Before you read

Here are some pictorial glimpses of the history of our country from 1757 to 1857. These pictures and ‘speech bubbles’ will help clarify your understanding of the conditions that led to the event known as the First War of Independence in 1857.

1. The Martyrs

At a function in Delhi

Oh my countrymen!
Let your eyes fill with tears,
as you recall the sacrifices of India's martyrs.

1. The Martyrs
With its superior weapons, the British East India Company was extending its power in 18th century India.

Indian princes were short-sighted.

That upstart Rajah Bah! Call the English merchants. They will help me to defeat him.

The people had no peace due to such constant fights.

The rivalries helped the East India Company and it could easily subdue Indian princes one by one.

A far-seeing ruler like the brave Tipu of Mysore fought the British till he died fighting!

Thank God, there is peace in the country now! No more wars and no looting by thugs!

How did Indians react to these conquests?

Some kings were not good, but after all, they were of this land.

Our destiny is linked with them!

The white man has killed or dethroned our kings.

Now we have become slaves of foreigners!

It is God who sent the British!
3. British Rule (1765-1836)

Religious leaders preached ideas like untouchability and child marriage.

Anyone who crosses the seas loses his religion.

All the misery in the world is due to women.

The truth was that Indians had lost self-respect. The British scorned them.

The natives are unworthy of trust, incapable of honesty.

True, your honour, but I am honest.

Still, the British invented other methods which gave them more profits.

Inevitably famines followed. Between 1822 and 1836 fifteen lakh Indians died of starvation.

The goods manufactured in England should not have any import duty when brought into India.

A good idea!

The British policies ruined the expert artisans and their business.

You are still in arrears. If you don’t pay next week, I will send you to jail.

But your men are taking all my crop!
4. Ram Mohan Roy (1772-1833)

Ram Mohan Roy, a learned man from Bengal, understood what was wrong with the country. Let us not despise ourselves, our ancient culture is great. And we are capable of greater achievements. We must first reform our society. Superstitions have been ruining us.

He told his wife Uma–

Cows are of different colours, but the colour of their milk is the same. Different teachers have different opinions but the essence of every religion is the same.

He was attracted by science and modern knowledge.

Knowledge should be practical and scientific.

He crossed the seas and went to England to see what made the British powerful. There he told them–

We accept you as rulers, and you must accept us as subjects. But you must remember the responsibility a ruler owes to his subjects.

He started newspapers but the suspicious British stopped them in 1823.
5. Oppression (1765-1835)

But the British continued to oppress Indians. In 1818, they had passed Regulation III. Under it, an Indian could be jailed without trial in a court.

All the time British officers in India drew big salaries and also made fortunes in private business.

By 1829, Britain was exporting British goods worth seven crore rupees to India.

The British prospered on the Company’s loot while Indian industries began to die.

Governor-General Bentinck reported back home –

“The bones of cotton weavers are bleaching the plains of India.”
6. Dissatisfaction (1835-56)

Education in India was in Persian and Sanskrit. In 1835, a Englishman named Macaulay suggested a change.

We should teach the natives through the English language.

I agree.

English education produced clerks to whom the British gave petty jobs under them. Incidentally, it also produced a new generation of intellectuals.

We must educate our brothers.

And try to improve their material conditions.

For that we must convey our grievances to the British Parliament.

By 1856, the British had conquered the whole of India.

They cared little about the needs of Indians.

Our kings have become puppets, and we have lost our old jobs.

Do something to drive them out!

Our lands are converting our brothers!

And they only talk!
7. The Sparks (1855-57)

Taxes continued to ruin the peasants. In Bengal, the Santhals who had lost their lands under new land rules, became desperate. In 1855, they rose in rebellion and massacred Europeans and their supporters alike.

Discontent was brewing in the East India Company’s army too. The white soldier gets huge pay, mansions to live in, servants. While we get a pittance and slow promotions! The Angrez asks us to cross the sea which is against our religion. Who is the topiwala to abolish our age-old customs?

We must drive out the Angrez.

Sepoy Mangal Pande attacked the adjutant of his regiment and was executed.

Thousands of other sepoys revolted. They were stripped of their uniforms, humiliated and put in irons.

Few Englishmen had cared to understand Indian customs or the people’s mind. What? The white man has deceived us too!

Soon, chapatties were sent from village to village to tell the people that their emperor would want their services. Similarly lotus flowers circulated among Indian soldiers.

Death to the foreigner!

Yes, all my village men will be ready.

The masses gave all help and shelter to the patriots.
8. Revolt (1857)

Then there was a violent outbreak at Meerut.

The sepoys marched to Delhi.

Long live our Emperor Bahadur Shah!

The rebellion spread wider.

Many landlords had lost their lands because of the British policies, and they were sore.

The white man's rule must end! Yes, we will help you.
9. The Fight for Freedom (1857)

Many former rulers like Begum Hazrat Mahal of Lucknow were bitter. The white man has taken away my kingdom!

Popular leaders like Maulvi Ahmedulla of Faizabad told the people – Rise, brothers, rise! The Angrez is ruining our land!

They joined the upsurge against the foreigner.

The people rose everywhere, in Bareilly, Kanpur and Allahabad.

Azimulla Khan told Tatya Tope: We should have Peshwa Nana Saheb as our leader in this war of independence.

Eighty-year old Kunwar Singh of Bihar received a bullet in his wrist. Mother Ganga! This is my last offering to you!

The patriots pounced upon the British and fought pitched battles all over North India.

from Our Freedom Movement
S.D. Sawant
Comprehension Check
1. Look at picture 1 and recall the opening lines of the original song in Hindi. Who is the singer? Who else do you see in this picture?
2. In picture 2 what do you understand by the Company’s “superior weapons”?
3. Who is an artisan? Why do you think the artisans suffered? (picture 3)
4. Which picture, according to you, reveals the first sparks of the fire of revolt?

Answer the following questions.
1. Do you think the Indian princes were short-sighted in their approach to the events of 1757?
2. How did the East India Company subdue the Indian princes?
3. Quote the words used by Ram Mohan Roy to say that every religion teaches the same principles.
4. In what ways did the British officers exploit Indians?
5. Name these people.
   (i) The ruler who fought pitched battles against the British and died fighting.
   (ii) The person who wanted to reform the society.
   (iii) The person who recommended the introduction of English education in India.
   (iv) Two popular leaders who led the revolt (Choices may vary.)
6. Mention the following.
   (i) Two examples of social practices prevailing then.
   (ii) Two oppressive policies of the British.
   (iii) Two ways in which common people suffered.
   (iv) Four reasons for the discontent that led to the 1857 War of Independence.

In comics what the characters speak is put in bubbles. This is direct narration. When we report what the characters speak, we use the method of indirect narration.
Study these examples.

First farmer: Why are your men taking away the entire crop?
Second farmer: Your men have taken away everything.

Officer: You are still in arrears. If you don’t pay tax next week, I’ll send you to jail.

- The first farmer asked the officer why his men were taking away the entire crop.
- The second farmer said that their men had taken away everything.
- The officer replied that they were still in arrears and warned them that if they did not pay tax the following week, he (the officer) would send them (the farmers) to jail.

1. Change the following sentences into indirect speech.

(i) First man: We must educate our brothers.
Second man: And try to improve their material conditions.
Third man: For that we must convey our grievances to the British Parliament.

The first man said that ____________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
The second man added that _______________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
The third man suggested that _______________________________________
_________________________________________________________________

(ii) First soldier: The white soldier gets huge pay, mansions and servants.
Second soldier: We get a pittance and slow promotions.
Third soldier: Who are the British to abolish our customs?

The first soldier said that __________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
The second soldier remarked that _________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
The third soldier asked ___________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________

1. Playact the role of farmers who have grievances against the policies of the government. Rewrite their ‘speech bubbles’ in dialogue form first.
2. Look at the pictures.

Fox accidentally falls into a well

“How do I get out of here?”

“Hello! Is this water sweet?”
(i) Ask one another questions about the pictures.
- Where is the fox?
- How did it happen?
- What is the fox thinking?
- Who is the visitor?
- What does she want to know?
- What is the fox’s reply?
- What happens next?
- Where is the goat?
- Where is the goat thinking?

(ii) Write the story in your own words. Give it a title.

“My mother used to say: Be careful how you take the advice of people you don’t know.”
3. Read the following news item.

**History becomes fun at this school**

Mumbai: Students in the sixth grade of a certain school in Navi Mumbai love their history lessons thanks to a novel teaching aid. It is not surprising given the fact that their study material includes comic books and they use their textbooks for reference to put things into perspective. Besides, students are encouraged to tap other sources of information as well. During history classes, students pore over comic strips of historical periods, enact characters of emperors and tyrants, and have animated discussions on the subject. History has become fun.

In the class students are asked to read the comic strip aloud, after which they break up into groups of four, discuss what they have heard and write a summary. Each group leader reads his group’s summary aloud and the whole class jumps into discussion and debate, adding points, disagreeing and qualifying points of view. A sixth grade student says, “It’s a lot of fun because everyone gets a chance to express themselves and the summary takes everyone’s ideas into account.”

According to the school principal the comic strip format and visuals appeal to students. A historian feels that using comics in schools is a great idea. Comics and acting help students understand what characters in the story are actually thinking.

(adapted from *The Times of India*, New Delhi, October 2007)

Based on this news item, write a paragraph on what you think about this new method of teaching history.

4. Find the chapters in your history book that correspond to the episodes and events described in this comic. Note how the information contained in a few chapters of history has been condensed to a few pages with the help of pictures and ‘speech bubbles’.

5. Create a comic of your own using this story.

   Once the Sun and the Wind began to quarrel, each one saying that he was stronger than the other. At last they decided to test each other’s strength. A man with a cloak around his shoulders was passing by. The Wind boasted, “Using my strength I can make that man take off the cloak.” The Sun agreed. The Wind blew hard. The man felt so cold that he clasped his cloak round his body as tightly as possible.

   Now it was the turn of the Sun which shone very hot indeed. The man felt so hot that he at once removed the cloak from his body. Seeing the man taking off the cloak, the Wind conceded defeat.
Do you have a pet cat? Have you ever noticed anything mysterious about it? It is not easy to say whether every cat is a mystery, but Macavity is one, for sure. What is it that makes him a perfect mystery cat? Read the poem and find out.

Macavity’s a Mystery Cat: he’s called the Hidden Paw —
For he’s the master criminal who can defy the Law.
He’s the bafflement of Scotland Yard, the Flying Squad’s despair:
For when they reach the scene of crime — Macavity’s not there!

Macavity, Macavity, there’s no one like Macavity.
He’s broken every human law, he breaks the law of gravity.
His powers of levitation would make a fakir stare,
And when you reach the scene of crime — Macavity’s not there!
You may seek him in the basement, you may look up in the air —
But I tell you once and once again, Macavity’s not there!

Macavity’s a ginger cat, he’s very tall and thin;
You would know him if you saw him, for his eyes are sunken in.
His brow is deeply lined with thought, his head is highly domed;
His coat is dusty from neglect, his whiskers are uncombed. He sways his head from side to side, with movements like a snake; And when you think he's half asleep, he's always wide awake.

Macavity, Macavity, there's no one like Macavity, For he's a fiend in feline shape, a monster of depravity. You may meet him in a by-street, you may see him in the square — But when a crime's discovered, then Macavity's not there!

T.S. Eliot

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glossary

defy: disobey or resist openly
Scotland Yard: the headquarters of the London police force
Flying Squad: a group of police or soldiers ready to move into action quickly
levitation: floating in the air without support
fiend: devil
feline: of, or relating to, a cat
depravity: moral corruption

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working with the poem

1. Read the first stanza and think.
   (i) Is Macavity a cat really?
   (ii) If not, who can Macavity be?
2. Complete the following sentences.
   (i) A master criminal is one who ___________________
   (ii) The Scotland Yard is baffled because _________________
   (iii) _________________ because Macavity moves much faster than them.
3. “A cat, I am sure, could walk on a cloud without coming through”. (Jules Verne)
   Which law is Macavity breaking in the light of the comment above?
4. Read stanza 3, and then, describe Macavity in two or three sentences of your own.

5. Say ‘False’ or ‘True’ for each of the following statements.
   (i) Macavity is not an ordinary cat.
   (ii) Macavity cannot do what a fakir can easily do.
   (iii) Macavity has supernatural powers.
   (iv) Macavity is well-dressed, smart and bright.
   (v) Macavity is a spy, a trickster and a criminal, all rolled in one.

6. Having read the poem, try to guess whether the poet is fond of cats. If so, why does he call Macavity a fiend and monster?

7. Has the poet used exaggeration for special effect? Find a few examples of it and read those lines aloud.

Rick: What did Papa Firefly tell Mama Firefly?
Hick: I don’t know.
Rick: Isn’t our child bright for his age!

Mary: Why isn’t a nose twelve inches long?
Jo: I don’t know. Why?
Mary: Because if it was twelve inches long it would be a foot.

Anita: I got a hundred in school today.
Mother: That’s wonderful. What did you get a hundred in?
Anita: Forty in Maths and sixty in English.
Bepin Choudhury’s Lapse of Memory

A Satyajit Ray story with a surprise ending that brings in its wake the much needed psychological relief to the sophisticated executive beleagured by a conspiracy, which is a humorous take after all.

Before asking children to read the text, tell the story part by part, each part ending where the listener wonders what comes next.

Activity 3 under working with language is about two tense forms — simple past and present perfect. Notice how both have been used in conjunction with each other. The following explanatory notes may be useful.

- The present perfect tense is used to refer to an action initiated and completed in the past and is associated with the present. It has its effect on the present situation.
  
  I have seen the Taj. (I know what it looks like.)
  He has arrived. (He is here.)
  I have finished my work. (I am free now.)

- Present perfect tense is usual with already, so far, not yet, ever, never etc.

- It is not used with ago, yesterday, last week/month/year, etc.

The Last Bargain

Here is a method of teaching that may be tried.

(a) Let children read the first stanza silently.

  Ask the following questions.
  
  (i) How many persons/characters are there?
  (ii) Who are they?
  (iii) Who is big and who is small?
  (iv) What does the person in the first line say?
  (v) What does the other one in the fourth line say?
  (vi) Do they stay together or part company? Why?
(b) Now reconstruct the episode. Begin like this.
   I was walking on the road looking for work. I saw the king in his chariot. He had a sword in his hand. He was very kind to me. He shook my hand and offered to hire me. I did not accept his offer. To me, power is not a valuable thing. It is not permanent. It won’t make me happy. I was looking for something else as a reward for my work.

   What is he looking for?

   Let us read the next stanza.

(c) Do the other stanzas in the same way.

   The clue to what the person is looking for lies in the last line. The operative phrases are ‘the child’s play’ and ‘a free man’.
   The child and her/his play is a metaphor for innocence and inward happiness, which gives this person a sense of fulfilment and freedom from stress and strife. He feels genuinely free and happy in the company of the child.

   Recite each stanza with feeling, pausing at the right places.
   The method suggested may work better for a poem with a story.

**The Summit Within**

Adventure and the world of nature – the arduous task of reaching the highest summit in the world makes the climber reflect on the ‘internal summits’ which are, perhaps, higher than the Everest. The text underscores the physical, emotional and spiritual aspects of the adventure in a single perspective.

Divide the text into three parts. A convenient division is suggested here.

   ‘...............that mountains are a means of communion with God’. (end of Part-I)
   ‘It is emotional. It is spiritual’. (end of Part-II)
   The remaining is Part-III.

Design while-reading comprehension questions for each part. The multiple choice items are given at the end of the lesson. You may try the following as additional questions.

   What is the author’s personal answer to the question as to why people climb mountains?
   How is the same question answered in Part-II in a different way?
Famous climbers have recorded how they needed *just that help*? Explain the italicised phrase.

Looking round from the summit, you tell yourself that _________________.

(a) Complete this sentence using the same words as in the text without referring to the book.

(b) Now complete it using a clause/phrase of your own without changing meaning.

Activities 2 and 3 under *working with language* provide ample opportunities for vocabulary development. Extend Activity 2 by choosing new words from the text to cover their adjective and/or adverb forms.

remark – remarkable – remarkably
type – typical – typically

Use each item in a meaningful context, involving more than one sentence.

‘What you say is not appropriate, though it’s a good remark.’
‘Isn’t that remarkable?’
‘It may be so, but it doesn’t mean you are remarkably objective.’

You may not find the dialogue above remarkable enough, but it meets the immediate requirement appropriately.

Re-read and discuss passages where the author’s admiration for the mountains and passion for adventure comes through.

**The School Boy**

A school is a place where children and teachers assemble every morning to learn from one another. Find out if any child would like to describe school in a different way.

An interesting discussion on different types of schools, supported by pictures from magazines/newspapers, may ensue — a village school where children are sitting on the floor; another school where they are sitting at long desks; an outdoor lesson under a tree, etc.

Ask children how they reach school. Do they walk or take a bus, etc.? What problems others in remote areas may face in reaching school on time?

Any suggestions as to how to make school an interesting and enjoyable place!
**This is Jody’s Fawn**

- A story about a child’s emotional preoccupation with the fawn whose mother had to be killed to save his father’s life. The story highlights values such as compassion and justice, care and concern for human and animal life.

- Spend some time on a discussion about ‘home remedies’ for commonplace health problems/ailments. Should we see a doctor about every little thing, or should we talk to the grandmother first?

- The growing concern about preservation of environment and protection of animal life has gone a long way in persuading schools to refrain from dissecting animals for experiment. Elicit children’s comments on the issue and on the law that punishes humans for hurting animals.

- Activity 1 under working with language is about reporting questions – yes/no and wh-questions. The use of ‘if/whether’ in the case of yes/no type questions should be explicitly explained. Devise separate exercises for teaching the use of ‘if/whether’, the appropriate reporting verb, the changes in pronominals in the reported speech and the sequence of tenses.

Here is a simple exercise to exemplify some of these points.

Choose the correct word to complete statements in indirect speech given below. Write words in the blanks given.

(a) “Where do you come from?”
   I ___________(said/asked) him where ______________ (he/you) come from.

(b) “What is your name?”
   He asked me what ____________ (my/his) name. (is/was)

(c) “Are you happy?”
   I asked him ______________ (if/whether) he _____________ (is/was) happy.

(d) “Do you live here?”
   He asked me ___________ (whether/if) I ____________ (live/lived) _________(here/there).

(e) “Why are you crying?”
   The teacher asked the child _____________ (if/why) she ____ (is/was/were) crying.
Here is another exercise.

Read the following dialogue between Jody and his father. Rewrite their conversation in indirect speech.

Penny lay quiet, staring at the ceiling.
“Boy, you’ve got me hemmed in.”
“It won’t take much to raise the fawn.
It will soon start eating leaves.”
“You are smarter than boys of your age.”
“We took its mother, and it wasn’t to blame.”
“It seems ungrateful to leave it to starve.”

Begin like this:

Penny lay quiet staring at the ceiling. He said to Jody that ______________________________________. Jody replied that it wouldn’t ____________________________

Activity 2 under working with language deals with transitive and intransitive verbs.

Ask children to underline the direct object in the following sentences.

He brought me a colourful umbrella.
I will write a letter to him.
You should give yourself a chance.

Activity 3 under writing may be linked with the first task covering home remedies under ‘Before you read.’ It will be useful to take it up separately also.

The Duck and the Kangaroo

Try the method suggested for The Last Bargain.

Before taking up the text and the activities given, let children talk about ‘unusual’ activities they want to do such as walking on the moon, floating in outer space or shaking hands with an octopus. Take every idea seriously, no matter how improbable it may seem. We may come upon enough raw material of which The Duck and the Kangaroo is made.

It may be suggested that a story/poem like the present one need not be factually correct or ‘real’. We enjoy reading them because they appeal to our imagination, curiosity and sense of the music of words.
Children should be encouraged to attempt short poems such as the following.

1. *Once I knew*
   A Kangaroo
   Named Sue
   How about you?

2. ‘*There is a man*’
   called Peter Pan’,
   ‘I know another
genre who’s neither Pan nor Peter.
You haven’t met him, have you?
It’s my friend Kanga Roo’.

Sample two is impromptu as you rightly guessed, did you?

A Visit to Cambridge

Excerpt from a travelogue highlighting exchange of views between two extraordinary persons on what it means to be ‘differently abled’. A tour through Cambridge had a surprise, both pleasant and poignant, for the author. He met the brilliant and completely paralysed author of *A Brief History of Time*, and talked to him for a full half-hour.

Activity 2 under *working with language* is about the present participle (dancing/walking) used as adjective.

- Running on the road, he saw __________. (participle)
- The train is running. __________ (verb)
- The running train __________ (adjective)
- The use of past participle as adjective may also be illustrated here.
- He has broken the window. (verb)
- The window was broken when the almirah was taken out (verb — in passive)
- See the broken window. (adjective)

Activity 3 under *speaking and writing* may be done as a project. Lot of oral work to precede the writing task. The final draft should be edited and improved before it is put up on the board.
Activities 1 and 2 under **speaking and writing** are about word stress. Stressed syllables to be pronounced clearly and loudly. Some words of more than one syllable from the text may also be listed according to whether the stress falls on the first or the second syllable.

**When I Set Out for Lyonnesse**

The poem has a clear beginning-middle-end structure. The beginning is ‘setting out’, the middle is ‘sojourn’ and the end is ‘return’.

Draw children’s attention to appropriate words/phrases/lines that suggest and reinforce each phase of the journey.

‘Lyonnesse’ to be pronounced as *lie-an-ness*. The last syllable receives the primary stress.

If feasible and useful, explain the rhyme scheme and its musical effect on the listener.

| Stanza 1   | A B B A A B | Lyonnesse - A |
| Stanza 2   | A C C A A C | away - B      |
| Stanza 3   | A D D A A D | there - C     |
|            |             | eyes - D      |