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(IDC)

FOUR YEAR BACHELOR'S DEGREE COURSE
(CBCS in Accordance with NEP 2020)

SEMESTER-II

GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF WRITING

Padmanath Gohainbaruah School of Humanities

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GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF WRITING

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COURSE INTRODUCTION

The course titled 'General Principles of Writing' aims to provide an overview of writing as a means of self-expression and vehicle for both social and moral purpose. Thus, it takes into account the primacy of a narrative text, its aesthetic, artistic and various other relevant concerns. In addition, it highlights the concerns of a writer and takes up the questions of form and structure of a creative work. Further, it focuses on the general aspects of writing that comprises amplification, review writing, editorial writing, column writing, science writing, press release and short composition.

The course comprises a total of eleven units which are as follows:

Unit 1: This unit introduces the learners to the aspect of art and aestheticism that defines the process of creative expression of a writer. It unravels how narratives and plots are developed by the writerand thereby reveals the entire process of writing that brings out the best in a writer.

Unit 2: This unit introduces the learners to the fundamental aspect of language, i.e., words. It discusses how the choice of words plays an important part in one's expression and articulation through both the written and the spoken form of the language.

Unit 3: This unit introduces narration and voice by highlighting its types and various sentence forms with sufficient examples for the learners.

Unit 4: This unit provides a detailed idea on the grammatical concept of time and tense, both of which are different from the other. It provides a concise idea on the various types of tenses with sufficient examples so that the learner can identify the same easily and also use tenses in the appropriate way.

Unit 5: The unit takes up a detailed discussion on the rich stock and use of phrases and idioms which can be considered an important aspect of language whether written or spoken. It provides relevant examples and meanings of some of the common phrases and idioms used in the language.

Unit 6: The unit provides an idea on the process of amplification of an idea which highlights how ideas can be elaborated and developed through the prescribed tips and techniques of amplification.

Unit 7: This unit introduces the learners to review writing that includes techniques of book review, film review, play review and musical review. This will enable the learner to write good and balanced reviews, articulate their feedback and opinion and also grasp what constitutes a good piece of review.

Unit 8: This unit introduces the learners to techniques of column writing, science writing and to press release. This will enable the learner to differentiate the characteristics of each of these types of writing and also to develop good writing skills by following the prescribed guidelines.

Unit 9: The unit introduces the leaner to editorial writing that require certain language skills, subject knowledge to structure a readable editorial for the readers. It takes up the finer points of editorial writing, which largely consist of the editorial, features, articles, middles and letters to the Editor.

Unit 10: The unit takes up the some of the important techniques required for attempting any unseen passage of comprehension particularly for the purpose of examination. It provides relevant examples for the learners to grasp the various aspects of intelligent comprehension in an effective way.

Unit 11: The unit discusses various types of Short Composition such as notice and advertisements etc. with interesting examples so that the learner may grasp how these are prepared.

While going through a unit, you may also notice some text boxes, which have been included to help you know some of the difficult terms and concepts. You will also read about some relevant ideas and concepts in “LET US KNOW” along with the text. We have kept “CHECK YOUR PROGRESS” questions in each unit. These have been designed to self-check your progress of study. The answers to these questions are given at the end of the unit. We strongly advise that you answer the questions immediately after you finish reading the section in which these questions occur. We have also included a few books in the “FURTHER READING” which will be helpful for your further consultation.

UNIT 1: THE WRITER AS AN ARTIST

UNIT STRUCTURE

1.1 Learning Objectives

1.2 Introduction

1.3 Art and Aestheticism

1.4 Narration and Narrative

1.5 Narrative and Plot

1.6 The Author and the Writing

1.7 Point of View and Voice

1.8 Let Us Sum Up

1.9 Further Reading

1.10 Model Questions

1.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

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

- discuss the role of a writer
- explain the process of creative expression
- establish the relationship between art and aesthetics
- list some of the concepts of creative writing.

1.2 INTRODUCTION

Creativity is a natural process that seems to represent the sensibility and aesthetic sense of the creator. It is primarily related to the spontaneous urge in the human mind to create something original, distinctive and new, which is not merely critical, academic, professional or mechanical. Thus, creativity is often identified with art, literature, the imaginative and the inventive. Creativity is a process accelerated by imagination and the thinking process, that works as a stimulator of aesthetic aspects in man. Since prehistorical times, man has been engaged in various creative occupations that seem to reflect the human thought and emotion. The earliest example of creative expression, as indicated by the researchers is said to

be the cave paintings at Lascaux in France. These extraordinary pictures of wild animals were painted more than 17,000 years ago by cave dwellers. Thus, man as creator reflects what is the best and loftiest of human expression. Fancy and imagination seem to work through deeper psychological processes. These are some of the avenues that also formulate both style and expression.

As for the nature of the creative aspect, there should be some consideration regarding the aesthetic as well as the socio-cultural factors influencing the creative artist. Creative expression in the form of writing at the beginning calls for study of creative endeavours in diverse fields of literature like prose, poetry, fiction, non-fiction, essays, critical analyses, biography, report for journals, drama, skit, script, monologue and the like.Thus, in this unit we shall examine this same with regard to the process of creative expression and the role of an author.

1.3 ART AND AESTHETICISM

Art and Aestheticism are two co-related terms. In creative writing, the general principles that are followed are required to conform to the norms of aesthetic theory. The notion of art is accepted in two broad categories, ‘art’ and ‘aesthetics’ are strictly kept on an isolated plane and artistic activities are resorted to for their own sake. The ultimate goal of art is to give pleasure and pursuit of happiness through strict perusal of aesthetic norms. However, in case of artistic or literary activities with a definite goal to achieve benefit for the society the perspective is different. Here, the stress is on the required reformation of the abuses and loopholes of the society. Art performs the role of an agency to bring about that change. In the late nineteenth century, a philosophy centered on aesthetics emerged which is known as Aestheticism. Walter Pater and Oscar Wilde are two famous proponents of the Aesthetic movement in England.

1.4 NARRATION AND NARRATIVE

Narrative is a story in prose or verse and it involves events, characters

and situations where characters are implicated. Narrative presupposes a narrator or speaker describing something of an event or situation. The narration may be done through direct presentation as in drama or in an indirect manner as in a novel, story, or in an essay. It should not be presumed that narrative could be only in prose and there is no narrative in verse. Rather in many poems there is a narrative element present. In Wordsworth's "The Solitary Reaper" an implicit narrative is present in the description of the Scottish highland girl who is absorbed in her reaping and singing a song. Anything that tends to describe some event or fact is a narrative. It is either fictional or factual. In a narrative, distinction is made between story and plot; the former being the incidence and the latter denoting the structure in which the story is described. Russian formalists use specific terms for the purpose and they are *fabula* and *syuzhet* respectively. The proponents of Russian formalism decide the merit of the trope on the basis of *literariness* which is, in simple terms, the specific quality of the language employed towards setting it apart from ordinary use of language. This is the basis of *ostranenie* or defamiliarisation.



LET US KNOW

A reliable narrator is one who offers a sound point of view because of his or her presence in the narrative all along. An unreliable narrator is not an authentic presenter of the story. An omniscient narrator may again be intrusive or opinionated or completely non-intrusive and objective.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 1: How is art related to aestheticism?

Q 2: What is a narrative?

1.5 NARRATIVE AND PLOT

A plot is the systematic arrangement and interrelation of events in a narrative work. It tends to provide for a framework and structural pattern for

the exposition of the theme or topic of the story. Plot and story can be distinguished from each other as plot is constructed out of the story. It serves as the raw material. However, to build a plot there should be the element of causality added to the mere event. The story is perceived chronologically but plot is not constrained by the boundaries of chronology. As already indicated, there can be various methods adopted by the author to break the barrier of time or chronology.

Prolepsis and analepsis are some such devices. Narration or telling means recounting which is somewhat different from presenting an action. Because, in some cases the impressions gathered in the mind have to be articulated. So the psychological reality would be presented directly or indirectly through interior monologue and soliloquy. Interior monologue is a type of 'stream of conscious' thought within the mind of the character which reflects the opinion, impression, liking and disliking etc. Ofcourse, more than this kind of direct discourse, authenticity is achieved through flashes of images which tend to connote more than they denote.

The two famous novels of Virginia Woolf titled *To the Lighthouse* and *Mrs Dalloway* are striking examples of interior monologues. Franz Kafka's works too present the inner workings of the characters' mind. His *The Trial* reflects the guilty conscious or guilt-ridden psyche of the character, Joseph K who passes his time speculating over the futility of the legal battle he wages against the callous authority and an indifferent system.

1.6 THE AUTHOR AND THE WRITING

It is a well-considered as well as an accepted notion that the author is behind every literary creation. He is the manipulator and the chief architect of the work of art called the text. So the reading and appreciation of that handiwork of the author definitely involves the author and his life. However, the reading of the text in that manner with the constant intervention of the author was somehow derided in the 1940s. This was when the New Critics following the new dictum proposed in John Crowe Ransom's 1941 book *The New Criticism*, tended to argue for the treatment of the book as a 'self-contained' and 'self-referential' object. In such an interpretation, a close

reading of the text is encouraged and the structure of language is thought to be closely associated with the 'meaning' of the work.

Now let us present the 'writer as an artist' who expresses himself in the process of creating an original and innovative work of art which is aesthetically pleasing and which evokes a sense of fulfillment of the deeper desires of the self.

The writer uses language in infinite number of ways, extends the common vocabulary and attains a meaning which is a combination of diverse elements like words, images, syntactical patterns, suggestions—both direct and indirect and stylistic devices to adorn the content in order to express and convey.

In this regard, the novels of the Jnanapith award winner Indira Goswami could be cited as examples of third person omniscient narratives. She is an involved author though she narrates her tales from the perspectives of the third person. This is reflected in the involved recounting of the characters' states and mind. In her novel *Dotal Hatir Wooye Khowa Howda* (Assamese) the pathetic plight of three Brahmin widows Giribala, Dura and Saru Gosani in the pre independence semi-feudal conservative society is depicted poignantly and her brilliant narration attains extraordinary heights with subtle suggestions and realistic portrayals of socio-economic condition of a society poised in the juncture of transition.

In another novel of Indira Goswami titled *Mamore DhoraTorowal* Goswami involves herself with the rough, torturous lives of the construction site workers in an engineering project over a river. The plight and pathos of Narayani the assertive survivor protagonist is narrated by the author with utmost objectivity. However, the fact remains that the author at times identifies with the dilemma and conflict of her character as a representative figure of her gender. These are only a few examples with which the learner can easily relate to. However, there are countless such examples especially in the wide field of literature.

1.7 POINT OF VIEW AND VOICE

Already in our study of narrative and narration, it has been pointed out that the story is always told from someone's point of view and in that specific perspective it is formed. Now what is a voice and is it replaceable with point of view? To speak generally, voice could be taken literally enough when it means a person. However, to be within the strict periphery of literature, voice can be equated with 'persona'.

Thus, in one narrative there could be predominance of one voice or at times many voices may overlap in a specific speech of a person or character. The famous Russian critic, Mikhail Bakhtin has deliberated extensively on the topic of voices in a novelistic discourse. The meaning of the term novelistic discourse is the study of novels. Bakhtin speaks of the mixing of voices which he calls 'polyphony'. The term refers to various viewpoints in dialogue with another. Point of view refers to the vantage point from which a narrative is told.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 3: Do you think the author is the main architect of a text?

Q 4: "A book can be read well only with the help of the biographical hints of the author". What is your opinion on it and why?

Q 5: "A story is narrated by the author." Is the statement true? What do you think about the point of view presented in a story?



1.8 LET US SUM UP

In this unit, you have learnt about the definition of creativity, the various aspects of art and aestheticism, the role of an author along with the process and nature of Creative Writing in general. You have also learnt about narrative and plot and author's point of view . Various aspects of narrative art are described in an elaborate manner in the unit. Significantly, the writer is

defined in terms of her/his artistic endeavours and the fact is established that the writer is a pioneering, innovative, artistic and original creator.



1.9 FURTHER READING

1) Bennet, Andrew & Nicholas Royle. (2004) *Literature, Criticism and Theory.* Pearson Education.

2) Geddes and Gresset (2003). *Spelling Grammar and Usage* Webster Reference Library.

3) Martin, Ross &Supriya M. Ray. (2003) *The Bedford Glossary of Critical And Literary Terms,* Bedford/St. Martin's.



1.10 MODEL QUESTIONS

Q 1: What are the ways by which the writer structures the piece of writing?

Q 2: Do you consider writing as a creative act and the writer as an artist? If so, why?

Q 3: Write short notes on:

(a) Point of view (b) Narrative (c) Narration

Q 4: What is the status of the author in the piece of writing? Is it her/ his personality that is reflected in the literary work? Write your views.

UNIT 2 : SOME CONCEPTS OF GRAMMAR

UNIT STRUCTURE

2.1 Learning Objectives

2.2 Introduction

2.3 Words

2.4 Let Us Sum Up

2.5 Answers to Check Your Progress

2.6 Model Questions

2.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

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

- discuss the different grammatical units
- grasp the relationship between different grammatical units.

2.2 INTRODUCTION

When we use a language for the purpose of communication, we use words. A language is made up of words. We shall take words as the basic unit of grammar for example:

(i) a, she, book, happy, unhappy, happily.

We put together words to form sentences. Sometimes a single word can have the force of a sentence. Two, three or more words can be put together either in speech or in writing to form a sentence. These are a few examples:

(ii) Yes.

(iii) Come here.

(iv) I like tea.

A sentence conveys sense and meaning to the listener or to the reader. Sentences are made up of words. These words may be of different classes. Depending upon the class, a word may occupy different positions in a sentence structure. The following are the 9 different classes of words.

Noun : John, book, beauty.

Pronoun : he, she, it.

Verb : meet, have, look.

Adjective : tall, lean, kind.

Adverb : kindly, simply, slowly.

Preposition : to, of, at, on.

Determiner : the, his, some.

Conjunction : and, but, so.

Interjection : oh, ah, alas.

A word class can have sub-classes as well. Here, it may be useful for you to know that a word can belong to more than one class depending on the position that it occupies in a sentence structure.

(v) Book : **(noun)** : This book is mine.

(verb) : I booked a ticket to Delhi.

(vi) Fast : **(adjective)** : He came by a very fast train.

(adverb) : Bhogeswar Baruah can run very fast.

(verb) : He is going to fast for three days.

(noun) : At the end of his fast, Gandhiji used to take lemon juice.

Words like head, eye, hand, elbow, are generally nouns. But, we can head a ball (verb), hand in a letter (verb), eye a person closely (verb) or elbow our way in a crowd (verb).

Sometimes a word can change its form to be used as different word classes.

Examples :

(vii) Change of word-class

Nouns	**Adjectives**	**Verbs**
atom	atomic	atomize
beauty	beautiful	beautify
circle	circular	encircle
deafness	deaf	deafen
education	educational	educate
fury	furious	infuriate

In the following section, we shall look at the grammatical unit **word** in greater detail.

2.3 WORDS

The grammatical units of English are :

1. Word
2. Phrase
3. Clause
4. Sentence

In this section, we shall take up the unit **word**.

The words of English can broadly be divided into these two groups in terms of their function in a clause structure.

1. Content word and
2. Grammatical word or Function word.

The following are examples of content words.

These words can also be known as Lexical Words.

1. Lexical Words :

Nouns	**:**	book, Guwahati, water, beauty.
Adjectives	**:**	tall, beautiful, rich, happy.
Full Verbs	**:**	play, run, walk, sleep.
Adverbs	**:**	happily, sadly.

The following are the examples of Grammatical Words.

These words are also known as Function words.

2. Grammatical Words :

Preposition	**:**	in, on, of, at.
Articles	**:**	a / an, the.
Possessives	**:**	my, your, his, her.
Demonstratives	**:**	this, that, these, those.
Quantifiers	**:**	some, any, much, many.
Wh - Determiners	**:**	which, what.
Auxiliaries		
Primary auxiliaries	**:**	be, have, do.
Modals	**:**	can, may, shall, will etc.

Pronouns : I, we, this, that.

Adverb particles : on, off, down, up.

Relatives : who, that, which, where.

Interrogatives : who, what, where.

Subordinators : because, then etc.

Co-ordinators : and, but, or,

Sentence connectors: therefore, further, however.

Intensifiers : very, quite, rather.

4. A few categories of Lexical words :

(A) Nouns : As a preliminary, look at the following examples:

1. Proper nouns

(a) The names of the days of the week : Sunday, Monday.

(b) The months: January, February.

(c) Countries, towns: India, Guwahati.

(d) Rivers, seas, oceans, mountains : The Nile.

(e) Important Buildings: The Taj Mahal.

(f) Streets: Zoo Road.

(g) Books, newspapers: Hamlet, The Telegraph.

(h) People and languages: Madhu, Khasi.

2. Countable Nouns

(a) Words for persons, animals, plants: boy, dog, trees

(b) Objects: ball, car

(c) Units of measurement: hour, metre

(d) A few abstractions: idea, scheme

3. Uncountable Nouns

(a) Solid substances : rice, bread

(b) Liquid materials : water, oil

(c) Languages : Assamese

(d) Some abstractions : honesty, equality

(B) Adjective : Here you may note the following uses of adjective i.e. attributive use and predicative use.

1. Attributive use

(i) A **tall** boy.

(ii) A **pretty** girl.

2. Predicative use

(i) The boy is **tall**.

(ii) The girl is **pretty**.

- Note that adjectives have degrees of comparison.

Positive	**Comparative**	**Superlative**
bold	bolder	boldest
tall	taller	tallest
good	better	best
little	less	least
beautiful	more beautiful	most beautiful

You will be required to change the degrees of comparison and re-write sentences :

(i) Rina is the tallest girl in the class.

(change into comparative degree)

Rina is taller than any other girl in the class.

(ii) America is richer than any other country in the world.

(change into superlative degree)

America is the richest country in the world.

(C) Adverb : You all know that an adverb performs the following activities.

(i) Modifier of adjective

This was a very funny film.

(ii) Modifier of adverb

He was walking very slowly.

(iii) Modifier of prepositional phrase

He sat right through the lecture.

(iv) Modifier of determiner

Nearly everybody was present.

(v) Modifier of noun phrase

Who will believe such a story?

- Note that adverbs can denote the following :

(i)	**Manner**	:	She walks quickly.
(ii)	**Place**	:	I live near the school.
(iii)	**Time**	:	You may go now.
(iv)	**Frequency**	:	I often visit her.
(v)	**Certainty**	:	I shall surely see you.
(vi)	**Degree**	:	It is very hot.
(vii)	**Interrogation**	:	Why are you late ?

- Note also that like adjectives, adverbs have degrees of comparison.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 1: What is the function of a sentence?

Q 2: What are the different classes of words?

Q 3: Change the word from its noun to its adjective and verb form:

a. beauty b. society

Q 4: What are the grammatical units of English?

Q 5: What are the different forms of lexical words? Give Examples.

Q 6: What are the different forms of grammatical words? Give Examples.



2.4 LET US SUM UP

After going through the unit, the learner will be able to discuss some of the basic concepts of English grammar. Words can belong to more than one class and the unit highlights the 9 different class of words namely: noun, pronoun, verb, adjective, adverb, preposition, determiner, conjunction and interjection. You have also learnt the two categories of words namely content words and function words. In addition, there are four categories of content words namely: nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs. Besides the unit shows various sentence types in terms of form and function. The unit provides sufficient examples through its discussion of the grammatical concepts to which you can easily relate.

2.5 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No 1: A sentence conveys sense and meaning to the listener or to the reader. Sentences are made up of words. These words may be of different classes. Depending upon the class, a word may occupy different positions in a sentence structure.

Ans to Q No 2: Noun, Pronoun, Verb, Adjective, Adverb, Preposition, Determiner, Conjunction and Interjection.

Ans to Q No 3: a) Beautiful, Beautify

b) Social, Socialise

Ans to Q No 4: Word, Phrase, Clause, Sentence

Ans to Q No 5: Lexical words are:

Nouns: book, Guwahati, beauty

Adjectives: happy, rich, beautiful

Full Verbs: play, eat, walk

Adverbs: sadly, happily, mildly

Ans to Q No 6: Grammatical words are:

Preposition: in, on, at, of

Articles: a, an, the

Possessives: my, your, his, her

Demonstratives: this, that, these, those

Quantifiers: some, many, any, much

Wh- Determiners: which, what, when, why

Auxillaries

Primary Auxillaries: be, have, do

Modals: can, may, shall, will

Pronouns: I, we, this, that

Adverb particles: on, off, down, up

Relatives: who, that, which, where

Interrogatives: who, what, where

Subordinators**:** because, then\

Co-ordinators**:** and, but, or

Sentence connectors**:** and, but, or

Sentence connectors**:** therefore, further, however

Intensifiers**:** very, quite, rather



2.6 MODEL QUESTIONS

Q 1: Below you will find a list of words in the box. Identify the function words from the list and write them down in the space below:

water, because, poorly,
tall, that, village, but,
enrich, encircle, down, poem,
angrily, those, on, truly

1. _____ 2. _____
3. _____ 4. _____
5. _____ 6. _____

Q 2: Make sentences using the following words as (a) noun and (b) verb :

(a) train (b) pocket (c) head
(d) back (e) hand (f) man

*** ***** ***

UNIT 3 : NARRATION AND VOICE

UNIT STRUCTURE

3.1 Learning Objectives

3.2 Introduction

3.3 Direct and Indirect Narration

- 3.3.1 Assertive Sentences
- 3.3.2 Imperative Sentences
- 3.3.3 Interrogative Sentences
- 3.3.4 Exclamatory Sentences

3.4 The Category of Voice in English

- 3.4.1 Assertive Sentence Forms
- 3.4.2 Interrogative Sentence Forms
- 3.4.3 Imperative Sentence Forms
- 3.4.4 Miscellaneous Sentence Forms

3.5 Let Us Sum Up

3.6 Answers to Check Your Progress

3.7 Model Questions

3.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

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

- distinguish between the structures of direct and indirect narration
- differentiate between the forms of active and passive voice sentences
- transform sentences from direct speech to indirect speech and vice versa
- transform sentences from active voice to the passive voice and vice versa.

3.2 INTRODUCTION

This unit on 'Narration and Voice' is made up of two parts. In the first part, there is an attempt to discuss the forms of direct and indirect narration and the rules for transforming one form to the other. In the second part, the

focus is on the forms of the active voice and passive voice sentences. There is also the attempt to discuss the ways of transforming sentences from the active voice to the passive and vice versa. Though two different grammatical concepts are brought together here, what is common between them is that both are about transformation of sentences. It is important as language users need to have an ability in effective oral and written communication.

Let us take a situation. A stranger in a town meets a policeman and says to him, “Where is the bus station?” Let us now assume that you would like to report what the stranger had asked the policeman. Which of these sentences would you use?

a) The stranger asked the policeman where was the bus station.

b) The stranger asked the policeman where the bus station was.

c) The stranger asked the policeman where is the bus station.

This unit will help you to evaluate all the three sentences and enable you to state that

- sentence (a) is not acceptable because when direct questions are turned into indirect speech the interrogative form changes to the assertive form.
- sentence (b) is acceptable according to the rule given above.
- sentence (c) is unacceptable for the same reason as the first example.

Such rules will be helpful in various composition tasks especially in precis writing activities.

Let us now suppose that you are writing a news story about a bus accident. Some of the sentences in your news story are:

(a) The taxi driver was arrested.

(b) The injured passengers were rushed to the Gauhati Medical College Hospital.

(c) The situation was brought under control.

The three sentences above are in the passive form. In each case you will notice that the doer of the action is insignificant; the action is more important. In such cases, the passive is the natural choice. Similarly, there are situations where the active is the natural choice. Read the following

extract of a conversation between a lady and a young man:

Lady : Would you like some tea, Mr. Das?

Mr. Das : No thank you. Tea was had by me.

The utterance of Mr. Das Tea was had by me is correct as a passive sentence but is not acceptable. In common day-to-day situations, passive is not preferred. He could have said : "No, thank you. I've just had."

The above discussion proves that the passive is not always the counterpart of the active; each has its own distinctive uses. However, you must know the form of the passive. The following sentence has been changed into passive voice. Four possible answers are given. Can you choose the right one?

Q : Seven days make a week.

(a) A week is made by seven days.

(b) A week is made of seven days.

(c) A week was made with seven days.

(d) A week is make by seven days.

In this unit, we shall look into such issues. It is important to be able to identify the correct form of the passive construction from the four options given above.

The whole approach is to acquaint you with the forms that make up the active and the passive sentence constructions. We shall look at these forms in different sentence types.

3.3 DIRECT AND INDIRECT NARRATION

There are two ways of relating what a person had said. First, we can use the exact words that the person had used. That is, we can report the person's words directly as follows :

(1) Anita said to me, "We are going to Delhi next week."

In (1) above, Anita's exact words have been reported directly. Her words have been put within inverted commas "....." also called quotation marks. When we use the actual words to report what has been said we say that we are using the direct speech or the direct form of narration.

Secondly, we can use our own words to report what a person has

said. That is, we can report the person's words indirectly as follows :

(2) Anita told me that they were going to Delhi on the following week.

In (2) above, Anita's exact words have been modified by retaining the essential information that the words convey. Hence, we do not use any quotation marks in indirect speech. There are however, certain rules or norms that we must follow in order to change a direct form of narration into indirect and vice versa. In the following sub-sections, we shall take up different types of sentences and show how different types of rules operate in changing these sentences from the direct to the indirect and vice versa.

3.3.1 Assertive Sentences

As you know, assertive sentences are statements. They are also called declarative sentences.

(1) Direct : Anita says to me, "I go to school by bus."
Indirect : Anita tells me that she goes to school by bus.

(2) Direct : Anita said to me, "I go to school by bus."
Indirect : Anita told me that she went to school by bus.

(3) Direct : Anita says to me, 'I wrote a letter to my brother.'
Indirect : Anita tells me that she wrote a letter to her brother.

(4) Direct : Anita said to me, 'I wrote a letter to my brother.'
Indirect : Anita told me that she had written a letter to her brother.

(5) Direct : Anita said to me, "I shall see her tomorrow morning."
Indirect : Anita told me that she would see her on the following morning.

Comment :

1. The reporting verb 'say' generally changes into 'tell'. If the reporting verb is in the present tense, eg. 'Anita says to me .....', in the indirect form it becomes 'Anita tells me .....' or 'Anita informs me .....'
2. The conjunction 'that' introduces the reported speech.
3. The inverted commas are removed in the indirect form.
4. When the sentence expresses a fact that is supposed to be

universally true, the present tense may be used in the reported speech.

5. If the reporting verb is in the past tense the reported clause undergoes changes in verb forms as follows :

(a) is/am	changed to	was
(b) are		were
(c) simple present		simple past
(d) present continuous		past continuous
(e) present perfect		past perfect
(f) present perfect continuous		past perfect continuous
(g) simple past		past perfect
(h) past continuous		past perfect continuous
(i) will/shall		would/should
(j) may/can		might/could

6. There are corresponding changes in pronouns and adverbs of time (now ? then) and position (here? there) etc.

3.3.2 Imperative Sentences

You know that an imperative sentence is in the form of a command, request, advice etc. Look at these forms in the direct and indirect forms of narration.

(1) Direct : The teacher said to the boy, “Please close the door.”
Indirect : The teacher told the boy to close the door.

(2) Direct : The teacher said to me, “Don’t be late tomorrow.”
Indirect : The teacher told me not to be late the next day.

(3) Direct : He said to Adity, “Please wait here till I return.”
Indirect : He requested Adity to wait there till he returned.

(4) Direct : “Call the first witness,” said the judge
Indirect : The judge ordered that the first witness be called.

(5) Direct : The teacher said, “Be quiet and listen to me.”
Indirect : The teacher told the students to be quiet and listen to her.

(6) Direct : Mother said to us, “Let’s have our lunch before starting the journey.”

Indirect : Mother suggested that we should have our lunch before starting the journey.

(7) Direct : The class captain said, “Let’s show our teacher how nicely we can arrange the programme.

Indirect : The class captain urged the class to show their teacher how nicely they could arrange the programme.

(8) Direct : He told the teacher, “Let me go home, please.”

Indirect : He requested his teacher to allow him to go home.

Comments :

1. The reporting verb has to be changed according to sense eg. request, advise, order, forbid, urge, command etc.
2. The imperative word (eg. the action verb open, close etc.) is changed into infinitive (eg. to open, to close etc.)
3. No conjunction is used to introduce the reported speech.

3.3.3 Interrogative Sentences

Interrogative sentences, that is, sentences that generally ask questions can be of several types especially sentences beginning with a ‘wh’ word (what, when etc) or questions that require ‘yes’ or a ‘no’ for an answer. Read these sentences:

(1) Direct : Anita said to me, “When did you come?”

Indirect : Anita asked me when I had come.

(2) Direct : The teacher said to Anita, “Why are you late?”

Indirect : The teacher asked Anita why she was late.

(3) Direct : Anita said to the teacher, “How can I get good marks in English?”

Indirect : Anita asked the teacher how she could get good marks in English.

(4) Direct : He said to me, “What are you doing?”

Indirect : He asked me what I was doing.

(5) Direct : He said to Rina, “Do you sing?”

Indirect : He asked Rina if she sang.

(6) Direct : Dilip said to the teacher, “May I leave, Sir?”
Indirect : Dilip asked the teacher if he could leave.

(7) Direct : She said to me, “Will you take part in the dance?”
Indirect : She asked me if I would take part in the dance.

(8) Direct : She said to Anita, “Have you a spare pen?”
Indirect : She asked Anita if she had a spare pen.

Comments :

1. The reporting verb is changed into ask, enquire etc.
2. No conjunction is used to introduce the reporting clause. Instead, in the case of ‘wh’ questions, a wh word introduces the reporting clause.
3. In yes-no type questions, the reporting clause is introduced by if or whether.
4. The rules of change of verbs, pronouns and adverbs are same as in the other sentences.

3.3.4 Exclamatory Sentences

An exclamatory sentence expresses the speaker’s or writer’s feelings. Such sentences begin with what or how as in interrogative sentences, but the structure is different. There is no reversal of the order of the subject and the auxiliary verb. Read these sentences:

(1) Direct : He said, “What a beautiful sunrise!”
Indirect : He exclaimed that it was a beautiful sunrise.

(2) Direct : The teacher said, “How clever you are!”
Indirect : The teacher exclaimed that I was very clever.

(3) Direct : He said to me, “What a stupid fellow you are!”
Indirect : He exclaimed that I was a stupid fellow.

(4) Direct : He said, “Alas! We have lost the match.”
Indirect : He exclaimed sadly that they had lost the match.

(5) Direct : He said, “Hurray! We have won the match.”
Indirect : He exclaimed with joy that they had won the match.

(6) Direct : He said to her, “What! You lost the admit card.”

Indirect : He exclaimed with surprise that she had lost her admit card.

Comments :

1. Exclamations usually become statements in indirect speech.
2. The reporting verb changes into exclaim, cry, etc.
3. The word 'that' is used as a linking word.
4. The exclamation mark at the end (!) becomes a full stop.
5. Observe the rules for change of verbs, pronouns etc. as in the case of other words.
6. Reporting words like 'May' as in "May you live long!" is changed into 'wish' as in

   The old man said, "May you be happy."

   ? The old man wished that I might be happy.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 1: Change the form of narration in the following sentences:

(a) He said to me, "When is your Puja holiday? Please visit us during the puja."

(b) The teacher said to me, "Why are you late? I had asked you to be punctual."

(c) The man said to me, "Can you show me the way to the railway station?" "Yes", I said.

(d) The teacher said, "I don't want any excuses. Why didn't you bring your homework.

(e) The tourist said, "What a beautiful place! I'd like to stay here for ever."

(f) The librarian said to us, "Don't make a noise. Leave the room silently."

(g) She asked Sahab why he didn't go to school. Sahab replied that there was no school in his place.

(h) Gandhi told the lawyers that he had come to the conclusion that they should stop going to the court.

(i) He said that they had arrived at Guwahati on the previous evening.

(j) The mother told the boy not to go out of the house as it was raining.

3.4 THE CATEGORY OF VOICE IN ENGLISH

The term 'voice' is used in grammar to refer to any one of the two forms - **active** and **passive** - by which the relation of the subject to the action is indicated. If the person or thing denoted by the verb of a sentence is the doer of the action, then the form of the verb is in the active voice. We use the active voice to state what the subject of a sentence does, eg :

(a) The boy kicked the ball.

On the other hand, if the person or thing denoted by the subject of a sentence is the receiver or sufferer of the action, then that form of the verb is in the passive voice. We use the passive voice to say what happened to the object of the sentence in the active voice, eg.

(b) The ball was kicked by the boy.

From the two examples of the active voice sentence (The boy kicked the ball) and the passive voice sentence (The ball was kicked by the boy), we see that the active-passive relations involve two grammatical levels:

1) The clause structure :
   (a) The object of the active verb is made the subject of the passive verb.
   (b) The subject of the active verb is made the object of the preposition 'by'.

(2) The verb structure :
   (a) The passive verb must have the past participle form of the finite verb.
   (b) Some form of the verb "to be" (am, is, are, was, were) is used according to sense.
   (c) The tense of the verb does not change.

In the following sections, we shall look at the rules that operate in changing different types of active sentences to passive forms.

3.4.1 Assertive Sentence Forms

Before we take up samples of assertive sentences in the active voice to note the changes in the passive voice, we shall look at the changes taking place in verb structure in the passive by taking the verb take in the following box.

	Active verb	**Passive verb**
1.	take/takes	am/is/are taken
2.	am/is/are taking	am/is/are being taken
3.	has/have taken	has/have been taken
4.	took	was/were taken
5.	was/were taking	was/were being taken
6.	had taken	had been taken
7.	shall/will take	shall/will be taken
8.	shall have taken	shall have been taken

Changes of voice : (A = Active; P = Passive)

1. A : I play football in the evening.
   P : Football is played by me in the evening.
2. A : John watches films on Sundays.
   P : Films are watched by John on Sundays.
3. A : The boys are making a noise.
   P : A noise is being made by the boys.
4. A : We are watching the cricket match.
   P : A cricket match is being watched by us.
5. A : She has written a poem.
   P : A poem has been written by her.
6. A : You broke the glass.
   P : The glass was broken by you.
7. A : We were playing cricket last evening.
   P : Cricket was being played by us last evening.
8. A : I had already taken tea.
   P : Tea had already been taken by me.
9. A : I shall buy a bicycle.

P : A bicycle will be brought by me.

10. A : I shall have completed the work.

P : The work will have been completed by me.

Comments :

1. Sentence 1 shows that the simple present form of the verb play becomes is played in passive.
2. Sentence 2 shows that the simple present form of the verb watch in the third person singular watches becomes are watched. The 'be' verb is plural here because it agrees with 'Films' as subject.
3. Sentences 3 and 4 are in the present continuous 5 in the present perfect, 6 in the simple past, 7 in the past continuous, 8 in the past perfect and 9 and 10 in two forms of the Future. Note how the active verb changes into passive in these sentences.
4. In each of these sentences there is a doer of the action that is shown in the passive. But there are sentences like The police arrested the thief where the doer of the action is not expressed in the passive eg. The thief was arrested.

3.4.2 Interrogative Sentence Forms

Change in voice :

1. A : Do you play football in the evening?

   P : Is football played by you in the evening?

2. A : Does John watch films on Sundays?

   P : Are films watched by John on Sundays?

3. A : Are the boys making a noise?

   P : Is noise being made by the boys?

4. A : What are you doing these days?

   P : What is being done by you these days?

5. A : Has she written any poems lately?

   P : Have any poems been written by her lately?

6. A : Who broke the glass?

P : By whom was the glass broken?

7. A : What were you doing last evening?
   P : What was being done by you last evening?
8. A : Has anyone not taken tea?
   P : Has tea not been taken by anyone?
9. A : Will you buy a bicycle?
   P : Will a bicycle be bought by you?
10. A : Will the police arrest the man?
    P : Will the man be arrested?

Comments :

1. In the above sentences more or less the same tense forms as in the assertive sentences are taken up. You will find the same passive forms of the verbs.
2. However, what you have to note is how the interrogative structure in the passive is formed. Take the sentence : Did you consult him? The verb is simple past. In the passive, the 'do' support is no longer necessary because the passive verb already has the 'be' auxiliary, which in the passive becomes 'was', thus giving us the sentence : "Was he consulted by you?"

3.4.3 Imperative Sentence Forms

Change in voice :

1. A : Tell the boy to come tomorrow.
   P : Let the boy be told to come tomorrow.
2. A : Close the door please.
   P : Let the door be closed please.
3. A : Do not tell a lie
   P : You are advised not to tell a lie.
4. A : Help the poor
   P : The poor should be helped
5. A : Please grant me leave for two days
   P : You are requested to grant me leave for two days.
6. A : Don't talk in the library.

P : You are requested not to talk in the library.

7. A : Please sit down

P : You are requested to sit down.

Comments :

1. A passive imperative expressing order/command begins with "Let" followed by the object in the active.
2. The imperative verb becomes be+past participle.
3. When the imperative verb has two objects, either of them can be made the subject in the passive.
4. The negative form requires "not to."

3.4.4 Miscellaneous Sentence Forms

1. There are certain sentences with two objects containing a di-transitive verb i.e., S+V+O+O structure. In such cases, you can use either of the objects as the passive subject.

   1. A : Mr. Barua teaches us English

      P : English is taught to us by Mr. Barua

      P2 : We are taught English by Mr. Barua

2. In S+V+O+O structure, the object becomes the subject in the passive and the complement is retained in its original position.

   2. A : They elected him leader of the party.

      P : He was elected leader of the party.

3. In sentences containing bare infinitives (without to), the bare infinitive becomes full infinitive (with to) in passive.

   3. A : They made him suffer.

      P : He was made to suffer.

4. Let us look at the structure of the passive in complex sentences.

   (a) A : She tells me that she is a singer

      P : I am told (by her) that she is a singer

   (b) A : We know that the earth is round

      P : It is known to us that the earth is round

   In complex sentences all the verbs with their objects are put into the passive voice.

(c) A : We know that he broke the window.

P : It is known to us that the window was taken by him.

5. The same rule operates in compound sentences as well.

A : His brother plays cricket but he plays football.

P : Cricket is played by his brother but football is played by him.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 2: Change the voice of the following sentences:

(a) Mr. Goswami writes short stories in Assamese.

(b) He has been writing stories for many years.

(c) People have translated his stories into many Indian languages.

(d) Have you read his stories?

(e) A few years ago he received the Sahitya Academy Award.

(f) People hold him in high esteem.

(g) He knows you well.

(h) Your success as a poet surprised him.

(i) Do you write poems these days?

(j) Please keep writing.

(k) Don't give up the good work.

(l) You shouldn't tell lies.



3.5 LET US SUM UP

In the first part of this unit, we discussed the differences in the direct form of narration and the indirect form. In addition, the unit highlights the changes that take place in transforming the direct speech from assertive, imperative interrogative and exclamatory forms into the indirect form and vice versa. Apart from this, we discussed the differences in the active forms of sentences with the passive forms while also highlighting the changes

that take place in transforming assertive, interrogative and imperative sentence types into passive forms. Moreover, the unit looks at a number of miscellaneous sentences in the active form and the modifications necessary in order to make them passive. Also, a host of examples have been provided in the unit, in order to look closely at the changes that take place in transforming these sentences from one form to the other. These examples provides sufficient scope to practice the exercise of sentence transformations.



3.6 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No 1:

(a) He asked me when my Puja holiday was. He requested me to visit them during the Puja.

(b) The teacher asked me why I was late. He said that he had asked him to be punctual.

(c) The man asked me if I could show him the way to the railway station. I replied that I could.

(d) The teacher said that he didn't want any excuses. He asked us why we didn't bring our homework.

(e) The tourist exclaimed that it was a very beautiful place. He stated that he would like to stay there for ever.

(f) The librarian told us not to make a noise. He asked us to leave the room silently.

(g) She said to Sahab, "Why don't you go to school?" Sahab said, "There is no school in my place."

(h) Gandhi said to the lawyers, "I have come to the conclusion that we should stop going to the court."

(i) He said, "We arrived Guwahati last evening."

(j) The mother said to the boy, "Do not go out of the house. It is raining.

Ans to Q No 2: (a) Short stories are written by Mr. Goswami in Assamese.

(b) Stories have been written by him for many years.

(c) His stories have been translated into many Indian languages.

(d) Have his stories been read by you?

(e) A few years ago, the Sahitya Academy Award was received by him.

(f) He is held in high esteem.

(g) You are known to him well.

(h) He is surprised by your success as a poet.

(i) Are poems written by you these days?

(j) You are requested to keep writing.

(k) You are advised not to give up the good work.

(l) Lies shouldn't be told by you.



3.7 MODEL QUESTIONS

Change the forms of narration in the following sentences:

Q 1: (a) The visitor said to me, "Is your father at home? He is expecting me at 8 o'clock."

(b) The lady asked me if I'd like a cup of tea. I thanked her saying that I had just had.

Q 2: (a) I said to Deepa, "Will you go with us for a picnic? We have planned to visit Pobitora."

(b) Anil asked me if I got up early day. I replied that I did.

Q 3: (a) The teacher said to the students, "Don't waste your time in idle gossip. You must do well in your examination."

(b) The invigilator told the students to stop writing. She asked them to submit their work and leave the hall silently."

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UNIT 4 : TIME, TENSE AND ASPECT

UNIT STRUCTURE

4.1 Learning Objectives

4.2 Introduction

4.3 Time and Tense

4.4 Tense and Aspect

4.5 The Present Tense

- 4.5.1 Simple Present Tense
- 4.5.2 Present Continuous Tense
- 4.5.3 Present Perfect Tense
- 4.5.4 Present Perfect Continuous Tense

4.6 The Past Tense

- 4.6.1 Simple Past Tense
- 4.6.2 Past Continuous Tense
- 4.6.3 Past Perfect Tense
- 4.6.4 Past Perfect Continuous Tense

4.7 The Future Tense

- 4.7.1 Simple Future Tense
- 4.7.2 Future Continuous Tense
- 4.7.3 Future Perfect Tense
- 4.7.4 Future Perfect Continuous Tense

4.8 Let Us Sum Up

4.9 Answers to Check Your Progress

4.10 Model Questions

4.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After reading this unit, you will be able to:

- grasp the relationship between time and tense
- find the relationship between tense and aspect
- appreciate how different forms of the verb perform different functions
- discuss ways by which future time can be expressed through a variety of forms.

4.2 INTRODUCTION

The title of this unit is made up of three important concepts of grammar: **time**, **tense** and **aspect**. In this introduction, we shall briefly discuss these three concepts for a **better** understanding of the forms of the **verbs** in English taken up in this unit.

Time is a universal concept that has been realised in terms of the present time, the past time and the future time. We can say that the notion of time exists independent of the grammar of a language

Tense, on the other hand, is a grammatical concept. It refers to the relationship between the form of the verb and the time of the action or state that it describes. The relationship of the verb form with the three elements of time constitutes tense.

Aspect is a grammatical category that is closely related to tense. Aspect marks such properties as whether an action is ongoing or completed. If it is an ongoing action, we call it a progressive aspect, if it is a completed action, we call it a perfective aspect or a perfective progressive aspect. Thus, aspect is not only related to **tense** but also to **time** as well.

In this unit, we shall see that each of these concepts helps in our understanding of the concepts of the verb forms in English. We shall look at the relation between time and tense on the one hand and tense and aspect on the other. We shall discover that there is no one-to-one relationship between time and tense in English.

We shall look at the different forms of the verb in terms of its different tenses and try to find out the function that each of these forms perform. It may interest you to know at the beginning of this unit that there are the following forms of the verb in English:

1. The Base Form:

The term 'base form' refers to the form of the verb that has no suffix added to it. The word **play** is in the base form; the word **plays** is not in the base form as it has the -s suffix added to it. The base form of the verb performs the following three functions:

(a) Present tense function

I play/ we play/ you play/ They play.

(b) Infinitive function

I like to play/ I want to go.

(c) Imperative function

Come with me/ Go there

2. The-s form

The-s form refers to the form of the verb with the suffix-S eg plays, takes performing the third person singular number fuction

eg. She sings/The boy plays tennis.

3. The Past Form

- The past form of regular verbs is the base form + ed suffix

  eg. play- played, open-opened etc.

- The past form of irregular verbs is a change in the vowels of the present form

  eg. give- gave, take- took

The past form expresses past time

eg. I wrote a letter/ I wanted to go

4. The -ing Form

The -ing form refers to the form of the verb with the -ing suffix attached to the base form I play- playing, give-giving etc. It performs two functions:

(a) Progressive function:

- She is playing/ He was reading.

(b) Gerundial function (gerund is a verbal noun)

- Swimming is a good exercise.

5. Past Participle Form

This form is produced by adding - ed/ -en suffix to the base form of the verb eg. played, taken, etc to perform a perfective function.

- The pupils have worked very hard.

  I have taken my lunch.

4.3 TIME AND TENSE

We have stated in 4.2 that time is a universal category that exists independent of any grammar of a language. On the other hand, tense is a grammatical category that is realised in verb forms used to express certain time relations. Similarly, aspect marks properties such as whether an action is ongoing or completed.

Let us begin by illustrating the relation between time and tense by taking these three sentences:

(a) I play chess every Sunday.

(b) He plays chess every Sunday.

(c) He played chess every Sunday.

In the first sentence, the present tense form of the verb 'to play' is in the base form i.e. a form in which no suffix is added. In the second sentence, the present tense form of the verb is marked by the inflection-s in the context of the third person singular number. In the third sentence, the past tense form of the verb is marked by the -ed suffixed to the base form and this does not change for person and number.

In the first two sentences, the verb is in the simple present tense form and in the third sentence the verb is in the simple past tense form. The first two sentence do not refer to something that is happening right now. It merely expresses a habitual action. While the third sentence expresses something that had happened in the past it also expresses a past habitual action. We shall see in due course that a present tense does not necessarily expresses an action taking place in the present time nor does a past tense necessarily express an action taking place in the past time. That is, there is no one-to-one relation between time and tense in English.

4.4 TENSE AND ASPECT

Aspect is a category of English grammar that is closely related to tense. It deals with how an event described by a verb is viewed. The relation between them can be seen in the context of the structure of the verb phrase. Tense may be present or past.

(a) Present tense : I write

(b) Past tense : I wrote

There is no single verb form that expresses future tense. Future time is expressed in a number of ways, one of which is the use of shall/ will before the base form of the verb eg. I shall write/ You will write.

Similarly, a finite verb phrase can contain a verb, which is usually a compound verb (or a verb phrase as it is called) that indicates whether an activity is going on or whether the activity is over.

- The verb phrase that carries the notion that an activity is going on as in I am writing has the progressive aspect.
- The verb phrase that carries the notion that an activity is completed as in I have written has the perfective aspect.
- The verb phrase that carries the notion that an activity has been going on for some time as in I have been writing has the perfective progressive aspect.

In the sections that follow, we shall look at the verb forms and their functions.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 1: Change the following forms as directed:

(a) I like to play. (Turn into negative)

(b) I want to go. (Turn into past tense negative)

(c) The boy plays tennis. (Turn into Interrogative)

(d) I gave her a book. (Turn into negative)

(e) I played football. (Turn into negative)

Q 2: Look at these sentences:

(a) He is reading a novel.

(b) Reading is my hobby.

In the first sentence, reading is in the present continuous tense. What is reading in the second sentence?

4.5 THE PRESENT TENSE

The Present tense refers to a tense which generally relates the time of an action or a state to the present moment in time. The present tense has the following forms.

(a) Simple Present Tense

- I/ We/You/ They play
- He/She/ It plays

(b) Present Continuous Tense

- I am playing
- You/We/ They are playing
- He/She/ It is playing

(c) Present Perfect Tense

- I/ We/You/ They have played
- He/She/ It has played

(d) Present Perfect Continous Tense

- I/ We/You/ They have been playing
- He/She/ It has been playing

4.5.1 Simple Present Tense

The simple present tense is used in these contexts:

(a) Habitual or repeated action

(i) She goes for a swim in the afternoon.

(ii) He goes to school by the school bus.

(b) General statements

(i) The sun rises in the east.

(ii) Mt. Everest is the highest mountain in the world.

(c) Proverbs/Sayings

(i) Necessity is the mother of invention.

(ii) A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush.

(d) Professional activities

(i) A baker bakes bread.

(ii) A blacksmith makes knives and tools.

(e) With verbs of perception

(i) I see a bird on the roof. (not am seeing)

(ii) I hear the sound of thunder. (not am hearing)

(f) To express a future action about which decision has already been taken

(i) The Prime Minister arrives tomorrow.

(ii) The train leaves in an hour.

(g) With verbs of cognition

(i) Do you understand what I say? (not are you understanding)

(ii) He knows Russian.

(h) Instantaneous Present

(used in running commentaries)

(i) The three services chiefs salute the Amar Jawan.

(ii) Ronaldo passed the ball to Ricardo.

Note

The simple present tense form of the primary auxiliaries are:

Be : Am/is/ are

Have : Have/ has

Do : Do/ does

4.5.2 Present Continuous Tense

The present continuous tense is used in these contexts:

(a) To express an ongoing action

(i) Simi is writing a letter.

(ii) The birds are chirping in the western sky.

(b) To express action going on presently

(i) He is writing a novel.

(ii) She is studying Engineering these days

(c) To express future plan

(i) I'm leaving for Bangkok tomorrow

(ii) The boys are meeting me next week.

(d) Verbs of perception

Certain verbs ('Verbs of Perception' eg. see, hear, feel,small)

are not generally used in the present continuous tense

(e) But some of these verbs may be used in the present continuous tense eg

I'm seeing him tomorrow

They are seeing their cousin off at the airport.

4.5.3 Present Perfect Tense

The present perfect tense is used in these contexts:

(a) An action just concluded when the resulting state is still present.

(i) The visitors have arrived

(ii) The university has just opened.

(b) For repeated actions

(i) I have been to Hyderabad several times

(ii) We have often talked about you.

(c) For activities or experiences that have occured in the past.

(i) I have been to the Selar Jung Museum.

(ii) Have you ever been to Singapore?

(d) For activities when the time of the activity is indefinite.

(i) I have visited Kohima.

(compare with: I visited Kohima on April last)

(ii) I have seen this film before.

4.5.4 Present Perfect Continuous Tense

The present perfect continuous tense is used in these contexts:

(a) For an action over a period of time up to now, the period leading upto the present.

(i) I have been working in this college for four years (and am still working).

(ii) The boys have been watching the match since morning.

(b) For repeated actions upto now

(i) I have been complaining to the GMC about the garbage dump.

(ii) I have been taking yoga lessons.

Note:

(a) The present perfect continuous tense focusses on the action going on.

(b) The present perfect tense focusses on the result of the action.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 3: Write the verbs in brackets in the correct tense.

(a) He _____ to school now a days at eight o' clock. (go)

(b) I always boil water before I _____ it (drink)

(c) He_____ the stars every night, now that he has time. (watch)

(d) The sun does not always shine but it _____now (shine)

(e) Please stop singing because I _____ to work. (try)

(f) Listen ! The baby _____ (talk)

Q 4: Fill in the blanks with either the Simple present tense or the Present perfect tense of the verb given in brackets.

(a) I _____ a lot of water this morning. (drink)

(b) Ice _____ when you bring it intothe sun. (always melt)

(c) It _____ to rain in upper Assam. (already start)

(d) She_____ has son for two years. (not see)

(e) May I go out when I _____my work. (finish)

(f) Water _____ if you heat it. (evaporate)

4.6 THE PAST TENSE

The past tense refers to a form of a verb which is usually used to show that the actor state described by the verb occured at a time before the present. The past tense has the following forms:

(a) Simple Past Tense

- I/You/We/ They played
- He/ She/It played.

(b) Past Continuous Tense

- I/ He/She/ It was playing
- You/ We/ They were playing

(c) Past Perfect Tense

- I/ You/ We/They had played
- He/she/ It had played

(d) Past Perfect Continuous Tense

- I/ You/We/ They had been playing
- I/ He/She/ It had been playing

4.6.1 Simple Past Tense

The simple past tense is used in these contexts:

(a) To express an action wholly completed at some point or during some period in the past.

(i) The exam started at 9 o' clock.

(ii) I lived in that house for four years.

Note that the simple past tense is usual with world or phrases that are time indicators eg at 9 o' clock or for four years.

(b) To express a supposition in same conditional sentences.

(i) If you worked hard you would pass the examination.

(ii) If I were you I should accept this offer.

(iii) It would be better if you went there yourself.

(c) With the simple past we often say when something happened.

Sometimes we don't say when.

(i) I had a good sleep and awoke refreshed.

(ii) I heard that you have left the job.

(d) We use **used to** the talk about the past also.

(i) Years ago, I used to play football.

= years ago, I played football

(ii) A Punjabi family used to live have a year ago.

(iii) Mrs. Koul never used to wear make-up.

4.6.2 Past Continuous Tense

The past continuous tense is used in these contexts:

(a) To describe actions and situations that were in progress at a particular time in the past.

(i) Five years ago, I was working in this office.

(ii) At 7 pm last evening, I was listening to the news.

(iii) It wasn't raining at that time.

(b) To describe two actions, one completed and the other continuous.

(i) While I was having my dinner, the doorbell rang.

(ii) When I was walking down the street, I met an old friend.

(c) To describe two actions that were both in progress at the same time.

(i) While I was giving the instructions, the students were working out the puzzles.

(ii) While Raju was having his food, his mother was packing his school bag.

4.6.3 Past Perfect Tense

The past perfect tense is used in these contexts:

(a) When we talk about two things in the past, we use the past perfect for the earlier event.

(i) When we reached the station the train had left.

(ii) All the students had arrived when the Principal entered the hall.

(b) To express an idea in the indirect speech that in direct speech had been in the present perfect tense.

(i) Direct: He said, "I have brought the book".
Indirect: He said that he had brought the book

(ii) Direct: She said to me, "Ramen has just left for school".
Indirect: She told me that Ramen had just left for school.

(c) To express a past condition or supposition with an implied negative.

(i) If I had known that she was so ill, I would have visited her. (implied negative: I didn't know)

(ii) If he had started early he wouldn't have missed the train. (He didn't start early)

(d) With such verbs as wish, hope, expect etc to express past wish, hope etc that was not realised.

(i) I wish now that I had taken your advice.

(ii) I thought we had agreed to meet today.

(iii) She hopes we hadn't forgotten her birthday.

4.6.4 Past Perfect Continuous Tense

The past perfect continuous tense is used in these contexts:

(a) To express the duration of an action upto a certain time in the past.

(i) He had been working in a private company before he joined our office.

(ii) She had been learning Fashion Designing when I met her a year ago.

(b) To express the present perfect continuous in reported speech:

(i) I asked her what she had been doing these days.

(ii) She told me that she had been trying to contact me for the last few days.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 5: Rewrite the sentences by filling in the blanks with either the simple past tense or the past continuous tense

(a) The teacher_____ he was lying (know)

(b) All the answers to his questions_____ wrong. (be)

(c) When I walked past the house, some men_____ the gate (paint)

(d) When she was a baby, she_____ (never cry)

(e) When I saw you in the shop yesterday, you_____ a blue shirt. (wear)

Q 6: Complete the dialogue with the proper form of the verb.

Charu: I _a_ the Dibrugarh University a couple of weeks ago. The University _b_ a lot since you and I _c_ there.(go, a change, b, to stay, c)

Nayan: I _d_ the University for years. But I heard that those small cottages where you and I _e_ are no longer there. (not visit, d, stay, e)

4.7 THE FUTURE TENSE

The future tense occupies a very curious position in English grammar. When we look at the verb form we find only two forms of the verb. We have stated that in terms of form we only have the present form and the past form.

In this context, it may be useful to point out that the present tense in sometimes referred to as non- past. That is, there are two tense forms: past and non- past. It is more accurate to call the present tense form of the verb as non- past because you will find that most present tense verbs do not always refer to something that is happening right now. A present tense verb form may express many other things.

If there is no future tense form, how do we then express something that is going to happen in a future time? Look at the sentence you have just read. The words is going to are underlined. These words express future. Indeed, we can express future time in a variety of ways. Read the following forms that express future:

(a) Auxiliary Verb Construction

(i) Use of shall +base form of the verb inthe first person. (Base form refers to the form of the verb without any suffix added)

I shall visit the library tomorrow.

(ii) Use of will + base form of the verb in the second and third persons.

You will play in our team.

He will meet the Principal tomorrow.

(b) Be going to + infinitive

The verb ‘be’ has these forms: am, is, are, was, were; infinitive refers

to - to + base form of the verb.

It is going to rain

They are going to play the match.

(c) Present Continuous Tense Form

The present continuous tense form with a time adverbial can be used to express future happening.

(i) We are going to the book fair in the afternoon, not now.

(ii) The plane is taking off in an hour's time.

This tense form can also refer to a future happening anticipated in the present.

(iii) He is joining Tata Tea.

(d) Simple Present Tense form

Both the present continuous and the simple present forms are often used with verbs like arrive, come, leave etc to refer to future time.

(i) The plane takes off in an hour's time.

This tense is also used to refer to a future event that is fixed.

(ii) What time is the meeting ?

(iii) The meeting starts at 3 o' Clock.

(e) Will shall + continuous tense of the verb

This structure can be used to express future time also.

(i) Don't worry, I 'll be doing my best

(ii) When will your brother be coming?

(f) Be to + infinitive

This structure expresses a future plan or arrangement.

(i) We are to leave by Monday.

(ii) You are to report for work by 10 o' clock.

(g) Be about to + infinitive

This structure expresses near future or immediate future action.

(i) Hurry up! The train is about to leave.

(ii) I was about to ring you up.

(h) Be going to + infinitive

This structure expresses unfulfilled future event.

(i) I was going to marry her.

(ii) You were going to ring me up, weren't you?

These are some of the ways by which we express future time. In addition to these are the traditional future tense forms, one of which has been referred to at the beginning of the above list. We shall examine each of these forms some of which are of course fairly literary. It is important to familiarise yourselves with these forms:

(a) Simple Future Tense

- I/ We shall / will play
- You/ They will play
- He/ She/It will play

(b) Future Continuous Tense

- I/ We shall / will be playing
- You/ They will be playing
- He/ She/It will playing

(c) Future Perfect Tense

- I/ We shall / will have played
- You/ They will have played
- He/ She/It will have played

(d) Future Perfect Continuous Tense

- I/ We shall have/ will have been playing
- You/ They will have been playing
- He/ She/It will have been playing

4.7.1 Simple Future Tense

We have stated that shall and will before a verb are used to express pure future as in

(i) I shall ring you up. (I'll.....)

(ii) We shall play the match. (We'll.....)

(iii) You will go with John. (You'll....)

(iv) He will see you now. (He' ll....)

(v) They will visit the zoo this afternoon. (They' ll....)

However, in addition to futurity, shall and will express other functions like willingness, determination, promise, suggestion etc.

Read these uses of shall:

(a) Prediction

(i) I shall see him tomorrow.

(ii) We shall overcome all obstacles.

In both these sentences shall expresses the speaker's determination to do something in the future.

(b) Promise

(i) I shall take you to the trade fair tomorrow.

(I promise to take you to the trade fair tomorrow.)

(ii) You shall have the money as soon as I get it.

(I promise you'll get the money as soon as I get it)

(c) Suggestion

(i) Shall we have some tea?

(= I suggest that we have some tea)

(ii) Shall we take a taxi from here?

(= I suggest we take a taxi from here)

Shall in yes/no questions with we as the subject has often the meaning of a suggestion.

(d) Determination

(i) You shall not bring a mobile phone to the exam hall, right.

(ii) I shall not allow you to enter the class without your proper uniform.

Now here are some uses of will . They can express prediction, willingness, request, order.

(a) Prediction

(i) It will rain tomorrow.

(= I predict the occurrence of rain?)

(ii) He will arrive in the afternoon flight.

(= I predict his arrival in the afternoon flight)

(b) Willingness

(i) I'll do it for you.

(= I'm willing to do it for you)

(ii) Will you lend me some money?

(= Are you willing to lend me some money?
also a request depending on the context.)

(c) Request

(i) Will you do me a favour?

(ii) Will you join me for lunch today?

Such requests are made in the question form.

(d) Order

(i) Will you leave the room?
(= I order you to leave the room)

(ii) Will you keep quiet?
(= I order you to keep quiet)

4.7.2 Future Continuous Tense

The future continuous tense is used in these contexts:

(a) To express an action in progress at some time in future.

(i) He will be doing his homework in the evening.

(ii) She will be watching the television all day tomorrow.

This tense form is used to express a future activity that would be going on at a point or period of time.

(b) To indicate future plans that have already been decided on

(i) They will be visiting Kolkata again this year.

(ii) I shall be meeting her this evening.

The future activity can take place either in a near future or a distant future.

4.7.3 Future Perfect Tense

(a) To express an action that will be completed before a certain time or another action in the future.

(i) In another year or so, you will have forgotten all about him.

(ii) I shall have finished writing this unit by this time tomorrow.

(b) To express a duration up to a time in the future.

(i) When I retire next year I shall have worked in this office for thirty years.

(ii) On 4th February we shall have been married for twenty years.

(c) To express possibility or assumption.

(i) It's 6 o' clock; the train will have arrived by this time now.

(ii) Your will have heard that I work in this college now.

4.7.4 Future Perfect Continuous Tense

(a) To express the duration of an action upto a certain time in the future :

(i) On 1st January 2016, I shall have been working in this college for six years.

(ii) In another month's time, she will have been working in the Board of Secondary Education for twenty two years.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS



Q 7: Complete the sentences with the going to form of the verb in brackets.

(a) Look at the dark clouds. It_____ (rain)

(b) I_____ (buy) some new shirts tomorrow.

(c) When you_____ (speak) to the Principal

(d) Nehru Stadium_____ (build) a new swimming pool.

(e) Because of the mindless felling of trees, this vast area _____ (be) a waste land soon.

Q 8: Complete the sentences with appropriate verb forms

(a) I' ll soon be 50 years old but I_____ (not feel) any older.

(b) The Government will take stern steps against price rise; so there_____ (not be) any rise in price this year.

(c) He' ll send her to a boarding school; but her mother_____ (not allow) her to go there.

(d) Sheela is still in her room; she_____ (not come) out.

(e) You wait in the car while I buy some stamps from the post office. I_____ (not be) much longer than two minutes.



4.8 LET US SUM UP

The unit began by looking at the concepts of time, tense and aspects in English. In the process, we discussed these points.There is no correlation between time and tense in English. A verb form in the present tense may not necessarily refer to the present time. It can even refer to the future time or even to a habitual action. Similarly, a past tense form can also refer to the future. In addition, we learnt that there are only two forms of the verb in English: present and past eg. write and wrote. There is no future form of the verb. The future tense is expressed by making use of a variety of forms. We discussed these forms that express future time.

Also, the unit has discussed the uses of each of the sixteen categories of the verb forms eg. simple present, present continuous etc. where each category can have more than one use. For example the unit has listed eight uses of the simple present, four uses of the present continuous, four uses of the present perfect and so on.



4.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No 1: (a) I don't like to play.

(b) I didn't want to go.

(c) Does the boy play tennis?

(d) I didn't give her a book

(e) I didn't play football.

Ans to Q No 2: It is a gerund.

Ans to Q No 3: (a) goes (b) drink (c) watches (d) is shining

(e) am trying (f) is talking

Ans to Q No 4: (a) have drunk (b) always melts

(c) has already started

(d) has not seen (e) have finished

(f) evaporates

Ans to Q No 5: (a) knew (b) were (c) were painting

(d) never cried (e) were wearing

Ans to Q No 6: (a) went (b) had changed

(c) had stayed (d) haven't visited

(e) had stayed

Ans to Q No 7: (a) is going to rain

(b) am going to buy

(c) are you going to speak

(d) is going to build

(e) is going to be

Ans to Q No 8: (a) won't feel (b) won't be

(c) won't allow (d) won't

(e) won't be



4.10 MODEL QUESTIONS

Q 1: Explain the line: "There is no one-to-one relation between time and tense".

Q 2: Illustrate with examples some of the ways of expressing future time.

Q 3: Give two uses of the present perfect tense.

Q 4: Give the uses of shall to express promise and suggestion.

Q 5: Illustrate the use of will to express request.

Q 6: Rewrite the following sentences using the verbs given in brackets in

their correct tense forms

(a) Recently the price of petrol_____ (go) up by Rs.1.50 p.

(b) She_____ (do) a lot of work this morning.

(c) The meeting_____ (start) before we reached the auditorium.

(d) I saw him while he_____ (cross) the road.

(e) I don't know the answer; I wish of _____ (know) it.

(f) I shall not go to the book fair if it _____ (rain).

(g) The teacher_____ (be) ill for three days.

(h) He _____ (watch) the football match in the TV when his friend visited him.

(i) Mr Das_____ (leave) the office at 5 pm every day.

(j) The boy_____ (walk) for two hours at a stretch and is now tired.

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UNIT 5 : PHRASES AND IDIOMS

UNIT STRUCTURE

5.1 Learning Objectives

5.2 Introduction

5.3 Samples of Phrases and Idioms

5.4 Let Us Sum Up

5.5 Answers to Check Your Progress

5.6 Model Questions

5.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After reading this unit, you will be able to:

- familiarise yourself with some of the more common idiomatic expressions of English
- identify whether a given expression is literary, colloquial, slang or is outdated.

5.2 INTRODUCTION

One of the basic characteristics of the English language is its huge stock of idiomatic expressions. Most of these expressions have posed a serious problem to English second language learners.

The problem arises because the meaning of these expressions cannot be easily deduced from knowledge of the normal meaning of the constituent words. Any student with knowledge of the normal meaning of 'fall' and 'out' would be able to understand a sentence like: *My wallet fell out my pocket* .

Knowledge of meaning of individual words will give a person no clue to such expression. e.g. '*They had been good friends for years until they fell out over some trivial matter*'.

It is important for second language speakers not only to understand such idiomatic expressions but also to use them in order to add sparkle to their expressions.

Two central features underlying an idiom are:

(a) The meaning of an idiomatic expression cannot be deduced by examining the individual words that make up the expression and

(b) The expression is fixed both grammatically and structurally.

Thus, the sentence below is unacceptable :

He turned every stone to get the job.

The expression 'turn every stone' distorts the fixed structure: *leave no stone unturned* as in: *He left no stone unturned to get the job*. We cannot change the form of the expression.

Moreover, an interesting point about these idiomatic expressions is that a word can enter into an enormous number of constructions. A word like 'hand' can enter into as many as 92 idiomatic expressions which include: *free hand*, *hand in glove*, *catch red-handed*, *wash one's hands off* and a host of others.

5.3 SAMPLES OF PHRASES AND IDIOMS

(a) ADJECTIVE AND ADVERB GROUP

BAD

Bad blood (enmity) **:** There has been bad blood between the two neighbours.

Be in one's bad books (be out of favour) **:** If you do not work hard, you will be in the teacher's bad books.

BIG

Make it big (be very successful) *slang* **:** His dream was to make it big in business.

Too big for one's boots (acting in a superior way) **:** After Prabin got the job, he's been altogether too big for his boots.

DEAD

Dead drunk (extremely drunk) **:** When I saw him, he was dead drunk.

Flog a dead horse (wastes one's time and efforts) **:** Teaching him to operate computers is like flogging a dead horse.

FLAT

Fall flat (a plan that failed) **:** Our plans to take a package tour to the

Far East fell flat when she fell ill.

Tell someone flat (tell someone in a definite manner) **:** She told him flat that she did not like him.

GOOD

As good as (almost certainly) **:** Dilip as good as knows that he cannot pass the examination.

For good (for ever) **:** They left the village for good.

Hold good (continue to be valid) **:** If your invitation still holds good, I'd like to visit you next Sunday.

In good time (with plenty of time to spare) **:** We got to the station in good time, so we had time for a cup of tea at the cafeteria.

HARD

Be hard up (be short of money) **:** After his retirement without a pension, he was rather hard up.

Hard and fast rule (a rule that applies without exception) **:** The third person singular–s is a hard and fast rule of grammar.

HIGH

High and dry (ignored) **:** After the celebrations were over and everyone had left, I was left high and dry.

High and low (everywhere) **:** I've searched high and low for you.

In high time (to do something without more delay) **:** It's high time you started doing some work.

HOT

Blow hot and cold (be undecided) **:***Informal* We are still blowing hot and cold about buying the house.

Strike while the iron is hot (taking advantage of something while the situation is favourable) **:** Being at the University, strike while the iron is hot; you may not get advantage of such a wonderful library once you leave.

LONG

Go a long way (be successful) **:** He has a brilliant educational record; I'm sure he'll go a long way in life.

The long and the short of it (the essential facts) **:** The long and the

short of the matter is that he doesn't know how to do the work.

OLD

A chip of the old block (like the previous one) **:** The new manager is just a chip of the old block.

Old hat (out of date) **:** He thought he gave an impressive lecture; but most of his ideas are old hat.

SHORT

Run short of (not having enough) **:** I'm running short of time; I need to finish the assignment today.

Cut short (bring something to an end) **:** On hearing the news, the Minister cut short his tour and rushed to the capital.

THICK

To have thick skin (become insensitive to criticism) **:** As a politician, in public life you quickly learn to grow a thick skin.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 1: What are the two central features underlying an idiom?

Q 2: Make suitable sentences using phrases and idioms from the following adjective and adverb group. Also briefly describe in a few words the implied meaning of the idioms:

E.g. **Too big for one's boots(acting in a superior way):**

After taking in charge of his new company, he has started acting too big for his boots

a. Take a hard line

b. Through thick and thin

c. Give someone a piece of mind

d. One's weak point

e. Read between the lines

(b) NOUNS

END

Make both ends meet (manage somehow) **:** How can you expect to make both ends meet with my salary?

To clear/tie loose ends (settle matters) **:** I have quite a number of loose ends to tie up before leaving.

LINE

The bottom line (result/outcome) **:** He didn't want any excuses but the bottom line of the inquiry.

In the line of fire (in a position between two opposing sides) **:** My position is such that I am always in the line of fire: there is the union on one side and the establishment on the other.

Read between the lines (understand more than the actual words said)**:** She didn't tell me much; but reading between the lines I understood that she didn't want to come.

MIND

Give someone a piece of one's mind (scold) **:** The next time he neglects his work, the boss is sure to give him a piece of his mind.

Have half a mind to do something (uncertain) **:** I had half a mind to go ahead with the new project.

Make up one's mind (take a decision) **:** Have you made up your mind where you will study?

POINT

A sore point (an irritating matter) **:** The scandal involving him in the deal was always his sore point.

One's strong point (one's best quality) **:** Mathematics has never been my strong point.

WAY

Give way (break) **:** After the heavy rain, the weak bridge gave way.

In the way (causing an obstruction)**:** Your arguments stand in the way of an amicable settlement.

Ways and means (methods) **:** Let me know the ways and means of doing the work.

WORLD

A man of the world (experienced) **:** He is a man of the world; he knows how to face such situations.

Out of this world (wonderful) **:** The Taj Mahal looks like a piece of art

that is out of the world.

(c) MISCELLANEOUS

ALL

After all (contrary to what one thinks) **:** I took my umbrella along, but it didn't rain after all.

All in all (considering everything) **:** We didn't agree on every point, but all in all we had a successful meeting.

All the same (in any case) **:** I expect the report is correct, but I'll check it myself all the same.

Be- all and end-all (the most important thing) **:** Cricket is his be-all and end-all. It's all he ever talks about.

Once and for all (finally)**:** I'm telling you once and for all, I don't like to see you here.

(d) ADJECTIVE + NOUN

The acid test (the ultimate test) **:** Facing the civil service interview board was the acid test of his communication skills.

A/the burning question (an important matter) **:** Unemployment is a burning question in the State.

Cold comfort (poor consolation) **:** It was cold comfort telling him that it was good for him to have lost the contract.

Fair weather friend (person who stops being a friend when one is in trouble) **:** When he lost his job and was no longer able to lead an expensive social life, then only he discovered that all his friends were fair weather friends.

Open secret (one that is generally known but is supposed to be a secret) **:** It's an open secret that Dilip and Priya are going to get engaged.

A rolling stone (person who moves from place to place) **:** For years Vicky was a rolling stone until he met Deepa.

(e) PAIRS OF NOUNS

Bag and baggage (with all belongings) **:** Dilip got tired of the job; he left the city bag and baggage.

Board and lodging (food and accommodation) **:** The board and

lodging expenses at Hotel Nandan come to around Rs. 1,800.00

Chapter and verse (details) **:** I know the chapter and verse of the matter.

By hook or by crook (by any method) **:** I'll get the money somehow, by hook or by crook.

Lock, stock and barrel (everything) **:** He had decided to go to live in Canada with his son, so he's selling up here lock, stock and barrel.

Ups and downs (good and bad moments) **:** There's no need to be so angry with me; these ups and downs are a part of our lives.

(f) PAIRS OF ADVERBS

By and large (taken as a whole) **:** By and large, it has been a pretty good year for Team India.

Far and wide (everywhere) **:** The news of the incident spread far and wide in no time.

Few and far between (seldom) **:** We enjoy your company; but your visits are so few and far between.

(g) IDIOMS WITH PREPOSITIONS

Above board (honest)**:** In business matters Mr. Das is above board.

At one's beck and call (at one's disposal) **:** He has a lot of people at his beck and cell.

At daggers drawn (enemies) **:** Mr.Das and his neighbour Mr. Deka have been at daggers drawn for years.

At home in (knowledgeable about) **:** I am at home in French.

By fits and starts (not continually) **:** The work on the book is going on by fits and starts.

In the eye of (in the opinion of) **:** You will be found guilty in the eye of the law.

In a nutshell (concisely) **:** Please give me the report in a nutshell.

On the cards (likely to happen) **:** It is on the cards that a new wing of the library will be built.

Out of the blue (unexpected)**:** The news came to me out of the blue.

With flying colours (with great success) **:** He passed the examination with flying colours.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 3: Briefly describe the meaning of the phrases and idioms in a few words and make suitable sentences with the following:

a. Once and for all

b. Hook or by crook

c. In a nutshell

d. On the cards

e. To have thick skin

Q 4: Find out more phrases and idioms other than those listed in the unit.



5.4 LET US SUM UP

After going through the unit, you will be able to figure out the common phrases and idioms that we use regularly in our expressions. The implied meanings in the idiomatic phrases add a dash of sparkle to our expressions and when used in its proper context make our expressions more apt and precise. Sometimes it also adds a dash of wit or humour for an instance the phrase 'for good' which means 'forever' could be used to express something in a witty manner: "I have to get rid of that fool for good!". The unit will also enable the learner to identify whether a particular phrase or idiom is literary, colloquial, slang or out of use. The lists of phrases and idioms are too exhaustive to be covered in one unit and therefore the learner must try to find more of such examples on his or her own. It is important to grasp the essence of these idiomatic expressions in order to use them correctly both in spoken or written form.

5.5 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No 1: The two central features are:

a. The meaning of an idiomatic expression cannot be deduced by examining the individual words that make up the expression.

b. The expression is fixed both grammatically and structurally

Ans to Q No 2: a. Take a hard line (be uncompromising) **:** The government has taken a hard line on unauthorised constructions.

b. Through thick and thin (through good times and difficulties) **:** They were together through thick and thin.

c. In the long run (over a long period of time) **:** I have invested some money in shares; I hope they will be beneficial in the long run.

d. The old school (traditional thinking/ standard)**:** Dr. Baruah is an old school English Professor who loves to talk about the magnificence of European culture with intense emotion.

Ans to Q No 3: a. Once and for all (finally): She had completed her payments once and for all.

b. By hook or by crook (anyhow or by any means): I want that fur coat by hook or by crook.

c. In a nutshell (briefly or concisely): In a nutshell, the chapter highlights the significant breakthroughs in science.

d. On the cards (likely to happen): The construction of the new building is on the cards.

e. A necessary evil(something unpleasant yet important): Examination is a necessary evil in school life.



5.6 MODEL QUESTIONS

Q 1: Make sentences with the following idioms :

(1)	hard and fast	(2)	at daggers drawn
(3)	in cold blood	(4)	at a stretch
(5)	on the brink of	(6)	to the backbone
(7)	put up with	(8)	by and by
(9)	in lieu of	(10)	in vogue
(11)	end in smoke	(12)	lion's share
(13)	null and void	(14)	look down upon
(15)	black sheep	(16)	cut short
(17)	dark horse	(18)	bring to light
(19)	bring to book	(20)	look after

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UNIT 6 : AMPLIFICATION OF AN IDEA

UNIT STRUCTURE

6.1 Learning Objectives

6.2 Introduction

6.3 Process Analysis of Amplification

6.4 Amplifications Worked Out

- 6.4.1 Where There is a Will, There is a Way
- 6.4.2 Rome Was Not Built in a Day
- 6.4.3 Fortune Favours the Brave
- 6.4.4 The Pen is Mightier than the Sword
- 6.4.5 Waste Not, Want Not

6.5 Let Us Sum Up

6.6 Answers to Check Your Progress

6.7 Model Questions

6.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

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

- define the concept of amplification
- explain the process involved in amplification
- amplify statements highlighting their surface and deeper meanings.

6.2 INTRODUCTION

Amplification is a distinctive writing activity that involves a distinctive writing skill. Précis writing is also a writing activity but the skills underlying précis writing are different from those underlying the activity of amplification. In précis writing we are given a fairly long reading passage which we are required to

- reduce by at least two third of the original length of the passage
- retain every original idea in the précis
- give a title to the précis

In amplification, we follow a reverse order. In the amplification task we are given an aphorism or a popular proverb. An aphorism is a short statement into which much thought and observation is compressed. Amplification involves expanding the compressed thought and observation into one or two paragraphs of cohesive writing where précis involves compressing the expanded thought and observation into one third of the length and ultimately to a single line which forms the title of the précis.

However, the similarity stops here. In précis, you have an elaborate piece of text that you examine to find out points of contraction or redundancies for elimination. But in a single line and that too a compact aphorism what do we do? In this unit, we shall look at a few strategies of writing an amplification. In this section, you will find some examples of the "finished product" that constitutes amplification.

It seems obvious that your interest should be more on the process involved in amplification – the ways to go about the task of expansion of the idea. This is our central concern in the subsections that follow.We shall look at some of the sub-skills involved in developing an idea into a piece of writing that is not only cohesive and coherent but also organised to provide interesting reading.

6.3 PROCESS ANALYSIS OF AMPLIFICATION

The first thing to note is that an amplification is a formal, structured piece of writing. The word 'formal' implies that the style of writing an amplification is not similar to the style that we use for writing a personal letter. The style should not be personal, friendly and casual. On the contrary, it has to be formal. We have also stated that an amplification is a structured piece of writing. This implies that an amplification is a well-organised piece of writing. Most school grammar and composition books contain a chapter on amplification. These chapters give a few worked out examples and each example is given in a small paragraph only. However, in most cases, it can be seen that the aphorisms given for amplification have a surface meaning and a deeper meaning which need to be handled in two different paragraphs at least in order to make the writing fairly structured.

Secondly, the amplification has to be 'developed' out of a statement containing a single topic or an issue. Let us take as an example the aphorism "All that glitters is not gold". This is the one idea that holds your whole amplified passage together from start to finish. But the basic question is: How do you develop your ideas?

One of the approaches as to how our ideas have to be developed is to take a close look at the sentence given for amplification. It may be that:

- You may be able to discover a surface meaning of the sentence i.e. the literal meaning.
- You may even discover an implied meaning that can be linked to our range of experience.

In many cases, you may even discover the literary context from which the line has been taken. Take for example "If winter comes, can spring be far behind". The line may remind you of Shelley's "Ode to the West Wind" from where the line has been taken. If you discover the source from where the line has been taken, you get a good starting point.But if you cannot find the source of a line, you need not be panicky. It is just that the source helps. You still have with you the ability to discover the surface meaning and the implied meaning.

Let us get back to "All that glitters is not gold". It may interest you to know that the line appears in Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*. That reference can be utilised as a good starting point for your amplification. This is how we can begin by discussing the context in which the line occurs.

The proverb "All that glitters is not gold" is associated with Shakespeare's play *The Merchant of Venice*. In this casket episode of the play, Shakespeare's heroine Portia, in order to choose the right suitor, makes use of three caskets – one each of gold, silver and lead respectively. A suitor had to choose one of the three caskets. When a suitor chose the golden casket and opened the lid, he found a poem in it beginning with the line "All that glitters is not gold".

We can use the above account of the caskets as the opening paragraph of the amplification if we are familiar with source of the proverb. But, if you are not at all familiar with the source, you might as well avoid the

account and begin with a paragraph which gives the literal meaning of the proverb. We can say something like this:

The meaning of the proverb is that appearance can be very deceptive and things are not what they seem to be. We mistake the highly polished brass for gold and are likely to be deceived by its gold-like glitter. Many people are deceived by fake ornaments by mistaking them to be ornaments of real gold. They hardly realise that appearance can be very deceptive.

The above paragraph takes care of the literal meaning of the proverb. We may now move on to the relevance of the proverb in our lives by reflecting upon certain situations that one is likely to encounter resulting in being duped or cheated by people with their glib talk. Here is a paragraph that can conclude the amplification.

We may often meet strangers while travelling in trains and buses who impress us by their polished behaviour. They win our confidence and we on our part little realise that the person is only waiting for a chance to dupe us. Their behaviour is like that of fake ornaments that dupe unsuspecting people. We must remember that all that glitters is not gold.

There are a few things that need to be explained before we move on to the next section. First, remember that when we write out the amplification, we have to give the original title at the beginning of the composition. You do not have to modify it.

Secondly, you have to be particular about the structure of the paragraph. Your paragraph must have one main idea only. Every sentence in that paragraph must relate to that idea.

Most paragraphs have a topic sentence which summarises this one idea. The topic sentence tells your reader what the paragraph is about. The topic sentence is generally the first sentence of a paragraph.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q.1 : Let us suppose you are going to write an amplification task on the proverb “Where there is a will, there is a way”. Before writing out your composition, you need to reflect upon the title given. Choose the correct answer from the

choices given.

a) In the title “Where there is a will, there is a way”, the word **will** means:

A. expecting to do something

B. firmness of mind

C. hope that something is going to happen

b) In this first paragraph you will

A. discuss the literal meaning of the proverb

B. relate the proverb to our lives

C. give a literary reference to the line

Q.2 : Go back to the second para (second box) of “All that glitters is not gold”. What is the main idea of the paragraph? Write it down briefly in your own words:

.....

.....

.....

6.4 AMPLIFICATIONS WORKED OUT

In this section of the unit, we shall take a look at a few worked out examples of amplifications followed by a comment on each example given. We shall take up a few aphorisms for amplification. In fact, there are a host of aphorisms from which a few have been taken, which are as follows :

a. A stitch in time saves nine

b. All that glitters is not gold

c. Charity begins at home

d. Example is better than precept

e. God helps those who help themselves

f. Look before you leap

g. Make hay while the sun shines

h. Rome was not built in a day

i. Slow and steady wins the race

j. The pen is mightier than the sword

k. We live in deeds not in years

l. What cannot be cured must be endured.

Most of them are familiar to us. But expanding the sentence to a composition is a different matter. Here are a few of them.

6.4.1 Where There Is a Will, There Is a Way

The proverb “Where there is a will, there is a way” means that when a person has a firmness of mind, he can always find a way of doing something. In this context, one remembers the words of the French Emperor Napoleon: “The word ‘impossible’ exists only in the dictionary of fools”. What Napoleon meant was that there is nothing that is impossible for a person who has a firmness of mind. The expression “there is a way”, thus means that a way can be discovered for doing something, for achieving our goal. Thus, the proverb means that for a person with a firmness of mind, there is nothing that he cannot do. He can always find a way for success.

The proverb has great relevance in our lives. When we look at the lives of great men, we find that they became great because of a firmness of mind that they possessed. Name of such an eminent person that comes to our mind is Mahatma Gandhi. As a young lawyer in South Africa, he faced racial prejudice by being thrown out of the first class railway compartment because a white man would not travel with him. He faced the humiliation with courage and patience. He had a firmness of mind to fight racial prejudice and with that South African experience he led the nationalist movement in India. It is the firmness of his mind that had given him the courage to achieve the goal of independence. It is such a firmness of mind that leads to success.

Comments : You will note that we did not refer to any literary source of this proverb. In the first paragraph we gave a literal meaning of the proverb while in the second paragraph we referred to its relevance in our lives. The reference to Mahatma Gandhi is just one of many

such examples. You can think of other persons as well. David Livingstone is another eminent personality who had demonstrated tremendous will power. He had faced sickness and physical dangers in the pathless jungles of Africa in his effort to conquer the Dark Continent.

6.4.2 Rome Was Not Built In a Day

The proverb "Rome was not built in a day" is a reference to the greatness and magnificence of the ancient city of Rome. There is a legend that when the city of Rome was built in 753 B.C., it was simply a collection of a few huts. But over the years, the city grew steadily till it subsequently became the center of European civilization. In pomp and splendour, in art and culture, Rome became the envy of the world. But all this did not happen in a single day. It took several centuries for Rome to reach its glorious heights.

The proverb is immensely meaningful for our lives. It reminds us that great things do not happen overnight or in the course of a single day. It takes constant perseverance and hard work for something great to happen. This is true, both for individuals as well as for nations. We as Indians are proud of our great civilization. This civilization is not the work of a single day. It goes back several centuries to the time of the Vedas and centuries of toil and achievements have added up to make what the great Indian civilization is today. Similarly, an individual has to work hard constantly to achieve fame. The lifetime achievement awards is an example of individual greatness.

Comments : The proverb is very old. John Heywood, the sixteenth century dramatist had used it in 1546 roughly to mean that great things do not happen all on a sudden. The proverb has been amplified above with a reference to the greatness of the Indian civilization. But you may think of other examples which illustrate a similar idea.

6.4.3 Fortune Favours the Brave

The proverb "Fortune favours the brave" has another variation "Fortune favours the bold". The proverb means that success or victory or reward always comes to a brave person. The proverb thus celebrates bravery and heroism as traits to be cherished. In the medieval times, when the proverb first originated, knights and heroes showed bravery in tournaments and battles and returned victorious. These heroes were amply rewarded for their bravery. There are many stories of King Arthur and his brave knights who defeated powerful enemies and won great honour. Fortune smiles only on such heroes.

On the contrary, a timid person can only dream of fortune; he can never achieve fortune. He does not have the courage to face the challenges of life. Such a person has to remain content with little gains. A person who is brave has the boldness to face the challenges of life. It is to such persons that bigger gains and high awards and rewards come.

Comments : In the second paragraph, you may relate one or two examples of real life heroes who were crowned with success. You can refer to mountaineers and eminent sports personalities by describing their challenges that they could overcome.

6.4.4 The Pen Is Mightier Than the Sword

The proverb is in the form of a comparison between two objects – a pen and a sword.The two words here are used symbolically. The pen stands for writings and the sword for military exploits. People are often dazzled by military exploits and tend to believe that the sword is mightier than the pen. Throughout the course of history, there have been great wars between nations that had destroyed whole civilizations and nations by the process of colonisation and subjugation. All these exploits highlight the power of the sword.

But if we ponder deeply enough, we find that the pen is mightier than the sword. Laying waste to civilizations is not a matter

of pride. A time comes when the conqueror along with the conquered will be forgotten. We all know about Shelley's Ozymandias whose broken statue is all that has remained in the lonesome desert. On the contrary the great works of the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*, the Vedas and Upanishads, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, Shakespeare and Milton has survived into the twenty-first century proving once and for all that the pen is mightier than the sword.

Comments : You can think of Ashoka whose military exploits brought the king great misery. He gave up the sword and started a new life of Buddhism. His edicts have made him more famous than his victory in the Kalinga war. Such events prove that the pen is mightier than the sword.

6.4.5 Waste Not, Want Not

Given in the form of a direction, the proverb "Waste not, want not" carries the meaning that if a person never wastes anything, especially food or money, he will always have it when he needs it. It can also be seen as a piece of advice on developing good spending habits. The proverb reminds one of Mr Micawber, a character from Charles Dickens's novel *David Copperfield*. Mr Micawber explained to young David who lived in his house as a guest that if the yearly expenses of a person is lower than the yearly income, the result is happiness. But if the yearly expenses are higher than the income, the result is unhappiness and ruin.

The proverb teaches us that we should not be too lavish in our expenses by unmindful spending. If we do so, our life will be filled with unhappiness leading us to ruin. We must learn to save at least for our rainy days – difficult days. If we do not keep something for the rainy days, our problems will increase. We should be prepared to face the difficulties that may come to us.

Comments : The first paragraph gives a meaning of the proverb. The meaning is illustrated with an example from the novel *David*

Copperfield by Dickens. In the second paragraph, the implication of the proverb is given: lavish spending and wastage would lead to misery.

So far, we have given five worked out examples of amplification. Each example aims to add to your knowledge and competence in amplifying a proverb. At the beginning of this section, we gave twelve proverbs as example of the kinds of proverb that are used for amplification. We shall now reflect on this section by checking our progress.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS



Q. 3 : In order to amplify a proverb, you need to know the meaning and the inner meaning of each proverb. Below a few proverbs are given with four possible meanings for each proverb. Choose the correct meaning.

a) Look before you leap

A) We must make our own plans

B) We must be cautious in performing certain tasks

C) Our plans must be strong enough to achieve our goal.

b) We live in deeds not in years

A) The value of our lives is estimated by a long life span

B) The value of our lives is estimated by a short life span

C) The value of our lives is estimated by our actions

c) Necessity is the mother of invention

A) All inventions are the result of our necessities

B) It is felt necessary to invent something

C) Mother invent necessities



6.5 LET US SUM UP

After going through the unit, the learner will be familiar with amplification, which is a distinctive kind of writing skill and requires expanding the ideas compressed in the proverb. Thus, it is a structured piece of writing that requires both cohesion and coherence in its paragraphs. Amplification involves giving the literal meaning of a proverb with illustrative examples and also involves giving the inner or deeper meaning underlying a proverb with explanations. Moreover, amplification involves tackling aphorisms, proverbs and wise sayings that are compressed with meanings. The unit will thus benefit and help you to develop your writing skills and skill of expression.



6.6 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No 1: a) B b) A

Ans to Q No 2: Appearance can be very deceptive and things are not what they seem to be.

Ans to Q No 3: a) B b) C c) A



6.7 MODEL QUESTIONS

Amplify the following proverbs:

1. Make hay while the sun shines.
2. The wearer knows where the shoe pinches.
3. Prevention is better than cure.
4. An idle brain is the devil's workshop.
5. Charity begins at home.

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UNIT 7 : REVIEW WRITING

UNIT STRUCTURE

7.1 Learning Objectives

7.2 Introduction

7.3 Techniques of Book Review

7.4 Techniques of Film Review

7.5 Techniques of Play Review

7.6 Further Reading

7.7 Answers to Check Your Progress

7.8 Model Questions

7.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

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

- describe the different types of review writing
- develop an objective standpoint in order to evaluate books, films and plays
- provide your own opinion and review on books, films and plays
- identify what constitutes a good piece of writing or composition.

7.2 INTRODUCTION

One of the meanings of the term “review” is that it is an evaluation or a judgement on a play, novel etc. Generally, while reviewing books, films etc. a reviewer-

- Introduces the work to the readers by stating what the work is about
- Provides a gist of the chapters, acts, sequences and notations of the work under review
- Takes a standpoint that enables the person to pass judgment on the work.

In this unit, we shall attempt to discover the issues that a reviewer takes into account in order to evaluate a work. You must have seen reviews of books, films, plays and musicals published in newspaper and magazines.

Some film reviewers even go to the extent of rating a film in terms of stars on a seven star scale. We shall try to see what criteria these reviewers take into account in pronouncing a work as good or bad and in rating a work.

It may interest you to know that some reviewers even go to the extent of proscribing a book for various reasons. The film Censor Board is in a way a board of reviewers passing judgment on films and so on. You all know that the recent blockbuster *Jodha Akbar* was banned by reviewers from being screened in Rajasthan because the reviewers felt that the film was distorting history.

Likewise, reviewers take the extreme step of banning books on the following grounds:

1. Questioning the sovereignty of State
2. Hurting religious feelings
3. Adverse reporting on the country
4. For such writings as may cause strained relation with other countries.
5. Obscenity

A complete list of books banned under different grounds is hard to compile. However, the following list should provide a backdrop for our present study. These are the books banned in India since independence.

1. Questioning the sovereignty of India

Beg, Aziz: *Captive Kashmir* (1958)

Lawrence. Alan: *Chinese Foreign Relations Since 1969* (1978)

2. Hurting religions feelings

Menon, Aubrey: *The Ramayana* (1957)

Ram Swarup: *Understanding Islam through Hadi* (1983)

Rushdie, Salman: *The Satanic Verses* (1989)

3. Adverse reporting on India

Naipaul, V. S.: *An Area of Darkness* (1970)

Segal, Ronald: *Crisis in India* (1970)

4. Relations with other countries

Hagen, Tony: *Nepal* (1965)

5. Obscenity

Kinsley et al: *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male* (1953)

Kinsley et al: *Sexual Behavior in the Human Female* (1953)

Lawrence, D.H.: *Lady Chatterley's Lover* (1958)

These are only a very few of the books that have been banned in post- independence India.

7.3 TECHNIQUES OF BOOK REVIEW

The term "book review" is likely to raise a number of questions notably: What type of book is being referred to? Are we referring to narrative texts or are we also referring to "scientific" texts? Then what about non-fictional texts on diverse subjects ranging from social science to religion? Do we need different methods, approaches and techniques for reviewing these diverse genres of texts?

Let us begin by taking a close book at the term "narrative text" Note that the word "narrative", more than anything else, refers to a technique or a strategy for representation that contrasts with "scientific" modes of explanation. A scientific text can explain the atmospheric processes that account for snow fall rather than rain; but it takes a narrative to convey what it is like to walk along a peak in fresh fallen snow as the afternoon turns to evening.

Ronald Barthes in his 1966 essay "Introduction to the Structural Analysis of Narratives" observes that the narratives of the world are numberless. He is of the view that "narrative is present in myth, legend, fable, tale, novella, epic, history, tragedy, drama……" Barthes goes on in the essay to identify key aspects of narrative – the defining traits that exist irrespective of whether the text is a novel or history, epic or drama. From this statement, it can be convincingly deduced that it is possible to develop a common method or technique or approach to review narrative texts irrespective of genres.

When you take up a narrative text, a novel for example, for writing a review on the book, you will discover as you read along that the "story" in the book is in most cases an account of what happened to particular people – and of what it was like for them to experience what happened – in particular circumstances and with specific consequences. You can, for example, state

what a book is about or is not about. Read the following extract of a review of Salman Rushdie's novel *Shame* by Malcolm Bradbury published in the ***Guardian***:

"Shame is and is not about Pakistan, that invented, imaginary country," 'a failure of the dreaming mind'….. The theme is shame and shamelessness, born from the violence which is modern history….."

The above extract is significant for our purpose. When we sit down to write a review on a book, we can find a lead – a starting point, if you like – to approach the book with the question: What is the book about? It is a "global understanding" of the subject matter of the book. You present this account at the beginning before you move on to what happens to the people or the event in the subsequent development of the story.

However, a review is not a summary or gist of the book under review. The reviewer has to evaluate the content, the style of presentation of the content, the layout of the content and a host of other aspects in order to comment on the work. Let us look at another excerpt of a review of Salman Rushdie's novel *Shame* to explore this point further:

"There can seldom have been so robust and baroque an incarnation of the political novel as *Shame*. It can be read as fable, polemic or excoriation; a history or as fiction ……..this is the novel as myth and as satire." (*Sunday Telegraph*)

When the reviewer evaluates the novel as 'fable', as a 'polemic', as an 'excoriation', as 'history' or as 'fiction', we understand that he/she is concerned with the narrative technique of the novel more than the "storytelling" aspect. The narrative technique of the novel can be analysed in the mode of representation in specific discourse context or occasion. There is a story telling style in homely and plain language so much common in fables and stories that runs through the novel. The reviewer Malcolm Bradbury had noted this point and hence he observes: "Rushdie shows us with what fantasy our sort of history must be written – if, that is, we are to penetrate it, and perhaps save it."

The narrative technique of the novel is also analysed in the creation of the story world of the novel. Rushdie conveys to us through his characters

what it is like to live through this story world. He highlights the pressure of events on real or imagined situations.

So far, an attempt was made to examine a review of Salman Rushdie's novel *Shame* in order to draw from it a way of approaching a book and thereby identify its basic elements for reviewing a book. We have noted two broad parameters. First, we have noted a focus on the thematic concerns and, secondly, a focus on the narrative technique. Finally, to bring about a close to the review work, the reviewer may like to give his overall impression on the book, as to why the book appealed to him or for that matter why the book should be proscribed as the case may be.

Having said that, let us carry out on exercise of review writing. Let us for an instance take a look at the book *Tea: Legend, Life and Livelihood of India* by G.P. Barooah for review writing as an example of review of a book in the non–fiction category. The name of the book with its particulars is generally provided at the top.

G.P.BAROOAH: *Tea: Legend, life and Livelihood of India*

LBS/ Red River Publication, Guwahati, 2006

Leafing through G. P. Barooah's masterpiece of a book is an experience in itself. Every single page laced with glossy photographs by Dushyant Parashar bears the touches of first-rate professionalism. It is a very touching gesture on the part of the author to have thought to dedicate the book to the memory of the Singphow chief Bessa Gaum, the martyr Maniram Dutta Barua, the explorer Robert Bruce and the unsung workers and entrepreneurs who had braved calamities and exploitation to set up a tea industry of world repute. Indeed, each of the seven chapters and the chronology of events that make up the eighth, from a rich brew having the right proportion of strength, colour and flavour that can be a connoisseur's delight.

The first chapter "Discovering Tea" introduces Mr. Andrew Gillis Bewles, an old Englishman who was on a nostalgic trip to a tea – estate in Tezpur, his birthplace, where his father happened to be the Superintending Manager years ago. However, the presence of Mr. Bowles in the structure of the text of the book is only incidental as evident from the way the main

theme of the chapter - - the colourful history of tea – is introduced. Quoting authoritative sources like Cambridge Encyclopedia of China (1982) as well as the myths and legends surrounding its history, the chapter brings out the value of tea in uniting people from all walks of life by their fondness of this remarkable drink.

The second chapter "Tea is forever" traces the Chinese origin of tea way back in the seventh century and moves on to an exploration of its Indian origin. In doing so, the chapter gives due credit to Maniram Dewan not only for the discovery of the tea plant but also for introducing the British trader and explorer Robert Bruce to the Singphow chief Bessa Gaum and helping in making a deal with the latter to supply indigenous tea plants. The chapter records that for this role, Maniram was appointed Dewan in the Assam Tea Company prior to starting his own tea plantations, thereby, becoming the first Indian tea planter.

Chapter three dwells upon the flavour and taste of tea, its classification, process of manufacture of teas like black tea, green tea, oolong tea, organic tea, decaffeinated tea, flavored tea, massala tea and so on. It also dwells upon the establishment of the Assam Tea Company at Nazira in Sibsagar district and the changing roles of the labourers in the development of the industry as equal partners in progress.

The phrase "Partners in progress" constitutes the core of Chapter four which looks at the contribution of the industry towards the development of a social infrastructure which include financing research on tropical diseases, setting up a state – of – the art school at Tezpur, construction of the Law Faculty building at Gauhati University, setting up the Kamal Kumari Foundation, promoting sports and employment, among others.

Chapter five titled "A colourful life and culture" is undoubtedly the most beautifully written chapter in the whole book both in terms of its lucidity and content. Highlighting the achievers from the tea background, the chapter brings together anecdotes around the lives of planters and their courage in tackling man-eaters and as well as extremists by highlighting the point that tea is much more than a commodity – it is a heritage based on values and culture, full of sentiments and commitments.

Chapter six looks at tea in terms of a health drink by referring to its anti-oxidant properties which build a defence mechanism in the human body to reduce the risk of some dreaded diseases and increasing longevity while Chapter seven records the threat that Indian tea has been facing from other beverages. It shows how foreign teas, pressure from workers, taxes, extremists, natural hazards, low prices, archaic labour laws and so on have conspired to bring about a crisis to this once glamorous industry. However, the chapter ends with the optimistic note that with the innovations in marketing and quality in production, a new era for Indian tea will dawn. What is impressive about the book is that it explodes the myth that local publishers can never come up to international standards in terms of quality and production. One would like to congratulate Mr G.P.Barooah for his excellent book that touches different perspectives on the theme of tea.

Observations:

1. Note that in the opening paragraph the reviewer focuses upon the thematic concerns of the book. To correlate with the subject matter, the reviewer uses words like “rich brew”, “right proportions of strength, colour and flavor” and “connoisseur’s delight” that can be associated with a decent cup of tea.
2. The remaining paragraphs except the last paragraph focus on the narrative technique of the book highlighting the contents in each chapter.
3. The concluding chapter gives an overall impression on the book.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Read the following book review:

Khaled Hosseini: *A Thousand Splendid Suns*. Bloomsbury, Price £5.99, Pages 372

Hosseini’s first novel, the splendidly sentimental The Kite Runner was quite the rage and deservedly so; this one, the story of two wives, is guaranteed to go the bestseller route as well. It’s dramatic, even soap operatic, providing an insider’s view of the plight of the girl child, and of the Afghan wife.

The book begins with the story of Mariam, confined with her epileptic mother, to a tiny hut on the outskirts of Herat. For Mariam is harami, an illegitimate child of a rich businessman. When her mother hangs herself, Mariam is married at 15 to a 45 year old shoemaker Rasheed of "crowded teeth …. nails yellow – brown, like the inside of a rotting apple" , and dispatched to far– away Kabul, where wives are only valued for their procreating potential. And Miriam only miscarries.

Here's when the pretty Laila, who lives down the street in Kabul, comes in. The rocket – bomb death of her parents pushes her, pregnant and protector– less, into the wife– beating arms of Rasheed. The two women soon warm up to each other, their courtyard cups of chai and halwa together becoming one bright spot in the day. "Women like us. We endure", Miriam's mother had told her years ago and their friendship helps them to do exactly that. "There isn't a court in this god– forsaken country that will hold me accountable for what I do," Rasheed declares, in perfect sync with a Taliban regime that will soon chillingly announce: "Attention, women, you will stay inside your house at all times…. If you are caught alone on the streets, you will be beaten and sent home".

Sadly, such tales are all too true, even if much of the history and politics in the novel seems plastered on. A Thousand Splendid Suns is pulp fiction at its emotive last.

Sonya Dutta Choudhury

Answer the following questions:

Q 1: How does the reviewer focus on the thematic concerns of the novel?

Q 2: How does the reviewer focus on the narrative technique of the novel?

Q 3: What conclusion does the reviewer arrive at?

7.4 TECHNIQUES OF FILM REVIEW

In his book *Films as Film* (Pelican, 1972), V. F. Perkins observes that in the early years of films even prominent film – makers like William De

Mille did not expect films to develop into anything which could be called art. Even as late as 1947, film reviewers regarded films as bits of celluloid and wire and it could not be considered art. However, today no one will deny that film constitutes a new kind of art that goes by the term "recording art".

This changed attitude towards films has been due to the fact that film developed by a process of replication of the novel, painting, drama and music. Anything that happens in life that is seen or heard can be recorded on film, tape or disc. Because of this advantage, film has not only achieved immense popularity but also posed a challenge to other arts. In fact, the novel and the stage drama had to redefine themselves in terms of the new artistic language of films.

You will note that there is a film version of a good number of novels. Dr. Bhabendranath Saikia's *Antarip* has a film version tilled *Agnisnan*. Atulananda Goswami's *Namghoria* has a tele film version serialised in the television. The major works of Defoe, Swift, Stevenson, Dickens and a host of other novelists have film versions. The narrative potential of film is so marked that it has developed a close bond with the novel. Both films and novels tell long stories with a wealth of details and they do it from the point of view of a narrator. Whatever can be told in print in a novel can be roughly pictured or told in film. One can see a high degree of correlation between pictorial narrations as in film with language narration or in a novel.

In writing a review for a film the steps that we follow in writing review for books are not so different. Here is a film review published in ***India Today***.

Mera Pehla Pehla Pyaar

Starring – Hazel ,Ruslaan Mumtaz. Directed by Robby Grewal

It is a tiny little film with no stars and a story of young love. Neither is a promising premise. But there is something endearing in its simplicity in a world where sex is supreme. Mumtaz is the son of an actor (Anjana Mumtaz), but he is not a star son. He is however, quite delightful as a young boy falling in love with the new girl in class.

The milieu is borrowed from Grewal's own adolescence and the school doesn't look as if it has stepped out of an Archie's comic book. The story needed a little more energy, though the climax – a frenetic 20 minute trip on the Parisian Metro to Eiffel Tower – tries to make up for it.

This is not exactly Dilwale Dulhaniya le Jayenge but it is an effort to show parents as they are now (friends rather than fuddy – daddies), fights as they happen (invariably in discothèques and always about a girl), and love as it grows (on borrowed credit cards and daddy's chauffeur driven cars). Grewal, who made the taut Samay, knows his subject. Now he needs a little more style.

By Kaveree Bamzai.

Observations:

1. The name of the film, the stars and the director is given in the same way that you introduce a book.
2. The review begins by stating what the film is about in general terms. We learn that "it is a story of young love……"
3. From general terms the writing moves to mark specific areas in the second paragraph to highlight some aspect of the film.
4. The review concludes with a general impression on the film. A comparison is made with a mega- starrer blockbuster *Dilwale Dulhaniya le Jayenge* and gives the suggestion that director Grewal "needs a little more style".

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS



Q 4: Select a feature film in any language and write a review of that film. Follow the steps given below for your review work.

(a) Write the names of the film, the cast and the director

(b) Begin by stating what the film is about in general terms introducing the prominent actors in their roles.

(c) From general terms you move on to specifics to highlight some notable scene or episode of the film.

(d) Conclude your review writing with a general impression on the story, the cast of the film.

7.5 TECHNIQUES OF PLAY REVIEW

On the surface, a play that is staged (we call it stage drama here) seems most closely comparable to film. The theatre companies of Assam notably 'Awahon' makes use of technology in stagecraft that brings a stage drama very close to a film. Certainly the roots of the commercial film in the early years of the twentieth century lie there. ***My Fair Lady*** is a film version of G.B. Shaw's famous play *Pygmalion*.

However, while reviewing a play we must bear in mind that a play differs from a film in several ways. The film has the vivid, precise visual potential of the pictorial arts; and it has much greater narrative capability which the stage drama lacks. But the most salient difference between staged drama and filmed drama is in point of view. We watch a play as we will; we see a film only through a filmmaker's point of view. Another difference between the two is that a stage actor acts with his voice, while a film actor acts with his looks. A film actor, thanks to dubbing, does not even require a voice of his own, dialogues can be added later. But the face must be extraordinarily expressive especially when it is magnified as much as a thousand times in close ups.

But theatre has one advantage over film and it in this point that reviewers need to focus on more than others. The advantage is that the theatre is live. One can feel a continued interaction between the audiences and the cast. Today there is an effort to abolish the stage and the auditorium and replace them by a single site without partition or barriers of any kind. A direct communication will be established between the spectators and the spectacle. The *Baator Naat*(Street play), so much popular in Assam, is an effort to bring the cast closer to the spectators.

An interesting point for your observation is that there is a difference between a live performance of a play and the text. It is notable that from a linguistic perspective it is both possible and easer to review a play as a written text than to review it as a live performance. In reviewing a live play obviously the focus should be both on the theatrical performance and on the text of the play. This view is slightly deferent from that of Mick Short

(1996) who suggests that the object of dramatic criticism should not be the theatre performance. He considers the text of the play a legitimate object of study. He argues that.

- Teachers and students have traditionally read plays without necessarily seeing them performed and have still managed to understand them and argue about them…….
- There is a logical and terminological distinction between a play and a performance of it. Coming out of the theatre, people can be heard making comments of the form that was a good/bad production of a good/bad play…."

It is argued here that the performance of a play is an equally legitimate and interesting object for consideration when we review a live performance of a play. Let us read a play review given below:

***Flowers*: Girish Karnad; Cast Rajit Kapur, Director : Roysten Abel.**

Girish Karnad's Flowers is a lyrical monologue for a priest torn between his devotion to God and his carnal desire for his courtesan mistress. Body and soul have always been in conflict and have made for great literature and Karnad uses this underlying theme for the priest's internal strife.

Flowers is directed by Roysten Abel with Rajit Kapur essaying the role of the priest. The experimental set is designed by Abel with lights by Arghya Lahiri making it a truly visual experience. The flip side is that the rich and lyrical text does not transcend into great performance on stage, and one is left with a static and rather detached experience instead of one that is intimate and enlightening. While the premise is interesting, the soul is missing which is why the play fails to engage you in its entirety. But definitely worth a watch.

Nirmala Ravindran

Observations:

1) The name of the play, the cast and the director is given in the way you introduce a book or a film.
2) The review begins by stating what the play is about in general terms. We learn that the play is a lyrical monologue for a priest torn between his devotion to god and his carnal desire for his mistress.

3) The reviewer moves on from the general to specific areas in which reference is made about the protagonist, the director and the stagecraft.

The review concludes with a general impression of the performance by drawing a comparison with the text. It leaves a suggestion that though "the soul is missing", the play is definitely by worth a watch.



ACTIVITY

Recall a play you might have seen and write a review of that play. In case you do not know the names of the actors, you may make up the names as well. You may follow the four steps given for film review writing (in the earlier Check Your Progress)



7.6 FURTHER READING

1) Herman, David (2009) *Basic Elements of Narrative*. England: Willey Blackwell.

2) Kumar, Girija (1990) *Censorship in India* (1990) New Delhi: Vikas.

3) Monaco, Jame (2009) *How to Read a Film*. Oxford.

4) Perkins,V. F. (1972) *Film as Film.* Pelican.



7.7 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No 1: The reviewer focuses on the thematic concerns of the novel in the first paragraph, especially in the second sentence.

Ans to Q No 2: The reviewer focuses on the narrative technique by stating the ways by which the story is developed. There is also a reference to the Taliban regime to give a local touch.

Ans to Q No 3: He calls it "pulp fiction at its emotive best".

Ans to Q No 4: The introduction stage includes the first two sentences.

Ans to Q No 5: The middle stage includes the next two sentences upto "uttaranga of Kaushidhwani

Ans to Q No 6: The remaining part constitutes the conclusion.



7.8 MODEL QUESTIONS

Q 1: Relate the grounds for banning a book. Give an example of a book that has been banned and state the reason for its being banned.

Q 2: Contrast briefly the approach of presentation of content in a narrative text with that of a scientific text.

Q 3: Relate two points of similarities between film and a novel.

Q 4: State briefly in what way the film is different from a novel.

Q 5: What advantage does the theatre have over film?

Q 6: What is the difference between a live performance of a play and the text of a play?

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UNIT 8 : WRITING FOR COLUMN, SCIENCE AND PRESS RELEASE

UNIT STRUCTURE

8.1 Learning Objectives

8.2 Introduction

8.3 Column Writing

8.4 Science Write- up

8.5 Press Release

8.6 Let Us Sum Up

8.7 Further Reading

8.8 Model Questions

8.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

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

- familiarise yourself with the skill of column writing
- grasp the techniques of science write-ups
- grasp the techniques of writing press release

8.2 INTRODUCTION

In the previous unit, we had discussed review writing and the present unit takes up column writing, science write up and press release. The learner will be introduced to writing columns, science write up and press release. Nowadays, there is a high demand for good newspaper contributions, feature or column and science writings. These can be considered some of the most popular forms of writing. Thus, the unit, highlights certain practical principles and methods of these different kinds of writings.

8.3 COLUMN WRITING

Let us begin by asking ourselves what a 'column' is. There are several meanings of this word.

(1) It is a standard vertical division of a newspapers page, hence comes the word 'column' measure.

(2) The vertical division of the news page is usually referred to as a column. A standard size newspaper is divided into five to eight columns.

(3) A signed article of opinion or strong personal expression frequently by an authority or expert is also a column. Thus, we have a sports column, a political or social column and so on.

From the word 'column', we get the word columnist. A regular writer on a particular subject is a columnist. He is usually a feature writer.

We use the term 'Feature' in the context of column writing to refer to an article emphasising the human or subjective aspects of a situation. It is differentiated from straight news. That is, a feature is not meant to deliver news first hand. It usually recaps major news that was reported in a previous issue of a newspaper. It can stand alone or be a corollary to the main story published elsewhere.

One of the important points about a feature is its timeliness. A feature to be read and appreciated must have immediate reference to what the reader knows only sketchily. A feature, in the circumstances must fill in the readers with new information of which he has been hitherto ignorant. It must provide him with all that he wanted to know but had not time to enquire about.

As an illustration, let us first of all refer to a news item that had appeared in the *Assam Tribune*. The news is about the death of a whole flock of vultures for repeatedly eating the carcass of a dog that had been killed by poisoning in Chaigaon area in Kamrup District of Assam. A few weeks after this news item appeared, there appeared a feature article titled "Conservation of Wildlife".

Let us take a close look at the structure of this article which, it is expected, will throw light on the techniques of writing a feature in a column. Perhaps the best way to begin a feature is to focus upon the contemporariness of the theme. The author takes this "timeliness" as the springboard to introduce the theme as illustrated below in the opening section of the feature:

Recently there appeared a news-item reporting the death of a flock of twenty seven or so vultures as a result of feeding on the carcass of a dog that had allegedly been poisoned to death. The question that is uppermost here is not so much about the poisoning of a dog to death. Pariah and mad dogs that abound our streets in towns and villages need to be eliminated and the use of posion as an instrument of elimination of unwanted dogs is well understood. But what one fails to understand is the irresponsible social behavior of individuals in matters such as disposing off dead animals. It needs hardly be stated that the most natural way of disposing off the dead dog would have been to bury it and not to dispose it off in a field so as to attract vultures and other scavengers. In this case, the irresponsible social behavior of individuals has become the cause of the slaughter of a whole flock of vultures that have often been included in the endangered category.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 1: How does the author focus upon the timeliness of the above feature (Answer in a sentence)

Q 2: Choose the appropriate answer from the alternatives given

In the opening section of the feature, the author stresses as

(A) the death of a flock of vultures

(B) irresponsible social behaviour of individuals

(C) killing dogs using poison

You will note that in writing a Feature you have to be cautious of the style of presenting of the material. The style is different from – in fact, just opposite to – a news report. Note this difference:

- News-reports are written mostly in the inverted pyramid formal structure and style. On the other hand, Features follow the structures of essays and discussion.
- News-reports do not present the reporter's distinct point of view but a feature does. In a feature, the author presents his / her point of view.

- Unlike news-reports, features are generally longer and are not constrained by a hand news-peg although they still need some element of timeliness.
- While hard news attempts to tell what is happening, features have more room to develop why and how something is occurring and provide more perspective.

What is meant by the expression "inverted pyramid"? Simply imagine a figure of a pyramid turned upside down. A news report follows this structure. It begins with the 'lead' in which the entire news-story is given. What follows after the lead is merely illustration of what has been referred to in the lead; hence, the pyramid structure.

While stating that a feature follows the structure of an essay, it is assumed that the essay has a fixed structure. We shall use that structure for features also. Generally, the Feature follows a linear structure as follows:

- Introduction
- Main body
- Conclusion

If you are given a word limit – say 500 words – you might split it up thus:

- Introduction: around 50 words
- Main body: around 300-350 words
- Conclusion: around 100 words

This is quite a sound plan and reflects a logical approach. You might, for example, need to define your terms or to indicate how you intend to tackle the topic. This would provide appropriate materials for an introduction.

In the main body you could deal with three or four main points, ideas, arguments, or aspects together with illustration and examples.

In the conclusion you could make your final point, recall the issues raised in the introduction, indicate a possible area for further study and review any important further implication.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Fill in the blanks to complete the sentences

Q 3: A news-report follows the structure of _____

Q 4: A feature has a _____ structure.

Q 5: The structure of a feature can be described in _____ stages.

Q 6: The feature provides the writer with a scope to present his / her _____.

Q 7: A feature is generally _____ than a news-report.

8.4 SCIENCE WRITE-UP

Science and technology is increasingly shaping and revolutionising our everyday lives. Nowadays, we just cannot possibly think of our lives without the contributions of science and technology. So in that case the common public needs to know what scientists are doing and their inventions and other technological advancements. Science is often hard to comprehend. Science writing is difficult to digest for common people. Most people think that the difficulties of science arise out of necessity and out of the extreme complexity of scientific concepts, data and analysis. Complexity of thought need not lead to impenetrability of expression. As a result, science writing as a different genre has evolved.

Science writing encompasses a wide variety of niches that can include writing for newspapers, mass market magazines, trade publications, university press offices, broadcast media, and newsletters, among many other venues.

Science writing needs special technical skills. The main difference between science writing and writing in other academic fields is the relative importance placed on certain stylistics elements .So in this unit, we will look into what is scientific writing and how to write a scientific write-up.

The basic purpose of scientific writing is not the mere presentation of information and thought, but rather its actual communication. It does not

matter how pleased an author might be to convert all the right data into sentences and paragraphs ; it matters only whether a large majority of the reading audience accurately perceives regarding what the author had in mind .

There are several different kinds of writing that fall under the umbrella of scientific writing.

- **Peer – reviewed journal articles** (presenting primary research)
- **Grant proposals** (You can't do science without funding)
- **Literature review articles** (summarising and synthesising research that has already been carried out)
- **Popular Science articles** (communicating scientific discoveries to a non –scientific audience)

The main purpose of scientific writing is to present data or ideas with a level of detail that allows a reader to evaluate the validity of the results and conclusions based only on the facts.

Some dos and don'ts in Scientific Writing :

1) **Precision –** You need to be precise in scientific writing. There is no scope for ambiguities as it creates confusion in the minds of the reader.
2) **Clarity –** You need to present your writing clearly .Language should be easy to follow**.**
3) **Objectivity –** Subjectivity needs to be avoided. Any claims that you want to make should be based on facts, not by intuition or emotion.

Certain points that need to be kept in mind while writing a science write up:

1) **Word choice –** Often several words may convey similar meaning, but usually only one word is most appropriate and that needs to be put in the given situation. For example :

"Population density is positively co-related with SARS transmission rate."

"Population density is positively related to SARS transmission rate."

So you can see that in some contexts, ''correlated'' and 'related' have similar meanings. But in scientific writing correlated conveys a precise meaning because it states the statistical relationship between

the two variables. So, simply pointing out that two variables are related is not enough. Our readers want to know more precise relationship between the two. Therefore, it is important to choose the appropriate word**.**

2) **Phrasing Choice**: The above mentioned idea is applicable here also in case of choosing the right phrase. For example, the phrase "writing of an investigative nature" could also be used in sciences. Also it might refer to a police investigation. So in that case a more specific phraseology needs to be used by avoiding ambiguous phraseology. Here it is noticed that repetition is to some extent preferable.

3) **Figurative Language:** Figurative language must be avoided because it is imprecise. For example "experimental subjects were assaulted with a wall of sound" does not convey the precise meaning of " experimental subjects were presented with 20 second pulses of nonspecific mating cells". Exclude similes and metaphors in scientific writing. You just cannot leave anything to imagination.

4) **Level of Detail**: You should avoid irrelevant information but do include as much information as required. Whatever information you want to put must be followed by your reader easily without being distracted by irrelevant facts and descriptions.

5) **Quantify:** Whenever possible, use quantitative rather than qualitative descriptions. For instance, a phrase like "development rate in the 30C temperature treatment was ten percent faster than development rate in the 20C temperature treatment "is more precise than the phrase "development rate was fastest in the higher temperature treatment."

6) **Language Use:** Complex ideas and concepts must be conveyed in a lucid manner. You need to distill complicated ideas into simple explanations. Use familiar terms rather than technical or obscure terms. Some expressions are given below with their simple alternatives:

COMPLEX	**SIMPLE**
Efficacious	**Effective**
Utilise	**Use**
Elucidate	**Explain**

Proximal **Close**

There are some situations where the use of a technical or obscure term is justified. For example , in a paper comparing two different viral strains , the author might use the word “enveloped “ rather than the phrase “surrounded by a membrane “.

7) **Sentence Structure:** Science writing must always be precise. It should be written in simple sentences rather than complex sentences. Precision requires a fine level of detail. Careful description of objects, forces, organisms, methodology etc. can easily lead to framing of complex sentences without pause which may cause difficulty for learners. So usually simple sentence is preferred.

For example : The osmoregulatory organ , which is located at the base of the third dorsal spine on the outer margin of the terminal papillae and functions by expelling excess sodium ions , activates only under hypertonic conditions . This sentence is too long and complex. Learner has to wait a longtime to get the main idea. So instead of that sentence a more simple sentence can be used like “Located on the outer margin of the terminal papillae at the base of the third dorsal spine , the osmoregulatory organ expels excess sodium ions under hypertonic conditions . “So you can see that a simpler sentence is easy to comprehend. Hence, sentence structure needs adequate care in scientific writing.

8) **Verbosity**: Use concise writing. Most of the scientific writing is space limited. Grant proposals, journal articles, and abstracts all have word limits. So you need to concisely write your scientific writing. Common phrases like “the fact that,” “it should be noted that,” and “it is interesting that “are cumbersome and unnecessary in scientific writing.

9) **Use of Passive Voice**: Generally, in science write up passive voice is used to enhance objectivity .But this again depends upon the reviewer who would instruct you whether to use passive voice or active voice. Just follow few guidelines below while using active voice :

- Avoid starting sentences with “I “ OR “WE “ because this pulls you out of the focus from the scientific topic at hand

- Avoid using "I " OR "WE " when you are making a conjecture, whether it's substantiated or not. Everything that you want to say should follow from logic, not from personal bias or subjectivity. Never use any emotive words in conjunction with "I" OR "WE". For example "I believe", or "we believe ".
- Never use "we" in a way that includes the reader.

10) Use of illustration : Tables, boxes, figures and diagrams referred to here as illustrations should always be used where they will save words or make your argument clearer.

SOME GUIDELINES TO BE FOLLOWED WHILE WRITING A SCIENTIFIC WRITING :

There are three fundamental aspects to good science writing- planning the structure, thinking about your reader, and choosing your words. Always remember the following points when you write a science write up.

- Be concise: Clear thinking and careful planning lead to economy of expression and avoidance of repetition and padding.
- Use simple words: Good style does not require you to be pompous or flamboyant.
- Write short sentences: Avoid long sentences as it becomes difficult for the reader to comprehend.
- Take care of your grammar.
- Beware of fashion: Words and phrases can become fashionable and over used, and their meaning often becomes uncertain.
- Use your own words as far as possible so that it because it will be more understandable to readers.
- Use words correctly: Always write with a good dictionary in hand.
- Use words that your reader will understand: Always remember knowledge of technical expressions (jargon) is often limited to a comparatively small group of people.
- Spell correctly: Use a good dictionary.
- Take care with the use of 'I' as I have mentioned earlier.

So, by now you must have graduated to the level of writing like a science reporter. Just remember that a science reporter need not necessarily

be a specialist in science. What is essential is a background in science and a scientific temperament. A science reporter must update himself with the latest developments of science and be aware of the major scientific research. So, your concern is to write the highly technical scientific news for 'common reader' in an understandable and readable way. So enjoy writing science write ups.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 6: What are the three fundamental aspects of good science writing?

Q 7: What are the different kinds of writing that fall under the umbrella of scientific writing?

8.5 PRESS RELEASE

A press release is a written statement of an organisation distributed to the media. It is a fundamental tool of public relations. Press releases are usually sent via newswire service (such as PR Newswire or Business Wire) to media outlets, where journalists may pick them up and use them as they see fit.

The text of a release is usually written as a news story with an eye-catching headline and text written in standard journalistic style with inverted pyramid structure. This style of news writing makes it easier for reporters to quickly grasp the message.

Some journalists believe that to copy from a press release may be unethical — they believe it is a lapse of good judgment. Ethical reporters prefer to try soliciting an individual quote from the speaker before filing their story. Public relations professionals believe that press releases and other collateral material aid a journalist's job.

Since press releases reflect the organisation's preferred interpretation or positive packaging of a story, journalists are often skeptical about their contents. The level of skepticism depends on what the story is and who is telling it. Newsrooms receive so many press releases that, unless it is a story that the media are already paying attention to, a press release

alone often is not enough to catch a journalist's attention.

With the advent of modern media and new technology, press releases are to be found in the form of video news releases and audio news releases.

The workhorse of public relations, the press release, was invented in the late 1800s. Written in the form of a conventional news story, a release presents the point of view of the organisation that disseminates it. Newspaper editors and reporters often use facts, quotes and other information from releases to amplify their stories or support their accuracy and credibility. Press releases were first used by the country's big railroads, although they rapidly became the norm in all corporations and large organisations, both for-profit and nonprofit. Early in the 20th century, Ohio Bell Telephone discovered that if it handed out "canned" news in this form, newspaper reporters would stop going to telephone rate hearings to get the information in person, thereby minimising uncomfortable inquiries about the rates and related matters. More often, releases were used, and continue to be used, to attract the media to attend press briefings or to request follow-up interviews. Initially it was considered a form of advertising because of their self-serving content.

Releases quickly became accepted for what they are today – a free source of news and information that can be used by media. The traditional format (one or two pages of double-spaced text with standardised spelling and punctuation) was developed to satisfy the needs of editors for space in which to edit the text, and typesetters who required certain kinds of editorial markings in order to follow the flow of individual pages while typesetting the text. With more and more releases distributed via e-mail and more and more print media moving to digital printing, the format of press releases has become far less important for recipients. Many public relations practitioners also disseminate their releases far beyond the media to key audiences such as employees and investors who are as interested as the media in what the organisations they support are doing.

The usual way of issuing information to the press is by writing a press release. A press release is an official, authorised statement about the policies and activities of an organisation. As the company or the government

has to stand by it, the press release must be factual, and correct and must project the policy clearly and without ambiguity. It should leave no scope for misreporting. This is then sent by post or by hand to various newspapers and periodicals as well as to radio and television news offices. It should also be communicated to the news agencies, who have direct tele-printer contact with the main newspaper offices in the country. The news agencies edit the release and do not send it out in its entirety. Therefore, it is always worthwhile sending out the full release as widely as possible.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 8: What do you mean by a press release?

Q 9: How do we issue information to the press?

HOW TO WRITE A PRESS RELEASE

Tips to Write a Press Release

- The press release should be written in journalistic style. It should follow the principles of news reporting.
- The introduction or the 'lead' should be in a summary format. It should answer the five W's and one H as in a news story.
- The second and the subsequent paragraphs should elucidate and elaborate the points. It should provide facts or information of interest to the readers and should attempt to cover all the aspects of a specific subject.
- The release should not generally be lengthy. It should be concise and to the point. The release is a piece of clear writing without any ambiguity, without any effort towards colour or ornamentation. As far as possible, each story should be complete in itself.
- Public memory is short and people are not likely to remember what had been said on the subject a couple of months ago, or even the previous fortnight. Moreover, repetitive publicity is the essence of selling an idea.
- It should have a consistent format. Generally, the name of the agency from where the release emanates is given at the top. The date and

place are indicated on the top right side. The release should have a title or sub-title also, if necessary. In the case of releases from non-official organisations, it is desirable also to mention the designation of the person issuing the release and his telephone number.

FORMAT OF A PRESS RELEASE

Writing a Press Release

Press releases are broadly categorised into the following types:

a) general news releases

b) event releases

c) product press releases

d) social media press releases

The writing style of the press releases is common. Some of these common structural elements include:

Headline — grabs the attention of journalists and briefly summarise the news.

Dateline — contains the release date and usually the originating city of the press release.

Introduction — first paragraph in a press release, that generally gives basic answers to the questions of who, what, when, where and why.

Body — further explanation, statistics, background, or other details relevant to the news.

Media Contact Information — name, phone number, email address, mailing address, or other contact information for the PR or other media relations contact person. The following is an example of a press release issued by the Rashtrapati Bhavan.



8.6 LET US SUM UP

The unit takes up some of the various types of writings such as column writing, science writing and press release is. It provides an idea on the various tips and techniques of for column writing and science writing techniques while also highlighting some of the dos and donts. Also, the

techniques for writing a press release which is a written statement distributed to the media and an important tool of public relations have been highlighted. A good knowledge on these writing skills will enable the learner to contribute write-ups and publish the same for the common readers.



8.7 FURTHER READING

1) Black, Sam. *Practical Public Relations*. New Delhi: Universal Book Stall.
2) H F Moore and F B Kalupa, *Public Relations*. Delhi: Surjeet Publication
3) Manipal Academy of Higher Education, (2002) Communication Skills in English. Manipal
4) Sharma R.C. and Mohan Krishna. (2002) Business Correspondences and Report Writing .Tata Mcgraw Hill Publishing Company.
5) Taylor, Shirley. (2006) Model Business Letters, e-mails and other Business Documents. Pearson Education.



8.8 MODEL QUESTIONS

Q 1: Write a press release with a backgrounder for the organisation with which you are associated.

Q 2: Write Features articles on the following topics.

a) Global Warming
b) The flood problem of Assam
c) Vocational Education – Issues and Prospects.
d) Global terrorism and what it means in India.
e) Tourism and Assam: Issues

Q 3: Write a science write up of India's space programme.

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UNIT 9 : EDITORIAL WRITING

UNIT STRUCTURE

9.1 Learning Objectives

9.2 Introduction

9.3 Introduction to the Editorial Page

9.4 Writing the Editorial

9.5 Writing the Feature

9.6 Writing the Article

9.7 Writing the Middle

9.8 Letters to the Editor

9.9 Let Us Sum Up

9.10 Further Reading

9.11 Answers to Check Your Progress

9.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

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

- discuss the finer points of writing editorial
- explain the difference between news writing and editorial writing
- explain their structure, content and style of writing
- develop specific language skill for writing editorial.

9.2 INTRODUCTION

Editorial writing in a newspaper is a great learning and education process. Analytical and incisive editorials and thought provoking articles expand our mental horizon and enable us to grasp the complexities of the burning problems of the day. As students of journalism, one has to learn the difference between news and editorial writing. News writing has a definite structure, starting with headlines, credit line, dateline, intro or lead para which is followed by the body of the report.

It is important to note that news stories are written in the Inverted Pyramid style as we discussed in the previous unit, where the most important

points of the story are put in the beginning. The less important points are presented in sequence as per their importance. Well-written features give us an insight to the world around us, while middles add a dash of humour and wit. A close reading of the editorial, articles, features, middles and letters to the Editor will reveal that their structure, content and style of writing are different from one another. A journalist may be a good news reporter or article writer, but may prove to be a poor editorial writer. To be a good editorial writer, one needs a good grasp of the language. As such one has to develop his or her language skills.

Editorial writing gives one the opportunity to use his or her command over vocabulary and usage to the best of one's abilities. Also, Letters to the Editor is an important feature of a newspaper where feedback from the readers is received in the form of opinions on various burning issues, besides, criticism and suggestions for improvement of the coverage of the newspaper. Language skills coupled with craftsmanship to structure a readable editorial, article or feature adds to the overall attraction of the newspaper. A letter to the editor sent by a reader may not be in the desired format needed for a newspaper. A sub-editor has to apply his skills to correct or even re-write a letter to make it fit for publication.

In this unit, we shall discuss the finer points of Editorial writing which largely consist of the editorial, features, articles, middles and Letters to the Editor.

9.3 INTRODUCTION TO THE EDITORIAL PAGE (EDITORIAL, FEATURES, ARTICLES, MIDDLES, LETTERS TO THE EDITOR)

The editorial page can be described as the soul of the newspaper as it reflects the approach or perspective and taste of the newspaper. The policy and stand of the newspaper on the burning issues of the day are projected through the editorials. Diverse opinions and analysis of different issues are presented through the articles where eminent persons specialising in their area of activity are given a platform to express their views and thereby expand the horizon of understanding of the readers.

Features in newspapers today are an extension of the hard news capturing the news headlines. Historical and cultural background of problems in the news, interesting facets of tourism spots, environmental issues, write-ups on film characters, celebrities etc. make interesting features. Writing Middles require writing skills and craftsmanship of a high order as a situation has to be developed and concluded with a punch line within limited words.

In addition, the Letters to the Editor column published in the editorial page is an important channel of interaction between the readers and the newspaper. The views of the readers on the burning issues of the day and their criticism and laurels of the quality of publication of the newspaper forms an important feedback for the newspaper to take remedial and corrective measures. On the whole, the editorial page of a newspaper provides food for thought for the serious readers. This page is not for the casual readers looking for some light reading. Well-written editorials, articles, features, middles and Letters to the Editor, may in many cases attract readers to a particular newspaper. Eminent editors and columnists make their name through the columns of the editorial page.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 1: How does an editorial page reflect the mindset and taste of newspaper?

Q 2: Where do we find letters to the Editor column?

9.4 WRITING THE EDITORIAL

As already mentioned, the editorial is the soul of a newspaper. The editorial reflects the policy and stand of the newspaper on the burning issues of the day. Strong and powerful editorials published in popular newspapers mould public opinion and act as catalysts of change. They also look after the public interest by pointing out anomalies and irregularities in public policies and developmental works, besides offering suggestions and solutions to problems and burning issues of the society.

All editorials in the newspaper are published in the name of the editor. However, all editorials are not written by the editor himself. In

newspapers, there is generally a panel of editorial writers who are assigned subjects of their specialised study by the editor. Sensitive and delicate issues which necessitate the voicing or spelling out of the newspaper's stand are generally handled by the editor himself or a close aide who is well acquainted with the newspaper's policies.

In the days when communication technology was at its nascent stage and the geo-political situation in the world developed at a slow pace, the general trend for the newspapers was to have one editorial, or at the most two. As the electronic media like the television was not much developed, the people depended on the newspapers for the news and views on the developments taking place around the world. As most of the readers were not aware of the background and causes of sudden socio-economic and political developments, most editorial writers used to discuss the subject in hand by giving the reader an idea about the background of the subject, then going on to analyse the pros and cons of the new development and its consequences and finally concluding with the newspaper's stand on the issue and suggestions for a solution.

However, with the development of communication technology the world today has become much closer. Any happening around the globe is immediately flashed on our television screens. People are today aware of the developments taking place. As such, the reader does not need to be explained about the development. Present day editorials directly approach the subject with the newspaper's views and comments, thereby cutting down the number of words compared to earlier editorials. This has given the editorial writers liberty to write two to three editorials regularly touching on varied subjects and engaging the attention of the society ranging from politics to sports and every subject of interest to the readers. Many newspapers write on off-beat subjects in the third editorial, thereby lightening the burden of serious issues in the editorial page.

Editorial writing has always been an art which has to be mastered by practice and judicious use of language. It cannot be written in the style of a news report nor in the format of an article. Limitation of words and space offers the editorial writer a challenge to encapsulate his/her thoughts

and views within the given framework by using the appropriate word, usage and language to tackle his/her subject. A good editorial is one that is not only thought-provoking but also readable.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 3: Explain the importance of editorial writing ?



ACTIVITY

Read the editorial of two leading English newspapers of Assam over a week. Now compare and contrast the style of writing and choice of issues discussed in the editorial in the two newspapers. Which one has appealed to you more and why?

9.5 WRITING THE FEATURE

The subject of a feature may be anything – a person, an idea, a situation, a hobby, a process, a historic anniversary. The objective of the writer may be to inform, to explain, to instruct, or only to entertain.

The qualities that set the feature apart from other stories are its lack of immediacy and its in-depth treatment of an interesting or provocative subject. Good example of features can be found in the Sunday supplements of newspapers.

An important quality of a feature is that it should have a ‘news peg’, that is, it should be related to a topic recently in the news. The ‘news peg’ is at times implicit in the story itself or sometimes expressed clearly at the beginning. The ‘news peg’ is the writer’s way of telling the readers why the features are being published and why they should bother reading it.

Most good features contain a considerable amount of human interest as its ingredient though it is not an absolute requirement. However, human interest expressed in colour, description, anecdote and dialogue helps in a big way to keep the reader’s attention throughout a long story.

The language of features offers an opportunity to the writer to display his/her command over the language and to show his craftsmanship skills. The principles of journalism stipulate that ornamental language should not be used while writing the hard news, but full liberty of language use and creative skills in writing features is allowed. Of course, the writer has to be careful to ensure that he/she does not lose the focus of the theme and subject. He/she has to apply his language and literary skills to make his feature attractive and readable. The way facts and materials of the subject are handled and the use of appropriate language will ultimately decide the fate of his/her writing.

Traditionally, features were used in the editorial and magazine sections of the newspapers. Attractive headlines and a liberal use of photographs were distinctive characteristics of a feature. However, news features and human interest features are quite popular in the modern newspapers. As we live in a fast moving world today where the television intrudes into our lives every moment, newspaper readers also cannot wait for the Sunday magazines or supplement to read more about a topical event. Hence, news features on topical events by reporters on the spot of the incident are elaborately used. In many cases the story behind the news is projected through news features where comments and views of opposing parties are projected, the reaction of the victims and the common people are presented and the merits and demerits of the issue is discussed with comments from experts.

Human interest features are quite popular among readers of newspapers. The struggle of ordinary mortals to reach dizzy heights and the actions of the rich and powerful which display their human face fascinate the common readers. An ordinary rickshaw puller returning a bag containing Rupees two lakhs to its rich owner captures our imagination. Similarly, the action of a rich man who goes out of his way to help the poor and weak in a novel way may make interesting reading.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 4: What are the qualities that set apart from other stories?

Q 5: What is 'news peg'?

9.6 WRITING THE ARTICLE

The article is one of the most serious piece of writing in the editorial page. It is generally written on a topical subject of importance or on a debatable issue. It is positioned at the top of the page, thereby reflecting the importance accorded to it by the editors.

The objective of the article is to enable the readers to understand better the burning issues of the day. It provides the readers an insight to the issues involved and gives crisp and though provoking analysis of the problem. Generally, articles are written by experts specialising in their area of work so that the reader gets an inside view of the issue at hand.

Analysis of an issue by considering all its pros and cons and interpreting the development in the light of past history and the prevailing socio-economic and political situation through the article provides useful insight and food for thought to the readers.

Normally newspapers try to get their articles on specific subjects written by experts in the field. If the subject pertains to national politics, an article written by a popular political commentator who has been closely monitoring the developments and have wide experience in the field would be preferred. Similarly, a former diplomat or senior foreign service officer may be asked to write on foreign affairs and so on.

Apart from their regular article writers, most newspapers subscribe to syndicated feature services which supply the newspaper with a wide range of articles on various subjects of interest, written by a panel of reputed writers drawn from different fields like politics, foreign affairs, social issues, health, education, defense etc.

As article writers are considered to be experts in their field, hence they are given the liberty of presenting their views in their own way. They

may relate their own experience in assessing a problem and offer solutions. In the process, an article gets a personal touch and offers the reader an insider's view on the subject.

Article writers have to have deep study of their subjects and personal experience add to the flavour of their writings. As such article written by amateurs by gleaning their information from various sources of the media are not taken seriously by the editors.

The language of articles like all journalistic writings should be preferably reader friendly. A non-journalist may have the tendency to write complex and ornamental language which should be curtailed while writing articles. The writer should try to convey his thoughts in a simple, lucid manner so that the reader has no difficulty in understanding him.

Editors who edit the articles have to ensure that the writings could be understood by the common reader without any difficulty. Even articles on technical subjects have to be written sans their technical jargons, as otherwise, there would be no difference between an article and textbooks. Infact, such problems have today given rise to a distinct form of journalism on scientific writings called science journalism.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 6: What is the objective behind writing an article?

Q 7: Where do we locate an article in the newspaper ?

9.7 WRITING THE MIDDLE

The Middle is an integral part of the Editorial Page of a newspaper. The objective of the Middle is to provide humour and wit in an otherwise serious page which has thought provoking editorials, enlightening articles and letters to the editor from the readers highlighting their grievances and problems and offering their point of view on the myriad issues of the day.

The length of a Middle should be around 400 words and it is generally positioned between the two articles of the editorial page. Hence, the name Middle given to it.

The word limitation in writing a Middle make Middle writing all that difficult. The writer generally picks up a topical subject, gives it a humourous twist and ends it with a punch line that provides the reader a humorous or satiric fare.

The Middle writer enjoys liberty in the use of language. There is no journalistic restrictions. As it is the product of their creative mind, the Middle writer is allowed to use even colloquial words and slangs. However, the writer has to ensure that normal decency and decorum is maintained.

Changing taste and dearth of good Middle writers have today pushed the Middle to oblivion. Many newspapers in which the Middle used to be a regular feature are today stopping its publication and going in for other columns.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 8: What is an integral part of the editorial page?

Q 9: What is the objective of the middle?

9.8 LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The 'Letters to the Editor' column is an important component of the newspaper where the views of the readers on burning problems of the day, their grievances and aspirations are reflected. This column is a part of the editorial page and acts as a medium of interaction with the readers. The input received from the readers is a good indicator of the popularity of the newspaper. Some of the letters also offer suggestions for improvement and constructive criticism of the published material which may help the editorial desk to take corrective measures keeping in view the likes and dislikes of the readers.

As the name suggests, 'Letters to the Editor' should be addressed to the Editor of the newspaper or publication. Writers should not waste time in introducing a subject but should arrive at the point staight. Ornamental language should be avoided. Simple and lucid language should be used so that the idea is conveyed in clear terms. Letters should be short and concise. Different ideas should be presented in different paragraphs.

It may be a good idea for aspiring journalists to make their foray into journalism by writing letters to the editor of their local newspaper. They should select people-oriented subjects and put forward their points of view in well-structured letters. Their efforts should be directed at marshalling their thoughts in proper sequence and structure which will help them in perfecting their writing skills by the use of appropriate words, phrases and construction of sentences. Letter writing will help them later in writing news reports and features.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 10: What does "Letters to the Editor" aim at?



ACTIVITY

Write a letter to the Editor of *The Assam Tribune* on the growing problem of artificial floods in Assam.



9.9 LET US SUM UP

In this unit, we have discussed editorial writing and some of its important features. Editorial writing in a newspaper is a great learning and education process. Analytical and incisive editorials and thought provoking articles expand our mental horizon and enable us to understand the complexities of the burning problems of the day. So in this unit, you have learnt the importance of editorial and how to write an editorial. Letters to the Editor is an important feature of a newspaper where feedback from the readers is received in the form of opinions on various burning issues, besides, criticism and suggestions for improvement of the coverage of the newspaper. Apart from highlighting the importance of middle and feature in a newspaper the unit also presents how to write an editorial and Letters to the Editor.



9.10 FURTHER READING

1) Mehta, D.S. *Mass Communication and Journalism*. New Delhi: *Allied Publishers*



9.11 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No 1: The policy and stand of the newspaper on the burning issues of the day are projected through the editorials. Diverse opinions and analysis of different issues are presented through the articles where eminent persons specialising in their area of activity are given a platform to express their views and thereby expand the horizon of understanding of the readers.

Ans to Q No 2: The Letters to the Editor column is published in the editorial page.

Ans to Q No 3: The editorial is the soul of a newspaper. The editorial reflects the policy and stand of the newspaper on the burning issues of the day. Strong and powerful editorials published in popular newspapers mould public opinion and act as catalysts of change. They also serve as watchdog of public interest by pointing out anomalies and irregularities in public policies and developmental works, besides offering suggestions and solutions to problems and burning issues of the society.

Ans to Q No 4: The qualities that set the feature apart from other stories are its lack of immediacy and its in-depth treatment of an interesting or provocative subject.

Ans to Q No 5: The 'news peg' is the writer's way of telling the readers why the features is being published and why they should bother reading it.

Ans to Q No 6: The objective of the article is to enable the readers to

understand better the burning issues of the day. It provides the readers an insight to the issues involved and gives crisp and thought provoking analysis of the problem

Ans to Q No 7: It is positioned at the top of the page, thereby reflecting the importance accorded to it by the editors.

Ans to Q No 8: The Middle is an integral part of the Editorial Page of a newspaper.

Ans to Q No 9: The objective of the Middle is to provide humour and wit in an otherwise serious page which has thought provoking editorials, enlightening articles and letters to the editor from the readers highlighting their grievances and problems and offering their point of view on the myriad issues of the day.

Ans to Q No 10: Letters to the Editor aims at reflecting the views of the burning problems of the day, their grievances and aspirations. This column is a part of the editorial page and acts as a medium of interaction with the readers.

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UNIT 10 : COMPREHENSION OF AN UNSEEN PASSAGE

UNIT STRUCTURE

10.1 Learning Objectives

10.2 Comprehension

10.3 Intelligent Reading

10.4 Tackling Unseen Passages

10.5 Answering Unseen Passages

10.6 Examples with Answers

10.7 Let Us Sum Up

10.8 Exercises for Practice

10.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through the unit you will be able to :

- learn the importance of comprehension
- gain an idea of intelligent reading
- tackle unseen passages with relative ease
- answer unseen passages keeping in mind the points of discussion
- attempt any form of unseen passages or extracts
- practice different types of comprehension passages
- develop an interest and enjoy the mental exercise of comprehension

10.2 COMPREHENSION

The mental exercise of comprehension may either tickle and excite your brain cells, or simply leave you head-scratching and totally jumbled. The trick of cracking any unseen passage lies in practice and once mastered can lead you to discover new ideas, information and knowledge. In this unit, the learner will be oriented to the skills of comprehension for both examination and regular reading purposes. While, it is an enjoyable exercise for many to read and comprehend any form of reading material such as news reports, editorials, magazine or journal articles, fiction narratives, prose

texts or various other write-ups; for some– 'reading' itself is an ordeal.

The learner may wonder what makes comprehension so important, particularly in an examination. It is seen that apart from school, college or university examinations even competitive examinations prescribe a portion of reading and comprehension for the English paper. Now it is not without a reason. The purpose of comprehension in an examination is to test the candidate's ability to read and grasp meaning, to scan and select information and most importantly to answer and express the content in his/her own words within a limited time. Thus, the answers to the given set of questions of an unseen passage provide the examiner, an idea of the candidate's comprehension skills. It is in a way to measure at once the candidate's cognitive abilities.

In the first place, comprehension requires the sharpening of reading skills because **intelligent reading** provides clues to quick grasping. And secondly, it requires the practice of writing skills because the given questions of a passage look for answers which are crisp and concise and reflect the candidate's own understanding in the **correct expression**. The unit lays out ways to both develop and improve 'intelligent' reading skills as well as to tackle and express one's understanding through the exercise of writing.

10.3 INTELLIGENT READING

What happens when you turn the leaf of your question paper in an examination and find an unseen passage staring back at you?

Certainly if you have practiced well, you will not lose your composure and instead busy yourself in reading and making sense of it. Once you have extracted the essence of the passage, a part of your work is done as you will then go on to focus on the details of the text and accordingly answer the set of questions. But, if you lack good practice you may not only lack confidence in attempting the comprehension portion, thereby losing a good deal of time in the examination but also run the risk of misinterpretation in your hurry.

One's first reading of an unseen passage is bound to be incomplete as it tends to provide a vague idea of its entire content. Only in re-reading

and grasping the essentials, the highlights, the keywords and the main points can one proceed to organising answers to the given questions. It is incorrect to think that reading a passage a few times over is a mere waste of valuable time. In fact by reading carefully one invests valuable time.

The methods of **skimming and scanning** are two ways to do justice to your reading. In an examination one does not have all the time to read at one's own pace. And thus, in order to improve one's reading speed and extract the most of an unseen passage, it is advisable to first 'skim' through the contents of the paragraph and then 'scan' through it. **Skimming** is a way of quick reading through a passage, to receive an overview or a gist of the content and the type of questions asked. This provides a vague idea of say an almost 55% of the text that one skims through. After having skimmed through the next thing to do is to scan the content. **Scanning** is a way of detailed reading which requires one to focus on the details of the content i.e. keywords, central controlling ideas, expository sentences, highlights, figures or factual details etc. This will enable one to form a broad view of the content and also in the formulation of a mental picture or map of meaning. While the examination clock is ticking, all it requires is **concentration and tact** to crack open an unseen passage.

10.4 TACKLING UNSEEN PASSAGES

The learner may often be clueless of what to prepare for the portion of 'comprehension of an unseen passage' in an examination. In order to tackle unseen passages in an exam one must inculcate a habit of regular reading and formulating self-questions and answers as there is no telling of how difficult or easy, how confusing or comprehendible an unseen passage may be.

The unseen passage can be a mentally stimulating exercise and help you measure your comprehension power. The key is in both the practice of reading and writing.

For examination purpose :

- Read a given passage or extract quickly in order to **receive a vague idea of the content**.

- Re-read the passage with **a careful attention to details** along with the **questions**.
- As you re-read your mind will simultaneously be at work to **figure out the core idea**.
- **Scan through the passage** for important ideas, information and details.
- Make **mental notes of the probable answers** to the given set of questions or frame your answers mentally first.
- If the questions follow the sequence of paragraphs serially, **mentally organise your answers.**
- Write your answers **in your own words without altering the content of the passage** or the author's opinion (if any).
- **Do not provide your opinion** unless the questions require it.
- Check if you have **misread or misinterpreted** any portion of the passage.

For general practice:

Select and **extract a passage** from a newspaper, novel, magazine, journal, encyclopedia or any other text source.

- You may pick any form of reading material be it in print or on the web.
- **Quickly read or browse** through the material.
- **Re-read and scan** the selected passage for smaller details.
- **Jot down the core idea or central theme** of the content.
- Mark or highlight certain **keywords** that act as clues to the central theme.
- **Consult a dictionary** if you find certain keywords difficult.
- **Form self-questions** pertaining to the content.
- **Jot down a set of questions**.
- Attempt to **answer** these questions in your own words.
- In case you are **asked to provide a heading**, write a suitable one in keeping with the core idea, theme, event or character as the case may be.
- Start from easier texts that interest you and gradually try the sort of texts that you generally avoid.

- You may **time yourself** while you do attempt the entire exercise of comprehension.
- Try to ask someone who will be able to explain the meaning and context of the passage.
- **Check** how much you have been able to comprehend correctly.

10.5 ANSWERING UNSEEN PASSAGES

Your answers form your response to what you have grasped from a given passage or an unseen extract. The challenge is to not only comprehend it but also to express what you have just understood through your written answers. While some students may suffer from a mental block and find the act of reading itself time consuming, some may find answering the set of questions pertaining to an unseen passage a tad too difficult. Answering questions to unseen passages require practice.

All the clues that you require are there in the passage itself all you need to do is **judiciously cull** out the important points that will provide suitable answers to the given questions. Generally, it is seen that the **questions follow a pattern** in which **each question correspond to the paragraphs** (or serially discussed ideas) of the given passage. But, at times there may be **analytical questions** from any part to test if you can reflect your understanding of a problem, issue or idea in a gist. In general, comprehension passages contain direct questions which seek the corresponding answer from the paragraphs in your own words. The learner is to answer only what has been questioned-nothing more, nothing less. Therefore, make it a point to make a mental organisation so that your **answers do not overlap** in the preceding questions.

Thus, the learner is to **provide clear-cut answers** which answer the question to the point. A well-written answer is both concise and precise, in simple language and correct grammar and most importantly appropriate in its content. Generally, in a descriptive or an informative passage the introductory and concluding lines contain the main idea. But in a passage containing a narrative, it may not necessarily be so. It is important to reflect your own comprehension abilities instead of lifting your answers from the

exact lines of the paragraphs. You may **rephrase your answers** instead of blindly copying them from the lines of the passage. But, while you **write in your own words**, keep in mind **not to alter the author's idea** or provide your own subjective opinions.

If the learner is weak at comprehension to be able to answer an unseen passage properly or is good at grasping but weak in reflecting his/her comprehension skills, its one and the same thing as it defeats the purpose of comprehension. **All in all, both intelligent reading and answering go hand in hand**. When reading and comprehension is confined to a stipulated time for an examination purpose, those with who inculcate a general habit of reading may grasp quickly and score high, while those with a lack of practice may lose out on both time and valuable marks. **Therefore, comprehension requires a good deal of intelligent reading practice, focus, an eye for details and a knack for the correct expression in words.**

10.6 EXAMPLES WITH ANSWERS

Extract 1

"The worst pair of opposites is boredom and terror. Sometimes your life is a pendulum swing from one to the other. The sea is without a wrinkle. There is not a whisper of wind. The hours last forever. You are so bored you sink into a state of apathy close to coma. Then the sea becomes rough and your emotions are whipped into a frenzy. Yet even these two opposites do not remain distinct. In your boredom there are elements of terror: you break down into tears; you are filled with dread; you scream; you deliberately hurt yourself. And in the grip of terror– the worst storm- you yet feel boredom, a deep weariness with it all.

Only death consistently excites your emotions, whether contemplating it when life is safeand stale, or fleeing it when life is threatened and precious.

Life on a lifeboat isn't much of a life. It's like an end game in chess, a game with a few pieces. The elements couldn't be more simple, nor the stakes higher. Physically it is extraordinarily arduous, and morally it is killing.

You must make adjustments if you want to survive. Much becomes expendable. You get your happiness where you can. You reach a point where you're at the bottom of hell, yet you have your arms crossed and a smile on your face, and you feel you're the luckiest person on earth. Why? Because at your feet you have a tiny dead fish**"**

[Martel, Yann. *Life of Pi*. Edinburgh : Canongate, 2013.]

Questions:

1. **What are the emotions that the narrator describes as the "worst pair of opposites"?**
2. **How are the hours spent at the sea described by the narrator?**
3. **Explain why the two opposite emotions do not remain distinct?**
4. **What is the comparison drawn to life on a lifeboat and why?**
5. **What are the physical and moral challenges faced in the sea?**
6. **Elaborate why one is compelled to make adjustments while all alone in the sea?**

Answers:

1. The worst pair of opposites that the narrator describes is boredom and terror.
2. The narrator describes the hours spent at the sea seem quiet and endless, where there is not a splash in the sea or a stir in the wind. It is at such a point that life feels like a swinging pendulum of a clock that measure time endlessly. One is so caught by boredom that one slips into a state of apathy or comatose. But, when the sea turns rough ones emotions are stirred into a state of uncertainty and uncontrolled excitement.
3. The two opposites do not remain distinct because one experiences mixed feelings of boredom and terror at the same time. The feelings of terror creep into the feelings of boredom when one is filled with dread, in tears, with the tendency to scream and hurt oneself knowingly. And again when one is in the worst storm of terror, a sudden feeling of boredom and deep weariness tends to creep in.
4. The comparison drawn to a life on a lifeboat is compared to an end game in chess in which only a few pieces remain. Just as the end

game is the most challenging part of a chess game when there's the risk of suffering a 'checkmate' position and it is difficult to decide who would be the winner,the seas are a challenging due to the involvement of high risks and the unpredictability of the elements at sea.

5. According to the narrator, while out in the seas all alone it turns physically tiresome or exhaustive in an extraordinary way and morally it turns defeating.
6. While at sea one is compelled to make adjustments in order to survive. When every resource tends to be spent one can only be happy in the moment which may not last long. One experiences moments that feel worse as hell and yet is compelled to bear it with calm and a smiling composure and make the best of the surviving moments.

Points to Note:

a. Try to write the answers in your own words from what you have grasped without altering what the narrator's conveys or expresses.

b. Read and re read the questions and answer briefly and precisely to the point.

Extract 2

"There's a new nation on earth with no defined geography. It is spread across the globe and is less than ten years old. It apparently had one billion people in 2012, making it the third most populous country on the planet after China and India. It has been calculated that "it took the population of modern humans about 200,000 years to reach that number". This nation exists only in cyberspace and it is called Facebook. Facebook's larger-than-life presence in digital media, which is itself defined as "the creative convergence of digital arts, science, technology and business for human expression, communication, social interaction and education", is a phenomenon that is being emulated and imitated the world over. It is inspiring new forms of human interaction, a phenomenon described as social media networking.

India can seize a series of opportunities while harnessing the progressive aspects of the exponential growth of social media-although a

substantial section of the country's population is yet to benefit from access to the internet-even as this exponentially- growing phenomenon has a distinct downside, since it has been (and can be) misused and abused to spread rumour and discontentment. The flipside of the social media as an empowering and democratizing force is its potential to spread chaos, confusion and anarchy. Like other developing countries, India will have to not just bridge the overall digital and the urban-rural hiatus in the use of the internet but also find an appropriate balance between the positive and negative aspects of the social media, between their benefits and their challenges."

[Ghose, Patrick S. L. and Thakuria, Paranjoy Guha. "Explosion in Digital Space: Opportunities and Challenges for India". *Yojana: A Development Monthly* Vol. 57 p.14 May, 2013.]

Questions:

1. **How is the new nation described in the above extract?**
2. **What is the definition given on the social media networking site Facebook?**
3. **What is the 'distinct downside' described in the extract?**
4. **State the flipside of social media.**
5. **What are the initiatives that India must undertake like the other developing countries?**

Answers:

1. The new nation described in the above extract is one which is devoid of all geographical borders and barrier and spans the globe. This is the world of 'cyberspace' which is not older than ten years and is supposed to have a billion people in 2012, making it the third most populous country after China and India. It is supposed to have taken the modern human population about 200,000 years to reach such a figure.
2. The definition provided on the social media networking site known as "the creative convergence of digital arts, science, technology and business for human expression, communication, social interaction and education" which has been phenomenal in inspiring new forms of human interaction.

3. While India continues to harness progressive opportunities of the social media which has been experiencing an exponential growth, it also has a 'distinct downside' as it has also been (and can be) misused and abused to spread rumour and wide discontentment.
4. While the social media is both is an empowerment and a democratising force the flipside of it is the potential to spread chaos, confusion and a wave of anarchy across the nation.
5. In following the examples of other developing countries, India has to bridge the overall digital and the gap in the urban-rural access and use of the internet and most importantly to draw a balance between the positive and negative aspects of the social media and look into its benefits and challenges.

Points to Note:

a. In such extracts which are more informative or with figures and factual details, scan for the minute pieces of information provided.

b. Look for provided keywords pertaining to the theme of the extract. It will lead you to the core issue or subject of the extract.

Extract 3

"I was born in the city of Bombay…once upon a time. No, that won't do, there's no getting away from the date: I was born in Doctor Narlikar's Nursing Home on August 15th, 1947. And thetime? The time matters, too. Well then: at night. No, it's important to be more…On the stroke of midnight, as a matter of fact. Clock-hands joined palms in respectful greeting as I came. Oh, spell it out, spell it out: at the precise instant of India's arrival at independence, I tumbled forth into the world. There were gasps. And,outside the window, fireworks and crowds. A few seconds later, my father broke his big toe; but his accident was a mere trifle when set beside what had befallen me in that benighted moment, because thanks to the occult tyrannies of those blandly saluting clocks I had been mysteriously handcuffed to history, my destinies indissolubly chained to those of my country. For the next three decades, there was to be no escape. Soothsayers had prophesied me, newspapers celebrated my arrival, politicos ratified my authenticity. I was left entirely without a say in the matter. I, Saleem Sinai, later variously called

Snotnose, Stainface, Baldy, Sniffer, Buddha and even Piece-of-the-Moon, had become heavily embroiled in Fate-at the best of times a dangerous sort of involvement. And I couldn't even wipe my own nose at that time.**"**

[Rushdie, Salman. *Midnight's Children*. London : Vintage, 2006]

Questions:

1. **Briefly describe the exact details of the narrator's birth.**
2. **Which significant historical moment had coincided with the narrator's birth?**
3. **How does the narrator describe the moment?**
4. **What do you understand by the words "saluting clock"?**
5. **Why does the narrator blame that moment of time?**
6. **What are the various names by which the narrator is known? What is his realisation at that particular moment?**

Answers:

1. The narrator was born in the city of Bombay in Doctor Narlikar's Nursing Home on the stroke of midnight on 15th of August 1947.
2. It was the precise moment of India's independence which had coincided with the narrator's time of birth.
3. Historically, it was a celebratory moment and there were fireworks and gathering of crowds. And at the personal level the narrator's father suffered an accident of breaking his big toe and the Independence Day timed with his birthday had mysteriously arrested him to history and he was thus chained to share similar destinies with that of the nation.
4. The words "saluting clock" refers to the clock-hands striking together at midnight which the narrator likens with or imagines as joined palms in a respectful greeting.
5. The narrator blames the moment because he considers the saluting clocks as a supernatural occurrence which had chained him for the coming three decades without escape. The soothsayers were caught busy with their prophecies on him, the newspapers celebrated his arrival and the politicians had consented to his genuineness.
6. The various names by which the narrator are Saleem Sinai, Snotnose,

Stainface, Baldy, Sniffer, Buddha and Piece-of-the-Moon.The narrator's realisation is that of helplessness with the way circumstances are shaped and he finds himself dangerously or heavily embroiled in Fate.

Points to Note:

a. **While answering extracts which have the first person narrative (note theuse of 'I' in the extract) write in third person speech i.e. narrate as a mere reporter of what you have received in the first person narrative.**

b. **If it so happens that you are unable to supply a synonym for a tough word, use the given word itself. Don't make guesses as it may lead you to misunderstand or misinterpret the entire sentence or idea.**

Extract 4

"Gopal was in great pain. A big battle seemed to be raging in his stomach. Of course, there was nothing **unusual** about this. With his weakness for good food-sweets in particular-he often did overeat and this was the inevitable result. As long as the pain lasted Gopal was full of **remorse**, and made wild promises to eat moderately, but all were forgotten the moment he was well.

This was the pain was worse than anything he had ever experienced before. "It must have been the fish," Gopal said aloud. "I thought it did not look fresh."

"Who asked you to eat it?" said Gopal's wife. "And eight large pieces too! Fresh or not, that's enough to make anyone sick.

"Don't be silly, said Gopal, I've often taken more than that. If it wasn't the fish it must have been the *rasagollas*."

"Well, you gobbled up three dozen of those!"

"Oh… Ahh…. don't stand there arguing," groaned Gopal.

"Get me some green coconut water. It's good for a bad stomach.

But the coconut water failed to help. The pain remained acute. "Mother Kali have mercy," prayed Gopal aloud.

"Make me well this once and I shall offer you a buffalo as sacrifice!"

"You really shouldn't make **promises** to the goddess unless you

mean to keep them! said Gopal's wife.

"Of course I'm going to keep my word!" said Gopal indignantly.

"Just let me get better, and I shall go to the Kali temple with the biggest buffalo I can lay my hands on.

"Is your stomach ache better?" said Gopal's wife suddenly. "You don't look nearly as pale as you did half an hour ago."

"You're right! said Gopal sitting up. "The pain isn't so bad now." So Mother Kali seems to have heard your prayers. Don't forget the buffalo now," said Gopal's wife.

Soon Gopal was feeling even better. "Mother Kali," he said looking out of the window, "things are getting more **expensive** day by day." He continued after a pause, "I think a buffalo would cost too much in these hard times! Won't a goat be enough? a nice fat goat! I'll get you one, the moment I'm well. I promise I will."

["Joking With the Goddess" *Laughing Together: Stories, Riddles and Proverbs from Asia and the Pacific*. New Delhi: National Book Trust, 2013.]

Questions:

1. **What had happened to Gopal and what do you understand about his nature?**
2. **What is the difference between Gopal and his wife's opinion of Gopal's condition?**
3. **What does Gopal do when the pain does not subside after his sipping coconut water?**
4. **How does Gopal's wife react to his words?**
5. **Give the word meanings or a synonym for the following words:**
   a. unusual b. remorse c. promises d. expensive
6. **Why does Gopal change his mind after he feels better? What does it reflect about his nature according to you?**

Answers:

1. Gopal was suffering from a severe stomach ache.There was nothing unusual about his pain as he often indulged in his habits of over eating. He had a weakness for good food and particular a taste for sweets. While in pain lasted Gopal made wild promises to eat moderately, but

as soon as he recovered he forgot his promises.

2. While Gopal suspects that the fish he had eaten was not fresh (almost in self-denial of the actual reason). His wife discloses the fact that he had eaten eight pieces was enough to make him sick. On hearing this Gopal denies saying that he had often eaten more than that and that the rasagollas might have affected him. And at this Gopal's wife quickly makes her point that he had also overeaten three dozen of those sweets.
3. Gopal orders his wife to get him a coconut drink to feel better but when his pain does not subside he prays aloud to Goddess Kali to be merciful and promises to offer her a buffalo as a sacrifice after he gets well.
4. Gopal's wife warns him not to make promises without really intending to keep them (perhaps fearing that it may cause the Goddess' displeasure).
5. a. different b. regret/guilt c. wordd. costly
6. After Gopal gets a little well he changes his mind by bargaining to offer a goat in place of a buffalo due to the rising expenses of things. He alters his earlier promise with the condition that he would offer a "nice fat goat" only after he recovers fully. This reflects Gopal's sense of greed in everything. He even assumes that the Goddess would be pleased with his offers rather than his nature.

Points to Note:

a. Note the use of the reportive speech in the dialogical extract i.e. the use of indirect speech in answering the extract which contains direct speech.

b. At times certain extracts ask for explanation of meaning or synonyms (words with similar meaning). If you are not sure of the meaning of the given word, try reading the entire sentence instead of taking the word in isolation. It may give you a clue or some idea about the probable meaning.

c. Only when you are asked to give your opinion as in question 6. state your opinion and not otherwise.

d. If the given extract is dialogical you may quote certain significant words under inverted commas. Refer to question 6.



10.7 LET US SUM UP

After going through this unit, the learner will gain a fair idea of the importance of comprehension through intelligent reading. The unit discusses on how to approach unseen passages for both examination and general reading practice. The various examples of the selected extracts with possible answers highlight some of the important points to note while tackling unseen passages. It also provides the learner a scope to develop both reading and writing skills through the practice exercises. The practice exercises contain a set of questions which are to be attempted by the learner. It encourages him/her to learn by doing or practicing and to inculcate a good habit of intelligent reading in the long run. Thus, the unit aims to both develop and improve the learner's interest and ability to make comprehension an enjoyable mental exercise. The power of comprehension will also open up new windows of knowledge and learning for the learner.

10.8 EXERCISES FOR PRACTICE

The few exercises given below are meant for the learner to practice. It takes frequent practice for one to develop a good sense of comprehension. Although, it is necessary to time oneself while practicing for examination purpose, it is advisable to first read at leisure and gradually develop a reading and scanning speed.

Exercise 1

Read the passage given below and answer the given questions:

"Here I gave him bread, and a bunch of raisins to eat, and a draught of water, which I found he was indeed in great distress for, by his running; and having refresh'd him, I made signs for him to go lie down and sleep; pointing to a place where I had laid a great parcel of rice straw, and a blanket

upon it, which I used to sleep upon my self sometimes; so the poor creature laid down, and went to sleep.

He was a comely handsome fellow, perfectly well made; with straight strong limbs, not too large; tall and well shap'd, and, as I reckon, about twenty six years of age. He had a very good countenance, not a fierce and surly aspect; but seem'd to have something very manly in his face, and yet he had all the sweetness and softness of an European in his countenance too, especially when he smil'd. His hair was long and black, not curl'd like wool; his forehead very high and large, and a great vivacity and sparkling sharpness in his eyes. The colour of his skin was not quite black, but very tawny; and yet not of an ugly yellow nauseous tawny, as the Brazilians, and Virginians, and other natives of America are; but of a bright kind of a dun olive colour, that had in it something very agreeable, tho' not very easy to describe. His face was round and plump; his nose small, not flat like the negroes, a very good mouth, thin lips, and his fine teeth well set, and white as ivory. After he had slumber'd, rather than slept, about half an hour, he wak'd again, and comes out of the cave for me;for I had been milking my goats, which I had in the enclosure just by; when he espy'd me, he came running to me, laying himself down again upon the ground, with all the possible signs of an humble thankful disposition, making a many antick gestures to show it.

At last he lays his head flat upon the ground, close to my foot, and sets my other foot upon his head, as he had done before; and after this, made all the signs to me of subjection, servitude, and submission imaginable, to let me know how he would serve me as long as he liv'd. I understood him in many things, and let him know I was very well pleas'd with him; in a little time I began to speak to him, and teach him to speak to me; and first, I made him know his name should be Friday, which was the day I sav'd his life; I call'd him so for the memory of the time; I likewise taught him to say Master, and then let him know, that was to be my name; I likewise taught him to say yes and no, and to know the meaning of them;

I gave him some milk in an earthen pot, and let him see me drink it before him, and sop my bread in it; and I gave him a cake of bread to do the like,

which he quickly comply'd with, and made signs that it was very good for him.**"**

[Defoe, Daniel. *Robinson Crusoe.* London : Everyman, 1998.]

Answer the following questions:

1. How does the narrator treat the stranger?
2. Briefly describe the narrator's observation of the stranger's appearance and facial features.
3. What does the stranger do after he wakes up from his slumber?
4. What did the stranger mean by such a gesture on his part?
5. How does the narrator react and what does he do at that moment?

Exercise 2

Read the passage given below and answer the given questions:

"'One morning we heard cannon-shots somewhere in the distance. When the noise stopped, everything went on again, just as usual. It was only when the foreign soldiers marched into the city that people understood what had happened: that the King had been defeated, the city conquered. Towards evening we saw troops marching out of the fort with sacks of loot. Palace workers too. A crowd gathered around the walls of the fort. I had never been past the walls. When I saw people crossing the moat, I went to join them. We went running in. At the walls of the palace we found a breached gateway. We broke through, hundreds of us. I suppose you could say it was a kind of riot. None of us knew what we were doing, everyone was following someone else. We went running into the rear of the palace: the women's section. The most valuable objects were already gone, but to us what was left seemed to be of an unimaginable sumptuousness, precious beyond imagining. People fell upon everything that was within reach, everything in sight, breaking the furniture, digging stones from the floor. After a while I left the main hallway and turned into an anteroom. There was a woman inside. She was small and slight of figure, and even though I had never seen her before I knew at once that she was Queen Supayalat.'

'The Queen?'

'Yes. Her Majesty herself. I imagine she had come there to salvage whatever was left of her possessions. She was without guards, without an

escort. She should have been frightened, but she was not. She shouted at us, threatened us. But what was still more remarkable was that everyone who came into the room fell instantly to the floor, to shiko to the Queen. Imagine how strange this was: there they were, looting the palace and at the same time paying homage to their Queen! I was mesmerised: I sat in a corner, watching. And when I had been there a while I realised that the Queen was not alone. She had two children with her, and some attendants, a group of young girls. Of the children the older was perhaps three. I took her to be a Princess, from the style of her clothes. Standing beside the Princess was an attendant, also a child, perhaps a year or two younger than me, perhaps more, I could not be sure, for this was a child like none I had ever seen before-beautiful beyond belief, beyond comprehension. She was like the palace itself, a thing of glass, inside which you could see everything of which your imagination was capable. All around us there was noise, the sound of knives, axes, running feet. It was evident that the girl was frightened, and yet, at the same time, she was perfectly calm. I could not take my eyes off her. I knew I was watching something I would never forget.'"

[Ghosh, Amitav. *The Glass Palace*. New Delhi : Harper Collins, 2006.]

Answer the following questions:

1. What had happened on that fateful morning when the King had been defeated?
2. Briefly describe the reactions of the crowd as observed by the narrator.
3. Who does the narrator find first while moving into the anteroom? What does the narrator observe about the person?
4. What did the narrator find strange remarkable and mesmerising?
5. a. Who else does the narrator find in the anteroom?
   b. Who had captured the narrator's attention?
   c. Why does the narrator consider it as a memorable moment?

Exercise 3

Read the passage given below and answer the given questions:

"Very long, long ago, there lived a big tiger who was King of the Wild Animals. With black fur, eyes like flames and teeth as sharp as knives,

this tiger was the terror of the jungle, killing and eating many other animals.

One day, after having a whole deer for breakfast, Tiger took a walk. He noticed with the satisfaction how animals fled on seeing him. Then he saw something that he could not understand. In afield near the foot of a mountain, a buffalo was quietly and steadily pulling a plough, followed by a young peasant who kept shouting and beating the buffalo with a bamboo rod.

Tiger was puzzled, as nobody would ever treat him that way in his kingdom. He waited and waited until the peasant and the buffalo stopped for a rest. He then came near the buffalo and asked, “Tell me, my friend! How come you let the little man beat and shout at you like hat? I can see that you are big and strong. With your knife-sharp pointed horns, you can easily gore that man to death any time. I simply can’t understand why you are so submissive.”

The buffalo looked up at the Tiger and said sadly,” He is little, yes, but don’t you know that he has his wisdom?

“Wisdom, you said?” The Tiger asked in surprise. “What do you mean by wisdom?”

The buffalo was irritated, for he himself did not know what wisdom was. He did not want to admit it to the Tiger, so he said, “You’d better go and ask the man yourself!”

Tiger walked up to the man, who was smoking a bamboo pipe, and said, “The buffalo told me that you have wisdom. Is it true?”

“Yes, it is true,” said the man. Then Tiger asked, “What is it like? Would you kindly let me have a look at it?”

“I wish I could show it to you, but I left it at home this morning for the fear of losing it in the field.”

“Will you go back and get it? I really want to see what is it like.”

“Surely, I will,” said the man and walked a few steps. Then he suddenly stopped and came back. “I can’t leave now,” he said. “I am afraid that you will kill my buffalo while I am away.”

“I swear I won’t,” said Tiger. “I am still full after having a deer for breakfast, so you need not be worried.”

The man thought for a moment, and then said, “Okay, I will go if you let me tie you up at that tree. Then I won’t be worried about you eating my buffalo.”

Eager to have a look at the so-called wisdom, Tiger agreed. The man quickly tied him up at the tree.

He then gathered dead leaves and firewood around the Tiger and set fire to them, saying, “Here is my wisdom.”

The flames grew high and hot, but Tiger couldn’t move. He looked so pained and laughed until he tumbled upon a rock and broke his upper teeth.

Only after the ropes round him were burnt off could Tiger get free. He roared in pain and fled into the jungle.

Since that time, members of the tiger family are born with black and brown fur as a result of the burns inflicted by the peasant, and members of the buffalo family are born with their upper teeth missing.**”**

[“The Peasant and The Tiger” *Read Me A Story*. New Delhi : National Book Trust, 2011.]

Questions:

1. Why was the tiger a terror? What had puzzled the tiger that morning?
2. What does the tiger ask the buffalo? What was the tiger curious about?
3. Describe the conversation between the tiger and the man.
4. How does the man use his wisdom?
5. Why are the members of the tiger family born with black and brown fur?

Exercise 4

Read the passage given below and answer the given questions:

“Among other things in this scene of desolation, the poverty and wretchedness of the inhabitants were remarkable. They occupy little huts, raised among the ruins of the monastery; and seem to have no employment but begging: as if a place, once devoted to indolence, could never again become the seat of industry. As we left the abbey, we found the whole hamlet at the gate, either openly soliciting alms; or covertly, under the pretence of carrying us to some part of the ruins, which each could show;

and which was far superior to anything which could be shown by anyone else. The most lucrative occasion could not have excited more jealousy and contention.

One poor woman we followed, who had engaged to show us the monk's library. She could crawl; shuffling along her palsied limbs, and meager, contracted body, by the help of two sticks. She led us, through an old gate, into a place overspread with nettles, and briars; and pointing to the remnant of a shattered cloister, told us, that was the place. It was her mansion. All indeed she meant to tell us, was the story of her own wretchedness; and all she had to show us was her own miserable habitation. We did not expect to be interested: but we found we were. I never saw so loathsome a human dwelling. It was a cavity, loftily vaulted, between two ruined walls; which streamed with various-coloured stains of unwholesome dews. The floor was earth;yielding, through moisture, to the tread. Not the merest utensil, or furniture of any kind, appeared, but a wretched bedstead, spread with a few rags, and drawn into the middle of the cell, to prevent its receiving the damp, which trickled down the walls. At one end was an aperture, which served just to let in light enough to discover the wretchedness within. When we stood in the midst of this cell of misery, and felt the chilling damps, which struck us in every direction, we were rather surprised that the wretched inhabitant was still alive than that she had only lost the use of her limbs

The country about Tintern Abbey has been described as a solitary, tranquil scene: but its immediate environs only are meant. Within half a mile of it are carried on great iron-works, which introduce noise and bustle into these regions of tranquility.**"**

[Bohls, Elizabeth A. and Ian Duncan. (eds.)William Gilpin, "Observations on the River Rye (1782)". *Travel Writing 1700-1830: An Anthology*. New York : Oxford University Press, 2008.]

Questions:

1. What does the narrator observe around the ruins of the Abbey?
2. What happens when the narrator is on the verge of leaving the Abbey?
3. Describe the poor woman who offers to show the visitors the monk's library.

4. Briefly describe the dwellings of the old woman
5. a. Why surprises the narrator having seen the miserable living conditions of the old woman?
   b. Why does the narrator find the country of Tintern Abbey quite unlike its usual description?

Exercise 5

"I had the whole afternoon before me, and examined about three miles of the road very carefully. When a tiger uses a road regularly it invariably leaves signs of its passage by making scratch marks on the side of road. These scratch marks, made for the same purpose as similar marks made by domestic cats and all other members of the cat family, are of very great interest to the sportsman, for they provide him with the following very useful information, (1) whether the animal that has mad the mark is a male or a female, (2) the direction in which it was travelling, (3) the length of time that has elapsed since it passed, (4) the direction and approximate distance of its headquarters, (5) the nature of its kills, and finally (6) whether the animal has been recently had a meal of human flesh. The value of this easily-acquired information to one who is hunting a man-eater on strange ground will be easily understood. Tigers also leave their pugmarks on the roads they use and these pugmarks can provide one with quite a lot of useful information, as for instance the direction and speed at which the animal was travelling, its sex and age, whether all four limbs are sound, and if not sound, which particular limb is defective.

The road I was on had through long disuse got overgrown with short stiff grass and was therefore not, except in one or two damp places was within a few yards of where the road came out on the ridge, and just below this spot there was a green and very stagnant pool of water; a regular drinking place for *sambhar*"

I found several scratch marks just round the corner where the road turned to the left after leaving the cultivated ground, the most recent of which was three days old. Two hundred yards from these scratch marks on the road, for a third of its width, ran under an overhanging rock. This rock was ten feet high and at the top of it there was a flat piece of ground two or

three yards wide, which was only visible from the road when approaching the rock from the village side. On the ridge I found more scratch marks, but I did not find any pugmarks until I got to the first hairpin bend. Here, in cutting across the bend, the tiger had left its trace where it had jumped down onto the same soft earth. The tracks, which were a day old, were a little distorted, but even so it was possible to see that they had been made by a big, old, male tiger."

[Corbett, Jim. "The Mohan Man-eater" *Man-eaters of Kumaon*. New Delhi : Oxford University Press, 2012.]

Answer the following questions:

1. What does the narrator learn from his examination of the road?
2. a. What information does a sportsman receive from a tiger's scratch marks?
   b. What information do the pug marks provide?
3. Describe the road on which the narrator finds the next set of scratch and pug marks.
4. Give a brief description of the rock visible from the road.
5. What does the narrator determine from the tracksat the hair pin bend of the rock?

Exercise 6

"Once upon a time there was a widow who had two daughters. She and her elder daughter resembled each other so closely, in appearance and character, that when you saw the daughter you would have said that it was the mother. They were both so disagreeable and proud that they were impossible to live with. The younger of the daughters, who for gentleness and good manners was the image of her father, was also as beautiful a girl as you could wish to see. Since like attracts like, the mother was excessively fond of the elder daughter, and had a terrible aversion for the younger. She made her eat in the kitchen and work all the time.

Among other things, the poor child was obliged to be a good half-league from the house twice a day to fetch water, and bring back a great big ewer filled on the top. One day, when she was at the spring, a poor woman came up to her, and asked if she could have a drink.

'Of course you can, good mother', said this pretty girl, and she rinsed out the ewer, went to fill it at the best spot along the stream, and offered it to the old woman, holding it so that she could drink more easily. When she had had her drink the good woman said to her: 'You are so fair, so good-natured, and so considerate, that I cannot do otherwise than give you a gift' (for she was a fairy, who had put on the shape of a poor village woman, in order to see how far the young girl's kindness and politeness would go).

The fairy continued: 'The gift that I give you is this: at every word you speak, from your mouth a flower will come, or else a precious stone.

When the beautiful daughter arrived home, her mother scolded her for coming back so late from the spring. 'I beg your pardon, mother, for having taken so long', said the poor girl; and as she spoke, from her mouth came two roses, two pearls, and two great diamonds.

'What's this?' exclaimed her mother in astonishment; 'I do believe that those are the pearls coming from her mouth; how can that be daughter?' (which was the first time she had ever called the girl daughter). The poor child told her exactly what had happened, producing huge quantities of diamonds as she did so.

'Really, I must send the other daughter,' said the mother, 'come along Florrie, look at what has come from your sister's mouth when she speaks. Wouldn't you like to have the same gift? All you have to do is to go and get some water to drink, give her some nicely.**"**

[Perrault, Charles. "The Fairies" *The Complete Fairy Tales*. New York : Oxford University Press, 2010.]

Answer the following questions:

1. How were the two daughters of the widow different from the other?
2. What obligations did the mother place on the younger daughter?
3. What happens when the younger daughter meets the poor old woman by the stream?
4. How is the young daughter gifted by the fairy for her good behavior?
5. a. What does the mother plan to do after she learns of the girl's gift?
   b. What strikes you about the widow's nature from your reading of the fairy tale?

Exercise 7

"There was a time when there was a river in everybody's life**.** Cultures developed in everybody's life.

Cultures developed alongside rivers. Rivers sustained farmlands; they were home to a variety of fish; they were conduits of commerce and cultural exchange. People followed waterways, from canals to great rivers, to build businesses, communities, and new lives.

Rivers were revered and feared. The river was a playmate to a child to splash about or joy for a woman after a hard day's work. A river could also be the unpredictable elder who inspired awe. Flooding at many times turned a harbinger of life and prosperity into a raging torrent that destroyed human lives and ruined crops, leading to food shortages and starvation.

But people learned to live with such vagaries. They learnt about its ebbs and flows. They tried to avoid places where its raging waters would strike, and settle where it would be at its nurturing best. They learnt to make use of the silt left by its floodwaters and to avoid the sand which harmed their crops. But even then rivers flooded, changed courses and wrecked havoc. People learnt to take that in their stride, sometimes with wit our folklore is replete with.

Over past 150 years or so, this connection has been severed. The change happened sometime during colonial rule. Colonial water planners and water engineers introduced the idea of tapping rivers. Colonial intervention transformed seasonally inundated floodplains into sites for irrigation, involving construction of barrages and weirs. But colonial understanding of hydrology could not come to terms with the idiosyncracies of Indian rivers. Replete with sand and sediment, most of them refused to flow between banks. Unfortunately, our planners did not take note of this failure of the colonial state when they devised plans for Indian rivers.

At the same time, the people also lost the spiritual connect with rivers. There is probably a river in each of our lives. But it is distant. Today many grow into adulthood without having seen a river in its full glory. Many of the mighty rivers have been reduced to a trickle.

A lot of us still venerate rivers. In fact, the number of pilgrims

thronging the sites associated with big rivers, the Ganga, Yamuna and the Brahmaputra, seems to be growing. But there is a discord between such ritual veneration and the ways we treat our rivers. Every pilgrimage adds to the burden of trash on rivers. Many of our rivers have turned into veritable sewers. Some of them are toxic cesspools. We have even lost rivers-we are a generation that has turned flowing fresh water rivers into rivers of sewage and garbage. Today in official documents these rivers have been renamed as drains. There cannot be a bigger loss, a bigger travesty."

[Narain, Sunita (Ed.) "Cover Story : Rivers, Up Close and Personal" *Down to Earth : Science and Environment Fortnightly* 22.7 (pp. 34-35.) New Delhi, August 16-31, 2013.]

Answer the following questions:

1. What role did the rivers play in the lives of people?
2. How did people learn to live with the ebb and flow of the river?
3. How were the connections with the rivers of India severed over the past 150 years?
4. How have people lost the spiritual connection with the rivers with the passing of time?
5. What did our planners fail to learn from the shortcomings of the colonial water planners?
6. What is the discord between our ritual reverence of the rivers and the way we treat them?

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UNIT 11 : SHORT COMPOSITION

UNIT STRUCTURE

11.1 Learning Objectives

11.2 Introduction

11.3 Notice Writing

- 11.3.1 Format of a Notice
- 11.3.2 Worked Out Examples

11.4 Advertisements

- 11.4.1 Classified Advertisements
- 11.4.2 Worked Out Examples
- 11.4.3 Commercial Advertisements
- 11.4.4 Worked Out Examples

11.5 Let Us Sum Up

11.6 Answers to Check Your Progress

11.7 Model Questions

11.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to:

- discuss the purpose of notices
- develop appropriate style and format for notice writing
- distinguish between classified and commercial advertisements
- practice appropriate style and format for drafting advertisements.

11.2 INTRODUCTION

The word ‘notice’ is very common to all of you. You have often said “There’s a notice on the board saying that tomorrow is a holiday”. Such notices are often typed or handwritten and signed by a competent authority. You are all familiar with the word “notice board” which is an important part of any school, college or an office. You also know what an advertisement is. If you lose your HS examination certificate and intend to apply for a duplicate, the first thing that you do is to advertise the loss in a local daily.

In fact, both notices and advertisements are forms of communication that aim at reaching out to a wider section of people. The occasion or situation for putting up a notice is not exactly the same as putting up an advertisement in the print or electronic media. The head of an educational institution often has to notify matters of importance to the staff and students. He notifies dates of exams, holidays, results, staff meetings and so on. He circulates the notice among the students and even puts up a copy on the notice board. The notice thus becomes a means of communication to the staff and the students.

Similarly, the head of an institution often has to advertise matters of importance in the newspaper. If there is a vacancy for a post of a teacher in Mathematics or any other subject, the head of the institution will put up an advertisement in the local daily specifying the qualification expected from a candidates who would be required to face an interview board. The advertisement should be unambiguous and easily comprehensible to the reader.

Now, whether it is a notice or an advertisement, it is important to note that such forms of communications have a distinctive form. The presentation of the content has to adhere to a distinctive style. The aim of this unit is to acquaint you with the form of notices and advertisements. Moreover, the unit acquaints you with the style of writing notices and advertisements. When you start writing a notice or an advertisement, you should have a clear idea of the form - how to begin the composition. In this unit, we shall look into these issues and guide you towards writing a well - formed piece of composition — a notice or an advertisement.

11.3 NOTICE WRITING

A notice is a form of written or printed communication on a topic or subject having public importance. The aim of a notice is to disseminate an important piece of information. Usually educational institutions and public and private sector offices and organisations have their own notice boards for displaying notices containing information useful to the organisation as well as to the concerned people. Structurally, a notice is a short composition

written in a formal style. Depending upon organisations, notices may differ. For example, educational institutions often notify forthcoming events, holidays, examination dates, meetings, seminars and allied educational programmes. Offices and banks and other organisations often notify various matters from time to time both on in-house as well as on public matters.

In spite of such wide ranges of variation in the subject matter, there are certain common features in notices in style and format and these are the aspects that are being addressed in this unit. We shall begin by taking a look at a format of a notice.

11.3.1 Format of a Notice

Let us take a look at a notice developed around the following specific topic :

You are Avik Das, the Cultural Secretary of East Guwahati Academy, Guwahati. Write a notice suitable for your school notice board inviting names of students willing to participate in an inter-college cultural programme.

Before you start writing the notice, here are a few things that you may like to note :

(1) You must imagine that you are Avik Das

(2) You are the Cultural Secretary of East Guwahati College

(3) The notice will be displayed in the Academy Notice Board

(4) You must be specific about the subject matter

East Guwahati College, Guwahati

1st June, 2023

NOTICE

Inter-School Cultural Programme

An inter-school cultural programme of Guwahati schools will be held from the 3rd to 5th July 2023 at Chandmari field. Students from BA 1st- 3rd semester willing to participate are requested to submit their names by 15th June 2023 to the undersigned for a trial to be held on 18th June 2023.

Avik Das

Cultural Secretary

The format of the above notice is discussed below :

(1) The name of the issuing authority is given at the top : 'East Guwahati College, Guwahati'.

(2) The date when the notice is written is given just below the name of the issuing authority.

(3) The word NOTICE is given just below the date.

(4) A caption or a heading is given below the word NOTICE.

(5) The caption is followed by the body of the notice with details which would include

  (i) the purpose of the notice

  (ii) the event/information notified

  (iii) occasion

  (iv) date/time/venue etc.

(6) Name and designation of the person issuing the notice is given at the end of the message

(7) The style is formal and the passive form is used

(8) The notice is given in the third person.

11.3.2 Worked Out Examples

In this section, we shall look at the form, style and content of a few worked out examples of notices.

1. You are Amrit Gogoi, Secretary of Rangpur Literary Society, Joysagar. Write a notice for your society notice board inviting a meeting of the Executive Committee of the Society on 3rd January 2023 at 1 p.m. in the Committee Room of the Society to chalk out a programme for holding Silpi Divas on 17th January 2023.

Rangpur Literary Society, Joysagar

29th December 2023

NOTICE

Meeting of Literary Society

It is for information of all Members of the Executive Committee that a meeting will be held on 3rd January 2023 at 1 p.m. in the Committee Room of the Literary Society to chalk out a programme for holding Silpi Divas on the 17th January 2023. All Members are requested to attend the Meeting that day to finalise the programme.

Amrit Gogoi

Secretary

Comment :

A common style of notice writing especially official notices is to begin the notice with the expression :

It is for general information .....

It is for information of all concerned .....

It is hereby informed that ..... etc.

2. You are the editor of an educational quarterly named Shiksha Jyoti, published by Shiksha Jyoti Educational Trust, Guwahati - 21. Write a notice for publication in a local daily inviting educational articles, book reviews etc by 15 June for publication in the magazine. Imagine yourself as Apurba Das.

Shiksha Jyoti Educational Trust

Guwahati - 21

12th May 2023

NOTICE

Invitation of Contributions

It is for information of all concerned that work on preparation of Shiksha Jyoti, an educational quarterly is going on. Articles, book reviews, reports on educational interest are invited for publication in the magazine. Contributions must be original and either typed or hand-written on one side of the page and sent to the Editor Shiksha Jyoti, Shiksha Jyoti Educational Trust, Guwahati-21 or by e-mail to shikshajyoti@yahoo.com.

Apurba Das

Editor

3. You are Arun Goswami, Secretary of Green World an organisation on Environmental issues. Write a notice for displaying in the schools of your town/city inviting school students of the age group of 18 to 22 years to a painting competition on the theme of environment to be held on 10th June. Specify venue.

Green World

(An NGO on Environment)

Guwahati - 24

10th May 2023

NOTICE

Painting Competition

It is for information of teachers, parents and guardians that as part of the World Environment Day Celebration, a painting competition is being organised at Narikalbari Park on Sunday, the 1st June at 9.00 a.m. The competition is open to students of the age group 18-20. No entry fees required.

Secretary

Green World

Guwahati - 24



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 1: You are the student Secretary of the KKHSOU Study Centre at Paharpur, Kamrup. Write a notice for your Study Centre notice board about an excursion that your centre is organising giving all the necessary information in about 50 words and asking those wishing to join the excursion, to give their names.

Q 2: You are the manager of a travel agency. Write a notice in your office notice board announcing the new office timings of your office and the lunch-break timings.

11.4 ADVERTISEMENT

An advertisement is a form of mass communication to the general public asking for or offering services or buying and selling property, goods etc. or providing information about missing items, persons, pets etc. An advertisement also offers people ideas, goods and services and persuades them about their benefits and utility. The medium of an advertisement may be

- print, such as a newspaper or magazine, poster, banner, leaflet, pamphlet or a hoarding
- electronic, such as the radio, television, video, cable, phone, internet or
- any other medium including oral

There are two broad types of advertisements in the print media, namely (a) classified ads and (b) commercial ads. Each of these types has been discussed in the sections that follow.

11.4.1 Classified Advertisements

The term 'classified advertisement' generally refers to the advertisements that are published in the specified columns of newspapers according to different classes depending upon its subject matter. Newspapers are used by advertisers because the newspaper medium has many advantages. Some of the advantages are as follows :

(a) Range of market coverage : Advertisers can reach out to a wide section of people in a cost-efficient manner.

(b) Easy access to the readers : Almost every person receives a home-delivery copy of a newspaper every morning. For this reason, advertisers choose to advertise in newspapers which makes the newspaper advantageous for both the advertiser and the reader.

(c) Positive consumer attitudes : Readers generally perceive newspapers, including the advertisement to be current and

credible information sources.

However, newspaper ads can have certain disadvantages as well. The most obvious disadvantage is that the advertisement page being crowded with ads, one is likely to miss out a particular ad. Besides, the life span of a newspaper being only one day, the advertisement too has a limited life span - unless of course the ad is repeated in several issues in a sequence.

Let us now look at the characteristics of classified advertisements.

1. Categorised into columns : The ads in the classified ad page are categorised subject-wise as follows :
   - Situations vacant
   - Situations wanted
   - Sale and purchase of Property/Vehicles etc.
   - To let
   - Business proposals etc.
2. Written in short catchy phrases and words : The language of advertisements is formal, yet plain, factual and unambiguous.
3. Relevant information provided : The contents of an advertisement are made up of relevant pieces of information. There is no scope for redundancies.
4. No blocks or designs : Classified ads do not make use of blocks or designs unlike display ads also called commercial ads.

11.4.2 Worked Out Examples

1. Situations Vacant

Distinctive features

1. Preferably begins with ‘Wanted’ or ‘Required’
2. Name of the advertising office, organisation given
3. Name of post and vacancies
4. Qualifications and experience expected
5. Pay and parks
6. Contact address and phone number

Sample 1

1. You are the Manager of East-West Travels, Chandmari, Guwahati - 3. You need two computer operators for your office. Write an advertisement for the "Situation Vacant" column of a local newspaper. Supply details.

Situation Vacant

Wanted two computer operators, either male or female, for our Guwahati Office. Candidate should be a graduate in Arts, Science or Commerce, having good communication skills besides being well-versed in computer and internet. Salary negotiable. Apply within seven days of publication of this advertisement to the Manager, East-West Travels, Chandmari, Guwahati-3 with you complete bio-data.

Manager

East-West Travels

2. Situation Wanted

Distinctive features

1. Includes personal details
2. Any other details that would interest prospective employer
3. Provides contact address

Sample 2

1. You are Arif Hussain of South Sarania, Ulubari, Guwahati. You have passed M.Com with Gold Medal from Gauhati University and have obtained a First Class MBA from Delhi University. You are in need of a job in or around Guwahati. Write an advertisement for the 'Situation Wanted' column of an English daily.

Situation Wanted

A first class gold medalist in M.Com from Gauhati University (2011) and a first class MBA from Delhi University (2014), at present working in Glaxo India, Delhi, is in need of a job in and around Guwahati. Salary negotiable. Please contact : Arif Hussain, South Sarania, Ulubari, Guwahati. Mobile : 9577268815.

3. Sale & Purchase of Property/Vehicle etc.

Distinctive features

1. Begin with For Sale/For Purchase/Available for .....
2. Mention the details of items for Sale/Purchase
3. End with Contact address and Phone number

Sample 3

You are Harsh Gupta, Paltan Bazar, Guwahati-1. You want to sell your vehicle Maruti 110. Draft an advertisement giving suitable details to be published in the columns of an English daily.

For Sale

Vehicle

Available for immediate sale a Maruti 110, registered in 2012 in excellent condition, so far having a total run of 50,000 kilometres only. Price negotiable. Contact Harsh Gupta, Paltan Bazar, Guwahati-1 or call on 9864152362.

4. To-let

Distinctive features

1. Preferably begins with 'Wanted' or 'Available'
2. Indicate type of accommodation
3. Location
4. Give preference of tenants

Sample 4

You are Raj Hussain, Lakhtokia, Guwahati. You want to let out the ground floor of your double storey house. Draft a suitable advertisement giving details to be published in the 'To Let' column of a newspaper giving your contact number as 9864552140.

To-Let

Available, ground floor of a double storey newly constructed RCC house located at Barnachal Road, Bamunimaidam, Guwahati-781021. Accommodation includes two bed rooms with attached baths, drawing-cum-dining room, kitchen, verandah and car park. The floor area of accommodation is 900 sq.ft. Rent negotiable. Only business executives and Govt. Officials need contact 9864552140.

5. Travels and Tours

Distinctive features

1. Begin with 'Cheapest Fare/Tickets available ....
2. State name of travel agency
3. Specify destination and duration
4. Supply details of package
5. Contact address

Sample 5

Premium Travels. Rajgarh Road, Guwahati-3 offers a package tour to Singapore. Draft an advertisement for publication in a national daily.

Travels & Tours

Package available in July 2014 for Singapore Visa, insurance, consultancy on passports etc. available. Contact Premium Travels Rajgarh Road Chandmari for details regarding destinations, duration and details of package - food/boarding/lodging sight-seeing etc. Contact 9864022231.

11.4.3 Commercial Advertisements

Commercial advertisements, also called display ads, can be of any size and can be placed anywhere in the newspaper except in the editorial page. These ads are inserted by leading manufacturers, establishments, organisations etc. They are directed to the consumers who buy these products for themselves or for somebody else. Products are of many types : Consumer durables, producer durables, products like TV, fridge, computer etc. or even facilities like resorts, hotels etc.

Main Characteristics

1. They are designed for commercial purpose
2. Visually attractive and eye-catching
3. Catchy headlines/slogans
4. Punch lines with visuals
5. Varying font size and types

11.4.4 Commercial Ads Worked Out

In this section we shall look at the features of a commercial/ display ad.

Sample 1

You are the proprietor of Wonderland, an amusement park, Tezpur. Write an advertisement for an English Newspaper offering attractive discount to Holiday packages/Honeymoon visitors.

LOOKING FOR THE BEST HONEYMOON?

HOLIDAY PACKAGE?

VISIT WONDERLAND

Attractions :

- Personal Car Park
- Free accommodation
- Western and Chinese cuisine
- Special Indian dishes
- Exclusive deluxe rooms
- Taxi service on order
- Booking for airline tickets
- Swimming pool, sauna bath, massage parlour

Contact : General Manager, Wonderland

Circuit House Road, Tezpur

Sample 2

Draft an advertisement for “LESSONS”, a coaching centre located at Guwahati Club, Guwahati - 3 providing extensive and intensive coaching for competitive exams such as ACS, Bank PO etc.

Distinctive features

1. There should be a caption
2. Highlight issuing authority
3. Specify main features
4. Give contact details

WE HELP TO FULFIL
YOUR DREAMS
For success in
ACS and Bank PO
join
LESSONS

- Experienced faculty
- Affordable course fee
- Highest success rate
- Interactive classes

Admission open for ACS

Contact : Lessons
Near Guwahati Club
Guwahati - 3



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 3: Discuss a few of the advantages of classified advertisements.

Q 4: Give two disadvantages of classified advertisements.

Q 5: Discuss the characteristics of classified advertisements.

Q 6: Discuss the characteristics of commercial advertisements.



11.5 LET US SUM UP

In this unit, we discussed two important writing activities, notice writing and advertisement writing. The unit highlighted the style of notice writing along with its structure. The presentation of notices should have a compactness and must be free from ambiguities. In addition, the learner shall note two different kinds of advertisements classified and commercial or display type advertisements. Advertisement is a means of mass communication. These may be print electronic or oral. We also noted that these may be printed in posters, banners, leaflets, pamphlets or hoardings.

The unit also refers to the medium of electronic advertisements. They include radio, television and so on.



11.6 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No 1: Follow the format given in the samples

Issuing authority : KKHSOU Study Centre, Paharpur, Kamrup

Heading : Students' Excursion

Body of the notice : KKHSOU Study Centre, Paharpur has orgainsed an excursion to Kaziranga during the Magh Bihu holidays. Interested students are asked to contact the undersigned for details of the excursion and to give their names. The excursion will involve two nights half at Kaziranga and a trip to the National Park on elephants.

Ans to Q No 2: Issuing authority : East West Travel Agency
Chandmari, Guwahati - 3

Headline : Office timings

Body of Notice : It is for information of the staff of East-West Travel Agency that the following office timings will become operative from 1st March to 31st October :

Week days : 9.30 . 5.30
Saturdays : 9.30. 4.00
Lunch Break : 1.30. 2.00

Ans to Q No 3: Refer to 12.4.1

Ans to Q No 5: Refer to 12.4.1

Ans to Q No 6: Refer to 12.4.1

Ans to Q No 7: Refer to 12.4.3



11.7 MODEL QUESTIONS

Q 1: You are one of the student enrolled in the BA course of a KKHSOU Study Centre. Write a notice for display in the Notice Board of your Study Centre requesting all the students who have enrolled in the BA course in the study centre to assemble on the following Sunday morning at 10.00 a.m. to discuss some matters relating to forming a literary society.

Q 2: You are the Secretary of an NGO. Write a notice inviting all the members of the NGO to discuss the fund position of the organisation and your annual plan of action.

Q 3: You are Megha Phukan and you have a boutique in your area. You wish to sell or to lease the showroom. Draft a suitable advertisement for publication in a local daily.

Q 4: You are Asaf Ali of Lakhtokia, Guwahati. You want a Music teacher for your daughter who is in class X. Draft a suitable advertisement in not more than 50 words stating your requirements.

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