



UNIT 1

WIT AND WISDOM

THE WIT THAT WON HEARTS



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Let us do these activities before we read.

I Select qualities of a person who uses wit from the box given below.

wise	serious	clever	powerful	humorous
stubborn	courageous	observant	charming	creative
punctual	confident	energetic		

Now, discuss reasons for your choice of qualities.

II Work in pairs and answer the riddles that are given below. Share the answers with your classmates and teacher.



I can be a friend or a foe, depending on how you use me. I can bring both joy or pain.
What am I?

What is always in front of you but can't be seen?

I can be measured, but I cannot be touched. I can be spent, but I cannot be saved.
What am I?

What has to be shared before you can keep it?



Note: You will find the answers of these riddles on page 16.

Discuss in pairs.

1. Why are qualities like humour and wit important in a person?
2. Why do you think kings and queens preferred to have witty people among their courtiers?
3. If you were asked to solve a disagreement between two people, what approach would you take?
4. Have you ever been in a situation where a small misunderstanding led to a big problem? How was it resolved?



Let us read



renowned: well known

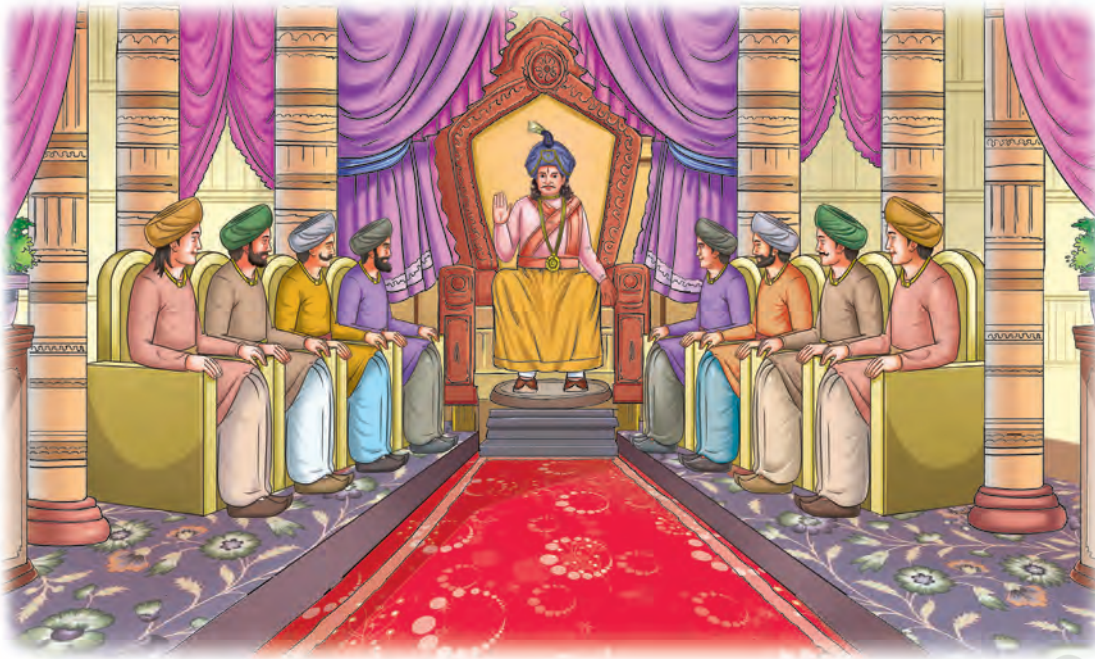
illustrious: respected and famous

patron: supporter

eminent: famous

The Vijayanagara Empire was **renowned** for its glory, wealth, and cultural achievements. Among its many **illustrious** rulers, King Krishnadeva Raya (ruled 1509–29 CE) stood out as a wise and powerful monarch. His reign is often referred to as the Golden Era of the Vijayanagara Empire, a time when art, literature, and architecture flourished. A great **patron** of learning, Krishnadeva Raya was not only an **eminent** warrior but also a gifted poet. His works, such as the epic *Amuktamalyada* and the Sanskrit drama *Jambavati Parinayam*, are acclaimed even today.





Krishnadeva Raya's court was home to eight celebrated poets, collectively known as the *Ashtadiggajas*. These poets, including Allasani Peddana and Tenali Ramakrishna, enriched the literary tradition with their masterpieces. Tenali Ramakrishna, in particular, was known for his quick wit and humour, earning him a special place in the king's court as both a poet and a witty advisor. His clever solutions to seemingly **insurmountable** problems made him a beloved figure in the empire's history.

Even the wisest rulers face moments of disharmony, and at one such time, the king had a quarrel with his queen, Thirumalambal, over a seemingly **trivial** matter. For weeks, he did not utter a single word to her, and in his frustration, stopped visiting her altogether. His absence cast a shadow over the palace, and the once cheerful corridors seemed quiet and **forlorn**.

Thirumalambal, **distraught** and upset, tried her best to resolve the issue but failed. With no other alternative, she decided to seek the help of Tenali Rama, the court's brilliant and witty poet. Rama listened patiently as the queen recounted the incident in detail.

"The king wrote a poem," she began, her voice trembling. "It was filled with **vague** expressions—sun, moon, stars, beautiful sky—but it made no sense. When he tried



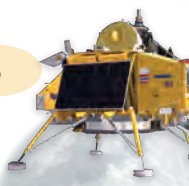
insurmountable:
undefeatable

trivial:
unimportant

forlorn: lonely

distraught:
extremely sad

vague: unclear



reciting it to his ministers, they all avoided him, making excuses. It was late evening when he came to me, seeking an audience. He began reciting it to me, but I was so exhausted after a tiring day that I yawned—not once, but several times. The king thought I was disrespecting his poem and stormed off. Since then, he has not spoken to me. If I had known this would happen I would have chosen another day. Help me, please, Rama. Only you can help the king understand.”



strategy: plan

profusely:
in large
amounts

bustling: busy

intricately: in a
detailed manner

exquisite: fine
and attractive

ornate:
decorative

gnawed: (here)
bothered

Rama nodded thoughtfully. “If you like, I will try my best to resolve this matter, Your Highness. But this needs a well-planned approach, and I may need time to find the right **strategy**.” The queen, who had placed her last hope in Rama, agreed and thanked him **profusely**.

The next morning, the royal court was **bustling** with activity. Ministers, scholars, and courtiers filled the courtroom, its **intricately** carved pillars towering towards the high ceiling. Rays of sunlight streamed through the open windows, illuminating the floor adorned with **exquisite** rugs. Despite the lively chatter, a tension hung in the air. The king sat on his **ornate** throne, his expression stern, his sharp eyes scanning the room. It was evident that the unresolved quarrel still **gnawed** at him.

The court discussion was centred on improving paddy cultivation in the empire. One by one, the ministers rose to present their ideas. Some suggested expanding irrigation networks, while others advocated for better manure. Amid these suggestions, Tenali Rama stood quietly at the edge of the court, observing everyone with an amused smile.



Finally, the king called upon Rama. The chatter in the court died down as all eyes turned to him. Rama approached the throne, carrying a plateful of paddy seeds. Bowing low, he began, “Your Majesty, I bring you a revolutionary type of paddy seeds. If these are sown, the **yield** will be three times greater than the current results.”

A murmur swept through the room. One of the courtiers, known for his **sarcasm**, whispered just loud enough to be heard, “I wonder if these are magic seeds! Next, he’ll claim they grow without water.” Another muttered, “Perhaps he found them on the moon!” **Snickers** rippled through the court.

The king frowned, unimpressed. “That sounds **absurd**,” he muttered. “Such cultivation would need special soil, manure, and pest and insect repellents. If, by chance, something were to go wrong, our farmers would suffer.”

Rama smiled, **unfazed**. “That may be true, Your Majesty, but the real issue lies not with the seeds themselves but with the person who sows them.”

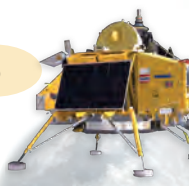
yield: (here)
harvest

sarcasm:
mockery

snickers:
suppressed
laughter

absurd: illogical

unfazed: not
worried



furrowed:
wrinkled

sceptical:
doubtful

keenly:
intensely

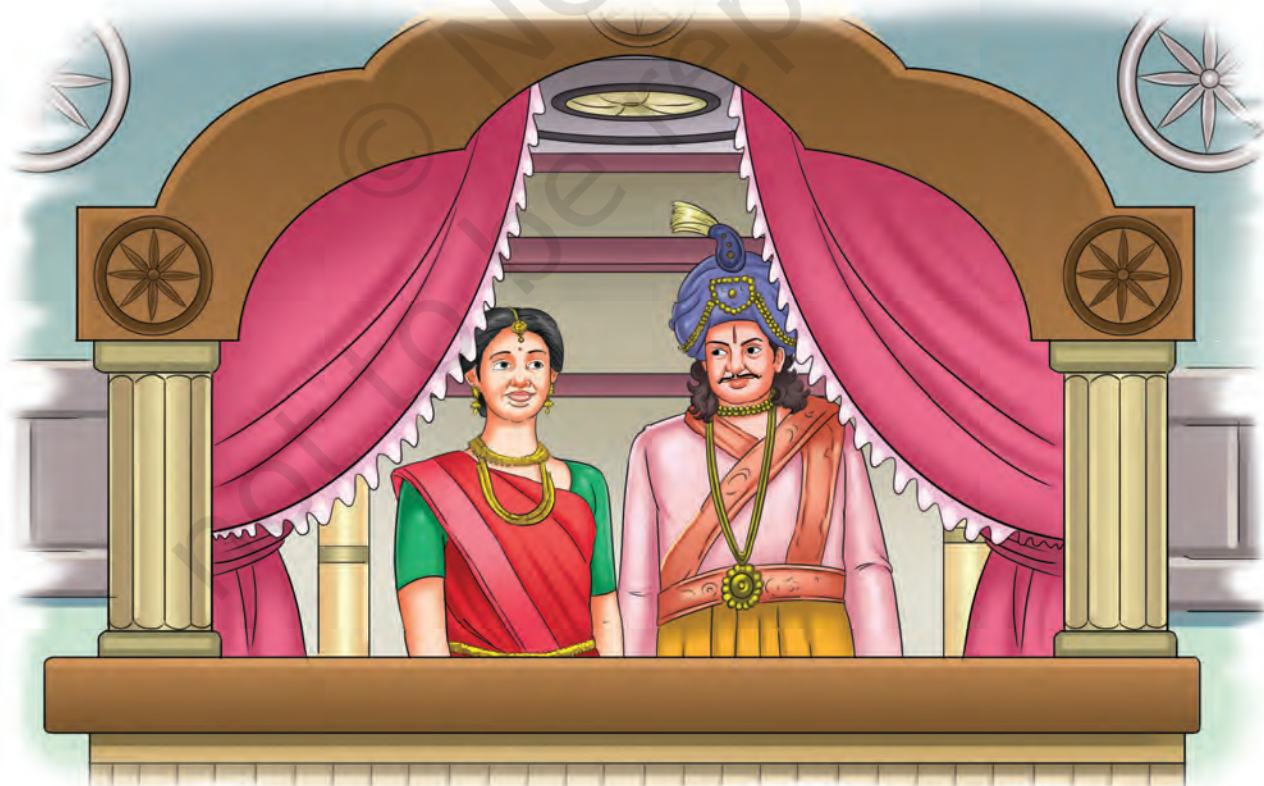
gesture: a
movement of
a hand or the
head, to express
an idea or
a meaning

A hush fell over the court as Rama's words hung in the air. The king's eyebrows **furrowed**. "What is wrong with the person who sows the seeds? Speak clearly, Rama!" he roared.

Rama glanced around the court, his sharp gaze meeting the **sceptical** eyes of the courtiers. "If one were to sow seeds without proper care, no one would reap a good harvest," he said, pausing for effect. "And what if the person had a habit of yawning while sowing? Wouldn't the seeds scatter unevenly?"

The court erupted into laughter, the earlier sarcasm replaced by genuine amusement. Even the king, caught off guard, sighed and instinctively yawned. Rama watched him **keenly**, then continued, "Your Majesty, is there anyone in this world who does not yawn? It is as natural as breathing."

The king's expression shifted as realisation dawned. His mind raced back to the quarrel with the queen. He remembered scolding her harshly for yawning while he recited his poem. He realised how unfair he had been. "If I had known that yawning was not a sign of disrespect, I wouldn't have taken her **gesture** so personally," he thought, regret filling his heart.





That evening, the king approached the queen with a softened expression. “Thirumalambal,” he began, his voice gentle, “I have been foolish. I see now that I overreacted. I let my pride blind me. I’m so sorry.”

The queen, who had longed for this moment, smiled and replied, “If you like, we can leave this quarrel behind us. I would very much like to listen to your poem.”

Rama, who had **orchestrated** this settlement, felt victorious. The king and the queen later presented him with valuable gifts for his service. The royal couple’s bond was restored, and the palace **brimmed** once again with joy and laughter.

orchestrated:
arranged

brimmed:
overflowed

Let us discuss

I Rectify the following false statements from the text.

1. The queen insulted the king by speaking against the quality of his poem.
2. Tenali Rama immediately went to the king and convinced him to talk to the queen.
3. The courtiers admired the king’s poem and praised his literary talent.
4. The ministers in the court were eager to hear Tenali Rama’s idea about paddy cultivation.
5. The king never realised his mistake and continued to stay angry with the queen.



Let us think and reflect

I Read the extracts and answer the questions that follow.

1. “... The king thought I was disrespecting his poem and stormed off. Since then, he has not spoken to me. If I had known this would happen I would have chosen another day. Help me, please, Rama. Only you can help the king understand.”

Rama nodded thoughtfully. “If you like, I will try my best to resolve this matter, Your Highness. But this needs a well-planned approach and I may need time to find the right strategy.”

- (i) Why does the queen believe that only Tenali Rama can help the king understand?





(ii) What does the queen's statement, "If I had known this would happen, I would have chosen another day", suggest about her feelings?

- A. She is angry at the king for overreacting.
- B. She regrets the unintended misunderstanding.
- C. She believes the poem was not worth listening to.
- D. She is worried that the king might punish her.

(iii) How does Tenali Rama's response reflect his wisdom and problem-solving skills?

(iv) Fill in the blank by choosing the correct option from those given in the brackets.

The king's reaction shows that he is sensitive and _____ (has a lot of faith/takes great pride) in his poetry.

2. *That evening, the king approached the queen with a softened expression. "Thirumalambal", he began, his voice gentle, "I have been foolish. I see now that I overreacted. I let my pride blind me. I'm so sorry."*

The queen, who had longed for this moment, smiled and replied, "If you like, we can leave this quarrel behind us. I would very much like to listen to your poem."

(i) Complete the following with a suitable explanation.

When the king said, "I let my pride blind me", he means that ____.

(ii) Why does the queen say, "If you like, we can leave this quarrel behind us"?

(iii) Fill in the blank by choosing the correct option from those given in the brackets.

The king acknowledges that his pride clouded his judgement, which shows _____. (intelligence and courage/maturity and self-awareness)

(iv) State any one characteristic that the queen's response to the king's apology shows about her.

II Answer the following questions.

1. Why was the Vijayanagara Empire considered to be in its 'Golden Era' during Krishnadeva Raya's reign?
2. How did Tenali Ramakrishna gain a special place in the king's court?
3. How did the quarrel between the king and the queen affect the palace?
4. What strategy did Tenali Rama use to make the king realise his mistake?

5. What was the reaction of the courtiers when Tenali Rama introduced his 'special' paddy seeds?
6. How does the story conclude, and what lesson can be learnt from it?



Let us learn

I Fill in the blanks and complete the paragraph by choosing suitable expressions from the box given below.

cast a shadow	murmur swept through the room	hush fell over
mind raced back	stormed off	rippled through

My mother is quite witty, and her sense of humour always lightens stressful moments. Once, at a family dinner, an argument began over a minor issue, and 1. _____, making everyone feel uncomfortable. Just as things were getting serious, she made a clever remark and laughter 2. _____ the gathering, making everyone relaxed. The person who started the argument 3. _____. Everyone disapproved of the action and a 4. _____. My 5. _____ to how my mother had saved other situations like this. Without her, such moments would have 6. _____ over the gatherings. I hope that I grow up to be as witty as my mother.

II The writer uses words like 'roared', 'murmur' in the text to indicate the sound produced. Fill in the blanks with suitable sound words from the box given below. You may refer to a dictionary.

murmur	sighed	mumble	gasped
snickers	thud	groan	rattle
roared	whispered		



1. As the teacher began the riddle challenge, a _____ of excitement spread through the classroom.
2. Anaya _____ in relief—she loved riddles more than solving Mathematics problems.
3. 'Think carefully,' the teacher began to _____, as she wrote a riddle on the board.
4. When the question was revealed, a few students _____, realising it wasn't as easy as they had expected.
5. Some exchanged _____, wondering if anyone at all would be able to solve it.
6. Just then, Anaya tapped her book on the desk with a small _____, deep in thought.



7. 'Ah, I see it now!' she said stretching with a _____, as if it had taken her great effort.
8. A small breeze made the windows _____, adding to the suspense of the moment.
9. 'So, what's the answer?' the students _____, their voices filled with playful enthusiasm.
10. Leaning forward with a smile, Anaya _____, 'Sometimes, the trickiest questions have the simplest answers.'

III As you have learnt, a compound word is formed when two or more words are combined to create a new word with a distinct meaning. These are of three types: closed compounds (sunlight, courtroom), hyphenated compounds (well-planned), and open compounds (paddy seeds).

1. Create new compound words by matching words in Column 1 with those in Column 2.

Column 1	Column 2
(i) quick	A. hall
(ii) soft	B. tempered
(iii) common	C. spoken
(iv) house	D. blue
(v) book	E. store
(vi) ill	F. sense
(vii) sky	G. witted
(viii) dance	H. hold



2. Fill in the blanks with the words created in the previous question.

Ravi was (i) _____, always speaking calmly even in arguments. He grew up in a lively (ii) _____, where he learned to handle different personalities. His friend Arun, however, was (iii) _____ and often lost his patience. Despite this, Arun admired Ravi's (iv) _____ thinking. One evening, as they passed a (v) _____, they saw some performers rushing out. Ravi noticed that one of them dropped a (vi) _____ book on the ground. "Is this yours?" he asked. "Oh thank you, young man!" the performer smiled. "It's a recent purchase from the (vii) _____ round the corner." True to his nature Arun promptly said to Ravi, "It's (viii) _____ that it's not from a bakery but bookshop!" Ravi smiled and they walked on.

- IV Read the sentences from the text and their explanation given in the table below.

Sentences from the Text	Tenses	Explanation
1. If you like , I will try my best to resolve this matter.	Simple Present + Present Modal	The condition in the 'if' clause may or may not be fulfilled. The present tense refers only to a possible future action.
2. If, by chance something were to go wrong, our farmers would suffer.	Simple Past + Past Modal	The condition in the 'if' clause expresses a hypothetical or imaginary situation.
3. If I had known this would happen, I would have chosen another day.	Past Perfect + would have + Past Participle	The condition in the 'if' clause describes what the speaker would have done (differently) if the past situation had been different and it is impossible to rectify it in the present.

In sentence 1 'if you like' is the **subordinate clause** (if clause) and 'I will try my best to resolve this matter' is the **main clause**.

Identify the subordinate and main clauses in sentences 2 and 3.





Now, match the subordinate clauses (if clauses) in Column 1 with the appropriate main clauses in Column 2 to make complete sentences.

Column 1	Column 2
(i) If I had a magic wand,	A. We will go to the theatre.
(ii) If it rains tomorrow,	B. I would sneak into the secret room.
(iii) If you had listened carefully,	C. I would give myself wings.
(iv) If you finish your homework,	D. The boys would have woken up on time.
(v) If I were invisible,	E. We will stay indoors and play board games.
(vi) If the alarm had rung,	F. You would have solved the puzzle.

V Complete the following sentences appropriately with either the main clause or the subordinate clause (if clause).

1. Your teacher will be unhappy if _____.
2. They would have caught the train if _____.
3. _____ if you continue to stay up late every night.
4. If she knew the answer, _____.
5. _____ if she had studied harder.
6. If I had a million rupees, _____.

VI Complete the following sentences. One example has been done for you.

1. If I were a tree, I would play with the wind and talk to the birds.
2. If I were the Head Teacher of my school, _____.
3. If I were a bird, _____.
4. If I were a magician, _____.
5. If I had studied harder, _____.



Let us listen

I You will listen to a woman narrating a story. As you listen, fill in the blanks in the following sentences by selecting the correct options. (Transcript for teacher on page 46)

1. The rope tying the bundle of sticks was ____.

- (i) loose
- (ii) thick
- (iii) short

2. The scholar is finally referred to as ____.

- (i) irritable
- (ii) mischievous
- (iii) arrogant

II You will once again listen to the story. As you listen, number the events of the story in the correct order of occurrence.

1. The great scholar was ashamed because he did not know what to say.
2. Rama accepted the challenge thrown by the visitor.
3. Rama had a bundle tied in silk when he came to the palace.
4. The king laughed at the explanation given by Rama.
5. The visitor wanted to show his superiority over others in the palace.
6. Rama showed the work to be a bundle of sticks tied together by a rope.
7. The king wanted to know more about the work mentioned by Rama.
8. The court scholars were afraid of the king's anger.



Let us speak

I While asking questions, it is important to use the appropriate tone to convey the correct meaning.

1. 'Yes' or 'No' questions have a rising tone at the end.

Are you coming [↗]home?

2. '-Wh' questions have a falling tone at the end.

When will you come [↘]home?

This rise and fall in tone is called **intonation**.

Now, work in pairs and mark the intonation in the questions given below. Take turns to practise by saying them aloud with the correct intonation.

- (i) Is this your cat?
- (ii) What is the name of your cat?
- (iii) Will you be going to your village?
- (iv) Why are you going to your village?
- (v) Is this where you live?



- (vi) Where do you live?
- (vii) Can I meet your parents?
- (viii) How are your parents?
- (ix) Do you have any plans for tomorrow?
- (x) What are you going to do tomorrow?

II 'What', 'Why', 'When', 'How', 'Where', and 'Who' are the words used to ask questions. These words are called **question words**. Let us use these words and make some questions.

While making questions, remember the correct word order.

- Who is the cleverest character in the story? (Correct)
- Who the cleverest character is in the story? (Incorrect)

Work in pairs and take turns to ask and answer questions about a trip that you are planning. Remember to use the correct intonation while asking these questions.

Here are some prompts for you.

- The destination (Where...)
- Purpose (Why...)
- Mode of transport (How...)
- Duration (When...)
- Travel companions (Who...)
- Activities (What...)

Now, work in pairs and take turns to ask and answer the questions about witty characters in folktales or stories you have read. Use the correct intonation while asking questions.

For example: Your favourite character in the folktale (Who...?)
Who is your favourite character in the folktale?

1. The name of the witty character (Who...?)
2. The reason for her/his wit being important in the story (Why...?)
3. The most famous trick or clever idea she/he used (What...?)
4. The time period or setting of the folktale/story (When...?)
5. The way she/he used her/his intelligence to solve a problem (How...?)
6. The location where the story takes place (Where...?)



Let us write

A narrative essay is written on a personal experience or an imagined experience.



I Read the narrative essay given below.

A Lesson in Responsibility

One bright Monday morning, I woke up to the sounds of birds chirping loudly. For once, I wasn't late for school. My uniform was neatly laid out, and my homework was already packed in my bag. I felt proud of myself for being so organised. But little did I know, the day would still teach me an important lesson.

During the morning assembly, our teacher, Mrs. Rao, announced a surprise Science quiz. My heart skipped a beat. I had studied the chapter a week ago, but I had forgotten to revise it over the weekend. As I sat at my desk with the question paper in front of me, I froze. The questions looked familiar, yet I couldn't recall the answers clearly. I tried my best to focus, but it wasn't enough. Later, when the results were announced, I scored much lower than I expected. Disappointed, I spoke to Mrs. Rao after the class. She smiled and said, "It's not about how much you know but how consistently you prepare. Small efforts add up every day."

Her words stayed with me. From that day on, I made it a habit to revise my lessons regularly, even if there wasn't an immediate test. Responsibility isn't just about being on time or finishing tasks—it's about being ready for what's unexpected.

Now, work in pairs and check (✓) if the following features are present in the narrative essay.

1. Introduction

- The essay begins with a clear and engaging opening.
- The introduction sets the context for the narrative.
- The central idea or purpose is clear.

2. Body of the essay

- Events are narrated in a logical sequence.
- Descriptive details are used.
- Characters and settings are clearly described.
- The narrator's emotions or thoughts are shared.
- The essay includes a challenge or a problem or a turning point.



3. Conclusion

- The essay ends with an outcome.
- A lesson or a message is clearly stated.

4. Writing Style

- The tone is personal and engaging.
- First person narration is used (for example, 'I,' 'my').

5. Language

- The essay uses simple and clear language.
- Grammar, punctuation, and spellings are correctly used.

Note: A narrative essay focuses on sharing a personal experience to convey a specific lesson, a reflection, or an idea. It has an introduction, a body, and a conclusion.

Now, write a narrative essay based on any one of the situations given below.

- The Day I Learnt the Value of Teamwork
- A Small Act of Kindness that Made a Difference



Let us explore

I Limericks are poems in five lines that have a twist in the last line. Read and enjoy the following limericks and create one on your own.

Raju flew his kite in the sky so wide,
It soared with grace, full of pride.
But a crow came along,
Singing its song,
And now it's the crow on a joyride!

II Go to the library and read a story of your choice. Share its theme and the interesting parts of the story with your classmates and teacher.

III You must have read stories of wit, humour, and wisdom in your own language or English. Make a list of these stories that you have read on a chart paper. Each student should read at least one new story from the list.

Answers: 1. Words 2. Time 3. The future 4. A secret