

UNIT 2

LETTER TO GOD



White sheep, white sheep,
On a blue hill,
When the wind stops,
You all stand still.
When the wind blows,
You walk away slow.
White sheep, white sheep,
Where do you go?

- Christina Rossetti

Who is the poet talking to?
Who does the poet address as 'white sheep'?

THE PLEASURE OF RAIN

Do you talk to the rain, flowers, birds and clouds? Here is the story of a man who talked to the rain.



The house, the only one in the whole valley, sat on the crest of a low hill. From this height one could see the river and the field of ripe corn dotted with flowers that always promised a good harvest.

The only thing the earth needed was a downpour or at least a shower. Throughout the morning Lencho had done nothing else but look at the sky towards the northeast. ‘Now we’re really going to get some rain, woman,’ he said.

The woman, who was preparing supper, replied, ‘Yes, God willing.’

During the meal, big drops of rain began to fall. Huge mountains of clouds could be seen approaching. The air was fresh and sweet.

Lencho went out to have the pleasure of feeling the rain on his body. ‘These aren’t raindrops falling from the sky, they are like new coins. The big drops are tens and the little ones are fives...’

1. How do you think Lencho knew that it was going to rain?

2. Throughout the morning Lencho had done nothing. Was he lazy? What do you think?

3. Have you watched the sky when it rains? How does it look?

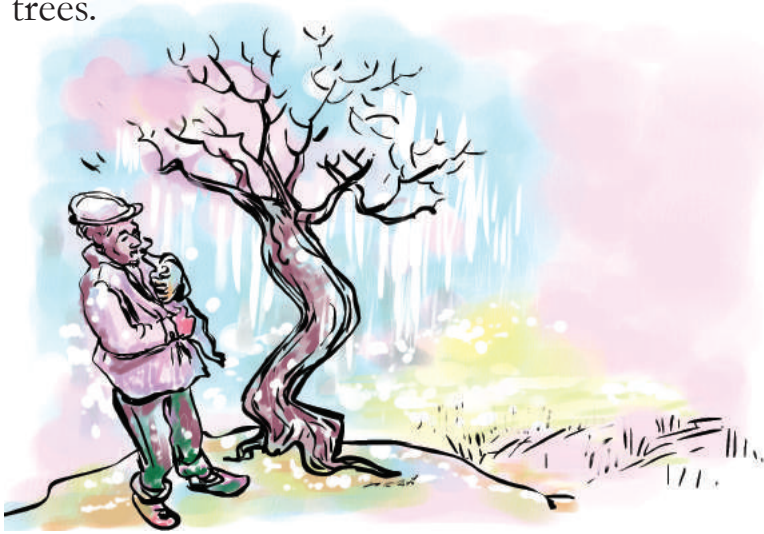
4. The big drops are tens and the little ones are fives...? What does Lencho mean by this?

A NIGHT OF SORROW

He looked at the field of ripe corn with its flowers draped in a curtain of rain. But suddenly a strong wind began to blow. Very large hailstones began to fall.

‘It’s really getting bad now!’ exclaimed Lencho. ‘I hope it passes quickly.’

It did not pass quickly. It hailed for an hour on the house, the garden, the hillside, the cornfield and the whole valley. The field was white, as if covered with salt. Not a leaf remained on the trees.



The corn was totally destroyed. The flowers had disappeared from the plants. Lencho’s soul was filled with sadness. That night was a sorrowful one.

‘This year we will have no corn.

There’s no one to help us.

We’ll all go hungry this year.’

But in the hearts of all who lived in that solitary house there was a single hope - help from God. All through the night, Lencho thought only of his one hope - God.

5. Lencho was happy when it started raining. But the happiness didn’t last long. What was the reason?

6. Pick out the expressions which tell you that Lencho was sad.

7. What changes did the hailstorm bring to the valley?

AT THE POST OFFICE

Lencho was an ox of a man, working like an animal in the fields. Still, he knew how to write. The following Sunday, at daybreak, he began to write a letter.

It was nothing less than a letter to God.

Dear God

If you don't help me, my family and I will go hungry this year.

I need a hundred pesos in order to sow my field again and to live until the crop comes. Because of the hailstorm you sent, everything is lost.

Hopefully waiting.

Lencho

Lencho

He wrote, "To God" on the envelope and went to the town. At the post office, he pasted a stamp on the letter and dropped it into the mailbox.



8. How does the author describe Lencho?

9. Which expression in the passage tells you that Lencho wrote the letter early in the morning?

10. Why did Lencho write the letter to none other than God?

Letter to God

The postman went to his boss laughing heartily. He showed him the letter to God. The postmaster also broke into a laugh. But immediately he turned serious. 'What faith! I wish I had the faith of the man who wrote this letter. Imagine starting up a correspondence with God!'



The postmaster came up with an idea: send a reply to Lencho from God. But he needed something more than goodwill, ink and paper to answer the letter. He took a collection from the employees of the post office. He himself gave a part of his salary.

But it was impossible for him to put together a hundred pesos. He was able to send the farmer only seventy pesos. He put the money in an envelope addressed to Lencho. He sent a letter along with it. It contained only a signature - God.

11. Immediately after reading the letter the postmaster turned serious. Why?

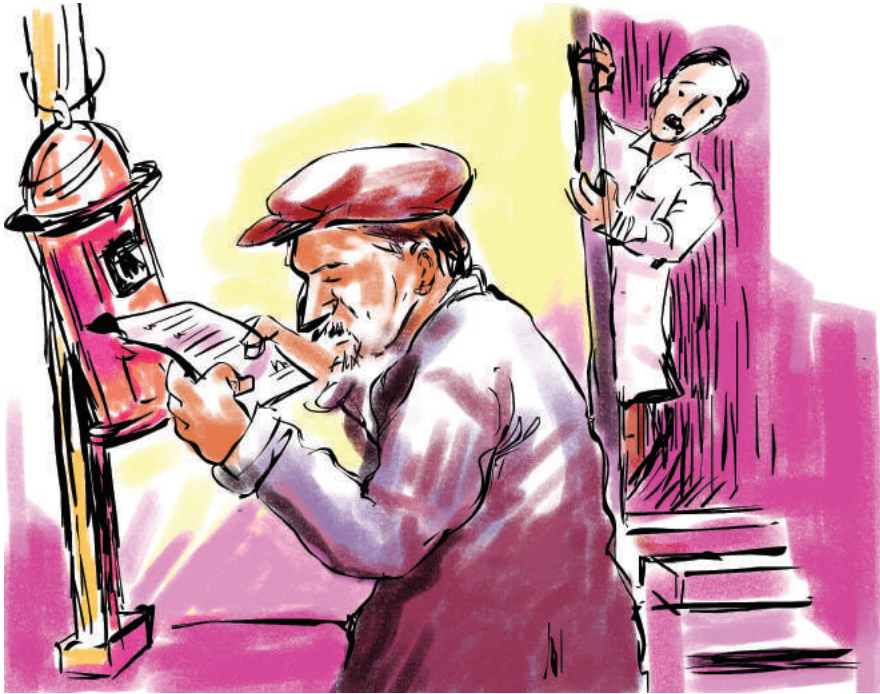
12. Why did the postmaster take effort to collect money for Lencho?

13. Why was it difficult for the postmaster to collect hundred pesos?

14. What would you do if you were the postmaster?

GOD REPLIES

The following day, Lencho went to the post office earlier than usual. He asked the postman if there was a letter for him. The postman handed a letter to him. The postmaster looked on from the doorway of his office.



Lencho showed not the slightest surprise on seeing the money; such was his confidence, but he became angry when he counted the money. God could not have made a mistake.

Immediately, Lencho went up to the window to ask for paper and ink. He sat at the public writing-table, he started to write. When he finished, he went to the window to buy a stamp. He licked the stamp and then affixed it on the envelope with a thump of his fist.

The moment the letter fell into the mailbox the postmaster went to open it.

15. Why didn't Lencho show any surprise when he got the money?

16. What was the expectation of the postmaster? Did it come true?

17. Why was Lencho angry?

Letter to God



Merciful God,
Of the money that I asked for, only seventy pesos reached me. Send me the rest, since I need it very badly. But don't send it to me through the mail, because the post office employees are a bunch of crooks.'

Lencho

Lencho

- **Gregorio Lopez Fuentes**

Let's review the story

1. What would be the postmaster's feeling when he read Lencho's second letter?
2. Why did Lencho think that the post office employees are a bunch of crooks?
3. Pick out the sentences in the story that show Lencho's strong faith in God.
4. Usually we enjoy rain. There are times when we curse the rain too. Have you had any such experience? Share it with your friends.

18. The actions of Lencho after counting the money are described in detail.

Narrate what he did in the correct order. You may begin like:

First, he went to the window to ask for paper and ink.

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19. Was Lencho greedy?
How do you describe him?

Let's write

After posting the second letter to God, Lencho returned home and narrated all the events to his wife. Write them down.

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The postmaster writes a reply to Lencho's second letter. Imagine and write down the letter.

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A hailstorm destroyed the crops in Lencho's village. The local newspaper reported it. Prepare the likely report. The headline is given for you.

Hailstorm destroys crops

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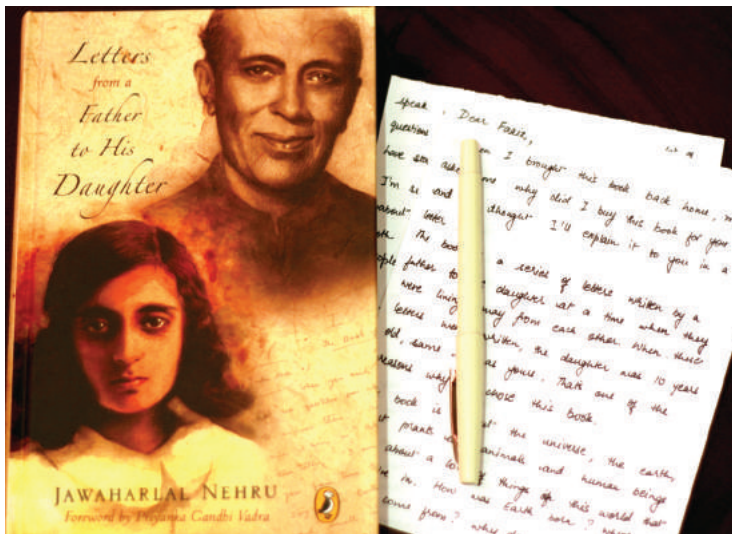
BIRTHDAY LETTER

Central Prison,
Naini.
October 26, 1930.

My dear Indira,

On your birthday you have been in the habit of receiving presents and good wishes. Good wishes you will still have in full measure, but what present can I send you from Naini Prison? My presents cannot be very material or solid. They can be of the mind and spirit.... Things that even the high walls of a prison cannot stop.

You know, sweetheart, how I dislike sermonising and doling out good advice.... I have always thought that the best way to find out what is right and what should be done is not by giving a sermon. It has to be done by talking and discussing. Out of discussion sometimes a little bit of truth comes out. I have liked my talks with you and we have discussed many things. But the world is wide and beyond our world lie other wonderful and mysterious worlds. None of us need ever be bored or imagine that we have learned everything worth



learning and become very wise.... But what am I to do then? A letter can hardly take the place of a talk; at best it is a one-sided affair. Imagine that I have made a suggestion to you for you to think over, as if we really were having a talk.

In history we read of great periods in the life of nations, of great men and women. Do you remember how fascinated you were when you first read the story of Jeanne d'Arc? Your ambition was to be something like her. Ordinary men and women are not usually heroic. They think of their bread and butter, of their children, of their household worries and the like. But a time comes when a whole people become interested in a great cause. Then history helps even simple, ordinary men and women to become heroes. Great leaders have something in them which inspires a whole people and makes them do great deeds.... In India a great leader, full of love for all who suffer and eager to help them, has inspired our people to great actions and noble sacrifice. He has helped to make the starving, the poor and the oppressed free and happy.

Bapuji is in prison, but the magic of his message has stolen the hearts of India's millions. Men and women, and even little children, come out of their little shells and become India's soldiers of freedom. In India today we are making history, and you and I are fortunate to see this happening before our eyes and to take some part ourselves in this great drama.

What part shall we play in it?

If we are to be India's soldiers we have to respect India's honour, and that honour is a sacred trust..... It is no easy

matter to decide what is right and what is not. One little test I shall ask you to apply whenever you are in doubt.... Never do anything in secret or anything that you would wish to hide. For the desire to hide anything means that you are afraid, and fear is a bad thing and unworthy of you. Be brave, and all the rest follows....

You know that in our great Freedom Movement, under Bapuji's leadership, there is no room for secrecy or hiding. We have nothing to hide. We are not afraid of what we do or what we say. We work in the sun and in the light. Even so in our private lives let us make friends with the sun and work in the light and do nothing secretly... and if you do so, my dear you will grow up a child of the light, unafraid and serene and unruffled, whatever may happen.

I have written a very long letter to you. And yet there is so much I would like to tell you.

How can a letter contain it? Good-bye, little one, and may you grow up into a brave soldier in India's service. With all my love and good wishes.

Your loving father,



Jawaharlal Nehru

Check how well you read

1. Here are some statements based on the letter. Put a tick mark (✓) in the right column for the statements that are true. Mark (x) the ones which are false. Correct the false statements and write them in the space given below the table.

Statements	True/ False
Nehru was imprisoned for taking part in the freedom fight.	
Indira never got any present as her birthday gift.	
Nehru always enjoyed advising his daughter.	
Writing a letter is not equal to a discussion as the former is one-sided.	
In history we don't read of great periods in the life of nations, of great men and women.	
The desire to hide anything shows that you are brave.	
Under Bapuji's leadership there is no scope for secrecy or hiding.	
Nehru wrote a short letter to Indira.	

The statements I have corrected:

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Extended Reading

2. Match the sentence parts in column A with those in column B to form meaningful sentences.

A	B
The magic of Bapuji's message	sermonising and doling out good advice.
Jawaharlal Nehru says that in our freedom movement	inspire people to do great deeds.
When time comes ordinary men and women	we have to respect India's honour.
Jawaharlal Nehru dislikes	become interested in a great cause.
According to Nehru if we are to be India's soldiers of freedom	there is no room for secrecy or hiding.
Great leaders can	has stolen the hearts of millions of men and women.

Now, write the sentences below.

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I WROTE MYSELF A LETTER

Here's a poem that tells you about a man who wrote a letter to himself. What did he write in the letter? Read on...



I wrote myself a letter.
I mailed it right away.
And, sure enough, the carrier,
delivered it today.

I couldn't wait to get it.
I nearly had to shout.
I quickly tore the envelope
and pulled the letter out.

I anxiously unfolded it
but now I must concede,
I'm clueless as to what it says.
I haven't learned to read.

Who is the speaker in this poem?
Usually one does not write a letter to oneself. What
made the poet write a letter to himself?
Which line in the poem shows that the poet is
impatient to read the letter?
Why could not the poet read his own letter?

Activity 1

In Lencho's story, there are many expressions which appeal to our senses of sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch. For example:

'Fresh and sweet air' appeals to sense of smell.

'The field was white' appeals to sense of sight.

Find out from the story more expressions which appeal to your senses.

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Activity 2

Look at the following expressions from the story.

a good harvest

new coins

a strong wind

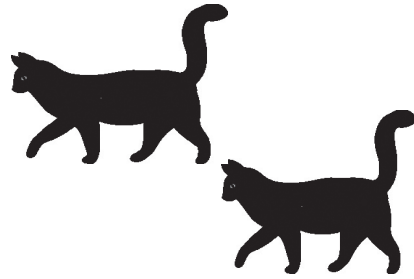
In the above expressions the underlined words tell us more about the headwords, 'harvest', 'coins' and 'wind'. Here, the underlined words tell us about the number and quality of the headword.

Now, let's look at a few more examples and find out how the headwords are described.

Look at the following.

Cats

- Two cats
- Two black cats.
- Two small black cats.



Certain words are added to the word 'cats'. These words tell us more about the cats, like their number, size and colour.

Look at the following.

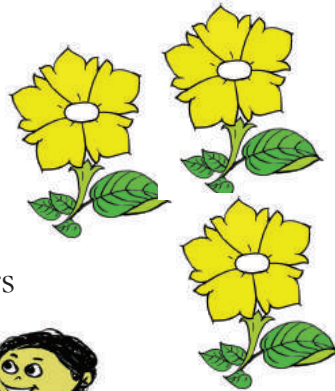
Bag

- A bag
- A leather bag
- A white leather bag
- A big white leather bag



Flowers

- Three flowers
- Three yellow flowers
- Three tiny yellow flowers
- Three beautiful tiny yellow flowers



Boy

- A boy
- A little boy
- A smart little boy



Identify the words in the above word pyramids which tell us about the number, quality, colour, shape, size, etc. of the objects/persons. Write them in the relevant columns of the table overleaf.

Number/Quantity	Quality	Colour	Shape	Size	Headword

You can also find such describing words from the story and list them in the columns.

Read the story given below. Some words are underlined. Make the story more interesting by adding describing words to them similar to the ones you have listed above in the columns.

A sparrow laid small eggs in her nest on a tree. An egg hatched. A chick peeped out. The sparrow brought worms for the birdie. The birdie ate them with its beak. Days passed by. One morning, the mother sparrow flew out of the nest. The chick opened its cute eyes and looked out . She saw flowers, leaves and fruits on plants and trees. She opened her wings and flapped them.

Add describing words before the underlined words and rewrite the story.

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Activity 3

You have met a farmer, a postman and a postmaster in the story 'Letter to God'. Read the following song and find out what the people of the town do.

PEOPLE IN MY TOWN

I see a fire-fighter fighting fires,
I see a car mechanic changing tyres,
I see a pilot flying through the air,
I see a barber cutting people's hair,
I see the people in my town and I say... Hey brother!
What's going on?

I see a postman with the mail,
I see a policeman putting folk in jail,
I see a lifeguard at the swimming pool,
I see the teachers at the local schools,
I see the people in my town and I say... Hey brother!
What's going on?

Doctors, nurses, astronauts, judges, lawyers in the courts,
I see an actor acting on the stage,
I see a writer writing on a page,
I see a chef working in a restaurant,
And a waiter asking what you want,
I see the people in my town and I say... Hey brother!
What's going on?

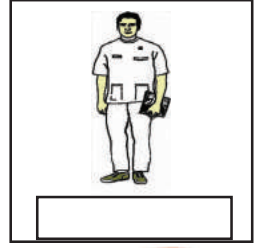
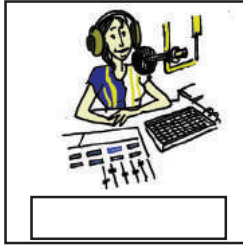
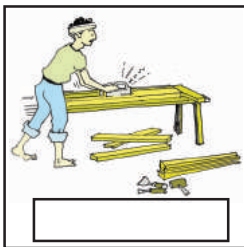
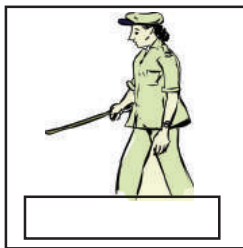
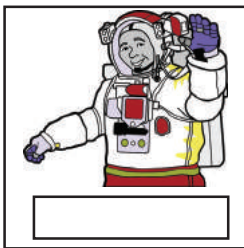
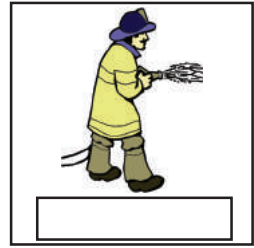
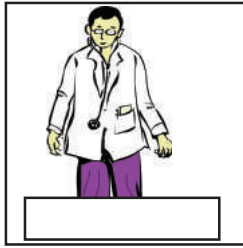
Doctors, nurses, astronauts, judges, lawyers in the courts,
I see the people in my town and I say... Hey brother!
What's going on?
I say... Hey brother!
What's going on?

- What different occupations are mentioned in the song? Make a list of them.
- What do you want to be when you grow up? Why?

Activity 4

Look at the following pictures, identify the occupations and write the names of the occupations in the boxes given below each picture.

fire-fighter, mechanic, pilot, hairdresser, postman, policewoman, lifeguard, teacher, doctor, musician, astronaut, artist, lawyer, nurse, actor, writer, chef, waiter, dentist, carpenter



Activity 5

We need help from other people on different occasions.
Who will you approach on the following occasions?

- You want to make a table
- You want to get your hair cut
- You want to paint your house
- When you are ill
- When a thief breaks into your house
- When a fire breaks out
- When your bicycle needs repair
- You want to change a water tap

Activity 6

The postmaster in the story said, 'I wish I had the faith of the man who wrote this letter.'

The postmaster expressed his strong wish here.

Now, look at the following.

Suja has to do a project on the topic 'Rivers of India'. But she can't find any books to refer to. There is no library near her house.

Look at how she expresses her wish.



Tom always thinks of buying a bicycle. But his father says he will buy a bicycle for him only after two years. He felt very disappointed.



I wish I had a bicycle.

Here, Suja and Tom express their feelings using 'I wish...?' Look at the pictures below. Complete the sentences beginning with 'I wish...?'



I wish.....



I wish.....



I wish.....

I wish.....










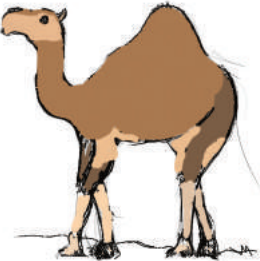

Activity 7

Look at the following sentence.

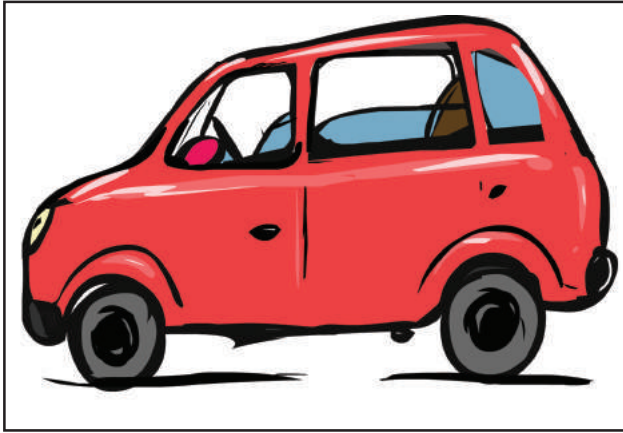
‘Lencho went to the post office **earlier** than usual.’

The word ‘early’ has two other degrees: ‘earlier’ and ‘earliest’.

Look at the pictures given below and fill in the blanks.

		
young	younger	youngest
		
.....	slower
		
.....	tallest

Look at the vehicles shown in the pictures and compare them using the words in the box. One is done for you.



bigger, more expensive, faster, heavier,
lighter, slower, smaller

1. A car is more expensive than an autorickshaw.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.

Activity 8

In the story you read the sentence, 'Don't send the letter to me through the mail, because the post office employees are a bunch of crooks.' Lencho gives his reason to God for asking Him not to send the letter by post.

Here is a little boy Nikhil who always gives some reasons for his actions.

When late to school he would say, 'I am late, because I missed the bus.'

You can see what happened to Nikhil in one column and why it happened in the other. Write in the space provided the reasons he gave using 'because'.

My books got wet



I screamed



I ran

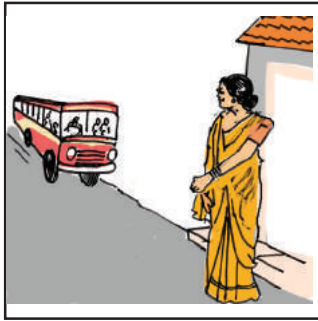


Activity 9

Look at the pictures given below:



What do you see in the picture?
A woman is waiting for the bus.

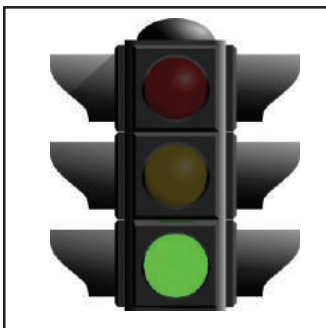


What do you see now?
The bus is coming.



What did the woman do when the bus came?
When the bus came, the woman got into it.

Now, look at the pictures below and answer the questions as shown in the example.

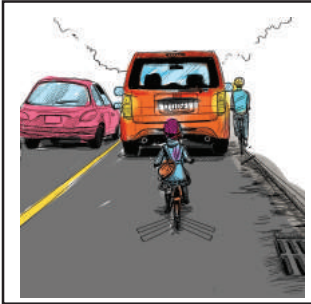


Are the signals turned on?
No, the signals are not turned on.



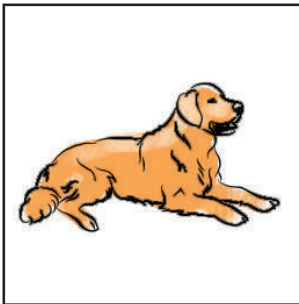
What do you see now?

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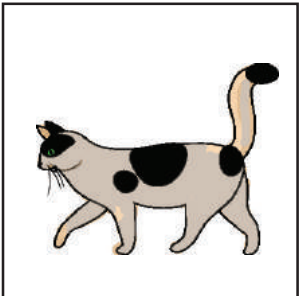
When did the vehicle move?

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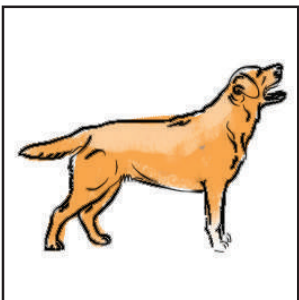
What is the dog doing?

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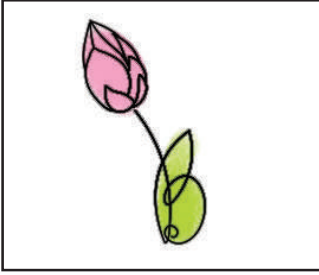
What did the dog see?

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When did the dog bark?

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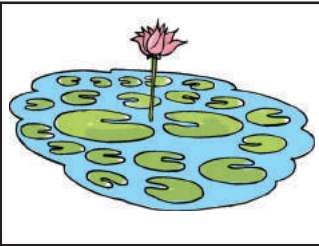
What do you see?

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What do you see now?

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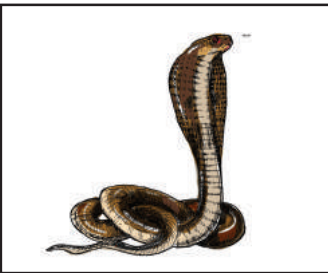
When did the lotus bud open?

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Who is seen in the picture?

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What did the girl see?

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When did the girl scream?

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Activity 10

The School Post Office

Visit a post office. What are the name boards and counters you see there? Who are the employees in the post office?

Let's set up a post office in the school. Prepare name boards and place them in the right counters. Don't forget to fix a post box.

Assign roles of postmaster, postmen, postal assistants, etc. to your classmates.

Let others write letters to their friends in the class and post them. The postman will collect the letters from the post box and deliver them to the addressees. Those who get letters may write replies and post them.

Editing

Here is a description of Lencho's village. There are certain errors in it. They are underlined. Edit them.

The morning sun rose up in the sky. The snow, covering the field, slowly begin to melt.

Leaves of grass peeped in clear water. The branches on the trees was free of snow. The birds flew in and on the branches sat. They dried their wing in the warm sun.

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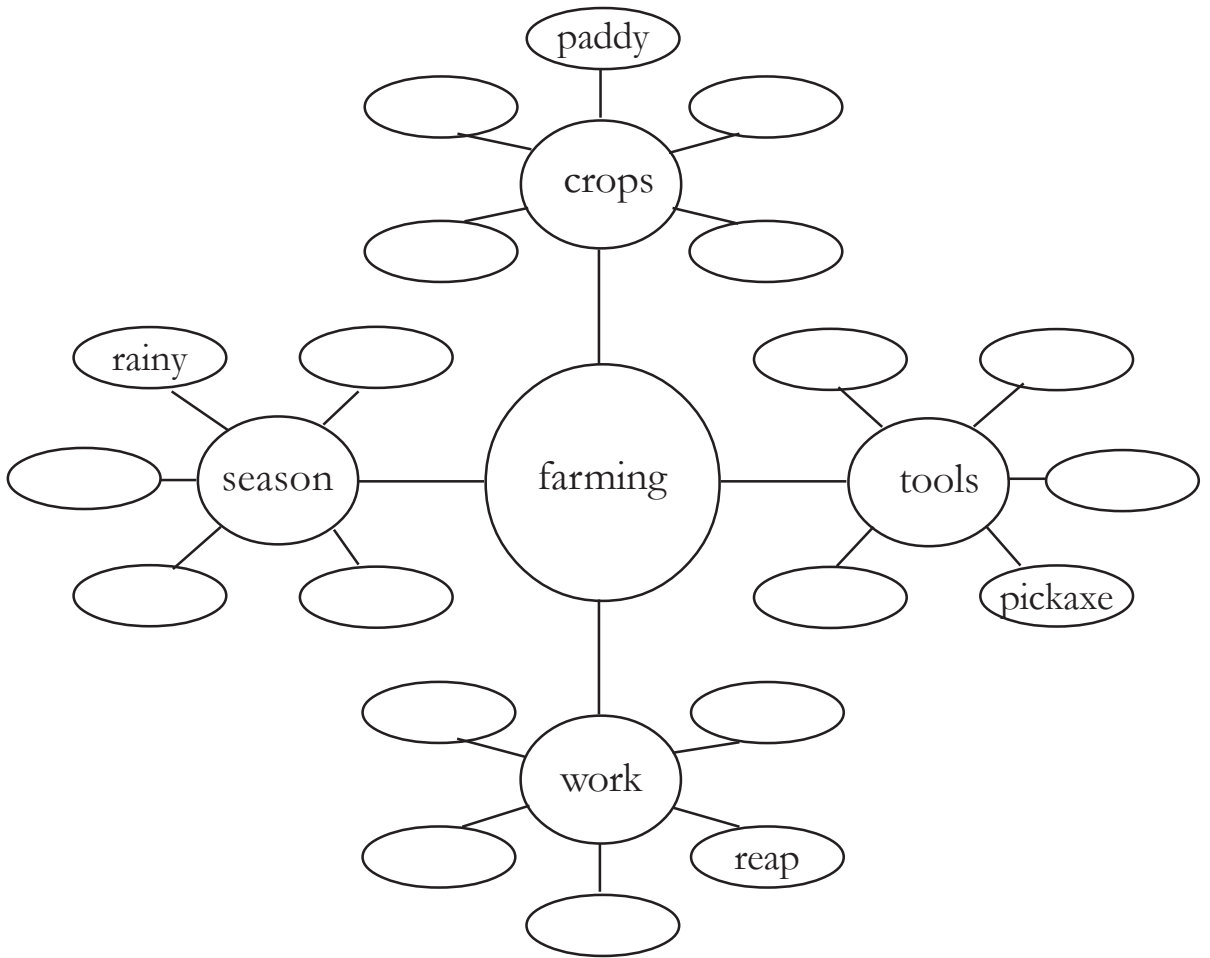
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Project Work

Lencho earned a living by farming. Let's make a word web on farming and related words.



Describe a farming activity that you have observed/heard of.

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What I can do	I can do it well	I can do with the help of others	I need improvement
make formal presentations in the classroom.			
follow the instructions given by the teacher.			
involve in the interaction sessions led by the teacher.			
read and enjoy the stories and poems given in the text.			
understand the theme of the given story and poem.			
narrate the events and complete a given story.			
write a personal letter appropriate to the context.			
prepare a news report.			
identify and write the names of different occupations.			
do simple project work.			
do vocabulary activities on my own.			
do language activities on my own.			



My Learners



My learner can	
identify different expressions used in a story/ poem.	
write a narrative to complete a story.	
write a personal letter appropriate to the context.	
read and enjoy a story.	
read extended reading passage and do the activities individually.	
read and enjoy a poem.	
identify describing words and use them before headwords.	
use 'I wish' to express a strong wish.	
use degrees of describing words and compare two objects/ persons.	
combine sentences using 'when' and 'because'.	
edit a passage with errors.	
undertake simple projects.	





ambition (n): something that you want to do or achieve very much

Anu's *ambition* in life is to become a dancer.

anxiously (adv): feeling worried or nervous

Students are waiting for their annual results *anxiously*.

approach (v): to come near to something in distance or time

The passengers got up from their seats when the train was *approaching* the station.

bunch (n): a number of things together

I presented a *bunch* of grapes to Ann on her birthday.

carrier (n): a person or thing that carries something

A postman is a *carrier* of letters.

clueless (adj): not having any idea about, not able to understand

He's completely *clueless* about computers.

concede (v): to admit that something is true, logical etc.

It took years to *concede* Galelio's argument that the earth is round.

correspondence (n): the letters a person sends and receives

crest (n): the top part of a hill

I decided to build a hut on the *crest* of the hill.

crook (n): a dishonest person

The shop owner is a real *crook*. He charges more than the actual rate for everything he sells.

deliver (v): to take goods, letters, etc. to a person/firm

The courier agency promised to *deliver* the parcel within 48 hours.

dole out (ph.v): to give out an amount of food, money, advice etc. to a number of people in a group

Our class teacher always *doles out* advice to us.

downpour (n): a heavy rainfall

drape (v): to hang clothes, materials, etc. loosely on something

She had a shawl *draped* around her shoulders.

esteem (n): great respect and admiration

Our headmistress is held in high *esteem* by all.

fascinate (v): to attract or interest somebody very much

Cartoon films *fascinate* children very much.

goodwill (n): friendly or helpful feelings towards other people or countries

India shows a spirit of *goodwill* in international relations with neighbouring countries.

hailstones (n): small balls of ice that fall like rain

harvest (n): crops

As there was plenty of rain this year, they got a good *harvest* from their paddy field.

heartily (adv): with strong feelings

I *heartily* congratulated her on her victory.

inspire (v): to give somebody the desire, confidence or enthusiasm to do something

Abdul Kalam's speech *inspired* me to read more about science.

material (adj): connected with money, possessions, etc.

Great saints avoided *material* comforts.

peso (n): the unit of money in many Latin American countries and the Philippines



ripe (adj): fully grown and ready to be eaten
The *ripe* mangoes are sweet.

sacred (adj): very important and treated with great respect
The Constitution of India is considered to be a *sacred* document.

serene (adj): calm and peaceful
The lake appeared still and *serene* in the morning.

sermonise (v): to give moral advice, especially when it is boring or not wanted
The teacher started to *sermonise*.

slight (adj): very small in degree
Our class teacher does not allow even the *slightest* change in our seating arrangement.

solitary (adj): alone, with no other people around
There was no one at his home. He led a *solitary* life.

sow (v): to plant seeds

The farmers *sowed* paddy in their fields.

spirit (n): a person's feelings

Jeevan helps everyone in his team. He shows great team *spirit*.

tear (v): to damage something by pulling it apart or into pieces

He *tore* the letter into pieces.

unfold (v): to spread open something that had previously been folded

When it began to rain he *unfolded* his umbrella.

unruffled (adj): calm

The passengers remained *unruffled* even when the driver lost control over the bus.

