DOLPHIN
ENGLISH

Based on New Syllabus 2019

Based on Government Question Pattern

Avail Exercise Book

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PREFACE

Esteemed Head-Masters, Respected Teachers, Sacrificing Parents and dear Students we thank you for your valuable support for our guide in the past and expecting the same in the upcoming years too.

We are happy to bring you Dolphin's English Guide for 12th Standard. Each unit is prepared carefully by the most experienced and dedicated teachers. For understanding the text easily and facing the exam boldly Prose, Poetry, Extended Reading, Grammar Rules and Important Tips all are translated (word by word) into Tamil. This Guide is based on the updated SamacheerKalvi Text - New Syllabus - 2019. It is also framed on the "Public Exam Question Paper Pattern for the year 2019".

For Self-testing and scoring higher marks we are also supplying a Exercise book and Key book along with this guide. It contains maximum number of model exercises with model question papers.

We hope this guide will help both the teachers and students to achieve their dreams in the educational field and in their life.

Best Wishes From
The Publisher

A Key is available for teachers
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**Note:**

*The Blue Print (Marks) and Question Numbers (Blue Print) are available in the TN Board's official resources. The Question Numbers (Question Numbers) and Blue Print (Blue Print) are for reference. The content covers various aspects of writing, comprehension, and grammar exercises.*
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Total Marks = 17

**PART-I**

Choose the correct Synonyms

3 x 1 = 3

Choose the correct Antonyms

3 x 1 = 3

**PART-III**

Prose Questions (Any 2 out of 3)

2 x 3 = 6

**PART-IV**

Prose Paragraph (Either…or…type)

1 x 5 = 5

Vocabulary, Grammar, Language Skills, Writing, Reading Exercises will be asked from Book Back Exercises.
About The Author:-
Archibald Joseph Cronin (1896–1981) was a Scottish novelist, dramatist and physician. A doctor by training, Cronin was one of the most renowned storytellers of the twentieth century. Many of his stories have emerged from his medical career and are noted for their narrative skill, deep social conscience and finely drawn characters. Cronin’s books were not only bestsellers but some of them (such as The Citadel and The Keys of the Kingdom) were made into successful films and were adapted for radio and television. His novella Country Doctor was adapted for a long running BBC radio and TV series.

PROSE TRANSLATION

<table>
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<th>PROSE</th>
<th>தமிழ் விளக்கம்</th>
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| PAGE-1
Here is a story about love, devotion, sacrifice, sincerity and maturity displayed by two little boys in their actions to save the life of their sister who suffers from tuberculosis of the spine. Read the story to find out how their actions give a new hope for humanity.

As we drove through the foothills of the Alps two small boys stopped us on the outskirts of...
Verona. They were selling wild strawberries. “Don’t buy,” warned Luigi, our cautious driver. “You will get much better fruit in Verona. Besides, these boys....”

He shrugged his shoulders to convey his disapproval of their shabby appearance.

One boy had on a worn jersey and cut-off khaki pants; the other a shortened army tunic gathered in loose folds about his skinny frame. Yet, gazing at the two little figures, with their brown skins, tangled hair and dark earnest eyes, we felt ourselves strangely attracted. My companion spoke to the boys, discovered that they were brothers. Nicola, the elder, was 13; Jacopo, who barely came up to the door handle of the car, was nearly 12. We bought their biggest basket, and then set off toward town.

Next morning, coming out of our hotel, we saw our friends bent over shoe shine boxes beside the fountain in the public square, doing brisk business.

We watched for a few moments; then as trade slackened we went over. They greeted us with friendly faces.

“I thought you picked fruit for a living,” I said.” We do many things, sir,” Nicola answered seriously. He glanced at us hopefully.

“Our disapproval of their shabby appearance.

Yet, gazing at the two little figures, with their brown skins, tangled hair and dark earnest eyes, we felt ourselves strangely attracted. My companion spoke to the boys, discovered that they were brothers. Nicola, the elder, was 13; Jacopo, who barely came up to the door handle of the car, was nearly 12. We bought their biggest basket, and then set off toward town.

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“We watch for a few moments; then as trade slackened we went over. They greeted us with friendly faces.

“I thought you picked fruit for a living,” I said.” We do many things, sir,” Nicola answered seriously. He glanced at us hopefully.

“We watch for a few moments; then as trade slackened we went over. They greeted us with friendly faces.

“I thought you picked fruit for a living,” I said.” We do many things, sir,” Nicola answered seriously. He glanced at us hopefully.
“All right,” I smiled. “You take us along.”

As we made the rounds, my interest was again provoked by their remarkable demeanour. They were childish enough, and in many ways quite artless. Jacopo was lively as a squirrel. Nicola’s smile was steady and engaging. Yet in both these boyish faces there was a seriousness which was far beyond their years. In the week which followed we saw them frequently, for they proved extremely useful to us. If we wanted a pack of American cigarettes, or seats for the opera or the name of good restaurant, Nicola and Jacopo could be relied upon to satisfy our needs. What struck one most was their willingness to work. During these summer days, under the hot sun, they shined shoes, sold fruit, hawked newspapers, conducted tourists round the town, and ran errands.

One night, we came upon them in the windy and deserted square, resting on the stone pavement beneath the lights. Nicola sat upright, tired. A bundle of unsold newspapers lay at his feet. Jacopo, his head resting upon his brother’s shoulder was asleep. It was nearly midnight.

“Why are you out so late, Nicola?”

“Waiting for the last bus from Padua. We shall sell all our papers when it comes in.”

“Must you work so hard? You both look rather tired.”

“We are not complaining, sir.”

But next morning, when I went over to the fountain to have my shoes shined, I said,
“Nicola, the way you and Jacopo work, you must earn quite a bit. You spend nothing on clothes. You eat little enough --- when I see you have a meal it’s usually black bread and figs. Tell me, what do you do with your money?”

He coloured deeply under his sunburn, and then grew pale. He looked to the ground.

“You must be saving up to emigrate to America,” I suggested. He looked at me sideways, spoke with an effort.

“We should greatly like to go to the States. But here, at present, we have other plans.”

“What plans?”

He smiled uncomfortably. “Just plans, sir,” he answered in a low voice.

“Well,” I said, “we’re leaving on Monday. Is there anything I can do for you before we go?” Nicola shook his head, but suddenly Jacopo said, “Sir,” he burst out, “every Sunday we make a visit to the country, to Poleta, 30 kilometres from here. Usually we hire bicycles.

But tomorrow, since you are so kind, you might send us in your car.”

I had already told Luigi he might have the Sunday off. However, I answered, “I’ll drive you out myself.”

There was a pause. Nicola was glaring at his young brother in vexation. “We could not think of troubling you, sir.”

“It won’t be any trouble.”

He bit his lip, then, in a rather put out tone, he said, “Very well.”

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| “Nicola, the way you and Jacopo work, you must earn quite a bit. You spend nothing on clothes. You eat little enough --- when I see you have a meal it’s usually black bread and figs. Tell me, what do you do with your money?” | निकोला, यदि आप और जाकोपो का प्रदेश, आप बिना किसी भी सांप्रदायिक खपत नहीं करते। आप जितनी कम भोजन करते हैं - जब मैं आपका सेवन देखता हूँ तो यह सब अक्सर लाल चावल और अनाज ही हो - तो आपके द्वारा क्या करते हैं अपने पैसे के? | "निकोला, आप और जॉकोपो की तरह आप पैसे बनाते हैं। आप नहीं कपड़े खर्च करते हैं। आप जितनी कम खाते हैं - जब मैं आपका खाना देखता हूँ तो यह सब अक्सर लाल चावल और अनाज ही हो - तो आपके द्वारा क्या करते हैं अपने पैसे के?

He smiled uncomfortably. “Just plans, sir,” he answered in a low voice. | "भाल है, जिस की तरह आप और जॉकोपो का प्रदेश, आप बिना किसी भी सांप्रदायिक खपत नहीं करते। आप जितनी कम भोजन करते हैं - जब मैं आपका सेवन देखता हूँ तो यह सब अक्सर लाल चावल और अनाज ही हो - तो आपके द्वारा क्या करते हैं अपने पैसे के? | "भाल है, जिस की तरह आप और जॉकोपो का प्रदेश, आप बिना किसी भी सांप्रदायिक खपत नहीं करते। आप जितनी कम भोजन करते हैं - जब मैं आपका सेवन देखता हूँ तो यह सब अक्सर लाल चावल और अनाज ही हो - तो आपके द्वारा क्या करते हैं अपने पैसे के?

“Well,” I said, “we’re leaving on Monday. Is there anything I can do for you before we go?” | "वेल्, मैंने सोमवार के बाद जा रहा हूँ। आपके लिए क्या कर सकता हूँ जब जा रहे हैं? | "वेल्, मैंने सोमवार के बाद जा रहा हूँ। आपके लिए क्या कर सकता हूँ जब जा रहे हैं?

Nicola shook his head, but suddenly Jacopo said, “Sir,” he burst out, “every Sunday we make a visit to the country, to Poleta, 30 kilometres from here. Usually we hire bicycles.| निकोला के सिर पर तोड़ा है, लेकिन जब जोकोपो बोला था, "साईर," उन्होंने बोला, "तटस्थ में सोमवार के दिन हम पॉलेटा जाते हैं, जो 30 किलोमीटर दूर है। हम हर सोमवार अपनी कार में जाते हैं।" | निकोला के सिर पर तोड़ा है, लेकिन जब जोकोपो बोला था, "साईर," उन्होंने बोला, "तटस्थ में सोमवार के दिन हम पॉलेटा जाते हैं, जो 30 किलोमीटर दूर है। हम हर सोमवार अपनी कार में जाते हैं।"

But tomorrow, since you are so kind, you might send us in your car.” | अंतिम रात, जब आप आश्चर्यजनक होंगे, तो मैं आपकी कार में भेजूं। | अंतिम रात, जब आप आश्चर्यजनक होंगे, तो मैं आपकी कार में भेजूं।

I had already told Luigi he might have the Sunday off. However, I answered, “I’ll drive you out myself.” | मैं उसने सोमवार से हटाने का हृदय किया था। हां, मैं आपकी आने का हृदय किया था। | मैं उसने सोमवार से हटाने का हृदय किया था। हां, मैं आपकी आने का हृदय किया था।

There was a pause. Nicola was glaring at his young brother in vexation. “We could not think of troubling you, sir.” | रोचक अवस्था में चालू हुई की यहां तक कि जिसका सिर उसकी पत्नी के सामने बनाने की जरूरत थी। एक अन्य लड़के के सामने उसने उसे दिखाया। "हां, नासी, यह वैसे ही बात है।" | रोचक अवस्था में चालू हुई की यहां तक कि जिसका सिर उसकी पत्नी के सामने बनाने की जरूरत थी। एक अन्य लड़के के सामने उसने उसे दिखाया। "हां, नासी, यह वैसे ही बात है।"

“If it won’t be any trouble.” | "यदि यह कोई चिंता नहीं होगा।" | "यदि यह कोई चिंता नहीं होगा।"

He bit his lip, then, in a rather put out tone, he said, “Very well.” | उन्होंने अपनी लिप बर्बरता में बनाई और उन्होंने नहीं कहा, "अंतर करो।" | उन्होंने अपनी लिप बर्बरता में बनाई और उन्होंने नहीं कहा, "अंतर करो।"
The following afternoon we drove to the tiny village set high upon the hillside. I imagined that our destinations would be some humble dwellings. But, directed by Jacopo, we drew up at a large red-roofed villa, surrounded by a high stone wall. I could scarcely believe my eyes and before I could recover breath my two passengers had leaped from the car.

“We shall not be long, sir. Perhaps only an hour. May be you’d like to go to the café in the village for a drink?” They disappeared beyond the corner of the wall.

After a few minutes I followed. I found a grilled side-entrance and, determinedly, rang the bell.

A pleasant-looking woman with steel-rimmed spectacles appeared. I blinked as I saw that she was dressed in the white uniform of a trained nurse.

“I just brought two small boys here.”

“Ah, yes.” Her face lit up; she opened the door to admit me. “Nicola and Jacopo. I will take you up.”

She led me through a cool, tiled vestibule into the hospital – for hospital the villa had become.

At the door of a little cubicle the nurse paused, put her finger to her lips, and with a smile bade me look through the glass partition. The two boys were seated at the bedside of a girl of about twenty who, propped up on pillows, wearing a pretty lace jacket, was listening to their chatter, her eyes soft and tender. One
I shook my head and turned away. I felt I could not bear to *intrude* upon this happy family party. But at the foot of the staircase I drew up and begged her to tell me all she knew about these boys.

She was eager to do so. They were, she explained, quite alone in the world, except for this sister, Lucia. Their father, a widower, a well-known singer, had been killed in the early part of the war. Shortly afterward a bomb had destroyed their home and thrown the three children into the streets. They had always known a comfortable and cultured life – Lucia had herself been training as a singer – and they had suffered horribly from near starvation and exposure to the cold winter.

For months they had barely kept themselves alive in a sort of shelter they built with their own hands amidst the *rubble*. Then for three years the Germans ruled the city. The boys grew to hate the Germans. When the resistance movement began secretly to form they were among the first to join. When the war was over, and we had peace at last, they came back to their beloved sister. And they found her – suffering from tuberculosis of the spine.”
She paused, took a quick breath. “Did they give up? I do not have to answer that question. They brought her here, persuaded us to take her into the hospital. In the twelve months she has been our patient she has made good progress. There is every hope that one day she will walk– and sing–again.”

“Of course, everything is so difficult now, food so scarce and dear, we could not keep going unless we charged a fee. But every week, Lucia’s brothers have made their payment.” She added simply, “I don’t know what they do, I do not ask. Work is scarce in Verona. But whatever it is, I know they do it well.”

“Yes,” I agreed. “They couldn’t do it better.”

I waited outside until the boys rejoined me, and then drove them back to the city. They sat beside me, not speaking. For my part, I did not say a word–I knew they would prefer to feel that they had safely kept their secret. Yet their devotion had touched me deeply.

War had not broken their spirit. Their selfless action brought a new nobility to human life, gave promise of a greater hope for human society.

---

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---

**PICTURES FOR UNDERSTANDING**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nicola – 13 years</th>
<th>Jacopo – 12 years</th>
<th>Narrator</th>
<th>Lucia-Sister-20 years</th>
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dolphin.pub2005@gmail.com  www.kalvidolphin.in
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>குறிப்பிட்டு கூறுத்தும் பொருள்</th>
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<td>interrupt</td>
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| leaped    | jumped          | பயிற்சியால் போக்கு பயிற்சியால் போக்கு
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**ANTONYMS**

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<tr>
<th>WORD</th>
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<td>despairingly</td>
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<td>downtown</td>
<td>கீழே வசைமாசு</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pale</td>
<td>bright</td>
<td>பாலானை</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pause</td>
<td>continue</td>
<td>வாழ்கமாக</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>peace</td>
<td>war</td>
<td>போர், பாதுகாப்பு</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>persuaded</td>
<td>dissuaded</td>
<td>அவ்விரும்பல்ளாக்காக</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pleased</td>
<td>displeased</td>
<td>பக்த வழக்காக</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>prefer</td>
<td>hate</td>
<td>பக்தாக</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>progress</td>
<td>regression</td>
<td>பெருக்கமுள்ள</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>propped</td>
<td>weakened</td>
<td>வெட்டிக்கையை ஒளித்திருக்க இயலாம்</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>proved</td>
<td>disproved</td>
<td>பெருமையை ஒளித்திருக்காக</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### SHORT ANSWERS

I. Answer the following questions in one or two sentences each based on your understanding of the story. (PAGE-5)

**a) Who did the narrator meet at the outskirts of Verona?**

The narrator **met two boys, Nicola and Jacopo**, at the outskirts of Verona.

**b) Why did the driver not approve of the narrator buying fruits from the boys?**

The driver did not approve of the narrator buying fruits from the boys **because of their shabby appearance**.
c) The boys did not spend much on clothes and food. Why?
   The boys did not spend much on clothes and food because they were saving money for the treatment of their beloved sister, Lucia, who was suffering from tuberculosis.

d) Were the boys saving money to go to the States? How do you know?
   No, the boys were not saving money to go to the States. When the narrator sarcastically asks the boys whether they had plans to migrate to the States they reply that they had other plans to be completed at Verona.

e) Why did the author avoid going to Lucia’s room?
   The author avoided for going to Lucia’s room because he didn’t want to intervene into the happy reunion of the boys with their beloved sister, Lucia.

f) What was Lucia suffering from?
   Lucia was suffering from tuberculosis of the spine.

g) What made the boys join the resistance movement against the Germans?
   The boys joined the resistance movement against the Germans because the war had killed their father and left them homeless on the streets.

II. Answer the following questions in three or four sentences each.

a) Describe the appearance of Nicola and Jacopo.
   Nicola and Jacopa had a shabby appearance as they were poorly dressed and looked untidy. With their tangled hair and worn out, loose fitting clothes about their skinny frame, they looked pitiable.

b) What were the various jobs undertaken by the little boys?
   The little boys sold strawberries, polished shoes, hawked newspapers, conducted tourists round the town and ran errands.

c) How did the narrator help the boys on Sunday?
   The narrator took them in his car to a place called Poleta about 30 km from Verona. The boys made a visit to Poleta every Sunday. Usually, they hired a cycle for the trip.

d) Who took the author to the cubicle?
   The narrator dropped the boys at a villa in Poleta. They jumped from the car and rushed into the building. When the narrator followed them he was greeted by a nurse. On enquiry about the whereabouts of the boys, she took him to the cubicle.

e) Describe the girl with whom the boys were talking to in the cubicle.
   The girl was about twenty and strongly resembled the two boys. She was wearing a pretty lace jacket and was listening to their chatter. Her eyes were soft and tender. She was suffering from tuberculosis of the spine. She had intense love and affection for her brothers.
f) Recount the untold sufferings undergone by the siblings after they were rendered homeless.

The siblings suffered horribly from near starvation and exposure to the cold winter. They lost their comfortable and cultured life as their father had been killed in the early part of the war. They kept themselves barely alive in a sort of shelter they built with their own hands.

g) The narrator did not utter a word and preferred to keep the secret to himself. Why?

Substantiate the statement with reference to the story.

The narrator understands that the boys worked hard to support their sick sister's treatment. But they didn't wish disclose it to anyone as they valued their dignity and self respect more than sympathy or financial help. The narrator sensed it when the boys refused to discuss their 'other plans' with him and also when they didn't take him into the villa. So he did not utter a word and preferred to keep the secret to himself.

h) What made the boys work so hard?

The boy worked so hard owing to their sister's health & pay for her treatment.

i) Why didn't the boys disclose their problem to the author?

The boy did not disclose their problem to the author because they wanted to keep the issue as their secret.

3. Answer the following in a paragraph of 100–150 words each.

a) What was the driving force that made the boys do various jobs?

b) How was the family affected by the war?

c) Write a character sketch of Nicola and Jacopo.

d) What message is conveyed through the story ‘Two Gentlemen of Verona’?

e) Justify the title of the story ‘Two Gentlemen of Verona’.

f) Adversity brings out the best as well as the worst in people. Elucidate this statement with reference to the story.

g) Which character do you like the most in the story and why?

PARAGRAPH FOR GIFTED STUDENTS

Devotion and dedication towards true relationships revive the spirit of humanity in mankind. Selfless sacrifice speaks the language of universal peace. The story 'Two Gentlemen of Verona' instills the spirit of nobility that can be practised even at times of adversity in the minds of young readers.

INTRODUCTION:

A.J. Cronin has successfully portrayed that gentlemanliness is not in our dress or behaviour but it is in the true soul that toils for the well being of a fellow human being. The story explains the importance of leading a life of sacrifice to experience real happiness. The young boys set perfect examples of noble living
in this materialistic world. The narrator presents role models who can enlighten the path of the young generation.

**NICOLA AND JACOPO - TRUE GENTLEMEN:**

The story revolves around the two boys, Nicola and Jacopo, who do numerous errands to earn money only to pay for their sister's treatment who suffers from tuberculosis of the spine. These modern 'Gentlemen' redefine the concept of what it means to be gentleman. The narrator and his friend meet the boys at the outskirts of Verona. They were selling strawberries. Next time when they meet, the boys were polishing shoes. They are found selling newspapers late night. The narrator is amazed at their sincerity, devotion and maturity. He even suspects about their plans to emigrate to America. But the boys refuse saying they have other plans.

**SECRET MISSION:**

The narrator gets curious to know about the boys. They were not ashamed of doing menial jobs. They offered to help the narrator during his stay at Verona as they could earn some good money. He was astonished to see that the boys worked hard yet lived meagerly. When he offers help, Jacopo asks him to drop them at Poleta. It is only here, the narrator gets the mystery unveiled. Lucia, the boys' sister, was admitted in a hospital as she was suffering from tuberculosis. The narrator follows them and finds details about their secret mission from a nurse. Their cultured life got shattered due to war. They lost their father and was left homeless on the streets. When they realized that Lucia had tuberculosis, they ensured that she received the best treatment. The ultimate mission of the boys' life centered on the welfare of their beloved sister.

**CONCLUSION:**

The boys seem to be a surprise pack of values in this modern era of selfishness. They don’t disclose their problems to the narrator as they didn't want to lose their dignity and self-respect demanding sympathy or financial help. Behind their shabby appearances were hidden two noble souls whose dedication and selflessness promise a new hope for mankind.

---

**Don't Lament on your loses, leap ahead to shatter your tangles.**

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**PARAGRAPH FOR AVERAGE STUDENTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Two Gentlemen of Verona</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Author</td>
<td>A.J. Cronin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Characters</td>
<td>Nicola, Jacopo, Narrator, His friend and Lucia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme</td>
<td>Appearances are deceptive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The narrator met Nicola and Jacopa at the outskirts of Verona. They were looking shabby and untidy. He was attracted by their earnest eyes. During his stay at Verona, he spots the 'little gentlemen' engaged in some menial jobs. They even offer to help the narrator. Their willingness to work impressed him. Their meager life style puzzled him. The narrator drops them at Poleta for their weekly visits and gets to know about their secret mission from a nurse. Their family gets shattered with war. The boys along with their sister, Lucia, are left on the streets. The girl suffers due to
The boys toil hard for her treatment. Inspite of poverty, they don’t steal, lie or beg. The narrator could sense that the boys were the real gentlemen. They exhibited dedication, determination and sincerity. Despite their shabby appearance, they were shining like heavenly creatures due to their inner beauty.

Life blossoms when nobility blooms among mankind

Nicola and Jacopa were two small boys.
They did several works to earn money.
Cronin likes them a lot
Lucia, their sister, is sick with tuberculosis.
They spend money for her treatment.
They keep it as a secret.
Cronin is surprised and happy to see them.
They were noble, gentle and great human beings.

PARAGRAPH FOR LATE BLOOMERS

VOCABULARY

a) Read the following words taken from the story. Give two synonyms and one antonym for each of these words. Use a dictionary, if required. (PAGE-6)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Synonym</th>
<th>Antonym</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>cautious</td>
<td>thoughtful</td>
<td>reckless</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>disapprove</td>
<td>criticize</td>
<td>approve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>brisk</td>
<td>energetic</td>
<td>slow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>engaging</td>
<td>attractive</td>
<td>unattractive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>humble</td>
<td>modest</td>
<td>arrogant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eager</td>
<td>keen</td>
<td>unenthusiastic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>resistance</td>
<td>opposition</td>
<td>surrender</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>persuade</td>
<td>convince</td>
<td>dissuade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>scarce</td>
<td>rare</td>
<td>common</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nobility</td>
<td>dignity</td>
<td>dishonour</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

b) beside - besides
You can sit beside me during the music class. Besides dancing she learns driving too.

c) judicial - judicious
The criminal is under judicial remand for a week. We should be judicious in our selection of friends.

d) Eligible - illegible
She is eligible for the job. Your handwriting is so bad, it’s almost illegible.

e) Conscience - conscious
My conscience troubles me whenever I take a wrong decision. He was severely injured but remained conscious.

f) industrial - industrious
We need industrial development in our country. Industrious students succeed in their life.

g) eminent - imminent
Toru Dutt is an eminent poet. A storm is imminent as we have strong winds.

h) illicit - elicit
The court condemned illicit production of liquor. You can't elicit a response from the public now.
About The Author:-

Edwin Muir (1887-1959) was a renowned Scottish poet, novelist, translator and critic. He was remembered for his vivid poetry. He began writing poetry at a relatively old age, and over the course of several years worked out an individual, philosophical style for which he gained recognition later in his life. First Poems and Chorus of the Newly Dead contain Muir’s initial attempts. Muir’s later collections include Variations on a Time Theme, The Narrow Place, The Voyage and Other Poems, The Labyrinth, and One Foot in Eden.

POEM TRANSLATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POEM LINES</th>
<th>தமிழ்நாட்டு வரலாறு விளக்கம்</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All through that summer at ease we lay,</td>
<td>கைத்தூரம், வள்ளைகள், பெறுவது குளையைத் தொடர்விளங்கள்.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>And daily from the turret wall</td>
<td>டெப்பில்லஸ், டெப்பில்லஸ் சிறு கூட்டக்குடிகளின்றிச்சமையும்.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We watched the mowers in the hay</td>
<td>மரியம் வோர்லீஸ் அரசர்களாகத் தொடர்விளங்கள் செய்யும்.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>And the enemy half a mile away</td>
<td>காஷ்ட விளையாட்டிற்கு அனைவரின் கால்மாருகள் சிற்றுக்குடிகள்.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They seemed no threat to us at all.</td>
<td>கால்மாருகள் அதிகமானவை நீங்கு தந்திரத்தின் விளையாட்டு.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For what, we thought, had we to fear</td>
<td>காஷ்ட முடிய என்ன சொல்லும் காணள்ளோம்?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With our arms and provender, load on load,</td>
<td>கால்மாரின் அரசியலமான, டெப்பில்லஸ் கர்ணனாவில் விளையாடுவது.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Our towering battlements, tier on tier,</td>
<td>கால்மாரின் சீர்தெய்வ சீர்தெய்வத்துடன் குடிகள்.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>And friendly allies drawing near</td>
<td>கால்மாரின் சீர்தெய்வ சீர்தெய்வத்துடன் குடிகள்.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On every leafy summer road.</td>
<td>கால்மாரின் சீர்தெய்வ சீர்தெய்வத்துடன் குடிகள்.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our gates were strong, our walls were thick,</td>
<td>கால்மாரின் குந்தூராக விளையாடும்.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>So smooth and high, no man could win</td>
<td>கால்மாரின் குந்தூராக விளையாடும் மூலமாயின்றிச்சமையும் மறு மூலமாயின்றிச்சமையும் விளையாடும்.</td>
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<tr>
<td>A foothold there, no clever trick</td>
<td>கால்மாரின் குந்தூராக விளையாடும் மூலமாயின்றிச்சமையும் மறு மூலமாயின்றிச்சமையும் விளையாடும்.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Could take us dead or quick,</td>
<td>கால்மாரின் குந்தூராக விளையாடும் மூலமாயின்றிச்சமையும் மறு மூலமாயின்றிச்சமையும் விளையாடும்.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only a bird could have got in.</td>
<td>கால்மாரின் குந்தூராக விளையாடும் மூலமாயின்றிச்சமையும் மறு மூலமாயின்றிச்சமையும் விளையாடும்.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What could they offer us for bait?</td>
<td>கால்மாரின் குந்தூராக விளையாடும் மூலமாயின்றிச்சமையும் மறு மூலமாயின்றிச்சமையும் விளையாடும்.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our captain was brave and we were true…</td>
<td>கால்மாரின் குந்தூராக விளையாடும் மூலமாயின்றிச்சமையும் மறு மூலமாயின்றிச்சமையும் விளையாடும்.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
There was a little private gate,  
A little wicked wicket gate.  
The wizened warder let them through.

Oh then our maze of tunneled stone  
Grew thin and treacherous as air.  
The cause was lost without a groan,  
The famous citadel overthrown,  
And all its secret galleries bare.

How can this shameful tale be told? I will maintain until my death  
We could do nothing, being sold: Our only enemy was gold,  
And we had no arms to fight it with.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PICTURES FOR UNDERSTANDING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Castle with high tower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soldiers – loyal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ready to shoot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enemies came into the castle</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. All through the summer at ease we lay,  
   And daily from the turret wall  
   We watched the mowers in the hay  
   We refers to the soldiers guarding the castle.  
   a) Who does we refer to?  
   b) How did the soldiers spend the summer days?  
      The soldiers spent their summer days relaxing at ease as their castle was safe and secure.  
   c) What could they watch from the turret wall?  
      They could watch the mowers working from the turret wall.

2. Our gates were strong, our walls were thick,  
   So smooth and high, no man could win.  
   a) How was the castle?  
      The castle was safe.  
   b) What was the firm belief of the soldiers?  
      The soldiers firmly believed that it was not humanly possible to capture their strong fort.

3. A foothold there, no clever trick  
   Could take us dead or quick,  
   Only a bird could have got in.  
   a) What was challenging?  
      Climbing the high walls of the castle was challenging.  
   b) Which aspect of the castle’s strength is conveyed by the above line?  
      The strength of the high and thick walls of the castle is conveyed by the above line.

4. Oh then our maze of tunneled stone  
   Grew thin and treacherous as air.  
   The castle was lost without a groan,  
   The famous citadel overthrown,  
   a) Bring out the contrast in the first two lines.  
      Stony walls of the castle have become thin due to treachery.  
   b) What happened to the castle?  

5. We could do nothing, being sold.  
   a) Why couldn’t they do anything?  
      They couldn’t do anything as the strong fort was conquered due to treachery.  
   b) Why did they feel helpless?  
      They felt helpless as they had a traitor among them inside the castle.

6. And the enemy half a mile away  
   They seemed no threat to us at all  
   a) Where was the enemy?  
      The enemy was just half a mile away from the castle.  
   b) Why didn’t they seem to be a threat?  
      They didn’t seem to be a threat due to the height of the castle.

7. For what, we thought, had we to fear  
   With our arms and provender, load on load  
   a) What do you mean by ‘provender’?  
      Provender means food.  
   b) Did they actually fear anything?  
      No, they didn’t fear anything.  
   c) Explain ‘load on load’.  
      The fortress is ready and prepared with ample weapons and food stored to withstand a siege.

8. Our towering battlements, tier on tier,  
   And friendly allies drawing near  
   On every leafy summer road.  
   a) What are ‘towering battlements’?  
      Towering battlements are tall towers with openings to shoot the enemies.  
   b) What does ‘friendly allies’ mean?  
      ‘Friendly allies’ means supporting nations or armed forces.

9. What could they offer us for bait?  
   a) Who is the speaker?  
      A soldier on guard of the castle is the speaker.  
   b) Whom does they refer to?  
      ‘They’ refers to the enemies.
10. **Our captain was brave and we were true....**
   a) Where was the captain?
      The captain was fighting to save the castle.
   b) What are the qualities discussed here?
      The qualities discussed in the above line are
      ✓ Bravery of the captain.
      ✓ Loyalty of his soldiers.
   c) What does the line convey?
      It conveys the atmosphere of confidence within the castle before the invasion.

11. **There was a little private gate,**
    *A little wicked wicket gate.*
   a) Where was the little private gate?
      The little private gate was in the castle.
   b) Why was the gate wicked?
      The gate was wicked as it became the point of entry for the enemies.
   c) What is a wicket gate?
      Wicket gate means a small gate beside a large one for use of people on foot.

12. **The wizened warder let them through.**
   a) Explain ‘wizened warder’
      Wizened warder is an aged or old guard.
   b) Who were let in?
      The enemies were let into the castle.
   c) Who let them in?
      An old guard let them into the castle.
   d) Why did he let them in?
      He let them in as he was bribed for his treachery.
   e) What was the consequence?

**POETIC DEVICES**

1) A little wicked *wicket gate.* - Personification
2) Oh then our maze of *tunneled stone* - Metaphor
3) Grew thin and treacherous as air. - Simile/ Personification
4) How can this *shameful tale* be told? - Rhetoric question
5) Our only *enemy was gold.* - Personification

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**FIGURES OF SPEECH:**

- Personification
- Metaphor
- Simile/ Personification
- Rhetoric question
- Personification

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**DOLPHIN-12TH ENG**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POEM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **FIGURES OF SPEECH:**
| 1) A little wicked wicket gate. - Personification
| 2) Oh then our maze of tunneled stone - Metaphor
| 3) Grew thin and treacherous as air. - Simile/ Personification
| 4) How can this shameful tale be told? - Rhetoric question
| 5) Our only enemy was gold. - Personification |

**STEP TO SUCCESS**

- The guard’s disloyalty led to the fall of the castle.

13. **The famous citadel overthrown,**
    *And all its secret galleries bare.*
   a) What is a citadel?
      Citadel is a safe and strong fort.
   b) How was it overthrown?
      It was overthrown because of the betrayal of one of the inhabitants of the castle.
   c) Why are the galleries bare?
      The galleries are bare as their occupants might have been killed in the war.

14. **How can this shameful tale be told?**
   a) What is a tale?
      A tale is a story with interesting happenings.
   b) What was the shameful tale?
      The narrator calls it as their shameful lose.
   c) Why can’t the tale be told?
      The tale can’t be told since it was about their shameful lose.

15. **Our only enemy was gold,**
    *And we had no arms to fight it with.*
   a) Who was their enemy?
      Gold was their enemy.
   b) Why does the narrator call it as their enemy?
      Gold was used as a bait to conquer the castle. So the narrator calls gold as their enemy.
   c) Why didn’t they have weapons to fight gold?
      Gold, an invisible enemy, controls the greedy human heart. So they didn’t have the weapons to fight gold.
**The Castle** by Edwin Muir

Poem: The Castle by Edwin Muir

**Clue words:**
- Turret, mowers, provender, battlements, tier, allies, foothold, bait, maze, wicked, wicket gate, treacherous, citadel, overthrown

**Common to all the lines:**

**Context:**
- Poem: The Castle
- Poet: Edwin Muir

**Explanation:**

The poem is an allegory which narrates about the downfall of a mighty castle due to disloyalty. The soldiers in the castle never suspected that such a fall was possible. With the height of the castle and its fortifications, along with the nearness of ‘allies’ to assist, there was never a doubt in the soldiers’ minds about the safety of the castle. Greed for gold instigates an aged guard to open the wicket gate for the enemies. The strong castle becomes weak and thin. Weaponless and clueless to tackle their enemy ‘gold’, the army falls a prey to it and the castle is captured.

**Comment:**

No warfare can tackle human greed.

1. **They seemed no threat to us at all.**

**Context:**
- Poem: The Castle
- Poet: Edwin Muir

**Explanation:**

When an army spots its enemy, it usually charts out a plan to tackle the situation. But the strength of the physical surroundings of the castle made the soldiers confident and they waited without much stress in a relaxed stance. The approach of their enemy didn’t seem to pose a threat for their safety. With friendly allies in the surroundings and with loads of weapons and ration in store to tackle a siege the chance of danger was completely eliminated from their minds.
Tragedy befalls as the enemy defeats and captures the citadel. Weaponless and clueless to tackle their enemy ‘gold’, the army becomes a prey to it.

Comment:
Greedy minds can never escape the clutches of gold.

5. Our gates were strong, our walls were thick

Explanation:
The soldiers are so confident of their fort with ‘strong gate’ and ‘thick walls’ that they lay off their concern about its security. The physical strength of the castle makes them stress free and relaxed. All threats the soldiers noticed were seen so insignificant due to the indomitable strength of the fort. The height of the castle shows its dominance over the enemy. With that mind frame, these soldiers were confident that nothing could endanger them and nothing could draw them out of the castle into the danger.

Comment:
Perils go unseen when overconfidence rules the hour.

6. A foothold there, no clever trick

Explanation:
No man could win against the towering obstacles of the castle. Only something that could soar as high as the tier like a bird could bring damage to the fort. So the narrator feels that their position is solid and stable in the castle. They never suspected that a fall was possible with the height of the castle. They pride themselves on the towering battlements and on their maze of tunneled stone which could defeat any clever trick of their enemies to enter the castle.

Comment:
Physical strength would allow us to overlook internal flaws.

7. What could they offer us for bait?

Explanation:
The soldiers were fearless with their fortress, so battle ready and prepared. Tier on tier with armed soldiers guarding the towering battlements; we can
The Castle

Poem: The Castle  Poet: Edwin Muir

Explanation:
The narrator believed that the castle was absolutely safe because their captain was brave and the soldiers were loyal. The narrator is not only confident of the physical strength of his castle but also has immense believes in the morality of his men. It makes him feel that nothing and no one could conquer their fortress. The enemy could not use bait for their entry inside the castle. This greatly diminished the chances for the fall of the castle.

Comment:
Military conflicts make us leave morality aside.

Context:
8. Our captain was brave and we were true....

Explanation:
The castle became thin due to treachery, it became an easy victim to its enemy. They walk in easily through the secret gallery and the intricate paths of the castle to confront the soldiers. Morality is laid aside when the guard opens the ‘wicket gate’ favouring the enemies for the bribe he had received. Thus treachery leads to the unexpected fall of the maze of tunneled stone.

Comment:
Loyalty gets shattered when greed steps into the human heart.

9. A little wicked wicket gate.

Explanation:
The castle’s fortune-turning event takes place with the opening of the wicked wicket gate for the enemies by the old guard. The overcoming of the castle by the invading force occurs due to this act of betrayal. The inhabitants of the castle spent so much time being comfortable and confident against the outside forces that they allowed that confidence to blind them to what was inside.

Comment:
Little mean acts hinder the path to success.

10. Grew thin and treacherous as air.

Explanation:
The strong castle becomes weak and thin because of a greedy disloyal warder. When the stony walls of the castle became thin due to treachery, it became an easy victim to its enemy. They walk in easily through the secret gallery and the intricate paths of the castle to confront the soldiers. Morality is laid aside when the guard opens the ‘wicket gate’ favouring the enemies for the bribe he had received. Thus treachery leads to the unexpected fall of the maze of tunneled stone.

Comment:
Loyalty gets shattered when greed steps into the human heart.

11. And we had no arms to fight it with.

Explanation:
Betrayal paved way for the enemy into the castle. The shocked soldiers put up a poor fight that they lost without a groan and the famous citadel was overthrown. The simplicity of this overtaking is attributed to the fact that the soldiers were weaponless and clueless to tackle their enemy ‘gold’. If it had been a military combat, their defenses against the invasion would have been more successful.

Comment:
More watchful thoughts could seal the path for hidden dangers.

12. We could do nothing, being sold.

Explanation:
The poem builds an atmosphere of confidence within the castle which gets shattered with the enemy’s invasion. Betrayal from within the castle leads to the fall of the mighty citadel. The strong castle becomes weak and thin because of a greedy disloyal warder. Since the focus was so completely on the dangers around them, they become clueless when betrayal from within brings them down. As their confidence gets shattered, they get blindfolded to the happenings around them.

Comment:
Confidence boosts the morale of even a lay man in adversity.
a) How safe was the castle? How was it conquered?
b) Bring out the contrasting picture of the castle as depicted in stanzas 3 and 5.
c) Human greed led to the mighty fall of the citadel. Explain.

Poem: The Castle  
Poet: Edwin Muir  
Theme: Money mends human minds

The poem ‘The castle’ by Edwin Muir is an allegory on the materialistic greed that can bring down even great empires with flawless fortified forts. The narrative poem builds an atmosphere of confidence within the castle which gets shattered with the enemy’s invasion. Betrayal from within the castle leads to the fall of the mighty citadel. The narration ends with a note of shame on the capture of the well guarded castle by treachery and not by a brave combat.

Destructive Strength Doesn’t Care About Morality

The soldiers are so confident of their fort with ‘strong gate’ and ‘thick walls’ that they lay off their concern about its security. The physical strength of the castle makes them stress free and relaxed. Moreover
- With the absence of enemies in the proximity
- With friendly allies in the surroundings
- With loads of weapons and ration in store to tackle a siege, the chance of danger was completely eliminated from their minds.

Our Captain Was Brave And We Were True

A brave captain with his loyal soldiers would stop the enemies at vicinity. In spite of such an advantageous position, the castle falls. Armed confrontation breeds betrayal on either side. Accordingly the enemy succeeds through crooked means.

Everything Is Fair In The Game Of War

The strong castle becomes weak and thin because of a greedy disloyal warder. The enemies walk in through the secret gallery and the intricate paths of the castle to confront the soldiers. Loyalty gets shattered when greed steps into the human heart. Morality is laid aside when the guard opens the ‘wicket gate’ favouring the enemies for the bribe he had received. Thus the unexpected fall of the ‘maze of tunneled stone’ is a shameful tale of treachery, betrayal and disloyalty.

The mighty towering battlements and the nearness of the allies ensure security to the castle. But the ingredient for the castle’s downfall came from within. The army too proud of its physical strength crumbled before human avarice to gold. The unexplored inward threat shackles their stability. Weaponless and clueless to tackle their enemy ‘gold’, the army falls a prey to it.

Betrayals Form Loopholes In The Chronicles Of Great Empires
The soldiers of the castle were stress-free and relaxed. They were confident of their castle’s physical strength. They were fearless because the castle had high walls and thick gates. Their castle was well fortified and they had enough stock of weapons and food. Their friendly allies too were nearby to support them in danger. They stood one above the other on the tower watching to shoot the enemy at sight. Their captain was brave and the soldiers were loyal. The enemy could not use bait for its entry. But there was a wicket gate guarded by a wicked guard. He let in the enemies. The strong castle became weak and thin because of the greedy disloyal warder. The citadel was captured by the enemies for gold. The narrator didn’t want to tell the tale to anybody. He felt shameful to disclose the truth that betrayal was the cause of the downfall.

PARAGRAPH FOR LATE BLOOMERS

- The castle was very strong with high walls.
- They had enough food and arms.
- So the soldiers were stress free.
- An old guard opened the gate to enemies for gold.
- The enemies opened the gate to enemies for gold.
- The enemies walked into the castle easily.
- The castle fell into their hands.
- The soldier was very sad as they were sold for gold.

TEXTBOOK EXERCISES: (PAGE-20)

1. Based on your understanding of the poem, answer the following questions in one or two sentences each.

   a) Who is the narrator in the poem?
      The narrator in the poem is a soldier.

   b) How long had the soldiers been in the castle?
      The soldiers had been in the castle all through the summer.

   c) Why were the soldiers in the castle fearless?
      The soldiers in the castle were fearless because the castle had high walls and thick gates.

   d) Where were the enemies?
      The enemies were just half a mile away.

   e) Why does the narrator say that the enemy was no threat at all?
      The narrator says that the enemy was no threat at all because their castle was well fortified and they had enough stock of weapons and food. Their friendly allies too were nearby to support them in danger.

   f) Did the soldiers fight with the enemies face to face?
      The soldiers didn’t fight with the enemies face to face as they entered the castle secretly through the wicket gate after bribing a guard.

   g) Who had let the enemies in?
      An old guard at the wicket gate had let the enemies in.
h) How did the enemies enter the castle?

The enemies entered the castle secretly through the wicket gate after bribing a guard.

i) Why were the secret galleries bare?

The secret galleries were bare because the enemy army had killed the soldiers who were on duty there.

j) What was the ‘shameful act’?

Getting bribed to betray and to be disloyal was the shameful act.

k) Why didn’t the narrator want to tell the tale to anybody?

The narrator didn’t want to tell the tale to anybody as he felt shameful to disclose the truth that betrayal was the cause of the downfall of the castle.

l) Why did the narrator feel helpless?

The narrator felt helpless because they were unaware of the warfare against treachery.

m) Who was the real enemy?

Gold was their real enemy.

2. Read the poem again and complete the summary using the words given in box.

Stanzas 1–3

‘The Castle’ by Edwin Muir is a moving poem on the capture of a well-guarded castle. The soldiers of the castle were totally stress-free and relaxed. They were confident of their castle’s physical strength. Through the turrets they were able to watch the mowers and no enemy was found up to the distance of half-a-kilometre and so they seemed no threat to the castle. They had plenty of weapons to protect them and a large quantity of RATION in stock to take care of the well-being of the soldiers inside the castle. The soldiers stood one above the other on the tower watching to shoot the enemy at sight. They believed that the castle was absolutely safe because their captain was brave and the soldiers were loyal.

Stanzas 4–6

Even by a trick no one but the birds could enter. The enemy could not use a bait for their entry inside the castle. But there was a wicket gate guarded by a wicked guard. He let in the enemies inside the famous citadel that had been known for its secret gallery and intricate path. The strong castle became weak and thin because of the greedy disloyal warder. The citadel was captured by the enemies for gold. The narrator lamented over the disloyalty of the useless warder and also decided not to disclose this shameful story to anyone. He was helpless and wondered how he would keep this truth to himself. He regretted not finding any weapon to fight with the enemy called ‘gold’.

6. Read the poem and complete the table with suitable rhyming words. (PAGE-22)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>lay</th>
<th>hay</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>wall</td>
<td>all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fear</td>
<td>near</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>load</td>
<td>road</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

LISTENING

(Listening Text is in Page-209)

The Soldier

If I should die, think only this of me.
That there’s some corner of a foreign field
That is forever England There shall be
In that rich earth a richer dust concealed
A dust whom England bore, shaped, made aware,
Gave once her flowers to love and her ways to roam;
A body of England’s, breathing English air,
Washed by the rivers, blest by suns of home.
And think, this heart, all evils shed away,
A pulse in the eternal mind, no less
Gives somewhere back the thoughts by England given;
Her sights and sounds: dreams happy as her day;
And laughter, learnt of friends; and gentleness,
In hearts at peace under an English heaven.

Rupert Brooke.
About The Author:-
Leo Tolstoy was born on September 9, 1828, in Tula Province, Russia. He is best known for the novels War and Peace (1869) and Anna Karenina (1877), often cited as milestones of realism. He first achieved literary acclaim in his twenties with his semi-autobiographical trilogy, Childhood, Boyhood, and Youth and Sevastopol Sketches, based on his experiences in the Crimean War. Tolstoy’s fiction includes dozens of short stories and several novels such as The Death of Ivan Ilyich (1886), Family Happiness, and Hadji Murad. He also wrote plays and numerous philosophical essays. Tolstoy died on November 20, 1910 in Astapovo, Russia.

SUPPLEMENTARY TRANSLATION

STORY

PAGE-24

Here is a story about faith, forgiveness, freedom and acceptance of a young merchant named Aksionov, who was sent to prison for a crime he didn’t commit.

In the town of Vladimir lived a young merchant named Ivan Dmitrich Aksionov. He had two shops and a house of his own.

Aksionov was a handsome, fair-haired, curly-headed fellow, full of fun, and very fond of singing. When quite a young man he had been given to drink, and was riotous when he had had too much; but after he married he gave up drinking, except now and then.

One summer Aksionov was going to the Nizhny Fair, and as he bade good-bye to his

STORY

God Sees the Truth, But Waits

About The Author:

Leo Tolstoy
DOLPHIN-12TH ENG | SUPPLEMENTARY READER | STEP TO SUCCESS

| family, his wife said to him, “Ivan Dmitrich, do not start to-day; I have had a bad dream about you.” |
| Ajaxionov laughed, and said, “You are afraid that when I get to the fair I shall go on a spree.” |
| His wife replied: “I do not know what I am afraid of; all I know is that I had a bad dream. I dreamt you returned from the town, and when you took off your cap I saw that your hair was quite grey.” |
| Ajaxionov laughed. “That’s a lucky sign,” said he. “See if I don’t sell out all my goods, and bring you some presents from the fair.” |
| So he said good-bye to his family, and drove away. |
| When he had travelled half-way, he met a merchant whom he knew, and they put up at the same inn for the night. They had some tea together, and then went to bed in adjoining rooms. |
| It was not Ajaxionov’s habit to sleep late, and, wishing to travel while it was still cool, he aroused his driver before dawn, and told him to put in the horses. |

**PAGE-25**

Then he made his way across to the landlord of the inn (who lived in a cottage at the back), paid his bill, and continued his journey.

When he had gone about twenty-five miles, he stopped for the horses to be fed. Ajaxionov rested awhile in the passage of the inn, then he stepped out into the porch, and, ordering a samovar to be heated, got out his guitar and began to play.

Suddenly a troika drove up with tinkling bells and an official alighted, followed by two soldiers. He came to Ajaxionov and began to question him, asking him who he was and whence he came. Ajaxionov answered him fully, and said, “Won’t you have some tea with me?” But the official went on cross-questioning him and asking him. “Where did you spend last night? Were you alone, or with a fellow-merchant? Did you see the other merchant this morning? Why did you leave the inn before dawn?”

Ajaxionov wondered why he was asked all these questions, but he described all that had
happened, and then added, “Why do you cross-question me as if I were a thief or a robber? I am travelling on business of my own, and there is no need to question me.”

Then the official, calling the soldiers, said, “I am the police-officer of this district, and I question you because the merchant with whom you spent last night has been found with his throat cut. We must search your things.”

They entered the house. The soldiers and the police-officer unstrapped Aksionov’s luggage and searched it. Suddenly the officer drew a knife out of a bag, crying, “Whose knife is this?”

Aksionov looked, and seeing a blood-stained knife taken from his bag, he was frightened.

“How is it there is blood on this knife?”

Aksionov tried to answer, but could hardly utter a word, and only stammered: “I--don’t know--not mine.” Then the police-officer said: “This morning the merchant was found in bed with his throat cut. You are the only person who could have done it. The house was locked from inside, and no one else was there. Here is this blood-stained knife in your bag and your face and manner betray you! Tell me how you killed him, and how much money you stole?”

Aksionov swore he had not done it; that he had not seen the merchant after they had had tea together; that he had no money except eight thousand rubles of his own, and that the knife was not his. But his voice was broken, his face pale, and he trembled with fear as though he went guilty.

The police-officer ordered the soldiers to bind Aksionov and to put him in the cart. As they tied his feet together and flung him into the cart, Aksionov crossed himself and wept. His money and goods were taken from him, and he was sent to the nearest town and imprisoned there. Enquiries as to his character were made in Vladimir. The merchants and other inhabitants of that town said that in former days he used to drink and waste his time, but that he was a good man. Then the trial came on: he was charged with murdering a merchant from Ryazan, and robbing him of twenty thousand rubles.
His wife was in despair, and did not know what to believe. Her children were all quite small; one was a baby at her breast. Taking them all with her, she went to the town where her husband was in jail. At first she was not allowed to see him; but after much begging, she obtained permission from the officials, and was taken to him. When she saw her husband in prison-dress and in chains, shut up with thieves and criminals, she fell down, and did not come to her senses for a long time. Then she drew her children to her, and sat down near him. She told him of things at home, and asked about what had happened to him. He told her all, and she asked, “What can we do now?”

“We must petition the Czar not to let an innocent man perish.”

His wife told him that she had sent a petition to the Czar, but it had not been accepted.

Aksionov did not reply, but only looked downcast.

Then his wife said, “It was not for nothing I dreamt your hair had turned grey. You remember? You should not have started that day.” And passing her fingers through his hair, she said: “Vanya dearest, tell your wife the truth; was it not you who did it?”

“So you, too, suspect me!” said Aksionov, and, hiding his face in his hands, he began to weep. Then a soldier came to say that the wife and children must go away; and Aksionov said goodbye to his family for the last time.

When they were gone, Aksionov recalled what had been said, and when he remembered that his wife also had suspected him, he said to himself, “It seems that only God can know the truth; it is to Him alone we must appeal, and from Him alone expect mercy.”

And Aksionov wrote no more petitions; gave up all hope, and only prayed to God.

Aksionov was condemned to be flogged and
sent to the mines. So he was flogged with a knot, and when the wounds made by the knot were healed, he was driven to Siberia with other convicts.

In prison Aksionov learnt to make boots, and earned a little money, with which he bought The Lives of the Saints. He read this book when there was light enough in the prison; and on Sundays in the prison-church he read the lessons and sang in the choir; for his voice was still good.

The prison authorities liked Aksionov for his meekness, and his fellow-prisoners respected him: they called him “Grandfather,” and “The Saint.” When they wanted to petition the prison authorities about anything, they always made Aksionov their spokesman, and when there were quarrels among the prisoners they came to him to put things right, and to judge the matter.

No news reached Aksionov from his home, and he did not even know if his wife and children were still alive.

One day a fresh gang of convicts came to the prison. In the evening the old prisoners collected round the new ones and asked them what towns or villages they came from, and what they were sentenced for. Among the rest Aksionov sat down near the newcomers, and listened with downcast eyes; for he knew that many of them were still alive.

One of the new convicts, a tall, strong man of sixty, with a closely-cropped grey beard, was telling the others what he had been arrested for.

"Well, friends," he said, "I only took a horse that was tied to a sledge, and I was arrested and accused of stealing. I said I had only taken it to get home quicker, and had then let it go; besides, the driver was a personal friend of mine. So I said,
‘It’s all right.’ ‘No,’ said they, ‘you stole it.’ But how or where I stole it they could not say. I once really did something wrong, and ought by rights to have come here long ago, but that time I was not found out. Now I have been sent here for nothing at all... Eh, but it’s lies I’m telling you; I’ve been to Siberia before, but I did not stay long.”

“Where are you from?” asked some one.

“From Vladimir. My family are of that town. My name is Makar, and they also call me Semyonich.”

Aksionov raised his head and said: “Tell me, Semyonich, do you know anything of the merchants Aksionov of Vladimir? Are they still alive?”

“Know them? Of course I do. The Aksionovs are rich, though their father is in Siberia: a sinner like ourselves, it seems! As for you, Gran’dad, how did you come here?”

Aksionov did not like to speak of his misfortune. He only sighed, and said, “For my sins I have been in prison these twenty-six years.”

“What sins?” asked Makar Semyonich.

But Aksionov only said, “Well, well--I must have deserved it!” He would have said no more, but his companions told the newcomers how Aksionov came to be in Siberia; how someone had killed a merchant, and had put the knife among Aksionov’s things, and Aksionov had been unjustly condemned.

When Makar Semyonich heard this, he looked at Aksionov, slapped his own knee, and exclaimed, “Well, this is wonderful! Really wonderful! But how old you’ve grown, Gran’dad!”

The others asked him why he was so surprised, and where he had seen Aksionov before; but Makar Semyonich did not reply. He only said: “It’s wonderful that we should meet here, lads!”

These words made Aksionov wonder whether this man knew who had killed the merchant; so he
said, “Perhaps, Semyonich, you have heard of that affair, or maybe you’ve seen me before?”

“Perhaps you heard who killed the merchant?” asked Aksionov.

Makar Semyonich laughed, and replied: “It must have been him in whose bag the knife was found! If some one else hid the knife there, ‘He’s not a thief till he’s caught,’ as the saying is. How could any one put a knife into your bag while it was under your head? It would surely have woke you.”

When Aksionov heard these words, he felt sure this was the man who had killed the merchant. He rose and went away. All that night Aksionov lay awake. He felt terribly unhappy, and all sorts of images rose in his mind. There was the image of Aksionov’s mother, the image of Aksionov’s father. The image of his family. The image of his home. The image of his friends. All that night Aksionov lay awake. He felt terribly unhappy, and all sorts of images rose in his mind.

“During the day he did not go near Makar Semyonich, nor even look at him.”

“In the morning, Makar Semyonich flogged the boy. The boy felt him so wretched that he was ready to kill himself.”

“And it’s all that villain’s doing!” thought Aksionov. And his anger was so great against Makar Semyonich that he longed for vengeance, even if he himself should perish for it. He kept repeating prayers all night, but could get no peace.
A fortnight passed in this way. Aksionov could not sleep at night, and was so miserable that he did not know what to do.

One night as he was walking about the prison he noticed some earth that came rolling out from under one of the shelves on which the prisoners slept. He stopped to see what it was. Suddenly Makar Semyonich crept out from under the shelf, and looked up at Aksionov with a frightened face. Aksionov tried to pass without looking at him, but Makar seized his hand and told him that he had dug a hole under the wall, getting rid of the earth by putting it into his high-boots, and emptying it out every day on the road when the prisoners were driven to their work.

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“Just you keep quiet, old man, and you shall get out too. If you blab, they’ll flog the life out of me, but I will kill you first.”

Aksionov trembled with anger as he looked at his enemy. He drew his hand away, saying, “I have no wish to escape, and you have no need to kill me; you killed me long ago! As to telling of you—I may do so or not, as God shall direct.”

Next day, when the convicts were led out to work, the convoy soldiers noticed that one or other of the prisoners emptied some earth out of his boots. The prison was searched and the tunnel found. The Governor came and questioned all the prisoners to find out who had dug the hole. They all denied any knowledge of it. Those who knew would not betray Makar Semyonich, knowing he would be flogged almost to death. At last the Governor turned to Aksionov whom he knew to be a just man, and said:

“You are a truthful old man; tell me, before God, who dug the hole?”

Makar Semyonich stood as if he were quite unconcerned, looking at the Governor and not so much as glancing at Aksionov. Aksionov’s lips and hands trembled, and for a long time he could not utter a word. He thought, “Why should I screen him who ruined my life? Let him pay for what I have suffered. But if I tell, they will probably flog the life out of him, and maybe I suspect him wrongly. And, after all, what good would it be to me?”
“Well, old man,” repeated the Governor, “tell me the truth: who has been digging under the wall?”

Aksionov glanced at Makar Semyonich, and said, “I cannot say, your honour. It is not God’s will that I should tell! Do what you like with me; I am your hands.”

However much the Governor tried, Aksionov would say no more, and so the matter had to be left.

That night, when Aksionov was lying on his bed and just beginning to doze, someone came quietly and sat down on his bed. He peered through the darkness and recognised Makar.

“What more do you want of me?” asked Aksionov. “Why have you come here?”

Makar Semyonich was silent. So Aksionov sat up and said, “What do you want? Go away, or I will call the guard!”

PAGE-30

Makar Semyonich bent close over Aksionov, and whispered, “Ivan Dmitrich, forgive me!”

“What for?” asked Aksionov.

“It was I who killed the merchant and hid the knife among your things. I meant to kill you too, but I heard a noise outside, so I hid the knife in your bag and escaped out of the window.”

Aksionov was silent, and did not know what to say. Makar Semyonich slid off the bed-shelf and knelt upon the ground. “Ivan Dmitrich,” said he, “forgive me! For the love of God, forgive me! I will confess that it was I who killed the merchant, and you will be released and can go to your home.”

“It is easy for you to talk,” said Aksionov, “but I have suffered for you these twenty-six years. Where could I go now?... My wife is dead, and my children have forgotten me. I have nowhere to go...”

Makar Semyonich did not rise, but beat his head on the floor. “Ivan Dmitrich, forgive me!” he cried. “When they flogged me with the knot it was not so hard to bear as it is to see you now... yet you had pity on me, and did not tell.”
For Christ’s sake forgive me, wretch that I am!” And he began to sob.

When Aksionov heard him sobbing he, too, began to weep. “God will forgive you!” said he. “Maybe I am a hundred times worse than you.” And at these words his heart grew light, and the longing for home left him. He no longer had any desire to leave the prison, but only hoped for his last hour to come.

In spite of what Aksionov had said, Makar Semyonich confessed his guilt. But when the order for his release came, Aksionov was already dead.
3. Answer the following questions in a paragraph of about 150 words each.

a) Compare and contrast the main characters, Aksionov and Makar Semeyonich, in the story. (i,ii,iii,iv,v,vii)

b) How did Aksionov react when his wife suspected him? (i,ii,iii,iv,vii)

c) Describe the life of Aksionov in prison. (i,ii,iii,iv,vii)

d) Why did Aksionov decide not to reveal the truth about Makar Semeyonich? (i,ii,iii,iv,v,vii)

e) Discuss the meaning and importance of the saying “God sees the truth but waits”. (i,ii,iii,iv,v,vii)

f) Forgiveness is the best form of revenge. Substantiate the statement with reference to the story. (i,ii,iii,iv,v,vii)

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PARAGRAPH FOR GIFTED STUDENTS

i. Introduction

ii. Bad dream – an evil omen

iii. Prisoner of circumstantial evidences

iv. Spiritual transformation

v. A rare encounter

vi. Juxtapose – Aksionov and Makar

vii. Conclusion – Forgiveness is the best form of revenge

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INTRODUCTION:

Men are destined to act according to the Will of the Supernatural Power that provides true clemency to every creature in desperation. Leo Tolstoy narrates a short story which speaks in volumes about the undisputable Supreme Element (God) and His Divinely plan for every human being. When we learn to accept and play our role as destined, we begin to imbibe the Divinity showered on us mercifully.

BAD DREAM – AN EVIL OMENT:

Ivan Aksionov is a prosperous merchant who has given up his past life of demeaning activities to settle down as a businessman and a loving husband. One summer, when he sets out on his journey to a fair to sell his goods, his wife stops him because she had a terrible dream in which he returns from the town with grey hair. Her dream foreshadows that something evil will befall Aksionov in the town. She assumes that he might get caught into serious trouble due to the bad omen. Ivan laughs and goes off to the fair.

PRISONER OF CIRCUMSTANTIAL EVIDENCES:

On the way to the fair, Ivan meets up with a fellow merchant and they spend the night at a local inn. Early at dawn he leaves the place to be stopped by Police later in the day. They interrogate about his stay the previous night and the fellow merchant who had been murdered. Aksionov becomes a prisoner of circumstantial evidences when a blood stained knife and some cash is taken from his bag.

SPIRITUAL TRANSFORMATION:

The circumstantial evidences made Aksionov’s wife suspect him. Eventually he lost hope on earthly mercy and directed his thoughts on the Divine. So he gave up sending petitions to the Czar for his release. ‘The Lives of the Saints’ a book on spirituality changes his life in the prison. He frequently prays and takes a prominent role in the religious services at the prison church on Sunday. He becomes the grandfather for the prisoners. They approach him to get their disputes and disagreements settled. He stops speaking of his misfortunes.

A RARE ENCOUNTER:

Coincidentally, the man who is responsible for his imprisonment ends up in the same prison as him. After months of knowing each other, Aksionov discovers that Makar is the actual murderer of his fellow merchant. He is furious with what he found out but doesn’t speak or utter a word about it. When Aksionov reminisces about everything he has lost, his anger rises against Makar Semeyonich. In the end, an opportunity arises for Aksionov...
to betray Makar Semyonich. Aksionov concludes that making Semyonich suffer will not return his youth, health, or family to him. Later in the night, Makar Semyonich asks for his forgiveness. Aksionov chooses not to speak words of condemnation to Makar. Instead, he assures his old enemy that God will forgive him.

**JUXTAPOSING AKSIONOV AND MAKAR:**

Aksionov suffers in prison for twenty-six years. Spiritual transformation redefines his life. He learns the truth of life in prison. Though he knows that Makar was the real murderer, he forgives him. He doesn’t betray Makar when they question him about Makar’s escape act. Aksionov’s life is fun and frolic in the earlier part and it gets filled with spirituality in the latter part.

Makar is practicality personified. He never feels guilty on seeing Aksionov in the prison. He is not ready to confess until Aksionov saves him. After he forgives him, there is a tremendous change in Makar. Reformation accompanies forgiveness.

**CONCLUSION:**

Society might have judged Aksionov to be a guilty man but God didn’t. No matter how difficult life may be for an individual God will always be there. Once we have faith in God we can overcome any obstacle that society puts in front of us. When we shift our focus from materialism to spiritualism we achieve inner peace.

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**PARAGRAPH FOR AVERAGE STUDENTS**

**Story**: God Sees the Truth, But Waits  
**Author**: Leo Tolstoy  
**Theme**: Forgiveness is the best form of revenge  
**Characters**: Aksionov, His family, Semyonich (Makar), Governor

Aksionov is a prosperous merchant. His past has got few darker pages. Now he is a good man. He is accused of murder of a fellow merchant with whom he had accompanied to a fair. The blood stained knife seals his destiny in the prison. His petitions to the Czar get rejected. Aksionov loses hope when his wife suspects him. He gives up all his efforts to prove his innocence. He learns boot making and reads ‘The Lives of the Saints’. He becomes more calm and poised. He is called as Gran'dad or Saint by his prison mates. Makar, the real murderer of Aksionov's case, is locked in the same prison. When they converse, Aksionov identifies the culprit. But he doesn't betray Makar, when he becomes a witness to his crime of digging a tunnel. Makar in return confesses his guilt. After twenty six years Aksionov gets justice.

Only a patient soul can understand the language of the Divine.

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**PARAGRAPH FOR LATE BLOOMERS**

- Aksionov was a rich merchant.  
- He is sent to prison for a murder.  
- But he is innocent.  
- He loses hope for freedom and suffers in the prison.  
- He starts believing in the plans of God.  
- After twenty six years, Makar confesses the crime.  
- Aksionov gets justice but dies before his release.