

### Saalumarada Thimmakka




Saalumarada Thimmakka, an environmentalist, is one of the well-known personalities of Karnataka. She has earned recognition due to her untiring efforts in planting and tending to 284 banyan trees along the highway covering a distance of four kilometres. Her persistent work has earned several national and international awards.

She has been honoured with the prestigious National Citizen's Award of India for her selfless works in the field of environment. She also has a U.S. environmental organization called Thimmakka's Resources for Environmental Education named after her.

#### **Saalumarada Thimmakka –A Brief History**

Saalumarada Thimmakka was born in a village named Hulikal that falls under the Magadi taluk of Bangalore Rural District. She was known as Thimmakka then. She did not go to school or get any formal education.

From an early age, she worked as a labourer in a quarry near her home. She was married off to Chikkaiah, a cattle herder. The couple wanted children but were unable to get any even after 25 years of their married life.



One day, the husband-wife duo decided to plant trees to overcome the sadness and empty feeling of their lives. That was around 50 years ago. From there started a journey of untiring love and selfless service of an ordinary couple towards an extraordinary mission: a mission to raise as many trees as possible with love and care and as their own children.

### **Her journey to become Saalumaarada Thimmakka**

Thimmakka and her husband decided to plant trees along the roadside and they selected the road to the next village, Kudur to fulfill their plans. This particular road was one that did not have a single tree and caused immense hardship to the travelers on the dry hot days.

They started grafting saplings from Ficus (banyan) trees as there were plenty of Ficus trees near her village. They grafted ten saplings in the first year and planted them along a stretch of 4 kilometres on the road that led to Kudur. They increased the number to 15 in the next year. They continued with their efforts and increased the number of saplings with each passing year.

They not only planted the saplings, but also tended to the young saplings. Each morning they started from their home with four pots filled with water and watered the saplings. When the pots emptied out they refilled them from the nearby ponds and wells and continued watering the saplings while covering the whole stretch on feet and returned home doing the same thing.

They treated the saplings as their own children and each day followed the same routine. They also protected the saplings from the grazing cattle by fencing them with thorny shrubs. Their tireless efforts began to bear fruit when the saplings grew into large and strong trees.

The couple planted the saplings mostly in the monsoon season so that the plants would get the rainwater for their growth. The couple planted more than 300 trees in total and today the asset value of the trees stands at more than 1.5 million rupees. Thimmakka's husband passed away in 1991 but she continued with her mission alone and undaunted. The Government of Karnataka has taken over the management of the trees now.

Thimmakka was referred to as Saalumarada Thimmakka after her work got popular among the people. Saalumarada means a row of trees in Kannada language. She was given the name to honour her dedication towards planting the saplings and preserving the environment despite the numerous hardships that she and her husband had to face along the way.

## Other Social Activities of Thimmakka

Saalumarada Thimmakka did not stop at only planting trees. She got involved in various social activities like construction of a tank to store rainwater for the annual fair of her village. She has plans of building a hospital in her village and has set up a trust for the purpose.

She is an active crusader for spreading the message of afforestation. Her simple philosophy of life is that every person on this earth must leave behind some asset for humanity.

She still lives in economic crisis and just manages to somehow make a living from the various awards and a monthly pension. But this has never managed to kill her spirit or her passion for doing good work for humankind.

## Awards and Recognition for Thimmakka

Saalumarada Thimmakka is the idol of every environmentalist today. She has shown the world how one illiterate woman can make a huge difference to the society through her hard work and patience.

She has been honoured with titles like Vanamitra, Nisargaratna, Vrikshapremi and Vrikshasri. For her uncompromising efforts towards saving the environment she has been conferred with several awards and citations including National Citizen's award 1995, Honor Certificate from the Women and Child Welfare Department, Government of Karnataka, Vishalakshi Award by Art of Living Organization and the Certificate of Appreciation from the Indian Institute of Wood Science and Technology, Bangalore.

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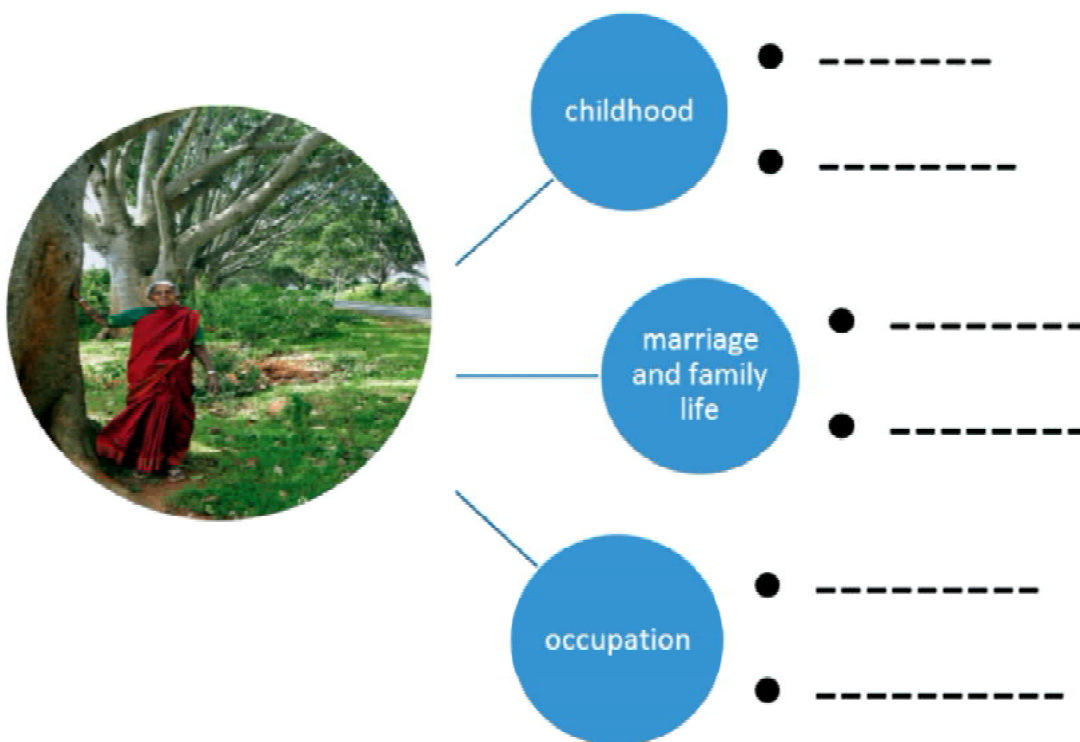
### Meanings in context

persistent	:	lasting for a long time
quarry	:	a large artificial hole in the ground where stone, sand etc. is dug for use as building material
to raise	:	to take care of a person or an animal or planet, until they are completely grown
sapling	:	a young tree
a stretch of	:	a continuous area of land or water

undaunted	: still determined and enthusiastic despite problems or lack of success
afforestation	: plantation of trees on an area of land in order to make a forest
uncompromising	: not giving space to excuses
citation	: a statement mentioned in an official record

## Comprehension

1. What details about the following do you get in the passage?



2. “From there started a journey of untiring love and self less service of an ordinary couple towards an extraordinary mission : a mission to raise as many trees as possible with love and care and as their own children.”

Identify the description in the lesson that talks about Thimakka’s

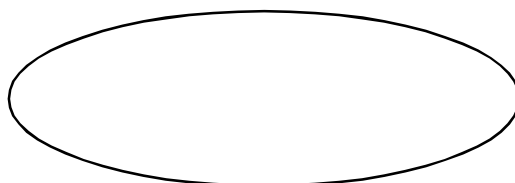
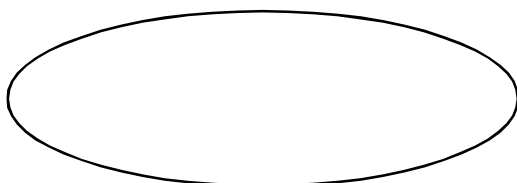
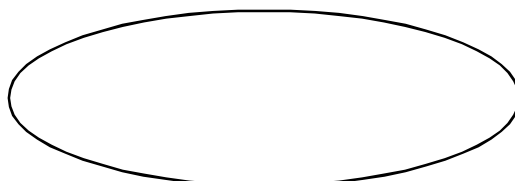
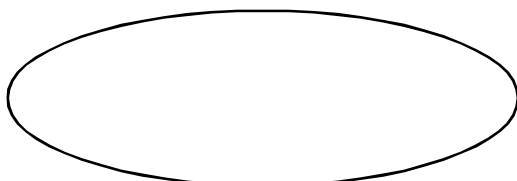
- untiring love.
- ambitious and uncommon mission.
- self and her husband as ordinary couple.
- selfless service.

### 3. Choose the correct answer.

- i) The village Kudur was selected by Thimmakka to plant trees along the road side because
    - a) it was near their home.
    - b) it had a broad road.
    - c) there were no trees on that road.
    - d) the weather in Kudur was hot.
  - ii) The saplings were watered
    - a) from the wells and ponds nearby.
    - b) from their home alone.
    - c) by the water tanks from the municipality.
    - d) by rain water only.
  - iii) Thimmakka has set up a trust to fulfil her plans because
    - a) she cannot do all the work alone.
    - b) she doesn't possess the money required.
    - c) her main aim is to protect the trees that she has grown.
    - d) many other people and social activists work with her.
4. One of the reasons why Thimmakka elected banyan saplings to be planted on the roadside was

The banyans grow into  
huge shady trees

**Fill in the bubbles with other possible reasons.**



## Vocabulary

1. *Saalumarada* is a Kannada word which means ‘a row of trees’. Find out the meanings and local language equivalents for the words given below:

Words	Meanings	Local language equivalent
Ficus trees	The banyan or fig trees	
Taluk		
Monsoon		
cattle		

2. The word ‘afforestation’ is preceded by a prefix ‘af’ to give a positive meaning to the root word ‘forestation’. Complete the table below by adding an appropriate prefix to each word. Find out how it influences the meaning of the word. One is done for you.

Prefix	Root word	New word	Positive/negative meaning
Af-	forestation	afforestation	positive
	active		
	sure		
	difference		
	ordinary		
	tiring		
	compromising		

3. (i) ‘Prestigious’ is an adjective that is often associated with ‘awards’. Find out adjectives from the lesson that you can associate with the following nouns.
- a) hardship                      b) courage
- c) patience                      d) love
- e) crisis
- (ii) Now add two more adjectives that can be used to describe the above nouns.  
e.g immense hardship
- (iii) List five words from your school environment that take the suffix ‘-ship’.

## Grammar

### 1. Not only-but also

Consider the following sentences.

1. They not only planted the saplings, but also tended to the young saplings.
2. Thimmakka not only planted trees, but also got involved in various social activities.

**The underlined words in the above sentences are used as linkers to express additional ideas.**

**Imagine Thimmakka talking to the children of the village Kudur, telling them how she cared for trees after she had planted them. Use not only–but also to join her ideas.**

<i>Amma, what did you do when you grafted the saplings?</i>	<i>We wrapped soil around the saplings We kept them moist.</i>
<i>Did you put tree guards?</i>	<i>We put thorns around them. We checked that they were not drying up.</i>
<i>Do you know trees you planted even now?</i>	<i>Yes, I know all of them. They also know me.</i>
<i>Do you know the animals and birds on the trees too?</i>	<i>I go to the trees everyday. I sit under the shade for many hours, so some of the birds are my friends.</i>

### 2. Use of ‘despite’ and ‘in spite of’

She was given the name to honour her dedication towards planting the saplings and preserving the environment despite the numerous hardships that she and her husband had to face along the way.

‘Despite’ means ‘even though’. It is the opposite of ‘because of/due to’ and can be used with a noun/noun phrase. In the sentence given above, it is used before the noun phrase ‘the numerous hardships’. It can also be used before a gerund as in:



Despite not reaching the station on time, he managed to board the train.

‘In spite of’ means exactly the same thing and is used in the same way as ‘despite’  
For example:

He had problems in English in *spite* of hard work.

He stood first in the class test despite not doing much work.

Both ‘despite’ and ‘in spite of’ are synonymous. ‘Despite’ is a little more formal.

**Describe the great work Thimmakka did even though she had many hardships to face in the initial stages. Use *despite/in spite of* to begin the narration. Make meaningful sentences according to the passage from the given table.**

**Example :** Despite her work at the quarry, she watered the plants every morning.

Despite	her hard work at the quarry their poor economic conditions knowing not an easy task	,	she is as simple and humble as ever. she watered the plants every morning. worried about storing water for the village.
In spite of	her other domestic work all the awards and honour she received		decided to plant shady trees along 4 kilometres. bought saplings and grafted them.

## Writing

**Read the lesson carefully and fill in Saalumaraada Thimmakka’s bio -data in the table given below.**

Name	_____
Place of birth	_____
Parentage	_____
Childhood and education	_____
Marital status	_____
Husband’s name and occupation	_____
Age	_____
Mission of life	_____
Specific details about the mission: i)	_____
	ii) _____
	iii) _____
	iv) _____
	v) _____
Other contributions to the society:	_____
Message to humanity:	_____