ENGLISH
Reading & Literature
Class XII

Department of School Education
Ministry of Education and Skills Development
Royal Government of Bhutan
Thimphu

Published by
Department of School Education (DSE)
Ministry of Education and Skills Development (MoESD)
Royal Government of Bhutan
Thimhu

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Toll Free: 1850
Web site: www.education.gov.bt

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

First Edition 2005

Revised Edition 2023

Rprint 2024

ISBN 978-99936-0-691-8

Acknowledgments

The Ministry of Education and Skills Development would like to acknowledge the contributions made by the following educational professionals and teachers to the development of this revised text book.

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The School Curriculum Division also sincerely acknowledges the retrieval and use of contents and resources, either in part or whole, from relevant websites and other sources with the assurance that these resources will be used exclusively for educational purposes in Bhutan.

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 untravl'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 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.

Standards for Reading & Literature for Key Stage V

Read and comprehend complex text types independently and proficiently.

1. Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.
2. Analyse a particular point of view or cultural experience reflected in a work of literature drawing on a wide range of world literature.
3. Identify and analyze the steps in their own reading process to broaden their critical understanding and metacognition.
4. Analyse how an author's choices of text structure create effects such as mystery, tension, and surprise.
5. Study different genres of literature independently and reflect on the different ways in which people discover meaning in their lives; different expressions of fundamental values like Truth, Goodness, and Beauty; the possibilities of human achievement; and find directions and models for one's own aspirations.

Learning Objectives for Reading & Literature

Sl No	Learning Objectives	Core Concepts/Topics	Essential Skills
1	Use reading strategies and skills developed in earlier classes to achieve various reading goals.	Building on to prior knowledge, concepts, and skills	Language and literacy skills: • Justify points of view with relevant supporting points • Use the knowledge of the features of different kinds of texts to enhance comprehension and analysis • Analyse structures and presentation styles to evaluate the efficacy to match the purpose • Analyse non-fiction and non-continuous texts to gather information • Evaluate the textual structure and use of diction in a text Social, behavioural, and affective skills: • Internalise and practice ethics and values encountered in reading. • Appreciate the beauty of language achieved using various literary devices • Value and practice one's own cultural beliefs and practices while acknowledging and appreciating diversity • Demonstrate understanding of the concepts of love, spirituality, tolerance, and patriotism • Appreciate the beauty created by literature. • Evaluate and appreciate the contributions of literature in human civilization • Make text-to-life connections for personal growth Note: Teachers should identify additional appropriate skills based on the lesson plans and learning activities.
2	Understand the aspects of the human conditions encountered in their readings such as perception on gender roles, understanding of love, impermanence and aging, self-knowledge and language and culture.	Empathy and emotional growth, gender roles, love	
3	Apply close and critical reading, and viewing to a variety of texts to enhance their understanding of how lexical and grammatical items are used in context.	Analyse the efficacy of lexical and grammatical structures used in texts	
4	Analyse and evaluate the great literary works from a variety of cultures to determine their contribution to the understanding of self, others, and the world.	Contribution of literature to the intellectual growth of individuals, communities, gender and nation	
5	Connect own background knowledge to recognize and analyse personal biases brought to a text with an emphasis on gender and national origin.	Existence of biases/prejudices based on gender, ethnicity, faiths etc	
6	Identify and analyse a range of issues encountered in a variety of texts.	Issues and themes	
7	Challenge or defend use of writer's diction and style.	Employment of specific structure and diction	
8	Assess their own values in the light of what they encounter in the literature they study.	Awareness of one's own values vis-à-vis those encountered in literature	
9	Evaluate alternative opinions of the texts they read, using information from other texts and sources where appropriate.	Multiple meanings of literary texts	
10	Demonstrate a greater level of familiarity with Bhutanese writers as well as major classical and modern writers.	Awareness of major writers	
11	Distinguish the best pieces of literature and make choices for their personal collection.	Criteria of good literature	
12	Read and evaluate across the curriculum a variety of texts for practical purposes such as advertisements, manuals, job and career descriptions, applications, catalogues, memos, etc.	Practical reading and application in real life situations	
12	Analyse and evaluate the validity of an author's argument.	Critical reading	
13	Demonstrate a heightened sense of beauty and harmony through reading literature.	Aesthetic reading	
14	Talk about some of major classical and modern writers, including Bhutanese authors, and their works.	Awareness of major writers	
15	Acquire and enhance understanding of new vocabulary by making connections to related ideas and other words.	Growth of vocabulary	
16	Engage in sustained reading and viewing for pleasure, personal development, and learning.	Reading for life-long learning	
17	Read at least 40 pieces of fiction and non-fiction texts.	Grow as readers	

SHORT STORIES

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1. The Elephant - *Slawomir Mrozek*

THE DIRECTOR AT THE ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS HAD SHOWN himself to be an upstart. He regarded his animals simply as stepping stones on the road of his own career. He was indifferent to the educational importance of his establishment. In his zoo the giraffe had a short neck, the badger had no burrow and the whistlers, having lost all interest, whistled rarely and with some reluctance. These shortcomings should not have been allowed, especially as the zoo was often visited by parties of school children.

The zoo was in a provincial town, and it was short of some of the most important animals, among them the elephant. Three thousand rabbits were a poor substitute for the noble giant. However, as our country developed, the gaps were being filled in a well-planned manner. On the occasion of the anniversary of the liberation, on 22nd July, the zoo was notified that it had at long last been allocated an elephant. All the staff, who were devoted to their work, rejoiced at this news. All the greater was their surprise when they learned that the director had sent a letter to Warsaw, renouncing the allocation and putting forward a plan for obtaining an elephant by more economic means.

"I, and all the staff," he had written, "are fully aware how heavy a burden falls upon the shoulders of Polish miners and foundry men because of the elephant. Desirous of reducing our costs, I suggest that the elephant mentioned in your communication should be replaced by one of our own procurement. We can make an elephant out of rubber, of the correct size, fill it with air and place it behind railings. It will be carefully painted the correct color and even on close inspection will be indistinguishable from the real animal. It is well known that the elephant is a sluggish animal and it does not run and jump about. In the notice on the railings we can state that this particular elephant is particularly sluggish. The money saved in this way can be turned to the purchase of a jet plane or the conservation of some church monument.

"Kindly note that both the idea and its execution are my modest contribution to the common task and struggle.
"I am, etc."

This communication must have reached a soulless official, who regarded his duties in a purely bureaucratic manner and did not examine the heart of the matter but, following only the directive about reduction of expenditure, accepted the director's plan. On hearing the Ministry's approval, the director issued instructions for the making of the rubber elephant.

The carcass was to have been filled with air by two keepers blowing into it from opposite ends. To keep the operation secret the work was to be completed during the night because the people of the town, having heard that an elephant was joining the zoo, were anxious to

see it. The director insisted on haste also because he expected a bonus, should his idea turn out to he a success.

The two keepers locked themselves in a shed normally housing a workshop, and began to blow. After two hours of hard blowing they discovered that the rubber skin had risen only a few inches above the floor and its bulge in no way resembled an elephant. The night progressed. Outside, human voices were stilled and only the cry of the jackass interrupted the silence. Exhausted, the keepers stopped blowing and made sure that the air already inside the elephant should not escape. They were not young and were unaccustomed to this kind of work.

"If we go on at this rate," said one of them, "we shan't finish by morning. And what am I to tell my missus? She'll never believe me if I say that I spent the night blowing up an elephant."
"Quite right," agreed the second keeper. "Blowing up an elephant is not an everyday job. And it's all because our director is a leftist."

They resumed their blowing, but after another half-hour they felt too tired to continue. The bulge on the floor was larger but still nothing like the shape of an elephant.

"It's getting harder all the time," said the first keeper.
"It's an uphill job, all right," agreed the second. "Let's have a little rest."

While they were resting, one of them noticed a gas pipe ending in a valve. Could they not fill the elephant with gas? He suggested it to his mate.

They decided to try. They connected the elephant to the gas pipe, turned the valve, and to their joy in a few minutes there was a full sized beast standing in the shed. It looked real: the enormous body, legs like columns, huge ears and the inevitable trunk. Driven by ambition the director had made sure of having in his zoo a very large elephant indeed.

"First class," declared the keeper who had the idea of using gas.
"Now we can go home."

In the morning the elephant was moved to a special run in a central position, next to the monkey cage. Placed in front of a large real rock it looked fierce and magnificent. A big notice proclaimed: "Particularly sluggish. Hardly moves."

Among the first visitors that morning was a party of children from the local school. The teacher in charge of them was planning to give them an object-lesson about the elephant. He halted the group in front of the animal and began:

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"The elephant is a herbivorous mammal. By means of its trunk it pulls out young trees and eats their leaves."

The children were looking at the elephant with enraptured admiration. They were waiting for it to pullout a young tree, but the beast stood still behind its railings.

"... The elephant is a direct descendant of the now-extinct mammoth. It's not surprising, therefore, that it's the largest living land animal."

The more conscientious pupils were making notes.
"... Only the whale is heavier than the elephant, but then the whale lives in the sea. We can safely say that on land the elephant reigns supreme."

A slight breeze moved the branches of the trees in the zoo.
"... The weight of a fully grown elephant is between nine and thirteen thousand pounds."

At that moment the elephant shuddered and rose in the air. For a few seconds it stayed just above the ground, but a gust of wind blew it upward until its mighty silhouette was against the sky. For a short while people on the ground could see the four circles of its feet, its bulging belly and the trunk, but soon, propelled by the wind, the elephant sailed above the fence and disappeared above the treetops. Astonished monkeys in the cage continued staring into the sky.

They found the elephant in the neighboring botanical gardens. It had landed on a cactus and punctured its rubber hide.

The schoolchildren who had witnessed the scene in the zoo started neglecting their studies and turned into hooligans. It is reported that they drink liquor and break windows. And they no longer believe in elephants.

Make connections

1. What is the setting of the story? In which point of view is it narrated?
2. What do you think it means when the 'elephant' is filled with gas?
3. What do you think is the author criticizing?
4. What do you think the elephant stands for?
5. What could it stand for in Bhutan? In other countries?
6. The Elephant is an allegorical story. Explore what allegory means and find examples from the story.

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2. Lamb to the Slaughter - *Roald Dahl*

The room was warm and clean, the curtains drawn, the two table lamps alight hers and the one by the empty chair opposite. On the sideboard behind her, two tall glasses, soda water, whisky. Fresh ice cubes in the Thermos bucket.

Mary Maloney was waiting for her husband to come home from work.

Now and again, she would glance up at the clock, but without anxiety, merely to please herself with the thought that each minute gone by made it nearer the time when he would come. There was a slow smiling air about her, and about everything she did. The drop of the head as she bent over her sewing was curiously tranquil. Her skin for this was her sixth month with child had acquired a wonderful translucent quality, the mouth was soft, and the eyes, with their new placid look, seemed larger, darker than before.

When the clock said ten minutes to five, she began to listen, and a few moments later, punctually as always she heard the tires on the gravel outside, and the car door slamming, the footsteps passing the window, the key turning in the lock. She laid aside her sewing, stood up, and went forward to kiss him as he came in.

"Hullo, darling," she said.
"Hullo," he answered.

She took his coat and hung it in the closet. Then she walked over and made the drinks, a strongish one for him, a weak one for herself; and soon she was back again in her chair with the sewing, and he in the other, opposite, holding the tall glass with both his hands, rocking it so the ice cubes tinkled against the side.

For her, this was always a blissful time of day. She knew he didn't want to speak much until the first drink was finished, and she, on her side, was content to sit quietly, enjoying his company after the long hours alone in the house. She loved to luxuriate in the presence of this man, and to feel - almost as a sunbather feels the sun that warm male glow that came out of him to her when they were alone together. She loved him for the way he sat loosely in a chair, for the way he came in a door, or moved slowly across the room with long strides. She loved the intent, far look in his eyes when they rested on her, the funny shape of the mouth, and especially, the way he remained silent about his tiredness, sitting still with himself until the whisky had taken some of it away.

"Tired, darling?"
"Yes," he said. "I'm tired." And as he spoke, he did an unusual thing. He lifted his glass and

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drained it in one swallow although there was still half of it, at least half of it, left. She wasn't really watching him, but she knew what he had done because she heard the ice cubes falling back against the bottom of the empty glass when he lowered his arm. He paused a moment, leaning forward in the chair, then he got up and went slowly over to fetch himself another.
"I'll get it!" she cried, jumping up.
"Sit down," he said.

When he came back, she noticed that the new drink was dark amber with the quantity of whisky in it.

"Darling, shall I get your slippers?"
"No."

She watched him as he began to sip the dark yellow drink, and she could see little oily swirls in the liquid because it was so strong.

"I think it's a shame," she said, "that when a policeman gets to be as senior as you, they keep him walking about on his feet all day long."

He didn't answer, so she bent her head again and went on with her sewing; but each time he lifted the drink to his lips, she heard the ice cubes clicking against the side of the glass.

"Darling," she said. "Would you like me to get you some cheese? I haven't made any supper because it's Thursday.
"No," he said.
"If you're too tired to eat out," she went on, "it's still not too late. There's plenty of meat and stuff in the freezer, and you can have it right here and not even move out of the chair."

Her eyes waited on him for an answer, a smile, a little nod, but he made no sign.

"Anyway," she went on, "I'll get you some cheese and crackers first."
"I don't want it," he said.

She moved uneasily in her chair, the large eyes still watching his face. "But you *must* have supper. I can easily do it here. I'd like to do it. We can have lamb chops. Or pork. Anything you want. Everything's in the freezer."
"Forget it," he said.
"But, darling, you *must* eat! I'll fix it anyway, and then you can have it or not, as you like."

She stood up and placed her sewing on the table by the lamp.
"Sit down," he said. "Just for a minute, sit down."

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It wasn't till then that she began to get frightened.
"Go on," he said. "Sit down."

She lowered herself back slowly into the chair, watching him all the time with those large, bewildered eyes. He had finished the second drink and was staring down into the glass, frowning.

"Listen," he said, "I've got something to tell you."
"What is it, darling? What's the matter?"

He had become absolutely motionless, and he kept his head down so that the light from the lamp beside him fell across the upper part of his face, leaving the chin and mouth in shadow. She noticed there was a little muscle moving near the corner of his left eye.

"This is going to be a bit of a shock to you, I'm afraid," he said. "But I've thought about it a good deal and I've decided the only thing to do is tell you right away. I hope you won't blame me too much."

And he told her. It didn't take long, four or five minutes at most, and she sat very still through it all, watching him with a kind of dazed horror as he went further and further away from her with each word.

"So there it is," he added. "And I know it's kind of a bad time to be telling you, but there simply wasn't any other way. Of course, I'll give you money and see you're looked after. But there needn't really be any fuss. I hope not anyway. It wouldn't be very good for my job."

Her first instinct was not to believe any of it, to reject it all. It occurred to her that perhaps he hadn't even spoken, that she herself had imagined the whole thing. Maybe, if she went about her business and acted as though she hadn't been listening, then later, when she sort of woke up again, she might find none of it had ever happened.

"I'll get the supper," she managed to whisper, and this time he didn't stop her.

When she walked across the room she couldn't feel her feet touching the floor. She couldn't feel anything at all except a slight nausea and a desire to vomit. Every thing was automatic now down the stairs to the cellar, the light switch, the deep freeze, the hand inside the cabinet taking hold of the first object it met. She lifted it out, and looked at it. It was wrapped in paper, so she took off the paper and looked at it again.

A leg of lamb.
All right then, they would have lamb for supper. She carried it upstairs, holding the thin bone-end of it with both hands, and as she went through the living-room, she saw him standing

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over by the window with his back to her, and she stopped.

"For God's sake," he said, hearing her, but not turning round. "Don't make supper for me. I'm going out."

At that point, Mary Maloney simply walked up behind him and without any pause she swung the big frozen leg of lamb high in the air and brought it down as hard as she could on the back of his head.

She might just as well have hit him with a steel club.
She stepped back a pace, waiting, and the funny thing was that he remained standing there for at least four or five seconds, gently swaying. Then he crashed to the carpet.

The violence of the crash, the noise, the small table overturning, helped bring her out of the shock. She came out slowly, feeling cold and surprised, and she stood for a while blinking at the body, still holding the ridiculous piece of meat tight with both hands.

All right, she told herself. So I've killed him.
It was extraordinary, now, how clear her mind became all of a sudden. She began thinking very fast. As the wife of a detective, she knew quite well what the penalty would be. That was fine. It made no difference to her. In fact, it would be a relief. On the other hand, what about the child? What were the laws about murderers with unborn children? Did they kill them both mother and child? Or did they wait until the tenth month? What did they do?

Mary Maloney didn't know. And she certainly wasn't prepared to take a chance.

She carried the meat into the kitchen, placed it in a pan, turned the oven on high, and shoved it inside. Then she washed her hands and ran upstairs to the bedroom. She sat down before the mirror, tidied her face, touched up her lips and face. She tried to smile. It came out rather peculiar. She tried again.

"Hullo Sam," she said brightly, aloud.
The voice sounded peculiar too.
"I want some potatoes please, Sam. Yes, and I think a can of peas."
That was better. Both the smile and the voice were coming out better now. She rehearsed it several times more. Then she ran downstairs, took her coat, went out the back door, down the garden, into the street.

It wasn't six o'clock yet, and the lights were still on in the grocery shop.

"Hullo Sam," she said brightly, smiling at the man behind the counter.

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"Why, good evening, Mrs. Maloney. How're *you?"*
"I want some potatoes please, Sam. Yes, and I think a can of peas."
The man turned and reached up behind him on the shelf for peas.

"Patrick's decided he's tired and doesn't want to eat out tonight," she told him. "We usually go out Thursdays, you know, and now he's caught me without any vegetables in the house."
"Then how about meat, Mrs. Maloney?"
"No, I've got meat, thanks. I got a nice leg of lamb, from the freezer."
"Oh."
"I don't much like cooking it frozen, Sam, but I'm taking a chance on it this time. You think it'll be all right?"
"Personally," the grocer said, "I don't believe it makes any difference. You want these Idaho potatoes?"
"Oh yes, that'll be fine. Two of those."
"Anything else?" The grocer cocked his head on one side, looking at her pleasantly.
"How about afterwards? What you going to give him for afterwards?"
"Well what would you suggest, Sam?"

The man glanced around his shop. "How about a nice big slice of cheesecake? I know he likes that."
"Perfect," she said. "He loves it."
And when it was all wrapped and she had paid, she put on her brightest smile and said, "Thank you, Sam. Good night."
"Good night, Mrs. Maloney. And thank *you."*

And now, she told herself as she hurried back, all she was doing now, she was returning home to her husband and he was waiting for his supper; and she must cook it good, and make it as tasty as possible because the poor man was tired; and if, when she entered the house, she happened to find anything unusual, or tragic, or terrible, then naturally it would be a shock and she'd become frantic with grief and horror. Mind you, she wasn't expecting to find anything. She was just going home with vegetables. Mrs. Patrick Maloney going home with vegetables on Thursday evening to cook supper for her husband.

That's the way, she told herself. Do everything right and natural. Keep things absolutely

natural and there'll be no need for any acting at all.

Therefore, when she entered the kitchen by the back door, she was humming a little tune to herself and smiling.

"Patrick!" she called. "How are you, darling?"

She put the parcel down on the table and went through into the living-room; and when she saw him lying there on the floor with his legs doubled up and one arm twisted back underneath his body, it really was rather a shock. All the old love and longing for him welled up inside her, and she ran over to him, knelt down beside him, and began to cry her heart out. It was easy. No acting was necessary.

A few minutes later she got up and went to the phone. She knew the number of the police station, and when the man at the other end answered, she cried to him, "Quick! Come quick! Patrick's dead!"
"Who's speaking?"
"Mrs. Maloney. Mrs. Patrick Maloney."
"You mean Patrick Maloney's dead?
"I think so," she sobbed. "He's lying on the floor and I think he's dead."
"Be right over," the man said.

The car came very quickly, and when she opened the front door, two policemen walked in. She knew them both she knew nearly all the men at that precinct and she fell right into Jack Noonan's arms, weeping hysterically. He put her gently into a chair, then went over to join the other one, who was called O'Malley, kneeling by the body.

"Is he dead?" she cried.
"I'm afraid he is. What happened?"

Briefly, she told her story about going out to the grocer and coming back to find him on the floor. While she was talking, crying and talking, Noonan discovered a small patch of congealed blood on the dead man's head. He showed it to O'Malley who got up at once and hurried to the phone.

Soon, other men began to come into the house. First a doctor, then two detectives, one of whom she knew by name. Later, a police photographer arrived and took pictures, and a man who knew about fingerprints. There was a great deal of whispering and muttering beside the corpse, and the detectives kept asking her a lot of questions. But they always treated her kindly. She told her story again, this time right from the beginning, when Patrick had come in, and she was sewing, and he was tired, so tired he hadn't wanted to go out for supper. She told how she'd put the meat in the oven "it's there now, cooking" and how she'd slipped out to the grocer for vegetables, and come back to find him lying on the floor.
"Which grocer?" one of the detectives asked.

She told him, and he turned and whispered something to the other detective who immediately went outside into the street.

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In fifteen minutes he was back with a page of notes and there was more whispering, and through her sobbing she heard a few of the whispered phrases "... acted quite normal... very cheerful…wanted to give him a good supper…peas…cheesecake. . .impossible that she..."

After a while, the photographer and the doctor departed and two other men came in and took the corpse away on a stretcher. Then the fingerprint man went away. The two detectives remained, and so did the two policemen. They were exceptionally nice to her, and Jack Noonan asked if she wouldn't rather go somewhere else, to her sister's house perhaps, or to his own wife who would take care of her and put her up for the night.

No, she said. She didn't feel she could move even a yard at the moment. Would they mind awfully if she stayed just where she was until she felt better? She didn't feel too good at the moment, she really didn't.

Then hadn't she better lie down on the bed? Jack Noonan asked.

No, she said, she'd like to stay right where she was, in this chair. A little later perhaps, when she felt better, she would move.

So they left her there while they went about their business, searching the house. Occasionally one of the detectives asked her another question. Sometimes Jack Noonan spoke to her gently as he passed by. Her husband, he told her, had been killed by a blow on the back of the head administered with a heavy blunt instrument, almost certainly a large piece of metal. They were looking for the weapon. The murderer may have taken it with him, but on the other hand, he may've thrown it away or hidden it somewhere on the premises.

"It's the old story," he said. "Get the weapon, and you've got the man."
Later, one of the detectives came up and sat beside her. Did she know, he asked, of anything in the house that could've been used as the weapon? Would she mind having a look around to see if anything was missing a very big spanner, for example, or a heavy metal vase.

They didn't have any heavy metal vases, she said.
"Or a big spanner?"
She didn't think they had a big spanner. But there might be some things like that in the garage.

The search went on. She knew that there were other policemen in the garden all around the house. She could hear their footsteps on the gravel outside, and sometimes she saw the flash of a torch through a chink in the curtains. It began to get late, nearly nine she noticed by the clock on the mantel. The four men searching the rooms seemed to be growing weary, a trifle exasperated.

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"Jack," she said, the next time Sergeant Noonan went by. "Would you mind giving me a drink?"
"Sure I'll give you a drink. You mean this whisky?"
"Yes, please. But just a small one. It might make me feel better."
He handed her the glass.
"Why don't you have one yourself," she said. "You must be awfully tired. Please do. You've been very good to me."
"Well," he answered. "It's not strictly allowed, but I might take just a drop to keep me going."

One by one the others came in and were persuaded to take a little nip of whisky. They stood around rather awkwardly with the drinks in their hands, uncomfortable in her presence, trying to say consoling things to her. Sergeant Noonan wandered into the kitchen, came out quickly and said, "Look, Mrs. Maloney. You know that oven of yours is still on, and the meat still inside."
"Oh *dear* me!" she cried. "So it is!"
"I better turn it off for you, hadn't I?"
"Will you do that, Jack? Thank you so much."

When the sergeant returned the second time, she looked at him with her large, dark eyes.

"Jack Noonan," she said
"Yes?"
"Would you do me a small favour you and these others?"
"We can try, Mrs. Maloney."
"Well," she said. "Here you all are, and good friends of dear Patrick's too, and helping to catch the man who killed him. You must be terribly hungry by now because it's long past your supper time, and I know Patrick would never forgive me, God bless his soul, if I allowed you to remain in his house without offering you decent hospitality. Why don't you eat up that lamb that's in the oven? It'll be cooked just right by now."
"Wouldn't dream of it," Sergeant Noonan said.

"Please," she begged. "Please eat it. Personally, I couldn't touch a thing, certainly not what's been in the house when he was here. But it's all right for you. It'd be a favour to me if you'd eat it up. Then you can go on with your work again afterwards."

There was a good deal of hesitating among the four policemen, but they were clearly hungry, and in the end they were persuaded to go into the kitchen and help themselves. The woman stayed where she was, listening to them through the open door, and she could hear them speaking among themselves, their voices thick and sloppy because their mouths were full of meat.

"Have some more, Charlie?"
"No. Better not finish it."

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"She *wants* us to finish it. She said so. Be doing her a favour."
"Okay then. Give me some more."
"That's the hell of a big club the guy must've used to hit poor Patrick," one of them was saying. "The doc says his skull was smashed all to pieces just like from a sledgehammer."
"That's why it ought to be easy to find."
"Exactly what I say."
"Whoever done it, they're not going to be carrying a thing like that around with them longer than they need."
One of them belched.
"Personally, I think it's right here on the premises."
"Probably right under our very noses. What you think, Jack?"
And in the other room, Mary Maloney began to giggle.

Make Connections

1. Judging from the title, what did you think would the story be about?
2. What is the irony in the story?
3. Did the events in the story surprise you? Are they funny? Why?
4. Do you think Mary Maloney should be punished or let go? Why?

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3. The Model Millionaire - *Oscar Wilde*

Rationale

This classic has been chosen especially because of the literary wealth the text possesses. Written by Oscar Wilde, an Irish poet and one of the most popular playwrights in London in the early 1890s, The Model Millionaire is narrated in the third person point of view about a young man. This story has a twisted plot. The story focuses on the ideas of the perception of class, beauty, wealth, and generosity. The story is also a satire on the upper-class society and its obsession with wealth. It's an engaging and entertaining story with his use of satire and irony adding depth to the story.

Wilde's delightful and witty writing style, stating truisms and maxims are evident in the story. Learners can explore the stylistic devices used in the text and also discuss on the values they hold and the way they see the world.

The Model Millionaire

Unless one is wealthy there is no use in being a charming fellow. Romance is the privilege of the rich, not the profession of the unemployed. The poor should be practical and prosaic. It is better to have a permanent income than to be fascinating. These are the great truths of modern life which Hughie Erskine never realised. Poor Hughie! Intellectually, we must admit, he was not of much importance. He never said a brilliant or even an ill-natured thing in his life. But then he was wonderfully good-looking, with his crisp brown hair, his clear-cut profile, and his grey eyes. He was as popular with men as he was with women, and he had every accomplishment except that of making money. His father had bequeathed him his cavalry sword, and a History of the Peninsular War in fifteen volumes. Hughie hung the first over his looking-glass, put the second on a shelf between Ruff's Guide and Bailey's Magazine, and lived on two hundred a year that an old aunt allowed him. He had tried everything. He had gone on the Stock Exchange for six months; but what was a butterfly to do among bulls and bears? He had been a tea-merchant for a little longer, but had soon tired of pekoe and souchong. Then he had tried selling dry sherry. That did not answer; the sherry was a little too dry. Ultimately he became nothing, a delightful, ineffectual young man with a perfect profile and no profession.

To make matters worse, he was in love. The girl he loved was Laura Merton, the daughter of a retired Colonel who had lost his temper and his digestion in India, and had never found either of them again. Laura adored him, and he was ready to kiss her shoe-strings. They were the handsomest couple in London, and had not a penny-piece between them. The Colonel was very fond of Hughie, but would not hear of any engagement.

'Come to me, my boy, when you have got ten thousand pounds of your own, and we will see about it,' he used to say; and Hughie looked very glum on those days, and had to go to Laura for consolation.

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One morning, as he was on his way to Holland Park, where the Mertons lived, he dropped in to see a great friend of his, Alan Trevor. Trevor was a painter. Indeed, few people escape that nowadays. But he was also an artist, and artists are rather rare. Personally he was a strange rough fellow, with a freckled face and a red ragged beard. However, when he took up the brush he was a real master, and his pictures were eagerly sought after. He had been very much attracted by Hughie at first, it must be acknowledged, entirely on account of his personal charm. 'The only people a painter should know,' he used to say, 'are people who are bete and beautiful, people who are an artistic pleasure to look at and an intellectual repose to talk to. Men who are dandies and women who are darlings rule the world, at least they should do so.' However, after he got to know Hughie better, he liked him quite as much for his bright buoyant spirits and his generous reckless nature, and had given him the permanent entree to his studio.

When Hughie came in he found Trevor putting the finishing touches to a wonderful life-size picture of a beggar-man. The beggar himself was standing on a raised platform in a corner of the studio. He was a wizened old man, with a face like wrinkled parchment, and a most piteous expression. Over his shoulders was flung a coarse brown cloak, all tears and tatters; his thick boots were patched and cobbled, and with one hand he leant on a rough stick, while with the other he held out his battered hat for alms.

'What an amazing model!' whispered Hughie, as he shook hands with his friend.

'An amazing model?' shouted Trevor at the top of his voice; 'I should think so! Such beggars as he are not to be met with every day. A trouvaille, mort cher; a living Velasquez! My stars! what an etching Rembrandt would have made of him!'

'Poor old chap! said Hughie, 'how miserable he looks! But I suppose, to you painters, his face is his fortune?'

'Certainly,' replied Trevor, 'you don't want a beggar to look happy, do you?'

'How much does a model get for sitting?' asked Hughie, as he found himself a comfortable seat on a divan.

'A shilling an hour.'

'And how much do you get for your picture, Alan?'

'Oh, for this I get two thousand!'

'Pounds?'

'Guineas. Painters, poets, and physicians always get guineas.'

'Well, I think the model should have a percentage,' cried Hughie, laughing; 'they work quite as hard as you do.'

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'Nonsense, nonsense! Why, look at the trouble of laying on the paint alone, and standing all day long at one's easel! It's all very well, Hughie, for you to talk, but I assure you that there are moments when Art almost attains to the dignity of manual labour. But you mustn't chatter; I'm very busy. Smoke a cigarette, and keep quiet.'

After some time the servant came in, and told Trevor that the frame-maker wanted to speak to him.

'Don't run away, Hughie,' he said, as he went out, 'I will be back in a moment.'

The old beggar-man took advantage of Trevor's absence to rest for a moment on a wooden bench that was behind him. He looked so forlorn and wretched that Hughie could not help pitying him, and felt in his pockets to see what money he had. All he could find was a sovereign and some coppers. 'Poor old fellow,' he thought to himself, 'he wants it more than I do, but it means no hansoms for a fortnight;' and he walked across the studio and slipped the sovereign into the beggar's hand.

The old man started, and a faint smile flitted across his withered lips. 'Thank you, sir,' he said, 'thank you.'

Then Trevor arrived, and Hughie took his leave, blushing a little at what he had done. He spent the day with Laura, got a charming scolding for his extravagance, and had to walk home.

That night he strolled into the Palette Club about eleven o'clock, and found Trevor sitting by himself in the smoking-room drinking hock and seltzer.

'Well, Alan, did you get the picture finished all right?' he said, as he lit his cigarette.

'Finished and framed, my boy!' answered Trevor; 'and, by-the-bye, you have made a conquest. That old model you saw is quite devoted to you. I had to tell him all about you - who you are, where you live, what your income is, what prospects you have--'

'My dear Alan,' cried Hughie, 'I shall probably find him waiting for me when I go home. But of course you are only joking. Poor old wretch! I wish I could do something for him. I think it is dreadful that any one should be so miserable. I have got heaps of old clothes at home - do you think he would care for any of them? Why, his rags were falling to bits.'

'But he looks splendid in them,' said Trevor. 'I wouldn't paint him in a frock-coat for anything. What you call rags I call romance. What seems poverty to you is picturesqueness to me. However, I'll tell him of your offer.'

'Alan,' said Hughie seriously, 'you painters are a heartless lot.'

'An artist's heart is his head,' replied Trevor; 'and besides, our business is to realise the world as we see it, not to reform it as we know it. a chacun son metier. And now tell me how

Laura is. The old model was quite interested in her.'

'You don't mean to say you talked to him about her?' said Hughie.

'Certainly I did. He knows all about the relentless colonel, the lovely Laura, and the £10,000.'

'You told that old beggar all my private affairs?' cried Hughie, looking very red and angry.

'My dear boy,' said Trevor, smiling, 'that old beggar, as you call him, is one of the richest men in Europe. He could buy all London to-morrow without overdrawing his account. He has a house in every capital, dines off gold plate, and can prevent Russia going to war when he chooses.'

'What on earth do you mean?' exclaimed Hughie.

'What I say,' said Trevor. 'The old man you saw to-day in the studio was Baron Hausberg. He is a great friend of mine, buys all my pictures and that sort of thing, and gave me a commission a month ago to paint him as a beggar. Que voulez-vous? La fantaisie d'un millionnaire! And I must say he made a magnificent figure in his rags, or perhaps I should say in my rags; they are an old suit I got in Spain.'

'Baron Hausberg!' cried Hughie. 'Good heavens! I gave him a sovereign!' and he sank into an armchair the picture of dismay.

'Gave him a sovereign!' shouted Trevor, and he burst into a roar of laughter. 'My dear boy, you'll never see it again. Son affaire c'est l'argent des autres.'

'I think you might have told me, Alan,' said Hughie sulkily, 'and not have let me make such a fool of myself.'

'Well, to begin with, Hughie,' said Trevor, 'it never entered my mind that you went about distributing alms in that reckless way. I can understand your kissing a pretty model, but your giving a sovereign to an ugly one - by Jove, no! Besides, the fact is that I really was not at home to-day to any one; and when you came in I didn't know whether Hausberg would like his name mentioned. You know he wasn't in full dress.'

'What a duffer he must think me!' said Hughie.

'Not at all. He was in the highest spirits after you left; kept chuckling to himself and rubbing his old wrinkled hands together. I couldn't make out why he was so interested to know all about you; but I see it all now. He'll invest your sovereign for you, Hughie, pay you the interest every six months, and have a capital story to tell after dinner.'

'I am an unlucky devil,' growled Hughie. 'The best thing I can do is to go to bed; and, my dear Alan, you mustn't tell anyone. I shouldn't dare show my face in the Row.'

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'Nonsense! It reflects the highest credit on your philanthropic spirit, Hughie. And don't run away. Have another cigarette, and you can talk about Laura as much as you like.'

However, Hughie wouldn't stop, but walked home, feeling very unhappy, and leaving Alan Trevor in fits of laughter.

The next morning, as he was at breakfast, the servant brought him up a card on which was written, 'Monsieur Gustave Naudin, de la part de M. le Baron Hausberg.'

'I suppose he has come for an apology,' said Hughie to himself; and he told the servant to show the visitor up.

An old gentleman with gold spectacles and grey hair came into the room, and said, in a slight French accent, 'Have I the honour of addressing Monsieur Erskine?'

Hughie bowed.

'I have come from Baron Hausberg,' he continued. 'The Baron--'

'I beg, sir, that you will offer him my sincerest apologies,' stammered Hughie.

'The Baron,' said the old gentleman, with a smile, 'has commissioned me to bring you this letter;' and he extended a sealed envelope.

On the outside was written, 'A wedding present to Hugh Erskine and Laura Merton, from an old beggar,' and inside was a cheque for £10,000.

When they were married Alan Trevor was the best-man, and the Baron made a speech at the wedding-breakfast.

'Millionaire models,' remarked Alan, 'are rare enough; but, by Jove, model millionaires are rarer still!'

Making Connections

1. The title of the story is appropriate at at least two levels of meanings. Explain how.
2. Imagine you are Laura Merton. Write a paragraph on how you would persuade your father to agree to your engagement to Hughie Erskine.
3. What are some of the stylistic devices used by the author and how do they contribute to the overall style and tone of the story?
4. What are the literary aspects used in the story and how do these aspects contribute to the overall meaning and message of the story?
5. Write down some lines or phrases from the story that you would like to use in your own writing and explain what each means.
6. What kind of person do you think is Hughie? Justify with evidence from the story.

4. An Astrologer's Day - *R. K. Narayan*

Rationale

An Astrologer's Day is a thriller, suspense short story by R. K. Narayan, one of the three leading English language Indian fiction writers, along with Raja Rao and Mulk Raj Anand.

Using the third person point of view, written in simple and concise language, Narayan makes effective use of light and dark symbolism. Interweaving the plot with the elements of suspense, logical climax and figurative language, the story explores various themes such as destiny, role of astrology in people's lives, guilt, fear and identity. Besides, learners can explore different literary elements and techniques employed in the story, and learn a number of lessons.

An Astrologer's Day

Punctually at midday he opened his bag and spread out his professional equipment, which consisted of a dozen cowrie shells, a square piece of cloth with obscure mystic charts on it, a notebook and a bundle of palmyra writing. His forehead was resplendent with sacred ash and vermilion, and his eyes sparkled with a sharp abnormal gleam which was really an outcome of a continual searching look for customers, but which his simple clients took to be a prophetic light and felt comforted. The power of his eyes was considerably enhanced by their position—placed as they were between the painted forehead and the dark whiskers which streamed down his cheeks: even a half-wit's eyes would sparkle in such a setting. To crown the effect he wound a saffron-coloured turban around his head. This colour scheme never failed. People were attracted to him as bees are attracted to cosmos or dahlia stalks. He sat under the boughs of a spreading tamarind tree which flanked a path running through the Town Hall Park. It was a remarkable place in many ways: a surging crowd was always moving up and down this narrow road morning till night. A variety of trades and occupations was represented all along its way: medicine-sellers, sellers of stolen hardware and junk, magicians and, above all, an auctioneer of cheap cloth, who created enough din all day to attract the whole town. Next to him in vociferousness came a vendor of fried groundnuts, who gave his ware a fancy name each day, calling it Bombay Ice-Cream one day, and on the next Delhi Almond, and on the third Raja's Delicacy, and so on and so forth, and people flocked to him. A considerable portion of this crowd dallied before the astrologer too. The astrologer transacted his business by the light of a flare which crackled and smoked up above the groundnut heap nearby. Half the enchantment of the place was due to the fact that it did not have the benefit of municipal lighting. The place was lit up by shop lights. One or two had hissing gaslights, some had naked flares stuck on poles, some were lit up by old cycle lamps and one or two, like the astrologer's, managed without lights of their own. It was a bewildering crisscross of light rays and moving shadows. This suited the astrologer very well, for the simple reason that he had not in the least intended to be an astrologer when

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he began life; and he knew no more of what was going to happen to others than he knew what was going to happen to himself next minute. He was as much a stranger to the stars as were his innocent customers. Yet he said things which pleased and astonished everyone: that was more a matter of study, practice and shrewd guesswork. All the same, it was as much an honest man's labour as any other, and he deserved the wages he carried home at the end of a day.

He had left his village without any previous thought or plan. If he had continued there he would have carried on the work of his forefathers—namely, tilling the land, living, marrying and ripening in his cornfield and ancestral home. But that was not to be. He had to leave home without telling anyone, and he could not rest till he left it behind a couple of hundred miles. To a villager it is a great deal, as if an ocean flowed between.

He had a working analysis of mankind's troubles: marriage, money and the tangles of human ties. Long practice had sharpened his perception. Within five minutes he understood what was wrong. He charged three pies per question and never opened his mouth till the other had spoken for at least ten minutes, which provided him enough stuff for a dozen answers and advices. When he told the person before him, gazing at his palm, 'In many ways you are not getting the fullest results for your efforts, ' nine out of ten were disposed to agree with him. Or he questioned: 'Is there any woman in your family, maybe even a distant relative, who is not well disposed towards you?' Or he gave an analysis of character: 'Most of your troubles are due to your nature. How can you be otherwise with Saturn where he is? You have an impetuous nature and a rough exterior.' This endeared him to their hearts immediately, for even the mildest of us loves to think that he has a forbidding exterior.

The nuts-vendor blew out his flare and rose to go home. This was a signal for the astrologer to bundle up too, since it left him in darkness except for a little shaft of green light which strayed in from somewhere and touched the ground before him. He picked up his cowrie shells and paraphernalia and was putting them back into his bag when the green shaft of light was blotted out; he looked up and saw a man standing before him. He sensed a possible client and said: 'You look so careworn. It will do you good to sit down for a while and chat with me.' The other grumbled some vague reply. The astrologer pressed his invitation; whereupon the other thrust his palm under his nose, saying: 'You call yourself an astrologer?' The astrologer felt challenged and said, tilting the other's palm towards the green shaft of light: 'Yours is a nature . . .' 'Oh, stop that,' the other said. 'Tell me something worthwhile . . .'

Our friend felt piqued. 'I charge only three pies per question, and what you get ought to be good enough for your money . . .' At this the other withdrew his arm, took out an anna and flung it out to him, saying, 'I have some questions to ask. If I prove you are bluffing, you must return that anna to me with interest.'

'If you find my answers satisfactory, will you give me five upees?' 'No.'

'Or will you give me eight annas?'

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'All right, provided you give me twice as much if you are wrong,' said the stranger. This pact was accepted after a little further argument. The astrologer sent up a prayer to heaven as the other lit a cheroot. The astrologer caught a glimpse of his face by the match-light. There was a pause as cars hooted on the road, jutka-drivers swore at their horses and the babble of the crowd agitated the semi-darkness of the park. The other sat down, sucking his cheroot, puffing out, sat there ruthlessly. The astrologer felt very uncomfortable. 'Here, take your anna back. I am not used to such challenges. It is late for me today . . .' He made preparations to bundle up. The other held his wrist and said, 'You can't get out of it now. You dragged me in while I was passing.' The astrologer shivered in his grip; and his voice shook and became faint. 'Leave me today. I will speak to you tomorrow.' The other thrust his palm in his face and said, 'Challenge is challenge. Go on.' The astrologer proceeded with his throat drying up. 'There is a woman . . .'

'Stop,' said the other. 'I don't want all that. Shall I succeed in my present search or not? Answer this and go. Otherwise I will not let you go till you disgorge all your coins.' The astrologer muttered a few incantations and replied, 'All right. I will speak. But will you give me a rupee if what I say is convincing? Otherwise I will not open my mouth, and you may do what you like.' After a good deal of haggling the other agreed. The astrologer said, 'You were left for dead. Am I right?'

'Ah, tell me more.'

'A knife has passed through you once?' said the astrologer. 'Good fellow!' He bared his chest to show the scar. 'What else?'

'And then you were pushed into a well nearby in the field. You were left for dead.'

'I should have been dead if some passer-by had not chanced to peep into the well,' exclaimed

the other, overwhelmed by enthusiasm. 'When shall I get at him?' he asked, clenching his fist.

'In the next world,' answered the astrologer. 'He died four months ago in a far-off town. You will never see any more of him.' The other groaned on hearing it. The astrologer proceeded.

'Guru Nayak—'

'You know my name!' the other said, taken aback.

'As I know all other things. Guru Nayak, listen carefully to what I have to say. Your village is two days' journey due north of this town. Take the next train and be gone. I see once again great danger to your life if you go from home.' He took out a pinch of sacred ash and held it out to him. 'Rub it on your forehead and go home. Never travel southward again, and you will live to be a hundred.'

'Why should I leave home again?' the other said reflectively. 'I was only going away now and then to look for him and to choke out his life if I met him.' He shook his head regretfully.

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'He has escaped my hands. I hope at least he died as he deserved.' 'Yes,' said the astrologer. 'He was crushed under a lorry.' The other looked gratified to hear it.

The place was deserted by the time the astrologer picked up his articles and put them into his bag. The green shaft was also gone, leaving the place in darkness and silence. The stranger had gone off into the night, after giving the astrologer a handful of coins.

It was nearly midnight when the astrologer reached home. His wife was waiting for him at the door and demanded an explanation. He flung the coins at her and said, 'Count them. One man gave all that.'

'Twelve and a half annas,' she said, counting. She was overjoyed. 'I can buy some jaggery and coconut tomorrow. The child has been asking for sweets for so many days now. I will prepare some nice stuff for her.'

'The swine has cheated me! He promised me a rupee,' said the astrologer. She looked up at him. 'You look worried. What is wrong?'

'Nothing.'

After dinner, sitting on the pyol, he told her, 'Do you know a great load is gone from me today? I thought I had the blood of a man on my hands all these years. That was the reason why I ran away from home, settled here and married you. He is alive.'

She gasped. 'You tried to kill!'

'Yes, in our village, when I was a silly youngster. We drank, gambled and quarrelled badly one day—why think of it now? Time to sleep,' he said, yawning, and stretched himself on the pyol.

About the Author

*Rasipuram Krishnaswami Iyer Narayanaswami (*R.K. Narayan) *(10 October 1906-13 May 2001) was an Indian writer known for his work set in the fictional South Indian town of Malgudi. He was a leading author of early Indian literature in English along with Mulk Raj Anand and Raja Rao. Narayan highlights the social context and everyday life of his characters.*

In a career that spanned over sixty years Narayan received many awards and honours including the AC Benson Medal from the Royal Society of Literature, the Padma Vibhushan and the Padma Bhushan, India's second and third highest civilian awards,[2] and in 1994 the Sahitya Akademi Fellowship, the highest honor of India's national academy of letters.[3] He was also nominated to the Rajya Sabha, the upper house of the Indian Parliament.

Making Connections

1. What is the theme of the story?
2. What are some literary techniques used in the story to create suspense and build the astrologer's character?
3. What do you think is the main conflict in the story? How is it resolved?
4. How does the ending of the story alter our understanding of the astrologer's character?
5. Identify as many imageries and symbols used in the text and explain how they contribute toward making "An Astrologer's Day" a good story.
6. Do you believe in astrologers or fortune tellers? Why?

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SUPPLEMENTARY

1. The Last Leaf – *O' Henry*

IN A SMALL PART OF THE CITY WEST OF Washington Square, the streets have gone wild. They turn in different directions. They are broken into small pieces called "places." One street goes across itself one or two times. A painter once discovered something possible and valuable about this street. Suppose a painter had some painting materials for which he had not paid. Suppose he had no money. Suppose a man came to get the money. The man might walk down that street and suddenly meet himself coming back, without having received a cent!

This part of the city is called Greenwich Village. And to old Greenwich Village the painters soon came. Here they found rooms they like, with good light and at a low cost.

Sue and Johnsy lived at the top of a building with three floors. One of these young women came from Maine, the other from California. They had met at a restaurant on Eighth Street. There they discovered that they liked the same kind of art, the same kind of food, and the same kind of clothes. So they decided to live and work together.

That was in the spring.

Toward winter a cold stranger entered Greenwich Village. No one could see him. He walked around touching one person here and another there with his icy fingers. He was a bad sickness. Doctors called him Pneumonia. On the east side of the city he hurried, touching many people; but in the narrow streets of Greenwich Village he did not move so quickly.

Mr. Pneumonia was not a nice old gentleman. A nice old gentleman would not hurt a weak little woman from California. But Mr. Pneumonia touched Johnsy with his cold fingers. She lay on her bed almost without moving, and she looked through the window at the wall of the house next to hers.

One morning the busy doctor spoke to Sue alone in the hall, where Johnsy could not hear.

"She has a very small chance," he said. "She has a chance, if she wants to live. If people don't want to live, I can't do much for them. Your little lady has decided that she is not going to get well. Is there something that is troubling her?"

"She always wanted to go to Italy and paint a picture of the Bay of Naples," said Sue.

"Paint! Not paint. Is there anything worth being troubled about?

A man?"

"A man?" said Sue. "Is a man worth—No, doctor. There is not a man."

"It is weakness," said the doctor. "I will do all I know how to do. But when a sick person

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begins to feel that he's going to die, half my work is useless. Talk to her about new winter clothes. If she were interested in the future, her chances would be better."

After the doctor had gone, Sue went into the workroom to cry.

Then she walked into Johnsy's room. She carried some of her painting materials, and she was singing.

Johnsy lay there, very thin and very quiet. Her face was turned toward the window. Sue stopped singing, thinking that Johnsy was asleep.

Sue began to work. As she worked she heard a low sound, again and again. She went quickly to the bedside.

Johnsy's eyes were open wide. She was looking out the window and counting—counting back.

"Twelve," she said; and a little later, "Eleven"; and then, "Ten," and, "Nine"; and then, "Eight," and, "Seven," almost together.

Sue looked out the window. What was there to count? There was only the side wall of the next house, a short distance away. The wall had no window. An old, old tree grew against the wall. The cold breath of winter had already touched it. Almost all its leaves had fallen from its dark branches.

"What is it, dear?" asked Sue.

"Six," said Johnsy, in a voice still lower. "They're falling faster now. Three days ago there were almost a hundred. It hurt my head to count them. But now it's easy. There goes another one. There are only five now."

"Five what, dear? Tell your Sue."

"Leaves. On the tree. When the last one falls, I must go, too. I've known that for three days. Didn't the doctor tell you?"

"Oh, I never heard of such a thing," said Sue. "It doesn't have any sense in it. What does an old tree have to do with you? Or with your getting well? And you used to love that tree so much. Don't be a little fool. The doctor told me your chances for getting well. He told me this morning. He said you had very good chances! Try to eat a little now. And then I'll go back to work. And then I can sell my picture, and then I can buy something more for you to eat to make you strong."

"You don't have to buy anything for me," said Johnsy. She still looked out the window. "There goes another. No, I don't want any- thing to eat. Now there are four. I want to see the last one fall before night. Then I'll go, too."

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"Johnsy, dear," said Sue, "will you promise me to close your eyes and keep them closed? Will you promise not to look out the window until I finish working? I must have this picture ready tomorrow. I need the light; I can't cover the window."

"Couldn't you work in the other room?" asked Johnsy coldly. "I'd rather be here by you," said Sue. "And I don't want you to look at those leaves."

"Tell me as soon as you have finished," said Johnsy. She closed her eyes and lay white and still. "Because I want to see the last leaf fall. I have done enough waiting. I have done enough thinking. I want to go sailing down, down, like one of those leaves."

"Try to sleep," said Sue. "I must call Behrman to come up here. I want to paint a man in this picture, and I'll make him look like Behrman. I won't be gone a minute. Don't try to move till I come back."

Old Behrman was a painter who lived on the first floor of their house. He was past sixty. He had had no success as a painter. For forty years he had painted, without ever painting a good picture. He had always talked of painting a great picture, a masterpiece, but he had never yet started it.

He got a little money by letting others paint pictures of him. He drank too much. He still talked of his great masterpiece. And he believed that it was his special duty to do everything possible to help Sue and Johnsy.

Sue found him in his dark room, and she knew that he had been drinking. She could smell it. She told him about Johnsy and the leaves on the vine. She said that she was afraid that Johnsy would indeed sail down, down like the leaf. Her hold on the world was growing weaker.

Old Behrman shouted his anger over such an idea.

"What!" he cried. "Are there such fools? Do people die because leaves drop off a tree? I have not heard of such a thing. No, I will not come up and sit while you make a picture of me. Why do you allow her to think such a thing? That poor little Johnsy!"

"She is very sick and weak," said Sue. "The sickness has put these strange ideas into her mind. Mr. Behrman, if you won't come, you won't. But I don't think you're very nice."

"This is like a woman!" shouted Behrman. "Who said I will not come? Go. I come with you. For half an hour I have been trying to say that I will come. God! This is not any place for someone so good as Johnsy to lie sick. Someday I shall paint my masterpiece, and we shall all go away from here. God! Yes."

Johnsy was sleeping when they went up. Sue covered the window, and took Behrman into the other room. There they looked out the window fearfully at the tree. Then they looked at each other for a moment without speaking. A cold rain was falling, with a little snow in it too.

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Behrman sat down, and Sue began to paint. She worked through most of the night.

In the morning, after an hour's sleep, she went to Johnsy's bedside. Johnsy with wide-open eyes was looking toward the window. "I want to see," she told Sue.

Sue took the cover from the window.

But after the beating rain and the wild wind that had not stopped through the whole night, there still was one leaf to be seen against the wall. It was the last on the tree. It was still dark green near the branch. But at the edges it was turning yellow with age. There it was hanging from a branch nearly twenty feet above the ground.

"It is the last one," said Johnsy. "I thought it would surely fall during the night. I heard the wind. It will fall today, and I shall die at the same time."

"Dear, dear Johnsy!" said Sue. "Think of me, if you won't think of yourself. What would I do?"

But Johnsy did not answer. The most lonely thing in the world is a soul when it is preparing to go on its far journey. The ties that held her to friendship and to earth were breaking, one by one.

The day slowly passed. As it grew dark, they could still see the leaf hanging from its branch against the wall. And then, as the night came, the north wind began again to blow. The rain still beat against the windows.

When it was light enough the next morning, Johnsy again commanded that she be allowed to see.

The leaf was still there.

Johnsy lay for a long time looking at it. And then she called to Sue, who was cooking something for her to eat.

"I've been a bad girl, Sue," said Johnsy. "Something has made that last leaf stay there to show me how bad I was. It is wrong to want to die. I'll try to eat now. But first bring me a looking-glass, so that I can see myself. And then I'll sit up and watch you cook."

An hour later she said, "Sue, someday I hope to paint the Bay of Naples."

The doctor came in the afternoon. Sue followed him into the hall outside Johnsy's room to talk to him.

"The chances are good," said the doctor. He took Sue's thin, shaking hand in his. "Give her good care, and she'll get well. And now I must see another sick person in this house. His name is Behrman. A painter, I believe. Pneumonia, too. Mike is an old, weak man, and he is

very ill. There is no hope for him. But we take him to the hospital today. We'll make it as easy for him as we can."

The next day the doctor said to Sue: "She's safe. You have done it. Food and care now—that's all."

And that afternoon Sue came to the bed where Johnsy lay. She put one arm around her.

"I have something to tell you," she said. "Mr. Behrman died of pneumonia today in the hospital. He was ill only two days. Someone found him on the morning of the first day, in his room. He was help- less with pain."

"His shoes and his clothes were wet and as cold as ice. Everyone wondered where he had been. The night had been so cold and wild.

"And then they found some things. There was a light that he had taken outside. And there were his materials for painting. There was paint, green paint and yellow paint. And—

"Look out the window, dear, at the last leaf on the wall. Didn't you wonder why it never moved when the wind was blowing? Oh, my dear, it is Behrman's great masterpiece—he painted it there the night that the last leaf fell."

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2. Face On The Wall – *E.V. Lucas*

We were talking of events which cannot be explained by natural causes at Dabney's last evening. Most of us had given an instance without producing much effect. Among the strangers to me was a little man with an anxious face. He watched each speaker with the closest attention, but said nothing. Then Dabney wishing to include him in the talk, turned to him and asked if he had no experience he could narrate – no story that could be explained. He thought a moment. "Well," he said, 'not a story in the ordinary sense of the word; nothing like most of your examples. Truth, I always believe, is not only stringer than a made up story, but also greatly more interesting. I could tell you an occurrence which happened to me personally and which strangely enough completed itself only this afternoon."

We begged him to begin.

"A year or two ago," he said, "I was in rooms in an old house in Great Ormond Street. The bedroom walls had been painted by the previous tenant, but the place was damp and there were great patches on the walls. One of these – as indeed often happens – exactly like a face. Lying on a bed in the morning and delaying getting up I came to think of it as real as my fellow lodger. In fact, the strange thing was that while the patches on the wall grew larger and changed their shapes, this never did. It remained just the same.

"While there I fell ill with influenza, and all day long I had nothing to do but read or think, and it was then that the face began to get a firmer hold of me. It grew more and more real and remarkable. I may say that it filled my thoughts day and night. There was a curious curve of the nose and the forehead was remarkable, in fact the face of an uncommon man, a man in a thousand."

"Well, I got better, but the face still controlled me, found myself searching the streets for one like it. Somewhere, I was convinced, the real man must exist, and him I must meet. Why, I had no idea; I only knew that he and I were in some way linked by fate. I often went to places where people gather in large numbers – political meetings, football matches, railway stations. But all in vain. I had never before realized as I then did how many different faces of man there are and how few. For all faces differ, and yet they can be grouped into few types."

"The search became a madness with me. I neglected everything else. I stood at busy corners watching the crowd until people thought me mad, and the police began to know me and be suspicious. I never looked at women; men, men, men, all the time."

He passed his hand over his brow as if he was very tired. "And then," he continued. "I at last saw him. He was in a taxi driving east along Piccadilly. I turned and ran beside it for a little way and then saw an empty one coming. 'Follow that taxi,' I said and leaped in. The driver managed to keep it in sight and it took us to Charing Cross. I rushed on to the platform

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and found my man with two ladies and a little girl. They were going to France. I stayed there trying to get a word with him, but in vain. Other friends had joined the party and they moved to the train in one group."

I hastily purchased a ticket to Folkstone, hoping that I should catch him on the boat before it sailed; but at Folkstone he got on the ship before me with his friends, and they disappeared into a large private cabin. Evidently he was a rich man."

"Again I was defeated; but I determined to go with him, feeling certain that when the voyage had begun he would leave the ladies and come out for a walk on the deck. I had only just enough for a single fare to Boulogne but nothing could stop me now. I took up my position opposite his cabin door and waited. After half an hour the door opened and he came out, but with the little girl. My heart beat fast. There was no mistaking the face, every line was the same. He looked at me and moved towards the way to the upper deck. It was now or never, I felt."

"Excuse me," I stammered, "but do you mind giving me your card? I have a very important reason in asking it."

"He seemed to be greatly surprised, as indeed well he might; but he granted my request. Slowly he took out his case and handed me his card and hurried on with the little girl. It was clear that he thought me mad and thought it wiser to please me than not."

"Holding the card tight in my hand I hurried to a lonely corner of the ship and read it. My eyes grew dim; my head reeled; for on it were the words; Mr. Ormond Wall, with an address at Pittsburgh, U.S.A. I remember no more until I found myself in a hospital at Boulogne. There I lay in a broken condition for some weeks, and only a month ago did I return."

He was silent.

We looked at him and at one another and waited. All the other talk of the evening was nothing compared with the story of the little pale man.

"I went back," he started once again after a moment or so, "to Great Ormond Street and set to work to find out all I could about this American. I wrote to Pittsburgh; I wrote to American editors; I made friends with Americans in London: but all that I could find out was that he was a millionaire with English parents who had resided in London. But where? To that question I received no answer."

"And so the time went on until yesterday morning, I had gone to bed more than usually tired and slept till late. When I woke, the room was bright with sunlight. As I always do, I looked at once at the wall on which the face is to be seen. I rubbed my eyes and sprang up. It was only faintly visible. Last night it had been clear as ever – almost I could hear it speak. And now it was a ghost of itself."

"I got up confused and sad and went out. The early editions of the papers were already out. I saw the headline, 'American Millionaire's Motor Accident.' You all must have seen it. I bought it and read. Mr. Ormond Wall, the Pittsburgh millionaire, and party, motoring in Italy, were hit by a wagon and the car overturned. Mr. Wall's condition was critical."

"I went back to my room and sat on the bed looking with unseeing eyes at the face on the wall. And even as I looked, suddenly it completely disappeared."

"Later I found that Mr. Wall died of his injuries at what I take it to be that very moment."

Again he was silent.

"Most remarkable," we said, "most extraordinary," and so forth, and we meant it too.

"Yes," said the stranger. "There are three extraordinary, three most remarkable things about my story. One is that it should be possible for a patch on the wall of a house in London not only to form the features of a gentleman in America but also to have a close association with his life. Science will not be able to explain that yet. Another one is that the gentleman's name should bear any relation to the spot on which his features were being so curiously reproduced by some unknown agency. Is it not so?"

We agreed with him, and our original discussion on supernatural occurrences set in again with increased excitement, during which the narrator of the amazing experience rose up and said good-night. Just as he was at the door, one of the company recalled us to the cause of our excited debate by asking him, before he left what he considered the third most exciting thing in connection with his deeply interesting story. "You said three thing, you know?" said he.

"Oh, the third thing," he said, as he opened the door, "I was forgetting that. The third extraordinary thing about the story is that I made it up about half an hour ago. Good-night again."

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3. The Beggar – *Anton Chekov*

"KIND sir, be so good as to notice a poor, hungry man. I have not tasted food for three days. I have not a five-kopeck piece for a night's lodging. I swear by God! For five years I was a village schoolmaster and lost my post through the intrigues of the Zemstvo. I was the victim of false witness. I have been out of a place for a year now."

Skvortsov, a Petersburg lawyer, looked at the speaker's tattered dark blue overcoat, at his muddy, drunken eyes, at the red patches on his cheeks, and it seemed to him that he had seen the man before.

"And now I am offered a post in the Kaluga province," the beggar continued, "but I have not the means for the journey there. Graciously help me! I am ashamed to ask, but . . . I am compelled by circumstances."

Skvortsov looked at his goloshes, of which one was shallow like a shoe, while the other came high up the leg like a boot, and suddenly remembered.

"Listen, the day before yesterday I met you in Sadovoy Street," he said, "and then you told me, not that you were a village schoolmaster, but that you were a student who had been expelled. Do you remember?"

"N-o. No, that cannot be so!" the beggar muttered in confusion. "I am a village schoolmaster, and if you wish it I can show you documents to prove it."

"That's enough lies! You called yourself a student, and even told me what you were expelled for. Do you remember?"

Skvortsov flushed, and with a look of disgust on his face turned away from the ragged figure.

"It's contemptible, sir!" he cried angrily. "It's a swindle! I'll hand you over to the police, damn you! You are poor and hungry, but that does not give you the right to lie so shamelessly!"

The ragged figure took hold of the door-handle and, like a bird in a snare, looked round the hall desperately.

"I . . . I am not lying," he muttered. "I can show documents."

"Who can believe you?" Skvortsov went on, still indignant. "To exploit the sympathy of the public for village schoolmasters and students -- it's so low, so mean, so dirty! It's revolting!"

Skvortsov flew into a rage and gave the beggar a merciless scolding. The ragged fellow's insolent lying aroused his disgust and aversion, was an offence against what he, Skvortsov,

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loved and prized in himself: kindliness, a feeling heart, sympathy for the unhappy. By his lying, by his treacherous assault upon compassion, the individual had, as it were, defiled the charity which he liked to give to the poor with no misgivings in his heart. The beggar at first defended himself, protested with oaths, then he sank into silence and hung his head, overcome with shame.

"Sir!" he said, laying his hand on his heart, "I really was . . . lying! I am not a student and not a village schoolmaster. All that's mere invention! I used to be in the Russian choir, and I was turned out of it for drunkenness. But what can I do? Believe me, in God's name, I can't get on without lying -- when I tell the truth no one will give me anything. With the truth one may die of hunger and freeze without a night's lodging! What you say is true, I understand that, but . . . what am I to do?"

"What are you to do? You ask what are you to do?" cried Skvortsov, going close up to him. "Work -- that's what you must do! You must work!"

"Work. I know that myself, but where can I get work?"

"Nonsense. You are young, strong, and healthy, and could always find work if you wanted to. But you know you are lazy, pampered, drunken! You reek of vodka like a pothouse! You have become false and corrupt to the marrow of your bones and fit for nothing but begging and lying! If you do graciously condescend to take work, you must have a job in an office, in the Russian choir, or as a billiard-marker, where you will have a salary and have nothing to do! But how would you like to undertake manual labour? I'll be bound, you wouldn't be a house porter or a factory hand! You are too genteel for that!"

"What things you say, really " said the beggar, and he gave a bitter smile. "How can I get manual

work? It's rather late for me to be a shopman, for in trade one has to begin from a boy; no one would take me as a house porter, because I am not of that class. And I could not get work in a factory; one must know a trade, and I know nothing."

"Nonsense! You always find some justification! Wouldn't you like to chop wood?" "I would not refuse to, but the regular woodchoppers are out of work now."

"Oh, all idlers argue like that! As soon as you are offered anything you refuse it. Would you care to chop wood for me?"

"Certainly I will. "

"Very good, we shall see. Excellent. We'll see!" Skvortsov, in nervous haste; and not without malignant pleasure, rubbing his hands, summoned his cook from the kitchen.

"Here, Olga," he said to her, "take this gentleman to the shed and let him chop some wood."

The beggar shrugged his shoulders as though puzzled, and irresolutely followed the cook. It was evident from his demeanour that he had consented to go and chop wood, not because he was hungry and wanted to earn money, but simply from shame and amour propre, because he had been taken at his word. It was clear, too, that he was suffering from the effects of vodka, that he was unwell, and felt not the faintest inclination to work.

Skvortsov hurried into the dining-room. There from the window which looked out into the yard he could see the woodshed and everything that happened in the yard. Standing at the window, Skvortsov saw the cook and the beggar come by the back way into the yard and go through the muddy snow to the woodshed. Olga scrutinized her companion angrily, and jerking her elbow unlocked the woodshed and angrily banged the door open.

"Most likely we interrupted the woman drinking her coffee," thought Skvortsov. "What a cross creature she is! "

Then he saw the pseudo-schoolmaster and pseudo-student seat himself on a block of wood, and, leaning his red cheeks upon his fists, sink into thought. The cook flung an axe at his feet, spat angrily on the ground, and, judging by the expression of her lips, began abusing him. The beggar drew a log of wood towards him irresolutely, set it up between his feet, and diffidently drew the axe across it. The log toppled and fell over. The beggar drew it towards him, breathed on his frozen hands, and again drew the axe along it as cautiously as though he were afraid of its hitting his golosh or chopping off his fingers. The log fell over again.

Skvortsov's wrath had passed off by now, he felt sore and ashamed at the thought that he had forced a pampered, drunken, and perhaps sick man to do hard, rough work in the cold.

"Never mind, let him go on . . ." he thought, going from the dining-room into his study. "I am doing it for his good!"

An hour later Olga appeared and announced that the wood had been chopped up.

"Here, give him half a rouble," said Skvortsov. "If he likes, let him come and chop wood on the first of every month. There will always be work for him."

On the first of the month the beggar turned up and again earned half a rouble, though he could hardly stand. From that time forward he took to turning up frequently, and work was always found for him: sometimes he would sweep the snow into heaps, or clear up the shed, at another he used to beat the rugs and the mattresses. He always received thirty to forty kopecks for his work, and on one occasion an old pair of trousers was sent out to him.

When he moved, Skvortsov engaged him to assist in packing and moving the furniture. On this occasion the beggar was sober, gloomy, and silent; he scarcely touched the furniture, walked with hanging head behind the furniture vans, and did not even try to appear busy; he merely shivered with the cold, and was overcome with confusion when the men with the vans laughed at his idleness, feebleness, and ragged coat that had once been a gentleman's.

After the removal Skvortsov sent for him.

"Well, I see my words have had an effect upon you," he said, giving him a rouble. "This is for your work. I see that you are sober and not disinclined to work. What is your name?"

"Lushkov."

"I can offer you better work, not so rough, Lushkov. Can you write?" "Yes, sir."

"Then go with this note to-morrow to my colleague and he will give you some copying to do. Work, don't drink, and don't forget what I said to you. Good-bye."

Skvortsov, pleased that he had put a man in the path of rectitude, patted Lushkov genially on the

shoulder, and even shook hands with him at parting. Lushkov took the letter, departed, and from that time forward did not come to the back-yard for work.

Two years passed. One day as Skvortsov was standing at the ticket-office of a theatre, paying for his ticket, he saw beside him a little man with a lambskin collar and a shabby cat's-skin cap. The man timidly asked the clerk for a gallery ticket and paid for it with kopecks.

"Lushkov, is it you?" asked Skvortsov, recognizing in the little man his former woodchopper. "Well, what are you doing? Are you getting on all right?"

"Pretty well. I am in a notary's office now. I earn thirty-five roubles."

"Well, thank God, that's capital. I rejoice for you. I am very, very glad, Lushkov. You know, in a way, you are my godson. It was I who shoved you into the right way. Do you remember what a scolding I gave you, eh? You almost sank through the floor that time. Well, thank you, my dear fellow, for remembering my words."

"Thank you too," said Lushkov. "If I had not come to you that day, maybe I should be calling myself a schoolmaster or a student still. Yes, in your house I was saved, and climbed out of the pit."

"I am very, very glad."

"Thank you for your kind words and deeds. What you said that day was excellent. I am grateful to you and to your cook, God bless that kind, noble-hearted woman. What you said that day was excellent; I am indebted to you as long as I live, of course, but it was your cook, Olga, who really saved me."

"How was that?"

"Why, it was like this. I used to come to you to chop wood and she would begin: 'Ah, you drunkard! You God-forsaken man! And yet death does not take you!' and then she would

sit opposite me, lamenting, looking into my face and wailing: 'You unlucky fellow! You have no gladness in this world, and in the next you will burn in hell, poor drunkard! You poor sorrowful creature!' and she always went on in that style, you know. How often she upset herself, and how many tears she shed over me I can't tell you. But what affected me most -- she chopped the wood for me! Do you know, sir, I never chopped a single log for you -- she did it all! How it was she saved me, how it was I changed, looking at her, and gave up drinking, I can't explain. I only know that what she said and the noble way she behaved brought about a change in my soul, and I shall never forget it. It's time to go up, though, they are just going to ring the bell."

Lushkov bowed and went off to the gallery.

POETRY

Reprint 2024

1. Digging - *Seamus Heaney*

Between my finger and my thumb
The squat pen rests; snug as a gun.

Under my window, a clean rasping sound
When the spade sinks into gravelly ground.
My father, digging. I look down

Till his straining rump among the flowerbeds
Bends low, comes up twenty years away
Stooping in rhythm through potato drills
Where he was digging.

The coarse boot nestled on the lug, the shaft
Against the inside knee was levered firmly.
He rooted out tall tops, buried the bright edge deep
To scatter new potatoes that we need picked
Loving their cool hardness in our hands.

By God, the old man could handle a spade,
Just like his old man.

My grandfather cut more turf in a day
Than any other man on Toner's bog.
Once I carried him milk in a bottle
Corked sloppily with paper. He straightened up
To drink it, then fell to right away

Nicking and slicing neatly, heaving sods
Over his shoulder, going down and down
For the good turf. Digging.
The cold smell of potato mould, the squelch and slap
Of soggy peat, the curt cuts of an edge
Through living roots awaken in my head.
But I've no spade to follow men like them

Between my finger and my thumb
The squat pen rests.
I'll dig with it.

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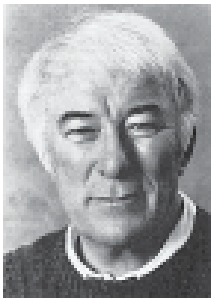
About the Poet

Seamus Heaney *was born in April 1939. He grew up as a country boy and attended the local primary school. When he was twelve years of age, Seamus Heaney won a scholarship to St. Columb's College, a Catholic boarding school situated in the city of Derry, forty miles away from the home farm, and this first departure from Mossbawn was the decisive one. It was followed by a transfer to Belfast and by another move to the Irish Republic where Heaney has made his home. All of these subsequent shifts and developments were dependent, however, upon that original journey from Mossbawn which the poet has described as a removal from "the earth of farm labour to the heaven of education." It is not surprising, then, that this move has turned out to be a recurrent theme in his work, from "Digging", the first poem in his first book, through the much more orchestrated treatment of it in "Alphabets"(The Haw Lantern, 1987), to its most recent appearance in "A Sofa in the Forties" which was published this year in The Spirit Level.*

The first verses he wrote when he was a young teacher in Belfast in the early 1960s and many of the best known poems in North, his important volume published in 1975, are linguistically tuned to the Anglo-Saxon note in English. Heaney's poems first came to public attention in the mid-1960s when he was active as one of a group of poets who were subsequently recognized as constituting something of a "Northern School" within Irish writing. Heaney married Marie who was to be the mother of his three children. She has been central to the poet's life, both professionally and imaginatively, appearing directly and indirectly in individual poems from all periods of his oeuvre right down to the most recent, and making it possible for him to travel annually to Harvard.



In 1984, Heaney was named Boylston Professor of Rhetoric and Oratory, one of the university's most prestigious offices. In 1989, he was elected for a five-year period to be Professor of Poetry at Oxford University, a post which requires the incumbent to deliver three public lectures every year but which does not require him to reside in Oxford. In recent years, he has been the recipient of several honorary degrees; he is a member of Aosdana, the Irish academy of artists and writers, and a Foreign Member of The American Academy of Arts and Letters. In 1996, subsequent to his winning the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1995, he was made a Commandeur de L'Ordre des Arts et Lettres by the French Ministry of Culture. - From Les Prix_Nobel 1995.

Make Connections

1) Who is the speaker in the poem? What is the occasion?
2) What kinds of emotions does the poem evoke in you as you read it?
3) How is digging with a spade similar to 'digging' with a pen?
4) How does the poem reflect the changes taking place in Bhutan?

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2. Ulysses - *Alfred, Lord Tennyson*

It little profits that an idle king,
By this still hearth, among these barren crags,
Match'd with an aged wife, I mete and dole
Unequal laws unto a savage race,
That hoard, and sleep, and feed, and know not me.
I cannot rest from travel; I will drink
Life to the lees. All times I have enjoy'd
Greatly, have suffer'd greatly, both with those
That loved me, and alone; on shore, and when
Thro' scudding drifts the rainy Hyades
Vext the dim sea. I am become a name;
For always roaming with a hungry heart
Much have I seen and known,— cities of men
And manners, climates, councils, governments,
Myself not least, but honor'd of them all,—
And drunk delight of battle with my peers,
Far on the ringing plains of windy Troy.
I am a part of all that I have met;
Yet all experience is an arch wherethro'
Gleams that untravell'd world whose margin fades
For ever and for ever when I move.
How dull it is to pause, to make an end,
To rust unburnish'd, not to shine in use!
As tho' to breathe were life! Life piled on life
Were all too little, and of one to me
Little remains; but every hour is saved
From that eternal silence, something more,
A bringer of new things; and vile it were
For some three suns to store and hoard myself,
And this gray spirit yearning in desire
To follow knowledge like a sinking star,
Beyond the utmost bound of human thought.
This is my son, mine own Telemachus,
to whom I leave the sceptre and the isle,—
Well-loved of me, discerning to fulfill
This labor, by slow prudence to make mild
A rugged people, and thro' soft degrees

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Subdue them to the useful and the good.
Most blameless is he, centred in the sphere
Of common duties, decent not to fail
In offices of tenderness, and pay
Meet adoration to my household gods,
When I am gone. He works his work, I mine.
There lies the port; the vessel puffs her sail;
There gloom the dark, broad seas. My mariners,
Souls that have toil'd, and wrought, and thought with me,—
That ever with a frolic welcome took
The thunder and the sunshine, and opposed
Free hearts, free foreheads,— you and I are old;
Old age hath yet his honor and his toil.
Death closes all; but something ere the end,
Some work of noble note, may yet be done,
Not unbecoming men that strove with Gods.
The lights begin to twinkle from the rocks;
The long day wanes; the slow moon climbs; the deep
Moans round with many voices. Come, my friends.
'T is not too late to seek a newer world.
Push off, and sitting well in order smite
The sounding furrows; for my purpose holds
To sail beyond the sunset, and the baths
Of all the western stars, until I die.
It may be that the gulfs will wash us down;
It may be we shall touch the Happy Isles,
And see the great Achilles, whom we knew.
Tho' much is taken, much abides; and tho'
We are not now that strength which in old days
Moved earth and heaven, that which we are, we are,—
One equal temper of heroic hearts,
Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will
To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield.

About the Author

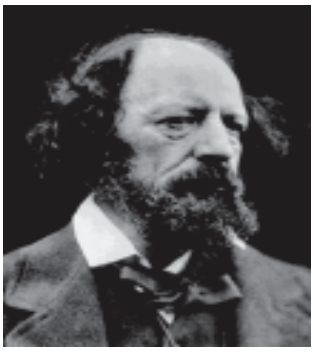
Alfred Tennyson was born August 6th, 1809, at Somersby, Lincolnshire, fourth of twelve children of George and Elizabeth (Fytche) Tennyson.

In 1827 he followed his two older brothers to Trinity College, Cambridge, where his tutor was William. Because

they had published Poems by Two Brothers in 1827 and each won university prizes for poetry (Alfred winning the Chancellor's Gold Medal in 1828 for ÒTimbuctooÓ) the Tennyson brothers became well known at Cambridge. In 1829 The Apostles, an undergraduate club, whose members remained Tennyson's friends all his life, invited him to join. The group, which met to discuss major philosophical and other issues, included Arthur Henry Hallam, James Spedding, Edward Lushington (who later married Cecilia Tennyson), and Richard Monckton Milnes—all eventually famous men who merited entries in the Dictionary of National Biography. Arthur Hallam's was the most important of these friendships. He and Tennyson knew each other only four years, but their intense friendship had major influence on the poet. Hallam's death from illness in 1833 (he was only 22) shocked Tennyson profoundly, and his grief lead to most of his best poetry, including "In Memoriam", "The Passing of Arthur", "Ulysses", and "Tithonus".

Since Tennyson was always sensitive to criticism, the mixed reception of his 1832 Poems hurt him greatly. Critics in those days delighted in the harshness of their reviews: the Quarterly Review was known as the "Hang, draw, and quarterly." John Wilson Croker's harsh criticisms of some of the poems in our anthology kept Tennyson from publishing again for another nine years. The success of his 1842 Poems made Tennyson a popular poet, and in 1845 he received a Civil List (government) pension of £200 a year, which helped relieve his financial difficulties; the success of "The Princess" and "In Memoriam" and his appointment in 1850 as Poet Laureate finally established him as the most popular poet of the Victorian era.

By now Tennyson, only 41, had written some of his greatest poetry, but he continued to write and to gain in popularity. In 1853, as the Tennysons were moving into their new house on the Isle of Wight, Prince Albert dropped in unannounced. His admiration for Tennyson's poetry helped solidify his position as the national poet, and Tennyson returned the favor by dedicating "The Idylls of the King" to his memory. Queen Victoria later summoned him to court several times, and at her insistence he accepted his title, having declined it when offered by both Disraeli and Gladstone.



Tennyson suffered from extreme short-sightedness—without a monocle he could not even see to eat—which gave him considerable difficulty writing and reading, and this disability in part accounts for his manner of creating poetry: Tennyson composed much of his poetry in his head, occasionally working on individual poems for many years. During his undergraduate days at Cambridge he often did not bother to write down his compositions, although the Apostles continually prodded him to do so. (We owe the first version of "The Lotos-Eaters" to Arthur Hallam, who transcribed it while Tennyson declaimed it at a meeting of the Apostles.) Long-lived like most of his family (no matter how unhealthy they seemed to be) Alfred, Lord Tennyson died on October 6, 1892, at the age of 83.

Make Connections

1. In what ways is this poem similar to My Last Duchess that you read in class XI?
2. Make a list of the figures of speech and images used in the poem. Think about how effective they are in conveying the meaning in each case.
3. Write a character sketch of the speaker in the poem.
4. How is the line, 'Yet all experiences is….for ever when I move' a metaphor for life?

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3. La Belle Dame sans Merci - *John Keats*

Rationale

"La Belle Dame sans Merci" is a ballad which is one of the oldest poetic forms in English. The poem explores themes that are timeless such as beauty, love, and death. The images in the poem are vivid and evocative.

John Keats is considered as one of the greatest poets of Romantic era. His poems are known for their musical language and powerful imagery which transport readers to different worlds and help them see the world from different perspectives. Keats unique style of writing makes readers appreciate the beauty of language, and thus help students improve their own writing by imbibing his style.

La Belle Dame sans Merci

O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms,
Alone and palely loitering?
The sedge has withered from the lake,
And no birds sing.

O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms,
So haggard and so woe-begone?
The squirrel's granary is full,
And the harvest's done.

I see a lily on thy brow,
With anguish moist and fever-dew,
And on thy cheeks a fading rose
Fast withereth too.

I met a lady in the meads,
Full beautiful—a faery's child,
Her hair was long, her foot was light,
And her eyes were wild.

I made a garland for her head,
And bracelets too, and fragrant zone;
She looked at me as she did love,
And made sweet moan

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I set her on my pacing steed,
And nothing else saw all day long,
For sidelong would she bend, and sing
A faery's song.

She found me roots of relish sweet,
And honey wild, and manna-dew,
And sure in language strange she said—
'I love thee true'.

She took me to her Elfin grot,
And there she wept and sighed full sore,
And there I shut her wild wild eyes
With kisses four.

And there she lullèd me asleep,
And there I dreamed—Ah! woe betide!—
The latest dream I ever dreamt
On the cold hill side.

I saw pale kings and princes too,
Pale warriors, death-pale were they all;
They cried—'La Belle Dame sans Merci
Thee hath in thrall!'

I saw their starved lips in the gloam,
With horrid warning gapèd wide,
And I awoke and found me here,
On the cold hill's side.

And this is why I sojourn here,
Alone and palely loitering,
Though the sedge is withered from the lake,
And no birds sing.

About the Author

John Keats (1795-1821) was an English Romantic poet. He gave up a possible career in surgery to devote his time and energies to poetry. In his brief but remarkable career he wrote some great poetry including his famous odes: ***Ode to Nightingale, Ode to a Skylark*** *and many more.*

Making Connections

1. Who is the speaker in the first three stanzas? Why do you think these stanzas are made to be spoken by a different persona? What effect does this create?
2. Locate all the adjectives in the poem. Why does Keats use so many adjectives? What effect do they create? What would happen if you read the poem without the adjectives?
3. How does Keats use form and imagery in the poem to convey his ideas, thoughts and feelings?
4. What does the poem suggest about the nature of love in general?
5. You must have heard stories about adventurous events or unusual deeds performed by people in the past. Try and write down about the event or the person in the form of ballad.

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4. How Do I Love Thee? (Sonnet 43) - *Elizabeth Barrett Browning*

Rationale

Many poems have been able to transcend time and still resonate with readers today because of the timeless themes. Love is one universal theme of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's poem expresses in "How Do I Love Thee?" The poem is a reflection of the speaker's deep and enduring love for the person addressed to in the poem.

It has been selected for several reasons. First, it is a very powerful poem written by a celebrated writer. Second, it is written in traditional Petrarchan sonnet form. The reader can explore the use of imagery and metaphor, and different ways in which true love can be expressed.

How Do I Love Thee? (Sonnet 43)

How do I love thee? Let me count the ways.
I love thee to the depth and breadth and height
My soul can reach, when feeling out of sight
For the ends of being and ideal grace.
I love thee to the level of every day's
Most quiet need, by sun and candle-light.
I love thee freely, as men strive for right.
I love thee purely, as they turn from praise.
I love thee with the passion put to use
In my old griefs, and with my childhood's faith.
I love thee with a love I seemed to lose
With my lost saints. I love thee with the breath,
Smiles, tears, of all my life; and, if God choose,
I shall but love thee better after death.

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About the Author

Elizabeth Barrett Browning (1806-1861) is a well-known British poet of the Victorian era. She was born in Durham and was home-schooled. She is known for her great works that reflect on love, politics, and social issues. Her poetry is characterized by its strong emotional intensity, rich imagery, and deep personal feeling. Her talent for writing was evident from a tender age. Her mother compiled a collection of the verses that her daughter had written as a child. Some of her famous works include ***"Sonnets from Portuguese"*** *and* ***"Aurora Leigh".*** *She was married to poet Robert Browning.*

Making Connections

1. What is the tone of the poem? How can you say that?
2. What does the speaker mean by "by sun and by candle-light"?
3. What is the theme of the poem?
4. Identify the literary devices used in the poem.
5. To what genre of poetry does this poem belong? Explain its features with reference to the poem.
6. How does the poem convey the idea of love being eternal and unchanging?
7. Compare and contrast this poem with Shakespeare's sonnet 18.
8. Why do you think the speaker felt the necessity to express his/her love?
9. Does this kind of love, as expressed by the speaker, exist today? How or why?

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SUPPLEMENTARY

1. What Were They Like? - *Denise Levertov*

Did the people of Viet Nam
use lanterns of stone?
Did they hold ceremonies
to reverence the opening of buds?
Were they inclined to quiet laughter?
Did they use bone and ivory,
jade and silver, for ornament?
Had they an epic poem?
Did they distinguish between speech and singing?

Sir, their light hearts turned to stone.
It is not remembered whether in gardens
stone gardens illumined pleasant ways.
Perhaps they gathered once to delight in blossom,
but after their children were killed
there were no more buds.
Sir, laughter is bitter to the burned mouth.
A dream ago, perhaps. Ornament is for joy.
All the bones were charred.
it is not remembered. Remember,
most were peasants; their life
was in rice and bamboo.
When peaceful clouds were reflected in the paddies
and the water buffalo stepped surely along terraces,
maybe fathers told their sons old tales.
When bombs smashed those mirrors
there was time only to scream.
There is an echo yet
of their speech which was like a song.
It was reported their singing resembled
the flight of moths in moonlight.
Who can say? It is silent now.
Sonnet 55 – William Shakespeare
Not marble nor the gilded monuments
Of princes shall outlive this powerful rhyme,
But you shall shine more bright in these contents
Than unswept stone besmeared with sluttish time.

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When wasteful war shall statues overturn,
And broils root out the work of masonry,
Nor Mars his sword nor war's quick fire shall burn
The living record of your memory.
'Gainst death and all-oblivious enmity
Shall you pace forth; your praise shall still find room
Even in the eyes of all posterity
That wear this world out to the ending doom.
So, till the Judgement that yourself arise,
You live in this, and dwell in lovers' eyes.

3. Sonnet 55 - *William Shakespeare*

Not marble, nor the gilded monuments
Of princes, shall outlive this powerful rhyme,
But you shall shine more bright in these contents
Than unswept stone, besmeared with sluttish time. [1]
When wasteful war shall statues overturn,
And broils root out the work of masonry,
Nor Mars his [2] sword nor war's quick fire shall burn:
The living record of your memory.
'Gainst death, and all-oblivious enmity [3]
Shall you pace forth, your praise shall still find room,
Even in the eyes of all posterity
That wear this world out to the ending doom. [4]
So till the judgment that yourself arise,
You live in this, and dwell in lovers' eyes.

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4. All Things Not Considered - *Naomi Shihab Nye*

You cannot stitch the breath
back into this boy.

A brother and sister were playing with toys
when their room exploded.

In what language
is this holy?

The Jewish boys killed in the cave
were skipping school, having an adventure.

Asel Asleh, Palestinian, age 17, believed in the field
beyond right and wrong where people came together

to talk. He kneeled to help someone else
stand up before he was shot.

If this is holy,
could we have some new religions please?

Mohammed al-Durra huddled against his father
in the street, terrified. The whole world saw him die.

An Arab father on crutches burying his 4 month girl weeps,
"I spit in the face of this ugly world."

Most of us would take our children over land.
We would walk in the fields forever homeless
with our children,
huddle under cliffs, eat crumbs and berries,
to keep our children.
This is what we say from a distance
because we can say whatever we want.

No one was right.
Everyone was wrong.
What if they'd get together
and say that?
At a certain point
the flawed narrator wins.

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People made mistakes for decades.
Everyone hurt in similar ways
at different times.
Some picked up guns because guns were given.
If they were holy it was okay to use guns.
Some picked up stones because they had them.
They had millions of them.
They might have picked up turnip roots
or olive pits.
Picking up things to throw and shoot:
at the same time people were studying history,
going to school.

The curl of a baby's graceful ear.
The calm of a bucket
waiting for water.
Orchards of the old Arab men
who knew each tree.
Jewish and Arab women
standing silently together.
Generations of black.
Are people the only holy land?

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ESSAY

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1. **English Zindabad** versus **Angrezi Hatao** - *Khushwant Singh*

WHEN ANYONE asks me, 'What is your mother tongue?' I reply without hesitation: 'English.' They regard my swarthy complexion, the turban on my head and my greying beard. The contemptuous look in their eyes leaves me in no doubt that they see me as a leftover of the breed of toadying spittlelickers of the British. When I add, 'My mother tongue is English though my mother cannot speak one word of it,' they roar with laughter. They think it is a big joke. How can a black man born in India deriving sustenance from the dung-heap of a Punjabi village describe English as his native tongue except in jest?

I do not jest. I call English my mother tongue because I am more familiar with it than with any other language. Since most people I mix with are also more at ease with English than with what they call their mother tongues, I hear more English spoken than any other language. Most of what I read is in English. All my work is done in English. I write it better than my three Indian languages, Punjabi, Hindi and Urdu. I know that in writing English I make errors in grammar and my vocabulary is limited. I try to better my diction, improve my syntax and endeavour to turn out a polished sentence which is at once pregnant with meaning and pleasing to the ear. With me English is a passion. No other language gives me quite the same pleasure. I find it more musical and much richer in its literature than any other language of the world.

When I make these assertions, my friends shake their heads, cluck their tongues and remark: 'Even if all you say about English is true, it still does not make it your mother tongue.'

I bark back: 'So much the worse for definitions! If a person cannot speak the language spoken by his mother (not an inconceivable situation, for example, children of Indian parents in England or even children in Westernised Bombay and Delhi) it is a travesty of fact to describe that language as a mother tongue. Let us redefine it as the language one is most at home with and which one loves. So defined, Jawaharlal Nehru's mother tongue was English. His daughter Indira Gandhi's mother tongue is also English. And it is also mine.'

'English, though it has been recognized by our Constitution as a language to be used in India, is not an Indian language,' asserted the poet Dinkar at a meeting to felicitate him on the receipt of the Jnanpith award. He was loudly cheered. I was made to appear as Rai Bahadur Maska Lal trying to unfurl the Union Jack: he, a Khadi-clad Bhagat Singh yelling 'Jai Hind.' Neither the poet's patriotic outburst nor the applause he received squashed me. 'Why,' I asked my black friends, 'do you deny English the status of an Indian language? Is it because it was brought to India by foreign conquerors? So also were Arabic and Persian. So indeed was Sanskrit by our Aryan forefathers.

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'Both Hindi and Urdu were born out of these once-foreign languages. English only happens to be the last of these importations. It has been with us for over two hundred years. It has insinuated itself in the speech of the illiterate peasant as well as the most sophisticated urbanite. Not one of us can carry on a conversation on any topic without a liberal profusion of English words. Famous and patriotic Indians like Raghunath Hari Navalkar of Maharashtra and Raja Rammohun Roy of Bengal wanted English to be made compulsory and developed as our national language. Very rightly we got rid of our English rulers; but must we foolishly give up the good with the bad? Must we throw out the lovely babbling baby with the dirty English bath-water?

The Angrezi hataowallas change their line of attack. 'English is spoken by barely two percent of the population of the country; how can it ever be given the status of a national language?' they demand. I reply: 'Many languages, e.g., Kashmiri, Sindh, Assamese, Panjabi are spoken by fewer or as many Indians as is English. And the two percent who speak English matter more in national affairs than speakers in other languages. All your cabinet ministers, chief ministers, judges, ambassadors, civil servants, defence personnel, scientists, economists, managers of factories are English speaking. Name anyone who matters and in nine cases out of ten the language he or she speaks best is English. If you weigh languages in terms of the power they wield, you will see that English outweighs all the fourteen other Indian languages (recognized in the Indian constitution) put together. Most of our work is still done in English because no other language is capable of handling the technicalities of administration, justice, technology, science.'

'Let us not forget how English served us in the past and does so today. It was the language of our protest against our rulers - a powerful weapon wielded by Tilak, Gokhale, Sri Aurobindo, Gandhi and Nehru. More than any other language it gave the sense of Indianness. It is not surprising that more people read English newspapers and magazines than publications in any other language.'

'What about the masses?'
'What about them? A survey carried out amongst illiterate peasants and workers around Delhi revealed that, when asked what language they would like to learn, the majority opted for English. It is not only the link language which will keep India together but also the language of opportunity. It opens the window of a village hovel to the city; it opens the window of India to the world.

Of course, we Angreziwallas derive solace from the conviction that no matter how much the Desi Bashawallas scream in protest, English has come to stay in India and will remain the chief link language between the different States of our Union and the only means of communication with the world outside. ...So, dear Bashawallas, make peace with Angrezi. Drape her in a Banaras

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brocade sari as you would if your son brought home a foreign daughter-in-law. But don't waste your energies fighting against her because she has come to stay 'till death do us part'.

About the Author

Khushwant Singh is much the most widely read author in India today. His weekly columns are reproduced by over fifty journals in all the regional languages of the country. He has written regularly for several European and American journals including ***The New York Times.*** *He has also edited and translated a number if literary works.*

Author of 89 books, Khushwant Singh is best known for his work of fiction, ***Train to Pakistan*** *and his two volumes* ***History of the Sikhs.*** *His acerbic pen, his wit and humour and most of all, his ability to laugh at himself has ensured him immense popularity over the years. He lives in New Delhi.*

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2. His Majesty's Address to the 11th Convocation of the Royal University of Bhutan - 7th June 2017 - *The Druk Gyalpo*

Rationale

His Majesty Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck, the Druk Gyalpo delivered this address at the 11th Convocation of the Royal University of Bhutan on 7th June 2017. This speech offers a good opportunity for the students to get a greater insight into the hopes and aspirations of our King, and issues concerning our people and country. More importantly, students should be able to take ownership of His Majesty's vision for the country thereby inculcating a sense of responsibility and patriotism.

Through this text, students will be able to explore the features of a good speech and the type of language to use that suits the audience and the purpose.

His Majesty's Address to the 11th Convocation of the Royal University of Bhutan- 7th June 2017

Your parents, relatives, and friends would be very proud of what you have achieved. At your age, to have completed your studies is your personal accomplishment. Your knowledge and capabilities are a great asset for the nation. I congratulate you for your achievements.

I am very happy to be among you, to share some of my thoughts about our country, hoping that it will be of some benefit to you.

Our country of Pelden Drukpa, is a blessed and sacred land. The legacy of our ancestors and leaders in the past, achieved through their hard work, is a treasure that we have inherited.

In spite of having to embrace a lot of changes over the decades with modernity, our core values, based on our traditions and etiquette, spirituality and integrity, sense of loyalty and patriotism, has not diminished. It remains deeply ingrained in our youth who understand them and continue to preserve them.

The security and sovereignty of our nation, our unity and harmony, and sense of peace and happiness are stronger today than ever before. This is the legacy that we have been fortunate to inherit from our leaders who achieved in 30 years what has sometimes taken humanity more than 300 years.

I regard our country with special pride, and feel a grave sense of responsibility for the future. This brings us to a question we must reflect upon: what is our vision for our country?

Our vision, simply put, is expressed in the philosophy of Gross National Happiness. And what is our end- objective when we talk about Gross National Happiness?

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It is to ensure that we have a just, equal, and harmonious society. When our people are able to live happy and secure lives, we know that we have achieved our objectives. That is what Gross National Happiness means.

The people of Bhutan are central to this endeavor. It is the responsibility of our people to bring all our national goals to fruition, and therefore, it is vital that our policies and strategies are aimed at empowering our people to become strong, capable and responsible citizens.

Democracy is a means to achieve this in the 21st century. To achieve great results, it is imperative that we work towards establishing a very successful and strong democratic system.

I have been King for 10 years, and I will reign for around 30 years more. What are the priorities of our time?

I believe that it is to pursue prosperity and progress. There has to be synergy between prosperity and progress. It is certainly desirable that our people become prosperous, and a prosperous state with adequate funds will give us all a sense of greater security.

But along with prosperity, we must also strive for progress. It is easy to lose material wealth- but not our capability and intelligence. I define progress as cultural, social, political and economic sophistication.

As we take our nation forward, we must continue to forge our own path. In the past, our policies were made with a clarity of vision, and the conviction that we have the best solutions, based on our own sense of identity.

For example, in the 1970's, tourism as an industry was only introduced after the coronation of His Majesty the Fourth Druk Gyalpo. It was suggested to us then that Bhutan would benefit economically from bringing in as many tourists as possible into the country. At that time, Bhutan was largely unknown to the outside world. And yet, with Drukgyal Zhipa at the helm, we had the confidence to make our own decisions- to decide that our approach to tourism policy would be that of high value low volume. It seemed counter-intuitive at a time when tourists to Bhutan were so few. There were many skeptics. But because of that policy, Brand Bhutan emerged. And you see the results of that policy for yourselves today. People who make it to Bhutan feel privileged to be our guest. In hindsight, we realize the profound wisdom of that decision, but we could have easily gone the other way, had it not been for that conviction we had to forge our own path, our future, and our destiny.

Another example is the national dress. Today, we wear our national dress with a great deal of pride as part of our identity. But in the 70's, as many of the younger generation received foreign education, they were perceived in society as the achievers who would lead the future. It became common for them to wear western suits to office to set themselves apart as the educated generation. With the realization that there was a real risk of losing our unique identity in the demography of large neighbours and a populous region, at a time when it

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was more important than ever to stand apart, it was made mandatory to continue wearing gho and kira. The stand that we took received a lot of criticism; many people felt that we were moving backwards. But again, that policy has resulted in the chance to build a common national identity that transcends other differences between our people. Our parents took difficult decisions and stood by their beliefs to give us a fighting chance for a bright future.

Similarly, in those days, many people offered different ideas for how the government could become rich. They offered to bring in investments including black money, and gambling businesses like casinos. They offered to mine our mineral resources and exploit timber from our huge forests, promising rich dividends. But we resisted- because it was not our objective to make the government rich. It was imperative that our people prospered. So instead, we came up with the visionary concepts of balanced socio-economic development, the preservation of our culture and pristine environment and biodiversity.

Now after looking at the lessons from the past, let me talk about our future, starting with some of the concerns I have about our country. I always say that it is good to have concerns- for that is a sign of being committed to the wellbeing of our country.

We are a small country, sandwiched between two countries that together are home to one third of the world's population, and constitute one fourth of the global GDP in PPP terms.

Besides being small, our country's terrain is such that only 7-8 percent of our total land is arable. As families grow, we are faced with fragmentation of land, and I worry about what will happen after a few more generations.

I also worry a great deal about the economy. We have been moving forward in quantum leaps when it comes to infrastructure development. Today we have about 12,600 kilometres of motorable road. We are better connected today than ever before. But last year alone, we imported 9,500 vehicles. We are now importing 1,000 vehicles each month. And to run these vehicles, we spend annually Nu 8 billion to import fuel. We also spend Nu 6 billion on food items, and Nu 11 billion to import construction materials. All these things are of concern.

I pay close attention to rural-urban migration, unemployment, and corruption, which is one of biggest problems plaguing our region. With the expansion of the development process, I worry about such problems emerging in Bhutan.

But, as concerned as I am, there is much more reason for me to be confident and optimistic about our future.

One perspective is that we are reaping the benefits of being small. Compare the number of registered voters, for example 902 in the Khatoed-Laya constituency, or even the largest voter bases - about 14,000 in Sarpang-Gelephu, and 12,000 in Bongo-Chukha, with 1 million in one Indian MP's constituency.

There are more than 18 million residents in New Delhi and Tokyo has more than 13 million while our entire country's population is just over 660,000.

Bhutan has one MP for 9,000 citizens. The margin between those who serve our country and the population they serve is very narrow. In many countries, elected representatives will never get to know all their people, even if they spend an entire lifetime trying to do so. We have one elected representative for 380 citizens, one public servant to look after the needs of 14 citizens. As I have said before, it is not a question of whether we can do something or not, whether we have enough or not, whether we are permitted or not. The question is, are we going to do it or not.

Being small is our greatest advantage. We can do things better, more efficiently, and faster, than any other nation in the 21st century. So I am concerned, but I have no doubt that we can overcome all our challenges and that our people and nation will experience phenomenal success within our lifetime.

In conclusion, I will leave you with 2 messages about our country, and 3 things which I think you should know about yourselves.

Firstly, as a country, we must continue to focus on the pursuit of higher standards. Whatever we do, we have to strive for excellence. As I always say, good is not good enough. It is a simple but effective rule.

Secondly, we will never go wrong if we invest in human resources and building intelligent institutions. We have to empower the people to achieve their full potential. What we lack in numbers, we must make up in talent.

As my parting words, I ask that you always remember that you are the guardians of our peace and stability. It is your duty to ensure that we set aside differences, and live as members of a single family. Our greatest strength comes from unity.

You must also remember that you are the custodians of our national identity. It is your responsibility to pass on our common national identity, which transcends ethnic, spiritual, and regional differences, to the next generation.

Finally, your capabilities and predisposition towards hard work will invariably shape the future of Bhutan. You must work with integrity, you must keep learning, keep working hard, and you must have the audacity to dream big.

I consider myself hugely privileged to have attended every single convocation ceremony since I became King. I am pleased to have had this opportunity yet again, and I have full confidence in all of you. I am excited about our future, and greatly look forward to working with you over the next few decades.

Making Connections

1. What are the main points in His Majesty's address?
2. "Being small is our greatest advantage." What does this phrase mean? Cite few examples of how Bhutan's smallness has worked to our advantage.
3. The speech contains a lot of facts and statistics. Why is it necessary to include facts and statistics in a speech?
4. Identify some of the effective techniques employed in this speech in order to draw the attention of the listeners.
5. What features or techniques are used to maintain the flow and sequence of the speech?

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3. Informing Ourselves to Death - *Neil Postman*

Rationale

In his speech, "Informing Ourselves to Death," Neil Postman talks about the dangers of being overloaded with too much information in this modern society which has led to state of constant distraction and lack of critical thinking. With the advent of internet and TV, we are bombarded with information to the extent that we are literally drowning in the sea of information. We remain constantly engaged and entertained by frivolous programs that are lacking in substance. This speech which was delivered thirty years ago has so much relevance and meaning in today's time and exactly describes modern society. Technology was meant to help people learn and improve lives instead technology has made people dependent, gullible, and anti-social.

"Informing Ourselves to Death" uses persuasive techniques. The speaker presents an argument and uses evidences and reasoning to persuade the reader to adopt a particular point of view. This text can be used for critical reading to analyze and evaluate the impact of technology and the effects of information overload.

Informing Ourselves to Death

(The following speech was given at a meeting of the German Informatics Society (Gesellschaft fuer Informatik) on October 11, 1990 in Stuttgart, sponsored by IBM-Germany.)

The great English playwright and social philosopher George Bernard Shaw once remarked that all professions are conspiracies against the common folk. He meant that those who belong to elite trades -- physicians, lawyers, teachers, and scientists -- protect their special status by creating vocabularies that are incomprehensible to the general public. This process prevents outsiders from understanding what the profession is doing and why -- and protects the insiders from close examination and criticism. Professions, in other words, build forbidding walls of technical gobbledegook over which the prying and alien eye cannot see.

Unlike George Bernard Shaw, I raise no complaint against this, for I consider myself a professional teacher and appreciate technical gobbledegook as much as anyone. But I do not object if occasionally someone who does not know the secrets of my trade is allowed entry to the inner halls to express an untutored point of view. Such a person may sometimes give a refreshing opinion or, even better, see something in a way that the professionals have overlooked.

I believe I have been invited to speak at this conference for just such a purpose. I do not know very much more about computer technology than the average person -- which isn't very much. I have little understanding of what excites a computer programmer or scientist, and in examining the descriptions of the presentations at this conference, I found each one more mysterious than the next. So, I clearly qualify as an outsider.

But I think that what you want here is not merely an outsider but an outsider who has a point of view that might be useful to the insiders. And that is why I accepted the invitation to speak. I believe I know something about what technologies do to culture, and I know even more about what technologies undo in a culture. In fact, I might say, at the start, that what a technology undoes is a subject that computer experts apparently know very little about. I have heard many experts in computer technology speak about the advantages that computers will bring. With one exception -- namely, Joseph Weizenbaum -- I have never heard anyone speak seriously and comprehensively about the disadvantages of computer technology, which strikes me as odd, and makes me wonder if the profession is hiding something important. That is to say, what seems to be lacking among computer experts is a sense of technological modesty.

After all, anyone who has studied the history of technology knows that technological change is always a Faustian bargain: Technology giveth and technology taketh away, and not always in equal measure. A new technology sometimes creates more than it destroys. Sometimes, it destroys more than it creates. But it is never one-sided.

The invention of the printing press is an excellent example. Printing fostered the modern idea of individuality but it destroyed the medieval sense of community and social integration. Printing created prose but made poetry into an exotic and elitist form of expression. Printing made modern science possible but transformed religious sensibility into an exercise in superstition. Printing assisted in the growth of the nation-state but, in so doing, made patriotism into a sordid if not a murderous emotion.

Another way of saying this is that a new technology tends to favor some groups of people and harms other groups. School teachers, for example, will, in the long run, probably be made obsolete by television, as blacksmiths were made obsolete by the automobile, as balladeers were made obsolete by the printing press. Technological change, in other words, always results in winners and losers.

In the case of computer technology, there can be no disputing that the computer has increased the power of large-scale organizations like military establishments or airline companies or banks or tax collecting agencies. And it is equally clear that the computer is now indispensable to high-level researchers in physics and other natural sciences. But to what extent has computer technology been an advantage to the masses of people? To steel workers, vegetable store owners, teachers, automobile mechanics, musicians, bakers, brick layers, dentists and most of the rest into whose lives the computer now intrudes? These people have had their private matters made more accessible to powerful institutions. They are more easily tracked and controlled; they are subjected to more examinations, and are increasingly mystified by the decisions made about them. They are more often reduced to mere numerical objects. They are being buried by junk mail. They are easy targets for advertising agencies and political organizations. The schools teach their children to operate

computerized systems instead of teaching things that are more valuable to children. In a word, almost nothing happens to the losers that they need, which is why they are losers.

It is to be expected that the winners -- for example, most of the speakers at this conference -- will encourage the losers to be enthusiastic about computer technology. That is the way of winners, and so they sometimes tell the losers that with personal computers the average person can balance a checkbook more neatly, keep better track of recipes, and make more logical shopping lists. They also tell them that they can vote at home, shop at home, get all the information they wish at home, and thus make community life unnecessary. They tell them that their lives will be conducted more efficiently, discreetly neglecting to say from whose point of view or what might be the costs of such efficiency.

Should the losers grow skeptical, the winners dazzle them with the wondrous feats of computers, many of which have only marginal relevance to the quality of the losers' lives but which are nonetheless impressive. Eventually, the losers succumb, in part because they believe that the specialized knowledge of the masters of a computer technology is a form of wisdom. The masters, of course, come to believe this as well. The result is that certain questions do not arise, such as, to whom will the computer give greater power and freedom, and whose power and freedom will be reduced?

Now, I have perhaps made all of this sound like a well planned conspiracy, as if the winners know all too well what is being won and what lost. But this is not quite how it happens, for the winners do not always know what they are doing, and where it will all lead. The Benedictine monks who invented the mechanical clock in the 12th and 13th centuries believed that such a clock would provide a precise regularity to the seven periods of devotion they were required to observe during the course of the day. As a matter of fact, it did.

But what the monks did not realize is that the clock is not merely a means of keeping track of the hours but also of synchronizing and controlling the actions of men. And so, by the middle of the 14th century, the clock had moved outside the walls of the monastery, and brought a new and precise regularity to the life of the workman and the merchant. The mechanical clock made possible the idea of regular production, regular working hours, and a standardized product. Without the clock, capitalism would have been quite impossible. And so, here is a great paradox: the clock was invented by men who wanted to devote themselves more rigorously to God; and it ended as the technology of greatest use to men who wished to devote themselves to the accumulation of money. Technology always has unforeseen consequences, and it is not always clear, at the beginning, who or what will win, and who or what will lose.

I might add, by way of another historical example, that Johann Gutenberg was by all accounts a devoted Christian who would have been horrified to hear Martin Luther, the accursed heretic, declare that printing is "God's highest act of grace, whereby the business of the Gospel is driven forward." Gutenberg thought his invention would advance the cause of the

Holy Roman See, whereas in fact, it turned out to bring a revolution which destroyed the monopoly of the Church.

We may well ask ourselves, then, is there something that the masters of computer technology think they are doing for us which they and we may have reason to regret? I believe there is, and it is suggested by the title of my talk, "Informing Ourselves to Death." In the time remaining, I will try to explain what is dangerous about the computer, and why. And I trust you will be open enough to consider what I have to say. Now, I think I can begin to get at this by telling you of a small experiment I have been conducting, on and off, for the past several years. There are some people who describe the experiment as an exercise in deceit and exploitation but I will rely on your sense of humor to pull me through.

Here's how it works: It is best done in the morning when I see a colleague who appears not to be in possession of a copy of The New York Times. "Did you read The Times this morning?" I ask. If the colleague says yes, there is no experiment that day. But if the answer is no, the experiment can proceed. "You ought to look at Page 23," I say. "There's a fascinating article about a study done at Harvard University." "Really? What's it about?" is the usual reply. My choices at this point are limited only by my imagination. But I might say something like this: "Well, they did this study to find out what foods are best to eat for losing weight, and it turns out that a normal diet supplemented by chocolate eclairs, eaten six times a day, is the best approach. It seems that there's some special nutrient in the eclairs -- encomial dioxin -- that actually uses up calories at an incredible rate."

Another possibility, which I like to use with colleagues who are known to be health conscious is this one: "I think you'll want to know about this," I say. "The neuro-physiologists at the University of Stuttgart have uncovered a connection between jogging and reduced intelligence. They tested more than 1200 people over a period of five years, and found that as the number of hours people jogged increased, there was a corresponding decrease in their intelligence. They don't know exactly why but there it is."

I'm sure, by now, you understand what my role is in the experiment: to report something that is quite ridiculous -- one might say, beyond belief. Let me tell you, then, some of my results: Unless this is the second or third time I've tried this on the same person, most people will believe or at least not disbelieve what I have told them. Sometimes they say: "Really? Is that possible?" Sometimes they do a double-take, and reply, "Where'd you say that study was done?" And sometimes they say, "You know, I've heard something like that."

Now, there are several conclusions that might be drawn from these results, one of which was expressed by H. L. Mencken fifty years ago when he said, there is no idea so stupid that you can't find a professor who will believe it. This is more of an accusation than an explanation but in any case I have tried this experiment on non-professors and get roughly the same results. Another possible conclusion is one expressed by George Orwell -- also about 50 years ago -- when he remarked that the average person today is about as naive as was the

average person in the Middle Ages. In the Middle Ages people believed in the authority of their religion, no matter what. Today, we believe in the authority of our science, no matter what.

But I think there is still another and more important conclusion to be drawn, related to Orwell's point but rather off at a right angle to it. I am referring to the fact that the world in which we live is very nearly incomprehensible to most of us. There is almost no fact -- whether actual or imagined -- that will surprise us for very long, since we have no comprehensive and consistent picture of the world which would make the fact appear as an unacceptable contradiction. We believe because there is no reason not to believe. No social, political, historical, metaphysical, logical or spiritual reason. We live in a world that, for the most part, makes no sense to us. Not even technical sense. I don't mean to try my experiment on this audience, especially after having told you about it, but if I informed you that the seats you are presently occupying were actually made by a special process which uses the skin of a Bismark herring, on what grounds would you dispute me? For all you know - indeed, for all I know -- the skin of a Bismark herring could have made the seats on which you sit. And if I could get an industrial chemist to confirm this fact by describing some incomprehensible process by which it was done, you would probably tell someone tomorrow that you spent the evening sitting on a Bismark herring.

Perhaps I can get a bit closer to the point I wish to make with an analogy: If you opened a brand-new deck of cards, and started turning the cards over, one by one, you would have a pretty good idea of what their order is. After you had gone from the ace of spades through the nine of spades, you would expect a ten of spades to come up next. And if a three of diamonds showed up instead, you would be surprised and wonder what kind of deck of cards this is. But if I gave you a deck that had been shuffled twenty times, and then asked you to turn the cards over, you would not expect any card in particular

-- a three of diamonds would be just as likely as a ten of spades. Having no basis for assuming a given order, you would have no reason to react with disbelief or even surprise to whatever card turns up.

The point is that, in a world without spiritual or intellectual order, nothing is unbelievable; nothing is predictable, and therefore, nothing comes as a particular surprise.

In fact, George Orwell was more than a little unfair to the average person in the Middle Ages. The belief system of the Middle Ages was rather like my brand-new deck of cards. There existed an ordered, comprehensible world- view, beginning with the idea that all knowledge and goodness come from God. What the priests had to say about the world was derived from the logic of their theology. There was nothing arbitrary about the things people were asked to believe, including the fact that the world itself was created at 9 AM on October 23 in the year 4004 B.C. That could be explained, and was, quite lucidly, to the satisfaction of anyone. So could the fact that 10,000 angels could dance on the head of a pin. It made quite

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good sense, if you believed that the Bible is the revealed word of God and that the universe is populated with angels. The medieval world was, to be sure, mysterious and filled with wonder, but it was not without a sense of order. Ordinary men and women might not clearly grasp how the harsh realities of their lives fit into the grand and benevolent design, but they had no doubt that there was such a design, and their priests were well able, by deduction from a handful of principles, to make it, if not rational, at least coherent.

The situation we are presently in is much different. And I should say, sadder and more confusing and certainly more mysterious. It is rather like the shuffled deck of cards I referred to. There is no consistent, integrated conception of the world which serves as the foundation on which our edifice of belief rests. And therefore, in a sense, we are more naive than those of the Middle Ages, and more frightened, for we can be made to believe almost anything. The skin of a Bismark herring makes about as much sense as a vinyl alloy or encomial dioxin.

Now, in a way, none of this is our fault. If I may turn the wisdom of Cassius on its head: the fault is not in ourselves but almost literally in the stars. When Galileo turned his telescope toward the heavens, and allowed Kepler to look as well, they found no enchantment or authorization in the stars, only geometric patterns and equations. God, it seemed, was less of a moral philosopher than a master mathematician. This discovery helped to give impetus to the development of physics but did nothing but harm to theology. Before Galileo and Kepler, it was possible to believe that the Earth was the stable center of the universe, and that God took a special interest in our affairs. Afterward, the Earth became a lonely wanderer in an obscure galaxy in a hidden corner of the universe, and we were left to wonder if God had any interest in us at all. The ordered, comprehensible world of the Middle Ages began to unravel because people no longer saw in the stars the face of a friend.

And something else, which once was our friend, turned against us, as well. I refer to information. There was a time when information was a resource that helped human beings to solve specific and urgent problems of their environment. It is true enough that in the Middle Ages, there was a scarcity of information but its very scarcity made it both important and usable. This began to change, as everyone knows, in the late 15th century when a goldsmith named Gutenberg, from Mainz, converted an old wine press into a printing machine, and in so doing, created what we now call an information explosion. Forty years after the invention of the press, there were printing machines in 110 cities in six different countries; 50 years after, more than eight million books had been printed, almost all of them filled with information that had previously not been available to the average person. Nothing could be more misleading than the idea that computer technology introduced the age of information. The printing press began that age, and we have not been free of it since.

But what started out as a liberating stream has turned into a deluge of chaos. If I may take my own country as an example, here is what we are faced with: In America, there are 260,000 billboards; 11,520 newspapers; 11,556 periodicals; 27,000 video outlets for renting tapes; 362 million TV sets; and over 400 million radios. There are 40,000 new book titles published

every year (300,000 world-wide) and every day in America 41 million photographs are taken, and just for the record, over 60 billion pieces of advertising junk mail come into our mail boxes every year. Everything from telegraphy and photography in the 19th century to the silicon chip in the twentieth has amplified the din of information, until matters have reached such proportions today that for the average person, information no longer has any relation to the solution of problems.

The tie between information and action has been severed. Information is now a commodity that can be bought and sold, or used as a form of entertainment, or worn like a garment to enhance one's status. It comes indiscriminately, directed at no one in particular, disconnected from usefulness; we are glutted with information, drowning in information, have no control over it, don't know what to do with it.

And there are two reasons we do not know what to do with it. First, as I have said, we no longer have a coherent conception of ourselves, and our universe, and our relation to one another and our world. We no longer know, as the Middle Ages did, where we come from, and where we are going, or why.

That is, we don't know what information is relevant, and what information is irrelevant to our lives. Second, we have directed all of our energies and intelligence to inventing machinery that does nothing but increase the supply of information. As a consequence, our defenses against information glut have broken down; our information immune system is inoperable. We don't know how to filter it out; we don't know how to reduce it; we don't know to use it. We suffer from a kind of cultural AIDS.

Now, into this situation comes the computer. The computer, as we know, has a quality of universality, not only because its uses are almost infinitely various but also because computers are commonly integrated into the structure of other machines. Therefore it would be fatuous of me to warn against every conceivable use of a computer. But there is no denying that the most prominent uses of computers have to do with information. When people talk about "information sciences," they are talking about computers -- how to store information, how to retrieve information, how to organize information.

The computer is an answer to the questions, how can I get more information, faster, and in a more usable form? These would appear to be reasonable questions. But now I should like to put some other questions to you that seem to me more reasonable. Did Iraq invade Kuwait because of a lack of information? If a hideous war should ensue between Iraq and the U.S., will it happen because of a lack of information? If children die of starvation in Ethiopia, does it occur because of a lack of information? Does racism in South Africa exist because of a lack of information? If criminals roam the streets of New York City, do they do so because of a lack of information?

Or, let us come down to a more personal level: If you and your spouse are unhappy together, and end your marriage in divorce, will it happen because of a lack of information? If your children misbehave and bring shame to your family, does it happen because of a lack of information? If someone in your family has a mental breakdown, will it happen because of a lack of information?

I believe you will have to concede that what ails us, what causes us the most misery and pain -- at both cultural and personal levels -- has nothing to do with the sort of information made accessible by computers. The computer and its information cannot answer any of the fundamental questions we need to address to make our lives more meaningful and humane. The computer cannot provide an organizing moral framework. It cannot tell us what questions are worth asking. It cannot provide a means of understanding why we are here or why we fight each other or why decency eludes us so often, especially when we need it the most. The computer is, in a sense, a magnificent toy that distracts us from facing what we most needed to confront -- spiritual emptiness, knowledge of ourselves, usable conceptions of the past and future. Does one blame the computer for this? Of course not. It is, after all, only a machine. But it is presented to us, with trumpets blaring, as at this conference, as a technological messiah.

Through the computer, the heralds say, we will make education better, religion better, politics better, our minds better -- best of all, ourselves better. This is, of course, nonsense, and only the young or the ignorant or the foolish could believe it. I said a moment ago that computers are not to blame for this. And that is true, at least in the sense that we do not blame an elephant for its huge appetite or a stone for being hard or a cloud for hiding the sun. That is their nature, and we expect nothing different from them. But the computer has a nature, as well. True, it is only a machine but a machine designed to manipulate and generate information. That is what computers do, and therefore they have an agenda and an unmistakable message.

The message is that through more and more information, more conveniently packaged, more swiftly delivered, we will find solutions to our problems.

And so all the brilliant young men and women, believing this, create

ingenious things for the computer to do, hoping that in this way, we will become wiser and more decent and more noble. And who can blame them? By becoming masters of this wondrous technology, they will acquire prestige and power and some will even become famous. In a world populated by people who believe that through more and more information, paradise is attainable, the computer scientist is king. But I maintain that all of this is a monumental and dangerous waste of human talent and energy. Imagine what might be accomplished if this talent and energy were turned to philosophy, to theology, to the arts, to imaginative literature or to education? Who knows what we could learn from such people -- perhaps why there are wars, and hunger, and homelessness and mental illness and anger.

As things stand now, the geniuses of computer technology will give us Star Wars, and tell us that is the answer to nuclear war. They will give us artificial intelligence, and tell us that this is the way to self-knowledge. They will give us instantaneous global communication, and tell us this is the way to mutual understanding. They will give us Virtual Reality and tell us this is the answer to spiritual poverty. But that is only the way of the technician, the fact-mongerer, the information junkie, and the technological idiot.

Here is what Henry David Thoreau told us: "All our inventions are but improved means to an unimproved end." Here is what Goethe told us: "One should, each day, try to hear a little song, read a good poem, see a fine picture, and, if it is possible, speak a few reasonable words." And here is what Socrates told us: "The unexamined life is not worth living." And here is what the prophet Micah told us: "What does the Lord require of thee but to do justly, and to love mercy and to walk humbly with thy God?" And I can tell you -- if I had the time (although you all know it well enough) -- what Confucius, Isaiah, Jesus, Mohammed, the Buddha, Spinoza and Shakespeare told us. It is all the same: There is no escaping from ourselves. The human dilemma is as it has always been, and we solve nothing fundamental by cloaking ourselves in technological glory.

Even the humblest cartoon character knows this, and I shall close by quoting the wise old possum named Pogo, created by the cartoonist, Walt Kelley. I commend his words to all the technological utopians and messiahs present. "We have met the enemy," Pogo said, "and he is us."

About the Author

Neil Postman (1931-2003) was an American critic and prolific author. He is best known for his social critique of mass communication especially television and its effect on the developing minds of children. He is best known for books on technology and education, including Amusing Ourselves to Death (1985), Conscientious Objections (1988), Technopoly: The Surrender of Culture to Technology (1992) The Disappearance of Childhood (1982) and The End of Education: Redefining the Value of School (1995)

Making Connections

1. What does the title, "Informing Ourselves to Death" mean? Is the title appropriate?
2. Although the above text is a speech delivered by Neil Postman, it contains many key features of an essay. Which essay's features do you come across in this speech? Cite examples from the text.
3. What literary techniques does the speaker use to make the speech effective?
4. How important is the research aspect when it comes to writing or delivering a good speech?
5. To what extent do you agree with the speaker regarding the effect of media and information in our lives? Explain.

SUPPLEMENTARY

1. A Nice Cup of Tea – *George Orwell*

If you look up 'tea' in the first cookery book that comes to hand you will probably find that it is unmentioned; or at most you will find a few lines of sketchy instructions which give no ruling on several of the most important points. This is curious, not only because tea is one of the mainstays of civilization in this country, as well as in Eire, Australia and New Zealand, but because the best manner of making it is the subject of violent disputes.

When I look through my own recipe for the perfect cup of tea, I find no fewer than 11 outstanding points. On perhaps two of them there would be pretty general agreement, but at least four others are acutely controversial. Here are my own 11 rules, every one of which I regard as golden:

- First of all, one should use Indian or Ceylonese tea. China tea has virtues which are not to be despised nowadays—it is economical, and one can drink it without milk—but there is not much stimulation in it. One does not feel wiser, braver or more optimistic after drinking it. Anyone who has used that comforting phrase 'a nice cup of tea' invariably means Indian tea.

- Secondly, tea should be made in small quantities—that is, in a teapot. Tea out of an urn is always tasteless, while army tea, made in a cauldron, tastes of grease and whitewash. The teapot should be made of china or earthenware. Silver or Britannia ware teapots produce inferior tea and enamel pots are worse; though curiously enough a pewter teapot (a rarity nowadays) is not so bad.

- Thirdly, the pot should be warmed beforehand. This is better done by placing it on the hob than by the usual method of swilling it out with hot water.

- Fourthly, the tea should be strong. For a pot holding a quart, if you are going to fill it nearly to the brim, six heaped teaspoons would be about right. In a time of rationing, this is not an idea that can be realized on every day of the week, but I maintain that one strong cup of tea is better than twenty weak ones. All true tea lovers not only like their tea strong, but like it a little stronger with each year that passes—a fact which is recognized in the extra ration issued to old-age pensioners.

- Fifthly, the tea should be put straight into the pot. No strainers, muslin bags or other devices to imprison the tea. In some countries teapots are fitted with little dangling baskets under the spout to catch the stray leaves, which are supposed to be harmful. Actually one can swallow tea-leaves in considerable quantities without ill effect, and if the tea is not loose in the pot it never infuses properly.

- Sixthly, one should take the teapot to the kettle and not the other way about. The water should be actually boiling at the moment of impact, which means that one should keep it

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on the flame while one pours. Some people add that one should only use water that has been freshly brought to the boil, but I have never noticed that it makes any difference.

- Seventhly, after making the tea, one should stir it, or better, give the pot a good shake, afterwards allowing the leaves to settle.
- Eighthly, one should drink out of a good breakfast cup—that is, the cylindrical type of cup, not the flat, shallow type. The breakfast cup holds more, and with the other kind one's tea is always half cold—before one has well started on it.
- Ninthly, one should pour the cream off the milk before using it for tea. Milk that is too creamy always gives tea a sickly taste.
- Tenthly, one should pour tea into the cup first. This is one of the most controversial points of all; indeed in every family in Britain there are probably two schools of thought on the subject. The milk-first school can bring forward some fairly strong arguments, but I maintain that my own argument is unanswerable. This is that, by putting the tea in first and stirring as one pours, one can exactly regulate the amount of milk whereas one is liable to put in too much milk if one does it the other way round.
- Lastly, tea—unless one is drinking it in the Russian style—should be drunk without sugar. I know very well that I am in a minority here. But still, how can you call yourself a true tea-lover if you destroy the flavour of your tea by putting sugar in it? It would be equally reasonable to put in pepper or salt. Tea is meant to be bitter, just as beer is meant to be bitter. If you sweeten it, you are no longer tasting the tea, you are merely tasting the sugar; you could make a very similar drink by dissolving sugar in plain hot water.

Some people would answer that they don't like tea in itself, that they only drink it in order to be warmed and stimulated, and they need sugar to take the taste away. To those misguided people I would say: Try drinking tea without sugar for, say, a fortnight and it is very unlikely that you will ever want to ruin your tea by sweetening it again.

These are not the only controversial points to arise in connection with tea drinking, but they are sufficient to show how subtilized the whole business has become.

There is also the mysterious social etiquette surrounding the teapot (why is it considered vulgar to drink out of your saucer, for instance?) and much might be written about the subsidiary uses of tealeaves, such as telling fortunes, predicting the arrival of visitors, feeding rabbits, healing burns and sweeping the carpet.

It is worth paying attention to such details as warming the pot and using water that is really boiling, so as to make quite sure of wringing out of one's ration the 20 good, strong cups that two ounces, properly handled, ought to represent.

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2. Gross National Happiness: A Tribute - *Thakur S. Powdyel*

Nailed to the rock of truth, grafted into the tree of knowledge. C I James left us a great little tale of wisdom.

A big dog saw a little dog chasing its tail and asked, 'why are you chasing your tail so?' Said the puppy, 'I have mastered philosophy, I have solved the problems of the universe which no dog has before me solved; I have learned that the best thing for a dog is happiness and that happiness is in my tail. Therefore, I am chasing it; and when I catch it, I shall have happiness.'

Said the old dog, 'My son, I, too, have paid attention to the problems of the universe, and I have formed some opinions. I, too, have found that happiness is a fine thing for a dog, and that happiness is in my tail. But I have noticed that when I chase after it, it keeps running away from me, but when I go about my business, it comes after me'.

Without appearing to gurufy the barking quadruped, had the world heeded to the counsel of the senior dog, the lot of the Homo sapiens might have been far happier than the predicament of a 'feverish little cold of ailments and grievances, complaining that the world will not devote itself to making you happy'. They would else have been a tremendous 'force of nature' as imagined by Bernard Shaw.

The world indeed went about its business, but like the junior dog, in a Faustian transaction bartering its soul for the gratification of its material and immediate desires. Human beings court happiness in myriad ways, and the faster they follow it, the swifter it flies from them. Almost everything promises happiness to us at a distance, but when we come nearer, either we fall short of it, or it falls short of our expectations.

For a world that is long used to measuring success in terms of per capita income and level of consumption, will an invitation to be human again make sense? His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo Jigme Singye Wangchuck's vision of Gross National Happiness is, undoubtedly, a unique paradigm of a chastening possibility in which the main motivating force behind human effort is not economic gain, but the cultivation of a humane society, the ultimate goal being the happiness of all people.

Let us face the fact that we the Bhutanese are no more than human - buoyed by the same reasons for hope and pained by the same causes of despair. And, it will be unrealistic to make greater demands on ourselves than we can fulfil.

But we can all do a little - we can begin gradually to work towards a vision and the way of life we believe would be the right way, rather than following blindly along a path of development that we fear is incapable of responding to the profound needs of human beings. The creation of a society in which gross national happiness is equal to or greater than gross national product presupposes a change in our daily lives. As I am, so is my nation.

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Bringing about general happiness is not a question of adapting to a life, which we constantly have to sacrifice our pleasures for the sake of others. This would hardly be possible for most of us. Arriving at a situation of gross national happiness is not a substitution of a life of sacrifice and renunciation by the Bhutanese.

His Majesty the King has dreamt for us a Bhutan where our success will not necessarily be measured by economics or statistics, but by the level of happiness and contentment that the Bhutanese are able to enjoy - from Sibsoo to Sakten from Lunana to Lalai.

"The success or failure of our five-year plans will be measured by the level of happiness and contentment of the Bhutanese people," said His Majesty in an audience he granted us once. This concern is a reflection of His Majesty's belief that the goal of life cannot be to own and consume as much as possible, because our dependence on material things is destructive of real joy and an intense experience of the celebration of living. Happiness is not available in a condition of inner passivity or emptiness, nor is it found in an escape from the process of life.

Granted that the basic conditions of happiness -security against fear, security against want, security against indignities -must be fulfilled; however, the real foundations of happiness are built in our attitudes and actions. So said Helen Keller:

"Your success and happiness lie in you. External conditions are the accidents of life. The great enduring realities are love and service".

Social conditions should foster love of life -ours as well as theirs. However, paradoxically enough, as Victor E. Frankl says, "Happiness must happen...you have to let it happen by not caring about it. Happiness cannot be pursued; it must ensue'.

For a Bhutan of gross national happiness to be born, the Bhutanese have got to be fully born, fully awake and fully human. We must free ourselves from the ideas of infantile grandiosity and accept with conviction our real, though limited, strength. A programme of gross national happiness demands courage and strength of character, no less than Gandhi's call to non-violence did.

The whole of the Bhutanese society, our entire way of thinking must gradually be changed, through a change in the individual. The way the situation is today, an attitude that is built on ideals that every one can espouse is easily spread. If at least the enlightened or educated Bhutanese could begin by being a little more responsible -with an understanding that everything we do is bound to have an impact on other Bhutanese -we will already have accomplished a lot.

Gross National Happiness cannot be brought about cheaply. We must enlist every Bhutanese - man, woman and child. They must be able to tell apart the genuine from the artificial; they should learn that consideration for others is more important than carving a career for themselves, that the worth of people is measured not by what they have, but by what they are.

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All that we are called upon to renounce are our false value and false notions of success -which actually obstruct our appreciation of life's real pleasures. We need to understand, that the pleasure of enjoyment is chasteningly enhanced if it is accompanied by a spirit of sharing. We fulfil ourselves more fully in relationships. 'It is the way our sympathy flows and recoils that really determines our lives', as in the language of D.H Lawrence in 'Lady Chatterley's Lover'.

Teaching ourselves how to live more simply more harmoniously and a little more genuinely is a real step towards working for gross national happiness. A Bhutan of gross national happiness has to be created in the heart of every Bhutanese before it can be lived in.

The Bhutan of gross national happiness may not be born in our times; we ourselves may not reach the Promised Land, but we will have helped create it. Little by little, and perhaps, faster than we think, once a new attitude has emerged, we will have created a new Bhutan by our own conscious efforts.

Once the idea of gross national happiness grips the national psyche and enkindles hope in the heart of every Bhutanese, then none can check the tide. It will be a national passion. The appeal of this programme is less loud, more profound, and less distinct but more stirring and enduring.

Judged by the standards of even a few decades ago, we live in one of the most exciting times to merge our individual 'I' with the national 'We' and strengthen the hand of His Majesty in our bid to embark on a future which we will be proud to recommend to our youngsters -a future which all of us singly and collectively will have created.

A Bhutan of gross national happiness will be a moral giant 'where everyone cares enough and everyone shares enough so that everyone has enough'. Such a nation 'will pattern a new social and economic order for this and all future generations'. One could echo the spirit of Frank Buchman.

Let us take one step, only one step, and be more imaginative, a little more genuine. Let us be more human again. Perhaps we will one day be able to invite the world to a marriage of gross national happiness and the results of physical enterprize. This is the only Bhutan we have. Come, let us crown her with the fruits of His Majesty's dreams.

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3. Health and Healing at Your Fingertips - *Anonymous*

Throw out the bottles and boxes of drugs in your house. A new theory suggests that medicine could be bad for your health, which should at least come as good news to people who cannot afford to buy expensive medicine. However, it is a blow to the medicine industry, and an even bigger blow to our confidence in the progress of science. This new theory argues that healing is at our fingertips: we can be healthy by doing Reiki on a regular basis.

Supporters of medical treatment argue that medicine should be trusted since it is effective and scientifically proven. They say that there is no need for spiritual methods such as Reiki, Yoga, Tai Chi. These waste our time, something which is quite precious in our material world. There is medicine that can kill our pain, x-rays that show us our fractured bones or MRI that scans our brain for tumors. We must admit that these methods are very effective in the examples that they provide. However, there are some "every day complaints" such as back pains, headaches, insomnia, which are treated currently with medicine. When you have a headache, you take an Aspirin, or Vermidon, when you cannot sleep, you take Xanax without thinking of the side effects of these. When you use these pills for a long period, you become addicted to them; you cannot sleep without them. We pay huge amounts of money and become addicted instead of getting better. How about a safer and more economical way of healing? When doing Reiki to yourself, you do not need anything except your energy so it is very economical. As for its history, it was discovered in Japan in the early 1900s and its popularity has spread particularly throughout America and Western Europe. In quantum physics, energy is recognized as the fundamental substance of which the universe is composed. Reiki depends on the energy within our bodies. It is a simple and effective way of restoring the energy flow. There are no side effects and it is scientifically explained.

Opponents of alternative healing methods also claim that serious illnesses such as HIV/AIDS and cancer cannot be treated without drugs. They think so because these patients spend the rest of their lives in the hospital taking medicine. How can Reiki make these people healthy again? It is very unfortunate that these patients have to live in the hospital losing their hair because of chemotherapy, losing weight because of the side effects of the medicine they take. Actually, it is common knowledge that except for when the cancer is diagnosed at an early stage, drugs also cannot treat AIDS or cancer. Most of the medicine these patients use are to ease their pain and their sufferings because of the medical treatment they undergo. Instead of drugs which are expensive and have many side effects, you can use your energy to overcome the hardships of life, find an emotional balance, leave the stress of everyday life and let go of the everyday worries. Most of the chronic conditions such as eczema or migraine are known to have causes such as poor diet and stress. Deep-rooted anger or other strong emotions can contribute to viral infections as well. Since balancing

our emotions and controlling our thoughts are very important for our well-being, we should definitely start learning Reiki and avoid illnesses before it is too late.

Some people may still maintain that in our material world, everything depends on time. It is even "lacking time" that causes much of the stress that leads to the illnesses we mentioned. How would it be possible to find time to do Reiki to ourselves and the people around us when we cannot even find time to go to the theater? This is one good thing about Reiki; it does not require more than 15 minutes of our time. There is no need for changing clothes or special equipment. It is a wonderfully simple healing art, an effective method of relaxation and stress-relief. Most important of all, it is less time consuming than medicine if we think of all the time we spend taking medicine for some complaints and taking some more for the side effects as well.

Having said these, resistance to Reiki would be quite illogical. Reiki is natural and drug-free. What is more, it is easy to learn by anyone, regardless of age and experience. It can be used anywhere, anytime. It also enhances physical, mental, emotional and spiritual well-being and the benefits last a lifetime. It is definitely high time to get away from the drug boxes we store in our drug cabinet!

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Time Allocation for XII

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 6 periods of 40 minutes for teaching English. The total time allocated for English in a week is 240 minutes. Therefore, class XII will have 120 hours in a year which is 180 periods.

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

	Period	**Time** *(minutes)*
Reading & Literature	2	80
Writing	2	80
Listening & Speaking	1	40
Language and Grammar	1	40
Total	**6**	**240**

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Modes of Assessment for Class XII

Continuous Assessment (CA) and Examinations Weighting for Class XII

English Paper I (Writing and Grammar) - CA and Written Examination Weighting

Term One				Term Two				Grand Total (Total A + Total B)
CA		Examination	Total A	CA		Examination	Total B	
Listening and Speaking	10%	40%	**50%**	Listening and Speaking	10%	40%	**50%**	**100%**

Note:

1. In English Paper I, the Writing and Language & Grammar strands form the written examination part, and the Listening and Speaking strand forms the CA part.
2. The Term One examination should be conducted out of 100 marks and converted to 40%. The 10% CA marks from the Listening and Speaking should be added to the examination marks to make it 50%.
3. Similarly, the Term Two examination should be also conducted out of 100 marks and converted to 40%. The 10% CA marks from the Listening and Speaking should be added to the examination marks to make it 50%.
4. Finally, the total marks of term one and term two should be added to make it 100%.
5. 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 students achieve the desired goals.
6. At the end of each Term, a formal test should be conducted to assess each learner's listening and speaking skills.
7. For class XII, the final mark, cumulative of 20% of each student, should be submitted to BCSEA.

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English Paper I (Writing and Language and Grammar) - Written Examination Marks Break-up

Sl No	Genre	Weighting	Remarks
1	Essay writing – Argumentative/Persuasive	25 marks	Either can be asked
2	Report / Summary writing	10 marks	Either can be asked
3	Information transfer	10 marks	Non-continuous to continuous or vice versa.
4	Official letter/ Memos	10 marks	Either can be asked
6	Grammar	35 marks	Items to be derived from the competencies and objectives. Questions can be asked from the lower classes as well.
7	Nature of Language	10 marks	As stated in the framework
Total		**100**	

Note: The questions types and patterns for written examinations shall remain dynamic.

English Paper I - Listening and Speaking CA (20%)

Sl No	Listening and Speaking activities	Remarks
1	Listening and Speaking skills	• Teachers can design additional activities to meet the Competencies and Learning Objectives of Listening and Speaking strand. • Conduct oral test/listening and speaking activities throughout the year. • For class XII, send the cumulative marks (20%) to BCSEA.
2	Oral report	
3	Debates	
4	Extempore speeches	
5	Presentations	
6	Book talk	

Note: The questions types and patterns for written examinations shall remain dynamic.

English Paper II (Reading & Literature) - CA and Witten Examination Weighting

Term One				**Term Two**				**Grand Total (Total A + Total B)**
CA		**Examination**	**Total A**	**CA**		**Examination**	**Total B**	
Reading Portfolio	5%	40%	**50%**	Reading Portfolio	5%	40%	**50%**	**100%**
Writing Portfolio	5%			Writing Portfolio	5%			

Note:

1. In the English Paper II, the Reading and Literature strand forms the written examination part, and the Reading Portfolio and the Writing Portfolio form the CA part.

2. The Term One examination should be conducted out of 100 marks and converted to 40%. The CA marks from the Reading Portfolio and the Writing Portfolio (5% each) should be added to the examination marks to make it 50%.

3. Similarly, the Term Two examination should be conducted out of 100 marks and converted to 40%. The CA marks from the Reading Portfolio and the Writing Portfolio (5% each) should be added to the examination marks to make it 50%.

4. Finally, the total marks of Term One and Term Two should be added up to make it 100%.

5. The Reading Portfolio should consist of record of reading, book reviews and critical response to books read. The Writing Portfolio should consist of learner's best pieces of writing (essays, articles, short stories, poems etc.), journal writing for books read, process of work, variety in number and genre.

6. Teacher should ensure that all the learners maintain their portfolios for academic purposes only.

7. The Reading and Writing Portfolios of each learner should be monitored consistently to check their progress. Teachers should provide timely feedback, support and take necessary remedial measures so that the learners achieve the objectives and competencies. The portfolios should be assessed at regular intervals and awarded marks accordingly.

8. For class XII, teachers should assess the portfolios consistently throughout the year and send the cumulative marks (20%) to BCSEA at the end of the academic year.

English Paper II (Reading and Literature) - Written Examination Marks Break-up

Sl No	Genre	Weighting	Remarks
1	Short Story	25 marks	The prescribed short stories. Questions on more than one story can be asked.
2	Essay	25 marks	From outside the prescribed textbook
3	Poetry	25 marks	From prescribed textbook or outside
4	Drama	25 marks	The prescribed play – The Merchant of Venice (till Act II for class XI and the entire play for class XII)
Total		**100**	

Note: The questions types and patterns for written examinations shall remain dynamic.

English Paper II CA (20%)

Reading Portfolio (10%)	Writing Portfolio (10%)	Remarks
• Record of reading • Critical response to books read • Records of text talk or book talk and reviews • Book excerpts or quotations chosen by the student	• Best pieces of writing selected by students • Original short story (employing elements of a short story) • Best pieces selected by teacher • Journal writing for book review • Meeting minutes • Resumes • Personal, transactional and poetic writing	• Use notebooks for maintaining portfolios. • Consider process while assessing the quality of work. • The writing portfolio should show the records of the Writing Process • Prohibit plagiarism • Indicate citation and reference wherever applicable. • Both Reading Portfolios should be assessed at regular intervals. • For the class XII, assess the portfolios consistently throughout the year and send the cumulative marks (20%) to BCSEA at the end of the academic year.

English Paper II (Reading & Literature) - CA and Written Examination Weighting

Term One				Term Two				Grand Total (Total A + Total B)
CA		Examination	Total A	CA		Examination	Total B	
Reading Portfolio	5%	40%	**50%**	Reading Portfolio	5%	40%	**50%**	**100%**
Writing Portfolio	5%			Writing Portfolio	5%			

Note:

9. In the English Paper II, the Reading and Literature strand forms the written examination part, and the Reading Portfolio and the Writing Portfolio form the CA part.

10. The Term One examination should be conducted out of 100 marks and converted to 40%. The CA marks from the Reading Portfolio and the Writing Portfolio (5% each) should be added to the examination marks to make it 50%.

11. Similarly, the Term Two examination should be conducted out of 100 marks and converted to 40%. The CA marks from the Reading Portfolio and the Writing Portfolio (5% each) should be added to the examination marks to make it 50%.

12. Finally, the total marks of Term One and Term Two should be added up to make it 100%.

13. The Reading Portfolio should consist of record of reading, book reviews and critical response to books read. The Writing Portfolio should consist of learner's best pieces of writing (essays, articles, short stories, poems etc.), journal writing for books read, process of work, variety in number and genre.

14. Teacher should ensure that all the learners maintain their portfolios for academic purposes only.

15. The Reading and Writing Portfolios of each learner should be monitored consistently to check their progress. Teachers should provide timely feedback, support and take necessary remedial measures so that the learners achieve the objectives and competencies. The portfolios should be assessed at regular intervals and awarded marks accordingly.

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Reading Strategies:

Secondary Reading Strategies

Reading is the process of constructing meaning through the dynamic interaction among:

- the reader's existing knowledge,
- the information Learning by the written language, and
- the context of the reading situation.

Four general purposes of reading are:

- to gain information
- to perform a task
- to experience and enjoy literature
- to form opinion

Critical Reading

Critical reading means **to look through texts rather than at them**; it means **reading beyond and beneath** surface meanings to the assumptions, arguments, and strategies behind them. Critical reading means about **how texts work**: how they make their meaning, how they appeal to your emotions and intellect, how they present arguments that are explicit and implicit; how they reason with readers and manipulate them.

To be a critical reader, you need to learn how to "slow down" your reading. Slowing down your reading doesn't mean you ought to read more slowly; it means that you need to **read in such a way that you learn to be aware of a text's various parts and processes**. Running your eye over the words on the page it is easy to think of any piece of writing as a smooth and solid object. But all writing — whether a short story by a famous writer or a paper by one of your classmates — is the result of a process and the product of a context. Both the process and context that produce a piece of writing are reflected in various ways in a text's parts and layers. When you learn to slow down your reading you will be able to see that all writing is made up of parts and layers that come together in the writing process to make something that seems whole.

Critical Reading Classroom Environment

For active, critical reading to occur, teachers must create an atmosphere which fosters inquiry. Students must be encouraged to question, to make predictions, and to organize ideas which support value judgments. Two techniques for developing these kinds of critical reading skills include **problem solving** and **to reason through reading**. Flynn (1989) describes an instructional model for problem solving which promotes analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of ideas. She states that, "When we ask students to analyze we expect them to clarify information by examining the component parts. Synthesis involves combining relevant parts into a coherent

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whole, and evaluation includes setting up standards and then judging against them to verify the reasonableness of ideas."

Beck (1989) adopts a similar perspective, using the term "reasoning" to imply higher order thinking skills. Comprehension requires inferencing, which plays a central role in reasoning and problem solving. For Beck, children's literature has the potential to engage students in reasoning activities.

When literature is approached from a problem solving perspective, students are asked to evaluate evidence, draw conclusions, make inferences, and develop a line of thinking (Riecken and Miller, 1990). According to Flynn (1989), children are capable of solving problems at all ages and need to be encouraged to do so at every grade level. (See, for example, "Using Fairy Tales" 1991 for young children; Anton 1990 for elementary children; Johannessen 1989 for middle school children.) Teachers may want to experiment with a particular children's book and plan a lesson which places reasoning at the centre of instruction.

Wilson (1988) suggests that teachers re-think the way they teach reading and look critically at their own teaching/thinking processes. She cautions against skills lessons that are repackaged in the name of critical thinking but which are only renamed worksheets. She points out that teaching students to read, write, and think critically is a dramatic shift from what has generally taken place in most classrooms.

According to Wilson, critical literacy advocates the use of strategies and techniques like formulating questions prior to, during, and after reading; responding to the text in terms of the student's own values; anticipating texts, and acknowledging when and how reader expectations are aroused and fulfilled; and responding to texts through a variety of writing activities which ask readers to go beyond what they have read to experience the text in personal ways.

Critical Reading Strategies

Mastering these strategies will not make the critical reading process an easy one, it can make reading much more satisfying and productive and thus help students handle difficult material well and with confidence.

Fundamental to each of these strategies is annotating directly on the page: underlining key words, phrases, or sentences; writing comments or questions in the margins; bracketing important sections of the text; constructing ideas with lines or arrows; numbering related points in sequence; and making note of anything that strikes you as interesting, important, or questionable.

Previewing: about a text before really reading it. Previewing enables readers to get a sense of what the text is about and how it is organized before reading it closely. This simple strategy

includes seeing what you can learn from the head notes or other introductory material, skimming to get an overview of the content and organization, and identifying the rhetorical situation.

Contextualizing: Placing a text in its historical, biographical, and cultural contexts. When you read a text, you read it through the lens of your own experience. Your understanding of the words on the page and their significance is informed by what you have come to know and value from living in a particular time and place. But the texts you read were all written in the past, sometimes in a radically different time and place. To read critically, you need to contextualize, to recognize the differences between your contemporary values and attitudes and those represented in the text.

Questioning to understand and remember: Asking questions about the content. As students, you are accustomed to teachers asking you questions about your reading. These questions are designed to help you understand a reading and respond to it more fully, and often this technique works. When you need to understand and use new information though it is most beneficial if you write the questions, as you read the text for the first time. With this strategy, you can write questions any time, but in difficult academic readings, you will understand the material better and remember it longer if you write a question for every paragraph or brief section. Each question should focus on a main idea, not on illustrations or details, and each should be expressed in your own words, not just copied from parts of the paragraph.

Reflecting on challenges to your beliefs and values: Examining your personal responses. The reading that you do for this class might challenge your attitudes, your unconsciously held beliefs, or your positions on current issues. As you read a text for the first time, mark an X in the margin at each point where you feel a personal challenge to your attitudes, beliefs, or status. Make a brief note in the margin about what you feel or about what in the text created the challenge. Now look again at the places you marked in the text where you felt personally challenged. What patterns do you see?

Outlining and summarizing: Identifying the main ideas and restating them in your own words. Outlining and summarizing are especially helpful strategies for understanding the content and structure of a reading selection. Whereas outlining levels the basic structure of the text, summarizing synopsizes a selection's main argument in brief. Outlining may be part of the annotating process, or it may be done separately (as it is in this class). The key to both outlining and summarizing is being able to distinguish between the main ideas and the supporting ideas and examples. The main ideas form the backbone, the strand that holds the various parts and pieces of the text together. Outlining the main ideas helps you to discover this structure. When you make an outline, don't use the text's exact words.

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Summarizing begins with outlining, but instead of merely listing the main ideas, a summary recomposes them to form a new text. Whereas outlining depends on a close analysis of each paragraph, summarizing also requires creative synthesis. Putting ideas together again — in your own words and in a condensed form — shows how reading critically can lead to deeper understanding of any text.

Evaluating an argument: Testing the logic of a text as well as its credibility and emotional impact. All writers make assertions that want you to accept as true. As a critical reader, you should not accept anything on face value but to recognize every assertion as an argument that must be carefully evaluated. An argument has two essential parts: a claim and support. The claim asserts a conclusion — an idea, an opinion, a judgment, or a point of view — that the writer wants you to accept. The support includes reasons (shared beliefs, assumptions, and values) and evidence (facts, examples, statistics, and authorities) that give readers the basis for accepting the conclusion. When you assess an argument, you are concerned with the process of reasoning as well as its truthfulness (these are not the same thing). At the most basic level, in order for an argument to be acceptable, the support must be appropriate to the claim and the statements must be consistent with one another.

Comparing and contrasting related readings: Exploring likenesses and differences between texts to understand them better. Many of the authors we read are concerned with the same issues or questions, but approach how to discuss them in different ways. Fitting a text into an ongoing dialectic helps increase understanding of why an author approached a particular issue or question in the way he or she did.

The Student's Role

Critical thinking implies that a reader is actively and constructively engaged in the process of reading. The reader is continually negotiating what s/he knows with what s/he is trying to make sense of. The role of background knowledge and the student's ability to draw upon it are essential to critical thinking.

It is not an easy task to incorporate higher level thinking skills into the classroom, but it is a necessary one. For students to participate in the society in which they live, they must have experiences which prepare them for life. In order to become critical thinkers, it is essential that students learn to value their own thinking, to compare their thinking and their interpretations with others, and to revise or reject parts of that process when it is appropriate.

A classroom environment which is student-centred fosters student participation in the process that is both personal and collaborative encourages critical thinking. Students who are reading, writing, discussing, and interacting with a variety of materials in a variety of ways are more likely to become critical thinkers.

The Teacher's Role

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Teachers who encourage **pre-reading discussions** to help readers activate prior knowledge or fill in gaps in background knowledge set the stage for critical reading. They help students identify purposes for reading, formulate hypotheses, and test the accuracy of their hypotheses throughout the reading process. In addition, asking students to examine their own reading and processes creates the awareness necessary for critical reading.

Post-reading activities that extend texts provide an opportunity for teachers to check for learning. Transforming ideas from reading into artwork, poetry, etc. is an evaluative, interpretive act that reveals the student's level of understanding. Critical readers are active readers. They **question, confirm, and judge** what they read throughout the reading process. Students engaged in such activities are likely to become critical thinkers and learners.

How Do I Sharpen my Critical Reading Strategies?

Reading critically does not mean that you are criticizing the writer's message but rather that you are **assessing the validity and reliability of the writer's material**. Critical readers are also aware that they bring their beliefs, values, experiences, and prior knowledge to the reading process. Critical readers ask questions about themselves, the writer, and the writing. Below is a set of questions to sharpen your critical reading strategies.

Menu of Critical Reading Questions

1. Reader's Background and Value Assumptions

i. What do I know about the topic?
ii. What are my beliefs and values regarding the topic?
iii. What is my purpose for reading this material?

2. Writer's Background and Value Assumptions

i. What is the writer's background?
ii. How might it affect the writer's approach to the topic and the selection and interpretation of the evidence presented?
iii. What are the writer's value assumptions regarding this topic?

3. Writer's Argument, Conclusion, and Evidence

i. What is the topic of the writer's argument?
ii. What is the writer's conclusion?
iii. How has the writer limited the scope of the argument through definitions of key terms and the use of qualifying words and phrases?

4. Writer's Use of Evidence to Support the Conclusion

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i. Are there any logical fallacies?
ii. What sort of evidence does the writer use to support the conclusion(s)?
iii. Does the evidence offer adequate support for the writer's conclusion?
iv. Are the sources creditable?
v. If the writer uses research studies as evidence, does the research satisfy these conditions:
    - Is it timely?
    - Is the sample group representative of the target population?
    - Who conducted the research? What was the purpose of the research?
    - Has the research been replicated?
    - Are the statistical findings and writer's conclusion focused on the same topic?
    - Do the graphic illustrations represent the data in a truthful manner?
    - Do the various physical dimensions of the graphic accurately portray the numerical relationships?
    - What is the source of the data in the illustration?
    - Are the statistical findings and the writer's conclusion focused on the same topic?

5. Reader's Reaction to the Reading

i. Do I accept the writer's evidence as reliable and valid support of the conclusion?
ii. To what degree do I accept the conclusion?
iii. How does the conclusion relate to what I already know and believe about the topic?
iv. How has the writer's argument changed my views on this topic?

Here are some strategies that may be used:

1. Take inventory of what you will be reading.

Think about what you already know about the subject. Write down some notes on these thoughts. Look over the material you are reading - look for key words and phrases that may be in italics or boldface. Look for any graphs, captions, pictures or other graphics. See if there is a summary at the end or a set of comprehension questions. Most textbooks have summaries and questions. These can be very helpful to guide your reading. You should always read the summary and the questions before you read the text. These will give you a good idea of what to look for when you read. Remember: not everything in the text is equally important: read for the main ideas.

2. See the forest, not the trees!

There is an English idiom that says, "You can't see the forest for the trees." This means that a person cannot see the overall picture or idea because she/he is concentrating on the details too much. When you are reading, don't try to understand every word - get the overall idea.

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3. Don't just read —WRITE!
Take notes while you are reading. Sometimes notes can be words and phrases that help you remember main ideas. However, you can also draw pictures or diagrams of key ideas. It's like drawing a map with roads connecting different cities or locations. If each location is an idea, connect them together in your notes.

4. If at first you don't succeed, try, try again.
If possible, read the text more than once.

5. Don't be afraid to make guesses.
Try to guess at meaning by looking at the context. The sentences and words immediately before and after the point you are reading can give you good ideas.

6. Try to analyze the text.
Look for the introduction and conclusion. Look for the topic sentences in each paragraph.

7. Make connections.
Try to make connections between main ideas and supporting details. Well-written texts will attempt to make connections of their ideas in a logical way.

8. Summarize & Paraphrase.
When you have finished reading a paragraph or a portion of the text, stop and try to summarize in your own words what you have read. You can do this in your notes or you can explain it orally to someone else.

9. Talk with your friends.
Discuss what you have read with others who have also read the same text.

SQ3R....for students & teachers

When you read, it is important to have a strategy or a plan for reading effectively. If you do not have a plan, you may be easily distracted or may not focus on the right things in the text. As a result, when you are finished reading, you may not understand very much of what you have read. Also, you may not have developed your English very much, either.

When you read, you must be actively involved in the reading process in order to understand most effectively. The SQ3R method is one way to help you do this.

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How does the SQ3R method work?

Survey

Survey means to scan the main parts of the text you are going to read. This includes looking at the title, headings of paragraphs, introduction and conclusion, first lines of each paragraph, and any extra information that may be presented in boxes on the page. Doing this gives you some basic understanding of what the text is about and helps you know what to expect when you read in more detail.

Question

Questions are very helpful when you read a text. Most of the time, people read first, and then look at questions at the end of the text. However, this is not the best way to read. If possible, read the questions provided for you FIRST. This will help you know what specific information to look for. Questions (those that are provided with text and those provided by your teacher) are designed to focus on the main points. Therefore, if you read to answer these questions, you will be focusing on the main points in the text. This helps you read with a goal in mind - answering specific questions.

3 R's

Read

Once you have some idea of what the text is about and what the main points might be, start reading. Do not be afraid if the text has many words you cannot understand. Just read!

Follow these suggestions:

- Do not use your dictionary the first time through the text.
- Try to understand as much as you can from the context.
- Take notes as you go.
- Make a note of places that you do not understand, or words that are unclear.
- Go through the text a second time.
- Try to answer the questions.

Recite

Studies have suggested that students remember 80% of what they learn, if they repeat the information verbally. If they do not repeat verbally, they often forget 80%. Writing down the answers to questions from the text and saying these answers will help you remember the information. One good way to do this is to discuss the information with a friend or classmate, or with the professor. Try to summarize the main points you have learned from the reading and add to your knowledge from the comments and responses of the person you are talking with.

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Review

Review means to go over something again. In order to remember information, you cannot simply memorize it one day and then put it aside. After you have read and discussed and studied your information, it is important to review your notes again a few days or weeks later. This will help you keep the information fresh in your mind.

Strategies for Teaching Reading Strategies

Modes of Reading

Different modes of reading offer varying levels of support for students, from having the teacher read the entire text aloud to having students read the text independently. It is frequently appropriate to combine several modes of reading at once. The combination provides a scaffold for learning that gradually releases responsibility to the students and helps them to become more proficient readers. Different combinations are used to meet the differing needs of students in relation to the materials they are reading.

Reading Aloud

The teacher reads aloud from a text that is too challenging for the students to read and comprehend alone. Usually the students do not have a copy of the text. The teacher may complete the text in one reading or may continue reading a longer text over a period of time. Reading aloud is used to develop background information, to make connections across texts, or for enjoyment.

Teacher-Directed Interactive Reading

Using grade level materials which may include magazine or newspaper articles, poems, charts, or other forms of print, the teacher provides direct, supported reading of text to the whole class. The text is read in a variety of ways.

- The teacher introduces the text and sets a purpose for independent, silent reading of a part or all of the text.
- The teacher reads the text or part of the text aloud while students follow the reading in their own texts. The teacher pauses for predictions, clarifications, and questions. A summary of what was read is developed orally or in writing with the class.
- Students are paired for buddy reading of the text.
- Small groups of students read the text together using reciprocal teaching strategies.
- The teacher reads the text aloud to a small group of students while the rest of the class reads the selection independently, with a buddy, or in a small group.
- Groups of students or the whole class may read the text together as a choral reading activity.

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Guided Reading

The teacher provides small group instruction using materials at the instructional level of the group. The teacher supports the development of effective reading strategies for processing new texts at increasingly challenging levels of difficulty. This progression of difficulty must be in increments small enough to allow the reader to bridge the gap without being frustrated. Therefore, the best materials for guided reading are sets of books that have the progression built in. For elementary school students whose instructional reading level is close to grade level, the grade level basal may be used to provide guided reading instruction.

During Guided Reading, the teacher works with a small group of students who use similar reading processes and are able to read similar levels of text with support. The teacher introduces a text to this small group and works briefly with individuals in the group as each student reads to him/herself. The teacher may select one or two reading strategies to present to the group following the reading and may have students participate in extension activities. Basic to Guided Reading is that the text is one that offers the reader a minimum of new concepts to learn so that students can read the text with the strategies they currently have, but it provides an opportunity for new learning.

Structured Independent Reading

Students build reading fluency, practice strategic reading skills, and increase their vocabularies by spending sustained periods of in-class time engaged in independent reading. Books may be self-selected or teacher assigned, but are at the students' independent reading levels. Time for this fluency practice must be built into the school day and must include a daily homework assignment.

Students in Pre-primary should spend a minimum of 15 minutes each day in developmentally appropriate independent reading behavior. **Students in grades 1-12 must spend 30 minutes each day on in-class independent reading**. **All students, PP-12, must read 30 minutes each night as daily reading homework.** Activities which support and strengthen independent reading include:

- drawing a picture of a favorite part of the book;
- discussing the book/chapter read with a partner or a small group;
- keeping a record or log of each book completed;
- writing a brief summary of the content;
- making a personal response to the reading in a log or journal;
- writing dialogue journals to the teacher about the independent reading material; and/or
- taking the Accelerated Reader test.

Working With Words

Students receive daily explicit, systematic instruction in one or more of the following as

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appropriate:

- phonemic awareness, students are taught the sounds of the language;
- phonics instruction, students receive instruction in letter/sound matching;
- blending and segmenting sounds, and decoding;
- graphophonic instruction, students learn to use letter/sound correspondence to write;
- syntactic, students learn word patterns and spelling, prefixes, suffixes, root words, etymologies; and
- vocabulary, students learn word meanings, analogies, usage, and cognates.

Reciprocal Teaching

Students are taught to become **strategic readers through an active dialogue** with a teacher/leader and other students. Working in small groups, students practice the following critical reading strategies:

- making predictions based on titles, captions, pictures, prior knowledge, etc.;
- formulating good questions based on the text (e.g., writing test questions);
- seeking clarification of words, phrases, or concepts not understood;
- summarizing, getting the main idea; and
- forming visual images while reading.

Questions and Discussion

Critical to reading comprehension is the ability to ask and answer higher order thinking questions about text and to defend or challenge answers using information and details from the text to support positions. Students at all levels and in all subject areas **must have daily opportunities** to raise questions to be used in group discussions about texts. Student-generated questions should be used to formulate teacher-made tests.

Read and Retell

Retellings are powerful tools because they serve authentic instructional and assessment purposes. Students retell, orally or in writing, narrative or expository text. In the retelling, they use the same form, style, and language of the original text. This strategy aids comprehension of text, expands vocabulary, and provides good models for students to transfer to their personal writing. Retellings provide insights into the thinking, organization, and comprehension levels of the readers. In primary grades students may use drawings in combination with oral retelling.

Learning to Write, Writing to Learn

Writing and reading are reciprocal skills which strongly support one another. It is important that students receive daily instruction in effective writing and that they use writing to demonstrate what they have learned. Writing is thinking made visible. It supports students in learning to construct meaning and become proficient readers. It involves many activities including:

- exploring different modes of writing;
- mini-lessons that include modeling; and
- engaging students in meaningful interactions with text.

Acknowledgments

The School Curriculum Division (SCD), Department of School Education is a non-profit government organization under the Ministry of Education and Skills Development, Royal Government. SCD is primarily responsible for developing curriculum materials, providing professional services to the teachers, and publishing school curriculum materials. The materials that are developed at the SCD are solely for educational purposes and are distributed free of cost to all the children studying in Bhutan.

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