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Fight, Manju, Fight!

by Sigrun Srivastava

Pre-reading Task

1. Imagine a situation wherein you are suffering from very high fever and you are to appear for a very important examination the next day. What will you and your friends do? Discuss in groups of five.
2. Do hurdles dishearten you or give you greater strength? Share your opinion with your friends.

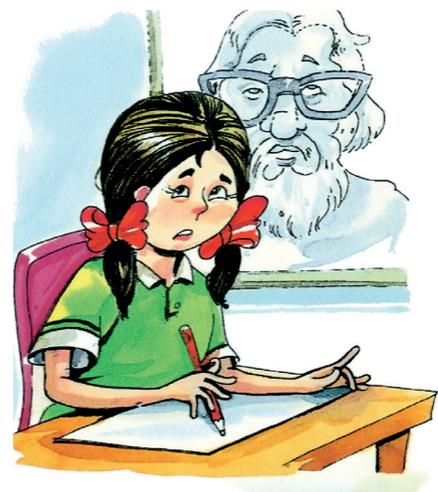
Now read the story of a young girl Manju, who does not let adversities hamper her ambitious spirit.

Manjula Parelkar knew she was no Hussain. She could never be, not with those hands of hers, those claw-like **malformed** fingers. Why her hands too? Wasn't it enough that her feet were deformed; ending in two massive moon-shaped toes pointing at each other, the hard nails touching, grating against each other whenever she wore wrong shoes. She wore wrong shoes most of the time, for there weren't any shoes in the market soft enough for her **clumsy** feet.

Her feet hurt most of the time but she didn't mind them so much. She could hide them in those ugly made-to-order shoes. But she could not hide her hands, could she?

Manjula Parelkar knew she would never paint like Hussain, but she could learn to paint well. Handling brushes was no problem, they didn't feel any different from a pencil. Her problem was the cost of the materials she would need.

'Mummy,' she asked one evening while helping her mother in the kitchen after dinner, 'do you think I could... .' she paused nervously, '...I could have some extra money tomorrow?'



malformed: badly formed

clumsy: awkward/large and heavy

'What do you need it for?' asked her mother gently, rinsing the dishes.

'For ice-cream,' answered her brother from the door with an **impish** grin. Thumping the door with the palm of his hand he chanted, 'We want ice-cream! We want ice-cream.' Ignoring him her mother repeated, 'Why do you need the money, Manjula?'

'For colours and paints... I ...I want to learn painting.'

'Painting?' asked her mother unbelievably.

'But... you.....' She added quickly, 'Of course, it's a nice hobby.'

'It will be more than a hobby,' replied Manjula quietly.

Mrs Parelkar looked at her daughter searchingly. She gazed long into those serious, melancholic eyes. Closing the tap she walked over to the kitchen cupboard and pulled out an ornate, metal tea box from the topmost shelf.

'My piggy bank,' she smiled. 'Don't let out the hiding place.' Then she pressed a few notes into Manjula's hands. 'Go ahead and buy whatever you need, dear. Have fun and show me the painting.'

Manjula Parelkar showed her first painting to her mother the very next day. 'Manjula,' cried her mother dropping her needlework in surprise, 'why, that is beautiful I didn't know you were this good.'

'Do you really think so?' asked Manjula doubtfully.

'Of course, dear,' she held the water-colour painting at arm's length. 'It looks perfect.'

'Oh, Ma,' cried Manjula pleased, 'this is just the beginning. I'll pick up fast.'



impish: mischievous

‘I’m sure you will,’ her mother returned the painting.

‘You must show it to Papa. He’ll be impressed.’

Mr Parelkar pushed his glasses up and glanced at Manjula’s work. ‘Well done. Very good. A nice picture. See, see what all you can do.’ Even though he didn’t look at her hands, those claw-like malformed fingers, she knew what he meant. She swallowed dryly, something inside her twisting painfully. She knew the pain. She was used to it. ‘Keep it up,’ her father patted her settling in his favourite chair with the newspaper. He enquired, ‘Is the tea ready?’

‘Why don’t you frame it?’ cried her brother Amol, snatching the sheet from Manjula’s hands. ‘Or why don’t you sell it?’ Raising it over his head he imitated an auctioneer, ‘Two thousand rupees. Who bids more? Two thousand one, two thousand two.. .’

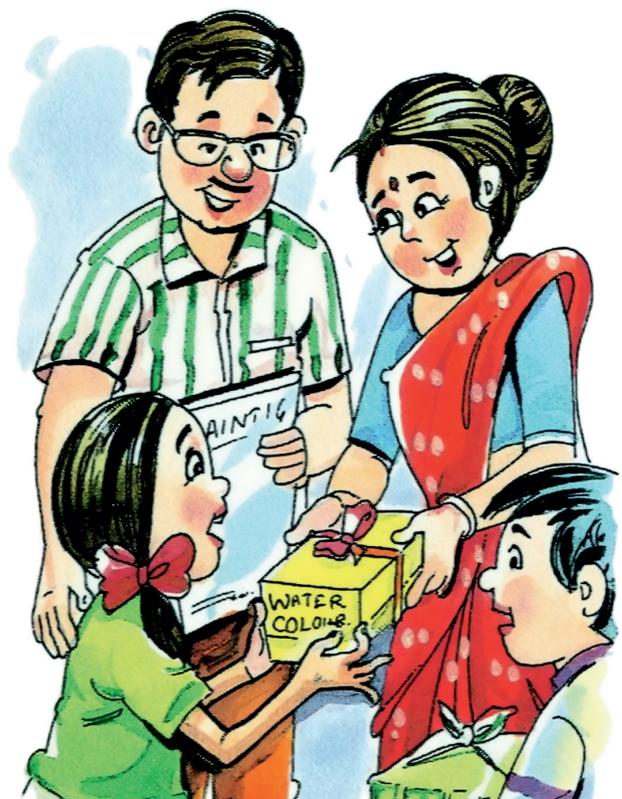
‘Amol,’ his mother warned him. ‘Put that painting down at once! Tell me, have you finished your homework?’

The word ‘homework’ was enough to sober Amol. He crept to his room.

Manjula returned to her brushes and paints and **drifted** into another world, a brighter world of glowing colour, beautiful forms and perfect shapes—the world where she wanted to belong so desperately.

Nobody had asked Manjula Parelkar what she wanted for her thirteenth birthday. But she got all she had secretly wished for.

‘Oh Mummy! Mummy,’ cried Manjula **overwhelmed**. ‘A set of artist’s water colours. Thank you. Thank you so much!’



‘And this is from your father.’ Her mother pressed a book in her hands.

‘*Painting, Step by Step*,’ Manjula jumped in excitement, her dark eyes shining with happiness. ‘Oh Papa, I could have never dreamt of this.’

‘You wouldn’t have dreamt of this present either,’ said her brother with a mischievous smile, holding out a big parcel, tightly wrapped and knotted. Manjula eyed it **suspiciously**. Sometimes she wasn’t too sure whether her brother was mischievous or simply mean.

drifted: moved away

overwhelmed: overcame by emotion

suspiciously: with suspicion



But he wouldn't be mean on her birthday! She began undoing the tight knots and took off the wrapper only to find another knot staring at her. She hated unknitting parcels. Why did her brother do this to her?

'Bring her the scissors,' she heard her father's voice from behind.

'Why?' asked Amol offended. 'Isn't it fun?'

It wasn't fun. It was sheer **torture**. However, she struggled on with the knots, all eleven of them. When finally she

managed to **unravel** the last one she found a little box with a slip of paper inside. She knew what would be written on it: 'Sorry, better luck, next time!' It was just like Amol! Though he was only a year younger, sometimes she felt a hundred year older than him.

'Read it,' he **urged**.

She read, 'Look for the next clue under your pillow!'

'Oh no,' cried Manjula, but her brother pulled her to her bedroom.

He even lifted the pillow for her. And there, tied with a pink ribbon, lay three water-colour brushes.

'Sable hair,' said her brother, 'artist's quality.' She studied the new book from cover to cover and soon used up all her papers. She knew for good water-colour paintings, she needed special water-colour paper. But that was expensive.

'Mummy,' she told her mother, pointing at the thin wobbly paper, 'I could do much better paintings on real water-colour paper. What do you think?'

'You are right,' replied her mother, 'but, oh... what a wonderful painting! You have improved a lot. I'll talk to your Papa today.'



torture: cruelty

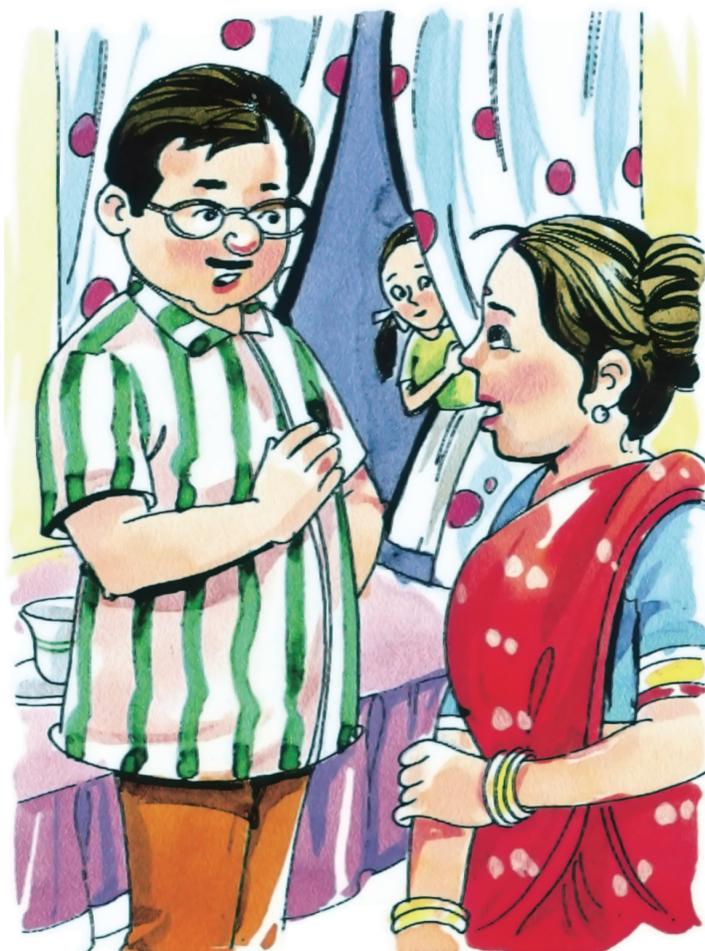
unravel: to undo and open up

urged: requested, implored, entreated

After dinner, when the children were in bed, Mrs Parelkar spoke to her husband about Manjula's paintings. Manjula did not understand why her father's voice was raised. He never raised it in front of her mother. With her heart thumping wildly, she tiptoed towards the drawing room, and peeped in.

'Smita, please,' she heard her father say. 'Water-colour paper is expensive. And she won't need one only. She'll need dozens of them. Where will the money come from? It doesn't grow on trees.'

'I know,' her mother's voice was soft and **pacifying**. 'The price of petrol has gone up,' her father continued while pacing the room, 'the price of vegetables has shot up. Amol needs a new pair of shoes. These curtains need a change.' He stopped and looked at his wife tenderly. 'And you haven't had a new *saree* since last Diwali. Do you think I don't notice all this?'



Her mother turned her face away and whispered, 'I don't need a *saree*. I have enough to last me a lifetime. Let's buy her a few sheets to begin with.'

'Smita, Smita,' said Mr Parelkar **wearily**, 'It's not a matter of a few sheets. After water-colours it will be oils, then canvases and what not. Why does she want to paint, of all things? Why doesn't she learn something more useful, like cooking or stitching? With those hands of hers she'll never become an artist.'

'Please,' cried her mother, 'don't say that ever again. Never. I tell you she has talent. May be we should show her paintings to an authority on art!'

Manjula Parelkar returned to her room. She didn't wait for an authority on art to see her paintings. She tore them into bits—one by one, slowly, without shedding a tear, her claw-like fingers absolutely steady. She bundled up the water-colours and the three brushes, all of best 'artist's quality' and tucked them away into the farthest corner of her cupboard.

pacify: to calm, to soothe

wearily: in a tired manner

'Mother,' she said the next day, coming into the kitchen, 'do you need some help in cooking?'

'Why, Manju!' her mother looked at her in surprise.

'Why Manju, why?' she repeated, glimpsing the pain in her eyes.

'Because,' said Manjula, in as steady a voice as she could manage, 'because I think cooking is a useful thing.' Manjula Parelkar learned to cook, to fry and to bake. She hated it. And she ate all she cooked, fried and baked. She hated that the most.

'Hey! This curry is real good, Mummy,' cried Amol. 'I'd like some more.'

'Manjula made it,' smiled Mrs Parelkar.

'Manju,' asked her brother surprised. 'Cooking? When did you take to cooking? I thought you were into painting.'

'I stopped painting,' returned Manjula, her eyes on her plate.

'But why?' Amol was shocked. 'You were so good at it. You must be crazy.'

'Amol,' his father scolded him, 'no such language in this house.'

'Sorry, Papa, but why must she do a dumb thing like this? I thought she would enter the 'On-the-spot Painting Competition' in November, at my school. Why, she would have easily bagged the first prize. Hey, Manju,' he turned to his sister, 'why don't you try for me?'

Silence hung over the dining table. Nobody spoke. Manjula waited, hoping for a word from her father. Her shoulders **sagged** when Mr Parelkar casually changed the topic. 'I have to go to Bombay (now Mumbai) next week. There's an important meeting at the Taj. I'll need my suit. Could you take it out and get it ironed?'

'Bombay,' thought Manjula Parelkar. She would like to go to Bombay too. People were different there. They might not whisper about her hands when they see her for the first



sagged: sunk, drooped, slumped

time. Or give her that dreaded 'Oh-God-poor-child' kind of look. And there was an art college in Bombay. Art! Manjula Parelkar was through with art. She had given it up for good. However much it would hurt, however much.

'Manju,' her mother's voice reached her from far away, 'will you give me a hand?'

Manjula helped her mother take down the steel trunk. Mrs Parelkar opened it but then shut it again. She turned to Manju, decisively. 'Manju, I would like to talk to you. I...'

'Mother, please,' interrupted the girl, her dark eyes burning. 'Don't...'

'But, Manju.. .'

'Please, Mother! Please!'

Mrs Parelkar gripped her daughter firmly by the shoulders and looked her straight in the eyes. Her voice firm with determination, she said, 'Don't give in, Manju! There is so much in you that other girls don't have. Let it come up. Even if you have to fight. Fight, Manju, fight!'

Manju's throat was thick with tears. She turned away from her mother.

'Manju, look at me,' her mother said gently. 'You have to learn to master obstacles. The will and the strength to overcome them can only come from within yourself.'

Manjula turned around in anguish. 'Stop preaching, Mother, just stop preaching. You see, it is... it is...'

'It is all Papa's fault,' she wanted to say, but deep inside she knew it wasn't.

She dashed to her room, flung herself on the bed and buried her face in the pillow. But she couldn't cry. The tears just would not come. When at last she sat up, her eyes fell on a newspaper cutting on the table. Strange, she thought, I didn't keep it there. Puzzled, she picked it up and read, 'Playing soccer with artificial feet!'



The bold heading screamed at her. 'In New Hampshire,' she read on, 'Rich Belanger' who had lost his feet in a train accident, decided to play football with artificial feet. His coach thought it was ridiculous. His parents did not like it. (This sentence was underlined in red.) But Belanger stuck to it and made it to the Nashua team as the defensive end.'

Manjula Parelkar dropped the clipping. 'What a brave boy,' she thought. 'He didn't give up. He played on, despite what other people said. Perhaps her mother was right. She had to fight, fight on like Rich Belanger.' Manjula walked over to her cupboard, hunted through the pile of clothes and pulled out her colours and brushes. She ran her thumb over the soft bristles and the longing to paint, see and smell colours drove tears into her eyes.

On the day of the 'On-the-spot Painting Competition', shortly after breakfast, her brother said, 'I am off, Ma. Rattan and I are helping at the entrance gate. They are expecting a big crowd.' Turning to Manjula he said casually, 'Pity you aren't coming. I'm sure, you would have won a prize.'

'I might win one still,' Manjula replied as casually as she could. 'It'll depend on the subject in my category.'

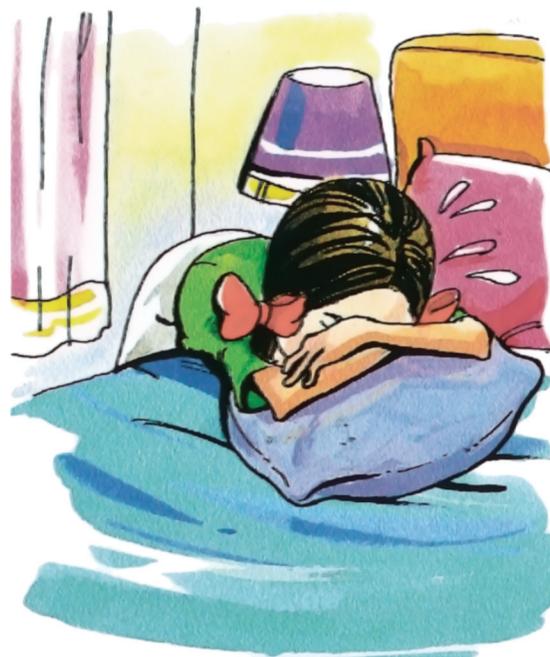
'Your category?' cried Amol. 'Manju, heh, does that mean you are participating?' He jumped up and pumped her hands up and down. 'I knew you would do it! I was sure you wouldn't give in.'

Manjula freed her hands and answered softly, 'If Rich Belanger could do it, why not Manjula Parelkar?'

Her brother looked at her, a broad smile spread over his face.

'Rich Belanger?' Mrs Parelkar asked, surprised. 'Who is Rich Belanger?'

'Rich Belanger,' spoke Manjula and her brother together, 'plays soccer with artificial feet. Isn't that something?'



I**Understanding the Story****A. Answer the following questions very briefly.**

1. Why did Manjula wear wrong shoes most of the times?
2. Why did Manjula need extra money?
3. Where was her mother's piggy bank?
4. How many knots were tied on the gift given by Manjula's brother?
5. Who was Rich Belanger?

B. Answer the following questions in not more than 30 words.

1. Handling brushes was no problem for Manjula. Then what was the real problem in learning painting?
2. Manjula used to drift to another world. What was there in this another world of Manjula?
3. What were the three gifts that Manjula received on her birthday?
4. Why did Manjula tear her painting into pieces?
5. Which sentence was underlined in red in the newspaper cutting? Why?

C. Complete the following table mentioning the role of various characters in encouraging Manjula.

Characters	How they encouraged Manjula to achieve her goal
Father	
Mother	
Brother	
Rich Belanger	

D. Who do you think kept the newspaper cutting on the table? Why?

II HOTS

'Sooner or later the man who wins, is the man who thinks he can.'

Discuss the importance of having a positive attitude in life. Give examples to justify your point of view.

III Life Skills

Physically challenged people do not need sympathy, they need encouragement. Discuss.

IV Values

- A. Sometimes Manjula was not too sure whether 'her brother was mischievous or simply mean.' Discuss with your partner what kind of boy he was.
- B. What qualities of Manjula's mother do you admire the most? Do you feel all mothers are alike?

V Writing Skills

Manjula won the first prize in her category in 'On-the-spot Painting Competition'. Write her diary entry. Specially include the following:

- (a) how the newspaper cutting instilled new courage in her,
- (b) the satisfaction she got from the prize.

About the Author

Sigrun Srivastav is an Indian author of German origin. She is a multifaceted artist, a writer, a sculptor and an illustrator. She has written over 25 books for children of all ages. Her stories for 12 to 14 year olds display a rare sensitivity towards the feelings, dreams, joys and fears of children of that age.

One of her most popular books is *A Moment of Truth* in which she has brought together true-life stories from all over the world. Sigrun's writings are distinguished by a strong social consciousness as is evident from her concern about ecological problems, the plight of the differently-abled and poverty. She has also written scripts for children's films for both television and cinema.



5

I Dream a World

by Langston Hughes

Pre-reading Task

If you want to make this world a better place to live in, what would you like to add to it? What would you like to be eliminated? Make two separate lists of additions and deletions (with reference to political, economic and social conditions) that you and your friends want.

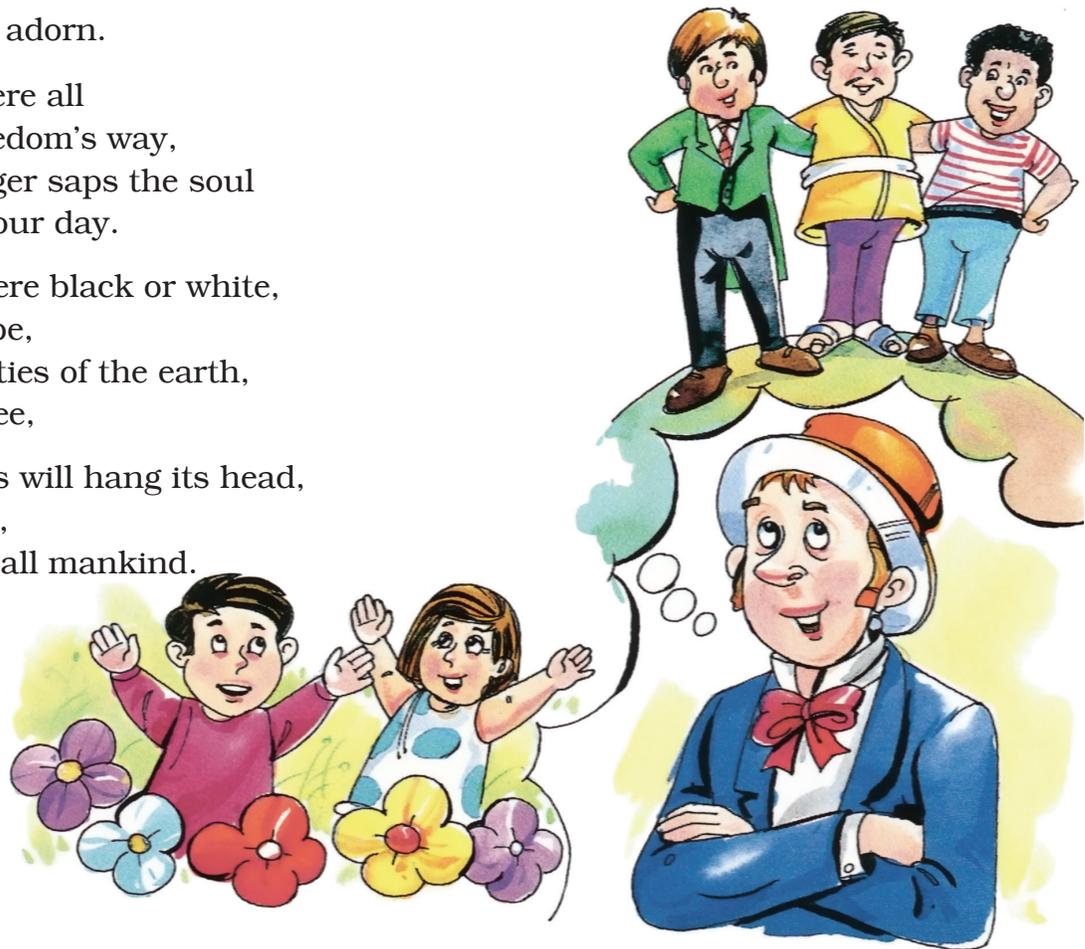
Read the poem that introduces us to the dream world of the poet.

I dream a world where man
No other will scorn
Where love will bless the earth
And peace its paths adorn.

I dream a world where all
Will know sweet freedom's way,
Where greed no longer saps the soul
Nor avarice blights our day.

A world I dream where black or white,
Whatever race you be,
Will share the bounties of the earth,
And every man is free,

Where wretchedness will hang its head,
And joy, like a pearl,
Attend the needs of all mankind.
Of such I dream-
Our world.



I Understanding the Poem

A. On the basis of your understanding of the poem, complete the following summary.

In the poet's dream world, no man will _____. The earth _____ by love and _____ will prevail everywhere. There will be no difference between _____. Everybody will be able to experience joy and happiness. Man will not be spiritually weakened by _____. _____ will not make human life miserable. People will share the _____ equally. Misery will be banished.

B. Read the following extract from the poem and answer the questions that follow.

And joy, like a pearl,
Attend the needs of all mankind.

- What has joy been compared to?
- What is the significance of this comparison?

C. Personification is a literary device in which objects or qualities are represented as human beings. What qualities have been personified in the following expressions?

- love will bless the earth
- wretchedness will hang its head

Which word/words in each expression suggests/suggest that the quality has been personified?

D. Word Power

A few phrases from the text have been placed in Column A with their meanings in Column B in a jumbled form. Match the phrases in Column A with their appropriate meanings in Column B.

Column A
(a) saps the soul
(b) avarice blights our day
(c) bounties of earth
(d) wretchedness will hang its head
(e) attend to the needs

Column B
1. misery and suffering will no longer exist
2. weakens or destroys our spiritual power
3. take care of the requirements
4. an extreme desire for wealth makes our daily life tense and miserable
5. the generous gifts offered to us by the land on which we live

II HOTS

The poet has described some features of his dream world. Work in groups of four or five and make a list of the steps that need to be taken to translate the poet's dream into reality.

III Life Skills

A new child has joined your class. He is black. No one wants to befriend him. You feel concerned for him. How will you ensure that he gradually becomes a part of your class?

IV Values

Greed and avarice are two negative human qualities we need to shun. Do you agree? If yes, how do you think we can ensure that we do not fall victims to such qualities?

Write a paragraph on the topic 'Man was born free but everywhere he is in chains' in about 80-100 words.

(OR)

Write a paragraph of about 80 words strongly emphasising the point that human beings should not be divided on the basis of colour, religion or language because all human beings have essentially the same feelings. Give your paragraph a suitable heading. (Refer to the poem 'No Men Are Foreign' in the *My English Reader*.)

About the Author

James Mercer Langston Hughes was an American poet, social activist, novelist, playwright, and columnist. Born in 1902 in Joplin, Missouri, Langston Hughes grew up mainly in Lawrence, Kansas. When his poem *The Weary Blues* won first prize in the poetry section of the 1925 *Opportunity* magazine literary contest, Hughes's literary career was launched. His first volume, also titled *The Weary Blues*, appeared in 1926.

Langston Hughes uses the rhythms of African-American music, particularly, blues and jazz in his poems. This sets his poetry apart from that of other writers. It also allowed him to experiment with a very rhythmic free verse.



6

Stone Soup in Bohemia

Pre-reading Task

1. Have you ever befooled anyone? Narrate the event in the class.
2. If you were to choose between intelligence and money, what would you opt for? Give reasons for your choice.

Read the story and find out how a hungry soldier's intelligence fetches him a satisfying meal.

In Europe, in the old days, soldiers returning from war used to roam around in the countryside. They depended partly upon the kindness of the populace and partly, as we shall see in this tale, upon their own sharp wits.

Three or four centuries ago, in Bohemia, a soldier reached a small village. It was a drab, threadbare kind of a place, but he walked into the village square and unloaded his meagre kit: a rough leather pack, a horsehair blanket, and an iron cauldron, which he carried on his back like a hump. Stretching himself, loosening his coat, and taking his boots off, he settled down on the pavement for the night.

Almost at once he felt a certain **hostility** among the passers-by, a grumpy **resentment**. 'I suppose you think we are going to feed you,' said one sly old man, leaning on his stick as he watched the soldier. 'Well, I'll have you know, young man, that I am the **Burgomaster** of the village, and I will tolerate no good-for nothings here. We've mouths of our own to think of.

Do you hear me, young man?' said this horrid person.



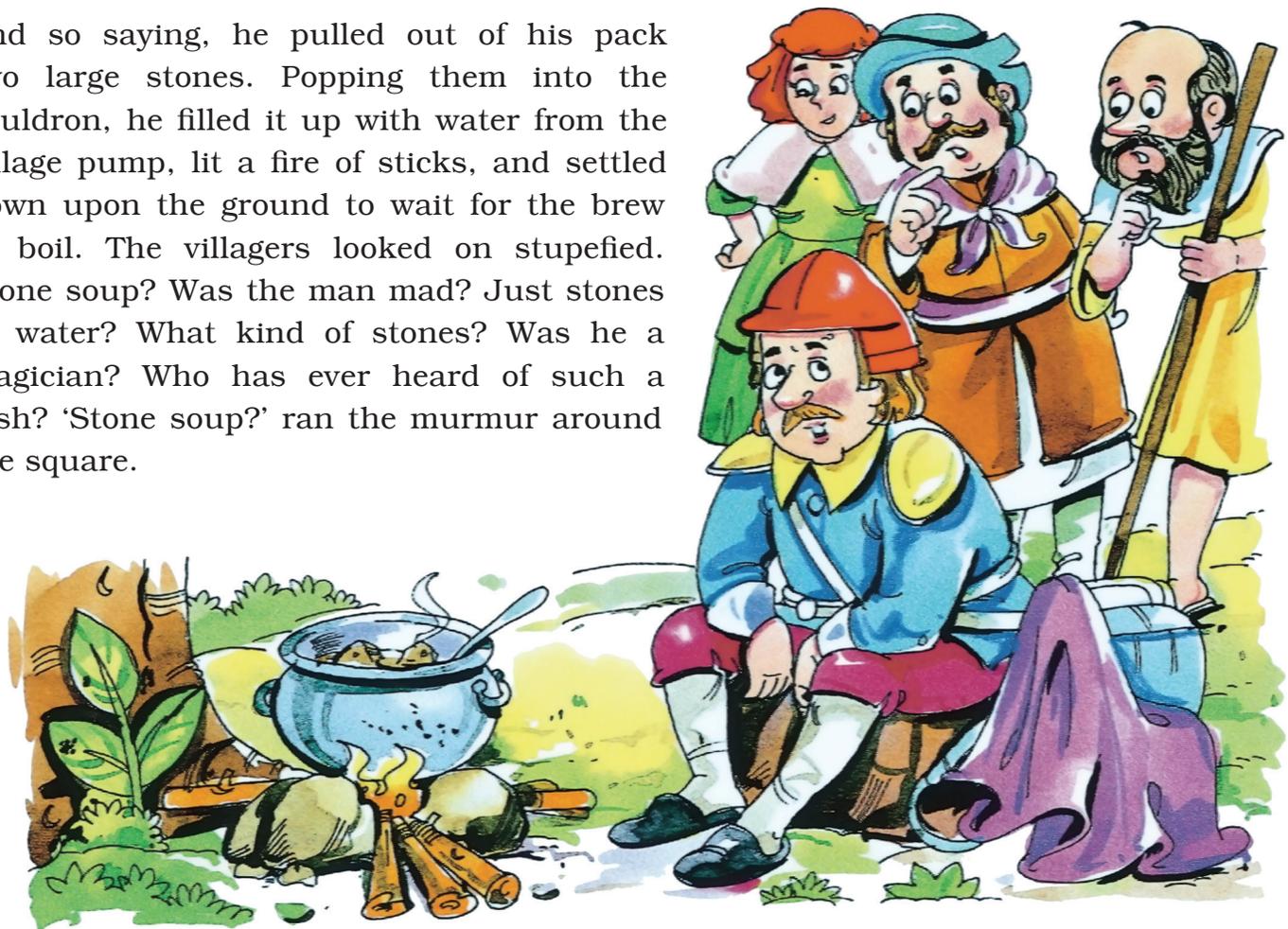
hostility: an extremely unfriendly attitude
burgomaster: chief magistrate

resentment: feeling of anger

The soldier heard all too clearly, if only because the Burgomaster was now bellowing at the top of his voice, and the little crowd that had gathered around him was echoing his words with every sign of approval. 'Not a bean will I give him,' a woman with a wart on her nose was saying. 'Not a single pea-pod.' 'We're respectable folk here,' said another. Soon the whole square was murmuring disagreeably, and the soldier might well have been forgiven, if he had felt a little **despondent**.

In fact he was not disheartened at all, for he was extremely cheerful. He swept off his red cap, made a mock bow to the assembly, winked at the woman with the wart on her nose, and said, 'All right, friends, all right. Mr Burgomaster, Sir, don't worry; I won't ask a thing of you. I'll just spend the night here, if I may, minding my own business. And in the morning I'll be on my way. I know how you all feel, and I don't blame you for it—we old soldiers, we can be a nuisance sometimes. No, don't you worry, I'll just clean up my cauldron'—and he rubbed the inside of the pot in a desultory sort of way, with a spotted handkerchief—just prepare the crockery, and make myself a nice bowl of stone soup.'

And so saying, he pulled out of his pack two large stones. Popping them into the cauldron, he filled it up with water from the village pump, lit a fire of sticks, and settled down upon the ground to wait for the brew to boil. The villagers looked on stupefied. Stone soup? Was the man mad? Just stones in water? What kind of stones? Was he a magician? Who has ever heard of such a dish? 'Stone soup?' ran the murmur around the square.



despondent: depressed, downhearted



‘All right then,’ said the soldier stirring the pot with a wooden spoon, ‘don’t upset yourselves. It is just a little pre-historical recipe I picked up in foreign presented to me by a saint, in gratitude for my having saved his life when threatened by wild elephants—these two stones have the power to brew for me the most delicious, the most mouth-watering soup that ever a man tasted. Stone soup from China, Aaach!’ And taking a little of water in his spoon, he sipped it with relish. ‘Mm, coming along very nicely,’ said he, while the peasants watched in **baffled** silence. ‘This is the very same soup that Alexander drank the night before he stormed the Pyramids—stone soup from China, the soup for heroes! You all look a friendly lot of people. I like your faces. Suppose I make a bit extra for you, eh? The cauldron is big enough—just a bit more water, that’s it, stoke up the fire, give it a stir—there we are, then,

enough for us all to have, a bowlful, eh?’ The

citizens were taken aback. ‘Are you trying to

tell me,’ said the Burgomaster severely, ‘that

all you need to make your soup is just those two stones and a potful of water?’

‘That’s all, Sir,’ replied the soldier,

‘nothing more nor less. Tell you what,

stone soup is even better—even more

breathhtakingly wonderful—with just a

pinch of garlic or of a carrot brings out

the flavour, you know. Cauliflower is

the next best thing. Anybody got a bit

of green stuff to throw in, now, while I

make sure the stones are fermenting

properly?’



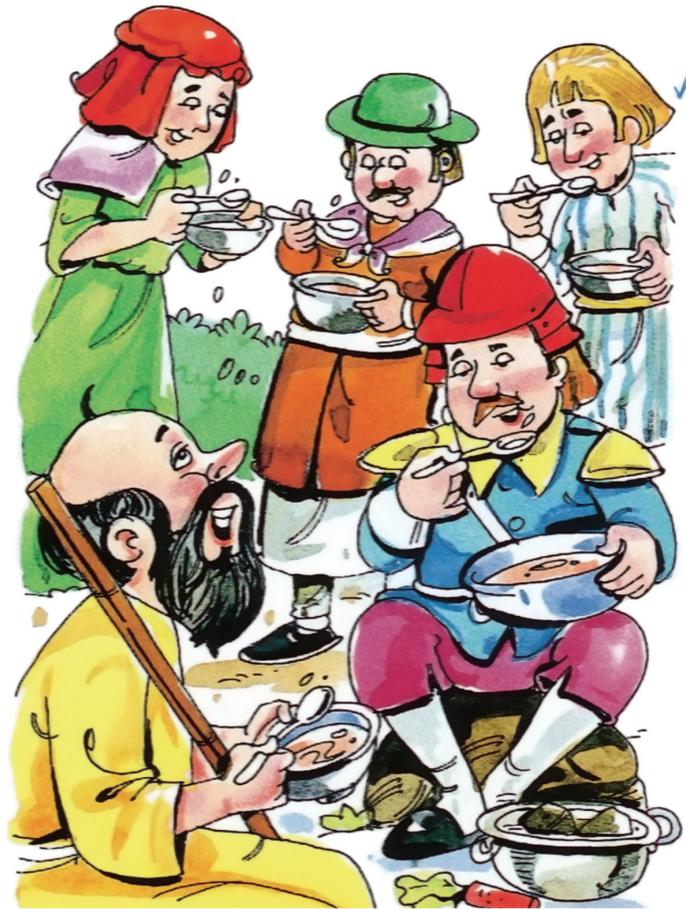
baffled: confusing

The peasants looked at each other sheepishly and suspiciously. Nobody wanted to move first, nobody wanted to admit his curiosity, nobody wanted to make a fool of himself but suddenly a common **impulse** overcame them all. Well, they said, just a piece or two could not do any harm—a handful of peas—a pair of tomatoes. Stone soup after all was something new in their lives, and they might as well make the most of it. One by one they slipped away and came back with a contribution. Splash went half a turnip. In went a potato. In went cabbage, and onions, and peas, until the brew was marvellously thick and fragrant, and you could not see those two stones for the bubble and richness of it. ‘Splendid!’ said the soldier. ‘Ho, what a dinner we are going to have, one and all of us, in this benevolent and hospitable village! It is not every night of the week that you have stone soup in Bohemia, eh, Mr Burgomaster, Sir?’ And thus carrying them along, with a joke for an old woman, a dig at a portly merchant, a little fattery for the Burgomaster and a flood of **anecdotes**, the soldier had all the citizens sitting around him, wondering and expectant, until at last the soup was ready. Its nourishing vapours were **wafting** around the square. A pile of bowls had appeared and they all sat on the paving stones, the soldier in the middle, sipping the stuff with infinite satisfaction.

‘Exquisite,’ said the Burgomaster, who prided himself on knowing about the food. ‘Magnificent,’ said the portly merchant, who was very fond of eating. ‘Real tasty, I must say,’ observed the woman with the wart on the nose. ‘On the top of the Great Wall, did you say?’ asked one youth with his mouth full. ‘Alexander the Great, do you mean?’ queried another. ‘Stone soup!’ said the last of them, all talking at once. ‘What a miracle, what a marvellous gift from China!’

And the soldier chuckled to himself, as he had his soup comfortably.

impulse: a sudden strong desire to do something
anecdotes: short stories based on personal experience
wafting: moving gently through the air



I Understanding the Story

A. Write T for true and F for false statements.

1. The villagers gave the soldier a very warm welcome.
2. The stones had no power of making a soup.
3. The villagers added nothing to the soup.
4. The villagers found the soup extremely delicious.
5. A Chinese had taught the soldier how to make stone soup.



B. Answer the following questions in about 30 words each.

1. How did the soldier react to the unwelcoming attitude of the villagers?
2. What according to the soldier was the speciality of the stones?
3. Why did the villagers initially hesitate to add anything to the soup?
4. What comments did the various villagers make on the quality of the soup?

II HOTS

What are the various methods that the soldier adopted to be friendly with the villagers?

III Life Skills

- A. 'Presence of mind is a more valuable asset than wealth or strength.' Elaborate the idea in a short paragraph.
- B. 'And the soldier chuckled to himself.' Why did the soldier do so? Discuss with your partner.

IV Values

'Tough times don't last but tough people do.' How could the soldier ensure that he was not disheartened at all?

V Writing Skills

You are a reporter who visits the village in Bohemia and listens to the fame of the stone soup. Write a news report to be published in your newspaper showing how a soldier used his wits to satisfy his hunger.