

## 6. The Prodigal Son

*The prodigal son is a story of love and forgiveness of parents. The Almighty has blessed mankind with umpteen bounties and blessings, but the most lovable of them is the selfless love, care and shelter provided to us by our parents. The story also reflects the grace and mercy of God. Repentance on behalf of man is the only way to atone for the sins.*

There was a rich man who had two sons. He loved his sons very much. The elder son was hard working and obedient but the younger one wanted to enjoy without working hard. He wanted to live a life of absolute freedom. He did not want to share any responsibility as he had an eye on his father's property. He said to his father, "Father, give me the share of the property that belongs to me." Inheritances were normally given when the father died. This brazen demand for an early division of estate was selfish and immature. But the father divided his wealth between the two sons.

Not a long time afterwards the younger son travelled to a distant land, where he wasted his money. He lavishly dined, wine and gambled. At last, when he had spent even the last penny, he almost starved to death. There came a terrible famine throughout the country that made living harsh. He had no money, no home to live in and nothing to eat. He badly needed a job. So he went and hired himself to one of the inhabitants of that country who sent him on to his fields to feed animals. He longed to make a meal of the pods the animals were eating, but no one gave him anything.

The hunger pangs made him to fall down and he became unconscious. On regaining his consciousness, he thought, "How many of my father's hired men have more bread than they want, while I here am dying of hunger, I will go to my father, and say to him, 'Father, I have sinned against Heaven and before you. I no longer deserve to be called a son of yours, treat me as one of your hired men and I will work for you.' "

This would ensure him a place to live in and food to eat. He went to his father who was patiently waiting for him to return. The father embraced the lost son and kissed him tenderly.

"Father," cried the son. "I have sinned against Heaven and before you: I am not worth calling your son." "I have wronged you, my dear father," said the son.

But the father said to his servants: "Fetch a good robe quickly and put it on him; and bring a ring for his finger and shoes for his feet. Fetch the fat goat and kill it, and let us feast and enjoy ourselves; for my son here was dead and has come to life again; he was lost and has been found."

And they began to make merry.

His elder son who was out on the fields returned and heard music and dancing. Then he called one of the fellows to him and asked what all that meant.

"Your brother has come," he replied; "and your father has had the fat goat killed because he has got him home safe and sound."

Then he was angry and would not go in. But his father came out and entreated him.

"All these years," replied the son, "I have been slaving for you, and I have never at any time disobeyed any of your orders, and yet you have never given me so much as a kid for me to enjoy myself with my friends; but now that this son of yours is back, who has destroyed up your property, you have killed the fat goat for him."

"You, my dear son," said the father, "are always with me, and all that is mine is also yours. We are bound to make merry and rejoice, for this brother of yours was dead and has come back to life; he was lost and has been found." The father said to his older son that one should not forget to rejoice when a sinner repents and returns to God. It is a moment of pleasure that your brother has realized his mistake and is seeking mercy and forgiveness. Let us accept him for he wants to become a good man. God teaches us to be kind and merciful.

(Abridged )

### **New Words**

umpteens, inheritance, prodigal, harsh, inhabitant, pod, hired men, fetch, feast, lost to the fold, merry, entreat, slaving

### **Glossary**

umpteens	many
inheritance:	money, property, etc., that is received from someone when that person dies
prodigal:	extravagant; one who wastes one's money
harsh	difficult
inhabitant:	a native
pod:	a seed vessel of certain plants, as peas

hired men:	servants
fetch:	go and bring
feast:	a special meal with large amounts of food
lost to the fold:	gone astray
merry:	happy
entreat:	request
slaving:	working like a slave

**Thinking about the Text****(A) Answer these questions:**

1. Why did the man divide his wealth between his two sons?

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2. Why did the younger son hire himself to someone?

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3. What did the younger son decide to tell his father?

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4. How was the prodigal son received by his father?

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5. Why was the elder son angry?

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6. Why was the family bound to make merry?

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**(B) Match the following:**

A	B
a) Distant	1. severe shortage of food
b) famine	2. the abode of God and the angels
c) longed	3. kindly
d) hearty	4. young one of a goat
e) tend	5. far away
f) heaven	6. to have a strong desire
g) tenderly	7. healthy and strong
h) kid	8. destined; sure
i) bound	9. feel or express great joy
j) rejoice	10. to care for

**(C) Put a (✓) or (X) against the statements given below:**

- The man had four sons. ☐
- There came a terrible famine throughout the country. ☐
- The younger son repented. ☐
- The father did not welcome his son when he came back. ☐
- The elder son was angry with his father for welcoming the younger son. ☐
- In the end the elder son also agreed with his father. ☐

**(D) Who says the following:**

- (a) "Father, give me the share of the property that comes to me." \_\_\_\_\_
- (b) "I have sinned against Heaven and you." \_\_\_\_\_
- (c) "Fetch a good coat quickly, the best one and put it on him." \_\_\_\_\_
- (d) "We are bound to make merry and rejoice." \_\_\_\_\_
- (e) "Your brother has come." \_\_\_\_\_

### Language Work

A dictionary not only gives us word meaning but tells us about other things as well.

Collocation is one of them.

Collocations are words that are frequently used together. These word combinations are often difficult to understand, so you need to learn them in order to sound natural in English.

### Verbs and Nouns

**Some examples of common verb + noun collocations:**

make friends

take a photo

make a speech

play the piano

make a noise

surf the web

have fun

**1. Match the verbs on the left with the nouns on the right. Use your dictionary to help you if you need to.**

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|----------|---------------|
| 1. make  | a) a question |
| 2. tell  | b) a train    |
| 3. watch | c) TV         |
| 4. catch | d) a mistake  |
| 5. ask   | e) a joke     |

### **Adjectives and Nouns**

**Some examples of common adjective + noun collocations:**

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|-----------------|-------------------|---------------|-------------|
| a great success | a narrow escape   | heavy traffic | fresh fruit |
| broad shoulders | a serious illness | a steep hill  | a sunny day |

**2. Fill in the gaps with the adjectives given in the box:**

thick	good	strong or broad	heavy
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- a) I used to be a \_\_\_\_\_ smoker.
- b) He has a \_\_\_\_\_ Scottish accent.
- c) She was late, but at least she had a \_\_\_\_\_ excuse.
- d) The plane could not take off because of \_\_\_\_\_ clouds.

**Prepositions:****Fill in the blanks with the prepositions given in the box:**

for	to	about	at	on
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1. I'm worried \_\_\_\_\_ Jane. She's usually home by now.
2. You have to apply \_\_\_\_\_ a visa before you go.
3. Can you describe the man \_\_\_\_\_ me?
4. That girl over there keeps smiling \_\_\_\_\_ me.
5. He goes to school \_\_\_\_\_ foot.

**Grammar Work**

You have already learnt narration. So far you have done Assertive, Interrogative and Imperative Sentences.

**Now let us do Optative Sentences:**

While changing an optative sentence into the indirect speech, observe the following rules:

1. Change the Reporting Verb into verbs such as pray, bless, wish, bade, etc.
2. Change the optative sentence into the assertive sentence.
3. The tenses of verbs, pronouns and words denoting nearness are changed according to rules.

**Look at the following examples:**

1. He said, "May you live long!"  
He prayed that he might live long.
2. He said, "May Allah hear my prayers!"  
He prayed that Allah might hear his prayers.
3. The beggar said, "Would that I were rich!"  
The beggar wished that he had been rich.
4. He said, "Good bye, my son! I will not return home till my work is completed."  
He bade good bye to his son and told him that he would not return home till his work was completed.

5. The teacher said, “Good morning, boys! How are you?”

The teacher wished good morning to the boys and asked them how they were.

**Now turn the following sentences from direct into indirect speech:**

1. The mother said, “May you prosper my son!”
2. He said, “How clever I am!”
3. The poor man said, “Would that I were a king!”
4. He said, “What a pity! You have not finished your work.”
5. The old woman said, “Alas! My only son has died.”
6. They said, “Oh! What a fine day it is!”

**Now turn the following into direct speech:**

1. He prayed that God might bless me.
2. I bade farewell to my friend.
3. The people cried out that the leader might live long.
4. I prayed that he might prosper.
5. She prayed that God might pardon that sinner.
6. He wished that he had been young again.

### **Let's Talk**

In this story, the younger son repents, confesses and is forgiven by his father. Discuss in groups why it is good to feel sorry after one has done wrong and then confessed.

Did you like this story? Tell the class why you liked it.

### **Let's Write**

Did you enjoy reading this story? If yes, then write it briefly in about a 100 words.

Or

Sum up an incident in your words (100 – 150) about how your parents reacted when you committed a wrong.

### **Teacher's Page (The Prodigal Son)**

1. You can begin with asking the learners about their families – parents, brothers, sisters, grandparents, uncles, aunts, cousins and their habits.
2. You may talk of love-hate relations in the family and the causes in addition to the themes of parental love, obedience, disobedience, respect, disrespect, hard work, laziness, sagacity, foolishness, austerity, prodigality, prosperity and repentance.
3. You may also give the learners the concept of family as an institution which is vulnerable to disintegration in this fast techno-savvy world.
4. You may also discuss the impact of family and parental involvement or their company on the personality of the child.
5. The teacher may direct the children to ask the parents to write a brief paragraph on the behaviour of his/her ward.
6. The narration – dialogue/ direct and indirect form – may also be discussed and taught in the light of the text along with collocations and the use of dictionary – verb-noun, adjective-noun, preposition, etc. Types of sentences also need to be discussed with special reference to optative sentences.
7. Discuss moral values in the light of the story and caution the learners about the disastrous consequences of vices and the benefits of virtues. Tell them to cultivate desirable behaviour and virtuous habits.



## THE FOUNTAIN

Into the sunshine,  
Full of the light,  
Leaping and flashing  
From morn till night!

Into the moonlight,  
Whiter than snow,  
Waving so flower-like  
When the winds blow!

Into the starlight,  
Rushing in spray,  
Happy at midnight,  
Happy by day!

Ever in motion,  
Blithesome and cheery.  
Still climbing heavenward,  
Never weary

Glad of all weathers,  
Still seeming best,  
Upward or downward,  
Motion thy rest;--

Full of a nature  
Nothing can tame,  
Changed every moment,  
Ever the same;--

Ceaseless aspiring,  
Ceaseless content,  
Darkness or sunshine  
Thy element;--

Glorious fountain!  
Let my heart be  
Fresh, changeful, constant,  
Upward, like thee!



James Russell Lowell

**New Words**

leap, morn, spray, blithesome, heavenward, weary, ceaseless, aspire, content

**Glossary**

leap:	spring into the air
morn:	morning
spray:	liquid falling in droplets
blithesome:	happy
heavenward:	toward the sky
weary:	tired
ceaseless:	never ending
aspire:	seek
content:	satisfied

**Reading is Fun**

1. How is the fountain described in the first stanza?

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2. How does the fountain look in the moonlight?

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3. How does the poet describe the happy mood of the fountain?

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4. What is the poet's wish in the end?

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**Language Work**

- A. Pick out the adjectives used for the fountain in the poem?
- B. Pick out the verbs that show the movement of the fountain?
- C. Pick out the sets of rhyming words from the poem:

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_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

**Let's Talk**

How does the moonlight make the night beautiful? Share your ideas with the class.

**Let's Write**

Make a list of things used to make a fountain.

### **Teacher's Page (The Fountain)**

1. Ask the students if they have seen a fountain.
2. Give the learners the concept about decorative fountains, musical fountains, drinking fountains, etc.
3. Talk about the uses of fountains and also inform the learners about the ancient and medieval fountains as pieces of architecture.
4. Ask the learners if they have seen any fountain in their state.
5. The teacher should refer to the 'fountain' that children are familiar with.
6. The learners be made to understand the working of the fountain.
7. Discuss how a fountain enhances the beauty of a place.
8. Ask the students about their feelings about the fountain.
9. Tell them to write a few sentences on it.
10. Ask the learners to find out about at least three famous fountains.