



**[Accredited with 'A+' Grade by NAAC (CGPA:3.64) in the Third Cycle
and Graded as Category-I University by MHRD-UGC]**

KARAIKUDI – 630 003

Under Graduate



PART-II: ENGLISH PAPER-I

I - Semester



ALAGAPPA UNIVERSITY

[Accredited with 'A+' Grade by NAAC (CGPA:3.64) in the Third Cycle
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(A State University Established by the Government of Tamil Nadu)

KARAIKUDI – 630 003



ONLINE PROGRAMMES

Under Graduate

I - Semester

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PART-II: ENGLISH PAPER - I

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INTRODUCTION

English is one language that most people all over the world choose to speak or learn to speak, beside their own mother tongue. Although language has been an object of attention for many philosophers from the times of Aristotle and Plato, it is said that the nineteenth century saw the birth of the study of language as a science. While the ability to communicate distinguishes human beings from animals, the ability to communicate effectively distinguishes one human being from another. Every human being faces the need to be well equipped with effective communication tools. In today's competitive environment, success depends to a great extent on good communication, i.e., the ability to not just speak well but also listen well.

If you are able to speak and listen correctly, you leave no scope for miscommunication. Good communication is also dependant on the correct usage of grammar. A person whose language is grammatically incorrect is bound to sound unpleasant. If you cannot speak correctly, chances are you will not be able to write correctly either. So, a sound knowledge of grammar is necessary for good communication, not just at the workplace but also at home. This book will discuss the various aspects of English grammar and usage. Along with it, it will also discuss a form of literature known as prose. Prose is the most basic form of written language, applying common grammatical structure and natural flow of speech rather than rhythmic structure. Its simplicity and loosely defined arrangement has led to its usage in the majority of spoken dialogues, factual discourse as well as contemporary and imaginary writing. There are many prose forms. Novels, short stories, and works of criticism are kinds of prose.

This book is divided into fourteen units that follow the self-instruction mode with each unit beginning with an Introduction to the unit, followed by an outline of the Objectives. The detailed content is then presented in a simple but structured manner interspersed with Check Your Progress Questions to test the student's understanding of the topic. A Summary along with a list of Key Words and a set of Self-Assessment Questions and Exercises is also provided at the end of each unit for recapitulation.

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BLOCK - I

PROSE I

C. V. Raman: 'Water: The Elixir of Life'

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UNIT 1 C. V. RAMAN: 'WATER: THE ELIXIR OF LIFE'

Structure

- 1.0 Introduction
- 1.1 Objectives
- 1.2 A Short Note on C. V. Raman
- 1.3 'Water: The Elixir of Life': Summary
- 1.4 Critical Analysis
- 1.5 Answers to Check Your Progress Questions
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- 1.7 Key Words
- 1.8 Self Assessment Questions and Exercises
- 1.9 Further Readings

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In this unit, we will study the essay called 'Water: The Elixir of Life' by C. V. Raman. The essay deals with the significance of water in our lives. C. V. Raman emphasizes in the essay, how without water we cannot imagine life and yet how water is not thought to be so valuable a commodity. By giving his views on water, C. V. Raman is making his readers aware of the ways in which water is essential to human existence and how it is nothing less than a magical potion. In, this unit, we will discuss the life and works of C.V. Raman and then move on the critical appreciation of the essay.

1.1 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Discuss the life and works of C. V. Raman
- Critically appreciate the essay 'Water: The Elixir of Life'
- Describe the significance of water in our lives
- Examine how water is significant for a nation's development and for the sustenance of humankind

NOTES

1.2 A SHORT NOTE ON C. V. RAMAN

Sir Chandrasekhara Venkata Raman, (7 November 1888 – 21 November 1970) was an Indian physicist and Nobel laureate in Physics well-known for his work on the molecular scattering of light and for the discovery of the Raman effect, which is named after him. In 1934 Raman became the Director of the Indian Institute of Science in Bangalore. He also started a company called Travancore Chemical and Manufacturing Co. Ltd. in 1943 along with Dr. Krishnamurthy. The Company during its sixty years history established four factories in Southern India. In 1947, he was appointed as the first National Professor by the new government of Independent India. He was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society early in his career (1924) and knighted in 1929. In 1930 he won the Nobel Prize in Physics. In 1954 he was awarded the Bharat Ratna. He was also awarded the Lenin Peace Prize in 1957. Raman retired from the Indian Institute of Science in 1948, and a year later he established the Raman Research Institute in Bangalore, Karnataka. He served as its director until his death in 1970, at the age of eighty-two.

Check Your Progress

1. What is C.V.Raman well known for?
2. When did Raman win the Nobel Prize in Physics?

1.3 'WATER: THE ELIXIR OF LIFE': SUMMARY

The essay 'Water: The Elixir of Life' written by Sir C. V. Raman analyses and discusses in a clear, concise, and scientific manner the nature and properties of water and its significance in the life of human beings. C.V. Raman begins the essay with his remark on how human beings have always sought for an imaginary elixir of life while neglecting and taking for granted the real elixir of life which is nothing but common water.

He gives the example of the Libyan Desert and the Valley of the Nile. Though both of them lie side by side, the first is a dry and arid desert while the latter is one of the most fertile valleys on this planet. The presence of the river Nile in the Valley of Nile is responsible for this huge difference between the two places. He in fact remarks that the entire civilization of Egypt was nurtured and sustained by the life-giving waters of the Nile.

Raman points out how the presence of water adds to the beauty of the countryside. The rain-fed tanks apart from quenching the thirst of human beings, animals, and plants, add life, colour, and vigour to the landscape. They are a very common sight in South India and play a very important role in nurturing the agricultural development of the region.

The author first mentions that one important property of water is its ability to carry silt or finely divided soil in suspension. These particles are carried over great distances and get deposited when the salt water of the sea mixes with the freshwater of the river in the delta areas. Large tracts of fertile alluvial land are formed in this manner. Thus water plays a pivotal role in promoting agriculture, and making the entire region fertile and full of greenery. But the very same agency can play a destructive role when it is present in excess, notes Raman. Soil erosion is one such phenomenon. It is a major problem in countries like India. It occurs when the top layer of the soil is washed away in successive steps by the action of water. It is mainly caused by sudden bursts of heavy rainfall, the slope of the land, removal of the natural protective coat of vegetation, the existence of ruts along which water can flow rapidly, and the absence of any checks to prevent the flow of water. Raman mentions that it can be checked using various preventive measures like the terracing of land, the construction of bunds to check the flow of water, the practice of contour cultivation, and the planting of appropriate types of vegetation.

C.V. Raman then points out that water is the basis for all forms of life. Hence the need of the hour is to conserve and properly harness all available water resources. In countries like India where agricultural production is mainly dependent on seasonal rainfall, this becomes a burning issue. Raman suggests the adoption of techniques which help in preventing and controlling soil erosion in order to conserve and harness water for useful purposes. This would prevent the water from the seasonal rainfall from running off the ground. He suggests the practice of afforestation and the planting of civilized forests to check soil erosion, conserve rain water, and provide cheap supplies of fuel.

Raman also mentions the idea of promoting internal waterways as a cheap and economical means of transport because a country like India has a large number of water bodies which can be used for navigation. He also supports the idea of using water resources to produce hydroelectric power. This would improve the rural economy, and help in tapping the ground water resources to a greater extent.

Hence Raman concludes by saying that though water is the commonest of liquids because of its easy availability, it is the most uncommon of liquids because it has the unique power of maintaining animal and plant life. Thus the study of its nature and properties is of highest scientific interest.

1.4 CRITICAL ANALYSIS

Water is the most significant liquid in the world as it is similar to that of life. Can one think of life without water? Can you live without water as you cannot live without oxygen? Water is so significant in the beginning, development and perpetuation of the world, the plants, the animal world as well as the humankind that there are no two opinions about its importance. C. V. Raman's essay 'Water – the Elixir of Life' seems to be a justification on the significance of water in the development of whole of the humankind.

C. V. Raman: 'Water: The Elixir of Life'

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But before going into the thematic aspects of the essay, it is necessary that we understand a little bit about the genre of 'Essay'.

What is of much significance in the present essay 'Water – An Elixir of Life' is that C. V. Raman with his scholarly insights has made the essay a pleasurable reading. Often a didactic essay on water may make the readers feel bored while reading the essay; but C. V. Raman with his choice of vocabulary and phrases as well as his syntactical constructions has written the essay in such a manner that often one enjoys reading the essay. It is to be kept in mind here that an essay necessarily talks about a topic / theme in such a way that the readers find themselves with some new information while reading the essay or they enjoy the process of reading itself. In the case of 'Water – An Elixir of Life', both the cases are served while reading the essay.

Another notable feature of the essay 'Water – An Elixir of Life' is that as the essay is written for the general public, therefore even though it explains things in a scientific manner; it does not use the scientific jargons at all. The choice of language is very important in an essay as on it depends who is going to read the essay. In other words, the language of the essay determines or chooses its readers. If the language is technical or scientific then a specific kind of readers can be addressed through that language; while if the language is general as it is in 'Water – An Elixir of Life', a greater readership is available to the essay. Here it is also important to understand that C. V. Raman wanted more and more people to know about the significance of water in their lives and therefore he consciously and deliberately chose a language which suits the purpose of the general readers who would not have to struggle with the language.

With this little discussion on the nature of the essay, let us now again move back to its theme – the significance of water in our lives. C. V. Raman begins the essay in an interesting way, by saying –

Man has through the ages sought in vain for an imaginary elixir of life, the divine *amrita*, a draught of which was thought to confer immortality. But the true elixir of life lies near to our hands. For it is the commonest of all liquids, plain water!

What is interesting about this beginning as well as the title of the essay is the use of the word 'elixir.' Elixir means 'a magical (sometimes also used in the sense of medicinal) potion' that guarantees an immortal life. We can see that often in western alchemy, there are mentions of bogus scientists who have tried to find that magical elixir and even in the Indian context, the notion of *amrita* is very familiar to all of us as being a potion which if drunk will possibly provide us with immortality, as also being pointed out by C. V. Raman. What is significant to mention here is that in the perusal of this magical potion, humankind has forgotten that what is available to them – 'the plain water' – is nothing less than the elixir.

Thus the title of the essay as well as the beginning of the essay provides us with a new way of looking at water: the most common things around us, yet most valuable. Often we with our short sightedness are not able to have a proper

understanding of the significance of water in our lives. So the essay ‘Water – An Elixir of Life’ in one way propounds what the title as the beginning of the essay states. The essay is written just to explain why water should be treated as the most valuable object and that one should make all efforts not to waste it in any way if one is looking forward to national development, or progress and sustenance of the humankind.

C. V. Raman beautifully gives the anecdote of how a civilization has become possible because of water. He writes –

I remember one day standing on the line which separates the Libyan Desert from the Valley of the Nile in Egypt. On one side was a visible sea of billowing sand without a speck of green or a single living thing anywhere visible on it. On the other side lay one of the greatest, most fertile and densely populated areas to be found anywhere on the earth, teeming with life and vegetation. What made this wonderful difference? Why, it is the water of river Nile flowing down to the Mediterranean from its sources a couple of thousands of miles away ... Egypt, in fact was made by its river. Its ancient civilization was created and sustained by the life-giving waters which come down year after year with unfailing regularity.

The above anecdote is truly inspiring in terms of our understanding of the significance of water. It is only the water of the Nile river which has made the Egyptian civilization possible; otherwise things would have been very much like the Libyan Desert.

Think about India, why is it that all the prosperous civilizations in India developed around the rivers – starting from the Indus Valley Civilization. All civilizations across the world has developed near the waterways for at least two reasons –

- (a) Water is equal to life, wherever there is water; humankind found it fit for settlement, as agriculture could be done in a much more fruitful way in the riverbanks. The rivers carrying with it the silts make the land fertile and helped people in agricultural activities.
- (b) Trade and Commerce also developed along the river as waterways could be used as a medium of transport.

Therefore, C. V. Raman states – ‘It (water) has played a role of vast significance in shaping the course of earth’s history and continues to play the leading role in the drama of life on the surface of our planet.’ In other words, life is only possible on earth because of the presence of water. If there would have been no water, there would not have been any history of the humankind as man’s existence will not be possible without adequate water.

Then C. V. Raman gives the details of ‘rain-fed tanks’ of water, i.e., the ponds that one sees in abundance in southern part of India. He talks about them in the following terms –

The rain-fed tanks that are so common in South India – alas often so sadly neglected in their maintenance – are a cheering sight when they are full. ... Water in a landscape may be compared to the eyes in a human race.

C. V. Raman: ‘Water: The Elixir of Life’

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After talking about the rain-fed tanks, C. V. Raman talks about the power to water to carry silts or finely divided soil in suspension. These silts provide the colour to the water and therefore the colour of the water varies from place to place. To talk about it vividly, C. V. Raman gives the example of change in colour of water as one journeys from a great river towards the sea –

This can be readily seen when one travels by a steamer down a great river to the deep sea. The colour of the water changes successively from the muddy red or brown of silt through varying shades of yellow and green finally to the blue of the deep sea.

After talking about the colour of water due to the presence of slits, C. V. Raman goes into the discussion of the geological process by which soil is formed on the earth's surface from the rocks of its crust because of the power of the flow of water. If because of the carriage of silt and its sedimentation in the river's banks can lead to the formulation of human settlements and great civilizations across the world, then because of the problem of soil erosion it can easily play a destructive part in the history of civilization.

Regarding soil erosion, C. V. Raman states –

Soil erosion occurs in successive steps, the earliest of which may easily pass unnoticed. In the later stages, the cutting up and washing away of the earth is only painfully apparent in the formation of deep gullies and ravines which make all agriculture impossible. Sudden bursts of excessively heavy rain resulting in a large surplus of water are the principal factors in causing soil erosion. Contributory causes are the slope of the land, removal of the natural preventive coat of vegetation, the existence of ruts along which water can flow with rapidly gathering momentum, and the absence of checks of such flow. Incredibly large quantities of precious soil can be washed away if such conditions exist, as is unhappily too often the case.

This kind of soil erosion which C. V. Raman mentions in the earlier quoted portion is really a cause of concern for a country like India which is full of rivers. If India has to get over this menace of soil erosion then according to C. V. Raman 'preventive actions' are immediately necessary. C. V. Raman talks about the following preventive actions –

- (a) The terracing of land
- (b) Construction of bunds to check the flow of water
- (c) The practice of contour cultivation
- (d) Planting of appropriate vegetation, etc.

After discussing the topic of soil erosion, C. V. Raman goes into the discussion of the need for the conservation and proper utilization of water so as to make the human civilization sustain for a longer time.

In India, seasonal rainfall is one of the greatest factors on which Indian agriculture is dependent. Therefore, C. V. Raman says 'The harnessing of our rivers, the waters of which now mostly run to waste, is a great national problem which must be considered and dealt with on national lines.' If water is used in

proper ways in India, then, according to C. V. Raman the vast acres of land which at present is scrub jungle can be turned into fertile land for the development of our nation. In other words, the prosperity of our nation depends on the successful implementation of well-planned actions of conservation and proper uses of water.

C. V. Raman is of the opinion that if along with the utilization of water, afforestation programmes are successfully implemented then it would lead to –

- (a) Check soil erosion
- (b) Conserve the rainfall from flowing away as waste
- (c) Supply cheap fuel
- (d) Farming and manure
- (e) Cheapest form of internal transport (by boats and barges through canals and rivers)
- (f) Development of hydro-electric power, especially useful for the rural economy.

Thus C. V. Raman shows that water and its right utilization can lead to prosperity and development of our nation. Therefore he ends the essay by saying –

In one sense, water is the commonest of liquids. In another sense, it is the most uncommon of liquids with amazing properties which are responsible for its unique power of maintaining animal and plant life.

Water is thus presented by C. V. Raman as the liquid which is the most significant for human existence. As we see water in abundance all around us we do not seem to value it so much. We feel that it is there and therefore it has no value. But in reality, it is the most valuable liquid available to humankind.

C. V. Raman thus had made a brief but incisive discourse on the need of water, its conservation and proper utilization so that humankind is aware of the problems related to water. One thing that he probably hasn't dealt with is the shortage of water in human life. In these days, often during summer months there are severe shortage of water. One of the greatest examples in India is the shortage of water in Shimla, the capital of Himachal Pradesh in 2018 summer months when the taps of the city went dry for many days. If water is not preserved, conserved and utilized in the proper way, then the day is not far when we will not have enough water to sustain our humankind.

Check Your Progress

- 3. Which example is given by Raman to indicate the importance of water at the beginning of the essay?
- 4. How can soil erosion be prevented as per Raman?
- 5. State the factor which determines or chooses the readers of an essay.
- 6. What provides colour to the water as per Raman?

C. V. Raman: 'Water: The Elixir of Life'

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1.5 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS

1. Sir Chandrasekhara Venkata Raman, (7 November 1888 – 21 November 1970) was an Indian physicist and Nobel laureate in Physics well-known for his work on the molecular scattering of light and for the discovery of the Raman effect, which is named after him.
2. Raman won the Nobel Prize in Physics in 1930.
3. Raman gives the example of the Libyan Desert and the Valley of the Nile to indicate the importance of water at the beginning of the essay.
4. Raman mentions that soil erosion can be checked using various preventive measures like the terracing of land, the construction of bunds to check the flow of water, the practice of contour cultivation, and the planting of appropriate types of vegetation.
5. The language of the essay determines or chooses its readers.
6. As per Raman, silts provide the colour to the water and therefore the colour of the water varies from place to place.

1.6 SUMMARY

- Sir Chandrasekhara Venkata Raman, (7 November 1888 – 21 November 1970) was an Indian physicist and Nobel laureate in Physics well-known for his work on the molecular scattering of light and for the discovery of the Raman effect, which is named after him.
- The essay 'Water: The Elixir of Life' written by Sir C.V. Raman analyses and discusses in a clear, concise, and scientific manner the nature and properties of water and its significance in the life of human beings.
- C.V. Raman begins the essay with his remark on how human beings have always sought for an imaginary elixir of life while neglecting and taking for granted the real elixir of life which is nothing but common water.
- One important property of water is its ability to carry silt or finely divided soil in suspension. These particles are carried over great distances and get deposited when the salt water of the sea mixes with the freshwater of the river in the delta areas. Large tracts of fertile alluvial land are formed in this manner.
- Soil erosion is a major problem in countries like India. It occurs when the top layer of the soil is washed away in successive steps by the action of water. It is mainly caused by sudden bursts of heavy rainfall, the slope of the land, removal of the natural protective coat of vegetation, the existence

of ruts along which water can flow rapidly, and the absence of any checks to prevent the flow of water.

- Raman suggests the practice of afforestation and the planting of civilized forests to check soil erosion, conserve rain water, and provide cheap supplies of fuel.
- Raman concludes by saying that though water is the commonest of liquids because of its easy availability, it is the most uncommon of liquids because it has the unique power of maintaining animal and plant life. Thus the study of its nature and properties is of highest scientific interest.

C. V. Raman: 'Water: The Elixir of Life'

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1.7 KEY WORDS

- **Silt:** It refers to fine sand, clay, or other material carried by running water and deposited as a sediment, especially in a channel or harbour.
- **Fertile:** It refers to the soil producing or capable of producing abundant vegetation or crops.
- **Elixir:** It means 'a magical (sometimes also used in the sense of medicinal) potion' that guarantees an immortal life.
- **Soil Erosion:** It occurs when the top layer of the soil is washed away in successive steps by the action of water.

1.8 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short-Answer Questions

1. Write a short-note on the various accolades received by C.V.Raman.
2. Briefly explain the destructive role of water when it is present in excess.
3. How does water play a pivotal role in promoting agriculture?
4. Briefly discuss the title of the essay.
5. 'All civilizations across the world has developed near the waterways for at least two reasons'. State the two reasons.
6. List the benefits of afforestation programmes as per Raman.

Long-Answer Questions

1. Why water is considered the 'true elixir of life'? Write a critical essay on the significance on water based on what you have gathered from C. V. Raman's essay 'Water – An Elixir of Life'.

C. V. Raman: 'Water: The Elixir of Life'

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2. How does soil erosion occur and what are the chief factors that cause it? What does C. V. Raman talk about soil erosion and what are the chief ways to avert soil erosion? Discuss in detail.
3. What is the measure suggested by C.V. Raman to control the movement of water in order to harness it for useful purposes?
4. What role is played water in shaping the humankind's history? With reference to C. V. Raman's essay, write three paragraphs on the significance of water in our civilization.

1.9 FURTHER READINGS

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UNIT 2 SAKI: *MRS PACKLETIDE'S TIGER*

NOTES

Structure

- 2.0 Introduction
- 2.1 Objectives
- 2.2 A Short Note on the Author: Saki
- 2.3 Critical Appreciation of *Mrs. Packletide's Tiger*
 - 2.3.1 Summary
 - 2.3.2 Critical Analysis
- 2.4 Answers to Check Your Progress Questions
- 2.5 Summary
- 2.6 Key Words
- 2.7 Self Assessment Questions and Exercises
- 2.8 Further Readings

2.0 INTRODUCTION

Mrs. Packletide's Tiger is a short story by Saki where the author presents the vanity of women to the extremes in such a way that it seems extremely humorous when we encounter them. In the story, Mrs. Packletide wants to shoot a tiger only to prove to her neighbour Loona Bimberton that she is no less in any way. Though she eventually gets to kill a tiger, but she pay a heavy price for the same. The story is about the vanity of the women who are trapped in colonial India and have nothing else to do, but live in a world of vanity to preoccupy themselves with something. It is a humorous short story with a twist at the end. It may be said that Saki is writing a satire on women and their vanity.

2.1 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Discuss the life and works of Saki
- Explain the important nuances of the short story *Mrs. Packletide's Tiger*
- Critically appreciate the short story *Mrs. Packletide's Tiger*

2.2 A SHORT NOTE ON THE AUTHOR: SAKI

Saki, pen name for Hector Hugh Munro (18 December 1870 – 14 November 1916) is a famous British writer who is renowned for his short stories. Often he is being compared to the other famous short story writer O. Henry. His stories are

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known for their satire and humour and often for the twist in their endings. Saki was a witty writer and often made a satiric critic of the society in which he was living. His significant works include –

- *Reginald* (1904)
- *The Chronicles of Clovis* (1911)
- *Beasts and Superbeasts* (1914)
- *The Unbearable Bassington* (1912)
- *William Came* (1913)

Check Your Progress

- | |
|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What are elements for which Saki's stories known for? 2. Name the famous writer to which Saki is often compared to. |
|---|

2.3 CRITICAL APPRECIATION OF MRS. PACKLETIDE'S TIGER

In this section, we will first discuss the summary of the short story and then move on to the critical analysis.

2.3.1 Summary

Mrs. Packletide is the protagonist of the story as the title of the short story points out. She is an English woman living in India during the colonial period who suddenly develops a strong urge to shoot a tiger. It is not that she is a very courageous lady or that she goes on hunting expeditions often. Moreover, in the story, this desire to shoot a tiger has off late been her obsession as she is envious of one of her companions, Loona Bimberton, who has recently been conveyed in a plane by an Algerian pilot. This incident has affected Mrs. Packletide to such an extent that she now wants to show to the world and moreover to Loona Bimberton that she is no less than her. So she has devised a plan now to have a tiger skin and show it on the mass of her Home.

Moreover, she happens to believe that if she succeeds in shooting a tiger then her photo will be up in the press and she would have a gathering in Curzon Street. Again she also wanted to show a tiger-clasp on Loona's next birthday. Thus all her intentions have a single obsessive concern – to somehow prove to herself and to the world that she is better off than Loona Bimberton.

It is at this point that things turn in favour of Mrs. Packletide as it comes to her knowledge that an old and feeble tiger was going by the neighbouring town and looking for much nourishment. This news make Mrs. Packletide make an offer in public that anyone who helps her in shooting the tiger will get a prize of one thousand rupees. One has to remember that it is colonial times and one thousand

rupees was a lot at that time and therefore the villagers all get exceptionally enticed with the prize money and do everything to help Mrs. Packletide. Every effort is made to bind the tiger in town and youngsters become additionally posted on the edges of wilderness so as to keep the tiger in town.

Saki: *Mrs Packletide's Tiger*

In such circumstances, one night Mrs. Packletide along with her partner (paid) Miss Mebbin go to a stage that is located at a strategic position above the trees and wait for the tiger to arrive as a goat with a noisy bleat is tied in an appropriate position to attract the tiger to that place. In a while the tiger shows up to the place where the goat was tied and starts inspecting the place. It becomes an opportune moment for Mrs. Packletide to shoot the tiger and she discharges a shot with her rifle. With the short, the tiger tumbles down to the other side and the villagers start celebrating the killing of the tiger with drums and singing and Mrs. Packletide seems exceptionally glad that she has at last has been able to kill a tiger.

Miss Mebbin who was there at site cautions Mrs. Packletide that something strange has happened in that the rifle shot had actually hit the goat and the tiger has merely died due to the heart attack caused by the rifle shot. Mrs. Packletide is baffled by the information but at least feels relieved at the consolation that she has got a tiger skin. The villagers consent to keep the information a secret provided they get the cash prize.

Following this, Mrs. Packletide's photo shows up in two weeklies, but Loona Bimberton declines to go to the lunch party where Mrs. Packletide had put the tiger skin on display. At this point something interesting happens – Miss Mebbin now asks for the cash from Mrs. Packletide to keep the information a secret that she has actually killed a goat and that the tiger had died of heart attack. Miss Mebbin is able to extort so much money for herself as was needed to purchase a weekend house close to Dorking. To keep Miss Mebbin keep the secret Mrs. Packletide had to pay the money and the author ends the story with the note that 'accidental costs were too substantial for such sort of chasing.'

2.3.2 Critical Analysis

The short story *Mrs. Packletide's Tiger* by Saki deals with British women in colonial India as they spend their times in India doing absurd things. What is of concern to the story is how Mrs. Packletide is obsessively concerned with a tiger's skin to display it to Loona Bimberton so as to assert that Mrs. Packletide is in no way inferior to that of Loona Bimberton. The short story appears to deal with the heavy price which females such as Mrs. Packletide pay for vanity. Saki in the short story *Mrs. Packletide's Tiger* comments on this vanity of colonial women as well as attacks the vanity of women from a satirical and humorous point of view.

In the following sections, we will be looking at the short story *Mrs. Packletide's Tiger* from different perspective so as to understand it critically.

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Colonial Women**NOTES**

Before blaming Mrs. Packletide for her vanity let us have a look at the situation in which colonial women like her had to live their lives. One has to understand here that most of these English women did not go to the colonized countries such as India with a job. They accompanied their husbands, or fathers or some male members of their family to the colonized countries and stayed there mostly within the boundaries of their bungalows. While the British males in the colonized set up were busy with their administrative and military preoccupations, the women had all the time to themselves to do almost nothing as there were servants to carry out the orders.

So these colonial women spent their days doing nothing apart from living up in their world of imagination and vanity. Many outpoured their loneliness, vanity, boredom and routine nature of their lives in their dairies so as to get accustomed to the boredom (so often there are many diary writing by the women of the colonial times) while many others like Mrs. Packletide lived in the world of their vanity where they created a world of balloon for herself and in the process of creation of that world, paid a heavy price.

Mrs. Packletide, as mentioned earlier, made an imaginary enemy in Loona Bimberton and she wanted to compete with her in all respects and emerge as a winner. Why does she have such a mentality? Is it because it's human nature to be jealous or is it that her circumstances made her to be one? Saki does not give any clue in the story regarding this. He just narrates the story and leaves it to the reader to figure out for them. But as a critical reader, one needs to probe this aspect of Mrs. Packletide's character seriously to understand the state of the colonial women in the Indian context as they were trapped and had nothing much to do but live in a world of vanity. Mrs. Packletide is presented by Saki as a woman of much wealthy background as she spends one thousand rupees by giving it to villagers for aiding her in killing the tiger and bribes Miss Mebbin with a bungalow so as to keep the secret that she hasn't shot a tiger, but a goat and the old feeble tiger died of heart attack.

With her wealth, it is obvious that she did not have to worry about anything else in the world. So from the vantage point of wealth what she embarks on in the story is to a world of vanity in which she finds herself much involved, leading to paying a heavy price for the same. One has to remember here that people like Mrs. Packletide is only busy with the image makeover and do not live a life in the world of reality. And one who lives in the world of air necessarily pays a heavy price for it one day or another as does Mrs. Packletide.

With leisure and resources at their disposal, the colonial women are a very distinct kind – they are not really an object of ridicule, but need to be looked at sympathetically so as to understand the social and cultural situation which provoked them to think and act in such a manner. So instead of saying that Saki is making a satirical attack on colonial women with their leisure, luxuries and resources, we

can say that the story *Mrs. Packletide's Tiger* is more about a satirical attack on the colonialism itself which produces these kinds of women.

Saki: *Mrs Packletide's Tiger*

Women Characters

All the major characters in the story are women and none of them are projected in the story in a positive light. Where Mrs. Packletide is shown to be envious and living in a world of her own vanity, Loona Bimberton seems to be similar to that of Mrs Packletide and Miss Mebbin is shown to be a money-minded person who takes the advantage of Mrs. Packletide to get money for herself and at last a bungalow from her.

Easily from these kinds of characterization of women in the short story, people may deduce that Saki has a strong hatred for women and therefore is presenting women in such a fashion. But this is not exactly true. It is not just that Saki is presenting women in such light as she has a hatred for women; moreover he does so as he is generally trying to present a humorous aspect of life and in this case the story is dealing with women who all have some extraordinary streak in their characters which makes us laugh at them.

Saki is a humorous writer – a writer who writes short stories with humorous characters and twists at the end of the story. Humour can be described as either as a comic utterance or a comic appearance or a mode of behaviour. In the present short story, *Mrs. Packletide's Tiger* humour is presented as a mode of behaviour of the characters. Humour is in the way Mrs. Packletide is envious of Loona Bimberton that it becomes her obsessive concern that she should somehow show herself to be superior than her neighbor Loona Bimberton. It is a kind of a vain attempt on her part to fall into the trap of such superiority complex. Otherwise why does she need to shoot a tiger to show to the world that she is superior than Loona? It is not that Mrs. Packletide is a deeply adventurous lady when it comes to hunting. In the story it is very evident that instead of hunting she merely kills a old and feeble tiger as the circumstances prove to be right for her.

One needs to understand that the short story *Mrs. Packletide's Tiger* is also a deep psychological study of the characters in the story. Mrs. Packletide is a person who vainly thinks that if she is able to shoot a tiger then it will add to her reputation and the tiger skin will be her object to show off to the world. As we have seen in the summary of the short story, she is able to kill a tiger but not shoot it. With the rifle shot, the old and feeble tiger died of a heart attack whereas the bullet had actually hit the goat. It is apparently a simple story, but in the hands of Saki, the master storyteller, the simple story turns out to be a great lesson for the humankind.

Ending of the Story

The satirical way in which Saki makes a comment on the end of the story is something which is greatly done. The story ends with – ‘The incidental expenses are so heavy’, she (Mrs. Packletide) confides to inquiring friends.’ Probably Mrs.

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Packletide at the end has realized where she has gone wrong with her vanity. It is because of her vanity that she had to pay a heavy price which pricks her conscience and makes her confess at the end of the story about 'the incidental expenses.' Probably people will never come to know about what actually happened when Mrs. Packletide attempted to shoot a tiger because Miss Mebbin is paid the price for shutting her mouth; but the glory of shooting a tiger will never be enjoyed by Mrs. Packletide. Whenever she will look at the tiger skin, she will be made to remember how she had to pay a heavy price for it. The satirical tone of the writer in the term 'incidental expenses' makes us look at the story from a very different point of view.

The whole story gets a twist because of this term at the end of the story. Saki is generally believed to provide this kind of twists to his story at the end so as to jolt the sensibilities of the readers. When we begin reading the story, it seems to be a story of a particular woman Mrs. Packletide and her jealousy. But as we come to the end of the story, we come to know the price that she had to pay for her jealousy. In his attempt to make the story reach a wider readership, Saki probably has shown the vanity of women as the word is usually associated with women. But one has to understand that it is not only about women – men also often have their own vanity. What Saki probably is trying to do is to make a mocking attack or satirizing attack at the notion of vanity and how each one of us need to pay a price if we have vanity in our character. In those terms, Saki can be termed as a glowing example of social satirist.

Check Your Progress

3. Which event makes Mrs. Packletide obsessed with the idea of shooting a tiger?
4. Who helps Mrs. Packletide professionally to shoot a tiger?
5. State the manner in which humour is presented by Saki in the short story.
6. Mention the phrase which Mrs. Packletide utters at the end of the story.

2.4 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS

1. Saki's stories are known for their satire and humour and often for the twist in their endings
2. Saki is often compared to the famous short story writer O. Henry
3. Shooting a tiger becomes Mrs. Packletide's obsession after she hears about one of her companions, Loona Bimberton, who had recently been conveyed in a plane by an Algerian pilot.

4. Miss Mebbin is the person who professionally helps Mrs. Packletide to shoot a tiger.
5. In the short story, *Mrs. Packletide's Tiger*, Saki presents humour as a mode of behaviour of the characters.
6. The phrase which Mrs. Packletide utters at the end of the story is– ‘The incidental expenses are so heavy’.

Saki: Mrs Packletide's Tiger

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2.5 SUMMARY

- Saki, pen name for Hector Hugh Munro (18 December 1870 – 14 November 1916) is a famous British writer who is renowned for his short stories.
- *Mrs. Packletide's Tiger* is a short story by Saki where the author presents the vanity of women to the extremes in such a way that it seems extremely humorous when we encounter them.
- In the story, Mrs. Packletide wants to shoot a tiger only to prove to her neighbor Loona Bimberton that she is no less in any way. Though she eventually gets to kill a tiger, but she pays a heavy price for the same.
- The story is about the vanity of the women who are trapped in colonial India and have nothing else to do but live in a world of vanity to preoccupy themselves with something.
- *Mrs. Packletide's Tiger* is a humorous short story with a twist at the end. It may be said that Saki is writing a satire on women and their vanity.

2.6 KEY WORDS

- **Humour:** It can be described as either as a comic utterance or a comic appearance or a mode of behaviour.
- **Satire:** It refers to the use of humour, irony, exaggeration, or ridicule to expose and criticize people's stupidity or vices, particularly in the context of contemporary politics and other topical issues.
- **Vanity:** It refers to the excessive pride in or admiration of one's own appearance or achievements.

2.7 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTION AND EXERCISES

Short-Answer Questions

1. What do you think is the primary theme of the short story *Mrs. Packletide's Tiger*?

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2. Write a brief note on the author's views about women as presented in the short story *Mrs. Packletide's Tiger*.
3. Compare the characters of Mrs. Packletide and Loona Bimberton.
4. Briefly discuss the ending of the short story.

Long-Answer Questions

1. Do you think the short story deals with multiple themes?
2. Do you think the title of the short story is apt? Give reasons in support of your answer.
3. Describe Miss Mebin's attitude as presented in the story *Mrs. Packletide's Tiger*.
4. Do you agree that the short story is a very apt psychological study of women in colonial times? Give reasons in support of your answer.
5. Critically comment on the element of humour and satire in the short story by Saki, *Mrs Packletide's Tiger*.

2.8 FURTHER READINGS

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UNIT 3 JIM CORBETT: *A DEED OF BRAVERY*

Jim Corbett: A Deed of Bravery

NOTES

Structure

- 3.0 Introduction
- 3.1 Objectives
- 3.2 A Short Note on the Author – Jim Corbett
- 3.3 Critical Appreciation of *A Deed of Bravery*
 - 3.3.1 Summary
 - 3.3.2 Critical Analysis
- 3.4 Answers to Check Your Progress Questions
- 3.5 Summary
- 3.6 Key Words
- 3.7 Self Assessment Questions and Exercises
- 3.8 Further Readings

3.0 INTRODUCTION

Jim Corbett's short story *A Deed of Bravery* deals with the heroic deeds of survival against all odds. Two protagonists of the story – Haria and Narwa had to survive against a circumstance which seems all about too much hardships. To collect bamboos for basket making, they have to travel long distance on foot to the forest where tigers are frequent. In one of such journey, Narwa get attacked by a tiger and Haria saves him with extreme bravery. Next comes Narwa's fight against odds to survive after the tiger attack.

Jim Corbett found this story an act of great bravery and thought about sharing it with his readers so as to make these characters immortal through his words. In the unit, we will deal with the story in as much as detailed way as possible. We will start with a little biographical details of the author Jim Corbett and then we will discuss the story in short, before moving on to critically appreciation the story to come up with the varied themes that the story deals with.

3.1 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Discuss the life and works of Jim Corbett
- Explain the nuances in the short story *A Deed of Bravery*
- Describe Jim Corbett's concern with India and Indians

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3.2 A SHORT NOTE ON THE AUTHOR – JIM CORBETT

Jim Corbett (1875-1955) is a very common name in India and there are many who are aware of his writings. Jim Corbett was a lieutenant-colonel of the British officers serving in India and had an illustrious career in India in terms of training people in jungle warfare and ways of Indian jungles. Usually, British officers serving in India were not seen in a positive light by us as most of the officers were cruel to the natives and did not concern themselves with the well-being of the native people. Their concern was primarily to look after the interests of the colonial administration and consequently they were perceived by us as some kind of oppressors.

But the picture of Jim Corbett is not that of a typical British Officer posted in Colonial India as his concern and knowledge about the Indian jungles and people living there made him be loved by many Indians. Jim Corbett's writings on man-eating tigers of India are popular throughout the world, especially *Man Eaters of Kumaon* and *Man Eating Leopard of Rudraprayag*.

Apart from being a colonial officer, Jim Corbett was also an excellent writer who had a natural flair for writing. In the piece of writing that is prescribed in our syllabus *A Deed of Bravery* (which is taken from his writing *My India*) Jim Corbett shows how a piece of writing can be made interesting with simplicity of expression. The narrative style of Jim Corbett is also fascinating as he gives biographical details about his own experience.

The summary in the succeeding section will provide you the details of the narrative of *A Deed of Bravery*.

Check Your Progress

1. In what capacity was Jim Corbett was working in India?
2. Name two works by Jim Corbett on the man-eating tigers in India.

3.3 CRITICAL APPRECIATION OF *A DEED OF BRAVERY*

In this section, we will first discuss the summary of the short story and then move on to the critical analysing the short story.

3.3.1 Summary

Narwa and Haria considered themselves as 'blood brothers' who were born and lived in a tiny village near Almora. They were basket makers by profession. In summer months, they worked in their village, while in winter months they went to Kaladhungi where there is a great demand for huge baskets. They used to collect

bamboos from the Government Reserved Forest near Kaladhungi to make the baskets. On 26 December 1939, Narwa and Haria set out to the bazaar at Kaladhungi to get a license from the forest guard to collect a head load of bamboo.

As they are on their way they came to a place of trees and grass jungle which is also frequented by many wild animals including tigers. Haria was leading among the two and Narwa was following him when suddenly Haria heard an angry roar of a tiger and the shriek of Narwa. Haria turns around, sees Narwa lying on his back on the ground and a tiger lying diagonally across him.

Haria then takes hold of the two feet of Narwa and starts pulling him away from under the tiger. He is able to save Narwa from the tiger, and eventually gets him to Nalni with his superhuman efforts. The tiger had badly crashed the bones of Narwa's shoulder and lacerated his flesh. When they reach Nalni, Maggie wrote to the Assistant Surgeon, the incharge of Kaladhungi hospital, to attend Narwa.

Jim Corbett, the author was out shooting birds; so when he came back in the evening, Maggie told him all about Narwa and how he was attacked by a tiger. Next morning when the author visits the hospital, the doctor inform him that he has done all he could and had sent him home after treatment and that there is very little chance of his recovery. So the author rushes to the communal hut (where twenty families were living together) to meet Narwa and finds Narwa lying in a corner on a bed of straw and leaves and his wounds showing signs of getting septic.

For a week, Narwa is in the hut's corner, looked over by his weeping wife and Haria as well as his other friends. It seems clear to the author that Narwa's wounds need to be opened up and cleaned in order to avoid becoming septic, so the author takes him to the hospital. The young doctor does his job brilliantly and for three month the treatment continues after which Narwa along with his wife and children and Haria go back to their village near Almora.

The author then mentions that:

Of all the deeds that I have witnessed, or that I have read or heard about, I count Haria's rescue of Narwa the greatest. Unarmed and alone in a great expanse of jungle, to respond to the cry of a companion in distress and to pull that companion away from an angry tiger that was lying on him, and then to drag and carry that companion for two miles up a steep hill to a place of safety, not knowing but that the tiger was following, needed a degree of courage that is given to few, and that any man could envy.

The author therefore wanted Haria's brave act and Narwa's heroism in surviving all odds to be acknowledged by a certificate of merit by the government but for that the truth had to be sworn in by 'independent and unbiased eyewitnesses' which were lacking in this case. He even wanted to appeal to His Majesty the King; but as the World War had just started the king was busy with much greater affairs.

*Jim Corbett: A Deed of
Bravery*

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3.3.2 Critical Analysis

A Deed of Bravery by Jim Corbett is an intense short story about two untouchable young men who fought a tiger and other adversities to emerge victorious. The author Jim Corbett is all praise for these two people – Haria and Narwa. In the following section, we will be dealing with different aspects of the short story –

Brave Acts of Haria and Narwa

Jim Corbett in *A Deed of Bravery* deals with significant characters – Narwa and Haria who consider themselves as ‘blood brothers’. These two characters present an excellent example of bravery which makes Jim Corbett narrate about them in his story. The act of bravery involves the following – on 26 December 1939, when Narwa and Haria were going to Nalni Reserved Forests to get ‘two headload of bamboos’ to make basket, Narwa was attacked by a tiger. When Haria heard the angry roar of a tiger and simultaneously a shriek of Narwa, he figured out that at the edge of the grass ‘Narwa was on his back with a tiger lying diagonally across him.’ instead of panicking and running away from the scene, Haria pulled Narwa away from the tiger and then took badly injured Narwa to the hospital to get himself treated. The author says –

Of all the deeds that I have witnessed, or that I have read or heard about, I count Haria’s rescue of Narwa the greatest. Unarmed and alone in a great expanse of jungle, to respond to the cry of a companion in distress and to pull that companion away from an angry tiger that was lying on him, and then to drag and carry that companion for two miles up a steep hill to a place of safety, not knowing but that the tiger was following, needed a degree of courage that is given to few, and that any man could envy.

It is to be understood here that apparently it seems very easy to speak about such an act, but to do something like that in reality is a herculean task for two reasons–

- (a) To be trailing in the forest which is frequented by tigers is itself an act of brave job which Haria and Narwa have to do for their livelihood. Then over it to survive an attack of a tiger is another great act of bravery. Braver is the act of Haria who instead of being fearful of the situation, tries to help his friend with all his might so that he can save him from the lashes of the tiger.
- (b) Not only saving a friend from the grasp of a tiger is significant but to carry the injured person through such rough and dangerous terrain to the town to get himself treated is also another act of bravery when there is always a chance that the tiger might come back and attack once again.

These acts of bravery made the author, Jim Corbett, take note of the incident when he heard about it and go and meet Haria and Narwa, as well as get Narwa get proper treatment so that his life can be saved.

Ending of the Story

Jim Corbett: *A Deed of Bravery*

Jim Corbett writes at the end of the story *A Deed of Bravery*–

I should have liked to have been able to end my story by telling you that Haria's brave act, and Narwa's heroic fight for life against great odds, had been acknowledged by a certificate of merit, or some small token of award, for both were poor men. Unfortunately red tape proved too much for me, for the Government were not willing to make any award in a case of which the truth could not be sworn to by independent and unbiased witnesses. ...

For many days I toyed with the idea of appealing to His Majesty the King, but with a world war starting and all it implied I very reluctantly abandoned the idea.

These last few lines of the story refers to many things –

- (a) Firstly, in our world, brave acts are those which are acknowledged by government and known to the people through different means – either by reporting in newspapers or other media or something else similar to it. So people always look for avenues from where certain acknowledgement of bravery could be attested so that people come to know about it. So the author Jim Corbett is also looking for avenues so that the brave deeds of Haria and Narwa are somehow acknowledged and some kind of recognition.
- (b) Secondly, the red tape is so much inscribed in the ways of our governmental machinery that no proper deeds can be achieved because of it. In case of Narwa and Haria, they performed brave acts, but without witnesses their acts lose all meaning with the government. Government just wants witnesses – without witnesses government won't accept any truth as truth. To prove a truth to be truth in the governmental mechanism there is always a procedure and most times greatest of the truths are lost in those procedural lapses. The story of Haria and Narwa will always remain far away from the governmental records because of the lack of witnesses and they and their stories will never come to light if people like Jim Corbett are not there to let the world know about these kinds of brave acts.
- (c) Thirdly, 1939 is the time when the Second World War was just beginning. War is the thing which made Jim Corbett not appeal to His Majesty the King of England. One has to remember that the time that Jim Corbett is talking about it when England was ruling over India, so the head of the state was the King of England. What Jim Corbett wants to present in the story is that the King of England would have given some kind of recognition to the brave acts of Haria and Narwa if it was not the time of World War. Though this is wishful thinking, but still it shows that when nations are preoccupied with Wars such as the World Wars, they forget to recognize some acts of courageous deeds such as that of Haria and Narwa. These small acts of

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bravery are much more significant than the heroism in war; these small acts of bravery are some things which tell us that the world is still a place where people achieve great things everyday even if they are not recognized.

- (d) Fourthly, Jim Corbett may ‘reluctantly abandon’ the idea of appealing to His Majesty the King, but he did a greater job than that by capturing the brave acts through his words in a short story. People might have not come to know about Haria and Narwa even if the King had awarded them with something, but the author did a greater job than that as he made the brave acts of Haria and Narwa become immortal in his short story.

Thus the ending of the story is very significant and it points to many things that the author presently indirectly in the story.

Theme of Friendship

Friendship is a very significant theme in the story *A Deed of Bravery* written by Jim Corbett. Corbett portrays the friendship between Narwa and Haria in as much details as possible. Friendship is a bond which many of us share with our friends and each one of us defines friendship in our own ways. It is a beautiful feeling for some, it is a shared bonding for others, and it is a feeling of brotherhood or sisterhood. In the story *A Deed of Bravery* Jim Corbett presents Haria and Narwa to be ‘blood brothers.’

They are not related but they feel that they are more than brothers and they therefore stick together. In their childhood they were playmates and as they grew up they took the same profession of basket-making which made them stick to each other all the time. So they go to forest together to collect Bamboos for making baskets and sell them. They have figured out that are not only meant for each other but also dependent on each other in more than one ways so to live life. Their livelihood being the same, it is a great boon for them that they can stick to each other.

But their friendship passes the ultimate test when Narwa is attacked by a tiger and Haria instead of running from the scene in fear, faces the situation bravely and saves Narwa from the tiger. Any other person probably in such a situation would have tried to save himself; but Haria did not so; as he knows that saving his friend is more significant than just running away with one’s own life. Haria shows that he can face adversity when the friend is in peril.

Moreover, the way Haria carries Narwa for his treatment to the nearby town only shows that he has a deep concern for his friend. It is a story of unusual friendship – a friendship which had passed the test of time and adversity to prove that friendship is all about when one feels and cares for the friend more than one’s own live. This story is probably one of the greatest examples of literature and in life about friendship.

Untouchability and Poverty

Jim Corbett: *A Deed of Bravery*

Untouchability is an anathema to Indian society; it is like a stigma which has created a lot of sufferings to those people who are considered to be untouchables by the Indian Brahminical caste system. Since ages, caste system has remained been one of the exclusive characteristics of the Hindu social system. Caste system divides people into inferior and superior castes and provides them lower and higher statuses respectively. It divides the Hindu society into five major castes – Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas, Shudras and Anti- Shudras or untouchables.

These castes have been arranged in a hierarchical social order with the Brahmins at the top followed by the Kshatriyas, Vaishyas, Shudras and Anti- Shudras or untouchables. Within each of these five major caste groups, there are innumerable sub-castes placed one over the other. It is a general notion that nobody can change one's caste from the one in which he or she is born.

Caste was associated with a particular occupation which determined the social and economic status of its members. While the Brahmins were thought to be the priests, teacher and advisors, the Kshatriyas were regarded as warriors or protectors or rulers. The Vaishyas were considered as traders, and the Shudras as cultivators and manual labourers. The untouchables were given the filthy menial and defiling occupations, such as sweeping, scavenging, removing night soil, etc. It is also believed that changing occupations from the given one was difficult and was often discouraged. In the short story *A Deed of Bravery* Jim Corbett shows how his protagonists belong to the caste of the untouchables. They are basket-makers and basket making is a job of an untouchable.

So even if Haria and Narwa wanted to change their jobs and take up something else they won't be allowed to do so as Indian Caste system did not allow then the choice of changing professions. In such circumstances, these people are doomed to live a life of ignominy, suffering, neglect and hardships. Throughout the short story Jim Corbett makes every attempt to show the lives of Narwa and Haria in details so that we can understand the hardships that these people have to go through as they belong to a particular caste called untouchables.

In the next section we will be talking about the hardships of their (Haria's and Narwa's) lives in detail to understand what they have to go through in order to have a living.

Life of Hardship

Narwa and Haria live a life of immense hardships. They somehow survive by making baskets and selling them. For six months they stay in their village and for the winter months they are in Kaladhungi, buying bamboos from the Government Reserved Forests and making baskets and selling them. They live in a communal hut in Kaladhungi in which about twenty families stay together which shows that

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they do not have even enough to have a proper living. When Narwa is injured and living in this hut he is shown to be lying on a bed of leaves and straw which tells us the financial state of these people.

Narwa and Haria had to go across many miles on foot to get the license for collecting bamboos and they had to go through jungles where Narwa is attacked by a tiger. Somehow because of the brave act of Haria, Narwa is saved from the tiger and is being carried to a safe distance, but Narwa does not get proper medication in the hospital as he is very poor and does not have the influence to get one. It is only when the author makes the provision for his medical help that he gets proper treatment and gets back life; otherwise he would have died by the septic of his wound.

Jim Corbett writes in the story – ‘with the exception of professional beggars, the poor in India can only eat when they work, ... Maggie supplied all Narwa’s wants, and the wants of his family.’ This description in the story shows that in India common people live a life of hardship where if they do not work they do not get any food. Narwa and his family would not have survived if Maggie would not have been helpful to them.

All these details are provided by Jim Corbett to point out how the lives of common people in India, especially those living on the foothills of the Himalayas, are full of suffering and hardships.

Check Your Progress

3. What were the professions of Haria and Narwa in the short story?
4. Who helps Haria and Narwa at Nalni?
5. State the primary reason why the author is unable to get Haria and Narwa acknowledged for their bravery.

3.4 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS

1. Jim Corbett was a lieutenant-colonel of the British officers serving in India and had an illustrious career in India in terms of training people in jungle warfare and ways of Indian jungles.
2. Jim Corbett’s writings on man-eating tigers of India are popular throughout the world, especially through writings like *Man Eaters of Kumaon* and *Man Eating Leopard of Rudraprayag*.
3. The author mentions that Haria and Naria were basket makers by profession. In summer months, they worked in their village, while in winter months they went to Kaladhungi where there is a great demand for huge baskets.

4. Maggie is the person who helps Haria and Narwa at Nalni. She writes to the Assistant Surgeon, the incharge of Kaladhungi hospital, to attend Narwa.
5. Corbett mentions that to get the bravery of Haria and Narwa acknowledged by a certificate of merit by the government, the truth had to be sworn in by 'independent and unbiased eyewitnesses' which were lacking in this case.

Jim Corbett: A Deed of Bravery

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3.5 SUMMARY

- Jim Corbett's short story *A Deed of Bravery* deals with the heroic deeds of survival against all odds.
- Jim Corbett (1875-1955) is a very common name in India and there are many who are aware of his writings. Jim Corbett was a lieutenant-colonel of the British officers serving in India and had an illustrious career in India in terms of training people in jungle warfare and ways of Indian jungles.
- Narwa and Haria considered themselves as 'blood brothers' who were born and lived in a tiny village near Almora. They were basket makers by profession.
- On 26 December 1939, Narwa and Haria set out to the bazaar at Kaladhungi to get a license from the forest guard to collect a head load of bamboo. Haria was leading among the two and Narwa was following him when suddenly Haria heard an angry roar of a tiger and a shriek of Narwa.
- After hearing the roar of the tiger, Haria finds Narwa lying on his back on the ground and a tiger lying diagonally across him. Haria took hold of the two feet of Narwa and started pulling him away from under the tiger. As he was able to save Narwa from the tiger, he eventually got him to Nalni with his superhuman efforts.
- The author mentions that 'Of all the deeds that I have witnessed, or that I have read or heard about, I count Haria's rescue of Narwa the greatest. Unarmed and alone in a great expanse of jungle, to respond to the cry of a companion in distress and to pull that companion away from an angry tiger that was lying on him, and then to drag and carry that companion for two miles up a steep hill to a place of safety, not knowing but that the tiger was following, needed a degree of courage that is given to few, and that any man could envy.'
- Jim Corbett in *A Deed of Bravery* deals with significant characters – Narwa and Haria who consider themselves as 'blood brothers'. These two characters present an excellent example of bravery which makes Jim Corbett narrate about them in his story.

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- Friendship is a very significant theme in the story *A Deed of Bravery* written by Jim Corbett. Corbett portrays the friendship between Narwa and Haria in as much details as possible.
- In the short story, Jim Corbett shows how his protagonists belong to the caste of the untouchables. They are basket-makers and basket making is a job of an untouchable.
- Jim Corbett to point out how the lives of common people in India, especially those livings on the foothills of the Himalayas, are full of suffering and hardships.

3.6 KEY WORDS

- **Friendship:** It refers to the relationship which is a beautiful feeling for some, is a shared bonding for others, and is a feeling of brotherhood or sisterhood.
- **Blood brothers:** It refers to a man who has sworn to treat another man as a brother, typically by a ceremonial mingling of blood.

3.7 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short-Answer Questions

1. What Jim Corbett's notion of bravery is as presented in the story *A Deed of Bravery*?
2. Write a short note on the theme of friendship as illustrated in Jim Corbett's story *A Deed of Bravery*.
3. List two reasons why the act of Haria and Narwa is considered a herculean task.
4. What does Narwa lying on a bed of leaves and straw indicate?
5. What are the barriers which prevent Haria and Narwa getting acknowledged for their bravery?

Long-Answer Questions

1. What according to you are the acts of bravery of Haria and Narwa?
2. What is the condition of the poor people in the colonial India? Give a detailed account for the same?
3. Comment on the ending of the story *A Deed of Bravery*.

4. Though untouchability is just being referred to in the short story *A Deed of Bravery*, yet it is an important aspect of it. Do you agree? Give reasons for your answer.

Jim Corbett: A Deed of Bravery

3.8 FURTHER READINGS

Corbett, Jim. 1989. *My India, Reprint*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Abrams, M.H. 1999. *The Glossary of Literary Terms*, Seventh Edition. Boston: Heinle and Heinle Thomson Learning.

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UNIT 4 KATHARINE M. WILSON: 'THE CAT'

Structure

- 4.0 Introduction
 - 4.1 Objectives
 - 4.2 About the Author: Katherine M. Wilson
 - 4.3 Critical Appreciation of 'The Cat'
 - 4.3.1 Summary
 - 4.3.2 Critical Analysis
 - 4.4 Answers to Check Your Progress Questions
 - 4.5 Summary
 - 4.6 Key Words
 - 4.7 Self Assessment Questions and Exercises
 - 4.8 Further Readings
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4.0 INTRODUCTION

Katharine M. Wilson's essay 'The Cat', as the title of the essay suggests, deals with cats. It talks about the way in which cats are one of the best pets of the world and how cats need little human attention and love. What this essay purports to do is to create a favourable image of cats in our minds. There are many perceptions of cats which we have but they are often not so well formulated and logical.

The essay 'The Cat' tries to provide a well-formulated discourse on the cats so that the readers can understand the very nature of cats and be more responsive and adoring to the cats next time. It tries to break many images related to cats as well as tries to present the cats in a very positive light so as to make the readers understand that cats are one of the most trusted animals and can be very good friends to human beings.

4.1 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Discuss the life and works of the essayist Katharine M. Wilson
- Describe the major points of the essay 'The Cat'
- Critically analyse the essay 'The Cat'

4.2 ABOUT THE AUTHOR: KATHERINE M. WILSON

*Katharine M. Wilson:
'The Cat'*

Katharine M. Wilson has varied interests when it comes to her writings, as her writings deals with literary criticism to music and also on the general topics which are of interest to common readers. She is also a children's writer. In the present essay 'The Cat' she makes an attempt to understand the nature of cats and tries to prove how cats can be one of the loveliest pets of human beings. Cats are adorable and how cats reciprocate human love is something that is the objective of the essay.

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4.3 CRITICAL APPRECIATION OF 'THE CAT'

In this section, we will first discuss the summary of the essay and then move on to the critical analysis.

4.3.1 Summary

The thesis statement of Katharine M. Wilson's essay 'The Cat' is the first sentence of the essay – 'The cat was made for love and warmth and softness.' When a cat is given, love, warmth and softness, it brings out its best qualities. The author feels that the cat is the 'nearest perfection' when it sleeps in a fluffy coil by the fire, secure by human warmth. If you bury your face in the body of a sleeping cat, it only stirs to purr. The author feels that it is the most innocent thing. A cat is further compared to heaven on earth by the writer for being 'blissful, quiet and content.' The author feels that the cat is the only animal that knows how to luxuriate in perfect rest.

What Katharine M. Wilson states vehemently is that 'The cat needs human affection.' A cat is unlike a rabbit that eats and frisk in lonely nature of unlike a sparrow or a mouse. When the cat does not receive the little human attention, then it becomes 'a nerve shattered maniac'; but a little love can make it a 'fluffy darling' according to the author.

When talking of cats being afraid in most circumstances, Katharine M. Wilson states that it is not instinct but experience which usually makes animals afraid. So if a cat is afraid it only shows that it has experienced such things in general that it is usually afraid of things. According to the author, cats and dogs have no natural antipathy for each other; it is just that the cats run and the dogs chase.

Moreover she comments that dogs won't know what to do with a cat if by chance it catches a cat. The moment the cat shows her attitude, the dog usually takes a different path. In reality, this happens because it has been happening this way since forever. In most cases, kittens and puppies live in natural amity, it is usual that a dog chases anything that runs and therefore they chase cats.

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Cats are usually very good in adapting to strange circumstances. Next the author points out why cats like fish and she says –

Perhaps they once hunted for crabs amongst the rocks, and only occasionally went into the fields to find voles. A dearth of crabs may have driven them inland after birds and mice.

Usually, a well-fed cat is not a thief. If it is underfed by its owners, then it is natural that a cat will become a thief and steal with 'surprising agility and cleverness.' It is to be remembered here that a cat does not consider human beings as its master and therefore there is no question of allegiance. The way we take honey from beehives and not consider it to be stealing; in the same way when cats take food, it does not consider it to be stealing. As the cat does not have any notion of allegiance, therefore it cannot be termed as a traitor.

Yet when a cat gets human love, it is more loyal to the master. Whereas a dog cannot be trained to say 'thank you', the cat does so by purring. She is a tiger when she lets loose herself as she cannot forbear; but that is when the customary gentleness and forbearing are missing. When a cat loves, it trusts and respects us completely and believes that we can protect her from any harm. According to Katharine M. Wilson, 'Though difficult to win, the cat's devotion is intense and enduring.'

If someone is going for vacation leaving the cat then the cat may follow him or her along the street upto a certain point but she will not go home at his or her commands as a dog usually does. It is an 'independent thinking friendship' with cats where there is no notion of obedience or worship. At the same time, cats are little 'reserved' creatures as they do not indulge their feelings as dogs do, for example –

- (a) The postman can pass without protest from the cat
- (b) Greets the master usually in her characteristic gentle way.

Yet cats are generally very sensitive creatures and do not make the first move towards friendship, though in the way of showing gratitude, they are no less than dogs.

A cat is cruel to a mouse and people generally sympathize with the mouse. It is a general human thing that the hunted is usually perceived with much concern and sympathy than the hunter. But it is to be remembered that when cats chase mouse, they do it as they are looking for their food, as other animals even do. It is not cruel like men who indulge in the merry sport of hunting for fun.

Cats are usually thought to be feminine as the female cats never leave their little ones and are very protective about them. Cats are very anxious about their little kittens. Apart from lively motherhood, cats have other feminine qualities (as against dog's masculine features). They are –

- (a) The cat pretends not to see the big dog on the street
- (b) The cats do not put up an air of ferocity

- (c) She is now ashamed to show her fear
- (d) Usually cats reserve their courage till the last step of feminine desperation.

*Katharine M. Wilson:
'The Cat'*

Katharine M Wilson says –

Dog and man behave bravely because they think they ought, cat and woman because they must. Dog and man display their courage, but are the bravest when they cannot reach the enemy. Neither cat nor woman makes her courage conspicuous; she keeps it for where the danger is greatest.

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4.3.2 Critical Analysis

Katharine M. Wilson's essay 'The Cat' deals with the nature of cats and how cats are and should be one of the most loved creatures of the world. In other words, the objective of the essayist is to draw such an image about cats through the essay that when we meet cats next time, we do not have a negative view about them. In other words, cats are one of the friendliest animals but it is that they are not the ones who take the first step towards friendship. Cats are very reserved by nature and therefore usually do not approach the human beings for their love and adoration; but if we approach cats with our affection and love then we will figure out that they respond very quickly and with much warmth. One needs to understand the nature of cats to be friendly with them; and this essay 'The Cat' intends to create that awareness in the readers about the cats.

In the essay, cats are compared to dogs as pets. Dogs as pets are usually very loved and they are thought to be adorable creatures than the cats. It is not that Katharine M. Wilson has any aversion for dogs; but it is just that by comparing with dogs, the essayist is trying to make us understand what cats are and how they are different from dogs. One cannot take the same approach to cats as one does towards a dog. They are different creatures and they need to be approached differently. The few significant things that Katharine M. Wilson points out about the cats are –

- (i) Cats are very sensitive creatures – cats do not take the first step towards friendship with men; but if they get little affection and love from human beings, then cats are the loveliest of creatures as pets.
- (ii) Cats and dogs do not have natural antipathy for each other. It is just that cats run and the dogs chase. It is more out of habit that they do so. A dog will not know what to do with a cat if it catches it. Moreover, if the cat shows some attitude then the dog usually takes the other way.
- (iii) Cats are not thieves by nature. If they are well-fed by their master, it is not that they will carry on stealing.
- (iv) Cats chase and kill mouse. They do it not for fun but for their food. So there is nothing wrong in it. Men indulge in hunting for fun, but cats do not do so for fun.
- (v) Cats are very feminine by nature not only because they are over-protective

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mothers, but also because –

- a. The cat pretends not to see the big dog on the street
- b. The cats do not put up an air of ferocity
- c. She is now ashamed to show her fear
- d. Usually cats reserve their courage till the last step of feminine desperation.

The essay 'The Cat' just sums up the basic nature of cats in such terms so as to prove to the readers that they are such adorable creatures.

Why Cats are Feminine

In the last point that we have discussed we have seen that cats have feminine features and therefore Katharine M. Wilson also refers to cats as 'she.' They are feminine because perhaps like women they share have some characteristics which make them sensitive in comparison to others. Women are vulnerable and suppressed in a patriarchal society and they are usually thought to be second grade citizens. Feminists all over the world are fighting for a just place and representation of women in this cruel man made world and to make the world a gender-neutral one. Similarly, in comparison to dogs which are usually thought to be masculine because of their ferocity, cats are usually seen as timid creatures. But cats are courageous too when it comes to the final moments of desperation as are women. Women, because of their suppression in a patriarchal society always try to be defensive and over protective about themselves as cats usually are. It might also be said that some tend to avoid any interest in men like the cats which pretends to overlook the big dog across the street.

Katharine M. Wilson is therefore coming up with an comparison which is of much concern as it not only talks about cats but also the way women are oppressed in a patriarchal set up; and how there is a need to think about the world in the other way round so that women get a proper place in society, as the cat also does.

Style of the Essay

Katharine M. Wilson's essay 'The Cat' is persuasive in its tone and tenor, as the author is trying her best to convince the readers that cats are the most loved pets if they get a little bit of human affection. An essay becomes 'persuasive' when the author tries to persuade the author in thinking along the lines in which the author feels or thinks. Katharine M. Wilson is of the opinion that cats are 'fluffy darling' and they are the ones who proves to be the greatest pets, provided they get some warmth and affection from us. She persuades her best to convince the readers for the same.

The question is – why does she need to be persuasive? The answer lies in the fact that most people of the world think that dogs are the best pets and they do not value cats as pets. Cats are usually thought to be cunning creatures as well as

them being thieves as they steal. This mentality of the people needs to be changed so as to make a just place for cats can be achieved amongst people as per the author. Persuasion is an art – everyone cannot be persuasive. Katharine M. Wilson is at her persuasive best in the essay ‘The Cat’ as she fights the case in favour of the cats so as to prove that they are not as degrading an animal as it is usually thought.

Persuasive essays are meant to convince the readers about the point of view of the author. The author’s point of view is such that where it goes against the general thought and tendency of the public in general. It is not that cats are not taken as pets by people; they are. But still more people prefer dogs because dogs are thought to be much more faithful than cats. What the author purports to do in the essay is to show that cats are similarly, if not more, lovely creatures and they should be given a chance for human love and affection.

Check Your Progress

1. Why do Katherine M. Wilson’s writings have varied interests?
2. When is a cat considered to be ‘nearest perfection’ as per the author?
3. What happens to cats when do not receive little affection according to the essay?
4. How does a cat say ‘thank you’ as per the author?
5. State Wilson’s objective of writing the essay.

4.4 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS

1. Katharine M. Wilson’s displays varied interests when it comes to her writings, because her writings deal with literary criticism to music and also on the general topics which are of interest to common readers.
2. The author feels that the cat is the ‘nearest perfection’ when it sleeps in a fluffy coil by the fire, secure by human warmth.
3. When the cat does not receive the little human attention, then it becomes ‘a nerve shattered maniac’; but a little love can make it a “fluffy darling” according to the author.
4. The cats say ‘thank you’ by purring.
5. The objective of the essayist is to draw such an image about cats through the essay that when we meet cats next time, we do not have a negative view about them.

*Katharine M. Wilson:
‘The Cat’*

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4.5 SUMMARY

- 'The cat was made for love and warmth and softness.' When a cat is given, love, warmth and softness, it brings out its best qualities.
- The author feels that the cat is the 'nearest perfection' when it sleeps in a fluffy coil by the fire, secure by human warmth.
- What Katharine M. Wilson states vehemently is that 'The cat needs human affection.' When the cat does not receive the little human attention, then it becomes 'a nerve shattered maniac'; but a little love can make it a 'fluffy darling.'
- According to the author, cats and dogs have no natural antipathy for each other; it is just that the cats run and the dogs chase. Moreover she comments that dogs won't know what to do with a cat if by chance it catches a cat. The moment the cat shows her attitude, the dog usually takes a different path.
- As per the author, cats are usually very good in adapting to strange circumstances.
- The author comments in the essay that a well-fed cat is not a thief. If it is underfed by its owners, then it is natural that a cat will become a thief and steal with 'surprising agility and cleverness.' Yet when a cat gets human love, it is more loyal to the master.
- Cats, as per the author are generally very sensitive creatures and do not make the first move towards friendship, though in the way of showing gratitude, they are no less than dogs.
- Cats are usually thought to be feminine as the female cats never leave their little ones and are very protective about them. Cats are very anxious about their little kittens. Apart from lively motherhood, cats have other feminine qualities (as against dog's masculine features). They are –
 - (a) The cat pretends not to see the big dog on the street
 - (b) The cats do not put up an air of ferocity
 - (c) She is now ashamed to show her fear
 - (d) Usually cats reserve their courage till the last step of feminine desperation.

4.6 KEY WORDS

- **Antipathy:** It refers to a deep-seated feeling of aversion.
- **Persuasive essay:** It is an essay in which the author tries to persuade the reader in thinking along the lines in which the author feels or thinks.

- **Purring:** It refers to a low continuous vibratory sound by a cat expressing contentment.

Katharine M. Wilson:
'The Cat'

4.7 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

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Short-Answer Questions

1. How does Katherine M. Wilson defend cats as not being traitors?
2. Write a short note on 'independent thinking friendship' as mentioned in the essay.
3. How does the author compare a cat's reaction towards fishes and dogs?
4. Give examples of cats being reserved as mentioned by the author.
5. Write a short note on 'The Cats' being a persuasive essay.

Long-Answer Questions

1. What according to Katharine M. Wilson are the features of cats which make them the most loved pets of all the animals? Discuss with reference to the essay 'The Cat.'
2. What does Katharine M. Wilson talk about the antipathy of dogs and cats? Do you think she is right in her evaluation of these two animals as she does in the essay 'The Cat'?
3. Cats need human affection. Do you agree with the statement?
4. Do you think cats are 'feminine' as Katharine M. Wilson points out in her essay 'The Cat'? Why do you think so? Give reasons.

4.8 FURTHER READINGS

Abrams, M.H. 1999. *The Glossary of Literary Terms*, Seventh Edition. Boston: Heinle and Heinle Thomson Learning.

Sebastian, D. K. 1985. *Prose for the Young Reader*. New Delhi: Macmillan.

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UNIT 5 ALPHA OF THE PLOUGH: 'ON LETTER WRITING'

Structure

- 5.0 Introduction
 - 5.1 Objectives
 - 5.2 A Short Note on A. G. Gardiner
 - 5.3 Summary Of 'On Letter Writing'
 - 5.4 Critical Analysis
 - 5.4.1 The Lost Art of Letter Writing
 - 5.4.2 Significance of Communication in Our Lives
 - 5.5 Answers to Check Your Progress Questions
 - 5.6 Summary
 - 5.7 Key Words
 - 5.8 Self Assessment Questions and Exercises
 - 5.9 Further Readings
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5.0 INTRODUCTION

Alpha of the Plough is the pen name of A. G. Gardiner. In this unit we will be referring to him mostly as A. G. Gardiner. A.G Gardiner's essay 'On Letter Writing' is an interesting and amusing piece of writing which deals with the notion of the lost art of letter writing and how it is necessary that we understand the significance of letter writing. In other words, Gardiner points out how the notion of letter writing has been one of the most coveted affair at one point of time and how today people are paralyzed with the notion of writing a letter. It is very interesting and humorous to read the essay not only because of the anecdote of two soldiers but also because of the literary allusions that it provides.

5.1 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Discuss the life and works of A. G. Gardiner
- Discuss the key issues related to letter writing as enumerated by A. G. Gardiner
- Explain the significance of letter writing in the present times
- Examine how letter writing is an art

5.2 A SHORT NOTE ON A. G. GARDINER

*Alpha of the Plough:
'On Letter Writing'*

Alfred George Gardiner (1865–1946, Pen name – Alpha of the Plough) is known today to us primarily as an essayist whose essays are being prescribed all over the world for their innovative ways of dealing with the themes which are of everyday concerns to the people. His humorous ways of presenting thing with simplicity in a concise manner made him a well-read and much appreciated writer during and after the Victorian Age onwards. Throughout his life, A. G. Gardiner had engaged himself with different profession related to writing – newspaper editor, journalist, and author. In his initial days of writing he often used to write under the pen-name ‘*Alpha of the Plough.*’

At the age of fourteen he joined the newspaper industry and became the editor of the Liberal Newspaper of the Victorian Times *Daily News*. As a typical Victorian, A. G. Gardiner’s writing was about the pressing social, intellectual, economic and religious issues of the time. His published and much read works include — *Prophets, Priests and Kings* (1908), *Pillars of Society* (1913), *The War Lords* (1915), and *Certain People of Importance* (1926).

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5.3 SUMMARY OF ‘ON LETTER WRITING’

Two soldiers, Sam and Bill, are on a railway platform – one inside the train compartment and other on the platform and they are discussing about writing letters. They discuss that whenever they are into writing letters they are dumb-struck and do not know how to progress after writing about the initial well-being of the recipient(s) and his or her nearer and dearer ones –

“Nothing,” said Sam, mournfully, “I just sit and scratch my head over the blessed paper, but nothing’ll come. Seems as though my head’s as empty as a drum.”

They discuss that letter writing is very different from writing love letters as in love letters one can put half page of crosses as one is stuck at something. In normal personal letters if one fills up the page with crosses then that would look ridiculous. Then the train begins to move and the soldier inside the compartment goes back to his seat and begins to smoke.

The author A. G. Gardiner comments here that these two soldiers have been at the midst of great events such as –

- (a) The retreat of the Marne
- (b) The advance of the Aisne
- (c) The first battle of Ypres
- (d) The fighting at Festubert.

But in spite of that when it comes to writing letters they find themselves blank – ‘In a word, he had seen some of the greatest events in the world’s history, face to

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face, and yet he confessed that when he came to write a letter, even to his wife, he could find nothing to say.' The author quotes Horace Walpole here to be more humorous as he says –

I write to you because I have nothing to do; I finish because I have nothing to say.

A.G. Gardiner is of the opinion that there are great many letter writing happening in the present times; but when it comes to people like Sam and Bill, they find themselves paralyzed as they want to write their first letter. In other words, they have no gift of self expression. It is not only true for Sam and Bill, but of thousands and thousands of young men who cannot write letters.

The author then comes to his thesis – 'letter writing is no doubt a lost art.' He gives two reasons for the same –

- (a) The Penny Post
- (b) The modern hurry

A.G. Gardiner says – 'When Madame de Savigne, Cowper, Horace Walpole, Byron, Lamb and Carlyles wrote their immortal letters the world was a leisurely place where there was time to indulge in the luxury of writing to your friends.' Moreover, the cost of posting a letter was very high which made people take it as a serious affair. The poor could not afford to write letters.

He gives an anecdote from Thomas De Quincey about how the dales man of Lakeland used to dodge the postal charges by receiving the letter at their door and then glanced at the superscription and a certain sign on it to understand what it means and then used to return the same unopened. In those days 'a letter was an event.'

As one can now post a letter for a penny to anywhere across the world, very few people take letter writing seriously. Therefore Carlyle once jokingly said – 'I shall send a penny letter next time.' Moreover the author mentions that with the arrival of the telegraph, the telephone and the typewriter, the destruction of the art of letter writing has reached its zenith. A. G. Gardiner gives an analogy here –

'If diamonds were as plentiful as pebbles we shouldn't stoop to pick them up.'

After discussing the way letter writing as a lost art, A. G. Gardiner discusses how the secret of letter writing is 'intimate triviality.' He gives an example –

Bill could not have described the retreat from Mons; but he could have told, as he told me, about the blister he got on his heel, how he hungered for a smoke, how he marched until he fell asleep marching, how he lost his pal at Le Cateau, and how his boot sole dropped off at Meaux. And through such trivialities he would have given a living picture of the great retreat.

A.G. Gardiner again mentions that letter writing has to be taken in the following ways:

- (a) Most causal and lightest way; and
- (b) It should be personal and not abstract.

The small sorts of things which happen to be the subject of household discussion should be the content of letters. A. G. Gardiner mentions that Carlyle knew this trick and he perfected it.

John Keats was another such person who knew the trick and therefore could write volumes of letters to his brother George and his wife in America in which he poured in his family affection. Keats writes –

I intend to write you such volumes that it will be impossible for me to keep any order or method in what I write; that will come first which uppermost in my mind, not that which is uppermost in my heart – besides I should wish to give you a picture of our lives here whenever by a touch I can do it; even as you must see by the last sentence our walk past Whitehall all in good health and spirits – this I am certain of because I felt so much pleasure from the simple idea of your playing a game of cricket.

This above quotation, according to A. G. Gardiner is one of the recipes of writing good letters. A. G. Gardiner further states that a letter written in the similar manner as that of what Keats prescribes does the following –

- (a) Annihilates distance
- (b) Makes intimate communions
- (c) Preserves one's presence in absence.

If one writes in an orderly, elaborate and stately manner, the style is good for an essay; but not a personal letter.

Check Your Progress

1. Mention some of the famous works of A.G. Gardiner.
2. List the two reasons why Gardiner considers letter writing as a lost art.
3. Which technologies have taken the destruction of letter writing to its zenith as per the essay?

5.4 CRITICAL ANALYSIS

There are many issues that we can talk about in the essay 'On Letter Writing' by Alpha of the Plough or A. G. Gardiner. These issues are taken up one by one in the following part of the discussion of the chapter.

Essays and Humour of A. G. Gardiner

We have discussed the notion of an essay in the first unit by C. V. Raman 'Water – An Elixir of Life', so not getting into details of an essay any further, though for your ready reference a short note on essay by M. H. Abrams is provided below.

It is to be remembered here that A. G. Gardiner is known for his humour in his essays – it is the element of humour which makes his essays an interesting read.

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When we meet the soldiers we find that they are unable to write letters to their nearer and dearer ones we find that quite amusing. At first it seems that it is the problem with the two soldiers that in spite of them being in the midst of great events, they are unable to write anything – that the act of writing paralyses them. But as we progress with the essay, we know that these two soldiers are not typical; but A. G. Gardiner is actually referring to that contemporary generation which finds it difficult to communicate through letters.

5.4.1 The Lost Art of Letter Writing

‘In the great sense, Letter writing is no doubt a lost art. It was killed by the penny post and modern hurry’ — A. G. Gardiner

If I ask you, when did you write your last letter and to whom, you will in most cases fumble with an answer, probably because you do not remember when you wrote a letter last time, apart from writing letters which have come in your examinations in English courses. Isn't it true for most of our cases? One may even ask what is so great about writing letters when there are so many modes of communication available to us all the times. We communicate through WhatsApp, through different social media like Facebook and Twitter, we communicate through emails, we can communicate through cell phones, etc. When so many easier, cheaper and faster means of communication are available to us all the times within the grasp of our hands, then why take a pen and paper and do the hard work of writing a letter. This may be true to some extent that with so many means of communication opens to us at the present times; it seems awkward that one gets into writing letters for communication. Letters these days are only used in official communication, to communicate some important things which are meant to be filed for future official purposes; otherwise, who writes letters these days.

But there were times when letter writing was a prized thing and there used to be smile in people's faces when they used to receive a letter. Letter was one of the most valuable pieces of communication at a particular point of time. Those times are being referred to by A. G. Gardiner in his essay 'On Letter Writing.' Probably when these times are being referred to, you may say that it is a matter of historical past and what is the point of talking about those past things when they are of no use in the present times. One may also even argue that if letter writing is a lost art, it is so because times have changed and so are our means and mediums of communication.

All these are true. A. G. Gardiner is not talking about it in ways in which letter writing is approached today; what he is concerned about is how Letter writing was an art – a sophisticated thing that was practiced well by few in the past for particular reasons. Today Letter writing may be an undervalued thing; but once upon a time it was a highly cherished, respectable and least affordable thing. Those were the days, when letters were valued and they were meant to be written and read with utter diligence.

As we have seen before, A.G. Gardiner is of the belief that two things greatly affected letter writing and made it a lost art. They are –

- (a) the penny post; and
- (b) modern hurry

By “Penny Post” what Gardiner means is that the moment postal duty is made cheaper, i.e., people had to pay less to post a letter, they start undervaluing it. Earlier, when postal charges were much higher people used to value letters too much as they used to take the affair seriously, but with the advent of cheaper modes of communication, the value of letter writing carried on becoming less graver. In today’s world where interpersonal communication has become much cheaper than it used to be, letter writing has been a lost affair.

Secondly, A. G. Gardiner points out that in the modern age we are all in great hurry. No one seems to be relaxed at any point of time. Everyone is running – running after something or the other – everyone is running to keep pace with times. In this great hurry, whatever beauty life had is lost in all possible ways. Letter writing was and still is a leisurely affair which people used to undertake in their leisure time – it is more like a hobby. Letters are not just meant to communicate the wellbeing of one to another, letters were means to transport emotions, ideas and related things like them. In the modern times, when people are in a hurry and are becoming more and more self-centred; they usually do not have time for writing long letters.

A.G. Gardiner or Alpha of the Plough is right in saying that Penny post and modern hurry has led to the decline of the art of letter writing, but at the same time the following things have to be remembered –

- (a) When letter writing was an expensive affair, only a few, the richer ones of the society could undertake the job of writing letters to communicate with each other. So only few could communicate as it was such an expensive affair. With the advent of modern technologies, communication (interpersonal communication) has become much easier and faster which is actually a boon for the culture and civilization. If communication would not have been so accessible and cheaper, people would have been still living in Stone Age. So it may be true that with the advent of “penny post” the art of letter writing has been a lost affair, but with at the same time communication became much more accessible to people.
- (b) Modern hurry may be a thing which has led to the loss of art of letter writing; but at the same time it is true that with modern hurry many things are lost – primarily the notion of leisure is lost. While this is true, one needs to remember that ‘leisure’ was only there for the privileged few in ancient times too. Even in earlier ages, only the richer classes could afford to have leisure times – only the elites could afford to have time to themselves. The working class was never free to have their leisure times. So when Gardiner

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is talking about 'leisure' he is primarily referring to the people who are rich and not just talking about people in general.

- (c) In the modern times, when different means of communication are being used by people – people again have got creative with the age. Many use their Facebook, Twitter posts in creative ways to communicate with the mass. Many use personal chats and emails to communicate on a much more regular basis. Some people are still creative with these technologies. So letter writing may be a dead art at the present times, but with it there has come many newer avenues of communication which have their own advantages and it is only that we need to use these technologies in a creative way so as to reap maximum benefits out of it.

One has to understand that each thing has its own problems and benefits – letter writing had the benefit of it being very creative; but at the same time it was problematic that it was not within the reach of most of the people. With the present day communication, which is much cheaper and faster, there are its own problems. So before making an evaluative judgment one should really be cautious, as the most significant thing that is important to human civilization is that people communicate with each other as much as possible.

5.4.2 Significance of Communication in Our Lives

Human are humans because we have a superior sense of communication than all other animals. Probably you will agree to it. One may say that animals also have their means of communication – bees communicate to each other by dancing, some animals communicate through making some sounds, ants communicate with other ants through chemical they release called pheromone. So if animals too communicate, then how it is that human communication is distinct and superior. Human communication can be termed superior because of the following reasons –

- (a) Human beings are much more creative in their communication. We use language much more creatively than any other living things in the world.
- (b) We modify sound and intonation to mean different things using the same language.
- (c) We have a language coding as symbols which can be used for written communication apart from our oral and non-verbal communication.

There can be numerous other reasons why human communication can be thought to be much more superior to animal communication.

For more details on this you can refer to Charles Hockett's essay called 'Thirteen Design Features of Human Communication' which gives details of how human communication is better than animal communication in thirteen ways.

As human supposedly have a communication system through language as well as non-verbal language, we use both to form relationships. Often you will see that relationships are formed because, you have communicated something to the

person with whom you are communicating. Communication is a means through which we build relationships (sometimes lack of communication also mars relationships and miscommunication can hamper relationships). So if communication is so significant then Letter writing as a communication was also important as personal letters are meant to be intimate and providing the details of the writer's life in such a way that the recipient of the letter will feel nearer to the sender the letter through the means of the letter.

Letters are meant to bring people closer who for some reasons have to live in far away from each other. Personal Letters are meant to communicate feelings and emotions in such a way that it builds up the relationships and often maintains relationships when distance makes every effort to mar one. Therefore letters can be seen as a great prized thing for the people who value it.

Letter – Great Pieces of Literature

Some letters are read and read over again and again. They are read not because they contain information which are needed; but because they are written in such a way that people still feel that they should be read as great pieces of literature. A. G. Gardiner refers to letters written by John Keats to his brother. Keats's letters are still read today by people as they are thought to be most beautiful pieces of literature, more beautiful than his poems probably. In these letters Keats is very personal and it is the personal touches which make the letters more readable and annihilates distance between people. A letter should be so that when a person reads the letter he or she should be able the emotions with which the letters are written and Keats letters show that and therefore still they are read all over the world.

Today's Youth – why aversion to writing

Many of today's youth find it difficult to communicate in writing letters as are the soldiers in 'On Letter writing.' Sam, a soldier in the essay says, 'Nothing ... I just sit and scratch my head over the blessed paper, but nothing'll come. Seems as though my head's as empty as a drum.' When Sam is saying this, this is not only typical of Sam, but a whole generation of people who are not accustomed to writing. Sam had been amidst the greatest of events – 'the battle of Mons, through the retreat to the Marne, the advance to the Aisne, the first battle of Ypres and the fighting at Festubert.' Even though being part of so many historical battles, Sam could not write about anything as he is not accustomed to writing, as Gardiner says 'It is that somehow the act of writing paralyses them.'

Letter writing paralyses them as they are not in the habit of letter writing, as they haven't written letters ever in their lives. What they need to do is to start writing letters again so as to revive that art. Letter is not just a means of communication but at the same time they are the means to enliven the spirit of the sender and the receiver. In an age, when one just forwards whatever contents one finds in social media, it is necessary that people start writing letters to get back

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their creativity, to get back the essence of their relationships, to get back the lively spirit as well as to bring some fulfilling moments in their lives.

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Check Your Progress

4. What does Gardiner mean by penny post?
5. Who does Gardiner refer to when he talks about leisure in the essay?
6. Whose letter writing does Gardiner consider as literature?

5.5 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS

1. Gardiner's published and much read works include — *Prophets, Priests and Kings* (1908), *Pillars of Society* (1913), *The War Lords* (1915), and *Certain People of Importance* (1926).
2. As per Gardiner, letter writing is no doubt a lost art because:
 - The Penny Post
 - The modern hurry
3. The author mentions that with the arrival of the telegraph, the telephone and the typewriter, the destruction of the art of letter writing has reached its zenith.
4. By "Penny Post" what Gardiner means is that the moment postal duty is made cheaper, i.e., people had to pay less to post a letter, they start undervaluing it.
5. When Gardiner is talking about 'leisure' in the essay, he is primarily referring to the people who are rich and not just talking about people in general.
6. Gardiner refers to letters written by John Keats to his brother as examples of letter writing which are like literature. .

5.6 SUMMARY

- Alfred George Gardiner (1865–1946) is known today to us primarily as an essayist. Alpha of the Plough is the pen name of A. G. Gardiner.
- A.G. Gardiner's essay 'On Letter Writing' is an interesting and amusing piece of writing which deals with the notion of the lost art of letter writing and how it is necessary that we understand the significance of letter writing.
- Two soldiers, Sam and Bill, are on a railway platform – one inside the train compartment and other on the platform and they are discussing about

writing letters. They discuss that whenever they are into writing letters they are dumb-struck and do not know how to progress after writing about the initial well-being of the recipient(s) and his or her nearer and dearer ones.

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- A.G. Gardiner is of the opinion that there are great many letter writing happening in the present times; but when it comes to people like Sam and Bill, they find themselves paralyzed as they want to write their first letter. In other words, they have no gift of self expression. It is not only true for Sam and Bill, but of thousands and thousands of young men who cannot write letters.
- The author comes to his thesis in the essay – ‘letter writing is no doubt a lost art.’ He gives two reasons for the same –
 1. The Penny Post
 2. The modern hurry
- A.G Gardiner again mentions that letter writing has to be taken in the following ways –
 1. Most causal and lightest way; and
 2. It should be personal and not abstract.
- G. Gardiner further states that a letter written in the similar manner as that of what Keats prescribes does the following –
 1. Annihilates distance
 2. Makes intimate communions
 3. Preserves one’s presence in absence.
- If one writes in an orderly, elaborate and stately manner, the style is good for an essay; but not a personal letter.

5.7 KEY WORDS

- **Victorian:** It refers to the attitudes and values of society during Queen Victoria’s reign, regarded as characterized especially by prudishness and a high moral tone.
- **Interpersonal Communications:** It relations to the relationships or communication between people.
- **Pheromone:** It refers to the chemicals released by ants to communicate with other ants.

5.8 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

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Short-Answer Questions

1. List the great events that A. G. Gardiner mentions were happening around the time Sam and Bill are struggling to write the letters.
2. What does Gardiner mean when he says 'letter was an event'?
3. State the ways in which letter writing has to be taken as per Gardiner.
4. What does a letter do, according to A. G. Gardiner, when written in the similar manner as that of what Keats prescribes?
5. How is letter writing crucial to human communication?
6. Write a short-note on personal letters as mentioned in the essay.

Long-Answer Questions

1. Do you agree with A. G. Gardiner that letter writing is a lost art?
2. What is the problem with present generation that they cannot write good letters?
3. What are the reasons of the decline of letter writing according to A. G. Gardiner? Do you agree with him?
4. Do you agree that with the decline of letter writing communication between people have come down? Give reasons in support of your answer.

5.9 FURTHER READINGS

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BLOCK - II

PROSE II

*Carl Sagan: 'Our
Ancestors'*

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UNIT 6 CARL SAGAN: 'OUR ANCESTORS'

Structure

- 6.0 Introduction
- 6.1 Objectives
- 6.2 A Brief Note on the Author: Carl Sagan
- 6.3 'Our Ancestors': Summary
- 6.4 Critical Analysis
- 6.5 Answers to Check Your Progress Questions
- 6.6 Summary
- 6.7 Key Words
- 6.8 Self Assessment Questions and Exercises
- 6.9 Further Readings

6.0 INTRODUCTION

The history of the animal world of planet Earth is a colourful and interesting one if one tries to read it carefully and minutely so as to understand from where human beings have come into being with such superior intelligence. Carl Sagan's essay 'Our Ancestors' deals with this issue from a very interesting point of view to make the readers be aware of the ways in which human beings have come to where they are surviving all odds.

The history of evolution is an interesting one – and Carl Sagan in a matter of very few pages shows that colourful history with great aptitude so as the readers are able to grasp the essential ways in which mankind has come to what they are and are progressing further with their developments – both within themselves and outside.

6.1 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- List the major works of Carl Sagan
- Discuss the essay 'Our Ancestors' by Carl Sagan
- Describe the significant concepts talked about by Carl Sagan in the essay
- Examine the evolutionary process of human beings

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6.2 A BRIEF NOTE ON THE AUTHOR: CARL SAGAN

Carl Edward Sagan (9 November 1934 – 20 December 1996) was an American astronomer, cosmologist, astrophysicist, astrobiologist, author, science popularizer, and science communicator in astronomy and other natural sciences. He is best known for his work as a science popularizer and communicator. His best known scientific contribution is research on extra-terrestrial life, including experimental demonstration of the production of amino acids from basic chemicals by radiation. His significant works include —

- *Communication with Extraterrestrial Intelligence (CETI).*
- *The Cosmic Connection: An Extraterrestrial Perspective.*
- *Broca's Brain: Reflections on the Romance of Science*
- *Contact: A Novel.*
- *Pale Blue Dot: A Vision of the Human Future in Space*
- *The Demon-Haunted World: Science as a Candle in the Dark*
- *Billions and Billions: Thoughts on Life and Death at the Brink of the Millennium*

The essay 'Our Ancestors' is taken from his book *Cosmos*.

6.3 'OUR ANCESTORS': SUMMARY

In the essay 'Our Ancestors', Carl Sagan looks at the ancestors of human beings in terms of how through the process of evolution we have come to where we are now. It is very significant to know about our ancestors so as to understand where we are progressing and how. Carl Sagan begins by saying —

Just sixty five million years ago our ancestors were the most unprepossessing of mammals — creatures with the size and intelligence of moles or three screws. It would have taken a very audacious biologist to guess that such animals would eventually produce the line that dominates the Earth today.

What Carl Sagan insists on is the fact that the way in which we have come from the mammals is something which is very astonishing.

Earlier, the earth was full of nightmarish dinosaurs as they were 'swimming reptiles, flying reptiles ... and some as tall as six storey building — thundering across the face of the Earth.' But even these vast creatures did not survive the fate of time as one catastrophic event destroyed them all and perhaps many other species from the world. But in this catastrophic event the mammals survived.

No one can tell for sure what the catastrophic event that wiped out the dinosaurs was. One may conjecture it to be some kind of cosmic catastrophe, the explosion of a nearby star which probably sprayed intense cosmic rays into the

space and some of it entered the Earth's envelope of air and burned the atmospheric nitrogen leading to the removal of the ozone layer. The depletion of the ozone layer led to the increase of solar ultraviolet radiation at earth's surface leading to frying of almost everything in earth's surface including the animals that were dinosaur's staple food which further led to their total wipeout.

As dinosaurs were wiped out, our ancestors, the mammals 'diversified exuberantly and flourished' leading through a long process to descend to become human beings. The reasons of these changes that happened in the atmosphere leading to the evolution of human beings are yet not ascertained for sure but it is generally believed that our existence is a product of 'random astronomical and geological events.'

Then Carl Sagan talks about how human beings progressed from its ancestors in the following terms –

After we came down from the trees, we evolved upright posture; our hands were free; we possessed excellent binocular vision – we had acquired many of the preconditions for making tools. There was now a real advantage in possessing a large brain and in communicating complex thoughts.

According to Carl Sagan, the furry little mammals, i.e., the monkeys, hid from the dinosaurs in the tree tops and later when the dinosaurs were wiped out they came down from tree tops and 'scampered down to domestic fire, invent writing, construct observatories and launch space vehicles.'

The author further comments that such was the growth of human beings from mammals. If one thinks of finding a similar species as that of human beings then probably the chances of it is almost zero; though chances of finding another form of intelligence is always probable. So if extra-terrestrial intelligence may exist and they may be of equal interest to be as we are to them. As we like to know about 'what we know, how we think, what are human brains like, the course of our evolution, the prospects of our future' and also about all these things of extra-terrestrial beings (if they exist); then they might also be interested in knowing similar things about us. If there are intelligent extra-terrestrial beings they can figure out about us by the intermittent radio signals that are whistling the Earth's magnetic field.

Check Your Progress

1. Name the book from which the essay 'Our Ancestors' is taken.
2. Mention the phrase the author uses to describe the existence of human beings.

6.4 CRITICAL ANALYSIS

Carl Sagan's essay 'Our Ancestors', as mentioned earlier, deals with the way in human beings has come to existence from its ancestors. We are a product who

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has come across through the process of evolution. Therefore while discussing the essay 'Our Ancestors' critically it is essential that we understand evolution and the contribution of Charles Darwin in giving us the theory of evolution.

Darwin – Theory of Evolution

Charles Darwin is a household name throughout the world for his contribution in the way we understand the universe. Before Charles Darwin, people thought that human beings are the products of God. Charles Darwin in *The Origin of Species* (1859) and *The Descent of Man* (1871) proved that man is not a divine product but a biological one who has evolved into the shape of a man due to the process of evolution. According to Christian theology (*The Bible*) human beings were divine products and descendants of Adam and Eve, and Adam and Eve are creations of God.

This view was challenged by Charles Darwin when he came up with the theory of Evolution by which he showed that human beings have come to existence through an evolutionary process from one celled creature amoeba. The history of the development from amoeba to human beings is an interesting one and in this history there were many complications which are very difficult to decipher as we do not have concrete proofs of all the processes which led to the development of human beings. But from what is known to man through historical and scientific theories are used by Carl Sagan in the essay 'Our Ancestors' to present this trajectory which the animal world took to reach the state of man.

Box 6.1: Charles Darwin

Charles Robert Darwin was an Nineteenth century English naturalist who through his researches and writings established that all species of life in earth have descended over time from common ancestors, and proposed the scientific theory of evolution resulted from a process that he called 'natural selection', in which the struggle for existence led to 'the survival of the fittest'. In 1859, Darwin published his theory of evolution with compelling evidence in his book named *On the Origin of Species*. Darwin's scientific discovery explained not only the diversity of life, but at the same time proved that man is not a divine product, but a creature which is a result of evolution. Darwin's early interest in nature led him to investigate marine invertebrates and encouraged his passion for natural science. His five year expedition on HMS *Beagle* established him as an eminent geologist whose observations and theories supported Charles Lyell's uniformitarian ideas, and publication of his experiences of the voyage made him famous as an author as well as a scientist. Darwin was extremely puzzled by the geographical distribution of wildlife and fossils and consequently collected them during his voyage. He began detailed investigations and in 1838 conceived his theory of 'natural selection'. Darwin's work established evolutionary descent with modification as the dominant scientific explanation of diversification in nature. In 1871 he examined human evolution and sexual selection in *The Descent of Man, and Selection in Relation to Sex*, followed by *The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals*. His research on plants was published in a series of books, and in his final book, he examined earthworms and their effect on soil.

Soon after *On the Origin of Species* was published in 1859, critics ridiculed his account of a struggle for existence as a Malthusian defense for the English industrial capitalism of the time. The term *Darwinism* was used for the evolutionary ideas of others, including Spencer's "survival of the fittest" as free-market progress. Later writers and scholars used Darwin's notion of natural selection to argue in favour of various, often contradictory, ideologies such as laissez-faire dog-eat dog capitalism, racism, warfare, colonialism and imperialism. Thus "Darwinism" became a popular term which meant several things at the same time as everyone tried to appropriate the term in their own context and use it according to their own whims and wishes.

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'Survival of the fittest'

We have probably heard the term 'survival of the fittest' many a times and also probably know that it was used by Charles Darwin for the first time to talk about the evolutionary process. In this world, all creatures are in competition to stay alive and progress. This is an inert fact of the natural world that we are competing with each other to survive; and the fittest among us would have the greater chances of survival. In the evolutionary process, the same hold true – the fittest of the animals survived over others and further grew from there.

The question naturally arises – what is it that then makes the dinosaurs be an extinct animals when they were one of the most huge creatures that existed? What are the reasons which made dinosaurs perish and the petty mammals like the monkey survive from where we are come through the evolutionary process. This is the question from where Carl Sagan begins his essay? He takes up this question and from there tries to present a significant narrative about how human beings came into existence from the mammals. As the mammals, the monkeys, came down from the trees they progressed from there to become human beings. Carl Sagan traces this history from a very interesting angle to present how human beings have come to achieve what they have achieved in this world. Behind this achievement of human beings lies his development of the brain which helped him in getting things for itself and creates a civilization of their own.

It is interesting to note here that when Carl Sagan talks about our ancestors, he refers to monkeys and not human beings, as he is trying to give a short history of the development of human beings from monkeys. We need to know this history as it is only by knowing this that we can understand that we are always in a process of change. The change is so slow that in a man's lifetime it is not to be seen or perceived. But when one looks at the vast history of the world then we can understand the process of evolutionary history.

Essay and its Expository Style

Expository writing is the most frequently used mode of writing. Expository writing includes explanations of chemical reactions, classification of plants, animals, or chemical substances, descriptions of causes of natural disasters, and comparisons of writing styles of different authors, to name just a few. As expository writing calls

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for logical analysis, therefore it is necessary to present ideas logically and weave sentences together in a smooth way. In expository writing, the writer's primary aim is to explain, describe, give information, and/or inform. The writer's job is not to give an opinion about the information or develop an argument, but to provide an objective account. In other words, the writer does an impartial analysis of facts and evidence. Therefore, expository writing is always done in the third person.

There are different types of expository writing:

- **Definitional:** The writer explains the meaning of a word, term, or concept. The topic can be a concrete subject or it can be any abstract term.
- **Classification:** The writer aims at classifying a broad subject or idea into categories and groups.
- **Comparing and contrasting:** The writer describes the similarities and differences between two or more people, places, or things. Generally speaking, comparison-contrast expository writing has two subjects which are compared and contrasted. Comparison and contrast focuses on strengths and weaknesses of something or advantages and disadvantage of something.
- **Cause and effect:** The writer explains how things affect each other and / or depend on each other. A cause-effect writing serves one of the two purposes: either it shows the effects of an event, or explains the causes of an event. In other words, cause and effect writing aims at explaining why things happen and what happens as a result.
- **'How to' essays or process essays:** The writer exposit a procedure, step-by-step process, or how to do something to instruct the reader.

Expository writing, as mentioned earlier the most frequently used mode of writing, is different from other kinds of writing as one does not try to analyse facts in this kind of writing, but presents it in such a logical manner that the readers get all the required information and can decide for themselves the course of action. They are neither swayed by emotional outpouring, nor motivated by narrative story-telling, nor by arguments that lead them to think in the way the writer's think.

In the essay 'Our Ancestors', Carl Sagan is neither trying to argue any case, nor is he trying to be persuasive. He is just stating facts and facts as they are known through various researches. These facts are presented in a chronological and logical manner so that the readers get the notion rightly. It is to be remembered here that in the expository style of writing, the writer merely presents facts so that the readers are aware of things as to how they happened. And that's what Carl Sagan does in this essay. Therefore the style of the essay is very direct and it moreover comes like a statement to the readers who are asked to consume the facts that are stated by the author. It is a very straight forward kind of writing which readers often do not enjoy so much as it is neither persuasive nor narrative, but merely informative. But someone who loves to

gather information and has a liking for the subject of the essay, he or she usually enjoys this kind of writing.

At the same time it is interesting to note that Carl Sagan is deliberately using a language which the readers can easily understand as the essay is written for common people and not for experts of the subject. So even if the essay is informative, the author has tried to do the following to appeal to the readers –

- (a) Keep the language simple and straightforward
- (b) Be logical and chronological
- (c) Keep the information to the minimum so that the readers are not bored
- (d) Bring about interesting anecdotes so that it entertains the readers

Check Your Progress

- 3. Who proved that man is not a divine product but a biological one?
- 4. Who does Carl Sagan refer to when he says ‘our ancestors’?
- 5. List the two purposes served by cause-effect writing.

6.5 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS

- 1. The essay ‘Our Ancestors’ is taken from his book *Cosmos*.
- 2. Carl Sagan refers to the existence of human beings in the essay as a product of ‘random astronomical and geological events.’
- 3. Charles Darwin in *The Origin of Species* (1859) and *The Descent of Man* (1871) proved that man is not a divine product but a biological one who has evolved into the shape of a man due to the process of evolution
- 4. Carl Sagan refers to monkeys and not human beings, when he talks about ‘our ancestors’.
- 5. A cause-effect writing serves one of the two purposes: either it shows the effects of an event, or explains the causes of an event.

6.6 SUMMARY

- Carl Sagan looks at the ancestors of human beings in terms of how through the process of evolution we have come to where we are now. It is very significant to know about our ancestors so as to understand where we are progressing and how.
- What Carl Sagan insists on is the fact that the way in which we have come from the mammals is something which is very astonishing.

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- Carl Sagan mentions in the essay that earlier, the earth was full of nightmarish dinosaurs as they were 'swimming reptiles, flying reptiles ... and some as tall as six storey building – thundering across the face of the Earth.' But even these vast creatures did not survive the fate of time as one catastrophic event destroyed them all and perhaps many other species from the world. But in this catastrophic event the mammals survived.
- Sagan says in the essay that no one can tell for sure what the catastrophic event that wiped out the dinosaurs was. One may conjecture it to be some kind of cosmic catastrophe.
- The author mentions in the essay that as dinosaurs were wiped out, our ancestors, the mammals 'diversified exuberantly and flourished' leading through a long process to descend to become human beings.

6.7 KEY WORDS

- **Mammal:** It refers to a warm-blooded vertebrate animal of a class that is distinguished by the possession of hair or fur, females that secrete milk for the nourishment of the young, and (typically) the birth of live young.
- **Evolution:** It refers to the process by which different kinds of living organism are believed to have developed from earlier forms during the history of the earth.
- **Expository Writing:** It includes explanations of chemical reactions, classification of plants, animals, or chemical substances, descriptions of causes of natural disasters, and comparisons of writing styles of different authors, to name just a few.

6.8 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short-Answer Questions

1. Write a short note on the life and works of Carl Sagan.
2. Describe the different types of expository writing.
3. What does Sagan say about extra-terrestrial intelligence in the essay?
4. How does Sagan use the expository writing in the essay 'Our Ancestors'?
5. Briefly explain the concept of 'survival of the fittest'.

Long-Answer Questions

1. What according to Carl Sagan are 'our ancestors'? In the light of the essay 'Our Ancestors', write an essay on how human beings have come through the process of evolution.

2. Evolution is a process. Do you agree? Give reasons for your answer.

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3. Write short notes on –

- (a) Monkeys as our ancestors
- (b) Reasons of extinction of dinosaurs
- (c) Charles Darwin

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6.9 FURTHER READINGS

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UNIT 7 C. E. M. JOAD: 'OUR CIVILIZATION'

Structure

- 7.0 Introduction
- 7.1 Objectives
- 7.2 A Note on the Author: C.E.M. Joad
- 7.3 'Our Civilization': Summary
- 7.4 Critical Analysis
- 7.5 Answers to Check Your Progress Questions
- 7.6 Summary
- 7.7 Key Words
- 7.8 Self Assessment Questions and Exercises
- 7.9 Further Readings

7.0 INTRODUCTION

C. E. M. Joad's essay 'Our Civilization' is taken from his *The Story of Civilization*. It deals with the positive and negative aspects of the modern civilization where the author is making an evaluative assessment of the modern civilization and is making an attempt to talk about what are the things that our civilization can avoid to reach its zenith. In other words, the author's attempt is at making a review of the modern civilization by looking at its pros and cons. It is an evaluative essay where the author has put forward his views quite enthusiastically so as to make the readers buy his arguments. The essay was written in the year 1931.

7.1 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Recall the major works of C. E. M Joad
- Discuss the major points of the essay 'Our Civilization'
- Critically analyse the essay 'Our Civilization' to understand the praises and defects of our civilization

7.2 A NOTE ON THE AUTHOR: C.E.M. JOAD

C. E. M. Joad (1891 – 1953) is a British thinker who began his life as a civil servant and later became the Head of Department of Philosophy at Birkbeck College, University of London. He wrote many essays and pieces on Modern

Civilization and is heralded as one of the good essayist of the early twentieth century England. His famous books include –

- *The Present and Future of Religion*
- *Common Sense Ethics*
- *Common Sense Theology*
- *Return to Philosophy*
- *The Story of Civilization*
- *Guide to Modern Wickedness*
- *Philosophy of Our Times.*

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7.3 'OUR CIVILIZATION': SUMMARY

C. E. M Joad in his essay 'Our Civilization' is making an evaluative study of the modern civilization by probing the characteristics which govern us. He first goes into talking about the 'praises' of our civilization and then goes on to talk about its defects. Thus a comparison between praises and defects are done by C. E. M Joad to make an evaluative judgment on the modern civilization.

Praises of Our Civilization

The aspects of modern civilization that C. E. M Joad praises are as follows –

- **Order and Safety:** According to C. E. M Joad, order and safety are two most characteristic things of the modern human civilization. As there is law and order in human civilization therefore it is possible that people can live happily and pursue greater things in life – 'Without safety those higher activities of mankind which make our civilization could not go on.' It is because law protects everyone that is why there is safety for everyone. It is only when everyone feels safe that a civilization can prosper – the inventor could not invent, the scientist find out or the artist make beautiful things if there is no safety and security. As men and women are almost completely free from 'fear of violence' in their modern lives, therefore C. E. M Joad thinks that it is an important characteristic of modern civilization.
- **Health:** Health, as C. E. M Joad emphasizes, is one of the chief factors that characterizes the modern human civilization. C. E. M Joad says that the modern men and women are 'largely free from the fear of pain.' Although C. E. M. Joad makes the point that the savages were healthier than the modern man; yet in modern times due to the use of anaesthetics, pain is not something that is feared so much, though he emphasizes at the same time 'unless you have good health, you cannot enjoy anything or achieve anything.' So it is important that one necessarily achieves good health. In modern times, men and women not only enjoy better health than earlier, but at the same time they live longer than what people did before.

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- **Modern Civilization Spreads Everywhere:** In earlier times, civilizations were broken in upon and destroyed by uncivilized people. For example the civilization of Babylon or Assyria had met the fate when their civilization were attacked and taken over by uncivilized people. It happened in China, India, Rome as well as Greece. C. E. M Joad gives analogy that earlier civilizations were like 'oasis' within a desert and the oasis was taken over by the uncivilized desert. But with the advent of science modern civilization has armed itself in such a way that it is very unlikely that the savages will take over.

- **The World is One:** The fourth point about modern civilization that C. E. M Joad mentions is that the world has necessarily become one larger unit than it used to be before. In terms of commerce and trade, the world is more like a unit. In present times, when one thinks of a meal it is really international in terms of availability of food materials and foods from all over the world – 'No great Caliph, no Eastern King, not even Solomon in all his glory, could draw on such rich stores of varied produce as the housewife who does her shopping at the grocer's.' This analogy of food points out how we have become one large unit. To explain it further C. E. M Joad gives the example of box –

Until quite recently the nations of mankind lived in a number of separate boxes holding no communication with each other except when the people in one box invaded those in the next, and some of the boxes were never opened at all. Today there is constant coming and going between the boxes, so much so that the sides of the boxes are breaking down, and the world is beginning to look more like one enormous box.

This analogy of box reminds C. E. M Joad that as almost all boxes are known to a greater extent these days therefore there are less chances of one box invading the next and breaking it upon. Therefore the dangers are not anymore from outside, but from within which leads the author C. E. M Joad to talk about the defects of modern civilization.

Defects of Modern Civilization

The defects of modern civilization according to C. E. M Joad are as follows.

- **Unfair Distribution of Wealth and Resources:** Even though there is very little 'political oppression' in today's world and people of a nation are more or less equal before the law as well as people usually enjoy the democratic way of choosing whom they want to be governed by; still there is a problem of 'sharing of money, food, clothing, houses and books.' It is very unfair that a handful of people enjoy all the riches and luxuries of the world and the rest are always doing odd jobs to earn a bare living. He gives the example of England –

In England alone one half of all the money which is divided every year (called the national income) is received by one-seventh of the population; which means that one half is divided among every sixteen people, and the seventeenth person gets the other half. So while some few people live in luxury, many have not even enough to eat and drink and wear.

This unfair distribution of wealth and resources has made most of the people of the world live in dreadful conditions where they can hardly make the two ends meet. C. E. M Joad is of the opinion that till the time everyone gets his or her proper share of 'necessary and delightful' things the world is not going to be a perfect place and modern civilization has still to strive for something better.

- **The Danger of War:** Even though the world has become one large unit, still there are chances of war because the world is divided in terms of nations who are at loggerheads with each other. He refers to the First World War (1914 – 1918) as one of the most destructive phase of the civilization that the world has seen. In this context it is to be kept in mind that the essay was written in 1931.

It is because of the fear of wars that each nation spends a fair share of their money to be prepared for the war. Each nation takes pride of the fact that they are militarily or martially equipped nation. Here C. E. M Joad gives the example of King Amanullah's (of Afghanistan) visit to England to figure out what the western civilization was like and what he is being shown and made to do are the following –

- (a) Tanks at Lulworth Cove
- (b) Bombing aeroplanes at Hendon
- (c) A trip to submarine
- (d) Allowed to fire torpedoes from Spithead.

All though all these things are being shown to him, but the English poets and their beautiful artistic works. He wasn't sent to meet the scientists and philosophers. Therefore he further states that when three hundred years from thence when the Afghan people will write their history they will talk about England as a 'warlike' nation – that England was more proud of its battleships than its poets; that England was spending more money in destroying the world through wars than making people happier and wiser during peace. It is not that C. E. M Joad is only making a critique of England; he says that most nations are like this and therefore he comments –

So long as the nations go on like this, it only wants another match stick to set the hayrick alight and it will blaze again. And so destructive has modern war become, that another blaze will probably burn up civilization altogether.

He mentions that the League of Nations have been formulated to look into the quarrels between nations where nations can bring their disputes for

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amicable settlement. Such as two quarrelling individuals go to the court to settle their disputes; similarly two quarrelling nations can go to the doors of the League of Nations. C. E. M Joad says that though the League is still not strong enough to prevent wars, still he hopes that it will become so in coming days.

- **The Danger of Machines:** Science and technology has given humankind many machines but hasn't given men and women the brain to use them judiciously. So he says – 'we do not know how to manage machines.' Machines were meant to be men's servants, but instead what has happened is that men have grown dependent on machines. He therefore, comments –
The machines are very stern master. They must be fed with coal, and given petrol to drink, and oil to wash with, and they must be kept at the right temperature. And if they do not get their meals when they expect them, they grow sulky and refuse to work, or burst with rage, and blow up, and spread ruin and destruction all around them. So we have to wait upon them very attentively and do all that we can to keep them in a good temper.
- **What to do with our time?** Machines are meant to save time and energy and what we have done with that extra time and energy is that we have engrossed ourselves in making more and more machines. It is to be understood that machines are meant to give us power which we can use as an aid to our civilization.

An Evaluation

We agreed at the beginning that being civilized meant making and liking beautiful things, thinking freely, and living rightly and maintaining justice equally between man and man. Man has a better chance to-day to do these things than he ever had before; he has more time, more energy less to fear and less to fight against.

If mankind can achieve this then that will be the greatest thing that can be achieved and it would be a long lasting one.

Check Your Progress

1. Which element of human civilization makes it possible for people to live happily and pursue greater things?
2. How does Joad use the word 'oasis' in the essay?
3. According to the author, till when is the world not going to be a perfect place?

7.4 CRITICAL ANALYSIS

C. E. M Joad in the essay 'Our Civilization' makes an evaluative assessment of the modern human civilization – comparing its praises and defects as we have

seen in the summary of the essay in the previous section. In this section, we will be looking at the ideas of C. E. M Joad more carefully to understand how far he is justified in making the arguments that he presented in the essay.

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On the surface, it seems that C. E. M Joad is quite justified in presenting his arguments. He seems to be quite apt in arguing all his points – whether one thing about the praises of the modern civilization or its defects. But as an Indian reader when we try to look at his essay 'Our Civilization' we have to think about quite a few things which are not very justified.

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First of all, one has to understand that the essay was written in 1931 when India was under the colonial British rule. We, as Indians, when we read the essay about civilization and know that C. E. M Joad is a British, we notice that he keeps on giving the examples of England as a nation, but for not once mentions the colonial India. He never mentions at all British as a colonial power or the effects of colonialism on our civilization, which should have been done to provide the essay with an effect which is necessary if someone from outside Europe reads the essay.

In the early twentieth century (when the essay was written), one of the significant things that modern civilization was grappling with was the empires and the colonies. If C. E. M Joad had to talk about civilization, then this should have been a necessary thing to mention. But C. E. M Joad does not refer to it at all. For him, it seems, civilization means primarily the European civilization. He does not take into account the civilizations of the Non-Europeans so much into account. It can be said so because he mentions that in the modern times people are equal before the law – that is true about Europe; but not of colonial Europe. English people had two standards – one for themselves and other for the colonized. So when C. E. M Joad says that everyone is equal before the law, it is not completely true in the colonial situation.

As colonials, we have faced the oppression and suppression by the British in many ways and that finds no mention in C. E. M Joad's essay. Probably being a British he sees things only from the perspective of the British and not really from a very objective perspective. He is an English man and that perspective looms large over the essay which does not make him see his own nation as a colonial power trying to dominate and oppress the whole of the world in the name of civilizing mission.

Colonialism is a political rule of one nation over the other where the colonized people are made to believe that they are fit to be ruled by the colonial power and not by themselves. Therefore if we accept C. E. M. Joad's arguments without really asking why he didn't mention about colonialism then probably we will be showing our colonial mind-set. We need to necessarily look at the discourses of the western civilization from a perspective which should be different from that of the Europeans as our standards of civilization and culture are different from that of Europe.

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Moreover, while talking about ancient civilizations it is being said that in today's world there is very little chances of the 'oasis' being eaten up by the desert meaning that the civilizations are taken over by the savages or the uncivilized. The word 'savage' is a very racial and imperial term as the people who seem to be savage from one particular point of view also have a culture and civilization of their own. During the 18th and 19th centuries, from the European perspective, people living in Africa were savage, uncultured and uncivilized; people of India had an ancient golden civilization but they had lost it and were also savage. It was argued at that time that the European colonialism was good for the savage Africans as well as Indians as Europe thought it was their religious duty to civilize the whole world by bringing in the European Enlightenment to the whole world. Thus when C. E. M. Joad talks about one world, it seems moreover to be a world dominated by the West.

Moreover, one needs to remember that whatever things he is talking about in the essay are only true about the then Europe – it wasn't true about India in 1931. In 1931, we were not an independent nation; in 1931, we didn't have grocery shops where food and food materials from all over the world were available to us; in 1931, we did not have so many machines all around us. So if we take this essay in the context of 1931 India, then the things does not apply to us to a large extent. We were, in 1931, still a colonized country under the British rule trying to find ways to fight the British colonial regime so that we could achieve independence. So our perspective cannot be similar to that of C. E. M. Joad.

But, if we approach the essay from the point of view of the twenty-first century readers than it has a completely different meaning. Though the League of Nations would ring a bell to our ears if we are not a history or political science student, but we know that United Nations does exist (The League of Nations led to the path of coming up for the United Nations). An association of countries established in 1919 by the Treaty of Versailles to promote international cooperation and achieve international peace and security. It was powerless to stop Italian, German, and Japanese expansionism leading to the Second World War, and was replaced by the United Nations in 1945. We know that UN (United Nations) even if it does not have much power over the nations, it still has the international recognition and the treaties it makes the different nations sign and ratify, these are being followed by the nations for international peace and security.

It is true that United Nations has done a recognizable job in trying to bring international peace and prosperity; but at the same time it is also true that it hasn't been able to stop nations from fighting with each other. For example, we are still grappling with the question of Kashmir with Pakistan and there is no conclusive solution that we have found till now. Modern nations may have come together to do trade and commerce, to exchange cultural artefacts and other things similar to that, it but has not been able to come to a situation when the wars could be averted.

We, in India, apart from the threats from the other nations such as Pakistan also suffer from many other problems – whether they be gender injustices, caste discriminations, female foeticide, communalism or terrorism. We have reached modern civilization, but we are still trying to fight with many problems apart from that of war, machines and unequal distribution of national wealth. So merely talking about the four defects of modern civilization – wars, machines, the problem of how to use our times and unequal distribution of wealth, there are multiple other problems that we have and they need to be dealt with a much more intricate ways so as to come to a situation when we can say that modern civilization has reached perfection.

If we talk about order and safety, we see that there are laws to punish the victims and that there is some kind of order; but at the same time we are also aware that there are many kinds of threat looming large over us all the time whether they be terrorist violence or gender violence or caste based or religion based violence. All these often make us question how ‘safe’ we are? So when one talks about order and safety, it is not always true that we have a perfect world with modern civilization.

Talking about health, we have modern medicines and technologies to help man live a longer life – we have many ways in which life has become easier and pains have been minimized; but at the same time this is also true that because of the rush of the modern civilization we have come across many new diseases as well as many kinds of drug abuse (which we will be reading in Unit 9 on ‘Dangers of Drug Abuse’ by Hardin B. Jones). So we may have gained longevity, but we have paid a price for it.

In connection to world being one larger unit and there being some kind of unity – it seems to be a very delicate affair as the international relations are deeply complicated and very sensitive. It is true that because of the multinational companies and faster communication network as well as mass migration of people from one country to another, things have taken a different shape altogether and that the margins of nations are fading day by day; but at the same time this is also true that the more the margins of the nations are fading, more we are getting aware of our ethnicity and other relayed things.

Coming to the topic of modern civilization spreading everywhere, C. E. M. Joad is of the opinion that the world is largely becoming one place and that each country is known to the other and that there is a mutual amity between people. But this all seems to be a myth when we think in terms of wars that are happening between nations. There is always a competitive spirit that is looming like a shadow upon the modern civilization because of the capitalistic trends in which we are living. C. E. M. Joad does not mention in any way the effects of capitalism in our modern civilization.

Overall, it can be said that C. E. M Joad has made a fair display of his analysis of the modern civilization; but there still remains many things which we need to add to that analysis so as to understand our civilization in a better fashion.

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Check Your Progress

4. Why is the use of the word savage problematic in the essay?
5. What is the League of Nations?

7.5 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS

1. Law and order is the element of the human civilization because of which it is possible that people can live happily and pursue greater things in life.
2. C. E. M Joad uses the word 'oasis' in the essay to give an analogy that earlier civilizations were like 'oasis' within a desert and the oasis was taken over by the uncivilized desert.
3. C. E. M Joad is of the opinion that till the time everyone gets his or her proper share of 'necessary and delightful' things the world is not going to be a perfect place and modern civilization has still to strive for something better.
4. The use of the word 'savage' is problematic in the essay because it is a very racial and imperial term as the people who seem to be savage from one particular point of view also have a culture and civilization of their own.
5. League of Nations is an association of countries established in 1919 by the Treaty of Versailles to promote international cooperation and achieve international peace and security. It was powerless to stop Italian, German, and Japanese expansionism leading to the Second World War, and was replaced by the United Nations in 1945.

7.6 SUMMARY

- C. E. M. Joad's essay 'Our Civilization' is taken from his *The Story of Civilization*. It deals with the positive and negative aspects of the modern civilization where the author is making an evaluative assessment of the modern civilization and is making an attempt to talk about what are the things that our civilization can avoid to reach its zenith. The essay was written in the year 1931.
- C. E. M Joad in his essay 'Our Civilization' makes an evaluative study of the modern civilization by probing the characteristics which govern us. He first goes into talking about the 'praises' of our civilization and then goes on to talk about its defects.

- The aspects of modern civilization that C. E. M Joad praises are as follows—
 - o Order and Safety
 - o Health
 - o The World is One
 - o The defects of modern civilization according to C. E. M Joad are as follows.
 - o Unfair Distribution of Wealth and Resources
 - o The Danger of War
 - o The Danger of Machines
 - o What to do with our time
 - o The essay is problematic in terms of its exclusion of non-western civilizations, the writer's disregard for the colonial times and the lack of mention of the ills of modern technology and capitalism.

*C. E. M. Joad:
'Our Civilization'*

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7.7 KEY WORDS

- **Modernism:** It generally refers to the broad aesthetic movements of the twentieth century; 'modernity' refers to a set of philosophical, political, and ethical ideas which provide the basis for the aesthetic aspect of modernism.
- **Enlightenment:** It is the term that was applied to the intellectual and cultural movement in Western Europe during the seventeenth century which reached its height in the eighteenth century.

7.8 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short-Answer Questions

1. What are the pros of modern civilization as mentioned in the essay?
2. Briefly discuss the defects of the modern civilization as per Joad.
3. Write a short note of the food analogy made in the essay.
4. How does the year of composition of the essay, that is, 1931, becomes relevant in its reading?

Long-Answer Questions

1. What according to you are the main pros and cons of Modern civilization as enumerated by C. E. Joad in the essay 'Our Civilization'?
2. Do you agree with the arguments presented by C. E. M. Joad in the essay 'Our Civilization'? Discuss in detail.

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3. Do you think modern civilization is perfect? Give answers to prove your point with reference to essay 'Our Civilization' by C. E. M. Joad.
4. What do you think about modern machines? Are they helpful in building up modern civilization? Give a reasoned answer.
5. What are the main features of modern civilization according to you?
6. Discuss in detail how as an Indian reader we should approach the essay 'Our Civilization' by C. E. M. Joad?
7. Write Short notes on –
 - (a) Health and Modern Civilization
 - (b) Machines and Modern civilization
 - (c) World is one big unit

7.9 FURTHER READINGS

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Sebastian, D. K. 1985. *Prose for the Young Reader*. New Delhi: Macmillan.

UNIT 8 B. R. NANDA: 'A HERO ON PROBATION'

B. R. Nanda: 'A Hero on Probation'

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Structure

- 8.0 Introduction
- 8.1 Objectives
- 8.2 A Short Note on the Author: B. R. Nanda
- 8.3 Mahatma Gandhi
- 8.4 Critical Analysis
- 8.5 Answers to Check Your Progress Questions
- 8.6 Summary
- 8.7 Key Words
- 8.8 Self Assessment Questions and Exercises
- 8.9 Further Readings

8.0 INTRODUCTION

The present essay 'A Hero on Probation' deals with Mahatma Gandhi's life in the year 1915 when he successfully finished the South African chapter of his life and came to India. He was about to become a significant leader of the Indian Freedom Struggle against the colonial British. In the essay, B. R. Nanda talks about three things in detail –

- (a) The year 1915 in Gandhi's life – a year of his probation
- (b) The establishment of an Ashrama in Ahmedabad, Gujrat
- (c) The life and philosophy practiced in Gandhi's Ashrama.

In the course of this unit, we will first have a brief look at Mahatma Gandhi's life so as to understand the significance of the great man in the history of India as well as the world and then move on to discuss the aforementioned details.

8.1 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Recall the life and works of B. R. Nanda's
- Examine the life and times of Mahatma Gandhi
- Describe Gandhi's way of life in *ashrama*
- Critically analyse Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy

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8.2 A SHORT NOTE ON THE AUTHOR: B. R. NANDA

B. R. Nanda is (1917– 30 May 2010), a writer from New Delhi, India, was the preeminent Indian biographer of Mahatma Gandhi. Bal Ram Nanda was in the Indian Railways Services and later became the first Director of the Nehru Memorial Museum & Library, New Delhi. His significant work includes –

- *Mahatma Gandhi: A Biography*
- *Gandhi and his critics*
- *Gokhale, Gandhi, and the Nehrus*
- *In Search of Gandhi: Essays and Reflections*
- *Gandhi: pan-Islamism, imperialism, and nationalism in India*
- *Motilal Nehru* (Builders of modern India)
- *Socialism in India, Gandhi: a Pictorial Biography*
- *Gandhi and his Critics*
- *Road to Pakistan*

8.3 MAHATMA GANDHI

There is probably no one in India who has not heard about Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi. He is probably the most well-known figure of Indian politics till date and his thoughts and writings are referred to all the times by politicians, scholars, students, academicians alike. Therefore it is significant that as an Indian and as a student, one should learn about him in greater detail not only to have an idea about what he believed in but also to figure out how he practiced his ideas in his daily life.

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi is known as the father of India (Bapu) and often also referred to as “mahatma” (great soul) – a title given to him by another great poet of India, Rabindra Nath Tagore. The two great men had immense respect for each other and shared a connection between them which is unparalleled in the history of India. Where Rabindra Nath Tagore was a poet, dramatist, lyricist, novelist, essayist, educationist and a great political activist; M. K. Gandhi was a writer, lawyer and a political and social leader who gave a new direction to the freedom struggle of India with his ‘satyagraha.’

Gandhi’s life in South Africa and the Initial Few Years in India – in Detail

After finishing his education of law in England (Barrister of Law from the Inner Temple, England in 1891), when Gandhi came to India to practice as a lawyer he found himself amidst quagmire as he has no knowledge about the Indian Judicial

system and he found himself to be a misfit in Indian courts in the initial years. In his early years, Gandhi was very shy and unable to speak publicly with confidence as was also some visible even during his stay in England, therefore it was very difficult for Gandhi to practice as a lawyer in an Indian court.

By his own admission, he was a failure as a lawyer in the initial years in India as he was not prepared yet to stand up in a court and fight someone's case. Therefore he had no other option but to go to Rajkot where he took the job of drafting applications for his brother's partner who had a settled practice. While he was passing his days thus in drafting legal applications he received an offer from Meman Firm (a Muslim Mercantile community mostly based in Bombay and Kathiawar), who were looking for a barrister to help their Firm resolve a lawsuit in South Africa. Gandhi found it to be a good offer and agreed to go there and he set sail for South Africa in April 1893 and reached Durban, where he was received by his employer Abdullah Sheth, one of the most prosperous Indian businessmen in Natal.

This journey was a decisive journey in the career of Gandhi not only as a lawyer but also as a human being as it gave him the opportunity to figure out his own metal and fight for the just causes. In South Africa, Gandhi got the opportunity to figure out his own talent. He went there to fight a legal suit for a firm and what he experienced there made him take up issues which is beneficial not only for the Indian labourers living in South Africa, but for the world in general as in his fight against the racial discrimination Gandhi came up with the idea of Satyagraha which was crucial in Indian Freedom Struggle and also as a philosophy.

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi suffered racial abuses as he was thrown out of the first class railway compartment even while having a valid ticket and he also found it difficult to find a lodge or a hotel to stay primarily because he was an Indian. Gandhi experienced the racial insults and abuses first hand and instead of suffering these insults and humiliations that other Indians did because of their livelihood compulsions, he decided to stand up for his own rights and for the unjustified suffering and humiliations that Indians were facing in the then South Africa.

In 1906, Gandhi could very well fathom that there was a simmering discontent among the Indians in South Africa as one after the other demeaning laws were being passed and enacted in South Africa with the intention of making the Indians settled there not able to bear the injustices and leave for their native land, that is, India. Gandhi thought it was a right moment to launch a movement as he would have support of all and consequently decided to start a civil resistance movement in which almost all the Indians in South Africa participated. As against the brutality of the whites, Gandhi decided that his weapon would be non-violence and with this means he would try to give a reply to the violence that had been thrust upon them.

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Gandhi understood the fact that the time of individual resistance is gone as it would not have any effect therefore he decided to enthuse the spirit of truth and non-violence in the mass so that they can give expression to the simmering discontent that they were experiencing, where truth is the goal that is to be realized and non-violence is the means to realize the truth. Thus started the movement which was earlier named as 'passive resistance' and later as 'Satyagraha.'

The years between 1906 and 1914 were the most fruitful years of Gandhi's stay in South Africa as in this period we perceive the practical implication of Gandhi's ideas of civil resistance and its success. The non-violent satyagraha where the participants of the movement not only fought the opposition by their love and suffering to defy the unjust civil norms, but with the purification of the self, try to win over the enemy. This tool became so successful that it came to notice world-wide and gave the resistance not only popularity all over the world, but Gandhi emerged as a true leader of the mass.

Gandhi's Ashram

Box 8.1: What is an Ashram?

An Ashram is usually thought to be a community who prefer to live in retreat. In India there was already an ancient tradition of many spiritual men establishing ashrams so as to spread the spiritual and philosophical ideas. M. K. Gandhi took up the ancient idea of an ashram and established one near Ahmedabad whose aim was not only to spread philosophical and spiritual ideas but also to practice and live life in such a way that it becomes an example for the whole of the world. The zeal of self-sacrifice, the routinized life, the social reformist attitude, the political beliefs, the spiritual quest, etc. – all were part of Gandhi's ashram.

Thereafter, Gandhi reached India. In May 1915, Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi established his first ashram in India at Kochrab, near Ahmedabad.

Kochrab village was affected by plague and the adamant people of the village refused to let M. K. Gandhi organize the sanitary operations in the village and consequently Gandhi decided to reestablish his ashram on the banks of the river Sabarmati, which is popularly known as Sabarmati Ashram. It was founded on 25 May 1915. The Ashram began with twenty-five inmates who vowed to a life of chastity, truth, non-violence, non-stealing, non-possession, control of palate, shramdan, swadeshi, religious harmony, fearlessness and removal of untouchability, etc. In other words, it can be said that Gandhi's ashram apart from having a spiritual concern was moreover dedicated to the social issues and was devoted to the service of humanity at large.

Mahatma Gandhi also had laid down certain rules and regulations to be followed by the inmates of the Ashram – these rules and regulations are something that is laid down by scriptures. The regulations not only upheld spiritual but also moral values. Thus, under Gandhi's guidance, the Ashram became a living example

of ideology that Gandhi believed in. the ashram was an application of his ideas in practical terms.

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The ashram was open to people from all caste and communities and when three people from an untouchable family came to Gandhi seeking permission to stay in the ashram, Gandhi welcomed them on the condition that they also need to follow the rules and regulations of the ashram. This step of Gandhi created uproar in the society as till then untouchables were not allowed to stay in the same quarters as that of the higher caste people. Thus this step of Gandhi was in some ways unprecedented and it was easy for the people of higher caste to easily accept it. It also led to a stoppage of all monetary help that the ashram was receiving. But soon an anonymous person helped the ashram financially and the financial situation of the ashram stabilized.

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Box 8.2: Rules and Regulations at Sabarmati Ashram

Ashram Rules The object of this Ashram is that its members should qualify themselves for, and make a constant endeavour towards, the service of the country, not inconsistent with universal good. 1. Truth: Truth is not fulfilled by mere abstinence from telling or practicing an untruth in ordinary relations with fellow-men. But Truth is God, the one and only Reality. All other observances take their rise from the quest for, and the worship of, Truth. Worshippers of Truth must not resort to untruth, even for what they may believe to be the good of the country, and they may be required, like Prahlad, civilly to disobey the orders even of parents and elders in virtue of their paramount loyalty to Truth. 2. Non-Violence: Mere not-killing (the animals) is not enough (for this observance). The active part of non-violence is Love. The law of Love requires equal consideration for all life from the tiniest insect to the highest man. One who follows this law must not be angry even with the perpetrator of the greatest imaginable wrong, but must love him, wish him well and serve him. Although he must thus love the wrong doer, he must never submit to his wrong or his injustice, but must oppose it with all his might, and must patiently and without resentment suffer all the hardships to which the wrong doer may subject him in punishment for his opposition. 3. Chastity (Brahmacharya) Observance of the foregoing principles is impossible without the observance of celibacy. It is not enough that one should not look upon any woman or man with a lustful eye; animal passion must be so controlled as to be excluded even from the mind. If married, one must not have a carnal mind regarding one's wife or husband, but consider her or him as one's lifelong friends, and establish relationship of perfect purity. A sinful touch, gesture or word is a direct breach of this principle. 4. Control of the Palate The observance of Brahmacharya has been found, from experience, to be extremely difficult so long as one has not acquired mastery over taste. Control of the palate has therefore been placed as a principle by itself. Eating is necessary only for sustaining the body and keeping it a fit instrument for service, and must never be practiced for self-indulgence. Food must therefore be taken, like medicine, under proper restraint. In pursuance of this principle one must eschew exciting foods, such as spices and condiments. Meat, liquor, tobacco, bhang, etc are excluded from the Ashram. This principle requires abstinence from feasts or dinners which has pleasure as their object. 5. Non-Stealing It is not enough not to take another's property without his permission. One becomes guilty of theft even by using differently anything which one has received in trust for use in a particular way, as well as by using a thing longer than the period for which it has

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been lent. It is also theft if one receives anything which he does not really need. The fine truth at the bottom of this principle is that Nature provides just enough, and no more, for our daily need. Hence it is also a theft to possess anything more than one's minimum requirement.

6. Non-Possession or Poverty This principle is really a part of (5). Just as one must not receive, so must one not possess anything which one does not really need. It would be a breach of this principle to possess unnecessary foodstuffs, clothing or furniture. For instance, one must not keep a chair if can do without it. In observing this principle one is led to a progressive simplification of one's own life.

7. Swadeshi Man is not omnipotent. He therefore serves the world best by serving his neighbour. This is swadeshi, a principle which is broken with one professes to serve those who are more remote in preference to those who are near. Observance of swadeshi makes for order in the world; the breach of it leads to chaos. Following this principle, one must as far as possible purchase one's requirements locally and not buy things imported from foreign lands, which can easily be manufactured in the country. There is no place for self interest in Swadeshi, which enjoins the sacrifice of oneself for the family, of the family for the village, and of the country for humanity.

8. Fearlessness One cannot follow Truth of Love so long as one is subject to fear. As there is at present a reign of fear in the country, meditation on and cultivation of fearlessness have a particular importance. Hence its separate mention as an observance. A seeker after truth must give up the fear of caste, government, robbers etc and he must not be frightened by poverty or death.

9. Removal of Untouchability Untouchability, which has taken such deep root in Hinduism, is altogether irreligious. Its removal has therefore been treated as an independent principle. The so-called untouchables have equal place in the Ashram with other classes.

10. Varnashtama Dharma In the Ashram caste distinction has no place. It is believed that caste distinction has caused harm to the Hindu dharma. The ideas of the superior and inferior status and pollution by contact implied in cast distinction serves to destroy the dharma of non-violence. However, the Ashram does believe in Varna and the Ashram dharma. The division of Varna is based upon occupation. One who follows that division lives by his parents' occupation, not inconsistent with larger dharma, and spends his spare time in acquiring and advancing true knowledge as well as performing service. The Ashram believes, as in the Varna, so in the four Ashrams of the Brahmacharya, Grihastha, Vanprastha, and Sanyasa. But the Ashram does not believe that life of renunciation can be lived in a forest only or by giving up performance of one's duties. The Ashram believes that dharma of renunciation can be and should be observed while leading a normal life and that it alone is true renunciation.

11. Tolerance The Ashram believes that the principal faiths of the world constitute a revelation of truth, but as they have all been outlined by imperfect men, they have been affected by imperfections and allowed with untruth. One must therefore entertain the some respect for the religious faiths of others as one accords to one's own.

12. Physical Labour (this was added afterwards by Gandhi) Man can be saved from injuring society, as well as himself, only if he sustains his physical existence by physical labour. Able-bodied adults should do all their personal work themselves, and should not be served by others, except for proper reasons. But they should, at the sometime, remember, that service of children, as well as of the disabled, the old and the sick, is a duty incumbent on every person who has the required strength. Keeping in view this object, no labourers are employed in the Ashram, and if at all they are inevitably employed, the dealing with them would not be of an employer-employee.

Source: http://www.gandhiashram.org.in/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=24&Itemid=45

As the untouchables were allowed in the ashram, it must have created uproar culturally; but at the same time it provided the people living in the ashram the chance to observe the untouchables from close quarters and live with them which made the inmates of the ashram soon realize that their initial response was unjustified. The ashram functioned as an organized community who are not only pursuing some spiritual practices but at the same time were trying to work for social upliftment and they understood the fact that untouchables are also as much a part of Indian society as that of the other caste people.

B. R. Nanda: 'A Hero on Probation'

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Check Your Progress

1. Who gave the title of 'Mahatma' to Gandhi?
2. Which period was considered the most fruitful years of Mahatma's life in Africa?

8.4 CRITICAL ANALYSIS

B. R. Nanda in the essay 'A Hero on Probation' talks about Mahatma Gandhi as he comes from South Africa to India after his successful Satyagraha there. As he reaches India, Gandhi could have jumped directly into Indian politics of ousting the British from the colonial India, but instead of doing that Nanda notes that he takes time out to understand the ethos of Indian sensibilities in its correct way so as to prepare himself mentally, psychologically, socially and politically as a leader of the Indian mass.

This period of one year in the year 1915 in which Gandhi travels through India to gather experiences of different parts of India is referred to by B. R. Nanda as a period of 'probation' in Gandhi's life. It is to be understood that Gandhi was already a hero when he entered the Indian political scene. He has been a hero because of his achievements in South Africa. But even a hero needs to acclimatize himself to the climate in which he wants to further prove his heroism. It is true at the same time that Gandhi never thought about himself as a hero. He always thought about himself as a common man fighting for the just causes of humanity.

Gandhi is a hero in our eyes. And this national hero of ours needed time to prepare himself before he launched himself into the political scenario of India. Nanda mentions that Gandhi took the necessary time to mould himself into the Indian scenario and then made such an impact in the Indian politics through his satyagraha that today the world remembers him as a true leader and we call him the 'father of our nation.' He came up with his own notions to fight the British in India through non-violent means which the British could not deal with as they are accustomed to the martial ways, but did not know how to tackle the non-violent satyagraha of Gandhi. In these terms, it can be said that the method that he came up about in South Africa, also finds its manifestation in the Indian political scenario.

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M. K. Gandhi as a Spiritual Leader

'I am not a saint who has strayed into politics; I am a politician who is trying to become a saint.'

M. K. Gandhi, *The Story of My Experiments with Truth*

To speak of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi merely as a political and social leader would be to undermine his contribution to humanity at large. No doubt Gandhi was a political and social leader, but he was more than that. His vision of life was not merely a political vision; but he thought about the spiritual aspect of man in a serious way. Throughout his life M. K. Gandhi has devoted himself not only in salvaging the world from the unjust human practices; but all his actions and ideas are related to the soul of man. He considered soul to be the most significant aspect of human living. A man devoid of his soul is nothing. Therefore, Gandhi always aspired to think beyond the physical and look for the spiritual aspect of man. But his spirituality does not make one a recluse.

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi was beginning something new – a politics based on the spirituality of nonviolence. Before this, whenever spirituality was concerned, the proponents of spiritualism always tried to cut themselves off from the worldly matters and moreover from the political matters, as they thought political matters are beyond the grasp and domain of practitioners of spirituality. Gandhi was very much influenced by Raichandbhai who also was of the view that the world of spirituality and the world of politics are two different worlds altogether and the two cannot be joined together.

But the uniqueness of Gandhi lies in the fact that he mixed the two worlds and said that true spiritualism lies in one's quest for truth by means of non-violence. Moreover he emphasized the fact that the world of spiritualism also deals with the world in which we live in and therefore we cannot neglect the worries and concerns of this world which made Gandhi delve into politics. He wanted a just oppression-less society and wanted the British to leave India, but he did not want anyone to be killed for the same.

But as we have seen earlier, more than driving out the British from India, Gandhi was concerned with reforming India from within so that the problems that the Indians suffer from are obliterated and India is ready to come to a situation when they achieve a perfectly harmonized society. Therefore M. K. Gandhi wanted basic human rights of food, clothing, shelter, education, healthcare, and dignity for hundreds of millions of impoverished Indians. He believed that it is only through his unconditional service to humankind that one can think in terms of 'moksha'. For him achieving divinity is to be part of the lives of the toiling millions who need to be brought out from their starving and suffering condition. It is only through these kinds of acts that one can think of self-purification.

It is in his spiritual search that Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi came up with the method of Satyagraha as a holy strategy for social and political revolution

and widespread structural change in society. Satyagraha is spiritualism as when one is a practitioner of Satyagraha one is willing to suffer and even die for justice and peace, but not willing to harm anyone for any reason. Satyagraha is the search for truth. As we see in the title of his autobiography *The Story of My Experiments with Truth*, M. K. Gandhi thought that his objective in life is to achieve truth at any cost. Truth is his god and the means that he uses to achieve the truth in life is through self-purification and non-violence. Non-violence is not merely a political tool of resistance, but also is a philosophical principle according to which one needs to love all things around oneself. Non-violence does not only mean not indulging in violence of any kind; but the true spirit of non-violence is when one loves everything around oneself. When one does that one lives in harmony with oneself and with his surrounding.

B. R. Nanda: 'A Hero on Probation'

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Check Your Progress

3. What according to B.R.Nanda was the probation period of Gandhi in India?
4. Mention the most significant aspects of human living as per Gandhi.

8.5 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS

1. Rabindra Nath Tagore gave Gandhi the title of 'mahatma' (great soul).
2. The years between 1906 and 1914 were the most fruitful years of Gandhi's stay in South Africa as in this period we perceive the practical implication of Gandhi's ideas of civil resistance and its success.
3. The period of one year in the year 1915 in which Gandhi travels through India to gather experiences of different parts of India is referred to by B. R. Nanda as a period of 'probation' in Gandhi's life.
4. Gandhi considered soul to be the most significant aspect of human living.

8.6 SUMMARY

- B. R. Nanda is (1917 – 30 May 2010), a writer from New Delhi, India, was the preeminent Indian biographer of Mahatma Gandhi. Bal Ram Nanda was in the Indian Railways Services and later became the first Director of the Nehru Memorial Museum & Library, New Delhi.
- Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi is known as the father of India (Bapu) and often also referred to as "mahatma" (great soul) – a title given to him by another great poet of India, Rabindra Nath Tagore.

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- M. K. Gandhi was a writer, lawyer and a political and social leader who gave a new direction to the freedom struggle of India with his 'satyagraha.'
- After finishing his education of law in England (Barrister of Law from the Inner Temple, England in 1891), when Gandhi came to India to practice as a lawyer he found himself amidst quagmire as he has no knowledge about the Indian Judicial system and he found himself to be a misfit in Indian courts in the initial years.
- In South Africa, Gandhi got the opportunity to figure out his own talent. He went there to fight a legal suit for a firm and what he experienced there made him take up issues which is beneficial not only for the Indian labourers living in South Africa, but for the world in general as in his fight against the racial discrimination Gandhi came up with the idea of Satyagraha which was crucial in Indian Freedom Struggle and also as a philosophy.
- The years between 1906 and 1914 were the most fruitful years of Gandhi's stay in South Africa as in this period we perceive the practical implication of Gandhi's ideas of civil resistance and its success.
- Mahatma Gandhi laid down certain rules and regulations to be followed by the inmates of the Ashram – these rules and regulations are something that is laid down by scriptures. The regulations not only upheld spiritual but also moral values. Thus, under Gandhi's guidance, the Ashram became a living example of ideology that Gandhi believed in. the ashram was an application of his ideas in practical terms.
- B. R. Nanda in the essay 'A Hero on Probation' talks about Mahatma Gandhi as he comes from South Africa to India after his successful Satyagraha there. As he reached India, Gandhi could have jumped directly into Indian politics of ousting the British from the colonial India, but instead of doing that Nanda notes that he takes time out to understand the ethos of Indian sensibilities in its correct way so as to prepare himself mentally, psychologically, socially and politically as a leader of the Indian mass.
- It is in his spiritual search that Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi came up with the method of Satyagraha as a holy strategy for social and political revolution and widespread structural change in society.

8.7 KEY WORDS

- **Satyagraha:** Satyagraha literally means 'a quest for truth.' Gandhi used the term to mean a kind of a lifestyle which is based on simplicity, humility, non-violence, and love for others.
- **Non-violence:** Non-violence, as the term literally means, is to not take recourse to any kind of violent activity or thought to harm or kill someone or even not to have any ill intention for anyone.

- **Passive Resistance:** Passive Resistance is a term used by Gandhi initially when he started his campaign against the racist regime in South Africa. It is way of resisting the unjust authority by means of civil disobedience but never to use violence even if the authority uses its brute force.
- **Untouchability:** Untouchability is the social-religious practice of ostracizing a minority group by segregating them from the mainstream by social custom.

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8.8 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short-Answer Questions

1. What according to you is the philosophy of Gandhi?
2. Write a short-note on Gandhi's experience when he first came to India after studying law in England.
3. What did Gandhi do in his probation year in India?

Long-Answer Questions

1. Examine the racism faced by and the activism undertaken by Gandhi in South Africa.
2. Discuss Gandhi as a social leader of the early twentieth century.
3. Do you agree that Gandhi was a spiritual leader whose spirituality manifested itself in social and cultural upliftment of Indian mass?
4. Discuss the Rules of Gandhi's ashram.

8.9 FURTHER READINGS

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UNIT 9 HARDIN B. JONES 'DANGERS OF DRUG ABUSE'

Structure

- 9.0 Introduction
 - 9.1 Objectives
 - 9.2 A Short Note on the Author: Hardin B. Jones
 - 9.3 'Dangers of Drug Abuse': Summary
 - 9.4 Critical Analysis
 - 9.4.1 Essay and its Didactic Element
 - 9.5 Answers to Check Your Progress Questions
 - 9.6 Summary
 - 9.7 Key Words
 - 9.8 Self Assessment Questions and Exercises
 - 9.9 Further Readings
-

9.0 INTRODUCTION

Drugs are a menace to our culture and civilization as it is taking a heavy toll on the younger generations of people who fall into easy prey to the drugs. For momentary pleasure, the youngsters often take recourse to drugs which become detrimental for them in long term and they ruin their lives. Hardin B. Jones in the essay 'Dangers of Drug Abuse' emphasizes on the dangers of the abuses of drugs as the title of the essay presents it. He shows how the drug abusers fall prey to their own problems and how they cause more harm to themselves than they can think about.

9.1 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Recall the life of the author Hardin B. Jones
 - Discuss the ways in which drugs can negatively affect our lives
 - Examine ways in which one can save oneself from drug abuses
-

9.2 A SHORT NOTE ON THE AUTHOR: HARDIN B. JONES

Hardin Blair Jones (11 June 1914-16 February 1978), in short, Hardin B. Jones was an American professor of medical physics and physiology. He was chairman

of the Graduate Group in Biophysics, Medical physics and Bioradiology from 1956 to 1962 and then again from 1964 to 1968. He also held a joint appointment as assistant director of Donner Laboratory from 1948 to 1976, and, from 1959 to 1960, as associate director of the Institute of Human Development. His research covered a wide range of subjects including the physiological effects of high altitude, low-level radiation, smoking, alcohol and various drugs; cancer treatment; cardiovascular disease; the aging process; and energy development. In the essay 'Dangers of Drug Abuse', he deals with the hazards and menace that had befallen humankind because of the misuse of drugs.

*Hardin B. Jones 'Dangers
of Drug Abuse'*

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9.3 'DANGERS OF DRUG ABUSE': SUMMARY

Drug abuse is a phenomenon which has been disturbing the whole humankind for a few decades now. Hardin B. Jones in the essay 'Dangers of Drug Abuse' deals with the theme of drug abuses. He starts by saying how in the past thirty years drugs have prevented and cured many physical diseases as well as mental illnesses. Whereas this is true; but at the same time, it is also true that as days have progressed, excitement over drugs have led people to believe that everything can be subsided just by taking a pill. Tranquilizers, amphetamines, and other mood altering drugs are being advertised in medical journals, and then prescribed by doctors which lead people to believe that these can bring miracles. All these have led to drug abuse.

All problems that we as human beings face in life have solutions which needed to be found through 'perseverance, self-discipline and mental effort.' But, instead of doing and practicing these, people take the easy way out of taking drugs and thus become dependent on them.

The author notes that this mentality that drugs can do so much when one is depressed led to a situation when people thought what drugs can do when people are in jovial mode, it can make them ecstatic. This has led to more abuses of drugs. Hardin here states the difference between medicines and sensual drugs; but before doing so, he gives a short historical account of the times from when drugs have been used by the humankind. According to him, medicinal use dates back to twenty three centuries to Hippocrates (a Greek physician) who is often regarded as the father of medicine. Hippocrates was of the opinion that a drug must be prescribed to a patient not only based on the symptoms but also after looking at the constitution and habits of the patient. His principles are followed in spirit. When a drug is prescribed for some remedy of a particular malady then it should have some restorative effects and it should not unbalance the healthy function of brain and body of the person who is having that drug or medicine. Therefore, Hippocrates says –

'Persons in good health quickly lose their strength by taking purgative medicines.'

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As against medicinal drugs, the sensual drugs are considered by Hardin as those drugs for which human beings have no need for, but merely provide the taker of the drug with some kind of vicarious pleasure. These sensual drugs stimulate the brain. As the brain governs sensations, moods, thoughts and actions, therefore the sensual drugs through a chemically induced process stimulates the brain. The normal chemical regulated controls of our brains are disturbed when one takes sensual drugs leading to a person's continuous craving for the same drug as well as weakening of the brain's pleasure reflexes because of artificial stimulations.

When the addiction becomes severe the pleasure mechanism fails to respond leading to brain not able to recognize the pleasurable sensations as pleasurable leading to a great misery of the drug abuser. Thus further leads to a general feeling of physical discomfort and personality changes –

The addict feels depressed and fails to respond either to his environment or to other people. His mental disturbance can be quite similar to paranoia. He cannot discern the source of his problem and looks for the cause in everything but himself. In this state, the addict is 'dead inside' as he cannot take any external thing in its proper manifestation and has a suspicion on everything and every person around him or her. Hardin describes how once a heroin addict described the following after being rehabilitated –

"The sun is shining, the flowers are in bloom, I know these are signs of a good day, but", pressing his chest, "I don't feel it in here."

According to Hardin B. Jones, the brain is the least understood organ of the human body. Because of its small size and complex mechanism as well as hazards involved in examining it, the brain remains the least researched part of human body.

Often people are of the view that drugs induce a safe form of pleasure, but this is complete reverse of the truth as we come to know about its consequences as discussed earlier. People often do not see the harmful effects of drugs as they are not immediately apparent. The effects may range from 'incidental delirious effects' to death if there is an overdose of the drug. The other effects are –

- (a) Degeneration of health
- (b) Depletion of brain function

A persistent user is usually the one on whom the effects are dangerous as he or she will do great harm to himself or herself before any warning symptoms appear.

There are many other drug related health disorders. Some of them are –

- (a) Injecting drugs can cause abscesses in the arms and veins
- (b) Liver disease
- (c) Venereal disease
- (d) Infection in kidneys and brains

- (e) Sniffing cocaine and amphetamines can cause damage to the nose tissue
- (f) Marijuana and smoking can cause lung diseases
- (g) Heavy use of alcohol consumption or intake of volatile solvents and amphetamines can cause permanent damage to livers
- (h) Marijuana can damage cells
- (i) Drug abusers are susceptible to pneumonia, tuberculosis, malnutrition and weight loss
- (j) Over dose can lead to respiratory or cardiac arrest and often can lead to death
- (k) Damage to Brain – brain damage due to drug abuse is subtlest and unrecognizable as sensual drugs effect the chemistry of the brain cells. According to Hardin, each exposure of drugs damages the cells and high doses and chronic use can lead to be very toxic. Toxicity in brain cells can lead to delicate chemical imbalance of the brain's intricate system of communication.

Hardin B. Jones 'Dangers of Drug Abuse'

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Check Your Progress

1. Who is regarded as the father of medicine?
2. Which is the least understood organ of the human body as per Hardin B. Jones?

9.4 CRITICAL ANALYSIS

Hardin B. Jones essay 'Dangers of Drug Abuse' is an eye-opener for the people as people have some notions about drug abuse but do not know what the consequences on it in detail are. Most of us are aware what drug abuse may lead us into, yet many fall prey to it because of many reasons which cannot be summarized in short. But it can be said that often depression is one of the main reasons why people resort to drugs as pointed out by Jones in his essay.

We, as humans, are all engrossed with problems from all sides of our lives. There is , probably, no one in the world who can say for sure that he or she does not have any problems. Life is all about finding solutions to those problems and moving ahead. Life has in its ambit the mystery – the mystery of trying to deal with the problems which occur to us at different points of time in our lives. Some people face these problems or challenges of life bravely and emerge victorious and they are often dubbed to be 'heroes' by people.

But some people just crumble in front of those challenges and often take resort to escapist means to evade the problem(s). In the process, many often fall prey to drugs as they initially give a temporary relief to the person involved by stimulating the pleasurable sensations in his or her brain as he or she takes the

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drug. This makes him or her feel initially euphoric and forgets all about the problems, worries and weariness. These people do not realize that they are not finding a solution to the problem but are looking for ways to evade the problems temporarily. And this temporary evasion does not take the problems away from us but moreover makes us invite many other problems. This is the crux of the essay by Hardin B. Jones and he then goes on to describe the ways in which drug abuse creates problems for the drug abusers.

The Problems faced by the Drug Abusers

After the initial euphoria caused by the sensual drugs, these drugs cause more and more problems for us – the problems which are often very detrimental to us and also to the world around us. Some of the problems are –

Health Problems

Drug abusers cause immense health problems for themselves as there are chances that continuous drug abuse may lead to the following –

- (i) Partial or permanent damage of various organs of our body – brain, lungs, kidney, etc.
- (ii) It makes one susceptible to many other diseases, including pneumonia, tuberculosis, malnutrition and weight loss
- (iii) It can lead to respiratory or cardiac arrest, leading to death of an individual.
- (iv) It can cause heavy damage to the brain cells and can disturb the chemical balance of the brain.

Apart from the health problems, the drug abusers may and often do also face other problems, such as psychological problems.

Psychological Problems

- (a) As the drug abuser gets accustomed to the drug, therefore the initial euphoria that he or she used to get from the drug gets over and one merely tries to take the drug as a routine thing (addiction) without it giving any sense of pleasure, but moreover more and more anxiety and weariness
- (b) As the sensations of the brains become numb because of the prolonged use of drugs, the drug abuser often feels that he or she is not able to adjust to the world, so he or she starts looking at every one with suspicion, leading to a situation when the social life of the drug abuser comes to an end and he or she starts feeling more and more lonely and becomes more dependant and habituated to drugs.
- (c) The drug abuser starts feeling that the whole of the world is conspiring against him or her and that everyone is his or her enemy and therefore find himself or herself to be a loner.

9.4.1 Essay and its Didactic Element

Hardin B. Jones 'Dangers
of Drug Abuse'

Hardin B. Jones is right and justified in presenting the problems faced by the drug abusers in a very detailed way so that the common people, especially the young men and women (who are the easy victims of drug abuse) do not fall prey to it. Thus the objective of Hardin B. Jones is to educate the people through his essay. Such kind of essays which tries to educate the readers can be termed as didactic essays where the primary objective of the essayist is to make the readers understand the gravity of the problem to such an extent that the readers are made to think and act as the essayist thinks and writes.

It is the social function of a writer to make the readers know the different facets of an issue in detail so that the readers learn and acquire a thorough knowledge. The readers are taken through a tour of the whole situation in depth so that the profundity of the issue can be understood in its right proportion. We need to take the issue of drug abuse seriously in the present day situation as there are many people who are victims of it. It is very easy to start with drugs and become an addict; but it takes a herculean effort to leave it and come back to normal life. Rehabilitation centres are there to help people come back to normal life; but these centres are only successful when an individual himself or herself makes an attempt to come back to normal life.

It is interesting to note here that Hardin B. Jones does not get into the causes of drug addiction much as there can be numerous reasons why a person gets addicted to drugs. Each individual is a different human being living in a different circumstances and have a unique way of his or her life. So to generalize why an individual chooses to depend of drugs is not very easy to decipher. But one thing is generally believed that a person who chooses to be a drug abuser is a weak in the will as he or she does not have the capability to face the life and its problems and challenges with courage. So instead of facing life, one tries to escape into the world of drugs to find a temporary way out.

Where some people take drugs to find a way out of problems, there are a certain other group of people who think that drugs are a means to pleasure. They feel that drugs are safe and they can take drugs to find some kind of vicarious pleasure from them. Sensual drugs provide stimulations to the brain for some time and make people feel euphoric. This makes some take recourse to drugs. If the people who take recourse to drugs to evade problems are weak at their mental strength, then the people who take drugs for euphoria are fools. Hardin B. Jones speaks about both the issues (drugs to evade problems and drugs for sensual stimulation) in the essay in short; but does not label these people. He does so as he does not want to offend his readers with his words. But at the same time it is true that he wants to educate both the kinds of people by telling them three things through his essay –

- (a) Firstly, one should face problems of life bravely and not try to evade problems through the means of drugs

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- (b) Secondly, one should not think that drugs are safe means to pleasure as it is the most dubious and dangerous thing.
- (c) Thirdly, drugs can lead to serious health and psychological problems that Hardin B. Jones emphasizes throughout the essay in detail.

Essay and its Argumentative Element

As we have learnt in earlier units, in argumentative or persuasive essays, the essayist aims at convincing the readers to agree with the facts, values, arguments and conclusions presented by him or her. Argumentative writing proceeds very much on the lines of a debate. In many cases, the essayist takes recourse to such writing to persuade and convince the readers adopt the writer's way of thinking. As the objective is to convince the reader that the position taken is justified and needs to be taken seriously, therefore the writer must take care to present the evidence and other details in such a logical manner that the reader gets convinced that the writer is justified in his or her thought process. So it is important that the writer plans the arguments carefully before he or she starts writing.

Hardin B. Jones in the essay 'Dangers of Drug Abuse' has argued the case well by showing all the significant points which are necessary to understand how drug abuse can lead to severe health problems and psychological problems and can even lead to death of the drug abuser. Hardin B. Jones starts by comparing the drugs with medicines and then shows the essential difference between the two so as to make the readers understand where the limit of medicines are and where it becomes a drug. One needs to have a clear cut line in understanding what are medicinal and what are sensual drugs. After giving a clear cut division of the same, Hardin B. Jones then goes into showing how the drug abuse can lead to severe health and psychological problems. He focuses on the brain the most to show how the drug abuse affects the brain, the most vital organ of human body which governs all other organs and psychological well-being of a person.

Check Your Progress

- 3. How does drug intake become an addition from euphoria?
- 4. What are the two types of drugs Hardin B. Jones creates a difference between in his essay?

9.5 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS

- 1. Hippocrates (a Greek physician) is often regarded as the father of medicine.
- 2. According to Hardin B. Jones, the brain is the least understood organ of the human body. Because of its small size and complex mechanism as well

as hazards involved in examining it, the brain remains the least researched part of human body.

Hardin B. Jones 'Dangers of Drug Abuse'

3. As the drug abuser gets accustomed to the drug, therefore the initial euphoria that he or she used to get from the drug gets over and one merely tries to take the drug as a routine thing (addiction) without it giving any sense of pleasure, but moreover more and more anxiety and weariness.
4. Hardin B. Jones creates a clear distinction between medicinal and sensual drugs in the essay.

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9.6 SUMMARY

- Drugs are a menace to our culture and civilization as it is taking a heavy toll on the younger generations of people who fall into easy prey to the drugs. For momentary pleasure, the youngsters often take recourse to drugs which become detrimental for them in long term and they ruin their lives.
- Hardin B. Jones in the essay 'Dangers of Drug Abuse' emphasizes on the dangers of the abuses of drugs as the title of the essay presents it.
- Hardin Blair Jones, in short, Hardin B. Jones was a professor of medical physics and physiology.
- All problems that we as human beings face in life have solutions which needed to be found through 'perseverance, self-discipline and mental effort.' But, instead of doing and practicing these, some people take the easy way out of taking drugs and thus become dependent on them.
- As against medicinal drugs, the sensual drugs are considered by Hardin as those drugs for which human beings have no need for, but merely provide the taker of the drug with some kind of vicarious pleasure.
- The effects of drug abuse are –
 - o Degeneration of health
 - o Depletion of brain function
- There are many other drug related health disorders. Some of them are –
 - o Injecting drugs can cause abscesses in the arms and veins
 - o Liver disease
 - o Venereal disease
 - o Infection in kidneys and brains
 - o Sniffing cocaine and amphetamines can cause damage to the nose tissue
 - o Marijuana and smoking can cause lung diseases
 - o Heavy use of alcohol consumption or intake of volatile solvents and amphetamines can cause permanent damage to livers

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- o Marijuana can damage cells
- o Drug abusers are susceptible to pneumonia, tuberculosis, malnutrition and weight loss
- o Over dose can lead to respiratory or cardiac arrest and often can lead to death
- o Damage to Brain
- Hardin B. Jones is right and justified in presenting the problems faced by the drug abusers in a very detailed way so that the common people, especially the young men and women (who are the easy victims of drug abuse) do not fall prey to it. Thus the objective of Hardin B. Jones is to educate the people through his essay.

9.7 KEY WORDS

- **Drug abuse:** It refers to the habitual taking of illegal drugs.
- **Sensual Drugs:** These are considered by Hardin as those drugs for which human beings have no need for, but merely provide the taker of the drug with some kind of vicarious pleasure.
- **Argumentative essays:** It refers to the essays where the essayist aims at convincing the readers to agree with the facts, values, arguments and conclusions presented by him or her.
- **Didactic essays:** It refers to essays which tries to educate the readers.

9.8 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short-Answer Questions

1. Can we call the 'Dangers of Drug Abuse' an argumentative essay?
2. How are psychological problems associated with drug abuse?
3. Differentiate between medicine and sensual drugs.
4. What happens when drug addiction becomes severe as per the essay?
5. Why are people often not able to see the harmful effects of drugs?
6. State the crux of the essay by Hardin B. Jones.

Long-Answer Questions

1. What do you think are the reasons which make people take recourse to drug abuse?

2. What are the ways in which drug abuse can affect human beings? Give your reply with specific reference to Hardin B. Jones' essay 'Dangers of Drug Abuse.'
3. What are the dangers of drug abuse according to you? Do you agree with Hardin B. Jones? Give a reasoned reply.
4. What is didacticism in essay writing? Do you think that Hardin B. Jones has written a didactic essay in 'Dangers of Drug Abuse'?
5. What are the arguments that Hardin B. Jones presents in the essay 'Dangers of Drug Abuse'?

Hardin B. Jones 'Dangers
of Drug Abuse'

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9.9 FURTHER READINGS

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- Sebastian, D. K. 1985. *Prose for the Young Reader*. New Delhi: Macmillan.
- Jones, Hardin B. and Helen Jones. 1977. *Sensual Drugs: Deprivation and Rehabilitation of the Mind*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

UNIT 10 J. B. S. HALDANE: 'FOOD'

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Structure

- 10.0 Introduction
- 10.1 Objectives
- 10.2 A Short Note on the Author: J.B.S. Haldane
- 10.3 'Food': Summary
- 10.4 Critical Analysis
- 10.5 Answers to Check Your Progress Questions
- 10.6 Summary
- 10.7 Key Words
- 10.8 Self Assessment Questions and Exercises
- 10.9 Further Readings

10.0 INTRODUCTION

J. B. S. Haldane's essay 'Food' deals with the significance of food in our lives. We cannot live without food. Food is not a luxury; but a necessity that each living individual needs to exist. The question is what we should eat and in what quantity? There are rich men in the world who can afford all kinds of food that they want but they cannot choose to eat whatever they feel like, because our body has certain requirements from food and those requirements have to be fulfilled to live a long and healthy life. The poor, on the other hand, often lack certain kinds of food and therefore they are not in a situation often to lead a healthy life.

Haldane's essay 'Food' does not deal with the question of the preferences of food for the rich and the poor but he definitely talks about the various requirements of our body are important to live a healthy life. There are different kinds of nutrients that we get from various kinds of food – that is the objective of discussion in Haldane's essay. We will be talking about the different kinds of food that we need to eat in the course of this unit.

10.1 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Recall the major highlights from the life of the essayist J. B. S. Haldane
- Discuss the main arguments of the essay 'Food'
- Describe the various requirements of food for our body

10.2 A SHORT NOTE ON THE AUTHOR: J.B.S. HALDANE

J. B. S. Haldane (1892 – 1964) was an eminent British biologist who lived in India from 1957 till his death. He spoke and wrote a lot about the different issues related to biology; but moreover focused on the needs of the human body. In the present essay on 'Food', he discusses the essential requirements of a human body to survive and grow in a proper manner. His writings are very informative and show his concern for the world in general and human beings in particular.

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10.3 'FOOD': SUMMARY

All of us need food for a variety of reasons – fuel, growth and repair. Where some foods serve only one purpose; other foods cover all the grounds. According to J. B. S. Haldane 'fuel' is the simplest requirement as in order to produce work, human beings need fuel; similar to that of a steam engine. Plants and few animals use light as the source of energy; most animals use chemical source and none gets energy from electrical source or from immaterial origins.

If a human being is put in a calorimeter then it can be observed easily that the amount of heat that the person produces is the same as the amount of food burnt except the food excreted as partly changed or unchanged. Usually in a human being, about 10 to 20 percent of the food may appear as work which is similar to that of other animals. Critics may say that perhaps J. B. S. Haldane is pointing out if a man is a machine. Haldane agrees and disagrees with the proposition that man is a machine to some extent and yet he is not. If a machine does not work, some parts of it can be replaced; but in case of human body, it is not completely true as some parts such as blood corpuscles can be replaced, but not everything; for example, we cannot exchange legs.

So Haldane is of the opinion that instead of asking if a man is a machine; one should ask how much of a man is a machine. The answer to this as Haldane points out is that man is less of a machine and more of an individual; but similar to machines, it needs fuel. Usually a steam engine or a petrol engine is a heat engine where the energy is converted into heat and then into work. But in case of animals some energy of the food we eat and oxygen we take is directly converted into muscular energy. The chemical substances that we can use to get energy are of three types –

- (a) Carbohydrates
- (b) Fats
- (c) Proteins

Apart from these there are various other substances which can be used to generate heat though not for the purpose of work. The number of calories that we

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have depends on the food we are eating as each food has different calories. Some of the cheapest energy sources are sugar (720 calories per id), oatmeal (420 calories per id) white bread (530 calories per id) and Lard (580 calories per id).

A man who does light work needs about two thousand five hundred calories per day while a person doing heavy work needs almost double of it. The only known animal which needs food just for fuel is blue-bottle flies. So if men needed more calories for survival, then food for fuel would have been enough; but men needs many things apart from the fuel value of food.

The most important function of food is to provide fuel, but at the same time it is to be kept in mind that even for a growing child; only five percent of food is used for growth. Human beings need food for bodybuilding as well as repair. Animals do not just rely on plants for supply of energy, but the plants are significant as they are the first step in building chemical compounds of which animal bodies are made. Food chain is a process in which plants are in the initial step and from there energy passes on to other animals; and from trees and animals to other animals and so on. The next important object that men need for food is protein. The best proteins are from animals. If a person is on vegetarian diet, then the person should specifically take food which is rich in protein such as milk and cheese.

Besides this men also need minerals and vitamins –

Besides the amino acids, there are at least eight other kinds of chemical substances which man needs and cannot make in his own body.

Haldane discusses some of them in the next part of the essay. First he discusses Vitamin A. which he describes as 'a red, greasy, crystalline stuff which melts to an oil when warmed.' It is usually found in the livers of many animals, especially fish. We need Vitamin A because a lack of it may cause drying up of the skin and delicate membranes of the eye as well as lining of the mouth, throat, intestines and other organs. Lack of Vitamin A can also cause night blindness. Prolonged shortage can also affect the nervous system and can slow down the process of growth of a child.

Next Haldane discusses Vitamin D. He states that the lack of Vitamin D can cause a disease called Rickets. In England, rickets was so common at one point of time that Doctors in Europe used to called Rickets as an 'English Disease.' Then Haldane discusses other diseases like Beri Beri which is common in India, Java, China and Japan. In Beri Beri disease, the patients have the following symptoms –

- (a) Numbness
- (b) Pain
- (c) Paralysis of legs
- (d) Can spread to heart
- (e) Death is the most common outcome.

Haldane next speaks about how we need other inorganic substances such as water and mineral in food. After water (which we need greatly for our survival), we need sodium chloride, i.e., the common salt. The people those who sweat a lot or do heavy work (such as miners, fireman and others) in which sweat is common, they need more of sodium chloride. In India, because of the hot weather, people need a great amount of salt. So when salt was taxed by the British Colonial government, Mahatma Gandhi rebelled against it.

J. B. S. Haldane: 'Food'

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Check Your Progress

1. What should asked be asked, according to Haldane, instead of asking if man is a machine?
2. List some of the cheapest energy sources as mentioned in the essay.
3. Name the vitamin whose deficiency causes rickets.

10.4 CRITICAL ANALYSIS

J. B. S. Haldane's essay 'Food', as discussed through the summary is all about the various nutritional requirements of our body. As stated by J. B. S. Haldane, our body requires food for three reasons –

- a) Fuel,
- b) Growth, and
- c) Repair

What does Haldane mean by these three terms? We need to understand them well before we eat our next meal so that we know what the things that our body requires are. We eat three to four meals a day or whenever we are hungry. Some people eat at fixed time and some people eat when they wish to. Food is a necessity that none of us can avoid. We can probably live without food for a few days, but there is always a need for food for running our body properly. Haldane compares our body to a machine. He says that our body is a machine and yet not one. What he means is that our body is a machine when we think of certain things and at the same time it is not like a machine as there are many dissimilarities with a machine. We need to understand how to cope up with our body so as to make it live longer and in a proper way. Our body is a machine as far as we think about it from the point of view of it needing fuel. All machines need fuel, and body also needs the same and therefore one may come to the conclusion that our body is a machine. But at the same time it is unlike a machine as our different parts of our body cannot be replaced as we can do with machines. So unlike machines, our body has some integral parts and they cannot be replaced.

Leaving the question, about whether our body is a machine or not, aside; let us now delve into the three reasons for which our body requires food. We need

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food so as to produce the energy which is needed for everyday work. On an average, according to J.B. S. Haldane, our bodies need 2500 calories from food for regular work; though if someone is engaged in heavy work, then he or she may need about the double of the regular calories so as to carry on with the work energetically.

Secondly, our body requires food for growth. We all know that up to an age in childhood we all grow quite rapidly and then the growth stops. For the growth of a child right nutrients are needed. So food is essential for the growth of our body.

Thirdly, our body often goes through many problems, diseases and ailments which cause damage to the body. The body needs to repair these damages to carry on functioning for a longer time properly. Therefore it requires certain kinds of nutrients in a right proportion for the repair of our body.

After talking about these three functions that food or nutrients serve for our body, we need to understand what the kinds of food that we need for our body are. We need the following –

- Carbohydrates
- Proteins
- Fats
- Water
- Minerals
- Vitamins

J. B. S. Haldane discusses these essential requirements of our body one by one to show how they are significant for the survival of the humankind.

The essay is very informative in nature. This kind of essays is usually called Expository essays where the author of the essay tries to inform people about the things around them in a manner in which the readers may not feel that they are ignorant. Food as chemicals is a very scientific subject matter and there are various researches that are done across the world which are very scientific in their temper. J. B. S. Haldane put all these researches into his essay but does so in common man's language so that common readers can easily understand the various requirements of human body.

It is essential to know our body to keep it safe, healthy and proper. The objective of education is not just to earn degrees, but to have proper information and knowledge so as to live a proper and healthy life. If education is of no use in leading such a life, then education has no meaning at all. Haldane seems to believe in this dictum as through his essay he is trying to educate people of the ways in which they should think about eating food so that it can be helpful for their longevity as well as health. It is to be remembered here that there are many essays

which are very didactic in nature – where the author takes the position of being superior to the rest of mankind and therefore has the duty to inform the readers how and when they should do what they are doing and what they ought to do? This kind of literature is also called ‘Pulpit literature.’

Apparently in the first glance when one looks at J. B. S. Haldane’s essay ‘Food’ one is forced to come to the conclusion that it is also of pulpit literature where the objective of the author is to be didactic, where the author is trying his best to have a superior position and from that position is lecturing mankind. But a more critical as well as deep glance into the essay makes us have a different opinion about the essay, primarily because –

- (a) The language of the essay is not didactic. Nowhere in the essay, J. B. S. Haldane takes the stand of him being superior than the readers. He always maintains the stance that he is same as that of the readers and that he is just better informed and therefore presenting things to the readers in a coherent and logical way.
- (b) The tone of the essay is very dialogical, in the sense that J. B. S. Haldane tries to, as if, get into a dialogue with his readers so as to point out to them what they should feel about food. Think about the place when he is comparing human body to machines. He talks about critics. He is taking into account the popular sentiments and the questions that the readers might ask him and trying to answer them so that the essay becomes dialogic rather than didactic.
- (c) J. B. S. Haldane tries to explain things in as much complexity as possible and yet is keeping in mind that the language of the essay is not so that the readers feel superimposed. In other words, the readers are made to feel light about the essay and yet they are provided with the most significant information that they need to live their everyday life.
- (d) J. B. S. Haldane gives different anecdotes in the essay to make the essay interesting. For example, he gives the reason why in Europe at one point of time Rickets was thought to be an English disease.
- (e) J. B. S. Haldane makes the essay very appealing to the Indian readers with his reference to Mahatma Gandhi at the end of the essay when he states what makes Gandhi take up the Salt Satyagraha. In India, as in the rest of the world, salt is a most common thing as well as most significant. When the British colonial government in India was taxing salt, Gandhi felt that there was a need that the British Salt Law be given a jolt so as to make people aware how the colonized people are victimized. So he took up Salt Satyagraha when, after the Dandi March, he went to Sabarmati lake and took a pinch of salt for which he was put to prison.

Thus J. B. S. Haldane’s essay has a vivid appeal to us as it deals with the most significant thing of our existence – food. All the people in the world are

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working and working hard so that they can have proper food. It is not a luxury, but an essential requirement. One needs to think deeply of this essential requirement of the human body so as to figure out in what ways one can benefit by taking the right food in right quantity. It is not that rich people are always taking the right food as they can afford anything and everything; it is also that poorer sections of the society are deprived of some essential nutrients – it is that for the richer sections food has become more luxurious and exotic; while the poor people are not able to afford any food at all and often go to sleep empty stomach.

In such circumstances it has also become necessary to think about ways in which all the people in the world are at least getting the basic nutrients. Talking about food is not only about the different ingredients that qualify for food, not also about the different nutritional values of the food, but also about the food distribution across the world among the people where everyone should and can afford to have three nice meals which provide them with all nutrients required for their survival and growth.

Check Your Progress

4. As per Haldane, what are the three reasons why our body requires food?
5. How many calories is required daily to carry out normal work as per the essay?

10.5 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS

1. Haldane is of the opinion that instead of asking if a man is a machine; one should ask how much of a man is a machine.
2. Some of the cheapest energy sources are sugar (720 calories per id), oatmeal (420 calories per id) white bread (530 calories per id) and Lard (580 calories per id).
3. The deficiency of Vitamin D causes rickets.
4. As stated by J. B. S. Haldane, our body requires food for three reasons –
 - Fuel,
 - Growth, and
 - Repair
5. On an average, according to J.B. S. Haldane, our bodies need 2500 calories from food for regular work.

10.6 SUMMARY

- J. B. S. Haldane's essay 'Food' deals with the significance of food in our lives.
- J. B. S. Haldane (1892 – 1964) was an eminent British biologist who lived in India from 1957 till his death.
- In the present essay on 'Food', he discusses the essential requirements of a human body to survive and grow in a proper manner.
- All of us need food for a variety of reasons – fuel, growth and repair. Where some foods serve only one purpose; other foods cover all grounds.
- The chemical substances that we can use to get energy are of three types –
 - Carbohydrates
 - Fats
 - Proteins
- A man who does light work needs about two thousand five hundred calories per day while a person doing heavy work needs almost double of it. Besides this we also need minerals and vitamins.
- After water (which we need greatly for our survival), we need sodium chloride, i.e., the common salt.
- J. B. S. Haldane put all these researches into his essay but does so in common man's language so that common readers can easily understand the various requirements of human body.
- Thus J. B. S. Haldane's essay has a vivid appeal to us as it deals with the most significant thing of our existence – food.

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10.7 KEY WORDS

- **Expository Essays:** It refers to essays where the author of the essay tries to inform people about the things around them in a manner in which the readers may not feel that they are ignorant.
- **Pulpit Literature:** It refers to the didactic literature by authors who take the position of being superior to the rest of the mankind and therefore take upon themselves the duty to inform the readers how and when they should do what they are doing and what they ought to do?
- **Food Chain:** It is a process in which plants are in the initial step and from there energy passes on to other animals; and from trees and animals to other animals and so on.

10.8 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

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Short-Answer Questions

1. 'Haldane agrees and disagrees with the proposition that man is a machine'. Discuss briefly.
2. What are the three types of chemical substances that we can use to get energy?
3. Why is Vitamin A important for our body?
4. Write a short-note on the disease Beri Beri.
5. Briefly explain how the tone of the essay is dialogical more than didactic.

Long-Answer Questions

1. J. B. S. Haldane's essay 'Food' is a pointed statement on the nutritional value of different kinds of food. Do you agree with the statement? Give a reasoned answer.
2. In what ways do you think J. B. S. Haldane talks about human body to be similar and dissimilar to a machine? What does it talk about human body?
3. What are the different nutritional ingredients of food that J. B. S. Haldane talks about in his essay 'Food' ?
4. Write an essay on 'Food we eat is the source of our sustenance.'
5. Write short notes on –
 - (a) Human body as machine
 - (b) Vitamins and Minerals
 - (c) English Disease
 - (d) Salt Satyagraha

10.9 FURTHER READINGS

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- Sebastian, D. K. 1985. *Prose for the Young Reader*. New Delhi: Macmillan.
- Dronamraju, Krishna R. 2017. *Popularizing Science: The Life and Work of JBS Haldane*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
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BLOCK - III

Grammar I

DEVELOPING GRAMMATICAL SKILLS

UNIT 11 GRAMMAR I

NOTES

Structure

- 11.0 Introduction
- 11.1 Objectives
- 11.2 Articles
 - 11.2.1 Repetition of the Article
- 11.3 Infinitives and Gerunds
- 11.4 Prepositions
- 11.5 Tenses
- 11.6 Participles and Modals
- 11.7 Answer to Check Your Progress Questions
- 11.8 Summary
- 11.9 Key Words
- 11.10 Self Assessment Questions and Exercises
- 11.11 Further Readings

11.0 INTRODUCTION

Proficiency in basic grammar skills is necessary to communicate in correct English. It is not just enough to impart proper information as the technical competence of a person who displays poor writing skills is questioned. All writing must have correct grammar and usage if it is to be considered credible and noteworthy. The purpose of good grammar is to ensure that what you write is correctly comprehended and is easy and enjoyable to read. Reading something, which is grammatically incorrect, may interrupt your flow of thought and take away from the pleasure of reading.

Very often, it is noticed that people make mistakes in sentence construction, the use of active and passive voice and the use of tenses. This unit provides rules to follow for various aspects of grammar usage along with pointing out common English errors. Idiomatic expressions are separate from the literal meaning or definition of the words of which they are made. The use of phrases and idioms can make your writing more colourful and meaningful. Perfect grammar can be an indicator of how educated you are. Studies clearly reveal that those who write (and speak) well excel in the job market and they rise faster in their careers.

In this unit, we will discuss the concept and rules related to articles, prepositions, tenses and modals.

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11.1 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Explain the various types of articles such as indefinite and definite articles
 - Describe the importance of prepositions in English language
 - Explain the use of present and past tense in sentences
 - Discuss the concept of gerund and participle
 - Recall the rules of using modals
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11.2 ARTICLES

In English grammar, the words ‘a’ or ‘an’ and ‘the’ are known as articles. Wikipedia defines an article as follows:

‘An article is a word that combines with a noun to indicate the type of reference being made by the noun and to specify the volume or numerical scope of that reference.’

Articles always appear before nouns. There are two types of articles ‘a’ or ‘an’ and ‘the’. ‘A’ or ‘an’ are known as indefinite articles and ‘the’ is known as the definite article.

Read the following sentences. Do you notice the mistakes?

- (i) West Indies is *a* island.
- (ii) Her new car is *one* week old.
- (iii) As he was entering school, he could hear *a* bell ring.
- (iv) There’s one bird’s nest in *an* cupboard.
- (v) She is a college president and is *a* excellent speaker.

The mistake is to do with the articles used in the sentences. The articles have been used incorrectly.

If you correct the sentences, they would read as follows:

- (i) West Indies is *an* island.
- (ii) Her new car is *a* week old.
- (iii) As he was entering school, he could hear *the* bell ring.
- (iv) There’s *a* bird’s nest in *the* cupboard.
- (v) She is *the* college president and is *an* excellent speaker.

You can refer to someone or something without being specific about who is being referred to.

Indefinite and Definite Articles

Articles are also referred to as determiners. Along with that, you have the *definite article* and the *indefinite articles* or the specific determiner and the general determiner.

In this section, you will be looking specifically at the use of articles *a*, *an*, *the*, which are used before nouns.

Indefinite Article

‘a’, ‘an’

Definition: An indefinite article (*a*, *an*) is placed before a singular noun which is used to refer to any member of a group. The usage of ‘a’ is with nouns starting with a *consonant*, ‘an’ is with nouns starting with a *vowel* (*a*, *e*, *i*, *o*, *u*).

A girl came to our house.

An orange fell out of the basket.

A truck turned on the highway.

An orphan came begging.

A frog is an amphibian.

An egg a day is good for children.

She wanted **an** ice cube.

An apple a day keeps the doctor away.

A game of cards can brighten his mood.

Usage of articles

An is used before:

1. Singular countable nouns
2. Vowels
3. Words that begin with a vowel sound

For example: An egg, an umbrella, also where the ‘h’ is silent—*an honour, an hour*; certain abbreviations like *an M.P., an I.O.U.*

Note: Some words begin with a vowel having a consonant sound—university, universal, European. In such instances, we use ‘a’.

Examples:

This is a universal truth.

I have never been to a European country.

Can you give me a Euro?

This is a useless object.

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‘A’ is used before:

1. Singular countable nouns
2. Words that begin with a consonant
3. Referring to one person/thing
4. Describing something/someone
5. Indicating a person’s job
6. Referring to something that the reader cannot identify

Examples:

- (i) I can see **a** flag in the distance..
- (ii) Ootacamund is **a** beautiful hill station.
- (iii) She is a director in **a** company.

Definite Article

A definite article (*the*) is used before a singular and a plural noun which is used to refer to a specific member of a group. A definite article usually refers to a thing or a person already introduced in the past.

The dog is sitting on the red carpet.

‘The’ is used:

1. Before a superlative adjective when it is followed by a noun, phrase
2. When there is only one of a kind
3. For a singular noun that refers to a species
4. For specific references that are clear to the listener
5. With proper nouns and titles
6. With an adjective to describe a person.

Examples:

- She is **the** most promising player on the tennis circuit.
- **The** sun beat mercilessly down upon him.
- **The** travel industry is witnessing a sudden boom.
- I am going on a trip to **the** Hawaiian Islands.
- **The** Lieutenant Governor of the city has introduced new security measures.
- **The** legendary composer and singer V.S. passed away this morning.

Note: You do not usually use ‘the’ with names of countries, continents, cities, planets.

You can say the African continent, the city of Chicago, the planet Mars but we cannot say the Africa and the Chicago. You can also use ‘the’ with a singular countable noun to talk about the general features of a class of things.

Examples:

- **The** computer has changed communication methods.
- **The** short story is a popular literary form.

At times, nouns may be used with or without an article depending on the context.

Examples:

- A school is being built next to the park.
- The new school is for children of defence personnel.
- The new room will be used to store stationery.
- They will put stationery in the new room.

Usage of Articles

Incorrect	Correct
• She took the coffee at 2 p.m.	• She took coffee at 2 p.m.
• She travelled by the road.	• She travelled by <i>road</i> .
• There is a empty glass on the table.	• There is <i>an empty</i> glass on the table.
• Yamuna is in flood.	• <i>The Yamuna</i> is in flood.
• My brother reads <i>Times of India</i> everyday.	• My brother reads <i>The Times of India</i> everyday.

11.2.1 Repetition of the Article

When two or more adjectives succeed the same noun, then the article is issued only before the first adjective. However, when they succeed different nouns, then the article is used before each adjective.

Example:

- The poet and novelist is present for the ceremony.
- The poet and the novelist are present for the ceremony.

The first example indicates that the poet and novelist is one person. The second example specifies that the poet and the novelist are two different people.

Therefore, you can see when two or more nouns are together in a sentence, the article used is always one. However, when two or more nouns are involved, and refer to different people and objects, the article is placed before each noun.

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Omission of the Article

The article is omitted or not used in the following situations:

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1. When an article is placed before a proper noun, e.g., Venice, Mumbai and Shakespeare, it becomes a common noun, e.g., *Munshi Premchand is the Shakespeare of India.*
2. An article is omitted before a plural noun, when it is used in a general sense, e.g., *Children like apples.*
3. Articles are not used before abstract nouns and uncountable nouns, e.g., *Chocolates are bad for teeth.*
4. Articles are never used before the names of meals, e.g., *I did not eat dinner today.*
5. Articles are never used before languages, educational institutions, church, bed, hospital, e.g.
 - She learnt Spanish in college.
 - English is spoken all over the world.
 - She mastered Hindi in a couple of months.
 - I would love to learn French.
 - She goes to church every week.
 - She put the children to bed immediately after dinner.
6. Articles are not used before relations, e.g., *father, mother, brother*, etc.
 - Father came home late last night.
 - I will ask Mother for some money.
 - Why don't you ask Father for the car?
7. Articles are also omitted in case of certain phrases.
8. Articles are not used in sentences where phrases have a preposition which is followed by an object, e.g., at home, by air, in bed, etc.
 - She is relaxing at home.
 - They will travel by air.
 - They plan to travel by road.
 - She is already in bed.
9. Finally, avoid using articles 'a' and 'an' before fun, health, work, advice, etc.
 - The children are having fun in the park.
 - She approached him for advice.
 - Exercise is good for health.

Check Your Progress

1. What is an article?
2. What is an indefinite article?
3. What is repetition of an article?
4. Give one instance when articles are omitted.

NOTES**11.3 INFINITIVES AND GERUNDS**

An infinitive is the form of a verb which consists of the word *to* plus the verb in its basic form. An infinitive verb performs the role of a noun, adjective or an adverb and describes an action.

An infinitive verb is easy to identify in its **to + verb** form.

A. Verbs that take an Infinitive with *to*

She was too shocked	to speak.
He went to the market	to buy vegetables.
They are planning	to go to Europe.
We want	to eat dinner.
I will tell her	to tell him.

B. Verbs that take an Infinitive without *to*

We felt the rain	splatter on our face.
He spent an extra hour	helping us with our homework.
He let me	pet his dog.
We watched aeroplanes	land on the runway.

Notes:

1. If the verb *feel* describes a feeling or explains an opinion, then it takes an infinitive with *to*.
We felt we had to leave.
We felt we had to thank the teacher.
2. The verbs *know* and *help* can be followed by an infinitive either with or without a *to*.
We helped him (to) build this house.
He knew that he had (to) study.
Could you please help the old man (to) cross the road?

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After the verb *help*, more often than not *to* is inserted, though some experts may insist that it is not needed. But to be on the safe side, it is always best to use *to*.

It is more common to not use *to* after *know*, especially when referring to a person's attitude or behaviour.

I have seen him get angry with the staff.

I have known him since he was a child.

In certain clauses the *to* can be omitted if the infinitive construction can be replaced by a noun clause.

Everyone knew him to be the cause of the problem.

Everyone knew that he was the cause of the problem.

The infinitive after passive verb

The rule to follow is that a passive verb precedes the infinitive with *to*, even if the *to* is removed from the corresponding active form of the sentence.

Active Valmiki wrote the Ramayana.

Passive The Ramayana was written by Valmiki.

Active She bought the blouse for \$100.

Passive The blouse was bought by her for \$100.

C. Some Other Points about the Use of the Infinitive

An infinitive without a *to* follows the verbs *must*, *can* and *may*.

You must look before you leap.

She can earn more money.

He may arrive tomorrow.

Even if the event being referred to is in the future, the infinitive is used, and not the future tense.

We must go sightseeing tomorrow. (not *We must shall go sightseeing tomorrow*)

I can meet you in my office in an hour. (not *I can will meet you in my office in an hour.*)

Ought precedes the present infinitive with *to*, to describe a commitment in the present.

You ought to go and visit her.

- The future

You ought to be more careful when overseeing the work in the factory tomorrow.

- The past

She knew she ought not to have spoken to her mother like that.

If one wants to convey information about something that should have been done but was not, then the *ought* is preceded by the perfect infinitive.

You ought to have pushed her harder to come home.

She ought to have studied harder for her exams.

The verb *know* never precedes a simple infinitive. If it needs to be conveyed that we know how something functions, then the infinitive should come before the *how*.

He told me how the files should be arranged. (He told me to arrange the files would mean that he ordered me to do it, whereas this way, it means that he showed me how to arrange the files.)

Adjectives which describe an attribute of an object as can be experienced by a person, such as *easy*, *hard*, *difficult*, *good* and *comfortable*, are followed by an active, not a passive infinitive.

It was difficult for him to sit still. (not *to be sat*)

The shoes were very comfortable to wear. (not *to be worn*)

The following are a few more examples:

He made it look so easy to disappear.

The plastic apples look good enough to eat.

The chair was very comfortable to sit on.

How difficult is it to explain this?

He found it very hard to walk away.

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Gerunds

Gerunds are words that are formed with verbs but act as nouns. They can be spotted easily as every gerund is a verb that ends with 'ing' without exception. Gerunds should not be confused with present participles that also end with the letters 'ing'. The difference between present participles and gerunds is that present participles do not act as nouns. Instead, they act as modifiers or complete progressive verbs. To find gerunds in sentences, just look for a verb + ing that is used as a noun.

Examples

Some examples of gerunds are as follows:

- Swimming in the ocean has been Sharon's passion since she was five years old.
- Let's go dancing at the club tonight.

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- c. I delayed telling Jerry the bad news.
- d. Holly decided that flying above the clouds was the most incredible experience she'd ever had.
- e. Bill avoided doing his math assignment because the World Series was on.

11.4 PREPOSITIONS

Prepositions specify place, direction and time. A preposition establishes a connection between the nouns, phrases and pronouns in a sentence to other words in that sentence.

The flower is in the vase.

The flower is on the plant.

The flower is beside the bed.

She held the flower under his nose.

She plucked the flower during her morning walk.

In each of these sentences, a preposition helps to locate the 'flower' in space or in time.

Some of the commonly used prepositions are listed as follows:

out	outside	over	past	since	through
throughout	till	to	toward	under	underneath
until	up	upon	with	within	without
about	above	across	after	against	along
among	around	at	before	behind	below
beneath	beside	between	beyond	but	by
despite	down	during	except	for	from
in	inside	into	like	near	of
off	on	onto			

1. Between, Among

Between is used with two persons or things.

Among is used with more than two persons or things.

There was a fight **between** team A and team B.

The dowry system still exists **among** the Hindus of North India.

2. At, In

In is used with names of countries and large towns.

At is used when speaking of small towns and villages.

That boy is **at** the top of his class.

The kids are already **in** bed.

3. With, By

With is used as an instrument whereas *by* indicates the agent.

The house was built **by** him **with** help from his friends.

The note was scribbled **by** him **with** a piece of charcoal.

4. Till, to

While *till* is used to indicate time, *to* is used to indicate place.

On Sundays he sleeps **till** ten in the morning.

We walked **to** the neighbourhood provision store.

5. On, upon

On is used while speaking of objects that are stationary or at rest, whereas *upon* is used for things in motion.

The teacher sat **on** a chair.

The monkey sprang **upon** the girl walking on the road.

6. In, within

In is used before a noun that indicates a period of time in the sense of *at the end of*; *within* means *before the end of*.

She was back **in** an hour (at the end of an hour).

She will be back **within** an hour (before the end of).

7. Since, from

Both *since* and *from* are used to denote a point of time. *Since* is preceded by a verb in some perfect tense, whereas *from* can be used with any form of tense. Also, *since* can be used only to talk about time in the past, whereas *from* can be used for present and future time.

He has been surviving on plain water **since** last week.

He studied classical dance **from** the age of four.

From next Monday, the school will close at 5 p.m.

8. Beside, besides

Beside is used to indicate *by the side of*, whereas *besides* means *in addition to*.

She sat **beside** him throughout the night.

Besides the participating children, there were five adults in the room.

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9. Due to, owing to

Due to and *owing to* are often confused. *Due* should be used as an adjective, that is, qualifying a noun or pronoun.

Example: This month's rent for this room is due.

Due to unforeseen circumstances, we had to leave the city in a hurry.
(this sentence is incorrect).

The correct usage would be as follows:

Owing to unforeseen circumstances, we had to leave the city in a hurry.

Use of Prepositions at the End of Sentences

It is kind of odd to use a preposition at the end of a sentence. However, there are certain exceptions:

- (a) The dancer hates being talked ***about***.
- (b) Nobody enjoys being shouted ***at***.
- (c) This is the house that we were looking ***for***.
- (d) This is the lake that he talked ***about***.
- (e) This is the spot we came ***to***.
- (f) This is the book we were talking ***of***.

When there are two verbs which should be followed by different prepositions, make sure that you put both the prepositions.

Example: The seniors have been talking and laughing at the freshers all night.
(incorrect)

The seniors have been talking ***about*** and laughing ***at*** the freshers all night.

Phrase Prepositions

Phrase prepositions are a group of words, or a phrase containing the force of a single preposition. A phrase preposition ends in a simple preposition. Some examples of phrase prepositions used in sentences are as follows:

- (a) *In comparison to* his elder brother, he is very dull.
- (b) *On behalf of* the staff, the executive handed over the gift to the boss.
- (c) *In the event of* his death, the property will go to his elder daughter.
- (d) *In addition to* being an ace tennis player, she is also a good singer.
- (e) *On account of* his poor health, he was dropped from the team.

Nouns and Adjectives and their Specific Prepositions

There are a number of adjectives that require specific prepositions to connect them with the nouns that follow.

Examples:

beset with	devoid of	occupied with
acquainted with	defective in	ignorant of
astonished at	capable of	entitled to
applicable to	contrary to	guilty of
bent on	disappointed with	envious of
deaf to	good at	delighted with
afraid of	doubtful of	indebted to

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A number of nouns require specific prepositions which connect them with other nouns. Here are a few examples:

capacity for	access to	interest in
expert in	cause for	love for
appetite for	fear of	hope of
approach to	difference between	surprise at
invitation to	comparison with	acquaintance with
cure for	attention to	improvement in

Check Your Progress

5. State the form of infinitive verb which makes it easy to identify?
6. State the difference between present participles and gerunds.

11.5 TENSES

Tenses in grammar are the various forms that indicate primarily different relationships of events in time. In order to understand the difference between different sentences, consider the following three sentences:

- She did her homework yesterday.
- She does her homework.
- She will do her homework.

These three sentences try to describe the act of doing homework, but at different instants or phases of time. The first sentence defines an event that took place in the past. The second sentence describes an event that takes place but whether it has been completed or not is not evident from this sentence. The third sentence defines an event that has not yet occurred but will occur in the near future.

Thus, we find that the tense of a sentence normally indicates the time of occurrence of an event.

Tenses can be broadly classified into two forms, which are:

1. Present tense
2. Past tense

NOTES**Present Tense**

Present tense is often used to express:

- Action at the present time
- A state of being
- A habitual action
- An occurrence in the near future
- An action that occurred in the past and continues till present

It is not sufficient to know the time of occurrence of an event only, it is equally important to know the progress of the action mentioned. Thus, present tense is further classified into subparts that explain the progress of the event mentioned.

Present tense is divided into four subparts or has four aspects which are:

1. Simple present tense
2. Present continuous tense
3. Present perfect tense
4. Present perfect continuous tense

Simple Present Tense

Simple present tense refers to the normal or general events that occur on a daily basis. The general format for a statement in the simple present tense is:

Subject + The first form of the verb + ...

When the subject is third person singular, 's' or 'es' is added with the first form of the verb.

Table 11.1 shows different statements in the simple present tense.

Table 11.1 Statements in Simple Present Tense

S. No.	Subject	Verb	The remaining part of the sentence
1	I	write	my diary everyday.
2	You	write	good poetry.
3	Doctors	help	patients by treating them.
4	He	goes	to school everyday.

The general format for interrogative sentences in the simple present tense is:

Do/Does + Subject + The first form of the Verb + ...?

Table 11.2 shows interrogative sentences in the simple present tense.

Table 11.2 *Interrogative Sentences in Simple Present Tense*

S. No.	Do/Does	Subject	Verb	The remaining part of the sentence
1	Do	I	write	my diary daily?
2	Do	you	write	good poetry?
3	Do	doctors	help	patients by treating them?
4	Does	he	go	to school everyday?

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The general format for the negative sentences in the simple present tense is:

Subject + do not/does not + the first form of Verb + ...

Table 11.3 shows the negative sentences in the simple present tense.

Table 11.3 *Negative Sentences in Simple Present Tense*

Tense

S. No.	Subject	Do not/Does not	Verb	The remaining part of the sentence
1	I	do not	write	my diary daily.
2	You	do not	write	good poetry.
3	He	does not	help	poor by giving alms.
4	He	does not	go	to school everyday.

The format for both interrogative and negative sentences is:

Do/Does + Subject + not + the first form of the Verb + ...?

Table 11.4 shows the interrogative, negative sentences in the simple present tense.

Table 11.4 *Interrogative + Negative Sentences in Simple Present Tense*

S. No.	Do/Does	Subject	Not	Verb	The remaining part of the sentence
1	Do	I	not	write	my diary daily?
2	Do	you	not	write	good poetry?
3	Does	he	not	help	Poor people by giving alms?
4	Does	he	not	go	to school everyday?

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The simple present tense is used in the following cases:

- This tense is used for expressing the facts that are universally true. Some examples of this type are mentioned below:
 - A. Honesty is the best policy.
 - B. The moon revolves round the earth.
 - C. The earth rotates on its own axis.
 - D. The Mount Everest is the world's highest peak.
- This tense is used for describing repeated events and habits. These sentences are used to describe usual information but do not provide any information on whether the event is taking place at the time of speaking. Some examples of this form are mentioned below:
 - A. Delhi always has hot summers.
 - B. I write in my diary every day.
 - C. My office begins at 9 am.
 - D. I watch movies on every weekend

Note: Adverbs of frequency are normally used in such sentences; for example, always, often, never, seldom, sometimes, usually, generally, once a day, etc. This tense is used for describing any event planned in the future. Thus, we see that present tense can be used for referring to future time but given the fact that it should be a definite plan/programme. For example, the General Manager (GM) arrives at Mumbai on Wednesday and presides over the meeting.

- This tense is also used to make general statements. Some examples of this type of statement are mentioned below:
 - A. He is a good singer.
 - B. English is one of the popular languages in the world.
 - C. Listening is more important than speaking.
 - D. My friend lives in Delhi.
- This tense is used to give a running commentary of actions as they actually occur. For example, the bowler runs up to the wicket and bowls. The batsman moves to the back foot and steers the ball down the third man for a single.
- This tense is used to conclude any past occurrence in a dramatic and distinct manner. For example, when the film begins, Mr Justin is having coffee. The doorbell rings and Mr Justin opens the door.
- This tense is also used in exclamatory sentences beginning with 'here' and 'there' to express what is actually taking place in the present. For example, 'Here goes the ball.'

- Simple present tense is used in the clauses after conjunctions of time or condition when the main clause is in the future. For example:

A. I shall not help him unless he asks for it.

B. He will come if you invite him.

- It is also used to introduce quotations. For example, Shakespeare said, ‘All that glitters is not gold.’

NOTES

Present Continuous Tense

Present continuous tense is used to explain the events that are in process. The general format for the statements in present continuous tense is:

Subject + is/are/am + Verb (— ing form) + ...

Table 11.5 shows the statements in the present continuous tense.

Table 11.5 Sentences in Present Continuous Tense

S. No.	Subject	Is/are/am	Verb (ing form)	The remaining part of the sentence
1	We	are	waiting	for the bus.
2	I	am	reading	a book.
3	She	is	singing	a song.
4	She	is	wearing	a red saree.

The format for interrogative sentences in the present continuous tense is:

Is/are/am + Subject + Verb (ing form) + ...?

Table 11.6 shows the interrogative sentences in the present continuous tense.

Table 11.6 Interrogative Sentences in Present Continuous Tense

S. No.	Is/are/am	Subject	Verb (ing)	The remaining part of the sentence
1	Are	we	waiting	for the bus?
2	Am	I	reading	a book?
3	Is	she	singing	a song?
4	Is	she	wearing	a red saree?

The format for negative sentences in the present continuous tense is:

Subject + is/am/are + not + verb (ing) + ...

Table 11.7 shows the negative sentences in the present continuous tense.

Table 11.7 Negative Sentences in Present Continuous Tense

S. No.	Subject	Is/am/are	Not	Verb (ing)	The remaining part of the sentence
1	We	are	not	waiting	for the bus.
2	I	am	not	reading	a book.
3	She	is	not	singing	a song.
4	She	is	not	wearing	a saree.

NOTES

The format for both an interrogative and negative sentence in the present continuous tense is:

Is/are/am + Subject + not + verb (ing) + ...?

Table 11.8 shows the interrogative and negative sentences in the present continuous tense.

Table 11.8 Interrogative and Negative Sentences in Present Continuous Tense

S. No.	Subject	Is/are/am	Not	Verb (ing)	The remaining part of the sentence
1	Are	we	not	waiting	for the bus?
2	Am	I	not	reading	a book?
3	Is	she	not	singing	a song?
4	Is	she	not	singing	a song?

The present continuous tense is used in the following cases:

- This tense is used to describe an event that is occurring now at the time of speaking. Some of the examples of this type of sentences are:
 - A. He is doing his homework.
 - B. She is singing a song.
 - C. He is running.
 - D. We are watching a soccer match.
- This tense is used to describe an event that is going on for quite some time including the present, but may or may not be occurring at the time of speaking. Some examples of this form of sentence are:
 - A. He is doing a software-testing course these days.
 - B. We are working on a software project nowadays.

- C. He is attending dance classes.
- D. I am writing a book on industrial engineering.
- This tense is used to describe an event whose occurrence in the near future is a certainty. Some examples of this form of sentence are:
 - A. The Prime Minister is arriving on Tuesday.
 - B. We are going to Delhi tomorrow.
 - C. I am leaving this place tomorrow.
 - This tense is also used when the speaker wants to disapprove an event that occurs quite frequently. Some of the examples of this type of sentence are:
 - A. He is always complaining about something.
 - B. You are becoming lazy day by day.

There are some verbs which cannot be normally used in the continuous tense on account of their meaning such as:

1. Verbs of perception, e.g., see, hear, smell etc.
2. Verbs of thinking, e.g., think, suppose, believe, agree, consider, etc.
3. Verbs of appearing, e.g., appear, look, seem
4. Verbs of emotion, e.g., want, wish, desire feel, love, hate, hope

Present Perfect Tense

Present perfect tense refers to those events that have been completed recently. The format for present perfect tense statement is given as:

Subject + has/have + the past participle+ ...

Table 11.9 shows some of the statements in present perfect tense.

Table 11.9 Statements in Present Perfect Tense

S. No.	Subject	Has/have	Past Participle	The remaining part of the sentence
1	I	have	bought	a new computer.
2	We	have	finished	our work.
3	He	has	received	his commission.
4	She	has	relocated	to a new place.

The format for interrogative sentences in the present perfect tense is:

Has/have + Subject + the past participle...?

NOTES

Table 11.10 shows some of the interrogative sentences in the present perfect tense.

Table 11.10 Interrogative Sentences in Present Perfect Tense

S. No.	Has/have	Subject	Past Participle	The remaining part of the sentence
1	Have	I	bought	a new computer?
2	Have	we	finished	our work?
3	Has	he	received	his commission?
4	Has	she	relocated	to a new place?

The format for a negative sentence in the present perfect tense is:

Subject + has/have + not + the past participle+ ...

Table 11.11 shows some of the negative sentences in the present perfect tense.

Table 11.11 Negative Sentences in Present Perfect Tense

S. No.	Subject	Has/have	Not	Past Participle	The remaining part of the sentence
1	I	have	not	bought	a new computer.
2	We	have	not	finished	our work.
3	He	has	not	received	his commission.
4	She	has	not	relocated	to a new place.

The format for the interrogative-negative sentences in the present perfect tense is:

Has/have + Subject + not + the past participle+ ...

Table 11.12 shows some negative sentences in the present perfect tense.

NOTES

Table 11.12 Negative Sentences in Present Perfect Tense

S. No.	Has/have	Subject	Not	Past Participle	The remaining part of the sentence
1	Have	I	not	bought	a new computer?
2	Have	we	not	finished	our work?
3	Has	she	not	received	her commission?
4	Has	she	not	relocated	to a new place?

NOTES

The present perfect tense is used in the following cases:

- The present perfect tense is used to refer to a past event that acts as an experience. Some examples of this type of sentence are:
 - A. I have succeeded in my first attempt.
 - B. He has faced a lot of hardships.
- This tense is used to explain an event that occurred in the past and is taken as a reference to express its importance at the time of speaking. Some of the examples of this type of sentence are:
 - A. I have relocated to a new place.
 - B. He has parked the car in the garage.
- This tense is used to explain an event that began in the past and is still in continuation. Some examples of this type of sentence are:
 - A. He has known her for five years.
 - B. They have lived in the US for several years.
- This tense is also used to explain an action that is not finished yet. Some examples of this type of sentence are:
 - A. The train has not arrived yet.
 - B. The match has not started so far.
- This tense also describes a past event whose time of occurrence is not mentioned. Some of the examples of this type of sentence are:
 - A. I have received a phone call from my friend.
 - B. They have done a terrific job.

Present Perfect Continuous Tense

Present perfect continuous tense is used to describe an event that has been occurring for some time and is still in continuation.

NOTES

The format for statements in the present continuous tense is:

Subject + has been/have been + the present participle + ...

Table 11.13 shows some of the statements in the present perfect continuous tense.

Table 11.13 Statements in Present Perfect Continuous

S. No.	Subject	Has been/have been	Present Participle	The remaining part of the sentence
1	I	have been	working	since morning.
2	He	has been	sleeping	since 10 pm.
3	The child	has been	crying	for an hour.
4	You	have been	studying	since afternoon.

The format for the interrogative sentences in present perfect continuous tense is:

Has/have + subject + been + the present participle + ...

Table 11.14 shows interrogative sentences in the present perfect continuous tense.

Table 11.14 Interrogative Sentences in Present Perfect Continuous Tense

S. No.	Has/have	Subject	Been	Present Participle	The remaining part of the sentence
1	Have	I	been	working	since morning?
2	Has	he	been	sleeping	since 10 pm?
3	Has	the child	been	crying	for an hour?
4	Have	you	been	studying	since afternoon?

The format for the negative sentences in the present perfect continuous is:

Subject + has /have not been + the present participle + ...

Table 11.15 shows the negative sentences in the present perfect continuous tense.

Table 11.15 Negative Sentences in Present Perfect Continuous Tense

S. No.	Subject	Has /have not been	Present Participle	The remaining part of the sentence
1	I	have not been	working	since morning.
2	He	has not been	sleeping	since 10 pm.
3	The child	has not been	crying	for an hour.
4	You	have not been	studying	since afternoon.

NOTES

The format for the interrogative, negative sentences in the present perfect continuous tense is:

Has/have + subject + not + been + the present participle + ...

Table 11.16 shows some interrogative-negative sentences in the present perfect continuous tense.

Table 11.16 Interrogative-Negative Sentences in Present Perfect Continuous

S. No.	Has/have	Subject	Not	Been	Present Participle	The remaining part of the sentence
1	Have	I	not	been	working	since morning?
2	Has	he	not	been	sleeping	since 10 pm?
3	Has	the child	not	been	crying	for an hour?
4	Have	you	not	been	studying	since afternoon?

The present perfect tense is used in the following cases:

- This tense is used to describe an event that started sometime in the past, is still going on and is in continuation at the time of speaking. Some of the examples of this type of sentence are:
 - A. We have been working together since two years.
 - B. You have been studying since morning.
 - C. It has been raining since last night.
- This tense is also used to describe the continuous and undisturbed nature of an event, though the event may not be occurring at the time of speaking.

Some of the examples of this type of sentence are mentioned:

- A. The children have been playing all morning.
- B. I have been working all the time.

NOTES

Note: ‘Since’ and ‘for’ are often used with perfect continuous tense. Since is used with a point of time at which an action started (The action continues till the present moment). For example, ‘I have been reading a novel since last Sunday.’ For is used to suggest a period of time for which an action has been going on. For example, ‘I have been typing for almost a year.’

Past Tense

In order to know the approximate time of occurrence of an event, the past tense is also divided into subtypes that are:

1. Simple past tense
2. Past continuous tense
3. Past perfect tense
4. Past perfect continuous tense

Simple Past Tense

Simple past tense is used to indicate an action completed in the past.

The format for a statement in the simple past tense is:

Subject + verb (past form) + ...

Table 11.17 shows some statements in the simple past tense.

Table 11.17 Statements in Simple Past Tense

S. No.	Subject	Verb	The remaining part of sentence
1	He	met	his teacher the day before yesterday.
2	I	rang	him in the morning.
3	You	did	the work yesterday.
4	We	came	here last Friday.

The format for the interrogative sentences in simple past tense is:

Did + subject + verb (present form) + ...

Table 11.18 shows some interrogative sentences in the simple past tense.

Table 11.18 Interrogative Sentences in Simple Past Tense

S. No.	Did	Subject	Verb	The remaining part of the sentence
1	Did	he	meet	his teacher the day before yesterday?
2	Did	I	ring	him in the morning?
3	Did	you	do	the work yesterday?
4	Did	we	come	here last Friday?

NOTES

The format for the negative sentences in the simple past tense is:

Subject + did not + verb (present form) + ...

Table 11.19 shows some negative sentences in the simple past tense.

Table 11.19 Negative Sentences in Simple Past Tense

S. No.	Subject	Did not	Verb	The remaining part of the sentence
1	He	did not	meet	his teacher the day before yesterday.
2	I	did not	ring	him in the morning.
3	You	did not	do	the work yesterday.
4	We	did not	come	here last Friday.

The format for interrogative-negative sentence in the simple past tense is:

Did + subject + not + verb (present form) + ...?

Table 11.20 shows some interrogative-negative sentences in the simple past tense.

Table 11.20 Interrogative-Negative Sentences in Simple Past Tense

S. No.	Did	Subject	Not	Verb	The remaining part of the sentence
1	Did	he	not	meet	his teacher the day before yesterday?
2	Did	I	not	ring	him in the morning?
3	Did	you	not	do	the work yesterday?
4	Did	we	not	come	here last Friday?

NOTES

Simple past tense is used in the following cases:

- This tense is used to describe a series of events that occurred in the past. For example, ‘the Managing Director (MD) came to Delhi yesterday and attended the meeting’.
- This tense is used to explain an event that occurred in the past. Some of the examples of this type of sentence are:
 - A. We bought a television one week ago.
 - B. I watched a movie last Saturday.
 - C. She left for Chennai yesterday.
- This tense is used to refer to an event that engaged for quite some time in the past and has now ended. Some of the examples of this type of sentence are:
 - A. I lived in Delhi for two years.
 - B. I worked in this company for ten years.
- This tense is used to explain an action that was a habit or usually performed in the past. Some of the examples of this type of sentence are:
 - A. He attended the dance classes regularly in the winter vacations.
 - B. I always went to play at the same time in my vacations.

Past Continuous Tense

Past continuous tense denotes an event which was going on at some time in the past. The time of occurrence of the event may or may not be specified.

The format for a statement in the past continuous tense is:

Subject + was/were + present participle + ...

Table 11.21 shows some statements in the past continuous tense.

Table 11.21 Statements in Past Continuous Tense

S. No.	Subject	Was/were	Verb (ing)	The remaining part of the sentence
1	I	was	waiting	for the bus.
2	We	were	playing	cricket.
3	She	was	feeding	the child.
4	You	were	listening	to the music.

NOTES

The format for an interrogative sentence in the past continuous tense is:

Was/were + subject + present participle + ...?

Table 11.22 shows some interrogative sentences in the past continuous tense.

Table 11.22 Interrogative Sentences in Past Continuous Tense

S. No.	Was/were	Subject	Verb (ing)	The remaining part of the sentence
1	Was	I	waiting	for the bus?
2	Were	we	playing	cricket?
3	Was	she	feeding	the child?
4	Were	you	listening	to the music?

The format for a negative sentence in the past continuous tense is:

Subject + was/were + not + present participle + ...

Table 11.23 shows some negative sentences in the past continuous tense.

Table 11.23 Negative Sentences in Past Continuous Tense

S. No.	Subject	Was/were	not	Verb (ing)	The remaining part of the sentence
1	I	was	not	waiting	for the bus.
2	We	were	not	playing	cricket.
3	She	was	not	feeding	the child.
4	You	were	not	listening	to the music.

NOTES

The format for interrogative-negative sentence in the past continuous tense is:

Was/were + subject + not + present participle + ...?

Table 11.24 shows some interrogative-negative sentences in the past continuous tense.

Table 11.24 Interrogative-Negative Sentences in Past Continuous Tense

S. No.	Was/were	Subject	Not	Verb (ing form)	The remaining part of the sentence
1	Was	I	not	waiting	for the bus?
2	Were	we	not	playing	cricket?
3	Was	she	not	feeding	the child?
4	Were	you	not	listening	to the music?

The past continuous tense is used in the following cases:

- This tense is used to express the progressive development of an occurrence. Some of the examples of this type of sentence are:
 - A. It was getting hot.
 - B. The kid was growing nicely.
- This tense is used to explain an event that was in progression, sometimes in the past. Some of the examples of this type of sentence are:
 - A. The jurisdiction was looking into the matter.
 - B. He was having his dinner at 10 p.m.
 - C. We were watching television at 8 p.m. yesterday.
 - D. At 7 a.m. in the morning, he was having his breakfast.
- This tense is used to express an event when another event comes into the picture. Some of the examples of this type of sentence are:
 - A. I was working when the doorbell rang.
 - B. He was studying, when someone bumped into him.
- This tense also describes two actions occurring together in the past. Some of the examples of this type of sentence are:
 - A. While I was reading, he was watching television.
 - B. We were working when it was raining.
- This tense is also used to convey disapproval or disagreement on a repeatedly occurring event. Some of the examples of this type of sentence are:

- A. They were always making a fool of others.
- B. She was regularly asking for money.
- C. He was constantly pressurizing me.

Past Perfect Tense

The past perfect tense refers to an event that was finished before a particular moment in the past.

The format for the statements in the past perfect tense is:

Subject + had + past principle + ...

Table 11.25 shows some statements in the past perfect tense.

Table 11.25 *Statements in Past Perfect Tense*

S. No.	Subject	Had	Past Principle	The remaining part of the sentence
1	I	had	left	when you arrived.
2	He	had	finished	his work before his friends arrived.
3	He	had	completed	his work long ago.
4	He	had	left	when I arrived.

The format for interrogative sentences in the past perfect tense is:

Had + subject + past participle + ...?

Table 11.26 shows some interrogative sentences in the past perfect tense.

Table 11.26 *Interrogative Sentences in Past Perfect Tense*

S. No.	Had	Subject	Past Principle	The remaining part of the sentence
1	Had	I	left	when you arrived?
2	Had	he	finished	his work before his friends arrived?
3	Had	he	completed	his work long ago?
4	Had	he	left	when I arrived?

NOTES

NOTES

The format for negative sentences in the past perfect tense is:

Subject + had not + Past Participle + ...

Table 11.27 shows some negative sentences in the past perfect tense.

Table 11.27 Negative Sentences in Past Perfect Tense

S. No.	Subject	Had not	Past Participle	The remaining part of the sentence
1	I	had not	left	before you arrived.
2	He	had not	finished	his work before his friends arrived.
3	He	had not	completed	his work long ago.
4	He	had not	left	when I arrived.

The format for interrogative-negative sentences in the past perfect tense:

Had + subject + not + Past Participle + ...?

Table 11.28 shows the interrogative-negative sentences in the past perfect tense.

Table 11.28 Interrogative-Negative Sentences in Past Perfect Tense

S. No.	Had	Subject	Not	Past Participle	The remaining part of the sentence
1	Had	I	not	left	before you arrived?
2	Had	he	not	finished	his work before his friends arrived?
3	Had	he	not	completed	his work long ago?
4	Had	he	not	left	when I arrived?

Past perfect tense is used in the following cases:

- This tense is used to describe an event that was finished before another event had occurred in the past. Some examples of this type of sentence are:
 - A. I went to office after the rain had stopped.
 - B. As soon as I had eaten, the bell rang.

- This tense is used to state an unrealized circumstance in the past. Some examples of this type of sentence are:
 - A. If I had asked him, he would have helped me.
 - B. If you had left earlier before, you would have caught the bus.
- This tense is also used to state that a past intention was not realized. Some examples of this type of sentence are mentioned below:
 - A. He had wished to become an athlete.
 - B. He had hoped to win the marathon.
 - C. He had intended to send his son to the US for higher studies.

NOTES

Past Perfect Continuous Tense

Past perfect continuous tense refers to those events that begin before a particular point in the past and continue up to that point of time. Table 11.29 shows the form of simple sentences, interrogative sentences, negative sentences and interrogative-negative sentences in the past perfect continuous tense.

Table 11.29 Format of Different Types of Sentences in Past Perfect Continuous Tense

Types	Format
Statements	Subject + had been + verb (ing form) + ...
Interrogative Sentences	Had + subject + been + verb (ing form) + ...?
Negative Sentences	Subject + had not been + verb (ing form) + ...
Interrogative-Negative Sentences	Had + Subject + not + been + verb (ing form) + ...?

Some examples of the past perfect continuous tense are:

1. He had been attempting to commit suicide.
2. Had he been attempting to commit suicide?
3. He had not been attempting to commit suicide.
4. Had he not been attempting to commit suicide?
5. I had been attempting this question for an hour.
6. She had been sleeping since morning.
7. The baby had been weeping for hours.
8. The children had been playing in the park for hours.

NOTES**Tenses: Future Forms**

Future time can be expressed with the help of the following forms:

- Simple present
- Present progressive
- Be going to
- Be + infinitive
- Modal auxiliaries-shall/will

Simple Present

Simple present + adverbial of future tense is used to express a definite plan, arrangement or event. Some examples of this form are:

1. The players board the bus to Delhi tomorrow.
2. India goes to play Pakistan next week.

Present Progressive

Present progressive always employs an adverbial of future time to make it different from the present + future time. Some examples of this form are:

1. I am visiting Delhi tomorrow.
2. The delegates are attending the meeting next week.

Be Going To

Going is used to express the future time in case some action or event is expected to occur in the future. Some of the examples of this form are:

1. I have saved enough money. I am going to purchase a house next month.
2. He has invited all his friends. He is going to celebrate his marriage anniversary tomorrow.

Some of the important points to remember while using these three future forms are explained follows:

- 'Will' represents simple future and is not used when the intention is depicted.
- 'Going to' generally refers to an immediate future, whereas 'will' can refer to immediate as well as distant future.
- Present progressive form is preferred rather than using 'going to come/go'.
- The short form of 'I am going to' is gonna and is used for only informal speech.

Be + Infinitive

Am/is/are + infinitive do not merely express futurity; it also expresses a future time + plan. Some of the examples of this form are:

1. The principal is to give away the trophies.
2. He is to get married next week.

Am/is/are + about/just about + infinitive is used to express an immediate future.

Some of the examples of this form are:

1. The president is about to begin his speech.
2. India is about to do a turn around.

NOTES

Modal Auxiliaries

There are four different forms of modal auxiliaries that are used to express future time. These forms are:

- Simple future
- Future progressive
- Future perfect
- Future perfect progressive

(A) Simple future

For a verb, the simple future form is shall/will + bare infinitive. For 'be', the simple future form is shall/will + be. For 'have', the simple future form is shall/will + have. Some examples of the simple future form are:

1. He shall be thirty on his next birthday.
2. We shall have a party tonight.

(B) Future progressive

For a verb, the future progressive form is 'will be' + 'present participle'. For 'have', the future progressive form is 'will be' + 'having'. 'Will' is more commonly used than 'shall' for the first person. Some examples of the future progressive form are:

1. He will be writing the novel tomorrow evening.
2. He will be leaving for the US next month.

(C) Future perfect

For a verb, the future perfect form is 'shall/will' + perfect infinitive. For 'shall/will' + 'have', the future perfect form is 'shall/will have' + 'had'. For the verb 'be', the future perfect form is 'will have been'. Some examples of the future perfect form are:

1. They will have built a fortune by the end of this year.
2. India will have won the match.

NOTES

(D) Future perfect progressive

For a verb, the future progressive form is 'shall/will' + 'have' + present participle. Some examples of the future perfect progressive form are:

1. By the end of this month, I will have been working here for one year.
2. By the end of this year, he will have been travelling for ten months.

11.6 PARTICIPLES AND MODALS

Take a look at the following two sentences:

- (i) I heard her singing a song.
- (ii) I heard Sita singing loudly.

The word 'Singing' is formed from the verb 'sing'. Therefore, it is like a verb. In sentence (i), 'singing', like a transitive verb, takes the object 'song'. In sentence (ii), singing, like a verb, is qualified by the adverb 'loudly'. Singing refers to 'her' is therefore like an adjective. Thus, the word 'singing' is partly a verb and partly an adjective. Such verb-adjective is called a participle.

There are two kinds of participle

1. Present participle

I saw him bring the wood

Here, the action of burning is going on, that is, the action is incomplete.

Participles ending in 'ing' describes incomplete action and are called 'present participle'.

2. Past participles

Deceived by his friends, he lost all hopes.

Here the action of deceiving is complete. It expresses a finished action. Participles ending in 'ed', 'en', 'd' and 't' describe perfect actions and are called past participles.

For example

- Terrified, they stood crowded together.
- Driven by fury, the tiger attacked the hunter.

A participle can be used in three ways.

- (a) As an attribute adjective

The wounded man was taken to the hospital.

A broken friendship cannot be revived.

- (b) Predicatively to complete the sentence

The mother seems worried.

The child stood laughing.

The manager seems contended.

(c) Object complement

I saw the child hopping.

She heard her mother scolding.

The police saw the thief hiding behind the wall.

NOTES

Modal Auxiliaries

In grammar, a modal or a modal auxiliary is a word such as ‘can’, ‘may’, ‘must’, ‘need’, ‘shall’, ‘should’ or ‘would’ which is used with a main verb to express ideas such as possibility, intention, or necessity.

For example

- The King may go hunting tomorrow
- I can run faster than Sita
- The teacher must be below thirty
- We shall go on tour next month
- I need no explanation

Check Your Progress

7. Mention the format for interrogative sentences in the present continuous tense.
8. What are the subtypes of past tense?
9. Define a modal.

11.7 ANSWER TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS

1. In English grammar, the words ‘a’ or ‘an’ and ‘the’ are known as articles.
2. An indefinite article (a, an) is placed before a singular noun which is used to refer to any member of a group. The usage of ‘a’ are with nouns starting with a consonant, ‘an’ is with nouns starting with a vowel (a, e, i, o, u).
3. When two or more adjectives succeed the same noun, then the article is used only before the first adjective. However, when they succeed different nouns then the article is used before each adjective.
4. Articles are not used in sentences where phrases have prepositions which are followed by an object, e.g., at home, by air, in bed, etc.
5. An infinitive verb is easy to identify in its to + verb form.

NOTES

6. The difference between present participles and gerunds is that present participles do not act as nouns.
7. The format for interrogative sentences in the present continuous tense is:
Is/are/am + Subject + Verb (ing form) + ...?
8. The past tense is also divided into subtypes that are:
 1. Simple past tense
 2. Past continuous tense
 3. Past perfect tense
 4. Past perfect continuous tense
9. In grammar, a modal or a modal auxiliary is a word such as 'can', 'may', 'must', 'need', 'shall', 'should' or 'would' which is used with a main verb to express ideas such as possibility, intention, or necessity.

11.8 SUMMARY

- Proficiency in basic grammar skills is necessary to communicate in correct English. It is not just enough to impart proper information as the technical competence of a person who displays poor writing skills is questioned. All writing must have correct grammar and usage if it is to be considered credible and noteworthy.
- 'An article is a word that combines with a noun to indicate the type of reference being made by the noun and to specify the volume or numerical scope of that reference.'
- Articles always appear before nouns. There are two types of articles 'a' or 'an' and 'the'. 'A' or 'an' are known as indefinite articles and 'the' is known as the definite article
- An indefinite article (a, an) is placed before a singular noun which is used to refer to any member of a group.
- A definite article (the) is used before a singular and a plural noun which is used to refer to a specific member of a group.
- An infinitive is the form of a verb which consists of the word to plus the verb in its basic form. An infinitive verb performs the role of a noun, adjective or an adverb and describes an action.
- Gerunds are words that are formed with verbs but act as nouns. They can be spotted easily as every gerund is a verb that ends with 'ing' without exception. Gerunds should not be confused with present participles that also end with the letters 'ing'.
- Prepositions specify place, direction and time. A preposition establishes a connection between the nouns, phrases and pronouns in a sentence to other words in that sentence.

- Tenses in grammar are the various forms that indicate primarily different relationships of events in time.
- Present tense is divided into four subparts or has four aspects which are:
 - o Simple present tense
 - o Present continuous tense
 - o Present perfect tense
 - o Present perfect continuous tense
- In order to know the approximate time of occurrence of an event, the past tense is also divided into subtypes that are:
 - o Simple past tense
 - o Past continuous tense
 - o Past perfect tense
 - o Past perfect continuous tense
- Future time can be expressed with the help of the following forms:
 - o Simple present
 - o Present progressive
 - o Be going to
 - o Be + infinitive
 - o Modal auxiliaries-shall/will
- In grammar, a modal or a modal auxiliary is a word such as ‘can’, ‘may’, ‘must’, ‘need’, ‘shall’, ‘should’ or ‘would’ which is used with a main verb to express ideas such as possibility, intention, or necessity.

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11.9 KEY WORDS

- **Article:** An article is a word that combines with a noun to indicate the type of reference being made by the noun and to specify the volume or numerical scope of that reference.
- **Gerund:** Gerunds are words that are formed with verbs but act as nouns.
- **Modals:** In grammar, a modal or a modal auxiliary is a word such as ‘can’, ‘may’, ‘must’, ‘need’, ‘shall’, ‘should’ or ‘would’ which is used with a main verb to express ideas such as possibility, intention, or necessity.
- **Preposition:** A preposition establishes a connection between the nouns, phrases and pronouns in a sentence to other words in that sentence.
- **Infinitive:** It is the form of a verb which consists of the word to plus the verb in its basic form.
- **Tenses:** In grammar, tenses are the various forms that indicate the different relationships of events in time.

11.10 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

NOTES

Short Answer Questions

1. What do you mean by tenses?
2. What is the difference between present continuous and present perfect tenses?
3. State the cases where past continuous tense is used.
4. What are infinitives?
5. Write a short note on participles.
6. Briefly discuss modals.

Long Answer Questions

1. Explain definite and indefinite articles.
2. Examine the uses of different types of prepositions with examples.
3. Discuss past tense and its various aspects in detail.
4. Describe the four subparts of present tense in detail. Substantiate your answer with examples.
5. Separately list the cases where simple present tense and present continuous tense is used.
6. Describe past perfect continuous tense with the help of appropriate examples.
7. Write a note on past perfect tense. Give examples.

11.11 FURTHER READINGS

- Wren, P.C. and H. Martin. 2007. *High School English Grammar and Composition*. New Delhi: S. Chand and Company.
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- Chatterjee, A.K. 2002. *Interactive English Grammar and Composition*. New Delhi: Jiwan Publishing House.

UNIT 12 GRAMMAR II

Structure

- 12.0 Introduction
- 12.1 Objectives
- 12.2 Introduction to Transformation of Sentences
 - 12.2.1 Simple, Complex, Compound
- 12.3 Direct and Indirect Speech
 - 12.3.1 Types of Sentences
- 12.4 Active and Passive Voice
 - 12.4.1 Rules for Transformation
- 12.5 Answers to Check Your Progress Questions
- 12.6 Summary
- 12.7 Key Words
- 12.8 Self Assessment Questions and Exercises
- 12.9 Further Readings

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12.0 INTRODUCTION

The unit will continue the discussion on English grammar. It will begin with a discussion on transformation of sentences. A sentence can be written in many different ways and forms without changing its meaning. This is where the role of transformation of sentences as a grammatical practice comes in. It is quite important for a student to be able to read, write and speak different kinds of sentences as required by the situation. This unit studies the various rules of transformation of sentences—interrogative to assertive, exclamatory to assertive, imperative to assertive, etc. The unit will then discuss direct and indirect speech.

It is crucial that one knows the proper use of language while directly or indirectly quoting someone in our daily lives. It is nevertheless, a source of confusion for many people. This is why the usage of reported speech becomes important. This unit focuses on navigating the various specificities related to tenses and different types of sentences while dealing with direct and indirect speech. The final section of the unit will discuss active and passive voice.

The knowledge of proper transformation of sentences by changing their voice, expands our grammar usage skills because we are able to write sentences in different manner without changing the meaning. In this unit, we specifically examine Active and Passive voices – the rules that apply to them with respect to tenses, different types of sentences and the few instances where allowances need to be made, despite the rule that might generally be applied to the situation described in the sentence.

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12.1 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Interpret the changing of tenses while converting direct speech into indirect speech
- Examine the rules applied to transformation of interrogative sentences into assertive sentences and vice versa
- Describe the rules applicable to the transformation of exclamatory sentences into assertive sentences and vice versa
- Discuss the transformation rules of simple, complex and compound sentences
- Analyse the instances where active voice is used in a sentence
- Examine the usage of passive voice in a sentence

12.2 INTRODUCTION TO TRANSFORMATION OF SENTENCES

The transformation of sentences is a useful skill because it helps in altering sentences without changing their meaning in English grammar. There are a number of different rules that are applied to different kinds of sentences, as explained below.

1. Assertive to Interrogative/Interrogative to Assertive

If you want to change an affirmative assertive sentence you have to change it into negative interrogative. If it is in negative then you have to change it into bare interrogative. Transformation of assertive to interrogative can be done in the following manner.

Example:

- Their glory can never fade. (Assertive Sentence)
- When can their glory fade? (Interrogative Sentence)

Example:

- He was a villain to do such a deed. (Assertive Sentence)
- Was he not a villain to do such a deed? (Interrogative Sentence)

Example:

- No one can rob the tomb without being defiled. (Assertive Sentence)
- Who can rob the tomb without being defiled? (Interrogative Sentence)

Example:

- Everyone knows him. (Assertive Sentence)
- Who does not know him? (Interrogative Sentence)

Example:

- This is not the kind of dress to be worn for a school function. (Assertive Sentence)
- Is this the kind of dress to be worn for a school function? (Interrogative Sentence)

In this same way an interrogative sentence can be transformed into an assertive sentence.

Example:

- Were we sent to this world simply to make money? (Interrogative Sentence)
- We were not sent to this world simply to make money. (Assertive Sentence)

Example:

- Shall I ever forget those happy days? (Interrogative Sentence)
- I never forget those happy days. (Assertive Sentence)

2. Exclamatory to Assertive

In case of transformation of exclamatory to assertive sentences, the subject and verb of the exclamatory sentence are to be used as the subject and verb of assertive sentence at the outset of the sentence.

Example:

- How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon the river-bank! (Exclamatory Sentence)
- The moonlight sweetly sleeps upon the river-bank. (Assertive Sentence)

Although such an exclamatory sentence can be transformed into an assertive sentence, an exclamatory sentence is preferred on many occasions to an assertive sentence for the emotional effect that an exclamatory sentence is carrying.

Example:

- If only I were young again! (Exclamatory Sentence)
- I wish I were young again. (Assertive Sentence)

Example:

- How beautiful is this night! (Exclamatory Sentence)
- This night is very beautiful. (Assertive Sentence)

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Example:

- What a delicious meal! (Exclamatory Sentence)
- This meal is delicious one. (Assertive Sentence)

3. Change of One Part to Another

To change one part of a sentence for another part, the verb of a sentence itself can be changed into another verb without change in the meaning of the sentence.

Example:

- These kind of jokes never amuse me.
- These kind of jokes never provide me any amusement.

In this sentence the verb has been changed into its noun form.

Example:

- It costs twelve dollars.
- Its cost is twelve dollars.

Here also the verb has been changed into its noun form.

Example:

- He has disgraced his family.
- He is a disgrace to his family.

The verb has been changed into its noun form.

Example:

- He gave a curt reply.
- He replied curtly.

Here the adjective has been changed into an adverb.

Example:

- I see him every day.
- I see him daily.

Here the adjective has been changed into an adverb.

Example:

- This scene is surpassingly beautiful.
- The beauty of this scene is surpassing.

Here the adjective has been changed into its noun form.

Example:

- He is admittedly the greatest general of this country.
- It has been admitted that he is the greatest general of this country.

Here, the adverb has been changed into a verb form.

4. Imperative to Assertive

The following are the rules to change imperative sentences to assertive sentences.

Rule 1: Add subject + should in doing assertive.

Example:

- Do the work.
- You should do the work.

Rule 2: Please/kindly '!' Replaced by '!' you are requested to.

Example:

- Please, help me.
- You are requested to help me.

Rule 3: Do not '!' Replaced by '!' You should not.

Example:

- Do not run in the sun.
- You should not run in the sun.

Rule 4: Never '!' Replaced by '!' you should never.

Example:

- Never tell a lie.
- You should never tell a lie.

Rule 5: Let us '!' Replaced by '!' We should.

Example:

- Let us go out for a walk.
- We should go out for a walk.

Rule 6: Let + noun/pronoun '!' Replaced by '!' Subject + might.

Example:

- Let him play football.
- He might play football.

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5. Change of Degree

Rule 1: If the superlative degree says about the best thing then the rule is:

For comparative use: subject + verb + adjective/adverb (comp. form) + Than any other + rest part

For positive, use: No other + rest part after supr. Degree + verb + so/as + positive form of adj/adv + as + sub.

Example:

- **Superlative:** Suman is the tallest boy in the class.
- **Comparative:** Suman is taller than any other boy in the class.
- **Positive:** No other boy in the class is as tall as Suman.

Rule 2: In superlative degree 'One of the' is transformed in this way:

Comparative: Sub+verb+comp. form+than most other+ Rest part.

Positive: Very few + rest part after supr. degree + verb + so/as + positive form of adj/adv + as + sub.

Example:

- **Superlative:** Nazrul was one of the greatest poets in Bangladesh.
- **Comparative:** Nazrul was greater than most other poets in Bangladesh.
- **Positive:** Very few poets in Bangladesh were so great as Nazrul.

Note: Superlative: Of all/of any

Comparative: Than all other/than any other.

Positive: It does not exist.

Example:

- **Superlative:** Mr. Khan is the oldest of all men in the village.
- **Comparative:** Mr. Khan is older than all other men in the village.
- **Positive:** No other man is as old as Mr. Khan.

Rule 3: Simple comparative is transformed into positive by using:

(not so + adj/adv+as)/ (so+adj/adv+as) if negative. Second noun or pronoun is used first.

Example:

- **Comparative:** Rina is wiser than Mina.
- **Positive:** Mina is not as wise as Rina.
- **Comparative:** Mina is not wiser than Rina.
- **Positive:** Rina is as wise as Mina.

Rule 4: No/not less — than is transformed into positive by using as +adj/adv+ as

Example:

- **Comparative:** Karim is not less meritorious than Suman.
- **Positive:** Karim is as meritorious as Suman.

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12.2.1 Simple, Complex, Compound

Simple sentences have one independent clause and expresses one idea. Complex sentences contain subordinate clauses. Compound sentences are sentences joined by a comma, semicolon or conjunction.

Rule 1: Since/As/When Change is to be made in the subordinate clause.

When subjects are same.

Simple:

- (1) Omit since/as/when
- (2) (Verb+ing) of the subordinate clause
- (3) Then write the rest part
- (4) Use subject with the principal clause
- (5) Principal clause remains unchanged

Example:

- Since the boy worked hard, he made a good result.
- Working hard, the boy made a good result.

Compound:

- (1) Omit since /as /when
- (2) Write down the rest part
- (3) Join clauses by using and, and so, and therefore
- (4) Write the main clause unchanged.

Example:

- Since the boy worked hard, he had a good result.
- The boy worked hard and had a good result.

Rule 2: In case of be verb in subordinate clause:

Use being/ Because of + Pronoun/noun (possessive form)+ being.

Example:

- Since he was weak, he could not work hard.

- **Simple:** Because of his being weak, he could not work hard.
- **Compound:** He was weak and therefore could not work hard.

Note: And therefore, is used for showing reasons.

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Rule 3: When the subject of clauses are different:

Simple:

- (1) Subject of subject clause
- (2) Verb+ing (be verb '!' being; Have verb '!' having)

Example:

- Since the weather was foul, we did not go out.
- The weather being foul, we did not go out.

Compound:

- (1) use 'and therefore' to join two clauses.

Example:

- The weather was foul and therefore we did not go out.

Rule 4: 'If,' is Replaced by – 'by + (verb+ing)'

Example:

- If you work hard, you will succeed in life.
- **Simple:** By working hard, you will succeed in life.
- **Compound:**
 - (1) Omit if+subject.
 - (2) use 'and' to join two clauses.

Example:

- **Compound:** Work hard and you will succeed in life.

Rule 5: Simple: If-not/unless, is replaced by, - without + (verb+ing)

Example:

- **Complex:** If you do not work hard, you will fail in the examination.
- **Simple:** Without working hard, you will fail in the examination.

Compound: Use or/otherwise to join two clauses.

Example:

- Work hard or you will fail in the examination.

Rule 6: **Simple:** Though is replaced by In spite of+ Possessive form of the subject+ (verb+ing)

Example:

- **Complex:** Though he tried heart and soul, he could not succeed in life.
- **Simple:** In spite of his trying heart and soul he could not succeed in life.

Compound: Use 'but' to join two clauses.

Example:

- He tried his heart and soul but he could not succeed in life.

Rule 7: Simple: So that is replaced by to/in order to.

Example:

- **Complex:** He works hard so that he may prosper in life.
- **Simple:** He works hard to/in order to prosper in life.
- **Compound:** 'and want/wants to' is used to join two clauses.

Example:

- He works hard and wants to prosper in life.

Rule 8: Simple: 'so + adjective + that' is replaced by 'Too + adjective + to'

Example:

- The boy is so foolish that he cannot understand it.
- **Simple:** The boy is too foolish to understand it.
- **Compound:** Use 'And Therefore' to make it a compound sentence.

Example:

- He is so foolish and therefore cannot understand it.

Rule 9: When (if mentions time) is replaced by

- (1) For short time – At
- (2) For month or season – In
- (3) For age – At the age of

Example:

- She woke up when it was midnight.
- **Simple:** She woke up at midnight.
- **Complex:** When it is spring, the cuckoo sings.
- **Simple:** In spring the cuckoo sings.
- **Complex:** When Samira was four she went to school.
- **Simple:** At the age of four, Samira went to school.

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Compound: Use and to join clauses.

Example:

- She woke up and it was midnight.

Rule 10: Simple: If the clause says about a continuous fact then use ‘at the time’ of instead of ‘When’.

Example:

- When I was eating the phone rang.
- **Sim:** At the time of my eating, the phone rang.
- **Compound:** Use ‘and’

Example: I was eating and the phone rang.

Rule 11: Simple: Noun clause can be replaced by noun.

Example:

- **Complex:** He admitted that he was guilty.
- **Simple:** He admitted his guilt.
- **Complex:** That he is honest is known to all.
- **Simple:** his honesty is known to all.
- **Compound:** Use ‘and’.

Example:

- He is honest and it is known to all.

Rule 12: Simple: If Complex sentence is made with relative pronoun (who, what, which, that), omit it and make (verb+ing).

Example:

- **Complex:** The Doctor who is working in the hospital is known to all.
- **Simple:** The doctor working in the hospital is known to all.

Note: If the verb is in the past participle it remains unchanged.

Example:

- The picture which was drawn by Liza is very fine.
- **Simple:** The picture drawn by Liza is very fine.

Rule 13: Simple: Adjective Clause is changed into - Adjective, Past participle Phrase, Noun in apposition, infinitive.

(1) **Adjective:**

Example:

- A man who is drowning catches at a straw.
- **Simple:** A drowning man catches at a straw.
- **Compound:** A man is drowning and so catches at a straw.

(2) Past participle phrase:**Example:**

- The answer that he wrote was not correct.
- **Simple:** The answer written by him was not correct.
- **Compound:** He wrote the answer and it was not correct.

(3) Gerundial Infinitive:**Example:**

- I have no money that I can lend you.
- **Simple:** I have no money to lend you.
- **Compound:** I have no money and I cannot lend you.

Rule 14: In the compound “not only—but also” is Changed by “Besides + (Verb +ing)” in the simple.

Example:

- Mr. Khan not only teaches us English but also writes novels.

Simple: Besides teaching us English, Mr. Khan writes novels.

Check Your Progress

1. Change the following assertive sentence into interrogative sentences:
(a) He is not a bad person.
2. Change the following exclamatory sentences to assertive.
(a) If I were a young man again!
3. Change the following sentences into simple sentences:
(a) Her desire is that she wants to serve the fatherland.
4. Transform the following sentences as directed in the brackets:
(a) Hurry up, or you shall miss the last ferry across the Bosphorus.

NOTES

12.3 DIRECT AND INDIRECT SPEECH

NOTES

In our lives we quote others in various circumstances. Sometimes we quote verbatim and put them within inverted commas while suggesting that it is exactly as it was said; or we report or acknowledge it when we do not use inverted commas. Thus, while directly and indirectly quoting someone or to report something that is being said by someone, we need to keep in mind certain grammatical changes that we need to follow.

In a direct speech, the actual words of the speaker are reproduced, whereas in an indirect speech the main idea of the speaker is reported by another person. There is use of quotation marks in direct speech, whereas indirect speech does not use them. For example:

Direct Speech

Quoting the exact words of the speaker is known as direct speech.

John said, 'I am writing a book now'.

Indirect speech

Reporting of what a speaker said without quoting his or her exact words is known as indirect speech.

John said that he was writing a book then.

Table 12.1 Direct and Indirect

Direct Speech	-	Indirect Speech
now	-	then
here	-	there
here after	-	there after
this	-	that
these	-	those
ago	-	before
thus	-	so
to-day	-	that day
to-night	-	that night
last night	-	the previous night
yesterday	-	the day before (or) the previous day
tomorrow	-	the next day (or) the following day
last week	-	the week before (or) the previous week
next week	-	the week after (or) the following week
last month	-	the month before (or) the previous month
next month	-	a month after
hither	-	thither
hence	-	thence

- If the reporting verb is in the Present or Future tense (e.g., say, will say) there is no change in the tense of the verb in the indirect speech.

Arthur says, "I ate a banana". (Direct)

Arthur says that he ate a banana". (Indirect)

- If reporting verb is in the Past Tense, the tense of the verbs in the reported speech or indirect speech must be generally changed.

The specific uses of tenses in reported speech

1. Present Tense in the direct becomes past tense.

Farhan said, "I write a letter". (Direct)

Farhan said that he wrote a letter. (Indirect)

2. Past Tense in the direct becomes past perfect or remains unchanged.

Anjali said, "I brought a dress yesterday". (Direct)

Anjali said that she had bought a dress the day before. (Indirect)

3. Present Continuous in the direct becomes past continuous.

Ranjan said, "I am going to the temple". (Direct)

Ranjan said that he was going to the temple. (Indirect)

4. Past Continuous in the direct becomes past perfect continuous.

David said, "I was playing football". (Direct)

David said that he had been playing football. (Indirect)

5. Present Perfect in the direct becomes past perfect.

Arnold said, "I have done my revision". (Direct)

Arnold said that he had done his revision. (Indirect)

6. Present Perfect Continuous in the direct becomes past perfect continuous.

She said, "I have been reading a magazine". (Direct)

She said that he had been reading a magazine. (Indirect)

7. 'Will' and 'Shall' are changed to 'would'.

He said, "I will go to Rome tomorrow". (Direct)

He said that he would go to Rome the next day. (Indirect)

8. To be noted:

Sheila said, "I must go now". (Direct)

Sheila said that she (or must) had to go then. (Indirect)

- **Exception to the above rule:** If the direct speech contains a universal truth, the tense of the direct speech remains unchanged even if the reporting verb is in the past.

The teacher said, "The sun sets in the West". (Direct)

The teacher said that the sun sets in the West. (Indirect)

NOTES

Converting direct speech into indirect speech

Reported Speech

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There are two ways of relating what a person has said: direct and indirect.

In direct speech we repeat the original speaker's exact words:

She said, "I have read the book".

Direct speech is seen usually in conversations in books, plays and quotations.

In indirect speech the exact meaning of a remark in speech is given, without necessarily using the speaker's exact words.

She said that she had read the book.

Some examples of Direct and Indirect Speech are as follows:

1. She said, "Jake will be in Paris on Saturday."

She said that Jake would be in Paris on Saturday.
2. "I never work late", she explained.

She explained that she never worked late.
3. She said, "I know I could."

She said that she knew she could.
4. He promised, "I will be there."

He promised that he will be there.
5. She said, "He is arriving this Monday."

She said that he was arriving that Monday.
6. She said, "I bought this phone for my brother."

She said that she had bought that phone for her brother.
7. He said, "Where is Preeti going?"

He asked where Preeti was going.
8. She said, "Luke, when is the next flight?"

She asked Luke when the next flight was.
9. "Is anyone there?" she asked.

She asked if anyone was there.
10. Mother said, "Sit down, Cathy."

Mother asked Cathy to sit down.
11. She said, "Don't jump on the bed, kids."

She asked the kids not to jump on the bed.
12. He said to her, "Please do not mention it again."

He asked her to never mention that again.

Reported Speech - Mixed Type

1. "I don't know that route. Do you?" she asked him.

She said that she didn't know the route and asked him if he did.

2. She said, "Oh! It's a spider. Stay away from it, children."

She exclaimed with disgust that it was a spider and told the children to stay away from it.

3. "If the riots get any more violent we must stay at home", she said.

(Must = will have to)

She said that if the riots got any more violent they would have to stay at home.

- (i) In all these sentences the reported part has more than one clause and tense. So, both the parts need attention to be converted into the indirect speech from the direct. This type of sentence is known as mixed type.
- (ii) When statements and questions are mixed, each section must be introduced by an appropriate verb, viz. tell, say, explain, remark etc., for statements and ask, enquire, want to know, wonder etc., for questions. A useful connective phrase for a statement is "adding that"...

For example

"I'm off to the mall. Where are you going?"

He said that he was off to the mall and wanted to know where I was going.

NOTES**Reported Speech: Statement: Rules**

Regardless of the tense of the reporting sentence, if it tells a universal fact, no change is made in the tense of the reported sentence.

Example No. 1:**Direct Speech:**

The mother is saying to the son, "The third month of the year is March."

Step 1: The reported sentence is: "The third March."

Step 2: It is a statement and a universal fact.

Step 3: So, the conjunction word is – "that".

Step 4: 'is saying to' changes into 'is telling'.

Step 5: No change of pronoun.

Step 6: It is a universal fact. So, no change of tense is necessary.

Step 7: No change of extension.

Now, the Indirect Speech is:

The mother is telling the son that the third month of the year is March.

Example No. 2:

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Direct Speech:

The History teacher says, “Magellan was the first navigator to travel around the globe.”.

Step 1: The reported sentence is: “Magellan globe.”

Step 2: It is a statement.

Step 3: The conjunction word is – “that”.

Step 4: ‘Says’ does not change. Use it as it is.

Step 5: There are no pronoun to get changed.

Step 6: No change of tense is made.

Step 7: No extensive word to get changed.

Now, the indirect speech is:

The History teacher says that Magellan was the first navigator to travel around the globe.

The following models have been answered for you:

1. The teacher has told the students, “Sea-water is different from river water.”.
The teacher has told the students that sea-water is different from river water.
2. Dean answered, “The caves are under the surface of the earth”.
Dean answered that the caves are under the surface of the earth.
3. James said to his friend, “U.N.O. is a world organisation”.
James told his friend that U.N.O. is a world organisation.

12.3.1 Types of Sentences

Let us analyse the different types of sentences.

1. Statement or Assertive Sentence

An assertive sentence or a statement is a sentence that states a fact.

Rules:

- Remove the quotation marks in the statement
- Use the conjunction ‘that’
- Change the reporting verb ‘say to’ into ‘tell’
- Change the reporting verb ‘said to’ into ‘told’

Note:

- He said that (correct)
 - He told me that (correct)
 - He told that (incorrect)
1. "I will work hard to top my class" said Steve (Direct)
Steve said he would work hard to top the class. (Indirect)
 2. "You can finish this task" said Mike to Patty (Direct)
Mike told Patty that she could finish that task. (Indirect)
 3. She says, "I am happy to be here this morning" (Direct)
She says that he is happy to be there that morning. (Indirect)

2. Imperative Sentence

An imperative sentence is a sentence that gives advice instructions or gives on order or a command.

Rules:

- Remove the quotation marks in an Imperative sentence.
 - Use 'to' if it is an affirmative sentence. (without don't)
 - Use 'not to' if the sentence begins without don't.
 - Don't use 'that'
 - Omit the word 'please'. Use the word 'request' instead of 'say'.
 - If the direct speech contains a request or a command, the reporting verb (say, said) changes to **tell, request, order, command** etc. in its correct tense.
1. "Don't laugh in the class" said the teacher to the girls. (Direct)
The teacher advised the girls not to laugh in the class. (Indirect)
 2. "Please give me something to drink. I am thirsty" the old lady said to them. (Direct)
The old lady requested them to give her something to drink and said that she was thirsty (Indirect)
 3. "Be careful" said he to her. (Direct)
He ordered her to be careful. (Indirect)

3. Interrogative Sentence

An interrogative sentence is a sentence that asks a question

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Rules:

- Remove the quotation marks and question mark in the interrogative sentence.
- Use ‘if’ or ‘whether’ if the sentence inside the quotation marks begins with a helping verb (auxiliary verb).
- Use the given interrogative word (what, when, where, why, who, whom, whose, which, now etc.) if it does not begin with the helping verb.
- Don’t use ‘that’.
- Changing the reporting verb (say, said) into ‘ask’ or ‘enquire’ in its correct tense.
- Omit helping verb like ‘do, does, did’. But don’t omit them when they are with ‘not’.

1. “Won’t you help me to carry this package?” said I to my brother. (Direct)

I asked my brother if he would not help me to carry that package. (Indirect)

2. Manny said to Justin, “Why did you not attend the conference yesterday?” (Direct)

Manny asked Justin why he had not attended the conference the day before. (Indirect)

3. “How often do you go to the movies?” said Cole to Joe. (Direct)

Cole asked Joe how often he went to the movies. (Indirect)

4. Exclamatory Sentence

An exclamatory sentence is a sentence that expresses strong feelings by making an exclamation.

Rules:

- Change the exclamatory sentence into statement or assertive sentence.
- Remove the quotation marks and exclamatory mark.
- Use the conjunction ‘that’
- Omit the interjections such as Oh, O, Alas, how, what, hurrah.
- Add the word ‘very’ to the adjective or adverb if necessary.
- If the verb is not given, use ‘Be’ form verb (is, was, are, were, am) in its correct tense according to the subject.
- Change the reporting verb (say, said) to ‘exclaim joyfully’
- Use ‘exclamation’ for sad or happy incidents.

1. “O, what a pleasant day it is!” said she. (Direct)

She exclaimed joyfully that that was a very pleasant day. (Indirect)

2. “What a terrible experience!” we all exclaimed. (Direct)
We all exclaimed that it was a very terrible experience. (Indirect)
3. “Alas! I have misplaced my mother’s necklace” said she. (Direct)
She exclaimed sorrowfully that she had misplaced her mother’s necklace. (Indirect)

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5. When is direct speech not converted into indirect speech?
6. What is an imperative sentence?
7. What is an exclamatory sentence?

12.4 ACTIVE AND PASSIVE VOICE

1. The active voice is the voice that is used most of the time. Most of the sentences we speak or write are in active voice. The following sentences are some examples of this.
 - I have just finished feeding my pet.
 - Pritam is teaching his younger brother to ride a cycle.
 - Sreeram has won a prize in the singing competition.
2. We use the active voice when we want to emphasize the subject; we use the passive voice when we want to emphasize the action. The following sentences are some examples of this.
 - Vaishali has decorated the house.
Here, we want to lay stress on the subject Vaishali, so we use the Active Voice.
 - The house has been decorated.
Here, we want to lay stress on the fact that the house has been decorated, so we use the Passive Voice. Note that the subject is not even mentioned here
3. Although most sentences are spoken or written in active voice, there are some cases where we need to use the passive voice. We use the passive voice when we want to make the object more important than the subject, or when we want to emphasize an action rather than its doer. Given below is an example.
 - America was discovered in 1492.
(Here, the author wishes to emphasise the discovery of America, so he uses the passive voice.

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Note: If the author had wanted to emphasize the subject or the doer of the action, he would have said:

- Christopher Columbus discovered America.

4. The passive voice is also used when we do not know the subject, or it is not important to mention the subject. The following sentences are some examples of this.

- The city has been beautified for the Commonwealth Games.
- The entire school has been painted for the Annual Day.

In the sentences above, the beautification of the city and the painting of the school are important, not who has done these actions.

5. When we form a sentence in Passive Voice, the object is preceded by with or by. When the passive object is a person, by is used, and when the passive object is a thing, with is used. The following sentences are some instances of this.

- Those flowers have been brought by Shruti.
- The safe was opened with a masterkey.

6. In interrogative sentences, remember that although most such sentences can be converted from active to passive voice, it is better to use the active voice as that always sounds better. Some examples of this are as follows:

- Are you reading the novel I gave you?
- Is the novel I gave you being read by you?

(In the above examples, you will notice that the first sentence in active voice sounds better than the second one in passive voice)

Some more examples:

- Does he like football? (Better)
Is football liked by him?
- Where did you buy this bag? (Better)
Where was this bag bought by you?
- When did you learn music? (Better)
When was music learnt by you?

12.4.1 Rules For Transformation

1. When a sentence is converted from Active to Passive Voice in the simple present tense, the structure of the verb changes from simple present form of the verb to is / are + simple past form of the verb. The following sentences are some examples of this rule.

- Surekha waters the flowers daily. (Active)
- The flowers are watered daily by Surekha. (Passive)

2. When a sentence is converted from Active to Passive Voice in the simple past tense, the structure of the verb changes from simple past form of the verb to was / were + past perfect of the verb. Given below are some examples.
 - Shiv drank a glass of milk everyday. (Active)
 - A glass of milk was drunk by Shiv everyday. (Passive)
3. When a sentence is converted from Active to Passive Voice in the present continuous tense, the structure of the verb changes from is / are + 'ing' form of the verb to is / are + being + past perfect of the verb. The sentences given below are some examples of this.
 - Rita and Sabina are singing carols. (Active)
 - Carols are being sung by Rita and Sabina. (Passive)
4. When a sentence is converted from Active to Passive Voice in the past continuous tense, the structure of the verb changes from was / were + 'ing' form of the verb to was / were + being + past perfect of the verb. The following are some examples of this.
 - Rita and Sabina were singing carols. (Active)
 - Carols were being sung by Rita and Sabina. (Passive)
5. When a sentence is converted from Active to Passive Voice in the simple future tense, the structure of the verb changes from will / shall + simple future tense of the verb to will / shall + be + past perfect of the verb. The following sentences are some examples.
 - Sayantan will accompany us. (Active)
 - We will be accompanied by Sayantan. (Passive)
6. When a sentence is converted from Active to Passive Voice in the future continuous tense, the structure of the verb changes from will / shall + be + 'ing' form of the verb to will / shall + be + past perfect of the verb. Given below are some examples.
 - Seema will be giving a dance performance tonight. (Active)
 - A dance performance will be given by Seema tonight. (Passive)
7. Sometimes, a statement in the Passive voice is grammatically correct, but it sounds rather odd. In such cases, it is better to use the Active Voice only. The second sentence in each example below, though correct, sounds very odd. The sentences given below are some examples of this instance.
 - Please help me. (Active) – Let me be helped. (Passive)
 - I see an opportunity. (Active) – An opportunity is seen by me. (Passive)
 - Did you find your keys? (Active) – Were your keys found by you? (Passive)

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- Drink the tea. (Active) – Let the tea be drunk by you. (Passive)
- You must not lend money on interest. (Active) – Money must not be lent by you on interest. (Passive)
- Obey the law. (Active) – Let the law be obeyed. (Passive)
- Will you receive me at the station? (Active) – Will I be received by you at the station? (Passive)

8. An imperative sentence does not usually possess a subject. It is used to express a command or request. When the imperative sentence in the passive voice, it takes the form of let + object + be + past participle. When the active voice is in the negative, the passive voice takes the form of let not + object + be + past participle. The examples of these instances are given follows:

- Finish the job at once. (Active voice)
- Let the job be finished at once. (Passive voice)
- Do not beat the dog. (Active voice)
- Let the dog not be beaten. OR Let not the dog be beaten. (Passive voice)

Sometimes we want to begin the sentence with you so that the emphasis is on the person addressed. In such cases, the passive voice takes the following form:

- Help him. (Active voice)
- You are requested to help him. (Passive voice)
- Learn your lessons. (Active voice)
- You are required to learn your lessons. (Passive voice)

The passive form has to begin with you, when the object of the verb in the active voice is not given. Some examples of this are as follows.

- Work hard. (No object) (Active voice)
- You are advised to work hard. (Passive voice)
- Get out. (No object) (Active voice)
- You are ordered to get out. (Passive voice)

Some more examples of conversion of Active Voice to Passive Voice

1. Active voice: Anjali loves Janaki.
Passive voice: Janaki is loved by Anjali.
2. Active voice: The mason is building the wall.
Passive voice: The wall is being built by the mason.
3. Active voice: The security guard opened the gate.
Passive voice: The gate was opened by the security guard.

4. Active voice: Some children were helping the wounded man
Passive voice: The wounded man was being helped by some children.
5. Active voice: He will finish the work in a week.
Passive voice: The work will be finished by him in a week.
6. Active voice: Who did this?
Passive voice: By whom was this done?
7. Active voice: Why did your brother write such a letter?
Passive voice: Why was such a letter written by your brother?
8. Active voice: Who stole the cookies?
Passive voice: By whom were the cookies stolen?
9. Active voice: She kept us waiting
Passive voice: We were kept waiting by her.
10. Active voice: The hunter did not aim at the bird.
Passive voice: The bird was not aimed at by the hunter.
11. Active voice: Did he give you anything?
Passive voice: Were you given anything by him?
12. Active voice: The company expanded their operations.
Passive voice: Operations were expanded by the company.
13. Active voice: The guard closed the gates at 10 o'clock.
Passive voice: The gates were closed by the guard at 10 o'clock.
14. Active voice: The gardener is plucking flowers.
Passive voice: Flowers are being plucked by the gardener.
15. Active voice: Is she presenting a paper?
Is a paper being presented by her.
16. Active voice: Are you taking your son for the show?
Passive voice: Is your son being taken for the show by you?
17. Active voice: You should write the address neatly.
Passive voice: The address should be written neatly.
18. Active voice: One cannot please everybody.
Passive voice: Everybody cannot be pleased.
19. Active voice: We should always speak the truth.
Passive voice: The truth should be always be spoken.
20. Active voice: Somebody must help this poor woman.
Passive voice: This poor woman must be helped.

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NOTES**Check Your Progress**

8. What is active voice?
9. What is passive voice?
10. State whether the following are active or passive voice sentences.
 - The entire house was painted by Tom.
 - The wedding planner is making all the reservations.

12.5 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS

1. The following assertive sentence has been changed into interrogative sentence:
Is he not a bad person?
2. The following exclamatory sentence has been changed to assertive sentence:
I wish I was a young man again.
3. The following sentence has been changed into simple sentences:
She wants to serve the fatherland.
4. The following sentence has been transformed as directed in the brackets:
Unless you hurry up, you shall miss the last ferry across the Bosphorus.
5. If the direct speech contains a universal truth, the tense of the direct speech remains unchanged even if the reporting verb is in the past.
6. An imperative sentence is a sentence that gives advice or instructions or that expresses a request or command.
7. An exclamatory sentence is a type of sentence that expresses strong feelings by making an exclamation.
8. Active voice describes a sentence where the subject performs the action denoted by the verb. In active voice, the subject is the doer of action.
9. Passive voice sentences describes a sentence where the subject is acted upon by the verb. In passive voice, the subject is the receiver of action.
10. According to the question, the voice of the given sentences has been specified below:
 - (a) This sentence is in the passive voice.
 - (b) This sentence is in the active voice.

12.6 SUMMARY

- The transformation of sentences is a useful skill to have because it helps altering sentences without changing the meaning of that sentence. There are a number of different rules involved in transformation that are applied to different kinds of sentences.
- If you want to change an affirmative assertive sentence you have to change it into negative interrogative. If it is in negative then you have to change it into bare interrogative. Transformation of interrogative to assertive is to be done doing the vice versa.
- In case of transformation of exclamatory to assertive sentences, the subject and verb of the exclamatory sentence are to be used as the subject and verb of assertive sentence at the outset of the sentence.
- To change one part of a sentence for another part, the verb of a sentence itself can be changed into another verb without change in the meaning of the sentence.
- While directly and indirectly quoting someone or to report something that is being said by someone, we need to keep in mind certain grammatical changes that we need to follow.
- Direct speech refers to quoting the exact words of the speaker.
- Indirect speech refers to the reporting of what a speaker said without quoting his or her exact words is known as indirect speech.
- If the direct speech contains a universal truth, the tense of the direct speech remains unchanged even if the reporting verb is in the past.
- If the reporting verb is in the Present or Future tense (e.g., say, will say) there is no change in the tense of the verb in the indirect speech.
- If reporting verb is in the Past Tense, the tense of the verbs in the reported speech or indirect speech must be generally changed.
- An assertive statement or a statement is a sentence that states a fact.
- An interrogative sentence is a sentence which asks a question.
- An imperative sentence is a sentence that gives advice or instructions or that expresses a request or command.
- An exclamatory sentence is a type of sentence that expresses strong feelings by making an exclamation.
- The Active voice is the voice that is used most of the time. Most of the sentences we speak or write are in Active voice.
- Although most sentences are spoken or written in Active voice, there are some cases where we need to use the Passive voice. We use the Passive

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voice when we want to make the object more important than the subject, or when we want to emphasize an action rather than its doer.

- The Passive voice is also used when we do not know the subject, or it is not important to mention the subject.
- In interrogative sentences, remember that although most such sentences can be converted from Active to Passive voice, it is better to use the Active voice as that always sounds better.
- When a sentence is converted from Active to Passive voice in the simple present tense, the structure of the verb changes from simple present form of the verb to is / are + simple past form of the verb.
- When a sentence is converted from Active to Passive voice in the simple past tense, the structure of the verb changes from simple past form of the verb to was / were + past perfect of the verb.
- When a sentence is converted from Active to Passive voice in the present continuous tense, the structure of the verb changes from is / are + 'ing' form of the verb to is / are + being + past perfect of the verb.
- When a sentence is converted from Active to Passive voice in the past continuous tense, the structure of the verb changes from was / were + 'ing' form of the verb to was / were + being + past perfect of the verb.
- When a sentence is converted from Active to Passive voice in the simple future tense, the structure of the verb changes from will / shall + simple future tense of the verb to will / shall + be + past perfect of the verb.
- When a sentence is converted from Active to Passive voice in the future continuous tense, the structure of the verb changes from will / shall + be + 'ing' form of the verb to will / shall + be + past perfect of the verb.
- Sometimes, a statement in the Passive voice is grammatically correct, but it sounds rather odd. In such cases, it is better to use the Active voice only.
- An imperative sentence does not usually possess a subject. It is used to express a command or request. When the imperative sentence in the passive voice, it takes the form of let + object + be + past participle. When the active voice is in the negative, the passive voice takes the form of let not + object + be + past participle.
- Sometimes we want to begin the imperative sentence with you so that the emphasis is on the person addressed.
- In imperative sentences, the passive form has to begin with you, when the object of the verb in the active voice is not given.

12.7 KEY WORDS

- **Independent Clause:** An independent clause is a clause that has a subject and verb and formulates a complete thought.
- **Gerundial Infinitive:** When the infinitive is used to qualify a noun, verb or adjective, it is called a qualifying infinitive or gerundial infinitive.
- **Assertive Sentence:** An assertive statement or a statement is a sentence that states a fact.
- **Interrogative Sentence:** An interrogative sentence is a sentence which asks a question.
- **Imperative Sentences:** An imperative sentence is a sentence that gives advice or instructions or that expresses a request or command.

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12.8 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short Answer Questions

1. What are the rules applied to the transformation of sentences from simple to complex?
2. What are the rules applied to transformation of sentences from simple to compound?
3. What are the rules applied to transformation of sentences when a change in the degree is required?
4. Rewrite the following sentences by using the passive voice of the verb:
 - (a) Asif told Rigya a lie.
 - (b) Govt. College for Women won several prizes in the youth festival.
5. Change the voice of the following imperative sentences:
 - (a) You are requested to help the poor in their crisis.
 - (b) Do not humiliate the needy.
 - (c) Send reminders to all the defaulters.
6. Change the following direct speech into indirect speech:
 - (a) 'I'm going to the mall now', said Warren.
 - (b) 'Bring me a glass of water', said Andre to Neena.
 - (c) Asif said to Ali, 'Do you like grapes?'
 - (d) 'How pretty she is!' said Bernard.

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7. Transform the following sentences as directed in the brackets:

- (a) How beautiful is the dawn! (assertive)
- (b) Rigya knows that terrifying man. (complex)
- (c) She treated me viciously. (adjective)
- (d) The Isle of Skye is the most beautiful island in Scotland. (comparative)
- (e) Helena understands that the earth is round. (compound)
- (f) Sabari writes more clearly than all other boys of his class. (positive)

Long Answer Questions

1. How does one change imperative sentences to assertive sentences? state the rules.
2. What are the conditions for changing exclamatory direct speech into indirect speech? Give examples.
3. Explain the rules of changing direct speech into indirect speech with respect to tenses. Give examples.
4. What are the rules for changing assertive sentences? Give examples.
5. What are the rules applies to mixed type sentences? Give examples.
6. Explain with examples the rules to change interrogative sentences.
7. How does one change imperative direct speech into indirect sentences? Explain with examples.
8. What are the different rules of changing a sentence from active to passive voice with respect to the tenses? Give examples of each.

12.9 FURTHER READINGS

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BLOCK - IV

Composition I

DEVELOPING WRITING SKILLS

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UNIT 13 COMPOSITION I

Structure

- 13.0 Introduction
- 13.1 Objectives
- 13.2 Letter Writing
 - 13.2.1 Parts of a Letter
 - 13.2.2 Layout of a Letter
 - 13.2.3 Essentials of a Good Business Letter
- 13.3 Précis Writing
 - 13.3.1 Developing Hints
- 13.4 Answers to Check Your Progress Questions
- 13.5 Summary
- 13.6 Key Words
- 13.7 Self Assessment Questions and Exercises
- 13.8 Further Readings

13.0 INTRODUCTION

Composition writing can be described as the effort of bringing together ideas and creating a coherent piece. Writing well has been a crucial communication skill since time immemorial. Compositions can be of various types, but in this unit, we will learn only three types: letter writing, précis writing and developing hints. Even though, in today's times with the development of technology, handwritten letters are on a decline, letter writing is still relevant. It has just changed its platform and is very common over the e-mail technology. Letters are the best way to communicate ideas in a structured form. Précis writing is another form of composition which allows for a faster and concise communication for here, the ideas are expressed in a brief yet effective manner. On the other spectrum of précis writing is another composition tool: developing hints. As the name suggests, it is related to the building up of material from very short clues.

13.1 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Analyse the requisites or essentials of a good letter
- Evaluate the process of writing a précis

13.2 LETTER WRITING

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A letter is a permanent and tangible record of a formal relationship. It is generally written for enquiry, to give information, give instruction, or to persuade the recipient towards the desired action. A well-written formal letter can achieve much for a purpose. It can act as an effective sales person, create goodwill, strengthen the relationship with customer and act as a source of reliable, useful information.

Because of its importance it is a must that formal letters be effectively written and maintain conformity to certain standards. A badly written letter reflects poorly on the writer. Some of the deficiencies of a poorly written letter are summarized below:

- Lack of clarity
- Poor use of words and expressions
- Incorrect spellings and grammatical errors
- Too short or very lengthy
- Factually incorrect
- Too much of jargon and technical words
- Offensive language
- Lacking in courtesy
- Absence of relevant information or too much information
- Use of poor quality ink, paper etc.
- Wrong address/No address

Today, most of the letters that are written are in the domain of business or written formally. Since personal letters do not follow very many hard and fast rules. We will restrict our discussion on letter writing with business letters in mind. Business is all about creating goodwill, favourable impressions, attracting attention, creating interest, wooing customers, reaching prospects, and building relationships. All this calls for conscious effort, concerted action and correspondence on a regular basis. As this has to be done in a world that is full of competition, one bad letter can cause avoidable damage to the reputation of the business and the individual. Badly written letters cause embarrassment to the people involved in the business and show the organization in poor light. In the succeeding section, we will discuss the parts of letter in the context of business letters.

13.2.1 Parts of a Letter

A business letter consists of the following essential parts:

- 1. Heading:** Business letters are written on letterheads that show the name and address of the organization, its telephone and fax numbers; the Internet and e-mail addresses along with the logo of the company. At the foot of the

page, the address of the 'registered office' and a registration number might appear.

Only the first page of any letter on letter-head stationery, with subsequent pages on blank pages. The heading also consists of a 'reference'—this could be a file number. It indicates the company's reference or the recipient's if this is a continuing correspondence.

The heading also consists of a date. There are two styles of writing the dates on which the letter must be written—British style (25th April 2007) and American style (April 25, 2007).

2. **Name and address of the recipient:** The name and address of the recipient as it will appear on the envelope is also mentioned in the letter. This ensures that the letter reaches the correct person even if the envelope gets damaged. The name includes the title of the person (Mr, Ms, Dr).
3. **Opening salutation:** Salutation is a way of addressing the addressee. The words generally depend upon the relation of the writer with the addressee. Although 'Dear Sir' or 'Dear Madam' is still used in very formal correspondence, it is a little old-fashioned and organizations now prefer to use a more personal approach.
4. **Subject line:** This is often omitted, but its inclusion means the reader can quickly see what the letter is about. Subject heading is prefixed with the word 'Subject' or 'Sub' or 'Ref' and underlined to make it more prominent.
5. **Main body of the letter:** This part contains the actual message/content of the letter. It consists of several paragraphs. Always leave a line space between paragraphs. The first paragraph is the introductory one which may include a reference to a previous correspondence or a telephonic conversation. The middle paragraphs constitute the main body and deal with the subject matter. The last paragraph is the concluding paragraph and states the expectation of some action.
6. **Complimentary closure:** It is a polite, formal way to end a letter. Standard forms are *Yours faithfully* or *Yours sincerely*. The complimentary closure must match the salutation.

Dear Sir or Dear Madam matches with *Yours faithfully*
Dear Mr Smith matches with *Yours sincerely*
7. **Signature space:** Leave space for the writer to sign the letter, usually about 5 blank line spaces. The signature is written in handwriting below the complimentary close. The name and designation of the person signing the letter are printed below signature for clarity.
8. **Enclosures:** In case any documents are being sent with the letter, it is indicated on the left hand bottom corner of the letter. It is abbreviated as 'Encls' or 'Encl' and after the abbreviation is given the number of enclosures.

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NOTES**13.2.2 Layout of a Letter**

These days, there is a tendency to adopt a friendly and informal style. However, you should follow an established type or form to avoid inconvenience, confusion and wastage of time. The company's in-house style includes rules on the layout of its business letters. A proper layout also gives the letter a formal look.

For most business letters, single line spacing is used as this gives the letter a compact look. In case the letter is very short, you may need to use double spacing. There are various styles of layouts available for business letters. In different forms there are different systems of indentation followed. The various styles include:

- Fully indented style
- Semi indented style
- Fully blocked style
- Modified blocked style

1. Fully indented style

This style has become old fashioned and is being fast replaced by other styles. Each paragraph appears prominently in this type of layout. This style is at times found cumbersome because of its numerous indentations. It has the following characteristics:

- The name, address and paragraphs of the body are five spaces indented.
- The letter is typed in single line spacing.
- The subject heading is two line spacing below the salutation which is three line spacing below the inside name and address.
- The paragraphs are separated by double line spacing.
- The complimentary closure begins at the centre of the typing line and the typed signature and designation follow ten spaces and five spaces as is determined depending on the length of the two.
- The inside address is offset to give the letter a balance.

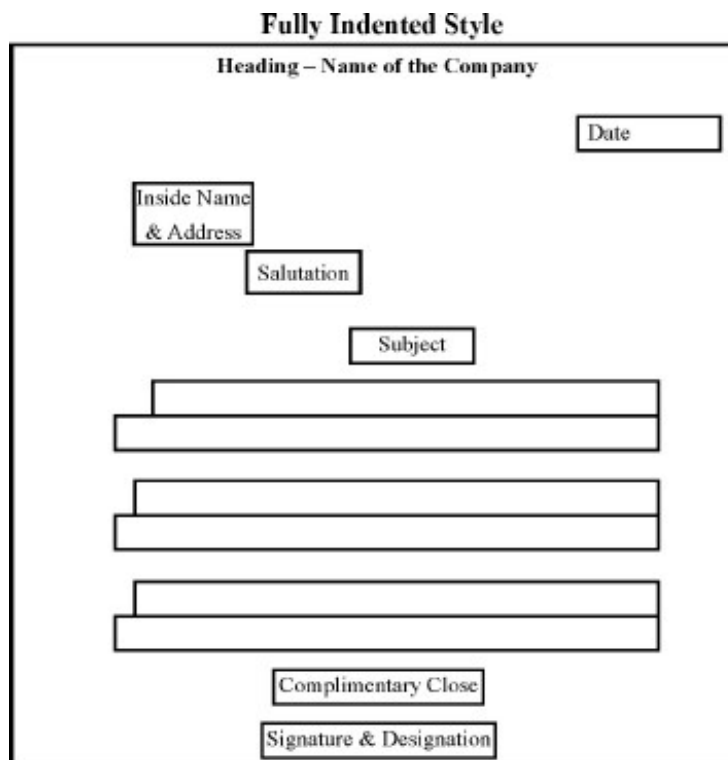
Fully Indented Style

Heading – Name of the Company	
Our Ref No. _____ Your Ref No. _____ Inside Name Address Salutation Subject Body of the Letter	Company's Address Phone No. Date Complimentary Close Signature & Designation

NOTES**2. Semi indented style**

This is a modified version of the fully indented style. It has the following characteristics:

- (i) The inside name and address does not have any indentation and is in a block form.
- (ii) The complimentary close and designation are typed evenly across the centre of the typed line. However, sometimes they are placed to the right hand side.
- (iii) This style provides a neat and compact look because of the block form of name and address.

NOTES**3. Fully blocked style**

This is a modern style and is most commonly used. Earlier the 'indented' format was used for business letters, but as a result of word processing, the 'fully blocked' format is the most commonly used one now, as it saves time setting up tabs and indents and the letters look more neat and tidy. It has the following characteristics:

- (i) All typed entries including date, inside name and address, subject line, paragraph, complimentary close, signatures begin at the left-hand margin, forming a vertical line down the page.
- (ii) There is a complete absence of punctuation marks from the date, salutation, the complimentary close and the end line of the inside name and address.
- (iii) In some letters, the date and complimentary close are placed towards the right margin so as to give the letter a more balanced appearance. This style is known as semi-blocked style.

Name of the Company	
Date Inside Name & Address Salutation Subject	Address & Phone No.
Body of the Letter	
Complimentary Close Signature Designation	

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4. Modified blocked style

This style is similar to the fully blocked style. The difference in this style is that the date, subject heading and the complimentary close signature are placed like semi-indented style. There is a treble line spacing between paragraphs to differentiate between paragraphs as paragraphs do not have indentation.

Modified Blocked Style	
Name & Address of the Company	
Ref. No. Inside Name & Address Satutation	Date
Subject	
Complimentary Close Signature Designation	

NOTES**13.2.3 Essentials of a Good Business Letter**

Before discussing the essentials of a good business letter, it would be desirable to keep in view what such a letter can achieve for business or the individual. A good business or formal letter can reach out and directly address the target, be it a customer or a prospect or a patron or regulator. A good business letter can address the prospect and set the sales pitch. A good business letter can act as an effective salesperson. A good business letter can strengthen the bond and provide further details to an existing customer. A good business letter can, thus, act as your relationship officer. A good business letter can dispel disinformation and create goodwill. It thereby acts as your ambassador. A good business letter can make announcements, share relevant information and keep you in touch with people who matter. In this way, a good business letter can be your Public Relations Officer (PRO). Well-written and imaginatively drafted letters can play the role of a salesman, a relationship officer, an ambassador and a PRO for business establishments. This is true especially for small businesses which cannot afford to employ people specifically for carrying out these functions.

Let us now briefly discuss the requisites or essentials of a good business or formal letter.

1. Clarity

A letter must have clarity. The underlying message should be expressed in clear terms. Care should be taken to avoid ambiguity. The purpose of communication should be made clear. Whether it is to inform, invite, reiterate, emphasize, remind, announce, seek participation or clarity and correct the earlier message, the purpose should clearly be stated.

If a letter-writer is writing a letter on behalf of somebody else, it should be done after obtaining clear instructions. There are occasions when one may receive a letter informing the date and the venue of a meeting without an accompanying invitation or request to attend. The reader or the receiver of the communication, in such an instance, will be in a dilemma. Is the invitation intended and implied but not specifically stated? Or is the letter just meant to be informative and no invitation is being extended. One way or the other, the message should be clear. There are umpteen ways in which the lack of clarity affects the intended purpose of the letter. A letter-writer should be conscious of this and exercise due care.

2. Impact

The letter should create the necessary impact. Behind every letter, there is an objective and the letter should have a clear purpose. The purpose of writing a letter is not just to reach out to the receiver. Every letter has an intended impact

which must be felt. To create the desired impact, it is often necessary to lay emphasis. Emphasis can be laid in many ways. It can be done by proper positioning—placing them in an important position. It can be done by repetition. It can be done by underlining or using a larger type or font. Similarly, to create the right impact, the letter-writer should address the letter to the right person. The right person is the specific person who is the target of the communication, and whose action or response, the business considers to be of value. Creating an impact also calls for establishing an appropriate wavelength. The letter-writer should write keeping in view the skill, knowledge, status, and comprehension ability of the reader or the addressee.

Yet another requisite of an impact-creating letter is coherence. It is necessary to use words, phrases and clauses clearly, so as to form balanced sentences. Coherence seeks to establish a proper relationship and link sentences to make the intended message clear. Coherence brings consistency and orderliness to the encoded message.

A letter succeeds in creating the desired impact when it ensures purpose orientation, lays the right emphasis, establishes an appropriate wavelength and is coherent. Some of the common questions asked or statements made in relation to these attributes are:

- What is one trying to convey? (Purpose Orientation)
- Which of these is really urgent? (Emphasis)
- Is it too elementary or is it an overhead transmission? (Wavelength)
- What is the sequence? (Coherence)

It is necessary to give due attention to these areas and build up skills so that the letters become impactful.

3. Relevance

The letter should provide the relevant details forming part of the message. Facts, figures, illustrations and other such information, which are both accurate and reliable, as well as relevant to the context of the communication, should be incorporated in the letter. The principle of communication that we are referring to here is also known as adequacy or completeness. A communication can be said to be complete only when it contains all the facts and details which the receiver needs to know in order to respond or act on the basis of that communication. Not giving all the required details leads to protracted correspondence, loss of customers or lack of response. Worse still, although non-submission of full details may be due to an oversight or inadequate attention to details, the receiver may infer that there is a deliberate attempt to withhold or conceal facts and figures. Imagine a letter received from a departmental store announcing the opening of a new branch and seeking

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your patronage, that does not give details of the new address or timings. Another requirement of a letter is concreteness. A communication is said to be concrete when it is specific, definite and to the point, and not vague and generalized. Often the letters are so rambling in nature that one can imagine the reader screaming, 'Please come to the point and be specific'. A concrete letter does not ramble and is sharp and focussed.

4. Brevity

Any good communication—oral or written—should necessarily incorporate this essential feature. Brevity is a very important attribute for any business letter. For everyone connected with business, time is of essence. The time that one can allot for reading business letters is certainly limited. The receiver does not have unlimited time to spare towards reading and re-reading the letter and drawing out the message in its entirety. On the contrary, any business letter is competing with a huge mass of business related and other communication targeted at the receiver, waiting to catch attention and time. Recognizing this, any business will have to value the receiver's time. Brevity in letter writing, therefore, is a must. Long letters, whatever be their merits, are often kept aside for 'later reading'. Brevity in communication is also referred to as conciseness. Conciseness refers to the skill of conveying what one wants to convey in the fewest possible words, without sacrificing completeness or courtesy. Conciseness eliminates unnecessary words and phrases, repetitive sentences, and keeps the letter focussed. A good letter makes economical use of words.

5. Simplicity

Simplicity is the hallmark of any good communication. Simplicity refers to the ease of understanding. Simple writing is the opposite of complex and involved writing. The art of simple writing is mastered through conscious effort and practice. A letter written in a simple, easy, informal style using easily understood words catches the attention, and makes an impact. Simplicity in writing does not, however, necessarily imply simple or plain thoughts. The thoughts may be complex, and the subject quite complicated, but the manner of expression or presentation is kept simple. It takes tremendous insight and skill to express complex matters and complicated issues in a simple form. The normal tendency on the part of the communicator is to resort to complex sentences, clichés, technical jargon and high-sounding words to communicate not-so-simple thoughts and developments, resulting in confusion and bewilderment. One must make constant endeavours to write simple, yet meaningful and impact-creating business letters. It involves not only the use of simple words, but also, more importantly, a clear insight into the structure of sentences and paragraphs. Brevity and simplicity are so essential for

good communication that many writers refer to it with the acronym KISS—Keep It (the letter) Short and Simple.

6. Timeliness

Letters, to be effective, should have proper timing. Letters should be written and dispatched on time. Some messages have a sense of urgency. They call for action, which is ‘immediate’ or ‘urgent’, or within a given time frame. Letters which carry such messages should reflect the associated urgency. They should be so addressed and delivered that there is enough time to permit action within the given time frame. It is not uncommon to see letters seeking some action by a specified date reaching the receiver after that date.

Apart from negating the purpose of communication, such letters reflect poorly on both the organization and the sender of the message. If the action called for is so urgent, the minimum that anyone would expect from the sender is a clear demonstration of the urgency by ensuring speedy communication. This necessitates not only timely writing but also timely dispatch. For example, there may be occasions when a letter dated 15 September 2001 or 20 September 2001 reaches the addressee on 2 October 2001 or 5 October 2001. Goal-oriented and effective communication presupposes that the person concerned acts and intervenes at every stage in the transmission of communication.

7. Suitability of language

Language is an extremely important facet of communication. First and foremost, it is necessary to ensure that the language used is appropriate, i.e. the language with which the reader is at ease. Letters should use the language which the addressee can read and understand. Grammatical errors and spelling mistakes have no place in a good letter. They create a poor impression on the reader. Every business writer may or may not achieve grammatical perfection. The use of commas at all relevant places in the sentence and avoidance of split infinitives, for example, may not always take place. In fact, certain grammatical imperfections such as the use of split infinitives are tolerated as long as the message is clear. The important point emphasized here is that while the letter-writer may or may not achieve grammatical perfection, glaring and obvious grammatical errors have no place in good writing. A good letter-writer should know his grammar well and seek appropriate reference when in doubt. A business letter with noticeably bad grammar, notwithstanding whatever other merits, creates a poor impression on the reader.

8. Effective vocabulary or word power

For the language to be effective, an important prerequisite is abundant vocabulary or word power. Words are the very essence of written communication. Words

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translate thoughts and carry the message to the reader. They lay emphasis as and when required. Since words have the potential to make or mar the language of the business communicator, this aspect has been dealt with in some detail in the following paragraphs.

The world of words, as we have noted earlier, is wonderful and fascinating. The English language has an enormous stock of words. With new words being added constantly, the stock of useable English words keeps growing. *The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (2000 edition) gives as many as 80,000 words and references covering both British English and American English. This vast and growing reservoir of words offers at once, both an opportunity and a challenge, to the communicator. It is an opportunity because there is a tremendous choice of words available to the person. It is a challenge no doubt, for the building up of word power calls for a systematic and ongoing effort, using familiar words and learning new words. One can easily spend one's lifetime learning new words, understanding their shades of meaning and effectively using all the words available.

Words make the letter. A good letter-writer should choose words with care. To do so, one must necessarily build an enormous word power. Every person keen on becoming an effective communicator should delve deeply into words and their meanings. Most words have many shades of meaning. The appropriate word or set of words depends on the context, tone and gravity of the message, and also the relationship with the person to whom it is addressed.

9. Appeal

A good letter should appeal to the reader's sensibilities. It should go beyond the message it conveys and make an overall good impression. It should have elegance, which means taste, beauty, and decency. A good letter also ensures certain aesthetic appeal. No letter can be called elegant or aesthetically appealing if it does not give due attention to appearance. Mistakes and corrections, striking, overwriting, improper ink flow, unintended gaps and other such deficiencies rob an otherwise good letter of all its elegance.

A letter is appealing when it shows consideration. Consideration means thoughtfulness. It means keeping in mind the reader and putting oneself in the reader's shoes while writing the letter. Consideration means visualizing the reactions of the reader and accommodating them in the approach to the communication. A good letter-writer invariably makes it a point to think from the other person's point of view. Another essential for a good writer is empathy. A letter shows empathy when it reflects understanding and comprehension of the impact on the reader. It tells the reader what is of interest to the reader. A

good letter uses the 'you' more frequently than 'I'. A good letter makes the reader feel important.

10. Good style

Style refers to the manner of writing. It constitutes the collective characteristics of the writing or impression or way of presenting things. Every person has an individual style. The writing style, to create an impact, again needs conscious effort, on an ongoing basis. While encompassing various requisites of letter writing, the letter brings to bear the individual's stamp on the letter. If you are regularly reading the letters emanating from a particular source, you get to identify the style. People tend to judge the style and categorize them—good style, bad style, free style, etc.

Style can be associated with the person writing the letter and carries certain distinctiveness. Style is also understood as 'Proper words in proper places'. One can also describe style in other ways—personal or impersonal, formal or informal, narrative or descriptive, rambling or focussed, considerate or harsh, simple or verbose. A simple, informal, considerate and focused style of writing scores high in building a rapport with the reader.

A good writing style also implies the proper use of idioms and expressions. An idiom is described as the way ideas are used in a language. It is a form of expression peculiar to a language. Like any other language, English too has its idioms. Another aspect worth noting in the context of developing a good writing style is to avoid clichés. Clichés are hackneyed literary phrases. They are often repeated ad nauseum. Some commonly used clichés are; 'Last but not least'; 'Better late than never'; 'However, there is no room for complacency', and so on.

A good writing style carries sincerity. Sincere writing is straightforward and there is no attempt at manipulation. The writer comes through as honest, genuine and frank. Some writing also gets described as candid and transparent. Being sincere, therefore, means writing naturally. The words reflect feelings, concerns and expectations in a forthright manner.

A good writing style should also encompass politeness or courtesy. It should respect the reader as an individual. It should reflect the basic minimum courtesies that any transaction or relationship demands. It should be appreciative and complementary to the extent appropriate in the given context. Business letters, by and large, seek to strengthen the relationships that are good for business when the occasion demands. The writer should not hesitate to apologize for omissions or errors.

A good writing style also refers to writing naturally, without undue efforts. Otherwise the writing becomes laboured and loses spontaneity. After a while, the

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tediousness starts showing. The ability to write spontaneously and effortlessly for all occasions has to be consciously developed.

11. Positive approach

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A good letter, in the ultimate analysis is that which has a positive approach. It creates a friendly atmosphere. It avoids negative feelings. One must be in a proper frame of mind to write a really good letter. Thoughts and words must be synchronized. The basic objective should not be lost sight of. The letter should bestir and motivate the reader to act or respond as visualized. Good letters cannot be written under extreme emotional conditions such as sorrow, depression, anger, frustration or shock. Such letters may not carry the overall balance in approach which is so essential for effective writing. Similarly, a good letter cannot be written in a great hurry. One must take adequate time to put thoughts into words, choosing the most appropriate ones for the context. The writer should write the letter taking adequate time, with due attention to all relevant considerations.

Apart from the various characteristics already listed, a good letter should have integrity, accuracy and promptness. There should be respect for values, and ethical and moral standards. The writer should demonstrate a sense of legitimacy in his writing. Messages should be accurate and there should not be any misrepresentation and out of context passages. Positive approach also means being prompt in responding. A writer is often also a recipient of communication. The writer should make it a point to respond without any undue delay.

A positive approach does not mean that one has to say 'yes', for everything. Any business has its commercial considerations. It has its rules, norms and compliances. One cannot say 'yes' if it is commercially imprudent and if the set norms are not met. Good letter-writing, therefore, is the art of learning to say 'no' by packaging 'no' in a pleasing manner. It is the art of packaging 'no' in an acceptable format. It is the art of winning over the customer even while losing that particular offer or transaction. The business offer may or may not come up to the expectation, but, nevertheless, the communication should leave behind a favourable impression.

A skilful writer learns to mitigate the hardship or adverse impact of the message through choice of words and manner of presentation. Although what is being said is not pleasant, how it is being said makes it less unpleasant.

A good letter radiates enthusiasm. Any good communication should have variety. It is said that variety is the spice of life. Variety adds spice to writing. It makes communication lively and interesting. A good letter makes its impact the

very first time. When the letter is repeated, however good and relevant it may be, the impact gets diluted. The reader's interest wanes. When the subject of the message is repetitive in nature, in terms of thoughts and ideas, there may not be much change. Nevertheless, in terms of choice of words, structure of sentences and intensity of the tone, the letter can and should be different.

Viewed against the backdrop of so many essentials for good letter-writing, models or drafts or stereotyped formats of letters are of limited value. Barring areas such as documentation, legal drafting, routine procedural forms, etc. it is not desirable to follow stereotyped writing models. Any draft or model letter would also carry the writer's style or approach. Moreover, copying or adopting such formats blindly restricts the writer's ability to develop a distinctive style of writing. In any case, each situation and every context is quite different and no standard format can be followed without appropriate refinements. At best, such formats can only be taken as broadly suggestive or indicative. Instead of taking a model and attempting to make requisite modifications to suit one's specific needs, it would be worthwhile to understand the principles and develop one's writing skills.

In the foregoing paragraphs, we have looked at numerous essentials or requisites of good writing. The attempt has been to make it fairly exhaustive rather than to cover only the minimum requisites. One can refer to the minimum requisites as the 'ABC' of good letter writing, where A stands for accuracy, B for brevity and C for clarity. The minimum requisites are necessary, but by no means adequate.

12. Excellence

A good letter-writer should try to achieve a significantly high standard of letter-writing and endeavour to achieve excellence. All the dozen or so essentials outlined above are relevant in building up the skills of effective letter-writing. When we talk of business letters, we refer to a great variety of letters. They range from the routine, repetitive letters to the more complex, goal-oriented ones. They seek not only to inform, educate and appeal, but also to carry out complex and composite functions such as evaluation, justification, motivation, persuasion, penetration, dispelling of wrong impressions and even award of punishment. They may be as short as half a page or as long as eight to ten pages. The bigger and more complex the letter, greater the scope for skilful writing.

The essentials outlined above are not to be taken as a checklist against which every letter has to be evaluated. Some letters need to be just simple and straightforward and there may not be much scope for imagination or creativity. The nature of the subject, the context of the communication and the relationship of the recipient determine how many qualities or essentials one can build into any

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letter. Being aware of as many essentials as are relevant in writing a wide range of business letters helps in developing effective letter writing skills.

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13.3 PRÉCIS WRITING

A précis is a shortened version of a long passage. While writing a précis, one has to take care that the meaning of the original passage has been effectively conveyed. According to the Oxford dictionary, précis is defined as ‘a summary or abstract of a text or speech’.

How to Write a Précis

To write a good précis, go through the following steps:

- Read the passage carefully and try to understand what the writer is trying to say. Read the passage more than once if you have not been able to understand the writer’s meaning the first time.
- Form a clear idea of the author’s meaning.
- Frame a title for the précis. Even if the original passage does not have a title, you must give a short title to the précis.
- Go through the passage once again and make a note of the main points.
- From the points you have noted, write a short passage which covers all the points. Remember to use your own words and not copy the language of the original.
- While writing the précis, omit any examples or illustrations that the original contains.
- Compare the précis with the original passage to make sure that all the important points have been included.
- Count the words in the original and in the précis you have written. The précis should be roughly one-third the length of the original.
- Write the final précis neatly on another sheet of paper.
- At the end of the précis, mention in brackets the number of words it contains.

C. Points to Remember

While writing a précis, some important points should be kept in mind. These are:

- Whatever the person or form of speech of the original, write the précis in third person in indirect speech.

- Write the précis in one tense only.
- Make sure that the précis is contained in one paragraph, even if the original passage has more than one paragraph.
- The opinion of the original author should be conveyed in the précis, not that of the writer of the précis. Do not express your own opinion or make any comment of your own in the précis.

NOTES**13.3.1 Developing Hints**

Developing hints into a story means to construct a story from a given outline. In this, the writer should have a clear idea of the story before he or she starts writing. He/she should follow the outline given, not omitting any point and keeping the order in which the points are given in the outline. The story should have coherence and a logical order. One can introduce conversation if needed. The conclusion to the story is very important, the entire story should conclude naturally. A suitable title should be applied.

Check Your Progress

1. List some of the different categories of purposes for writing a letter.
2. Which attributes of the addressee should the letter-writer keep in mind while writing a letter?
3. Mention the common acronym used to indicate brevity and simplicity in letter writing.
4. What does ABC stand for in letter writing?
5. State the elements which are eliminated in précis writing.
6. Which form of speech is used in précis writing?

13.4 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS

1. Some of the different categories of purposes for writing a letter are to inform, invite, reiterate, emphasize, remind, announce, seek participation or clarity and correct the earlier message.
2. The letter-writer should write keeping in view the skill, knowledge, status, and comprehension ability of the reader or the addressee.
3. The common acronym used to indicate brevity and simplicity in letter writing is KISS—Keep It (the letter) Short and Simple.

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4. In 'ABC' in good letter writing, A stands for accuracy, B for brevity and C for clarity.
5. While writing the précis, any examples or illustrations that the original contains are omitted.
6. The précis is written in third person in indirect speech.

13.5 SUMMARY

- A letter is a permanent and tangible record of a formal relationship. It is generally written for enquiry, to give information, give instruction, or to persuade the recipient towards the desired action. A well-written formal letter can achieve much for a purpose.
- The letter has the following components heading, addresses of the recipients, salutation, complimentary closure, main body of the letter, signature and enclosures.
- Well-written and imaginatively drafted letters can play the role of a salesman, a relationship officer, an ambassador and a PRO for business establishments. This is true especially for small businesses which cannot afford to employ people specifically for carrying out these functions.
- The requisites or essentials of a good business or formal letter: clarity, impact, relevance, brevity, simplicity, timeliness, suitable language, vocabulary, appeal, positive approach, excellence, good style, etc.
- A précis is a shortened version of a long passage. While writing a précis, one has to
- take care that the meaning of the original passage has been effectively conveyed. According to the Oxford dictionary, précis is defined as 'a summary or abstract of a text or speech'.
- While writing a précis, some important points should be kept in mind. These are: Whatever the person or form of speech of the original, write the précis in third person in indirect speech, write the précis in one tense only, make sure that the précis is contained in one paragraph, even if the original passage has more than one paragraph and the opinion of the original author should be conveyed in the précis, not that of the writer of the précis. Do not express your own opinion or make any comment of your own in the précis.
- Developing hints into a story means to construct a story from a given outline. In this, the write should have a clear idea of the story before he

or she starts writing. He/she should follow the outline given, not omitting any point and keeping the order in which the points are given in the outline. The story should have coherence and a logical order. One can introduce conversation if needed. The conclusion to the story is very important, the entire story should conclude naturally. A suitable title should be applied.

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13.6 KEY WORDS

- **Letter:** It is a permanent and tangible record of a formal relationship. It is generally written for enquiry, to give information, give instruction, or to persuade the recipient towards the desired action.
- **Précis:** It is a shortened version of a long passage.
- **Developing Hints:** It refers to the composition technique of constructing a story from a given outline.
- **Conciseness:** It refers to the skill of conveying what one wants to convey in the fewest possible words, without sacrificing completeness or courtesy.

13.7 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short Answer Questions

1. What are the deficiencies of a poorly written letter?
2. Explain the importance of brevity in letter writing.
3. What is meaning of positive approach in letter writing?
4. Write a short note on developing hints.

Long Answer Questions

1. Discuss the requisites or essentials of a good business or formal letter.
2. Describe the essential parts of a business letter.
3. Explain the composition technique of writing a précis.
4. Describe the different layouts of a letter.

13.8 FURTHER READINGS

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UNIT 14 COMPOSITION II

Structure

- 14.0 Introduction
- 14.1 Objectives
- 14.2 Paragraph Writing
 - 14.2.1 Paragraph Writing Process
- 14.3 Dialogue Writing
- 14.4 Answers to Check Your Progress Questions
- 14.5 Summary
- 14.6 Key Words
- 14.7 Self Assessment Questions and Exercises
- 14.8 Further Readings

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14.0 INTRODUCTION

The final unit of the book will discuss dialogue writing and paragraph writing.

Writing for some seems to be a difficult task. People fear that what they write will not be worthy to be read by others. This fear prevents them from writing or expressing themselves. As a written document can be preserved for a longer time and can be referred to in future, therefore, one usually tends to think that what he/she writes needs to have a certain standard. One should keep in mind that writing is a craft which can be learnt through proper training.

It has to be kept in mind that to be an effective writer, one should not only have ideas, but should also know how to put those ideas on paper using proper words and phrases. It is necessary, therefore, that the writer chooses proper words and expressions to formulate coherent sentences to express oneself.

14.1 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Define paragraph and identify its elements
- List the types of paragraphs
- Discuss the paragraph writing process in detail
- Analyse the requisites or essentials of good paragraph-writing
- Discuss dialogue writing

14.2 PARAGRAPH WRITING

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The definition of a paragraph to a layman can be given as a series of coherent and organized sentences that are all connected to a single specific theme/topic. As a writer, your attempt should be to organize into paragraphs, any piece of writing that comprises more than a couple of sentences. Paragraphs help the reader identify the various parts of a piece of prose or an essay; they help identify where the essay begins and where it ends.

Whether a paragraph contains a series of events, compares two incidents or things, describes a place, discusses an individual or an opinion, one thing it will definitely have is a topic sentence. You will read about this and other elements in the following paragraphs.

A paragraph is a specific portion of written or printed text that deals with a specific idea. This portion usually begins on a new line with an indentation. It usually forms a part of a large piece of text or composition, such as an essay, a prose chapter or a story. However, we can also treat a paragraph as a separate, complete and stand-alone unit. It is a short literary composition comprising a continuous series of meaningful sentences that are properly linked and together bring out a systematically developed unit of thought. The basic purpose of a paragraph is to not only widen the perspective of the learner but also expand his mental horizon and help his writing skills.

Paragraphs can be of many types as discussed:

- (1) **Narrative paragraphs:** This type of paragraph records an event or happening in a chronological manner. The event or incident could be real or a figment of imagination. The main idea is highlighted in the beginning, and the elements are then unified using sentences. The concluding sentence usually sums up the effect of the event. Some examples of this type of paragraph are a piece of prose on *A visit to a national sports meet* or *A trip to the market*. Such paragraphs comprise chronological accounts of personal experiences. Coherence in such paragraphs is achieved by using adverbial expressions of time, for example, then, when, meanwhile, the next day. These experiences are usually narrated in the past tense.
- (2) **Descriptive paragraphs:** Such paragraphs comprise descriptions of places, objects, events and individuals depicting the individual's perspective in response to such situations and objects. *An ideal husband*, *A good student*, *Life of a sportsperson*, are examples of descriptive-writing.

The details in such paragraphs are spatially arranged in order using adverbials of time and place in order to give the details a structured pattern.

Different Elements of a Paragraph

Composition II

There are three elements of a paragraph: topic sentence, supporting sentence and concluding sentence. Let's discuss the three in detail.

1. Topic Sentence

The first sentence in a paragraph is usually known as the topic sentence and it introduces the main idea of the paragraph. In other words, it is a sentence in which the main idea of a paragraph is summarized so that the readers can figure out what they can expect in the rest of the paragraph. Though it is not always true, as the topic sentence can also be elsewhere in the paragraph, depending upon the demand of the writing.

The following points should be kept in mind while writing the topic sentence:

- The topic sentence is the governing sentence of the paragraph. The whole paragraph should revolve around the topic sentence.
- In most cases, the topic sentence is not about just stating a fact; but it is about a point of view. A point of view that the writer is about to develop in the rest of the paragraph.
- Every sentence in the paragraph should support/uphold/hold/go on to prove/analyse/explain/annotate the topic sentence.

2. Supporting Sentences

Supporting sentences are sentences which support or uphold the topic sentence and make the body of a paragraph. The supporting sentences support by providing facts, details and examples to logically present the argument presented in the topic sentence.

One should keep in mind so as to provide specific details to show how the ideas are valid.

- While stating facts, examples, studies, experts' opinions, etc. be specific.
 - (a) Use the experts' names and other details.
 - (b) Examples should also be specific in terms of their names, places, dates, etc.
 - (c) Use specific numbers and dates.
 - (d) In case of scientific studies, explain in short how the study was done.
 - (e) Use vivid descriptions to provide details.
- One should make sure that all the details provided in the supporting sentences are relevant; otherwise, the reader may lose interest and focus with unnecessary digressions.

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- Try to explain things in detail so that the readers do not have to think too hard to figure out the significance.
- Supporting sentences should not be used to merely repeat your topic sentences in other words, but they should be the explanations, justifications, interpretations and analyses of the topic sentence.
- One should also make sure that all the supporting sentences are in a logical order.

3. Concluding Sentence

The last sentence of the paragraph is termed as the concluding sentence which is usually a review of the paragraph. It should emphasize on the main point or the topic sentence. It is advisable not to end the paragraph therefore with a quotation, but to end with your own words and idea; so that the readers know that you are giving your idea in the paragraph and not merely saying what others have thought and written.

Four Basic Things To Consider While Writing a Paragraph

- 1. Unity:** By unity it means that all the sentences in the paragraph should deal with a specified idea, topic, argument or point of view. It should not seem that any sentence of the paragraph is redundant; in the sense that, without that sentence the paragraph would have made the same sense. The topic sentence of the paragraph should be the governing idea or the umbrella sentence according to which all the supporting sentences of the paragraph should be written. Moreover, the supporting sentence should provide details and discuss the topic sentence.
- 2. Order:** Order in paragraph writing refers to the logical progression of ideas. Sentences randomly written on a particular topic will not make it a paragraph. This will be random jotting and won't make any sense till they are joined together in manner that makes it sound like an argument. Therefore, it can be said that order is essential. For example, if you are narrating an incident then the order should be chronological; if you are presenting an argument or writing an argumentative paragraph then the arguments should be presented in order of importance. In other words, it can be said that order is the structure or organization of the sentences in a particular way so that the paragraph makes sense to the readers.
- 3. Coherence:** Coherence makes any writing understandable to the readers. What it means is that sentences within a paragraph must logically connect to each other so that when one reads the paragraph he or she gets the notion of the paragraph as a whole. Most significant aspect in bringing about coherence in a paragraph are transition words which connect one sentence with another such as:
 - show order (first, second, third)
 - spatial relationships (above, below)

- logic (furthermore, in addition, in fact).

Moreover, it is also significant that the whole paragraph is written from a single point of view and a tense which is consistent. Such as, if the paragraph has begun with past tense then the whole paragraph should carry on with past tense and there should not be a mix of tenses.

4. **Completeness:** An idea or an argument should be fully developed within a paragraph. In other words, the topic sentences should be justifiably given supporting sentences for the topic sentence to stand upright.

14.2.1 Paragraph Writing Process

If the outlines of the paragraph and the title are available, the paragraph can be easily developed using the hints. Of course, appropriate conjunctions and linking words and phrases can be used generously to bring about the desired continuity and spontaneity of thought.

In the absence of guidelines or hints like the title or paragraph outlines, a proper plan is required to make paragraph-writing effective. The following steps could be followed:

- **Topic selection:** Keeping in mind the broad areas of interest, the topic should be first selected. It should be one with which the writer is most familiar, involving his personal knowledge and experiences. He needs to think clearly and have complete understanding of the topic before he can write.
- **Statement of idea:** The most dominant idea should be stated in the introductory statement or sentence. The subsequent statements in the paragraph should be built up around this main theme or idea. This sentence could also be referred to as the topical sentence. The tone and style of the introductory sentence should be capable of drawing and sustaining the attention of the reader.
- **Information gathering:** The contents of the paragraph can be developed only when all the required information and material related to the concerned paragraph are put together as a meaningful whole. To unify the various elements of the paragraph, there should be certain supporting ideas.
- **Conclusion:** Once the content is logically organized, the paragraph should reach a proper conclusion. This conclusion should wind up the paragraph by either reiterating the main theme forcefully or by highlighting the effect of the event or experience on the mind of the narrator.

Characteristics of good paragraph-writing

Generally, you will find that the first sentence of a paragraph is a topic sentence. It contains the topic and an opinion on the topic. It does not give any supporting

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ideas which cannot be avoided in the sentence that is to follow. There would be at least two or three sentences to support the main idea/ideas with examples, reasons, comparisons, or even anecdotes. The end of the paragraph is as good as its beginning. Therefore, the conclusion usually reasserts the writer's opinion without expressing it in words used earlier.

To write an effective, clear and good paragraph, the following points should be kept in mind:

- The writer should ensure that he is very clear about what he wants to write. There should be clarity in thought and also in the way these thoughts are expressed.
- The language used should be simple. The thoughts should be lucidly expressed using crisp sentences.
- The thoughts and facts expressed should flow in a logical sequence so that there is continuity and spontaneity. The natural flow should not be lost.
- The events being expressed or described should be placed in the natural order. They could be arranged as per the importance or as per the chronological order.
- Connectives can be used to bring about coordination of sentences. *Next, then, when, after, there, near, next, etc.* can be used to refer to the time and place. Transitional words can be used to carry forward an idea or debate like *Besides, on the contrary, in other words, in addition, on the other hand, etc.* Other sentence linkers depicting cause-effect relationship can also be used such as *hence, since, therefore, thus* and *in short*. *Still, however, nevertheless* and *but* can also be used to achieve structural coordination. In addition, writers can also use rhetorical or parallel sentences for effect.
- The paragraph can be given an impressive form by using variety in terms of vocabulary.
- The written text should be revised once to get rid of grammatical and spelling errors and even wrong punctuation.
- During revision, all material that is irrelevant should be deleted. Digressions could be rectified and repetitions could be avoided.
- The paragraph should be within the word limit, and be precise and to-the-point.

14.3 DIALOGUE WRITING

Dialogue writing is the most impressive creative writing technique. Dialogue can be defined as a fictional speech which is appropriate for a story. Dialogues are incorporated in a work of fiction to fulfil certain functions like revealing the character,

advancing the plot, eliciting the reader's or audience's emotion, creating conflict, acting as a break from action, etc. The dialogue for any literature is written as per the needs and dynamics of the genre. In this section, let's understand the points to be kept in mind while writing dialogues for drama. Drama is a fictional composition in verse or prose presenting a story in monologue or dialogue imitating some action. This word is derived from Greek word 'drao' which means 'to do'. This is often referred to as play in colloquial English which means the same as drama. There are characters which enact the play in front of the audience and the one who writes the play and directs it on the stage is known as the playwright or dramatist. The form is generally represented by the commonly recognized black and white masks which is a representative of comedy and tragedy.

Let us see a few genres / types of drama.

Comedy

This aims to provide a lighter environment and laughter to the audience by using quaint circumstances unusual characters and witty comical dialogues. This usually has a happy and good ending. The more the fun and the laughter quotient, the better it is for the playwright.

Some of the famous works of Shakespearean comedy are:

- ***All's Well That Ends Well:*** A play by William Shakespeare. With its unusual plot and odd resolution, it switches the line between comedy and tragedy, and is considered to be one of Shakespeare's "problem plays". The action of the play is set in France (Roussillon and Paris, to be exact), as well as Italy.
- ***As You Like It:*** It is known for the dramatic characterization and wit. The play, a splendid comedy on love and life, consists of many elements, and the readers can also enjoy some of Shakespeare's loveliest poetry. *As You Like It* aptly lives up to the promise of its title. Its characters have a great admiration for love, for one another, and themselves. The play has freshness and vitality and, although adapted from an older story full of artifice, suggests a world of spontaneity and life.
- ***The Comedy of Errors:*** *The Comedy of Errors* is one of Shakespeare's shortest and fastest-paced plays, relying heavily on double entendre words, slapstick comedy and wordplay to bring out humour. A funny idea of mistaken identity is the key driving plot and is the foundation for most of the play's humour and wordplay. *The Comedy of Errors* depends on impossible situations and bizarre humour.

Tragedy

This form of drama uses darker themes such as disaster, pain or death. In this form of drama, it is the characters that have some kind of imperfection which leads to

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their failure. This often leads to the unfavourable situations to which the main protagonist fails to cope with.

Example of the famous tragedy dramas in this genre are:

Romeo and Juliet: It is a romantic tragedy set in Verona, Italy, where there is an ongoing fight between the Montague and Capulet families. The play starts with servants from both houses engaged in a street fight that eventually draws in the family patriarchs and the city officials, including Prince Escalus. This fight causes sad ending results for the main characters in the play, Romeo and Juliet. The events contrast hatred and revenge with love and a secret marriage, forcing the young star-crossed couple lovers to grow up quickly and sadly die in despair.

Farce

A farce is a literary genre and is a type of a comedy that makes the use of highly funny and long stretched situations to entertain the audience. Farce, a subcategory of dramatic comedy is different from other forms of comedy, as it only aims at making the audience laugh. This genre of comedy needs characters to be full of energy, and require quick physical movements. Often humour is derived from mistaken identities and confusion or misunderstandings.

- **Noises Off by Michael Frayn:** The play deals with the mistakes of the theatres folks and he decides that he would make a good deal out of it to showcase it to the audience. Set with an idea of a 'play within a play' the author of this farce genre of drama shows the behind the scenes events in the theatre arising from missed cues of dialogues which leads to fights between the cast of the drama. This leaves the audience with a plethora of laughter in the audience gallery.
- **What the Butler Saw by Joe Orton:** The play consists of two acts—though the action is continuous—and revolves around a character, Dr. Prentice, a psychiatrist attempting to seduce his attractive interviewing secretary, with comedy, and the only aim of this comedy is to make the audience roll with laughter.

Musical Drama

Normally referred to as an Opera, in this form the dramatic elements and the musical overtones are equally important and together they make as one offering.

Some of the examples of the Musical Drama are as follows:

- **Oliver!** is a 1968 British musical drama film directed by Carol Reed and based on the stage musical of the same name, with book, music and lyrics written by Lionel Bart.

- ***Les Misérables*** is a 2012 British-American musical drama film directed by Tom Hooper.

Composition II

Check Your Progress

1. Name the different elements of a paragraph.
2. What are supporting sentences?
3. How are paragraphs helpful for the reader?
4. What does the narrative type of paragraph record?
5. What is a farce?

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14.4 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS

1. The different elements of a paragraph are topic sentence, supporting sentences, and concluding sentence.
2. Supporting sentences are sentences which support or uphold the topic sentence and make the body of a paragraph.
3. Paragraphs help the reader identify the various parts of a piece of prose or an essay; they help identify where the essay begins and where it ends.
4. Narrative type of paragraph records an event or happening in a chronological manner. The event or incident could be real or a figment of the imagination. The main idea is highlighted in the beginning, and the elements are then unified using sentences.
5. A farce is a literary genre and is a type of a comedy that makes the use of highly funny and long stretched situations to entertain the audience.

14.5 SUMMARY

- The definition of a paragraph to a layman can be given as a series of coherent and organized sentences that are all connected to a single specific theme/ topic.
- Whether a paragraph contains a series of events, compares two incidents or things, describes a place, discusses an individual or an opinion, one thing it will definitely have is a topic sentence.
- A paragraph is a specific portion of written or printed text that deals with a specific idea.

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- A paragraph usually forms a part of a large piece of text or composition, such as an essay, a prose chapter or a story. However, we can also treat a paragraph as a separate, complete and stand-alone unit.
- Narrative paragraphs records an event or happening in a chronological manner. The event or incident could be real or a figment of imagination. Coherence in such paragraphs is achieved by using adverbial expressions of time, for example, then, when, meanwhile, the next day.
- Descriptive paragraphs comprise descriptions of places, objects, events and individuals depicting the individual's perspective in response to such situations and objects.
- The first sentence in a paragraph is usually known as the topic sentence and it introduces the main idea of the paragraph.
- The topic sentence is the governing sentence of the paragraph. The whole paragraph should revolve around the topic sentence.
- Supporting sentences are sentences which support or uphold the topic sentence and make the body of a paragraph.
- One should make sure that all the details provided in the supporting sentences are relevant; otherwise, the reader may lose interest and focus with unnecessary digressions.
- The last sentence of the paragraph is termed as the concluding sentence which is usually a review of the paragraph. It should emphasize on the main point or the topic sentence.
- Order in paragraph writing refers to the logical progression of ideas. Sentences randomly written on a particular topic will not make it a paragraph.
- Coherence makes any writing understandable to the readers. It means is that sentences within a paragraph must logically connect to each other so that when one reads the paragraph he or she gets the notion of the paragraph as a whole.
- The most dominant idea should be stated in the introductory statement or sentence. The subsequent statements in the paragraph should be built up around this main theme or idea.
- To unify the various elements of the paragraph, there should be certain supporting ideas.
- The writer should ensure that he is very clear about what he wants to write. There should be clarity in thought and also in the way these thoughts are expressed.

- Dialogue writing is the most impressive creative writing technique. Drama is a fictional composition in verse or prose presenting a story in monologue or dialogue imitating some action.

14.6 KEY WORDS

- **Paragraph:** It is a specific portion of written or printed text that deals with a specific idea.
- **Topic sentence:** The first sentence in a paragraph is usually known as the topic sentence.
- **Comedy play:** It is a play characterized by its humorous or satirical tone and its depiction of amusing people or incidents, in which the characters ultimately triumph over adversity.
- **Drama:** It is a play in a theatre or on television or radio, or plays and acting generally.

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14.7 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short Answer Questions

1. What is the main purpose of a paragraph?
2. Enumerate on the different types of paragraphs.
3. Evaluate the characteristics of good paragraph-writing.

Long Answer Questions

1. Discuss the paragraph writing process in detail.
2. Write a paragraph developing the idea or the theme of the topics stated below:
 - (a) A visit to a forest
 - (b) Mass communication
 - (c) A visit to a zoo
 - (d) How to make tea
3. Discuss the different types of drama in detail.

14.8 FURTHER READINGS

NOTES

- Sidhu, C. D., Prem Nath and Kapil Kapoor. 2004. *Comprehensive English Grammar and Composition*. New Delhi: Khosla Publishing House.
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Under Graduate 12

PART-II: ENGLISH PAPER-I

I - Semester



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