

3. Ode to Autumn

Learning Outcomes

- ▶ read the poem and understand the context
- ▶ understand what personification is and identify where it is used in the poem
- ▶ understand different types of sentences: simple, complex and compound
- ▶ learn the pronunciation of consonant and vowel digraphs

Digital Desk



Warm-up

Which season do you like the most and why?
Also, mention how each season makes you feel.



Have you ever wondered why seasons change?

The varying of seasons is caused by the tilt of the Earth's axis in combination with its orbit around the sun. At different times of the year, the sun's rays hit different parts of the Earth more directly. When the top of the Earth is tilted towards the sun, it is summer in the northern hemisphere. Since the bottom half of the Earth (the southern hemisphere) is tilted away from the sun, it's winter there.

On around June 21st, the northern hemisphere is at its maximum tilt towards the sun. This is called the summer solstice. This is also the longest period of daylight of the year in the northern hemisphere. On around December 21st, the Northern hemisphere is at its maximum tilt away from the sun, which is known as the winter solstice and the shortest period of daylight. June 21st is the winter solstice for the southern hemisphere, and December 21st is its summer solstice.

Cross-curricular Connection



Read a poem about the autumn season.

🎧 Seasons of mists and mellow fruitfulness!
Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun;
Conspiring with him how to load and bless
With fruit the vines that round the thatch-eaves run;
To bend with apples the mossed cottage trees,
And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core;
To swell the gourd, and plump the hazel shells
With a sweet kernel; to set budding more,
And still more, later flowers for the bees,
Until they think warm days will never cease,
For Summer has o'erbrimmed their clammy cells.

Who hath not seen thee oft amid thy store?
 Sometimes whoever seeks abroad may find
 Thee sitting careless on a granary floor,
 Thy hair soft-lifted by the winnowing
 wind,
 Or on a half-reaped furrow sound
 asleep,
 Drowsed with the fume of poppies,
 while thy hook
 Spares the next swath and all its twined
 flowers;
 And sometimes like a gleaner thou dost
 keep
 Steady thy laden head across a brook;
 Or by a cider-press, with patient look,
 Thou watchest the last oozy hours by
 hours.

Where are the songs of Spring? Ay, where
 are they?
 Think not of them, thou hast thy music
 too,—
 While barred clouds bloom the soft-dying
 day,
 And touch the stubble-plains with rosy
 hue;
 Then in a wailful choir the small gnats
 mourn
 Among the river shallows, borne aloft
 Or sinking as the light wind lives or dies;
 And full-grown lambs loud bleat from hilly
 bourn;
 Hedge-crickets sing; and now with treble
 soft
 The redbreast whistles from a garden-croft;
 And gathering swallows twitter in the
 skies.

John Keats

bosom-friend: a very close or intimate friend

thatch-eaves: thatch is a roof made of dried straw or reed; eaves are the edge of a roof

o'erbrimmed: full

clammy: damp in an unpleasant way

winnowing: (*here*) capable of blowing away

furrow: (*here*) ploughing

swath: a row or line of grass or crops as it falls or lies after being mowed or reaped

gleaner: a farm worker

barred: (*here*) blocked

wailful: sorrowful

gnats: a small fly with two wings, that bites

river shallows: willow trees

bourn: small stream

garden-croft: a small place used as a kitchen garden



About the Poet

John Keats (1795–1821) was one of the chief Romantic poets and authored famous poems such as 'Endymion', 'Bright Star' and 'Would I were Steadfast as Thou Art'. His other odes such as 'Ode to a Grecian Urn' and 'Ode to a Nightingale' are also very popular.



Comprehension

A. Complete these sentences.

1. The two close bosom-friends are _____.
2. The season is conspiring with _____.
3. Summer has _____.
4. Bees think that warm days _____.
5. The last oozing is that of _____.

B. Answer these questions.

1. What is the connection between the flowers and the bees?
2. Why is the season of mists called the 'close bosom-friend' of the sun?
3. How do the season of mist and the sun conspire?
4. In what way has the summer helped the bees?
5. In the later lines, the speaker says that autumn is found sleeping on a half-reaped furrow. What has induced it to sleep?

C. Think and answer.

1. The theme of 'Ode to Autumn' is the fleeting quality of nature. Do you agree? Give reasons to support your answer.
2. Give examples of imagery from the poem.
3. Seasons are the cycle of life. How does the given statement relate to human existence? Share your thoughts with the class.



Word Wonder

Read these lines from the poem.

*Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness,
Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun;
Conspiring with him how to load and bless
With fruit the vines that round the thatch-eaves run;*

Who do you think is the speaker referring to?

In the above lines, autumn is personified as a close friend of the sun. In fact, the speaker calls autumn a 'close bosom-friend' of the sun.

Many famous poets have used personification as a figure of speech in their poems to make them more effective. Examples of personification in English Literature are 'Two Sunflowers Move in a Yellow Room', 'I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud' and 'The Waste Land'.



Personification is a literary device in which a non-human object, abstract idea or animal is represented as having human qualities.

- A. Pick out four examples of personification used in the poem and explain them.
- B. Identify the object or idea that is being personified in each sentence and write which human trait or action is applied to the object or idea.
1. The wind whispered through the dark and gloomy forest.
 2. The flowers waltzed in the gentle breeze.
 3. The sad waters of the icy wasteland streamed through the barren landscape.
 4. The night smiled as crickets chirped and owls hooted under the light of the moon.
 5. The baseball screamed all the way into the outfield.



Learn About Language

You have learnt about simple, compound and complex sentences in previous grades. Let us learn more about them.

Read these sentences.

- ▶ The boy cried for his mother. (**simple**)
- ▶ She spoke to her mother in French, but she did not understand and responded in German. (**compound**)
- ▶ After he had worked out at the gym, Rajesh went to his friend's house for dinner. (**complex**)

According to the structure of sentences, they can be divided into three types:

- ▶ simple sentences
- ▶ compound sentences
- ▶ complex sentences

Let us study about them.

- a. A **simple sentence** has one independent clause and therefore only one subject and a finite verb. It expresses a single complete thought that can stand on its own.

For example,

- ▶ Kabir is mowing the garden.
- ▶ This book is very interesting.



b. A **compound sentence** has two independent clauses that are joined together by a coordinating conjunction. An independent clause is a part of a sentence that can stand alone because it contains a subject and predicate and expresses a complete thought.

The coordinating conjunctions used to join the independent clauses are **for, and, nor, but, or, yet** and **so**.

For example,

- ▶ I want cold coffee, but Betty wants pineapple shake.
- ▶ We went to the waterpark yesterday, and we had a wonderful time.
- ▶ He was tired, so he went off to sleep.

c. A **complex sentence** has one principal clause and one or more subordinate clauses that are joined together by a subordinating conjunction. Each of the principal and dependent clauses in a complex sentence has a finite verb of its own. The dependent clause may be a noun clause, an adjective clause or an adverb clause.

Some of the subordinating conjunctions used in a complex sentence are **as, because, since, after, although, though, while** and **when**.

For example,

- ▶ We shall meet the principal after we return from the States.
- ▶ When the cake is brown, take it out of the oven.

The highlighted clauses convey complete sense.

They are called principal, or independent, clauses.

The underlined clauses are dependent on the highlighted parts to complete their meaning. These clauses are called dependent or subordinate clauses.

A complex sentence may also have relative pronouns such as 'who', 'that', 'which'.



State whether the following sentences are simple, complex or compound.

1. He tried to speak Hindi and his friend tried to speak Tamil.
2. When she left her home for work, she forgot to lock the door.
3. The old man, being weak, could not walk properly.
4. Many children like to play in the evening.
5. My mother goes to the market every day, but does not always find fresh vegetables.

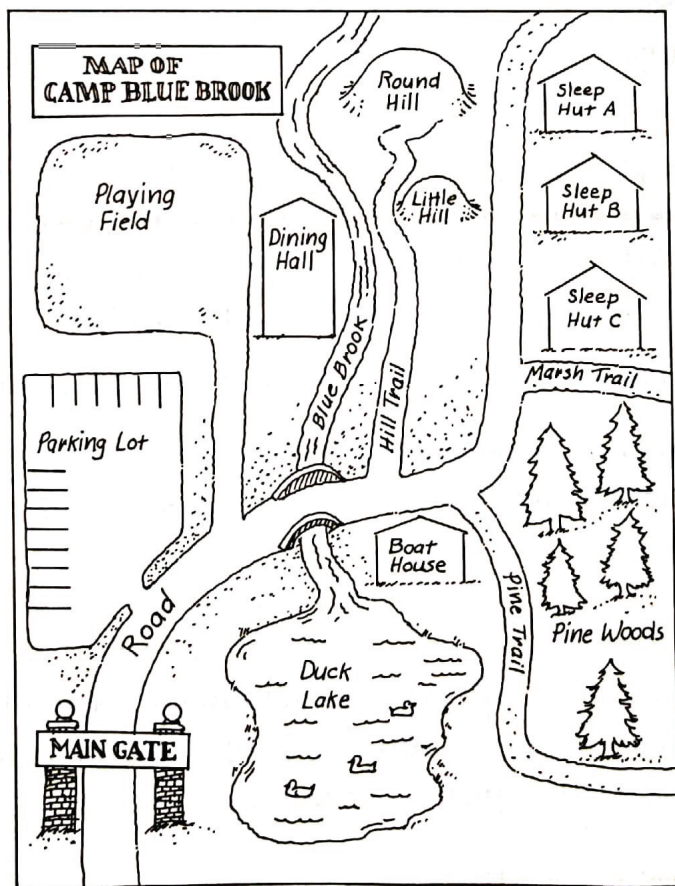


A. Listen to the recitation of the poem 'Wandering Singers' by Sarojini Naidu, and answer the questions that follow.



1. Whose 'wandering feet' is the voice of the wind calling?
2. What tales do the songs depict?
3. What does the poem tell you about the wandering singers?
4. How do the singers decide their next destination?
5. What kind of life do musicians have today? How different were their lives earlier?

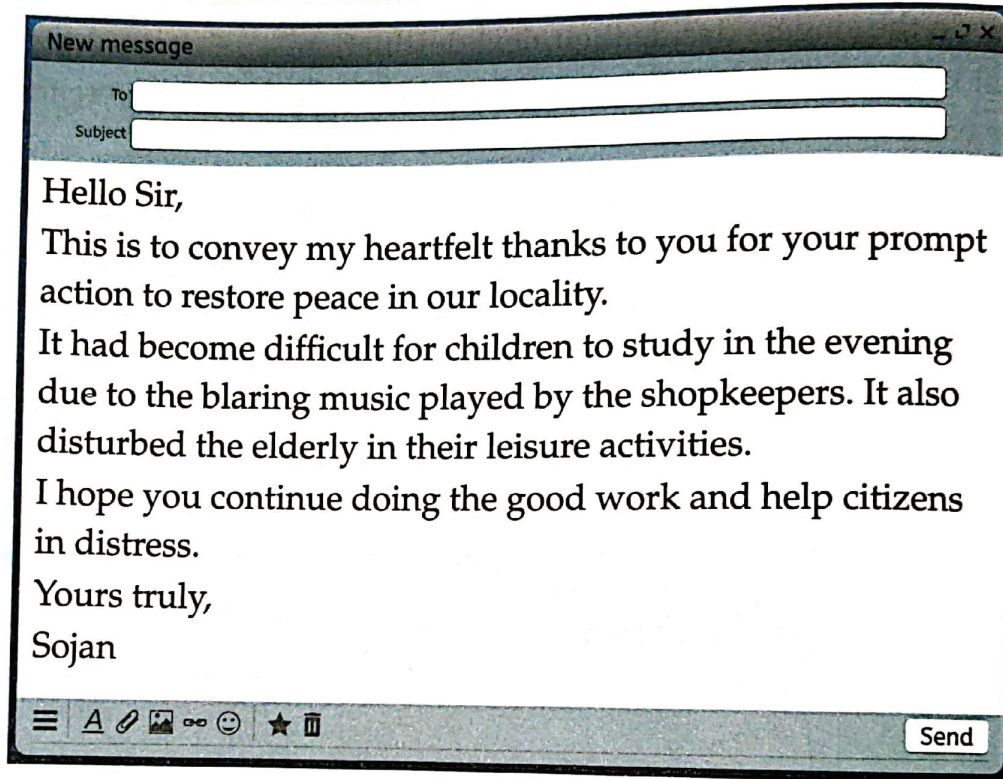
B. Here is a map of Camp Blue Brook. Look at it carefully. Work in pairs. Now, mark yourselves as A and B. A takes the map and B takes pencil and paper. A has to give directions to B to go from Sleep Hut C to the Playing Field. B (without looking at the map) draws the route on the paper. After you finish, compare it with the map and see if it is correct. Now, do it again with B giving directions to A to go from the Pine Trail to the Little Hill and A drawing the route. Match with the map.



Composition

Writing an email is similar to writing a letter. The only difference is that an email is an electronic letter in which you need to enter the recipient's email address and the subject in the respective fields. The format, whether formal or informal, remains the same as in a letter.

Let us revise how to write an email.



New message

To:

Subject:

Hello Sir,
This is to convey my heartfelt thanks to you for your prompt action to restore peace in our locality.
It had become difficult for children to study in the evening due to the blaring music played by the shopkeepers. It also disturbed the elderly in their leisure activities.
I hope you continue doing the good work and help citizens in distress.
Yours truly,
Sojan

Send



A. Work in pairs. Write to a friend to tell him/her that you are planning a surprise party for your sister and ask for him/her ideas.

Now, exchange mails. Reply to the mail your friend has written.



B. Write an email to your uncle sharing your week's activities. Also, let him know what you will be doing over the coming weekend.

Activity

Make a poster for an autumn festival to be held in your school. Mention all the activities and food counters that would be put up. Also, think of an interesting dress code that represents the spirit of autumn.



Further Reading: 'Rain' by Anjum Hasan

