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Reading & Literature

Class V



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This book is compiled and printed for educational purposes exclusively for schools in Bhutan.

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Department of School Education
Ministry of Education and Skills Development
School Curriculum Division



Foreword

Following the advent of modern education in the country, the English language has been given an important place along with Dzongkha, the national language. English has, in fact, been the language of instruction for many school subjects, and it has served our purpose well even outside the curriculum.

The emphasis of the English curriculum is on the improvement of language skills of students, on literature studies written in the contemporary English language, the inclusion of non-fiction writing and changes in the approach to the assessment of students' performance. The curriculum also demands a change in the way in which students are taught, specifically a movement away from the teacher-centred classroom to a gender-sensitive, student-centred learning environment. This means that the teacher is responsible for designing activities that promote active learning while the students play a greater role in their own learning. The teacher will act as a facilitator to allow students to explore and create knowledge.

The selection of texts represents a conscious and rigorous effort to bring to our classrooms an assortment of rich and varied literary experiences presented through different genres which celebrate the dignity of content and the beauty of language.

The plans put forward in the curriculum offer a balanced programme with adequate instructional time to develop the skills in each strand of Reading & Literature, Writing, Listening and Speaking and Language. The goal is to provide adequate time to learn these skills so that students are able to communicate with eloquence and receive the communication of others with respect and clarity.

The Ministry of Education and Skills Development hopes that the English Curriculum will open the doors to new opportunities for our students to improve their English language skills. The learning programmes in the curriculum will ensure that they will acquire the knowledge to continue higher studies and the skills they require to become competent communicators – in reading, writing, listening and speaking as required in the workplace and society.

The Ministry wishes to acknowledge the valuable contributions of the teachers and teacher-educators to the development of the curriculum.

Tashi Delek.

Karma Galay
Director General

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Foreword to Reading & Literature

*“I am part of all that I have met;
Yet all experience is an arch wherethro’
Gleams that untrav’l’d world, whose margin
Fades for ever and for ever when I move.”*

- “Ulysses”, Alfred Lord Tennyson

Like Ulysses, when we read, we become travellers through worlds whose horizons beckon and entice us farther and farther into realms beyond our own daily experiences. We travel from our own world to different places and times, go to a universe beyond our own, a universe in which we meet people who hold ideas and beliefs which confirm, challenge, and elaborate what we know, understand and believe.

Reading is the key to unlocking the vault of the wisdom of the race. To read well is to be in contact with those who have gone before us, who have discovered what it is to be human and the best ways to organise themselves to achieve happiness.-

We do not always read for such exalted reasons. Reading is also something we use to do everyday things at work or at home: things like shopping, reading mail, getting information on topics of interest and getting instructions on how to do things or put things together. We also read to learn the ideas of others on more abstract issues like political thought or religious beliefs. We read for pleasure and to pass the time. Sometimes we read our favourite authors simply because we like to read their works. Whatever the reasons we have for reading, it is making meaning with text in an interactive process that engages the reader, the writer, and the text in a dialogue about the subject of the piece.

Engaging in the dialogue begins when the reader tries to be clear about what the writer or his/her characters are saying and doing. Frequently, once that has been achieved and is clear, the reader does not want to go further. The knowledge of what has been read is enough. But just as frequently, readers want to move beyond the simple knowledge of a book to levels of dialogue, which engage them, the writer, and the text in negotiations about the significance of what has been said or enacted in the piece. It is in this kind of dialogue that the focus shifts from the surface knowledge of the text to attempts to comprehend what has been read at more profound levels, to delight in possible interpretations, to analyse how the writer achieves the cogency of the piece, and ultimately, the evaluation of the beauty and the validity of what has been said.

Whatever the level of the dialogue, the readers bring to the table not only their knowledge of the text under study, but also their experiences with other texts, the experiences they have had in real life or have imagined, and quite likely, sets of beliefs that challenge the point of view of the writer. Students need to be taught the strategies to read in these ways. And they need time to participate in activities which are planned by the teachers to allow them to practise the strategies.

The literature in the syllabus provides the material to teach students how to read, while at the same time permitting them to read some of the best literature available in English. Students have to learn how to make meaning by themselves and to appreciate what it means to have met some of the best writers and their works in the course of their studies. If we can build classroom communities where that can be arranged, then, like Ulysses, our readers will be drawn to travel through new worlds of experience whose horizons keep expanding.

SHORT STORIES



Title: Like An Animal In A Cage

Author: Dennis Pelrine

Genre: Short Stories

Rationale:

People often take animals for granted and think that they do not have feelings like humans do. In families where both parents work and the children are at school, sometimes pets can get lonely. This story teaches values such as love, care, and empathy and showing kindness toward animals. Since many Bhutanese families keep pet animals, this story is easily relatable to the events and characters in the story.

Also, this text is excellent for discussing short story elements and applying them to one's own writing. Metaphors, compound words, direct and indirect speeches, and other literary devices presented in the story show how rich vocabulary and literary devices enrich the narration.

The day did not get off to a good start. First of all, Miguel fell off his bike and scraped his knee. Then he got bitten by a hornet. Even after his mother put some lotion on the sting, it still hurt. Not a lot, but enough. All in all, it was not Miguel's idea of a good way to start the day.

After that, though, the day settled down into the kind of Saturday Miguel liked best. He and his mom went to Byron's Book Shop to get some books. His mom was a reporter and was always buying books and magazines. She claimed she needed them for her work. When Miguel wanted a book, he used the same argument— "I need it for school." Sometimes it worked, sometimes it didn't. Today it worked, and he got the book of animal stories he wanted.

Then he and his mom went to a hamburger place for lunch. The burgers were big and tasty, the shakes were thick and rich. By the time they left the restaurant, they were both feeling great.

At that point, the day changed suddenly in a way Miguel never expected.

Something happened that made him feel all mixed up inside. It made him feel great, but not the way a good book or hamburger did. It also made him feel bad. As Miguel and his mother walked in the warm sunshine toward their car, they saw a man come up out of the ravine.

“Want to buy a pet, lady?” the man asked.

He was carrying a box with a wire mesh front. Through the wire, Miguel saw a little raccoon.

“How much do you want for it?” his mother asked the man. Miguel saw that his mom was frowning, the kind of frown she wore when something made her angry.

As his mother and the man discussed price, Miguel became excited about having a raccoon as a pet. When the deal was made, his mother took the box and handed it carefully to Miguel.

“Thanks, Mom,” Miguel said. He stared at the little animal. “I’ll be the only kid around with a raccoon for a pet.”

“I’m afraid not, dear,” his mother said. “It’s cruel to capture wild animals and keep them as pets.” She unlocked the car door and Miguel put the box in the middle of the front seat.



“I don’t understand,” he said, as he slid in beside the box and buckled his seat belt. “You paid that man a lot of money for the raccoon and now you say we can’t keep it. Why did you buy it? What are we going to do with it?”

As they drove home, Miguel’s mother explained that she had bought the raccoon so that they could set it free. Now Miguel was frowning, but not because he was angry. He knew his mom was right, and yet he wanted to keep the raccoon.

“What have you knuckleheads done now?” Miguel’s father asked when they arrived home and showed him the animal.

Miguel and his mother laughed. In their family, they often called each other “knucklehead” or “fuzzybrain,” but it was always in fun.

“We have to have a family meeting,” Miguel said. “Is now okay?”

The discussion didn’t take long. As always, Miguel was allowed to give his thoughts and feelings. But he soon realized he wasn’t going to win this discussion. It was clear that both parents thought the raccoon should be set free.

“Well, we can’t take the raccoon back to the ravine just now.” Miguel’s father said. “Here comes that storm we were warned about.”

Thick black clouds were building up and rolling across the sky. Big drops of rain bouncing off the window sill and a wind blowing things around outside.

Miguel smiled a little secret smile. The raccoon was his for a little while at least. Perhaps his parents might even change their minds.

Miguel put some cat food, the dry crunchy kind, into the raccoon’s box. While the family ate dinner that evening, they watched the raccoon munch its dinner in the cage.

“Don’t you think it looks like a tiny little bear?” Miguel asked. “I think I’ll call it Oso.”

“Because it looks *oh so* like a bear,” his father teased.

Miguel groaned at his dad’s bad joke. Oso is the Spanish word for bear. The family

had learned to speak Spanish when they lived in Mexico. But they had returned to Canada five years ago, when Miguel was very small, and he had forgotten most of his Spanish. For some reason, *osito* was one word Miguel did remember. After dinner, Miguel let Oso out of the cage and played with it the whole evening. He taught it to come to him and eat food out of his hand.

“See how smart Oso is?” he called to his parents. “I can teach it lots of things.”

His parents looked at each other, but didn’t say anything. If they see how I can take care of a raccoon and teach it things, Miguel thought, maybe they’ll let me keep it. That night, Oso slept in its cage beside Miguel’s bed.



After lunch the next day, Miguel’s mother went to the radio station to do an interview. His father was writing in his studio. Miguel became bored. He wanted to be outside riding his bike or playing with his friends. But it was still raining, so he had to stay inside. He sighed and looked around for something to do. Playing with Oso had been fun for a while, but he couldn’t play with a raccoon all day.

“You looked bored,” Miguel’s father said as he came out of his studio to get coffee.

“I am. There’s nothing to do. I wish this dumb storm would stop so I could go out and play with my friends.”



“I know how you feel, Miguel.” His father rubbed his hand through Miguel’s thick, black, curly hair. “Boredom is no fun.”

“Do grown-ups get bored?” Miguel asked.

“Sure. Everybody does at one time or another. When I’m bored, I feel restless and out of sorts.” He paused. “Particularly when I’m cooped up.” He paused again. “Like an animal in a cage. . . Well, I guess I’d better get back to work.”

“Like an animal in a cage.” Miguel got the message. He looked over at Oso’s box. The raccoon was lying down, but he could see that it wasn’t asleep. It was just lying there. Like an animal in a cage. Miguel thought those words over and over. The storm passed. The sun came out. And still Miguel lay on the floor, looking at the raccoon and thinking.

Finally he got up and lifted the box. “Come on, Oso,” he said, and walked toward the hall.

Just then, the doorbell rang. His father came out of his studio. “I’ll get it, Dad,” he said. “I think it’s some friends who have come to call for me.”

“I was coming anyway,” his father said. “I heard the car come up the driveway. Your mother’s home.”

When his friends saw the box Miguel was carrying, they asked him what was in it.

“It’s a raccoon,” Miguel said.

“Can we take it to the park and play with it?” asked Nicole.

“No,” Miguel told her. “I’m going to take it back to the ravine and let it go.”

“Why don’t you keep it?” Damier asked.

“Because it isn’t fair,” Miguel replied. “Animals get bored too, you know. How would you like to be kept in a cage and never have anyone to play with?”

When his friends left, Miguel turned to his parents. “Well,” he said, “let’s go.”

“Will you drive, dear?” Miguel’s mother said to his father. “I seem to be having a bit of eye trouble,” she added, and wiped her eyes with a tissue.

“Funny, I’m having the same problem myself,” his father said. “I’m sure proud of this knucklehead of ours.”

“Don’t you call this beautiful knucklehead a knucklehead,” Miguel’s mother said, laughing.

When they arrived at the ravine, they walked down the side of the hill until they reached the bushes. Miguel opened the cage and took the raccoon out.

“Goodbye, Oso,” he said. “I hope you find your mom and dad and all your friends.”

Miguel put the raccoon down in the grass and the animal scurried off into the bushes.



Make connections

1. Why do you think Miguel's mom looked unhappy when she saw the caged animal?
2. How did Miguel's parents convince him to let the raccoon go?
3. What do you think Miguel's father meant when he said, "Like an animal in a cage..."?
5. How would you feel if you were locked in a room with no one to play with?
6. Find four compound words in the story. Pick two of them and use them in sentences to show what they mean.



Title: The Wise Old Woman

Author: Retold by Yoshiko Uchida

Genre: Floktale

Rationale:

This story has been chosen because it talks about values that are relatively close to Bhutanese hearts. Alongside having an entertaining plot, this story also talks about family love and wisdom of old aged people.

Furthermore, this story projects grammar aspects such as direct and indirect speeches, compound and complex sentences, possessives and punctuation. Also, the rich dialogue laden story makes it appropriate for a readers' theatre.



Long ago in the wooded hills of Japan, a young farmer and his aged mother lived in a village ruled by a cruel young lord.

“Anyone over seventy is no longer useful,” the lord declared, “and must be taken into the mountains and left to die.”

When the young farmer’s mother reached the dreaded age, he could not bear to think of what he must do. But his mother spoke

the words he could not say.

“It is time now for you to take me into the mountains,” she said softly.

So, early the next morning, the farmer lifted his mother to his back and reluctantly set off up the steep mountain path.

Up and up he climbed—until the trees hid the sun, and the path was gone, until he could no longer hear the birds, but only the sound of the wind shivering through the trees.

On and on he climbed. But soon he heard his mother breaking off small twigs from the trees they passed.



“I’m marking the path for you, my son,” she said, “so you will not lose your way going home.”

The young farmer could bear it no longer.

“Mother, I cannot leave you behind in the mountains,” he said. “We are going home together, and I will never, ever leave you.”

And so, in the dark shadows of night, the farmer carried his mother back home. He dug a deep cave beneath the kitchen, and from that day, the old woman lived in this secret room, spinning and weaving. In this way two years passed, and no one in the village knew of the farmer’s secret.

Then one day, three fierce warriors in full armour galloped into the small village like a sudden mountain storm.

“We come from the mighty Lord Higa to warn you,” they shouted to the young lord. “When three suns have set and three moons have risen, he will come to conquer your village.”

The cruel young lord was not very brave. “Please,” he begged, “I will do anything if you will spare me.”

“Lord Higa knows no mercy,” the warriors thundered, “but he does respect a clever mind. Solve the three impossible tasks written upon this scroll and you and your village will be saved.”

Then, tossing the scroll at the young lord, they galloped off as quickly as they had come.

“First, make a coil of rope out of ashes,” the young lord read. “Second, run a single thread through the length of a crooked log. And third, make a drum that sounds without being beaten.”



The young lord quickly gathered the six wisest people of his village and ordered them to solve the impossible tasks. They put their heads together and pondered through the night. But when the stars had vanished and the roosters began to crow, they still had no answers for the young lord.

They hurried to the village shrine and sounded the giant bronze bell. “Help us,” they pleaded to the gods. But the gods remained silent.

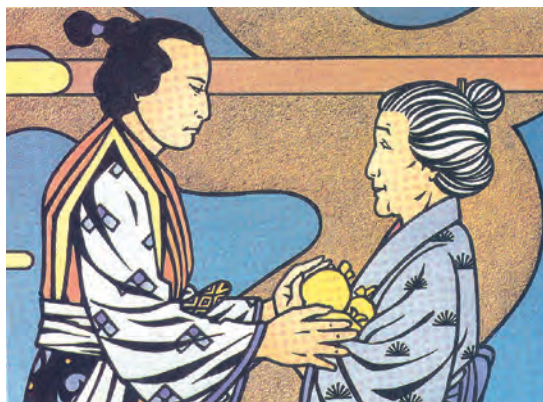
They went next to seek the clever badger of the forest, for they knew that animals are sometimes wiser than men.

“Surely, you can help us,” they said eagerly.

But the badger only shook his head. “As clever as I am,” he said, “I see no way to solve such impossible tasks as these.”

When the six wise people returned to the young lord without any answers, he exploded in anger.

“You are all stupid fools!” he shouted, and he threw them into his darkest dungeon. Then he posted a sign in the village square offering a bag of gold to anyone who could help him.



The young farmer hurried home to tell his mother about the impossible tasks and Lord Higa’s threat. “What are we to do?” he asked sadly. “We will soon be conquered by yet another cruel lord.”

The old woman thought carefully and then asked her son to bring her a coil of rope, a crooked log with a hole running through the length of it, and a small hand drum. When the farmer had done as she asked, she set to work.

First, she soaked the coil of rope in salt water and dried it well. Then, setting a match to it, she let it burn. But it did not crumble. It held its shape.

“There,” she said. “This is your rope of ash.”

Next she put a little honey at one end of the crooked log, and at the other, she placed an ant with a silk thread tied to it. The farmer watched in amazement as the tiny ant wound its way through the hole to get to the honey, taking the silk thread with it. And the second task was done.

Finally, the old woman opened one side of the small hand drum and sealed a bumblebee inside. As the bee beat itself against the sides of the drum trying to escape, the drum sounded without being beaten. And the third task was done.

When the farmer presented the three completed tasks to the young lord, he was astonished. “Surely a young man such as you could not be wiser than the wisest people of our village,” he said. “Tell me, what person of wisdom helped you solve these impossible tasks?”

The young farmer could not lie, and he told the lord how he had kept his mother hidden for the past two years. “It is she who solved each of your tasks and saved our village from Lord Higa,” he explained.

The farmer waited to be thrown into the dungeon for disobeying the lord. But instead of being angry, the young lord was silent and thoughtful.

“I have been wrong,” he said at last. “Never again will I send our old people into the mountains to die. Henceforth they will be treated with respect and honour, and will share with us the wisdom of their years.”

Whereupon the young lord freed everyone in his dungeon. Next he summoned the old woman and gave her three bags of gold for saving the village.

Finally he allowed the farmer to march with his finest warriors to Lord Higa’s castle.

The long procession wound slowly over the mountain roads carrying its precious cargo. And it was the young farmer who carried the lord’s banner fluttering high in the autumn wind.

When they presented to Lord Higa the rope of ash and the threaded log and the drum that sounded without being beaten, he stroked his chin thoughtfully.

“I see there is much wisdom in your small village,” he said, “for you have solved three truly impossible tasks. Go home,” he directed the young farmer, “and tell your lord that his people deserve to live in peace.”

From that day on, Lord Higa never threatened the small village again. The villagers prospered, and the young farmer and his mother lived in peace and plenty for all the days of their lives.

Make connections

1. Why did the young farmer carry his mother into the mountains? How does this show their relationship? Give examples from the story.
2. Can you explain the three hard tasks given to the young lord by Lord Higa's warriors? How did the young farmer's mother help with these tasks?
3. How did the young lord change his attitude towards older people in the story? How did this change affect the village and its people?
4. In your own words, tell what important lesson the young lord learns from the young farmer and his mother's actions. How did this lesson make a difference in the village?
5. Describe the role of wisdom and respect for older people in the story. How does the story teach us to value the wisdom of older folks, and what message does it give about this?
6. Explain, with examples, that makes this story a folktale.



Title: The Ladybug Garden

Author: Celia Godkin

Genre: Short Story

Rationale:

The interdependence of plants and insects in a garden is one example of how the story communicates a fundamental ecological principle. This account of a gardener's endeavor to create hardy veggies also explains the fundamental principles of avoiding hurting animals. The farmer's garden before and after insecticide treatment might be contrasted and compared using the story.

Alliteration, metaphor, rhyme, and parts of speech are just a few of the language features that this story uses in addition to its extensive vocabulary.



The gardener looked all around his garden, and he liked what he saw. There were hardy vegetables, brightly coloured flowers, and fruit trees that made the air smell sweet. There were many kinds of insects in the garden, too: ladybugs and wasps, bees and butterflies, aphids and ants.

The gardener thought about all those insects. He knew that bees and butterflies helped the garden grow. As they flew from flower to flower, drinking nectar, they picked up a fine yellow dust called pollen, which the flowers produced. By

carrying pollen from one flower to another, the bees and butterflies helped the flowers produce seeds for new plants.

Though the butterflies were helpful, the gardener knew that their young—the caterpillars—were not. They often damaged plants by eating the leaves.

The ants and wasps in the garden were harmful in one way but helpful in another. They sometimes nibbled on ripe fruit before the gardener got around to picking



it. But they also helped the garden by eating harmful insects.

There was no question about the aphids, though. The gardener knew they were bad for the garden, because they sucked plant juices and spread diseases.

He didn't know much about the bright red ladybugs, but he thought they were special and was very fond of them.

One day the gardener had an idea. If I get rid of the bad insects, he thought, my garden will be perfect. So the next day, the gardener sprayed the fruit trees, the vegetables, and the flowers. He used a spray gun filled with bug killer.

As the gardener sprayed the poison, the bees, ants, and wasps hid in their nests to protect themselves. But the ladybugs didn't have any nests, so they flew away in a great red cloud.

The aphids didn't have nests either, but, without wings, they couldn't fly away. They hid under the leaves in the garden.

When the gardener finished spraying, the aphids crept out of their hiding places and went back to work. Many of them died from the poison, but others survived.

The aphids sucked the juice out of leaves and tender plant stems. Some of the juice passed through their bodies and turned into a sweet, sticky liquid called honeydew.



Soon it seemed there were more aphids than ever before. As they multiplied, they sucked more and more plant juice. It wasn't long before the plants in the garden were coated with sticky honeydew, which ants love.

The ants “milked” the aphids by stroking them with their feelers. This made the aphids squeeze out honeydew, which the ants then licked up.

There were so many ants going to get honeydew from the aphids that the gardener began to see ant trails all over the garden.

The bees in the garden liked honeydew, too. It was easier for the bees to lick honeydew from the plants to make their honey than it was for them to go from flower to flower collecting nectar. Besides, there were fewer flowers now. The plants had become too sick to make many flowers, because of the damage the aphids had done.

With fewer flowers, there were fewer butterflies visiting the garden. But there were still many caterpillars. They stayed in the garden, eating leaves, until they grew big enough to turn into butterflies and fly away.

Not only were the plants too sick to make many flowers, the fruit trees were too sick to produce much fruit. Wasps buzzed angrily about, fighting over what little fruit there was.

And all the while, the aphids continued to multiply. There were so many, in fact, that they were crowded together on the plants, fighting one another for food and space. Many plants were so covered with honeydew that they grew mouldy.

The gardener knew that something was terribly wrong. The garden had few flowers, the fruit trees had little fruit, and the vegetables were shrivelled up and wilted. The plants were covered with aphids. There were ant hills and ant trails everywhere. The wasps were becoming a nuisance, and the butterflies had all but disappeared. Even the bees’ honey tasted strange, because they had made it from honeydew instead of nectar.

The gardener didn’t know what to do. He could see that spraying with poison had been a mistake. He understood now that all the life in his garden was linked somehow, that the plants and insects depended on one another to survive.

“What about ladybugs?” a friend suggested.

“What about them?” the gardener asked.

“Ladybugs are nature’s way of controlling aphids,” the friend replied. And she gave him an address from which to order a supply.

When the box of ladybugs arrived, the gardener took it out to the garden, opened it, and left it in a shady spot under a tree. One by one, the ladybugs flew or crawled out of the box. Soon they were all over the garden.

The ladybugs ate all the aphids they could find. They ate and ate and ate and ate. And after a while, the garden began to recover. The plants grew stronger and healthier.

When the following summer came, the gardener looked all around his garden. Once again there were hardy vegetables, brightly coloured flowers, and lots of sweet, ripe fruit. The butterflies were back. The ants and wasps had settled down. And the bees were making delicious honey. Everything was as it should be.

The gardener smiled. He had always known there was something special about ladybugs!

Make connections

1. What did the gardener do at first to deal with the insect problem in his garden? What happened as a result of his actions?
2. Why did the gardener decide to use ladybugs to help with the insect issue in his garden? How did the ladybugs make a positive difference in the garden?
3. Can you explain how the different insects in the garden were connected and relied on each other? Use examples from the story to illustrate this.
4. Describe the changes that occurred in the garden after the introduction of ladybugs. What improvements did the gardener notice in the garden’s health and appearance?
5. What important lesson do we learn from the gardener’s experience with ladybugs in his garden? How does this story teach us about the balance of nature and the significance of certain insects in the ecosystem?



Title: The Wind on Haunted Hill

Author: Ruskin Bond

Genre: Short Story

Rationale:

*In the tale *The Wind on Haunted Hill*, 12-year-old Usha, a responsible and brave girl, is forced to seek shelter in the ruins (which are rumored to be haunted) after getting caught in a storm while returning from the bazaar. The younger siblings are unaware that the older sister is in the ruins, and she is unaware that they are there too. The children then notice shadowy figures as lightning sporadically lights up the dark interior of the ruins. In those haunting ruins, are they seeing each other's shadows or something else?*

Who, who, who, cried the wind as it swept down from the Himalayan snows. It hurried over the hills and passed and hummed and moaned through the tall pines and deodars. There was little on Haunted Hill to stop the wind – only a few stunted trees and bushes and the ruins of a small settlement.

On the slopes of the next hill was a village. People kept large stones on their tin roofs to prevent them from being blown off. There was nearly always a strong wind in these parts. Three children were spreading clothes out to dry on a low stone wall, putting a stone on each piece.

Eleven-year-old Usha, dark-haired and rose-cheeked, struggled with her grandfather's long, loose shirt. Her younger brother, Suresh, was doing his best to hold down a bedsheet, while Usha's friend, Binya, a slightly older girl, helped.

Once everything was firmly held down by stones, they climbed up on the flat rocks and sat there sunbathing and staring across the fields at the ruins on Haunted Hill.

'I must go to the bazaar today,' said Usha.

'I wish I could come too,' said Binya. 'But I have to help with the cows.'

'I can come!' said eight-year-old Suresh. He was always ready to visit the bazaar, which was three miles away, on the other side of the hill.

'No, you can't,' said Usha. 'You must help Grandfather chop wood.'

'Won't you feel scared returning alone?' he asked. 'There are ghosts on Haunted Hill!'

'I'll be back before dark. Ghosts don't appear during the day.'

'Are there lots of ghosts in the ruins?' asked Binya.

'Grandfather says so. He says that over a hundred years ago, some Britishers lived on the hill. But the settlement was always being struck by lightning, so they moved away.'

'But if they left, why is the place visited by ghosts?'

'Because – Grandfather says – during a terrible storm, one of the houses was hit by lightning, and everyone in it was killed. Even the children.'

'How many children?'

'Two. A boy and his sister. Grandfather saw them playing there in the moonlight.'

'Wasn't he frightened?'

'No. Old people don't mind ghosts.'

Usha set out for the bazaar at two in the afternoon. It was about an hour's walk. The path went through yellow fields of flowering mustard, then along the saddle of the hill, and up, straight through the ruins. Usha had often gone that way to shop at the bazaar or to see her aunt, who lived in the town nearby.

Wild flowers bloomed on the crumbling walls of the ruins, and a wild plum tree grew straight out of the floor of what had once been a hall. It was covered with soft, white blossoms. Lizards scuttled over the stones, while a whistling thrush, its deep purple plumage glistening in the sunshine, sat on a window-sill and sang

its heart out.

Usha sang too, as she skipped lightly along the path, which dipped steeply down to the valley and led to the little town with its quaint bazaar.

Moving leisurely, Usha bought spices, sugar and matches. With the two rupees she had saved from her pocket-money, she chose a necklace of amber-coloured beads for herself and some marbles for Suresh. Then she had her mother's slippers repaired at a cobbler's shop.

Finally, Usha went to visit Aunt Lakshmi at her flat above the shops. They were talking and drinking cups of hot, sweet tea when Usha realised that dark clouds had gathered over the mountains. She quickly picked up her things, said goodbye to her aunt, and set out for the village.

Strangely, the wind had dropped. The trees were still, the crickets silent. The crows flew round in circles, then settled on an oak tree.

'I must get home before dark,' thought Usha, hurrying along the path.

But the sky had darkened and a deep rumble echoed over the hills. Usha felt the first heavy drop of rain hit her cheek. Holding the shopping bag close to her body, she quickened her pace until she was almost running. The raindrops were coming down faster now – cold, stinging pellets of rain. A flash of lightning sharply outlined the ruins on the hill, and then all was dark again. Night had fallen.

'I'll have to shelter in the ruins,' Usha thought and began to run. Suddenly the wind sprang up again, but she did not have to fight it. It was behind her now, helping her along, up the steep path and on to the brow of the hill. There was another flash of lightning, followed by a peal of thunder. The ruins loomed before her, grim and forbidding.

Usha remembered part of an old roof that would give some shelter. It would be better than trying to go on. In the dark, with the howling wind, she might stray off the path and fall over the edge of the cliff.

Who, who, who, howled the wind. Usha saw the wild plum tree swaying, its foliage thrashing against the ground. She found her way into the ruins, helped by the constant flicker of lightning. Usha placed her hands flat against a stone wall and moved sideways, hoping to reach the sheltered corner. Suddenly, her hand touched something soft and furry, and she gave a startled cry. Her cry was answered by another – half snarl, half screech – as something leapt away in the darkness.

With a sigh of relief Usha realised that it was the cat that lived in the ruins. For a moment she had been frightened, but now she moved quickly along the wall until she heard the rain drumming on a remnant of a tin roof. Crouched in a corner, she found some shelter. But the tin sheet groaned and clattered as if it would sail away any moment.

Usha remembered that across this empty room stood an old fireplace. Perhaps it would be drier there under the blocked chimney. But she would not attempt to find it just now – she might lose her way altogether.

Her clothes were soaked and water streamed down from her hair, forming a puddle at her feet. She thought she heard a faint cry – the cat again, or an owl? Then the storm blotted out all other sounds.

There had been no time to think of ghosts, but now that she was settled in one place, Usha remembered Grandfather's story about the lightning-blasted ruins. She hoped and prayed that lightning would not strike her.

Thunder boomed over the hills, and the lightning came quicker now. Then there was a bigger flash, and for a moment the entire ruin was lit up. A streak of blue sizzled along the floor of the building. Usha was staring straight ahead, and, as the opposite wall lit up, she saw, crouching in front of the unused fireplace, two small figures – children!

The ghostly figures seemed to look up and stare back at Usha. And then everything was dark again.

Usha's heart was in her mouth. She had seen without doubt, two ghosts on the other side of the room. She wasn't going to remain in the ruins one minute longer.

She ran towards the big gap in the wall through which she had entered. She was halfway across the open space when something – someone – fell against her. Usha stumbled, got up, and again bumped into something. She gave a frightened scream. Someone else screamed. And then there was a shout, a boy's shout, and Usha instantly recognised the voice.

‘Suresh!’

‘Usha!’

‘Binya!’

They fell into each other's arms, so surprised and relieved that all they could do was laugh and giggle and repeat each other's names.

Then Usha said, ‘I thought you were ghosts.’

‘We thought you were a ghost,’ said Suresh.

‘Come back under the roof,’ said Usha.

They huddled together in the corner, chattering with excitement and relief.

‘When it grew dark, we came looking for you,’ said Binya. ‘And then the storm broke.’

‘Shall we run back together?’ asked Usha. ‘I don't want to stay here any longer.’

‘We'll have to wait,’ said Binya. ‘The path has fallen away at one place. It won't be safe in the dark, in all this rain.’

‘We'll have to wait till morning,’ said Suresh, ‘and I'm so hungry!’

The storm continued, but they were not afraid now. They gave each other warmth and confidence. Even the ruins did not seem so forbidding.

After an hour the rain stopped, and the thunder grew more distant.

Towards dawn the whistling thrush began to sing. Its sweet, broken notes flooded

the ruins with music. As the sky grew lighter, they saw that the plum tree stood upright again, though it had lost all its blossoms.

‘Let’s go,’ said Usha.

Outside the ruins, walking along the brow of the hill, they watched the sky grow pink. When they were some distance away, Usha looked back and said, ‘Can you see something behind the wall? It’s like a hand waving.’

‘It’s just the top of the plum tree,’ said Binya.

‘Goodbye, goodbye...’ They heard voices.

‘Who said “goodbye”?’ asked Usha.

‘Not I,’ said Suresh.

‘Nor I,’ said Binya.

‘I heard someone calling,’ said Usha.

‘It’s only the wind,’ assured Binya.

Usha looked back at the ruins. The sun had come up and was touching the top of the wall.

‘Come on,’ said Suresh. ‘I’m hungry.’

They hurried along the path to the village.

‘Goodbye, goodbye...’ Usha heard them calling. Or was it just the wind?

Making connections

1. Describe the setting of the story, including the location and the weather conditions. How do these elements contribute to the story's atmosphere?
2. Who are the main characters in the story, and what are their roles? How does their relationship change during the course of the story?
3. Why do Usha, Suresh, and Binya end up in the ruins during the storm? How do they react to their situation, and what emotions do they experience?
4. The story mentions the possibility of ghosts in the ruins. How does the author build suspense and fear around this idea? What do the children discover in the ruins?
5. What do you think the phrase "Goodbye, goodbye..." signifies at the end of the story? How does it relate to the events that took place during the storm?



Title: The Magic Root

Author: CAPSD

Genre: Short Story

Rationale:

Many of the plants in our environment have a variety of medicinal uses. Here is a legend about a magical root that promotes healing. Although it is not based on actual events, the story is unlike any other short fiction you have read. The main character of the story is you. Starting in Passage One, you get to decide what to do. After reading each passage, make a choice. Navigate to the passage you selected to the end and see if you can find your grandmother's magic root.

This story highlights the value of natural resources, especially the medicinal plants. Unlike other short stories, this is a unique story in terms of its elements, and could be compared easily with other short stories. Also, this story could be used for purposeful reading.

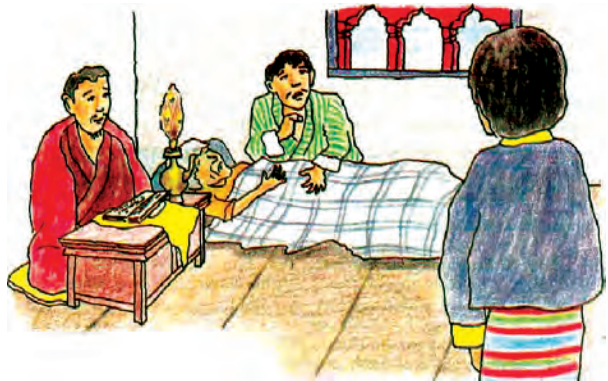
1

Your grandmother is dying. Your father calls the lama to see her. He says that there is only one hope for her. If she takes medicine made from a special plant which grows in the south of Shemgang she will get well again.

Your father is too old to travel. He asks you if you will go and look for it.

If you agree turn to 15.

If you refuse turn to 9



2

You continue working till evening and clear the field of weeds. This time the two people are very grateful. They give you plenty of food and in the morning when they let you go, the woman gives you a magic monkey made of wood. “Use it when you are in danger,” she says.



You leave the house and continue on your way. Go to 25.

Your story ends here.



3

Having found the plant you put your hand round its stem to pull it out. However the stem is covered in long thorns which cut your hand. They contain poison ...

4

You rub the wooden monkey as the log floats down the river. Just at this moment the log hits a rock and moves to the side. You take hold of a branch and pull yourself to the bank. You get out and find a path. It goes uphill to a small temple. The temple is silent.



Do you go in ? Turn to 27.
Do you wait ? Turn to 7.

5

You go home. As you get near to your house you hear the sound of crying. Your grandmother is dead. The lama is making a puja but no one will talk to you. Your mother and father look away from you.

Your story ends here.

6

“That is a quicker route,” says the holy man and points to a path leading north. You thank him and quickly set off along the path. Soon it divides.

Do you take the path east? Turn to 34.

Do you take the path west? Turn to 16.

7

You see a prayer wheel and turn it, praying. Suddenly you hear a voice.

“Good evening friend. What brings you to this remote place?” asks an old white-haired holy man.

“Kuenzang?” you ask and the holy man smiles. “I have come to get some medicine to make my grandmother well. My lama told me to ask you for help.”

The holy man smiles and points towards a tall plant with yellow flowers growing in the shade of the cypress tree.



“That is the plant but be careful. The thorns are poisonous. Do not touch them. Dig down and only take the root.”

If you do as the holy man says turn to 24

If you don't listen to him turn to 3.

8

You stay with the family for three days. They feed you well and show you the path to the holy man's temple. The woman in the house is very kind and gives you a small wooden monkey to tie to your lucky string. "The monkey will help you when you need help," she says.

You leave the house and follow the path by the river. It is a good path but when you come to cross the river you find the bridge is gone.

Do you go back to get help from the house ? Turn to 31.

Do you try to cross ? Turn to 18.

9

Your father is very angry with you. You run out of the house. You feel both ashamed and frightened. What are you to do ?



Do you go to ask the guru for help ? Turn to 26.

Do you go back to say you are sorry ? Turn to 5

10

You are grateful to the old people and give them all your money. The man is very pleased. "We can now go and buy food in

the market." he says. "Here is a knife. It may help you when you are in difficulties." You thank him and you put it inside your clothes.

You decide to start walking again. Turn to 18.

11

You have no money. The man and woman look angry but then the man tells you you will have to work for them. You go out to work in the fields pulling out the weeds. It is hot and hard work but eventually towards evening the woman brings you some rice. She then goes away. You feel stronger.

Do you take the chance to escape? Turn to 25. Do you continue with the work? Turn to 2.

12

You are very frightened and hold onto your lucky string. You think the animal will kill you but instead you find a large dog beside you. It too has been lost. You get out your bangchu of rice.

Do you share it with the dog? Turn to 17.

Do you eat it yourself? Turn to 14.

13

That evening you look inside the holy man's pot. It is full of rice, pork and chillies! Your family are never hungry again as each evening the pot is full of food. Your grandmother grows fat and strong.

14

You feel better as you eat but when you have finished you find the dog has gone. Once again you hear animal noises in the forest and you don't sleep. It begins to rain. In the morning it is cold and wet and you cannot find the path. Slowly you get more tired and weaker. You lie down and do not get up again.

Your story ends here.

15

The lama says that you must find a holy man called Kuenzang who lives in a small temple in the forest. The lama puts a lucky string around your neck to help you, and your father gives you a hundred ngultrum and a bangchu of rice. You leave your house and take the path going south from your village. You see a line of packhorses.



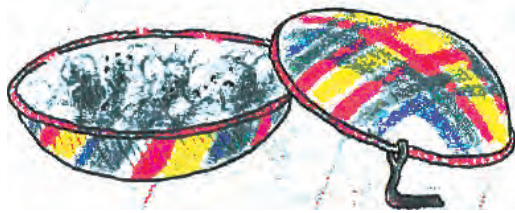
If you wait until they pass you turn to 22.
If you join the horsemen turn to 30.

16

It's a good path. It broadens and you meet a man with a horse. He lets you ride on the horse. Soon you arrive home and hurry into your house. The lama is standing beside your grandmother. Proudly you shout "I've got the root," and open the bangchu. All that is inside is a pile of black earth. You look at the lama in surprise.

"You went to save the life of your grandmother," he said quietly "but you forgot to save the life of the plant. All living things -animals, birds, fish, plants and people are equally important. We must never forget that."

You cry in anger and sadness. Then the lama speaks again,



"But you had a good heart and because of that your grandmother will not die."

Your grandmother sits up and smiles. You hug her.

Your story ends here.

17

The dog eats the rice you give it. You are still a little hungry but the dog sleeps beside you and you feel safe. It barks whenever there is a noise. Next morning it leads you south through the forest. It is a good path and you go fast. Eventually you come to a house in a clearing. The family are very pleased to see you because it is their dog you have found. They ask you to stay a few days.

Do you stay? Turn to 8.

Do you go on? Turn to 18.

18

It is a long walk and you have to go through a lot of jungle. There are leeches and it is quite hot. Eventually, towards the end of the day, the path has to cross a large river but to your surprise you find the bridge has fallen down.



The river is not very wide but it is fast flowing. You don't know what to do.

If you have the knife go to 36.

If you have the monkey go to 20.

If you have neither go to 33.

19

The path continues through the forest going downhill. It is beginning to get dark when you find an old house in a clearing in the forest. You knock on the door and are welcomed in by a man and a woman. They give you food and you sleep here. In the morning you thank them and start to leave but the man stops you and asks for money.

If you have money turn to 10.

If you don't have any money turn to 11.

20

You rub the monkey gently and immediately you hear "Kwa" from a tree. You look up and see some monkeys. They drop a large creeper. You take hold of it and swing across the river.



You then climb up the steep path slowly until near the top of the hill you see a small house. You see the red line around it and know it is holy ... but it is completely silent.

Do you go in? Turn to 27.
Do you wait outside? Turn to 7.

21

You reach down and pull out the entire root. You put it inside your bangchu and hurry back to the monk.,

Turn to 28.

22

You sit for some time and then decide to start walking. The path goes south through fields and you have to ask the way. Eventually the path enters the forest. It is very quiet and lonely now. it is getting dark. Suddenly the path divides.

Do you go left ? Turn to 32.
Do you go right ? Turn to 19.

23

The holy man smiles. “Come here, child/” he says. “I can help you get home. Climb inside this pot.” Sleepily, you climb into his large metal pot and fall asleep.

Go to 35.

24

You find the plant and carefully dig down to its roots.

If you decide to take all of the root turn to 21.

If you decide to only take a piece of the root turn to 29.



25

The path ends at a large river but there is no bridge and the river is deep. You see a large log and decide to float across. As you push the log out you find the river is strong and it pulls the wood. You go faster and faster towards a waterfall.

If you don't have the magic monkey your story ends here.
If you have the magic monkey go to 4.

26

You go into the village to look for the gup or someone else who could help you, but the village is empty except for a cowherd. He looks rather foolish but you ask him what to do. He listens and then asks you,

“Whose life is more valuable - yours or your grandmother's ?”

If you think *yours* go to 5.
If you think your grandmother's go to 22.



27

You open the door. Inside it is very dark but you can see a man asleep in the corner. It's the holy man ! You hurry over and shake him awake.

“Please help me,” you cry. “My grandmother is very sick. Where is the plant which can make her well again ?”

“It's the tall one with yellow flowers over by the cypress tree,” he says sleepily and closes his eyes again.

Turn to 3.



28

Feeling proud and pleased you walk back towards the temple. But now you begin to feel very tired and it's a long way back to your village. The holy man is watching you. "Show me the root," he says.

If you took all of the root turn to 6

If you took a piece of the root turn to 23.

29

You dig around the root and then carefully break off a small piece. You put it inside your bangchu.

Turn to 28.



30

You go up to the men and join them. You say where you are going. They say they know the place and are going near it. You are pleased and go south until the evening when you all stop. The men take out bottles of ara and you drink with them but it is very strong and soon you fall asleep. When you wake up the men and your money have gone.

Do you go on ? Turn to 19.

Do you go home ? Turn to 5.

31

You go back but it is difficult going uphill and it takes longer than you thought. When you get back to the house you find it is empty - no people, no dog, no animals. The people have moved somewhere else. You see a piece of rope lying by the house. Suddenly you realize it is a large snake. You reach for your lucky string but too late

Your story ends here.



32

The path continues through the forest but it is getting dark. There are strange sounds in the forest - growls and grunts as wild animals look for their food. Soon you cannot see and have to stop. Suddenly there is a loud growl and a large animal jumps out of the bush.

If you have the lucky string go to 12.

If you don't the hungry animal lands on your back and your story ends here.

33

You try to cross the river but it is very strong and deep. Suddenly your foot slips and the river carries you down towards a waterfall ...

Your story ends here.



34

You climb up the mountain side, it begins to rain heavily and the path is slippery. You cannot find any shelter. Soon it is dark and you try not to lose the path. Suddenly there is a loud noise above you and the path is washed away down the mountain side. Large stones fall down on you. You have no time to escape.



35

You wake up and look around you. You are sitting in the pot outside your house. The holy man has used his magic pot to bring you home. “Mother, father,” you shout, I’m home.” You run into your house. The lama is standing beside your grandmother. Proudly you open the bangchu and take out the root. “Well, done, my child,” says the ma. “Now

your grandmother will get well.”

If you have the lucky string turn to 13.

If you do not your story ends here.



36

You take out your knife and look for a straight stick to cut. To your surprise the knife is very sharp and you are able to cut a strong stick. You use this to cross the river.

When you get to the other side you are surprised and frightened to see a large dog. It is growling.



Do you move away? Go to 34.

Do you wait ? Go to 37.

37

As you wait, you see that the dog has a thorn in its foot. Carefully you use the knife to take out the thorn. The dog is pleased and sets off along a path.

You follow the dog to a temple in the forest.

Go to 7.



Make connections

1. Why is the protagonist asked to find a special plant in the south of Shemgang, and how does the story begin?
2. What are the different choices the protagonist can make in the story, and how do these choices affect the outcome of the story?
3. Describe some of the magical elements in the story, such as the wooden monkey and the lama's lucky string. How do these elements play a role in the story?
4. How does the story emphasize the importance of valuing all living things? Provide examples from the story that demonstrate this theme.
5. What lesson or moral does the story convey, and how does it relate to the protagonist's journey and choices?

ESSAY



Title: How Young Animals Are Protected

Author: Audrey Wilson

Genre: Informative Essay

Rationale:

Do you think your parents are too protective and that they should give you more freedom? Do you have more freedom now than you had when you were six? Your parents, like all parents including animals, want to protect their young. This essay talks about some clever ways animals protect their young.

This essay is chosen because it presents the information in a straightforward manner and provides a contrast to other essays. Additionally, the text also provides opportunity to practice information transfer skills.

Young animals and birds are kept from harm in many ways. When they are very young, their parents protect them from their enemies. When they are a little older, their parents teach them how to escape from danger. Young animals are also protected by their coloring and by the kind of house they live in.

Many birds and mammals just seem to *know* how to keep their young from harm. If their young are in danger, they act right away. They do not have to think. We call this way of acting *instinct*. When a parent animal acts this way, we say it acts *instinctively*.

Here are some ways in which animals protect their young.

A beaver slaps the water with its tail to warn of danger.

A mother skunk defends her family by “shooting” a spray at the enemy. This spray has a strong, sickening smell that lasts for days and days.



If an enemy gets between a mother bear and her cubs, she fights to protect them. In the forest a mother bear's "woof" warns her cubs of danger. They scamper up a tree and hide there until she signals them to come down. Many birds guard their nests from enemies.

An adult swallow will swoop at a cat walking underneath her nest. The kingbird, which is not as large as a robin, attacks crows or hawks that fly too close to her nest.

Cowbirds lay their eggs in the nest of a smaller bird. When the cowbird egg is hatched, the big cowbird baby gets most of the food. The smaller bird's young often die.

The yellow warbler is one small bird that works hard to protect its young. Each time a cowbird lays an egg in her nest, the warbler covers it over so that it won't hatch. If she has eggs of her own in the nest, she has to cover them, too. Then she builds a new nest on top of the old one and lays more eggs. The warbler may have to build two, three, or even four nests before she has a nest with only her own eggs in it.

When danger is near, a mother duck makes her ducklings swim right behind her, in a tight line. At times, they all crouch down in the reeds near the shore. In the reeds, they are hard to see. They hide there and do not move.

If something comes near a killdeer's nest, the mother bird puts on an act. She pretends that she has a broken wing. Then she coaxes the enemy away from her

young. She limps, dragging her “broken” wing, and she cries piteously. As she does this, the mother killdeer moves farther and farther from her nest. When she has led the enemy far enough, the killdeer stops pretending. Suddenly she lifts her “broken” wing and flies off! The enemy has lost what it thought was an easy dinner.

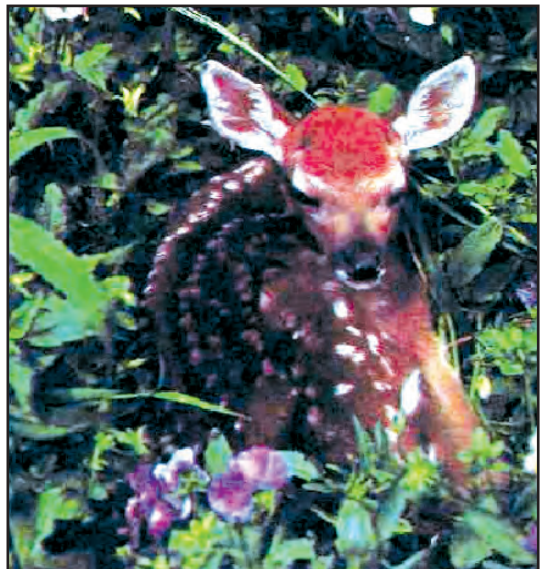
When baby woodchucks are six weeks old, their mother gives them their first lesson in how to escape from danger. She coaxes them away from their burrow. She coaxes them away from their burrow. She coaxes them away from their burrow. Then, suddenly, she whistles an alarm. She rushes for home as if danger were right on her heels. The baby woodchucks hurry after their mother and follow her into the burrow.



At last the mother woodchuck peeks out. When all looks safe, the family comes out to eat. Suddenly, the mother repeats the whole lesson. She is not satisfied until the young woodchucks reach the entrance of the burrow before she does.

Small animals hide their young in nest or in homes under the ground.

Cottontail rabbits nest in a slight hollow on the ground. As the mother rabbit leaves the nest, she tucks a cover of fur and grass over her young. This hides them safely from the prying eyes of an enemy. If an enemy does come near, the baby rabbits sit perfectly still. They don't wiggle a whisker or twitch a nose. This action is called “freezing.”



Their color also keeps young animal from harm. The eggs of birds that nest on the ground have the same coloring as their surroundings. Because of this coloring, the eggs are hard to see. They are *camouflaged*, or almost invisible.

A young fawn is well protected by its coloring. The spots on its coat also protect it. These spots help a fawn to match the sunlight that shines in little spots through the leaves of trees and bushes. The spots *camouflage* the fawn. They make it hard for an enemy to see it. The doe leaves her fawn in a place where it is well camouflaged. Then she orders it not to move until she calls it.

Their mother's instinct to protect them from danger, their training, their coloring, their homes, and "freezing" all help young animals to survive.

Make connections

1. What are some ways in which young animals and birds are protected from harm by their parents or by their own instincts?
2. Explain the concept of "instinct" and provide examples from the story of animals acting instinctively to protect their young.
4. Describe how the camouflage and coloring of certain animals help protect their young. Provide examples from the story.
5. How does the behavior of young woodchucks demonstrate their ability to escape from danger?



Title: The Great Mouse Plot

Author: Roald Dahl

Genre: Narrative Essay

Rationale:

This narrative essay is an excerpt from the book titled Boy by Roald Dahl. It is chosen because children can relate to the setting and the characters in this essay as it talks about playing pranks which is common among students. Alongside teaching virtues like honesty, it would be engaging to discuss the situational humour of the piece.

Also, this literature is excellent for discussing grammar elements like contractions, types of sentences, direct and indirect speeches, and other literary devices. Furthermore, the open-minded ending leaves room for students to bring in their creativity and imagination.

My four friends and I had come across a loose floor-board at the back of the classroom, and when we prised it up with the blade of a pocket-knife, we discovered a big hollow space underneath. This, we decided, would be our secret hiding place for sweets and other small treasures such as conkers and monkey-nuts and birds' eggs. Every afternoon, when the last lesson was over, the five of us would wait until the classroom had emptied, then we would lift up the floor-board and examine our secret hoard, perhaps adding to it or taking something away.

One day, when we lifted it up, we found a dead mouse lying among our treasures. It was an exciting discovery. Thwaites took it out by its tail and waved it in front of our faces. 'What shall we do with it?' he cried.

'It stinks!' someone shouted. 'Throw it out of the window quick!'

'Hold on a tick,' I said. 'Don't throw it away.'

Thwaites hesitated. They all looked at me.

When writing about oneself, one must strive to be truthful. Truth is more important than modesty. I must tell you, therefore, that it was I and I alone who had the idea for the great and daring Mouse Plot. We all have our moments of brilliance and glory, and this was mine.

‘Why don’t we’, I said, ‘slip it into one of Mrs Pratchett’s jars of sweets? Then when she puts her dirty hand in to grab a handful, she’ll grab a stinky dead mouse instead.’

The other four stared at me in wonder. Then, as the sheer genius of the plot began to sink in, they all started grinning. They slapped me on the back. They cheered me and danced around the classroom. ‘We’ll do it today!’ they cried. ‘We’ll do it on the way home! *You* had the idea,’ they said to me, ‘so *you* can be the one to put the mouse in the jar.’

Thwaites handed me the mouse. I put it into my trouser pocket. Then the five of us left the school, crossed the village green and headed for the sweet-shop. We were tremendously jazzed up. We felt like a gang of desperados setting out to rob a train or blow up the sheriff’s office.

‘Make sure you put it into a jar which is used often,’ somebody said.

‘I’m putting it in Gobstoppers,’ I said. ‘The Gobstopper jar is never behind the counter.’

‘I’ve got a penny,’ Thwaites said, ‘so I’ll ask for one Sherbet Sucker and one Bootlace, And while she turns away to get them, you slip the mouse in quickly with the Gobstoppers.’

Thus everything was arranged. We were strutting a little as we entered the shop. We were the victors now and Mrs Pratchett was the victim. She stood behind the counter, and her small malignant pig-eyes watched us suspiciously as we came forward.

‘One Sherbet Sucker, please,’ Thwaites said to her, holding out his penny.

I kept to the rear of the group, and when I saw Mrs Pratchett turn her head away for a couple of seconds to fish a Sherbet Sucker out of the box, I lifted the heavy glass lid of the Gobstopper jar and dropped the mouse in. Then I replaced the lid as silently as possible. My heart was thumping like mad and my hands had gone all sweaty.

And one Bootlace, please,’ I heard Thwaites saying. When I turned round, I saw Mrs Pratchett holding out the Bootlace in her filthy fingers.

‘I don’t want all the lot of you troopin’ in ‘ere if only one of you is buyin’,’ she screamed at us. ‘Now beat it! Go on, get out!’

As soon as we were outside, we broke into a run. ‘Did you do it?’ they shouted at me.

‘Of course I did!’ I said.

‘Well done you!’ they cried. ‘What a super show!’

I felt like a hero. I *was* a hero. It was marvellous to be so popular.

Make connections

1. What did the protagonist and their friends discover beneath a loose floorboard in the classroom, and what did they decide to do with it?
2. Describe the mouse that the children found among their treasures. What did the group initially consider doing with it?
3. Who came up with the idea for the “Mouse Plot,” and what was the plan for the mouse in Mrs. Pratchett’s sweet shop?
4. What kind of lady do you think Mrs. Pratchett is? Why?
5. How did the children feel after the Mouse Plot was carried out, and how were they treated by their friends as a result?



Title: We Take Care Of Each Other

Author: Lindsey

Genre: Narrative Essay [non-fiction]

Rationale:

Even after being married for several years, husbands and wives sometimes decide to separate. It has been said that the children suffer the most in a divorce. However, the parents and children can still support each other and live happily, as this story shows.

The basic social skills like taking care, understanding, decision making, acceptance, responsibility is emphasized through this text. The piece also teaches the features of a narrative writing.

How do you think a divorcing couple can ease the upheaval in their children's lives?

The end of a marriage can strengthen the bonds between children of divorce.

My parents got divorced when I was two. I don't really remember much when we were little except that my mother used to take me and my brother and sister to visit my dad. My mother said I always used to ask her to sleep over at his house with us. She said it used to put her in an awkward position. We visited him regularly, and we still keep in touch. We write letters. He lives in Washington now but still comes here on business and visits us when he can. I see him pretty often.

My sister was really the only one who was *that* affected by the divorce. I think she was about six and didn't really understand what was going on. My dad got married again about eight years ago. They have a daughter, who's seven. He didn't tell us in advance he was getting married. We had eaten dinner at my stepmother's house before then, I guess for him to see if we liked her or not. Then a couple of

months later he got married and came back from his honeymoon and announced, “Oh, I got married.” My sister really got upset. It didn’t faze me. He’d always been this man whom I’d visited and called my dad. It wasn’t as personal to me, because I don’t remember ever living with him. It took my sister a little while to get everything worked out. Maybe if I had been a little older at the time it would have affected me more.

I didn’t miss having a father around now that I look back. Every once in a while I did, I suppose. I have a friend who used to tell me that you should always have a father to live with. But I think if I lived with my dad I’d be a totally different person, and I don’t think I’d want to be. I love my mother and the way she handled us all. She worked and took care of the three of us. I think she did a great job. . . .

I wasn’t aware of much friction between my parents. I think they argued a little when I was growing up, but it was over the phone, so I didn’t hear it directly. My mom argued with my sister a lot. There was a time when my sister and my mother didn’t get along at all. My sister really hated her. I remember that very well. It was in sixth or seventh grade. I think she just resented the fact that my mother was going out with other men. She was probably jealous of the attention not paid to her. But in general we have all been happy here and not upset by the situation.

**We all live here,
this is our house,
and we have to
make it work.**

The three of us kids have basically taken care of ourselves. My mother has given us responsibility always, just because that’s the way she had to do it. I think we are all pretty levelheaded about what we know we have to do. And if my dad were around, I think we’d be a little more spoiled. My parents are exact opposites. My dad is very quiet, very conservative, very organized. My mother just sort of plays everything by ear. I think it would drive me crazy if I had everything organized, all planned out. Probably because she brought me up the way she did. We all take after her that way. Very open. We have a relationship with her that’s

like being friends—we're on a peer level—rather than she's the parent giving the rules and we have to obey them. We all live here, this is our house, and we have to make it work.

She never directly told me why she and my father got divorced, but I think I figured it out. He was much older than she. My mom was just out of college, and she had been taught by her mother that women should get married and have babies. It seemed like getting married was something she had to do then. They were only married for a few years. I just don't think he was the right person. My mother probably needed more love and support than he could give, because he's a very closed person. It was just a mistake. When he comes here, we go out to dinner, the three of us, my dad, my mother, and I. They're good friends. It's just that I don't think they could live together. There's no rancor or anger. There might have been before, but I've never seen it, and it's never been directed at us kids. . . .

I got into the high school counseling program to help other people. I feel as though my sister helped me and my brother through a lot, and we all sort of take care of each other. Also, I think I've grown up faster than a lot of people because of having to take care of myself and having to make my own decisions. ...This summer I went to Outward Bound out west. There you can learn a lot about yourself, what you should do and what you shouldn't do, doing what *you* want and not listening to other people. So I think I can help others, and I really want to.

Make connections

1. Do you think the father missed out on anything while the children were growing up? Explain.
2. The author says, “I didn’t miss having a father around now that I look back.”. Why do you think she says so?
3. What kind of a relationship does the mother share with her children? Do you share similar kind of relationship with any of your family members?
4. What expectations do the family and the community place on girls and boys in Bhutan? Discuss them separately.
5. Do you think your brothers and sisters understand you better than your parents? If so, give examples to support your answer. If not, explain why not.
6. What features of a narrative essay are particularly evident in this text?



Title: Let's Talk Advertising

Author: Susan Hughes

Genre: Non-fiction

Rationale:

Advertising is an important part of media. In fact, most forms of media depend on the revenue from advertising to cover the costs of production. Advertisers often pay large sums of money to promote their products in the media. Research shows that advertising works and as consumers we need to be aware of the power of advertising. This text provides ample opportunities to discuss the pros and cons of advertisement.

Did the catchy title grab you? Would it have been more appealing in flashing neon or as a speech balloon alongside a photo of your favourite actor? That's the kind of thing advertisers want to know. Advertising is all about getting your attention and making you want what the ad is selling—a product or a service—or making you want to do what the ad is suggesting, such as exercise more often or recycle.

And it isn't new. Hundreds of years ago, a farmer in the market shouted out, "Eggs for sale!" A neighbour suggested, "Try that barber." A shopkeeper's sign read: "Fresh bread." More recently, posters invited the public to stamp exhibits. Small advertisements in local newspapers suggested emigrants book their sea-passage to Canada.

Then factories began manufacturing products in large quantities. Cities grew, bringing many people together. New communication technologies blossomed. With better ways to communicate more products to more consumers, there was an explosion in advertising.

It carries on today. Who hasn't seen ads for political parties, clothes, travel locations, and charities? Billboards line the highways. Radio jingles fill the airwaves.

Most television channels exist only because the advertising on them pays for the programming. There are even channels dedicated to home shopping. Viewers can see products, watch how they work, and then dial in and order them.

From airborne blimps to roadside recycling boxes to the Internet, we are being bombarded with messages from advertisers.

Who produces ads? Often designers, artists, psychologists, market researchers, and copywriters work together. A successful ad is seen by many people. It can persuade even people who don't need the product that they must have it. They may buy a product because they are hoping to buy the way of life shown in the advertisements. For example, if they buy—and then drink—a certain brand of juice they might expect to feel as if they were plunging into a cool, refreshing pool.

Advertising is a powerful tool. Its goal: to capture your attention and make you want something. Advertising has been around a long time and__it works.

Make connections

1. Discuss the power of advertisements.
2. Narrate one interesting advertisement you have seen.
3. When you look at advertisements, do you feel tempted to buy the products? Why or why not?
4. "...They may buy a product because they are hoping to buy the way of life shown in advertisements..." Did you land up buying something hoping to buy the way of life shown in advertisements?
5. Did advertisements convince you to make an unnecessary purchase? Give an example.
6. The text says that the goal of advertising is to capture your attention and make you want something. Do you agree? Why or why not?

POETRY



Title: My Mother Saw a Dancing Bear

Author: Charles Causley

Genre: Poetry

Rationale:

This poem is an example of a narrative poem in which a group of children enjoy the spectacle of a dancing bear at first, but by the end of the show, they begin to feel sorry for the bear.

This poem was chosen because of the message it conveys. The poem begins likely but ends in a sad tone. The poem can be used to discuss the ethics of keeping animals in captivity- whether it be in a zoo or circus.



My mother saw a dancing bear
By the schoolyard, a day in June.
The keeper stood with chain and bar
And whistle-pipe, and played a tune.

And bruin lifted up its head
And lifted up its dusty feet,
And all the children laughed to see
It caper in the summer heat.

They watched as for the Queen it died.
They watched it march. They watched it halt.
They heard the keeper as he cried,
'Now, roly-poly! Somersault!'

And then, my mother said, there came
The keeper with a begging-cup,
The bear with burning coat of fur,
Shaming the laughter to a stop.

They paid a penny for the dance,
But what they saw was not the show;
Only, in Bruin's aching eyes,
Far-distant forests, and the snow.

Make connections

1. Why do you think the children stop laughing towards the end of the poem?
2. Mention two elements of the poem's narrative features?
3. List down some of the rhyming words in the poem.
4. What does the last two lines of the poem tell you about the bear's life?
5. How did you feel after reading the poem?
6. Is it a good idea to capture wild animals and keep it as pets, in zoos and use them for entertainment? Why?



Title: Life Doesn't Frighten Me

Author: Maya Angelou

Genre: Poetry

Rationale:

This poem transports the reader inside the head of a young girl who claims to have discovered a means of overcoming fear. It is a series of loosely connected images tied up with mostly full end rhymes and a repeated refrain which reinforces the idea that, despite what we encounter in life, we do not have to be afraid. Aside from the main theme, overcoming fear, strength, and daily living can be explored through this poetry. Other aspects of the poetry that can be considered include mood and tone. The structure of a poem of the poem is to consider.

This poem is a good illustration of how to deal with poetic devices because it uses enjambment, anaphora, repetition, and alliteration, among others. This poem can be a good example to use for writing poems using anaphora and alliteration.

Shadows on the wall
Noises down the hall
Life doesn't frighten me at all

Bad dogs barking loud
Big ghosts in a cloud
Life doesn't frighten me at all

Mean old Mother Goose
Lions on the loose
They don't frighten me at all

Dragons breathing flame
On my counterpane
That doesn't frighten me at all.

I go boo
Make them shoo
I make fun
Way they run
I won't cry
So they fly
I just smile
They go wild

Life doesn't frighten me at all.

Tough guys fight
All alone at night
Life doesn't frighten me at all.

Panthers in the park
Strangers in the dark
No, they don't frighten me at all.

That new classroom where
Boys all pull my hair
(Kissy little girls
With their hair in curls)
They don't frighten me at all.

Don't show me frogs and snakes
And listen for my scream,
If I'm afraid at all
It's only in my dreams.

I've got a magic charm
That I keep up my sleeve
I can walk the ocean floor
And never have to breathe.

Life doesn't frighten me at all
Not at all
Not at all.

Life doesn't frighten me at all.

Making connections

1. What are some things you think are frightening?
2. How do you usually overcome your fears?
3. Line "Life doesn't frighten me at all," are repeated throughout the poem. Focusing on the first stanza, why does the narrator repeat this line in this stanza? What in this stanza is the poet trying to emphasize?
4. How is the structure of the poem different from other poems you have read?
5. Why does the speaker of this poem smile at frightening things?
6. Explain at least four qualities of fearless/courageous person.
7. What is the central message of the poem?



Title: Great, Wide, Beautiful, Wonderful World

Author: W. B. Rands

Genre: Poetry

Rationale:

While describing the Earth, the poem praises its size and physical features. Later, the speaker hears a whisper inside him telling him that humans are more important than the planet because we have the ability to love, reason, and think, which the earth does not. As a result, we are better than Earth.

The rhyming scheme and figures of speech (Personification, Alliteration, and Anaphora) in the poem can be explored. A review of common punctuation and its effect on the poem can also be done. This poem also offers opportunity to teach descriptive adjectives.

GREAT, wide, beautiful, wonderful World;
With the wonderful water round you curled,
And the wonderful grass upon your breast, -
World, you are beautifully dressed.

The wonderful air is over me,
And the wonderful wind is shaking the tree,
It walks on the water, and whirls the mills,
And talks to itself on the top of the hills.

You friendly Earth! how far do you go
With the wheat fields that nod and the rivers that flow,
With cities and gardens, and cliffs, and isles
And people upon you for thousands of miles?

Ah! you are so great, and I am so small,
I tremble to think of you, World, at all;
And yet, when I said my prayers, to—day,
A whisper inside me seemed to say,
“You are more than the Earth, though you are such a dot
You can love and think, and the Earth cannot!”

Making connections

1. Why do you think, the poet calls the Earth ‘friendly’?
2. The earth is often called ‘Mother’. What qualities of the earth makes it like a mother?
3. State five ways you can help make the earth better.
4. According to the poet, what are the things we can do that earth cannot?
5. What makes the speaker feel greater than the earth at the end of the poem?
6. List the punctuations used in the poem.
7. Identify the use of personification in the poem.



Title: Be Glad Your Nose is on Your Face

Author: Jack Prelutsky

Genre: Poetry

Rationale:

We frequently complain about the things in our lives. This humorous poem expresses the idea that we should be content with what we have rather than complaining about it or attempting to change it. The poem is both amusing and profound. Acceptance, joy, and mastery over nature's creation are the poem's overarching themes. The poet employs the metaphor of a nose to demonstrate how the arrangement of seemingly insignificant objects can lead to disaster.

Be glad your nose is on your face,
not pasted on some other place,
for if it were where it is not,
you might dislike your nose a lot.

Imagine if your precious nose
were sandwiched in between your toes,
that clearly would not be a treat,
for you'd be forced to smell your feet.

Your nose would be a source of dread
were it attached atop your head,
it soon would drive you to despair,
forever tickled by your hair.

Within your ear, your nose would be
an absolute catastrophe,
for when you were obliged to sneeze,
your brain would rattle from the breeze.

Your nose, instead, through thick and thin,
remains between your eyes and chin,
not pasted on some other place—
be glad your nose is on your face!

Making connections

1. If you were told that your nose had to move to a different place on your body and you could choose where it went, where would you put it? Why?
2. What other area of your body not described in the poem would be bad for your nose to go? Why?
3. Apart from your nose, what other parts of your body you don't want between your toes? Why?
4. Find nose-related idioms and share with your friends.
5. Why is it important for you to be happy with what you have and not complain?
6. List down the important functions of nose.

Time Allocation for Class V

The maximum number of instructional days available for curriculum delivery excluding examination is 150 days in a year. The school year divided into two terms of fifteen weeks each, and that each week will have 7 periods of 40 minutes for teaching English. The total time allocated for English in a week is 280 minutes. Therefore, class V will have 140 hours in a year which is 210 periods.

The following is the suggestive period and time allocation per week for all strands.

	Period	Time (minutes)
Reading & Literature	2	84
Writing	2	70
Listening & Speaking	2	70
Language and Grammar	1	56
Total	7	280

Continuous Assessment (CA) and Examination Weighting for Class V

Term One			Term Two				Grand Total (Total A + Total B)	
CA		Examination	Total A	CA		Examination		Total B
Listening and Speaking	10%	25%	50%	Listening and Speaking	10%	25%	50%	100%
Reading Portfolio	5%			Reading Portfolio	5%			
Writing Portfolio	10%			Writing Portfolio	10%			

Note:

1. The Term One examination should be conducted out of 60 marks and converted to 25%. The 10% CA marks from the Listening and Speaking, 5% from the Reading Portfolio, and 10% from the Writing Portfolio should be added to the examination marks to make it 50%.
2. Similarly, the Term Two examination should be also conducted out of 60 marks and converted to 25%. The 10% CA marks from the Listening and Speaking, 5% from the Reading Portfolio, and 10% from the Writing Portfolio should be added to the examination marks to make it 50%.
3. Finally, the total marks of term one and term two should be added to make it 100%.
4. Listening and Speaking activities such as debates, extempore speeches, presentations, book talks, reports, and discussions should be conducted consistently throughout the year ideally by integrating in other strands so that the learners get maximum time to practice the skills. Teachers need to develop their own additional listening and speaking exercises wherever necessary. Use Continuous Formative Assessment (CFA) to help learners achieve the instructional goals.

5. At the end of each Term, a formal test should be conducted to assess each learners' competencies in listening and speaking through oral test items and other listening and speaking exercises. The final mark or score should be converted to 10%.
6. The Reading and Writing Portfolios of each learner should be monitored regularly and consistently to check their progress on reading and writing skills. Teachers should provide timely feedback, support and make necessary intervention so that the learners meet the expected objectives and competencies. At the end of each term, both the portfolios should be assessed to award marks accordingly.

English Paper (Writing, Reading and Literature, and Grammar) - Written Examination Marks Break-up

Sl No	Genre	Weighting	Remarks
1	Essay writing	10 marks	Composition based on picture sequence, narrative Writing
2	Personal letter/leave application/ invitation	8 marks	Any ONE can be asked
3	Grammar	12 marks	Items to be derived from the competencies and objectives. Questions can be asked from the lower classes as well.
4	Short Story	11 marks	Any ONE from the prescribed short stories
5	Essay	11 marks	From outside the prescribed textbook
6	Poetry	8 marks	Any ONE from the prescribed or outside textbook.
Total		60	

Note:

The above matrix is a sample of question items that can be tested in the examinations. The question types and patterns for written examinations shall

remain dynamic. Questions can be asked to assess any of the competencies/ learning objectives, which includes a combination of different types of writing items including short story and report writing.

Listening and Speaking CA (10%)

Listening and Speaking activities	Remarks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listening and Speaking skills • Reports • Debates • Extempore speeches • Presentation of their written pieces • Book talk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers can design additional activities as per the lesson plans. • Conduct oral test/listening and speaking tests and marks converted to 10% at the end of each term.

Reading Portfolio and Writing Portfolio CA (15%)

Reading Portfolio (5%)	Writing Portfolio (10%)	Remarks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Record of reading • Critical response to books read • Text talk or book talk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best pieces of writing selected by learners • Best pieces selected by teacher • Simple book reviews • Folktales • Simple poems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use notebooks for maintaining portfolios. • Consider process while assessing the quality of work. • The writing portfolio should show the records of the Writing Process • Avoid plagiarism. • Both Reading and Writing Portfolios should be assessed at the end of each term and award marks accordingly.