

## **B.A./B.COM-II : GENERAL ENGLISH**

---

**COURSE CODE : AA-201**

**LESSON NO. 1**

**SEMESTER-II**

**UNIT - I**

---

### **“GOOD MANNERS” : J.C. HILL**

#### **STRUCTURE**

- 1.1 Objectives
- 1.2 Introduction to the Essayist
- 1.3 Introduction to the Essay
- 1.4 Main Points of the Essay
- 1.5 Summary
- 1.6 Self-Assessment Questions
- 1.7 Glossary
- 1.8 Short Answer Type Questions
- 1.9 Examination Oriented Questions
- 1.10 Recapitulation of the Lesson
- 1.11 Answer Key
- 1.12 Multiple Choice Questions
- 1.13 Suggested Reading
- 1.14 References

#### **1.1 OBJECTIVES**

The objective of this lesson is to acquaint the learner with the essay “Good Manners.” The learner is given a detailed and a comprehensive summary of the

lesson so as to thoroughly explain the theme and substance of the essay. Good Manners is redefined by J.C Hill when he says that Manners are the external decoration of man. Manners stand for good qualities which endear us to others. Without manners, life becomes dull and colourless.

## **1.2 INTRODUCTION TO THE ESSAYIST**

John Christopher Hill was an English Marxist historian and author of text books. Born into a prosperous middle class family, he had ability and was offered a place to go to Cambridge. Hill's notable studies focused on 17<sup>th</sup> century English history, based on printed sources accessible. He was prolific in his publications and occupied the intellectual centre stage.

## **1.3 INTRODUCTION TO THE ESSAY**

“Good manners” is a beautiful essay written in a friendly tone. It is a kind of sermon about bringing back fellow feelings into society and how they can be brought back in the world torn by callous and indifferent society. Human society as such is in the grip of selfishness.

The essay is an adaptation from *An Introduction to Citizenship*, where J.C Hill talks about the values as a link between need and action. He lays emphasis on the right conduct of a responsible citizen. The language is simple and lucid. The lesson is of great relevance to our youngsters who are forgetting the value of good manners under the impact of materialistic gains. Clarity of thoughts and its expression in speech, making way for the weak and the mentally challenged and humility in behaviour are some of the important points which Hill focuses in his essay.

## **1.4 MAIN POINTS OF THE ESSAY**

Manners means ways of behaving or speaking, particularly when they are considered good and polite. As its title says, the essay “Good Manners” is a write-up about good manners. It is actually an adaptation from J.C. Hill's work titled *An Introduction to Citizenship*. The author lays emphasis on the importance of good manners in our life and social relationships. Where there are people with

good manners, there are warm and friendly relations among one another. Good manners are the very basis of one's conduct and behaviour. Values link need and action. They cannot be separated from our feelings and behaviour.

J.C Hill rightly says that 'good manners come from having sympathy with others and from understanding our own limitations.' We come to the world once and so it is our duty to be kind and considerate to our fellow beings.

Students, in particular, must follow the suggestions put forth in the essay and cultivate good manners without fail.

### **1.5 DETAILED SUMMARY**

This essay begins with a moral lesson. There was a young man. He was strong and healthy. He liked his work. He felt on top of the world in every way. He had absolutely no sympathy for dull and boring people. One day he was down with influenza. He developed pneumonia and was bed-ridden. After recovering from his illness, he became very weak. He could walk with difficulty. He would easily get tired. Life became very hard and burdensome for him. When he was healthy enough to go to work, he found the journey home very painful. He was strong and healthy young men sitting comfortably in the train or bus. He saw that the old men standing near him were very tired. He became strong again but he became very kind and considerate. He used to offer his seat to anyone else in the train or bus. He said that he had got his strength back after illness but the older people would never get it back.

When we see an old man stopping or moving unsteadily on a crossing, we should not call him an old fool. It is quite likely that he may have his powers of hearing or seeing damaged or weakened due to old age. It is quite possible that he might have got tired with walking. It is possible that he was a famous soldier in the war and his wounds are still painful to him. Or he might be having an artificial leg. It is also possible that anyone of us might have to fight in a war in the future and we could be badly wounded. It is therefore bad and unwise to make fun of those who walk slowly.

Young boys and girls are very different in this dangerous world. Our teachers, parents and all the older people have suffered some harsh blows already in their lives. They receive more severe blows every year. Most of us would be willing to give everything they want to get their health and strength back. Since they do not complain, we think that everything is fine with them. We must try our best to make their life comfortable. When it is our turn to suffer, we will feel happier for having helped when we were in a position to do so.

Good manners are important when we are among our own friends. When we speak to anyone, we must speak clearly and loudly so that others can hear us. It is an insult to a person if we invite his attention and then speak in a way that he does not understand us. It is our primary duty to make ourselves understood by our hearers.

Thoreau, an American writer, once said that it takes two to speak the truth. One has to speak the truth and the other has to hear it. If we follow Thoreau's saying, we would save much argument and displeasure in life. One cannot speak the truth by saying what one thinks is the truth. One has to express it differently for different people. For some people the meaning of socialism is taking money from those who have it and giving it to those who do not have it. To another set of people, socialism means state control of industry and commerce. We therefore cannot say that we have spoken the truth about socialism, unless we know what the person we have spoken to, understands by it. If a man says to a friend, "Good morning, Mr. A, and the friend in reply says, it is not a good morning at all." The man has not spoken the truth as the listener does not understand the man.

Remarks should not be taken too literally. Those who take them with their basic meaning often make mistakes in understanding them. Only stupid people fail to find the meaning in other's statements. Your friend tells you that he will be thankful if you post a letter for him if you were going past the post office. If you say not to the question your friend may think that you were not willing to oblige him.

In a company, we often find that it is not easy to speak frankly. One must watch for signs otherwise one is likely to be considered ill-mannered. It is not easy to go on listening to one person for long. You should not monopolise conversation. You should give a chance to the other man to speak. If he keeps quiet, it means he wants you also to keep quiet. It is wrong to go on talking endlessly.

We should not say irritating or bad things behind someone's back because we will be found out. When we say something about someone, we must always assume that the other person will come to know about what we have spoken against him. One must change one's remarks accordingly. This is how all experienced people act. No man is able to understand himself. It is one of the most surprising things. But if we are able to understand ourselves, much of the argument and anger could be avoided. It is often observed that people often make mistakes in their statements. If there is a motor accident, different people will say different things about it. Accurate report is just not made. Again if students are shown a bull-fight on the screen, they will make errors in their account of the bull-fight. So whenever we are arguing with someone on a point, we should always bear in mind that we can be wrong.

Good manners are ways of behaving or speaking, especially when they are polite and courteous. They come from having sympathy with others. They also come from understanding our own limitations. We should realize this about ourselves. We should know that we are humble little people on this planet. So we should try our best to help ourselves to the maximum possible extent during our short existence in the world. We are to pass our existence in this world only once. So we must try to do good to others. We must not neglect or ignore this duty to our fellow men.

## **1.6 SELF- ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS**

- a) What does on 'top of life' mean?
- b) Who did the young man not show sympathy for?
- c) What should the young do for their parents, teachers etc?

d) How could we save a lot of argument and anger?

e) How should we speak to anyone?

## 1.7 GLOSSARY

Strong and healthy	–	Energetic
Felt on top of life	–	Happy and satisfied in life
Uninterested folk	–	Common men who are dull and boring.
Gave up	–	Abandoned
Hesitating	–	pausing a little
Wounds	–	Injuries
Severely	–	very badly
Little attention	–	no care
Fragile	–	delicate
Severe blows	–	harsh knocks or experiences
Complain	–	not satisfied or to grumble
Make fun of	–	laugh at
Thoreau	–	A well – known American writer
Argument	–	heated exchange of views
Annoyance	–	displeasure
Literally	–	According to the actual meaning of word/expression
Silly	–	foolish
Remarks	–	comments
Exhausted	–	Tired

Assume	–	Suppose
Unpleasant things	–	Talk bad about somebody
Account	–	Description
Swear to an oath	–	To promise publicly that you are telling the truth
Knocked over	–	Hit with a vehicle
Evidence	–	Something that gives a reason for believing something.
Good Chance	–	Considerable possibility
Jersey	–	Knitted woollen or cotton clothing with long sleeves and no buttons for the upper part of the body.
Limitations	–	What we cannot do/constraints
Realize	–	Understand
Humble	–	Showing that you are less important
Defer	–	delay
Neglect	–	No due consideration/attention

## 1.8 SHORT ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS

Q1. What is the significance of the story of the young man at the beginning of the essay?

Ans: At the beginning of the story, the young man did not care at all for others. He was indifferent to the old people. But then he fell ill due to influenza and pneumonia. He became very weak. His illness brought about a great change in him. He began to show sympathy for the old.

Whenever he saw an old man in need of a seat in a bus or train, he would offer his own seat to the old man. The story of the young man gives us a useful

lesson. Young men and women should treat the old people with sympathy and consideration. They should realize that the old people will never get back the strength of their youthful days.

Q2. Why are good manners important?

Ans: Good manners are important because they constitute or form a part of human character. Young people in particular must cultivate good manners so that they become useful members of the society. They must learn to treat the old and physically weak members of society with care and sympathy. It is good manners which teach young people to be considerate, kind and thoughtful in caring for the elderly people.

Q3. What, according to the author, is the common factor about all boys and girls?

Ans: The common factor about them is that they often remain indifferent to their own limitations. They regard old men as a boring lot. They, therefore, have no sympathy for them. They have forgotten the need for service, empathy and consideration. This being the case, they should all try to cultivate good manners.

Q4. What is the difference between literal meaning and real meaning? Which one is to be considered according to the author?

Ans: Literal meaning is the usual or basic meaning of a word or a phrase. When we say something to someone, the listener is expected to take the surface meaning of what we say. Some people take the meaning so literally that they do not bother to understand the speaker's real or intended meaning. The meaning intended by the speaker is the real meaning. The author is of the view that the real meaning is to be considered of greater importance than the surface or literal meaning. Only the real meaning enables us to understand the truth.

Q5. What does the author say about speaking the truth? How does he support his statement?

Ans: In the words of the author, it takes two to speak the truth. One cannot speak the truth by saying what one thinks is the truth. One has to express it

differently for different people. He supports his statement by giving the example of an American author Thoreau. It was Thoreau who said, "If one is not properly understood, what one says would not be truth for the listener. The speaker's intended meaning must be understood in the proper context."

Q6. It takes two to speak the truth-one to speak, and another to hear." What does the writer wish to convey through this remarks made by Thoreau.

Ans: This remark of Thoreau can save a great deal of argument and annoyance in life if people pay attention to it. The writer wants to emphasize the point that we cannot speak the truth by saying what we think is the truth. We have to express truth differently for different people. To some people, socialism means taking money from those who have it and giving it to those who do not have it. It is not possible to tell a man the truth about socialism until we know what he understands by this word.

Q7. "It is not easy in company to speak frankly." Why not?

Ans: In a company, we have to speak clearly and loudly so that our hearer understands us. It is an insult to a person if we invite his attention and then speak to him so that he does not understand us. It is our responsibility to make ourselves understood. Moreover, sometimes people may ask teasing and tiresome questions. We may like to make joke about them. At times, our remarks are likely to be taken too literally. And if we speak frankly, we are likely to be considered a bad-mannered person. We should not monopolise conversation. We should not make it a one man show. We should give the listeners a chance to speak. If he does not speak, then we should not speak more.

Q8. "Now here is one of the most surprising things in life." What is most surprising? Why is it so?

Ans: The most surprising statement is that no man understands himself. But if we only understand this, we can avoid a lot of argument and anger. Suppose a motor accident is seen by you. You would give a description of the accident.

Another person or a third person would give another version. Experiments are sometimes made to find out how people make mistakes in their statements.

Q9. “The truth is too big for any of us to understand.” What is the truth? How is it related to good manners?

Ans: Good manners come from having sympathy with others and from understanding our own limitations. This is the ‘truth.’ It is so big that none of us can understand it. We wonder how good manners can come from having sympathy with others and from understanding our own limitations. It is only our truth and a part of larger truth. We should always realize that we are humble, unimportant, small people of this planet. We should try to help the world as much as we can in our short stay on this earth. It has connection with good manners. We cannot cultivate good manners without having due consideration for others.

### **1.9 EXAMINATION ORIENTED QUESTIONS**

Q1. “No man really understands himself.’ Explain.

Ans: It is one of the most surprising things in life that no man understands himself. When a motor accident takes place, our understanding of it may not be the correct one. There are different reports of it. Our own report may not be the same as that of another. Experiments are sometimes made by experts to find out how many errors people make in their statements.

The writer describes one experiment which was tried. Some students at the university were shown pictures of a bull-fight. When this was finished they were instructed to put a number on every statement made. They had to put number 1 if they thought so; number 2 if they were fairly sure about it and number 3 if they were quite sure and number 4 if they were willing to swear to the statement on oath. It was found that every student had at least ten percent error in the statements.

A student saw the bull with his tongue out. He was quite sure about it. When he was shown the picture again, he saw that the bull’s mouth was closed.

Thus they made mistakes. From this one thing becomes clear. Whenever we are arguing with someone about a point, there is every possibility that we are wrong even if we are very confident about our remark.

Q2. Why does one have to express the truth differently to different people? Give reasons for your answer with suitable examples from the text.

Ans: One is required to express the truth differently to different people. The reason is simple. We cannot speak the truth by saying what we think is the truth. The hearer must also understand us so that he is able to catch our intended meaning to take an example from the text, to some people socialism means taking money from those who have it and giving it to those who have not means. To other people socialism means State control of industry and commerce. We cannot tell a man about socialism until he understands what socialism is. If we say that we believe in socialism, and he understands that we mean we believe in robbery, he would not like us.

Sometimes people ask very teasing questions and we like to make a joke about it. A lady saw a boy in shorts, a jersey with badges, a scout's hat, and carrying a boy scout's pole. The little boy told the lady, "I am two eggs on toast". The lady simply made a remark to the effect that the boy looked very smart in his scout's uniform. There was nothing silly in her remarks. It is only foolish or silly people who take remarks too literally without looking for the real meaning in the statements that people make.

Q3. Bring out the significance of good manners in life with Hill's views in mind.

Ans: Manners are the external decoration of man. Manners stand for good qualities which endear us to others. They stand for polite behaviour, courtesy, good conduct and graceful gestures. Snobbery and showy conduct do not indicate good manners. Rudeness and insolence are the signs of bad manners. Manners play a very important role in life. Without manners, life would be colourless and dull.

Hill's essay is a sermon on how fellow feelings can be brought back into our society. He is correct when he remarks that the society is overtaken by

selfish and indifferent people, especially the youth under the influence of their materialistic education.

He emphasizes the importance of good manners. He gives the example of a weak young man who felt hopelessly weak after recovery from his illness. He becomes aware of the ill manners of young men and young women. He finds them without consideration for the elderly.

Parents, teachers and senior members of society nurture and protect young children in their tender years. But it is a pity that the youth have become indifferent to good manners. They do not feel the necessity of having consideration for others.

Good manners help us to develop a sympathetic attitude towards the older people. They also make us kind and considerate in the company of others. They teach us patience, co-operation and understanding. They form a part of human character. Good behaviour should not only be an outward sign of kindness but should proceed from good feeling within our hearts. A man gifted with polite manners and consideration for others at once gets the passport to sure and brilliant success from the social point of view.

Q4. How did the attack of influenza change the young man's attitude towards old men?

Ans. Refer summary

Q5. What precautions should one take while speaking in company?

Ans. Refer Q2 (Examination Oriented Questions).

### **1.10 RECAPITULATION OF THE LESSON**

Manners play a very important role in life. They stand for polite behaviour, courtesy, good conduct and graceful gestures. Snobbery and showy conduct do not indicate good manners. Society is overtaken by selfish and indifferent people. Parents, teachers and seniors nurture and protect young children in their tender years. But it is a pity that the youth have become inconsiderate. Good manners help us to develop a sympathetic attitude towards the older people. We should realize that we are humble, unimportant, small people of this planet. We should

try to give the world as much as we can in our short stay on this earth. A man gifted with polite manners and consideration for others gets the passport to sure and brilliant success from the social point of view.

### **1.11 ANSWER KEY**

#### Answers to Self-Assessment Questions

- a) “On top of life” means to deal with life successfully and enthusiastically. It means to be fully happy and contented.
- b) Young man have no sympathy for the dull and boring people.
- c) The young people should try to make life easy and comfortable for the older people, including their parents and teachers.
- d) We could save a lot of argument and anger if we understand ourselves. We cannot speak the truth by saying what we think is the truth.
- e) We should speak clearly and loudly so that the hearer understood us. It is our responsibility to make ourselves understood.

### **1.12 MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS**

Q1. What does Good Manners lay emphasis on?

Ans: The author lays emphasis on:-

- a) the right conduct of a responsible citizen.
- b) Speaking Clearly and annoyed
- c) Laying stress on publicity

Q2. When we speak to anyone we should speak:-

- a) clearly and loudly
- b) softly and with expressions
- c) high leveled vocabulary

- Q3. Good Manners need
- service and consideration for others.
  - Form a part of human character
  - Both a and b.
- Q4. “Good Manners” is adapted from which book?
- Ans: “Good Manners” is adapted from the book:-
- An Introduction to the Citizenship*
  - Alpha of the plough
  - Interesting ride
- Q5. The values are the link between:-
- Need and action
  - Form the basis of our feeling and behaviour
  - The right conduct of a responsible citizen.
- Q6. The author of the essay “Good Manners” is :-
- Jerome C. Jerome
  - J.C. Hill
  - C.V. Raman

### **1.13 SUGGESTED READING**

*Timeless Thoughts* : An Anthology for B.A, B.Sc, B.Com and B.C.A  
First year, University of Jammu.

### **1.14 REFERENCES**

- *Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary of Current English* (A.S Hornby)

\*\*\*\*\*

## **B.A./B.COM-II : GENERAL ENGLISH**

---

**COURSE CODE : AA-201**  
**SEMESTER-II**

**LESSON NO. 2**  
**UNIT - I**

### **On the Whims of Lottery Adventurers**

By  
**Joseph Addison**

#### **OBJECTIVES**

##### **2.1 ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

##### **2.2 INTRODUCTION TO THE ESSAY**

##### **2.3 CRITICAL ANALYSIS**

##### **2.3.1 STORY OF MEDIEVAL PHILOSOPHER**

##### **2.3.2 NUMBER AND GAMBLERS**

##### **2.3.3 GEORGE GOSLING, THE SWINDLER**

##### **2.3.4 ADDISON'S ADVICE**

##### **2.4 TEXT OF THE ESSAY**

##### **2.5 SUMMARY**

##### **2.6 EXPLANATION OF THE TEXT**

##### **2.7 EXAMINATION ORIENTED QUESTION ANSWERS**

##### **2.8 GLOSSARY**

##### **2.9 REFERENCES AND SUGGESTED READINGS**

#### **OBJECTIVES**

**The objectives of the lesson are:**

- 1. To know about the author**
- 2. To understand the prose in detail.**
- 3. To appreciate the prose critically**
- 4. To have an insight into the philosophy of the essay.**

## **2.1 ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Joseph Addison (1672-1719) was a prominent poet, writer, playwright, politician, and classicist of the 18th century. He is considered as one of the best periodical essayists who launched the daily journal “The Spectator” with his friend Richard Steele. “The Spectator” has become a popular and widely read publication. He contributed about 274 essays to “The Spectator” and wrote an essay for the “The Tatler.” His writing skills gave him an important position in the government while the Whigs were in power. In his essay, Addison deals with the social issues of his time. His irony is sharp, but his social presence is by no means bitter. He was known for his magnificent and awesome personality. He died on June 17, 1719 at Holland House in London at the age of 48. He was buried in the Westminster Monastery in the City of Westminster, London.

Joseph Addison, the British essayist, poet, playwright and politician is remembered along with his longtime friend Richard Steele, who founded “The Spectator” magazine. His simple prose style marked the end of the mannerisms and conventional classical images of the 17th century. Addison’s personality is said to be kind, exaggerated, socially overkill and passionate. His fascinating manners and conversation skills contributed to his general popularity. He often swore considerable benefits to his friends and showed great generosity

to few of his enemies also. His essay is noteworthy for its clarity, elegant style, friendly and respectful humor.

## **2.2 INTRODUCTION TO THE ESSAY**

In this essay, Addison talks about people who are crazy about the lottery. Addison says people don't play the lottery to get rich but because it is fun to indulge in the fantasy that one day their lives may suddenly become easier by gaining the money distributed among the winners. Their actions and decisions are based on their whims and cold mechanical calculations by the brain. In this essay, Addison reveals the evil of gambling. He contacts people having wild desires and advises them to be satisfied with what they actually own.

## **2.3 CRITICAL ANALYSIS**

In his essay, Addison deals with social issues of the time. His irony is sharp, but his social presence is by no means bitter. His prose style is characterized by lightness, clarity and elegance. Addison's contribution to the development of English prose cannot be exaggerated. He composed prose in English as a means of expressing his ideas of social evils. His style is free of gravity and vulgarism, and at the same time easy and friendly, without elaborate flourishes of metaphor and having comparisons for the easy understanding of readers. In the words of Dr. Johnson, Addison is a master of "middle style" familiar but not crude, elegant, flashy or formal on serious subjects. It doesn't sneak up on easy occasions, it's not purely ruthless, and it doesn't have an exact and obvious refinement. There are no enthusiastic words or pointed phrases but always the easy and

common words. Addison's style is modest, elegant, clear and fluid.

### **2.3.1 STORY OF MEDIEVAL PHILOSOPHER**

Addison begins his essay by referring to the ridiculous stories of medieval philosophers. Two bundles of hay were placed on the back of an ass. The donkey's sense of smell and vision were equally affected on both sides. As a result, the ass was unable to decide which bunch to eat. The ass had no free will to influence moving to one side instead of the other so it could not decide which one to eat thus it starved. This is a classic example of starving in the midst of plenty. Addison says that when faced with two lotteries, one is in the same predicament. A person cannot decide which lottery to buy and which to reject. Addison says that whims are often a substitute for reason. The lottery is based on the same luck claim and the same competitive base.

### **2.3.2 NUMBER AND GAMBLERS**

Gamblers are attracted to numbers. Players spend all their money in buying lottery tickets having numbers resembling to their birthdates, favourite occasions or superstitious figures like 1711 because it is the number of gods. Some players have an irrational meaning to the number 134 so they choose it instead of any other. One player who hates Pope chooses the number, called the "number of evil" which is 666. Some people choose the number that won someone the last lottery. Some stupid people choose their own old age. Wise and fools are similar on this issue who put strange sense while choosing lottery numbers.

### **2.3.3 GEORGE GOSLING, THE SWINDLER**

Addison uses an example to show how a gambler can be easily duped by unscrupulous

con artists. One such rogue was George Gosling. The post boy was once advertised in the newspaper by him. He offered ten shillings more than the market price for the ticket. A few days later, Addison received a letter from George Gosling, claiming that he was the one who placed the advertisement. He claimed that he chose the number 132 after having a dream about it. He claimed that he had regular and intense visions. Gosling ended the letter by promising to give Addison a nice present if he received £1200. Addison says people who believe person like Gosling are the real fools.

#### **2.3.4 ADDISON'S ADVICE**

Addison says people who spend money on the lottery have wild imagination. They live in an imaginary world and want to earn amazing amount of money but spend all their money on the lottery. Even the very wealthy people become bankrupt because of spending their wealth by trying their luck in the lottery. Addison cites the Italian saying, "A man who lives with hope will be hungry" in support of his agreement.

Conclusion: Addison exposes a gambling addiction in this essay. He mocks the people who want to gratify their crazy wants by indulging in lottery.

#### **2.4 TEXT OF THE ESSAY**

*Some ludicrous school men have put the case that if an Ass were placed between two bundles of hay, which affected his senses equally on each side, and tempted him in the very same degree, whether it would be possible for him to eat of either. They generally determine his question to the disadvantage of the Ass who they say would starve in the midst of plenty, as not having a single grain of free will, to determine him more to the one*

than to the other. The bundle of hay on either side striking his sight and smell in the same portion, would keep him in perpetual suspense, like the two magnets, which travelers have told us, are placed one of them in the roof and the other in the floor of Mahomet's burying place at Mecca, and that means, say they, pull the impostor's iron coffin with such an equal attraction, that it hangs in the air between both of them, As for the ass's behavior in such nice circumstances, whether he would starve sooner than violate his neutrality to the two bundles of hay, I shall not presume to determine; but only take notice of the conduct of our own species in the same perplexity, when a man has a mind to venture his money in a lottery, every figure of it appears equally alluring, and as likely to succeed as any of its fellows. They all of them have the same pretensions to good-luck, stand upon the same foot of competition and no manner of reason can be given why a man should prefer one to the other before the lottery is drawn. In this case therefore, caprice very often acts in the place of reasons, and forms to itself some groundless imaginary motive, where real and substantial ones are wanting. I know a well meaning man that is very well pleased to risk his good fortune upon the number 1711, because it is the year of our Lord. I am acquainted with a tacker that would give a good deal for the number 134. On the contrary, I have been told of a certain zealous dissenter, who being a great enemy to popery, and believing that bad men are the most fortunate in this world, will lay two to one on the number 666 against any other number, because, says he, it is the number of the beast. Several would prefer the number 12,000 before any other, as it is the number of the pounds in the great prize. In short, some are pleased to find their own age in their number; some that have got a number which makes a pretty appearance in the ciphers; and others, because it is the

*same number that succeeded in the last lottery. Each of these upon no other grounds thinks he stands fairest for the great lot, and that he is possessed of what may not be improperly called the golden number.*

*These principles of election are the pastimes and extravagances of human reasons, which is of so busy nature that it will be exerting itself in the meanest trifles, and working even when, it wants materials. The wisest of men are sometimes acted; by such unaccountable motives, as the life of the fool and the superstitions is guided by nothing else.*

*I am surprised that none of the fortune tellers, or, as the French call them, the Discurs de bonne Avanlure, who publish their bill in every quarter of the town, have turned our lotteries to their advantage. Did any of them set up for a caster of fortunate figures, what might he not get by his pretended discoveries and predictions?*

*I remember among the advertisement in the Post-boy of September the 27th, I was surprised to see the following one:*

*“This is to give notice, that ten shillings over and above the market-price, will be given for the cricket in the 1,500,0001. Lottery, No. 132, by Nath. Cliff, at the Bible and There crowns in cheap side”*

*This advertisement had given great matter of speculation to coffee-house the priest. Mr. Cliff’s principles and conversation have been upon this occasion and various conjectures made why he should thus set his heart upon No. 132. I have examined all the powers in those numbers, broken them into fractions, extracted the square and cube root divided and multiplied them all ways, but could not arrive at the secret until about the days*

*ago, when I received the following letter from an unknown hand; by which I find that Mr. Nath Cliff is only the agent, and not the principal in this advertisement.*

*MR. SPECTATOR,*

*I am the person that lately advertised I would give ten shilling more than the current price for the ticket No. 132 in the lottery now drawing; which is a secret which I have communicated to some friends, who rally me incessantly upon that account. You must know I have but one ticket, for which reason, and a certain dream I have lately had more than once, I was resolved it should be the number I most approved. I am so positive I have pitched upon the great lot, that I could almost lay all I am worth of it. My visions are so frequent and strong upon this occasion, that I have not only possessed the lot, but disposed of the money which in all probability it will sell for. This morning in particular, I set upon an equipage which I look upon to be the gayest in the town; the liveries are very rich but not gaudy, I should be very glad to see a speculation or two upon lottery subjects, in which you would oblige all people concerned, and in particular,*

*Your most humble servant,*

*George Gosling*

*P. S Dear Spec, If I get the 12,000 pound; I'll make thee a handsome present. ' After having wished my correspondent good luck, and thanked him for his intended kindness, I shall for this time dismiss the subject of the lottery, and only observe, that the greatest part of mankind are in some degree guilty of my friend Gosling's extravagance. We are apt to reply upon future prospects, and become really expensive while we are only rich in possibility. We live up to our expectations, not to our possessions, and make a figure*

*proportion-able to what we may be, not what we are. We out run our present income, as not doubting to disburse ourselves out of the profits of some future place, project, or reversion that we have in view. It is through this temper of mind, which is so common among us, that we see tradesmen break, who have met with no misfortunes in their business; and men of estates reduced to poverty, who have never suffered from losses or repairs, tenants, taxes, or law-suits. In short, it is the foolish sanguine temper, this depending upon contingent futurities that occasions romantic generosity, chimerical grandeur, senseless ostentation and generally ends in beggary and ruin. The man who will live above his present circumstances. Is in great danger of living is a little time much beneath them; or, as the Italian proverb runs. 'The man who lives by hope, will die by hunger'.*

*It should be an indispensable rule in life. To contract our desires to our present condition and whatever may be our expectations, to live within the compass of what we actually possess. It will be time enough to enjoy an estate when it comes into our hands; but if we anticipate our good fortune we shall lose the pleasure of it when it arrives, and may possibly never possess what we have so counted upon.*

## **2.5 SUMMARY**

“On the Whims of Lottery Adventurers” is a voice against gambling. Addison does an excellent job of describing the state of gamblers. He discusses lotteries, a popular number game in which many people participate. Even the wisest men, he claims, engage in such dumb behaviour. He claims that putting a bundle of hay in both sides of an ass will attract him equally. By using the analogy of hay and the ass, Addison is implying that it is a

hypothetical situation created for philosophers to split their hair. Addison discusses lotteries, a popular numerical game in which many people participate. Even the wisest persons, he claims, make ultimate decisions. They find enjoyment in a variety of ways. They seek their destiny in these numbers. Addison says the bad guys are the happiest in the world. They try their luck with the lottery number. If they don't get a lucky number in the lottery, they will be depressed, so even the smartest person will chase after such stupidity and be happy in the lottery. He talks about his friend George Gosling. He was greedy and extravagant in winning the lottery. He believes he will pay 10 shillings more than the current price of ticket number 132. He is crazy about number 132.

Addison tells that lottery games eradicate a man's thinking power. Players tend to rely on future prospects, which are expensive just because they have plenty of opportunities. Men live on these occasions, but spend a lot of money on the lottery. This game ruins men. People stop living in the present and begin to live in a fantasy world.

## **2.6 EXPLANATION OF THE TEXT**

Anecdote: Anecdote is a short, entertaining narrative about a genuine person or event. Addison begins the essay with a story about an Ass who lost his sense of smell and sight on both sides and had a bunch of hay on both sides. It didn't have the freedom to choose which bundle of hay to eat, so it went hungry even though there was plenty on both sides, setting an excellent example of starvation in the middle of plenty. Humans, like machines, have no free will. This means that their actions and decisions are solely the outcome of their brain's mechanical processing. The bewilderment of humans and asses, according to Addison is the same. While purchasing lottery tickets human are in the same state of perplexity as that

of an ass because each ticket has equal probability of winning but still the man will be confused about which one to buy.

People have different criteria in choosing a lottery number. People are irrational in their ticket selections and their decisions are based on arbitrary criteria such as superstitions, religious beliefs, horoscopes, assumptions, and so on. Some gamblers like the winning lottery number, while others prefer 12000 over any other number because of previous large prize payouts. Some ignorant gamblers select a number based on their own age, while others select a number based on their own religious beliefs. Some gamblers chose 1711 because their lord was born in that year, while another chose 666 because he despises Popes. As a result, we can see that gamblers make irrational decisions when selecting numbers. Attractive features of lottery adventures are believed by Addison that even the smartest men have adventures while indulging in lottery. They are duped by swindlers like George Gosling. Someone wrote Addison a letter claiming to be George Gosling, the advertiser. He went with the number 132 instead. He claimed that his visions in this area were regular and powerful, and that if Addison received the 12000 pounds, he would pay him well. As a result, Addison believes that people who trust this kind of people are complete fools.

**Conclusion:** People who spend money on lottery tickets, according to Addison, are tied up in extravagant dreams. They don't buy lottery tickets or spend money on them in order to get wealthy; they play the lottery because it's entertaining to imagine that their life could change in an instant. Addison goes on to add that they live in a made-up world where they get their presents. They spend all of their hard-earned money on lottery tickets in the hope

of winning a large sum of money. Even wealthy people who win the lottery are relegated to poverty. Addison concludes his essay by stating that lottery adventures are alluring and can wreck people's lives. He exposes the dangers of gaming and recommends people to spend less time and money on it.

## **2.7 EXAMINATION ORIENTED QUESTION ANSWERS**

### **Q.1. Justify the title of the essay “On the Whims of Lottery Adventures.”**

**Answer:** The title of the essay is like a window to a room. It is the center, and the whole story moves around it. It gives us an idea of what an essay is and introduces the topic of the essay. It shouldn't be too long or too little. In this essay, Addison reveals the evil of gambling. He encourages people to contrast their desires and live happily. He says people don't play the lottery to get promoted. They play it because it's fun to indulge in the fantasy that one day their lives may suddenly become easier to live in an imaginary world. They out run their present income hoping to win a huge amount and spend all their hard earned money on lottery ticket and are reduced to poverty. Addison aptly quotes that the man who lives by hope will die by hunger. Addison obtains approval and cites appropriately the stance of Italians who prevent a man who lives with hope. At the end of the essay, Addison advises people not to waste their hard-earned money on things that are not as useful as a lottery adventure. The title of the essay is appropriate, accurate, and concise. It shows the absurdity of people indulging in lottery games.

### **Q.2. How does Addison begin the essay with an anecdote?**

Ans. Addison begins his essay with an anecdote. Anecdotes are simple and interesting stories about real people or incidents. Addison starts the essay with an anecdote of an ass that had equally affected sense of smell and sight on both sides and had a bundle of hay on either sides and did not have the free will to choose a bunch of hay. It remained hungry, even if there was plenty of hay on both sides. It provides the perfect example of hunger among many. Similarly, humans have no free will and are ultimately complex machines. This means that their actions and decisions are only the result of mechanical calculations by the brain.

**Q.3. What is the author's opinion about lottery Adventures?**

Ans. According to Addison, even wise men are fooled by lottery adventures. Players are fooled by scammers like George Gosling. George Gosling advertised in the Postboy newspaper, which was 10 shillings above the market price, on the £ 1,500,000 lottery No. 132 ticket by Nathaniel Cliff. Addison learns that Nathaniel Cliff is just an agent. Someone wrote to Addison a letter alleging that George Gosling had been charged. He dreamed about it, so he dialed 132. He argued that his vision on this issue was very frequent and powerful, and if he got £ 12,000, he would give Addison a fair amount of money. Therefore, Addison believes that those who trust these types of people are real fools.

**Q.4. What criteria do people have while choosing lottery numbers?**

Ans. It is unreasonable to choose a ticket number based on explicit and unreasonable criteria such as superstitions, religious beliefs, horoscopes, and assumptions. Some number players prioritized the last lottery, some prioritized over 12000, for the grand prize awarded in the past. Some stupid players choose their age among the numbers, some choose the

numbers according to their different religious beliefs. One player chose 1711 as the year of the Lord, and another chose 666 because he hated the Pope. Therefore, when choosing numbers, players can say that their choice is unreasonable which is a fascinating aspect of the lottery adventure.

**Q.5. What message does Addison try to convey through this essay “On whims of Lottery Adventures?”**

Ans. Addison says people who spend money on the lottery are caught up in the wild imagination. Instead of buying lottery tickets to get rich, they play lottery tickets because it's fun to indulge in the fantasy that one day their lives may suddenly become easier. Addison goes on to say that they live in a fictional world and have emerged from their present. They want to spend all their hard earned money on the lottery and earn huge sums. Even the rich in the lottery are driven into poverty. Addison ends the essay by saying that the lottery adventure is seducing and ruining people's lives.

**2.8 Glossary**

1. **Ludicrous:** ridiculous or foolish.
2. **School men:** a scholastic theologian.
3. **Perpetual:** never ending or changing; occurring repeatedly.
4. **Starve:** Suffer or die or cause to suffer or die from hunger.
5. **Pretensions:** The use of affectation.
6. **Alluring:** Tempting.
7. **Lottery:** It is a means of raising money by selling numbered tickets and giving prize to

the holders of numbers drawn at random.

8. **Dissenter:** A nonconformist.

9. **Trifle:** A thing of little importance or value.

10. **Grandeur:** Splendor and impressiveness, especially of appearance or style.

## 2.9 SUGGESTED READINGS

Abrams, M.H and Geoffrey Harpham. *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, ed. by Cengage Learning. Cengage Learning India Private Limited, 2015.

Addison, Joseph. *Dictionary of National Biography*. Smith, Elder & Co, 1885.

---. *Essays of Joseph Addison*. General Books, 2012.

Hurd and Houghton. "Essay on the Life and Writings of Addison." *Essays* vol. 5, 1873, pp.320-322.

[https://www.easybib.com/guides/citation-guides/mla-format/how-to-cite-an-essay-mla/#:~:text=MLA%20Essay%20Citation%20Structure%3A,%2C%20URL%20\(if%20applicable\).](https://www.easybib.com/guides/citation-guides/mla-format/how-to-cite-an-essay-mla/#:~:text=MLA%20Essay%20Citation%20Structure%3A,%2C%20URL%20(if%20applicable).)

Peter Smithers. *The Life of Joseph Addison*. Oxford UP, 1968.

Steele, Richard and Joseph Addison. *Sir Roger de Coverley and the Spectator's Club*. Nabu Press, 2010.

Tilak, Raghukul. *History of English Literature*, ed. by Rajhans Prakashan Mandir. Surjeet Publication, 2018.

## **B.A./B.COM-II : GENERAL ENGLISH**

---

**COURSE CODE : AA-201**

**LESSON NO. 3**

**SEMESTER-II**

**UNIT - I**

---

### **“PLAYING THE ENGLISH GENTLEMAN”**

- 3.1 Objectives
- 3.2 Introduction to the Essayist
  - 3.2.1 Birth and Childhood of Gandhiji
  - 3.2.2 Philosophy of Gandhiji
- 3.3 Introduction to the Essay
- 3.4 Text
- 3.5 Summary
- 3.6 Analysis of the Text
- 3.7 Glossary
- 3.8 Examination Oriented Questions
- 3.9 Let Us Sum Up
- 3.10 Suggested Reading

#### **3.1 OBJECTIVES**

In this lesson, our aim is to give you some practice in reading prose. You will be required to answer questions set on the text provided for study by :

- (a) giving you a thought provoking essay written by Mahatma Gandhi,
- (b) giving you a glossary of difficult words and phrases from the essay,

- (c) discussing various literary devices used by Gandhiji in his prose writings,
- (d) giving you lesson end exercise.

## **3.2 INTRODUCTION TO THE ESSAYIST**

### **3.2.1 Birth and Childhood of Gandhiji**

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi was born at Porbandar, a coastal city in Kathiawar (now a part of the Gujarat State) on 2nd October 1869. He was the youngest child of his parents, Karamchand and Putlibai. Gandhi belonged to the Modh Bania community. They were originally grocers. However, Uttamchand, Mohan's grandfather, rose to become a Dewan of the Porbandar State. Mohan's father Karamchand, also served as the Dewan of Porbandar, Rajkot and Vankaner States. Kathiawar then had about 300 small states. Court intrigues were the order of the day. At times, Gandhis became their victim. Uttamchand's house was once surrounded and shelled by the State troops. Karamchand was once arrested. However, their courage and wisdom earned them respect. Karamchand even became a member of the Rajashanik Court, a powerful agency to solve disputes among the States.

Karamchand had little education, but had shrewdness of judgment and practical knowledge acquired through experience. He had little inclination to amass wealth and left little for his children. He used to say that "My children are my wealth." He married four times, had two daughters by the first two marriages and one daughter and three sons by his fourth marriage. Putlibai, his fourth wife, was younger to him by 25 years. She was not much educated but was well-informed about practical matters. Ladies at the palace used to value her advice. She was deeply religious and superstitious and had strong will-power. She used to visit the temple daily and regularly kept difficult vows. Mohan loved his mother. He used to accompany her to the Haveli (Vaishnav temple).

Mohan had a great devotion for his father and he often used to be present at the discussions about the State problems. Gandhis had Parsi and Muslim friends and Jain monks used to make regular visit. Mohan thus had occasion to hear discussions about religious matters also. Being the youngest, he was the darling of the household.

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi was a man considered one of the great sages and prophets. He was held as another Buddha, another Jesus, Indians called him the 'Father of the Nation.' They showered their love, respect and devotion on him in an unprecedented measure. They thronged his way to have a glimpse of him, to hear one word from his lips. They applied on their foreheads the dust on the path he had trodden. For them, he was almost an incarnation of God, who had come to break the chains of their slavery. The whole world bowed to him in reverence. Even his opponents held him in great respect.

Mohandas Gandhi was, however, not a great scholar, nor was he a great warrior. He was not born with exceptional faculties. Neither was he a good orator, nor a great writer. He did not claim anything exclusively divine in him. He did not claim being a prophet or having superhuman powers. He considered himself an average man with average abilities. Born in a middle class Bania family in an obscure princely State in a corner of India, he was a mediocre student, shy and nervous. He could not muster courage to speak in public. His first attempt at legal practice miserably failed.

But he was a humble seeker of Truth. He was a man with exceptional sincerity, honesty and truthfulness. For him, understanding meant action. Once any principle appealed to him, he immediately began to translate that in practice. He did not flinch from taking risks and did not mind confessing mistakes. No opposition, scorn or ridicule could affect him. Truth was his sole guiding star. He was ever-growing; hence he was often found inconsistent. He was not concerned with appearing to be consistent. He preferred to be consistent only with the light within.

He sacrificed all his luxuries and identified himself with the poorest of the poor. He dressed like them, lived like them. In the luxuries oppressed and the depressed people, he saw God. For him, they too were sparks of the divine light. They might not have anything else, but they too had a soul. For Gandhi, soul-force was the source of the greatest power. He strove to awaken the soul-force within himself and within his fellowmen. He was convinced that the potentialities of the soul-force have no limit. He himself was a living example of this conviction. That is why this tiny and fragile man could mobilise the masses and defeat the mighty British empire. His eleven vows, his technique of *Satyagraha*, his constructive programme - all were meant to awaken and strengthen the soul-force. He awakened and aroused a nation from semi-consciousness. It was a Herculean task. For, India was not a united country, it was a sub-continent. It was a society divided in different classes, castes and races, in people with different languages, religions and cultures.

It was a society where almost half of the population i.e., women, was behind purdah or confined to the four walls of houses, where one-fourth of the population - the depressed classes - was living marginalised life, where many did not have a single full meal every day. Gandhi made the oppressed sections wake up and break their chains. He mobilised the people and united them to work for the cause of *Swaraj*, which gave them a sense of belonging, a sense of purpose. Gandhi wanted to win *Swaraj* for the masses. For him, *Swaraj* did not mean replacement of White masters by brown masters. *Swaraj* meant self-rule by all. He said: "Real *Swaraj* will come, not by the acquisition of the authority by a few, but by the acquisition of the capacity by all to resist authority when it is abused." He worked to develop such a capacity. Development of such a capacity involved transformation of the individual.

Transformation of the individual and transformation of the society - they were not separate, unrelated things for Gandhi. Revolutionary social philosophies had concentrated on changing the society. On the

other, hand spiritual seekers had concentrated on the inner change. Gandhi not only bridged the gap between these extremes, he fused them together. Gandhi was thus both a saint and a social revolutionary. For Gandhi, unity of life was great truth. His principle of non-violence stemmed from this conviction. Non-violence was not a matter of policy for him; it was a matter of faith. He applied the doctrine to all the departments of individual and social life and in so doing revolutionized the doctrine, made it dynamic and creative. He believed that a true civilization could be built on the basis of such non-violence only.

He rejected the modern civilization. For him, it was a disease and a curse. This civilization leads to violence, conflicts, corruption, injustices, exploitation, oppression, mistrust and a process of dehumanisation. It has led the world to a deep crisis. The earth's resources are being cornered by a handful of people without any concern for others and for the coming generations. The conventional energy sources are getting depleted. Forests are being destroyed. Air, water, soil-everything has been polluted.

We are living under the shadow of nuclear war and environmental disasters. Thinking and intellectual men over the world are looking to Gandhi to find a way out of this crisis and to build an alternative model of sustainable development. Gandhi knew that the earth has enough to satisfy everybody's need but not anybody's greed. He had called for the replacement of greed with love. Gandhi is, therefore, now a source of inspiration and a reference book for all those fighting against racial discrimination, oppression, domination, wars, nuclear energy, environmental degradation, lack of freedom and human rights- for all those who are fighting for a better world, a better quality of life. Gandhi is, therefore, no longer an individual. He is a symbol of all that is the best and the most enduring in the human tradition. And he is also a symbol of the alternative in all areas of life-agriculture, industry, technology, education, health, economy, political organisations, etc. He is a man of

the future - a future that has to be shaped if the human race has to survive and progress on the path of evolution.

### **3.2.2 Philosophy of Gandhiji**

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi was a great leader of the national freedom struggle of India. He is remembered for his adherence to truth and non-violence. His remarkable and devoted campaigns for human right as well as his championing the philosophy of non-violence are quite unforgettable. Popularly known as 'Mahatma Gandhi', M.K. Gandhi lived a simple life in the service of the people of India. His teachings were a source of great inspiration for many leaders and social political movements, not just in India but around the world as well.

### **3.3 INTRODUCTION TO THE ESSAY**

Gandhi's autobiography, which he had titled 'The story of My Experiments with Truth' can be rated as one of the most popular and the most influential books in the recent history. It was written at the instance of Swami Anand. It appeared in the Weekly 'Navjivan' during 1925-28. It covers Gandhi's life up to 1920. He did not cover the period after that as it was well-known to the people and most of the concerned persons were alive. Besides he felt that his experiments in that period were yet to yield definite conclusions.

Gandhi's autobiography is very different from other autobiographies. The autobiographies normally contain self-praise by the authors. They want to criticize their opponents and boost their own image in the people's eyes. Gandhi's autobiography is completely free from all this. It is marked with humility and truthfulness. He had not hidden anything. In fact, he is rather too harsh on himself. He did not want to show to the world how good he was. He only wanted to tell the people the story of his experiments with Truth, for Gandhi, was the supreme principle, which includes many other principles. Realization of the Truth is the purpose of human life. Gandhi always strove to realize the Truth. He continuously tried to remove impurities in himself. He always tried to stick to the Truth as he

knew and to apply the knowledge of the Truth to everyday life. He tried to apply the spiritual principles to the practical situations. He did it in the scientific spirit. Sticking to the truth means *Satyagraha*. Gandhi therefore called his experiments as ‘Experiments with Truth’ or ‘Experiments in the science of Satyagraha.’ Gandhi also requested the readers to treat those experiments as illustrative and to carry out their own experiments in that light.

The extract “Playing the English Gentleman” is taken from Chapter 15 of the first volume of his well-known autobiography, *The Story of My Experiments with Truth*. The incidents narrated in the extract are from the time when Gandhiji was studying to be a lawyer in London. The piece tells us how far Gandhiji went to imitate the English till he realized his own worth and individuality as an Indian imbued with a rich cultural heritage of his own country.

### **3.4 TEXT**

My faith in vegetarianism grew on me from day to day. Salt’s book whetted my appetite for dietetic studies. I went in for all books available on vegetarianism and read them. One of these, Howard Williams’ *The Ethics of Diet*, was a ‘biographical history of the literature of humane dietetics from the earliest period to the present day.’ It tried to make out, that all philosophers and prophets from Pythagoras and Jesus down to those of the present age were vegetarians. Dr. Anna Kingsford’s *The Perfect Way in Diet* was also an attractive book. Dr. Allinson’s writings on health and hygiene were likewise very helpful. He advocated a curative system based on regulation of the dietary of patients. Himself a vegetarian, he prescribed for his patients also a strictly vegetarian diet. The result of reading all this literature was that dietetic experiments came to take an important place in my life. Health was the principal consideration of these experiments to begin with. But later on religion became the supreme motive.

Meanwhile my friend had not ceased to worry about me. His love for me led him to think that, if I persisted in my objections to meat-eating, I should not only develop a weak constitution, but should remain a duffer, because I should never feel at home in English society. When he came to know that I had begun to

interest myself in books on vegetarianism, he was afraid lest these studies should muddle my head; that I should fritter my life away in experiments, forgetting my own work, and become a crank. He therefore made one last effort to reform me. He one day invited me to go to the theatre. Before the play we were to dine together at the Holborn Restaurant, to me a palatial place and the first big restaurant I had been to since leaving the Victoria Hotel. The stay at that hotel had scarcely been a helpful experience for I had not lived there with my wits about me. The friend had planned to take me to this restaurant evidently imagining that modesty would forbid any questions. And it was a very big company of diners in the midst of which my friend and I sat sharing a table between us. The first course was soup. I wondered what it might be made of, but dared not ask the friend about it. I therefore summoned the waiter. My friend saw the movement and sternly asked across the table what was the matter. With considerable hesitation I told him that I wanted to inquire if the soup was a vegetable soup. 'You are too clumsy for decent society,' he passionately exclaimed 'If you cannot behave yourself, you had better go. Feed in some other restaurant and await me outside.' This delighted me. Out I went. There was a vegetarian restaurant close by, but it was closed. So I went without food that night. I accompanied my friend to the theatre, but he never said a word about the scene I had created. On my part of course there was nothing to say.

That was the last friendly tussle we had. It did not affect our relations in the least. I could see and appreciate the love by which all my friend's efforts were actuated, and my respect for him was all the greater on account of our differences in thought and action.

But I decided that I should put him at ease, that I should assure him that I would be clumsy no more, but try to become polished and make up for my vegetarianism by cultivating other accomplishments which fitted one for polite society. And for this purpose I undertook the all too impossible task of becoming an English gentleman.

The clothes after the Bombay cut that I was wearing were, I thought, unsuitable for English society, and I got new ones at the Army and Navy stores.

I also went in for a chimney-pot hat costing nineteen shillings – an excessive price in those days. Not content with this, I wasted ten pounds on an evening suit made in Bond Street, the centre of fashionable life in London; and got my good and noble-hearted brother to send me a double watch-chain of gold. It was not correct to wear a ready-made tie and I learnt the art of tying one for myself. While in India, the mirror had been a luxury permitted on the days when the family barber gave me a shave. Here I wasted ten minutes every day before a huge mirror, watching myself arranging my tie and parting my hair in the correct fashion. My hair was by no means soft, and every day it meant a regular struggle with the brush to keep it in position. Each time the hat was put on and off, the hand would automatically move towards the head to adjust the hair, not to mention the other civilized habit of the hand every now and then operating for the same purpose when sitting in polished society.

As if all this were not enough to make me look the thing, I directed my attention to other details that were supposed to go towards the making of an English gentleman. I was told it was necessary for me to take lessons in dancing, French and elocution. French was not only the language of neighbouring France, but it was the *lingua franca* of the Continent over which I had a desire to travel. I decided to take dancing lessons at a class and paid down £3 as fees for a term. I must have taken about six lessons in three weeks. But it was beyond me to achieve anything like rhythmic motion. I could not follow the piano and hence found it impossible to keep time. What then was I to do? The recluse in the fable kept a cat to keep off the rats, and then a cow to feed the cat with milk, and a man to keep the cow and so on. My ambitions also grew like the family of the recluse. I thought I should learn to play the violin in order to cultivate an ear for Western music. So I invested £3 in a violin and something more in fees. I sought a third teacher to give me lessons in elocution and paid him a preliminary fee of a guinea. He recommended Bell's *Standard Elocutionist* as the text-book, which I purchased. And I began with a speech of Pitt's.

But Mr. Bell rang the bell of alarm in my ear and I awoke.

I had not to spend a lifetime in England, I said to myself. What then was the use of learning elocution? And how could dancing make a gentleman of me? The violin I could learn even in India. I was a student and ought to go on with my studies. I should qualify myself to join the Inns of Court. If my character made a gentleman of me, so much the better. Otherwise I should forego the ambition.

These and similar thoughts possessed me, and I expressed them in a letter which I addressed to the elocution teacher, requesting him to excuse me from further lessons. I had taken only two or three. I wrote a similar letter to the dancing teacher, and went personally to the violin teacher with a request to dispose of the violin for any price it might fetch. She was rather friendly to me, so I told her how I had discovered that I was pursuing a false ideal. She encouraged me in the determination to make a complete change.

This infatuation must have lasted about three months. The punctiliousness in dress persisted for years. But henceforward I became a student.

### **3.5 SUMMARY**

M.K. Gandhi followed vegetarianism. His friend believed Gandhi would develop a weak body and remain an outcast as a result of his opposition to meat-eating. He would never feel himself comfortable in English society. Besides, his friend thinks Gandhi might become a crank as a result of his excessive experiments with diet. One day he invited Gandhi to go to the theatre. As decided, they were to dine together at the Holborn Restaurant before seeing the play.

Gandhiji and his friend shared a table between them in the midst of a very big company of diners. The first course was soup. Gandhiji summoned the waiter. Seeing the movement, his friend asked what the matter was. With some hesitation, Gandhiji told him that he wanted to know whether the soup was vegetarian soup. He called Gandhiji too clumsy for polished and polite society. If he could not conduct himself well, he had better leave, and feed for him outside. Feeling much delighted, Gandhiji went out. But the vegetarian restaurant nearby was closed. So Gandhiji had to go without food that night. He accompanied his friends to the

theatre, but the latter said nothing about the scene the former (Gandhiji) had created. Gandhiji himself had nothing to say about what had happened. The tussle, however, did not affect their relations in the least. Gandhiji knew it was his friend's love for him that had motivated him to make him suitable for polished society.

Gandhiji got new clothes at the army and navy stores. He also bought a top hat costing nineteen shillings. He wasted ten pounds on an evening suit made in Bond Street. Gandhiji also got his good and noble-hearted brother to send him a double watch-chain of gold. As it was not to correct wear a ready-made tie, he learnt the art of tying one for himself. He also began wasting ten minutes every day before a huge mirror, watching himself arranging his tie and parting his hair in the correct fashion. Every day he had to struggle with the brush to keep his hair in position. Each time his hat was put on and off, his hand would automatically move towards his hat to adjust his hair.

Thinking as if all that was enough to make him look polite and polished, Gandhiji attended to other activities supposed to help him become an English gentleman. He was told to take lessons in dancing, French and elocution. He decided to take dancing lesson at a class and paid down \$3 as fees for a term. But he failed to follow the piano. So he invested \$3 in a violin and something more in fees. He had a third teacher for lessons in elocution and paid him a preliminary fee of a guinea. He recommended Bell's *Standard Elocutionist* as the textbook, and Gandhiji bought it. Gandhiji began with a speech of Pitt's.

Mr. Bell rang the bell of alarm and Gandhiji awoke. He realized learning elocution was of no use as he had no to spend a lifetime in England. Dancing too won't make him a gentleman. The violin could be learnt back in India. As a student, he had to focus on his studies, qualify himself to join the Inns of Court, and his character ought to make him a gentleman. With these thoughts possessing him, Gandhiji wrote about them in a letter addressed to the elocution teacher. He requested the teacher to excuse him from further lessons. He wrote a similar letter to the dancing teacher, and went to the violin teacher in person with a request to sell the violin for any price. The violin teacher, a lady, encouraged

Gandhiji in his resolve to make a total change. Hence forward Gandhiji became a student and nothing else.

### **3.6 ANALYSIS OF THE TEXT**

1. Gandhiji's faith in vegetarianism grew stronger. The more books on vegetarianism he read, the more important experiments with reading books on vegetarianism provoked him to experiment with his food.

2. Gandhiji's friend feared Gandhiji's vegetarianism would weaken his body and also make him unacceptable in English society.

3. Gandhiji's friend invited him to go to the theatre after taking dinner at the Hal Born Restaurant. The first course served to them was soup. Gandhiji asked the waiter whether it was a vegetarian soup. This made Gandhiji's friend so upset that he asked him to eat in some other restaurant and wait for him outside.

4. Gandhiji had to go without food that night because the vegetarian restaurant nearby was closed. He accompanied his friend to the theatre. But this last friendly scuffle did not affect their relations in the least.

5. Gandhiji decided to grow polished and compensate for his vegetarianism by cultivating other abilities that might help him become an English gentleman.

6. So Gandhiji got new clothes suitable for English society. He also bought a top hat and an evening suit. He asked his good brother to send him a double watch-chain of gold. He also learnt the art of tying the tie (necktie). He began using a mirror every day when he was to get ready. All these tasks were undertaken to become an Englishman.

7. His infatuation (false love) for becoming an English gentleman was gone. Hence he thought of nothing except his determination to become a student with character and individuality.

### **3.7 GLOSSARY**

- Vegetarianism: the habit of not eating meat or fish
- Muddle: disordered or confused state; to bring into a disorder or confused state

- Crank : an eccentric or moody/ whimsical person
- Summoned : called
- Clumsy : odd; awkward; not graceful or smooth in movement, etc.
- Decent : polished
- Passionately : with strong emotion(s); highly emotionally
- Tussle : struggle or scuffle
- Actuated : motivated to do something
- Elocution : the skill of speaking clearly and pronouncing words distinctly
- Pitt : the famous Prime Minister of England
- Inns of Court : the law courts of London
- Infatuation : false love
- Extract : a short passage from a book
- Pursue : study
- Insight : clear understanding of a situation
- Cultivate : (here) adapt oneself to the situation
- Accomplishments : the abilities that have to acquire by training
- Introspection : the contemplation of one's own thoughts, desires and behavior
- Frugality : careful in avoiding waste of money
- Austerity : plain living
- Acquires a taste : improves interest
- Modest life : plain living

### 3.8 EXAMINATION ORIENTED QUESTIONS

Q1 “I wasted ten minutes everyday before a huge mirror.” What does Gandhi mean by this?

Ans: While Gandhi was a student in London, his hair was by no means soft and everyday it requires a regular struggle with the brush(comb) to keep it in position. Hence he had to spend ten minutes everyday before a huge mirror to arrange his tie and part his hair in the correct fashion.

Q2. What does Gandhi says, “The recluse in the fable kept a cat to keep off the rats, and then cow to feed the cat with milk, and a man to keep the cow and so on”?

Ans: In order to become an English gentleman, Gandhi makes every attempt, tries to follow lot many accomplishments. For the sake of learning something it is again required Gandhi to learn some other things. For becoming an English gentleman Gandhi wants to learn the art of dancing. While this very skill of dancing also pursues Gandhi to learn another art of playing the violin. That is why Gandhi mentions this fable at that context.

Q3. “But hence forward I became a student.” What does Gandhi before? Why does he says so?

Ans: In order to mould himself as an English gentleman, Gandhi not only wastes a lot of money but also valuable time, which he needs to spend on books. His acquired habit of wasting time by standing himself before mirror to arrange his hair, his taking lessons in dancing, French, elocution and the violin makes Gandhi to keep away from serious reading of his subjects of study. When he gets realization by undergoing introspection, Gandhi notices that he is not even doing the basic chores of a law student. When he ables to come out from all these, focusing on his studies, Gandhi thinks hence forward he has become a (real) student.

Q4 Why do Gandhi wants every youth to learn from him about saving money?

Ans: Gandhi wants that every youth should make an account of money that comes into and goes out of one’s pocket, so that he/she is surely a gainer in the

end. Gandhi expects that every youth should lessen their expenditure and should save every coin here and there that is possible. The money, in Gandhi's perception, they save will be more beneficial for them in due course of time.

Q5 What made Gandhi think that he had to economize?

Ans: As soon as he gets realized by undergoing introspection, Gandhi notices that he has wasted a lot of money at the cost of purchasing lot many luxurious things, and for taking lessons in various fields. He then keeps a strict watch over his way of living and decides to minimize his expenses by half. That is why he thinks that it is necessary for him to economize.

Q6. What effort did Gandhi make to economize?

Ans: In order to economize his way of living, he decides to reduce his expenses by half. As his living with a family of friends required the payment of regular weekly bills of dinners and parties and conveyances(travelling expenses), he decided to take two rooms on his own account, instead of living in a family of friends. As Gandhi's accounts showed numerous items on fares, he also decided to move from place to place by walk. For this, he also selected rooms that are near to his place of business. In this way he could economize his life.

Q7. Why did Gandhi decide to learn Latin and what did he do to learn it?

Ans: During the period of Gandhi's studying in London, French was not only the language of France, but also the *lingua franca* of the Europe. Gandhi was also told by one of his friends that the knowledge of Latin was very useful in comprehending law books and knowledge of Latin means greater command over the English language. Hence Gandhi acquired a taste for Latin, though it was very difficult, wanted to acquire proficiency in it by undertaking literature degree, in which Latin was compulsory subject. Though he ploughed in Latin in his first attempt, he didn't lose heart, and kept his serious attention to that course.

Q8. Why did Gandhi feel that he had to simplify his life further?

Ans: Gandhi felt that his way of living didn't befit/suit the modest/plain living of his family. The thought of his struggling brother, who nobly responded to his

regular calls for monetary help, deeply pained him. Gandhi noticed some students, who could spend from eight to fifteen pounds per month, had the advantage of scholarship, observed a student who was staying in the slums at two shillings a week. All these made Gandhi feel that he had to simplify his life further.

Q9. What were the initial reasons to motivate Gandhiji to vegetarianism?

Ans: Gandhiji was a vegetarian. His faith in vegetarianism became stronger from time to time. He read many books on vegetarianism. The result was that his experiments with his diet acquired an important place in his life. The initial reasons why Gandhiji took to vegetarianism were mainly related to considerations of health and, as implied, of cultural as well.

Q10. Gandhiji's friend was worried about his vegetarianism. What were the reasons for his worry?

Ans: Gandhiji's friend was worried about his growing faith in vegetarianism. The man had definite reasons to feel worried on account of Gandhiji's faith. Firstly, he feared if he persisted in his objections to meat-eating, he would develop a weak constitution. Secondly, he would remain an outcast as he would never feel comfortable and at ease in English society.

Q11. What steps Gandhiji took in a new direction after he decided on concentrating on his career?

Ans: After Gandhiji decided on concentrating on his career, he gave up efforts that were aimed at making an English gentleman of himself. He took some steps in the new direction. He wrote about his thoughts in a letter addressed to his elocution teachers. He requested the teacher to excuse him from further lessons. He wrote a similar letter to the dancing teacher. He went personally to his violin teacher. He requested her to dispose of the violin for any price it might fetch. She was pleased on learning that Gandhiji had finally learnt about the false idea he had been pursuing. She encouraged him in his determination to change his priorities.

### 3.9 LET US SUM UP

In England, Gandhi was a bit embarrassed about his clumsiness and his vegetarianism, which was always being ridiculed by his friends. He decided that he would try to become polished and make up for his vegetarianism by cultivating other accomplishments.

He undertook the too impossible task of becoming an English gentleman. He gave up his 'Bombay cut' clothes and got new ones from the Army and Navy stores. He also went in for a chimney-pot hat which cost him nineteen shillings, an excessive price in those days. He wasted ten pounds on an evening suit made in Bond Street, the centre of fashionable life in London; and got his brother to send him a double watch-chain of gold. He would spend time every day before a huge mirror, watching himself arranging a tie and parting his hair in the correct fashion. Gandhi had been told that it was necessary to take lessons in dancing, French and elocution to be a gentleman. He decided to take dancing lessons and paid £ 3 as fees for a term. After about six lessons in three weeks, he realized that he was no good at rhythmic motion. He could not follow the piano and hence found it impossible to keep time. What then was he to do? Gandhi decided to learn to play the violin and cultivate an ear for Western music. So he invested another £3 in a violin and something more in fees. He also got lessons in elocution after paying a preliminary fee of a guinea. The teacher recommended Bell's *Standard Elocutionist* as the textbook, which Gandhi readily purchased. It was the book by Mr. Bell which rang an alarm bell in Gandhi's ear. 'I do not have to spend a lifetime in England' he thought. 'What then is the use of learning elocution? And how can dancing make a gentleman of me? The violin I can learn even in India. I am a student and ought to go on with my studies' he thought. He wrote to all his teachers asking them to excuse him from further lessons. Gandhi says he came to the conclusion that, 'If my character made a gentleman of me, so much the better. Otherwise I should forego the ambition.' He later recalled, 'This infatuation must have lasted about three months. The punctiliousness in dress persisted for years.'

### 3.10 SUGGESTED READING

- Abel M (4 January 2005). Glimpses of Indian National Movement.
- Andrews, C. F. “VII – The Teaching of Ahimsa”. Mahatma Gandhi’s Ideas Including Selections from His Writings.
- Dalton, Dennis, ed. (1996). Mahatma Gandhi: Selected Political Writings.
- Duncan, Ronald, ed. (May 2011). Selected Writings of Mahatma Gandhi.
- Gandhi, M. K.; Fischer, Louis (2002). Louis Fischer, ed. The Essential Gandhi: An Anthology of His Writings on His Life, Work and Ideas.
- Gandhi, Mohandas Karamchand (1994). The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi. Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Govt. of India.
- Gandhi, Mohandas Karamchand (1928). “Drain Inspector’s Report.”
- Gandhi, Mohandas Karamchand (1990). Desai, Mahadev H., ed. Autobiography: *The Story of My Experiments With Truth*.
- Gandhi, Rajmohan . Mohandas: True Story of a Man, His People.
- Guha, Ramachandra. “Middle Cast, Middle Rank”. *Gandhi Before India*.
- Jack, Homer A., ed. (1994). The Gandhi Reader: A Source Book of His Life and Writings.
- Johnson, Richard L. and Gandhi, M. K. (2006). Gandhi’s Experiments With Truth: Essential Writings by and about Mahatma Gandhi.
- Todd, Anne M. Mohandas Gandhi.
- Parel, Anthony J., ed. (2009). Gandhi: “Hind Swaraj” and Other Writings Centenary Edition.

\*\*\*\*\*

## **B.A./B.COM-II : GENERAL ENGLISH**

---

**COURSE CODE : AA-201**

**LESSON NO. 4**

**SEMESTER-II**

**UNIT - I**

---

### **“THE TASK OF EDUCATION”**

- 4.1 Objectives
- 4.2 Introduction to the Essayist
- 4.3 Introduction to the Essay
- 4.4 Summary
- 4.5 Critical Analysis
- 4.6 Analysis of the Text
- 4.7 Glossary
- 4.8 Examination Oriented Questions
- 4.9 Let Us Sum Up
- 4.10 Suggested Reading

#### **4.1 OBJECTIVES**

The main objective of the lesson is to introduce you with the essay “The Task of Education” by Vinoba Bhave. The lesson would further familiarize you to Vinoba Bhave, his works and his writing style, focussing mainly on “The Task of Education.”

#### **4.2 INTRODUCTION TO THE ESSAYIST**

Vinoba Bhave was born in Kolaba district of Maharashtra. He was deeply influenced by his mother and inspired by the *Bhagavad Gita*. He became Gandhi’s

disciple. He was a self-taught, multi-linguist. In 1951, he started the Bhoodan movement. He took the land donated by landlords and gave it to the poor peasants to cultivate. He wanted each village to be self-sufficient. He worked for the establishment of equality. He called his philosophy 'sarvodaya.' Vinoba Bhave was one of the great spiritual leaders and social reformers of modern India, whose work and personal example moved the heart of all Indians, from Prime Ministers to the poor. Born in 1895, at the age of ten he took a vow of lifelong celibacy and service to others. Searching for a way of life that would embody both spiritual truth and practical action, he discovered Gandhi and joined in his work for the regeneration of India.

Vinoba participated in Gandhi's non-violent resistance (*satyagraha*) to the British Raj. Later, after independence had been achieved, Vinoba started out on his extraordinary bhoodan (Land Gift) movement. Over a period of twenty years, Vinoba walked the length and breadth of India, persuading landlords to give to their poor neighbours a total of over four million acres of land. Vinoba's social activism was founded on a lifetime's study of the spiritual traditions of India, and also of the other major world religions. These memories reveal both the inner and outer life of a great man who has an unwavering commitment to the practice of non-violence to an engaged spirituality, and to the power of love.

In this essay, Vinoba Bhave expresses his views regarding the purpose and aim of education. According to him, education should enable a student to acquire knowledge on his own without the constant help of his teachers. He further says that work and knowledge cannot be separated. He emphasizes the importance of practical knowledge. There should be no division between mental labour and intellectual work. True education should take us closer to nature, it should strengthen the forces of love and peace.

### **4.3 INTRODUCTION TO THE ESSAY**

The title "Thoughts on Education" is intended to describe the nature of the book. It contains no fully worked-out system, no ready-made pattern of

education. On the contrary, Vinoba utters repeated warning against the dangers which threaten education from systems, regulations and rules.

The essays and speeches which are translated here are occasional writings in the best sense of the word; that is to say, these are called forth by, and designed for, particular and special occasions. These essays and speeches are talks given to particular groups of people in particular places at particular times, in order to help those people, to suit their circumstances, to answer their questions, to meet their difficulties. These “Thoughts ‘Q’ On Education” are the response of a true teacher to the doubts and needs of the real people who assembled to hear him. In other words, these are themselves illustrations of an educational principle which Vinoba often reiterates, the principle that teaching should be given only when it is called out by an actual situation, and that only teaching which is relevant to that situation should be given.

#### **4.4 SUMMARY**

It is the work of education to make the student self-reliant in the matter of getting knowledge. He must be made fit to gain knowledge both by his own experiments and by experience of others. It does not express any credit on the teacher. Actually it discredits the teacher, remains a guardian of his student for a period of twelve or fifteen years.

It is known to us that Visvamitra, who is a character in the *Ramayana*, came to king Dasaratha to ask him for the services of Ramachandra. He told the king that he wanted Ram and Lakshman to protect his sacrifices. Dasaratha did not want to let Ram go. He had his own reason for not sending Ram with him. He told Visvamitra that Ram was not yet sixteen years old. So he could not send him with Visvamitra. Then Vasishtha explained to Dasaratha that his son Ram would get best education from Visvamitra. Vasishtha did not want to press king Dasaratha further. He simply wanted to illustrate the idea that a boy of sixteen should be fit to get knowledge through his own efforts.

By the age of sixteen, the boy should have learned how to use dictionary, an encyclopedia, and other references books. He should be able to read standard

books in his own language and should be capable of learning new languages by his own efforts. He should be able to make his own experiments increase his knowledge.

It is possible to teach children a number of languages in school. But we should make sure that we give children such mastery of one language that they get an understanding of linguistic principles. This way they can learn other languages for themselves. We should teach children how they can teach themselves with their own efforts without taking the help of teachers. The question arises what shall we teach our students? We have to put in their hands the key to knowledge.

Children generally forget the things that they used to learn. Those things are not worth remembering. This fact is known to us. So new declare children to have passed if they secure a mere thirty-three per cent of the marks. If someone were to come and ask us for a cook's job saying that he could manage to bake thirty or forty good loaves of a bread out of every hundred but that the rest would be bad, we would not employ such a person. A boy who gets thirty-three percent of marks is sixty seven percent a failure. But we give him a pass because we know that he cannot remember all the things we have taught him. Vinoba Bhave wants a boy's knowledge to be one hundred percent. He must feel sure that a thing is seen with a great deal of confidence.

In olden times when a day came for a student to leave his gurukul and go out in society, he was given a mantra by the guru. It was the token that his education was complete. The mantra ran something like this : *“the four quarters of the world lie before me, and I am the lord of creation. I am the maker, and to its clay I will give what form I please. I who have a mind ,am able to give to the mindless.”*

At this time, education and defense are two separate departments of the government. In a non-violent society, education itself means defense. The better our education, the less we need to spend on police and on the army. We think of education as a spending department. True knowledge is a weapon before which all other weapons fail. Education can protect by the power of non- violence.

The basic principle of education is that work and knowledge should never be separated. No real knowledge had to be without action. There is no such thing as knowledge divorced from action. It is only the knowledge of the self which is divorced from action. All other forms of knowledge are linked with action. We have to try to find out the right human way of living. If we live in harmony with nature, the greater would be our welfare and happiness. The more we are cut off from nature, the less contented we would be. Vinoba thinks that happiness is found to be beneath the sky, there is joy of blessings to go out in the open air among the natural objects of creations.

#### **4.5 CRITICAL ANALYSIS**

Vinoba's *Thoughts* would be on their contemporary relevance. The book is a compilation of lectures delivered by the thinker largely between 1949 and 1957; however none of the issues seems dated. This can mean two things: first, that the common cliché holds true – India has not achieved much in the years post-independence and the problems that plagued the country then, and occupied social thinkers and activists then, are still relevant and unresolved; and/or two, that the questions that Vinoba raises are philosophical in nature, and subsequently do not have answers (read easy, practicable solutions), or that the solutions he suggests are of such an ideal/idyllic nature that one cannot find too many instances of those in life. Either of the two possibilities is true, but neither would deter one from realizing the intrinsic value of his thoughts.

There are several ideas that this small book throws up, I would however be discussing one of the most pertinent ones here. Vinoba talks about the great divide in a human being's life in the present day, which is the product of the educational system – (for those who are 'lucky' enough to get a formal education!) – That between life at/during one's educational career, and post it. The artificial system of marks is a reality that one confronts only while at school and never again. Unless one translates 'marks' into 'remuneration figures' later in life, which again is problematic, since various studies and commonsense have shown that it is not necessary for the above average student to inevitably do well for herself in

life and that it is often the under-achievers rather than the over-achievers who 'do well for themselves' (speaking in a conventional sense) in their careers.

Coming back to Vinoba, and to quote him:

“A person spends the whole of his first fifteen or twenty years in getting an education and the ordinary cares of life are kept at a distance; after that he throws away his education with his school-bag and the rest of his days are given entirely to living!”

He goes on to talk about young men harboring great ambitions and dreams – of wanting to become 'a poet like Valmiki' or 'a scientist like Newton', only to later in life 'stoop to problems of housekeeping, of getting his daily bread.' Now, what Vinoba is saying may be regarded by many as commonplace. This dichotomy is the reality of the vast majority – the binary of 'getting an education' and 'living' are hard to reconcile. And the term given to this reconciliation is 'maturity'! So when someone gives up on what 'sensible' folk would regard 'fanciful' he is applauded and said to have gained in 'maturity'! But the causes which foster this divide have not been addressed and that too for years. Instead, the education systems in India and elsewhere have become even more entrenched.

This is something that either we ourselves have experience of, or are witness to around us. I for one still go through bouts of nostalgia when I think of school and marks as an easier alternative to 'life'. That is not to say my school days were the happiest or that I was a 'good' student! But the life I led then was different and did little to prepare me for the life that I now lead...

Parents who themselves perhaps had to struggle in their lives to reach a certain economic standing believe that they should not let any shadow of trouble fall upon their children (a common theme seen in Hindi movies as well). To this sentiment, Vinoba says, "We think of it (life) in terms of conflict and struggle. But

if this were true, if life were a terrible, weary struggle, we should neither introduce children to it nor continue to live it ourselves...” Historically contextualizing Vinoba would help us see that he was pointing towards the *Nai Taleem* – an educational scheme that Gandhi had come up with, which was loosely based on Tagore’s notions of education and the place of vocational training in education. The *Nai Taleem* was never successfully implemented and perhaps in a way for the better, however that does not take away from the arguments put forth by Vinoba in the favour of the significance of vocational training in education today.

Taking Vinoba’s ideas on education seriously would entail a major overhaul of the current mainstream education system. But until that happens, perhaps parents and teachers in an individual capacity need to take up the responsibility of making children feel that they are a part of the world – of the grown-up world of responsibilities and work. For adults to understand that ‘responsibility’ is not a bad word – and that if it is so in childhood, those same children cannot be expected to grow up and start looking at the same thing differently. To quote Vinoba again:

“If this is done [i.e. the artificial division between ‘school-life’ and ‘life’ be done away with], life will no longer consist of two broken fragments. The difficulties which arise from being thrust unprepared into responsible living will be avoided. There will be a constant, unconscious accumulation of knowledge, but men will not fall into the illusion of “education”, and will be helped to attain that detachment of spirit in which a man labours, but does not lust after the fruits of his labour.”

#### 4.6 ANALYSIS OF THE TEXT

Boys are taught various bits of information in school nowadays, but they are not taught how to acquire knowledge independently for themselves.

Many people would agree about the importance of self-reliance in education. Self-reliance, for me, has a very profound meaning. It is not merely that the child should be taught some handicraft, some manual skill by which he may support himself. There must of course be manual labour, everyone must learn how to use his hands. If the whole population were to take up some kind of handicraft, it would bring all sorts of benefits—class divisions would be overcome, production would rise, prosperity and health would improve. So that, at the very least, this measure of self-sufficiency must form a part of educational programme. But self-sufficiency as I understand it involves much more than that.

It seems to me that education must be of such a quality that it will train students in intellectual self-reliance and make them independent thinkers. If this were to become the chief aim of learning, the whole process of learning would be transformed. The present school syllabus contains a multiplicity of languages and subjects, and the student feels that in every one of these he needs the teacher's help for years together. But a student should be so taught that he is capable of going forward and acquiring knowledge for himself. There is an infinite sum of knowledge in the world, and each one needs some finite portion of it for the conduct of his affairs. But it is a mistake to think that this life-knowledge can be had in any school. Life-knowledge can only be had from life. The task of the school is to awaken in its pupils the power to learn from life.

Most parents are anxious for their boys to complete the school course so that they can get a salaried job and lead an easy life. This however is a wrong way of looking at education. Learning has value in its own right. The purpose of learning is freedom—and freedom is another word for what we have called Self-reliance.

Self-reliance means freedom from dependence on others, or on any external support. A man who has true learning is truly free and independent. The first and least part of this self-sufficiency is that the body must be educated and made skilled in a craft. A second, and a very important part of it is the ability to acquire new knowledge for oneself. There is a third essential element in freedom, and this also is a part of education. Freedom implies not only independence of other people but also independence of one's own moods and impulses. The man who is a slave to his senses and cannot keep his impulses under control is neither free nor self-sufficient. Temperance, vows and service therefore have their place in education, for it is by such means that this third aspect of freedom can be learned.

Self-sufficiency, then, has three meanings. The first is that one should not depend upon others for one's daily bread. The second is that one should have developed the power to acquire knowledge for oneself. The third is that a man should be able to rule himself, to control his senses and his thoughts. Slavery of the body is wrong. The body falls into slavery for the sake of the belly; therefore a free man must know how to earn his living through handicraft. Slavery of the mind is wrong. If a man cannot think for himself and teach an independent judgment, his mind is enslaved; a free man must have acquired the power of independent thought. Slavery of the emotions and the senses is also wrong, and it is an essential part of education to overcome their tyranny.

Parents ought to keep these three principles in mind when thinking about their children's education. The parents' whole duty has not been done when the boys have got jobs and a marriage has been arranged. They will find their true satisfaction in seeing their children happy, skilled and respected by all their neighbours.

It is about fourteen years now since our country was given the great idea of *Nai Talim*. In one sense it is not new at all, since no truth of experience is new. Truth is eternal, and the seeds of this idea have existed for many centuries. But when some aspect of truth is lighted up for our own times, it seems to us that we have got hold of a new idea, and for us it is new. Its newness lies in this, that we draw inspiration from it. This idea of *Nai Talim* has been working steadfastly

among us for many years ; it has been tried and tested; its reality, its strength, and its abiding truth have been established beyond doubt. The time has come for this *Nai Talim* to stand up and summon the nation like a trumpet call.

It puzzles and saddens me that three years should have gone by since we gained our independence, yet we have not found the courage to take a decision about this. What dearer proof could there be of our failure to understand the essentials, than that the very system of education which was in use before independence as a means to keep people in subjection, should be allowed to continue after independence has been won? If you still feel that our new education is as yet in the experimental stage—it is still cooking, it is not ready to be eaten, and we will eat it only when it is properly cooked—if that is your idea, then I must ask whether we are to eat bricks and stones in the meanwhile? Are such things fit to eat, or fit to be thrown away? Where would have been the harm if you had thrown them away at once, and then said to us: “We have not yet considered what the new pattern of education should be. It will take us a few months to think this out, and for that time we will stop all schooling. As it is urgently necessary to increase production, all the children will go out and work.” But we do not feel so keenly about our national education as we do about our national flag; that is what I mean by our failure to understand the essentials.

We have named this education “basic education,” but we do not understand the meaning of the word “basic.” We imagine that it means merely the first stage of children’s education. It means far more than that. It means that this is the found on, the base, upon which the whole of our education, from beginning to end, has to be built, whether you call it primary, or middle, or higher. It will not have to be the one kind of education for the villages and another kind for the towns. It will not to be the have one kind of education for the first four years of school life, and afterwards some other kind that is quite unrelated to it. It will not do to regard this as an experiment to be tried out on refugees while the rest of the country has something else. We have a right to use the word “basic” only if we are agree that the whole education of the country should be built up on the foundation of *Nai Talim*. Many even of those who are engaged in educational

experiment, when asked what plans they have made for the towns, reply that this education is not intended for the towns, but for the villages. Nothing, in my view, could be a greater mistake. This education is for all, and in it there is no distinction between town and village.

If we are content that the atmosphere, the mental attitudes, which now prevail in our towns should continue, India will have no peace. The town must interest itself in the service of the villages on whose support it stands, and must educate its children with this end in view. It will not do to bring up village children to serve their country while town children are brought up to loot their country. Such a thing cannot happen in this country because the nation has awakened, and a wide-awake nation will never allow differences of that kind to arise. This then is the meaning of Basic Education.

Many people nowadays think of Basic Education as a new kind of system, method or technique of teaching, on a par with the various other teaching “methods” which have had their vogue in the past. This is a mistaken view. I am very much afraid of systems, especially in educational work ; a system can make an end of all education. What a student receives from a *Nai Talim* centre such as *Sevagram* is not a system to be practised but a compass to show him the direction. He is given a suggestion which he may keep in mind and think over, but he must make his own independent judgments and try out his own independent experiments in his own place. *Nai Talim* is not a system, it is a far-reaching educational idea, it is a seed-thought, like the *Brahma-vichar* which was formerly so widespread in India and in which so many different systems of thought—*advait*, *dvait*, *visisht-advait* and so on—were all rooted.

Our plan for education is a plan for discipline ; its main-spring, that is to say, is not self-indulgence but self-control. Our chief aim should be that our children should learn from their earliest years to keep their senses, minds and intellects under control. Their speech must be imbued with the spirit of truthfulness. We must train them to express their thoughts clearly, and to choose words for their fitness, not for fashion. I would like to invite your attention to this difference between fitness and fashion.

If we are to carry out this task of creating a spirit of discipline and self-control, basic education must be entrusted, so far as is possible, to women, and women must be trained for this work. We ought to be keeping in touch with all organisations and institutions for women in India, and inducing them to come forward for this service. The education of little children should be entirely in the hands of women. As the Upanishad has it, “*matruvan, pitruvan, acharyavan*” — education is to be received first from the mother, then from the father, and lastly from the teacher. That is the true order of education.

#### 4.7 GLOSSARY

Reflect	: here, express
Tutelage	: guardianship
Encyclopedia	: book of set of books giving information about every branch of knowledge
Tongue	: here, language
Lingustic	: of languages
To give latitude	: to allow
Token	: evidence
Litigation	: a legal proceeding in a court; a judicial contest to determine and enforce legal rights
Fountain head	: original source
To Pore-over	: to study with close attention
Vandalism	: destruction, spoiling the beauty of nature
Acquiring	: getting
Rendered	: made
Reflects	: express
Discredit	: bad name
Springs	: fountains or sources
<i>Dhammapada</i>	: a religious book

#### 4.8 EXAMINATION ORIENTED QUESTIONS

Q1. What, according to Vinoba, is not creditable for the teacher.

Ans) It is the task of education to make the student self-sufficient in the matter of acquiring knowledge. He should be made capable of gaining knowledge both by his own experiments and by using the experience of others. It is not creditable for the teacher if the student has to remain in the guardianship of the teacher for twelve to fifteen years.

Q2. What did Vasistha say to Dasaratha ?

Ans) Visvamitra, in the *Ramayana*, came to king Dasaratha to ask him for the services of Ram Chandra and Lakshmana. He wanted the two brothers to protect his sacrifices. Dasaratha did not want to send Ram with Visvamitara. He gave the reason to Visvamitra that Ram was yet sixteen. So he could not send Ram with him. Then Vashshta explained to Dasaratha that his son would get best knowledge from Visvamitra. He merely wanted to illustrate the idea that a boy of sixteen should be capable of acquiring the knowledge by his own efforts.

Q3. Why are city dwellers unable to go into the open air for joy and blessing?

Ans) City dwellers live in the cabined, cribbed and confined life of cities. They are unable to go out in the open air, among the natural objects of creation. So they get a flower-pot and put flowers in it. They hang pictures of sunrise and sunset on the walls and lead artificial lives.

Q4. What does Vinoba Bhave say about the utility of books ?

Ans) He says that books like spectacles are secondary. They are not the most important instruments of knowledge. Even the fear that children will learn nothing if time spent on books is reduced is not well-founded. It is based on misunderstanding of the psychological law. The truth is that work and knowledge go together .

Q5. Explain briefly about the task of education.

Ans) The task of education is to make the student self-sufficient in the matter of acquiring knowledge. He must be enabled to gain knowledge both by his own

experiments and by using the experience of others. Education should enable the students to acquire knowledge by his own, without constant help of teachers. He points out that work and knowledge cannot be separated and the importance of practical knowledge. There should be no division between manual labour and intellectual work. True education eschews violence. It leads to the elimination of violence through its benign influence. It strengthens the force of love and peace.

Education reveals to us the beauties of nature. It emphasizes that there is joy and blessing in being able to go out in the open air among the natural objects of creation. It exposes the bad luck of the city dweller who remains deprived of the benedictions of nature. According to the German philosopher, can't the starry heavens above and the moral law within are the greatest blessings of life.

Q6. Explain how education has a social and national goal.

Ans) Vinoba argues that education should give true knowledge. True knowledge is a weapon before which all other weapons fail. Education ought to be able to claim that it can protect the country by the power of non- violence. Education is a social and a national goal. The individual goal through education is the attainment of the self-sufficiency in learning. The goal through education is for humanity , for the nation must be freedom from fear. We should think out ways and means of reaching this goal. Education should influence people to strengthen the forces of love and peace.

Q7. What is Vinoba's opinion about education and defence?

Ans.) Talking about his times, Vinoba says that education and defense are two separate departments of the government. But in a non- violent society. Education is itself the means of defense. If our education is better, the less we need to spend on police and on the army. He thinks of education as spending department. Some lament that in a poor country like ours, there is very little money to spend on it. True knowledge is a weapon before which all other weapons fail. Education should be able to claim that it can protect the country by the power of non-violence.

Education has a social and national goal as well. The goal of education for the individual is the attainment of self-sufficiency in learning. The goal of

education for the nation and humanity must be freedom from fear from the world community. This is the greatest task before all of us. Vinoba is of the view that there is a good deal of litigation in the world. We should try to resolve the disputes through education. If there is a dearth of the world, true education should strength the force of love and peace.

#### **4.9 LET US SUM UP**

##### **Defects of the Present Education System**

At present mistakes, are being made in the field of education in two ways. First, millions of people do not get education, and, secondly, those who get it, do not receive the right type of education. Thus, the condition is that, one on the side there is lack of education, and, on the other, miseducation.

The present education is concerned only with two faculties - power of memory and capacity for arguments. There are several other faculties important than these, but the present education pays no attention towards their developments.

Considering the needs of the country, this education is of no use. The state of affairs is that a boy starting from the age of six, continues to study till the age of twenty or twenty-one, and for these fifteen years, he does no work or labour. He is incapable of standing inclemencies of weather and of doing anything, be it agriculture, carpentry, weaving or cooking. He has knowledge of dietetics. Thus he comes out of the school without any preparation for practical leaving.

##### **The Task before Education**

There is no true joy for the man whose life cut off from the heavens above and the world of Nature around. This means that the task before education is to change the whole system of values and the way of life that is current in our cities. How this is to be done is not a question for you and me alone, but for the whole humanity.

##### **Tests of Education**

Self-control, fearlessness and independence of thinking, these are three tests of education. Only that country is educated where these three qualities find expression.

## **Government and Education**

But nowadays what is happening is that governments, both in our country and elsewhere, are doing their utmost to keep students under their thumb and impose upon them the ideas upon which the governments themselves are based. If the government is communist, communist ideas are instilled. If Fascists were to take over, they would all be taught Fascism. Each and every government tries to mould the minds of students according to its own brand of thought.

### **4.10 SUGGESTED READING**

- *Vinoba Bhave: The Man and His Mission*, by P. D. Tandon.
- *India's Walking Saint: The Story of Vinoba Bhave*, by Hallam Tennyson.
- *Acharya Vinoba Bhave*, by Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, India, Published by Publications Division, Government of India, 1955.
- *India's Social Miracle: The Story of Acharya Vinoba Bhave and His Movement for Social Justice and Cooperation, Along with a Key to America's Future and the Way for Harmony Between Man, Nature, and God*, by Daniel P. Hoffman.
- *Sarvodaya Ideology & Acharya Vinoba Bhave*, by V. Narayan Karan Reddy.
- *Vinoba Bhave on Self-Rule & Representative Democracy*, by Michael W. Sonnleitner.
- *Struggle for Independence : Vinoba Bhave*, by Shiri Ram Bakshi.
- *Philosophy of Vinoba Bhave: A New Perspective in Gandhian Thought*, by Geeta S. Mehta.
- *Vinoba Bhave – Vyakti Ani Vichar* (a book in Marathi) by Dr Anant D. Adawadkar.

\*\*\*\*\*

## **B.A./B.COM-II : GENERAL ENGLISH**

---

**COURSE CODE : AA-201**

**LESSON NO. 5**

**SEMESTER-II**

---

**UNIT - II**

### ***“MY MISTRESS’ EYES ARE NOTHING LIKE THE SUN”***

- 5.1 Objectives
- 5.2 About the Poet
- 5.3 Context
- 5.4 Introduction to the Sonnet
- 5.5 Background of the Sonnet
- 5.6 The Text
- 5.7 Critical Appreciation
- 5.8 Glossary
- 5.9 Characters
- 5.10 Form and Structure
- 5.11 Imagery
- 5.12 Themes of the Sonnet
- 5.13 Symbolism in the Sonnet
- 5.14 Sonnet 130 as a Satire
- 5.15 Multiple Choice Questions
- 5.16 Examination Oriented Questions
- 5.17 Suggested Reading
- 5.18 References

## 5.1 OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this lesson are:

- a) To acquaint you with Shakespearean sonnets.
- b) To critically analyse the sonnet.
- c) To explain the structure of Shakespearean sonnet.
- d) To expose the thematic concerns of the sonnet.

## 5.2 ABOUT THE POET

Shakespeare has been referred to as a versatile genius primarily because of his variety as well as universality of his literary output. His 38 plays, 154 sonnets, two long narrative poems and other works have inspired people across the globe for more than four hundred years. Shakespeare was so highly capacious in spite of being “untutored”, so universal a humanist who never chose to incline his writings towards any particular genre. His early plays were comedies like *The Comedy of Errors* and *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, and histories like *Henry VI* (parts I, II & III) and *Henry IV* (parts I & II). Until 1608, he had written numerous tragedies like *Hamlet*, *Othello*, *Macbeth*, *King Lear* and *Antony and Cleopatra* which are one of the finest dramatic works in the English language. The last phase of his writing produced tragi-comedies (or romances) such as *Pericles* and *The Tempest*. Quite early in his writing career, in the mid 1590s, he wrote his *Sonnets*, breaking away from the Petrarchan conventions prevalent in Elizabethan sonneteering. His way of adapting to every form of writing is almost miraculously characteristic of his prodigious versatility. In today’s world, Shakespearean works have been widely read, performed and rediscovered as material immune from the restrictions of time and place. This prodigious playwright has a phenomenal way of approaching and presenting life in its broad universal spectrum and cutting across all classifying genres.

## 5.3 CONTEXT

Shakespeare wrote 154 sonnets, first published in the 1609 quarto. They take the form of sequences, some of which seem to be addressed to a ‘fair’

young man and some being to a 'dark lady' as in this sonnet. To add to the mystery, Shakespeare also dedicated the publication to 'Mr WH' whose identity has never been confirmed. Sonnets were something of a craze. Many poets were inspired by the Italian writer Petrarch, who had fashioned sonnets (little songs) to his idealised love Laura. By Shakespeare's time, many of the conventions of sonnet writing had already become tired. His sonnet takes these Petrarchan conventions and plays with them in such a way that Shakespeare manages to reveal how silly they had become, whilst at the same time showing that he could do it better. And we are left with a more honest declaration of love despite all the attempts to demolish the foolishness of the form. The listing of desirable female qualities isn't only found in the sonnets. Shakespeare also uses the device in his plays. In *Twelfth Night* Olivia pours scorn on Count Orsino's declarations of love by listing his requirements in a woman, which reveals that the Count's isn't real love, just idealised love. Similarly in *Much Ado About Nothing* both Beatrice and Benedick use lists as a way of revealing their ideal partners, which in turn show us that they have yet to acknowledge real love.

#### **5.4 INTRODUCTION TO THE SONNET**

Shakespeare satirizes the traditional love poem, which is often a vehicle to idealize the speaker's lover by using flowery language to liken her beauty to natural imagery. Associated with Petrarch, this style was also popular in Elizabethan England. However, Shakespeare boldly countered this traditional style, as evidenced by this very sonnet. The speaker reveals his lover's imperfections by comparing her to beautiful objects found in nature and admits that her physical appearance cannot add up to things as beautiful as roses, snow, or the sun. Instead, the speaker remains confident that he can glorify his lover without exaggerated and unrealistic metaphors, that their love is both honest and unparalleled. Shakespeare makes sure to cover all conventional imagery like the heavens, nature, seasons, music, and classical allusions, but mocks them to realistically depict his lover. Although typical in the treatment of the subject matter, this sonnet demonstrates what is now known as the Shakespearean

sonnet: three quatrains and singular couplet follow the *ababcdcdefefgg* rhyme scheme.

## 5.5 BACKGROUND OF THE SONNET

Sonnet 130 is the poet's pragmatic tribute to his uncomely mistress, commonly referred to as the dark lady because of her dun complexion. The dark lady, who ultimately betrays the poet, appears in sonnets 127 to 154. Sonnet 130 is clearly a parody of the conventional love sonnet, made popular by Petrarch and, in particular, made popular in England by Sidney's use of the Petrarchan form in his epic poem *Astrophel and Stella*.

If you compare the stanzas of *Astrophel and Stella* to Sonnet 130, you will see exactly what elements of the conventional love sonnet Shakespeare is light-heartedly mocking. In Sonnet 130, there is no use of grandiose metaphor or allusion; he does not compare his love to Venus, there is no evocation to Morpheus, etc. The ordinary beauty and humanity of his lover are important to Shakespeare in this sonnet, and he deliberately uses typical love poetry metaphors against themselves.

In Sidney's work, for example, the features of the poet's lover are as beautiful and, at times, more beautiful than the finest pearls, diamonds, rubies, and silk. In Sonnet 130, the references to such objects of perfection are indeed present, but they are there to illustrate that his lover is not as beautiful — a total rejection of Petrarch form and content. Shakespeare utilizes a new structure, through which the straightforward theme of his lover's simplicity can be developed in the three quatrains and neatly concluded in the final couplet.

Thus, Shakespeare is using all the techniques available, including the sonnet structure itself, to enhance his parody of the traditional Petrarchan sonnet typified by Sidney's work. But Shakespeare ends the sonnet by proclaiming his love for his mistress despite her lack of adornment, so he does finally embrace the fundamental theme in Petrarch's sonnets: total and consuming love.

## 5.6 THE TEXT

Sonnet 130

***“My mistress’ eyes are nothing like the sun”***

*My mistress’ eyes are nothing like the sun;  
Coral is far more red, than her lips red:  
If snow be white, why then her breasts are dun;  
If hairs be wires, black wires grow on her head.  
I have seen roses damasked, red and white,  
But no such roses see I in her cheeks;  
And in some perfumes is there more delight  
Than in the breath that from my mistress reeks.  
I love to hear her speak, yet well I know  
That music hath a far more pleasing sound:  
I grant I never saw a goddess go,  
My mistress, when she walks, treads on the ground:  
And yet by heaven, I think my love as rare,  
As any she belied with false compare.*

## 5.7 CRITICAL APPRECIATION

It is one of the few of Shakespeare’s sonnets with a distinctly humorous tone. Its message is simple: the dark lady’s beauty cannot be compared to the beauty of a goddess or to that found in nature, for she is but a mortal human being.

The sonnet is generally considered a humorous parody of the typical love sonnet. Petrarch, for example, addressed many of his most famous sonnets to an idealized woman named Laura, whose beauty he often likened to that of a goddess. In stark contrast Shakespeare makes no attempt at deification of the dark lady; in fact he shuns it outright, as we see in lines 11-12: “I grant I never

saw a goddess go; / My mistress, when she walks, treads on the ground.” Here the poet explicitly states that his mistress is not a goddess.

She is also not as beautiful as things found in nature, another typical source of inspiration for the average sonneteer: “My mistress’ eyes are nothing like the sun; / Coral is far more red than her lips’ red.” Yet the narrator loves her nonetheless, and in the closing couplet says that in fact she is just as extraordinary (“rare”) as any woman described with such exaggerated or false comparisons. It is indeed this blunt but charming sincerity that has made sonnet 130 one of the most famous in the sequence.

However, while the narrator’s honesty in sonnet 130 may seem commendable, we must not forget that Shakespeare himself was a master of the compliment and frequently made use of the very same sorts of exaggerated comparisons satirized here. We even find them elsewhere in the sonnets, and in great abundance, too; note that while his “mistress’ eyes are nothing like the sun,” his fair lord’s indeed are, as in sonnet 49: “And scarcely greet me with that sun, thine eye.” This may lead one to wonder, is it really pure honesty that the poet is showing in sonnet 130, or is there also some sentiment, perhaps that the dark lady is not deserving of the narrator’s fine words? Or perhaps she is deserving but such words are not necessary, as though the narrator feels comfortable enough with the dark lady that he is able to show such honesty. There are many ways to interpret how the poet’s psychological state may have influenced stylistic choices in his writing, but these sonnets do not provide definitive proof.

Line 1

*My mistress’ eyes are nothing like sun ;*

Here we are introduced for the first time to the main character in this poem, the speaker’s “mistress.” Today, when we use the word “mistress,” it’s usually to refer to a woman who is dating a married man. In Shakespeare, though, it was more general, like “my love” or “my darling.” The speaker jumps right into his anti-love poem, letting us know that this lady’s eyes aren’t like the sun.

As we read the next few lines though, we see that the comparison is a standard way of praising a beautiful woman in a poem. It's like saying, "her eyes are like sapphires". Our speaker is refusing to fall back on clichés though instead telling us that this simile doesn't apply at all.

Line 2

*Coral is far more red than her lips red;*

If you imagined a stereotypically beautiful woman, like a model in a magazine, she'd probably have red lips. Certain kinds of very red coral are polished and used to make jewellery so if you compared lips to coral, you'd be thinking of the most beautiful, shiny red thing you could imagine. Nope, says the speaker, that doesn't sound like my girlfriend's lips at all .

Line 3

*If snow be white why then her breast are dun*

Next comes the mistress' breast. They get pretty much the same treatment as her lips. If the reddest red is like coral, then the whitest white is the colour of snow. A poet could praise a woman for having skin as white as snow not here, though. This woman's skin isn't white or even cream coloured. Instead, the speaker calls it "dun," a sort of grayish-brown colour. Be sure to notice the little changes here. In the first two lines, we hear only that the woman isn't like these other things (the sun, coral). Now we get an actual description, an adjective ("dun") that applies to her. Unfortunately it just makes her sound uglier. Dun is a word often used to describe the colour of a horse, and definitely not the kind of thing a woman would be thrilled to hear about her breasts.

Line 4

*If hairs be wire, black wires grow on her head.*

Now things just get worse if a poet wanted to be sentimental and sweet, he might compare his lover's hair to something soft, smooth, and shiny, like silk. Here though, the mistress' hair is compared to black wires sticking out of the top

of her head. Keep in mind that the whole point of this poem is to push back against standard ways of talking about women in poems. So it's not necessarily bad that she has frizzy black hair.

Lines 5-6

*I have seen roses damasked, red and white,  
But no such roses see I in her cheeks;*

There's a tricky word here: damasked. Basically it just means a pattern of mixed colours woven into expensive fabric. Imagine a rose with white and red pattern on it or may be a bouquet of red and white roses. Our speaker has seen beautiful roses like that, but his mistress' cheeks don't remind him of them at all. May be some perfectly beautiful women has cheeks that are white with just a little blush of red ,but that's not the women he's talking about.

Lines 7-8

*And in some perfumes is there more delight  
Than in the breath that from my mistress reeks*

The speaker tells us that some perfumes smell better (give more "delight") than this woman's breath. Apparently she stinks, too. Let us recap quickly: so far the speaker said that his mistress' eyes aren't that great, that her lips aren't that red, that her skin is yellowish, that her hair is like wires, that her cheeks are nothing like roses, and that her breath reeks. What a way to start a love poem.

Lines 9-10

*I love to hear her speak yet well I know  
That music hath a far more pleasing sound;*

Now, after all of that criticism, the speaker starts to get a little bit nicer . He admits that he really does "love to hear her speak." Seems like she was due for a compliment. The speaker can't just let it go at that, though, and immediately he starts to back up a little. Basically, that "yet" in the middle of line 9 gets us ready for a negative comparison. It's like saying, "You're really great, but..."

Then, in line 10, we get the negative half of that thought: he thinks that music is more pleasing” than the sound of her voice. Well, maybe that’s not so bad after all. If your boyfriend or girlfriend said, “I like music more than the sound of your voice,” you might not exactly be thrilled, but it sure beats having him or her tell you that your breath stinks. Maybe the speaker is softening up a little bit.

Lines 11-12

*I grant I never saw a goddess go;*

*My mistress when she walks threads on the ground.*

Here’s another thought that is split over two lines. In line 11, the speaker essentially tells us that he’s willing to admit that he’s never seen a goddess move. Now, when the speaker finishes his thought on line 12 he’s not actually being mean at all, just stating the facts. His mistress isn’t a goddess, she doesn’t fly or soar or float along. She just walks like a normal person on the ground. A pretentious poet might say: “My love walks like a goddess,” but we would know that it isn’t true. Has he ever seen a goddess? Maybe the best way to tell someone you love him or her in a poem is to be simple, honest and straight forward.

Lines 13-14

*And yet, by heaven, I think my love as rare.*

*As any she belied with false compare.*

Now, at long last, we get to the sweet part, but it might take a little bit of translating. Here are two lines in plain English: the speaker thinks that his lover is as wonderful (“rare”) as any woman (“any she”) who was ever misrepresented (“belied”) by an exaggerated comparison (“false compare”). These last two lines are the payoff for the whole poem. They drive home the speaker’s main point, that unlike other people who write sonnets, he doesn’t need flowery terms or fancy comparisons. He can just tell his mistress, plainly and simply, that he loves her for who she is.

## 5.8 GLOSSARY

*dun* (3): i.e., a dull brownish grey.

roses damasked, red and white (5): This line is possibly an allusion to the rose known as the York and Lancaster variety, which the House of Tudor adopted as its symbol after the War of the Roses. The York and Lancaster rose is red and white streaked, symbolic of the union of the Red Rose of Lancaster and the White Rose of York. Compare *The Taming of the Shrew*: “Such war of white and red within her cheeks!”

than the breath...reeks (8): i.e., than in the breath that comes out of (reeks from) my mistress. As the whole sonnet is a parody of the conventional love sonnets written by Shakespeare’s contemporaries, one should think of the most common meaning of *reeks*, i.e., *stinks*. Shakespeare uses reeks often in his serious work, which illustrates the modern meaning of the word was common.

rare (13): special.

she (14): woman.

belied (14): misrepresented.

with false compare (14): i.e., by unbelievable, ridiculous comparisons.

## 5.9 CHARACTERS

The use of the first person pronoun ‘I’ is an indication that this poem will present the poet’s own feelings about the nature of real love. This sonnet contains humorous mockery of the overblown metaphors used by some ‘sonneteers’ (writers of sonnets) and although the description of the narrator’s lady love is frank, the honesty of the narrator leaves the reader feeling that this is a genuine relationship. Shakespeare is mischievously presenting an alternative to typical Renaissance love poetry, where women are often compared to nature, but then shown to outstrip it, (sun, coral, snow, roses, perfume, music, goddesses). This is where the ‘goddess’ idea comes from in more conventional sonnets. The narrator’s purpose is made clear in the final line: He is warning about the perils of empty praise –

‘false compare’. There is a playfulness about the sonnet which is highly entertaining and accessible. The comparisons the narrator makes about his mistress are very recognisably romantic and it is the fact that he then says she’s not like any of these which makes the sonnet comical.

**Mistress:** The mistress is presented through the senses of the narrator. We end up with a character like a real person because of the honest way she is described. The mistress is not named but the use of ‘my’ might be seen as a specific enough reference.

The mistress is initially presented very physically:

1. She is black haired, with a dark skin-tone (dun).
2. Her lips are ‘red’, but not too red.
3. Her eyes are ‘nothing like the sun’, which might indicate dark eyes.
4. Her movement is revealed; she ‘treads on the ground’ when she walks which suggests perhaps heavy-footedness, but could also show that the narrator appreciates her for her down-to-earth qualities.
5. Her breasts also feature in the inventory.

This list of physical attributes is presented in a manner that might be seen as dismissive, sexist even. Indeed, the verb ‘reeks’ is used to describe her breath moving us from the sense of sight to the sense of smell, a sense not often used in love poetry. It’s worth considering that the narrator dwells on the physical. Her intellectual or spiritual qualities are never referred to. The description of the woman is interesting in the context of the time the poem was written (1590s) because the Elizabethan ideal of beauty was very fair. This woman’s darkness is exotic and we get a strong sense of a real person despite (or because of) Shakespeare’s depiction.

## **5.10 FORM AND STRUCTURE**

The poem takes the form of a Shakespearean sonnet. The word sonnet is derived from the Italian for ‘little song’ and was usually used to express and explore the nature of love in the Elizabethan period. Here Shakespeare isn’t just

writing a love sonnet to someone though, he's actually subverting the whole genre of sonnet writing. Cross rhymed lines (abab, cdcd, efef) give a sense of progression which is brought to a conclusion by means of the thought - provoking rhyming couplet at the end (gg), which works like a punchline. The sudden change of mood from the previous quatrain to the final couplet is called the VOLTA, signifies a change of mood or alternative point of view. Metre scans the lines and you will find that the metre used is iambic pentameter i.e five beat lines going Ti-TUM. However, in line two the first foot (unit of rhythm) isn't iambic. It goes TUM-Ti which just alters the rhythm enough to make us sit up and take notice. This type of foot is called a TROCHEE. The stress falls on the first syllable of 'Coral' and this signals a shift as the narrator begins to consider other things that his lover is not like. The choice of iambic pentameter is integral to the form of a sonnet, but it's worth remembering that iambic pentameter is often the form of serious poetry. It's also the poetical metre which best mimics the patterns of speech in English whilst the iamb is mimetic of the heartbeat. All of which influences the way we might read and understand this poem as a critique of false affections and genuine love.

**Stanza and rhyme scheme** Shakespeare's sonnets don't have stanzas (separate groups of lines, like paragraphs in prose) but the groups of four lines, or quatrains, contribute a similar sense of development that different stanzas might.

- The first quatrain describes the mistress' appearance in frank terms.
- The second is more fanciful and moves away from the woman to use another point of comparison – roses, the sight of which links to the idea of perfume (smell) enabling Shakespeare to deliver the killer line on reeking breath. These two quatrains form the OCTAVE (the first 8 lines of a sonnet) which is primarily concerned with what the woman is not like.
- The third quatrain focuses on the sound and motion of his mistress and, with the final couplet, forms the last six lines, known as the SESTET of the sonnet. Here the poem shifts away from the negative comparison of the octave to more objective description; he 'loves to hear her speak' and she 'walks...on the ground'.

The final couplet gives an example of a VOLTA. This often comes in line nine of a sonnet. Here the sudden move towards praise is very near the end. This contributes to the impact of the sincerity of what the poet expresses in the couplet, making the reader reconsider the ‘criticisms’ of earlier in the poem. The volta forces us to ask whether it was the woman or other poets who were in the firing line. If we thought the poet was harsh on his lover, we can see with greater clarity Shakespeare’s mockery of other poets. The rhyme scheme is MASCULINE, which means the rhymes land on the stressed second beat of the IAMB. If we crunch the poem to focus only on the rhyming words we get: • Sun - Red - Dun - Head • White - Cheeks - Delight - Reeks • Know - Sound - Go - Ground • Rare - Compare. The fully masculine rhyme scheme is wholly appropriate because this poem is written from a masculine perspective. It offers a male gaze (a point of view that is particularly male and which treats women as objects) and so feminine rhymes (when the rhyme falls on an unstressed beat as in Sonnet 116) would be less appropriate.

**Enjambment and caesurae** : The poem is heavily reliant on enjambment. Shakespeare is very adept at exploiting the possibilities of iambic pentameter without being restricted by the form. The combination of enjambment and caesurae are the means by which he flexes the form of the poem. In these first four lines, each comparison has its own line, which contributes hugely to the sense of denial. There is no room for manoeuvre; the narrator thinks such florid ideas are nonsense.

By the second quatrain, the narrator allows himself to consider roses and because the idea is more elaborate and because he is introducing wider knowledge, the lines need to run on to accommodate the elasticity of the idea. There is a check at the end of line 6. But the perfume of roses is suggested in the next line which then runs on to conclude so devastatingly with ‘reeks.’ Music and movement are the focus of the third quatrain. Each concept has its own run-on line, but there isn’t enjambment between the two.

### **5.11 IMAGERY**

The main object in the poem is the mistress. She is then compared with a variety of things that are ultimately found to be inadequate or unrealistic: the sun,

coral, snow, roses, perfume, music and goddesses. The imagery in this poem is sparse and the effects could really be described as anti-imagery. The poet dismisses all the usual ways of trying to elevate a woman's beauty in poetical terms. Shakespeare chooses clichéd ideas and then proceeds to demolish them, by showing how utterly silly they are in terms of describing a real, flesh and blood lover. He has the skill to take the devices of lesser poets, knock them flat and PARODY them (something which mimics and mocks) and still deliver a vigorously appreciative appraisal of his mistress. In the first quatrain the subject matter is given a brutally honest treatment as Shakespeare takes the tired old similes of the Elizabethan love sonnet and compares them to a real woman:

1. Her eyes are 'nothing like the sun.'
2. Her lips are not as red as coral.
3. Her breasts are light brown, not white. If her hair is described as a series of 'wires', a common image among poets of the time, then hers are black. Despite all the seeming denial, Shakespeare actually conveys genuine regard for the woman's physical attributes; her eyes, lips, breasts (and cheeks) are all catalogued and this is what Shakespeare manages to emphasise, without the need of far-fetched comparisons.

Repetition is used to highlight the futility of comparing things which turn out to be fundamentally different; 'red' is applied to coral, lips and roses:

1. 'Roses' is used both literally and figuratively (the supposed 'roses' in a woman's cheeks).
2. 'Black' is applied to 'wires' and hair. The repetition also, perhaps, conveys a tone of disbelief at how such absurd exaggeration could ever be sincere. It's also clear that much of the focus on colour is quite extreme; red, white and black are strong, emblematic colours. The woman in question does have red lips and black hair, suggesting passion, danger and vitality. The fact that her breasts are not white might similarly suggest that she is not insipid and conventional but passionate and vivacious. The concept that usually provokes the biggest reaction

from the modern reader is the assertion that his mistress' breath 'reeks.' It is a striking assertion, but contextually it is not surprising. In Elizabethan times perfumes were distilled from all sorts of unpleasant things to make very strong smelling products. They had to be strong smelling because most people stank in a way modern readers can't begin to imagine. To have 'reeky' breath might be grim, but it wouldn't be unusual and in this poem it adds to the forceful realism of the portrayal. Besides, the word 'reeks' wasn't as strong to Elizabethans as it is to us, so perhaps we can excuse the seeming bluntness of the narrator. Far-fetched comparisons typically listed a woman's assets comparing them to other lovely, natural things. This is why the narrator acknowledges the potential points of comparison (sun, coral, snow, roses, perfume, music, goddesses) but then mocks the genre by dismissing them. It is the dismissal of conventional comparisons and the use of negatives which creates the sense of an argument throughout the poem. However, it is the final rhyming couplet where the clout of the sonnet comes. After twelve lines of scepticism, the poet appeals to heaven, describes his lover as 'rare' (precious/unusual). He also delivers his highest praise, that all other women immortalised in poetry were 'belied with false compare' that is, described using hopelessly exaggerated language. They were, in effect, being lied about. The final couplet offers the answer to the questions the poet has posed throughout the preceding twelve lines .

## **5.12 THEMES OF THE SONNET**

### **Themes**

- Accurate description of a lover.
- The nature of female beauty.
- Mocks the empty praise and insincerity of clichéd poems
- Real, true, sincere love shown through contrast language
- Uses conventions of clichéd Elizabethan love poetry to undermine and mock them
- Comparisons are with natural elements

## **1 Theme of appearance**

“Appearances” is a major theme in Sonnet 130, since our speaker spends a lot of the poem talking about what’s wrong with his mistress’ looks. He does a pretty complete dissection of her face, her body, and her smell. He doesn’t say anything at all about her personality, but instead sticks to his laundry list of problems with her appearance. This gives Shakespeare a chance to poke fun at our obsession with looks and to show how ridiculous it is to ask any person to live up to some ideal of perfect beauty.

## **2 Theme of literature and writing**

The theme of “Literature and Writing” is sort of flying under the radar in this poem, but we think it’s important. The whole point of this poem is to gently mock the clichéd love poems written by other authors. The speaker isn’t actually making fun of his own lover so much as he is pointing out how ridiculous poetic comparisons can become. In that sense, this is a poem about other poems as much as it is about a particular woman with frizzy black hair.

## **3 Theme of women and femininity**

In Sonnet 130, the theme “Women and Femininity” is connected to the idea of appearances. This poem is all about female beauty and our expectations and stereotypes about the way women ought to look. You know how in magazines women pretty much tend to look the same? They all fit into a very narrow definition of what is beautiful. Essentially, the speaker in this poem is pointing out that love poetry does the same thing. It makes women into goddesses, not real human beings. He insists that his idea of beautiful femininity doesn’t depend on fitting an abstract, unrealistic fantasy.

## **4 Theme of love**

Like many of Shakespeare’s sonnets, this poem is an expression of love. In order to express your love, you have to talk about it, define it, examine it. In

telling his mistress that he loves her, our speaker also has to give us an idea about what his love is like. This poem is partly about where love comes from, what motivates our feelings of affection for someone else. Specifically, it's about finding love in spite of (or maybe even because of) physical flaws.

### 5.13 SYMBOLISM IN THE SONNET

#### 1 Her lips

##### Symbolic analysis

Lips seem to be among the standard list of things you're supposed to notice in a beautiful woman. Think about a gorgeous movie star, for example. When she has a close-up in a praise her beauty has a really long history particular scene, the camera tends to focus on her skin, her hair, her eyes, her breasts – all the things that Shakespeare includes here. The idea of breaking a woman into parts in order to.

**Line 2** : Comparing lips to red coral gives us another slightly ridiculous over-the-top simile. Lips that red would have to be painted, and that's the kind of fake beauty that this poem is pushing back against.

#### 2 Her eyes

##### Symbolic analysis

Eyes are something we focus on in other people, so it's no surprise that they are always cropping up in love poetry. You know the old saying, "The eyes are the windows of the soul"? Well, that's just the kind of frequently used phrase that our speaker doesn't have much for times.

**Line 1**: We start out with the speaker refusing to compare his lover's eyes to the sun. He picks a really out-there, exaggerated simile.

#### 3 The mistress

##### Symbolic analysis

She's definitely the star of this show. Every line refers to her, whether it's describing her appearance or her smell or the way she walks. We learn a few

things about her, like the colour of her hair and her skin. In general, though, she's a little more like an idea than a real person. Instead of being a fully drawn character like Hamlet or Juliet, she is mostly here to give the poet a chance to poke fun at exaggerated love poetry. We hear a lot about her, but for the most part, the information is rather vague and negative. Since all the images and symbols in this poem concern her in one way or another, we're going to put the different parts of her under the microscope, just like Shakespeare does.

#### **4 Her breast**

##### **Symbolic analysis**

For obvious reasons, breasts are a classic symbol of female beauty. We'll keep this G-rated, but you can see why talking about this woman's breasts forces us to think about how we define an ideal woman and what seems beautiful about her.

**Line 3:** Here the speaker avoids a direct simile. He just gives us the strong image of sparkling white snow, and lays it next to the equally strong image of dun (grayish-brown) breasts. He's playing with our associations with these colours. White is a long-standing symbol of purity, cleanliness, virginity, and all that next to that squeaky clean image, the mistress' breasts seem dirty and polluted. But the speaker will go on to show us that old stereotypes might not really mean much at all.

#### **5 Her hair**

##### **Symbolic analysis**

Another major cliché about women's beauty is that their hair should be silky smooth and shiny. Shakespeare turns this assumption on its head in a big way in this poem. Readers in Shakespeare's time would have recognized all these worn-out comparisons as allusions to images in other love poems. Famous examples of traditional love sonnets include the poems of Petrarch, an Italian poet from 14<sup>th</sup> century.

**Line 4:** We think this image of hair as black wires sprouting out of her head is meant to gross you out a little bit. Sounds like a creepy doll.

## **6 Her cheeks**

### **Symbolic analysis**

If the ideal woman in Shakespeare's time was supposed to have skin as white as snow and smooth and blond hair, then her cheeks are probably going to have to be pink and rosy too. You've probably picked up the pattern by now. The more clichés the speaker piles on, the more we see what a silly way this is to compliment someone .

**Line 6:** The speaker takes the standard image of rosy cheeks a step further here, pretending to be surprised that there aren't actually red and white roses in this woman's cheeks. When you put it like that, it makes the whole metaphor (i.e. "her cheeks are roses").

## **7 Her breath**

### **Symbolic analysis**

Faults such as your hair not being just right, or your eyes being the wrong colour, might be easy to overlook; but bad breath, that's something else altogether. Shakespeare seems to be having fun here, pushing his gross-out portrait as far as it will go

**Line 8:** The word "reeks" brings up a really strong image of just how far from perfect this woman is. By hitting us over the head with her very human flaws, the speaker forces us to take a look at our definitions of female beauty. Just like the "black wires" (line 4), this line pushes our boundaries a little, turning the love poem into a criticism

## **8 Her voice**

### **Symbolic analysis**

Just a couple more things to round out the list. She should of course have a beautiful voice to go with all the rest of it.

**Lines 9-10:** As always, the speaker rejects the obvious simile ("her voice is like music"), but this time he's being a little nicer. He doesn't say, "She sounds like a

frog with laryngitis.” In fact, he goes out of his way to say that he loves the sound of her voice. He just thinks that comparing her voice to music is going too far.

## **9 The way she moves**

### **Symbolic analysis**

Of course this perfect woman that the speaker is taking apart would have to be as graceful as an angel too. Throughout the poem he’s been setting up two portraits, side by side. One is of an ideal fantasy woman that he can’t begin to believe in, and the other is of the real, imperfect woman he loves. In these last lines the speaker chooses the real woman over the goddess that he has never even seen .

**Line 11:** We want to take a second to dork out about the alliteration in this line. Check out the way those three “g” words: “grant...goddess...go” make the line float along as gracefully as a goddess. Fun, huh? Plus, comparing a normal woman to a goddess is a complete exaggeration (or hyperbole as we English literature folks like to say), and that’s exactly what this poem is trying to get us away from.

## **5.14 SONNET 130 AS A SATIRE**

This sonnet plays with poetic conventions in which, for example, the mistress’ eyes are compared with the sun, her lips with coral, and her cheeks with roses. His mistress, says the poet, is nothing like this conventional image, but is as lovely as any woman. Here, Barbara Mowat offers her opinion of the meaning behind Sonnet 130; this work breaks the mold to which Sonnets had come to conform. Shakespeare composed a sonnet which seems to parody a great many sonnets of the time. Poets like Thomas Watson, Michael Drayton, and Barnabe Barnes were all part of this sonnet craze and each wrote sonnets proclaiming love for an almost unimaginable figure; Patrick Crutwell posits that Sonnet 130 could actually be a satire of the Thomas Watsons poem “Passionate Century of Love”, pointing out that the Watsons poem contains all but one of the platitudes that Shakespeare is making fun of in Sonnet 130. However, E.G. Rogers points out the similarities between Watson’s “Passionate Century of Love,” Sonnet

130, and Richard Linche's Poem collection entitled "Diella." There is a great deal of similarity between sections of the Diella poem collection and Shakespeare's "Sonnet 130", for example in "130" we see, "If hairs be wires, black wires grow on her head," where in "Diella" we see "Her hayre exceeds fold forced in the smallest wire." Each work uses a comparison of hairs to wires; while in modern sense this may seem unflattering, one could argue that Linche's work draws upon the beauty of weaving gold and that Shakespeare mocks this with harsh comparison. This, along with other similarities in textual content, lead, as E.G. Rodgers points out, the critic to believe that Diella may have been the source of inspiration for both homage, by Watson's "Passionate Century of Love," and satire by Shakespeare's "Sonnet 130." The idea of Satire is further enforced by final couplet of "130" in which the speaker delivers his most expositional line: "And yet, by heaven, I think my love as rare, as any she belied with false compare." This line projects the message behind this work, demeaning the false comparisons made by many poets of the time.

### **5.15 MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS**

1. Shakespeare's sonnet 130 is a (an)
  - a. satire on the deficiencies of the speaker's mistress
  - b. belittling of a loved one for the amusement of friends
  - c. playful expression of faults to irritate the lady
  - d. confession of love for a harlot
  - e. comment on the uniqueness and beauty of the speaker's mistress
2. The last two lines of the sonnet
  - a. express the true feeling of the speaker
  - b. seem out of place in the poem
  - c. express a love for someone whose beauty is of the spirit
  - d. reveal the speaker as a liar and boor
  - e. are an illustration of hyperbole

3. The first 12 lines of the sonnet are a (an)
  - a. ironic comment of female adornment
  - b. angry description
  - c. paradoxical evocation
  - d. parody of love sonnets
  - e. a play on metaphors
4. Seemingly, all of the following are criticisms of the mistress except
  - a. Coral is more red than her lips.
  - b. I love to hear her speak.
  - c. There are no roses on her cheeks.
  - d. She treads the ground.
  - e. Music has a more pleasing sound than her voice.
5. By “false compare” the speaker states that
  - a. the conventional praise of mistresses by poets are romantic lies
  - b. to win love, one must compare the charms of mistresses with the beauties in nature
  - c. love poetry must abound in hyperbole
  - d. the women whom men love must be worshipped as goddesses
  - e. love must be privileged to distort truth
6. The speaker in Shakespeare’s sonnet
  - a. is a complainer
  - b. is an arrogant and egotistic lover
  - c. raises the reader’s suspicions about his feelings and then tells honestly how he feels

- d. envies the verbal dexterity of his fellow poets
  - e. engages in a poetic exercise for fun
7. The true intent of the speaker in the sonnet is revealed most by
- a. the outrageousness of his metaphors
  - b. the rare words of praise that creep into his statement
  - c. his imaginative conceits
  - d. his sense of fun
  - e. the contrast between the first twelve lines and the last two
8. The reader of the sonnet must know that the criticism of the mistress is indeed a form of praise because
- a. the progress of fault-finding leads to the wrong conclusion
  - b. the fault-finding is imaginative and humorous
  - c. there are hidden romantic nuances in the judgments
  - d. the sequence of fault-finding eases in lines 9-12
  - e. there are paradoxical hints in the metaphors
9. All of the following are metaphors Except
- a. Her eyes are not the sun.
  - b. The hairs on her head are black ones.
  - c. No roses are her cheeks.
  - d. Music has a more pleasing sound than her voice.
  - e. The lady I love is rare.
10. An essential element of this sonnet is
- a. praise of a mistress

- b. finding the blemishes in a loved one
  - c. a lover's compromise with reality
  - d. mockery of a convention in love poetry
  - e. ambiguity of intention
11. Love poetry of the age frequently contains the "Petrarchan ideal," that is, the beautiful, blond, blue-eyed goddess all men desire. Shakespeare implies that this "ideal" is
- a. more to be desired than his mistress
  - b. less to be desired than his mistress
  - c. foolish to contemplate
  - d. merely pleasant foolery
  - e. the impossible dream of every man
12. The tone of the sonnet is
- a. happy
  - b. sad
  - c. satirical
  - d. pessimistic
  - e. mischievous
13. The word "false" in line 14 refers to
- a. a lying woman
  - b. the lying speaker of the poem
  - c. the Petrarchan ideal
  - d. his mistress
  - e. a philandering mate

14. A device in which one uses unusual, exaggerated comparisons is a(an)
- a. allegory
  - b. conceit
  - c. metaphor
  - d. apostrophe
  - e. elegy
15. The speaker's mistress, based on his own description, can best be described as
- a. beautiful
  - b. ugly
  - c. ordinary
  - d. intellectual
  - e. unfaithful (false)
16. The assumption in line 12 is that other women
- a. do not walk
  - b. walk, but very slowly
  - c. float above the ground
  - d. walk on the ground
  - e. are carried when they need to go somewhere
17. Sonnets invariably ask a question, present a proposal, present a puzzle, make a statement in the first eight or twelve lines; the proposal here is
- a. women can never be understood
  - b. even though different, my woman is as beautiful as any other

- c. even though she is ugly, I still love her
  - d. I really wish she had straight blond hair and blue eyes.
  - e. Her eyes, lips, skin are not the best of her.
18. The poetic device in line 1 is a(an)
- a simile
  - b. metaphor
  - c. synecdoche
  - d. apostrophe
  - e. metonymy
19. How many sonnets are there in total?
- a) 156
  - b) 126
  - c) 153
  - d) 154
20. Which of the following best describes a quatrain?
- a) a poem of fourteen lines, typically featuring rhyme, meter, and logical structure
  - b) a two-line, typically rhyming unit of verse
  - c) a type of metrical foot
  - d) a four-line, typically rhyming unit of verse
21. In what year was Shakespeare born?
- a) 1609
  - b) 1598

- c) 1616
  - d) 1564
22. How many syllables are found in a traditional line of iambic pentameter?
- a) 11
  - b) 12
  - c) 14
  - d) 10
23. In what country was the sonnet first used as a poetic form?
- a) England
  - b) France
  - c) Italy
  - d) Greece
24. Where in England was Shakespeare born?
- a) London
  - b) Newcastle-upon-Tyne
  - c) Stratford-upon-Avon
  - d) Canterbury
25. What is the name given to the 1609 publication of the sonnets?
- a) Quarto
  - b) First Folio
  - c) Codex Poeticus

Answer Key: 1e, 2a, 3d, 4b, 5a, 6c, 7e, 8a, 9e, 10d, 11b, 12c, 13c, 14b, 15a, 16c, 17b, 18a 19d,20d ,21d, 22d ,23c , 24c ,25a

## 5.16 EXAMINATION ORIENTED QUESTIONS

Q1. How and why does Shakespeare use comparisons — especially similes and metaphors — in Sonnet 130 (“My Mistress’ Eyes Are Nothing Like the Sun’s”)?

Ans. Similes and metaphors are two of the most powerful weapons in the arsenal of any poet, and Shakespeare certainly uses them quite effectively in sonnet 130 (which begins “My mistress’ eyes are nothing like the sun”). Similes make comparisons by using the words “like” or “as”; metaphors almost identify or equate the two things compared and thus omit such words as “like” or “as.” In the first line of Shakespeare’s sonnet, the speaker wittily disavows the tired, standard, conventional simile comparing a woman’s eyes to the sun. Indeed, throughout this poem, the speaker refutes or denies the kinds of trite comparisons that poets had often made between their beloved and various material objects. The speaker thereby asserts his own originality as well as his impatience with shop-worn poetic clichés. If a woman deserves to be praised physically, she also deserves to be described honestly, or at least that is one of the implications to be drawn from the phrasing of this poem. Thus, in line 4, the speaker mocks the standard metaphor equating the blond hairs on a woman’s head with golden wires; instead, he confesses that “If hairs be wires, black wires grown on her [that is, his mistress’] head.” Ironically, the poet contributes to the beauty or effectiveness of his own poem by denying his mistress the kind of stale, predictable praise she might have received from other poets. Again and again, the speaker mocks the kinds of comparisons used by previous poets to praise their lovers. The first twelve lines of the sonnet amount to a point-by-point rejection of many of the standard metaphors and similes of English and European love poetry: His mistress’ cheeks are not like roses; her breath is not like perfume; her speech is not like music; and her movement is not like the flowing movement of a goddess:

I grant [that is, admit] I never saw a goddess go [that is, walk];

My mistress, when she walks, treads of the ground (11-12). Finally, in the concluding couplet of the poem, the speaker announces that he nevertheless considers his mistress

. . . as rare

As any she [that is, any woman] belied [that is, misrepresented] with false compare. (13-14)

The final two words of the sonnet – “false compare” – make explicit the speaker’s concern with illegitimate similes and bogus metaphors. The sonnet is as much about the writing of true, honest, trustworthy poetry as it is about the particular physical appearance of any particular woman. The poem amounts to a kind of manifesto, implicitly urging poets to tell the truth when they write and admonishing them to be willing to take genuine responsibility for the similes and metaphors they employ.

Q2. What are Poetic Devices used in Shakespeare’s Sonnet 130?

Ans. Shakespeare is known for crafting some of the most intricately beautiful poems in the English language. Sonnet 130, while similar to other Shakespearean sonnets in the use of poetic devices and techniques, stands apart from most of his other sonnets for its mocking voice and use of satire.

### **Imagery**

In writing Sonnet 130, Shakespeare relied very heavily on strong sensory images to get his satirical message across. Imagery is a poetic device that employs the five senses to create an image in the mind of the reader. In this sonnet, Shakespeare draws on sight, sound and smell when he compares his mistress’ eyes to the sun, her lips to red coral, her breasts to white snow, her hair to black wires, her cheeks to red and white roses, her breath to perfume and her voice to music.

### **Structure**

Sonnet 130, as its name implies, is a sonnet. Sonnets are structured poems that dictate the length, style and even content of the poem. Like Sonnet 130, most sonnets are 14 lines in length and written in a meter called iambic pentameter with an alternating ABAB rhyme scheme. In order to form iambic pentameter,

the writer chooses words that alternate between an unstressed and a stressed syllable; the first sentence of the sonnet, written out to show the stressed syllables in capital letters, would read, “my MISTress’ EYES are NOthing LIKE the SUN.” Finally, sonnets often have a surprising twist to them towards the end; in this poem, the twist comes when the reader sees that, despite his criticisms, the author does actually love his mistress.

### **Hyperbole**

Hyperbole is a form of speech that exaggerates the facts in order to make a point. To the same extent that many romantic poets exaggerate the beauty of their mistresses, insisting that their eyes are more beautiful than the sun, their hair fairer than gold or their cheeks redder than roses, Shakespeare decides to exaggerate how unattractive his mistress is. Sonnet 130 suggests that his mistress’ hair is made of black wire, her breath reeks, her breasts are greyish brown and her voice is grating.

### **Satire**

Shakespeare’s Sonnet 130 also uses satire as a literary device. In writing this poem, he was gently poking fun at the conventional romantic poems that were being written by other poets. In pointing out that his mistress’ eyes are not more beautiful than the sun, that her hair is not made of gold threads, that her cheeks are not as red as roses and that her breath is not finer than perfume, he was able to make the argument that he loves her just the same for who she is and not for an unrealistic idealized notion of beauty.

Q3. In Shakespeare’s sonnet 130, what is the tone and how does it affect the reader? How is tone created in a poem?

Ans The tone is sometimes considered a subjective appraisal of a poem or other written work, since it can be something that a reader picks up on in a subtle way, and not necessarily spelled out in a clear and direct fashion. The tone conveys the mood of the poem. The tone of sonnet 130 is mocking. This is an interesting sonnet, in that even though the speaker is describing his lady love, he

seems more concerned with slamming the cliched descriptions usually used to describe a love in poetry. The cliched descriptions of eyes, lips and breasts that Shakespeare mocks in his opening line:

My mistress's eyes are nothing like the sun;  
Coral is far more red than her lips' red;  
If snow be white, why then her breasts are dun;

If hairs be wires, black wires grow on her head. This last description for me, tips the scale to a sarcastic mocking tone. It's very hard to receive, as a reader, the description of "black wires" for hair from a poet who is sincerely pouring his love for his lady's beauty into his description. His implication in choosing "black wires" seems to be the most opposite of whatever trite phrase most poets would use (Black as coal). His reasoning in defying these celestial, cliched descriptions becomes clear when he says:

I grant I never saw a goddess go;  
My mistress, when she walks, treads on the ground.  
His mocking, however, turns to a defiant and protective tone in the final couplet:  
And yet, by heaven, I think my love as rare  
As any she belied with false compare.

#### **5.17 SUGGESTED READING**

- Brown, Ivor. *Shakespeare*. London: Collins, 1955.
- Kerrigan, John. *William Shakespeare: The Sonnets and A Lover's Complaint*. Penguin Books, 1986.
- Paul, Rajinder. *Shakespeare: The Sonnets*. New Delhi: Educational Publishers, 2007.
- Sarker, Sunil Kumar. *Shakespeare's Sonnets*. New Delhi: Atlantic Publishers, 2003.

## 5.18 REFERENCES

- Dowden, Edward, ed. *Shakespeare Sonnets*. London: Adamant Media Co., 2005.
- Paul, Rajinder. *Shakespeare: The Sonnets*. New Delhi: Educational Publishers, 2007.
- Sarker, Sunil Kumar. *Shakespeare's Sonnets*. New Delhi: Atlantic Publishers, 2003.
- "Shakespeare's Sonnets." Oxquarry Books Ltd., n.d. Web. 25 Mar. 2015.

\*\*\*\*\*

## **B.A./B.COM-II : GENERAL ENGLISH**

---

**COURSE CODE : AA-201**

**LESSON NO. 6**

**SEMESTER-II**

**UNIT - II**

---

### ***“SUCCESS IS COUNTED SWEETEST”***

- 6.0 Objectives
- 6.1 Introduction to the Poetess
- 6.2 Important Features of Dickinson’ Poetry
- 6.3 Introduction to the Poem
- 6.4 Background of the Poem
- 6.5 The Text
- 6.6 Summary
- 6.7 Critical Analysis of the Poem
- 6.8 Analysis of the First Stanza
- 6.9 Analysis of the Second Stanza
- 6.10 Analysis of the Third Stanza
- 6.11 Glossary
- 6.12 Commentary
- 6.13 Themes of the Poem
- 6.14 Symbolism
- 6.15 Form
- 6.16 Stylistic Analysis of the Poem

- 6.17 Figurative Language of the Poem
- 6.18 Tone
- 6.19 Conclusion
- 6.20 Multiple Choice Questions
- 6.21 Examination Oriented Questions
- 6.22 Check your Progress
- 6.23 Suggested Reading

## **6.0 OBJECTIVES**

In this lesson, our aim is to give you some practice in reading and understanding poem. You will be required to answer questions set on the text provided for study by :

- (a) Giving you a summary and analysis of poem by the poet.
- (b) Diving you a glossary of difficult words and phrases from the poem,
- (c) Discussing various literary devices used by Dickinson in her poem,
- (d) Giving you questions to be answered.

After reading and understanding various sections of this lesson, you will be able to :

- (1) Understand the text in its totality,
- (2) Develop the ability to read between the lines and understand the real motive of the author in writing this poem .
- (3) Appreciate and evaluate the poem.

## **6.1 INTRODUCTION TO THE POETESS**

Emily Dickinson is one of the greatest poets of America. She led a life of seclusion, but intensity of her feelings urged her to express her feelings in a metrical composition. As a sensitive person, she was severely affected by the horrors of

civil war which broke out in America and the after effects which this war brought such as the tragedy of Lincoln's assassination, and the process of Reconstruction. She lived a quiet life in her father's house in Amherst Massachusetts where she was born and died (1830-1886). It is a popular myth that she led an isolated life but her poetry reveals that she was not forgetful of the world around her. She was deeply engrossed in the phenomenon of this world. During her life, no volume of her poetry was published. After her death, her sister discovered her diaries and published the content. Now she is considered one of the two finest poets of the nineteenth century.

Emily Dickinson is considered as one of the most acclaimed 19<sup>th</sup> century American poets. She explored her own spirituality through poignant verses and personal poetry. Dickinson's interest lied on philosophy, Geology, Latin and Botany apart from poetry.

Dickinson's poetry reflects her loneliness and the speakers of her poems generally live in a state of want, but her poems are also marked by the intimate recollection of inspirational moments which are decidedly life giving and suggest the possibility of happiness. Her works were heavily influenced by the metaphysical poets of seventeenth century England as well as her reading of the book of revelation and her upbringing in a puritan New England town which encouraged a Calvinist, orthodox and conservative approach to Christianity.

## **6.2 IMPORTANT FEATURES OF DICKINSON'S POETRY**

A common idea in Dickinson's poems is that not having increases our appreciation or enjoyment of what we lack; the person who lacks (or does not have) understands whatever is lacking better than the person who possesses it. In this poem, the loser knows the meaning "definition" of victory better than the winners. The implication is that he has "won" this knowledge by paying so high a price, with the anguish of defeat and with his death.

### **Her style**

- Simple yet passionate

- Marked by economy and concentration.
- Discovered the sharp,intense image is the poet's best instrument.
- Anticipated the modern enlargement of melody by assonance ,dissonance and off rhyme.
- Discovered the utility of ellipsis of thought and the verbal ambiguity.

### **Her ideas**

- Witty and rebellious.
- Original
- On death and immortality.

### **Her materialism**

- Confined her materials to the world of her small village,her domestic cycle, her garden and a few good books.
- Possessed the most acute awareness of sensory experience and psychological actualities.
- Expressed radical discoveries in the areas with frankness and force.
- Takes liberties with grammar, punctuation and capitalization.
- Was a product of Amherst village, where colonial America lingered in puritan overtones. She inherited the tradition of the romantic nature poets but her realism and psychological truth made her seem contemporary to a much later generation.
- Glimpses of her most private thoughts and feelings (what in a nature capture her attentions; how she responds to beauty ,to pain, to death ,her special form of worship and her faith in God).

### **Her obsessions**

- The problems of good and evil.

- Of life and death.
- The nature and destiny of the human soul.

### **6.3 INTRODUCTION TO THE POEM**

The poem brings to us the pathetic condition of those soldiers who, in the hope of gaining success in the form of victory over their enemy, fought a battle but now are injured and about to die. At a short distance, there is a crowd of victorious soldiers, celebrating their victory but this crowd is not a company for them. Success has intoxicating effect on victorious ones. Trumpets are being played by their opponents as a sign of their victory but for these soldiers, these trumpets are the symbol of their defeat and this is piercing the dying soldiers' hearts. The poem presents an enthusiastic and heroic atmosphere. The tone expresses a kind of enlightenment. The speaker says that "those who ne'er succeed" place the highest value on success. (They "count" it "sweetest.") To understand the value of a nectar, the speaker says, one must feel "sorest need." She says that the members of the victorious army ("the purple Host / Who took the flag today") are not able to define victory as well as the defeated, dying man who hears from a distance, the music of the victors.

A common idea in Dickinson's poems is that not having increases our appreciation or enjoyment of what we lack; the person who lacks (or does not have) understands whatever is lacking better than the person who possesses it. In this poem, the loser knows the meaning "definition" of victory better than the winners. The implication is that he has "won" this knowledge by paying so high a price, with the anguish of defeat and with his death.

### **6.4 BACKGROUND OF THE POEM**

**Historical Background of the Poem** -The American Civil War was in its highest tense at the time during Emily's life (1830-1886), and inspired her in many of her poems. The war actually has an important role in "Success is Counted Sweetest", as shown in the 3rd stanza 3rd line "strains of triumph", and the scenes of defeated armies "as he defeated -dying-" the poetry's terms Nectar : kind of sweet

substance, usually in flower. Purple host : another meaning of king, or majestic leader, Flag : represents the goals, dreams. First Stanza Analysis 1st line and 2nd line “success is counted sweetest By those who ne’er succeed.” The first two line shows us an example of paradoxical unity. The idea is that those who directly feel its struggle to reach success with their own mind and soul will know more about its joy rather than those who just accept it and never feel sense of satisfaction. 3rd and 4th lines analysis. “To comprehend a nectar requires sorest need.” It means we have to struggle, sacrifice and remain committed to our goals. Besides, we need to have strong desire of our goals. 2nd stanza analysis “not one of all The Purple Host Who took the Flag today can’t tell the definition so clear of victory” The purple host here means “the king”. As all we know, the king usually only ordered his armies to war or fight for him. So basically the true winner is the armies, not the king. So, in essence the king only got its fame. He even cannot describe how’s the victory reached, how’s the condition and the feeling or emotion of the struggle. 3rd Stanza analysis “as he defeated –dying on whose forbidden ear. The distant strains of triumph Burst agonized and clear.” The meaning of the last stanza is: The king defeated and dying with his own regret. But, he heard the sound of victory of his opponents from his ear that makes him feel depressed and his soul fallen down into the darkness. Even it come from far distant it burst his mind and heart.

## 6.5 THE TEXT

*Success is Counted Sweetest*

*Success is counted sweetest*

*By those who ne’er succeed.*

*To comprehend a nectar*

*Requires sorest need.*

*Not one of all the purple host*

*Who took the flag to-day*

*Can tell the definition,*

*So clear, of victory!*

*As he, defeated, dying,  
On whose forbidden ear  
The distant strains of triumph  
Burst agonized and clear!*

## **6.6 SUMMARY**

This poem's message, carried forth in a few different metaphors, is that those who succeed never truly appreciate it—it is only those who fail, or who lack something, who can truly appreciate how wonderful it would be if they did succeed. The dilemma presented by this poem is that it is not just those who strive for longer before succeeding who can appreciate it more, it is only those who “ne'er succeed” who can count it “sweetest” to succeed. This means, then, that no one ever truly appreciates success to its full desert, because those who could, once offered the chance, lose the ability to.

The next metaphor changes the scope of the poem slightly; it is no longer just about success, but about want and desire, too. Here, for someone “To comprehend a nectar,” that is, to truly understand all the wonderful aspects of nectar, and to be satisfied by it, not just to scarf it down, “Requires sorest need.” That is, only the starving can truly appreciate food. Again, we have the dilemma that as soon as one has their first bite, they are no longer starving, and they quickly lose their ability to appreciate it.

The final two stanzas elucidate one last, more extended, metaphor. Here Dickinson has taken us to a battlefield, and she compares the perspectives of the winning and losing sides. Not only can the soldiers in the winning army not feel the same appreciation of victory as the losing soldiers, but they cannot even truly understand what it is. Those soldiers left “defeated” and “dying” on the battlefield, however, can, as they must listen to the other side's celebrations of their victory.

## **6.7 CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE POEM**

Fame, or success, and their lack—failure—often occurs as a theme in Dickinson's poetry. Ironically, this poem, extolling the virtues of failure, was one

of her very few poems to be published (although after heavy editorializing). Yet while this poem's publication may complicate the issue, it can still be read as being largely about Dickinson's own failure to publish her poetry, even though she removes the poem and its failures from herself by using only third-person narration and a distant, unemotional tone.

Although during her lifetime her poems were not published, there was something to be gained in this ostensible failure, and that is what she explores in this poem. Beyond just liking paradoxes, Dickinson regularly sees pain as having the positive side of adding to one's experience, and this is another example of that paradox. Not only can a successfully published poet not understand the true joy of that publication, as the winning soldier cannot, but they also lose their ability to empathize with failure generally, as the victorious soldier strides off to loud fanfare, completely ignoring the dead and dying on the other side of the battlefield. Nor can they see the true beauty of success, and thus, they lose part of their emotional vocabulary for their poems. In this way the experience of success may actually lead to less truly successful poems—they may be published, but they are not as profound, or so Dickinson seems to believe.

This can be read as a reason that Dickinson did not try harder to get her poems published, although it is more likely that had to do with her repeated failures to do so, and the agonizing changes editors made, even when her poems were accepted. This poem, then, is more of a portrait of the frustrating ironies of life, rather than a single extended metaphor for the good side of her failure to publish, for example poem shows that true happiness cannot be ultimately available, if one cannot appreciate success unless one does not have it.

Dickinson is careful to avoid directly discussing the successes or failures of publication, just as she is careful to keep herself out of the poem as a character or even a visible speaker. The opening two lines deal with success directly, followed by two metaphors; starvation and loss in battle. Of these, the battle metaphor gets by far the majority of the lines, which seems to emphasize the fact that success often requires the failure of another.

## 6.8 ANALYSIS OF FIRST STANZA

*Success is counted sweetest*

*By those who ne'er succeed.*

*To comprehend a nectar*

*Requires sorest need.*

In stanza one, she repeats the *s* sound and, to a lesser degree, *n*. Why does she use this alliteration i.e., are the words significant? “Sorest” is used with the older meaning of greatest, but can it also have the more common meaning? What are the associations of “nectar”—good, bad, indifferent? Does “nectar” pick up any word in the first line?

The actual importance of success can be felt and understood -success is counted sweetest by those who have failed in the attempt to pursue the same! Those who have attained success through less effort can never understand the “perception of being successful.” If you’re to truly feel the essence of success (comprehend a nectar)you need to pass through a phase of sustained failure ,ultimately reaching the level of true success.

Emily Dickinson’s “Success is Counted Sweetest” has been penned in iambic trimeter with the exception of the first two lines of the second stanza. The poem highlights aphoristic truths that are universal.

In the first stanza, Emily Dickinson endeavors to define the true essence of success. The general impression is that success can be ‘counted’ by only those who have experienced it numerous times. Nevertheless, it is more precisely evaluated or counted by those who have never succeeded as they can apprehend its true value. In another poem, “I Had Been Hungry, All the Years”, Emily Dickinson writes that “Hunger-was a way / Of Persons outside Windows- / The Entering-takes away-”.

For the true experience of life, failures are inevitable. For, what we learn from our failures, success can never teach us. The alliteration with the repetition of the ‘s’ sound lays emphasis on ‘success.’ Success also tastes sweeter to the person

who has persevered very hard for it, than to a person who has found success effortlessly. The former is also more thankful to God, and cherishes his accomplishment. The word 'nectar' here implies water. However, it is perception that renders it 'nectar.' To the thirsty ones with parched throats, a drop of water tastes as sweet as nectar. Here 'sorest' is utilized with reference to its old meaning, that is 'greatest.' Only the one in the direst need, can treasure any sort of sanction.

## 6.9 ANALAYSIS OF THE SECOND STANZA

*Not one of all the purple host  
Who took the flag to-day  
Can tell the definition,  
So clear, of victory!*

In stanza two, "purple" connotes royalty; the robes of kings and emperors were dyed purple. It is also the colour of blood. Are these connotations appropriate to the poem? In a battle, what does a flag represent? Why is victory described in terms of taking the losing side's flag? No one from the victorious side can actually define how it feels to be successful in a battle. Victory or success often accompanies sheer luck and the person thus successful misses the real less of success:

THERE CAN BE NO INTEREST WITHOUT LOSS, NO VICTORY  
WITHOUT SUFFERING, NO FREEDOM WITHOUT SACRIFICE

Success itself is expressed through the loss. Only the defeat can understand the true value of success. Some people define success by virtue of positions that they acquire and assume in life. The poetess asserts how none of the purple leaders who took the flag today could describe what victory actually meant. The act of victory in such a stance of winning a battle is limited to the act of taking away a flag. It also points to the worldly act of hoisting a flag. Arundhati Roy in "The End of Imagination" toys with the word 'successful.' She echoes how the meaning of the word 'successful' depends upon perception. For instance, a soldier who dies at war is deemed by others to be 'unsuccessful.' Roy points out that it

does not necessarily mean that the soldier is in any way ‘unfulfilled.’ The poetess highlights the word ‘to-day’ to underline the presentness and transiency of the situation. ‘Purple’ is the colour of royalty because the fine clothes/robes of kings and emperors were dyed purple; and also connotes ‘blood.’ It was the trend that dynasties ruled over some countries. Being born to a royal family, one could never realize how difficult it was to achieve that position as it naturally came to them as a heirloom. Shakespeare said: “Some are born great, some achieve greatness, and some have greatness thrust upon ’em.” (*Twelfth Night* Quote Act ii, Scene 5.) of these, only those who achieve it comprehend its worth according to Dickinson.

#### 6.10 ANALYSIS OF THIRD STANZA

*As he, defeated, dying,*

*On whose forbidden ear*

*The distant strains of triumph*

*Burst agonized and clear!*

In stanza three, what words are connected by *d* sounds and by *s* sounds? Is there any reason for connecting or emphasizing these words? Dickinson is compressing language and omitting connections in the last three lines. The dying man’s ears are not forbidden; rather, the sounds of triumph are forbidden to him because his side lost the battle. The triumphant sounds that he hears are not agonized, though they are clear to him; rather, he is agonized at hearing the clear sounds of triumph of the other side. They are “distant” literally in being far off and metaphorically in not being part of his experience; defeat is the opposite of or “distant” from victory. Defeated in the battle the soldiers are on the verge of death. During the battle he might have given his hundred percent and subsequently changed his warfare strategy a number of times only to attain success. However his hope could not be realised. His ear could vaguely interpret the sound of triumph of his opponent. This very inner feeling of pain and emptiness at the eve of death further clarifies his perception of success<sup>1</sup> and finally he dies in pain.

In the above lines, the poetess exemplifies the frenzy of success, that one loses consciousness in. He loses the ability to evaluate himself objectively. In such a context, the person who loses the battle and is dying can perceive it better. The dying man's ears are not 'forbidden.' The figure of speech utilized here is a 'transferred epithet.' Rather what is forbidden to his ears is the sound of success, as he belonged to the defeated side. He is successful in that he can realize the futility of war, and the meaningless of success as the speaker in Wilfred Owen's "Strange Meeting" does. The word 'strain' in "strains of triumphs" may be used as a pun in the above phrase. Here, the victory may also be 'strained.' The idea of distance and defeat is suggested by the alliteration of the 'd' sound. Moreover, the one who is caught in the noise and fury of success cannot, in fact hear its sound. The one who serenely lies away can perceive it better. It does not manifest itself subtly, but does "Burst agonized and clear"

#### **6.11 GLOSSARY**

Counted sweetest	:	something that is pricey
Nectar	:	drink of gods
Sorest need	:	fact of accepting failure
Purple host	:	intensification of success
Flag	:	victorious troop marching with the high raised flags
Forbidden ears	:	defeated soldiers can only hear the echos of their opponent's success (and their failures )
Stains of triumph	:	worries and anxieties they have undergone hearing shouts of their opponents of success
Burst agonized	:	extreme pain and despair.

#### **6.12 COMMENTARY**

Many of Emily Dickinson's most famous lyrics take the form of homilies, or short moral sayings, which appear quite simple but that actually describe

complicated moral and psychological truths. “Success is Counted Sweetest” is such a poem; its first two lines express its homiletic point, that “Success is counted sweetest / By those who ne’er succeed” (or, more generally, that people tend to desire things more acutely when they do not have them). The subsequent lines then develop that axiomatic truth by offering a pair of images that exemplify it: the nectar—a symbol of triumph, luxury, “success”—can best be comprehended by someone who “needs” it; the defeated, dying man understands victory more clearly than the victorious army does. The poem exhibits Dickinson’s keen awareness of the complicated truths of human desire (in a later poem on a similar theme, she wrote that “Hunger—was a way / Of Persons outside Windows— / The Entering—takes away—”), and it shows the beginning of her terse, compacted style, whereby complicated meanings are compressed into extremely short phrases (e.g., “On whose forbidden ear”).

### 6.13 THEMES OF THE POEM

“Success is Counted Sweetest” is a philosophical poem whose main theme is conjured in the following line: *success if only hard earned actually matters in life ! she is supported the thought , never judge a person’s success by how high he arises in his life*. The poem addresses the following major questions in the form of themes of the poem. Failure, a kind of success. The very first line of the poem is giving us the theme of the poem. The poetess describes a complicated phenomenon of human life that those who succeed in achieving something are not able to relish their success to full extent. The word success is important for those who “never succeed.” Need-Next is the description of need philosophy. “Sorest need” is required to “comprehend a nector.” We have regard for something or someone only when acute need is there. In fact water is taught by thirst so success is also taught by failure. Indifference of man. The poet has used parallelism in this poem to bring out a heightened effect. On one side, there are half-dead soldiers who are unable to bear the pain due to wounds they have received in war. On the other, there are the trumpets of victory which are adding to the misery of the dying half-conscious soldiers. Thus the callousness of human nature reveals itself in the behaviour of the victorious soldiers.

## **Isolation**

Isolation of man on this planet earth has been the theme of various poets. The loneliness of dying soldiers among so many opponents shows that a crowd is not company.

## **Death**

Death is a theme which occupies an important part in her poetry. A Glaring example is “I could not stop for death” and so many poems like this. The house where she lived was in the way which led to cemetery so death seems to be a part of her poetry.

### **6.14 SYMBOLISM**

The poetess has cleverly used symbolism in the poem which adds to it a specific charm and delight. ‘Nectar’ is the symbol of triumph and victory. In her days wars were common so they found their expression in this poem. The word purple stands for the blood stains and ‘Host’ for king who won the victory in the battlefield. It seems that the king is habitual of fighting wars with his enemies and during this process the uniform, he is wearing, has received so many stains which have become purple with the passage of time. Success is now a facile victory for him. Trumpets are symbol of victory for the successful soldiers but a symbol of defeat for the unsuccessful dying soldiers. Flag is another symbol of victory used in this poem.

The use of this symbol after defeat and dying shows the intensity of the poetess’ feelings. As he defeated\_dying\_ Nouns (common) Pronouns Verbs Adjectives Success Those counted Sweetest, sorest Nectar Who succeed Purple, defeated Host . He comprehend dying, forbidden Flag One took distant, agonized Victory

### **6.15 FORM**

The three stanzas of this poem take the form of iambic trimeter—with the exception of the first two lines of the second stanza, which add a fourth stress at the end of the line. (Virtually all of Dickinson’s poems are written in an iambic meter that fluctuates fluidly between three and four stresses.) As in most of

Dickinson's poems, the stanzas here rhyme according to an ABCB scheme, so that the second and fourth lines in each stanza constitute the stanza's only rhyme.

### **6.16 STYLISTIC ANALYSIS OF THE POEM**

This is a short lyrical poem having twelve lines. The poetess is a highly gifted person. She has tried to explain a great phenomenon of world in few possible words. Indeed this poem is very close to our lives. The poem can be taken as a parable of human life. In this battle of human life, some of us remain successful in achieving success in terms of health, wealth, honour etc. Some of us are not successful in acquiring our desired goals. In the hope of achieving our goals, only death comes to our rescue. The charm of our unfulfilled desires continues to exist. This poem is very close to life as every one of us has the same feelings at one or another stage of life.

### **6.17 FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE OF THE POEM**

- Simile (1st line): "success is counted sweetest".
- Metonymy (3rd line): to comprehend a nectar (represents success) (5th line): not one of all the purple host (represents the king, or majestic leader) (6th line): who took the flag today (flag represents victory)
- Hyperbole (4th line): Requires sorest need.
- Simile (12th line): "as he defeated -dying- Atmosphere : enthusiastic , heroic Tone : ambitious. Mood : encouraging, enlightening.

#### **Alliteration**

Use of alliteration "s" is clear in the first line of the poem: Success is counted sweetest. Alliteration of "d" is visible in the 9th line: As he defeated—dying—

Affixes-Affixes are visible in the use of words such as count+ed, sweet+est, defeat+ed, dye+ing, forbid+den, strain+s, agon+ized.

#### **Paradox**

We find a paradox, a kind of homily which appears quite simple but very complex in nature when it is closely examined i.e. Success is counted sweetest

By those who ne'er succeed. Skilful use of paradox reminds the readers of Donne's style of poetry where two heterogeneous ideas are successfully combined.

Phrase- A beautiful, marvellous and uncommon phrase has been used which gives a touch of richness to the poem e.g. "on whose distant ear."

### **6.18 TONE**

A kind of serenity, untold calmness is there in the poem. The tone of the poetess is suggestive of her sensitivities. Her tone seems to be sympathetic. The unfulfilled desire of success has been glorified. She has given us a new mirror to look at things and phenomena around us. With the help of mere words, the poetess has given us the photographic representation of a battlefield.

#### **Metrical Pattern of the Poem**

Suc CESS | is COUNT | ed SWEET | est iambic tetrameter By THOSE  
| who NE'ER | suc CEED iambic trimeter To COM | pre HEND | a NEC | tar  
iambic tetrameter Re QUI | res SO | rest NEED iambic trimeter Not ONE | of  
ALL | the PUR | ple Host iambic tetrameter Who TOOK/ the FLAG/ toDAY  
iambic trimeter Can TELL/ the DEFINI/ tion iambic trimeter So CLEAR/ of  
VIC/ tory iambic trimeter AS he/ DEFEATED/ Dying trochaic trimeter ON whose/  
FOR bidden/ EAR trochaic trimeter The DIST/ ant STRAINS/ of TRI/ umph -  
iambic tetrameter Burst A/ goNIZED/ and CLE/ar iambic tetrameter.

### **6.19 CONCLUSION**

"Success is Counted Sweetest" is a poem which describes that success is sweet but the desire of success is more charming. Words have been carefully used to give the readers the picture of a battlefield where on one side, there are the victorious ones whose victory will lose its charm after some time. On the other hand, there are the losers, the dying soldiers who will be able to taste the fruit of success as this particular word has still a charm for them. They will continue to love it forever. This poem reminds us of Keats "Ode On Grecian Urn" where Heard melodies are sweet Those unheard are sweeter.

## 6.20 MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS

1. According to Emily Dickinson's poem "Success Is Counted Sweetest," to " \_\_\_\_\_ requires sorest need."
  - a) ingest salivation
  - b) comprehend a nectar
  - c) calculate a hectare
  - d) celebrate a spectre
2. The alliteration in the first stanza serves to
  - a) soothe the reader
  - b) highlight the envious tone
  - c) complement the assonance in the first stanza
  - d) contrast the consonance in the second stanza
  - e) emphasize the appeal of success by creating an appealing sound
3. The rhythm and beat of the poem as a whole can best be described as consisting of
  - a) three to four feet of iambs
  - b) iambic pentameter
  - c) iambic trimeter
  - d) three to four feet of trochees
  - e) trochaic tetrameter
4. Line 5 is an example of what type of measured beat?
  - a) iambic tetrameter
  - b) iambic trimeter
  - c) trochaic tetrameter

- d) iambic pentameter
  - e) trochaic trimeter
5. The poem's language can be described as consisting of all of the following except
- a) aphorisms
  - b) homilies
  - c) epigrams
  - d) axioms
  - e) chiasmus
6. The poem's rhyme scheme is
- a) abcb defe ghih
  - b) abab abab abab
  - c) abcb abcb abcb
  - d) abcd efgh ijkl
  - e) aabb ccdd eeff
7. The word "comprehend" in line 3 most likely means
- a) to eat
  - b) to figure out
  - c) to determine
  - d) to analyze
  - e) to truly know
8. The words "day" (6) and "victory" (8) provide an example of
- a) feminine rhyme
  - b) slant rhyme

- c) double entendre
  - d) oxymoron
  - e) antithesis
9. The structure of the poem consists of
- a) a hypothesis, reasoning, and a solution
  - b) a proposition and evidence
  - c) one axiomatic sentence and two sentences with images demonstrating the axiom
  - d) a theory and examples
  - e) a question answered by hypothetical situations
10. The overall tone of the poem is
- a) pedantic
  - b) didactic
  - c) moralistic
  - d) adage like
  - e) envious
11. The poem can be summarized by which of the following sentences?
- a) Only those who have achieved success understand its sweetness.
  - b) Success comes only to those who risk and persevere.
  - c) Success is best won through hard work.
  - d) Only those who have not achieved success understand its sweetness.
  - e) The victor is always better off .

12. What two images does Dickinson use to symbolize “success” in “Success is counted sweetest”?
- a) The nectar and the victorious army
  - b) The nectar and the olive branch
  - c) The olive branch and the laurel
  - d) The laurel and the victorious army
13. Where did Dickinson die?
- a) At her family home in Amherst
  - b) In a hospital in Rochester Minnesota
  - c) In hotel in Washington,DC
  - d) At sea ,while traveling to visit her nephew in France
14. How many poems were discovered among Dickinson’s belongings after she died?
- a) Nearly three hundred
  - b) Nearly 1800
  - c) Nearly 8500
  - d) None,the unpublished poems were never found
15. Which of the following poets was Dickinson’s close friend and mentor in Amherst?
- a) Ralph Waldo Emerson
  - b) Walt whitman
  - c) William Blake
  - d) None of the above,Dickinson was not friend with any important poets

**Answers of the MCQ**

1 B 2 E 3 A 4 A 5 E 6 A 7 E 8 B 9 C 10 D 11 D 12 A 13A 14 A 15 D

## 6.21 EXAMINATION ORIENTED QUESTIONS

Q.1 What is the tone of “Success is Counted Sweetest” by Emily Dickinson?

Ans. The tone is happy, excited, optimistic, bright, the feel of defeat, etc. The tone of the poetess is suggestive of her sensitivities. Her tone seems to be sympathetic. The unfulfilled desire of success has been glorified. She has given us a new mirror to look at things and phenomena around us. With the help of mere words, the poetess has given us the photographic representation of a battlefield.

Q2. What analogy does Dickinson draw in this poem?

Ans. The analogy that Dickinson draws in this poem is that ones who are always successful in life do not appreciate success as much as one whose success is rare. The analogy is the nectar, which refers to the drink of the gods which is an illusion.

Q3. Is the analogy an effective comparison? Why?

Ans. Yes, this is an effective comparison because it shows the difficulties of success.

Q4 . Purple is a colour associated with bloodshed in battle (Purple Heart). Purple is also a colour associated with royalty or nobility. What is the “purple Host” in line 5?

Ans. The “Purple Host” in line five is someone who was noble and courageous; however they did not always see the benefits from their achievements. The host is purple after battle because they are bloody. The people who took the flag are the winners.

Q5. Whose ear is mentioned in line 10? What is the ear forbidden to hear?

Ans. The ear is the ear of the purple host or honourable person. The ear is forbidden to hear because he did not live to see success.

Q6. Describe the image you see in the last stanza.

Ans. In the last stanza you get the image that the person who has been striving for success, does not realize once it has been achieved.

Q7. In the poem “Success is Counted Sweetest” by Emily Dickinson, what poetic devices can be found in it.

Ans. There are several techniques in the poem. The first is rhyming. The words that rhyme in her poem are “succeed/need”, and “ear/clear.” She also uses imagery in the last stanza (imagery is using the 5 senses to describe something). She describes, “On whose forbidden ear/the distant strains of triumph/Break, agonized and clear.” She is describing the sounds of triumph very descriptively, which is imagery. She also describes the army as a “purple Host”, an image that fits with imagery. Then, for figurative language techniques, there is a metaphor. She compares people who appreciate success the most to someone who appreciates nectar because they are starving. She says, “To comprehend a nectar/ requires sorest need.” This enhances the point that she is making, that success often is counted the sweetest to those who have fought and struggled for it, and never tasted it.

**6.22 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS**

Q1. Write a short account about an incident from your own life that demonstrated the truth of “To comprehend a nectar / Requires sorest need.”

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

2. Is it possible to fail in victory and success in defeat?

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

-----  
-----

3. People measure success by the money they make, the power they wield, the admiration they receive, the satisfaction they derive from performing a task, and so on. Write an essay that explains your definition of success. Use plenty of examples to make your point.

Ans. -----  
-----  
-----  
-----

4. Comment on the effect of the word *distant* in the last stanza.

Ans. -----  
-----  
-----  
-----

12. These lines are taken from the poem of Emily Dickinson's "Success is Counted Sweetest" where the poetess describes about the triumph of success can only be enjoyed by the person who faces the failure.

Ans. -----  
-----  
-----  
-----

### 6.23 SUGGESTED READING

- Crystal, D. (1992): *A Dictionary of Linguistics and Phonetics*. Fowler, (1970)
- *Key Concepts in Language and Linguistics*, Routledge: Newyork. Wales. K. (2011).
- *A Dictionary of Stylistics*. Widdowson H. G. (1975): Stylistics and the teaching of literature. London. Longman.

\*\*\*\*\*

## **B.A./B.COM-II : GENERAL ENGLISH**

---

**COURSE CODE : AA-201**  
**SEMESTER-II**

**LESSON NO. 7**  
**UNIT - II**

---

### **“ODE TO AUTUMN”**

- 7. 1 Objectives
- 7. 2 Introduction of the Poet
- 7. 3 Important Features of Keats’ Poetry
- 7. 4 “Ode” -Meaning
- 7. 5 Introduction to the Poem
- 7. 6 Background of the Poem
- 7. 7 Text
- 7. 8 Summary
- 7. 9 Analysis of the First Stanza
- 7. 10 Analysis of the Second Stanza
- 7. 11 Analysis of the Third Stanza
- 7. 12 Glossary
- 7. 13 Analysis and Commentary of “ ODE TO AUTUMN”
- 7. 14 Themes
- 7. 15 Stylistic Analysis of the Poem
- 7. 16 Stylistic Devices in the Poem
- 7. 17 Structure

- 7. 18 Form
- 7. 19 Imagery
- 7. 20 Tone
- 7. 21 Conclusion
- 7. 22 Examination Oriented Questions.
- 7. 23 Suggested Reading

### **7.1 OBJECTIVES**

In this lesson, our aim is to give you some practice in reading an Ode:

- (a) Giving you a summary and analysis of ode.
- (b) Giving you a glossary of difficult words and phrases from the poem.
- (c) Discussing various literary devices used by Keats in his poem.
- (d) Giving you questions to be answered.

After reading the various sections of this lesson you will be able to :

- (1) Comprehend the text in its totality.
- (2) Develop the ability to read between the lines and understand the real motive of the author in writing this poem .
- (3) Appreciate and evaluate the poem.

### **7.2 INTRODUCTION OF THE POET**

John Keats (1795-1821) is a well known English Poet of the nineteenth century. He shines singularly out among the galaxy of such great poets of his century as Wordsworth, Coleridge, Shelley, Byron, Tennyson, Browning and Arnold although he got the least long age (only 25 Years) among all of them. Though that small age he was destined to live, he wrote a good number of such poems without which no anthology of English poetry is ever completed. "Ode to Nightingale", "

To Autumn”, “Ode on a Grecian Urn” and “La Belle Dame Sans Merci” are known and remembered for their unmatched eloquent expression and sublimity .He writes about love and beauty in a very sweet sensuous manner.

### **7.3 IMPORTANT FEATURES OF KEATS’ POETRY**

He is a romantic poet. Keats is generally known as a poet of beauty. For him, the principle of beauty has a spiritual existence. Keats sees and visualized beauty through his five senses. Another feature of his poetry is sensuousness. He takes sensuous delight in all focus of beauty. His poetry is replete with sweet audio and visual images. He is also called Hellenist, he loves Greek Culture and Literature, and therefore he continues to spread Greek culture through his poetry.

### **7.4 “ODE”**

An ode is a kind of poem, usually praising something. It is a form of lyric poetry-expressing emotion and it is usually addressed to someone or something or it represents the poet’s message on that person or thing, as Keats ‘ode’ tells us what he thought about autumn. The word ‘ode’ comes from a Greek word for “song” and like a song; an ode is made up of verses and can have a complex meter.

**There are three types of Ode:**

#### **1. Pindaric Ode**

Pindaric Ode is named after Pindar. They were performed with dances and sometimes celebrated the Olympics games.

#### **2. Horatian Ode**

The Horatian Ode was named after the Roman poet, Horace. It was usually calmer and less formal than Pindaric Ode and was more personal enjoyment than a stage performance.

#### **3. Irregular Ode**

Author of the irregular Ode will retain some of the elements of an Ode, but have the freedom of experiment. “Ode to autumn” is an irregular Ode.

## **7.5 INTRODUCTION TO THE POEM**

“To Autumn” has only three well-knit and tightly –woven stanzas that tell about autumn and its activities. The first stanza tells about the beauty and bounty of the autumn season with its vines full of grapes, the apple 8 ripe, the gourd fat, and hazels with sweet kernels. Then the poet tells about the busy bees suggesting sweet honey. The whole scene is full of ripeness and each line, in itself, is like a branch of a fruit tree fully laden and hanging down due to the weight of its juicy fruit.

The second stanza depicts certain very typical scenes of autumn. It gives some of the most vivid pictures in English poetry. Keat’s pictorial quality is really at its zenith in this stanza. We see autumn season as a being, a personification. We see reaping, winnowing and gleaning and the autumn itself seen doing all these seasonal activities.

The third stanza tells us about different audio of autumn season. We hear the choir of gnats, the beatings of lambs, the songs of cricket, the whistling of redbreasts, the twittering of swallows and like the first and second stanza is rich in their visual effects whereas this third stanza is rich in audio effect. There is a complete and ripe picture of autumn season in this poem.

In his poem “To Autumn,” John Keats portrays the different aspects of autumn and its progression through time. Through his use of vivid imagery and literary devices such as simile, personification, and rhetorical questions, Keats establishes the beauty and fulfillment of autumn and outlines autumn’s mixture of ripening, fulfillment, dying, and death.

## **7.6 BACKGROUND OF THE POEM**

The poem “To Autumn” written by John Keats is about the season of autumn where the composer talks about the different stages of autumn and emphasizes autumn’s progression through time. Throughout the poem, Keat’s uses vivid imagery to attract the reader’s interest as well as appealing to the senses of sight and taste. Also through the use of language devices of similes, personification and rhetorical questions, the composer is able to establish a natural atmosphere, with its mixture of ripening, fulfillment, dying and death.

The first stanza of “To Autumn” concerns itself with the beauty and extravagance of autumn appealing to the senses of sight and taste. The first line, “seasons of mists and mellow fruitfulness” arouses visual imagery where the word “mellow” is used to depict the colour of autumn. The “mists and mellow fruitfulness” suggest the rustic colour of the fruits and leaves. Whereas the lines, “And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core; to swell the gourd and plump the hazel shells” describes the harvesting of fruits and conveys the image of autumn working together with the sun to ripen and plump the fruits. There is also an association of the sense of taste where the composer mentions “with a sweet kernel; to set budding more.”

The second stanza personifies autumn as a lady, where autumn is given the characteristics of a woman where she is “sitting careless on a granary floor” which explains that she is calm relaxed and reflective because the work of spring and summer are over. The effect of “the winnowing wind” highlights alliteration and onomatopoeia where the word “winnowing” evokes soft images which contain positive connotations of soft sounds.

Here the composer reveals that we should appreciate the gifts and unique experience that autumn brings. There is a relaxed atmosphere where the composer mentions “Drows’d with the fumes of poppies while thy hook Spares the next swath and all its twined flowers.” The words “Drows’d” and “swath” are both examples of long and slow vowels which create a slow rhythm and pace. “Twined flowers” portrays the image of slow and little movement where everything is almost standing still. The second stanza moves slowly as “thou watchest the last oozing hours by hours.”

The third stanza is a comparison from winter to spring, “where are the songs of spring? Ay where are they?” in this stanza the composer makes an understanding that autumn, which represents the end of life, is just as important as spring, which represents new life. This has been shown in the last five lines of the poem where it shows spring as birth where, “full grown lambs loud bleat from hilly bourne...”

John Keat’s has used imagery to portray the different aspects of autumn and “To Autumn” has a number of words being emphasised to create a long period

of time and giving a general feeling of abundance. The Romanticist wanted to express his opinions of beauty, nature and decay.

## 7.7 TEXT

### “Ode To Autumn”

*SEASON of mists and mellow fruitfulness,  
Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun;  
Conspiring with him how to load and bless  
With fruit the vines that round the thatch-eaves run;  
To bend with apples the moss'd cottage-trees,  
And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core;  
To swell the gourd, and plump the hazel shells  
With a sweet kernel; to set budding more,  
And still more, later flowers for the bees,  
Until they think warm days will never cease,  
For Summer has o'er-brimm'd their clammy cells.*

*Who hath not seen thee oft amid thy store?  
Sometimes whoever seeks abroad may find  
Thee sitting careless on a granary floor,  
Thy hair soft-lifted by the winnowing wind;  
Or on a half-reap'd furrow sound asleep,  
Drows'd with the fume of poppies, while thy hook  
Spares the next swath and all its twined flowers:  
And sometimes like a gleaner thou dost keep  
Steady thy laden head across a brook;*

*Or by a cyder-press, with patient look,  
Thou watchest the last ooziings hours by hours.  
  
Where are the songs of Spring? Ay, where are they?  
Think not of them, thou hast thy music too,—  
While barred clouds bloom the soft-dying day,  
And touch the stubble plains with rosy hue;  
Then in a wailful choir the small gnats mourn  
Among the river sallow's, borne aloft  
Or sinking as the light wind lives or dies;  
And full-grown lambs loud bleat from hilly bourn;  
Hedge-crickets sing; and now with treble soft  
The red-breast whistles from a garden-croft;  
And gathering swallows twitter in the skies.*

## **7.8 SUMMARY**

Keats' speaker opens his first stanza by addressing Autumn, describing its abundance and its intimacy with the sun, with whom Autumn ripens fruits and causes the late flowers to bloom. In the second stanza, the speaker describes the figure of Autumn as a female goddess, often seen sitting on the granary floor, her hair "soft-lifted" by the wind, and often seen sleeping in the fields or watching a cider-press squeezing the juice from apples. In the third stanza, the speaker tells Autumn not to wonder where the songs of spring have gone, but instead to listen to her own music. At twilight, the "small gnats" hum among "the river sallows," or willow trees, lifted and dropped by the wind, and "full-grown lambs" bleat from the hills, crickets sing, robins whistle from the garden, and swallows, gathering for their coming migration, sing from the skies. The first stanza, the speaker describes the autumn as a harvest time. Everything is bursting with "fruitfulness."

Things are so full and ripe that, following the summer, the bees “think warm days will never cease.” In the second stanza, the speaker addresses the personified autumn, noting the moments one sees autumn in the midst of harvest. The tone shifts from the celebratory first stanza to one indicating a sense of rest. As the fruits are harvested, the plants and fields are more desolate. The “half-reap’d furrow” is “sound asleep.” Autumn’s “hook” (scythe) is the instrument of harvesting the fruits. This hook/scythe is associated with death. The autumn season signifies the end of vibrant life in nature and the approaching season of winter. The last image is of the personified autumn watching the harvested apples processed in the “cyder-press.” Autumn is “patient” as if trying to forestall the coming winter. In the last stanza, the speaker describes the song of autumn. The sounds of the swallows, crickets, and lambs are a “choir” singing the approach of the shortened days and the colder weather of late autumn and winter. The clouds “bar” the sun; the increasingly overcast skies of autumn signify shorter days and less light in general. The decrease in sunlight, the “soft-dying” day, is associated with darkness, sleep, and death; all natural progressions.

## **7.9 ANALYSIS OF THE FIRST STANZA**

*SEASON of mists and mellow fruitfulness,  
Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun;  
Conspiring with him how to load and bless  
With fruit the vines that round the thatch-eaves run;  
To bend with apples the moss'd cottage-trees,  
And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core;  
To swell the gourd, and plump the hazel shells  
With a sweet kernel; to set budding more,  
And still more, later flowers for the bees,  
Until they think warm days will never cease,  
For Summer has o'er-brimm'd their clammy cells.*

When Keats' wrote this poem, he was just two years away from his death. In the fall of 1819, he contracted tuberculosis and knew by February the following year that he would die soon. However, this did not prevent him from creating beautiful, much admired poetry in his final years, when he was racked with illness. In "To Autumn", Keats' is addressing Autumn herself, personifying the season as a sort of goddess or deity. The first stanza describes Autumn as a lighthearted, kind entity that is more mature than summer but just as warm in personality. "Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness" (line 1) conveys a sort of motherly personality—the word "mellow", as described by a miniature American Heritage Dictionary, means "1. *Soft, sweet, and full-flavored because of ripeness.* 2. *Rich and soft in quality: a mellow wine.* 3. *Having the gentleness often associated with maturity.*" (See all the connotations and multiple layers of meaning a single word can bring us. Poets don't [always] just pick random words out of the air, so if you're an aspiring writer or literary critic, a dictionary can come in handy.) Also, "fruitfulness" connotes not just "producing fruit" and "abundance" but also producing offspring, which is where the "motherly" feeling is coming from. Lines 2 and 3 bring across the speaker's view of Autumn as divine: Autumn is close friends with "the maturing sun" (line 2), and the sun is often portrayed as a sort of God in ancient religions. She "conspir[es] with him how to load and bless/with fruit the vines that round the thatch-eaves run" (lines 3-4)— again, "bless" brings to mind the divinity of Autumn and the sun. The stanza continues with a description of Autumn and the sun bringing fruitfulness to "cottage-trees" (line 5), "hazel shells" (line 7), and "later flowers for the bees" (line 9). Then the first stanza wraps up with the nostalgic tone of "Until they think warm days will never cease,/ For Summer has o'er-brimmed their clammy cells" (lines 10- 11). Here, the lines depict Autumn as a continuation of summer. Summer carries a universal positive connotation, which transfers over to Autumn in Keats' "To Autumn". Overall, the first stanza sets up the character of Autumn and personifies her as a caring, warm-hearted goddess, which sets the poem apart from the common association of autumn as a bitter, cold harbinger of winter.

### 7.10 ANALYSIS OF THE SECOND STANZA

*Who hath not seen thee oft amid thy store?  
Sometimes whoever seeks abroad may find  
Thee sitting careless on a granary floor,  
Thy hair soft-lifted by the winnowing wind;  
Or on a half-reap'd furrow sound asleep,  
Drows'd with the fume of poppies, while thy hook  
Spares the next swath and all its twined flowers:  
And sometimes like a gleaner thou dost keep  
Steady thy laden head across a brook;  
Or by a cyder-press, with patient look,  
Thou watchest the last ooziings hours by hours.*

In the second stanza of Keats's "To Autumn", the speaker begins to address Autumn directly and to characterize her personality and appearance. "*Who hath not seen thee oft amid thy store?*" (line 12). ("Store" refers to her supply of bounty, described vividly in the first stanza.) "*Sometimes whoever seeks abroad may find/ Thee sitting careless on a granary floor,/ Thy hair soft-lifted by the winnowing wind*" (lines 13-15). "Careless" brings up a connotation of Autumn's sunny, feminine personality; its denotation in the context of the second stanza is best described with the definition "*free from cares, cheerful.*"

A granary, or "a building for storing threshed grain" (American Heritage Dictionary, Fourth Edition), is unique to fall because autumn is the season when you harvest grain. This characterizing word, multiplied with the word "winnowing" (separating the chaff from the grain by means of a current of air), serves to separate Autumn from her much-glorified sister seasons. The speaker is starting to distinguish Autumn from Summer and Spring, explaining how she is just as beautiful as they are (more on that in the third stanza).

*“Or on a half-reaped furrow sound asleep,/ Drowsed with the fume of poppies, while thy hook/ Spares the next swath and all its twinéd flowers:”* (lines 16-18). Here, Autumn is outside, sleeping on a furrow (“a long shallow trench made in the ground by a plow or other tool”, that has only been half harvested).

In line 17, an interesting word appears: “poppies.” The mention of this bright scarlet/orange-gold/white flower seems out of place in the fall and more akin to spring or summer. Why would Keats use this flower? A quick Google search with the term “poppy symbolism” brings up the following suggestions: the poppy is a symbol of sleep, death, oblivion, and resurrection. In Greek mythology, Demeter, the goddess of agriculture and harvest, created the poppy to help her sleep after the loss of her daughter Persephone. (We all know how familiar Keats is with Greek mythology, right?) This fits because Autumn is “drowsed” and “asleep” with the fume of poppies.

Furthermore, her characterization as a goddess leads to a new connection with Demeter. Demeter’s role is to preside over crops: depending on her mood, she can either bring bountiful harvest or a devastating crop failure. Sounds a bit like Autumn, right? (And when we hit the Demeter-causes-winter-after-Persephone-is-abducted connection, we can analyze still more about the relationship between the season and the goddess.) Okay, back to analyzing lines 16 through 18. The “hook” mentioned in line 17 is a “scythe or sickle”, according to Norton Introduction to Poetry book. Reminds a little of death, which brings us back to the poppy symbolism. (Poetry analysis is seldom straightforward, in case one has not figured that out yet by rambling.) The word “spares” in line 18 again gives us the impression that Autumn is benevolent (unless the action was caused by her poppy intoxication, that is). *“And sometimes like a gleaner thou dost keep/ Steady thy laden head across a brook;”* (lines 19-20). Let’s look up some definitions first, like my professor always tells us to. Glean: “to gather grain left behind by reapers.” Steady multiple definitions: “1. Firm in position or place, fixed. 2. Direct and unflinching, sure. 3. Not changing or fluctuating, uniform.

4. Reliable; dependable.” 5. Brook: “a small stream; 6. creak” or “to put up with; tolerate.”

Some of the paradox in the poem are :- Autumn the goddess is carrying a basket of grain or fruits on her head, or is wearing a divine wreath of fall flora on her head (most likely the former). “Brook” probably symbolizes something or other. Water has many symbolic meanings: life, fertility, the power of nature and the passage of time, even boundary markers... it’s starting to come together in my head, but I don’t want to spoil all the fun (and make this post longer than it already is). I’ll move on. “*Or by a cider-press, with patient look,/ Thou watchest the last ooziings hours by hours*” (lines 21-22). “Patient look” and the fact that she watches over every drip of the cider-making process contributes more to the poet’s portrayal of Autumn’s personality.

#### 7.11 ANALYSIS OF THE THIRD STANZA

*Where are the songs of Spring? Ay, where are they?  
Think not of them, thou hast thy music too,—  
While barred clouds bloom the soft-dying day,  
And touch the stubble plains with rosy hue;  
Then in a wailful choir the small gnats mourn  
Among the river sallow’s, borne aloft  
Or sinking as the light wind lives or dies;  
And full-grown lambs loud bleat from hilly bourn;  
Hedge-crickets sing; and now with treble soft  
The red-breast whistles from a garden-croft;  
And gathering swallows twitter in the skies.*

In the third stanza, the speaker reassures Autumn that she has her own music that is different yet just as lovely as spring’s. He says, “Think not of them, thou hast thy music too” (line 24). However, as the stanza progresses, he seems

to lapse into a melancholy tone, showing the other side of Autumn: it comes from summer, but it dies and is replaced by winter. This tone surfaces in words such as “soft-dying day” (line 25); just as day becomes night, so does autumn become winter. “Then in a wailful choir the small gnats mourn” (line 26) brings to mind a funeral chorus, furthering the symbol of death. “Full-grown lambs loud bleat from hilly bourn” (line 30)—the lambs have passed through their first stages of life, or youth, and are entering old age, represented by winter. Lastly, the line “gathering swallows twitter in the skies” (line 33) subtly hints of the coming winter, when birds migrate to other continents; that could also be interpreted as the passing of life into the other realm of death.

## 7.12 GLOSSARY

1. Mellow : soft, sweet, juicy, and full
2. bosom-friend : close friend
3. Conspiring : to act together, usually in secret
4. eaves in groups over long distances : overhanging part of a roof
5. moss'd : to overfill
6. core : center of fruits
7. Gourd :vegetables like squash, pumpkin
8. Hazel : Hazelnut
9. o'er-brimm'd : to overfill
10. store flavored due to ripeness : supply for future use
11. Granary : building for storing grain
12. Winnowing : to separate chaff from grain
13. reap'd over after harvesting : harvested
14. Furrow : groove made by a plow
15. drows'd : to be half asleep

### 713 3 ANALYSIS AND COMMENTARY OF TO “AUTUMN” BY JOHN KEATS

In “To Autumn”, a superficial reading would suggest that John Keats writes about a typical day of this season, describing all kind of colourful and detailed images. But before commenting on the meaning of the poem, I will briefly talk about its structure, its type and its rhyme. The poem is an ode that contains three stanzas, and each of these has eleven lines. With respect to its rhyme, “To Autumn” does not follow a perfect pattern. While the first stanza has an ABABCDEDCCCE pattern (see the poem on the next page), the second and the third ones have an ABABCDECDDE pattern. However, it is important to say that a poetic license appears in the third stanza. The word ‘wind’ (line 15) is pronounced [waɪnd] to rhyme with ‘find’. With regard to the meaning of the poem, as I said above, the author makes an intense description of autumn at least at first sight. The first stanza begins showing this season as misty and fruitful, which, with the help of a ‘maturing sun’, ripens the fruit of the vines. Next, we can see clearly a hyperbole. Keats writes that a tree has so many apples that it bends (line 5), while the gourds swell and the hazel shells plump. Finally, Keats suggests that the bees have a large amount of flowers. And these flowers did not bud in summer but now, in autumn. As a consequence, the bees are incessantly working and their honeycombs are overflowing since summer.

In the second stanza, there is an evident personification. The poet starts asking a rhetoric question (line 12) to autumn which now is not only a woman but a gleaner. However, this woman is apparently resting in a granary or in the landscape: ‘Or on a half-reaped furrow sound asleep, Drowsed with the fume of poppies...’ As she is not working with her hook, some flowers, that were going to be cut, remain untouchable (lines 17 and 18). Also we can see an image of her hair gently moving. The stanza ends with autumn patiently watching the ‘last oozings’ of cider.

The third stanza continues again with rhetoric questions. In the first one, Keats’ asks the woman where the sounds of the spring are. And the second one

is just a repetition of the same question. However, the poet tells autumn that she has her own sounds, although some of them are sad: ‘Then in a wailful choir the small gnats mourn.’ On the contrary, the ‘full-grown lambs’ bleat loudly, the crickets sing, a red-breast whistles, and swallows warble in the sky. Keats also describes a day that is dying, ending, and, as a consequence, is getting rose (lines 25 and 26). The last lines of this stanza consist of a combination of the autumn sounds, of the animal sounds (lines from 30 to 33) as I said before few lines above.

John Keats’ was simply describing the main characteristics of autumn, and the human and animal activities related to it, a deeper reading could suggest that Keats talks about the process of life. Autumn symbolises maturity in human and animal lives. Some instances of this are the ‘full-grown lambs’, the sorrow of the gnats, the wind that lives and dies, and the day that is dying and getting dark. As we all know, the next season is winter, a part of the year that represents aging and death, in other words, the end of life.

However, in my opinion, death does not have a negative connotation because Keats enjoys and accepts ‘autumn’ or maturity as part of life, though winter is coming.

#### **7.14 THEMES**

In both its form and descriptive surface, “To Autumn” is one of the simplest of Keats’ odes. There is nothing confusing or complex in Keats’ paean to the season of autumn, with its fruitfulness, its flowers, and the song of its swallows gathering for migration. The extraordinary achievement of this poem lies in its ability to suggest, explore, and develop a rich abundance of themes without ever ruffling its calm, gentle, and lovely description of autumn. Where “Ode on Melancholy” presents itself as a strenuous heroic quest, “To Autumn” is concerned with the much quieter activity of daily observation and appreciation. In this quietude, the gathered themes of the preceding odes find their fullest and most beautiful expression.

“To Autumn” takes up where the other odes leave off. Like the others, it shows Keats’ speaker paying homage to a particular goddess—in this case, the

deified season of Autumn. The selection of this season implicitly takes up the other odes' themes of temporality, mortality, and change. Autumn in Keats' ode is a time of warmth and plenty, but it is perched on the brink of winter's desolation, as the bees enjoy "later flowers," the harvest is gathered from the fields, the lambs of spring are now "full grown," and, in the final line of the poem, the swallows gather for their winter migration. The understated sense of inevitable loss in that final line makes it one of the most moving moments in all of poetry; it can be read as a simple, uncomplaining summation of the entire human condition.

There are five main themes of the poem "To Autumn":

- 1) Man and the Natural World
- 2) Time
- 3) Awe and Amazement
- 4) Transformation
- 5) Mortality

**(1) Man and the Natural World**

There's a lot more to say about this poem besides the fact that it's a "nature poem." By itself, the term "nature poem" does not tell us much. "To Autumn" contains very specific natural landscapes and images. The first stanza offers images of the interaction between humans and the plants that surround them. The second describes the production of agriculture, a natural process that is controlled by people. The third stanza moves outside of the human perspective to include things that are not used or consumed by humans, such as gnats and swallows. This third section captures some of the "wildness" and unpredictability.

**2) Time**

We don't think it's a coincidence that "To Autumn" mentions autumn and spring, but not winter. Keats doesn't want to dwell on the cold days to come. To appreciate autumn, we need to forget about how each passing day seems a little shorter and chillier. For the most part, the speaker stays

focused on the present moment, just like the personified figure of autumn, who doesn't seem to have a care in the world. Nonetheless, the poem moves forward in subtle ways. The natural world is at the peak of sunlight and ripeness in the first stanza, and by the third stanza the sun is setting.

**3) Awe and Amazement**

This ode is almost like a pep talk delivered to autumn. The speaker knows that autumn often gets short shrift in the catalogue of seasons, so he reminds her (and, maybe, himself) of its many wonders: the bounty of the harvest, the dropping of seeds that will become next year's flowers, and the symphony of sights and sounds at sunset. Strangely, autumn herself seems blissfully unaware of any need to be praised or appreciated by anyone. She wanders through the scenery and examines her work without concern or urgency.

**4) Transformation**

Autumn is the time of transformation between the growth of summer and the dormancy of winter. Things are winding down, and once the harvest is complete, there is nothing left to do but wait until the next season. Much of the transformation in the poem occurs between stanzas. For example, in the first stanza fruits and gourds are swelling outward before they will be picked for food. By the second stanza, the harvest is already complete, or mostly complete, and the ripe apples have been turned into rich, delicious cider. The third stanza focuses only on one transformative event, the setting of sun.

**5) Mortality**

Autumn is frequently used as a symbol in literature for old age, the time before death, symbolized by winter. "To Autumn" avoids any super-obvious references to death, but we do get some subtle ones, like the oblivious bees that think the summer will last forever, or the "hook" that spares the poppy flowers from their inevitable end. As the day begins to "die" in the final section, the entire landscape contributes to the song of mourning.

## **7.15 STYLISTIC ANALYSIS OF THE POEM**

“To Autumn” seems to be missing a key word when compared to Keats’ other Great Odes: the word “ode.” You would expect the title to be, “Ode to Autumn,” but maybe Keats felt confident that he had this whole ode thing down and could just use a shorthand. However, “To Autumn” seems to change the meaning, “To Autumn.” Or Keats could merely be helping us understand whom the speaker is addressing. Whatever your explanation, “To Autumn” stands out as a title among Keats’ odes.

## **7.16 STYLISTIC DEVICES IN THE POEM**

“To Autumn”

A stylistic device is a particular characteristic of a text that makes it distinctive in some way. Stylistic devices include such things as imagery, diction, sound devices, symbol, tone, mood, personification, schemes, tropes, form or theme. Literary devices are divided into two groups: Schemes and Tropes.

- a) Schemes: Schemes are literary devices that deal with letters, words, syntax and sounds rather than meaning of the word.
- b) Tropes: Tropes are literary devices having meaning different from their literal meanings.
- c) Antithesis: A scheme in which contrasting words, phrases, sentences or ideas are used for emphasis. For example: lives and dies.
- d) Metaphor: A trope in which a word or phrase is transfused from its literal meaning to stand for something else. A metaphor compares two objects or things without using the words like “like” or “as”. For Example: close bosom friend, soft dying day.
- e) Simile: A trope in which comparison is introduced by using the words “like” or “as”. For example: “Like a gleaner”, “as the light wind.”
- f) Symbol: An object that stands for points to and shares in a significant reality over and beyond it. For Example: “Seasons of mists and mellow fruitfulness.”

- g) Personification: Trope in which human qualities or abilities are assigned to abstraction or inanimate object is called personification. In this poem, author has personified the autumn under four forms of the season.
- 1) Firstly, as a harvester sitting carelessly on the granary floor during winnowing.
  - 2) Secondly, as a tired reaper fallen asleep in the very midst of his reaping.
  - 3) Thirdly, as a gleaner following his work home across a brook in the evening with a load of sheaves on his head.
  - 4) Lastly, as it represented as a cyder press watching intently the press squeezes juice out of fruits.

## **7.17 STRUCTURE**

“To Autumn” is a poem of three stanzas, each of eleven lines. Like others of Keats’ odes written in 1819, the structure is that of an odal hymn, having three clearly defined sections corresponding to the Classical divisions of strophe, antistrophe, and epode. The stanzas differ from those of the other odes through use of eleven lines rather than ten, and have a couplet placed before the concluding line of each stanza.

“To Autumn” employs poetical techniques which Keats had perfected in the five poems written in the Spring of the same year, but departs from them in some aspects, dispensing with the narrator and dealing with more concrete concepts. There is no dramatic movement in “To Autumn” as there is in many earlier poems; the poem progresses in its focus while showing little change in the objects it is focusing on. There is, in the words of Walter Jackson Bate, “a union of process and stasis”, “energy caught in repose”, an effect that Keats himself termed “stationing.” At the beginning of the third stanza he employs the dramatic Ubi sunt device associated with a sense of melancholy, and questions the personified subject: *“Where are the songs of Spring?”*

Like the other odes, “To Autumn” is written in iambic pentameter (but greatly modified from the very beginning) with five stressed syllables to a line, each usually preceded by an unstressed syllable. Keats varies this form by the employment of Augustan inversion, sometimes using a stressed syllable followed by an unstressed syllable at the beginning of a line, including the first: “*Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness*”; and employing spondees in which two stressed syllables are placed together at the beginning of both the following stanzas, adding emphasis to the questions that are asked: “*Who hath not seen thee...*”, “*Where are the songs...?*”

The rhyme of “To Autumn” follows a pattern of starting each stanza with an ABAB pattern which is followed by rhyme scheme of CDEDCCE in the first verse and CDECDDE in the second and third stanzas. In each case, there is a couplet before the final line. Some of the language of “To Autumn” resembles phrases found in earlier poems with similarities to *Endymion*, *Sleep and Poetry*, and *Calidore*. Keats characteristically uses monosyllabic words such as ... “*how to load and bless with fruit the vines that round the thatch-eaves run.*” The words are weighted by the emphasis of bilabial consonants (b, m, p), with lines like... “*for Summer has o’er-brimm’d their clammy cells.*” There is also an emphasis on long vowels which control the flow of the poem, giving it a slow measured pace: ... “*while barred clouds bloom the soft dying day.*”

Between the manuscript version and the published version of “To Autumn” Keats tightened the language of the poem. One of Keats’ changes emphasised by critics is the change in line 17 of “Drows’d with red poppies” to “Drows’d with the fume of poppies”, which emphasises the sense of smell instead of sight. The later edition relies more on passive, past participles, as apparent in the change of “While a gold cloud” in line 25 to “While barred clouds.” Other changes involve the strengthening of phrases, especially within the transformation of the phrase in line 13 “whoever seeks for thee may find” into “whoever seeks abroad may find.” Many of the lines within the second stanza were completely

rewritten, especially those which did not fit into a rhyme scheme. Some of the minor changes involved adding punctuation missing from the original manuscript copy and altering capitalisation.

## **7.18 FORM**

Like the “Ode on Melancholy,” “To Autumn” is written in a three-stanza structure with a variable rhyme scheme. Each stanza is eleven lines long as opposed to ten in “Melancholy”, and each is metered in a relatively precise iambic pentameter. In terms of both thematic organization and rhyme scheme, each stanza is divided roughly into two parts. In each stanza, the first part is made up of the first four lines of the stanza, and the second part is made up of the last seven lines. The first part of each stanza follows an ABAB rhyme scheme, the first line rhyming with the third, and the second line rhyming with the fourth. The second part of each stanza is longer and varies in rhyme scheme: The first stanza is arranged CDEDCCE, and the second and third stanzas are arranged CDECDDE. (Thematically, the first part of each stanza serves to define the subject of the stanza, and the second part offers room for musing, development, and speculation on that subject; however, this thematic division is only very general.)

## **7.19 IMAGERY**

Imagery is a figure of speech or vivid description which appeals to the five senses. There are two types of imagery.

- 1) Visual
- 2) Auditory

“To Autumn” is a masterpiece of the imagery. Here we find one image coming after the other in quick succession, and every image is sublime, super and unique. we can feel and see all what Keats sees and feels. Keats’ uses both audio and visual images.

### **1) Visual Images**

“To Autumn” ‘the maturing’, the vines that round the thatch eves sun”, “the mossed cottage trees”, lending fully with the load of “Apples”, the swelling

“gourd”, “the hazel shells” becoming “plumps” with a sweet kernel, “the later flowers” assuring the bees that “warm days will never cease” because “summer has over brimmed their clammy cells”, such beautiful and live images are found in the very first stanza.

In the 2nd stanza the poet takes a leap forward and personified the autumn through different images in person doing different things. Sometimes we see the autumn, “sitting careless on granary floor” with hair soft lifted by the winnowing wind. At other times we see her “on a half-reaped” furrow sound “asleep” because she is “drowsed” with the fume of poppies and her sickle is sparing, “the next swath and its entwined flowers.” Sometimes we see her in the shape of “gleaner” keeping steady her “laden head across a brook.” And a very –alluring picture ends the stanza when we see autumn standing “by a cayder –press, with patient book” watching “the last oozings hours by hours.”

## **2) Auditory Imagery**

In the 3rd stanza we hear the songs and music of autumn. We hear the “barred clouds bloom the soft dying day. And touch the stubble-plains with rosy line” “we hear the willful choir” of the small gnats, mourning. We hear “full grown lambs loud least from hilly bourn.” Similarly we hear as “hedge-crickets sing” and gathering swallows twitter.” This is all the images of one master pieces of Keats’ i.e. to autumn.

## **720 TONE**

Tone is the poet’s attitude towards his or her subject or readers. It is similar to tone of voice but should not be confused with mood or atmosphere. An author’s tone might be sarcastic, sincere, humorous, melancholic etc. In this poem the author’s tone is romantic. His choice of words shows his love of nature, love of beauty, imagination, love of past and wearied sadness. Keats’ attitude is quite optimistic and positive.

## **721 CONCLUSION**

“To Autumn” is most objective and impersonal. The theme of the poem is fulfillment and through the richness of images, the poet has prolonged its

fulfillment. It is most satisfying in thought and expression. The first line of the ode shows autumn in the abstract but the second reveals the germ of personification which is amplified in the beautiful pictures and convey to us the ripeness of autumn. In the second stanza, we find different pictures of the season: harvester, the reaper, the gleaner and the cyder-presser. All personify autumn. The third stanza reproduces symphony the season sounds. This poem shows that Keats' possesses all the romantic traits-love of nature, beauty and imagination. This poem is rich in sensuous imagery.

## **722 EXAMINATION ORIENTED QUESTIONS**

**Q1** How is the nature presented in "To Autumn" by John Keats'?

**Ans** The poem observes the natural world in autumn by delineating a number of sights, sounds, and pastimes that place human beings squarely in the season's midst. There is also a theme of nature's providing a bounty of food and drink for human consumption. The description of fruits on the trees and vines is related to descriptions of reaping, winnowing (grain) or pressing cider from apples: all activities are related to the production of food or drink. In this way, the poem celebrates the abundant gifts of nature, and the deep and vital connection humans have to the natural world; as the poem suggests, without these foods provided at harvest time, we would experience hunger and thirst. But the poem also hints at the sensual pleasures of these activities, and the ways in which autumn (and more specifically, nature in autumn) engages all of our senses, particularly with sounds and songs (as with the third stanza, referring to the "songs of spring" and the sounds of birds, lambs and insects). In crafting lines that immerse the reader into this complex realm of sensual pleasure, the poet creates many visual and aural points of reference that could possibly inform the reader's future thoughts of autumn, every year when it returns, making this observance an ingrained part of one's life experience, underscoring the centrality of nature to human existence.

Q 2 Why did Keats' write this poem and used many imagery, motifs from nature?

Ans "To Autumn," the " perfect embodiment of poetic form, intent, and effect," is an ode, a serious and dignified lyric poem that adheres to a stanzaic form and is fairly long. Keats' ode is divided into three eleven-line stanzas with the rhyme scheme of *abab cdecde*. Autumn is personified by Keats', and he employs apostrophe, addressing Autumn as a woman: Keats' portrays the ongoing process of growth and maturation in autumnal nature: the vine-creepers and the apple trees being loaded with fruits; the gourds still swelling, and the hazel-nuts being filled with 'sweet kernel' to their core. Autumn is a prelude to winter, and the season seems to come to an end. Yet the ripening and fulfilment go on; harvesting is held in abeyance; there is, as it were, no end to autumn, and the inevitable death is indefinitely postponed. As we look at the imagery in stanza 2, the season is personified in the roles of harvesters—the winnower, the reaper, the gleaner, and the cyder-presser. But the harvesting operations are being held up or delayed, and Autumn does not take leave of nature. Mutability and death are certain to come, but 'ripeness is all.'

In the final stanza, the poet assures Autumn that the sounds of her music are no inferior to those of Spring. The gnats, the Robin-redbreast, the grasshoppers and the 'twittering swallows' constitute the finely orchestrated symphony of Autumn, harmonising joy and melancholy. If death is unavoidable and the thought of death is saddening, ripeness and fulfillment of life are no insignificant source of joy. The swallows twitter as they get prepared for migration but at the end of the cold winter-days, the swallows would come back.

Q3. What are the figures of speech used in "To Autumn" written by John Keats?

Ans Keats' "To Autumn" uses many literary devices, but several stand out as contributing majorly to the structure of the poem. The first of these literary devices is apostrophe. Apostrophe is when the speaker of a poem addresses, or speaks to, something that can't speak back. In this poem,

Keats' speaker is addressing autumn when he asks, "Who hath not seen thee oft amid thy store?" (line 12). Another literary device that Keats uses in this poem is personification. Just as he speaks to autumn, he also personifies (or describes something as if it were a person) autumn as a worker in a granary, sleeping on the floor because of the heavy drowsiness that Keats associates with the season in the first stanza. A final literary device, and perhaps the most pervasive in the poem, is imagery. Keats employs visual imagery in the first stanza, in which he describes the "swell[ed]" gourd and the "plump...hazel shells" (7). In the third stanza, the imagery becomes auditory, as Keats describes the "music" of autumn (23), such as the "twitter[ing]" swallows and the "wailful choir" of gnats (33, 27).

Q 4. What are some literary flourishes in the poem "To Autumn" by John Keats'?

Ans. There are many literary flourishes in the poem. First, there is a progression in the poem. Stanza one is about the morning, stanza two is about the afternoon, and stanza three deals with evening. From this perspective, there is movement throughout the day. Second, some has seen a progression of life as well. Stanza one is about the birth of man and the final stanza is about the dusk of a man's life. Third, there is also a lot of personification. For example, the sun matures and blesses, and autumn is also described as on with soft hair. Finally, there are lots of sounds. In the final stanza, the crickets sing and the birds whistle.

Q 5. What is the structure of the poem "Ode to Autumn"?

Ans. The poem "Ode to Autumn" by John Keats is a masterpiece. The structure is beautifully crafted. Here are some points to bear in mind. First, there are three stanzas. Second, the meter is iambic pentameter. This is a commonly used meter in English poetry. The rhythm of the meter is based on iambs, which means the meter is unstressed followed by a stressed syllable. There are five iambs (hence, pentameter). Third, there is also a

rhyming scheme. Here is the pattern: ABABCDEDCCCE. There is also a temporal structure to the poem which shows the progression of a day. The first stanza deals with morning. The second stanza is afternoon, and in the final stanza, it is night. We can also say that there is also a progression of seasons - spring, summer, and fall.

Q6 Describe the person's admiration for autumn in the poem "To Autumn" by John Keats.

Ans. There is great love for autumn. What makes this point even starker is that the first stanza is addressed to a different season, summer. Keats is saying that summer is beautiful, as things mature and grow. The language is one of undoubted admiration.

*Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness,*

*Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun;*

*Conspiring with him how to load and bless*

*With fruit the vines that round the thatch-eaves run;*

The same goes for the season of spring, which is briefly mentioned in the last stanza in a rhetorical question - "Where are the songs of spring?"

But as we move along in the ode, Keats begins to enter into his main topic, the beauty of autumn. As he does this, the contrast becomes clearer. Autumn is as great as the other seasons, if not greater. In other words, summer and spring have their glories, but what is more glorious is autumn. Praise by way of contrast is one of the ways Keats shows admiration. So, what is autumn like? It is a carefree and soft woman (stanza 2). Autumn has its own music, and nature joins that chorus to sing with lambs, crickets, and birds (stanza 3). All of this praises autumn. Therefore, autumn has no reason for insecurity.

Q7. In "To Autumn" by John Keats, where is onomatopoeia used?

Ans. If a writer uses onomatopoeia, he or she (usually a poet) uses words that mimic or echo the actual thing described. For example, the word "run" has

nothing to do with the sound you make when you're running, but "buzz" ends with a buzzing sound, and so would be considered onomatopoeia. In "To Autumn," Keats uses fairly subtle versions of onomatopoeia. I'd say that the vowels in "oozings" late in the second stanza sound like something, well, oozing. When "the redbreast whistles" in the third stanza, that verb sounds like some forms of whistling. In the final line, "twitter" sounds like what birds sound like when twittering, and so would be onomatopoeia. Keats' "wailful choir" in that same stanza works: the word "wail" sounds like someone wailing. Examples beyond these get subtle indeed, and open to more interpretation. When Keats says hair is "soft-lifted by the winnowing wind," you can hear the air moving in "lifted," but you have to connect wind with lift for that to really work.

Q8. How is nature presented in the poem 'To Autumn'?

Ans. Nature is presented in all its bounty and fruitfulness in John Keats' mellifluous ode. It is of particular note that in the second stanza in which Keats describes all of nature's gifts, he creates the image of a young woman "sound asleep" from her labours, who ... "sometimes like a gleaner thou dost keep Steady thy laden head across a brook. While many of the harvest labourers were young women in England in the 1800's, there is, perhaps the metaphoric suggestion that Nature is like a woman who nurtures her unborn baby most of a year and then the "fruit" of her womb is produced later. So, too, does Autumn yield the fruits and products of its earlier growing months, and the richness of Nature is bountiful in its production in this season. Connotations of birth are in the first stanza with the words "ripeness," "sweet kernel" and the phrase "swell the gourd"; then later there are "flowers for the bees." Certainly, Keats' lyric ode paints a rich, and enduring tableau of what he depicts as Nature's richest season, the season that brings forth all the fruits and grains and mellow bounty.

Q 9. What are the devices used in "To Autumn" by John Keats'?

Ans. A characteristic of Keats is his amazing ability to develop an idea to its extreme with great intellectual flexibility, and his "To Autumn" in its form

and content is evident of this ability. In his beautiful lyric poem. Keats' employs the following:

**a) The ode form**

First of all, this poem is an ode, a long, formal lyric poem with a serious theme and the traditional stanza structure of four lines with the rhyme scheme of *abab* and the remaining seven of *cdecdd*.

**b) Personification**

The most salient literary device in Keats' beautiful ode is personification calling the season of Autumn "thee" and "close bosom friend of the maturing sun." Summer, too, is personified in the final line of the first stanza, "For Summer has o'er brimmed their clammy cells." And, both Summer and Autumn "conspire."

**c) Apostrophe**

The poet calls upon something that is not human—autumn—and directly addresses it: "Who hath not seen thee oft amid thy store?" "Where are the songs of Spring?" is also an example of apostrophe, as in a sense the poet evokes these melodies.

**d) Imagery**

Keats' employs much language that appeals to all the senses. For instance, there is visual imagery in the first stanza with such words as "thatch-eyed," "mossed cottage trees," "plump the hazel shells," "flowers for the bees," "the granary floor," "full-grown lambs," and "crickets." Further, there is olfactory imagery with the smells of "sweet kernel," and the "fume of poppies." Tactile imagery appears with "clammy cells," "winnowing wind"; aural imagery with "Music," "wailful choir," "treble soft," and "twitter."

Truly, "To Autumn" is a pleasurable ode to read because it delights the senses with its rich imagery and lyrical rhymes. Certainly, this ode is a tribute to the great talent and sensitivity of John Keats.

**723 SUGGESTED READING**

- Revised edition, New York: Oxford University Press, 1966; revised again, Cambridge,
- Sidney Colvin, *John Keats: His Life and Poetry ...* (London: Macmillan / New York: Scribners, 1917).
- Hyder Edward Rollins, ed., *The Keats Circle: Letters and Papers and More Letters and*
- *Papers of the Keats Circle*, revised edition, 2 volumes (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1965).
- Claude Lee Finney, *Evolution of Keats's Poetry*, 2 volumes (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1936).
- Newell F. Ford, *The Prefigurative Imagination of John Keats*, Stanford Studies in Language and Literature (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1951).
- G. S. Fraser, ed., *John Keats: The Odes: A Casebook*, (London: Macmillan, 1971).
- Kenneth Muir, ed., *John Keats: A Reassessment* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1958).

\*\*\*\*\*

## **B.A./B.COM-II : GENERAL ENGLISH**

---

**COURSE CODE : AA-201**

**LESSON NO. 8**

**SEMESTER-II**

**UNIT - II**

---

### **LAL DEDS “VAKH”**

#### **STRUCTURE**

- 8.1 Objectives
- 8.2 An Introduction to the Poetess
- 8.3 Synopsis of the different Vakhs
- 8.4 Four Vakhs constitute a single idea
- 8.5 A perfect yogi/yogini
- 8.6 The Mundane and the Spiritual
- 8.7 Importance of Lal Ded in the history of Kashmiri Literature
- 8.8 Lal Ded and Her times
- 8.9 Lal Ded and Kashmiri Shaivism
- 8.10 Glossary
- 8.11 Self-Assessment Questions
- 8.12 Examination Oriented Questions - I
- 8.13 Examination Oriented Questions - II
- 8.14 Suggested Reading

#### **8.1 OBJECTIVES**

In this lesson, we shall discuss Lal Ded’s Vakhs. After reading this lesson you will be

- a) acquainted with the life history of Lal Ded.
- b) appreciate and analyze the different vakhs.
- c) the importance of Lal Ded in the history of Kashmiri Literature.
- d) familiarized about Kashmiri Shaivism.

## **8.2 INTRODUCTION TO THE POETESS**

My pen shivers when I write about Lad Ded. It's like showing a lit candle to the sun. She is a living example of what all the religious scriptures tell the mortals to follow. She had attained enlightenment. She was a 'hath-yogini.' Her gender made her quest for God more difficult. She was a naked fakir who used to roam in jungles and one can imagine the plight of a woman roaming in such a condition.

Lad Ded, the great saint-mystic-poet was born in 1320 in a village Pandrethan in Kashmir. She was born in a Kashmiri Pandit family. Her father's name was Yandrabutt. She was the only child of Mr. and Mrs Yandrabutt. Right from her childhood, she was alien to worldly matters. Whenever she felt suffocated inside the house, she used to go outside and roam in the fields. Sometimes she used to roam at night. Since, she was a blessed child; her talks were mystical for the common people. Her friends used to laugh at her. They called her mad but her parents understood that their daughter was a special child. Yandrabutt's family guru Pandit Sidhmol had prophesized that this girl will attain enlightenment. He respected her because for him, she was an evolved soul. He used to visit Yandrabutt's house so that he can have darshan of Shiva's light in the eyes of Lal Ded. As a child, Lal used to inquire about God from Guru Sidhmol. The Guru used to give her Sanskrit religious texts. He poured all the knowledge which was available to him. He even provided her sacred and rare Sanskrit texts. By the time she was twelve she was well versed in Bhagvad Geeta and all the eighteen Puranas. Her parents were worried about her mystical behaviour; they decided to marry her off when she was fourteen years old. But Guru Sidhmol had warned against this idea. Lad Ded's parents felt that they would be ostracized by the society if they'll not marry her to someone. Finally they married her to Damodar of Padampur village.

In her in-laws house, she used to remain silent, she never liked the company of gossiping women. Her mother-in-law was very cruel. She used to keep her busy with household chores. Whenever she gave her food she used to put a big fat stone in her thali and on this stone she used to spread rice, so that the plate may look full of rice. Lal never raised her voice against her. She used to eat silently and then she used to wash the stone along with the thali and keep both the things back in the kitchen. Her mother-in-law was so cruel that she repeated the same behaviour every day. Once, Lal requested her not to give her meat along with rice. From then on, she deliberately used to give her meat and rice only. Lal used to cry silently at her plight. She took it as a kind of test from Lord Shiva. Her husband treated her worse than an animal. Once when she was carrying a pitcher full of water on her head, her husband hit her pitcher with a stick. To his surprise, the pitcher broke into pieces but the water remained on her head in the shape of a pitcher. Both the mother and the son called her a witch as they felt she knew some magic. They decided to send her back to her parent's house but her father-in-law was a kind - hearted man. Pandit Balbhadra realized that Lal was a Shiv-Bhaktin, she shouldn't be treated in such a manner. But both mother and son were adamant. On that night, Lal decided to renounce the world and she became a sanyasini. She just wanted to meet her Lord Shiva and nobody else.

She left the house at midnight and from then on, she roamed in the jungles. Whenever she felt, she sat in a Samadhi. Occasionally, after her samadhi's she used to express her experience in 'Vakhs'. Her 'vakhs' or speeches were in poetic forms. Once a boatman and her wife went to have her darshan. Fortunately after sometime they were blessed with a child. They became her disciples and popularized her vakhs. She however didn't like the idea of having disciples. She never stayed at one place. She followed her Guru's advice that she has to find Lord Shiva within herself only. Sometimes she used to spend days in Samadhi. Wherever she went people felt she is a great yogini who can get rid of their sufferings. They sought her for her blessings. Her 'vakhs' were so popular that every household used to recite them. Ultimately, this great soul quenched her spiritual thirst by having the darshan of Shiva within herself. She attained moksha.

In her last mortal moments, it is said she heard a voice coming from inside: 'I am Shiva, Lal, I am Shiva.'

### 8.3 SYNOPSIS OF DIFFERENT VAKHS

Lal Ded's *Vakhs* hold a special place in Kashmiri society and Kashmiri Literature. *Lalla vakh*, literally mean sayings of Lala. She was known by different names, some called her Laleshwari, some Lal Arifa. She followed the Kashmiri Shaivite tradition. She was a tough yogini. Despite the worldly sufferings she never left her quest for the ultimate realization. According to Kashmiri Shaivism, our soul is wrapped under many layers. This very soul is Shiva. Shiva appears in different forms in this world. When we take birth, we forget our previous birth Karmas due to Yogmaya. While we are alive, we should meditate and break all the stubborn layers that cover the Light of Shiva i.e. our Soul. This physical body is given to realize the union of Atma with the Paramatma. But when we take birth and join the society we forget our purpose and while dealing with worldly matters we suffer from common ills like jealousy, hatred, lust, anger, greed, pride, attachment to near and dear ones and because of all these evils we remain disturbed, insatiated and dissatisfied with ourselves. After leading a useless life one day death takes away our soul and this physical body is either burned or buried. The saints keep on warning us, they try to shake us out of our worldly sleep. Here Lal Ded is also shaking our conscience. In Vakh 118 she is perhaps laughing at us, she says, 'Reputation is like a foul smelling water splashing in a basket full of dead fish because it fills us with false pride.' When people praise us we forget that we are unimportant perishable beings. It's like detracking oneself from the path of God. One should not waste time in pursuing worldly pleasures. The real bliss is within.

In Vakh 119, Lal Ded says some yogis while on the path of yoga learn some Sidhis. God takes a lot of tests (Pariksha) before giving ultimate realization. Whoever follows His path, He (God) often gives them power and He waits to see how they utilize it. Some people, when they realize that they can do some miracles, forget their real aim of attaining salvation. They forget their aim of

realization of God. Such Sadhus remain limited to performing miracles. Lala laughs at those foolish Sadhus. She says, to control a flood, to blow out a forest fire, to walk on air, to milk a wooden cow, these are the activities which even an expert magician or artist or a trickster can also perform. A true yogi should not indulge in such activities. He should not forget that such powers are again wastage of energy. Such activities are going to give temporary powers and temporary pleasures.

In Vakh 120, Lal tells us the crux of the Bhagvad Geeta in simple words. Lord Krishna had advised Arjuna to rein in his five senses. A true yogi while seeing, touching, eating, listening and breathing reminds himself that it is the body that is performing its basic actions then only he would be able to control his mind which thereby will help him in realizing the soul. Similarly, while on her path to Lord Shiva, Lal Ded was indifferent to cold and heat, pain and suffering, hunger and appetite, praise or criticism, acceptance or rejection. She had controlled all her five senses through her determination and love for God. Out of her own experience she says, ‘who can stop the dripping frost (layer of ice) or cup the wind in his palms but a soul which has controlled the five senses, such powerful self-realized soul can pluck the light of sun from the midnight sky.’ The yogini says, ‘when this body, mind and soul becomes one with God, it’s consciousness spreads to such greater heights that it can visualize the light of sun even at midnight.’ The yogi can see the light even when worldly men say it is dark. The only need is to control the uncontrollable mind, or ‘*Chanchalam hi manah*’ through abhaya or practice of yoga.

In Vakh 121, Laleshwari again simplifies the teachings of Bhagvad Geeta. She says, the one who realizes the power of ‘Om’ and the one who has realized its true meaning finds that it is the only source towards heavenly bliss. One doesn’t need rituals, mantras, spells; this one word ‘Om’ is enough to realize the ultimate truth.

#### **8.4 FOUR VAKHS CONSTITUTE A SINGLE IDEA**

Lal Ded was born in 1320 in the times of Sultan Allauddin. Her parents belonged to the village Pandrethan in Srinagar. She was married at a minor age

to Damodar of Pampore. Right from her childhood, she was inclined to spirituality; she was indifferent to the worldly affairs. She became a mystic of the Kashmiri Shaivite Sect. Whenever she had ecstatic mystical experiences in her Samadhi, she used to reveal them in mystic poetry which is popularly known as *vatsun* or *vakhs*, literally speech. Lal Vakhs or speeches of Lal are the earliest compositions in the Kashmiri language. The four Vakhs constitute a single idea i.e. a true yogi abhors reputation, he never indulges in performing futile miracles, he is the one who has controlled his five senses, when he practices the first syllable Om, he truly becomes a realized being. Her vakhs reveal the essence of the Bhagvad Geeta. In Chapter thirteen of the holy book, Lord Krishna says,

*'Mahabhutanyaahamnkaro Budhira yaktmer ch,  
Indriyani dasheken ch panch chendriyago-charr.'*

The five elements, the ego, the intellect, the Unmanifest the ten organs of perception and action; the mind and the five objects of senses (sound, touch, taste, smell and sight) should be controlled by a yogi.

Similarly, in chapter eight Lord Krishna says:-

*Ometyakaaksharm brahma  
vyahranmamanusmarun,  
Yeh pryati tyajandeham sa  
yati param gatim*

This means, having controlled all the senses and firmly holding the mind and the heart, and then drawing the life-breath (prana) to the head, and thus remaining steadfast in Yogic concentration on God, he who leaves the body and departs uttering the one Indestructible Brahma, Om, reaches the supreme goal.

Lal Ded is also signaling towards the achievement of the ultimate good i.e. salvation through a disciplined intellect and firm control over one's senses. Her Guru Sidhmol had given her all Sanskrit holy texts. By the time she was

twelve years old she was well-versed in the Bhagvad Geeta and the eighteen Puranas. She revealed the teachings of the Bhagvad Geeta in the simple local Kashmiri language in a poetic form, popularly known as Lal Vakhs. Throughout her life, Laleshwari strived for the fusion of self with the Eternal Being. Her constant endeavour to refine her body and mind was aimed at self-realization and seeing God in herself. In her times some people used to learn tantric powers to befool common people. But she warns such people because such practices will lead them nowhere. True yoga practice will take them towards ultimate realization. In one of her vakhs she says in Kashmiri language:

*'Tanthar gali toy mantar motsa Manthar gol toy matry Tseth Tseth gol toy kehti na kune' Shunes shunah milith gaur.*

This means, 'Holy books will disappear and then only mystic formula will remain. When the mystic formula departed naught but mind was left. When the mind disappeared naught was left anywhere. And a void became merged within the void.' Hence she is right when she says (in Vakh 121) that there is no need to chant a thousand mantras when there is true realization of the First Syllable OM which is a bridge to heaven.' Thus she conveys clearly that instead of running after reputation, tantric skills and magical powers one should withdraw all senses from the sense objects and make oneself steady. This will lead to self-control, stability and self-realization.

## **8.5 A PERFECT YOGI/YOGINI**

Laleshwari also popularly known as Lalla, Lal Ded or Lal Arifa was a perfect yogini. She was an epitome of Indian spiritual knowledge, according to which human life is rare and this body is given to realize the supreme consciousness or God. According to Indian Yogic tradition, a human body has five layers and seven chakras. Through the practice of yoga (literally-union) one can reach the sublime state where, while being conscious one can become united with the supreme consciousness. Laleshwari belongs to the mystic tradition of Shaivism in Kashmir. Her Guru Sidhmol prophesized early that Lalla was born to attain

self-realization. She was well-versed in the Bhagvad Geeta when she was only twelve years old. She understood very early the teachings of Lord Krishna. He says-

*Ya misha sarvbhutanim tasyam jagrati sanyami, Yasyam jagriti bhutani sa nisha pashyati munay.*

‘That which is night to all beings, in that state of Divine knowledge and Supreme Bliss the God realized Yogi keeps awake and that the ever-changing transient worldly happiness in which all beings keep awake, Is night to the seer’. Lal Ded had achieved this state of Supreme Bliss through controlling ‘prana’ (breath) and rigorous ‘Samadhis.’ She elucidates the same preachings in simple Kashmiri language. She says-

*‘Okuy om-kar yes nabi dare*

*Kumbuy brahmandas sum gare*

*Akh suy manthar tsetas kare*

*Tas sas manthar kya kare.’*

This means, ‘He from whose navel stead fastly proceeds in its upward course the syllable Om and naught but it. And for whom the Kumbaka exercise (breath-controlling) forms a bridge to the Supreme God, he bears in his mind the one and only mystic spell. And of what benefit to him are a thousand spells?’

She was a perfect yogini because she had understood the trappings of the material world. She had realized that a few siddhis or such powers like controlling the wind or water do not make a yogi. They are not the paths that lead to God. Infact they are meant to deflect from the path of God. They are tests to evaluate the resolve of a yogi. There are many who get deflected because they are unable to resist the trappings of the ego that is soothed by such superficial powers and the reputation that follows such shams. One may get many disciples, big reputation and huge following. One may feel a sense of power. But one should not forget that these are mere tricks. A perfect yogi is the one that can see beyond these simple tricks because he has mastered his five senses, peeled the layers of the material world and gotten in touch with his soul, the embodiment of the ultimate Shiva.

## 8.6 THE MUNDANE AND THE SPIRITUAL

Lal Ded was a saint-poet who laid emphasis on self-recognition. Her vakhs or speeches or sayings belong to the genre of ‘Uttam-kavya’ or poetry of highest kind. Her vakhs are spiritual as well as evocative. The visual images produce suggestive emotions. She is a creator of mystic poetry. The great saint Lal was born in 1320 in Pandrethan (ancient Puranadhistan) in the south-east of Srinagar in a Kashmiri Pandit family. As a child, she used to spend most of her time in silence. She disliked the mundane gossiping of her friends. Either she used to spend her time in a temple or among the beautiful trees. Her spiritual teacher, Guru Sidhmol had provided her rich and rare Sanskrit holy texts. Her parents married her off at the age twelve (according to some texts at the age of fourteen). She had a very tough time at her in-laws’ house. The anecdotes related to her mother-in-law’s cruel treatments towards her are known to every Kashmiri man and woman. Her mother-in-law used to starve her. It is said that she used to put a stone on Lala’s plate and then she would cover it with a thin layer of rice so that it looked like a plate full of rice. Lalla never complained against her. She was so innocent that after eating rice she used to wash the plate and the stone and then kept it back in the kitchen. Her mother-in-law was so cruel that she kept on repeating the same behaviour. Lal once said,

*“Hond marten, hakhur marten Lali nelvath chali ne zainh.”*

‘Whether they killed a big sheep or small one, Lalla has always a stone for her dinner.’ When she was twenty-four years old, she decided to leave her mundane life. She left her home and became a ‘sanyasini.’ After sometime her reputation as a blessed sanyasini spread like a wild fire. People followed her to become her disciples.

She abhorred such ideas and this is why she calls reputation, a dirty foul smelling water. Some people believed she could bless them or she could do miracles. She criticizes such people who attain siddhis and then bewilder common people. She warns against such cheap publicity-seeker sadhaks and siddhas.

She warns them to abandon tantric knowledge and advises them to follow the path of a true yogi. She says in one of her vakhs-

To stop a flowing stream, to cool a raging fire to walk on one's feet in the sky to labour at milking a wooden cow. All these, in the end, are but base juggling. She directs the material seekers to join the path of God. She says-

*Marukh mara buth kaam krodh lobh,  
ha-ta kan baith mariney pain  
manay khen dikh swa-vetsara shem  
visey tihond kyah kyuth druw zan*

Murder thou the murderous Demons- Lust, anger, desire, otherwise they will aim their arrows and destroy thyself.

With careful thought, by meditation on thy self, give to them quietism as their only food.

Then will thou know what and how little firm, is their realm of power.

Lal had to face lot of hurdles in her path of spirituality. She was discarded by her friends, she was maltreated by her husband, her mother-in-law meted out to her the cruelest treatment, she was initially termed as a mad woman who roamed in naked state everywhere. Slowly and gradually when she spoke in vakhs only then people felt that she was an enlightened soul.

## **8.7 IMPORTANCE OF LAL DED IN THE HISTORY OF KASHMIRI LITERATURE**

According to historians, Kashmir used to be a huge lake- a valley full of water known as Kashyap sar. It is said, some Rishis used to live on the banks of lake as meditators. A saint from South India, Kashyap Rishi came to this place. Perhaps from his name, the name of this place is derived. Some historians believe 'Kas' means channel and 'mir' mountain hence the term Kashmir. Kashmiri Literature has a history of at least 5000 years when Sanskrit texts were written.

The early texts include *Mahabhasya* by Patanjali and *Grammar* by Panini. In the medieval times, Kashmir remained under the spell of the brilliant sages and savants who propounded the Kashmir Shaivism and Trika Shastra. The main propounders of Kashmiri Shaivism were Abhinavgupta, (it is said he walked into a cave with twelve hundred disciples and never emerged again), Kshemendra the greatest Sanskrit poet (his books are still available) and Vilhana. Similarly there is Kalhana Pandit's *Rajtarangini*.

Lal Ded was well versed in the Bhagvad Geeta, 18 Puranas, texts of Abhinavgupta, Kshemendra, Shri Kantha, Vasugupta, Kallata, Somananda, Utpalcharya, Lakshmana and Yograa. Lal Ded followed the spiritual disciples and devotional practices of Kashmir Saivite mysticism. Guru Adi Shankracharya (788 CE-820 CE) had established the Shaivaite tradition in all over India but particularly in Kashmir he himself attained spiritual enlightenment. He consolidated the doctrine of Advaita (formless God). Lal Ded was part of this tradition. It is said she was also familiar with Tantra, Yoga, Yogacara, Buddhism and Sufism.

Since Sanskrit was the language of the elite, Shrikantha began using Kashmiri language in his work *Mahanayaka Prakash*. Lal Ded also used the same language for her mystical verses in the Vakhs, in four-line couplet style. If we try to see technical aspects of her poetry we can take Majrooh Rashid's views. He says, 'All the four schools of Indian aesthetics, the concept of Almkara, the *Rasasastra*, the *Ritisastra* and the *Dhvani* all originated in Kashmir.' Consciously or unconsciously it influenced Lal's poetry. 'Lala's verses are specimen of poetic beauty and suggestiveness that evoke the unparalleled emotive and evocative experience in the mind of a reader.' Her verses are full of emotions, rasadhvani and grandeur of thought. A close reading of her poems reveals multi-dimensional meanings. The ideas, images, figures of speech and symbols have evocative as well as emotive powers. Not only her poems have great thought but also they are loaded with artistic craftsmanship.

Dr M.H. Zafar in his research paper, *Kashmiriyat: A World View* says, 'Lal Ded's poetry forms the foundation of Kashmiri culture and tradition.' She

laid emphasis on self-recognition rather than on discursive and logical thinking. Nund Rishi carried on her legacy. According to a popular anecdote when Sheikh Noorud-din Noorani (Nund Rishi) was born, he wouldn't take feed from his mother. His parents took him to Laleshwari. She said to the infant, if he hadn't been ashamed to be born, why he should be ashamed to drink milk from his mother's breast? Hence, she herself breast fed him. Dr Zafar, says 'The self whose knowledge is sought both by Lal Ded and Nund Rishi is a non-temporal and non-spatial entity.'

The ancient Kashmiri spiritual tradition advocates the realization of the self through yoga. Lal, in one of her vakhs says-

*Dev wata diwor wata*

*Petha bona chuy yeka wath*

*Puz manas ta pawanas sangath*

This means, an idol is but a lump of stone, a temple is but a lump of stone. From crown to sole each is of but the one stuff. O! Learned Pandit! What is this to which thou offereth worship?

Bring thou together a determined mind and thy vital air (pranas)

Hence, poetically, materially and spiritually, Lal Ded is an important link between the ancient and the modern, poetic as well as spiritual traditions. She is a glorious name that still reverberates in the social, historical, poetical and spiritual aspects of Kashmiri life and culture.

## **8.8 LAL DED AND HER TIMES**

In the 14th century, India was experiencing a period of re-orientation of religious, social and moral values in Kashmir. Avanti-varman had popularized Shaivism. Hindu religion had become highly ritualistic and complicated for the common man. Sanskrit was the language of the elite. Common men used to talk in Prakrit language. During this era, Kashmir was introduced to Islam. Before Islam, Mahayana Buddhism was also a popular religion. During these times Lal Ded

emerged as a saviour, a common woman talking about love for God in common Kashmiri language. People were attracted to her spirituality. Some hated her. But mostly believed she had the power of blessing them.

## **8.9 LAL DED AND KASHMIRI SHAIIVISM**

Since times immemorial Kashmir had been the land of saints and rishis. Lal Ded is an important part of that long legacy. During the time of Avantivarman, Shaivism turned into a dominant ideology of the common people. After his reign the spiritual element of Shaivism lost its fervor and people started believing in complex rituals. Moreover, Sanskrit became the language of the elite and the common man became alien to the sacred language. During the 14th century Kashmir witnessed political upheaval. Islam attracted the attention of the people of the valley when they were facing moral collapse in the social order and political uncertainties. Mahayana Buddhism, Upanishadic teachings, Yoga, Tantric Yoga and Islamic mysticism emerged as an amalgamation of a new form of religion in the valley.

According to a book *Kashmiri Bazm-e-Adab*, 'It was during this period of religious fermentation that a need was felt for a new approach to a religion embracing all creeds and castes and appealing to the heart rather than the head. Thanks to its rich religious and philosophic traditions, Kashmir rose to the occasion and produced a number of mystics and saints who by their teachings and their lives of complete self-abnegation were the living embodiments of true religion and morality.' Lal Ded is a shining gem of that rich tradition. Muslims call her Lal Arifa. Her Vakhs (sayings) have become maxims in the Kashmiri language. Her family Guru Sidh Srikanth had already prophesied about her being an enlightened soul. Once, it is said, she was roaming in naked state in the streets her only coverings were her long strands of hair, some small street urchins were throwing stones at her. A kind hearted shopkeeper intervened because he knew she was a blessed saint. She asked that shopkeeper to give her a piece of cloth, she tore it into two and hung it on either shoulder and kept on wandering throughout the day. During her stroll some people praised her, some mocked at her. On every occasion she tied a knot. In the evening she came back to the same place and

gave the piece of cloth to the shopkeeper. On both the pieces same number of knots were tied. Thus she told him, ‘mental equipoise should not be shaken by the manner people greeted or rebuked a person.’

Her Vakhs are spiritual messages in a sweet, simple and precise language. Most of the time she used to remain in a transcendental state. After waking up from her transstate she used to speak in vakhs. Her sayings were considered as divine songs by the Kashmiris.

### 8.10 GLOSSARY

Vakhs	—	speech, sayings.
Creel	—	a basket for holding fish that have just been caught.
Gale	—	an extremely strong wind
Tether	—	to tie (an elephant to a post)
Dam a flood	—	to control gushing water
Con artist	—	a trickster, a magician
Halt	—	stop
Frost	—	thin layer of ice
Rein	—	control
Five senses	—	sense of smell, sight, touch, hearing, taste (five indriyas)
First syllable	—	‘Om’
Spell	—	a mantra, the chanting of which produces some magical powers.

**1. Reputation** - Reputation here means worldly reputation. Lal Ded treats it as the lowest form of desire chased by human beings. She compares it with the dirty and foul smelling water in which the fish which has just been caught is kept. She rejects it as the dirtiest thing. She also calls reputation, an extremely strong wind that people want to control in their fist. When people chase reputation they're like those adventurous people who want to tie an elephant with a single hair. For her, reputation is a meaningless, meanest and malicious thing.

**2. Milking a wooden cow** - When people try to follow the path of yoga, God puts them to hard task. He takes their test at every step. Sometimes he gives them Sidhhis, with the help of which they can even perform miracles but when yogis start indulging in such activities, they lose their focus and deviate from the path of God. Lad Ded criticizes such yogis. She says even a con artist can milk a wooden cow, a trickster can also perform such a trick. Hence, she warns people about losing their focus from achieving the realization of God.

**3. A yogi can pluck the Sun from the Midnight Sky** - Lal Ded was an enlightened soul. From her own yogic experience she tells us that a true yogi who has controlled his five senses and thereby has controlled his mind from wandering to-wards the outside world, such a Yogi reaches a stage of spiritual enlightenment where he can visualize the sun even in the midnight sky. He can see the light even when the worldly men feel it is dark. He can realize the inner light.

**4. OM, the first Syllable** - Lal Ded followed the Kashmiri Shaivite tradition. She was a true yogini. When she refers to the word 'Shiva', it doesn't mean the physical form of Shiva. She talks about the Shiva that is present in every mortal being. It can be realized by peeping within oneself. It can be reached with the help of Samadhi. When she says 'from whose naval the first syllable rises', she symbolically means to say that it is the sound of the whole universe. One needs to control one's senses and evils then with the help of Om one can realize the Shiva (the parabrahma) that is present in our own self.

## **8.11 SELF -ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS**

### **Multiple Choice Questions:**

- 1) In Vakh 118, she compares 'Reputation' to a \_\_\_\_\_ .
  - a. Dead fish
  - b. Foul smelling water
  - c. Vicar basket
  - d. False pride
- 2) According to Kashmiri Shaivism, what is Shiva?
  - a. It is our Soul
  - b. It is our Karmas
  - c. It is Yogmaya
  - d. It is Illusion

- 3) Lal Ded calls those yogis who attain siddhis and perform miracles as comparable to
- |               |                  |
|---------------|------------------|
| a. Tricksters | c. Cheaters      |
| b. Magicians  | d. All the above |
- 4) In Vakh 120, Lal Ded gives the crux of
- |                  |           |
|------------------|-----------|
| a. Puranas       | c. Vedas  |
| b. Bhagvad Geeta | d. Sutras |
- 5) Lal Ded's parents belonged to the village \_\_\_\_\_.
- |               |               |
|---------------|---------------|
| a. Pandrethan | c. Gandherbal |
| b. Pampore    | d. Sopore     |

**Short Answer: Type Questions**

1) How can one visualize the light of sun even at midnight?

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

2) What advice does Lord Krishna give to Arjuna that Lal Ded refers to in Vakh 120?

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

3) What does Lal Ded want to say by giving the example of a wooden cow?

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

4) Which according to Lal Ded, is the first syllable?

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

5) Who was the ruler of Kashmir when Lalla was born?

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

### **8.12 EXAMINATION ORIENTED QUESTIONS - I**

**1. Answer the following questions in 40 to 50 words each.**

- a. Who can 'pluck the sun from the midnight sky'?
- b. Whom does the poet refer to as 'from whose navel the first syllable rises'?

**2. Answer the following questions in 250 words each.**

- a. Do you think the four vakhs given here together constitute single idea? Elaborate on your answer with examples.

- b. Who is a perfect yogi/yogini? How does the poetess arrive at the answer through these four vakhs?
- c. How does the poetess combine the mundane and the spiritual in her poems?
- d. Do some background reading on Lal Ded and based on the information you have collected, evaluate the importance of the poetess in the history of Kashmiri literature.
- e. What made Lal Ded adopt the life of a Yogini? (Refer to point 2c)
- f. Do you think Lal Ded's sayings are an amalgamation of various school of Indian thought on religion? Elaborate (Refer to 2 e)

### **8.13 EXAMINATION ORIENTED QUESTIONS - II**

- 1) How does the poet treat 'reputation' in vakh 118?

Ans. Reputation here means worldly reputation. Lal Ded treats it as the lowest form of desire chased by human beings. She compares it with the dirty and foul smelling water in which the fish which has just been caught is kept. She rejects it as the dirtiest thing. She also calls reputation, an extremely strong wind that people want to control in their fist. When people chase reputation they're like those adventurous people who want to tie an elephant with a single hair. For her, reputation is a meaningless, meanest and malicious thing.

- 2) In vakh 119, what does the poetess mean by 'milking a wooden cow'?

Ans. When people try to follow the path of yoga, God puts them to hard task. He takes their test at every step. Sometimes he gives them Sidhhis, with the help of which they can even perform miracles but when yogis start indulging in such activities, they lose their focus and deviate from the path of God. Lal Ded criticizes such yogis. She says even a con artist can milk a wooden cow, a trickster can also perform such a trick. Hence, she warns people about losing their focus from achieving the realization of God.

### 8.13 SUGGESTED READING

- I, Lalla: *The poem of Lal Ded* edited by Ranjit Hoskote, Penguin. U.K. 2013
- *A History of Indian Literature, 500-1399: From Courtly to the Popular* by Sisir Kumar Das. Sahitya Akademi. New Delhi. 2005.
- *Lal Ded: The Great Kashmiri Saint-poetess* by Sasisekhara Toshakahani. A.P.H. Publishing Corporation. 2002.
- *Women Writing in India: 600 B.C. to the early twentieth century* by Susie J. Tharu, Ke Lalita. Feminist press. 1991.

\*\*\*\*\*

## **B.A./B.COM-II : GENERAL ENGLISH**

---

**COURSE CODE : AA-201**  
**SEMESTER-II**

**LESSON NO. 9**  
**UNIT - III**

### **The King and the Tree Goddess** **Ruskin Bond**

#### **UNIT STRUCTURE**

##### **1.1 Objectives**

##### **1.2 About the Author**

##### **1.3 About the short story**

##### **1.4 Summary of the short story**

##### **1.5 Glossary**

##### **1.6 Title of the story**

##### **1.7 Theme of the story**

##### **1.8 Self-Assessment Questions**

###### **1.8.1 Fill in the Blanks**

###### **1.8.2 Multiple Choice Question`**

##### **1.9 Examination Orientated Questions**

##### **1.10 Answer key**

##### **1.11 References**

##### **1.1 Objectives**

The objectives of this lesson are to familiarize the distance learners about the life and works of Ruskin Bond and an in-depth study of the short story 'The King and the Tree Goddess' prescribed in the syllabus. This lesson will help the learners to understand the

close relationship between man and nature and that both are interrelated and interdependent.

## **1.2 About the Author**

### **Ruskin Bond**

Ruskin Bond is a prominent contemporary Indian writer of British descent. At present, he lives in Landour, Mussoorie. He is a prolific writer who appeals to both children and adults through his stories and novels.

He was the eldest son of Edith Clarke and Aubrey Alexander Bond, born on 19 May 1934 in Kasauli, Punjab States Agency, British India. His father taught English to the princesses of Jamnagar Palace and Ruskin and, his sister Ellen lived there till he was six. Later his father joined RAF (Royal Air Force) in 1939 and Ruskin along with his mother and sister went to live at his maternal home at Dehradun. When he was eight years old, his mother got divorced from his father and married a Punjabi Hindu, Hari. Ruskin's father made necessary arrangements and brought him to New Delhi where he was posted and looked after him. Ruskin was very close to his father and described the period which he spent with his father as one of the happiest times of his life. He was only ten years old when his father died while he was posted at Calcutta. At that time, Ruskin was at his boarding school in Shimla and was informed about the tragedy by his teacher. He was deeply heartbroken by his father's untimely demise. Later he was taken to Dehradun by his mother and stepfather where he was raised by his grandmother.

He studied in Bishop Cotton School, Shimla and completed his graduation from Shimla in 1950. He won several writing competitions in the school including the Irwin Divinity Prize and the Hailey Literature Prize. The first twenty years of his life groomed him to be a good writer as it developed his personality into a different person. Despite, his sufferings and lonely childhood, Bond developed an optimistic outlook about life. He chose the path of becoming an earnest writer that his father wished him to follow. Therefore, he found peace in reading books that habit was also inculcated in him by his father. He loves to read the works of T. E. Lawrence, Charles Dickens, Charlotte Bronte and Rudyard Kipling.

He started his writing career at the age of seventeen in London, by writing his first novel, *The Room on the Roof*. The novel charts the life of an orphaned Anglo-Indian teenager. He runs away to live with his friends as he escapes the tyranny of his strict guardian. The book has a strong autobiographical element as it's based on his actual experience living in a small rented room on the roof in Dehradun. It was not published until he was twenty-one. He was awarded John Llewellyn Rhys Memorial Prize for his first novel. Its success gave him an impetus to write its sequel *Vagrants in the Valley*.

Subsequently, he returned to India and worked as a journalist in Delhi and Dehradun for a few years. Later, he relocated to a town in Himalayan foothills, Mussoorie, where he pursued freelance writing since 1963. His essays and articles were published in numerous magazines, such as *The Pioneer*, *The Leader*, *The Tribune*, and *The Telegraph*. Till now he has written over three hundred short stories, essays, novels, and over thirty children's books. Additionally, he penned two autobiographical volumes; *Scenes from a Writer's Life* and *The Lamp is Lit; Leaves from a Journal*. The first one details his formative years in India and the second one is based on journal entries, essay collection episodes about his years making it as a freelance writer.

Some of the other famous works of Ruskin Bond are *Blue Umbrella*, *A Flight of Pigeons*, and *Funny Side Up*. His works have also been adapted for television and film.

Bond was awarded the Sahitya Academy Award in 1992 for his novel, "Our Trees Still Grow in Dehra" and in 1999 he has been conferred with Padma Shri, one of the most prestigious civil awards in India. Later in 2014, he was also awarded the Padma Bhushan for his immense effort in English literature.

### **1.3 About the Short Story (*The King and the Tree Goddess*)**

Ruskin Bond lives in the foothills of the Himalayas since his childhood. The natural scenic hills of Dehradun and Mussoorie always constitute the setting of his works and reflect his faith in the healing power of nature. It is hard to imagine a story from the pen of Ruskin Bond without a reference to trees, animals, the soft breeze of mountains, and amidst these a sensitive human soul. In this story, there was a king who lived in the Himalayan foothills.

The king wished to build the most beautiful palace for himself with the wood of the deodar tree, which was usually used to build temples. The entire Himalayan region was searched and finally, the king's men found a sumptuous deodar tree. The villagers used to worship the tree as a Goddess who they believed resided in it. The king's men paid respect to the Tree Goddess and informed her about the king's aspirations. The Tree Goddess responded quietly. That night, she spoke to the king in his dreams and made him aware of the importance of her existence and the other trees which motivated him to change his mind.

#### **1.4 The King and the Tree Goddess**

##### *Summary*

Ruskin Bond is one of the most environment-friendly and ecology-savvy writers of all Indo-Anglican writers. His literary works reveal his great love and concern for nature as well as his pity for the cruel and unsympathetic attitude of humans towards nature. Bond put emphasis on the fact that there is a close relationship between man and nature and both are interrelated and interdependent. Religious rituals are the traditional techniques to safeguard the intrinsic relationship between mankind and nature. In Indian tradition, trees, animals, and rivers are worshiped in every household, and the earth is considered as Mother-Goddess. "The King and the Tree Goddess", a representative short story of Ruskin Bond published in his anthology *The Road to the Bazar*, in 1980 is well-knit around this concept. It has been written in the form of a legend in consonance with the Indian pantheistic tradition of regarding all the elements in the universe as a manifestation of the Almighty. It conveys the message that man is only one species just like many others in the whole scheme of things, that has no right to obliterate the richness and diversity of nature and natural resources around him.

The story opens on one wet monsoon evening when it is impossible to venture out for playing; Koki's grandmother narrated the story of "The King and the Tree Goddess" to children. It is about a king who lived in the Himalayan foothills and desires to build the most beautiful palace in that part of the world for himself. In order to build something exquisite that had never been seen before, he decides to support and rest his entire palace

on one column only. For this purpose, the tallest tree from the kingdom was needed. In the setting of the story, the entire Himalayan region is a storehouse of varied trees like Spruce, Oak, Pine, and Deodar. The deodar so-called the 'Tree of God' is considered to be the tallest and strongest of them. The king summons his prime minister and orders him to make arrangements for the biggest deodar around so that it could be used as a column for the palace. On hearing this, the king's daughter protested and suggests, "the deodar is a sacred tree.....it is used for building temples."(43) Guided by the cultural ideology of human superiority over nature and blinded by his self-centeredness, the king remains adamant on his attitude. From an eco-critical stance, the king is such a character who asserts his authority over others, an archetype of hierarchical mindset. The king does not understand that unnecessary and unwanted interference by humans in the non-human world has reduced the richness and diversity of life. However, the protest registered by the daughter before the king highlights her empathy towards the non-human world. Her concern is exactly in tune with that Indian cultural tradition in which trees are considered sacrosanct and were revered like any other deity or other immortal beings. They were chopped down only when it mattered the most and not for petty human interests. The king's inability to strike a bond with the non-human world is thus completely contradictory to the perspective of his daughter and that is quite apparent in their respective actions.

The prime minister sends out thirty men in search of the tallest deodar tree in the entire kingdom. Though they finally succeed to find the tallest, they return soon because carrying or dragging such a big log is a strenuous task for them. The king then orders the prince to take his horsemen and fulfill his wish to build a palace "as magnificent as any temple" (43), but the prince also fails in his efforts. Animals like elephants are used to accomplish the arduous task but all in vain as the hills are too steep for them. But the king is adamant and insists upon bringing a tree just as big as any other deodar in the forest from one of his parks.

After much searching the king's men find the required deodar tree growing in the neighborhood of the city, but that tree is inhabited by a tree Goddess, "who gave to the tree its great strength, size, and beauty" (44). Because of being the abode of the Goddess, it is

worshipped by the local people. The kinsmen turn up with garlands, lamps, and music to pay their reverence to the tree and “warn her that she must leave her abode. Within seven days it had to be cut to the ground” (44). Then joining hands, some of the men dance while some other sing:

With cruel axe we’ve come  
To fell you age-long home,  
Forgive us, great Tree-Goddess  
We danced before your throne!  
To please the king must we  
Cut down your loveliest tree. (44)

The Tree-Goddess hears it and immediately understands the whole situation. She remains tranquil for a few minutes, and then by bowing of her branches and whispering through leaves, she assures the villagers that their plea has been heard. At night a glorious figure draped in shining green foliage appears in the dream of the king. She speaks in a voice that is like “the rustle of the autumn leaves” (44). She says, “I am the Goddess of the Deodar Tree, great king. Your men have told me that you intend to cut me down. I have come to beg you to change your mind” (45). The king disapproves of her request and tells her that there is no other tree strong enough in all the parks to support a palace all by itself, “and therefore I must have it” (45).

The Tree-Goddess urges the king to reconsider his decision as she has been worshiped by the people of all the villages in his region and has proved beneficial to all of them. Her munificence is for everybody, as birds build nests in her branches and men rest against her trunk. The earth blesses her by sending new plants and herbs under her protective arms. She binds the earth with her strong roots, children play at her feet and she provides respite to women coming from fields, from the sweltering heat of the sun. But the stubborn king is reluctant to withdraw and refuses his request. In a state of hopelessness, she requests the king not to cut her down in one go and her body should be felled in three parts. The king is amazed at the request and asks for the reason for doing so. She replies, “Dozens of young deodar trees have sprung from me and have grown up around me. Should you tell me with

one mighty stroke, my weight would certainly crush all my children to death. But if I suffer the stroke three times, and fall in three pieces, some of the young one may escapes” (46).

The next morning king tells his children and ministers about his changed decision of building a palace on a column of stone instead of a tree. They express their astonishment at the decision. The king says, “Within the deodar tree lives a spirit nobler than my own” (46). Taking a cue from the decision of the king, the populace of the kingdom also stopped using wood in the construction of their houses and start using stones. By narrating this story to the young children, the grandmother disseminates a greater message of conservation of nature for the future generation. The writer here makes nature speak through the tree Goddess. Man, in grip of his wishes has harmed nature beyond proportions. But a reasonable thought, as deep ecology preaches can create a harmonious relationship between the human and non-human world. Deep Ecology never supports hampering human growth, but it asserts a reasonable differentiation between the requirements and superfluous desires. Through this short story, Ruskin Bond touched the burning issue of deforestation in a very light manner and has also raised the consciousness of its reader. The king symbolizes modern human culture that necessitates progress by encroaching upon and overusing natural resources mindlessly whereas the Tree Goddess is the mouth of the piece of Ruskin Bond and of all other deep ecologists as well. Carolyn Merchant’s advice is pertinent here that “humans are dependent on the ecosphere for the survival and should not exploit it as the master does to a slave”.

### 1.5 Glossary

Ecology: a science that deals with the relationship between groups of living things and their environment

Venture: doing something that might be unpleasant

Empathy: the ability to imagine how another person is feeling and so understand his mood

Exquisite: graceful

Sacrosanct: holy

Deity: god

Strenuous: difficult

Tranquil: calm, quiet

Rustle: whisper

Foliage: leaves, vegetation, greenery

Munificence: generosity, kindness

Sweltering: very hot, boiling

Archetype: epitome

Deep ecology: an environmental movement and a philosophy that regards human life as just one of many equal components of a global ecosystem.

Eco-criticism: a study of literature and the environment from an interdisciplinary point of view.

Carolyn Merchant: an American eco-feminist philosopher

### **1.6 Title of the Story**

The title of a story must be descriptive, direct, accurate, appropriate, relevant, concise, precise, and should not be misleading. It should neither be too long nor too short. It must throw light on the contents and themes of the story. The title “The King and the Tree Goddess” meets these requirements and is so apt and suitable. It tells us about the story of a king who lives in the foothills of the Himalayas and desires to build the most beautiful palace for himself. In order to build something unique that had never been seen before, he decides to support and rests the entire place on one column only and the column is to be made from the tallest deodar from the entire Himalayan region, but her daughter told about a sacred tree that should not be cut down but the king wants to cut the tree at any cost and send his men to the forest. When the Tree Goddess changes his perception by urging him not to cut down trees, the king realizes his mistakes and decides not to cut trees.

### **1.7 Theme of the short story**

Life in any form is worthy of everyone’s respect is what we learn from Ruskin Bond’s short story “The King and the Tree Goddess.” It emphasizes the fact that trees too have a life. Sometimes humans forget this important reality. They cut down trees to fulfill their

temporary wishes. In India, many trees like the Tulsi, Banyan, Peepal, Deodar, etc. are considered sacred and worshiped.

In this story, a king living in the Himalayan foothills wanted to build the most beautiful palace for himself with the wood of the deodar tree which was usually used to build temples. After searching a lot, the king's men found a splendid deodar tree. The villagers used to worship the tree as a Goddess who resided in it. The king's men paid their respect to the Tree Goddess and informed her about the king's desire. The Tree Goddess reciprocated quietly. That night she spoke to the king in his dream and made him aware of the importance of her existence and the other trees which motivated him to change his mind.

### 1.8.1 Fill in the blanks

1. There was a king living in the \_\_\_\_\_ foothills.
2. He longed to build a \_\_\_\_\_.
3. The entire palace was to be supported by one \_\_\_\_\_ only.
4. The column was to be made from the tallest \_\_\_\_\_.
5. In the Himalayas, there are many tall trees \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, oak and \_\_\_\_\_.
6. The word Deo-dar means \_\_\_\_\_.

### 1.8.2 Multiple Choice Questions

1. Who desires to build a beautiful palace?
  - a. king's daughter
  - b. king
  - c. villagers
  - d. koki
2. How many men were sent out by the prime minister for searching the tallest tree?
  - a. forty
  - b. twenty
  - c. sixty
  - d. thirty

3. Who protested the decision of the king?
- a. King's daughter      c. king's son  
b. villagers              d. none of the above
4. In how many parts did the Tree-Goddess wish to be felled?
- a. two                      c. three  
b. one                      d. five
5. Who appeared in the king's dream?
- a. Tree-Goddess      c. villagers  
b. King's daughter      d. pine tree

### 1.9 Examination Orientated Question

Q 1: Why did the king send his men to the forest?

Q 2: Why was the deodar chosen to build the palace?

Q 3: Why did the villagers worship the deodar trees?

Q 4: What was the last request of the Tree-Goddess?

Q 5: What made the king change his decision?

Q 6: What message does the writer try to convey through this short story?

### 1.10 Answer Key

Fill in the Blanks

1. Himalayan    2. Beautiful palace    3. column    4. Deodar

5. Spruce, pine, deodar    6. Tree of god

Multiple Choice Questions

1. King    2. thirty    3. king's daughter    4. three

## 5. Tree-Goddess

### 1.11 References

Pathania, Uday. "Eco-consciousness in the select short stories of Ruskin Bond"

<https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki>

<http://economictimes.indiatimes.com>

<https://brainly.in>

<https://devikacloud.in>

**Shashi Deshpande: The Beloved Charioteer**

**Structure:**

- 10.1 About the Author
- 10.2 Objectives
- 10.3 Introduction to the short story “The Beloved Charioteer”
- 10.4 Main Points of the short story “The Beloved Charioteer”
- 10.5 Summary of the short story “The Beloved Charioteer”
- 10.6 Let Us Sum Up
- 10.7 Glossary
- 10.8 Self-Assessment Questions
- 10.9 Examination Oriented Questions
- 10.10 Suggested Reading

**10.1 About the Author:**

Shashi Deshpande was born in 1938 in Dharwad, Karnataka, to the renowned dramatist and Sanskrit scholar, Shri Adya Rangacharya. At the age of fifteen she went to Bombay, graduated in Economics from Elphinstone College, then moved to Bangalore, where she gained a degree in Law winning two gold medals. The early years of her marriage were largely given over to the care of her two young sons, but she took a course in journalism from the Bhavan’s R.P. College of Mass Communication, winning three medals including *The Times of India Gold Medal*. Her writing career only began in earnest in 1970, initially with short stories, of which several volumes have been published. She is the author of four children’s books and seven novels, the best known of which are *The Dark Holds No Terrors*, *That Long Silence* which won the *Sahitya Akademi Award* in 1990 and *The Binding Vine*. She received Padma Shri award in 2009. Her novel *Shadow Play* was shortlisted for *The Hindu Literary Prize* in 2014.

Shashi Deshpande lives in Bangalore with her pathologist husband. Shashi Deshpande’s works are in their own way all about humankind and society- the essential loneliness of being and the human predicament, a matter of interest to all humanity. She says that generally, she starts with an idea, a vague one really, and as she goes on writing she finds that she is going into other regions, exploring other ideas. Writing gives her a constant sense of discovery.

Following is the list of her novels and short-story collections:

- The Legacy and Other Stories* (1971)
- It was the Nightingale* (1986)
- The Miracle* (1986)
- The Intrusion and Other Stories* (1993)
- The Dark Holds No Terrors* (1980)
- If I die Today* (1982)
- Roots and Shadows* (1983)
- Come up and be dead* (1983)
- It was Dark* (1986)

*That Long Silence* (1988)  
*The Binding Vine* (1992)  
*A Matter of Time* (1996)  
*Small Remedies* (2000)  
*Moving On* (2004)  
*In the Country of Deceit* (2008)  
*Shadow Play* (2013)  
*Strangers to Ourselves* (2015)

## 10.2 Objectives:

The objectives of this lesson are:

- to elucidate the sum and substance of the story “The Beloved Charioteer”,
- to apprise the learner with the format of the examination-oriented questions.
- To explain the relationship between grandmother, mother and daughter
- To acquaint the learner with issues concerning widowhood
- To highlight the theme concerning Traditional woman versus modern woman

## 10.3 Introduction to the short story “The Beloved Charioteer”:

Shashi Deshpande’s short story “The Beloved Charioteer” describes the difficulties and hardships faced by two widowed women in the patriarchal society, especially in middleclass society. The story illustrates the relationship and bond that exists between mother and daughter. Throughout the story, the anguish of mother towards her child is visible. The vacuum, misery and hollowness of widowed women and how they reconciled is portrayed through grandmother, Ajji, and daughter, Aarti in the short story “The Beloved Charioteer”. Story also depicts how three generations, Ajji, Aarti and Priti react with each other.

## 10.4 Main Points of the short story “The Beloved Charioteer”:

- This is the story of an old woman (Ajji), her daughter, Aarti and her granddaughter, Priti.
- Ajji was blessed with two sons and a daughter, Aarti. Unfortunately, both the sons passed away very young and later her husband too passed away.
- Aarti was pregnant by seven months when her husband, Madhav, passed away.
- Later, Aarti gives birth to a baby girl, Priti.
- At present, three women Ajji, Aarti and Priti are living in the same house.
- The story is presented from the point of view of Ajji i.e. Ajji is the narrator of story.
- The story depicts how a mother loves, protects, safeguards, guides and mentors her children in different situations in life and help them lead balanced life.
- The story also brings out how a woman though suffered a lot during her life time, tries to
  - take the responsibility.
  - show the right path her children.
  - make her children realize their responsibilities.

## 10.5 Summary of the short story “The Beloved Charioteer”

Shashi Deshpande is an award-winning novelist and short story writer who makes gender central to her writing. In her story “The Beloved Charioteer”, she tries to show the relationship of grandmother, mother and daughter at various stages of life. The story is based on three generations, three women, three different mindsets living together.

The story is presented from Ajji’s point of view, a woman who was dominated by her husband and suppressed in all possible ways. During her early married life, she changed her daily routine and even her food habits for the sake of her husband. But her husband treated her like an object to satisfy his desires. She molded herself to suit to the needs of her husband and family. She did not even have liberty to wear a sari of her choice. In the bedroom at night, she hardly dared to breathe. She was afraid to get up and get glass of water to drink because that would disturb his (her husband’s) sleep. She was afraid to cough too.

Moreover, Ajji gave birth to two sons and one daughter, Aarti. Two sons did not survive. Her husband did not like tears so she cried secretly when her two sons died. Her only daughter, Aarti, loved her father but not her. Soon, Ajji’s husband died of a massive heart attack.

Later, Aarti’s husband, Madhavan also passed away when she was pregnant by seven months. Aarti gave birth to a baby girl, Priti. Now three women stay in one home. Aarti entirely entangles in past neglecting her present. She becomes isolated and finds solace in her father’s room. Ajji cannot bear isolation from her daughter and tries to get her daughter out of her entangled past and tries to confront her with the truth of her real situation. Ajji tries to show some ways to her daughter to overcome loneliness by advising her to go out to park or any place of her choice. But, Ajji is shocked to listen to her reply that if she comes across people who are happy, she would indeed kill and bury their happiness. Though Ajji is holding the pain of her husband, she is confronting with her situations. She is able to lead life peacefully, though she is a widow. But she is unable to make her widowed daughter live peacefully in same situation. Ajji tries to change the attitude of her daughter in many respects for her bright future.

However, Aarti loved two persons in her life- her father and her husband, Madhavan. Her married life was full of love and understanding. She was happy. Unfortunately, her father dies of heart attack and later the death of her husband completely shatters her life and she becomes very sad and depressed. She is angry with her mother because she did not inform her of her father’s critical condition. Aarti stops talking to her mother. She neither does household chores, takes care of her daughter, Priti nor help her aged mother who herself is a widow. She never plays with Priti. Her grief knows no bounds as she lost two most loving persons of her life. She spends most of her time in her father’s room, smoking, staring at walls with blank face. She does not take bath and gets up late in the morning. By the time she wakes up, her mother would be cooking lunch. By the sounds Aarti makes, Ajji would understand that she got up. Ajji would prepare tea and Aarti takes two cups of tea and would leave the kitchen without speaking a word. Rest of the day, she is confined to four walls. She is lost in her own sadness and neglects the needs of her daughter. Though Ajji tries to speak, Aarti replies very harshly as though her mother has done lot of injustice to her. She never tries to understand her mother’s urge to bring her back to normal.

Her attitude was careless and revolting as though she had lost the entire world. Aarti’s hatred against her mother is quite absurd. She finds solace in her dead father’s room rather than her mother who is very much alive. Aarti loves her father more than her mother. No one else and nothing else matters to her.

Priti is the only ray of hope for the family. She loses her grandfather and father even before she is born. Her mother was leading a depressed life. She never plays with Priti. Though

Priti loves sleeping with her mother, Aarti spends entire night smoking and does not sleep well. She scolds Priti to exhibit her anger, outrage and displeasure. She did not show any concern, love and affection to her child. So Priti tries to figure her mother in her grandmother Ajji. She did not want to sleep with her mother, she only wanted to sleep with her grandmother. She did not like the smoking smell from her mother. Ajji felt that Priti was losing the motherly affection so Ajji takes care of Priti. She dresses her up, and they both have tea together. Ajji makes breakfast for Priti and sends her to school. Priti finds solace in her grandmother's company. And Ajji's ray of hope is only Priti and this is the only happiness Ajji has at home.

Finally, the photo frame that is broken accidentally by Aarti gives a chance to Ajji to disclose her oppression to her daughter which makes her daughter realize true character of her father resulting in reconciliation with her mother. She looks at her mother as though she is looking at a strange person. By the looks Ajji realizes that Aarti has desirable change in her and she has understood the true nature of her father. Further, she says that people who are living are more important than people who are dead. Thus, indirectly she says that Priti, Arti's daughter, is more important than her husband and father who are no more. She asks her daughter to live in the real world and face realities of life with confidence and courage. Thus, Ajji brings her daughter to the central position of life from isolation and aloofness. Ajji makes a successful attempt to counsel her daughter to forget all the incidents that gives her pain, distress and agony and finally she comes out of her isolation with the help of her mother and shoulders her responsibilities and reconciles with her mother.

Thus, the story brings out how a woman though suffered a lot during her life time, tries to take the responsibility, tries to show the right path to her children and make her children realize their responsibilities. The story also depicts how a mother loves, protects, safeguards, guides and mentors her children in different situations in life especially in difficult situations and helps them lead a balanced life.

## **10.6 Let Us Sum Up**

“The Beloved Charioteer” by Shashi Deshpande is based on three women i.e. grandmother, mother and their relationship with each other at various stages of their lives.

Mother named Arti, the daughter of grandmother, a depressed lady as for whom she cared and loved have died. She loved two persons that is her father and her husband has both died. She is now the most irritated person in the house and she spends her most of the time smoking and looking at the walls of her room. She doesn't talk to anyone neither to her daughter Priti and nor to her mother. She even scolds Priti for no reason. She is so much entangled with the past that her present is neglected. The daughter named Priti is the youngest and the most energetic character. Her father and grandfather had both died. Her mother doesn't talk to her. Her caretaker and her best friend in the house is her grandmother (Ajji). When Priti is gone, silence settles in the house. The relation between the Arti and Priti is not too good in the story.

Arti is depressed, sad, unhappy, and is in pain. She doesn't do any work, which a mother should do for her daughter and for her aged mother. She doesn't talk to Priti; play with her however she scolds Priti at times to show her anger, outrage and displeasure. Because of her nature grandmother Ajji have to take care of Priti, she acts like her mother. She wakes her, she dresses her for school, make breakfast for her. It is shocking to see that at this age also Ajji does all the work and she even doesn't complain. The relationship of Arti and Priti is not good whereas the relationship between Ajji and Priti is good. Ajji once insist Arti to go out of house like park whereas in reply she says that seeing other people happy she wanted to kill and bury their happiness. This shows one of the natures of depressed lady.

Ironically Ajji's husband's room offers her the opportunity to find her voice, rebel against her daughter and break the silence that threatens to destroy her home and her

granddaughter. The photo frame that was broken accidentally by Arti gave a chance, which helped Ajji to talk to her and to explain her that what gone is gone. Ajji is also holding the pain of her husband but on the other hand she is managing and not running from her problems and fears. Priti has a daughter and she need to take care of her. Ajji also says that she does not want to ever see the photograph again as it is no point of seeing things which gives pain and discomfort. Arti needs to be happy at which she got rather than things, which she doesn't have. Hence through this story Shashi Deshpande elegantly brings out the mother/daughter relationship on different stages and aspects of life.

## 10.7 Glossary:

Anguish:	be extremely distressed about something
Beloved:	much loved person
Chortle:	Laugh in a noisy, gleeful way
Conspiratorial Whisper:	making secret plan to do something bad; showing that you share secret knowledge
Contemplate:	to observe deeply
Counsel:	to give advice
Crawl:	an act of moving on one's hands and knees or dragging one's body along the ground
Entangle:	involve (someone) in difficulties or complicated circumstances from which it is difficult to escape
Fascination:	the state of feeling an intense interest in something
Gaze:	to give a romantic look to somebody
Glance:	to take a brief look (intentionally)
Glimpse:	to take a brief look (unintentionally)
Grin:	smile broadly
Guffaw:	loud and hearty laugh
Impish:	inclined to do slightly naughty things for fun; mischievous.
Mould:	influence the formation or development of
Mumble:	say something indistinctly and quietly, making it difficult for others to hear
Oppression:	prolonged cruel or unjust treatment or exercise of authority
Outrage:	an extremely strong reaction of anger, shock, or indignation
Peek:	to take a brief look, secretly
Peep:	to take a long look, secretly
Peer:	to observe searching something
Reconcile:	restore friendly relationships
Safeguard:	to protect
Sibilant:	making or characterized by a hissing sound.
Stare:	to give a rude look somebody
Strangle:	suppress (an impulse, action, or sound).
Talons:	a claw, especially one belonging to a bird of prey
Urge:	try earnestly or persistently to persuade (someone) to do something

## 10.8 Self-Assessment Questions:

1. "The Beloved Charioteer" is written by \_\_\_\_\_.
2. How many generations do we find in "The Beloved Charioteer"?
3. What is the name of the grandmother?
4. What is the name of the grand daughter in "The Beloved Charioteer"?
5. Who is the daughter of Ajji?
6. Who is the beloved charioteer in the story?
7. How many sons does Ajji have?

### Answers:

1. Shashi Deshpande
2. Three
3. Ajji
4. Priti
5. Arti
6. Priti
7. Two

## 10.9 Examination Oriented Questions:

### A. Short Answer Type Questions. (Answer the following questions in 40-50 words each)

1. Why Arti is in pain?

-----  
-----  
-----  
-----  
-----  
-----

2. What message does Shashi Deshpande try to convey through her short story "The Beloved Charioteer"?

-----  
-----  
-----  
-----  
-----  
-----

3. How does Priti help her grandmother regain her sense of life in "The Beloved Charioteer"?

-----  
-----  
-----  
-----  
-----  
-----

**B. Long Answer Type Questions. (Answer the following questions in 250 words each)**

1. Critically analyse Shashi Deshpande's "The Beloved Charioteer".

**Ans.** In the modern society the place of mother and the place of daughter have been changing very rapidly. Earlier, mothers were lovable, ready to sacrifice everything for their children and family. They didn't know the world beyond their husband, children, household duties and familial responsibilities. But with the passage of time the stereotypical image of mother has also undergone a radical change. Now she has become aware of her own rights, desires, ambitions and needs and gives priority to economic independence, career, self-respect and self-identity. Her changed attitude affects every relationship of hers and even the sacred relationship of a mother and a daughter cannot escape from it. Such reflections are found in the writings of Shashi Deshpande. She has highlighted the changing relationships amongst the members of family in her short stories especially between mother and daughter. She deals with the middle-class Maharashtra in general and women in particular. Her stories portray a picture of women and their exploitation in a conventional patriarchal society. She depicts a realistic and authentic picture of woman in her stories as her characters are not just mothers, daughters or women, but they are human beings who are living in different circumstances, conditions and have different personalities.

One major concern in the short-stories of Shashi Deshpande is the mother-daughter relationship. Her heroines are well-educated, career-oriented, middle-class women, and proud of their independent views but have a clash with the mothers as they are traditionally submissive, oppressed and follow the norms and taboos laid down by the society. Deshpande's fictional mother is a terrible mother in the eyes of her daughter. The short story titled "The Beloved Charioteer" also describes the sad existence of two widowed women. The story is told in first person narrative through the lens of grandmother, Ajji and the mother-daughter relationship here is laid down not on mutual relationship but on hatred. The protagonist is an old widow staying with her widowed daughter, Aarti and her granddaughter, Priti. Because of the early death of her husband Madhav, Aarti is lost in her own grief and has become indifferent to the world around her, even to her own daughter. The old lady in the story finds solace and comfort in her granddaughter. She finds a reason for survival in Priti.

In order to please the child, Priti, the grandmother behaves as she wishes and desires. Their relationship is based on love, care and understanding but the mother-daughter relationship is not based on the same plain. Aarti does not understand Priti's needs and requirements as she is lost in her own grief. She has turned bitter after her widowhood and silence has overtaken her to such an extent that she feels disturbed with everything around. When asked by her mother casually whether she slept well, Aarti once harshly answers "Slept well? No. I never do that. I haven't slept well since Madhav died. I'll never sleep well again all my life" (Deshpande 182). The mother wants to share the suffering of her daughter but she cannot. The old mother feels "Nine months I carried this daughter of mine in my body. I had felt every beat of her heart, every movement of limbs within me. But . . . my pains and shocks could never penetrate to her, she was insulated against them" (Deshpande 183).

However, Ajji wants to protect Aarti from all the suffering. When Ajji lost her husband, Aarti was not told about her father's death as she (old mother) did not want to frighten her pregnant daughter. She is so concerned that even while cooking she often thinks whether her daughter (Aarti) would like it or not and whether she would eat well. She waits for the day when her daughter would be happy again. The mother knows that Aarti is not intentionally being cruel to her. But it hurts her to recall that Aarti was calling herself a widow and it is her "face that has the arid look of a desert, no smile, no happiness ever blooms there" (Deshpande 184). Aarti is cold not only towards her mother but also towards her daughter Priti. She (Priti)

is neglected, scolded for not remembering her dead father, and not caressed by Aarti. She feels neglected at times and their relationship becomes more formal with passing days. On the other hand, the grandmother loves both Priti and Aarti. She neglects Aarti's smoking, her bitterness, her negligence on the part of Priti and her behaviour only because she does not wish to hurt her daughter. The mother blames herself for her daughter's behaviour since she cannot escape the burden of parentage. She thinks that the fault lies on her if her daughter hates people who are happy. It hurts the mother to see that Aarti can find comfort from her dead father and not from her living mother.

Ajji loves her widowed daughter too much and in order to bring her out of the trance, she applies shock tactics. The incident of breaking the glass on her late husband's photograph comes like an opportunity to mother. Like most of Deshpande's female protagonists, Aarti was much closer to her father than to her mother. But now mother introduces Aarti to her father's latent traits of character. She tells her of her own marriage and her widowhood which were not less treacherous. Ajji gives outlet to her feelings of hatred for her dead husband which comes as a big shock to the daughter. It is for the first time that mother reveals her relationship with her husband, to the daughter who had great love for her father. She tells Aarti that she was always dominated by her husband. During the last twenty-five years they lived together, she looked after each and every need of his. However, she received no credit for this and was dominated by him. Through the character of Ajji Deshpande has tried to give voice to the predicament of woman. Aarti finally realizes that her mother is "a victim of gender-based oppression and patriarchal socialization". However, towards the end of this short-story the mother is happy as she makes her daughter to look at her. She does not bother whether there will be change in the attitude of Aarti towards her but she is satisfied that the locked door of communication between them is finally opened. She (the old lady) is with her (Aarti) now, giving her new strength for new battle and Aarti finally becomes the charioteer of her mother.

2. What is the themes of the story "The Beloved Charioteer"?

OR

Explain the bond of mother and daughter in the context of "The Beloved charioteer".

**Ans.** In "The Beloved Charioteer" Shashi Deshpande portrays the three generations, mother, daughter and grand-daughter. The relationship of the grandmother and grand-daughter Priti is based on love, care and understanding. But the relationship of the mother Arti and the daughter Priti is not on the same base. The mother-daughter relationship in this story develops at the end as both understand each other's needs, requirements. Both need each other's emotional support.

In the story, an old widow is living her lonely life peacefully. Her daughter Aarti, with her daughter Priti comes to live with her after the death of her husband. Old mother is living alone for seven years after her husband's death but now daughter and granddaughter come to live with her. The mother lives her life happily but is unable to make widow daughter live happily. Mother says she has used to live with this silence in the last seven years. It had never seemed terrible to her. The silence was the friendly silence, filled with the ghosts of so many voices in her life - the voices of her late younger brother, late aunt who loved her when she was a child, late two infant sons who never grew up come back to keep her company. She further says that since the arrival of her daughter, the friendly ghosts have all gone. Because of the sad demise of husband Arti is grief stricken. Mother loves Aarti so much that she makes all possible efforts to make her happy. She hopes that Aarti will talk and laugh again one day. In every minor act she thinks about the happiness of Aarti. She remembers the day when Aarti laughed loudly. That laughter frightened mother. When mother asked the reason Aarti said, "I always used to think I was very different from you. And look at us now, both of us alike. A pair of widows" (Deshpande 184). It hurts mother very much. The mother hopes that Arti will come out of grief one day, but all efforts went in vain.

Aarti spends her whole day in her father's room. Aarti loves her father more than her mother. It also hurts mother very much. Father was everything for Aarti always. One day while sitting in his room the photograph of her late father is accidentally broken by Aarti. At that time mother tells her about how was her relationship with husband. She has lived twenty-five years married life with her husband. She has taken care of all his needs, wants. She even not thought of herself, her happiness and her wants while fulfilling her husband's needs. She has avoided every that thing which he did not like or hate. Even at her two baby's deaths she wept alone and in secret. At night when he wanted her, he says, "Come here" and when he finished, he said, "You can go" (Deshpande 189). Mother was always available for him in his each and every need. But in return, she got nothing.

Aarti comes to know about her mother's real relationship with her father. In the story the old widow is living her lonely life peacefully, but is unable to make her widow daughter to live happily in the same situation. Arti, the widow daughter of the woman is lost in her own grief in such an extent that she neglects the needs of her daughter, Priti. The mother finds comfort in her grand-daughter, Priti. Priti is a ray of hope in her meaningless life. But mother can't see grief-stricken Arti. She tries at her best to bring her back to the happiness but is a failure. She hopes that Arti will talk and laugh again one day. The mother wants to share the sufferings, sorrows of her daughter but can-not. Mother is hurt by calling of Arti herself a widow. It hurts mother that Arti can find her comfort from her dead father and not from her living mother. Mother thinks that the fault is hers if her daughter hates the people who are happy. The incident of breaking the glass on her late father's photograph comes like an opportunity to mother. Arti always has loved her father than mother. But now mother introduces Arti to her father's latent traits of character. The mother tells Arti that she was always dominated by her husband. At the end mother is happy because she makes her daughter to look at her. She does not bother whether there will be change in attitude of Arti towards her. She is satisfied because the locked door of the communication is opened.

Arti comes to know that her mother is a victim of gender-based oppression and patriarchal socialization. At last, the mother is successful to bring back her daughter to this living world again. Mother feels that the daughter is with her now, giving her new strength for new battle. Arti becomes the beloved charioteer of her mother.

3. Who is referred to as the charioteer in the short story "The Beloved Charioteer" written by Shashi Deshpande?

-----  
-----  
-----  
-----  
-----  
-----  
-----  
-----

4. Give an account of mother's nature and behaviour depicted in "The Beloved Charioteer".

-----  
-----  
-----  
-----  
-----  
-----  
-----

5. Write an essay on Shashi Deshpande's delineation of women characters in the story "The Beloved Charioteer"?

-----  
-----  
-----  
-----  
-----  
-----  
-----

6. Comment on the title of the short story "The Beloved Charioteer".

-----  
-----  
-----  
-----  
-----  
-----  
-----

**10.10 Suggested Readings:**

1. Deshpande, Shashi. "The Beloved Charioteer". *The Inner Courtyard (Stories by Indian Women)*, edited by Lakshmi Holmstrom. Rupa & Company, 2002.
2. Mother and daughter relationship in "My Beloved Charioteer" <http://www.onlinejournal.in/IJIRV2I12/326.pdf>
3. Symbolism in "My Beloved Charioteer." <https://ijellh.com/OJS/index.php/OJS/article/view/7915>

## **B.A./B.COM-II : GENERAL ENGLISH**

---

**COURSE CODE : AA-201**  
**SEMESTER-II**

**LESSON NO. 11**  
**UNIT - IV**

---

### **I. PARAGRAPH WRITING**

- 10.1 Objectives
- 10.2 What is a Paragraph
- 10.3 Essential Elements in a Paragraph
- 10.4 How to write a Paragraph
- 10.5 Suggestions for writing a Good Paragraph
- 10.6 Specimen Paragraphs
- 10.7 Self-Assessment Exercises
- 10.8 Model Paragraphs
- 10.9 Let Us Sum Up
- 10.10 Examination Oriented Questions

#### **10.1 OBJECTIVES**

Dear learners, our objective in this lesson is to acquaint you with the art of paragraph writing. Paragraph writing is short composition. It is devoted to one thought/idea/aspect. The length of the paragraph has to be appropriate. From the examination point of view, you are required to write a paragraph of 150 words

on any one of the four given topics. After reading this lesson and going through the exercises you shall develop the skills to write a good paragraph.

## **10.2 WHAT IS A PARAGRAPH?**

A paragraph consists of a series of sentences written on a particular subject. Sentences should deal with one topic and the easiest way to ensure this coherence is to keep on to one single subject. Usually a topic sentence in the beginning of a paragraph sets the tone of the whole paragraph. All the sentences are so grouped that they serve to develop the main theme. They are either explanatory or illustrative and radiate from the topic sentence.

## **10.3 ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS IN A PARAGRAPH**

The paragraph should be read as an organic whole and not a group of loosely-stringed or haphazard sentence. The paragraph must have the virtues of unity, logical development and clarity. Logical sequence is very important in the amplification of an idea. Every sentence should logically grow out of the preceding one and there should be no abruptness or jolt anywhere in the paragraph. Thus, continuity, logical sequence and clarity may be termed as essential qualities of a good paragraph.

## **10.4 HOW TO WRITE A PARAGRAPH**

The method, by which a topic may be developed, varies according to the nature of the topic and its purpose. The following are the common devices for developing sentences into a paragraph:

- (i) by giving reason;
- (ii) development by specific examples;
- (iii) discussion of the validity of the assumption underlying the given statement;
- (iv) development of the theme by comparison and by contrast or analogies;
- (v) discussion of the implications or the consequences;
- (vi) presenting cause and effect;

- (vii) defining the terms and further explanation; and
- (viii) combination of any two or more of the methods stated above.

It should be noted that no statement will admit of the use of a single method. It may require us to adopt one or more or a combination of some of them. It also depends upon the nature of the given statement. For the sake of study and simplification, we will discuss each of them separately.

- (i) **Giving reasons:** This method involves rational progression towards a conclusion based on the presentation of adequate reasons. It implies giving reasons for belief. If this method is employed, it is better to avoid mixing up illustrations or definitions with it. The reasons must not be obscure. They must be cumulative and cogent.
- (ii) **Development by Specific Examples and Illustrations:** This method is serviceable whether we proceed from the general to the particular or from particular to the general. The method “general to particular” is useful when the basic meaning of the topic-statement is very clear and does not require evidence.
- (iii) **Discussing the Assumption Underlying the Given Statement:** Statements are generally based on certain assumptions which may or may not be valid from our point of view. Instead of demolishing or supporting the ideas expressed in the statement, sometimes it is advisable to discuss the assumption on which the statement is based.
- (iv) **Development by Comparison, Contrast or Analogies :** A very natural method of absorbing new information is to learn the unfamiliar in terms of familiar or the new terms for the old or the “unknown” in terms of the “known.” Comparisons or contrast or analogies are some of the devices in the process of actualizing the “unknown” through the “known.”
- (v) **Discussing the Implementation or Consequences:** A given topical statement is accepted as it stands and we can discuss its implications. The consequences of the substance of the statement are not questioned.

- (vi) **Presenting the Cause and Effect:** A topic may be developed by the method of presenting cause and effect. A paragraph may show (a) the causes of the phenomenon or conditions stated in the given statement; or (b) it may show its effects; or (c) relate the cause and effect.
- (vii) **Definition of the Terms and Explanations:** Sometimes one or more of the terms used in the statement of the topic may need to be defined and elaborated. For example, in the statement “Where is the wisdom we have lost in the knowledge? Where is the knowledge we lost in information?” It appears essential to define or explain the three terms “Wisdom, knowledge and information” and establish the difference. Only after that can we proceed to explain their relationship, either by abstract analysis or by comparison or by giving illustrations. But in the interest of the unity of paragraph, it will be inadvisable to employ several methods in the same paragraph. The process of defining sometimes includes negative definition, i.e., telling what a thing is not as well as what it is.
- (viii) **Combination of Methods:** All statements cannot be developed by adopting a single method. But they can be more suitably treated by a combination of methods enumerated above. We must be consciously aware of the various patterns, plus their logical combination and then practise writing the paragraph until the sub-conscious mind takes it over.

## 10.5 SUGGESTIONS FOR WRITING A GOOD PARAGRAPH

Just stop here. Kindly go through these suggestions before writing a paragraph:

- (1) Unity is the key note of a paragraph. It must deal with one topic or thought and that topic or thought should be developed logically and clearly. Every sentence in a paragraph contributes to its beauty and power. This beauty lies in the proper selection of words, in proper arrangements of your syntax and in neat phrasing. And as a paragraph deals with one topic or subject, there should be no digression whatsoever, and the candidate must concentrate on explaining and elucidating the idea as best as possible.

- (2) Correct interpretation and full understanding of the given idea or proverb is the first requisite of paragraph writing. The candidate must make sure that he has understood the given words fully before he sets out to write the paragraph. In this connection, a candidate must bear in mind that some ideas or proverbs can be taken literally whereas others need a metaphorical interpretation. Any confusion between these two is bound to lead to a ridiculous paragraph. Do remember there is no golden rule for finding out where a particular sentence needs literal interpretation or metaphorical and what interpretation a student puts on, it would depend entirely on his intelligence and common sense.
- (3) Our advice to the candidates is to use simple but forceful language. Some candidates think that they can impress an examiner by writing high-sounding words and very long and involved sentences. We may add for your information that such long sentences often ring hollow unless what the writer says is really pithy and intelligent. Simple Language has a force and writer says is really pithy and intelligent. Simple language has a force and charm of its own, and the highest and the noblest thoughts are often expressed in simple words. Make your expression simple and stick to the main topic.
- (4) One mistake that candidates often commit is that they stuff their paragraph with quotations indiscriminately as if by this device, they shall be able to get more marks. After all, what is the sense in introducing about hundred words of a quotation in a paragraph of 200 words? If you have some striking quotation in mind, and if it is very relevant to the topic you are dealing with, include it by all means. But indiscriminate use of quotations or piling up quotations upon quotations is liable to be penalised. Very good paragraph can be written often without giving even a single quotation. If you have developed and elucidated the given idea well, then your paragraph does not need the authority of some greater thinker or writer.

- (5) The first sentence should always be framed and worded with great care as it is the key sentence of the paragraph you are writing.
- (6) The concluding sentence should be equally carefully worded, for it constitutes the essence of all that you have written in the paragraph. Here is your last opportunity to write pithily over the idea or statement given for paragraph writing.
- (7) After having finished the paragraph, check up the number of words and note it at the end of the Para. Also check up your grammar and punctuation. This is very important.

## **10.6 SPECIMEN PARAGRAPHS**

### **One is as old as one feels**

It is man's attitude to life and his reactions to the world around that make him young or old. Age does not depend on the number of years he has lived. A young man may feel tired of life and disgusted with the world, Feeling disinterested in the affairs of the world or floored by its complexity, he may be really old in his thought and attitude inspite of his youth. On the other hand, an old man whose physical powers are unimpaired and who has keen interest in the life around him and the world in general, is really young. Shakespeare makes Henry IV at the age of thirty four years open speech with "So shaken as we are so man with care." Some may not accept this saying as an absolute truth but there is a great deal of substance in this.

### **A bad workman quarrels with his tools**

It is a general tendency with people, who do not execute their work properly, to attribute their failure to extraneous causes while the real reason may be their own idleness and indifference. They are the bad workmen who complain of their tools and attribute their failure to them, e.g., an unskilled carpenter finding fault with his chisels, etc. Our research students at times complain of lack of up to date equipment in their laboratories. The good workman makes excellent use

of the available tools while the bad workman shifts the blame on others. It is the man and his diligence that matters most, not the favourable or unfavourable circumstances in which he is placed.

### **No Pain, No Gains**

There is no success or reward for persons who do not work or take pains. Nothing worthy of achievement is won without infinite labour patiently put in. Thomas Alva Edison was able to amaze the world with his wonderful inventions because of his capacity to take pains, he believed in and acted up to his idea, the genius was 99% perspiration and 1% inspiration. Same is true of any one of the great scientists, Raman or Einstein. It took Gandhi ji years of patient works to lift the Indian masses out of the dust to consciousness of their dignity and freedom. It is only the labourer who is worth of hire. There is great deal of truth in the poet's lines which say that great men who attained and kept the highest were toiling hard in the night while their companions slept.

### **Population Explosion**

Population explosion poses a great threat to mankind today. A century back, the population of the world was far less than it is today. It was estimated to be one hundred crores at that time. It has crossed the 5000 million mark today. In developing countries, the population growth rate is higher than in the developed countries. Sharp population growth is called population explosion. The high rate of population growth is due to two reasons. These two reasons are very low death rate and high birth rate. The low death rate is due to the great progress in the medical field. One big reason behind the population growth is the lack of interest on the part of society to check population increase. The people of India should be made aware of the fact that when they have small families, they can enjoy greater comforts of life.

### **Hostel Life**

Hostel Life has charms and benefits of its own. It develops individuality in a student. A student living in a hostel has a foretaste of independent living.

Hostel life teaches a student virtue of self-caring. One learns to live within one's means. A student living in a hostel can plan his studies in voluntary way. One has all the time at one's disposal. In hostel, one can find some time for recreation also. But a student has to guard his interests very carefully in a hostel. He should keep away from bad company. A student has to live a disciplined life in a hostel. In some of the hostels, the students are required to get up at a particular time. They have fixed timings for meals. All this punctuality pays one in the long run. The foundations of a successful career are thus laid in good hostels. One really enjoys living in a good hostel.

### **The value of Travelling**

Man is always eager to see more places and to know more things. Travelling satisfies that urge of man to some extent. In this connection, Francis Bacon once wrote: "Travel is a part of education in the younger sort and part of experience in older." No elaborate literary description of a place or people can be a substitute to a personal visit to a particular place. One may choose to remain contented in one's place or one may choose to travel to other places. In the former case, one becomes self-centered. One is likely to develop narrow thinking. In the latter case, one develops a wider view of life. Thus one can say that value of travelling is great. People of one region must find time to travel to other regions occasionally. Travelling satisfies the spirit of adventure in a person. There lies the thrill of having conquered the distance. Besides being a source of instruction and education, travelling provides entertainment.

### **The Problem of Rural Upliftment**

About 80% of Indian people live in villages. India is predominantly a rural country. It is, therefore, necessary that proportionate extent of attention and funds should be spent on rural upliftment. At present, there is a vast difference between the life style of rural and urban dwellers. In spite of their being in majority, most of them are having lack of facilities in the fields of education, medicine etc. The government is fully aware of the necessity of improving the living conditions of the rural people.

## **Films in India**

It is generally said that Indian films copy foreign films. By and large, it seems to be true. But there have been purely Indian films too. India has produced great directors who showed complete originality in their films. Films constitute an art as well as an industry. Film-making is the most modern of fine arts. It links itself with other arts like music and dance. But it has its separate artistic individuality. There is a serious concern in Indian society over the display of violence and vulgarity in many Indian films. This bad trend has to be checked at all costs. The government is fully seized on the matter. From the technical point of view, Indian film Industry is far behind its counterparts in developed countries. Lack of financial resources is one of the big hurdles in this connection. Reforms in Indian film industry must be undertaken on year to year basis. Our screened stories are much obsessed with sex and love problems. This tendency has to be stopped. Films produced in India can capture world-wide market provide serious efforts are made to improve them from all angles.

## **Life in a crowded city**

Life in a big city has many advantages. In a big city, there is every kind of facility for education. Good and well-equipped educational institutions are set up in a big city. A lot of medical facilities are also available there. Life in a big city is not dull and drab because there are countless means of recreation there. Social function like exhibitions, conferences, seminars, sport meets etc., are held there occasionally. There are many avenues of employment in a big city. Life in a big city has some disadvantages too. The famous English Poet Cowper once remarked: "God made the country and man made the town." Life in a big city is artificial to some extent. Man is away from nature in a big city. Life in a big city faces the threat of environmental pollution. The smoke coming out of chimneys pollutes the natural purity of environment day and night.

## **Use of Radio**

Radio is very useful for man. It is one of the most powerful means of information and entertainment. Radio was invented by Marconi in 1887. A man

after the day's hard work may switch on his radio set and listen to sweet music. While listening to a news bulletin, he is bound to feel as if distant countries are his immediate neighbours. The educative value of Radio is also very great. As a powerful instrument of information, it can be of great practical value. Educational programmes are broadcast for the benefit of the student community. Radio is nowadays used for another purpose also. It is being used for advertising commercial products. During election days, radio is used as a means of propaganda by party leaders. Radio transmissions are useful in some other ways too. One can get information about the arrival and departure timings of different trains. One can get information about weather too.

### **Our Mountains and Rivers**

India is a land of mountains and rivers. There exists a net of rivers spreading from North to South and from East to West. Ganga, Yamuna, Godavari, Ravi, Jhelum and Brahmaputra are the main rivers of India. The well-known mountains of India are the Himalayas, the Satpura, the Vindhya, and the Western and the Eastern Ghats. The Ganga originates from the place "Gangotri" in the Himalayas and mingles with the sea-water at Calcutta after covering a distance of thousands of kilometres. Our rivers are useful in many ways. They provide us clean water to drink and to wash. They irrigate our agricultural land. Our rivers are connected with our lives in many ways. On important days, lakhs of people flock on the river-banks for a holy dip. Our mountains provide many kinds of fruit trees. There are many health resorts situated on the mountains. Wildlife is a typical attraction of our mountains. In brief, our mountains and rivers are a source of health and wealth.

### **Poverty in India**

A big chunk of Indian population lives below the poverty line. Poverty in India has been defined as that situation in which a person is unable to earn income sufficient to buy things of his need. The Planning Commission has defined the poverty line on the basis of recommended nutritional requirement of 2,435 calories per person per day for rural areas. Poverty, however, is not equally distributed throughout the country. In Bihar, 47.87 percent of population lives below the poverty line. In Punjab, 13.20 percent of the total population live

below the poverty line. In rural areas, the major group of the poor consists of landless labourers. In many big cities, the migrant workers are prominently among the poor. The proportion of people below the poverty line in India is not a stable factor. It varies a lot. The states where the proportion of the total population below the poverty line is more than the national average of 36.90% are Assam, Madhya Pradesh, Meghalaya, Orissa, Tamil Nadu, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal.

### **Career for Women**

There are many jobs which women can join nowadays. A teacher's job is best suited to a woman. Women are academically and socially as good today as men. In some cases, women excel men. In university examination results, one finds that sometimes women have a clean sweep. In the primary stage of education, women can prove themselves the best teachers by virtue of their gift of sympathy, love and sweet manner of talking. They can understand better the psychology of a child. Yet another career for women is that of doctor or a nurse. There is an element of truth in the saying. "A woman's voice is a cure and her touch a balm." Women are also doing an excellent job as receptionists and air-hostesses; there are other fields too in which women are making their mark. There are female stenographers, typists, radio and television artists, saleswomen and telephone operators. Women are now being recruited even in military as well as in police force.

### **10.7 SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISES**

Expand the following outlines into Paragraphs:

(a) **Patriotism is not enough.** Patriotism is a very desirable and very essential quality ----- Excessive patriotism may lead to a narrow nationalistic outlook —— Today's world is a world of internationalism —— Patriotism must, therefore, be tempered with tolerance and respect for other nations.

(b) **Slave is he who cannot speak his thoughts.**

Slavery in the old sense—— sale and purchase of human beings and denial of the right of self-rule does not exist in the modern world——.

But the loss of right of self-expression is also a kind of slavery—— Totalitarian regimes like Nazi Germany or Fascist Italy did not allow freedom of speech—— freedom of speech and thinking is essential for mankind.

(c) **Where there is a will there is a way.**

Man is the architect of his own destiny—— Achievements do not come our way easily —— One must not be frightened by difficulties. One can overcome hardships not only through inborn abilities but through the determination to put these abilities to use.

(d) **Peace hath her victories no less renowned than war:**

(i) The victories won in war bring glory to the nations. But the victories registered in peaceful times are really more glorious.

(ii) War is an instrument of destruction. It brings bloodshed, destruction, suffering and vandalism in its train. On the other hand, all fine arts and science flourish and mature in peace times. The Greek art and philosophy, the Buddhist sculpture and literature and the Elizabethan drama and poetry are typical examples. Moreover, scientific discoveries in times of war are generally the discoveries of mere lethal agents of death, while those of peace times improve condition of living.

(iii) During war, people are heavily taxed as money is required for military equipment. In the Second World War, the British had to lead a miserable life due to the increased burden of taxes. In peace time, people do not have to walk on a financial tight rope. It is, therefore, quite true that peace hath her victories no less renowned than war.

(e) **Brevity is the Soul of Wit:**

(i) Brevity is the real touchstone of one's intelligence.

- (ii) A witty person can say whatever he wants to in a few words. His utterances and writings are marked with clarity and precision. An unintelligent person, on the other hand, is always repetitive and rambling in his expression.
- (iii) If, therefore, we are to judge a man's wit we should look to the quality of his expression. If it is terse, the man is witty; otherwise he is not to be regarded as such.

**(f) To Travel Hopefully is Better than to Arrive:**

- (i) It is better to travel with hope than to attain a goal and rest on oars. Distance lends charm. The moment people reach their destination, the charm fades away.
- (ii) This can be very well illustrated by the example of a railway passenger. In the course of journey, he eagerly waits for his station but once he catches a glimpse of it from his window all his eagerness and enthusiasm leave him.
- (iii) Indeed, a man who has fulfilled his aim has reached a dead end.
- (iv) He is left without purpose and direction. To travel, therefore is better than to arrive, provided there is hope in travel.

**10.8 MODEL PARAGRAPHS**

**1) How are you Getting on with your Neighbours?**

Good relationship depends on mutual adjustment.

I am a South Indian but I have no difficulty in getting along with my neighbours, a Punjabi and a Bengali family. We depend on each other in times of difficulty, and we happily share each other's joys. There are occasional misunderstandings giving rise to mixed feelings, which we quickly overcome. It is irritating to listen to the blaring noise of the radio coming from next door while I am trying to concentrate on my books. But in the morning, when I am late, my neighbour offers me a lift on his scooter, so I am in time for examination.

## **2) Waiting for a bus:**

Delhi's transport system is quite inadequate. Nevertheless, waiting at the bus stop is not always sheer boredom. Watching people can be fun. Some are in desperate hurry. Others are prepared for the worst that is to wait till God knows how long. They settle down on the ground in a resigned manner, causing obstruction for others to move freely. On the other hand, there are students and young men, who are thrilled, so it seems, to board the running bus. Some hesitate too long and the bus goes off before they can decide. In the midst of all these, the right bus for me arrived and alas. I have missed it. I was too busy, watching others.

## **3) The Man who has impressed me most:**

Mr. X, a junior colleague of my father, came to our house for the first a few years back. He had come in connection with the work of an office club, to which both he and my father belonged. He was introduced to us and he stayed with us for some time. As a man of personality, he impressed me from the very beginning. Over the years, I have come to know him better, and have liked him better for his attitude towards life. He is quiet but firm in his ways. A kindly man, he is always prepared to take into consideration the other man's point of view. Polite and courteous, he knows well how to rebuff the snobbery of some self-important men. His wit and his sense of humour makes him a delightful company, and indeed I consider it a privilege to be counted among his friends.

## **4. Friends**

That man is unfortunate who has no friends. But he is even more unfortunate who believes he has friends but actually has none. A false friend is worse than a foe. True friends multiply joys and divide griefs: "They are not made. They are recognised." "They are like instruments of music. They grow better by use and time." When a person is in luck he can make as many friends as he likes. The world is ever prepared to share the moments of your happiness with you. When the weather is fair and your life is smooth and there is no storm to shake and invade the clam of your life, you may look round. You will find yourself surrounded by a large number

of apparently dependable-looking friends. But your life may get a turn for the worse and you find yourself surrounded by only dark clouds of despair. The faces that beamed at you from all sides will lose countenance and disappear as they were never there. Good fortune makes friends and adversity tries them. There is no dearth of fair weather friends. They come and go with the season. There are other who become friends under some compelling need. They become your friends not out of any feeling for you. They become your friends at a particular period in life, they happen to need you. Friendship for them is a sort of politics in their own circle. Such people are clever rather too clever to be real friends. And the moment the need for friendship is no more, they are not your friends. But there is another need born from the heart of man which finds satisfaction in friendship. The need for friendship is inborn and is constant in the heart of man. It is like one nature finding fulfilment in another. Out of the union of these natures true friends find one another. Adversity cannot sever them away. And good fortune cannot make them more friendly. Such friends are rare indeed but they are the pride of humanity. We can say of such friends: the more the merrier. A man who can claim to have good friends is a happy man. He is a favourite of God and is in possession of God's greatest gift.

## **5 Our National Flag**

Our National Flag consists of three colours, saffron, white and green. It was under the banner of this flag that Mahatma Gandhi led us to freedom from the slavery of the British rule. The only difference between the national flag and common flag is the wheel in the centre in place of the "Charkha." At the top is the saffron colour which represents courage and sacrifice. In the middle, is the white colour which is a symbol of truth and peace. These are the very ideals for which India has always stood. The bottom patch is of green colour. It stands for prosperity and faith. In the centre of the white patch is a reproduction of the wheel on Asoka's pillar at Sarnath. It has twenty four spokes and is an emblem for onwards march and progress towards perfection. The flag is made of pure khadi cloth which symbolizes our aim of self-sufficiency by depending upon Indian

made goods. Thus, sacrifice and courage, truth and peace, progress and prosperity, march to perfection-are all shown by our flag which stands for national pride and honour. It reminds us of the sacrifices made by thousand of Indians in the freedom struggle. It is our most sacred duty to protect the honour and prestige for which the national flag stands at all costs.

#### **6) The Scene at a polling station**

The scene at a polling station is very captivating. A polling station is generally set up at a central place. It is within the walking distance of all the voters of the area. One can see men and women going enthusiastically towards the polling station. Different political parties are allowed to set up their stalls to guide the voters. These stalls are at a specific distance from the polling station. The voters can collect their identity slips from here. The police personnel are on full alert at the polling station. There are separate rows of men and women outside the polling station. They are seen waiting eagerly for their turn to cast the vote. They are allowed to go inside the polling station in two's or three's, according to the space available inside the polling station. The inspection teams of higher authorities can be seen visiting the polling station throughout the day. The polling is generally held from 7 A.M. to 5 P.M.

#### **7) Life in a Village**

Indian civilization is basically a rural one. In other words, India is a land of villages. More than 80% of our people live in villages. Life in a village is in marked contrast to that in a city or a town. Most of the houses in a village are made of mud. The village life is simple in all respects. The people have a simple mode of living. They lead a self-sufficient life. They produce their own food, grains and vegetables. They have not to buy much from the market. They keep cattle. These yield sufficient milk for their use. Most of the villages are still without electricity and water taps. But government is doing its best to provide these facilities. Perfect silence prevails in the village after sunset. One can occasionally hear the sound of the bells tied to the necks of the cattle. The villagers generally drink the water of wells. They wash their clothes in ponds. Life in a village is one of hard labour. On the whole, it has a charm of its own.

## **8 My First Day in the College**

My First day in the college was full of enthusiasm for me. I met new teachers and made new friends. I was highly impressed by the very look of the college campus. On the first day, we were given our roll numbers and time-table. Each arts student has to attend four classes daily. Science students have practicals too. Some esteemed professors were seen guiding the new entrants to the college. Most of the teachers gave introductory lectures on the first day. The principal of the college addressed all the B.A/B.Sc/ B.Com.-Part I students in the college hall. He advised them to work hard from the very first day in the college. I visited the reading room of the college library. I saw the college canteen also. My first day in the college was really full of busy schedule. I came to know that a number of extra curricular activities are also held in the college. Games/sports activities form an integral part of college life. I saw some students playing volley ball. I saw the indoor games, hall also. My first day in the college has left an indelible impression on my mind.

## **9) Republic Day Celebration**

Our Republic Day falls on 26th of January every year. We celebrate it with great national love and enthusiasm. It is a red-letter day for the Indian masses. The most impressive celebration of this day takes place in Delhi. The Republic Day parade is the special feature of the programme. The President, the Prime Minister, the Cabinet ministers, the members of Parliament are all there to witness the parade. Usually, a foreign dignitary is the chief guest on the occasion. Republic Day Celebrations are organised in State capitals also. The President of India takes the salute in the Republic Day parade in Delhi. The Governors or the Chief Ministers take the salute in the State level celebrations of the Republic day. The armed forces, the paramilitary forces, the police personnel, the NCC cadets etc. take part in the parade. The Republic Day Celebrations include evening get-togethers too. National flag is hoisted atop all important Government buildings. The nation looks forward to the Republic Day Celebrations eagerly every year.

#### **(10) A Historical Place**

Taj Mahal at Agra is an important place. It was built by the Mughal emperor Shah Jahan in the memory of his beloved wife, Mumtaz Mahal. The main building of this historical building is located on a platform which is octagonal in shape. It has four gates on four sides. The gates are all arched. There are latticed walls. One has to walk between spacious lawns to reach the big building. The tombs of Mumtaz and Shah Jahan lie in the centre of the main hall. They are made of white marble. Verses from the holy Quran are written on the marble walls of the tomb. There are four beautiful marble minarets at the four corners of the platform. The river Yamuna flows modestly at the back. The Taj Mahal is believed to have been built between 1631 and 1653. It is said that its construction took 22 years. Nearly 20,000 men worked for the construction of the Taj Mahal.

#### **(11) Uses of Forests**

There are many uses of forests. Wood is the most important item of forest produce. All forest products other than wood are referred to as 'Minor Products.' The most important and plentiful minor forest product is bamboo. Bamboo has a number of varieties. These varieties of bamboo vary from the giant bamboo of Assam forests to the small bamboo varieties of the dry Deccan forests. Grasses form a universal feature of Indian forests. Apart from their use as fodder, the grasses have other commercial uses also. The 'Sabai' grass is used for making paper or rope. Leaves of forest plants also serve many purposes. One of the most important forest leaves is Kendu leaf. It is used to make wrappers for 'beedis.' Gums extracted from the forest trees have numerous uses. The most important gum yielding trees are Babul, Kulu, Dhaora, Salat and Bijal. Resins differ from gums. Resins are soluble in alcohols. 'Katha' taken from forest is used in medicines meant for digestive troubles. Bee wax and honey are two other important forest products.

#### **(12) Students and Politics**

Gandhi once advised the students to keep away from politics. He said that the moment a student indulges in politics; he ceases to be a student. The main aim

of a student should be to study and not to get involved in politics. But it is disheartening to note that there has been an increase in students participation in political activities in the college/university campus. It is partly due to the allurements given by politicians. There is, of course, no harm if the students keep themselves in touch with the political developments mentally. But active participation is to be avoided at all costs. Politics is a subtle game. It is meant for shrewd persons. The participation of students in politics at a tender age is totally unjustified. They are unable to understand the implications of political moves. Once they are caught in the web of politics, their career is ruined. Some people are, however, of the opinion that participation of students in politics may have some justification under compelling circumstances. For example, students made a significant contribution to our struggle before 1947. But there is absolutely no justification for students to take part in politics under normal circumstances.

### **(13) Value of Games**

There are many uses of games. Games give more than momentary pleasure. Games train one's body and mind. Games shape one's personality. Games can form an outlook which is essential for a successful life. Games teach team spirit. Games teach certain morals. Games teach us that we should accept success as well as defeat with a cool mind. We should not lose our heart in the moment of Victory. Similarly, we should not lose our heart in the moment of failure. "A sound mind in a sound body", is an old saying. Its importance is as fresh as it was a hundred years ago. In the past, games were not given much attention in educational institutions. They were called extra- curricular activities. The educationists today have realised their utility. Hence games are today included in the category of co-curricular activities. Games encourage the virtues of large-heartedness, generosity and toleration. They inculcate the spirit of 'give and take' among the players. Sports and games played at the international level strengthen the bounds of universal brotherhood.

### **(14) My favourite hobby**

A hobby may be defined as 'One's favourite recreation.' It is a pursuit followed for pleasure. My hobby is reading. Being a student, I have found reading

to be the best hobby for me. I love reading books, magazines, newspapers etc. A famous English prose writer wrote that studies serve for delight, for ornament and for ability. When a person has no company, books give delight. I buy a new book whenever I can afford. I spend as much time as I can in reading periodicals. I often go to the college library reading room during vacant periods. I do not believe in wasting time in gossiping during vacant periods. I love to read fiction. I read standard works of fiction. I have recently completed reading Charles Dicken's novel "A Tale of Two Cities." Among the Indian writers, I appreciate the works of Rabindra Nath Tagore most of all. Among the English poets, I like Keats'. Shakespeare is my most favourite playwright. Reading as a hobby has benefited me to a very great extent.

#### **(15) National Integration**

National integration is the need of the hour. The future of our country is very much linked with our success on national integration front. India is a vast country. It has at present more than 86 crore people. There are many diversities among them. Our motto is "Unity in diversity." Indian civilisation has survived till today only due to the spirit of unity among its masses. Indians are one in spite of their differences of caste, creed and colour. In spite of the occasional set-backs to our unity, we have been marching ahead unitedly. Yet much remains to be done. We should overhaul our education system. Our text books should contain poems and prose-pieces on national integration. We must inculcate the feelings of national unity among our young learners. Young minds should be kept away from prejudices, false prestige and undesirable practices that bring diversive forces into play. It must be understood clearly that national integration is not merely an idea. It is an important part of the process of development of the of life. We must learn to promote harmony in all walks of life. National integration should be our greatest aim.

#### **16) Electricity and Its Uses**

The discovery of electricity has revolutionised the world. It is one of the most useful discoveries made by man. Electricity helps human beings in almost every sphere of life. The modern age has been correctly described as the age of electricity.

Electric machines and gadgets are within the reach of the common man today. The electric light, the train, the electric telegraph, the electric bell, the electric stove etc., are the blessings of electricity. Electricity has a wide application in medical field. It is used in X-ray machines and in the field of surgery. Computers, television, radio are all the gifts of electricity. Electric is used in mills and factories. Cooking of food as well as washing of clothes is done by electricity. Electricity heaters keep our houses warm in winter. Electric fans, coolers and air-condition devices keep our houses cool in summer. Electricity has made this globe all the more worth living. Man is today so much dependent on electricity that life without electricity is simply unthinkable. Electricity has reduced man's physical labour in industrial sector. One machine can do the work of many workers. It will not be wrong to say that electricity has conquered earth and space to a great extent.

#### **(17) Leisure-Its Uses And Abuses**

Leisure may be defined as free time that one gets after doing one's daily work. One should know how to spend one's leisure usefully. G.B Shaw had pointed out that leisure should be utilized wisely. Machines have helped the workers to have a lot of leisure. They can use this time for the general upliftment of society. The value of leisure should be taught to the children early in life. Children should be encouraged to play and have good hobbies during leisure hours. Leisure time is very essential for the modern man who is crushed under the burden of life. There are many activities which can be undertaken during leisure hours. Reading magazines and newspapers, listening to music, playing indoor games etc., are some of these activities. However, there are many people who do not appreciate the value of leisure. Such people waste their spare time in useless activities. One can understand the value of leisure if one is otherwise leading a meaningful life. Leisure breaks the monotony of daily life. It rejuvenates one's energy. It is aptly said that all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy. Undoubtedly, leisure has its uses and abuses. Many ignorant people think that leisure is only meant for playing cards or drinking wine. This is really bad. Leisure should be used to enrich one's life. It is meant for relaxation and good enjoyment.

### **(18) My Idea of Happy Life**

Every human being has his or her own view of life. In other words, the definition of a happy life varies from person to person. My idea of happy life is concerned with hard work. A sincere worker mostly leads a happy life. One should set a goal for oneself and start working for it. I fully agree with R.L. Stevenson's view that an aspiration is a joy for ever. The key to success lies in continuous struggle. Happiness is a state of mind and not a solid possession. It is a product of imagination. It is to be enjoyed through senses. It can be felt and not seen. I also think that peace of mind adds immensely to one's happiness. Doing one's duty sincerely also gives happiness. We should do our duty without thinking much about the result. Happiness is not the monopoly of the rich alone. It is also not the monopoly of the saints. Happiness can be had by a common man by walking on the correct road of life. Happiness is all around us. We should have wisdom to get it. My idea of happy life is not merely theoretical. It is practical.

### **(19) Evils of Dowry system**

Dowry system is one of the most harmful social practices. This fact is known to everybody, but very few make an attempt to stop this evil practice. The existence of such evils as the dowry system has weakened our democratic system. It has commercialized the sacred institution of marriage and belittled the prospects of happy marriage. Dowry means cash or the goods given by the parents of a girl in her marriage. In the past, the father of a girl used to give dowry to his capacity. But today he is forced, in many cases, to give dowry even beyond his means. If the father is unable to pay, the in-laws make the girl's life miserable. She is physically and mentally tortured. Many girls are forced to take their lives under such circumstance. In some cases, a girl is burnt by her in-laws. The laws concerning dowry should be made more strict. The rich people escape punishment in many cases. One effective solution lies in creating public awareness against dowry system. Women organisation should come forward to fight the evil of dowry system. Only relentless efforts on all fronts by all agencies-government, public and individuals, etc. might bring about a change in the attitude towards this evil. Sensible and self-

respecting young men should come forward to reject the practice and refuse to sell themselves.

#### **(20) The Importance of Discipline**

Discipline is very essential in life. The strength of a nation lies in discipline. Discipline is the very basis of the universe. Every object and movement in nature is governed by certain laws to maintain perfect harmony and stability. The importance of discipline in educational institutions is well-known. It is a matter of sadness to note that discipline in schools and colleges is declining. Students of today are not as respectful as those of the past. They misbehave in the classroom. They take part in strikes engineered by vested interests. This is certainly an alarming situation. The importance of discipline in the social and political life of a nation is also very great. We have got to work hard in that direction. We have, no doubt, made much progress in the field of science and technology. But, as people, we have yet to shake off our backwardness. In the political field also, we need discipline. Discipline has a great value even in domestic life. In brief, discipline is important for personal growth as well as for national prosperity.

#### **(21) Environmental Pollution**

There was a time when the environmental pollution was considered to be a threat to the industrialised world. Now it is a matter of concern for the whole world. Environmental pollution has increased manifold. All kinds of pollution threaten human existence. Seventy percent of available water is polluted. About 35% of India's total land area is subjected to serious environmental degradation. The first Act passed by the Government of India in this connection concerned water pollution. It was passed in 1974. The second Act passed in this connection was the one regarding Air pollution. It was passed in 1980. Finally, Department of Environment was formed in 1980. In this way, one can assert that India has shown much awareness about this problem. Air pollution is getting worse day by day in the whole of the universe. Ozone depletion and the Green House effect are becoming matters of grave concern. The very existence of mankind is threatened. The people all over the world are worried about the alarming proportions of the problem.

## **(22) A Cricket Match**

I am a cricket player. I have great fascination for this game. My school has a good cricket team. I am one of its players. We played a cricket match last week against the cricket team called 'The City Stars'. Our captain, Ram Prakash, lost the toss. The rival captain, Johnny, decided to bat. I am an all round player. To everyone's surprise, I was given the ball. My captain knew my competence fully well. He knew that I could swing the ball both ways. He also knew that I could play very effectively over a drying pitch. The rain had made the pitch wet the previous night. I got a wicket in my very first over. In about forty minutes, 'The City Stars' were 25 for 3. Then came a partnership between the rival skipper Mohan and their star batsman, Virendra. They pushed the score to 90. After lunch, I was given the ball once again. I took four wickets. 'The City Stars' were all out for 100. Then came our turn. The first four overs saw us lose four wickets. Our position became worse when we lost three more wickets by the time we reached 30 for 7. The trend continued like that and we lost.

## **(23) Science in Everyday Life**

Science is a great blessing. Science has brought innumerable changes in the lifestyle of man. The means of communication have improved to a very great degree. One can have one's tea in one part of the world and lunch in another. The transport system even within a country or a town has undergone a tremendous change. The wonders of modern means of communication have enabled man to speak from space to the people on the earth. Science has transformed our daily life. Those days are no more when only the rich could afford luxuries. Science has brought them within the reach of other sections of society also. Science has brought T.V., radio and other forms of entertainment within the reach of common man. Science has made life easier for a housewife. Science has given her the kerosene stove, the gas stove, the electrical appliances etc. A housewife can now do her household work more easily and quickly. Washing machines have made the washing of clothes very easy. Electricity is the greatest blessing of science. Science has revolutionised engineering and medical sectors also.

#### **(24) A Day Before The Examination**

A day before the examination, students take stock of their entire preparation. This day brings different kinds of moods for different students. Top-rankings students are full of confidence. An average student is tossed between hope and despair. The less intelligent ones reconcile themselves to their fate. But there are a few factors common to all the students. Every Student faces some kind of an uncertainty a day before the examination. The prepared questions may or may not be in the next day's question paper. The effect of physical exertion due to studies can be seen on all faces. The day before the examination is really a crucial day. Sometimes a few new questions may also have to be prepared. One forgets one's sleep. One forgets one's hunger. Every minute seems very important. But time seems to fly on wings. The minds of students however are assailed by confusing thoughts and nightmares. The day before the examination is certainly a decisive day.

#### **(25) Purpose of education**

Aristotle once said that the distinguishing feature of man is his moral sense. The aim of education is to tone up this moral sense. The other main purpose of education is to impart book education. Education should discipline the learner's mind and brain. The stress on character-building is to continue at all the stages of education. It is for the teachers to see that education imparted by them disciplines the emotions of learners. If emotions are not properly channelized, a human being is reduced to the status of an animal. The purpose of education is to remove the darkness of ignorance. Education broadens one's vision of life. Education has a great role to play in strengthening the foundations of a country. A country cannot progress without a sound system of education. The purpose of education should be to produce eminent scientists, educationists, politicians, etc. Education should enlighten the learners about their rich heritage and golden traditions. A sound system of education has the potential of cementing national unity. The text-book should contain chapters on the importance of national integration. In brief, education has a major role to play in nation-building.

## **26) Social Evils**

A social evil may be defined as a harmful habit or harmful practice existing in society. Every society is affected by one or the other social evil. Indian society is not an exception. It is not possible to recount and discuss all of these evils. Some of the social evils in India include caste system, drinking, smoking and drug taking. Caste system is a blot on the fair name of Indian society. Untouchability is, no doubt, an off-shoot of caste system. Caste seems to be a domineering force in almost every social activity. A meaningful spread of education is the only way caste system gets loosened. Drinking too is a social vice. Drinking makes one weak, physically as well as psychologically. It leads to abject poverty, disease and misery. Social awareness against such evils can help to a great extent. Drug addiction is another social evil. Misguided youth fall a prey to this social evil. Proper counselling can save our youth from this social evil.

### **10.9 LET US SUM UP**

While writing a paragraph, you are advised to keep the following points in mind:

- (i) From among the sentences given, understand the meaning.
- (ii) Care should be taken not to introduce any other topic in the paragraph. The main theme of the paragraph should always be one and all the sentences must move towards it.
- (iii) The paragraph should possess an orderly and logical development of the thought. The sentences should follow one another in proper order.
- (iv) The paragraph should be read as complete piece of composition written in correct English. Sentences should be clear and complete.
- (v) The paragraph should be strictly within the prescribed word limit.

### **10.10 EXAMINATION ORIENTED QUESTIONS**

**I. Write a paragraph of 100 words on any of the given topics:**

- a) Computer Revolution
- b) Drug Addiction.
- c) Unemployment
- d) Terrorist Attack on World Trade Centre

**II. You can Practise writing paragraphs on the following topic:**

- 1. As you sow, so shall you reap.
- 2. All Art is Useless
- 3. An Unpleasant Neighbourhood.
- 4. Beauty is truth, truth is beauty.
- 5. Adult Illiteracy
- 6. Place of Women in society.
- 7. Childhood.
- 8. India My Dream Country
- 9. Early to Bed and Early to Rise
- 10. Politics is an Art of Compromise
- 11. Once bitten, twice shy.
- 12. Newspaper

**III You can practise writing paragraph (100 words) on the following topics:**

- 1. Nature and Environment
- 2. Independence Day
- 3. Internet-Chatting
- 4. Cyber-Cafe
- 5. Indian movies
- 6. Life in a Village

7. Life in a city
8. Indian Railways
9. Our Parks and Gardens
10. Patriotism
11. Education
12. Personality
13. Stamp Collection.
14. Indian Postal System
15. T. V. Serials

\*\*\*\*\*

## **B.A./B.COM-II : GENERAL ENGLISH**

---

**COURSE CODE : AA-201**  
**SEMESTER-II**

**LESSON NO. 12**  
**UNIT - IV**

---

### **SYLLABLES AND WORD STRESS**

- 11.1 Objectives
- 11.2 Introduction
- 11.3 Defining Syllables and Word Accent
- 11.4 Dividing Words into Syllables
- 11.5 Structure of Syllables
- 11.6 More About Syllables
- 11.7 Disyllabic and Trisyllabic Words
- 11.8 Primary Accent and Secondary Accent
- 11.9 Rules of Word Stress
- 11.10 Let Us Sum Up
- 11.11 Exercises
- 11.12 Works Cited
- 11.13 Suggested Reading

#### **11.1 OBJECTIVES**

In this lesson, you will be introduced to syllables, their kinds , rules of dividing the syllables and their role in understanding word stress and rhythm of

English language. An effort will also be made to provide you self-check exercises in addition to the examples given alongside the discussion. For a better grasp of this topic, you are desired to revise the consonant and vowel sounds introduced to you in your earlier semester

## **11.2 INTRODUCTION**

Dear learners, by now you should be well acquainted with various sounds of the English language i.e. vowels and consonant sounds which are described as segmental features. A word is made up of syllables and syllables are made up of speech sounds. A thorough understanding of the syllables becomes fundamental in understanding the flow of English speech with its stress pattern. So, a syllable is the smallest unit of speech.

## **11.3 DEFINING SYLLABLES AND WORD ACCENT**

Syllable becomes a determining aspect of defining other suprasegmental features of an English sentence. Syllables are the building blocks of which words are made of. T. Balasubramanian in his book *A Textbook of English Phonetics* while analyzing speech says that each syllable is made up of speech sounds i.e. vowels and consonants. Every syllable necessarily has one sound which is usually a vowel sound because it is practically impossible to speak a word consisting of consonants only. The reason behind this is that during the articulation of vowel sounds, the pulmonic egressive air escapes freely and continuously. So, most syllables contain both vowels and consonants but some have only vowels. For instance, *eye* has only a vowel sound.

Though anybody can divide a word into apparently possible syllables as a matter of commonsense yet this division depends primarily on the pronunciation of English language, dialectal or standard. It may also depend on including nasals as separate syllables e.g in *pessimism*. This difference of opinion can also arise from considering /r/ as syllabic or not or some other phonological considerations (difference in pronunciation of *hour* and *tower*). Peter Ladefoged and Keith Johnson in their book *A Course in Phonetics*, however, agree that

despite these differences majority of words have a clear division of syllables. Every utterance must contain at least one syllable. Words like relative, cucumber, demonstrate and comforting have three syllables and three vowels each .

Word is a linguistic identity. It is made up of syllables. Like the sounds contribute to meaning of the speech segment, other features like stress,pitch, intonation etc. also influence the meaning. These are called suprasegmentals or prosodic features or extra-linguistic features. In this lesson, we will limit our study to syllables and word stress.Stress, according to Sharad Rajimwale, is “*an increased articulatory effort...gives prominence to some segments of an utterance than others.*” There are two kinds of stress or accent :word stress and phrase stress.

Word stress is the gradation of force or relative emphasis that may be given to certain syllables within a word. To understand word stress, it is important to understand syllables. Every word is made from syllables. Each word has one, two, three or more syllables. This means syllables break words into various parts which are either stressed or unstressed. The pronunciation of a word depends upon its stress pattern. This means that one part of the word receives a stronger emphasis than other/s. One which is strongly stressed becomes stronger syllable and the one with weak stress is called weak syllable. Number of phonemes may not be confused with number of syllables. A word may have one or more phonemes but it can be monosyllabic, for example ‘make’. In monosyllabic words stress falls on one syllable only which is spoken with full syllabic energy whereas in disyllabic and trisyllabic words stress is distributed over two or three syllables; one syllable is accented more than the others. English has its own rhythm and stress pattern of words play an essential role in speaking this language.It helps in correct and accurate communication.

#### **11.4 DIVIDING WORDS INTO SYLLABLES**

It is important to learn how to count syllables in a word. As said earlier that syllables are decided as per the vowel sounds but it can prove misleading if we count vowels in a word rather than vowel sounds. In *Bat* it is easier to locate

vowel sound and decide that it has one syllable but in *Beautiful* 'eau' together make one vowel sound and so the word has three syllables. Also remember that 'y' also gives out a vowel sound as in *Busy*. Most of the times 'e' at the end of a word is silent as in 'College' which has two syllables but in words like 'Adorable' it is pronounced.

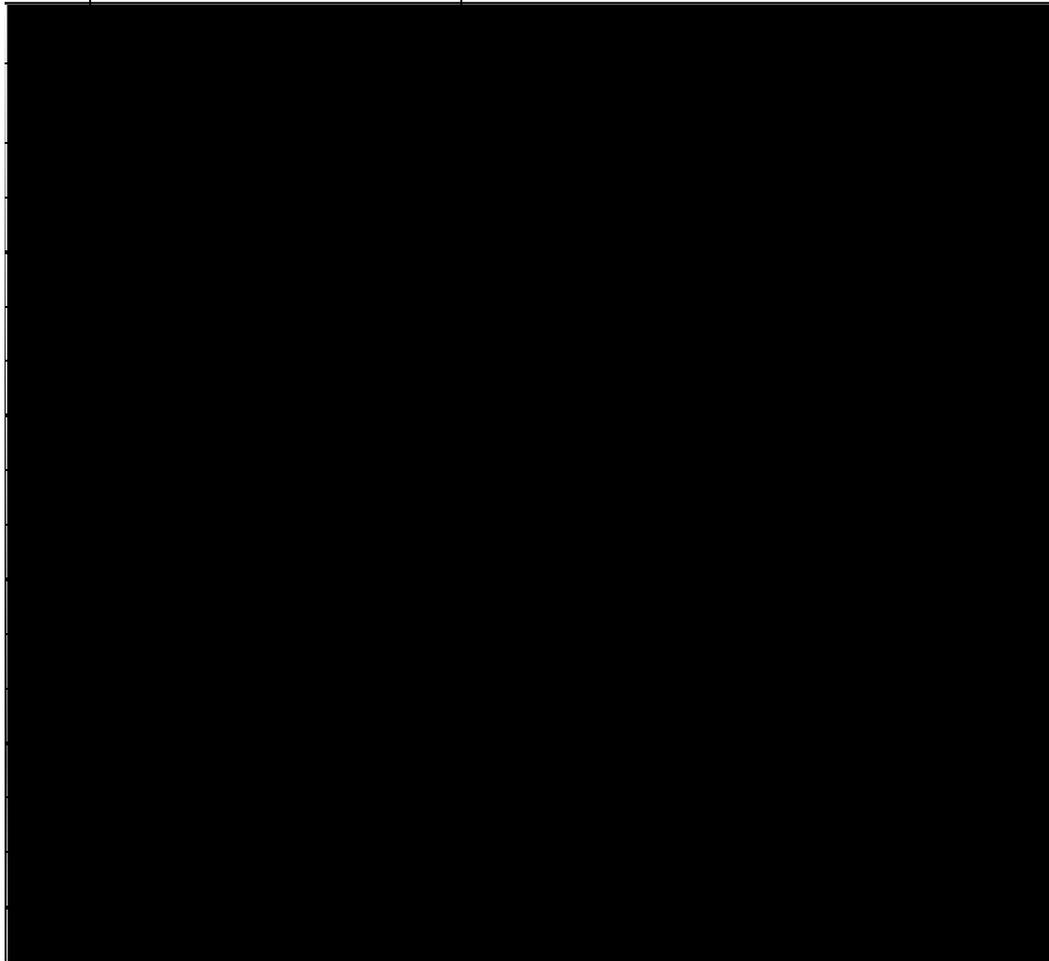
Before deciding which part of the word receives stress, it is essential to divide that word into syllables. The following rules can help us out in this task:

- If the word has two middle consonants, divide it into two parts. For example, *Market* has two middle consonants *r* and *k*. We will divide this into *Mar* and *ket*. Similarly *Better*, *Thinner*, *Litter* etc. will be split into two parts.
- If we have a word with single middle consonant instead of two then this word can be divided before the single middle consonant. For example, *Open* can be divided as 'O' and 'pen', *p* being the single middle consonant.
- If a word ends in 'le' then divide a word before the consonant preceding 'le'. For instance *Table* shall be divided as 'Ta' and 'ble'. *Bubble*, *Able* and *Struggle* are some other examples.
- Compound words can be split off appropriately. For example, *Sportsperson* as 'sports' and 'person'.
- Words having prefixes and suffixes can also be split after and before them. For example: *Repair* into *Re* and *pair*; *Dealer* into *Deal* and *er*.

### 11.5 STRUCTURE OF SYLLABLES

As emphasized earlier that a vowel sound is an essential element in the structure of a syllable, so it is referred as nucleus of a syllable. This nucleus may be preceded, succeeded or both preceded and succeeded by consonants which are marginal or optional elements in the structure of a syllable. The consonant that precedes the nucleus is called 'releasing consonant' or 'onset.' The consonant following the nucleus is called 'arresting consonant' or 'coda.'

While formally defining the structure of a syllable, nucleus is represented by 'V' and consonants by 'C'. English syllables can have anything between zero to three consonants before the nucleus whereas the nucleus can also be followed by four consonants. The formula for the structure of English syllable is:  $C^{0-3}VC^0-4$ . For instance, the syllable structure of 'Mark' is CVCC.



## 11.6 MORE ABOUT SYLLABLES

If a syllable ends in a vowel as in see, eye, fee, etc., it is called open syllable but if it ends in a consonant or consonant cluster, it is called closed syllable as in jump, stuff, brown, dream etc.

If in a syllable ( for example second syllable in *Lit-tle* , II-tl ) a vowel is absent, then consonant sound of /l/ and /n/ act as vowels. Such consonants are called Syllabic consonants. Mark them as V in syllable structure not as C. So the structure of the second syllable of ‘lit-tle’ would be ‘CV.’

Remember that the features of a stressed syllable are:

- L-o-n-g-e-r –it takes longer time to speak. E.g. com p-u-ter.
- L-o-u-d-e-r –we can feel this sound as louder. E.g. comPUTer.
- Changed pitch- from the syllables coming before and afterwards (usually higher).
- More clearly uttered -the vowel sound is purer.
- Larger facial movements - Looking in the mirror can make you more clear about it.

And the unstressed syllable has exactly the opposite characteristics.

## 11.7 DISYLLABIC AND TRISYLLABIC WORDS

As discussed earlier, a word consists of syllables. If it has one syllable, it is called a monosyllabic word. A word having two syllables is a disyllabic word and one with three syllables is called trisyllabic or multisyllabic word.

Various patterns of word stress can be located in multi-syllabic words. Let us consider them one by one.

### **Disyllabic words:**

Four common patterns that can be noted in pronouncing and transcribing two syllable words:

1. When in a two syllable words the first syllable receives primary stress and the second syllable receives no stress.

For instance:

- Paper [ˈpeɪpə]
- Kindness [ˈkændnəs]

- College [ˈkɒlɪdʒ]
- Happens [ˈhæpənz]
- Radish [ˈrædɪʃ]
- Rhythm [ˈrɪðəm]
- Busy [ˈbɪzi]
- Hopeless [ˈhəʊpləs]

2. When the first syllable receives no stress and the second receives primary stress.

**For instance**

- Above [əˈbʌv]
- Complete [kəmˈplɪt]
- Convince [kənˈvɪns]
- Discuss [dɪˈskʌs]
- Pretend [prɪˈtend]
- Regard [rɪˈgɑː(R)D]
- Today [təˈdeɪ]
- Mistake [mɪˈsteɪk]

3. When one syllable receives secondary stress.

Usually the first syllable receives the primary stress and the second syllable receives the secondary stress but the other variation is also often used in pronunciation.

For instance:

present ˈpre,zent] [,prɪˈzent]

4. When both syllables receive primary stress. These are usually compound words.

For instance:

baseball [ˈbeɪs ˈbɔːl]

Trisyllabic words

Trisyllabic words may have more than one syllable that receives stress .

Following stress patterns can be located

1. Stressed-unstressed-unstressed:

Animal [ˈæ nɪ rəl]

Arrogant [ˈæ rəɡ ənt]

Denigrate [ˈde ni greɪt]

2. Unstressed-Stressed-Unstressed:

Disgraceful [dɪs ˈɡreɪs f ʊl]

Arena [ə ˈriːn ə]

3. Unstressed-stressed-stressed: Chicago Chicago [ʃə ˈkɑː ,ɡəʊ]

4. Stressed-unstressed-stressed: Buffalo Buffalo [ˈb ʃə ,ləʊ]

5. Stressed-stressed-unstressed: Electric Electric [ˈ ɪlek tr ɪk]

In derivatives the stress shifts from one syllable to the other. For instance, in *ˈpolitics*, *ˈsatire* and *ˈproduct*, the stress is on the first syllable but in *poˈlitical*, *saˈtirical* and *proˈduce*, it shifts to the second syllable. In *poliˈtician* and *producˈtivity*, the stress is on the third syllable.

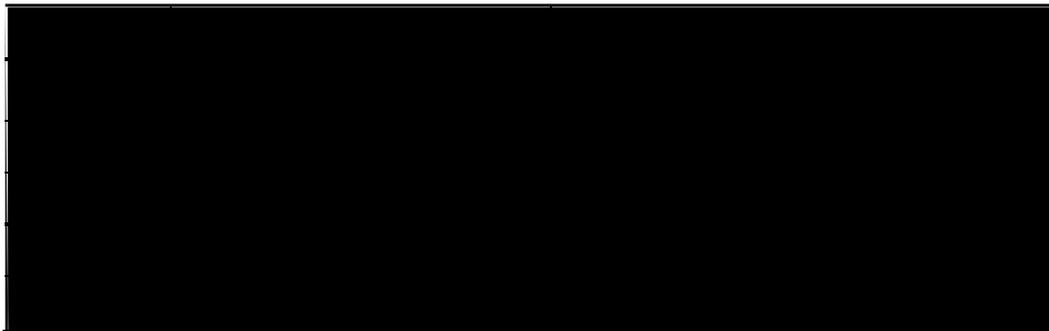
## 11.8 PRIMARY AND SECONDARY ACCENT

In words having three or more syllables, two syllables in each word are accented, the first syllable of the two receives less prominence so it is given secondary accent whereas the second of these two receives the primary stress and is spoken with more energy and higher pitch. For example in the word *employee* ‘em’ and ‘yee’ syllables receive the secondary and the primary stress respectively. Accented syllables stand out from other syllables in terms of syllabic energy they use. Those syllables that use less energy are weak syllables and are not marked.

Though different people use different techniques, but generally primary accent can be marked with vertical mark above and before the syllable ( e.g. <sup>1</sup>Absent) whereas secondary accent is marked by a vertical line below and before the syllable. E.g. in *afternoon* stress marks will be indicated as: after<sup>1</sup>noon.

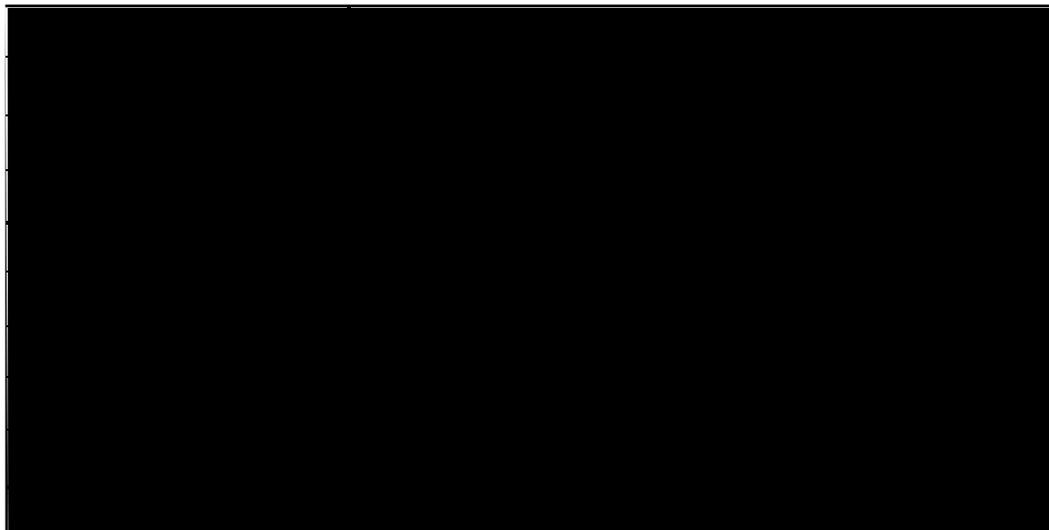
### 11.9 FUNCTION OF WORD ACCENT

Sometimes the word stress defines the function of a word. In disyllabic words if the primary accent falls on the first syllable, the word functions as a noun or adjective. But a shift in the stress on the second syllable defines it as a verb. Let us look at the following examples:



Some words are accented on the same syllable irrespective of their function.

The examples are:



## 11.10 RULES OF WORD STRESS

Note: Though only disyllabic and trisyllabic words are prescribed in the syllabus yet some polysyllabic words are included here for complete understanding of the topic.

The basic rules of word stress are:

- One word has only one accent.
- We can stress only vowels ,not consonants.
- In most two-syllable nouns and adjectives, the first syllable takes the stress. Examples:

√ 'Samples

√ 'Carton

√ 'Colorful

√ 'Rainy

- In most two syllable verbs and prepositions, the stress is on the second syllable, but there are exceptions to this .

Examples:

√ Re 'lax

√ Re 'ceive

√ Di 'rect

√ A 'mong

√ A 'side

√ Bet'ween

- If there is a word that ends in a consonant or in a -y, then the first syllable

gets the stress.

Examples:

√ 'Rarity

√ 'Optimal

√ 'Gradient

√ 'Container

√ Words having weak prefixes ( a, be) take stress on their roots.

Examples:

√ A'board

√ A'ccount

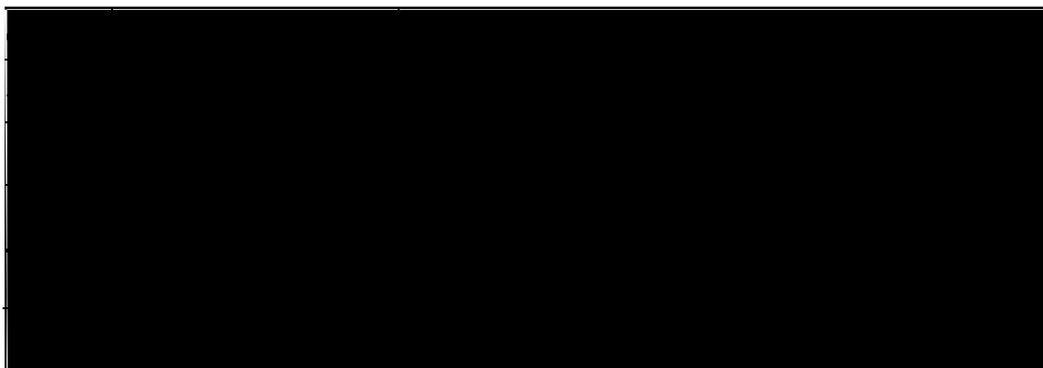
√ A'lone

√ Be'low

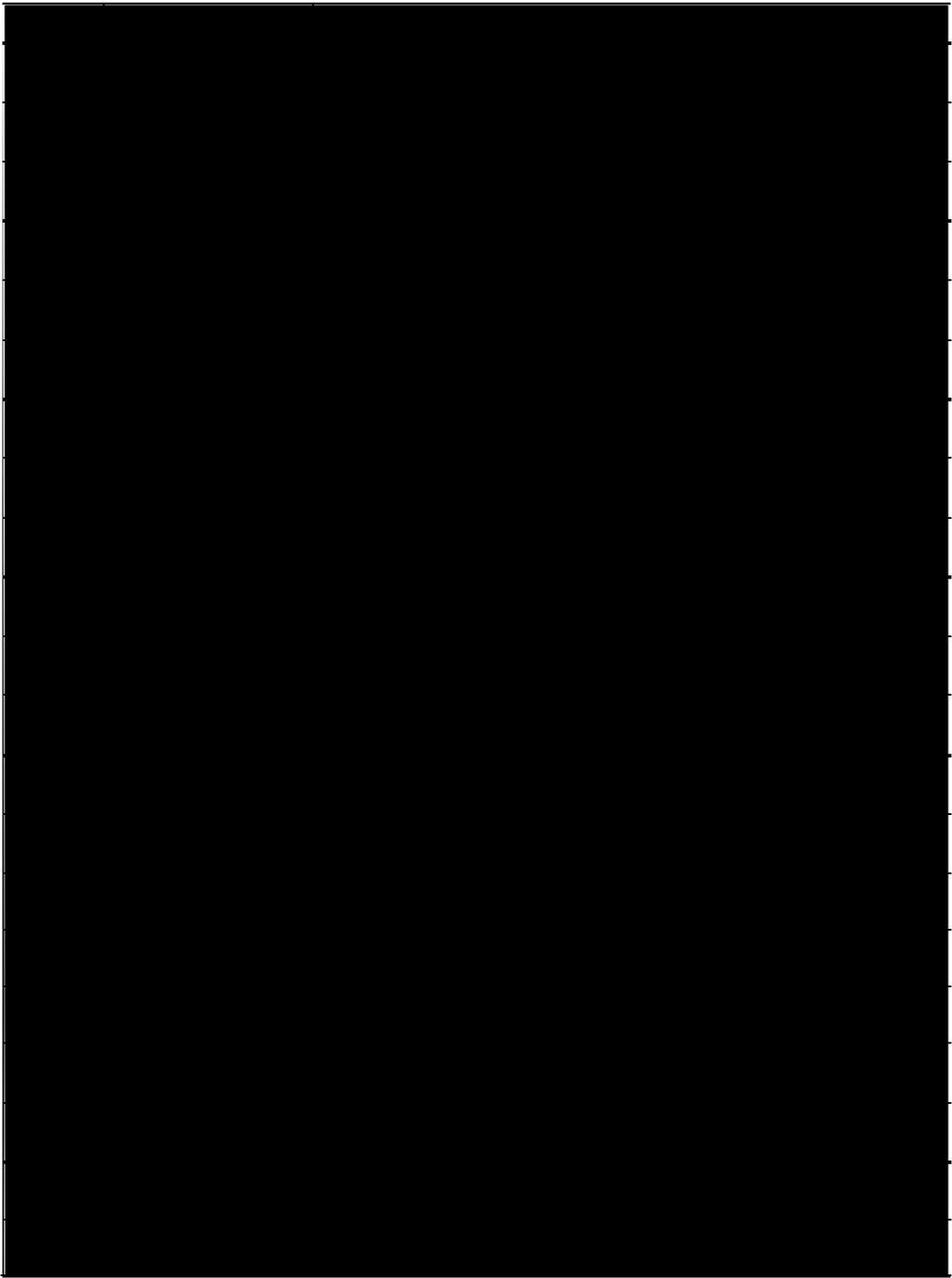
√ Be'come.

- The inflectional and derivational suffixes (-ed, -s, -es, -ing, -en, -est, -ance, -er, -ess, -ful, -hood, -ice, -ish, -ive, -less, -ly, -ment, -ness, -or, -ship, -ure, -zen, -ally) do not effect the stress after they are added to a base. The stress falls on the same syllable which was stressed before adding the suffix.

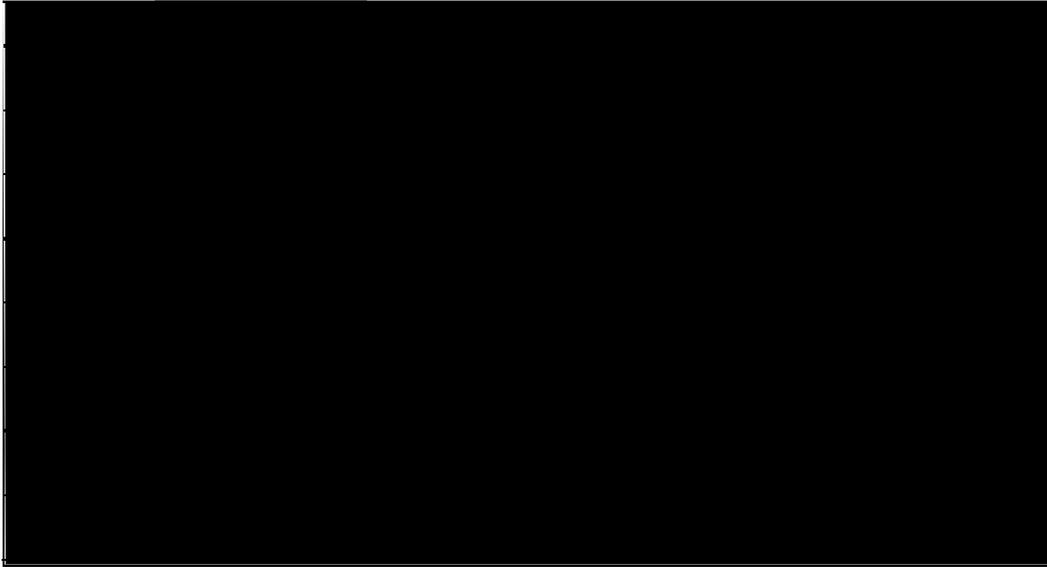
Examples:



	Re <sup>l</sup> ate	Re <sup>l</sup> ated
--	---------------------	----------------------



-ful	<sup>1</sup> Duty	<sup>1</sup> Dutiful
	<sup>1</sup> Color	<sup>1</sup> Colorful
	<sup>1</sup> Success	<sup>1</sup> Successful
-hood	<sup>1</sup> Brother	<sup>1</sup> Brotherhood
	<sup>1</sup> Child	<sup>1</sup> Childhood
	<sup>1</sup> Likely	<sup>1</sup> Likelihood
-ice	Coward	<sup>1</sup> Cowardice
-ish	<sup>1</sup> Child	<sup>1</sup> Childish
	<sup>1</sup> Red	<sup>1</sup> Redish
	<sup>1</sup> Devil	<sup>1</sup> Devilish
-ive	At <sup>1</sup> tend	At <sup>1</sup> tentive
	Des <sup>1</sup> truct	Des <sup>1</sup> tructive
	Per <sup>1</sup> mit	Per <sup>1</sup> missive
-less	Re <sup>1</sup> gard	Re <sup>1</sup> gardless
	<sup>1</sup> Meaning	<sup>1</sup> Meaningless
	<sup>1</sup> Base	<sup>1</sup> Baseless
-ly	<sup>1</sup> Purpose	<sup>1</sup> Purposely
	<sup>1</sup> Happy	<sup>1</sup> Happily
	<sup>1</sup> Certain	<sup>1</sup> Certainly
-ment	<sup>1</sup> Settle	<sup>1</sup> Settlement
	<sup>1</sup> Place	<sup>1</sup> Placement
	<sup>1</sup> Resent	<sup>1</sup> Resentment
-ness-	<sup>1</sup> Aware	<sup>1</sup> Awareness
	<sup>1</sup> One	<sup>1</sup> Oneness



Words ending in -ic and -sion /tion take stress on penultimate syllable  
(penultimate = second from end)

√ Geo<sup>i</sup>graphic,

√ Geo<sup>l</sup>ogic

Tele<sup>i</sup>vision,

√ Reve<sup>i</sup>lation

• Some words with the following suffixes take stress on ante-penultimate syllable (ante-penultimate = third from end)

For example

**a) Words ending in -cy, -ty, -phy and -gy:**

√ De<sup>i</sup>mocracy

√ Dependa<sup>b</sup>ility

√ Pho<sup>t</sup>ography,

✓ Geology

- ✓ 'Fequency
- ✓ 'Pregnancy
- ✓ Ac'curacy
- ✓ Re'dundancy
- ✓ Bu'reaucracy
- ✓ Cons'piracy
- ✓ Ac'tivity
- ✓ Curi'osity
- ✓ Mo'rality
- ✓ Proba'bility

**b) Words ending in -ate**

- ✓ Indicate
- ✓ 'Operate
- ✓ 'Separate
- ✓ A'ppropriate
- ✓ 'Candidate

**c) Estimate Words Ending In -Eous**

- ✓ Pon'taneous
- ✓ Outrageous

√ Simu<sup>l</sup>ltaneous

√ <sup>l</sup>Gorgeous

√ Homo<sup>i</sup>geneous

√ Advan'tageous

**d) Words ending in -Al**

√ Po'litical

√ 'Physical

√ 'Medical

√ 'Practical

√ Chemical

√ 'Technical

√ 'critical

√ Geo'logical

**e) Words ending in -fy**

√ 'Identify

√ 'Justify

√ 'Specify

√ 'Qualify

√ 'Modify

√ 'Clarify

**f) Compound Words Compound words exhibit varied pattern of accent.  
Most commonly the first part is stressed.**

• 'Ball-pen

• 'Birth-day

- 'Book-shelf
- 'Life-boat
- 'Door-mat

- ˈAir-tight
- ˈTea-party
- ˈPost-man
- ˈBook-worm
- ˈMan-eater
- ˈBallot-box
- ˈWash-basin

**g) Compound words with *self* and *ever* as suffixes are stressed on the second element.**

- Your ˈself
- My ˈself
- How ˈever
- When ˈever
- What ˈever

**h) In yet other compound words, both the parts are accented; the first receives the secondary stress, the second receives the primary stress.**

- ˌBack-ˈstab
- ˌClose-ˈdoor
- ˌNeck-ˈtie
- ˌGood-ˈhearted
- ˌUnder ˈstand
- ˌDown ˈstairs
- ˌBlank-ˈverse
- ˌBack-ˈseat

**i) In Compound adjectives ( which is composed of at least two words) the stress is placed within the second word.**

Examples:

- Two-<sup>1</sup>day
- Rock-<sup>1</sup>solid
- Fifteen-<sup>1</sup>hour

**j) In Compound verbs ( when a subject has two or more verbs), stress is on the second or on the last part.**

Examples:

- Sohan loves ghee but *de<sup>1</sup>tests* butter.
- The servant roasted the chicken and <sup>1</sup>*ate* it up.
- He loves to eat potatoes and likes <sup>1</sup>*drinking* soup.

In nouns+ nouns compound (two-word compound nouns) the stress is on the first word.

Examples:

- <sup>1</sup>Airbase engineer
- <sup>1</sup>Guesthouse keeper
- <sup>1</sup>Bedroom curtains

**k) In adjectives+ past participle compounds, second part is stressed.**

Examples:

- Well-<sup>1</sup>meant
- Hard-<sup>1</sup>headed
- Old-<sup>1</sup>fashioned

**l) In Preposition + Verb compounds, second part is stressed**

Examples:

- Under<sup>i</sup>stand,
- Over<sup>i</sup>look ,
- Out<sup>i</sup>do

**11.11 LET US SUM UP**

Dear learners, knowledge of syllables and word stress is very important to be good speakers. In this lesson, we have discussed all the major issues of this area. Before we wind up, let's have a re-look at the earlier matter and proceed towards self-check section.

**11.12 EXERCISES**

Exercise-I:

Circle the disyllabic words:

- a) Person
- b) Fast
- c) Beauty
- d) Today
- e) Begin
- f) Make
- g) Decide
- h) Hungry
- i) College

Exercise-II:

Mark the appropriate stress( primary or secondary ) in the following words:

- a) Cigarette
- b) Apple
- c) Opportunity
- d) Population
- e) Canteen
- f) Accidental
- g) Generosity
- h) Assimilation
- i) Employee
- j) Understand
- k) Accomodation
- l) Examination
- m) Refugee
- n) Back-door
- o) Bow-tie
- p) Self-rule
- q) Post-graduate
- r) Absentee
- s) Absolute
- t) Oriental
- u) Panacea
- v) Inspiration
- w) Curiosity

- x) Affidavit
- y) Artificial
- z) Definition

#### Exercise-III

Which syllable in the following words takes the primary stress:

- a) democracy
- b) dependability
- c) photography,
- d) geology
- e) frequency
- f) pregnancy
- g) accuracy
- h) redundancy
- i) bureaucracy
- j) conspiracy

#### Exercise-IV

Locate the primary accent in the following words and rewrite them.

- a) Cannibalism
- b) Secularism
- c) Fanaticism
- d) Impropriety
- e) Irresponsible
- f) Incarceration
- g) Mechanization

- h) Approximate
- i) Contamination
- j) Examinee
- k) Hypocrisy
- l) Gratuity
- m) Decomposition
- n) Bazar
- o) Arrogant
- p) Encourage
- q) Congestion
- r) Engineer
- s) Acrimony

**Answers**

Exercise-I : A C D E G H I

Exercise-II

- a) Ciga<sup>l</sup>rette
- b) <sup>l</sup>Apple
- c) <sup>l</sup>Oppor<sup>t</sup>unity
- d) Popu<sup>l</sup>ation
- e) Can<sup>l</sup>teen
- f) <sup>l</sup>Acci<sup>l</sup>dental
- g) Gene<sup>l</sup>rosity
- h) <sup>l</sup>Assimi<sup>l</sup>lation

- i)     <sub>1</sub>Empl<sup>o</sup>yee
- j)     <sub>1</sub>Understand
- k)     Ac<sub>1</sub>com<sup>o</sup>'dation
- l)     E<sub>1</sub>xami<sup>n</sup>'nation
- m)     <sub>1</sub>Refu<sup>l</sup>'gee
- n)     <sub>1</sub>Back-'door
- o)     <sub>1</sub>Bow-'tie
- p)     <sub>1</sub>Self-'rule
- q)     <sub>1</sub>Post-'graduate
- r)     <sub>1</sub>Absen<sup>t</sup>'tee
- s)     <sub>1</sub>Abso<sup>l</sup>'ute
- t)     <sub>1</sub>Ori<sup>e</sup>'ntal
- u)     Pana<sup>a</sup>'cea
- v)     <sub>1</sub>Inspi<sup>r</sup>'ation
- w)     <sub>1</sub>Curi<sup>o</sup>'sity
- x)     <sub>1</sub>Affi<sup>d</sup>'avit
- y)     <sub>1</sub>Arti<sup>f</sup>'icial
- z)     <sub>1</sub>Defi<sup>n</sup>'ition

#### Exercise-III

Words ending in -cy, -ty, -phy and -gy take stress on ante-penultimate syllable (ante-penultimate = third from end).

#### Exercise-IV

- a)     <sup>1</sup>Cannibalism
- b)     <sup>1</sup>Secularism

- c) Fanaticism
- d) Impro'priety
- e) Irre'sponsible
- f) Incarce'ration
- g) Mechani'zation
- h) A'pproximate
- i) Contami'nation
- j) Exami'nee
- k) Hy'pocrisy
- l) Gra'tuity
- m) Decompo'sition
- n) Ba'zar
- o) 'Arrogant
- p) En'courage
- q) Con'gestion
- r) Engi'neer
- s) 'Acrimony

### 11.13 WORKS CITED

- Balasubramanian, T. *A Textbook of Phonetics for Indian Students*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. India: Macmillan, 1981.
- Rajimwale, Sharad. *Introduction to English Phonetics, Phonology & Morphemes*. Jaipur & New Delhi: Rawat publications, 1997.
- Ladefoged, Peter and Keith Johnson. *A Course in Phonetics*, 7<sup>th</sup> Ed. USA: Cengage Learning, 2015.

#### 11.14 SUGGESTED READING

- Arnold, G.F. *Stress in English Words*. North Holla Publishing Co., 1957.
- Bansal, R.K., J.B. Harrison. *Spoken English*. Orient Longman, 2005.
- Hill, L.A. *Stress and Intonation. Steps by Steps*. Oxford University Press, 1965.
- O'Connor, J.D. *Better English Pronunciation* 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Cambridge University Press, 2012.
- Roach, Peter. *English Phonetics and Phonology* 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Cambridge University Press, 2004.
- Smith, Neil and Wilson Deirdre. *Modern Linguistics*. Penguin books, 1980.
- Wells, J.C. *Accents of English : Beyond the British Isles*. Cambridge, 1982.

\*\*\*\*\*

## **B.A./B.COM-II : GENERAL ENGLISH**

---

**COURSE CODE : AA-201**

**LESSON NO. 13**

**SEMESTER-II**

**UNIT - V**

---

### **TENSES**

- 12.1 Objectives
- 12.2 Introduction
- 12.3 Kinds of Tenses
- 12.4 Present Indefinite Tense
- 12.5 Present Continuous Tense
- 12.6 Present Perfect Tense
- 12.7 Present Perfect Continuous Tense
- 12.8 Let Us Sum Up
- 12.9 Check Your Progress
- 12.10 Suggested Reading

#### **12.1 OBJECTIVES**

Dear learners, in the last unit we learnt about syllables and word stress which are extremely helpful in defining our correct speech. Now in this lesson, we will be learning another important aspect that corrects our sentences and makes them meaningful. You will be acquainted with the English tenses and their usage in real life situations. Though we are dealing with the structural grammatical approach here yet an effort will be made to integrate it with the situational and functional styles of teaching language. This lesson will be restricted to the present tense and its

kinds. To facilitate your understanding, four kinds of sentences shall be discussed viz. affirmative, negative, interrogative and interrogative negative with every tense form. Self-check exercises shall be provided at the end of the lesson where you can test your understanding of the present tense. To get a thorough grip of this topic, you are advised to use these tense structures in your day to day conversation. You can invent and explore new situations and try to overcome the difficulties by revisiting this lesson, content. After the completion of this lesson you should be able to

- Differentiate between various present tense forms.
- Use the structures of various sentences in present tense forms.
- Use tenses to produce meaningful communication.
- Gain more confidence as effective user/speaker of English.

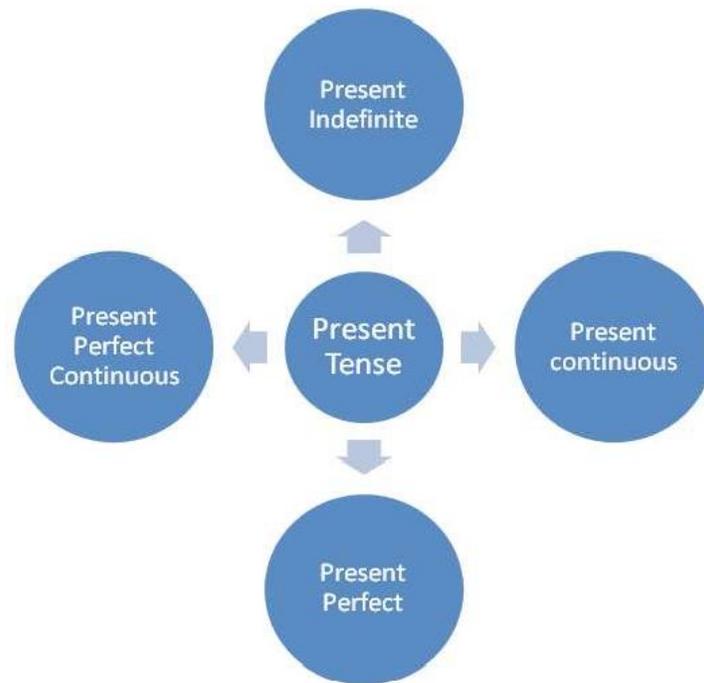
## **12.2 INTRODUCTION**

Like every language, English also has its unique tense system. Though tenses are there in every language yet these structures of English may or may not suit other languages. The word *tense* has been derived from its Latin root *tempus* which means time. Tenses constitute an inseparable part of English grammar. You might have felt that mere knowledge of vocabulary is incompetent for a meaningful interaction. It needs to be ascertained when has the action actually taken place. Within a given situation, an appropriate tense form is required. Any communication in English, oral or written, lacks life if correct tense is not used. Tenses become the backbone of an effective communication. Use of right tense minimizes the probability of comprehension by the listeners hence enhancing the inter-personal communication. So tenses are tools to help speakers to express time in the language. A good knowledge of the sentence structures, forms of verb and pronouns is a pre-requisite to get a fuller knowledge of tenses.

## **12.3 KINDS OF TENSES**

Since there are many ways in which we express the time of action, so we study tenses. Broadly speaking there are three main tenses; past tense, present tense and the future tense. Each of these tenses has four forms each, they are: Simple or

indefinite , Progressive or Continuous, Perfect and Perfect Progressive or Perfect Continuous. Each form has its own area of operation, structure and applicability. At times you might come across instances where some tenses prove confusing because of their usage but an effort will be made here to be as explicit as possible. Let us start with the present tense:



Students usually find it very difficult to produce sentences with appropriate tense forms. Reason for this is an unorganized approach to study tenses. While you start learning a tense form, take note of the following points:

1. Context and use of the tense form.
2. Form of verb used ( V1 is present form, V2 is past form and V3 is past participle).
3. Auxiliary used (we need auxiliary especially in negative and interrogative sentences).

4. Signal words like always, never etc.
5. Compare the corresponding tense forms.

#### **12.4 PRESENT INDEFINITE TENSE**

This is the most often used tense form. This tense form takes first form of verb with 's' or 'es' .

Let us apply it to four sentence types:

##### **Affirmative sentences**

Structure: Subject+ V1+ s or es ( only if the subject is third person singular)+  
Object

Examples:

- I read a book daily.
- He likes to be a part of this group.
- She admires her parents.
- You defend your case very well.

##### **Negative sentences**

Structure: Subject+ Auxilliary Verb ( do/does)+not+V1+ Object

Examples:

- I do not read a book daily.
- He does not like to be a part of this group.
- She does not admire her parents.
- You do not study your case well.

Caution: The 's' or 'es' of the affirmative sentence will change to 'does.' Do not use 's' or 'es' with does.

Example:

Incorrect: Mohan does not agrees with me.

Correct: Mohan does not agree with me.

Interrogative sentences

Structure: Question word ( Wh word) + Auxilliary ( do/does) Subject+ V1+ Object

Examples:

- What do you read daily?
- Does he like to be a part of this group?
- Does she admire her parents?
- Do you defend your case well?

Advice: Construct twenty such sentences applicable in your daily life.

Caution: ‘Do/Does’ can also form questions independently . But if ‘Wh’ words like when , where etc are initiating a question , ‘do/does’ shall follow as a routine course.

Incorrect: Where you live?

Correct: Where do you live?

Interrogative negative sentences:

Structure: Question word ( ‘Wh’ word) /Auxilliary ( do/does)+ Subject+ Not+V1+ Object

Examples:

- Why does he not read a book daily?
- Does he not like to be a part of this group?
- Does she not admire her parents?
- Do you not defend your case very well?

Advice: The word “not” follows the auxiliary verb only when it’s contracted:

Examples:

- Isn’t he your friend?
- Don’t you like pizza?
- Haven’t you been to the party?

- Won't you come alone?

- Couldn't you go by taxi?

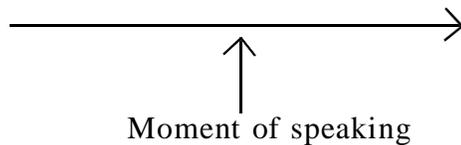
Let us look at its uses:

- Action in the present taking place once, never or several times;  
I never find him speaking properly.  
He usually sings alone.
- In habits and routine;  
I get up early in the morning.  
He takes bath daily.  
He seldom speaks a lie.  
I do not like apples.
- Action set by a timetable or schedule;  
My office starts at 8.00 a.m.  
The next train from Dublin arrives at 10.13
- Facts and Universal truth;  
The Sun sets in the west.  
Two and two make four.
- In proverbs;  
All is well that ends well.  
Don't cry over spilt milk.
- Sometimes for future course of action;  
The Prime Minister goes to New York tomorrow.  
Cabinet meets tomorrow over the budget.
- As a substitute of the past tense;  
Defeated, the Sultan immediately rushes to his capital.

- To describe a series of action, e.g. when giving information or instructions;  
“How do I get to the station?”  
“First you go along Victoria Street, then you turn left ...”
- In subordinate clauses of complex sentences as a combination of present or future in main clauses;  
The train often leaves the station when he reaches there.  
If I go to Shimla I will get apples for you.
- To introduce quotations;  
Shakespeare says, “ All the world’s a stage...”
- In broadcast commentaries;  
“And Sehwag clean bolds Smith with his unusual spin bowling....”
- In the verbs of:
  1. Perception : see, hear, smell.
  2. Appearing : look, seem, appear.
  3. Emotions : want, wish, love, hate, feel, hope.
  4. Thinking : suppose, agree, consider ,know, imagine etc.
  5. Possession : own, possess, belong to, contain etc.
  6. Signal words : The following words signal the use of this form:  
Always, every, never, normally, often, seldom, sometimes, usually, everyday, generally, frequently, once, twice, etc.

## **12.5 PRESENT CONTINUOUS TENSE**

This tense form is used to show an action in progress. The speaker does not know and is not excited to know about the time of the start of this action, rather one is concerned about its current status of continuity.



Action continued

### **Affirmative sentences**

Structure: Subject+ is/am/are+ V1+ ing + Object

Examples:

- I am reading this book these days.
- He is asking strange questions.
- They are growing vegetables in pots.
- The child is putting on weight.

Negative sentences

Structure: Subject+ is/am/are+ Not+ V1+ ing + Object

Examples:

- I am not reading this book these days.
- He is not asking questions.
- They are not growing vegetables in pots.
- The child is not putting on weight.

Interrogative sentences

Structure: Question word ( 'Wh' word) /Auxilliary ( do/does)+ Subject+ V1+ Object

Examples:

- Is he reading this book these days?
- Is she asking strange questions?
- Are they growing vegetables in pots?
- Why is the child putting on weight?

- Where are they living these days?

### **Interrogative negative sentences**

Structure: Question word ( 'Wh' word) /Auxilliary ( do/does)+ Subject+ not + V1+ Object

Examples:

- Is he not reading this book these days?
- Is she not asking strange questions?
- Are they not growing vegetables in pots?
- Why is the child not putting on weight?

Uses:

- When we want to say that somebody is doing something, this means that the action or event is in progress and not yet complete.
- To express the idea that a repeated action is temporary,i.e. it is happening for a limited period of time.

Patrick is working at a restaurant during his holidays.

- We can use the adverb always with the present progressive to say that something happens again and again, although not at regular intervals. Here always means very often or too often.

You're always forgetting your books!

- For something definitely planned or arranged for the future. It must be clear from the context or from the use of a phrase of future time that we are talking about future.

We're having a party on Sunday.

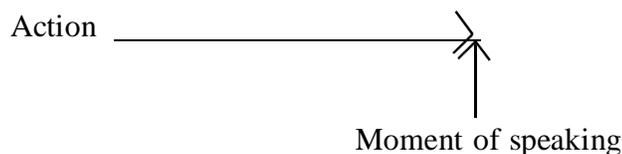
Signal words:

At the moment, these days, now-a-days, now, just and still.

## 12.6 PRESENT PERFECT TENSE

This tense form is a sort of combination of the past and the present. It always implies a strong connection with the present but the action is complete. Even if the action has completed long back, it still has a connection with the present.

Here the end point of the action can be ascertained.



### Affirmative sentences

Structure: Subject+ has/have+V3+ Object

Examples:

- I have read this book twice.( means I still remember the content)
- He has opted to join this group.
- She has always admired my work.
- You have defended your case very well.

Note: 'Has' is used with the third person singular only. You can remember that such subjects where 's' or 'es' is used take 'has' in this tense form.

### Negative sentences

Structure: Subject+ has/have+ not +V3+ Object

Examples:

- I have not read this book.
- He has not opted to join this group.
- She has never admired my work.
- You have not defended your case well.

## **Interrogative sentences**

Structure: Question word ( Wh word) /Auxilliary ( has/have)+ Subject+ V3+ Object

Examples:

- What have you read in this novel?
- Has he liked to be a part of this group?
- Has she still kept my souvenirs?
- Have you told him the story?

Advice: Construct twenty such sentences applicable in your daily life.

Interrogative negative sentences:

Structure: Question word ( 'Wh' word) /Auxilliary ( has/have)+Subject+ Not+V3+ Object

Examples:

- What have you not read in this novel?
- Has he not liked to be a part of this group?
- Has she still not kept my souvenirs?
- Have you not told him the story?

Uses:

- Conversations
- Letters
- Radio reports
- For recent actions whose time is not definite.

I have read instructions but I don't understand them.

- Recent actions in the present perfect often have results in the present.

Tom has had a bad car crash.

- Use of 'yet' also shows results in the present.

He has not come yet.

- For a past action but its connection is with the present. It may happen again.

I have seen wolves in the forest.

- For habitual actions:

I have never been late for work.

They have always supported me.

- Use of since/for:

'Since' is used for the point of time .E.g. 1960, Monday, 11'00 p.m.

He has lived here since 1978.

'For' is used with the period of time. E.g. two seconds, ten years, a week etc.

He has lived here for two decades.

### Signal words :

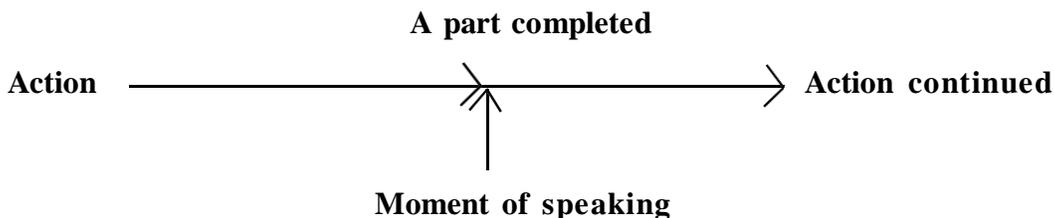
Just, already, always, never, rarely, seldom, before,ever, lately, recently, often, still not, so far, up to now, not yet, yet.

## 12.7 PRESENT PERFECT CONTINUOUS TENSE

It is used for an action which began in the past, has completed some part and is still continuing. There is always an indication of fixed time in this tense form.

E.g. The farmers have been ploughing since morning.

I have been watching him for the last two years.



Often the activity is of a general nature: something generally in progress this week, this month, this year.

In the sentence “She is writing another book this year” means that writing a book is a general activity she is engaged in at present, but it does not mean that at the moment of speaking, she is sitting, at her desk with pen in hand.

### **Affirmative sentences**

Structure: Subject+ has/have+ been +V1+ ing+ Object

Examples:

- I have been reading this book for the last two hours.
- He has been operating this machine for the last twenty years.
- She has been designing this project since 2010.
- You have been defending your case since long.

### **Negative sentences**

Structure: Subject+ has/have+ not+ been+V1+ing+ Object

Examples:

- I have not been reading this book for the last two hours.
- He has not been operating this machine for the last twenty years.
- She has not been designing this project since 2010.
- You have not been defending your case since long.

### **Interrogative sentences**

Structure: Question word ( ‘Wh’ word) /Auxilliary ( has/have) Subject+ been + V1+ing+ Object

Examples:

- Have I been reading this book for the last two hours?
- Why has he been operating this machine for the last twenty years?

- Have they been designing this project since 2010?
- Have you been defending your case since long?

Advice: Construct twenty such sentences applicable in your daily life. Be careful while using ‘since’/’for.’

### **Interrogative negative sentences**

Structure: Question word ( ‘Wh’ word) /Auxilliary ( has/have) + Subject+ not+ been+ V1+ing+ Object

Examples:

- Have I not been reading this book for the last two hours?
- Why has he not been operating this machine for the last twenty years?
- Have they not been designing this project since 2010?
- Have you not been defending your case since long?

### **Other uses**

We use the present progressive after recently, lately or how long

How long have you been playing the guitar?

Recently, I have been feeling really tired.

### **Signal words:**

Recently, lately, since, for.

Note: The following verbs are never used in progressive forms.

1. Senses ( *feel, touch, see, hear, taste* )
2. Mental activity (*know, believe, think, understand, recognize, remember, forget, mean* )
3. Possession ( *possess, own, have, belong* )
4. Attitudes ( *Want, prefer, need, appreciate, love, like, hate, dislike, seem, look appear* )

They can be used in progressive forms when their usage is different from the above categories.

For example:

Incorrect: I am meaning this person, not that.

Correct: I mean this person, not that. ( means I think of )

But if 'means' stands for intention rather than mental activity, then we can say

I have been meaning to see you.

## 12.8 LET US SUM UP

Tense	Aspect			
		Simple	Continuous	Perfect
Present	verb (s)	am/is/are + verb + ing	has/have + PP	has/have + been + verb + ing
Past	verb + ed	was/were + verb + ing	had + PP	had + been + verb + ing
Future	will + verb	will + be + verb + ing	will + have + PP	will + have + been + verb + ing

## 12.9 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Exercise-I

Rewrite the following sentences using correct tense forms of the given verbs:

1. Ram (limp) because he has hurt his right foot.

-----

2. They (not/learn) their lesson properly.

-----

3. My peon (not/come) in time.

-----

4. He always (support) me in examination.

-----

5. (do) she tease her brother unnecessarily?

-----

6. Does your father (go) to the shop in a car?

-----

7. Mosquitoes (not) let us (sleep)at night.

-----

8. (do) he miss his aim yesterday?

-----

9. I (send) this book to Ram next week.

-----

10. Why(not) you (listen) to my advice?

-----

11. He (catch) the same train every evening.

-----

12. I (look) for my glasses and I (not, can) find them anywhere.

-----

13. Did the merchant (give) a short measure?

-----

14. We (have) lunch with the Smiths on Tuesdays.

-----

15. We (have) dinner with the Browns on last Friday.  
-----
16. Why don't you (dress) your hair?  
-----
17. Mr Green (come) to see us next week.  
-----
18. They (get) them photographed.  
-----
19. My cousins (go) to Greece this summer. They (go) there nearly every year.  
-----
20. James (want) a new pair of trousers.  
-----
21. He ( run) temperature now.  
-----
22. I (invite) him to tea.  
-----
23. The watch (keep) correct time.  
-----
24. Julie (need) to have her hair cut.  
-----
25. I hope you (understand) what I (talk) about John.  
-----

26. (you, go) to London on Friday?

-----

27. (you, remember) when you were very small?

-----

28. I (wish) he would stop calling me at eleven o'clock at night. He (always, do) it.

-----

29. (Has/have) your cow (run) dry?

-----

30. How often you (be) to Srinagar.

-----

31. The teacher (not/arrive) yet.

-----

32. Where have you been? (you, play) tennis?

-----

33. Look! (somebody, break) that window.

-----

34. You look tired. (you, work) hard?

-----

35. (you, ever, worked) in a factory? – No, never.

-----

36. Liz is away on holiday. – Is she? Where (she, go / be) ?

-----

37. Sorry, I'm late. – That's all right. (I, not wait) long.

-----

38. Is it still raining? – No, (it, stop) .

-----

39. She (not, do) a single thing all morning.

-----

40. They (build) that house (for/since) more than a year and they (still, not, finish) it.

-----

41. It's May 30th and I (not, receive) a letter from him this month.

-----

42. Come quickly! Your father (break) his arm.

-----

43. I am awfully sorry, but I (drop) your clock. I hope it (not, break).

-----

44. "Is John in?" – "No, I'm afraid he (be/go) to Margate."

-----

45. (you, stand) in the rain (for/since) all that time?

-----

#### Exercise-II

Recognise the kind of tense form in each of the following sentences:

1. The novel describes life in an Irish village.

-----

2. The boys made a fun of him.

-----

3. He has always remained my favourite singer.

-----

4. Have they not confirmed their visit?

-----

5. Why haven't you invited them to tea?

-----

6. They are working in the fields.

-----

7. Are you planning to come here?

-----

8. My sister has never been to London.

-----

9. Where has he been working for the last eight years.

-----

10. If I grow rich, I will adopt you.

-----

Exercise-III:

Recognise the signal words in the following sentences :

1. He frequently visits my home.

2. He has just arrived.

3. He never misses an opportunity to help the poor.

4. Look! His father has arrived.
5. He is keeping silent at the moment.
6. He spoke to me yesterday.
7. We saw him last Friday.
8. He sang while the girl danced.
9. He has not arrived yet.
10. They have already eaten their dinner.
11. He has lived here for four years.
12. Mohan has been working here since 1975.
13. He will be here by 5.00 p.m.
14. Now-a-days he is pleasant in his behaviour.
15. He has been responding well lately.

#### Exercise-IV

Correct the following:

1. He did not fed the chicken properly.
2. She does not speaks English well.
3. He has been living there for 1965.
4. If he has done it, he would have agreed.
5. I would help you if I was a king.
6. I am working on this farm since 1980.
7. I am owning a house.
8. He is disliking the book.
9. He is seeming to be a nice person.
10. I am seeing a butterfly.

Answers:

Exercise-I

1. Ram limps because he has hurt his right foot.
2. They have not learnt their lesson properly.
3. My peon has not been coming in time.
4. He always supports me in examination.
5. Does she tease her brother unnecessarily?
6. Does your father go to the shop in a car?
7. Mosquitoes do not let us sleep at night.
8. Did he miss his aim yesterday?
9. I will send this book to Ram next week.
10. Why don't/ didn't you listen to my advice?
11. He catches the same train every evening.
12. I am looking for my glasses and I can not find them anywhere.
13. Did the merchant give a short measure?
14. We have lunch with the Smiths on Tuesdays.
15. We had dinner with the Browns on last Friday.
16. Why don't you dress your heir?
17. Mr Green is coming to see us next week.
18. They are getting them photographed.
19. My cousins are going to Greece this summer. They go there nearly every year.
20. James wants a new pair of trousers.
21. He is running temperature now.

22. I have invited/ will invite him to tea.
23. The watch is keeping correct time.
24. Julie needs to have her hair cut.
25. I hope you have understood what I talked about John.
26. Are you going to London on Friday?
27. Do you remember when you were very small?
28. I wish he would stop calling me at eleven o'clock at night. He always does it.
29. Has your cow run dry?
30. How often have you been to Srinagar.
31. The teacher has not arrived yet.
32. Where have you been? 'W'ere you playing tennis?
33. Look! Somebody has broken that window.
34. You look tired. Have you worked hard?
35. Have you ever worked in a factory? – No, never.
36. Liz is away on holiday. – Is she? Where has she gone ?
37. Sorry, I'm late. – That's all right. I have not waited long.
38. Is it still raining? – No, it has stopped .
39. She has not done a single thing all morning.
40. They have been building that house for more than a year and they have still not finished it.
41. It's May 30th and I have not received a letter from him this month.
42. Come quickly! Your father has broken his arm.
43. I am awfully sorry, but I dropped your clock. I hope it has not broken.

44. “Is John in?” – “No, I’m afraid he has gone to Margate.”

45. Have you been standing in the rain for all that time?

#### Exercise-II

1. The novel describes life in an Irish village.

Present indefinite

2. The boys are making fun of him.

Present continuous

3. He has always remained my favourite singer.

Present perfect

4. Have they not confirmed their visit?

Present indefinite

5. Why haven’t you invited them to tea?

Present perfect

6. They are working in the fields.

Present continuous

7. Are you planning to come here?

Present continuous

8. My sister has never been to London.

Present perfect

9. Where has he been working for the last eight years?

Present perfect continuous

10. If I grow rich, I will adopt you.

Present indefinite ( conditional)

### Exercise-III

1. He **frequently** visits my home.
2. He has **just** arrived.
3. He **never** misses an opportunity to help the poor.
4. **Look!** His father has arrived.
5. He is keeping silent **at the moment**.
6. He spoke to me **yesterday**.
7. We saw him **last** Friday.
8. He sang **while** the girl danced.
9. He has not arrived **yet**.
10. They have **already** eaten their dinner.
11. He has lived here **for** four years.
12. Mohan has been working here **since** 1975.
13. He will be here **by** 5.00 p.m.
14. **Now-a-days** he is pleasant in his behaviour.
15. He has been responding well **lately**.

### Exercise-IV

1. He did not feed the chicken properly.
2. She does not speak English well.
3. He has been living there since 1965.
4. If he had done it, he would have agreed.
5. I would help you if I were a king.
6. I have been working on this farm since 1980.
7. I own a house.

8. He dislikes the book.
9. He seems to be a nice person.
10. I see a butterfly.

#### **12.10 SUGGESTED READING**

- Fux, David . *Tenses: Grammar and Exercises*. Switzerland :Luzern , 2009.
- Leech, Geoffrey and Jan Svartvik. *A Communicative Grammar of English* 3<sup>rd</sup> ed.Pearson,2004.
- [www.ebanque-pdf.com/fr\\_mixed-tenses](http://www.ebanque-pdf.com/fr_mixed-tenses)
- *Rajadurai,T.English Tenses*. Akthi Publishing House; 1st edition ,2013.
- Parker, Celeste N.Duae Linguae English: *Most Common Verbs Fully Conjugated in All Tenses: Volume 1*. CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform , 2016.

\*\*\*\*\*

## **B.A./B.COM-II : GENERAL ENGLISH**

---

**COURSE CODE : AA-201**  
**SEMESTER-II**

**LESSON NO. 14**  
**UNIT - V**

---

### **TENSES (CONTD...)**

- 13.1 Objectives
- 13.2 Introduction
- 13.3 Past Indefinite Tense
- 13.4 Past Continuous Tense
- 13.5 Past Perfect Tense
- 13.6 Past Perfect Continuous Tense
- 13.7 Future Indefinite Tense
- 13.8 Future Continuous Tense
- 13.9 Future Perfect Tense
- 13.10 Future Perfect Continuous Tense
- 13.11 Let Us Sum Up
- 13.12 Check Your Progress
- 13.13 Suggested Reading

#### **13.1 OBJECTIVES**

Dear learners, the objective of this lesson is to acquaint you with the past and future tense forms, their usage in various situations followed by a self-check exercise. You will be required to invent situations and contexts to use the newly learnt tense forms.

## 13.2 INTRODUCTION

In the lesson 5.1, you were acquainted with the present tense, various aspects, usage and practice of all present tense forms. Let us revise them a bit: The tense is divided into three kinds: Present, Past and Future, which are further divided into four sub-kinds. In the present tense, do/does is used as auxiliary verb, wherever required. We also discussed that present indefinite and present continuous forms can also be used sometimes to show past and future actions. Past and future tenses will be discussed on the same parameters as have been used to discuss present tense. You will have to keep a track of the points where they differ viz. auxiliary, verb form etc.

## 13.3 PAST INDEFINITE TENSE

Past indefinite tense is used to show an action that occurred in the past. In order to be perfect in understanding this tense form, you should revise your understanding of regular and irregular verbs. We use –'ed' to make the past indefinite of regular verbs whereas irregular verbs have their own forms.

I. This tense is used in answering the action happened at a particular point or period of time in the past. In the words of Leech and Svartvik, it is “ past-happening-related-to-past-time.” It is also used in reports of past events.

II. It can be used as a past-time adverbial in the same sentence:

Example:

- He came to India as an employee of East India Company.

III. Signal words of time expressions are: yesterday, in 1996, last year, half an hour ago, etc.

IV. Past simple and present perfect both tell us about the complete action which can be confusing for you .

For instance:

- I have completed my work.( completed)

- I completed my work at 12.30 p.m.

But remember, after ‘when’ or fixed time use past simple only.

Example:

- Incorrect: When have you passed your 10<sup>th</sup>?
- Correct: When did you pass your 10<sup>th</sup> ?

V. We use past indefinite to explain and elaborate a past event introduced by present perfect.

For example: There has been a reshuffle in the portfolios of the ministers. It happened after the recent decision of the party to suspend three ministers following their involvement in the corruption case. The party high command met here this morning and re-allotted the portfolios.

VI. This tense is also used to show two parallel short actions in the past.

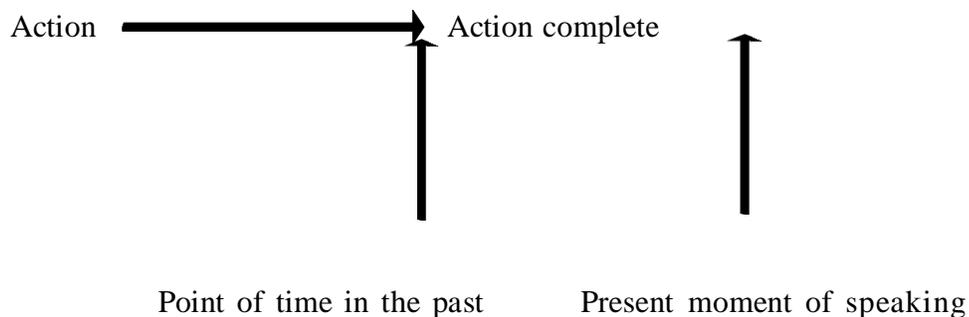
For instance,

- She danced while she sang.
- He attacked when she opened the door.

VII. The definite time in the past can be identified by the context outside language.

Example:

- Did you get any orders? ( context tells that orders come out at this time)



### **Affirmative sentences**

Structure: Subject+ V2+ Object

Examples:

- I finished a book on animals yesterday.
- He liked to be a part of our family.
- She admired my approach in that matter.
- You defeated the move of your enemies.

### **Negative sentences**

Structure: Subject+ 'did not'+V1+ Object

Examples:

- I did not read a book on animals yesterday.
- He did not like to be a part of our family.
- She did not admire my approach in that matter.
- You did not understand the move of your enemies.

**Caution:** V2 is used in the affirmative sentences only. With 'did', always use V1.

Example:

Incorrect: Mohan did not agreed with me.

Correct: Mohan did not agree with me.

### **Interrogative sentences**

Structure: Question word ( 'Wh' word)+Did+Subject+ V1+ Object

Note: 'Did' can also form questions independently . But if 'Wh' words like when , where etc are initiating a question , did shall follow as a routine course.

- Incorrect: Where you recorded work ?
- Correct: Where did you record your work ?

Examples:

- Did you finish a book on animals yesterday?
- Why did he like to be a part of our family?
- Did she admire my approach in that matter?
- Did you understand the move of your enemies?

Advice: Construct twenty such sentences applicable in your daily life.

### **Interrogative negative sentences:**

Structure: Question word ( 'Wh' word) ( optional) +Auxiliary ( did)+ Subject+ Not+V1+ Object

Examples:

- Did you not finish a book on animals yesterday?
- Why did he not like to be a part of our family?
- Did she not admire my approach in that matter?
- Did you not understand the move of your enemies?

Note: The repeated actions or habits/routine of the past are expressed in this tense form.

For instance:

- During those days, people made tools of stone.
- They would hunt animals for food.
- There used to be a tough survival strategies.

### **13.4 PAST CONTINUOUS TENSE**

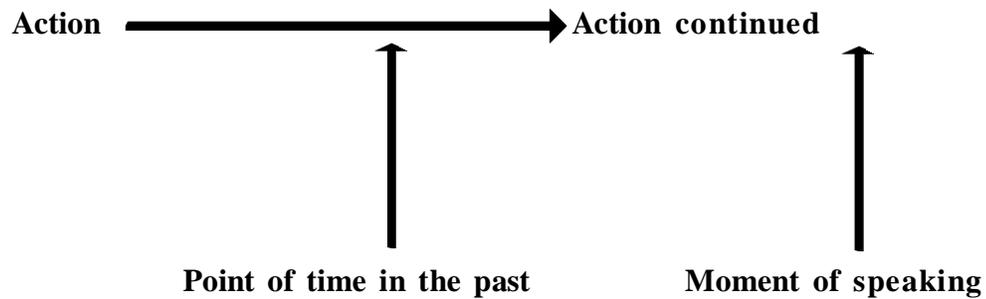
We use the past continuous to say that something was in progress (going on) at a particular time in the past.

The past continuous is sometimes used together with the past simple. The past continuous refers to a longer 'background' action or situation whereas

the past simple refers to a shorter action that happened in the middle of the longer action, or that interrupted it.

Example:

- As I was reading the book, I heard a blast outside.



### **Affirmative sentences**

Structure: Subject+ was/were+ V1+ing+ Object

Examples:

- I was reading a book on animals.
- He was thinking to be a part of our family.
- She was looking for my support in that matter.
- You were thinking of the motives of your friends.

### **Negative sentences**

Structure: Subject+ was/were+not+ V1+ing+ Object

Examples:

- I was not reading a book on animals.
- He was not thinking to be a part of our family.
- She was not asking for my support in that matter.
- You were not thinking of the expectations of your friends.

### **Interrogative sentences**

Structure: Was/were +subject+ V1+ing+ Object

Examples:

- Was he reading a book on animals?
- Was he thinking to be a part of our family?
- Was she looking for my support in that matter?
- Were you thinking of the motives of your friends?

Advice: Construct twenty such sentences applicable in your daily life.

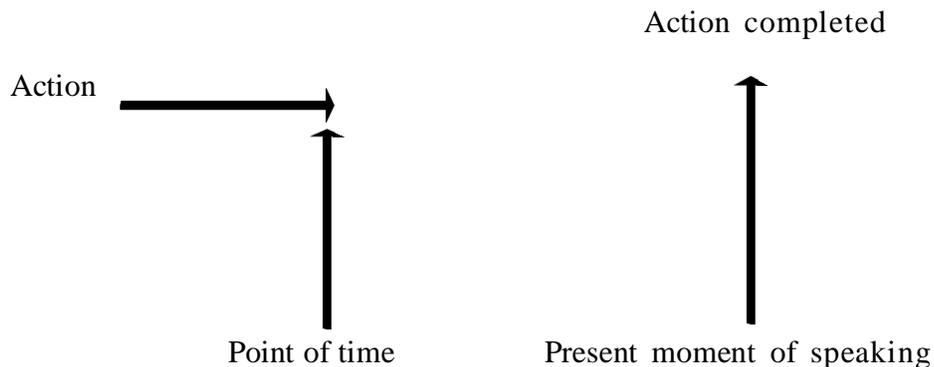
### **Interrogative negative sentences**

Structure: Was/were +subject+ not+ V1+ing+ Object

Examples:

- Was I not reading a book on animals?
- Was he not thinking to be a part of our family?
- Was she not looking for my support in that matter?
- Were you not thinking of the motives of your friends?

### **13.5 PAST PERFECT TENSE**



This tense form is used to show an action completed in the past. It is also called ‘past in the past’ i.e. a remote past moment seen from a recent past moment.

It is also used in the main clause of complex sentences in combination with simple past in subordinate clauses.

- Rajesh had arrived home when he received his father's call.

Note: Here comes the concept of recent past and remote past. If the actions are reported chronologically then simple past tense is used. If the action moves in recent and remote past, then use past simple for recent action and past perfect for remote past. In simple terms, past perfect can be used to report an action that happened earlier.

For example:

Ram looked quite disturbed on what his son had told him few days before. He had raised Mukund, his son, with a great deal of affection and care. He had never wanted him to go out alone or be in a strange company. And everything was good till he had gone to England for studies. Angela had accompanied him to India. And now they were marrying. Lost in these thoughts suddenly Ram fainted.

Now let us write this text in chronological manner:

Ram raised his son Mukund with great care and affection. He never left him alone and never wanted him to meet strange people. Everything went on well till Mukund went to England for further studies. He came back accompanied by Angela and decided to marry him. Ram got disturbed when Mukund told him about his decision. Lost in thoughts Ram fainted.

In complex sentences, this tense is used in combination with past simple in subordinate clause.

- When I visited him, he had been waiting there for two hours.

**Remember** that 'since'/'for' will be used in the same manner as have been studied in present perfect tense.

### **Affirmative sentences**

Structure: Subject+ had+V3+ Object

Examples:

- I had read this book twice.

- He had herself opted to join that group.
- She had always admired my work.
- You had defended your case very well.

### **Negative sentences**

Structure: Subject+ had+ not +V3+ Object

Examples:

- I had not read this book.
- He had not opted to join this group.
- She had never admired my work before that meeting.
- You had not defended your case well.

### **Interrogative sentences**

Structure: Question word (‘Wh’ word) /Auxiliary ( had) + Subject+ V3+ Object

Examples:

- What had you read in that novel?
- Had he liked to be a part of that group?
- Had she still kept my souvenirs?
- Had you told him the story?

Advice: Construct twenty such sentences applicable in your daily life.

### **Interrogative negative sentences**

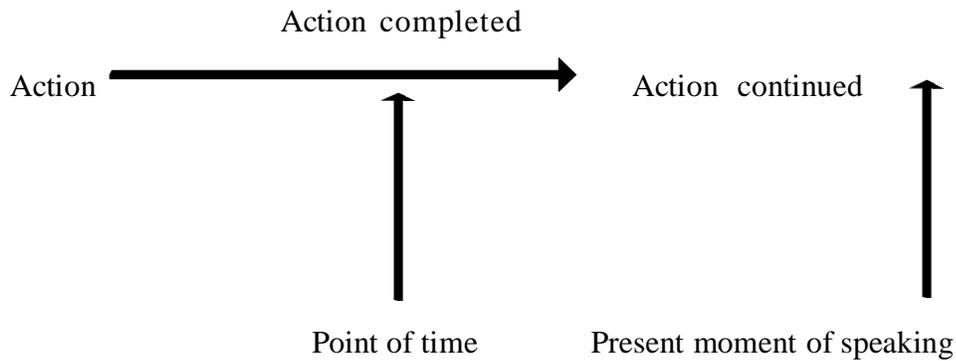
Structure: Question word (‘Wh’ word) /Auxiliary ( had) +Subject+ Not+ V3+ Object

Examples:

- What had you not read in this novel?

- Had he not liked to be a part of that group?
- Had she still not kept my souvenirs?
- Had you not told him the story before I came?

### 13.6 PAST PERFECT CONTINUOUS TENSE



This tense form is used for an action which started at a point of time in the past and completed some part in given period or at a point in time, but still continued at the moment of consideration.

#### **Affirmative sentences**

Structure: Subject+ had+ been +V1+ ing+ Object

Examples:

- I had been reading this book for the last two hours when he came.
- He had been operating this machine for the last twenty years in 1998.
- She had been designing this project since 2010.
- You had been defending your case since long.

#### **Negative sentences**

Structure: Subject+ had + not+ been+V1+ing+ Object

Examples:

- I had not been reading this book for the last two hours when he came.

- He had not been operating this machine for the last twenty years in 1998.
- She had not been designing this project since 2010.
- You had not been defending your case since long.

### **Interrogative sentences**

Structure: Question word ('Wh' word) /Auxiliary (had) + Subject+ been + V1+ing+ Object

Examples:

- Had I been reading this book for the last two hours when he came?
- Why had he been operating this machine for the last twenty years?
- Had they been designing this project since 2010?
- Had you been defending your case since long?

Advice: Construct twenty such sentences applicable in your daily life. Be careful while using since/for.

### **Interrogative negative sentences**

Structure: Question word ('Wh' word) /Auxiliary ( had) + Subject+ not+ been+V1+ing+ Object

Examples:

- Had I not been reading this book for the last two hours when you came?
- Why had he not been operating this machine for the last twenty years in 1998?
- Had they not been designing this project since 2010?
- Had you not been defending your case since long?

## **13.7 FUTURE INDEFINITE TENSE**

This tense form is used to refer to an action that will happen in future. In future tenses will/shall is used as auxiliary verb.

Present progressive tense form is also used to refer to a future action when the idea of the sentence concerns a planned event or definite intention ,that is, when something will very probably happen because there are already signs of it happening. A future meaning is indicated either by future time words in the sentence or by the context.

- Sue has already made her plans. She is leaving at noon tomorrow.
- He will start his work tomorrow.
- He is going to start his work tomorrow

Though the present progressive is used in a much wider range of situations but sometimes the simple present is also used primarily with verbs such as open/close, begin/end, arrive/leave and expresses an established fact i.e. when a future event is a fixed part of a timetable, programme , schedule etc.

- Samecha's plane arrives at 6:05 next Monday.

In a complex sentence having the future action, future tense is *not* used in a time clause. Main clause takes the future indefinite whereas the subordinate clause takes present indefinite . For example:

- I will get pearls for you if I go to china.
- After I get home, I will speak to him.
- I will wait here until they come.

### **Affirmative sentences**

Structure: Subject+ will/shall+ V1+ Object

Examples:

- I shall read a book daily.
- He will like to be a part of this group.
- She will admire my parents.

### **Negative sentences**

Structure: Subject+ Auxiliary Verb ( will/shall)+not+V1+ Object

Examples:

- I shall not read a book daily.
- He will not like to be a part of this group.
- She will not admire my parents.

### **Interrogative sentences**

**Structure:** Question word ('Wh' word) + Auxilliary ( will/shall) + Subject+ V1+ Object

Examples:

- Shall I read a book daily?
- Will he like to be a part of this group?
- She will not admire my parents?

**Caution:** 'Shall' is used with first person whereas 'Will' is used with second and third persons in the normal sentences. But if the sentence is showing promise , threat, etc., the use of shall/ will is inverted.

Example:

- I shall obey my parents in future.
- I will never steal in future.(promise)

But in interrogatives with ' I' as subject 'shall' is used .

- Incorrect: Will I help you?
- Correct: Shall I help you?

Advise: Construct twenty such sentences applicable in your daily life.

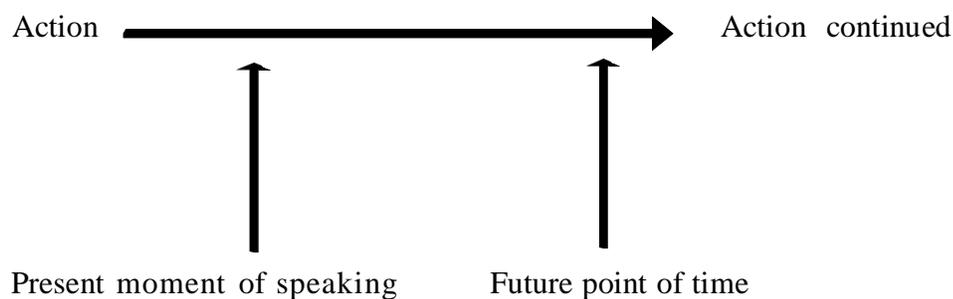
### **Interrogative negative sentences**

**Structure:** Question word ( 'Wh' word) /Auxiliary ( will/shall) Subject+ Not+ V1+ Object

Examples:

- Why will he not read a book daily?
- Will he not like to be a part of this group?
- Will she not admire her parents?
- Will you not defend your case well?

### 13.8 FUTURE CONTINUOUS TENSE



The future continuous tense is used to express an activity that will be in progress at a point of time in future.

When an event will occur at an indefinite time in the future, future indefinite can be equally used.

- Don't get impatient. She will come soon ( or she will be coming soon).

#### **Affirmative sentences**

Structure: Subject+ shall/will + be+ V1+ ing + Object

Examples:

- I will be reading this book these days.
- He will be asking easy questions.
- They will be growing vegetables now.
- The child will be putting on weight.

### **Negative sentences**

Structure: Subject+ shall/will+ not + be+ V1+ ing + Object

Examples:

- I shall not be reading this book these days.
- He will not be asking easy questions.
- They will not be growing vegetables now.
- The child will not be putting on weight.

### **Interrogative sentences**

**Structure:** Question word(optional) + Shall/will + Subject+ + be+ V1+ ing + Object?

Examples:

- Will he be reading this book these days?
- Shall I be asking any questions?
- Will they be growing vegetables now?
- Will the child be putting on weight?

### **Interrogative negative sentences**

**Structure:** Question word(optional) + Shall/will + Subject+ + be+ V1+ ing + Object?

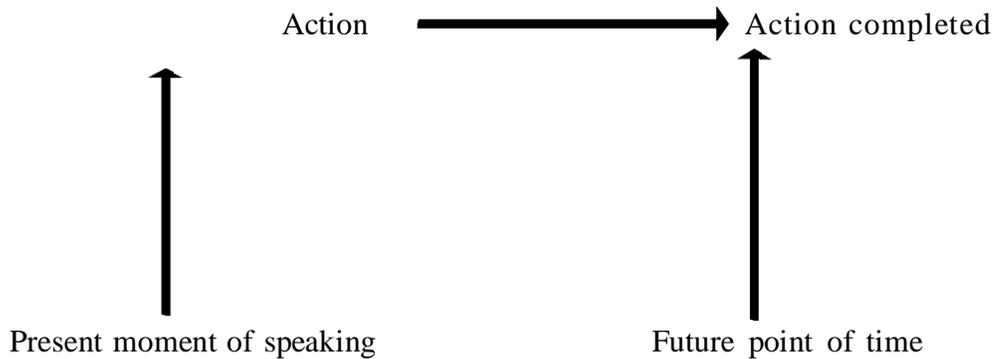
Examples:

- Why will he not be reading this book these days?
- Shall I not be asking any questions?
- Will they not be growing vegetables now?
- Will the child not be putting on weight?

## **13.9 FUTURE PERFECT TENSE**

The future perfect tense refers to a completed action in the future. When we use this tense, imagine ourselves in the future and look at an action that will

be completed some time later than now. It is most often used with a time expression.



It expresses an activity that will be completed before another time or event in the future. In such cases, usually we have complex sentences where present indefinite is used in time clause.

Example:

- I will have finished my homework by the time he comes to see me.
- ‘By the time’ is the signal phrase.

### **Affirmative sentences**

Structure: Subject+ will + have + V3+ Object

Examples:

- I’ll have read this book by the end of September.
- He’ll have completed his training when you reach back.
- They’ll have grown in stature by the end of this century.

### **Negative sentences**

Structure: Subject+ will+ not + have + V3+ Object

Examples:

- I won’t have read this book by the end of September.

- He won't have completed his training when you reach back.
- They won't have grown in stature by the end of this century.

### **Interrogative sentences**

Structure: Question word(optional) + Shall/will + Subject+not have+ V3+ Object

Examples:

- Will he have read this book by the end of September?
- Will he have completed his training when you reach back?
- Will they have grown in stature by the end of this century ?

### **Interrogative negative sentences**

Structure: Question word(optional) + Shall/will + Subjec+ be+ V1+ ing + Object?

Examples:

- Won't he have completed his training when you reach back?
- Won't they have grown in stature by the end of this century ?
- Won't the child be putting on weight?

## **13.10 FUTURE PERFECT CONTINUOUS TENSE**

### **Affirmative sentences**

Structure: Subject+ will + have + been+ V1+ ing + Object.

Examples:

- I will have been sleeping for two hours by the time he gets home.
- He will have been struggling for two years by then.
- They will have been growing vegetables for six months by December this year.

### **Negative sentences**

Structure: Subject+ will+ not+ have + been+ V1+ ing + Object

Examples:

- I won't have been sleeping for two hours by the time he gets home.
- He won't have been struggling for two years by then.
- They won't have been growing vegetables for six months by December this year.

### **Interrogative sentences**

Structure: Question word(optional) + will + Subject+ + have +been + V1+ ing  
+ Object?

Examples:

- Why will he have been reading this book by the time I get a new one for him?
- Will you have been asking any questions when the officer enters the hall?
- Will they have been growing vegetables for two years in 2018?
- Will the child have been putting on weight before the doctor recommends diet?

### **Interrogative negative sentences**

Structure: Question word(optional) + will + Subject+ + not+ have +been+ V1+  
ing + Object?

Examples:

- Won't he have been reading this book by the time I get a new one for him?
- Won't you have been asking any questions when the officer enters the hall?
- Won't they have been growing vegetables for two years in 2018?
- Won't the child have been putting on weight before the doctor recommends diet?

### **13.11 LET US SUM UP**

Dear learners, we discussed past and future tense forms, structures of sentences to be produced in these forms and allied information in this lesson. Hope you have understood them. Let us have a recap:



### 13.12 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

#### Exercise-I

Use correct tense (past simple or present perfect):

Sam: I \_\_\_\_\_ (never, be) to Delhi.

Jack: Oh, I \_\_\_\_\_ (go) there last summer. I \_\_\_\_\_ (do) a tourism course there. I \_\_\_\_\_ (make) a lot of new friends too.

Sam: And your management skills are very good \_\_\_\_\_ (you, ever, think) about starting a business there?

Jack: No, I'm quite happy with my current occupation. May be after some time.

Sam \_\_\_\_\_ (you, purchase) any house there yet?

Jane: No, it's too early. I only \_\_\_\_\_ (send off) the application forms last week.

## Exercise-II

Use past simple or progressive tense form.

1. She (walk) down the road when she (find) an old friend and stopped to say hello.
2. He (see) the poor and old man and (go) to support him.
3. Chris (read) a book when the bell (ring).
4. When he (receive) her cheque, he (prepare) to go.
5. While he (look) out of the window, he (notice) that there was a river nearby.
6. The grocer (lock) up his shop, (get) on his bicycle and (go) home.
7. I (give) Sarita her present and she (say) she would never forget that moment.
8. The dog (dig) a hole and (hide) the bones in it.
9. While they (eat) their lunch, my students (knock) the door.
10. When he (be) younger, he (grow) habits of stealing.

## Exercise-III

Use past simple or past perfect or both , whichever applicable:

1. After he (start) \_\_\_\_\_ singing I (call) \_\_\_\_\_ you inside.
2. I (be) \_\_\_\_\_ very sad after I (hear) \_\_\_\_\_ about the death of my cousin.
3. As soon as he (enter) \_\_\_\_\_ the old house, he (faint) \_\_\_\_\_ again.
4. Everybody (leave) \_\_\_\_\_ the station by the time I (reach) \_\_\_\_\_ there.
5. I (tell) \_\_\_\_\_ him about the theft of our new car before you (arrive) \_\_\_\_\_ .

6. It (not, be) \_\_\_\_\_ his first meeting with me, we (meet) \_\_\_\_\_ there many times before.
7. My father (ask) \_\_\_\_\_ me why I (not, complete) \_\_\_\_\_ my homework.
8. I (not, know) \_\_\_\_\_ her for a long time when I (decide) \_\_\_\_\_ to marry him.
9. These dresses (be) \_\_\_\_\_ very clean because our housemaid (wash) \_\_\_\_\_ them.
10. Students (finish) \_\_\_\_\_ their work before the bell (rang) \_\_\_\_\_.

#### **Exercise-IV**

Use the appropriate tense form of the verbs in brackets:

1. We (see) the counselor on coming April 5th.
2. What (Vikas, do) on Sunday night?
3. When Raveena (call) this evening, I'll come and have a word with her.
4. Even if it stops raining, he (not, go) out.
5. Tiara! We (go) to the cinema! Would you like to come with us?
6. Before you (leave), I ( show ) you my bike.
7. When (you, make) the Christmas cake?
8. When I (get) up tomorrow morning, the sun (shine) , the birds (sing) and my roommate (lie, still) in bed fast asleep.
9. Look at those dark clouds. When class (be) over, it (rain, probably).
10. I'm getting tired of sitting in the car. Do you realize that by the time we arrive in Jammu, we (drive) for twenty straight hours?

### Exercise-V

Use correct tense of the given verbs:

- 1) On June 30th, I returned home. I (*be*) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) away from home for two years. My friends (*meet*) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) me at the airport with kisses and tears. They (*miss*) \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) me as much as I had missed them. I (*be*) \_\_\_\_\_ very
- 5) happy to see them again. My family members (*also come*) \_\_\_\_\_  
to receive me.
- 6) My little brother (*be*) \_\_\_\_\_ no longer so little.
- 7) He (*grow*) \_\_\_\_\_ at least a foot.
- 8) He (*be*) \_\_\_\_\_
- 9) almost as tall as my father. My little sister (*wear*) \_\_\_\_\_
- 10) a blue dress. She (*change*) \_\_\_\_\_ quite a bit, too, but
- 11) she (*be, still*) \_\_\_\_\_ naughty and inquisitive. She
- 12) (*ask*) \_\_\_\_\_ me a thousand questions a minute, or so
- 13) it seemed. My father (*gain*) \_\_\_\_\_ some weight, and
- 14) his hair (*turn*) \_\_\_\_\_ a little bit greyer, but otherwise
- 15) he was just as I had remembered him. My mother (*look*) \_\_\_\_\_  
a little older, but not much. Her face was full of satisfaction on my arrival.

### Answer Key

#### Exercise-I

Sam: I have never been to Delhi.

Jack: Oh, I went there last summer. I did a tourism course there. I have made a lot of new friends too.

Sam: And your management skills are very good. Did you ever think about starting a business there?

Jack: No, I'm quite happy with my current occupation. May be after some time.

Sam: Have you purchased any house there yet?

Jane: No, it's too early. I only sent off the application forms last week.

### **Exercise-II**

Use past simple or progressive tense form:

1. She was walking down the road when she found an old friend and stopped to say hello.
2. He saw the poor old man and went to support him.
3. Chris was reading a book when the bell rang.
4. When he received her cheque, he was preparing to go.
5. While he was looking out of the window, he noticed that there was a river nearby.
6. The grocer locked up his shop, got on his bicycle and went home.
7. I gave Sarita her present and she said she would never forget that moment.
8. The dog dug a hole and hid the bones in it.
9. While they were eating their lunch, my students knocked the door.
10. When he was younger, he grew habits of stealing.

### **Exercise-III**

1. Had started, called
2. Became, had heard
3. Entered, fainted
4. Had left, reached

5. Had told, arrived
6. Was not, had met
7. Asked, had not completed
8. Had not known, decided
9. Were, had washed
10. Had finished, rang

**Exercise-IV**

1. Will be going
2. Does Vikas do
3. Calls
4. Will not
5. Are going
6. Leave /have left, will show
7. Do you make/will you make
8. Get, will be shining, will be singing , will still be lying
9. Is, will be probably raining
10. Will have driven

**Exercise-V**

- 1) Had been
- 2) Met
- 3) Had missed
- 4) Was
- 5) Had also come

- 6) Was
- 7) Had grown
- 8) Was
- 9) Was wearing
- 10) Had changed
- 11) Was still
- 12) Asked
- 13) Had gained
- 14) Had turned
- 15) Looked

### **13.13 SUGGESTED READING**

- Quirk, Randolph, Sydney Greenbaum, Geoffrey Leech, Jan Svartvik. *A Comprehensive Grammar of English Language*. India: Pearson,2010.
- Burton,S.H., J.A. Humphries . *Mastering English Language*. Macmillan.1992.
- Cruse, Alan. (2000). *Meaning in language: An Introduction to Semantics and Pragmatics*. Oxford: University Press.
- Leech Geoffrey , Jan Svartvik. *A Communicative Grammar of English 3<sup>rd</sup> ed*. India: Pearson,2004.

\*\*\*\*\*

## **B.A./B.COM-II : GENERAL ENGLISH**

---

**COURSE CODE : AA-201**

**LESSON NO. 15**

**SEMESTER-II**

**UNIT - V**

---

### **WORD FORMATION**

- 14.1 Objectives
- 14.2 Introduction
- 14.3 Classification of Words
- 14.4 Affixation
- 14.5 Compounding
- 14.6 Neologisms
- 14.7 Abbreviations
- 14.8 Clipping
- 14.9 Blending
- 14.10 Conversion
- 14.11 Back Formation
- 14.12 Calque
- 14.13 Let Us Sum Up
- 14.14 Check your Progress
- 14.15 Suggested Reading

#### **14.1 OBJECTIVES**

Dear learners, this lesson introduces you to yet another very important constituent of English language learning which is called word formation. There

will be a detailed discussion on classification of words, methods of word formation etc. along with self-check exercises. You will be required to do a lot of practice while you read this lesson. After you finish this lesson, you shall be able to :

Understand word, classify a word, use affixation method of word formation, identify blend words, compound words etc.

## 14.2 INTRODUCTION

Speakers of a language must not only possess the knowledge of the words of that language which constitute the backbone of that language but also know about the composition and structure of words. When we think of a word what comes to mind is the word as a unit in the written form of language what we call orthographic word. Any living language of this world is required to grow in terms of its word power in order to meet and adapt to the changing demands. Many words become obsolete over the time whereas many new are added to a language. English has proven its potential by being open to accept and adapt words from other languages. Not only this, many methods have been devised to coin new words. While doing a study of word formation, we enter the domain of lexicology and morphology. Let us briefly look at what morphemes are all about. A morpheme is the smallest grammatical and meaningful unit of a language. A morpheme can not necessarily be called a word, because a word can stand alone whereas a morpheme may or may not . A word is called a root when it has a meaning of its own (for instance the morpheme *Dog*) but when it depends on another morpheme to express an idea, it is an affix because it has a grammatical function (for instance the *-s* in *dogs* to make it plural). Word Formation implies dealing with rules that “form” or create new words. It is the creation of longer, more complex words from shorter, simpler word . For example, ‘discourteous’ has been created from courtesy. This means for an output of word formation, the input is also a word ( in a general sense). A good language user is very active in collection of words that form the treasure of English language. Appropriate word in appropriate context is what defines the efficiency of a language user. To learn this art, word formation becomes an important activity.

### 14.3 CLASSIFICATION OF WORDS

Words can be classified into four types as discussed below:

1. Primary Words.
2. Compound Words
3. Primary Derivatives
4. Secondary Derivatives

1) **Primary Words:** Words which belong to the original stocks of the words and are not derived or compounded or developed from other words are called Primary Words.

For Examples

Moon, go, boy, stand, sun, day, college, girl, hotel, write, sit, walk, dot, book, pin, he, she, etc.

2) **Compound Words:** The Compound Words are formed by joining two or more Primary Words. Though most compound words are Nouns, Adjectives and Verbs, these can also be pronoun, adverb, conjunction, preposition etc.

For Example:

Moonlight, boyhood, He-man, nevertheless, etc.

3) **Primary Derivatives:** Primary Derivatives are formed by making some changes in the body of the Primary Words. These can be:

i) **Formation of Nouns from Verbs:**

- Seat from sit
- Choice from choose
- Chip from chop
- Food from feed
- Fleet from float
- Attraction from attract

- Bite from bit
- Bond from bind
- Birth from bear
- Gift from give
- Proof from prove
- Sight from see
- Gait from go
- Death from die
- Seed from sow
- Web from weave
- Watch from wake
- Speech from speak
- Sale from sell
- Song from sing
- Success from succeed

**ii) Formation of Nouns from Adjectives:**

- Depth from deep
- Heat from hot
- Justice from just
- Pride from proud
- Vanity from vain
- Poverty from poor
- Morality from moral
- Safety from safe

- Vitality from vital
- Width from wide
- Reality from real
- Height from high
- Bravery from brave
- Freedom from free
- Brevity from brief
- Chastity from chaste
- Urgency from urgent
- Privacy from private
- Truth from true
- Piety from pious

**iii) Formation of Adjectives from Verbs:**

- Cold from cool
- Low from lie

**iv) Formation of Adjectives from Nouns:**

- Bookish from book
- Dutiful from duty
- Circular from circle
- Famous from fame
- Advisable from advice
- Daily from day
- Customary from custom
- Icy from ice

- Hairy from hair
  - Joyous from joy
  - Magical from magic
  - Needful from need
  - National from nation
  - Only from one
  - Habitual from habit
- v) **Formation of Verbs from Nouns:**
- Bathe from bath
  - Encage from cage
  - Encode from code
  - Befriend from friend
  - Hasten from haste
  - Enjoy from joy
  - Terrify from terror
  - Drop from drip
  - Encircle from circle
  - Vitiate from vice
  - Knit from knot
  - Live from life
  - Graze from grass
  - Believe from belief
  - Behead from head
  - Amass from mass

- Befool from fool

**vi) Formation of Verbs from Adjectives:**

- Fatten from fat
- Cheapen from cheap
- Harden from hard
- Lessen from less
- Sharpen from sharp
- Publish from public
- Fill from full
- Rectify from right
- Soften from soft
- Belittle from little
- Justify from just
- Purify from pure
- Ascertain from certain
- Civilize from civil
- Darken from dark
- Refine from fine
- Renew from new

**4) Secondary Derivatives:** Secondary derivatives of a word are formed by adding either a prefix or a suffix to the word.

When we add to the beginning of a word it is called a **Prefix**.

When we add to the end of word it is called a **Suffix**.

The detailed discussion on these classification will be dealt in the next section.

Methods of word formation

#### 14.4 AFFIXATION

Affixation gives rise to the secondary derivatives as discussed above. We add either a prefix or a suffix to a base word to form a new word.

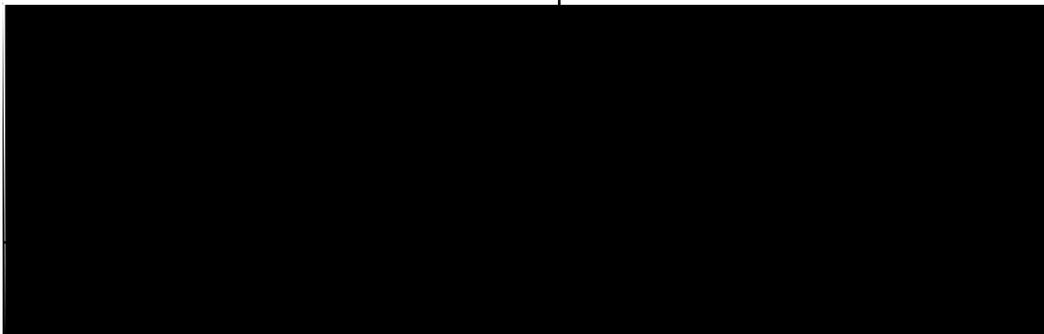
##### Prefixes

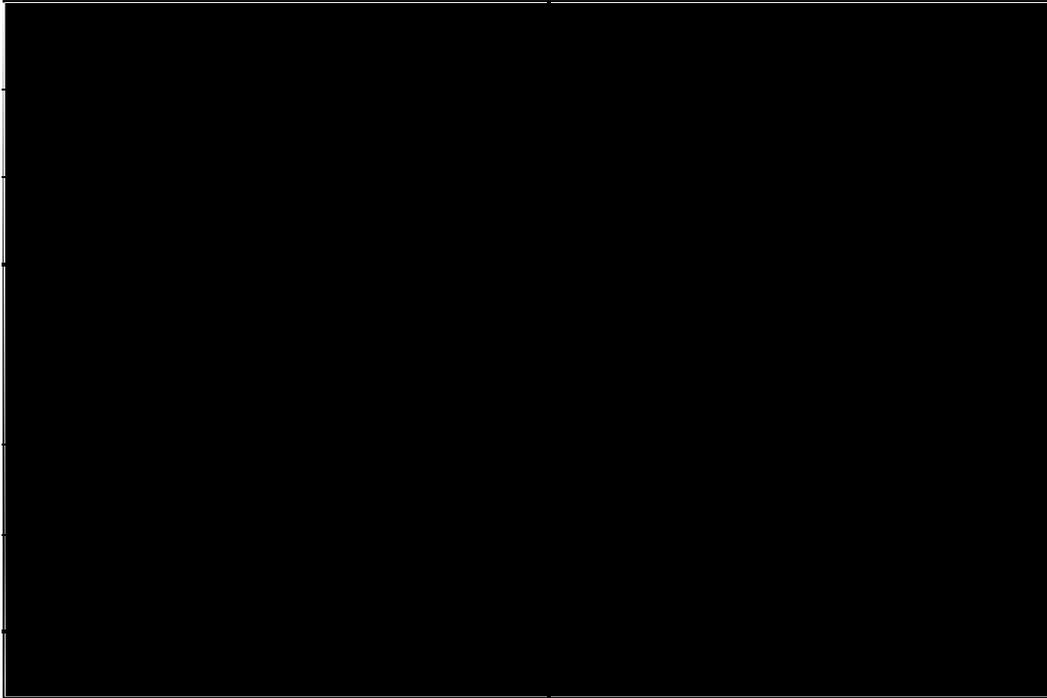
We add prefixes before the base or stem of a word to form a new word. There are many prefixes like un, in, dis, mis, mono, di, tri, post, pre etc.

Prefixes	Examples
<i>mono-</i> means 'one'	<i>monorail, monologue</i>
<i>multi-</i> means 'many'	<i>multipurpose, multicultural</i>
<i>post-</i> means 'after'	<i>post-natal, postgraduate</i>
<i>un-</i> means 'not' or 'opposite to'	<i>undone, undemocratic</i>
<i>tri</i> means three	<i>trisyllabic, tripod</i>
<i>Pre</i> means before	<i>Pre-paid, pre-natal</i>

##### Suffixes

We add suffixes (a syllable) after the base or stem of a word. It derives a new word from the base word. The main purpose of a suffix is to show what class of word it is (e.g. noun or verb , adverb etc.). Suffixation also forms comparative degree and superlative degree . Let us look at the uses of suffixes:





## 14.5 COMPOUNDING

While compounding, we join together two or more bases/morphemes to create a new lexical unit which functions both grammatically and semantically as one word. It may involve the combination of the unchanged base ( as in *taxfree*); or the first element may be in its special combining form ( e.g. *socioeconomic*); or the second element may have a suffix required by the compound type ( e.g. *blue-eyed*); or both elements may have a form that is compound specific ( e.g. *Laundromat*) (Quirk, 1567). Though both the bases in a compound are in principle equally open, they are normally in a relation where the first item identifies a key feature of the second word or the first modifies the second. But this relation needs to be defined in such a way that it is reasonable to classify the second element in terms of the first . This way it can be called prefixation with open class items (Quirk, 1567). For example, the two bases *back* and *fire* can combine to form the compound noun *backfire*, and the two bases *post* and *man* combine to form the compound noun *postman*. Compounds can be written with a space in between

or with a hyphen between the elements or simply with the two roots run together with no separation. The way the word is written does not affect its status as a compound. Native English roots are free morphemes (independent words that can occur by themselves.)

Examples:

- postman (composed of free root *post* and free root *man*)  
mail carrier  
dog house  
fireman

But since English has borrowed from Latin and Greek and in these languages, roots (bound roots) do not stand alone so they preserve this characteristic.

There are a number of subtypes :

Rhyming compounds

These compound from two rhyming words. Examples:

- lovey-dovey
- chiller-killer

There are words that are formally very similar to rhyming compounds, but are not quite compounds in English because the second element is not really a word—it is just a nonsense item added to a root word to form a rhyme.

Examples:

- higgledy-piggledy
- tootsie-wootsie

This formation process is associated in English with child talk (and talk addressed to children), technically called hypocoristic language.

Examples:

Bunnie-wunnie

Henny Penny

Snuggly-wuggly

Georgie Porgie

Piggie-Wiggie

Another word type that looks a bit like rhyming compounds comprises words that are formed of two elements that almost match, but differ in their vowels. Again, the second element is typically a nonsense form:

Pitter-patter

Zigzag

Tick-tock

Riffraff

Flipflop

***Compounds are found in all word classes. Let us see how the Compound Words of Nouns, Adjectives and Verbs are formed.***

Compound Words: Nouns may be formed in the following ways:

**i. Verbless compounds :** Noun + Noun: Here the either first noun/subject or the second noun object powers/operates/produces/yields/contains /controls/ works in connection with the other.

- Cable car
- Coal fire
- Steam engine
- Candlelight
- Chairman
- Postman

- Railway
- Shoemaker
- Windmill
- Teaspoon
- Haystack
- Ringleader
- Jailbird
- Manpower
- Screwdriver
- Tax-payer
- Airman
- Manservant
- Fire-escape
- Chess-board

In this combination, the second noun is/or like/is for/consists of the first noun (subject + complement)

- Blinkerlight
- Pine tree
- Killer shark
- Oak tree
- Manservant
- Catfish
- Cowshed

- Doghouse
- Coffee time
- Goldfish
- Sand dune
- Dust heap

There can be combining-form compounds also where the primary stress falls on the linking vowel of the combining form.. The common second constituents are –meter, -graphy, -ology, -gram etc.

- Psychology
- Agriculture
- Biophysics
- Barometer
- Orthography

**ii.** Adjective + Noun:

Examples:

- Hothouse
- Longboat
- Blueprint
- Blackboard
- Quicksilver
- Stronghold
- Halfpenny

**iii.** Noun (subject or object) and verb compounds: It can be Verb + Noun/  
Noun+verb/Verbal noun in –ing + noun pattern of combination.

Examples:

- Driftwood
- Popcorn
- Tugboat
- Glowworm
- Punch ballBee-sting
- Daybreak
- Cleaning woman
- Washing machine
- Spendthrift
- Makeshift
- Breakfast
- Telltale
- Pick-pocket
- Cut-throat
- Daredevil
- Hangman
- Scarecrow
- Hair-splitter
- Call-girl

iv. Gerund and Noun (subject or object) compounds:

Examples:

- Oath-taking

- Town-planning
  - Writing-desk
  - Looking-glass
  - Walking-stick
  - Blotting-paper
  - Stepping-stone
  - Spelling-book
  - Sight-seeing
  - Typing paper
  - Sleepwalking
  - Handwriting
  - Horse riding
- v. Adverb (or Preposition)+ Noun/-ed or –ing participle:

Examples:

- Outlaw
- Afternoon
- Forethought
- Foresight
- Overcoat
- Downfall
- Afternoon
- Bypass
- Inmate

- Inside
- Home-made
- Ill-bred
- Sweet-smelling
- Far-fetched

vi. Verb + Adverb:

Examples:

- Drawback
- Lock-up
- Go-between
- Die-hard
- Send-off
- vii. Adverb + Verb:

Examples:

- Outset
- Upkeep
- Outcry
- Income
- Outcome

Adjective-compounds: Compound words that can be used as adjectives.

i.) Noun + Adjectives (or Participle):

Examples:

- Blood-red

- Sky-blue
- Snow-white
- Pitch-dark
- Breast-high
- Skin-deep
- Lifelong
- World-wide
- Headstrong
- Homesick
- Stone-blind
- Seasick
- Love-lorn
- Hand-made
- Bed-ridden
- Heart-broken
- Moth-eaten
- Note-worthy

ii) Adjective + Adjective:

Examples:

- Red-hot
- Blue-black
- White-hot
- Dull-grey
- Lukewarm

iii) Adverb + Participle:

Examples:

- Longsuffering
- Everlasting
- Never-ending
- Thorough-bred
- Well-deserved
- Outspoken
- Down-hearted
- Inborn
- Far-seen

iv) Noun + Verb:

- Waylay
- Backbite
- Typewrite
- Browbeat
- Earmark

v) Adjective + Verb:

Examples:

- Safeguard
- Whitewash
- Fulfill

vi) Adverb + Verb:

Examples:

- Overthrow
- Overtake
- Foretell
- Undertake
- Undergo
- Overhear
- Overdo
- Outbid
- Outdo
- Upset
- Ill-use

Learners, if you find it difficult to know where to put hyphens or separate the words that are compounded , look up in a good learner's dictionary.

## **14.6 NEOLOGISM**

A neologism is a completely new word or phrase that is not yet used regularly by most speakers and writers. Language is not something set in stone, but an evolving body of work, subject to adjustment, deletions, additions, and change as happens in the living world. A species which can adapt to its environment survives whereas one that can not goes extinct. As new things are invented, as slang becomes acceptable, and as new technologies emerge, new words must fill in the gaps in language

Loan words

As said earlier, language is a dynamic entity. It has to grow either by giving birth to new words or by giving place to the words from other languages. Words borrowed from other languages are called Loan words. For example

*Hukkah*, *Bazar* and *chapatti* have been borrowed from Indian languages into English. Normally these words are used in their original form but sometimes we inflect them if they are singular countable nouns (*Bazars*, *chapattis*). Let us have a look on some of the loan words and their original places;

- algebra – Arabic
- bagel – Yiddish
- cherub – Hebrew
- chow mein – Chinese
- haiku – Japanese
- murder – French
- paprika – Hungarian
- pizza – Italian

#### New words

In English , new words are formed by compounding, prefixation etc. Recently the prefix *e-* is used to create new words that are connected with the Internet and the use of the Internet:

- *e-banking, e-cards, e-learning, e-commerce*
- *computer virus, carbon footprint, quality time*

#### Derived words

Derived words are words that use ancient Greek and Latin phrases naturalized to match the English language.

Here are a few examples of derived words:

- Latin word: villa

Meaning: villa or house

Derived words: villa, village, villager

- Latin word: copia

Meaning: plenty

Derived words: cornucopia,

Onomatopoeia

Onomatopoeias are words that sound like the sound they describe. Sometimes onomatopoeias are invented for specific sounds. For instance:

- Hush for silence
- Boom for an explosion
- Trin-trin for phone
- Cock-a-doodle-doo for a rooster's call
- Honk for a car horn

#### **14.7 ABBREVIATION**

When we shorten a word, this is called abbreviation. Initialisms are a type of abbreviation formed by the initial letters of a word or phrase. Although abbreviation is largely a convention of written language, sometimes abbreviations carry over into spoken language .

- Lt.-Liter
- cm – centimeter(s)
- Dept. – department
- Dr. – doctor
- Jr. – Junior
- Mr. – Mister
- B.C.E. – Before Common Era
- HIV – Human Immunodeficiency Virus

- i.e. – id est [that is]
- RSVP – répondez s'il vous plait

#### **14.8 CLIPPING**

We shorten or 'clip' one or more syllables from a word commonly from proper names for people:

- *Ad* is the clipped version of *advertisement*
- *Lab* is the clipped version of *laboratory*
- *Univ* is the clipped version of *University*

Some more examples

- Gasoline – gas
- Gymnasium – gym
- Influenza – flu
- Mathematics – math
- Memorandum – memo
- Photograph – photo
- Public house – pub
- Reputation – rep
- telephone – phone

#### **14.9 ACRONYMS**

Here the initial letters of two or more words are combined in a way that produces consonant and vowel sequences found in words. These are normally pronounced as words:

- GAD: General Administration Department.

- RAM: Random Access Memory
- WiFi: Wireless Fidelity
- Sometimes Initials are similar to acronyms but are pronounced as sets of letters, not as words:
- WHO: World Health Organisation, pronounced W–H–O
- CD: compact Disc, pronounced as C-D

Blending.

Blending is one of the most common in word formation processes in English. It is a creative art in the sense that speakers take two words and merge them based not on morpheme structure but on sound structure.

So, here we blend , combine or merge the sounds and meanings of two or more other words or word parts to form a new word. It is also known as a portmanteau word.

- *Brunch* is a blend of Breakfast and Lunch
- *Blog* is a blend of web and log
- *Motel*: blend of motor and hotel

Some more examples

- Electrocute (electricity + execute)
- Affluenza (affluent + influenza)
- Agitprop (agitation + propaganda)
- Biopic (biography + picture)
- Camcorder (camera + recorder)
- Cosmeceutical (cosmetic + pharmaceutical)
- Emoticon (emote + icon)
- Flare (flame + glare)

- Glimmer (gleam + shimmer)
- Infotainment (information + entertainment)

One common type of blend is a full word followed by a word part which is called a splinter, as in *motorcade* (*motor* + *cavalcade*), *sportscast* (sports + broadcast) & *workaholic* (work + alcoholic)

Blends are also formed through compounding which we have discussed earlier.

#### 14.10 CONVERSION

In conversion we change and use a word from one word class to/for another word class.

For example

- I will text you this information. (A verb from the noun text)
- This download has been successful. (noun from verb download)
- No ifs and buts . (noun from conjunction if )
- I have seen a lot of ups and downs in life. (nouns from prepositions)

#### 14.11 BACK FORMATION

When we remove a part of a word, which appears like a suffix or a prefix, this is called back formation. In this case, usually we form verbs from nouns.

For example, *to liaise* has been formed from the noun *liaison* after removing *-on* and adding *-e*. Similarly *to enthuse* has been back formed from the noun *enthusiasm*.

I will liaise with John and finalize the schedule for this event.

The child has been enthusing about her new school.

#### 14.12 CALQUE

In this word formation process, a borrowed word or phrase is translated from one language to another.

For example:

- Beer garden has been calqued from German word Biergarten
- Blue-blood has been calqued from Spanish word sangre azul
- Flea market has been calqued from French word marché aux puces
- Free verse has been calqued from French word vers libre
- loanword has been calqued from German word Lehnwort
- Pineapple has been calqued from Dutch word pijnappel
- scapegoat has been calqued from Hebrew word ez ozel
- wisdom tooth has been calqued from Latin word dēns sapientiae
- Calques are also referred to as root-for-root or word-for-word translations.

#### 14.13 LET US SUM UP

Dear learners, in this lesson we discussed another very interesting component of language which makes the language dynamic and growing entity. Learning word formation helps you in using language freely. It facilitates your spoken and writing skills. Revise the instructions before we proceed to practice in our self-check exercise.

#### 14.14 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Exercise-I

Make nouns from the following verbs and use them in sentences:

- deal .....
- dig .....
- float .....
- deem .....

- e. bear .....
- f. wake.....
- g. sit .....
- h. gape .....
- i. gird .....
- j. grieve.....
- k. weave.....

Exercise-II

Use the appropriate form of word in brackets to complete the sentences.

- a. Kashmir is known for.....of Apples.(produce)
- b. If you can ..... the interviewer , you will get the job.(impression)
- c. This is my greatest ..... (achieve)
- d. Swaminathan is known for his vast.....in this field. (know)
- e. This place is.....for spices and mines. (fame)
- f. His .....never came between him and his success. (disable)
- g. He was disallowed to enter the hall for his .....record in the past. (crime)
- h. Your ..... has always helped me to do the rightful thing. (guide)
- i. The entire world was surprised at his.....to submit and let others win. (refuse)
- j. The bank charges no tax on your limited .....(save)

- k. Can we purchase few ..... with this amount. (equip)
- l. This house has an excellent.....to attract anyone. (surround)
- m. The policies of this government have not been..... (effect)
- n. The .....of this building is least..... (enter, impression)
- o. Gardening can also be a..... hobby. (profit)
- p. He was asked to prepare a detailed..... of the project. (estimate)
- q. He performed his task in a really ..... and astonishing way. (wonder)
- r. That teacher can not .....punishment to this child. (just)
- s. Do not go by....., these can be deceptive. (appear)
- t. She was the most ..... woman around the neighbourhood during her times. (fashion)
- u. I want to have a .....explanation for the answer. (science)
- v. What is the ..... qualification for this job. (desire)
- w..... words hurt more than sticks. (abuse).
- x. I can not understand the reason of his .....towards me. (hostile)
- y. She has a .....to put on weight despite exercises. (tend)
- z. The group had a ..... escape during the storm. (fortune)

### Exercise-III

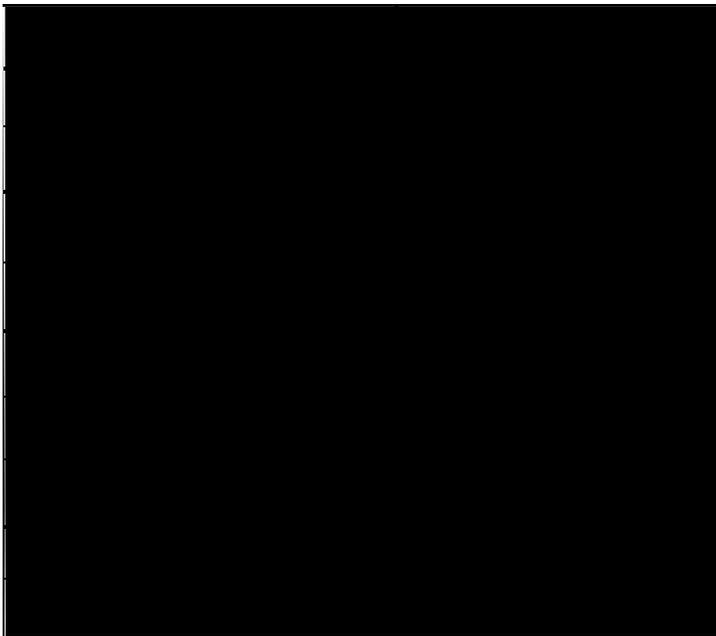
Add the prefixes or suffixes to the words in brackets and use them in the given sentences.

- a. He was found ..... when he was asked how to reach the station. (clue)
- b. Chetan is a .....son. (duty)

- c. We must be aware of the ..... prevailing in the society. (practice)
- d. My Experiments with Truth is Gandhiji's ..... (biography)
- e. He was taken to task for his.....conduct. (care)
- f.....in any form is condemnable. (cruel)
- g. He surprised us with his ..... behaviour. (sensitive)
- h. How could you.....many precious lives with your careless driving? (danger)
- i. He is applying to .....his license.(new)
- j. The things here are in utter state of..... (order)

Exercise-IV

Match the following words to form compounds and use them in the sentences below



- a. Your this act has started a.....discussion.
- b. These day my son is enrolled in a.....in computers.
- c. He has been honored with a.....award.
- d. The world shall always envy our..... relationship.
- e. You are fined Rs. 500/- in violation of rules. This is no.....
- f. The rich have never cared for the upliftment of the.....
- g. What will the.....of this property after ten years?
- h. He is known for his..... and rude behaviour.
- i. Singing is his..... talent.
- j. Only a team of.....people can do this task successfully.

Exercise-V

Write the adjectives of the following words:

- a. Rhythm .....
- b. System .....
- c. Nation .....
- d. Stability .....
- e. Ugliness .....
- f. Elect .....
- g. Demonstrate .....
- h. Fertile .....
- i. Presence .....
- j. Offend .....
- k. Compete .....

l. Watch .....

Answer Key:

Exercise-I

- a. Dole from deal
- b. Dike from dig
- c. Fleet from float
- d. Doom from deem
- e. Bier from bear
- f. Watch from wake
- g. Seat from sit
- h. Gap from gape
- i. Girth from gird
- j. Grief from grieve
- k. Woof from weave

Exercise-II

- |                |                         |                |                |
|----------------|-------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| a. production  | b. impress              | c. achievement | d. knowledge   |
| e. famous      | f. disability           | g. criminal    | h. guidance    |
| i. refusal     | j. savings              | k. equipments. | l. surrounding |
| m. effective   | n. entrance, impressive | o. profitable  |                |
| p. estimate    | q. wonderful            | r. justify     | s. appearances |
| t. fashionable | u. scientific           | v. desirable   | w. abusive     |
| x. hostility   | y. tendency             | z. fortunate   |                |

### Exercise-III

- a. clueless      b. dutiful      c. malpractices      d. autobiography  
e. careless      f. cruelty      g. insensitive/hypersensitive  
h. endanger      i. renew      j. disorder

### Exercise-IV

- a. Never-ending      b. crash course      c. well-deserved      d. everlasting  
e. thoroughfare      f. downtrodden      g. market-value      h. outspoken  
i. inborn      j. like-minded

### Exercise-V

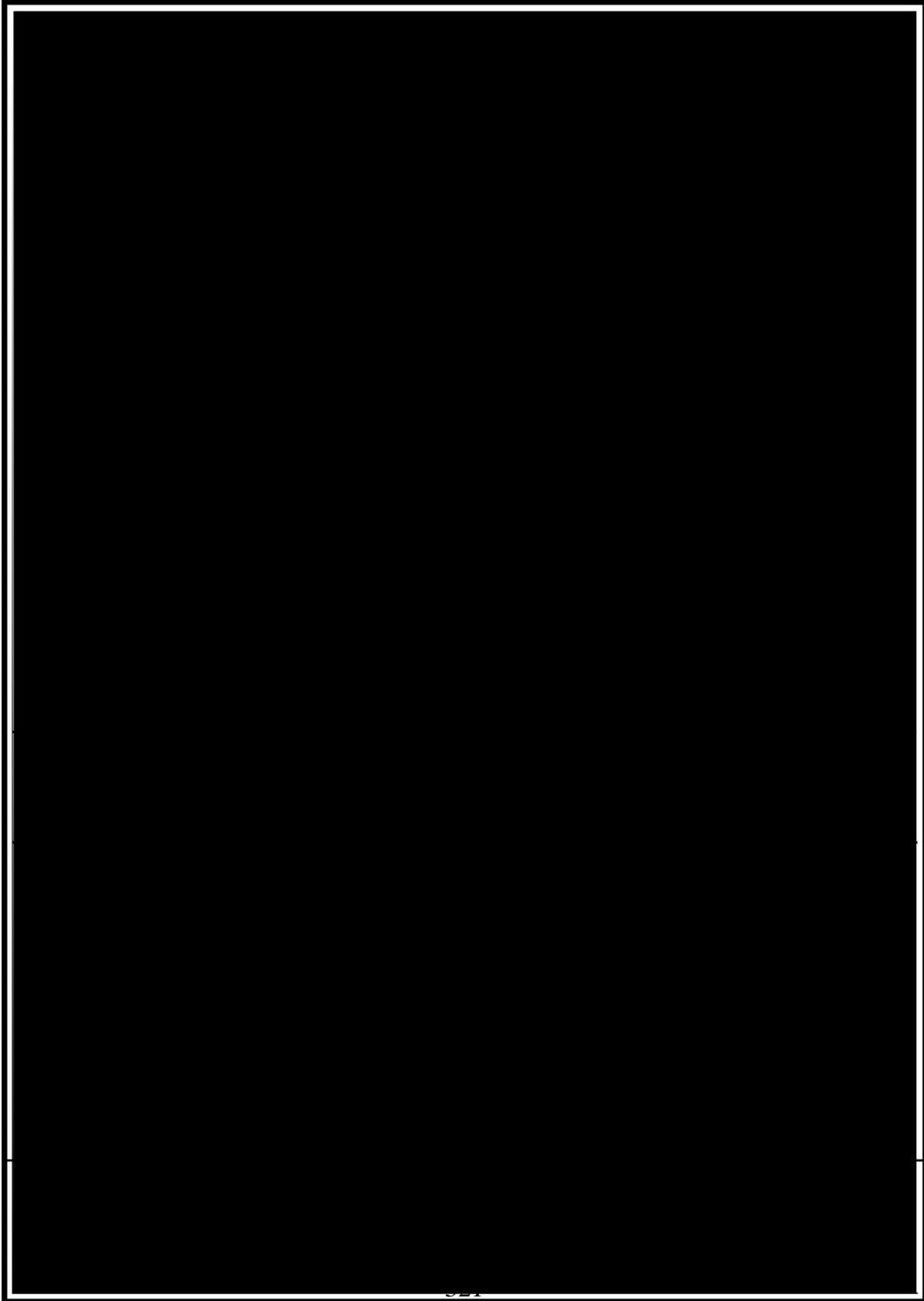
- a. Rhythmic  
b. Systematic  
c. National  
d. Stable  
e. Ugly  
f. Elective  
g. Demonstration  
h. Fertility  
i. Present  
j. Offending  
k. Competitive

### 14.15 SUGGESTED READING

- Balasubranian, T. *A Textbook of Phonetics for Indian Students* 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. India: Macmillan, 1981.

- Rajimwale, Sharad. *Introduction to English Phonetics, Phonology & Morphemes*. Jaipur & New Delhi :Rawat publications.1997.
- Ladefoged, Peter and Keith Johnson. *A Course in Phonetics*,7<sup>th</sup> Ed.USA: Cengage Learning, 2015.
- Arnold, G.F. *Stress in English Words*.North Holla Publishing Co.,1957.
- Bansal,R.K., J.B. Harrison.*Spoken English*.Orient Longman,2005.
- Wells, J.C. *Accents of English : Beyond the British Isles*. Cambridge, 1982.
- Das, B. K. *Functional Grammar and Spoken and Written Communication in English*.Orient Longman , 2006.

\*\*\*\*\*



## **B.A./B.COM : GENERAL ENGLISH (AA-201)**

---

### **SEMESTER - II**

---

#### ***COURSE CONTRIBUTORS :***

- **Dr. Anupama Vohra**
- **Dr. Jasleen Kaur**
- **Ms. Parveen Kumari**
- **Dr. Shubhra Jamwal**
- **Ms. Nusrat Chowdhary**
- **Dr. Garima Gupta**
- **Dr. Sadaf Shah**
- **Prof. Sudhir Singh**

---

© Directorate of Distance Education, University of Jammu, 2021

---

- All rights reserved. No part of this work may be reproduced in any form, by mimeograph or any other means, without permission in writing from the DDE, University of Jammu.
- The script writer shall be responsible for the lesson/script submitted to the DDE and any plagiarism shall be his/her entire responsibility.