



UNIT 4

TRAVEL AND ADVENTURE

THE TUNNEL



0773CH04

Let us do these activities before we read.

I What kind of an adventure activity would you like to be a part of?
Now, choose the option(s) that best applies to you.

1. How would you like to spend your weekends?

- (i) Trying new activities (ii) Reading a book
(iii) Spending time with friends (iv) Learning something new

2. Which of these places would you prefer to explore?

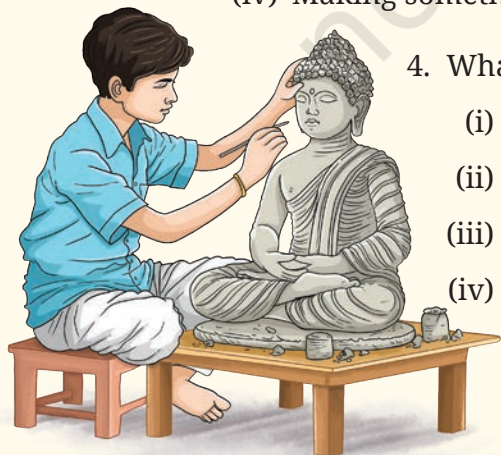
- (i) Dense forests and clear streams
(ii) Magical lands with fairies
(iii) Busy cities with interesting people
(iv) Quiet places to think and create

3. Which one of these activities would you prefer to do?

- (i) Climbing a mountain or exploring a jungle
(ii) Finding a hidden treasure or discovering a secret world
(iii) Solving puzzles or guessing riddles with friends
(iv) Making something creative or building a model

4. What do you think about teamwork?

- (i) I love leading the team.
(ii) I enjoy working with others.
(iii) I prefer sharing ideas with friends.
(iv) I like working alone.



Based on your choices, which of the following do you think applies the best to you? Discuss with your classmates.

- Bold Explorer
- Energetic Planner
- Imaginative Dreamer
- Thoughtful Creator

You may add to the list as per your choices.



Let us read



shimmered:

shined with a light that appears to move

railway embankment:

a stone wall made to carry the railway over low ground

cutting:

a narrow valley cut through a hill to make space for a railway line

scrub-covered:

covered with short trees and bushes

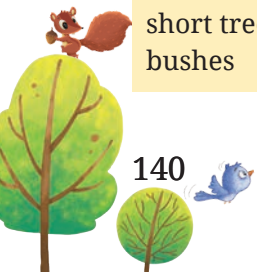
I

It was almost noon, and the jungle was very still, very silent. Heat waves shimmered along the railway embankment where it cut a path through the tall evergreen trees. The railway lines were two straight black serpents disappearing into the tunnel in the hillside.

Suraj stood near the cutting, waiting for the midday train. It wasn't a station, and he wasn't catching a train. He was waiting so that he could watch the steam engine come roaring out of the tunnel.

He had cycled out of the town and taken the jungle path until he had come to a small village. He had left the cycle there, and walked over a low scrub-covered hill and down to the tunnel exit.

Now he looked up. He had heard, in the distance, the shrill whistle of the engine. He couldn't see anything, because the train was approaching from the other side of the hill;



but presently a sound like distant thunder issued from the tunnel, and he knew the train was coming through.



A second or two later, the steam engine shot out of the tunnel, snorting and puffing like some green, black, and gold dragon, some beautiful monster out of Suraj's dreams. Showering sparks left and right, it roared a challenge to the jungle.

Instinctively, Suraj stepped back a few paces. Waves of hot steam struck him in the face. Even the trees seemed to **flinch** from the noise and heat. And then the train had gone, leaving only a **plume of smoke** to drift lazily over the tall **shisham** trees.

The jungle was still again. No one moved.

Suraj turned from his **contemplation** of the drifting smoke and began walking along the embankment towards the tunnel.

The tunnel grew darker as he walked further into it. When he had gone about twenty yards, it became pitch dark. Suraj had to turn and look back at the opening to **reassure** himself that there was still daylight outside. Ahead of him, the tunnel's other opening was just a small round circle of light.

The tunnel was still full of smoke from the train, but it would be several hours before another train came through. Till then, the cutting belonged to the jungle again.

instinctively:
without thought
or plan

flinch: make a
quick movement

**plume of
smoke:** long,
thin cloud of
smoke

shisham: a
tree found in
northern parts
of India

contemplation:
deep thought

reassure:
comfort, calm



scuttled: ran hurriedly

dazzled: blinded by bright light

swishing: moving with a brushing sound

Suraj didn't stop, because there was nothing to do in the tunnel and nothing to see. He had simply wanted to walk through, so that he would know what the inside of a tunnel was really like. The walls were damp and sticky. A bat flew past. A lizard **scuttled** between the lines.

Coming straight from the darkness into the light, Suraj was **dazzled** by the sudden glare and put a hand up to shade his eyes. He looked up at the tree-covered hillside and thought he saw something moving between the trees.

It was just a flash of orange and gold, and a long **swishing** tail. It was there between the trees for a second or two, and then it was gone.

About fifteen metres from the entrance to the tunnel stood the watchman's hut. Marigolds grew in front of the hut, and at the back there was a small vegetable patch. It was the watchman's duty to inspect the tunnel and keep it clear of **obstacles**.

Every day, before the train came through, he would walk the length of the tunnel. If all was well, he would

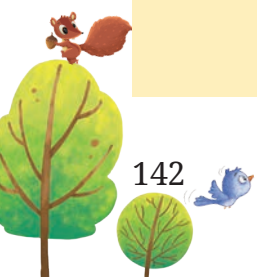
return to his hut and take a nap. If something was wrong, he would walk back up the line and wave a red flag, and the engine driver would slow down. At night, the watchman lit an oil lamp and made a similar inspection of the tunnel. Of course, he would not stop the train if there was a **porcupine** on the line. But if there was any danger to the train, he'd go back up the line and wave his lamp to the approaching engine. If all was well, he'd hang his lamp at the door of his hut and go to sleep.

He was just settling down on his cot for an afternoon nap when he saw the boy emerge from the tunnel. He waited until Suraj was only a metre or so away and then said, "Welcome, welcome. I don't often have visitors. Sit down for a while, and tell me why you were inspecting my tunnel."

"Is it your tunnel?" asked Suraj.

obstacles: things that block the way

porcupine: a small animal (large rodent) with sharp spikes on its back





“It is,” said the watchman. “It is truly my tunnel, since no one else will have anything to do with it. I have only lent it to the Government.”

Suraj sat down on the edge of the cot.

“I wanted to see the train come through,” he said. “And then, when it had gone, I thought I’d walk through the tunnel.”

“And what did you find in it?”

“Nothing. It was very dark. But when I came out, I thought I saw an animal—up on the hill—but I’m not sure, it moved off very quickly.”

“It was a leopard you saw,” said the watchman. “My leopard.”

“Do you own a leopard too?”

“I do.”

“And do you lend it to the Government?”

“I do not.”

“Is it dangerous?”

“No, it’s a leopard that minds its own business. It comes to this **range** for a few days every month.”

“Have you been here a long time?” asked Suraj.

“Many years. My name is Sunder Singh.”

“My name’s Suraj.”

“There is one train during the day. And there is one train

range: area



night mail: a train that runs at night

during the night. Have you seen the **night mail** come through the tunnel?”

“No. At what time does it come?”

“About nine o’clock, if it isn’t late. You could come and sit here with me, if you like. And after it has gone, instead of going to sleep I will take you home.”

“I’ll ask my parents,” said Suraj. “Will it be safe?”

“Of course. It is safer in the jungle than in the town. Nothing happens to me out here. But last month, when I went into town, I was almost run over by a bus.”

Sunder Singh yawned and stretched himself out on the cot. “And now I am going to take a nap, my friend. It is too hot to be up and about in the afternoon.”

“Everyone goes to sleep in the afternoon,” complained Suraj. “My father lies down as soon as he’s had his lunch.”

“Well, the animals also rest in the heat of the day. It is only the tribe of boys who cannot, or will not, rest.”

Sunder Singh placed a large banana leaf over his face to keep away the flies, and was soon snoring gently. Suraj stood up, looking up and down the railway tracks. Then he began walking back to the village.

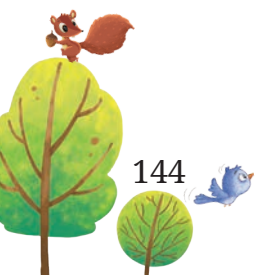
Let us discuss

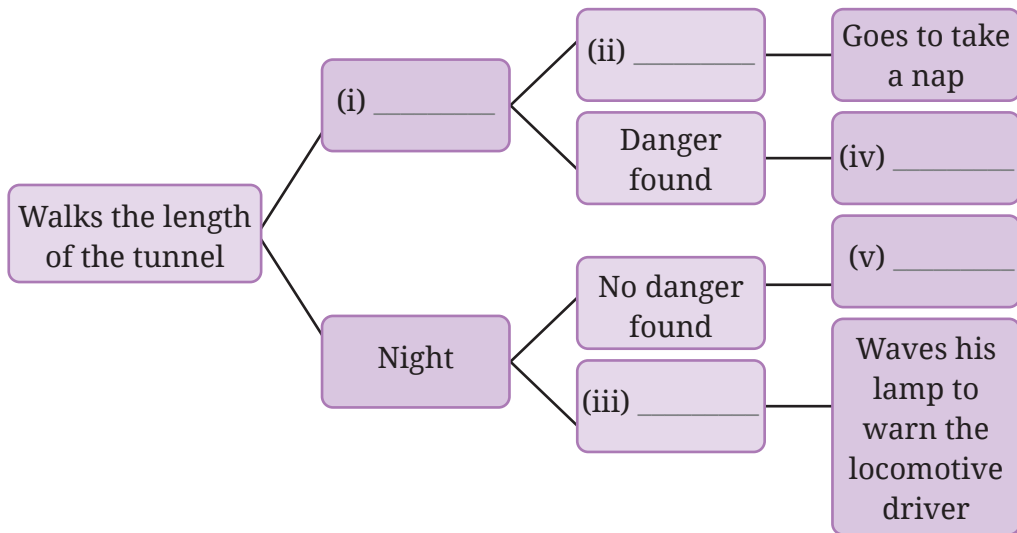
1. Suraj compares the train to a magical creature. Pick the phrases that convey the meaning.
2. Suraj knew that the train was close by because _____.
3. What did Suraj see inside the tunnel?
4. Select the correct option.

What does Sunder Singh convey about the tunnel?

He says that _____ (it is damp and sticky inside/he has lent it to the Government).

5. The watchman has created a system through which he informs the locomotive driver about any danger in the tunnel. The following flow chart shows this system. Refer to the text and complete the flow chart.





II

The following evening, towards dusk, as the flying foxes **swooped** silently out of the trees, Suraj made his way to the watchman's hut.

It had been a long hot day, but now the earth was cooling, and a light breeze was moving through the trees. It carried with it the scent of mango blossoms, the promise of rain.

Sunder Singh was waiting for Suraj. He had watered his small garden, and the flowers looked cool and fresh. A kettle was boiling on a small oil stove.

"I am making tea," he said. "There is nothing like a glass of hot tea while waiting for a train."

They drank their tea, listening to the sharp notes of the tailorbird and the noisy chatter of the **seven sisters**.

swooped:

moved quickly through the air downwards

seven sisters:

birds, also called jungle babblers and found in groups of six to eight



quaint: unusual

nightjar: a nocturnal bird with a short bill

flexing: bending

trimming: (here) adjusting the wick of the lamp

As the brief twilight faded, most of the birds fell silent. Sunder Singh lit his oil lamp and said it was time for him to inspect the tunnel. He moved off towards the tunnel, while Suraj sat on the cot, sipping his tea. In the dark, the trees seemed to move closer to him. And the nightlife of the forest was conveyed on the breeze—the sharp call of a barking deer, the cry of a fox, the **quaint** tonk-tonk of a **nightjar**. There were some sounds that Suraj didn't recognise—sounds that came from the trees, creakings and whisperings, as though the trees were coming to life, stretching their limbs in the dark, shifting a little, **flexing** their fingers.

Sunder Singh stood inside the tunnel, **trimming** his lamp. The night sounds were familiar to him and he did not give them much thought; but something else—a padded footfall, a rustle of dry leaves—made him stand still for a few seconds, peering into the darkness. Then, humming softly to himself, he returned to where Suraj was waiting. Ten minutes remained for the night mail to arrive.

As Sunder Singh sat down on the cot beside Suraj, a new sound reached both of them quite distinctly—a rhythmic sawing sound, as if someone cutting through the branch of a tree.

“What's that?” whispered Suraj.

“It's the leopard,” said Sunder Singh. “I think it's in the tunnel.”

“The train will soon be here,” said Suraj.

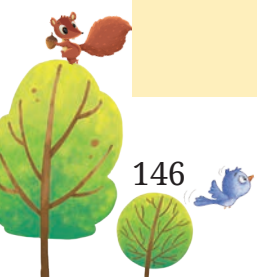
“Yes, my friend. And if we don't drive the leopard out of the tunnel, it will be run over and killed. I can't let that happen.”

“But won't it attack us if we try to drive it out?” asked Suraj, beginning to share the watchman's concern.

“Not this leopard. It knows me well. We have seen each other many times. It has a weakness for goats and stray dogs, but it will not harm us. Even so, I'll take my axe with me. You stay here, Suraj.”

“No, I'm coming with you. It will be better than sitting here alone in the dark!”

“All right, but stay close behind me. And remember, there is nothing to fear.”



Raising his lamp, Sunder Singh advanced into the tunnel, shouting at the top of his voice to try and scare away the animal. Suraj followed close behind, but he found he was unable to do any shouting. His throat was quite dry.



They had gone about twenty paces into the tunnel when the light from the lamp fell upon the leopard. It was crouching between the tracks, only five metres away from them. It was not a very big leopard, but it looked **lithe** and **sinewy**. Baring its teeth and **snarling**, it went down on its belly, tail **twitching**.

Suraj and Sunder Singh both shouted together. Their voices rang through the tunnel. And the leopard, uncertain as to how many terrifying humans were there in the tunnel with him, turned swiftly and disappeared into the darkness.

To make sure that it had gone, Sunder Singh and Suraj walked the length of the tunnel. When they returned to the entrance, the rails were beginning to hum. They knew the train was coming.

Suraj put his hand to one of the rails and felt its tremor. He heard the distant rumble of the train. And then the engine came round the bend, hissing at them, scattering sparks into the darkness, **defying** the jungle as it roared through the steep

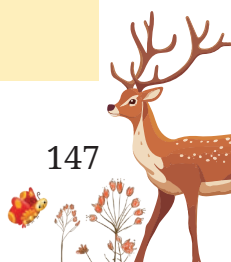
lithe: thin, graceful

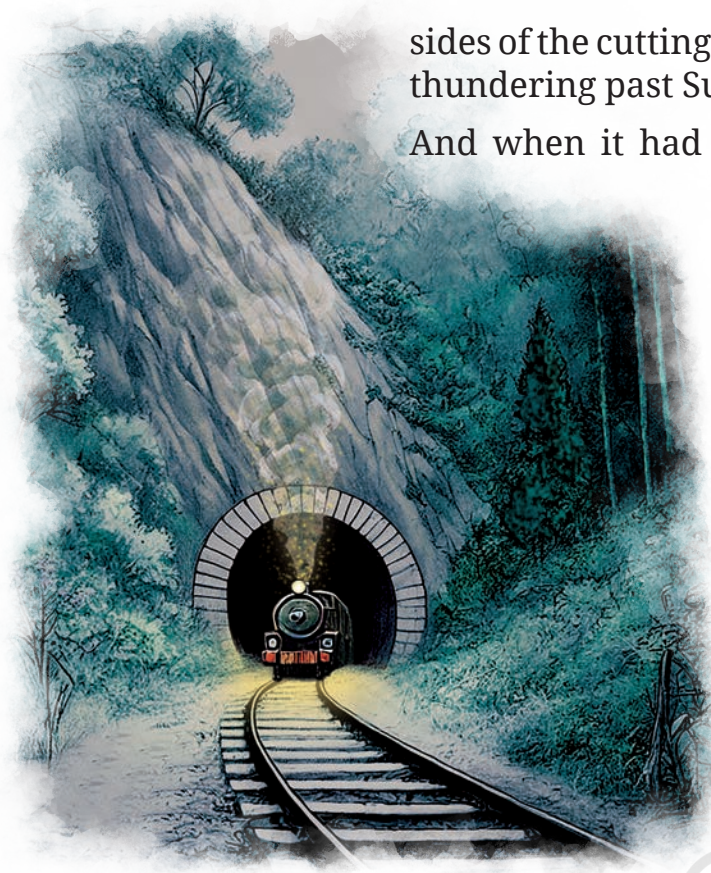
sinewy: lean and muscular

snarling: growling

twitching: a short, sudden movement

defying: opposing





sides of the cutting. It charged straight at the tunnel, and into it, thundering past Suraj like the beautiful dragon of his dreams.

And when it had gone, the silence returned and the forest seemed to breathe, to live again. Only the rails still trembled with the passing of the train.

They trembled again to the passing of the same train, almost a week later, when Suraj and his father were both travelling in it.

Suraj's father was scribbling in a notebook, doing his accounts. Suraj sat at an open window staring out at the darkness. His father was going to Delhi on a business trip and had decided to take the boy along. ("I don't know where he gets to, most of the time," he'd complained. "I think it's time he learnt something about my business.")

flickering:

burning
unsteadily

fringe: edge

shrill: sharp

sound

The night mail rushed through the forest with its hundreds of passengers. The carriage wheels beat out a steady rhythm on the rails. Tiny **flickering** lights came and went, as they passed small villages on the **fringe** of the jungle.

Suraj heard the rumble as the train passed over a small bridge. It was too dark to see the hut near the cutting, but he knew they must be approaching the tunnel. He strained his eyes looking out into the night; and then, just as the engine let out a **shrill** whistle, Suraj saw the lamp.

He couldn't see Sunder Singh, but he saw the lamp, and he knew that his friend was out there.

The train went into the tunnel and out again; it left the jungle behind and thundered across the endless plains.

Suraj stared out at the darkness, thinking of the lonely cutting in the forest and the watchman with the lamp, who would always remain a firefly for those travelling thousands as he lit up the darkness for steam engines and leopards.

RUSKIN BOND

Let us discuss

1. Sunder Singh knew that the leopard was in the tunnel because _____.
2. Why do you think Suraj was unable to do any shouting in the tunnel in the beginning?
 - (i) He was afraid of the leopard.
 - (ii) He didn't want to disturb the leopard.
 - (iii) He was trying to listen for the leopard.
 - (iv) He didn't really believe Sunder Singh.
3. What made the leopard disappear into the darkness?
4. How did Suraj know Sunder Singh was at the tunnel?
5. Why did Suraj's father take him along to Delhi?



Let us think and reflect

I Read the following lines and answer the questions that follow.

1. *Suraj had to turn and look back at the opening to reassure himself that there was still daylight outside. Ahead of him, the tunnel's other opening was just a small round circle of light.*

The tunnel was still full of smoke from the train, but it would be several hours before another train came through. Till then, the cutting belonged to the jungle again.

Suraj didn't stop, because there was nothing to do in the tunnel and nothing to see. He had simply wanted to walk through, so that he would know what the inside of a tunnel was really like.

- (i) Write whether the following statement is **true** or **false**.

Suraj looked back at the opening of the tunnel to check if the train was coming.

- (ii) Choose the correct option to complete the sentence given below.

Suraj did not stop anywhere in the tunnel because _____.

- A. there was nothing to see in the tunnel
- B. the tunnel was damp and sticky
- C. he was in a hurry to get out of the tunnel
- D. it was time for another train to come



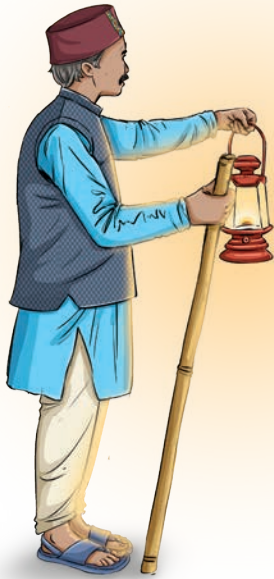
- (iii) What does the sentence 'Till then, the cutting belonged to the jungle again' mean?
- (iv) Suraj wanted to know the inside of the tunnel. What character trait of Suraj is highlighted here?

2. "The train will soon be here," said Suraj.

"Yes, my friend. And if we don't drive the leopard out of the tunnel, it will be run over and killed. I can't let that happen."

"But won't it attack us if we try to drive it out?" asked Suraj, beginning to share the watchman's concern.

"Not this leopard. It knows me well. We have seen each other many times. It has a weakness for goats and stray dogs, but it will not harm us. Even so, I'll take my axe with me. You stay here, Suraj."



- (i) What was the watchman's concern?
- (ii) Complete the sentence with a suitable reason.

Sunder Singh was sure that the leopard in the tunnel would not attack him and Suraj because _____.

(iii) Select the sentences that are **true** from those given below.

- A. Suraj wants to see the leopards in the jungle.
- B. Suraj is concerned about Sunder Singh's safety.
- C. The leopard in the tunnel attacks goats and stray dogs.
- D. Sunder Singh wants to protect Suraj.
- E. Sunder Singh knows all about the animals in the jungle.

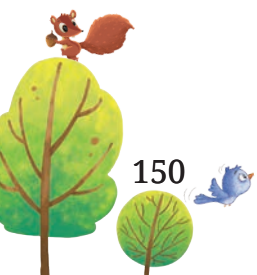
(iv) Choose the correct option to complete the sentence.

Sunder Singh decides to take his axe with him. This tells us that he was _____.

- A. violent B. cautious C. bold D. afraid

II Answer the following questions.

1. What does Sunder Singh convey by saying that he has lent his tunnel to the Government?
2. According to Sunder Singh, "It is safer in the forest than in the town". What example does Sunder Singh give to support his opinion? What does this tell us about him?
3. Sunder Singh has become part of the jungle life. Support the view with a suitable reason.



4. Sunder Singh and Suraj form an unlikely friendship. What draws them together?
5. Why is Sunder Singh referred to as a 'firefly'?
6. Do you think Suraj is an adventure-loving boy? Give reasons.



Let us learn

I Complete the following sentences using the suitable phrases from the text given in the box below.

drifting smoke approaching engine sawing sound flickering lights

1. We could hear the _____ of the train long before it came into view at the station.
2. The street was completely dark but the little boy walked to his house guided by the _____ from the houses.
3. The _____ from the carpenter's workshop grew louder every hour.
4. From the balcony, she watched the _____ from her neighbour's chimney float across the backyard.

II The text has many 'sound words'. Some of these words are given in Column 1 and their meanings are given in Column 2. Match the words with their meanings. You can use a dictionary.

Column 1

1. creaking
2. chatter
3. hissing
4. rustle
5. puffing

Column 2

- (i) making a noise like a long 's' sound
- (ii) making a long low sound when a door or wooden object moves or is moved
- (iii) repeated series of short high sounds made by birds or monkeys
- (iv) blowing with short, quick blasts, as the wind
- (v) a soft low, dry sound made by the movement of things such as leaves, paper, etc.



Now, complete the sentences given below by filling in the blanks with the correct form of the sound words given in Column 1.

1. The steam engine reached the station _____ black smoke into the sky.
2. Suddenly the snake raised its hood and made a _____ noise.
3. When the wind blew, I heard the _____ of the wooden roof.
4. He heard a _____ of leaves behind him when he was walking in the woods.
5. I get disturbed by the continuous _____ of the monkeys in the neighbourhood.

III Read what the watchman Sunder Singh did regularly at the tunnel as part of his duty. Notice the use of 'would'.

*Every day, before the train came through, he **would** walk the length of the tunnel. If all was well, he **would** return to his hut and take a nap. If something was wrong, he **would** walk back up the line and wave a red flag and the engine driver **would** slow down. At night, the watchman lit an oil lamp and made a similar inspection of the tunnel.*

1. Why is the word 'would' used here?

- (i) to make a polite request
- (ii) to express a desire
- (iii) to talk about a habit in the past

In these sentences, the word 'would' is used to speak about a past habit.

'Would' is used in these sentences to describe repeated activities for a period of time in the past. We call them 'habitual or routine actions in the past'.

Would and **used to** both describe something that happened regularly in the past. However, 'used to' indicates a past action that doesn't happen any longer.

- I **used to** paint when I was in Grade 4.
 - Riya **used to** eat a lot of junk food, but she stopped last year.
2. Complete the sentences using the verb in brackets with the correct form of 'used to' or 'would'. An example has been done for you.

When I was a child we used to live in a village near a forest. Back then, we (i) _____ (grow) vegetables in our back garden. Every day we (ii) _____ (get up) early and go for a walk. The weather in summer (iii) _____ (be) really nice. There was a lake near the house and we (iv) _____ (go) there every Sunday for a picnic. Winters (v) _____ (be) rather cold. In the evenings, my father (vi) _____ (tell) us incredible stories and we (vii) _____ (listen) with admiration.

IV We use punctuation marks to make our writing clear. You already know how to use full stops and commas. Let us look at three more punctuation marks—brackets, semicolon, and colon.

Colon (:) is used to introduce a list or an explanation.

- You need the following ingredients to make Ela Ada: ghee, coconut, jaggery, and rice flour.
- He has one goal: to win the championship.

Semicolon (;) is used to connect two clauses which are closely related without a conjunction.

- She loves reading; he prefers watching movies.
- Suraj followed close behind; but he found he was unable to do any shouting.

Now, use semicolons and colons to punctuate the following paragraph.

We explored the busy by-lanes of Charminar, the heart of Hyderabad it was an exciting day. We wanted to do a few things buy bangles, taste biryani, and purchase pearl earrings, which are special to this area. As we walked through the lanes, we saw stalls selling spices, clothes, and jewellery the market was full of colours. We visited some famous spots Charminar, Golconda Fort, Salar Jung Museum, and Chowmahalla Palace each place was beautiful.



Let us listen



A famous museum in your town is organising a treasure hunt in the museum premises. You and your friends decide to participate in it. Upon arrival, you find that there are many other teams. Each team is given an audio guide (recorded information) and a map to the museum. (Transcript for the teacher on pg. 176)

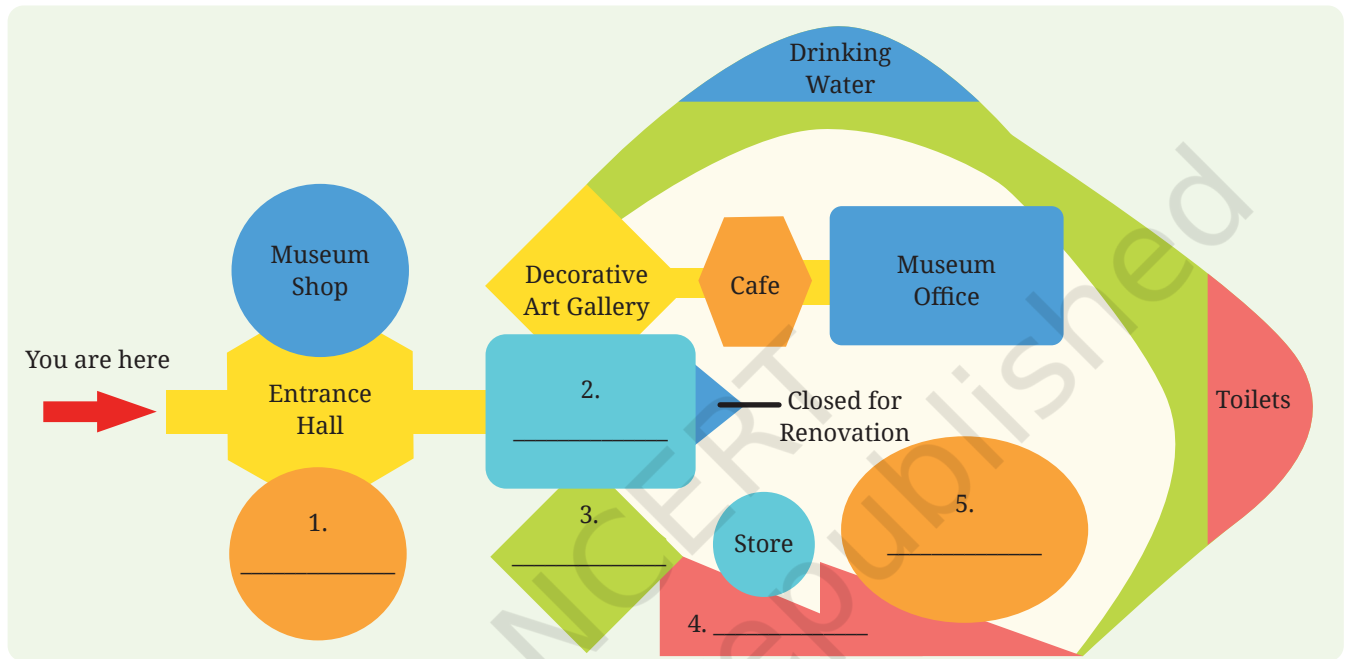




Listen to the audio recording and as you listen, mark your map with the route to take to find the treasure. To help you, the names of a few rooms in the museum are given below. Now listen to the audio and mark the various rooms.



library auditorium weapon room art gallery
musical instruments hall

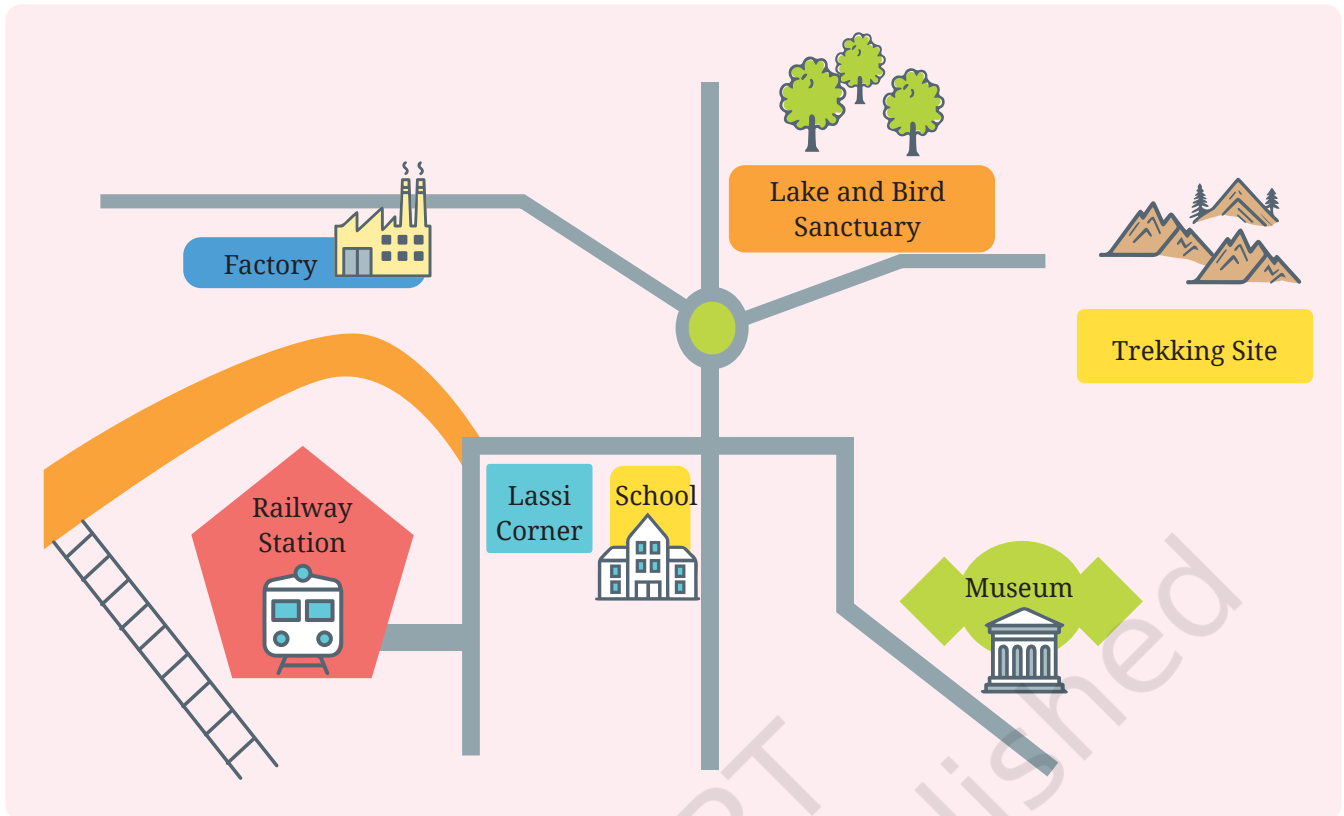


Let us speak

Anju is going on a trekking trip with her family during the summer vacation. They have reached the railway station. Anju calls the tour manager for directions to the trekking site.

Work in pairs and have this conversation. Student A will play the role of Anju and mark the route on the map given below. Student B will play the role of the tour manager. Looking at the map, give directions to reach the trekking site from the railway station. You may use phrases like the ones in the box to help you.

turn left	turn right	keep going straight till...
take the next left	take the next right	take the roundabout
take the second left	start from...	on the opposite side
right around the corner	in front of	next to



Let us write

Write a descriptive paragraph about your experience of a train journey. Describe the sights, sounds, and feelings you experienced during the journey. Include details about the people around you, the scenery outside, and the atmosphere inside the train to make your paragraph vivid and engaging.

You may use the following guidelines to help you create the paragraph.

- Start with how the journey began: boarding the train, finding your seat, and the initial impressions.
- Describe the sounds: the whistle of the train, the chatter of passengers, and the rhythmic clatter of wheels on the tracks.
- Mention the sights: the changing scenery outside the window, the hustle and bustle inside the train, and any interesting moments.
- Reflect on your feelings: Were you excited, relaxed, or curious? How did the journey make you feel overall?





Let us explore

- I The Nation's pride Atal Tunnel is 9.02 kilometres long. It runs under the Rohtang Pass. It was constructed on the Manali-Leh Highway under the challenging conditions of freezing temperatures in extremely difficult terrain. The Atal Tunnel has officially been certified by World Book of Records as the 'World's Longest Highway Tunnel above 10,000 Feet'!



- II The history of Indian Railways spans over 165 years. On 16 April 1853, the first passenger train ran between Bori Bunder (Mumbai) and Thane, covering 34 kilometres. It was operated by three locomotives named Sahib, Sultan, and Sindh and had thirteen carriages. In 1864, the North received its first station, Delhi Junction, near Chandni Chowk.

You may refer to the given link to know more about Indian Railways.

<https://artsandculture.google.com/story/a-history-of-indian-railways-national-rail-museum/cAVh7RwiKiTtKg?hl=en>