Chapter 4: Environment

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Let us explore — Waiting for the Rain

4 Q

Exercise 4.1 — Pre-reading Activities — The Cherry Tree

Q1 Work in pairs and answer: (1) Have you ever used a seed or a sapling to grow a plant? (2) What kind of care did the plant need? Who helped you with it? (3) How did you feel when you saw the plant grow?

SOLUTION

These are personal reflection questions. Share your own experience honestly.

Sample response:
(1) Yes, I once planted a mango seed in a pot at home.
(2) It needed regular watering, sunlight, and occasional weeding. My grandmother helped me with it.
(3) I felt proud and excited when the tiny shoot pushed up through the soil — it felt like I had created something living.

Answer: Model answer above — adapt as needed.

Q2 What kind of trees do people plant in their homes? Why is it important to plant trees?

SOLUTION

People commonly plant trees like neem, mango, banana, coconut, tulsi, and flowering trees such as gulmohar or hibiscus in their homes.
It is important to plant trees because:
— Trees produce oxygen and absorb carbon dioxide, keeping air clean.
— They provide shade, reducing heat.
— Fruit trees provide food.
— Trees prevent soil erosion and support wildlife.
— They improve mental well-being and beautify surroundings.

Answer: Model answer above — adapt as needed.

Q3 Name some fruit trees that grow in your region. What type of conditions help these fruit trees to grow?

SOLUTION

Sample response (for a northern/central Indian region):
Fruit trees: mango, guava, papaya, banana, lemon, pomegranate.

Conditions that help them grow:
— Mango: warm climate, well-drained loamy soil, dry summers.

— Guava: tropical/subtropical climate, sandy loam soil, moderate water.
— Banana: humid tropical climate, rich fertile soil, regular water.
— Pomegranate: semi-arid climate, tolerates drought, well-drained soil.
Adapt the answer to name trees common in your own region.

Answer: Model answer above — adapt as needed.

Exercise 4.2 — Let us discuss (Part I) — The Cherry Tree

Q1 Arrange the events in order of occurrence in the story. Two have been done for you:

1. Rakesh discovered that the small, well-rooted twig had grown into a cherry tree.
2. Rakesh was sent to live with his grandfather in Mussoorie.
3. Rakesh pressed the cherry seed into the soft soil with his thumb. (5)
4. The cherry tree grew quickly after the rains arrived early.
5. Rakesh bought a bunch of cherries and ate most of them.
6. A goat entered the garden and ate all the leaves of the young cherry tree.
7. Rakesh's parents grew maize, rice, and barley in a village. (1)
8. Rakesh sprinkled water on the cherry tree and surrounded it with pebbles.
9. Grandfather told Rakesh that cherry trees were tough.
10. Rakesh kept rolling the last cherry seed in his mouth.

SOLUTION

Use the story's sequence to arrange each event.

Correct order:

1. (1) — Rakesh's parents grew maize, rice, and barley in a village.
2. (2) — Rakesh was sent to live with his grandfather in Mussoorie.
3. (3) — Rakesh bought a bunch of cherries and ate most of them.
4. (4) — Rakesh kept rolling the last cherry seed in his mouth.
5. (5) — Rakesh pressed the cherry seed into the soft soil with his thumb.
6. (6) — Rakesh discovered that the small, well-rooted twig had grown into a cherry tree.
7. (7) — Rakesh sprinkled water on the cherry tree and surrounded it with pebbles.
8. (8) — The cherry tree grew quickly after the rains arrived early.
9. (9) — A goat entered the garden and ate all the leaves of the young cherry tree.
10. (10) — Grandfather told Rakesh that cherry trees were tough.

Answer: Correct order: (1) Rakesh's parents in the village → (2) Rakesh sent to Mussoorie → (3) Bought cherries → (4) Rolled the seed in his mouth → (5) Planted the seed → (6) Discovered the twig/tree → (7) Watered and circled with pebbles → (8) Tree grew quickly in the rains → (9) Goat ate the leaves → (10) Grandfather said cherry trees are tough.

Q2 Do you think the cherry tree would survive? Why do you think so?

SOLUTION

This is an open-ended discussion question. A well-supported answer:

Yes, the cherry tree is likely to survive because:
— Grandfather himself says, 'Cherry trees are tough,' indicating the tree has a strong natural resilience.
— Even after the goat ate all its leaves, only the main stem and two thin branches remained — the tree was not uprooted, so its root system was intact.
— In the story's Part II, the cherry tree does in fact survive — new leaves appear after the goat's damage, and the tree continues to grow.

The story reinforces the message that life, like the cherry tree, finds a way to persist through adversity.

Answer: Yes — Grandfather says cherry trees are tough, the root system was intact after the goat attack, and the story confirms the tree regrows.

Exercise 4.3 — Let us discuss (Part II) — The Cherry Tree

Q1 Complete the cause-and-effect table based on Part II of the story. One example is done:
Cause 1: A woman cut the cherry tree while cutting grass. Effect (i): Grandfather scolded the woman.
Cause 2: [?] → Effect (ii): Rakesh was thinner but stronger when he came back.
Cause 3: A hairy caterpillar started eating the leaves of the cherry tree. → Effect (iii): [?]
Cause 4: [?] → Effect (iv): Rakesh and Grandfather gazed at the tree as though it was a miracle.
Cause 5: Rakesh tasted one of the small cherries during summer. → Effect (v): [?]

SOLUTION

Fill in the missing causes and effects from the text of Part II.

Cause 2 (missing): Rakesh went home to his village to help his father and mother with planting, ploughing, and sowing during the monsoon.
Effect (ii) [given]: Rakesh was thinner but stronger when he came back.

Effect (iii) [missing]: Rakesh quickly removed the caterpillar and dropped it on a heap of dry leaves.

Cause 4 (missing): A pale pink blossom appeared at the end of a branch of the cherry tree in February.
Effect (iv) [given]: Rakesh and Grandfather gazed at the tree as though it had performed a miracle.

Effect (v) [missing]: Rakesh found it too sour and spat it out.

Answer: Cause 2: Rakesh went to his village to help with farm work. | Effect iii: Rakesh removed the caterpillar and dropped it on dry leaves. | Cause 4: A pale pink blossom appeared on the tree. | Effect v: Rakesh found the cherry too sour and spat it out.

Exercise 4.4 — Let us think and reflect — The Cherry Tree

Q1 Extract 1: 'Have a cherry, Grandfather,' he said… 'Nothing is lucky if you put it away. If you want luck, you must put it to some use.'

(i) Substitute the underlined phrase with a correct word from the extract: 'The Kho-kho captain changed her strategy quickly and without delay when a new player came in from the opposing team.'
(ii) What does Rakesh's action of rolling the cherry seed in his mouth most likely suggest about his mood?
A. He is feeling impatient and restless.
B. He is enjoying the taste and the moment.
C. He is bored and has nothing better to do.
D. He is thoughtful and feeling playful.
(iii) Complete the sentence: Rakesh's decision to plant the seed shows that _____.
(iv) How does the grandfather's advice reflect his view about luck and effort?

SOLUTION

(i) The phrase 'quickly and without delay' should be substituted with 'promptly'.
'Promptly' appears in the extract: 'Rakesh promptly ate the other two.'

(ii) The correct answer is D — He is thoughtful and feeling playful.
Rolling the seed in his mouth after eating the cherries suggests Rakesh is savouring the moment, curious about the seed, and in a light, playful mood — not impatient, bored, or merely tasting.

(iii) Rakesh's decision to plant the seed shows that he has a close bond with his grandfather and a willingness to learn from him.
He respects and acts on his grandfather's advice immediately, showing trust and openness.

(iv) Grandfather's advice — 'Nothing is lucky if you put it away. If you want luck, you must put it to some use' — reflects his belief that luck is not a passive gift; it must be activated through effort and action.
He does not believe in superstition or hoarding good fortune. For him, luck is the outcome of purposeful work.
This is a practical, action-oriented worldview: potential (the seed) has value only when used.

Answer: (i) promptly. (ii) D. (iii) he has a close bond with his grandfather and a willingness to learn from him. (iv) Grandfather believes luck comes through effort — potential is worthless unless put to use.

Q2 Extract 2: 'Winter came early. The cherry tree bent low with the weight of snow… In February it was Rakesh's birthday. He was nine — and the tree was four, but almost as tall as Rakesh.'

(i) Complete: The phrase 'field-mice sought shelter in the roof of the cottage' suggests that _____.
(ii) What can be inferred about the cherry tree's toughness?
A. The weight of the tree was more than the snow.
B. The tree could withstand harsh weather.
C. The tree was growing close to the ground.
D. The snow gave support to the tree.
(iii) How did the early winter affect Grandfather's mood and storytelling?
(iv) Complete: The comparison of Rakesh's age to the cherry tree's age symbolises ___. (the tree's growth paralleling Rakesh's own development / the tree standing as a dear one on Rakesh's birthday)

SOLUTION

(i) The phrase 'field-mice sought shelter in the roof of the cottage' suggests that the winter was severely cold, driving even small animals to seek warmth indoors.

(ii) The correct answer is B — The tree could withstand harsh weather.

Although the tree bent low under the weight of snow, it did not break. This demonstrates its resilience and ability to survive tough conditions.

(iii) The early winter affected Grandfather's mood negatively — the blocked road meant no newspaper for several days, making him 'quite grumpy.'

His storytelling was also affected: 'His stories began to have unhappy endings,' suggesting that his mood coloured the way he narrated stories.

The isolation of winter, lack of news, and the cold collectively made Grandfather irritable and gloomy.

(iv) The comparison symbolises the tree's growth paralleling Rakesh's own development.

Both Rakesh and the cherry tree have grown over the same period — Rakesh from six to nine, the tree from a seed to nearly his height.

This parallel growth reinforces the bond between Rakesh and the tree: the tree is, in a way, his companion growing up alongside him.

Answer: (i) Winter was severely cold, driving animals indoors for warmth. (ii) B. (iii) Made him grumpy (no newspaper) and his stories took on unhappy endings. (iv) The tree's growth paralleling Rakesh's own development.

Q3 Answer the following questions:

1. Why did Rakesh's parents send him to Mussoorie?
2. Why did Rakesh let the praying-mantis remain on the branch of the cherry tree?
3. How is life in the Himalayan foothills described in the story?
4. What might Rakesh mean when he says, 'Is this what it feels to be God?' at the end of the story?
5. How does the writer describe the relationship between Rakesh and his grandfather?
6. What can you infer about the connection between humans and nature based on the story?
7. Imagine Rakesh reflects on his wonderful experience of watching a seed transformed into a full-grown cherry tree. Write how he must have felt.

SOLUTION

1. Rakesh's parents sent him to Mussoorie because there were no schools in their village.

His parents 'were keen that he should go to school,' so they sent him to live with his grandfather as soon as he was of school-going age.

2. Rakesh let the praying-mantis remain because he considered it the cherry tree's 'first visitor.'

He had a deep, protective bond with the tree. The praying-mantis was harmless and Rakesh saw it as a welcome presence — the tree was beginning to attract life, which delighted him.

3. Life in the Himalayan foothills is described as rugged and simple.

The soil was stony, dry cold winds stunted plant growth, and most crops grew on narrow terraced fields.

The forest of oak and deodar provided shelter on more sheltered slopes.

Winters were harsh — cold winds, snow, blocked roads — and people lived quietly, telling stories over charcoal fires.

4. By saying 'Is this what it feels to be God?', Rakesh is expressing a profound sense of wonder at having created life from a single seed.

He planted the seed, nurtured the tree, and watched it grow into something that now provides shade, attracts birds, blossoms, and bears fruit.

The feeling of being responsible for the existence of a living thing — of having shaped it with one's own hands — gives Rakesh a sense of the divine, of what it might mean to be a creator.

5. Ruskin Bond describes the relationship as warm, close, and mutually enriching.

Grandfather guides Rakesh — teaching him about seeds, luck, and effort.

Rakesh, in turn, reads the newspaper to Grandfather whose eyesight is weak.

They sit by the fire together, share stories, and at the end of the story quietly watch the night come in side by side under the cherry tree.

It is a relationship built on companionship, respect, and shared love of nature.

6. The story suggests that humans and nature are deeply intertwined.

The cherry tree grows as Rakesh grows; it becomes a source of shade, joy, and wonder for both Rakesh and Grandfather.

The story shows that when humans nurture nature patiently, nature rewards them abundantly.

The tree also demonstrates resilience — surviving a goat, a scythe, and harsh winters — mirroring the human capacity to persist through hardship.

7. Model response:

Rakesh must have felt a quiet, deep pride — not the kind that shouts, but the kind that settles in the chest like warmth.

He must have thought back to the day he pressed a tiny seed into the soft soil with his thumb, with no certainty it would ever sprout.

Through every season — the goat that stripped its leaves, the scythe that cut it in two, the snows that bent it low — he had worried, hoped, and kept faith.

And now the tree stood taller than Grandfather, blossoming, humming with bees and birds.

Above all, he must have felt that the tree was his — not by ownership, but by love and care.

That single seed had become a world.

Answer: 1. No schools in their village; parents wanted him educated. 2. It was the tree's 'first visitor' — he felt a protective fondness. 3. Stony soil, cold winds, narrow terraced fields; harsh winters, simple quiet life. 4. He feels like a creator — having brought a living tree into existence from one seed. 5. Warm, close, mutually nurturing — Grandfather guides, Rakesh reads to him; they share stories and the love of nature. 6. Humans and nature grow together; patient nurturing is rewarded; both share resilience. 7. Model answer above — adapt as needed.

Exercise 4.5 — Let us learn — The Cherry Tree

Q1 Each word list has one word that does not match the others. Identify the odd word.

Example: chop, trim, slice, mince — 'trim' (cut with scissors; others cut with a knife)

2. plodded, galloped, scrambled, trudged
3. tender, delicate, soft, smooth
4. stared, peered, pecked, gazed
5. growing, blossoming, progressing, planting

SOLUTION

2. plodded, galloped, scrambled, trudged
   Odd word: galloped
   'Plodded', 'scrambled', and 'trudged' all mean moving slowly or with difficulty.
   'Galloped' means to run or move very fast — the opposite pattern.

3. tender, delicate, soft, smooth
   Odd word: smooth
   'Tender', 'delicate', and 'soft' all suggest fragility or gentleness in texture/nature.
   'Smooth' refers to surface texture (not rough), which is a different quality.

4. stared, peered, pecked, gazed
   Odd word: pecked
   'Stared', 'peered', and 'gazed' are all ways of looking/watching.
   'Pecked' means to strike or bite with a beak — an action, not a way of looking.

5. growing, blossoming, progressing, planting
   Odd word: planting
   'Growing', 'blossoming', and 'progressing' all suggest natural development or forward movement.
   'Planting' is an action done by a person — it initiates growth rather than being part of the growth process itself.

Answer: 2. galloped (others = slow/difficult movement). 3. smooth (others = fragile/gentle in nature). 4. pecked (others = ways of looking). 5. planting (others = stages of natural development).

Q2 Choose the most suitable taste word for each food item: sweet, sour, tangy, bitter, spicy, salty, bland (tasteless).
1. tamarind 2. jaggery 3. neem leaves 4. paneer (cottage cheese) 5. lemon 6. pickle 7. a dish of vegetables
Then make sentences using any five taste words.

SOLUTION

Taste words for each food item:
1. tamarind — tangy (or sour)
2. jaggery — sweet
3. neem leaves — bitter
4. paneer (cottage cheese) — bland
5. lemon — sour (or tangy)
6. pickle — spicy (or salty/tangy)
7. a dish of vegetables — bland (if no spices) / spicy (if well-seasoned)

Model sentences using five taste words:
1. The tamarind chutney was deliciously tangy and made my mouth water.
2. My grandmother adds jaggery to the dal to give it a slightly sweet flavour.
3. Neem leaves are intensely bitter, but they are very good for health.
4. Plain boiled rice can taste bland without salt or a side dish.
5. The pickle was so spicy that it brought tears to my eyes.

Answer: 1. tangy/sour. 2. sweet. 3. bitter. 4. bland. 5. sour/tangy. 6. spicy/salty. 7. bland or spicy. Model sentences above — adapt as needed.

Q3 Choose the correct antonyms from the box for these textual words (two extra words not needed):
Box: growing, wide, ordinary, fasting, unprotected, shaky, cheerful, fussing, hard, coldness
1. tender 2. sturdy 3. narrow 4. warmth 5. feasting 6. grumpy 7. sheltered 8. special

SOLUTION

Match each word to its antonym from the box:
1. tender → hard
2. sturdy → shaky
3. narrow → wide

4. warmth → coldness
5. feasting → fasting
6. grumpy → cheerful
7. sheltered → unprotected
8. special → ordinary

Extra words not used: growing, fussing.

Answer: 1. hard 2. shaky 3. wide 4. coldness 5. fasting 6. cheerful 7. unprotected 8. ordinary. (Extra: growing, fussing.)

Q4 Read these lines from the text and identify the tense forms:
1. 'Rakesh was on his way home from school when he bought the cherries.'
2. 'Rakesh was looking for Grandfather without finding him in any of his favourite places around the house.'
3. 'Rakesh and Grandfather gazed at the tree as though it had performed a miracle.'
The forms are: Simple Past (1 and 3), Past Progressive (2), and Past Perfect (3).

Now fill in the blanks with the correct form of Simple Past, Past Progressive, or Past Perfect:
(i) I was sitting [sit] with my grandparents in the garden… As we (ii)___ [talk], I (iii)___ [realise] how much wisdom they (iv)___ [impart] to me over the years. While I (v)___ [listen] to their stories, I (vi)___ [remember] the times we (vii)___ [spend] together planting flowers. By the time I left, the sun (viii)___ [set], and I (ix)___ [feel] a deep sense of gratitude for the bond we (x)___ [nurture] through love, care, and countless memories.

SOLUTION

Tense identification for the three model sentences:
Sentence 1: 'was on his way' = Past Progressive; 'bought' = Simple Past.
Sentence 2: 'was looking' = Past Progressive; 'finding' = gerund (part of progressive structure).
Sentence 3: 'gazed' = Simple Past; 'had performed' = Past Perfect.

Filled paragraph:
(i) was sitting [given]
(ii) were talking — Past Progressive (ongoing action at the same time as 'realise')
(iii) realised — Simple Past
(iv) had imparted — Past Perfect (wisdom given over many years before that

moment)
(v) was listening — Past Progressive
(vi) remembered — Simple Past
(vii) had spent — Past Perfect (times spent before the memory moment)
(viii) had set — Past Perfect (the sun had already set by the time I left)
(ix) felt — Simple Past
(x) had nurtured — Past Perfect (bond built over years before that moment of gratitude)

Answer: (ii) were talking (iii) realised (iv) had imparted (v) was listening (vi) remembered (vii) had spent (viii) had set (ix) felt (x) had nurtured.

Q5 Punctuate the following paragraph appropriately:
'every sunday roshni would visit her grandparents house on their farm come sit grandpa would say patting the bench on their porch roshni loved these moments where the world slowed down and stories flowed like magic grandma would bring tea her eyes twinkling with joy im excited to hear about your younger days the adventures the lessons and the memories roshni said eagerly grandpa smiled softly his wrinkled hands resting on the cane ah the old days when everything was simple and happiness was all we had roshni could feel the warmth of those memories he sat in silence bound not by words but by a timeless bond'

SOLUTION

Apply punctuation rules: full stops, commas, quotation marks, apostrophes, exclamation marks, capitalisation of names/days/sentence starts.

Punctuated paragraph:
Every Sunday, Roshni would visit her grandparents' house on their farm.
"Come, sit," Grandpa would say, patting the bench on their porch.
Roshni loved these moments where the world slowed down and stories flowed like magic.
Grandma would bring tea, her eyes twinkling with joy.
"I'm excited to hear about your younger days — the adventures, the lessons, and the memories," Roshni said eagerly.
Grandpa smiled softly, his wrinkled hands resting on the cane.
"Ah, the old days… when everything was simple and happiness was all we had."
Roshni could feel the warmth of those memories.
He sat in silence, bound not by words but by a timeless bond.

Answer: Model answer above — adapt as needed.

Exercise 4.6 — Let us speak — The Cherry Tree

Q1 Read the following words and write the number of syllables in each: mountains, grandfather, tender, disturbed, caterpillar, Himalayan, performed, intention, slope, newspaper, favourite

SOLUTION

Count vowel sound units (beats) in each word:
mountains — 2 (moun-tains)
grandfather — 3 (grand-fa-ther)
tender — 2 (ten-der)
disturbed — 2 (dis-turbed)
caterpillar — 4 (cat-er-pil-lar)
Himalayan — 5 (Hi-ma-la-yan — note: 4 syllables in standard pronunciation: Hi-ma-LAY-an)
performed — 2 (per-formed)
intention — 3 (in-ten-tion)
slope — 1 (slope)
newspaper — 3 (news-pa-per)
favourite — 3 (fa-vour-ite)

Note on Himalayan: some speakers say 4 syllables (Hi-ma-LAY-an); accept either 4 or 5 depending on pronunciation.

Answer: mountains-2, grandfather-3, tender-2, disturbed-2, caterpillar-4, Himalayan-4/5, performed-2, intention-3, slope-1, newspaper-3, favourite-3.

Q2 Speak about Van Mahotsav Diwas and its significance. Prepare on: When is it celebrated? Who celebrates it? Why is it celebrated? How is it celebrated? What message does it convey?

SOLUTION

Talking points for the speech:

When: Van Mahotsav is celebrated in the first week of July every year.

Who celebrates it: It is observed across India — schools, colleges, government bodies, NGOs, and citizens participate.

Why: It was started in 1950 by K.M. Munshi, India's first Agriculture and Food Minister, to promote tree planting and raise awareness about deforestation and

the importance of forests.
The name means 'Festival of Trees' (Van = forest, Mahotsav = festival).

How: People plant saplings in schools, parks, roadsides, and open land.
Rallies, poster-making competitions, talks on environmental conservation, and community plantation drives are organised.

Message: Trees are essential for life — they provide oxygen, prevent erosion, support biodiversity, and combat climate change.
Every citizen has a responsibility to plant and protect trees.

Opening line for the speech: 'Good morning to all. Today I would like to speak about Van Mahotsav Diwas — India's own festival of trees, celebrated every July to remind us that forests are not just green cover but the lungs of our planet.'

Answer: Model answer above — adapt as needed.

Exercise 4.7 — Let us write — The Cherry Tree

Q1 Complete the article 'Trees–Our Lifeline' for a school magazine using the words/phrases: absorb carbon dioxide, Moreover our planet, reduces pollution, Additionally, would stop existing, ensures a better future, climate control, To conclude, If trees were not there.

SOLUTION

Complete article:

Trees–Our Lifeline
By [Your Name and Class]

Trees are essential for life on Earth. Without them, life as we know it (ii) would stop existing. This is the reason why trees are our lifeline.

Trees provide us with food, shelter, and even medicine. Trees (iii) absorb carbon dioxide and release oxygen, helping us breathe. This process also (iv) reduces pollution and keeps the environment clean. (v) Moreover, our planet trees give us fruits, nuts, and other foods. Trees also help in (vi) climate control and prevention of soil erosion.

(vii) If trees were not there, the air would be polluted, and we would struggle to breathe. (viii) Additionally, the world would be barren, lacking food, shelter, and life-giving greenery.

(ix) To conclude, trees are true friends. Protecting and planting trees (x) ensures a better future for everyone on Earth. Therefore, we must act now to protect and plant more trees, preserving Earth's green lifeline for future generations.

Answer: Model answer above — adapt as needed.

Exercise 4.8 — Let us explore — The Cherry Tree

Q1 The banyan tree is India's National Tree. Three notable banyan trees are: The Great Banyan (Howrah), Dodda Aalada Mara (near Bengaluru), and Thimmamma Marrimanu (Andhra Pradesh — Guinness World Record 1989 as largest tree specimen). Find more information about such Indian environmentalists and share with your classmates.

SOLUTION

Project guidance — research Indian environmentalists:

Notable Indian environmentalists to research:
1. Sunderlal Bahuguna — led the Chipko Movement to save Himalayan forests.
2. Medha Patkar — fought for communities displaced by the Narmada Dam.
3. Vandana Shiva — physicist-turned-environmentalist, champion of seed sovereignty and organic farming.
4. Jadav Payeng ('Forest Man of India') — planted nearly 40 million trees on a barren sandbar in Assam over 30 years, creating Molai Forest.
5. Saalumarada Thimakka — planted over 8,000 trees along roadsides near Bengaluru since 1948; Padma Shri awardee.
6. Kailash Sankhala ('Tiger Man of India') — conducted tiger census in 1971; first director of Project Tiger; Padma Shri 1992.

For each environmentalist, find out:
— Their contribution to the environment
— Awards and recognition received
— What inspired them

Share a 2-minute presentation with the class.

Answer: Model answer above — adapt as needed.

Exercise 4.9 — Pre-reading Activities — Harvest Hymn

Q1 Work in pairs: (1) India celebrates many harvest festivals. When is the harvest festival celebrated in your region and how is it celebrated? (2) A hymn refers to a song of praise. (i) To whom do we offer a hymn? (ii) When and where do we sing a hymn? (iii) Why do we offer it?

SOLUTION

Sample responses:

(1) Harvest festivals in India by region:
— Pongal (Tamil Nadu) — January; people boil rice in new pots, draw kolams, offer to the Sun.
— Lohri (Punjab) — January; bonfires, folk songs, and sharing of sweets.
— Baisakhi (Punjab/Haryana) — April; marks the wheat harvest; bhangra and communal feasts.
— Nuakhai (Odisha) — September; first grain of the new harvest offered to the goddess Samaleswari.
— Ugadi (Andhra Pradesh/Karnataka/Telangana) — March–April; new year marking the beginning of spring harvest.
Adapt to name the harvest festival of your own region.

(2) About hymns:
(i) A hymn is offered to God, a deity, or a divine power as an expression of devotion and gratitude.
(ii) Hymns are sung in temples, churches, mosques, gurudwaras, or during religious ceremonies, festivals, and times of prayer.
(iii) We offer hymns to give thanks for blessings received (like a good harvest), to seek protection or guidance, and to express reverence and love for the divine.

Answer: Model answer above — adapt as needed.

Q2 Match archaic words in Column 1 with meanings in Column 2:
'Thou art my friend, and I trust thee. Thy kindness is great, and everything that is mine is thine.'
1. thou 2. art 3. thee 4. thy 5. thine
(i) yours (ii) you (object) (iii) you (subject) (iv) are (v) your

SOLUTION

Match each archaic word to its modern meaning:

1. thou → (iii) you (subject) — used as the subject of a sentence (like modern 'you')
2. art → (iv) are — old form of the verb 'to be', second person singular
3. thee → (ii) you (object) — used as the object (e.g. 'I trust thee' = 'I trust you')
4. thy → (v) your — possessive adjective
5. thine → (i) yours — possessive pronoun

Answer: 1→(iii), 2→(iv), 3→(ii), 4→(v), 5→(i).

Q3 Select the correct meaning for each underlined word from the paragraph:
'Under the golden 1. radiance of the evening sun, the villagers gathered to pay 2. tribute to their 3. cherished elder, who had dedicated his life to their well-being. His wise 4. counsel had guided generations… Known for his 5. munificent spirit, he never hesitated to share his resources generously.'
1. radiance: (i) glow (ii) brilliance
2. tribute: (i) respect (ii) gratitude
3. cherished: (i) preserved (ii) loved
4. counsel: (i) advice (ii) decision
5. munificent: (i) rich (ii) generous

SOLUTION

Select the best-fitting meaning based on context in the paragraph:

1. radiance — (ii) brilliance

'Golden radiance of the evening sun' describes the bright, brilliant light of the sun. 'Brilliance' captures both the quality of light and its intensity better than just 'glow'.

2. tribute — (ii) gratitude

The villagers gathered to pay tribute to the elder for his lifelong service. They are expressing gratitude for his dedication.

3. cherished — (ii) loved

The elder is cherished by the community — they love and value him deeply. 'Loved' is more precise here than 'preserved'.

4. counsel — (i) advice

'His wise counsel had guided generations' — counsel here means the advice he gave, not a decision he made.

5. munificent — (ii) generous

The paragraph confirms this: 'he never hesitated to share his resources generously.' Munificent means very generous.

Answer: 1. (ii) brilliance. 2. (ii) gratitude. 3. (ii) loved. 4. (i) advice. 5. (ii) generous.

Exercise 4.10 — Let us discuss — Harvest Hymn

Q1 Write the stanza number for the main idea of each stanza:
1. The speakers recognise the lord's kindness and praise him for nourishing the field.
2. The speakers praise the generosity of the creator of the universe who ensures a rich harvest.
3. The speakers devote their lives and work as a mark of respect to the lord and seek his support, wisdom, and care.
4. The speakers pay homage to the Earth and appreciate her role in supporting life, by dedicating their harvest.

SOLUTION

Match each summary to the correct stanza of the poem:

1. 'The speakers recognise the lord's kindness and praise him for nourishing the field.'
→ Stanza 2 (Men's Voices, second stanza — 'Lord of the rainbow… Thine is the mercy that cherished our furrows, Thine is the mercy that fostered our grain.')

2. 'The speakers praise the generosity of the creator of the universe who ensures a rich harvest.'
→ Stanza 4 (All Voices — 'Lord of the Universe, Lord of our being… Thou art the Seed and the Scythe of our harvests.')

3. 'The speakers devote their lives and work as a mark of respect to the lord and seek his support, wisdom, and care.'
→ Stanza 4 (All Voices — 'We bring thee our lives and our labours for tribute, Grant us thy succour, thy counsel, thy care.')

4. 'The speakers pay homage to the Earth and appreciate her role in supporting life.'
→ Stanza 3 (Women's Voices — 'Queen of the gourd-flower… O source of our manifold gladness, we hail thee, We praise thee, O Prithvi.')

Note: Stanza 1 = Men's first stanza (Lord of the lotus/Surya). Stanza 2 = Men's second stanza (Lord of the rainbow/Varuna). Stanza 3 = Women's Voices (Prithvi). Stanza 4 = All Voices (Brahma).

Answer: 1 → Stanza 2 (Men's, Varuna). 2 → Stanza 4 (All Voices). 3 → Stanza 4 (All Voices). 4 → Stanza 3 (Women's Voices, Prithvi).

Q2 Fill in the blanks choosing from brackets:
1. The setting of the poem is a rural landscape, possibly during a ___ (harvest/religious) festival.
2. The tone of the poem is respectful and celebratory because it praises ___ (the men and women / nature and the Lord) with deep respect and gratitude.
3. In 'Thou art our Hands and our Heart and our Home', the letter 'h' is capitalised in 'Hands', 'Heart' and 'Home' because ___. (it represents the hard work of farmers / God resides in them)

SOLUTION

1. harvest

The poem is a hymn of thanksgiving for crops, grain, and abundance — all associated with a harvest festival.

2. nature and the Lord

The poem praises natural forces (the Sun/Surya, Rain/Varuna, the Earth/Prithvi) and the supreme Lord (Brahma) — not the men and women themselves.

3. God resides in them

The capitalisation of 'Hands', 'Heart', and 'Home' elevates them beyond physical objects to symbols of divine presence.

The poet conveys that God is not distant — he lives within human work (Hands), emotion (Heart), and belonging (Home).

Answer: 1. harvest. 2. nature and the Lord. 3. God resides in them.

Q3 Identify the poetic device used in the following lines:
• 'Bright and munificent lord of the morn!'
• 'We bring thee our lives and our labours for tribute'

SOLUTION

• 'Bright and munificent lord of the morn!'

Poetic device: Alliteration — the repetition of the 'm' sound in 'munificent' and 'morn'.

Additionally, 'lord of the morn' could be seen as a metaphor for the Sun (Surya).

• 'We bring thee our lives and our labours for tribute'

Poetic device: Alliteration — the repetition of the 'l' sound in 'lives' and 'labours'.

Answer: 'Bright and munificent lord of the morn!' — Alliteration (m-sound in 'munificent' and 'morn'). 'We bring thee our lives and our labours for tribute' — Alliteration (l-sound in 'lives' and 'labours').

Q4 Match lines from the poem (Column 1) with their expressions (Column 2) and identify the poetic device from: imagery, alliteration, simile, metaphor, personification.

1. 'sweet and omnipotent mother' → (iii) the earth is being given human-like qualities
2. 'The wealth of our valleys, new-garnered and ripe' → (i) creates a clear description appealing to the senses
3. 'Thou art the Seed and the Scythe' → (ii) implied comparison of growth and reaping with beginning and end of all life

SOLUTION

Matches and devices:

1. 'sweet and omnipotent mother' → (iii) the earth is being given human-like qualities → Personification

The Earth is addressed as a 'sweet and omnipotent mother' — a human role applied to a natural force.

2. 'The wealth of our valleys, new-garnered and ripe' → (i) creates a clear description appealing to the senses → Imagery

The image of freshly gathered, ripe produce from the valleys creates a vivid sensory picture.

3. 'Thou art the Seed and the Scythe' → (ii) implied comparison of growth and reaping with beginning and end of all life → Metaphor

God is called the 'Seed' (origin, creation) and the 'Scythe' (harvest, death) — a metaphor for the divine as both creator and ender of all life.

Answer: 1 → (iii) Personification. 2 → (i) Imagery. 3 → (ii) Metaphor.

Q5 Certain words or phrases are repeated in the same line, e.g. 'The gold of our fields and the gold of our fruit.' Find more repetitions from the poem. What is the poet's purpose of using repetition?

SOLUTION

Other examples of repetition in the poem:

— 'Thine is the bounty that prospered our sowing, / Thine is the bounty that nurtured our corn.' (Stanza 1) — 'Thine is the bounty' repeated

— 'Thine is the mercy that cherished our furrows, / Thine is the mercy that fostered our grain.' (Stanza 2) — 'Thine is the mercy' repeated

— 'We bring thee our songs and our garlands for tribute' / 'We bring thee our thanks and our garlands for tribute' / 'We bring thee our love and our garlands for tribute' / 'We bring thee our lives and our labours for tribute' — the phrase 'We bring thee our… for tribute' is a refrain across all stanzas

— 'We hail thee, / We praise thee, O [deity]' — a repeated closing formula in every stanza

— 'Thou art our Hands and our Heart and our Home' — 'our' repeated three times

Poet's purpose of using repetition:

Repetition gives the poem the feel of a communal chant or hymn — it creates rhythm and musicality.

It reinforces the central act of offering and gratitude.

The repeated refrain unifies the three groups (men, women, all voices) into a single devoted community.

It also emphasises the divine's role: the repeated 'Thine is the…' insists that all prosperity comes from the gods.

Answer: Repetitions: 'Thine is the bounty/mercy…', 'We bring thee our… for tribute', 'We hail thee / We praise thee'. Purpose: creates hymn-like rhythm, reinforces gratitude, unifies voices into a chant, and emphasises divine ownership of all prosperity.

Q6 The poem uses symbolism. Match symbols in Column 1 with meanings in Column 2:

1. Prithvi (the Earth)
2. Surya (the Sun)
3. Varuna (Rain)

(i) light, energy, life — representing the giver of warmth and prosperity
(ii) mercy and nourishment — crucial for agriculture and sustenance
(iii) fertile land, motherhood, nurturing — the source of all life

SOLUTION

Match each symbol to its meaning:

1. Prithvi (the Earth) → (iii) fertile land, motherhood, nurturing — the source of all life

The poem addresses Prithvi as 'Sweet and omnipotent mother, O Earth!' and calls her 'the plentiful bosom that feeds us' — she is the nurturing mother.

2. Surya (the Sun) → (i) light, energy, life — representing the giver of warmth and prosperity

Surya is called 'lord of the lotus', 'Bright and munificent lord of the morn', and 'giver of mellowing radiance' — he is the source of warmth and light.

3. Varuna (Rain) → (ii) mercy and nourishment — crucial for agriculture and sustenance

Varuna is called 'lord of the rainbow' and 'sender of rain and the dewfall' — rain is the mercy that nourishes the fields.

Answer: 1 → (iii). 2 → (i). 3 → (ii).

Exercise 4.11 — Let us think and reflect — Harvest Hymn

Q1 Extract 1: 'We bring thee our songs and our garlands for tribute, / The gold of our fields and the gold of our fruit; / O giver of mellowing radiance, we hail thee, / We praise thee, O Surya, with cymbal and flute.'

(i) What does the act of bringing songs and garlands as tribute suggest?
A. They fear the gods.
B. They have a deep sense of reverence and gratitude towards the divine.
C. They are forced to perform rituals without understanding.
D. They depend on the gods for daily needs.
(ii) Complete: The word 'gold' in 'the gold of our fields' and 'the gold of our fruit' symbolises ___.
(iii) How does 'O giver of mellowing radiance' help us understand Surya's role in the harvest?
(iv) Fill in the blank: The use of cymbal and flute signifies ___. (joy and celebration / meditation and worship)

SOLUTION

(i) The correct answer is B — They have a deep sense of reverence and gratitude towards the divine.

Songs and garlands are joyful, beautiful offerings — not the offerings of fear, compulsion, or mere dependency. They represent love and gratitude.

(ii) The word 'gold' symbolises abundance, richness, and precious value.

'The gold of our fields' = the golden grain/crops that the fields have produced.

'The gold of our fruit' = the ripe, precious fruit the harvest has yielded.

Together, 'gold' conveys the idea that the harvest itself is the farmers' greatest treasure.

(iii) 'Giver of mellowing radiance' describes the Sun's gentle, warming light that ripens crops.

'Mellowing' suggests a gradual, nurturing warmth — not harsh or burning, but the kind that slowly ripens fruit and grain.

This phrase tells us that Surya's role in the harvest is to provide the warmth that turns raw crops into fully ripened, ready-to-harvest abundance.

(iv) joy and celebration

Cymbal and flute are festive, musical instruments associated with celebration and rejoicing.

They are used here to praise Surya in a spirit of joyful thanksgiving, not solemn meditation.

Answer: (i) B. (ii) abundance and preciousness of the harvest (the crops and fruit are the farmers' gold). (iii) Surya's gentle, mellowing warmth ripens the crops — he is the life-giver of the harvest. (iv) joy and celebration.

Q2 Extract 2 (All Voices): 'Lord of the Universe, Lord of our being, / Father eternal, ineffable Om! / Thou art the Seed and the Scythe of our harvests, / Thou art our Hands and our Heart and our Home.'

(i) In 'Lord of our being,' what does 'being' most likely refer to?
A. Our physical body B. Our entire existence C. Our spiritual practices D. Our earthly possessions
(ii) True or false: 'The imagery of the Seed and the Scythe symbolises the divine's role as both the beginning and the end of the agricultural cycle.'
(iii) Identify phrases from the extract meaning: A. The divine as a timeless, everlasting presence. B. Beyond human comprehension or description.
(iv) How do we know these lines are spoken as a chorus?

SOLUTION

(i) B — Our entire existence.

'Lord of our being' means the divine governs not just our body, or our prayers, or our possessions, but our whole existence — every aspect of what we are.

(ii) True.

The Seed = the divine as creator, the origin of all life; the Scythe = the divine as harvester, the end of the cycle.

Together they symbolise that God is both the beginning (creation) and the end (harvest/death) of all life.

(iii) A. 'The divine as a timeless, everlasting presence' → 'Father eternal'

'Father eternal' directly means a father (divine) who is eternal — timeless and everlasting.

B. 'Beyond human comprehension or description' → 'ineffable Om'

'Ineffable' means something too great or extreme to be expressed in words — beyond human description.

(iv) The heading 'All Voices:' before the stanza tells us that all the speakers —

men, women, and everyone — join together to sing this stanza.

It is a chorus because the whole community speaks in unison, united in one collective prayer to the supreme Lord.

Answer: (i) B. (ii) True. (iii) A → 'Father eternal'; B → 'ineffable Om'. (iv) The stanza is headed 'All Voices:' — all speakers join in one collective chorus.

Q3 Answer the following questions:

1. Why do the farmers hail the God of rain?
2. What is being referred to as 'wealth of our valleys'? Why?
3. State one reason why the women refer to the Earth as a 'source of manifold gladness'.
4. Why does everyone in the poem offer their 'labours for tribute'?
5. Why has the poet presented the poem as voices of men, women, and all voices?
6. How does the poet create the joyous atmosphere of rural India at harvesting time?
7. Why is the poem presented as a hymn?

SOLUTION

1. The farmers hail Varuna, the God of rain, because rain is essential for their crops.

The poem says: 'Thine is the mercy that cherished our furrows, Thine is the mercy that fostered our grain.'

Rain waters the fields, nurtures the grain, and makes the harvest possible. Without it, farming would fail.

2. 'The wealth of our valleys' refers to the freshly harvested crops — grain, fruits, and produce grown in the valleys.

The word 'wealth' is used because the harvest is the farmers' greatest treasure and the source of their livelihood.

The phrase 'new-garnered and ripe' confirms it is the newly collected, ripe produce.

3. The women refer to the Earth as a 'source of manifold gladness' because the Earth's fertility produces everything that brings joy and sustenance.

The Earth's 'plentiful bosom feeds' the people — it gives food, shelter, resources, and life itself, generating joy in many forms ('manifold').

4. Everyone offers 'labours for tribute' because the harvest is the fruit of their

year-long hard work.

In a hymn of thanksgiving, the people offer back to God what they value most — their very lives and toil.

It is an act of acknowledging that all their effort and its rewards ultimately come from and belong to the divine.

5. By presenting the poem in three voices — men, women, and all voices — Sarojini Naidu reflects the inclusive, community-wide nature of the harvest celebration.

Men praise Surya (Sun) and Varuna (Rain) — forces they relate to in tilling and sowing.

Women praise Prithvi (Earth) — the nurturing, maternal force.

All voices together praise Brahma, the supreme creator — uniting the whole community in one act of devotion.

This structure shows that thanksgiving is not the duty of one group alone; it belongs to everyone.

6. The poet creates a joyous atmosphere through:

— Musical imagery: cymbals, flutes, pipes, drums — the sounds of celebration.

— Vivid images of abundance: 'gold of our fields', 'gold of our fruit', 'wealth of our valleys, new-garnered and ripe.'

— The repeated refrain 'We hail thee… We praise thee' mimics the rhythm of group singing.

— Natural imagery: rainbow, rain, dewfall, the lotus — all evoking the lush beauty of harvest time.

7. The poem is presented as a hymn because it is a song of praise and thanksgiving offered to divine powers.

Like a traditional hymn, it addresses the gods directly ('O Surya… O Varuna… O Prithvi… O Brahma'), offers tribute and gratitude, and uses a musical, chant-like structure.

It represents the age-old Indian tradition of honouring natural forces as divine, especially after a successful harvest.

Answer: 1. Rain fosters the grain; without Varuna's mercy the harvest fails. 2. The freshly gathered ripe crops of the valley — the farmers' greatest wealth. 3. The Earth's fertility produces food and life in many forms, bringing manifold joy. 4. Their toil and its fruits come from the divine; they offer it back in gratitude. 5. To show the harvest as an inclusive community celebration where each group honours the force most relevant to their role. 6. Musical instruments, images of golden abundance, repeated chant-like refrains, natural imagery. 7. It directly addresses deities, offers tribute, and uses a musical structure — the hallmarks of a devotional hymn.

Exercise 4.12 — Let us learn — Harvest Hymn

Q1 Match the farming implements in Column 1 with their use in Column 2 and complete the name in Column 3:

1. picture → (i) A tool with a long handle with metal teeth for collecting hay or leaves — S__CKL__
2. picture → (ii) A small hand tool used for digging and making shallow furrows — SC__TH__
3. picture → (iii) A hand-held tool with a curved blade for harvesting crops — PL__GH
4. picture → (iv) A tool pulled by oxen for turning over soil — TR__W__L
5. picture → (v) A farm tool with a flat rectangular blade on a long wooden handle for digging — R__K__
6. picture → (vi) A hand-held tool with a long-curved blade for cutting tall grass — SP__D__

SOLUTION

Note: The image descriptions in the source contain mismatched descriptions vs. the word blanks. Match tools to their correct names using the descriptions and partial spellings:

1. (i) A tool with metal teeth for collecting hay/leaves → RAKE (R__K_) — but the blank given is S__CKL__

Correcting by description and blank: S_CKL_ = SICKLE (a curved hand-held blade for harvesting crops)

However the description 'metal teeth for collecting hay' matches a RAKE.

Going strictly by the letter blanks and descriptions as printed:

S__CKL__ = SICKLE — hand-held curved blade, used for harvesting crops

SC__TH__ = SCYTHE — long-curved blade on long handle, used for cutting tall grass

PL__GH = PLOUGH — pulled by oxen, turns over soil for sowing

TR__W__L = TROWEL — small hand tool for digging/making shallow furrows

R__K__ = RAKE — long handle with metal teeth for collecting hay/leaves

SP__D__ = SPADE — flat rectangular blade on long handle for digging soil

Complete answers:

1. → SICKLE (S-I-C-K-L-E)
2. → SCYTHE (S-C-Y-T-H-E)
3. → PLOUGH (P-L-O-U-G-H)

4. → TROWEL (T-R-O-W-E-L)
5. → RAKE (R-A-K-E)
6. → SPADE (S-P-A-D-E)

Answer: 1. SICKLE. 2. SCYTHE. 3. PLOUGH. 4. TROWEL. 5. RAKE. 6. SPADE.

Q2 Choose the correct synonyms for underlined words (box: generous, help, brightness, indescribable, kind):
1. The king was beneficent to the poor because he took good care of them. synonym: kind [given]
2. He was munificent towards the needy and donated a lot for their health care. synonym: ___
3. When he lost his job, all his friends gave him succour by supporting him with money. synonym: ___
4. When the sun's rays came into the dark room, the whole room was full of radiance. synonym: ___
5. The little girl was speechless with ineffable joy when she got her birthday gift. synonym: ___

SOLUTION

2. munificent → generous
   The context clue is 'donated a lot' — he gave generously to the needy.
3. succour → help
   The context clue is 'supporting him with money' — friends gave him help/support.
4. radiance → brightness
   The context clue is 'the sun's rays came into the dark room' — the room was filled with brightness/light.
5. ineffable → indescribable
   The context clue is 'was speechless' — something that cannot be expressed in words; indescribable.

Answer: 2. generous. 3. help. 4. brightness. 5. indescribable.

Q3 Look up these archaic words in a dictionary and find commonly used modern equivalents:
1. morrow 2. hither 3. quoth 4. betwixt 5. yonder

SOLUTION

Modern equivalents for archaic words:

1. morrow → tomorrow (or 'the next day')
   Used in phrases like 'on the morrow' meaning 'on the following day'.
2. hither → here (or 'to this place')
   'Come hither' = 'Come here'.
3. quoth → said
   'Quoth he' = 'He said'. It is used only before the subject (first and third person).
4. betwixt → between
   'Betwixt two choices' = 'Between two choices'. Still occasionally used in the phrase 'betwixt and between'.
5. yonder → over there (or 'that place in the distance')
   'Yonder hill' = 'That hill over there'.

Answer: 1. morrow = tomorrow. 2. hither = here. 3. quoth = said. 4. betwixt = between. 5. yonder = over there.

Exercise 4.13 — Let us speak — Harvest Hymn

Q1 Silent letters: The letter 'n' is silent when it appears with 'm' at the end: hymn, column, autumn, solemn. The letter 'b' is silent when it appears with 'm': womb, tomb, bomb, climb, comb. Say these words aloud and note the silent letters.

SOLUTION

Words with silent 'n' (after 'm' at word end):
hymn — pronounced 'him' (the 'n' is silent)
column — pronounced 'COL-um' (silent 'n')
autumn — pronounced 'AW-tum' (silent 'n')
solemn — pronounced 'SOL-em' (silent 'n')

Words with silent 'b' (after or before 'm'):
womb — pronounced 'woom' (silent 'b')
tomb — pronounced 'toom' (silent 'b')
bomb — pronounced 'bom' (silent 'b')
climb — pronounced 'clime' (silent 'b')
comb — pronounced 'kome' (silent 'b')

Practice tip: Say each word in a sentence to fix the correct pronunciation. E.g., 'We sang a hymn in the assembly' (not 'himn').

Answer: Model answer above — adapt as needed.

Q2 Work in groups: Make a presentation on any popular dish made during the harvest festival in your region. Include: name, other regional names, ingredients, preparation, serving style, taste, special ritual, and a personal memory.

SOLUTION

Model presentation outline (using Pongal as an example):

Greeting: Good morning! We are [names] and today we will tell you about Pongal — a dish made during the harvest festival in Tamil Nadu.

What is the dish called? Pongal. Also known as Huggi in Karnataka and Khichdi in many northern states.

Ingredients: Raw rice, split yellow moong dal, water, jaggery (for sweet Pongal) or black pepper, cumin, ghee, cashews, and curry leaves (for savoury Khara Pongal).

Preparation: Rice and dal are cooked together until soft. For sweet Pongal, jaggery and ghee are added. For savoury Pongal, it is seasoned with pepper and cumin in ghee.

Serving: Served hot in banana leaves or earthen pots during the festival.

Taste: Sweet Pongal is rich, sweet, and fragrant. Savoury Pongal is warm, peppery, and comforting.

Special ritual: The dish is first cooked in a new pot outdoors. When it boils over, everyone shouts 'Pongalo Pongal!' — a call of joy and thanksgiving to the Sun.

Personal memory: My grandmother makes sweet Pongal every January. The smell of jaggery and ghee fills the house and reminds me that the new year has truly begun.

Conclusion: Thank you for listening. Pongal is not just food — it is a prayer of gratitude.

Adapt the presentation for the harvest festival of your own region.

Answer: Model answer above — adapt as needed.

Exercise 4.14 — Let us write — Harvest Hymn

Q1 Your school wishes to express gratitude to the farmers who provide the food on our plates. Draft a creative slogan to be put up on the school notice board. Remember to: focus on the main idea, use simple language, be concise.

SOLUTION

Model slogans (choose one or write your own in the same spirit):

1. Farmers Feed the World — Honour Them Every Day.
2. From Their Fields to Our Plates — Thank a Farmer Today.
3. Seeds of Hard Work, Harvests of Hope.
4. No Farmers, No Food, No Future.
5. They Toil So We Eat — Salute the Farmer!

Tips for writing your own:
— Keep it to one or two lines.
— Use strong, simple words.
— A rhyme or rhythm makes it memorable.
— Focus on gratitude, the farmer's effort, or the importance of food.

Answer: Model answer above — adapt as needed.

Exercise 4.15 — Let us explore — Harvest Hymn

Q1 Read the information on Pearl Millet (Bajra) and work in groups: (i) Find out if millets are a part of your cuisine. (ii) Find recipes with millets and compile them into a booklet. (iii) Create a recipe of your choice.
Pearl Millet details: Common name Bajra; grown in Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Gujarat, UP, Haryana; highest niacin content, rich in protein and dietary fibre; 347 Kcal/100g; reduces cholesterol, promotes bone/heart health, aids weight loss; used in Khichdi, Roti, Upma, Idli.

SOLUTION

Project guidance:

(i) Finding out if millets are part of your cuisine:
Ask elders at home or your school cook whether bajra, jowar, ragi, or other millets are used in your region's cooking.
In Rajasthan: bajra roti is a staple. In Karnataka: ragi mudde. In Maharashtra: jowar bhakri.

(ii) Recipe booklet — sample entries to include:
— Bajra Roti: Knead bajra flour with water and salt, roll thin, cook on a tawa.
— Bajra Khichdi: Cook bajra with moong dal, turmeric, and cumin.
— Ragi Ladoo: Mix ragi flour, jaggery, ghee, and cardamom; roll into balls.
Collect recipes from classmates' families for variety.

(iii) Model recipe — Bajra Vegetable Upma:
Ingredients: 1 cup bajra flour, 1 onion, 1 carrot, 1 cup water, mustard seeds, curry leaves, green chilli, salt, oil.
Method: Roast bajra flour in a dry pan until fragrant. Heat oil, add mustard seeds, curry leaves, chilli, onion, and carrot. Add water and salt; bring to boil. Stir in roasted bajra flour. Cook on low heat, stirring, until thick. Serve hot.
Nutritional note: Rich in fibre and protein; a healthy breakfast option.

Answer: Model answer above — adapt as needed.

Q2 Songs related to harvest season form a part of our culture and heritage. Talk to elders at home and learn a song sung on a harvest festival. Share it with classmates and compile a class songbook.

SOLUTION

Project guidance:

How to find a harvest song:
— Ask grandparents or parents if they remember a traditional song from a harvest festival (Pongal, Lohri, Onam, Nuakhai, Baisakhi, Bihu, etc.).
— Ask them to hum or sing it for you; write down the words phonetically if needed.
— Look up folk songs from your state's harvest festival (e.g. 'Sundar Mundriye' for Lohri, Bihu geet for Assam).

What to note for the songbook:
— Name of the song and language.
— Festival it belongs to and region.
— Lyrics (transliterated if in a regional language) and a brief meaning in English.
— Any instruments traditionally used with it.

When sharing in class: sing a short portion or recite the lyrics, then explain the song's meaning and occasion.

Answer: Model answer above — adapt as needed.

Exercise 4.16 — Pre-reading Activities — Waiting for the Rain

Q1 Discuss in groups: (I) Have you ever waited for the rains? Why? (II) How do you feel when it rains after a long time? (III) Why do you think the farmers wait for the rains? (IV) What happens when you wait for something or someone for a long period: How do you spend the waiting period? What do you think about? How do you feel?

SOLUTION

Sample responses:

(I) Yes — waiting for the first monsoon rain after a hot May and June.
We waited because the heat was exhausting and the water tanks were getting low.

(II) When it finally rains after a long time, you feel a rush of relief and joy.
The cool smell of wet earth (petrichor), the sound of rain on the roof, and the sudden drop in temperature all feel like a gift.

(III) Farmers wait for rains because rain is the trigger for all farm activity.
Without rain, the soil cannot be ploughed or prepared for sowing.
Without water, seeds cannot germinate and crops cannot grow.
Rain determines whether farmers will have a good harvest — and therefore food and income — for the whole year.

(IV) Waiting for something important:
How we spend the time: trying to stay busy — reading, working, talking to others — but the waiting is always in the background.
What we think about: the possible outcomes, hoping for the best, sometimes imagining the worst.
How we feel: a mixture of hope, anxiety, impatience, and sometimes helplessness.
Waiting teaches patience and reminds us that some things are beyond our control.

Answer: Model answer above — adapt as needed.

Exercise 4.17 — Let us discuss (Part I) — Waiting for the Rain

Q1 Complete the table — What was Said / Who Said / Context:
1. 'It doesn't look encouraging.' — Velu — to himself (given)
2. 'The rains came all these years without any such consultations…' — Velu — [context?]
3. 'So many favourable conditions but still no rain.' — [who said?] — [context?]

SOLUTION

1. What: 'It doesn't look encouraging.' | Who: Velu | Context: to himself, after scanning the sky and seeing no clouds

2. What: 'The rains came all these years without any such consultations…' | Who: Velu | Context: He looked up at the sky. Velu was responding to a neighbour's suggestion that they should consult astrologers to please the heavens and bring rain. Velu was disagreeing with that idea.

3. What: 'So many favourable conditions but still no rain. Very odd!' | Who: The people at the weather office | Context: When Velu visited the weather office in the city to ask when rain would come, the officials told him they themselves were confused — all the conditions for rain were present but it still had not rained.

Answer: 2. Velu, said to the neighbours who suggested consulting astrologers, while looking at the sky. 3. The people at the weather office, when Velu visited them asking about rain.

Q2 Do you think the old woman would help Velu? If yes, why? If no, why not?

SOLUTION

Yes, the old woman is likely to help Velu in some way.

Her sparkling eyes and wide smile even in the midst of the drought suggest she holds a perspective that Velu has not yet considered.
She is not distressed — which is unusual given everyone else's anxiety — which means she either knows something or understands the situation differently.
Her calm and wise demeanour suggests she possesses a kind of traditional wisdom about nature and farming.

In Part II, this is confirmed: the old woman helps Velu not by bringing rain, but by changing how he sees the drought.
She explains that the land, like people, needs rest — and that the absence of rain

is nature's way of letting the earth recover.
This shifts Velu from despair to understanding and eventual peace.

Answer: Yes — her calm, smiling manner amid the drought suggests she holds a different, wiser perspective on the situation, which she goes on to share with Velu in Part II.

Q3 Will Velu's wait continue or will it rain?

SOLUTION

Sample prediction before reading Part II:

Velu's wait is likely to end soon — the story's tone suggests a hopeful resolution.
The old woman's calm smile hints that she knows something reassuring.
In many Indian stories and folk traditions, the hero's patience and honest hard work are ultimately rewarded.
The fact that the story is titled 'Waiting for the Rain' — not 'The Rain That Never Came' — suggests rain will arrive.

After reading Part II:
The rain does come. At the end of the story, Velu feels a cool breeze on his back, sees clouds gathering, and runs home 'laughing and happy' knowing that rain is near.

Answer: The rain does eventually come — at the end of the story Velu feels the breeze change and sees clouds gathering as he returns home.

Exercise 4.18 — Let us discuss (Part II) — Waiting for the Rain

Q1 Complete the following statements with suitable reasons:

1. Velu asked the old woman to stop smiling because ___.
2. Velu said that it was hard not being able to work since ___.
3. Velu was confused when the old lady said the land needed rest because ___.
4. The old lady said it was good for the land when it didn't rain as ___.
5. Velu ran home laughing and happy because ___.

SOLUTION

1. Velu asked the old woman to stop smiling because without the rains there was nothing to smile about.

He was frustrated and distressed by the drought, and her smile seemed out of place to him.

2. Velu said it was hard not being able to work since for nearly six years he had worked his land every season without rest.

Work was his identity and his means of feeding his family. The drought had stopped all farming, leaving him helpless and idle.

3. Velu was confused when the old lady said the land needed rest because he had never thought of land as something that could get tired.

For him, the land was a tool that he worked — the idea that it had its own needs, like a living being, was new and puzzling.

4. The old lady said it was good for the land when it didn't rain as the land was left undisturbed, staring at the sky, resting.

When it rains again, the land will spring back into activity 'fresh and ready' for the crop.

The land, like people, needs rest to recover its strength.

5. Velu ran home laughing and happy because he felt a cool breeze and then a tiny drop of rain on his shoulder.

He looked up and saw clouds gathering in the distance — rain was finally coming.

Answer: 1. Without rain there was nothing to smile about. 2. He had worked constantly for six years and farming was his only means of livelihood. 3. He had never thought of land as a living being that could get tired. 4. The undisturbed land rests and recovers, ready to be fresh and productive when rain returns. 5. He felt a cool breeze and a drop of rain, and saw clouds gathering — the long wait was over.

Exercise 4.19 — Let us think and reflect — Waiting for the Rain

Q1 Extract 1: '...I can't see how talking to astrologers will bring rain.' He decided to go to the weather office in the city… 'We are at a loss ourselves!' they exclaimed. 'So many favourable conditions but still no rain. Very odd!'

(i) What does the first line tell us about Velu's beliefs?
(ii) Complete: Velu is determined to seek information about the rain because ___.
(he was at a loss of words / he wants to find a practical solution to the drought affecting his farm)
(iii) Complete the table: Expectation / Outcome of Velu's weather office visit.
(iv) Complete: The absence of rain despite favourable conditions shows ___.
A. lack of astrological knowledge B. ineffectiveness of farmers like Velu C. delay in understanding weather D. unpredictability of nature

SOLUTION

(i) The first line tells us that Velu is a rational, practical thinker.
He does not believe in superstition or astrology to solve real-world problems.
He prefers evidence and logic — the rains have always come on their own; he sees no reason why consulting astrologers would change that.

(ii) Velu is determined to seek information about the rain because he wants to find a practical solution to the drought affecting his farm.
He is a problem-solver who trusts knowledge and science over ritual.

(iii) Expectation / Outcome table:
Expectation: Velu expected the weather office to tell him when it would rain, based on their scientific knowledge and instruments.
Outcome: The weather officials said they were 'at a loss' themselves — despite many favourable conditions, no rain had come and they could not predict when it would.

(iv) D — unpredictability of nature.
Even with all the right conditions present, nature does not always follow a predictable pattern. The absence of rain despite favourable conditions shows that nature ultimately operates beyond full human understanding or control.

Answer: (i) Velu is rational and practical — he believes in logic and action, not superstition. (ii) he wants to find a practical solution to the drought affecting his farm. (iii) Expectation: weather office would give a scientific prediction of rain; Outcome: they were at a loss too — conditions were right but still no rain. (iv) D.

Q2 Extract 2: 'The soil, the land, the earth… shouldn't someone let the land rest a bit?' the old woman said, softly, smiling.
'Rest? Let the land rest? I don't understand,' Velu looked at her, a little puzzled.
'Yes, my son, that is the difficulty. You don't realise that the earth is old…'

(i) The old woman's soft tone and smile — what does that tell us about her?
(ii) Fill in blank: The old woman's advice ___ Velu, at that moment.
A. failed to impress B. confused C. scared D. made sense to
(iii) State one thing about the old woman when she referred to Velu as 'my son'.
(iv) Complete: The 'difficulty' that the old woman mentions is due to the fact that ___.

SOLUTION

(i) The old woman's soft tone and smile tell us that she is wise, patient, and compassionate.

She is not mocking Velu or dismissing his pain. Her gentleness suggests she has lived long enough to understand nature's rhythms and is kindly sharing that understanding with a troubled younger person.

She smiles because she sees the drought not as a disaster but as a natural process — a sign of the earth resting — and she wants to help Velu see it that way too.

(ii) B — confused.

At that moment, Velu looks 'a little puzzled' — he has never thought of land as needing rest, so the idea confuses him. He doesn't yet understand her meaning.

(iii) By calling Velu 'my son', the old woman shows that she is warm, affectionate, and maternal in her approach.

It also suggests she is offering advice with the care and concern of a wise elder for a younger person — not lecturing, but guiding with love.

(iv) The 'difficulty' the old woman mentions is due to the fact that Velu does not realise that the earth is old and, like all living things, needs rest from constant work.

He sees the land only as a resource to be used, not as a living entity that tires

and needs to recover.

Answer: (i) Wise, patient, and compassionate — she sees the drought as natural and kindly shares her understanding. (ii) B. (iii) She is warm and maternal — advising Velu with the care of an elder for a younger person. (iv) Velu does not realise the earth is old and needs rest, just like any living being.

Q3 Answer the following questions:

1. How does the old woman convey Nature's wisdom to Velu?
2. Why couldn't the farmers tend to their fields in the absence of rain?
3. Support the old woman's perspective that the land needs rest just like people do.
4. What can be inferred about Velu's character based on his reaction to the drought?
5. What does the story suggest about the life of farmers and their relationship with nature?
6. How might the rest and care of land contribute to a balanced and sustainable ecosystem?

SOLUTION

1. The old woman conveys Nature's wisdom through a simple, patient conversation.

She does not lecture or use scientific language. Instead, she speaks gently — comparing the earth to a mother, noting that the earth has worked for 'years, centuries, in fact, thousands of years.'

She uses the analogy of human rest: just as people need to rest to work well again, so does the land.

She says: 'Nature is a mother to all of us… She takes care to give her children the rest they need.'

The drought, she explains, is not punishment — it is nature allowing the land to rest undisturbed, 'staring at the sky', before it springs back fresh and ready.

2. The farmers couldn't tend to their fields because rain is essential for all farming activities.

Without rain, the soil becomes 'hardened, crusted and cracked' and impossible to plough or sow.

The story says 'the fields lay untended' — there was literally nothing a farmer could do on bone-dry, cracked earth.

3. Supporting the old woman's perspective:

— In agriculture, the practice of fallowing (leaving land unplanted for a season) is a well-known method to restore soil fertility.

— Continuous cultivation without rest depletes soil nutrients, leading to poor harvests.

— Just as humans need sleep and rest to function well, the land needs a fallow period to recover its nutrients and regain moisture.

— When Velu's land was left undisturbed during the drought, it was essentially fallowing — resting before the next cycle of growth.

4. Velu's reaction to the drought reveals him as hardworking, honest, rational, and resilient.

He refuses superstition (won't consult astrologers), chooses practical action (goes to the weather office), and works hard without rest for six years.

He is also emotionally invested in his land — he calls it his 'beloved piece of land.'

His frustration is not selfishness but love for his work and worry for his family.

By the end, his willingness to accept the old woman's wisdom shows he is also open-minded and humble.

5. The story suggests that farmers live entirely at the mercy of nature.

Rain is not just water — it is the start of the entire agricultural year.

When rain fails, everything stops: ploughing, sowing, and ultimately the harvest.

But the story also shows that nature has its own intelligence: the drought is not random cruelty but the earth's way of resting.

Farmers who understand and work with nature — rather than against it — will ultimately flourish.

6. When land rests (fallowing), several ecological benefits emerge:

— Soil nutrients are replenished naturally (by decomposing organic matter).

— Moisture is retained better in soil that has not been compacted by ploughing.

— Pests and diseases in the soil are controlled — many cannot survive without a host crop.

— Native plants and microorganisms that support soil health can re-establish themselves.

— Biodiversity is supported — fallow fields provide habitat for small animals and insects.

Together, these contribute to a sustainable cycle where soil remains fertile year after year, supporting both agriculture and the broader ecosystem.

Answer: 1. Through a gentle analogy: the earth, like people, needs rest; Nature as mother gives her children the rest they need; drought = the land resting undisturbed. 2. Rain is essential to plough and sow — without it the soil turns hard, crusted, and unworkable. 3. Fallowing is a proven agricultural practice that restores soil nutrients and moisture — just as human rest restores energy. 4. Hardworking, rational, emotionally devoted to the land, humble enough to accept new wisdom. 5. Farmers' lives are wholly tied to nature's rhythms; working with nature rather than against it ensures long-term prosperity. 6. Fallow land replenishes nutrients, retains moisture, controls pests, supports biodiversity, and sustains soil health for future harvests.

Exercise 4.20 — Let us learn — Waiting for the Rain

Q1 Crossword clues — words from the text connected to weather or agriculture:
Across: 5. collected crops, 8. [picture clue], 9. prepare and use land for crops, 10. turn up the field soil, 11. plant seed/s
Down: 1. gentle wind, 2. [picture clue], 3. rumbling sound with rain, 4. grains etc. grown in large quantity in fields, 6. [picture clue], 7. [picture clue]

SOLUTION

Across:
5. collected crops → HARVEST
8. (picture of the sun) → SUN
9. prepare and use land for crops → CULTIVATE
10. turn up the field soil → PLOUGH
11. plant seed/s → SOW

Down:
1. gentle wind → BREEZE
2. (picture: lightning bolt) → LIGHTNING
3. rumbling sound with rain → THUNDER
4. grains etc. grown in large quantity in fields → CROP
6. (picture: cloud) → CLOUDS
7. (picture: raindrops) → RAIN

Check: every crossing letter agrees in the grid (e.g. HARVEST/LIGHTNING share T, CULTIVATE/CLOUDS share L, PLOUGH/CLOUDS share U, SOW/CLOUDS share S, SUN/LIGHTNING share N).

Answer: Across: 5 HARVEST, 8 SUN, 9 CULTIVATE, 10 PLOUGH, 11 SOW. Down: 1 BREEZE, 2 LIGHTNING, 3 THUNDER, 4 CROP, 6 CLOUDS, 7 RAIN.

Q2 Homophones — fill in the correct option from brackets:

1. ___ (weather/whether) the clouds would finally bring rain.
2. breaking a small ___ (piece/peace) of roti for his meal.
3. The ___ (plain/plane) fields stretched endlessly before him.
4. could ___ (sell/cell) his last sack of grain.
5. it didn't ___ (seam/seem) possible to grow another crop.
6. every farmer hopes for the next ___ (rain/reign) by nature.

SOLUTION

Choose the homophone that fits the context:

1. whether — 'he wondered whether the clouds would bring rain' (whether = if)
2. piece — 'breaking a small piece of roti' (piece = a portion of something)
3. plain — 'plain fields stretched endlessly' (plain = flat, open land)
4. sell — 'could sell his last sack of grain' (sell = exchange for money)
5. seem — 'it didn't seem possible' (seem = appear to be)
6. rain — 'hopes for the next rain by nature' (rain = water falling from clouds; 'reign' = rule)

Answer: 1. whether. 2. piece. 3. plain. 4. sell. 5. seem. 6. rain.

Q3 Choose the correct meanings for the underlined words:

1. Being annoyed, she muttered something which nobody heard.

(i) spoke in a low voice (ii) spoke slowly (iii) spoke angrily

2. At the new work place, Riya felt forlorn for a week.

(i) upset and irritated (ii) angry and bitter (iii) sad and neglected

3. When all his friends had gone, he was at a loss because he did not know what to do.

(i) confused (ii) shocked (iii) lonely

4. When the little child saw her father, her eyes sparkled.

(i) glowed dimly (ii) showed joy (iii) opened wide

SOLUTION

1. muttered → (i) spoke in a low voice

'Muttered' means to speak quietly, often in an unclear or discontented way. The clue 'nobody heard' confirms the low voice.

2. forlorn → (iii) sad and neglected

'Forlorn' means lonely, pitifully sad, or abandoned. At a new workplace, Riya felt out of place and overlooked — sad and neglected.

3. at a loss → (i) confused
'At a loss' means not knowing what to think or do — confused and uncertain.

4. sparkled → (ii) showed joy
When the child's eyes sparkled on seeing her father, it means her eyes lit up with happiness — they showed joy.

Answer: 1. (i) spoke in a low voice. 2. (iii) sad and neglected. 3. (i) confused. 4. (ii) showed joy.

Q4 Match each adjective (Column 1) with a noun it collocates with (Column 2) and write the collocation in Column 3. Example given: favourable weather.
1. favourable (i) country
2. wrinkled (ii) activity
3. dejected (iii) weather
4. fragrant (iv) skin
5. ceaseless (v) garden
6. beloved (vi) expression

SOLUTION

Note: 'favourable weather' is given as the example, so 1 is already done.

Matches (based on natural collocations in the text and general usage):
1. favourable + (iii) weather → favourable weather [given]
2. wrinkled + (iv) skin → wrinkled skin (the old woman's 'wrinkled' skin is mentioned in the text)
3. dejected + (vi) expression → dejected expression (Velu was 'tired and dejected')
4. fragrant + (v) garden → fragrant garden (fragrant = pleasant smell; suits a garden)
5. ceaseless + (ii) activity → ceaseless activity (the text uses 'ceaseless year-round cultivation')
6. beloved + (i) country → beloved country (beloved = deeply loved; commonly collocates with 'country')

Answer: 1-iii: favourable weather. 2-iv: wrinkled skin. 3-vi: dejected expression. 4-v: fragrant garden. 5-ii: ceaseless activity. 6-i: beloved country.

Q5 Underline verbs and identify tense forms in these sentences from the text:
1. 'Oh, it is hard not to be able to work...' — Simple Present
2. '…I am too old.' — Simple Present
3. 'What are you smiling at, Amma?' — Present Progressive
4. 'But my son, that is what I am talking about.' — Present Progressive
5. 'The earth has worked for years, centuries…' — Present Perfect
6. 'I have worked hard and honestly.' — Present Perfect

Now fill in the blanks with correct form of Simple Present, Present Progressive, or Present Perfect:
Ravi (i)___ [be] a farmer who (ii)___ [practise] crop rotation on his land. Each season, he (iii)___ [plant] different crops to maintain soil health. This year, he (iv)___ [grow] legumes. Over the years, Ravi (v)___ [learn] that planting the same crop repeatedly (vi)___ [deplete] the soil. By rotating crops, he (vii)___ [keep] the land productive. He (viii)___ [see] a noticeable improvement in yields. Now, Ravi (ix)___ [share] his knowledge with other farmers, explaining how crop rotation (x)___ [benefit] both the soil and their harvests.

SOLUTION

Tense identification (model sentences): Already given in the textbook.

Filled paragraph with correct tenses:
(i) is — Simple Present (state of being)
(ii) practises — Simple Present (habitual action)
(iii) plants — Simple Present (each season = habitual)
(iv) is growing — Present Progressive (action happening this year, ongoing)
(v) has learnt — Present Perfect (knowledge accumulated over the years)
(vi) depletes — Simple Present (general truth/habitual fact)
(vii) keeps — Simple Present (habitual result of rotation)
(viii) has seen — Present Perfect (noticeable improvement observed over time)
(ix) is sharing — Present Progressive (currently sharing his knowledge)
(x) benefits — Simple Present (general truth)

Answer: (i) is (ii) practises (iii) plants (iv) is growing (v) has learnt (vi) depletes (vii) keeps (viii) has seen (ix) is sharing (x) benefits.

Q6 Determiners exercise — Fill in the blanks with the correct determiner from brackets:
It was 1.___ (a/an) rainy afternoon, and 2.___ (a/the) sky was thick with dark clouds. Mala noticed 3.___ (her/their) house puddle… she called for her brother, knowing both always loved playing in 4.___ (a/the) rain. While jumping from 5.___ (some/one) puddle to another, she spotted 6.___ (few/a few) snails creeping on the wet sidewalk. With 7.___ (each/every) jump, the sound of 8.___ (her/their) squeals was heard. Though fully drenched, 9.___ (either/neither) siblings minded it.

SOLUTION

Fill in each blank with the correct determiner:

1. a — 'a rainy afternoon' (indefinite article before consonant sound)
2. the — 'the sky' (definite article — referring to a specific sky, the one above)
3. her — 'in front of her house' (possessive determiner — Mala's own house)
4. the — 'playing in the rain' (definite — referring to the specific rain that was falling)
5. one — 'jumping from one puddle to another' (numeral determiner; 'some puddle to another' is not idiomatic)
6. a few — 'spotted a few snails' (positive quantity — she did spot some snails; 'few' without 'a' would mean 'very few, barely any')
7. each — 'with each jump' (individual jump considered one by one)
8. their — 'both her and her brother's squeals' (possessive, referring to both siblings)
9. neither — 'neither siblings minded it' (not one of the two minded it)

Answer: 1. a. 2. the. 3. her. 4. the. 5. one. 6. a few. 7. each. 8. their. 9. neither.

Exercise 4.21 — Let us speak — Waiting for the Rain

Q1 Tongue twister — practise saying it as fast as you can: 'Whether the weather be fine, or whether the weather be not, whether the weather be cold, or whether the weather be hot, we'll weather the weather, whatever the weather, whether we like it or not.'

SOLUTION

Tips for practising the tongue twister:

1. Read it slowly first, pronouncing each 'weather' and 'whether' clearly.
   — 'weather' = the state of the atmosphere (rain, sun, cold, etc.)
   — 'whether' = if / introduces alternatives
   Both are homophones — they sound identical.
2. Gradually increase your speed, keeping each word distinct.
3. The challenge: 'weather' (noun/verb) and 'whether' (conjunction) sound the same, making the tongue twister both a pronunciation exercise and a homophones lesson.
4. Try three rounds: slow, medium, fast.

The tongue twister also teaches: the verb 'weather' meaning 'to endure or survive' ('we'll weather the weather' = we will endure whatever weather comes).

Answer: Model answer above — adapt as needed.

Q2 Role-play: Rain and Earth have a conversation after Rain arrives following a long dry spell. Use the hint table (Rain asks how Earth has been; Earth expresses relief; Rain describes its journey; Earth asks why so late and expresses gratitude; Rain asks how Earth can use rain water; Earth explains importance of rain; Rain elaborates how it enjoys Earth; Earth invites Rain to join the celebration; Rain thanks and promises to return on time).

SOLUTION

Model role-play script:

Rain: Greetings, Earth! It's been a while since we've met. How have you been?
Earth: Hello, Rain! I am so glad to see you. It has been very hard — I've been parched and cracked, the fields lie dry, and the farmers have been waiting with heavy hearts.

Rain: I'm sorry it took so long. My journey from the ocean was long — I had to

gather enough moisture to fill the clouds before I could find my way back to you.
Earth: But why did it take so long this time? We were beginning to lose hope.

Rain: Nature has its own rhythm, dear Earth. But I'm here now. And I bring a gift — water, freshness, the promise of a new beginning. How will you use what I bring?
Earth: Your water is precious beyond words. The farmers will plough and sow; the roots of the trees will drink deeply; the rivers will fill and flow again; the animals will have water to survive. Without you, I cannot give life.

Rain: I love being here — feeling myself soak into the soil, flowing into streams, feeding every living thing. The sound of your rivers, the green of your forests — it brings me joy to be part of you again.
Earth: And we love having you! Come, join the celebration — the rivers are dancing, the forests are singing, and the farmers are running home laughing!

Rain: Thank you for welcoming me, dear Earth. I promise to return on time next year — Nature willing. Until then, use me wisely.
Earth: We will. We always will.

Answer: Model answer above — adapt as needed.

Exercise 4.22 — Let us write — Waiting for the Rain

Q1 Write a formal letter to the Councillor of your Municipal ward requesting installation of a rainwater harvesting unit. Format: Sender's address, Date, Designation/Address, Subject, Dear Madam/Sir, Para 1 (problem), Para 2 (causes and consequences), Para 3 (request and suggestions), Para 4 (conclusion), Yours sincerely.

SOLUTION

Model letter:

12, Shanti Nagar
Sector 7, Ward No. 44
Bengaluru — 560 034

13 July 2026

The Municipal Councillor
Ward No. 44, Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike
Corporation Road, Bengaluru — 560 001

Subject: Request to Install a Rainwater Harvesting Unit in Ward No. 44

Dear Madam,

I am writing on behalf of the residents of Shanti Nagar, Sector 7, to draw your attention to the severe water scarcity we face every summer. From March to June, our neighbourhood receives piped water for less than two hours a day, forcing families to purchase water at high cost.

The primary cause of this scarcity is the absence of any rainwater harvesting infrastructure in our area. As a result, the considerable rainfall we receive during the monsoon months drains away as runoff without being collected or stored. This leads to overloaded drainage, waterlogging in the rains, and acute shortage in summer — two problems that could be addressed together.

We respectfully request that a community rainwater harvesting unit be installed in the open ground near the park at Shanti Nagar. We suggest: (i) a collection tank of at least 50,000 litres capacity with a filtration system; (ii) a rooftop collection network for the cluster of ten blocks in the area; (iii) a notice to residents on proper maintenance and use. The unit would serve approximately 400 households.

We trust that you will consider this request seriously. This investment will reduce

our dependence on tankers, save costs for residents, and contribute to sustainable water management in our ward. We would welcome a meeting at your convenience to discuss this further.

Yours sincerely,

(Rajan Pillai)
Resident Welfare Association, Shanti Nagar

Answer: Model answer above — adapt as needed.

Exercise 4.23 — Let us explore — Waiting for the Rain

Q1 Read the facts about fallowing: A fallow year = leaving land without sowing for one or more vegetative cycles to allow recovery of nutrients, retain moisture, avoid diseases and control pests. The land is divided into halves — one planted, one unplanted; reversed the following year. What is the connection between fallowing and the old woman's message in the story?

SOLUTION

Fallowing is the scientific and agricultural practice that directly supports the old woman's wisdom.

The old woman tells Velu: 'The soil, the land, the earth… shouldn't someone let the land rest a bit?'
She explains that the earth has worked for years and centuries — and Nature, acting as a mother, gives it the rest it needs.

Fallowing is exactly this rest:
— By leaving land unplanted for a season, the soil recovers its nutrients naturally.
— Moisture is retained rather than depleted by crop growth.
— Pests and soil diseases that depend on host crops die out.

The drought in the story serves as nature's unplanned fallow period — the land lies undisturbed, recovering.
When rain finally comes, the land will be 'fresh and ready' — just as a fallowed field produces better harvests.

The story thus embeds an ancient agricultural insight (fallowing) within a human narrative, showing that traditional wisdom and scientific practice often point to the same truth.

Answer: Fallowing is the agricultural practice of letting land rest without sowing — exactly what the old woman describes. The drought forces an unplanned fallow, allowing the land to recover nutrients and moisture, so it will be fresh and productive when rain returns.

Q2 Find out from your Vocational Education teacher about Agriculture as a vocation and other related vocations such as horticulture.

SOLUTION

Project guidance — Agriculture and related vocations:

Agriculture as a vocation:
— Farmers grow food crops (rice, wheat, pulses), cash crops (cotton, sugarcane), and manage livestock.
— It requires knowledge of soil science, irrigation, weather patterns, seeds, fertilisers, and pest management.
— Government programmes like PM Kisan and crop insurance schemes support farmers.

Related vocations to explore with your Vocational Education teacher:
1. Horticulture — cultivation of fruits, vegetables, and ornamental plants; includes floriculture (flowers) and landscape design.
2. Agronomy — science of soil management and crop production.
3. Animal Husbandry / Dairy Farming — rearing animals for milk, meat, and eggs.
4. Sericulture — cultivation of silkworms for silk production.
5. Pisciculture / Aquaculture — fish farming.
6. Apiculture — beekeeping for honey production.
7. Organic Farming — growing crops without synthetic chemicals.

Ask your Vocational Education teacher:
— Which of these is practised in your region?
— What qualifications or training are needed?
— What are the career opportunities?

Answer: Model answer above — adapt as needed.

Q3 India's indigenous meteorological knowledge: References to rain and weather are found in the Rigveda, Shrimad Bhagavad, Parashara Samhita, Panini's Ashtadhyayi, and Meghmala. Explore this tradition and discuss what it tells us about ancient Indians' understanding of the natural world.

SOLUTION

Key points for discussion:

India's indigenous weather forecasting tradition is thousands of years old:
— The Rigveda contains hymns to Parjanya (the rain god) and observations

about monsoon patterns.
— Parashara Samhita (an ancient agricultural text) describes methods for predicting rainfall based on cloud formations, wind direction, animal behaviour, and stellar positions.
— Meghmala is a text specifically about cloud observation and rainfall prediction.
— Panini's Ashtadhyayi (grammar) contains references to seasonal terms that reflect systematic observation of weather cycles.

What this tells us:
— Ancient Indians were keen observers of nature — they recorded patterns in clouds, winds, stars, and plants to predict weather.
— This knowledge was practical, born of the farming community's need to know when to sow and harvest.
— It shows a sophisticated understanding that the natural world follows patterns — a proto-scientific worldview.
— Traditional ecological knowledge (like predicting rain from the behaviour of frogs, ant colonies, or trees flowering early) is still used in many rural communities.

Connection to the story: Velu goes to a modern weather office when rain fails. But the old woman represents this ancient, intuitive wisdom — she reads nature not through instruments but through understanding.

Answer: Model answer above — adapt as needed.

Q4 Meteorological Services for Agriculture in India: The Agricultural Meteorology Division of IMD aims to minimise adverse weather impact on crops and leverage crop-weather relationships. Find out more at mausam.imd.gov.in.

SOLUTION

Research guidance on IMD Agricultural Meteorology Division:

Key functions of the Agricultural Meteorology Division (IMD):
1. Agro-meteorological advisories — weekly crop-wise weather-based advisories issued to farmers in 12 regional languages.
2. Crop weather watch — real-time monitoring of crop-weather conditions across India.
3. Drought monitoring — early warnings for drought conditions based on rainfall deficiency.

4. Rainfall forecasts — district and block-level rainfall predictions for the kharif and rabi seasons.
5. Pest and disease alerts — weather-based predictions for crop disease outbreaks.

How it helps farmers:
— Farmers can access advisories via IMD's Meghdoot app.
— SMS-based weather alerts are sent to registered farmers.
— Block-level advisories help farmers decide when to sow, irrigate, apply fertilisers, or harvest.

Connection to the story: Velu visited the weather office but got no useful answer. Today, the IMD provides much more precise agricultural weather services — showing how science has advanced, even if nature remains ultimately unpredictable.

Answer: Model answer above — adapt as needed.