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202en01

SNAKE BITE

Have you ever teased an animal? What did your elders have to say to you? How did the animal react? Did you think about how the animal felt? In this story, the narrator Raja, is an innocent young boy. He is adventurous and likes to meddle with creatures like snakes and bees. His grandparents are concerned about his well-being and safety. Once when a bee stings him, they think he has been bitten by a snake. His grandfather takes him to a man whom he believes can cure snake bite. Let us read the story and see what happens.



OBJECTIVES

After completing this lesson you will be able to:

- discuss the theme of the story;
- relate to the feelings and behaviour of reptiles and other living creatures;
- think critically about people's superstitions and blind faith in untrained medicine men;
- think critically about the myth that all snakes are dangerous;
- realise the importance of timely and effective communication;
- realise that silence is not always good;
- realise that silence is not always good;
- use some new words in meaningful sentences;
- give the past tense form of some commonly used verbs;
- discriminate between regular and irregular verbs;
- form adverbs from adjectives and use them appropriately;
- frame requests and enquiries, and
- write short descriptions of people.



1.1 LET US READ THE TEXT

One day I saw a small snake in the compound. It was crawling along slowly but when it saw me, it moved away quickly and hid itself in a coconut shell. I quietly went near and closed the mouth of the coconut shell with a stone. Then I took the shell and ran to Grandmother.

“Look, Grandma,” I cried, “I have caught a snake.”

“Snake?” asked Grandmother in alarm. She was shocked. She cried for help. Grandfather came running. When he learnt that I had a snake in the shell, he snatched the shell and threw it away.

The snake crawled away and disappeared behind some bushes. Grandfather warned me never to go near a snake, because snakes were very dangerous.

Later in the evening, I tried to catch a bee and it stung me on my finger. I felt a sharp pain. I ran to grandmother and told her that I had been bitten and wanted her to do something to stop the pain. Grandmother thought that I had been bitten by a snake. She called out to Grandfather, “Come and see what has happened to Raja.”

Grandfather came at once. He looked at my finger and there was a blue mark. Without a word he took me in his arms and started running. He ran across the garden and through the paddy fields. He ran and ran and did not stop until he reached a small house quite some distance away from our home. Then he shouted for the man who lived there.

An old grey haired man came out of the house. He knew the cure for snake bite. Grandfather asked him to cure me. The old man took me inside. He looked at my finger and then asked me to sit down and not to move. I sat on Grandfather’s lap. The old man then took some water in a small brass vessel, sat in front of us and started reciting some *mantras*.

I wanted to tell him that it was a bee and not a snake that had bitten me. But Grandfather held me tight and did not allow me to talk. Grandmother too had arrived by then and some other people with her. They looked sad and silently watched me.

By this time the pain in my finger had stopped. But still I had to sit there and get cured of ‘snake bite.’

After a few minutes, the old man got up, washed my finger and gave me some water to drink. He asked me to keep quiet for some more time. Then he turned to Grandfather and said, “Thank God, you brought Raja in time. He is out of danger now. It was indeed a poisonous snake that bit him.”

Grandfather, Grandmother and all others thanked the old man for the magic cure. On returning home, Grandfather sent him gifts.

– Shankar ‘Life with Grandfather’
(a story from the collection)

crawling: moving slowly pulling the body along the ground

in alarm: in anxiety, (here) in fear

shell: hard outer covering of coconut or nuts

learnt: gained knowledge (here) was told

cure: treatment

recite: say something aloud

vessel: a container to hold liquid



1.2 LET US UNDERSTAND THE TEXT

1.2.1 PART 1

One day I saw were very dangerous.

Have you ever seen snakes in your neighbourhood? One day Raja sees a snake in his compound. He carries it home in a coconut shell. His grandmother is shocked to know that there is a snake inside the shell. His grandfather throws the shell away and tells Raja that creatures like snakes are dangerous. His grandparents worry about his safety. His grandfather tells him never to go near a snake again.



INTEXT QUESTIONS 1.1

I. Answer the following questions.

1. Why do you think the snake hid itself?
2. What did Raja do when he saw the snake going into the coconut shell?
3. Why was Grandmother shocked? How did she react?
4. Imagine you are Raja's grandfather. Raja brings home a snake. How do you think you would react?

II. Say whether the following statements are true or false:

1. The snake hid under a stone.
2. Raja was very excited to see the snake.
3. Raja's grandparents were very worried to see the coconut shell with the snake in it.
4. The coconut shell broke and the snake crawled away.



LET US LEARN NEW WORDS 1.1

I. Find words from the passage which mean the opposite of the following words.

1. far
2. opened
3. appeared
4. always



II. Match the words in Column A with their opposites in Column B

Column A

1. quietly
2. slowly
3. went
4. dangerous

Column B

- a. came
- b. harmless
- c. noisily
- d. quickly

**DO YOU KNOW**

- There are about 2000 species of snakes in the world.
- All snakes are not poisonous.
- In India there are 270 species of which only 70 are poisonous.
- Some Indian species are the cobra, the krait, the Flower snake, the rat snake, the python, and the Russell's viper.
- Snakes have good vision.
- All snakes are colour blind.
- Snakes have different habitats; some snakes live in holes, others in warm seas, semi deserts, swamps, and trees.
- The biggest snake in the world is the Anaconda, found in the jungles of South America; it can grow to the size of a full grown man.
- The smallest snake can be just ten centimetres long.

**LET US TALK 1.1**

Making requests

Practice the following dialogues with a friend.

A:

You: Could you open this bottle for me please?

Friend: Sure..

You: Thank you.



B.

Friend:	Do you have a spare pencil?
You:	Yes, I do.
Friend:	May I borrow it? I have forgotten to bring mine.
You:	Of course. Here you are.
Friend:	Thank you.

When you ask someone to do something for you, or ask for permission to do something, it is important to sound polite. Here are some ways in which you can do this.

Requesting someone to do something for you:

“Could you shut the door for me, please?”

“Would you mind passing the paper, please?”

“Can you suggest a movie I could watch over the weekend?”

Asking someone for permission to do something:

“Can I use your computer, please?”

“Could you lend me some money?”

“Do you mind if I turn on the fan?”

Exercise

Now use the examples given above to make simple requests. Ask your friend for some help in doing something, ask for directions to go somewhere, or ask for a dictionary.

1.2.2 PART 2

Later in the evening lived there.

Do you like playing with animals? Did you or anyone you know ever get scratched by a cat or bitten by a dog while playing? How did your parents react to this? Raja is curious about creatures like snakes and bees. In the evening when he tries to catch a bee he gets stung. He runs for help to his grandmother and shows her the sting, she immediately thinks that it is a snake bite. His grandfather looks at the bite and thinks exactly the same thing. He picks him up and runs to the house of a man who he believes can help them. Raja does not get a chance to tell any one that he has been bitten by a bee and not a snake. Sometimes people misunderstand and react to situations without listening or asking questions. Has this ever happened to you?

**INTEXT QUESTIONS 1.2**

I Answer the following questions:

1. Why did the bee sting Raja?
2. Why did Raja go to his grandmother?
3. What did his grandmother think? Why did she think so?
4. What do you think his grandmother should have done when Raja came to her after being stung by a bee?
5. What would have happened if Raja had been bitten by a snake, but his grandmother believed that he was bitten by a bee? Explain in about 30-40 words.

II. Say whether the following statements are true or false:

1. Raja's grandfather got very worried to see the blue mark on Raja's finger.
2. Raja had to run through the paddy fields with his grandfather.
3. Raja and his grandfather ran to catch the bee.
4. Raja's grandfather had to run a long distance carrying Raja in his arms.
5. Raja's grandfather shouted because he was angry.

**LET US LEARN NEW WORDS 1.2**

I. Find words/phrases in the story which are close in meaning to the following words:

stain

far

ache

II. Fill in the blanks in the following sentences using suitable words from the story.

1. She is wearing a diamond ring on her index _____.
2. I have _____ in my legs because I am tired.
3. I grow colourful flowers in my _____.
4. Farmers plough their _____ with tractors.



III. Read the following sentences.

1. Snakes hiss.
2. Bees buzz.
3. Cats mew.
4. Parrots talk.

The underlined words denote the sounds made by the creatures mentioned in the above sentences.

Now match the names of the animals in Column A with their sounds in Column B.

Column A	Column B
1. lions	a. bray
2. elephants	b. chatter
3. donkeys	c. growl
4. monkeys	d. trumpet
5. cows	e. roar
6. bears	f. low

**DO YOU KNOW**

- Bees live in colonies or hives of 50,000 bees on an average.
- Bees have an inborn ability to communicate.
- Bees' language is a language of smells and dancing.
- Bees sting only in self defence.
- After stinging, a bee dies instantly.
- A bee sting is painful.
- When stung by a bee one should remove the stinger as quickly as possible.
- The use of an ice pack reduces the swelling and the pain of a bee sting.



LET US DO 1.1

Complete the following crossword with the help of the given clues. All the words are from the story. One has been done for you.

		² S	N	A	K	E		
¹ C								
								⁴ F
		E						
			³ B					
		⁵ P						
			S					

ACROSS:

- Children learn to move like this on four limbs before they can walk. (5 letters)
- A reptile (5 letters)
- The boy got malaria because he was _____ by mosquitoes. (past participle of the verb 'to bite' - 6 letters)
- Rice fields are known as _____ fields (5 letters)

DOWN:

- A fruit with a hard covering (7 letters)
- A reptile (5 letters)
- A metal (5 letters)
- A part of the body (6 letters)

1.2.3 PART 3

An old gray haired man.....Grandfather sent him gifts.

When you fall ill or get hurt you usually go to a doctor if you live in a city or town. But in most villages doctors are not easily available. So villagers usually go to the village medicine man for help. This is what happens with Raja too. Raja's grandparents think that the bee sting on his finger is a snake bite. His grandfather picks him up and runs across the fields to the house of a medicine man. The medicine man convinces them that Raja's life is in danger

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because of the poisonous snake bite. Raja's finger stops hurting before the medicine man gives him any treatment, but Raja does not tell anyone this. The medicine man makes Raja's grandparents believe that Raja is safe because of his treatment and *mantras*. Raja's grandfather thanks the medicine man by giving him gifts, but Raja knows that the old man is a liar and has fooled everybody.



Notes



INTEXT QUESTIONS 1.3

I. Answer the following questions:

1. What did Grandfather tell the old man to do?
2. What two things did the old man do?
3. Why was everyone sad and silent?
4. Why did Raja's grandfather send gifts to the old man?
5. Do you think the old man cured Raja? Give reasons for your answer.
6. If you were Raja would you keep quiet like him?

II. Say whether the following statements are true or false:

1. The old man gave Raja medicine to cure him.
2. Only Raja knew that he had not been bitten by a snake.
3. Raja's grandfather did not give Raja a chance to tell what had happened to him.
4. As time passed the pain in Raja's finger stopped.



LET US LEARN NEW WORDS 1.3

I. Find words in the story which are opposite in meaning to the following words:

1. loose
2. happy
3. loudly
4. noisy
5. young
6. safety



LET US DO 1.2

In the box given below there is a list of adjectives which can be used for Raja, his grandparents or the old man. Write them in column A, B or C as the case may be. You may take the help of a dictionary to know the meanings of the given words.

caring, simple, obedient, affectionate, pretender, superstitious, nervous, innocent, gullible, adventurous, concerned, innocent, clever

A	B	C
Raja	Grandparents	Old man

Task 1.

Visit 10 houses in your neighbourhood to find out how people react and what they do if there is a crisis like snake bite or dog bite. How many households go to untrained medicine men, nearby hospitals, private doctors or use home remedies? Enter this information into the table given below.

House no.	Private doctors	Untrained medicine men/ magic curers	Hospitals	Home remedies
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				

Task 2.

Explain the advantage of going to doctor/hospital, to the people who go to untrained medicine men for treatment.



1.3 LET US LEARN GRAMMAR

The Verb

We can classify verbs as regular verbs and irregular verbs.

**Regular verbs**

Read the following sentences appearing in the story:

1. Grandmother was shocked to see the snake in the coconut shell.
2. She called out to Grandfather.
3. They reached a small house.
4. Then he shouted for the man who lived there.

- The underlined verbs are in the simple past tense; they refer to actions that happened in the past.
- To form simple past tense verbs from simple present tense verbs we just add ‘-d’ or ‘-ed’ to the verb.

e.g. shock + ed = shocked

call + ed = called

reach + ed = reached

shout + ed = shouted

live + d = lived

dive + d = dived

like + d = liked

- These verbs are regular verbs because they have ‘-d’ or ‘-ed’ endings as a regular feature in the past tense.

Irregular Verbs

Read the following sentences:

1. I took the shell and ran to Grandmother.
2. He snatched the shell and threw it away.
3. Look, Grandma, I caught a snake.

- The underlined verbs are irregular verbs; they do not end in ‘-d’ or ‘-ed’.
- All verbs do not take the ‘d’ or ‘ed’ endings to form the past tense. In some verbs there is a change in spellings in the past tense form as you see in the above sentences.
- Examples:

simple present tense

simple past tense

take

took

throw

threw

catch

caught



- Given below are some more examples of irregular verbs:

run	ran
hear	heard
bring	brought
buy	bought
deal	dealt
bind	bound

- Some verbs remain the same in the past tense as they are in the present tense.
- Examples:

We put (simple present tense) some extra sugar in our tea.

I am sorry I put (simple past tense) salt instead of sugar yesterday.

Exercise 1

Find five examples each of past tense forms of regular and irregular verbs in the story.

Exercise 2

Write the simple past tense of the following verbs. Put them in column A (regular) or column B (irregular) as the case may be.

draw, walk, manage, hold, ask, forgive, drive,
meet, swim, repair, shake, cook, ring, clean,
enjoy, bear, lead, cheat, write, eat,

Exercise 3

Give two examples of verbs that are the same in the present and past tense.

Adverbs

Read the following sentences.

- She reads the newspaper.
- She reads the newspaper silently.

In the first sentence reads is an action word (verb).

In the second sentence silently tells us **how** she reads i.e. it tells us something more about the verb. It is an adverb.

As you know verbs are action words. Adverbs are words that tell us something more about verbs.

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Notes

Read the following sentences.

- He speaks loudly.
- She walks slowly.
- She dresses up beautifully.
- He walks fast.

The underlined words are adverbs.

Usually adverbs are formed by adding 'ly' to adjectives.

Examples:

- loud + ly = loudly
- slow + ly = slowly
- beautiful + ly = beautifully

However, some adverbs are exceptions to this rule. We do not add 'ly' to some adjectives to make adverbs. For example we say 'I walk **fast**'. We **do not** say 'I walk **fastly**'.

Exercise 4

Form adverbs from the adjectives and use them in your own sentences.

neat, nice, soft, clear, elegant, careful, regular, graceful



LET US DO 1.3

1. Do you know that there are several branches of Traditional Medicine in India? Some examples are Ayurveda, Homeopathy, and Unani. Speak with a doctor in your locality to understand the difference between Western Medicine (Allopathy) and Traditional Medicine (Ayurveda, Homeopathy, Unani).
2. Speak with your mother and write down a list of things found at home that she uses to cure simple ailments. For example she might use ginger for stomach upsets.



1.4 LET US WRITE

Describing people

Raja came home and wrote a description of the old man.

Before writing the description of the man, Raja noted some points given below:



Notes

Age:	old
Physical features:	tall, stout, white beard, grey hair, shrewd looks,
Dress:	long white robe and a skull-cap
Behaviour:	polite and gentle
Special points:	intelligent
This is what Raja wrote:	

An old grey haired man came out of the hut. He was short and stout and had a white beard. He wore a long white robe and a skull-cap. He looked quite shrewd and intelligent. He was also very polite and gentle.

Exercise

In about 6 or 7 simple sentences write a description of a person with the help of the hints given below.

- Name: _____
- Age: 35 years
- Physical features: tall, heavy built, fair complexion, sharp nose
- Nature: simple, friendly, helpful, kind
- Hobbies: singing, reading
- Profession: teaching



WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNT

We learnt that in an emergency it is very important to find out what happened before reacting, if we want to avoid making mistakes. Sometimes we unnecessarily complicate situations because we are influenced by our wrong beliefs, lack of knowledge and fear of even harmless things. The simple problem of Raja's bee sting got complicated due to all of the above reasons. We also learnt that we should beware of untrained medicine men (like the old man in the story) who cheat innocent people by creating fear in their minds.



TERMINAL QUESTIONS

1. What do you think Raja felt when he had to sit in front of the old man to be treated for a snake-bite?



2. Why do you think Raja's grandfather did not let Raja speak? Do you approve of Raja's silence?
3. In your opinion what kind of a person was the old man?
4. If you were the old man would you accept the gifts sent by Raja's grandfather? Give reasons for your answer.
5. Many people are afraid of snakes. Why do they fear snakes? Do you think they are right? Give reasons for your answer.

**ANSWERS****1.2.1 PART 1****INTEXT QUESTIONS 1.1**

1.because it was scared of human beings.
2. Raja put a stone on the mouth of the coconut shell to close it.
3. Raja's grandmother was shocked to hear that Raja had brought home a snake. She cried for help.
4. Individual responses.

II. 1. F 2. T 3. T 4. F

LET US LEARN NEW WORDS 1.1

I. 1. near 2. closed 3. disappeared 4. never

- II 1. quietly c. noisily
 2. slowly d. quickly
 3. went a. came
 4. dangerous b. harmless

1.2.2 PART 2**INTEXT QUESTIONS 1.2**

- I. 1. ... because Raja tried to catch it.
2. ... because he was in pain and wanted his grandmother to help him stop the pain.
3. Grandmother thought that a snake had bitten Raja because he told her that he had been bitten, and because he had brought home a snake in the morning.



Notes

4. Individual responses.

Suggested response: Raja’s grandmother should have spoken to him and asked him to tell what had happened.

5. Individual responses

II. 1. T 2. F 3. F 4. T 5. F

LET US LEARN NEW WORDS 1.2

I. 1. mark 2. some distance away 3. pain

II. 1. finger 2. pain 3. garden 4. fields

III. 1. lions roar
2. elephants trumpet
3. donkeys bray
4. monkeys chatter
5. cows low
6. bears growl

LET US DO 1.1

Crossword

Across

- 1. crawl
- 2. snake
- 3. bitten
- 5. paddy

Down

- 1. coconut
- 2. snake
- 3. brass
- 4. finger

		² S	N	A	K	E		
		N						
¹ C	R	A	W	L				
O		K						⁴ F
C		E						I
O			³ B	I	T	T	E	N
N			R					G
U		⁵ P	A	D	D	Y		E
T			S					R
			S					

1.2.3 PART 3

INTEXT QUESTIONS 1.3

I. 1. Grandfather told the old man to cure Raja of snake-bite.



2. i. took some water in a vessel
ii. recited *mantras*
3. Everybody was sad and silent because they thought Raja had been bitten by a snake and his life was in danger.
4. Grandfather sent gifts to the old man as a reward for curing Raja.
5. No, the old man did not cure Raja. The old man knew how to cure snake bite, but Raja did not have a snake bite. He had a bee sting, and his bee sting stopped hurting before the old man washed his finger and gave him water to drink.
6. Individual responses

II. 1. F 2. T 3. T 4. T

LET US LEARN NEW WORDS 1.3

1. tight 2. sad 3. silently 4. quiet
5. old 6. danger

LET US DO 1.2

A	B	C
<u>Raja</u>	<u>Grandparents</u>	<u>old man</u>
obedient	caring	pretender
Innocent	simple	clever
adventurous	affectionate	
	superstitious	
	nervous	
	gullible	
	concerned	

1.3 LET US LEARN GRAMMAR**Exercise 1**

Simple past tense verbs appearing in the story

Regular verbs Irregular verbs

shocked	hid
snatched	went
warned	thought
wanted	held
happened	gave

**Exercise 2**A (regular)

walked
managed
asked
repaired
cooked
cleaned
enjoyed
cheated

B (irregular)

drew
held
forgave
drove
met
swam
shook
rang
bore
led
wrote
ate

Exercise 3

let cut

Exercise 4**Adverbs**

neatly nicely softly clearly elegantly
carefully regularly gracefully

TERMINAL QUESTIONS

1. Individual responses

Suggested response: he might have felt restless and helpless.

2. Individual responses.

Suggested response:

Raja's grandfather did not let him speak because he was very sure about what was wrong with Raja and about what had to be done. He did not want to waste time talking about it because he believed Raja's life was in danger.

If I was in Raja's place I might have freed myself from my grandfather's arms and run away. However, I do not approve of Raja's silence, he should have told his father the reality.

3. Individual responses

Suggested response: He was shrewd and dishonest.

4. Individual responses

5. Individual responses