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SUBJECT: ENGLISH (HONEY COMB)

CLASS: VII

LESSON -2 THE GIFT OF CHAPPALS

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SUMMARY

Mridu is a young girl living with her grandmother, Tapi and grandfather, Thatha in Chennai. Mridu goes along with Tapi to her aunt Rukku Manni's place one afternoon. There she meets her cousins Lalli, Ravi and Meena. Everyone at Rukku Manni's house was glad to see Mridu. There was a thick bitter-berry bush in their backyard, Ravi took her beside that. There was a small kitten inside a torn football. The small creature was busy drinking milk that was kept inside a half-shell of a coconut.

Meena informed Mridu that they have found the kitten outside their house in the morning of that day. But, they must keep it as a secret, otherwise, the grandmother will leave their house immediately. Ravi was upset that they were being taught to be kind towards animals, but when he was trying to do so, elders were screaming at them, calling the kitten a dirty creature. His grandmother was suspicious while he was taking out milk for the kitten from kitchen. He had to drink more than half of the milk to make her believe that it was for him.

He also told Mridu that they have named the kitten as Mahendran. Mridu loved the name because it sounded real unlike those cute ones you keep for the kittens. Ravi further added that its complete name was Mahendravarma Pallava Poonai and M P Poonai in short.

He informed her that he could make it from its fur that it was a fine breed cat, a close relative of lion family like the one that Pallava kings used in their emblem. To this, Mridu giggled which instigated Ravi to prove his knowledge about the history further. On his school trip to Mahabalipuram, he had seen statue of a lion and he firmly believes that it was the ancestor of that kitten. He proudly announced that his small kitten is the descendant of Mahabalipuram Rishi-Cat. He reminded Mridu of cats being worshipped in ancient Egypt. He believed it to be a descendant of cat goddess, Bastet.

Ravi was busy in making all proud announcements about his kitten when a weird sound 'Kreech...!' came from the window. Mridu was shocked, while Mahendran was frightened. Mahendran jumped with fear on a dry red chillies kept under the Sun for drying. With the kreeching noise continuing on the background, Mridu enquired what it was? Ravi informed her that it was Lalli, learning to play the violin. Mridu peeped from the window and she found Lalli was holding the violin in an awkward position sitting a bit away from her music teacher, who had his back towards the window.

The teacher was bald with a fringe of oiled black hair falling around his ears. There was gold chain in the neck and a ring on this hand. He had a big toe with which he was thumping the ground. He was playing the notes perfectly on the violin, while Lalli was struggling hard. His tracks were filled with melody, while Lalli continued missing the notes.

Children were having fun peeping from the window, when Rukku Manni called Ravi to send the beggar away. She was fed up with the beggar coming to their place for a week now and wanted him to find another house. The beggar had made himself comfortable at the garden. He was leaning

against the neem tree with his upper cloth spread under it. He was about to snooze when he heard Ravi, asking him to leave. He was shocked hearing this and called for lady of the house. An irritated Rukku Manni told Ravi that there wasn't anything left in the kitchen and asked the beggar not to come again.

Her voice was so loud that Ravi didn't have to repeat her words to the beggar. The beggar told them that he would leave after taking rest for a while. It was too hot outside and there were blisters in his feet. The children were in pain seeing this and started making plans to give him chappals.

Mridu remembered seeing a pair of old grey chappals, while she had entered Ravi's house. She asked Ravi whom they belonged to. Ravi took the chappals and gave it to the beggar and asked him not to come again. The beggar went away wearing the chappals and blessing the children. It was the time for the music teacher to leave. He was looking for his chappals. He called Lalli and they looked everywhere, but didn't find them. Lalli informed Rukku Manni about it. Rukku Manni questioned the children if they had seen anyone picking up the chappals.

Rukku Manni was really angry and Mridu couldn't control anymore. She told her that they have given the music teacher's chappals to the beggar. Rukku Manni went inside and brought Gopu mama's new chappals and gave them to the music teacher. The teacher was happy getting the new chappals, but still pretended as though it was tough for him to accept them.

The teacher called Ravi a monkey, an incarnation of lord Hanuman, which seemed clear that Rukku Manni didn't like. She wanted the teacher to leave immediately.

After he left, she called the children home and offered them some snacks. She thanked God that Gopu mama doesn't go to office in Chappals, but needed them after coming home immediately. She wondered what she will tell him giving a hint that she will take the blame on herself.

WORD MEANINGS:

1. **scrawny:** thin
2. **paati:** grandmother(in tamil)
3. **throw her off the scent:** mislead her so that she won't understand the real purpose
4. **thatha:** grandfather (in tamil)
5. **descendent:** a descendent of, or comes from the same family
6. **stowaway:** someone who hides himself/ herself in a ship or an aircraft to travel unnoticed
7. **weird:** strange or unusual
8. **glided:** moved along smoothly
9. **veshti:** dhoti (in tamil)
10. **stumbled:** followed haltingly
11. **beringed:** the music-master is wearing a ring

12. **snooze:** short sleep
13. **kept my body and soul together:** managed to stay alive
14. **fed up:** tired and unhappy
15. **blisters:** boils or bubbles on the skin, from burns or rubbing
16. **eyes filling:** with tears
17. **unappreciative:** disapproving
18. **lurking:** waiting quietly
19. **clattered off:** gone off noisily

COMPREHENSION CHECK (PAGE-22)

Q1. What is the secret that Meena shares with Mridu in the backyard?

Ans. Inside a torn football lined with sacking and filled with sand, lay a very small kitten , lapping up milk from a coconut half-shelf. This is the secret that Meena shares with Mridu.

Q2. How does Ravi get milk for the kitten?

Ans. Ravi gets milk for the kitten secretly by saying that he is very hungry. He even drinks most of it to prove Paati that he was indeed hungry. He then brings the tumbler in the backyard and emptied it in the coconut shelf.

Q3. Who does he say the kitten's ancestors are? Do you believe him?

Ans. Ravi says that one of the descendants of the Egyptian cat goddess was a stowaway in a Pallava ship and his descendant was the Mahabalipuram Rishi-Cat, which has the Emblem of the Pallava dynasty. No, I don't believe this story.

Q5. What was the noise that startled Mridu and frightened Mahendran?

Ans. The noise that startled Mridu and frightened Mahendran was a 'kreech..! sound coming when Lalli was learning to play violin.

COMPREHENSION CHECK (PAGE-28)

Q1. The music master is making lovely music. Write the sentence from the text that expresses the idea.

Ans. The music-master's notes seemed to float up and settle perfectly into the visible tracks of the melody.

Q2. Had the beggar come to Rukku Manni's house for the first time? Give answer for your answer.

Ans. No, the beggar has been coming to Rukku Manni's house for last one week. The beggar himself confirms this saying that he has survived for a week because of Rukku Manni's kindness.

Q3. "A sharp V-shaped line had formed between her eyebrows". What does it suggest to you about Rukku Manni's mood?

Ans. The V-shaped line suggests that Rukku Manni was very angry and was about to lose her temper on the children.

WORKING WITH THE TEXT (PAGE-29)

ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

Q2. Describe the music teacher, as seen from the window.

Ans. The music teacher was a bony figure. He was sitting in front of Lalli with his back towards the window. He was a bald-headed man with a fringe of oiled black hair falling around his ears and an old-fashioned tuft. He had a shining gold chain around his neck and a diamond ring on his hand. He was wearing a golden-bordered dhoti. His large foot stuck on the floor and he was beating time on the floor with the scrawny toe.

Q3 (i). What makes Mridu conclude that the beggar has no money to buy chappals?

Ans. When Mridu saw the blistered feet of the beggar, she concluded that he did not have any money to buy chappals.

Q3(ii). What does she suggest to show her concern?

Ans. Mridu was concerned about the beggar. She suggested giving an old pair of chappals to the beggar.

Q4. "Have you children...." she began, and then, seeing they were curious quiet, went on more slowly, "seen anyone lurking around the verandah?"

(i). What do you think Rukku Manni really wanted to ask?

Ans. Rukku Manni wanted to ask the children what they have done with chappals.

(ii). Why did she change her question?

Ans. She changed her question finding the children serious and quiet. She became sure that the children had done something to the chappals.

(iii). What did she think had happened?

Ans. She thought that the children would have hidden the chappals somewhere.

Q5. On getting a gift of chappals, the music teacher tried not to look too happy. Why?

Ans. The music teacher's chappals were old but he lied to Lalli saying that they were brand new. Gopu mama had hardly worn his new chappals. The music teacher was happy getting them, but was trying to hide those feelings. He tried to show that he was upset with the children and his loss.

Q6. On getting a gift of chappals, the beggar vanished in a minute. Why was he in such a hurry to leave?

Ans. On getting a gift of chappals, the beggar vanished in a minute because he didn't want to lose the gift of those chappals. His feet were blistered and felt that he wouldn't have got anything better from that house.

Q7. Walking towards the kitchen with Mridu and Meena, Rukku Manni began to laugh. What made her laugh?

Ans. Gopu mama was always in such a hurry to throw off his shoes and socks and get into his chappals as soon as he came home. Rukku Manni began to laugh while thinking about the reaction of her husband, when he would come to know that his new chappals were given to the music teacher.

POEM-2 THE REBEL -By D.J.Enright

Short Summary:

The poem tells the nature of a rebel, who does not conform to the norms of the society. He does just the opposite of what others do. The poet tells that it is dangerous but at the same time, it is good because it is rebel, who comes with the new ideas.

Stanza 1

When everybody has short hair,

The rebel lets his hair grow long.

When everybody has long hair,

The rebel cuts his hairs short.

Explanation: When the rebel encounters a group of people with short hair, he would allow his hair to grow long because he derives pleasure and satisfaction by going against them. However, he is not constant and therefore when he sees people growing their hair long, he would end up cutting his short.

Stanza 2

When everybody talks during the lesson,

The rebel doesn't say a word.

When nobody talks during the lesson,

The rebel creates a disturbance.

Explanation: Seeing everybody talk during the lesson, the rebel suddenly finds his silence most valuable. However, because he is a rebel, he cannot help but create disturbances and make a series of interruption, when he sees that everybody else has become quiet. The rebel constantly seeks attention by doing what others don't do.

Stanza 3

When everybody wears a uniform,

The rebel dresses in fantastic clothes,
When everybody wears fantastic clothes,
The rebel dresses soberly.

Explanation: Because the rebel always wants to showcase and exhibit himself as different, he would wear colourful clothes, when everybody else is dressed up in a common uniform. However, the moment he sees others dressed up in different and colourful clothes, he would be unable to control his urge to wear the uniform.

Stanza 4

In the company of dog lovers,
The rebel expresses a preference for cats.
In the company of cat lovers,
The rebel puts in a good word for dogs.

Explanation: When the rebel finds himself in the company of dog lovers, he begins to prefer the cats. On the other hand, on being surrounded by cat lovers, he will put in a favourable word for dogs. His preferences and choices never seem to match with anyone else in the group.

Stanza 5

When everybody is praising the sun,
The rebel remarks on the need for rain.
When everybody is greeting the rain,
The rebel regrets the absence of sun.

Explanation: Even with respect to the weather, it is difficult to bring the rebel on board for he would appreciate the sun while all others would be welcoming the rains and miss the rains while others would be enjoying the sun.

Stanza 6

When everybody goes to the meeting,
The rebel stays at home and reads a book.
When everybody stays at home and reads a book,
The rebel goes to the meeting.

Explanation: The rebels are people, who are usually all alone for they prefer to step on a different path than others. So, when others go for meeting, they stay at home and read a book. When the others stay at home, they go to the meeting.

Stanza 7

When everybody says, Yes please,

The rebel says, No thank you.

When everybody says, No thank you,

The rebel says, Yes please.

Explanation: Saying yes when everybody says no and saying no when everybody says yes is another character trait of the rebel.

Lines 29 & 30

It is very good that we have rebels.

You may not find it very good to be one.

Explanation: It seems that having rebels around us is beneficial as they train us to acknowledge differences. However, it is not good to be a rebel because they are not accepted by the society.

WORKING WITH THE POEM (PAGE-34)

ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS.

Q1 (i). If someone doesn't wear uniform to school, what do you think the teacher will say?

Ans. The teacher will ask him/ her about the reason for not being in uniform and then take action accordingly.

(ii). When everyone wants a clear sky, what does the rebel want most?

Ans. When everyone wants a clear sky, the rebel wants rain the most.

(iii). If the rebel has a dog for a pet, what is everyone else likely to have?

Ans. If the rebel has a dog for a pet, then everyone else is likely to have a cat.

(iv). Why is it good to have rebels?

Ans. It is good to have rebels because they oppose the decision of the majority freely, which can be beneficial.

(v). Why is it not good to be a rebel oneself?

Ans. It is not good to be a rebel, as no one will like you and you will have many enemies.

(vi). Would you like to be a rebel? If yes, why ? If not, why not?

Ans. No, I wouldn't like to be a rebel as I don't want to hurt the feelings of others. No, I don't want to be a source of bitterness among the people.