. The curtain rises to the sound of birds chirping. A cock crows in the distance. A dog barks. A prayer gong sounds in the distance. Ko Ko enters, yawns and stretches.*

Ko Ko : Father and Mother have gone to the field to transplant the paddy. I have to look after the house till mother returns to prepare lunch ..... Hmm .... I’ll see what Mother has left for me for breakfast.(*He goes to the meat-safe, opens it and looks in. He takes out a plate containing four rice cakes. He licks his lips and smiles.*)

Ko Ko : Ah! Ha! Rice cakes! My favourite !  
(*He rubs his stomach as he takes the plate to the table. He puts the plate on the table and sits down.*)

- Ko Ko : I am going to have a good feed.  
*(He picks up a cake, takes it towards his mouth. There is a loud knock on the door.)*
- Nyi Nyi : Ko Ko! Hey, Ko Ko, open the door. It 's me, Nyi Nyi.
- Ko Ko : My Goodness! It's that greedy glut, Nyi . If he sees these rice cakes he'll want some too. I must hide them !
- Nyi Nyi : Open up, Ko Ko. What are you doing, taking so long ?
- Ko Ko : Where shall I hide them? Where shall I hide them ? *(Looking at the radio on the meat-safe.)* I've got it ! I'll hide the plate behind the radio. *(In a louder voice.)* Coming, Nyi Nyi, I'm coming. *(He rushes to the meat-safe and quickly puts the plate behind the radio. Then he rushes to the door and opens it.)*
- Ko Ko : Come in. Nyi Nyi, come in.  
*(Nyi Nyi steps in.)*
- Nyi Nyi : What took you so long to open the door ?
- Ko Ko : Nothing, nothing, I... err ... I just finished my breakfast and was rinsing my mouth. But tell me, what brings you so early in the morning ?
- Nyi Nyi : What ? Don't tell me you have forgotten. There's going to be an important announcement on the radio about our exam.
- Ko Ko : B-b-but you have your own radio at home, don't you ?
- Nyi Nyi : It's out of order, so I thought I'd come to you and listen to the announcement on your radio. *(Nyi Nyi sits down at the round table.)*
- Nyi Nyi : Bring the radio here so that we can relax and listen.
- Ko Ko : I ..... I'm sorry, Nyi Nyi, there's something wrong with our radio too.
- Nyi Nyi : *(Getting up.)* Let's try and see. I'll go and get it.  
*(Nyi Nyi starts to walk toward the meat-safe.)*
- Ko Ko : No, Nyi Nyi. No ! Don't touch it ! You'll get a bad shock if you touch it.  
*(Nyi Nyi stops suddenly.)*

- Nyi Nyi : Phew, I nearly touched it. Well, I don't want to miss that announcement. Maybe I'll go to Tin Soe's place. Want to come along?
- Ko Ko : No, no, thanks. You can give me the news later. Well, you'd better hurry or you'll miss it.
- Nyi Nyi : Yes, yes. So, see you later. *(Nyi Nyi makes a quick exit.)*
- Ko Ko : *(Breathing a deep sigh.)* Phew, that was close. Well, now to have a good feed. My stomach has started to growl with hunger.
- (Ko Ko gets the plate from behind the radio and brings it to the table. He sits down, picks up a cake and brings it towards his mouth. Sound of loud knocking on the door.)*
- Ko Ko : *(Putting the cake quickly down on the plate.)* I wonder who that is
- Mi Mi : *(Knocking again.)* Open the door, Please. It's me, Mi Mi.
- Ko Ko : Oh, my goodness, it's Mi Mi. She likes rice cakes as much as I do. And she's always hungry. I must hide my rice cakes. But where shall I hide them? She is sure to search everywhere for something to eat.
- Mi Mi : *(Knocking again.)* Open the door, Ko Ko. Why are you taking so long?
- Ko Ko : Where to hide them? Where to hide them? *(Looking around the room.)* Ah, I've got it! I'll hide them in this empty flower vase. *(Ko Ko puts the cakes into the flower vase.)*
- Ko Ko : Just a second, Mi Mi. I'm coming.
- (Ko Ko goes to the (side) door the opens it. Mi Mi enters carrying a bundle wrapped in paper.)*
- Mi Mi : What took you so long to open the door?
- Ko Ko : I just finished my breakfast and was rinsing out my mouth. Come, sit down.
- (Ko Ko and Mi Mi sit down at the round table.)*
- Mi Mi : I just met your father and mother going to the fields. Your mother said she had left some rice cakes for you, so I thought....
- Ko Ko : Rice cakes? Yes, Yes, rice cakes. But I've eaten them up.



- Mi Mi : What ? You have eaten all of them ? Not even one left ?
- Ko Ko : Sorry, Mi Mi. I ate them all up. (*Rubbing his stomach with his hand.*) See, I'm so full. I don't think I can have any lunch today.
- Mi Mi : That's too bad. My mother made banana fritters this morning, and I thought I'd share them with you. I've brought four. Two for you and two for me. I thought we'd have a good feed with your rice cakes and my banana fritters.
- (Mi Mi opens up the paper bundle and takes out the banana fritters. She puts them on a plate on the table.)*
- Mi Mi : Hmm .... they're still hot, and look delicious. What a pity your stomach is so full that you can't eat any more !
- Ko Ko : (*Looking at the banana fritters and licking his lips, speaks aside.*) I made a big mistake telling her that my stomach was too full. Anyway. I don't think she can finish all four of the banana fritters. Maybe she'll leave two for me.
- (Mi Mi picks up one banana fritter.)*
- Mi Mi : Have you got any plain tea to wash it down ?
- Ko Ko : Yes, it's on the meat-safe. I'll get it for you.
- (Ko Ko brings the teapot and two bowls. Mi Mi pours the tea into one bowl.)*
- Mi Mi : I don't think you want any tea. Your stomach is too full.
- Ko Ko : (*Aside.*) My stomach has started to growl with hunger. I hope she doesn't hear it.
- Mi Mi : (*While eating a banana fritter.*) What was that sound ?
- Ko Ko : Sound ? What sound ?
- Mi Mi : A low growling sound. There it is again! Did you hear it ?
- Ko Ko : Oh, that sound ? It's only a rat. We have a big rat in the house. And it often makes that sound.
- (Sound of knocking at the door.)*
- Ko Ko : Yes? Who is it ?

- Tin Soe : It's me. Tin Soe.  
*(Ko Ko starts to get up.)*
- Mi Mi : No, don't get up, Ko Ko. Take a rest. Your stomach is too full. I'll go and open the door.  
*(Mi Mi goes and opens the door. Tin Soe enters carrying a bunch of aster flowers.)*
- Tin Soe : Ah, Mi Mi, You're here too !
- Mi Mi : Come in, Tin Soe.  
*(Going to the table.)* Hello, Ko Ko. Hey, what's the matter with you ? You don't look well.
- Ko Ko : Hello, Tin Soe.  
*(Mi Mi and Tin Soe sit down at the table.)*
- Mi Mi : *(To Tin Soe.)* He's all right. It's only that he had too many rice cakes for breakfast this morning.
- Tin Soe : *(Looking at the banana fritters.)* Ah, banana fritters !
- Mi Mi : I brought them to share with Ko Ko. But since he is too full, maybe you could help me finish them up.
- Tin Soe : It will be a pleasure. Your mother's banana fritters are the best in the whole village.  
*(Tin Soe picks up one banana fritter and starts eating it with relish. Mi Mi pours him a bowl of tea.)*
- Mi Mi : Here's tea to wash it down.
- Tin Soe : *(Taking a sip of tea and smacking his lips.)* Hmm ... very good tea. It's good luck for me that I came here.
- Ko Ko : *(Aside.)* Yes, good luck for you, but bad luck for me. *(Mi Mi and Tin Soe finish one banana fritter each. Mi Mi picks up another.)*
- Mi Mi : Here, Tin Soe. Have one more.

- Tin Soe : No, thanks. One is enough for me.
- Mi Mi : Take half, at least. I'll eat the other half. And we can leave one for Ko Ko to eat in the evening.
- Tin Soe : Okay if you insist, I'll eat the other half.
- Ko Ko : Well, at least they're going to leave one for me. I'm so hungry.
- Tin Soe : What was that sound?
- Mi Mi : It's only a big rat. Ko Ko says it often makes that sound.
- Tin Soe : Well, it sounded like someone's stomach growling with hunger. *(Mi Mi and Tin Soe finish the banana fritter.)*
- Mi Mi : By the way what are these flowers for?
- Tin Soe : Oh, I forgot. My mother says that Ko Ko's mother bought a flower vase from the People's Shop yesterday. She sent these flowers for the vase. *(Looks around and notices the vase on the meat-safe.)* Ah, there it is. On the meat- safe there !
- Mi Mi : Give the flowers to me. I'll wash the vase and put the flowers in it.  
*(Tin Soe gives the flowers to Mi Mi who starts to get up.)*
- Ko Ko : *(Excitedly.)* No, Mi Mi, no !
- Mi Mi : *(Startled.)* You frightened me. What's the matter, Ko Ko ?
- Ko Ko : The ... the ... the flowers ... these flowers. My mother is allergic to aster flowers. Every time she sees aster flowers, she ... breaks out in a rash.
- Tin Soe : Oh I did not know that. Well, I'll have to take the flowers back, I suppose.
- Ko Ko : *(Heaving a sigh. Aside.)* Oh, how I have to lie to save my rice cakes!  
*(There is a knock on the door.)*
- Ko Ko : Yes! Who is it ?
- U Ba Tun : It's me, People's Shop manager, U Ba Tun.
- Mi Mi : *(To Ko Ko.)* Don't get up, Ko Ko. I'll open the door. *(Loudly.)*  
Coming, Uncle U Ba Tun.  
  
*(U Ba Tun enters carrying a blue coloured flower vase)*
-

- Mi Mi : Come, sit at the table.
- U Ba Tun : Hello, children. (*Looking at the table*). Ah. I see that you're having a little party.
- Mi Mi : Come, sit at the table, Uncle U Ba Tun.  
(*U Ba Tun sits down at the table.*)
- Mi Mi : What about some tea, Uncle ?
- U Ba Tun : I don't mind if I do. Thank you, child, thank you.  
(*Mi Mi goes to the meat-safe, brings a bowl, and pours tea into it. She offers it to U Ba Tun.*)
- U Ba Tun : (*Taking a sip.*) Ah, delicious tea. So fragrant , so refreshing.
- Tin Soe : Had your breakfast, Uncle U Ba Tun ?
- U Ba Tun : No, not yet. I was thinking of dropping in at the tea shop and having a bite.
- Mi Mi : No need to go to the tea shop. You can have this banana fritter.
- U Ba Tun : Well, I ... I wouldn't like to deprive any of you.
- Tin Soe : That's all right, Uncle U Ba Tun. We're all full up to here. (*Putting a finger to his throat.*)
- U Ba Tun : Well, thanks. Hey, what was that sound ?
- Tin Soe : It's rat. It often makes that sound ?
- U Ba Tun : Hmm ... I thought it was my stomach growling with hunger. (*U picks up the banana fritter and starts eating it.*) You're so quiet today, Ko Ko. Anything troubling you ?
- Ko Ko : Nothing, Uncle U Ba Tun. Nothing at all. I'm perfectly well.
- Mi Mi : He's too full. Had too much to eat for breakfast. (*U Ba Tun finishes the banana fritter and wipes his mouth with the back of his hand.*)
- U Ba Tun : That was the best banana fritter that I ever tasted. Thanks, children.
- Mi Mi and Tin Soe : You're welcome, Uncle.
- U Ba Tun : Well, Ko Ko, your mother bought a flower vase from our shop yesterday.

(Looks around). Ah, there it is !

Ko Ko : W-w- what's the matter with the vase ?

U Ba Tun : Well, you see, she wanted a blue vase but I couldn't find one of that colour, so she took that pink one. After she left the shop I started searching in the storeroom, and I was lucky to find this blue vase. I have come to exchange it for her.

(U Ba Tun goes to the meat-safe, picks up the pink vase and puts down the blue one.)

U Ba Tun : (To Ko Ko) I'm sure your mother is going to be very happy when she sees that blue vase. Well, have to be going. Thanks, children, and goodbye.

Mi Mi and Tin Soe : Goodbye, Uncle U Ba Tun

Ko Ko : Goodbye, Uncle U Ba Tun. (Aside.) Goodbye RICE CAKES.

**3. About the Author :**

The play has been translated from the original Burmese into English by P. Aung Khim.  
(Source : Together in Dramaland, National Book Trust, India).

**4. Word Notes and Glossary :**

plump	-	slightly fat
bamboo matting walls	-	walls made of bamboo slices woven with one another
meat-safe	-	cupboard for keeping meat
backdrop	-	scene at the back stage
wings	-	the sides on the left or right of the stage. The wings are divided into sections for the actors to enter or leave the stage
prayer gong	-	large circular metal object kept hanging in a frame in temples. Devotees hit it during prayers
transplant	-	to take a plant out of the ground and put it at a different place
food	-	meal

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glut	- (short for ) glutton ; one who eats more than one should
rinsing	- washing
phew	- (interjection) expression of relief
growl	- make a low sound in the stomach caused by hunger
fritters	- kind of specially prepared food
allergic	- a medical condition in which a person becomes sick or his skin covered with red marks as a reaction to something he eats or touches
aster	- name of a flower
rash	- red marks on the body
aside	- in drama, a way of delivering a dialogue which the characters on the stage are not supposed to hear, but which the audience can hear
delicious	- pleasant to taste or smell

**5. Comprehension :**

**(A) Based on your reading of the play complete the following statements :**

- (a) Seeing the rice cakes for breakfast Ko Ko was thrilled thinking that he was going to \_\_\_\_\_
- (b) Nyi Nyi came to Ko Ko's place because he wanted to hear on the radio \_\_\_\_\_
- (c) To keep the rice cakes away from Mi Mi Ko Ko hid \_\_\_\_\_
- (d) Commenting on the banana fritter that he had eaten, uncle U Ba Tan said \_\_\_\_\_

**(B) Answer the following questions in a sentence each :**

- (a) What had happened to Nyi Nyi 's radio ?
- (b) Why did Ko Ko take sometime in opening the door for Mi Mi ?
- (c) Why did Ko Ko not want Mi Mi to put the aster flowers in the vase ?

- (d) The visitors often heard a growling sound which they thought was made by a rat. What was it actually ?

**(C) Answer the following questions briefly :**

- (a) How did Ko Ko get rid of Nyi Nyi ?  
(b) What lie did Ko Ko tell to Mi Mi for his delay in opening the door ?  
(c) “Yes, good luck for you, but bad luck for me.’ why does Ko Ko say so ?  
(d) Why did U Ba Tun visit Ko Ko’s place ?  
(e) ‘..... Goodbye RICE CAKES.’

Why did Ko Ko say so ?

**(D) Answer the following questions in about 80 words:**

- (i) “Oh, how I have to lie to save my rice cakes !” said Ko Ko.

Write how Ko Ko had to lie for his rice cakes ?

- (ii) Bring out the moral of the story.

**6. Think and Answer :**

- (a) Suppose Ko Ko had not lied when Nyi Nyi came. What would have been the sequence of events? Discuss in your group for presentation to the whole class.
- (b) Here is a list of the events that had happened in Ko Ko’s house that morning. But they are not in their proper sequence. Arrange them in their proper sequence.
- (i) Ko Ko is about to eat breakfast.  
(ii) Mi Mi comes and knocks at the door.  
(iii) Ko Ko hides his rice cakes in the vase.  
(iv) Tin Soe comes bringing some asters.  
(v) Ko Ko hides rice cakes behind the radio.  
(vi) U Ba Tun turns up.  
(vii) Ko Ko tells his mother is allergic to aster.

**7. Vocabulary :**

Fill in the blanks in each of the following sentences with the words given in the box :

allergy	glutton	rash	rinse
delicious	vase	growling	

- I. After you eat your meal, \_\_\_\_ your mouth.
- II. The oranges of Tamenglong tastes \_\_\_\_\_.
- III. Can you hear how the tigers are \_\_\_\_\_.
- IV. A \_\_\_\_\_ is sure to end up in shame.
- V. Something must be wrong with the man. His body is covered with \_\_\_\_\_.
- VI. If you eat or touch something that does not suit you, you may have \_\_\_\_\_.
- VII. I want to buy a flower \_\_\_\_\_ for my mother.



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## POETRY SECTION

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Chapter 1  
**ABOU BEN ADHEM**

*James Henry Leigh Hunt*

**1. Introduction :**

(A) God is the father of mankind. What is His greatest gift to man ?

- (a) Love .
- (b) Riches .
- (c) Fame .

Discuss in your group and justify your answer.

(B) Imagine two men.

- (a) one who loves god.
- (b) one who loves people.

Whom will God love more ?

**2. Now let us read a poem by James Henry Leigh Hunt :**

Abou Ben Adhem (may his tribe increase!)  
Awoke one night from a deep dream of peace,  
And saw, within the moonlight in his room,  
Making it rich, and like a lily in bloom,  
An angel writing in a book of gold –  
Exceeding peace had made Ben Adhem bold;  
And to the Presence in the room he said  
“What writest thou ?” – The vision raised its head,  
And with a look made of all sweet accord,  
Answered “The names of those who love the Lord.”  
“And is mine one?” Said Abou. “Nay not so”  
Replied the angel. Abou Spoke more low.  
But cheerly still, and said “I pray thee, then,  
Write me as one that loves his fellow men.”

The angel wrote and vanished. The next night  
It came again with a great wakening light  
And showed the names whom love of God had blessed.  
And lo! Ben Adhem’s name led all the rest.



**3. About the poet :**

James Henry Leigh Hunt(1784 - 1859), poet, essayist and journalist, was a friend of well known English Romantic Poets like P.B. Shelly, Byron and John Keats. For his fearless journalism, he went to jail. He is one of the best known writers of light miscellaneous essays. His chief poetical works include 'The story of Rinini' and 'Hero and Leander.' Abou Ben Adhem is one of the best known poems of Leigh Hunt.

**4. About the poem :**

In the poem, Abou Ben Adhem wakes up from a dream to find an angel writing in a book of gold, the names of the people who loved the Lord. Hunt conveys the message that God loves most the man who loves his fellow human beings.

**5. Word Notes and Glossary**

tribe	— (here) kind of people like Abou Ben Adhem
deep dream of peace	— dream occurring in deep, peaceful sleep
Exceeding peace had made Ben	}
Adhem bold	
presence	— one who is present (here) the angel
vision	— sight, something seen unrealistically in a dream or in a trance-like state
sweet accord	— harmony. The look of the angel was suggestive of harmony or peace
wakening light	— light so bright that it awoke Abou
led all the rest	— was at the top
cheerly	— happily

**6. Comprehension :**

(A) On the basis of your understanding of the poem answer the following questions by ticking the correct choice.

a. When the angel appeared in the room of Abou Ben Adhem,

- i. he was asleep.
- ii. he was dreaming.

- iii. he was awake .
- iv. he was praising god in sweet and low voice.

**b. When the angel appeared.**

- i. Abou's room was very dark.
- ii. Abou had to put on light to see the angel.
- iii. the angel was having a torch shaped like a lily.
- iv. there was moonlight in the room.

**c. What was the angel doing ?**

- i. The angel was writing in a book made of gold.
- ii. The angel was standing and looking at Abou Ben Adhem.
- iii. The angel asked whether Abou loved god or fellow men.
- iv. The angel was holding a white lily in bloom.

**d. How many times did the angel visit Abou ?**

- i. Once .
- ii. Twice .
- iii. Thrice .
- iv. Many times.

**(B) Answer the following questions briefly:**

- i. Who or what looked like 'a lily in bloom' - the angel, Abou or the book? Why does the poet mention ' lily' ?
- ii. Which line suggests that Abou was a fearless man ? Why was he fearless ?
- iii. What did Abou want to know from the angel ?
- iv. What did the angel say to Abou ?
- v. What request did Abou make ?
- vii. What did the angel show Abou the next night?
- viii. Where was Abou's name in the list shown by the angel to Abou ?

**7. Think and write :**

- (A) Which of the following two sentences may be applied to the poem ?
- a. Service to God is service to man.
  - b. Service to man is service to God.

Try to justify your answer in a few lines.

**8. Appreciation :**

- (a) When two dissimilar things are compared in a poem, such a comparison is called a simile. A simile can be easily recognised from the use of words ‘like’ or ‘as’ in the comparison. Now make a list of ‘similies’ in the poem in your group.
- (b) Look at the word ‘a deep dream of peace’ in the second line. The poet is using the sound ‘d’ in two words nearby to each other. Such use of the same sounds in successive words or in words near to one another is called **Alliteration**.

Now, make a list of alliterations in the poem in your group.

**9. Activity :**

Love Mankind  
To  
Love God

Attempt another placard of similar nature.

[Blank box for student activity]

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Chapter 2  
**COROMANDEL FISHERS**

*Sarojini Naidu*

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**1. What do the people living by a lake or sea generally do for their livelihood ? Which one of the following is the likely profession for them ? Tick the correct option.**

- a. Farming.
- b. Catching fish.
- c. Transport.
- d. Industry.

**2. Suppose you are a member of a team that has a job to do. It is getting late and your team – mates are still asleep. Which one of the following is the best thing to do ?**

- a. Rebuke them.
- b. Do nothing.
- c. Go to sleep.
- d. Arouse/Awaken them for the work.



**3. Now let us read a poem by Sarojini Naidu.**

Rise, brothers, rise the wakening skies pray to the morning light  
The wind lies asleep in the arms of the dawn like a child that has cried all night  
Come, let us gather our nets from the shore and set out catamarans free  
To capture the leaping wealth of the tide, for we are the kings of the sea!

No longer delay, let us hasten away in the track of the sea gull's call,  
The sea is our mother, the cloud is our brother, the waves are our comrade all  
What though we toss at the fall of the sun where the hand of the sea-god drives?  
He who holds the storm by the hair, will hide in his breast our lives.

Sweet is the shade of the coconut glade, and the scent of the mango grove,  
And sweet are the sands at the full o' the moon with the sound of the voices we love,

But sweetest ,O brothers, the kiss of the spray and the dance of the wild foam's glee  
Row, brothers, row to the edge of the verge, where the low sky mates with the sea.

**4. About the poet :**

Sarojini Naidu (1879 – 1949) was one of the most well-known poets of India. The themes of her poems were the various aspects of Indian life like the life of the fishermen, beggars, bangle-sellers, a newly married bride, etc. Because of the sweetness in her poems, she is known also as “The Nightingale of India.” She took active part in the freedom movement as a member of the Congress party, and was also a former of the Indian constitution. In this poem, Naidu describes the excitement in the life of the Coromandel fishermen.

**5. About the poem :**

In this poem Sarojini Naidu brings out the fear, hope and excitement in the life of the fishermen at Coromandel coast.

**6. Word Notes and Glossary :**

wakening skies	–	sky that is gradually being lit up by morning sun
arms of the dawn	–	dawn is compared with a mother
catamarans	–	fast sailing boats having two hulls
leaping wealth of the tide	–	fish which is wealth to the fishermen
what though	–	why should we care
holds the storm by the hair	–	controls the storm

**7. Comprehension :**

**(A) Based on your understanding of the poem tick the correct answer :-**

- I. The wind is
  - a. crying like a baby.
  - b. being made to sleep by its mother.
  - c. having a disturbed sleep.
  - d. asleep comfortably.
- II. The sea is mother to the fishermen because she
  - a. provides them means of livelihood.
  - b. protects them from danger.

- c. is source of water to them.
- d. is worshipped by them.

III. Who is the speaker in the poem ?

- a. The poet.
- b. The village leader.
- c. A fisherman.
- d. A fisherman's wife.

**(B) Answer the following questions briefly :**

- a. By what means do the fishermen go out to the sea ?
- b. How will the fishermen know which direction in the sea they should take ?
- c. Do the fishermen feel that their work is free from danger ? What assures them of their safety ?
- d. How are the fishermen 'kings of the sea' ?
- e. Why should the fishermen not delay?
- f. 'What though we toss at the fall of the sun.'
- Why do the fishermen not care even if they are tossed at the fall of the sun ?
- g. Where is the place where the hand of the sea-god drives ?
- h. What places do the fishermen love on land ?
- i. What place is sweeter than land to the fishermen ?

**8. Think and Answer :**

- (a) How will you describe the pace, i.e., the movements of the lines in the poem – quick, moderate or slow. Try to write a few lines why the poet has made it so. See if it has something to do with the activity of the sailors described.

**9. Appreciation :**

- (a) In the second line of the poem 'dawn' is compared with a child that has cried all night. Write a few lines elaborating the comparison.[clue – refer to similar comparison in the previous poem.]



- (b) What do you understand by the expression ‘the leaping wealth of the tide’ in the fourth line?

Is this another form of comparison? Discuss in your group how it is different from the comparison given in the exercise above.

**10. Discuss :**

- (a) Does the poem describe some aspect of Indian life? How? Discuss in your group for presentation to the whole class.

**11. Activity :**

Find out with the help of your teacher (Geography) where Coromandel Coast is. Sarojini Naidu grew up there. Do you think the poet’s experience in the Coromandel Coast had influence on her writing the poem? Attempt to write a few lines on it.

**12. Writing :**

In the last stanza the poet describes some beautiful scenes on the land. Try to describe some beautiful scenes from your own experience in a few lines.

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Chapter 3  
**SPRING THE SWEET SPRING**

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*Thomas Nashe*

**1. Introduction**

(A) There are four seasons in a year:-

spring,      summer,      autumn,      winter.

(B) Each of the seasons has different characteristics.

Below, twelve characteristics of the seasons are given, three for each of the seasons. Now, identify them and write them in the boxes:

cold	pleasant	hot	snowy
bright	colourful	flower	harvest- time
sunshine	ripe fruits	mist	leaves fall

Spring



--	--	--	--

Summer

--	--	--	--

Autumn

--	--	--	--

Winter

--	--	--	--

**2. Now, let us read a poem about Spring Season by Thomas Nashe :-**

Spring, the sweet spring, is the year's pleasant king.  
 Then blooms each thing, then maids dance in a ring  
 Cold doth not sting, the pretty birds do sing  
 Cuckoo, jug-jug, pu-we, to- witta – woo!

The palm and may make country houses gay,  
 Lambs frisk and play, the shepherds pipe all day,  
 And we hear aye birds tune this merry lay:  
 Cuckoo, jug-jug, pu-we, to-witta- woo!  
 The fields breath sweet, the daisies kiss our feet,  
 Young lovers meet, old wives a-sunning sit,  
 In every street these tunes our ears do greet  
 Cuckoo, Jug-jug, pu-we, to witta – woo !

**3. About the poet :**

Thomas Nashe (1567 - 1601) was an English Elizabethan poet. He was a playwright and satirist also. His nature poems are lively and catches the spirit of the season he describes.

**4. About the poem :**

In this short poem the poet describes the effect of spring on human being as well as on trees and birds.

**5. Word Notes and Glossary :**

maids	–	(old use) unmarried young women
dance in a ring	–	dance by forming a circular ring
doth	–	poetic use of the word does
sting	–	bite
lay	–	song
jug- jug, etc	–	sounds made by the birds
a – sunning	–	sitting in the sun; basking in the sun

**6. Comprehension :**

*(A) Based on your understanding of the poem, answer the following questions. Tick the correct option :*

- I. The tone of the poem is of
  - a. sadness.
  - b. joy.
  - c. indifference.
  - d. pain.
  
- II. The most common sound in spring is
  - a. the bleating of lambs.
  - b. the song sung by maids.
  - c. the song of the birds.
  - d. all the above.
  
- III. The poem describes the beauty of spring in
  - a. the countryside.
  - b. the town.
  - c. the wood.
  - d. the fields.

*(B) Answer the following questions:*

- i. Which season is the year's pleasant king ?
- ii. What do the maids do in spring season ?
- iii. Who pipes all day during the spring ?
- iv. What do the daisies do in spring ?

*(C) Answer the following questions briefly:*

- I. Why is spring called 'the pleasant king' ?
- II. Why does the poet say 'cold doth not sting' ?
- III. What makes the country houses gay?
- IV. Give a picture of the village common in spring?
- V. 'The fields breathe sweet.' Explain.

**7. Think and Answer :**

(1) The poet has given some characteristics of spring season in England. Now write some activities connected with spring season in your locality or place. It may be a fair or a festival.

**8. Appreciation :**

(a) Look at these words in the first line :

‘Spring, the sweet spring.....’

The three words ‘spring’, ‘sweet’ and ‘spring’ begin with ‘s’ sound. These words are close to one another and as such they produce a special sound effect when read out loudly. The poet has used these words deliberately for this special sound effect. Now, find out what this poetic device is called and tick the right word from those given below :

- I. Simile.
- II. Alliteration.
- III. Onomotopoeia.

(b) Look at the first stanza :

The word ‘spring’ in the first line rhymes with the word ‘king’. Similarly, it also rhymes with ‘thing’ and ‘ring’ in the third line.

Now, find out the words that rhyme with one another in the second and third stanza :

2<sup>nd</sup> stanza \_\_\_\_\_

3<sup>rd</sup> stanza \_\_\_\_\_

**9. Discuss :**

‘Cuckoo, jug-jug, pu-we, to-witta-woo !’

What are these words ? Why does the poet repeat these words at the end of every stanza ? Discuss it in your group and tell the class.

**10. Vocabulary :**

Fill in the blanks with the words given in the list to make every sentence meaningful.

pleasant      sting (v)      ring      tune      greet (v)

- (i) There is our teacher. Let us \_\_\_\_\_ her.
- (ii) March is a \_\_\_\_\_ month in Manipur.
- (iii) I like the soft \_\_\_\_\_ of that song.
- (iv) When bees \_\_\_\_\_, you feel a sharp pain.
- (v) Boys, make a \_\_\_\_\_ in the courtyard.

**11. Writing :**

(I) Write a diary entry expressing your joy at the coming of spring at the end of winter season.

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## Chapter 4

# SILVER

*Walter De La Mare.*

### 1. Introduction

(A) You must have seen many moonlit nights.

But have you ever noticed the colour of different objects during those nights? How will you describe it? Write a few lines about it.

(B) If you are asked to compare the moon either with a strong man or a handsome lady, which one will it be?

(C) Do you remember any folk or fairy tale or a song about the moon that you heard from your grandmother or someone in your family ? Write about it.

### 2. Now let us read a poem “Silver” by Walter de La Mare

Slowly, silently, now the moon  
Walks the night in her silver shoon;  
This way, and that, she peers, and sees  
Silver fruit upon silver trees;  
One by one the casements catch  
Her beams beneath the silvery thatch;  
Couched in his kennel, like a log;  
With paws of silver sleeps the dog;  
From their shadowy cote the white breasts peep  
Of doves in silver feathered sleep  
A harvest mouse goes scampering by,  
With silver claws, and silver eye;  
And moveless fish in the water gleam,  
By silver reeds in a silver stream.



### 3. About the poet:

Walter De La Mare (1873-1956) was a Georgian poet and novelist. He wrote many delightful poems for the children in his “Peacock Pie” and other volumes. De La Mare always makes his poems suggest depths of meaning beyond what words actually say. He wrote with an

appearance of simplicity and ease. He hints of mystery and magic and breathless uncanniness of silence with great skill and impressiveness. He also wrote novels (e.g. *Memoirs of a Midget*) and many short stories, all with an atmosphere of strangeness.

#### 4. About the poem :

The poem *Sliver* describes the romantic effect of the full moon on earth. The moon is a beautiful lady traversing the length and breadth of the sky turning everything on earth into silver

#### 5. Word Notes :

shoon	–	shoes. The moon is like a lady wearing silver shoes
peer	–	to look closely
casement	–	window
thatch	–	straw for covering roofs of houses
couch	–	to rest
kennel	–	small shelter for a dog
cote	–	nest for birds
dove	–	a white bird
scamper	–	to move quickly with small light steps
gleam	–	(v) to shine brightly
reed	–	a tall thin plant that grows near water

6. (A) Based on your understanding of the poem answer the following. Tick (✓) the correct answer.

- I. In the poem the moon is described as a lady wearing
  - a. colourful dress.
  - b. golden dress.
  - c. silvery white dress.
  - d. silvery pink dress.
- II. 'Of doves in silver feathered sleep'  
'Silver feathered sleep' means
  - a. the doves are turned silver by moonlight.
  - b. the doves are dreaming of silver.
  - c. doves are by nature silver coloured.
  - d. the cote is silver coloured.



- III. The moon, in the poem is described as
- inclined on a bed.
  - walking hurriedly.
  - staying unmoved.
  - walking slowly.

**(B) Answer the following questions in a sentence each :**

- What does 'silver shoon' refer to in the poem ?
- 'One by one the casements catch' What do the casements catch ?
- Describe the effect of the moonlight on the dog.
- How does the poet describe the harvest mouse ? What turns its claws and eyes silver ?
- Explain 'moveless fish'

**(C) Answer the following questions briefly:**

- Describe the way the moon walks.
- What are the effects of the moonlight on the dog ?
- Why is the cote shadowy while the doves are white and silvery ?

**7. Think and Answer :**

- Write in a few lines how the world will look like if the sun becomes blue.
- You have noticed that the poem has a painting like quality. What is the dominant colour in the painting of the scene described ?

**8. Appreciation :**

- You must have noted that the word 'silver' plays a very effective role in the poem. Count how many times it occurs in the poem. You will also notice that the sound 's' is predominant in the poem. Discuss its effect in your group and present it to the whole class.
- Identify the rhyming words in the poem.

**9. Discuss in your group :**

- The poem suggests a magic spell cast by the moon on all objects in the night. How will you describe the difference of the same scene during a moonless night ?

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## Chapter 5

# I REMEMBER, I REMEMBER

*By Thomas Hood*

### 1. Introduction

(A) Every person remembers his or her childhood days. Some events of childhood are difficult to forget throughout life. Some of the events will be delightful. But there may be some sad happenings too.

(B) Now make a list of happy events like the birth of a brother or a journey, etc. Similarly, make a list of sad occasions, say, loss of someone near and dear one that affected you in the past, or a natural disaster, etc.

Happy Occasions	Sad Occasions
1	1
2	2
3	3

### 2. Now let us read a poem by :- Thomas Hood :

I remember, I remember  
The house where I was born.  
The little window where the sun  
Came peeping in at morn;  
He never came a wink too soon  
Nor brought too long a day.  
But now, I often wish the night  
Had borne my breath away.

I remember, I remember  
The roses red and white,  
The violets and the lily cups—  
Those flowers made of light!  
The lilacs where the robin built,  
And where my brother set



The laburnum on his birthday,  
The tree is living yet !

I remember, I remember  
Where I was used to swing,  
And thought the air must rush as fresh  
To swallows on the wing,  
My spirit flew in feathers then  
That is so heavy now  
The summer pools could hardly cool  
The fever on my brow.

I remember, I remember  
The fir- trees dark and high,  
I used to think their slender tops  
Were close against the sky  
It was a childish ignorance  
But now 'tis little joy  
To know I'm farther off from Heaven  
Than when I was a boy.

**3. About the Poet:**

Thomas Hood (1799 - 1845) was the son of a London Book Seller. He is known as a poet, journalist and humourist. During the years 1821-1823 he worked as 'a sort of sub editor' of the London Magazine and he came in contact with great writers like Charles Lamb, Thomas Quincy and William Hazlitt. In 1827, he published a volume of poem – *The Midsummer Fairies* – which was strongly influenced by John Keats. He wrote humanitarian verses too and one such poem 'The Song of the Shirt' was widely read and translated in many countries. The poem 'I Remember, I Remember' is a very popular poem because of its touching lyric.

**4. About the poem :**

In the poem Thomas Hood reflects on his life and childhood. The poem highlights the joy of childhood days and experience and how they contrast with the regrets and losses and pain of his adult life.

**5. Word Notes and Glossary :**

borne	–	carried away
laburnum	–	kind of tree with yellow flower
swallows	–	kind of bird

- fir – kind of evergreen forest tree with leaves like needles
- spirit – feelings; state of mind

<b>6. Comprehension :</b>
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**(A) On the basis of your understanding of the poem, complete the following statements:**

- I. As a grown up, the poet often wishes that \_\_\_\_\_
- II. On his birthday, the poet's brother set \_\_\_\_\_
- III. Compared to his spirit in his childhood, the poet's spirit is now \_\_\_\_\_
- IV. In his childhood, the poet thought that the top of fir trees touched \_\_\_\_\_.

**(B) Answer the following questions in a sentence each :**

- I. Where did the robin build its nest ?
- II. What did the poet remember as he used to swim.

**(C) Answer the following questions briefly:**

- I. In the first stanza what does the poet remember of the sun?
- II. Is the poet happy with his present condition? How do you know?
- III. Explain 'those flowers made of light'?
- IV. What does the poet remember of his brother?
- V. 'My spirit flew in feathers then.' What does the poet mean by it ?
- VI. The poet says that he is 'farther off from Heavens'? What is the poet's 'heaven'?

<b>7. Think and Write :</b>
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- (A) The poet says that he lost his brother and he regrets it. Make a list of other things that the poet lost.
- (B) You are still in your childhood. But, is your 'now' the same as when you were a little boy or 'girl', say, when you were 8 or 9. Try to list the differences between your 'now' and your 'then'.

Now	Then
1. I am in my teens.	I was a child, yet to attain my teens.
2.	
3.	

**8. Appreciation :**

(a) In the poem, the words '*I remember, I remember*' is repeated at the beginning of every stanza. Which of the following statements are the effects it produces:

- I. It has no special purpose.
- II. Emphasises childhood memories
- III. Stresses the loss between childhood innocence and grown up experience.
- IV. The poet reminds himself of his childhood so that he will not forget it.
- V. Reflects the unhappy condition of his adulthood.

The relevant statements are:


**9. Discuss**

(a) Our understanding of things in childhood is different from the reality. What idea of it is expressed in the line 'It was a childish ignorance'?

Discuss it in your group for presentation to the whole class.

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## Chapter 6

# NIGHT MAIL

*W.H.Auden*

### 1. Introduction :

(A) You must have seen mails (letters, parcels, etc) reaching your home. Have you ever wondered what brings these letters and parcels from distant places to your home? Mark the correct choice in the following:

- a. aeroplanes .
- b. trains .
- c. vehicles .
- d. all the above .

(B) Do you know why letters are important to us specially letters from your loved ones – father, mother or a brother and sister? Which of the following, do you think is the true answer?

- a. They bring news about our near and dear ones.
- b. Getting letter makes you important.

(C) Imagine what it will be like if you don't get any message from your parents when you are far away from them. (Imagine there are no mobiles and telephones.) Of course, you will always wait for the mails that will bring you letters .

Write a small paragraph about your feelings when you do not hear any news about your near and dear ones.

### 2. Now let us read a poem 'Night Mail' by W.H. Auden.

This is the night mail crossing the Border,  
Bringing the cheque and the postal order,

Letters for the rich, letters for the poor,  
The shop at the corner, the girl next door.

Pulling up Beattock, a steady climb:  
The gradient's against her, but she's on time.



Passed cotton-grass and moorland boulder  
Shovelling white steam over her shoulder,

Snorting noisily as she passes  
Silent miles of wind-bent grasses.

Birds turn their heads as she approaches,  
Stare from bushes at her blank-faced coaches.

Sheep- dogs cannot turn her course;  
They slumber on with paws across.

In the farm she passes no one wakes,  
But a jug in a bedroom gently shakes.

Dawn freshens, Her climb is done.  
Down towards Glasgow she descends,  
Towards the steam tugs yelping down a glade of cranes  
Towards the fields of apparatus, the furnaces  
Set on the dark plain like gigantic chessmen.  
All dark glens, beside pale- green lochs  
Men long for news.

Letters of thanks, letters from banks,  
Letters of joy from girl and boy,  
Receipted bills and invitations  
To inspect new stock or to visit relations,  
And applications for situations,  
And timid lovers' declarations,  
And gossip, gossip from all the nations,  
News circumstantial, news financial,  
Letters with holiday snaps to enlarge in,  
Letters with faces scrawled on the margin,  
Letters of condolence to Highlands and Lowlands  
Written on paper of every hue,  
The pink, the violet, the white and the blue,  
The chatty, the catty, the boring, the adoring,  
The cold and official and the heart's outpouring,  
Clever, stupid, short and long,  
The typed and the printed and the spelt all wrong.



Thousands are still asleep,  
 Dreaming of terrifying monsters  
 Or of friendly tea beside the band in Cranston's or Crawford's:

Asleep in working Glasgow, asleep in well-set Edinburgh,  
 Asleep in granite Aberdeen,  
 They continue their dreams,  
 But shall wake soon and hope for letters,  
 And none will hear the postman's knock  
 Without a quickening of the heart,  
 For who can bear to feel himself forgotten ?

### 3. About the poet:

W.H. Auden(1907-1973) was the youngest son of a doctor. Even as a student he was recognised as a poet of great potentiality. In his youth he mainly wrote dictatic and satiric poems, but later in life his poems became serious in their themes. His influence on succeeding generation is great.

### 4. About the poem:

The poem *The Night Mail* describes the journey of a night train that carries the mail, from England to Scotland. Every stage of the train's journey – crossing of the border between England and Scotland, moving through the big industrial cities, climbing up the hilly areas – are described. The people are all asleep, but as soon as morning comes, they all will wake up and shall expect the arrival of mails that would bring tidings of all kinds. The poem gives the night train personality of its own. It gives an idea of how much the mail it carries mean to different kinds of people.

### 5. Word Notes and Glossary :

postal order	-	an official document that one can buy at a bank or post office and send to somebody so that they can exchange it for money
Beattock	-	a town at the Scotland border
gradient	-	the degree to which the ground slopes
moorland	-	unused land, unfit for cultivation
shovelling	-	to lift coal with a shovel and throw it into the fire in the engine; (here) throwing while steam over her engine
snorting	-	breathing forcefully like oxens or horses do



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freshens	-	makes fresh
Glasgow	-	name of city in England
yelping	-	blowing sharp horns
glade of cranes	-	cranes in the harbour that look like a wood of trees
apparatus, the furnaces	-	the factories, machines in industrial cities like Glasgow
glane	-	narrow valley with a river
loch	-	lake (Scottish)
situations	-	jobs
omit	-	group of islands in the North-West coast of England
catty	-	mischievous; words expressing anger
Cranston's or Crawford's	-	names of restaurants
granite	-	rocky

**6. Comprehension :**

*(a) Based on your understanding of the poem answer the following questions. Tick (✓) the correct answer.*

I. The night mail brings letters

- a. for the rich.
- b. for the poor.
- c. for the kings and queens.
- d. for everyone.

II. '..... fields of apparatus, the furnaces'

Here, the poet is describing that Glasgow is

- a. an agricultural city.
- b. an ancient city.
- c. an industrial city.
- d. a historical city.

III. When the people hear the postman's knock they feel

- a. excited.
- b. nervous.
- c. frightened.
- d. call us.

**(b) Answer the following in a sentence each:-**

- I. What does the night mail shovel over her shoulder ?
- II. Why does a jug in the bedroom gently shake ?
- III. What are the people doing as the night mail passes through the night ?
- IV. Why is Aberdeen described as ‘granite Aberdeen’ ?

**(c) Answer the following questions briefly:-**

- i. Name the people for whom the night mail carries letters.
- ii. How does the night mail pass through cotton grass and moorland boulder ?
- iii. What do the birds do when the night mail comes ?
- iv. Describe Glasgow as the night mail turns towards it.
- v. Why does all Scotland wait for the night mail ?
- vi. Give an idea of the colours of the letters that the mail train carries.
- vii. What kinds of dreams do the people have in the early hours of the morning ?

**7. Think and Write :**

(a) As the night mail moves on, the poet describes and brings out the changes in the landscape. Describe the changing landscape in your own words.

**8. Appreciation :**

(a) The rhythm of the poem is to suit the movement of the train. Ask your teacher to imitate the movement of a train and then try to read the poem following that rhythm.

**9. Discuss :**

(b) Discuss in your group the benefit that Manipur will get when a rail line connects it with the rest of India.

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Chapter 7  
**A DAWN SONG**

*Ezra Pound*

**1. Introduction:**

(A) Life is a precious gift of God. One should celebrate life by making others happy. Words of encouragement should be spoken to bring joy and happiness to others.

(B) Emotions can broadly be divided into two divisions:-

i. Positive, and ii. Negative. Positive emotions are emotions which are good like *courage*. Negative emotions are those that are harmful, like *cowardice*.

(C) Now make a list of positive emotions. Similarly, make a list of negative emotions.

Positive emotions	Negative emotions
I.	I.
II.	II.
III.	III.

**2. Now let us read a poem by Ezra Pound :**

God hath put me here  
In earth's goodly sphere  
To sing the joy of the day,  
A strong glad song,  
If the road be long,  
To my fellows in the way.  
  
So I make my song of the good glad light  
That falls from the gate of the sun,  
And the clear cool wind that bloweth good  
To my brother Everyone.



**3. About the poet:**

Ezra Pound(1885-1972) was one of the most talented and controversial poets of the twentieth century. His contribution to poetry began with his promotion of Imagism, a movement that called for a return to more Classical values, stressing clarity, precision and economy of language, and had an interest in verse forms such as the Japanese *Haiku*. His best-known works include *Ripostes* (1912), *Hugh Selwyn Mauberley* (1920) and his unfinished 120- section epic, *The Cantos*(1917-1969). He died in 1972 in Italy.

**4. About the poem:**

In this lyrical poem, the poet praises the glorious creation of God while watching the delightful scene of daybreak. The poet is also conscious of his responsibility of guiding his fellow human beings with his pleasant song through the long journey of life.

**5. Word notes and Glossary :**

hath	:	an old- fashioned third person singular form of the verb 'have'
goodly	:	something that is better than what is often expected
sphere	:	an object that is completely round and shaped like a ball; here, the earth
glad	:	happy and pleased about something
fellows	:	people who are in the same situation
gate of the sun	:	a figure of speech. Here, it means heaven.
clear cool wind	:	here, pleasant and unpolluted wind of the morning
bloweth	:	an old form of verb, 'blow'

**6. Comprehension:**

*(A) Answer the following questions in a sentence each:*

- I. Where has God put the poet ?
- II. What opinion does the poet have about the earth ?
- III. 'If the road be long'  
What does 'road' signify here ?
- IV. What is the 'source' of the poet's song ?
- V. Identify 'brother' in the last line.

**(B) Answer the following questions briefly :**

- I. What is the purpose of the poet’s life, according to him ?
- II. What is the poet’s attitude to life ?
- III. What kind of song is the poet going to sing ?
- IV. ‘ ..... the clean cool wind that bloweth good’

Explain.

**(C) Which part of the day do you think can best represent the entirety of the poem ?**

- I. Morning
- II. Noon
- III. Evening
- IV. Night

Explain why you think so.

**7. Think and write.**

(a) In the poem the poet has described some pleasant aspects of nature. One such description is ‘earth’s goodly sphere’.

Attempt to write a few more pleasant aspects of nature that occur in the poem.

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**8. Appreciation :**

An imagery is a device or a way of description that enhances the reader’s perception or understanding of the idea described in a poem or piece of literature. For example, in the words “earth’s goodly sphere”, the imagery describes the earth as a place which is ‘good’, which means that it is a pleasant place to live. So is the phrase ‘the joy of the day’.

Now, in your group find out a few more imageries.

**9. Discuss :**

- (a) The poem shows that even at the earthly stage of the poet's life, he realised what his duty in this earth ought to be and he pursued it. This is a kind of positive outlook towards life.

In the light of this statement given above, discuss it in your group and make a short note on the poet's positive outlook elaborating (i) what it was (ii) how it has been fulfilled.

- (b) There is a saying in English "Morning shows the day". Do you think the poet's 'morning' showed his day? Discuss it in your group for presentation to the class.



