

## UNIT 2

### WIT AND HUMOUR

#### ANIMALS, BIRDS, AND DR. DOLITTLE



0773CH02

**Let us do these activities before we read.**

- I Do you have a pet or a domestic animal? If yes, why? If not, why not? How do people usually spend time with a pet or domestic animal? Share your thoughts with your classmates and the teacher.
- II You must have read stories where animals and birds talk. If you had a chance to communicate with an animal or a bird, who would you like to speak to and why? Share your thoughts with your classmates and the teacher.
- III If we closely observe the body language of animals and birds, we can understand what they want to tell us. Work in pairs and study the pictures given below. Find out what emotions these animals and birds are trying to convey. Share your observations with your classmates and the teacher.



1.



2.



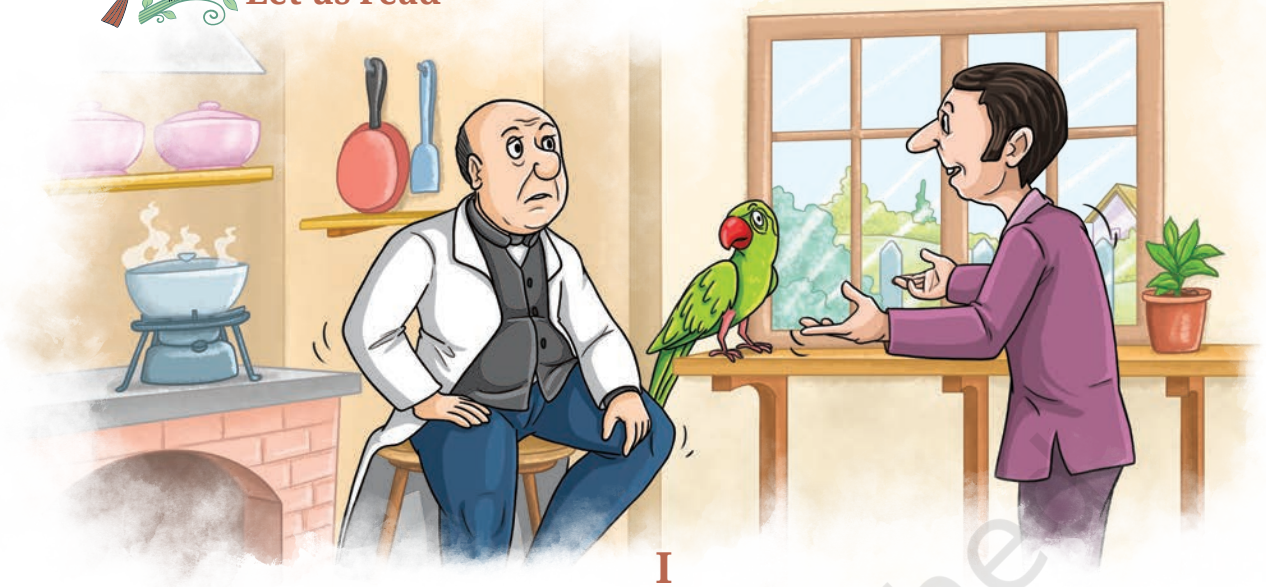
3.



4.



Let us read



I

Doctor Dolittle was sitting in his kitchen talking with the Cat's-food-Man who had come to see him with a stomach-ache.

"Why don't you give up being a people's doctor, and be an animal doctor?" asked the Cat's-food-Man.

The parrot, Polynesia, was sitting in the window looking out at the rain and singing a sailor song to herself. She stopped singing and started to listen.

"You see, Doctor," the Cat's-food-Man went on, "you know all about animals—much more than what these vets here do. That book you wrote—about cats, why, it's wonderful! I can't read or write myself—my wife, Theodosia, is a **scholar**, and she read your book to me. You might have been a cat yourself. You know the way they think."

When the Cat's-food-Man had gone the parrot flew off the window on to the Doctor's table and said, "That man's got sense. That's what you ought to do. Be an animal doctor. Give the silly people up—if they haven't brains enough to see you're the best doctor in the world. Take care of animals instead—they'll soon find it out. Be an animal doctor."

"Oh, there are plenty of animal doctors," said John Dolittle, putting the flowerpots outside on the windowsill to get the rain.

"Yes, there are plenty," said Polynesia. "But none of them are

**scholar:** a  
learned person





any good at all. Now listen, Doctor, and I'll tell you something. Did you know that animals can talk?"

"I knew that parrots can talk," said the Doctor.

"Oh, we parrots can talk in two languages—people's language and bird language," said Polynesia proudly. "If I say, 'Polly wants a **cracker**', you understand me. But hear this: Ka-ka oi-ee, fee-fee?"

"Good Gracious!" cried the Doctor. "What does that mean?"

"That means, 'Is the porridge hot yet?'—in bird language."

"My! You don't say so!" said the Doctor. "You never talked that way to me before."

"What would have been the good?" said Polynesia, dusting some cracker crumbs off her left wing. "You wouldn't have understood me if I had."

"Tell me some more," said the Doctor, all excited; and he rushed over to the drawer and came back with a book and a pencil. "Now don't go too fast—and I'll write it down. This is interesting—very interesting—something quite new. Give me the **Birds' A.B.C.** first—slowly now."

So that was the way the Doctor came to know that animals had a language of their own and could talk to one another. And all that afternoon, while it was raining, Polynesia sat on the kitchen table giving him bird words to put down in the book.

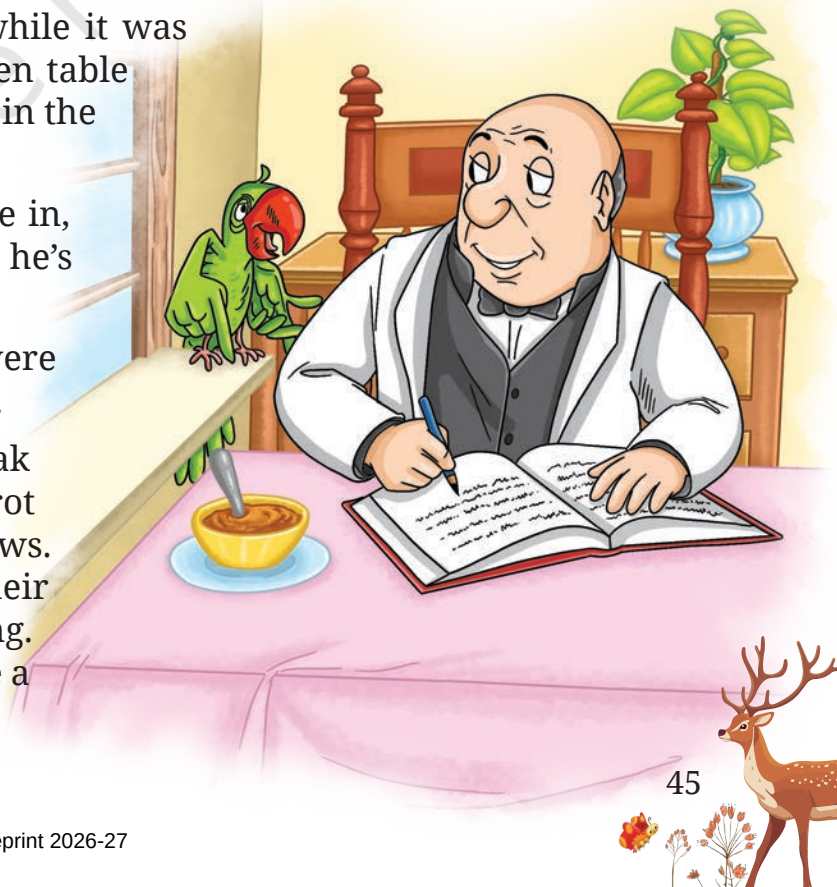
At teatime, when the dog, Jip, came in, the parrot said to the Doctor, "See, he's talking to you."

"Looks to me as though he were scratching his ear," said the Doctor.

"But animals don't always speak with their mouths," said the parrot in a high voice, raising her eyebrows. "They talk with their ears, with their feet, with their tails—with everything. Sometimes they don't want to make a

**cracker:** a thin, dry biscuit usually eaten with cheese

**Birds' A.B.C.:** (here) the language that birds speak



noise. Do you see now the way he's twitching up one side of his nose?"

"What's that mean?" asked the Doctor.

"That means, 'Can't you see that it has stopped raining?'" Polynesia answered. "He is asking you a question. Dogs nearly always use their noses for asking questions."

After a while, with the parrot's help, the Doctor got to learn the language of the animals so well that he could talk to them himself and understand everything they said. Then he gave up being a people's doctor altogether.

### Let us discuss

I Complete the following sentence by selecting a suitable reason.

The Cat's-food-Man suggests to Doctor Dolittle that he should become an animal doctor because he believes that Dolittle \_\_\_\_\_.

1. earns less fee by treating human patients
2. enjoys the company of animals as they speak less
3. dislikes spending time with human patients
4. knows more about animals than the local veterinarians

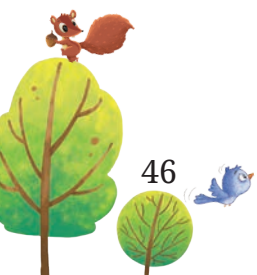
II Fill in the blanks by choosing the suitable option given in the brackets.

Doctor Dolittle reacts to Polynesia's information about animal languages with both excitement and \_\_\_\_\_ (certainty/curiosity). He rushes to \_\_\_\_\_ (write/memorise) the bird words she provides and is interested in learning more.

III Do you think Doctor Dolittle would be famous as an animal doctor? If yes, why? If not, why not?

## II

As soon as the Cat's-food-Man had told everyone that John Dolittle was going to become an animal doctor, old ladies began to bring him their pet pugs and poodles who had eaten too much cake; and farmers came many miles to show him sick cows and sheep.





One day a plough horse was brought to him; and the poor thing was terribly glad to find a man who could talk in horse language.

“You know, Doctor,” said the horse, “that vet over the hill knows nothing at all. He has been treating me six weeks now—for something or the other. What I need is spectacles. I am going blind in one eye. There’s no reason why horses shouldn’t wear glasses, the same as people. But that stupid man over the hill never even looked at my eyes. He kept on giving me big pills. I tried to tell him, but he couldn’t understand a word of horse language. What I need is spectacles.”

“Of course—of course,” said the Doctor. “I’ll get you some at once.”

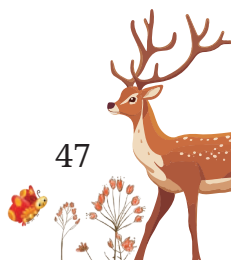
“I would like a pair like yours,” said the horse—“only green. They’ll keep the Sun out of my eyes while I’m ploughing the field.”

“Certainly,” said the Doctor. “Green ones you shall have.”

“You know, the trouble is, Sir,” said the plough horse as the Doctor opened the front door to let him out—“the trouble is that anybody thinks he can doctor animals—just because the animals don’t complain. As a matter of fact, it takes a much cleverer man to be a really good animal doctor than it does to be a good people’s doctor.”

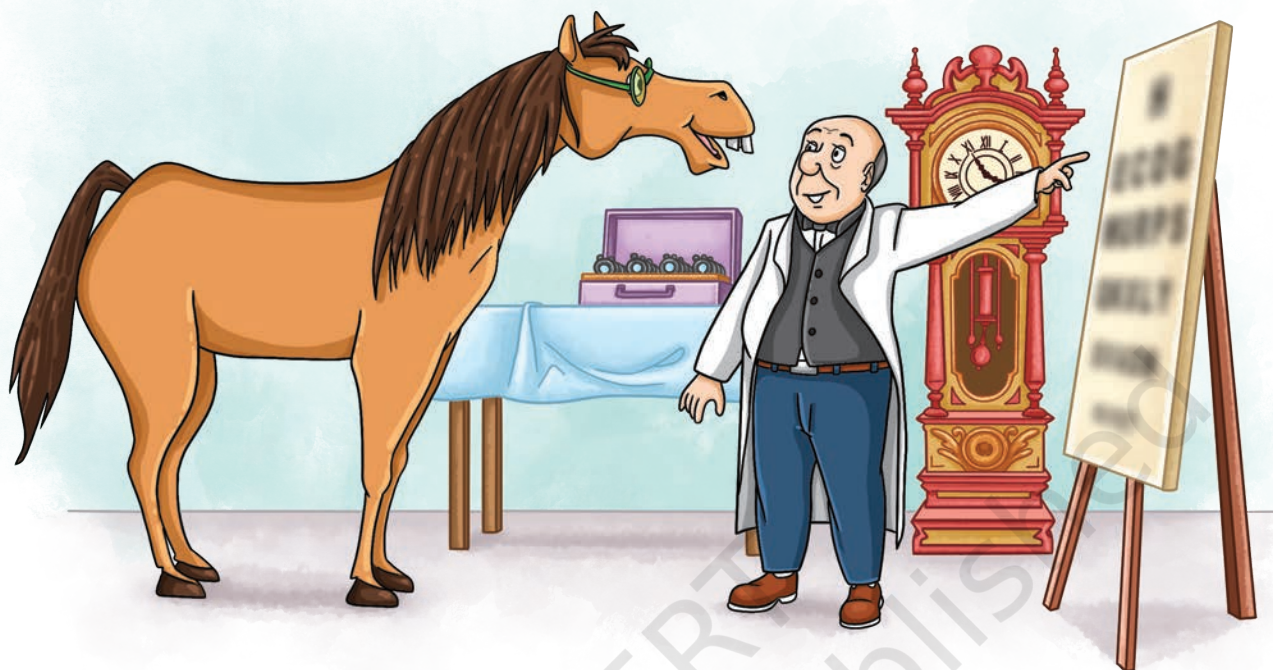
“Well, well!” said the Doctor.

“When will my glasses be ready?”





“I’ll have them for you next week,” said the Doctor.  
 “Come in again Tuesday—Good morning!”



**countryside:**  
 rural area

Then John Dolittle got a fine, big pair of green spectacles; and the plough horse stopped going blind in one eye and could see as well as ever.

And soon it became a common sight to see farm animals wearing glasses in the **countryside**, round Puddleby; and a blind horse was a thing unknown.

And so it was with all the other animals that were brought to him. As soon as they found that he could talk their language, they told him where the pain was and how they felt, and of course it was easy for him to cure them.

Now all these animals went back and told their brothers and friends that there was a doctor in the little house with the big garden who really was a doctor. And whenever any creatures got sick—not only horses and cows and dogs—but all the little things of the fields, like harvest mice, badgers, and bats, all came at once to his house on the edge of the town, so that his big garden was nearly always crowded with animals trying to get in to see him.

There were so many that came that he had to have special doors made for the different kinds. He wrote ‘HORSES’ over



the front door, 'COWS' over the side door, and 'SHEEP' on the kitchen door. Each kind of animal had a separate door—even the mice had a tiny tunnel made for them into the **cellar**, where they waited patiently in rows for the Doctor to come round to them.

And so, in a few years' time, every living thing for miles and miles got to know about John Dolittle, M.D. And the birds who flew to other countries in the winter told the animals in foreign lands about Dolittle who could understand their talk and help them in their troubles. In this way he became famous among the animals—all over the world. He was happy and liked his life very much.

HUGH LOFTING

**cellar:** a room below ground level often used for storage

### Let us discuss

I What became a common sight in Puddleby after Doctor Dolittle started treating animals?

1. Humans talking to farm animals
2. Farm animals wearing glasses
3. Farm animals learning bird language
4. Birds riding atop farm animals

II What challenges do you think Doctor Dolittle might face if more and more animals come to him for help?

1. How might he overcome these challenges to ensure that he provides good treatment?



III Arrange the following events in correct order according to the story. Two have been done for you. Share your answers with your classmates and the teacher.

|                                                                                                                                  |      |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| 1. Doctor Dolittle decides to stop being a doctor for people and becomes a doctor for animals.                                   |      |
| 2. Animals from near and far come to Doctor Dolittle for help, crowding his garden.                                              |      |
| 3. A man with a stomach-ache visits Doctor Dolittle and suggests he should treat animals instead of people.                      | (i)  |
| 4. Polynesia teaches Doctor Dolittle animal languages, and he starts understanding and communicating with animals.               |      |
| 5. A plough horse with vision problems visits Doctor Dolittle, who prescribes green spectacles, to improve the horse's eyesight. |      |
| 6. The parrot, Polynesia, encourages Doctor Dolittle to become an animal doctor, revealing that animals can talk.                | (ii) |
| 7. Doctor Dolittle installs special doors for different animals to enter his house for treatment.                                |      |
| 8. Doctor Dolittle's ability to communicate with animals helps him diagnose and treat their illnesses effectively.               |      |
| 9. Doctor Dolittle gains fame among animals worldwide, and they come to him from various places for his help.                    |      |
| 10. Word spreads, and people start bringing their sick pets and farm animals to Doctor Dolittle for treatment.                   |      |



### Let us think and reflect

I Read the extracts given below and answer the questions that follow.

1. *"If I say, 'Polly wants a cracker', you understand me. But hear this: Ka-ka oi-ee, fee-fee?"*

*"Good Gracious!" cried the Doctor. "What does that mean?"*

*"That means, 'Is the porridge hot yet?'—in bird language."*

*"My! You don't say so!" said the Doctor. "You never talked that way to me before."*





*"What would have been the good?" said Polynesia, dusting some cracker crumbs off her left wing. "You wouldn't have understood me if I had."*

- (i) Complete the sentence by choosing the correct option.

In the line, "Good Gracious!" cried the Doctor, the expression 'Good Gracious' can be replaced by \_\_\_\_\_!

- A. bravo      B. gosh      C. alas      D. hurray

- (ii) Why had Polynesia never used bird language with the Doctor earlier?

- (iii) Identify whether the following statement is **true** or **false**.

Polynesia had been munching on a food item while talking to Doctor Dolittle.

- (iv) How did Doctor Dolittle feel according to the extract?

- A. anxious      B. surprised      C. angry      D. relaxed

2. *"I would like a pair like yours," said the horse—"only green. They'll keep the Sun out of my eyes while I'm ploughing the field."*

*"Certainly," said the Doctor. "Green ones you shall have."*

*"You know, the trouble is, Sir," said the plough horse as the Doctor opened the front door to let him out—"the trouble is that anybody thinks he can doctor animals—just because the animals don't complain. As a matter of fact, it takes a much cleverer man to be a really good animal doctor than it does to be a good people's doctor."*

- (i) Choose a word from the extract to complete the analogy.

digging: flower bed:: \_\_\_\_\_: field

- (ii) Choose the correct word to complete the sentence.

Doctor Dolittle's attitude in the extract is \_\_\_\_\_.

- A. respectful      B. sentimental      C. understanding      D. careful

- (iii) Complete the sentence with an appropriate reason.

Based on the extract, we can conclude that doctors take animals for granted because \_\_\_\_\_.

- (iv) Do you agree with the concluding sentence of the extract? Why/why not?

## II Answer the following questions.

- How can we say that Polynesia was a good trainer of animal language?
- Explain how Doctor Dolittle gave equal and individual attention to each animal who came to him for treatment.



3. How does Doctor Dolittle's readiness to follow the parrot's advice highlight the importance of listening to different viewpoints?
4. Which qualities of Doctor Dolittle made him famous among the animals? Explain with evidence from the text.
5. What changes do you think would happen in the world if people suddenly gained the ability like Doctor Dolittle, to understand and communicate with animals?



### Let us learn

I Read the following words from the text.

*Cat's-food-Man, bird language, flowerpots*

Are all the words that are combined to form another word written the same way?

**Compound words** are formed by combining two words of different parts of speech to create a new word that has an entirely new meaning. They are of three types—hyphenated (Cat's-food-Man), open compound words (bird language) and closed compound words (flowerpots).

Complete the following table correctly by choosing words from the box given below. An example has been done for you.

sailor song      teatime      check-in      plough horse  
harvest mice      windowsill      well-bred

| Hyphenated Words | Open Compound Words | Closed Compound Words |
|------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| check-in         |                     |                       |
|                  |                     |                       |
|                  |                     |                       |
|                  |                     |                       |
|                  |                     |                       |
|                  |                     |                       |
|                  |                     |                       |
|                  |                     |                       |
|                  |                     |                       |

## II Create compound words from the table given below.

| A        | B            |
|----------|--------------|
| 1. fun   | (i) head     |
| 2. high  | (ii) birds   |
| 3. never | (iii) flying |
| 4. early | (iv) loving  |
| 5. song  | (v) risers   |
| 6. over  | (vi) tops    |
| 7. tree  | (vii) ending |

Now, complete the paragraph with suitable compound words from the table. An example has been done for you.

After being treated by Doctor Dolittle, the A. **fun-loving** dolphins danced playfully in his sanctuary. The B. \_\_\_\_\_ chatter of monkeys echoed through the C. \_\_\_\_\_, their ailments cured. D. \_\_\_\_\_ eagles soared gracefully E. \_\_\_\_\_ their health restored. F. \_\_\_\_\_ among the G. \_\_\_\_\_ chirped joyfully from the branches. All creatures were happy with Doctor Dolittle's care.

## III Underline the names of animals that are hidden in the sentences given below. Clues are given within the brackets. An example has been done for you.

1. Dr. Dolittle was eating oatmeal for his breakfast. (a farm animal)
2. Old ladies began to bring him their pets. (an insect)
3. The author sees the connection between humans and animals. (a farm animal)
4. The three baby dinosaurs are from ice age. (field animal)
5. The patients who came late didn't know where to go. (ship of the desert)

## IV Read the following sentence from the text. Study the highlighted words.

*But that stupid man over the hill **never even** looked at my eyes.*

The highlighted words spell and read the same backwards too.

A word, phrase, or sequence that reads the same backwards as forwards is a **palindrome**.



Some of the common palindromes include ‘Was it a car or a cat I saw?’, ‘Madam, I’m Adam’ and ‘A man, a plan, a canal—Panama’.

Read the sentences below and identify the palindrome words and sentences.

1. Step on no pets.
2. Naman saw a race car at the show.
3. Nitin speaks in Malayalam.
4. The engineer used a rotator to check the surface level.
5. The pilot relied on the radar to navigate safely.
6. Eva can I see bees in a cave?

Now, create your own palindrome and share it with your classmates and the teacher.

V Underline the verbs and identify the tense form in the following sentences from the text.

1. *He is asking you a question.*
2. *Oh, there are plenty of animal doctors.*
3. *I am going blind in one eye.*
4. *... the trouble is that anybody thinks he can doctor animals.*

The verbs in 1. and 3. are in present continuous form. The verbs in 2. and 4. are in simple present.

VI Read the following sentences from the text.

- *That man’s (man has) got sense.*
- *Can’t you see that it has stopped raining?*

In the first sentence the verbs, ‘has got’ denote an action that is relevant at the time of speaking.

In the second sentence, the verbs ‘has stopped’ denote an action that is recently completed.

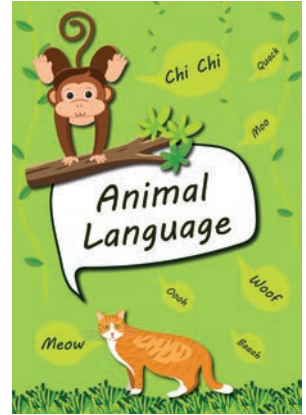
We use **present perfect tense** to indicate:

- a recently completed action
- an action that started in the past and is relevant even at the moment of speaking
- an action in the past where the focus is on the action and not on the time of occurrence (but relevant at the time of speaking)

Structure of Present Perfect Tense:  
has/ have + V3 (past participle)

Fill in the blanks using the correct form of verbs (present perfect) given within brackets.

Since becoming an animal doctor, Doctor Dolittle 1. \_\_\_\_\_ (learn) to communicate with all animals and birds. He 2. \_\_\_\_\_ (treat) countless farm animals and pets with care. The parrot, Polynesia, 3. \_\_\_\_\_ (teach) him bird-language, and he 4. \_\_\_\_\_ (write) books about his adventures. Many people 5. \_\_\_\_\_ (bring) their sick animals to his door. Over the years, Dolittle 6. \_\_\_\_\_ (become) renowned worldwide for his unique abilities.



### Let us listen

I You will listen to an announcement. As you listen, state whether the following statement is **true** or **false**. (Transcript for the teacher on pg. 88)

Dr. Dolittle's new clinic presents an offer of free medicines.

II You will listen to the announcement again. As you listen, complete the details given below with one or two exact words you hear.

1. The new clinic is located in the town of \_\_\_\_\_.
2. The address is 12, \_\_\_\_\_ Lane.
3. The clinic is open Monday to Friday from \_\_\_\_\_ a.m. to 5 p.m.
4. Special timings for \_\_\_\_\_ are on Saturdays from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.
5. Dr. Dolittle will ensure that animals get the \_\_\_\_\_.
6. All animals—horses, cows, \_\_\_\_\_, wild animals, and others are welcome.



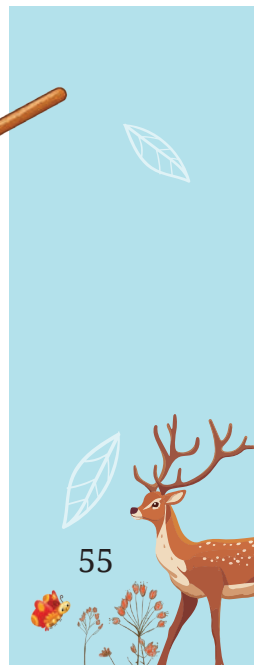
### Let us speak

Conversation between a doctor and a patient

- Read the information about the problems 1–4.
- Use the cue cards provided to guide your conversation.
- Take turns to play parts of doctor and patient.

**Problem 1:** Cough and cold

- *Solution: Ginger and honey mix*
- *Additional Advice: Drink warm fluids and rest.*



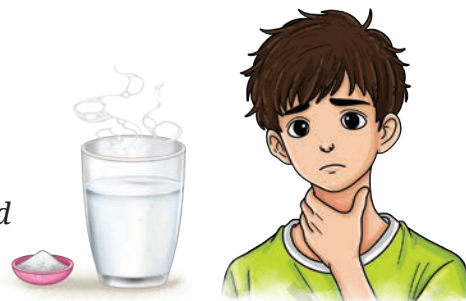


### Problem 2: Dry lips

- *Solution: Apply ghee*
- *Additional Advice: Stay hydrated and avoid wetting your lips.*

### Problem 3: Sore throat

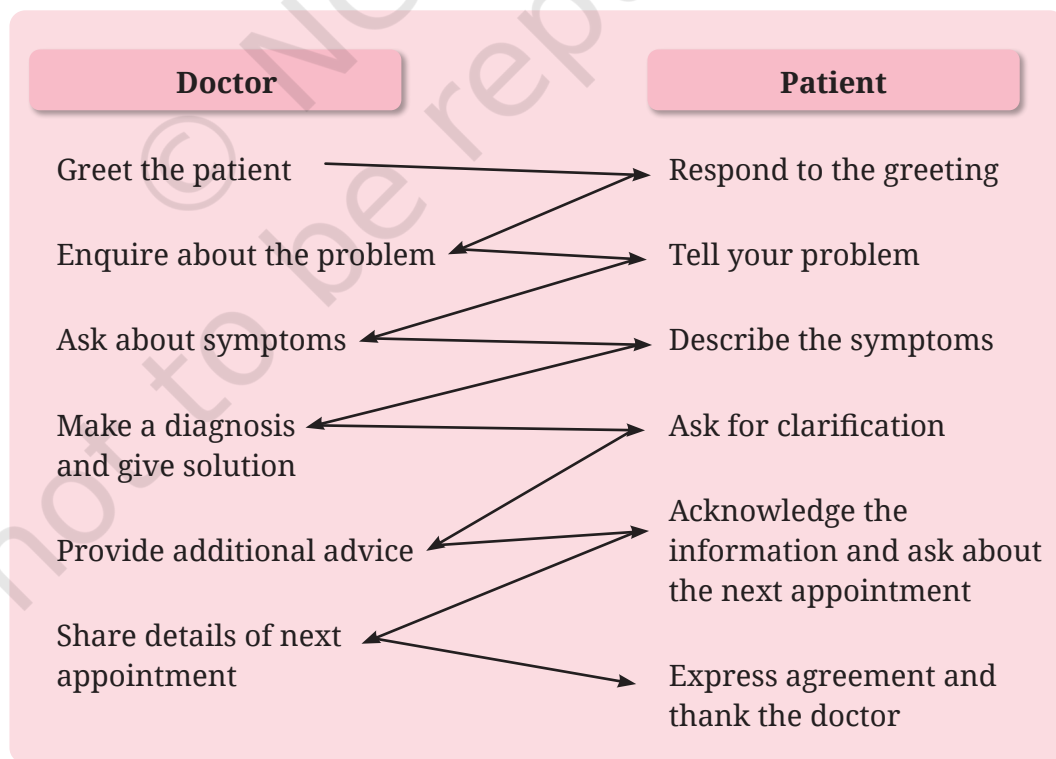
- *Solution: Gargle with warm salt water.*
- *Additional Advice: Drink herbal teas and avoid cold drinks.*



### Problem 4: Fatigue

- *Solution: Ensure adequate sleep and a balanced diet.*
- *Additional Advice: Take short walks to increase energy levels.*

### Cue Cards







## Let us write

A **notice** is a means of formal communication for a particular group of persons. It informs them about some important event, such as an invitation to a meeting, an announcement, to give instructions, make appeals, etc.

Write a notice in about 50 words about the Annual Health Check-up for students of Grades 6–8. Remind students to collect their health check-up cards from the class teacher. Include all other necessary details about date, time, and venue.

Complete the draft of the notice by using the words and phrases given in the box below.

|                     |         |             |                 |
|---------------------|---------|-------------|-----------------|
| inform              | queries | health card | health check-up |
| assembly hall       |         | Grades 6–8  | please contact  |
| Thursday and Friday |         |             |                 |

Name of the School

### NOTICE

12 July 20XX

\_\_\_\_\_ Mention Heading \_\_\_\_\_

This is to \_\_\_\_\_ all the students of Grades 6–8 about the Annual Health Check-up.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_, 27 and 28 July 20XX

Time: 9:00 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.

Venue: \_\_\_\_\_

All students are requested to bring their \_\_\_\_\_ for the check-up.

For \_\_\_\_\_ or further details \_\_\_\_\_ the undersigned.

Asma

Asma

In-charge

### Remember to

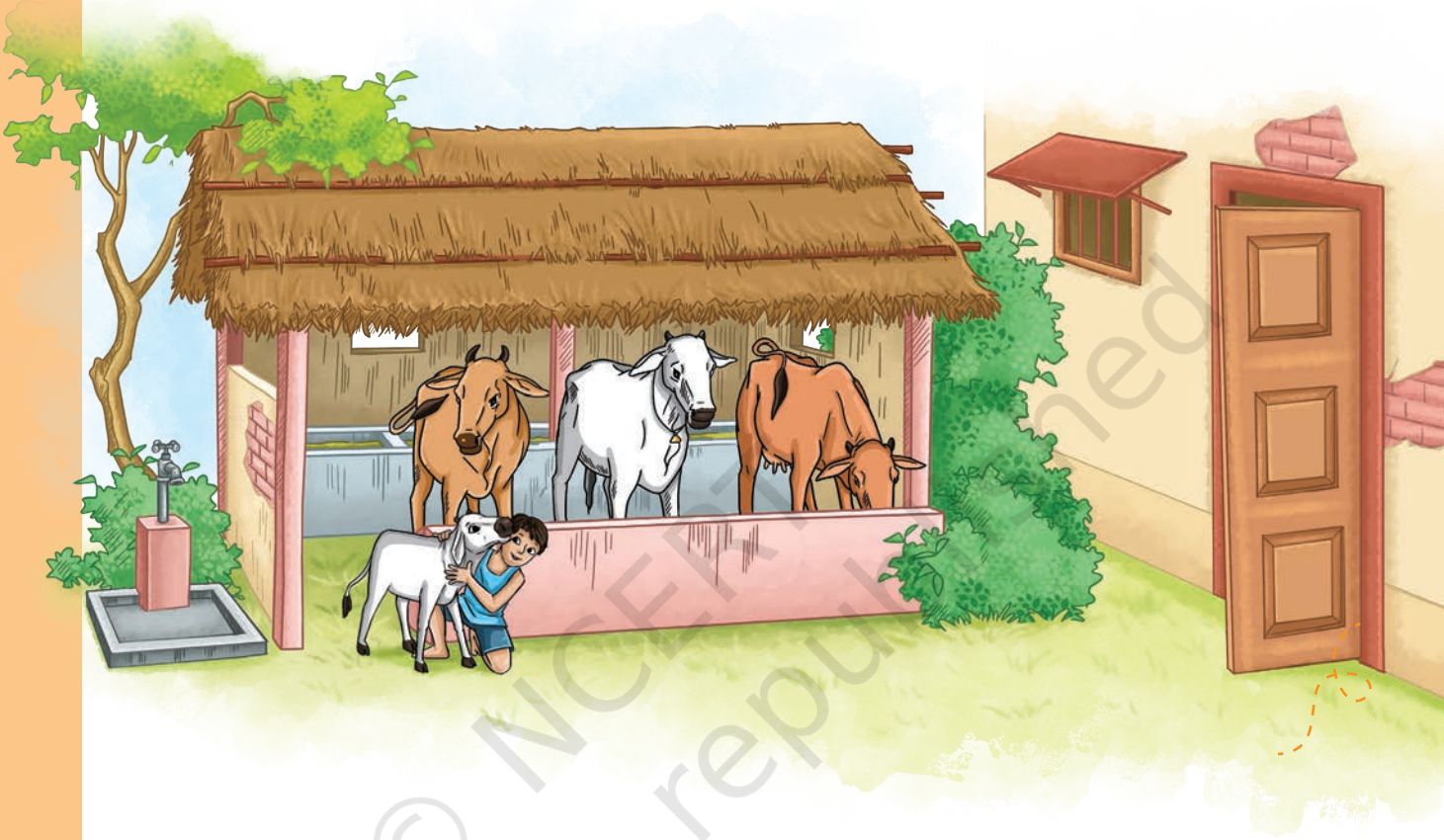
- use formal language in third person.
- mention the reason for writing the notice and any other relevant information. For example, whom to contact, when and where, etc.
- write the notice in a box.





## Let us explore

I The word 'goshala' translates to 'cowshed' in English. It is a Sanskrit word that is made up of the words 'go', which means 'cow', and śālā, which means 'shed' or 'hall'.



Plan a visit with the teacher to a 'goshala' and find out how the cows are looked after.

II Ayurveda is the oldest existing medical system in India. Animals received good medicinal care in ancient India. Indian medical treatises like *Charaka Samhita*, *Sushruta Samhita*, and *Harita Samhita* contain references of care of animals. Find out names of different organisations that work for the welfare of animals with the help of the teacher.

III What is the best way to take care of stray and abandoned animals?

1. Provide food and water for the animal
2. Take them to an animal shelter
3. Adopt them by taking them home

Give reasons for your responses.

