

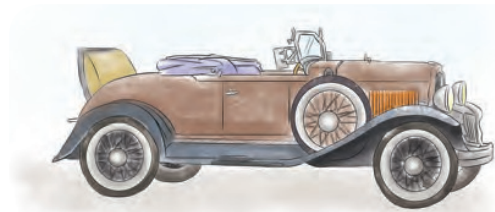
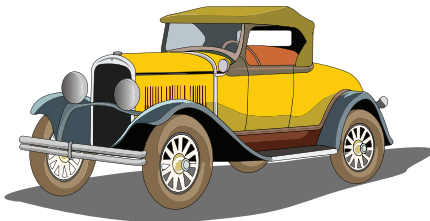
# 1

# Uncle Ken at the Wheel



## Warm Up

Work in pairs. Which of these are vintage cars? Tick (✓) them.



## Reading

*Ruskin Bond lives in Dehradun with Granny and Crazy—a mongrel dog. Ruskin also has a friend called Mohan, who is their gardener's son. They are now joined by Uncle Ken, who is Ruskin's father's cousin. Uncle Ken has just come back from Shimla to stay with them in Dehradun. He used to work in a hotel, but it has shut down. He now wants to learn to drive so that he can earn his living as a taxi driver.*

## 2 | Uncle Ken at the Wheel

Over tiffin (as lunch was called in those days), Uncle Ken talked very seriously about ways and means of earning a living. “There is only one taxi in the whole of Dehra,” he **mused**. “Surely, there is room for another?”

“I’m sure there is,” said Granny. “But where does it get you? In the first place, you don’t have a taxi. And in the second place, you can’t drive.”

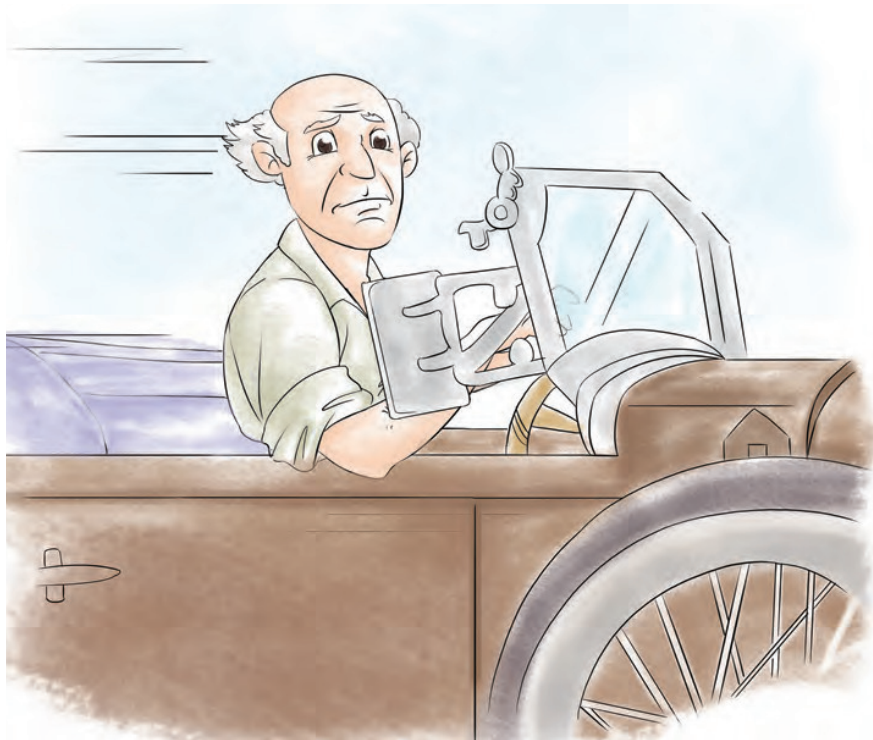
“I can soon learn. There’s a driving school in town. And I can use uncle’s old car. It’s been **gathering** dust in the garage for years.” He was talking about Grandfather’s vintage Hillman Roadster.

“I don’t think it will run now,” said Granny.

“Of course, it will. It just needs some oiling and **greasing** and a spot of paint.”

“All right, learn to drive. Then we will see about the Roadster.”

So, Uncle Ken joined the driving school.



He was very regular, going for his lessons for an hour in the evening. Granny paid the fee. After a month, Uncle Ken announced that he could drive and that he was taking the Roadster for a **trial run**.

“You haven’t got your license yet,” said Granny.

“Oh, I won’t take her that far,” said Uncle Ken. “Just down the road and back again.”

He spent all morning cleaning up the car. Granny gave him money for a can of petrol.

After tea, Uncle Ken said, “Come along, Ruskin, hop in, and I will give you a ride. Bring Mohan along, too.” Mohan and I **needed no urging**. We got into the car beside Uncle Ken.

“Now don’t go too fast, Ken,” said Granny anxiously. “You are not used to the car as yet.”

Uncle Ken nodded and smiled and gave two sharp toots on the horn. He was feeling pleased with himself.

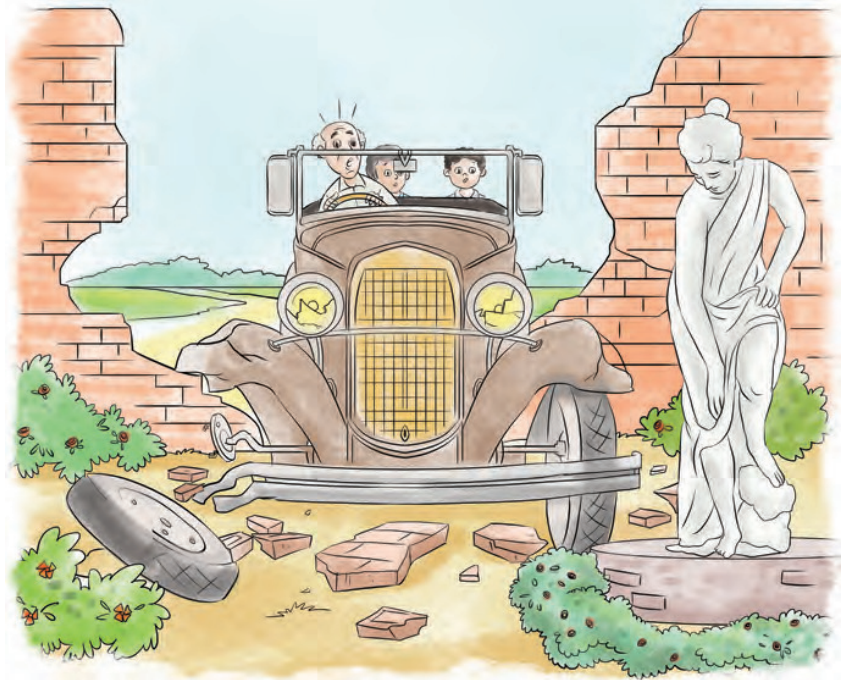
Driving through the gate, he nearly ran over Crazy.

Miss Millner, coming out for her evening rickshaw ride, saw Uncle Ken at the wheel of the Roadster and went indoors again.

Uncle Ken drove straight and fast, **tootling** the horn without a break. At the end of the road, there was a roundabout.

“We’ll turn here,” said Uncle Ken, “and then drive back again.”

He turned the steering wheel, and we began going round the roundabout, but the steering wheel won’t turn all the way, not as much as Uncle Ken would have liked it to. So, instead of going round, we took a right turn and kept going, straight on — and straight through the Maharajah of Jetpur’s garden wall.



#### 4 | Uncle Ken at the Wheel

It was a single-brick wall, and the Roadster knocked it down and **emerged** on the other side without any damage to any of its occupants. Uncle Ken brought it to a halt in the middle of the Maharajah's lawn.

Running across the grass came the Maharajah himself, **flanked** by his secretaries and their assistants. When he saw that it was Uncle Ken at the wheel, the Maharajah **beamed with pleasure**.

“Delighted to see you, old chap!” he exclaimed. “Jolly decent of you to drop in again. What about a game of tennis?”

—Slightly abridged and adapted from the Book of Humour by Ruskin Bond

#### Glossary

**mused:** thought

**gathering:** collecting

**greasing:** putting grease on something to make it work smoothly

**trial run:** a sort of first test to see how something works

**needed no urging:** did not need any extra encouragement

**tootling:** making a series of sounds by blowing a horn or a trumpet

**emerged:** came out

**flanked:** on each side of

**beamed with pleasure:** expressed great happiness



## Read and Answer

### 1. Choose the best option to complete the sentences.

a) Uncle Ken had come back from Shimla because

i) it was snowing there.

ii) the hotel where he worked had shut down.

iii) he did not like his job in Shimla anymore.

b) At lunch, Uncle Ken seriously spoke about

i) his job in Shimla.

ii) the weather in Dehradun.

iii) earning a living.

c) Granny was worried that Uncle Ken's plan was not great because

i) he did not know how to drive, and he did not have a license.

ii) he did not know how to drive, and he did not have a taxi.

iii) he did not have a taxi, though he knew how to drive.

- d) Uncle Ken learnt to drive
- i) by joining a driving school.
  - ii) with help from Ruskin.
  - iii) all on his own.
- e) Uncle Ken did not pay any attention to
- i) what the Maharajah of Jetpur said.
  - ii) what Miss Millner said about driving.
  - iii) Granny's word of caution.
- f) Uncle Ken lost control of the car
- i) while turning the wheels at the roundabout.
  - ii) on seeing Crazy on the street.
  - iii) on seeing Miss Millner get on the rickshaw.
- g) The Maharajah and Uncle Ken were
- i) neighbours who did not like each other.
  - ii) strangers to each other.
  - iii) old friends who had played tennis together.

## 2. Answer these questions.

“We'll turn here,” said Uncle Ken, “and then drive back again.”

- a) Where was Uncle Ken when he said this?
- b) Who was Uncle Ken speaking to?
- c) What happened when he tried turning and driving back?



## Think and Answer

1. Which moment was the turning point in the story? How was it a turning point?
2. A story is often humorous for a number of reasons. It could be because of the ways the characters are described or how they behave. It could be also because of how incidents take shape. Why is this story humorous or funny? Explain.
3. Would you trust Uncle Ken with the car once again? Why or why not?



## Word Work

### Onomatopoeia

Read this sentence.

- Uncle Ken drove straight and fast, **tootling** the horn without a break.

The word **tootling**, as you already know, means ‘making a series of sounds by blowing a horn or a trumpet.’

Now, **tootling** is a sound word. A sound word stands for the sound it describes. The use of words that contain sounds similar to the noises they describe is called **onomatopoeia**.

Example: swish, crash, hoot, crackle, zip

#### 1. Circle the onomatopoeic words in this list.

clock	crinkle	snap	snort	snack	splash
splurge	spark	tweak	buzz	hiss	hitch

#### 2. Complete the sentences using the words you circled. You may need to change the tense of the word.

- In the jungle, I could only hear the \_\_\_\_\_ of a rattlesnake.
- I don't want the \_\_\_\_\_ of bees around my ears when I am at work. Could you please take the hive down?
- Mum made me laugh so much that I \_\_\_\_\_ the water I had drunk out of my nose.
- Sam \_\_\_\_\_ up the paper and threw it into the dustbin.
- Jimmy jumped into the pool with a big \_\_\_\_\_.
- He \_\_\_\_\_ his fingers when I shared my plan with him. He was clearly excited.



## Listen Live

Listen to this funny story and answer the questions.

- a) What problem did the knight face when he grew old?
- b) Why did the speaker talk about an egg in the story?
- c) How did the knight solve his problem?
- d) What happened when the knight went hunting?
- e) What did the knight do when everyone started laughing at him?
- f) Choose the best moral for this story.
  - i) Never hide your weakness.
  - ii) Be smart when you hide your weakness.
  - iii) It is best to laugh at yourself when people laugh at you.



## Sound Sense

In some words, the letters **ch** make a soft sound.

- **ch**ap          Hello! Old **ch**ap!

In some words, the letters **ch** make a hard sound like **k**.

- **sch**ool          So, Uncle Ken joined the driving **sch**ool.

1. Complete the words with **ch**. Circle the words that have a hard **k** sound.

a\_\_\_ \_\_\_e

s\_\_\_ \_\_\_ool

\_\_\_ \_\_\_eck

stoma\_\_\_ \_\_\_

mun\_\_\_ \_\_\_

an\_\_\_ \_\_\_or

2. Read the sentences aloud.

- a) Uncle Chubby had a strong character.
- b) The boy on the cherry tree has a toothache.
- c) Chang is a chemist in China.
- d) The children were singing for the Christmas choir.
- e) We could hear the echo of the chirping chimpanzees.
- f) The chameleon chased the rats away.

# Speak Now



Work in pairs. Imagine you are driving a car and are lost. Look at the picture. Ask and answer the questions after completing the sentences.



- Hello. Can you tell me where the \_\_\_\_\_ is?  
The \_\_\_\_\_? It's opposite the park.
- Can you help me? I am looking for the \_\_\_\_\_.  
The \_\_\_\_\_? That's easy. It's between the café and the clock tower.
- Hi! Where's the \_\_\_\_\_, please?  
It's between the clock tower and the cinema.
- Excuse me, where's the \_\_\_\_\_?  
The \_\_\_\_\_? It's just before the car park.





## Go Grammar

### Types of sentences

There are four types of sentences. Let's learn about each with the help of this table.

Type of sentence	Definition	Ends with	Example
Assertive	It gives information about something.	Full stop (.)	"We'll turn here and then drive back again."
Imperative	It gives a command or makes a request.	Full stop (.)	"Now don't go too fast, Ken," said Granny anxiously.
Interrogative	It asks a question.	Question mark (?)	"What about a game of tennis?"
Exclamatory	It expresses a strong emotion or feeling.	Exclamation mark (!)	"Delighted to see you, old chap!" he exclaimed.

1. Place a **full stop**, a **question mark**, or an **exclamation mark** at the end of these sentences.

- a) The train will be here soon
- b) What a beautiful day
- c) Are you waiting for the bus
- d) My mother is a photographer
- e) Don't tell him that I am here
- f) This is the best place in the world
- g) Can I borrow some books from you
- h) Switch off the television and go to bed
- i) I am looking forward to the school holidays
- j) Open the window, please


2. Choose the correct option.

- a) Which of these is an assertive sentence?
  - i) You did a great job!
  - ii) Come and sit next to me.
  - iii) Mrs Jones is our music teacher.

## 10 | Uncle Ken at the Wheel

b) Which of these is an interrogative sentence?

i) Please take out your books.

ii) Have you ever travelled to London?

iii) Ravi wants to be a doctor when he grows up.

c) Which of these is an exclamatory sentence?

i) I love that blue dress!

ii) My mother makes delicious cheese sandwiches.

iii) We are playing a memory game.

d) Which of these is an imperative sentence?

i) The customer was rude to the shopkeeper.

ii) Leave your shoes outside.

iii) Do you have an extra pair of scissors?



## Write It

### 1. Read this description and answer the questions.

Of all my relatives, I like my Aunt Polly the best. She's my mother's oldest sister. She has never married, and she lives alone in a small village near Mussoorie. She's in her late fifties, but she's still quite young in spirit. What does she look like? Let me describe her. She has a fair complexion, thick brown hair which she wears in a bun, and dark brown eyes. She has a kind face, and when you meet her, the first thing you notice is her lovely, warm smile. Her face is a little wrinkled now, but I think she is still very pretty. She is the sort of person you can always go to if you have a problem.

She likes reading and gardening, and she goes for long walks over the hills with her dog, Rocky. What an active person she is! Once when I was a little kid, she said, "Run to the hills and fetch me some fresh apples. I want to make an apple pie for you." She is either making something, or mending something, or doing something to help others. She does the shopping for some of the old people in the village. She is extremely generous but rather unkind to people who do not agree with her. I hope that I am as happy and satisfied as she is when I am her age.

- a) Underline the lines that
  - i) describe Aunt Polly's appearance
  - ii) describe her character
  - iii) talk about her habits
- b) Find these words in the paragraph above.

quite      a little      rather      very      extremely

How do the words you just spotted change the meanings of the adjectives that follow them?

2. **Now, write about your relative. Describe his or her appearance, character, and habits. Use at least one example of each kind of sentence you have already learnt above. Remember to punctuate your sentences correctly.**

