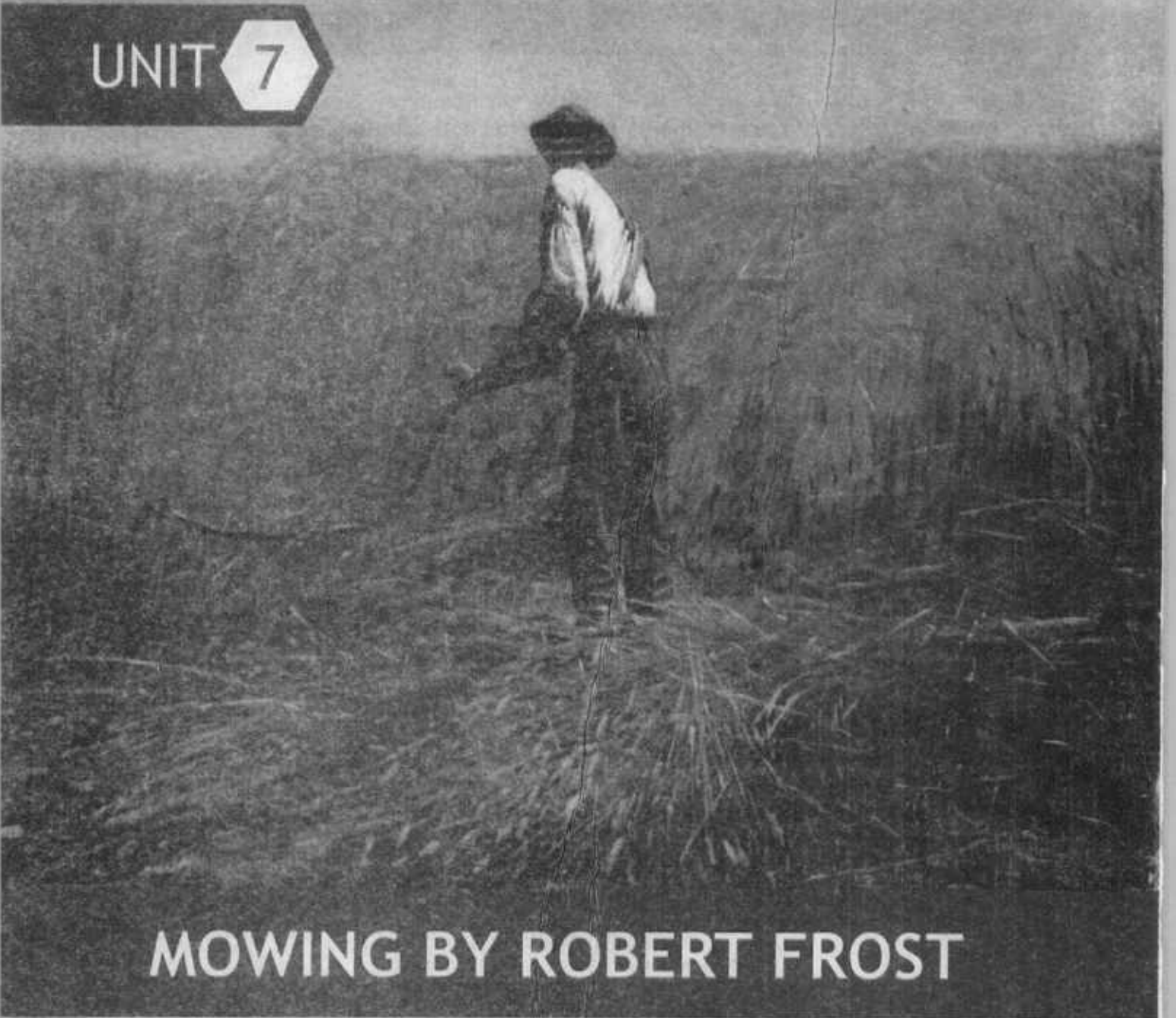


UNIT 7



MOWING BY ROBERT FROST

After completing this lesson, students will be able to:

- speak confidently and fluently in a wide range of context e.g (conflict, resolution, panel discussion, role play)
- provide an objective summary of fiction and poem
- analyse various types of biographies and autobiographies connected to different fields and professions
- learn to write multiple paragraphs essays/stories; multi-stanza poems or play script using mechanics of correct writing
- use all types of tenses correctly in speech and writing
- use gerunds, infinitives and participle

Main Theme: LITERATURE & POETRY

Sub Theme: Nature

Pre-Reading Questions

- Do you like gardening?
- Does the title of the poem reflect its theme?
- What is a sonnet?

MOWING BY ROBERT FROST

There was never a sound beside the wood but one,
And that was my long scythe whispering to the ground.
What was it whispered? I knew not well myself;
Perhaps it was something about the heat of the sun,
Something, perhaps, about the lack of sound—
And that was why it whispered and did not speak.
It was no dream of the gift of idle hours,
Or easy gold at the hand of fay or elf:
Anything more than the truth would have seemed too weak
To the earnest love that laid the swale in rows,
Not without feeble-pointed spikes of flowers
(Pale orchises), and scared a bright green snake.
The fact is the sweetest dream that labor knows.
My long scythe whispered and left the hay to make.

About the writer

Robert Frost, in full Robert Lee Frost, (born March 26, 1874, San Francisco, California, U.S.—died January 29, 1963, Boston, Massachusetts), American poet who was much admired for his depictions of the rural life of New England, his command of American colloquial speech, and his realistic verse portraying ordinary people in everyday situations. His famous poems are *Birches*, *Mending Walls*, *The Road not Taken*, *Home Burial* and *Desert Places*.



Post-Reading Questions

Q 1. Hard work is a key to success. What are your aspirations in life and how will you plan to reach your destination?

The poem 'Mowing' reflects the vital relationship of the worker to the land, of the work being in itself the reason for proper and wholesome existence. The physical act of scything as part of the natural order becomes *'the sweetest dream that labor knows.'* It is also about the importance of hard work. Frost uses his skill with natural imagery to depict the peace found in simplicity.

THEME



Glossary

Words	Pronunciations	Meanings
scythe	/saɪð/	sickle, cutter
fay	/feɪ/	fairy
elf	/elf/	Imp, dwarf, fairy
idle	/'aɪdl/	lazy, indolent
earnest	/'ɜ:nɪst/	sober, solemn
swale	/sweɪl/	ditch, a low tract of moist or marshy land
feeble	/'fi:bl/	weak, delicate
orchises	/'ɔ:kɪsɪz/	a flowering plant
spike	/spaɪk/	thorn, spine
hay	/heɪ/	fodder, feed



Reading and Critical Thinking

Answer the following questions.

- Q 1. Who is whispering to the ground?
- Q 2. What was whispered according to the poet?
- Q 3. Enlist poetic devices used in the poem.
- Q 4. According to the poet, what is "the sweetest dream that labor knows"?
- Q 5. What is the central idea of the poem?
- Q 6. What is the form and tone of the poem?

POETIC DEVICES

The term "poetic device" refers to anything used by a poet—including sounds, shapes, rhythms, phrases, and words—to enhance the literal meaning of their poem. This could mean using rhythm and sound to pull the reader into the world of the poem, or adding figurative meaning to their literal words.

DEVICE	DEFINITION	EXAMPLES
Imagery	The mental impression summoned up by a word, phrase or sentence. It suggests to the reader what to think and feel. It usually appeal to our sense of smell, taste, touch, hearing and sight.	-Fragrance of roses (smell) -As sweet as honey (taste) -Velvety texture (touch) -Sweet song of cuckoo (hearing) -Lush green valley (Sight)
Metaphor	A figure of speech that compares two or more things with a similar quality and does not use "like" or "as". One thing is said to be another.	-Life is a banana cream pie. -Time is money.
Personification	When an inanimate object or abstract image is given human qualities or abilities.	-The leaves "danced" in the wind. -The tree "screamed" under the saw blade. It was a "strutting" sort of blue.
Simile	A figure of speech that compares two things by using "like" or "as."	-He was as excited as a kid at the fair. -He looked like a Jack-in-the-box the way he kept jumping up.
Alliteration	The repetition of initial sounds in words within a line or verse of poetry.	Ms. Smith's English <u>cl</u> ass <u>ca</u> uses her <u>co</u> nfusion.
Onomatopoeia	The use of words which suggest their meaning when pronounced.	The bees " <i>buzz</i> " the clock " <i>tick tocks</i> " the snake " <i>hisses</i> "
Rhyme	Two words which end with identical sounds (rhyme depends on sound, not spelling)	Crime/rhyme/slime/time



Oral Communication

A panel discussion in the classroom is a technique to teach students to work as a group. It is also designed to improve skills of research, logical organization of ideas as well as the ability to present these thoughts clearly and effectively. Panel discussion is a great way to engage students in meaningful classroom discussions. A selected group of 4-6 students act

as panelists and the remaining students are the audience. Students conduct discussions around a particular topic but from different perspectives. One of the benefits of the activity is that it provides an opportunity for students to experience authentic real life, panel-based activities.

Activity

Pair Work

Work in the pair of two and discuss the importance of hardwork.

Group Work

Select a panel of four students, the rest of the students will act as audience and assign them the topic *"The Impact of Social Media on our Life"*.



Vocabulary and Grammar

- Pick out the rhyming words from the poem "Mowing"?
- Identify examples of alliteration in the poem?

Grammar

Exercise: Put the verb into the correct tense form

1. We can go out now. It (not/rain) any more.
2. Ali (wait) for me when I (arrive).
3. I (get) hungry. Let's go and have something to eat.
4. What (you/do) in your spare time? Have you got any hobbies?
5. My brother usually (phone) me on Fridays but he (not phone) me last Friday.
6. I'm looking for Arham. (you/see) him?
7. a. When I last saw you, you (think) of moving to a new flat.

- b. That's right, but in the end I (decide) to stay where I was.
8. What is that noise? What (happen)?
9. It's usually dry here at this time of the year. It (not/rain) much.
10. Yesterday evening, the phone (ring) three times while we (have) dinner.

VERBALS: GERUNDS, INFINITIVES, AND PARTICIPLES

The three verbals—gerunds, infinitives, and participles—are formed from verbs, but are never used alone as action words in sentences. Instead, verbals function as nouns, adjectives, or adverbs. These verbals are important in phrases.

Gerund (verbal-noun)

The gerund ends in *-ing* and functions as a noun.

Example

- i. *Jumping* is fun.
- ii. He liked *skiing*.
- iii. He had a unique way of *whistling*.

Infinitive

The infinitive is the base form of a verb with *to*. Usually it functions as a noun, although it can also function as an adjective or adverb.

Example

- i. *To jump* is fun. (noun; subject of the verb *is*)
- ii. I like *to ski*. (noun; direct object of the verb *like*)
- iii. She had a suggestion *to offer*. (adjective modifying *suggestion*)
- iv. He called *to warn* her. (adverb modifying the verb *called*).

Participle (Verbal-adjective)

A participle is a verb that ends in *-ing* (present participle) or *-ed, -d, -t, -en, -n* (past participle). Participles may function as adjectives, describing or modifying nouns.

- i. The *dancing* parrots entertained the crowd.
- ii. The *wrecked* sailboat washed up on shore.

Exercise: Identifying Verbals

For each of the following sentences, decide if the word or phrase in bold is a participle, a gerund, or an infinitive.

1. The children's *singing* and *laughing* woke me up.
2. Jenny likes *to dance* in the rain.
3. There are many ways of *breaking* a heart.
4. A *broken* heart will mend over time.
5. Happiness is having a large, *loving, caring*, close-knit family in another city.
6. I believe that *laughing* is the best calorie burner.
7. I don't want *to achieve* immortality through my work. I want *to achieve* it through not dying.
8. He escaped away in the *waiting* car.
9. It is not enough *to succeed*.
10. *Hunting* dogs are called hounds.



Writing

Guidelines for Paraphrasing a Poem

Paraphrasing a poem is a new experience for many students. The following are a few paraphrasing tips that may be useful:

- Write in modern prose and change as many of the original words as possible without altering meaning.

- Write in the same person and tense as the original poem is written in.
- Paraphrased poems are usually longer than the original due to the need to clearly explain what each line means.

Sample Paraphrasing

Daffodils

By William Wordsworth

I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host, of golden daffodils;
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Paraphrasing: I strolled or roamed alone like a cloud that moves high over the valleys and hills. All of sudden, I saw a large number of golden daffodils along the lake under the trees, which were waving and dancing in the morning breeze.

a. Paraphrase the given stanza.

There was never a sound beside the wood but one,
And that was my long scythe whispering to the ground.
What was it whispered? I knew not well myself;
Perhaps it was something about the heat of the sun,
Something, perhaps, about the lack of sound—
And that was why it whispered and did not speak.

b. Write the summary of the poem 'Mowing'.

c. Write an essay on "Hard work is Key to Success".