

18. Weeds in the Garden



Most of the parents like to fulfil the wishes of their children. They feel sorry when they cannot indulge their kids or when they have to scold them. And when even a scolding has no effect, the parents become very very unhappy. Such was the case with Anshuman and his parents.

Anshuman's parents had noticed that he was developing some bad habits. Naturally, they began to warn him time and again, but all in vain. Anshuman just wouldn't listen. He refused to believe that he was letting those bad habits get a hold over him. Gentle words, strict warnings, a scolding now and then – his parents tried everything short of beating him up. And that they would never do. However unhappy they themselves were, they wanted to be loving and gentle as they tried to correct their son's ways.

Soon, an opportunity presented itself. Anshuman had gone to stay on his grandfather's farm with his parents. Early one morning, his father took him

for a walk around the farm. He was describing the specialities of various plants and vines and bushes and trees to Anshuman. Suddenly, he stopped and pointed at a small seedling growing near a plant.

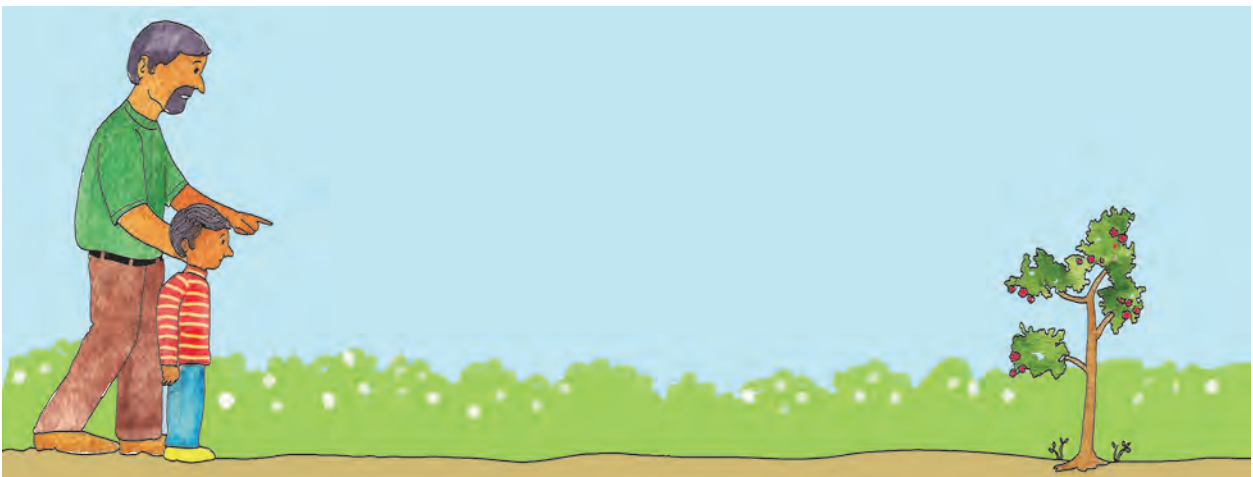
“Anshuman, that's a weed. Can you pull it out?”

Anshuman had no difficulty in pulling all of the small seedling out. “Good!” said his father and they continued with their walk. After a while, they came upon the same weed but there, it had grown slightly bigger. Anshuman's father told him to pull out this plant, too. He told him to uproot the weed carefully, making sure that no trace of the root was left in the soil.

“Otherwise the weed can grow again,” he warned.

Anshuman uprooted the plant carefully, twisting it and pulling it hard so that the whole of it came out.

Then his father drew his attention to the same weed growing at some



distance. There, it had grown into a big plant with tiny flowers and dark fruit.

“That could be quite dangerous. We mustn’t leave it growing there. Take it out,” said Anshuman’s father.

Anshuman held the plant in his hands and gave it a tug. The weed didn’t move at all. He pulled harder and harder but to no avail.

“I can’t get this out!” exclaimed Anshuman. “It has gone too deep into the soil.”

So then his father brought some implements, they dug around the weed and with great effort, pulled it out.

When they were returning home after the hard work, Anshuman’s father mentioned, “Habits are like weeds. The



longer you allow them to grow, the harder it is to uproot them. It is wise to get rid of them when it is easy to do so.”

Anshuman realized the truth in his father’s words. Throughout his life, he never forgot that early morning walk on the farm with his father.

Things to do :

1. List all the words and phrases in this story that indicate ‘time’.

2. Add proper prefixes like up- , un- , dis- , in- to the following to form opposites.

* happy * root * effective * noticed * believe * civilized * continue

3. Answer the following questions.

(1) When do the parents feel sorry and become unhappy ?

(2) What methods did Anshuman’s parents use to warn Anshuman about his bad habits ?

(3) What did Anshuman’s father compare bad habits to ?

4. Use the following phrases in your own sentences –

* in vain * get a hold of * to get rid of.

5. Language Study (See pages 84-88.)

(1) Read the highlighted words. They are known as **prepositions**.

* **for** a walk * **around** the farm * specialities **of** plants

* **in** the soil * **with** great effort

(2) Change the meaning of the sentences by changing the preposition.

The tiger jumped into the river.



Put the cubes in the box.



We travelled to Mumbai by train.



There were many people around the house.



The children were asked to come without their parents.



(3) Change the meaning by changing the adverb.

- * Speak gently.
- * Come in.
- * Hit the stone hard with the hammer.

6. Group Work

(1) Form groups of 5-8 and list the following.

- * Bad habits
- * Very harmful habits

(2) Discuss the following in groups.

- * Do people admit that they have bad habits?
- * What can we do to get rid of bad habits?
- * Do's and Don'ts for young children.
