UNIT 6

THE NIGHT TRAIN AT DEOLI

B3X4J9

Pre-task

(A) Recite the poem.

In the Train

As we rush, as we rush in the train,
The trees and the houses go wheeling back,
But the starry heavens above the plain
Come flying on our track.

All the beautiful stars of the sky,
The silver doves of the forest of night,
Over the dull earth swarm and fly,
Companions of our flight.

We will rush ever on without fear;
Let the goal be far, the flight be fleet!
For we carry the heavens with us, dear,
While the earth slips from under our feet!

- James Thomson

Mark true or false.

When we travel in a train:

1. Stars are like bright birds.	T	F
2. We are slipping on the earth.	T	F
3. Star filled sky is changing.	T	F
4. The dark night looks like a forest.	T	F
5. It seems as if trees are racing with us.	T	F
6. The journey is scaring.	T	F

(B) Recollect a meeting with a stranger during your journey on a train or a bus and share details of that person with your classmate.

(You may use your mother-tongue)

Read

When I was at college, I regularly spent my summer vacation in Dehra, at my grandmother's place. I would leave the plains early in May and return late in July. Deoli was a small station about 50 kms from Dehra. It was on the border of the heavy jungle of the Indian Terai.

I decided that one day I would get off the train at Deoli and spend the day there. I was eighteen, visiting my grandmother and the night train stopped at Deoli. A girl came down the platform selling baskets.

It was a cold morning and the girl had a shawl across her shoulder. Her feet were bare and her clothes were old. She was a young girl, walking gracefully towards me.

When she came to my window, she stopped. She saw that I was looking at her intently, but at first she pretended not to notice. She had a pale skin, shiny black hair, and dark eyes. And then those eyes, searching and lively, met mine.



She stood by my window for some time and neither of us said anything. But when she moved on, I, don't know why, left my seat and rushed to the carriage door. She noticed me at the door, and stood waiting on the platform. I walked across to the tea stall. A kettle was boiling on a small fire. The girl followed me behind the stall.

''Do you want to buy a basket ? She asked. ''They are very strong, made of the finest cane.''

''No,'' I said, ''I don't want a basket.''

We stood looking at each other for a very long time and then she said, ''Are you sure you don't want a basket ?''

''Give me one,'' I said, and I took the one on top and gave her a rupee. I wished to touch her fingers, but could not.

The guard blew his whistle; she said, something, but it was lost in the clanging of the bell and the hissing of the engine. I had to run back to my compartment. I watched her as the platform slipped away. She was alone on the platform and did not move, but she was looking at me and smiling. I watched her until the signal box came in the way, and then the jungle hid the station. I could still see her standing there alone.

I sat up awake for the rest of the journey. I could not forget the girl's face and her dark, bright eyes.

But when I reached Dehra, the incident got blurred and distant; for there were other things on my mind. It was only when I was making the return journey two months later, that I remembered the girl.

I was looking out for her as the train drew into the station and I felt an unexpected thrill. I saw her walking up the platform. I ran to the door and waved at her. When she saw me, she smiled. She was pleased that I remembered her. I was pleased that she remembered me.

She did not start selling baskets, but came straight to the tea stall. Her dark eyes were suddenly filled with light. We said nothing for some time but we spoke without words. I felt the impulse to put her on the train there and then, and take her away with me. I could not bear the thought of watching her vanish into the darkness of Deoli station. I took the baskets from her hand and put them on the ground. She put out her hand to take a basket, but I caught her hand and held it.

''I have to go to Delhi,'' I said.

She nodded. ''I do not have to go anywhere.''

The guard blew his whistle and I hated the guard for doing that.

''I will come again,'' I said. ''Will you be here?''

She nodded. ''I do not have to go anywhere.''

She nodded again. The bell clanged and the train slid forward. I had to pull my hand away from the girl and run for the moving train.

This time I did not forget her. She was with me for the rest of the journey, and for long after. All that year she was a bright, living thing. And when the college term ended. I packed in haste and left for Dehra earlier than usual. I was nervous and anxious as the train entered Deoli. I was wondering what I should say to the girl, and what I should do. I was determined that I wouldn't stand helplessly before her.

The train came to Deoli, and I looked up and down the platform, but I could not see the girl anywhere.

I opened the door and stepped off the foot board. I was deeply disappointed. I felt I had to do something, and so I ran up to the station master and said, 'Do you know the girl who used to sell baskets here?

''No, I don't'', said the station-master.

The train was moving out of the station, and I had to run up the platform and jump for the door of my compartment.

As Deoli platform vanished, I decided that one day I would have to break journey there. I would spend a day in the town, make enquiries, and find the girl who had stolen my heart with nothing but a look from her dark, impatient eyes.

In the last few years I have passed through Deoli many times. I always look out of the window to see the same unchanged face smiling to me. But I will never break journey there. I prefer to keep hoping and dreaming, and looking out of the window for the girl with the baskets waiting for me.

I never break my journey at Deoli, but I pass through as often as I can.

-Ruskin Bond

Glossary

plain meadow, open field **bare** not covered **gracefully** moving in a smooth way, in a stylish way **intently** purposefully **pretend** to show what is not true, ડોળ **pale** colourless, dull **shiny** bright, dazzling **clanging** ringing **still** quiet **awake** not sleeping with open eyes **blurred** not clear, cloudy **distant** in a far place, remote **thrill** to feel very excited **impulse** a sudden urge to act **slide** slip **nervous** in tension, uncomfortable, uneasy **determined** certain, having a firm decision **disappointed** having feeling of failure **impatient** anxious, eager, excited **prefer to** favour, like

Vocabulary

V. 1 Frame a sentence using all the words in each group.

1. anxious - look at – pale - my teacher
2. determine – summer vacation – spend – Mt. Abu
3. kettle – tea – gas stove
4. run back – bell – class room-students
5. bare – sun – road – walk

V. 2 Form words by rearranging the letters in a correct order. The middle column gives you some clues.

	Clue	Word
last 1	a small shop	stall
ulbr	not clear	_____
joruney	trip, travel	_____
pumisle	a sudden urge to act	_____
otneic	observe	_____
aclng	a loud ringing sound	_____
paimtniet	restless	_____

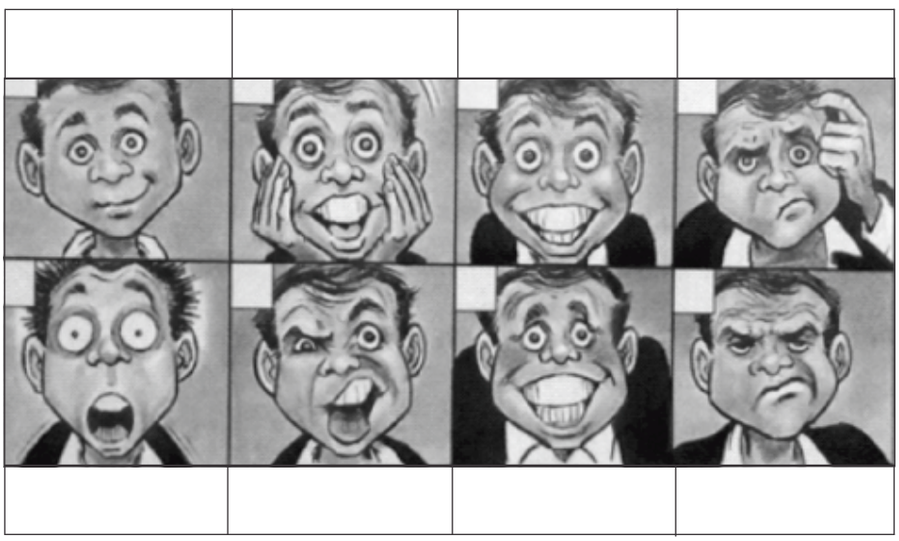
V. 3 Write appropriate match from the brackets to complete the phrases.

(and down, foot board , the dark, the engine, the train , the hospital, the jungle, the bell)

1. clanging of	.....	2. border of	.....
3. get off	.....	4. rushed to	.....
5. vanishing	.....	6. hissing of	.....
7. stepped	.....	8. looked up	.....

V. 4 Match the words with the expressions.

amazed, annoyed, confused, disgusted, embarrassed, excited, interested, shocked



Comprehension

C. 1 Read the picture of the girl selling baskets and write at least eight sentences about her.
(bare feet, old clothes, young, walking gracefully, pale skin, black hair, dark eyes, searching and lively)



(1) _____
(2) _____
(3) _____
(4) _____
(5) _____
(6) _____
(7) _____
(8) _____

C. 2 Mark 'True' or 'False'. Correct the false statements.

(1) The girl was selling many things.	T	F
(2) The writer met the girl twice at Deoli.	T	F
(3) The writer controlled his feeling of touching the girl.	T	F
(4) The writer watched the girl in the dream during the journey.	T	F
(5) The writer expressed his love in words during their second meeting.	T	F
(6) The writer broke his journey at Deoli and made inquiries about the girl.	T	F

C. 3 Here is a list of sentences expressing writer's attraction and love for the girl selling baskets. Put the numbers from 7 (highest) to 1 (least) for suggesting the degree of attraction according to your opinion.

- ☐ I was looking at her intently.
- ☐ I wished to touch her.
- ☐ I watched the girl until the signal box came.
- ☐ I could not forget her face.
- ☐ I felt the impulse to put her on the train there and then.
- ☐ I caught her hand and held it.
- ☐ She was with me for the rest of the journey and for long after.

C. 4 Fill in the blanks selecting appropriate words from the text.

The writer was of about _____ years of age. He regularly spent_____ with his grandmother who _____. He left for Dehra _____ and _____. Once while he was travelling by the night train, at Deoli, he _____ on the platform. She _____. She had _____. The writer _____ so he got off the compartment and _____. Actually he didn't want to buy any basket but he _____ so that he _____ for some time. He wanted to _____ but he couldn't do so. As the train started, he _____ to his compartment. He couldn't _____ of the girl till he reached Dehradun.

C. 5 Answer the questions.

(1) Where did the author spend his summer vacation?
(2) How did the author react when he saw the girl for the first time?
(3) What feeling did the author have while buying the basket?
(4) What kept the author awake for the rest of the journey?
(5) What urge did the author have when he met the girl for the second time?
(6) Why did the author leave for Dehra earlier than usual?
(7) How did the author feel as the train entered Dehra? What did he decide then?
(8) Whom did the author ask about the girl? What reply did he get?
(9) Why did the author want to break the journey at Deoli? Could he do that?

- **Imagine that you were the writer. What would you have done?**
- **What do you think about the end of the story?**

Language Practice

L. 1 Work in pairs. Write the occupation of the speaker.

Example: He told me that I must not drive until I was 18 years. – Traffic Police

1. She told me that I was not taking my medicines regularly. _____
2. He scolded him that nobody would write from his neighbour's answer book. _____
3. She announced that the train scheduled on that day would arrive on the day after. _____
4. They declared that they were ready to participate in any programme organised after school hours. _____

L. 2 Read the sentences in A and B carefully. Underline the differences.

	A	B
1	He said, "I am alone at home today."	He said that he was alone at home that day.
2	He said, "I 'm looking for my keys now."	He said that he was looking for his keys then.
3	He said, "I visited Mehsana last Sunday."	He said that he had visited Mehsana the previous Sunday.
4	He said, "I've lived here for a long time."	He said that he had lived there for a long time.
5	He said, "I had finished my homework when my parents came."	He said that he had finished his homework when his parents came.
6	He said,"I have been watching this programme for two hours."	He said that he had been watching that programme for two hours.
7	He said, "I was watching television when they rang the doorbell."	He said that he had been watching television when they rang the doorbell.

8	He said, "I had been doing my homework when the light went off".	He said that he had been doing his homework when the light went off.
9	He said,"I will open the library tomorrow."	He said that he would open the library the next day.

L. 3 Read the text given in L.2 and write down the changes made in 'B' into the table.

Sentence	A	B
Example	I, am, today	He, was, that day
1	I'm looking, my, now	
2	I visited, last Sunday	
3	I've lived, here	
4	I had finished, my, came	
5	I have been watching this	
6	I was watching, rang	
7	I had been doing, went off	
8	I will open, tomorrow	

L. 4 You are a class monitor. As a monitor of your class you are asked to take attendance and note down absentees and the reasons for their absence in the class. Following are the reasons given by the students who remained absent the previous day in the class.

You : Why were you absent yesterday?

1. Disha : I was not well.
2. Haroon : I got up late in the morning.
3. Suketu : I was not ready with my homework.
4. Vraj : I visited my uncle's place with my parents.
5. Dhiraj : I went to the stadium to watch the cricket match.
6. Sania : We had some guests and I had to help out my mother in the kitchen.

Now you are reporting the students' reasons to your class teacher.

Madam,

1. Disha said that …….....…….
2. Haroon said that…….....……..
3. Suketu said that …….....……...
4. Vraj said that …….....……
5. Dhiraj said that …….....……
6. Sania said that …….....……

L. 5 As a part of your school project you meet Roopam, a former student of your school. S/he remembers her/his school days.

• I was an average student in study. But I was very good at English. I was not good at sports. I was very fat. I did not like reading much. I used to spend too much time watching TV. I loved the annual function celebrations.

Work in pairs and write a brief report on what was shared by Roopam about her/his early school days.

Roopam is a former student of our school and s/he is a successful business person now.
S/he said that …… in studies. But s/he stated that ……..... in English. S/he shared that..... …… sports as ……..……..……..
S/he said that …….. reading much. s/he said that …… watching TV. s/he happily said that ……. celebrations.

L. 6 Your school is busy preparing for the Annual day. A music teacher is appointed to train you for different events. Unfortunately, the music teacher's guitar is lost from the school. The teacher is making inquiry about the lost guitar.

Teacher : *Where were you last evening*?
Mohsin : I was with the dance group. But I saw Raghav playing guitar.
Raghav : I took it for a while, then I went to see the dance practice.
Megha : I was busy with my classical dance practice.
Reena : We were rehearsing our prayer song in the assembly hall.
Sam : I left for home early as I wasn't feeling well.

The teacher is now sharing the information with the principal about what had happened. Complete the following text.

I had left the guitar in the music hall the previous evening. I asked the students who were involved with different events. Mohsin said that _____ the dance group but _____Raghav _____ with guitar. Raghav said that _____ for a while then _____the dance practice. Megha revealed that _____classical dance practice. Reena said that _____into the assembly hall. Sam said that _____ feeling well.

L. 7 When Radhika and Shekhar shifted to their new flat, several things needed repairing. The flat owner rang them up and said:

"I am out of station now, but I will come tomorrow and give you the extra key for the main door. I will also get furniture in the kitchen repaired and get the gas heater fixed in the bathroom. I will also get the curtain fixed in the drawing hall this week. I had checked the fans and lights in all the rooms. And I had reinstalled a new stabilizer for the AC in bedroom. I am not sure whether the doorbell works well. If you find any other problem, you can ring me tonight at home."

Two weeks passed but the flat owner had done nothing. Radhika is telling her friend what the owner had said. Complete the text.

When my flat owner rang up he said ……. out of station but……. …… and ……. the extra

key for the main door. But he never came. He said he ..…… ….....in the bathroom. He added he ……that week. But he never did. He also said that he…….....…… and he had…..... …… in bed room. He told us he …… Then he said if we .....…… …… at home. We rang him, but he never responded.

L. 8 Read the dialogue. Now write it as you are reporting it to your neighbour. Work in pairs.

The author : I have to go to Delhi.

The girl : I do not have to go anywhere.

The author : I will come again. Will you be there?

The girl : I do not have to go anywhere.

Writing

W. 1 Read the conversation among the family members. Now write a report on Dilipbhai's family tour. Work in pairs.

Dilipbhai : Hello everybody, it's time to plan this year's family trip. What are your suggestions?

Dhaval : Papa, let's go to Mangalore once again!

Dilipbhai : Again to the same place? Why?

Darshana : Yes, Papa. That was the most exciting trip. The journey by Konkan Railway was the most memorable one.

Ranjanben : I agree with the kids. I still remember those beautiful sea shores, palm trees, villages and towns on the way to Mangalore by train.

Dhaval : And those mountain passes and tunnels and jungles?

Darshana : Of course, I would love to travel on the same route again.

Dilipbhai : Well, I remember the railway stations and porters and passengers only. But I grant your wish. Let's go once again to the same beautiful route to revisit all those beautiful landscapes.

W. 2 Write a paragraph on The Person I Miss Most.

W. 3 Describe the given picture.



My New Bus Port

You can use these words if you like: platform, buses, passengers, hawkers, porters, bookstore, depot manager, drivers, conductor, inquiry window, police.