

**KENDRIYA VIDYALAYA SANGATHAN,**

**RANCHI REGION**

**STUDY  
MATERIAL**

**CLASS XII SUBJECT- ENGLISH CORE (301)**

**FOR TERM 2 (2021-22)**

Compiled by: K V Barkakana

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## English Core (301) Class XII (2021-22)

### Term Wise Syllabus

SECTION	TERM I	WEIGHT AGE (IN MARKS)	TERM II	WEIGHT AGE (IN MARKS)
A	<b>Reading Comprehension:</b> ( Two Passages) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unseen passage (factual, descriptive or literary/ discursive or persuasive)</li> <li>Case Based Unseen (Factual) Passage</li> </ul>	14 (8+6 Marks)	<b>Reading Comprehension:</b> (Two Passages) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unseen passage (factual, descriptive or literary/ discursive or persuasive)</li> <li>Case Based Unseen (Factual) Passage</li> </ul>	14 (8+6 Marks)
B	<b>Creative Writing Skills :</b>  <b><u>Short Writing Tasks</u></b> <input type="checkbox"/> Notice Writing <input type="checkbox"/> Classified Advertisements  <b><u>Long Writing Tasks(One)</u></b> <input type="checkbox"/> Letter to an Editor (giving suggestions or opinion on issues of public interest) <input type="checkbox"/> Article Writing	3+5  marks  Total=0  8	<b>Creative Writing Skills :</b>  <b><u>Short Writing Tasks</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Formal &amp; Informal Invitation Cards or the Replies to Invitation/s</li> </ul> <b><u>Long Writing Tasks(One)</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Letter of Application for a Job</li> <li>Report Writing</li> </ul>	3+5  Marks  Total=0  8
C	<b>Literature :</b> Literary-prose/poetry extracts ( seen- texts ) to assess comprehension and appreciation, analysis, inference, extrapolation  <b>Questions Based on Texts to assess comprehension and appreciation, analysis, inference, extrapolation</b>  <b><u>Book- Flamingo (Prose)</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Last Lesson</li> </ul>	11 Marks for Flamingo + 7 Marks for Vistas = 18 Marks	<b>Literature:</b> Questions based on extracts/texts to assess comprehension and appreciation, analysis, inference, extrapolation  <b><u>Book-Flamingo (Prose)</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Rattrap</li> <li>Indigo</li> </ul> <b><u>Book-Flamingo (Poetry)</u></b>	11 Marks for Flamingo + 7 Marks for Vistas = 18 Marks

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lost Spring</li> <li>• Deep Water</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Thing of Beauty</li> <li>• Aunt Jennifer's Tigers</li> </ul>	
	<p><b><u>Book-Flamingo (Poetry)</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• My Mother at Sixty-Six</li> <li>• An Elementary Classroom in a Slum</li> <li>• Keeping Quiet</li> </ul>		<p><b><u>Book-Vistas (Prose)</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Should Wizard Hit Mommy?</li> <li>• On the Face of It</li> <li>• Evans Tries an O Level</li> </ul>	
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>40</b>
	<b>ASL</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>ASL</b>	<b>10</b>
	<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>40 + 10 = 50</b>	<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>40 + 10 = 50</b>

### Prescribed Books

1. **Flamingo:** English Reader published by National Council of Education Research and Training, New Delhi
2. **Vistas:** Supplementary Reader published by National Council of Education Research and Training, New Delhi

## SECTION – A (READING COMPREHENSION)

### READING SKILLS

Reading is a skill that can be acquired. Anyone can learn to read better and faster and thereby comprehend in lesser time.

Rather than concentrating on words on the page, look for the main ideas, follow the main thread of the ideas consciously at a fast pace. Try to comprehend the overall organisation of the passage in terms of the development of thought. Don't get side tracked by minor details or examples.

The following points should be kept in mind and carefully noted while attempting the questions on comprehension:

1. Do not be panicky seeing a long passage.
2. Go through the passage carefully and try to get a general idea of the subject the passage deals with.
3. Second reading would certainly better your understanding. So do it.
4. Some difficult words may scare you but do not lose heart. Make a guess and try to relate them to the preceding and the following sentences.
5. Read the questions asked very carefully.
6. Underline the relevant parts of the passage which can give the answers.
7. Answer to the point.
8. Use simple and your own language. Do not give your comments. You are to display your comprehension and not knowledge.
9. If there is no way out, use words from the passage. Wrong words, if used, will send wrong signals.
10. If you are asked to give a title or heading to the passage, keep in mind the following clues:
  - a) Title is hidden either in the beginning or in the ending lines of the passage.
  - b) First letter of each word in the title should be capital letter.
  - c) Title should give the main idea of the passage.
  - d) Title should be small and brief.

## SOLVED EXAMPLES

### PASSAGE-1

#### **REORIENTATION OF EDUCATIONAL IDEALS**

Everybody knows that the education given at present in our universities is narrow and strictly intellectual and is confined to giving instructions in the subjects of set course with an eye only on the student's success in the examination. The physical side of the education is neglected, and there are practically no facilities for. Social life or corporate activities of any kind. Naturally in such narrow grooves, 'there is little opportunity for training the character of the student and developing his personality. In this connection, it will be wise to look up to America, the most practical country in the world. America possesses democracy in education. Education is not a monopoly of the idle rich, of the privilege solely of the bloated and arrogant middle class, but the birth right of every American child. In Europe primary education is free and compulsory, but higher education is reserved only for a few. No attempt is made by American Educationists to dole out education according to social position. It is possible for student to start in the common school and right up to the university.

Education in America is frankly utilitarian as it is not either in England or in India. Metaphysics and Latin and Greek occupy a very subordinate place in the curriculum. The almost miraculous success of American business all over the world is due to the strictly utilitarian ideals of American education. In America businessmen generously give away large sums of money. It is not an idealistic generosity which prompts them to do so. But the realization that their education has helped them to make money and so they must give money for giving similar education to others. No American would even dream of encouraging a- type of education without direct social utility. A look into an American university calendar would show that the courses of study offered range from dish-washing to metaphysics. But dish-washing is given more importance than Aristotle.

The difference between American and Indian education is that Indian educationists aim at providing merely glorified clerks while Americans want self-respecting citizens who shall be taught to make an independent living in every walk of life. Our unemployed are consoled by being told that "man shall not live by bread alone?" This is not true. The truth is that man shall not live by culture alone. He wants bread first. That is recognized by American universities. So in these two ways we can learn much from America. We must make education cheap within reach of all who are capable of it and desire it and we must make it utilitarian. A man who can do the job of dish-washing really efficiently is a better citizen than a man who writes Babu Piche Lal's English, and murders Shakespeare. In America, examinations have been completely eliminated. Instead of holding examinations and promoting those who receive a certain percentage of marks, the entire group is promoted. The more slowly developing child is given individual attention, and the brilliant child is not retarded. The gifted child is given more work of a creative nature, and is even encouraged to dream, but is never placed in a class of children older than himself, where he may grow self-conscious and lose confidence.

On basis of reading the above passage, answer the following questions

A1. a) What is the aim of present system of education of India?

Ans.) The aim is to give instructions in subjects of course with an eye only to the student's success in the examination.

a) **What are the two shortcomings of the social life of a student?**

Ans.) The two short comings are- no opportunity for training the character of student and to develop his personality as there are no corporate activities.

b) **On what grounds can we say that American education is utilitarian in nature?**

Ans.) The courses of study in America offer a range from dishwashing to metaphysics, but dishwashing is given more importance. Education without direct social utility is discouraged.

c) What is the great distinction between American and Indian education?

Ans.) Indian education aims at producing merely glorified clerks. Our unemployed are consoled by being told that "man shall not live by bread alone!" Americans want self-respecting citizens who shall be taught to make an independent living in every walk of life. They recognize that man needs bread first.

d) Americans treat the gifted child on different norms. What are those?

Ans.) The gifted child is given more work of creative nature, is encouraged to dream, never placed in a class of children older than himself, where he may grow self-conscious and lose confidence.

e) **What can Indians learn from the American system of education?**

Ans.) Education is birth right of every child. It should be utilitarian. Education should produce self-respecting citizens capable of making an independent citizen. Eliminate exams.

g) **Write the synonyms of the following words :**

(i) Opportunity - chance

(ii) Miraculous - wonderful, supernatural, divine

(iii) Eliminated - removed

h) Write three facts from the passage that speak about the success of business in America

Ans. (i) Utilitarian ideals of education.

(ii) Businessmen generously give away large sums of money for education.

(iii) Not idealistic generosity-realizes that education helps make money so they must give to others.

## PASSAGE-2

Read the following passage and answer the questions that follow: 8 Marks

1. As religious people believing in God, we are all aware of the influence of prayer in our individual lives. It is true our temples, gurdwaras, churches and mosques reverberate with the prayers of the devout on festive occasions and even in the course of daily life. When individuals face dire situations, often they are led into prayer, their faith thus opens for them a source of comfort and encouragement in their hour of need.
2. But how does this nation, as a collective entity, exercise its faith in prayer? It may be recalled that during the freedom struggle and subsequently after Independence, the Father of the Nation, used to lead the people in prayer on matters affecting its destiny. The men of different faiths used to take part in such meetings, which gave them a sense of purpose and also a sense of solidarity as people sharing one destiny.
3. Since the Mahatma fell to the bullets of an assassin, no one else probably came forward to provide leadership to an exercise of prayer at the national level. No doubt, people of all faiths had organised prayers at their places of worship in the aftermath of national tragedies like the Gujarat earthquake or the Orissa cyclone. The hijacking of an Indian plane with its passengers to Kandahar in the recent past had moved this nation to pray. The whole nation, again, had taken to prayer en masse on two other earlier occasions-when Amitabh Bachchan fell seriously ill and also when Mother Teresa was on bed.
4. "Man's" need for prayer is as great as his need for bread. As food is necessary for the body, prayer is necessary for the soul. I have not a shadow of doubt that the strife and quarrels with which our atmosphere is so full today are due to the absence of the spirit of true prayer. True prayer never goes unanswered." wrote Gandhiji. According to Vasudevan, secretary of the Rajghat Samadhi Samiti, all-religion prayer meetings are held every Friday at Rajghat from 4 p.m. to 5.15 p.m.
5. It is said that the act of prayer changes people and situations. There is a general impression that prayer is an act of seeking favours from God for selfish ends. It is as if all praying people are only interested in taking their shopping lists to their maker! Far from it. The very act of praying teaches one to empathise with those who suffer. It broadens one's vision and outlook. It builds up one's character by imparting a sense of responsibility towards other people and situations.
6. The latest example of a praying nation comes from the United States, which is often labeled as too materialistic. Speaking at the National Prayer Breakfast at Washington in the second week of February, President George Bush praised Americans of all faiths for turning to prayer in the wake of the September 11 terrorist attacks. He said he had spent much time "on bended knee" since terrorists attacked the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, killing more than 3000 people.
7. Regardless of the religious affiliations, people in the affected areas showed an exemplary sense of tolerance in the hour of tragedy. All differences of religion, ethnicity, race and language were forgotten as volunteers got busy assuaging the pain and sorrow felt by the victims. The American example has several lessons for India which is also a pluralistic society. It has demonstrated that differences of religion and ethnicity need not stand in the way of the nation unitedly facing all its challenges. If it is true that all religious faiths teach tolerance, humility and the value of helping neighbours, then the religious leaders of this nation could also engender unity and oneness of purpose by coming together periodically to pray for the nation. And when they focus on the fact that all people, regardless of their differences, share one common destiny, there could be greater communal harmony. Such



a consciousness ought to pave the way for peace in society.  
(M.P. K. Kutty)

**(a) Answer the following questions:**

**(i) When do people generally pray? Why?**

When individuals face dire situations, often they are led into prayer, their faith thus opens for them a source of comfort and encouragement in their hour of need.

**(ii) What is the importance of the nation praying as a collective entity?**

It gives them a sense of purpose and also a sense of unity as people sharing one destiny.

**(iii) Give two examples from the recent times when the nation was led to pray for a cause?**

The Gujarat earthquake/the Orissa cyclone or any other.

**(iv) How does the act of praying influence mind and Personality?**

The very act of praying teaches one to empathise with those who suffer. It broadens one's vision and outlook. It builds up one's character by imparting a sense of responsibility towards other people and situations.

**(v) What lesson does the American example demonstrate to India?**

The American example has several lessons for India which is also a pluralistic society, it has demonstrated that differences of religion and ethnicity need not stand in the way of the nation unitedly facing all its challenges.

**b) Find words from the passage which mean the same as the ones given below:**

(i) unity (para 2)  
solidarity

(ii) conflict (para 4)  
strife

(iii) Commendable (para7)  
exemplary

## PASSAGES FOR PRACTICE

### PASSAGE-3

#### **1. Read the following passage and answer the questions that follow: 8 Marks**

1. Three worrisome aspects of national life demand drastic measures as early as possible. These are: exploding population, rampant corruption and an administrative system which is among the worst in the world. Ever since Independence, these three problems have been pushed under the carpet because they require tough decisions.
2. Even as the country's population has crossed the one billion mark, our leaders continue to twiddle their thumbs. The so-called national population policy, announced with much fanfare recently, is an unmitigated farce. After talking about a dozen concerns pertaining to the health of women and children, it again puts "emphasis on voluntariness in the area of family planning. But experience of the last five decades shows that Indians population problem is of such a magnitude that mere recourse to persuasion and propaganda-which means voluntariness-is just not enough. There is urgent need for a centrally-sponsored nation-wide scheme of incentives and disincentives-a carrot-and-stick policy.
3. Needless to say, an incentive-disincentive scheme would initially cover the organised sector, which means employees of the Central and state governments as well as the public and private corporate sectors. The incentives-disincentives would entail monetary rewards, promotions and concessions relating to the education of children, housing and transportation. The details are not difficult to work out and have been written about ad nauseam.
4. Corruption has been corroding the very innards of the Indian nation. First, there is need for an attitudinal change. We should eschew the despicable habit of throwing up our hands in despair and lamenting that nothing can be done about corruption. Because of the innate avariciousness of human nature, it may be difficult to eradicate corruption, but it can definitely be reduced. For this, it is equally important to remember that we must attack corruption at the highest echelons of power because, like liquid, it flows from top to bottom. The Central Vigilance Commission is there to check corruption among bureaucrats. But what about corruption among ministers and parliamentarians who occupy a higher position than bureaucrats in the hierarchy of power ? It is here that the Lokpal comes in, an ombudsman-like institution independent of the government which would also cover the office of the Prime Minister.
5. There is also need to strike at the root cause of corruption by breaking the corrupt politician-businessman nexus. Politicians take black money from businessmen in order to fight elections. If there were state funding of political parties, this need would, to some extent be obviated. Considering that the quinquennial expense of elections in India is estimated around Rs 1000 crore, it, means that there is an annual need of just Rs 200 crore for state funding of political parties. For a country of India's size this is a manageable amount. Several advanced democracies, the USA and Germany among them, have state funding of political parties.

6. An atrocious administrative system is not only retarding the country's economic progress but has also become the average citizen's nightmare. At the time of Independence our leaders blindfoldedly adopted the colonial type of administration left behind by the British and imposed it on the nation. In the last five decades, despite a constant clamour, there has not been a single piece of administrative reform, with the result that the situation has been going from bad to worse.
7. Three administrative reforms should be introduced immediately. One, no file should be required to move more than three levels before a decision is taken. Two, there should be 'a moratorium on government recruitment till the size of the bureaucracy is reduced by 30 per cent over 10 years. Three, the foolproof security of service in government jobs should be rescinded. But, considering our pusillanimous leadership, who will bell the cat?

(Arund Bhandari)

**(a) Answer the following questions briefly in your own words as far as possible:**

- (i) What are the three worrisome issues faced by the present day India? 1 Mark
- (ii) Why has the National Population Policy not been effective in reducing population so far ? What is the author's suggestion in this regard? 1Marks
- (iii) Who should be targeted first for reducing corruption? What is the role of Lokpal in this context? 1 Marks
- (iv) What is the root cause of political corruption? What measure can be taken to reduce this? 1 Marks
- (v) Mention the main reforms that can be adopted to strengthen the administrative system in India? 1 Marks

**(b) Find words from the passage which mean the same as the ones given below:**  
3 Marks

- (i) severe (Para 1)
- (ii) scale (Para 2)
- (iii) greediness (Para 4)

#### PASSAGE-4

1. Read the following passage and answer the questions that follow:

The advance of knowledge is often a mixed blessing. Over the past 60 years, nuclear physics has been one obvious example of this truth. Over the next 60 years, genetics may be another. Today, enterprising firms offer, for a fee, to tell you about your genes. They claim that this knowledge will help you live longer and better. You might, for example,

have extra check-ups to detect early signs of the diseases that you are most at risk of contracting, or you could alter your diet to reduce that risk. If your chances of a long lifespan are not good, you might buy more life insurance, or even retire early to have enough time to do what you always wanted to do.

Selecting our children raises more profound ethical problems. This is not new. In developed countries, the routine testing of older pregnant women, combined with the availability of abortion, has significantly reduced the incidence of conditions like Down's syndrome. In some regions of India and China where couples are anxious to have a son, selective abortion has been the ultimate form of sexism, and has been practiced to such an extent that a generation is coming of age in which males face a shortage of female partners.

Selection of children need not involve abortion. For several years, some couples at risk of passing a genetic disease on to their children have used in vitro fertilisation, producing several embryos that can be tested for the faulty gene and implanting in the woman's uterus only those without it. Now couples are using this technique to avoid passing on genes that imply a significantly elevated risk of developing certain forms of cancer.

Since everyone carries some adverse genes, there is no clear line between selecting against a child with above-average risks of contracting a disease and selecting for a child with unusually rosy health prospects. Thus, genetic selection will inevitably move towards genetic enhancement. For many parents, nothing is more important than giving their child the best possible start in life. They buy expensive toys to maximise their child's learning potential and spend much more on private schools or after school tutoring in the hope that he or she will excel in the tests that determine entry to elite universities. It may not be long before we can identify genes that improve the odds of success in this quest.

In the case of sex selection, it is easy to see that couples who independently choose the best for their own child can produce an outcome that makes all their children worse off than they would have been if no one could select the sex of their child. Something similar could happen with other forms of genetic selection. Since above-average height correlates with above-average income, and there is clearly a genetic component to height, it is not fanciful to imagine couples choosing to have taller children. The outcome could be a genetic arms race that leads to taller and taller children, with significant environmental costs in the additional consumption required to fuel larger human beings.

The most alarming implication of this mode of genetic selection, however, is that only the rich will be able to afford it. The gap between rich and poor, already a challenge to our ideas of social justice, will become a chasm that mere equality of opportunity will be powerless to bridge. That is not a future that any of us should approve.

But avoiding this outcome will not be easy, for it will require that selection for genetic enhancement is either available to no one or accessible to everyone. The first option would require coercion, and since countries will not accept that others should gain a competitive edge, an international agreement to forego the benefits that genetic enhancement can bring. The second option, universal access, would require an unprecedented level of social assistance for the poor, and extraordinarily difficult decisions about what to subsidise.

(Peter Singer, TOD)

**Answer the following questions briefly in your own words as far as possible:**

- (i) How does the knowledge offered by some 'enterprising firms' help people?
- (ii) How can genetic selection help couples avoid from passing on the cancer affected genes to their next generation?
- (iii) Mention two positive effects of genetic selection.
- (iv) What are two main adverse effects of genetic selection?
- (v) Why is the universal access to the selection for the genetic enhancement not an easy option for nations to accept?
- (b) **Find words from the passage which mean the same as the ones given below :**
  - (i) innovative (Para 1)
  - (ii) moral (Para 2)
  - (iv) high

### PASSAGE-5

**1. Read the following passage carefully and answer the questions that follow:**

1. Our ancient sages and forefathers had taught us the importance of three qualities as essential requisites to preserve our culture eternally. They relate to our intellectual, emotional and physical aspects involving moment to moment transactions. They are fearlessness, non-attachment and non-violence.
2. The most important among the three is fearlessness. Whenever our culture or our values are threatened, we should have the courage to stand against the inimical forces. The conflict between truth and untruth or right and wrong, is a phenomenon that has baffled people right from the beginning of creation. Many times, we feel that wickedness is over-running righteousness. But we should realise that this is temporary. Ultimately, truth alone will win. This is the law of nature. The main weapon in the battle for the victory of Dharma (Righteousness) is fearlessness. This is essentially a state of mind.
3. To develop fearlessness, we have to shed our ego that often clouds our mind and intellect. First of all we must develop a firm conviction in the principles and beliefs, we value. We should then remain ready to sacrifice everything that we hold dear to us. Some people merely sacrifice their possessions, that too mainly for the sake of name and fame. That is not true sacrifice. Giving up one's ego with a spirit surrender or submission to the unseen power of Almighty to attain fearlessness is true sacrifice. We

understand submission as mere obedience to our superiors or others in authority, forgetting our basic responsibility that we should resist any attempt from any quarters to impose wrong practices and unrighteous acts.

4. Fearlessness can be attained only if another equally important quality like non-attachment can be cultivated. This calls for discrimination (Viveka). The ability to distinguish between the permanent and the temporary is called Viveka. There is no attachment to any person or a thing, be it a family or property. But this value comes only when we seek for higher levels of knowledge to attain wisdom, which is different from the skills or techniques or literary proficiency.
5. Supplementing both these qualities of fearlessness and non-attachment is the ability to remain non-violent under all circumstances. Non-violence is not limited to the physical body. One should practice non-violence in speech and thought too. It calls for immense will power. Jains as a community led by their monks have shown clearly the path of non-violence in day-to-day life. When we combine fearlessness and non-attachment with non-violence, we unleash forces which can bring down even powerful armies and mighty empires. Take the case of the United States of America, which had a fearless leader like Abraham Lincoln, who galvanised the urges of the people against slavery for freedom. Mahatma Gandhi inspired us for freedom from foreign rule by inspiring us through fearlessness, non-attachment and non-violence.
6. However, epics teach us that it is impossible to correct men like Duryodhana. In such cases, use of force is not only necessary, but it also becomes mandatory. The physical punishments parents mete out to their children for a positive purpose also cannot be considered as violence as long as no love is lost in the relationship. (Adapted-D. Narsimha Rao-HT)

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

- (i) What are the three essential requisites according to the passage to preserve our culture eternally? Of these, which is the most important?
- (ii) What is fearlessness an important weapon against? How?
- (iii) How can fearlessness be cultivated in a person?
- (iv) What is non-violence? Is violence always wrong? Explain.
- (v) How does the combination of the three requisites described in the passage help preserve our culture?

(b) **Find a word from the passage which means the same as each of the following :**

- (i) a thing which is needed for a purpose.
- (ii) that can be morally justified.
- (iii) to release something powerful.

## WRITING COMPOSITION

### INFORMAL/FORMAL INVITATIONS & REPLIES

There are two types of letter of invitations

- a. The formal letter of invitation
- b. The informal letter of invitation

Attributes of the Formal letter of Invitation

- i. It is written in Third Person.
- ii. Simple Present Tense is used
- iii. There is no signature
- iv. The address is given on the right side at the bottom.
- v. RSVP – a French word –(repondez sil vous plait)- please reply – is written at the bottom left side.
- vi. This category contains.
  - a. Name of the sender
  - b. Time and date of the event
  - c. Some formal expression – “request the pleasure of the company of “  
or  
“Solicite your gracious presence on the auspicious occasion of -----“  
or  
“Seek your auspicious presence at ----- “
  - d. Venue
  - e. The reason of the invitation

**Solved examples – formal Invitations.**

1.

<p>Mrs. and Mr. Satish Mehta Solicit your gracious presence on the auspicious occasion Of the marriage of their grand daughter <b>NISHI</b> (D/o Mrs. and Mr. Sharad Mehra) <b>NARENDRA</b> (S/o Mrs. &amp; Mr. L.K.Kashyap) On 18<sup>th</sup> October 2008 At 7:30 p.m. At INVITATION BANQUET HALL Model Town, Jaipur</p>	
RSVP	With best complements from
Virendra Mehra	All Relatives
7120011, 7210012	

2.

<p>Mrs. and Mr. Rajkumar Gupta Seek your auspicious presence At the GRAND CELEBRATION Of their son Rohit's admission To the <b>AIIMS</b> On 13<sup>th</sup> August 2008 at 6:00 P.M. At <b>LISTAV BANQUET HALL</b> K-18 Shalimar Bagh Delhi – 110052</p>	
RSVP	Compliments from
L-18 Karol Bagh	Friends and
Delhi 110058	Relatives
Ph- 7012131, 7025141	



### **Question for practice (Formal)**

1. Your school is organizing its Annual Sports Day. Draft an invitation to be sent to the parents.
2. Your grandparents are celebrating the golden jubilee of their marriage. Draft an invitation for friends and relatives.
3. A fast food restaurant has been opened in your colony's shopping centre. Draft an invitation card.
4. Swapana Srivastava is holding a birth day bash at her residence 6, Rouse Avenue, Delhi. Draft an invitation to her friends.

### **REPLIES-ACCEPTANCE/REFUSAL [FORMAL INVITATION]**

- Acknowledge the invitation
- Express thanks in Third person.
- Mention acceptance/refusal (specify reason)
- Be brief and specific

### **EXAMPLES**

#### **Refusal (Formal)**

C-2, greater Noida

U.P.

26<sup>th</sup> June 2008

Mrs. and Mr. V.K.Nair thank Mrs. and Mr. Bhartiya for the invitation to the inauguration of their showroom GALAXY on Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> June 2008 at 10:00 a.m. at B-2 Pitampura, Delhi.

However, they express their inability to be present on the occasion due to a prior engagement.

With Best Wishes

Nairs

#### **ACCEPTANCE (FORMAL)**

15 Rose Gardens

Bangalore

26<sup>th</sup> June 2008

Mrs. and Mr. V.K.Nair have a great pleasure in receiving the invitation from Dr. Kapoor for the workshop on ' Child Care' being held on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2008 at his clinic B-9-UV, Keshav Puram, Delhi from 9:00 a.m. onwards. They confirm their presence with thanks.

### **EXERCISE FOR PRACTICE**

1. You have Abhinav/ Akrite. You have received an invitation card from your close friend to attend the marriage his sister. But unfortunately, you cannot attend it due to your precious commitment. Write him expressing your inability to attend the marriage ceremony.
2. Your friend Mr. A.D.Bhalla has invited you to attend a marriage ceremony of his daughter Sangeeta on Sunday, the 30<sup>th</sup> June 2008 at 8:00 P.M. Write a formal reply accepting the above invitation.

## INFORMAL INVITATION

### REFUSAL, ACCEPTANCE

#### ATTRIBUTES OF INFORMAL LETTER OF INVITATION

- It is written in First person.
- Different tenses are used.
- The salutation is – Dear----- and Name.
- The complimentary close is – Your sincerely.
- The date of writing is given but no need to mention the year.
- Writers address is given
- There is no inside address
- No reply is asked for but the last sentence suggests that a reply is expected.

#### EXAMPLES

1. Suresh has been selected for Electronic Engineering in IIT, Delhi. He has decided to have a party for his friends. Write an invitation giving details of venue, time and date.

Dear Friends

Do join me for an Evening Bash at my residence 26, Rafi Marg, New Delhi on Sunday, 29<sup>th</sup> May at 6 P.M. This is to celebrate my selection for Electronic Engineering in IIT, Delhi. Looking forward to meet you all.

Suresh

2. Mamta grover is holding a get-together and lunch for all Mahila Samiti members and friends at her residence on 1<sup>st</sup> November at 12:30 P.M. Draft an invitation for the purpose.

Friends

I request the pleasure of your company at a get-together and lunch on Saturday, the 1<sup>st</sup>

November, 2008 at 12:30 P.M. at my residence. All the Mahila Samiti members will be joining us for an informal chat on Sundry topics regarding the welfare of colony.

Mamta

#### **ACCEPTANCE (INFORMAL)**

15, Tilak Palace

New Delhi

28<sup>th</sup> October, 2008

Dear Bantty

Many thanks for the invitation to the marriage of your daughter Sangeeta to be held on 1<sup>st</sup> November, 2008 at 7:00 P.M. at Residency Hotel. We shall be delighted to attend the same . in case, we can be of any service to you, do write to us unhesitatingly.

Yours sincerely

Manav

#### **REFUSAL (INFORMAL)**

C-56 Ankur Bhawan

Jaipur

20<sup>th</sup> October, 2008

Dear Bantty

I would have loved to attend the marriage of your daughter Sangeeta on 1<sup>st</sup> November, 2008 at 7:00 P.M. at your residence but, unfortunately, I will be away to Kanpur for a week during this period.

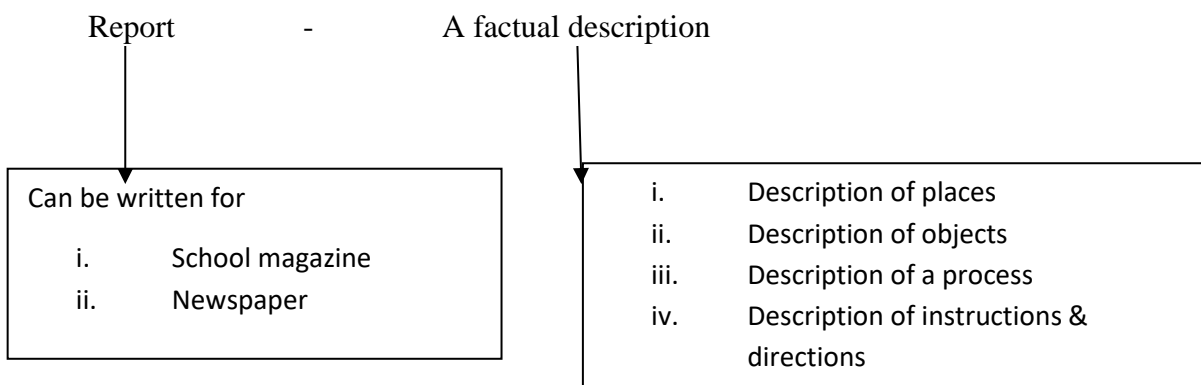
Kindly convey my heartiest blessing to the couple.

Yours sincerely

Manav

### EXERCISE

1. Write an informal letter to your friend inviting him on the house-warming ceremony of your newly constructed house.  
(1.1) Write an acceptance and refusal letter to the above.
2. Write an informal letter of invitation to your friend inviting him and his family to BHAGWATE JAGRAN.  
(2.1) Write an acceptance and refusal letter to the above.



## **REPORT WRITING**

Words limit – 100 to 125 words

Marks allotted – 5 marks

Time available – 8-10 Min.

### **DISTRIBUTION OF MARKS**

FORMAT	- 1 MARKS
CONTENT	- 2MARKS
EXPRESSION	- -2 MARKS

It should be written as a first person account –

A report gives a description of an event. Hence it should be prepared in the same order in which the event has happened. A report should be to the point and clear.

### **REPORT FOR A SCHOOL MAGAZINE**

**School activities may be published in a school magazine.**

#### **FORMAT**

- Give a title/ heading to the report.
- Writer's name, class & section.

#### **CONTENT**

- Factual information about the school activity/event, date time, venue.
- Sequence of programme, event.
- Information about chief guest/ judges/ participant.
- Highlights of the event.
- Kind of organization, people responsible for program arrangement.
- Result if describing a contest or conclusion.

### **REPORT FOR A NEWSPAPER**

[Political news, sports, accidents, natural disaster, crime etc. are usually subjects for news reports]

## **FORMAT**

- A. **Headline.**
- B. **Date & place of occurrence before beginning the report**
- C. **By a correspondent or an agency as its source.**

## **LANGUAGE & STYLE**

- **Formal**
- **Passive voice is preferred.**

**CONTENT** - **What, When, Where and how (highlights) and other relevant information/ details.**

**EXPRESSION** – **Grammatical accuracy, appropriate words and spellings.**

-**Coherence & relevance of ideas and style.**

## **SUGGESTED VALUE POINTS**

1. **Road accidents/Fire accidents, robbery, Train accident**
  - **Headline**
  - **What, When, Where.**
  - **Give reasons.**
  - **Details in brief.**
  - **Eye-witness account**
  - **Casualties, damages etc.**
  - **Action taken – role of police, fire brigades, local people.**
  - **Relief measures.**
  
2. **Cultural events/ Sports events/ celebrations**
  - **What, When, Where**
  - **Date, venue objectives**
  - **Name of the competition, level, topic**

- **Chief guest, special invitees**
  - **Inaugural ceremony, welcome.**
  - **Audience response.**
  - **Message by the chief guest.**
  - **Vote of thanks.**
3. **Camps/ Visits/ Exhibition**
- **Place, destination**
  - **Organizer**
  - **Duration, date etc.**
  - **Number of persons/ Visitors etc.**
  - **Description as applicable.**
    - Theme & type of exhibits
    - Sightseeing, scenic beauty, etc.
    - Purpose and nature of camp.
    - Activities undertaken.
4. **SILVER/PLATINUM JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS.**
- **What**
  - **When**
  - **Where**
  - **Platinum/ Silver jubilee celebrations**
  - **Cultural programmes/inter-school competitions.**
  - **Dignitaries present**
  - **Audience response.**
  - **Any other relevant details**



## **Examples of a report for the school magazine**

**1.**

### **EARTHQUAKE CAUSES INEXPLICABLE LOSS**

**BY LAVIS, XII-A**

It was republic day when people were lost in gaiety and merry-making. School children had gone to their school to participate in R'Day celebrations.

At about 10. A.m. We felt the earth shaking. The rumbling sound sent a shiver round on spine. The earth quake lasted for two minutes but in these two minutes lakhs of people in Bhuj, Surat Ahmedabad and Kutch Lost their lives. It was of a very severe intensity. It shook almost the entire Northern India Bhuj, being the epicenter of earthquake, was wiped off completely. Huge buildings were raged to grounds. There was a heavy loss of life. People were rendered shelterless in the cold winter. Govt. foreign countries and social organizations rose to the occasion. They sent money, blankets, food, clothes and medicines. Teams of doctors from all around and mechanical paraphernalia to remove the debris reached the spot. But it was not sufficient. People were in grave misery. Their miserable condition was inexplicable.

**2.**

### **HOW I SAVED A BOY FROM DROWNING**

**By Anju, XII-B**

On a hot summer day the students of our class decided to enjoy at the bank of Karnal-lake. Reaching there on our bikes, we sat down under the cool shade of the trees on the bank of the lake. Then we started running after the other. One of us slipped and fell into the water. He was drowning. I, at once, ramped into the water swam to the boy and brought him on the bank. His body was swollen with water. He was unconscious. One of us ran to his parents, informed them and took him to the hospital. The doctor pressed out the water out of his stomach. He praised us for bringing the boy to the hospital well in time. A little delay could be fatal. The boy came to this senses. His parents reached the hospital and thanked me profusely for saving their child's life. I felt an inner joy saving a precious life.

### **EXAMPLE OF A REPORT FOR THE NEWSPAPER**

3.

#### **Children Theatre Workshop Held.**

Jaipur, May 19:

Natya Kala Sangam organized a Children's Theatre workshop from 1<sup>st</sup> May to 18<sup>th</sup> May. The age limit was from 7 yrs. To 17 yrs. There was no training fee and the registration was open only on one day from 9 am to 11 am. Since there were only limited seats available, registration was done on first come first served basis. As you can understand I was one of the.

The children were divided into 2 groups according to their ages. The younger children were taught the basics of only acting. How to deliver dialogues, where to pause how to give modulation to one's voice were some of the things included in it. Older children were taught many more aspects of drama like creating the script of a play from a story, innovating dialogues from imagination, basic of direction, stage management, effective use of props etc. In the last week children were divided into different groups, each was assigned a separate play which had to be put up. Parents were invited and results were there for all to use.

--- Bhasker Correspondent

4.

### **5 Killed in Anaj Mandi-Fire in Ganganagar**

By- Manjeet Bawa, staff reporter

News Times

Ganganagar, May 19: At least five people died in district Ganganagar on May 19 and many got injured when a fire engulfed five shops in the wholesale grain market of Ganganagar on Thursday afternoon,

Onlookers said that it began with an explosion from a nearby transformer. First there sparks in the transformer, which later, started flying into adjoining shops. The blaze spread swiftly in the congested area trapping workers in the basement area of the shops. The stored dry grains proved to be a fast medium for the spread of the fire. The chief minister has announced Rs. 20000 as compensation to the kill of each dead. Those injured will also be compensated. An inquiry has been setup to look into the cause of the explosion in the transformer.

5.

### **TRAFFIC JAM**

Gurgaon : 23<sup>rd</sup> May, 2008

For students of D.A.V. Public school, Rohtak boarded a Haryana Roadways bus (No- HNN 3369) at sample for Rohtak. When the bus reached near the school, the said students pleaded that they be dropped down there. Instead, the driver accelerated the speed and reached bus stand.

There was an exchange of hot words between the students and the roadways staff thereupon, the students rushed to the school and raised a hue and cry against the excesses done to them by the roadways staff. The students came out of their classes, collected at national highway and jammed the traffic. They started raising slogans against the general manager, Haryana Roadways. Some students even threw stones at the glass panes of the buses. The police rushed to the spot. The traffic could be resumed only after the S.P. and the Dy. Commissioner gave full assurance to the students that the strict action would be taken against the errant driver and the conductor.

-A report by Seema Chawla-Press Reporter

Times of India

6.

### **CAREER COUNSELLING PROGRAMME**

(Atul – a reporter from Career Times)

Jaipur : 24<sup>th</sup> May, 2008

A one day Career Counselling programme was organized in our school by Careers India, Jaipur on 23<sup>rd</sup> May, 2008 at 10:00 P.M. Students of class X, XI and XII some of them along with their parents attended the programme. Students of Sr. classes from some other schools also attended the lectures delivered by the experts in the fields of food technology, fashion technology and media management.

Students of Science Stream took very little interest in food technology and fashion designing. The students of Humanities stream and commerce stream showed interest in media management. They were stick to learn of the vistas opened them. They learnt that they could be journalists, editors and news telecasters. Some of the parents put questions to know more of avenues opened for their words. It was a very nice programme. All had a word of praise for it. In the end, the principal thanked the professionals for sparing their valuable time for the students.

### **FACTUAL DESCRIPTION**

#### **Value points**

1. Description of Places

Purpose – Travel, article, geography lesson, letter to a friend.

**1.1** Spatial description in all its vividness so that it is easy to visualize as location, features, special qualities, food, recreational activities, local people, art and craft monuments of cultural, historical and religious importance of language etc.

**1.2** Language can be rich and figurative with the use of colourful adjectives, verbs 2 phrases.

**1.3** Be selective, don't give unrelated details in paragraph.

2.

### **SCHOOL BUILT A NEW COMPUTER ROOM**

By Snahil, XII-A

One week ago the school became the proud owner of 20 sophisticated sleek computers. They are IBM compatible Models complete with Central Processing Unit (CPU), key board, printer, terminal and mouse. They have various applications running on the system like basic language programming, spread sheet, word processor, etc. some video games have also been loaded to generate interest among the students and teach them how to use the various units. The machines are kept in air conditioned room which has to be kept dust-free. So shoes are taken out and the main room is separated by a glass screen from the entrance.

Two computer teachers have been appointed who have already started teaching us the theoretical portions of the syllabus, mainly the computer language. The other one is teaching us the keyboard and mouse. When the school installed the machines many of us had seen the computers from such close quarters for the first time. It was a thrilling experience.

## APPLICATION FOR JOB

### MAIN POINTS

- Source of information
- Request for job
- Bio-data
- Enclosures

### A GENERAL FORMAT OF BUSINESS/OFFICIAL LETTERS

1.	<b>Sender's Address</b> & <b>Date</b>	1. Delhi Public Library Shyama Prasad Mrkh- Marg  Delhi-110006.  2 <sup>nd</sup> March, 2009
2.	<b>Addressee's Address</b>	2. The Sales Manager M/s Jiwan Publishing House(P)Ltd. 24, Ansari Road, Daryaganj  New Delhi-110002
3.	<b>Salutation</b>	3. Sir/Madam
4.	<b>Subject</b>	4. Sub: Order for Books
5.	<b>Content</b>	5. It would be much obliged on your part if you could kindly send me the following books by VPP. These are urgently required.  - ..... - ..... - .....

**SUBSCRIPTION**

6. Thanking you

**SIGNATORY**

7. Yours faithfully

Sd/

(Harish Kumar)

Chief Librarian

### **Enclosures**

(if any)

### **Example:**

#### **Advertisement-**

COACHING INSTITUTE AT PITAMPUR

Requires Part-Time Tutors for primary/middle classes. Graduates/under graduates with excellent academic record can apply. Write to

Career Point, A-50, Pushp Enclave  
New Delhi.

**Q.** Sameer narang sees the above ad. In the “Morning News” and decides to apply for the job.

His address is 16, Jawahar Nagar, New Delhi.

**Sol.**

16, Jawahar Nagar

New Delhi.

17 Feb 2008

Career Point  
A-50  
Pushp Enclave,  
New Delhi.

Sir

**Sub: Application for the post of Tutors.**

This refers to your advertisement published in the “Morning News” dated 13<sup>th</sup> February,2003, I wish to submit my application for the post of tutor for primary classes. I am doing my graduation B.Sc. and have taught primary school children earlier also. I hope my interest in teaching and previous experience of the same will hold me in good stead for the job. I would be happy to hear from you. I enclose herewith my complete bio-data.

Thanking you  
your faithfully

Sd

(Sameer Narang)

**Bio-Data**

1. Name : SAMEER NARANG
2. Father's Name : Sh. A.K.NARANG
3. Mother's Name : Mrs. NALINI NARANG
4. Date of Birth : 8<sup>th</sup> JUNE, 1988
5. Permanent Address : A-50 KAROL BAGH, DELHI
6. Postal Address : SHANTI TUTORIALS  
G.T.ROAD, NEW DELHI
7. Qualification:  
School level - X-65%, XII- 72%  
College level - B.Sc. I year 68%



8. Professional Qualification : Computer knowledge
9. Experience : Taught tuition to class IX and V  
Children for two yrs.
10. Salary Expected : Rs. 10000 approx.
11. Reference : a. Dr. Anik Sharma(BDK Hospital)  
b. Dr. Rajesh Verma(BDK Hospital)

## EXERCISES FOR PRACTICE

1. Ad.

JFC Finance requires female receptionist, young, pleasant personality, Apply with full particular to – Manager, S-308, Dhaka chamber, Kolkata.

**Q.**Monika Sah sees the above advertisement in Career Times and decides to apply for the same. Her address is 6-Ganga Devi Market, Kolkata.

2. Ad.

Lab attendant required for a Senior Secondary School. Applicant must be Secondary pass. Apply to the Chairman, Annie Sr.Sec. School, Manipur.

**Q.**Kavita Nath of 9/8 Downer Street Sees this ad in the paper and decides to apply. Write the application.

3. Ad.

Required Boys/girls for “Have all” department store. Young, active and polite people preferred. Write to manager, have all Departmental store.

**Q.**Sameena sees this advertisement published in the “Local News” Aurangabad. She decides to apply. Her address is 38, Stadium Area, Aurangabad.

## Advanced Exercises

1. The problem of corruption is increasing in India with a rise in consumerism and inflation. Mr. S.K. Singh, a lecturer in Physics. Writes a letter to the editor of “Our India” expressing this views on the steady decline in moral values of Indians. His address in save India Forum, Patna.
2. Repeated strike of doctors leaves patients at the mercy of god. Mr. kaushal who had a bitter experience recently when he fell sick and had to be admitted to a hospital writes a letter to the Editor of “The patriot” narrating his tale of woe and generating public opinion on “Why shouldn’t essential services be banned from going on strike ?”.
3. Indian international public school, Kanpur, a privately run school has increased fees twice in one session much to the inconvenience of the parents. The parents write a letter to the school authorities through the Chairman, parents Teachers Association, complaining about the un-proportionate like and requesting them to reconsider their decision.
4. Sagar Chauhan writes a letter of complaint to the director, Telephone Nigam because his phone has been out of order for several weeks and not been attended even after several reminders, His address is 21/6 H Scheme Gomti Nagar, Lucknow. Write his letter.
5. This summer vacation you are planning to visit shimla. Write a letter to travel agency in shimla requesting them to book you a room in a five star hotel. Give other detail of your journey and facilities you require there. Sign your name as Leela/Mohan , c/5 Assam.
6. Ad.

### SCHOLARSHIPS

April 30 : Inlaks Scholarships

Applications from graduates for scholarship by  
Inlaks Foundation for projects or studies in any  
subject in UK & USA. Contact : - Inlaks Foundation,  
P.O.Box No. 2108 New Delhi.

Manisha is a very brilliant student who has completed B.Sc. Chemistry Honors from Delhi University. Her friend shows her this newspaper cutting. She enquires from them (in the form of a letter) more details about the scheme. Her address is 63, Press Enclave N.D. write her letter.

7. Madhumita Rai of Nehru colony, Delhi is interested in taking up a career in acting. She decides to send her resume to CINEVISTA FILMS,P.O. Street, Shalimar Bagh, New Delhi. Write her letter.
8. You are Vinesh Jain of 27-G/Raja Mandi Agra. Write a letter to the president of your Municipal committee drawing his attention to the problem.
9. Write a letter to the Editor of the Indian Express, New Delhi complaining about the frequent break down in the supply of electricity in your locality.
10. You are Apoorva/Arpita. You bought a Mixie from Ganesh Electronics & Electricals, Gandhi Marg, Nagpur. It does not function properly. Write a letter to the Sales Manager of the shop complaining about the defect and asking for immediate replacement or repair as necessary.

# LITERATURE

## The Rattrap

By Selma Lagerlof

### Theme

The story is about an old disheartened peddler who is taken in and shown generosity by a young woman. Her generosity and kindness change his bitter attitude towards life. The peddler is a man who has fallen upon misfortune and now resorts to selling rattraps, begging, and thievery. He is very pessimistic about the world around him and sees the world as merely a “rat trap”. He believes that society tempts us with riches and fine things, and when we accept, we are caught in the trap and are left with nothing.

The story conveys a universal message that the essential goodness in a human being can be awakened through love, respect, kindness and understanding. It highlights the human predicament. Material benefits are the traps that most human beings are prone to fall into. Human beings do have a tendency to redeem themselves from dishonest ways as does the peddler at the end of the story.

### Summary:

A rattrap peddler went around selling small rattraps. His clothes were in rags. His cheeks were hollow. He had the look of a starved man. He made wire traps. He begged the material from stores and big farms. Sometimes he resorted to begging and a little stealing to survive. The world had never been kind to him. He had no home, no shelter.

The peddler led a lonely life. One day while he was thinking about his rattraps, an idea struck him. He thought that the world itself was a rattrap. As soon as anybody touched it, the trap closed on them. He was amused to think of some people who were already trapped, and some others who were trying to reach the bait in the trap. It was a cold evening in December. He reached a cottage on the roadside. He knocked at the door and asked for a night’s shelter. The owner of the cottage was a lonely old crofter. He wanted someone to talk to. He welcomed the peddler. He gave the peddler hot porridge to eat, and tobacco to smoke. Then they played cards. The crofter was

generous as well as trustful. He told the peddler that he had a cow and sold her milk to a creamery. He also told him that he received thirty kronors as payment the previous month. Then he took down a pouch and showed him the money. Then he put the money back in the pouch and hung it on a nail in the window frame.

Next morning the peddler left. The crofter locked his cottage, and went away. The peddler came back to the cottage. He had been tempted to steal the money that hung like a bait in the window frame. He smashed the pane and stole the money. Now he thought it was not safe to walk along the public highway. So he went into the woods. There he walked and walked but could not get out. He moved in circles. He was tired. He looked upon the forest as a rattrap in which he was caught. He thought his end was near. He lay down to die.

After a while he heard regular thumping of a hammer's strokes. He knew the sound was coming from Ramsjö Ironworks. He stood up and walked in the direction of the sound. He opened the gate of the ironworks and went into the forge. The owner came on his nightly rounds and noticed the ragged wretch near the furnace. The ironmaster looked intently at the peddler's face. He felt sure that the peddler was one of his old regimental comrades, Captain von Stable who had fallen on evil days. He invited the peddler to go home with him for Christmas. But the peddler was alarmed. He thought it was risky for him to accept the offer. He firmly declined it. The ironmaster went home. The ironmaster sent his daughter Edla to persuade the peddler to come home. She spoke gently to him. The peddler felt confidence in her and agreed to go with her. On the way he was sorry to have stolen the crofter's money that had put him in a trap.

The ironmaster was happy to have his old regimental comrade under his roof. He planned to feed him well and give him some respectable work. The servant cut the peddler's hair, shaved him and bathed him. The peddler appeared wearing one of the ironmaster's fine suits. But when the ironmaster looked at him in daylight, he felt that he had made a mistake. The peddler was not captain von Stable. He thought that the man had deceived him. He even thought of handing him to the sheriff. The peddler said that he had not pretended to be what he was not. He had not been willing to go to the ironmaster's house. Even then he was willing to put on his rags and leave. He also told the ironmaster that the world was a rattrap, and he himself might one day be tempted by a big bait and get caught in the trap. The ironmaster told him to leave at once. Edla did not like her father's asking the poor peddler to leave. She thought it was unfair to turn away the man whom

they had invited. She wanted to have the joy of entertaining a homeless wanderer on Christmas Eve. She stopped the peddler and her father agreed to it.

Edla served food to the peddler. He was given Christmas presents which he thankfully received. Edla told him that her father's suit that the peddler was wearing was also a Christmas present. She assured him that he would be welcomed again if he liked to spend the next Christmas Eve with them. Next morning the ironmaster and his daughter went to church. There they learned that the peddler was a thief. He had robbed the crofter. The ironmaster was sure that the peddler must have made away with their silver. Edla was dejected. But when they reached home they learned that the peddler had left. But he had taken away nothing. On the other hand he had left a Christmas present for Edla. Edla opened the present. It was a tiny rattrap. Edla was happy to see that the peddler had left the crofter's money behind. There was a letter also. It was addressed to Edla. He thanked her for her kindness. He wanted to repay her kindness. So he had left the crofter's money and had requested her to return it to the crofter. He said he had been raised to captain. That was why he could come out of the rattrap in which he had been caught. He signed the letter Captain von Stable.

### **Gist of the lesson:**

- The peddler was a vagabond who sold ratttraps with a little thievery on the side to make both ends meet. Had no worldly possession to call his own, not even a name
  - . . It amused him to think of the world as a rattrap.
- Takes shelter at a crofter's cottage. The crofter welcomed him, gave him dinner, shared his pipe, played 'mjolis' with him also confided in him about his income and showed him where he put it.
- Next morning, the Peddler steals the money and takes the back roads to keep away from people and gets lost in the jungle at night. While he wanders in the forest he realizes that he has also got caught in the rattrap and that the money was the bait.
- Finally reaches Ramsjo ironworks, where he takes shelter for the night. The blacksmith and his assistant ignore him but the master mistakes him to be an old acquaintance and invites him home. Though the Peddler does not correct the ironmaster, hoping to get some money out of him, he declines his invitation.
- The ironmaster then sends his daughter who persuades him to go home with her. She notices his uncouth appearance and thinks that either he has stolen something or he has escaped from jail.
- The Peddler is scrubbed, bathed, given a haircut, a shave and a suit of old clothes of the ironmaster. In the morning light, the iron master realizes he is mistaken and that he is not the Captain. He wants to call the Sheriff. The peddler is agitated and breaks out that the world is rattrap and he too is sure to be caught in it. The ironmaster is amused but orders him out. The compassionate Edla convinces her father that he should spend the Christmas day with him.

- The Peddler spends the whole of Christmas Eve eating and sleeping. The next day at church, Edla and her father come to know that the Peddler is a thief who stole thirty kroners from the poor crofter.
- Back home, they found a letter addressed to Edla, signed as Captain Von Stahl and a rattrap as a gift from the crofter. In the rattrap were the three ten kroner notes of the crofter.

### Setting

This story is set amidst the mines of Sweden, rich in iron ore which figure large in the history of that country. The story is told somewhat in the manner of a fairy tale.

### Characters

1. A peddler with rattraps.
2. An Oldman: A crofter
3. Master Smith in the Ramsjo Iron Mill in Sweden
4. Helpers in the Mill: blacksmiths
5. Iron mill owner
6. Edla Willmansson – daughter of the Iron Mill owner.

### **Important questions**

1. **From where did the peddler get the idea of the world being a rattrap?**  
**Ans:** The peddler had been thinking of his rattraps when suddenly he was struck by the idea that the whole world was nothing but a big rattrap. It existed only to set baits for people. It offered riches and joys, shelter and food, heat and clothing in the same manner as the rattrap offered cheese and pork. As soon as someone let himself be tempted to touch the bait, it closed in on him, and then everything came to an end.
2. **Why was he amused by this idea?**  
**Ans:** His own life was sad and monotonous. He walked laboriously from place to place. The world had never been kind to him. So, during his gloomy ploddings, this idea became his favourite pastime. He was amused how people let themselves be caught in the dangerous snare and how others were still circling around the bait.
3. **Did the peddler expect the kind of hospitality that he received from the crofter?**  
**Ans:** The crofter served him porridge for supper and tobacco for his pipe. He also played a game of cards with him till bed time. This hospitality was unexpected as people usually made sour faces when the peddler asked for shelter.
4. **Why was the crofter so talkative and friendly with the peddler?**  
**Ans:** The crofter's circumstances and temperament made him so talkative and friendly with the peddler. Since he had no wife or child, he was happy to get someone to talk to in his loneliness. Secondly, he was quite generous with his confidences.
5. **Why did he show the thirty kronor to the peddler?**  
**Ans:** The crofter had told the peddler that by supplying his cow's milk to the creamery, he



had received thirty kronor in payment. The peddler seemed to doubt it. So, in order to assure his guest of the truth he showed the thirty kronor to the peddler.

**6. Did the peddler respect the confidence reposed in him by the crofter?**

**Ans:** No, the peddler did not respect the confidence reposed in him by the crofter. At the very first opportunity that he got, he smashed the window pane, took out the money and hung the leather pouch back in its place. Then he went away.

**7. What made the peddler think that he had indeed fallen into a rattrap?**

**Ans:** The peddler realised that he must not walk on the public highway with the stolen money in his pocket. He went into the woods. He kept walking without coming to the end of the wood. Then he realised that he had fallen in the rattrap. He had let himself befooled by a bait and had been caught in.

**8. Why did the ironmaster speak kindly to the peddler and invite him home?**

**Ans:** The ironmaster walked closely up to the peddler. In the uncertain reflection from the furnace, he mistook the man as his old regimental comrade, Captain Von Stahle. He addressed the stranger as Nils Olof, spoke very kindly and invited him home.

**9. Why did the peddler decline the invitation?**

**Ans:** The peddler knew that the ironmaster had mistaken him for his old regimental comrade. Secondly, he had stolen money—thirty kronor—on him. Going to the ironmaster's residence would be like entering the lion's den. So, he declined the invitation.

**10. What made the peddler accept Edla Willmansson's invitation?**

**Ans:** Miss Edla Willmansson looked at the peddler quite compassionately. She noticed that the man was afraid. She assured him that he would be allowed to leave just as freely as he came. She requested him to stay with them over Christmas Eve. Her friendly manner made the peddler feel confidence in her and accept her invitation.

**11. What doubts did Edla have about the peddler?**

**Ans:** As Edla lifted the peddler's hat, he jumped up abruptly and seemed to be quite frightened. Even her kind looks, disclosure of her name and purpose of visit failed to calm him. From his fear, she thought that either he had stolen something or he had escaped from jail.

**12. When did the ironmaster realise his mistake?**

**Ans:** Next morning, the stranger was cleaned and well-dressed. The valet had bathed him, cut his hair and shaved him. He was led to the dining room for breakfast. The ironmaster saw him in broad daylight. It was impossible to mistake him for an old acquaintance now. Then the ironmaster realised his mistake and threatened to call the Sheriff.

**13. How did the peddler defend himself against not having revealed his true identity?**

**Ans:** The peddler explained that he had not tried to pretend as his acquaintance. He was not at fault. All along he had maintained that he was a poor trader. He had pleaded and begged to be allowed to stay in the forge. No harm had been done by his stay. He was willing to put on his rags again and go away.

**14. Why did Edla still entertain the peddler even after she knew the truth about him?**

**Ans:** Edla did not think it proper on their part to chase away a human being whom they had asked to come to their house and had promised him Christmas cheer. She understood the reality of the peddler's life and wanted him to enjoy a day of peace with them. Hence, she still entertained the peddler even after knowing the truth about him.

**15. Why was Edla happy to see the gift left by the peddler?**

**Ans:** As soon as Edla opened the package of the gift, the contents came into view. She found a small rattrap with three wrinkled ten kronor notes and a letter addressed to her. The peddler wanted to be nice in return as she had been so nice to him all day long. He did not want her to be embarrassed at the Christmas season by a thief.

**16. Why did the peddler sign himself as Captain von Stahle?**

**Ans:** The ironmaster has invited the peddler to his house mistaking him for Captain von Stahle. He was welcomed there and looked after as captain even after the reality became known. The peddler got a chance to redeem himself from dishonest ways by acting as an honourable Captain.

**17. How does the peddler interpret the acts of kindness and hospitality shown by the crofter, the iron master and his daughter?**

**Ans:** The peddler interprets the acts of kindness and hospitality shown by the crofter, the iron master and his daughter differently. He cheats the crofter as he provides him company in his loneliness and helps him pass time. He wants to get a couple of kronors from the iron master and is surprised at the contrasting style of behaviour of father and daughter. He is touched by the kindness, care and intervention of Edla on his behalf.

**18. What are the instances in the story that show that the character of the ironmaster is different from that of his daughter in many ways?**

**Ans:** The ironmaster is impulsive\* whereas his daughter is cool, logical, kind and thoughtful. In uncertain light he (iron master) mistakes the stranger as his old regiment comrade. He invites him home and takes care of his feeding, clothing etc. When he sees him in broad day light he calls the man dishonest, demands an explanation and is ready to call in the sheriff. His daughter is more observant. She notices the fear of the stranger and thinks that either he is a thief or a run-away prisoner. In spite of that she is gentle, kind and friendly to him. She treats him nicely even after knowing the mistake in identity

**19. The story has many instances of unexpected reactions from the characters to others' behaviour. Pick out instances of these surprises.**

**Ans:** The peddler is surprised at the warm welcome, generous supper, cheerful company and intimate confidences by the crofter. The ironmaster addresses the peddler as Captain von Stahle. He is surprised when the ironmaster calls him "Nils Olof. The ironmaster assumes his declining the invitation a result of embarrassment caused by his miserable clothing. The peddler's comparison of the world to a rattrap makes the ironmaster laugh and he drops the idea of calling in the sheriff.

The peddler looks at Edla in boundless amazement when she tells him that the suit is a Christmas present. She also invites him to spend next Christmas with them. She does all this even after knowing the mistake about his identity. The crofter is robbed by his guest, the rattrap peddler, in return of his hospitality.

**20. What made the peddler finally change his ways?**

**Ans:** Edla Willmansson treated the tramp in a friendly manner. She was nice and kind to her. She interceded on his behalf when her father was about to turn him out. She still entertained the peddler even after knowing the truth about him. She offered him the suit as Christmas present and invited him to spend the next Christmas with them. Her love and understanding aroused the essential goodness in the peddler and finally he changed his ways.

**21. How does the metaphor of the rattrap serve to highlight the human predicament?**

**Ans:** The world entices a person through the various good things of life such as riches and joy, shelter and food, heat and clothing. These were just like the baits in the rattrap. Once someone is tempted by the bait, the world closed on him. The peddler was tempted by thirty kronor of the crofter. It makes him hide himself. He walks through the wood. He is afraid to go to the Manor house. He gets peace only after returning the bait (money).

**22. The peddler comes out as a person with a subtle sense of humour. How does this serve in lightening the seriousness of the theme of the story and also endear him to us?**

**Ans:** The peddler has a subtle sense of humour, which is revealed during his interactions with the ironmaster and his daughter after the truth about him becomes known. He is neither afraid of being turned out in cold in rags nor of being sent to prison. He makes the ironmaster laugh

with his metaphor of the rattrap. His letter with the Christmas present to Edla is a fine example of his capacity to make others laugh at him. Thus, he lightens the seriousness of the theme of the story and also endears himself to us.

**23. The reader's sympathy is with the peddler right from the beginning of the story. Why is this so? Is the sympathy justified?**

**Ans:** The peddler wins our sympathy for his way of life and how the world treats him. It is an admitted fact that the underdog always runs away with sympathy, so does the peddler with the rattraps. He begs the material like wire for his rattraps. His business not being specially profitable, he resorts to begging and petty thievery to keep body and soul together. His life is sad and monotonous. He plods along the road lost in his own meditation. The world has never been very kind to him and he feels happy in calling it a rattrap. Whenever, he asks shelter for the night, he meets sour faces. He is an unwelcome, unwanted and undesirable figure. The blacksmiths at forge glance at him only casually and indifferently. The master blacksmith nods a haughty consent without honouring him with a single word. The old and lonely crofter finds him an enjoyable company. The ironmaster mistakes him for an old regimental comrade. Only Edla Willmansson behaves with him in a kind, friendly manner. Her nice treatment arouses the tramp's goodness. He redeems himself by returning the stolen money and wins our admiration. Thus, we see that the sympathy is not only well earned but well justified too.

**24. The story also focuses on human loneliness and the need to bond with others.**

**Ans:** There are at least three characters in the story who suffer from loneliness and express the need to bond with others. They represent three strata of the human society as well. The peddler with the rattraps, the old crofter and the ironmaster all suffer from loneliness. The peddler is called a tramp, a vagabond and stranger at various points of the story. He moves wearily from one place to the other. He is lost in his own thoughts. He seeks shelter for night and people look at him with sour faces. Even the blacksmiths look haughtily at him and nod consent. The old crofter suffers from loneliness as he has neither wife nor child with him. Hence, he feels happy when he gets the peddler to talk to in his loneliness. The ironmaster is also lonely in his manor house. His wife Elizabeth has died and his sons are abroad. There is no one at home except his oldest daughter and himself. His requests to Captain von Stehle to accompany him show his need for human bonding. He admits frankly that they didn't have any company for Christmas. The stranger turns down the request not because he is against bonding with others but because he fears being caught with stolen money.

**25. The story is both entertaining and philosophical. Discuss.**

**Ans:** The story entertains us by providing glimpses into human nature and how people react to various situations. The actions of the peddler after stealing thirty kronor are quite amusing. The reactions of the blacksmiths to the tramp's request for shelter show how casual and indifferent human beings can be.

The U-turn in the ironmaster's attitude towards the stranger reveal how selfish and ignorant human beings can be. Mistaking the vagabond for his old regimental comrade, whom he thinks he has run across unexpectedly, he asks the stranger to accompany him home and spend Christmas with them. When the stranger refuses to go with him, the ironmaster sends his daughter. With her better persuasive power she makes him follow her.

The ironmaster is annoyed on seeing the stranger in broad daylight. But instead of realising his own mistake, he puts the blame on the man. He talks of handing him over to the sheriff. The metaphor of the world being a rattrap saves the situation for the tramp, but the ironmaster wants to turn him out. His daughter's comments are quite entertaining and philosophical. She wants the tramp to enjoy a day of peace. Secondly, she does not want to chase away a person whom they had invited home and had promised Christmas cheer.



# INDIGO

By Louis Fischer

## Summary:

This story describes Gandhi's struggle for the poor peasants of Champaran. In those days most of arable land in the Champaran district was divided into large estate owned by Englishmen and worked by Indian tenants. The chief commercial crop was Indigo. The landlords compelled all tenants to plant 15% of their Indigo and surrender the entire Indigo harvest as rent. This was done by long term contract.

The British didn't need the Indigo crop any more when Germany had developed synthetic Indigo. Just to release the peasants from the 15% agreement they demanded compensation. Some illiterate peasants agreed but the others refused. One of the sharecroppers named Raj Kumar Shukla met Gandhi in this regard and compelled him to visit Champaran because of the long term injustice of landlords. Then the two of them boarded a train for the city of Patna in Bihar. From there Shukla led him to the house of a lawyer named Rajendra Prasad. Mahatma Gandhi's humble and simple attire made the servants mistook him as another poor peasant. He surveyed before taking any vital step in order to get those peasants justice. It was the time when British government punished those who in any condition gave shelter to national leaders or protesters.

Gandhi's arrival and the nature of his mission spread like a wildfire. Many lawyers and peasant groups came in large numbers to support him. The lawyers accepted the fact that their charges were high and for a poor peasant it will be irksome. Gandhi rebuked them for collecting big fee from the sharecroppers. He stressed on counseling as this would give the peasants enough confidence to fight their fear. He managed to get justice after a yearlong battle for the peasants. He also made arrangements for the education, health, and hygiene for the families of the poor peasants. He gave them the lesson of self-reliance.

## Gist of the lesson:

- Raj Kumar Shukla- A poor sharecropper from Champaran wishing to meet Gandhiji.

- Raj Kumar Shukla – illiterate but resolute, hence followed Gandhiji to Lucknow, Cawnpore, Ahmedabad, Calcutta, Patna, Muzzafarpur and then Camparan.
- Servants at Rajendra Prasad’s residence thought Gandhiji to be an untouchable.
- Gandhiji considered as an untouchable because of simple living style and wearing, due to the company of Raj Kumar Shukla.
- Decided to go to Muzzafarpur first to get detailed information about Champaran sharecropper.
- Sent telegram to J B Kriplani & stayed in Prof Malkani’s home –a government servant.
- Indians afraid of showing sympathy to the supporters of home rule.
- The news of Gandhiji’s arrival spread –sharecroppers gathered in large number to meet their champion.
- Gandhiji chided the Muzzafarpur lawyer for taking high fee.
- Champaran district was divided into estate owned by English people, Indians only tenant farmers. · Landlords compelled tenants to plant 15% of their land with indigo and surrender their entire harvest as rent. 87
- In the meantime Germany had developed synthetic indigo –British landlords freed the Indian farmers from the 15% arrangement but asked them to pay compensation.
- Many signed, some resisted engaged lawyers, and landlords hired thugs.
- Gandhiji reached Champaran –visited the secretary of the British landlord association to get the facts but denied as he was an outsider
- Gandhiji went to the British Official Commissioner who asked him to leave Tirhut , Gandhiji disobeyed, went to Motihari the capital of Champaran where a vast multitude greeted him, continued his investigations.
- Visited maltreated villagers, stopped by the police superintendent but disobeyed the order
- .Motihari black with peasants spontaneous demonstrations, Gandhiji released without bail Civil Disobedience triumphed.
- Gandhiji agreed to 25% refund by the landowners, it symbolised the surrender of the prestige
- Gandhiji worked hard towards social economic reforms, elevated their distress aided by his wife, Mahadev Desai, Narhari Parikh.
- Gandhiji taught a lesson of self- reliance by not seeking help of an English man Mr. Andrews.

### **Important questions**

#### **Q1.Who was Rajkumar Shukla? Why did he come to Lucknow?**

**Ans:** Rajkumar Shukla was a poor peasant from Champaran district in Bihar. He had come to Lucknow, where a Congress session was being held, to complain about the injustice of the landlord system in Bihar.

**Q2. Where is Champaran district situated? What did the peasants grow there? How did they use their harvest?**

**Ans:** Champaran district of Bihar is situated in the foothills of the Himalayas, near the kingdom of Nepal. Under an ancient arrangement, the Champaran peasants were sharecroppers. They had to grow indigo on 15 per cent of the land and give it to the English estate owners as rent.

**Q3. How did the development of synthetic indigo affect the English estate owners and the Indian tenants?**

**Ans:** The English estate owners saw that indigo cultivation was no longer profitable. They wanted money from the sharecroppers as compensation for being released from the 15 per cent arrangement. They obtained agreements from their tenants to this effect and extorted money illegally and deceitfully.

**Q4. How did the Indian peasants react to the new agreement released them from sharecropping arrangement?**

**Ans:** The sharecropping arrangement was troublesome to the peasants. Many of them signed the new agreement willingly. Some resisted and engaged lawyers. Then they came to know about synthetic indigo. The peasants wanted their money back.

**Q5. Why do you think Gandhi was not permitted to draw water from Rajendra Prasad's well at Patna?**

**Ans:** The servants of Rajendra Prasad thought Gandhi to be another peasant. They did not know him. They were not certain whether he was an untouchable or not. They feared that some drops from his bucket might pollute the entire well. So, he was not permitted to draw water from the well.

**Q6. Why did Gandhi decide to go first to Muzaffarpur before going to Champaran:**

**Ans:** Gandhi wanted to obtain more complete information about conditions than Shukla was capable of imparting. Muzaffarpur lawyers, who frequently represented peasant groups in courts, brief Gandhi about their cases.

**Q7. Why did Gandhi chide the lawyers? What according to him was the real relief for the sharecroppers?**

**Ans:** Gandhi chided the lawyers for collecting big fee from the poor sharecroppers. He thought that taking such cases to the court did little good to the crushed and fear-stricken peasants. The relief for them, according to Gandhi, was to be free from fear.

**Q8. How did Gandhi begin his mission in Champaran? How far did his efforts prove successful?**

**Ans:** He began by trying to get the facts. First, he visited the secretary of the British landlord's association. He told Gandhi that they could give no information to an outsider. Then Gandhi called on the British official commissioner of the Tirhut Division. The commissioner tried to bully Gandhi and advised him to leave Tirhut.

**Q9. How did Gandhi react to the commissioner's advice? Where did he go and how did people react to his arrival?**

**Ans:** Gandhi did not leave Tirhut division. Instead, he went to Motihari, the capital of

Champaran. Several lawyers accompanied him. At the railway station, a very large crowd of people greeted Gandhi.

**Q10. Where did Gandhiji want to go? What happened to him on the way?**

**Ans:** Gandhiji wanted to go to a nearby village where a peasant had been maltreated. He had not gone far when the police superintendent's messenger overtook him and ordered him to return to town in his carriage. Gandhiji obeyed the order and returned with him.

**Q11. 'In consequence, Gandhi received a summons to appear in the court next day.' Which events of the previous day led to this state of affairs?**

**Ans:** The police superintendent's messenger served an official notice on Gandhi. It ordered him to quit Champaran immediately. Gandhi signed a receipt for the notice. He wrote on the receipt that he would disobey the order. Hence, he was summoned to appear in the court.

**Q12. What according to Gandhi was the beginning of the poor peasants' 'Liberation front fear of the British'?**

**Ans:** The next morning the town of Motihari was black with peasants. They had heard that a Mahatma who wanted to help them was in trouble with the authorities. They spontaneously demonstrated, in thousands, around the courthouse. Gandhiji called their action of protest as their liberation from fear of the British.

**Q13. Why did Gandhiji feel that taking the Champaran case to the court was useless? [Delhi 2014]**

**Ans:** Gandhiji felt that taking the Champaran case to the court was useless. Because the real relief for the peasants would come only when they become fearless. The peasants were in acute panic.

**Q14. What was the "conflict of duties" in which Gandhi was involved?**

**Ans:** First, he did not want to set a bad example as a law breaker. Second, he wanted to render the "humanitarian and national service" for which he had come. He respected the lawful authority, but disregarded the order to leave to obey the voice of his conscience.

**Q15. What according to Rajendra Prasad, was the upshot of the consultations of the lawyers regarding the injustice to sharecroppers?**

**Ans:** They thought that Gandhi was a total stranger. Yet he was ready to go to prison for the sake of the peasants. On the other hand, the lawyers were the residents of nearby districts. They also claimed to have served these peasants. It would be shameful desertion if they should go home then.

**Q16. "Civil disobedience had triumphed, the first time in modern India." How?**

**Ans:** A case against Gandhi was initiated for disregarding government orders. The spontaneous demonstration of thousands of peasants baffled the officials. The judge was requested to postpone the trial. Gandhi refused to furnish bail. The judge released him without bail. Several days later Gandhi received an official letter. The case against him had been dropped. Thus, civil disobedience had triumphed.



**Q17. What do you think, led Gandhi to exclaim “The battle of Champaran is won”?**

**Ans:** Gandhi was ready to go to jail fighting against the injustice to the sharecroppers. Many prominent lawyers had come from all over Bihar to advise and help him. At first, they said they would go back if Gandhi went to prison. Later, they had consultations. They told Gandhi they were ready to follow him into jail. This support made Gandhi extremely happy and confident. This confidence led him to exclaim that the battle of Champaran was won.

**Q18. How did Gandhi and the lawyers try to secure justice for the sharecroppers?**

**Ans:** They started conducting a detailed enquiry into the grievances of the peasants. Depositions by about ten thousand peasants were written down. Notes were made on other evidence. Documents were collected. The whole area came alive with the activities of the investigators. The landlords raised loud protests.

**Q19. What was the reaction of Gandhi and his associates when he was summoned to the lieutenant governor?**

**Ans:** In June, Gandhiji was summoned to Sir Edward Gait, the Lieutenant Governor. Anything could happen. Gandhi met his leading associates before going. Detailed plans for civil disobedience were chalked out in case he should not return.

**Q20. What was the outcome of the four protracted interviews Gandhiji had with the Lieutenant Governor?**

**Ans:** An official commission of enquiry into the sharecroppers’ situation was appointed. This commission consisted of landlords, government officials and Gandhi as the sole representative of the peasants.

**Q21. Why did the big planters agree in principle to make refund to the peasants?**

**Ans:** The official inquiry assembled a huge quantity of evidence against the big planters. The crushing evidence forced the big planters to agree in principle to make refund to the peasants.

**Q22. What amount of repayment did the big planters think Gandhi would demand? What did Gandhi ask? What amount was finally settled?**

**Ans:** They thought Gandhi would demand repayment in full of the money they had extorted from the sharecroppers. Gandhi asked only 50 per cent. The planters offered to refund up to 25 per cent. Gandhi was adamant on 50 per cent. The deadlock was broken when Gandhi agreed to a settlement of 25 per cent refund to peasants.

**Q23. How did the refund-settlement influence the peasant-landlord relationship in Champaran?**

**Ans:** Before the settlement of the refund, the planters had behaved as lords above the law. Now the peasant saw that he had rights and defenders. He learned courage. Within a few years, the British planters abandoned their estates. The peasants became masters of the land. There were no sharecroppers now.

**Q24. Which other spheres besides political or economic fields received Gandhi’s attention during his long stay in Champaran?**

**Ans:** The cultural and social backwardness of the Champaran areas pained Gandhi. He appealed for teachers. Several persons responded to his call. Primary schools were opened in six villages.

Kasturba taught the ashram rules on personal cleanliness and community sanitation. With the help of a doctor and three medicines, they tried to fight the miserable health conditions.

**Q25. “This was typical Gandhi pattern” observes Louis Fischer. What do you learn about Gandhian politics from the extract ‘Indigo’?**

**Ans:** Gandhi’s politics was intermixed with the practical, everyday life of the millions of Indians. This was not a loyalty to abstractions. It was a loyalty to living human beings. In everything Gandhi did, he tried to mould a new free Indian who could stand on his own feet and thus make India free.

**Q26. How did Gandhi teach his followers a lesson of self-reliance?**

**Ans.** During the Champaran action, Gandhi’s lawyer friends thought it would be good if C.F. Andrews stayed on in Champaran and helped them. Gandhi opposed this idea as it showed the weakness of their heart. Their cause was just and they must rely upon themselves to win this unequal fight. They should not seek the support of Mr Andrews because he happened to be an Englishman.

### **LONG ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS**

**Q1. What solution to the problems of the poor did Gandhi suggest? How far did the Champaran movement help in this direction?**

**OR**

**“The real relief for them is to be free from fear”, remarked Gandhi. What do you think, was “the beginning of their liberation from the fear of the British” ?**

**Ans.** The sharecropper peasants had to grow indigo on 15 per cent of their holdings and surrender the indigo harvest as rent to the landlord. When Germany developed synthetic indigo, the British planters started extracting money illegally and deceitfully as compensation from the peasants for being released from the 15 per cent arrangement. The peasants were made to sign new agreements and pay money. The planters behaved as lords above the law. Many peasants engaged lawyers at hefty fees and went to courts.

The Muzaffarpur lawyers briefed Gandhi about the peasants for whom they frequently represented in courts. Gandhi realised that these peasants were badly crushed and fear-stricken. Freedom from fear was more important than legal justice for them. Gandhiji was ready to court arrest for them. Thousands of peasants demonstrated spontaneously around the court. The government had to release Gandhi without bail. This voluntary uprising of the peasants marked the beginning of their liberation from the fear of the British.

**Q2. Why was Gandhi summoned to appear in the court? How did he gain his liberty?**

**OR**

**‘Civil disobedience had triumphed, the first time in modern India.’ Relate the events during Gandhi’s stay in Champaran that led to the triumph.**

**Ans.** Gandhi had reached Motihari, the Capital of Champaran, to study the problems of the sharecropper peasants. He was on his way to a neighbouring village, where a peasant was ill-treated. On the way, he was stopped by the police superintendent’s messenger and ordered to return to town. When he reached home, he was served with an official notice to quit Champaran at once. Gandhi wrote on the receipt that he would disobey the order. So Gandhi received a summons to appear in the court the next day.

Next morning the town of Motihari was black with peasants. Thousands of peasants demonstrated voluntarily outside the court. The prosecutor requested the judge to postpone the

trial. Gandhi protested against the delay. He read out a statement pleading guilty. He asked the penalty. The judge announced that he would pronounce the sentence after a two-hour recess. He asked Gandhi to furnish bail for that period. Gandhi refused. The judge released him without bail. After the recess, the judge said that he would not deliver the judgement for several days. Meanwhile he allowed Gandhi to remain at liberty.

Several days later Gandhi received a letter. The case against him had been dropped. Thus, civil disobedience had triumphed, for the first time in India.

**Q3. Give an account of Gandhi's efforts to secure justice for the poor indigo sharecroppers of Champaran.**

**OR**

**“Indigo sharecropping disappeared.” Which factors do you think, helped to achieve freedom for the fear-stricken peasants of Champaran?**

**Ans.** Gandhi went to Champaran on receiving reports of exploitation of the poor sharecropper peasants at the hands of British planters. He began by trying to get the facts. The British landlords as well as the Commissioner of Tirhut were non-cooperative. Lawyers from MuZaffarpur briefed him about the court cases of these peasants.

Gandhi and the lawyers collected depositions by about ten thousand peasants. Notes were made on other evidence. Documents were collected. The whole area throbbled with the activities of the investigators and forceful protests of landlords.

The lieutenant governor summoned Gandhi. After four protracted interviews an official commission of inquiry was appointed to look into the indigo sharecroppers' condition. Gandhi was the sole representative of the peasants. The official inquiry assembled huge quantity of evidence against the big planters. They agreed, in principle, to make refunds to the peasants. After consultation, a settlement of 25 per cent refund to the farmers was agreed on. This was a moral victory of the peasants. They recognised their rights and learned courage.

Within a few years the British planters gave up their estates. These now went back to the peasants. They became the masters of land. Thus, indigo sharecropping disappeared.

**Q4. How did Gandhi work for rural uplift during his stay in Champaran?**

**Ans.** Gandhi wanted to do something to remove the cultural and social backwardness in Champaran villages. He appealed for teachers. Two young disciples of Gandhi, Mahadev Desai and Narhari Parikh and their wives volunteered themselves for work. Several others responded from distant parts of the country. Mrs. Kasturba Gandhi and Devdas, Gandhi's youngest son, arrived from the Ashram. Primary schools were opened in six villages. Kasturba taught the ashram rules on personal cleanliness and community cleanliness. She also talked to women about their filthy clothes.

Health conditions were miserable. Gandhi got a doctor to volunteer his services for six months. Only three medicines were available: Castor oil, quinine and sulphur ointment. Anyone who showed a coated tongue was given a dose of castor oil; anybody with malaria fever received quinine plus castor oil; anybody with skin eruptions received ointment plus castor oil.

Thus, Gandhi never contented himself with large political or economic solutions. He worked for total uplift of villages and the poor sections of the society.

**Q5. ‘Self-reliance, Indian independence and help to sharecroppers were all bound together.’ Elucidate on the basis of reading ‘Indigo’ by Louis Fischer.**

**OR**

**‘The Champaran episode was a turning-point in Gandhi's life. Explain with examples from ‘Indigo’ by Louis Fischer.**

**Ans.** Gandhi stayed in Champaran for a long time. The Champaran episode was a turning point in his life. It was during this struggle in 1917 that he decided to urge the departure of the British. Champaran episode did not begin as an act of defiance. It grew out of an attempt to make the sufferings of large numbers of poor peasants less severe. Gandhi concentrated on their practical day to day problems. He analysed the root cause of the problem-fear, and tried to eradicate it. The voluntary demonstration of the poor peasants against the government for putting Gandhi in trouble was the beginning of the end of their fear of the British. In everything Gandhi did, he tried to mould a new free Indian who could stand on his own feet and thus make India free. He taught his lawyer friends a lesson in self-reliance by opposing the involvement of C.F. Andrews, an Englishman in their unequal fight. His help would be a prop. This would reflect their weakness. Their cause was just and they must rely on themselves to win the battle. Thus self-reliance, Indian independence and help to sharecroppers were all bound together.

**Q6. Justify the appropriateness of the title ‘Indigo’ to this extract.**

**Ans.** The title ‘Indigo’ is quite appropriate, to the point and suggestive. It at once focuses our \* attention on the central issue-the exploitation of the indigo sharecropper peasants at the hands of cruel British planters. They compelled them through a long term agreement to raise indigo on 15 per cent of their landholding and surrender the entire indigo harvest as rent.

After the development of synthetic indigo by Germany, the British planters extracted money from the peasants as compensation for being released from the 15 per cent agreement. The peasants who wanted their money back had filed civil suits. The planters who behaved as lords above the law and were dreaded by the poor were obliged to surrender part of money and with it part of their prestige.

The extract also points out the work done by Gandhi and his associates to improve the economic, political, cultural and social life of the indigo sharecroppers. Their education, health and hygiene also received due attention. The plight of indigo sharecroppers, then- struggle under Gandhi’s leadership and ultimate victory when Indigo sharecropping disappeared from important landmarks. Thus, the title ‘Indigo’ is highly suggestive and apt.

**Q7. What impression do you form about Gandhi on reading the chapter ‘Indigo’?**

**Ans.** The chapter ‘Indigo’ pays a tribute to the leadership shown by Mahatma Gandhi to secure justice for oppressed people through convincing argumentation and negotiation. Gandhi had a magnetic attraction and great persuasive power. He could draw people of all classes to himself and make them partners in the freedom movement. Even ordinary people were inspired to make contribution to the freedom movement.

Gandhi emerges as a champion of the downtrodden and the oppressed. Rural uplift was his favourite programme. His knowledge of legal procedure and respect for law is also highlighted. He does not want to be a lawbreaker. At the same time he wants to render the humanitarian and national service in obedience to the higher law of our being, the voice of conscience. He also appears as a polite and friendly person. Gandhi’s ability to read the minds of others made them speechless. He believed in self-reliance, just cause and purity of means to achieve India’s Independence.

**Q8. Why is the Champaran episode considered to be the beginning of the Indian struggle for Independence? [All India 2014]**

**Ans.** The Champaran episode began as an attempt to ease the sufferings of a large number of peasants. He got spontaneous support of thousands of people. Gandhi declared that the British could not order him about in his own country. Under his leadership, the peasants became aware

of their rights. Raj Kumar Shukla, a farmer of Champaran helped him a lot in bringing about the change. Other peasants too fought courageously and contributed in their own way to the movement. It resulted in their winning the battle of Champaran. The effects of Gandhi's method of non-violence and non-cooperation proved very fruitful in this movement. Hence, it can be said that the Champaran episode is the beginning of the Indian struggle for independence.

## **A THING OF BEAUTY**

**BY JOHN KEATS**

‘A Thing of Beauty’ is an excerpt from his poem, ‘Endymion: A Poetic Romance’ which was first published in 1818. It begins with the line “A thing of beauty is a joy forever”. Endymion is written in rhyming couplets also known as heroic couplets. The theme of Endymion is love, beauty and youth and it reflects the poet’s attitude towards beauty.

The poem conveys the message that a thing of beauty is a joy forever. It transcends time. It will never fade away. Beauty has the power to remove darkness and negativity and helps us survive when there is a ‘dearth of noble nature’ or when one is surrounded by evil. It has a positive impact on one’s health. It helps one get sound sleep. Moreover, it highlights the fact that beauty is not only physical but also spiritual and seems to flow down from heaven as an ‘immortal drink’ made for man.

A Thing of Beauty is by the famous poet John Keats. Furthermore, the poet says that a beautiful thing can give us extreme happiness and delight. Moreover, a beautiful thing is eternal that never declines or fades. Also, a beautiful thing resembles a shady shelter which gives us a comfortable sleep comprising of sweet dreams and relaxation. This will ultimately lead to good health.

The author says that individuals have an attachment to the Earthly things. This attachment is such that it has the resemblance of a flowery wreath. Furthermore, there are traps that keep people connected to materialistic things. This connection with materialistic things distracts humans from eternal happiness. This is because the focus of such materialistic people will be on acquiring more and more resources rather than on attaining eternal happiness. The world has a lot of negativity, hatred, and greed. According to the poet, the cause of gloom and sadness is this negativity. Moreover, one can fade away these negative vibes away with the help of beautiful things that surround us. This is because these beautiful things bring nothing but positivity.

The poet informs us about some beautiful things that are all around us. Beauty is certainly in the eyes of the one who beholds. This means one can see the beauty in anything. Furthermore, the poet talks about the numerous creations of God which we should admire. One such creation is the Sun which provides energy. Moreover, the poet also talks about the beauty of the moon and the natural beauty of the trees.

There are various animals around that make our world lively. The pretty flowers like daffodils enhance the liveliness and greenery of the world. Moreover, the flowing streams of water provide refreshment and cooling effect to us in the hot summer season. The forests have plenty of pretty musks rose flowers. Such flowers are a beautiful sight and eyes feel the delight due to them. All such things certainly are things of beauty. Also, one must not forget the beautiful and inspiring stories of the brave soldiers. These brave soldiers risked and sacrificed their lives in order to protect others.

These beautiful things have a resemblance to the fountain of immortality bestowed upon us by God as a gift and a blessing. Such beautiful things are an inspiration for all of us to continue living. They make life worth living. Also, they also help us in maintaining our faith in goodness. Life without these beautiful things would certainly become very hard.

### Poetic Devices

#### **Metaphor:**

- 'bower quiet'-refers to a quiet shady part in the garden
- 'sweet dreams'-happy dreams
- 'wreathing a flowery band'-connecting to nature
- 'pall'-a covering like a shroud
- 'endless fountain of immortal drink'- refers to the deeds of great men and women that have made them a source of inspiration for people of all times
- The list of beautiful things is metaphors and symbols of nature.

#### **Alliteration:**

- 'noble natures'
- 'cooling covert'
- 'band to bind'

#### **Imagery:**

- 'flowery bands'
- 'shady boon'
- 'clear rills'
- 'daffodils in green world'
- 'grandeur of dooms'
- 'cooling covert'
- 'endless fountain of eternal drink'

#### **Symbol:**

- 'simple sheep' — refers to mankind as Christ is considered the shepherd who leads human souls out of the dark world of sins and temptations

#### **Transferred epithet:**

- 'gloomy days' • 'unhealthy and o'er darkened ways'

#### **Oxymoron**

- 'mighty dead'

#### **Quick points**

##### **Theme**

1. Things of beauty have an embalming effect.
2. They help us cope with negativity.
3. They make life more meaningful.
4. God has blessed us with objects of beauty.
5. We need to bond with them.

##### **List of things of beauty**

1. Sun, moon, deep forests
2. Sheep grazing in open pastures
3. Daffodils, rivulets, musk roses
4. Tombs built to honour heroes.
5. Legends, tales from classics and scriptures

These things of beauty are like blessings from heaven, they sweeten our bitter lives.

### **Qualities of a thing of beauty**

1. Gives everlasting joy.
2. Ageless.
3. Never goes waste
4. Shelters and protects like a bower.
5. Relaxes, comforts, invigorates us.

### **Things that cause pain**

1. Ill health, gloomy days, depression
2. Lack of goodness in human beings
3. In sad moments things of beauty come to our rescue, remove the gloom from our lives.

### **Important questions**

#### **1. Why does the poet bring in the image of the fountain? What does it signify?**

The poet brings in the image of the fountain to describe the beautiful bounty of the earth.

#### **2. Why does man need beautiful things of nature?**

In order to love life man needs beautiful things of nature as life is full of troubles and sufferings.

#### **1. Answer the following questions in one sentence. (1Mark)**

a) Name the poet & the poem?

Ans. John Keats. "A Thing of Beauty."

#### **b) What is the poet's reason to say that a thing of beauty is a joy forever?**

Ans. A thing of beauty is a permanent source of happiness and its loveliness goes on increasing and it never passes into nothingness.

#### **c) What do you understand by 'a bower'?**

Ans. A bower is a pleasant place in the shade under a tree.

#### **d) Why do we weave a flowery wreath every day?**

Ans. We weave a flowery wreath every day to bind us to the beauties of the earth.

#### **e) Explain "In spite of all."**

Ans. In spite of all refers to all the evils, all the negative thoughts obstructing our way to success, and the sense of hopelessness that darkens our ways. In spite of all these we find joy in the beautiful things of nature.

#### **f) Explain "the grandeur of the dooms"**

Ans: The grandeur of the dead refers to the honour that our mighty dead, who had great achievements while alive would get, on the Doomsday (the Final Judgment Day)

#### **g) Why does Keats associate 'grandeur' with "the mighty dead"?**



Ans. The mighty dead were powerful during their lifetime due to their great achievements. So they will attain grandeur on Doomsday

**h) List the things of beauty mentioned in the poem?**

Some of the things of beauty mentioned in the poem are the sun, the moon, trees old, and young, the beautiful daffodils and the clear rills.

**i) Mention the image used by the poet to describe the beautiful bounty of the earth?.**

Ans.” An endless fountain of immortal drink”

**j) What do you mean by “clear rills” &” covert”**

Ans: They refer to small streams &rivers; shelter of thickets

**k) Explain” Pouring unto us from the heaven’s brink”**

Ans: Beauty is a gift of God which has been showered upon us from the heavens above. This beauty is everlasting and is a source of happiness for human beings.

**2. Answer the following questions in two sentences (2Marks).**

**a) Mention the images of beauty that the poet refers to?**

Ans. The poet sees beauty in the sun, the moon, the trees, the innocence of the sheep, the blossoming of daffodils, the old &young trees, the rivers& the streams, mass of ferns, blooming musk-roses and in every aspect of this green world we live in.

**b) What are the pains &sufferings of life that the poet refers to in the poem?**

Ans The pain, hopelessness, malice &disappointment caused due to the lack of noble qualities, the hostile &inhuman attitude that makes our days gloomy and darkens our ways with despair and sadness.

**c) What makes human beings love life in spite of troubles &sufferings?**

Ans .Life on earth is full of sufferings and pain, but the In between phases of happiness, which beautify life, make human beings love life. The natural beauty motivates us to love life in the midst of life’s hardships.

**d) What spreads the pall of despondence over our dark spirits? How is it removed?**

Ans: In this journey of life man faces lots of troubles. His miserable life spreads a pall of despondence over his dark spirits. It is a thing of beauty that removes it.

## AUNT JENNIFER'S TIGER

BY ADRIENNE RICH

Aunt Jennifer's Tigers Summary – In the poem a woman expresses her deep feeling through her art. She (Aunt Jennifer) is prey of male dominant society. Also, there is no one with whom she can share her physical pain. So she makes a picture to describe her deep feelings. Moreover, the narrator defines the tigers which her aunt made on the panel. Like their motion and movements and their magnificence and fearlessness. Further, there are men sitting under the tree but the tigers don't. Besides, now Jennifer finds it difficult to take pictures by using ivory needles. Also, after marriage, she became weary of doing household work. Now she can't involve herself in artistic work instead she has to do it in leisure time. She is scared of her husband but her art expresses her desire to move fearlessly and proudly like tigers.

In this poem, the poet describes a lady whom she addresses as Aunt Jennifer. The poet also says that she is doing embroidery on a piece of cloth that could be a wall hanging or table cloth. Moreover, she has made it with beautiful tigers that are running fiercely in the green forest. Further, she describes their beauty in comparison to a topaz. As in the green background of the forest, they appear bright yellow. Company of men does not affect them as they are fearless. At this point, we can sense the contrast of behaviour between the aunt and tigers. Although tiger made by her is fierce she is afraid of her husband. According to the poet, tigers are the proud and fearless citizens of the forests. These creatures are very elegant and shiny.

In the second stanza the poet defines Aunt Jennifer's fear of her husband. While doing embroidery she says that her fingers shake with the fear of her husband. As her husband does not approve her hobby of embroidery. Hence, she quivers while she is embroidering the piece of cloth. Also, it becomes difficult for her to pull the needle up and down. After that, she defines her wedding ring which her husband give her on their wedding day. In addition, she sees it as a kind of burden to wear this ring.

She feels this because her husband tortures her so much that she sees the wedding ring as a burden instead of a beautiful gift by her husband. Due to the many difficulties, she has faced in her married life that she describes the little wedding ring as a heavy band on her trembling fingers. It also means that the ring is linked with some bad experiences in the form of torture that she has faced. Further, this experience relates to the dominating behaviour of her husband.

In the last part, the poet says that though aunt's design of tigers can easily sense her desire for freedom and fearlessness. However, the poet says that it is not possible for her to achieve this freedom during her lifetime. Only after her death, she will attain freedom. But the irony here is that even then she will be tied with chains in the form of her husband's wedding ring. This ring is the only proof of the pains that she had faced from her husband. On the contrary, the tigers

made by Aunt Jennifer will always portray her desire for living a fearless life by jumping boldly and proudly on a piece of cloth.

#### Conclusion of Aunt Jennifer's Tigers Summary

By Aunt Jennifer's Tigers, the poet wants to represent the life of a woman who has to live under a constant fear from her husband. Also, she will only get freedom when she will die.

#### Following literary devices/figures of speech have been used in the poem Aunt Jennifer's

#### Tigers:

1. **Metaphor:** It is a literary device which is used to make a comparison between two things that aren't alike but do have something in common. e.g. "Bright topaz denizens" (tigers are compared with Bright topaz because of their elegant colour).
2. **Alliteration:** It is the occurrence of the same sound at the beginning of adjacent or closely connected words. e.g. "finger fluttering", "prancing, proud".
3. **Symbolism:** It is the use of symbols to represent ideas or qualities. e.g. "Bright topaz denizens" represents tigers' elegant colours, "massive weight of Uncle's wedding band" represent male domination, "tigers" represent her hidden desires.
4. **Personification:** It is the attribution of human characteristics to animals and non-human things. e.g. "chivalric" is a word which was used for knights in medieval times. But here, it is used for the tigers.
5. **Hyperbole:** It is an exaggerated statement. e.g. "massive weight of Uncle's wedding band sits heavily upon Aunt Jennifer's hand." The weight of wedding band cannot be heavy. But it symbolises mental trauma of marriage.
6. **Transferred Epithet:** It is a poetic device in which adjective is transferred from the noun it is meant to describe to another noun in the sentence. e.g. "terrified hands" refer to Aunt Jennifer who herself is terrified.
7. **Enjambment:** It is the continuation of a sentence or clause across a line break. e.g. "The massive weight of Uncle's wedding band sits heavily upon Aunt Jennifer's hand."

#### Important Questions

##### 1. Describe the tigers created by Aunt Jennifer. (Delhi 2009)

The poet describes Aunt Jennifer's tigers as 'bright topaz denizens' of the forest. They are fearless and ferocious in sharp contrast to their creator, Aunt Jennifer's nervousness and timidity. Gallant and confident, they are sure of their purpose and move ahead undeterred by any kind of hindrance or obstruction.

**2. Why did Aunt Jennifer choose to embroider tigers on the panel? (All India 2009)**

Aunt Jennifer chose to embroider tigers on the panel because of the nature of the tigers. They symbolise strength and splendour which was in sharp contrast to her own meek nature. The massive weight of the wedding band that sits heavily on her finger symbolises the ordeals and hardships of her married life so she creates tigers as they are a striking contrast to the frail, meek old lady who created them.

**3. Read the extract given below and answer the questions that follow: (Delhi 2010)**

Aunt Jennifer's tigers prance across a screen,  
Bright topaz denizens of a world of green.  
They do not fear the men beneath the tree;  
They pace in sleek chivalric certainty.

1. How are Aunt Jennifer's tigers described?
2. Why are they described as denizens of a world of green?
3. Why are they not afraid of the men?

Answer:

1. Aunt Jennifer's tigers are described as powerful, strong and fearless.
2. The tigers are inhabitants of the dense green forests so they are described as dwellers of a world of green.
3. Their courage and fearlessness gives them a confidence due to which they are not afraid of men.

**4. What will happen to Aunt Jennifer's tigers when she is dead? (All India 2010)**

Aunt Jennifer's tigers will survive even after she is dead. She has created the tigers in a panel out of wool. These objects of art are immortal. They will continue prancing, proudly and fearlessly. To express her desire for freedom she had created the chivalrous tigers who will survive long after her death but her own longing for freedom will remain unfulfilled.

**5. How has Aunt Jennifer created her tigers? What traits of tigers do they reveal? (All India 2010)**

Aunt Jennifer has created shining topaz yellow- coloured tigers who are denizens of a dense, green forest. They are fierce, unafraid and fearless and pace in 'sleek' and 'chivalric' certainty.

6. **Why are Aunt Jennifer's hands fluttering through her wool? (Comptt. Delhi 2010):**

Aunt Jennifer is a victim of gender oppression at the hands of her husband. She lives a life of total domination and constant fear. So she feels nervous and terrified that the hands shake and flutter through her wool as she sits down to knit.

7. **Describe the contrast between Aunt Jennifer 'and her creation, the tigers. (Comptt. All India 2010)**

Aunt Jennifer is totally victimised and suffers from oppression by her male counterpart. So she creates an alternate world of freedom in her art. The tigers she creates go on prancing menacingly, exhibiting their pride and fearlessness of any social group or gender conflicts.

8. **How do 'denizens' and 'chivalric' add to our understanding of the tigers' attitude? (Delhi 2011)**

'Denizens' means that the tigers inhabit a green world. They live in the forests where they are free from constraints. 'Chivalric' means they are brave and fearless creatures. This helps us to understand that bravery and fearlessness are the basic nature of the tigers.

9. **Why do you think Aunt Jennifer created animals that are so different from her own character? (All India 2011)**

Aunt Jennifer's tigers possessed all the qualities that Aunt Jennifer did not have. The tigers were free, fearless, confident and proud whereas Aunt Jennifer was meek, submissive and without any identity. She was a rather indecisive woman unlike the confident tigers she had created.

10. **What do the symbols, 'tigers', 'fingers' and 'ring' stand for in the poem, 'Aunt Jennifer's Tigers'? (Comptt. Delhi 2011)**

The 'tigers' are symbols of bravery and courage and also of Aunt Jennifer's desire for freedom. The 'fingers' are symbolic of the nervousness and fear experienced by Aunt Jennifer and the 'ring' symbolises a binding marriage that is full of oppression and curtails one's freedom.

**11. Describe the tigers created by Aunt Jennifer. (Comptt. All India 2011)**

The poet describes Aunt Jennifer's tigers as 'bright topaz denizens' of the forest. They are fearless and ferocious in sharp contrast to their creator, Aunt Jennifer's nervousness and timidity. Gallant and confident, they are sure of their purpose and move ahead undeterred by any kind of hindrance or obstruction.

**12. Read the extract given below and answer the questions that follow: (Comptt. All India 2012)**

Bright topaz denizens of a world of green.

They do not fear the men beneath the tree;

They pace in sleek chivalric certainty.

1. Who are 'They'? Where are 'They'?
2. Why are They' not afraid of men?

Answer:

1. 'They' refers to the tigers that Aunt Jennifer has knitted on the panel. They are prancing jerkily in the forest (across a screen).
2. The tigers are not afraid of men because they are gallant and fearless creatures who are undeterred by any obstacles or hindrances and thus are not afraid of the men.

**13. Why did Aunt Jennifer choose to embroider tigers on the panel? (Delhi 2012)**

Aunt Jennifer chose to embroider tigers on the panel because of the nature of the tigers. They symbolise strength and splendour which was in sharp contrast to her own meek nature. The massive weight of the wedding band that sits heavily on her finger symbolises the ordeals and hardships of her married life so she creates tigers as they are a striking contrast to the frail, meek old lady who created them.

**14. How do the words, "denizens' and 'chivalric' add to our understanding of Aunt Jennifer's tigers? (All India 2012)**

Aunt Jennifer chose to embroider tigers on the panel because of the nature of the tigers. They symbolise strength and splendour which was sharp contrast to her own meek nature. The massive weight of the wedding band that sits heavily on her finger symbolises the ordeals and hardships of her married life so she creates tigers as they are a striking contrast to the frail, meek old lady who created them.

**15. What kind of married life did Aunt Jennifer lead? (Comptt. Delhi 2012)**

Aunt Jennifer's wedding band lies heavily on her hand. It reminds her of her unhappy married life. It is symbolic of male authority and power of her husband who had suppressed her and made her a nervous wreck. He had dominated over her for so long that she had lost her identity.

**16. What will happen to Aunt Jennifer's tigers when she is dead? (Delhi 2013)**

Aunt Jennifer's tigers will survive even after she is dead. She has created the tigers in a panel out of wool. These objects of art are immortal. They will continue prancing, proudly and fearlessly. To express her desire for freedom she had created the chivalrous tigers who will survive long after her death but her own longing for freedom will remain unfulfilled.

**17. What lies heavily on Aunt Jennifer's hand? How is it associated with her husband? (All India 2013)**

Aunt Jennifer's wedding band lies heavily on her hand. It reminds her of her unhappy married life. It is symbolic of male authority and power of her husband who had suppressed her and made her a nervous wreck. He had dominated over her for so long that she had lost her identity.

**18. Why has Aunt Jennifer made 'prancing, proud and unafraid' tigers? (Comptt. Delhi 2013)**

Aunt Jennifer chose to embroider tigers on the panel because of the nature of the tigers. They symbolise strength and splendour which was sharp contrast to her own meek nature. The massive weight of the wedding band that sits heavily on her finger symbolises the ordeals and hardships of her married life so she creates tigers as they are a striking contrast to the frail, meek old lady who created them.

**19. What is the meaning of the phrase, 'massive weight of uncle's wedding band'? (Comptt. All India 2013)**

Aunt Jennifer's wedding band lies heavily on her fingers as she has been a victim of gender oppression at the hands of her husband. She has been so physically and mentally trapped for so many years that she lives in a perpetual state of mental fear which she has never been able to overcome.

**20. What are the difficulties that aunt Jennifer faced in her life? (Delhi 2014)**

Aunt Jennifer faced great hardships in her married life. She led a terrifying and oppressed life wherein she had never been free but a helpless victim of male chauvinism. Dominated and terrorised by her husband, Aunt Jennifer struggled for an existence within the deep conflicts of slavery.

## **SHOULD WIZARD HIT MOMMY?**

**By John Updike**

This story deals with a child's view of the world and the difficult moral questions she raises during the story session with her father. Jack (Joanne's father) had become accustomed to, or putting it more precisely, obligated to telling stories out of his head to his daughter Joanne during the evenings and Saturday afternoons! This tradition itself was now two years old and Joanne had been two when it started.

These stories were almost the same except for some slight variations. It started with a creature usually named Roger (Roger fish, Roger squirrel, Roger chipmunk), who had some problem and went with it to the wise owl. The owl directed him to go to the wizard, who would solve his problem in exchange for a few pennies more than the creature had and in the same breath would direct the creature to go to a place where he could find it. Then, the Roger creature would be happy and would return home just in time to hear the train whistle that brought his daddy home from Boston.

### **Should Wizard Hit Mommy Theme**

The main theme of this story is the relation of children with their parents. Children's fantasies and the messages of stories they bring with them affect children and sometimes, make them critical.

### **Short Summary**

The story, "Should Wizard Hit Mommy?" written by John Updike, revolves around the conflicting views of a child and a parent on the child's future. Parents express their own expectations. They desire that their children should grow up as per their expectations. However, children have their own ambitions and aspirations.

Jack used to tell his little daughter Jo bedtime stories. When she grew a little older, she began to ask a number of questions. For some time, Jack was not able to invent new stories. Thus, the basic story was the same but its hero changed. The hero, a small animal known as Roger meets an owl with its problem. The owl directs Roger to the wizard. The wizard solved the problem with his magic wand. Roger felt good. He played along with animals of the woodland. But when his father used to come back, he went back home to eat supper with him. Jo feels happy with this ending.

Later, her father told the story of a little animal called Roger Skunk. Just like other heroes of his stories, even Skunk has a problem. He used to smell awfully bad. The wizard made him smell like roses, and little animals liked him and played with him. Jo was again happy. However, Skunk's mother wanted Skunk to get back his original smell. She took him back to the wizard. The wizard again made Skunk smell as awful as ever. Skunk's mother was happy. However, Jo was not happy. She desired that the wizard should hit the stupid mother. However, Jack defended the mother's action.

In "Should Wizard Hit Mommy?" John Updike presents the worldview of a little child. Jo warmly responds to her father's story-telling. But she can't excuse Roger Skunk's mother for making poor little Roger smell bad again. Her hero must smell like roses and must not stink at



any cost. So she wants her father to make a little change in the story. She wants him to tell a different story in which the wizard takes a magic wand and hits Roger Skunk's mommy.

## **Main Characters**

### **Jack**

He is the protagonist of the story. He is a married man. His wife, Clare is pregnant and they have a four-year-old daughter, Jo and a two-year-old son, Bobby.

### **Jo**

She is Jack and Clare's four-year-old daughter. She is a growing girl. As she is growing, she has begun to contradict things.

### **Roger Skunk**

Roger Skunk is the protagonist of the story that Jack narrates to Jo. He is bullied for his foul Skunk smell. He wants nothing more than to play with the other animals.

## **Important questions**

1. Father has felt empty after two years of story -telling to Jo. What idea do you form about his skill in the art of story - telling?  
Ans. It would be wrong to say that Jo's father is a bad story teller. In fact, with all his histrionics, sound effects and gestures, he is quite effective in the art. His only problem is that his stories lack variety and he ends up telling the same old story again and again with slight variation here and there. He feels empty because he has been telling stories for over two years now and has quite naturally run short of ideas.
2. Do you think the father in the story is, more or less, an alter ego of the author, as far as the childhood is concerned?  
Ans. John Updike's childhood was tortured by 'psoriasis' and stammering and he had to suffer humiliation and ridicule at the hands of his classmates on account of this. Like him, Jo's father too recalls certain moments of 'humiliation of his own childhood. "Thus the father more or less, was an alter ego of the author."
3. What was Roger Skunk's problem? How did he get rid of it?  
Ans. Roger Skunk was a delightful child. His only problem was that he smelled awful. As a result nobody liked to befriend him and play with him. He got rid of his bad smell with the help of wizard who cast a magic spell to change the smell into that of roses.
4. Why did the woodland creatures avoid Roger Skunk? How did their behaviour affect Roger?  
Ans. The woodland creatures avoided Roger Skunk because of his awful smell. As soon as they saw him coming they would cry "Uh-oh, here comes Roger Stinky Skunk and they

- would run away. Roger Skunk would stand there all alone and weep silently.
5. How was Jo affected by Jack's story telling?  
Ans. Jo would be immensely engrossed in the story. She liked the way her father used to tell story particularly his dramatization of it, through gestures and changing voices. She also liked the predictable way the story would unfold for it allowed her to make guesses, draw conclusions and ask questions. The whole world of the story would come alive before her and she would twitch and turn in excitement as the story progressed.
  6. This was a new phase, just this last month. 'What new phase is referred to here in the story "Should Wizard Hit Mommy"?'  
Ans. Children's physical and mental growth is very speedy. Earlier Jo used to accept father's word about magic etc, but now she has started having apprehensions about such spells. She has become more inquisitive and less credulous.
  7. Why does the wizard instruct the Skunk to "Hurry up"?  
Ans. The wizard asks Skunk to hurry up because he is used to living alone and does not like company for a long time and secondly he was keen to have his full payment for the task performed. Another reason can be that he could not stand Skunk's smell for long.
  8. How did the woodland creatures react to the Skunk's new smell? What did Skunk feel about the new change?  
Ans. The woodland creatures found Roger Skunk's new smell to be "so good". They gladly took him in their fold as a friend and played with him many games. Naturally, Roger was happy to have been accepted by others as their friend. Moreover, his inferiority complex had disappeared.
  9. After the Skunk started smelling of roses Jo "thought the story was all over." Why did she think so?  
Ans. Viewed from a child's angle, Skunk's smelling of roses is a befitting ending for the story, because first, Skunk's long standing desire has been fulfilled and secondly he is able to do what is dearest to his heart-play with other woodland creatures.
  10. Why in your opinion is the smell of roses obnoxious for the Skunk mother "or How did Skunk's mother react to his new smell?  
Ans. Nature keeps its own balance and has its own way. The Skunk's smell is obnoxious for other creatures, but certainly not for other Skunks. Skunks are born with this particular smell and any deviation is violation of Nature. So the mother Skunk does not like the rose smell of Roger Skunk. She believes that what is natural is not disgraceful.
  11. The Skunk accepts Mom's order like a tame lamb and follows her to the wizard without demur, but Jo chooses to differ from her father with regard to changing the rose smell. How would you account for this difference in attitude between the two?  
Ans. Roger Skunk as a character symbolizes Jack's own personality as a child. He loved and obeyed his mother very much. She in turn taught him courage and self-regard in dealing with his hurt and humiliation on account of his psoriasis and stammering. Thus, Skunk is as unquestioningly obedient as Jack himself was. Jo on the other hand is a happy-go-lucky child of four who has no upset and humiliation to deal with. She is naturally inquisitive and is curious to know more and more. It is not surprising that she is full of questions. The attitudes of both Skunk and Jo are shaped by their life experience.
  12. Why did Jo not approve of Skunk's mother scolding him for his new smell?  
Ans. Jo was very happy to hear that Skunk had got rid of his awful smell and had been accepted by the woodland creatures. She did not like Skunk's mother scolding him for his new smell because Jo thought it was a pleasant smell and the one that had won Skunk so many friends. Skunk's mother, she thought, was wrong in scolding him for his new smell.
  13. What is the underlying idea behind the wizard's taking the beating and tamely changing the rose smell?

Ans. By making the wizard take his beating by Skunk's mother quietly, Jack and through him the author wishes to bring home the idea that mothers are always right and that we should accept what is natural. The wizard also sees the point and tamely changes Skunk's rose smell into his original Skunk smell.

14. Why does mother Skunk hug and pat her son as he prepares to sleep?

Ans. The obedience shown by Roger Skunk impresses the mother and she pats and hugs him as he prepares himself for sleep. The idea behind her action is that obedient children will always be loved and patted by mothers. The mother's gesture is also an expression of her satisfaction at her little one getting back his Skunk smell.

15. What inference do you draw from the narrator's statement, "eventually they (woodland creatures) got used to the way he (the Skunk) was and did not mind it at all"?

Ans. The woodland creatures learnt the lesson that what is natural is not disgraceful and should be accepted as an integral part of one's being. One should not hate or avoid others because of something they cannot help. One should instead be courageous and tolerant enough to accept it. This is how the woodland creatures got used to the way Skunk smelled.

### Long answer type questions

16. What is the moral issue that the story raises?

Ans. Although "Should Wizard Hit Mommy?" reads like a typical bed time story elders tell little children, it does raise a moral question - Should parents always decide what is best for their children and should children always obey their parents unquestioningly ?

Roger Skunk is a very obedient child but he feels very sad and upset because he smells so awful that nobody wants to befriend him and play with him. One day he gets a change to get his bad smell replaced with the smell of roses. He feels excited about the change for everyone likes his new smell and readily agrees to play with him. However Roger's mother does not like the change. For her, Roger was better off with his original smell. So, she makes the wizard restore Skunk's original smell. Roger meekly accepts his mother's decision and other children get used to Roger's awful smell and don't complain about it any more.

But the narrow world view of the little girl, Jo likes to spell out the slogan of equality for all. She believes in the axiom "Tit for Tat". She feels that mothers is wrong in getting her son's original smell back and wants her to be spanked by the wizard for her mistake. Her father, who has modelled Skunk's story on his own story, strongly defends the mother Skunk's decision.

Thus, the author through this story raises a moral question of how much authority parents should exercise in teaching their children what is wrong, what is right, what they should do and what not. Since, there is no single correct answer to the question, he leaves it for the readers to answer it on the basis of their beliefs, cultures and values.

17. Why is an adult's perspective on life different from that of a child's?

Ans. As the child grows into maturity his perspective and vision of life change gradually. A child views things at superficial and sensory level but a grown up's vision is realistic, reflective, philosophical and even psychological. Viewed from the study of the story "Should Wizard Hit Mommy?" Jo, a child of four, like most children of her age, prefers to live in dreams and fantasies. She is hostile by nature and would like to wreak vengeance on Skunk's mother and wants the wizard to retaliate.

She is annoyed because the father refuses to accept her suggestion. The father has a mature perspective and sees beyond the surface and explores the philosophical and moralistic aspect of the entire situation. The wizard had unwittingly interfered with nature and had thus done a great deal of harm and deserved to be punished. According to him the punishment meted out to the

wizard is well merited and retaliation is out of the question.

Thus the story makes it clear that the perspective of a child and that of an adult is totally different.

## ON THE FACE OF IT

By Susan Hills

It is a short play. The first scene is located in Mr Lamb's garden. There is an occasional sound of bird song and of tree leaves rustling. Derry's footsteps are heard as he walks slowly and hesitantly through the long grass. He comes round a screen of bushes. When Mr Lamb speaks to Derry he is close at hand. Naturally, Derry is startled.

Mr Lamb asks Derry to mind the apples. Derry enquires about the person. Mr Lamb gives his name and again asks him to mind the apples. He adds that those are crab apples. They have been blown down from the tree by the wind and are lying in the long grass. The boy could step on one of them and fall.

Derry tries to explain. He says that he thought that was an empty place. He did not know there was anybody there. Mr Lamb asks him not to be afraid. He explains that the house is empty since he is out in the garden. He observes that such a beautiful day is not worth spending indoors.

Derry panics and says that he has got to go. Mr Lamb assures him that he should not feel disturbed on his account—he doesn't mind who comes into the garden. The gate is always open. It was only the boy who climbed the garden wall. Derry is angry that the old man had been watching him. Mr Lamb welcomes Derry

Derry explains that he had not come to steal anything. Mr Lamb assures him that he hadn't. He further adds that only the young lads steal. They steal apples from the garden. He is not that young. Derry explains that he just wanted to come into the garden. He wants to go and says goodbye.

Mr Lamb tells him that there is nothing to be afraid of. It is just a garden and only one person, that is, he himself is there. Derry then says that people are afraid of him. He asks Mr Lamb to look at him and after seeing his face he might think that he is the most frightful and ugliest thing. Derry says that when he looks in the mirror and sees his face, he is afraid of it. Mr Lamb says that the whole of his face is not frightening.

There is pause. Mr Lamb now changes the topic. He says when it is a bit cooler, he'll get the ladder and a stick, and pull down those crab apples. They are ripe for making a jelly. September is the right time of year for it. The apples look orange and golden. He tells Derry that he could help him.

Derry asks him what he has changed the subject for. He says that the old man does not ask him because he is afraid to do so. Derry says that he doesn't like being with people. Mr Lamb makes a guess. Perhaps the boy got burned in a fire. Derry says that he got acid all down that side of his face and it burned it all away. Derry asks Mr Lamb if he is not interested. The old man says he is interested in anybody and anything made by God—even grass, rubbish, weeds, flowers, fruit. He observes that it is all life-developing just as they are.

When Derry says that they are not the same, Mr Lamb says that there is no difference. He is old, Derry is young and has got a burned face. The old man has got a tin leg. His real one got blown off years back in the war. Some kids call him Lamey-Lamb but it doesn't disturb him. There are plenty of things other than his leg to stare at. He refers to Beauty and the Beast. Derry says that no one will kiss him. He won't change.

Derry says that people talk about persons who are in pain and brave and never cry or complain and don't feel sorry for themselves. People try to console people suffering from physical impairment by asking them to think of all those people worse off than them. They might have been blinded, or born deaf, or have to live in a wheel chair, or be insane and dribble. But all this will not change his face. Even totally strange persons call him terrible.

Derry repeats that he doesn't like being near people: especially when they stare at him and when he sees them being afraid of him. Mr Lamb then tells him the story of a man who was afraid of everything in the world. So he locked himself in his room and stayed in his bed. A picture fell off the wall onto his head and killed him.

Derry says that the old man said peculiar things. Then he asks what he does all day. Mr Lamb replies that he sits in the sun. He reads books. His house is full of books. His house has no curtains as he does not like shutting things out. He likes the light and the darkness. He hears the wind from the open window. Derry too hears the sound of rain on the roof, when it is raining. Mr Lamb observes that if he hears things, he is not lost. Derry says that people talk about him downstairs when he is not there. They seem to be worried about him and his future. Mr Lamb gives him a very inspiring advice. He will get on the way he wants like all the rest as he has all the God-given organs. He could even get on better than all the rest, if he determined to do so.

Mr Lamb tells Derry that he has hundreds of friends. The gate is always open. People come in. Kids come for the apples, pears and for toffee. He makes toffee with honey. Sometimes his friendship may be one-sided. Even if Derry might never see him again, Mr Lamb would be still his friend.

He tells Derry that hating others is bad. It harms more than any bottle of acid. Everything is the same, but everything is different.

Derry's attitude shows a gradual change. He wants to come there again. He thinks that the other friends of Mr Lamb might go away, if he came. Mr Lamb assures him that people are not afraid of him because he is not afraid of them.

Derry wants to stay there but he has to inform his mother where he is. His house is three miles away. Mr Lamb asks him to run there and inform his mother. Derry asks the old man about the persons who come there. He thinks that nobody ever comes there. The old man is there all by himself and miserable. No one would know if he were alive or dead and nobody cared. Derry says that he'll come back. Then Derry runs off.

In the second scene we see Derry and his mother. He informs his mother about the lame old man. She tells him not to go there. Derry says that he wants to go there, sit and listen to things and look. No body else has ever said the things the old man has said. When his mother says that

he is best off there, Derry says he hates it there. He no longer cares about his face. It is not important. It's what he thinks, feels, sees, hears and finds out that is important. He is going there to help the old man with crab apples and to look at things and listen. If he doesn't go back there, he will never go anywhere in that world again.

The third or last scene is again located in Mr Lamb's garden. Derry reaches Mr Lamb's garden panting. He finds Mr Lamb lying on the grass with the ladder. Derry tells him that he has come back. Since Mr Lamb fails to respond, Derry kneels by him and begins to weep and the curtain falls. The play has a very pathetic end.

### **Character of Derry**

Derry: Derry, is a fourteen years old boy who is disfigured and ugly because half of his face was burnt due to spilling of acid. He is conscious of the fact that his ugliness is revolting to others and so everybody wants to ignore him or pity him. He suffers from inferiority complex. He becomes too arrogant and avoids any social interaction. He hears people using nasty comments about him and so bears a grudge towards the society.

He suspects everyone and lacks trust. Derry started listening to Mr. Lamb because Mr. Lamb was also handicapped. It is only when Mr. Lamb bestowed on him love, trust and generosity that his mindset started changing. Due to the wise words of Mr. Lamb, Derry got transformed completely.

### **Character of Mr. Lamb**

Mr. Lamb: Mr. Lamb is an old man who lives alone in a big house with a big lawn. He is handicapped, having lost his leg in a bomb explosion during the war. He is very optimistic. His openness is reflected through the open doors and windows of his house. He makes toffees, jam and jelly to attract people. He grows crab apples. He is never perturbed at being called 'Lamey Lamb'.

Mr. Lamb accepted his handicap in a very mature manner. He is a great motivator and encourages Derry to look at everything in a positive way. He is a patient listener and holds a positive attitude to life. He fills Derry with confidence. He has great love for life and believes that we should not fritter away our lives aimlessly. Mr. Lamb is instrumental in changing the attitude of Derry to his handicap and, finally, accepting it as part of life.

### **Important questions**

#### **1. Why was Derry a pessimist and suffered from inferiority complex?**

Ans. Derry was a physically impaired boy of 14. His face was burnt by acid. Nobody loved him except his mother. He felt loneliness and aloofness. He was the victim of atrocities.

#### **2. How is Lamb able to eliminate the fear of Derry –a shy boy?**

Lamb endeavours to impress Derry by his positive thoughts and optimistic attitude. He motivates him to focus on the brighter side of life and not pay attention on the others comments and remove the negative ideas.

#### **3. What is the attitude of Lamb though he is physically impaired like Derry?**

Ans. Lamb is optimistic and he focuses on the stronger part of his life. Children called him “Lamey Lamb” but he takes the comments lightly. He is cheerful and elated with life. He is supportive and compassionate.

**4. Why is Derry adamant to go back to Lamb in the end?**

Ans. Lamb encourages him not give attention about the comments made by others. He advises him to overcome his physical deficiency confidently. He also inspires him to be more concerned what he thinks and feels. Derry knows if he does not go back to meet Lamb, he will never go back.

**5. How can they remove their loneliness and inferiority complex? Comment.**

Ans. Physically impaired people should concentrate on the positive side of life and overcome the shortcomings. They are the integral part of the society and society should accept them. They can also contribute something for the betterment of the society. They should have a sense of belongingness.

**6. What is it that draws Derry towards Mr Lamb in spite of himself?**

**Ans.** Both Derry and Mr Lamb suffer from physical impairment. Derry has one side of his face disfigured and burnt by acid. The old man has a tin leg because his real leg got blown off during the war. Apart from these physical disabilities, Derry finds signs of loneliness and disappointment in Mr Lamb’s life. The old man tries to overcome these feelings but the sense of alienation felt by him is more painful than the pain caused by physical disability. Derry tries to avoid meeting people because they consider his face frightful and ugly. They avoid him as they are afraid of him. His parents seem worried about him and talk about him and his future.

Mr Lamb provides him a new approach to things. He tells him to see, hear, feel and think about things around him. He should not hate others. Hatred is worse than acid because it bums the inside. He has all the God-given limbs. He must take a firm decision and work towards it. He will succeed. He should not be afraid of people and they will not be afraid of him. All these factors draw Derry towards Mr Lamb.

**7. In which section of the play does Mr Lamb display signs of loneliness and disappointment? What are the ways in which Mr Lamb tries to overcome these feelings?**

**Ans.** It is in the middle section of the first scene of the play that Mr Lamb displays signs of loneliness and disappointment. He says that when it is a bit cooler, he will get the ladder and a stick, and pull down those crab apples. He makes jelly. Derry could help him. Then he says he is interested in anybody or anything that God made. It may be a person, flower, fruit, grass, weeds or rubbish. There are plenty of things to look at. Some of them are his crab apples or the weeds or a spider climbing up a silken ladder or his tall sun-flowers. He also likes to talk and have a company. He has a hive of bees. He hears them singing. He sits in the sun and reads books. He likes the light and the darkness. He hears the wind coming through open windows. There aren’t any curtains at the windows as they either shut things out or shut things in. These are the ways in which Mr Lamb tries to overcome his loneliness.

**8. The actual pain or inconvenience caused by a physical impairment is often much less than the sense of alienation felt by the person with disabilities. What is the kind of behaviour that the person expects from others?**

**Ans.** The play ‘On The Face Of It’ focuses our attention on the physical pain and mental anguish of the persons suffering from some physical impairment. The playwright, Susan Hill, presents the two leading characters—an old man and a small boy—having different sorts of physical disabilities.



The old man has a tin leg. It did hurt him when it came off. Then he got used to it. He feels pain now and then in wet weather. He finds it inconvenient to run, to climb a tree or a ladder. He lives all alone in a big house with a garden.

The boy has one side of his face badly burnt by acid. He felt the physical pain then. After discharge from hospital, he feels hurt at the attitude of the people. They regard his face as horrible and ugly, show signs of being scared and avoid his presence. In short, he is disliked, if not hated. He is not accepted as an ordinary member of society. So, he does not like people to look at him.

It is clear that the sense of alienation that these disabled persons feel causes them constant pain. Such persons expect kind and considerate behaviour from others. They do not want tears, sympathy or pity. They dislike being pointed at, nicknamed, mocked at or made a fun of. They only demand a reasonable behaviour from others, full of appreciation of their difficulties.

**9. Will Derry get back to his old seclusion or will Mr Lamb's brief association effect a change in the kind of life he will lead in the future?**

**Ans.** (Two different answers are possible. One is being given below)

Derry will not get back to his old seclusion. He has been associated with Mr Lamb for a short time only, but even this brief association will effect a change in the kind of life he will lead in future. Instead of being conscious of what people comment about the ugliness of his face, he will use his head and heart to achieve what he decides to do in life. It is also possible that with his firm determination and zeal to achieve his aim, he might do better than the rest, even those who do not suffer from any physical impairment.

By his persuasive manner and skilful use of anecdotes, Mr Lamb convinces Derry that a life of seclusion and withdrawal from the world is dull as well as risky. The world has many beautiful objects to see and admire, sounds to hear and ideas to think. One should have an open mind and positive attitude. Hatred is worse than acid.

Derry's mother tries her best to keep Derry with her. But Derry resolves to go back to Mr Lamb to look at things and listen to him. He no longer cares about his face. What he thinks and feels, and what he wants to see and find out and hear is more important. He does not want to remain at his home. He has got clear perception of things. If he does not go back there, he will never go anywhere in that world again. In short, Derry's coming back to Mr Lamb is indicative of the change in the kind of life he is likely to lead in future

## **EVAN TRIES AN O- LEVEL**

**By Colin Dexter**

This story depicts a clash of wit between a criminal and the law enforcing authorities in which the prisoner Evans befools the jail authorities and manages to escape from the prison. If the government and law enforcing officials are vigilant, crime can be detected and criminals can be booked. But criminals like Evans can hoodwink the authorities and escape punishment as long as the officials are slow and lack alertness and wit. More Summary It is the month of early March. The secretary of the Examination Board receives a call from the Governor of the H.M. Prison, Oxford. He tells that a prisoner named Evans has started night classes in O Level German. Now he wants to attain some academic qualification. The Secretary replies that there is no need to worry. All the necessary forms and other requisite material will be sent. They will give him a chance. He enquires about Evans.

The Governor tells him that Evans has no record of violence. Rather he is an amusing fellow. He is one of the stars at the Christmas concert. The Secretary asks him if they can arrange a room where Evans can sit in for the examination. The Governor tells that the room of Evans can be used for this purpose. The Secretary agrees and tells that they could get a parson from St. Mary Mags to invigilate. The Governor takes utmost care to see that he would not be fooled. Every care was taken to make Evans prepare for the exam. He was tutored by a German teacher for 6 months. The day before the exam the teacher wishes good luck but makes it clear that he had hardly any 'chance of getting through.' But Evans gives an ironical twist to the tutor's observation by saying "I may surprise everybody." On the day of the exam Jackson and Stephens visited Evan's cell and took away everything that may help him injure himself. Evans was insisted to take away the hat but he refused saying that it was lucky charm. Evan's cell was bugged so that the Governor could himself listen to each and every conversation in the cell. The invigilator Rev. S. Mc Leery too was searched and left him invigilator Rev. S. Mc Leery too was searched and left him to complete the task. Stephen sitting outside the cell every now and then peeped into the cell. The exam went on smoothly. Stephen escorted the invigilator to the main gate and looked into Evan's cell and found the invigilator (actually Evans) wounded, informed the Governor. The latter was to be hospitalized but informed that he was alright and asked them to follow Evans. Thus he escaped the prison. When the invigilator was not found in the hospital they went to the residence of Rev. S. Mc Leery only to find him 'bound and gagged in his study in Broad Street'. He has been there, since 8.15 a.m. Now everything was clear to the Governor. Evan escaped the prison the fourth time. But by taking the hint from the question paper the Governor reached the hotel where Evans was staying. He captured him and came to know how he planned his escape. The Governor said that his game was over. Evans surrendered himself to the Governor. Evans was handcuffed and sent away with a prison officer in the prison van. But here again he befools the Governor. Both the prison officer and the prison van were part of the plan devised by Evan's friends.

Once again he was a free bird.

### **GIST OF THE LESSON**

1. Evans a kleptomaniac was imprisoned thrice and all the time escaped from the prison. Now he was in the prison for the 4th time and all of a sudden developed curiosity to appear in O-level German Examination which also was an effort to break the prison.

2. The Governor takes utmost care to see that he would not be fooled. Every care was taken to make Evans prepare for the exam.
3. He was tutored by a German tutor for 6 months. The day before the exam the tutor wishes good luck but makes it clear that he had hardly any 'chance of getting through.' But Evans gives an ironical twist to the tutor's observation by saying "I may surprise everybody."
4. On the day of the exam Jackson and Stephens visited Evans cell and took away everything that may help him injure himself. Evans was insisted to take away the hat but he refused saying that it was lucky charm.
5. Evans cell was bugged so that the Governor could himself listen to each and every conversation in the cell. The invigilator Rev. S. McLeery too was searched and left him to complete the task. Stephen sitting outside the cell every now and then peeped into the cell.
6. The exam went on smoothly. Stephen escorted the invigilator to the main gate and took a look into Evans cell and found the invigilator (actually Evans) wounded, informed the Governor. The latter was to be hospitalized but informed that he was alright and asked them to follow Evans. Thus he escaped the prison.
7. When the invigilator was not found in the hospital they went to the residence of Rev. S. McLeery only to find him 'bound and gagged in his study in Broad Street". He has been there, since 8.15 a.m. Now everything was clear to the Governor.
  - Evan escaped the prison the 4th time. But by taking the hint from the question paper the Governor reached the hotel where Evans was and captured him and came to know how he planned his escape and said that his game was over. Evans surrenders himself to the Governor.
  - The Governor tells Evan they would meet soon.
  - The moment they are rid of the Governor, the so called prison officer-a friend of Evans unlocks the handcuffs and asks the driver to move fast and Evans tells him to turn to Newbury.

### **Characters**

1. James Roderick Evans: a prisoner
2. Secretary of the Examination Board: a higher official of the examination board
3. Governor: the governor of H.M. Prison, Oxford.
4. Mr. Jackson: a prison officer
5. Mr. Stephens: a prison officer
6. Reverend Stuart McLeery: an invigilator
7. Mr. Carter: a detective superintendent
8. Mr. Bell: a detective chief inspector

## Important Questions:

1. **What kind of a person was Evans?**

**Ans.** James Roderick Evans was a jail bird. The prison officers called him ‘Evans the Break’ as he had escaped from prison three times. At present he was in a solitary cell in Oxford Prison. He was quite a pleasant sort of chap—an amusing person who was good at imitations. He was not at all violent. He was just a congenital kleptomaniac. It meant he suffered from the disease of involuntarily stealing things. This was disease with which he was bom.

2. **What were the precautions taken for the smooth conduct of the examination?**

**Ans.** The solitary cell of Evans was tinned into examination room by placing two small tables and two chairs in it. Reverend Stuart McLeery, a parson from St. Mary Mags was to work as invigilator. The cell was to be kept locked from outside and a prison officer would observe Evans from a peep-hole after every minute or so. All potential weapons such as knife, scissors, nail-file and razor had been taken away. Even the contents of the suitcase of the invigilator were thoroughly searched, fhe paper knife was taken away by a prison officer. The Governor himself was to listen-in the conversation in the cell during the examination. The cell was in the D-Wing which had two heavy gates—outer and inner. Both were locked securely. Mr Jackson, the prison officer, was in constant contact with the Governor on the phone.

3. **Will the exam now go as scheduled?**

**Ans.** The two-hour examination in O-Level German was scheduled to begin at 9.15 a.m. on Tuesday, 8 June. However, it started a bit late. At 9.20 a.m. Evans objected to the presence of Stephens, a prison officer, in the examination room, as it disturbed his concentration. Under the orders of the Governor, Stephens was got out of the cell. At 9.40 a.m. a correction slip was dictated to the candidate. At 10.50 a.m. Evans complained of bitter chill and made a request for putting a blanket round his shoulders. At 11.20 a.m. McLeery informed Evans that only five minutes remained. At 11.22 a.m. Jackson called Stephens to the phone. The Governor was on line. Stephens was given orders to escort McLeery to the main prison gates. The examination was over at 11.25 a.m. The door of the cell was locked on Evans after McLeery had left the cell. Thus, the examination went on smoothly as scheduled.

4. **Did the Governor and his staff finally heave a sigh of relief?**

**Ans.** The Governor heard the door of the cell clang for the last time. The examination was over. Stephens escorted McLeery to the main gates. His Scots accent seemed broader and he seemed to have grown slimmer under his long black overcoat. Stephens was happy that the morning had gone pretty well. In short, the Governor and his staff finally heaved a sigh of relief. Their relief was, however, shortlived. On returning to the cell of Evans, Stephens found a person sprawling back in a chair. Blood dripped from his closely cropped front part of head on to his small black beard and over the white clerical collar down into the black clerical front. Stephens shouted wildly for Jackson. It was suspected that Evans had hit

McLeery and walked out impersonating him. A search began for Evans dressed as a parson.

5. **Will the injured McLeery be able to help the prison officers track Evans?**

**Ans.** Injured McLeery spoke slowly and in broken phrases that he knew where Evans was. He asked the prison officers to get the police and not to worry about the ambulance. He found the German question paper on the table. He told Jackson to get the Governor. He drew the attention of the Governor to the German text on photocopied sheet on the last page. The Governor slowly translated it. The words 'From Elsfield Way drive to the Headington roundabout' caught his attention. The Examination Board was in Elsfield Way. Meanwhile, the police arrived. Before the Governor could explain anything, McLeery told the officer to go Elsfield Way. The Governor told Detective Superintendent Carter to take injured McLeery with him. McLeery was helped inside the car. He helped the police to follow the direction indicated in the German text.

6. **Will the clues left behind on the question paper, put Evans back in prison again?**

**Ans.** The text on the last page of German question paper contained the plan of escape. It had important clues of the route. From Elsfield Way the person had to drive to the Headington roundabout and from there to Newbury. After sometime, Superintendent Carter informed the Governor on phone that McLeery had spotted Evans driving off along Elsfield Way. They had got the number of the car all right and given chase at opce. But they had lost him at the Headington roundabout. Since McLeery felt quite weak when they got to the Examination offices, they rang Radcliffe for the ambulances from there. They left McLeery on Elsfield Way. Thus, the injured McLeery, who had posed to help the authorities, disappeared and Evans remained untraced.

The other clues: Index number 313; Centre number 271 and 'Golden Lion' also had a deep meaning. The Governor took help of an Ordnance Survey Map for Oxfordshire. The six figure reference 313/271 brought him in the middle of Chipping Norton. He found Evans in the Golden Lion in Chipping Norton.

7. **Where did Evans go?**

**Ans.** Evans left the prison disguised as parson McLeery who had been injured by the examinee Evans. He pretended to guide the authorities to help them track Evans. When the police car reached the Examination offices on Elsfield Way, McLeery (Evans in disguise) grogged. An ambulance was called in from the Radcliffe and he was left there. Evans got into a car as arranged beforehand. It had soap, water, clothes and a map. He removed blood stains from hair, peeled the false beard, changed clothes, put on a smart new hat. Then he drove to the Golden Lion in the middle of Clipping Norton. He was traced in this hotel by the Governor of Oxford Prison following the clues in the German text on the German question paper.

8. **Reflecting on the story, what did you feel about Evans' having the last laugh?**

**Ans.** It is Evans who has the last laugh. The play makes a fun of the routine procedure followed by prison authorities and police. It depicts how the criminals are one step ahead of the jail authorities.

All precautions have been made by the Governor of Oxford Prison to see that the O-Level German examination, held in prison for the prisoner Evans, does not provide him

means to escape. The examination passes off peacefully. Mr Stephens, a prison officer, sees off McLeery, the invigilator and on returning to the cell finds injured “McLeery” sprawling in Evans’s chair.

It is easy for Evans impersonating as McLeery to leave the prison along with police officer. He claims to have spotted Evans driving off along Elsfield Way but loses track at the Headington roundabout. He grogs off near the Examination offices. Then he disappears. He is located in the Golden Lion in Chipping Norton by the Governor of Oxford Prison. Instead of bringing Evans securely back to prison, the Governor lets him come in a prison van guarded by a prison officer. It is just what Evans had planned. The driver and the ‘prison officer’ are his friends and Evans escapes from prison once again. In fact, Evans has made elaborate arrangements. He joins the night classes in September. The German teacher is one of his friends. He has his friends in the Examination Board as well. He waits patiently till June. Two of his friends bind and gag Reverend Stuart McLeery in his Broad Street flat. One of them personates him. He is dressed up as a minister. He has two collars and two black fronts on his person. Evans fiddles about under the blanket with the black front and the stud at the back of the collar. His friends also arrange a car where he can change his make up as well as clothes. He successfully deceives the police as well as the prison authorities.

9. **When Stephens comes back to the cell he jumps to a conclusion and the whole machinery blindly goes by his assumption without even checking the identity of the injured ‘McLeery’. Does this show how hasty conjectures can prevent one from seeing the obvious? How is the criminal able to predict such negligence?**

**Ans.** On his return to the cell of Evans, Stephens saw a man sprawling back in Evans’ chair. For a semi-second Stephens thought it must be Evans. But the small black beard, white clerical collar and black clerical front and red blood dripping from the front of his head, made Stephens jump to a conclusion—Evans impersonating McLeery, had walked out.

Almost immediately the whole machinery jumped into action. No one bothered to check the identity of the injured “McLeery.’ The assumption of Stephens prevailed. It was reinforced by the broader Scots accent and slimmer body of the parson he had seen off and the blood coming out of wound and dress of the “parson” in the cell.

The hasty conjecture prevents one from seeing the obvious. The jail breaker might have played a trick again. Even the Governor is deceived. He believes what his staff says. The man who doubted everything and cross checked it, does not even examine the victim. Due to their long stay prison the criminals become familiar with the temperaments of prison officers as well as the routine they follow. A criminal is always disbelieved. On the other hand, an officer’s word is always accepted. The criminals are sure that negligence of the prison authorities is their only passport to freedom. They doubt the remotest possibility and doubt genuine telephone calls as fake ones, yet an assumption is accepted as truth and the obvious is ignored. Hence, the criminal is able to predict such negligence on the part of prison authorities.

10. **What could the Governor have done to securely bring back Evans to prison when he caught him at the Golden Lion? Does that final act of foolishness really prove that “he was just another good-for-a-giggle, gullible governor, that was all”.**

**Ans.** The Governor should have escorted Evans himself to the Oxford Prison. He had only two persons with him, and later it turned out that these two persons were associates

of Evans. One of them, who posed to be the silent prison officer instructed the driver to move on faster. The driver, who spoke in a broad Scots accent, was the person who acted as the Reverend S. McLeery. The Governor should have at least checked the identity of the staff to whom he was entrusting the prisoner.

Secondly, he should have contacted Mr Jackson and Mr Stephens, the two prison officers, Detective Superintendent Carter and Detective Chief Inspector Bell, who were all searching Evans.

It was perhaps his over excitement and childish enthusiasm at his arm-chair reasoning in locating the hide-out of Evans and catching him at the Golden Lion, that he threw all cautions to wind and acted foolishly by reposing confidence in wrong persons. Evans and his associates had befooled him earlier as well. The German teacher and the invigilator were friends of Evans. The correction slip sent from Examination Branch was a clever device to convey the route of escape and the hide-out. The Governor's last act of foolishness really proved that he was only worth being laughed at as he was too credulous and trustful.

**11. While we condemn the crime, we are sympathetic to the criminal. Is this the reason why prison staff often develop a soft corner for those in custody?**

**Ans.** People condemn the crime as it is an evil act against law and society. In the past, punishment was the only way to treat the criminals. The greater the crime, the harsher and harder the punishment, which could go to the extent of life-imprisonment or death sentence.

In the modern age, efforts are on to reform the criminals, even the hard core, and bring them back to the mainstream. Hence police, prison officers, judges and other law-enforcing agencies develop a soft corner for the people in custody. While the sufferer should get justice, the innocent must not be punished. This idea too helps the prison staff often develop a soft corner for the prisoners.

The behaviour of prison officer Jackson amply illustrates the above point. He is very strict in enforcing the rules and regulations of prison as well as the Governor's orders. Yet somewhere in him we find a tiny core of compassion. Even Evans knew it. Mr Jackson has asked Evans to remove that filthy bobble hat. Evans requested him to allow it to wear it during exam as it brought luck to him. It was kind of lucky charm for him. Jackson agreed.

**12. Do you agree that between crime and punishment it is mainly a battle of wits?**

**Ans.** Crime and punishment are like two sides of the coin. Punishment follows crime. It is only after a crime has been committed that the law-enforcing agencies become active and try to nab the offenders and bring them to book. If efforts of the police are successful, suitable punishment is awarded to the criminals.

Since the location, time and victim of a crime cannot be predicted in advance, preventive action to check the crime is not possible. Even tight security fails when hardened criminals or suicide-minded human bombs come into play.

Criminals are always one step ahead of the police. It is always a battle of wits between the two. The police tries to trace the clues left by the criminals and apprehend them on the basis of these. On the other hand, the criminals devise a full proof plan and try to leave no clues which might help in identification later on. Since the legal system is based on evidence—both human and material—police as well as criminals and their lawyers, use their wits to turn the case in their favour and win it.