

UNIT

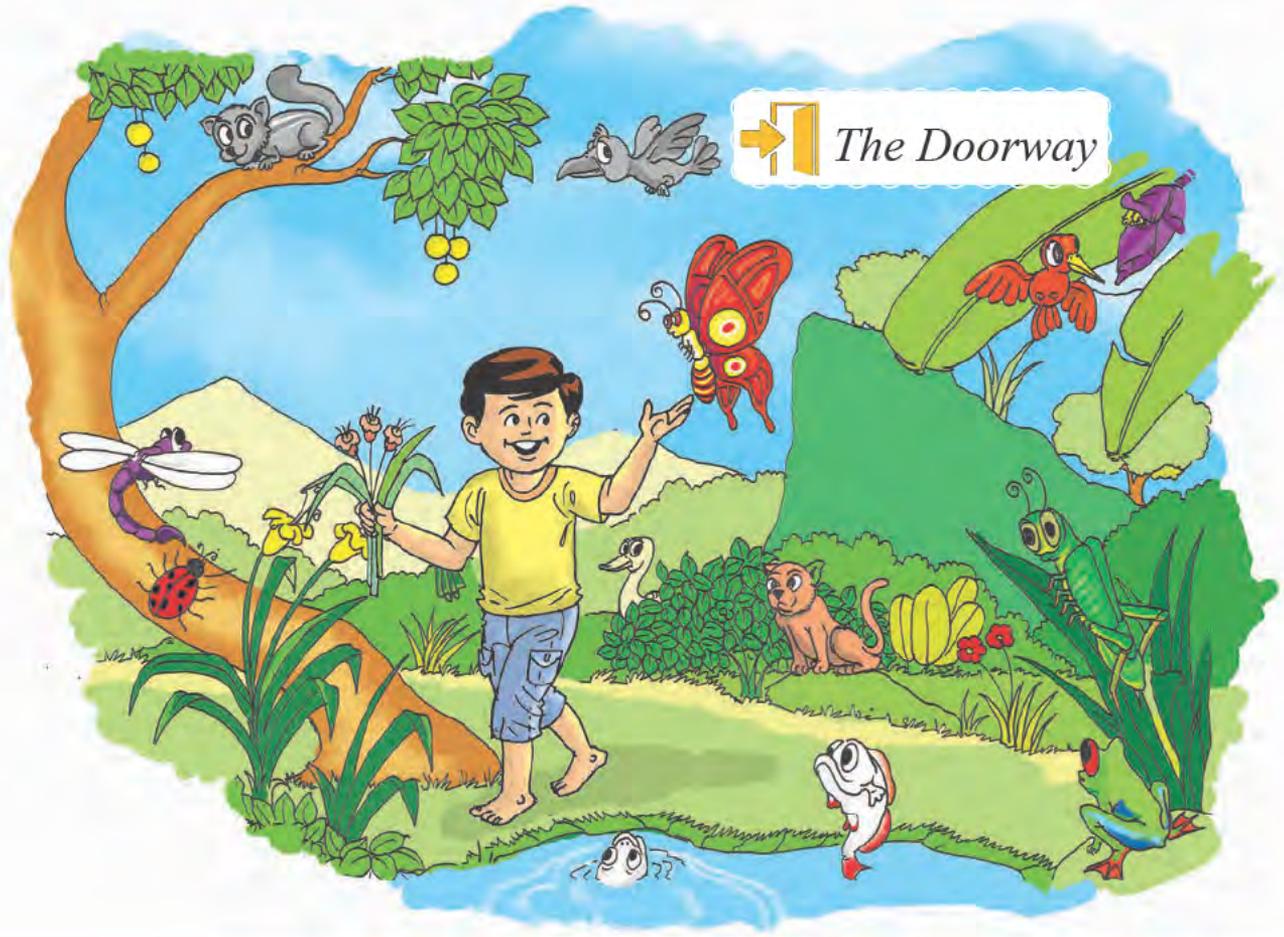
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TENDER SHOOTS



“When we plant a tree we plant hope.”

Wangari Maathai



What do you see in the picture? How do you feel?
Can we think of Nature as our friend ? Why?

Here the boy is very happy and is singing a song.

‘Oh little butterfly,
Come and play with me.
The day is bright, the sky is blue
Come and sing with me.

Hey, little grasshopper,
Come and dance with me.
Friends we have, all around
Never feel afraid.’

Sing the song along with your teacher.

Here is a poem that shows how Nature is a good companion and guardian.

The Moon

The moon has a face like the clock in the hall;
She shines on thieves on the garden wall,
On streets and fields and harbour quays,
And birdies asleep in the forks of the trees.

The squalling cat and the squeaking mouse,
The howling dog by the door of the house,
The bat that lies in bed at noon,
All love to be out by the light of the moon.

But all of the things that belong to the day
Cuddle to sleep to be out of her way;
And flowers and children close their eyes
Till up in the morning the sun shall arise.



About the poet



Robert Louis Stevenson (1850-1894) was a Scottish novelist, essayist, poet and travel writer. He is best known for works such as *Treasure Island*, *Kidnapped* and *A Child's Garden of Verses*.



Glossary

- birdie : a child's term for a bird
- cuddle : to hold close in one's arms to show affection
- forks : division of the trunk of a tree into two branches
- quay : a metal platform for loading and unloading ships
- squall : cry noisily
- squeak : make a high-pitched sound or cry



Let's explore the poem

1. Have you ever walked in the moonlight? What do you feel when you see the moon in the sky?

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2. What is the moon's face compared to?

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3. Where, according to the poet, do birds sleep at night?

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4. Where does the moon shine and spread its beautiful beams?

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5. Why could the dog be howling by the door of the house?

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6. Which are the creatures that like to spend time in the moonlight?

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7. How long do the flowers and children sleep and take rest?

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Activity 1

Look at the words used to describe the sounds made by animals - the chirping birds, the trumpeting elephants. There are similar words in the poem, that describe the sounds made by the animals.

Pick out those words and write them down.

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Activity 2

Match the phrases in column A with those in column B and make complete sentences.

Column A

- The thieves
- The birds
- The bat
- The dog
- The children

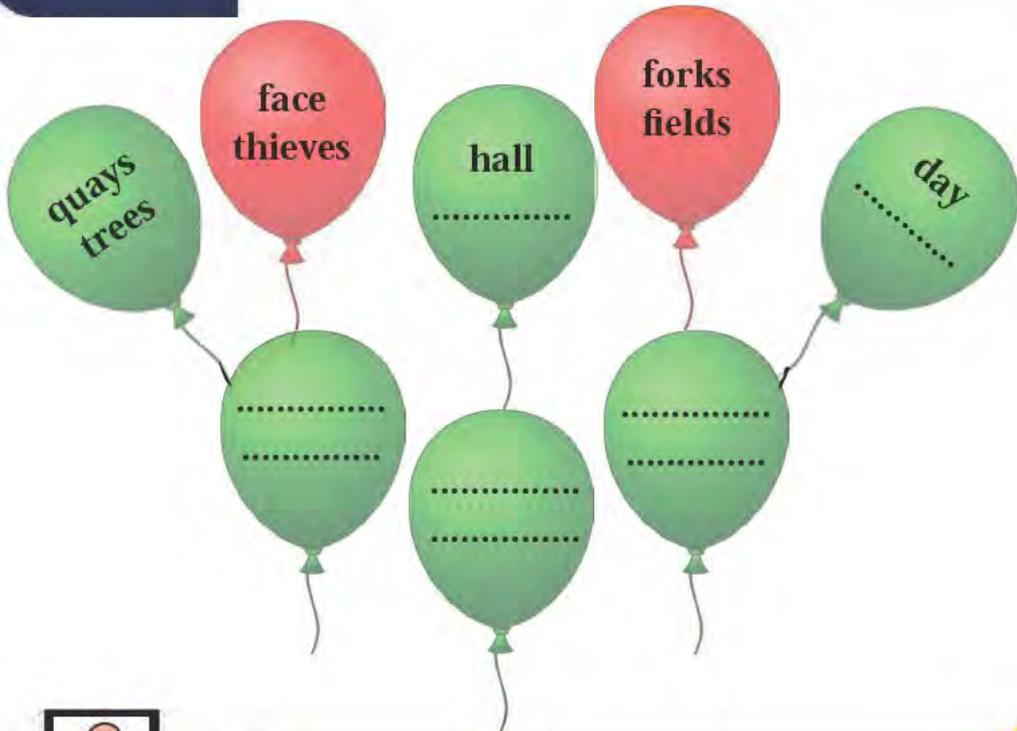
Column B

- is howling by the door of the house
- lies in bed at noon
- sleep till the sun rises
- are on the garden wall
- are asleep in the forks of trees



Activity 3

Here are some balloons. Some are red. Some are green. Rhyming words are given on the green balloons. The words on the red balloons do not rhyme. Add rhyming words on the green balloons from the poem.



Activity 4

Collect similar nature poems, write one of them below and recite it in the class.

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Nature is beautiful. But, if we harm Nature it will show us its scary face.

- ◆ What are the human activities that harm nature?
- ◆ What could be the consequences?
- ◆ Here is a news report. Please read it.

FLOODS PLAY HAVOC WITH LIVES IN KERALA

Thiruvananthapuram: Rains, storms, and floods this past week took a toll of 200 lives so far, officials stated here on Monday. Giving a round-up of the havoc across districts, officials said, several houses collapsed and hundreds of people have been rendered homeless. Roads were flooded in low-lying areas, leading to the suspension of road traffic. Rail services too remained suspended for two days. Telecommunication links were snapped at many places due also to the fall of trees. “The lines are being restored,” officials said.



- ◆ What is the newspaper report about?

Here is a collage made of news headlines.

Read some of the headlines.

- ◆ What is the collage about?



Collect a few news headlines related to environmental issues and paste them in your notebook to make a collage of your own. You may include pictures also to make it more colourful.

We have seen that excess of water can result in a calamity. Scarcity of water can also be a problem. Now let's read a story.

Rebecca, the Changemaker

In the land of the Maasai, in Southwest Kenya, there was a girl named Rebecca. Her family kept cattle, sheep and goats and depended on farming the land for food. After school time, Rebecca used to help her family and take care of the animals on the farm.



◆ What did Rebecca's family do for a living?



On a very hot day, Rebecca found her mother crying. “Our crops have been bad this year,” she said. “Now our goats and sheep might die.” Later at school, Rebecca asked her teacher why there had been so little rain that year. “We have had many days without rain,” said her teacher. “When we have no rain, plants cannot grow. If there are no crops for food and no water to drink, our animals will die.” Everyone in the class was quiet for a moment. They were worried about their families, their animals, and their community.

At the school library, Rebecca searched for more information about the rain. What she learned alarmed her. The whole world is getting hotter, and there is less rain. She learned a new term: ‘climate change.’ Cars, buses and aeroplanes are polluting the air. Trees are being cut down and used to make buildings. Huge piles of trash are thoughtlessly buried in the ground. All these activities are harming nature. Rebecca felt sad. “What can I, just a little girl do to help the whole world?” she wondered.

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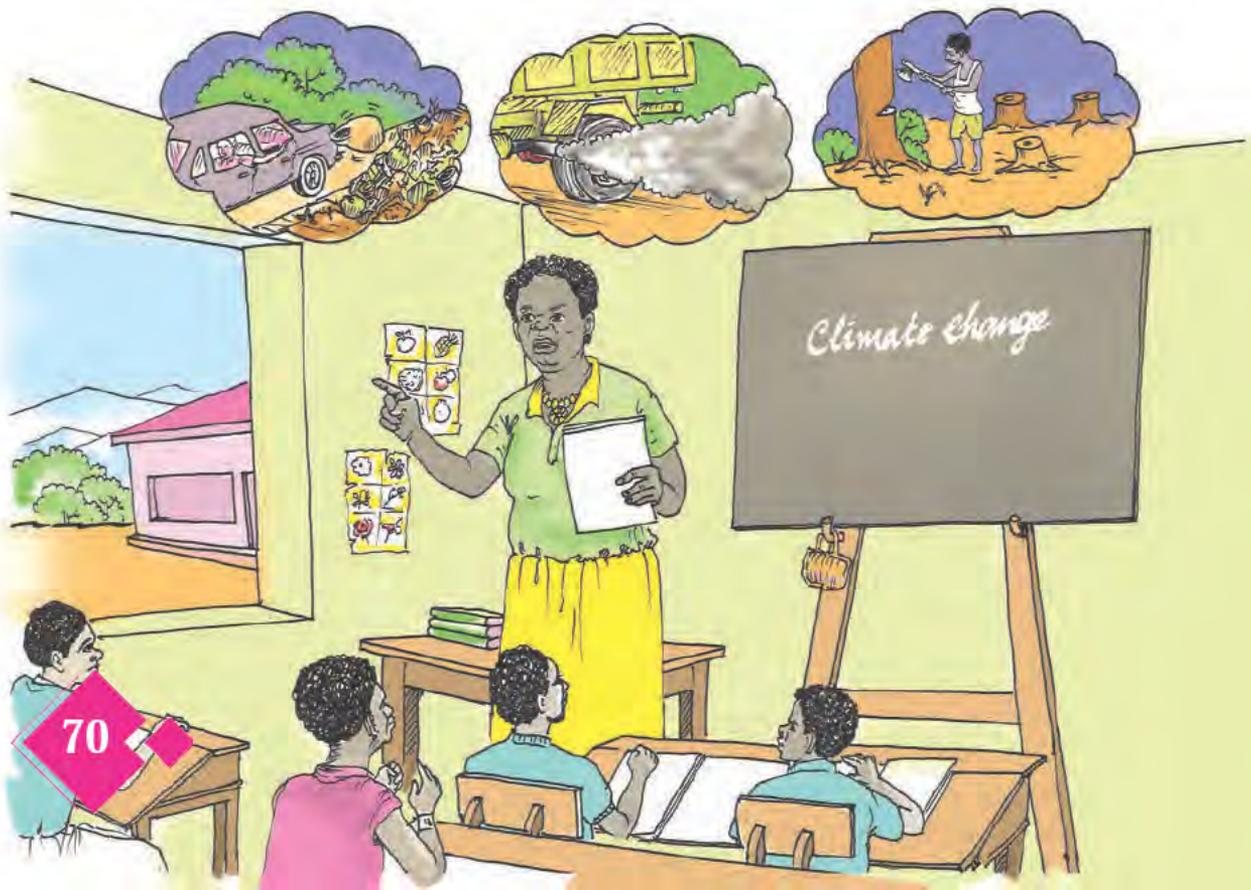
- ◆ Why was Rebecca’s mother sad?
- ◆ What new information did Rebecca get from the library?



Rebecca decided to talk to her teacher about what she had learned. “It is a big problem for the earth,” her teacher explained. “But there are certain things that we can do to help, like planting trees to make nature stronger.” As Rebecca walked home, it was very hot and she stopped to drink from her water bottle. She couldn’t stop thinking about the lack of rain, and how it was affecting the environment. She wanted to help her community. Then she gets an idea. “I’ve learned so much about climate change,” she thought. “It would help if everyone knew about this problem! Then together, we could work out a solution.”

The next day Rebecca requested her teacher to give a lesson about the changing weather, and the damage humans were doing to nature. The teacher gladly gave them a detailed session as requested. At the end of the class, Rebecca stood up. She asked everyone in her class to go home, and teach their parents about what they had learned. In just a few days, everyone was talking about how humans were bringing harm to nature.

? ♦ What did Rebecca ask everyone in her class to do?



One day, the elders in her village held a meeting to talk with Rebecca about what could be done to help nature. The problem they faced was so big. “Let’s write a letter to the President of Kenya,” one of the elders said. “He needs to know that we cannot live without rain. Then, maybe, he will implement laws to stop harming nature.”

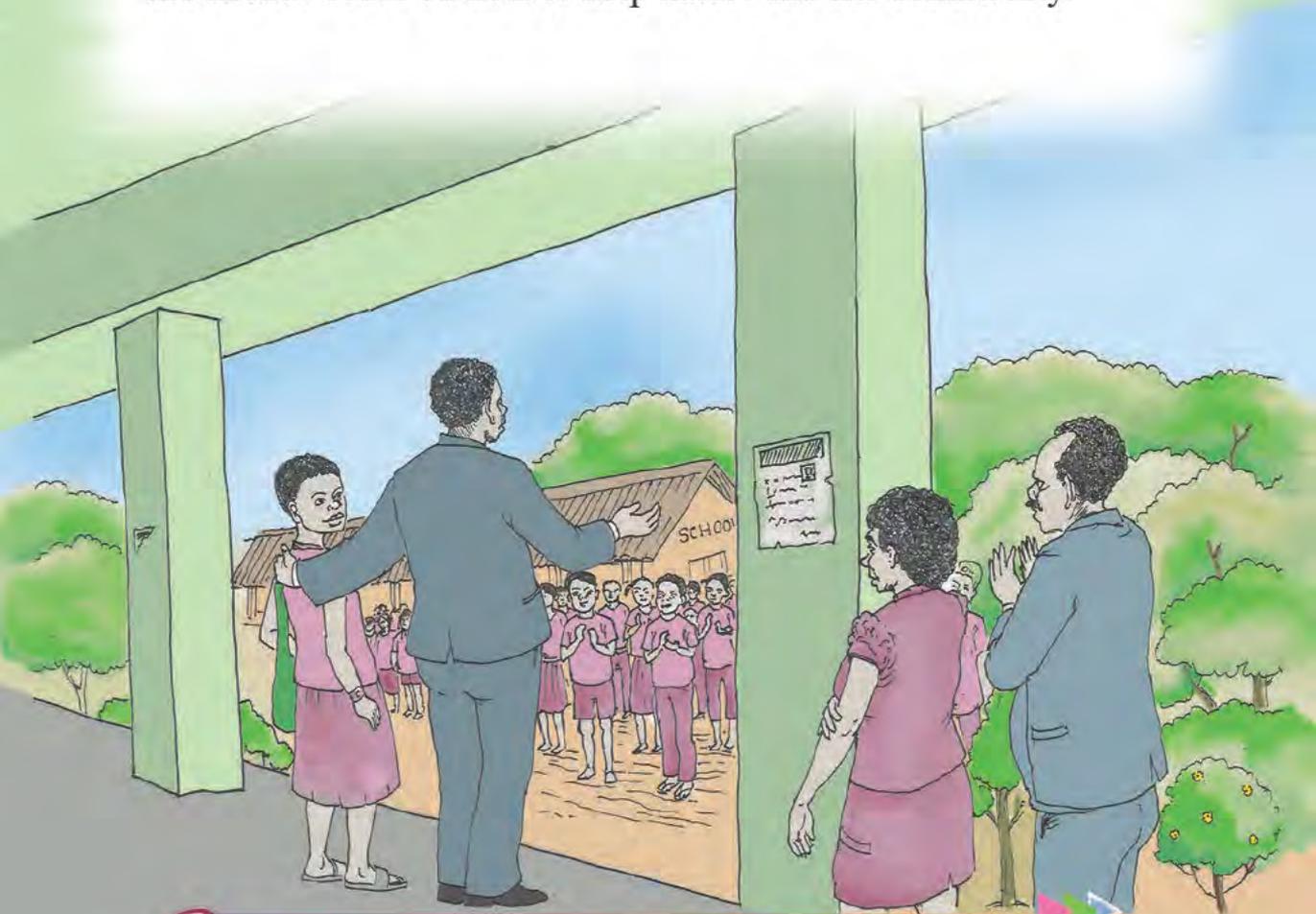
Rebecca took the letter and shared it with her classmates. They asked their family members to sign their names at the bottom to show their support. In Nairobi, the President read the letter from the Maasai community. He received many other letters, from other parts of the country too. “I need to help Kenya to protect nature,” he thought. The President asked his countrymen to plant trees outside their homes. In the Maasai community, everyone agreed to plant a tree outside their home. Rebecca and her mother dug a hole together, and planted a seedling.

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- ◆ Why did the elders of the Maasai community write a letter to the President of Kenya?
- ◆ What instructions did the President give his countrymen to save nature?



At Rebecca's school, the Principal held an assembly to address the students. He asked Rebecca to stand beside him. "Protecting the environment is a big job and everyone in the world has to help," the Principal said. "But we would like to thank Rebecca for helping us learn and make a change. Imagine how beautiful the world would be if we all helped our community!" he added. Rebecca felt very happy. She wondered what she and her friends could do next to help nature and her community.



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- ◆ "We would like to thank Rebecca," said the Principal. Why?
- ◆ Rebecca found out several reasons for climate change. What are they?
- ◆ Suggest two activities to protect nature.

About the author



Olivia Wood is a video games writer, narrative designer and editor. She is a senior writer at 'Possibility Space.' Her works are inspirational and deal with human relationships.



Glossary

alarm	: to feel frightened
bury	: to put something into a hole in the ground and cover it
cattle	: the animals kept in a farm
climate	: weather in a particular area
community	: a group of people living in a specific locality
damage	: physical harm
trash	: waste material
worried	: anxious



Activity 1

Read the story and complete the following sentences.

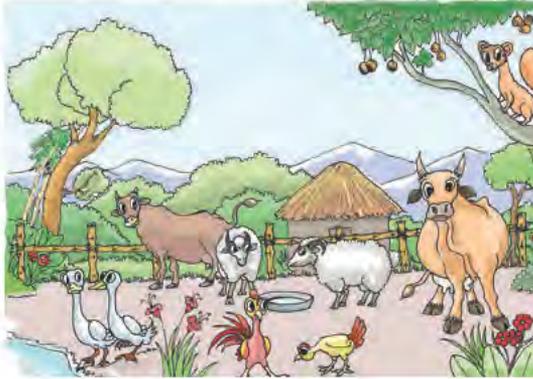
1. Rebecca asked her teacher
2. Trees are being cut down and
3. The President asked his countrymen
4. We would like to thank Rebecca



Activity 2

Given below are two scenes of Rebecca's farm. Look at the picture and prepare a description.

Before the drought



This is Rebecca's farm. There are cattle, sheep, ducks and hens in the farm. Large brown cows are grazing in the farm. There is a huge tree with ripe fruits. A happy brown squirrel is sitting on one of its branches. The lovely red flowers add beauty to the farm.

After the drought



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Activity 3

Look at the following sentences



The man is dumping waste on the road.



The children are clapping their hands.

Now you may look at the following pictures and write down what each of them is/are doing.





Activity 4

The Nature Club of Rebecca's school has decided to conduct a short film festival on climate change. Prepare a script for announcement in the morning assembly.

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Activity 5

Pairs of words that have the same sound, but different meanings are given in brackets. Choose the right word and complete the following sentences.

1. Thiswe did not get sufficient rain. (year/ear)
2. The boy saw a small.....on the tree trunk. (whole/hole)
3. We need to breathe in. (air/heir)
4. The country is entering a new.....in development.
(face/phase)
5. The elders decided toa letter to the President of Kenya.
(right/write)
6. The classroom is.....now. (quiet/quite)



Activity 6

Here is Rebecca's routine. Read it and write down some of your routine activities.

Rebecca gets up early in the morning. She brushes her teeth. She learns her lessons regularly. She helps her mother in cooking. She goes to the farm and feeds the animals.

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Activity 7

Shall we form two groups and play a word game? Your teacher will give necessary instructions. Act accordingly.



Convert the following statements into questions.

a. They are worried. Answer: Are they worried?

b. The world is getting hotter.

c. It is a big problem for the earth.

d. Rebecca is happy.

e. They have planted saplings.

f. Rebecca has written a letter to the President.

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Activity 8

Read the following newspaper report about a girl who set out on a mission to save the planet.

GRETA'S GREAT MISSION TO SAVE PLANET



STOCKHOLM: A differently abled young girl won the hearts of millions as she held a placard and sat outside the Swedish Parliament here on Monday. Greta Thunberg was promoting the cause of 'Saving the planet from Climate Change.'

Diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) at a tender age, she was undeterred, took up the campaign and sat alone to promote the cause. "Greta proved how she could make a big difference to this campaign," noted a local television channel that beamed the event live.



The Eco Club in your school planted saplings on the school premises and distributed saplings to the students on World Environment Day. A rally was also held to make the people aware of the need to conserve water. The programme was inaugurated by the Ward Member. Prepare a news report.



Activity 10

Look at the words underlined. Rebecca had a beautiful garden. There was an apple tree in the garden. Complete the following passage using *a*, *an* or *the*.

Hello children, how are you?

I amapple tree in Rebecca's garden.

Have you got enough rain this year?

I think,.....answer is 'NO'. What may be
reason? People are cutting us down. We help in
bringing rain. We give you fruits, flowers and
fresh air. So don't cut us down. I can stand
like umbrella to protect you
from hot sun. If you plant more saplings,
I shall give you lots of apples. When we plant
..... sapling, we are planting hope.

There are people around us who love Nature and take care of it. If we take care of Nature, what will it give us in return? Read the story given below.

The Honey - Mango Tree

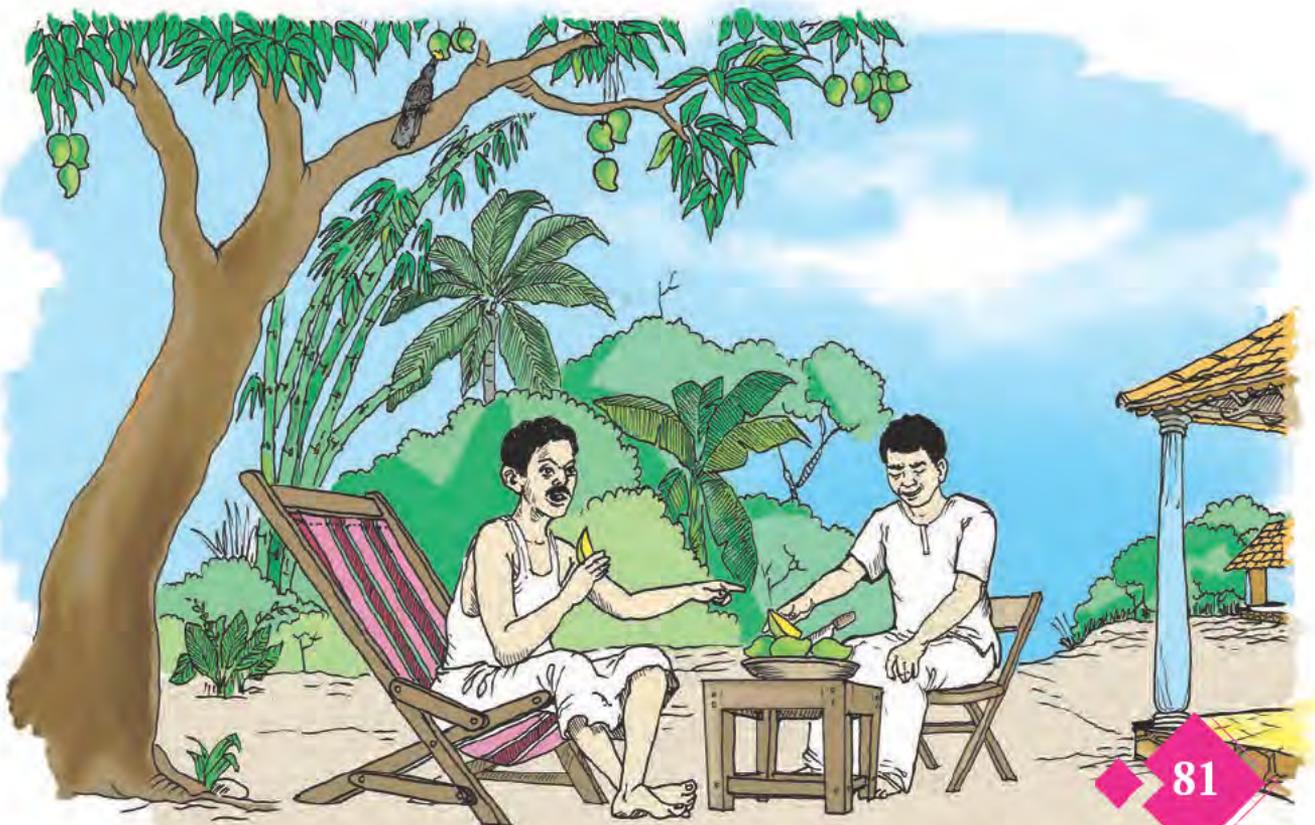
“You know, this tree has a special place in my heart,” Rasheed, my neighbour said to me as we stood under the mango tree. Rasheed paused as his son, a young boy of sixteen, walked up with a plate of ripe mango slices.

“Did you like the mango?” Rasheed enquired after I had made a quick feast of it.

“Like it! It tastes like honey. Did you plant this tree?”

“Not exactly. This mango tree has an interesting story. That is why I said it has a special place in my heart.”

Rasheed started telling the story.





It happened long ago. I was a young bachelor. I had gone to visit my young brother who was a Police Inspector. He worked in a small town about seventy-five miles away from here. It was a hot day. I set out on a stroll in the evening. I had not gone far when I saw an old man lying under a tree. His beard was long and his hair overgrown. He looked about eighty. As I approached, I heard him groaning in pain. He looked badly ill. "Give me some water, son," he said in a hoarse whisper as he saw me.

I saw a pretty young woman sitting at the sit-out of a house across the road, reading a paper. I asked her for some water. She was puzzled as I started walking away with the pitcher of water. I told her about the old man. She got up and came with me.

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- ◆ Describe the appearance of the old man.
- ◆ Where was the young woman sitting? What was she doing?

When I gave the pitcher of water to the old man he did something amazing. He got up with great difficulty. Instead of drinking the water, he walked up to a withered sapling of a mango tree. It had sprouted from the seed which had been thrown away by a wayfarer. The old man poured half the water on it. He went back to the tree under which he had been resting. He sat down, drank the water and prayed silently.

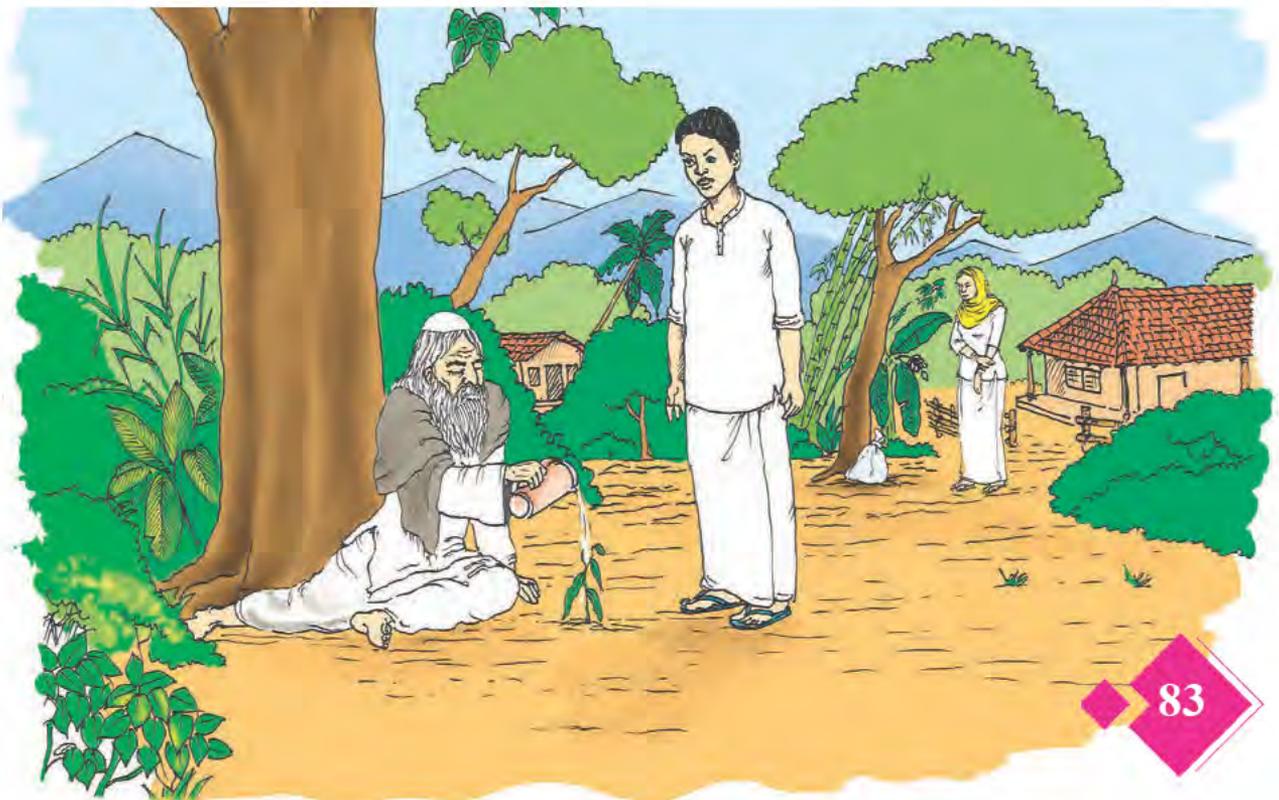
“I am Yusuf Sidhik, a fakir,” the old man started to speak. “I have no kith or kin. I have spent most of my time travelling from place to place.” “I am Rasheed,” I introduced myself. “I am a school teacher.” “I am Asma,” the young woman said. “I am a school teacher too.”

“God bless you.”

The old man lay down again. He was dying. He breathed his last as we watched. I went home to get my brother. We buried him in the

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◆ What amazing thing did the old man do?





I had found a sum of six rupees in his pocket. Asma and I put in five rupees each. I bought sweets for the amount and Asma distributed them to the children at her school. Asma watered the sapling every day. It soon sprouted fresh leaves. A little later Asma and I were married. When I built this house, I carefully uprooted the sapling and brought it home. Asma and I planted it here. We watered it regularly and manured it with ash and dung. We added some humus and bone meal later. In no time it rose to the sky and spread its canopy. And here you are!

Rasheed smiled pleasantly and put his arms around the tree.

As I turned to go home, Rasheed's son called me from behind. He held in his hand some mangoes wrapped in a newspaper.

“Mother asked me to give you these.”

I smiled. “Thank you son. We live next door to each other. But I still don't know your name.”

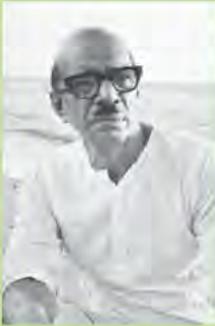
“Yusuf Sidhik.”

“Yusuf Sidhik?”

“Yes, uncle, Yusuf Sidhik.”

(Translated and slightly adapted)

About the author



Vaikom Muhammad Basheer (1908-1994) was a famous Malayalam writer. He is known as Beypore Sultan. He was a humanist, freedom fighter, novelist and short story writer. His notable works include *Balyakalasakhi*, *Ntuppuppakkoranendarnnu*, *Pathummayude Aadu*, etc. He was awarded the Padma Shri by the Government of India in 1982.



Glossary

bachelor	: a man who is not married
canopy	: leaves that spread out at the top of trees
groan	: to utter a long, deep sound in pain
hoarse whisper	: rough and unclear low voice
humus	: organic fertilizer
kith or kin	: friends or relatives
pitcher	: a large jug
stroll	: to walk slowly enjoying the sights
uproot	: to pull out of the ground (especially a plant)
wayfarer	: a person who travels on foot
withered	: dried up or decayed



Activity 1

Theatre game

Enact the story *The Honey - Mango Tree* with the help of your teacher. You can make use of some properties along with background music.



Activity 2

Read the story *The Honey - Mango Tree* and find sentences related to the picture given here. Write the sentences under each picture.



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