









# My English Reader



Class-VI

Publication Division  
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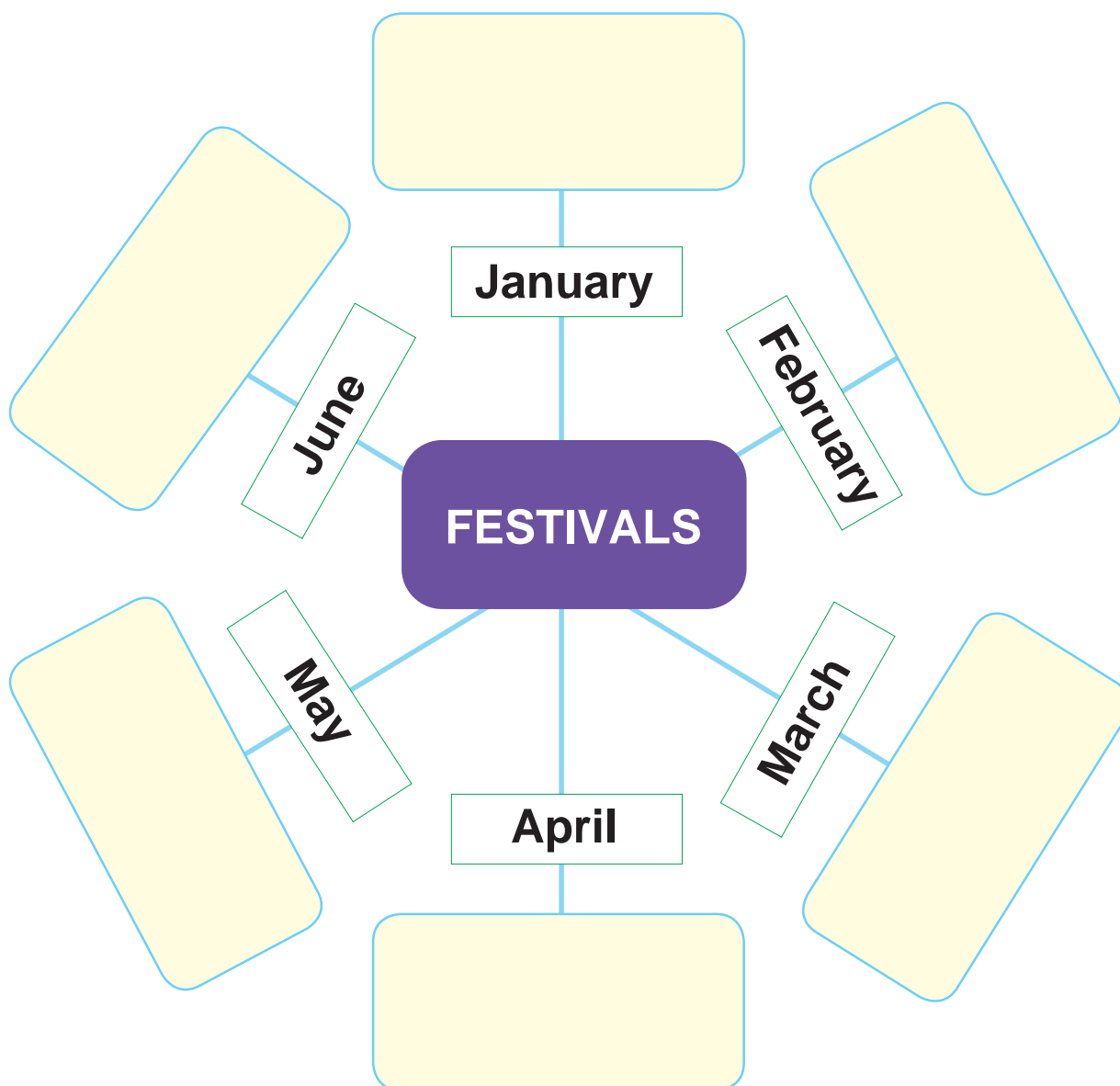


# Celebrations



## Introduction

Festivals are occasions that offer people a chance to celebrate together. Complete the given web chart by writing the names of the festivals (national and international), celebrated during the first six months of the year.





- A.1.** Read the encyclopaedia entry given below about Hina Matsuri—a festival of Japan dedicated to girls.

## Hina Matsuri

1. Seven-year old Sayo in Osaka, Japan looks forward to the third day of March when Hina Matsuri takes place—a day dedicated entirely to girls. Nearly every Japanese girl owns a special set of beautiful dolls, which has either been bought especially for her or has been in her family for many years. The dolls represent traditional Japanese values, such as calmness and dignity, and are intended to set an example that girls can follow.

'My grandparents gave me this kimono. It has so many layers, which makes it quite uncomfortable to wear.'



**AWASHIMA SHRINE**

2. The Japanese believe that a person's illness or bad luck can be transferred to a doll. They, therefore, hold a purification ceremony each year during Hina Matsuri at the Awashima Shrine near Osaka.



3. After the prayers are completed, the boats are set afloat in water. Some people believe that the dolls go to the country of the gods and carry the owner's ill fortune with them.



**CEREMONY OF DOLLS**

4. Huge crowds gather outside the shrine to watch the ceremony, which is called *Nagashi-Bina* (casting the dolls out to sea). The dolls are placed in boats, and after prayers have been said, the boats are led in a procession from the shrine to the nearby sea. Shintoists dressed in religious Japanese robes chant prayers as they follow the path down the sea.



### SAYO'S DOLL DISPLAY

5. Ten days before the festival, Sayo and her mother clean the best room of the house and erect a seven-tiered platform. On the highest step, Sayo's mother places the Emperor and Empress dolls. Beneath them are the rest of the palace staff and on the bottom step is the palace furniture.



Sayo's favourite doll is the beautiful Empress. The Empress is dressed in ceremonial court robe, which is made up of 12 layers of silk.



A polished chest of drawers.



The cherry blossom tree represents the season of the festival.



### TASTY SNACKS

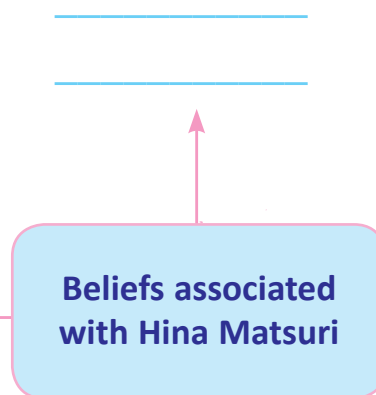
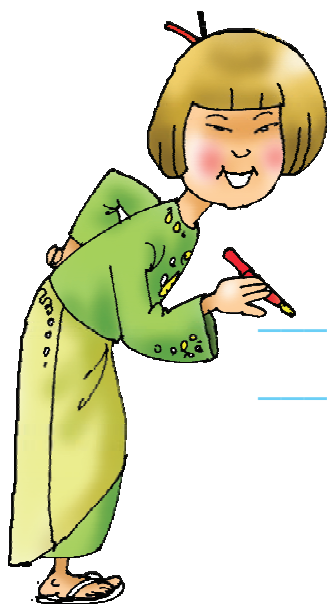
6. One of the traditional foods for Hina Matsuri is pink rice cakes, called *mochi*, which are wrapped in cherry (*sakura*) blossom leaves. These seasonal treats are called *sakura mochi*. Cakes and snacks are also prepared and offered first to the dolls and then to the visitors.



Traditional table with bowls.

A red cotton cloth covers the steps of the elaborate display.

**A.2.** Various beliefs are associated with the festival of Hina Matsuri. On the basis of your reading of the above entry, complete the chart given below.



The dolls go to the  
country of the gods.

**A.3. Fill in the blanks with one word/phrase each.**

- (a) Traditional food for Hina Matsuri \_\_\_\_\_
- (b) Number of silk layers in the ceremonial robe of the Empress doll \_\_\_\_\_
- (c) Venue for the purification ceremony \_\_\_\_\_
- (d) The month in which Hina Matsuri takes place \_\_\_\_\_
- (e) The doll-casting ceremony \_\_\_\_\_
- (f) Qualities that the dolls represent \_\_\_\_\_

**A.4. Values**

Festivals bring us joy and happiness. We all like to celebrate together. But in our society, there are many underprivileged children, who cannot partake in festivities. Enlist a few things you can do for such children so that they can also experience the joy of celebration.

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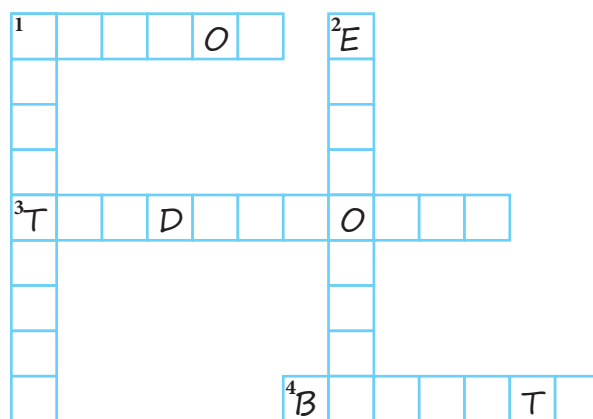
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An **Antonym** is a word that means the **opposite** of another word.

**A.5. Complete the puzzle with the antonyms of the words given below. You can find the antonyms in the encyclopaedia entry—Hina Matsuri.**



Across →

- 1. top
- 3. modern
- 4. above

Down ↓

- 1. ugly
- 2. simple or plain



**A.6.** When we think about festivals and celebrations, many words come into our head. A list of few words is given below. Use a dictionary to find their meanings and write them in the space provided.

- (a) festivity \_\_\_\_\_
- (b) carnival \_\_\_\_\_
- (c) gaiety \_\_\_\_\_
- (d) frolic \_\_\_\_\_
- (e) ritual \_\_\_\_\_

**A.7.** Summarising a text means providing appropriate words for long sentences. A useful summary technique is to replace a group of words with one word.

Match each phrase with a word from the box given below. Write the word in front of the phrase.

further	pile	several	most	therefore	easy	to
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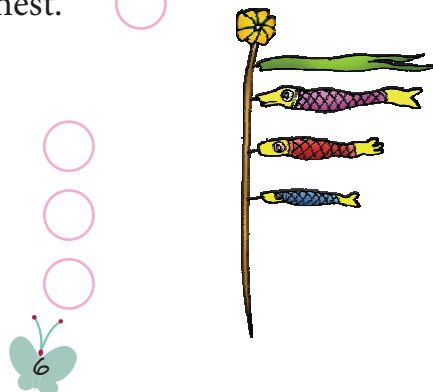
- (a) to put one on top of another – \_\_\_\_\_
- (b) as a result – \_\_\_\_\_
- (c) what is more – \_\_\_\_\_
- (d) not too difficult – \_\_\_\_\_
- (e) the majority – \_\_\_\_\_
- (f) in order to – \_\_\_\_\_
- (g) a number of – \_\_\_\_\_



Listen to the audio CD titled *Listen & Comprehend* (Class-VI). After listening, answer the questions asked in the audio CD verbally. Listen to the tape script once again and attempt the given question. The tape script is also given on page no. 27.

**A.8. Listen to the tape script on Kodomono-hi carefully and tick (✓) the correct option(s).**

1. Kodomono-hi is a festival celebrated by the—  
(a) Japanese girls. ☐ (b) Japanese boys. ☐  
(c) Japanese people. ☐
2. Kodomono-hi is celebrated on the—  
(a) sixth day of May. ☐ (b) f f h day of May. ☐  
(c) f f h day of March. ☐
3. Kodomono-hi is celebrated to demonstrate such qualities as—  
(a) strength ☐ (b) determination ☐  
(c) patience ☐
4. The Japanese boys bathe with iris leaves to—  
(a) make themselves beautiful. ☐  
(b) protect themselves from illness. ☐  
(c) make themselves strong. ☐
5. Kazu finds wearing kimono somewhat uncomfortable because—  
(a) it is a traditional dress. ☐  
(b) it is too long. ☐  
(c) it is tight around the chest. ☐
6. A carp is a—  
(a) f sh. ☐  
(b) bird. ☐  
(c) kite. ☐



7. The carp kites inspire the young Japanese boys to—

(a) overcome obstacles. ☐

(b) be successful. ☐

(c) fly more carp kites. ☐

### A.9. Celebrating Family History

At a family gathering, such as a holiday celebration, a birthday party or a family visit, telling stories about the family history can be fun.

Celebrate the family history week in your classroom. Each student tracks their family history and weaves it in the form of a tale.



#### How to Start

- Fix a special time with the elders of the family to interview them. Have a recorder to record the interview. Make a written list of the questions that you might want to ask in order to create a story about your family.
- Questions about people, places, life events, objects, important transitions, work, or travel can be story starters.



#### Sample questions to help you frame the Interview

##### 1. Places to remember

- Describe the house in which you lived when you were a child.
- Describe the place that you were fond of visiting when you were a child.

##### 2. People to remember

- How many brothers and sisters do/did you have?
- Does/Did anyone in your family have an unusual character?

3. **Life Events**

- (a) Schooling—When did you go to school f rst?  
What was your experience on the f rst day?
- (b) Party time—Any party that you remember?



4. **Miscellaneous**

- (a) Photographs—Where was the picture taken? Who took the picture?  
What was the occasion?
- (b) Family recipes—Who invented them? Are they being passed from  
generation to generation?



**For the Teacher**

- Work out how long each student will speak.
- Aim at two or three minutes for each student.
- Select a time keeper to keep track of the activity.

**The Story Telling**

- Decide about the presentation of the story. How would you want to present it? For instance, you may want to dress up like your grandfather.
- Greet your teachers and friends as you come to the stage.
- Try to make the opening statement catchy. Keep the language simple and sentences short.
- Look at the audience while speaking.
- Remember not to speak very fast or very slowly.
- Thank your audience when you f nish.
- Practise the story telling session at home.







**B.1. Read the poem in chorus.**

**Birthday!!**

*'Feliz Cumpleanos'*, that's how they say it in Spain,  
*'Frohlicher Geburtstag'*, in German it means the same,  
*'Gratulerer med magen'*, Norwegians say it too,  
But anyway you say it, it means 'Happy B'day to you!'  
They say in Samoa, *'Manuia lou aso fanau'*.  
*'Tanjobi Omedeto'*, the Japanese say and bow,  
*'Sangilulchiukhahamnida'*, Koreans say it too,  
But anyway you say it, it means 'Happy B'day to you!'



Birthday games became popular because people believed that they marked the end and a new beginning. (The end of the past year and the beginning of the new year.)

About a hundred years ago, Mildred Hill and Patty Hill of America wrote the song, *Happy birthday to you*.



The custom of making Birthday cards started in England about a hundred years ago!



- B.2.** (a) Work with your partner and list all the games that you play at birthday parties.

*Popular Games at Birthday Parties*

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- (b) Create a birthday card with your personal message for your best friend.

*Write your message here.*

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- B.3.** Read the following excerpt, reconstructed with the help of Chapter 1 of the book, *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban* by J.K. Rowling.

## ▶ The Best Birthday

It was one o'clock in the morning. Harry's stomach gave a funny jolt. He had been thirteen years old, without realising it, for a whole hour.

An unusual thing about Harry was how little he looked forward to his birthdays. You see, Harry lived with the Dursleys—Uncle Vernon, Aunt Petunia and their son, Dudley. The Dursley family were Harry's only living relatives and they were not fond of Harry at all. The Dursleys were non-magical people, also called 'Muggles', in the wizard world. They did not believe in magic.

Harry studied in the Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. He was a wizard, just like his parents—James and Lily. They had died, when he was just one year old, in a car accident.

Harry stood at the window, looking out for his pet owl, Hedwig. Suddenly, he spotted three owls coming in his direction. They were carrying one packet each, which was tied to their feet. Harry recognised the first owl, Errol. It had brought him a packet from his best friend, Ron. Fingers



trembling slightly, Harry opened his first birthday card and started reading:

Dear Harry,

Happy B'day! I am in Egypt right now. My brother, Bill, has shown us all the pyramids. I am sending you a 'Pocket Sneakoscope'. If someone tells you a lie, it is supposed to light up. Enjoy your gift!

Ron

Harry picked up the packet Hedwig had brought. It was from Hermione, the brightest girl in Harry's class.

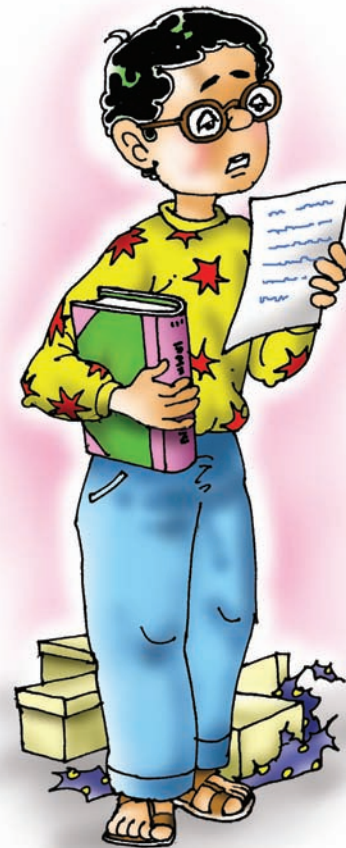
Dear Harry,

Happy B'day. Presently, I am on a holiday in France. Guess whom I met there? Hedwig! She probably wanted to make sure that I got you something for your birthday. I am sending you a 'Broomstick Servicing Kit'. Enjoy your day!

Hermione

Wow Hermione! Harry whispered. He felt very excited because he was a member of his school Quidditch team, the most popular sport in the magical world. It was much like football but it was played on broomsticks.

Harry now reached for the last parcel, brought to him by a big golden owl. As he tore open the cover, a book fell out. It was titled, *The Monster Book of Monsters*.



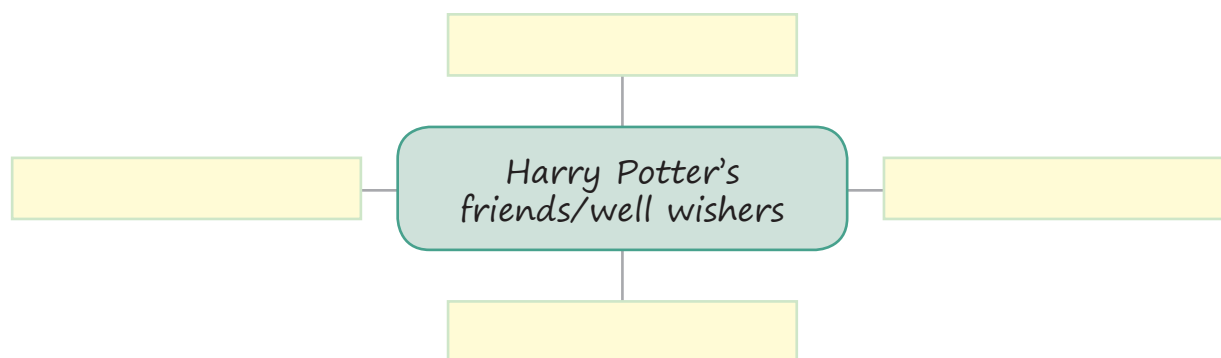
Dear Harry

A very 'Happy Birthday.' I think you will find this book useful for the next year. Won't say no more. Tell you when I see you. All the best!

Hagrid

Harry happily looked at all the gifts around him. As he settled into his bed, he realised that he had celebrated his birthday for the first time in his life. He never felt happier before.

**B.4.** Complete the web chart given below with appropriate information.



**B.5.** Unjumble the words given in Column II and match them with the clues in Column I. One has been done for you.

Column I

Column II

Harry Potter

Brightest girl in Harry's class

The only living relatives of Harry

The other name for non-magical people

Name of Ron's pet owl

gsmelug

enoimreh

lrero

ydelurss

wizard dwriaz

**B.6. Fill in appropriate information from the text.**

Gifts received by Harry

Gift 1 : \_\_\_\_\_

Gift 2 : \_\_\_\_\_

Gift 3 : \_\_\_\_\_

Sent from

Gift 1 : \_\_\_\_\_

Gift 2 : \_\_\_\_\_

Sent by

Gift 1 : \_\_\_\_\_

Gift 2 : \_\_\_\_\_

Gift 3 : \_\_\_\_\_

**B.7. Life Skills**

We can strengthen our friendships by not taking our friends for granted. Small gestures to show gratitude to our friends like ‘a word of thanks’, help us to make our friendships stronger.

Imagine you are Harry Potter. When you get up in the morning, you decide to send ‘Thank you’ notes to your friends. Complete the notes that Hedwig can deliver to Harry’s friends who sent him gifts.

Dear Ron

Hello! Thanks a lot for the lovely present. It is the first \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Love

Harry





Dear Hermione

Wow! What a present! I could never have  
thought \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Thanks  
Harry

Dearest Hagrid

How are you? Thank you for the present

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

See you soon.  
Harry



**B.8.** Work with your friend and find words from the text that mean the same as the following. Some clues are given to help you.

(a) a magician

z   d

(b) the use of magic power

w     c    t

(c) to shake with fear, cold or weakness

r   b

(d) a large stone structure with a f at square base and triangular sloping sides which meet to form a point at the top.

y  a



**B.9.** Paper used to wrap gifts can be red, golden, blue and so on. Colours can be used in other ways too. Several expressions in English make use of colours. Match the expression given in Column A with its appropriate meaning in Column B.

#### Column A

(a) in the pink →

(b) white elephant →

(c) out of the blue →

(d) red with rage →

(e) green with envy →

(f) in black and white →

#### Column B

something that costs a lot of money but serves no useful purpose

put in the written form

very angry

very jealous

in very good health

something completely unexpected

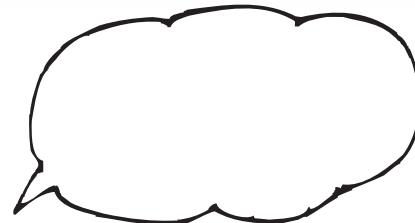
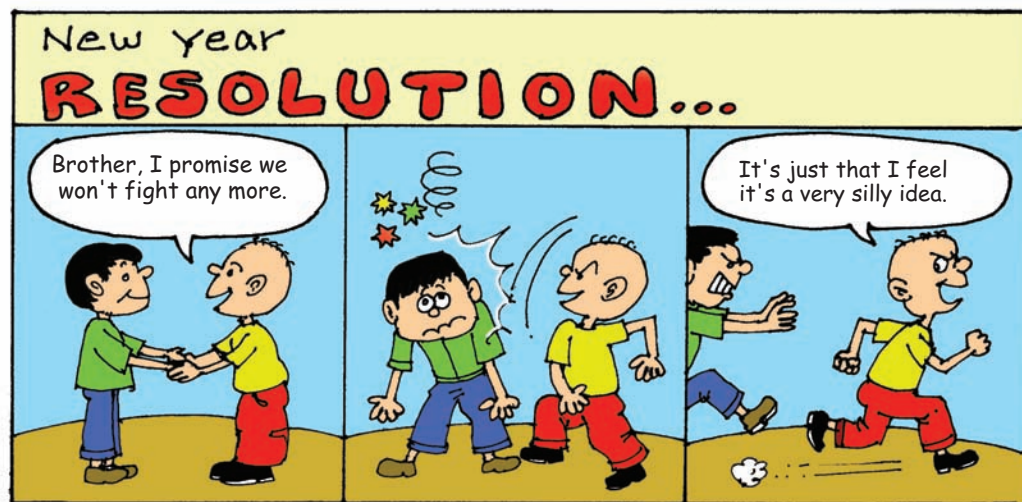


Collect more of such expressions and keep adding them to your vocabulary!



## ▶ A New Beginning

C.1. Read the cartoons given below.



Write a funny dialogue for the above picture.

- C.2. (a) How do you spend your New Year day? Do you make resolutions every year? Discuss your resolutions with your friends. List two resolutions that you will make this year.**

Resolution I : \_\_\_\_\_

Resolution II : \_\_\_\_\_



- (b) On a coloured sheet, draw the scene of the New Year's eve the way you would want to celebrate it.**

**For the Teacher**

Encourage the students to use plenty of colours, markers, laces and other accessories. The class could finally prepare a collage giving it an interesting title.

- C.3. On New Year, people make New Year resolutions—a list of things they will or will not do during the following year.**

Read the poem given below.

**▶ My New Year's Resolutions**

I will not throw the cat out of the window  
Or put a frog in my sister's bed,  
I will not tie my brother's shoelaces together  
Nor jump from the roof of Dad's shed.



I shall remember my aunt's next birthday  
And tidy my room once a week,  
I'll not moan at Mum's cooking (Ugh! fish fingers again!)  
Nor give her any more of my cheek.

I will not pick my nose if I can help it

I shall fold up my clothes, comb my hair,

I will say please and thank you (even when I don't mean it)

And never spit or shout or even swear.



I shall write each day in my diary

Try my hardest to be helpful at school,

I shall help old ladies cross roads (even if they don't want to)

And when others are rude I'll stay cool.

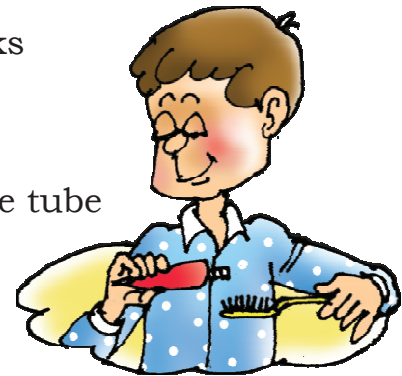


I'll go to bed with the owls and be up with the larks

And close every door behind me,

I shall squeeze from the bottom of every toothpaste tube

And stay where trouble can't find me.

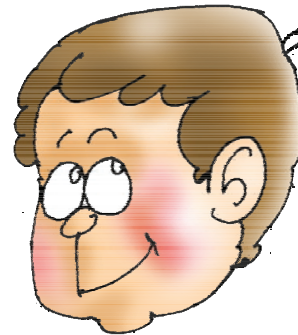


I shall start again, turn over a new leaf,

leave my bad old ways forever

Shall I start them this year, or next year

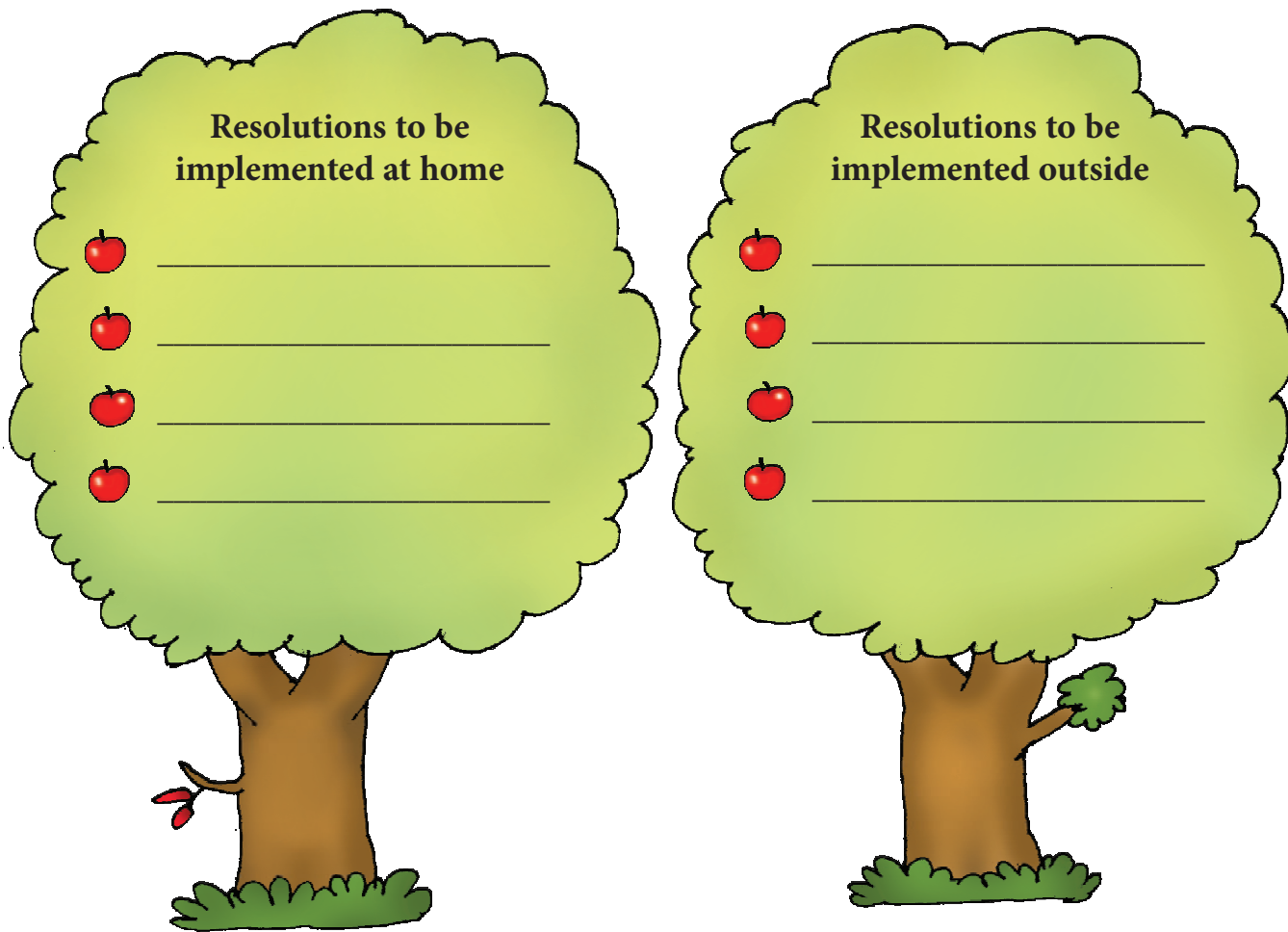
shall I sometime, or .....?



—Robert Fisher



- C.4.** Help the resolution trees given below bear fruit by listing some of the promises made by the speaker.



- C.5.** Tick (✓) the appropriate option and complete the statements.

- (a) The speaker is \_\_\_\_\_.
- ☐ a small boy ☐ an adult
- ☐ an old man ☐ an old woman
- (b) The speaker has made \_\_\_\_\_ New Year resolutions in the poem.
- ☐ 22 ☐ 20 ☐ 21 ☐ 19
- (c) The speaker intends to clean his room \_\_\_\_\_.
- ☐ once a week ☐ once a month
- ☐ once a day ☐ once a year



(d) The speaker has resolved to go to bed \_\_\_\_\_.

☐ with the larks

☐ with the frogs

☐ with the owls

☐ with the cats

(e) The speaker has promised to turn over a new leaf. This means that \_\_\_\_\_.

☐ he wants to change his appearance

☐ he wants to mend his ways

☐ he wants to plant a new tree

☐ he wants to remain as naughty as he is

**C.6.** List two pieces of evidence from the poem that suggest that the speaker does not intend to keep his resolutions.

Evidence-1

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Evidence-2

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**C.7. Answer the following.**

'I shall definitely remember her birthday next year!'

Whose birthday will the speaker remember?

'I will use these two words to be polite to people.' Pick two words from the poem that convey etiquettes.

\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_

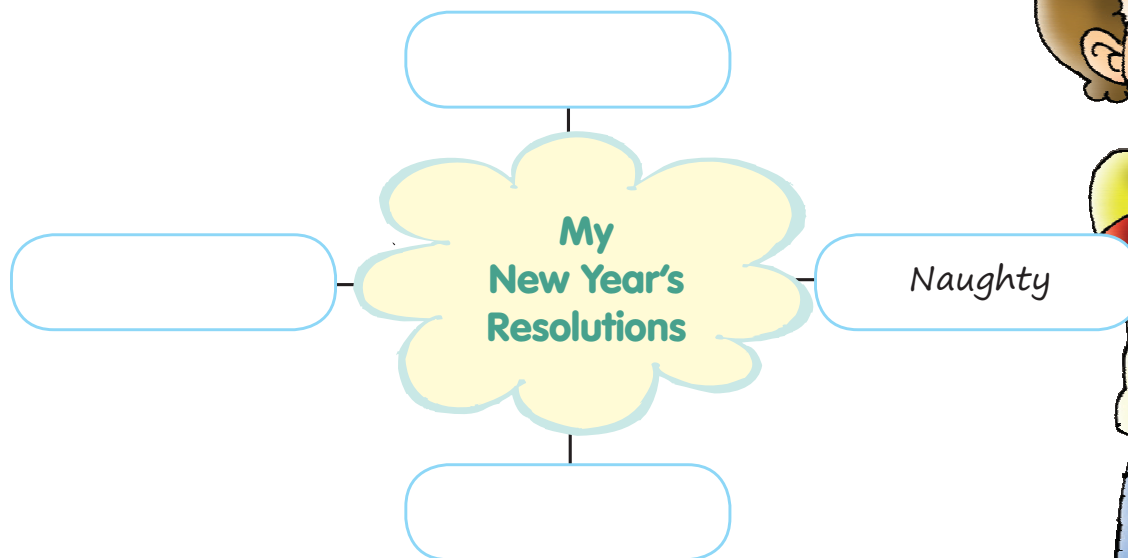
'I will not reply back to my mom.' Find a phrase in the poem that indicates this.

'Shall I start them this year or next year, shall I sometime, or

Complete the line.



**C.8. Complete the chart given below with words that best sum up the mood of the poem.**



C.9. Life Skills

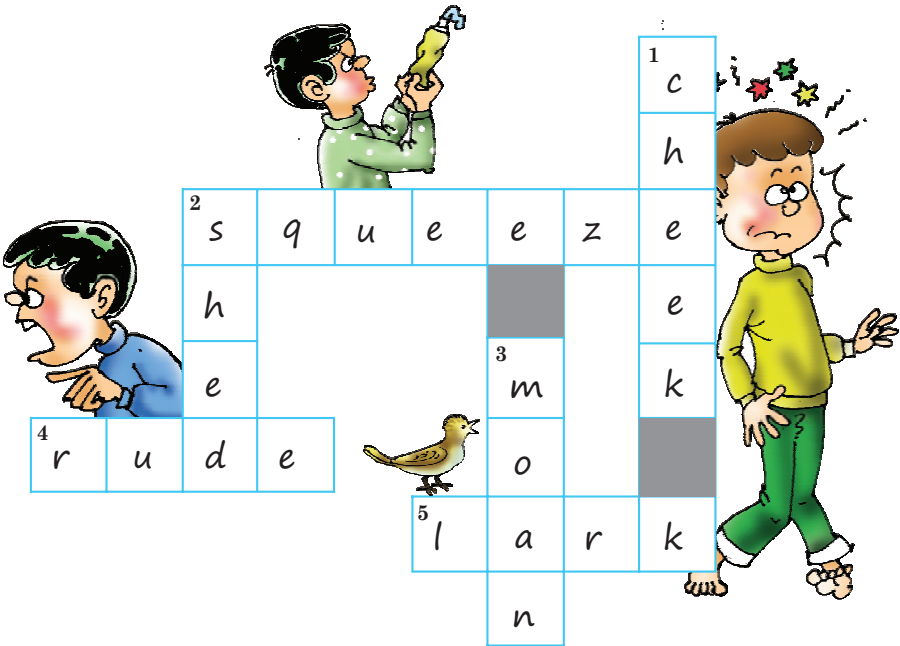
Setting your goals helps you to channelise your efforts properly and live a successful and happy life. Make a list of your short-term and long-term goals.

MY GOALS	
SHORT-TERM GOALS (Goals that can be accomplished in the near future.)	LONG-TERM GOALS (Goals that are more far-reaching and take longer to achieve.)

C.10. The following crossword is slightly different. Instead of the clues, the words from the text are filled in the puzzle. Find out the clues by using a dictionary.

For the Teacher

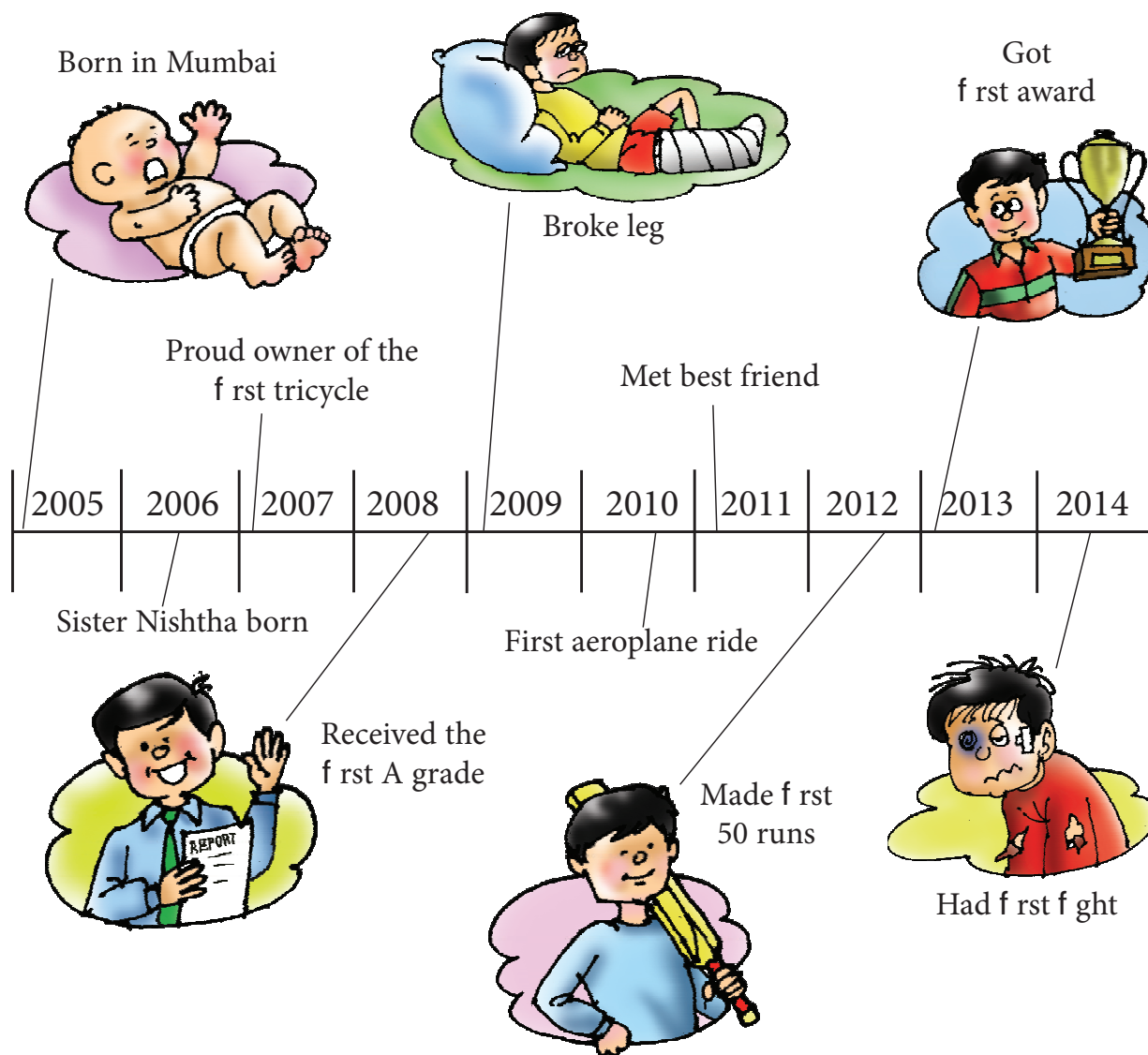
Let the students work in pairs. Set a time limit for this activity.



ACROSS →	
2	
4	
5	
DOWN ↓	
1	
2	
3	

**C.11.** The New Year eve symbolises the commencement of another year. A timeline represents the important dates, events or incidents in a person's life, distributed over a year or many years.

Given below is the timeline of a cricketer's life. The numbers represent the years. The phrases written above and below the timeline tell us about events, people and things that were important to this cricketer at different times of his life.



#### For the Teacher

Guide the students to ask their elders about the milestones in their growing up from birth to their present age.





## Read it Yourself

Read about an interesting ceremony—Beating the Retreat.

### ▶ Beating The Retreat

Republic Day celebrations which mark the unification of our country into a sovereign democratic republic is concluded with a ceremony known as 'Beating the Retreat'. It is performed three days later, on the evening of January 29, at Vijay Chowk.

The ceremony applauds the ancient custom of calling back the troops to their barracks by sending drummers down the streets heralding sunset.

The illuminated Rashtrapati Bhavan and Parliament House stand as a magnificent backdrop to the musical extravaganza. A spectacular performance by more than twenty bands from the three armed forces of the country playing martial music is the spotlight of the evening. The bands play many famous songs and hymns among which, the hymn *Abide with me*, is played as the ceremony comes to an end. As this hymn is played, the bands fall silent and a solitary bugler takes up the refrain and plays upon the tranquil note until the fading final notes augur the end of the grand celebrations of the Republic Day.

Since India became a republic in 1950, there has been only one instance when Beating the Retreat ceremony was cancelled. The function for the year 2001 was not held on account of the devastating earthquake that struck Gujarat on January 26.







## Tape Script



### Kodomo-no-Hi

Hi friends! I am four-year old Kazu. I live in Osaka in Japan. I have learnt English from an Indian teacher. I am going to tell you about Kodomo-no-hi, or children's day celebrated by the Japanese boys on the fifth day of May. The main purpose of this festival, say my parents, is to show to the young boys the importance of such qualities as strength and determination.

We begin this special day by bathing with iris leaves. It is believed that these leaves have the power to protect us from illness and to make us strong. We, then, put on a kimono—our traditional dress for the festival. This dress is famous all over the world for its beautiful design. But it is quite tight around the chest and I am happy that I don't have to wear it every day. But it doesn't matter. After all, Kodomo-no-hi comes only once a year! We enjoy this day by flying brightly-coloured steamers and carp kites for the whole day. You must be wondering what a carp kite is. Actually, the carp is a strong fish, renowned for its energy and determination. It provides a good example to Japanese boys who must also overcome obstacles and be successful.