

READ, THINK AND ENJOY

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THREE DAYS TO SEE

Helen Keller

*Helen Keller (1880 -1968) became blind and deaf when she was 19 months old. She learnt to read and write in Braille. She wrote numerous articles and her autobiography **The Story of My Life** (1902) became the source of inspiration to the physically challenged and others as well. She was also an educator par excellence.*



THREE DAYS TO SEE

1. I have often it would be a blessing if each human being were stricken blind and deaf for a few days during his early adult life. Darkness would make him more appreciative of sight; silence would teach him the joys of sound.
2. Now and then I have tested my seeing friends to discover what they see.
3. Recently, I asked a friend, who had just returned from a long walk in the woods, what she had observed. "Nothing in particular," she replied.
4. How was it possible, I asked myself, to walk for an hour through the woods and see nothing worthy of note? I, who cannot see, find hundreds of things to interest me through mere touch. I feel the delicate symmetry of a leaf. I pass my hands lovingly about the smooth skin of a silver birch, or the rough, shaggy bark of a pine. In spring I touch the branches of trees hopefully in search of a bud, the first sign of awakening Nature after her winter's sleep.

Occasionally, if I am very fortunate, I place my hand gently on a small tree and feel the happy **quiver** of bird in full song.

5. At times my heart cries out with longing to see all these things. If I can get so much pleasure from mere touch, how much more beauty must be **revealed** by sight! And I have imagined what I should most like to see if I were given the use of my eyes, say, for just three days.
6. I should divide the period into three parts. On the first day, I should want to see the people whose kindness and companionship have made my life worth living.
7. I do not know what it is to see into the heart of a friend through that "window of the soul," the eye. I can only "see" through my finger-tips the outline of a face. I can detect laughter, sorrow, and many other obvious emotions. I know my friends from the feel of their faces.
8. How much easier, how much more satisfying it is for you who can see to grasp quickly the essential qualities of another person by watching the subtleties of expression, the quiver of a muscle, the **flutter** of a hand. But does it ever occur to you to use your sight to see into the inner nature of a friend? Do not most of you seeing people grasp casually the outward features of a face and let it go at that?
9. For instance, can you describe accurately the faces of five good friends? As an experiment, I have questioned husbands about the colour of their wives' eyes, and often they express **embarrassed** confusion and admit that they do not know.
10. Oh, the things that I should see if I had the power of sight for just three days!
11. The first day would be a busy one. I should call to me all my dear friends, and look long into their faces, **imprinting** upon my mind the outward evidences of the beauty that is within them. I should let my eyes rest, too, on the face of a baby, so that I could catch a vision of the eager, innocent beauty which precedes the individual's consciousness of the conflicts which life develops. I should like to see the books which have been read to me and which have revealed to me the deepest channels of human life. And I should like to look into the loyal, trusting eyes of my dogs, the little Scottie and the stalwart Great Dane.

12. In afternoon I should take a long walk in the woods and **intoxicate** my eyes on the beauties of the world of Nature. And I should pray for the glory of a colourful sunset. That night, I think, I should not be able to sleep.
13. The next day I should arise with the dawn and see the thrilling miracle by which night is transformed into day. I should behold with awe the magnificent **panorama** of light with which the sun awakens the sleeping earth. This day I should devote to a hasty glimpse of the world, past and present. I should want to see the **pageant** of man's progress, and so I should go to the museums. There I would see the condensed history of the earth—animals and the races of men in their native environment; huge **carcasses** of dinosaurs and mastodons which roamed the earth before man appeared, with his tiny stature and powerful brain, to conquer the animal kingdom.
14. My next stop would be the Museum of Art. I know well through my hands the sculptured gods and goddesses of the ancient Nile-land. I have felt copies of Parthenon friezes, and I have sensed the rhythmic beauty of charging Athenian warriors. The **gnarled** features of Homer are dear to me, for he, too, knew blindness.
15. So on this, my second day, I should try to probe into the soul of man through his art. The things I knew through touch I should now see. More splendid still, the whole magnificent world of painting would be opened to me. I should be able to get only a superficial impression. Artists tell me that for a deep and true appreciation of art one must educate the eye. One must learn through experience to weigh the merits of line, of composition, of form and colour. If I had eyes, how happily would I embark on so fascinating a study!
16. The evening of my second day I should spend at the theatre or at cinema. How I should like to see the fascinating figure of Hamlet, or the gusty Falstaff amid colourful Elizabethan **trappings**! I cannot enjoy the beauty of rhythmic movement except in a sphere restricted to the touch of my hands. I can vision only dimly the grace of a Pavlova, although I know something of the delight of rhythm, for often I can sense the beat of music as it vibrates through the floor. I can well imagine that cadenced motion must be one of the most pleasing sights in the world. I have been able to gather something

of this by tracing with my fingers the lines in sculptured marble; if this static grace can be so lovely, how much more acute must be the thrill of seeing grace in the motion.

17. The following morning, I should again greet the dawn, anxious to discover new delights, new **revelations** of beauty. Today, this third day, I shall spend in the workaday world, amid the haunts of men going about the business of life. The city becomes my **destination**.
18. First, I stand at a busy corner, merely looking at people, trying by sight of them to understand something of their daily lives. I see smiles, and I am happy. I see serious determination, and I am proud. I see suffering, and I am compassionate.
19. I stroll down Fifth Avenue. I throw my eyes out of focus, so that I see no particular object but only a **seething** kaleidoscope of colour. I am certain that the colours of women's dresses moving in a **throng** must be a **gorgeous spectacle** of which I could never tire. But perhaps if I had sight I should be like most other women - too interested in styles to give much attention to the splendour of colour in the mass.
20. From Fifth Avenue I make a tour of the city - to the slums, factories, to parks where children play. I take a stay-at-home trip abroad by visiting the foreign quarters. Always my eyes are open wide to all the sights of both happiness and misery so that I may probe deep and add to my understanding of how people work and live.
21. My third day of sight is drawing to an end. Perhaps there are many serious **pursuits** to which I should devote the few remaining hours, but am afraid that on the evening of that last day I should again run away to the theatre, to a **hilariously** funny play, so that I might appreciate the **overtones** of comedy in the human spirit.
22. At midnight permanent night would close in on me again. Naturally, in those three short days I should not have seen all I wanted to see. Only when darkness had again descended upon me should I realize how much I had left unseen.
23. Perhaps this short outline does not agree with the programme you might set for yourself if you knew that you were about to be stricken blind. I am,



however, sure that if you faced that fate you would use your eyes as never before every object that came within your range of vision. Then, at last, you would really see, and a new world of beauty would open itself before you.

24. I who am blind can give one hint to those who see: Use your eyes as if tomorrow you would be stricken blind. And the same method can be applied to the other senses. Hear the music of voices, the song of a bird, the mighty strains of an orchestra, as if you would be stricken deaf tomorrow. Touch each object as if tomorrow your tactile sense would fail. Smell the perfume of flowers, taste with relish each morsel, as if tomorrow you could never smell and taste again. Glory in all the facets of pleasure and beauty which the world reveals to you through the several means of contact which Nature provides.
25. But of all the senses, I am sure that sight must be the most delightful.

LET'S THINK AND DO

1. Discuss in small groups how does a blind person feel.
2. How does the narrator throw light on how to use our ability to see? Discuss.
3. Do a project work on the 'Art of Seeing'.



Stone-Masons, My Father, And Me

Namdeo Dhasal

NAMDEO DHASAL (b. 1949 probably) a noted Marathi poet, grew up in Mumbai slums. He organised 'Dalit Panthers' to fight the oppression of the Dalits. His collections of poems include *Golpitha* and *Gandubegicha*. He has also been honoured with Padma Shree. His present poem 'Stone-Masons, My Father, And Me', translated from Marathi by Vinay Dharwadkar, very succinctly depicts a stone mason's life - his misery and the dexterity with which he gives shapes to stones.



Stone-Masons, My Father, And Me

Stone-masons give stones dreams to dream;

I set a match to fireworks.

They say one mustn't step into

One's father's life:

I do; I scratch

his elbows,

his armpits.

Stone-masons give stones flowers;

I play horns and trumpet.

I overtake the Parsi who stands

turned to stone

by the bodies of four women

bent like bows.

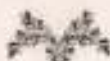
I see my father's bloodied rump.
In the chaos of the dark
I smoke a cheroot
and smoulder with memories
till my lips get burnt.

Stone-masons inseminate stones;
I count exhausted horses.
I harness myself to a cart;
I handle
my father's corpse;
I burn.

Stone-masons mix blood with stones;
I carry a load of stones.
stone-masons build
a stone house.
I break heads with stones.

LET'S THINK AND DO

1. How is the life of stone-masons depicted in the poem?
Describe in your own words.
2. What is the attitude of the speaker to his work? Why did he become a stone-mason?
3. Talk to the stone-masons in your locality and do a project work on them.



UNEMPLOYED HOPE

Umeshwar Prasad

DR UMESHWAR PRASAD (1933-1998), a professor in the Department of Post-Graduate Studies and Research in English, Bihar University, Muzaffarpur, was the General Editor of *Indian Sensibility Publications*, and was for many years the Chief Editor of the *Articulator*, a quarterly journal. His poems and critical articles, both in English and Hindi, have appeared in a number of prestigious anthologies and journals published from important cities of India. His collections of poems include *Confrontation and Other Poems*, *Unemployed Hope*, and *A Nailed Dream*. His poems have the making of urgent intensity. *Virginia Woolf* (criticism) and *Vyawaharik Alochana* (criticism in Hindi) are his other important works.



UNEMPLOYED HOPE

My dreams have fallen
among arching aches
in deep-levelled bowels;
Who will fool with them now
that you really did, father!
for four secular years
in an unproviding democracy,
for the unemployed hope
of your postgraduate son,

who would often apply,
and would often discuss
His fairy salary,
"I'm getting this job, father
and with the first month's salary
I will get for you
a Maharaja dhoti
and a silken Kurta";
and your tears would sing
a tender prayer,
and your aged eyes sprang
a gay gratitude
for your only son's
unemployed fancies.

They haven't come his way, father!
though your hands have gone
off his head for good.

Wasn't it father –
my mother would tell me
oftener in her last hours,
in her dotted voice,
knotted and timberless –
that you so much cherished
a Maharaja dhoti
and a silken Kurta
that proudly sat
on young labour's limbs
in your wedding...?

With smouldering lead
in my eyes now,
I'm utterly jobless, father;

Even the doting dream
For a maharaja dhoti
and a silken shirt
has lapsed in transaction
with loyalism for life,
and with starved protest
against death.

LET'S THINK AND DO

1. How does the poem express the frustration of the unemployed youth?
2. Comment on the title of the poem?
3. Do a project work on the employment among educated youths, focussing on its causes and consequences. Also, suggest ways to deal with the problem.



LANKAPURI

Krishna Kumar

KRISHNA KUMAR (b.1951), a professor of education at the University of Delhi, is presently working as Director, NCERT. He has published short stories and essays in Hindi as well as books and papers in English on education. He has written both for children and the teachers. Among his publications for children are *Neelee Ankhonwale Bagule* and *Aaj Nahin Parhoonga* and for teachers *The Child's language* and *The Teacher*. The present short story 'Lankapuri', translated from Hindi by Arun Prabha Mukherjee, is a revealing study of adolescence – the sudden changes that the adolescence brings with it.



LANKAPURI

1. I did not always remember that Manno was a little older than me. But, I now know that Manno was very conscious of it. She used to **torment** me over the **pettiest** things. She used to make me pay her a price before she would **deign** to grant my very simple requests. Both of us are very fond of listening to film songs on the radio. I could never remember the exact wordings of any song, while Manno could memorize the whole song after listening to it once. Sometimes I couldn't even follow the song properly. 'Yon to hamne lakh hasin dekne hain', a very **favourite** song of mine at that time, would be misheard by ears as 'Yon to hamne dhak wahin dekhe hain.' When my mind got tired of **deciphering** a meaning out of these words, I would **resort**

to asking Manno for a correction. On such occasions Manno used to first **embarrass** me by laughing very loudly and then she used to make me enter all kinds of business transactions for each and every line of song. The jobs she made me do might have been very easy - like bringing a glass of water for her or putting a cover on her book or sharpening her pencil - but to pay for each line of the song by doing jobs like this seemed a very **exorbitant** price. Despite this I used to attend to all such **chores** quietly as the attraction of the song was very powerful. To know a song entirely and correctly seemed worth going through all the trouble.

2. The promises were also quite easy to fulfil - that I will never pull her hair or tell against her and things like that. And even as I gave my **pledges**, I used to **resolve** in my mind to do exactly what I was promising never to do again. Not that I always succeeded. Many a time it became impossible to pull her hair as she also knew about the **fickleness** of my promises and was prepared for their immediate **infringement**. But, I will say that I had become **habituated** to taking my promises lightly. Though I was different about the **oaths**. For instance, Manno would sometimes put me under Vidya's or God's oath, that I would not trouble her like that, and then I used to be a bit **subdued** for a day or so. By next morning neither Manno nor I remembered the oath.
3. Manno used to live opposite my house and her father taught in a school like my father's. The only difference was that her father wore spectacles and dressed in dhoti and kurta while my father wore pyjamas and kurta and didn't use spectacles. They were very good friends, but I am of the opinion that my friendship with Manno was far stronger and deeper. Manno didn't have a mother. She had only an elder sister who visited them once in a while. I was alone in my house and Manno is hers, but it did not matter because we hardly ever stayed apart. Except during the days we had to take examinations, we hardly ever separated. Manno was one year ahead of me and so she had to study more. In appearance too she was superior. What did I have to compare with her colourful frocks and ribbons? I in my brown or blue or khaki **knickers** and yellow or white or green shirts could never dare compete with Manno's well-turned-out appearance. And then, when were my clothes ever clean? My shirts always had big rings of black dirt around the collars and in the front you could find spots of ink or grease. My hair was always **dangling** over my forehead in the most unruly manner while Manno's shining hair was neatly

braided. My knees were always adorned with lots of flies or else there would be a big bairdage around them. I wonder if Manno ever had even a smaller **blister**, nothing to say of an injury.

4. While I did give her a blow or two during play or pulled at her braids, I had a very special place for Manno in my heart, far above my mother and father. Once when I saw Manno in a drama in her school I couldn't believe it was the same Manno I knew. She was dressed in a long red skirt which was **glimmering** in the bright stage light. And her cheeks were red with **rouge**. After that evening I didn't even dare go near her for three or four days. All my clothes looked very **shabby** to me and all my books and copy books seemed quite irrelevant. Four or five days later, after the stage personality of Manno had faded a little, I made her write out the song she had danced on the stage. It was summer and after one line she sent me running to the bazaar to get her some ice. I got the complete song out of her only after that. I still remember the first line. *Guriya aurat ek kahani* (O my doll, woman's life is a story).
5. Oh yes, I forget to mention that Manno always managed to keep her school books and copies brand new. And her handwriting was so neat that the words looked printed. On the other hand, all my books were dog-eared and my copies were **snagged** with **blobs** of ink on almost every page.
6. Every evening we used to play Nagin Tapa on our rooftop. One could see a large portion of our town from there. There was a big lake at one end of the town. One day during our play I was looking at the lake and asked her, 'Manno, what is that in the middle of the lake?'
7. 'Lankapuri,' she answered, without even looking at the lake.
8. 'What do they do there?'
9. 'Nothing.'
10. 'Nothing happens there?'
11. 'Sometimes.'
12. 'What?' I asked, stopping in the midst of the game. I was quite outside Nagin Tapa now. I had already flown to Lankapuri.
13. 'They burn the **effigy** of Ravan on Dussehra and then drown him there.'
14. 'What happens during the rest of the year?'
15. 'Nothing.'
16. 'Does it lie vacant all the time?'

17. 'What do you think?'
18. I was not satisfied with this answer. It was very strange for me that a place like Lankapuri should remain vacant. At least they could leave some stuff belonging to Ravan there.
19. Manno took away the **puck** from my hand, saying, 'You have lost your turn by throwing the puck in the fourth house. As for me, the Nagin Tapu had **submerged**; only Lankapuri remained.
20. That night I dreamt that there is a school in Lankapuri where only Manno and I got to study.
21. Next morning, when we were on our way to the school, I told Manno that we must go to Lankapuri one day. The first time she absolutely refused on the **pretext** that it would involve a lot of walking. And that was quite true. One had to go around the lake in order to reach Lankapuri. And it was certainly no ordinary lake. It touched the two important landmarks of our town: the temple of Shivaji and the veterinary hospital. All the houses of the town could not cover the space which the lake occupied. Lankapuri was at the other end of the lake, but, seen from afar, it seemed right in the middle. On its two sides were some date trees and in the front one could see a stretch of sand.
22. At last, Manno was persuaded that one morning we would get out early and go up to Lankapuri. We did not **disclose** this plan to any one at home. There would certainly be problems if we had told them. Perhaps, they would have forbidden us to go. First of all, Lankapuri was so far off. Secondly, it was quite isolated. That week I looked at Lankapuri from my roof many times. I never saw anyone there. How could Manno and I be allowed to go where nobody ever went? Therefore, the best thing was not to talk about it at all.
23. I started practising getting up very early in the morning, but it didn't work for the first few days. By the time we reached the lakeshore, the sun would be up and so we would have to come back to get to school in time. Again next morning, my pulse would start beating fast as soon as I left the bed, but I would find, to my disappointment, that it was already too late to start. I would keep my eyes fixed on Lankapuri while I walked along the shore. The lake would come inside me and Lankapuri would be in front. I couldn't even hear the **splash** of the divers and the bells of the temple.
24. At last, one morning we found that we had the time to get to Lankapuri. We hit the road much before sunrise. There was a very faint light in the

east across the lake and it was difficult to see things **distinctly**. Above our heads were stars – stars that **peep**, not the ones that stay as if stitched in the night sky. There was a soft wind blowing which had a slight chill.

25. We made the end of the lake in record time. From there onwards we had to leave the road and get into the fields. My feet were in the air and the fields were slippery like wet soap. Manno was in front, walking **gingerly**. I was **hopping** like a bird, my steps hardly touching the ground. Immediately after we left the road I felt that I had arrived in a strange place. I had travelled in a train only once before. Otherwise I had never been out of my town. The jungle was for me a place seen in dreams. Rabbits **loitering** on soft, green grass and birds **chirping** on tall, thick trees. A village was like a picture in my third standard book: women drawing water from well, **groves**, people sitting under trees, tiny cottages and children on swings.
26. There. That is Lankapuri. The east was blazing red when we reached Lankapuri. There was sand all around and **desolation**; the voices on the shore seemed far, far away.
27. Lankapuri was like a very old house. There was moisture in the walls and plants **jutted** out of corners.
28. 'We have arrived,' Manno said as she put her foot on the first step.
29. 'Let us get in first,' I said and started to walk in.
30. 'Let us first rest a little.'
31. 'No, I want to go in first.'
32. 'No, I'm very tired.'
33. And Manno sat down on the steps. I didn't like her sitting down like that at all. I said with great anger in my voice: 'Keep sitting all day if you want.' I jumped two steps at a time and entered Lankapuri.
34. I saw that Lankapuri was totally **deserted**. There was nothing there except walls on all sides. Suddenly, I saw in the morning light that there was something **scribbled** on the walls. I went near the front wall and tired reading it. In big letters was **etched** the name 'Sushila' and after that were such words as I had seen behind the school wall, on the lake road and at several other places. Near the words was the picture of a girl and she had nothing on.
35. My glance **penetrated** the dark. I saw that the same words were written on all the other walls. As I went looking at them, my feet started getting

cold. My hands went into my pockets and I lost all sense of place. Still, I kept moving ahead till I reached the window and the sun suddenly **glared** in my eyes.

36. I recalled that Manno was sitting outside. I **tip-toed** to the steps where I found Manno dozing with her head on her knees. My hand reached for Manno's braids out of habit but stopped. I put it back in my pocket and started looking at the waves. A little later I felt like hitting her on the back, but this time my hand didn't even come out of my pocket. I resumed looking at the waves.
37. Suddenly I raised my head and I looked towards the shore. There was light all over the lake and **commotion** on the shore. I felt as though my head had a **fissure** and the tip of a knife was pointed straight at my eyes when I thought that the people bathing on the shore must be staring at Manno and me.

LET'S THINK AND DO

1. How do the narrator and Manno behave with each other? What does their **behaviour** signify? Is it common to all adolescents?
2. Do you have any friend with whom you can be as free and informal as the narrator used to be with Manno?
3. When the narrator comes out of Lankapuri, he becomes conscious of the people staring at him and Manno. What does he become conscious of? What makes him conscious?
4. At the end of the story the narrator feels a knife pointed straight at his eyes. What does this image signify?



Letter to Martha

Dennis Brutus

*DENNIS BRUTUS (b.1924), a noted south African poet has written prolifically on apartheid. The following poem (no 17) is taken from **Letters to Martha** written while the poet was in prison. It recounts the poet's experiences in the prison.*



Letter to Martha

In prison
The clouds assume importance
And the birds

With a small space of sky.
cut off by walls
of bleak hostility
and pressed upon by hostile authority
the mind turns upwards
when it can -

- there can be no hope
of seeing the stars:
the arcs and fluorescents
have blotted them out -
the complex aeronautics

of the birds
and their exuberant acrobatics
become matters for intrigued speculation
and wonderment

clichés about the freedom of the birds
and their absolute freedom from care
become meaningful

and the graceful unimpeded motion of the clouds
— a kind of music, poetry, dance —
sends delicate rhythms tremoring through the flesh
and fantasies course easily through the mind:

- where are they going
where will they dissolve
will they be seen by those at home
and whom will they delight?

LET'S THINK AND DO

1. Why and how do 'the clouds' assume importance in prison?
2. Does the poem look at the nature or birds in the same way as does Nehru in 'Animals in Prison'? Discuss.
3. Can you remember any poem in any language that you know in which clouds play a major role in the speaker's life living in isolation. Translate that poem into English and show it to your friends and your teacher.



Of Remembering God

Kabir

KABIR (1398-1451, one of the major exponents of the Bhakti poetry in India, was a weaver by profession. He openly criticized the caste system and other ills of the contemporary society. He has written more than 500 verses. His poetry exhibits a mystical love for God and celebrates the equality of all men before the eyes of God. The poem 'Of Remembering God' is a transversion by Mohan Singh Karki of Kabir's poem 'Sukh mein sumiran sab kare...'



Of Remembering God

In sorrow all remember God,
But in happiness nobody;
Who remembers God in happiness
Why should ever sorrow there be?

1

O how sad ever for him who's asleep!
In his grief he doesn't he doesn't wake to weep
One whose dwelling is in the grave,
In full ease he ever he even can sleep.

2

'Why art thou asleep?' says Kabir,
'Sing of God's glory, be awake!
Death doth stand just over thy head
For his daily ration's intake'.

3

Why are thou asleep! Says Kabir,
Greatly thy sleep may thee damage;
When Time maketh thundering sound
Even Brahma's throne starts to shake.

Leaving aside the beloved Ram
Who doth adore an alien god,
He is like the prostitute's son,
Whom to call his father knows not.

Loot in as much as thou canst loot
Divine name of Ram in treasure;
God of Death will hold thee by throat
And throttle all thy ten apertures.

Guru and God stand side by side,
Whose feet should I touch and kowtow?
O guru! I offer myself
At thy feet since God tells me so.

Why God's in the sulks, says Kabir,
To the guru for shelter goes,
But when guru is in the sulks
In no way the helper is god.



LET'S THINK AND DO

1. Why do we remember God only in our sorrow?
2. Who, in your opinion, is greater – Guru or God? Why? Discuss in small groups.
3. Talk to the people of different religions and find out the essential similarities between them.



LETTER TO CORK

Dean Mahomed

*Dean Mahomed (1759-1851), a native of Patna, Bihar, is the first known Indian author in English. While in the service of The East India Company, he travelled to different parts of India, Ireland and England and wrote his observations and letters addressed to a friend Cork. This was printed under the title **Mahomed** by J. Connor, 17, Corner of Castle- and it describes the of selling and prevalent at that time in*



*experiences in a series of friend Cork. This was **The Travels of Dean** at the circulating Library, no street. This is Letter no XXIV features as well as the way purchasing of elephants India.*

LETTER TO CORK

Dear Sir,

1. Of all the animals in the East or elsewhere, none can equal the elephant in magnitude. To excite your wonder, and, at the same time, afford you some entertainment, I shall here give you a particular description of this **quadruped**, which is ...the largest in the universe. It is from twelve to fifteen feet high, and seven broad: it's skin about the belly is so tough, that a sword cannot penetrate it: the eyes of it are exceeding small, the ears large, the body round and full, and the back rises to an arch: it is of a darkish colour and very much seamed: on each side of it's jaws, within the mouth are four teeth or **grinders**; and two teeth which project outwards: in the male, they are stronger and thicker; in the female, they are sharper and smaller: both male and female use one, which is sharp as a defensive weapon, and the other which is blunted to **grub up** trees and plants for food. The teeth of the male sometimes grow to the length of ten feet, and have been known to weigh three hundred pounds each; the teeth of the female, though less, are the most valuable ivory. They naturally shed their teeth once in ten years, and bury them carefully in the earth, to prevent, as it is

imagined, their being found by man. The elephant's tongue is small, but broad; the feet round and ample, and the legs have joints, which are flexible: the forehead is large and rising; the tail resembles that of a hog; and the blood of this creature is colder than that of any other; but the organ which most peculiarly distinguishes it, is the trunk. This singular member is cooked, grisly, and pliant, about seven feet in length, three in circumferences, and gradually diminishing to the **extremity**. At the root, near the nose, are passages, the one into the head, the other to the mouth; through the first, it breathes; and by the later, it receives it's provisions, the trunk serving the purposes of a hand to feed it, and a weapon to defend it. So strong is this powerful animal, that it can lift a prodigious weight; and so delicate in the sensation of feeling, that it can take the smallest piece of coin from the ground. It delights much in water, and will swim a great way.

2. They are taken by stratagem in different parts of India, as they descend from the mountains, where they feed, to the lakes or rivers, to water. The hotteewallies, or people employed to take them, dig deep trenches in their direction, which they conceal with reeds covered over with earth and grass; the elephants, on their way to the watering places, unacquainted with the danger before them, fall into the pit contrived by these artful men who often risqué their lives in the execution of such hazardous projects. The old animals, by some means extricate themselves, and escape to the woods, but the young ones, who thus become an easy prey to their pursuers, are suffered to remain in this situation, for some days without food, till they are almost spent, and unable to make any resistance: an easy descent is then opened into the pits or trenches, and collars thrown round their necks, after which they are mounted, and following a tame elephant as their leader, conducted with great facility to the next town or village. When a considerable number of them, is collected in this manner, they are regularly trained by the hotteewallies, for the use of the Nabobs and other great men; and when rendered by age unfit for their amusements, they serve to carry the equipage of camps and other burdens. Under the management of their tutors, they are taught to do anything, and, in a short time, become as tractable as the horses of the most famous riders in Europe.
3. It is related of one of them, that when the child of it's keeper, lay some time in a cradle, crying for want of nourishment, in the absence of the parents, this huge but generous animal took it up gently, gave it suck, and afterwards laid it down in the cradle with the utmost solicitude. This tenderness, which is not unlike gratitude in our species, proceeded from the kind treatment of its keeper.

4. An elephant is commonly sold by measurement; and some of those animals, which are young and well trained, are purchased at the rate of 150 rupees per cubit: they are measured from the head to the tail, which is about seven cubits long, and at this calculation will amount to above one hundred pounds sterling each.
5. Next to the elephant in bulk and figure, is the rhinoceros, called by the modern Indians, *abadu*; it is not unlike the wild boar, but much larger, having thicker feet, and a more unwieldy body. It is covered with large hard scales of blackish colour, which are divided into small squares, raised a little above the skin, and nearly resembling those of the crocodile. It's head, which is large, is wrapped up behind in a kind of **capuchin**; it's mouth is little; but its snout extends to a great length, and is armed with a long thick horn, which makes him terrible to other animals, it's tongue is as rough as a file, and a sort of wings like those of the bat, cover the belly.
6. In the eastern territories, there is no beast more useful than the camel, either for burden or dispatch: some of them will carry a thousand weight, and travel, at least, seven or eight miles an hour: they have no teeth, except in the lower jaw, and one **bunch** on the back: none of the brute creation, of such a bulk, less voracious than this creature. They lie down on their bellies to receive their loads, and are always governed by the voice of the drover, who could never mend their pace, by beating them. They are naturally fearful, and extremely patient under fatigue.

LET'S THINK AND DO

1. Dean Mahomed says that an animal is commonly sold by measurement? Does the practice continue even today? How is elephant sold now?
2. How many animals does the author describe in his letter? Which are they? Do they have anything common about them?
3. Write a letter to your foreign friend describing your favourite Indian animal.



I am The Daughter Of The Land Of Dravida

Amrita Pritam

*Amrita Pritam (b. 1919), Punjabi poet and fiction writer, has published 18 volumes of her poems including **Kagaz te Kanvas**. She has also authored 24 novels including **Yaatri** and 15 collections of short stories. Her autobiography **Rasidi Ticket** is a widely read book. On various occasions she has been honoured with several awards including Padma Shree, Sahitya Akedemy (1956) and Jnanpith awards. The poem 'I am The Daughter Of The Land of Dravida', translated from Punjabi by the poet herself, is about the different roles of women in different situations and time.*



I am The Daughter Of The Land Of Dravida

I am Kama- kanya, the daughter of love.

I am Kal -kanya, the daughter of death.

Wearing this body, I have come.

I am the daughter of the land of Dravida.

One by one, I passed

Through each of the four ages

And was turned into a mere subject

I am the daughter of the land of Dravida.

Temple, palace, brothel, slum
The allure of the body's clay
The body resides in all of these.
I am the daughter of the land of Dravida.

The red veil of honour
the black veil, of disgrace
Both colours have fluttered in the air
This was my body's earthly stage
Where I wore both colours
And then discarded them
I have merged myself in the depths of
My own being.
I am the daughter of the land of Dravida.

LET'S THINK AND DO

1. Why does the speaker call herself both Kama-Kanya and Kal-Kanya?
2. Comment on the significance of the title? Why does each stanza end with this?
3. Describe the condition of woman in your society.



SPRING

Awadh Behari Lall

AWADH BEHARI LALL (b. 1866 - ?) was a student of Patna College and started writing poetry at the age of 17. He wrote descriptive and didactic poetry, epistles and epistolary poems, and elegies. His significant achievement is *Bihar: A Series of Poems (Part I: The Country and the Season)*. This has three cantos: spring, summer and winter. The poem here accentuates the specific identity of Bihar through flora and fauna, seasons and the people. The extract is from the first canto entitled 'Spring'

SPRING

New fresh leaves, green or red, the tress did wear
And pleasant blooms and young fruits did appear,
A pleasing gale, soft murm'ring through the trees,
Laden with fragrance, did my joys increase.

In various spots of ground before my sight
Were flowers blooming, kindling my delight,
They were of diff'rent kinds; with various hues
Were coloured they by Nature's hands profuse,
Which Art with all the majesty of wit

Will never copy them and has not copied yet.
You can im'tate the flow'r, but, artists! Whence,
Say, will you bring the natural fragrance?
In fact did Nature put on liv'ries new

Of various colours – red, white, yellow, blue,
Pink and carnation, amaranth and gold,
Purple and dark – faint, mediocre, or bold.
But chief of all that pleased my smell and sight,
The queen of flow'rs Flora's great favourite,
Was the red rose, emblem of love and of delight.

Her kins and sisters in same bed did stand
To charm the senses – a great lovely band.
The primrose pale, the briar, the eglantine,
Their sim'lar beauties and fragrance did join;
They looked one another with jealous eyes

And rivalled for th' obtaining of the prize
For passing most in the sweetest scent and loveliest dyes...

LET'S THINK AND DO

1. Which flower is Flora's great favourite? What does it symbolise?
2. How does the poet depict the spring? Write in your own words.
3. Pick out the instances of personification in the poem and comment on the significance of their use.



Syllabus

English Language

Intermediate or +2 Stage (Classes XI-XII)

General Introduction:

Language, the chief function of which is communication, is the most distinctive trait of human society. The very acquisition of knowledge depends on language. Language is a marker of our identity and is closely associated with power in society. We can hardly do without language in any walk of life.

The knowledge of English is especially very important in the age of globalisation we are living in. The richness of this language and the existing stock of wide knowledge in English make it immensely useful. It is a window on the world and an access to the growing store of knowledge in science, technology and humanities.

We have to acknowledge, whether we like it or not, that English plays an important role in the domains of education, administration, business and political relations, judiciary, industry etc and is, therefore, a passport to social mobility, higher education and better job opportunities.

The mushroom growth of the so called 'English medium' or public schools in every nook and corner of the state and the people's preference to such schools is a testimony to the growing importance and need of English which needs to be addressed in the curriculum /syllabus of the state. The very principle of equality entails that English should not remain associated only with the rich, elite or the upper middle class. Even a rural child of the underprivileged has an equal right to gain a sufficiently good level of proficiency in it so that he should not suffer discrimination for lack of it.

With the changes in the aims and objectives of education, redesigning curricular framework and thereof revision of syllabus becomes a compulsion. This compulsion is the positive strength of a live education system.

The guidelines of NCF 2005 framed in the light of the well known report "Learning Without Burden" has shifted the focus from the teachers to the learners, confining the former to the role of facilitator only. The NCF 2005 recognises learners as the constructor of knowledge and sees multilingualism as a strength in the classroom. It prescribes five guiding principles. These include/imply:

- ❖ Connecting knowledge to life outside the school
- ❖ Ensuring that learning be shifted away from rote methods

- ❖ Enriching the curriculum to provide for over all development of the child rather than remain textbook centric, and
- ❖ Making examination more flexible and integrated with classroom life
- ❖ Nurturing identity of the learners within democratic polity

The change in attitude to teaching and learning necessitates the revision of the State Curriculum Framework and thereof the syllabus of English language. It is high time we recognised the importance of creating socio-cultural contexts that would encourage children to participate actively in understanding and create appropriate communicative practices. The Bihar inputs and the appropriate use of mother tongue in the classroom will accelerate the pace of learning and thus can help the learners overcome their fear of English. It's time we removed the notion that English is difficult to learn.

The present syllabus owes much to the NCF 2005 and the NCERT syllabus developed in the light of NCF 2005. The attempt has been to accommodate the NCERT syllabus as far as practicable in the context of Bihar. This has entailed, to some extent, the omission, modification and even shifting of many of the objectives, learning strategies and learning outcomes to another class.

It is important to state that, unlike the NCERT syllabus which is only stage wise, the proposed state syllabus is developed both stage- wise and class - wise.

Special emphasis has been laid on oral drilling and building vocabulary of the learners at the primary stage. It appears necessary as the children in the state are mostly of rural background and they lack the exposure to English language or English vocabulary at the initial stage. The children who follow the NCERT syllabus are mostly from urban background and hence they have exposure to English or at least they pick up a fairly large number of English words even before they come to schools. Hence, the NCERT syllabi for Class I and II can expect their children to develop ability to 'enact small plays /skits' and 'talk bout themselves, members of the family and the people in their surroundings' but this will be too ambitious an objective for the children with rural background and with little or no exposure to English language and its vocabulary.

Methods and techniques of teaching have been dealt with in details for classes I-II. However, for the rest of the classes this has been done stage- wise rather than class-wise. Attempts have also been made to correlate learning outcomes with the learning objectives at every stage. The NCERT syllabus has been of great help in this connection.

Attention has also been paid to integrate contemporary issues with the core components, prescribed in the National Education Policy and academically

accommodate them in the light of the local needs and specialities. This aims at improving the state syllabus knowledge-wise and objective-wise.

The proposed syllabus also recognises the availability of actual time for the classes as an important component of syllabus designing. This has an important bearing on the selection of content materials quantitatively so that the syllabus does not exert any unnecessary pressure on the learners.

The learning of grammar has been visualised as the process of discovery of English usages. Hence, more emphasis has been given on the learning of the functions of the words than on their grammatical terminology. It is hoped that this will enable the learners use structures and vocabulary appropriately in different contexts and social situations both orally and in writing.

A very significant feature of the proposed syllabus is that the continuity of linkage has been maintained at each successive level of learning from class I to class XII. The emphasis has been to ensure the integrated communicative competence by the time the learner passes the +2 level. It is for this reason that the syllabus recommends measures to assess and evaluate the oral proficiency as well.

Background (Intermediate or + 2 level)

For a large number of students, the higher secondary stage is a preparation for the university, where a fairly high degree of proficiency in English may be required. But for another large group, the higher secondary stage is a preparation for entry into the world of work. Hence, the course will cater to both groups by promoting the language skills required for academic study as well as language skills required for the workplace. Since the learners are expected to have acquired a reasonable degree of language proficiency in English by the time they come to class XI, the primary concern at the +2 level is to promote the higher - order language skills both written and spoken in an integrated manner.

Learning Objectives

The **general objectives** at this stage are:

- ❖ To develop greater confidence and proficiency in the use of language skills - Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing - necessary for social and academic purposes.
- ❖ To develop ability to comprehend the standard books in English in his own special subjects.
- ❖ To participate in group- discussions/interviews, making short oral presentations on given topics.

other forms of language learning activities such as role play, dramatisation, group discussion, writing, etc. (although many such activities could be carried out without the preliminary use of textual material). It is important that students be trained to read independently and intelligently, interacting actively with texts, with the use of reference materials (dictionaries, thesauruses, etc.) where necessary. Some pre-reading activity will generally be required, and the course book should suggest suitable activities, leaving teachers free to devise other activities when desired. So also, the reading of texts should be followed by post reading activities. It is important to remember that every text can generate different interpretations. Students should be encouraged to interpret texts in different ways.

Group and pair activities can be restored to when desired, but many useful language activities can be carried out individually.

In general, teachers should encourage students to interact actively with texts and with each other. Oral activity (group discussion, etc) should be encouraged.

Learning outcomes

At the end of this stage, learners will be able to:

- ❖ Understand and respond to lectures, speeches, etc.
- ❖ Do text-based writing (i.e., writing in responses to questions or tasks based on prescribed or unseen texts).
- ❖ Read and comprehend extended texts (prescribed and non-prescribed) in the following genres: fiction, science fiction, drama, poetry, biography, autobiography, travel, sports, literature, etc.
- ❖ Write expository/ argumentative essays of 250-300 words, explaining or developing a topic, arguing a case, etc.
- ❖ Write formal/informal letters and applications for different purposes.
- ❖ Write items related to the workplace (minutes, memoranda, notices, summaries, reports; filling up of forms, preparing CVs, e-mail messages, etc).
- ❖ Taking/making notes from reference materials, recorded talks etc.
- ❖ Develop the capacity to appreciate literary use of English and also use English creatively and imaginatively.
- ❖ Enjoy and appreciate different types of prose pieces and poems.

Required teaching competence

- The teacher should be able to encourage students to interact actively with texts and with one another.

- ❖ To listen to and comprehend live as well as recorded oral presentations on a variety of topics.
- ❖ To build communicative competence in various 'Registers' of English.
- ❖ To perceive the over-all meaning and organisation of the text (i.e. the relationship of the different 'chunks' in the text to each other).
- ❖ To identify the central/main point and supporting details, etc.
- ❖ To promote advanced language skills with an aim to develop the skills of reasoning, drawing inferences, etc through meaningful activities.
- ❖ To translate texts from mother tongue(s) into English and vice versa.
- ❖ To develop ability and knowledge required in order to engage oneself in independent reflection and enquiry.
- ❖ To develop sense of language through a variety of prose specimens providing good models of contemporary English.
- ❖ To develop the ability to comprehend and appreciate simple poems in English.

Language items

The course would draw upon the language items suggested for classes IX –X and delve deeper into their usage and functions. Particular attention may, however, be given to the following areas of grammar:

- ❖ The uses of different tense forms for different kinds of narration (e.g. media commentaries, reports, programmes, etc.)
- ❖ The use of passive forms in scientific and innovative writings
- ❖ Converting one kind of sentence /clause into a different kind of structure as well as other items to exemplify stylistic variations in different discourses
- ❖ Modal auxiliaries – uses based on semantic considerations

The study of formal (descriptive) grammar, at a very elementary level, will be introduced in class XI. The workbook for the course will contain suitable exercises on grammar as well as basic phonology. A conscious knowledge of some grammatical rules and sound patterns may be useful and interesting at this stage.

Learning Strategies

The teaching at this stage would follow a multi-skill, learner-centred, activity-based approach, of which there can be many variations. To promote habits of self-learning and reduce dependence on teacher, silent reading of prescribed/selected texts for comprehension would be encouraged as the classroom activity along with

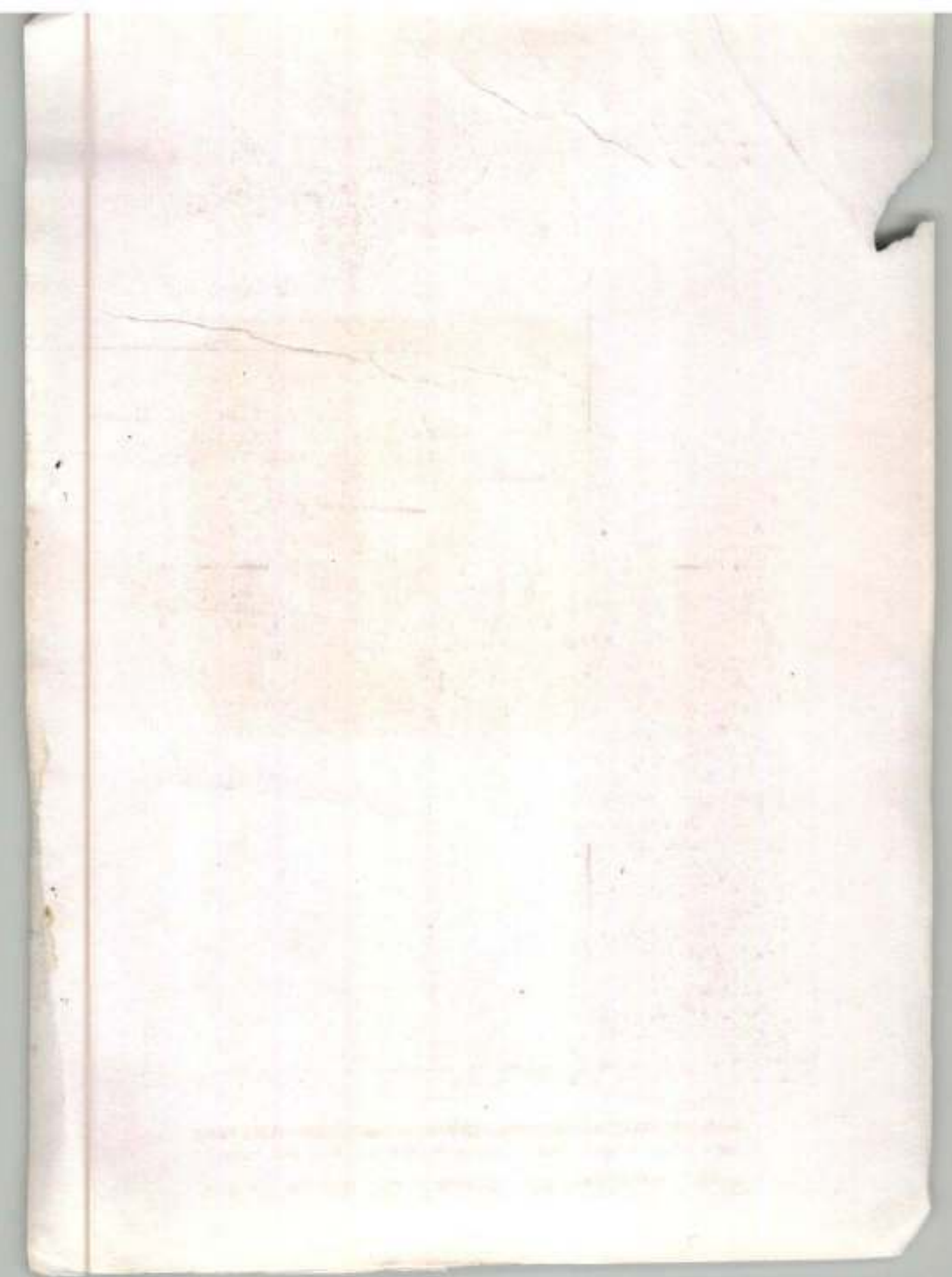
- The teacher should have the competence to show the learners that there could be various interpretations of a given text and encourage them to interpret texts in different ways.
- This entails that the teacher should have the competence to fulfil the functional (communicative), literary (aesthetic) and cultural (sociological) needs of the learners.
- The teacher should also have fluency and accuracy in speaking and writing.
- The teacher should have the competence to devise and conduct various activities related to the text.
- The teacher should have a sound knowledge of the functional grammar, literature and phonological features of English.
- The teacher should be able to encourage critical and analytical thinking on the part of the learners.
- The teacher should have the competence to build meaningful environment to elicit responses from the learners.
- The teacher should have the ability to initiate learners to group activities and role play.
- The teacher should be good at role play, dramatisation, discussion, debate etc.
- The teacher should have the competence to handle audio-visual aids.
- The teacher should have the clarity of concepts regarding the process of writing.
- The teacher should have the competence to devise suitable language games and hold language activities for a long time.
- The teacher should have the competence to reduce his indispensability and encourage learners to become the facilitator of learning but at the same time he should also have the ability to plan and devise his teaching methods according to the need of the learners.

Syllabus: Class XI

Sl no.	Teaching Items	Method	Objective	Resources/ Textual support
1.	Live / Recorded presentation on variety of topics	Oral-Written exercises	Develop Listening, Speaking and Comprehension skills	Audio records/ text prints to enable the teachers to read out if there is no audio aids
2.	Group discussions on familiar topics/ contemporary issues	Oral exercises	Developing argumentative and Speaking skills	Examples: Familiar topic: "Can literature help us win bread and butter?" Contemporary issue: "Is death sentence violation of human rights?"
3.	Preparing notes and writing summary of a given passage	Writing exercises	Identifying central/main point and supporting details etc and perceiving overall meaning and organisation	The texts should deal with socio-political and cultural issues along with the principles enshrined in the constitution.
4.	Comprehension of unseen factual/	Reading with understanding	Developing the skills of	

	imaginative passages (Short and long question-answer items) Reading of tales/ short	and Writing exercises	reasoning, drawing inferences	
5.	stories /short plays	Reading and Writing exercises	Reading with understanding and imbibing virtues	Bihari writers, Indian writers, Commonwealth writers and native writers of English
6.	Reading of informative pieces/ essays	Reading with understanding and Writing exercises	Read with understanding and respond effectively in writing	On Environment, Economics, Sports, Science, Health and Hygiene, Adolescence, Human values and Human rights, Cultural diversity and unity etc.
7.	Reading poems for enjoyment and understanding	Oral and Written exercises	Enjoying and understanding poems and imbibing human values and/or encountering truth	World fame poets (both native and non native poets of English), Indian poets, Bihari Poets
8.	Free composition on familiar/ contemporary issues	Writing exercises	Communicative skills in Writing	Notices, memorandum, formal and informal letters, application etc.

9.	Various registers of English	Oral/written excises	Build communicative competences in various registers of English	Support with standard pieces of writing
10.	Translation from mother tongue into English	Writing exercises	Ability to translate from mother tongue into English and vice versa.	Wide ranging topics covering different aspects of life including great personalities
11.	Grammatical items and structures: a) The use of different Tense forms for different kinds of narration (e.g. media commentaries, reports, programmes, etc.) b) Reported speech in extended texts c) The use of Passive forms in scientific and innovative writing d) Converting one kind of sentence/ clause into a different kind of structures as well as other items to exemplify stylistic variations in different discourses e) Modal auxiliaries – uses based on semantic considerations f) Phrases and idioms a) Synthesis	Oral and Writing exercises	Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing skills	Sufficient examples followed by extensive exercises based on or related to text





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