

BLOSSOMS

English Textbook for Class VII



West Bengal Board of Secondary Education

77/2, Park Street, Kolkata - 700016

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WEST BENGAL BOARD OF SECONDARY EDUCATION

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THE CONSTITUTION OF INDIA PREAMBLE

WE, THE PEOPLE OF INDIA, having solemnly resolved to constitute India into a SOVEREIGN SOCIALIST SECULAR DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC and to secure to all its citizens : JUSTICE, social, economic and political; LIBERTY of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship; EQUALITY of status and of opportunity and to promote among them all – FRATERNITY assuring the dignity of the individual and the unity and integrity of the Nation; IN OUR CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY this twenty-sixth day of November 1949, do HEREBY ADOPT, ENACT AND GIVE TO OURSELVES THIS CONSTITUTION.

ভারতের সংবিধান

প্রস্তাবনা

আমরা, ভারতের জনগণ, ভারতকে একটি সার্বভৌম সমাজতান্ত্রিক ধর্মনিরপেক্ষ গণতান্ত্রিক সাধারণতন্ত্র রূপে গড়ে তুলতে সত্যনিষ্ঠার সঙ্গে শপথ গ্রহণ করছি এবং তার সকল নাগরিক যাতে : সামাজিক, অর্থনৈতিক ও রাজনৈতিক ন্যায়বিচার; চিন্তা, মতপ্রকাশ, বিশ্বাস, ধর্ম এবং উপাসনার স্বাধীনতা; সামাজিক প্রতিষ্ঠা অর্জন ও সুযোগের সমতা প্রতিষ্ঠা করতে পারে এবং তাদের সকলের মধ্যে ব্যক্তি-সম্মম ও জাতীয় ঐক্য এবং সংহতি সুনিশ্চিত করে সৌভ্রাতৃত্ব গড়ে তুলতে; আমাদের গণপরিষদে, আজ, ১৯৪৯ সালের ২৬ নভেম্বর, এতদ্বারা এই সংবিধান গ্রহণ করছি, বিধিবদ্ধ করছি এবং নিজেদের অর্পণ করছি।

PREFACE

Secondary Education is meant for the students who have entered the arena of education from the Primary level. In this arena the utmost need is to help the young buds to flower, to extend their knowledge and to explore their aptitudes, potentials towards different streams of learning for their further education. Keeping this concept in mind the new series of English textbooks for Secondary education is thus named “BLOSSOMS”. This series of textbooks is based on the new curriculum and syllabus framed and recommended by the newly formed “Expert Committee” comprising of eminent academicians. The books are in the line with the vision of NCF 2005 and RTE Act 2009.

This series of textbooks for Upper Primary Level (Class VI to VIII) is meant for the learners of English is a second language. The pieces selected in the series are aimed to expose the learners to the thoughts and writings of the world’s best writers and thinkers. The pieces are arranged in a graded manner so as to ensure a smooth progress to the next level. At the end of each lesson sufficient exercises have been provided to measure and reinforce language skills. The practice tests are designed to encourage students’ participation. After completion of each exercise the learner will feel a sense of achievement which will motivate the young learners to go for the next. The targeted age group falls in that learners is begin to take shape. “BLOSSOMS” aims to inculcate in learners, particularly the first-generation institutional learners, love for the richness and variety of English language literature.

It is hoped that the new series of books would contribute a lot in making the young learners learning English language, a gateway to modern communication and trade.

Taking the help of Paschim Banga Sarba Siksha Mission these books are being distributed free of cost among the learners. In materialising this project Hon’ble Education Minister Dr. Partha Chatterjee, Govt of West Bengal, the School Edn. Dept., Directorate of School Edn., Govt. of West Bengal and the Paschim Banga Sarba Siksha Mission—all have extended their valued help and their role has always been indisputably momentous in all respect.

A group of eminent educationists, teachers and subject experts worked hard to develop the textbook. The book has been illustrated by the renowned artist. I thank them all for their notable work.

All suggestions to improve the series are welcome.

December, 2017
77/2, Park Street,
Kolkata - 700 016



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FOREWORD

The Hon'ble Chief Minister of West Bengal Smt. Mamata Banerjee constituted an 'Expert Committee' to review the entire aspects of school level curriculum, syllabus and textbooks in 2011. The new curriculum, syllabus, and textbooks are developed according to the recommendations of the Committee. The new English textbooks for the upper-primary level fall under a newly named series, 'Blossoms'. We have tried to develop and formulate the textbooks in line with the vision of NCF 2005 and RTE Act, 2009. In this textbook we have shifted from the conventional approach to a child-centric, activity based approach to learning. The exercises for the learners have been designed accordingly. A special effort has been taken to develop the conversational skills in English for the learners.

The theme for **Blossoms : English textbook for class VII** is 'human relationships'. A teachers' guideline is appended at the end of the book. The textbooks venture to link classroom experiences with nature and society. We hope to supply our learners with enough material to develop their language skills and sense of aesthetics. For the latter we had invited famous artists to illustrate the books. The texts represent a varied spectrum of experiences and achievements. They will, certainly, help the learners to build their vision and perspective to life.

We thank the West Bengal Board of Secondary Education, School Education department, Govt of West Bengal and PBSSM for their active support. The West Bengal Board of Secondary Education has obliged us by giving their approval for this textbook. A chosen group of educationists, teachers and subject experts developed this book in a very short period of time. If the book can help learners to apply the language in real-life situations, we will consider our initiative successful.

The Hon'ble Education Minister Dr. Partha Chatterjee has enriched us with his views and comments, We express our gratitude to him.

We invite all people who love education to convey their views for the improvement of the book.

Thank You.

December, 2017
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Aneek Majumder
Chairman
Expert Committee
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Revision Lesson

Let's do:

Activity 1

Tick the correct answer from the given options:

I [am/is] Nilofar. I [am/is] a girl. I study in class VII. There [is /are] forty students in our class. Some [is/are] boys and others [am/are] girls. Sima, Shamim and Rohini [am/are] my friends. Rohini [is/are] the best student in our class. She [is/are] very fond of me.

Activity 2

Join the following sentences with 'and' or 'but'. One is done for you:

- (a) In India summer is hot. In India winter is cold .
Answer: In India summer is hot but winter is cold
- (b) A mouse is a small animal. An elephant is a large animal.
- (c) I have a pen. I have a pencil.
- (d) The sun rises in the east. The sun sets in the west.
- (e) My father is tall. He is lean.
- (f) Bees are small. Wasps are big.
- (g) In a cricket match we need a bat. We also need a ball.

Activity 3

Odd one out

In each set there is a word that does not fit with rest of the words in the set. Identify and underline the word. One is done for you:

- (a) Teacher, student, chalk, tall, duster
- (b) Football, goal, beautiful, field, player
- (c) Books, nice, pen, paper, table
- (d) Red, apple, guava, banana, water melon
- (e) Rice, wheat, barley, cereals, golden
- (f) Spinach, cabbage, tasty, cauliflower, onions

Activity 4

Fill in the blanks by choosing the correct form of verbs from the given alternatives:

- (a) My English textbook _____[have/has] one hundred and thirty eight pages.
- (b) Our class _____[has/have] thirty students.
- (c) My school _____[have/has] a big playground.
- (d) We _____[has/have] a beautiful garden.
- (e) All my friends _____[have/has] some interest in sports.

Let's talk:

- ❖ Describe your friend, using suitable adjectives
- ❖ Describe your house to the class
- ❖ Tell your class what you see everyday while coming to school

Let's do:

Activity 5

Fill in the blanks with suitable articles and prepositions:

Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar lived _____ the nineteenth century India when very few people went _____ school. He founded _____ school _____ Calcutta which was later known as Vidyasagar College. He wrote _____ Bengali primer which is used even today. We are proud _____ Vidyasagar for his great work _____ the field _____ education.

Activity 6

Underline the correct form of the verbs given in brackets:

- (a) The sun [rise/rises/rose] in the east.
- (b) When do you [go/goes/went] to school?
- (c) Two and two [make/makes/made] four.
- (d) The great scholar Bopedev [write/writes/wrote] 'Mugdha Bodh'.
- (e) Robert Bruce [fight/fights/fought] hard to regain his kingdom.

Activity 7

Write the opposite of the following words:

good, fat, wise, dull, old, warm, kind, happy, tall

Activity 8

Make new words by joining ‘-less’ to the words in the given box and fill in the blanks. One is done for you:

help, harm, rest, power, meaning, colour, home

- (a) Water is a colourless liquid.
- (b) Rita was _____ as she had fever.
- (c) People often become _____ during a natural calamity.
- (d) A snake is _____ if not disturbed.
- (e) The king became _____ after his brother betrayed him.
- (f) A sentence is _____ without a verb.

Let's talk:

- ❖ Suppose, last Sunday, a visitor came to your house. Tell your friend what each of your family members was doing at that time.

Hints:-

Your father [talking with friends]

Your mother [cooking]

Your brother/sister [studying]

You [painting]

- ❖ Tell your friends what you did yesterday evening before going to sleep.

Let's do:

Activity 9

Your friend has written this passage. But there are mistakes in every line. Underline the mistakes and correct them. One is done for you:

The History of Chess

Almost two thousand years ago a board-game was played at ⁱⁿ India. It was call *Chaturanga*. It was very popular among kings, warriors and scholars. Chaturanga mean four limbs. It represent the four groups of the army: the warriors who fought on elephants, the cavalry, the charioteers and the infantry. From India the game went to the Persia where it was called *Shatranj*. Some of the words we now use in chess were use in Persia. The term, ‘checkmate’, was earlier call ‘Shah Mat’ or ‘the king is dead’. From Persia, the game went to the Europe. The game was now been called chess.

Activity 10

What do we call the people who live in the following countries? One is done for you:

Country	Nationality
India	Indian
Iran	
Italy	
Russia	
Canada	
America	
China	
Nepal	
Japan	
Pakistan	
England	

Activity 11

Make sentences with the following adverbs:

slowly, fast, now, often, sometimes

Let's talk:

Suppose your friend was absent at the annual sports meet.

❖ Tell your friend about your experience there using the adverbs given in Activity 11.

Let's do:

Activity 12

Write the past forms of the following words:

put, meet, jump, sleep, cry, kneel

Activity 13

Fill in the blanks by choosing the correct form of verbs from the given alternatives:

- (a) They_____ (goes/are going/was going) to school.
- (b) He_____ (live/lives/have lived) within his means.

- (c) She and her friends_____ (go/went/goes) to the picnic yesterday.
- (d) Rahim and I _____ (eat/ate/were eating) when the bell rang.
- (e) The striker _____ (score/is scoring/scored) a goal in the football match yesterday.

Activity 14

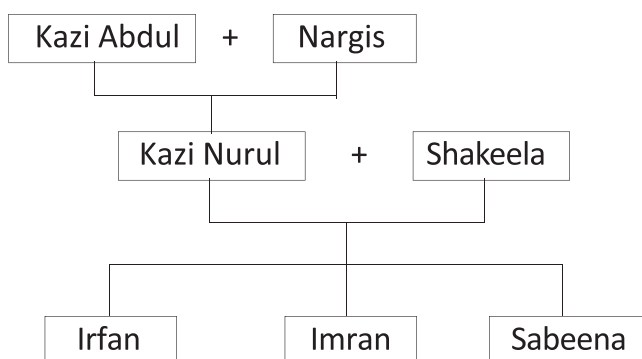
Classify the following nouns in the chart given below:

cow, fleet, Vidyasagar, chalk, honesty, girl, dog, Robert Bruce, ring, friendship, table, herd, class, television, teacher, Rabindranath, truthfulness, bench, enmity, football

Common noun	Proper Noun	Material Noun	Abstract Noun	Collective Noun

Activity 15

Study the family tree of your friend Sabeena carefully. Then write a short paragraph about her family in about sixty words:



Activity 16

Write a short story in about 60 words using the following hints:

Crow looking for water—thirsty—finds a pitcher—water at the bottom—finds pebbles—drops pebbles—water level rises—quenches thirst

Lesson : 1

The Book of Nature

Jawaharlal Nehru

Let's start:

Pundit Jawaharlal Nehru was a great freedom fighter and the first Prime Minister of independent India. He was a very good writer as well. *The Discovery of India*, *Glimpses of World History* and *Autobiography* are some of his noted works. During the late 1920s he wrote a series of letters to his young daughter Indira to share his ideas, thoughts and knowledge with her. These letters were later compiled into a book titled *Letters from a Father to his Daughter*. The present text is an excerpt from the book.



Let's share:

- ❖ Why do we write letters? Discuss with your partner.
- ❖ Have you ever received a letter from an elder?
- ❖ Ask your partner if he/she had written a letter to anyone before.

Let's read:

Unit I

When you and I are together you often ask me questions about many things and I try to answer them. Now that you are at Mussoorie and I am in Allahabad we cannot have these talks. I am therefore going to write to you from time to time short **accounts** of the story of our earth and the many countries, great and small, into which it is divided. You have read a little about English history and Indian history. But England is only a little island and India, though a big country, is only a small part of the earth's surface. If we want to know something about the story of this world of ours we must think of all the countries and all the peoples that have **inhabited** it, and not merely of one little country where we may have been born.

I am afraid I can only tell you very little in these letters of mine. But that little, I hope, will interest you and make you think of the world as a whole, and of other

peoples in it as our brothers and sisters. When you grow up you will read about the story of the earth and her peoples in fat books and you will find it more interesting than any other story or novel that you may have read.

You know of course that our earth is very, very old—**millions** and millions of years old. And for a long long time there were no men or women living in it. Before the men came there were only animals, and before the animals there was a time when no kind of life existed on the earth. It is difficult to imagine this world of



ours, which is so full today of all kinds of animals and men, to be without them. But scientists and those who have studied and thought a great deal about these matters tell us that there was a time when the earth was too hot for any living being to live on it. And if we read their books and study the rocks and the fossils (the remains of old animals) we can ourselves see that this must have been so.

Word Nest

accounts: descriptions of events; **inhabited:** lived in a place
million: ten hundred thousand

Let's do:

Activity 1

Underline the appropriate alternatives:

- (a) India is in fact a (big/ small/ huge) part of the earth's surface.
- (b) Once upon a time the earth was too (cold/ dark/ hot) for any living being to survive.
- (c) Fossils are (a type of wild animal/ one kind of hard rock/ the remains of old living beings).

Activity 2

Answer the following questions in complete sentences:

- (a) What must we do to know about the tale of this world?
- (b) How old is our earth?
- (c) Who roamed the earth before the arrival of human beings?

Activity 3

Fill in the blanks with suitable words from the text. The first letters of the words are given:

- (a) As a subject, h_____ is quite interesting.
- (b) We have good relations with our neighbouring c_____.
- (c) Plants need air, water and sunlight to g_____.
- (d) Can you i_____ how big the Universe is?
- (e) You should s_____ regularly if you want to be a good student.

Activity 4

Make meaningful sentences with the following words:

- (a) interest :
- (b) surface :
- (c) inhabited :
- (d) together :
- (e) scientist :

Let's continue:

Unit II

You read history in books. But in old times when men did not exist surely no books could have been written. How then can we find out what happened then? We cannot merely sit down and imagine everything. This would be very interesting for we could imagine anything we wanted to and would thus make up the most beautiful fairy tales. But this need not be true as it would not be based on any facts that we had seen. But although we have no books written in those far-off days, fortunately we have some things which tell us a great deal as well almost as a book would. We have rocks and mountains and seas and stars and rivers and deserts and fossils of old animals. These and other like things are our books for the earth's early story. And the real way to understand this story is not merely to read about it in other people's books but to go to the great Book of Nature itself. You will I hope soon begin to learn how to read this story from the rocks and mountains. Imagine how **fascinating** it is!

Every little stone that you see lying in the road or on the mountain side may be a little page in nature's book and may be able to tell you something if you only knew how to read it. To be able to read any language, Hindi or Urdu or English, you have to learn its alphabet. So also you must learn the alphabet of nature before you can read her story in her books of stone and rock. Even now perhaps you know a little how to read this. If you see a little round shiny **pebble**, does it not tell you something? How did it get round and smooth and shiny without any corners or rough edges? If you break a big rock into small bits, each bit is rough and has corners and rough edges. It is not at all like a round smooth pebble. How then did the pebble become so round and smooth and shiny? It will tell you its story if you have good eyes to see and ears to hear it. It tells you that once upon a time, it may be long ago, it was a bit of a rock, just like the bit you may break from a big rock or stone with plenty of edges and corners. Probably it rested on some mountain side. Then came the rain and washed it down to the little valley where it found a mountain stream which pushed it on and on till it reached a little river. And the little river took it to the big river. And all the while it rolled at the bottom of the river and its edges were worn away and its rough surface made smooth and shiny. So it became the pebble that you see. Somehow the river left it behind and you found it. If the river had carried it on, it would have become smaller and smaller till at last it

became a grain of sand and joined its brothers at the seaside to make a beautiful beach where little children can play and make **castles** out of the sand.

If a little pebble can tell you so much, how much more could we learn from all the rocks and mountains and the many other things we see around us?

Word Nest

fascinating : very interesting; **pebble** : small piece of stone;
castles : forts

Let's do:

Activity 5

Identify which of the following statements are True and which are False. Give a supporting statement for each of your answers.

- (a) Fairy tales are rich in imagination. ()
- (b) We have no means to know about the far-off days. ()
- (c) The alphabet of nature is like the Hindi or the English alphabet. ()
- (d) We can learn a lot about our world from the rivers and mountains. ()

Activity 6

Complete the following sentences with information from the text:

- (a) No book could have been written in old times because.....
.....
- (b) To be able to read any language one
.....
- (c) A small pebble was definitely a part.....
.....
- (d) On the beaches at the seaside, little children.....
.....

Activity 7

Fill in the following chart with information from the text:

Statement	Reason
1. Fairy tales need not be true.	
2. A piece of rock looks different from a pebble.	
3. A bit of rock from some mountain side reaches a little valley.	
4. All pebbles do not become sand.	

Activity 8

Answer the following questions :

- (a) Which are the things around us that tell us about the earth's early tale?
- (b) Why does a pebble have a smooth surface?
- (c) How does a pebble become grains of sand?
- (d) What does the author mean by "The Great Book of Nature?"

Activity 9

Rearrange the sentences in the correct order by writing the numbers in the brackets. One is done for you :

- (a) The rock is taken to a big river by the little river. ()
- (b) At last it is turned into grains of sand. ()
- (c) It becomes a pebble. ()
- (d) A bit of rock is pushed by a mountain stream into a little river. (1)
- (e) The pebble becomes smaller because it is carried on and on by the river. ()
- (f) The edges of the rock are worn away and its rough surface is made smooth. ()

Activity 10

Match the words in Column A with their meanings in Column B. One is done for you :

A	B
1. fascinating	(a) the set of letters in a language <input type="text"/>
2. merely	(b) top visible side <input type="text"/>
3. fortunately	(c) became damaged by use <input type="text"/>
4. alphabet	(d) only or just <input type="text"/>
5. surface	(e) luckily <input type="text"/>
6. worn	(f) very interesting or charming <input type="text" value="1"/>

Activity 11

Replace the underlined words with suitable opposite words from the box. There are some extra words.

hopeful, lost, add, left, ugly, late, sad, rough

- (a) The man became famous in the early years of his life.
- (b) She is looking very happy.
- (c) The trunk of this huge tree has a smooth bark.
- (d) Jatin found his pencil box on his way to school.
- (e) Smita learnt to subtract.

Let's talk :

Form groups of three and discuss among yourselves the following topics:

- ❖ the things you learn about nature by observing the plants and animals around you
- ❖ the importance of school tours or excursions that you learn from "The Book of Nature"

Let's learn :

Note the following parts of sentences from the text:

- ❖ our books for the earth's early story
- ❖ read about it in other people's books
- ❖ a little page in nature's book

We find the use of **apostrophe (')** in the underlined words. This punctuation mark is used to

- ❖ show the omission of a letter or letters in a word
examples: e'er (ever), o'er (over), hon'ble (honourable) etc.
- ❖ form the plural of letters and figures
examples: Dot your i's and cut your t's.
Add three 4's and five 2's.
- ❖ indicate possession of or connection with something
example: Bani's mother is a school teacher.
- ❖ create shortened or contracted forms
examples: don't (do not), I've (I have), etc.

Let's do:

Activity 12 (a)

Read the paragraph below and put the apostrophe (') mark in the proper places:

Rahims father is a well-known person. The honourable M.L.A. of the area is his relative. He has donated a good sum of money to the local library for buying new books. The library is located near the girls high school. Sabinas brother and Akrams sister often visit the library. They like to read childrens story books and Tagores poems. Their parents also go there to read newspapers after the days work.

Activity 12 (b)

Rewrite the following passage using contracted forms of words wherever applicable:

The teacher said, "We all know you are a good student. I cannot understand why you have done such a thing. You should not behave rudely with your classmates. Promise me, you will always remember what I have said."

The student realised his mistake. He said, "Sir, I am sorry. I shall never behave like this."

Let's learn :

Study the following sentences taken from the text:

- ❖ You have to learn **its** alphabet.
- ❖ You can read **her** story in **her** books of stone and rock.

In the above sentences the coloured words **its** and **her** come before nouns and function as adjectives. They indicate possession or relation with the nouns that follow. So **its** and **her** are **Possessive Adjectives**. 'My', 'our', 'their', 'your', 'his' are also **Possessive Adjectives**.

Now read these sentences:

- ❖ We want to know something about the story of this world of **ours**.
- ❖ I am afraid I can only tell you very little in these letters of **mine**.
- ❖ This book is **mine** and those pens are **yours**.
- ❖ Many years ago, this garden was **theirs**.

In the above sentences the underlined words **ours**, **mine**, **yours** and **theirs** do not have nouns after them. They come after preposition 'of' or a verb. But they also indicate possession of or connection with the nouns in the sentence. So they are **Possessive Pronouns**. 'His' and 'hers' are also **Possessive Pronouns**.

Let's do :

Activity 13(a)

Fill in the chart correctly:

Pronouns	Possessive Adjectives	Possessive Pronouns
I	my	
we		ours
	your	
he		
		hers
it		
	their	

Activity 13 (b)

Fill in the blanks with appropriate possessive pronouns and possessive adjectives:

Yesterday I forgot to take back _____ pen from Sunil. I gave him _____ in the class because he didn't bring _____.

The little girl has torn _____ clothes. "But why are _____ clothes dirty?" asked the mother to the girl's elder brothers. "We have soiled _____ clothes while playing outside", they said.

Let's learn :

Imagine that Nirmal is a boy living in Siliguri. His friend from Delhi, Kanan, has written him a letter. Here is the letter:

32/4 M G Road,

① Eastern Extension,
Delhi— 110092.

② 30 June, 2012

③ My dear Nirmal,

④ I hope you all are fine. Let me share a happy news with you. My brother and I, along with our parents, are going on a tour of Rajasthan next month. It will be great if you join us along with your parents.

Please write back to me as soon as possible so that my father can make necessary arrangements.

⑤ Your loving friend,

⑥ Kanan

Nirmal Das c/o Bimal Kumar Das 22/1, Hill Road, Siliguri, West Bengal.	Stamp
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A letter from a friend is a **Personal Letter**. It has six main parts—

- (1) The writer's address
- (2) Date of writing

- (3) Greeting or Salutation
- (4) Body of the letter
- (5) Leave-taking or Subscription
- (6) Signature/name of the person writing the letter.

The name and address of the person to whom the letter is sent is shown in a box. It is generally written on the envelope.

Now you can understand that the text of Lesson 1 (Unit I and Unit II) is *the body of a letter* written by Pundit Nehru to his daughter Indira.

Unfortunately, Nirmal cannot say 'yes' to his friend in Delhi because his mother is scheduled to undergo a surgery the following month. So he writes:

Delhi—110092
32/4 M G Road
Eastern Extension

Dear Kanan,

I got your letter yesterday. Thank you for your invitation to go on a tour of Rajasthan together. But my mother is very ill. She is going to have a heart surgery early next month. So we can't join you for the tour. Please don't mind. Wish you a happy and memorable visit to Rajasthan.

I am Nirmal, my dear friend.

22/1, Hill Road, Siliguri.

Let's do :

Activity 14 (a)

Nirmal hasn't replied in the correct format.

Rewrite the letter correctly for him.

Activity 14 (b)

Write a letter to your friend in about seventy words telling him/her about a short tour you had recently gone to. Mention the places you had visited, how you travelled, people who accompanied you, your sightseeing and your enjoyment of the tour.

Activity 15

Study the following picture carefully:



Now write a paragraph in about seventy words describing this picture of a village fair. Use the following words and phrases:

fair ground, crowd, merry-go-round, circus tent, shops and counters, balloon-seller, fun, enjoyment.

Begin like this:

A village fair is a popular event in the countryside.....

Let's work together :

- ❖ Find out how you can cut and fold a piece of paper to make an envelope.
- ❖ Take a piece of brown paper and gum.
- ❖ Make an envelope.
- ❖ Collect a used postage stamp and fix it at the top right corner of your envelope.
- ❖ Now write down your address on the left side and your friend's address on the right.
- ❖ Show your work to the class.
- ❖ Next, write a letter to your friend and put it in this envelope.

Lesson : 2

The Riddle

Let's Start :

Akbar was one of the greatest emperors of India. He belonged to the Mughal dynasty. He had in his court the “Nine Gems”, his nine advisors. One of these gems was Birbal, known for his wit and wisdom.



Let's share :

- ❖ Can you name any other famous emperor of India?
- ❖ Why would a person be called a 'gem'?
- ❖ Can you name any other 'gem' of Akbar's court other than Birbal?

Let's read:

The king of Kings, Emperor Akbar, who ruled over India was a great lover of arts, sciences, literature and music. One day, on a fine morning, he was walking in his vast garden. His garden was lined with trees that produced the tastiest and juiciest fruits in the whole kingdom. There were flowers of all shapes and sizes in his garden. He had his most trusted and favourite minister Birbal with him.

But the great Emperor Akbar did not have peace of mind, the quality without which no one, not even the king of kings, can **appreciate** beauty.

Wise Birbal, noticing this, asked Akbar, 'O great and powerful King, what is troubling you? You do not seem to be your usual self, for my king never fails to enjoy the beauty of the greatest kingdom this earth has ever seen.'

Akbar replied, 'Birbal, my dearest friend, you are right. There is indeed a **riddle** that has been troubling me. An idle thought, which came to me in passing, is now my cause of worry. I am troubled because I cannot find an answer to a simple question- what is the fastest thing on this planet?'

Birbal said, 'Is that all, your Majesty? Call your **courtiers** together. Let us see if one of them can answer. If not, then I am certain I can tell you of the fastest thing on the planet.'

At the King's court, many heard the question that was troubling Akbar. Most were puzzled. Some said, 'bullock carts', others said, 'horses'. But Birbal just smiled at them.

After everyone had failed to satisfy Emperor Akbar, Birbal offered to answer his question. He said, 'Your Majesty, it is the human mind!' To prove it, he said, 'Let the people of our kingdom present a problem to me. I shall show you how fast I can solve it using the powers of my mind alone.'

A man came forward from the audience. He claimed that his neighbour had sold him his well. Now, when he wanted to draw water from the well, his neighbour wanted to charge him money for it. After being **summoned** to the court, his neighbour argued that he had just sold him the well, not the water in it.

Akbar listened to this argument carefully and asked Birbal to settle the dispute. Birbal smiled at the man and said, 'I think the solution is rather simple. It is your well now, your neighbour should be paying you rent for keeping water in your well. If he wants you to pay for his water, he must pay for using your well.'

The neighbour realised that he was **outwitted** and withdrew his claim immediately.

All around, people were amazed at the wisdom of Birbal and the speed of the human mind that has the ability to solve a problem instantly. Truly, there was nothing faster than it.



Word Nest

appreciate: to understand the worth of something ; **riddle**: a verbal puzzle;
courtiers: a person who is part of the court of a king or a queen; **summoned**
: called for; **outwitted**: defeated by logic

Let's do:

Activity 1

Choose the correct answers from the given alternatives :

- (a) Emperor Akbar was walking
 - (i) in his palace
 - (ii) in the royal garden
 - (iii) in the house of Birbal.
- (b) Birbal was Akbar's
 - (i) most trusted and faithful minister
 - (ii) greedy and unfaithful minister
 - (iii) rival
- (c) The emperor was
 - (i) happy
 - (ii) calm
 - (iii) worried
- (d) The fastest thing on earth is
 - (i) the human mind
 - (ii) bullock cart
 - (iii) horse
- (e) The neighbour was outwitted by
 - (i) Akbar
 - (ii) Birbal
 - (iii) the neighbour's friend

Activity 2

Identify which of the following statements are True and which are False. Give a supporting statement for each of your answers.

- (a) Emperor Akbar was very worried when he was roaming in his garden.
- (b) There were no flowers and fruits in the garden of Akbar.
- (c) Birbal was indifferent to Akbar's troubles.
- (d) Birbal succeeded in answering to Akbar's query.
- (e) The people of Akbar's court admired the wisdom of Birbal.

Activity 3

What kind of a text is this?

It is a (i) play (ii) essay (iii) story.

Activity 4

Give another title to the story. Give reasons for your answer.

Activity 5

Complete the sentences meaningfully :

- (a) Akbar asked Birbal
- (b) Most people of the court of Akbar were puzzled
.....
- (c)withdrew his claim immediately.
- (d) the fastest thing on earth.

Activity 6

Fill in the chart with information from the text:

Cause	Effect
	1. Akbar was troubled
2. Emperor Akbar asked Birbal to solve a riddle	
	3. The neighbour wanted to charge money for drawing water from the well

Activity 7

Answer the following questions :

- (a) What were the things that the great Emperor Akbar loved?
- (b) Why did Akbar not have peace of mind?
- (c) What was the problem presented by the man from the audience?
- (d) How did Birbal solve the problem?

Activity 8

Identify the words from the text which are the synonyms of the following words:

- (a) confused
- (b) demand
- (c) argument
- (d) surprised

Let's learn:

Look at the sentences from the text :

- ❖ Emperor Akbar, who ruled over India was a **great** lover of arts, sciences, literature and music
- ❖ My king never fails to enjoy the beauty of the **greatest** kingdom this earth has ever seen.

The word **great** in sentence 1 is an **adjective**. It is said to be in the **positive** degree. The word **greatest** in sentence 2 is also an adjective. It is said to be in the **superlative** degree. **Superlative** degree is formed by adding 'est' or 'most/least' to the **positive** adjective.

Look at the sentence:

- ❖ Emperor Akbar is **greater** than many other kings.

Here the word **greater** is in **comparative** degree

The **comparative** degree is formed by adding 'er' or 'more/less' to the adjective

Study the following chart:

Positive	Comparative	Superlative
clever	cleverer	cleverest
big	bigger	biggest
rare	rarer	rarest
happy	happier	happiest
beautiful	more beautiful	most beautiful
good	better	best

There are certain rules for forming adjectives of different degrees.

- ❖ We can form comparative by adding 'er' and superlative by adding 'est', such as strong-stronger-strongest.

- ❖ In some of the adjectives, however, the last letter is repeated while adding 'er' and 'est'. This usually happens in case of small words which have single consonant at the end with a single vowel in between. Such words are fat –fatter-fattest.
- ❖ Some words which end in 'e' add 'r' and 'st' as the 'e' is already present in the adjective itself. Such words are large-larger-largest.
- ❖ Some words which have more than two syllables form their comparatives by adding 'more' and 'most', such as wonderful-more wonderful-most wonderful.
- ❖ Some words that end in 'y' add 'er' and 'est', but the 'y' changes to 'i' and then 'er' and 'est' are added, such as funny-funnier-funniest.
- ❖ There are some adjectives which are irregular in their comparative and superlative forms. They do not follow any rules, such as **bad-worse-worst**.

Let's do:

Activity 9

Complete the following sentences with the proper degree of adjectives:

- Shiela has the _____ (long) hair in the class.
- Mr.Ghosal is _____ (busy) than Mr.Patnaik.
- We should be _____ (careful) in our speech.
- Shenawaz is as _____ (thin) as Pralay.
- The owl is considered as the _____ (wise) of all.
- His house is _____ (far) away from my house than Sanjeev's.

Let's learn:

Look at the following sentence:

- ❖ What **is troubling** you?

In the above sentence, we find that the action is in progress. When we express a present, ongoing action, we use **Present Continuous Tense**. The form that is used for this tense is **is/am/are + verb + ing**.

Look at the sentences from the text you have read:

- ❖ On a fine morning, Emperor Akbar **was walking** in his vast garden.

- ❖ At the King's court, many heard the question that **was troubling** Akbar.

The coloured words indicate actions that were continuing at a time in the past. Such words which denote an action that was happening in the past is known as **Past Continuous Tense**. The form that is used for this tense is **was/were + verb + ing**.

Let's do:

Activity 10

Fill in the blanks with either Present Continuous Tense or Past Continuous Tense:

- (a) It _____ (rain) now.
- (b) Dr. Manmohan Singh _____ (visit) Kolkata today.
- (c) Hari _____ (study) at 9pm yesterday.
- (d) The boys _____ (play) in the field now.
- (e) Rahim _____ (talk) to his friend when his mother called him.

Let's learn :

How do we write a dialogue?

- ❖ In case of **dialogue writing**, we usually write exactly those words that are actually spoken.
- ❖ Abbreviations can be used in dialogues.
- ❖ Contracted forms are also used.
- ❖ It should be in a conversational style.

The form is like this:

Sita : Hello! How are you?

Reshma : I'm fine. How are you?

Sita : Meeting you after a long time! Where were you ,by the way?

Reshma : I was held up with my exams.

Sita : I see! And how was your exam?

Reshma : Well, not bad really! But now I'm getting a bit nervous about the result.

Sita : Oh, come on! I'm sure you'll do well.

Reshma : Thanks, Sita.

Sita : Bye then! Take care.

Reshma : Bye.

Let's do :

Activity 11

Suppose your friend asks you to solve a riddle and you don't know the answer to it. Write a dialogue in about seventy words based on the conversation that you had with your friend.

Begin like this:

Sunil : Hello Rohit! What's going on?
You : Nothing serious. Just having a crack at this crossword.
Sunil : Good to see that you like puzzles. Well, here's a riddle for you.
You : What's the riddle?
Sunil : Well,

Activity 12

Try to write a story that you may have heard before using the following points (in about seventy words):

A crow—finds meat—flies to a tree—a clever fox—sees—says to crow—sing—crow sings—meat falls—fox takes—crow sad—flies away.

Begin like this:

A crow was flying for a long time. He became very hungry

Now complete the rest of the story taking cues from above.

Let's work together::

Enact a play

- ❖ Read the story again.
- ❖ Write dialogues for Akbar, Birbal and the neighbour.
- ❖ Play the roles of Akbar, Birbal and the neighbour.
- ❖ There should be a director who will guide the characters.
- ❖ Some of your friends will prompt.

Lesson : 3

We are Seven

William Wordsworth

Let's start :

The poet:

William Wordsworth [1770-1850] was one of the greatest poets of nature. He was a major poet of the Romantic period. His greatest poems are *The Prelude*, *The Daffodils*, *Tintern Abbey*, *London 1802*, *Ode to Duty*, *Upon Westminster Abbey* etc. He spent his life in the Lake District of England. The present text is an edited version of his poem *We are Seven*.



Let's share:

- ❖ Do you have any brother or sister?
- ❖ How many cousins do you have?
- ❖ How old are they?
- ❖ Where do they live?

Let's read:

A simple child,
That lightly draws its breath,
And feels its life in every limb,
What should it know of death?

I met a little cottage girl:
She was eight years old, she said
Her hair was thick with many a curl
That **clustered** round her head.