

Lesson 1

Elements of Fiction

Activity 1 : Given below are a few extracts. Match these with the words given in the box:

News report, Short Story, Article, Novel

Extract 1

It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of wife.

However little known the feelings or views of such a man may be on his first entering a neighbourhood, this truth is so well fixed in the minds of the surrounding families, that he is considered as the rightful property of one or other of their daughters.

'My dear Mr. Bennet,' said his lady to him one day, 'have you heard that Netherfield Park is let at last?'

Mr. Bennet replied that he had not.

'But it is.' Returned she; 'for Mrs. Long has just been here, and she told me all about it.'

Mr. Bennet made no answer.

'Do not you want to know who has taken it?' cried his wife impatiently.

'You want to tell me, and I have no objection to hearing it,'

This was invitation enough.

'Why, my dear, you must know, Mrs. Long says that Netherfield is taken by a young man of large fortune from the north of England; that he came down on Monday in a chaise and four to see the place, and was so much delighted with it that he agreed with Mr. Morris immediately.

Extract 2

Law of the business to which my life is devoted and I should show less than devotion if I did not do what in me lies to improve it, and when I perceive what seems to me the ideal of its future, if I hesitated to point it out and to press toward it with all my heart.

After 60 years of Independence, the Indian justice system still remains 'untouchable' and non-approachable' to the have not humanity of the country. This is true at the level of the trial court, the appellate court, and the superior tribunals with binding finality and constitutional supremacy. The performance of this great constitutional instrumentality is in need of a transformation. The powerful words of Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes persuade me to undertake a moderate critique, with deep reverence to the high Indian judiciary, of certain facets of public concern.

Everywhere, docket arrears are escalating. Judges clamour for more members, more perks and status-oriented facilities. Overall litigate expenses, court fees, lawyer's fees and incidentals are mounting. Court judgments are a gamble from deck to deck. Even minimal interlocutory proceedings go on interminably, with arcane verbiage, prolix adversarial advocacy and sluggish, leisurely hearings and disposals. In delivering the final conclusions, the system exhibits procrastination or precipitancy. Fair expectations of justice are marred by inevitable frustration of faith in judicial remedies.

Extract - 3

"I met little Madhu several years ago, when I lived alone in a town near the Himalayan foothills. I was in my twenties then, and my outlook on life was still romantic; the cynicism that was to come with the thirties had not yet set in. I preferred the solitude of the small district town to the kind of social life I might have found in the cities; and in my books and in my writing and the surrounding hills there was enough for my pleasure and occupation. I knew I could not isolate myself indefinitely; a time would come when the money I had made from my book would run out, and then I would have to return to the cities to make a living.

On summer mornings I would often sit beneath an old mango tree, with a notebook or sketch pad on my knees. The house which I had rented stood on the outskirts of the town; and a large tank, and a few poor houses, could be seen from the garden wall. A narrow public pathway passed under the low wall.

One morning, while I sat beneath the mango tree, I saw a young girl of about eight, wearing a few torn clothes, darting about on the pathway and along the high banks of the tank.....

Extract - 4

The Capital has already got more than its share of the cold wave that has hit northern India and on Tuesday that trend continued with the temperature settling at 2.6 degrees Celsius, the season's coldest so far and four degrees colder than normal.

The first day of a new year in Delhi had not been close to Tuesday's chill for at least the past five years. Last year, for instance, it was more than 10 degrees Celsius; the year before it was 7, while the first day of the new year was a rather warm 14 degrees Celsius.

The cold wave came as a relief for revellers flocking to places like Hanuman Temple, Central Park and Indian Gate. The chilling northwesterly winds had calmed a bit and there was a clear sky and a full winter sun.

What is Fiction?

Activity 2 : Read the following quotes on fiction and answer the questions that follow:

- An imaginative creation or a pretence that does not represent actuality but has been invented.
- A literary work whose content is produced by the imagination and is not necessarily based on fact.
- Fiction is reality that facilitates imagination. This is opposed to our natural tendency to anticipate reality by imagining it or to flee from it by idealizing it.

a) Given below are a few statements. Mark True or False, based on what you have just read.

- Fiction presents what is happening around us. ☐
- The author's imagination plays no role in writing fiction. ☐
- Fiction anticipates reality and not imagination. ☐

Activity 3 : Now, write your own definition of fiction:

Fiction, then, can be defined as genre of imaginative prose literature, including novels and short stories. More generally, fiction is both written and oral imaginative literature including comic books, fables, fairy tales, films and interactive fiction. Works of fiction may however include reference to real people, places and events. Depending on the number of words, types of prose fiction include short story or novel.

Fiction is largely perceived as a form of art and / or entertainment. Fiction may be, created by parents for their children, based on tradition or in order to instill beliefs or values. Fiction, over a period of time, may blend with factual accounts and develop into mythology served narrative.

Story Telling

Fiction is fundamental to human culture and the ability to create fiction and other artistic works is a defining feature of humanity.

Activity 4 : Given below are different texts: Read through each one and decide whether or not you think it is a fictional text. If not, then think about the origin of the text. Underline the sentences which helped you decide. Then complete the table given after the texts.

Text A :

Mobile War Against Water – Borne Diseases

Close to half a million children die in India every year of water-borne diseases such as diarrhoea, enteric fever, typhoid and hepatitis. Public health officials are convinced that hundreds of thousands of lives can be saved by the seemingly simple act of ensuring access to clean, potable water. But somehow, that's been easier said than done.

That could change. In a significant development in the war against such infections, a new *mobile* or *personal* water purifier that costs very little has been developed. Named Purewhite in its present, prototype stage, it is said to be the first in a new class of electrically operated, flow-based water purifiers.

It is a compact purifier, operating on self contained batteries, small enough to be carried in a ladies handbag. It can be used anywhere, weighs about 700 gms (with batteries) and costs approximately Rs. 600 without batteries and mobile charger.

It can also be mounted on a fixed stand and fed with water from a container for use indoors or 'offline'. This may be of relevance for more than 50% urban homes that either lack piped water, or where connecting commercial purifiers to the plumbing may not be possible.

The purifier can also be operated from external batteries, mains (through adapters) or from solar panels. The purifier can use feed-water from all municipal sources or ground water un-contaminated by chemical toxins.

On the anvil is a proposal to make the purifier available as a 'kit' (without UV lamps) for less than Rs. 200 to facilitate its access by low-income households.

Text B :

To cut A Long Story Short

Although Harrods has over a hundred thousand customers a week, the quietest period is always between ten and eleven on a Monday morning. Kenny knew every detail about the great store, in the way a football fan knows all the statistics of his favourite team.

He knew where all the CCTV cameras were placed, and could recognize any of the security guards at thirty paces. He even knew the name of the assistant who would be serving him that morning, although Mr Parker had no idea that he had been selected as a tiny cog in Kenny's well-oiled machine.

'Good morning, sir,' turning to face his first customer of the day. 'How can I help you?'

'I was looking for a pair of cufflinks,' Kenny said, in the clipped tones he hoped made him sound like a Guards officer.

'Yes, of course sir,' said Mr Parker.

It amused Kenny to see the deferential treatment he received as a result of the Guards tie, which he had been able to purchase in the men's department the previous day for an outlay of £ 23.

'Any particular style?' asked the sales assistant.

'I'd prefer silver.'

'Of course, Sir,' said Mr Parker, who proceeded to place on the counter several boxes of silver cufflinks.

Kenny already knew the pair he wanted, as he had picked them out the previous Saturday afternoon. 'What about those?' he asked, pointing to the top shelf. As the sales assistant turned away, Kenny checked the TV surveillance camera and took a pace to his right, to be sure that they could see him more clearly. While Mr Parker reached up to remove the cufflinks, Kenny slid the chosen pair off the counter and slipped them into his jacket pocket before the assistant turned back round.

Out of the corner of his eye, Kenny saw a security guard moving swiftly towards him, while at the same time speaking into his walkie-talkie.

'Excuse me, sir,' said the guard, touching his elbow. 'I wonder if you would be kind enough to accompany me.'

'What's this all about?' demanded Kenny, trying to sound annoyed, as a second security guard appeared on his other side.

Text C :

Word spread like wild-fire. The rogue is coming this way! Panic gripped the whole village. What should they do? What could they do?

Men gathered in someone's front yard to plan a strategy: There must be enough firewood stacked up in one place; a big fire should be lit at that end; the elephant would appear from this end.

Women were everywhere, like anxious hens before a storm, as they tried to herd their young ones to the safety of their homes. The elders sat looking at the frightened women. Then they shouted. Didn't the women realize that their bamboo and thatch huts were but match boxes for a wild elephant? One nudge from him would raze these to the ground.

A wild elephant has gone mad! It is a big tusker. It was seen coming out of the sanctuary and heading westward. It has not only damaged several houses in its frenzied march but has killed some five or six people. News had already reached the village. A bridge trampled to death in one village. A couple in another. A peasant has been killed on his way to the field. An old man, returning one evening from the weekly market, was kicked around like a football. Who knows how many houses have been destroyed?

*Text D :**The Woman on Platform 8*

It was my second year at boarding-school, and I was sitting on platform no. 8 at Ambala station, waiting for the northern bound train. I think I was about twelve at the time. My parents considered me old enough to travel alone, and I had arrived by bus at Ambala early in the evening; now there was a wait till midnight before my train arrived. Most of the time I had been pacing up and down the platform, browsing at the book-stall, or feeding broken biscuits to stray dogs; trains came and went, and the platform would be quiet for a while and then, when a train arrived it would be an inferno of heaving, shouting, agitated human bodies. As the carriage doors opened, a tide of people would sweep down upon the nervous little ticket-collector at the gate; and every time this happened I would be caught in the rush and swept outside the station. Now tired of this game and of ambling about the platform, I sat down on my suitcase and gazed dismally across the railway-tracks.

Trolleys rolled past me, and I was conscious of the cries of the various vendors—the men who sold curds and lemon, the sweet-meat-seller, the newspaper boy—but I had lost interest in all that went on along the busy platform, and continued to stare across the railway-tracks, feeling bored and a little lonely.

"Are you all alone, my son?" asked a soft voice close behind me. I looked up and saw a woman standing near me.

Text	Title	Fiction Yes/No	Why?	Word/Phrase which helped you to decide	Possible Source of text

Activity 5 : Read the given extract from a short story and answer the questions that follow:

The Bent-Double Beggar

The person I encounter most often in the road is old Ganpat, the bent-double beggar. Every morning he hobbles up and down the road below my rooms, bidding his time, and suddenly manifesting himself in front of unwary passers-by or shoppers. It is difficult to resist Ganpat because, though bent double, he is very dignified. He has a long white beard and a commanding eye. His voice is powerful and carries well; which is probably why people say he was once an actor.

People say many things about him. One rumour has it that he was once a well-to-do lawyer with a European wife: a paralytic stroke put an end to his career, and his wife finally left him. I have also been told that he is a C.I.D. man in disguise—a rumour that might well have been started by Ganpat himself.

I was curious to know the true story of his life, for I was convinced that he was not a beggar by choice; he had little in common with other members of his profession. His English was good, and he could recite passages from Shakespeare; his Hindi was excellent. He never made a direct request for money, but would enter into conversation with you, and remark on the weather or the innate meanness of the human race, until you slipped him a coin.

"Look, Ganpat," I said one day, "I've heard a lot of stories about you, and I don't know which is true. How did you become a beggar? How did you get your crooked back?"

"That's a very long story," he said, flattered by my interest in him. "I don't know if you will believe it. Besides, it is not to everyone that I would speak freely."

He had served his purpose in whetting my appetite. I said, "It will be worth a rupee if you tell me your story."

He stroked his beard, considering my offer.

"Very well," squatting down on his haunches, while I pulled myself up on a low wall. "But it happened more than twenty years ago, and you cannot expect me to remember the details very clearly ..."

In those days (said Ganpat) I was a healthy young man, with a wife and baby daughter. I owned a few acres of land, and, though we were not rich, we were not very poor. When I took my produce to the market, five miles away, I harnessed the bullocks and drove down the dusty village road, sometimes returning home late at night.

Every night I passed a peepul tree, which was said to be haunted. I had never met the ghost, and did not really believe in him, but his name, I was told, was Bippin, and long ago he had been hanged from the peepul tree by a gang of dacoits. Since then this ghost had lived in the tree, and was in the habit of pouncing upon any person who resembled a dacoit and beating him severely. I suppose I must have looked a little

guilty after a particularly successful business deal, because one night Bippin decided to pounce on me. He leapt out of the tree and stood in the middle of the road, bringing my bullocks to a halt.

"You, there," he shouted. "Get off your cart, I am going to thrash you and then string you up from this tree!"

I was of course considerably alarmed, but decided to put on a bold front.

"I have no intention of getting off my cart. If you like, you can climb up yourself!"

"Spoken like a man," said Bippin, and he jumped up beside me. "But tell me one good reason for not stringing you up."

"I am not a dacoit", I replied.

"But you look as though you could be one. That is the same thing."

"I am a poor man, with a wife and child to support."

"You have no business being poor," said Bippin angrily.

"Well, make me rich if you can."

"Do you not believe I can? Do you defy me to make you rich?"

"Certainly," I said, "I defy you to make me rich."

"Then drive on," cried Bippin. "I am coming home with you."

And I drove on to the village with Bippin sitting beside me.

"I have so arranged it," he said, "that no one will be able to see me. And another thing I must sleep beside you every night, and no one must know of it. Should you tell anyone about my presence, I will not hesitate to strangle you!"

"You need n't worry," I said "I can't tell anyone."

"Good I look forward to living with you. It was getting lonely in that peepul tree."

1. *The author is curious about:*

- (a) an old man
- (b) an old beggar
- (c) a ghost

2. *The author has heard that the beggar was:*

- (a) a lawyer
- (b) a C.I.D. agent
- (c) None of the above

3. *The theme of the above story seems to be*

- (a) Ganpat's past exploits
- (b) The real self of Ganpat
- (c) The secret behind Ganpat's success

Now, read the rest of the story to confirm your guesses.

What, do you think, is the theme of this short story?

And so Bippin came to live with me, and he slept beside me every night; and we got on very well together. He kept his promise, and money began to pour in from every conceivable source, until I was in a position to buy more land and cattle. Nobody knew of our association, though naturally my friends and relatives wondered where all the money was coming from. At the same time, my wife was rather upset at my unwillingness to sleep beside her at night. I could not very well put her in the same bed with a ghost, and Bippin was most particular about sleeping near me. At first I told my wife that I wasn't well, and that I would sleep on the verandah. Then I told her that there was someone after our cows, and that I would have to keep an eye on them at night. Bippin and I slept in the cow-house.

My wife would often spy on me at night, suspecting infidelity; but she always found me lying alone amongst the cows. Unable to understand my strange behaviour, she mentioned it to her family; and next day my in-laws arrived on our doorstep, demanding an explanation.

At the same time my own relatives were insisting that I give them some explanation for my own rapidly increasing fortune. Uncles and aunts and distant cousins descended on me from all parts of the country, wanting to know where the money was coming from, and hoping to have some share of it.

"Do you all want to die?" I said, losing my patience with them. "I am under an oath of silence. If I tell you the source of my wealth, I will be signing my own death-warrant."

But they laughed at me, taking this for a lame excuse; they suspected I was trying to keep my fortune to myself. My wife's relatives suspected that I had found another woman. Finally I became so exasperated with their questions and demands that in a moment of weakness I blurted out the truth.

They didn't believe the truth (who does?), but it gave them something to think about and talk about, and they left me in peace for a few days."

But that same night Bippin did not come to sleep beside me and I was left alone with the cows. When he did not come the following night, I was afraid that he would throttle me while I slept. I was almost certain that my good fortune had come to an end, and I went back to sleeping in my own house.

The next time I was driving back to the village from the market, Bippin leapt out of the peepul tree.

"False friend," he cried, halting the bullocks.,

"I gave you everything you wanted, and still you betrayed me!"

"I'm very sorry," I said, "But as a ghost you wouldn't understand what a man's relatives can be like. You can of course hang me from the peepul tree, if you wish."

"No, I cannot kill you," he said. "We have been friends for too long. But I must punish you all the same."

Picking up a stout stick, he struck me three times across the back, until I was bent double.

"After that," concluded Ganpat, "I could never straighten , myself up again, and or twenty years I have been a crooked man. My wife left me and went back to her family, and I could no longer work in the fields. I left my village and wandered form one city to another, begging for a living. That is how I came here. People in this town seem to be more generous than elsewhere."

He looked at me with his most appealing smile waiting for the promised rupee.

"You can't expect me to believe that story," I said. "But for your powers of invention you deserve a rupee."

"No, no," said Ganpat, backing away and affecting indignation "If you don't believe me, keep the rupee!"

Finally he permitted me to force the note into his hand, and then he went hobbling away to bazaar. I was almost certain he had been telling me a very tall story. But you can never really be sure. Perhaps it was true about Bippin. And it was clever to give him the rupee, just in case he was, after all a C.I.D. man.

Ruskin Bond

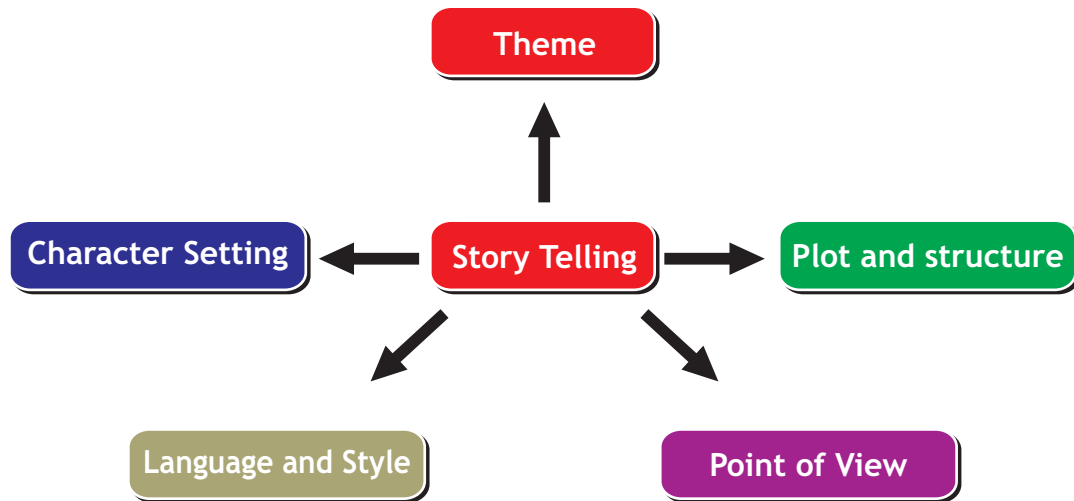
Discuss in your class how human behaviour depends on culture and internalized values, and vary like other human requirements. For one society, collective religious practice or community life patterns may be primary, in others individually oriented work or recreative pursuits may rank higher. Some societies prize tradition and continuity as an important aspect of social quality whilst others may place a high premium on innovation and modernity. The developing nations may need strong assertion and acceptance of their cultural and political identity as a prerequisite for their qualitative development. It is worth re-emphasising that some level of material standard is essential to the quality of life. At lower levels of standards of living most choices are formed in survival terms. It is only when we have material sufficiency that more individuals can exercise their qualitative preferences in more definite ways.

Various attempts have been made to define the quality of life ranging from individual subjective evaluations to large scale cross-nation surveys. The quality of life is the sense

of being pleased (happy) or satisfied with those life elements that are most important to a person. In addition, quality is the '*sense of being pleased with what one has*'. Although satisfaction, happiness, or pleasure is the central element in this definition, it should not be seen as a momentary state of happiness. May be it is best expressed as a sense of fullness or a completeness of life.

Elements of Fiction

There are some fundamental parts of all story telling:



Theme

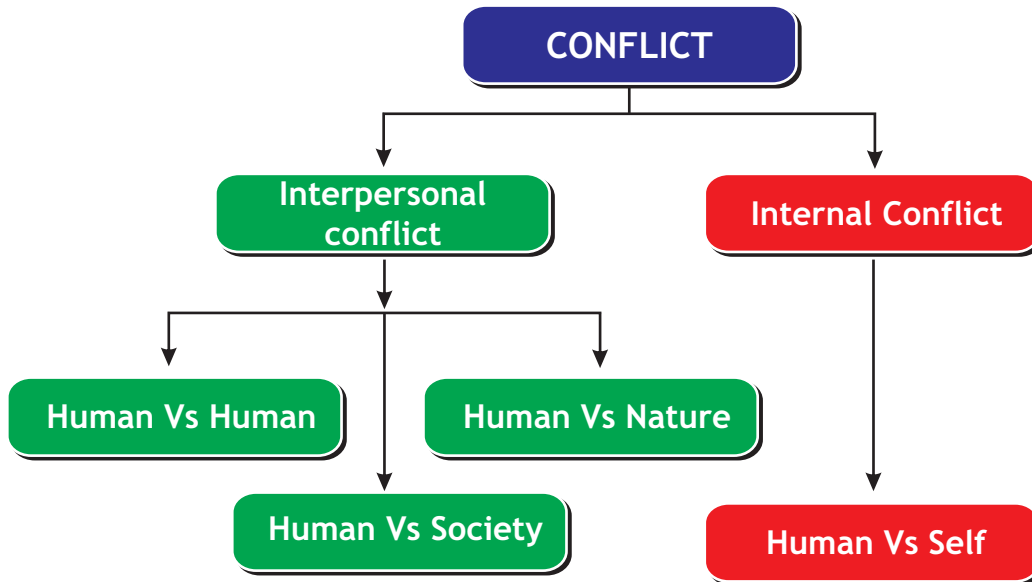
Theme is the central idea or central message. It usually contains some insight in the human condition - telling something about human beings and life. The theme is always a generalization gathered from the collective effect of all elements of a story.

Activity 6: Read the given piece/ extract and answer the questions that follow

Plot and Structure

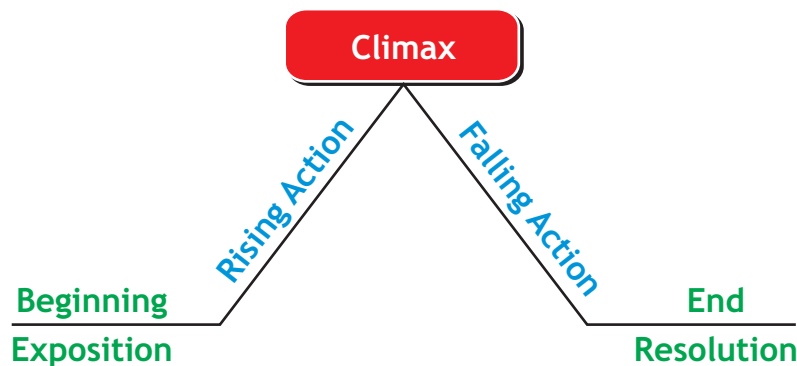
Plot and structure deal with the arrangement, sequence and organization of events that make up a piece of fiction. The narrative begins with an explanation of the situation and character (exposition), followed by a series of complicating factors ('complicating or rising action'). There is a turning point, crisis or climax, followed by action moving towards some result. The story ends with a 'resolution', where the complications of the plot are resolved. However, not all fictional pieces stories,

novels, novellas follow this pattern. Many stories are not chronological but begin in the future only to look in the past. There is often simultaneous action, a climax, or even no resolution. Conflict is an inherent part of the plot. Without conflict, there is no plot.



stages in plot and structure

- Exposition : The start of the story, the situation before the action begins.
- Rising Action : The series of conflicts and crisis in the story that leads to the climax.
- Climax : The turning point, the most intense moment in action.
- Falling Action : Action which comes after the climax and moves toward the resolution.
- Resolution : The conclusion and tying together of all threads.



Therefore, the plot constitutes the substance of a story. It shows the arrangement of events and actions within a story.

Character : A Character is a human or some other participant in the story, whose existence is in the fictional work or performance. Characters may be of several types:

- **Protagonist** : The main Hero whose story is usually told / from whose point of view the story is to be understood
- **Antagonist** : The character that stands in opposition to the protagonist.
- **Supporting Character** : A character that plays a part in the plot but is not major.
- **Minor Character** : A character in a bit/ cameo art.

The characters of the short story are similar to the characters in a movie.

Another way of categorising characters in a fictional piece is on the basis of their nature:

Round characters are characters in a story who are convincing and true to life. Their personalities, in the story, are multi-faceted and display several different, and, at times, contradictory personality traits. They are characters that evolve in the course of the narrative.

Flat characters are stereotyped and include typical personality traits.

From another point of view, characters are defined as *dynamic* and *static* :

Static characters do not change in the course of the story.

Dynamic characters develop in different ways in a short story/ novel either by or through what they do or so.

Elizabeth Bennet in '*Pride and Prejudice*' is a round character, while *Mrs Bennet*, her mother is a flat character as very limited aspects of her personality are brought to the fore.

Activity 7 : Read the following extracts from a short story

Extract -1

"Michel was a charming boy - full of exuberance always ready to oblige. I had only to mention that I needed a newspaper or an Aspirin and he would be off on his bicycle, swooping down these steep roads with great abandon."

Extract - 2

"There was old Miss Marley at Pine Top. A retired teacher from Woodstock, she had a wonderful memory, and she had lived in the hill station for more than half a century."

Extract - 3

At seventy, Aunty Roopwati had enough bloom left in her cheeks to give the impression of blushing while reminiscing about those wonderful days when modernity meant a newly-wed lady, almost half her face revealed to the public, sharing a hand-pulled rickshaw with her husband, and when a monthly magazine highlighted the phenomenon of progress in its cover by showing a young lady cycling by (though the artist had forgotten to give a touch of motion to the spokes). Hence the storm that must have been caused by the beautiful Aunty Roopwati joining the struggle can be easily visualized.

These are examples of characterization. Imagine that your best friend features as part of your short story. Write about her in the space given below:

Activity 8 : *Now, read the following extracts and answer the question that follow*

- a) "Of course, there was a meet, "said the Baroness, "All the usual crowd were there, especially Constance Broddie, who is one of those strapping florid girls that go so well with autumn scenery or Christmas decorations in Church."
- b) For some fears, Dr. Hardacre, he continued, 'my life and that of my wife have been made miserable by a cause which is so grotesque that it borders upon the ludicrous. And yet familiarity has never made it more easy to bear - on the contrary, as time passes my nerves became more worn and shattered by the constant attrition.
- c) I'm small but I'm strong, 'said the boy, who certainly looked sturdy. He had pink cheeks and a well - knit body'.
- d) 'Good evening, General' we greeted in a chorus. General Valla appeared pleased. He kept his dogs under control with one hand and opened the gate with the other. He was almost twice our height. His moustache looked like a pair of rusty hammers joined at their handles. 'Young men, don't believe in your textbook proverb that a barking dog does not bite. It is extremely doubtful if the dog itself has any idea of the proverb, warns a great man.' The general raised his voice and laughed like one of those automatic guns in action. The dogs fell silent and wagged their tails and looked at him in appreciation.

Fill in the following table:

	Speaker of the extract	Subject about whom the comments are being made	Traits of the person	Words that helped you decide
A				
B				
C				

Each of the three extracts, given above exemplify indirect characterization, as these reveal a character's personality through :

- The comments of other characters
- The character's thoughts, words and actions
- The character's physical appearance.

Setting

The location and time of a story is what we call "setting". Setting is significant as the physical details of time and place often have metaphorical value. That is, the setting is associated with values, ideals, attitudes, and beliefs.

As setting is the place where the story happens, it reflects upon the characters and embodies the theme. Setting can also convey the emotional or psychological state of characters. The setting includes the following :-

- *The geographical location (for eg; Delhi, London, Palghat)*
- *The time period (for example, 1965, during World War II, today)*
- *The socio-economic characteristics of the location (for example, wealthy suburbs, extreme poverty)*
- *The specific building, room and so forth (for eg, a prep school, a log cabin, a bus, a military base)*

Activity 9: Read the following extracts and answer the questions regarding their setting:

A) One morning Mr. Ta En left for Shillong and travelled for about 150 kilometres in order to seek more information from the concerned offices. In the city, he went straight to the house of a fellow villager, who was working as a peon in one of the offices, for he was quite perplexed where to begin and how to go about his errand.

B) "Parbatpuri, I knew the place. A small town surrounded by hills on three sides, and bordered by the mighty river on the fourth. Surrounded by mile upon mile of lush tea gardens, it is the headquarters of one of the remote districts of our state. But though it is a picturesque town, it is not for its beauty that Parbatpuri is in the news these days. We, at the newspaper office where I work, see the name often in the news dispatches that come in. Parbatpuri, these days, is the very nerve - centre of the fierce unrest that boils all around the district, the insurgency and violence that threatens to rip apart the very fabric of our lives, even in this distant capital city of the state where I live.

C) Far out by the open sea there was a poor little fishing - hamlet - ten small, black, wooden huts. Half buried in the sand, the string of low houses crept like a caterpillar behind the high, naked sand- down over which the breakers scattered their foam.

D) Best Barricune died in 1910. Not more than a dozen persons showed up for his funeral. Among them was an earnest young reporter who hoped for a human interest story; there were legends that the old man had been something of a gunfighter in the early days.

Fill in the following table

	Geographical Location	Time Period	Socio-economic features of the location	Specific Location
A				
B				
C				
D				

Points of View

Point of View is the place from which, or the way in which, something is viewed. There can be three points of view: my point of view, your point of view and other peoples' point of view - the first person, second - person and third-person point of view.

In terms of a short story, the point of view is the perspective from which the story is told. A story can be told by a distant third person, a mere observer who may or may not have the privilege of knowing the characters' thoughts and feelings.

Activity 10: Read the following passages and try to identify the point of view:

- (a) Don't know why I keep remembering the night meals as a child in my grandmother's house with uncles and aunts and cousins..... I wonder why these memories come back to me now?
- (b) I sometimes wondered if we had seen each other before. Surely so many years could not have passed by without us meeting?
- (c) "When I was about eight years old, the marriage of the goddess at our local temple was to be celebrated. My mother and I were to take part in the celebrations. I was dressed in red and my hair was fragrant with jasmine and coconut oil. I had twirled around the front room of our house as my mother got ready, my heart as light as my silk pavadai which caressed my ankles."
- (d) "At the same house this morning Captain Lewis and Captain Clark set out to explore the two rivers. Captain Lewis with six men crossed the north fork near the camp, below a small island from which he took a course W.30° for four and a half miles to a commanding eminence. Here, he observed that the north mountain, changing its direction paralleled to the miss over, turned towards the north and terminated abruptly."
- (e) "While he spoke, he shivered from head to foot, and the sweat came out upon his face, and he knew not why, for he had looked upon many crosses. He passed over two hills and under the battlemented gate, and then round by a left-hand way to the door of the Abbey."

Passages a, b, and c are first person narratives, while passages d and e are addressed by a third person.

When the narrator talks he has the privilege of knowing the character's thoughts and feelings, for instance in d, the narrator is an omniscient narrator. The 'limited omniscient' narrator knows the characters' thoughts and feelings partially.

Language and Style

The way a writer chooses words, arranges them in sentences and longer units of discourse, and exploits their significance determines his or her style. Style is a kind of verbal identity of an author/ writer that reflects his/ her perceptions about the world. For eg. Hemingway uses short, cryptic and journalistic kind of writing. How something is said is just as important as what is said. Language and style also includes images, the concrete representation of a sense impression, feeling or idea. Images may invoke our sight, hearing, sense of smell and taste, and tactile perceptions. Imagery refers to a pattern of related details. When images form patterns of related meaning that convey a feeling beyond what the images literally describe, we call them metaphorical or symbolic.

Activity 11 : Read Extract 1, 2 and 3 given under Activity 1 again and try to pick out characteristic features of language and style.

End of the Lesson-Review Questions.

1. Comprehension

- a. List the features of a short story?
- b. What is the difference between:
 - i) round and flat characters
 - ii) interpersonal and internal conflicts
 - iii) rising and falling action
 - iv) protagonist and antagonist
- c. What role do the following play in a short story :

- theme
- character
- setting
- plot
- climax

2. Vocabulary

- a. What do you understand by the following in a short story:
 - Theme
 - Language and Style
 - Point of View
 - Setting
 - Character
 - Plot and structure

3. Writing – for your Portfolio.

- a. Collect two short stories of your choice. Develop a small write-up on each of these, outlining the following points
 - Reasons for selecting this short story
 - Characters
 - Point of View
 - Setting
 - Plot
 - Mood
 - Language and Style
 - Theme

- b. Given below is an outline of a short story. Write your short story with the help of the given outline. Include this in your Portfolio.

A teacher - taught moral lessons - had lazy students - kept a big stone on the way to school - next day student come - go - week passed - they did not remove it - the teacher took them for a picnic - acted as though the stone was seen for the first time - tried to remove it - could not - got the students to do it. Under it was a big box, marked 'For the student who moves away the stone' - lots of chocolates - the students learnt a lesson.