

Learn How to Climb Trees

(Many tigers roamed about in the thick forests in the Kumaon and Garhwal hills till the beginning of the 20th Century. Jim Corbett was brought up in this region. He loved mountains, forests and animals. He was an excellent shooter. He killed many man-eaters and saved the lives of countless people.)

Kunwar Singh was the first to visit me the day I was given my first gun. I was eight then. He came early, and I put the old double-barrelled gun into his hands with great pride. He laid the gun aside and said to me, “You are no longer a boy, but a man; and with this good gun you can go anywhere you like in the jungles and never be afraid provided you learn how to climb trees. I’ll now tell you a story to show how necessary it is for us, who shoot in the jungles, to know how to climb trees.

Har Singh and I went to shoot one day last April. We started when the stars were paling. Since we found nothing to shoot, we started for home towards evening. While we were taking a sandy nullah that ran through dense scrub and thorn-bamboo jungle, a tiger was looking at us. It stared at us for some time but went back.

We continued on our way and the tiger came out again and it was growling and twitching its tail. We stood still and luckily, the tiger left the nullah. Being disturbed by the tiger, a number of jungle fowl rose cackling out of the dense scrub. One of them alighted on a branch and Har Singh fired at it.



The tiger came towards us with a terrifying roar. I had climbed up a *runi* tree but Har Singh could not climb up a tree as he had not learnt to climb trees when he was a boy.

The tiger sprang at him and he was screaming. Now I fired the gun off into the air. The tiger went away and Har Singh collapsed at the foot of the tree. I climbed down very silently



and went to Har Singh. I found that one of the tiger's claws had entered his stomach and torn the lining from his navel to within a few fingers breadth of the back-bone. All his inside had fallen out. I could not know what to do. Har Singh told me to put his intestines back into his stomach. I stuffed them all back along with the dry leaves, grass and twigs that stuck to them.

Later I wound my *pugree* (turban) round his stomach and knitted it tight to keep everything from falling out again. We started for home walking for seven miles. I led the way and Har Singh followed me. Holding the *pugree* in position Har Singh told me that he wanted to meet the doctor. We walked for the extra three miles to the hospital. It was night and the hospital was closed. But the doctor-babu who lived nearby was awake. He asked me to call Aladia, the tobacco-seller. When I returned, the doctor had laid Har Singh on a string bed. Aladia held the lantern and I held the two pieces of flesh together. The doctor was very kind. He sewed up the hole in Har Singh's stomach. I offered him two rupees but he refused to take it. When we went home, the woman folk were crying.

-Jim Corbett

Glossary

paling (v):	appearing less bright
nullah(n):	a water course, especially a dry one
scrub (n):	an area of dry land covered with small bushes and trees
cackling (v):	making a loud unpleasant noise
collapse (v):	to fall down suddenly because of loss of strength/support
sew (ed)(v):	to join / attach something using a needle and thread

How well did I read?

Fill in the boxes using yes/ somewhat/ no.	
I enjoyed reading the passage.	
I got the idea of the passage on my own.	
I got the idea with the help of my friends in the group.	
The teacher helped me to understand the passage.	
I used the glossary given at the end of the passage.	



I. Answer the following questions:

1. What do you think is the main reason for the tiger’s attack on Har Singh?
2. What kind of person was the doctor? Justify your answer.
3. What would you have done if you were in the narrator’s place when the tiger attacked Har Singh? Do you think that it is appropriate to give an eight years old a gun?
4. What do you think the narrator wants to convey through this story?



Self Assessment

How well have I understood this unit?

Read and tick (✓) in the appropriate box.

Indicators	Yes	Somewhat	No
I was able to talk on the fortune favours the brave (Face sheet)			
I read and understood the text:			
A. A Hero			
B. My Nasty Adventure(poem)			
C. Learn How to Climb a Trees			
I was able to do the exercises on synonyms and proverbs given under ‘Vocabulary’.			
I was able to understand the do the exercises on simple past and past continuous tense given under ‘Grammar’.			
I was able to write a diary given under ‘Writing’.			
I was able to do the activity given under Study Skills.			
I listened to and understood the story “Carried Away by an Eagle” answered the questions and retold the story given under ‘Listening and Speaking’.			
I was able to complete the ‘Project Work’ and present it to the class.			

