

# READING COMPREHENSION

## CHAPTER-1

### UNSEEN PASSAGES

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### Introduction

- The word 'comprehension' means to fully understand the text using one's intellect. A comprehension passage is a text set for testing the reader's ability to comprehend (understand) the meaning being implied by the text and the theme of that particular passage. The students need to fully understand the text by using their intellect.
- Questions based on a passage generally appear as a chronological relationship with the passage. Usually, the first question has the answer in the initial paragraphs and so on, but if the answers are inferential, then the matter might have to be collected from various paragraphs and for this, one needs to be familiar with the entire passage.

#### Types of Comprehension Passage :

1. **Factual Passages :** As the name suggests, factual passages give some facts, be it historical or about the achievements of a particular person. They can also provide instructions. They can be reports or even descriptions of something.
2. **Discursive Passages :** These kinds of passages involve an opinion. They have a logical flow and are argumentative in nature.
3. **Literary Passages :** These are the extracts from a literary piece.

### Tips to Know

#### How to read a Passage for Comprehension :

Following are some guidelines that should be followed while attempting an unfamiliar passage:

1. Read silently. Do not read aloud.
2. Read the entire sentence together to make out the sense or meaning.
3. Read the passage thoroughly to determine the main idea before you have a good look at the questions.
4. Read the passage thoroughly first and then the questions.
5. Give a second reading to the passage. This time keep marking the points you feel, can be the answers to the asked questions.
6. Don't panic about the words you do not understand.
7. Go through the questions carefully and re-read the part again which contains the answer.
8. Initially, if you are unable to understand the meaning of a word, try to make out the meaning of that particular word in context of the passage.
9. Maintain the order in which the questions appear in the test paper.



## WRITING

### CHAPTER-2

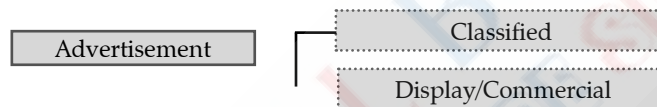
## SHORT WRITING TASKS

### 1. CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

#### Introduction

- An advertisement is a type of public announcement for the promotion of services, goods etc. or for giving information about missing persons, pets etc.
- It is an announcement made through a popular medium that targets a large number of people.
- It can be through print or electronic medium. Newspapers, Magazines, TVs and Radios are usually used for advertising. The content of advertisement is kept brief, words used are limited, and the English used is not necessarily grammatically correct.

There are two basic types of advertisements in the newspapers or magazines.



**1. Classified Advertisements:** These are placed by individuals in newspapers or magazines to advertise their services offered or because of the need for goods and services. Classified advertisements are charged according to the space they occupy; therefore, they are written with limited words, conveying the complete message.

**2. Display Advertisements:** These advertisements are attractive; they convey the complete message and are usually included under the category of posters.

#### Categories of Classified Advertisements

##### 1. Situation Vacant: Title/Heading

- Wanted/Required/Situation Vacant
- Name of the post
- Number of posts
- Qualification
- Preferences
- Salary
- To whom and how to apply

##### 2. To Let:

- Type of accommodation
- Size
- Facilities
- Preferences
- Contact address and phone number

##### 3. Sale/Purchase of Property or Vehicle:

- Available/sale/purchase
- Type of accommodation/vehicle
- Description of accommodation—size, facilities, location etc.
- Description of vehicle—vehicle model, colour, accessories, condition etc.

##### 4. Tours & Travels:

- Destination & Duration
- Details of facilities—stay, boarding, food etc.

- Cost and discount
- Package, if any
- Travel agency: address and phone number.

#### 5. Educational

- Name of the institution/past record
- Courses offered
- Eligibility condition
- Facilities and fee-structure
- Last date for registration
- Contact address and phone number.

### Format:

#### SITUATION VACANT

*Required: Senior Manager for a reputed MNC in Gurgaon. Candidates must be MBA, with 3 years' work experience, fluent in English, having pleasing personality, and open to rotational shifts. Salary negotiable.*

*Send latest resume to abc@infotech.com.*

## 2. NOTICE WRITING

### Introduction

- Notices are short compositions written to convey some information or make a formal announcement about some events like change of name. They are simple and lucid in style. The notices are either posted on the notice board meant for the purpose or given in a newspaper.

### Some Useful Tips

- Notice carries 3 marks.
- It usually begins with 'This is to inform' or 'It is hereby informed that'.
- The notice should always answer the questions 'What', 'Where' and 'When'.
- The signing off should have a signature, name and designation of the person in charge.
- The word limit of the body should not exceed 50 words.
- The word 'NOTICE' along with a proper title and the issuing organisation should be mentioned.
- Date of issuing the notice should be mentioned.
- The name and designation of the person writing the notice should be mentioned. He/she should sign it too.
- It should be written in a box.
- Write in third person. Also, the language should be formal yet brief, simple and easily comprehended.

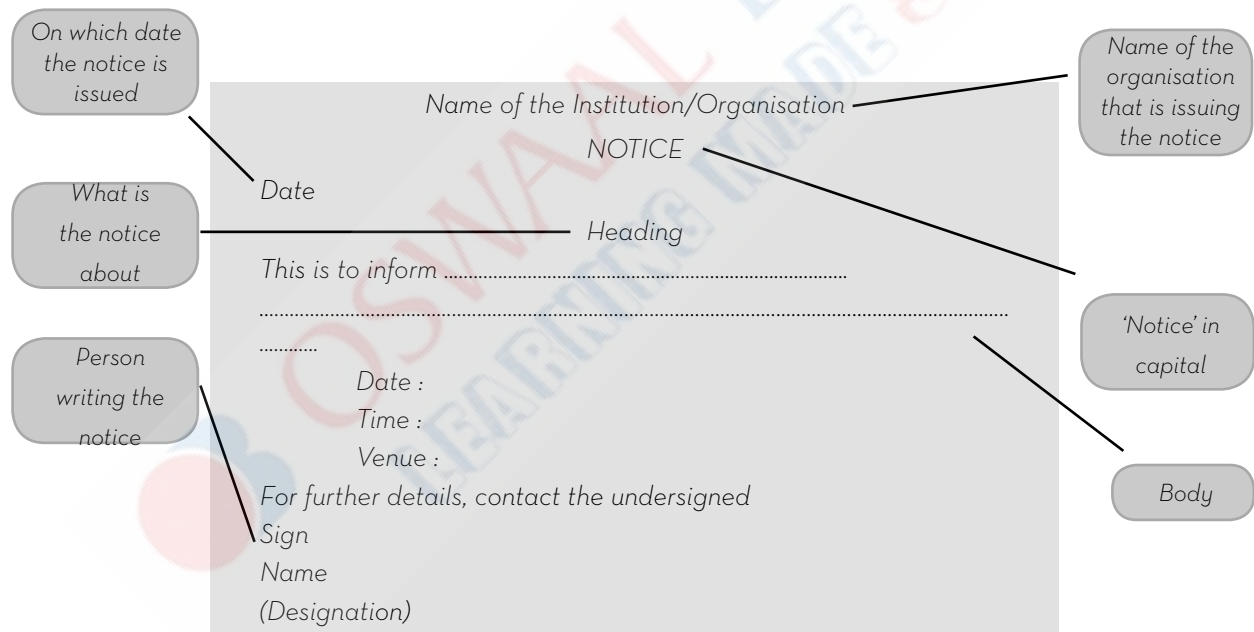
Notices can be categorized under the following heads:

1. **Meeting :**
  - Date, Time, Place
  - Agenda, Purpose, Objective
  - Chief Presiding person (if any)
  - Additional information
  - Contact Address
2. **Events :**
  - Name
  - Objective, Occasion
  - Date, Time, Duration, Venue
  - Who can participate

- Additional information (if any)  
Contact Address
3. **Lost & Found :** Name of the article lost or found  
Date, place and time  
Specific marks for identification  
Contents  
Whom, when, where to contact
4. **Tours & Camps :** Name of the Club/Association  
Objective  
Name of the destination  
Duration  
Occasion  
Expenditure  
Additional information (if any)  
Contact address

## Format

The Format should include : Name of the institution (issuing authority) / Notice/Title, Date and Writer's name with designation :



## LONG WRITING TASKS

### 1. LETTER TO AN EDITOR

(Giving Suggestions or Opinion on issues of Public Interest)

## Introduction

- Letter writing is an art. Therefore, it must aim at a certain standard of form and elegance. While writing a letter, we must always think of the person to whom we are writing. The subject matter, no doubt, is important, but we must write it in a way which will make the letter interesting to the person receiving

it. A letter written rustically may contain useful information, but it may lack in elegance, and violate the norms which require a good taste. Therefore, one must observe certain standards of form and good taste in the order and structure of one's letters. This means that there should be no carelessness about it, and it should not suggest discourtesy and indifference to the person addressed.

- We should always remember that letter plays an important role in maintaining our communication and relations with friends and relatives, as well as establishing commercial and other kinds of relations with foreigners.

### Classification of Letters

Letters may be divided into the following classes :

1. **Business or Official Letters** : For making enquiries, registering complaints, asking for and giving information, placing orders and sending replies.
2. **Letter to the Editor** : Giving suggestions or opinion on issues of public interest.
3. **Application for a Job** : Forwarding your resume for a job opportunity.

**Salutations & Subscriptions :**

<b>Family &amp; friends —</b>	Dear..	Yours affectionately/ lovingly Or Your loving friend/ son etc.
<b>Strangers —</b>	Dear Sir/ Madam	Yours truly
<b>Business Persons/ Officials —</b>	Sir	Yours truly/ sincerely
<b>Principal/ Teachers —</b>	Respected Sir/ Madam Or Sir/Madam	Yours obediently Or Yours faithfully
<b>Editors —</b>	Sir	Yours truly/ sincerely

**Useful Expressions**

<b>Enquiry —</b>	I am writing to enquire about Please let us know We'll be glad if you
<b>Complaint —</b>	It is a matter of great regret that ..... This is to bring to your notice that ..... This is to complain .....
<b>Request —</b>	I would be grateful if ..... Kindly oblige me by .....
<b>For job application —</b>	With reference to your advertisement dated X/X/XXXX, I offer myself as a candidate ..... Through some reliable sources, I have come to know that .....

**To Conclude :**

- (i) Looking forward to your reply.
- (ii) Thanking you in anticipation for a positive reply.
- (iii) With warm regards.

## Format of a Formal Letter

1. Sender's address
2. Date
3. Receiver's address
4. Subject/ heading
5. Salutation
6. Complimentary close

*Sender's Address*  
 .....  
 .....

*Date*  
*Receiver's Address*  
 .....  
 .....

*Subject : Underline the Subject*  
*Dear Sir,* .....

..... *Body* .....

.....

*Yours Sincerely*  
*Signature*  
*(NAME)*

## 2. ARTICLE WRITING

### Introduction

**Article** : An article is a written work, published in printed/electronic form for the purpose of propagating news, and analysis of results or academics. It is related to one topic, subject or theme.

### Format of an Article

*Heading* .....

..... *Introduction* .....

.....

..... *Content/Problem/Opinion* .....

.....

..... *Solution/Conclusion* .....

.....

.....

## Literature - Flamingo

### Prose

## CHAPTER-1 : THE LAST LESSON

–Alphonse Daudet (1840-1897)

### Introduction

'The Last Lesson' is set against the backdrop of the Franco-Prussian war (1870–71) in which France was defeated by Prussia in the war led by Bismark. Prussia, then consisted of what now are the nations of Germany, Poland and parts of Austria. In this story, the French districts of Alsace and Lorraine have passed into Prussian hands. This story also shows the effect of this incident on the normal life in the schools. It also highlights the pain that was inflicted upon the people of a territory by the conquerors, who took away the rights of the people to study or speak their own language.

### Summary

As Franz started very late for his school that morning, he was in great fear, especially because his teacher Mr. Hamel had said that he would put up questions on participles and Franz did not know anything about it. For a moment, he thought of running away and spend the day out. It was a warm and bright day. Birds were twittering outside and soldiers were practicing. All these things were more attractive than the rules of participles, but anyhow, he forced himself to move hurriedly towards the school.

When he was passing the town hall, there was a crowd in front of the bulletin board. For the last two years, all the bad news like the lost battles and the orders of the commanding officers, had been displayed on that notice-board. "What could be the matter then?", he thought without stopping.

The blacksmith, who had read the bulletin, told Franz not to hurry. There was plenty of time he had told him, but Franz did not slow down. He thought that the blacksmith was poking fun at him.

Franz wanted to reach his desk unnoticed. He hoped that there would be noise and commotion as usual. He depended on this noise and bustle to reach his desk unnoticed. However, he was surprised. Instead, he found the school quiet. Students were sitting quietly in their seats. Mr. Hamel was not rapping his ruler on the table. He was moving up and down with the ruler under his arm. He too looked grave and quiet.

There was no chance of Franz entering the room unnoticed. He had to open the door and enter before everybody else. Unexpectedly, Mr. Hamel did not rebuke him. Instead, he spoke kindly to him and told him to go to his desk. When Franz had settled down, he looked at Mr. Hamel. There was another surprise for him.

Mr. Hamel had put on his beautiful green coat, his frilled shirt and his embroidered black silk cap. He used to put on these clothes only on special occasions, but it was no special day. Franz could not understand why Mr. Hamel had put on those Sunday clothes.

There was still another surprise in store for Franz. There were village people on the back benches that had always been empty. The former Mayor, the former Post Master, the old Hauser with his triangular cap and some other village people occupied those back benches.

Mr. Hamel climbed up his chair and spoke to his pupils in a gentle and serious tone. He told them that an order had come from Berlin. French would not be taught to them anymore. Instead, German was going to be taught and the new teacher was expected to arrive the very next day. The students were going to have their last lesson in French that day. Now, he knew, what order was there on the bulletin board, and why the blacksmith had told him not to hurry. He could also see why Mr. Hamel had put on his best clothes.

Mr. Hamel's words struck Franz like a thunderbolt. He was lost in thoughts. He had hardly learnt how to read and write, he felt that he would have to stop forever. He was sorry to have wasted his time. He had always been enjoying himself outdoors. He had hated his books. He had dreaded Mr. Hamel and his iron ruler, but his attitude suddenly changed. He felt that his books were good companions. He did not mind Mr. Hamel's ruler and rebukes.

Now, he also understood why the people of the village were there. They were also sorry that they had not been to school for much time. Now, they had come to thank the teacher for his faithful service.

Mr. Hamel asked Franz to tell the rule for the participle. Franz wished he could tell the rule, but he failed miserably.

Mr. Hamel did not scold Franz. He said Franz was not the only person to blame. The people of Alsace had never been interested in learning. The people always put it off till the next day. Franz's parents wanted Franz to earn some money instead of going to school. Mr. Hamel said they were strange Frenchmen who could not write or read their own language. He also blamed himself. He said sometimes he had closed the school when he had wanted to go fishing.

Mr. Hamel, then, praised his mother tongue. He said that French is the most beautiful, most logical and clearest language in the world. He exhorted the people to stick to it. He assured them that if they held fast to their language, they would be able to get rid of the Prussian rulers. Their language was the key to their freedom from slavery.

It was Mr. Hamel's last day at school, but he had the courage and devotion to do his teaching work as usual. He taught grammar. He gave writing exercises. He asked little children to trace their fishhooks. Franz listened to his lesson attentively. He felt Hamel had explained the lesson so clearly which he had never done before. It appeared to him that on that last day, he wanted to give his pupils all the knowledge he had.

The church clock struck twelve. It was the time for the school to close. Mr. Hamel wanted to say something, but he was overwhelmed with emotions. He wrote "Vive La France" on the blackboard and with a wave of his hand, dismissed the class.



## CHAPTER-2 : LOST SPRING (STORIES OF STOLEN CHILDHOOD)

—Anees Jung

### Introduction

This story is written by a famous short-story writer Anees Jung. She was born in Rourkela and spent her childhood and adolescence in Hyderabad. She received her education in Hyderabad and in the United States of America. She began her career as a writer in India. She has been an editor and columnist for major newspapers in India and abroad and has authored many books. The following is an excerpt from her book titled 'Lost Spring, Stories of Stolen Childhood'. Here, she writes about the utter poverty and traditions which force children to a life of exploitation. Anees Jung highlights the utter destitution of ragpickers of Seemapuri and the bangle makers of Firozabad. They can be seen loitering around near the heaps of garbage to find a rupee note or a coin or something that they can sell. They have no school to go to, no work to do. They are neglected by society as well as by their parents. For most of us, they do not seem to exist.

The ragpickers' families in Seemapuri came from Bangladesh because their fields were washed away and they were forced to starve. The other part of the story deals with the unenviable lot of the poor bangle makers of Firozabad. They have been traditional bangle makers. They are poor, illiterate, and fatalists. They cannot alter their lot. They find themselves caught in the web of middlemen and moneylenders who are supported by law enforcing authorities and they live in filth and squalor. About 2000 children help their parents in bangle making. Though this type of child labour is illegal, yet it goes on unabated.

One of the children, Mukesh wants to give up his work. He dreams to be a motor mechanic. However, he will have to cross a few hurdles before he can realise his dream.

### Summary

**'Sometimes I find a rupee in the garbage.'**

The author comes across a boy, Saheb every morning. She always found him searching for something in a heap of garbage. When he was asked why he did it, he replied, 'I have nothing else to do.' She told him to go to the school, but there was no school in his neighbourhood. She told him that she was going to start a school. Saheb was happy. He would go to her school, but she did not intend to start a school.

Saheb's full name was Saheb-e-Alam. It means the 'Lord of the Universe'. However, the poor boy wandered on roads along with other barefooted poor boys like him. The author talked to the other companions of Saheb. One of the barefooted boys said his mother would not bring his chappals down from the shelf. One of them was wearing shoes though they did not match. Another boy who never had footwear, wished he had a pair of shoes.

Many children walk barefoot. Some people argue that lack of money is not the reason. It is a tradition to walk barefoot, but the author does not agree with them. She asserts that perpetual state of poverty is the real cause. Some children are lucky. Their prayers to get shoes have been granted, but the rag pickers remain barefoot.



The ragpickers live in Seemapuri. Therefore, the author went there. Seemapuri is very close to Delhi, but there is a world of difference between the two.

Like all other families of rag pickers, Saheb's family came from Bangladesh in 1971. They came there because their homes and fields were destroyed by floods. They had nothing to live on.

About 10,000 rag pickers live in Seemapuri. They live in mud structures with roofs of tin and tarpaulin. They lack all civic amenities like sewage and running water. Living in Seemapuri enables them to cast their votes. They move about and pitch their tents wherever they can find food. Rag-picking is their sole means of earning a livelihood.

Saheb used to stand outside a club. He watched two young men playing tennis. Tennis fascinated him. He wished to play tennis. Someone gave him a pair of discarded tennis shoes. Half of his dream came true. Of course, playing tennis was out of his reach.

Saheb got a job at a tea stall. He was paid 800 rupees a month and all meals. Still, he was not happy. He lost his carefree look and his freedom. He was no longer his own master.

**'I want to drive a car.'**

The author visited Firozabad. Firozabad is famous for its bangle making industry. Almost every other family in Firozabad is engaged in making of glass bangles for women all over India. Glass bangles are a symbol of bliss for a married woman's life.

She came across a boy named Mukesh. His family too was engaged in manufacturing bangles. Mukesh took her to his house. They went through stinking lanes choked with garbage. Families of bangle makers lived there. Their houses had crumbling walls and wobbly doors.

They entered Mukesh's house which was like any other house in the lane. A frail young woman was cooking meals on a firewood stove. Her eyes were filled with smoke. She greeted the author with a smile. She was the wife of Mukesh's elder brother. She was respected as the daughter-in-law of the family. Mukesh's father also came in. The daughter-in-law covered her face with her veil as the custom demanded.

Mukesh's father was old and weak. He had lost his eyes working on furnaces at polishing bangles. He had worked hard all his life, but he could not afford to send his two sons to school. He could only teach them the art of making bangles. He had built the house but could not repair it. Mukesh's grandmother expressed her belief in destiny. She said that on account of their *karam* (deeds) they were born in the bangle makers' caste. It was their destiny to suffer and no man could change what was ordained by fate. In fact, her belief was shared by all.

Another woman told the author that despite hard work, they had never had a full meal in their whole life.

The author could see bangles everywhere. She saw boys and girls sitting with parents before flickering oil lamps. They welded pieces of coloured glass that she had learnt. Their eyes got used to dark and they lost their eyesight before they were adults. At home, families worked hard all day before furnaces with high temperatures. All the operations of bangle making cause blindness.

Generation after generation, families of bangle makers have been engaged in making bangles. They live in poverty, they work hard, and die in poverty. Nothing has changed with the passage of time. They find themselves in the clutches of middlemen and moneylenders. The police and the administration do not help them. If they try to pull out of the vicious circle, they are in trouble. The police beats them up and puts them in jail.

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## CHAPTER-3 : DEEP WATER

—William Douglas

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### Introduction

William Douglas (1898–1980) was born in Maine, Minnesota. After graduating with a Bachelor of Arts in English and Economics, he spent two years teaching at a high school in Yakima. He was an advisor and a friend to President Roosevelt. Douglas was a leading advocate of individual rights. He retired in 1975 with a term lasting thirty-six years and remained for a time the longest period—serving justice in the history of the court. 'Deep Water' has been taken from his book 'Of Men and Mountains'. It was his personal experience. It reveals how as a young boy, William Douglas nearly drowned in a swimming pool. In this extract, he talks about his fear of water and thereafter, how he finally overcame it.

## Summary

Douglas was about four years old. He visited a beach with his father. They stood in the surf. A powerful wave swept him and knocked him down. He was terrified. He had avoided water since then.

When Douglas was about eleven years old, he had a desire to learn swimming. The Yakima River was treacherous. Many people had drowned in it. His mother advised him never to try to swim in it, but the Y.M.C.A pool was safe. It was only two to three feet deep at its shallow end. The other end was about nine feet deep and the drop was gradual.

Douglas decided to learn swimming there. He bought a pair of water wings and went to the pool. He paddled with water wings. He imitated others.

One day he was sitting all alone on the edge of the pool, when a well-built young man came there. He looked at skinny Douglas and out of mirth, picked him up and tossed him into the deepest part of the pool. Douglas hit the water surface in a sitting position and began to sink to the bottom slowly. Douglas was terrified, but he could think of a plan to save himself. He decided to spring from the bottom of the pool as soon as his toes touched it.

He hoped he would pop like a cork to the surface. Then, he would lie flat and paddle to the edge of the pool.

As soon as his toes touched the tiled floor of the pool, Douglas bounced with all his strength. But he did not rise quickly. He came up slowly. He opened his eyes. He could see only water. He grew panicky. He was suffocating. He tried to shout, but there was no sound. Finally, his eyes and nose came out of the water. He beat his arms. He tried to raise his legs. But they hung like dead weights. He felt something was pulling him downward again.

Once again, he slipped downwards. He had spent all his energy. His lungs ached and his head throbbed. He was getting dizzy. Fortunately, he could remember his strategy. Once again, he sprang from the bottom of the pool. He was paralysed, stiff and rigid. But when he jumped, he could see only water around him. Then, suddenly he reached the surface. His eyes and nose came out of water. But he began to go down once again.

Once again, he began to drift downwards. He could make no effort. He was relaxed. There was no fear. There was no panic. It was all quiet and peaceful. He felt as if he were floating in space. He was unconscious. When Douglas regained his consciousness, he realised that he had been saved. He was lying on his stomach. He was vomiting. He heard voices. Someone said he had nearly died. The young man who had thrown him into the pool said that he had done it out of fun.

After sometime, Douglas went home. He was weak and trembling. The dreadful experience haunted him again and again. A few years later, he went to the waters of the Cascades. He wished to wade into them. The terror seized him again. His legs were paralysed. Whenever and wherever he went fishing, canoeing, bathing and swimming, he was seized with terror. The joy of living was lost. Finally, Douglas decided to get an instructor to help him overcome his fear of water. The instructor helped him bit by bit, piece by piece. First, he put a belt around Douglas and attached the belt with a rope. He held the end of the rope as they moved up and down the pool. He made Douglas put his face under water and exhale. He held Douglas on the side of the pool and made him kick with legs. He was with Douglas for about six months. When he felt that Douglas was able to swim alone, he left.

Though Douglas was able to swim the length of the pool up and down, he was not sure that the old fear had left him completely. He, however, was prepared to overcome it if it reappeared. Then, he went to Lake Wentworth in New Hampshire. He dived off a dock at Triggs Island. He swam two miles across the lake to Stamp Act Island. He used all the strokes he knew. Only once did the terror return, but Douglas was able to overcome it at once. He still wanted to test himself, so Douglas went to Warm Lake. There, he swam across the other shore and back. Terror did not reappear. Douglas gave out a cry of victory.

His terror of water and his conquest of it, gave him an insight into the meaning of life and death. He had experienced the fear of death as well as the sensation of dying. He felt there is peace in death, so he lived more intensely. He enjoyed life.

## FLAMINGO - POETRY

# CHAPTER-1 : MY MOTHER AT SIXTY-SIX

—Kamala Das

## Introduction

In this poem, the poetess is commenting on the relationship between a mother and a daughter when they cannot afford to be together for long. The poetess is going to catch the plane at Cochin. Her old mother, pale and sick, is also accompanying her to the airport. The mother looks colourless like a dead body.

She is unlikely to live for long. The poetess doubts if she will be able to meet her again. She looks out of the car and finds young trees racing past. She also notices happy children running out of their houses. They stand for a healthy and hopeful life. The old mother is nearing her end. The poetess becomes shaky, but she tries to cheer up the old woman. With a smiling face, she promises to see her mother again.

## Summary

The poetess was on her way back to Cochin, the previous Friday morning to catch a flight. Her mother was seated beside her in the car. The old woman started feeling drowsy. She had her mouth open. Her face looked pale and ash-coloured as that of a dead body. The poetess became panicky. She thought that her mother would not live long. She was deeply pained.

She tried to overcome her fear. She looked out of the window. The young trees appeared to be running back at full speed. She also saw cheerful children coming out of their homes. They were in sharp contrast to her own aged mother. They reached the airport and passed through the formal security check. From the distance of a few yards, the poetess looked at her mother again. The mother was weak and pale like the moon in a late winter night. The sight of her revived the narrator's old childhood fear of being away from her mother. There was no hope of improvement in her condition.

But before bidding her farewell, the poetess just smiled and expressed hope to see her again.

### 1. Driving from .....

.....  
 .....  
 .....  
 ..... thought away.

While driving to Cochin from her parent's home, the poetess' mother accompanied her in the car to see her off. She sat beside the poetess. At one moment, when the poetess turned and looked at her mother, she noticed that her mother was dozing and her mouth was open. Her face had turned ashen *i.e.*, it seemed as if it had lost the vitality of life and her face looked like that of a corpse (dead body). The poetess was frightened as the reality seized her that her mother had grown old. She was not ready to accept it, as old age is followed by death. Therefore, she tried to put the thought away.

**Simile** → Ashen like that of a corpse.

### 2. and looked out at.....

.....  
 .....  
 .....**Smile**

She started looking out in order to take away the frightening thought from her mind. She noticed the trees sprinting in contrast to her mother who looked lifeless while sitting beside her. She also noticed children coming out of their home happily. The happy children are the representatives of youth and power. Probably they were reminding her of the time when the poetess was a child and her mother was young. Then they reached the airport. After the security check at the airport, she again looked at her mother who was standing a few yards away. She again felt that old familiar ache of losing her mother who looked like a late winter's moon which loses its beauty in the fog. She felt that her mother had also lost her youth, vitality and had become inactive. She had a childhood fear of permanent separation from her

mother. But she did not show it to her mother. She kept on smiling and smiling and said, 'See you soon, Amma'. These were the words of reassurance that they would meet again and she smiled in an attempt to hide her feelings.

**Personification and Imagery** → Trees sprinting

**Simile** → As a late winter's moon

**Alliteration** → See you soon

**Repetition** → Smile and smile



## CHAPTER-2 : AN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CLASS ROOM IN A SLUM

—Stephen Spender (1909-1995)

### Introduction

Stephen Spender was a poet who visited the Gemini Studios in Bombay. He had left his learning and felt deeply for the poor and the downtrodden. He was not against progress and prosperity, but he wanted that the poor and the downtrodden should have equal opportunities to share the benefits. In this poem, he wants to draw the attention of the society and the government to the dismal conditions under which those children live and study. There is a map that shows beautiful cities, ships, and love all around, but these children are deprived of these. He wants that children should be given education in a conducive atmosphere.

### Summary

Stephen Spender visited an elementary school in a slum. The classroom was dim. The paint on the walls was faded. Children were sick and undernourished. A girl sat with her head weighed down in despair. A child's growth was stunted. His bones were twisted. A boy looked dreamy. He was thinking of a squirrel's game. On the wall, there was a portrait of Shakespeare and a map of the world. The map showed beautiful cities under a cloudless sky at dawn. There were ships and love. It had symbols of modern progress and liberal attitude, but by contrast, the lives of the children were dark and dismal. Their future was written in fog. The poet thinks that the map and Shakespeare had no significance for the children who lived in houses just like graves. He pleads that these windows should be broken and the children should be moved to the bright daylight. They should experience the sun, the sky and the sea. They should be educated. They should have equal opportunities like others.

1. **Far far** .....  
 .....  
 .....  
 ..... **other than this.**

The poem begins with a description of the children sitting in a school classroom which is located in a slum. The poet has compared these children to rootless weeds, as they are not given any importance by any member of the society. They are unwanted like the rootless weeds or useless plants. Their faces are pale and untidy hair fall all over their faces.

Then, the poet describes a few children sitting in the classroom; there is a tall girl who sits with her head down due to poverty or some affliction. She seems to be in a depressed state. There is a boy who is very thin and has eyes which bulge out like that of a rat. His physical appearance clearly depicts that he is undernourished and his eyes seem to be always in search of food like a rat. There is one more boy who is unlucky, as he had inherited a gnarled bone disease from his father. His physical growth is stunted and he recites his lesson from his desk as he can't stand. Another boy is seated at the back of that dull and dim room, there is a sweet boy who is not paying any attention to the class, rather he is day-dreaming about the outside world, where a squirrel is playing in the hollow of a tree. It is in contrast to his own life. He also wants to go out and play like a squirrel, but cannot do so.

**Simile** – Like rootless weeds

**Metaphor** – Paper seeming boy

2. **On sour cream** .....

.....  
 .....  
 .....  
 ..... **stars of words.**

The poet then proceeds to give a detailed description of the classroom which has sour cream walls. They are dirty and yellow and are unpleasant to look at. There is a picture of Shakespeare’s head on the wall. Apart from this, a cloudless sky at dawn, the domes of buildings, the beautiful scene of the Tyrolese valley with its beautiful flowers and bells are all painted on the walls. However, these things have no meaning for the slum children. The names of people who have given donations for the school have also been displayed on the sour cream walls. Open-handed maps have also been drawn on the walls of the classroom, but they are of no use as their area has not been shown in it. This map does not have their world in it. Their world is foggy, dull, and bleak. There is no ray of hope in it. Their life has no future and they live a life of uncertainty. They are doomed to live in narrow streets, with a dull, leaden sky. Rivers, capes, and stars are natural beauties, but for these children, they represent a world which has no meaning for them.

**Metaphor** – Future’s painted with a fog

**Metaphor** – Lead sky

3. **Surely Shakespeare** .....

.....  
 .....  
 ..... **as big as doom.**

Shakespeare’s head and the map on the walls of a classroom of a slum is wicked because they can’t imagine any other world, except their own. Besides, Shakespeare has no relevance in their lives whose writing the children cannot understand. The pictures of ships and sun are a bad example for these children because they tempt them to run away from their dark world to the world of adventure which is represented by the ships and the world of the rich. Their houses have been compared to narrow holes where their future is foggy and like an endless night. The slum children are emaciated as their bones seem to be peeping through their skins. They wear steel spectacles which have mended glass. The poet is comparing the mended glass to the small pieces of broken glass on stones, as the world of the slum children is also broken due to their unfulfilled desires. They are supposed to use the discarded things of the rich. The slums are not marked on the maps, but it should be done. The slums should be spotted and drawn on the maps so that the slum children should feel one with the others and realise that their slums can also be located on the maps.

**Alliteration** – Spectacles of steel

Space are foggy slum

From Fog to endless night

like bottle bits on stones

**Simile** – like bottle bits on stones

4. **Unless governor** .....

.....  
 .....  
 ..... **is the sun.**

The poet further moves on saying that these miserable conditions of the slum will continue unless some governor, inspector or visitor visits this place and tries to improve the conditions of the classroom in a slum. The windows of the classroom symbolise the environment of the slums which blocks the progress of the slum children. They should not be bound to live in these places which are like catacombs. Let these children go out and face the world. Let them see the green fields which are a sign of prosperity. Let them lead a life of freedom represented by golden sands. Give them the opportunity to express themselves freely because only those people make and create history, who fight for a cause and are able to overcome their surroundings. The slum children should also be given an opportunity of being memorable.

**Simile** → lives like catacombs

**Repetition** → Break or break open till they break the town



## CHAPTER-3 : KEEPING QUIET

—Pablo Neruda

### Introduction

Pablo Neruda (1904–1973) is the pen name of Neftali Ricardo Reyes Basoalto who was born in a town of Parral in Chile. Neruda's poems are full of easily understood images which make them no less beautiful. He won the Nobel Prize for literature in the year 1971. In this poem, he talks about a strange striking theme. It is basically an anti-war poem. The poet is deeply concerned about violence, cruelty to animals and the plight of the manual workers. Here, the poet offers a very simple solution to many of our problems. The solution is self-introspection and creating a feeling of mutual understanding among human beings.

### Summary

The poet invites people all over to come together and suspend their activities till he counts to twelve. He wants us all to keep quiet and do nothing. It would be a rare moment in the history of mankind. Fishermen will not harm whales. There will be no preparation for war; there will be no harm to the environment.

However, the poet makes one thing clear. He wants us to suspend activities but not to stop them forever, because life is meant for action and progress, and inactivity means death. However, he hopes the moments of introspection will help us to move in the right direction only if we stop and think.

1. *Now we will count to twelve  
and we will all keep still  
For once on the face of the Earth  
let's not speak any language,  
let's stop for one second,  
and not move our arms so much.*

The poet, *Pablo Neruda*, asks each one of us to count till twelve and then not do anything, whether it is talking or moving. He wants everyone to keep quiet and not move at all. In this moment of silence, he wants that we should not speak in any language and not move even our arms. It is in fact, at the number twelve when both the hands of the clock unite. Therefore, he wants us also to unite like the two hands of the clock.

**Alliteration** ® stop for one second

**Pun** (word having dual meaning in the same line) ® not move our arms so much

(a) part of body

(b) weapons used for destruction

2. *It would be an exotic moment  
without rush, without engines,  
we would all be together  
in a sudden strangeness'*

The moment when everyone would be quiet would be an exciting and thrilling moment. There will be no rushing of everyday work, no sound of machines polluting the environment. It will be a moment when everyone would be together but in a strange kind of way.

**Repetition** → without rush, without engines

**Alliteration** → in a sudden strangeness

3. *Fishermen in the cold sea  
would not harm whales  
and the man gathering salt  
would look at his hurt hands.*

The fishermen would also stop for some time and not kill whales. Fishermen, in these lines, represent the tyrants or killers who do not think about others and carry on with their act of killing. They will also stop and introspect the selfish acts that they are doing. The salt-gatherers would also stop gathering salt and would get time for introspection which they never get in the rat-race of earning their livelihood. In this strange moment, everyone will stop doing the

kind of work that they are doing and realise their mistakes, when they get time to introspect. The man gathering salt represents the lower section of society which is ready to descend to any level in order to earn a living and often end up hurting themselves. Besides, humans have tendency to procure more and more (gathering salt) for which he is wantonly depleting natural resources. He does not know that he is harming nature at the cost of his own life.

**Alliteration** → would look at his hurt hands; **Symbolism**—The fishermen symbolise man's indiscriminate exploitation of nature for his vested interests and salt stands for materialistic possessions. Hurt hands are symbolic of human suffering.

4. *Those who prepare green wars,  
wars with gas, wars with fire,  
victory with no survivors  
would put on clean clothes  
and walk about with their brothers  
in the shade, doing nothing.'*

The poet is now referring to the creators of pollution—those who prepare green war, chemical wars—wars with gas and nuclear wars—wars with fire. He wants them also to stop and think over what harm they are doing. They should stop their brutal work and think positive. These wars would bring only destruction and there would be no survivors to enjoy their victory. They should clean their soul of negativity and join hands with other fellow beings. They would also leave the path of destruction for that one moment when everyone would remain quiet.

**Repetition** → wars with gas, wars with fire

**Alliteration** → would put on clean clothes

5. *'What I want should not be confused  
with total inactivity.  
Life is what it is about;  
I want no truck with death.  
If we were not so single minded  
about keeping our lives moving,  
and for once could do nothing,  
perhaps a huge silence  
might interrupt this sadness.  
of never understanding ourselves  
and of threatening ourselves with death.'*

The poet then moves on to say that he doesn't want that keeping quiet should be taken as total inactivity because we can never remain inactive. We may be inactive physically, but we can never be inactive mentally, as we'll be introspecting. The poet does not believe in inactivity. Life is an 'on-going process', so he does not want to associate it with death, or bring it to a dead-end. Moreover, man is single-mindedly rushing for scientific progress and advancement. He has so focussed himself that he pays no heed to the pros and cons of reckless progress and moves ahead without reflecting on the consequences. The expression is a comment on the modern men's mechanised and busy life. Life, no doubt is an on-going process, but in the name of progress, man is treading the path of destruction. He is trapped in a rat race of mad competition. He knows no rest, no peace.

Man, in his race towards materialism, has sacrificed the fulfilment of his emotional needs and has thus, become sad and isolated. Besides, the increasing arms race and man's rapid advancement towards progress at the cost of nature has brought him on the verge of extinction.

6. *Perhaps the Earth can teach us  
as when everything seems dead  
and later proves to be alive.  
Now I'll count up to twelve  
and you keep quiet and I will go.'*

We must try to learn something from the Earth. In the winter season, the Earth seems to be still and quiet, but something goes on beneath its surface where seeds are lying hidden. They come up in spring and teach us to do our work quietly. Introspecting can be done easily while keeping quiet. It will also help us in regaining our lost vitality and energise us to do our work. The poet finally starts counting up to twelve and tells others to keep quiet.

**VISTAS-SUPPLEMENTARY READER****CHAPTER-1 : THE THIRD LEVEL***—Jack Finney***Introduction**

Charley is a young man of 31. He had several times lost himself in the Grand Central Station. He bumps into new doorways and new corridors. He even finds himself in a long tunnel that leads him to a place, he never wanted to go. His psychiatrist friend believes that he has been day-dreaming to escape from the unhappiness of his present life, but Charley does not believe so. He has been to the third level where he can find means to escape into the past. He, however, is never again able to find the third level. He tells his psychiatrist friend, Sam, about a peaceful small town named Galesburg. The psychiatrist is infected by Charley's dream. He himself escapes into it. The story is a mixture of reality and fantasy. Logically, no one can travel back into time, except in one's imagination. However, Sam as well as Charley have experienced it. Charley even finds a letter with a postmark dated July 18, 1894 written by Sam after he has been there for two weeks, which is hard to believe it as true.

**Summary**

Charley was 31-year-old man married to Louisa. Several times, he had lost himself in the Grand Central Station. He always found himself bumping into new doorways and new corridors. Every time he had a new experience. He even had begun to believe that the Grand Central was like a huge tree ever pushing new tunnels and new corridors like the roots under the ground. Once, he got into a mile long tunnel and came out in the lobby of a hotel. At another time, he came up into the building of an office.

There were certainly only two levels at the Grand Central. However, Charley asserted that there were three levels. He talked about it to his friends. One of them was a psychiatrist. The psychiatrist said that it was nothing but day-dreaming. He explained that it was only an escape from his present life. The modern world is full of fear, tension, and worries. The third level provided him an exit from it.

His other friends agreed with the psychiatrist. They said that his stamp collecting was also a temporary escape. Charley did not agree with them. He said that his grandfather started the stamp collection, and in his grandfather's days, life was peaceful. He did not need an escape. Besides, President Roosevelt also collected stamps.

One day, Charley got late from his office. He wanted to reach home soon, so he went to the Grand Central to catch a train. He walked down to the first level and then walked down another flight of stairs. He thought he had reached the second level again, but he got lost. He walked down a corridor. He thought it was wrong, but he walked on downward. He walked down a short flight of stairs. He thought that he had reached the second level again, but he had reached the third level.

The third level was entirely different and old-fashioned. There were fewer ticket windows. The information booth was made of wood. The lights were open flame gas lights. There were brass spittoons on the floor. Men had beards and sideburns. Women wore old-fashioned dresses and high buttoned shoes. The railway engine was small with a funnel shaped stack. Everything looked a century old. He walked to the newsboy. There he glanced at "The World". The lead story was about President Cleveland. Later, Charley found out from the library files that it was printed on June 11, 1894.

Charley wanted to go to Galesburg. He had been there in his childhood days. It was a wonderful town with tremendous trees and frame houses. In 1894, it was a heaven of peace and tranquility. People lived a carefree life. Therefore, he asked for two tickets to Galesburg. He paid the fare in modern notes which were different from those in 1894. The clerk thought the notes were fake and Charley was trying to cheat him. He threatened to get him arrested. Charley immediately turned around and fled as fast as he could.

Next day, Charley bought old-style notes from a coin dealer. He got only two hundred old dollars for three hundred new dollars. However, he could never again find the corridor that led to the third level.

Charley's wife was worried when she heard that he had bought old-style notes. Therefore, Charley turned to his stamp collection. One day, among his grandfather's collection of first day covers, he discovered an envelope. The postmark showed that it had been there since July 18, 1894. He opened the envelope, but the paper inside was not



blank. It was a letter from Sam, the psychiatrist friend whom Charley had often told about Galesburg. He had already gone there. He urged Charley to continue to look for the third level and join him in the Galesburg of 1894. It was a wonderful place.

Later, Charley learnt that Sam had bought eight hundred dollars' worth of old currency. Charley hoped Sam would have set up hay and feed business in Galesburg and that was what he had always wished to do.



## CHAPTER-2 : THE ENEMY

—*Pearl S. Buck*

### Introduction

It is the time of the World War II. Japan is at war with America. An American prisoner of war gets washed away to the doorstep of a Japanese, Dr. Sadao. The choice is very hard for Dr. Sadao and his wife. Should they hand him over to the police or save him from dying? Being a doctor, Sadao gives top priority to save the life of a dying man. Not only does he save him but also helps him in escaping to freedom.

### Summary

Dr. Sadao Hoki's house was built on the Japanese coast. His father never joked or played with him. Sadao knew that his education was his father's chief concern. For this reason, he had sent him to America at twenty-two to learn surgery and medicine. He had come back at thirty and before his father died, he had seen Sadao become a famous surgeon and scientist. Sadao had met Hana in America but didn't fall in love with her until he was sure she was a Japanese. His father would never have accepted her unless she had been 'pure in her race'. Sadao met her at an American Professor's house. They came home to Japan. Their marriage had been arranged in the old Japanese way. They were perfectly happy and had two children.

Sadao and Hana found something coming out of the mist. A man seemed to be on his hands and knees crawling. Then, they saw him fall on his face and lie there. He was wounded and lay motionless on the sand. He was a white man. On the right side of his lower back, Sadao saw that a gun wound had reopened. He was bleeding. He had packed the wound with the sea moss. The man cried, but didn't awake. They read the faint letters on his cap : 'U. S. Navy'. The American was a prisoner of war.

If they sheltered the white man in their house, they would be arrested. But if they turned him over as a prisoner, he would certainly die. The couple was in a fix. All Americans were their enemies. If he were healthy, they could hand him over to the police. But he was wounded. He would die unless he was operated upon. At any rate, something was to be done with him. The servants were frightened at what their master had just told them. They thought that their master should not heal the wound of that white man. Even Yumi refused to wash the white man and returned to her work. Hana herself washed Tom's breast and face with steaming hot water carefully.

Sadao asked Hana to help him to turn the man. She obeyed. She was asked to give the anaesthetic if needed. The bullet was still there. He had lost much blood. Hana couldn't bear the sight and ran out of the room. She had never seen an operation. Sadao went on with his work. But she came with a bottle and some cotton in her hand. Then, with a very clean and precise incision, the bullet was taken out. The man quivered, but was still unconscious. He only muttered a few words in English. Dr. Sadao declared that the man would live in spite of all.

The young man woke up. He was very weak. His blue eyes were terrified when he saw where he was. Hana consoled him not to be afraid. She comforted him that he would soon be strong. On the third day, Dr. Sadao examined the wound. Tom asked what they were going to do with him. He looked barely seventeen. For a moment, Sadao didn't answer. Tom was a prisoner of war and should have been handed over to the police.

The servants felt that they could not stay if Sadao hid that white man anymore in the house. People would think that they liked Americans. The servants grew more watchful daily. Sadao wanted the prisoner to get up on his feet. He should practice it every day till he gained strength. The man thanked the doctor for having saved his life. The doctor cautioned him not to thank him so early. The last stitches had been pulled out. The young man would be all right within

a fortnight. On the seventh day, the servants left all together. Hana was terrified, but maintained her pride as a mistress. She paid them off and thanked them for all they had done for her.

The old General was sick. He knew that Sadao was indispensable to him. He didn't want Sadao to be arrested. What would happen if Sadao were condemned to death and the next day he himself had to have his operation? He didn't trust other surgeons. The General hit upon a plan. It would be best if the American could be quietly killed. He had his own private assassins. He could send two of them to his house at night. Sadao agreed that it would be very natural.

Sadao thought over the General's plan. The whole thing could go out of his hands. He didn't tell anything to Hana. The next morning, he went to the guest room. He thought of putting his boat on the shore that night with food and extra clothing in it. The American might be able to row to that little island not far from the coast. Nobody lived on that island. He gave all necessary instructions to Tom. If his food ran out before he caught a Korean boat, he could signal him two flashes. The young American shook Sadao's hand warmly and walked into the darkness of the garden. Sadao informed the General that the young man had escaped. The General had promised Sadao to get him killed. But due to his own illness, he forgot to respect his promise. Sadao got his reward. He didn't receive any signal. No one was on the island. The prisoner had gone safely. Sadao remembered that he had great difficulty in finding a place to live in America because he was a Japanese. The Americans were full of prejudice. White people were repulsive. It was a relief to be openly at war with them at last. Then, he remembered the 'haggard face of the prisoner—white and repulsive'. 'Strange', he thought, 'I wonder why I could not kill him?'

