

Unit 5



Reading A : The Treasure Within - Part I

Reading B : The Treasure Within - Part II

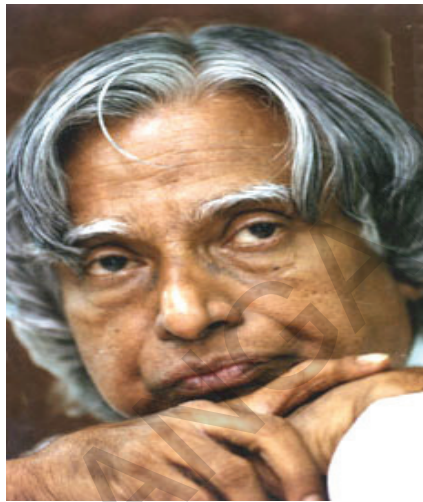
Reading C : They Literally Build the Nation



Education and Career

Education and Career

Look at the pictures given below and answer the questions that follow.



1. Identify the persons in the pictures.
2. Which field does each of them belong to?
3. Would you like to be like any one of them? If yes, name the field you like.

Oral Discourse: Talk on - “Ambition of your life.”

The Treasure Within

Read the following interview. It is based on a conversation between Ms. Bela Raja (BR), Editor of Sparsh, a newsletter from the Resource Centre, The Valley School, Bangalore and Mr. Hafeez Contractor (HC), one of India's leading architects.

Part I

- HC** : I used to have this terrible nightmare. Only now, over the last four to five years, it seems to have disappeared.
- BR** : What nightmare are you talking about and why do you think it has disappeared now?
- HC** : I used to get continuous nightmares about appearing for a maths examination where I did not know anything! Now the psyche must have gotten over it, I don't have to think about education and there is absolutely no time to get nightmares.
- BR** : Tell us something about your earliest memories in school.
- HC** : In the first and second year I was a good student. After I reached the third standard, I simply lost interest and I never studied.

I used to be interested in games, running around, playing jokes and pranks on others. I would copy in class during exam times. I would try to get hold of the examination paper that had been prepared and study it, as I could not remember things that had been taught to me in class.

However, later, one sentence spoken to me by my Principal changed my life.

When I approached my eleventh standard, the Principal called me and said, "Look here, Son. I have been seeing you since day one. You are a good student, but you never studied. I have taken care of you till today. Now, I can no longer take care of you, so you do it yourself."

He talked to me for five minutes, "You don't have your father, your mother has worked so hard to bring you up and paid all your fees all these years but you have only played games. Now you should rise to the occasion and study."

I used to be a very good sportsman. I had been the senior champion for so many years and I also was the cricket captain. I used to play every game, but that year I did not step out onto the field.

I would go for prayers and all I would do was eat and study. I normally used to copy and pass, but I realised that once I was in SSC, I could not do that.

When I got a second class, 50 per cent, in my SSC, my Principal said, “Son, consider yourself as having got distinction!”. This is my memory of my school days.

I did lots of other things. See, as far as my things are concerned, I can’t remember. I forget things very easily. To remember, I have to see things as a photograph. I read a book and I can remember the matter as a photograph but not through my mind. That is how it works.



Mr. Hafeez

- BR** : When you were in school and you were doing badly, did the teachers pull you up and how did you feel?
- HC** : I never felt anything on being pulled up. I used to be so interested in playing. I would receive a caning every week.
- BR** : When you knew that you had incurred the wrath of your teacher by not doing your homework or by behaving badly, when you knew you would get a caning, what was the state of your mind?
- HC** : State of mind? Just lift up the hand and they would cane me you. It would hurt badly and then I would have to forget about it, because I would want to go and play.
- BR** : Have you ever felt insecure or threatened?
- HC** : I was just interested in playing and nothing else. I was most interested in funny pranks. One day, I did not want to study, so I created a distraction. For one whole hour we played ‘*chor police*’.

Every Saturday we were allowed to go into town to see a movie. So what I would do was, have no lunch and collect money from 40 – 50 students, and run and buy the tickets. On my way back, I would eat to my heart’s content.

I used to be the leader of a gang. We would have gang fights and plan strategies. These things used to interest me more than any academics.

Students used to book my textbooks for the following year, because they were almost brand new. I probably opened them one day before exams.



Glossary

- nightmare (*n*) : frightening dream
- psyche (*n*) : mind or mentality
- caning (*n*) : punishment or beating
- chor police (*n*) : children’s game (thief and police)

strategies (<i>n</i>)	:	methods of winning
academics (<i>n</i>)	:	educational matters (books, studies, discussions, etc.)
book (<i>v</i>)	:	offer to buy in advance.



Comprehension

Answer the following questions.

1. What nightmare did Hafeez have?
2. Which words of the principal influenced Hafeez deeply?
3. “...That year I did not step out onto the field”. Who said these words and why?
4. What was the reason for which Hafeez indulged in distraction?
5. What things did Hafeez prefer to academics? List them.

B Reading

The Treasure Within Part II

(Continuation of the interview between Ms. Bela Raja and Hafeez Contractor)

Hafeez stumbled on architecture because he knew little French and less German. He was offbeat even in the pranks that he played. When he found his calling, there was no looking back.

BR : How did you get into the field of architecture?

HC : In the college for architecture, nobody who had got below 80-85 per cent was allowed to enter. I had only 50 per cent.

I wanted to join the Army. I got my admission letter but my aunt tore it up. Then I decided that I wanted to join the police force.

My mother said, “Don’t join the police force, just do your graduation!” So I went to Jai Hind College in Bombay.

There, I was to take either French or German. Though I had studied French for seven years, I did not know seven words of French. So I took German. Then my German teacher died. The college told me that I could change the college or take French. Now, who would give me admission in another college? I had got admission to Jai Hind by influence. So I thought, ‘Okay, I will take French’ and I started learning French again. I learnt it from my cousin. She was an architect’s wife. I was going to the architect’s office to learn French!

BR : Was it then that you decided you wanted to do architecture?

HC : Actually, it all happened quite by chance.

In the architect’s office, I saw somebody drawing a window details. A window detail is very advanced drawing.

I told him that his drawing was wrong- that the window he had drawn would not open.

He then had a bet with me and later he found that indeed, his drawing was wrong! My cousin’s husband was surprised. He asked me to draw a few specific things, which I immediately did.

He asked me to design a house and I designed a house. After that, he told me to drop every thing and join architecture. We went to meet the Principal of the college. The Principal warned me, “I will allow you to take part in the entrance exams, but if you do not do well I will not allow you to join.”

I got an ‘A+’ in the entrance exam and from that day it was a cakewalk. I had never made a plan, but I knew how something looked like, from the top. I had never known what a section was, but I knew if you cut a plan what it would look like.

I stood first in class, first throughout after that.

I believe that all this understanding came from what I used to play and do during school.

I had a friend called Behram Divecha. We used to have competitions between us for designing forts, guns and ammunition. Each of us would design something in an effort to be different.

In school, when I was in the second or third standard, one of my teachers, Mrs Gupta, saw my sketches and told me, “See, you are useless in every thing else but your sketches are good. When you grow up, you will become an architect”. I did not know at the time but she was right. Later, after I became an architect, I went back to meet her and told her.