



UNIT 1

LEARNING TOGETHER

THE DAY THE RIVER SPOKE



0773CH01

Let us do these activities before we read.

I Close your eyes and quietly listen to the sounds around you for a minute.

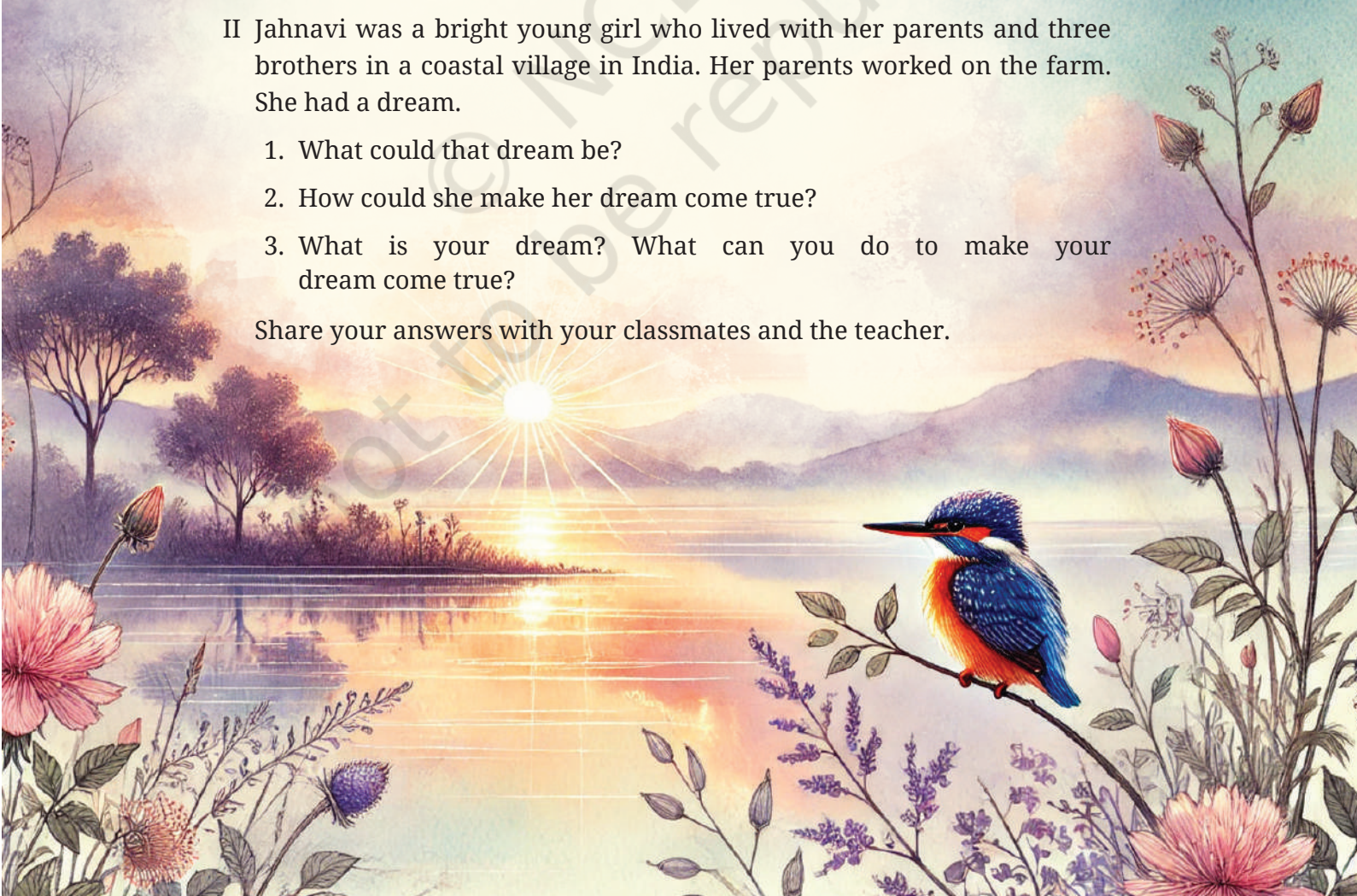
1. Are they trying to tell you something?
2. Do you think the things around you also listen to you all day long?

Share your answers with your classmates and the teacher.

II Jahnavi was a bright young girl who lived with her parents and three brothers in a coastal village in India. Her parents worked on the farm. She had a dream.

1. What could that dream be?
2. How could she make her dream come true?
3. What is your dream? What can you do to make your dream come true?

Share your answers with your classmates and the teacher.





Let us read



splashed: fell in drops, making a sound

slithered: moved by sliding from side to side

murmuring: speaking in a low voice

startled: surprised

thicket: a dense group of bushes and trees

shrieked: made a high-pitched sound

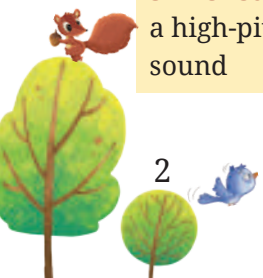
I

A big bright tear **splashed** down her nose. And another. A kingfisher swept down, its wings an arrow of blue in the sunlight. And a green lizard **slithered** down to the river's edge to bask in the sun.

"Dear, dear!" said a sleepy, **murmuring** voice, "What's the matter?"

Jahnavi was **startled**, because she was sure she had been quite alone. It couldn't have been the lizard. And the kingfisher was up in the **thicket** of bamboo eating the fish it had caught. It couldn't be the parrots, because parrots **shrieked** and this was such a sleepy voice. She looked around her. There wasn't a soul in sight. She was rather scared and wanted to run away.

"You shouldn't cry, you know," the voice went on. "And you really shouldn't be scared, when you have been coming here to see me every day, well, almost every day."



She was puzzled. It was such a voice, like the river. It couldn't be the river!

"Well, tell me all about it," said the River, for it was the River. "I've got to hurry to reach the sea, you know."

"They won't let me go to school," said Jahnavi. "I asked my mother, 'Why can't I go to school like Ettan and Meena?' And Mother had replied, 'You are too small, baby. Maybe later.'" But when she was five, little Ramu was born and Mother still said, "Maybe next year. Jahnavi, mind your little brother while I go to the fields." Now, she was nearly ten and minding Little Appu, who was the smallest. "They don't want me. They only..."—she stopped with a sob...

"I am scared to go to school. And I'm so old now, they'll never let me go. But I want to go. I want to learn to read like Ettan and Meena." Jahnavi called her brother 'Ettan'. Ettan means 'Elder brother', but his real name was Gopi. "I want to know why spiders are yellow in yellow flowers, why bamboo trees **rustle**, why the moon always comes from behind the hills, never the other way, why the baby fish in the field water become frogs, why..."

"Stop!" said the River. "You make me breathless. So many *whys*! I can tell you where the moon goes," the River said **conspiratorially**. "It goes down towards the sea. I've seen; it always takes the same way—over the mountains and down to the sea, like me!"

Let us discuss

1. What was Jahnavi's dream? Was it important to her? Why?
2. Do you think the river can help her in fulfilling her dream? How?



rustle: light sound made by leaves rubbing against each other

conspiratorially: secretly



II

clump:

a small group of trees growing together

rattling: noise made by shaking things

catamaran: a kind of boat

wailed: (here) complained in a loud voice

“Even little Ramu goes to school,” said Jahnavi, “pity, the school isn’t by the sea,” said the River. “Then I could take you along, you know. But, I suppose I couldn’t really. You’d get your feet wet. And that would never do! I’m afraid there’s only one thing you can do.”

“Can I do something?” asked Jahnavi. “Well, it’s up to you,” said the River. “Seems to me little girls can do as much as little boys—they swim as fast as little boys. You just slip along one morning and sit there in the school and listen to what’s going on, and maybe the teacher will let you stay.”

“I couldn’t,” gasped Jahnavi. “I couldn’t! They’d scare me! They’d chase me out.”

The River laughed. “You? Scared?” the River said, “when you’re not afraid of the green lizard, or of the snake in the bamboo **clump**, (Jahnavi startled) or the big trains **rattling** past that bridge.” “Trains are noisy; I prefer ships,” said the River.

Jahnavi never knew the snake lived in the bamboo clump.

“What are ships?” she asked.

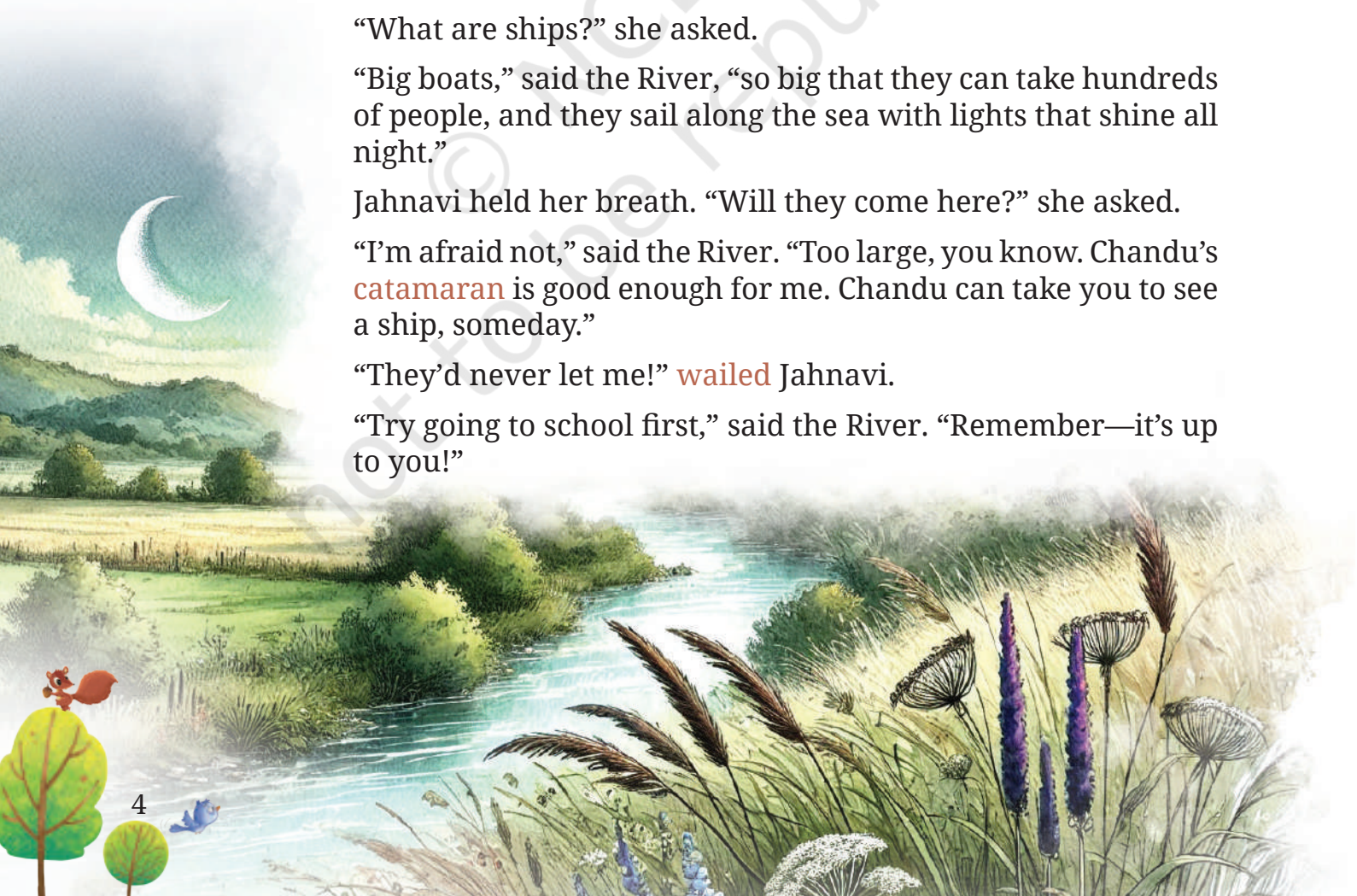
“Big boats,” said the River, “so big that they can take hundreds of people, and they sail along the sea with lights that shine all night.”

Jahnavi held her breath. “Will they come here?” she asked.

“I’m afraid not,” said the River. “Too large, you know. Chandu’s **catamaran** is good enough for me. Chandu can take you to see a ship, someday.”

“They’d never let me!” **wailed** Jahnavi.

“Try going to school first,” said the River. “Remember—it’s up to you!”



Jahnavi gathered courage. The next day she reached the school, panting and out of breath and stood by the door listening while the teacher read out the lesson. It was a story about a prince called Aśhoka, who became a great king. Little Appu had fallen asleep on her shoulder. She crept nearer and nearer till she was in the back row, squatting with the others on the earthen floor. Little Appu made no noise and she listened.

“Where did you spring from, little girl?” asked the teacher. “And what is your name? You’re new in my class.”

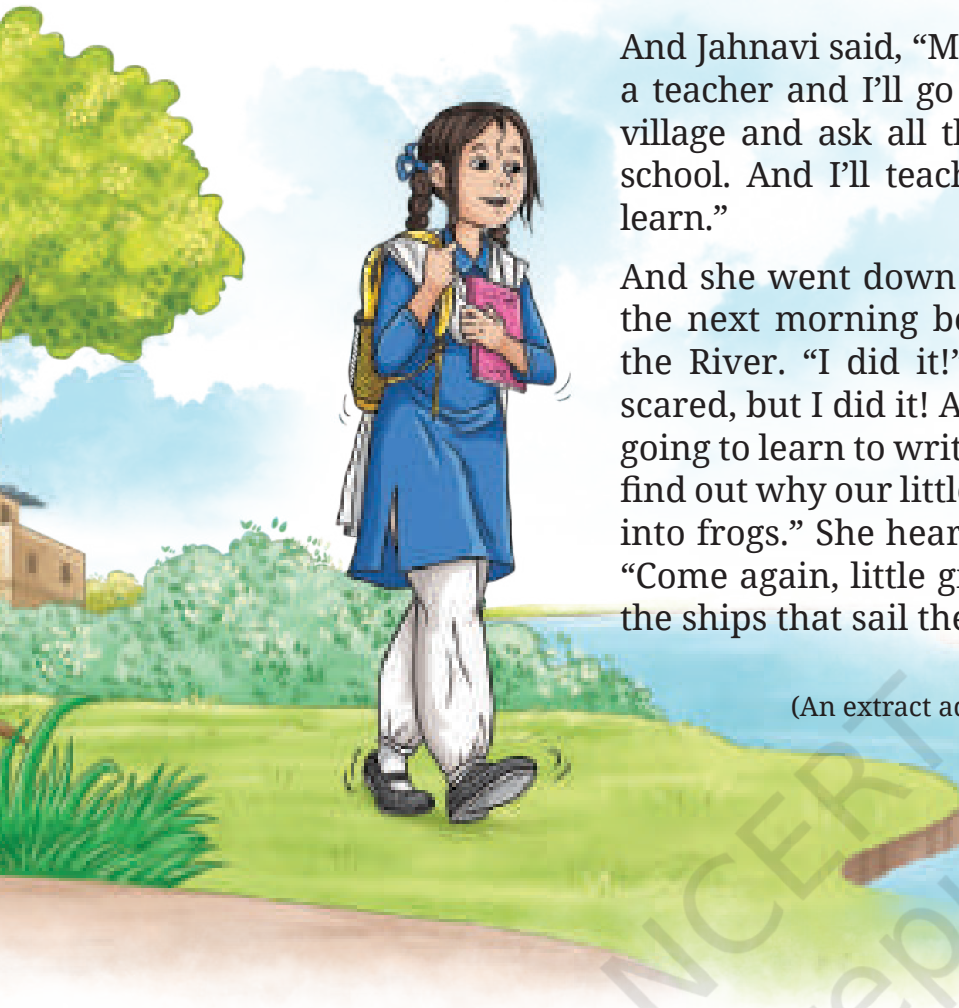
“She’s Gopi’s sister, Gopi is in the next class,” said one of the boys. “It’s Jahnavi,” said another. “So, you’re Gopi’s little sister? Nice lad, Gopi.”

“If you really, really want to come to my school, Jahnavi,” the teacher had said, “we’ll talk to your father about it. Don’t you worry. We’ll find a way.”



Jahnavi saw the teacher walking up the steps to their gate the next evening when she was lighting the lamp. She could see her father scratching his cheek the way he did when he was worried and the teacher was nodding and saying something she couldn’t make out. And Mother said, “Little Jahnavi, I shall miss you when you go to school. Girls should learn as much as they want. When I was your age, I wanted to go to school, but your grandmother said ‘No’, but now, I am glad the teacher came to talk to your father.”





And Jahnavi said, “Mother, when I grow up, I’ll be a teacher and I’ll go from house to house in our village and ask all the little girls to come to my school. And I’ll teach them all that I’m going to learn.”

And she went down the path between the fields the next morning before school began, to meet the River. “I did it!” she told the River. “I was scared, but I did it! And they’re letting me go. I’m going to learn to write my name and do sums and find out why our little fishes in the rice fields turn into frogs.” She heard the river’s sleepy chuckle, “Come again, little girl, and I’ll tell you all about the ships that sail the sea.”

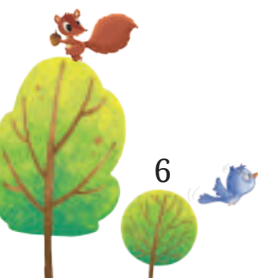
KAMALA NAIR

(An extract adapted from *The Day the River Spoke*)

Let us discuss

Complete the table given below with Jahnavi’s questions in Column 1 and the River’s answers in Column 2. Check your answers with the teacher.

| Column 1 | Column 2 |
|--|--|
| ...why the moon always comes from behind the hills...? | |
| | ... little girls can do as much as little boys. |
| | Big boats, so big that they can take hundreds of people, and they sail along the sea with lights that shine all night. |
| Will they come here? | |





Let us think and reflect

I Read the extracts given below and answer the questions that follow.

1. *"You shouldn't cry, you know," the voice went on. "And you really shouldn't be scared, when you have been coming here to see me every day, well, almost every day." She was puzzled. It was such a voice, like the river. It couldn't be the river! "Well, tell me all about it," said the River, for it was the River. "I've got to hurry to reach the sea, you know."*

- (i) Complete the sentence with the correct option from those given in the brackets.

The tone of the River in the given extract is _____.
(assuring/sympathising)

- (ii) Select a phrase from the extract which shows that Jahnvi was a frequent visitor to the spot.

- (iii) Choose the correct option to complete the sentence.

The use of an exclamation mark at the end of the line, 'It couldn't be the river!' expresses _____.

A. excitement B. hesitation C. irritation D. disbelief

- (iv) Choose three qualities of the River highlighted in the extract from the words in the box given below.

affectionate forgiving thoughtful impatient kind-hearted

2. *"Can I do something?" asked Jahnvi. "Well, it's up to you," said the River. "Seems to me little girls can do as much as little boys—they swim as fast as little boys. You just slip along one morning and sit there in the school and listen to what's going on, and maybe the teacher will let you stay."*

"I couldn't," gasped Jahnvi. "I couldn't! They'd scare me! They'd chase me out."

- (i) Complete the sentence with an appropriate reason.

According to the River, there was no difference between girls and boys because _____.

- (ii) Identify whether the following statement is **true** or **false**.

The River encourages Jahnvi to have faith in herself and fulfill her desire to go to school.



(iii) Choose the correct option to complete the sentence.

When the River suggests that Jahnavi should 'slip along', it means that she should move _____.

- A. quickly B. casually C. quietly D. confidently

(iv) What does the repetition of the phrase *I couldn't*, tell us?

II Answer the following questions.

1. Why does the writer describe different aspects of nature in great detail at the beginning of the story? Why do you think the writer does this?
2. How did the River know so much about Jahnavi?
3. Jahnavi says, "And I'm so old now, they'll never let me go." What can you infer about Jahnavi and the school from this line?
4. Why did the River laugh when Jahnavi said she would be scared at school?
5. Why should Jahnavi follow the River's advice?
6. How does the conversation between Jahnavi and the River make the story more appealing?
7. What is the main message that the writer intends to convey?



Let us learn

I You have learnt that naming words are called nouns and only proper nouns begin with a capital letter. Why has the author used a capital letter for the 'River' even when it is a common noun? (Clue: Has the River been given qualities of a human being?)

II There are a few words related to sound in the text. Pick the words from the text and write them next to the correct definition.

1. made a high-pitched piercing sound
2. to cause liquid to strike or fall on something
3. a low continuous background noise
4. cry with loud uncontrollable gasps
5. to make a soft dry sound, like paper or leaves moving
6. took a short quick breath through the mouth due to surprise, pain or shock
7. shaking rapidly to make continuous short, sharp sounds

8. making a lot of noise
9. made a long, high cry, usually because of pain or sadness

Now, fill in the blanks with suitable sound words from exercise (II).

The classroom grew (i) _____ as the students noticed the teacher carrying the answer papers. As the teacher turned the pages with a (ii) _____, the children (iii) _____, wondering what comments awaited. Someone (iv) _____ in frustration, and the (v) _____ of the students steadily increased. Finally, when the teacher praised the students for their excellent performance, the students (vi) _____ with excitement.

III The word 'catamaran' is used in the text. The word originates from Tamil language '*kattu maram*' meaning 'tied wood'.

Find out the meanings of these words. From which Indian language these words were borrowed. An example has been given.

- | | | | |
|---------------------|-----------|------------|--------------|
| 1. karma (Sanskrit) | 2. sahib | 3. chutney | 4. guru |
| 5. verandah | 6. jungle | 7. areca | 8. palanquin |

IV Chandu, the fisherman, has a catamaran that the River preferred to a ship. Given below are some boats that are used in different parts of our country.



1. canoe



2. catamaran



3. coracle



4. shikara

- (i) Which one would you like to travel in?
- (ii) Make a colourful drawing of a boat that you would like to travel in.

V Solve the crossword puzzle based on words related to water transport.

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|---------|---------|--|----|--|----|---------|---|---|---|---------|
| | | | | | | 5. C | | | | 6. T |
| 1. S | | | | | | | | | | U |
| | | | | | | | | | | G |
| | 7. Y | | | | 2. | O | | T | | B |
| 3. R | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | |
| | H | | | | | | | | | T |
| | T | | 4. | | | | M | E | R | |

Across

- a large vessel used for transporting goods or passengers by sea
- a small vessel for travelling on water, typically propelled by oars, sails, or an engine
- a flat floating structure for travelling across water
- a boat or ship driven by steam

Down

- a small, light, narrow boat, pointed at both ends and moved using a paddle
- a boat with a powerful engine which can change direction easily and is used to pull large ships into and out of port
- a boat with sails and sometimes an engine, used for either racing or travelling for pleasure, rhymes with 'cot'

VI Read the highlighted words in the following lines from the text.

"She goes down **towards** the sea. I've seen her; she always takes the same way—**over** the mountains and **down** to the sea, like me!"

Prepositions are words that indicate the relationship between nouns or pronouns and other elements in a sentence. They show direction, location, time or logical relationships between ideas.

Now, fill in the blanks with suitable prepositions given within the brackets.

Jahnavi takes the River's advice and goes to school. On her first day 1. _____ (at/in/on) school, Jahnavi stood nervously 2. _____ (in/outside/above) the gate, clutching her bag close to her. The bell rang and she hurried 3. _____ (outside/through/inside) the bustling classroom. She found a seat 4. _____ (among/between/from) two friendly classmates. The teacher greeted them warmly and started the lesson 5. _____ (about/in/for) numbers. Jahnavi listened attentively, feeling excited 6. _____ (at/about/for) the new adventure ahead.

VII Read the highlighted words in the following sentence from the text.

A kingfisher swept **down**, its wings an arrow of blue in the sunlight.

Words like **on**, **off**, **up**, **down** can function both as preposition and as adverb.

For example:

• She ran **up** the stairs. (preposition)

• She rang me **up**. (adverb)



Remember, a preposition will always be followed by an object (noun) whereas an adverb will tell you more about the action (verb).

Fill in the blanks with prepositions or adverbs.

1. The cat jumped _____ the table. (preposition)
2. The children played _____ until dark. (adverb)
3. She quickly ran _____ the park. (preposition)

4. The helicopter was hovering _____. (adverb)
5. We were just walking _____, chatting. (adverb)
6. After thoroughly wiping his shoes, he stepped _____. (adverb)
7. She drove slowly _____ the sharp curve. (preposition)
8. He placed the keys _____ the mat before leaving. (preposition)



Let us listen



I Read the words given in the box below. You will listen to five people speak about school life. As you listen, circle the words that are used by the speakers. There are two words you do not need. (Transcript for the teacher on pg. 39)

| | | | | |
|------------|----------|----------------|-----------|---------|
| lawyer | desks | homemaker | principal | posters |
| newspapers | marriage | advertisements | careers | books |

II You will once again listen to the five speakers. As you listen, match each statement 1–7 to each speaker (i)–(v). There are two statements that you do not need.

| Statements | Speaker No. |
|---|----------------------|
| 1. Promotes active participation for all in school activities | <input type="text"/> |
| 2. Comments on how school makes learning Mathematics joyful | <input type="text"/> |
| 3. Believes in the power of education that leads to freedom of choice | <input type="text"/> |
| 4. Shares that school also means companionship | <input type="text"/> |
| 5. Understands that boys and girls have different abilities | <input type="text"/> |
| 6. Persuades the parent to grant permission to attend school | <input type="text"/> |
| 7. Believes that learning skills is not gender-based | <input type="text"/> |



Let us speak

I Read the sentence given below.

“Dear, dear! What’s the matter? ... You shouldn’t cry, you know. And you really shouldn’t be scared, when you have been coming here to see me every day, well, almost every day.”

The River spoke to Jahnvi in a ‘sleepy’ voice. Work in pairs and take turns to speak the same sentence in ‘other’ voices. Some hints are given below.

happy surprised angry scared sad worried

II Janhavi asks the River for advice and the River gives advice. Read the given situations and work in pairs to **ask for and give advice**. Take turns to change your roles. Use the prompts given below.

1. Situation (i) : You wish to play football at school but it has an all-boys’ team only.
2. Situation (ii) : You have been unable to score well in Mathematics due to nervousness during exams.
3. Situation (iii) : You really enjoy music classes but do not get enough time to practise for it.
4. Situation (iv) : You cannot see the blackboard clearly from the last bench.



Asking for advice

- _____ problem _____.
What do you think I should do?
- _____ problem _____.
Do you think I should...?
- _____ problem _____.
What would you do in my position?
- _____ problem _____.
I’d appreciate your advice on this issue.

Giving advice

- I think you should...
- Why don’t you...?
- The best thing to do is...
- If I were you,
I would / wouldn’t...





Let us write

OBSERVING NATURE



Take some time to observe the world around you. Over the next few days, pay attention to the colours, shapes, patterns, and textures found in nature. Look closely at the plants, trees, flowers, birds, and even the sky. Make detailed notes of what you observe, focusing on textures, movements, and how light plays with these elements. Record your observations in detail and the features that draw your attention the most—whether it's the soft ripple of water, the vibrant flutter of a butterfly or the colour of the birds or flowers.

Now, write a descriptive paragraph based on what you've observed. Highlight the colours, shapes, textures, and unique details that made an impression on you.

Give a title to your paragraph.

| Ideas | Prompts |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What do you observe? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Every day, I see... I find it very interesting that... |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How do you feel? Why? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I like... because... I feel... as... |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is your message to everyone around you? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I want to tell you that... My advice to all is... |



Let us explore

I Discuss why rivers in India are considered to be sacred and most of them are referred to as female. Some rivers are referred to as male, for example, the Brahmaputra and the Sone.

II Whole Class Activity

- India is a multilingual country, and many of us can speak two to three languages easily. Make a list of the languages that everyone in the class can speak and display it on a chart paper in the classroom.
- In which language do you enjoy reading and learning the most?

III Read the poster given below and answer the questions that follow.



1. What are the things you can observe in the poster?
2. Why do you think the girls look happy?
3. Dignity means 'self-respect'. What is the relation between 'dignity' and 'happiness' ?
4. How does a Nation prosper when its daughters are happy?

IV The Government has launched many schemes for the education of the girl child. Some of them are 'Beti Bachao Beti Padhao', 'Balika Samridhi Yojana', 'Samagra Shiksha Scheme-Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas', etc.

Find out more such schemes from the internet or from your teacher and spread awareness in your neighbourhood.

