

## Lesson 7

# The Mountain and The Squirrel



Have you come across the word 'proud'? The word has two meanings, one positive and one negative.

Work in pairs. Use the dictionary to find out both the meanings and write them in the space below:

(a) \_\_\_\_\_

(b) \_\_\_\_\_

Now think and tell which meaning- (a) or (b) is opposite of the following words:

humble, modest

Discuss with your partner whether we should be proud or humble. Give two reasons for your answer.

*Now read a poem about a mountain and a squirrel, who have a quarrel about who is greater. After reading, say which one of them is proud, and which one is humble.*



The mountain and the squirrel  
Had a quarrel,  
And the former called the latter “Little prig”.  
Bun replied,  
“You are doubtless very big;  
But all sorts of things and weather  
Must be taken in together  
To make up a year,  
And a sphere.  
And I think it no disgrace  
To occupy my place.  
If I’m not so large as you,  
You are not so small as I,  
And not half so spry:  
I’ll not deny you make  
A very pretty squirrel track.  
Talents differ; all is well and wisely put;  
If I cannot carry forests on my back,  
Neither can you crack a nut.”

— *Ralph Waldo Emerson*

## ACTIVITIES

1. Did you like the poem? Write three words you connect with each object you found in the poem. One has been done for you.

Squirrel	Mountain	Forest
tree		
nut		
climb		

2. Read the poem once again and answer the following questions:

- (a) Why did the mountain call the squirrel “Little prig”?
- (b) What did the squirrel say to the mountain?
- (c) What are the main differences between the mountain and the squirrel?
- (d) “If I’m not so large as you,  
You are not so small as I,  
And not half so spry:  
I’ll not deny you make  
A very pretty squirrel track.”

Who said these lines and to whom?

- (e) The word ‘former’ means *the first one out of two*, and the word ‘latter’ means *the second one out of two*. “And the former called the latter Little prig” – Who is the ‘former’ and who is the ‘latter’ in the poem?

- (f) Write down the lines from the poem that mean the following:
- (i) The squirrel is not as big as the mountain and the mountain is not even half as energetic as Bun.
  - (ii) Everyone is unique in their own way. People have different skills and everything is put very wisely.
  - (iii) To make a year and a revolution around the sun all types of things and weather must be taken into consideration.

**3. Read the following lines:**

But all sorts of things and weather  
Must be taken in together  
To make up a year,  
And a sphere.

**Why does the poet talk about a year and a sphere?**

**4. Here are some sentences related to the poem. Which sentences are true, and which are not true? Correct the ones which are wrong and write the correct sentences in your notebook.**

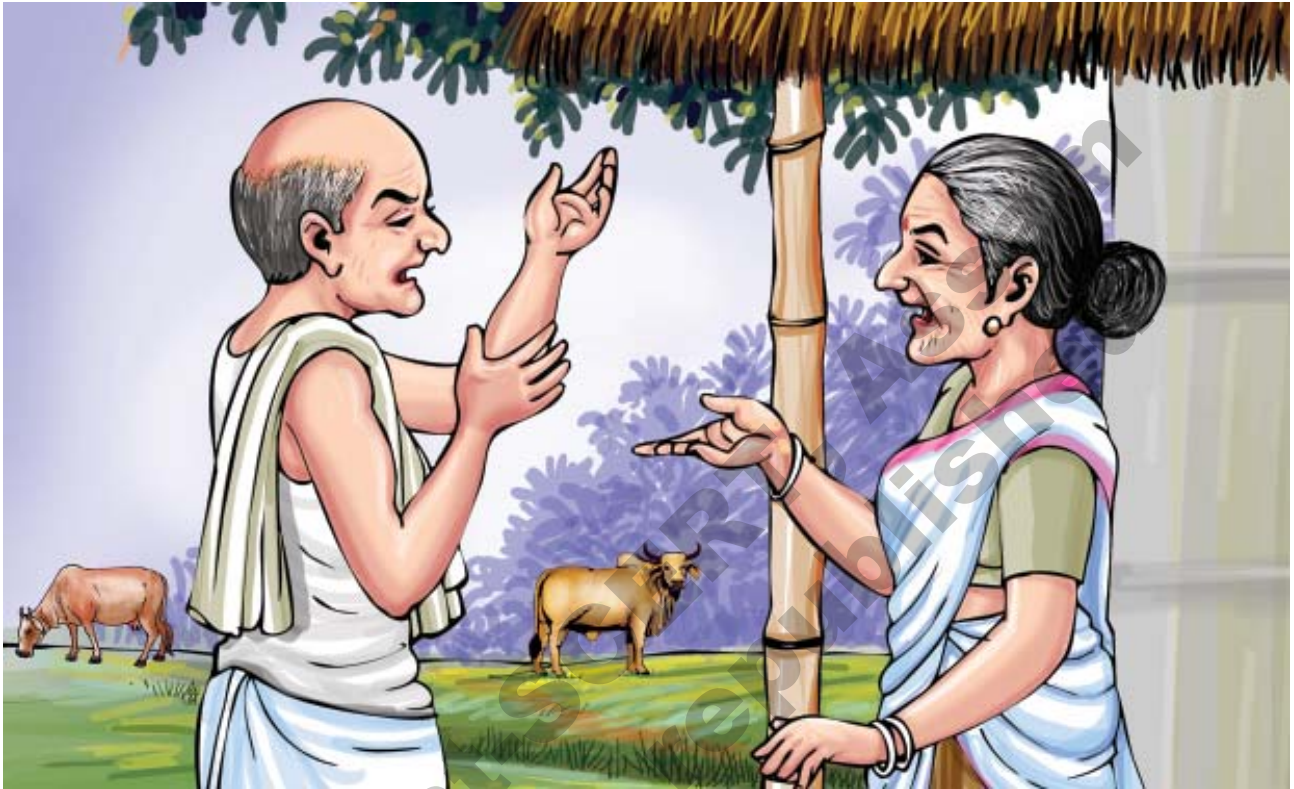
- (a) The mountain called the squirrel 'Little prig'.
- (b) The squirrel told the mountain that it wasn't a disgrace to be small.
- (c) The mountain is not as spry as the squirrel.
- (d) The squirrel can carry a forest on his back.

**5. Discuss in groups and share your answers with the class.**

- (a) What was the cause of the fight between the mountain and the squirrel? Why do you think so?
- (b) Tell your friends two things you like about the squirrel and two things you dislike about the mountain.



6. Have you heard the folk tale about an old man and his wife? They were quarrelling about whose work was harder. Read and enjoy the story!



Once upon a time there was an old man who lived with his wife on a farm. One day they had a big quarrel. The old man said, “Keep quiet, woman! You are so lucky. You do easy work, you get time to rest and to enjoy yourself with your friends.” The old lady was very angry. “How dare you say that! I do such hard work! I work from morning till night cleaning the house, cooking food for you, washing your clothes, feeding the animals. Try doing it one day!” So the old man and the old lady decided to change places for one day. The old man stayed at home to do house work, and his wife went to the paddy field with the plough and the bullocks.

**What do you think happened that day? Whose work was easier? Think of an ending for the story. Discuss your thoughts with the friend next to you and share it with the class.**

**7. Look at this sentence.**

- (a) The mountain said to the squirrel, “You are a little prig”.

**The words used by the mountain to call the squirrel are given in inverted commas. When the exact words used by the speaker is given in inverted commas, we call the words or sentences – direct speech.**

**We can rewrite the sentence by providing the information indirectly as follows:**

The mountain told the squirrel that he was a little prig.

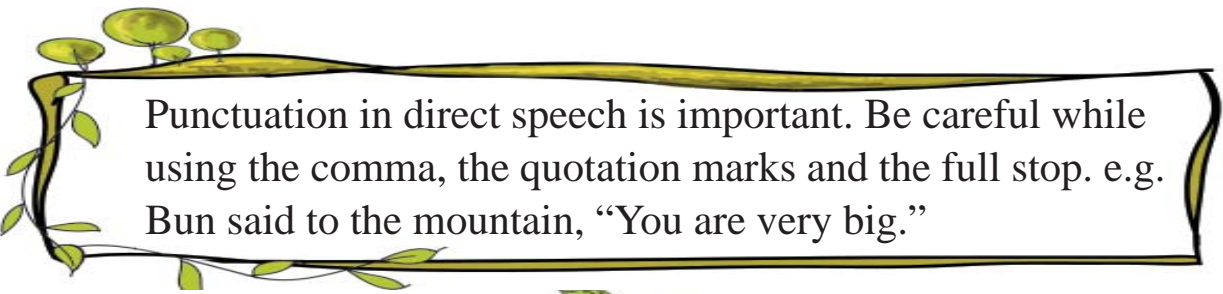
This is an example of an indirect narration – or indirect speech. Here is another example:

- (b) Bun said to the mountain, “You are very big.”

Bun told the mountain that he was very big.

**What changes did you notice when the sentence in direct speech was turned into indirect speech?**

- (i) You must have seen that the inverted commas and comma are removed.
- (ii) The word ‘that’ is added.
- (iii) The verb ‘are’ which is in the Present Tense changed to ‘was’ in the Past Tense.
- (iv) The pronoun ‘you’ became ‘he’.



Punctuation in direct speech is important. Be careful while using the comma, the quotation marks and the full stop. e.g.  
Bun said to the mountain, “You are very big.”

**Now try and change the following sentences from direct to indirect speech.**

- (i) Anurag said to Anu, “You are a lazy girl.”
- (ii) Anu said to Anurag, “You are doubtless very smart.”
- (iii) He said to her, “I play cricket.”
- (iv) She replied, “I don’t play cricket.”
- (v) She added, “I dance Bihu.”
- (vi) He said to her, “I don’t dance Bihu.”
- (vii) Arun said, “A lazy girl cannot dance.”
- (viii) Anurag said, “I agree with you.”

**8 . You know that we have names for people who do different kinds of work. For example, you are a student because you study in school. Do you know other such names? Fill in the table below with appropriate names.**

(i) Who serves us food in a restaurant?	Waiter
(ii) Who takes care of sick or injured people?	
(iii) Who teaches us in school?	
(iv) Who operates the controls of an aircraft?	
(v) Who takes care of our teeth?	
(vi) Who puts out fires?	

**9. What would you like to be when you grow up? Think of five reasons why you have chosen this profession and share them with the class.**

10. The pictures given below show people practising different occupations or professions. Read and complete the sentences with appropriate words.

(a)



(i) Terang is a \_\_\_\_\_. He grows \_\_\_\_\_ and vegetables. He supplies food to the people living in towns and cities.



(ii) Reshma is a \_\_\_\_\_. People get their grocery supplies from her shop.



(iii) Robert is a \_\_\_\_\_. He drives the car of the Governor. He is very honest and hardworking.



(iv) Neboli is a \_\_\_\_\_. She flies the aeroplane to different parts of the country. She is very careful because the lives of the passengers depend upon her.





- (iv) Akhilesh is a \_\_\_\_\_. He is very brave. He guards our borders against enemies.



- (v) Mrs. Agarwal is a famous \_\_\_\_\_. She is a hard-working woman. She employs over a hundred people in her industrial company.



- (vii) Tina is an \_\_\_\_\_. She works in a firm that designs houses and factories.

(b) Fill in the gaps in the sentences below using the information given above. Use *although* where needed:

- (i) Although Mr. Shekhar Sharma is the Governor, when he is in his car, his life depends on the \_\_\_\_\_.
- (ii) \_\_\_\_\_ Terang is not as rich or powerful as Mr. Sharma, Mrs. Agarwal and Tina, they will get food to eat only if farmers like \_\_\_\_\_ grow crops in the fields.
- (iii) \_\_\_\_\_ Akhilesh is not a General, the people of the country are safe because of \_\_\_\_\_ like him.
- (iv) Grocers like \_\_\_\_\_ can do business only because farmers like \_\_\_\_\_ produce things which she sells in her \_\_\_\_\_.

## For the Teacher

The poem is about a mountain and a squirrel, but the theme is about learning to be humble. This aspect can be discussed to help learners work out the meaning of the poem.

- You may begin eliciting different meanings of the word 'proud' through the pre-reading activity. This will not only enhance their word stock; it will also help them respond to the poem better.
- Read the poem aloud with appropriate voice modulation while the learners listen to you, so that they understand and enjoy it better.
- Ask children to look for words and phrases in the poem suggesting the quarrel between the mountain and the squirrel. This will enable them to comprehend the main idea (central idea) and locate the details in the poem.
- Comprehension and vocabulary building activities will thereafter become easy to handle. Divide the class into groups and encourage them to discuss the questions in Activity 5. When they share their answers with the class, do not let anyone interrupt or point out mistakes. The practice of speaking aloud, and on a longer topic will help develop learners' confidence to speak.
- Activity 6 will generate a lot of individual responses, and children may use their imagination to build up interesting ending to the story. Sharing their thoughts to the class will create confidence to speak fluently and eventually, accurately.
- The poem being a conversation, leads itself easily to a discussion of the direct and indirect speech. Hence Activity 7 will give learners practice in this grammatical element without undue focus on memorization of grammar rules.
- Activities 8, 9 and 10 are meant to connect the theme and language of the lesson to learners' own lives. In Activity 10 (a) there are certain visuals that will help learners choose the appropriate words for the blanks. All these activities will give learners practice in talking and writing about different professions and the nature of work associated with these professions.

### Learning Outcomes:

#### The learner:

- participates in activities in English like role play, group discussion, debate, etc.
- recites and shares poems, songs, jokes, riddles, tongue twisters, etc.
- responds to announcements and instructions made in class, school assembly, railway station and in other public places
- reads a variety of texts in English/Braille and identifies main ideas, characters, sequence of ideas and events and relates with his/her personal experiences.
- responds to a variety of questions on familiar and unfamiliar texts verbally and in writing
- uses synonyms, antonyms, appropriately deduces word meanings from clues in context while reading a variety of texts
- uses meaningful sentences to describe/narrate factual/imaginary situations in speech and writing
- refers to a dictionary to check meaning and spelling, and to suggested websites for information
- writes grammatically correct sentences for a variety of situations using noun, pronoun, verb, adverb, determiners, etc.