



Garden Snake

I saw a snake and ran away. . . .
 Some snakes are dangerous, they say;
 But mother says, that kind is good,
 And eats up insects for his food.
 So when he wiggles in the grass
 I'll stand aside and watch his pass
 And tell myself, "There is no mistake,
 It's just a harmless garden snake."



1. Where do you normally find snakes?
2. Name the snakes that you know.
3. In what way(s) are snakes useful?

Oral Discourse: Talk on - Talk about your reaction when you see a snake.

A. Reading

Snakes in India

What are the most dangerous animals on the Indian subcontinent? They are not lions, tigers or wolves but poisonous snakes. They attack far more frequently than most people suspect. Over 20,000 humans are bitten by venomous snakes in India each year. Unfortunately, the death-rate from snake bites is high, largely because of widespread ignorance about snakes and snakebite prevention. Also, proper medical treatment is often delayed or unobtainable. According to an estimate made by the World Health Organization, about 15,000 deaths from snakebites occur annually in India—nearly half the world total of such deaths. Even for those who survive, it is a dreadful experience, usually resulting in days or weeks of agony.

Take what happened to Tengal Kamal on a rainy evening in August 1981. Kamal, a 25-year-old farmer living near Goregaon, a suburb of Mumbai, was working barefoot in his fields when he suddenly felt a sharp sting on his right foot.

Kamal examined his foot and saw two tiny marks near the ankle. Convinced it was a snake-bite, he hastily tied a rope just above his knee, and called out to a relative working



nearby, who immediately took him by taxi to a local doctor's dispensary. Unfortunately, the doctor was not a fully qualified allopathic practitioner and did not know about antivenin serum (anti-snake venom) or how to administer it. He gave Kamal a pain-killing injection and antibiotic tablets. He told him to rest at home until the pain subsides.

But during the next few hours, Kamal felt increasingly giddy and vomited continually. His right foot and lower leg swelled alarmingly and the pain was unbearable. Kamal's relatives rushed him to a large public hospital in central Mumbai.

By then it was more than five hours since Kamal had been bitten and blood had begun to ooze from the snake-bite marks. His gums were also bleeding and a soft thin tube put through Kamal's nose into his stomach revealed a large amount of blood. Fearing that it might already be too late, the doctor gave Kamal an injection of antivenin, and began an emergency blood transfusion.

Over the next three days, Kamal was given 15 such transfusions as well as a repeat shot of antivenin. It was only after the fifth day that he was declared out of danger. After about a fortnight he was finally discharged from hospital.

Only about 50 of the more than 200 species of snakes in India are venomous. Of these, only four—Russell's viper, saw-scaled viper, Indian cobra and common krait—are really dangerous. They are found across the country, from desert to fertile plains. While all the four are most common in rural India, Indian cobras and common kraits can be found in and around any human dwelling, posing danger even in the suburbs of major cities like Mumbai, Kolkata, and New Delhi.



Of the death-dealing quartet, the Russell's viper is found from the paddy fields and river valleys of north India to the densely forested hills of Tamil Nadu, Kerala, and Karnataka in the south. Tan or brownish, thick-bodied, and reaching a length of one metre, it has long, movable fangs that inject a large amount of venom, making it even more dangerous than the Indian cobra.





Monocle Cobra

The Indian cobra, a relative of some killer snakes of Asia, Africa and Australia, is readily recognized by the ‘spectacle’ (picture on the right) and ‘monocle’ (picture on the left) marks on its back. However, the black cobra has no distinguishing marks.

About one and a half to two metres long, the cobra spends much of its time underground or beneath dead logs or stones, feeding mainly on frogs and rats. The cobra’s bite is shallow and delivers a smaller dose of venom. But the venom is three times as toxic as that of the Russell’s viper.



Spectacle Cobra



Indian Cobra

Even more toxic is the venom of the secretive and timid common krait. One to one and a half metres in length, it is found throughout India. The common krait is usually glistening, bluish-black, with thin, often indistinct, white cross-bands.



Krait

Contrary to what many people believe, most snakes are timid, nocturnal creatures, feeding mostly on rats, mice, frogs, toads, lizards or birds. They attack humans only when actually stepped upon, or provoked in some way. Precautions, such as wearing shoes and long trousers when walking through high grass and undergrowth, will lessen the risk of being bitten, for most snake-bites in India occur as people walk barefoot. Carry a lantern or a torch when you venture out at night.

Beat the ground ahead with a long stick as you walk—snakes will perceive the vibrations and slither away. The snakes move around as long as they have rats to feed on. Hence, keep your home and its surroundings rat-free. One should be alert during the monsoon season when snakes are most active.

Glossary

ignorance (n):	lack of knowledge or information about something
convinced (v):	completely sure about
giddy (adj):	feeling that everything is moving and that you are going to fall
unbearable (adj):	too painful , annoyingly unpleasant
reasonable (adj):	acceptable
toxic (adj):	containing poison, poisonous
nocturnal (adj):	active only during the night



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. Why do many people die of snakebite?
2. If 100 people died in a year in India, how many people might have died in the rest of the world?
3. What opinion do you form about the first doctor who treated Kamal?
4. What does a Russell's Viper do when provoked?
5. What is the death-dealing quartet?
6. What are the poisonous and non-poisonous snakes?
7. What is the writer's opinion about snakes?
8. What are people's misconceptions about snakes?
9. What precautions should we take if we want to lessen the risk of a snakebite?
10. If you had been in Kamal's position, what would you have done?
11. Why do you think some people worship cobras even though they are poisonous and very harmful?

Vocabulary

I. Fill in the blanks with words given below:

convinced, repeat, occur, contrary, venture

Sometimes cyclones _____ in the ocean. _____ to our opinion fishermen are never _____ that it is dangerous to _____ into the ocean during the cyclones. They _____ the same mistake and lose their precious lives.

II. Look at the following words from the text: 1. precaution 2. dangerous

The word 'precaution' consists of two parts – 'pre-' and 'caution' (prefix+root).

The word 'dangerous' consists of two parts 'danger' and '-ous' (root+suffix).



Add appropriate prefixes / suffixes to the following roots to make new words.
The first one is done for you.

Prefix	Root	New Word	Root	Suffix	New Word
dis-	courage	discourage	king	-dom	kingdom
	active		rich		
	legal		brave		
	able		fame		
	believe		boy		

Fill in the blanks in the following sentences with suitable forms (after adding a prefix/suffix) of the words in brackets.

1. He was acting in a very _____ way. (child)
2. This word is very difficult to spell, and even worse, its _____. (pronounce)
3. You shouldn't have done that! It was very _____ of you. (think)
4. He didn't pass his exam. He was _____ in the second attempt. (succeed)
5. Some of the Indian cities are dreadfully _____. (crowd)
6. The team won the _____. (champion)
7. There is a very high _____ that they will be late. (likely)
8. I couldn't find any _____ in his theory. (weak)
9. There was a three-hour _____ because of the strike. (stop)
10. You need a _____ of motivation, organization and revision to learn English. (combine)

Grammar

I. Read the following sentences.

1. The snakes move around as long as they have rats to feed on.
 2. He told him to rest at home until the pain subsides
- 'Until' refers to a point of time or an event.
 - 'As long as' refers to a period of time (duration) over which an activity lasts.

Sentence No.	Subject	Predicate
1	Poisonous snakes	are very dangerous
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		

III. Editing - Read the following passage. Every numbered sentence has an error. Identify and edit it.

(1)Mr.Narayan Rao slowly bent and sit in his armed chair. (2)He leaned back removing his spectacle. (3)He said, "Koushik, can you bring down my old box from the upper shelf in me bedroom?" The boy mounted a chair as quick as a lizard and brought the box down. (4)"What do it contain?" he murmured and tried to open it. (5) His sister snatched it on his hands and ran away.

Writing

I. Prepare a poster giving a list of Dos and Don'ts when a snake bites. Here are two Dos and two Don'ts:

Dos

- Keep the person calm.
- Keep the affected area below the heart level.

Don'ts

- Do not wait to see if the bite causes any problems; treat it straight away.
- Do not cut, wash, or suck the bite.

How well did I prepare the poster?

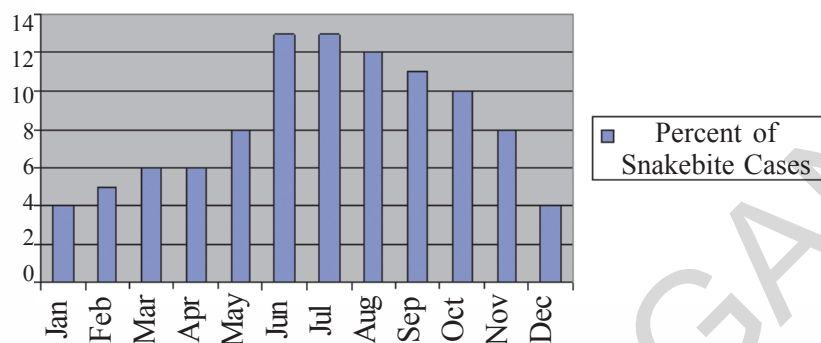
Fill in the boxes using yes/ somewhat/ no.	
I used apt words.	
I used a good lay out.	
I was able to convey the message through my poster.	
I used proper punctuation marks.	



Study Skills

Study the bar-chart given below.

Month-wise distribution of 1379 snakebite incidences during the period 1999-2003.



Source: Department of Biochemistry, University College of Science, Osmania University, Hyderabad.

I. Answer the following questions:

1. What is this bar-chart about?
2. Which months recorded the highest number of snakebite cases?
3. The lowest percent of snakebite cases occurred in _____.
4. In which months did 8 per cent of snake bites occur?
5. What is the average percentage of snake bites in T.S. per month?
6. What other inferences can you draw from this chart?

Listening and Speaking

Your teacher will read the story 'The Farmer and the Cobra' Listen to your teacher and answer the questions given below.

I. Say whether the following statements are true or false.

1. The farmer returned home in the afternoon. []
2. The owner of the tree wanted to have the tree to construct a house. []
3. The farmer did not like the tree to be cut down. []
4. The farmer died when the tree was cut down. []
5. The cobra died in front of its hole. []





II. Listen to the story and answer the following questions:

1. Why did the people leave the farmer to himself?
2. Did the farmer talk to the cobra? Why did he refer to the cobra as a friend?
3. What kind of a man was the farmer? Support your answer.

III. Work in groups and discuss the following

1. If you were the farmer, would you feel sorry for the cobra?
2. Would you like to make friends with a cobra as the farmer did? Why?
3. Do you think the farmer is really a peculiar person? Do you find any person of this kind in your locality? Share your ideas with your friends.

IV. Imagine that you are a reporter of a local television channel. You want to cover the celebrations of “Nagula Chavithi” in your area. One of you can act as a TV reporter and some of you can act as devotees.

