

2.5 A Play

Warming up!

Chit-Chat

- Do you like to watch plays?
- Which is the last play you saw?
- Do you watch TV serials? Which ones?
- Do you like slow-moving serials?
- Do you like stories from the past? What type of stories do you like?



Two Truths, One Lie !

- Make groups of 10-15. In this game, each person writes three sentences about himself/herself, two of which are true and the third one is a lie. Read aloud your sentences, while others guess which two are true and which is a lie.

Examples : Hello, everyone! I am Sonali. I have a brother and a sister. I live in Amalner. We have a pet dog at home.

Lost and Found

- Divide the students into groups of five. They sit in a circle. They choose one object of daily use such as a bag, wallet, box, etc. The group leader writes four sentences about it.
- I have found a
- It's (colour).
- It's (shape)
- It has a
- I found it (place where it was found).

Others, too, write four sentences each.

- I've lost a
- It's (colour)
- It's (shape)
- It has a
- I lost it (place where it was lost).

They all open read their lines, beginning with the group leader. The player whose description matches the group leader's the most gets the object.

In the game 'Two Truths, One Lie!', it is necessary to use details which can be verified to see whether they are true or false. For example, you cannot use sentences like 'I once had a blue sweater.'

You may add other suitable lines such as 'There was/were in it.'

A Play

Part I

Scene I : *A King's Court. The court awaits the arrival of the king. Two guards are standing front right of the stage.*

First Guard : *(To the second guard)* Be alert, the king is about to arrive.

Second Guard : Who wants to be alert ? Life seems like one long sleep in this land. I am at ease, all day, though I am a guard.

First Guard : How boring ! I wonder if some interesting drama will unfold at the court today. It would enliven the atmosphere.

Second Guard : I would be equally happy if there was none. *(Enter the disciple looking around.)*

First Guard : Halt ! You are a stranger. Give your identity.

Disciple : You are right. I am a visitor here – a disciple of the Wise Sage from the Ghangor forest which lies to the east of your kingdom.

First Guard : What brings you here ?

Disciple : I have heard amazing stories about this kingdom of Andher Nagari and the great King Chaupat. I am especially impressed by the fact that everything in the market is sold at the same price. No complications.



Second Guard

First Guard : You have heard right. In our land, you can buy the most rich and delectable sweets for the same price as an equal measure of vegetables. *Taka ser bhaji, taka ser khaja.* I am quite happy about it. It makes life easy.

Disciple : So it should. It would be a good idea to settle in this land. But first I would like to attend the court today and pay my respects to the mighty King Chaupat.



First Guard

- ♦ What is the name of the town?
- ♦ What is the name of the King?
- ♦ What is the speciality of the land?
- ♦ What Indian proverb is reflected in the play?

- ♦ Do you think this is a good land to settle in? Why?

- ♦ What are the titles of King Chaupat?



King Chaupat and the Thief

- ♦ Can we call thieves 'truly hard-working and honest'?

Second Guard : You may stand there (pointing out) with those people who are in a queue.

(Loud Voice from backstage : Hear you people. Here comes the most noble, most revered, most gracious, most learned King Chaupat of this vast kingdom. Make way for the king – Bow to the Royal Monarch.)

(King Chaupat arrives to the fanfare of bugles and drums and takes his place on the throne.)

King : Let the court begin !

Fourth Guard Messenger : The first complainant !

Thief : (rushes forward and wails loudly) Justice ! Oh, Most Great King ! I beg for Justice.

King : And what is your complaint?

Thief : In this great land of Andher Nagari, my friend and I have been truly hard-working honest thieves. All these years we have been true to our profession. And what is our reward? Last night, with great efforts, we made a hole in the wall of a merchant's house, when all his family were away. My friend peered through that hole into the house, when suddenly the wall collapsed (Wails louder).... and and my friend was instantly killed. I've lost my only friend and partner. O King ! It's the merchant's fault for living in a house with such weak walls.

King : Fetch the merchant at once. A life for life ! The merchant must be hanged !

(Third Guard leaves and returns with the merchant who bows before the king.)

Merchant : Mercy, O Noble King ! I had no intention of killing these skilled professionals. It is not my fault that the wall of my house collapsed. My house has been recently built. It is the fault of



Courtier



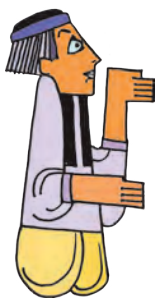
Merchant

the bricklayer, who carelessly built such a weak wall.

King : Bring the careless bricklayer immediately. He must hang for his fault.

(Second Guard leaves and returns with the bricklayer)

Bricklayer : O Most Kind Lord and King ! *(kneeling to the king)* Have mercy. I beg you, don't send me to the gallows. I agree that I built the wall which collapsed and killed a man. But it was not due to my carelessness. The mortar which I used to lay the bricks was of very poor quality. There was too much of water mixed in it. It is entirely the mortar-maker's fault.



Brick layer

King : Summon the mortar-maker at once. He must pay with his life for his thoughtlessness.

(First Guard exits and returns with the mortar-maker who rushes and throws himself before the king.)

Mortar-maker : *(wailing loudly)* Forgive me, O Merciful King. Please do not hang me to death. I have a wife and two young children. Who will look after them ?

King : Your carelessness has cost a life. You must pay with your life.

Mortar-maker : No... no... no, my Royal Lord. I am not to blame. The pot which I used to pour water into the mortar had an extra-ordinarily large mouth. So excess water poured down into the mortar mixture. I was helpless. It is the potter's fault for making such a useless pot.

King : Let the potter be brought here at once. He must be executed for moulding such useless pots.

(Fourth Guard leaves and re-enters with the potter.)

Potter : *(cowering before the king)* Your Majesty, show mercy to this humble potter. I agree the pot I made and sold to the mortar-maker was a defective one. But I am not guilty. As I was

♦ If you had been the merchant, what would you have said?



Mortar-maker

♦ What is the Mortar-maker's excuse? Is it believable?

- ◆ Do you think the Potter is telling the truth? Why?

- ◆ Why is the Daughter so confident that the king will not hang her? Does her prediction come true?

- ◆ Is the Daughter's complaint about the Goldsmith true?

moulding that pot, I heard the sweet delicate tinkling of anklets. It was the money-lender's daughter. She distracted me just as I was shaping the mouth and it became too wide.

King : Bring the money-lender's daughter here, this very instant. She must be sent to the gallows for disturbing this poor potter at work.

(First Guard leaves and enters with the money-lender and his daughter.)

Money-lender : *(in a desperate voice)* O Just King ! Spare my daughter. She is my only child and to be wedded next Monday.



The Potter, The Money-lender's Daughter and The Goldsmith

Daughter : Oh, do not fret, father. The king will not hang me. *(To the king)* Your Most Esteemed Highness, I rarely step outside the threshold of my home. But as my father said, I am to be married next week and my jewellery is not ready. I had to go to the goldsmith's shop to urge him to work faster and hand over my ornaments on time ... The potter's shop is on the way. I could not help it. It is all the goldsmith's fault. Had he delivered my ornaments on time. I would not have been forced to go past the potter's shop.

King : Then send for the goldsmith and without any delay, he must be hanged.



1. List the characters that have appeared so far in the play.
2. List all the different titles they use to address the King.
3. Copy the exclamations from the play. (At least 5)
4. Copy the orders (imperative sentences) from the play.
5. Use your imagination and the details from the play and draw a map of Andher Nagari.
6. Write what each of the following should have said after listening to the complaint against him/her :
 - (a) Daughter
 - (b) Potter
 - (c) Mortar-maker
 - (d) Bricklayer.....
 - (e) Merchant.....
7. What should the King have said to the Thief?
8. Will a thief appear in a court on his own? Why does this Thief dare to do so?

Language Study

9. Read the following sentences and find the subject and the verb in each.

Sentence	Subject	Verb
You are a stranger.		
I am a visitor here.		
You have heard right.		
He must pay with his life.		
The king will not hang me.		

10. Read the following sentences. Tick the ones in passive voice. Copy them correctly.
 1. I have heard amazing stories ... ☐
 2. I am especially impressed by the fact ... ☐
 3. I am quite happy about it. ☐
 4. I beg for justice. ☐
 5. ... and my friend was instantly killed ... ☐
 6. My house has been recently built ... ☐
 7. It is the fault of the bricklayer ... ☐

Part II

(Second Guard exits and returns with the goldsmith)

Goldsmith : *(in a cranky tone)* O Noble King ! I beg of you ! How can you give me such a harsh sentence ? I was merely following your orders to the letter. You commanded me to set aside all my work and get the Queen's ornaments ready before Her Highness's birthday. So there has been a delay in making this lady's bridal ornaments. In the name of justice, Your Highness, pardon me. Spare my life. I was just following Your Highness's orders.

King : Not another word. Your excuse does not hold good. *(To the guards)* Take the goldsmith away to the gallows and hang him at once.

Goldsmith : Have mercy, O, Generous King, I fall at thy feet. Please, forgive me, just once, this time. Let me live. I have....

King : *(loudly)* None of this anymore. Take him away at once. Let him hang to death.

(Two guards drag the wailing goldsmith away. Courtiers and others whisper to one another out of shock. Soon the guards return with the goldsmith and the hangman.)

King : *(annoyed)* What? Why have you not carried out my orders? Hang the goldsmith at this moment or else you will suffer the same punishment.

Hangman : *(holding a noose in his hand)* A thousand apologies, O Great King, but this noose does not fit the goldsmith's neck. It is too loose.

King : Then try it around everyone's neck here *(Pointing to the subjects)* and see who it fits. Whosoever has a neck of the size of the noose must be hanged.

(Hangman tries the noose on many of the subjects waiting for justice. They spurn and resist, but the Hangman with the help of the guards overpowers them. Finally, the noose fits the disciple.)

Hangman : Ah, Your Highness, It fits..... at last.

Disciple : But... but...

♦ What is the Goldsmith's excuse?

Is the Goldsmith telling the truth? Give reasons for your answer.



Hangman

King : Ah ! Justice at last ! Take him to the gallows without further delay.

(Hangman and guards force the protesting disciple out.)

King : Justice delayed is justice denied. Andher Nagari prides itself on prompt action. Our actions speak louder than words.

(Voices and shouts heard from outside. All re-enter in a rush with another elderly man.)

King : What ? Why have you all returned with this stranger alive ? And who is this man?

First Guard : I beg your pardon, Your highness but we are confused indeed. This old man rushed towards us as we were about to hang the young stranger and begged and pleaded that he should be hanged instead.

Second Guard : At first we thought the old man had lost his mental balance. What sane man would wish to suffer such a drastic death willingly?

First Guard : But this young man says that he is a wise and learned sage from the forest yonder and he himself was this man's disciple.

Sage : O Noble King, You are most generous. Be kind and allow me to be hanged in place of my disciple. I beg of you.



Sage

King : What a strange appeal ! And why does such a wise and holy man wish to obstruct the course of justice, may I ask ?

Sage : *(showing reluctance to let out his secret)* Your Majesty.... the truth is... no.... no.... I cannot say it.

King : I demand an explanation or I shall not have you hanged in place of your disciple.

Sage : You see..... uh..... it has been predicted by the great prophets..... uh..... no..... no..... I shouldn't say this.

King : *(annoyed)* Speak out at once or your disciple will be hanged.



Disciple

- ♦ What is the Sage's request?
- ♦ What does the king want to know?

- ♦ Is the King willing to hang the Sage?

- millenium : a thousand years
 - recluse: a person who lives away from all others
- ♦ What is your opinion about the king - is he wicked, greedy, stupid or all of these? Which of his actions/words show that?

Sage : The.... the great prophets have foretold that the one who will be hanged on this day, in this kingdom, shall.... shall become the next king and conquer many more nations. I want to become the next great king, Your Majesty, and reign over a greater country... I will go down in history as a famous royal monarch. The future generations will read about me and my greatness for milleniums to come.

I shall never earn that fame if I remain a recluse – a sage. So do grant me this favour, O King, let me die at the gallows today.

King : Humm..... The next king? And this kingdom will expand? Glory for milleniums to come! Why, no one but I should be entitled to this privilege. Guards! Take me to the gallows and hang me at once without any delay. Hurry up! Don't waste time. What a wonderful fate in my next life – a king once again! Goodbye, world. See you again.

(All exit)

ENGLISH WORKSHOP



1. List the characters that appear for the first time in this part of the play. Write one or two lines about each of them.
2. Say whether the following sentences are true or false:
 - (a) The Goldsmith blamed the King for the delay in his work.
 - (b) The King thought that the Goldsmith had a good reason to delay the Daughter's work.
 - (c) The Goldsmith was hanged.
 - (d) The noose did not fit the Goldsmith's neck.
 - (e) The noose did not fit the disciple's neck.
 - (f) The Sage wanted to die on that day.
 - (g) The Sage wanted to save his Disciple.
 - (h) The King wanted to be King again in his next birth.
3. Write any three instances of funny rules and twisted logic used in Andher Nagari.

4. List the proverbs and sayings used in the play.
5. Read the entire play and complete the following blame game flow chart.

 Blame-game flow chart 

Who is blaming?	Who does he blame?	For what does he blame that person
Thief	Owner of the house	For not constructing a strong wall
Owner of the house	-	-
Merchant		
Bricklayer		
Mortar-maker		
Potter		
Money-lender's Daughter		
Goldsmith		

6. Form groups. Translate one page of the play into your mother tongue as a group activity. Gather the pages translated by different groups and prepare a translated script of the entire play.

7. Divide the play (Part I as well as Part II) into sections.

Form groups and assign roles. Practise your lines in groups.

Hold play reading sessions in the classroom.

Which group/student presents the most effective reading?

Note the features that make an **oral presentation effective**. Some of them are :

- Meaningful reading – taking proper pauses
(breaking the speech into meaningful chunks)
- Using suitable intonation
- Speaking clearly
- Good pronunciation – using English sounds and stress patterns
- Pleasant and confident appearance of the speakers.



8. Look up the following entries in the Language Study pages given at the end.

- stress • intonation • sound • consonant • vowel

9. Note the way the dialogue in the play is presented. Look up the word ‘colon’ in the ‘Language Study’ pages and note how it is used in the play.

10. Listen carefully and write the verbs in the appropriate column.

Main verb	Auxiliary verb	Modal auxiliary

Teacher : can, give, following, commanded, get, has, been, spare, does, take, hand, have, fall, forgive, let, drag, return, will, is, try, has, must, be, resist, force, speak, are, were, should, had, thought, lost, would, says, was, are, does, may, cannot, demand, shall, shouldn't, become, reign

