

Unit

6

Mother to Son

By the end of the unit, the students will be able to:

- use critical thinking to respond orally and in writing to the text (post-reading) to:
 - give a personal opinion and justify stance related to viewpoints/ ideas and issues in the text read.
 - relate what is read to his or her own feelings and experiences.
 - scan to answer short questions.
- read a given poem and give orally and in writing:
 - theme and its development.
 - personal response with justification.
- recognize literary techniques such as personification and alliteration.
- analyse how a writer/ poet uses language to:
 - appeal to the senses through use of figurative language including similes, metaphors and imagery
 - set tone
- develop focus for own writing by identifying audience and purpose.
- demonstrate heightened awareness of conventions and dynamics of group discussion and interaction to:
 - present and explain ones point of view clearly
 - support or modified one's opinion with reasons
 - acknowledge other's contribution
 - share information and ideas
 - clarify, rephrase, explain, expand and restate information and ideas.
- illustrate the use and all functions of modal verbs.
- use various reference sources to refine vocabulary for interpersonal academic workplace situation including figurative, idiomatic and technical vocabulary.

Mother to Son

Well, son, I'll tell you:
Life for me ain't been no crystal stair.
It's had tacks in it,
And splinters,
And boards torn up,
And places with no carpet on the floor—
Bare.
But all the time
I'se been a-climbin' on,
And reachin' landin's,
And turnin' corners,
And sometimes goin' in the dark
Where there ain't been no light.
So boy, don't you turn back.
Don't you set down on the steps
'Cause you finds it's kinder hard.
Don't you fall now—
For I'se still goin', honey,
I'se still climbin',
And life for me ain't been no crystal stair.

Langston Hughes



About poet:

James Mercer Langston Hughes (February 1, 1902 – May 22, 1967) was an American poet, social activist, novelist, playwright, and columnist. Hughes is best known as a leader of the Harlem Renaissance. His work, first published in 1921, continue to enrich and inspire decades later. Some of the famous poems of Langston Hughes are 'Dreams', 'Montage of a Dream Deferred', 'Life Is Fine', 'Still Here', 'The Negro Speaks of Rivers', 'Po'Boy Blues', 'I, Too', 'The Weary Blues', etc.

Glossary

Word	Meaning
tacks	a small, sharp broad-headed nail.
splinter	a small, thin, sharp piece of wood, glass, or similar material broken off from a larger piece.
boards	a long, thin, flat piece of wood or other hard material, used for floors or other building purposes.
landin's	a level area at the top of a staircase or between one flight of stairs and another.
kinder hard	characterized by effort to the point of exhaustion.
I'se	Non standard form of 'I have /I am'.

Reading Comprehension

Answer the following questions.

1. What is the dominant theme of the poem 'Mother to Son'?
2. What are some of the literary techniques used in the poem 'Mother to Son'?
3. What is an extended metaphor? How does Hughes use this literary technique to illustrate the consistent struggle of mother in her life? Give examples from the poem.
4. In the poem 'Mother to Son', Hughes repeats some lines. What function does it serve in poem? Explain.
5. What type of imagery is used in the poem 'Mother to Son'? What does it suggest?
6. What is the tone of the poem 'Mother to Son'? Support your view with instances from the poem.

Writing Suggestions

A. How do you like the poem 'Mother to Son'? Write your response in a short paragraph.

B. How do you write reference to context?

To write an explanation of a verse/verses of poetry, divide your writing into two sub-headings:

(a) Reference to the context

(b) Explanation

Writing Reference to the Context

Step-I

Begin by mentioning the name of the poem and the poet of that particular poem.

For example:

These lines have been taken from the poem ___ written by ___ or

This is an extract from the poem _____ written by _____ or

These lines occur in the poem ___written by ___

Step-II

Briefly describe the context/situation in which the chosen lines occur. Identify the order/place in the poem i.e., whether the lines under reference happen to be the opening or concluding lines, whether it is the first stanza or the last stanza or it occurs in the middle of the poem.

Identify the form of the poem whether it is a sonnet, lyric, dramatic monologue, ode or ballad, etc. You may incorporate this information while referring to the context of the given passage e.g.; This is the first/second, etc. stanza of the sonnet/lyric etc...

Important points to remember

You should be able to identify the poem, name the poet and locate the passage in the poem.

Writing Explanation

Step-I

Give a simple and brief meaning of the passage.

Look for the hidden meanings conveyed through poetic devices.

Mention similes, symbols, metaphor, personification, imagery, etc. if any used by the poet in the given lines.

Step-II

Bring out the meaning of these poetic devices.

Step-III

Re ate the underlying relevance and beauty of these poetic features by way of commenting on their effect in the poem.

Now write an explanation of the following lines with reference to the context.

Well, son, I'll tell you:
Life for me ain't been no crystal stair.
It's had tacks in it,
And splinters,
And boards torn up,
And places with no carpet on the floor—
Bare.

Oral Communication

"Every step toward the goals of life requires sacrifice, suffering and struggle" : teacher should write this quote on writing board and hold class discussion on it in the backdrop of poem "Mother to Son". All students should express their views orally; and at the end, the teacher should summarize the main points of discussion for the benefit of the whole class.

Vocabulary and Grammar

Vocabulary

Find the meaning of the following idioms related to animals in suitable reference source and then match them to their exact meaning as given in column B.

Column A	Column B
1. You can't teach an old dog new tricks _____	a) don't presume anything until it is certain.
2. Crocodile tears _____	b) someone in a bad mood.

3. Bear with a sore paw	c) false tears to give impression of sadness.
4. Have a whale of a time	d) someone who is too accustomed to old habits won't want to change.
5. To rat on somebody	e) husband who is nagged at by his wife.
6. Cold turkey	f) be angry, resentful about a certain issue.
7. Don't count your chickens before they hatch	g) have an exciting, interesting time. enjoy oneself enormously.
8. Hen pecked	h) one big problem in an otherwise faultless plan.
10. A fly in the ointment	i) tell a person in authority about the bad behaviour of another person.
11. A bee in your bonnet	j) period of time without something you are addicted to.

GRAMMAR

Modal Verb

A. Which of the three sentences containing a modal has the same meaning as the original one?

1. They are able to speak English well,

They can speak English well.

They may speak English well.

They must speak English well.

2. Ali is not allowed to stay out late.

Ali may not stay out late.

Ali might not stay out late.

Ali need not stay out late.

3. Do I have to clean the kitchen?

Can I clean the kitchen?

Must I clean the kitchen?

Should I clean the kitchen?

Teacher's Guideline:

Explain and revise with the students the use and functions of modal verbs as studied in earlier classes.

4. Are you able to drive a tractor?

Can you drive a tractor?

Must you drive a tractor?

Should you drive a tractor?

5. We are not allowed to swim when the red flag is flying.

We must not swim when the red flag is flying.

We need not swim when the red flag is flying.

We should not swim when the red flag is flying.

6. She is not able to read Chinese.

She cannot read Chinese.

She may not read Chinese.

She need not read Chinese.

7. Do you think we are allowed to park here?

Do you think we may park here?

Do you think we must park here?

Do you think we need park here?

8. You don't have to do this exercise.

You must not do this exercise.

You need not do this exercise.

You should not do this exercise.

9. We have to stop when the traffic lights are red.

We can stop when the traffic lights are red.

We may stop when the traffic lights are red.

We must stop when the traffic lights are red.

10. Am I allowed to ask a question?

May I ask a question?

Must I ask a question?

Should I ask a question?

B. Fill in the blanks with appropriate modal auxiliary verbs in parenthesis.

1. It is possible that Christopher Marlowe _____ have written plays for Shakespeare. (might/could)

2. The daughter asked her mother if she _____ go out. (would/might)

3. Speak slowly lest you _____ awake the child. (should/would)
4. Children _____ take tea at night. (should/must)
5. She came here so that she _____ (may/might) meet her child.
6. _____ her soul rest in peace! (Would/ May)
7. They _____ not read this book for this topic. (need/dare)
8. You _____ to go to Peshawar tomorrow to attend the meeting. (will have/ should)
9. If you stayed here, you _____ not face the problem. (would/should)
10. _____ she had worked hard, she would have passed. (Should/ Must)
11. He _____ be given warm welcome if he wins the tournament. (will/shall)
12. Children _____ not go to the roof at night. (dare/ can)
13. She _____ read a book while watching TV during her school days. (would/could)
14. He _____ pass this time as he has worked satisfactorily hard. (may/can)
15. She said that she _____ prepare dinner herself. (will/would)
16. Khan _____ to be at home. (used/ ought)
17. They _____ to play cricket every day when they were in the college. (used/ ought)
18. _____ you please help me lift this box? (Can/ Could)
19. _____ that I knew her! (May/ Would)
20. Anyone _____ write a poem on this topic. (can/may)

C: Filling in the blanks with a modal from the list below:

can

could

be able to

1. I don't think I will have much work next week. I think I will _____ take a day off.
2. Excuse me, _____ you tell me where the bus station is?
3. They haven't _____ solve the problem yet.
4. She _____ play the flute and the guitar.
5. When we were younger, we _____ watch movies all afternoon! Now we think it's boring.

D: Filling in the blanks with a modal from the list below:

must

might

may

1. Oh no, I think they _____ be hurt! But I'm not sure.
2. They look just the same! I am sure that boy _____ be his son.
3. That looks delicious, and I am so hungry! _____ I have some?
4. He is running very well! I think he _____ win!
5. That looks like fun! _____ we paint some eggs with you?

E: Filling in the blanks with a modal from the list below:

need

have to

1. Wow, my house is a mess! I really _____ clean a bit!
2. Professor, do we _____ finish all the exercises on the test?
3. The judge said that he will _____ make a formal apology to the public on television.
4. If you want to camp in the park, you _____ pay for a permit first.
5. I have worked too long! I _____ take a break!

F: Filling in the blanks with a modal from the list below:

should

ought to

had better

1. He _____ go inside, or he will get a terrible sunburn!
2. I think we _____ play. What do you think?
3. He _____ stop drinking so much coffee, or he will make himself sick!
4. She has a beautiful voice! She _____ record a CD!
5. His cell phone is ringing. I think he _____ answer it.