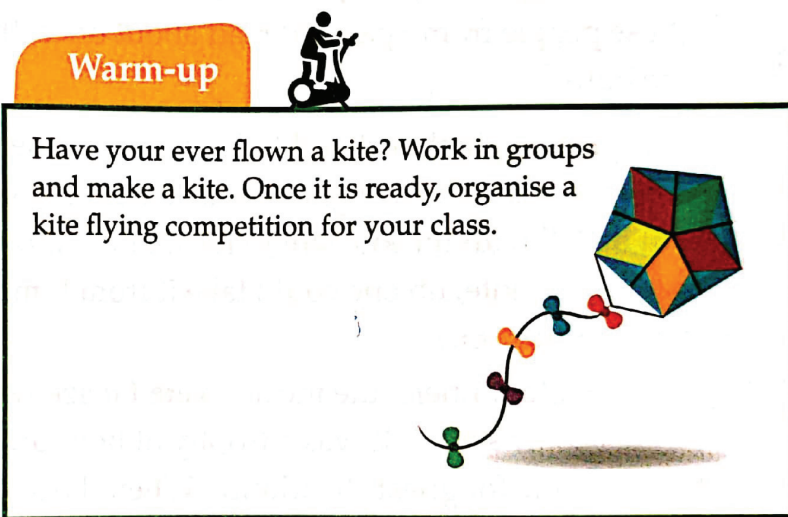


4. The Final Victory

Sports

Learning Outcomes

- ▶ read the extract and understand the setting, the background and the context
- ▶ understand the formation of affixes
- ▶ learn to identify and use different types of phrases
- ▶ understand pronunciation of consonant sounds
- ▶ learn to write an argumentative essay



Pakora is a savoury, usually made on special occasions. It is a piece of vegetable or meat, coated in seasoned batter and deep-fried.

Pakora is a word from Hindi language, which is used in everyday language in India and some other Asian countries and has been added to the English dictionary.

Some of the other Hindi words that have recently been added to the English dictionary are didi, bapu, desh, sevak and namkeen. You will be surprised to know that guru is a Sanskrit word and it has been added to the English dictionary. It means an individual with influential leadership, knowledge and deep intelligence.

Cross-curricular Connection



Read this extract from the famous book *The Kite Runner*.

The kite-fighting tournament was an old winter tradition in Afghanistan. It started early in the morning on the day of the contest and didn't end until only the winning kite flew in the sky. Once the tournament outlasted daylight, people gathered on sidewalks and roofs to cheer for their kids. The streets filled with kite fighters, jerking and tugging on their lines, squinting up to the sky, trying to gain position to cut the opponent's line. Every kite fighter had an assistant—in my case, Hassan—who held the **spool** and fed the line. The fun began when a kite was cut. That was where the kite runners came in, those kids who chased the windblown kite drifting through the neighbourhoods until it came spiralling down in a field, dropping in someone's yard, on a tree or a rooftop. The chase got pretty fierce.

Hordes of kite runners swarmed the streets, shoved past each other like those people from Spain I'd read about once, the ones who ran from the bulls.

One year a neighbourhood kid climbed a pine tree for a kite. A branch snapped under his weight and he fell 30 feet, getting severely injured. But he fell with the kite still in his hands. And when a kite runner had his hands on a kite, no one could take it from him. That wasn't a rule. That was the custom.

For the kite runners, the most **coveted** prize was the last fallen kite of a winter tournament. It was a trophy of honour, something to be displayed on a mantle for guests to admire. When the sky cleared of kites and only the final two remained, every kite runner readied himself for the chance

spool: a cylindrical device on which film, thread or other flexible materials can be wound; a reel

coveted: greatly desired

to land this prize. He positioned himself at a spot that he thought would give him a head start. Tense muscles readied themselves to uncoil. Necks craned. Eyes crinkled. Fights broke out. And when the last kite was cut, all hell broke loose. Over the years, I had seen a lot of guys run kites. But Hassan was by far the greatest kite runner I'd ever seen. It was downright eerie the way he always got to the spot the kite would land before the kite did, as if he had some sort of inner compass. The day of the tournament dawned. Streets glistened with fresh snow and the sky was a blameless blue. Snow blanketed every rooftop and weighed on the branches of the stunted mulberry trees that lined our street. I heard Baba mutter a prayer under his breath; he always said a prayer when I left the house.

I had never seen so many people on our street. Kids were flinging snowballs, squabbling, chasing one another, giggling. Kite fighters were huddling with their pool holders, and making last-minute preparations. From adjacent streets, I could hear laughter and chatter. Already, rooftops were jammed with spectators reclining in lawn chairs, hot tea steaming from thermoses, and the music of Ahmad Zahir blaring from cassette players¹. I turned my gaze to our rooftop, found Baba and Rahim Khan sitting on a bench, both dressed in wool sweaters, sipping tea. Baba waved. I couldn't tell if he was waving at me or Hassan.

'We should get started,' Hassan said. He wore black rubber snow boots and a bright green *chapan*² over a thick sweater and faded corduroy pants. Sunlight washed over his face, and, in it, I saw how well the pink scar above his lip had healed.

Suddenly I wanted to withdraw. Pack it all in, go back home. What was I thinking? Why was I putting myself through this, when I already knew the outcome? Baba was on the roof, watching me. I felt his glare on me like the heat of a blistering sun. This would be a failure on a grand scale, even for me.

'I'm not sure I want to fly a kite today,' I said.

'It's a beautiful day,' Hassan said.

I shifted on my feet, tried to peel my gaze away from our rooftop. 'I don't know.

Maybe we should go home.'

crinkled: crumpled

eerie: strange and mysterious

stunted: kept from growing

squabbling: arguing

huddling: crowding together

¹ *cassette players:* a machine for playing and recording a cassette (a sealed plastic unit used for playing music)

² *chapan:* a coat worn over clothes, usually during winters

Then he stepped toward me and, in a low voice, said something that scared me a little.

'Remember, Amir agha. There's no monster, just a beautiful day.' How could I be such an open book to him when, half the time, I had no idea what was milling around in his head? I was the one who went to school, the one who could read, write. I was the smart one. Hassan couldn't read a first-grade textbook but he'd read me plenty. That was a little unsettling, but also sort of comfortable to have someone who always knew what you needed.

'No monster,' I said, feeling a little better, to my own surprise.

He smiled. 'No monster.'

'Are you sure?'

He closed his eyes. Nodded.

I looked at the kids scampering down the street, flinging snowballs. 'It is a beautiful day, isn't it?'

'Let's fly,' he said.

'Let's do it,' I said.

Hassan's face brightened.

'Good,' he said. He lifted our kite, red with yellow borders, and, just beneath where the central and cross spars met, marked with Saifo's unmistakable signature. He licked his finger and held it up, tested the wind, then ran in its direction—on those rare occasions we flew kites in the summer, he'd kick up dust to see which way the wind blew it. The spool rolled in my hands until Hassan stopped, about 50 feet away. He held the kite high over his head, like an Olympic athlete showing his gold medal. I jerked the string twice, our usual signal, and Hassan tossed the kite.



milling: moving

spars: a thick, strong pole



I took a deep breath, exhaled, and pulled on the string. Within a minute, my kite was rocketing to the sky. It made a sound like a paper bird flapping its wings.

Hassan clapped his hands, whistled, and ran back to me. I handed him the spool, holding on to the string, and he spun it quickly to roll the loose string back on.

At least two dozen kites already hung in the sky, like paper sharks roaming for prey.

Within an hour, the number doubled, and red, blue and yellow kites glided and spun in the sky. A cold breeze wafted through my hair. The wind was perfect for kite flying, blowing just hard enough to give some lift, make the sweeps easier. Next to me, Hassan held the spool, his hands already bloodied by the string.

Soon the cutting started and the first of the defeated kites whirled out of control.

They fell from the sky like shooting stars with brilliant, rippling tails, showering the neighbourhoods below with prizes for the kite runners. I could hear the runners now, hollering as they ran the street. Someone shouted reports of a fight breaking out two streets down.

I kept stealing glances at Baba sitting with Rahim Khan on the roof and wondered what he was thinking. Was he cheering for me? Or did a part of him enjoy watching me fail? They were coming down all over the place now, the kites, and I was still flying.

I was still flying, but my eyes kept wandering over to Baba, bundled up in his wool sweater. Was he surprised I had lasted as long as I had?

You don't keep your eyes to the sky, you won't last much longer. I snapped my gaze back to the sky. A red kite was closing in on me—I'd caught it just in time. I tangled a bit with it, ended up basting him when he became impatient and tried to cut me from below.

Up and down the streets, kite runners were returning triumphantly, their captured kites held high. They showed them off to their parents, their friends. But they all knew the best was yet to come. The biggest prize of all was still flying. I sliced a bright yellow kite with a coiled white tail. It cost me another gash on the index finger and blood trickled down into my palm. I had Hassan hold the string and sucked the blood dry, blotted my finger against my jeans.

Within another hour, the number of surviving kites dwindled from maybe 50 to a dozen. I was one of them. I'd made it to the last dozen. I knew this part of the tournament would take a while, because the guys who had lasted this long were good—they wouldn't easily fall into simple traps like the old lift-and-dive, Hassan's favourite trick.

wafted: drifted

hollering: shouting



By three o'clock that afternoon, tufts of clouds had drifted in and the sun had slipped behind them. Shadows started to lengthen. The spectators on the roofs bundled up in scarves and thick coats. We were down to a half dozen and I was still flying. My legs ached and my neck was stiff. But with each defeated kite, hope grew in my heart, like snow collecting on a wall, one flake at a time.

My eyes kept returning to a blue kite that had been **wreaking havoc** for the last hour.

'How many has he cut?' I asked.

'I counted eleven,' Hassan said.

'Do you know whose it might be?'

Hassan clucked his tongue and tipped his chin. That was a trademark Hassan gesture, meant he had no idea. The blue kite sliced a big purple one and swept twice in big loops.

Ten minutes later, he'd cut another two, sending hordes of kite runners racing after them.

After another thirty minutes, only four kites remained. And I was still flying. It seemed I could hardly make a wrong move, as if every gust of wind blew in my favour. I'd never felt so in command, so lucky it felt intoxicating. I didn't look up to the roof. Didn't dare take my eyes off the sky. I had to concentrate, play it smart.

Another fifteen minutes and what had seemed like a laughable dream that morning had suddenly become a reality—it was just me and the other guy. The blue kite.

The tension in the air was as **taut** as the glass string I was tugging with my bloody hands.

People were stamping their feet, clapping, whistling, chanting, 'Boboresh! Boboresh!'

'Cut him!'

Cut him! I wondered if Baba's voice was one of them. Music blasted. The smell of steamed *mantu*¹ and fried *pakora*² drifted from rooftops and open doors.

But all I heard—all I willed myself to hear—was the thudding of blood in my head.

All I saw was the blue kite. All I smelled was victory. Salvation. Redemption. If Baba was wrong and there was a God like they said in school, then He'd let me win. I didn't know what the other guy was playing for, maybe just bragging rights. But this was my one chance to become someone who was looked at, not seen, listened

wreaking havoc: great destruction

taut: stretched tightly

¹ *mantu*: it is a dish served in Afghanistan. It is a meat stuffed dumpling.

² *pakora*: a piece of vegetable or meat, coated in seasoned batter and deep-fried.



to, not heard. And suddenly, just like that, hope became knowledge. I was going to win. It was just a matter of when.

It turned out to be sooner than later. A gust of wind lifted my kite and I took advantage.

Fed the string, and pulled up.

Looped my kite on top of the blue one.

I held position. The blue kite knew it was in trouble. It was trying desperately to manoeuvre out of the jam, but I didn't let go. I held position. The crowd sensed the end was at hand. The chorus of 'Cut him! Cut him!' grew louder, 'You're almost there, Amir Agha! Almost there!' Hassan was panting.

Then the moment came. I closed my eyes and loosened my grip on the string. It sliced my fingers again as the wind dragged it. And then...I didn't need to hear the crowd's roar to know, I didn't need to see either. Hassan was screaming and his arm was wrapped around my neck.

'Bravo! Bravo, Amir agha!'

Abridged extract from The Kite Runner by Khaled Hosseini



About the Author

Khaled Hosseini was born in Kabul in 1965 and had his early education there. In 1976, his family relocated to Paris. From there, Khaled Hosseini moved on to the US to complete his education. *The Kite Runner*, was his first novel and was published in 2003 and is considered a modern classic. He also wrote *A Thousand Splendid Suns* and *And the Mountains Echoed*.



Comprehension

A. Answer these questions.

1. What was special about kite flying in Afghanistan?
2. Why should a kite fighter have an assistant? What was Hassan's role here?
3. Why did Amir want to withdraw? What was he afraid of?
4. Explain Hassan's favourite trick.
5. Amir kept looking at Baba during the kite-flying tournament. Why? What do you think he wanted to prove?

manoeuvre: a movement performed with care and skill



B. Answer these questions with reference to the context.

1. *I felt his glare on me like the heat of a blistering sun. This would be a failure on a grand scale, even for me.*
 - a. Who is the speaker and whose glare is he speaking of?
 - b. What would be a failure?
2. *But this was my one chance to become someone who was looked at, not seen, listened to, not heard.*
 - a. What one chance is Amir talking about?
 - b. What does he mean by 'someone who was looked at, not seen, listened to, not heard'?

C. Think and answer.

1. Why is victory both a salvation and redemption for Amir?
2. Compare the characters of Amir and Hassan from what you have read about them.
3. Physical activities not only keep us healthy and active but also help us forge deep bonds of friendship and teach us the spirit of healthy competition. How far is this true? Support your answers with reasons.



Word Wonder

Read these sentences.

- ▶ The soldiers didn't **go away**.
- ▶ The rabbits **slipped out** from the other end of the warren.

The words highlighted in the sentences on the previous page are phrasal verbs.

A **phrasal verb** is a compound verb that contains a verb and a prepositional adverb or preposition. It functions as does a simple verb; however, a phrasal verb conveys an idiomatic meaning.

Phrasal verbs can be transitive and intransitive and separable and inseparable, which is why they are often referred to as 'two-part verbs'.

- a. Transitive phrasal verbs have a direct object.
For example,
 - ▶ We need to **fill up** petrol in the car.
 - ▶ They need to **cut down** on their expenses.
 - b. Intransitive phrasal verbs do not have a direct object.
 - ▶ They want to **come over** during summer vacations.
- 38 ▶ He will **go back** to Edinburgh in September.



c. If a phrasal verb is separable, it means you can separate the two words and put the direct object in between.

For example,

▶ Please **turn off** the lights.

▶ Please **turn** the lights **off**.

d. If a phrasal verb is inseparable, then you cannot separate the two words.

For example,

▶ They will **look after** his mother when he is away.

▶ The financier **backed out** of the deal at the last minute.

A. Fill in the blanks with appropriate phrasal verbs from the box.

drop off

came across

calm down

cheer up

fill out

dressing up

1. We were asked to _____ a registration form.
2. They came to my house to _____ some food as I was unwell.
3. The manager _____ an advertisement, which helped him find an assistant.
4. She was upset. So, her parents got her some books to _____ her _____.
5. It was difficult to _____ her _____ after the accident.
6. The little girl spent hours _____ her dolls _____.



B. Make as many phrasal verbs as you can, using the verbs and the prepositions given below.

give

take

look

come

see

put

call

away

in

off

on

break

Learn About Language

Read these sentences.

▶ They were carrying **black paper flags**.



▶ The teacher is cleaning the blackboard **with a new duster**.

▶ **Cleaning the house** is Maya's duty.

The highlighted words in these sentences are phrases.

You have already learnt phrases in your previous classes.

Let us revise them.

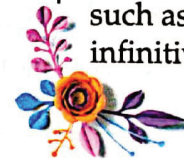
A **phrase** is a group of words that conveys some meaning but does not make complete sense.

There are five types of phrases:

- ▶ noun phrase ▶ adjective phrase ▶ verb phrase
- ▶ adverb phrase ▶ prepositional phrase

a. A **noun phrase** contains a noun (also called a head) and at least one modifier associated to the noun. The head word in a noun phrase is a noun or a pronoun. A modifier can either prefix or suffix the noun. If it prefixes the noun, it is called a pre-modifier. If it suffixes the noun, it is called a post-modifier.

A phrase does not have a finite verb, but it may contain a non-finite verb, such as a participle, an infinitive or a gerund.



Noun modifiers include determiners (articles, demonstratives, numerals, possessives and quantifiers), adjectives and participles.

For example,

▶ Marie lives in a **grand house**.

▶ **Four thieves** broke into the house.

b. When a group of words does the work of an adjective in a sentence, we call it an **adjective phrase**. An adjective phrase tells us something about the noun it is modifying.

For example,

▶ A **green-eyed monster** scared the people away.

▶ Tourism is one of the **fastest-growing industries** today.

c. A **verb phrase** contains at least one verb and its dependents like objects, complements and other modifiers.

For example,

▶ Vikram **is talking** to his brother.

▶ **It might rain** today.

d. A **prepositional phrase** always begins with a preposition and ends with a noun or pronoun which is the preposition's object.



Now, let us see more examples.

- ▶ Mr Malhotra and his daughter had to walk through *the large puddles*.
- ▶ The poor man was proven innocent by *virtue of the law*.

In these sentences, the words in colour are prepositions. The underlined words are the objects of prepositions and the words in italics are the modifiers of the object.

A. Fill in the blanks using the correct form of the phrase as instructed in brackets.

1. I wear _____ to help me see. (noun phrase)
2. The dog _____ barks all day long. (adjective phrase)
3. I'm surprised to learn that _____. (noun phrase)
4. Sameer _____ his watch to get it repaired. (verb phrase)
5. You _____ me when you find time. (verb phrase)
6. She was wearing a necklace _____. (adjective phrase)

B. Identify the types of phrases in these sentences.

1. The meat at the dinner party smelt awfully strange.
2. Those swings in the park have been recently repaired and can be used again.
3. The lawyer who lives next door works very late hours.
4. Let us go and collect your necklace from the jeweller's tomorrow morning.
5. The bright red Toyota has been my pride and joy for the last 10 years.
6. Milkha Singh ran with great speed to win the Commonwealth Games.
7. The doctor took the medicine from her table and gave it to the patient.
8. The doll was placed in the display case at the hotel reception.



C. Use these prepositional phrases to write a descriptive essay.

- ▶ under the blanket
- ▶ at the mercy of
- ▶ by accident
- ▶ for the good of
- ▶ on account of
- ▶ in a deep sleep

Language Lab

A. Listen to the passage and fill in the blanks.

1. Every creature with a will to live has the right to live free from _____ and _____.



2. When a tiger hunts a deer for food, it's not _____, it's _____.
3. Most farms raise animals in _____ conditions.
4. Commit to _____ products.
5. From _____ to _____, animals go through a lot of pain for us to have certain products.



B. Enact an animal story on the theme 'Save Animals'. You may even write your own story.

Composition

A **speech** is meant to convey one's thoughts or opinions, share information with or spread awareness among a large group of people.

A good speech has clarity of thought and expression, accuracy of facts and an unbiased view of issues.

Format of a speech.

- ▶ **Opening paragraph:** The speech will start with a pre-speech note that will include salutation, occasion of speech (if it is a special day such as Earth Day), and announcement of topic.
- ▶ **Development of topic:** Reference to statistics (from books, newspapers or the Internet), effects and results and arguments.
- ▶ **Conclusion:** Conclude with a hope, an appeal or a warning (in the end with a 'Thank You').



A. Write a speech on 'Cruelty towards Animals', to be delivered during the morning assembly in your school.



B. Yoga has cured people of many diseases. Write a speech on 'Yoga—the magical alternate therapy'.

Activity



Work in groups and find out in which other parts of the world the kite-flying festival is celebrated. Then, prepare a file with all the information and pictures. The cover of the file should also be on the theme 'Kite Flying'.



Further Reading: *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas* by John Boyne

