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1

Advanced Introduction to
Creative Writing



*The tree that never had to fight
For sun and sky and air and light,
But stood out in the open plain
And always got its share of rain,
Never became a forest king
But lived and died a scrubby thing...
Good timber does not grow with ease,
The stronger wind, the stronger trees.*

Douglas Malloch

An Introduction to Creativity : Lesson 1 Nature and Concept

Introduction

It is said that *Leonardo da Vinci* before ever lifting his brush saw all his paintings in the damp stains on his walls. *Herman Melville* stared at *Mount Greylock* every day until one day it turned into devilish great white whale *Moby Dick*. In our young imaginative years we look up at the clouds and see old women, fairy, houses, alligators, and dinosaurs rather than constellations. According to biologists, man can no longer be defined as different from other animals by virtue of speech or tool making. But we are absolutely unique in our dazzling ability to make metaphors. *Creativity is the art of living metaphorically.*

It is an undisputed fact that Humanity has always owed its progress and development to *Creativity* be it in the sphere of science and technology, music or art or poetry or agriculture.

Besides giving satisfaction and joy to the human soul, the creative process has always given a new meaning to life in every era or period of human development.

The *creative spark* within an individual, leading to *creative endeavours* stems from a basic, yet strong, feeling of dissatisfaction with the usual process and activities. Some may not feel *dissatisfied at all with the way things are*. And, those who do feel discontented may react or respond in one of the following ways:

- Simply complaining or feeling frustrated without doing anything about the existing state of things.
- Trying to change the state of affairs by *creating something new* in a new way or even attempting to mould the public opinion or attitude by writing about the state of affairs in an original style with a skillful use of words and expressions.

This entails moving away from the old association, as was done, for example, by the *Romantics* like *Byron, Wordsworth, Keats* and *Shelley* who *broke away* from the *form dominated* writings of the *Restoration Period* writers like *Pope* and *Dryden*. If creativity is any one thing-it is imagine, imagine, imagine. If we don't express our imagination, it frustrates, it turns us into inert observers, when we were meant to be blaring our instruments in the universal choir.

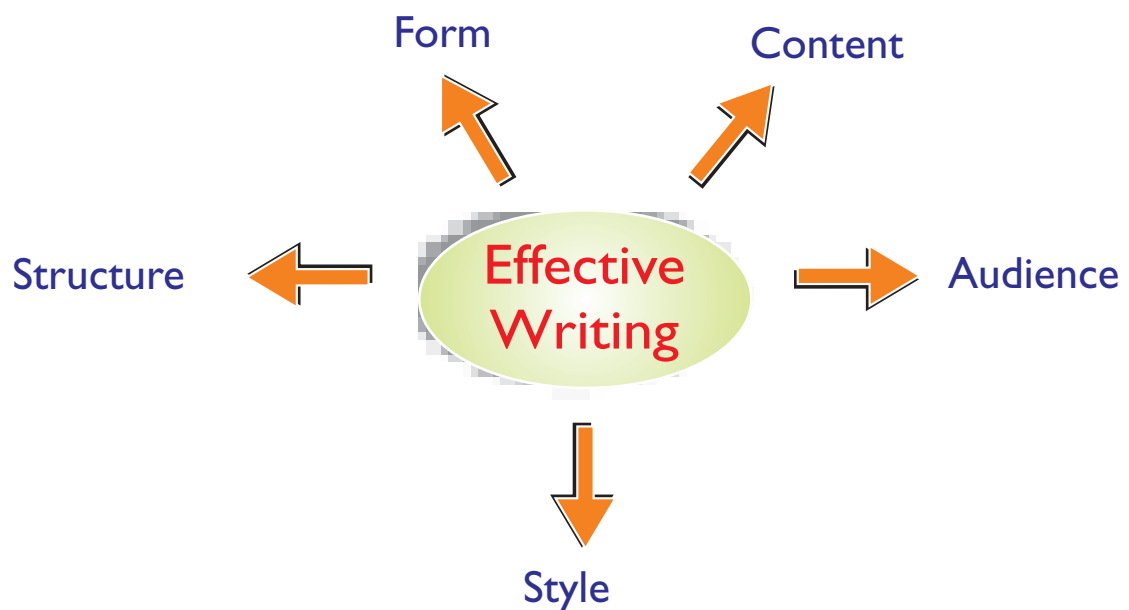
One may take real life examples to illustrate this point in a simpler way. In order to increase food production or to give a fillip to the *Grow More Trees Campaign* people may

talk of improving the quality of seeds or fertilizers. But, the truly creative person breaks away from *routine thinking* and may suggest ways and means of converting deserts into green fields.

Let's take an example from the realm of sports this time. When Captains and bowlers from all over the cricketing world thought of curbing the flow of runs from opposition batsmen by bowling a *negative leg-stump-line* with fielders on the on-side, the first batsman who thought of countering such a play by means of the *reverse-sweeps* shot was nothing short of being creative.

The above requisites of the '*creative processes*' may be safely applied to the various domains of writing as well.

You will recall that the vital elements of any piece of writing comprise the following:



ANALYSING A CREATIVE COMPOSITION

Creative writing is the process of inventing or rather presenting your thoughts in an appealing way. The writer thinks critically and reshapes something known into something that is different and original. Each piece of writing has a purpose and is targeted at an audience. It is organized cohesively with a clear beginning, middle and an end. Attention is paid to choice of apt vocabulary, figurative use of language and style. The following can be taken as *key points* for understanding of writing creatively:

The Beginning: Creative writing takes its first breath when the writer asks, "What can I create out of a particular feeling, image, experience, or memory?"

The Purpose: It carries out a writer's compelling desire to imagine, invent, explore, or share. Writing satisfies the creative soul. It often takes on a life of its own; the writer merely follows along.

The Form: Any form using a writer's imagination is suitable for creative development of some element of fiction. Some of the most common types of creative writing are poetry, essays, character-sketches, short-fiction, anecdotes, play-scripts, songs, parodies, reminiscences, historical fiction etc.

The Audience: A specific audience may not be known in the beginning, and each situation is different. However, if the finished piece has a universal meaning, the story will speak to a wide range of readers and may have varied meaning for various people.

The Style: A writer's style comes from an array of choices that result in the sole ownership of the finished product. The key to attaining a unique style is focused control. The writer lays out a viewpoint and if it appeals to the readers, it influences them. A good write up has the ability to rejuvenate a reader mentally and emotionally. Sometimes a good write-up evokes realisation of the abstract. As a result, the reader will see, hear, smell, taste, and feel specific things.

Activity 1 : Based on the information given above, complete the table given below:

Essentials of effective writing:

- (1) Purpose : _____
- b) Organization : _____
- (3) Form : _____
- (4) Unique Style : _____

Activity 2 : Given below are a few excerpts of writing. Answer the following, based on your reading. Then fill in the table given.

- (a) What form of writing is it? (An article, essay, story, poem, report etc.)
- (b) What is the main thought in each?
- (c) What are the ways in which the main idea has been expanded?
- (d) The writing belongs to which place and age/time? Pick the words that indicate its location, time and place.

- (e) Pick the unusual expressions and comment on their use in the writing.
- (f) Identify the words or sentences that can easily be discarded without affecting the meaning.

Excerpt-1

All-Round Show

New Delhi : Varun Sood and Neeraj Bansal captured three wickets apiece to guide West Delhi Academy to a thrilling four-run victory over Delhi Blues in the pre-quarterfinals of the eighth *Shakuntala Dogra memorial cricket tournament* at the *Chilla Sports Complex here*.

The scores: West Delhi Academy 240 for eight in 45 overs (Sagar Dhaiya 55, Varun Sood 50) beat Delhi Blues 236 for six in 45 overs (Gaurav Upadhyay 77, Shubhankar 49).

Excerpt-2

What affordable housing takes

It will take extraordinary political commitment and liberal public funding during the 11th Plan for affordable housing to become a credible goal. The National Urban Housing and Habitat Policy of the United Progressive Alliance government seek to make access to housing, long acknowledged as a fundamental right, a reality for all. The task is staggering even if we go by conservative estimates. The housing shortage to be met during the Plan is 26.53 million units, which include the backlog from the 10th Plan. If the existing stock of poor quality dwellings and the growing urbanization-driven demand are taken into account, the real deficit will be even higher.

By way of initiatives to improve housing supply, the new housing and habitat policy suggests repealing land ceiling Acts, amending rent Acts, relaxing building rules like the floor area ratio, and promoting integrated townships. The first two initiatives are carry-forwards from earlier policies and the rest will deliver only when subsidies are directed towards the target groups and realized. A functional new rent Act to protect the interests of landlord and tenant alike is overdue. But this alone will not be enough. As UN-HABITAT studies recommend, rental housing is one of the essential housing options and needs to be further explored through creative financial schemes. The policy encourages private sector participation in housing for the needy. This will be productive if there is an efficient regulatory framework that assures sufficient delivery of affordable housing. In the main, the housing policy must recognize that the real challenge in urban housing concerns the economically weaker sections who have no bankable assets and look up to the state for meeting their basic needs. Without fundamental and deep-going reform, the housing policy is unlikely to make any major impact. The housing deficit has led to a quarter of the country's urban population living in some of the worst slums found anywhere in the world, insecure and perpetually in conflict with the more affluent and the state. The remedy lies in creating more public housing and expanding common spaces.

Excerpt-3

Wanda Petronski was not in her seat. But nobody, not even Peggy and Madeline, the girls who started all the fun, noticed her absence. Usually Wanda sat in the seat next to the last seat in the last row in Room Thirteen. She sat in the corner of the room where the rough boys who did not make good marks sat, scuffling of feet, most roars of laughter when anything funny was said, and most mud and dirt on the floor.

Wanda did not sit there because she was rough and noisy. On the contrary, she was very quiet and rarely said anything at all. And nobody had ever heard her laugh out loud. Sometimes she twisted her mouth into a crooked sort of smile, but that was all.

Nobody knew exactly why Wanda sat in that seat, unless it was because she came all the way from Bogging Heights and her feet were usually caked with dry mud. But no one really thought much about Wanda Petronski.

Excerpt-4

Electronics is one of the most important sciences today. What is meant by electronics? To understand this science, we should know what happens inside a wire when electric current flows through it. When potential difference is maintained between the ends of a wire, some of the electrons are pushed from one end of the wire towards another end. It is not the electron but the energy associated with it which moves from one end of the wire to another and constitutes current. This stream of electrons works electric devices, such as heaters and light.

Excerpt-5

Elizabeth's impatience to acquaint Jane with what had happened could no longer be overcome; and at length resolving to suppress every particular in which her sister was concerned, and preparing her to be surprised, she related to her the next morning the chief of the scene between Mr. Darcy and herself.

Miss Bennet's astonishment was soon lessened by the strong sisterly partiality which made any admiration of Elizabeth appear perfectly natural; and all surprise was shortly lost in other feelings. She was sorry that Mr. Darcy should have delivered his sentiments in a manner so little suited to recommend them; but still more was she grieved for the unhappiness which her sister's refusal had given him.

'His being so sure of succeeding, was wrong', said she; 'and certainly ought not to have appeared; but consider how much it must increase his disappointment.'

'Indeed', replied Elizabeth, 'I am heartily sorry for him; but he has other feelings which will probably soon drive away his regard for me. You do not blame me, however, for refusing him?'

Excerpt-6

Absentee expertises: science advice for biotechnology regulation in developing countries

Uncertainties and potential controversies surround the spread of biotechnology to developing countries. In rather different quarters it has been suggested that developing countries lack the capacity and relevant scientific expertise to develop regulation of biotechnology that addresses issues of bio-safety, food safety and property regimes. Contingent upon one's view, the central point of concern is incapacity to control the risks of an unregulated spread of, for example, genetically modified organisms (GMO's), or the fear that lack of regulation may exclude developing countries from the potential benefits of new biotechnologies. In this situation of uncertainty and potential controversy, both national and international politicians and regulators turn to experts for advice to assist decision-making. Generating cognitive consensus and codifying this consensus in laws and regulations, standards and guidelines, and definitions of best practice are seen as first steps towards reaching normative consensus about controversial 'technical' issues.

Excerpt-7

THERE ISN'T TIME

*There isn't time, there isn't time
To do the things I want to do-
With all the mountain tops to climb
And all the woods to wander through
And all the seas to sail upon,
And every where there is to go,
And all the people, every one,
Who live upon the earth to know.
There's only time, there's only time
To know a few, and do a few,
And then sit down and make a rhyme
About the rest I want to do.*

-Eleanor Farjeon



Number	Title	Form	Main Idea-Expansion	Age/Time	Unusual Expression	Words/ sentences discarded without affecting the meaning
Excerpt 1						
Excerpt 2						
Excerpt 3						
Excerpt 4						

Excerpt 5						
Excerpt 6						
Excerpt 7						

Activity 3 : Based on your understanding of effective writing, tick (✓) the statements which are apt.

- a) The experience presented in the writing may be real or imaginary.
- b) All writing is based on a thought, an idea, an opinion or an experience.
- c) The content of writing can comprise opinion or experience of the writer.
- d) The form of writing has scope for the writer's creativity.
- e) Not much structuring is required, once the form has been identified.
- f) One needs to use words with precision and economy.

Things that must be avoided by a Writer

Verbosity: Using more words than are necessary to express an idea.

Repetition: Repeating an idea in different words.

Pedantry: using high sounding, difficult and obscure words instead of simple short ones.

Periphrasis Or Circumlocution: Using a roundabout way of saying a simple thing.

Archaic Words: Use of outdated words and phrases.

Colloquialism: Words or expressions used in familiar conversation such as 'tis, bike, phone.

Slang: Specific colloquialisms invented for humour and vividness in expressions such as cool dude, damn.

Indianisms: Translating the idioms and expressions of Indian languages literally.

Mixed Metaphors: Comparing a thing to two or more things.

Words which do not convey a precise meaning such as good, awfully.

Activity 4 : Rewrite the given sentences after identifying the errors:

- a) The grand opulence around us was seen to be believed.
- b) The papers were attached together before submitting.
- c) The elevator ascended up as he pressed down the button to the fourth floor.
- d) The class was united together splendidly.
- e) How many times do I need to repeat again for you to understand?
- f) The wedding ceremony transpired after the pyrotechnic display was over.

Creative Process and Creative Writing Ideas.

CREATIVE PROCESS

Breathe the fresh air and think.



Allow your thoughts to float.



The journey of your thought will find the seeds to plant your story.



Revisit your ideas for topics and scan through the entries in your Portfolio that focus on your experiences.



Mind map a simple plan that contains a few characters, a basic setting and a problem that will be resolved.



Give life to your plan and write your first draft.



Take time to revise the basic frame of story.



Evaluate character development, conflict in plot, exciting twist and turns.



And Voila! You have a creative output!

Activity 5 : Write a small poem/ prose piece about your thoughts about creative writing. You are free to experiment with the style. Let your imagination unfold.

Creative writing ideas

1. Let it flow. A story or book has little to do with the intellect or language when we first begin. Best ideas usually emerge as a spark or image. Like dreams, they will make little sense. Follow them without questions, they will hold the key to the creative unconscious.
2. Creativity is cyclical. You cannot and will not be creative all the time. What is full must empty and what is empty will fill. Creative melody has its own internal rhythms. Lend ear to yours.
3. Criticism is the most dreaded enemy of creativity. Keep your work-in-progress to yourself and don't share it at all with people who are critical or those whose opinions leave you vulnerable, no matter how much you value them. Good critiquing should inspire you, not dampen your sprits.
4. Evoke your inner critic and listen to its voice. If he/she is not comfortable with a creative endeavour review it. By becoming aware of the foul babble of your inner critic, you can see how you can reflect upon your creative endeavour.
5. Being a creator is a perilous trade. Don't underestimate the tremendous emotional and psychic risks the journey demands. Learn to push yourself even when you feel you can't pen even a single word. Learn to challenge your limits.
6. Embrace failure with a smile. Keep in mind every successful creator has failed and faced rejection many times before they became successful. Failure is the manure that nurtures the tree of creativity. Failure doesn't mean you're wrong or your approach is wrong. It only means your creativity has to face a challenge, which it needs to do successfully.
7. Enjoy writing trivia. Every successful writer writes hillocks of trivia. Give your work time to percolate, before you brew it. Play games with your characters. For example, if you're writing fiction and a character is sweet and loving and you're

stuck, give the character mean and hateful touch and enjoy the fun. Keep in mind that in the world of the imagination, anything can happen.

8. Nurture your creativity. It is as delicate as a budding flower. Let your creative thoughts dance to the tune of imagination. Support this by doing what you like the best; listen to music that makes you feel on top of the world. Go for a walk. Laugh with a friend, child or someone you like the most. Creativity is about creating a feeling, a purpose, a passion, which is special.
9. Be ardently passionate. Creativity is all about being passionately in love with your ideas, your thoughts.
10. Learn your craft by practising regularly. So write, write, and write! The more you write, the more polished you will get. Strictly discipline yourself. Successful writers are disciplined writers.

Activity 6 : Discuss the following creative writing ideas vis-à-vis your point of view:

- *Creativity is cyclical*
- *Embrace failure with smile*
- *Enjoy writing trivia*
- *Nurture your creativity*
- *Be ardently passionate*

Forms of Creative Expression : Fiction

Activity 7 : Given below are four Excerpts. Read them carefully and complete the table that follows:

Excerpt-1

The time when they thought about Wanda was outside of school hours - at noon-time when they were coming back to school or in the morning early before school began, when groups of two or three, or even more, would be talking and laughing on their way to the school yard.

Then, sometimes, they waited for Wanda - to have fun with her.

The next day, Tuesday, Wanda was not in school, either. And nobody noticed her absence again.

But on Wednesday, Peggy and Maddie, who sat down front with other children who got good marks and who didn't track in a whole lot of mud, did notice that Wanda wasn't

there. Peggy was the most popular girl in school. She was pretty, she had many pretty clothes and her hair was curly. Maddie was her closest friend. The reason Peggy and Maddie noticed Wanda's absence was because Wanda had made them late to school.

Excerpt-2

New find may shed light on Mughal era

New Archaeological evidence unearthed near Humayun's Tomb has revealed that the Nila Gumbad was also a part of the tomb complex.

The Nila Gumbad, located east of Humayun's Tomb next to the railway line, is an early Mughal period monument. The two monuments are at present cut off from each other by a road. The road forms a loop around the tomb and connects East Nizamuddin with Gurdwara Dumduma Sahib. The historic link - and arcaded platform - was discovered during a routine inspection of the Nila Gumbad site. The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) had commissioned India Tourism Development Corporation (ITDC) to develop a park around Nila Gumbad. The work was suspended after the discovery of the archaeological remains.

The clearance work carried out at the site showed historic connection between the Nila Gumbad and Humayun's Tomb. The arcaded platform stretches from the Nila Gumbad site to the tomb's eastern wall.

It is a major discovery and integrating the two sites through a green landscape will be a major contribution to tourism. But if the two sites are to be integrated, the road in between will have to be shifted further east towards the railway line. It is learnt that the ASI will take up the issue with the Railway Ministry soon.

The Nila Gumbad is an early Mughal period monument dating back to mid 16th century and showcases Persian influence on Mughal architecture. With blue and green tiles, the gumbad was originally a river island tomb accessible from Humayun's Tomb and the arcaded platform protected it from the river Yamuna that once flowed near Humayun's Tomb before shifting course eastward.

Excerpt-3

Migration, interrupted: nature's rhythms at risk

A new book argues that it is not just individual species that should be conserved - the migratory way of life too should be protected.

The world is etched with invisible paths, the routes taken each year by uncountable swarms of geese, elk and erback turtles. Their migrations speak to us in some unfathomably deep way. Bird watchers flock to stopover sites such as Cape May, New Jersey, to watch birds on their journeys to the far north in the spring and back to the tropics in the fall. Eco tourists head for the Serengeti to train binoculars on herds of wild beast that stretch to the horizon. American school-children watch monarch butterflies hatch from chrysalises in their classrooms and then see them off on their trip to Mexico.

But in his new book *No way Home*, David Wilcove, a Princeton biologist, warns that "the phenomenon of migration is disappearing around the world."

Despite their huge numbers, migratory species are particularly vulnerable to hunting, the destruction of wild habitat and climate change. Humans have already eradicated some of the world's greatest migrations and many others are now dwindling away. While many conservation biologists have observed the decline of individual migrations, Professor Wilcove's book combines them into an alarming synthesis. He argues that it is not just individual species that we should be conserving - we also need to protect the migratory way of life.

As a scientist, Professor Wilcove finds the disappearance of the world's migrations particularly heartbreaking because there is so much left for him and his colleagues to learn. What are the cues that send animals on their journeys? How do they navigate vast distances to places they have never been? How do some species travel for days without eating a speck of food?

In his book, Professor Wilcove describes threats that have only recently come to light. Cowbirds can devastate migrating songbirds in the United States by parasitizing their nests, for example, Cowbird mothers throw out the songbirds' eggs and lay their own instead. It turns out that fragmenting forests are an excellent habitat for cowbirds.

In years to come, Professor Wilcove warns global warming may come to have a huge effect on migrations, by dismantling ecosystems and leaving migrating animals without the food they depend on.

It is difficult to come up with a strategy to preserve a phenomenon as multifaceted as an annual migration. If a species of tree that lives only in part of Florida is endangered, the solution is straightforward. Try to conserve that little patch of habitat. But migratory animals don't respect international borders. The preservation of their migrations demands that countries work together to find solutions.

New York Times News Service

Excerpt-4

South America's biggest cat fight

Like the leopards in Mumbai, Brazil's Jaguars too need a truce with humans to survive. The Morning was just starting to heat up when biologist Ricardo Costa set out to look for jaguars on a 30,000 acre cattle ranch, rice farm and wildlife reserve in Brazil, known as the Pantanal.

Soon, Costa spotted a young male jaguar lazing in sun-flecked shade. "It's *Orelha*," he whispered, pointing out the tear in its right orelha, or ear. *Orelha* yawned, exposing teeth strong enough to crunch through the skull of anything.

Panthera oca, the largest cat in the America and the third largest in the world, prowls the rangelands of the Pantanal, a mosaic of rivers, forests and seasonally flooded savannas that spill from Brazil into neighbouring Bolivia and Paraguay. At stake in the

Pantanal, is 15 per cent, of the world's remaining population of jaguars. No one knows the rate at which the number is declining or just how many jaguars there are. But the world Conservation Union pegs the total free-ranging population at fewer than 50,000 adults and classifies the animal as near threatened.

Jaguars may not yet be in such desperate shape as Asian tigers, or African lions. But if conflicts with people and livestock are not resolved, jaguars could quickly trace a similar trajectory.

The next decade will be pivotal for jaguars throughout its range, which runs from northern Argentina to the borderlands shared by Mexico and the US.

Complete the table using information from the Excerpts above.

No. of Excerpt	Kind of writing (Genre)	Theme/Topic	Writer's Purpose	Writer's Style
Excerpt 1				
Excerpt 2				
Excerpt 3				
Excerpt 4				

End of the Lesson Review Questions

1. Comprehension:

- a. Explain creativity? What are the key features of creative writing?
- b. What do you understand by the style of a writer? How will you demonstrate your style?
- c. What are the ten things that a writer should avoid while writing? Explain.
- d. How many types of Fictions do you know? What is your favorite type and why?

2. Vocabulary:

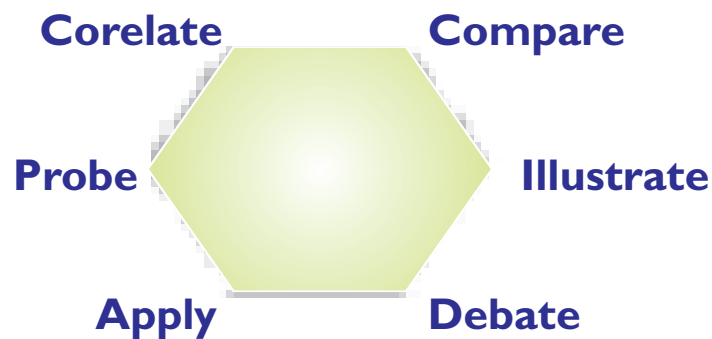
Give the meaning of the following in your own words and also write an example of each:

- a. Verbosity
- b. Pedantry
- c. Circumlocution
- d. Colloquialism
- e. Slang

3. Writing for your Portfolio

- a. Try *free-writing* to spawn ideas. Free-writing calls for simply putting pen to paper for a particular period of time and writing without thinking about spellings, punctuation, organization, or whether or not you're even making sense. If you feel short of things to write, just scribble, "I don't know what to write" until you consider there is something to share. Let your imagination lead your writing wherever it likes. You can free-write about any topic that interests you, or about a specific topic of your subject matter. Some good starts for free-writing can be:
 - (i) One thing I want to come true and alive is ...
 - (ii) I've thought about this idea a lot, but I still don't feel comfortable ...
 - (iii) The most appealing thing about this issue, is ...
 - (iv) If I had to explain this matter to someone who knew nothing about it, I would start with ...
- b. Use a "**hexagon**" to think about your topic from different perspectives, which should help you conceive some fresh ideas about your topic and help you ensure that you don't get grounded to a halt because of just one way of seeing things. Imagine the six sides of a hexagon as each being one way of looking at your topic. Quickly (*no more than 3 minutes each*) write down your responses to these six sets of prompts:

Illustrate: Reflect about your topic in terms of the five senses. What does it look like? How does it feel ? What does it smell, taste, sound like, or what could be its colour?



Compare: What is your topic similar to? What is its exact opposite?

Correlate: Create associations. What does your topic remind you of? When you close your eyes and think about your topic, what pops up in your head?

Probe: Analyse and think about the different parts of your theme and how they work together. Tell what causes your topic, how it emerges/emerged, what effects or influences it, and how it can be characterized or assembled.

Apply: Where and how can you use your topic? How can your subject be used productively? What good does your subject do anyone?

Debate: Take a stand for or against your theme - or both! Think of as many reasons, logical or inane, that you might have for favouring or opposing your subject.

Don't take a break between the questions -- just keep writing until you have responded to all six sides of the hexagon.

- c Make a *turn round sketch* from your draft. Read over your written piece and, after you read each paragraph, summarize that section in one sentence. Write these sentences, in order, on a piece of paper and then read over the outline they create. Does the flow transcend logically from one to other? Do any parts seem to be absent? Does anything appear to be at an off beam place, or is there anything that should be wiped off ? Does this outline, make sense, clearly convey the premise you want to put forth?
- d Use assemblage tactic to help you give a form to your ideas and make them look like an organized matter. Take a piece of free-writing or a hexagon and use a highlighter pen or underline to identify ideas that seem attention-grabbing to you. Reread the highlighted/underlined sections and ask yourself if any of the ideas you have identified might go together. You could highlight ideas about one theme in one colour and other themes in other colours. You might also snip key sentences with scissors or copy them onto individual index cards and then actually move ideas around to see how they might connect or fit together. So start it now.

Lesson 2 *Learning How to Write* the Short Story

One of the best ways for amateur writers to create a story is to base it upon real life occurrences. *Mark Twain* worked on a riverboat. *Jack London* explored *Alaska*. *Hemingway* was an avid fisherman and loved to travel. Their experiences allowed them to create settings and characters that seem real. Trying to become a short story writer and endeavouring to develop this '*Creative Writing Form*' involves two important steps.

1. Becoming aware of the following four basic elements of the story:

- *Theme*
- *Setting*
- *Plot*
- *Characterisation*

2. Practising the craft, the *how* of combining these elements can be a lifelong process.

The Elements of the Short Story

As a form of fictional prose, the short story is basically a narrative that is about imaginary events which happen to imaginary people or characters of the story. In most stories, the events lead to a crisis that usually gets resolved at the end. The resolution may or may not be a happy one.

Noted story writer *Edgar Allan Poe* has explained in very simple terms that a short story has three parts.

Beginning: The Characters usually meet in the beginning.

Middle : In the middle, the characters encounter a crisis that seems to overtake them.

End : The crisis gets *resolved* in the end.

Together, these three parts constitute the *Plot* of the story. By taking the readers through these three parts with the characters, the writer as it were conveys his message. This message may safely be called the theme of the story.

Activity 1 : Read the following extract :



One such ruin is *Fox-Burn*, but I won't tell you exactly where it can be found, because I visit the place for purposes of meditation (or just plain contemplation) and I would hate to arrive there one morning to find about fifty people picnicking on the grass.

And yet it did witness a picnic of sorts the other day, when the children accompanied me to the ruin. They had heard it was haunted and they wanted to see the ghost...

Work in Pairs

a. Which of the basic four elements of the short story does the above extract exemplify? Put a tick (✓) in the relevant box.

- Characterization
- Theme
- Setting
- Plot

b. Choose at least 3 words or groups of words by means of which the writer established the element that you have chosen as your answer to the previous question.

c. Is there anything in the extract that would make the reader want to read the story? Support your answer with lines from the extract.

d. We know that short story is a narrative. In the extract the writer *Ruskin Bond*, has 'laced' himself in the story by using the first person narrative. But, do you think, he will be one of the principal characters interacting with other characters or will watch the characters interacting with each other as the plot unravels itself? Give textual evidence from the extract to support your answer.

At times it happens that some stories truly captivate while others leave you with the feeling of 'why was this written at the first place, what was the point?' To make your short stories more effectual, ponder on these points before dipping the nib in the ink.

2. *Cover a very short time span. One single event that proves pivotal in the life of the character can illustrate the theme.*
3. *In a short story, say a big "No" to too many characters. Each new character will bring a new dimension to the story, and for an effective short story too many diverse dimensions (or directions) will dilute the theme. Have only enough characters to effectively illustrate the theme.*
4. *Every word counts. There is no room for unnecessary expansion in a short story. If each word is not working towards putting across the theme, delete it.*
5. *Focus on focus. The best stories are the ones that follow a narrow subject line. What is the point of your story? Its point is its theme. It's tempting to digress, but in a 'short story' you have to follow the straight and narrow otherwise you end up with either a novel beginning or melting ideas that add up to nothing.*

Activity 2 : Fill up the blanks with suitable phrases or words on the basis of the passage given above:

1. What is the _____ or statement behind the words and what is the _____ of the story?
2. One single event that proves _____, should be covered in a short span of time.
3. You _____ too many characters. Each new character will bring a new dimension to the story.
4. If a word is not working towards putting across the theme, _____ it.
5. The best stories are the ones that follow a _____.

Now, read this extract from O' Henry's short story, "The Rose of Dixie."

When *The Rose of Dixie* magazine was started by a stock company in Toombs City, Georgia, there was never but one candidate for its chief editorial position in the minds of its owners. Col. Aquila Telfair was the man for the place. By all the rights of learning, family, reputation, and Southern traditions, he was its foreordained, fit, and the logical editor. So, a committee of the patriotic Georgia citizens who had subscribed the founding fund of \$100,000 called upon Colonel Telfair at his residence, Cedar Heights, fearful lest the enterprise and the South should suffer by his possible refusal.

The colonel received them in his great library, where he spent most of his days. The library had descended to him from his father. It contained ten thousand volumes, some of which had been published as late as the year 1861. When the deputation arrived, Colonel Telfair was seated at his massive white-pine centre-table, reading Burton's, *Anatomy of Melancholy*. He arose and shook hands punctiliously with each member of the committee.

If you were familiar with *The Rose of Dixie* you will remember the colonel's portrait, which appeared in it from time to time. You could not forget the long, carefully brushed white hair; the hooked, high-bridged nose, slightly twisted to the left; the keen eyes under the still black eyebrows; the classic mouth beneath the drooping white moustache, slightly frazzled at the ends.

The committee solicitously offered him the position of Managing Editor, humbly presenting an outline of the field that the publication was designed to cover and mentioning a comfortable salary. The Colonel's lands were growing poorer each year and were much cut up by red gullies. Besides, the honor was not one to be refused.

1. *What is the setting of this story?*

2. *Which aspects of Col. Aquila Telfair's character have been highlighted in the extract? What is the tone of the writer as he introduces his main character, Col. Aquila Telfair?*

Activity 3 : Read the passage below and rewrite a summary of the same in five sentences:

All short stories need not look alike, but they do share a basic structure that makes them "click": they're readable, engaging or intense. For such a story in the first place, the writer must have both passion and patience. When you write, you leave the territory of the mundane. The first draft of your story need not follow any rules necessarily, but should be an outpouring of words. Believe in what you are writing. Explore the interior realm, and pull words from your grief, pleasure, happiness, anger and pain. Describe concretely and specifically what you see with the inner eye, how you feel and what matters to you.

After you write a first draft, it is a good idea to let the story sit for a while, a few days or even weeks. It is easy to love one's own writing in the same way that we can each put up with our own singing, even when others cannot! Wait a while. When you come back to the story for its first revision, start to notice a few things. Does the story have the basic elements? Does it have a believable plot? What is the theme, or the point of the story? Are the characters real? How does the plot build to the point of tension wherein everything is resolved in the denouement? Is the conclusion satisfying?

Activity 4: What characteristics of story writing are focused in the excerpt below? Put them as per your understanding in the blank lines given below:

Once you establish the basic elements of Theme, Plot, Setting and Characterisation in your short story, go through and scratch out every word, paragraph or page that does not contribute to them. You may have a wonderful description of a city on the second page which has nothing to do with the story. Be brutal. Scratch it out. You might have a brilliant quip on page four, or some allusive alliteration on page six, that do not contribute to the basic elements. Do away with them. Believe it or not, the story actually works better without them, is easier for others to read, and becomes a powerful vehicle of artistic expression. Listen to the advice of others. If a lot of people are distracted by some sentence you happen to love, think about changing it. Don't be afraid to revise. You are the creator, the writer, and you have it in your power to produce something beautiful. This means revision, which is not an act of mutilation, but of creation--though it may feel temporarily painful now and then.

Re-read your story with a critical mind when you are in different moods, and re-write it accordingly. A story that works does not just *happen*, but it is the fruit of rewriting and revision. You will discover that you will see it differently and find various new things you want to change according to your various moods.

So once you have the basics in place, you can begin to work on your own style and unique voice. But these come later. Short story writing takes skill as well as an artistic temper; you must learn the skills before you can shape it into art.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Activity 5 : Given below are some short stories. Write a small write-up in your Portfolio on each of these taking into account the following parts.

i) Plot

ii) Characters

iii) Mood

iv) Storyline \ action

The Story-Teller

It was a hot afternoon, and the railway carriage was correspondingly sultry, and the next stop was at Templecombe, nearly an hour ahead. The occupants of the carriage were a small girl, and a smaller girl, and a small boy. An aunt belonging to the children occupied one corner seat, and the further corner seat on the opposite side was occupied by a bachelor who was a stranger to their party, but the small girls and the small boy emphatically occupied the compartment. Both the aunt and the children were conversational in a limited, persistent way, reminding one of the attentions of a housefly that refuses to be discouraged. Most of the aunt's remarks seemed to begin with "Don't," and nearly all of the children's remarks began with "Why?" The bachelor said nothing out loud. "Don't, Cyril, don't," exclaimed the aunt, as the small boy began smacking the cushions of the seat, producing a cloud of dust at each blow.

"Come and look out of the window," she added.

The child moved reluctantly to the window. "Why are those sheep being driven out of that field?" he asked.

"I expect they are being driven to another field where there is more grass," said the aunt weakly.

"But there is lots of grass in that field," protested the boy; "there's nothing else but grass there. Aunt, there's lots of grass in that field."

"Perhaps the grass in the other field is better," suggested the aunt fatuously.

"Why is it better?" came the swift, inevitable question.

"Oh, look at those cows!" exclaimed the aunt. Nearly every field along the line had contained cows or bullocks, but she spoke as though she were drawing attention to a rarity.

"Why is the grass in the other field better?" persisted Cyril.

The frown on the bachelor's face was deepening to a scowl. He was a hard, unsympathetic man, the aunt decided in her mind. She was utterly unable to come to any satisfactory decision about the grass in the other field.

The smaller girl created a diversion by beginning to recite "On the Road to Mandalay." She only knew the first line, but she put her limited knowledge to the fullest possible use. She repeated the line over and over again in a dreamy but resolute and very audible voice; it seemed to the bachelor as though some one had had a bet with her that she could not repeat

the line aloud two thousand times without stopping. Whoever it was who had made the wager was likely to lose his bet.

"Come over here and listen to a story," said the aunt, when the bachelor had looked twice at her and once at the communication cord.

The children moved listlessly towards the aunt's end of the carriage. Evidently her reputation as a story-teller did not rank high in their estimation.

In a low, confidential voice, interrupted at frequent intervals by loud, petulant questionings from her listeners, she began an unenterprising and deplorably uninteresting story about a little girl who was good, and made friends with every one on account of her goodness, and was finally saved from a mad bull by a number of rescuers who admired her moral character.

"Wouldn't they have saved her if she hadn't been good?" demanded the bigger of the small girls. It was exactly the question that the bachelor had wanted to ask.

"Well, yes," admitted the aunt lamely, "but I don't think they would have run quite so fast to her help if they had not liked her so much."

"It's the stupidest story I've ever heard," said the bigger of the small girls, with immense conviction.

"I didn't listen after the first bit, it was so stupid," said Cyril.

The smaller girl made no actual comment on the story, but she had long ago recommenced a murmured repetition of her favourite line.

"You don't seem to be a success as a story-teller," said the bachelor suddenly from his corner.

The aunt bristled in instant defence at this unexpected attack.

"It's a very difficult thing to tell stories that children can both understand and appreciate," she said stiffly.

"I don't agree with you," said the bachelor.

"Perhaps you would like to tell them a story," was the aunt's retort.

"Tell us a story," demanded the bigger of the small girls.

"Once upon a time," began the bachelor, "there was a little girl called Bertha, who was extra-ordinarily good."

The children's momentarily-aroused interest began at once to flicker; all stories seemed dreadfully alike, no matter who told them.

"She did all that she was told, she was always truthful, she kept her clothes clean, ate milk puddings as though they were jam tarts, learned her lessons perfectly, and was polite in her manners."

"Was she pretty?" asked the bigger of the small girls.

"Not as pretty as any of you," said the bachelor, "but she was horribly good."

There was a wave of reaction in favour of the story; the word horrible in connection with goodness was a novelty that commended itself. It seemed to introduce a ring of truth that was absent from the aunt's tales of infant life.

"She was so good," continued the bachelor, "that she won several medals for goodness, which she always wore, pinned on to her dress. There was a medal for obedience, another medal for punctuality, and a third for good behaviour. They were large metal medals and they clicked against one another as she walked. No other child in the town where she lived had as many as three medals, so everybody knew that she must be an extra good child."

"Horribly good," quoted Cyril.

"Everybody talked about her goodness, and the Prince of the country got to hear about it, and he said that as she was so very good she might be allowed once a week to walk in his park, which was just outside the town. It was a beautiful park, and no children were ever allowed in it, so it was a great honour for Bertha to be allowed to go there."

"Were there any sheep in the park?" demanded Cyril.

"No," said the bachelor, "there were no sheep."

"Why weren't there any sheep?" came the inevitable question arising out of that answer.

The aunt permitted herself a smile, which might almost have been described as a grin.

"There were no sheep in the park," said the bachelor, "because the Prince's mother had once had a dream that her son would either be killed by a sheep or else by a clock falling on him. For that reason the Prince never kept a sheep in his park or a clock in his palace."

The aunt suppressed a gasp of admiration.

"Was the Prince killed by a sheep or by a clock?" asked Cyril.

"He is still alive, so we can't tell whether the dream will come true," said the bachelor unconcernedly; "anyway, there were no sheep in the park, but there were lots of little pigs running all over the place."

"What colour were they?"

"Black with white faces, white with black spots, black all over, grey with white patches, and some were white all over."

The storyteller paused to let a full idea of the park's treasures sink into the children's imaginations; then he resumed:

"Bertha was rather sorry to find that there were no flowers in the park. She had promised her aunts, with tears in her eyes, that she would not pick any of the kind Prince's flowers, and she had meant to keep her promise, so of course it made her feel silly to find that there were no flowers to pick."

"Why weren't there any flowers?"

"Because the pigs had eaten them all," said the bachelor promptly. "The gardeners had told the Prince that you couldn't have pigs and flowers, so he decided to have pigs and no flowers."

There was a murmur of approval at the excellence of the Prince's decision; so many people would have decided the other way.

"There were lots of other delightful things in the park. There were ponds with gold and blue and green fish in them, and trees with beautiful parrots that said clever things at a moment's notice, and humming birds that hummed all the popular tunes of the day. Bertha walked up

and down and enjoyed herself immensely, and thought to herself: 'If I were not so extraordinarily good I should not have been allowed to come into this beautiful park and enjoy all that there is to be seen in it,' and her three medals clinked against one another as she walked and helped to remind her how very good she really was. Just then an enormous wolf came prowling into the park to see if it could catch a fat little pig for its supper."

"What colour was it?" asked the children, amid an immediate quickening of interest.

"Mud-colour all over, with a black tongue and pale grey eyes that gleamed with unspeakable ferocity. The first thing that it saw in the park was Bertha; her pinafore was so spotlessly white and clean that it could be seen from a great distance. Bertha saw the wolf and saw that it was stealing towards her, and she began to wish that she had never been allowed to come into the park. She ran as hard as she could, and the wolf came after her with huge leaps and bounds. She managed to reach a shrubbery of myrtle bushes and she hid herself in one of the thickest of the bushes. The wolf came sniffing among the branches, its black tongue lolling out of its mouth and its pale grey eyes glaring with rage. Bertha was terribly frightened, and thought to herself: 'If I had not been so extraordinarily good I should have been safe in the town at this moment.' However, the scent of the myrtle was so strong that the wolf could not sniff out where Bertha was hiding, and the bushes were so thick that he might have hunted about in them for a long time without catching sight of her, so he thought he might as well go off and catch a little pig instead. Bertha was trembling very much at having the wolf prowling and sniffing so near her, and as she trembled the medal for obedience clinked against the medals for good conduct and punctuality. The wolf was just moving away when he heard the sound of the medals clinking and stopped to listen; they clinked again in a bush quite near him. He dashed into the bush, his pale grey eyes gleaming with ferocity and triumph, and dragged Bertha out and devoured her to the last morsel. All that was left of her were her shoes, bits of clothing, and the three medals for goodness."

"Were any of the little pigs killed?"

"No, they all escaped."

"The story began badly," said the smaller of the small girls, "but it had a beautiful ending."

"It is the most beautiful story that I ever heard," said the bigger of the small girls, with immense decision.

"It is the ONLY beautiful story I have ever heard," said Cyril.

A dissentient opinion came from the aunt.

"A most improper story to tell to young children! You have undermined the effect of years of careful teaching."

"At any rate," said the bachelor, collecting his belongings preparatory to leaving the carriage, "I kept them quiet for ten minutes, which was more than you were able to do."

"Unhappy woman!" he observed to himself as he walked down the platform of Templecombe station; "for the next six months or so those children will assail her in public with demands for an improper story!"

The Cross Photograph

A long time ago, when I was a little girl with a naughty little sister who was younger than me, our mother made us a beautiful coat each.

They were lovely red coats with black buttons to do them up with and curly-curly black fur on them to keep us warm. We were very proud children when we put our new red coats on.

Our mother was proud, too, because she had never made any coats before, and she said, "I know! You shall have your photographs taken. Then we can always remember how stylish they look."

So our proud mother took my naughty little sister and me to have our photographs taken in our smart red coats.

The man in the photographer's shop was very stylish too. He had curly-curly black hair just like the fur on our yellow handkerchief that he waved and waved when he took our photographs.

There were lots of pictures in the shop. There were pictures of children, and ladies being married, and ladies smiling and gentlemen smiling, and pussycats with long fur, and black-and-white rabbits. All those pictures! And the curly-curly man had taken every one himself!

He said we could go and look at his pictures while he talked to our mother, so I went around and looked at them. But do you know, my naughty little sister wouldn't look. She stood still and quiet as quiet, and she shut her eyes.

Yes, she did. She shut her eyes and wouldn't look at anything. She was being a stubborn girl, and when the photographer-man said, "Are you both ready?" my bad little sister kept her eyes shut and said, "NO."

Our mother said, "But surely you want your photograph taken."

But my naughty little sister kept her eyes shut tight as tight, and said, "No taken! No taken! And she got so cross, and shouted so much, that the curly man said, "All right, then. I will just take your big sister by herself."

"I will take a nice photograph of your big sister," said the photographer-man, "and she will be able to show it to all her friends. Wouldn't you like a photograph of yourself to know to your friends?"

My naughty little sister did want a photograph of herself to show to her friends, but she would not say so. She just said, "No photograph!"

So our mother said, "Oh well, it looks as if it will be only one picture then, for we can't keep this gentleman waiting all day."

So the photographer-man made me stand on a box-thing. There was a little table on the box-thing, and I had to put my hand on the little table and stand up straight and smile.

There was beautiful picture of a garden on the wall behind me. It was such a big picture that when the photograph was taken it looked just as if I was standing in a real garden. Wasn't that a clever idea?

When I was standing quite straight and quiet smily, the curly photographer-man shone a lot of bright lights, and then he got his big black camera-on-legs and said, "Watch for the dickey-bird!" And then "click!" said the camera, and my picture was safe inside it.

"That's all," said the man, and he helped me to get down.

Now, what do you think? While the man was taking my picture, my little sister had opened her eyes to peep, and when she saw me standing all straight and smily in my beautiful new coat, and heard the man say, "Watch for the dickey-bird," and saw him wave his yellow handkerchief, she stared and stared.

The man said, "That was all right, wasn't it?" and I said "Yes, thank you."

Then the curly man looked at my little sister, and her saw that her eyes weren't shut any more so he said, "Are you going to change your mind now?"

And what do you think? My little sister changed her mind. She stopped being stubborn. She changed her mind and said, "Yes please," like a good, polite child. You see, she hadn't know anything about photographs before, and she had been frightened, but when she saw me having my picture taken, and had seen how easy it was, she hadn't been frightened any more.

She let the man lift her onto the box-thing. She was so small thought that then took the table away and found a little chair for her to sit on and gave her a teddy bear to hold.

Then he said, "Smile nicely now," and my naughty sister smiled very beautifully indeed.

The man said, "Watch for the dickey-bird," and he waved his yellow handkerchief to her, and "click", my naughty little sister's photograph had been taken, too!

But what do you think? She hadn't kept smiling. When the photographs came home for us to look at, there was my little sister holding the teddy bear and looking as cross as cross.

Our mother was surprised. She said, "I thought the man told you to smile!"

And what do you think that funny girl said? She said, "I did smile, but there wasn't any dickey-bird, so I stopped."

My mother said, "Oh dear! We shall have to have it taken all over again!"

But our father said, "No, I like this one. It is such a natural picture. I like it as it is." And he laughed and laughed and laughed and laughed.

My little sister liked the cross picture very much, too, and sometimes, when she hadn't anything else to do, she climbed up to the looking-glass and made cross faces at herself. Just like the cross face in the photograph!

Dorothy Edwards

Activity 6 : Given below are three extracts. Extract A is from a fable, B from a contemporary short story and C from a Fairy tale. Read these carefully and fill in the given table:

Parameters	A	B	C
Simple Language			
Clear Statement			
Easy to Understand			
Poetic Expression			
Factual Account			
Any Others			

Extract A

The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse

Now you must know that a Town Mouse once upon a time went on a visit to his cousin in the country. He was rough and ready, this cousin, but he loved his town friend and made him heartily welcome. Beans and bacon, cheese and bread, were all he had to offer, but he offered them freely. The Town Mouse rather turned up his long nose at this country fare, and said: 'I cannot understand, Cousin, how you can put up with such poor food as this, but of course you cannot expect anything better in the country; come you with me and I will show you how to live. When you have been in town a week you will wonder how you could ever have stood a country life.' No sooner said than done: the two mice set off for the town and arrived at the Town Mouse's residence late at night. 'You will want some refreshment after our long journey,' said the polite Town Mouse, and took his friend into the grand dining-room. There they found the remains of a fine feast, and soon the two mice were eating up jellies and cakes and all that was nice. Suddenly they heard growling and barking. 'What is that?' said the Country Mouse. 'It is only the dogs of the house,' answered the other. 'Only!' said the Country Mouse. 'I do not like that music at my dinner.' Just at that moment the door flew open, in came two huge mastiffs, and the two mice had to scamper down and run off. 'Good-bye, Cousin,' said the Country Mouse, 'What! Going so soon?' said the other. 'Yes,' he replied; 'Better beans and bacon in peace than cakes and ale in fear.'

Extract B

A Crow in the House

A young crow had fallen from its nest and was fluttering about on the road in danger of being crushed by a car or a tonga, or seized by a cat, when I brought it home. It was in a sorry condition, beak gaping and head drooping, and we did not expect it to live. But my Grandfather and I did our best to bring it around. We fed it by prizing its beak gently open with a pencil to allow it to swallow. We varied his diet with occasional doses of my Grandfather's plum drink. As a result the young crow was soon on its way to recovery.

He was offered his freedom but did not take it. Instead he made himself at home in our house. My Grandfather, Aunt Mabel and even some of our Grandfather's pets objected but there was no way of getting rid of the bird. He took over the administration of the house. We were not sure he was male but we called him Caesar.

Before long, Caesar was joining us at mealtimes besides finding his own grubs or beetles in the garden. He danced about on the dining table and gave us no peace till he had been given his small bowl of meat, soup and vegetables. He was always restless, fidgeting about investigating things. He would hop about a table to empty a matchbox of its contents, or rip the daily paper to shreds, over-turn a vase of flowers or tug at the tail of one of the dogs. "That crow will be the ruin of us", grumbled my Grandmother, picking marigolds off the carpet. "Can't you keep him in a cage?"

We did try putting Caesar in a cage but he became so angry and objected with such fierce cawing and flapping that it was better for our nerves and peace of mind to give him the run of the house. He did not show any inclination to join the other crows in the banyan tree. Grandfather said this was because he was really a jungle crow-a raven of sorts, and probably felt contempt towards ordinary carrion crows. But it seemed me to that Caesar, having grown used to living with humans on equal terms, had become snobbish and did not wish to mix with his own kind. He would even squabble with Harold, the hornbill. Perching on top of Harold's cage he would peck at the big bird's feet, whereupon Harold would swear and scold and try to catch Caesar through the bars.

In time, Caesar learned to talk a little-as ravens sometimes do-in a cracked, throaty voice. He would sit for hours outside the window, banging on the glass and calling "Hello, hello." He seemed to recognize the click of the gate when I came home from school and would come to the door with hop, skip and a jump to say "Hello, hello." I had also taught him to sit on my arm and say "Kiss, kiss" while he placed his head gently against my mouth.

On one of Aunt Mabel's visits, he alighted on her arm and cackled "Kiss, kiss." Aunt Mabel was delighted and probably flattered and leant forward for a kiss. But Caesar's attention had shifted to my aunt's gleaming spectacles, and thrusting at them with his beak he knocked them off. Aunt Mabel was never a success with pets.

Pet or pest, Grandfather insisted that Caesar was a pest inspite of his engaging habits. If he had restricted his activities to his own house it would not have been so bad, but he took to

visiting neighbours' houses and stealing pens and pencils, hair ribbons, combs, toys, shuttle cocks, toothbrushes and false teeth. He was especially fond of toothbrushes and made a collection of them on top of the cupboard in my room. Most of the neighbours were represented in our house by a toothbrush. Toothbrush sales went up that year and so did Grandmother's blood pressure.

Caesar spied on children going to the baniya's shop, and often managed to snatch sweets from them as they came out. Clothes pegs fascinated him. Neighbours would return from the bazaar to find their washing lying in the mud and no sign of the pegs. These too found their way to the top of the cupboard.

It was Caesar's gardening activities which finally led to disaster. He was helping himself to a neighbour's beans when a stick was flung at him, breaking his leg. I carried the unfortunate bird home and Grandfather and I washed and bandaged his leg as best as we could. But it would not mend. Caesar hung his head and no longer talked. He grew weaker day by day, refusing to eat. One morning I found him dead on the sofa, his legs stiff in the air. Poor Caesar! His anti-social habits led to his early end. I dug a shallow grave in the garden and buried him there along with all the toothbrushes and clothes-pegs he had taken the trouble to collect.

Ruskin Bond

Extract C

The Real Princess

There was once a Prince who wished to marry a Princess; but then she must be a real Princess. He travelled all over the world in hopes of finding such a lady; but there was always something wrong. Princesses he found in plenty; but whether they were real Princesses it was impossible for him to decide, for now one thing, now another, seemed to him not quite right about the ladies. At last he returned to his palace quite cast down, because he wished so much to have a real Princess for his wife.

One evening a fearful tempest arose, it thundered and lightened, and the rain poured down from the sky in torrents: besides, it was as dark as pitch. All at once there was heard a violent knocking at the door, and the old King, the Prince's father, went out himself to open it. It was a Princess who was standing outside the door. What with the rain and the wind, she was in a sad condition; the water trickled down from her hair, and her clothes clung to her body. She said she was a real Princess. 'Ah! we shall soon see that!' thought the old Queen mother; however, she said not a word of what she was going to do; but went quietly into the bedroom, took all the bed-clothes off the bed and put three little peas on the bedstead. She then laid twenty mattresses one upon another over the three peas, and put twenty feather beds over the mattresses.

Upon this bed the Princess was to pass the night.

The next morning she was asked how she had slept. 'Oh, very badly indeed!' she replied. 'I have scarcely closed my eyes the whole night through. I do not know what was in my bed, but I had

something hard under me, and am all over black and blue. It has hurt me so much!' Now it was plain that the lady must be a real Princess, since she had been able to feel the three little peas through the twenty mattresses and twenty feather beds. None but a real Princess could have had such a delicate sense of feeling.

The Prince accordingly made her his wife; being now convinced that he had found a real Princess. The three peas were however put into the cabinet of curiosities, where they are still to be seen, provided they are not lost.

Wasn't this a lady of real delicacy?

End of the Lesson Review Questions:

1. Comprehension

- a. What are the key elements of a short story?
- b. What do you understand by the beginning, middle and end in context of a short story?
- c. How important are the characters for a story?
- d. What is the significance of the setting in a story?

2. Writing for the Portfolio

- a) An archetypal exercise: Start your story with the line *I recall* (or *I don't recall*), and write for twenty minutes.
- b) Pick a scene from a story of your choice and rewrite it from a different perspective (i.e., rewrite a scene from a different character's point-of-view, or from the same character's, but using first person instead of third).
- c) Write a story from the point-of-view of an inanimate object (for example, a table).
- d) Begin a story with the last line, and write backward (end with the first line). Read it backward, and then read it forward.
- e) Have each member of your family (or friends group), suggest a word (such as an item, character, or event), then write a story using all of the words suggested.
- f) Divide a piece of paper down the middle. On the left side, write about nine nouns (not necessarily related to one another). On the right, write about nine words related to one certain occupation of your choice. Then draw lines from one column to the next, connecting one noun with one word from the right column. Choose one of these paired-off words and write a short story or poem using them.
- g) Create a character by starting with just a name. Add details until that character gets placed into a plot.
- h) Take an ordinary snippet of a memory, maybe from childhood, and embellish it, disguise it, turn it into a "new" recollection.
- i) If you go to a cafe or restaurant, then choose a person or people from another table and think of a story surrounding their reason for being there. It is interesting because one observes the tiny details (such as the way people are interacting, clothes, manner, etc.) and uses them to add truth to a story.

- j) Imagine the perfect writing situation for you and describe it in as much detail as possible. Where is it? What time of day? What sounds do you hear? What objects surround you? What are you using to write? What can you see when you look up from your writing? How do you feel? Try to explain why this situation would be so comforting and productive for you.
- k) Imagine that a film producer is making your story into a movie. Write about the changes he or she might make to your "plot," the actors who would play key roles, and the reviews that the movie might receive.
- l) Write about your story in a letter to a family member or friend. Start with, "*I have to write this story about X and here's what I'm thinking right now ...*" Explaining your ideas to a friendly person is often a helpful strategy for clarifying those ideas for yourself.
- m) *Shifts in Perspective*: Write about a past family gathering, the most embarrassing thing that ever happened in your school, the best teacher you ever had, the time you learned to do something important (swim, ride a bike, use a computer), or the biggest event you ever attended. Write the story in as much detail as possible, explaining what you saw, what you did, and how you felt. Then rewrite the same story from the perspective of someone else - a relative, a fellow student, another participant, a passer-by, etc.
- n) *Genre Changes*: Write out your favourite joke (or fairy tale or poem). Then rewrite that narrative as a tragedy, as a limerick, as a haiku, as a serious academic essay, as a breaking news story, or as the script for a music video.
- o) Open the dictionary and pick five words at random. Write a story that incorporates all five words.

Introduction to Lesson 3 Article Writing

As an aspiring professional journalist or a freelancer writing for a newspaper or a magazine, one has to *get started* by understanding the basic differences between the newspaper article and the magazine article.

Newspapers publish what are termed as *hard news* as well as *soft news* articles. The former are usually based on *breaking* news and the *immediacy factor* in terms of time and interest. These give an account of what has happened or something that is happening now based on earlier facts about what may happen in the future.

On the other hand, *soft news* articles, also called *feature articles* generally include *Profiles in Excellence*, i.e. profiles of noteworthy and *newsworthy* people, human-interest stories and discussions of issues. Based on facts, feature articles are more discursive in nature. Magazines, which may be weekly or fortnightly or monthly publications, contain *soft news* or *feature articles* as they are not constrained by the *immediacy* factor. The readers of a magazine will get to read about an event several days after it had occurred.

The newspaper article is predominantly based on facts, whereas the magazine article usually consists of the report of a *factual event* in a summarized form. The more pertinent elements of the magazine article on *soft news* article are:

1. Background information gathered about the incident
2. The possible reasons behind it and which may have unravelled themselves since the time the event had taken place; and
3. The opinion of the writer about the event (usually determined by the 'slant' that the news magazine is known for)

Activity 1: Some extracts from newspapers and magazine articles are given below. Read them carefully and on the basis of your understanding of the basic difference between a newspaper article and a magazine article, decide which extracts are more suitable for a newspaper and which ones are more likely to be a part of a magazine article.

Tick the relevant box and also state why you made the choice you did:

[Redacted text block]

Newspaper / hard news article.

Magazine / soft news article.

Give reasons for your choice.

[Redacted text block]

Newspaper article.

Magazine article.

Reasons for your choice.

[Redacted text block]

An extract from a newspaper article

An extract from a magazine article

Reasons for your choice.

iv) Vishwanthan Anand scored two victories when they really mattered and setup a much awaited title-clash with Armenian hot-favourite Levon Aronian in the Final Chess 960 World Chess Championship in Mainz, Germany on Wednesday.

Extract from a newspaper article

Extract from a magazine article

Reasons for your choice

Activity 2 : We have already seen that a newspaper ('hard' news) article is mostly fact based, whereas a magazine (soft news) feature article also expresses opinion on the fact. Now, read the following sentences and decide whether the language used in them is more suited to reporting facts 'F' or expressing opinions 'O'.

i) Anup Sridhar continued with his devastating form to stun World No. 16 Mohd. Hafiz B. Hashim of Malaysia and make it to the men's singles quarter finals of the World Badminton Championship here today.

ii) The U.S. Government has ruled out re-negotiation of the civil nuclear deal with India amid demands that the agreement be worked out fresh.

iii) It was a power dinner. But it was soon to become a power - hungry one. Early September, Agriculture Minister hosted a dinner in honour of the Chairman of a Software company during his ninth visit to India Surprisingly, the young Indian parliamentarians had only one request for the Chairman. No, they did not want him to set up its next microprocessor factory in India on their constituency; they wanted the global chip giant to initiate its next social sector project in their area.

iv) Global prices of wheat are currently ruling at a 10 year high and have more than doubled in the past 18 months. Indian wheat is available from farmers and traders at a rate that is almost 40 percent cheaper. Despite this differential, the government is more keen to import wheat to boost its existing buffer stocks to an 'adequate level'. It seems like an age - old case of policy mismanagement and myopic mindset that invariably grips the authorities when it comes to food grain procurement.

Now, read the extracts carefully and pick out key words / expressions that helped you in making your choice.

Activity 3 : Writing a newspaper article.

Key features of a newspaper article

Think of something that happened around you in the very recent past (may be today morning or yesterday). Write a newspaper article on it taking help of the key points given below:

Headline - usually only four or five words. It tries to attract the interest of the reader by telling them what the story is about, in a short and interesting way.

How many words are there in the headline?

By-line - tells about who wrote the article.

Introduction - It will set the scene and summarise the main points of the article: who, what, when, where.

Can you identify these important points in your article?

Who is the article about? _____

What happened? _____

When did it happen? _____

Where did it happen? _____

Body - provides more detail about the event, in particular it answers the questions how and why.

What else do you know now?

Quotes - sometimes articles will include what a person (like an eye-witness or an expert) has said. These will be in speech marks.

Does your article have quotes? If so,

What was said?

Who said it?

How are they related to the event?

Photograph and caption - sometimes articles have a photograph and a sentence explaining the photograph

Does your article have a photograph? What does it show - describe exactly what you see?

Activity 4: Given below is article with jumbled paragraphs. Read the paragraphs carefully and indicate their correct order.

Dr. Sethi, inventor of Jaipur Foot, dies

- a. Dr. Sethi first thought of the idea of working on the artificial limb mechanism in 1965, when he was prescribing solid-ankle-cushion heel (SACH) feet to people with amputated lower limbs in Jaipur. He would ask users, in casual encounters outside the hospital setting, how satisfied they were with their new feet and found that many of them had returned to using crutches.
- b. These devices have two other features that led to their popularity. First, they can be made easily by local artisans and with local materials. Therefore once the design is known, they can be produced anywhere, Second, Dr. Sethi's team did not patent the designs, making them available free of charge and thus reducing the cost to users. As a result, the devices have proved useful not only in the ESCAP region, but also in Africa, and Latin America
- c. Born on November 23, 1927 at Agra who went on to win the Padmashree, Dr. Sethi got his FRCS degree from Edinburgh in England in 1954 and invented the Jaipur Foot in 1968. He practiced in Sawai Man Singh Hospital and established a rehabilitation research centre.
- d. He was 80 and is survived by his wife Sulochana, son and three daughters. He was cremated in a local burial ground where a large number of people attended the funeral procession.
- e. Former Vice-President, Governor and Chief Minister Raje have expressed grief on the demise of Dr. Sethi who had brought fame to Rajasthan as well as the country. The Vice President said "Dr. Sethi proved the 'mesiah' of handicaps who became self dependent and started walking after the invention of Jaipur Foot by him."
- f. The production team had not realized that the SACH foot, intended to be worn with shoes and for sitting in chairs, was not suitable for Indians who walked bare feet and sat on the floor. By 1970, with the help of his team members, Dr. Sethi had come up with the new designs, which have since been known as the Jaipur Foot.
- g. Magsaysay Winner and inventor of the Jaipur prosthesis 'Jaipur Foot', an artificial limb used all over the world for the physically challenged, Dr. P.K. Sethi died of a cardiac arrest at a private hospital on Saturday.

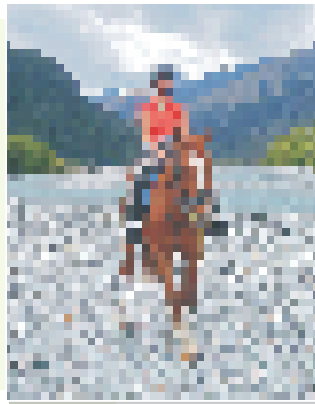
Activity 5 : Given below are some details about Nainital . Read these and write a profile of the city.

- Beautiful and scenic.
- Lake District - Naini Lake singed by hills.
- Varied topography
- Hotels to suit all budgets available

How to reach : Nearest station Kathgodam, 35 kms by road

By road : connected to highway no 87 connected to Delhi, Agra, Dehradun, Haridwar, Lucknow, Kanpur.

By are Nearest airport: Pantangar 10 kms from Nainital.



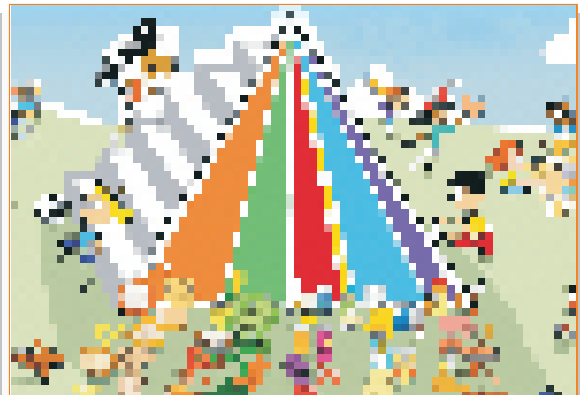
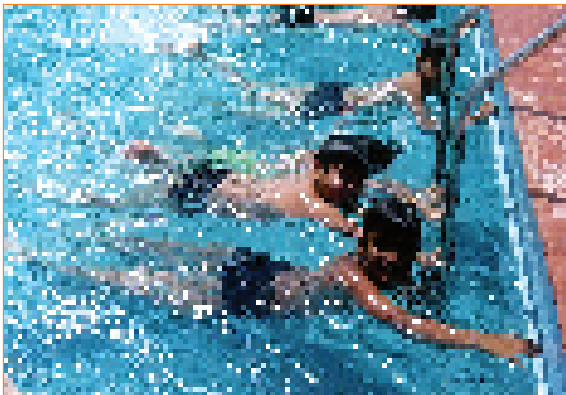


Activity 6 : Given below are details about Nina - a famous singer. Read these carefully and write a profile.



Activity 7 : Use the photographs given below for writing an Article on Keeping Fit:

Picture, especially photographs, carry with them implicit narratives, making them ideal for generating new ideas. Choose one of these photograph writing prompts or use this exercise with a class or writing group, having each student/member bring in a picture and trade with someone. Whether you do it alone or with a group, the exercise will help loosen you up and get you to explore new themes. For groups and classes, exercises like break up the routine and build cohesion.



End of the Lesson Review Questions

1. Comprehension

- What is the basic difference between a newspaper article and a magazine article?
- What are soft news articles? What are their characteristics?
- What do you understand by a headline and a by-line? Find out any ten headlines with by-lines in today's newspaper?
- What are the 4 W's of a News article and what is their significance?

2. Vocabulary : What is the meaning of the terms?

- Hard news
- Feature articles
- Quotes
- By-line
- Caption

3. Writing for the Portfolio.

- Read any five articles of your choice from a magazine or today's Newspaper and write the details as per the following checklist in your Portfolio. Don't forget to paste a photocopy or the cutting of the article**

Features of a Newspaper / Magazine article	Comments
What kind of article is it? News (local, national or international) / Sport / Entertainment / Fashion / Weather etc.	
Is there a bold and eye catching headline?	
Are the paragraphs written in columns?	

Are there any subheadings?	
Is it written in a 'news style' with short and informative sentences giving details about who / what / where / when / how?	
Does it use quotations?	
What other features of magazines / newspapers are there on the page? e.g. competitions / advertisements / letters	
Is there a picture or photograph with a caption?	

2. Follow the steps given below and use a photograph prompt to write articles / short stories.

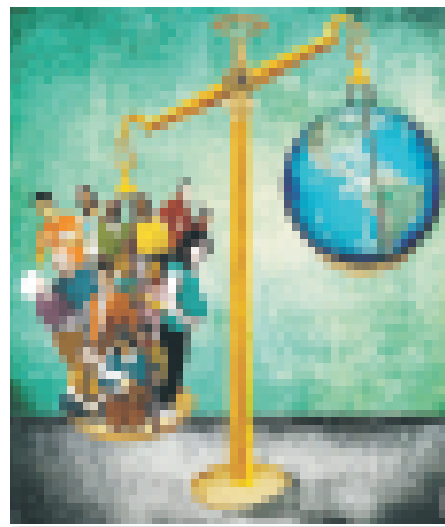
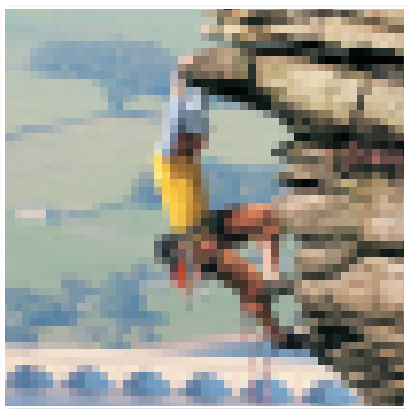
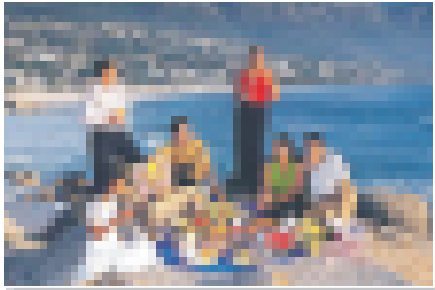
1. Either choose an image from this selection of photograph writing prompts, or have your students each bring in a picture and trade. With groups, have some kind of system for the trade so that students don't plan ahead. (Have everyone pass their picture to the right, for instance.)
2. Spend ten to fifteen minutes free writing on the photograph.
3. Choose some aspect of your free writing exercise as a starting point for a short story on an article. The story does not necessarily have to explain the picture, so long as the picture has in some way inspired the resulting work.
4. Share the stories (either that day or the next time the class meets, depending on how much time you have) alongside the pictures, explaining, when necessary, how the picture resulted in the work.

5. If you wish to continue working on the story, you may want to refer to articles on plot, dialogue and character as you revise.

Tips:

1. Don't worry overmuch about conforming closely to the photograph. The point of the exercise is to get you started writing -- ideally something you wouldn't have written otherwise.
2. You can also do this exercise solo by opening a magazine at random or asking a friend to present you with an image. You can also give yourself the assignment of using an image from that day's mail. (Generally junk mail includes some images.)
3. Don't use something you've written in the past just because it fits the picture. Use the exercise to write something entirely new.

Photograph Prompts



Lesson 4 *Introduction to the Writing of Drama*

The stage is a magical place. Live actors and a live audience make for an immediacy no other art of the written word can duplicate. The ancient Greeks and Romans believed that the dramatic *poet* had the power and the duty to *teach and to please* and it's a tradition that lives on to this day. Sounds great. But how do you do it?

Before your play can teach and please anyone, you have to write it, rewrite it (probably over and over again.) It can be a long road and good playwrights typically have patience and perseverance to spare.

Types of Plays

Plays come in all shapes and sizes. Here are the most common ones:

Ten-Minute Plays

Ten-minute plays have become very popular in recent years. A good ten-minute play is not a sketch or an extended gag, but rather a complete, compact play, with a beginning, middle and end. It typically takes place in one scene and runs no more than ten pages.

One-Act Plays

One-acts can run anywhere from fifteen minutes to an hour or more. While technically, the one-act gets its name from having only one act (however long that might be), it's more commonly thought of as a play that isn't long enough to constitute a full evening. Arguably the most popular length for one-acts is around a half-hour. A good one-act focuses on one main action or problem; there's not time to get into complicated layers of plot. And for practical reasons, it's a good idea to keep the play to one set and as few scenes as possible. The moral of the story is to write your one-act with the most minimal set and technical demands possible.

Full-Length Plays

Full-length plays are also called evening-length plays. How long is that? Anywhere from around seventy or eighty minutes and up. These days, with TV shrinking our attention spans, you'd better have a very good reason to keep an audience in the theater for much longer than two hours. And it's always a good idea to write your play so that it can be produced, if necessary, with minimal set and technical requirements.

Musicals

Musicals can run the gamut in length from ten minutes (though these are rare, because it's not very cost effective to assemble a band to play for only ten minutes) to three hours. Again, the middle ground - somewhere between ninety minutes and two hours, is probably the one to shoot for.

Activity 1 : Based on the reading, complete the notes given:

1. _____ plays have become very popular in recent years. It typically takes place in _____ and runs no more than ten pages.
2. One-acts can run anywhere from _____ to an hour or more. Arguably the most popular length for one-acts is around a _____.
3. Full-length plays are also called _____ plays, they can be from around _____ or _____ minutes and up.
4. Musicals can run the gamut in length from _____ minutes to _____ hours. Again, the middle ground - somewhere between _____ minutes and two hours.

How Plays Work

There is a similarity between plays and musical scores. Like the musical score, the printed play is a manual or a blueprint for performance. Yet, every musical score does not get performed, the same holds good for plays as well. All the plays that are written do not get enacted on the stage or 'read' on the radio!

Hence, when a playwright writes a play, he has to endeavour to make the dialogue and description work as a set of directions for the performance as well as for its own 'realization', if it does not get enacted. On the one hand, a play brings quite a bit of the playwright's understanding of his play to work on an imagined audience in the circumstances of an imagined theatrical representation. At the same time, it should be 'fulfilling' and 'complete' in itself, like a novel, or a short story, if it does not get presented on the stage.

The following components of a drama, while working together when written, aim to get the desired effect on the audience supposed to be present in the theatre as well as on the 'private' reader of the play.

Dialogues

In a play, we have passages of dialogue separating the speakers and introduced by speech-brackets or names of character. These components help the action on the stage in the sense they know who has to speak when in trying to 'present slices of life' on the stage. Now

whether the dialogue being 'read out' by them appears to be realistic or not, depends on how good they are as actors and also whether the playwright is able to make 'characterization' and 'situation' in the drama clear to the reader through the dialogue and in doing - so, he has to take care the dialogues don't drag on or don't become too loaded with words and expression that are acceptable to a reader but sound too artificial or high-sounding and formal when spoken.

Descriptions within Parenthesis

The task of the play might become easier by means of certain components of a drama after using the dialogue. These are as follows:

- i) Descriptions of scene and action sometimes precede the passages of dialogue or dialogues are interspersed with such description.
- ii) The situation and its complexities are made clear through the oral (dialogue) and visual (action, facial expression and body language) elements that are the essential components of a drama. Yet, the entire scenario may still not be clear. So the playwright has the option to include the tone, feeling or emotion of a character within parenthesis.

Activity 2 : Fill in the appropriate words from the box given :

A play is a story written to be _____. The people who are in the play are called the _____ and each one has a _____ with a specific _____ in the story.

Plays are split up into _____, not _____ like in a novel. They are usually acted on a _____ in front of an _____. Some plays have a _____ who explains what is happening when there are no words. The people acting wear _____ and sometimes carry or use _____ to make their performance more _____.

Each section will have different _____ to show the change of place or time. The people also will wear _____ so that they don't look pale under the _____ and also to look more like their character.

Voices must be _____ and _____ and are often accompanied by _____.

People who write plays are called _____ and one very famous one is _____, who wrote many plays including _____.

Plays that are mostly sung are called _____ and those with classical _____ are called _____.

lights	stage	audience	loud	Shakespeare	cast
musicals	performed	narrator	gestures	Romeo and Juliet	
character	chapters	props	operas	scenes	costumes
playwrights	scenery	make-up	clear	role	music
					real

Activity 3 : Read this scene given below and attempt to write out the entire play.

Scene 1 : Outside an old, green vinegar bottle.

Narrator: Once there was an old woman who had the bad luck to live in a vinegar bottle.

(Old woman enters carrying a mop and bucket)

Old Woman (grumpily): "It's a scandal. Nobody should have to live in a vinegar bottle, least of all me. I've worked hard all my life and this is all I've got to show for it. One nasty, cold bottle. And the smell of the place. It's awful! It doesn't matter how often you wash it, you can never get rid of it." *(She bangs the bucket down and throws her mop to the floor)* "I'm so fed up! What I need is a good fairy to grant me a wish."

(There is a sudden flash of light and a tinkling of music)

Good Fairy: "Did someone call?"

Old Woman! (gulping): "Um, it was me. I was just saying that I could do with a good fairy to grant me a wish."

Good Fairy (sweetly): "And here I am. What do you wish for?"

Old Woman (thoughtfully): "Oh nothing much. I'm not greedy. Just a little cottage with perhaps a few roses round the door and a small garden with some flowers at the front and space to grow a few vegetables out the back. That's all."

Good Fairy (waving her wand): "Close your eyes, count one, two, three. And we shall see what we shall see!"

(With a puff of smoke the vinegar bottle vanishes and, in its place, is...)

Can you continue the play?

Read this before you move ahead:

There are innumerable ways to approach an idea for developing a play or its plot. Whatever method you choose, here are some points for you to keep in mind.

1. Create a world that's true to real life or fantastical or that mixes the mundane with the magical. Create a set of rules for that world, make sure you follow them.

2. Focus on a conflict that builds as the play progresses. As you structure the conflict, think in terms of your play having a beginning, a middle and an end.
3. Develop characters that want something (which puts them in moment of conflict with other characters) and try to get what they want at every moment.
4. Be sure that each character has something at stake, and hence of consequence if he doesn't get what he wants.
5. Create a "ticking clock" that puts the characters under pressure to get what they want right away.
6. There should be a good reason, an "event," for your play. It's not enough for two characters to sit around and talk for a while and then leave. There needs to be some important reason why we're watching them now, at this particular stage.
7. Pen the dialogues that bring your characters to life and also progress the plot at the same time.
8. Make each character speak in a distinctive voice. If you have trouble with that, try imagining a specific actor you know - even if it's someone who will never play the part - in the role.
9. Do not let a character say a thing s/he can show us instead. For example, it's much more effective to hide under the bed than to say "I'm afraid."
10. Gift each character a "moment," something that justifies the character's existence in your play and that makes him attractive for an actor to play.

Activity 4 : State the following as True or False based on the reading of the tips above

1. In a play you should create a world that's true to real life or fantastical or that mixes the mundane with the magical.
2. As you structure the conflict, don't think in terms of your play having a beginning, a middle and an end.
3. Develop characters that don't demand or try to get what they want at every moment.
4. A Character has to have something at stake.
5. Every character should speak in a distinctive voice that gives him/her an identity.
6. Do not let a character say a thing s/he can show us instead.

Activity 5: Read the following extract from the play entitled "Mother's Day" by J.B. Priestley and do the exercise that follows

(Mrs. Pearson enters Room carrying a bottle and a half-filled glass. Cyril and Doris try to

stop their guffawing and giggling, but they are not quick enough. Mrs. Pearson regards them with contempt.)

- Mrs. Pearson (coldly)** : You two are always talking about being grown up - why don't you both try for once to be your age? *(She moves to the settee and sits.)*
- Cyril** : Can't we laugh now?
- Mrs. Pearson** : Yes, if it's funny. Go on, tell me. Make me laugh. I could do with it.
- Doris** : I knew you never understand our joke's Ma'am..
- Mrs. Pearson** : I was yawning at your jokes before you were born, Doris.
- Doris (almost tearful)** : What's making you talk like this? What have we done?
- Mrs. Pearson (promptly)** : Nothing but come in, ask for something, go out again, then come back when there's nowhere else to go.
- Cyril (aggressively)** : Look - if you won't get tea ready, then I'll find something to eat myself.
- Mrs. Pearson** : Why not? Help yourself. *(She takes a sip)*
- Cyril** : *(Turning on his way to the kitchen)* : Mind you, I think it's a bit thick. I've been working all day.
- Doris** : Same here.
- Mrs. Pearson (calmly)** : Eight hour day!
- Cyril** : Yes - eight hour day - and don't forget it.
- Mrs. Pearson** : I've done my eight hours.
- Cyril** : That's different.
- Doris** : Of course it is.
- Mrs. Pearson (calmly)** : It was. Now it isn't forty - hour week for all now. Just watch it at the week - end when I have my two days off. *(Doris and Cyril exchange alarmed glances. Then they stare at Mrs. Pearson who returns their look calmly.)*
- Cyril** : Must grab something to eat. Looks as if I'll need to keep my strength up. *(Cyril exits to the kitchen).*
- Doris** : *(Moving to the settee, anxiously)*: Mummy you don't mean you're not going to do anything on Saturday and Sunday?

Besides the dialogue, in the short extract, the playwright uses certain directions within parentheses (brackets) for chiefly two purposes :

- i) To help actors with their movements and action (for the 'imagined' audience to see), and,
- ii) To help the actors get the right facial expressions and to make the reader and audience (*if the play is enacted*) enter the minds of the characters and understand their mood or state of mind.

Choose the playwright's directions within brackets and complete the table below:

<i>Playwright's Direction</i>	
For movement and action to help actors primarily	To help action with their body language & make readers understand the mood of the characters.
1. Mrs. Pearson enters Room	1. Mrs. Pearson regards them with contempt
2.	2.
3.	3.
4.	4.
5.	5.
6.	6.

Activity 6 : Read the following extract and do the exercise that follows. This extract is a continuation of the previous extract you worked on in this lesson (from J.B. Priestly's "Mother's Day")

Dialogue provides the substance of a play. Each word that is uttered by a character performs several functions at the same time. It furthers the play, in other words, it makes the play move ahead by making the situation, the plot and the twists in the same clearer to the reader or audience. It shows the dominant emotion or the state of mind of the character.

Mrs. Pearson (*airily*) : No, I wouldn't go that far. I might make a bed or two and do a bit of looking as a favour. Which means of course, I'll have to be asked very nicely and thanked for everything and generally made a fuss of. But any of forty hour - a - weepers who expect to be waited no thanks for it, are in for a nasty disappointment. Might go off for the week-end perhaps.

Doris (*aghast*) : Go off for the week-end?

Mrs. Pearson : Why not? I could do with a change, stuck here day after day, week after week. If I don't need a change, who does?

Doris : But when would you go? And who would you go with?

Mrs. Pearson : That's my business. You don't ask me where you should go and who you should go with, do you?

Doris : That's different.

Mrs. Pearson : The only difference is that I'm a lot older and better to look after myself, so it's you who should do the asking.

It's very clear that the mother, Mrs. Pearson, wants to teach a lesson to the children.

She is very determined, confident and sure of herself.

The audience / reader is amused whenever she 'teases' her children or has a dig at them.

All the scope are exemplified by dialogue and the purposeful choice of words therein by Mrs. Pearson and what she is trying to do.

i) Her cool confidence

ii) Her 'playful' mood- teasing her children

Now, think of the next situation when Mrs. Pearson's husband George, who has always taken his wife for granted, is in for a surprise, like his children Cyril and Doris. Write the next part of the play with a dialogue between George and Mrs. Pearson.

(Hint to begin: George comes in and is surprised to see his wife with a glass in her hand. So quite typically, he starts off by saying that he hadn't expected to see his wife with a glass in her hand)

George: _____

Given below is a story. First read it carefully and then we'll move on to the next part:

A Defenceless Creature

IN spite of a violent attack of gout in the night and the nervous exhaustion left by it, Kistunov went in the morning to his office and began punctually seeing the clients of the bank and persons who had come with petitions. He looked languid and exhausted, and spoke in a faint voice hardly above a whisper, as though he were dying.

"What can I do for you?" he asked a lady in a mantle, whose back view was extremely suggestive of a huge dung-beetle.

"You see, your Excellency," the petitioner in question began, speaking rapidly, "my husband Shtchukin, a collegiate assessor, was ill for five months, and while he, if you will excuse my saying so, was laid up at home, he was for no sort of reason dismissed, your Excellency; and when I went for his salary they deducted, if you please, your Excellency, twenty-four roubles thirty-six kopecks from his salary. 'What for?' I asked. 'He borrowed from the club fund,' they told me, 'and the other clerks had stood security for him.' How was that? How could he have borrowed it without my consent? It's impossible, your Excellency. What's the reason of it? I am a poor woman, I earn my bread by taking in lodgers. I am a weak, defenceless woman . . . I have to put up with ill-usage from everyone and never hear a kind word. . ."

The petitioner was blinking, and dived into her mantle for her handkerchief. Kistunov took her petition from her and began reading it.

"Excuse me, what's this?" he asked, shrugging his shoulders. "I can make nothing of it. Evidently you have come to the wrong place, madam. Your petition has nothing to do with us at all. You will have to apply to the department in which your husband was employed."

"Why, my dear sir, I have been to five places already, and they would not even take the petition anywhere," said Madame Shtchukin. "I'd quite lost my head, but, thank goodness -- God bless him for it -- my son-in-law, Boris Matveyitch, advised me to come to you. 'You go to Mr. Kistunov, mamma: he is an influential man, he can do anything for you. . . .' Help me, your Excellency!"

"We can do nothing for you, Madame Shtchukin. You must understand: your husband served in the Army Medical Department, and our establishment is a purely private commercial undertaking, a bank. Surely you must understand that!"

Kistunov shrugged his shoulders again and turned to a gentleman in a military uniform, with a swollen face.

"Your Excellency," piped Madame Shtchukin in a pitiful voice, "I have the doctor's certificate that my husband was ill! Here it is, if you will kindly look at it."

"Very good, I believe you," Kistunov said irritably, "but I repeat it has nothing to do with us. It's queer and positively absurd! Surely your husband must know where you are to apply?"

"He knows nothing, your Excellency. He keeps on: 'It's not your business! Get away!' -- that's all I can get out of him. . . . Whose business is it, then? It's I have to keep them all!"

Kistunov again turned to Madame Shtchukin and began explaining to her the difference between the Army Medical Department and a private bank. She listened attentively, nodded in token of assent, and said:

"Yes . . . yes . . . yes . . . I understand, sir. In that case, your Excellency, tell them to pay me fifteen roubles at least! I agree to take part on account!"

"Ough!" sighed Kistunov, letting his head drop back. "There's no making you see reason. Do understand that to apply to us with such a petition is as strange as to send in a petition concerning divorce, for instance, to a chemist's or to the Assaying Board. You have not been paid your due, but what have we to do with it?"

"Your Excellency, make me remember you in my prayers for the rest of my days, have pity on a lonely woman," wailed Madame Shtchukin; "I am a weak, defenceless woman. . . . I am worried to death, I've to settle with the lodgers and see to my husband's affairs and fly round looking after the house, and I am going to church every day this week, and my son-in-law is out of a job. . . . I might as well not eat or drink. . . . I can scarcely keep on my feet. . . . I haven't slept all night. . . ."

Kistunov was conscious of the palpitation of his heart. With a face of anguish, pressing his hand on his heart, he began explaining to Madame Shtchukin again, but his voice failed him.

"No, excuse me, I cannot talk to you," he said with a wave of his hand. "My head's going round. You are hindering us and wasting your time. Ough! Alexey Nikolaitch," he said, addressing one of his clerks, "please will you explain to Madame Shtchukin?"

Kistunov, passing by all the petitioners, went to his private room and signed about a dozen papers while Alexey Nikolaitch was still engaged with Madame Shtchukin. As he sat in his room Kistunov heard two voices: the monotonous, restrained bass of Alexey Nikolaitch and the shrill, wailing voice of Madame Shtchukin.

"I am a weak, defenceless woman, I am a woman in delicate health," said Madame Shtchukin. "I look strong, but if you were to overhaul me there is not one healthy fibre in me. I can scarcely keep on my feet, and my appetite is gone. . . . I drank my cup of coffee this morning without the slightest relish. . . ."

Alexey Nikolaitch explained to her the difference between the departments and the complicated system of sending in papers. He was soon exhausted, and his place was taken by the accountant.

"A wonderfully disagreeable woman!" said Kistunov, revolted, nervously cracking his fingers and continually going to the decanter of water. "She's a perfect idiot! She's worn me out and she'll exhaust them, the nasty creature! Ough! . . . my heart is throbbing."

Half an hour later he rang his bell. Alexey Nikolaitch made his appearance.

"How are things going?" Kistunov asked languidly.

"We can't make her see anything, Pyotr Alexandritch! We are simply done. We talk of one thing and she talks of something else."

"I . . . I can't stand the sound of her voice. . . . I am ill. . . . I can't bear it."

"Send for the porter, Pyotr Alexandritch, let him put her out."

"No, no," cried Kistunov in alarm. "She will set up a squeal, and there are lots of flats in this building, and goodness knows what they would think of us. . . . Do try and explain to her, my dear fellow. . . ."

A minute later the deep drone of Alexey Nikolaitch's voice was audible again. A quarter of an hour passed, and instead of his bass there was the murmur of the accountant's powerful tenor."

"Re-mark-ably nasty woman," Kistunov thought indignantly, nervously shrugging his shoulders. "No more brains than a sheep. I believe that's a twinge of the gout again. . . . My migraine is coming back. . . ."

In the next room Alexey Nikolaitch, at the end of his resources, at last tapped his finger on the table and then on his own forehead.

"The fact of the matter is you haven't a head on your shoulders," he said, "but this."

"Come, come," said the old lady, offended. "Talk to your own wife like that. Don't be too free with your hands."

And looking at her with fury, with exasperation, as though he would devour her, Alexey Nikolaitch said in a quiet, stifled voice:

"Clear out."

"Wha-at?" squealed Madame Shtchukin. "How dare you? I am a weak, defenceless woman; I won't endure it. My husband is a collegiate assessor. . . . I will go to Dmitri Karlitch, the lawyer, and there will be nothing left of you! I've had the law of three lodgers, and I will make you flop down at my feet for your saucy words! I'll go to your general. Your Excellency, your Excellency!"

"Be off, you pest," hissed Alexey Nikolaitch.

Kistunov opened his door and looked into the office.

"What is it?" he asked in a tearful voice.

Madame Shtchukin, as red as a crab, was standing in the middle of the room, rolling her eyes and prodding the air with her fingers. The bank clerks were standing round red in the face too, and, evidently harassed, were looking at each other distractedly.

"Your Excellency," cried Madame Shtchukin, pouncing upon Kistunov. "Here, this man, he here . . . this man . . ." (she pointed to Alexey Nikolaitch) "tapped himself on the forehead and then tapped the table. . . . You told him to go into my case, and he's jeering at me! I am a weak, defenceless woman. . . . My husband is a collegiate assessor, and I am a major's daughter myself!"

"Very good, madam," moaned Kistunov. "I will go into it . . . I will take steps. . . . Go away . . . later!"

"And when shall I get the money, your Excellency? I need it to-day!"

Kistunov passed his trembling hand over his forehead, heaved a sigh, and began explaining again.

"Madam, I have told you already this is a bank, a private commercial establishment. . . . What do you want of us? And do understand that you are hindering us."

Madame Shtchukin listened to him and sighed.

"To be sure, to be sure," she assented. "Only, your Excellency, do me the kindness, make me pray for you for the rest of my life, be a father, protect me! If a medical certificate is not enough I can produce an affidavit from the police. . . . Tell them to give me the money."

Everything began swimming before Kistunov's eyes. He breathed out all the air in his lungs in a prolonged sigh and sank helpless on a chair.

"How much do you want?" he asked in a weak voice.

"Twenty-four roubles and thirty-six kopecks."

Kistunov took his pocket-book out of his pocket, extracted a twenty-five rouble note and gave it to Madame Shtchukin.

"Take it and . . . and go away!"

Madame Shtchukin wrapped the money up in her handkerchief, put it away, and pursing up her face into a sweet, mincing, even coquettish smile, asked:

"Your Excellency, and would it be possible for my husband to get a post again?"

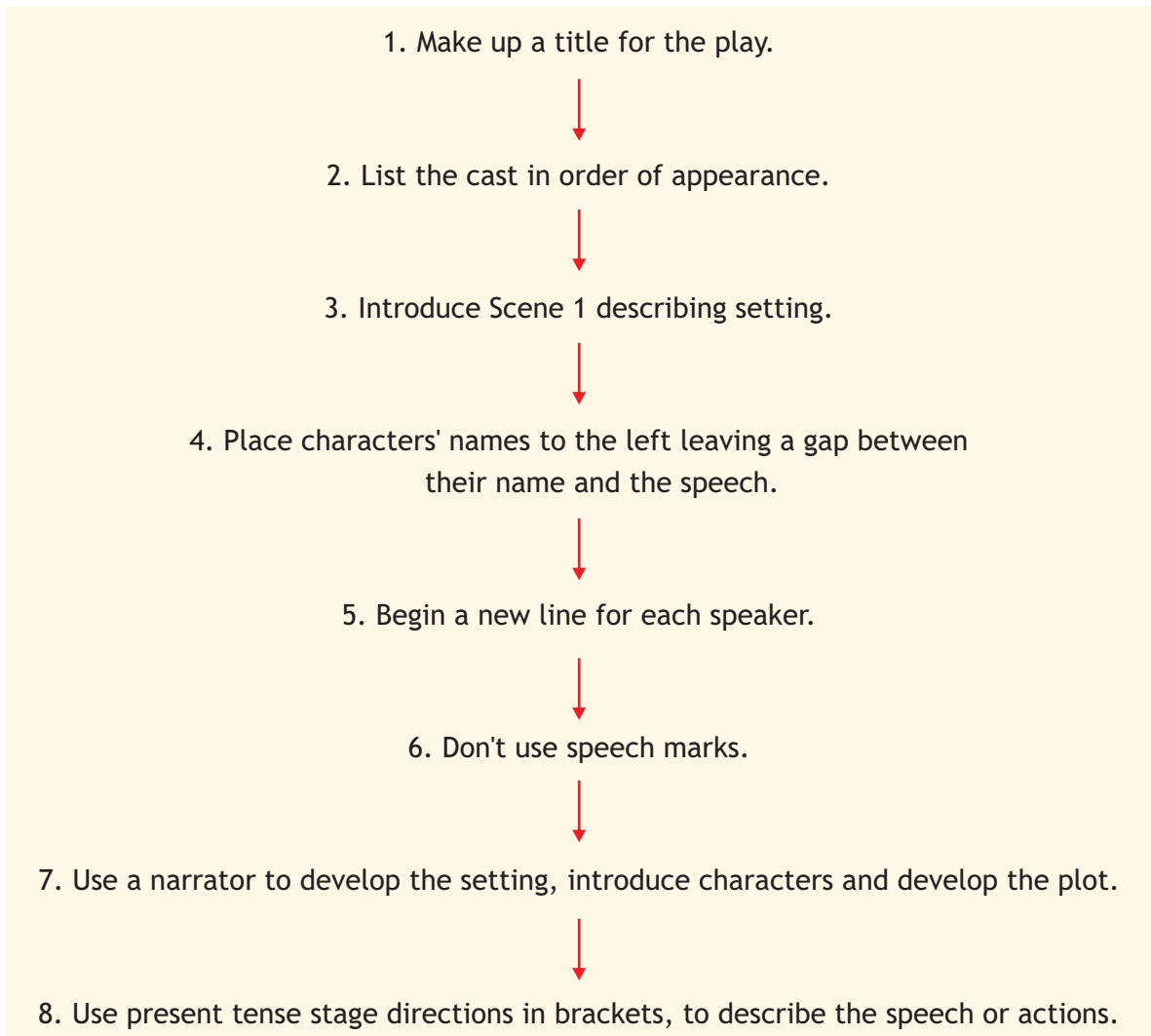
"I am going . . . I am ill . . ." said Kistunov in a weary voice. "I have dreadful palpitations."

When he had driven home Alexey Nikolaitch sent Nikita for some laurel drops, and, after taking twenty drops each, all the clerks set to work, while Madame Shtchukin stayed another two hours in the vestibule, talking to the porter and waiting for Kistunov to return. . . .

She came again next day.

Anton Chekhov

Now, Keeping in mind the basic rules for writing a play script, which are given below write a script for the above story.



Activity 7 : Convert the above story 'A defenceless Creature' into a dialogue form. You may leave out details and descriptions if you like. You may put some of these into stage directions.

Discuss your dialogues in your group and improve upon it so that the emotions and thoughts of the character come through.

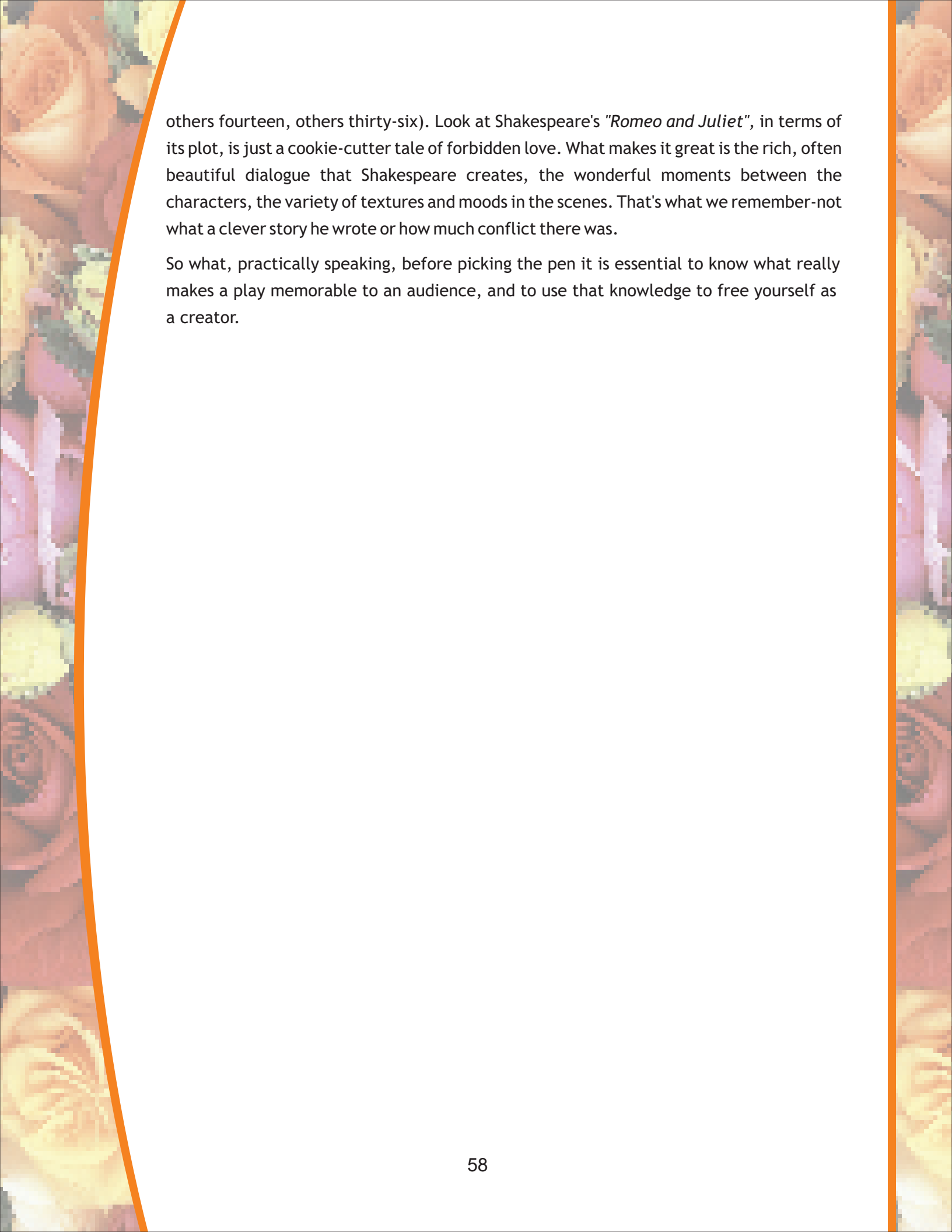
Revise the draft.

Activity 8 : Before putting the play on stage check the following in your script:

It Contained	I included this	I will include this next time.
Stage directions for:		
A) Movement		
B) Speech		
C) Lighting and props Stage directions are always in brackets. Stage directions, dialogue and character names all start with a capital letter.		
Narrator used to give the audience information.		
No use of 'said.		
No speech marks.		
Characters names down left hand side		

Playwriting, has always been a home for writers with unique ways of telling a story, or for writers who don't tell a story at all-on purpose. Let us take the example of *Beckett's Waiting for Godot*, one of the greatest plays ever written and try to understand. The conflict? There really isn't one. There's barely a story: it's just two men waiting for a third man that never shows up. And by the end, nothing has happened. For the audience, the fun of the play is listening to the back and forth between Vladimir and Estragon as we slowly fill in the landscape of the world in which they live.

Some plays use a technique called "*gapping*" instead of lots of "*on stage conflict*" and plot. The scenes are episodes, and between each episode, time has passed, and things have changed. Or your play can be a "*process*" structured around some event. For example, two people wait for a bus. When the bus arrives, the play ends. Or maybe the play is a collection of characters, each following a story that happens at the same time as the others but seems disparate. In the end, all these stories meet and add up to one. Examples of this more "*anecdotal*" structure can be found in the work of the great Russian playwright Chekhov. There are only a limited number of plots out there (some people say seven,

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others fourteen, others thirty-six). Look at Shakespeare's *"Romeo and Juliet"*, in terms of its plot, is just a cookie-cutter tale of forbidden love. What makes it great is the rich, often beautiful dialogue that Shakespeare creates, the wonderful moments between the characters, the variety of textures and moods in the scenes. That's what we remember-not what a clever story he wrote or how much conflict there was.

So what, practically speaking, before picking the pen it is essential to know what really makes a play memorable to an audience, and to use that knowledge to free yourself as a creator.

End of the Lesson Review Questions

1. Comprehension

1. What do you understand by a play?
2. Write briefly about :
 - a. One Act Play
 - b. Full Length Play
 - c. Musical
3. What are the main components of a drama?
4. How should a playwright develop a plot?

2. Vocabulary : What is your understanding of the following terms:

- a. Plot
- b. Musical
- c. Characters
- d. Conflict in a play
- e. Narrator
- f. Scenes

3. Writing for the Portfolio

Read an extract from the prologue of the play "Androcles and the Lion" by Bernard Shaw. Develop the play and write it in your Portfolio

Prologue

Overture : forest sounds, roaring of lions, Christian hymn faintly.

A jungle path. A lion's roar, a melancholy suffering roar, comes from the jungle. It is repeated nearer. The lion limps from the jungle on three legs, holding up his right forepaw, in which a huge thorn sticks. He sits down and contemplates it. He licks it.

He shakes it. He tries to extract it by scraping it along the ground, and hurts himself. He roars piteously. He licks it again. Tears drop from his eyes. He limps painfully off the path and lies down under the trees,

exhausted with pain. Heaving a long sigh, like wind in a trombone, he goes to sleep. Androcles and his wife Megaera come along the path. He is a small, thin, ridiculous little man who might be any age from thirty to fifty-five. He has sandy hair, watery compassionate blue eyes, sensitive nostrils, and a very presentable forehead; but his good points go no further; his arms and legs and back, though wiry of their kind, look shrivelled and starved. He carries a big bundle, is very poorly clad, and seems tired and hungry. His wife is a rather handsome, pampered, well fed and in the prime of life. She has nothing to carry, and has a stout stick to help her along.

Megaera : *(suddenly throwing down her stick) I won't go another step.*

Androcles : *(pleading wearily) Oh, not again, dear. What's the good of stopping every two miles and saying you won't go another step? We must get on to the next village before night. There are wild beasts in this wood: lions, they say.*

Megaera : *I don't believe a word of it. You are always threatening me with wild beasts to make me walk the very soul out of my body when I can hardly drag one foot before another. We haven't seen a single lion yet.*

Androcles : *Well, dear, do you want to see one?*

Megaera : *(tearing the bundle from his back) You cruel beast, you don't care how tired I am, or what becomes of me (she throws the bundle on the ground): always thinking of yourself. Self! self!self! always yourself! (She sits down on the bundle).*

Androcles : *(sitting down sadly on the ground with his elbows on his knees and his head in his hands) We all have to think of ourselves occasionally, dear.*

Megaera : *A man ought to think of his wife sometimes.*

Androcles : *He can't always help it, dear. You make me think of you a good deal. Not that I blame you.*

Megaera : *Blame me! I should think not indeed. Is it my fault that I'm married to you?*

Androcles : *No, dear: that is my fault.*

End of the Unit Review Questions:

Comprehension

1. "Creativity is the art of living metaphorically" Illustrate.
2. How does Humanity owe its progress and development to 'Creativity'?
3. Define the four basic elements of the story? Augment your definition with examples
4. What are *hard news* articles? What are their characteristics?
5. What is the importance of dialogue in a play? What should be kept in mind while writing them?

Vocabulary : Give the meaning of the following in your own words and also write an example of each:

- Creative spark
- Creative endeavours
- Form
- Structure
- Style
- Periphrasis
- Archaic words
- Indianisms
- Soft news
- Audience

Writing for your Portfolio

1. Open today's newspaper and pick five words at random. Write a soft news story that incorporates all five words.
2. Read any article of your choice from a magazine or today's Newspaper and rewrite it after taking views of at least five people on it. You have to incorporate their views in the rewritten article.
3. Write a piece of hard news on the incident or accident that you have witnessed anytime in your life and is still fresh in your memory.
4. Read a magazine article or story. Find the ten most common words from this piece (exclude insignificant and uninteresting words). Use these words as titles for ten paragraphs of prose.
5. Imagine a person with a peculiar way of seeing the world (for example- an astronomer, under water diver, a mine worker, a night shift employee). Have this character witness a traumatic event that does not directly involve him or her. Narrate the event from a first-person point of view, making sure that the perspective is carefully built around the idiosyncrasies of this personality.

6. Think of two people arguing—a man and a woman (or may be either two men or two women). Each is convinced he or she is right. You, as the writer, do not know—and do not want to know—who is right, but you have exquisite sympathy for both points of view, both sides of the argument. You can introduce an accidental arbitrator—a third party narrator, either first or third person narration. This person knows and likes both these people well, but doesn't and can't favor one over the other. Frame a story with an unusual ending.
7. Write about your presence at a place where some actors are rehearsing a scene, repeating lines and whole sections of a speech, going over mistakes, etc., with several familiar characters of yours. Don't forget to add the director's reactions.
8. A person is in coma stage. S/he cannot react but still understands the outer world. Voices of family and friends are familiar, but the patient cannot attach names to the voices. S/he has lost this capacity. Write a narrative from his/her point of view.
9. Write a fragment of a story (just a part of story) about a character who is relatively young (under 35), who will die in a few years, but has no idea of this or the disease s/he is suffering from. You, as author, do. Let your feelings flow in this excerpt.
10. What's the most peculiar gift you've ever received? You have to write a small script, describing the scene when you opened it and your reaction.

Project Work

Work in groups of four or five and prepare a magazine using A4 sheets (30-35). Your magazine can have these sections (you can add or delete the sections as per your group's consensus)

- Editorial
- Story
- News
- Feature articles
- Bollywood news
- Fashion
- Interview
- Cookery
- Agony Aunt Column
- Hard News
- Comic strip
- Kid's corner
- One act play
- Poetry Corner

You can use pictures clippings or illustrations to make it attractive. This magazine should be handwritten.