

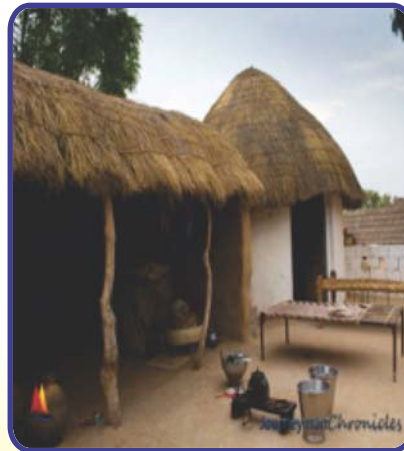
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The Felling of the Banyan Tree

- Have you ever gone through some forests somewhere?
- What did you see there?
- How can we save trees?

About the poem: The poet is saddened by the slaughter of the trees in his house and describes the felling of the two hundred year old banyan trees like the murdering of a human being. It is a moving poem that expresses the poet's love for trees and criticizes the creation of concrete jungles at the cost of green forests.

My father told the tenants to leave
Who lived in the houses surrounding our house on the hill.
One by one the structures were demolished
Only our own house remained and the trees
Trees are sacred my grandmother used to say
Felling them is a crime but he massacred them all
The sheoga, the oudumber, the neem were all cut down





But the huge banyan tree stood like a problem
Whose roots lay deeper than all our lives
My father ordered it to be removed
The banyan tree was three times as tall as our house
Its trunk had a circumference of fifty feet
Its scraggly aerial roots fell to the ground
From thirty feet or more so first they cut the branches
Sawing them off for seven days and the heap was huge
Insects and birds began to leave the tree
And then they came to its massive trunk
Fifty men with axes chopped and chopped
The great tree revealed its rings of two hundred years
We watched in terror and fascination this slaughter
As a raw mythology revealed to us its age
Soon afterwards we left Baroda for Bombay
Where there are no trees except the one
Which grows and seethes in one's dreams, its aerial roots
Looking for ground to strike.



-Dilip Chitre

GLOSSARY:

tenant	:	a person who pays rent for the use of room, building, land, etc to the person who owns it
demolish	:	to destroy something totally
sacred	:	holy very important and treated with great respect,
massacre	:	destroying in a cruel way
scraggly	:	growing in a way that looks uneven and in bad condition
chop	:	cut
mythology	:	set of ancient myths, ideas that people have but they may or may not be true
seethe	:	to be extremely angry about something but not to reveal it
slaughter	:	(here) cutting of trees cruelly
circumference	:	measurement around the outside of a circle

Activity - I**A. Say whether the following statements are True or False -**

- I. It was taught to poet by his grandmother that trees are very important and holy. ()
- II. Poet's father cut trees mercilessly. ()
- III. The banyan tree was as big as poet's house. ()
- IV. They started cutting branches first because the tree was small. ()
- V. Fifty men chopped the tree. ()
- VI. The only tree remained was in his dreams. ()

B. Answer the following questions:

- I. Why did the poet's father want to demolish the old structures?
- II. Describe the huge banyan tree in your own words.
- III. What was a crime according to the grandmother?
- IV. Which trees were cut down first?

V. How was the banyan tree cut at last?

VI. Where does the banyan tree still exist?

Activity - II

A. Insert the missing letter in the blanks: -----

- I. It is the duty of every civilian to keep their houses and surr_undings neat and clean.
- II. My grandmother told me many interesting stories from Hindu mythol_gy.
- III. Destroying forest is a type of crim _.
- IV. The programme was very nice and we watched with fascin_tion.
- V. A b_nyan tree is considered s_cred.

B. Write opposites of the following words:

huge, raw, sacred, deep, reveal, massive, problem,

C. Find out and write the synonyms for the following words

fell, sacred, huge, demolish

Activity - III

Read the following sentences carefully :

1. The tenants who lived in the surrounding houses have left.
2. I have a banyan tree whose roots are much deeper.
3. This is a banyan tree which has aerial roots.
4. This is the village where everybody is literate.

Relative clause

Relative Clauses beginning with relative pronouns (who, whose, whom, which, that, etc.) and relative adverbs (when, where, why) are often used to modify nouns and some pronouns to identify people and things places and time and to give more information about them. Clauses used like this are called **Relative Clauses**.

Use the suitable relative pronouns in the blank spaces:

- I. Shambhu,elder brother is a principal, is the Sarpanch of the Village.
- II. The Ramayan,..... is the scripture of the Hindus, is loved and liked in Bharat and abroad.
- III. Do you know Rita, lives near Gulab bag?
- IV. Deshnok,the temple of Karnimata is situated, is a town in Rajasthan.
- V. Raksha Bandhan is the daysisters tie Rakhies to their brothers.

Activity - IV

“Trees are said to be green gold.” Keeping this in view, discuss the importance of 'trees' in keeping the environment pollution-free and healthy.

Read and enjoy the following poem:

Tree

They didn't tell us
 What it would be like
 Without trees.
 Nobody imagined
 That the whispering of leaves
 Would grow silent
 Or the vibrant jade spring
 Pale to grey death
 And now we pile
 Rubbish on rubbish
 In this dusty landscape
 Struggling to create
 A tree.
 But through the space is right



And the nailed branches
Lean upon the wind
And plastic leaves
Lend colour to the twigs.
We wait in vain
For the slow unfurling of buds.
And no amount of loving
Can stir our weary tree
To singing

Activity - V

A. Draw different types of trees found in your locality and name them.

