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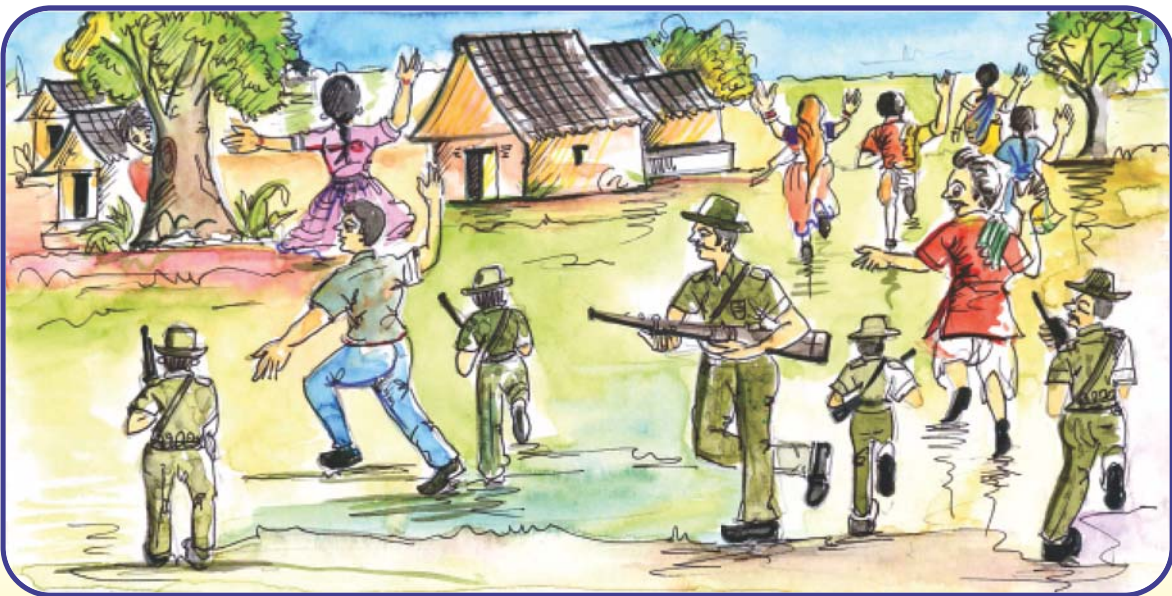
The Brave Lady of Rajasthan

- Name some important figures who sacrificed everything for the freedom of India.
- Why do we still remember them?

Our country was invaded by the enemy. A battalion had been ordered to march across the borders and kill even the civilians, not to spare even a child, an old man or a woman.

The battalion marched towards a little village, avoiding an open encounter with the Indian jawans. The battalion had to march through the hot sand of the desert, always in fear of sudden dangers. However, the movement of the enemy forces was noticed by some of the homeguards well in time and the neighbouring village had been vacated.

The battalion reached the village but noticed no movement, heard no noise. Some soldiers advanced but saw nothing; absolute silence reigned there. The Officer-in-Command, suspecting a hidden attack, ordered an utmost alert on all sides.



The troops entered a lane and arrived at a small opening where some bags of wheat and a quantity of chapatis, sugar, tea and other provisions were still smoking, though consumable items evidently been spilt to prevent their falling into the hands of the enemy.

The soldiers were dying of thirst and hunger. As soon as the soldiers satisfied themselves, after all their toil and facing dangers that no water or refreshment was to be obtained, they roared with rage but no vengeance was within reach. All the inhabitants had run away.

Suddenly cries were heard coming out of the deserted huts, amongst which the soldiers had dispersed themselves in the hope of discovering some food or water. The cries came from a young woman holding a one-year-old child in her arms. The soldiers were dragging her to their Commander.

“Sir,” said one of them, “Here is a woman we have discovered, sitting beside an old man who is completely paralyzed.”

She was dressed in the peasant costume of Rajasthan and was pale and trembling with fear.

“Why are you alone here?” asked the officer.

“I stayed with my grandfather who is suffering from paralysis and so could not follow the rest to a safe place,” replied the woman boldly as if annoyed to say a word in the presence of the enemy, “I stayed back to take care of him.”

“Why have neighbours left the village?”

The lady's eyes flashed fire; she fixed on the Commander, look of strange meaning and answered. “You know very well. Weren't they all to be killed?”

The Commander shrugged his shoulders, “But why did you burn the chapatis and wheat and emptied the milk cans and waterpots?”

“So that you might find nothing. As they could not carry them off, there was no other way but to destroy them.”

At this moment, sudden shouts of joy were heard. A group of soldiers appeared carrying some sweets, several pots of water and cans of milk and curds. The

provisions were discovered in an underground hole in the earth, which was concealed by the straw bed that the old man was lying on. The young lady stared at them with a look of deep vengeance. The Commander, who was anxious about the poor and sinking condition of his troops, rejoiced at this unexpected discovery. But then he recollected that wells and tanks were being poisoned.

“Where have these provisions come from?”

“We had concealed them for ourselves, after destroying the rest.”

“Where is your husband?”

“My husband is in heaven,” said she, lifting up her eyes “he died for the motherland. I have no relations except my poor child.” She pressed the infant to her bosom. The poor little creature was lean and thin but his large eyes shone as they turned to his mother.

“Commander,” said one of the soldiers, “Please let us have these provisions because we are very hungry and thirsty.

“One moment, my boys, listen, said he, eyeing the young woman suspiciously. These provisions are good, I hope.”



“How should they be otherwise?” replied the Rajasthani woman bravely. “They are not meant for you.”

“As this milk is good, you will not object to a glass of it!”

“Oh no! as much as you please,” and accepting the glass offered by the commander, she emptied it without hesitation.

“And your child will drink some also.” said the Commander.

“He is so pale, it will do him good.”

In holding the cup to her infant's lips her hand slightly trembled, but the child also emptied his cup.

Presently, the provisions speedily disappeared and the soldiers took food and water. Suddenly, the infant began to turn white. Foam came out of his mouth. He was crying with pain. The mother too, though she uttered no groan, could not remain standing, and her features betrayed her sufferings.

“Wretch!” exclaimed the officer, “you have poisoned us!”

“Yes”, said she, with a feeble smile, falling to the ground beside her child. “Yes, I have poisoned you. All of you will soon die and go to hell.”

Her last words were hardly audible. The soldiers at first did not understand the full horror of the situation but as the poison worked, they began to fall on the ground in heaps.

After the war was over, her heroic deed became known to the people. All the countrymen applauded her gallant sacrifice. Long live the brave young lady! Long live those who fought for the independence and died for their country! Long live our Motherland!

GLOSSARY:

invade	:	to attack
battalion	:	a large group of soldiers
encounter	:	to face a dangerous opposition
reign	:	to rule for a period of time
provisions	:	food, drink and other supplies
vengeance	:	revenge
disperse	:	go away in different directions
shrug	:	to raise and lower your shoulders to show rejection
discovery	:	an act or the process of finding something or somebody learning about something that was not known before
infant	:	a very young child, a baby
feeble	:	very weak, not showing energy
applaud	:	clap, to show your approval
gallant	:	brave, heroic
sacrifice	:	giving something very important or valuable

Activity - I

A. Tick the correct alternative.

- I. The soldiers went to different directions in order to :
 - a) search out some food or water.
 - b) find out only water for them selves.
 - c) discover their soldiers who had lost their way.
 - d) attack their enemy.
- II. All of you will soon die and go to hell' It shows
 - a) firm determination and patriotism of young woman.
 - b) Feeling of sympathy toward enemies.
 - c) Weakness of the young lady
 - d) Her disappointment.

B. Say whether the following statements are true or false.

- I. The brave young lady was a great patriot.

II. The enemy wanted to kill everybody whoever they encountered.

.....

III. The brave young lady was frightened when she saw the soldiers.

IV. The soldiers found the provisions which were put beside the old man on the ground.

V. The enemy battalion advanced for an open encounter with the Bhartiya jawan.

VI. The brave young lady did not know the provisions were poisoned.

VII. Just as the soldiers drank and ate, they learnt that the provisions had been poisoned.

VIII. The Rajasthani lady was very proud of her husband's sacrifice.

C. Answer the following questions in 10 to 20 words each.

- I. What was the unexpected discovery?
- II. Where did the soldiers find things to eat?
- III. What did the woman say before dying?
- IV. Who did the soldiers take to the commander?
- V. What did the people do to save themselves?
- VI. Why did the enemy march towards a little village?
- VII. Who were there with the woman?

D. Answer the following questions in 30 to 40 words each.

- I. Why did the young woman stay back?
- II. What was her plan to kill the enemies?

Activity - II

- A. Write the words opposite in meaning to the words in brackets or underlined:**

- I. The old man became.....(strong).
- II. We are prepared to fight if theattacks us. (friend).
- III. The police.....the thief and he answered.
- IV. We have read in the Bible about hell and

B. Fill in the blanks with the help of the words given in the box below:

marching, sacrifice, heroic, troops, costumes

On 26 January the parade began. Thecamein colourful.....then we recollected the days of.....deeds and great.....of brave bold Bhartiyas who died for the nation.

C. Read the following words and use them in your own sentences so as to bring out their meaning.

sand	send
dying	dyeing
here	hear
of	off
desert(n)	dessert
whole	hole
deep	dip
reach	rich
but	butt
so	sow

Activity - III

A. Read the following sentence from the text and notice the use of 'as soon as'.

“As soon as the soldiers satisfied themselves, after all their toil and facing dangers, that no water or refreshment was to be obtained, they roared with rage but no vengeance was within reach.”

'As soon as' is generally used to say that something happened after something or 'no sooner' something had happened 'than' the other thing took place. 'As soon as' is interchangeable with 'no sooner.....than'

Change the following using ! 'no sooner.....than'.

Example:- As soon as Raju realized his mistake, he sat about correcting it.

No sooner did Raju realize his mistake than he sat about correcting it.

I. As soon as the panchayat results were declared, people garlanded him.

II. As soon as it started to rain heavily, people went inside their houses.

III. As soon as it rained, the farmers began to plough their fields.

IV. As soon as the teacher entered the class, the class became silent.

V. As soon as it grew dark, the gates of city were closed for the night.

VI. As soon as tiger rushed at me, I fired a shot.

VII. As soon as Prashant saw his mummy, he ran to touch her feet.

VIII. As soon as Krishna saw Sudama, he hugged him and began to weep.

IX. As soon Ram asked Hanuman to seek Sita, he set out immediately.

B. Read the following sentences carefully :

You should come in uniform. You may join the parade.

You should come in uniform **so that** you may join the parade.

You should come in uniform **in order that** you may join the parade.

'So that' is used to talk about purpose. It is usually followed by a modal auxiliary verb such as **can or will, may**(more formal). Sometimes '**in order that**' is used in stead of '**so that**' especially in informal style.

Now use 'so that'/'in order that' and the modal auxiliaries discussed above in the following sentences :

I. Jaya has been working hard to get better marks than earlier.

II. Pramod takes exercises everyday to keep himself physically fit.

III. Anurag is studying regularly to improve his English language.

IV. Kamal ran fast to catch the thief.

V. Jyoti drove fast to reach home in time.

Activity - IV

Pronounce each pair of words twice-in each pair the vowel sound of the first word is long and that of the second is short.

I. beat	bit
I. deep	dip
II. feel	fill
III. neat	knit
IV. heat	hit
V. heal	hill
VI. lead	lid
VII. leave	live
VIII. scene	sin
IX. read	rid

Activity - V

You must have heard about the valour and sacrifice made by the great queen ‘Padmini of Chittor’. Ask your teacher to acquaint you with the glorious history of ‘Mewar’ and the valour of the lady. On the basis of the tips supplied by the teacher, write a paragraph on the queen, ‘Padmini of Chittor’.