



**DIRECTORATE OF OPEN AND DISTANCE LEARNING
DIBRUGARH UNIVERSITY**

SELF LEARNING MATERIAL

ENGLISH

COURSE : ENGLISH - 101

ENGLISH COMMUNICATION

**READING SKILLS - I
WRITING SKILLS - I**

BLOCK : I & II

FIRST SEMESTER

Directorate of Open and Distance Learning

**DIBRUGARH UNIVERSITY
DIBRUGARH - 786 004**

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COURSE : ENGG : 101

WRITING SKILLS - I

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COURSE : ENGG : 101

READING SKILLS - I

WRITING SKILLS - I

BLOCK - I & II

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BLOCK INTRODUCTION

Block I will take you to the study of essential reading skills required for effective reading. This block should help you not only in solving exercises on Reading Comprehension and Reading Precis, but also help you keep pace with today's highly competitive and rapidly changing world. In newspapers and magazines, you get to know about so many things that happen around you every changing second. When you read these news or articles, your reading should be purposeful; while reading you must not only enjoy reading it but at the same time understand it and keep in mind the main points of the things you have read.

'Comprehension' which means 'to grasp' is aimed at testing your ability to grasp the understanding of a passage and answer the questions on it in simple and clear languages. There are no set rules to grasp a given passage. Some difficulties which may hinder your progress like, poor vocabulary, inability to get to the main ideas quickly, slow reading speed, etc. can be solved through constant practice. The unit on 'Reading Comprehension' contains enough practice materials so as to facilitate your smooth learning.

'Reading precis' is another fine exercise in reading as well as writing 'Precis' which means to shorten a given passage, can be looked upon as a test of the value of your reading. It happens that many a times we read so carelessly that we retain only a vague idea of what we have read. Writing precis makes us pay more attention to our reading so that we can get hold of the main points of the passage and write them down clearly, concisely and effectively. This practice in precis-writing should make you more quick and accurate in grasping whatever you read and hear, also enable you to reproduce them in the shortest but effective way!

Why not explore this block yourself right now!

BLOCK I : READING SKILLS

(20 Marks)

Unit 1 : Reading Comprehension

(15 marks)

Unit 2 : Reading Precis

(10 marks)

UNIT 1

READING COMPREHENSION

Structure

- 1.0 Objectives
 - 1.1 Introduction
 - 1.2 Study Guidance
 - 1.2.1 Define the purpose of your reading
 - 1.2.2 Determine your reading speed
 - 1.2.3 Improve your vocabulary
 - 1.2.4 Preview
 - 1.2.5 Locating the main/central ideas
 - 1.2.6 Using context for vocabulary
 - 1.2.7 Making inferences
 - 1.2.8 Scanning for details
 - 1.2.9 Identifying exceptions
 - 1.2.10 Locating references
 - 1.2.11 Points to remember for critical reading
 - 1.2.12 Exam tips
 - 1.3 Activities to Check your progress
 - 1.4 Let us sum up
 - 1.5 Suggested Reading
- Glossary
- References

1.0 OBJECTIVES

In this unit we have discussed ways of improving **Critical Reading skills**. After reading through this unit, you should be able to:

- *determine* the purpose of your reading
- *regulate* your reading speed
- *increase* your vocabulary
- *improve* your Comprehension
- *analyse* texts / reading material
- *answer* questions on the given passage

1.1 INTRODUCTION

In today's highly competitive and rapidly changing world we need to have communicative skills in English. When we talk about developing Communicative Skills, we usually mean Reading Skills, Writing skills, Interpretative Skills and Appropriate Application. A piece of writing, however good it may be, has no significance unless you read and comprehend it. Developing Reading Skills enable us to read, comprehend and assimilate diverse information. It also helps us to store relevant information for later use. We need to accomplish all these effortlessly and without losing the sheer pleasure of reading. Most importantly, as students you need to prepare for exams where you have to answer questions on unfamiliar/hitherto unseen passages. This requires you to do multiple things simultaneously:

read effectively and critically, retain and recall information, use your knowledge of vocabulary and grammar and write appropriate answers to the questions asked, within a stipulated time. In other words, you have to acquire two key skills: Comprehension and Appreciation, for which you need to have the requisite reading speed, knowledge of grammar, a good stock of vocabulary and analytical and interpretative abilities.

1.2 STUDY GUIDANCE

This Unit will develop your reading and comprehension skills. It will improve your vocabulary and enable you to analyze texts. You will be able to read critically and answer questions on the given passage. Moreover, at the end of this Unit, you shall acquire suitable critical reading skills in terms of analysis, comprehension, appreciation and application; this shall be your step forward towards writing précis, which you shall learn in Unit II of Block I.

Unit I has 12 subsections which deal with different aspects of reading comprehension. Each subsection explains the skill aspect and offers practical suggestions to acquire and enhance the skill. When required, subsections are punctuated by an activity i.e. a sample/work out passage with questions and self assessment questions that will help you to check your progress. You will have to measure your reading speed using the work-out passages and develop an effective reading speed. The multiple choice questions on synonyms and antonyms will help in enhancing your vocabulary. Timed Exercises will allow you to apply & gauge your acquired skills. Important exam tips will help you to tackle difficult passages.

1.2.1 Define the purpose of reading

Clarity of purpose is essential. Determine whether you are reading to kill time, to appear for an examination, to increase your knowledge or to collect data. The time and the attention you devote to the text would depend on this. If you are preparing for an exam, you have to **understand** what you read, **retain** the information and **recall** it when you are answering the questions.

1.2.2 Determine your Reading Speed

Read at a fairly good speed. Remember, effective reading is not necessarily slow reading. Though rapid reading is not recommended for good comprehension, but excessively slow readers lose track of the larger perspective as their focus shifts from the totality of the text to an analysis of each word. The ideal average reading speed is approximately 150-200 words per minute. However, the speed may vary slightly depending on your aptitude and subject knowledge which you shall bring to bear upon the text. With improving comprehension skills, your reading speed may increase but, in the final count, you shall have to determine your own **effective** reading speed.

The most important thing about reading comprehension is understanding what you read. Being able to read fast is also important, but you have to remember *that speed is always secondary to understanding.*

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS 1

Read the following passage carefully and answer the questions given below it. Certain words are given in bold to help you locate them while answering some of the questions.

During Emperor Akbar's reign, there was a poor man in Agra who was thought of bringing bad luck. People believed that if anyone looked at his face in the morning, they would have a bad day.

"Get lost you ugly fellow!" he would be cursed by one and all. "Hide your face before you kill someone with your evil eye!"

The emperor soon heard of this man's **reputation** and wanted to see him. The poor fellow who had not harmed a single person in his life, was brought to Akbar. Akbar took a look at him and asked him to be brought back in the evening.

That **particular** day was an especially full and tiring day for the emperor and his courtiers.

So many matters had to be attended to, that Akbar even forgot to eat. By the end of the day, the emperor was **exhausted**. To make matters worse, Akbar was informed that his favourite child, little Prince Salim had fallen ill.

Then the emperor suddenly remembered that he had seen the face of the 'unlucky' man that morning.

That was it. It was that man's entire fault, Akbar decided. Akbar called his courtiers and told them he was going to have the 'unlucky' man executed. All of them agreed immediately.

That is, all except Birbal. Instead Birbal let out a short laugh.

"What's the matter, Birbal?" asked the angry emperor. "You seem to find something funny!"

"Nothing, your majesty," replied Birbal.

"You say this man brings bad luck because you had to go without food ever since you saw him this morning. Look at his luck. Yours was the first face he saw today, and he has to die because of it."

Akbar immediately realized his folly and rewarded Birbal for his wisdom.

Check your reading speed: Note the time you have taken in reading the passage. Did you find it difficult or easy? Find out your effective reading speed by calculating the time you require for average comprehension. The passage has approximately 295 words and should take you about two minutes to read. Your comprehension will be tested when you answer the following set of questions. Correct answers are listed in a text box at the end of the unit.

Q1. Why had the king not eaten his food?

- i) He was very busy that day.
- ii) He had seen the face of the unlucky fellow.
- iii) He was not feeling well.
- iv) He had been invited by Birbal for lunch.
- v) None of these.

- Q2. Who was not well on that particular day?
- i) King Akbar
 - ii) The King's courtiers
 - iii) Birbal
 - iv) The poor man
 - v) Prince Salim
- Q3. Which of the following describes Birbal?
- i) He was a famous merchant
 - ii) He had lost his senses
 - iii) He was very poor
 - iv) He possessed good logical thinking
 - v) He was a miser
- Q4. Which of the following is TRUE in the context of the passage?
- i) The poor man wanted to see the king
 - ii) The poor man was well educated
 - iii) The courtiers were sympathetic with the poor man
 - iv) Akbar was happy to see the poor man
- Akbar realized his mistake
- Q5. Which of the following is/are NOT TRUE in the context of the passage?
- A) Akbar worried too much after meeting the poor man

B) Akbar had eaten his food with the poor man

C) Akbar decided to execute the poor man

i) Only A

ii) Both B & C

iii) All A, B & C

iv) Both A & B

v) Only C

Q6. What was Birbal's initial reaction when he heard that the poor man would be executed?

i) He was angry because Akbar had not taken his advice

ii) He laughed slightly

iii) He was silent and wanted to give a chance to the poor man

iv) He was very happy because he wanted to get rid of the poor man

v) He was surprised and wanted to speak to the poor man

Q7. Which of the following cannot be said about the poor man?

A) People of his own place cursed him

B) He was living in Agra

C) He was executed because of his unlucky face

i) Only A

ii) Only B

iii) Only C

iv) All A, B & C

v) None of these

Q 8. Why did the king decide to execute the poor man?

- i) The poor man was in fact very lucky
- ii) The King had a very bad day after seeing him
- iii) His attendants told him to do so
- iv) The poor man brought ill luck for everyone
- v) The poor man refused to meet him

Q 9. Birbal was rewarded because-

- i) He was in agreement with the king's decision
- ii) He made the King realize his mistake
- iii) He brought the poor man to the King
- iv) He wanted to teach a lesson to the poor man
- v) None of these

Q 10-Q 12. Choose the word that is most nearly the same in meaning as the word/phrase printed in bold as used in the passage:

10. Reputation

- i) Character
- ii) Respect
- iii) Fame
- iv) Report
- v) Honour

11. Folly

- i) Argument
- ii) Mistake
- iii) Words
- iv) Conflict
- v) Misunderstanding

12. Particular

- i) Special ii) Definite iii) General iv) Significant
v) Specific

Q.13-15. Choose the word which is most OPPOSITE in meaning of the word/ phrase printed in bold as used in the passage:

13. Hide

- i) Seek ii) Show iii) Go away iv) Indicate
v) Disclose

14. Exhausted

- i) Consumed ii) Drained iii) Restless iv) Desirous
v) Energetic

15. Cursed

- i) Blamed ii) Hated iv) Ignored v) Damn

Assess your Progress: Score yourself to find out how many questions you have answered right. Were able to locate the correct synonyms and antonyms? This will enable you to assess your vocabulary.

1.2.3 Improve your vocabulary

To be an efficient reader it is essential to have a good vocabulary. Limited knowledge of words and their usage leads to difficulty in comprehension and waste of precious time. Moreover, if you have to resort to constant reference to a dictionary, the flow of reading will be interrupted making a fair appreciation of the text virtually impossible. Vocabulary cannot be improved overnight. You have to read regularly and inculcate the habit of finding out word meanings from the dictionary, synonyms and antonyms from the thesaurus and increase your stock of words in the language. Exercise 3 of this unit specifically focuses on building your vocabulary through a series of multiple choice questions on word meanings. Besides, you will have to answer a few questions on synonyms and antonyms at the end of each sample passage in the context of the passage. This will allow you to learn new words as well as hone your ability to locate the meaning of a word with reference to the context. For example, the words 'reputation', 'particular' and 'exhausted' have been used in a context in the sample passage given in Exercise 1. The multiple choices offered would confuse you unless you refer to the text (passage) and context to locate the word and relate to the meaning.

1.2.4 Preview

It is easier to understand what you are reading if you have a general impression of what the passage is about. To gather that impression

you should read the first sentence of the passage, the first sentence of each subsequent paragraph and the last sentence of the passage. You have to read this as quickly as possible. Remember, you are reading to gather a **general** impression of the topic, not for specific information, which will come later. In other words, you read to **identify the topic**.

1.2.5 Location the main/central ideas

The author's *thesis* or point of view is identified. If you could compress the reading to a single sentence, what would it be? Questions like- what would be the main idea? What is the subject? What is the topic? What would be a good title? -basically ask one and the same thing. If you try to compress the passage in a single sentence, what you would get is the main idea or the core thesis in a nutshell.

1.2.6 Using contexts for vocabulary

A *context* is the combination of vocabulary and grammar that surrounds the word. It may be a sentence, paragraph or passage that helps you make a general prediction of the meaning. In other words, if you are stuck in a situation of not knowing the meaning of a certain word or words & cannot access a dictionary, you can make an educated guess in terms of predicting/deriving the meaning from the context. Moreover, a question like "what does the word or phrase mean in the context of the passage?" would expect you to refer to the information provided in the passage to arrive at the meaning.

1.2.7 Making inferences

Sometimes, in reading a passage, you find a direct statement of fact. This is called *evidence*. But at other times, a direct statement is not found. In such cases, clues provided must be used to make an *inference*. An inference is a logical conclusion about the passage or the author's viewpoint based on textual evidence. Take for instance the last line of the passage given in Exercise 1: "Akbar immediately realized his folly and rewarded Birbal for his wisdom." There is no direct statement to the effect that Akbar withdrew his verdict to have the man executed but, you can infer the same/arrive at that logical conclusion from the textual evidence offered by the quoted line.

1.2.8 Scanning for details

First read the questions on the passage you are expected to answer, then look for important *content* words. These are nouns, verbs or adjectives & they contain the meaning of a sentence. A quick search of the passage for such words is called *scanning*. This exercise helps in finding answers from the passage. For example in the sentence "King Akbar realized his mistake and decided not to execute the poor man. He also rewarded wise Birbal for honesty and courage", the nouns (king, Akbar, Birbal, man, mistake, honesty, courage), verbs (realized, decided, execute) and adjectives (poor, wise) are content words. Identifying these will facilitate your understanding/comprehension.

1.2.9 Identifying exceptions

You may be asked to select from a number of possible answers the one that is **not** mentioned in the passage. Scanning skills help in locating related words and phrases and identifying those that are not included. For example, questions like "which of the following sentences are 'true' or 'false' in the context of the given passage?" would require you to identify exceptions and point out the same from the given options.

1.2.10 Locating references

You may be asked to find the antecedent of a pronoun. An antecedent is a word or phrase to which a pronoun refers. When given a pronoun such as 'it', 'it's', 'them', the reference word or phrase has to be located in the passage. For example, you may be asked to answer questions like "who is the 'he'/'she' referred to and related questions like "what did 'they' do as described in the passage?" or "what does the author say about 'him'/'her'?" in the passage?" or "whom do 'they' refer to?" and related questions like "what did 'they' do as described in the passage?" or "what does the author say about 'him'/'her'?"

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS 2

Read the brief passage given below carefully and answer the questions following the passage. In questions 1-5 Choose the best option out of the four alternatives given.

No one can seriously pretend to remain unaffected by advertisements. It is impossible to turn a blind eye to the solicitous overtures to buy this or that article that fill our streets, newspapers and magazines. Even in the sanctity of our living rooms, advertisers are waiting to pounce on their helpless victims as they tune into their favourite radio or television programmes. In times, no matter how hard we resist, clever little tunes and catch-phrases seep into our subconscious minds and they stay there. Though they seem so varied, all these advertisements have one thing in common; they make strong appeals to our emotions.

Q1. The word **sanctity** means

- i) Sacredness ii) Privacy iii) Privilege iv) Security

Q 2. Which one of the following lines best expresses the meaning of the first sentence in the passage?

- i) All men are influenced by advertisements
ii) Most men are influenced by advertisements
iii) Some men are not influenced by advertisements
iv) Advertisements cannot influence everybody

Q 3. To turn a blind eye-its opposite meaning is to

- i) perceive ii) view iii) visualize iv) sight

Q 4. The 'helpless victims' are the

- i) public ii) spectators iii) audience iv) sellers

- Q 5. Advertisements are successful when we respond to them
- i) intellectually
 - ii) blindly
 - iii) helplessly
 - iv) emotionally
- Q6. What is the **central idea** of the passage?
- Q7. Scan the passage to identify the **content** words-the nouns, verbs and adjectives.
- Q8. What does the author say about the advertisers?
- Q9. What do the advertisements have in common?

1.2.11 Points to remember for critical reading

Let us now briefly recall the essential/vital points that will help you in critical reading.

- i) A quick **preview** of the text will help you to identify the topic of the passage.
- ii) Locate the central idea & understand the author's thesis or perspective.
- iii) Use the contextual meaning of words and phrases with reference to the passage. This will help you to predict the meaning of unfamiliar words & phrases.
- iv) When there is no direct statement, look for clues that will help you to make inferences.
- v) **Scan** the passage for **content words** that will give

you the detailed information required to answer questions that focus on minute details of the text.

- vi) Remember to **locate references** and **identify exceptions**.
- vii) You have to **improve your vocabulary**. This will facilitate your critical reading skills.

1.2.12 xam tips

While preparing for exams you would do well to put into practice the practical guidance tips enlisted below:

- Do not rush yourself. It is natural that you will start a little slowly and then build up speed as you gain familiarity with the passage.
- Read all the questions first (if the exam format permits this). This will help you zero in on the relevant portions when you start reading the passage.
- Read actively. This means, try to anticipate the next sentence. Reading this way will help you engage with the passage more closely.
- **Make notes** to capture the essence of each paragraph within the passage. The first sentence of the paragraph usually conveys the main idea or theme of the paragraph.

- **Do not try to memorize anything.** Memorizing consumes time and is not very useful.
- **Get the overview.** After you have read the passage, ask yourself the following questions:
 - (1) *What do the introductory lines say?*
 - (2) *What is the passage as a whole trying to say?*
 - (3) *How does each paragraph contribute to the broad message of the passage?*
 - (4) *How does the passage conclude?*

1.2 ACTIVITIES TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

The Activities that follow will test your ability to apply the knowledge you have already acquired. The vocabulary exercise will test your knowledge of vocabulary and help you to learn at least 150 difficult words that you may not be familiar with. The sub sections have demonstrated how to read a given passage quickly and yet comprehend the same. These have also taught you what to look for and how, in order to enhance your comprehension and critical reading abilities. You should now be able to apply those skills in reading the sample passages given in the 'Activities' section and answering the questions that follow. The Activities shall act as tools of SWOT analysis. Through these you should be able to:

Identify your Strengths of/in reading comprehension

Locate your Weaknesses or shortcomings in critical reading abilities

Use the Opportunities in terms of applying the skills you have learnt reading comprehension

& Combat the Threats that may challenge or discourage you in reading comprehension

Note: It is essential that you time each exercise you attempt. Remember that reading comprehension in exams is a time-bound exercise and your primary focus should be on answering the given questions correctly within a stipulated time frame. Keep in mind the fact that in an exam of 100 marks you will have 3 hours time in hand. 15 marks are allotted for reading comprehension. This means that you can spend precisely 12 minutes in reading and answering the passage. You could stretch the time to a maximum of 15 minutes.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS 3

Vocabulary test

Directions: In questions 1 to 10, out of the alternatives offered, choose the one which best expresses the meaning of the given word.

1. Garish

- i) Unusual ii) Exciting iii) Confused iv) Gaudy

2. Baleful

- i) Harmful ii) Doubtful iii) Useful iv) Helpful

3. Duplicity

- i) Repetition ii) Artlessness iii) Deception
iv) Cleverness

4. Vagary

- i) Lapse of memory ii) Companionship iii) Gang

5. Evince

- i) Look ii) Try iii) Apply iv) Show

6. Morbid

- i) Ignorant ii) Scandalous iii) Unhealthy iv) Innocent

7. Insurgent

- i) Rebel ii) Eccentric iii) Emigrant iv) Spy

8. Truant

- i) One who likes to speak the truth ii) One who trusts everyone
iii) One who stays away without permission iv) A truthful aunt

9. Misanthrope

- i) One who hates whole mankind ii) One who hates women
iii) One who hates man iv) One who loves mankind

10. Reparation

- i) Compensation ii) Correction iii) Aspersion
iv) Delegation

Directions: In questions 11 to 20, out of the alternatives, choose the one opposite in meaning to the given word.

11. Gruesome

- i) Macabre ii) Grim iii) Repugnant iv) Pleasant

12. Desultory

- i) Apologetic ii) Random iii) Methodical
iv) Questionable

13. Putrid

- i) Fresh ii) Outcome iii) Freeze iv) Rigid

14. Dauntless

- i) Daring ii) Forgiving iii) Harsh
iv) Timid

15. Gingerly

- i) Cautiously ii) Deliberately iii) Carelessly
iv) Awfully

16. Foster

- i) Disappoint ii) Discourage iii) Disapprove
iv) Disentangle

17. Lenient

- i) Strict ii) Compassionate iii) Forbearing
iv) Sparing

18. Vituperative

- i) Abusive ii) Scurrilous iii) Harsh iv) Laudatory

19. Taciturn

- i) Opaque ii) Paltry iii) Malevolent
iv) Loquacious

20. Mitigate

- i) Alleviate ii) Facilitate iii) Aggravate
iv) Mollify

Directions: In questions 21 to 30, sentences are given with blanks to be filled in with an appropriate and suitable word. Four alternatives are suggested for each question. Choose the correct alternative out of the four.

21. Though impulsive in her personal life, Edna. St. Vincent was _____ in her work, producing several pages of complicated rhyme in a day.

- i) humble ii) dispirited iii) organised
iv) sanguine

22. It is very difficult for him to give up smoking as he is an _____ smoker.

- i) indifferent ii) inveterate iii) insensitive
iv) innate

23. Mother's milk _____ substituted by anything else.

- i) could be ii) cannot be iii) can be iv) may not be

24. We all hope _____ a better future

- i) of ii) on iii) for iv) with

25. The city _____ torn by riots

- i) torn ii) tear iii) was torn iv) will tear

26. Our flat is _____ the second floor of the building.

- i) at ii) on iii) in iv) to

27. Her illness was diagnosed _____ epilepsy.

- i) for ii) with iii) at iv) as

28. Keep your dog _____ the flower beds or he might damage them.

- i) from ii) across iii) of iv) off

29. In Homer's work, Achilles is the paragon of bravery, Odysseus _____ the shrewd man.

- i) abhors ii) exemplifies iii) reinvents
iv) eschews

30. The doctor advised him to rest for _____ days.

- i) few ii) a few iii) the few iv) fewer

Directions: In questions 31 to 40, four alternatives are given for the underlined idioms/phrases. Choose the alternative that best expresses the meaning of the underlined idiom/phrase.

31. They are all at sixes and sevens.

- i) in groups of sixes and sevens
ii) in disagreement
iii) playing a game
iv) None of the above.

32. He failed miserably in the competitive examination as he had worked for it by fits and starts.

- i) finally ii) hastily iii) irregularly iv) impulsively

33. While the employees plan for a strike, the government tries to fly a kite.

- i) detect the facts

- ii) please the children
- iii) test public opinion
- iv) enter into an agreement

34. Fast bowling is the Achilles' heel of Indian cricket.

- i) major factor
- ii) satisfactory element
- iii) weak point
- iv) cause of failure

35. The Education Minister and five other MLAs sustained minor in the free for all in the assembly.

- i) everyone got something free
- ii) uncontrollable situation
- iii) free entrance for all
- iv) fight for freedom

36. John cannot play second fiddle to others.

- i) cannot play the first fiddle
- ii) cannot lead other people
- iii) cannot play a subordinate role
- iv) cannot play any other fiddle

37. Salma can never be easily fooled by cock and bull stories.

- i) stories of birds and animals
- ii) unbelievable stories

- iii) stories dealing with fights
 - iv) stories of adventure
38. Unable to bear the insult any further I gave him a piece of my mind.
- i) complained to him
 - ii) advised him
 - iii) scolded him
 - iv) warned him
39. I will not you allow to play ducks and drakes with my money.
- i) destroy
 - ii) save
 - iii) bet
 - iv) waste
40. Their attempts to nab the smuggler ended as a wild goose chase.
- i) tight competition
 - ii) surprising result
 - iii) horrible experience
 - iv) hopeless search

Direction: In questions 41 to 45, out of the four alternatives, choose the one which can be substituted for the given words or sentence.

41. A person who can appreciate art, music etc.

- i) epicure ii) gourmet iii) connoisseur
iv) cosmopolitan

42. Two words different in spelling and meaning but pronounced alike.

- i) Homonyms ii) Homographs iii) Synonyms
iv) Homophones

43. A servile self-seeker who attempts to win favour by flattering influential people.

- i) nepotist ii) sycophant iii) psychopath
iv) hedonist

44. An abnormal fear of high places.

- i) hydrophobia ii) claustrophobia iii) aerophobia
iv) acrophobia

45. The belief that nothing can be known about God.

- i) Agnosticism ii) Theism iii) Atheism
iv) Henotheism

Think as you work out: While testing your vocabulary you will come across about 150 words that may not be familiar to you. The answer key provided at the end of the unit will give you the correct answer. However, this is an opportunity for you to find out the meaning of the other words from a dictionary. At the end of this exercise you shall have learnt the

*meaning of at least 150 words. As you learn the synonyms (same meaning) you could simultaneously find out the antonyms (opposite in meaning). In other words, your vocabulary could then be enriched by at least 300 new words. **Questions 31 to 40** will test your knowledge of idiomatic expressions, which is another core skill of critical reading.*

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS 4

Q. Read the brief passage carefully and answer the questions following it. Choose the best answer to each question out of the four given alternatives.

A little boy used to play in the shade of a tree. One day the boy sat leaning against its trunk; he cried and sighed, "I am hungry". "Eat my fruit", said the kind tree. And it bent down one of its branches. The little boy had his fill of the fruit and felt satisfied.

Long years passed and the boy grew up. Then once again he sat under the tree with a look of dejection and hopelessness. "What is it?", the tree asked. "My wedding day is barely a week away and I have nowhere to live." "Cut down my branches and build yourself a house," said the tree. The young man set to work immediately.

Time passed and now the young man was a sailor. And once again he sat under the tree with a look of remorse on his face. It again asked what the matter was. He pleaded, "My Captain

is crude, so to survive I must own a ship." "Cut down my trunk and build a ship."

The sailor grew old but once again he turned to the tree with a laden expression on his face. It was cold and the sailor leaned on his stick trembling. "Make a fire of me" said the stump of the tree. It soon burnt in the fire softly humming a tune.

Q1. **Define** the friendship that this story illustrates.

- i) It was life long
- ii) It was unselfish
- iii) It was one sided
- iv) It was foolish

Q2. What is meant by set to work immediately?

- i) He made a house immediately
- ii) He started work immediately
- iii) He began to cut down the branches immediately
- iv) He got his work immediately

Q3. In general, man in this story is

- i) unusually greedy
- ii) over burdened with difficulties of life
- iii) selfish and always demanding
- iv) very intelligent

Q4. The main qualities of two characters in this story are

- i) both are foolish
- ii) one is intelligent, another is foolish

- iii) both of them are intelligent
- iv) one is demanding, another full of mercy

Q5. The last sentence of the passage means

- i) every tree sings when it is burnt
- ii) it felt the maximum pleasure when suffering for the happiness of others
- iii) the tree was foolish & never felt any pain
- iv) it tried to forget its pain humming.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS 5

Q. Read the passage carefully and answer the questions that follow.

Although stage plays have been set to music since the era of the ancient Greeks, when the dramas of Sophocles and Aeschylus were accompanied by lyres and flutes, the usually accepted date for the beginning of opera as we know it is 1600. As part of the celebration of the marriage of King Henry of France to the Italian aristocrat Maria de Medici, the Florentine composer Jacopo Peri produced his famous Euridice, generally considered to be the first opera. Following his example, a group of Italian musicians, poets, and noblemen called the Camerata began to revive the style of musical story that had been used in Greek tragedy. The Camerata took most of the plots for their operas from Greek and Roman history and mythology, writing librettos or dramas

for music. They called their compositions *opera in music or musical works*. It is from this phrase that the word "opera" is borrowed.

For several years, the center of opera was Florence, but gradually, during the baroque period, it spread throughout Italy. By the late 1600s, operas were being written and performed in Europe, especially in England, France, and Germany. But, for many years, the Italian opera was considered the ideal, and many non-Italian composers continued to use Italian librettos. The European form de-emphasized the dramatic aspect. New orchestral aspects and even ballet were introduced under the guise of opera. Composers gave in to the demands of singers, writing many operas that were nothing more than a succession of brilliant tricks for the voice. Complicated arias, recitatives and duets evolved. The aria, which which is a long solo, may be compared to a song in which the characters express their thoughts and feelings. The recitative, which is also a solo, is a recitation set to music whose purpose is to continue the story line.

The duet is a musical piece written for two voices which may serve the function of either an aria or a recitative.

1. this passage is a summary of

- i) an opera in Italy
- ii) the Camerata
- iii) the development of opera
- iv) Euridice

2. According to this passage, when did modern opera begin?

- i) in the time of ancient Greeks
- ii) in the fifteenth century
- iii) at the beginning of the sixteenth century
- iv) at the beginning of the seventeenth century

3. The word "it" in line 4 refers to

- i) an opera
- ii) date
- iii) era
- iv) music

4. What was the Camerata

- i) A group of Greek musicians
- ii) Musicians who developed a new musical drama based upon Greek drama
- iii) A style of music not known in Italy
- iv) the name given to the court of King Henry IV

5. The word "revive" in line 8 could be best replaced by

- i) appreciate
- ii) resume
- iii) modify
- iv) investigate

6. The word "plots" in line 10 is closest in meaning to

- i) locations
- ii) instruments
- iii) stories
- iv) inspiration

7. According to the author, what did Jacopo Peri write?

- i) Greek tragedy
- ii) the first opera
- iii) the opera Maria de Medici
- iv) the opera The Camerata

8. The author suggests that the Euridice was produced in
- i) France
 - ii) originally by Sophocles and Aeschylus
 - iii) without much success
 - iv) for the wedding day of King Henry IV
9. From what was the term "opera" derived
- i) Greek and Roman history and mythology
 - ii) non-Italian composers
 - iii) the Italian phrase that means "musical works"
 - iv) the ideas of composer Jacopo Peri
10. Which of the following is an example of a solo?
- i) a recitative
 - ii) a duet
 - iii) an opera
 - iv) a lyre

1.3 LET US SUM UP:

Unit I has shown you how to improve your critical reading abilities so that you are able to read comprehension within a stipulated time and answer questions on the given passage. You now know that you have to first determine the purpose of your reading in order to regulate your reading speed. With practice, you will be able to develop an *effective* reading speed that will facilitate your skills of reading comprehension. The subsections of the unit have dealt with the different aspects of reading comprehension with elucidations from the sample passage in Exercise 1. Two vocabulary exercises have acquainted you with unfamiliar words. You have learnt how to find out synonyms and antonyms from the passages provided and improved your vocabulary by enhancing your stock of words. You have also learnt to predict the meaning of words

with reference to the context of the passage. Your comprehension skills have improved as you can now apply the methods taught in this unit to tackle difficult passages. You can locate the central idea of a passage and the author's point of view. You have learnt the methods of quick preview, scanning for details like content words and antecedents and draw inferences if there is no direct statement in the text. The subsection titled "exam tips" has focused on reading comprehension for answering questions in exams and has taught you quick and effective ways of doing the same. Your analytical abilities have been sharpened and you are now adequately equipped to answer questions on hitherto unseen passages. The Activities with solved exercises [refer to Answer Key] were designed to help you to identify your strengths and weaknesses in reading comprehension. The model exercises provided in the "Test your knowledge" section are intended to make you practice and prepare for exams. Moreover, with improved skills of reading comprehension, you have already taken a step forward towards the next unit, where your analytical abilities will be put to practice/ test in writing précis.

STOP TO CONSIDER

You are aware of the skills required for reading comprehension. You have gone through the activities in the preceding section and checked the time you have spent in reading the passages and answering the questions. You have also counted your scores from the answer key given at the end of the unit to have a fair idea about your progress. Here are some more model passages with questions that will help you to test the extent of your progress in terms of knowledge of vocabulary, grammar and idioms. These will also improve your critical and analytical abilities in terms of application, interpretation and problem solving.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS 6

Read carefully the passage given below and answer the questions that follow

The self-fulfillment of the individual has itself become part of a larger, more embracing idea: the self-fulfillment of man. We think of man as a species with special gifts, which are the human gifts. Some of these gifts, the physical and mental gifts, are elucidated for us explicitly by science; some of them, the aesthetic and ethical gifts, we feel and struggle to express in our mind; and some of them, the cultural gifts, are unfolded for us by the study of history. The total of these gifts is man as a type or species, and the aspiration of man as a species has become the fulfillment of what is most human in these gifts.

The idea of human self-fulfillment has also inspired scientific and technical progress. We sometimes think that progress is illusory, and that the devices and gadgets which become indispensable to civilised men in the last five hundred years are only a self-propagating accumulation of idle luxuries.

Give very brief answers to the following questions:

- (a) What is the larger idea of which self-fulfillment of the individual has become a part?
- (b) Which human gifts are elucidated by science?
- (c) To express what do we feel and struggle?
- (d) What does the study of history unfold unto us?

- (e) What does the aspiration of man as a species constitute?
- (f) What does the idea of human self-fulfilment inspire?
- (g) How do we now react to progress and to the devices?

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS 7

Read carefully the passage given below and then answer the questions that follow:

There are two types of people in the world. Although they have equal degrees of health and wealth and other comforts of life, one becomes happy, the other becomes miserable. This arises from the different ways in which they consider things, persons and events, and the resulting effects upon their minds.

In whatever situation men can be placed, they may find conveniences and inconveniences. In whatever company, they may find persons and conversations more or less pleasing. At whatever table, they may find meat and drink of better or worse taste, dishes better or worse prepared. In whatever climate, they may find good or bad weather. Under whatever government, they may find good and bad laws, and good and bad administration of these laws. In every poem or work of genius, they may see beauties and faults. In almost every face and every person, they may discover fine features and defects, good and bad qualities.

Under these circumstances, people who are to be happy

fix their attention on the conveniences of things, the pleasant parts of conversation, the well-prepared dishes, the fine weather. They enjoy all the cheerful things. Those who are unhappy speak and think only of the contrary things. Therefore, they are continually discontented themselves. By their remarks they sour the pleasures of society, offend many people, and make themselves disagreeable everywhere. If this turn of mind were founded in nature, such unhappy persons would be the more pitied. The disposition to criticise and be disgusted is perhaps taken up originally by imitation. It grows into a habit, unknown to its possessors. The habit may be strong, but it may be cured when those who have it are convinced of its bad effects on their congeniality. I hope this admonition may be of service to them, and help them change this habit.

(a) State whether the following statements are, according to the passage, true or false?

- (i) People who look only at the bad things are always unhappy.
- (ii) Happiness depends upon the degrees of health, wealth and other comforts of life.
- (iii) Some people develop the complaining and criticizing habits by imitating others.

(b) How do the unhappy people offend others?

- (c) Who is a happy person?
- (d) Why are some people happy in life and some unhappy?
- (e) What kind of persons, according to the passage, are to be pitied?
- (f) 'Those who are unhappy speak and think of the contrary things.' What are these 'contrary' things?
- (g) How can the habit of criticising others be cured?
- (h) What are the different ways in which a happy man and an unhappy man look at things?

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS 8

Read the following passage and give brief answers to the questions given below:

Machines alone cannot keep pace with civilization. We should try to become more civilized. For the machines themselves, and the power which the machines have given us, are not civilization, but aids to civilization. It must be known that civilization rests on our thinking and behaving. We all agree that being civilized means making beautiful things, thinking freely and living rightly and maintaining justice equally between man and man. Man has a better chance today to do these things than he ever had before; he has more time, more energy, less to fear and less to fight

against except for the dangers he has himself created. If he will give this time and energy, which his machines have won for him, to making more beautiful things, to finding out more and more about the universe, to removing the cause of quarrels between nations, to discovering how to prevent poverty, then I think our civilization would undoubtedly be the greatest, as it would be the most lasting, than there has ever been.

- (a) How does the writer relate the increase in the number of machines to human civilization?
- (b) What does being civilized mean?
- (c) How can machines and machine power help man to become more civilized?
- (d) What are the advantages of machines to modern man?
- (e) Find out the words from the above passage which have the following meanings:
 - (i) to have an effect for a long time
 - (ii) to stop from happening
 - (iii) the speed at which one walks or runs
 - (iv) lies

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS 9

In questions 1-10, out of the four alternatives (A, B, C, D), choose the word which can be substituted for the given word or sentence.

Q		A	B	C	D
1.	That which would burn easily	Incendiary	Incantatory	Inflammable	Incandescent
2.	Place of gathering for public discussion	Platform	Dais	Stage	Forum
3.	An addition to the end of a letter	Post Script	Prelude	Post Natal	Post Mortem
4.	Young cow that has not yet had a calf	Cowlet	Colt	Ewe	Heifer
5.	A mournful song or poem for the dead	Ballad	Dirge	Ode	Lyric
6.	The dead skin cast off by a snake	Bough	Slough	Peeling	Borough
7.	Science dealing with bird life	Zymology	Ornithology	Stymology	Philology
8.	One who is from 60—69 years old	Sexton	Sexologist	Sexagenarian	Sextuplet
9.	Someone who keeps bees	Apiarist	Horticulturist	Ornithologist	Pathologist
10.	Speaking one's thoughts aloud to oneself	Apostrophise	Memorise	Soliloquize	Solemnise

1.6 SUGGESTED READING

Apart from inculcating a regular reading habit as mentioned in the " suggestions for general improvement" given below, you may also access internet websites like Wikipedia. You may also consult Vandana R. Singh's *The Written Word* and Three Year Degree Course question papers of the last five years for practice passages.

- Read for at least 30 minutes a day
- Read from a variety of sources: newspapers, the internet, novels, magazines, etc.
- Read across a broad range of topics: sports, business, politics, science, etc.
- Read actively; develop a habit of being curious about whatever you are reading.
- Always summarize to yourself the material you have just read

GLOSSARY :

Analysis: Examining minutely to find/show the essence of a text/passage.

Antonym: Word of contrary meaning; opposite in meaning.

Antecedent: Previous to; noun, clause, sentence, to which a pronoun or adverb refers.

Central: Main, pivotal; the core idea or main theme with reference to a passage.

Comprehension: Act or faculty of understanding, especially of writing or speech.

Content word: Word containing the meaning of; constituent words of a conception.

Context: Parts that precede or follow a passage/sentence/word & fix its meaning.

Critical reading: Detailed, analytical and correct reading of texts.

Define: Make clear, outline, declare exact meaning or scope of; state precisely.

Determine: Decide, arrive at conclusive decision.

Effective: Operative, that which accomplishes desired objective.

Evidence: Obvious indication; information that establishes fact.

Hypothesis: Proposition made as a basis for reasoning; supposition subject to research/investigation

Inference: Forming of conclusion from textual evidence.

Locate: Establish; discover the exact place.

Nutshell: Put it in brief; concise; compact.

Overview: General survey.

Perspective: Point of view.

Preview: View in advance; quick look over.

Reference: In relation to; in connection; with regard to; corresponding with.

Scanning: To examine all parts closely

Skill: Expertness, practiced ability.

Stock: Storehouse; quantity ready to be drawn upon or utilized.

Synonym: Word or phrase with the same meaning with another& of identical and coexisting usage in the same language.

Textual: Pertaining to the text; of or in the text.

Theme: Subject

Thesis: Proposition to be maintained or proved.

Vocabulary: Person's range of language.

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ANSWER KEYS

Questions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
CYPs															
1	i	v	iv	v	iv	ii	iii	ii	ii	iii	ii	v	ii	v	iii
2	ii	i	ii	iii	iv	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
4	iii	iii	iii	iv	ii	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5	iii	iv	i	ii	ii	iii	ii	iv	iii	i	-	-	-	-	-
9	iii	iv	i	iv	ii	ii	ii	iii	i	iii	-	-	-	-	-

CYP: VOCABULARY EXERCISE

Q	A	Q	A	Q	A	Q	A	Q	A
1	iv	10	i	19	iv	28	iv	37	ii
2	i	11	iv	20	iii	29	ii	38	iii
3	iii	12	iii	21	iii	30	ii	39	iv
4	iv	13	i	22	ii	31	ii	40	iv
5	iv	14	iv	23	ii	32	iii	41	iii
6	iii	15	iii	24	iii	33	iii	42	iv
7	i	16	ii	25	iii	34	iii	43	ii
8	iii	17	i	26	ii	35	ii	44	iv
9	i	18	iv	27	iv	36	iii	45	i

Q=Questions A= Answers

UNIT 2

READING PRÉCIS

STRUCTURE

- 2.0 Objectives
- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 The Definition and the Features of Précis
 - 2.2.1 What is a Précis?
 - 2.2.2 Various features of a Précis
 - 2.2.3 Precision
 - 2.2.4 Reflection of the central idea
 - 2.2.5 Simple Language
- 2.3 Various skills of Précis Writing
 - 2.3.1 Proper Reading and Understanding
 - 2.3.2 Ability to draw out the central idea
 - 2.3.3 Ability to summarize the key points
- 2.4 Let us sum up
 - Key words
 - Examples
 - Further Readings

2.0 OBJECTIVES:

After going through this unit you will be able to-

- *summarize* the central idea of a given passage
- *convert* a long passage into a précis
- *read* a 500 word passage in 3-5 minutes

2.1 INTRODUCTION

You have already acquired the skill of reading a given passage at a fairly good speed by going through the first unit of this block. So while going through this unit where will learn to write précis, you need to apply those skills. Moreover, these skills will also help you to learn Note-making, Caption Writing, Heading and Title Writing that you will come through in the next blocks of this course.

This unit introduces you to a précis. A précis is a much shorter version of a long speech, article etc. giving the central ideas. So in order to write a précis first of all you need to read the given passage and should try to find out the central idea of that passage. Then in the next step you need to summarize the idea and write it shortly in a simple and clear language.

The different means of acquiring good reading and writing skills that we are going to discuss in this unit will make you able to write a précis out of a given passage. It will also prepare you for better communication skills in English. Before starting to read this unit you should keep an English dictionary with you. Moreover, you can also take help of the grammar and composition books such as *Precis Writing for Beginners* by Guy N. Pocock.

2.2 THE DEFINITION AND THE FEATURES OF A PRÉCIS

2.2.1 WHAT IS A PRÉCIS?

We have already known that a précis is a brief, original summary of the important ideas given in a long selection. Its aim is to give the general effect created by the original selection. It is a concise and lucid summary that forsakes all unnecessary details (including illustrations, amplifications, and embellishments) in favor of reproducing the logic, development, organization and emphasis of the original. Retaining the substance of a fuller statement, it seeks to articulate another author's thoughts by extracting the maximum amount of information and carefully conveying it in a minimum number of words.

So question may arise in your mind that what should be length of a précis. In answer to that we can say that a précis should be one-third or one-fourth of the length of the given passage. Now that you have known how long a précis should be, you can define it as the summary of a given passage having the length of not more than one-fourth the length of the original passage. After defining a précis now we will discuss the major features of it.

STOP TO CONSIDER

A précis remains incomplete without a title. An appropriate title is that which gives an idea about the content. The central idea of the given passage can be formulated into a title. However, the title should not be a complete sentence rather a summation of the central idea in few words.

2.2.2 VARIOUS FEATURES OF A PRÉCIS

While looking into the definition of a précis, you have surely noticed that it is a short summary of a particular length. So the various features of a précis are apparent in the definition itself. Let us now find out what are they. Since the definition talks about shortness, it can easily be understood that precision or briefness is the first feature of a précis. The second feature that comes out of the definition is the summation or the summary of the central idea. And the third feature of a précis is its simple language. It is necessary to keep in mind while writing a précis that it should be written from the point of view of the person who is going to write it. It means that when you are writing a précis, you are not writing it according to the person who has written the given passage, rather you will write it from your learning of the passage given. Therefore, it should be written in a simple and clear language so that it clearly reflects all the central ideas/ the central idea found in the passage. Now let us discuss these three features in some detail.

2.2.3 PRECISION

Precision or briefness is called the first feature of a précis. Let us discuss why it is so or how it can be attained in précis writing. First of all, precision is required in précis writing because you can not write a précis that is almost equally long to the original passage. If you do that the basic idea of a précis is lost. We have already discussed that it is a short summary and in order to be short you must maintain a particular length in précis writing.

Since we have already discussed that we are not going to repeat that, but you should keep in mind that unless you shorten a given passage it can not be called a précis. However, while being precise you should follow the actual order of thoughts given in the original passage. It means that you must write down the ideas given in the passage following the order in which they appear in the given passage. Remember that the précis is only a summary and not an essay. Therefore, do not be tempted to add any ideas or thoughts of your own, however brilliant they might be. The précis should not have any ideas which are not in the original. And also, do not add any critical comments of your own. There is no need to analyze the original piece. You need to present only the abstract and not an analysis.

2.2.4 REFLECTION OF THE CENTRAL IDEA

In order to write a précis you must be able to draw out the central idea of the passage given. And if the passage contains more than one central idea you need to find out them keeping in mind which one comes first and which one later, so that you can write them in their proper order as occurred in the passage. You have already come across the word 'summary' while reading the definition of a précis, so this summary here refers to the summary of the central idea or ideas. The summary of the given passage or the idea with which the passage deals with should be reflected in the title of the précis. To be able to find out the central idea of a passage, you need to practice the act of reading a passage carefully and you will know the importance of this reading part when you read the next sections of this unit. Précis is not a mechanical reproduction of the

given text. It will not make a good précis if you copy word to word from the original passage. As far as possible, attempt to summarize in your own words. But this does not mean that you should completely avoid the words used by the author. Many a time, a key word or a phrase has to be literally reproduced from the original text. Such key words and phrases are indispensable. Nevertheless, the language should be your own. Read the passage once again to locate any omissions that you have made. You should not leave out anything which is important.

2.2.5 SIMPLE LANGUAGE

The language of a précis should always be simple and clear. When you are able to find out the central idea or ideas present in a given passage you need to write them in your own simple words. The language here is important because the person who will read your précis must be able to understand what the original ideas were. Therefore, you should keep in mind that if you are unable to write the central ideas in your own words you do not understand the passage. Simple language is called a feature of précis, because perhaps you know that whenever one tries to be precise, he becomes complex or the meaning becomes hazy. Therefore it is necessary that you write the précis in as much simple words as possible so that the meaning becomes clear. If the language used in a précis is full of allusions and unfamiliar words, it can not be called a proper précis. So you should be direct and clear in writing down the ideas that you think are central in the given passage. Be sure not to repeat the original

words except those which you think are indispensable. The précis should contain an organic plan. It should be developed logically with a clear-cut, unbroken chain of ideas, which are linked accurately. Coherence has to be maintained throughout. The sequence should not be disturbed. Sometimes, for the sake of clarity, the sequence may have to be broken. In such a case, see to it that the précis is cogent and runs smoothly. In any case, the central idea of the passage should not be marred. It is very important to note that the précis should always be written in the Third Person. Even though the passage is in the First Person or in the form of a dialogue, it should be converted into the Third Person.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. What is a précis?

2. What are the major features of a précis?

2.3 VARIOUS SKILLS OF PRECIS WRITING

After being familiar with the idea of a précis you must have known by now what are the most important things you need to keep in mind while attempting to write a précis. However, let us discuss in this section about the various skills of writing a précis. Or to be precise, what you should attempt first before starting to write a précis out of a long passage.

2.3.1 PROPER READING AND UNDERSTANDING

Perhaps it has already occurred in your mind that the first necessary quality for précis writing is the ability of proper reading and understanding. Why is it so let us discuss. Since précis is all about interpreting a long passage in fewer words then obviously first of all you will have to understand what is there in the passage given. The written version or the précis will come only after reading the given passage. Therefore first of all you will have to develop the skill of reading a given passage, e.g. a 500 word passage within a particular time limit and thereby interpret it in your words. It means that you can not devote all of your time at reading the particular passage because you are allotted a specific time in your examination. So in order to complete your précis within a short period you need to practice the art of reading at a fairly good speed. The phrase fairly good speed here refers to such a speed limit which is neither too fast nor too slow. It can not be fast because by doing so you will not be able to understand the meaning or the

might run out of time to attempt other questions in the exam. Therefore you should try to develop this skill of reading a given passage within a particular time period. However, reading alone is not sufficient because if fail to understand the passage then your interpretation of it might prove wrong. So it is very necessary that you practice the act of reading regularly and enhance your vocabulary so that the meaning of the passage becomes clear.

2.3.2 ABILITY TO DRAW OUT THE CENTRAL IDEA

The next important skill required for précis writing is the ability to draw out the central idea or the ideas out of a long passage. In order to develop this skill you need to mark out or find out the important words or sentences while reading the passage. This is because although the passage might be saying about one particular idea all the sentences may not be relevant or important. Therefore you must try to find out the prominent areas within the passage and then a summing up of those important sentences or ideas will prove fruitful. For this a very good concentration is required while reading the passage. Once you find out what it is with which the author is dealing with, your work is half done. Because after finding out the key ideas, there remains only the task of writing down those ideas in simple and clear language. So the best way to find out the main points is to mark them out while reading the passage. However, be sure to discard the unimportant ideas in your précis. If you read the passage several times, it is easy for you to extract the points. Choose the important matter and

eliminate the unimportant. Your skill lies in picking up the material which revolves round the central theme and organizing it in an orderly fashion. You should be able to select the most pertinent points and eliminate the inessential. Drawing out the central idea is also important because it can be used as the heading of the précis. The heading of the précis should be such which gives a general impression of the subject-matter of the précis.

2.3.3 ABILITY TO SUMMARISE THE KEY POINTS

Once you find out the central idea of a passage you need to write it down briefly. The points that are superfluous and inappropriate should be straight away omitted. See to it that you leave out repetitions. Some authors have the habit of repeating the same ideas at the beginning of every paragraph for the sake of emphasis. Such repetitions may be eliminated because economy of words is an essential feature of a précis. Examples, illustrations, quotations, anecdotes, metaphors, similes and other figures of speech can be removed. Redundant words and irrelevant stuff also may be dispensed with. In order to summarise the key points of the given passage in a few words your vocabulary should be strong. You should try to be as brief as possible. Try to use those words which alone can perform the task of a long sentence. It has already been advised to keep a dictionary with you. The habit of using a dictionary will enhance your word-power and thus you will be able to summarize large ideas into brief sentences. Another important task for writing a good précis is that you should always revise your writing till you believe that you have written an accurate

summary of the given passage. While revising your précis always remember to avoid those ideas which are not there in the original passage. Moreover, this revision will help you to maintain the exact length of the précis.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. What are the important steps of précis writing?

2. Why do you think a title or heading is necessary for précis?

A well-regulated précis must have variety. Variety can be achieved by using varied sentences of different lengths and clause structures. Long and short sentences should be used alternatively to make the presentation vivid and striking. Simple, complex and compound sentences can be used to lend richness to the texture. Two simple sentences can be synthesized to construct

one compound sentence. Similarly, a complex sentence can be converted into a compound sentence and vice versa. This is how you can reduce the number of words.

For example,

(1) She is fair. She is fat. (6 words)

She is fair and fat. (5 words)

(2) He will win the election. That is certain. (8 words)

He will certainly win the election.(6 words)

By using this technique the number of words can be reduced without changing the meaning. So, transforming sentences from one form to the other will be of great help to trim down the passage. One-word substitutes can also be used quite liberally to cut the length.

2.4 LET US SUM UP

After going through this unit you have learnt what a précis is, what are the essential features of a précis, how one can write a good précis. The skill of précis writing will help you acquiring better communication skills in English. This in other words is a very important skill because once you master it, it will be easier for you to convey your ideas in fewer words and avoid monotony and elaboration. It will be helpful for you to remember that no words, phrases, clauses, or sentences which are unessential to the thought of the selection, are considered. Every unnecessary

idea of the passage; whereas if you read too slowly then you word is discarded until all that you have left is the thought, the dominating idea, of what you have read. Then in your own words, give this thought as briefly and clearly as possible. Your sentences must be carefully constructed. Do not omit any essential articles, prepositions, or conjunctions. So let us now look upon the key words that you need to remember after reading this unit.

KEY WORDS

- (i) Proper Reading
- (ii) Summary
- (iii) Precision
- (iv) Simple Language
- (v) Suitable Title
- (vi) Revision

EXAMPLES

Here are given some of the examples of précis writing so that by following them you can exercise the method of précis writing.

Write the précis of the following passage:

1. In life, every man has twin obligations -obligations to his family, to his parents, to his wife and children; and he has an obligation to his people, his community, his country. In acivil and humane soociety, each man is to fuldill those

obligations according to his own inclinations and abilities. But in a country like South Africa, it was almost impossible for a man of my birth and colour to fulfill both of those obligations. In South Africa, a man of colour who attempted to live as a human being was punished and isolated. In South Africa, a man who tried to fulfill his duty to his people was inevitably ripped from his family and his home and was forced to live a life apart, a twilight existence of secrecy and rebellion. I did not in the beginning choose to place my people above my family, but in attempting to serve my people, I found that I was prevented from fulfilling my obligations as a son, a brother, a father and a husband.

Answer: Title- Life of a Colored Man in South Africa

A civilized society provides the opportunity to its members to fulfill their twin obligations- to their family and to their nation. But in South Africa, where colored people were not considered as human beings, it was not possible. Those black people fighting for their community were separated from their family and therefore this person decided to place his people above his family.

2. Trees give shade for the benefit of others, and while they themselves stand in the sun and endure the scorching heat, they produce the fruit of which others profit. The character of good men is like that of trees. What is the use of this perishable body if no use is made of it for the benefit of mankind? Sandalwood, the more it is rubbed, the more scent does it yield. Sugarcane, the more it is peeled and

cut up into pieces, the more juice does it produce. The men who are noble at heart do not lose their qualities even in losing their lives. What matters whether men praise them or not? What difference does it make whether they die at this moment or whether lives are prolonged? Happen what may, those who tread in the right path will not set foot in any other. Life itself is unprofitable to a man who does not live for others. To live for the mere sake of living one's life is to live the life of dog and crows. Those who lay down their lives for the sake of others will assuredly dwell for ever in a world of bliss.

Answer- Title- **Life of a Good Man**

A good man's life can be compared to a tree because both of them serve others for no profit of their own. Human life becomes worth living when it is devoted to the human race. Trees like Sandalwood and Sugarcane are the best examples of the fact that sometimes service of mankind also needs personal suffering. To not use life's possibilities for a purpose is to live like dogs and crows and those who dedicate their lives for others' welfare they attain immortality.

3. Almost any individual who makes a great deal of money very rapidly supposes that mere possession of wealth is evidence of worth. He also is apt to imagine that with his means he can buy happiness. These mistakes usually seem folly to the old-rich, to one who was born to poverty, whose father and mother were bred with it. Such a one knows that merely because he or his friends have it, it is no sign that they are worth it, but quite commonly the contrary.

He has learned through experience that money is not in itself very valuable stuff. Happiness, which is what all men desire, cannot be purchased; it is an illusive something not for sale. The old-rich know these things well enough, but the new-rich rarely discover them until they have grown accustomed to possessions. So it seems to be with our society. We go in, almost without question and in all classes, for the sordid nonsense of supposing that externalities possessed ennoble the owners, that a full fist invariable indicates a fine spirit.

Answer- Title **Value of Wealth in Human Life**

People in possession of wealth often considers it as a means of gaining importance and believes that he can even by happiness with it. However, those who have earned this wealth with hard labour witnessing their parents' poverty are quite aware of the social conditions where both poor and the rich live. And therefore, for them money is not the ultimate worth in life. But those who have earned wealth newly are worshippers of wealth. In fact, this has become a matter of concern in our society which is running after wealth blindly.

FURTHER READING

1. Pocock,, Guy N., *Precis Writing for Beginners*, London, Blackie and Son, 1917.
2. Gay, Robert M. *Writing through Reading: A Suggestive method of Writing English, with Directions and Exercies*, Boston, The Atlantic Monthly Press, 1921.

BLOCK INTRODUCTION

Block - II is aimed at enabling you to master the essential writing skills in English. Right from your school days you have already done exercises on sentence making and paragraph writing. You must have also got a fairly good hold on English conversation. Yet, this block is an attempt to revise your skills and also train you further in writing with a specific purpose, like, note making, writing memos and short notes.

Unit 1 takes you to the use of English idioms. Idiomatic expressions are found everywhere, whether in written or spoken conversation. Your command and use of idioms not only beautify your language, but also help you to express certain situation with ease and clarity.

Unit 2 deals with Paragraph writing, with which you are acquainted with from your school days. This unit talks about the features of a good paragraph and helps you develop a well-written paragraph with the help of worked-out examples. It has also got enough exercises for your practice.

Unit 3 familiarizes you with a very useful practice for extracting the relevant and valuable information out of a given passage, a talk, a speech or a lecture, i.e., note making. It also talks about another form of short written communication - Short Notes. Short notes may be used for easy conveyance of message from one person to another, whether in personal or official use. Next, you will find - memos, which is an important method of internal communication, mainly in offices. These three forms of short composition are closely related, but they do have differences. Learn and explore these yourselves!

The structure of this block is as under:

BLOCK II : WRITING SKILLS - I (25 MARKS)

Unit 1 : Sentence Making from Idioms (5 marks)

Unit 2 : Paragraph Writing (10 marks)

Unit 3 : Note Making/ Writing Memos / Short Notes (10 marks)

UNIT I

SENTENCE MAKING - FROM IDIOMS

Structure

- 1.0 Objective
- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 What is an idiom?
- 1.3 Idiom : as part of a culture
- 1.4 Structure of an idiom
- 1.5 Importance of idioms
- 1.6 How to learn idioms?
- 1.7 Let's learn idioms and frame sentence from them
 - 1.7.1 Idiom phrases as nouns
 - 1.7.2 Idiom phrases as verbs
 - 1.7.3 Idiom phrases as complements
 - 1.7.4 Adverbial idiom phrases
 - 1.7.5 Idiom phrases as conjunction
 - 1.7.6 Idiom phrases as preposition
 - 1.7.7 Idioms composed of pairs of words
- 1.8 Some more idioms
- 1.9 Let's sum up

Suggested Readings

1.0 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you should be able to

- *Identify* an idiom.
- *Explain* the meanings of different idioms.
- *Make* sentences from idioms.

1.1 INTRODUCTION

You have learned English as a second language in your school days (some, for even upto fifteen years in school). But do some of you still find yourself unable to follow a movie in English, understand the world news on T.V., or converse in a colloquial style because you never had a chance to hear and learn common, everyday expressions such as, "It's a done deal!" or "Drop whatever you're doing."

This kind of situation may arise because native speakers of English use idiom all the time, often without realizing that they are doing so. The use of idioms is commonplace and it can be extremely frustrating to find yourself losing track of a conversation when a few idioms are introduced into it. So by familiarizing yourself with idioms you can take your fluency to new heights.

Being stripped of the non-standard phrases everyday language will lose its flavor and become pedestrian and dull. Let us now try to familiarize ourselves with some of the common English idioms.

1.2 WHAT IS AN IDIOM?

Idioms are a small group of words that have figurative meanings. The combination of words that make an idiom has a meaning that is different from the meanings of the individual words themselves. This is why, when a speaker uses an idiom, the listener might mistake its actual meaning, if he or she has not heard this figure of speech before. For example, "break a leg" is a common idiom. Its literal meaning would be to break a bone in your leg; but its idiomatic meaning is to do your best and do well.

Idioms are expressions particular to a language. Every language has its own idioms. Though some idioms across languages have some similarity, they usually do not translate well. In some cases, when an idiom is translated into another language, either its meaning is changed or it is meaningless. As such, students of a new language must learn its idiomatic expressions as vocabulary.

English language is rich in idiomatic expressions. Let us now try to familiarize ourselves with some of these interesting expressions.



Stop to Consider :

Distinction between phrase and idiom

An idiom is also like a phrase with a small group of words. But they have got some difference. You can guess the meaning of the given phrase if you know the meanings of the individual words constituting the phrase. But, even if you know the meanings of the words constituting an idiom, you may not know the idiom. We may not be able to use it in a proper context if we do not know the actual meaning/usage in which that particular idiom has been used in the language.

1.3 IDIOMS : AS PART OF A CULTURE

The New International Webster's College Dictionary defines an idiom as, "an expression not readily analyzable from its grammatical construction or from the meaning of its component parts. It is the part of the distinctive form or construction of a particular language that has a specific form or style present only in that language."

The above definition stands true to a considerable extent because to understand the meanings of many idioms, conversational parties must possess common cultural references - some foundational knowledge, information, or experience to use only within a culture. Take for instance the following idioms:

- 'A baker's dozen' - meaning 'thirteen'.

Origin: It used to be an old English market place tradition to pay for twelve bread rolls, and get an extra one, thrown in for good

measure, to make a total of thirteen. So, in the London market a baker's dozen doesn't mean twelve, it means thirteen.

➤ 'A feather in your cap' - meaning 'doing something well and worthy of recognition'.

Origin: In the old days, there was a practice followed by the hunters of wearing a fine-looking feather, stuck into the band of their caps as a sign of their hunting skills. So, in the present day we can say that someone deserves a feather in his cap when he has done something well and worthy of recognition.

Idioms are thus part of the culture. They can often be very difficult to understand. In some cases you may be able to guess the meaning from the context but if not, it is not easy to know the meaning. Because many idioms, for instance, come from favourite traditional British activities such as fighting, sailing, hunting and playing games. Not only this, there are some idioms which have words that were used two or three hundred years ago, or longer, and hence are a little obscure. Here is an example:

➤ *Jockeying for position* - just as in a horse-race, competitors have to jockey for position to see who can be first and who can get ahead of whom.

Now that the Prime Minister has been elected there will be a lot of *jockeying for position* to get the key posts in administration.

As culture typically is localized, idioms often are useless beyond their local context. Nevertheless, some idioms can be more universal than others, can be easily translated, and the metaphoric meaning can be deduced. As for instance, there are

some idioms which come from common human means and habits which have changed over time.

- 'To hold one's horses' - meaning 'to stop and wait patiently for someone or something.

Origin: It comes from a time when people rode horses and would have to hold their horses while waiting for someone or something.

1.4 STRUCTURE OF IDIOMS

Most idioms are unique and fixed in their structure. The expression *to sit on the fence* cannot become *to sit on a fence* or *to sit on the fences*. However there are many changes that can be made to an idiom.

- There can be changes in nouns, pronouns or in the verb tenses.

I sat on the fence and did not give my opinion. Many people are sitting on the fence and do not want to give their opinion.

- Adjectives and adverbs can also be added to an idiomatic phrase.

The politician has been sitting squarely in the middle of the fence since the election.

An idiom is a phrase which does not always follow the normal rules of meaning and grammar. Many idioms can undergo changes which would generally be considered to be wrong in the grammatical structure. Have a look at the following constructions:

- *To be broken* literally means that something is broken. The lamp is broken so I cannot read my book.

To be broke is grammatically incorrect, but it has the idiomatic meaning of to have no money.

I am broke and I cannot go to a movie tonight.

- *To curry favour with* means to *seek favour*.

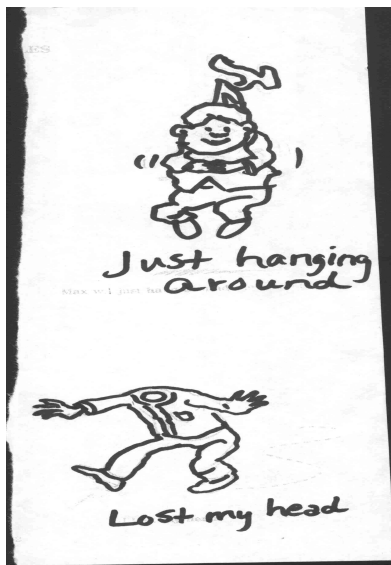
I hate to curry favour with such an upstart.

- *To dance attendance on* means to *wait on*.

I am not the person *to dance attendance on* a rich buffoon.

- *Husband our resources* means to *save*.

We must *husband our resources* against hard times.



1.5 IMPORTANCE OF IDIOMS

Idioms can be found everywhere - in newspapers, books, magazines, on the radio, on the television, in everyday conversation and at work. Being able to master idioms is almost

essential if you want your English to sound more native-like and less awkward. We use idioms to express something that other words do not express as clearly or cleverly. We often use an image or symbol to describe something as clearly as possible and thus make our point as effectively as possible. For example, *'in a nutshell'* suggests the idea of having all the information contained within very few words.

Understanding idiom can help you to communicate better with your colleagues and friends. Idioms beautify the language and establish the characteristic style of individual languages. Speech/Writing studded with idioms is generally considered as flowery language, although an overload of it, for that matter any nicety, may not be relished much. Lack of knowledge or understanding of idioms in a language prevents the learner from understanding the cultural niceties or peculiarities. All this apart, learning idioms makes understanding and using a language a lot easier and more fun!



1.6 HOW TO LEARN IDIOMS?

There are innumerable idioms in English. It is not possible to learn idioms by the rule of thumb. Properly using and understanding idioms is a high level language skill achieved well after a person masters grammar and vocabulary. A good and attentive reading is the best aid towards acquiring an appreciation and assimilation of idioms.

The best advice to you is not to make many efforts, trying to remember tons of idioms at one sitting, but to learn the most common ones gradually and naturally through the learning material or lively communication with native speakers. Remember that it is much better to be accurate in the non-idiomatic English than inappropriate when using idioms.

Though there are no golden rules for learning idioms, you may follow these simple steps whenever you come across a new idiom:

- i. Make a note of an idiom/expression.
- ii. Define and explain it in understandable words (including synonyms).
- iii. Try to frame three sentences using the expression.

In the section that follows I will try to do the same - familiarize you with an idiom, its meaning, and also provide you with a sample sentence.

1.7 LET'S LEARN IDIOMS AND FRAME SENTENCES FROM THEM

Here follows a list of idioms, but this list is by no means absolute. These are just a few idioms from the vast array of such expressions.

What is especially interesting about idioms is that they can be defined in different ways, depending on the functions they fulfill. Idiom can be a figure of speech, which means that the words in idiomatic expressions are used figuratively, rather than with their literal meaning.

I have here divided the idioms according to their use and function, for the convenience of presentation as well as your study.

1.7.1 IDIOM PHRASES USED AS NOUNS

- A,B,C (elementary facts)
 - He does not know the **A,B,C** of Mathematics.
- An apple of discord (a bone of contention, an object of quarrel)
 - This park is **an apple of discord** among all its co-sharers.
- An axe to grind (motive of self-interest)
 - When someone flatters me, I am afraid he has **an axe to grind**.
- Bed of roses (easy and comfortable)

- The way to success is not always a **bed of roses**.
- Bird's eye-view (a general view taken in at a glance)
- This book gives a **bird's eye-view** of the state.
- Broad day light (day time)
- The theft was committed in **broad day light**.
- Burning question (a much discussed current topic)
- Growing unemployment is a **burning question** now-a-days.
- Blue blood (aristocratic birth)
- He is proud of his **blue blood**.
- A close fisted man (a miser)
- Hari's father is a **close fisted man**.
- Crocodile tears (hypocritical)
- Her **crocodile tears** could not move anybody.
- Castle in the air (an unrealizable project)
- Your idea of making a fortune by this project is only a **castle in the air**.
- A drawn game (undecided)
- The football match ended in a **drawn game**.
- Far reaching effect (important)
- Advertisements have a **far-reaching effect** on children's minds.
- A far cry (a long distance)

- It is **a far cry** from Bombay to Burma.
- A fish out of water (out of element)
- In the company of the old men I felt like **a fish out of water.**
- A fool's paradise (deluded with false hopes)
- If you think you can get the job by trickery, then you are in **a fool's paradise.**
- Foregone conclusion (an anticipated result)
- Making you our team captain was a **foregone conclusion.**
- Hair-breadth escape (a narrow escape)
- The girl had just a **hair-breadth escape** from being run by the motor car.
- A hard nut to crack (difficult to solve)
- Unemployment problem is a **hard nut to crack.**
- An itching palm (greed for gain)
- In spite of having all the amenities of life, he has **an itching palm.**
- Jaundiced eye (a prejudiced mind)
- Why do you always look at my works with a **jaundiced eye ?**
- Jack of all trades (claiming to be all-knowing)
- He thinks himself to be the **jack of all trades.**
- Laughing stock (an object of ridicule)

- His peculiar manners make him a **laughing stock** for all.
- Leap in the dark (a risky step of uncertain consequences)
- By depositing your money in the unrecognized bank, you have taken a **leap in the dark**.
- Lion's share (major portion)
- His brother has got the **lion's share** of property from their father.
- Man of letters (a literate man)
- A **man of letters** is respected everywhere.
- Man of his words (faithful man)
- My father is a **man of his words**.
- An open secret (a matter known but not admitted)
- The partiality for you is **an open secret**.
- Pandora's box (a curse in the form of gift)
- The car that I got in the lottery proved to be a **Pandora's box** for me.
- Penelope's web (endless)
- His work seems to be a **Penelope's web**.
- Scape goat (a person singled out for punishment)
- We all were guilty but only John was a **scape goat**.
- Silver lining (a redeeming feature)
- Even a naughty boy can have a **redeeming feature**.

- Sworn enemy (a determined or irreconcilable enemy)
 - The two neighbours seem to be **sworn enemies**.
- Tall talk (exaggerated talk)
 - He only indulges in **tall talk** without doing anything of worth.
- Utopian scheme (a fanciful unrealizable scheme)
 - I don't want you to invest your money in such an **Utopian scheme**.
- White elephant (a costly but unprofitable establishment)
 - The shopping mall in this remote area will prove a **White elephant** for you.

1.7.2 IDIOM PHRASES USED AS VERBS

- Bear the brunt (face the utmost fury)
 - The Belgians had to **bear the brunt** of the German invasion.
- Boar down (overpower)
 - The Indian boxer has **bore down** his competitor.
- Bear down upon (attack quickly)
 - As soon as the major commands **bear down** upon the enemy.
- Bear a hand (help)
 - We will be glad to **bear a hand** in this noble job.

- Bear in mind (remember)
 - Always **bear in mind** the guidance given by your mother.
- Bear on (apply)
 - He can **bear on** his experience to solve this problem.
- Bear out (confirm, corroborates)
 - Your witness **bears out** the evidence of the earlier witness.
- Bear up (resist)
 - For your sake I can **bear up** against misfortune.
- Broke open (opened by breaking)
 - The robbers **broke open** the door.
- Broke cover (came out of concealment)
 - The mad dog **broke cover** and created all the panic.
- Broke down (failed)
 - Her health broke **down under** pressure of work.
- Broke into (enter by force)
 - The cow **broke into** the field.
- Broke off (stopped suddenly)
 - The politician **broke off** in the middle of his speech.
- Broke loose (got free)
 - The dog **broke loose** from its chain.
- Brought about (caused)

- The tsunami **brought about** mass devastation.
- Bring down (humble)
- This incident should **bring down** his pride.
- Brings forth (deliver)
- A lioness **brings forth** several cubs at a time.
- Brings in (result)
- Hard work **brings in** good harvest.
- Brings out (shows)
- A crisis **brings out** the real worth of man.
- Brings on (causes)
- Negligence to work **brings on** failure.
- Brought to book (charged)
- My friend was **brought to book** for her irregularity.
- Brought to light (disclosed)
- The secret was **brought to light** in the end.
- Called at (visited)
- On the eve of Durga Puja Geeta **called at** her nephew's home.
- Called for (demanded)
- The principal has **called for** his explanation on the quarrel.
- Call forth (evoke)
- Dangers **call forth** all the strength of a man.

- Call in (engage)
- **Call in** a doctor immediately.
- Call on (visit)
- I have to **call on** you in the afternoon.
- Called me names (abused)
- He **called me names** for such a petty mistake.
- Called to account (asked to explain)
- Rosy was **called to account** for her absence.
- Call to mind (remember)
- I cannot **call to mind** what I told him.
- Call a spade a spade (to be outspoken)
- I like people who have the courage to **call a spade a spade**.
- Carry out (execute)
- You must **carry out** my order immediately.
- Carried off (killed, removed)
- Many persons were **carried off** by the swine flu.
- Carried on (managed)
- His grandson **carried on** his business after his death.
- Cast down (dejected, depressed)
- He was much **cast down** by his result.
- Casting about (thinking)
- The thief was **casting about** for a way of escape.

- Come about (happened)
 - When did the accident **come about**?
- Came across (saw accidentally)
 - On my way to the market I **came across** your fiancée.
- Come at (reached)
 - After the long discussion we have **come at** this conclusion.
- Come of (to be born of)
 - He **comes of** a respectable family.
- Comes off (occurs)
 - His marriage **comes off** next Tuesday.
- Comes into force (operates)
 - The new law will **come into force** soon.
- Come out with flying colours (won)
 - Because of hard work and determination, our team **came out with flying colours**.
- Cut down (reduced)
 - You should **cut down** your intake of soft drinks.
- Do away with (give up)
 - Can't you **do away with** smoking?
- Done for (ruined)
 - If this project fails, I am **done for**.
- Done up (tired)

- I have worked for hours and I am **done up**.
- Do the needful (what is required)
- Please **do the needful** till I come.
- To eat humble pie (submit to humiliation)
- After so much tall talk, he had to **eat the humble pie**.
- Eating into my vitals (sapping life)
- The anxiety of the court case is **eating into my vitals**.
- Fall back upon (depend on)
- The old man has to **fall back upon** his sons.
- Fell on (attacked)
- We **fell on** the robbers and overpowered them.
- Fall a victim to (suffer)
- Many a good man **fall a victim** to treachery.
- Fall in (agree)
- I have to **fall in** with your opinion on the matter.
- Fell out (quarreled)
- The children **fell out** for the marbles.
- Fell short of (was less than)
- The rescue team **fell short** of medicines.
- Get at (reach)
- I have to **get at** my office positively by 10'O clock.
- Get on (manage)

- I cannot **get on** without your help.
- Got over (overcome)
- He has somehow **got over** the shock.
- Get on with (agree or live sociably with)
- It is hard to **get on with** a suspicious man.
- Get by heart (memorise)
- The school mistress asked the boy to **get by heart** his poem.
- Got the upper hand (dominated)
- The new party has **got the upper hand** in this election.



- Got the better of (defeated)
- Tom **got the better** of his rival by sheer skill.
- Gave away (handed over)
- Tina **gave away** her money to her brother.
- Give in (yield)

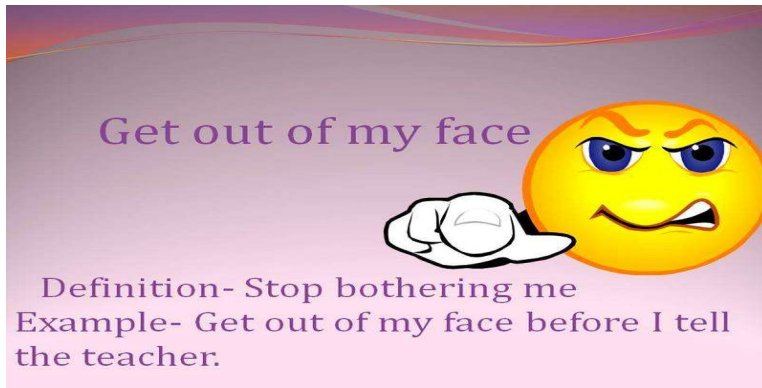
- The terrorist will rather die than **give in**.
- Gave out (declared, exhausted)
- The horses **gave out** at the next milestone.
- Give vent to (expressed)
- He **gave vent to** his anger with a roar.
- Go a-begging (found no acceptor)
- This post had to **go a-begging**.
- Go in for (appear at)
- I shall **go in for** the next interview.
- Go through (read, examine)
- Ma'am, can you please **go through** my paper now?
- Goes against the grain (is against natural inclination)
- I cannot **go against the grain** to help that ungrateful man.
- Go through fire and water (take all risk)
- I am prepared to **go through fire and water** for your sake.
- Held out (offered resistance)
- The hijackers **held out** for about fifteen days.
- Holds good (applies)
- This rule still **holds good**.
- Keeping up appearances (an outward show of prosperity)

- The mayor is somehow **keeping up appearances** though he has fallen on bad days.
- Keep back (conceal)
- They say, women cannot **keep back** secrets.
- Keep at arm's length (keep aloof)
- **Keep at arm's length** from bad company.
- Keep one's own counsel (keep silent)
- It is proper to **keep one's counsel** here rather to risk an opinion.
- Laid hold of (grasped)
- We **laid hold** of the opportunity.
- Let into (made acquaint with)
- I was **let into** the ongoing projects of the company.
- Looks down upon (hates, despises)
- You should not **look down** upon the poor.
- Look forward (awaited)
- We have long **look forward** to your visit.
- Make believe (pretend)
- You **make believe** that you don't know how to use a computer.
- To make both ends meet (keep out of debt)
- His whole life was a struggle **to make both ends meet**.

- Make good (fulfill)
- You ought to **make good** your promise.
- Making a mess of (managing badly)
- You have **made a mess** of the party.
- Made up my mind (decided)
- I have **made up my mind** to study diploma in aviation.
- Passed away (died)
- Her father **passed away** in an accident five years ago.
- Pass by (overlook)
- No one can **pass by** so touching a sight.
- Pay the penalty of (suffer)
- He had to **pay the penalty** of mixing with bad boys.
- Playing with edged tools (run risks)
- In dealing with the dangerous man you will be **playing with edged tools**.
- Played upon (deceived)
- The boy **played upon** the credulity of his uncle.
- Played into the hands (unconsciously surrendered)
- We **played into the hands** of that cunning man.
- Put by (save)
- He has learnt to **put by** for the future from a very early age.

- **To put down** (suppress)
 - I was resolved **to put down** resistance.
- Put off (leave)
 - **Put off** you luggage.
- Put to death (killed)
 - He was **put to death** on the spot.
- Put a good face upon (praised)
 - The teacher **put a good face** upon his student.
- Run after (pursue)
 - It is foolish to **run after** impossible things.
- Run down (exhausted)
 - He seems **run down** after work.
- Run the risk of (incur danger)
 - Because of your irregularity you **run the risk** of losing your job.
- Ran rampant (became widespread)
 - Corruption **ran rampant** in the society of the time.
- Run counter to (clashes with)
 - His views **ran counter** to mine.
- See through (understand)
 - I can **see through** your problem.
- See to (attend)

- I will ask the principle to **see to** your problem at the earliest.



- Set the ball rolling (started)
 - The Prime Minister has been highly praised for this project as it was he who **set the ball rolling**.
- Set my hand to (join)
 - These days I am too busy as I have **set my hand to** a new job.
- Set fire to (ignite)
 - That athlete **set fire to** the Olympic lamp.
- Set aside (rejected)
 - The authorities have **set aside** our entire claim.
- Stood up for (defended)
 - Gandhi **stood up for** social equality.
- Stand over (wait)
 - The matter may **stand over** till the next week.

- Stood their ground (maintained their position)
 - The young boys **stood their grounds** well against the veteran players.
- Stand by (support)
 - I will **stand by** your side even in your bad days.
- Taken aback (surprised)
 - Mother was **taken aback** by the rude behavior of the shopkeeper.
- Take it amiss (misunderstand)
 - Do not **take it amiss**.
- Took a fancy to (liked)
 - The girl **took a fancy to** Barbie dolls.
- Took to (resorted to)
 - The old man **took to** opium for his dyspepsia.
- Turned up (appeared)
 - The postman **turned up** at the right time.
- Turns upon (hinges on)
 - Everything **turns upon** the question of money.
- Blow hot and cold (are inconsistent)
 - You **blow hot and cold** in the same breadth.
- To blow your own trumpet (praise one's own self)
 - It does not become you **to blow your own trumpet**.

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- Burning the candle at both ends (losing doubly)
 - He is **burning the candle at both ends** by investing his money in a lost cause.
 - Burnt his fingers (suffered for his rashness)
 - By trying to insult his seniors he has **burnt his fingers**.
 - To fly in face of (defy)
 - He did not hesitate **to fly in the face of** his father.
 - Flew to each other's throat (rushed to strike)
 - The brothers **flew to each other's throat**.
 - Hit the right nail on the head (touched the exact point)
 - In you research paper you have **hit the right nail on head**.
 - Harping on the same string (dwelling persistently on the same topic)
 - You are **harping on the same string** of glorifying the past.
 - Let the grass grow under his feet (was prompt to act)
 - Having once obtained a foot hold, he did not **let the grass grow under his feet**.
 - Moved heaven and earth (tried his utmost)
 - I **moved heaven and earth** to clear Civil Service examination.
 - Nursed a grudge against (harboured ill-will)

- Ever since his defeat, he had always **nursed a grudge against me.**
- To run the gauntlet of (undergo criticism)
- The writer had **to run the gauntlet of** public.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS :

Make sentences from the following idioms:

1. brought to light
.....
2. bird's eye-view
.....
3. lion's share
.....
4. keep at arm's length
.....
5. turn a deaf ear to
.....
6. an apple of discord
.....
7. bear down upon
.....
8. call forth
.....
9. lay hands on
.....
10. moved heaven and earth
.....

1.7.3 IDIOM PHRASES USED AS COMPLEMENTS

- As good as his word (true to promise)
- Sita proved **as good as her word**.
- At home (strong, at ease)
- I feel **at home** in Arithmetic.
- At a loss (puzzled)
- I was **at a loss** what to say.
- At stake (in danger)
- His reputation was **at stake** because of the false news.
- At deadlock (at a stand-still)
- At present things are **at a deadlock**.
- In the dark (ignorant)
- You must not keep your parents **in the dark**.
- In a fix (puzzled)
- I am **in a fix**.
- In vogue (current)
- This style is **in vogue**.
- Worth his salt (efficient)
- The new worker was **worth his salt**.
- At their wit's end (puzzled)
- The clever thief left the policemen **at their wit's end**.

- At sea (confused)
 - I am quite **at sea**, and don't know what to do.
- From the frying pan into the fire (an equally difficult position)
 - By changing his position, he has shifted **from the frying pan into the fire**.
- In right earnest (seriously)
 - Begin your work **in the right earnest**.
- In jeopardy (at stake)
 - My whole fortune is now **in jeopardy**.
- In my mind's eye (imagination)
 - I can figure out the scene **in my mind's eye**.
- Of one accord (of one mind)
 - We were all **of one accord** in the matter.
- On the alert (watchful)
 - The watch was not **on the alert** when the robbery took place.
- Under lock and key (in a safe)
 - Always keep your important documents **under lock and key**.
- Out of date (obsolete)
 - This sort of fashion is already **out of date**.

1.7.4 ADVERBIAL IDIOMATIC PHRASES

- All along (throughout)
- **All along**, he was with us.
- All at once (suddenly)
- This happened **all at once**.
- As a matter of fact (really)
- **As a matter of fact**, I know his secret.
- As luck would have it (unfortunately)
- My crops failed badly **as luck would have it**.
- At all costs (at any sacrifice whatever)
- I need to reach Goa today **at all costs**.
- Behind the scene (internally)
- What is going **behind the scene**?
- By all means (certainly)
- You should **by all means** help your neighbor.
- By no means (on no account)
- I shall **by no means** excuse him.
- From hand to mouth (from day to day)
- His family lives **from hand to mouth**.
- In good faith (unsuspectingly)
- I told him the secret **in good faith**.
- On second thoughts (subsequently)

- I rejected his application, but **on second thoughts** I accepted it.
- With one accord (together)
- **With one accord** they demanded an enquiry.

1.7.5 IDIOM PHRASES USED AS CONJUNCTION

- As long as (while)
- You can stay here **as long as** it rains.
- In as much as (because)
- We suffered **in as much as** we neglected our work.
- In so far as (to the extent that)
- I defended him **in so far as** I could without ruining my reputation.
- Unless and until (till and expect when)
- I cannot believe your words **unless and until** you prove it.
- In so much that (with the result that)
- It rained all day **in so much that** we could not go out.

1.7.6 IDIOM PHRASES AS PREPOSITIONS

- At the threshold of (at the outset)
- He is **at the threshold of** his career.

- At variance with (inconsistent)
- Your words are **at variance with** your conduct.
- By dint of (by force of)
- He got the first prize **by dint of** his hard work.
- In the good books of (in the favour of)
- You are **in the good books** of your tutor.
- In the twinkling of (in a moment)
- The thief disappeared **in the twinkling** of an eye.
- In the good graces of (favoured)
- You are **in good graces of** the authority.
- In the gift of (at disposal)
- My books are **in the gift of** my friend.
- In quest of (in search of)
- He went too far **in quest of** water.
- Under the very nose of (in front of)
- The accident took place **under the very nose of** the traffic police.
- On the brink of (near)
- The old man is **on the brink of** his death.
- On an errand of (on a message)
- Swami set him **on an errand of** peace.
- On tiptoe to (noiselessly)
- He walked **on tiptoe to** the door.

- On tiptoe for (in eager expectation of)
 - We are all **on tiptoe for** the examination results.
- With an eye to (aiming at)
 - Always work **with an eye to** your future.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS :

Make sentences from the following idioms:

1. under lock and key
.....
2. of one accord
.....
3. as good as his words
.....
4. in a fix
.....
5. at the eleventh hour
.....
6. in a nutshell
.....
7. as luck would have it
.....
8. from hand to mouth
.....
9. on the brink of
.....
10. on tiptoe for
.....

1.7.7 IDIOMS COMPOSED OF A PAIRS OF WORDS

- Again and again (repeatedly)
- My mother warned me **again and again**.
- All and sundry (everyone without exception)
- We invited **all and sundry** to our party.
- All in all (all-powerful)
- He thinks himself to be the **all in all** of the team.
- Backward and forwards (up and down)
- The manager was pacing **backward and forwards** in great anxiety.
- (At my) beck and call (ready to oblige)
- My best friend is always at my **beck and call**.
- Cut and dried scheme (ready made)
- The committee placed a **cut and dried scheme** for doing the work.
- Fair and square (honest)
- I am always **fair and square** in my dealings.
- Flesh and blood (body)
- The statue seems to have **flesh and blood**.
- Length and breadth (all over)

- The creepers have covered the **length and breadth** of this old palace.
- Lock and key (in a safe)
- Safe and sound (beyond any risk)
- She reached New York **safe and sound**.
- To and fro (backwards and forwards)
- The pendulum is moving **to and fro**.
- A part and parcel of (portion)
- She is **a part and parcel** of our family.
- By hook or by crook (by means fair and foul)
- I want to win the game **by hook or by crook**.
- Pros and cons of (points for and against)
- Can I know the **pros and cons** of the project?
- A hue and cry (clamour)
- The rumor of a bomb created **a hue and cry**.

1.8 SOME MORE IDIOMS AND PHRASES

Here follows a list of some more idioms and phrases with their meanings. Try to frame sentences with them yourself.

- A barefaced lie (a shameless and obvious lie)
- A bundle of energy (full of power and energy)

- A bundle of nerves (very stressed)
- A drop in the bucket (a small part of the whole)
- A hard nut to crack (difficult, inflexible person)
- A storm in a tea cup (a big fuss about nothing)
- Add fuel to the flames (make a bad situation worse by adding an extra provocation or complication)
- At one's wits end (running out of ideas about what to do with a problem)
- At the drop of a hat (in no time at all)
- Bare your breast (tell all that you know)
- Be on your toes (be careful, be prepared)
- Pain in the neck (an obnoxious or bothersome person or event)
- Cost an arm and a leg (something is very expensive or costly)
- With flying colors (to do something with great success)
- Green with envy (very jealous, full of envy)

There are a lot more idioms in English. It is beyond the scope of this unit to familiarize you with more idioms. So, try to explore them for yourself and have fun!

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS :

Make sentences from the following idioms:

1. all and sundry

.....

2. by hook or by crook

.....

3. length and breadth of

.....

4. far and wide

.....

5. to and fro

.....

6. be on your toes

.....

7. a hard nut to crack

.....

8. green with envy

.....

9. on cloud nine

.....

10. raining cats and dogs

.....

1.9 LET'S SUM UP

In this unit I have tried to familiarize you with some of the common English idioms with their meaning. I have also provided an example sentence for each idiom. I have talked a bit about the relation of idioms to culture, and also the structure and use of idioms. There are some illustrated idiom images in the unit, which should refresh your mind. Don't you feel that idioms can also make great projects for art? Hope this unit is able to guide you in learning idioms and framing sentences from idioms. Try to enrich your communication skills by learning more and more idioms.

SUGGESTED READING

- 1) Wren and Martin (2010) *High School English Grammar and Composition*, New Delhi : S.Chand & Company Ltd.
- 2) Collis, Harry and Russo, Mario (1987) *101 American English Idioms*, McGraw-Hill
- 3) Hinds-Howell, David and M Gulland, Daphne (2002) *The Penguin Dictionary of English Idioms*, Penguin

UNIT - 2

PARAGRAPH WRITING

Structure

- 2.0 Objectives
 - 2.1 Introduction
 - 2.2 Definition and Features
 - 2.2.1 Introduction: Information and Definition
 - 2.2.2 Features of a Good Paragraph
 - 2.3 How to Write a Paragraph
 - 2.3.1 General Discussion
 - 2.3.2 Arrangement of a Paragraph with Jumbled Sentences
 - 2.3.3 Development of a Paragraph Finding out
Missing Links
 - 2.3.4 Writing a Paragraph Developing Information
 - 2.3.5 Writing a Paragraph on a given Topic Activity
 - 2.4 Sample Paragraphs Sample Paragraphs Activities
 - 2.5 Let us Sum Up
- Glossary
- Possible Answers
- Model Questions
- Reference

2.0 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to :

- *know* what a paragraph is
- *find* out the features of a good paragraph
- *arrange* a paragraph from jumbled sentences
- *develop* a paragraph finding out missing links
- *write* a paragraph developing information
- *write* a paragraph on a given topic

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In the first unit of this block we have discussed how sentences are framed with words. Now we are to talk about arrangement of sentences into a group and learn how to write a paragraph without any guidance. A good paragraph always has some characteristics or features. We should remember those while writing a paragraph. In this unit you will find introductory information about a paragraph and will be aware of the features of a good paragraph. Then there will be tips for writing a paragraph. The sample paragraphs worked out also give us hints about how to write a paragraph. This is done step by step from guided composition to independent composition of a paragraph. You will learn how to arrange, develop and write a paragraph by yourself. There are activities to check your progress, probable answers, and glossary of words, model questions and list of books for further reading.

2.2 DEFINITION AND FEATURES

2.2.1 Introductory Information and Definition

You have already known that sentences are arranged together to make a paragraph. And you have seen and read so many paragraphs while reading any prose writing like an essay, an article or a story. You have seen that every paragraph is arranged separately in a longer writing. Do you know why? It is because every paragraph deals with a particular idea, statement or point and that is stated by the topic sentence. A paragraph begins with a new line and is indented. The length of a paragraph varies according to the necessity to clarify the controlling idea. A paragraph should have unity of thought and unity of structure. A good paragraph always has coherence or logical link. All other sentences of a paragraph are directed to establish the single controlling idea stated by the topic sentence.

Following the above discussion we can define a paragraph to be a distinct unit of prose writing developing round a single controlling idea and having unity and coherence among the sentences.

2.2.2 Features of a Good Paragraph

Singleness of Thought Stated by the Topic Sentence

A good paragraph always develops round a single idea or point. No paragraph contains more than one idea. The sentence that states the single idea or point is said to be the 'topic sentence'. All other sentences go forward to explain, support, describe or

establish that single idea stated by the topic sentence. The topic sentence usually occurs at the beginning or at the end. It occurs only occasionally at the middle.

Unity

You have already known that a paragraph is a distinct unit in prose writing and a paragraph always keeps that unity both in thought and in structure.

(i) Unity of thought

All the sentences of a paragraph lead to illustrate, support or establish a single thought, idea or point. A good paragraph does not bear more than one point. A paragraph is a distinct unit or distinct part of a longer writing only because it deals with a distinct idea or point. All the sentences of a paragraph follow a direction to explain, establish or support the idea stated by the topic sentence.

(ii) Unity of Structure

Sentences of a paragraph maintain a unity of structure. They are linked or joined with sentence linkers or connectives. It brings free flow while reading, helps to maintain unity of thought and makes the thought more clear.

Coherence

Coherence means having logical order or link. The sentences of a paragraph have logical link among themselves.

They have a tendency to follow a logical order. Every sentence should be linked to the sentence that goes before and after it. And all the sentences explain, support or establish the topic sentence. Events in a narrative paragraph follow the sequence of time and a descriptive paragraph may follow the sequence of importance. We have to use our reasoning, while we arrange sentences in a paragraph. Coherence is maintained with the repetition of key words, use of synonyms, use of connectives or sentence linkers and pronouns for nouns already referred.

Clarity

Clarity is an important feature of any writing. Clarity in a paragraph is achieved by paying importance to the controlling idea or thought around which the paragraph develops. The key words stating the central idea are repeated and synonyms for them are used time and again. Simple sentences and simple words are used instead of complex sentences and difficult words to achieve clarity. Logical sequence or coherence also helps to achieve clarity.

2.3 HOW TO WRITE A PARAGRAPH?

2.3.1 General Discussion

The aim of this unit is to make you able to write a paragraph by yourself and that is a process of free composition. Now, we are precisely at that stage of teaching/learning how to write a paragraph. A paragraph is a short piece of free composition. And before going to that step of writing a paragraph, let us go through

guided composition of a paragraph to make the things easier, O.K.? In the following subsection 2.3.2, you will learn how to arrange jumbled sentences into a paragraph. In 2.3.3 you will observe how to develop a paragraph finding out missing links. In 2.3.4 you will learn how to write a paragraph developing information given in hints and at last in the subsection 2.3.5 you will learn how to write a paragraph on a given topic. At that step your knowledge of logical arrangement of sentences, finding missing links, developing information etc. will help you to write a paragraph by yourself.

2.3.2 Arrangement of a Paragraph with Jumbled Sentences

The sentences are already there. We are to arrange them in the proper order. But how? Let us find out the topic sentence first. We have to read the sentences till we find out the controlling thought and topic sentence. Then we have to arrange other sentences following a logical order. To do this we have to use our reasoning. If we find that the topic sentence is a proverbial saying, a statement, a theme or a problem then it must come first and we have to arrange other sentences to explain, support, or establish it. If the topic sentence is a conclusion or a result, it will go to the end and all other sentences will work in the form of explanation, reasoning, example etc. and we should arrange them in such a way that we can come to the conclusion stated by the topic sentence smoothly.

Example

Jumbled Sentences

Liberal education teaches us how to live; vocational how to make a living. But the need for imparting vocational education was felt long ago. In India in the past more stress has always been laid on liberal education rather than on vocational. Mahatma Gandhi, who knew the pulse of India, emphasized on the fact that as the country was poor, students should be able to 'earn while they learn'. There are two types of education - liberal and vocational.

Worked out Paragraph :

There are two types of education - liberal and vocational. Liberal education teaches us how to live; vocational how to make a living. In India in the past more stress has always been laid on liberal education rather than on vocational. But the need for imparting vocational education was felt long ago. Mahatma Gandhi, who knew the pulse of India, emphasized on the fact that as the country was poor, students should be able to 'earn while they learn'.

2.3.3 Development of a Paragraph Finding out Missing Links

Developing a paragraph finding out missing links is another example of guided composition of a paragraph. The topic sentence is already present there, though not in a complete form. All the sentences are at their right order. And all the information is there in the form of some incomplete sentences. So, our task here is to

find out the missing links and fill in the blanks. No doubt, we are given full freedom to rewrite the sentences. But if you want to add new sentences, you should be very careful. The single controlling idea should not be blurred and the logical sequence of sentences should not be disturbed. A good word stock would be a great help here.

Information with Missing Links :

Though there was no telescope thousand of years ago _____ studied the position and movements of the sun, the moon and the stars. _____ towers to observe from them ____ with their naked eyes _____ like telescope came much later. To house these tools observatories _____. It is very important to select _____ for an astronomical observatory. The place should have appropriate _____ such as clear days and nights without cloud. _____ little haze, rain and snow.

Worked out Paragraph :

Though there was no telescope thousands of years ago yet people of the ancient times studied the position and movement of the sun, the moon and the stars. They built lofty towers to observe from them the heavenly bodies with their naked eyes. Astronomical tools like the telescope came much later. To house these tools observatories had to be built. It is very important to select the right place for an astronomical weather conditions such as clear days and nights without cloud. There should be little haze, rain and snow.

2.3.4 Writing a Paragraph Developing Information

When we have to write a paragraph with given hints for informations, first we have to develop the hints to complete sentences. The next step will be to arrange the sentences into a paragraph. If the informations are in logical order, we are only to join them with sentence linker or connectives. If the informations are jumbled, we have to find out the topic sentence and apply our reasoning to arrange the sentences in chronological order or in the order of importance, whichever is appropriate. Joining the sentences with connectives etc will give structural unit and continuity to the paragraph.

Informations

Here are some informations about one Raju to write a paragraph about him.

- (i) When was Raju born? (March, 15, 1986)
- (ii) Who and what is his father? (Mr S.K. Dutta, a doctor)
- (iii) Where has he grown up? (Jorhat)
- (iv) Where has he received his higher education? (J.B. College, Dibrugarh University)
- (v) What is his educational qualification? (M.A., English, Diploma in Computer Application)
- (vi) What is his hobby? (Photography)
- (vii) What is his aim in life? (To be a Professor of English)

Worked out Paragraph :

Raju is a young boy of twenty five years. He was born on March, 15, 1986. The name of his father is Mr S.K. Dutta, who is a doctor. Raju has been brought up at Jorhat and he has received his college education at J.B. College, Jorhat. He is an M.A. in English with a diploma in Computer Application from Dibrugarh University. His hobby is photography and his aim of life is to be a professor of English in a University.

2.3.5. Writing a Paragraph on a Give Topic

When we are given a topic to write a paragraph, we naturally ask ourselves what we know about it. We may ask ourselves some questions about the topic and try to find out answers. We may write down what informations we gather about the topic and select some important informations to be used and reject the others. The given topic would provide us the topic sentence. We can put our topic sentence at the beginning or at the end and arrange all other sentences or informations to explain or establish our topic sentence. We can provide examples to make the topic clear.

To maintain the singleness of the controlling idea or to become precise, we must use only those informations that are directly related to the given topic. If you are asked to write a paragraph on "Television as an Aid to Education', write only how television helps to educate people, do not go to say about the harms caused by television or how a television is made etc.

To maintain coherence we have to arrange the informations logically and in order of importance. We can repeat key words if necessary and use synonyms. We can use pronouns in place of already used nouns. We must use sentence linkers or connectives to maintain structural unity and to keep continuity.

It is already referred that a paragraph is a distinct unit of prose writing and it begins on a new line and is indented i.e. the first line begins a little more to the right of the page than other lines.

There is no hard and fast rule about the number of words and length of a paragraph. Shorter paragraphs are used to explain or establish a particular point or idea and longer paragraphs are used to describe something in technical writings.

Example

Write a Paragraph on 'Science as a Blessing'

Science has blessed human life with comforts infinite. Man has conquered nature and is not afraid of elements of nature. Electricity has torn the veil of darkness. Summer heat has to bow down to air-conditioning. Flood has been prevented by big embankment. Sea water has been turned to drinking water. Medical science has made human life longer and healthier. Distance has been cut short by trains and aero planes. World is turned to a global village by TV, computer and internet. Man becomes the lord of the world with the blessings of science.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS I

(i) *Develop the following informations into a paragraph finding out missing links.*

Success in life depends on hard labour. Some people think that _____ luck and chance. It is not true. Scientists' _____ in their laboratories to invent _____ etc. which have made our life comfortable. America has got its power and position _____ of its citizens. We Indian must learn to _____ to raise _____ of our country in the world. _____

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

(ii) *Write a paragraph on 'Benefits of Physical Exercise'*

Hints:

- Helps to keep physical fitness
- Healthy body breeds healthy mind
- Teaches sportsman spirit -co-operation, friendliness et c.
- Necessity in the modern world.

.....

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

2.4 Sample Paragraphs

2.4.1. Arrangement of a Paragraph

1. Jumbled Sentences

I was eager to leave my house and I left without saying goodbye to anybody. I was going to join my college at Chandigarh as a hosteller. I was already at my school-hostel for some years and no such attraction towards home. I did not kiss her goodbye and started exploring the new place. That is when I realized there is no place like home. But as I was going to sleep, I experienced the terror of loneliness and insecurity and tears rolled down my cheeks. I had a row with my mother during the journey.

Worked Out Paragraph

I was going to join my college in Chandigarh as a hosteller. I was eager to leave my house and I left without saying goodbye to anybody. I was already at my school-hostel for some years and no such attraction towards home. I had a row with my mother during the journey. I did not kiss her goodbye and started

exploring the new place. But as I was going to sleep, I experienced the terror of loneliness and insecurity and tears rolled down my cheeks. That is when I realized there is no place like home.

Note : The topic sentence at the last

2. Jumbled Sentences

The Middle Ages smelt abominably. Drainage by means of which refuse of all kinds are got rid of is a new thing in civilization. Think of the use of drains in large cities. In particular people are apt to catch diseases like typhoid fever. Now, where there is rotting refuse, there is always a danger of plague. There was no way of disposing of refuse, which lay about in heaps and stank.

Worked out Paragraph

Think of the use of drains in large cities. Drainage by means of which refuse of all kinds are got rid of is a new thing in civilization. The Middle Ages smelt abominably. There was no way of disposing of refuse, which lay about in heaps and stank. Now, wherever there is rotting refuse, there is always a danger of plague. In particular people are apt to catch diseases like typhoid fever.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS 2

Q. Arrange the following jumbled sentences into a Paragraph.

It affects the size, shape and colour of plants and animal and also the ways in which they grow and live. We get our food, clothing, shelter and all other necessary substances from the environment. Environment has a great effect on plants and animals. Even the survival of some particular organism depends on environment. We must study our environment and try to find solutions for environmental problems. He lives surrounded by what he has made. Man's environment is also cultural.

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2.4.2 Development of Paragraph : Finding out Missing Links

1. Informations with Missing Links

One day I entered a dark cave with a torch _____. After entering half kilometer _____. I stumbled on a stone and fell down. _____ slipped from my hand and broke into pieces. _____ a candle but could not find one. I groped my way back _____ and

finally with bruises all over _____ out of the cave into the broad daylight. The first thing I wanted to do _____ was to light a cigarette and relax.

Worked out Paragraph

One day I entered a dark cave with a torch in my hand. After entering half a kilometer inside the dark cave I stumbled on a stone and fell down. My torch slipped from my hand and broke into pieces. I searched for a candle but could not find one. I groped my way back in the dark and finally with bruises all over I stumbled out of the cave into the broad daylight. The first thing I wanted to do after coming out of the cave was to light a cigarette and relax.

2. Informations with missing links

And yet, adventure is always _____ and the wide world still beckons _____ courage and spirit, and the stars hurl their challenge_____. Need _____ Poles or the deserts or the mountains _____ when the adventure of life is there for all who care? What a mess _____ of this life of ours and of human society? With plenty of joy and a free development of the human spirit _____ we yet starve in misery and have our spirit crushed in a slavery worse _____ the old. Let us _____ to change this, so that human beings may _____ their great inheritance and _____ full of beauty and joy.

Worked out Paragraph

And yet, adventure is always there for the adventurous and the wide world still beckons to those who have courage and spirit and the stars hurl their challenge across the skies. Need one go to the Poles or the deserts or the mountains for adventure when the adventure of life is there for all who care? What a mess we have made of this life of ours and of human society! With plenty of joy and free development of human spirit open to us, we yet starve in misery and have our spirits crushed in a slavery worse than that of old. Let us our bit to change this, so that human beings may become worthy of their great inheritance and make their lives full of beauty and joy.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS 3

Q. Write a paragraph with the informations below finding out missing links.

The first great discovery that man probably made was that of Fire. We _____ by a match. But _____ recent things. In old times _____ by rubbing two flints against each other till a spark came, _____ to pieces of dry straw or some other dry things. _____ by themselves in the forest perhaps by the rubbing together of flints or something else. Animals were _____ to learn anything from them. But man was claver _____ the use of fire. It kept him warm _____ and frightened away his enemies _____ the big animals.



2.4.3 Writing a Paragraph Developing informations

1. Informations in questions and answers

- (i) What do you mean by air pollution? (load the air with poisonous gases, dust and smoke)
- (ii) How can air pollution harm us? (respiratory diseases like asthma and even cancer)
- (iii) What are the specific phenomena related to air pollution? (Ozone depletion and global warming)
- (iv) What are the causes of air pollution? (petrol fumes, vehicle emit poisonous gases, industries and construction work)
- (v) How can we prevent air pollution? (Regular servicing of vehicle, safe distance to locate industries, protects forest etc.)

Worked out Paragraph

Air pollution means to load the air with poisonous gases, dust and smoke. Air pollution harms not only human bodies but also the whole atmosphere of the world in various ways. Air pollution can cause respiratory diseases like asthma and even cancer. There are two important and specific phenomena relating to air pollution. They are ozone depletion and global warming. Tremendous changes may be caused by these effects upon the atmospheric condition of the world. Air is polluted by petrol fumes, vehicle emits poisonous gases, industries and construction work. It can be prevented to some extent by regular servicing of vehicle, safe distance maintained by industries from cities, protection of forest etc.

2. Informations in questions and answers

- (i) Do you think that having more machines means being more civilized? (No.)
- (ii) What does being civilized mean? (peaceful and comfortable living, beautiful things and free thinking)
- (iii) How can machine help man to become more civilized? (giving more time and energy to think, to do and to make beautiful things)
- (iv) How can modern man make this civilization most lasting? (preventing war, diseases and poverty)

Worked out Paragraph

Having more machines does not mean being more civilized. Civilization means peaceful and comfortable living, having beautiful things to make life enjoyable and ability to think freely to find out new things. Machine can help man to become more civilized by giving more time and energy to do welfare work and to think freely. Modern man can make this civilization most lasting by preventing war, diseases and poverty.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS 4

Q. Write a paragraph developing informations from the questions and answers below.

When was the concluding function of your Annual College Week held? (7 December, 2010)

Where was it held? (College Auditorium)

Who presided over the function? (Principal)

Who was the Chief-guest? (Chairman, G.B.)

How was the lecture of the Chief-guest? (Interesting and informative)

Who distributed the prizes? (Principal and Chief guest)

How did it come to and end? (With a cultural function)

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2.4.3 Writing a paragraph on a given topic.

1. Write a paragraph on 'Benefits of Reading Newspaper'

The newspaper is an essential companion of modern man. He has to keep himself aware of the local, national and global news. So, he has to read the newspaper for updating his knowledge about the world. Newspaper makes a man well-informed of different works going on in different fields of activity. Newspaper has a great role as an educator of its readers. The range of a man's knowledge expands through newspaper. A man becomes acquainted with inventions of science and technology, theories of social sciences, art and literature etc going through the pages of a news paper. A newspaper trains and inspires a budding politician, social thinker or even a social worker with necessary informations. Newspaper is a great force in organizing public opinion and directing public activities. And a newspaper reader can take part in such activities. So, the benefits of reading newspaper is various and vast.

2. Write a paragraph expanding the thought contained in 'A little learning is a dangerous thing'

Knowledge is always great. But little learning is dangerous. Little learning or imperfect knowledge may lead to wrong notions. A man of little learning tries to show off his knowledge and misleads others. A little learning about something may lead to great confusion. If we learn anything we should try to have a clear idea about it, otherwise one may make mistakes and confuse others. So, the English poet Alexander Pope says -

'A little learning is a dangerous thing

Drink deep or taste not the Pierian Spring'.

3. Write a paragraph on 'Computer Education'.

Computer is now an unavoidable part of global world. Every office or institution does its dealings through computer. Every educated person has access to computer education and knows at least how to handle it. Every type of written communication is now going on through computer - laptop or desktop. So, computer education is a must for all. Computer education begins at school and goes on upto the engineering course. There are courses like Bachelor of Computer Appliance, Master of Computer Appliance, Appliance, courses on computer hardware and computer software etc. Many young men with computer education from developing countries are going to work at developed countries of the west.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS 5

Q. Write a paragraph on 'Travelling as a Part of Education'

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2.5 LET US SUM UP

In this unit we have discussed what a paragraph is and found out a possible definition i.e. - a paragraph is a distinct unit of prose writing developing round a single controlling idea and having unit and coherence among the sentences.

We have discussed the important features of a paragraph i.e. (i) singleness of thought started by the topic sentence (ii) Unity (iii) coherence (iv) clarity.

Then we have come to how to write a paragraph and discussed it in four sections with examples and activities --- 124(i)

Arrangement of paragraph with jumbled sentences

- (i) Development of a paragraph finding missing links
- (ii) Writing a paragraph developing informations
- (iv) Writing a paragraph on a given topic

We have given ample sample paragraph to help you to clear your ideas about arrangement, development and writing a paragraph. We have also given activities at the end of sections to check your progress.

GLOSSARY :

Clarity - quality of being clear

Coherence - logical arrangement

Key words - words carrying most important thoughts

Singleness - quality of being single

Topic sentence - sentence that states the thought or topic of the paragraph

POSSIBLE ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

CYP I

- (i) Success in life depends on hard labour. Some people think that success depends on luck and chance. It is not true. Scientists work hard in their laboratories to invent telephone, television, computer etc which have made our life comfortable. America has got its power and position due to hard labour of its citizens. We Indians must learn to work hard to raise the status of our country in the world.

(ii) Benefits of physical exercise are many and varied. It has effects on our body, mind and even on our behaviour. It helps to keep us physically fit. Mental labour without physical exercise is the cause of many diseases. So, we would develop a habit of doing physical exercises. Healthy bodies breed healthy minds. Only a healthy body can keep us happy. Physical exercise like games and team work teaches us sportsman spirit i.e. to take everything playfully. It also teaches us co-operation and friendliness. Most of the city-dwellers in modern time earn their living by doing office work. So, it is very much necessary for them to do some physical exercise.

CYP 2

Environment has a great effect on plants and animals. It affects the size, shape and colour of plants and animals and also the way in which they grow and live. Even the survival of some particular organism depends on environment. We get our food, clothings, shelter and all our necessary substances from the environment. Man's environment is also cultural. He lives surrounded by what he has made. We must study our environment and try to find solutions for environmental problems.

CYP 3

The first great discovery that man probably made was that of fire. We light a fire by a match. But matches are quite recent things. In old times fires

were made by rubbing two flints against each other till a spark came, and this spark set fire to pieces of dry straw or some other dry things. Fires sometimes occur by themselves in the forest perhaps by the rubbing together of flints or something else. Animals were not clever enough to learn anything from them. But man was clever. He saw the use of fire. It kept him warm in the winter and frightened away his enemies, the big animals.

CYP 4

The concluding function of our Annual College Week was held on December 7, 2011. The venue was College Auditorium. The Principal of our College presided over the meeting. And the Chief-Guest was the chairman of the Governing Body of our college. He delivered an interesting and informative lecture. Prizes were distributed by the Principal and the Chief-guest. The President's speech was short but informative. The function concluded with a brief tidy cultural function,

CYP 5

Travelling as a Part of Education

When we read about a place we get only those informations which the author gives us. But when we travel a place we get everything directly. We see the place, know the geography, see the rivers and hills, meet the people, observe their culture and enjoy

their festivals. We can learn their language and notice their economic and social status. By traveling we can learn co-operation, strengthen our confidence and develop our ways of behaviour. We are inspired to learn new things. We appreciate values, manners and ways of doing things from others and are inspired to take up new enterprises. Travel gives us an analytical insight to look at the life and the world.

Self Assessment Questions

Write short paragraphs on each of the following topics:

- (i) Students and Politics
- (ii) Biodiversity
- (iii) Use of College Library
- (iv) Necessity of Environmental Study
- (v) Mobile Phone
- (vi) Knowledge is Power
- (vii) Necessity is the Mother of Invention
- (viii) Your Favourite Cricketer
- (ix) The Advertising Industry

References :

1. The Written Word, Vandana R. Singh, O.U.P.
2. Written Communication, Sunil Borthakur, Banalata, Dibrugarh.

UNIT - III

NOTE MAKING / SHORT NOTES / WRITING MEMOS

STRUCTURE

- 3.0. Objectives
- 3.1. Introduction
- 3.2. Necessity of Note Making
 - 3.2.1. Methods of Note Making
 - 3.2.2. Mechanism of Note Making
 - 3.2.2.1. Procedures to be adopted in Making Notes
 - 3.2.3. Salient Features of Good Notes
 - 3.2.4. Difference between Note Making and Note Taking
- 3.3. Necessity of Short Notes
 - 3.3.1. Procedures adopted in making Short Notes
- 3.4. Definition of Memo
 - 3.4.1. Parts of Memo
 - 3.4.2. Uses of Memo
- 3.5. Let us Sum up
- 3.6. References
- 3.8. Suggested Reading

3.0. OBJECTIVES

As we have explained in the previous two Units of this Block, several fresh spheres of expressing ideas in English and how to write purpose fully, now let us begin with what Note Making, Short Notes and Memos are, why they are needed and how they are used in communication in English. After going through this Unit, you will be able to-

- *define* the basic skills of written communication
in English
- *list* the different modes of writing in English
- *differentiate* between Note Making and Note
Taking
- *infer* the procedure adopted in making Short Notes
- *explain* the different fields of using Memos
- *generalize* the analytical and interpretative
capacity in English

3.1. INTRODUCTION

In the earlier Units of this Block, you have obtained a fairly good insight in to the two types of letters, namely- letter of application and letter of complaint .Let us begin with Note Making, Short Notes and Memos. Note Making is an extremely useful practice that enables the reader or the listener to preserve

information for future use. Just as there could be varied reasons for taking Notes, similarly there are several methods of Note Making. Whatever the methods you adopt would depend on what you wish to make Notes of, the situation you are in at the given time and of course what method you feel most comfortable. Further there could be several reasons for taking down Short Notes and there are several points to be kept in mind while writing a Short Note. Moreover, Memo is informal business communication, usually without a personal signature. It is generally used for internal communication of all kinds.

After studying this Unit, you will be able to assess your ideas with the previous knowledge. You will find the Unit interesting because this shifts the focus of interest gradually from those areas which are familiar to you, to those in which it ought to be developing an interest.

3.2. NECESSITY OF NOTE MAKING

Almost every one of us often finds ourselves in situations where we need to take notes. It is an important study skill. You may want to do so while attending a seminar, listening to a talk or a speech or simply during the daily ritual of attending classes. In this respect, we need to draw the main points of the materials we read as it is difficult to remember large chunks of information. So, we have to take resort in Making Notes. Note Making is an extremely useful practice that enables the readers or the listener to preserve information for future use. How attentive we may be and how much we may concentrate, it is often difficult to retain

and retrieve all that we hear, read or see. Notes are usually jotted down for personal use but you must make an effort to write clearly and legibly so as to be able to decipher your handy work even after a long gap of time by when memory of the original task may have been reduced to being a hazy imprint in your mind.

There could be several reasons for taking down notes. These are-

- i. to maintain a record of the speaker's or writer's ideas.
- ii. to assist one's memory while revising the same at a later date
- iii. for better absorption of the said ideas by putting them in black and white.

3.2.1. METHODS OF NOTE MAKING

Just as there could be varied reasons for taking notes, similarly there are several methods of Note Making. These can broadly be categorized as under-

- i. Notes taken while listening
- ii. Notes taken while reading
- iii. Notes from memory
- iv. Short hand notes
- v. Tape recording
- vi. Photo copying
- vii. Underlining, highlighting, marking etc.

i. Notes taken while listening : Results in tangible and very positive notes and is certainly a very good way of assimilating fresh information. The chances, however, of missing out of some important points while trying to simultaneously listen and write are rather high.

ii. Notes taken while reading : Note Making while reading can increase concentration and contribute towards a better analysis. However, this may make reading a passive, mechanical process thereby depriving you of the pleasure of reading forcing you, every now and then, to break away from the writer's train of thought.

iii. Notes from memory : The advantage of writing notes from memory is that it allows you to focus fully on the speaker/writer. You can even enjoy the luxury of studying the speaker's body language or read between the lines as the case may be. The disadvantage here is that you may not be able to retain all that you hear or see and may ultimately end up losing out on a lot of finer details. In case of reading, of course, you have the advantage of referring back to the text at your will.

iv. Short hand notes : This is the surest way of recording almost everything that you wish to. However, you can do so only if your writing speed is good and for that you need to put in long hours of practice.

v. Tape recording : Needless to say, while adopting the method everything is recorded for your future use leaving you free to concentrate fully on the speaker. However, retrieval of information can at times be tedious and time-consuming as it entails listening to the entire recording again. A lot of

information on the tape may not be of any real use to you. Being in possession of a tape-recorder may also turn you into a passive, complacent listener.

vi. Photo copying : Saves a lot of time and energy, enabling quick and easy retrieval and duplication. Unfortunately, owing to the ease with which it can be accomplished, photocopying often results in sizable wastage of paper. It also empowers you only with physical possession of information- you may or may not have really studied and internalized the information. Photocopying may also add up to being an expensive way of retaining information.

vii. Underlining, highlighting, marking etc. : If you wish to make a note of certain parts of a text this may be the quickest way of going about it - it is also perhaps the most popular. But you can do this only with your own copy of the materials. It would certainly not be possible with borrowed books or papers as it results in permanent disfiguration of the same.

3.2.2. MACHANISM OF NOTE MAKING

Note Making is usually a personal activity as the notes are for one's own use and convenience. It is the process of short listing the prominent points and shifting out of all unnecessary details. The mechanism of Note Making are-

- a. Headings and sub-headings or titles and sub-titles should be used for easy reference.

- b. Abbreviations should be used wherever possible.
- c. The information should be presented in points.
- d. Proper indentation should be used as it makes way for clarity.
- e. Thoughts exist in the text or lecture should be divided in to the main points or phases and sub-points in the following way-
 - (i) Main point
 - (ii) Sub points
 - (iii) Further sub points.

3.2.2.1. PROCEDURE TO BE ADOPTED IN MAKING NOTES

The procedures to be adopted in making notes are-

- (a) The passage should first be read quickly but carefully.
- (b) The second reading should be more slower and thorough.
- (c) Key words should be located and main points should be underlined. Think of a possible title.

3.2.3. SALIENT FEATURES OF GOOD NOTES

Whichever of the above methods you may use, the basics of good Note-Making remain constant.

Appropriate : Make a note of only what is relevant and appropriate to the purpose for which you are taking down the information.

Brevity : It is of extreme importance that you may be brief while making notes. Excessive elaboration on a few points would invariably result in your missing out completely on some others.

Clarity : Even though you may be making notes for your own use, it is useful to avoid ambiguity. Vague or illegible writing may later result in poor recall or worse still a misinterpretation of facts and figures.

3.2.4. DIFFERENCE BETWEEN NOTE MAKING AND NOTE TAKING

Note making is a different business from note taking.

Firstly, notes are taken when we listen something or enjoy something. But note making is a post note taking phenomena. In this process, the notes already taken down, are arranged in a logical way.

Secondly, we do not have the chance to arrange or use language properly while taking notes. But in making notes, we can arrange these logically in our own language.

Thirdly, in note taking, we sometimes take the help of short hand, abbreviations etc. but note making does not need such methods. In note taking, we try to be brief. But these ideas are extended in prepared notes.

In short, the process of note making starts after we have carefully read or listened to a particular text.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q: On the basis of reading the following passage, make notes

in it in points only giving heading and sub-heading. Use abbreviations wherever necessary. Suggest a title to the following passage.

A country is an extended family. When income and resources are limited, one must budget to ensure that waste is avoided, resources husbanded, priorities established, education and other social needs catered to, special provision is made for those who are weaker, industry is to be balanced with agriculture, technology with culture, state ventures with private initiatives, economic growth with social justice, the large with the small. Every section of society must be stimulated to creative activity.

India's planning experience sums up the successes and problems of our democratic development. The magnitude and significant of democracy's operation in India are not well understood, for it is often treated as an adventitious or borrowed growth. Why has democracy worked in India? Our national leadership was dedicated to it and we wanted it to work, but, because in our society there were elements and traditions which supported the growth of democracy.

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3.3. NECESSITY OF SHORT NOTES

A note means a short written record of facts, request, instruction or orders kept to serve as a reminder. But there occur certain situation where we have to write short notes. These are not sent by post, but left at a specific place for the target person to see or are delivered by hand. Short notes are written to people with whom we are in regular contact. In preparing short notes, no certain format is to be adopted, even in mentioning date and time.

Short notes are necessary for easy conveyance of message from one official another or from one department to another or between two officers in the same department. Communicative notes (which are frequently required) include-

- i. Passing of information received
- ii. Giving instructions

- iii. Making requests/arrangements
- iv. Apologizing etc.

Knowledge is advancing and expanding so fast and so enormously that we have to learn with the same speed and enormity. We can not learn, chew or digest it purely on the strength of our memory. Hence comes the necessity of short notes to our aid.

3.3.1. PROCEDURES ADOPTED IN MAKING SHORT NOTES

The procedures adopted in making short notes are-

- i. They list information in what is called " note form".
- ii. These should be written only in phrases, not sentences and should be in concise.
- iii. Information should be logically divided and subdivided by the use of figures/letters. iv. Abbreviations and symbols should be used freely. Article, preposition and conjunction should be omitted.
- v. These must make sense when they are read again, otherwise they will be of no use.

Writers sometimes clog up their writings with one or more extra words or phrases that seem to determine narrowly or to modify the meaning of a noun but do not actually add to the meaning of

the sentence. Although such words and phrases can be meaningful in the appropriate context, they are often used as filler and can easily be eliminated in preparing short notes.

STOP TO CONSIDER :

Wordy :

I would appreciate it if you would bring to the attention of your drafting officer the administrator's dislike of long sentences and paragraph in messages to the field and in other items drafted for her signature or approval as well as in all correspondence, reports and studies. Please encourage your section to keep their sentences short. (56 words)

Concise :

Please encourage your drafting officer to keep sentences and paragraphs in letters, reports and studies short. The administrator has mentioned that reports and memos drafted for her approval recently have been wordy and time consuming. (37 words)

3.4. DEFFINITION OF MEMO

A memo is an important method of internal communication. When some message or information is to be sent from one officer to another or between juniors and seniors, memos are written. It is a simplified form of communication and helps in fixing the accountability of the sender and the receiver.

Memos have a two fold purpose-

- i. They bring attention to problems.
- ii. They solve problems.

Memos accomplish their goals by informing the reader about new information like policy changes, price increases or by persuading the reader to take an action, such as- attend a meeting or change a current production procedure. Regardless of the specific goal, memos are most effective when they connect the purpose of the writer with the interests and needs of the reader.

3.4.1. PARTS OF MEMO

Standard memos are divided in to segments to organize the information and to help in achieving the writer's purpose. The following are the segments of a memo-

- i. Heading segment.
- ii. Opening segment.
- iii. Task segment.
- iv. Summary segment.
- v. Discussion segment.
- vi. Closing segment.
- vii. Necessary attachment.

i. Heading segment :

The heading segment follows this general format-

To : (Reader's name and job title)
From : (Sender's name and job title)
Date : (The date of issuing the memo)
Subject : (What the memo is about)

ii. Opening segment :

The purpose of a memo is usually found in the opening paragraph and includes- the purpose of the memo, the context and problem and the specific assignment or task. Before indulging the reader with details and the context, give the reader a brief overview of what the memo will be about.

iii. Task segment :

One essential portion of a memo is the task statement where you should describe what you are doing in solving the problem. If the action is being requested, your task may be indicated by a sentence like -

You ask that I look at

iv. Summary segment :

If your memo is longer than a page, you may include a separate summary segment. However, this section is not necessary for short memo and should not take up much space.

v. Discussion segment :

The discussion segment is the longest portion of a memo and is the part in which you include all the details that support your ideas. You should begin with the key findings and recommendations. The discussion segment includes the supporting ideas, facts and research that back up your argument in the memo.

vi. Closing segment :

After the reader has absorbed all of your information, you should close with a courteous ending that states what action you want your reader to take. Further, you ensure how the reader will benefit from the desired actions and how you can make those actions easier.

vii. Necessary attachment :

You should ensure that your findings provide detailed information whenever necessary. You can do this by attaching lists, graphs, tables etc. at the end of your memo.

Example :

To : Branch Assistants,
AGVB, Jorhat.

From : General Manager,
AGVB, Jorhat.

Date : April 10, 2011.

Subject : Regarding Office Duty.

It has been reported that you are often found irregular in your office duties. Moreover, some of you are reported very late on duty without permission. You all are hereby advised to be regular, punctual and to attend office in time. Failure to violate these rules would invite disciplinary action against you.

Sd/
General Manager.

3.4.2. USES OF MEMO

Memos are used for internal communication. A memo may be written to warn an employee, to scrutinize an official file or to be loyal to his seniors. It is meant to inform or to persuade. Memos are used for such internal functions like information about arrival of goods or resolution of complaints etc.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q. As a Manager of a company, write a memo to all members of the staff of your office regarding the revised working hours in the office.

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3.5. LET US SUM UP

This unit focuses on the necessity of making notes. We make notes -

- i. To remember the useful details and to get the gist of the particular text.
- ii. To refresh our memory of the past events and situations.
- iii. To make lengthy text in to short paragraph.
- iv. To store matter extracted from reference books and journals.

The points to be remembered for making notes are -

- i. Notes should be short and to the point i.e. complete sentences should not be used.
- ii. Notes must be written in points, listed one under the other and numbered and should include all the important information.
- iii. We must not add examples, article or preposition while making notes.
- iv. We should not use confusing abbreviation.

There are several methods of note making. These are -

- i. Writing down the relevant points of a speech etc. while listening.
- ii. Writing down the useful portions while reading.
- iii. Taking short hand notes while listening.
- iv. Tape recording of speeches, instruction etc.
- v. Photocopying of something already printed.

We may use any of the above methods, but our aim should be to see that our note is suitable for our purpose.

In writing Note, we should be brief and see that it has appropriateness, brevity and clarity in expressing the ideas of the text.

We also distinguish between note taking and note making.

Further, we have discussed the procedures of making short note and how effectively it will help you to improve your study and work habits and to remember important information. As you make short note, you will develop skill in selecting important material and in discarding less important material. The secret to develop this skill is practice.

Besides, this Unit focuses on the definition and uses of memo.

Memos are used for inter office communication. Because they are not for use outside the company and rules for writing them are not as formal as letters. However, they do convey important information and so this should be clear, neat and carefully arranged. Memos should be easy to understand and to find the main point.

REFERENCES

1. Sunil Borthakur, *Written Communication*, Banalata, August, 2007, Pp 132-142.
2. Vandana R Singh, *The Written Word*, Oxford University Press, 2007, Pp 194-220.

SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS :**QUESTIONS**

1. What is Note Making ?
2. As a student why do you think you need to make Notes ?
3. How is Note Making different from Note Taking ?
4. What is a Memo ? Give some of the purposes for which it is used.
5. Write a Memo to your branch assistants advising them to be regular and punctual in their attendance.
6. Write a Memo to the members of your office regarding unpunctuality and delay in submission of a project report.

SUGESTED READING

Sarah Freeman, *Written Communication in English*, Orient Longman Limited, Seventeenth Impression, 1998.



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SELF LEARNING MATERIAL

ENGLISH

COURSE : ENGLISH - 101

ENGLISH COMMUNICATION

WRITING SKILLS - II

BLOCK : III

**INTERPRETATIVE SKILLS
& APPLICATION**

BLOCK : IV

FIRST SEMESTER

Directorate of Open and Distance Learning

**DIBRUGARH UNIVERSITY
DIBRUGARH - 786 004**

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BLOCK - IV : INTERPRETATIVES SKILLS & APPLICATION

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ENGLISH COMMUNICATION

COURSE : ENGG – 101

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BLOCK - III
WRITING SKILLS - II

BLOCK INTRODUCTION

Block III is a continuation of English writing skills. Here you get to know about two forms of written communication Report writing and Letter Writing.

A report is a form of communication, usually in writing, which contains a brief description or account of an event, expression, experience, experiment or examination of some issue or a problem. It carries some information on related topics. It is given in such a way that the reader draws quick conclusion from it. Usually a report is prepared by someone for some other's consideration. There are different kinds of report writing; which have been discussed in this unit.

Letter writing is a kind of art. To write a good and beautiful letter, you need constant practice and adherence to formatting prescribed for different kinds of letters viz personal, official, business, to the editor, etc. Without a proper conventional and or current formatting, a letter howsoever it may have been written beautifully, becomes useless. Let us therefore learn this art !

This block has ample sample examples and practice questions to make your study fruitful. Hope, you master these forms of writing very easily!

BLOCK - III : WRITING SKILLS - II (30 MARKS)

Unit 1 : Report Writing (10 marks)

Unit 2 : Letter Writing (20 marks)

UNIT I

REPORT WRITING - FRAMING AND PRESENTATION

Structure

- 1.0. Objectives
- 1.1. Introduction
- 1.2. Kinds of Report
 - 1.2.1. Points to be remembered in preparing a Report
 - 1.2.2. Steps in preparing a Report.
 - 1.2.2.1. Reporting Conversation/ Message
 - 1.2.2.2. Reporting Facts and Possibilities
 - 1.2.2.3. Reporting Meetings and Interviews
 - 1.2.2.4. Reporting on going Activities and Future Plans
 - 1.2.2.5. Reporting Experiences/ Past Events
 - 1.2.2.6. Objective Reporting
- 1.3. Let us Sum up
- 1.4. References
 - Model Question Answer
 - Questions
 - Suggested Reading

1.0. OBJECTIVES

In this Unit, we are going to define what Report Writing is, what its kinds are. Here we also look at how to prepare Report for newspapers or magazines or as part of some project undertaken by an individual or an institution. After studying this Unit, you will be able to -

- *formulate* an idea of Report Writing
- *identify* the different types of Reports
- *explain* the various steps involved in preparing a Report
- *identify* the features of a good Report
- *use* the skill of preparing Report

1.1. INTRODUCTION

As we have explained in the previous two Units of this Block, several fresh spheres of expressing ideas in English and how to write purpose fully, now let us begin with Report Writing. During your academic years, you may be expected to write reports for your college journal or prepare a brochure containing relevant information. Besides, there are some specific rules for preparing report.

Depending on the attitude of the reporter, most reports fall under two heads -

(a) Informative, and (b) analytical.

According to subject matter, there are several type of Reports. After studying this Unit, you will be able to assess your ideas with the previous knowledge. You will find the Unit interesting because this shifts the focus of interest gradually from those areas which are familiar to you, to those in which it ought to be developing an interest.

1.2 KINDS OF REPORT

Reporting or Factual description forms an essential part in expressing our ideas, knowledge and other facts that occur in our day to day. Generally we have to describe an event or a happening that we have experienced or are an eye-witness to it.

According to the dictionary one of the meanings of the word 'report' is an 'account or a statement'. A report, therefore, is an account of events or the investigation and analysis of an area of interest and concern or a problem, prepared for somebody's perusal or presentation at a particular forum. Reports are of different kinds and may be prepared for diverse purposes. You may also find yourself in situations where you have to write a report focusing on the activities of a particular organization, or record your observations on a given subject, giving your suggestion and to make recommendations for the improvement of a system.

Depending on the attitude of the reporter, most reports fall under one of the two heads -

- (a) Informative and (b) analytical.

According to subject matter, reports can be of many kinds :

- (a) Reporting Conversation/Message
- (b) Reporting Facts and Possibilities
- (c) Reporting Meetings and Interviews.
- (d) Reporting on going Activities and Future Plan
- (e) Reporting Experiences/Past Events
- (f) Objective Reporting
- (g) Reporting Scientific Experiments

1.2.1 POINTS TO BE REMEMBERED IN PREPARING A REPORT

The written report is prepared for the perusal of somebody or presentation at a particular forum. The person receiving the report can quickly and easily draw information from it.

A reporter who covers an event like could be a particular rally, an accident, a conference, a fashion show, a festival, a riot and the like, has to meet a good number of people involved in the event. After detailed questioning and investigation, the reporter should write out the report ensuring that it is unbiased and firmly based on fact.

A reporter must always remember the following points while reporting an event :

CHECK YOUR PROGRES

1. What is Report Writing ? How do you prepare a Report ?

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2. What are the qualities of good Report ?

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1.2.2 STEPS IN PREPARING A REPORT

Before writing, a reporter must ask himself a number of questions. What is the purpose of the Report ? Is it to focus on some problem ? Is it to pass an information ? Is it to persuade someone to take a particular course of action ? Who are the readers and to whom is the report due ?

The procedure leading to the writing of a good investigative report generally passes through these steps :

- i. Method and source of investigation
- ii. Taking notes.
- iii. Interpreting and analyzing the available facts.
- iv. Drafting the outline of the report.
- v. Writing the Final Report

i. Method and source of investigation

(a) Method of Investigation :

All ideas, conclusion, evaluation and recommendations presented in a report must grow out of facts. Before one begins to organize and construct the report, the reporter must take the first step in gathering and organizing and assembling the facts along with data. The length and importance of the report determines the extent of the investigation.

(b) Sources of Information :

- i. Files : Government or company files are a source of information in preparing a report. These help the reporter to understand the background of some development or the problem he is investigating.
- ii. Personal Communication : This also helps a reporter in gathering first hand information.
- iii. Reference Books : For background material and for updating information, a reporter may take the help of reference books or journals or newspapers.

ii. Taking Note

In the course of investigation, a reporter may take note of anything that appears to be related with the subject he is investigating. The purpose of taking note is to jot down any information that will be attached in the report. The advantage of taking note is that it supplements memory. Notes should be brief and not obscure and should be organized into an outline at the time of preparing the draft of the report.

iii. Interpreting and analyzing the available facts

After collecting the information, a reporter must see whether all the collected information is relevant or not. Then he /she

should arrange the information in logical order by dropping the irrelevant information.

iv. Drafting the outline of the report

After arranging the information, it would be wise to write a detailed outline first so that it can help in preparing the final report.

v. Writing the Final Report

After preparing the outline, the reporter should make a draft of the report. In the next step, he/she should edit and revise the draft so that the report will be a good one.

1.2.2.2. REPORTING CONVERSATION / MESSAGE

Example:

1. The telephone rings for Lavkumar's brother while he is out. Lavkumar answers. Here is the conversation which follows:

Lavkumar : Hello?

Sanjay : Hello, could I speak to Mahesh ?

Lavkumar : I'm afraid he is out . Can I take a message ?

S : Oh, well , this is Sanjay here . I was wondering if

he will be free this afternoon .I am going to the new film at the Wellington Talkies . I'd like him to come with me if he's free.When will he be back?

L : He won't be long. He's just gone out to post a letter.

I don't think he's doing anything this afternoon .

S : Good . Well , can you tell him I shall wait for him at the left-hand side of the steps at 1.45 . If he's not there by 2, I'll go in.

L : Yes , I'll tell him . Goodbye .

S : Goodbye , thank you .

Reporting of the Conversation to Lavkumar's brother:

While you were out, Sanjay telephoned. He wanted to know if you would be free this afternoon. He is going to the new film at the Wellington. I said you wouldn't be long , and I didn't think you were doing anything . you said he'd wait for you at the left-hand side of the steps at 1.45 , and if you aren't there by 2 , he'd go in..

1.2.2.2. REPORTING FACTS AND POSSIBILITIES

While reprinting, a reporter does his best to get at the correctness of facts of his story to avoid any legal complication. He cross. Checks the information from various sources. For example, to cover a case of an accident, he interviews the eye-witnesses, and

enquires from the hospital, the police station & the victims of the accident. And then he presents the incident / event in a lively, exciting but brief & clear way.

Example : Suppose you are a Staff Reporter. You have witnessed a road accident involving a lorry and Maruti Car. Here you have a specimen report:

A LORRY HITS A MARUTI CAR

Staff Reporter : New Delhi - 2 March, 20XX

There occurred a serious accident between a lorry and a Maruti car at about 7 pm near Ashok Vihar crossing. The lorry jumped the red light and suddenly turned right. It was to collide with a Maruti car but the driver saw through the disaster and took a left turn but could not escape the collision. As a result, the lorry lost its balance and hit the wall to the right. The Maruti car was involved in the accident. The lorry driver was thrown out of the seat and struck his head on the ground. He died on the spot. The car driver had a miraculous escape. The lorry had turned turtle. About 30 people received injuries. The car also was damaged. Within moments there was a traffic jam. The people swarmed the place. Soon the police control room arrived and the injured were removed to hospital. An enquiry has been instituted.

1.2.2.3. REPORTING MEETING AND INTERVIEWS

Example :

A school has just started an English Association and the Headmaster wants an Englishman, Mr. R. Brown to inaugurate the association. Mr. Brown agrees to come, but in his letter he asks if the Headmaster can tell him a little about the association and its purpose. Below is the conversation which took place between Headmaster and Mr. Brown on his arrival at the school.

H.M. : Please come in and sit down. We are very happy that you could spare the time to visit us, Mr. Brown.

Mr.B. : Well ,it is a good opportunity for me to find out about Indian schools. I have lots of questions to ask you.

H.M. : Oh, please go ahead. I shall be glad to answer them.

Mr.B. : Is this a large school ? What is the total number of pupils ?

H.M. : Yes, it is quite a big school. We have 1500 pupils altogether.

Mr.B. : How many sections are there in Standard X ?

H.M. : There are six sections this year. We usually have five to six.

- Mr.B. : Does that include an English medium section ?
- H.M. : Yes, we have one English medium section from Standard III upwards.
- Mr.B. : How do your staff like teaching English ? Do they enjoy teaching English or do they prefer teaching their other subjects ?
- H.M. : I'm afraid most of them prefer teaching other subjects. They seem to think that teaching English involves more correction work than the other subjects.

Reporting of the interview :

The Headmaster welcomed Mr. Brown to the school and thanked him for giving his time. Mr. Brown said he was pleased to have an opportunity to find out about Indian schools. He asked whether the school was large and what the total number of pupils was. He also wanted to know how many sections there were in Standard X, and whether there was an English medium section. He asked whether the staff liked teaching English. He inquired whether they preferred teaching English or their other subjects. The Headmaster let him know that the school had 1500 pupils, with one English medium section from standard III onwards. And he informed that there were six sections in standard X. Further, he said that the teachers preferred to teach other subjects over English.

1.2.2.4. REPORTING ON GOING ACTIVITIES AND FUTURE PLANS

Example:

A school has adopted a small slum community in a suburb of the town 3 k.m. from the school. This is to form part of the work experience and social service of the students in Standard XI.

Here is the report of the first visit to the community, made by teachers and sections leaders-

On Saturday, April 18th 2011, six teachers and six section leaders visited the slum community at Velinagar for the first time. They inquired whether the head of the community had received a letter from the school management and were told that he had. The people were asked if they would mind answering a few personal questions about their families and occupations. The inhabitants wanted to know who would ask the questions and when they would come. They were told that it would be Standard XI school pupils who would come on Saturday afternoons in April. They also wanted to know how they would benefit from the investigation. They were told that the school hoped to help with teaching the children to read and write., to supply clothes and do other practical things. But this question could not really be answered until after the investigation had been done. The inhabitants seemed in general to accept the idea.

1.2.2.5. REPORTING EXPERIENCES/ PAST EVENTS

An arrest was made a few days later and reported from Jhansi on August 26th. This time the accused man was aged 33 and was carrying 5 litres of arrack. He was arrested at Katpadi junction on August 25th.

The news item is the following -

Held for Possession of Arrack

Jhansi, August 26 : Police arrested a 33 year old man for possession of 5 litres of arrack at Katpadi railway junction on August, 25th. A case has been registered.

1.2.2.6. OBJECTIVE REPORTING

Example :

The following statistic refer to the population problem in India :

1872-1921 - population of India increased by 60 million

1921-1971 - population of India increased by 296 million

1976 - Total world population = 4 billion

Population of Asia = 2 billion

1976 - population increases by 13 million per year, low standard of living (not enough

food for all) high death rate (many people die due to disease or lack of food)

- 1976 - Government - National Population Policy for family planning
- 1980s - decrease in rate of population growth - lower population growth
- higher standard of living - lower death rate
- 2000 - population control - economic development

Now, report the history and prospects of the population problem in India.

Begin : 'During the period 1872-1921, the population of India increased by 60 million, but in the following fifty years it increased by the times that number, 296 million. The total world population is now 4 billion, and that of Asia.....' (Try yourself)

1.2.2.7. REPORTING SCIENTIFIC EXPERIMENTS

The Calcutta Metropolitan Development Authority recently conducted a survey of air pollution in Calcutta. Here is the outline of the research and the report that was written about it :

Aim : To study the degree of air pollution in Calcutta over a period of two years.

Methods : Collect sample of air over large area of Calcutta and Howrah.

Analyze samples.

Observation :

Pollution : 250 tonnes of particles per day. 75 tonnes of harmful gases -sulphur dioxide and oxide of nitrogen, smoke.

Causes : i. Domestic and industrial coal burning
ii. Fumes from vehicle
iii. 100,000 domestic ovens

Problem worse : High humidity and little wind.

Results : Winter fog. 50% of population of Calcutta have respiratory problems.

Conclusion : i. More research needed
ii. Need to reduce pollution to improve health of population
iii. Possibility of using smokeless fuel for industry ?
iv. Possibility of law to prohibit excessive exhaust from vehicles.

Report of Survey :

A survey to discover the degree of air pollution of Calcutta was carried out over the 2 years 1974-76, by the Calcutta Metropolitan Development Authority. Samples of air were collected over a large area of Calcutta and Howrah. The contents of the samples were then analysed. It was found that each day, 250 tonnes of particles, and 75 tonnes of harmful gases were released into the atmosphere. These were produced by the burning of coal in homes and industry, and by the fumes from motor vehicles. In addition, large amount of smoke was produced daily by 100,000 domestic ovens. The problem of pollution was made worse by the climate in Calcutta, which has very high humidity but little wind. This caused fog in the winter. As a result, 50% of population of Calcutta suffer from respiratory diseases.

These result show that pollution is a serious and urgent problem in Calcutta. Some solution must be found as soon as possible, in order to improve the health of the inhabitants. Two possible ways of reducing pollution would be to use smokeless fuel in industry, instead of using coal, and to pass a law prohibiting excessive exhaust from vehicles. Further research into the problem is needed immediately.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q. Prepare a Report on the recent floods that hit in your area.

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1.3 LET US SUM UP

A report is a form of communication, usually in writing, which contains a brief account of an event, experience, experiment or examination of some issue or problem. It carries essential information on the related topic and enables the reader to reach quick conclusion.

Reporting or factual description forms an essential part in expressing our ideas, knowledge and other facts that occur in our day to day life. Generally we have to describe an event or a happening that we have experienced or are an eye-witness to it. In writing a report, it should be our attempt to collect the first hand information from the affected parties or persons.

In order to write a good report, we must keep in mind the following points-

- i. Mention the place, date, time and other relevant facts.
- ii. If possible try to see the affected person and get his story and then see the other party and try to get his points.
- iii. Their facts should be verified by contacting the eye-witness directly.
- iv. Authorities can also be contacted to have their actual position.
- v. It will be more desirable to write the name of the reporter, mentioning the date and place of origin of reporting in Capital Letters.
- vi. Make use of proper language and provide authentic facts.
- vii. It should have accuracy, order by presentation with an appropriate title or heading.

Depending on the attitude of the reporter, reports can be divided into two broad categories. They are -

- (a) informative and (b) analytical.

According to subject matter, reports can be of many kinds :

- (a) Reporting Conversation/Message
- (b) Reporting Facts and Possibilities
- (c) Reporting Meetings and Interviews.
- (d) Reporting on going Activities and Future Plan
- (e) Reporting Experiences/Past events
- (f) Objective Reporting
- (g) Reporting Scientific Experiments

1.4. REFERENCES

- 1 Sarah Freeman, *Written Communication in English*, Orient Longman Limited, Seventeenth Impression, 1998, Pp 124-160.
2. Sunil Borthakur, *Wriitten Communication*, Banalata, August, 2007, Pp 120-122.

MODEL QUESTION / ANSWER

You are Beena / Biju. As a special correspondent of a leading local daily you are sent to cover a two-week Book Fair organized by the book publishers and distributors in the city. Write a report in about 125 words for publication in a local daily.

Ans. BOOK FAIR AT PRAGATI MAIDAN

By our special correspondent Beena/Biju

Delhi, November 15: A two-week long Book Fair commencing from 1st November to 14th November was organized at Pragati Maidan by All India Association of Book Publishers and Distributors. The Publishers and Distributors have well arranged their pavilions by keeping books and other printed materials on all subjects and on different languages. The entry was made by tickets. Some foreign book publishers also participated in it. Lovers of literature, librarians, academicians, scholars of

medicine, law, engineering, agriculture, electronics, computers, fashion designing, dress and weaving materials were visiting the fair with great number. A heavy rush was soon on all the working and other days. The Minister for Human Resources and Development inaugurated the fair. Such kinds of fair provide a good deal of information of what is happening in the remotest part of the world. These are the literary tools that pave a way for first hand knowledge and information.

SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

1. What is Report Writing ?
2. How do you prepare a Report ?
3. What important points would you keep in mind for preparing a Report ?
4. What are the qualities of a good Report ?
5. How are Newspaper Reports different from Scientific Reports ?
6. Prepare a Report on the recent flood in Assam.
7. Prepare a Report on Teachers' Day Celebration held in your college.

SUUGESTED READING

Vandana R Singh, *The Written Word*, Oxford University Press, 2007.

UNIT -2

LETTER WRITING

Structure

2.0 Objectives

2.1 Introduction

2.2 Difference between Formal and Informal letter

2.3 Function of Business Letter

2.3.1 Parts of Business Letter

2.3.2 Formats of Business Letter

2.4 Types of Formal Letter

2.4.1 Complaint Letter

2.4.2 Placing Orders

2.4.3 Seeking Information

2.5 Writing Effective Job Application

2.5.1 Composing Curriculum Vitae

2.6. Summing Up

2.7. References

2.0 Objectives

After reading this unit you should be able to:

- *differentiate* between formal and informal letters
- *explain* the functions and parts of business letters
- *discuss* the different formats of composing letters
- *identify* different types of formal/business letters
- *write* effective letters of complaint to the authority, to the editor etc.
- *write* a job application
- *design* convincing curriculum vitae.

2.1 Introduction

In unit 3 of Block II we saw that Memo is a kind of communication that is used for conveying information within an organization. This type of internal communication can be lateral and or vertical. We also observed that such communication is often informal in nature. It has a specific structure, and is drafted to convey a particular piece of information, either to an individual or a group. We have also seen that writing short notes serve the same purpose. By this time you must have realized that such modes of communications are unsuitable for communicating outside an organization.

For external communication we need to depend on letters. Letters can be formal or informal. When we write to someone who is

known or close to us, we use the informal letter. Such letters have only one format. **The formal or the business letters** on the other hand have different formats depending on the content. In this unit you will get a comprehensive instruction on writing such letters. This unit will teach you to write letters of complaint, applications and most importantly, job application. You will also learn how to compose an effective Bio-data/ Curriculum Vitae (CV) or Resume.

You have probably seen that all the units in Blocks II & III are primarily concerned with communicating or disseminating information. You will recognize that developing your skills like writing paragraph, memo, and report writing are all included and needed in letter writing.

STOP TO CONSIDER

In writing you must be able to arouse and hold the interest of the reader of your correspondence or communication. You want that whatever you have written should be read and not just dismissed in the waste paper basket. That is the reason you should learn and practice the skills of interesting and effective writing.

2.2 Difference between formal and informal letter

Formal or business letters differ from personal or informal letters in terms of tone, style and structure. We write a personal letter to

maintain a personal contact or a personal relationship. Such a letter is written to give a sense of actual meeting with the reader. When you write a personal letter you are frank and intimate. In such letters emotions dominate because they are written to express feelings. A good personal letter carries so much of the writer's personality, that he seems to be sitting next to you and talking, as if both of you are together.

The objective of a business letter on the other hand, is to achieve a definite purpose like seeking information, placing an order or lodging a complaint. The business letter is written in a calculated manner and is always precise.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

- 1. Define a memo? How does it differ from a letter?(60 words)

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- 2. Differentiate between a personal letter and a formal letter.(80 words)

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3. What are the objectives of business letters ?(60 words)

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2.3 Functions of Business letters

You should understand that a business letter is a kind of communication made by an authorized person of an organization. Such letters not only maintain a contact between two people, but they also establish a relationship between two organizations. Therefore in writing such letters, you should remember that you are first of all trying to achieve the purpose of your organization, and secondly, you are also creating a friendly relationship with another organization.

In writing a business letter, you are communicating with someone

you have never met, or he may be a casual acquaintance. Therefore it is very important that your letter should not only convey the subject matter but it should also send a positive impression about you. So you should be careful about the language you use and the tone you adopt. These factors will contribute much in speaking on your behalf. Be careful to avoid grammatical errors or misspelling words.

Business letters are written for making or answering queries; placing orders; selling goods and services; making or responding to complaints and applying for jobs.

STOP TO CONSIDER

Perhaps no form of professional writing reflects the personality of an individual as vividly as does a letter. Dealing with varied levels of human intellect, experience and different attitudes, would demand a number of qualities from you. Writing a successful letter therefore requires:

- A deep perception of human nature
- A clear understanding of psychology of man.
- A discerning eye to judge the attitude of the respondent
- An ability to anticipate the reaction of the receiver.

2.3.1 Parts of Business Letter

In writing a business letter, you should have at least eight elements which are considered essential. In addition your letter may also

(i) Reference: SBI/Tr/10-2010, date 05/11/2010

(4) Sub: *Non -Receipt of Cheque Book, a/c no.1002543776*

(5) Dear Sir,

(6) This is to inform you that I had sent a requisition for a new cheque book against the above mentioned a/c vide letter no. SBI/Tr./10-2010 dated 05/11/2010.

(7) The requisition slip was duly signed and accepted by the designated official. However, I have not yet received the same as yet and my further reminders have also remained unacknowledged. (Copy enclosed)

(7) I therefore request you to kindly look into the matter and arrange for immediate dispatch of the same.

Thank you

(8) Yours sincerely

(Chandan Pathak)

(ii) Enclo: As stated.

1. Your Address: This is a very important part of the letter. When you are writing on behalf of an organization, you will be using a printed letter head, which usually contains details of the sender's name, complete postal address, e-mail address, telephone/Fax- number(s) etc. All these details are traditionally printed at the top centre of the page.

However, if you are using an ordinary blank page, then you have to write your own address, as shown in the illustration.

2. **Inside Address:** This section contains the name, designation and addresses of the recipient of the letter. The details here should be exactly the same, on the envelope as well. This address is usually written at the left hand corner, above the date, ref: sub: and salutation.
3. **The date:** Generally the date is written at the right hand corner of a letter, above two to five spaces of the sender's address. Some people prefer to write the date at the left hand margin either above or below the inside address. Date can be written as 8-11-2010; November 8,2010 ;08/11/2010. You can use any of the styles, but the last mentioned is the most simple and easy to use.
 - i. *Reference* : The reference usually gives information as file number, letter number, etc. This is an optional element.
4. **The subject:** This line can appear either above or below the salutation line; It is always at the centre of the sheet and it informs the reader of the main subject of the letter. It is through this line the receiver knows at a glance where the focus of the letter is. Therefore the subject is usually highlighted either by underscoring it or by using italics or by printing it in bold letters.
5. **The greeting or salutation:** It is a greeting to the receiver and is always placed inside the address and the main body of the letter. The salutation is a courteous opening of the

letter and is usually followed by a comma - Dear sir,

6. The first Paragraph: This is a short paragraph which opens the letter. You should use this paragraph to relate /refer earlier correspondence. This section introduces the receiver to the main body of the letter, which is in the subsequent paragraphs.
7. Other paragraphs: These paragraphs develop the subject matter of the letter, or convey the main purpose of the letter. In these paragraphs you should develop your intention or argument clearly and logically. If you have to write more than one paragraph, remember to focus one point or separate aspect in each paragraph. All these paragraphs should be clearly linked with each other. The last paragraph should clearly indicate what action you wish the receiver to take, or what are your expectations and intentions.
8. The ending or the complementary close: your letter must end on a polite note. This is written four spaces below the last paragraph of the letter. The first letter of the first word is written in capitals and a comma is used at the end of the last word - eg: Yours truly,

The ending of the letter usually corresponds to the salutation as shown below-

- (i) Sir,/Dear Sir/Dear Madam, - Yours faithfully OR
Yours truly
- (ii) Dear Customer ,/ Dear Reader,/Dear Subscriber,/Dear
Member, / Dear Editor, - Yours sincerely.

The ending or the complementary close is followed by the

signature of the writer and the name is typed two spaces below.

ii. Enclosure: It is typed two spaces below the name of the sender. It is used to indicate the number of documents attached with the letter. If the documents are important, they are specified.

Eg:- Enclosures

- (i) One photocopy of pan card
- (ii) One attested photocopy of address proof
- (iii) One D.D. No - SR0324 dt. 10/03/2010

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. What are the functions of a business letter? (80 words)

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2. Why are business letters written? (40 words)

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3. Enumerate the essential elements of a business letter?
(80 words)

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4. What are the optional elements of a business letter?
(40 words)

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5. What is business letter? Discuss its various parts.

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6. How do you write the date in business letter?

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2.3.2 Formats of Business Letter

By now you must have realized that writing business letters require additional care and effort. Now I am going to tell you about the various formats that we use in writing business letters.

Generally we use three forms to draft our formal letters. They are:

- a) indented form
- b) block form
- c) full block form

Indented Form : In typing your letter in this form, you ensure that the inside address, body of the letter and all the first lines of each paragraph begin five to seven spaces from the left margin. The date and the close of the letter is kept on the right side. This format requires extra adjustment in typing, and it also makes the letter look uneven.

Block Form: This is a popular format in which the date, closing and signature are aligned to the right margin. The other elements of the letter like inside name and address are leveled with the left margin. Each paragraph is indented with double space. There is double spacing between the elements and the paragraphs of the body of the letter. Single spacing is used between the elements and lines of the paragraph.

Full Block Form: When using this format you are to align all the elements with the left margin. However, if you are using a printed letter-pad it will have the address printed in the centre. In this form no punctuation mark is used in the inside address, after the salutation and the closure, but the body of the letter follows the normal punctuation. This format is much simple and easier to type requiring little adjustments, and hence it is more popular and widely preferred.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

- 1. Mention the types of formats used in business letters?
(40 words)

.....
.....

Sub: *Estimation of Project Cost*

Dear Sir,

We are a reputed business organization based at Dibrugarh. We plan to set up a shopping mall at the commercial area of Dibrugarh. We have six thousand square feet of open space for the same. We are looking for reputed builders who can undertake the project.

We would be glad if your firm can submit a detailed project report which should include architectural plan, the nature of material to be used, the estimation of overall cost and the probable time of completion.

We look forward to your early response.

Yours sincerely,
R.K Goenka
(Managing Director)

In the above example you have seen how a formal letter in the Indented format is composed. Now we shall examine the same letter written in the **block form**.

M/S GOYENKA TRADERS
HS ROAD, DIBRUGARH
Ref:Mall/Project/Est.2011-12

26/09/2011

To
Unitech Builders
Dona Plaza Towers

23 GS Road
Guwahati -12

Sub: *Estimation of Project Cost*

Dear Sir,

We are a reputed business organization based at Dibrugarh. We plan to set up a shopping mall at the commercial area of Dibrugarh. We have six thousand square feet of open space for the same. We are looking for reputed builders who can undertake the project.

We would be glad if your firm can submit a detailed project report which should include architectural plan, the nature of material to be used, the estimation of overall cost and the probable time of completion.

We look forward to your early response.

Yours sincerely,

R.K Goenka

(Managing Director)

In the above examples we have noticed that both the formats are almost similar but the difference lies in the structure of the paragraphs. In the indented form each paragraph begins five to six spaces from the margin, while in the block form, the paragraph starts from the margin.

We now give below an example of the **full block form** which is now the most popular format as it is easier to type and compose on the computer.

M/S GOYENKA TRADERS

HS ROAD, DIBRUGARH

26/09/2011

To

Unitech Builders

Dona Plaza Towers

23 GS Road

Guwahati -12

Sub: Estimation of Project Cost

Dear Sir,

Ref: Mall/Project/Est .2011-12

We are a reputed business organization based at Dibrugarh. We plan to set up a shopping mall at the commercial area of Dibrugarh. We have six thousand square feet of open space for the same. We are looking for reputed builders who can undertake the project.

We would be glad if your firm can submit a detailed project report which should include architectural plan, the nature of material to be used, the estimation of overall cost and the probable time of completion.

We look forward to your early response.

Yours sincerely

R.K Goenka

(Managing Director)

2.4. Type of Formal Letters

In a business organization letters are written with specific purpose. They may be written to seek information, to get something done, or to lodge a complaint. Let us now discuss examples of each kind.

2.4.1. Complaint Letter: we write such letters to lodge a complaint either to a business party, or to an authority for getting things done. You should take care that the language of these letters is always polite and courteous.

M/S GOYENKA TRADERS
HS ROAD, DIBRUGARH

26/09/2011

To
M/s. Unitech Builders
Dona Plaza Towers
23 GS Road
Guwahati -12

Sub: Supply and Use of Defective Material at the Project Site.

Dear Sir,

Ref: Mall/Project/Est .2011-12

This is with reference to your letter no. UB/ Project/Mall-2011 dated 5th August 2011, concerning the inventory you

supplied to us stating the nature of materials supplied and used in our project.

I regret to say that most of the listed articles do not measure up to our agreed norms. Our engineers have inspected the site and expressed dissatisfaction.

It seems that your purchase department did not take proper care in acquiring the materials. Kindly ensure that the inferior material is replaced at the earliest.

Yours sincerely

R.K Goenka

(Managing Director)

2.3.2 Placing Orders: when you want to place an order for making a purchase, you write a request letter in which you mention the details of your requirements. In such letters you have to indicate the items you need, the quantity required, the mode of delivery and payment etc.

Omega Electronics

Cyber City

R.K. Naidu Road

Hderabad-12

2/11/2009

To

M/S. Electronic World

Chandni Chowk
New Delh-110009

Sub: Placing Order for Electronic Appliances.

Dear Sir,

Ref: Omega/Electro/Order no. 243/2009

We are a reputed business organization based at Hyderabad dealing in household electronic items. We would like to place an order for some branded electronic items for our retail shop.

We require LCD/LED TV's, Home Theatre Systems, Washing Machines, Refrigerators and Music Systems of Sony, LG, Panasonic and Samsung company.

Kindly mail a detailed catalogue with latest price list along with available ranges. We expect the regular wholesale discount of 15% on all purchases. Payment will be made by cheque on satisfactory delivery.

Hoping for an early reply.

Yours sincerely
N.K Reddy
(Managing Director)

2.4.3 Seeking Information: This is another type of request letter used for seeking information or to obtain details about a course, project or travel schedule.

B-56
New Lake Town
Rajar Hat
Kolkata 23

12/09/10

The Director
Institute of Spoken English
Carol Bag
23 M.G. Road
New Delhi -12

Sub: Information Regarding Course in Spoken English.

Dear Sir,

This refers to your advertisement published in The Times of India, dated 08/09/10 regarding a course in spoken English. I am an under graduate student and wish to join your course.

I shall be very grateful if you could send me a detailed prospectus containing the following information:

- i. Course Duration
- ii. Profile of the Faculty
- iii. Fee and Mode of Payment
- iv. Availability of Hostel

I am enclosing a self addressed stamped envelope along with

Carol Bag
23 M.G. Road
New Delhii -12

Sub: Frequent Power Failure.

Dear Sir,

This refers to the frequent break down of power in the Rajar Hat area of the Kolkata Municipal Corporation. The power supply in this area is erratic. There is no time schedule for power cut. It goes abruptly and sometimes it is for hours together. This frequent failure has caused great difficulties to students in particular and the public in general. I would like to draw the attention of the concerned authorities through the columns of you esteemed paper.

We have approached the concerned authorities many times but to no avail. Therefore we request you to publish this letter, so that the a public awareness is created and the authorities may be persuaded to take action.

Yours Faithfully

XYZ

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. How many types of business letters are there? (40 words)

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2. Which type of letter would you write to highlight your problem? (80 words)

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3. Discuss the various types of business letters?(250 words)

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SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

1. Write a letter of complaint to The Chief Executive Engineer, PWD of your city regarding the bad condition of roads in your area.
2. You are Abhijit Baruah living in Guwahati. You want to spend a week in Kerela. Write a letter to the Director, M/S. Make my Trip, a travel agency, seeking relevant information about lodging, travelling, sight- seeing and the expenditure involved.

2.4 Writing Effective Job Application

This is perhaps the most important type of letter that you have to learn. Job application letters are written to get an interview for the job. Such letters have your personal details, qualification experience skills etc. A job application letter has two parts- the covering letter and the Resume or Bio-Data. This section will instruct you to write the covering letter, and in the next you will learn the skills of composing a good resume.

Manjul Apartment
Rajiv Gandhi Road
Delhi -west

12/3/11

To
The Principal
Delhi Public School
Oil India Limited
Duliajan, Assam.

Sub: Application for the Post of English Teacher.

Sir,

With reference to your advertisement published in the Times of India, dated 10th March 2011 for the post of an English teacher, I wish to apply for the same.

I am an MA in English from Delhi University and have a degree in Education. I am a young man with pleasing personality and have interest in music and theatre. I have participated in many state and national level competitions. I have won many awards and certificates for my performances.

If given an opportunity to appear before the Interview Board, I am certain, I shall come up to your expectations and prove to be an asset to your institution. I have enclosed my detailed resume along with photocopies of my educational certificates and other testimonials for your kind perusal.

Yours faithfully

L.K. Prasad

Enclosed : As stated

Here is another example of a job application letter for recruitment of Manager Trainee.

C/o.Ramen Gohain

26 Pub Sarania

Ulubari

Guwahati-12

10th March 2009

The Personnel Manager

ICICI Prudential

Nariman Point

Mumbai

Sir

Sub. : Recruitment of Management Trainees.

51

With reference to your advertisement published in The Telegraph, dated 5th March, 2009, for management trainees in your company, I would like to be considered for the same.

I am a commerce graduate with little experience in sales. I have enclosed my resume for your kind perusal and consideration. If I am found suitable for the interview I can assure you of my dedication and cooperation in the discharge of my duties.

Yours faithfully

Pranab Gohain

Encl : As Stated.

2.5.1 Composing Curriculum Vitae or Resume.

A resume or curriculum vitae is a written summary of your educational qualifications and experience. You should know that in the present globalized environment there is great competition in the job market. Therefore in applying for a job you should know how to sell your skills to your prospective employer. It requires a great amount of skill and practice not only to draft your job application, but also your resume.

A resume is thus a persuasive document which you must write very carefully and creatively, to sell your talents, so that you are sure to get a call for the interview. When you apply for a job, try

to match its requirements with your qualifications and experience. If they match, then carefully compose your application letter. Remember you can't give all the information in an application. It is generally provided in a separate sheet in the form of a personal data /bio-data or a resume.

STOP TO CONSIDER

A resume contains your short vocational history, highlighting your educational qualifications, experience, and accomplishments.

In preparing your resume, you must definitely keep in mind the qualifications, the experiences and other requirements, but not at the cost of hiding any vital information or giving wrong details. You only have to orient or direct your information according to the need and nature of the job.

In creating your resume keep the following in mind-

1. Give sufficient information to your employer so that he can for some idea of your suitability to the position offered.
2. Include your personal details like date of birth, age, address etc.
3. Give a list of your educational achievements starting from HSLC to the highest level.
4. Include those courses which you have attended and you think may help you to qualify for the post.

Education	: 1996 HSLC 1st Div. SEBA Guwahati.
	: 1998 HSSLC 1st Div. AHSEC Guwahati.
	: 2001 B.Com. 1st class, Dibrugarh University
Other Qualifications	: One Year Diploma Course in Compute Application, Dibrugarh University. 2002 : Six Months Certificate course in Soft Skill Development, Symbiosis, Pune.
Experience	: February 2004 to the present Working as a Marketing Executive with HCL, Guwahati.
Recognition	: Awarded the Star Sales Executive of the Year-2006 and 2007.
References	: 1. Prof. R.K. Pandey Head, Department of Commerce, Dibrugarh University. 2. Mr. Kamal Rammurthy Regional Manager (North East) HCL Building, Guwahati.

3. Mr. S.P. Sen Senior Manager,
HCL Corporate Office, Navi
Mumbai

In this section you have seen that a *job application is written to persuade your future employer about your employability*. You must try to give the impression that you are the right person for the job and that you should be able to contribute greatly to the organization with your special skills.

2.5 SUMMING UP

In this unit you have learnt that business letters are important tools in business communication.

Business letters are different from personal letters, in manner of content as well as style. The intention of writing personal letters is to establish a personal contact, but business letters are written to conduct business through letters.

The business letters serve the purpose of keeping a record for future references, and can act as proof of contract between the parties.

Business letters may be written for making a request, filing a complaint, emphasizing an issue or giving a wide publicity to some problem by writing to the editor of a prominent news paper.

You have also learnt that a business letter has eight essential components and two optional features.

All business letters are written in a definite format, using either,

the indented form, the block or the full block form. The full block form is the most popular form because it is easier to compose than the other two forms.

The most important business letter is the job application. It is a tool which you utilize to sell your skills in an effective manner in the highly competitive job market.

Your job application and your resume is a persuasive letter that you write to your prospective employer. Therefore drafting such letters require great amount of skill, care and creativity. These are your sales letter offering your own services to the prospective employer.

Your resume should contain your personal details, educational qualifications, other qualifications, experience, awards and references. You may also include other relevant information like interests and hobbies, languages known, your willingness to visit and work in diverse places.

2.7 REFERENCES:

1. Ashley, A. 2003. *Oxford Hand Book of Commercial Correspondence*. Oxford: Oxford University Press
2. Banerji, Meera and Krishna Mohan. 2009. *Developing Communications Skills*. New Delhi: MacMillan.
3. Kumar, Varinder. 2007. *Business Communication*. Ludhiana: Kalyani Publishers
4. Seely, John. 1998. *The Oxford Guide to Writing & Speaking*. Oxford: Oxford University Press

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SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS :

1. What are business letters? Discuss its various parts.
2. Write a brief note on the essential components of a business letter.
3. Explain the various formats of business letters?
4. Discuss the various types of business letters.
5. What are job letters? Discuss the different points that should be considered in writing such letters.
6. What is a resume? Draft a resume of a mechanical engineer.
7. Write a letter of complaint to your local authorities about the condition of the main road in your town.
8. You are Ms. Inderjit Kaur, a chemical engineer from NIT, Jalandhar. Write a job application to the Personnel Manager, Assam Oil Company, Digboi, applying for the post of Junior Chemist.

9. You are Ashok Kumar Hazarika, an M.A in English from Tezpur University. Write an application for the post of a lecturer in your local college.
10. Draft a letter to the editor of The times of india, New Delhi, pointing out to the incidents of rising crimes in your locality.
11. You are Biswajit Singh. You have seen an advertisement in the Hindustan Times for the post of Sales Executive. Write an application with your complete resume.

BLOCK - IV
INTERPRETATIVE SKILLS &
APPLICATION

BLOCK INTRODUCTION

Precisely, Block IV is specially designed to expose you to various interpretative skills and their application. Here we shall talk of using different skills of interpretation that you would need for different purposes. Several exercises and tasks are included for better comprehension of the subject. You would understand its worth only when you work with the exercises.

The first unit will familiarize you with captions, headings and titles. Apart from differentiating each, you will learn how to write a good caption, a heading, or a title. This unit will be an indirect help for learning the skills of analysis and interspretation as well. Thus, you will be at ease while dealing with the next unit.

The second and last unit will deal with a very vital topic, i.e., transcoding of information. Our aim here is to introduce you to the skill of interpreting information from one code to another. Here you will learn how to interpret visuals into written information. Its relevance in the domain of oral and written communication is undoubtedly great. *Our* sole concern is to train you will become eligible for any sort of task that requires similar interpretative skills.

BLOCK IV : INTERPRETATIVE SKILLS AND APPLICATIONS (20 MARKS)

Unit - I : Caption / Heading and Title Writing (10 marks)

Unit - II : Transcoding Information from Charts, Graphs,
Visuals etc. (10 marks)

UNIT- I CAPTION/HEADING AND TITLE WRITING

Structure

- 1.0 Objectives
- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Caption
 - 1.2.1 What is a Caption?
 - 1.2.2 How to write a Caption?
 - 1.2.3 Characteristics of a good Caption

***CHECK YOUR PROGRESS**

- 1.3 Heading
 - 1.3.1 What is a Heading?
 - 1.3.2 How to write Headings?
 - 1.3.3 Characteristics of a good Heading

*** CHECK YOUR PROGRESS**

- 1.4 Title Writing
 - 1.4.1 What is Title Writing?
 - 1.4.2 How to write a Title?
 - 1.4.3 Characteristics of an effective Title

***CHECK YOUR PROGRESS**

- 1.5 Let us sum up
 - * Key Words
 - * References
 - * Further Readings
 - * Model Questions

1.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you will be able to

- » **define** Caption, Heading and Title
- » **distinguish** between Caption and Heading, Heading and Title and Caption and Title
- » **list** their characteristics
- » **write** good captions, headings and titles

1.1 INTRODUCTION

After completing the previous two Blocks, you have accumulated a fair knowledge of the reading and writing skills in English. The next block will take you little further in enhancing your communicative skills. This block will introduce and guide you in respect of study, analysis and interpretation of various written as well as illustrated information.

Unit 1 will help you to understand the differences present among Captions, Headings and Titles. We are well aware that nowadays people have less time to spend in reading long printed matters. A captivating line attached to a picture or a crisp headline above an article is tempting enough to snatch the viewer /reader's attention. That is why we can remember the '**catching phrases**' used in advertisements very easily. For instance, whenever we think of Amul butter, we visualize the small girl with the words '**Utterly Butterly Delicious**'. This is one among plenty of such examples and there is no doubt that we all are quite fond of them. Now in this unit we

shall help you to comprehend the skills needed for such creativity. By this time, you have learnt that while writing a précis you have to draft more than once. To achieve accuracy you have to do so- as the first attempt may not be the final one. Likewise, lot of practice is needed in order to write good captions, headings and titles. Then unit II will introduce you to Transcoding with special reference to Visual Transcoding. Moreover, you will learn how to transcode a visual. This will assist you in improving your application skills. However, in this process of acquiring communicative skills, you should keep the following in mind:

Always

- (i) consult a good Dictionary for enriching your vocabulary.**
- (ii) consult a good English grammar for avoiding grammatical errors.**
- (iii) be observant - look around yourself and try to grasp and follow the various communicative styles used by others.**

Once you are familiarized with these, you will be eligible for certain jobs like that of an announcer, receptionist, scriptwriter, feature writer with newspaper etc. You may even go for advertising jobs too. Above all, this knowledge will enhance your SELF-CONFIDENCE. Your hesitation and shyness regarding English communication will be washed away. As a whole, you will observe a definite change in your personality.

1.2 CAPTION

Look at the following illustration and its supporting explanation:



WE ARE FAMILY

Can you classify it? Well, this is an example of a caption and in this section, we shall discuss it in detail.

The term caption was originally derived from the Latin term 'captio', which means 'seizure' or 'capture'. A **caption**, according to Illustrated Oxford Dictionary is

1. **a title or brief explanation appended to an illustration, cartoon etc.**
2. **wording appearing on a cinema or television screen as part of a film or broadcast.**
3. **the heading of a chapter or an article.**

From the above definitions it is clear that a caption is to capture the viewer's or the reader's attention. A caption, also known as a cutline, is text that appears below an image. Though three definitions are given here, only the first one is significant for our present discussion. Furthermore, the third definition may also be taken into consideration.

1.2.1 What is a Caption?

Has it ever happened to you that instantly after seeing a picture or an illustration you have given it a name? Again, in certain cases you felt that something is missing in a picture that makes it incomplete. Yes, in our day-to-day life we very often try to name or put a title to illustrations we come across. In simple words, that act of naming a picture is what we term as **caption writing**.

Look at this picture:



Has something come to your mind? What is it? Give your thought the shape of a caption. Think...

1.2.2 How to write a caption?

You must be wondering- what is so difficult about writing a caption! Just take a picture and add a few words to it and that's it. It sounds easy but in reality it is not so. It has rightly been said that *a picture is worth 1000 words, but it still needs a caption*. In other words, a captionless illustration is similar to watching an interesting movie without sound.

Caption writing holds a significant position in the field of writing. One has to understand an illustration thoroughly before writing a caption. It is so because the job of a caption writer is not to state the obvious, rather to bring out the concealed implication.

Now let us concentrate on the art of writing captions and see how we can achieve it.



We shall try to write a caption for the above illustration:

To begin with, try to read beyond the obvious- that means don't simply see what is shown. Anybody can tell what is obvious in the picture. Study the picture carefully and try to trace every minute detail hidden in it.

Have you found something interesting? Are you ready with a caption or need some more time? The picture consists of a mother giraffe affectionately caressing her baby, which is obvious. Your objective is to think of a bold statement that can intrigue your readers.

The next step is to analyze the picture and its context. This

is important as your caption has to substantiate its presence in that context.

Then you have to outline one or two captions and decide which would suit the picture. Do not be content with only one caption - frame as many as you can. Revise your captions until you arrive at a witty and interesting one.

Given below are some captions for the above image - choose the most suitable one from the following:

(i) Mother Child Relation (ii) Power of Love (iii) Life at Zoo (iv) Welcome To Earth

1.2.3 Characteristics of a good caption

Well - in the preceding section, you have observed the skills needed for writing captions and we are sure that you have acquired them as well. Nevertheless, another vital question arises now - What are the qualities of a good caption?

After all, your caption should be something special and not just a cluster of words. This indicates that a good caption certainly has a distinctive quality. In the following lines, we shall attempt to arrange the unique components of a caption:

A good caption should

1. Identify the subject without stating the obvious.

Clear identification of the subject is one of the primary objectives of a caption. Make sure your caption does that, without confusing the readers regarding the subject of the illustration. Be as unambiguous as practical in identifying the subject.

2. Be interesting.

Your caption has to be interesting enough to attract the readers. A dull and witless caption spoils the whole job. Suppose your caption 'A Happy Baby' is meant for the picture of a cute baby with a smiling face; undoubtedly it is a dull one. Instead of that, think of something such as 'Happiness Unlimited...!' The latter sounds quite fascinating, don't you feel so?

3. Be easily readable.

The reader should always feel comfortable with your caption. Avoid using difficult and bombastic words - otherwise your reader will be deprived of the real pleasure of the caption.

4. Be informative.

Your caption has to be informative as well. Informative here implies that as and when you provide details, these should be specific and concrete. If necessary, add one more sentence that supplies extra information that is not apparent in the picture. This could be background information on the person or persons in it, the outcome of the event, or information on related events. For sports captions, you should give scores and other related information about the particular action in the picture and its effect on the outcome.

5. Be brief or concise.

Always be concise in writing a caption. You should know that a long caption turns weak in comparison to a brief one. More than three lines of text in a caption may be distracting. Take care not to distract your reader with a lengthy caption. Again, if you are writing a caption for a singular picture, one short sentence or phrase is sufficient.

6. Establish relevance to the related article.

A good caption should be able to justify the presence of the picture in the article. An irrelevant picture along with a caption will certainly fall flat. However, in cases of lone or single illustration, you need not bother for any explanation.

7. Provide context for the picture.

This is related to the preceding point. If the picture belongs in an article or any written text, your caption has to link the past as well as the future. Let me explain - a picture captures only a single moment in time and your readers have no idea as to why and where it was taken. They will be curious to know what occurred before and after the picture was shot. Hence, your caption, if connected to an article has to supply context for it. Your caption needs to satisfy the curiosity of the reading public.

8. Be grammatically correct.

You should always be cautious regarding your spelling and grammar. However good a caption is, a single spelling error can ruin the charm. Always consult a dictionary for accurate spelling and meaning of a word.

*** CHECK YOUR PROGRESS**

1. Answer the following questions briefly:

(a) What is a caption?

(b) Why is it important to understand the illustration before writing a caption for it?

(c) Mention the qualities of a good caption

(d) Why should a caption be interesting?

(e) Why is a caption useful in an article?

(f) How, according to you, a long caption can affect an article?

(g) A caption should provide context for the picture - explain.

2. Match the following:

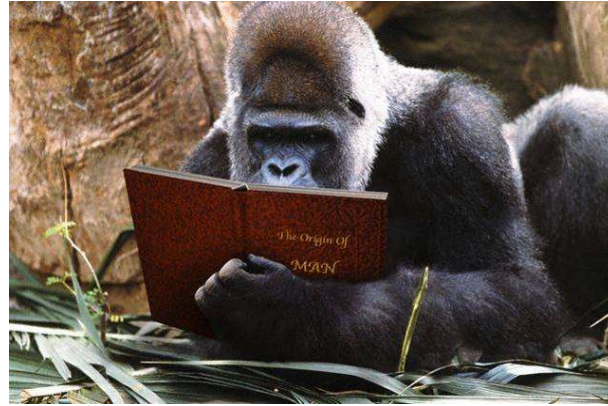
- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| (i) A caption breathes | (a) is called caption writing. |
| (ii) A good caption | (b) the text that appears
beneath an illustration. |
| (iii) The act of naming a picture | (c) fails to establish relevance. |
| (iv) A caption is | (d) fills in the details which
are hidden in the picture. |
| (v) An irrelevant caption | (e) life into the picture. |

3. Fill in the blanks:

- (i) The Latin term 'captio' means _____ or _____.
- (ii) While writing captions, you should be careful about your _____ and _____.
- (iii) A picture captures a _____ moment in time.
- (iv) A caption is also known as a _____.
- (v) Clear identification of the _____ is one of the primary objectives of a caption.

4. Here are some illustrations for you -write captions for them:

1.



(2)



(3)



(4)



(5)



(6)



(7)



(8)



(9)



(10)



(11)



(12)



(13)



(14)



(15)



N.B.: Write captions for the pictures given in Question 3 of unit II.

1.3 HEADING WRITING

Dictionary defines Heading as 'a title at the top of a page or section of a book.' Though heading is termed as title, there exists a clear distinction between these two. You have to be very careful in discerning both. But before going into the analysis, you ought to understand what heading exactly means.

1.3.1 What is a Heading?

Already in the note-making section you were introduced to the term 'Heading' and you must have been applying it frequently. Still, we would like you to recall it once more. While making notes from a given passage, you divide the points under certain titles that are in fact, termed as headings. To be precise, the purpose of headings in any written composition is to systematically inform the readers about the sub topics. A long passage without headings and sub-headings turns to be monotonous for its readers. In order to retain the interest of the readers, the use of headings is very necessary. Even in report writing, you are supposed to give a heading, whether informative or descriptive depends on the situation.

Okay, let's look at an example -a passage with title is given below. Read the entire passage and see if you can remember the same in an organized manner.

Passage

Title: Religious Intolerance

Religious intolerance has been a curse to society since very old times. The great tragedy is that it is still continuing while we boast of our scientific advancement. A very large number of

innocent people still suffer because they belong to a particular religion or race. The rising scourge of religious fanaticism and sectarianism is turning men into creatures worse than wild beasts.

The malady arises from the priests working at the grass roots level in all religions. Ignoring the high ideals enshrined in their religions or rather in all the religions they misguide their co-religionists by misinterpreting their scriptures and traditional faiths. In addition to this, selfish politicians also incite the people of their own community against other religious communities so as to broaden and strengthen their vote banks. They sometimes purposefully plan communal riots.

Common people should be aware of such elements. Right type of education can help a lot in this direction. All religions consist of essential and non-essential elements. The irony is that self-styled protectors of different religions ignore the essentials and fight over the non-essentials and cause bloodshed. They do not stop to think that all religions are similar in their basic tenets. In fact all the great prophets and saints were great lovers of humanity. They saw great injustice, cruelty and malpractices in their own communities and raised their voices against it. But what happened? The selfish elements and vested interests did not want any reform; they turned against them and almost all the prophets, saints and reformers had to suffer one way or the other.

Prophet Mohammed raised his voice against idolatry and other malpractices amongst the Arab tribes and had to leave Mecca and flee to Medina. The innocent saintly Jesus was mercilessly crucified on the cross because the priestly class of his own Jewish community did not like his reformist zeal. His only fault was that he wanted people to lead a truly virtuous life and not to care for non-essentials in their religion. The well-trenched priests thought

it to be a challenge to their authority and self-interest and therefore incited the Roman ruler of the region to condemn him to death. Jesus was presented by them as someone who incited rebellion against the Roman empire -the greatest crime in the eyes of the Romans.

In the beginning all religions were pure; they aimed at improving the social and spiritual life of man. But by and by non-essential rituals overpowered the basic tenets of religions and spoiled them. That is why Kabir, the great poet-saint of the medieval India condemned in his verse the useless rituals in both Islam and Hinduism. Let religion disseminate the ideal of universal brotherhood and create in man a desire for social justice.

(Courtesy; General English)

Was it an easy one? Tell me if you are really able to retain all the major points hidden in it. No need to tax your brain much as we shall provide you with the headings and sub-headings here itself.

Title/Heading: RELIGIOUS INTOLERANCE

1. RELIGIOUS INTOLERANCE - A BANE

- 1.1 Bane since very old times
- 1.2 Still continues in modern times
- 1.3 Innocent people still suffer
- 1.4 Turns man against man

2. MEN BEHIND RELIGIOUS INTOLERANCE

- 2.1 Priests working at grass roots level
- 2.2 Selfish politicians
- 2.3 Selfish elements with vested interests

3. REMOVAL OF RELIGIOUS INTOLERANCE

3.1 Awareness amongst common people

3.2 Right type of education

4. GREAT PREACHERS AND THEIR SUFFERING

4.1 Prophet Mohammed on raising his voice on malpractices among Arab tribes had to leave Mecca and flee to Medina

4.2 Jesus - mercilessly crucified on cross as the priestly class didn't like his reformist zeal.

5. AIM OF RELIGION

5.1 Improving social life of man

5.2 Improving spiritual life of man

6. KABIR AND RELIGION

6.1 Condemned useless rituals in Islam and Hinduism

6.2 Preached universal brotherhood and spiritual growth of man.

Now compare both and see the difference - in the latter instance, the contents of the passage entitled 'Religious Intolerance' is presented in a systematic way. All the notes are preceded by sub-headings that lead us to the sub-topics. If you relate these to the passage, you will observe that all the major points of the passage are covered and assigned a specific sub-heading. Such classification enables the readers to comprehend the whole matter in an organized manner.

Once you understand the meaning of heading, you will automatically realize its significance. Let me explain - see, as you know what a heading is, you know why a heading is

necessary too. The above-cited illustration clarifies how helpful headings and sub-headings are in the process of comprehending a written composition. Look at the first passage and see how long and puzzling it is; next look at the same passage when segregated by headings and sub-headings. Is it clear now? To be precise, have a close look at the structure part of this unit. What do you see there? The broad title of the unit is 'Caption/Heading and Title Writing'. Now, observe the pattern in which this broad title is divided - each heading deals with one single sub topic, thereby making the entire unit easily comprehensible for learners like you. I think this much will do - now you all know what a heading is.

Let's try to find the similarities and differences that exist between a heading and a caption. To speak of similarities, we find that both a caption and a heading are

- » Useful for comprehending the content of an illustrated or written document.
- » Concise.
- » Informative.
- » Easily readable.
- » Relevant to the article.

When we think of the differences, the following points are derived:

- » A caption is a title appended to an illustration, while a heading is a title at the head of a page or section of a book.
- » A caption is a supplement to the illustration but a heading is the condensed shape of the entire topic.
- » A caption is complete in itself whereas a heading generally is followed by sub-headings.

Next we shall explore the guidelines needed for writing headings.

1.3.2 How to write a Heading?

Already you have observed that headings are essential for effective comprehension of any written document. As learners, you will certainly admit that headings are beneficial for you to a great extent. Now you have to acquire the proper method of heading writing for developing your writing skills. No doubt, our discussion has revealed a lot by this time. In the following lines, we shall try to identify the basic criteria for it:

- ▶ First of all, read the passage very carefully. If possible, read more than once. This will help you to comprehend the theme clearly. Once the theme/topic is clear, frame a heading for the beginning part of the passage.
- ▶ Next step is to list the sub-headings that fall within the heading - be careful not to overlap sub- themes. Sub-headings are always given under the main headings. Sometimes there may be several divisions under the sub-headings too.
- ▶ Repeat the process till the whole passage is covered.
- ▶ After you finish, verify your answer so that not a single point is left out.
- ▶ If not satisfied, restructure your answer and perceive the difference.

Let's assume that you are able to understand the above - now onwards you are supposed to practise this regularly. The English Newspapers can be of some help in this regard. Take any article published and start framing headings and sub-headings from it - enjoy this practice. You can try this with the different SLMs of the other subjects too.

In the next sub-section, we shall attempt to enlist the salient characteristics of a good heading.

1.3.3 Characteristics of a good heading

- ▶▶ A good heading should be lucid. Your headings should be able to identify and emphasize the main points. Otherwise, their purpose will not be served.
- ▶▶ It should be neither too long nor too short. A long heading may again turn tedious while a short one may look incomplete. Try to make your heading concise by incorporating only the main point.
- ▶▶ Each main heading usually includes a single paragraph but sometimes many paragraphs are included.
- ▶▶ A good heading should be informative as well. A reader must be informed of the sub-topics contained in the composition.
- ▶▶ A good heading consists of simple language. Never use bombastic words - they might be confusing.
- ▶▶ A good heading always compresses the content of a passage for easy understanding. Never deviate from that goal.

So, these are the points you have to remember while writing headings and sub-headings. Perhaps, this much knowledge will enable you to apprehend the skill of effective heading writing.

***CHECK YOUR PROGRESS**

1. Give short answer to the following questions:

(a) Define Heading.

(b) Why do we need headings?

(c) What is sub-heading?

(d) What is common between a caption and a heading?

(e) Enlist the steps necessary for writing headings.

(f) Enlist the characteristics of a good heading.

(g) Mention one difference found between a caption and a heading.

2. Say 'true' or 'false':

- (a) A heading is a title at the bottom of a page or section of a book.
- (b) A good heading has to be lucid.
- (c) Headings convey systematic information about the sub-topics.
- (d) A long heading is really interesting.
- (e) Use of simple language in heading is important.

3. Fill in the blanks:

- (a) A passage without heading becomes _____ for the readers.
- (b) A heading should contain a _____ topic.
- (c) Headings are necessary to _____ the interest of the readers.

- (d) A caption is given at the _____ of an illustration but a heading is given at the _____ of a page or section of a book.
- (e) Headings are essential for easy _____.

4. Read the following passages and give headings /sub-headings to them:

- (a) One of the greatest advances in modern technology has been the invention of computers. They are already widely used in industry and in universities. Now there is hardly any sphere of human life where computers have not been pressed into service of man. In this present century a computer is as much a part of man's life as a telephone or a calculator.

Computers are capable of doing extremely complicated work in all branches of learning. They can solve the most complex mathematical problems or put thousands of unrelated facts in order. For instance, they can provide information on the best way to prevent traffic accidents, or they can count number of times the word 'and' has been used in the Bible. Because they work accurately and at high speeds, they save research worker's years of hard work. This whole process by which machines can be used to work for us has been called 'automation'. In the future, automation may enable human beings far more leisure than they do today. The coming of automation is bound to have important social consequences.

Some years ago, an expert on automation, Sir Leon Bagrit, pointed out that it was a mistake to believe that these machines could 'think'. There is no possibility that human

beings will be 'controlled by machines'. Though computers are capable of learning from their mistakes and improving on their performance, they need detailed instructions from human beings to be able to operate. They can never, as it were, lead independent lives or 'rule the world' by making decisions of their own.

- (b) Conversation is a fine art. It is the art of exchanging thoughts. It is an art which even the least gifted of us can cultivate. Not everybody can paint or play music, but almost everyone can talk. Conversation, therefore, is that art which affords the greatest pleasure to the greatest number.

Conversation is indeed the most easily teachable of all the arts. All you need to do in order to become a good conversationalist is to find a subject that interests you and your listeners. There are, for example, numberless hobbies to talk about. But the important thing is that you must talk about the other fellow's hobby rather than your own.

It is just as important to know what subjects to avoid as what subjects to select for good conversation. If you don't want to be regarded as tiresome, be careful to avoid certain unpleasant topics. Avoid talking about yourself, unless you are asked to do so. People are interested in their problems, not in yours. Always remember that while conversing you have to read the mind of the person/s you are talking to. Then only the outcome will be lively and effective as well.

- (c) The essence of greatness lies in selfless devotion to an ideal. A person sacrifices his comfort and ease to realize this end or ideal. He does not care personal suffering and pain for

the sake of this ideal. He is ever ready to risk his life. He does not care for the praise or blame of others. He does not budge an inch from his chosen goal of life. He follows his ideal with determination and zeal. He is gifted with an uncommon moral courage. He is a man of self-confidence. He has the courage of a martyr in him.

Greatness is won sometimes by achievement and sometimes through renunciation. Joan of Arc died a martyr to her faith and won greatness for ever. She did not abjure her faith in the face of torture and death. Gautam Buddha left the life of wealth and power, and embraced the life of a monk. Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose even did not hesitate to leave his country at the risk of life to realize the dream of his life. He won undying fame by virtue of his great courage and sacrifice, his burning patriotism, his urgent zeal for work and his resolute determination.

The resoluteness of the great men is often mistaken for foolhardiness. We often condemn it as vanity. This is because we are often blind to the wickedness of a custom or we do not have the courage to go against it.

Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar fought against some evil customs of the Hindu Society and the people went against him. Yet he did not retreat. Finally he won the battle. He won undying fame because he did not submit his judgement to the judgement to the multitude.

Courage, determination, faith and devotion - these are some of the cardinal virtues which make greatness. One must engage all these qualities in the service of a noble ideal to justify one's claim for greatness.

- (d) Teenage is the most joyful period of an individual's life when one has no responsibility and maximum enjoyment. This was certainly true a couple of decades ago, however it has turned into a complicated stage due to immense pressure of competition. The phase which was once considered the smoothest and happiest one has now turned into a labyrinth where one has to struggle to find a path. This is the stage where one undergoes maximum physical and emotional changes. This combined with pressure from parents and society to perform better and better is proving to be exhausting for teenagers.

Important decisions have to be made. They have to choose the right stream, for their entire future depends on this. They need to get admission into college of their choice. But these decisions are often taken under pressure from parents and peers and might not be their first choice. Sometimes due to such pressure teenagers adopt the wrong course in life. They become rebels and even resort to anti-social behaviours. This is a phase where teenagers struggle to find out what is 'acceptable' and 'expected'.

They wish enjoy teenage years but at the same time are pressurized to concentrate on their studies and career.

Teenagers need a lot of emotional support and guidance. Parents need to spend quality time with them and handle them with patience and understanding. Only with the right support and counselling the teenagers can enjoy this beautiful life.

- (e) Every bright star is a sun, like our own sun. This means that stars are huge balls of glowing gases. They are so hot

that if a piece of steel were placed there, it would disappear in a cloud of gas! In many of the stars, the gases are very thin. This is because the particles or atoms of matter in the gas are far apart.

But stars do have matter in them. We know, for example that the sun contains more than sixty of the chemical elements present in the earth. Among the elements in the sun are hydrogen, helium, iron, calcium and magnesium.

In cooler stars, the matter may be more nearly liquid, somewhat like the boiling iron in a blast furnace. In some very old and cold stars, the matter may be so closely packed that a cubic inch of it would weigh a ton. Such stars are called 'dead' or 'dark' stars.

Astronomers can find out all this by using instruments called 'spectroscopes'. The spectroscope studies the light a star gives, and from this we can learn what kinds of matter it contains and how hot it is.

The different colours of the stars - white, blue, yellow, or red - show us what chemical elements are present in them. Different temperatures of stars also cause differences in the light they give, in their 'spectrum'. In this way the temperature of a star can be determined.

- (f) There are basically two types of communication called verbal and non-verbal communication. Verbal communication includes oral and written communication. Oral communication facilitates immediate feedback. It can occur face to face between two people or in a gathering. It can be planned or unplanned, formal or informal. It is not possible to meet people face to face all the time as it would mean spending a lot of resources in terms of money and time.

Written communication provides records for future reference. It provides legal defence. However, immediate feedback is not always possible. Written communication requires space for storage, maintenance and retrieval. This can be expensive.

Tone and body language make up non-verbal communication. Body language is made up of gestures, eye contact and facial expressions. Personality of a person can also influence communication. Non-verbal communication is a supportive form of communication to verbal communication. It can also contradict verbal communication.

The use of electronic media in communication is important and is increasing day by day. Telecommunication has wide applications. However, the disadvantage is that telecommunication limits and reduces face-to-face communication. The sender cannot assess the reaction of the receiver of a message if telecommunication is used.

- (g) We take water so much for granted, but we cannot live without it. Almost three-fourths of the surface of the earth is covered with water. You may ask, so why worry about water?

But have you realized that 97 percent of the water on earth is in the oceans. This water cannot be directly used to meet any of our daily needs. Almost 2 percent of the water is stored in ice caps and glaciers and again cannot be used, unless melted. That leaves us with just 1 percent to meet all the needs of all living beings. This is what we call freshwater, and this is found in ponds, lakes, rivers, and

some of this is underground. Can you think of all the uses of water in our daily lives? It is this 1 percent that meets all these needs.

This natural resource is becoming scarcer in certain places, and its availability is a major social and economic concern.

Currently, about one billion people around the world routinely drink unhealthy water. Poor water quality and bad sanitation are killers; some five million deaths a year are due to polluted drinking water.

- (h) Did you know that English is not the original language of England? It was introduced to the island only in the mid-fifth century by three Germanic tribes. Prior to this, Celtic was the spoken dialect. This language survives even today in the Gaelic languages of Scotland and Ireland and in Welsh. When the Germanic tribes entered the British Isles, they pushed the locals into Wales, Cornwall and Scotland. The invaders were Jutes, Saxons, and Angles. The Angles were named from Engle, their land of origin. Their language was called Englisc from which the word English is derived. They spoke a mutually intelligent dialect, which slowly evolved into English, or rather, old English. At this time, the Vikings from Scandinavia too influenced English.

The Roman invasion in the ninth century had introduced a number of Latin words. The next influence came from the Norman Conquest in 1066 A.D. The Normans were of Germanic stock. Anglo-Norman was a French dialect that had Germanic influences in addition to Latin roots.

English is quite flexible and extends hospitality to all languages. This is the reason why foreign languages have greatly influenced the English language.

- (i) Archaeology is the scientific study of the remains of past human culture. Archaeologists investigate the lives of early people by studying the objects those people left behind. Such objects include buildings, artwork, tools, bones and pottery. Archaeologists may make exciting discoveries, such as a tomb filled with gold or the ruins of a magnificent temple in the midst of a jungle. However, the discovery of a few stone tools or grains of hardened corn may reveal even more about early people.

Archaeological research is the chief method available for learning about societies that existed before the invention of writing about 5,000 years ago. It also provides an important supplement to our knowledge of ancient societies that left written records. In America, archaeology is considered a branch of anthropology, the scientific study of humanity and human culture. European archaeologists, however, think of their work as closely related to the field of history. Archaeology differs from history in that historians mainly study the lives of people as recorded in written documents.

- (j) Scarcity is not created by war; it is a permanent characteristic of all human society and is the basis of the problem that faces, and always has faced, the human race whatever its form of organization. It springs from the fact that the material resources of the world are limited and that our ability to make use of those resources is even more limited by our ignorance. Everything that we need to satisfy our wants has to be derived finally from two sources - the natural resources that are available and the human ability to make use of them. As our knowledge grows and we increase our skill, we can exploit more and more of the

opportunities that nature offers to us. The increase in communications, for example, has brought within our reach the resources of vast areas that were closed to us before; the development in scientific knowledge has made accessible many valuable minerals from depths below the earth's surface that could not be reached by earlier generations. Railways, steamships and aircraft have vastly extended the 'neighbourhood' on whose resources we can draw, and our increasing skill - both of techniques and of organization - enables us to get more out of what we can reach. But whatever the rate of development may be there is, at any one time, a limit to the total of what can be produced.

1.4 TITLE WRITING

There is no doubt that you all know the term 'title' and many a time you have used it. However, for the present discussion you must be clear about the proper meaning of the word 'title'. According to Compact Oxford Reference Dictionary, a 'title' is

1. the name of a book, musical composition, or other artistic work.
2. a name that describes someone's position or job.
3. a word, such as Dr, Mrs, or Lord, used before or instead of someone's name to indicate their rank or profession.
4. the position of being the champion of a major sports competition.
5. a caption or credit in a film or broadcast.

Now look at the above mentioned meanings and see how one single word can have different meanings. Can you locate the meaning which is applicable to our study? Yes, it's the first one. We shall make a detailed discussion of it in the following subsection.

1.4.1 What is Title Writing?

Well, please think whether you have written or attempted to write a title earlier for any kind of written document...

Probably not - but several times you have written **paragraphs** on given topics/**titles**. This indicates your familiarity with both and therefore you are one step ahead. Let us try to explain it little more - a title has much significance because it gives a glimpse of the written composition beforehand. A title helps us to comprehend the subject matter of a given composition. Any written composition without a title becomes vague; the reader doesn't know what he/she is actually going to read. The title is a key to the literary composition and hence is a very important part of it.

Let us show you an example of title writing. First read the following passage carefully. Then choose an appropriate title from the options given below:

Modern drugs can heal a wide range of diseases, including those once thought to be incurable. Some drugs are taken orally; others are injected into the blood stream or applied over the diseased part of the body. Usually, it is the doctor who prescribes the drug to be taken. However, we hear a lot about drug abuse. This is the misuse of drugs - drugs obtained illegally and taken for the purpose of getting pleasure and thrills. The practice can ruin a person's life and can even

kill him. Knowing the dangers of drug abuse, governments and NGOs have taken steps to deal with the problem.

- Title:**
- (i) Use of Drugs
 - (ii) Drugs - Use and Abuse
 - (iii) Good Drugs and Bad Drugs
 - (iv) How to Use Drugs

Now tell which one of these sounds appropriate - is it the second one? Yes, the title *Drugs -Use and Abuse* clearly informs the reader of the content of the passage. The remaining three titles are good too, but they fail to summarize the entire passage.

Now are you sure that you really know what title writing is? If so, we may proceed to the next step, i.e. How to write a title?

1.4.2 How to write a Title?

Before writing a title you have to apply your reading skills for understanding the content of the given passage. Without comprehension a good title is not possible. Again, we shall **put stress on** having **adequate word stock** as well as **grammatical knowledge**. In other words, we may consider these as the tools necessary for written communication.

By now you are aware that the title has to be able convey the idea or theme of the given passage. The effectiveness of a title solely depends on the writer's perception. Generally, the author of a book or an article writes the title for his/her work of art. However, the case is totally different for you students. You have not authored the passage - it is written by someone else and your assignment is to provide a suitable title to it. Therefore, you should be very

careful as well as precise in accomplishing the duty. Here we shall attempt to enlist certain stages for the beginners.

1. First of all, a thorough reading of the given passage is a must. While reading, you should be alert in order to grasp the central idea or theme of it. Avoid casual reading.
2. Secondly, after comprehending the central idea make a mental revision. Ask yourself what you have understood and whether that is correct or not.
3. Thirdly, if you are sure of your understanding, start framing a couple of titles. We are emphasizing on more than one title because the first one may not be the final one. The more you practise, the more you will be near perfection.
4. Write down the title you have selected. Again, give a second thought. Does your title transmit the key idea? Can you give a better title? Has any other title come to your mind? These are some common questions which can help you in achieving your goal, i.e. a suitable title.
5. When there is no doubt or confusion, be sure that you have got the title of your choice - don't waste time - WRITE DOWN THE TITLE and that's it!
6. Don't forget to **capitalize** all the words in your title except the articles, prepositions etc.

Are you really able to absorb the rules aforesaid? You are not sure, perhaps you need some practical knowledge - okay, we shall do an exercise for your help. The following passage is an extract of the message given by Dr. S. Radhakrishnan to the nation on the eve of Independence Day in 1947.

Passage

Education is the instrument for social, economic and cultural change. If we are to work for social and national integration, if we are to foster moral and spiritual values, and increase productivity, agricultural and industrial, we have to use education in a proper way. Science and technology will help us to solve the problems of hunger and poverty, of disease and illiteracy, of superstition and deadening custom, of vast resources running to waste, of a rich country inhabited by poor people. We have to free ourselves from the inertias and inefficiencies which have bogged down our programmes of development. Our administration, at all levels, should become clean and efficient.

After you have read the passage ask yourself: 'What is the passage about?' Well, the answer is 'The passage is about education.' Here Dr. Radhakrishnan is speaking of the significance of education in bringing change in our life at all levels. He states how instrumental education can be in transforming life in our country.

The next important stage is to frame a title in order to express whatever you have understood. Start thinking ... what can it be? Let's make a list of some probable titles:

- (a) Power of Education
- (b) Role of Education
- (c) Impact of Education on our Life
- (d) Education for Progress
- (e) Education: Means for Change and National Integration.

See, how easily we have found five titles and each is a suitable one. In this manner you carry on with your practice and you

will definitely become efficient in this area. After learning the different stages, we shall talk of the characteristics of an effective title.

1.4.3 Characteristics of an effective Title

As students you all know the importance of the language you use for communication. Simply knowing a language is certainly not sufficient; you must have a command over the language. For example, suppose despite your clear understanding of the given passage, you are unable to provide a title to it. And imagine that too, because of limited vocabulary! What will happen then? The examiner will not realize your dilemma since it is not for an internal test. Ultimately your score will get affected... Aren't you worried? Better you be - else your endeavour will be wasted. That is why; you must update your knowledge of English. Anyway, now we shall shortlist the characteristics of an effective title.

Characteristics

A good title should be

1. Short, simple and clear.
2. Impressive.
3. Appealing for the readers.
4. Comprehensive for the readers.
5. Able to convey the key idea.
6. Grammatically correct.

***CHECK YOUR PROGRESS**

1. Answer these:

(a) What is a Title?

(b) Why does a composition require a title?

(c) What will happen if a title is not appropriate?

(d) Name the skill required for understanding a passage.

(e) Explain how a title is different from a caption and a heading.

2. Fill in the blanks:

- (a) A title should convey the _____ idea.
- (b) The _____ is the most important part of writing.
- (c) You should read the passage _____ in order to comprehend it.
- (d) A title should be _____ and _____.
- (e) The effectiveness of a title depends on the writer's _____.
- (f) A title has to be _____ correct.

3. Say 'True' or 'False':

- (a) A title should be long and complicated.
- (b) A title has to be appealing to the readers.
- (c) Casual reading is necessary for writing titles.
- (d) The main words in a title should be in capital letters.
- (e) Impressiveness is a significant quality of a title.

4. Read the passages given below and give a suitable title to each:

- (1) The biggest threat to a child's health these days is pollution. This is a major cause of respiratory diseases among children in big cities and towns. The number of vehicles on the roads is increasing day-by-day. Apart from petrol fumes, the vehicles emit poisonous gases which permeate the atmosphere, and lead to diseases like asthma and even cancer. Many industries and construction works located in these cities also add to air pollution. People in some cities have started

putting on pollution masks outdoors. That, however, cannot be a permanent solution; the level of pollution has to come down.

- (2) Learning is a never-ending process. Right from our birth we try to understand life and it continues till the end of our life. Schools and colleges offer us education in a formal way. We learn from our teachers and the books we are supposed to study, which are the sources of experience for us. We also learn from our parents and elderly persons. In our daily life we keep on learning constantly. In course of time, we grow up intellectually and emotionally. We learn how to face new, strange and unpleasant experiences. It is only through experience that we come to know the kind of person one is. The more experience we have, the wiser we become in understanding people. It is experience that makes us understand life and teaches us how to live life better.
- (3) It has often been said that values cannot be taught, they must be caught. The need of the hour is to strengthen the moral and cultural fabric of the individual, society and the nation. It is the parents, teachers, elders and leaders in society who act as role models for the younger generation. Their behaviour, action and non-verbal communication often sets a trend and acts as a catalyst for students. Schools need to implement the value education programme through activities and projects. Universal values such as love, peace, tolerance, brotherhood and co-operation should be reinforced through various literary components of languages. An effort should be made to celebrate all the festivals of all faiths together. By doing this students are sensitized to the dominant strengths of all religions. Human rights must be

respected and protected. Gender sensitivity must be inculcated from an early age so that students grow up with respect for the opposite sex.

- (4) The disparity in the views, outlook and lifestyle that characterizes parents and the older generation on the one hand and the youth on the other results in a generation gap. The younger lot wants to stay out for late night parties and believe in the philosophy of leading a merry life. They want to keep in tune with the ever-changing world of fashion and believe in dressing up in the latest outfits. The taste in music as well as lifestyle also differs from the older to the younger generation. The old age traditional values of respect for elders and love and attention for younger ones are being eroded and slogan like free expression are being put forth by the younger generation. From being a myth, a generation gap is becoming a reality.
- (5) The involvement of students in politics began during the freedom struggle. After independence, politicians utilised the exuberance of bubbling youth for their partisan and selfish ends. While contesting elections to the students' council, the student leaders resort to all the tricks employed by the seasoned politicians. In the colleges and universities, elections are contested on party lines. The political parties thus make inroads into educational institutions. They get dedicated workers and utilise their services during their own elections to parliament or state legislatures. Well, political awareness is good, but too much involvement in politics is certainly harmful. Students should not forget their main aim and mission - studies and learning. They should develop political consciousness but not become tools of wily politicians.

- (6) Effective speaking depends on effective listening. It takes energy to concentrate on hearing and to concentrate on understanding what has been heard. Incompetent listeners fail in a number of ways. First, they may drift. Their attention drifts from what the speaker is saying. Second, they may counter. They find counter arguments to whatever a speaker may be saying. Third, they compete. Then, they filter. They exclude from their understanding those parts of the message which do not readily fit with their own frame of reference. Finally, they react. They let personal feelings about speaker or subject override the significance of the message that is being sent. The first key to effective listening is the art of concentration. If a listener positively wishes to concentrate on receiving a message, his chances of success are high.
- (7) Though people are much less superstitious nowadays than they used to be, they do sometimes give way to illogical fears. The desire to believe in the supernatural lurks in the background and occasionally breaks to the surface. Because superstition is infectious, popular imagination, once fired, needs little encouragement to turn fancy into fact. Some time ago, people claimed to have seen saucer-shaped objects which were supposed to have come from outer space. One writer went so far to claim that one of these objects landed in a field and that he was able to communicate with diminutive 'people' from Venus. In time, so many of these 'saucers' were seen, that one was led to believe that the earth was threatened with imminent invasion.
- (8) Habit of idleness once firmly fixed cannot be suddenly thrown off. Lost wealth may be replaced by industry, lost knowledge by study, lost health by temperance or medicine,

but lost time is gone forever. In the list of excuses for the neglect of duty, there is none which drops oftener from men's lips than want of leisure. People are always cheating themselves with the idea that they would do this or that desirable thing if only they had time. Remember that the men who have done the most for their own and the general people are not the wealthy, leisurely people, who have abundance of time to themselves and nothing to do. The great men who served their country were very industrious and knew the value of time.

- (9) Most of our habits - good or bad - are formed in childhood and early boyhood. A child's mind is soft and pliable and is easily impressed. He learns things easily, and what he learns now, he hardly ever forgets in life. We should, therefore, take special care to inculcate good habits in our children. If they see around them bad examples, they will at once begin to imitate them. In course of time, the imitation will develop into a bad habit. But they will pick up good habits if they are brought up in a good and healthy environment. The school and the home can play a significant and constructive role in the matter of forming good habits. The power of habit is great. If we come to acquire some habits, it becomes very difficult for us to shake them off. Some habits are so strong that they become a part and parcel of our personality and stay with us till our death. We grow habits unknowingly good or imperceptibly from our childhood. There is hardly any man, who has not formed a habit, good or bad. It is, indeed, our second nature.
- (10) Man is a social animal. He can't live in vacuum. He has to depend on others to make a living. He has to bond with

others and be a part of a team. Working in a team is quite a challenge. One has to adjust himself to the requirements of his team. A team must work like a well oiled machinery. Only then it can produce great results. All the members of a team must work together selflessly to achieve a common aim or goal. Working in a team is really a healer and a stress buster. Success or failure is not an individual's responsibility. It is a collective responsibility. A good team work demands a perfect and effective communication between all the members of the team. A strong leadership controls the individuals and guides them to achieve the common goal. Conflicts are avoided. The focus is on unity and cooperation. Mutual jealousy and conflict of interests have no place in a team. Negative attitudes should be discouraged. Each member should have deep respect and appreciation of other's abilities and competencies.

- (11) Culture is a treasure of collected gems of experiences and wisdom of the ages, gifted by a lot many earlier generations. It is the essence of the distilled experiences of so many people, carried over from the past. It is a reservoir of tried and tested values, norms, observances and principles that have taken the form of lifestyles, manners, etiquette, folklore, celebrations, quotations, festivals and visual and performing arts, such as dance, drama, songs, conventions, traditions and even rituals. How the youngsters should meet, greet and treat the elders and vice-versa, how one should treat a guest, a neighbour or friend and how one should respect one's teacher or a sage, what and how one should eat and drink or what one should not eat and not drink; at what hour in the morning

should one get up and at what hour should one sleep; what kind or form of dress one should wear; how gents should treat ladies or what manners should each gender observe in the presence of the other - all these and thousand more things are included in the term 'Culture'.

- (12) To teach the meaning of a word thoroughly, is to teach the nature of the spirit that coined it; the secret of language is the secret of sympathy, and its full charm is possible only to the gentle. And thus beautiful speech is always the outcome of sincere and kindly speech. False speech, apparently beautiful, may be constructed on principles imitated from those out of which sincere and truly beautiful speech has arisen; but all such utterance, whether in oration or poetry, is not only without permanent power, but it is destructive of the principles of sincerity it has usurped. So long as no words are uttered but in faithfulness, so long the art of language goes on exalting itself; but the moment it is shaped on external principles, it falls into frivolity, and perishes.
- (13) Man cannot be completely selfless like God. Often the ambitious individual, working in his own interest, benefits society. The benefit may be incidental, but it is substantial. Ambitious men like Alexander, Caesar, Stephenson and Shakespeare in working for their ends have enriched society. The unambitious people, though contented and happy, are not productive; they have a limited value in the sense that they make a respectable audience for the ambitious; but let them not mistake their inertia for wisdom or imagine themselves to be happier than the others.

- (14) Chaos, dirt and disorder have become the regular features of metros in India. Nowhere the chaotic conditions are more visible than on their roads. The chaotic state of traffic in metropolitan cities has become a cause of concern for the concerned authorities as well as the public. The advent of the Maruti brought a revolutionary change in the size and volume of traffic on the road in the metros. The flood of all brands of cars and vehicles has only worsened the situation. The ever increasing number of vehicles on roads has resulted in frequent traffic jams. The two wheelers are still the craze of young men and women. There is hardly any space left for bicycles and pedestrians. The traffic becomes really unmanageable. The atmosphere becomes polluted with the smoke, dust and fumes of diesel and petrol. The possibilities of road accident are always there in such chaotic situations.
- (15) Today there is a great disparity in our society. A rich man has an excess of wealth which he still goes on accumulating whereas the poor man can hardly get two square meals a day. The rich are becoming richer and the poor are becoming poorer. The present conflict between capital and labour is due to the economic inequality. The socialistic pattern of society is an impossibility unless the wide gulf between the rich and the poor is eliminated. People are losing their lives because of the inequal distribution of the riches. The society has numerous beggars, dacoits and robbers due to lack of suffice wealth. A man who doesn't get three times meal has nothing to do with humanity and mankind. He requires food and shelter for his family at any cost. Economic inequality has become the cause of many social evils.

1.5 LET US SUM UP

In this unit, you have been introduced to caption, heading and title writing.

Although similar, these three have hairline differences. This unit has made an effort to show you how distinctive each of these three is. Each of these three has a vital role in the field of communication. You must build the capacity for creativity and be very prompt in arranging such captions or headings or titles. Your thinking power has to be sharp enough for this. In fact, this unit intends to sharpen your imaginative skill that will be extremely important for the next unit. You have learnt how to study a picture, a passage and consecutively to develop a caption or a heading/title.

▶▶ Key Words

- Caption** : A title or brief explanation printed with an illustration or cartoon etc. In simple words, it is the text that appears below an image.
- Heading** : A title at the top of a page or section of a book.
- Sub-heading:** It comes below a heading; tells about the sub-topics.
- Title** : Usually title refers to the name of a book, work of art, piece of music etc. However, occasionally, it covers the heading of a chapter, poem, document etc.
- Note taking** : Taking down the important points of an oral presentation/ comment/ argument in an abbreviated and informally coded form for later use only.

Note making : Taking down the important points from a written text in an abbreviated and informally coded form for later use, usually for oneself.

Informative Heading : Heading of a section which indicates what is said in the section instead of merely saying what the section is about.

Descriptive Heading: Heading of a section in a report which only tells what the section is about without giving any indicating what is said there.

Precision: It refers to a use of language in which we say exactly what is meant without any vagueness or ambiguity.

Conciseness : It refers to a use of language in which the meaning is conveyed using the minimum possible number of words.

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» **Model questions**

- * Questions given in Check Your Progress may be considered
as model questions.

UNIT-II: TRANSCODING INFORMATION FROM CHART, GRAPHS, VISUALS ETC.

Structure

- 1.0 Objectives
- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Transcoding
 - 1.2.1 What is Transcoding?
- 1.3 Types of Transcoding
 - 1.3.1 Dialogue to Prose/ Prose to Dialogue
 - 1.3.2 Audio Transcoding
 - 1.3.3 Visual Transcoding
- * Check Your Progress
- 1.4 Let Us Sum Up
 - ◆ Key Words
 - ◆ References
 - ◆ Further Readings
 - ◆ Model Questions

1.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you will be able to

- ◆ **interpret** the given visual
- ◆ **analyze** the information hidden in a visual
- ◆ **convert** charts, graphs, visuals etc. into written information

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Already in the previous unit you have noticed the subtle differences between captions/headings, captions/titles and headings/titles. Now you know how to write them. We would like to remind you that you have to be imaginative and creative as well to write good and effective captions or titles. In this last unit of the block and the course, we will introduce you to another important and useful method of communication, i.e. transcoding information.

Once you complete this unit, you will find yourself as a competent person in the area of English communication. You will be confident enough to communicate in verbal as well as written mode with others. The basic idea of the unit is to enhance your confidence and competence as well.

1.2 TRANSCODING

1.2.1 What is transcoding?

In simple words, 'transcoding' means **information transfer**. That denotes transferring information from one given code to another known code. Well, have a look at the following to get a clear picture.

Both (A) and (B) contain the same information about the teaching staff of a college - (A) is in prose/written form and (B) is in tabular form.

(A)

- ◆ The total teaching staff of the college is 300 of which one sixth, i.e. 52 are women teachers.
- ◆ The teachers who have obtained higher

qualifications, i.e. higher than their post graduation are very few. They constitute just 20% of the total staff. Among them 15 teachers have qualified themselves for the M.Phil degree and 10 for the Ph.D.

- ◆ A majority of teachers is permanent and their number is 238. The rest of the teachers are appointed on a temporary basis.
- ◆ As far as the age is concerned about half of the teachers are middle-aged i.e. between 31 to 45 years. The number of younger teachers i.e. those between 25 to 30 and older ones, i.e. those above 45 is approximately the same. They are 73 and 77 respectively.

(B)

Teaching staff of the college - Total staff: 300

Sex		Qualifications			Appointment		Age Group		
Male	Female	Post Graduation	M.Phil	Ph.D	Temporary	Permanent	25-30	31 - 45	Above 45
248	52	275	15	10	62	238	73	150	77

Courtesy: Enriching your Competence in English, Thorat, Valke, Gokhale

Well, what is your view?

Which form do you find better?

Is it the written one or the visual one?

I think it is the latter one - we all are fond of visuals because these can be easily understood and remembered. Besides, these take less time too.

It happens sometimes that a particular information is in the form of a dialogue or a visual. However, in the given situation, written information is needed.

What to do then? We have to study the given information well and then change it into a written one. In case of dialogue to prose or prose to dialogue, the process is somewhat easy. It is so because we already have some words and sentences with us. The only thing is to rewrite it in the form of a composition. Certainly, you all have an idea of narration, changing from direct speech to indirect speech and vice-versa. That will be of great help for you.

But remember, in case of visuals, the process is little different. Here you have to read the unwritten and give it a written form. This certainly has link with your earlier knowledge of caption writing. The difference is that there you had to study a visual and add a name to it. However, here you are to construct a passage or a few sentences from a visual. Both the reading and writing skills acquired in the previous blocks will help you in this regard.

1.3 Types of Transcoding

Already you have an idea of transcoding - now we shall talk of the different types of transcoding that we come across. Do you know most of the time we transcode information unknowingly? Remember how you used to narrate the story of a film or an incident to your friends ... that is transcoding. Again, noting down the words of your teacher in a class is another example.

Let us look at the varieties of transcoding -

- ◆ Dialogue to prose / prose to dialogue
- ◆ Audio transcoding
- ◆ Visual transcoding

We shall discuss each in detail in the following sections.

1.3.1 Dialogue to Prose/ Prose to Dialogue

This implies transfer of information in dialogue or spoken code to prose or written code and vice-versa. As stated earlier, this type of transcoding is a regular practice for most of us. There's no doubt that you all are aware of the movies or television serials, which are based on some novels or short stories. For instance, R.K. Narayan's *Swami* and *Friends* is the source of the famous T.V. serial *Malgudi Days*. Even the epics *The Ramayana* and *The Mahabharata* were transcribed to dialogue form for the purpose of enactment either on stage or on screen. We can cite the example of the Assamese film *Agnisnan* based on the classic novel *Antarip* authored by Dr. Bhabendranath Saikia. These are only a few of the examples of Prose to Dialogue transcoding.

Well, let's have a look at an example which is already done: Read the following paragraph carefully and notice how a dialogue between the girl and the counsellor is prepared based on the information given in the paragraph.

Prose

Choosing a career is never easy. With so many options available it is difficult to decide which one is best for you. Caught in a dilemma a 16-year-old girl, just out of class ten decides to visit a career counsellor. "Sir, how do I know which stream is best for me?" asks the girl. She is told by the counsellor about certain aptitude tests that she could take. The girl indicates a preference for commerce and business management. The counsellor asks the girl to come the next day and take the necessary tests. The girl thanks him and takes leave. She is relieved that the conflict in her mind would be resolved next day.

Dialogue

Girl: Good afternoon, Sir.

Counsellor: Good afternoon, what brings you here?

Girl (nervously): Actually Sir, I have just appeared for my class ten exams and I am thoroughly confused as to which stream to choose and which career to pursue.

Counsellor (smiling): Well I'm sure we here at the Career Counselling Institute can help you take a decision.

Girl: But how do I decide, Sir?

Counsellor: We'll identify your strengths, that is, your aptitude. And you must tell us about your interests. Wherever the two meet, that'll be the ideal choice for you. By the way, what is your area of interest?

Girl: Sir, I am interested in pursuing the commerce stream. My dream is to do business management and work for a top multinational firm.

Counsellor: That is wonderful! It's always good to think big, but without losing touch with reality. I'm not trying to discourage you, but you should keep your options open and this is where the aptitude test will help you. You may come tomorrow and we'll administer the tests. The following week we'll have an individual counselling session based on the results of these tests.

Girl (looking relieved): Thank you very much, Sir. I will be here tomorrow. What time should I come?

Counsellor: Be here at ten o' clock sharp.

Girl: Certainly, Sir. I am already feeling optimistic and relieved. So many choices were really beginning to confuse me. I felt I would never be able to make the right decision.

Counsellor (smiling encouragingly); Of course, you will make the right decision. That's what we're here for! All the best and be here tomorrow.

Courtesy: The Written Word, Vandana R. Singh

Then comes transcoding from Dialogue to Prose. Here also we shall show you a worked out exercise that is an excerpt based on the story of *The Frog Prince*.

Dialogue

"You are a royal Princess," he said, "and whatever promise you made you must keep. Even a promise to a frog. Now open the door and let him come in."

The Princess looked with disgust at the ugly green frog.

"I can't reach the table," he croaked. "Lift me up, Princess!"

The Princess set the ugly frog on the linen cloth, where he sat blinking his eyes.

"Give me my supper," he croaked. "And you promised I could eat from your crystal plate."

The King looked sternly at the Princess, so she pushed her crystal plate nearer the ugly frog who ate some of her supper. After that, the Princess could not eat a bite.

Prose

The King told her that she was a royal Princess and she must keep whatever promise she had made, even if it were a promise to a frog. He then told her to open the door and let him come in. The Princess looked with disgust at the ugly green frog. The frog croaked that he could not reach the table, asking her to lift him

up. The Princess set the ugly frog on the linen cloth, where he sat blinking his eyes. The frog then asked for his supper reminding her that she had promised that he could eat from her own crystal plate. The King looked sternly at the Princess, so she pushed her crystal plate nearer the ugly frog who ate some of her supper. After that, the Princess could not eat a bite.

Courtesy: The Written Word, Vandana R. Singh

Is it clear now?

Can you see the transformation properly?

Do you think you have the same ability to achieve it?

Yes, if you are well acquainted with the English language, its vocabulary, grammar etc., you certainly can.

As this part is not included in your syllabus, we won't discuss it more. Our objective here is only to give you an idea of the varieties of Transcoding.

1.3.2 Audio Transcoding

Audio transcoding - what comes to your mind? Are you familiar with this type of transcoding? Give a little thought... Well, as students that is what all of us do - when your teacher delivers his/her lecture in the classroom, what do you do? You transform the whole or part of the lecture into a note form. Your experience of note taking and note making will benefit you in this regard because some elements are common.

Let's go back to Unit III of Block II - what was in it? There you learnt of **note making** and its implications. Do you remember

anything about **note taking**? Was it there? Yes, note-taking/making are almost similar. We take notes from what we listen to and we make notes from what we read. It is an interactive process. Mentally we interact with the spoken/written matter constantly and try to grasp the meaning in order to write down important points in such a manner that accurate reconstruction of the matter becomes easier.

From the above discussion, it has become clear that audio transcoding is much closer to note taking. When we want to record something which we have heard (from any source), we take down the important points or summarize it for later expansion. This process is termed as audio transcoding or note-making from memory, or note taking while listening.

It is quite a difficult task because we tend to miss out some portions while transcoding from the auditory medium as our concentration fluctuates resulting in partial remembrance. Therefore, you should be aware of the following three factors that decide the effectiveness of audio transcoding:

- ◆ The listener's power of comprehension
- ◆ The listener's power of retention
- ◆ The listener's power of recall

If you can improve in these three areas, the quality of your transcoding will surely develop.

Let's study one such example which is already done for you.

A few days ago you had heard this talk on radio and you happened to mention the same to your teacher who has asked you to write down the details and present them to her.

What is the Cause of Flat Feet?

When you make wet footprints on the bathroom floor, you will see that there are blank patches in the middle between the toe marks and the heel marks. This is because the middle parts of the feet are raised off the ground by two sets of muscles, called the tibial and the peroneal muscles which make the arches of the feet. If these muscles weaken, the feet spread out and the arches sink to the ground. The footprints are flat, with no gaps in the middle. This is called having flat feet, or fallen arches. Sometimes people get flat feet because their jobs keep them standing around too much. Policemen, waitresses and nurses often suffer from flat feet.

The cure is exercise which tightens up the muscles again. Supports to be put inside shoes are worse than useless. They make the muscles slacken, weaker instead of stronger.

Reproduction

What is the cause of flat feet?

If you look at the impressions of your wet feet on the bathroom floor you will notice blank patches between the toe marks and heel marks. This is on account of two sets of muscles, namely, the tibial and the peroneal muscles which give arches to the feet. In the event of these muscles weakening the feet spread out and the arches start touching the ground. Anyone having flat feet or fallen arches, as they are called, would have flat footprints as well. People whose jobs involve a lot of standing, such as policemen, waitresses and nurses, also tend to have flat feet. The only care

to this is exercise that helps tighten the muscles. Special shoes do not really help as they make the muscles weaker instead of stronger.

Courtesy: 1000 Questions and Answers

Can you see any difference between these methods of transcoding? Try to identify and enlist those differences.

1.3.3 Visual Transcoding

Finally, we arrive at visual transcoding that is included in your syllabus. Visual transcoding involves study and analysis of a visual for transcoding it. A book generally provides us with elaborate information in the form of written composition. However, we find tables, graphs, cartoons etc. within books or any such reading materials that contain a lot of condensed information. In both cases, a reader gets information. The latter is an example of visual information.

In simple words, we can divide the whole process of visual transcoding into three parts -

- (i) thorough study of a visual
- (ii) analysis of it and
- (iii) transformation of it into prose.

Before going into details, you should know what visual is. The term 'visual' here covers any picture, map, diagram, pie-chart, cartoon, caricature, bar-graph etc. which appears along with any written composition. *Graphs, tables and charts are a means of focusing attention on particular facts e.g. some relevant data*

or figures. They support and illustrate the points being explained by the presenter. A graph depicts visible trends or developments that have taken place. Earlier such supportive visuals used to be very few, but nowadays we get a lot of them while reading any sort of reading material. Especially, the books meant for children are full of visuals and therefore, they enjoy reading the same. Even the elders love to have a look at those books. This transition is caused by the need of the hour. As the visuals usually supplement the textual information, the reading public appreciates that. People have less time or interest to go thoroughly through a long or detailed composition and hence the visuals in it can convey the same information in a compact form. Moreover, a visual has a lasting impression and the reader finds it convenient for analysis.

We shall enlist the **advantages** of information presented in visuals as follows:

- ◆ The data is presented vividly. Tables, graphs and charts highlight the main points and avoid repetition of words and sentences.
- ◆ They require comparatively less space because the information presented is very concise.
- ◆ Precision, clarity and simplicity of the forms make complicated matter easy to understand.
- ◆ They are easy to remember because of their visual effect.
- ◆ Analysis of the information can be done and generalizations can be arrived at without much difficulty.

Courtesy: *Enriching your Competence in English*, Thorat, Valke and Gokhale

Let us practically discern the effectiveness of a visual by finding out whether the information conveyed by the diagram given below totally corresponds to the accompanying information:

Visual:

	Vasanta	Chaitra - Baisakha
		March - April
	Grishma	Jyestha - Asadha
		May - June
Seasons	Varsha	Sravana - Bhadra
		July - August
	Sharada	Asvina -Kartika
		September -October
	Hemanta	Margashirsa - Pausa
		November - December
	Shishira	Magha - Phalguna
		January - February

Indian seasons with months according to (i) Indian calendar and (ii) English calendar.

Source: General Geography of India - NCERT

Information transcoded :

According to the Indian convention the year is divided into the following six seasons (ritus):

The Vasanta is the first season of the year and roughly corresponds to spring. The season, however, does not fully coincide with the English months of March and April as it extends over the period mid-February to mid-April. The Vasanta is replaced by Grishma (summer) occurring during the months of April, May and June.

The Sharada Ritu occurs in Asvina-Kartika (mid- September to mid-November). However, there is no clear distinction between the Sharada and the following Hemanta (Margashirsa -Pausa) except that the cold weather is rigorous during the latter. The Sharada is clearly a transition between the Varsha and the Hemanta.

The Hemanta is followed by the Shishira. The Varsha Ritu (rainy season) of the Indian tradition extends over Sravana -Bhadrapada (July-August). The rainy season may, however, set in by the middle of May and June and continue upto the middle of September with marginal variations and occurs in Magha and Phalgun (January -February). During Shishira the cold weather gradually gives way to the spring (Vasanta) itself transitional to summer.

It is interesting to note that this view of seasons holds good in north and central parts of India. There are some variations in seasons in the southern region of the peninsula.

Source: General Geography of India NCERT

What is your opinion?

How far is the transcoding successful?

Is there any drawback in this transcoding?

Do you feel that only partial information is conveyed?

Can you prepare a better one?

Try to answer this yourself and see how much you have understood. Now we shall proceed to the next stage, i.e. **method of visual transcoding**.

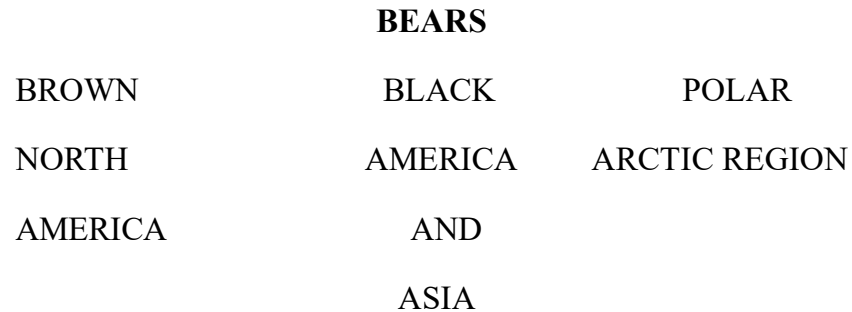
The questions that immediately crop up are - How to convert a visual into a written composition? Is there any fixed rule for visual transcoding?

In fact, there are no fixed rules as to how to transcode a visual. As the range of visuals is so varied, it is quite difficult to frame any rule for such widespread variety. Still, we may suggest certain **basic points** necessary for viewing a visual.

- ◆ First of all, you must read the title carefully. This is important as usually the title reflects the content.
- ◆ Secondly, try to detect any concealed key or code. Once again, such detection can prove worthy enough for the purpose of transcoding.
- ◆ Thirdly, if any accompanying text is there, try to analyze the visual in that particular context. This is purely optional because visuals are usually self-explanatory.

- ◆ Finally, practise, practise and practise - perhaps, the best way of acquiring this skill is by actually applying your minds to active interpretation. Make a habit of studying every visual you come across be it in newspapers, books, journals, hoardings etc. and see the difference. Take it as a game and enjoy it! See how promptly you can decipher a visual and that's the magic!

Let's start with a simple example - study the following diagram minutely:



Communication Skills in English, MAHE

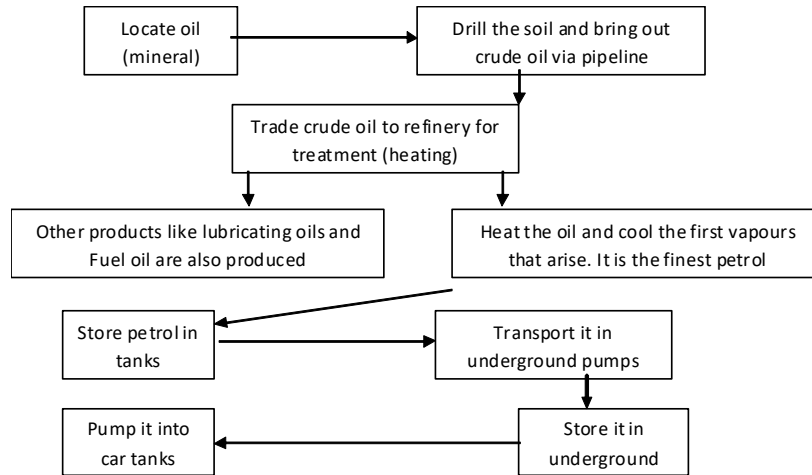
Now read the following description on this diagram:

Bears can be considered as belonging to three main groups. They are brown bears, the black bears and the polar bears. The brown bears are normally found in North America, Europe and Asia. Whereas the black bears are found in America and Asia. But the polar bears can only be found in the Arctic regions.

Isn't it a simple one? The above diagram has been interpreted in a lucid style using simple language. This is the appropriate style - your intention should never be to confuse your readers. Try to make your transcoding plain as far as possible.

Take one more example: this time you are to study the flow chart and write a paragraph on it.

Title: Journey of Petrol: from Well to Tank



Courtesy: Enriching Your Competence in English, Thorat, Valke, Gokhale

First of all, look at the title - in fact, it conveys the subject matter of the visual. It becomes much easier for you to interpret the content. Then, study the chart and trace the route of petrol's journey.

One more point to note is that however good you are in deciphering a visual, you might lag behind due to lack of grammatical knowledge and word stock. Someone has rightly said - **No grammar, some communication: no words, no communication.** Hence, side by side concentrate on improving your deficiencies. We expect overall growth in

you as learners. Never overlook your drawbacks - rather put more stress on them, work hard for improvement and see the change!

Let us assume that after completion of this unit you are now well versed in this field of transcoding. Make the best of this knowledge by rigorous practice. Always remember - **the only key to success is hard work!**

***CHECK YOUR PROGRESS**

1. Give short answers to the following questions:

(a) What do you understand by the term 'transcoding'?

(b) Give an example of transcoding done in day-to-day life.

(c) Mention one difference between caption writing and visual transcoding.

(d) Enlist the different varieties of transcoding.

(e) What is audio transcoding? Give an example.

(f) What is meant by transcoding from dialogue to prose or vice-versa? Provide at least one example of each.

(g) Enlist the factors important for effective audio transcoding.

(h) State the basic difference between note taking and note making.

(i) Explain briefly, what visual transcoding is. Give an example too.

(j) What is a 'visual'?

(k) Enlist the advantages of visual information.

(l) Is there any definite method for visual transcoding? If not, explain how to convert a visual into a written composition?

(m) Mention the components of visual transcoding.

2. Fill in the blanks:

- (a) Information transferring from one code to another is called _____.
- (b) _____ transcoding is closer to note taking.
- (c) Visuals usually _____ written information.
- (d) Data is presented _____ in visual information.
- (e) _____ are generally self-explanatory.

3. Study the pictures below and bring out their significance in few sentences:

(1)



(2)



(3)



(4)



(5)



(6)

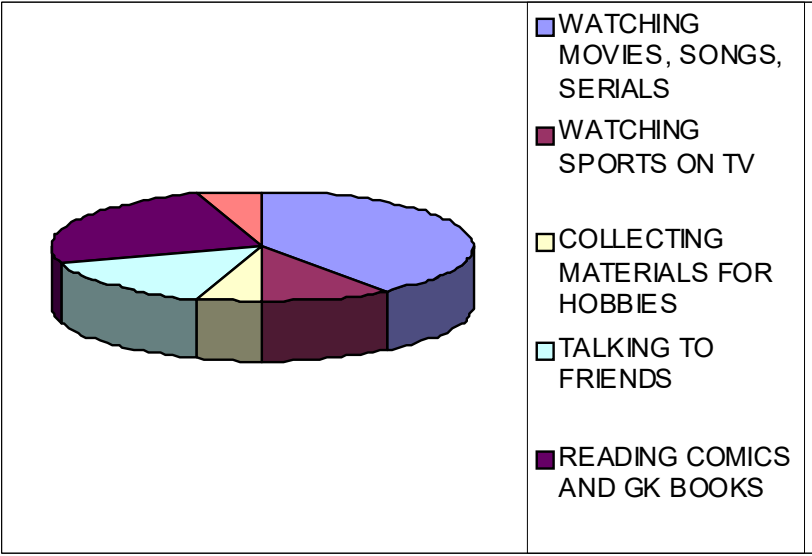


(7)

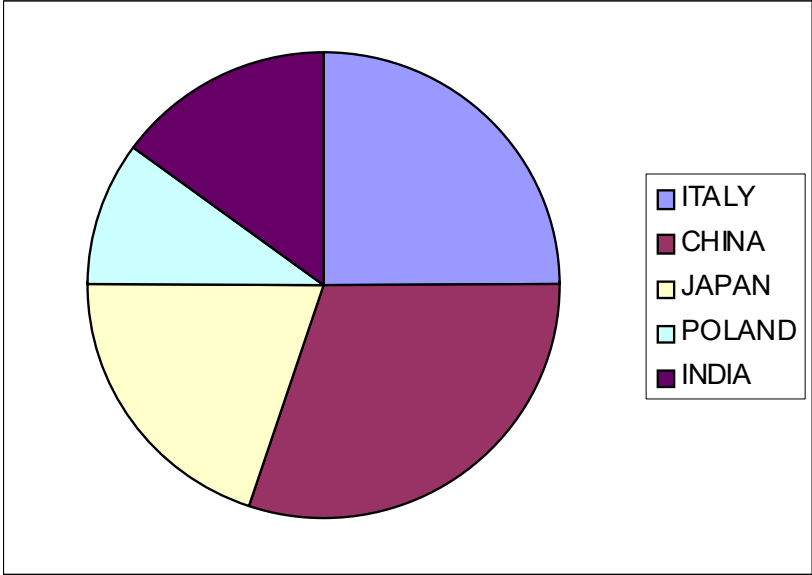


4. Taking clue from the pie chart and the data given below, write a Paragraph on 'How teenagers spend their free time':

Data : Watching movies, songs, serials -	40%
Watching sports on TV -	10%
Collecting materials for hobbies -	5%
Talking to their friends -	15%
Reading comics and general knowledge books -	25%
Playing indoor and outdoor games -	5%



5. Study the pie chart and write a paragraph on 'Production of Woolen Goods':



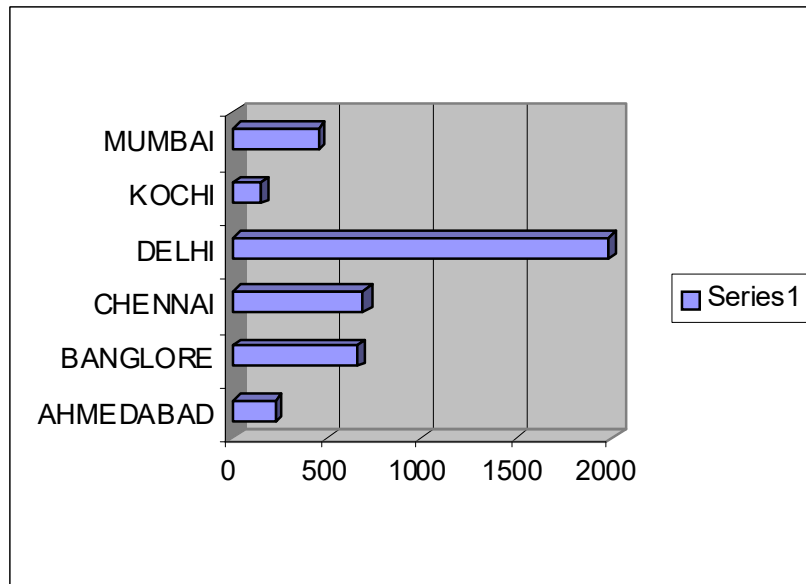
6. Taking clue from the data given below write a paragraph titled

'Driving India Crazy':

Mumbai 449, Kochi 148, Delhi 1989, Chennai 692, Bangalore

659, Ahmedabad 223

Number of persons killed in road accident



7. Taking information from the table given below write a paragraph

on 'Promotion of Tourism':

TOURISTS WHO VISITED

Year	Domestic	International
1998	44456	98563
1999	436350	11478

Plans of Tourism Department

- ◆ To develop a wild life park
- ◆ Illumination and light and sound programme at one of the places of tourist interest in the city
- ◆ To develop a big amusement park
- ◆ Convention centre and a multiplex in the cit

8. Read the text of the telegrams given below and provide a context for the message to bring out the meaning in five to six sentences:

- (a) MESSAGE: ENTRANCE POSTPONED STOP
 PAPER LEAKED STOP INFORM
 NEW DATE LATER.
- (b) MESSAGE: INTERVIEW CANCELLED STOP
 HEAVY RAINFALL STOP
 INFORM FRESH DATE LATER.
- (c) MESSAGE: ADMISSION DATE DECLARED
 STOP SEND MONEY STOP
 CONSIDER URGENT.

N.B. Attempt the exercises given after the Chapter 'Visual Transcoding' in The Written Word.

1.4 LET US SUM UP

In this last unit of the entire course, you have seen how information of one type can be converted into another. This is a very significant skill for any individual - as members of society we come across a number of data, which has to be diverted into another code depending on the situational demand. Although

visual transcoding is included in the course, we have tried to introduce you to the remaining types of transcoding as well. However, you must put your own effort for achieving accuracy. We have provided mostly theoretical knowledge and therefore, you must practice it repeatedly for achieving mastery.

◆ **Key words**

- Transcoding** : It refers to transferring of codes, especially of information.
- Visual** : Tables, bar charts, line charts, pie charts, graphs etc. which are used for reporting any information.
- Audio transcoding** : It implies transfer of information in auditory form to prose or written form. Also termed as note-making from memory/note-making while listening.
- Prose to dialogue** : This implies transfer of information in dialogue or spoken code to prose or written code.
- Dialogue to Prose** : This implies transfer of information in prose or written code to dialogue or spoken code.
- Visual transcoding** : It refers to the process of converting a visual into written or prose code after proper study and analysis of it.
- Data** : Known facts or things used as a basis for inference or reckoning.
- Table** : A set of facts or figures systematically displayed , esp. in columns.

- Bar diagram** : It is a diagram, on which narrow strips, which are of equal width but of varying height are used to represent quantities.
- Pie chart** : A pie chart is a diagram that consists of a circle divided into parts and each part represents a specific proportion of the whole.
- Flow chart** : A flow chart is a diagram that indicates stages or processes of something.
- Analysis** : A detailed or thorough examination of the elements or structure of something.
- Transformation** : A remarkable change in nature, form, or appearance.
- Decipher** : To convert something difficult from code into normal language.

◆ **References**

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♦ **Further Readings**

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♦ **Model Questions**

N.B.: Question No. 3 - 8 in Check your Progress are samples of model questions.