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UNIT 1

THE SELFISH GIANT

Oscar Wilde (1856 – 1900)

Students Learning Outcomes:

On completion of the unit, students will be able to:

- answer the comprehension questions.
- recognize personification.
- illustrate punctuation.
- write an essay on a general subject.
- analyze the elements of the story.
- write an extended narrative incident.
- translate English passages into Urdu.
- create and deliver group / class presentations.

Pre-reading:

- Have you ever read any short story?
- What is fiction and non-fiction?

Every afternoon, as they were coming from school, the children used to go and play in the Giant's garden.

It was a large lovely garden, with soft green grass. Here and there over the grass stood beautiful flowers like stars, and there were twelve peach-trees that in the spring-time broke out into delicate blossoms of pink and pearl, and in the Autumn bore rich fruit. The birds sat on the trees and sang so sweetly that the children used to stop their games in order to listen to them. "How happy we are here!" they cried to each other.

One day the Giant came back. He had been to visit his friend the Cornish ogre, and had stayed with him for seven years. After the seven years were over he had said all that he had to say, for his conversation was limited, and he determined to return to his own castle. When he arrived, he saw the children playing in the garden.





“What are you doing there?” he cried in a very gruff voice, and the children ran away.

“My own garden is my own garden,” said the Giant, “anyone can understand that, and I will allow nobody to play in it but myself.” So he built a high wall all round it, and put up a notice-board.

TRESPASSERS WILL BE PROSECUTED

He was a very selfish Giant.

The poor children had now nowhere to play. They tried to play on the road, but the road was very dusty and full of hard stones, and they did not like it. They used to wander round the high wall when their lessons were over, and talk about the beautiful garden inside. “How happy we were there,” they said to each other.

Then the spring came, and all over the country there were little blossoms and little birds. Only in the garden of the Selfish Giant it was still winter. The birds did not care to sing in it as there were no children, and the trees forgot to blossom. Once a beautiful flower put its head out from the grass, but when it saw the notice-board it was so sorry for the children that it slipped back into the ground again, and went off to sleep. The only people who were pleased were the Snow and the Frost. “Spring has forgotten this garden,” they cried, “so we will live here all the year round.” The Snow covered up the grass with her great white cloak, and the Frost painted all the trees silver. Then they invited the North Wind to stay with them, and he came. He was wrapped in furs, and he roared all day about the garden, and blew the chimney-pots down. “This is a delightful spot,” he said, “we must ask the Hail on a visit.” So the Hail came. Every day for three hours he rattled on the roof of the castle till he broke most of the slates, and then he ran round and round the garden as fast as he could go. He was dressed in grey, and his breath was like ice.

“I cannot understand why the Spring is so late in coming,” said the Selfish Giant, as he sat at the window and looked out at his cold white garden; “I hope there will be a change in the weather.”

But the Spring never came, nor the Summer. The Autumn gave golden fruit to every garden, but to the Giant's garden she gave none. “He is too selfish,” she said. So it was always Winter there, and the North Wind and the Hail, and the Frost, and the Snow danced about through the trees.

One morning the Giant was lying awake in bed when he heard some lovely music. It sounded so sweet to his ears that he thought it must be the King's musicians passing by. It was really only a little linnet singing outside his window, but it was so long since he had heard a bird sing in his garden that it seemed to him to be the most



beautiful music in the world. Then the Hail stopped dancing over his head, and the North Wind ceased roaring, and a delicious perfume came to him through the open casement. "I believe the Spring has come at last," said the Giant; and he jumped out of bed and looked out.

What did he see?

He saw a most wonderful sight. Through a little hole in the wall the children had crept in, and they were sitting in the branches of the trees. In every tree that he could see there was a little child. And the trees were so glad to have the children back again that they had covered themselves with blossoms, and were waving their arms gently above the children's heads. The birds were flying about and **twittering** with delight, and the flowers were looking up through the green grass and laughing. It was a lovely scene, only in one corner it was still winter. It was the farthest corner of the garden, and in it was standing a little boy. He was so small that he could not reach up to the branches of the tree, and he was wandering all round it, crying bitterly. The poor tree was still covered with frost and snow, and the North Wind was blowing and roaring above it. "Climb up! little boy," said the Tree, and it bent its branches down as low as it could; but the boy was too tiny.

And the Giant's heart melted as he looked out. "How selfish I have been!" he said; "now I know why the Spring would not come here. I will put that poor little boy on the top of the tree, and then I will knock down the wall, and my garden shall be the children's playground forever and ever." He was really very sorry for what he had done.

So he crept downstairs and opened the front door quite softly, and went out into the garden. But when the children saw him they were so frightened that they all ran away, and the garden became winter again. Only the little boy did not run, for his eyes were so full of tears that he did not see the Giant coming. And the Giant stole up behind him and took him gently in his hand, and put him up into the tree. And the tree broke at once into blossom, and the birds came and sang on it, and the little boy stretched out his two arms and flung them round the Giant's neck, and kissed him. And the other children, when they saw that the Giant was not **wicked** any longer, came running back, and with them came the Spring. "It is your garden now, little children," said the Giant, and he took a great axe and knocked down the wall. And when the people were going to market at twelve o'clock they found the Giant playing with the children in the most beautiful garden they had ever seen.

All day long they played, and in the evening they came to the Giant to bid him good-bye.

"But where is your little companion?" he said: "The boy I put into the tree."



The Giant loved him the best because he had kissed him.

“We don’t know,” answered the children; “He has gone away.”

“You must tell him to be sure and come here tomorrow,” said the Giant. But the children said that they did not know where he lived, and had never seen him before; and the Giant felt very sad.

Every afternoon, when school was over, the children came and played with the Giant. But the little boy whom the Giant loved was never seen again. The Giant was very kind to all the children, yet he longed for his first little friend, and often spoke of him. “How I would like to see him!” he used to say.

Years went over, and the Giant grew very old and feeble. He could not play about any more, so he sat in a huge armchair, and watched the children at their games, and admired his garden. “I have many beautiful flowers,” he said; “but the children are the most beautiful flowers of all.”

One Winter morning he looked out of his window as he was dressing. He did not hate the Winter now, for he knew that it was merely the Spring asleep, and that the flowers were resting.

Suddenly he rubbed his eyes in wonder, and looked and looked. It certainly was a marvelous sight. In the farthest corner of the garden was a tree quite covered with lovely white blossoms. Its branches were all golden, and silver fruit hung down from them, and underneath it stood the little boy he had loved.

Downstairs ran the Giant in great joy, and out into the garden. He hastened across the grass, and came near to the child. And when he came quite close his face grew red with anger, and he said, “Who hath dared to wound thee?” For on the palms of the child’s hands were the prints of two nails, and the prints of two nails were on the little feet.

“Who hath dared to wound thee?” cried the Giant; “tell me that I may take my big sword and slay him.”

“Nay!” answered the child; “but these are the wounds of Love.”

“Who art thou?” said the Giant, and a strange awe fell on him, and he knelt before the little child.

And the child smiled on the Giant, and said to him, “You let me play once in your garden, today you shall come with me to my garden, which is Paradise.”

And when the children ran in that afternoon, they found the Giant lying dead under the tree, all covered with white blossoms.

About the Author

Oscar Wilde was born in Ireland in 1856. He attended Trinity College in Dublin and Magdalen College, at Oxford; while still, a university student, Oscar Wilde became involved in the aesthetic movement, and gained wide-spread reputation for his brilliant wit.

After completing his studies, he moved to London and became a popular writer. His irony, biting criticism, unconventional ideas and eccentric behavior made him the talk of the town. He died in Paris in 1900.



Reading and Thinking Skills:

1. Answer the following questions.

- i) Where did the story take place?
- ii) Why could not children play on the road?
- iii) Why did the Giant chase the children away from his garden?
- iv) Do you think that the Giant was really selfish? If yes, why?
- v) What happened to the garden after the children left?
- vi) When did the spring return to the garden?
- vii) Why did the beautiful flower slip back into the ground?
- viii) Why was one tree covered with frost and snow?
- ix) Why could not the small boy reach up to the branches of the tree?
- x) How did the Giant learn to love children?

2. Choose the correct answer.

- i) Cornish ogre was
 - (a) an enemy of the Giant.
 - (b) a dwarf.
 - (c) a man eating Giant.
 - (d) a friend of the Giant.
- ii) The writer of the story is
 - (a) Oscar Wilde.
 - (b) H.G. Wells.
 - (c) Jerome K. Jerome.
 - (d) Katherine Mansfield.
- iii) After many years, the Giant was unable to play with the children, because he
 - (a) didn't like to play anymore.
 - (b) was feeble and weak.

- 
- (c) had gone to see his friend.
(d) was fed up playing the same game time and again.
- iv) In the garden of the selfish Giant, it was
(a) still Winter.
(b) still Autum.
(c) still Spring.
(d) still Summer.
- v) The Autumn gave golden fruit to every garden, but to the Giant's garden
(a) she gave too much.
(b) she gave some.
(c) she gave none.
(d) she gave enough.
- vi) One morning, the Giant was lying awake in bed when he
(a) heard a lovely song.
(b) heard some lovely music.
(c) heard a loud cry.
(d) heard a poem.
- vii) Through a little hole in the wall the children had crept in, and they were
(a) standing outside the garden.
(b) singing songs.
(c) sitting on the chairs.
(d) sitting in the branches of the trees.
- viii) When the children saw the Giant, they were so frightened that they all ran away, and
(a) the garden became Winter again.
(b) the garden became Summer again.
(c) the garden became home again.
(d) the garden became school again.
- ix) "It is your garden now, little children," said the Giant, and he took a great axe
(a) and knocked down the door.
(b) and knocked down the window.

- (c) and knocked down the mirror.
(d) and knocked down the wall.
- x) **When the children ran in that afternoon, they found**
(a) the little monkey dead under the tree.
(b) the Giant lying asleep under the tree.
(c) the Giant lying dead under the tree.
(d) the little boy dead under the tree.

3. Tick the sentences as True or False.

- i) Giant was selfish only in the beginning. (T/F)
ii) He had been to visit his friend, the Cornish ogre, and had stayed with him for eight years. (T/F)
iii) The Giant loved the little girl the most. (T/F)
iv) The Giant admitted that the children are the most beautiful flowers of all. (T/F)
v) After coming from school, the children used to go and play in the ground. (T/F)
vi) "Who hath dared to wound thee?" cried the boy. (T/F)
vii) Every afternoon, when school was over, the teachers came and played with the Giant. (T/F)
viii) Years went over, and the Giant grew very old and feeble. (T/F)
ix) The Giant took a great axe and knocked down the wall. (T/F)
x) Downstairs ran the Giant in great joy, and out into the garden. (T/F)

Critical Thinking:

- What lesson do you get after reading the story?

Personification

'The practice of representing objects, qualities, etc. as humans, in art and literature; an object, quality, etc. that is represented in this way: the personification of autumn in Keat's poem.' (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary)

Examples:

- i) Death lays his icy hands on kings.
ii) Love healed all his wounds.

Activity:

- Identify the examples of personification used in the text.
- Find out and share at least five examples of personification from any other source.

Grammar:

Punctuation Marks

The full stop (.)

Examples:

- i) I am reading a story.
- ii. He lives in the U.S.A.

The Question Mark (?)

Examples:

- i) Where is your father?
- ii) Do you study two hours daily?

The Quotation Marks / Inverted Commas (“ ”)

Examples:

- i) He said, “let us go for a walk.”
- ii) She said, “Who are you?”

The comma (,)

Examples:

Yes, you can go now.
Oh, what a beautiful scenery!
His father was a big, strong, clever boxer.
She said, “My brother is ill.”

The Colon (:)

Examples:

- i) These are our options: we go by train and leave before the end of the show; or we take the car and see it all.
- ii) The garden had been neglected for a long time: it was overgrown and full of weeds.

The Semicolon (;)

Examples:

- i) She was determined to succeed whatever the cost; she would achieve her aim.
- ii) The sun was already low in the sky; it would soon be dark.

The Apostrophe (`)

Examples:

- i) My friend's brother is a doctor.
- ii) The students' books are on the table.

The Exclamation Mark (!)

Examples:

- i) That is marvelous!
- ii) Never!' she cried.

The Hyphen (-)

Examples:

- i) hard-hearted
- ii) fork-lift-truck

Activity:

Punctuate the following passage.

winston is one of the most laid-back people i know he is tall and slim with black hair and he always wears a t-shirt and black jeans his jeans have holes in them and his baseball boots are scruffy too he usually sits at the back of the class and he often seems to be asleep however when the exam results are given out he always gets an "A" i don't think he is as lazy as he appears to be

Writing Skills:

Activity:

Write an essay on:

'The Unforgettable Day of My Life'.

After he/she has written the essay, proofread and edit it, (in pairs) keeping in mind the following points:

CHECK LIST

- Faulty sentence structure.
- Unclear pronoun reference.
- Subject / verb agreement.
- Inconsistency in verbs / tenses.

CHECK LIST

- Faulty parallelism.
- Vague language.
- Errors of punctuation and spelling.
- Redundancy.

Research Project

Collect the data from different sources (experts, library, internet etc.) and write a research report on causes of child labour in Pakistan. Also suggest some possible measures to get rid of this evil in the society.

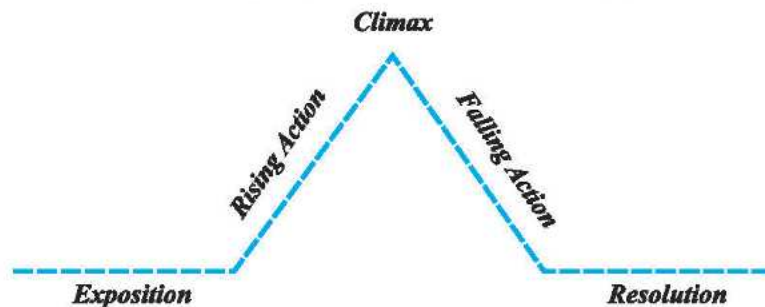
Story Writing

Elements of story

- (i) Plot (ii) Character (iii) Conflict (iv) Setting (v) Theme

Plot of a Story

A plot is the sequence of related events in a story. A typical plot concerns a conflict, a struggle between opposing forces and follows a pattern as:



Examples from the text:

Exposition:

Every afternoon, as they were coming from school, the children “How happy we are here!” they cried each other.

Rising Action:

One day the Giant came back. He had been snow danced about through the trees.

Climax:

One morning the Giant was lying awake He was really very sorry for what he had done.

Falling Action:

So he crept downstairs and opened the front door The little boy he had loved.

Resolution:

Downstairs ran the Giant in great joy All covered with white blossoms.

Plot:

To sum up, plot is the progression of events that make up the action. Throughout the course of a story's plot events unfold, develop to a climax, and are then resolved during the resolution.

Characters:

The characters in a story are the individuals who participate in the action, the characters in this story are the Giant, Children, Spring, etc.

Setting:

The setting of a story is the time and place of the action. Setting provides a context for the action. The story is set in a garden.

Theme:

The theme of a short story is its central message or an insight of life.

How to Write a Story

1. You should have clear idea of the whole plot of the story before you start writing it.
2. All sentences and paragraphs should have a logical sequence.
3. Where possible try to introduce dialogues and conversation.
4. The story should be written in simple and idiomatic language.
5. The conclusion of a story should be very impressive.
6. Give a suitable title to the story.

Activities:

1. **Write a story on:**
 - (i) How you helped someone in trouble?
 - (ii) A rich man unexpectedly lost all his wealth.
2. **Read any other story and analyze its elements by giving examples.**

Vocabulary:

Translation

Translation from one language to another language is a skill. It should be kept in mind that some words, phrases or proverbs have specific meaning in each language. Therefore, it is not possible to translate them literally while translating from one language to another language, we have to keep the sense of the sentences.

Examples:

The old woman was highly delighted to see her son alive.	بڑھیا اپنے بیٹے کو زندہ دیکھ کر باغ باغ ہو گئی۔
Are you feeling dizzy?	کیا تمہارا سر چکرار ہے۔
May I ask your name, please?	جناب کا اسم شریف؟
Don't beat about the bush, come to the point.	ادھر ادھر کی مت ہانکو مطلب کی بات کرو۔

Activity:

Translate the second paragraph of the story 'The Selfish Giant' keeping in mind the above points.

Oral Communication Skills:

Presentation skills

- **Introduction:**

Give your listeners general information on the topic and explain how your presentation is structured.

- **Actual presentation:**

Sub-divide your presentation into several sub-topics. You may illustrate your presentation by pictures or drawings.

- **Conclusion:**

Try to find a good conclusion.

Activity:

Form groups and make a presentation on the story elements of "The Selfish Giant" and present it in the class, followed by a question answer session.