



YAYATI

This story from the Mahabharata has been taken from Spiritual Stories of India compiled and edited by Chaman Lal and published by Publication Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India. The story has been rendered in English by C. RAJGOPALACHARI.

A. Work in small groups and discuss the following:

1. Which is the golden period of life - childhood, youth or old age? Give reasons for your choice?
2. Why does man want to remain always young?

YAYATI

- 1 **E**mperor Yayati was one of the ancestors of the Pandavas. He had never known defeat. He followed the dictates of the sastras, adored the gods and venerated his ancestors with intense devotion. He became famous as a ruler devoted to the welfare of his subjects.
- 2 He became prematurely old by the curse of Sukracharya for having wronged his wife Devayani. In the words of the poet of the Mahabharata: "Yayati attained that old age which destroys beauty and brings on miseries." It is needless to describe the misery of vigorous youth suddenly blighted into age, where the horrors of loss are accentuated by pangs of recollection.
- 3 Yayati, who found himself suddenly an old man, was still haunted by the desire for sensual enjoyment. He had five beautiful sons, all virtuous and accomplished. Yayati called them and appealed pitcously to their affection: "The curse of your grandfather Sukracharya has made me unexpectedly and prematurely old. I have not had my feel of the joys of life; for not knowing what was in store for me. I lived a life of restraint, denying myself even lawful pleasures. One of you ought to bear the burden of my old age and give his youth in return. He who agrees to this and bestows his youth on me will be the ruler of my kingdom. I desire to enjoy life in the full vigour of youth."

- 4 He first asked his eldest son to do his bidding. That son replied: "O great king, women and servants will mock at me if I were to take upon myself your old age. I



cannot do so. Ask of my younger brothers who are dearer to you than myself."

- 5 When the second son was asked, he gently refused with the word: "Father, you ask me to take up old age which destroys not only strength and beauty but also – as I see – wisdom. I am not strong enough to do so."

6 The third son replied: "An old man cannot ride a horse or an elephant. His speech will falter. What can I do in such a helpless plight? I cannot agree."

7 The king grew angry when he saw that his three sons had declined to do as he wished. He hoped for better from his fourth son, to whom he said: "You should take up my old age. If you exchange your youth with me, I shall give it back to you after some time and take back the old age with which I have been cursed."

B.1.1 Answer the following questions briefly:

1. Who was Emperor Yayati?
2. How did Yayati become old? Who cursed him?
3. Was Yayati devoid of sensual desires?
4. What was the reply of his eldest son?
5. Why did he become angry?

8 The fourth son begged to be forgiven, as this was a thing he could by no means consent to. An old man has to seek the help of others even to keep his body clean, a most pitiful plight. No, much as he loved his father, he could not do it.

9 Yayati was struck with sorrow at the refusal of the four sons. He paused for some time and then supplicated his last son who had never yet opposed his wishes: "You must save me. I have got this old age with its wrinkles, debility and grey hairs as a result of the curse of Sukracharya. I cannot bear it. If you take upon yourself these infirmities, I shall enjoy life for just a while more and then give you back your youth and resume my old age and all its sorrows. Puru, do not refuse as your elder brothers have done." Puru, the youngest son, moved by filial love, said: "Father, I gladly give you my youth and relieve you of the sorrows of old age and the cares of State. Be happy." Hearing these words Yayati became a youth. Puru, who accepted the old age of his father, ruled the kingdom and acquired great renown.

10 Yayati enjoyed life for long and, not satisfied, went later to the garden of Kubera and spent many years with an apsara maiden. After long years spent in vain efforts to quench desire by indulgence, the truth dawned on him. Returning to Puru, he said:

11 "Dear son, sensual desire is never quenched by indulgence, any more than fire is by pouring ghee in it. I had heard and read this, but till now I had not realised it. No object of desire – corn, gold, cattle and women – nothing can ever satisfy the desires of man. We can reach peace only by a mental pose beyond likes and dislikes. Such is the state of Brahman. Take back your youth and rule the kingdom wisely and well."

12 With these words Yayati took back his old age. Puru, who regained his youth, was made king by Yayati who retired to the forest. He spent his time there in austerities and in due course attained heaven.

B. 1.2. Answer the following questions briefly :

1. What are the symptoms of an old man?
2. Who was Puru? Did he accept his father's proposal?
3. Sensual desire is everlasting. Whose thought is this?
4. Why did Yayati resume his old age?
5. Do corn, gold, cattle and woman satisfy the desire of a man?

B. 1.3. Answer the following questions briefly:

1. What was Yayati famous for?
2. Why did Yayati call his sons?
3. What did he say to them?
4. Which son agreed to give Yayati his youth and take his old age?
5. Why did Yayati go to the garden of Kubera?

GLOSSARY AND NOTES

ancestors (n): people from whom one is descended

dictate (n): an order which one has to obey

venerated (v): respected deeply

prematurely (adv): before the usual or proper time

curse (n): solemn invocation of divine wrath on a person or thing

wronged (n): treated unjustly

bidding (n): command

mock (v): ridicule

plight (n): unfortunate condition or state

supplicated (v): addressed humbly

C. 1. LONG ANSWER QUESTIONS

1. Why did Yayati become prematurely old? Why did he dislike it?
2. In order to enjoy the pleasures of youth, Yayati wished to take the youth of one of his sons. Was he right in doing so? Explain with arguments of your own.
3. Write in your own words the responses of the first three sons to their father's request.
4. How did the fourth son respond to his father's appeal? How would you have responded if you were the fourth son?
5. Why did Puru agree to give his youth to his father and take his father's old age in the bargain? Did he do the right thing?
6. Is it right for a father to make such a request to his sons as Yayati did?
7. Were the four sons justified in refusing their father's request? If yes, give reasons.

8. What lesson do you learn from this story?

C. 2. GROUP DISCUSSION

1. "Elderly people are assets to our nation." Do you agree? Give reasons.

C. 3. COMPOSITION

1. Write a paragraph in about 100 words on "Relation between parents and sons".

Message: Telegram

A telegram is a brief message sent by telegraphy in emergency through Post and Telegraph Department. Since money is charged for each word in the message, only key words are written in such a message. It has lucidity, simplicity and brevity. It is written on a form provided by the Post and Telegraph Department.

FORMAT

INDIAN POST AND TELEGRAPH

ADDRESSEE'S NAME AND ADDRESS	
MESSAGE	
SENDER'S NAME (NOT TO BE TELEGRAPHED) SENDER'S ADDRESS: 	

Urgent telegrams are usually delivered in one day while ordinary ones are delivered within two or three days depending on the distance of the addressees.

Your mother is seriously ill. Your father is on an official tour. Send a telegram to him in this connection.

INDIAN POST AND TELEGRAPH

ADDRESSEE'S NAME AND ADDRESS	<i>Mr. G. S. Gupta</i> <i>7-3 Arobindo Marg, New Delhi.</i>
MESSAGE..... <i>Mother serious (stop) Come soon (stop)</i>	
SENDER'S NAME <i>Ramesh Kumar</i> (NOT TO BE TELEGRAPHED)	
SENDER'S ADDRESS: <i>Buddha Colony, Patna - 800001</i>	

- Ex. 1.** Your friend Amit has passed NTS examination. Send a congratulatory telegram to his parents. Do not use more than 10 words to write the message.
- Ex. 2.** You were scheduled to reach home from your school hostel on 30th Sept.. But now you will be reaching on 5th October, as you are preoccupied with other businesses. Inform your parents of your programme by telegram.

D. WORD STUDY**D.1. Dictionary Use**

Ex. 1. Correct the spelling of the following words:

vigor pityful releive bestow indulgence

Ex. 2. Look up a dictionary and write two meanings of the following words - the one as used in the lesson and another which is more common.

defeat desire restraint affection pleasure

D. 2. Word Formation

Read carefully the following sentences taken from the lesson:

(a) *He had five beautiful sons, all **virtuous** and accomplished.*

(b) *Yayati, who found himself suddenly an old man, was still haunted by the desire for sensual **enjoyment**.*

In the first sentence the word '**virtuous**' is an Adjective which is derived from the word Noun '**virtue**'. The new word has been made by adding suffix '**-ous**' to it. Similarly, in the second sentence the word '**enjoyment**' is a Noun which is derived from the Verb '**enjoy**' by adding suffix '**-ment**' to it.

Ex. 1. Now, make Adjectives from the following Nouns by using the suffix '**-ous**', '**-eous**' or '**-ious**':

joy, prestige, fame, population, vigour, danger, courage, labour, pity, victory, industry, luxury, merit, spontaneity, continuity, humour

Ex. 2. Now make new words from the following Verbs by using the suffix '**-ment**':

fulfil, attain, enchant, agree, better, settle, retire, require, engage, entertain, adjust, improve.

D. 3. Word-Meaning

Ex. 1. Find out from the lesson the words the meanings of which have been given in Column A. The last few letters of each word have been given in Column B:

A	B
morally gooduous
painful feelingusly
people from whom one is descendedtors
respected deeplyrated
commandding

Ex. 2. Fill in the blanks with words given below:

wrinkle
virtuous

consent
mocked

prematurely
maiden

curse
bidding

1. I finally gave my to my father's proposal.
2. I saw a standing at the gate of my school.
3. We should not anyone.
4. He me and I became angry.
5. Your face is covered with Are you getting old?
6. The patient died
7. men will go to the heaven.
8. Excuse me, I am not at your

D. 4. Phrases

Ex. 1. Read the lesson carefully and find out the sentences in which the following phrases have been used. Then use these phrases in sentences of your own:

have had fill of by no means take upon oneself
take up give back in due course

E. GRAMMAR

Sequence of Tenses

The principle of the Sequence of Tenses is that the tense of the Verb in a Subordinate Clause follows the tense of the verb in the Principal Clause. There are two main rules with regard to the sequence of tenses.

- (1) If the Verb in the Principal Clause is in the Present or Future Tense, the Verb in the Subordinate Clause may be in any tense, according to the sense needed to express.

I know or I shall know	what he does .
	what he is doing .
	what he has done .
	what he has been doing .
	what he did .
	what he was doing .
	what he had done .
	what he had been doing .
	what he will do .
	what he will be doing .
	what he will have done .

- (2) If the Verb in the Principal Clause is in the Past Tense, the Verb in the Subordinate Clause must also be in the Past Tense; e.g.

*I **knew** what he **was doing**.*

*He **worked** hard so that he **might succeed**.*

- (3) However, there are some exceptions to this rule:

- (i) If the Verb in the Subordinate Clause expresses some universal truth or habitual fact, it is always in the Present Tense, even if the Verb in the Principal Clause is in the Past Tense; e.g.

*The teacher **said** that the earth **is** round.*

*He **said** that man **is** mortal.*

- (ii) If the Verb in the Subordinate Clause is introduced by the Conjunction 'than' the Verb of the Subordinate Clause may be in any tense, even though there is Past Tense in the Principal Clause; e.g.

*He **liked** her better than he **likes** you.*

*They **helped** us more than they **help** their own children.*

- (iii) If the Subordinate Clause is an Adverbial Clause of place or reason, it may be in any tense according to the sense implied; e.g.

*He **failed** because he **has** poor health.*

We must remember that the Conjunction 'lest' is always followed by 'should'; e.g.

*He **worked** hard **lest** he **should** fail.*

- (4) The conjunction 'as if' and 'as though' always take 'were' or V² (i.e; Past Form of a Verb) in the subordinate clause, whatever the tense of the Principal Clause may be; e.g;

*He speaks **as if** he **were** mad.*

*He speaks **as if** he **knew** everything.*

*He fought **as though** he **were** a tiger.*

F. ACTIVITY

1. What is the place of an old man in our society? Do a project work to find out the real position of an old man in our society.

G. TRANSLATION

Translate the following sentences into Hindi / your mother tongue.

1. Rajeev was going to market when it started raining.
2. Seema is cooking food now.
3. When the doorbell rang, Abhinav was working on his homework.

4. Sita is trying to go abroad for studies.
5. Does he want to go to market with his mother?
6. Mr. Shah is going out for fishing with his son today.
7. Aashu is a naughty boy, isn't he?
8. Oh! What a hot day it is!
9. To err is human; to forgive is divine.
10. Were you ready to come and play with me?
11. Sita said, "I am feeling hungry."
12. Rajeev told Mira that he was going out of town during the summer vacation.

