

## GENERAL ENGLISH SEMESTER-III

**Semester End Examination : 80**

**Internal Assessment : 20**

**Objective :** The objective of this paper is to develop the comprehension, reading, writing skills of the students through a study of literature and language. This would stimulate and sharpen their aesthetic sensibility by a study of the selected English prose, poems and short stories.

### **UNIT I : Essays**

- |      |                                   |                         |
|------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| i)   | Go Kiss the World                 | ----- Subroto Bagachi   |
| ii)  | Don't be Sorry for Yourself       | ----- A.J. Cronin       |
| iii) | Spoken English and Broken English | ----- G.B. Shaw         |
| iv)  | Early Modern English              | ----- Dr K Radha Kumari |

### **UNIT II : Poems**

- |      |               |                     |
|------|---------------|---------------------|
| i)   | The Lotus     | ----- Toru Dutt     |
| ii)  | London        | ----- William Blake |
| iii) | Habba Khatoon | ----- Habba Khatoon |
| iv)  | Migrations    | ----- Keki Daruwala |

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### **UNIT III : Short Stories**

- |     |                |                    |
|-----|----------------|--------------------|
| i)  | The Gold Frame | ----- R.K. Laxman  |
| ii) | Miyan's Farm   | ----- Krishna Prem |

#### **UNIT IV : Grammar**

- i) Articles
- ii) Punctuation and Capitalization
- iii) Change of voice
- iv) Modals and auxiliary verbs

#### **UNIT V : Reading, Writing and Speaking Skills**

- i) Ways of Reading, Rules of word stress
- ii) Transcriptions of words
- iii) Precis

Writing

#### **Mode of Examination**

##### **Section - A**

This section will cover units I to III and will have three long answer type questions for 10 marks each with internal choice. The prescribed word limit will be 250-300 words.

##### **Section - B**

This section will cover units I to III and will have five short answer type questions. The candidates will be required to attempt any three. Each question will be of 6 marks and the prescribed word limit will be 60-80 words.

##### **Section - C**

This section will have two questions of 16 marks each.

The first question will have four parts of four marks each. In each part seven questions will be asked and the students will attempt four out of seven.

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The second questions will have three parts. The first two parts will be of four marks each and will deal with part i and ii of unit V. In each part seven questions will be set and the candidate will attempt any four in each part. The third part will be set on precis writing and will carry eight marks. The questions will be set from the prescribed text book.

**Suggested Readings:**

- 1) *Spoken English and Broken English*, Linguaphone Institute.
- 2) *Indian Writing in English* by K.R. Srinivasa Iyengar. Sterling publisher.
- 3) *William Blake's London: An Interpretation* by Samir Mazarweh. Grin Verlag publishers.
- 4) *Habba Khatoon: The Nightingale of Kashmir* by S.N. Wakhlu Roli Books Private Ltd.
- 5) *An Anthology of Commonwealth Poetry* by C.D. Narasimhaiah. Macmillan India.
- 6) *Fantasy: A Collection of Short Stories* by V. Sasikumar. Orient Longman Pvt. Ltd.
- 7) *Comprehensive English Grammar and Composition* by S.C. Gupta. Arihant Prakashan.
- 8) *The Routledge Handbook of Language and Professional Communication* by Vijay Bhatia, Stephen Bremmer. Routledge Publishing house.

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**B.A./B.COM SEMESTER – III : GENERAL ENGLISH**

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**Course No. : AA 301 (Theory)**

**Title : General English**

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*Go Kiss the World*

By : Subroto Bagchi

**UNIT STRUCTURE**

- 1.1 Objectives**
- 1.2 Introduction to the author**
- 1.3 *Go Kiss the World* (Text)**
- 1.4 Summary of the Essay**
- 1.5 Central Idea of the Essay**
- 1.6 Theme of the Essay.**
- 1.7 Let Us Sum up**
- 1.8 Glossary**
- 1.9 Self- Assessment Questions**
  - 1.9.1 Short type questions**
  - 1.9.2 Multiple Choice Questions**

## **1.10 Examination Oriented Questions 1.11**

### **Reference and Suggested Readings**

#### **1.1.1 Objectives:**

- The students will be able to infer the real meaning of success.
- The students will be able to improvise their ideas.
- The students will be able to agree with the author about the real purpose of one's actions.

#### **1.2 Introduction to the Author:**

Subroto Bagchi is a well known Indian entrepreneur and an innovative business leader. He was born on 31<sup>st</sup> May 1957 in Odisha. His father was a government officer. He spent his childhood in the tribal areas of Odisha. He was a hard working student, he won many scholarships. During his career he won many awards also. In 1957, he won the Best NCC Cadet award. In his University days, he won the best Debater award. He was awarded Doctorate in Literature by Utkal University though he was a student of Political Science. Later on, he worked as the Chief Executive of Wipro's Global R&D. He also founded the Mind Tree, an IT Service Company. Bagchi is a motivational leader and he has contributed immensely for the capacity building of young entrepreneurs and leaders.

#### **1.3 Go Kiss the World (Text)**

I was the last child of a small-time government servant, in a family of five brothers. My earliest memory of my father is as that of a District Employment Officer in Koraput, Orissa. It was, and remains as back of beyond as you can imagine. There was no electricity; no primary school nearby and water did not flow out of a tap. As a result, I did not go to school until the age of eight; I was home-schooled. My father used to get transferred every year. The family belongings fit into the back of a jeep so the family moved from place to place and without any trouble, my mother would set up an establishment and get us going. Raised by a widow who



had come as a refugee from the then East Bengal, she was a matriculate when she married my father.

My parents set the foundation of my life and the value system, which makes me what I am today and largely, defines what success means to me today.

As District Employment Officer, my father was given a jeep by the government. There was no garage in the office, so the jeep was parked in our house. My father refused to use it to commute to the office. He told us that jeep is an expensive resource given by the government- he retreated to us that it was not 'his jeep' but the government's jeep. Insisting that he would use it only to tour the interiors, he would walk to his office on normal days. He also made sure that we never sat in the government jeep- we could sit in it only when it was stationery.

That was our early childhood lesson in governance- a lesson that corporate managers learn the hard way, some never do.

The driver of the jeep was treated with respect due to any other member of my father's office. As small children, we were taught not to call him by his name. We had to use the suffix 'dada' whenever we were to refer to him in public or private. When I grew up to own a car and a driver by the name of Raju was appointed, I repeated the lesson to my two small daughters. They have, as a result, grown up to call Raju 'Raju Uncle' – very different from many of their friends who refer to their family driver, as 'my driver'. When I hear that term from a school-or collegegoing person, I cringe.

To me, the lesson was significant-you treat small people with more respect than how you treat big people. It is more important to respect your subordinates than your superiors.

Our day used to start with the family huddling around my mother's chulhaan earthen fireplace she would build at each place of posting where she would cook for the family. There was neither gas, nor electrical stoves. The morning routine started with tea. As the brew was served, father would ask us to read aloud the editorial page of *The Stateman's* 'muffosil' edition- delivered one day late. We did not understand much of what we were

reading. But the ritual was meant for us to know that the world was larger than Koraput district and the English I speak today, despite having studied in an Oriya medium school, has to do with that routine. After reading the newspaper aloud, we were told to fold it neatly. Father taught us a simple lesson.

He used to say, 'you should leave your newspaper and your toilet, the way you expect to find it'. That lesson was about showing consideration to others. Business begins and ends with that simple precept.

Being small children, we were always enamoured with advertisements in the newspaper for transistor radios-we did not have one. We saw other people having radios in their homes and each time there was an advertisement of Philips, Murphy or Bush radios, we would ask father when we could get one. Each time, my father would reply that we did not need one because he already had five radios-alluding to his five sons.

We also did not have a house of our own and would occasionally ask father as to when, like others, we would live in our own house. He would give a similar reply, 'We do not need a house of our own. I already own five houses.' His replies did not gladden our hearts in that instant.

Nonetheless, we learnt that it is important not to measure personal success and sense of well being through material possessions.

Government houses seldom came with fences. Mother and I collected twigs and built a small fence. After lunch, my mother would never sleep. She would take her kitchen utensils and with those she and I would dig the rocky, white ant infested surroundings. We planted flowering bushes. The white ants destroyed them. My mother brought ash from her chulha and mixed it in the earth and we planted the seedlings all over again. This time, they bloomed. At that time, my father's transfer order again. This time, they bloomed. At that time, my father's transfer order came. A few neighbours told my mother why she was talking so much pain to beautify a government house, why she was planting seeds that would only benefit the next occupant. My mother relied that it did not matter to her that she would not

see the flowers in full bloom. She said, 'I have to create a bloom in a desert and whenever I am given a new place, I must leave it more beautiful than what I had indented.

That was my first lesson in success. It is not about what you create for yourself, it is what you leave behind that defines success.

My mother began developing a cataract in her eyes when I was very small. At that time, the eldest among my brothers got a teaching job at the University in Bhubaneswar and had to prepare for the civil services examination. So, it was decided that my mother would move to cook for him and, as her appendage, I had to move too. For the first time in my life I saw electricity in homes and water coming out of a tap, it was around 1965 and the country was going to war with Pakistan. My mother was having problems reading and in any case, being Bengali, she did not know the Oriya script. So, in addition to my daily chores, my job was to read her the local newspaper-end to end. That created in me a sense of connectedness with a large world. I began taking interest in many different things. While reading out news about the war, I felt that I was fighting the war myself. She and I discussed the daily news and built a bond with the larger universe. In it, we became part of a larger reality. Till date, I measure my success in terms of that sense of larger connectedness. Meanwhile, the war raged and India was fighting on both fronts. Lal Bhadur Shastri, the then Prime Minister, coined the term 'Jai Jawan, Jai Kishan' and galvanized the nation in to patriotic fervour. Other than reading out the newspaper to my mother, I had no clue about how I could be part of the action. So, after reading her the newspaper, every day I would land up near the University's water tank, which served the community. I would spend hours under it, imagining that there could be spies who would come to poison the water and I had to watch for them. I would daydream about catching one and how the next day, I would be featured in the newspaper. Unfortunately for me, the spies at war ignored the sleepy town of Bhubaneswar and I never got a chance to catch one in action. Yet, that act unlocked my imagination.

Imagination is everything. If we can imagine a future, we can create it, If we can create that future, others will live in it. That is the essence of success.

Over the next few years, my mother's eyesight dimmed but in me she created a larger vision, a vision with which I continue to see the world and, I sense, through my eyes, she was seeing too. As the next few years unfolded, her vision deteriorated and she was operated for cataract. I remember, when she returned after her operation and she saw my face clearly for the first time, she was astonished. She said, 'Oh my God, I did not know you were so fair'. I remain mighty pleased with the adulation even till date. Within weeks of getting her sight back, she developed a corneal ulcer and, overnight, became blind in both eyes. That was 1969. She died in 2002. In all those 32 years of living with blindness, she never complained about her fate even once. Curious to know what she saw with blind eyes, I asked her once if she sees darkness. She replied, 'No I do not see darkness. I only see light even with my eyes closed.' Until she was eighty years of age, she did her morning yoga every day, swept her own room and washed her own clothes.

To me, success is about the sense of independence; it is about not seeing the world but seeing the light.

Over the many intervening years, I grew up, studied, joined the industry and began to carve my life's own journey. I began my life as a clerk in a government office, went on to become a Management Trainee with the DCM group and eventually found my life's calling with the IT industry when fourth generation computers came to India in 1981. Life took me places I worked with outstanding people, challenging assignments and travelled all over the world.

In 1992, while I was posted in the US, I learnt that my father, living a retired life with my eldest brother, had suffered a third degree burn injury and was admitted in the Safdarjung Hospital in Delhi. I flew back to attend to him-her remained for a few days in critical stage, bandaged from neck to toe. The Safdarjung Hospital is a cockroach infested, dirty, and inhuman place. The overworked, under-resourced sisters in the burn ward are both victims and perpetrators of dehumanized life at its worst. One morning, while attending to my father, I realized that the blood bottle was empty and fearing that air would go into his vein, I asked the attending nurse to change

it. She bluntly told me to do it myself. In that horrible theatre of death, I was in pain and frustration and anger. Finally when she relented and came, my father opened his eyes and murmured to her, 'why have you not gone home yet?' Here was a man on his deathbed but more concerned about the overworked nurse than his own state. I was stunned at his stoic self.

There I learnt that there is no limit to how concerned you can be for another human being and what the limit of inclusion is you can create.

My father died the next day. He was a man whose success was defined by his principles, his frugality, his universalism and his sense of inclusion.

Above all, he taught me that success is your ability to rise above your discomfort, whatever may be your current state. You can, if you want, raise your consciousness above your immediate surroundings. Success is not about building material comforts- the transistor that he never could buy or the house that he never owned. His success was about the legacy he left, the memetic continuity of his ideals that grew beyond the smallness of an ill-paid, unrecognized government servant's world.

My father was a fervent believer in the British Raj. He sincerely doubted the capability of the post-independence Indian political parties to govern the country. To him, the lowering of the Union Jack was a sad event. My mother was the exact opposite. When Subhash Bose quit the Indian National Congress and came to Dacca, my mother, then a schoolgirl, garlanded him. She learnt to spin khadi and joined an underground movement that trained her in using daggers and swords. Consequently, our household saw diversity in the political outlook of the two. On major issues concerning the world, the Old Man and the Old Lady had differing opinions.

In them, we learnt the power of disagreements, of dialogue and the essence of living with diversity in thinking.

Success is not about the ability to create a definitive dogmatic end state; it is about the unfolding of thought process, of dialogue and continuum.

Two years back, at the age of eighty-two, mother had a paralytic stroke and was lying in a government hospital in Bhubaneswar. I flew down from the US where I was serving my second stint, to see her. I spent two weeks with her in the hospital as she remained in a paralytic state. She was neither getting better nor moving on. Eventually I had to return to work. While leaving her behind, I kissed her face. In that paralytic state and a garbled voice, she said,

‘Why are you kissing me, go kiss the world.’ Her river was nearing its journey. At the confluence of life and death, this woman who came to India as a refugee, raised by a widowed mother, no more educated than high school, married to an anonymous government servant whose last salary was rupees three hundred, robbed for her eyesight by fate and crowned by adversity, was telling me to go and kiss the world!

Success to me is about vision. It is the ability to rise above the immediacy of pain. It is about imagination. It is about sensitivity to small people. It is about building inclusion. It is about connectedness to a larger world existence. It is about personal tenacity. It is about giving back more to life than you take out of it. It is about creating extra-ordinary success with ordinary lives.

Thank you very much; I wish you good luck and God’s speed.

Go! Kiss the world!!!

#### **1.4. Summary of the Essay**

The present essay is a speech delivered by Subroto Bagchi to IIM students of Bangalore in 2006. *Go Kiss the World* is a highly inspirational essay. It tells us about the real meaning of success. The essay is based on author’s real life experiences. In the beginning, the author tells us about his childhood days. Subroto was the fifth child of his parents. His father was a government servant. When he was eight years old he was sent to school for the first time. At that time, his father was posted in a very remote area. His father used to get transferred every year. His parents were very simple

people but with high ideals. His mother was a matriculate. His parents founded the basis of all the values in his life.

Subroto, illustrates many examples which directly or indirectly taught him the right values from the beginning. His father was a District Employment Officer. He was given a government jeep for official work but his father never misused this facility provided by the government. He never used it for personal purpose. Even for official purposes, he used it only when it was necessary. So this was the first lesson which he learnt from his father.

Another important thing he learned was to treat the driver of the jeep with respect. They called him, 'dada'. He taught the same values to his daughter's also because Bagchi believes that one should respect them more than one's superiors.

His father motivated the children to read *The Statesman* newspaper. This habit developed English language skills though Bagchi had studied in Oriya Medium School. After reading the newspaper they were told to keep it back, folded neatly because his father believed that one should leave the things neat and clean so that other's can also use it properly.

In those days having a Radio was a luxury. Bagchi and his siblings used to request their father to buy a Radio for them but he used to say that they don't need a radio as he had five radios, referring to his five sons. Even, when they demanded a house, he would say he already had five houses. His statement developed a sense of pride and confidence in them. They felt happy on hearing this.

Bagchi's mother also played a very important role in shaping their character. Her hard working nature was imbibed by her children. Bagchi's mother selfless woman, wherever she went, she made that place beautiful by planting flowering seeds. Sometimes the neighbours used to advise her that she should not do so much hard work, after all they were government quarters. Moreover, if they get transferred they won't get any benefit. But she believed that she had to create a flowering bloom even in desert. She

must leave a beautiful place behind her. So, Bagchi learned that the real meaning of success is to always leave something good for others.

In 1965, Bagchi moved with his mother and his elder brother to Bhuvaneshwar. Here he saw tap water and electricity for the first time. Unfortunately, his mother developed cataract. So, Bagchi used to read the newspaper aloud for his mother. In 1965, India was at war with Pakistan. Bagchi says that he felt connected with larger universe while reading the newspaper. This event also had a long lasting effect on his life. It opened his flight of imagination. He learnt that the real essence of success would be to use imagination to create a good future for all. It was unfortunate that his mother lost her eyesight due to cataract. In her later years she suffered from corneal ulcer. She had to live her next 32 years with blindness. Till the age of 80 she used to do her morning yoga, she herself cleaned her room and washed her own clothes. She was blind but she remained independent till the last days of her life. Her determination inspired Bagchi.

When Bagchi grew up he worked as a clerk in a government office. Later on, after joining different jobs, he was posted in US in 1992. Another severe incident happened which changed Bagchi's outlook towards success. His father received third degree burn injuries. Subroto came back from the US. He attended to his father in Safdarjung Hospital in New Delhi. One morning, Bagchi saw that the blood bottle was empty so he requested the nurse to change it. Normally, the government hospitals and its workers are found in horrible and dirty condition. The nurse treated them badly. When his father opened his eyes he asked the nurse that why she had not gone home. Bagchi was surprised to see that how a man burnt from head to toe can be so concerned about the welfare of others. Here, he learnt that there is no limit of true compassion for others. His father was a man of love for all. Success is not just mere possession of material or luxuries. Its real measure is to leave behind a better world.

Another interesting thing was his parents had opposite political beliefs. His father favoured the British Raj, his mother was a supporter of Indian National Congress. They never fought over this issue so the children learnt that two people can stay together successfully even if they have diverse views.



His parents last few moments of their lives also taught him unforgettable lessons. At the age of eight-two, his mother had a paralysis. Bagchi came back from US to see his mother. She was almost on her death bed and Bagchi had to go back to US, he kissed his mother's forehead with much sadness, his mother replied that why he was kissing her, rather he should kiss the world, i.e. win the world. He was surprised to see his mother's greatness. She was not crying in pain. She could endure that pain. She could rise above it. So he learned to rise above pain. Real success is about being sensitive to all; about feeling spiritually connected to a larger world. It is about being courageous. It is about leaving the world a beautiful place.

### **1.5 Central Idea of the Essay.**

Action speak louder than words, this dictum is proved by Subroto Bagchi's parents. They practiced the values which they preached. It's not enough to just tell a child to follow the right path, if the parents actions are righteous then the child automatically learns it from them. The way Bagchi's mother used to carry the household chores even in new places laid the foundation of self reliance in her children. The feeling of togetherness which the entire family had, while the mother cooked food on chullah, also helped Bagchi to learn the importance of working as a team. Though there was no electricity and tap water in Koraput, still the family lived a happy life. They were able to derive joy even in difficult conditions. Luxury, lethargy and laxity had no place in their family. Material possessions were immaterial to them. Hence, the children were taught, right from the beginning that their aim is to do something bigger and better, rather than just running after gathering material. Bagchi's mother remained blind for 32 years but Bagchi never saw her cribbing about her blindness. In fact, she continued with her work, she kept her independence intact. Her determination, discipline and diligence were remarkable. Bagchi adopted his mother's qualities. She was a successful woman because she faced the difficulties of life with a lot of patience.

Bagchi's father's honesty, frugality and fatherly attitude towards all, developed a sense of universalism in his sons. The way he respected his wife's patriotism while holding firm on his own belief was also surprising.

He taught his children to co-exist with diverse views. Hard work, integrity and compassion for all the people around him made him a truly successful man. Bagchi's parents taught him to serve the world.

The essay, '*Go Kiss the World*' gives a broader meaning of success. True success does not mean gathering material goods, expensive cars or big houses. It has nothing to do with personal possessions or power. The real meaning of success is to follow the ideals of simple living and high thinking. It is about having patience, endurance and an ability to serve others selflessly.

Parents play a very important role in laying the foundation of value system in their children. The lessons learned in childhood days leaves a long lasting impact. Like loyalty towards one's institution is very important. Similarly, treating one's subordinates with respect is also important. How we utilise the things and how we leave them for the use of others also needs to be paid attention to. This shows that we do have concern for others.

Similarly, it's not necessary that parents should immediately fulfil the demands of their children rather they should develop a sense of independence and sense of work in them. Like Bagchi's father did when they demanded a radio.

No matter what kind of environment is given to a person, he or she should leave it in such a way that the coming generations find it beautiful. The way Bagchi's mother used to take care of government houses and the way she used to create gardens out of desert is inspirational. Personal success is immaterial and limited. Those who practise universalism they remain compassionate even when they are in great pain. Thus, one should not have a narrow meaning of success. One should follow the values of inclusion and an ability to rise above personal pain.

#### **1.6. Theme of the Essay**

The essay '*Go Kiss the World*' is based on the guiding principles and values of Subroto Bagchi's life. It is quite inspiring for young professionals. The

essay defines success in a comprehensive manner. The way Subroto Bagchi was brought up it had shaped his mind and value systems. The essay inspire us to be selfless, hard working and feel compassion for mankind. Successful people are those who are givers not takers. The essence of life for them is seeking light in everyone.

Real success lies in building inclusion. It lies in keeping one's sense of universalism alive till the last breath. It's not necessary that one has to be extraordinary to be successful. Ordinary people with their simple actions can also create happiness for others. They possess the deep vision to see the universal light in all. Their imaginations makes them achieve extraordinary feat. Material possessions are unimportant to them. Since they are free from any kind of greed they are the ones who are able to feel the connectedness to a larger world existence.

Honesty, courage and a sense of gratitude makes them truly successful. Hence, Subroto Bagchi learnt these basic principles from his parents. He was amazed to see their compassion for others even when they were on their deathbed. They had the ability to rise above the immediacy of pain. Subroto Bagchi feels indebted to them.

### **1.7. Let Us Sum Up**

*'Go Kiss the World'* tells us about the principles which can make us successful. Surprisingly, it doesn't talk about the limited definition of success which is popular in the modern times. It talks about the broader definitions of success that involves the welfare of mankind. That talks about inclusiveness, sacrifice, giving and not taking. Bagchi learnt these principles from his mother and father. Their lives, their actions, their thinking till the last breath laid the strong foundation about,life that made Bagchi share his personal experience with today's youngsters.

### **1.8 Glossary**

Commute : Travel some distance between one's home

and place of work on a regular basis.

Reiterate	:	Say something again or a number of times, typically For emphasis or clarity.
Cringe	:	Disgust, aversion, distaste
Huddling	:	To sit together.
Cataract	:	Disease leading to blurred vision, weak eyesight.
Precept	:	Rule, Law
Gladden	:	Delight, rejoice, happy
Appendage	:	Close to, assist.
Adulation	:	Praise
Infested	:	Presence of insects like cockroaches in large numbers in a place.
Bluntly	:	Coldly refused
Dehumanized	:	Not fit for humans
Murmur	:	Speak in a low voice
Stunned	:	Shocked
Stoic	:	Indifferent to pain or pleasure, stable.
Inclusion	:	Embrace, encompassment.
Frugality	:	Economical, a person who doesn't spend money unnecessarily.
Fervent Believer	:	Strong Believer

Universalism : The belief that all mankind can be saved.  
Union Jack : The British National Flag.  
Adversity : Difficulty  
Tenacity : Courage

## **1.9 Self Assessment Questions**

### **1.9.1 Short Answer Type Questions**

Q1) Who laid the foundation of values in Bagchi's Life?

Ans Subroto Bagchi's mother and father laid the foundation of values in his life.

Q2) Why Bagchi's father refused to use Government's jeep for personal purpose ?

Ans Bagchi's father was very conscious about the use of public resources. He was loyal to his institution hence he never misused government property.

Q3) Why is it important to respect one's subordinate more than one's superior ?

Ans It is important to respect one's subordinates because of humanitarianism. Any man who earns his bread with dignity should be respected just like one's superiors.

Q4) Which activity helped Bagchi in learning English language ?

Ans Bagchi's father made him read the newspaper, *The Statesman*, daily, this habit of reading helped him learn English language though he had studied in Oriya Medium School.

Q5) Why Bagchi's mother planted seeds in government accommodation?

Ans Bagchi's mother believed in leaving a better place than it was found hence she planted seeds in government houses.

Q6) What is the role of imagination in one's success?

Ans \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Q7) What are the values that the writer learnt from his mother ?

Ans \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Q8. Why Bagchi's parent did not encourage them to gather material goods ?

Ans \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Q9. How did the nurse treat Bagchi's father in the hospital ?

Ans \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Q10. What is the meaning of the title, '*Go Kiss the World.?*'

Ans \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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### 1.9.2 Multiple Choice Questions

1. In which year Subroto Bagchi was born?
  - a. 1957
  - b. 1960
  - c. 1961
  - d. 1962
2. Who was a refugee from East Bengal in the essay, *Go Kiss the World*?
  - a. Bagchi's father
  - b. Bagchi's mother
  - c. Raju Uncle
  - d. The Nurse
3. Who said, 'you should leave your newspaper and your toilet, the way you expect to find it?'
  - a. Bagchi's mother
  - b. Elder brother
  - c. Father
  - d. The neighbours
4. To whom, Bagchi's father referred to as 'five radios' and 'five houses'?
  - a. To his sons
  - b. To his property
  - c. To his job
  - d. To his position
5. For how many years Bagchi's mother lived with blindness?
  - a. 40 years
  - b. 12 years
  - c. 32 years
  - d. 60 years
6. How Bagchi learnt the sense of larger connectedness?
  - a. By doing household work
  - b. By working in a Company
  - c. By going to the U.S





- Q5. Why sense of universalism is important for true success?
- Q6. Describe how Bagchi's life was influenced by his father.
- Q7. Is it possible that people with diverse political outlook can live together? Discuss in the light of the given essay.
- Q8. Describe the last moments of Bagchi's parent's. How it left an indelible mark on Bagchi's mind?

### 1.11 Reference And Suggested Readings

- Bagchi's Subroto. *Go Kiss the World*. Penguin India, New Delhi . 2008.
- Xu, Kevin, *The Traveller's Gift*. Mebo International
- Slobotski, Jeff. *Give and Take*. Router Ventures.

### Answer Key MCQ

- Q1. (a)            Q2 (b)            Q3 (c)            Q4. (a)            Q5. (c)            Q6. (d)
- Q7. (c)            Q8 (c)            Q9 (a)            Q10. (b)

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**Course No. : AA 301 (Theory)**  
**Semester-III**

**Title : General English**  
**Unit – 1**

**ESSAYS**

**Lesson No:2**

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*Don't Be Sorry for yourself*

*By : A.J. Cronin*

### UNIT STRUCTURE

**2.1 'Objectives**

**2.2 Introduction to the author**

**2.3    *Don't be Sorry for Yourself* (Text)**

**2.4    Summary of the Essay**

**2.5    Central Idea of the Essay**

**2.6    Theme of the Essay**

**2.7    Let Us Sum up**

**2.8    Glossary**

**2.9    Self- Assessment Questions**

**2.9.1   Short type questions**

**2.9.2   Multiple Choice Questions**

**2.10   Examination Oriented Questions**

**2.11   Reference and Suggested Readings**

**2.1    Objectives:**

- The students will be able to identify the effects of different kinds of attitudes towards life.
- The students will be able to prepare themselves for facing different challenges in life.
- The students will be able to recognize different new expressions in English language.

**2.2    Introduction to the Author:-**

The optimist, Archibald Joseph Cronin was born on 19<sup>th</sup> July 1896 in Scotland. By profession, he was a doctor but his inclination towards literature and his keen observation of human nature, led him to become a writer. It happened, when once he was working as a Medical Inspector of Mines he observed that the doctors were following unethical practices to become rich, he decided to write a

novel about it. The title of novel was *The Citadel*. This novel became popular and established him as a writer. Not only this, it inspired the formation of National Health Services as well as it introduced medical ethics also. Cronin's other popular works are *The Stars Look Down*, *Hatter's Castle*, *The Key of the Kingdom*, *The Green Years*, *The Minstrel Boy*, *Three Loves*, *Country Doctor* and *Enchanted Snow*. His books became so popular that they were translated into many languages. Some of his stories have been adapted into films and T.V series also. It's not that all was rosy in his life, in 1930, the doctors examined him and declared that he was suffering from a chronic duodenal ulcer. Owing to illness, he was directed by the doctors to take complete rest for at least six months in country side. It is here he started writing stories. *Hatter's Castle*, his first novel was written here. It became immensely popular and Cronin, thereafter, decided to become a full time author. Cronin's narrative style, deep sense of observation, compassion for fellow beings and light humour made him a popular writer. He received many awards and recognitions for his literary work. One of them was National Book Award for Favourite Novel of 1937, for *The Citadel* in U.S.

Cronin's sense of social responsibility made him an unforgettable author. Cronin left this mortal world in 1981.

### **2.3 Don't Be Sorry For Yourself (Text)**

Last summer, on the Channel Island of Jersey, on a cliff overlooking the harbour, I came upon a worn moss-covered bench. A century ago, when Victor Hugo was in exile, persecuted by his beloved France, it was here that he climbed every evening and, gazing into the sunset, gave himself up to profound meditation, at the end of which he would rise and, selecting a pebble of varying size-sometimes small, at other times large-he would cast it, with satisfaction, into the water beneath. This behaviour did not escape the notice of some children who played nearby, and on evening a little girl, bolder than the rest, pushed forward.

‘Monsieur Hugo, why do you come here to throw these stones?’

The great writer was silent; then he smiled gravely. ‘Not stones, my child. I am throwing self-pity into the sea.’

In this symbolic act there is a powerful lesson for the world of today. So many of us, despite our manifold advantage have developed to an inordinate degree the capacity for being sorry for ourselves. We are forever alert to find cause for personal grievance in the working of our social, economic or political system. The small things and the great-an unpunctual morning train, the threat of atomic annihilation-are alike provocative of our woe. We dwell on the difficulties and dangers, the tensions and complexities of modern life.

How damaging such thinking may be is found in the words of Seneca. 'In thoughts of selfcommiseration,' he declares, ' a man will discover no advantage but will rather incline towards deterioration and softening of himself, and with this there will come upon him a growing indifference to his fellow men.' In essence, the basis of self pity is selfishness. People who are sorry for themselves can never be truly sorry for others.

As a young doctor practising in a mining district of Wales I was called to the wife of a colliery manager, a great lump of a man, a glib talker, who acted as lay preacher in chapel on Sundays and was regarded as a moral leader in the village.

The wife was a quiet, subdued woman, a model housekeeper, a devoted and – I suspected –an uncomplaining wife. When I examined her, I discovered advanced, inoperable malignant disease of the liver. Sadly, I broke the news to her husband that she had but a short time to live. I shall never forget his incredible words. Shocked, clutching my arm, he instinctively revealed himself: 'My God doctor, when she's gone what will happen to me?'

In my early days as an author I was occasionally asked to lunch by the woman editor of a popular magazine. Attractive, with an assured position and an excellent salary, she had a charming flat, a car and chauffeur; she enjoyed excellent health and had no family troubles of any kind. Yet to hear her talk was to account her the most wretched being on earth.

From the soup to the sweet she poured into my ear a succession of lamentations on the harrowing pattern of her existence, the difficulties of her job, the noise made the night before by the people giving a party in the flat above her. On it would go until I felt beaten down mentally and physically and she, at the end, diffused an intolerable sense of the misery of being alive. In truth, she had little to complain of,

but by brooding on her troubles, real or imaginary she had magnified them out of all proportion to their importance, and simply could not escape from them.

No living creature is more to be pitied than the man who thinks that his personal pains and problems constitute the centre of the cosmos. How often does the physician hear in the privacy of his office the mournful plaint: Doctor, I m, not well.....I'm on edge..... I've no interest in life..... I.....I'. Yes, always that inevitable 'I', the cry of the wounded, self-pitying ego. In the opinion of Professor Jung, one-third of the cases that came to his nerve clinic were suffering solely from the disastrous effects of constantly being sorry for themselves.

Doubt and fear, the great enemies of human advancement, are born in the darkness of self-pity, and if we yield to them we thwart ourselves at every step. We can rise, conquer and achieve only by lifting our thoughts away from ourselves, by realizing that in achievement, of whatever kind, the selflessness of the effort is the measure of the result. We shall reach full stature only when we cease to revile and complain. When we no longer protest against circumstances, but begin to use them as an aid to our progress, then shall we discover the hidden powers and possibilities within ourselves.

Thus, when trouble, real trouble, strikes at us we shall have learned to make a virtue of adversity, to face it bravely and turn it to good account. If we think correctly and courageously, there is no misfortune inherent in human existence that we cannot turn to our ultimate advantage. Within the compass of my own experience I have seen this proved to be true.

A young friend of mine, already recognized as a promising painter before the Second World War, was shot down in his Spitfire in the Battle of Britain. He sustained two broken legs and a skull fracture which severed the optic tract and left him completely blind. When he came out of hospital, where he nearly died, I went to see him, expecting to find, in a wheel-chair, the pitiful wreckage of a man. Instead I found him propped up on crutches enthusiastically making arrangements with wooden blocks on a high worktable. 'Since I can't paint anymore,' he smiled, 'I'm going to have a shot at building house.' Today, he is one of the foremost architects in Britain.

And again.....in my Scottish hometown there lived until recently a little old woman of eighty. Left a widow at the age of twenty-six by the accidental death of her husband, with five young sons and no means of support, she set to work and by incredible perseverance and self-sacrifice succeeded in education her boys through the university and in seeing them all rise in various professions to position of importance. When I asked her, as I did since she was my grandmother-how in the world she had accomplished this, all that she would say, quite without pride, was: I was never one to sit down and be sorry for myself.'

Innumerable instances could be given of other indomitable souls who, in the face of great misfortune have refused to surrender to self-pity. Consider how Helen Keller, incredibly afflicted has become one of the foremost world citizens of our day; how Robert Louis Stevenson, riddled with tuberculosis, produced masterpieces of literature; how Father Damien, dying of leprosy, still continued his wonderful work amongst the sufferers of this dreaded disease. Consider how countless unknown, ordinary people have overcome illness, hardships, continuous pain, and live their lives cheerfully, successfully, in an unsung epic of uncomplaining heroism. Consider this and then, If you dare, be sorry for yourself.

The ancient Greek proverb, 'As a man thinketh, so is he' contains the key to the entire problem. It is so easy to think wrongly, not only in respect of major difficulties that confront us, but even in the trivia of everyday life. On holiday in France last month, arriving with a friend at a favourite hotel, we were unexpectedly forestalled by two coach-loads of excursionists. They were Germans, of the peasant class; they rushed and shouted, held us up for half an hour at the reception desk and later, in the dinning-room, boisterously exuberant in their shirt-sleeves, delay the service intolerably. I was about to protest when my companion, a surgeon with a long record of public service, turned to me with a sympathetic chuckle:

'After all they went through under Hitler in the war, isn't it fine to see these good people enjoying themselves?'

How right had been his thinking! I felt ashamed of my own.

Our thoughts have the power to make or unmake us; on the wheel of thought we may edge the weapons of tragic self-immolation, but we may also shape the tools to build for ourselves an abode of joy and peace. Should we not resolve then, to think less of ourselves and more of others; to count our blessing in this fruitful and abundant land; to discipline our minds against self-commiseration; to acknowledge and appreciate, in this age of rush and anxiety, the quite compensations of life? They are all around us, heedlessly passed over by so many the beauty of a sunset or of the stars at night, the tranquil delights of a country walk, the budding of the trees in spring.

And if, despite all this, we should find ourselves in danger of succumbing to an attack of private misery, let us remember old Victor Hugo and his evening rite upon that Channel cliff. To enact it, simply gather your sorrows together, visualize them as a stone, and fling them from you with all the strength you possess. You will feel the better of it.

#### **2.4 Summary of the Text:-**

Cronin has beautifully portrayed the different shades of life which often one becomes a part of. Since, life is a journey and one is ought to face challenges at different stages, he tells us how we can face them. In the beginning of the essay, *Don't be Sorry for Yourself* he gives the example of great French writer, Victor Hugo. When Hugo was exiled from France, he spent his time on the Channel Island of Jersey, it is one of the Islands in the British Channel. Hugo used to spend long time sitting on a high steep rock facing the sea. He used to watch the rising sea waves. After meditation on the rock he used to get up and throw stones in the sea. Some children noted this action and one day, out of them, one little girl came and asked Mr. Hugo that why he threw stones in the sea daily. Mr. Hugo smilingly replied that those were not stones but he was throwing self-pity into the sea.

What is self-pity? Well, it is a feeling of not being able to accept a situation or circumstances in life. It is a negative feeling. We can also say that self-pity is a destructive approach towards life. So, Victor Hugo was throwing away all the negative thoughts though he was facing difficulties, he was exiled from his country.

He faced the difficult times with courage. Hence, Cronin tells his readers to avoid any such emotion that makes them believe that they are the victims of unfortunate circumstances. People have the habit of being sorry for themselves even on minor issues, like, an unpunctual train. Self –pity also affects one’s spiritual growth. Since, modern life is complex we should avoid self-pity. Cronin further gives example of a great Roman writer Seneca who said that self-commiseration or self pity will only lead to degradation and selfishness.

Cronin again narrates a funny example, once he was posted as a doctor in Wales district and he happened to visit the house of a Coal mine manager. The manager’s wife was suffering from some incurable liver disease. It was sad that there was no cure for that liver disease. Her life could not be saved. Cronin broke this news to the husband. The husband replied in a shock, ‘My God, doctor, when she’s gone (dead) what will happen to me?’ So, those who are selfish, they think about themselves only even in such critical condition.

In another humorous example Cronin tells us about a woman editor of a popular magazine. She had everything which life could offer but still she kept on complaining in such a way as if she was the most unlucky person in the world. While talking to her over lunch Cronin came to the conclusion that she considered herself as the most pitiable creature in the world.

Basically, our ego, that, ‘I’ syndrome never allows us to think beyond us and hence we develop a number of limitations, unknowingly. Professor Jung, the famous psychologist, told that one –third of his patients were victims of self-pity only. Selfpity is harmful because it develops doubt and fear in a person.

Cronin suggests that we should strongly avoid self-pity because it will never allow us to develop our full potential. Life is going to throw challenges, it will offer difficulties, it should depend on us how we deal with them. We should practice positivity so that when real danger comes we would be able to deal with that.

Cronin further gives example of a brave soldier from the Second World War. He says, one of his friend was a talented painter but during the war he joined the Army. In the war, he received critical injuries, besides, wounds all over his body. Due to skull fracture, he completely became blind. When Cronin went to see his friend in



the hospital he was surprised to see his positive attitude. His friend was working 'with wooden blocks on a high worktable.' Later on, the same man became the most famous architect in Britain.

Cronin carries on with another example. This time he gives example of his own grandmother. Who is now eighty years old. She became a widow when she was only twenty six. She was a mother of five sons at that time and she had no job . But she worked and she brought up her five sons all alone without anybody's support. She made sure that her sons got the best education and now her sons are well settled. Cronin asked his grandmother that how she achieved all that. She replied that she never stopped and she never felt sorry for herself.

There are hundreds of examples, where people have fought against difficulties. For example, the life of Helen Keller, R L Stevenson & Father Damien. In fact, there are so many ordinary people doing extraordinary works in their lives. Just think about those people and you will be filled with optimism.

Cronin states a Greek proverb which says, 'As a man thinketh, so is he,' that means if you feed your mind with seeds of positive thoughts, you will think positively and if you have negative thoughts it will develop into a negative attitude towards everything.

Cronin says that even in minor instances of day to day life one should keep a cool attitude. Our thoughts have the power to make us or ruin us . If we have a cool attitude we will be joyful and peaceful. It can be done only through disciplining our minds. If we love our fellow-beings, if we are not selfish, we will be able to achieve a positive attitude towards life. The love for nature, for people , for the creatures of earth teaches us to be hopeful, loving and joyful. If anyhow, self-pity tries to attack us we should remember what Victor Hugo used to do. We should throw self-pity out and free our minds.

## **2.5 Central Idea of the Essay**

If we consider our lives as valuable, precious and an opportunity then we will be able to achieve our full potential along with that we will be able to live our lives joy fully. But if we keep on complaining about everything around us then in good things will appear bad. So, our mental attitude is prepared with the kinds seeds of

thoughts which we sow in our minds. One should not indulge in one's sorrows or misfortunes. Because, it develops into a habit.

The damaging effect of self-pity can be accessed from Seneca's statement that if a person keeps on indulging in self-pity, he/she will never be able to focus on the advantages he has in his life. Such feelings make that person selfish. A person who is selfish will only limit or confine himself/herself and lead a deteriorated life. Like the coal manager, what a pity? His wife was dying and he was least concerned about that. He only thought about the discomforts he will have after her death. Similarly, the lady editor of a magazine whom Cronin met our lunch, she had everything which the world could offer yet she had complaints about everything. Her negative attitude made her look like a pitiable creature.

Constantly being sorry for one-self leads to depression, sadness and ultimately lack of self-esteem. Slowly and gradually such people lose their capacity to grow in their lives. Doubt and fear overpower them hence one should be brave enough to keep away negative emotions. If one is selfless and has the capacity to connect to the larger world around him or such people would be able to live with enthusiasm, like the soldier who was injured and blinded in the Second World War. Despite such difficulties he became a famous architect.

If someone pays attention to the beautiful nature around them, even from there, one can draw a lot of inspiration. The beauty of sunrise and sunset, the starry nights, the blooming trees, in fact, all the events of nature teach us to be happy. The sense of larger connectedness helps us to broaden our horizon. It helps us to count our blessings and utilize our lives better while we are alive.

The writer tells the readers to remain free from the thoughts of self-pity. He gives many motivational and inspirational examples from real life like the way Victor Hugo overcame the feeling of self pity. Cronin gives example of those people, who suffer from self pity. Basically such people are selfish like the coal mine manager and the lady, an editor of a popular magazine. Self-pity is a damaging attitude. It leads to doubt and fear. These two elements are dangerous because a person suffering from doubt and fear will never be able to develop his/her full potential. Self-pity also makes us magnify even a small problem. Hence, one should avoid this negative emotion. It can be done through believing in one's capability and by developing love for everyone around us including the beautiful nature that

surrounds us. We should channelize our thoughts in a positive direction then only we will be able to enjoy life.

## **2.6 Theme Of The Essay**

Cronin makes people aware of the damaging effects of self-pity. One should count one's blessings rather than feeling sorry for oneself. It is a waste of time if we keep on dwelling on the problems of life whether at the social front or in personal life. Constant focus on self-pity leads to deterioration of one's capabilities. The basis of self-pity is selfishness. Selfish people never feel any compassion for others. Constant lamentations, complaints and self-pitying ego is harmful for one's spiritual growth. Doubt and fear are the worst enemies of mankind. One need to discover one's true potential by accepting the adversities and turning them into opportunities. No matter what the circumstances are human beings have the capacity to come out of it with the help of determination, strong will power and positive attitude.

In order to develop a strong character, a person should pay attention to his/her thought process. Training and disciplining of mind is essential for developing an optimistic attitude. It's very important to learn that 'As a man thinketh, so is he.' The thoughts with which you feed your mind; you will turn out to be that only.

## **2.7 Let Us Sum Up**

The essay, '*Don't be Sorry for Yourself.*' is an eye-opener towards the negative effects of self-pity. Constantly being sorry for oneself hampers a person's ability to grow and explore his capabilities. Imaginary troubles are magnified if someone indulges in self-pity. In order to face real troubles we should leave our ego and selfishness. Broad mindedness, love for nature and compassion for all, helps us being lighter and achieve great feats in life. Thoughts are very powerful hence we should make sure that we think in a way that it shapes our mind for the betterment of all.

## **2.8 Glossary**

Cliff	-	High, steep overhanging face of a rock.
Cast	-	Throw

Victor Hugo	-	French Poet and novelist (1802-85)
Monsieur	-	Mister in French
Commiserate	-	To express self pity
Inordinate	-	Excessive
Provocative	-	Causing anger
Woe	-	Misery, sorrow
Colliery	-	Coal mine
A great lump of a man	-	Dull witted
Incredible	-	Impossible to believe
Assured position	-	High position or good status
Wretched	-	Unhappy
Harrowing	-	Horrible
Thwart	-	Prevent someone from accomplishing something.
Spitfire	-	Name of a British fighter airplane used in World War-II
Propped up	-	Supported firmly
Crutches	-	Wooden sticks for support.
Perseverance	-	Constant effort
Accomplished	-	Achieved
Indomitable	-	Unconquerable.
In-numerable	-	Countless, large number
Confront	-	Come face to face with
Forestalled	-	Prevented

Trivia	-	Ordinary, minor
Unmake	-	Ruin, mar, undo.
Resolve	-	Make up one's mind.
Compensations	-	(Here) rewards.
Needlessly	-	Carelessly
Tranquil	-	Peaceful
Rite	-	Ritual, ceremony

## 2.9. Self Assessment Questions 2.9.1

### Short Answer Type Questions

Q1) What is Self-pity ?

Ans: Self-pity is a person's belief that he or she is a victim of unfortunate circumstances.

Q2) What is the role of 'thinking' in shaping one's attitude towards life ?

Ans. 'As a man thinketh, so he is'. The thoughts we feed our minds with, converts it' into actions. Hence if we think positive it will be reflected in our behaviour.

Q3 Why do you think the lady editor feels herself to be a wretched creature ?

Ans. \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Q4) Name the two great enemies of human growth?

Ans. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Q5) How the blind soldier is able to become a successful architect ?

Ans. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### 2.9.2 Multiple Choice Questions

1. Which famous author was exiled from France ?
  - a. Gustave Flaubert
  - b. Victor Hugo
  - c. Charles Baudelaire
  - d. Balzac
2. In which district Cronin was practising as a doctor ?
  - a. Hampshire
  - b. Yorkshire
  - c. Wales
  - d. Glasgow
3. Which individual should be pitied ?
  - a. The one who thinks his personal problems constitutes the centre of the universe.
  - b. The one who is an optimist.
  - c. The one who faces real troubles with courage.
  - d. The one who keeps his hope alive.
4. How can we face misfortunes ?

- a. If we think correctly and courageously.
  - b. By complaining constantly.
  - c. By magnifying our problems.
  - d. With the help of self-pity.
5. What was the relation of the author with the eight year old Scottish woman?
- a. She was Cronin's aunt.
  - b. She was Cronin's Cousin.
  - c. She was Cronin's Grandmother.
  - d. She was not related to Cronin.
6. 'Our\_\_\_\_\_ have the power to make or unmake us' Fill in the blank with an appropriate word.
- a. Thoughts
  - b. Relatives
  - c. Money
  - d. None of the above

### **2.10 Examination Oriented Question**

- Q1 How self-pity leads to deterioration? Elaborate with the help of illustrations from the text.
- Q2. What is the basis of self-pity ?
- Q3. What are the ways of overcoming self-pity ?
- Q4. What are the disastrous effects of constantly being sorry for oneself ?

Q5. Why should we discover the hidden powers and possibilities within ourselves ?

Q6. Give examples from the text about the people who have overcome difficulties successfully.

Q7. Have you ever seen across the people who faced difficulties courageously?

Q8. Give examples from your real life?

## 2.11 REFERENCE AND SUGGESTED READINGS

- Salwak, Dale. *A.J. Cronin*. Boston: Twayne's English Authors Series, 1985.
- Davies, Alan. *A.J. Cronin. The Man Who Created Dr. Finlay*. Alma Books, 2011.
- *The University of Glasgow Story: Biography of A.J. Cronin*.

Answer Key MCQ's

Q1. (b)      Q2 (c)      Q3 (a)      Q4 (a) Q5 (c)      Q6 (a)

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**Course No. : AA 301 (Theory)**  
**Semester-III**

**Title : General English**  
**Unit – 1**

**ESSAYS**

**Lesson No:3**

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*Spoken English and Broken English*

By: G.B Shaw

## UNIT STRUCTURE

**3.1 Objectives**

**3.2 Introduction to the author**



### **3.3 Spoken English and Broken English (Transcript)**

### **3.4 Summary**

### **3.5 Central Idea**

### **3.6 Theme**

### **3.7 Let us sum up**

### **3.8 Glossary**

### **3.9 Self-Assessment Questions**

#### **3.9.1 Short type Questions**

#### **3.9.2 Multiple Choice Questions**

### **3.10 Examination Oriented Questions**

### **3.11 MCQ Answer key**

### **3.12 Reference and Suggested Readings**

### **3.1 Objectives**

In general, languages are constantly evolving, usually very slowly over time. But over the last decade, our language has taken a great leap forward because of the modern technology and globalisation. The phenomena called globalisation gave rise to the need for an efficient way of communication and this made the knowledge of English language necessary. The domain of English is today a basic need for any professional in any major area. The internationalisation of manpower made nations adopt English as the official language of the world and the learning of this language opens doors for personal, professional and cultural development. The English language has always been evolving. The language spoken during the Middle Ages is entirely different from the everyday language used today. But in today's modern world the Internet has majorly impacted the lexical, phonetic and syntactic standards of the English language. So, it is very important in today's time that the emphasis should be on the communicative part of the English language rather than its being 'correct' and 'good'. Therefore a brief study of the recording *Spoken*

*English and Broken English* by George Bernard Shaw can surely help students understand the basics of the language and in its efficient communication process.

### **3.2 Introduction to the Author**

George Bernard Shaw was an Irish playwright and he was also an essayist, a literary critic, novelist and short story writer. He was the first person to be awarded both a Nobel Prize and an Academy Award, receiving the 1925 Nobel Prize in Literature and sharing the 1938 Academy Award for Best Adapted Screenplay for the film version of *Pygmalion*. Shaw turned down all other awards and honours, including the offer of a knighthood. Shaw was highly influenced by Shakespeare and Chekov, and Ibsen.

He was born on 26<sup>th</sup> July 1856 in Dublin. Bernard grew up in an atmosphere of genteel poverty, which to him was more humiliating than being merely poor. At first, Shaw was tutored by a clerical uncle as he basically rejected the schools he then attended and by the time he was 16, he started working in a land agent's office. In 1873 Shaw resolved to become a writer and moved to London where his mother was residing with his two daughters. Shaw developed a wide knowledge of music, art, and literature as a result of his mother's influence and his visits to the National Gallery of Ireland and later established as a respected theatre and music critic in London. Although his first profitable writing was music and literary criticism, in which capacity he wrote many highly articulate pieces of journalism, his main talent was for drama and he wrote more than 60 plays. He had also written fictions but they failed utterly. The semi-autobiographical and aptly titled *Immaturity* written in 1879 (published in 1930), repelled every publisher in London. His next four novels were similarly refused, as were most of the articles he submitted to the press for a decade. Shaw's initial literary work earned him less than 10 shillings a year.

Despite his failure as a novelist in the 1880s, Shaw found himself during this decade. He became a vegetarian, a socialist, a spellbinding orator, a polemicist, and tentatively a playwright. He became the force behind the newly founded (1884) Fabian Society, a middle-class socialist group that aimed at the transformation of English society. Shaw involved himself in every aspect of its activities, most visibly as editor of one of the classics of British socialism, *Fabian Essay in Socialism* (1889), to which he also contributed two sections.

Eventually, in 1885, the drama critic William Archer found Shaw through his journalistic work. His early journalism ranged from book reviews and art criticism to brilliant musical columns. Shaw had a good understanding of music, particularly opera. But Shaw truly began to make his mark when he was recruited by Frank Harris to the *Saturday Review* as a theatre critic. In his position as a theatre critic, he used all his wit and polemical powers to displace the artificialities and hypocrisies of the Victorian stage with a theatre of vital ideas. By this time he had embarked in earnest on a career as a playwright and used all these ideas in his own plays.

Shaw published a collected edition of his plays in 1934, comprising fortytwo works. He wrote a further twelve in the remaining sixteen years of his life, mostly one-act pieces. Shaw's most important plays are *Widower's Houses* (1892) which concerns the landlords of slum properties and introduces the first of Shaw's New Women—a recurring feature of later plays. Other important plays are *The Philanderer* (1893) which develops the theme of the New Woman and were highly influenced by Ibsen, *Arms and the Man* (1894) which conceal beneath a mockcomic romance, a Fabian parable contrasting impractical idealism with pragmatic socialism. Another important play by Shaw is *Candida* and its central theme revolves around a woman's choice between two men; the play contrasts between the aspirations and idealism. Other important plays by Shaw are *You Never Can Tell* (1896), *The Devil's Disciple* (1896), *Caesar and Cleopatra* (1898) and *Captain Brassbound's Conversion* (1899) and all of them centers on the questions of empire and imperialism, one of the major topic of political discourse in the 1890s. These are set respectively in America, Ancient Egypt and Morocco.

Shaw's another major plays address individual social, political or ethical issues. In *Man and Superman* (1902), Shaw gives his interpretation of creative evolution. *The Admirable Bashville* (1901) focuses on the imperial relationship between Britain and Africa. *John Bull's Other Island* (1904) comically depicts the prevailing relationship between Britain and Ireland. *Major Barbara* (1905) presents ethical questions in an unconventional way, confounding expectations that in the depiction of an armaments manufacturer on the one hand and the Salvation Army on the other the moral high ground must invariably be held by the latter. *The Doctor's Dilemma* (1906) a play about medical ethics and moral choices in allocating scarce treatment, was described by Shaw as a tragedy.

Shaw also wrote short plays that are comedies and they range from the deliberately absurd *Passion, Poison, and Petrification* (1905) to the satirical *Press Cuttings* (1909). One of the most important play by Shaw is *Pygmalion* (1912), and it is a Shavian study of language and speech and their importance in society and in personal relationships. *The Apple Cart* (1929) was Shaw's last popular success. He gave both that play and its successor, *Too True to Be Good* (1931), the subtitle "A political extravaganza", although the two works differ greatly in their themes. Shaw's plays of the 1930s were written in the shadow of worsening national and international political events. Like the earlier decade of his writings, Shaw's later plays were generally comedies and others addressed various political and social preoccupations.

George Bernard Shaw was not merely the best comic dramatist of his time but also one of the most significant playwrights in the English language since the 17th century. Some of his greatest works for the stage—*Caesar and Cleopatra*, the "Don Juan in Hell" episode of *Man and Superman*, *Major Barbara*, *Heartbreak House*, and *Saint Joan*—have a high seriousness and prose beauty that were unmatched by his stage contemporaries. His development of a drama of moral passion and of intellectual conflict and debate, his revivifying of the comedy of manners, and his ventures into symbolic farce and into a theatre of disbelief helped shape the theatre of his time and after. A visionary and mystic whose philosophy of moral passion permeates his plays, Shaw was also the most trenchant pamphleteer since Swift, the most readable music critic in English, the best theatre critic of his generation, a prodigious lecturer and essayist on politics, economics, and sociological subjects, and one of the most prolific letter writers in literature. Nearly all his writings address prevailing social problems with a vein of comedy. By bringing a bold critical intelligence to his many other areas of interest, he helped mould the political, economic, and sociological thought of three generations.

### **3.3 Transcript of *Spoken English and Broken English***

Let me introduced myself, Bernard Shaw.

I am asked to give you a specimen of spoken English. But first, let me give you a warning. You think you are hearing my voice. But unless you know how to use your gramophone properly, what you are hearing maybe grotesquely unlike any sound that has ever come from my lips.

A few days ago I heard a gramophone record of a speech by Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, the parliamentary chief of the British Labour Party, who has a fine deep Scottish voice and a remarkably musical and dignified delivery. What I heard was a high pitched, sharp, cackling voice, most unmusical, suggesting a small, egotistical, very ill-mannered man, complaining of something. I said, "That is not Mr. MacDonald, I know his voice as well as I know my own." The gramophone operator assured me that it was and showed me the label on the record to prove it. I said, "No, that is not Ramsay MacDonald. But let me see whether I can find him for you." Then, as the record started again, I took the screw, which regulates the speed, and slowed the record down gradually until the high pitched yapping changed to the deep tones of Mr. MacDonald's voice. And the unmusical, quarrelsome self-assertion became the melodious rhetoric of the Scottish orator. "There," I said, "that is Mr. MacDonald."

So you see what you are hearing now is not my voice unless your gramophone is turning at exactly the right speed. I have records of famous singers and speakers who are dead; but whose voices I can remember quite well: Adelina Patti, Sarah Bernard, Charles Santley, Caruso, Tamagno. But they sound quite horrible and silly until I have found the right speed for them as I found it for Mr. Macdonalds.

Now the worst of it is that I cannot tell you how to find the right speed for me. Those of you, who have heard me speak, either face to face with me or over the wireless, will have no difficulty. You have just to change the speed until you recognize the voice you remember. But what are you to do, if you have never heard me? Well, I can give you a hint that will help you. If what you hear is very disappointing and you feel instinctively, that must be a horrid man, you may be quite sure the speed is wrong. Slow it down, until you feel that you are listening to an amiable old gentleman of 71 with a rather pleasant Irish voice. Then that is me. All the other people, whom you hear at the other speeds, are impostors, sham.

Shaws, phantoms who never existed

I am now going to suppose that you are a foreign student of the English language, and that you desire to speak it well enough to be understood when you travel in the British Commonwealth or in America or when you meet a native of those countries.

Or it maybe that you are yourself a native, but that you speak in a provincial or Cockney dialect of which you are a little ashamed or which perhaps prevents you from obtaining some employment, which is open to those only who speak what is called correct English.

Now whether you are a foreigner or a native the first thing I must impress on you is that there is no such thing as ideally correct English. No two British subjects speak exactly alike.

I am a member of a committee established by the British Broadcasting Corporation, for the purpose of deciding how the utterances of speakers employed by the corporation should be pronounced, in order that they should be a model of correct English speech for the British islands.

All the members of that committee are educated persons, whose speech would pass as correct and refined in any society or any employment in London. Our chairman is the poet laureate who is not only an artist, whose materials are the sounds of spoken English, but a specialist in their pronunciation. One of our members is Sir Johnston Forbes-Robertson, famous not only as an actor, but for the beauty of his speech. I was selected for service on the committee because as a writer of plays I am accustomed to superintend their rehearsals. And to listen critically to the way in which they are spoken by actors who are by profession trained speakers, being myself being a public speaker with a long experience.

That committee knows as much as anyone knows about English speech. And yet its members do not agree as to the pronunciation of some of the simplest and commonest words in the English language.

The two simplest and commonest words in any language are yes and no. But no two members of the committee pronounce them exactly alike. All that can be said is that every member pronounces them in such a way that they would not only be intelligible in every English speaking country, but would stamp the speaker as a cultivated person, as distinguished from an ignorant and illiterate one.

You will say, "Well, that is good enough for me. That is how I desire to speak." But which member of the committee will you take for your model? There are Irish members, Scottish members, Welsh members, Oxford University members,

American members. All recognizable as such by their differences of speech. They differ also according to the country in which they were born. Now as they all speak differently it is nonsense to say that they all speak correctly. All we can claim is that they all speak presentably. And if you speak as they do you will be understood in any English speaking country and accepted as a person of good social standing. I wish I could offer you your choice among them all as a model. But for the moment I am afraid you must put up with me, an Irish man.

I have said enough to you about the fact that no two native speakers of English speak it alike. But perhaps you are clever enough to ask me whether I myself always speak it in the same way. I must confess at once that I do not. Nobody does.

I am at present speaking to an audience of many thousands of gramophone listeners. Many of whom are trying hard to follow my words syllable by syllable. If I were to speak to you as carelessly as I speak to my wife at home this record would be useless. And if I were to speak to my wife at home as carefully as I am speaking to you she would think that I was going mad. As a public speaker I have to take care that every word I say is heard distinct-fully at the far end of large halls containing thousands of people.

But at home, when I have to consider only my wife sitting within six feet of me at breakfast, I take so little pains with my speech, that very often, instead of giving me the expected answer, she says, "Don't mumble and don't turn your head away when you speak. I can't hear a word you are saying". And she also is a little careless. Sometimes I have to say, "What?" two or three times during our meal. And she suspects me of growing deafer and deafer. So she does not say so, because as I am now over 70 it might be true. No doubt I ought to speak to my wife as carefully as I should speak to a queen and she to me as carefully as she would speak to a king. We ought to, but we don't. Don't by the way is short for do not.

We all have company manners and home manners. If you were to call on a strange family and to listen through the key hole, not that I would suggest for a moment that you are capable doing of such a very unladylike or ungentlemanlike thing. But still, if in your enthusiasm for studying languages you could bring yourself to do it, just for a few seconds to hear how a family speaks to one another, when there is

nobody else listening to them, and then walk into the room and hear how very differently they speak in your presence, the change would surprise you.

Even when our home manners are as good as our company manners, and of course they ought to be much better, they are always different. And the difference is greater in speech than in anything else.

Suppose I forget to wind my watch and it stops I have to ask somebody to tell me the time. If I ask a stranger I say, "What o'clock is it?" The stranger hears every syllable distinctly. But if I ask my wife all she hears is "Clock's it". That is good enough for her, but it would not be good enough for you.

So I am speaking to you now much more carefully than I speak to her. But please don't tell her.

I am now going to address myself especially to my foreign hearers. I have to give them another warning of quite a different type. If you are learning English, because you intend to travel in England and wish to be understood there do not try to speak English perfectly. Because if you do; no one will understand you.

I have already explained that 'though there is no such thing as perfectly correct English, there is presentable English, which we call good English. But in London 999 out of every thousand people not only speak bad English, but speak even that very badly. You may say, that even if they do not speak English well themselves, they can at least understand it when it is well spoken. They can when the speaker is English. But when the speaker is a foreigner, the better he speaks, the harder it is to understand him.

No foreigner can ever stress the syllables and make the voice rise and fall in question and answer assertion and denial, in refusal and consent, in inquiry or information, exactly as a native does. Therefore the first thing you have to do is to speak with a strong foreign accent and speak broken English. That is English without any grammar. Then every English person, to whom you speak, will at once know that you are a foreigner and try to understand you and be ready to help you. He will not expect you to be polite and to use elaborate grammatical phrases. He will be interested in you, because you are a foreigner and pleased by his own



cleverness in making out your meaning and being able to tell you what you want to know.

If you say, “Will you have the goodness, sir, to direct me to the railway terminus at Charing Cross,” pronouncing all the vowels and consonants beautifully, he will not understand you. And will suspect you of being a beggar or a confidence trickster. But if you shout, “Please, Charing Cross, which way?” you will have no difficulty. Half a dozen people will immediately overwhelm you with directions. Even in private intercourse with cultivated people you must not speak too well.

Apply this to your attempts to learn foreign languages and never try to speak them too well. And do not be afraid to travel, you will be surprised to find out how little you need to know or how badly you may pronounce. Even among English people to speak too well is a pedantic affectation. In a foreigner it is something worse than an affectation; it is an insult to the native who cannot understand his own language when it is too well spoken.

That is all I can tell you. The record will hold no more. Good bye.

### **3.4 Summary of the Transcript**

‘Spoken and Broken English’ is incorrectly labelled as a prose by countless people across the millennia whereas it is a transcript of a radio talk and was recorded in 1927. The talk was broadcast over Manhattan’s radio station WNEW, during his visit to America. It was a part of series of talks entitled “A Treasury of the Spoken World”. In his speech, the provocative ideas are couched in a simple but lively, witty and rhetorical style.

In this recording, Shaw first of all ponders on the difficulties in accurately reproducing an individual human voice given the deficiencies of the playback technology of the time.

Further in his talk ‘Spoken English and Broken English’, Shaw gives some instruction to a foreign student of the English Language in regard to speaking English when he travels in the British Commonwealth or in America or when he meets a native of those countries or it may be that he is himself a native but that he speaks in a provincial or cockney dialect of which he is a little ashamed, or which

perhaps prevents him from obtaining some employment which is open to those only who speak in correct English.

Shaw says that there is no single model of correct speech in English. Whether one is a foreigner or native, the first thing that he must remember is that there is no such thing as ideally correct English. Shaw discusses notions of 'correct English,' that is, the proper way in which English should be spoken. To demonstrate his point further, Shaw says that no two British subjects speak exactly alike. He himself is a member of a committee set up by the British Broadcasting Corporation for the purpose of deciding how the utterances of speakers employed by the corporation should be pronounced in order that they should be a model of correct speech from the British Islands. The Chairperson of the Committee is the Poet Laureate who is an expert in pronunciation. It is also comprised of an actor, who is known for the beauty of his speech and Shaw who sits on the rehearsal of the plays and critically listens to the way the professionally trained actors speak, being himself a speaker of long experience. The committee is comprised of Irish members, Wales's members, Scottish members, Oxford University members, American members all recognizable by their differences of speech. Their speech differs also according to the countries in which they are born. Shaw says that even the most common of the commonest words in English like 'Yes' and 'No' are pronounced differently by different people of the committee. Though they all speak differently but they all speak presentably and if a foreign student of the English language speaks as they do he will be understood in any English speaking country and accepted as a person of good social standing. Shaw illustrates that even among the educated and the specialists on language; the manner of speaking is determined by one's origin, background, training and workplace.

Shaw stresses that as a public speaker he has to take care that every word he utters on this radio-talk is understood by his audience. But he confesses that at home when he speaks to his wife, he takes very little pains with his speech. Shaw gives examples to demonstrate that in familiar surroundings and in one's exchanges with close friends or relatives, one is quite careless, both in one's articulation and in framing full-bodied, grammatical sentences. This is because they are confident of being understood in these circumstances without seeming rude or uncivilized. In the public sphere, however, there is no such assurance. Therefore, one is much more careful with one's speech while speaking with strangers or on formal occasions.

This section draws an example from Shaw's own life, namely his conversations with his wife. He says that speaking to an audience by any stretch of the imagination is not similar to speaking to his wife. Speaking at home is informal. He says that his wife always complained that he mumbles and turns his face away when he speaks to her which made it very difficult for her to understand him. She also doesn't take care while talking to him at home and she thinks that he is growing deafer by each day.

Shaw further says that everyone has company manners and home manner. At home, people speak in a careless manner but when they speak in the presence of a stranger they speak very carefully. In order to illustrate his point, Shaw suggests that an enthusiastic learner of language should spy on a stranger's way of speaking at home by listening through the keyhole just for few seconds and look at the difference of how one speaks at home and in public. Even when their home manners are as good as their company manners they are always different and the difference is greater in speech than in anything else. Shaw illustrates how everyone, irrespective of whether they are educated or uneducated, speaks differently in public and in private.

Shaw now advises foreigners on how to communicate in English while travelling in English speaking countries. Shaw warns the foreigners that if they are learning English because they intend to travel in England and wish to be understood there, they must not try to speak English perfectly because if they do, no one will understand them. He further says that though there is no such thing as perfectly correct English, there is presentable English which is called 'good English', but in London, nine hundred and ninety-nine out of every thousand people not only speak bad English but speak even that very badly. Even if they do not speak well themselves they can at least understand it when it is well spoken. The native English understands the language well when the speaker is English, but when the speaker is a foreigner, the better he speaks, the harder it is to understand him. A native will not expect a foreigner to use elaborate grammatical phrases. No foreigner can ever stress the syllables and make the voice rise and fall in question and answer; assertion and denial, in refusal and consent, in enquiry or information, exactly as a native does. Therefore the first thing they have to do is to speak with a strong foreign accent and speak broken English without grammar. Then every English

person to whom he speaks will at once know that he is a foreigner and try to understand him and be ready to help him.

Shaw advises the foreigners against the pedantic affectation of too-correct English. He says that among natives to speak too well is seen as a pedantic affectation and in a foreigner, it is worse than that and is considered as an insult. A native English speaker will be interested in him because he is a foreigner and will help him with what he wants to know if the foreigner speaks in broken English.

### **3.5 Central Idea :**

The central idea of Shaw's radio talk 'Spoken English and Broken English' is that a speaker of English language should emphasize more on the communicating part rather than the correctness of the language. In this talk, Shaw highlights the importance of understandable English in a speech over Correct English. An ardent advocate of the simplification of language Shaw says that even educated native speakers do not speak English correctly and says that there is nothing that can be called as 'Correct English'.

Shaw illustrates the point that there is nothing called 'Correct English' by explaining that even no two British subjects speak exactly the same way. Even educated persons and trained speakers do not pronounce some of the simplest and commonest words in the English language like yes and no, alike. The model of the speech among people differs according to the country in which they are born. Even within a language's native home, it may be used in different accents and ways.

Although Shaw is concerned only with the English language but his argument in this talk is applicable to any language. To demonstrate the idea that language is a transporter of thoughts, Shaw draws instances from regular life. He suggests that everyone has company manners and home manners which mean that in order to communicate with the family and close friends people speak in a careless manner but when in a company they speak carefully.

In order to bring home his point and to connect with the people of different languages, Shaw advises the foreigners travelling England against speaking perfect English. According to Shaw, most of the native English do not speak perfect English themselves and a foreigner with perfect English accent runs the risk of

appearing insulting to the natives. He suggests that a foreigner with the broken English is welcomed and helped by the native English people.

### **3.6 Theme:**

Language is a medium of communication and the world is full of different languages but in recent years the English language has taken a supreme position over all the other languages. It is evident that English is the dominant language of science and technology, international communications, business and academics, medicine, popular culture and the Internet. In information technology, there is no relevant programming language that isn't based on English. English is the official language of many multinational corporations with headquarters outside the English-speaking world. The implications are obvious as no one can afford to ignore the role of the English language in today's modern world. But those who struggle with English as a foreign language, however, may find some relief in George Bernard Shaw's observation in his radio talk given in 1927. Shaw in his typical Shavian wit and sharp tongue has given a ray of hope to these foreign speakers of English.

The theme of this talk 'Spoken English and Broken English' by George Bernard Shaw is that there is not anything called as 'Correct English'. But he suggests that there is good English, the English which is presentable and is good English. Shaw's argument is that the speakers of English from several parts of the world use English differently. He further states that it is true even to the knowledgeable scholars who speak English. He says that even the native speakers differ in speaking their language and no two native speakers of English speak English alike.

The theme of the talk can be further read as that too precise use of English can, in fact, be a barrier to smooth conversation. Shaw advises the foreigners against speaking too perfect English whenever they travel to the Commonwealth Nations or Britain because asking questions in a near to perfect English can raise suspicion in the minds of natives for the foreigners. Shaw advocates the use of Broken English in communication because it makes people rush to help the person using it.

### **3.7 Let's Sum up:**

Before summing it up, it is important to bring forth the attention of students towards the importance of language itself. We learn a language, either native or foreign for a communicative reason. Language is used both as a medium of speech as well as that of writing. The frequency of the use of whichever medium depends upon the communicative needs of the users of the language. However, speech has been used more extensively than writing and there are many reasons for this. The speech comes first in the history of any language community as people learn to speak than before they begin to write. The users of language tend to speak more than the writing and then there are technical devices like the television, the radio which emphasize on the speech more than the writing. As a result of which there has been a tremendous growth in oral communication.

In his radio talk, ‘Spoken English and Broken English’ Shaw talks about Spoken English only. The rules mentioned in the talk should not be applied to written English as written English is an entirely different subject and he doesn’t even touch upon the written English. Shaw in the said talk addresses two kinds of people, first the foreign speaker who wishes to speak English for Commonwealth countries and the native speaker who speaks in a provincial or cockney language, which he is ashamed of. Shaw puts to rest the fears of both these people because according to him, there is nothing such as ‘Correct English’.

Though the radio talk was recorded in 1927 many years back and a lot of changes have taken place in the world, for example, there is an extensive use of the English language throughout the world, globalization and the increase in foreign travels. All this has led to different opinions of the linguists about the non-native speakers. But even than what Shaw says about Broken English and that the context determines intelligibility of Spoken English, stands true even today.

This radio talk by Shaw is a morale booster to the students as he suggests that the English language and obsession for the correct English should not intimidate the speakers. But at the same time, a student should remember that there is always a room for improvement and it is with the proper training in the right manner and with focus on the right syntax and the grammar that one can become efficient in the said language and speak well.

### **3.8 Glossary**

Phantom: a figment of the imagination.

Cockney: a native of East London, traditionally one born within hearing of Bow Bells.

Dialect: a particular form of a language which is peculiar to a specific region or social group.

Charing Cross: A bus and underground station in London.

Being a beggar: Something that is too incredible and one finds it hard to believe.

Pedantic: excessively concerned with minor details or rules.

Affectation: Behaviour, speech, or writing that is pretentious and designed to impress.

### **3.9 Self-Assessment Questions:**

#### **3.9.1 Short-type Questions**

Q.1 Why does Shaw think that we should not try to speak the foreign language too well?

**Possible Answer:** George Bernard Shaw in his radio talk, ‘Spoken English and Broken English’ suggests the foreigners against speaking English perfectly because the native speakers of English won’t understand them. To illustrate his point he says that in London nine hundred and ninety-nine out of thousand people not only speak bad English but speak even that very badly. He further elaborates on it by saying that no foreigner can ever stress the syllables and makes the voice rise and fall in questions and answer, assertion and denial, in refusal and consent, in enquiry or information, exactly as a native does. Shaw says that when the speaker is a foreigner, the better he speaks the foreign language, the harder it is for the native to understand him. G. B.Shaw explains that it is an insult to the native speaker of English who cannot understand his own language when it is too well spoken. Therefore, the first thing a foreigner has to do is to speak with a strong foreign accent and speak broken English.

Q.2 What does George Bernard meant by ‘Broken English’ in his radio talk ‘Spoken English and English’?

**Possible Answer:** Broken English is a poorly spoken or ill-written version of the English language used by a non-native speaker. Broken English is a phrase applied by the linguists to bad or incorrect English. It is a dialect other than the Standard English that means a language which is fragmented, incomplete and has a faulty syntax and inappropriate diction. The phrase applied by G.B.Shaw depicts the foreignness of the speaker or his/her lack of training in that specific language. Many non-native speakers speak what can be put as Broken English. For example, in the sentence, Gandhi ate many blows in the jail; one can clearly see the influence of native language. According to G.B. Shaw, instead of speaking perfect English, a foreigner should speak in Broken English as it is spoken and understood by everyone and everywhere.

Q.3 What are the advantages of learning to speak well as given by G.B. Shaw in his radio-talk ‘Spoken English and Broken English’?

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Q.4 What according to G.B. Shaw in his radio-talk ‘Spoken English and Broken English’ is the ‘Correct English’?

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Q.5 Write about the provocative ideas given by G.B.Shaw on spoken English in ‘Spoken English and Broken English’.

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### 3.9.2 Multiple Choice Questions:

1. To Shaw the two simplest and commonest words in any language are\_\_\_\_\_
  - a. come and go
  - b. give and no
  - c. yes and no
  - d. give and take
2. Everybody has \_\_\_\_\_ manners and \_\_\_\_\_ manners
  - a. Regular and irregular
  - b. polite and impolite
  - c. company and home
  - d. soft and loud
3. According to Shaw’s view, which dialect prevents one from obtaining some employment?
  - a. Cockney dialect
  - b. Regional dialect
  - c. National dialect
  - d. Local dialect
4. “Spoken English and Broken English” is a gramophone recording Shaw made for\_\_\_\_\_
  - a. Linguaphone Institute
  - b. BBC
  - c. Fabian Society
  - d. None

5. Shaw was the member of a committee established by———
- |        |         |
|--------|---------|
| a. BBC | b. UNO  |
| c. CNN | d. None |

### **3.10 Examination Oriented Questions**

1. What are the arguments given by Shaw in ‘Spoken English and Broken English’ to commence his idea that there is no such thing as ‘Correct English’?
2. Narrate the humorous incidents that Shaw refers to in ‘Spoken English and Broken English’ in order to support his claim that informal speech is generally careless.

### **3.11 MCQ Answers Key**

**Answer Key:** 1. (c), 2. (c), 3. (a), 4. (a), 5. (a)

### **3.12 Reference and Suggested Readings:**

1. Shaw, George Bernard. *Pygmalion*. Penguin. New York; 2003.
2. Shaw, George Bernard. *Major Barbara*. Methuen Drama; 2016.

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**Course No. : AA 301 (Theory)**

**Title : General English**

**Semester-III**

**Unit – 1**

**ESSAYS**

**Lesson No:4**

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*Early Modern English*

By Dr. K Radha Kumari

**UNIT STRUCTURE**

**4.1 Objectives**

**4.1 Introduction to the Author**

**4.3 *Early Modern English* (Text)**

**4.4 Summary of Early Modern English**

**4.5 Lets Sum Up**

**4,6 Glossary**

**4.7 Self-Assessment Questions**

**4.7.1 Five Short Type Questions with at least two questions with possible answer.**

**4.7.2 Five Multiple Choice Questions**

**4.8 Examination Oriented Questions**

**4.9 MCQ Answer Key**

**4.10 References**

**4.11 Suggested Readings**

**4.1 Objectives:**

- To enable students to identify the historical background of the English language.
- To provide a student –friendly perspective on the history of English literature and a brief development of the language over the ages.
- To provide an introduction to the study of the growth and development of the English language.
- To enable students to identify and analyze the textual and linguistic characteristics of a variety of texts typical of the period.
- Students will have a good insight into the nature and language of different types of texts from the Early Modern English Period and of their relationship with the more standard printed texts of the time.
- To demonstrate the extent to which the evolution of the English language during the Early Modern period shaped literary taste and served to advance knowledge in many areas.

#### **4.2 Introduction of The Author**

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#### **4.3 *Early Modern English (Text)***

The surge of new learning that engulfed Europe reached the shores of England about 1500. It had a great influence on English language and literature. The reformation came in the wake of the Renaissance. Though its importance was primarily religious and political, it had its impact on the language as well. The Reformation gave an impetus to Bible translations which augmented the word stock of English. The introduction of printing also had a far-reaching effect on the development of the language. All these factors mark the beginning of the Modern Age in the history of the English language.

In Modern English, the inflections have been considerably reduced and the form of the language is almost like present day English. However, the original

inflections have been retained in the marking of plurals of nouns and the possessive singular, and in the forms of personal pronouns. The adjectives dropped all endings and no longer showed distinctions of number, case and gender. But a complicated system of verbs evolved.

During the Renaissance all major works such as Francis Bacon's *Novum Organum* and Sir Thomas More's *Utopia* were written in Latin. Nevertheless, English was reestablished as the sole literary language due to several factors. At the time of the Reformation, controversial books and pamphlets were written in English in order to reach out to the public which did not know Latin. The rise of the nation state fostered national feeling and pride in the native tongue. The new nationalism led to conscious attempts to create a vernacular literature to vie with that of Greece and Rome; for example, Edmund Spenser's *Faerie Queen* and John Milton's *Paradise Lost*. Even at this time the English language came very much under Latin influence.

In the Middle Ages there was a trickle of Latin words in English: legal, legitimate, custody, prosecute, pauper, index, zenith, lunatic, ulcer, nervous, incarnate, rosary, etc. But quite a large number of Latin words crept into English during the Renaissance. Some of them retained their Latin spelling: genius, species, militia, radius, focus, specimen, apparatus, equilibrium, formula, veto etc. Several Latin words were modified when they entered English. For example,

Latin complexus	>	Eng complex
Latin considerabilis	>	Eng considerable
Latin externus	>	Eng external
Latin conspicuus	>	Eng conspicuous

The Renaissance also gave rise to a number of synonyms with slight distinctions in meaning. For example, along with the native word 'kingly' which has a human significance and the commonplace French term 'royal', there is the formal Latin term 'regal' which is the contribution of the Renaissance. The custom of using an adjective of classical origin to correspond to a native noun is yet another feature of this period. Thus the native word 'hand' has the adjective 'manual'; so also: catfeline; town-urban; village-rural; water-aquatic; nose-nasal; mouth-oral, etc. the zeal of Latin scholars sometimes resulted in modifying the spellings of several words. For example, the 'b' in 'debt' and 'doubt' is the outcome of tracing the

words to their Latin origin, *debitum* and *dubitare*. In Middle English they were borrowed from French and appeared as ‘dette’ and ‘doute’. Sometimes the enthusiasm of the Latin scholars gave rise to etymological blunders like the insertion of the letter ‘s’ in the word ‘island’. They wrongly related the Anglo-Saxon word ‘igland; (which became ‘iland’ in Middle English) to the Latin word ‘insula’ and reshaped its spelling.

## Changes in Pronunciation

### *The Great Vowel Shift*

The remarkable changes in the pronunciation of vowels which took place during the transition from Middle English to Modern English are commonly referred to as the Great Vowel Shift. As a result of these changes, the long vowels gradually came to be pronounced with greater elevation of the tongue and those which could not be raised without becoming consonantal, became diphthongs.

The greater vowel shift can be visualized in this manner.

- a) Middle English /ē/ >  
     /ī/fet > Feet /fē:t/  
     fed > Feed /fē:d/
- b) Middle English /ō/ >  
     /u:/fod > Food /fu:d/ (pr f  
     ōd) g ōs > goose/gu:s/
- c) Middle English /a/ >  
     /eI/nāme > name /neIm/  
     tāke > take /telk/
- d) Middle English /ī/ > /aý /  
     bīnden > bind /ba ý nd/  
     child > child /t f aý Id/
- e) Middle English /ū/ >  
     /au/Hous > house /h a us/  
     ūt > out /aut/
- f) Middle English /ō/ > /Yu/  
     Stōn > stone /stYun/

Hōp > hope/hYup/

The short vowels, however, did not undergo such important changes.

- a) Middle English /a/ > /æ/ glad > glad /glæd/ appel > apple /æpl/  
But /a/ was lengthened before 's' 'th' and 'f'  
Ask/a:sk/  
father/fa:ðY/  
craft/kraft/
- b) Lengthening of /a/ also took place when the lateral /l/ stood before  
/f/. calm /ka:m/ calf /ka:f/
- c) Middle English /e/ and /i/ have remained the same in Modern English.  
Helpen > help  
Sitten > sit
- d) Middle English /u/ > /ʌ/  
Tonge > tongue /tʌŋk/  
Sonne > sun /sʌn/

But in words like pull, full, etc. the /u/ has remained.

### *Spelling Reform*

English spelling is an Achilles heel to non-native speakers of English. There is no relation between spelling and pronunciation. As G.L. Brook observes, 'English spelling is notoriously difficult, and foreigners learning English are bewildered by the lack of correlation between spelling and pronunciation.'

The primary reason is that English is an un-phonetic language. There is no one-to-one correspondence between the letters of the alphabet and the phonemes they symbolize. For example the letter 'a' represents many sounds: /a:/ in 'father', /æ/ in 'cat', /ʌ/ in 'cut', /Y/ in 'arrive', /ei/ in 'late' and /T:/ in 'hall'. The central vowel /Y/ is represented in different ways as in: about, father, neighbor, pleasure, the, theatre. This overloading is one reason why English spelling is misleading.

The fact that English spelling is consistently changing is another reason. English pronunciation has been constantly changing for the last three centuries or more; but spelling has changed little. So English spelling often represents pronunciation as it is used to be rather than as it is today.

The use of more than one spelling convention is yet another reason. Some of the spelling conventions go back to Old English, while others were introduced by French scribes during the Norman Conquest when French predominated. This accounts for the difference between the spelling and of the sound /s/ in 'mouse' and 'mice'. The 's' is the native spelling while 'c' is the French spelling. In loan words the influence of foreign spelling is most strongly marked. Thus we have 'ph' as the spelling for /f/ in Greek loan words like 'telephone' and 'philosophy' and 'c' for /s/ before front vowels in words like 'cede' and 'receive'.

The scribes of the Middle Ages had to write in an English that was in a bewildering state of flux. They represented in symbols the sounds they heard, that is, they tried to spell phonetically. Spelling was not constant; it was determined according to the whims and fancies of the scribes. The later scribes adopted the spelling conventions of the earlier period without reference to the change in pronunciation. Caxton adopted a uniform spelling in his printed works but did not recognize the changes in pronunciation effected by the Great Vowel Shift.

It was only during the eighteenth century that spelling became fixed. In his Dictionary (1755), Dr. Johnson gave authority to the 'historical phonetic' spelling and since his time there have been only a few changes. English spelling is historical and not actually phonetic because the symbols and the alphabets have had to represent singly or in combination the sounds of all manner of other languages which have contributed to English vocabulary.

Some of the basic difficulties posed by English spelling are:

1. One letter of the alphabet or a combination of letters may represent different sounds and a sound may be represented by different symbols,  
eg. the 's' in the words 'this', 'these', 'sugar' and the 'sh' represented by 's' in 'sugar' and 'sure'. Homophones also show this phenomenon: flower/flour, there/their.
2. In a monosyllabic word that ends in a single vowel and a single consonant, the consonant is doubled before a suffix with a single vowel, as for, eg. sadsaddest.
3. Final unstressed 'y' (representing the vowel sound /i/) is changed to 'i' before suffixes beginning with a consonant and before s suffix beginning with a vowel except 'I'. For example happy/happiness, but hurry/hurrying.



### *Reform Movements*

During the sixteenth century, many attempts were made to reform English spelling. In 1568, Thomas Smith published the *Dialogue Concerning the Correct and Emended Writing of the English Language*, but it did not become popular. William Bullokar made a better attempt at phonetic reform in 1580. In 1582 Richard Mulcaster brought out a treatise on English spelling. During the Restoration Age, the English Academy also took up the task of spelling reform.

It is the publication of Dr. Johnson's Dictionary in 1755 that accelerated the reform movement. It offered a standard and fixed spelling system. In the nineteenth century, the quest for spelling reform was vigorously pursued by Pitman and others.

Despite all sincere attempts at reform over the years, English spelling, as professor Ernest Weekley in *The English language* observes, 'is so far as its relation to spoken words is concerned quite crazy.'

### *Dictionaries*

In the Middle Ages, glosses were written. These glosses, which contained the meanings for difficult Latin words or synonyms for the use of scholars and readers, are the earliest forms of dictionaries. Their chief purpose was to facilitate the intricacies of a foreign language and not a better understanding of the vernacular. These glosses were not arranged in an alphabetical order but were usually attached to a particular text. In the sixteenth century, alphabetical dictionaries were published, like Vernon's trilingual *Dictonarium* (1552). In the sixteenth century, English lexicography was given great attention but it did not attain perfection.

Efforts were made in this direction by Robert Cawdrey, the first person who explained English terms in English in his work *Table Alphabetical* (1604). It was not complete; it was limited to rare and difficult words. In 1616, John Bullokar published *An English Expositor* with the aim of teaching the interpretation of the most difficult words used in English. In 1623, Henry Cockeram brought out his *English Dictionarie* which alphabetically divided and arranged strange and foreign words into several parts. In 1568, appeared *New World of Words* with 11,000 entries compiled by John Milton's nephew Edward Philips. It went through several editions in his lifetime. Many dictionaries were compiled during the eighteenth

century, of which Nathan Bailey's *Universal Etymological Dictionary* (1727 and 1732) deserves special mention because it served as the basis for Dr Johnson's Dictionary.

#### *Dr. Johnson's Dictionary*

Dr. Samuel Johnson noticed the preoccupation of the eighteenth century middle class with 'correctness' in linguistic usage and ventured into lexicography to satisfy its needs. Accordingly in 1747, Dr. Johnson submitted the plan of his dictionary to Lord Chesterfield for his patronage. But unfortunately, Lord Chesterfield ignored the plan (unintentional, according to Lord Chesterfield). After seven years of patient labour, Dr. Johnson published his Dictionary in two folio volumes in 1755. It ran into five editions during his lifetime. Through his Dictionary he hoped to preserve the pronunciation of English and to ascertain its use and lengthen its duration. In his collection of words Dr. Johnson did not go further than the works of Sidney, holding that 'from the authors which rose in the time of Elizabeth, a speech might be formed adequate to all the purpose of our use of language'. He held high the language of the Pre-Restoration writers. Hence, as he observed, he 'studiously endeavoured to collect examples and authorities from the writers before the Restoration, whose works I regard as the wells of English undefiled, as the pure sources of genuine diction.'

Dr. Johnson's *Dictionary* is an important landmark in lexicography. He listed a larger number of words than his predecessors and standardized English spelling, sometimes unsatisfactorily. He defined the meanings of words illustrated with quotations from standard authors so that, as he said in the Preface, the sense may easily be understood. Dr. Johnson recognized the prior claims of usage over the arbitrary appeals to logic, analogy, Latin grammar and the sheer prejudice so often indulged in by his contemporaries. His attitude to foreign words was quite wholesome. He 'warned others against the folly of naturalising useless foreigners to the injury of the natives.'

Though Dr. Johnson's *Dictionary* was commended by the contemporaries, it got its fair share of criticism too. Many of his definitions of words reveal his prejudices and caprices, as in his definition of 'oats' as 'a grain which in England is generally given to horses but in Scotland supports the people'. However, he has continued to be a source of inspiration to successive lexicographers.

## **The Oxford English Dictionary**

By 1850, scholars felt the limitations of existing dictionaries. In 1857, the Philological Society resolved to set up a committee to collect the words that were not found in the existing dictionaries with a view to publishing a supplement. In 1859, the proposal for a *New English Dictionary* was issued by the Philological Society. A large number of volunteers participated in the compilation of the world's greatest dictionary, originally called *A New English Dictionary on Historical Principles* and since 1895 popularly called *The Oxford English Dictionary*. The final section of the dictionary was published in 1928, 70 years after the resolution was passed at the Philological Society. This magnum opus, in ten volumes, runs into 15,487 pages, covering nearly 2,40,165 main words. In 1933, a supplementary volume of the dictionary was published. The Oxford English Dictionary has become the Voice of Authority, the arbiter of linguistic disputes and the purveyor of exact data. Almost all the modern dictionaries in English are based on this.

### *Lexicography in America*

Noah Webster (1758-1834), a Connecticut lexicographer and biologist, published his *Compendious Dictionary of the English Language*, in 1806. This was a forerunner of *An American Dictionary of the English Language* published in 1878 in two quarto volumes. His work made use of Americanisms and based its definitions on the usage of American as well as English writers and soon became the recognized authority. In 1840, Webster revised his work to include 70,000 words instead of the original 38,000. A vastly revised edition, in which his son William G. Webster and Prof. Chauncy A. Goodrich of Yale collaborated, was brought out by the Merriam firm in 1847. Successive editions were also published in the years that followed.

### *Slang*

Slang is mainly an informal language that is more common in speech than in writing, often the creation of those who despise and disregard conventions and hanker after novelties of expression in the belief that it shows originality and independence. Sometimes, slang terms (informal, non-standard language) acquire respectability and pass into the literary language. Many good and respectable words in modern English first originated as slang, e.g. chap, coax, jilt, pluck, pinch, kidnap.

### *English as a Global Language*

In this age of rapid globalization and mass migration, a link language for the purpose of international communication has become the need of the hour. Artificial languages like Esperanto, Ido and Novial were created to serve this purpose; but they did not gain currency. Hence English, which is extensively used, has become the lingua franca. As David Crystal observes, ‘English is now the language most widely taught as a foreign language—in over 100 countries, such as China, Russia, Germany, Spain, Egypt and Brazil—and in most of these countries, it is emerging as the chief foreign language to be encountered in schools, often displacing another language in the process.’

From the status of a language of ‘small reach’ in the sixteenth century, English has, over the years, evolved into a universal language of communication at economic, commercial, political and cultural levels. Moreover, English is the mother tongue outside England too. English colonization that spanned the period from the seventeenth to the nineteenth century empowered both Britain and her language. English came to be spoken in the United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. In the former colonies of Britain like India, Africa, and Sri Lanka, English is an important medium of communication. Communication is in English in the two powerful domains of science and commerce in advanced countries like China and Japan. In these countries, English is taught as a foreign language, but is not accorded a special administrative status. The special role of English as a language recognized in every country has conferred a global status on English.

The standard form of English had already been in existence even before the use of English became widespread. This must be the reason why English survived as a single language. There are marked differences in pronunciation and vocabulary among American English, Canadian English, Australian English and the parent British English and the different non-native varieties. But these differences do not, in any way, hamper mutual intelligibility. The distinguished Swedish philologist R.E. Zachrisson has pointed out several factors that strengthen the possibility of English becoming a global language. In the first place, English is the language of two very progressive countries in the world—England and USA. It is second only to Mandarin Chinese in having the largest number of speakers in the world. Nearly a quarter of the world’s population is competent or fluent in English. According to an estimate made in the late 1990s there were 1.5 billion speakers of English. No

other language has come anywhere near this phenomenal progress. Above all, its cosmopolitan vocabulary, natural gender and inflectional simplicity enable foreigners to master English without much difficulty. Nevertheless the notoriously difficult spelling, the lack of correlation between spelling and pronunciation and the complexities of English words and idioms stand in the way of the acquisition of English. C.K. Ogden invented Basic English to overcome some of these difficulties. Basic English is a selection of one thousand words which can express the minimum of concepts and thoughts required for international communication. But it lacks the dynamism and expressive vitality of English. In an attempt to simplify English spelling along phonetic lines, R.E. Zachrisson invented Anglic without departing much from the existing system. Though philologists supported it, Anglic did not become popular. So English continues to hold her sovereign position among the languages of the world.

There are several countries where English is recognized as an official language. In these countries, English serves the purpose of communication in government affairs, the law courts, the education system and the media. International bodies like the UNO, UNESCO, UNICEF, IAEA and WHO recognize English as an official language. Even where English has no official status, it has the pride of place in foreign language teaching. The accelerating boom in advertising and broadcasting, Pop music, the phenomenal progress in information technology, scientific advancements, the enhanced modes of international travel and the thriving ELT industry are added reinforcements to the status of English as a global language.

Thus it can be said with certainty that no other language is so widespread or has a larger number of speakers than English. The socio-economic power nexus of the English, the official status English enjoys among non-speakers, the proliferation of new 'Englishes' and the emphasis given to English education, all privilege the position of English over other languages in the world and ensure the global status of English in the years to come.

#### **4.4 Summary of the Text**

Of all the languages, English perhaps has the vocabulary most copious, heterogeneous and varied. The urge of new learning that engulfed Europe reached England around 1500 and had a great influence on English language and literature. Though the Reformation that came in the wake of the Renaissance was significant

religiously and politically, it had its impact on the language as well. The Reformation gave a momentum to Bible translations which multiplied the word stock of English. The introduction of printing also had a sweeping effect on the development of the language. All these factors mark the beginning of the Modern age in the history of the English language.

In Modern English, the inflections have been substantially decreased and the form of language is almost like present day English. However, the original inflections have been maintained in the marking of the plurals of nouns and the possessive singular, and in the forms of the personal pronouns. The adjectives dropped all endings and no longer showed dissimilarities of number, case and gender. But a complex system of verbs developed.

During the Renaissance, all major works such as Francis Bacon's *Novum Organum* and Sir Thomas More's *Utopia* were written in Latin. In spite of that English was restored as the exclusive literary language due to several factors. At the time of the Reformation, contentious books and pamphlets were written in English in order to reach out to the public which didn't know Latin. The intensification of the 'nation state' nurtured national feeling and pride in the native tongue. The new nationalism led to conscious efforts to create a vernacular literature to compete with that of Greece and Rome; for example, Edmund Spenser's *Faerie Queene* () and John Milton's *Paradise Lost*(). Even at this time the English language came very much under Latin influence.

In the Middle Ages, there was a decline in Latin words in English: legal, legitimate, custody, prosecute, pauper, index, zenith, lunatic, ulcer, nervous, incarnate, rosary, etc. But considerably a large number of Latin words crept into English during the Renaissance. Some of them reserved their Latin spelling such as genius, species, militia, radius, focus, specimen, apparatus, equilibrium, formula, veto, etc. Many Latin words were mutated when they entered English. For example,

Latin *complexus*>Eng complex

Latin *considerabilis*>Eng considerable

Latin *externus*>Eng external

Latin *conspicuus*>Eng conspicuous

The zeal of Latin scholars sometimes resulted in modifying the spellings of several words. For example, the ‘b’ in ‘debt’ and ‘doubt’ is the outcome of tracing the words to their Latin origin, *debitum* and *dubitare*. In the Middle English they were borrowed from French and appeared as ‘*dette*’ and ‘*doute*’. The Renaissance also gave impetus to a number of synonyms with modest variations in meaning. Sometimes the zest of the Latin scholars gave rise to etymological blunders like the insertion of the letter ‘s’ in the word ‘island’. They wrongly associated the Anglo-Saxon word ‘igland’ (which became ‘iland’ in Middle English) to the Latin word ‘insula’ and reshaped its spelling.

## CHANGES IN PRONUNCIATION

### The Great Vowel Shift

The major series of changes in the pronunciation of vowels during the transition from Middle English to Modern English are commonly referred to as the Great Vowel Shift. As a result, the long vowels gradually came to be pronounced with a greater elevation of the tongue whereas those that could not be raised without becoming consonantal became diphthongs. But the short vowels did not undergo any such important variations. **Spelling Reforms**

English spelling does not come very easy to non-native speakers of English. English is an un-phonetic language as there is no direct relation between the letters of the alphabet and the phonemes they symbolize. For example the letter ‘a’ represents many sounds: /a:/ in ‘father’, /æ/ in ‘cat’, /Ä/ in ‘cut’, /Y/ in ‘arrive’, /ei/ in ‘late’ and /T:/ in ‘hall’. The central vowel /Y/ is represented in different ways as in: about, father, neighbor, pleasure, theatre. This overloading is one reason why English spelling is misleading.

English pronunciation is changing for the past many centuries; but the spelling has changed little. So English spelling often represents pronunciation as it used to be rather than as it is today.

Another reason is the use of more than one spelling convention. Some of them go back to Old English, while others were introduced during the Norman Conquest by the French scribes which accounts for the difference between the spelling and of the sound /s/ in ‘mouse’ and ‘mice’. The ‘s’ is the native spelling while ‘c’ is

the French spelling. The influence of foreign spelling is strongly marked in the loan words. Thus, 'ph' as the spelling for /f/ in Greek loan words like 'telephone' and 'philosophy' and 'c' for /s/ before front vowels in words like 'cede' and 'receive'. The advent of the printing press introduced in England by William Caxton in 1476 (set up at Westminster) was a major factor in the development of the early modern English. He adopted a uniform spelling in his printed works but did not recognize the changes in pronunciation effected by the Great Vowel Shift.

However, during the eighteenth century the spelling became fixed. Dr Johnson's *Dictionary* (1755) gave sovereignty to the 'historical phonetic' spelling. English spelling is historical and not phonetic because the symbols and the alphabets have had to represent singly or in combination the sounds of all manner of other languages which have contributed to English vocabulary.

### ***Reform Movements***

In 1568, Thomas Smith published a somewhat unpopular *Dialogue Concerning the Correct and Emended Writing of the English Language*. William Bulloker made a better attempt at phonetic reform in 1580. A treatise on English spelling was published by Richard Mulcaster in 1582. During the Restoration Age, the English Academy also took up the task of spelling reform. However, the publication of Dr Johnson's *Dictionary* (1755) escalated the reform movement by offering a standard and fixed spelling system. During the nineteenth century, the exploration for spelling reform was pursued by Pitman and others.

### ***DICTIONARIES***

During the Middle Ages, glosses were written and their main function was to facilitate the intricacies of a foreign language and not a better understanding of the vernacular. In the sixteenth century, English lexicography was given due importance but it failed to attain any attention.

Dr Samuel Johnson, who, noticed the preoccupation of the middle class with 'correctness' in linguistic usage, submitted the plan of his dictionary to Lord Chesterfield for his patronage in 1747. After seven years of patient labour, he published his *Dictionary* in two folio volumes in 1755 which ran into five editions during his lifetime. Through *Dictionary* he hoped to safeguard the pronunciation of English and to ascertain its use and lengthen its duration. His work is an important



landmark in lexicography. He listed a large number of words than his predecessors and standardized English spelling, sometimes unsatisfactorily. He defined the meaning of the words illustrated with quotations from standard authors so that their sense may easily be understood. Many of his definition of words reveal his biases such as his definition of 'oats' as 'a grain which in England is generally given to horses but in Scotland supports the people'.

### ***THE OXFORD ENGLISH DICTIONARY***

In 1857, the Philological Society resolved to set up a committee to collect the words that were not found in the existing dictionaries with a view to publish a supplement. As a result, the proposal for a new English Dictionary was issued by it in 1859. A large number of volunteers assisted in the compilation of the world's greatest dictionary, originally called *A New English Dictionary on Historical Principles* and since 1895 popularly called *The Oxford English Dictionary*, the final section of which was published in 1928. This magnum opus, in ten volumes, runs into 15,487 pages, covering nearly 2,40,165 main words. In 1933, a supplementary volume of the dictionary was published. Almost all the modern dictionaries are based on it. In 1806, Noah Webster, a Connecticut lexicographer and biologist, published his *Compendious Dictionary of the English Language* which became the forerunner of *An American Dictionary of the English Language* (1878) in two quarto volumes. In 1840, Webster revised his work to include 70,000 words instead of the original 38,000.

### ***SLANG***

It is mainly an informal language that is more common in speech than in writing, often the creation of those who despise and disregard the conventions and hanker after novelties of expression in the belief that it shows originality and independence. Many good and respectable words in modern English first originated as slang, e.g. chap, coax, jilt, pluck, pinch, kidnap.

### ***ENGLISH as a GLOBAL LANGUAGE***

In this age of globalization and mass migration English has become a link language for the purpose of international communication. Over the years, English language has evolved into a universal language of communication at commercial, political, economic, and cultural levels. Moreover, English is the mother tongue

outside England too. For example, in advanced countries like China and Japan, English is an important medium in the domains of science and commerce. The special role of English as a language recognized in every country has conferred a global status on English. There are marked variations in pronunciation and vocabulary among American English, Canadian English, Australian English and the different non-native varieties. But these differences do not hamper mutual intelligibility in any way. International bodies like the UNO, UNESCO, UNICEF, IAEA and WHO recognize English as an official language.

#### **4.5 Let's Sum Up**

The above essay traces the development of English into a modern and global language. It elucidates how spellings were standardized and what influenced them; how pronunciation changed over the ages and how dictionaries came to be written. Before the Renaissance and the Reformation, Latin and French were the important languages. However, the translation of Bible into English from Latin required that pamphlets and treatises be written in the language of the common people, together with the advent of the printing press gave a huge impetus to the English language. In 1755, Dr Samuel Johnson published his *Dictionary* which attempted to standardize the spellings of the words as well as their pronunciation. He gave examples from his predecessors to convey the sense in which the word had been used. *The Oxford English Dictionary*, the most authoritative dictionary in the English language ran into ten volumes with 2,40,165 words. Today, English, the global language, is spoken as the first language in countries such as the US, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. It is the language of communication and trade and has the largest number of speakers in the world.

#### **4.6 Glossary**

- *Renaissance*: The terms 'Renaissance' means a new birth or rebirth. It began in Italy around the mid- 14<sup>th</sup> century, slowly moving outward over all of Europe and reaching England around the 16<sup>th</sup> century. The Renaissance is associated with a variety of areas – architecture, painting, visual arts and literature. Reading ancient Latin and Greek texts, scholars of this period began to think extensively about human nature. The Renaissance rejected religious and superstitious beliefs in favour of actual scientific experiments and rational thinking.

- *Reformation*: refers to the religious revolution that took place in the Western church in the 16<sup>th</sup> century headed by Martin Luther and John Calvin. It became the basis for the founding of Protestantism.
- *Far-Reaching*: Having a wide range or influence.
- *Retained*: To continue to have or use.
- *Fostered*: To help something grow or develop.
- *Native*: Belonging to a person since birth or childhood.
- *Vernacular*: Using a language or dialect native to a region or country rather than a literary, cultured, or foreign language.
- *Trickle*: To move or go slowly in small numbers or amounts.
- *Legitimate*: Real, accepted or official.
- *Prosecute*: To hold a trial against a person who is accused of a crime to see if that person is guilty.
- *Pauper*: A very poor person.
- *Zenith*: The strongest or most successful period of time.
- *Lunatic*: Wildly foolish.
- *Ulcer*: A painful, sore area inside or outside the body.
- *Incarnate*: Having a human body.
- *Equilibrium*: A state in which opposing forces or influences are balanced.
- *Veto*: A decision by a person in authority to not allow or approve something.
- *Conspicuous*: Very easy to see or notice.
- *Synonyms*: A word that has the same meaning as another word in the same language.
- *Zeal*: A strong feeling of interest and enthusiasm that makes someone very eager or determined to do something.
- *Insertion*: Something that is added to a piece of writing.

- *Etymological*: The history of a word.
- *Achilles Heel*: A weakness
- *Bewildered*: To perplex or confuse by a variety of objects or considerations.
- *Correlation*: The relationship between things that happen.
- *Phonemes*: The smallest unit of speech that can be used to make one word different from another word.
- *Consistently*: Continuing to happen or develop in the same way.
- *Convention*: A custom or a way of acting or doing things that is widely accepted and followed.
- *Scribes*: An official or a clerk or a public secretary.
- *Flux*: A series of changes.
- *Homophones*: A word that is pronounced like another word but is different in meaning, origin, or spelling.
- *Monosyllabic*: Having only one syllable.
- *Suffix*: A letter or a group of letters that is added to the end of a word to change its meaning or to form a different word.
- *Quest*: Along or difficult effort to find or do something.
- *Vigorously*: Done with great force and energy.
- *Glosses*: A deceptively attractive appearance.
- *Facilitate*: To help something run more smoothly and effectively.
- *Intricacies*: Something that is complex.
- *Lexicography*: Making of a dictionary.
- *Patronage*: Money or support that is given to an artist, organization, etc □
- *Arbitrary*: Not based on reason or evidence.
- *Prejudice*: A feeling of like or dislike for someone or something especially when it is not reasonable or logical.
- *Caprice*: A sudden change.
- *Resolution*: The act of finding an answer or solution to a conflict, problem, etc.

- *Magnum Opus*: A great work.
- *Purveyor*: A person or a business that sells or provides something.
- *Quarto*: The size of a piece of paper cut four from a sheet.
- *Despise*: To dislike something or someone very much.
- *Hanker*: To have a strong or constant desire for something.
- *Chap*: A crack in or a sore roughening of the skin caused by exposure to wind or cold.
- *Extensively*: Having wide or considerable extent.
- *Conferred*: to give (something, such as a degree, award, title, right etc.) to someone or something.
- *Cosmopolitan*: A person who has lived in and knows about many different parts of the world.
- *Philologist*: A person who studies language.
- *Accelerating*: To cause something to happen sooner or more quickly.
- *Boom*: To grow or expand suddenly.
- *Reinforcements*: The act of encouraging or strengthening something.
- *Nexus*: A relationship or connection between people or things.
- *Proliferation*: to increase in number or amount quickly.
- *Norman Conquest*: It was the 11<sup>th</sup> century invasion by an army of Norman and Breton French soldiers led by Duke William I (William the Conqueror) of Normandy.
- *Diphthong*: Also known as a gliding vowel, it is a sound formed by the combination of two vowels in a single syllable, in which the sound begins as one vowel and moves towards another as in coin, soil, loud and side.
- *Lingua franca*: it is a language that is adopted as a common language between speakers whose native languages are different.
- *Inflection*: It is the modulation of pitch in the voice.

## 4.7 Self-Assessment Questions

### 4.7.1 Short Answer type questions (50-60 words)

Q.1. Describe briefly the role of Dr Johnson's Dictionary in the development of Early Modern English.

Possible Answer : Dr Samuel Johnson, who, noticed the preoccupation of the middle class with 'correctness' in linguistic usage, submitted the plan of his dictionary to Lord Chesterfield for his patronage in 1747. After seven years of patient labour, he published his Dictionary in two folio volumes in 1755 which ran into five editions during his lifetime. Through *Dictionary* he hoped to safeguard the pronunciation of English and to ascertain its use and lengthen its duration. His work is an important landmark in lexicography. He listed a large number of words than his predecessors and standardized English spelling, sometimes unsatisfactorily. He defined the meaning of the words illustrated with quotations from standard authors so that their sense may easily be understood. Many of his definition of words reveal his biases such as his definition of 'oats' as 'a grain which in England is generally given to horses but in Scotland supports the people'.

Q.2 What is Slang?

Possible Answer : It is mainly an informal language that is more common in speech than in writing, often the creation of those who despise and disregard the conventions and hanker after novelties of expression in the belief that it shows originality and independence. Many good and respectable words in modern English first originated as slang, e.g. chap, coax, jilt, pluck, pinch, kidnap.

Q3. Describe briefly the role of Reform Movements in the development of the Early Modern English.

Answer \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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Q4.How did the Great Vowel Shift change pronunciation?

Answer \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Q5. How did the changes in pronunciation effect the standardization of the English language?

Answer \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

#### 4.7.2 Multiple choice Questions

1. Dr Johnson published his *Dictionary* in the year  
(A) 1755 (B) 1756  
(C) 1745 (D) 1775
2. The *Compendious Dictionary of the English Language* was written by  
(A) Robert Cawdrey (B) Samuel Johnson  
(C) Noah Webster (D) John Bullockar
3. *Novum Organum* was written by:

- (A) Milton (B) Francis Bacon
- (C) William Langland (D) Shakespeare
4. The first person who explained English terms in his work *Table Alphabetical* was
- (A) Edward Philips (B) Henry Cockeram
- (C) Nathan Bailey (D) Robert Cawdrey
5. Lexicography is the study of:
- (A) Dictionary (B) Encyclopedia
- (C) Newspaper (D) Magazine

#### 4.8 EXAMINATION ORIENTED QUESTIONS

- Q1. Describe the role of dictionaries in the development of the English language.
- Q2. What were the main factors of the transition from Middle English to the Early Modern English?
- Q3. Describe the importance of English language globally.

#### 4.9 Answer Key:

1. A) 1755 3. B) *Francis Bacon*
2. C) Noah Webster 4. A) Robert Cawdrey
5. A) Newspaper

#### 4.10 References:

Algeo, John. Ed. *The Origins and the Development of the English Language*. Sixth Edition. USA: Wadsworth Cengage Learning, 2010.



Bate, Walter Jackson. *Samuel Johnson*, Ch. 15, "Storming the Main Gate: The Dictionary". New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1975.

Crystal, David. *English as a Global Language*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed, London: Cambridge University Press, 2003.

Wikipedia Contributors. "Early Modern English." *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*. Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, 17 June 2017. Web. 17 June 2017. [https:// en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Early Modern English](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Early_Modern_English)

#### **4.11 Suggested Readings:**

*Early Modern English* (1976) by C.L. Barber.

*The History of English Language* (2006) by E.V. Gelderan.

*The Oxford History of English* (2006) ed. by L. Muggleston.

*The Adventures of English* (2003) by M. Bragg.

*A Concise History of English Literature and Language*(2013)

by K. RadhaKumari

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**Course No. : AA 301 (Theory)**  
**Semester-III**

**Title : General English**

**Unit – II**

**POEMS**

**Lesson No: 5**

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*The Lotus*

By Toru Dutt

**UNIT STRUCTURE**

- 5.1 Introduction**
- 5.2 Objectives**
- 5.3 About the Author**
- 5.4 *The Lotus* (Text)**
- 5.5 Summary of the Sonnet *The Lotus***
- 5.6 Critical Appreciation of the Sonnet *The Lotus***
- 5.7 Self-Assessment Questions**
- 5.8 Multiple Choice Questions**
- 5.9 Examination Oriented Questions**
- 5.10 Answer Key to Multiple Choice Questions**
- 5.11 Suggested Reading**
- 5.1 Introduction**

Toru Dutt was one of the two poets who represented a very crucial period of Bengal, a poet whose poems reflected a decisive turning point in the literature and culture of Bengal, the other poet being Michael Madhusudan Dutt. Toru Dutt was the product of great interaction of cultures and religious faiths that occurred in Calcutta following the cultural and social reawakening heralded by Raja

Rammohun Roy. Through the Sonnet *The Lotus* she offers her country and the world the rich blend of East and West, a balanced spirit of the old and the new.

## **5.2 Objectives:**

The Objective of this lesson is to:

- a) familiarize the learners with Toru Dutt, the first Indian woman to write in English
- b) make the learners aware of the conditions that lead to the development of Indian Writing in English during colonial period.
- c) highlight the contribution of Toru Dutt in the development of Indian Writing in English through her poetry, particularly the poem prescribed for study.

## **5.3 About the Author**

A number of promising writers adorned the galaxy of Indo-Anglian writing during nineteenth century. The Ghoses and the Dutts and a few others gained a 'local habitation and a name' for the Indo-Anglian writing. Most of the early writers writing in English belonged to Bengal. The most prominent among these were Henry Derozio, Kashiprasad Ghose, Rajnarain Dutt, Michael Madhusudan Dutt, Govin Chunder Dutt, Omesh Chunder Dutt, Greece Chunder Dutt, Art Dutt and Toru Dutt.

Toru Dutt belonged to the famous Dutt Family of Bengal. Even during the days of Madhusudan Dutt, the Dutt family had distinguished itself for its literary and creative activities in Bengal. Toru's father and uncles were the earlier Indian writers in English. Together they wrote a book *The Dutt Family Album* (1870). Apart from *The Dutt Family Album*, they also wrote many other poems. Toru's paternal Grandfather, Rasamoy Dutt, was an active advocate of English education in the early nineteenth century. His life has been described as "a landmark in the history of the transformation of Hindu society under the influence of English." (Harihar Das 5)

Toru Dutt was born in Calcutta on 4 March 1856. She was the youngest daughter of Govin Chunder Dutt. Toru was frail and fragile in her physical appearance. When she was a little girl, her father wrote about her as follows:

Puny and elf like, with dishevelled tresses,  
Self-willed and shy-ne'er heeding that I call,  
Intent to pay her tenderest addresses  
To bird or cat,- but most intelligent. . .

Toru had two siblings Aru and Abju. All of the three were very intelligent. They were given very good education. They had a private tutor but Govin Chunder took personal interest in their education. Aru Dutt and Toru Dutt, both the sisters were fortunate to have been born in the renowned Dutt Family. Born and bred in such a cultured family, it was natural for Aru and Toru Dutt to take up serious literary activities. The first calamity that befell Toru's family was the death of her only brother Abju at the age of 14 in 1865. To overcome this untimely grief, Toru and Aru began to read *Paradise Lost* by Milton. Toru also read Shakespeare. Her father had a deep impact on her life. He encouraged her to study French, English and Sanskrit literature. Her mother deeply inspired her childhood imagination with the ancient history and culture of India.

Her family was one of the earliest families in Calcutta to be influenced by British colonial and missionary discourse. Toru's father Govin Chunder Dutt, along with his wife and children got converted to Christianity in 1862 and was baptised in Calcutta. At that time Toru was six years old, Aru was eight and their brother Abju was eleven. The conversion into Christianity caused a temporary estrangement between the parents, as may be inferred from Govin Chunder's poem addressed to his wife:

Nay part not so —one moment stay  
Repel me not with scorn,  
Like others, wilt thou turn away,  
And leave me quite forelorn?

Wilt thou too join the scoffing crowd.

The cold, the heartless, and the proud,

Who curse the hallowed worn,

When, daring idols to disown,

I knelt before the Saviour's throne? (Agrawal 27)

Toru's mother, Kshetramoni Mitter was versed in vernacular and Hindu mythology. She also mastered English after her marriage. Though baptised, Kshetramoni resisted conversion to Christianity. But later she became a practising Christian and became involved with the Oxford Mission, with her husband in Calcutta. She translated *The Blood of Jesus*, a monograph on Christian salvation by William Reid, into Bengali.

The Dutt family was marginalised from the conservative Hindu community due to their conversion to Christianity: "I have not been to one dinner party at all since we left Europe. And then I do not know any people, here, except our kith and kin, and some of them I don't know. . . The life we live here is so retired and quiet." (Lokuge xvii) The alienation and loneliness caused by this marginalization was perhaps one of the strongest forces behind Toru's creative inspiration.

In 1869, Toru, along with her family went to Europe. Toru and Aru were the first Bengali women to cross the "black waters," which was considered blasphemous act in Hinduism as it meant pollution and loss of caste. In Europe, Toru and Aru attended a French school at Nice. The family went to London after one year. Here Toru and Aru took lessons in music. Toru's cousin Romesh Chunder who was in London at that time gave Toru and Aru company to remove their loneliness. Toru was fascinated by the French culture and gained astonishing mastery over French and English so much so that she could identify herself with everything that was French. French became her favourite language and France became the country of her choice. She had deep sympathy for France: "No, she stirs!- There's a fire in her glance. Ware, oh ware of that broken sword! What, dare ye for an hour's mischance, Gather around her, jeering France, Attila's own

exultant horde?” (207) Sir Edmund Gosse writes, “To the end of her days, Toru was a better French than English scholar. She loved French best, she knew its literature best, she wrote its language with more perfect elegance.” (xii)

In 1871, the Dutt family moved to Cambridge where Toru and Aru attended the lectures for women and made friends with Miss Mary Martin. Mary was lifelong friend of Toru. Toru wrote letters to her till the end of her life.

After a lapse of four years, Toru Dutt returned to Calcutta along with her family in 1873. She returned home with glorious images of France and England inscribed indelibly in her memory. After her exposure to Europe, she found it very difficult to adjust back to life in Calcutta:

. . . and today also there is Kali-Poojah, or the worship of Kali. One feels sometimes so sad when one looks on all these processions following a graven image, offering goats, and other sacrifices to it, bowing themselves before it. Oh, that all India should turn to the true and loving God, who is alone able to save us and cleanse us from our sins! (313-14)

She saw Calcutta/ India through Europeanized and Christianized lenses. She was alienated and plunged into “a feverish dream of intellectual effort and imaginative production.”(Gosse xii)

Toru’s father had a deep impact on her life. He encouraged her to study French, English and Sanskrit literature. Her mother deeply inspired her childhood imagination with the ancient history and culture of India. Toru’s visit to Europe for four years was one of the most positive forces in her life. All these influences converged to shape her creative life and they prominently feature in her writings. She claimed an ambiguous and in-between physical presence, in an “interstitial passage between two fixed identifications.” (Bhabha 4) this in-between space, this “third space” identity at the point of cultural crossings charges Toru Dutt’s writing and makes it a site for an enriching postcolonial experience.

In 1877, Toru Dutt fell seriously ill. She had recurrent attacks of fever, cough spasm and blood spitting. She became too weak to write her letters. She died on 30 August 1877 due to consumption at the age of 21, leaving her parents totally deserted and depressed. Her father reported her death to Mary Martin as: “Her end

here was peaceful and happy, and her mother and myself will never, never forget the expression that was on her face when all was over. Such a glory there was on it.” (Das, 311) Toru was buried at the C.M.S Cemetery in Calcutta near her loved brother and sister.

Toru Dutt lived in a period of Indian history which was overshadowed by Macaulay’s Minute and Lord William Bentick’s ruling of 1835, promoting European education among the Indian masses and channelling all educational funds towards the use of “English Education” alone (Dwivedi 17). Widespread interest in Christianity and a number of conversions – “even among members of the higher castes of Hindu society, resulting from the spread of Christian missionary schools brought in their train the habit of learning English and other European languages, speaking and writing English habitually and even adopting English dress, food and furniture” (Williams 13). This excessive “mimicry” of colonizers led to the somewhat tragic figure of the totally anglicized Indian, alienated from its own culture. Toru Dutt also learned English and learned it marvellously, but she, as contrasted with ordinary Indians, was quick to realize that her own Oriental background of literature was so precious that she would have to commingle it with her abundant European knowledge. This “ ‘commingling’ or cross-fertilization of Eastern and Western ideas is at the root of the Indian Renaissance which took place in the nineteenth century” (Sharma 39).

Toru Dutt rendered several French poems into English and also several Sanskrit anecdotes and legends into delightful English verse. Thus she interplayed the culture of her land with that of England and France. James Darmesteter, a noted French critic and writer observes:

This daughter of Bengal, so admirably and so strangely gifted, Hindu by race and tradition and English woman by education, a French woman at heart, poet in English, prose writer in French; who at the age of eighteen made India acquainted with the poets of France in the rhyme of English, who blended in herself three souls and three traditions, and died at the age of twenty (sic), in full bloom of her talent and on the eve of awakening of her genius, presents in the history of literature a phenomenon without parallel. (Das 1)

T.O.D Dunn writes about Toru Dutt:

This lady may be justly described as the founder of the modern school of English poetry in Bengal. In two ways she differs from her predecessors – in her European education she received in England and France; and in her acceptance of oriental themes at the very time when, by her talented application, she had forged for herself an instrument of expression from two difficult European languages. (Dunn 21)

The most remarkable poet to emerge in Indo-Anglian literary circles between Derozio and Tagore was this young Bengali woman, Toru Dutt. She was “brilliant, precocious, scholarly and like many a romantic in Europe, she died very young, bequeathing her poetry to a world that scarcely knew she existed at all” (Williams 18).

Toru Dutt pioneered the Indian women’s English literary tradition. Conversant in four languages - English, French, Sanskrit and Bengali – Toru Dutt was a novelist, poet, essayist and translator. When she died at the age of twenty one, she left behind an impressive collection of writing. Her writings “give voice to the aspirations of a sensitive young woman trying to negotiate the cross-cultural complexities and nuances of an Indo-European encounter” (Sharma 44). Skilfully crafted, her writings reflect a “passionate commitment to theme, character and setting” (Lokuge xiii).

#### **5.4 Sonnet *The Lotus***

Toru Dutt has written *The Lotus* in the form of a sonnet. In this sonnet, toru Dutt has beautifully described the beauty of the flower Lotus. The text of the sonnet goes as:

Love came to Flora asking for a flower  
That would be of flowers be undisputed queen,  
The lily and the rose, long, long had been  
Rivals for that high honour. Bards of power  
Had sung their claims. ‘The rose can never tower  
Like the pale lily with her Juno mien’ –



‘But is the lily lovelier?’ Thus between  
Flower –factions rang the strife in Psyche’s bower.  
‘Give me a flower delicious as the rose  
And stately as the lily in her pride’ –  
‘But of what colour?’ – ‘Rose-red,’ Love first chose,  
Then prayed, - ‘No, lily-white, - or, both provide;’  
And Flora gave the lotus, ‘rose-red’ dyed,  
And ‘lily-white,’ – the queenliest flower that blows.

### 5.5 Summary of the Sonnet *The Lotus*

Another celebrated poem exuding plenty of lyrical energy, the “Lotus” is unique in incorporating in it vigorous arguments in a bid to settle a long-standing, between two flowers. The poem opens with direct statement that Love approached Flora, the reigning sovereign of the kingdom of flowers and vegetation and asked for a flower that would be the unanimously accepted as a queen. For this honour, Rose and Lily have been the claimants for a long time. They had evoked praise and admiration of the singers, composers of verses and others. So if there could be any flower contesting with valid reasons for it, it had to be these two flowers. Suddenly the world of flowers got divided into two debating factions, and there arose a fierce discussion. One of them asserted that Lily is most stately, majestic flower towering over the rose with its exquisite long upright shape. It has a temper of Jupiter’s wife. The quarrel raged in the Psyche’s bower. The rival faction claimed that Lily cannot be considered more beautiful than Rose. Love who had approached flora with a request, said once again that he wanted a flower which would have sensuous beauty of a rose and the dignified carriage of personality of a lily in her true pride. It was a sort of compromise between the two. Now everybody started thinking about the new compromising flower. What is to be the colour of this new compromising flower? It was the question next asked. The dilemma was not easy to resolve – Love said ‘Rose-red’ first and then changing its mind said ‘Lilywhite’ – and then again changing its mind opted for ‘both’, that is, a flower that would have the characteristics of both rose and lily. Flora then created Lotus – with a little of the

sensuous beauty of rose and the majestic appearance of lily. This became the 'queenliest flower that blows', which since then has been enthroned as the most beautiful and pleasant looking flower.

### **5.6 Critical Appreciation of the Sonnet *The Lotus***

The imaginative power of Toru Dutt displays its extraordinary reach in this sonnet. Perhaps, she was inspired by Greek mythological story, since she uses names like Flora and Psyche. She has created a beautiful short dramatic composition full of exciting dialogues and narrative force. The sonnet reminds one of the sixteenth century sonneting practice that developed in the hands of Shakespeare and great metaphysical poets, particularly John Donne whose inducted dramatic element animate this form. Shakespeare often used it as a range within which he used to play out points and counter-points on certain topic. This proved to be the most convenient ground for portraying the inner tug-of-war that often wrecked these poets' soul.

Conscious about the moral issues of life, Toru Dutt sees through the contrastive qualities of the two flowers, Rose on the one hand and Lily on the other, a means of resolving the 'conflict' in a judicious combination of the two. This sonnet apparently works at two levels; On the surface level the floral world is shown in turmoil, ringing with debates, as Love comes to ask Flora, the ruler of this world, for a flower that can be the uncontested queen of all flowers. The scene replete with high dramatic possibilities is quite engrossing, mainly because of Toru Dutt's artistic presentation in miniature, one can say, of the incident. In short clipped sentences she unfolds the crowded details such as

- i) Bards of power/Had sung their claims
- ii) Thus between/ Flower-factions rang the strife
- iii) "But of  
what colour?"
- iv) "Rose-red", Love first chose

It is to the credit of the fine artistic sense of this teenaged girl that such wealth of description is accommodated with remarkable finesse in short measured clauses

without upsetting the metrical balance. It is a difficult art which Toru Dutt accomplished with such a mature flair. The short parable- like narration ends on a compromise between the two that created the flower of lotus.

Underneath this surface, one can read another text which is what Toru Dutt was concerned about; the eternal drama of conflicting moral positions that is played in the theatre of heart. Weaving a glittering allegorical tapestry, she juxtaposes Rose and Lily as symbolizing two contrary attributes: that of sensuous appeal contained in the passionate redness of its velvety texture which stands in full view of all most seductively to tempt the admirers; and Lily's lofty appeal of stately stature that stirs the inner desire to achieve a different kind of purity. The concepts of physicality of attachment and the intangible hold of spiritual attraction draw the poet's attention in a perpetual struggle for mastery over her heart. John Donne talks of a heart-rending strife that the forces of sensuous love wage for the capture of that fortress which is his heart, in his famous poem "Batter my Heart". He fears that their victory may drive him further away from God. That was the projection of the seventeenth century English conflict in the wake of the ascendant puritanical formulae. Toru Dutt's perception diverges radically in that the philosophical ground that she prepares for the acceptance of a balance between the sensuous and the spiritual is already present in the characteristic Indian view of a sensible harmonizing of conflicting forces. There cannot be a total dominance of purely spiritual which goes against nature's scheme, nor can there be an unbridled promiscuous presence of 'delicious' sensuous instincts.

Both rule themselves out by claiming an exclusive presence for themselves. The attraction of one is as irresistible as the other; the only balanced view of life can be a combination of both the physical and the spiritual. 'Rose' is a perfect symbol for short-lived impulsive tendencies; "lily's lingering aura of presence" is equally essential for the gradual unfolding of the inner sources of vitality.

Lotus has a unique place in the Indian pantheon of symbolic objects. It can be seen to have been profusely used in the classical paintings, murals, temple sculptures and literature of ancient India. It is also the seat of Vishnu and Goddess Lakshmi. Its numerous uses point to one thing – the qualities of purity and spiritual elevation, enlightenment and a lofty source of inner energy. The subdued colour, and manypetalled, many-layered shape of lotus metamorphosed into symbol of that

equilibrium of nature's raw untamed forces which if not given the proper restrained direction are capable of wreaking havoc in life.

This sonnet is also a tale of Toru Dutt's life which is neither completely Indian in terms of being traditional Hindu, neither completely westernized, but a mixture of two. The Indian traditions, its ancient spirit, the hoary tales from its mythology are bound very intricately within her. This inherent part of her self/identity, which she carries with her even when she is far away from her country shows that conversion to Christianity, could not cut her from her roots. But even as this rich heritage throbs within her, "winds of Westernism, of liberty brush against her, touch her, affect her and question her allegiance, her ultimate love" (141). The poet's maturity, the evolving of her 'self' emanates in the final lines of the poem, ". . . the lotus, "rose red" dyed,/ and "lily – white,"...". Through these lines she offers her country and the world the rich blend of the East and West, a balanced spirit of the old and the new.

The lotus has been a persistent motif in ancient Indian poetry and mythology as an emblem of peace and tranquillity. The serenity and purity with which the lotus is associated suggests hope and harmony for the nation. Toru Dutt gracefully establishes the lotus as the unrivalled queen of flowers signifying "seductively feminine Empire striking at the Centre"(Datta 40). Toru Dutt's spontaneous, innovative and bold conception renders 'The Lotus' both cultural and political, heralding "the beginning of cultural fusion without surrendering indigenous identity" (Dasgupta 208).

Toru Dutt skilfully employs and 'blends' international icons of mythic power to emphasise the superiority of the national icon through the cultural fusion effected through harmonious assimilation of the "Occidental" or Western red rose and white lily. By engaging with Western literary symbols and tradition such as the red rose, a symbol of love, beauty and respect, and the white lily, a representation of purity and majesty, Toru Dutt projects the lotus as the "undisputed queen" by showing that although the flower might be "other" and strange, it is not separate from lily and rose. Instead, it is an amalgamation of their two colours. This ensemble of varied cultures explains the incursion of the mythological figures in the poem. By emphasising Flora's political power and stressing the hybrid nature of the lotus, Toru Dutt envisions gender equality and autonomy for the East without

separating it from the West. In this respect, “The Lotus” can be assessed as a political poem.

### 5.7 Self-Assessment Questions

Q1: Write a short note on the impact of conversion to Christianity on Toru Dutt?

Possible Answer : Toru Dutt’s family was one of the earliest families in Calcutta to be influenced by British colonial and missionary discourse. Toru’s father Govin Chunder Dutt, along with his wife and children got converted to Christianity in 1862 and was baptised in Calcutta. At that time Toru was six years old, Aru was eight and their brother Abju was eleven. The conversion into Christianity caused a temporary estrangement between the parents. The Dutt family was marginalised from the conservative Hindu community due to their conversion to Christianity. The conservative Hindus looked down upon the converted Christians with disgrace.

Q2: Comment on *The Lotus* as a political poem.

Possible Answer : Toru Dutt skilfully employs and ‘blends’ international icons of mythic power to emphasise the superiority of the national icon through the cultural fusion effected through harmonious assimilation of the “Occidental” or Western red rose and white lily. By engaging with Western literary symbols and tradition such as the red rose, a symbol of love, beauty and respect, and the white lily, a representation of purity and majesty, Toru Dutt projects the lotus as the “undisputed queen” by showing that although the flower might be “other” and strange, it is not separate from lily and rose. Instead, it is an amalgamation of their two colours. This ensemble of varied cultures explains the incursion of the mythological figures in the poem. By emphasising Flora’s political power and stressing the hybrid nature of the lotus, Toru Dutt envisions gender equality and autonomy for the East without separating it from the West. In this respect, “The Lotus” can be assessed as a political poem.

Q3: Write the summary of the poem *The Lotus*.

Ans. \_\_\_\_\_

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Q4: Highlight the contribution of Dutt family in the development of Indian English Poetry?

Ans. \_\_\_\_\_

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Q5: Why did Flora prefer Lotus over Rose and Lily?

Ans. \_\_\_\_\_

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### 5.8 Multiple Choice Questions:

1. Toru Dutt was born in

- |         |         |
|---------|---------|
| a) 1856 | c) 1857 |
| b) 1854 | d) 1870 |

2. Who was Toru Dutt's father?

- |                        |                     |
|------------------------|---------------------|
| a) Ramesh Chunder Dutt | c) Hur Chunder Dutt |
| b) Govin Chunder Dutt  | d) Rasamoy Dutt     |

3. Which flower is considered to be the "queenliest flower that blows"?

- a) Rose                      c) Lily
- b) Lotus                     d) Pansy

4. Where did Psyche go to end the debate among two factions over superiority?

- a) Flora                      c) Jupiter
- b) Juno d) Rose

5. In which anthology of Toru Dutt does “Lotus” appears?

- a) *Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan*
- b) *A Sheaf Gleaned in French Fields*
- c) *A Scene from Contemporary History*
- d) *Bianca*

## 5.9 Examination Oriented Questions

1. Comment on Toru Dutt’s contribution in the development of Indian Poetry in English?
2. “Lotus is a poem having political connotations.” Discuss
3. Attempt a critical appreciation of the poem “Lotus”.

## 5.10 Answer Key to Multiple Choice Questions

- 1. (a)      3. (b) 5. (a)
- 2. (b)      4. (a)

## 5.11 Suggested Reading:

Dwivedi, A.N. *Toru Dutt*, Arnold Heinemann. 1977.

Lokuge, Chandani. Ed. *Toru Dutt, Collected Prose and Poetry*. Oxford University Press. 2006.

Sengupta, Padmini. *Toru Dutt in the 'Makers of Indian Literature' Series*. New Delhi. Sahitya Academy, 1968.



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Course No. : AA 301 (Theory)  
Semester-III

Title : General English

Unit – II

POEMS

Lesson No: 6

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*London*

By William Blake

**UNIT STRUCTURE**

- 6.1 Objectives
- 6.2 Introduction to the Poem
- 6.3 Text of the Poem *London*
- 6.4 Summary of the Poem *London*
- 6.5 Critical Analysis of the Poem
- 6.6 Glossary
- 6.7 Reference to Context
- 6.8 Let Us Sum Up
- 6.9 Examination Oriented Questions
- 6.10 Suggested Reading
- 6.1 Objectives

The objective of this lesson is to acquaint the learner with William Blake's poem *London*. It helps the learner in analyzing William Blake as a poet through his poem *London*. William Blake was the most extraordinary literary genius of his age. His lyrics display all the characteristics of the romantic spirit. He influenced the Romantic poets with recurring themes of good and evil, heaven and hell, knowledge and innocence, and external reality versus inner imagination. His poems were full

of romantic spirit, imagery symbolism and revolutionary spirit. He was the forerunner of romantic poetry of the 19th century. The learner is given a summary of the poem to explain the theme and substance of the poem. It also acquaints the learner with the format of examination oriented questions.

## **6.2 Introduction to the Poet**

William Blake (28 November 1757 – 12 August 1827) was an English poet, painter, and printmaker. Blake was born in London, England, on November 28, 1757. He was the third of seven children, two of whom died in infancy. Blake's father, James, was a hosier. He attended school only to learn reading and writing, leaving at the age of ten, and was otherwise educated at home by his mother Catherine Blake. Even though the Blake's were English Dissenters, William was baptized on 11 December at St James's Church, London. The Bible was an early and profound influence on Blake, and remained a source of inspiration throughout his life. Except for a few years in Sussex, England, his entire life was spent in London. From his earliest years he saw visions. He would see trees full of angels or similar sights. If these were not true mystical visions, they were the result of the artist's intense spiritual understanding of the world. His parents tried to discourage him from these visions because they did not understand that Blake was different from his peers. At age ten, Blake expressed a wish to become a painter, so his parents sent him to drawing school. Two years later, Blake began writing poetry. When he turned fourteen, he apprenticed with an engraver because art school proved too costly. One of Blake's assignments as apprentice was to sketch the tombs at Westminster Abbey, exposing him to a variety of Gothic styles from which he would draw inspiration throughout his career. After his seven-year term ended, he studied briefly at the Royal Academy.

In 1782, he married an uneducated woman named Catherine Boucher. Blake taught her to read and to write, and also instructed her in draftsmanship. Later, she helped him print the illuminated poetry for which he is remembered today. The couple had no children. In 1784, he set up a print shop with a friend and former fellow apprentice, James Parker, but this venture failed after several years. For the remainder of his life, Blake made a meager living as an engraver and illustrator for books and magazines. In addition to his wife, Blake also began training his younger brother Robert in drawing, painting, and engraving. Robert

fell ill during the winter of 1787 and succumbed, probably to consumption. As Robert died, Blake saw his brother's spirit rise up through the ceiling, "clapping its hands for joy." He believed that Robert's spirit continued to visit him and later claimed that in a dream Robert taught him the printing method that he used in *Songs of Innocence* and other "illuminated" works.

Blake's first printed work, *Poetical Sketches* (1783), is a collection of apprentice verse, mostly imitating classical models. These poems protest against war, tyranny, and King George III's treatment of the American colonies. He published his most popular collection, *Songs of Innocence*, in 1789 and followed it, in 1794, with *Songs of Experience*. Some readers interpret *Songs of Innocence* in a straightforward fashion, considering it primarily a children's book, but others have found hints at parody or critique in its seemingly naive and simple lyrics. Both books of *Songs* were printed in an illustrated format reminiscent of illuminated manuscripts. The text and illustrations were printed from copper plates, and each picture was finished by hand in watercolors.

Blake was a nonconformist who associated with some of the leading radical thinkers of his day, such as Thomas Paine and Mary Wollstonecraft. In defiance of 18th-century neoclassical conventions, he privileged imagination over reason in the creation of both his poetry and images, asserting that ideal forms should be constructed not from observations of nature but from inner visions. He declared in one poem, "I must create a system or be enslaved by another man's." Works such as *The French Revolution* (1791), *America, a Prophecy* (1793), *Visions of the Daughters of Albion* (1793), and *Europe, a Prophecy* (1794) express his opposition to the English monarchy, and to 18th-century political and social tyranny in general. Theological tyranny is the subject of *The Book of Urizen* (1794). In the prose work *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* (1790-93), he satirized oppressive authority in church and state, as well as the works of Emanuel Swedenborg, a Swedish philosopher whose ideas once attracted his interest. In 1800, Blake moved to the seacoast town of Felpham, where he lived and worked until 1803 under the patronage of William Hayley. He taught himself Greek, Latin, Hebrew, and Italian, so that he could read classical works in their original language. In Felpham, he experienced profound spiritual insights that prepared him for his mature work, the great visionary epics written and etched between about 1804 and 1820. *Milton* (1804-08), *Vala, or The Four Zoas* (1797; rewritten after 1800), and *Jerusalem*

(1804-20) have neither traditional plot, characters, rhyme, nor meter. They envision a new and higher kind of innocence, the human spirit triumphant over reason.

Blake believed that his poetry could be read and understood by common people, but he was determined not to sacrifice his vision in order to become popular. In 1808, he exhibited some of his watercolors at the Royal Academy, and in May of 1809 he exhibited his works at his brother James's house. Some of those who saw the exhibit praised Blake's artistry, but others thought the paintings "hideous" and more than a few called him insane. Blake's poetry was not well known by the general public, but he was mentioned in *A Biographical Dictionary of the Living Authors of Great Britain and Ireland*, published in 1816. Samuel Taylor Coleridge, who had been lent a copy of *Songs of Innocence and of Experience*, considered Blake a "man of Genius," and Wordsworth made his own copies of several songs. Charles Lamb sent a copy of "The Chimney Sweeper" from *Songs of Innocence* to James Montgomery for his *Chimney-Sweeper's Friend, and Climbing Boys' Album* (1824), and Robert Southey (who, like Wordsworth, considered Blake insane) attended Blake's exhibition and included the "Mad Song" from *Poetical Sketches* in his miscellany, *The Doctor* (1834-1837).

Blake's final years, spent in great poverty, were cheered by the admiring friendship of a group of younger artists who called themselves "the Ancients." In 1818, he met John Linnell, a young artist who helped him financially and also helped to create new interest in his work. It was Linnell who, in 1825, commissioned him to design illustrations for Dante's *Divine Comedy*, the cycle of drawings that Blake worked on until his death in 1827.

### **6.3 Text of the Poem *London***

*I wander thro' each charter'd street,  
Near where the charter'd Thames does flow,  
And mark in every face I meet  
Marks of weakness, marks of woe.*

*In every cry of every man,  
In every Infants' cry of fear,  
In every voice, in every ban, The  
mind-forg'd manacles I hear.*

*How the Chimney-sweeper's cry  
Every blackening Church appalls;  
And the hapless Soldier's sigh  
Runs in blood down Palace walls.*

*But most thro' midnight streets I hear  
How the youthful Harlot's curse  
Blasts the new-born Infant's tear,  
And blights with plagues the Marriage hearse*

#### **6.4 Summary of the Poem *London***

*London* is a poem which is published in *Songs of Experience* in 1794. It is one of the few poems in *Songs of Experience* that does not have a corresponding poem in *Songs of Innocence*. This poem reveals the author's feelings toward the society in which he lived. The speaker wanders through the streets of London and comments on his observations. He sees despair in the faces of the people he meets and hears fear and repression in their voices. The woeful cry of the chimney-sweeper stands as a chastisement to the Church, and the blood of a soldier stains the outer walls of the monarch's residence. The nighttime holds nothing more promising- the cursing of prostitutes corrupts the newborn infant and sullies the "Marriage hearse."

Blake has been often referred as a social commentator. His large number of poems focused on similar themes that were relevant to the society in which he was writing, such as poems on industrialization, child labour and the more general notions of man versus nature and the individual against society, etc. "London" is no exception to this, acting as a social commentary on Blake's time. At first, Blake loved London, he wrote that "golden London and her silver Thames, throng'd with shining spires and corded ships" but after French Revolution, the British government began to oppress the civil democratic activities. Then London was quite different from before because everything was covered with darkness, terrors and miseries.

In this poem, Blake draws from his personal observations and gives a comprehensive picture of the many miseries, physical and spiritual, in the English capital London. He paints a picture of the dirty, miserable streets of London and

describes the wretched people at the bottom of the society: the chimney-sweepers, soldiers, and harlots. The entire poem centers on the wails of these people from their pain and the injustices done to them, and exposes the gap between those in power and the misery of poor people. The poem is representative of English economic problems of the time, condemning many powerful institutions such as the church, royalty, the new industries, and the military. The main subject and theme of this poem is man's lack of freedom and the causes of this lack. It is a relatively unique poem, in that it takes such a negative and critical view of London, when at the time the city represented the pinnacle of technology, and was considered the center of western culture and British Empire.

## **6.5 Critical Analysis of the Poem**

*London* is an outstanding poem not only due to the subject and theme reflected in it but also due to the almost flawless writing techniques used by the poet.

The following are some of the technical features in this poem.

### **i. Images.**

The key image in this poem is “the mind-forg’d manacles”—attitudes which take away our freedom of thought and action. Three powerful examples of those who are not free, or three encounters who have “weakness” and “woe” are the chimney-sweeper, the soldier and the harlot.

The “mind-forged manacles” of the second stanza is the key image and the central metaphor of this poem. Blake imagines the mind as a forge where “manacles” are made. Manacles and shackles for the legs, would be seen on convicts, perhaps passing along the streets on their way to prison or, commonly in London in Blake’s time, on their way to ships, for transportation to Australia. For Blake and his readers, the image is very striking and horrible. The image is also an allusion to an even more famous statement. In 1762, some thirty years before Blake wrote *London*, the Swiss philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau wrote in “The Social Contract”, “Man is born free, but everywhere he is in chains”. Blake agrees with Rousseau that man’s lack of freedom, his “manacles” are “mind-forged”—they come from the ideas and outlook imposed on us by external authority. Mind forged manacles lie at the heart of the poem. The examples of the “the mind-forg’

dmanacles” start with the chimney-sweeper. As the church building is literally “black’ning” with smoke from the chimneys, so the church as an organization, which should help the poor, is blackened, metaphorically, with shame at its failure to give that help. The church should be appalled by the cry of the “chimney-sweeper”.

The second image is the “hapless” soldier. The poem was written shortly after the start of the French Revolution: the uprising was so bloody that the figure of speech called hyperbole was often used, as blood was said to be running down the walls. Blake shows how the unhappiness of the English soldier could, if its causes were ignored, lead to similar bloodshed here.

The last image—the harlot, is the most shocking to Blake as well as to us. The harlot is the truth behind respectable ideas of marriage. New birth is not a happy event but only to continue the cycle of misery, and the wedding carriage is seen as a hearse, leading to a kind of death. The word “plagues” here suggests the sexually transmitted diseases, which the “youthful harlot” would contract, and pass on to others, giving her cursing words real destructive power.

## **ii. Capitalization**

Capitalization is used extensively throughout the poem, to infer something beyond the simple meaning of the word—it usually means something deeper. For instance, the capitalization of Man in the second stanza suggests that the whole of urbanized society has gone to the state of moral decay and misery. “Every Infants cry”—the capital letter shows that there is something beyond just children that the persona meets—also innocence, which is being corrupted by fear; instead of child idealistically being given security or a haven, here they have to fear and be afraid. Capitalization is also used in “Chimney-sweeper’s cry”, “Church”, “Soldier”, “Palace”, “Harlot”, and “Marriage”—usually to represent an idea beyond just the word, or an institution which will be criticized. For instance, “Soldier” represents the army, “Chimney-sweeper” represents child labour, “Harlot” represents prostitution, “Palace” symbolizes royal family, etc. Capitalization is used a lot, and represents the institutions, and is accompanied by the reason why Blake is criticizing these institutions.

## **iii. Choice of words**

The careful choice of some words also enhanced the theme of this poem. The following are some examples. The use of the word “charter’d” in the first line is rich in imagery. It introduces imagery of mankind in bondage—showing that oppression, not freedom or individuality is the condition of the London that Blake writes about. “Charter’d” also means hired out, or leased, and shows that the city is in the hands of the merchants, and even the streets and the river Thames is being controlled for profits.

The use of “face” in the first stanza dehumanizes the words—the persona is not seeing marks of weakness or woe in a human person, just a blank face. The poet chooses the word “face” instead of “person” to show the loss and sorrow of the people.

“Blackening” is an easy and common word, but in this poem, the poet wonderfully chooses this word which literally means blackening with smoke, but metaphorically means blackening with shame at its failure to give that help. At the same time, this word contrasts with “appalls” which means makes pale. Such a simple word conveys so much information, so we have to admire the poet’s technique in choosing words.

“Harlot” is a Biblical word, and is stronger than “prostitute”. By using this word, the poet expresses his deep worry and strong condemnation of the society. And thus, the last stanza is the most powerful part of the poem. The unfortunate women are forced to be harlots. Just according to their curses, we can see everything covered with darkness, so the wedding becomes a funeral. Here “marriage hearse” is an apparent contradiction and is a figure of speech known as an oxymoron. It is used satirically to compare the wedding to a funeral and foretells what kind of future England must be faced with if things go like this.

#### **iv. Repetitions**

In this poem, Blake uses many powerful devices to enhance the expression of the theme, one of which is the use of repetition for special purposes. In the first stanza, there is something awkward in the repetition of the word “mark”. The first “mark” is a verb, the second and last are nouns. So there were two complex effects: the observer “marks”, but he marks “marks”. Blake reinforces the effect of being dragged into an imprisoned world, where nothing reveals from the faces he meets, but weakness and woe. In the second stanza, the poet even uses “every” for five times, showing that no one can escape from the miserable and tragic reality, that is,



there are “The mind-forg’d manacles” everywhere. The repetition of “cry”, “cry of every man”, “Infant’s cry of fear”, “the Chimney-sweeper’s cry” and even “the hapless Soldier’s sigh”, emphasize how the people in London suffered at that time.

#### **v. Rhyme and rhythm**

This poem is famous for highly strong musical pattern. Generally speaking, the rhyme and rhythm is very definite and structured—the rhyme is *ABAB CDCD*, and this poem is written with a metrical pattern of iambic tetrameter sporadically blended with trochaic tetrameter—which can help to accentuate the line, with 7 syllables and the first word stressed. The changes are acquired by the special purposes, i.e. the emphasis of the meaning. The alteration of the stresses on the syllables in each line makes the poem sound like striking of the anvil, and also helps the poem to be more powerful. So one of the most striking characteristics of this poem is the anvil music. In addition to the technical features mentioned above, “London” begins with the verb set in the present tense. This implies that the poem concerns timeless realities unbounded by references to any particular incident. The use of a persona in this poem who clearly has firsthand knowledge of London’s conditions lends credibility to the poem, making it more personal and emotive.

#### **6.6 Glossary**

i. Chartered – protected or founded by a charter (document granting privilege or right). ii. Thames – major river running through London. iii. Appall – dismay, shock or terrify. iv. Hapless – unlucky; wretched. v. Harlot – prostitute.

vi. Blight – disease that withers plants; evil influence; deterioration of buildings through neglect.

vii. Hearse – vehicle used to transport a coffin to its grave. viii.

Oxymoron – the close association of two contradictory ideas. ix.

Manacles – handcuffs.

x. Ban – forbid; a constraint both.

xi. Personification- the attribute of human characteristics to inanimate objects; a typical example of something (embodiment).

## 6.7 Reference to Context

- i) *I wander thro' each charter'd street,  
Near where the charter'd Thames does flow.  
And mark in every face I meet  
Marks of weakness, marks of woe.*

**Explanation:** In the first stanza, the speaker provides setting and tone. The setting can of course be derived from the title, but the first stanza also reveals that the speaker is walking down a street. He says that he “wander[s] down each chartered street”. The term “wander” gives some insight into the speaker as well. He appears to be not quite sure of himself, and a bit misguided, if not entirely lost. The use of the term “chartered” also suggests that the streets he walks are controlled and rigid. He is not walking in a free, open field, but a confined, rigid, mapped out area. The speaker will expound upon this idea later on in the poem. As he walks, he notices something about the faces of the people walking by. There seems to be the marks of weariness in them all. He describes their faces as having “weakness” and “woe”. This sets up the tone as melancholy. The gloom and the sadness seem to seep from the speaker’s voice as he describes the passersby.

- ii) *In every cry of every Man,  
In every Infants cry of fear,  
In every voice: in every ban,  
The mind-forg'd manacles I hear*

**Explanation:** While the first stanza sets up the tone of the poem, the second stanza gives some insight into the speaker’s melancholy feelings toward the people he watches pass him by. The speaker reveals that from the cry of the newborn infant, to the cry of the full grown man, he hears the “mind forg’d manacles”. This gives insight into his despairing view of mankind. The “manacles” are shackles or some kind of chain that keeps a person imprisoned. The fact that these chains are “mind forg’d” reveals that they are metaphorical chains created by the people’s own ideas. The use of the word “ban” reveals that these manacles are placed there by society. A ban, of course, is a restriction given by law. The speaker’s use of words such as

“Chartered” “ban” and “manacles” reveal his belief that society metaphorically imprisons people. Suddenly, it becomes apparent that the thoughts, pressures, and ideals of society are under scrutiny here. iii) *How the Chimney-sweepers cry*

*Every blackning Church appalls,*

*And the hapless Soldiers sigh*

*Runs in blood down Palace walls*

**Explanation:** In this stanza, the speaker digs even deeper into the reasons for his feelings toward humanity. He implies that the shackles worn by the people and inflicted by society have some disastrous results. He begins with the Chimney sweeper. The Chimney sweeper was one of the poorest of society. His life expectancy was threatened because of his line of work. He was consistently dirty and sick. Those of the lowest class were forced into this kind of work in order to provide for their families. Then, the speaker criticizes the church, calling it “blackening” and claiming that even the church “appalls” at the Chimney sweeper. Often, the chimney sweepers were just children. They were small enough to fit down the chimneys. These children were often orphaned children, and the church was responsible for them. This explains why the author ties the chimney sweepers with the “blackening church”. The speaker then turns his attentions to the “hapless soldier”. He has already criticized society, pointed out the misfortunes of the poor and the hypocrisy of the church, and now he will also criticise the government by suggesting that the soldiers are the poor victims of a corrupt government. He reveals his feelings toward war by describing the blood that runs down the palace walls. The palace, of course, is where royalty would have lived. Thus, the speaker accuses the higher up people in his society of spilling the blood of the soldiers in order to keep their comfort of living in a palace.

*But most thro' midnight streets I hear*

*How the youthful Harlots curse*

*Blasts the new-born Infants tear*

*And blights with plagues the Marriage hearse*

**Explanation:** In the final stanza, the speaker reveals how the corruptness of society attacks innocence. He says that he hears the “youthful Harlot’s curse...”. The idea of a youthful harlot suggests the level of poverty and corruption, that a girl who was yet a youth would be involved in prostitution. Then, things become even more interesting, as the speaker reveals the object of the Harlot’s cursing. She curses at the tears of a newborn baby. This is the ultimate attack upon innocence. The speaker does not reveal whether the harlot is the mother of the baby or not, but he does imply that rather than comforting a crying infant, she curses it. This reveals the hardened heart of the harlot, which represents the hardened heart of society at large. While the innocent shed tears, the perverted attack them. The last line of this poem reveals the speaker’s thoughts on marriage as well. The Harlot, apparently, has “blighted” the “marriage hearse”. She has deranged marriage by having sold her body before ever entering into the marriage union. Although the speaker believes that the Harlot has somehow damaged marriage, he also reveals his beliefs about marriage in the first place. The fact that he calls it a “marriage hearse” reveals that he views marriage as death. Overall, the poem has criticized society, the church, prostitution, and even marriage. The innocent baby shedding tears represents those who are innocent in the world. They are few and they are scoffed at. They are also infants, and are not left to be innocent for long. Their innocence is “blasted” by the cry of the perverted.

## **6.8 Let Us Sum Up**

*London* is one of the most powerful descriptions of the industrial towns to be found in literature. It’s one of Blake’s greatest poems, this poem shows the suffering brought by the industrial revolution and it belongs to the *Songs of Experience*. The passage from the innocence to the experience is the passage from a simple world to a deceptive one. So, if in the *Songs of Innocence* Blake seems the poet of childhood, in the *Songs of Experience* he becomes the terrible critic of the contemporaneous world. His polemic is about two themes: the first one is the politic one, a politic attack towards an oppressive society where the exploitation is one of the main problems; here we can see a reference mark towards the Industrial Revolution against which he celebrates French and American Revolutions. The other theme is moral and religious one, a criticism to a Church which became an instrument of spiritual oppression because of its dualism about soul and body, its

moral code against instincts, its idea of a mysterious and cruel God typical of Old Testament instead of a merciful God typical of the New Testament.

As for his poem *London*, is concerned Blake shows us the great suffering of the British society during the French Revolution and Industrial Revolution, so that *London* deserves “the mightiest brief poem”. Overall “London” is a very pessimistic poem that expresses no solutions to the issues mentioned within each line. By its conclusion, this nightmarish impression of darkness is heavily imbued within the thoughts of the reader. Perhaps just as William Blake would have intended, this poem is to truly convey the horror and injustice that was present in London.

## 6.9 Examination Oriented Questions

Q1. Discuss the imagery, form and subject matter of the poem “London”.

Possible Answer : The opening image of wandering, the focus on sound, and the images of stains in this poem’s first lines recall the Introduction to *Songs of Innocence*, but with a twist; we are now quite far from the piping, pastoral bard of the earlier poem: we are in the city. The poem’s title denotes a specific geographic space, not the archetypal locales in which many of the other *Songs* are set. Everything in this urban space even the natural River Thames submits to being “charter’d,” a term which combines mapping and legalism. Blake’s repetition of this word reinforces the sense of stricture the speaker feels upon entering the city. It is as if language itself, the poet’s medium, experiences a hemmingin, a restriction of resources. Blake’s repetition, thudding and oppressive, reflects the suffocating atmosphere of the city. But words also undergo transformation within this repetition: thus “mark,” between the third and fourth lines, changes from a verb to a pair of nouns—from an act of observation which leaves some room for imaginative elaboration, to an indelible imprint, branding the people’s bodies regardless of the speaker’s actions.

Ironically, the speaker’s “meeting” with these marks represents the experience closest to a human encounter that the poem will offer the speaker. The entire speaker’s subjects—men, infants, chimney-sweeper, soldier, harlot are known only through the traces they leave behind: the ubiquitous cries, the blood on the palace walls. Signs of human suffering abound, but a complete human form the

human form that Blake has used repeatedly in the *Songs* to personify and render natural phenomena is lacking. In the third stanza the cry of the chimney-sweep and the sigh of the soldier metamorphose (almost mystically) into soot on church walls and blood on palace walls but we never see the chimney-sweep or the soldier themselves. Likewise, institutions of power the clergy, the government are rendered by synecdoche, by mention of the places in which they reside. Indeed, it is crucial to Blake's commentary that neither the city's victims nor their oppressors ever appear in body: Blake does not simply blame a set of institutions or a system of enslavement for the city's woes; rather, the victims help to make their own "mind-forg'd manacles," more powerful than material chains could ever be.

The poem climaxes at the moment when the cycle of misery recommences, in the form of a new human being starting life: a baby is born into poverty, to a cursing, prostitute mother. Sexual and marital union—the place of possible regeneration and rebirth—are tainted by the blight of venereal disease. Thus Blake's final image is the "Marriage hearse," a vehicle in which love and desire combine with death and destruction.

### Sound

In the first *stanza*, Blake uses repetition twice, firstly using the word "chartered". This is a reference to the charters that allocated ownership and rights to specific people. Many, including Blake, saw this as robbing ordinary people of their rights and freedoms.

The second use of repetition is with the word "marks". This has a dual meaning: it refers to the physical marks carried by people as a result of the conditions they endure, and is also suggestive of the speaker recording evidence during his walk through the city streets.

Regular rhyme can sometimes appear rather upbeat, but the rhymed words here tend to have sad meanings. There are also a lot of heavy vowel sounds in the rhyme – the *oh* in "woe" and the long *i* sound in *cry* and *sigh* – to emphasise the sadness.

### Imagery

In the first three lines of stanza two, the speaker makes it clear that "every" sound he hears is evidence of the "mind-forged manacles". Manacles are like

handcuffs. The speaker is suggesting that people's minds are restricted and confined - that the city has robbed them of the ability to think.

The poem is full of negative words: "weakness", "woe", "cry" "fear", "appals", "blood", "blights", "plagues" and "hearse" are just some of them.

The poem ends with a startling contrast in the language chosen: "marriage hearse". To Blake, marriage should be a celebration of love and the beginning of new life. Yet here it is combined with the word "hearse" - a vehicle associated with funerals. To the speaker of the poem, the future brings nothing but death and decay.

#### Form and structure

As the title of the collection suggests, London is presented in a very regular way, much like a song. There is a strict abab rhyme scheme in each of the four stanzas, which each contain four lines. This alternating *rhyme scheme* contributes to the song form.

#### Subject matter

The poem describes a journey around London, offering a glimpse of what the speaker sees as the terrible conditions faced by the inhabitants of the city. Child labour, restrictive laws of property and prostitution are all explored in the poem. The poem starts with a criticism of laws relating to ownership. The "chartered Thames" is a bitter reference to the way in which every aspect of life in London is owned, even the river, so often in other poems a symbol of life, freedom and the power of nature. Blake's poem also criticises religion and its failures. The speaker draws attention to the cry of the chimney sweeper and the blackening of church walls, implying that the church as an institution is inactive, unwilling to help those in need. It ends with a vision of the terrible consequences to be faced as a result of sexually transmitted disease.

Q2. Discuss the themes and ideas highlighted by Blake in "London".

Possible Answer : Blake's speaker has a very negative view of the city. For Blake, the conditions faced by people caused them to decay physically, morally and spiritually. The tone of the poem is at times biblical, reflecting Blake's strong interest in religion. It is as if the speaker is offering a prophesy of the terrible consequences unless changes are made in the city.

For Blake, buildings, especially church buildings, often symbolised confinement, restriction and failure. In this poem, the lines “the Chimney-sweeper’s cry / Every blackening church appals” provide an association which reveals the speaker’s attitude. Money is spent on church buildings while children live in poverty, forced to clean chimneys - the soot from which blackens the church walls. To Blake, this makes a mockery of the love and care that should characterise the Christian religion.

The “blackening” church walls are also linked to the running of “blood down Palace walls” - a clear allusion to the French Revolution. The speaker is perhaps arguing that, unless conditions change, the people will be forced to revolt.

The poem as a whole suggests Blake sees the rapid urbanisation in Britain at the time as a dangerous force. Children are no longer free to enjoy childhood; instead working in dangerous conditions. Charters restrict freedoms, ultimately resulting in the restriction of thinking. The poem is pessimistic. It is without hope for the future.

Q3. How does Blake present people in London?

Ans. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Q4. How does Blake picture himself at the start of the poem?

Ans. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Q5. What details of the city does he focus on?

Ans. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



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Q6. Which words or phrases struck you most vividly as you read the poem ?

Ans. 

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Q7. How would you describe the feelings Blake expresses in the poem?

Ans. 

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 Q8.

Why do you think Blake describes the streets and even the River Thames as  
'chartered'?

Ans. 

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#### **6.10 Suggested Reading**

William Blake. *Songs of Experience*. Montana USA: Kessinger Publishing, 2010. Print.

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Course No. : AA 301 (Theory)  
Semester-III

Title : General English

Unit – II

POEMS

Lesson No: 7

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*Habba Khatoon*

By Habba Khatoon

### **UNIT STRUCTURE**

- 7.1 Objectives**
- 7.2 Introduction to the Author**
- 7.3 *Habba Khatoon* (Text)**
- 7.4 Summary of the Poem**
- 7.5 Detailed Analysis**
- 7.6 Theme of the poem**
- 7.7 Multiple choice Questions**
- 7.8 Short Answer type questions**
- 7.9 Long Answer type question**
- 7.10 Key to MCQs**
- 7.11 Exam Oriented Questions**
- 7.12 Suggested Reading**

**7.1 Objectives: The objectives of this lesson are:**

- To acquaint the student with the rich literary tradition of his own state
- To familiarize him with the canonical poetess of Kashmir Habba Khatoon
- To make him study a different form of poetry
- To make him study an important aspect of the history of Kashmir embedded in the poem
- To acquaint him with different aspects of reading poetry

## **7.2 Introduction to the Author**

Habba Khatoon, a 16th-century Kashmiri mystic-poet and ascetic, was also known as 'Nightingale of Kashmir'. She was born in 1554. Her birth place was a small village Chandhar (Chandhaur) just outside Sempora in the present Jammu and Kashmir State. She was known by the name Zoon (the Moon) because of her immense beauty until her marriage with Yusuf Shah Chak, who later became ruler of Kashmir. It was only after her marriage with Yusuf Shah Chak that she was called Habba Khatoon that means Lady of Love. She became an ascetic, when her husband Yusuf Shah Chak was captured by Mughal emperor Akbar, and was taken away to Bengal, never to return. Her neglected tomb lies near Athwajan on the Jammu-Srinagar national highway.

She is almost a legendary figure in Kashmiri literary history and her songs, known as *lol* in the local language, are very popular in Kashmir. She was very imaginative, and her imagination was the result of the sufferings that she came across during her life. Her childhood days were spent amidst the saffron fields and in the shade of the chinar trees. She was only a peasant girl who had received some basic education. Though she belonged to a peasant family but was not raised as a typical peasant girl. She had received some education from the moulvi and knew how to read and write. She was married to a peasant boy at a very tender age. But they had no compatibility as that boy failed to understand the longings of her heart. Her first husband was totally illiterate. She had a difficult time in her first marriage, which eventually ended in divorce. Thus she, like Lal Dad, spent most of her life with melancholy. Her marriage to Yusuf Shah Chak was her second marriage. However,

her second marriage also could not bring any comfort. Though she became famous as the queen of the valley, but the happiness that she drew from marriage didn't last long. She spent the rest of her life wandering across the Valley singing her songs.

Zoon full of sorrow and melancholy used to sing in the shade of a chinar tree. On one such occasion Yousuf Shah Chak, the to – be King of the valley, was out hunting on horseback when he came across Zoon. He happened to pass the place where Zoon was singing under the chinar tree. On hearing the melancholic melodies of Zoon he went look for her. He was mesmerized by her beauty. In their first meeting, they fell in love. Yousuf Shah got her divorced. Later, Zoon and Yousuf Shah were married. After her marriage to Yusuf Shah Chak, she changed her name and became Habba

Khatoon. She introduced lol to Kashmiri poetry; lol is more or less equivalent to the English 'lyric,' conveying one brief thought. Lol is always full of melody and love. Habba Khatoon and Yousuf Shah had a happy married life. The couple was very content and Yousuf Shah became the ruler of Kashmir.

However, their happiness did not last long. As soon as Akbar came into power in Delhi, he called Yousuf Shah there. In 1579, Yousuf Shah was forced to go to Delhi where Akbar arrested him via treachery. As Kashmiris had soundly defeated the Mughals consistently, Akbar took revenge by imprisoning Yousuf Shah Chak in Bihar and this marked the end of the union between Habba Khatoon and Yusuf Shah Chak. The rest of her life is represented in the songs of Habba Khatoon, which are full of the agony of separation. She spent her last days singing her songs in the valley; these songs are popular to this day. She left for the heavenly adobe in 1609. Even, in the modern days one can see young Kashmiri singers turn to her in such popular lyrics as *Mye ha kaer chey kit* and *Che Kamiu Sonei Myani*.

#### Contribution of Habba Khatoon

Kashmir has been a land of rich poetic tradition with names like Lal Ded and Sheikh Nur-ud-Din reverberating across the valley. After the 14th Century, however, there seemed to be a drought of poetic compositions, except for a few anonymous songs. Hence, the poetic compositions of Habba Khatoon seemed like a revival of Kashmiri Poetry, infusing a new life in the genre. At the time Persian was the language of the court. However, Habba Khatoon chose to compose in the Kashmiri language that was spoken by the common people. She was not a purist and

incorporated many Persian words in her compositions that had become part of common parlance. She invented a unique stanza of three lines, followed by a refrain. The first line rhymes with the third line while the second line is unrhymed. She also uses a medial rhyme more often than not.

Her work was a formative influence for the development of the Kashmiri language and also on many poets of succeeding generations till today. Several Kashmiri lyricists have acknowledged her influence on their work.

Writing in the times of strong mystical traditions like Sufism and Bhakti, Habba Khatoon steers clear of mysticism. Hence, critics like S. Shah have termed her the first secular and humanist poet in Kashmiri. Though, like in any literature of eternal appeal, a sense of oneness pervades her poetry where all the flowers, shrubs and birds are gathered into a single song, however, this is not presented as a mystical experience. Infact, she emphasizes the significance of an individual's emotional experience, of personal relationships and of love that is human, not divine. Even when she does dwell on the transitory nature of fame and honour, she does not get didactic. Her poems are expressive, never hortatory, and represent an important tradition that celebrates human experience.

### **7.3     *Habba Khatoon (Text)***

I left my home for play  
Nor yet again  
Returned, although the day  
Sank in the West.  
The name I made is hailed

On lips of men,  
Habba Khatun! though  
veiled, I found no rest.  
Through crowds I found my way  
From forests, then,  
The sages came, when day  
Sank in the West.

#### 7.4 Summary of the Poem

The poem, *Habbah Khatoon*, is a curtal sonnet, written by famous Kashmiri poetess, Habbah Khatoon. In this sonnet, poet talks about herself. She says that she had left her home, not with any intention of leaving forever, but it so happened with that she never returned. Though time passed on days, months, years passed away she did not return. The poet says that she became very famous among people and everybody knew her by the name Habbah Khatoon. Although she had a celebrated name and might be said to have a successful life but she never lived in peace. She rose above the crowds, she came out of the woods, she became famous and finally found peace as she passed away.

Critical Aspects: The poem follows the rhyme scheme, abac dbdc abcd. The lines vary in the length, some lines contain six, and some seven and some contain four syllables.

In the poem, the poet talks about her own life. She was a peasant girl from Kashmir, who was married to a peasant boy. But they could not maintain a happy relationship, She kept on singing about her pain and longing in the form of couplets, which in Kashmir, came to be known as 'lol'. In the initial lines of the poem, poet talks about leaving her home. She would spend most of her time under a Chinar tree, and sing in her beautiful voice. In one such instance, Yousuf Shah Chak, who later became the King of the Kashmir, saw her and was so influenced by her sweet voice and heavenly beauty that he fell in love with her and later got her divorced and married her. Thus poet says that she just left her home for 'play' but that turned her fortunes, and she never returned, "I left my home for play / Nor yet again / Returned." It was only after her marriage with Yousuf Shah Chak, that she came to be known as Habbah Khatoon (lady of love). After leaving the home, she became famous and her name was hailed by every man 'Habbah Khatoon.' In this verse, poet stressed on words, "is hailed on lips of men" because she was very much troubled by the early marriage in which, both her husband and relatives ill treated her. But she was treated as queen, and every one's eyes turned to her; one who was a dejected lady before, became a celebrity. But even her life with the King of Kashmir was short lived and she was again forced into a grieved life. Habbah Khatoon like Lal Ded another famous Kashmiri poetess, lived a sad life. After her husband was imprisoned treacherously by the Mughal King, Akbar, she spent her

entire life in grief and singing. Thus she says that she never had peace, “Habba Khatoon! though veiled, I found no rest.”

In the last part of the sonnet, she throws light on her journey from a village girl to the famous Habbah Khatoon. She says that she became very famous among the people of the valley, “Through crowds I found my way / From forests, then.” Finally her life ended, but she never lived a happy life.

The poem is autobiographical in nature. Throughout the poem we find reference to the personal life of the poet. She refers to the certain incidents of her life which changed her life throughout. The poem people and everybody knew her by the name Habbah Khatoon. Although she had a celebrated name and might be said to have a successful life but she never lived in peace. She rose above the crowds, she came out of the woods, she became famous and finally found peace as she passed away

## 7.5 Detailed Analysis

### (Stanza I)

*I left my home for play*

*Nor yet again*

*Returned, although the day*

*Sank in the West.*

**Context:** These lines are extracted from the first stanza of the eponymous poem by Habba Khatoon, a sixteenth-century mystic poet also known as ‘Zoon’. She has the distinction of introducing to Kashmiri poetry a kind of verse akin to lyric poetry called ‘lol’. In this curial sonnet that she has titled after her name *Habba Khatoon* she has traced the journey of her entire life very tersely and pithily in a span of mere twelve lines.

**Paraphrase:** The poet says that she left her home for her daily chores when destiny played its hand and she did not return back. Even though she suffered downfall and loss, she did not return home. Here, she talks about leaving the house of her first husband where she was ill-treated. To soothe her hurt she would sit under a chinar

tree and sing her songs. One day, as she was singing Yousuf Shah Chak, the heir to the throne of Kashmir, heard her and was mesmerized by her beauty. She got divorced and they got married. She left with him never to return back, though he was imprisoned and killed by the Moughals.

**Critical Comments:** From the very beginning of the poem, the reader finds an autobiographical tone of the poet. The first person pronoun ‘I’ along with the title of the poem gives the idea that this is the journey of the poet from Zoon to Habba Khatoon. In the very first line the poet uses the word ‘play’. This can be interpreted in many ways. First, she was married at a very tender age when everything was a ‘play’ for her. Second, it can mean that she terms the daily chores she used to do as ‘play’ because just like childish games, she found no significance or meaning in them. However, the most significant interpretation of the word can be that she means the ‘play’ of destiny. In these lines she refers to her first purely coincidental meeting with Yousuf Shah Chak, a ‘play’ of destiny that altered her life completely. She went with him, never to return inspite of his downfall and death. It can also mean that it was the ‘play’ of the destiny that Zoon became Habba Khatoon forever with no return. Another prominent image in these four lines is that of the sinking day – an image that she repeats at the end of the poem, thus making its structure cyclic. Here the phrase “the day/Sank in the West” is preceded by “although” and refers to the downfall and death of Yousuf Shah through the treachery of Moughals. Although’ she suffered a great loss, but there was no reverting back for her. She, who now was Habba Khatun did not return but moved ahead.

**(Stanza II)**

*The name I made is hailed  
On lips of men,  
Habba Khatun! though veiled,  
I found no rest.*

**Context:** These lines are extracted from the second stanza of the eponymous poem by Habba Khatoon, a sixteenth-century mystic poet also known as ‘Zoon’. She has the distinction of introducing to Kashmiri poetry a kind of verse akin to lyric poetry called ‘lol’. In this curtal sonnet that she has titled after her name *Habba Khatoon* she has traced the journey of her entire life very tersely and pithily in a span of mere twelve lines.



**Paraphrase:** In this stanza the poet says that the name Habba Khatun that she acquired became famous throughout the valley and was respected by all. Though her name acted as veil of honour and reknown, it could not shield her from the turbulences of life. All the honour and fame could not provide her any peace, that she so much desired.

**Critical Comments:** The second stanza describes her journey after her marriage to Yousuf Shah Chak and her transformation to Habba Khatoon. Though no one knew Zoon, Habba Khatoon became a renowned name, hailed by one and all. Habba Khatoon, the queen of Kashmir, became famous amongst people. The line that her name is “hailed/On lips of men” is also tinged with sarcasm as she remembers the time, she was ill-treated by her in-laws and relatives. It was only after she married Yousuf Shah that she made her name as Habba Khatoon. This also suggests her awareness of the transitory nature of fame that comes only with status. This kind of fame, however, could not protect her from the vicissitudes of life. Though the name “Habba Khatun” veiled her with honour, status and reknown, it could not veil her from the harshness of life. The poet uses the image of ‘veil’ because in the valley it is associated with the respect and honour of a woman. This also implied a form of masking/protection. Thus the poet says that her name acted as a veil of honour and respect even in her reknown among men, but it could not veil her from the troubles of life and she did not find any rest.

Thus, neither honour, not fame could give her the peace that she desired. It could also be taken to mean that amidst all the status, honour and fame, the real Habba Khatun remained veiled hiding her tormented, restless ` self from the world. This could also refer to her separation from Yousuf Chak. As critics note about her poetry, “Not a single lyric expresses fulfillment or happiness in love. All of them are variations on the theme of separation”.

**(Stanza III)**

*Through crowds I found my way  
From forests, then,  
The sages came, when day  
Sank in the West.*

**Context:** These lines are extracted from the first stanza of the eponymous poem by Habba Khatoon, a sixteenth-century mystic poet also known as 'Zoon'. She has the distinction of introducing to Kashmiri poetry a kind of verse akin to lyric poetry called 'lol'. In this curial sonnet that she has titled after her name *Habba Khatoon* she has traced the journey of her entire life very tersely and pithily in a span of mere twelve lines.

**Paraphrase:** In the last stanza the poet says that finally she found her way among multitudinous men and came out of the trials and tribulations of life and when her life ended she eventually found the peace that she had longed for but never achieved in her life.

**Critical Comments:** Stanza III takes the reader closer to the end of Habba Khatun's journey. The very first line used the image of "crowd". This image can mean "crowd" of people with their mundane activities and mundane existence. It can also mean "crowd" of troubles and tribulations of this world. This is reinforced by the second image of the "Forests" that can also be translated as "woods". The idiom "to come out of woods" means to emerge out of troubled times. Thus, the first two lines signal the end of sorrow. The elusive "rest" hinted at in the previous stanza seems to be in sight now. The poem ends with the repetition of the line of Stanza I "day/sank in the West". However, in this stanza it is preceded by "when", and refers to the death of the poet and she says that "The sages came", when she died. This can also have varied interpretations. It can mean that literally sages or noble soul came to her when she died to lead her to a realization of the divine. But "sage" also means tranquil, calm, peaceful. In this light "sages came" can also mean that with death, she at last found the peace, the "rest" that she was longing for. As the critics claim that she was not given to mysticism, but was rather a secular humanist poet, the latter interpretation seems the most probable one. Further the repetition of the last line of stanza I in the last stanza gives the poem a cyclic structure but with a logical progression and closure.

## **7.6 Theme of the Poem**

The poem, "Habbah Khatoon" is autobiographical in tone. It is concerned with the life of the poetess. However beneath the representation of the self, the poem has many significant themes.

- i. ***Life is unpredictable:*** The very first stanza establishes this theme. She went out to 'play' and never thought that she would not return at the end of the day. But as life would have it the turns and twists of destiny her 'play' took put her on a path that did not lead her back home.
- ii. ***Honour comes with status:*** One of the themes of the poem is that respect and recognition are transient and material as they are bound with status. In the case of Habbah Khatton, we read that she was ill treated by her first husband and relatives before she met Yousuf Shah Chak, who was the King of Kashmir. She married him, and afterwards, her fame grew throughout the valley, because now she was a queen. She herself confesses, "The name I made is hailed / On lips of men,/ Habba Khatoon!" "Habba Khatoon' was the name she took after marriage and it was this name that became renowned.
- iii. ***Fame does not provide the peace:*** Another dominant theme of the poem is the desire for peace. Despite being the queen, the famous poetess, Habbah Khatoon was not able to find any peace. Though her name is hailed by everyone even this is not enough for her to find peace. Thus the message of the poem is that fame does not provide peace.
- iv. ***Spiritual Enlightenment:*** It is not the status or the honour that is guarantee of a spiritual life. Each individual has to find his/her own way 'through crowds'. It is a journey that everyone has to chart out for their own selves. When one is able to come out of 'crowds' only then do the 'sages' come to bless and endow salvation.

## 7.7 Multiple Choice Questions

i. Habba Khatoon is also known as

a. Nightingale of India c. Nightingale of Kashmir

b. Cuckoo of Kashmir d. Robin of India ii. Habba

Khatoon is born in

a. 1554    c. 1553

b. 1654    d. 1557

*iii.* The form of poetry that she introduced in Kashmiri is

a. Vakh    c. Lol

b. Pakh    d. Chhand

*iv.* The name Habba Khatoon means

a. Lady of Court    c. Lady of Beauty

b. Lady of Love    d. Lady of Status

*v.* The poem that is titled after the name of the poem is called

a. Homonymous                      c. Homophonic

b. Synonymous                      d. Eponymous

### **7.8    Short Answer type Questions –**

Q. i. What are the various senses in which the word ‘play’ is used in the poem?

Possible Answer : In the very first line the poet uses the word ‘play’. This can be interpreted in many ways. First, she was married at a very tender age when everything was a ‘play’ for her. Second, it can mean that she terms the daily chores she used to do as ‘play’ because just like childish games, she found no significance or meaning in them. However, the most significant interpretation of the word can be that she means the ‘play’ of destiny. In these lines she refers to her first purely coincidental meeting with Yousuf Shah Chak, a ‘play’ of destiny that altered her life completely. She went with him, never to return inspite of his downfall and death. It can also mean that it was the ‘play’ of the destiny that Zoon became Habba Khatoon forever with no return.

Q. ii. Do you think that Habba Khatoon is proud of the name she made for herself source or does she find it burdensome?

Possible Answer : One of the themes of the poem is that respect and recognition are transient and material as they are bound with status. In the case of Habbah Khatton, she was ill treated by her first husband and relatives before she met Yousuf Shah Chak, who was the King of Kashmir. She married him, and afterwards, her fame grew throughout the valley, because now she was a queen. She herself confesses, “The name I made is hailed / On lips of men,/ Habba Khatoon!” “Habba Khatoon” was the name she took after marriage and it was this name that became reknowned.

However, this does not satiate her desire for peace. Despite being the queen, the famous poetess, Habbah Khatoon was not able to find any peace. Though her name is hailed by everyone even this is not enough for her to find peace. It is more of a burden than an achievement and as she says, “I found no rest”.

Q. iii. Why does she feel the need to be ‘veiled’?

Possible Answer : The poet uses the image of ‘veil’ because in the valley it is associated with the respect and honour of a woman. This also implied a form of masking/ protection. Thus the poet says that her name acted as a veil of honour and respect even in her reknown among men, but it could not veil her from the troubles of life and she did not find any rest. Thus, neither honour nor fame could give her the peace that she desired. It could also be taken to mean that amidst all the status, honour and fame, the real Habba Khatun remained veiled hiding her tormented, restless self from the world. This could also refer to her separation from Yousuf Chak. As critics note about her poetry, “Not a single lyric expresses fulfillment or happiness in love. All of them are variations on the theme of separation”.

## **7.9 Long Answer type Questions**

Q. i. What are the major images in the poem? How do they influence our response to it?

Possible Answer : The poem is composed in a very simple and lucid language. Since the meaning is profound, the form is not technically complex. Despite having a lucid language, there are many images that are evoked by the poet.

The first image she uses is that of the sinking day – an image that she repeats at the end of the poem, thus making its structure cyclic. Here the phrase “the day/Sank in the West” is preceded by “although” and refers to the downfall and death of Yousuf Shah through the treachery of Moughals. Although she suffered a great loss, but there was no returning back for her. She, who now was Habba Khatun did not return but moved ahead. At the end of the poem the same image is repeated but there it means the death of the poet herself.

The poet uses the image of ‘veil’ because in the valley it is associated with the respect and honour of a woman. This also implied a form of masking/protection. Thus the poet says that her name acted as a veil of honour and respect even in her reknown among men, but it could not veil her from the troubles of life and she did not find any rest.

The very first line in stanza III uses the image of “crowd”. This image can mean “crowd” of people with their mundane activities and mundane existence. It can also mean “crowd” of troubles and tribulations of this world. This is reinforced by the second image of the “Forests” that can also be translated as “woods”. The idiom “to come out of woods” means to emerge out of troubled times. Crowds is one of the significant image in the poem, which represents hardships, poet says that, “Through crowds I found my way/ From forests, then,.” Forest is also an image that represents the troubles and hardship. Thus the language of the poem is very simple yet the thought is complex.

### **7.10 Key to MCQs**

- i) c   ii) a   iii) c   iv) b   v) d

### **7.11 Exam oriented Questions**

- a) What is the sense in which the word ‘West’ is used in the poem?
- b) What does the poet mean when she says that “Through crowds I found my way”?
- c) Why does the poet find no rest?

- d) Discuss the major themes of the poem.
- e) The language of the poem is very simple yet the thought is complex. Translate the poem into your mother tongue, then compare the various versions in class and decide on the best one.

### **7.12 Suggested Reading**

*Habba Khatoon: Nightingale of Kashmir* by S.N. Wakhlu. South Asia Publications. 2009

“Nightingale of Kashmir” in *The Literary Heritage of Kashmir* by Krishan Lal Kalla. Mittal Publications. 1985

*Muslim rule in Kashmir, 1554 A.D. to 1586 A.D.* by Nizan-ud-Din Wani. Jay Kay Book House. 1987

*Baharistan-i-Shahi: A Chronicle of Medieval Kashmir* translated by Prof. Kashi Nath Pandita. Firma KLM Pvt Ltd. 1988

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**Course No. : AA 301 (Theory)**  
**Semester-III**

**Title : General English**

**Unit – II**

**POEMS**

**Lesson No: 8**

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Migrations

By Keki Nasserwanji Daruwalla

## **UNIT STRUCTURE**

**8.1 Objectives**

**8.2 Introduction to the author**

**8.3 Author's style**

**8.4 Migrations (Text)**

**8.5 Summary and Analysis of the Poem Migrations**

**8.6 Paraphrases**

**8.7 Glossary**

**8.8 Self-Assessment Questions**

**8.8.1 Short type Questions**

**8.8.2 Long type Questions**

**8.8.3 Multiple Choice Questions**

**8.9 Let Us Sum Up**

**8.10 Suggested Readings**



## 8.1 Objectives

Objectives of this lesson is to acquaint the learners with life and literary works of Keki Nasserwanji Daruwalla and to enable them to comprehend and analyze his poem Migrations.

## 8.2 Introduction to the author

Keki Nasserwanji Daruwalla was born in Lahore in 1937. His father N.C. Daruwalla was an eminent professor who taught in Government College Lahore. Before the Partition of India, his family left undivided India in 1945 and moved to Junagarh and then to Rampur in India. As a result, he grew up studying in various schools and in various languages.

He obtained his master's degree in English Literature from Government College, Ludhiana, University of Punjab. He spent a year at Oxford as a Queen Elizabeth House Fellow in 1980-81.

He joined the Indian Police Service (IPS) in 1958, and eventually becoming a Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on International Affairs. He subsequently was in the Cabinet Secretariat until his retirement.

His first book of poetry was *Under Orion*, which was published by Writers Workshop,

India in 1970. He then went on to publish his second collection *Apparition* in April 1971 for which he was given the Uttar Pradesh State Award in 1972. His poems appeared in many prestigious poetry anthologies like *Anthology of Contemporary Indian Poetry* edited by Menka Shivdasani, *The Dance of the Peacock*.

He won the Sahitya Akademi Award, given by the Sahitya Akademi, India's National Academy of Letters, in 1984 and returned the same award in October, 2015 in protest and with a statement that "The organisation Sahitya Akademi has failed to speak out against ideological collectives that have used physical violence against authors." Daruwalla did not take back his award even after Sahitya Akademi passed a resolution condemning the attacks on rational thinkers. In an interview to *The Statesman*, Daruwalla expanded on why he did not take back his award, saying "what you do, you do once and you can't be seen as giving back an award and then taking it back." He received Commonwealth Poetry Prize for Asia in 1987. Nissim

Ezekiel comments “Daruwalla has the energy of the lion”. He is president of The Poetry Society (India), and is based in Delhi.

### **8.3 Author’s Style**

Over nine books and more than three decades, Daruwalla’s poetry has journeyed a long way both formally and thematically. However, it retains certain strong distinguishing characteristics: an ironic stance, an evocation of the multi-layered contradictory realities of Indian life, a preoccupation with diverse cultural, historic and mythic landscapes, a terse, vigorous and tensile style, supple imagism, sustained narrative drive, an ability to segue between metrical patterns and free verse, and a capacity to combine an epic canvas with a miniaturist’s eye for detail.

A remarkable feature of Daruwalla’s poetry is its ability to vividly materialize its abstractions, to strike a creative tension between image and statement. His poetry has the narrative energy and sweep to paint, for instance, a vast portrait of postIndependence India as “a landscape of meaninglessness”: “Then why should I tread the Kafka beat/ or the Waste Land,/ when Mother, you are near at hand/ one vast, sprawling defeat?”

But it can also offer a fine-tuned vision of the particular, evident in his evocation of the rumbling innards of a miserable multitude listening to the speech of a corpulent political leader: “Within the empty belly/ the enzymes turn multi-lingual/ their speech vociferous/ simmering on stomach wall”.

His landscapes extend from the ancient kingdom of Kalinga under the reign of the great Indian emperor Ashoka to the seething contradictions of the modern metropolis of Bombay (“From the lepers, the acid-scarred, the amputees/ I turn my face. The road, I feel/ should be stratified so that/ I rub shoulders only with my kind”) as well as rural and small-town India (Benaras is unforgettably evoked as the place where “corpse-fires and cooking-fires/ burn side by side”, even while the sacred river Ganga flows on, “dark as gangrene”).

His most recent book, *The Map-maker: Poems* (2002), offers a compelling series of dramatic monologues by figures as diverse as a disciple of the Buddha and an old map-maker from Majorca, suggesting that the passionate interest in other cultural and historical milieux is alive and well. But there is also a more marked fascination with inner worlds, with philosophical notions of time and space.

In *Migrations*, for example, the metaphysical is integrally linked to the concrete and the singular, as the poem explores the theme of migrations across space and time, from the violent biography of nations to a searing moment of personal biography: “Now my dreams ask me/ if I remember my mother/ and I’m not sure how I’ll handle that./ Migrating across years is also difficult.”

#### **8.4 Text of the poem *Migrations***

##### *Migrations*

Migrations are always difficult:

ask any drought,  
any plague; ask  
the year 1947.

Ask the chronicles  
themselves: if there had been  
no migrations would there  
have been enough history to  
munch on?

Going back in time is also tough.

Ask anyone back-trekking to Sargodha  
or Jhelum or Mianwali and they’ll tell  
you. New faces among old brick;  
politeness, sentiment, dripping from  
the lips of strangers. This is still your  
house, Sir.

And if you meditate on time that  
is no longer time – (the past is  
frozen, it is stone, that which  
doesn’t move and pulsate is not  
time) – if you meditate on that  
scrap of time, the mood turns  
pensive like the monsoons  
gathering in the skies but not  
breaking.

Mother used to ask, don't you remember my  
mother? You'd be in the kitchen all the time and  
run with the fries she ladled out, still sizzling on the  
plate.

Don't you remember her at  
all? Mother's fallen face  
would fall further at my  
impassivity.

Now my dreams ask me

If I remember my mother

And I am not sure how I'll handle that.

Migrating across years is also difficult.

## **8.5 Summary and Analysis of the Poem Migrations**

The poem *Migrations* is written by Keki N. Daruwalla. It is taken from his collection of poems titled *The Map-maker: Poems*. It is written in blank verse, that is iambic pentameter with no rhyme scheme. "Migrations" is a pondering on the occurrence of human migration across space and time. There are many types of migrations. People move if natural calamities like a drought, plague or any deadly disease strike. People also migrate due to man-made disasters like the partition of India when thousands left their homes to flee to the other side. The question seems like a taunt: would there have been enough history to munch on without the high emotion supplied by droughts, plagues and partition? Daruwalla is telling a big story through the fine print of personal relationships and the feelings of the people who live through difficult times. History is replete with examples of large-scale migrations by people. Equally important are those migrations that occur within us as our needs and priorities change. We discard old relationships for new ones. People migrate from past to present. Going back in time is difficult. Migration from one's house is also painful. Ask anyone who migrated and had a long and hard walk to Sargodha or Jhelum or Mianwali. They will tell you how difficult it is to migrate from one place to another. If we migrate from one house into another, we can sometimes go back and though things have changed and there are 'new faces among old brick', that is the place which was once ours and now occupied by others who will say that 'This is still your house, Sir.' We can pretend like the present inhabitants that that place or house still belongs to us but it is never be the same.

However, the attachment never lost. Going back in time is also difficult. The past is like a frozen stone and it never changes and never moves and never goes. It remains with the person. If one meditate on the past, the one becomes sad. Here, the poet compares one's situation with the monsoons which gathers in the sky but it is not bursting. However, when we migrate out of childhood into adulthood we sometimes lose memories that were once precious but now cannot be recalled. This loss is as deep and painful as the loss of home or possessions. The slow forgetting of something that is important to you and you took for granted is painful like one's mother's face. Like Daruwalla does at the end of "Migrations":

Mother used to ask, don't you remember my  
mother? You'd be in the kitchen all the time and  
run with the fries she ladled out, still sizzling on the  
plate.

Don't you remember her at  
all? Mother's fallen face  
would fall further at my  
impassivity.

Now my dreams ask me

If I remember my mother

And I am not sure how I'll handle that.

Migrating across years is also difficult.

Daruwalla migrates across the years to dig for his roots or the grandmother's face. Grandmother's kitchen and sizzling sound of the fries are reminders of slow and tragic forgetting. Mother's response to Daruwala's forgetting is different from the strangers who had occupied the old house. She makes no attempt to be polite or

sentimental. Her disappointment at her son's indifference to lost memories is blatant and the poet realizes "Migrating across years is also difficult."

## 8.6 Paraphrases

- I. Migrations are always difficult: ask any  
drought, any plague; ask the year 1947.

Ask the chronicles  
themselves: if there had been  
no migrations would there  
have been enough history to  
munch on?

Migrations always bring pain. It can because of drought or plague. Or it can be situation like 1947 when India got divided into two nations: India and Pakistan and people ran to the other side of the border. You can ask the people who suffers and endure migrations or you can search in the records. You will find that the migrations are hard and painful. If there had been no migrations perhaps there would have been no history to study about them.

- II. Going back in time is also tough.  
Ask anyone back-trekking to Sargodha  
or Jhelum or Mianwali and they'll tell  
you. New faces among old brick;  
politeness, sentiment, dripping from  
the lips of strangers.  
This is still your house, Sir.

Going back in time is also difficult. Ask anyone who had covered the tedious journey to Sargodha or Jhelum or Mianwali. They will tell you how difficult it is to leave one's house. One finds new faces in the old building and the polite and sentimental words will drip from the lips of the strangers, that is "This is your still your house, Sir." But the house is now a thing of the past. In the past it belonged to the one but presently there is no right of the one on that house to whom the one is attached through memories.

III. And if you meditate on time that is no  
longer time – (the past is frozen, it is  
stone, that which doesn't move and  
pulsate is not time) – if you meditate on  
that scrap of time,  
the mood turns  
pensive like the  
monsoons gathering  
in the skies but not  
breaking.

And if you think across the past, you will find that it has frozen and has no  
movement. It is frozen like dead stone. It can never become the present as it is  
frozen and has no pulsation and has no life. But it is still with the person. One  
wishes to go back and live once again the beautiful memories but the one is  
never able to do so. If you meditate on that piece of the time, you become sad.  
Your situation is like the monsoon that gathers in the sky but give you no  
showers.

IV. Mother used to ask, don't you  
remember my mother? You'd be in the  
kitchen all the time and run with the  
fries she ladled out, still sizzling on the  
plate.  
Don't you remember her at  
all? Mother's fallen face  
would fall further at my  
impassivity.  
Now my dreams ask me  
If I remember my mother

And I am not sure how I'll handle that.  
Migrating across years is also difficult.

Poet's mother would often ask him that if he does not remember her mother.  
He would be in the kitchen and would run with the fries she ladled out and

still were hot and produced sizzling sound. She asks him, “Don’t you remember her at all?” Poet’s mother would feel sad seeing the face of son’s showing no emotions and feelings. Now the dreams of the poet ask him if he remember his own mother. “And I am not sure how I’ handle that” means she is still in his memories but it is very difficult to migrate from his memory of his mother. Therefore, migrations across years is also difficult.

## **8.7 Glossary**

Breaking- In the poem is used for showering

Chronicles- A written record of events in the order in which they happened

Fallen Face- Look of dismay or disappointment

Impassivity- Derived from the word impassive means emotionless

Ladle- To place food on a plate with a large spoon or in large quantities

Migrations- movement of people to a new area or country in order to find work or better living conditions/seasonal movement of animals from one region to another

Munch- Chomp

Pensive-Showing or expressing deep, often melancholy thought

Pulsate- Produce a regular throbbing sensation or sound/expand and contract with strong regular movements

Scrap- A small piece of something

Sizzle- To make the sound of food frying in hot oil

Trekking-Derived from the word trek which means a long, hard walk lasting several days or weeks, especially in the mountains; synonyms: Tramp

## **8.8 Self-assessment questions**

### **8.1 Short-type Questions**

Q1. Why does the poet feel that the past is ‘cast in stone’? Do you agree with him?



Possible Answer : The past is cast in stone because it is gone forever. The past never comes back. It is cast in stone that can't move back. It is as gone as dead. It does not pulsate. It has no life. It is frozen, lifeless and hence incapable of any movement. Meditating on 'past' is all futile as it won't move or pulsate. It never becomes present. It is devoid of life as a stone is. However, hard one may pine for it, 'past' is gone forever and won't return stone as it is. It is a thing dead and gone by.

Q2. What is the poet's experience when he revisits the home he left behind?

Possible Answer : When the poet revisits his home which he left behind, he finds himself in a disturbing situation. He feels uncomfortable among new faces who are now residing in that house and strangers to the poet. He gets disturbed when listens the words like "This is still your house, Sir." He tries to pretend that the house still belongs to him but he fails. Neither has he experienced that belongingness to the house which once belonged to him nor can he detach himself from the house to which he is attached through memories.

Q3. What does the image of 'monsoons/gathering in the skies/ but not breaking' convey?

Possible Answer : The image of 'monsoons/gathering in the skies/but not breaking' is a simile. The poet has used this image in relation to the past which is no time as we pine for it but are sad when it does not return. Similarly, when monsoon clouds gather in the sky, they create a feeling of hope and make us happy at the possibility of rain. But when, to our dismay, the monsoons do not break into torrents of rain, we feel pensive. We begin thinking quietly and a serious expression fills our face when monsoons clouds fill us with the hope of rain but do not break into torrents. Likewise, when we meditate over past, we feel pensive when we realize that it will never come back.

Q4. Why is the mother disappointed at her son's response to his forgotten memories?

Possible Answer : When poet's mother asks the poet "don't you remember my mother?" The poet shows no expressions. He remains impassive as he feels that thinking of the times gone by is to invite unpleasant feelings because the

past is dead and won't come back. His mother feels disappointed at his response to his forgotten memories. She is sad to find her son all concerned and unfeeling and makes hardly any attempt at being polite or sentimental.

### **8.8.2 Long-type Questions:**

Q1. What is the difference between the two kinds of migrations that Daruwalla discusses in the poem?

Possible Answer : In his poem "Migrations" the poet Keki N. Daruwalla discusses two types of migrations. One type of migrations is because of disaster either because of natural calamities like drought or plague or it can be man-made like partition of 1947. Whenever there is drought, there is little or no rain. As a result, crops get ruined. People are, therefore, forced to leave their homes and move on to new places to live there temporarily or permanently. Similarly, when people at a place are struck by the plague or a deadly disease, they have to migrate from their hometown to some other safe place. The partition of 1947 was also a dreadful event. Thousands of people had to migrate to the other side of the border. These migrations are external. It can be man-made or natural.

The second type of migration is internal, that is the migrations occur when our needs and priorities change. These migrations occur within us. When our needs change and we fix new priorities, we give up old relationships and foster new ones. Sometimes we migrate across time like childhood into adulthood, the memories stay with us but the past is like a frozen stone. It shows no movement and never become present. Recalling the past time, poet realizes that "Migrations across years is also difficult."

Q2. Why does the poet feel that 'if you meditate on time/ that is no longer time'?

Possible Answer : In the poem "Migrations" the poet focuses on the migrations it can be outside the individual or can be inside. Internal migrations occur within us as our needs and priorities undergo a change. Migration from childhood to adulthood is also painful. Sweet memories stay with us. But the past is like a frozen stone. It shows no movement. It does not have a life. It is dead. It can never become present. The remembrance of the past is painful. One becomes pensive while remembering the old memories. Therefore, when poet's mother tries to remind him the old memories of his childhood, the poet remains impassive and does not show

any expression and feeling. He thinks that thinking about the past is to invite unpleasant feelings as the past is dead and won't move at all. Her mother becomes sad to find her son all unconcerned about the old memories.

Thinking of time that does not pulsate is the same as thinking of lost memories that don't come back. Therefore, 'if you meditate on time/ that is no longer time' is sad.

### 8.8.3 Multiple Choice Questions:

(i) Who is the author of Migrations?

(1) Daruwalla

(3) Singh

(2) Narang

(4) None of the  
above

(ii) "Migrations" is taken from collection of poems titled \_\_\_\_\_

(1) The Map-maker: Poems

(3) The Marry Making

(2) The Collections (4) Orion

(iii) "Migrations" is written in \_\_\_\_\_

(1) Heroic Couplet (3) Quatrains

(2) Blank Verse (4) Triplets

(iv) Blank verse consists \_\_\_\_\_

(1) Iambic Pentameter

(3) Iambic Hexameter

(2) Trochaic Pentameter

(4) Trochaic  
Hexameter

(v) Daruwalla was born in \_\_\_\_\_

(1) Lahore

(3) Punjab

(2) Delhi

(4) America

(vi) How many types of migrations Daruwalla has talked about in "Migrations"?

(1) Two (3) Four

(2) Three (4) Five

(vi) “Migrating across years is also difficult”, the poet is talking about

(1) Internal Migration (3) Internal and External

(2) External Migration (4) None of the above

(vii) the mood turns pensive like the monsoons gathering in the skies but not breaking

The poet has used

(1) Oxymoron

(3)

Anaphora

(4)

(2) Simile

Antithesis

Answer Key

(i)(1), (ii) (1), (iii) (2), (iv) (1), (v) (1), (vi) (1), (vii) (2)

### 8.9. Let Us Sum Up

Keki N. Daruwalla is a renowned Indian author better known for his poetry. In his poem “Migrations” he focuses on migrations which can be external or internal. Migrations can be natural or man-made. Whatever the case may be, migrations are hard, difficult, distressing and painful.

### 8.10 Suggested Readings

*Collage: A Textbook of Language and Literature.* Board of Editors, University of

Jammu “Keki N. Daruwalla.” *Wikipedia.org*.

Daruwalla, Keki. *N. Poetry Magic.* *Googlebooks.co.in*

Daruwalla, Keki. N. *The Map-maker Poems.* New Delhi: Orient Blackswan, 2002.  
*Print.*

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**Course No. : AA 301 (Theory)**  
**Semester-III**

**Title : General English**

**Unit – III**

**SHORT STORIES**

**Lesson No: 9**

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*The Gold Frame*

By: Rasipuram Krishnaswamy Laxman

**UNIT STRUCTURE**

**9.1 Objectives**

**9.2 Introduction to the author**

**9.3 *The Gold Frame* (Text)**

**9.4 Summary of the Story**

**9.5 Central Idea of the story**

**9.6 Theme of the story**

**9.7 Glossary**

**9.8 Self-Assessment Questions**

**9.8.1 Multiple Choice Questions**

**9.8.2 Fill in the Blanks**

**9.9 Examination Oriented Questions**

**9.10 Answer Keys**

**9.11 Reference and Suggested Readings**

**9.1 Objectives**

The Objectives of this lesson is to familiarise the distance learner with life and works of R.K. Laxman along with a through in-depth study of the short story *The Gold Frame* prescribed in the syllabus. The lesson is formatted in the modern Self Learning Material style, which provides an enhanced clarity in the content so that the distance learners can easily grasp the theme and central idea of the work at hand. The distance learners are advised to follow each step within the Unit Structure and try to answer the sample questions at the end of the lesson.

## **9.2 Introduction to the author**

Rasipuram Kirshnaswami Iyer Laxman one of the most successful Indian cartoonist, illustrator and humorist was born on 24<sup>th</sup> Oct. 1921 in the South Indian city of Mysore, Karnataka. Born in a Tamil speaking Iyer family consisting of three brothers, R. K. Laxman was the younger brother to Rasipuram Kirshnaswami Iyer Narayanaswami, famously known as R.K. Narayan, the novelist and author of *Malgudi Days*. Since the very childhood days R.K. Laxman was a keen observer of illustrations and caricatures made in the magazines like ‘The Strand’, ‘Punch, Bystander’, ‘Wide World’ and ‘Tit-Bits’ and the sketches of the world renowned British caricature artist Sir David Low really amused and inspired him to draw on his own of everyday commonplace things. This early passion and love for drawing and constant encouragement from school teachers and friend illumined in him the love for painting and further in his career made him to apply for the prestigious J.J. School of Arts, Bombay, after high schools. However, as destined, he could not avail himself the honour of being its student and he graduated with Bachelors of Arts (B.A) degree from the University of Mysore. However, while keeping his passion for sketch and painting alive, he in the later parts of his life went on to become one of the most successful caricature artist of his time.

R.K. Laxman started his early career as a freelance artist activist and contributed cartoons and drew political cartoons for few local newspapers and daily newspaper like ‘Rohan’ and magazines like ‘Swarajya’, ‘Blits’ and Kannada humor magazine ‘Koravanji’ owned by Dr. M. Shivaram, an eminent kannada humorist, who had always encouraged Laxman. During his graduation he was asked to illustrate the stories written by his brother R.K Narayan for the famous national newspaper ‘The Hindu’ and this was his early appearance for the national reader. Later on Laxman took a full time job of cartoonist for the ‘The Free Press Journal’ based in Bombay where he became friend to colleague Bal Thackeray: the founder of the political

party 'Shiv-Sena'. In the year 1951 Laxman had an opportunity to join 'The Times of India', Bombay and since then he became associated with this national newspaper and this association lasted for over fifty years. His iconic character the "Common Man" saw its birth and recognition while working for the 'The Times of India' and represented the aspirations, hopes and problems of the average Indian middle class man, through a daily comic strip, "*You Said It*". Clad in a *dhoti* and plaid jacket the "Common Man" explored and revealed the corruption and indifferences of state agencies and helplessness of ordinary citizens with sharp and witty cartoon sketch.

Besides drawing cartoons R.K Laksman was also a very good storyteller. He has written and published numerous short stories, essay and travel articles. Some of these were published in a book *Ideal Hours*. He has also written two novels, *The Hotel Riviera* and *The Messenger*, both published by Penguin Books. Penguin has also published several collections of Laxman's cartoons in the series *The Best of Laxman* and *Laugh with Laxman*. *The Tunnel of Time*, Laxman's autobiography, is also available from Penguin Books. In his preface to the *Collected Writings* R.K Laksman writes that his brother was the biggest inspiration for him to write. He recalls that watching his brother write, "Then there came a time when wanted to write too. My creative faculty was already being stimulated daily by the demands of my profession as a cartoonist. It would, I felt, be easy enough to conjure up a character and write him into a situation and make him act credibly. But I was hesitant. I was afraid to set foot in the domain of my brother. I felt I would come off poorly in the comparison that were bound to take place". He further writes, "Nevertheless, irresistibly, one or two short stories of mine found their way into print. Encouraged by this I pressed on and took on the task of writing a novel. Unfortunately, as a political cartoonist having to work over six hours a day in a newspaper office, poring over news items and analysing political events, I had no time to pursue my 'hobby' with any systematic regularity. But once I started I was surprised to find my novel writing itself. Somehow, without my being conscious of it, I had become the observer; I watched the plot develop and the characters move in and out of *The Hotel Riviera*, playing their roles with natural ease. In time, another novel, *The Messenger*, followed. Whatever the quality of the ultimate product, it was great fun writing these novels and watching each character appear, develop a definite outline, flesh and blood and finally behave like a human with all the eccentricities and follies of the race".

With a creative and literary output of more than fifty years R.K. Laxman was awarded with two most prestigious awards conferred by Indian Government to civilians. He was awarded Padma Bhushan, the second highest civilian award, in 1973 and with Padma Vibhushan, the third highest civilian award, in 2005, for his outstanding contribution to Art and Literature. The University of Marathwada and Mysore conferred an honorary Doctor of Literature degree on him. He has also won many awards and recognition for his cartoons, including Asia's top journalism awards, the Ramon Magsaysay Award, in 1984. He died at the age of 93 on 26 Jan 2015 due to multiple organ failure and the Maharashtra Government in honour of him accorded him with State Funeral.

### **9.3     *The Gold Frame (Text)***

The Modern Frame Work was actually an extra-large wooden packing case mounted on wobbly legs tucked in a gap between a drug store and a radio repair shop. Its owner, Datta, with his concave figure, silver-rimmed glasses and a complexion of seasoned timber fitted into his shop with the harmony of a fixture.

He was a silent, hard-working man. He gave only laconic answers to the questions his customers asked and strongly discouraged casual friends who tried to intrude on his zone of silence with their idle gossip. He was always seen sitting hunched up, surrounded by a confusion of cardboard pieces, bits of wood, glass sheets, boxes of nails, glue bottles, paint tins and other odds and ends that went into putting a picture in a frame. In this medley a glass cutter or a pencil stub was often lost and that was when he would uncoil from his posture and grope impatiently for it. Many times he had to stand up and shake his dhoti vigorously to dislodge the lost object. This operation rocked the whole shop, setting the Pictures on the walls gently swinging.

There was not an inch of space that was not covered by a picture: gods, saints, hockey players, children, cheap prints of Mona Lisa, national leaders, wedding couples, Urdu calligraphy, the snow-clad Fujiyama and many others coexisted with a cheerful incongruity like some fabulous world awaiting order and arrangement.

A customer standing outside the shop on the pavement, obstructing the stream of jostling pedestrians, announced, 'I want this picture framed.' Datta, with his habitual indifference, ignored him and continued to be engaged in driving screws into the sides of a frame. 'I want a really good job done no matter how much it



costs.’ The customer volunteered the information, unwrapping a faded newspaper and exposing a sepia-brown photograph of an old man. It was sharp and highly glazed in spite of its antiquity.

‘What sort of a frame would you like?’ Datta asked, still bent over his work.

‘The best, of course. Do you expect I would stint where this great soul is concerned?’

Datta gave a side glance and caught a glimpse of the photograph: just another elderly person of those days, he told himself: standard portrait of a grandfather, a philanthropist, a social worker, with the inevitable whiskers and top-heavy cascading turban — it could be any one of these. At least half a dozen people came to him every month bearing similar portraits wanting to demonstrate their homage to the person in the picture in the shape of a glittering frame.

The customer was describing the greatness of the old Man: extravagant qualities of nobility, compassion and charity were being generously attributed to him in a voice that came close to the chanting of a holy scripture. ‘...If this world had just more like him, believe me, it would certainly have been a different place. Of course, there are demons who may not agree with me. They are out to disgrace his name and destroy his memory. But he is God in my home!’

‘What sort of a frame do you want?’ Datta interrupted. ‘Plain, wooden, lacquer, gold, plastic or just enamel painted?’ He waved a casual hand towards the pictures on the wall.

The customer silently surveyed the various frames. After some time Datta heard him mumble, ‘I want the best...’

‘I don’t have any second-rate stuff in my shop,’ Datta said.

‘How much will that gold frame cost?’ the customer enquired.

He was shown a number of samples: plain, decorative, floral, geometrical, thin, hefty and so forth. The customer was baffled by the variety. He examined the selection before him for a long time as if he was unsure of his judgement and was afraid of enshrining his saviour forever in some ugly cheap frame.

Datta came to his rescue and recommended one with a profusion of gold leaves and winding creepers and, in order to clear any lingering doubt he might still be harbouring in regard to its quality, added: ‘It is German! Imported!’

The customer at once seemed impressed and satisfied. Dutta next asked, 'You want a plain mount or a cut mount?' and watched the puzzled look in return. Again he helped the man out by showing him various mounts and suggested that a cut mount looked more elegant.

'All right, let me have a cut mount then. Is that a cut mount?' he asked, pointing to a framed picture on the wall of a soulful-looking lady in an oval cut mount. 'I like that shape.

Will it cost much?'

'No, frame, mount, glass- all will cost seventeen rupees.'

The customer had expected it would be more. He pretended to be shocked all the same and tried to bargain. Datta withdrew to his corner without replying and began to cut a piece of plywood. The customer hung about uncertainly for some time and finally asked, 'When will you have it ready?' and barely heard the reply over the vibrating noise of the saw on the plywood: 'Two weeks from today.'

Datta had learnt by long experience that his customers never came punctually. They came days in advance and went away disappointed or came months later, and some never turned up at all and their pictures lay unclaimed in a box gathering dust and feeding cockroaches and silverfish. Therefore, he only framed for those who visited him at least twice before he actually executed their orders.

Ten days later, the tall, rustic-looking man appeared and enquired, 'Has the picture been framed? I was passing by and thought I could collect it if it was ready.' Datta cast a side look at him and continued with his work.

'I know I have come four days early,' the customer grinned nervously.

'Will it be ready by Tuesday?'

Datta merely nodded without shifting attention from tiny nail which he, with precise rhythmic strokes, was flying into a frame but sensed the man's obsessive attachment to the photograph. He told himself there would be trouble if he did not deliver the order on the promised date.

Next morning he made that his first job, keeping aside all the others.

The photograph was lying in a shelf among many others. He took it and carefully kept it on a wooden plank on the floor. Then he looked for the pencil stub for marking the measurements. As usual, it was missing. He swept his hand all round him impatiently, scattering fragments of glass and wood.

False shapes that he mistook for the pencil harassed him no end and stoked his anger. Frustrated in all his attempts to find it, he finally stood up to shake the folds of his dhoti - an ultimate move which generally yielded results. But he shook the folds so violently that he upset a tin containing white enamel paint and it fell right on the sacred photograph of the old man, emptying its thick, slimy contents on it.

Datta stood transfixed and stared at the disaster at his feet as if he had suddenly lost all faculty of movement. He could not bring himself even to avert his eyes from the horror which he seemed to be cruelly forced to view. Then his spectacles clouded with perspiration and helpfully screened his vision.

When at last he fully recovered his senses he set about rescuing the picture in such desperate hurry that he made a worse mess of it. He rubbed the Picture so hard with a cloth that he peeled off thin stripes of filmy coating from surface. Before he realized what he had done half of the old man's face and nearly all of his turban were gone. Datta looked helplessly at the venerable elder transformed into thick black specks sticking to the enamel smeared on the rag in his hand. He sat with both hands clutching his head: every nerve in his head throbbed as if it would tear itself apart if he did not hold it down. What answer was he going to offer to the customer who had a fanatic devotion to the photograph he had just mutilated beyond recovery? His imagination ran wild, suggesting nightmarish consequences to his own dear self and to the fragile inflammable shop.

He racked his brain for a long while till sheer exhaustion calmed his agitated nerves and made him accept the situation with hopeless resignation. Meanwhile, the plethora of gods, saints and sages gazed down at him from the walls with transcendental smiles and seemed to offer themselves to him to pray to. With a fervent appeal in his heart he stared at them.

In his state of mind it did not register for quite a while that a particular photograph of a person on the wall had held his attention rather more than it was qualified to do. It was an ordinary portrait of a middle-aged man in a dark suit and striped tie, resting his right arm jauntily on a studio prop made to look like a fluted Roman pillar. Datta was amazed to see that he had a faint likeness to the late lamented old man. The more he gazed at the face the more convincing it appeared to him. But he dismissed the odd resemblance he saw as one of those tricks of a thoroughly fagged-out mind. All the same at the back of his mind an idea began to take shape: he saw the possibility of finding acceptable substitute!

He brought down the old wooden box in which he had kept all the photographs unclaimed over the years. As he rummaged in it, panicked cockroaches and spiders scurried helter-skelter all over the floor. Unmindful of them Datta anxiously searched for the brownish photograph of the old man's vintage. Soon there was a pile before him: he was surprised he could pick up so many which qualified to take the old man's place. But he had to reject a lot of them. In most of the portraits the subjects sported a very conspicuous flower vase next to them, or overdressed grandchildren sat on their laps and therefore had to be rejected. Luckily, there was one with which Datta felt he could take a fair risk: the print had yellowed a bit noticeably but he calculated that the total effect when put in a dazzling gold frame would render it safe.

After a couple of hours of concentrated work he sat back and proudly surveyed the old man's double, looking resplendent in his gold frame. He was so pleased with his achievement that he forgot he was taking perhaps one of the greatest risks any frame maker ever took! He even became bold enough to challenge the customer if his faking was discovered. 'Look, my dear man,' he would say, 'I don't know who has been fooling you! That's the picture you brought here for framing. Take it or throw it away!'

The days that followed were filled with suspense and anxiety. Datta feared that the customer would surprise him at an unguarded moment making him bungle the entire carefully thoughtout plot. But the man turned up promptly a couple of days later. At that moment Datta was bent over a piece of work and stiffened slightly as he heard the voice, shrill with expectation, ask, 'Is it ready?'

Datta's heart began to race and to compose himself let a whole minute pass without answering. Then he put aside the scissors in his hand with slow deliberation and reached out to take the neatly wrapped package lying in a corner.

'Ah, it is ready!' the customer exclaimed with childish delight, at the same time mumbling flattering tributes to Datta for his promptness and so on. He spread his arms wide apart with dramatic exuberance to receive the photograph as if it was actually a long-lost person he was greeting.

But Datta took his time removing the wrapper from the frame. The customer waited impatiently, filling in the time showering more praises on his worshipful master who was to adorn the wall of his home.

Datta finally revealed the glittering frame and held it towards him. The customer seemed visibly struck by its grandeur and fell silent like one who had entered the inner sanctum of a temple.

Datta held his breath and watched the man's expression. With every second that passed he was losing his nerve and thought that in another moment he would betray the big hoax he had played.

Suddenly he saw the customer straighten, the reverential look and benevolent expression vanished from his face.

'What have you done?' he demanded, indignantly. For Datta the moment seemed familiar for he had already gone through it a thousand times night and day since he splashed the white paint on the original photograph. Several times he had rehearsed his piece precisely for this Occasion. But before he could open his mouth the customer shouted with tremendous authority in his bearing, 'Now, don't deny it! I clearly remember asking for a cut mount with an oval shape. This is square. Look!'

#### **9.4 Summary of the Story**

The central character Datta is the owner of the 'The Modern Frame Work shop' that stood on a very weak structure between a chemist shop and a radio repair shop. He is a very honest man who believes in hard work for one's livelihood and likes to remain silent and despise idle friends at his shop. Even while dealing with the customers his response to the inquiries made by them is very limited and short and does not indulge himself in unnecessary talks. While at shop one finds him always occupied with some work at hand and lost in his own world of frame making. Many a times he is quite busy struggling to find a misplaced item required for the work; shaking his dhoti so vigorously that at times it seemed that the whole shop would toppled down and fall with the force.

One day a customer arrives to his shop and explains that he wants to get a picture of a very important person framed. Datta shows him the available frames for the purpose but the customer is not satisfied and demands for the best one. Finally, the customer decides for a Gold oval cut frame, which Datta assert to be imported from Germany. The customer meanwhile proclaims that he cannot settle for less than the best as the person in the photograph was a highly revered man of high importance and therefore needs the best available frame.

Datta, as accustomed, knew his customers and hence always waited for their second visit before he started with the work. One day the customer appears again without any notice and inquires about the frame but since he knew he was early he leaves the shop asking Datta to complete the frame on time. Seeing the urgency of the customer, Datta resolute to complete the frame as soon as possible and straight away starts working on it the very next day. While working on the frame Datta misplaces the pencil stub, and as usual, starts searching for it madly but unfortunately while searching he accidentally spills a tin of paint on the photograph. To save the photograph, Datta without any thought, rubs it with a piece of cloth and completely destroys the picture. Petrified Datta feels helpless and begins to worry about the outcome of the mistake done and starts thinking for a solution.

After much thinking Datta comes with a plan to replace the photograph with a similar looking one and searches for it all over although he knew he was taking the biggest risk ever taken by any frame maker. Finally he comes across a picture which somewhat resembled the spoiled photograph and Datta calculates that he can take the risk. With much hard work Datta finally completes the work and is more then satisfied to see the final frame and notices that the picture replaced blends perfectly with the original one with rich gold frame. He also plans a hoax and starts practicing it day and night to counter argue his customer if he happens to find the change and impatiently starts waiting for the customer to collect it.

One day, while Datta was busy in his work, the customer drops by unannounced and asks for the frame. Datta's heart starts pounding the moment he recognises the man's voice in front of his shop and without even lifting his eyes grabs the neatly wrapped frame from the corner and starts unwrapping it and hands it over to the customer. The customer startled with the work done starts pouring praises for Datta while mumbling reverence of the person framed at the same time. After much satisfied look suddenly the customer's face changes to a cold expression and heavily demands, 'what have you done?' Datta, with all the past rehearsals for this moment, is suddenly interrupted before he could even speak by the angry customer who further complains, 'Now, don't deny it! I clearly remember asking for a cut mount with an oval shape. This is square. Look!'

### **9.5 Central Idea of the story**

The story Gold Frame is based on the central idea that we human beings have been so much captured by the daily routine that we have lost the essence of being human.

The central character Datta, about whom we have no background to family and past life, somewhat seems to be cold and inhuman by nature. He is always preoccupied with his work, which makes it obvious that he is a hardworking man but this can also mean that he really wants to be left alone and work is the only state where he is most comfortably alone. Further the fragile structure of the shop he owns tantamount to the loose founding of his own possible upbringing with no love and care for others and therefore it may be the reason that he really despises any ideal visitors or even friends at his shop.

The second character, whom the author denies a name, is a 'Customer' and best represents the 'modern man' consumed by materialism and hypocrisy. He is easily manipulated by fascinating names, things and tags and is always worried about the appearance of things rather than the intrinsic value associated with it. The constant and never-ending acclaims for the person in the photograph and his want to enshrine him forever in the most elaborate gold frame becomes the mother of all Irony when the reader comes to know that the Customer does not even recognise the changed man in the photograph. The author has beautifully crafted the whole story and the reader is mesmerised with the development of the plot and is made to rethink the whole incidents at the end. The suspense to whether Datta's bluff will be caught or not carries till the end with a spontaneous ironic twist in the last sentence of the story, which further enthralls the reader.

## **9.6 Theme of the Story**

The story *The Gold Frame* is based upon the theme of insincerity, materialism and hypocrisy. Datta a hardworking man is nevertheless a clever manipulator; the Customer's hypocrisy, underscores the modern man's attachment to materialism. Datta portrays an excellent example of man who is although honest but also does not hesitate to cheat someone. The fact that he is delighted and satisfied when he completes the frame making with the lookalike photograph accentuates his dishonest demeanour. His confidence to hoax someone and his will to practice it day and night exemplify his use of good virtue towards evil end. The hypocrisy and materialistic view of the Customer is carried till the end of the story and ironically his true self is blatantly revealed as a surprise at the end.

R.K Laxman's choice of character further exemplifies his mastery at the art of sarcasm and invokes a sense of guilt of insincerity and hypocrisy we all carry somewhere within our hearts. The only two characters and people in the story, Datta

and the Customer, will easily resemble anyone among us and the whole story really amuse us and makes us to rethink the deep flaw we carry among us all the time. The characters therefore become the epitome of modern man and his follies. The story is skilfully left with an open-end by the author and compels the readers to amusingly wonder and conclude that the generations of people following the customer will have to praise and revere, without their slightest knowledge, a wrong person in the golden frame.

## **9.7 Glossary**

**Illustrator:** a person who draws or creates pictures for magazines, books, advertising, etc.

**Humorist:** causing laughter and amusement; comic.

**Caricatures:** A picture, description, or imitation of a person in which certain striking characteristics are exaggerated in order to create a comic or grotesque effect.

**Illumined:** light up; brighten.

**Freelance:** self-employed and hired to work for different companies on particular assignments.

**Aspirations:** a hope or ambition of achieving something.

**Credibly:** in a believable and convincing way.

**Conjure:** make (something) appear unexpectedly or seemingly from nowhere.

**Eccentricities:** the quality of being eccentric.

**Follies:** a foolish act, idea, or practice.

**Mounted:** riding an animal, typically a horse, especially for military or other duty.

**Wobbly:** tending to move unsteadily from side to side.

**Concave:** having an outline or surface that curves inwards like the interior of a circle or sphere.



Fixture: having an outline or surface that curves inwards like the interior of a circle or sphere.

Laconic: using very few words.

Hunched: raise (one's shoulders) and bend the top of one's body forward.

Grope: search blindly or uncertainly by feeling with the hands.

Vigorously: forcefully.

Dislodge: knock or force out of position.

Calligraphy: decorative handwriting or handwritten lettering.

Incongruity: the state of being incongruous; incompatibility.

Pavement: a raised paved or asphalted path for pedestrians at the side of a road.

Jostling: push, elbow, or bump against (someone) roughly, typically in a crowd.

Pedestrians: a person walking rather than travelling in a vehicle.

Glazed: lose brightness and animation.

Antiquity: an object, building, or work of art from the ancient past.

Whiskers: a long projecting hair or bristle growing from the face or snout of many mammals.

Cascading: pass (something) on to a succession of others.

Portraits: a painting, drawing, photograph, or engraving of a person, especially one depicting only the face or head and shoulders.

Lacquer: a liquid made of shellac dissolved in alcohol, or of synthetic substances, that dries to form a hard protective coating for wood, metal, etc.

Hefty: large and heavy.

Enshrining: preserve (a right, tradition, or idea) in a form that ensures it will be protected and respected

Saviour: a person who saves someone or something from danger or difficulty.

Profusion: an abundance or large quantity of something.

Creepers: any plant that grows along the ground, around another plant, or up a wall by means of extending stems or branches.

Harbouring: keep (a thought or feeling, typically a negative one) in one's mind, especially secretly.

Silverfish: A silvery bristletail (insect) that lives in houses and other buildings.

Grinned: smile broadly.

Precise: marked by exactness and accuracy of expression or detail.

Rhythmic: having or relating to rhythm.

Frustrated: feeling or expressing distress and annoyance resulting from an inability to change or achieve something.

Transfixed: cause (someone) to become motionless with horror, wonder, or astonishment.

Avert: prevent or ward off (an undesirable occurrence).

Perspiration: the process of sweating.

Plethora: a large or excessive amount of something.

Transcendental: relating to a spiritual realm.

Fervent: having or displaying a passionate intensity.

Jauntily: Sprightly; lively

Fagged-out: Exhausted

Rummaged: search unsystematically and untidily through something.

Scurried: (of a person or small animal) move hurriedly with short quick steps.

Helter-skelter: in disorderly haste or confusion.

Vintage: denoting something from the past of high quality, especially something representing the best of its kind.

Resplendent: attractive and impressive through being richly colourful or sumptuous.

Anxiety: a feeling of worry, nervousness, or unease about something with an uncertain outcome.

Bungle: a mistake or badly carried out action.

Mumbling: speaking or spoken in a quiet and indistinct way.

Flattering: full of praise and compliments.

Promptness: Doing or responding to something quickly.

Exuberance: The quality of being full of energy, excitement, and cheerfulness; ebullience.

Sanctum: a sacred place, especially a shrine within a temple or church.

Hoax: trick or deceive (someone).

Reverential: of the nature of, due to, or characterized by reverence or deep respect for someone or something.

Indignantly: in a manner indicating anger or annoyance at something perceived as unfair.

Materialism: a tendency to consider material possessions and physical comfort as more important than spiritual values.

Tantamount: equivalent in seriousness to; virtually the same as.

Hypocrisy: the practice of claiming to have higher standards or more noble beliefs than is the case.

Petrified: so frightened that one is unable to move; terrified.

Intrinsic: belonging naturally; essential.

Irony: the expression of one's meaning by using language that normally signifies the opposite, typically for humorous or emphatic effect.

Mesmerised: capture the complete attention of (someone); transfix.

Bluff: try to deceive someone as to one's abilities or intentions.

Spontaneous: performed or occurring as a result of a sudden impulse or inclination and without premeditation or external stimulus.

Enthrals: capture the fascinated attention of.

Manipulate: control or influence (a person or situation) cleverly or unscrupulously.

Underscores: emphasize.

Accentuates: make more noticeable or prominent.

Demeanour: outward behaviour or bearing.

Blatantly: in a completely obvious and unsubtle way.

Revere: feel deep respect or admiration for (something).

Epitome: A perfect example of something.

## **9.8 Self-Assessment Questions**

### **9.8.1 Multiple Choice Questions**

1. The Modern Frame Shop stands in between \_\_\_\_\_ shop.
  - a. drug store and grocery
  - b. grocery and radio repair
  - c. drug store and hair saloon
  - d. drug store and a radio repair
2. What kind of frame cut the customer decides for?
  - a. Oval cut mount
  - b. Square cut mount
  - b. Rectangular cut mount
  - c. None of these

3. While searching for the \_\_\_\_\_ Datta accidentally spills the enamel paint on the photograph.
  - a. Nails
  - b. photograph
  - c. glass
  - d. pencil stub
4. What kind of frame cut Datta ends up making?
  - a. Oval cut mount
  - b. Square cut mount
  - c. Rectangular cut mount
  - d. None of these

### 9.8.2 Fill in the Blanks

1. Datta wears a \_\_\_\_\_ glasses.
2. Datta asserts that the Gold frame is made in \_\_\_\_\_.
3. The customer asks Datta to keep the frame ready by- \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Datta had accidentally spilled -- \_\_\_\_\_ colour paint over the photograph

### 9.9 Examination Oriented Questions

Q.1. Write a short note on the character sketch of Datta.

Possible Answer: The central character Datta is a hardworking man who does not indulge himself in wasting of time. He despises any idle visitor or even friends to his shop and likes to remain rather alone and working then to talk unnecessary. Even his answers to the enquires made by his customers are also very limited. Although he is a hardworking man but at the same time he is also very clever and manipulative and knows his customers at the back of his hand. His workaholic nature is also flawed with frequent misplacing of small things that often tends to lead him into trouble. The misplacing of a pencil's stub and while searching for it, an accidental spilling of the white enamel on the customer's photograph, leads to the development of the whole story *The Gold Frame*. However, he works really hard and manages to replace the original photograph with a lookalike and frames it flawlessly in the most elaborate frame. He also prepares himself well, day and night, for any unwanted situation and therefore his sheer confidence to manipulate and hoax, enables him to overcome this difficult situation at the end of the story.

Q.2. Write a note on the theme of the story *The Gold Frame*.

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Q.3. *The Gold Frame* is a mockery on the modern man's follies. Explain.

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Q.4. Write a short summary of the story *The Gold Frame*.

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## 9.10 Answer Keys

### 9.11.1. Multiple Choice Questions

1. d                      2. a                      3. d                      4. B

9.11.2. Fill in the blanks

1. Silver-rimmed      2. Germany      3. Tuesday      4. White

### **9.11 Reference and Suggested Readings**

Laxman, R.K. *Collected Writings*. Penguin Books. India; 2000.

Laxman, R.K. *The Tunnel of Time: An Autobiography*. Viking. India; 1998.

Singh, Khushwant. *Best Indian Short Stories Volume II*. Harper Collins Publishers. India; 2003.

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**Course No. : AA 301 (Theory)**

**Title : General English**

**Semester-III**

**Unit – III**

**SHORT STORIES**

**Lesson No: 10**

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*Miyan's Farm*

By : Krishna Prem

### **UNIT STRUCTURE**

**10.1 Objectives**

**10.2 About the Author**

**10.3 About the Story *Miyan's Farm***

**10.4 Summary of the Story**

**10.5 Glossary**

**10.6 Theme/Subject of the Story**

**10.7 Important Points**

**10.8 Important Quotes**

**10.9 Self-Assessment Questions**

### **10.9.1 Long Answer Type Questions**

### **10.9.2 Short Answer Type Questions**

### **10.9.3 True or False**

### **10.9.4 Fill in the blanks**

### **10.9.5 Answer Key**

## **10.10 Suggested Readings**

### **10.1 Objectives:**

The objectives of this lesson is to acquaint the learners with the life and literary works of Dogri woman writer Krishna Prem so as to enable them to appreciate and analyze her story Miyan's Farm.

### **10.2 About the Author**

#### **Krishna Prem**

The creative expressions of women writers, the so-called 'other sex', are now seen as documents reflecting as to how women are negotiating with systemic social injustice including patriarchy, religious extremism, political and sexual violence in the present day world.

In the corpus of modern literature being created in Jammu, the growing number of women writers through their textual creativity and in their writing practices, provide a window to their feminist vision of social transformation and change. This practice of looking at the world critically and creatively stems from a deeply collective nature of feminist thought and also by the fact that being a woman has political consequences in the world we live in.

Jammu region due to its unique multi-lingual and multi-ethnic legacy, today boasts of many well known women writers who through their creative writings in Dogri, Hindi, Punjabi and other languages have made mark at local as well as national level. The trickle which started with the pioneering efforts of Shanta Bharti, Shakuntala Seth and others has today turned into a steady stream of women writers whose works now enjoy far better visibility in literary as well as public domain



with the support of All India Radio, J&K Cultural Academy, Sahitya Akademi, New Delhi, local and outside literary NGOs.

It was in 1957 that Dogri's first female writer Lalita Mehta came out with a collection of her short stories namely *Sui Tahga (Needle and Thread)*. The stories of this collection were descriptions of the rural life of Duggar in a folk style marked with simple structure and play of imagination.

1970s was a decade of great cultural resurgence in Jammu. Many new talented women poets and writers appeared on literary scenes. Some of these were 'home writers' while others were working women basking in the newly found freedom of action and thought.

Amongst this band of new women writers figures Krishna Prem who with her anthology *Sur Te Taal (Melody and Rhythm)* became another famous woman Dogri short story writer to explore the female psyche. Most of her characters are women who through their social roles and situations allow a peep into the inner thoughts and psychological aspirations of the fair sex. Her other book of stories is *Thahmm Te Klaawa (Pillar and Embrace-2011)*.

*Sur Te Taal* was published in the year 1976 (1977) and is a collection of eight short stories which are "Issaldi Lo", "Kasondi Gand", "Gunjal", "Sukke Atharun", "Phullein Di Daali", "Raste de Morh", "Boal" and "Sur te Taal". Out of these stories, "Issaldi Lo" ("Diminishing Light") and "Phullein di Daali" ("A Branch of Blooms") are thematically based on the issue of family planning, which has been a matter of serious concern in India since long. "Issaldi Lo" sheds light on a traditional belief among masses who see children as gift of God and portrays how neglect of family planning deprives children of quality parenting. "Phullein di Daali" has further developed this theme addressing the issue from a psychoanalytical perspective. With a vivid imagery, the writer conveys a strong message through the words of gardener when he says, "This wild rose occupies so much space and even causes fissure in the fence – so I'm sowing the seed of a sunflower now. Only a single flower blooms on one branch of a sunflower and this makes the plant rise its head in pride and sway in bliss." These words jolt the protagonist making him come out of the life of selfcomplacency and realize that parenting is unjustifiable if it is not able to cater to the needs and desires of children.

In addition to this collection, Krishna Prem's stories have also been published in various Dogri magazines and aired by Doordarshan. Out of the corpus of these stories, *Dhir Thuadi* ("Fie Upon You!") is a very powerful and poignant story, which not only delves into the mind of the protagonist but has strong feminist undercurrents. What makes this story insightful is its treatment of the question of men's role in feminism? The protagonist of *Dhir Thuadi*, Hari Ram champions the cause of feminism and questions the unjust, unfair and biased mindset of society which has separate yardsticks of morality for men and women. **10.3 About the Story *Miyan's Farm***

*Miyan's Farm* is a story about female infanticide and foeticide—the evil of killing newly born and unborn girls respectively because they are considered to be a burden on the family. Also, in some cultures in India, it is particularly inauspicious if the first born child in a family is a girl. In the olden days little girls were buried alive, often without the knowledge or consent of their mothers. In the modern world, when we have 'progressed' much, little girls are killed in their mother's wombs, with the connivance of the mother and the doctor, both of whom are otherwise life-giving and life-affirming figures. In *Miyan's Farm* we see that the poor and helpless Padmanaabh, the retainer of the rich and powerful zamindar named Badde Miyan ji has far more humanity and shows greater care and concern for the abandoned firstborn girl child of the zamindar than the zamindar himself, who is quite content to have her buried alive. Padmanaabh saves the little girl and brings her up as his own daughter even though he has nothing to gain. Raano Boo, the daughter 'buried alive'; learns of her true parentage only when she is fairly advanced in age and feels her sense of self collapsing when she realizes that for her biological father she was nothing more than a solitary clay lamp. Also, she was not the only one who was wished dead by her father. Whole 'farms' were used up for such burials. Once again, the traditional use of the farm is subverted because these farms are not used to provide sustenance but are used to 'farm' out the dead. The family tradition of the Badde Miyan ji carried forward by his youngest son and his wife who have already aborted two female foetuses and will abort the third if it happens to be female.

#### **10.4 *Miyan's Farm***

##### **Summary**

The story *Miyan's Farm* is about a woman affectionately called as Raano Boo by the villagers. The story unfolds the bitter truths about Raano Boo's life who comes to know of them only later in her life. Raano Boo's story throws light on the evil practice of female infanticide and foeticide in India.

Raano Boo is a woman slightly old in age. She returned to her village to live with her father after the death of her husband. Raano Boo lived in a small room which was adjacent to the Miyan's haveli in which the Thakur lived. The Thakur was an awe inspiring man. Everyone in the village looked towards him with respect and fear. Everyone in the village called him Badde Miyan ji. His wife was called Baddi Bobo ji by the villagers. The couple had five sons. Badde Miyan ji held his wife in high esteem as she gave him five sons, and maintained the honour of the family.

With the passage of time, as Badde Miyan ji's sons grew up, they left the haveli and went to big cities and settled there.

Miyan ji's servant/retainer, Padmanaabh was Raano Boo's father. Both Badde Miyan ji and Baddi Bobo ji treated Raano Boo with love and affection.

There were many farms which belonged to Miyan ji. They were spread far and wide in the village. But one of the farms, which was on the left side of the haveli was fenced off on three sides in such a way so that no one could enter into the farm. This farm was known as Miyan's Farm. A clay lamp burnt in the middle of the Miyan's farm. Raano Boo tried to enquire about that clay lamp but her father, Padmanaabh answered in a very ambiguous way. He told her that there was a mystery associated with it. So, Raano Boo never asked him again about the lamp.

As time passed, Badde Miyan ji and Baddi Bobo passed away. After some time, Padmanaabh also fell ill and on his death bed, he revealed a secret to Raano Boo about her life. He told Raano Boo that he was not her real father and she was the daughter of Badde Miyan ji. Badde Miyan ji, in order to uphold his honour tried to bury Raano Boo alive the moment she was born. Padmanaabh who was present there at that time, could not see all this and after Badde Miyan ji left, he took Raano Boo out of the hole and raised her as his own daughter. So, Miya's farm was a farm of daughters. Padmanaabh tells Raano Boo that the other farms might have filled up with the bodies of the infant girls, so Badde Miyan ji perhaps needed a new farm to bury the child. The clay lamp which burnt there was in the memory of Raano

Boo. Padmanaabh also told her that he only knows about this secret and even Badde Miyan ji did not know about this.

Raano Boo was completely shaken after hearing the truth. Her eyes filled with tears. She felt sorry for her mother who didn't even know about her. However, in order to safeguard the honour of Badde Miyan ji, Raano Boo never tells the secret to anyone.

Days passed and Badde Miyan ji's youngest son, Kuldeep Singh came to the village with his wife. Kuldeep Singh's wife was pregnant at that time. Even after fifteen years of marriage, the couple had only one son, although she had aborted twice. When Raano Boo enquired about it, she told her that she got two of her daughters aborted. This time also, they were going for a test to determine the sex of the child, and if it happens to be a girl, they will abort that child too. She further says that as times have changed, now it is easy to abort the girl child before the birth than to bring her up.

Raano Boo was stunned on hearing this. Raano Boo thought that earlier the girls were killed after their birth for whatever reasons. The mothers were not a party to such an inhuman practice during those days. But now, as the world has advanced, the mothers also take an active part in this inhuman practice. A girl is not given a chance to be born and is killed in the womb. Raano Boo asks the question, has the earth's womb got filled up with the girls' corpses that girls nowadays are buried in the mother's womb itself? The ways might have changed, but the victim is still the girl.

Raano Boo thought of asking the young woman that what she was going to do for the unborn girl who has been killed. She should at least build a farm for her where someone would light a lamp in her memory. People would then claim it as the daughter's farm. But as no farms are build today, the new world is completely dark as there are no Padmanaabhs left and the mothers themselves are responsible for their daughter's murder.

Raano Boo stood up and looked up at the Miyan's farm which now had no lamp burning there. The lamp has gone out as the world has changed and has lost all hopes of betterment.

## **10.5 Glossary**

*Forlorn:* lonely and unhappy

*Haveli:* a mansion

*Cubicle:* small space formed by dividing a larger room

*Awe:* respect and fear

*Retainer:* servant

*Clan:* large family group

*Brambles:* prickly wild bush on which blackberries grow

*Pinioned:* hold or tie somebody, especially by their arms, so that they cannot move

*Dharma:* duty

*Spellbound:* held with attention (as if) by a magic spell

*Averted:* prevent something unpleasant from happening

*Solitude:* state of being alone

*Seldom:* not often; rarely

*Hedges:* rows of bushes between fields, gardens, etc.

*Precipice:* very steep cliff

*Midst:* in the middle of something

*Sprawling:* spread untidily over a large area

*Dexterously:* skill, especially with your hands

*Filth:* disgusting dirt

#### **10.6 Theme/Subject of the Story *Miyan's Farm*:**

The theme of the story *Miyan's Farm* is female infanticide and foeticide. Female infanticide is an age old tradition in India. In the traditional set up, the girl child is undesirable and everyone longs for a male child who can carry the family name forward. For this reason, the girl child is killed. The tradition has undergone a change, but it still goes on in some parts of the country. Earlier the parents used to bury the girl child. After knowing that the new born is a girl, the parents would kill the infant and the most popular way among such people was to bury the girl child alive. Mothers, however, were not participants in this heinous crime. They were kept unaware regarding the burial of the girl child. This was done because earlier there were no means through which the sex of the unborn child could be determined. However, with the passage of time, and advancement in technology, it has become easy to determine the sex of the unborn child. So, parents in a bid to rid themselves of the so-called 'burden' of the girl child, abort the foetus. The girl child is not given an opportunity to come to life. She is killed even before she could take birth. The mothers, nowadays, participate equally in this inhuman practice.

*Miyan's Farm* explores this theme of female foeticide in detail. The story depicts how the process of female infanticide has changed over the years. Earlier, the girl child was killed after being born, but now she is being killed in the womb itself. The story also questions the concept of progress. Is it true progress where people have become even more cruel and inhuman? The story also draws our attention to the fact that the role of mothers in this evil practice has also changed. Whereas earlier the mothers did not participate in this evil practice, nowadays, the mother's participation is equal. Raano Boo's mother did not know about Raano Boo's being buried alive, but Kuldeep Singh's wife was an equal participant in the act. She voluntarily and deliberately decided to abort the girl child. So, the story *Miyan's Farm* puts a lot of questions to the society.

### **10.7 Important Points:-**

1. The story draws the attention of the reader towards the inhuman practice of female infanticide wherein a girl child is killed as soon as she is born. Earlier, the girl child was buried alive after she was born, and in the modern times, the foetus itself is aborted. So, the murder takes place even before the birth of the child in the womb itself.

2. The story hits hard at the face of the society which in the garb of honour, denies the girl child the right to live.
3. Another important point is the goodness among the poor people and the hypocritical attitude of the rich people. Padmanaabh may be a poor person but he is a much better human being than Badde Miyan ji. Badde Miyan ji in order to safeguard his honour, commits the inhuman practice of burying his daughter alive. Padmanaabh's essential goodness is brought out when he not only saved the life of Raano Boo, but also raised her as his own daughter. Miyan's farm symbolizes the cruelty of Badde Miyan ji and the cruel nature of patriarchal society towards girls.
4. The story highlights the sad plight of women in a patriarchal society. A girl child is killed either before her birth or immediately after her birth. The mother's sad plight is also depicted as earlier, the women did not even know about the killing of the girl child.
5. The story is also remarkable for its symbolism. Miyan's Farm stands for the graveyard of the infant girls who were killed by their families. Miyan's Farm is only one among many such farms. Another important symbol is the clay lamp which lit there in the Miyan's farm. The clay lamp stands for the buried girls. In the end, as the light in the lamp goes off, the reader is given a hint that girls' situation will be even darker in the future.
6. The story also questions the meaning of progress. If progress is understood in terms of advancement of technology, then this surely is the distorted meaning. The story depicts that with the coming of better technology, it has become easier for the parents to get their daughters killed, that too, in the womb of the mother itself. The Doctors and Mothers, both of whom are life giving, very cleverly perform the act with the help of modern technology.
7. The story also explores the changing role of the mother in the act. Earlier the mothers were not informed about the killing of the daughters. But now, the mothers take an active part in this inhuman practice.
8. The story ends on a very depressing note with no hopes of betterment. With the passage of time, things have certainly changed, but they have

changed for the worse. There is no hope of improvement in the status of girls in the society.

### **10.8 Important Quotes from the story *Miyan's Farm***

1. Miyan's farms and fields were spread far out in the village. But there was one exclusive plot on the left of the haveli, fenced off on three sides with thick hedges bolstered with heavy stones and made impenetrable by prickly brambles. The hedges ended on a steep precipice. There was no way as person could stray into this farm, which was known to everyone as the Miyan's Farm.
2. Occasionally, Raano Boo saw a solitary clay lamp burning in the midst of the Miyan's Farm, and bowed to it thinking that of the clay lamp, nor had she felt any need to enquire, since everything about the haveli was kept under wraps.
3. Raano Boo, you are not my daughter. You are the first-borne of Miyan ji and his wife, Baddi Bobo. The moment you were born, Miyan ji realized you were a girl and not a boy. He wrapped you in the blanket and holding a lantern in his hand went towards the Farm. Your unconscious mother was not aware of the goings on. On arriving at a spot in the Farm, he put you down in a hole dug into the ground. Asking me to throw earth over you and cover the hole....A clay lamp burns there even today in your name.
4. Miyan ji youngest son, Kuldeep arrived along with his wife. Raano Boo knew that the woman was pregnant. She had borne only one son in fifteen years of marriage, though she had conceived and aborted twice. 'Only one son, daughter-in-law?' she asked Kuldeep's wife. 'Boo ji', replied Kuldeep's wife, 'times have changed. On two earlier occasions I got the test done.

Both of them were girls. I went to the doctor and had them aborted. This time also I am going for a test and if it is a girl again, I will have it cleared out. The thought of bringing up daughters in times such as these gives me the nerves!'



5. But the world had advanced so much now that both parents connived to kill a daughter even before she was born.
6. She considered asking the younger woman, ‘Eighty years ago, a Miyan had built a farm for his daughter. What are you planning to do for yours, daughter-inlaw?...The new world’s farm is pitch dark. Perhaps there is not another Padmanaabh today who would strive to keep his word. Today a mother herself is responsible for her daughter’s murder.’

## **10.9 Self-Assessment Questions:**

### **10.9.1. Long Answer Type Questions:**

1. What is the symbolic significance of *Miyan’s Farm*?
2. Critically analyse Raano Boo’s assertion, “The world has truly changed. There is so much progress.”
3. Female infanticide is an age old tradition in India and it has undergone change with time. How does the story *Miyan’s Farm* depict that change?
4. How does Raano Boo come to know of her true identity? How does she react to it?
5. Padmanaabh kept a secret regarding the true identity of Raano Boo all his life. Was it right on his part to disclose it to Raano Boo at his deathbed?
6. Raano Boo’s story throws light on a very heinous tradition of female infanticide in India. Critically analyse Raano Boo’s life with reference to the tradition of female infanticide / foeticide?

### **10.9.2. Short Answer Type Questions:**

1. What was Raano Boo’s real identity?
2. Having been buried alive, how was Raano Boo saved?
3. What does the solitary clay lamp in *Miyan’s Farm* represent?
4. How many sons did Bade Miyan ji have?

5. How did Raano Boo see the change in the tradition of female infanticide?  
How, according to her, mother's role has changed in the process?
6. How many children did Kuldeep Singh's wife abort and why?
7. What was Raano Boo's reaction on hearing the truth about her identity?  
Why did she not tell it to anyone?

### **10.9.3 State whether these statements are True or False**

1. Raano Boo was Bade Miyan ji's daughter. True/False
2. Bade Miyan ji had buried Raano Boo alive. True/False
3. Badi Bobo was aware of the fact that Raano Boo was being buried alive.  
True/False
4. All of Miyan ji's sons lived with him in the haveli. True/False
5. The only person whom Bade Miyan ji told about Raano Boo was Padmanaabh. True/False
6. Raano Boo lived in a big haveli. True/False
7. Raano Boo never married. True/False
8. Padmanaabh effectively kept his master's secret. True/False
9. Bade Miyan ji had two sons. True/False
10. Kuldeep Singh's wife was equally involved in female foeticide.  
True/False

### **10.9.4 Fill in the blanks:**

1. Raano Boo returned to her village after the death of her\_\_\_\_\_.
2. Raano Boo's real father was\_\_\_\_\_.

3. The farms were used to bury the \_\_\_\_\_.
4. A \_\_\_\_\_ lit there in Miyan's Farm.
5. All of Miyan ji's sons settled in \_\_\_\_\_.
6. Kuldeep Singh's wife had \_\_\_\_\_ son/s.
7. \_\_\_\_\_ saved Raano Boo's life as an infant.
8. Raano Boo lived in a small \_\_\_\_\_.
9. Only \_\_\_\_\_ knew about Raano Boo's true identity.
10. Kuldeep Singh's wife had aborted \_\_\_\_\_ (two/three) daughters.

#### 10.9.5. Answer Key

- |            |            |            |               |
|------------|------------|------------|---------------|
| (1) True   | (4). False | (7). False | (10).<br>True |
| (2) True   | (5). True  | (8). True  |               |
| (3). False | (6). False | (9). False |               |

#### 10.9.5 Fill in the blank Answer key.

- |                      |               |   |
|----------------------|---------------|---|
| (1) Husband          | (4) clay Lamp | (7) Padmanaabh                                |
| (2) Bade Miyan Ji    | (5) cities    | (8) room on the left of the<br>Miyan's haveli |
| (3) newly born girls | (6) one       | (9) Padmanaabh                                |
| (10) two             |               |   |

#### 10.10 Suggested Reading

*Collage: A Textbook of Language and Literature*, Board of Editors,  
University of Jammu

"Krishna's Strength lies in Psychological Realism." *Daily Excelsior.com*.

"Women Writers of Jammu." *Daily Excelsior.com*

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**Course No. : AA 301 (Theory)**  
**Semester-III**

**Title : General English**

**Unit – IV**

**GRAMMAR**

**Lesson No: 11**

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***ARTICLES***

**UNIT STRUCTURE**

**11.1 Objectives**

**11.2 Definition of Articles**

**11.2.1 Definite Articles**

**11.2.2 Indefinite Articles**

**11.2.3 Articles Usage with examples**

**11.3 Correct Use of Articles**

**11.4 Check Your Progress**

**11.5 Tips to Remember**

**11.6 Let Us Sum Up**

**11.7 Answer Key**

**11.8 Suggested Reading**

**11.1 Objectives**

Our objective in this lesson is to familiarize you with the correct use of articles in sentences. This lesson not only prepares you for semester end examination but also polishes your language skills both speaking and writing.

**11.2 Definition of Articles**

An Article is a word used to modify a noun, which is a person, place, object or idea. Technically, an article is an **adjective**, which is any word that modifies a noun. Usually adjectives modify noun through description, but articles are used instead to point out or refer to nouns . There are two different types of articles that we use in writing and conversation to point out or refer to a noun or group of nouns : definite and indefinite articles.

### 11.2.1 Definite Articles

Let us begin by looking at the **definite article**. This article is the word **the** , and it refers directly to a specific noun or groups of noun. For example :

- the **freckles** on my face
- the **alligator** in the pond
- the **breakfast bun** on my plate

Each noun or group of nouns being referred to in these cases - freckles, alligator and breakfast bun - is direct and specific.

### 11.2.2 Indefinite Articles

Indefinite articles are the words **a** and **an** . Each of these articles is used to refer to a noun, but the noun being referred to is not a specific person, place or idea. It can be any noun from a group of nouns. For examples :

- a **Mercedes** from the car lot
- an **event** in history

In each case, the noun is not specific. A Mercedes could be any Mercedes car available for purchase, and an event could be any event in the history of the world.

### 11.2.3 Articles Usage with Examples

Properly using a definite article is fairly straightforward, but it can be tricky when you are trying to figure out which indefinite article to use. The article choice

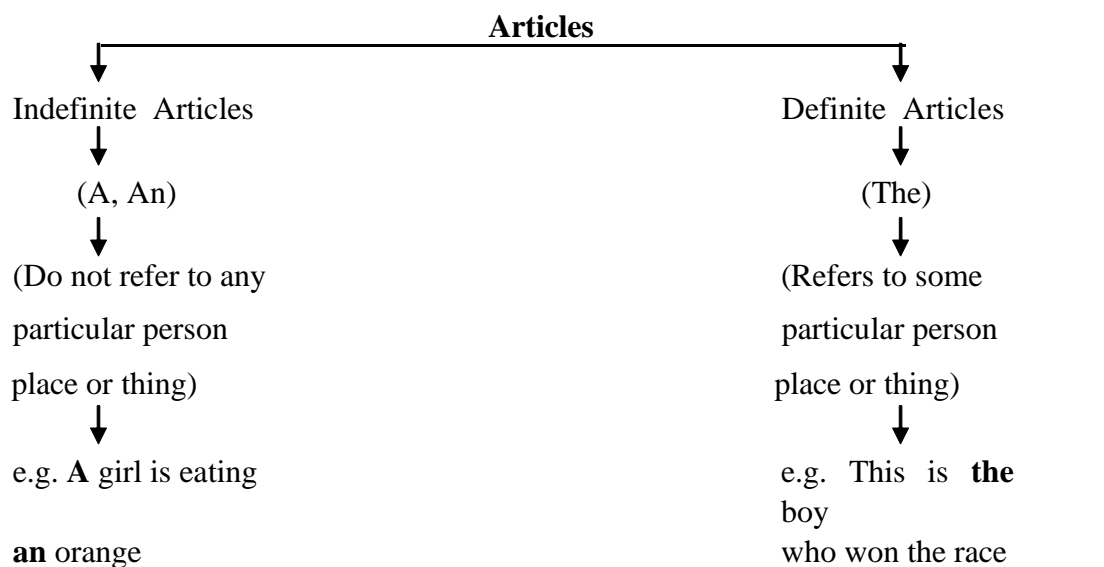
depends on the sound at the beginning of the noun that is modified. There is a quick and easy way to remember this.

If the noun that comes after the article begins with a vowel sound, the appropriate indefinite article to use is 'an'. A vowel sound is sound that is created by any vowel in the English language 'a', 'e', 'i', 'o', 'u' and sometime 'y' if it makes an 'e' or 'i' sound.

Fill in the blanks in the sentences given below to get an idea about the usage of articles:

1. I like .....blue T-shirt over there better than.....red one.
2. Their car does 150 miles.....hour.
- 3 Where's ..... USB drive I lent you last week?
4. Do you still live in .....Bristol?
5. Is your mother working in .....old office building?
6. Carol's father works as ..... electrician.
7. The tomatoes are twenty rupees .....kilo.
8. What do you usually have for .....breakfast?
9. Ben has .....terrible headache.
10. After this tour you have .....whole afternoon free to explore the city.

### **11.3 Correct use of Articles**



Here are some incorrect sentences (errors pertaining to articles) and their corrections.

INCORRECT	CORRECT
1. The <i>sun, moon</i> and <i>stars</i> are heavenly bodies.	<i>The sun, the moon</i> and <i>the stars</i> are heavenly bodies.
2. This is <i>quite</i> revolutionary recommendation.	This is <i>quite a</i> revolutionary recommendation.
3. Those who are not <i>the members</i> of the club cannot play golf here.	Those who are not <i>members</i> of the club cannot play golf here.
4. The majority of people living in this colony belong to <i>Hindu Community</i> .	The majority of <i>the</i> people living in this colony belong to <i>the Hindu Community</i> .
5. <i>One thing</i> that I like about this place is its cleanliness.	<i>The one thing</i> that I like about this place is its cleanliness.

- |     |   |  |
|-----|---|--|
| 6.  | Goa is known as <i>Rome</i>   | Goa is known as <i>the Rome</i>                                  |
|     | of the East.  | of the East.   |
| 7.  | Kalidas is <i>Shakespeare</i> of India.                               | Kalidas is <i>the Shakespeare</i> of India.                      |
| 8.  | <i>The running waters</i> were cleanest                               | <i>Running waters</i> were the cleanest.                         |
| 9.  | I have purchased this car from the <i>Ashoka Motors</i> .             | I have purchased this car from <i>Ashoka Motors</i> .            |
| 10. | <i>The people</i> must look after the security of their neighborhood. | <i>People</i> must look after the security of their neighborhood |
| 11. | <i>People of Japan</i> are very industrious.                          | <i>The people of Japan</i> are very industrious.                 |
| 12. | <i>The honesty</i> is the best policy.                                | <i>Honesty</i> is the best policy.                               |
| 13. | <i>Love of wealth</i> drove him to his doom.                          | <i>The love of wealth</i> drove him to his doom.                 |
| 14. | <i>Truth</i> of your statement can be challenged.                     | The <i>truth</i> of your statement can be challenged.            |
| 15. | The children leave <i>the school</i> at 1.30 p.m.                     | The children leave <i>school</i> at 1.30 p.m.                    |
| 16. | I did not <i>shake the</i> hands with her.                            | I did not <i>shake</i> hands with her.                           |
| 17. | Decorations are <i>out of place</i> here.                             | Decorations are <i>out of the place</i> here.                    |
| 18. | He looked at her from <i>the</i>                                      | He looked at her from  |



*head to the foot.*

*head to the foot.*

- |     |   |  |
|-----|---|--|
| 19. | His mischief came to <i>the light</i><br>when I opened the box.               | His mischief came to <i>light</i><br>when I opened the box.                      |
| 20. | We walked through the busy<br>market place <i>hand in hand</i> .              | We walked through busy<br>Market place <i>hand in the hand</i> .                 |
| 21. | She has removed the bed, <i>the table</i><br>and <i>chairs</i> from her room. | She has removed the bed,<br><i>table</i><br>and <i>the chairs</i> from her room. |
| 22. | I heard <i>noise</i> coming<br>from the next room.                            | I heard <i>a noise</i> coming<br>from the next room.                             |
| 23. | Please, don't disturb her<br>she has <i>headache</i> .                        | Please, don't disturb her<br>she has a <i>headache</i> .                         |
| 24. | It is <i>a quarter</i> to four now.   | It is <i>quarter</i> to four now   |
| 25. | They decided to stay in<br>the hills for <i>a few</i> days more.              | They decided to stay in<br>the hills for <i>few</i> days more.                   |
| 26. | <i>Camel</i> is known as ship<br>of the desert.                               | <i>The Camel</i> is known as the<br>ship<br>of the desert.                       |
| 27. | He has scored high marks<br>in <i>the Geography</i> .                         | He has scored high marks<br>in <i>Geography</i> .                                |
| 28. | Didn't you know that<br>cloth is sold by <i>the metre</i> ?                   | Didn't you know that<br>cloth is sold by <i>metre</i> ?                          |
| 29. | Why are you in such<br><i>great hurry</i> .                                   | Why are you in such <i>a</i><br><i>great hurry</i> .                             |
| 30. | My sister is <i>great</i> singer  | My sister is <i>a great</i> singer   |

and dancer.

and dancer.

31. He is *the student* of Presidency

He is *a student* of Presidency

College.

College.

32. They want *an* university  
for their state.

They want *a* university  
for their state.

33. We don't have *an* union in our  
organisation.

We don't have *a* union in our  
organisation.

34. He is *an useful* person to have  
around.

He is *a useful* person to have  
around.

35. I felt that it was *an* one-sided  
match.

I felt that it was *a* one-sided  
match.

36. There was *an* hole in the wall.

There was *a* hole in the wall.

37. It is *a* honour for me to be  
dinning with you.

It is *an* honour for me to be  
dinning with you.

38. He is *Kapil Dev* as far as  
fast bowling goes.

He is *a Kapil Dev* as far as  
fast bowling goes.

39. *Car* you are looking for  
is not produced anymore.

*The car* you are looking for  
is not produced anymore.

40. *Sooner* you meet him,  
*the better* it is.

*The sooner* you meet him,  
better it is.

41. She is *a girl* we are looking for.

She is *the girl* we are looking  
for.

42. When he read that poem  
*the poet* in him was troubled.

When he read that poem  
*poet* in him was troubled.

- |     |  |  |
|-----|--|--|
| 43. | They left the city at <i>the daybreak</i> .                                  | They left the city at <i>daybreak</i> .  |
| 44. | He was quite fine at <i>the breakfast</i> .                                  | He was quite fine at <i>breakfast</i> .  |
| 45. | He is determined to achieve his goal<br>by <i>fair</i> or <i>foul</i> means. | He is determined to achieve his goal<br>by <i>the fair</i> or <i>the foul</i> means. |
| 46. | He arrived here <i>on the horse back</i> .                                   | He arrived here <i>on horse back</i> .   |
| 47. | Please, don't lose <i>the heart</i> ,<br>things will improve.                | Please, don't lose <i>heart</i> ,<br>things will improve.                            |
| 48. | At dawn, we <i>set the sail</i> .  | At dawn, we <i>set sail</i> .  |
| 49. | At <i>the dead of night</i> the<br>attack began.                             | At <i>dead of night</i> the<br>attack began.   |
| 50. | He has succeeded <i>by the dint of</i><br>hard work.                         | He has succeeded <i>by dint of</i><br>hard work.                                     |
| 51. | The news reached us by<br><i>word</i> of mouth.                              | The news reached us by<br><i>the word</i> of mouth.                                  |
| 52. | Nobody advised him to<br><i>leave school</i> .                               | Nobody advised him to<br><i>leave the school</i> .                                   |
| 53. | He stood up and we <i>followed</i><br><i>suit</i> .                          | He stood up and we <i>followed</i><br><i>the suit</i> .                              |

#### 11.4 Check Your Progress :

**Correct the following sentences :**

1. The rice is a summer crop.

Ans \_\_\_\_\_

2. Vasu is sincere boy.

Ans. \_\_\_\_\_

3. The children like to play.

Ans \_\_\_\_\_

4. India of today is progressive.

Ans. \_\_\_\_\_

5. Guilty must be punished.

Ans. \_\_\_\_\_

6. She buys cars by dozens.

Ans \_\_\_\_\_

8. You may drink water kept on the table.

Ans \_\_\_\_\_

9. I saw her about a hour ago.

Ans \_\_\_\_\_

10. He is a good man and an accomplished officer.

Ans \_\_\_\_\_

### **11.5 Tips To Remember**

1. When two adjectives refer to one person the verb is singular and the article is not repeated.

2. In case of different persons the article should be repeated.
3.
  - a) The definite article 'the' is placed before nouns which can be applied to more than one object, e.g., 'the moon', 'the world', 'the sun', 'the Gita', 'the Bible', 'the poles', 'the north', 'the Vedas', etc.
  - b) It is placed before an adjective to show it as a whole class e.g., 'the wise', 'the rich', 'the learned'.
  - c) It is placed before the names of nations, e.g., 'the Indians', 'the Chinese'.
  - d) It is used before the names of rivers, e.g., 'the Ganges', 'the Sutlej', before names of groups of islands e.g., 'the West Indies', 'the Andamans', before the names of gulfs or oceans, e.g. 'the Indian Ocean', 'the Arabian gulf, before the ranges of mountains, e.g. 'the Alps', before the descriptive names of the countries or provinces, e.g.. 'the Punjab', 'the Deccan'.
  - e) The definite article is omitted before abstract nouns, material nouns, and collective nouns, except in certain cases where some noun is used in restricted and specialised forms e.g. 'the love of money', 'the people of India', 'the gold of America'.
4. The articles are omitted in many phrases made by transitive verb, followed by their objectives, when the verbs and the objectives cannot be considered as separate entities.
5. The articles are omitted in prepositional phrases.
6. When different objects are numbered, the articles are omitted for brevity and emphasis.
7. 'A' is used before a word beginning with a consonant sound e.g., 'a cow', 'a man', 'a dog', 'a fan'.
8. 'A' is used before any word beginning with the 'u' sound pronounced as 'u' (yoo). e.g., 'a European', 'a union', 'a university', 'a useful pen'. But when

‘u’ is not pronounced as ‘yoo’, it is preceded by the ‘u’ article ‘an’, e.g. ‘an urge’, ‘an uncle’.

‘A’ is also used before ‘o’ pronounced as ‘wa’, e.g., ‘a one-eyed man’, ‘a one rupee note’, ‘a one-sided argument’.

‘A’ is again used before a word beginning with an aspirated ‘h’. e.g. ‘a hole’ ‘a house’, use ‘an’ in place of ‘a’ where ‘h’ is silent e.g. , ‘an honest man’, ‘an hour’, ‘an honour’, ‘an heir’.

9. ‘An’ is used :
  - a) Before a vowel, e.g., ‘an inkpot’, ‘an umbrella’, ‘an enemy’, ‘an owl’, ‘an orange’.
  - b) Before a word beginning with a silent ‘h’, e.g. , ‘an honest man’, ‘an hour’, ‘an heir’.
  - c) Before a consonant , with sound like a vowel, e.g., ‘an M.B.B.S.’, ‘an M.A.’, ‘an L.L.B.’, ‘an S.P’.
- 10 We use ‘a’ or ‘an’ when a proper noun is used in the sense of a common noun.
11. ‘A’ is used before a common noun in the singular word to single out an individual  
e.g., the representation of a class.
12. ‘The’ is used before the names of seas, mountains, rivers, lakes, oceans, names of seasons, natural phenomenon, direction, holy books, newspapers, buildings, provinces, group of islands, the moon, the sun, the earth, the sky, the games, the north, the public, the world, the universe.  
  
‘The’ is used before denoting a nationality or a community e.g., ‘the Indians’, ‘the English’, ‘the’ is used before descriptive use of some countries or states, e.g., ‘the United States of America’, ‘the Deccan’, ‘the Punjab’.
13. ‘The’ is used when a singular noun is meant to represent a whole class.

14. 'The' is used when we speak of particular person, a thing or one already referred to or known to the speaker.
15. 'The' is used with the superlatives because they specify singular objects.
16. We use 'the' as an adverb with a comparative , e.g., 'the merrier', 'the more'.
17. 'The' is used before nouns employed in a special case.
18. 'The' is used in fixed idiomatic phrases. e.g., 'put to the test', 'in the wrong', 'in the dark', 'to the rescue', 'on the contrary'.
19. 'The' is not used before the following:
  - a) Before proper nouns, unless they are used as common nouns, e.g., 'Kalidas', 'Bombay'.
  - b) Before abstract nouns, e.g., 'truth', 'beauty', 'honesty'.
  - c) Before names of materials, e.g., 'gold', 'silver', 'copper'.
  - d) Before plural nouns that denote a class , e.g., 'Poets love nature'.
  - e) Before names of diseases, sports, sciences, things single in kind , e.g. 'God', 'dancing', 'hockey', 'medicine', 'heaven', 'cricket', 'plague', 'cholera'.
  - f) Before the nouns in certain idiomatic phrases, e.g. , 'At a daybreak', 'to bring wood', 'take to heart', 'at breakfast', 'catch fire', 'by name', 'by air', 'by sea', 'in debt', 'by fair or foul means', 'on horseback', 'to loose heart', 'to set foot', 'to give ear', 'to set sail', 'to take offence', 'to take out', 'by leaps and bounds', 'out of reach', 'at dead of night', 'to shake hands', 'by dint of',  
     'by word of mouth', 'to follow suit', 'to leave school', 'to take oath',  
     'to call in mind', 'to live from hand to mouth', 'out of place'.

- g) Before days of the week, seasons, time of the year, e.g., 'Sunday', 'Deepawali', 'June'. Collective nouns used in a general sense do not take the definite articles, e.g., 'Parliament', 'Society', 'cattle', 'mankind', 'posterity'.
- h) Before names of regular meals, names of thing single in kind, e.g., 'dinner', 'lunch', 'breakfast', 'hell', 'god', 'heaven'.
- i) Before certain titles and names indicating relationship, e.g., 'Emperor Ashoka', 'President Naser', 'Raj Bahadur'.
- j) Before a noun used in its widest sense, e.g., 'Man is mortal', 'What kind of flower is it?'
- k) Before plural nouns used to denote a class in a general sense, e.g., 'Lawyers are generally clever'.

### 11.6 Let Us Sum Up :

In this lesson , you have explored three very small but important words in the English language , the articles **a**, **an** and **the**. These are words that you use in almost every sentence that you speak or write. An article is a type of determiner that precedes and provides context to a noun, categorizing it and the article as either definite or indefinite.

#### Indefinite Articles :

As we have read , the definite article 'the' specifies a particular individual in a particular context. On the other hand indefinite articles like 'a' and 'an' indicate that the following noun is not able to be identified specifically by the writer or speaker. Such would be the case if I were to say ' a reader of the article' instead of referencing 'you, the reader'. The indefinite article 'a' is always used before consonant sound while 'an' is always used before a vowel sound.

Articles are used as both a part of speech and written English and depending on the audiences native tongue may present challenges to the listener or reader's comprehension of the definiteness of the noun the article is modifying.



## 11.7 Answer Key

### Check Your Progress :

1. Rice is a summer crop.
2. Vasu is a sincere boy.
3. Children like to play.
4. The India of today is progressive.
5. The guilty must be punished.
6. She buys cars by the dozens.
7. She grabbed me by the collar.
8. You may drink the water kept on the table.
9. I saw her about an hour ago.
10. He is a good and accomplished officer.

## 11.8 Suggested Reading :

R.D. Zandvoort : A Handbook of English Grammar

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**Course No. : AA 301 (Theory)**  
**Semester-III**

**GRAMMAR**

**Title : General English**

**Unit – IV**

**Lesson No: 12**

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### *Punctuation and Capitalisation*

### **UNIT STRUCTURE**

#### **12.1 Objective**

- 12.2 Introduction**
- 12.3 Punctuation and Capitalisation defined**
- 12.4 Rules of Capitalisation**
- 12.5 Sentence-enders; Period or Full stop**
- 12.6 Commas**
- 12.7 Colon & Semi-colon**
- 12.8 Apostrophe**
- 12.9 Speech marks (inverted commas)**
- 12.10 The Hyphen**
- 12.11. The em Dash**
- 12.12 Brackets or Parenthesis**
- 12.13 Let Us Sum Up**
- 12.14 Lesson End Exercise**
- 12.15 Suggested Reading**
- 12.1 Objective**

Dear learners, in this lesson we will acquaint you with the strategies of effective writing called punctuation and capitalization followed by self-check exercises. You will be required to invent situations and contexts to use the newly learnt techniques.

## **12.2 Introduction**

In the earlier semesters we introduced you to various speaking and reading strategies, and some grammar inputs that help one express oneself effectively. You were also taught tense forms which, in addition to correct oral communication train you to be good writers. The written communication, despite brilliant ideas and use of correct tenses and other grammatical forms, sometimes becomes incomprehensible due to the incorrect pauses, stops etc. that comprise punctuation. Punctuation signals a reading strategy in the absence of which miscommunication happens. But it is only a correctly punctuated text that can communicate the desired concept and the idea. Punctuation and capitalization are taught since the primary

classes but even after a long training, there is a tendency to incorrectly use them. In literary and academic writings, be it an essay, research paper or notes, the quality of the text is gauged by an awareness and a thorough knowledge of these nuances. “Students who do master punctuation & capitalization will have some of the tools they need to execute clear and effective writing in any arena” (Kellaher 12). So in this lesson we are not only revising them but also adding to the existing knowledge. Do not forget to test your learning in a real life situation to get their better grip. Let me remind you of a rhyme that we were made to recite to learn punctuation.

I wrote a sentence, my dear friend.

Now I’ll put punctuation at the end.

But just which kind will all  
depend. On the message I’m  
trying to send. If I stated a fact or  
gave some news, Then a PERIOD  
is what I’ll use.

Try: “The saxophone player played the blues.”

Or “I think that sweater is Mary Sue’s.”

If I asked a question, though,

A QUESTION MARK is the way to go.

Try: “Did you stub your little toe?”

Or “Have you ever seen such snow?”

And if I gave a command or excited cheer,

An EXCLAMATION POINT should appear.

Try: “Fido, sit down over here!”

Or “Driver, don’t forget to steer!”

### **12.3 Punctuation and Capitalisation defined**

Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines ‘Punctuation’ as ‘the act or practice of inserting standardized marks or signs in written matter to clarify the meaning and separate structural units.

Cambridge Dictionary calls it a use of special symbols that you add to writing to separate phrases and sentences to show that something is a question.

Both these definitions refer to an appropriate division of a sentence into some parts called clauses and phrases. This is done through the usage of some standardized

signs or marks so that the meaning of various components could collaborate to produce a wholeness of meaning in a sentence rather than producing an incoherence of ideas that lead to misunderstanding of an utterance.

Unlike Hindi or Urdu, English follows a practice of Capitalisation to emphasize nouns or pronouns. Its function, like any other rule of grammar, is to enhance understanding of the sentences.

#### **12.4 Rules of Capitalisation:**

- First word in a sentence: The first word in any sentence is capitalized, irrespective of its being any part of speech. e.g. Where there is will, there is a way.

He has been told to practice the lesson more .

- Proper nouns, including people, cities, holidays, organizations, and places

. e.g. “Sunita and Rajiv live in the Pacific Northwest and celebrate Christmas there.”

- The pronoun “I”

The personal pronoun ‘I’ is capitalized everywhere, whatever the case may be.

e.g. I have firm belief in the power of unity.

When he left the room, I was about to sleep.

- Days and months of the year

e.g. The first Monday of October has been fixed for the interview.

The last Sunday of the first month and the first Tuesday of June have been scheduled for the meetings.

- Proper adjectives like the American or the African

e.g. The Indian Ocean , The American customer, The Chinese troop etc.

- Words used as names and titles:

How could I tell my Dad to leave?

The war claimed the life of General Sourabh Kataria.

- The first word used when opening or closing a letter

Dear sir

Dear friend

Yours truly

- Capitalize the titles of publications, including the first and last parts of a title regardless of their parts of speech. Short prepositions and articles do not need to be capitalized.

*The Twelfth Night*

*Half Blood Prince* .

*All is Well that Ends Well.*

- Historical events, eras, or documents .

The Declaration of  
Independence the Stone Age  
the Dark Age the Renaissance  
the Revival

- For many acronyms, abbreviations, and official titles: UN (United Nations),

TV (television),

Mrs., Mr., Dr.,

General ,*Ulysses*.

- The first word in each line of poetry

The woods are lovely dark and deep

But I have promises to keep.

- Capitalize the points of the compass as regions, such as, the East, the North.

His friend John is from the South.

There has always been an encounter between the East and  
the West.

- Trade names use a capital letter, non-trade names don't. Xerox, but photocopy  
Crocin, but aspirin
- Foods and drinks do not use capital letters when used alone Scotch whisky, but a double scotch
- Seasons use capital letters only when they are part of a game Winter sports ( but a visit in the winters)  
Spring Fair ( but a showers of the spring)

### 12.5 : Sentence-enders; Period or Full Stop

➤ **A period ends a declarative sentence or statement:**

She ate two burgers.

It was raining heavily.

It is supposed to rain today.

➤ **A period can also end a gentle imperative sentence or command:**

Please pass the salt.

Come here.

Turn left at the traffic light.

**Periods have other jobs, too. They are used in abbreviations, with initials, and in Web site names:**

Dec. 12, 2001 John

F. Kennedy

[www.scholastic.co](http://www.scholastic.co)

m

**Note:** Use a period with abbreviations in lower case: e.g. a.m. , vol. , etc.

With abbreviations that appear in capital letters, do not use a period.

e.g. CMO, USA, USSR, UNO etc.

➤ **A question mark ends an interrogative sentence or question:**

Will you play cards with me ?

How old is your sister ?

Why is the park closed ?

➤ **When posing a direct query in an interrogative sentence, use a sign of interrogation. In such sentences the speaker seeks information.**

Are there any messages for me this morning?

When did you start reading that book?

➤ **When a statement ends with a word inflected as a query and with question tags.**

Just leave me alone, OK?

So you got a relief, eh?

You didn't find those moments, did you?

You found those friends, didn't you?

➤ **If a question is inserted in a sentence, and it comes in the beginning, put the question mark in the middle but do not capitalize the word following it.**



If it is in the end, use a comma to differentiate.

Was she really the person behind that conspiracy? Her boss wondered.

Was she really doing the best she could? was the question.

**Note:** Do not use a question mark in statements that contain indirect questions (written as declarative sentences).

**Incorrect:** Her boss wondered whether she was really doing her job the best she could?

**Correct:** Her boss wondered whether she was really doing her job the best she could.

**Incorrect:** I kept asking myself how she had done it

**Correct:** I kept asking myself how she had done it.

- **A question mark is required with a mild command or polite request. If instead, a period is used it would make the request more demanding.**

Let us look at these examples.

Would you take these reports down to accounting?

Here, it is a polite request, but in the next sentence, it is more of an order.

Would you take these reports down to accounting.

**Rhetorical questions can be very confusing.** Only the punctuation marks decide their actual intention and implication.

Aren't his songs amazing? This sentence shows interest or surprised reaction.

Aren't his songs amazing. This sentence shows uninterested or musing reaction

Aren't his songs amazing! This sentence shows indignant or exciting reaction

### **Remember**

- Do not use a comma after a question mark occurring in the middle of a sentence.

“You didn't actually look into that problem?” his boss asked incredulously.

- Do not use a period or full stop after a question mark occurring in the end of a sentence, even if followed by quotation marks.

Did you actually take that trouble?



When a question mark follows a quoted text, put it before the closing quotation mark if it applies just to the quoted text.

Do you think it would be better in this case to stick to the attitude of “what’s in it for me”?

- Put the question mark outside the closing quotation mark if it applies to the entire sentence.

I really do not like her attitude of “what’s in it for me?”

**An exclamation mark ends an exclamatory sentence:**

Exclamation marks were originally called the “note of admiration.” They are used to express excitement, surprise, astonishment, or any other such strong emotion. Any exclamatory sentence can be properly followed by an exclamation mark, to add additional emphasis.

*Ow! That hurt!*

*Hello! How are you?*

We won the championship!

There’s a car next door!

- They are commonly used after interjections (words or phrases that are used to exclaim, command or protest). Interrogatories include words such as “oh, wow, and boy”

For example:

Wow! This action plan is interesting.

Boy! I wish I’d learned it before.

Oh! That’s wrong, I did.

- **When used in a quote, exclamation points should be inside the quotation marks:**

Joe said, “I like pizza a lot!

- **In a direct speech that represents something shouted or spoken very loudly:**

*‘Get out of here!’ she yelled.*

- **It can also be used with something that amuses the writer:**



*Included on the list of banned items was 'crochet hooks'!*

- **An exclamation mark can also be used in brackets after a statement to show that the writer finds it funny or ironic:**

*She says she's stopped feeling insecure (!) since she met him.*

- **When used in a quote, exclamation points should be inside the quotation marks.**

Joe said, "I like pizza a lot!"

## 12.6: Commas

Commas can assist the reader by separating thoughts and indicating pauses. Without commas words run together and the reader is not sure where to pause. It is equally important in reading and writing.

- **A comma separates words ( without conjunctions in British English), clauses, or phrases. A comma has many jobs: A comma separates words in a list or series.**

For example:

I packed a dress, some caps, a sweater and a pants.

We ate, sang and danced at the picnic.

These rocks are red, gold, yellow and brown.

Is this a play by Synge or Ibsen or Shaw?

The man walked across the street, climbed up the pole and stole the wire.

After listening to both the witnesses, the Judge declared life sentence for the accused.( Adverbial phrase)

- **A comma separates clauses in a sentence.**

For example:

Allison arrived, but not before the show started.

I stayed up late, which made me tired the next day.

- **A comma separates a city and state.**

For example:

Jane lives in Newark, New Jersey.

Seattle, Washington, is my home city.

**A comma separates a direct quote from the rest of the sentence.**

For example:

The principal said, “Study hard!”

“Look both ways,” said the crossing guard.

- **When writing a date, a comma separates the month and day from the year.**

For example:

Mohan was born on April 29, 1998.

On January 1, 2010, a new chapter of my life began.

- **A comma sets apart an appositive, or descriptive phrase.**

For example:

Kristen, my sister, is a redhead.

My car, a Saturn, is new.

- **A comma is used for a direct address too.**

For example:

Sir, I have an observation on your statement.

Son, I want you to be more serious in your studies.

- **Yes, No Oh, Ah are separated by a comma.** Common introductory words that should be followed by a comma include yes, however, well. Use a pair of commas in the middle of a sentence to set off clauses, phrases, and words that are not essential to the meaning of the sentence Yes, I admit my fault.

No, I don’t agree with you.

Oh, what a sweet child.

However, you may not be satisfied with the results.

- **Commas are not required to separate the address lines on an envelope.**

The Principal

Govt. College for Women

Udhampur 182101



- **Use Commas for non-restrictive modifiers** i.e. the modifiers that add information which is not essential to our understanding of the sentence. Such information can easily be removed from the sentence but the basic meaning of the sentence does not change.

For example:

The painting of his Kashmir by Joseph Smith, dated 1894, sold for over a million dollars.

William Carlos Williams, the poet, was also a farmer.

John, who has been drinking, should not drive.

The waiters, dressed in their white jackets, are already arranging the chairs on the sidewalk.

### 12.7: Colon & Semi-colon

The **colon** ( : ) is a **punctuation** mark which consists of two equally sized dots centered on the same vertical line. It precedes an explanation or an enumeration, or list. It has many uses but grammatically speaking , the following are important.

- **The first is to introducing a list of items** or a series of items. The colon is used to introduce a list of items.

*For example:*

*You know what to do: practice.*

*You may be required to bring many things: sleeping bags, pans, utensils, and warm clothing.*

The bookstore specializes in three subjects: art, science and commerce.

The job calls for skills in the following areas: proofing, editing, and database administration.

*I want the following items: butter, sugar, and flour.*

I have lived in a few states: Alabama, Kansas, Colorado and California.

I like many healthy foods: carrots, broccoli, apples, spinach and oranges.

*I need an assistant who can do the following: input data, write reports, and complete tax forms.*

**The second usage is between independent clauses . In such cases the second explains or illustrates the first.**

For example:

The colon is used to separate two independent clauses when the second explains or illustrates the first. In such usage, the colon functions in much the same way as the semicolon. Normally do not capitalize the first word after the colon unless the word is ordinarily capitalized.

I have very little time to learn English: my new job starts in three weeks.

*He got what he worked for: he really earned that promotion*

It wasn't easy: to begin with, I had to find the right house.

All three of their children are involved in the arts: Ram is a painter, Dinesh is a sculptor, and Jagmohan is an actor.

- **But, capitalize the first word following the colon when two or more sentences follow a colon.**

For example:

He made three points: First, the company was losing over a million dollars each month. Second, the stock price was lower than it had ever been. Third, no banks were willing to loan the company any more money.

Capitalize the first word of a complete or full-sentence quotation that follows a colon.

*The host made an announcement: "You are all staying for dinner."*

- **Thirdly, a colon may be used to give emphasis** to whatever you are introducing because the reader must come to a full stop at the colon, which causes them to pay attention to what comes next.

Rohit was the best person for this job because he had experience in one key area: teaching.

*This sentence introduces why Rohit was the best person for the job and makes the reader focus on that reason: teaching.*

### **Some 'don'ts' of the Colon usage:**

- Do not use a colon to separate a preposition from its object.



**Incorrect:** He was responsible for: cooking dinner, washing dishes and taking out the trash.

**Correct :** He was responsible for cooking dinner, washing dishes and taking out the trash. or

He had a few responsibilities: cooking dinner, washing dishes and taking out the trash.

**Incorrect:** She went to the concert with: Amy, Lisa, Nick and Richard.

**Correct :** She went to the concert with Amy, Lisa, Nick and Richard.

**or**

She went to the concert with her friends: Amy, Lisa, Nick and Richard.

**Incorrect:** The bookstore specializes in: art, art, science and commerce

**Correct:** The bookstore specializes in art, art, science and commerce.

➤ **Do not use a colon after a verb in a sentence**

**Incorrect:** Her favorite activities these days are : biking, cooking and playing

tennis. **Correct :** Her favorite activities these days are biking, cooking and playing tennis. **Or** She is interested in many activities these days: biking, cooking and playing tennis.

**Incorrect:** I like to eat: mango, meat and toffees.

**Correct :** I like to eat mango, meat and toffees..

**or**

I have a few favorite eatables: mango, meat and toffees.

**Incorrect :** *I want: butter, sugar, and flour.*

**Correct:** *I want butter, sugar, and flour.*

➤ **Do not use a colon after “such as.”**

**Incorrect:** I need to buy a few items before evening such as: vegetables, snacks and milk.

**Correct :** I need to buy a few items before evening such as vegetables, snacks and milk. **or**

I need to buy a few items before evening: vegetables, snacks and milk.

**In its non-grammatical use, colon is used with time, ratio and references.**

The examples are as follows:

11:00 a.m., 19:30 p.m.

13:4, 17:5

English Quarterly 3:45-49

The semi-colon is stronger than a comma but weaker than a full stop. Comma is used for smaller separations, semi colon is used for bigger ones. It is used between two independent clauses which are closely linked by ideas & when a style mark stronger than a comma is needed.

When a semicolon is used to join two or more ideas (parts) in a sentence, those ideas are then given equal position or rank.

When the second clause expands on or explains the first, the colon is the better mark.

- **The semicolon is also used between two independent clauses linked by a transitional expression** (e.g., *accordingly, consequently, for example, nevertheless, so, thus*).

Heavy snow continues to fall at the airport; consequently, all flights have been grounded.

- **By using semicolons effectively, you can make your writing sound more sophisticated.**
- **Use a semicolon between two independent clauses that are connected by conjunctive adverbs or transitional phrases.**

**e.g.** But however they choose to write, people are allowed to make their own decisions; as a result, many people swear by their writing methods.

Some people write with a word processor, typewriter, or a computer; but others, for different reasons, choose to write with a pen or pencil.

Some people write with a word processor; others write with a pen or pencil.

He wants to become a politicians; his plans are, however, vague.

It is also used when two well-balanced contrastive statements are written.

➤ **Link lists where the items contain commas to avoid confusion between list items**

For example:

There are basically two ways to write: with a pen or pencil, which is inexpensive and easily accessible; or by computer and printer, which is more expensive but quick and neat.

The new store will have utensils on the first floor; luggage and home makers at the first floor; formal wears at the second floor; and books and electronics on the third floor.

**Comma splice**

If both parts of the sentence are independent clauses semi colon should be used instead of commas ,especially if there is no coordinating conjunction.

**Incorrect:** The bread is stale, it is also sour.

**Correct:** The bread is stale; it is also sour.

➤ **Use semi-colon for restrictive modifiers**

The painting dated 1894 is a forgery; the one dated 1892 is genuine.

In this sentence phrases “dated 1894” and “dated 1892” are restrictive modifiers because they can not be removed; they are essential for understanding of the sentence. These phrases answer to ‘how’ & ‘why’ queries.

The waiters dressed in white jackets serve in the main dining room; those in red serve in the coffee shop.

➤ **Use semi-colon with commas in elliptical sentence constructions, eliminating the need to repeat an understood portion of the initial clause.**

In 1992, Blackberry had under 200 stores; twenty years later, over 7,000.

Some people brought beds; others, clothing; yet others, merely a willingness to help.

➤ **Do not use a semi-colon where a comma is required i.e. where the clauses are not independent.**



e.g. Because monkeys chatter; they offend me.

**Correct:** Because monkeys chatter, they offend me

## 12.8 : Apostrophe

We use the apostrophe with nouns to show possession.

- ✓ **If it is a singular noun, add an apostrophe plus the letter s.** For example:  
a man's hat the owner's wife Mrs. Peter's house
- ✓ **Many nouns end in 's'; be it common nouns (*bus*) or proper nouns (*Christmas*).** There might be confusion as to how to show their possession. Though the opinions differ, yet a simple apostrophe must serve the purpose with the proper nouns in this case and an apostrophe with 's' with common nouns. For example

The bus's arrival

Jones' father

Texas' festival

**Note:** Be careful to place the apostrophe outside the word in question.

For example

**Correct:** *Mr. Jones' pen*

**Incorrect:** *Mr. Jone's pen*

- ✓ In case of the plurals of the *regular nouns* (*boy, boys; letter, letters; etc.*) use an apostrophe after the *s*. Do not use an apostrophe + *s* to make a regular noun plural

For example

**Correct:** Boys' party (Boy + s + apostrophe)

**Incorrect:** Boy's night out (implies only one guy) **Incorrect:** Apostrophe's are confusing.

**Correct:** Apostrophes are confusing.

**Incorrect:** We've had many happy Christmas's.

**Correct:** We've had many happy Christmases.

- ✓ **See how important apostrophe is for clarity.**

For example

My a's look like u's.

Imagine what would happen if you write this sentence without apostrophes. Readers will read it “My as look like us”.

In case of irregular nouns the plural of which involves change of spelling, you need to be careful while showing its possession.

For example:

**Correct:** His teeth’s colour

**Incorrect:** His teeths’ colour

- ✓ In case of compound nouns, apostrophe plus ‘s’ is used to show possession; to make plurals add ‘s’ first and then make it possessive.

My sister- in- law’s father(singular)

My sisters- in- law’s father(Plural)

- ✓ If the same item is shared by two persons, use apostrophe with ‘s’ with the second.

For example:

**Correct:** Ram and Sita’s sons.

**Incorrect:** Ram’s and Sita’s sons

- ✓ But if one of the nouns is replaced by a pronoun, then use possessive of the both. The same applies to the case where the possession is separate, not shared.

- ✓ **Correct:** Ram’s and my sons.

**Incorrect:** His and Sita’s sons.

### 12.9: Speech marks (inverted commas)

Inverted commas can be single - ‘x’ - or double - “x”. They are also known as quotation marks, speech marks, or quotes. Its usage is as:

- ✓ **We use quotation marks to show the exact words spoken, direct quotes, with titles of certain works, to imply alternate meanings, and to write words as words..**

e.g. “I’ll have a tuna sandwich,” said Peter.

Lily said, “Tomorrow is my birthday.” Nora said her arm hurt “just a little.”

- ✓ **They set apart titles of magazine and newspaper articles, book chapters, songs, and poems.**

I wrote the article titled “Gujjars of Jammu” for the school newspaper.

Tiara just finished chapter 4, “A New Friend.”

Carl Sandburg’s poem “Sky Talk” is one of my favorites.

*For example: “I hope you will help me,” he said.*

### ***Remember***

- ✓ The first rule of using quotations is that once they’re opened, they have to be closed.

The person reading your work needs to know where the quote starts and where it ends.

- ✓ If you’re quoting a phrase or a part of a sentence, don’t start the quote with a capital letter:

He called them “loud, smelly, and utterly annoying,” and he closed the door.

- ✓ If you’re splitting a quote in half to interject a parenthetical, you should not capitalize the second part of the quote:

“The problem with opinions,” Paula explained, “is that everyone has one.”

## **12.10: The Hyphen**

The **hyphen** ( ) is a punctuation mark used to link words and parts of words to make compound words. The use of **hyphens** is called hyphenation.

For example:

Dining-room, Tooth- paste.

## **Compound words**

Hyphens are used in many compound words to show that the component words have a combined meaning or that there is a relationship between the words that

make up the compound: for example, *rock-forming minerals* are minerals that form rocks.

For example:

*a pick-me-up, mother-in-law, good-hearted*

Many compound adjectives need to be hyphenated. Compound adjectives are made up of a noun + an adjective, a noun + a participle, or an adjective + a participle. Let us look at some examples:

**Noun + adjective:** accident-prone, sugar-free , carbon-neutral, sport-mad, camera-ready.

**Noun + participle:** computer-aided power-driven user-generated , muddle-headed, custom-built **Adjective + participle :** good-looking, quick-thinking,

- ✓ If a compound adjective is formed from the adverb *well* and a participle, or from a phrase (e.g. *up-to-date*), you should use a hyphen when the compound comes before the noun. When they come directly before a noun, they are known as compound modifiers.

For example:

Noise-cancelling headphones

An off-campus apartment

*State-of-the-art design*

Well-known brands of coffee

An up-to-date account

- ✓ But if it is not followed by a noun or the compound comes after the noun, do not hyphenate the it:

For example:

His dance was also well known in China.

Their files are up to date.

- ✓ If you are describing ages and lengths of time use hyphen in the compound adjectives to avoid ambiguity

For example: *two-day national meet, ten-day course, three month course*

**Note:** However, some established compound adjectives are always hyphenated. Doublecheck with a dictionary or online.

For example:

*The design is state-of-the-art.*

- ✓ When writing out new, original, or unusual compound nouns, writers should hyphenate whenever doing so avoids confusion.

For example:

*I changed my diet and became a no-meater.*

*No-meater* is too confusing without the hyphen.

- ✓ The adverb *very* and adverbs ending in *ly* are not hyphenated. ***It should not be ‘the very-elegant watch’ but ‘the finely-tuned watch’***
- ✓ The following two examples are correct because the- *ly* words are not adverbs:  
*the friendly-looking dog*  
*a family-owned café*
- ✓ Hyphenate all compound numbers from *twenty-one* through *ninety-nine*.
- ✓ For example:

*thirty-two children*

*one thousand two hundred twenty-one dollars*

- ✓ When writing out numbers with fractions, hyphenate only the fractions *unless* the construction is a compound adjective.

For example:

**Correct:** *The sign is five and one-half feet long.*

**Correct:** *A five-and-one-half-foot-long sign.*

**Incorrect:** *The sign is five-and-one-half feet long.*

### **Compound verbs**

If a compound is formed from two nouns to make a verb, a hyphen is required.

For example: ‘An ice skate’ is a noun whereas ‘to ice-skate’ is verb

He committed suicide after his court martial. (noun)

But A fake case was registered to court-martial him.(verb)

## Phrasal Verbs

Verbs made up of a main verb and an adverb or preposition i.e. phrasal verbs do not require hyphens if these are used as verbs.

For example: They broke in by through the back wall.

But, a phrasal verb used as a noun requires a hyphen.

For example: There was a build-up of emotions inside him.

A compound noun (noun+noun) can be written in one of three different ways:

Playgroup, play group, play-group.

## Joining prefixes to other words

✓ While joining a prefix to another word three cases can occur:

a) If the prefix ends in a vowel and the other word also begins with one

*e.g. pre-existed or co-own, trans-American mid-July*

b) If you are pre-fixing a name or date

*e.g. post-Shakespearean or pre-1700.*

c) If you want to avoid confusion with another word.

*e.g. to distinguish re-cover (to cover again) from recover (get well again).*

✓ In describing family relations, *great* requires a hyphen, but *grand* becomes part of the word without a hyphen.

*Examples:*

*My grandson and my granduncle never met.*

*My great-great-grandfather fought in the Civil War*

✓ Hyphenate all words beginning with the prefixes *self-*, *ex-* (i.e., *former*), and *all-*.

*Examples:*

*self-assured ex-*

*mayor all-knowing*

✓ **Showing word breaks**

If you end a line with a half word and another half is carried on to the next line, use hyphen. But be careful to split the word from a sensible place so that the reader is not misled.

For example: Con-fusion, not conf-usion.

### **12.11: The Em Dash**

The em dash can be used in place of a colon when you want to emphasize the conclusion of your sentence.

The em dash is less formal than the colon. It is especially common in informal writing, such as personal emails or blogs. For instance:

After months of discussion, the jurors reached a unanimous conclusion—guilty.

*One thing's for sure—he doesn't want to tell the truth.*

*Things have changed a lot today—mainly for the better*

The white sand, the warm water, the sparkling sun—this is what brought them to Hawaii.

Words and phrases between dashes are not generally part of the subject.

**Joe**—and his trusty mutt—**was** always welcome.

### **12.12: Brackets or Parenthesis**

Brackets and Parenthesis are not the same thing; the difference between a 'bracket' and a 'parentheses' can be a bit confusing. Generally, 'parentheses' refers to round brackets ( ) and 'brackets' to square brackets [ ]. However, usually these are referred to simply as 'round brackets' or 'square brackets'

The term "brackets" is used to refer to all types of brackets which include the square brackets [], the angle brackets or the chevrons <>, the curly brackets {}, and the parentheses (). It is more commonly used to refer to the square brackets, though, especially in the American usage.

A parenthesis, on the other hand, is one of the several types of brackets. It may be nested, using the same or other types of brackets in the inner sets. It is used to enclose materials that are used as explanations or commentaries and which could

be excluded without changing the meaning of the sentence. It is also used when additional information is added to indicate either a plural or singular forms of a word such as: “the choice(s).”

Parentheses are used to enclose numbers, words, phrases, sentences, letters, symbols, and other items while brackets are used to enclose information that is inserted into a quote as well as parenthetical materials within the parentheses.

“Write a three page essay on the subject ‘What I Shall Do With My Life’ (with a brief account of its chief events to date and a plan for the future).

“The English (it must be owned) are rather a foul-mouthed nation.”

✓ **Sometimes dash is also used instead**

Some of the local store owners ( *Mr. Kwan and Ms. Lawson, for example*) insisted that the street be widened.

**OR** Some of the local store owners— *Mr. Kwan and Ms. Lawson, for example*— insisted that the street be widened.

- ✓ If your parentheses enclose a sentence within a sentence, don’t use a period within the parentheses. Do use a question mark or an exclamation mark if it is called for.

Mother love ( *hers was fierce*) ruined the young boy’s life.

They finally said ( *why didn’t they admit it earlier?*) that she had been there.

The wedding reception ( *what a fiasco!*) ended abruptly.

- ✓ If the parentheses enclose a complete sentence that can stand alone, place the period inside the closing parentheses.

( *Her father was the only one who didn’t attend.*)

- ✓ If the parentheses enclose a phrase that falls at the end of the sentence, place the closing punctuation outside the closing mark.

The only one who didn’t attend was Mr. Jensen ( *her father*).



Brackets are used to enclose parenthetical materials within the parentheses while parentheses are used to enclose words, numbers, phrases, sentences, symbols, and other items in a sentence.

### 12.13: Let Us Sum Up

Dear learners, we discussed the definition of punctuation & capitalization. We have done in detail the rules and examples of period, colon, semi-colon, hyphen, comma, dash parenthesis etc. There is still more to learn about punctuation. But keeping in mind your need of learning, let us wind up. Hope you have understood them. Let us have a recap to check your progress through the section that follows.

### 12.14 : Lesson End Exercise

#### Exercise-I

**Correct the following with regard to punctuation and capitalisation**

1. Morris the martian was flying around the Solar System one day, when he saw a strange light in front of him.

.....  
.....

2. *What is that* he thought to himself Morris was scared but he flew a little bit closer so that he could see it better “Hello” he called out there was no reply

.....  
.....

3. “Hello is anyone there he called but again there was no reply suddenly a creature appeared in front of the light

.....  
.....

4. BOO it shouted Poor Morris was really scared and he flew off home and hid under his bed.

.....

.....

**Exercise-II**

**Punctuate the following** in a faraway land, there lived a very lazy queen named suzie. she loved to drink pepsi, eat lays potato chips and twinkies, and watch the movie toy story. she never exercised and soon got too big to walk into her favorite place, wanda’s wonderful world of wonder. on tuesday, queen suzie wanted to attend the celebration of her country’s victory over veggie land, called spoiling day. she called to bob and juan and said, “i order you to bring a scooter for me. they got the scooter and she was off. naturally, she won the contest and got the all you can eat in ten minutes award.

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

**Exercise-III: Use the correct exclamation.**

A. Yes. I will marry you.

.....

B. Oh. That is a great new dress.

.....

C. Wow. I can't believe I ran into you here.

.....

D. No. I did not intend to lock myself out of the house.

.....

E. Stop. I really don't want to get wet, don't throw me in the pool!

.....

F. The cat said meow loudly and I couldn't sleep

.....

**Exercise-IV : Is the hyphen usage correct or incorrect , and why?**

A. They had a long-term relationship.

.....

B. Their relationship was long term.

.....

C. The fire-proof vest proved to be a great life saver for Santa Claus.

.....

D. Santa's new vest is fire proof.

.....

**Exercise-V: Correct the following, if required.**

1. *Will she re-cover from her illness?*

.....

2. Springfield has little town charm

.....

3. *I have re-covered the sofa twice.*

.....

4. *More than a third of registered voters oppose the measure*

.....

5. *I must repress the  
shirt.* .....

.....

6. *I like a finely-tuned watch*

.....

7. *The stamps have been reissued.*

.....

8. *The sign is five and one half feet long.*

.....

9. *The apartment is off campus*

.....

*10. My grandson and my granduncle never met*

.....

## **Exercise-VI**

### **Correct the use of comma, colon and semi-colon**

1. Cows though their bovine majesty has been on the wane in recent millennia are still one of the great species of this planet domesticated yet proud they ruminate silently as we humans pass tumultuously by.
- \2. I like cows however I hate the way they smell.
3. I like goats they give us milk which tastes good they give us meat which also tastes good, and they give us leather which is used for bags.
4. Because cows smell they offend me.
5. John who has been drinking should not drive.
6. The waiters dressed in their white jackets are already arranging the chairs on the sidewalk.
7. The senior clerks are permitted off-campus lunch the peons must remain on campus.
8. The senior clerks are permitted off-campus lunch but the peons must remain on campus.
9. The new store will have utensils on the first floor luggage and home makers at the first floor; formal wears at the second floor and books and electronics on the third floor.

10. *Dan thought the flight food was delicious in fact he asked the flight attendant for some recipes.*
11. *The flight was delayed due to the workers' strike consequently we had to change our holiday plans.*
12. *The flight did not include any meals however the price was conveniently low*
13. *Call me tomorrow you can give me an answer then.*
14. *We have paid our dues we expect all the privileges listed in the contract*
15. *Although they tried they failed.*

**Answer Keys:**

**Exercise-I**

1. Morris the Martian was flying around the Solar System one day, when he saw a strange light in front of him
2. *What is that?* he thought to himself. Morris was scared, but he flew a little bit closer so that he could see it better. "Hello," he called out. There was no reply.
3. "Hello. Is anyone there?" he called, but again there was no reply. Suddenly a creature appeared in front of the light.
4. "BOO!" it shouted. Poor Morris was really scared and he flew off home and hid under his bed.

**Exercise-II**

**Punctuate**

In a faraway land, there lived a very lazy queen named Suzie. She loved to drink Pepsi, eat Lays potato chips and Twinkies, and watch the movie Toy Story. She never exercised and soon got too big to walk into her favorite place, Wanda's Wonderful World of Wonder. On Tuesday, Queen Suzie wanted to attend the

celebration of her country's victory over Veggeland, called Spoiling Day. She called to Bob and Juan and said, "I order you to bring a scooter for me." They got the scooter and she was off. Naturally, she won the contest and got the All You Can Eat in Ten Minutes award.

### **Exercise-III**

- A. Yes! I will marry you.
- B. Oh! That is a great new dress.
- C. Wow! I can't believe I ran into you here.
- D. No! I did not intend to lock myself out of the house.
- E. Stop! I really don't want to get wet, don't throw me in the pool!
- F. The cat said meow! loudly and I couldn't sleep.

### **Exercise-IV :**

- A. They had a long-term relationship.  
Correct.
  - B. Their relationship was long term. Correct
  - C. The fire-proof vest proved to be a great life saver for Santa Claus. Correct
  - D. Santa's new vest is fire proof.  
Correct
- Exercise-**

### **V:**

1. *Will she recover from her illness?*
2. *Springfield has little-town charm.*
3. *I have re-covered the sofa twice.*
4. *More than a-third of registered voters oppose the measure.*

5. *I must re-press the shirt.*
6. *I like a finely-tuned watch*
7. *The stamps have been re-issued.*
8. *The sign is five and one- half feet long.*
9. *The apartment is off campus*
10. *My grandson and my granduncle never met.*

**Exercise-VI :**

1. Cows, though their bovine majesty has been on the wane in recent millenia, are still one of the great species of this planet; domesticated, yet proud, they ruminate silently as we humans pass tumultuously by.
2. I like cows; however, I hate the way they smell.
3. I like goats: they give us milk, which tastes good; they give us meat, which also tastes good; and they give us leather, which is used for shoes and coats.
4. Because cows smell, they offend me
5. John, who has been drinking, should not drive.
6. The waiters, dressed in their white jackets, are already arranging the chairs on the sidewalk.
7. The senior clerks are permitted off-campus lunch; the peons must remain on campus.
8. The senior clerks are permitted off-campus lunch, but the peons must remain on campus.
9. The new store will have utensils on the first floor; luggage and home makers at the first floor; formal wears at the second floor; and books and electronics on the third floor.



10. *Dan thought the flight food was delicious; in fact, he asked the flight attendant for some recipes.*
11. *The flight was delayed due to the workers' strike; consequently, we had to change our holiday plans.*
12. *The flight did not include any meals; however, the price was conveniently low*
13. *Call me tomorrow; you can give me an answer then.*
14. *We have paid our dues; we expect all the privileges listed in the contract*
15. *Although they tried, they failed.*

#### **12.15: Works Cited/Suggested Reading**

William Joynson Cocker: Hand-Book of Punctuation: With Instructions for Capitalization, Letter-Writing, and Proof-Reading . Forgotten Books: 2017

William Stevens Balch: Lectures on Language As Particularly Connected with English

Grammar.Kindle Edition

Girard Sagmiller: English Grammar, Punctuation and Capitalization

Jane Straus , Lester Kaufman & Tom Stern: The Blue Book of Grammar and Punctuation:

An Easy-to-Use Guide with Clear Rules ,11th Edition. Jossey Bass.

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Course No. : AA 301 (Theory)

Title : General English

Semester-III

Unit – IV

GRAMMAR

Lesson No: 13

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***CHANGE OF VOICE***

***SECTION – I***

**UNIT STRUCTURE**

**13.1 Objectives**

**13.2 Introduction**

**13.3 Tips to Remember**

**13.4 Rules for Change of Voice in Different Tenses**

**13.5 Self- Check Exercise 13.6**

**Examination Oriented Questions**

**13.7 Let Us Sum Up.**

**13.8 Answer Key.**

**13.1 Objectives**

Dear learners the objective of this lesson is to familiarise you with two kinds of voices of the verbs:

(i) Active Voice

(ii) Passive Voice

The objective is also to acquaint you with the rules for change of voice from Active to Passive.

**13.2 Introduction**

**Consider the following sentences:**

- (i) Mary closed the door.
- (ii) We shall see you on Monday.

In these sentences, “MARY” and “WE” are subjects, the doers of actions denoted by the verbs “closed” and “shall see”.

**Sentences in which subjects act are said to be in the Active Voice**

**Now Consider the following sentences:**

- (i) The door was closed by Mary.
- (ii) You will be seen by us on Monday.

In these sentences, the subjects “The Door” and “You” do not act; rather they are acted upon or in other words, they receive actions.

**Sentences in which subjects are acted upon are said to be in the Passive Voice.**

**13.3 Tips to Remember:**

In order to change a sentence from the Active Voice into the Passive Voice, we need to keep in mind the following tips:

- (i) The object in the Active Voice is to become the subject.
- (ii) The (be) form of the verb, followed by the third form of the verb, is to be used.
- (iii) The subject becomes object, and is generally preceded by the preposition “by”.

**Examples:**

- (1) Active: My father will see it.  
Passive : It will be seen by my father.
- (2) Active: Ram is doing your work.

- Passive : Your work is being done by Ram.
- (3) Active: The monkey eats fruits.  
Passive : Fruit is eaten by the monkey.
- (4) Active: We do not sing songs.  
Passive : Songs are not sung by us.
- (5) Active: My brother loves me.  
Passive : I am loved by my brother.
- (6) Active: The police caught the thief.  
Passive : The thief was caught by the police.
- (iv) In case, there are two objects, direct and indirect, it is better to change the indirect object into the subject in the passive voice. The direct object, of course, can be changed into the subject in the passive voice.
- (v) Sentences in the Perfect Continuous Tense and the Future Continuous Tense cannot be changed into Passive forms.
- (vi) There cannot be passive forms of the Intransitive Verbs. (Verbs which do not take objects.)

For example, the following sentences have Intransitive Verbs and hence cannot be changed into Passive Voice: (1) Hari walked fast.

(2) My sister went to America.

(3) Tears came into her eyes.

But when an Intransitive verb is followed by a Preposition the sentence can be changed into Passive Voice:

- (1) Active: The officer objected to this proposal.  
Passive : His proposal was objected to by the officer.
- (2) Active: They talk about Kashmir.

Passive : Kashmir is talked about by them.

#### 13.4 Rules for Change of Voice in Different Tenses

##### PRESENT INDEFINITE

(Rule : Is, Am, Are + V<sub>3</sub> (i.e.) Third form of the Verb)

ACTIVE	PASSIVE
1. I seek this man.	This man is sought by me.
2. Do you want bananas?	Are bananas wanted by you?

##### PAST INDEFINITE (Rule : Was, Were, + V<sub>3</sub> )

ACTIVE	PASSIVE
1. She beat the poor child.	The poor child was beaten by her.
2. He did not like them.	They were not liked by him.

##### FUTURE INDEFINITE

(Rule : Will be, Shall be, + V<sub>3</sub> )

ACTIVE	PASSIVE
1. I shall change my name.	My name will be changed by me.
2. He will treat you.	You shall be treated by him.

##### PRESENT CONTINUOUS

(Rule : Is, Are, Am + Being + V<sub>3</sub> )

ACTIVE	PASSIVE
1. They are watching me.	I am being watched by them.

2.	I am covering lots of them.	Lots of them are being covered by me.
3.	She is writing a letter.	A letter is being written by her.

### PAST CONTINUOUS

(Rule : Was, Were + Being + V<sub>3</sub> )

ACTIVE		PASSIVE
1.	I was chasing them.	They were being chased by me.
2.	She was tearing the book.	The book was being torn by her.

### PRESENT PERFECT

(Rule : Has been, Have been + V<sub>3</sub> )

ACTIVE		PASSIVE
1.	Sohan has done this.	This has been done by Sohan.
2.	Shiv has helped us.	We have been helped by Shiv.

### PAST PERFECT (Rule : Had been + V<sub>3</sub> )

ACTIVE		PASSIVE
1.	We had completed the work.	The work had been completed by us.
2.	The fire destroyed the hut.	The hut had been destroyed by the fire.

### FUTURE PERFECT (Rule : Shall have been, will have been + V<sub>3</sub> ) ACTIVE PASSIVE

- |                                |   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| 1. It will not have helped us. | We will not have been helped by it.             |
| 2. I shall have seen him.      | He will have been seen by me. <b>IMPERATIVE</b> |

### SENTENCES

Do remember that sentences with 'Please' or 'Kindly' are changed into 'you are requested to'.

**Examples:**

	<b>ACTIVE</b>	<b>PASSIVE</b>
1.	Pardon me.	You are requested to pardon me.
2.	Stop it.	Let it be stopped.
3.	Kindly spare the life of a poor boy.	You are requested to spare the life of poor boy.
4.	Please help me.	You are requested to help me.

**13.5 Self-Check Exercises:-**

**Exercise-1**

Change the Voice of the following from Active to Passive:

(a) They serve their country.

Ans. \_\_\_\_\_

(b) The child does not like milk.

Ans. \_\_\_\_\_ (c)

What do you want?

Ans. \_\_\_\_\_ (d)

He remembers her.

Ans. \_\_\_\_\_ (e)

I do not play cricket.

Ans. \_\_\_\_\_

**Exercise - 2**

**Change the Voice from Active to Passive:**

1. I did not like his behaviour.

Ans. \_\_\_\_\_ 2.

Ram did not abuse me.

Ans. \_\_\_\_\_ 3.

Mohan stole the money.

Ans. \_\_\_\_\_ 4.

He will purchase a gold chain.

Ans. \_\_\_\_\_ 5.

The pilots are flying the aeroplanes.

Ans. \_\_\_\_\_ 6.

I shall write a letter.

Ans. \_\_\_\_\_ 7.

The children will visit the museum.

Ans. \_\_\_\_\_

**Exercise – 3**

**Change the Voice from Active to Passive:**

1. She has saved no money.

Ans.

\_\_\_\_\_ 2.

She had stolen all the pens.

Ans.

\_\_\_\_\_ 3.

Sid has broken this jug.



Ans. \_\_\_\_\_

### **Answer Key**

#### **Self-Check Exercise -1**

- (a) Their country is served by them.
- (b) Milk is not liked by the child.
- (c) What is wanted by you?
- (d) She is remembered by him.
- (e) Cricket is not played by me.

#### **Self-Check Exercise -2**

- 1. His behaviour was not liked by me.
- 2. I was not abused by Ram.
- 3. The money was stolen by Mohan.
- 4. A gold chain will be purchased by him.
- 5. The aeroplanes are being flown by the pilots.
- 6. A letter will be written by me.
- 7. The museum will be visited by the children.

### **13.6 Examination Oriented Questions**

#### **Exercise - 1**

**Change the voice of the following from Active to Passive**

- 1. This pot contains very hot milk.
- 2. Do you take tea?
- 3. I know him very well.
- 4. That book contains beautiful pictures.

5. Grand mother told us a story.
6. This teacher teaches us English.
7. They distribute sweets to the poor.
8. This glass contains juice.
9. I solve the questions daily.
10. Lata sings a sweet song.

### **Exercise - II**

**Change the voice of the following from Active to Passive:**

1. I do not like this city.
2. The children do not make a noise.
3. We do not see pictures.
4. Why does he hate you?
5. He does not like games.
6. I wrote books.
7. We ate apples and bananas.
8. My brother wrote a very good story.
9. I posted the letter yesterday.
10. My son threw a ball towards me.

### **Exercise -III**

**Change from Active to Passive Voice:**

1. I will catch the ball.
2. He will not help me.
3. The mother will look after the child.

4. Our principal will give a talk.

#### **Exercise -IV**

##### **Fill in the blanks:-**

1. He did not attend the interview. (Active)  
.....not attended.....(Passive)
2. Who sang such a sweet song? (Active)  
.....was.....sung? (Passive)
3. Did you visit our place yesterday? (Active)  
.....visited by you.....?(Passive)
4. I will respect my teacher for all times to come. (Active)  
My teacher.....by .....for all times to come. (Passive)
5. Our school team won the match. (Active)  
.....won by our school team. (Passive)

#### **13.7 Let Us Sum Up**

Well learners, now I hope it is clear to you that active sentences are about what people (or things) do, while passive sentences are about what happens to people (or things).

#### **13.8 Answer Key**

##### **(Examination Oriented Questions)**

##### **Exercise I**

1. Very hot milk is contained in this pot.
2. Is tea taken by you?
3. He is known to me very well.
4. Beautiful pictures are contained in that book.

5. A story was told by grandmother.
7. Sweets are distributed to the poor by them.
8. Juice is contained in this glass.
9. The questions are solved by me daily.
10. A sweet song is sung by Lata.

### **Exercise II**

1. This city is not liked by me.
2. A noise is not made by the children.
3. Pictures are not seen by us. 4. Why are you hated by him?
5. Games are not liked by him.
6. Books were written by me.
7. Apples and bananas were eaten by us.
8. A very good story was written by my brother.
9. The letter was posted yesterday by me.
10. A ball was thrown towards me by my son.

### **Exercise III**

1. The ball will be caught by me.
2. I will not be helped by him.
3. The child will be looked after by the mother.
4. A talk will be given by our principal.

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**Course No. : AA 301 (Theory)**  
**Semester-III**

**Title : General English**

**Unit – IV**

**GRAMMAR**

**Lesson No: 13**

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**CHANGE OF VOICE (2)**  
**SECTION – II**

**UNIT STRUCTURE**

**13.9 Objectives**

**13.10 Passive to Active Voice.**

**13.11 Rules for Change from Passive to Active Voice.**

**13.12 Self-Check Exercise.**

**13.13 Let Us Sum Up.**

**13.14 Answer Key.**

**13.15 Examination Oriented Questions**

**13.16 Suggested Reading**

**13.9 Objectives:**

The objective of this lesson is to further acquaint you with Active Voice and Passive Voice.

The Lesson also exposes you to certain rules which have to be followed while changing sentences from Passive to Active Voice.

**13.10 Passive To Active Voice.**

**Consider the following sentences:**

- (1)     Passive        :     His footsteps were heard no more by us.  
         Active        :     We did not hear his footsteps any more.
- (2)     Passive        :     The boy was punished by the teacher.  
         Active        :     The teacher punished the boy.

- (3)    Passive        :        The money was stolen by me.  
          Active        :        I stole the money.
- (4)    Passive        :        The dinner will be cooked by her.  
          Active:                She will cook the dinner.
- (5)    Passive        :        The child will have been put to sleep by the nurse.  
          Active        :        The nurse will have put the child to sleep.

We observe that, sentences in which the subjects do not act but are acted upon are said to be in the Passive Voice.

Sentences in which the subjects act or the subjects are the doers of actions are said to be in the Active Voice.

### **13.11 Rules for Change from Passive to Active Voice :**

1.        Shift the passive object to the position of the subject.
2.        Locate the passive verb to ascertain its tense.
3.        Use the verb in the active form.
4.        Shift the passive subject to the position of the subject.

### **13.12 Self-Check Exercise.**

#### **Excercise - 1**

**Change the following sentences from Passive to Active Voice :**

1.        Were you insulted by Satyam ?

Ans. \_\_\_\_\_

2.        Black tea was not taken by her.

Ans.

\_\_\_\_\_ 3.

The book was returned by him.

Ans.

\_\_\_\_\_ 4.

The first prize was won by Sid.

Ans.

\_\_\_\_\_ 5.

Bombs will be dropped by the aero planes.

Ans.

### **Exercise – 2**

**Change the following passage from Passive to Active Voice:**

(a) The inattentive boy was thrown out of the class-room by the teacher. It was clear that the boy had been punished by the teacher so that a lesson would be learnt by him forever.

Ans.

### **Exercise – 3**

**Change the following sentences from Passive to Active Voice:**

(a) Her hair will be dyed by her.

Ans.

\_\_\_\_\_ (b)

Nests are built by birds.

Ans.

\_\_\_\_\_ (c)

A letter will not be written by Rama.

Ans.

\_\_\_\_\_ (d)

The papers were thrown by the children.

Ans.

\_\_\_\_\_ (e)

The cake was not eaten by Ravi.

Ans. \_\_\_\_\_

### 13.13 Let Us Sum Up:

When a sentence is written in the Active Voice, the subject performs the action. In the Passive Voice, the subject receives the action. The Passive Voice is formed by using a form of auxiliary verb “be” (be, am, is, are, was, were, being, been) followed by the past participle of the main verb. Besides, always remembers that in active forms the subject of the sentence is the person or things that does the action. In passive construction, the verb is performed by someone or some thing other than the subject, often, the action is done by someone else.

### 13.14 Answer Key.

#### Self - Check Exercise:

##### Exercise - 1

- (1) Did Satyam insult you?
- (2) She did not take black tea.
- (3) He returned the book.
- (4) Sid won the first prize.
- (5) The aeroplanes will drop the bombs.

##### Exercise - 2

**Ans** : The teacher threw the inattentive boy out of the classroom. It was clear that the teacher had punished the boy so that he would learn a lesson forever.



### **13.15 Examination Oriented Questions**

#### **Exercise I**

**Change the voice of the following from Passive to Active:**

1. The examination has been passed by me.
2. Their home task has not been done by many students.
3. The Taj Mahal has been seen by us many times.
4. A lie has never been told by my brother.
5. Where has the pen been placed by you?
6. A sweet song was sung by her.
7. The test had not been taken by some boys.
8. He had been insulted by you.
9. A new house has been bought by us.
10. The bet was won by my brother.

#### **Exercise II**

**Change the voice of the following from Passive to Active:**

1. Let it be done at once.
2. Let your tongue be held.
3. Let the light be switched off.
4. You are requested to help me.
5. You are requested to sit down.
6. It is proposed that we should go out for a walk.

#### **Exercise III**

**Change the voice of the following sentences from Passive to Active:**

- (a) Were the pictures painted by Sita?

---

(b) By whom has this book been written?

---

(c) It can be done even now.

---

(d) Let your parents be obeyed by you.

---

(e) Gambling is not liked by us.

---

(f) Stones should not be thrown at others by those who live in glass houses.

---

(g) You are advised to speak the truth always.

---

(h) Is milk contained in this pot?

---

(i) Is the work being done by you.

---

(j) Let this fruit be tasted.

---

(k) Should action not be taken against him by us?

---

(l) A goal might have been scored by your team.

---

#### **Exercise IV**

**Fill in the blanks :-**

1. Do not disturb me now. (Active)  
Let I be .....now. (Passive)
2. Ring the bell just now. (Active)  
Let the bell..... just now. (Passive)
3. That man would always blame you. (Active)  
You would.....by that man. (Passive)
4. Can you help me in this matter? (Active)  
Can I.....by you in this matter? (Passive)
5. I may help in difficulty. (Active)  
He.....helped by .....in difficulty. (Passive)

**Exercise V**

**Change the sentences to passive voice.**

1. One of the cleaners has found my purse.
2. The rubber hit him on the head with a hammer.
3. The government has built a new road in this area.
4. The assistant handed me a note.
5. We elected John class representative.
6. Someone has taken my wallet.
7. Many people use bicycles as a means of transport.
8. They advised me to get a visa.
9. They were rebuilding the old road when I drove by.
10. The local council opened a new shopping centre.
11. They haven't decided anything yet.

12. The crowd was slowly filling the new stadium.
13. Someone has suggested that the shop should close.
14. Dad used a knife to open the window.
15. The waitress will bring you your drinks in a minute.
16. Nobody ever heard anything of John again.
17. People asked me the way three times.
18. Lots of people had parked their cars on the pavement.
19. The helpers have not packed the boxes yet.
20. They are still preparing the food.
21. They will launch the new ship next week.
22. Christopher Wren built the church in the 17<sup>th</sup> century.
23. Beckham scored the goal in the 35<sup>th</sup> minute.
24. We serve all main courses with vegetables and salad.
25. Someone pushed Harry over the railing. **Answer Key**

### **Exercise I**

1. I have passed the examination.
2. Many students have not done their home task.
3. We have seen the Taj Mahal many times.
4. My brother has never told a lie.
5. Where have you placed the pen?
6. She sang a sweet song.
7. Some boys had not taken the test.

### **Exercise II**

1. Do it at once.

2. Hold your tongue.
3. Switch off the light.
4. Please help me.
5. Please sit down.
6. Let us go out for a walk.

### **Exercise III**

- (a) Did Sita paint the pictures?
- (b) Who has written this book?
- (c) You can do it even now.
- (d) Obey your parents.
- (e) We do not like gambling.
- (f) Those who live in glass houses should not throw stones at others.
- (g) Always speak the truth.
- (h) Does this pot contain milk?.
- (i) Are you doing the work?.
- (j) Do taste this fruit.
- (k) Should we not take action against him?.
- (l) Your team might have scored a goal.

### **Exercise IV**

1. Let I be not disturbed by you now.
2. Let the bell be rung just now.
3. You would be blamed by that man.
4. Can I be helped by you in this matter?
5. He may be helped by me in difficulty.

### **Exercise V**

1. My purse has been found by one of the cleaners.
2. He was hit on the head with a hammer by the robber.
3. A new road has been built in this area by the government.
4. I was handed a note by the assistant.
5. John was elected class representative.
6. My wallet has been taken.
7. Bicycles are (often, widely) used as a means of transport.
8. I was advised to get a visa.
9. The old road was being rebuilt when I drove by.
10. A new shopping centre was opened by the local council.
11. Nothing has been decided yet.
12. The new stadium was slowly being filled by the crowd.
13. It has been suggested that the shop should close.
14. A knife was used to open the window.
15. Your drinks will be brought in a minute.
16. Nothing was ever heard of John again.
17. I was asked the way three times.
18. Many cars had been parked on the pavement.
19. The boxes have not yet been packed yet.
20. The food is still being prepared.
21. The new ship will be launched next week.
22. The church was built by Christopher Wren in the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

23. The goal was scored by Beckman in the 35<sup>th</sup> minute.
24. All main courses are served with vegetables and salad.
25. Harry was pushed over the railing.

### 13.16 Suggested Reading :

Manik Joshi : Interchange of Active and Passive Voice

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**Course No. : AA 301 (Theory)**  
**Semester-III**

**Title : General English**

**Unit – IV**

**GRAMMAR**

**Lesson No: 14**

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### *Modal and Auxiliary Verbs*

#### **UNIT STRUCTURE**

#### **14.1 Introduction**

#### **14.2 Objectives**

#### **14.3 Definition of Auxiliary**

#### **14.4 Past Tense indications with Modal Auxiliary verbs**

#### **14.5 Long and Contracted forms of Modals**

#### **14.6 Modals' Usage**

##### **14.6.1 Use of 'Can'**

##### **14.6.2 Use of 'Could'**

##### **14.6.3 Use of 'will'**

##### **14.6.4 Use of 'Would'**

##### **14.6.5 Use of 'Shall'**

##### **14.6.6 Use of 'Should'**

- 14.6.7            Use of ‘May’**
- 14.6.8            Use of ‘Might’**
- 14.6.9            Use of ‘Needn’t’**
- 14.6.10          Use of ‘Ought to’**

**14.6.11          Use of ‘Must’**

**14.6.12          Dos and Dents**

**14.7    Functional Grouping of Modals**

**14.8    Modals and their Phrasal Counterparts**

**14.9    Primary Auxiliary Verbs**

**14.10   Let Us Sum Up 14.11**

**Lesson-End**

**Exercise**

**14.12   Suggested reading.**

**14.1    Introduction**

Dear Learners, step by step we are learning the ways and means to understand all the four aspects of English language learning; reading, writing, speaking and listening. In this chapter you will be introduced to one more important component of good writing and effective speaking. Auxiliaries are the trickiest things in grammar if not understood in time. We will be discussing auxiliary verbs through discussion, examples and practice. Hope you enjoy learning them.

**14.2:   ‘Objectives**

This lesson aims at training you in the usage of auxiliary verbs. This will not only chisel your writing skills but will also enhance your effective articulation in English. Primary auxiliaries are integral to the construction of a sentence; modals heighten or weaken the certainty of a sentence. The stronger the modal, the stronger the possibility. Whereas ‘must’ is the strongest, ‘ may’ leads us to uncertainties. So learning about auxiliaries will be a great fun for you.



### 14.3: Definition of Auxiliary

Literally, an auxiliary stands for support, assistance. In grammar auxiliary may be defined as a helping element, typically a verb, that complements in meaning to the basic meaning of the main verb in a clause. Auxiliaries can convey information about tense, mood, person, and number. An auxiliary verb occurs with a main verb that is in the form of an infinitive or a participle. In this lesson we will be discussing primary auxiliaries and modal auxiliary verbs. The auxiliaries have certain features that distinguish them from main verbs: they have negative forms, they are used to make questions & they are used in tag questions.

**The Primary Auxiliary verbs** (be, do, have) support the main verbs and make their meaning more clear. They are also called helping verbs. They can not stand independently if used as auxiliary verbs. Like other auxiliary verbs, primary auxiliaries are irregular verbs.

**Modal auxiliary** is a verb that is used with another verb to enhance the expression of a mood, ability, possibility, necessity, capability, willingness, permission or obligation, tense etc. It can include can, could, may, might, must, ought, shall, should, will and would. This is different from other verbs; they have many forms but Modal auxiliaries have only one form .

Most verbs also indicate whether something happened in the past, present, or future; their forms change to refer to this temporal aspect. This is not the case with most modal auxiliary verbs, which makes them simpler to understand and use correctly.

Let us see how use of different modals change the meaning of the same sentence.

- We can play Chess. ( Showing ability)
- We could play Chess. (Indicating the past)
- We may play Chess. ( Showing possibility)
- We might play Chess. ( Showing possibility in the past)
- We must play Chess. ( Showing necessity)
- We mustn't play Chess. ( Showing prohibition)
- We need to play Chess. ( Showing urgency)

- We shall play Chess. ( Showing future prospects)
- We should play Chess. ( Showing suggestions)
- We will play Chess. ( Showing resolution)
- We would play Chess. ( Showing habit/routine)

#### 14.4: Past Tense indications with Modal Auxiliary verbs

Modal auxiliary verbs do not have a past tense form, except can, will and shall, but these past forms can hardly be interchanged. For example: A. I shall help him.

B. I should help him

In the above example both the sentences have almost same structure except auxiliary and its past form, but the meaning of both the sentences is different. B is not the past form of A. A is a statement whereas B shows some kind of obligation.

Now if we want to express past activity with the use of modals, the use of 'have+ past participle' is required. But again in this sense, the activity expressed will be something that just remained a wish, an imagination, a proposal etc. but never realized for some want.

For instance: While at a super bazaar, an idea strikes my mind to purchase some cotton, anticipating a demand that may rise at home. I will say I should buy a pound of cotton.

When I come home from the store and realize that my cotton storage has completely exhausted and this one purchased now will go insufficient shortly, I will use past tense. To change this sentence, which currently uses the modal auxiliary verb 'should,' to past tense, we would follow the rule above.

- I should have bought another pound cotton.

#### 14.5: Long and Contracted forms of Modals

Affirmative		Negative	
Long form	Contracted form	Long form	Contracted form
Can	...	Can not	Can't
Could	...	Could not	Couldn't

Shall	‘ll	Shall not	Shan’t
Should	‘d	Should not	Shouldn’t
Will	‘ll	Will not	Won’t
Would	‘d	Would not	Wouldn’t
May	...	May not	...
Might	...	Might not	...
Ought to	...	Ought to not	Oughtn’t to
Need	...	Need not	Needn’t
Must	...	Must not	Mustn’t

It’s important to note that these verbs can also indicate the negative: could not, may not, should not, etc.

For example:

I just could not help it.

You need not consider this issue seriously.

He may or may not agree with us.

## **14.6: Modals’ Usage**

### **14.6.1: Use of ‘Can’**

- ✓ **‘Can’ as a modal can be used to express ability , capacity or capability in the present tense. In this sense it means ‘able to’.**

Let us try some sentences:

I can think about it in better terms.

He can help us out.

She can not be of any help in this matter.

He can not extend any support to the subordinates. I can articulate things better than him.

- ✓ **It can be used to make a request** Let us try some sentences:

Can you pass this message to him, please?

Can you offer us any advice, please?

- ✓ **To make an offer**

Let us try some sentences:

I can support you in this matter.

Can I stand by you in this hour of need?

✓ **To seek Permission**

Let us try some sentences:

Can I leave now, Sir? My work is over.

Can I see you tomorrow?

✓ **It can also be used to offer suggestions** Let us try some sentences:

Can we add few more names in the list to make it transparent?

Can we not expect this quantum of help from him?

Can she not be approached at all?

✓ **To explore a possibility**

Let us try some sentences:

It can be of great help in future.

He can prove an asset if taken in confidence.

Can it not be possible to test his resourcefulness?

#### 14.6.2: Use of 'Could'

✓ **'Could' as a modal can be used to express ability, capacity or capability in the past tense. In this sense it means 'was/were able to'.**

Let us try some sentences:

I could handle that issue better than him.

He could not help us out.

She could not be of any help in this matter.

He could not extend any support to the subordinates. I could not articulate things better than him.

✓ **It can be used to make a polite request, question or suggestion** Let us try some sentences:

Could you pass this message to him, please?

Could you offer us any advice, please?

Could I ask you one personal question, please?

Could we seek his suggestion in this regard, please?

Could you please add few more names in the list to make it transparent?

- ✓ **To seek Permission (in the past)** Let us try some sentences:

I could rest as much as possible.

Could you not utter any suggestion?

Could she not be approached at all?

- ✓ **To explore possibility**

It could become risky for us.

It could rain in October.

He could prove an asset if taken in confidence.

#### 14.6.3: Use of 'will'

- ✓ **It can be used to show resolve or promise, make a request, demand or order but it remains less polite than 'would'.**

Will you please look into this matter?

I will not steal in future.

I will help you in this matter.

Will you get me some rice, please?

"Drop in sometimes John", he said. "I will", replied John.

- ✓ **To show habits or routine**

This office will close at 5 p.m.

He will never be late to school.

He will never yield.

- ✓ **To make a supposition/prediction** It will rain on Monday.

He will surely come back.

#### 14.6.4: Use of 'Would'

Looking at it normally 'would' appear to be a past tense of 'will', but as modal auxiliary it is not. It is more than that.

- ✓ **It is used to express wish and request** Would you go to fetch vegetables, please?

I would now work better.

- ✓ **To express an unfulfilled activity**

Had the father agreed to her proposal, she would have lived some more.

- ✓ **In polite questions**

Would you like to have some more rice?

- ✓ **To express habits in the past**

We would discuss things for hours and hours.

Sitting alone on the terrace, he would stare at the road expecting her return.

#### **14.6.5: Use of ‘Shall’**

- ✓ **It is used in questions with first person instead of ‘will’.**

For example:

Shall I compare thee to a summer’s day?

Shall I get a glass of water for you?

- ✓ **With second and third persons in sentences expressing requests, promises, order etc.**

For example:

You shall not steal.

We shall extend all our help to you.

#### **14.6.6: Use of ‘Should’**

- ✓ **It is used to express advice, suggestion and obligation.**

For example:

You should not argue with your elders unreasonably.

I should restrain myself from telling lies.

You should approach the concerned minister in this regard.

You should not waste electricity and water.

#### **14.6.7: Use of ‘May’**

- ✓ **It is used to express possibility** It

may snow tonight.

He may approach the Governor regarding his grievances.

- ✓ **To express polite request in**

**question form** May I request you to

preside over the session?

May he accompany you to the market?

- ✓ **To express wishes and prayers**

May God bless you all.

May you regain your health at the earliest.

#### **14.6.8: Use of ‘Might’**

- ✓ **To express possibility(weaker than may)** He might come to see you

I might not come there.

It might rain today.

- ✓ **To express hesitant offer** Might I accompany you.  
Might he share your load.

#### 14.6.9: Use of 'Needn't'

- ✓ **To express that something is not necessary.**  
You needn't write down this poem.  
He needn't seek his help.

#### 14.6.10: Use of 'Ought to'

Its use is similar to should.

- ✓ **To show obligation** For example:  
You ought to answer this.  
He ought not to be too expressive.

#### 14.6.11 Use of 'Must'

- ✓ **It is a forceful modal to show necessity**  
You must learn English well to cope with the standards of communication at the global level.  
You must go to school daily.
- ✓ **To express possibility** You must be feeling disgusted.  
You must be tired.
- ✓ **To express advice, recommendation.**  
You must leave now. It is getting dark.  
You must watch the new movie.
- ✓ **To express obligation and strong prohibition**  
I must listen to you.  
You must not disobey your parents.

#### 14.6.12: Dos and Dents

- ✓ **Do not use modals for things which happen definitely.** A modal can't be used in sentences showing the definite actions.

For example: The sun sets in the West.

- ✓ **Do not use 's' or 'es' forms with the modals.**

For example:

Incorrect: I can certainly helps you.

Correct: I can certainly help you.

Incorrect: He should sticks to his promise.

Correct: He should stick to his promise.

- ✓ **Do not start questions using modals with do/does.**

Incorrect: Does he can offer any advice on this issue?

Correct: Can he offer any advice on this issue?

- ✓ **Modal verbs precede another verb.**

For example:

Children should not get up late in the evening (main verb= get up)

The borders ought to be saved

Modals also do not have subject-verb agreement or take the infinitive "to" before the next verb.

#### **14.7: Functional Grouping of Modals**

After a thorough study of the usage of Modals, let us consider how Modals can be grouped according to their functions they perform. These groups are: logical possibility, ability, necessity and permission.

- 1. Logical possibility** ( From strongest to weakest): must, will, would, should, may, can, could, might.

The certainty of a sentence is hedged or weakened by this use of modals.

The stronger the modal is, the stronger is the logical possibility. Must is the strongest modal in this category; it forces action. On the extreme end, could and might show the least possibility, lack of commitment or force of action.

**For example:** Note how the possibility decreases in the following sentences.



He **must** ensure the timely execution of the job entrusted to him.  
(forceful)

He **will** ensure the timely execution of the job entrusted to him.

He **would** ensure the timely execution of the job entrusted to him.

He **should** ensure the timely execution of the job entrusted to him.

He **may** ensure the timely execution of the job entrusted to him.

He **can** ensure the timely execution of the job entrusted to him.

He **could** ensure the timely execution of the job entrusted to him.

He **might** ensure the timely execution of the job entrusted to him.  
(least committed)

## 2. Ability:

This group shows ability rather than possibility. The modals are can and could.

Can shows the strongest ability, could is weaker.

**For example:**

It **can** be done in a better way.

It **could** be done in a better way.

## 3. Necessity: This group either expresses an advice, suggestion or gives a recommendation.

The modals of this group are must and should. Must shows the strongest necessity.

For example:

He **must** adhere to the statutes of the University.

He **should** obey the order.

## 4. Permission: This group asks or gives permission in the form of a question. It appears less in published academic writing, but frequently appears in academic correspondence such as e-mails, proposals, or revisions. The modals of this category are: may, could, can. The strongest modal (may) is the most polite and indirect, whereas can is the more direct and slightly impolite. For example:

**May** I request you for few words on this matter?

**Could** you enlighten us on this matter?

**Can** you throw some light on this matter?

The first sentence is expressed in the most polite manner.

#### **14.8: Modals and their Phrasal Counterparts**

Every modal seems to have one phrasal counterpart that can be called phrasal modal or periphrastic modals, pseudo modals or quasi modals. These modals are multiword forms ending in 'to', and they function in the same manner as true modals do. Subject-verb rule and infinitive 'to' rule need to be applied to them (except used to).

Can, could= Be able to

Will, shall= Be going to, Be about to

Must= Have to, have got to

Should, ought to=Be to, be supposed to

Would(habit)= Used to

May might= Be allowed to, be permitted to.

#### **14.9: Primary Auxiliary Verbs:**

Primary auxiliary verbs are helping verbs like modal auxiliaries that enhance the meaning of the main verbs. But unlike modal verbs, primary auxiliaries form their past tense forms in irregular ways. These verbs include: be(is, am , are), do & have. They can also be used as main verbs.

For example

I have ten books on Shakespeare in my library.

He is a man of integrity.

I am the Principal of this college. I had a cup of tea a while ago.

Their uses are:

✓ **To make negative sentences:**

For example:

I did not listen to the advice of the elders, so I suffered.

They are not going to Chandigarh today.

- ✓ **To define the specific tense form** For example:  
'be' plus V1+ ing defines present continuous form.  
He is eating his breakfast.

Has/had/have + V3 define a perfect tense form.  
He has not agreed to this idea.  
I have completed my work.

- ✓ **To form interrogative sentences** Have you ever visited Agra?  
Do you still hold him responsible for this?  
Did he really shoot the deer?  
Are the children happy with the hostel services?

#### **Use of Do/Does/Did**

- ✓ **To form questions**  
For example  
Does he like swimming?  
Did they go to the exhibition.  
Does she offer them food?
- ✓ **To frame negatives in simple sentences** For example He doesn't like be bullied.  
They do not believe in submission.  
I don't trust the mysterious speakers.
- ✓ **In Tag questions**  
For example You like ice cream, don't you?  
He never tells the truth, does he?  
They hide their true nature, don't they?
- ✓ **In Imperative sentences**  
For example  
Do not shut the door.  
Do not tell a lie.
- ✓ **To be emphatic**  
For example

He does defy the orders.

He did believe in the justice of the authorities.

They do understand the complexity of this case.

### Use of 'Have'

**Has, have & had are used in their contracted forms as: 've, 's & 'd**

#### ü To form a perfective verb phrase.

They have done their job.

I have spared him this time.

I had no time to tell you about this matter.

He had killed him before I entered the room.

### Use of Be

It is a unique verb in English. It is the only verb with eight forms: is, am, are, was, were, , being, been & be. It is used:

#### ü To form progressive forms of verb

They are running for fun.

He is enjoying holidays.

Is he crying for justice?

## 14.10: Let Us Sum Up

So we discussed in detail about both the auxiliary verbs; modal auxiliaries and primary auxiliary verbs, and found how important these are in learning English language. Beware of the difficulties the modals pose because of our understanding of normal verbs. They do not inflect according to the number of the subjects. They are tense less auxiliaries that take no subject verb agreement and no infinitive 'to' before the following verbs; they directly precede the verbs. Be careful regarding the features, nature and code of the social situations. A person uttering ' You may leave the room' must have sufficient authority and status for such utterance. Now it is important to revise the contents and check your progress in the section that follows.

## 14.11: Lesson-End Exercise

**Exercise I: Use the appropriate modal auxiliary and complete the following sentences.**

1. An emotion .....properly translated into words.
2. Your comments .....create an atmosphere of revolt.
3. There .....a possibility to deal with this issue.
4. The probabilities of reaching a conclusion .....explored.
5. You ..... leave now. It is getting dark.
6. I ..... restrain myself from telling lies.
7. I ..... articulate things better than him.
8. I ensure you that I.....with you in this crisis.
9. You .....consult another doctor.
10. ....yu like something to eat?

**Exercise II: Make ten different sentences using the different possible modal auxiliaries in the following sentence.**

He .....extend support to his subordinates in dealing with this conflict.

**Exercise III: Locate the difference in meaning of the following pairs of sentences.**

- A. Could you tell me how to get to the University?  
Would you tell me how to get to the University?
- B. He should introduce John to meHe will introduce  
John to me. C. You may go.  
You must go

**Exercise IV: Find out to which functional group , the modals used in the following sentences belong. Arrange them in the order of strong possibility to least possibility.**

Those signals must mean that the outcome is pleasant. Your attitude can be attenuating to this cause This attitude will not work everyday.  
As a result, the school will close earlier than yesterday.  
Change of attitude might bring better results.

Full commitment should be invested in this effort.  
It may rain today.  
Change on attitude can bring more heartening results.

**Exercise V:**

Write ten sentences expressing politeness using various modals.

**Exercise VI:** Fill in the blanks with appropriate auxiliary .

1. Subhash .....repair this DVD player.
2. ....we go for a movie?
3. ....you think this place will be suitable for meeting?
4. We .....not convinced with the opinion of others.
5. Ram .....doing his exercise daily these days.
6. Wasim .....the captain of school cricket team .
7. The workers of this factory .....always demanded more than they deserve.
8. We all .....go for long walks in the evening during our trip to London.
9. He .....be a great support to me in crises.
10. She .....not care about what the people say; she just believes in honesty.

**Answer Key**

**Exercise I: Use the appropriate modal auxiliary and complete the following sentences.**

1. An emotion should/can/must be properly translated into words.
2. Your comments must/can create an atmosphere of revolt.
3. There may/might be a possibility to deal with this issue.
4. The probabilities of reaching a conclusion should/may/will be explored.
5. You may/must leave now. It is getting dark.
6. I should/must restrain myself from telling lies.
7. I can articulate things better than him.
8. I ensure you that I will be with you in this crisis.
9. You should/must consult another doctor.
10. Would you like something to eat?

**Exercise IV: Logical possibility**

Those signals must mean that the outcome is pleasant.  
As a result, the school will close earlier than yesterday.  
This attitude will not work everyday.

Full commitment should be invested in this effort.  
It may rain today.  
Your attitude can be attenuating to this cause.  
Change on attitude can bring more heartening results.  
Change of attitude might bring better results.

**Exercise VI:**

1. Subhash can repair this DVD player.
2. Shall we go for a movie?
3. Do you think this place will be suitable for meeting?
4. We were/are not convinced with the opinion of others.
5. Ram is/has been doing his exercise daily these days.
6. Wasim was the captain of school cricket team .
7. The workers of this factory have always demanded more than they deserve.
8. We all used to go for long walks in the evening during our trip to London.
9. He would be a great support to me in crises.
10. She does not care about what the people say; she just believes in honesty.

**14.12: Suggested Reading:**

Celce-Murcia, Marianne and Diane Larsen-Freeman. *The Grammar Book: An ESL/EFL Teacher's Course*. 2nd edition. Boston: Heinle & Heinle, 1999

Bouscaren J. , J. Chuquet. *Introduction to a Linguistic Grammar of English: An Utterer-centered Approach*. Paris: Orphys.

Riggenbach, H. & V. Samudha. *Grammar Dimensions: Form, Meaning and Use*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. Boston: Heinle & Heinle.

Course No. : AA 301 (Theory)

Title : General English

Semester-III

Unit – V

**READING, WRITING AND  
SPEAKING SKILLS**

**Lesson No: 15**

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*Ways of Reading, Rules of Word Stress*

**UNIT STRUCTURE**

**15.1 Objective**

**15.2 Ways of Reading**

**15.3 Reading Objective, Reading a text in several different ways.**

**15.4 Reading a text three times.**

**15.5 Different stages of Reading.**

**15.6 Implementing the basics of Reading improvement.**

**15.7 Advancing your Reading skills.**

**15.8 Improving your Reading skills.**

**15.9 Detailed Reading and Note taking.**

**15.10 Developing reading speed.**

**15.11 Rules of Word stress**

**15.12 Stress in English Words**

**15.13 Rules of Word Stress.**

**15.1 Objectives:-**The objective of the chapter is to improve the reading skills and enable the student of read in a more focused and selective manner. The levels of understanding and concentration will be increased. The student will be made



familiar with the rules of stress so that they can make generalizations about the location of stress words.

**15.2 Ways of Reading:** - There are many ways of reading, which are determined partly by what is read, but also by the purpose of reading the given text . we read novels differently from introductory work on statistics. However, whether we read a novel for pleasure or for literary criticism will also affect how we read it.

### **15.3 Reading objective:**

- Suppose you are exploring a new field or topic. You begin by looking for general knowledge by reading broadly rather than deeply
- Reading broadly is useful in the initial phase of the writing process, both for a fixed assignment or to develop your own research techniques.
- If you intend to write a thesis on the topic , you will eventually need to narrow your focus . Look for material that is directly relevant to your topic and your specific research questions.
- Engage in dialogue with the text you read. Studying involves not only gaining knowledge, but also learning to employ it in different manners and situations.
- Not all text are of high quality and not all text are equally relevant.

### **15.4 Reading a text in several different ways.**

There is no one-size-fit-all solution for getting the most out of a text. Readers are not all alike. Practice being an active reader. Try to vary your ways of reading. One recommended strategy is to read the same text three times in three different ways.

#### **1. Reading a text three times.:-**

- Familiarize yourself with the text:- Browse through the text-form a provisional opinion sp of its genre and subject. If it is an article, look at the heading, subheading, the summary and the reference list. If it

is a book, study the table of contents, the foreword, the subject index, the names index, the back cover blurb and anything else that describes the text.

- Read quickly through the text:- The next step is to quickly read through the whole text. Do not take notes yet. If you do not understand everything, keep reading you will get more than one chance to return to the text later.
- Read the text closely:- Immerse yourself in the text. You are now reading to understand the text to the best of your abilities. Get a pen and paper and take notes while reading.

□ Ask Questions:-

Ask the text questions trying to clarify something you wonder about or do not understand. While reading makes the reading both easier and more interesting many of the text which are read are.

- Argumentative Text: - articles, thesis and scholarly monographs (books). Most of the texts written during the studies will also be argumentative.

Many people have trouble with reading. Reading is hard for some people, and it can take time. It is a process of the brain where you look at symbols on a page and your mind sees the patterns of characters and understands the meaning in them.

### **15.5 Different stages in Reading:-**

- First stage is preparing to read:- Examples include a children's book, newspaper article, a short story etc.
- Go to the library and pick up lots of books:- Pick books depending on your reading level, no matter what your age. It should be something that you find interesting , otherwise you will not feel like sticking to it. Reading is about enjoying the experience while learning something.
- Find a place to read where you can concentrate :- This may be someplace secret where no one will bother or simply your home at a time when it is quiet.

- Schedule time to read:- Any time is a good to read. But if you can set aside some time everyday, that will help in developing a reading habit.

### **15.7 Implementing the Basis of reading improvement:-**

- Begin your reading by looking at picture in the book and may be listen to some music to set the atmosphere.
- Start with titles, name and other introductory sections in the book. Some books have a section with principal characters listed and some information about them.
- Read the page carefully. If you cannot read, then do not push yourself to read faster. The whole point of reading is to understand what the author is conveying.

Ask yourself the five WS-WHY,WHAT WHO, WHEN AND WHERE.

### **15.7 Advancing your reading skills:-**

- Read as much as you are able. When you start getting bored or need a break, take one. Reading should be fun and enjoyable , don't force it. After your break return to where you were and continue.
- Reread the material:- It is okay to reread something if you do not understand it fully the first time.
- Use Context clues to find out a word's meaning:- Context clues are when a person figures out the meaning of a word by seeing how the word was used in a sentence. For example, you were reading the following sentence and wanted to know what "pessimist" means: "My mother is always happy and optimistic, the total opposite of my brother, the pessimist." So from the sentence you can gather that "pessimist" mean the opposite of happy, so pessimist means being moody and angry. Good experienced readers always use context clues. One can use dictionary to clear one's doubts.
- Memorize a text :- Read that portion out in front of a mirror, out loud, memorizing can improve your confidence with reading.

- Keep Reading:- Try as much as reading you can in your free time. Reading will help in lots of ways: your vocabulary will become larger and more sophisticated.

so to improve your reading skills you need to

- :➤ Have clear reading goals.
- Choose the right texts.
- Use the right reading style. ➤ Use note taking technique.

### **15.8 Improving Reading Skills:-**

Clear reading goals can significantly increase your reading efficiency use reading goals to select and prioritise information according to task in hand.

Reading Goals can be:□ An essay or seminar subject.

- A report brief.
- A selected subject area.
- A series of question about specific topic.

Choosing a text:- Asses the text to see if it contains information that is relevant to your reading goals. Once a text is selected following Techniques of Scanning and skimming to identify area for detailed reading can be used.

#### Scanning :-

Scanning is the technique which is used when reading telephone directory. You pass your vision speedily over a section of text in order to find particular words or phrases that are relevant to your current task.

One can scan.

- To introduce or preface of text.
- The first or last paragraphs of chapters.
- The concluding or summarizing chapter of a text.
- The book index.

## **Skimming**

Skimming is the process of speedy reading for general meaning. Let your eyes skip over sentences or phrases which contain detail. Concentrate on identifying the central or main point, use this technique to :

- Pre-view a selection of text prior to detailed reading.
- Refresh your understanding of a selection of text following detailed reading.

### **15.9 Detailed Reading and Note Taking:-**

After selecting useful information, you can begin to read in detail. Note taking techniques provide a useful aid to reading use:-

- Underlining and highlighting : - to pick out what seem to you the most central or important words or phrases. Do this in your own copy of text-never on borrowed texts.
- Keywords:- to record the main headings as you read. Use one or two keywords for each main point.
- Questions:- to encourage you to take an active approach to your reading record your questions as you read.
- Summaries:- to check you have understood what you have read. Pause after a section of text and put what you have read in your words skim over the text to check the accuracy of your summary.

□

Being focused and selective in reading habits will reduce the time spend in reading. The average reading speed is about 240-300 words per minute. For average reader, the eyes fix on each word individually.

### **15.10 Developing reading speed :-**

- Don't worry about how quickly one is reading but instead, concentrate on reading the line in only three fixations.
- As this becomes more natural, practice without drawing times.
- Later, reduce the number of fixation to two per line.
- Once this increased word span become a comfortable habit; an increase in reading speed will occur.

### 15.11 Rules of word stress

Words are made up of syllable: if a word has more than one syllable, the entire syllables are not equally prominent; one of the syllables is more prominent than the others. For example, the word telephone is made up of three syllables: te, le and phone but only the first syllable te is stressed : i.e, it is more prominent than le and phone. Similarly, in the word pronunciation, which is made up of five syllables, the syllable a is the most prominent.

### 15.12 Stress in English words:-

Syllable is made up of a vowel and optionally consonant(s). Stress in English words is fixed i.e. the stress always falls on a particular syllable in a given word. For example , in the word miserable, the stress is on the first syllable,i.e mis, whether the word is said in isolation or in connected speech. But at the same time, stress in English word is free i.e it is not tied to any particular syllable in the chain of syllables constituting the word for example, words can be stressed on the first syllable as a miserable, on the second syllable as in agree, on the third syllable as in understand and so on. In some language however, stress is tied to a particular syllable: for example it is always on the first syllable on the first syllable in Czech and on the last syllable in French.

It is only stress that makes syllable prominent: pitch change also contributes to the prominence of syllables. The syllable on which pitch movement can be initiated is said to have the primary stress/accent. The syllable which has primary stress becomes a tonic syllable when the pitch movement is initiated on it a tone group. Any other prominent syllable is said to have secondary stress/accent. Primary accent is marked with a vertical bar above and in front of the syllable to which it refers. Secondary accent is marked with a vertical bar below and in front of the syllable to which it refers. For example, in the following words.:

afternoon, cigarette, represent

Stress in English is not tied to a particular syllable. One has to refer to a dictionary to find out which particular syllable in a word is stressed. There are , however, some rules of word stress which can help in locating stress.

### 15.13 Rules of word stress

There are a number of words of two syllables in which the accentual pattern depends on whether the word is used as a noun, an adjective or a verb.

When the word is used as a noun or an adjective, the stress is on the first syllable. When the word is used as a verb, the stress is on the second syllable. Here are a few examples:

Noun / Adjective	verb
ˈabsent    abˈscent    ˈobject    obˈject	
ˈsubject    subˈject    ˈpermit    perˈmit	
ˈrecord	reˈcord
ˈprogress    proˈgress    ˈproduce    proˈduce	ˈperfect
perˈfect	
ˈdecrease    deˈcrease    ˈincrease    inˈcrease	
ˈpresent	preˈsent

#### Words with prefixes/suffixes: Their Stress Patterns

##### 1. Words with weak prefixes

##### A. Words with weak prefixes are accented on the root.

Aˈrise	beˈlow	comˈpose
Aˈlone	beˈcome	deˈvelop
Aˈloud	beˈfall	reˈduce
Adˈmit	beˈtween	
Aˈmount	beˈgun	
Aˈpart		beˈhold
Aˈfloat		beˈlieve
Acˈcept		beˈside

Above

About.

B. Prefixes with negative connotations get stressed

disloyal

insincere

illogical

half-finished

C. Verbs of two syllables beginning with the prefix dis- are stressed on the last syllable

Disarm	disarm
Disband	disband
Discern	discern
Disclose	disclose
Discount	discount
Disgrace	disgrace.

2. Verbs of two syllables

Verbs of two syllables ending in -ate, -ise/ize, -ct are stressed on the last syllable

<u>-ate</u>	-ize
Narrate	capsize
Migrate	baptize
Debate	<u>-ct</u>
Locate	attract
Pulsate	connect
Vibrate	depect
<u>-ize</u>	infect
Chastise	select
Comprise	protect



3. Words ending in -ion, ic, -ical, -ically, -ially, -ian, -ions, -eons.
- A. Words ending in -ion have the stress on penultimate (ie, the last but the one) syllable. -ion
- Application  
 Civilization  
 Composition  
 Conversation  
 Cultivation
- B. Words ending in -ic/-ical/-ically, -ian have the stress on the syllable preceding the suffix
- |                          |                      |
|--------------------------|----------------------|
| <u>-ic</u>               | <u>-ially</u>        |
| Apolo <u>ge</u> tic      | of <u>fi</u> cially  |
| E <u>lec</u> tric        | <u>spe</u> cially    |
| Sympa <u>the</u> tic     | es <u>sen</u> tially |
| <u>-ical</u>             | <u>-ian</u>          |
| Apolo <u>ge</u> tical    | vic <u>to</u> rian   |
| <u>-ically</u>           | lib' <u>ri</u> arian |
| Dapolo <u>ge</u> tically | elec <u>tri</u> cian |
| <u>-ial</u>              | mu <u>si</u> cian    |
| Me <u>mo</u> rial        | poli <u>ti</u> cian  |
| Of <u>fi</u> cial        |                      |
| Presi <u>de</u> ntial    |                      |
| In <u>du</u> strial      |                      |
- C. Words ending in -ions, -eons have the stress on the penultimate (i.e, the last but one) syllable
- |                 |                 |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| <u>-ious</u>    | <u>-eous</u>    |
| <u>an</u> xious | <u>pi</u> teous |

In <u>du</u> strious	cou <u>ra</u> geous
In <u>ju</u> rious	<u>hi</u> dous
La <u>bo</u> rious	<u>ri</u> ghteous
Re <u>be</u> llious	adv <u>n</u> tageous.

4. Words ending in -ate, -ise/ize, -fy, -ity, -cracy, -crat, -graph, -graphy, meter -logy.

A. Words of more than two syllables ending in -ate, -ise/ize, -ify are stressed on the ante-penultimate syllable (i.e., third from the end)

<u>-ate</u>	<u>-ise, -ize</u>	<u>-ify</u>
<u>com</u> pl <u>icate</u>	<u>col</u> on <u>ise</u>	<u>ju</u> st <u>ify</u>
<u>se</u> par <u>ate</u>	<u>en</u> ter <u>prise</u>	<u>cl</u> ass <u>ify</u>
<u>edu</u> cate	<u>br</u> utal <u>ize</u>	<u>be</u> aut <u>ify</u>
<u>cult</u> ivate	<u>pat</u> ron <u>ize</u>	<u>cer</u> t <u>ify</u>

B. Words ending in -ity have the stress on the ante-penultimate syllable (i.e, third from the end) -ity

Ability

Electricity

Possibility

Activity.

C. Words ending in -cracy, -crat have the stress on the ante-penultimate syllable (i.e third from the end)

<u>-cracy</u>	<u>-crat</u>
Au <u>to</u> cracy	<u>au</u> to <u>crat</u>
De <u>m</u> ocracy	<u>de</u> mo <u>crat</u>
Tech <u>n</u> ocracy	<u>te</u> ch <u>no</u> crat
Plu <u>to</u> cracy	<u>plu</u> to <u>crat</u>

D. Word ending in -graph, -graphy, -meter, -logy have the stress on the antepenultimate syllable(i.e, third from the end)

<u>-graph</u>	<u>-graphy</u>	<u>-meter</u>	<u>-logy</u>
---------------	----------------	---------------	--------------

autograph	photography	thermometer	psychology
paragraph	biography	lacrometer	biology
photograph	diameter	zoology	

5. Word stressed on the suffix words ending with the suffixes -ain, -aire, -eer, -ental, -ential, -ese, -esce, -escence, -escent, -esque, -ique, -itis, -ee, -ette, -ete, -ade are stressed on suffix

<u>-ain</u>	<u>-aire</u>	<u>-eer</u>	
Obtain	millionaire	engineer	
Maintain	questionnaire	volumeteer	
		carvee	
		Marketeer	
<u>-ental</u>	<u>-ential</u>	<u>-ese</u>	
Experimental	existential	burmese	
Fundamental	providential	chinese	
Accidental	presidential	Assamese	
Parental		japanese	
<u>-esce</u>	<u>-escence</u>	<u>-escent</u>	
Coalesce	effervescence	adolescent	
Conalesce	adolescence	effervescent	
<u>-esque</u>	<u>-ique</u>	<u>-itis</u>	
Rictusque	physique	neuritis	
Grotesque	unique	arthritis	
<u>-ee</u>	<u>-ette</u>	<u>-ete</u>	<u>-ade</u>
Payee	etiquette	delet	ebbriade
Addresssee	cigarette	replate	casade
Employee	gazette		

### Activity

Mark the stress on the following words and say them correctly (try and apply the rules we have discussed above)

Ability \_\_\_\_\_.  
Authorize \_\_\_\_\_.  
Antique\_\_\_\_\_.  
Biology\_\_\_\_\_.  
Canteen \_\_\_\_\_.  
Cigarette \_\_\_\_\_.  
Capacity \_\_\_\_\_.  
Collection \_\_\_\_\_.  
Doctrinaire \_\_\_\_\_.  
Dramatic \_\_\_\_\_.  
Electricity \_\_\_\_\_.  
Elemental \_\_\_\_\_.  
Efficient \_\_\_\_\_.  
Experience \_\_\_\_\_.  
Magician \_\_\_\_\_.  
Ornamental \_\_\_\_\_.  
Optician \_\_\_\_\_.  
Pioneer\_\_\_\_\_.

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**Course No. : AA 301 (Theory)**

**Title : General English**

**Semester-III**

**Unit – V**

**READING, WRITING AND  
SPEAKING SKILLS**

**Lesson No: 16**

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*Transcriptions of Words*

## **UNIT STRUCTURE**

### **16.1. Objective**

### **16.2. Introduction**

### **16.3. Speech Sounds i.e. Consonants and Vowels**

### **16.4. Vowels**

#### **16.4.1 Monophthongs**

#### **16.4.2 Front Vowels**

#### **16.4.3 Back Vowels**

#### **16.4.4 Central Vowels**

#### **16.4.5 Diphthongs**

### **16.5. Consonants**

### **16.6. Phonetic Transcription**

### **16.7. International Phonetic Alphabet**

### **16.8. Phonetic Transcription in detail**

### **16.9. Exercise**

### **16.1. Objective:-**

Students would be introduced to concept of vowels and constants sounds. With the help of phonetic symbols, the importance of phonetic transcription will be explained.

### **16.2 Introduction:-**

Language has a very important social purpose, because it is mainly used for linguistic communication. Linguistics is a systematic study of language. Phonetics is a branch of

linguistics and it is the branch dealing with the medium of speech. It deals with the production, transmission and reception of the sounds of human speech.

### **16.3. Speech sounds i.e. consonants and vowels:-**

Speech sounds are very broadly divided into two categories, namely, vowels and consonants.

### **16.4. Vowels:-**

Vowels are the speech sounds during the production/articulation of which the pulmonic egressive air escapes freely, continuously through the mouth. When we produce sound represented by letter 'oe' in Shoe, the air escapes through the mouth freely and without any friction. Vowels are categorized into Monophthongs and Diphthongs.

#### **16.4.1 Monophthongs:-**

Monophthongs are the vowels of unchanging quality. They sound the same for the entire duration of their articulation. They are also called as simple vowels or pure vowels. There are twelve pure vowels or Monophthongs. Each of these vowels has a distinct quality and this is because of the different positions taken up by the tongue during different vowel articulations. The tongue can assume a large number of positions during the articulation of vowel sounds, but the upper surface of the main body of the tongue is usually convex. This is because some part of the

tongue – the front, back or centre – is raised in the direction of the roof of the mouth.

#### **16.4.2 Front Vowels:-**

Front vowels are those during the articulation of which the front of the tongue is raised in the direction of the hard palate. There are three front vowels i:, i,e, æ in bee, bid, bed and bad.

#### **16.4.3 Back Vowels:-**

Back Vowels are those during the articulation of which the back of the tongue is raised in the direction of the soft palate in such a way that there is a sufficiently wide gap between them for the air to escape without friction. There are five back vowels i.e. a:, ɔ:, ɒ and u: as in cart, cot, caught, push and pool.

#### 16.4.4 Central Vowels:-

Central vowels are those during the production of which the centre of the tongue is raised in the direction of that part of the roof of the mouth where the hard palate and the soft palate meet. There are three central vowels i.e. ʌ, ɜ:/ə: and ə as in cup, heard, ago.

There are twelve Monophthongs:

Monophthongs or pure vowels along with phonetic symbols and examples:

Vowel sound	Example
1. i:	bead, see, sea, bee
2. ɪ	sit, bid, kit
3. e	bed, egg, leg, beg
4. æ	ass, at, bad, hat
5. a:	heart, bard, cart
6. ɒ	cot, pot, hot
7. ɔ:	caught, bought

- |     |                          |
|-----|--------------------------|
| 8.  | pull, push, look         |
| 9.  | u:<br>food, pool, school |
| 10. | ʌ<br>cup, up, bus        |
| 11. | ɜ:<br>bird, curd, earn   |
| 12. | ə<br>ago, about          |

### 16.4.5 Diphthongs

A diphthong is a sound made by combining two vowels, specifically when it starts as one vowel sound and goes to another, like oy sound in oil. Diphthongs are also called as complex vowels or vowel glides.

There are eight diphthongs:

#### Diphthongs gliding towards |i|

- |                      | Example         |
|----------------------|-----------------|
| 1.  ei  → e + i → ei | eight, straight |
| 2.  ai  → a + I → ai | light, fight    |
| 3.  i  — ə + i → ɔ i | oil, boil       |

#### Diphthongs gliding towards |u|

- |                      |             |
|----------------------|-------------|
| 1.  əu  — ə + u — əu | ago, no, so |
| 2.  au  — a + u — au | now, cow    |

#### Diphthongs gliding towards |ə|

- |                      |            |
|----------------------|------------|
| 1.  iə  — i + ə — iə | here, fear |
|----------------------|------------|



2. |uə| — u + ə — uə poor, tour

3. |eə| — e + ə — e care, share

Diphthongs along with phonetic symbols and examples

	Phonetic symbol	Example
1.	eɪ or ei	eight, straight, bade
2.	aɪ or ai	light, bite, bide
3.	ɔɪ or ɔ i	oil, boy, foil
4.	əʊ	no, so, go
5.	au	now, cow, how
6.	ɪ or i	here, hear, fear
7.	u	poor, tour
8.	ɪə or eə	pear, care, share

There are twenty vowel sounds

### 16.5. Consonants:

The speech sounds during the articulation of which the air from the lungs doesn't escape freely or continuously or through the mouth are consonants. The air escapes with friction. When we produce the sound represented by the letters 'Sh' slowly in the word shoe, we realize that during the production of this sound, the air escapes through the mouth with friction. Consonants are classified on the basis of the strictures involved (the way the passage of the air is restricted). There are twenty four consonant sounds.

1. Plosives i.e. complete closure and sudden release. The active and passive articulators are in firm contact with each other and active articulator is removed suddenly from the passive articulator, the air escapes with a small explosive noise. There are six plosives i.e. p, b, t, d, k, g as in pin, bin, tin dog, kite, girl.

2. Affricates i.e. complete closure and slow release. The active articulator is removed slowly from the passive articulator the air escapes with friction. There are two affricates i.e. tʃ and dʒ as in chair and jump.
3. Nasals i.e. complete oral closure. The oral passage is blocked completely and air escapes through the nostrils. There are three nasal sounds i.e. m, n and ŋ as in mother, rose and king.
4. Fricatives i.e. close approximation. The active articulator is brought so close to the passive articulator that there is very narrow gap between them. The lung air escapes with friction. There are nine fricatives i.e. f, v, θ, ð, s, z, ʃ, ʒ and h as in fine, vine, then, that some, zip, shine, pleasure, hat.
5. Lateral i.e. partial closure. The active and passive articulator are in firm contact with each other. The air escapes along the sides of the tongue without any friction. There is only one lateral i.e. l as in lung.
6. Approximates i.e. open approximation. The active articulator is brought close to the passive articulator so that the gap between them is wide, the air will escape through this gap without any friction. These sounds are also called frictionless continuants and semi-vowels. There are three semivowels i.e. r, w, and j as in red, wine and young.

Consonants along with phonetic symbol and example:

	Phonetic symbol	Example
1.	P	poor, pool, pure
2.	b	ball, bin, blue
3.	t	tear, tin
4.	d	dog, dear
5.	K	King, cake, care
6.	g	glow, girl, go

7.	tʃ	chair, choose, chin
8.	dʒ	jump, joy, judge
9.	m	man, money
10.	n	nose, nice
11.	ŋ	King uncle
12.	f	fair, fine
13.	v	vine, van
14.	θ	thin, through
		15. ð
		that, this
16.	s	son, sin, sure
17.	z	Zip, Zoo
18.	ʃ	shine, shore
19.	ʒ	pleasure, vision
20.	h	hat, hollow
21.	l	light, little
22.	r	red, rose
23.	w	wine, where
24.	j	young, youth

There are twenty four consonant sounds.

### **16.6. Phonetic Transcription:-**

What is need of Phonetic Transcription? In English language, there is no one-to-one correspondence between the letters of the alphabet and the sounds they represent. Letters 'Ch' in 'Chin' cannot be pronounced like 'Ch' in 'machine'. Same letters 'Ch' will give the sound of 'K' in 'character'. In English therefore, one letter of the alphabet stands for more than one sound and conversely, the same sound is represented by different letters of the alphabet.

### **16.7. International Phonetic Alphabet:-**

To overcome the problem of non-existence of a one-to-one relationship between spelling and pronunciation, a need had been felt to evolve an alphabet in which words of any language could be written unambiguously. One such alphabet, which is used very extensively by phoneticians all over the world, is the International Phonetic Alphabet (or IPA), devised by the International Phonetic Association. It is claimed to have symbols to represent all the sounds that exist in the languages of the world; it can therefore be used to transcribe words of any language i.e. to write them down more or less as one pronounces them. It is based primarily on the Roman alphabet; but since the 26 letters of the Roman alphabet are grossly inadequate to represent all the symbols that exist in all the languages of the world, some additional symbols have been devised by modification of the existing symbols of the alphabet, and some other symbols have been borrowed from the Greek alphabet.

### **16.8. Phonetic Transcription:-**

It is the visual representation of speech sounds. IPA can be used to represent in writing the sounds, words, phrases and sentences of any language of the world. Such representation is called **Phonetic Transcription**. For example, take the English words 'cent' and 'cant' both beginning with the letter C. The first is transcribed as /sɛnt/ and the second as /kɑːnt/. From the transcription it is clear that letter C is pronounced differently in these two words.

The English words 'cell' and 'call' are transcribed as /sɛl/ and /kɔːl/. Though the

The English words cell and call are transcribed as /sɛl/ and /kɔ:l/. Though the first letter C is in both the words yet it is clear from the transcription that it stands for two different sounds and is pronounced differently in the two words. On the other hand, words that are pronounced alike but have different spelling, are represented by the same phonetic symbol. For example, in the words keep, pick, corn character, quarter, account, the K sound will be represented by the Phonetic Symbol [K].

Phonetic transcription, is based on the principle of 'one symbol are sound', that is, a symbol represents one and only one sound. It is this principle that makes it possible for dictionaries to indicate the pronunciation of a word in addition to its meaning, pronouncing dictionaries of English which give pronunciation as well, will for instance at once show that the letter b is silent in the words climb, thumb, comb.

IPA can be enabled to write any language of the world. Indeed, so great is the advantage of this alphabet, that in modern times, whenever a hitherto unwritten language is reduced to writing, the writing system given to it is very often kept as close to the IPA as possible.

If we have to transcribe the word cat, we are now familiar with 20 vowel sounds and 24 consonant sounds, keeping that in mind we will transcribe cat as / k æ t/. Transcription is always written within slanted lines.

Using 44 speech sounds of English we can transcribe any word. With practice, the hold over the phonetic transcription will improve. Some example –

Words	Phonetic Transcription
come	k ʌ m
boat	bəʊt
taper	teip
school	skU:l
prize	praiz
potato	ptetəʊ
ambition	æmbiʃən
matter	məetə

population      |popjulei n| examination      ʔIgʒ

emineɪnʔ cigarette      |Sigaret| captain      |K eptin|

relationship      ʔrileɪnɪpʔ

computation      ʔKɔmpjuteɪnʔ etc

### 16.9. Exercise:-

Transcribe the following words using phonetic transcription exercise, solemn, room, view, singer, teacher finger, language, character, subtle, confusion, computer, beauty, single, bill, pay, fat, girlfriend, cattle, peace, battle, brother, mother, comb, circus, friction, stranger, unit, heaven, fungus, pink, prayer, cucumber, remember, bamboo.

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**Course No. : AA 301 (Theory)**

**Title : General English**

**Semester-III**

**Unit – V**

**READING, WRITING AND  
SPEAKING SKILLS**

**Lesson No: 17**

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### *Precis Writing*

#### **UNIT STRUCTURE**

**17.1 Objectives**

**17.2 What is Precis Writing?**

**17.3 How to Attempt a Precis?**

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## **17.8 Suggested Reading**

### **17.1 Objectives**

After going through this lesson, you will be able to explain:

- (a) what is Precis-writing
- (b) the art of precis-writing
- (c) give yourself a thorough practice by attempting unsolved passages of Precis writing

### **17.2 What is Precis Writing**

‘Precis’ is a French word which means a concise or an abridged statement. Precis writing is an exercise in compression of ideas, in a manner that the given statement or a passage is reduced to a certain length. In doing so, all unessentials are to be ignored. Board facts are to be made concise. The principal facts are to be clothed in accurate and precise expressions.

Precis writing has assumed a great importance in English composition. Not only in academic pursuits, but also in our daily life, the importance of precis-writing is felt greatly. ‘Brevity is the soul of wit’. The Bard of Stratford-at-Avon had rightly understood the significance of a well polished and precise language.

Precis writing is an intellectual exercise. After comprehending the sense of a given passage, a learner has to pen down the substance of the whole in a precise and wellconnected form. Reduction of words has to be made and the main ideas to be kept intact. Words have to be pruned as unbecoming or superfluous leaves on a rose plant but the overall composition and the beauty of the plant has to be

maintained. In the same manner, the spirit of the original passage is maintained. The maximum has been achieved in a minimum form. While attempting a précis, a learner has to be judicious and do the exercise in a logical manner.

### 17.3 How to Attempt a Précis?

Dear learners the following requirements are to be observed while attempting a précis:-

1. **Heading:-** A précis must have an apt title. The title should be indicative of the contents in the précis. An apt word, phrase or a brief sentence should form the title. Whatever the case, the title should compel the attention of the reader/viewer/examiner. So, if you do, at least, two careful readings of the given passage, you will assuredly hit upon the apt heading.
2. **Form of speech:-** A précis should be written in an indirect form of narration. You should be careful about the sequence of tenses.
3. **Person:-** First person singular should be completely avoided.
4. **No repetition or personal commentary:** Repetition should be scrupulously avoided. It will unnecessarily add to the number of words. You are not expected to comment upon or criticize the ideas expressed by the author of the passage.
5. **Length of the précis:-** Generally, the question paper contains a direction to this effect. But it is an accepted rule/practice that the total number of words in the précis should not exceed the one third ( $\frac{1}{3}$ ) of the total number of words in the given passage.

Five or six words, here and there (more or less) do not matter.

#### 6. **Avoid:**

1. Telegraphic expression
2. Loose and disjointed sentences
3. Borrowing all words/expressions from the original



#### 4. Quotations

7. **Language:-** As far as possible, use your own language. Technical, scientific or other peculiar terms may find a place in the precis, but on the whole, choose your own style and words. Remember, credit is always given to originality.

#### 17.4 Dear learners, please stop here to revise and keep the following instructions in mind

Read the passage two/three times. Find out the topic/subject of the passage. Assign a suitable title to the precis which you are going to attempt. Read the passage again. Underline the main ideas contained in the passage and make a rough draft of the main ideas in your own words. Rewrite the whole carefully and patiently. There should be no ambiguous or useless expressions. The precis should be a clear and readable literary piece.

#### 17.5 SOLVED EXAMPLES OF PRECIS WRITING

Here are five solved examples of Precis-writing. Read these with utmost attention. Try to absorb the salient features of Precis writing.

##### Solved Exercise No. 1

**Passage:** Of all, mineral oil is going to be the most important in the next fifty years or so and oil production will keep on steadily growing and outpacing than that of any other mineral. This statement can be justified in several ways. Firstly, oil is an extremely valuable fuel decidedly richer in calories than coal, unlike the latter which has to be mined underground, oil is obtained at the surface through boring. Secondly, oil is of the greatest value to the chemical industry as a raw material. Already we have hundreds, even thousands of names of products that are derived from oil, and very soon there will be thousands and tens of thousands of them. At the present time, we have wrapping materials such as polythene and cellophane that are derived from oil; these are much used for wrapping meat, fats, sugar and other essential food products. So that not only the wrapping but also the contents of the parcel that the house wife carries home will be oil by products.

Oil, of course, is a raw material for making plastics, and plastics, as you know, are ousting metal, on the one hand, and wood and stone on the other. The numerous advantages of plastics make it an extremely valuable material for mankind. The next century will undoubtedly be the age of plastics just as the present age is the age of metal.

People will be fed, clothed and given winter warmth by oil through its by products. Since products will even play an increasingly important part in building and tools and instruments manufacture. For Science and Industry, oil will become more valuable by far than gold.

(Total No. of Words = 213)

#### **Title :- Importance of Oil in Future**

**Precis:-** Oil has a brilliant future. It will outpace every other mineral in value, 50 years hence. It generates more heat than coal and can be drilled on the surface. Also, it is of immense value to chemical industry. It has thousands of useful by-products which are being used these days. Today, certain wrapping materials for eatables and plastics are derived from oil. Plastics hold a great promise as it ousts metal, wood and stone in factories and buildings. Oil will be more valuable than gold – for science and industry.

(Total words in the Precise = 90)

#### **Solved Exercise No. 2**

**Passage:** Before the domestication of animals, the hunter discharged a social duty by providing food. Today the hunter is not needed for that purpose; yet hunting is fashionable because hunting for sport has taken the place of hunting for livelihood. Man is the only animal who kills for reasons which are more or less metaphysical, for an obsolete claim to territory. War was the sport of Kings, and the game of upper classes in which the prizes were wealth and honour. War has become an end in itself, an exciting game, a vested interest of financiers. Those who engage in war are not bad men who believe themselves to be doing wrong but good men who are convinced that they are going right. So long as power and success are worshipped, the military tradition in its modern form of mechanical inhumanity will flourish. We must after our values, recognize that violence is an

unfortunate breach of community, and devise other means of establishing satisfactory relationships. Bernard Shaw remarks somewhere that in a really civilized society, flogging would be impossible, because no man could be persuaded to flog another. But as it is, any decent warder will do it for a rupee, probably not because he likes it or thinks it desirable on penal grounds but because it is expected of him. It is obedience to social expectation. The pity and sordidness of war lie in this that without any evil in us we engage in it, not because we are in a way cruel but because we mean to be kind. We engage in wars to save democracy, to win freedom for the world, to guard our women and children, to protect our health and homes. At least we believe so.

(Total No. of words = 300)

**Title:- The Motive Behind Wars – Then and Now.**

**Precis:-** Man kills other for reasons, which are abstract, for an untenable claim to territory. These days, war has become an end in itself, a thrilling sport or a lucrative interest of financiers. Those, who war with others, feel that they are doing right. War will thrive until wealth, power and success are worshipped. We must alter our value and recognize violence as a social evil. Those who fight, believe, that they do so to save democracy, win freedom and protect their homes etc. It is an illusion and a pity both.

(Total words in Precis = 91)

**Solved Exercise No. 3**

**Passage :** Gandhiji's ideas of women also finds a close parallel to those of Shaw. "I am probably 90 percent female. The women in my plays are flesh, others are ideas". Shaw said Gandhiji went much further, declaring that he was hundred percent female and that he understood women much better than women themselves. His capacity for compassion and suffering, his frail body, his tender hands, his soft flesh, his patient attitude towards the ailing and the injured, his sense of economy, morality and housekeeping were all feminine. Gandhiji advised all women to tear the purdah away and not to carry stone and metals on their persons which he called "personal furniture". He wanted them to remind themselves that more than the gold and its glitter in their bodies it is cultivation of the mind and the illumination of the soul which matters. Shaw also exhorted women "to learn some manners" and not

to convert their homes into private halls, maintaining of course, that there are larger loves and divine dreams than those of the free-side”.

Shaw, like Gandhiji, was a Puritan – root and branch. His insistence on public and private austerity and vegetarianism, his complete teetotalism made him morally and spiritually a colossus. Asked why he wore a particular coat for so many years. Shaw replied that it was a part of his flesh. Gandhiji’s simplicity acquired the status of a legend even during his life-time.

(Total No. of words= 242)

### **Title :- Gandhiji and Shaw on Women**

**Precis :-** Gandhiji and G.B. Shaw exhibited an identical outlook on women. Both had a profound knowledge about fair sex. Female characters in Shaw’s plays are “flesh” while others are mere ideas. Womanish traits, like tender heart, delicate body, thrifty nature were found in Gandhiji. Gandhiji advised women to discard purdah and be mentally and spiritually emancipated. Shaw urged women to build ideal homes. Both Shaw and Gandhi were over-scrupulous. Both refrained from drinking and both observed vegetarianism.

(Total No. in Precis = 76)

### **Solved Exercise No. 4**

**Passage :-** A university training is the ordinary means to a great but ordinary end; it aims at raising the intellectual tone of society, at cultivating the public mind, at supplying true principles to popular enthusiasm and fixed aims to popular aspiration, at giving enlargement and sobriety to the ideas of the age, at facilitating the exercise of political power and refining the intercourse of private life. It is education which gives man a clear, conscious view of his own opinions and judgment, a truth in developing them and eloquence in expressing them, and a force in urging them. It teaches him to see things as they are, to go right to the point, to disentangle a skin of thought, to detect what is sophisticated, and discard what is irrelevant. It shows him how to accommodate himself to others, how to throw himself into their state of mind, how to bring before them his own, how to come to an understanding with them, how to bear with them. He is at home in any society;

he has common ground with every class; he knows when to speak and when to be silent; he can ask a question pertinently and gain a lesson reasonably, he can listen to others when he has nothing to impart himself, he is ever ready and yet ever in the way; he knows when to be serious and when to trifle, and has a sure tact which enables him to trifle with gracefulness and to be serious with effect. He has response of mind which lives in itself while it lives in the world and which has resources for its happiness at home when it cannot go abroad. He has a gift which serves him in public and supports him in retirement, without which good fortune is but vulgar, and with which failure and disappointed have a charm.

– **Cardinal Newman**

(Total No. of words = 315)

#### **Title – Benefits of University Education**

**Precis:-** University education elevates human intellect and endows men with knowledge. It widens their mental capabilities and bestows upon them sanity and sobriety. It educates them to use their political rights correctly, ventilates their ideas with conviction, and differentiate between right or wrong, nonsuperfluous and superfluous. It teaches them to behave correctly with others. It makes them to adjust to other's views. It teaches them to be serious and trifling, as the occasion demands. It confers peace of mind upon them which helps them through prosperity and adversity. It is a gift which helps them in public and in retirement.

(Words used in the Precis = 100)

#### **Solved Exercise No. 5**

**Passage :-** The time I was in Tahiti was a glorious time; Saturn had really descended on the earth. Every morning found me on the beach, watching the sunrise over the ocean with a slow reddening of the vast shimmering watery horizon. Little ripples caressed my feet and the tall palms standing behind would awaken from the mighty slumber. These trees had seen Rupert Brooke riding the turf before he rode to the vast to die fighting in the First Great War. Ganguin had at this place cut off all relation with the West, with his family and race, to dwell among the natives

before he died of leprosy. Even R.L. Stevenson must have wandered here telling his tales to the Polynesian chiefs. The place is rich with memories, memories of forgotten men, adventures and reckless wanderers, mostly men rejected by the rest of the world. For long, it was the heaven of the homeless. But this, paradise was soon full of bad men, in fact the whole of the Pacific ocean was invaded by rascals. During the Second Great War, some of the Pacific islands were literally sunk with heavy bombardment. Silence of the countries ended, and loud explosions were heard everywhere. Today Tahiti has hotels and restaurants, the Europeans and Americans are seen dancing there; the old Polynesian dances are not seen unless arranged on special request. But the beauty of nature is still the same.

(Total no. of words = 242) **Title:**

### **Tahiti – An Exquisitely Beautiful Place**

**Precis:-** The writer had a lavish enjoyment in Tahiti – a beautiful Pacific Island. The surf, the palm trees and other natural objects delighted him in their own ways. Earlier, Tahiti had been frequented by many great men. It was a heaven for the homeless.

The Second Great War shattered its peace. Now the island has turned modern with its hotels and restaurants, where tourists dance their native dances. Also rascals have invaded this place. Still, the natural beauty of Tahiti remains intact.

(Total words in the Precis = 80)

## **17.6 Let Us Sum Up**

Now that you have a guideline before try to attempt a precis of each of the following passage. The passages in Examination Oriented Question are meant for your practice at home, so that you achieve proficiency in this particular art. Write a Precis and give a suitable title.

## **17.7 Examination Oriented Questions**

### **Exercise No. 1**

We cannot have a better illustration of the growing interdependence of all nations than the effects of modern war on disease. For one thing, easier and faster transport all over the earth can lead to the rapid spread of epidemics: witness the movement of the influenza's outbreak of 1919, which had its roots in the conditions created by the war in Europe. But the disease did not confine itself to the warring European nations. Even in the remote Pacific islands, more people died in proportion than in Britain. They would not have died but for the war, so that there can be no neutrals in the war against disease. The house does not recognize frontiers; tuberculosis ignores race and language. Neutrality in this war by lengthening the period of fighting, must mean greater mortality from disease among the neutrals.

We knew from the lessons of History that when the war came one of our greatest enemies would be disease, then at every turn, in the home, in the hospital, the battle would have to be relentlessly waged, for the dangers were far greater since the bomber had increased the opportunities for disease spread. It was clear that if we did not control the situation, the microbe and other parasites would control us. We were not wrong. The bomber with high explosive and incendiary bombs blasted a way for disease, bursting open the mains and blending water with sewage. The bombs have shaken up the dust and dirt of centuries and they have smoothened our clothes, our homes and our food. Worse than that, people have been driven to crowd together in basements, shelters and tube stations. For nearly a year, hundreds of thousands of people, old and young, healthy and sick, dirty and clean, have lived in this way. The war has boxed us up. We eat and travel, so to speak, with a strange elbow in our back. We sleep, on fire watching nights, to the accompaniment of the noise of a stranger. We exclude the air, and see the stars only when we are on civil defence duty. The less room we have in which to live, the greater the opportunity for the microbe. These are the environment risks of modern war, and they are greatest in our congested industrial centres.

(E.E. Allen & A.T. Mason)

### **Exercise No. 2**

It is the height of selfishness for men, who fully appreciate in their own case the great advantages of a good education, to deny these advantages to women. There is no valid argument by which the exclusion of the female sex from the privilege of education can be defended. It is argued that women have their domestic duties to perform and that if they were educated, they would busy themselves in their books and have little time for attending to the management of their household. Of course, if possible for women, as it is for men, to neglect necessary work in order to spare more time for reading sensational novels. But women are no more liable to this temptation than men and most women would be able to do their household work all the better for being able to refresh their minds, in the intervals of leisure, with a little reading. Nay, education would even help them in the performance of the narrowest sphere of womanly duty. For education involves knowledge of the means by which health may be preserved and improved and enables a mother to consult such modern books as will tell her how to rear up her children into healthy men and women, skillfully nurse them and her husband when disease attacks her household.

But according to a higher conception of women's sphere, women ought to be something more than a household drudge. She ought to be able not merely to nurse her husband in sickness, but also to be his companion in health. For this part of her wifely duty, education is necessary, for there cannot be congenial companionship between an educated man and an uneducated wife. Also, one of the mother's highest duties is the education of her children at the time when their mind is most amenable to instruction. A child's whole future life, to a large extent, depends on the teaching it receives in early childhood and it is needless to say that this first foundation cannot be well laid by an ignorant mother.

### **Exercise No. 3**

Every war is represented as just by both sides in the conflict. What is justice? It is distributive justice, then an unfair or unequal allotment of possession, opportunities, new materials, places in field of economic and political influence must be corrected. If justice is to consist in the right proportion between the importance of nation and its possessions, what is the test to importance? Is it population, power, culture or experience in the business of government? Is there a system of law for which we fight? Do not insist that no nation should plunge the



world into war until the resource of negotiations, discussions and arbitration are exhausted? Thus wars are non-aggressive and liberative. They aim at defending the people against foreign invasion and attempts to enslave them. Unjust are wars of aggressions, and aim at the seizure and enslavement of other countries. But is this distinction very clear? Issues are very complex and other sources of information are poisoned by government, so that it is difficult for us to decide which is a just war. Right and wrong are not clearly divided that either side is possessed of only one or the other. At best, it is distribution between the more just and the less just. The difference between the aggression and defender is not real. So long as the present ideas operate, the play will continue the same in the theatre of war; only the actors will change.

#### **Exercise No. 4**

Whether work should be placed among the causes of happiness or among the causes of unhappiness may perhaps be regarded as a doubtful question. There is certainly much work which is exceedingly irksome and an excess of work is always very painful. I think, however, that, provided work is not excessive in amount even the duller work is to most people less painful than idleness. There are in work all grades, according to the nature of the work and the ability of the worker. Most of the work that most people have to do is not in itself interesting, but even such work has certain great advantages. To begin with, it fills a good many hours of the day, without the need of deciding what one shall do. Most people, when they are left to fill their own time according to their own choice are at a loss to think of anything sufficiently pleasant to be doing. And whatever they decide on, they are troubled by the feeling that something else would have been pleasanter. To be able to fill leisure intelligently is the last fruit of civilization, and at present very few people have reached this level. Moreover the exercise of choice is in itself tiresome. Except to the people with unusual initiative it is positively agreeable to tell what to do at each hour of the day provided the orders, are not too unpleasant. Most of the idle rich suffer unspeakable boredom as the price of their freedom from drudgery. At times, they may find relief by hunting big game in Africa, or by flying round the world, but the number of such sensations is limited, specially after youth is past. Accordingly, the more intelligent rich men work nearly as hard as if they were,

while rich women for the most part keep themselves busy with innumerable trifles whose earthshaking importance are firmly persuaded.

### **Exercise No. 5**

But having said this we must now turn our attention to the dangerous aspects of nationalism. Unlike capitalism and communism, nationalism is not a single worldwide system, but it is a different system in each nation. It consists essentially in collective self-glorification and in a conviction that it is right to pursue the interests of one's own nation however they may conflict with those of others. In the eighteenth century, the British proclaimed the slogan, "Britons never shall be slaves" and proceeded to make slaves of as many non-Britons as they could. The French shortly afterwards proclaimed, "Let impure blood water our furrows" – the impure blood being that of the Austrians. I recently received a letter from a German explaining the Germany, above all, does not mean that Germany should rule the world, but that a German should think only of German interests". One could multiply examples indefinitely, but the phenomenon is too familiar to need further illustrations. It is rather odd that emphasis upon the merits of one's own nation should be considered a virtue. What should we think of an individual who proclaimed : "I am morally and intellectually superior to all other individuals, and because of this superiority, I have a right to ignore all interests except my own". There are no doubt plenty of people who feel this way, but if they proclaim their feelings too openly, and act upon it too blantly they are thought ill of.

### **Exercise No. 6**

New York is a city of many beauties, and with a reckless prodigality she has done her best to obscure them all. Driven by a vain love of swift traffic, she assails your ear with an incessant din and your eye with the unsightliness railroad that human ingenuity has ever contrived. She has sacrificed the amenity of her streets and the dignity of her buildings to the false God of speed. The men of New York, as they tell you, with an insistent pride, are 'hustlers', but the 'hustling' probably leads to little enough. Haste and industry are not synonymous. To run up and down is, but a form of busy idleness. The captains of industry who do the work of the world are still, surrounded by bells and telephones. They show themselves furtively behind vast expenses of plate-glass, and move only to eat or sleep. It is the common citizen of New York who is never quiet. He find it irksome to stay long in the same

place. Though his place may be comfortable, even luxurious, he is in a hurry to leave it. And so it comes about that what he wants to call 'transportation' seems the most important thing in his life.

Movement, then, noisy and incessant, is the passion of New York. Perhaps it is the brisk air which drives men to this useless activity. Perhaps it is an ingrained and superstitious habit. But the drowsiest foreigner is soon caught up in the whirl. He too must be chasing something which always eludes him. He too finds himself leaving a quiet corner where he would like to stay, that he may reach some place which he has no desire to see.

*(E.E. Allen, A.T. Mason)*

### **Exercise No. 7**

Whether in the long run Gandhi's gospel of 'ahimsa', love and peace – will triumph is a different matter. Gandhi's attitudes were too spiritual to be generally adopted in India or any other country. Under Nehru since 1947, India has championed 'neutralism' between the West and the Communist East but hardly 'non-violence' in a Gandhian sense. She has welcomed foreign capital and pursued five-year plans of industrialization very far from Gandhi's spinning wheel. Yet Gandhi's influence and importance were enormous. First, it is very doubtful if without him the transfer of power could have been effected without a breakdown into a prolonged civil war. Second, the example of India's freedom from British rule, which he led, acted as a powerful stimulus to the other people of Asia and Africa to demand freedom from 'colonialism' – one of the most significant movements of our time. Third, inside India, great social reforms add, above all, the decline of untouchability, stem directly from Gandhi's campaigns. No other statesman of this century has left behind him such a weight of love and respect. His name in India is a legend and outside India his greatness grows as the years recede. He loved India and he called himself a nationalist; but, more important, he loved God and man; and most surprising, really did forgive his enemies. The twentieth century has seen many successful revolutionaries and many great men. It has not seen many who were, in addition, simply and powerfully good.

### **Exercise No. 8**

If then a practical end must be assigned to the University course, I say it is that of training good members of society. Its art is the art of social life, and its end is fitness for the world. It neither confines its views to particular profession on the one hand, nor creates heroes or inspires genius on the other. Works indeed of genius fall under no act; heroic minds come under no rule; a university is not a birthplace of poets or of immortal authors, of founders of school; leaders or colonies or conquerors of nations. It does not promise a generation of Aristotles, of Newtons, of Napoleons, of Washingtons, of Raphaels or Shakespeares though such miracles of nature it has before contained within its precincts. But a University training is the great ordinary means to a great but ordinary end : it aims at rising the intellectual tone of society, at cultivating the public mind, at purifying the national taste, at supplying true principles to popular enthusiasm and find aims to popular aspiration. It is education which gives a man a clear conscious view of his own opinions and judgements, a truth in developing them, an eloquence in expressing them and a force in urging them. It teaches him to see things as they are, to go right to the point, to disentangle a skein of thought, to detect what is sophistical, and to discard what is irrelevant. It prepares him to fill any post with credit, and to master any subject with facility. It shows him how to accommodate himself to others, how to throw himself into their state of mind, how to bring before them his own, how to influence them, how to come to understanding with them, how to bear with them.

### **Exercise No. 9**

Our religion has glorified those of meek and contemplative character rather than those of action. Further, it places the highest good in humility, lowliness, and the contempt for worldly things. This manner of life, then, seems to have rendered the world weak, and to have given it over as a prey to wicked men.

Those Princes or Republics that would save themselves from growing corrupt should above all keep uncorrupted the ceremonies of religion, holding them always in veneration. For, there can be no surer sign of decay in a country than to see the rites of religion in contempt.

It is therefore the duty of Princes and heads of Republic to uphold the foundations of the religion of their countries, for them it is easy to keep their people religious, and consequently well-conducted and united. And, therefore, everything

that tends to favour religion (even though it were believed to be false) should be received and availed to strengthen it; and this should be done the more, the wiser the rulers are, and the better they understand the natural course of things.

And as the strict observance of religious worship is the cause why states rise to eminence, so contempt for religion brings ruin on them. For where the fear of God is wanting, destruction is sure to follow, or else it must be sustained by the fear felt for their Prince, who may thus supply the want of religion in this subject. Whence it arises that the kingdoms that depend only on virtue of a mortal, have a short duration; it is seldom that the virtue of the father survives in the son.

(Niccolo Machiavelli)

### **17.8 Suggested Reading :**

1. Art of Precis Writing: R.C. Sharma.
2. The Techniques of Compression and Precis Writing: R.N. Singh.

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