

TANSICHE SYLLABUS 2023-2024

**Part II English
First Year-First Semester
(Units I, II and III)**

Essays Prepared
by
Mrs. Beena. E. S
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Department of English (Aided)
Nesamony Memorial Christian College
Marthandam

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Class : _____ **Roll No. :** _____

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My Story of My Experiments with Truth Mahatma Gandhi

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, was a lawyer, and a freedom fighter. He was born on 2nd October, 1869, in Porbandar, also known as Sudamapuri. He played an important role in India's struggle for independence from the British. The title 'Mahatma' was given to him by Rabindranath Tagore.

Mahatma Gandhi's autobiography **The Story of My Experiments with Truth** recounts his life from early childhood to 1921. He wrote it in weekly instalments in his journal *Navjivan* between 1925 and 1929. An English translation of the autobiography was also serialised in his other journal, *Young India*.

Gandhi's life was shaped by his upbringing, the cultural norms of his time, the experiences he gained during his childhood, and the values instilled by his parents. His early life was marked by challenges and regrets, but those experiences played an important role in shaping his character. Though Gandhi was shy and introvert, he displayed a strong sense of justice and empathy from an early age.

Gandhi was significantly influenced by two plays he read during his childhood. One of the plays was **Shravana Pitribhakti Nataka**. It was about a devoted son, Shravana, who carried his blind parents on a pilgrimage. The story left an indelible impression on his mind. The other play was **Harishchandra**. It inspired him to follow truth and face the challenges he faced. He genuinely believed in the tale of **Harishchandra**. Both Harishchandra and Shravana remained live examples for him, and influenced him in advocating truth, nonviolence, and social justice.

My Experiments with Truth reveals the personal life of Mahatma Gandhi. The autobiography is known for its clear, easy-to-understand language and honest narration. It is an important document to understand Gandhi's life and beliefs.

A Note on Mahatma Gandhi's parents.

The Gandhis were originally grocers and belonged to the Bania caste. For three generations, starting from Uttamchand Gandhi (also known as Ota Gandhi), they served as Prime Ministers in various Kathiawar States. He married twice and had six sons, including Karamchand Gandhi (Kaba Gandhi) and Tulsidas Gandhi.

Kaba Gandhi, the father of Mahatma Gandhi, served as the Prime Minister in Rajkot and Vankaner. He was known for his loyalty, impartiality, and practical wisdom in managing affairs. He loved his clan. He was truthful, brave, and generous, but short-tempered. He lacked formal education and had only the fifth-grade knowledge in reading Gujarati. He had limited religious training but possessed a religious culture gained through frequent visits to temples and listening to religious discourses. He spent his final days reading the Gita and would recite verses aloud during daily worship. He married four times, and Gandhiji is the youngest son.

Gandhi's mother Putlibai Gandhi was pious, and chanted daily prayers and regularly visited the Vaishnava temple. She would take tough vows and never break them, even if she fell ill. She would have just one meal a day during Chaturmas. She also fasted every other day during Chaturmas and wouldn't eat until she saw the sun. His mother was a wise and well-informed woman, earning respect for her intelligence from the court ladies. When Gandhi was young, he would join her in discussions with Thakore Saheb's widowed mother.

A Note on Gandhiji's Childhood

Gandhi was seven years old when his father left Porbandar and joined the Rajasthanik Court in Rajkot. He attended a primary school in Rajkot. Gandhi states that he could remember those days quite well, including the names of his teachers. He was just an average student.

Gandhi was shy, and was afraid of being teased by others. He preferred being alone with his books and lessons, running back home as soon as school was

over. He did not like talking to anyone. During an examination at the high school, he misspelt the word, 'Kettle' and even though his teacher hinted him to copy, he did not copy from his classmates.

A Note on Gandhi's Marriage

In the third chapter, Gandhi discusses his marriage. He states that Marriage in Hindu culture is a significant and complex affair. The parents of the bride and groom often go to great lengths, spending a lot of money and time on preparations, such as clothes, ornaments, and dinner arrangements. They try to outdo each other. Women often exhaust themselves by singing passionately, sometimes even falling ill, and unintentionally causing disturbances for their neighbours. Despite the chaos and mess left behind after the celebrations, the neighbours tolerate it, knowing that they will eventually find themselves in a similar situation.

In Kathiawad there were two separate ceremonies - betrothal and marriage. Betrothal involved a preliminary promise made by the parents of the boy and girl to unite them in marriage, but it was not considered a binding agreement. Fortunately, even if the boy passed away, the girl was not considered a widow, as betrothal did not hold the same weight as marriage. This betrothal agreement was purely between the parents, and the children often had no knowledge or involvement in the process. Gandhi had been betrothed three times without his knowledge, and he was later informed that two girls chosen for him had passed away.

Gandhi married his wife, Kasturba, when he was 13. Gandhi gives a vivid picture of their wedding day. He fondly remembers sitting together on the wedding dais and performing the Saptapadi. He describes with regret the lustful feelings he felt for his young bride. Initially, he enjoyed the marriage, but as time passed, he began to see it as shameful. He later became highly critical of his father for his childhood marriage.

I Am Malala: The Story of the Girl Who Stood Up for Education and was Shot by the Taliban Malala Yousafzai

The Nobel Laureate Malala Yousafzai is an advocate of girls' education and women's rights. She was born in July 12, 1997 in the Swat District of Pakistan's northwestern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. She was awarded the **Nobel**

Peace Prize in 2014 at the age of 17. She is the youngest-ever recipient of the **Nobel Peace Prize**.

I Am Malala: The Story of the Girl Who Stood Up for Education and was Shot by the Taliban is an autobiography written by Malala Yousafzai, co-authored by Christina Lamb. The book published in the year 2013, tells her remarkable story, including her advocacy for girls' education and surviving an assassination attempt by the Taliban.

Malala Yousafzai was named after Malalai of Maiwand, 'the greatest heroine of Afghanistan', who motivated the Afghan army to triumph over the British in 1880 during the Second Anglo-Afghan War.

Yousafzai's parents Ziauddin Yousafzai and Toor Pekai Yousafzai, belong to the Yousafzai tribe. She has two brothers - Khusal and Atal. Her family lived in Mingora, the biggest and only city in the valley. Their ancestors arrived in Swat during the sixteenth century from Kabul.

Growing up, Yousafzai and her brothers spent most of their time with their mother as their father was often busy with various activities. Her father shared with her the stories of warring tribes, Pashtun leaders, and saints. Yousafzai, though born in Pakistan, felt her identity strongly rooted in being Swati and Pashtun before considering herself a Pakistani. As a child, she played cricket with her neighbours Safina, Babar, and Basit. However, societal expectations limited girls' freedom, confining them indoors to cook and serve male relatives. Yousafzai does not want to conform, and she was encouraged by her father to be as free as a bird. She dreamt of exploring beyond the valley. Yousafzai's story has inspired millions of people worldwide. Her efforts and activism have earned her numerous accolades. **I Am Malala** is a gripping memoir that takes readers on a journey of courage and determination, it also underlines the transformative power of education in changing lives and communities. It serves as a testament to the power of an individual's voice in creating positive change in the world.

A Note on Malalai

Malalai was a shepherd's daughter from a small town in Afghanistan. When her father and her fiancé fought against the British, she went to the battlefield to care for the wounded. She fought alongside Ayub Khan. Seeing their side losing, she encouraged the men to fight with determination. Though she died in the battle, her courage inspired the Afghan men to win, causing a major defeat for the British. To honour the victory, a monument was built in Kabul by the last

Afghan king. Many girls' schools in Afghanistan are named after Malalai.

A Note on Swat- Malala Yousafzai's Hometown

Yousafzai describes Swat as a heavenly kingdom of mountains. It is called the *Switzerland of the East*. It was a popular destination for both wealthy Pakistanis and foreigners. Yousafzai's hometown, Swat, was once a princely state, separated from Pakistan. After independence, it became a part of Pakistan but remained autonomous. The journey to the capital, Islamabad, took five hours due to the Malakand Pass. The place was abundant with fruit trees, including figs, pomegranates, peaches, grapes, guavas, and persimmons. Swat was once a flourishing Buddhist kingdom ruled by their kings for over 500 years. Chinese explorers documented around 1,400 Buddhist monasteries along the River Swat, where temple bells created a magical ambiance. Though the temples are destroyed, remnants of their existence, including rock carvings of Buddha, can still be found amid the valley's natural beauty. Islam arrived in Swat, in the eleventh century when Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni invaded from Afghanistan.

Yousafzai's ancestors played a crucial role in helping a Timurid emperor regain his throne after being removed by his own tribe. In the Yousafzai tribe, the land was distributed among male members through a unique system called *wesh*. The villages were governed by khans, and the common people, craftsmen, and labourers were their tenants.

In the early 20th century, the Yousafzai tribe chose Miangul Abdul Wadood, affectionately known as Badshah Sahib, as their king. He established forts across Swat, created an army, and gained recognition from the British as the ruler. He implemented positive changes, including setting up a telephone system, building the first primary school, and ending the *wesh* system, which allowed for more stability and development in the region.

Two years after the establishment of Pakistan, Miangul Abdul Wadood handed over his position to his elder son, Miangul Abdul Haq Jehanzeb. Yousafzai's father refers to Jehanzeb's reign as a golden period in their history. Jehanzeb was passionate about education and built schools, hospitals, and roads. He also abolished the tax system where people paid taxes to the khans in the 1950s. However, during his rule, there was no freedom of expression, and criticism of the ruler could lead to expulsion from the valley. In 1969, the year Yousafzai's father was born, Jehanzeb gave up power, and their region became part of

Pakistan's North- West Frontier Province, which later changed its name to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Where the Mind is without Fear **Rabindranath Tagore**

Rabindranath Tagore was a prominent Indian poet, philosopher, and polymath. He was awarded the **Nobel Prize for Literature in 1913** for his collection of poems titled **Gitanjali**. He composed the National Anthem of India. He was a vocal advocate for India's independence from British rule, and his writings reflect the country's struggle for liberation.

Where the Mind is Without Fear is the 35th poem in **Gitanjali**. The poem is in the form of a prayer to God. It is his idealistic dream about India. The lyrics are inspiring and patriotic. The poem set against the backdrop of British colonial rule in India, is a passionate plea for a society where individuals can think and act without fear. The prayer expresses the fact that he was not happy with the present values and priorities of Indian society. The freedom he anticipates is not merely political freedom. The poet wishes for a land where people can live without fear and with respect, without being controlled by anyone.

Tagore prays for his nation's freedom— an ideal freedom. He visualizes a world where knowledge is not confined to narrow domestic walls. The poet yearns for an education system that liberates minds and encourages exploration beyond conventional boundaries. The 'narrow domestic walls' symbolise the restrictions imposed by societal norms. He envisions a nation where knowledge is not crippled by communal or religious forces.

Tagore dreams of a free India where the mind is free from all kinds of fear. Only a mind without fear can enjoy true freedom and hold its head high in self-respect. People speak only truth in the new dream land; they work tirelessly to achieve perfection in whatever they do. Here, people are logical and reasonable. He hopes for a country where people's ability to distinguish right from wrong doesn't get stuck and disappear like a stream in the sand. It is a land where old customs and habits don't suffocate reasoning and where the mind is always encouraged by God to progress, think better, and act better.

The poem **Where the Mind is Without Fear** is a powerful vision of an ideal world – a world where fear is replaced with fearlessness, ignorance by knowledge, and divisions by unity. Tagore earnestly wishes the nation to wake

up into a paradise where there is absolute freedom of thought and action. The poem evokes a sense of inspiration and patriotism through its powerful lines, reflecting the poet's desire for a society devoid of narrow-mindedness and selfishness.

The poem's timeless message resonates with people across generations, encouraging them to dream big and work towards a better world. The poem is remarkable for its simple diction and images. Expressions like 'narrow domestic walls', 'depth of truth', 'stream of clear reason' and 'dreary desert sand of dead habit' lend extra beauty to the poem.

Love Cycle **Chinua Achbe**

Chinua Achebe, a Nigerian novelist, poet, and critic is regarded as the central figure of modern African literature. He is famous for his novel **Things Fall Apart**, published in 1958. **Love Cycle** is a captivating and imaginative poem that compares the sun and the earth to a married couple symbolising the enduring bond and the cyclical nature of their activities. The poem is a part of the collection **Beware Soul Brother and Other Poems**, published in 1971. It consists of three stanzas written in free verse. The poem depicts a metaphorical portrayal of the Sun's journey throughout the day, symbolising a romantic relationship between the Sun and the Earth. The Sun is portrayed as an angry man, and the Earth is depicted as a patient and tolerable woman. Achebe uses personification and symbolism to create vivid and powerful images in the poem.

At the outset, the poet paints a clear picture of the dawn, where the sun slowly emerges, embracing the earth with its gentle rays. The sun's mildness during the night is portrayed as a sign of a loving relationship between the two celestial bodies. As Earth wakes up, it is described as 'perfumed in dew drop fragrance'. The poet describes the gentle arrival of daylight by calling it 'soft eyed light.'

However, as the day progresses, the sun's temper changes. The poet emphasizes the forceful and intense nature of the sun's movement, revealing its harsh and rude side during daily activities. By comparing the sun's journey across the sky to ploughing through vast acres, the poem emphasizes the sun's powerful and forceful movements. The way the sun's fiery temperament is described in the poem represents the turbulent emotions that can happen in any relationship.

Despite the sun's dominance, the earth remains patient, waiting for the

evening when it can regain its power and influence. The poem showcases the cyclical relationship between the two, where each takes its turn.

Chinua Achebe beautifully crafts this poem using simple language and powerful imagery. The poem uses the image of the Sun and the Earth to explore the cyclical nature of emotions and relationships, moving from dawn to dusk.

The School for Sympathy

E V Lucas

Edward Verrall Lucas, often referred to as E. V. Lucas is an English writer and essayist. He is a versatile writer. He is known for his essays, which exhibited qualities of urbanity, honest observation, and imagination. He is recognized for his role as a prominent editor of Charles Lamb's writings and also for his biography on Charles Lamb

E. V. Lucas' **The School for Sympathy** revolves around Miss Beam's unconventional teaching methods designed to foster empathy and compassion among her students. This story shows how these experiences change the students, making them more thoughtful and able to see things from others' perspectives.

As the narrator visits Miss Beam's school, a place he had heard much about, he observes a young blindfolded twelve-year-old girl being led by an eight-year-old boy through the flower-beds. He meets Miss Beam, the headmistress. She is described as a middle-aged, authoritative, yet kind and understanding woman. During their conversation, the narrator asks about the teaching methods at the school.

The school's teaching method is simple and focuses on developing skills like reading, writing and basic mathematics. However, the main emphasis is on instilling thoughtfulness, humanity, and kindness. To cultivate empathy, the students were given days of simulated disability – blind, lame, deaf, and dumb days. This gives them first hand understanding of the challenges faced by the physically challenged and also develops compassion for them.

The narrator expresses surprise and concern upon noticing some students who appear to be blind and lame. Miss Beam informs that these conditions are simulated and are a part of the learning experience. The narrator finds this

approach surprising, and Miss Beam elaborates that it is meant to be both educational and a way to cultivate empathy.

Miss Beam explains the concept of blind days, lame days, deaf days, and dumb days. For instance, during a blind day, students' eyes are bandaged overnight, simulating blindness when they wake up. This forces them to rely on others for assistance, cultivating empathy and understanding towards those who face such challenges. The school believes that first hand experience is the best way to teach children to understand and comprehend misfortune.

Miss Beam takes the narrator to interact with a blindfolded girl. The girl mentions that being blind is terrifying, as she can't see and constantly fears bumping into things. She says that children who have already experienced blindness are the most helpful guides. The girl also describes the upcoming deaf day and dumb day as less intimidating.

The narrator's interaction with the blindfolded girl makes him realise how thoughtful they have become in the process. They understand the importance of describing their surroundings and guiding someone who can't see. When Miss Beam frees the narrator from his role, she remarks that the effectiveness of her teaching method becomes apparent.

The account concludes with the narrator leaving, reciting lines that underscore the idea of sharing others' difficulties to truly understand and empathise with their experiences:

*Can I see another's woe, And
not share their sorrow too?
O no, never can it be,
Never, never, can it be.*

Nine Gold Medals

David Roth

David Lee Roth, a renowned American rock singer served as the lead vocalist for the hard rock group *Van Halen*. **Nine Gold Medals** written by him is based on an event that happened during the Special Olympics in 1976. The poem celebrates human values like cooperation, compassion, empathy, and concern for others.

The poem vividly portrays the atmosphere of the special Olympic event, where athletes from different parts of the country have gathered to compete for their medals. The athletes and the spectators were excited.

The spectators, a diverse crowd, assembled around the old field to support and cheer up the young women and men participating in the games. The loud speakers announced the names of the participants.

The blocks were all lined up for the hundred-yard dash race. Nine athletes waited in the back of the starting line for the sound of the gun. The race began with the gunshot. The youngest of the nine competitors stumbled and fell on the track right in the beginning. He cried in frustration and pain. Everything he had worked so hard for suddenly came tumbling down. Strangely enough all the other eight participants turned back to help him instead of running the race. Their act showed their profound sense of empathy and unity. They prioritised helping their fellow competitor over their personal glory.

They helped the boy to get up on his feet. The hundred-yard dash became a walk. Their act of sportsmanship and unity touched everyone, and they all reached the finishing line together. They were all declared winners and given a standing ovation for the spirit of sportsmanship they displayed. The poem conveys the importance of sportsmanship, unity, and empathy in a poignant manner.

Alice Fell or Poverty **William Wordsworth**

William Wordsworth was a renowned English poet and a key figure in the Romantic literary movement. He is best known for his lyrical and nature themed poetry. His poem **Alice Fell or Poverty** written in 1802 was inspired by a true story narrated by his sister Dorothy in her journal. It was published in 1807.

The poem **Alice Fell or Poverty** is an account of an encounter between the unnamed narrator and a young girl named Alice Fell. It is a compassionate poem that explores the themes of empathy, kindness, and the plight of an orphaned child.

The poem begins with the narrator riding in a post-chaise driven by a post-boy. It is raining and as they ride, the narrator hears a piteous moan. The narrator asks the post-boy to stop the carriage to find out where the sound came from. But, the noise stopped.

The post-boy then rode the horses through the rain. However, the haunting voice is heard again and the narrator instructs the post-boy to halt again. The narrator got off the chaise to find out the source of the mournful sound. He finds a little girl sitting behind the chaise alone. The narrator pities

the little girl when he sees the cause of her distress is that her already tattered cloak is caught in the wheel. They released the cloak and the narrator allowed her into the cabin.

The little girl introduces herself as Alice Fell, an orphan and belongs to Durham. Throughout the journey, Alice remains mourning for her spoiled cloak. Upon reaching their destination, a tavern, the narrator recounts Alice's story to the host and gives money to buy a duffel grey new cloak.

The next day Alice Fell was 'happy and proud' in her new cloak. The poem conveys a timeless message of compassion and the importance of extending a helping hand to those in need.

Barn Burning **William Faulkner**

William Faulkner-A Nobel laureate, is one of the most celebrated writers of American literature. **Barn Burning**, a short story set after the Civil War, recounts the story of Abner Snopes and his son, Colonel Sartoris Snopes. It was written in 1939.

The story starts with Abner Snopes' trial in court for burning down Mr. Harris's barn. Mr. Harris explains that Snopes's hog got into his corn, and even though Harris gave a wire to fix the pen, Snopes didn't use it. When the hog got out again, Snopes paid a dollar to get it back. Mr. Harris mentions about a nigger who warned him, *Wood and hay kin (can) burn*. In the makeshift courtroom, Abner's guilt is not proven, but he is advised to leave the town to avoid further issues.

After the trial, a boy punches Snopes's son Sarty and calls him a barn burner. Sarty's family, including his mom, brother, sisters, and aunt, relocate. It is their 12th move in 10 years.

Snopes' s confrontational behaviour continues. He deliberately damages a rug belonging to their wealthy landlord Major de Spain. When Major de Spain confronts Abner about the ruined rug, Abner offers to clean it himself. However, in a fit of anger, he damages the rug further, and Major de Spain demands 20 bushels of corn. Snopes refuses to pay, resulting in a court hearing. The Judge finds Abner at fault but reduces the penalty to 10 bushels of corn.

Dissatisfied with the verdict Snopes plans to burn down Major de Spain's barn. Sarty runs to warn Major de Spain, but he's too late to prevent the barn from being burned. Sarty hears gunshots and realises his father has been shot.

Sarty walks away from the scene, understanding that his life has changed forever. He grapples with conflicting emotions, and he realises that he can't go back home.

Barn Burning delves into themes of morality, loyalty, the struggle between right and wrong, and the complex dynamics within a family. It portrays Sarty's internal conflict as he struggles with his loyalty to his father and his own sense of morality.

The Things That Haven't done before **Edgar Albert Guest**

Edgar Albert Guest was a British-born American poet. He is addressed as the People's Poet. His poems are inspiring and optimistic. **The Things That Haven't Been Done Before** by Edgar Albert Guest is a thought-provoking poem that explores the importance of taking risks. Guest employs historical allusions and vivid descriptions to prompt readers to take the road not taken. It emphasizes the importance of exploring new and uncharted territories.

The first stanza sets the tone for the poem. The speaker refers to Christopher Columbus and his courageous voyage to a place he didn't know about. Columbus was an explorer who dreamed of finding a new land even when others doubted him. This dream of discovering a place that nobody had seen before represents the idea of doing things that haven't been done before. The speaker says Columbus had a bold heart and faith.

In the second stanza, the speaker talks about two groups of people. Most people follow a path that's marked and known, using signs and charts to guide them. They feel safe following what others have done. But there are a few brave ones who decide to take a different path. They want to explore things that nobody has done before. They are curious, willing to face challenges and ready to experience new challenges.

In the third stanza the speaker discusses the people who dare to do things differently. These people might face tough times and get hurt, but they create a new way for others to follow. Brave people inspire others to not just do the same old things. The speaker says that these trailblazers are the reason we make progress and find new ideas, while most people just copy what has been done before.

In the final stanza, the speaker asks a series of reflective questions to the

readers. The readers are asked whether they are content to be part of the crowd that follows established norms or if they are willing to take on a leadership role. This stanza urges readers to make conscious choices that defy convention, embrace challenges, and seek out uncharted territories.

The Things That Haven't Been Done Before is a poem about taking risks and being venturesome. The poem tells us to try new things, be bold, and not always follow what everyone else does. It advises us to dream big, take careful chances, and show that we can do more than we think. This poem inspires us to believe in ourselves and make the world better for the future.

Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening **Robert Frost**

Robert Frost was an American poet known for his realistic depictions of rural life and his use of simple language. He is famous for poems like **The Road Not Taken**, **Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening**, and **Mending Wall**. His works often explore themes of nature, human choices, and the complexities of life.

Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening was published in 1923. It is a part of his collection *New Hampshire*. This poem, though simple, possesses layers of meaning. The poem delves into themes of solitude, temptation, and the struggle between responsibilities and desires.

The poet was passing through the woods on a wintry evening on his horse. He was possessed by the beauty of the place and stopped in the middle of his journey. He recognized that the owner of the woods was familiar to him but was not sure that the owner may remember him.

The speaker also thinks from his horse's perspective. The horse finds it unusual to stop in a remote place without a farmhouse nearby. It gives its harness bell a gentle shake seemingly questioning the reason for the stop. Apart from the sound of the horse's bells, the only other noise is the gentle movement of the wind and the falling snowflakes.

The place was calm except for the sound of the bell and the noise of the blowing wind and the falling snow. The poet for a moment thought of spending his time in the woods which he found lovely, dark and deep. But, he was instantly reminded of the duties and responsibilities he has towards his family and the society. He has to travel a long distance before he sleeps. So he cannot stop in the woods. He decides to move ahead. He left the place telling everything in the woods are

*...are lovely, dark and deep,
But I have promises to keep,
And miles to go before I sleep,
And miles to go before I sleep.*

The woods symbolise distractions, temptations, or diversions that one encounters on their life journey. These distractions can lead individuals away from their goals and responsibilities. In this poem they are a powerful symbol, urging readers to reflect on the choices they make in their journey through life.

The Magic Brocade A Tale of China

The Magic Brocade A Tale of China recounts the story of an elderly widow and her son Chen, who lived in a Chinese village. The widow had gained widespread fame for her remarkable skill in weaving brocades using her loom. She crafted intricate images of flowers, birds, and animals using threads of silver, gold, and colourful silk.

One day, the widow went to a busy marketplace to sell her beautifully woven brocades. People were very eager to buy them. Her brocades sold out very quickly. With the money she decided to buy things that she needed for her home. However, her attention was abruptly disturbed by a beautiful painted scroll that hung in one of the stalls.

The shopkeeper informs her that the scroll portrayed a *Sun Palace* - a mythical place situated far to the east. Legend had it that the palace was inhabited by an array of fairy-like ladies. Even though it was expensive, the widow couldn't stop herself from buying the scroll.

The widow's son suggests weaving the picture as a brocade. Excited by the idea, she immediately sets up her loom and begins to weave the *Sun Palace*. She devotes countless hours, days, and weeks to finish the task. This affected her business. She did not have anything to bring to the market which was the primary source of income. Chen takes on the responsibility of cutting and selling firewood to earn a living.

One day, Chen finds his mother in tears. He inquires about her distress, and she reveals that the wind has carried the *Sun Palace* to the east. Chen assures that he will bring back the *Sun Palace* brocade. He embarks on a journey. Chen meets an old woman near a hut and explains that he is searching for the brocade that was carried away by the wind to the east. The woman informs him that the fairy ladies of *Sun Palace* are using it as a pattern.

Chen is determined to retrieve it. The woman lends him her horse, warning him about the challenges ahead. Chen endures the challenges and the horse guides him to *Sun Palace*. Inside the palace finds copies of the brocade being woven by fairy ladies. The original brocade the widow had woven was hanging in the centre of the room.

Chen meets a beautiful fairy named Li-en. The fairies express their admiration for it and propose to keep it temporarily to try and replicate the brocade. Chen, however, is concerned about his ailing mother and insists on taking the brocade back to her.

Li-en proposes a compromise - she suggests that they keep the brocade for a day to attempt to finish their own creations, with the promise to return it to Chen the following day. Chen, touched by their enthusiasm, agrees to this arrangement. As the last fairy departs and Li-en finishes her brocade, she conceives a brilliant plan. She embroiders an image of herself onto the widow's brocade and casts a spell, infusing it with her essence and magic.

Chen awakens to the rising sun and an empty hall. He hurries back to his mother. Upon returning, Chen revives his mother by presenting her with the brocade. The brocade transforms into a portal, unveiling a larger-than-life vision of the palace.

Li-en's invites Chen and his mother into the brocade. Li-en requests the widow to teach the art to the fairies. Chen, who marries Li-en, decides to stay in the palace. The story masterfully intertwines the world of reality and enchantment, highlighting themes of sacrifice, compassion, and the transformative power of love.

Stories on Stage Aaron Shepard

Stories on Stage by Aaron Shepard compiles reader's theatre scripts designed for young readers, adapted from narratives by fifteen distinct authors such as Louis Sachar, Nancy Farmer, and Roald Dahl. The stories were selected based on their dramatic essence, literary significance, and resonance with young audiences.

Aaron Shepard has adapted three stories from the Wayside School Series originally written by Louis Sachar in his Stories on Stage. Louis Sachar is an American author renowned for his young-adult mystery- comedy works. He is most recognized for his **Wayside School Series** and the novel **Holes**.

Sideways Stories from Wayside School was published in 1978. The

series includes titles such as **Sideways Stories from Wayside School** (1978), **Wayside School is Falling Down** (1989), **Wayside School Gets A Little Stranger**, and **Wayside School Beneath the Cloud of Doom**.

The setting of the story is the fictional Wayside School, originally intended to have thirty classrooms in a single-story layout. However, it was mistakenly constructed as a towering thirty-story building, with one classroom on each floor except for the missing nineteenth story.

The main focus is on Mrs. Jewls' class, situated on the thirtieth story, and each chapter highlights different students and teachers within the school. The stories are a collection of quirky and absurd tales that revolve around the students and teachers in this unconventional school setting. The stories are known for their whimsical and imaginative nature, often featuring strange happenings, unusual events, and unexpected outcomes.

Aaron Shepherd has adapted three stories from the series. The first story, narrates Joe's struggles with counting and his encounter with Mrs. Jewls, who teaches him to count correctly using amusing methods. Despite his efforts, Joe's counting skills do not improve.

The second story follows Bebe, an artist who draws at an incredible speed. Calvin helps Bebe manage her drawings, and together they set a record. However, their teacher, Mrs. Jewls, emphasizes the value of artistic depth over quantity.

In the third story, Calvin is tasked with delivering a note to a teacher on the nonexistent nineteenth storey of the sideways school. Calvin's confusion and interactions with Louis, the yard teacher, lead to humorous misunderstandings.

Story 1

The story revolves around Joe, a student who finds himself embroiled in a comical yet insightful encounter with Mrs. Jewls. Mrs. Jewls keeps Joe back from recess specially to teach counting skills. Despite Joe's protest that he already knows how to count, Mrs. Jewls insists on learning to count correctly.

Despite Joe's attempt to count, he delivers a sequence of numbers that are incorrect. When Joe insists that he counted up to ten, Mrs. Jewls disagrees and decides to point out his error. She places five pencils on the table and asks Joe to count them. Joe counts the pencils as four, six, one, nine, five, arriving at an answer of five pencils. Mrs. Jewls tells Joe that he got the correct answer, but he used the wrong method to count, suggesting his success was due to luck. This

interaction humorously illustrates Joe's struggles with counting and Mrs. Jewls' quirky teaching methods. This continues with potatoes, trees etc.

Mrs. Jewls teaches Joe to count properly using the numbers from one to ten. After practising with her, Joe counts six erasers using the proper method but arrives at the wrong answer. Frustrated, he points out that when he counts in his own way, he gets the right answers, while counting as everyone counts he gets the wrong answer. This highlights Joe's confusion and the humorous nature of the situation.

Finally, Mrs. Jewls hits her head against the wall five times. After turning away and hitting her head, she asks Joe how many times she hit her head. Joe counts and says ten, then re-counts in the method he uses and answers five. Eventually, Mrs. Jewls confirms that Joe's second answer was right. As the bell rings, Joe realises he has missed recess.

Story 2

The second story revolves around a character named Bebe, who possesses an extraordinary talent for drawing. She is a student in Mrs. Jewls's class and is known for her exceptional speed in creating artwork. She can create detailed drawings of cats in less than forty-five seconds, dogs in less than thirty seconds, and flowers in less than eight seconds.

The class takes place from 12:30 to 1:30, and within this short time, Bebe manages to draw an impressive number of pictures. For instance, she can complete fifty drawings of cats, a hundred flowers, twenty dogs, and even multiple eggs or watermelons. She spends the same amount of time drawing something as small as an egg or as complex as a watermelon.

Calvin, another student in the class, sits beside Bebe. He lacks the same artistic prowess as Bebe and struggles to complete a single drawing in the entire class period. He spends his time helping Bebe instead. He becomes Bebe's partner, supporting her artistic process. Whenever Bebe finishes rapidly, Calvin takes the drawing from her and replaces it with a fresh sheet of paper. He is also prepared with new crayons whenever Bebe's runs low on crayons.

Bebe drew pictures as fast as Calvin could pick up the old paper and set down the new. Bebe set a new record by creating 378 pictures in 1 hour. Calvin chose not to draw. When asked for the reason Calvin responds that he loves art, which is precisely why he refrained from drawing. He goes on to explain his perspective: if he had drawn, it would have taken him the entire class period to

create just one picture. He says by working together, they accomplished the remarkable feat of drawing 378 pictures.

Mrs. Jewls, the teacher, doesn't agree with this perspective. She argues that the quantity of pictures isn't the sole measure of art. She uses the example of spending a lifetime drawing of a single picture of a cat.

Bebe, feeling emotional, discards the pictures from Calvin's desk and leaves the room in distress. She runs to the playground where she meets Louis, the yard teacher. Bebe expresses her intention to go home and draw a cat picture. Louis asks if she could show it at school the next day, but Bebe humorously doubts she will not finish even a whisker by then.

Story 3

This story is confusing and lacks all logic. Calvin is asked by Mrs. Jewls to deliver a note to Miss Zarves. Mrs. Jewls specifies that Miss Zarves can be found on the nineteenth storey. Calvin doubtfully asks whether it is the nineteenth storey. Mrs. Jewls, frustrated by Calvin's constant questioning, repeatedly reminds him that they've already established that fact. Mrs. Jewls compels Calvin to carry out the task, and he agrees to do so.

Calvin leaves the classroom but is not certain of what to do. The school was not only accidentally built sideways, but also the nineteenth storey was omitted. Calvin is baffled and unsure about what steps to take. He walks down to the eighteenth storey and walks back up to the twentieth storey. He makes a funny remark about how strange his problem is. He's supposed to give a note to a teacher who isn't real and teach on a floor that was never even built. And he doesn't even have the note.

Calvin heads down to the administration office in the first storey. He plans to place the note in Miss Zarves's mailbox. However, there isn't a mailbox for Miss Zarves, which doesn't bother Calvin too much since he doesn't have the note. Calvin sees Louis, the yard teacher, playing basketball outside from the window. He thinks Louis can help him, so he tells Louis that he's in a hurry and has to give a note to Miss Zarves on the nineteenth storey.

Louis and Calvin discuss the non-existence of the nineteenth storey, Miss Zarves, and a note. Louis advises Calvin not to take notes to teachers, leading to confusion. Eventually, Calvin decides to tell Mrs. Jewls that he couldn't deliver the note. Despite the confusion, Calvin returns to Mrs. Jewls's class and she thanks him. The conversation humorously portrays the complexity of the situation and the characters' misunderstanding.