

## POEM

### LAND OF OUR BIRTH, WE PLEDGE TO THEE

In page VI of this book what do you find after invocation to Goddess Tamil? Do you say the pledge in your school assembly? What do you find below the pledge? What is your Motherland? Do you love your Motherland? If 'yes', please sign your name, after filling in all the other places in the box. Whenever you open the English reader, read page VI and renew your pledge.

Land of our birth, we pledge to thee  
our love and toil in the years to be,  
when we are grown and take our place  
as men and women with our race.

Father in heaven, who lovest all,  
O help thy children when they call,  
that they may build from age to age  
an undefiled heritage.....

Teach us the strength that cannot seek,  
by deed or thought, to hurt the weak,  
that, under thee, we may possess  
man's strength to comfort man's distress.

Teach us delight in simple things,  
and mirth that has no bitter springs,  
forgiveness free of evil done,  
and love to all men 'neath the sun.

Land of our birth, our faith, our pride  
for whose dear sake our fathers died;  
O Motherland, we pledge to thee  
head, heart and hand through the years to be.



**-Rudyard Kipling**

pledge	–	promise
thee	–	old English for 'you'
toil	–	long, hard work
lovest	–	old English for love
thy	–	your
undefiled	–	pure
heritage	–	the treasure of history, culture, traditions etc.
possess	–	have
distress	–	great unhappiness, sorrow
mirth	–	joy, happiness
neath	–	beneath, under

### NOTE ON THE POET :

Joseph R. Kipling, one of the most popular British writers, was born in Bombay in 1865 but was taken to England by his family when he was five. Kipling is best known for his stories and collections of stories such as The Jungle Book, Just So Stories, Kim his poems 'If', Gunga Din etc. He was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1907. The given poem was set to music. So if you learn the lines, you can sing it for the school Independence and Republic Day Celebrations.

### LET US UNDERSTAND:

1. Can you find out if one or more than one person speak(s) in the first stanza?
2. Are they young or old? How do you know?
3. Who do you think the speaker is in the second stanza? Why?
4. Who is addressed in the first and last stanzas?
5. Who is addressed in the rest of the stanzas?
6. Can you rejoice at another person's sorrow?
7. What should we do when people hurt us?

In the last line of the poem the sound “h” is repeated. Such a technique is called alliteration, where the same sound is repeated. Poet use alliteration to add beauty and musicality. Thiruvalluvar uses it often in Thirukkural – example

“கற்க கசடற கற்பவை கற்றபின்....”



**LET US REMEMBER:**

1. What do the children promise to give to the Motherland in the first stanza?
2. What does the poet pray that the children should do for the nation in the second stanza?
3. How should we use our strength?
4. What do the children pray for in the fourth stanza?
5. Who fought for our freedom?
6. What do the children pledge to the nation?
7. Write words in alliteration you find in this poem.

## SUPPLEMENTARY READING

# AFTER THE STORM

### In Preparation

What do you do, when you feel very troubled about the situations around you? Here is an experience of a group of children.

The storm raged all night. Lightning flashed and the wind howled like a demon. Saruli crawled under the covers and clung to her mother when she heard the thunder. A peculiar crack-crack-crack SNAP was followed by a tremendous crash, as though a giant had fallen to the ground.

“What is that?” she asked her mother.

<b>lofty</b>	- high
<b>foraging</b>	- collecting food for cattle
<b>wiry</b>	- thin and strong

“The trees,” her mother replied. “The wind is blowing them down.”

“The trees!” Saruli was shocked. The wind was strong, very strong. But was it powerful enough to knock down those enormous pines—so straight and tall?

The next morning she saw it for herself. Row upon row of the **lofty** pines lay stretched helplessly on the ground. Saruli was stunned. Half the jungle seemed bare. Most of the people from the small hillside village were there, **foraging** for branches and dragging them away. But Saruli, a **wiry** girl of thirteen, stood there stunned.

Gripped with fear Saruli was thinking of the barren hillside across the valley. How desolate it looked! A real contrast to the forest near their village, which was full of fresh grass and shrubs. Suppose... suppose all the trees fell down ... wouldn't the forest disappear? With an effort she dismissed these thoughts and began to collect wood. Fuel is always an important need. Saruli gathered a large bundle. On her way back, she passed Diwan Singh's house. The old man was seated outside. “You want some wood, uncle?” she asked. Without waiting for an answer she dropped part of her bundle in one corner of the paved courtyard.

“So you have been to the forest, girl?”

“Yes, uncle, lots of trees fell down last night.”



Old Diwan Singh was the headman of her village. "It was to be expected," he said slowly. "The trees have been totally hollowed by the resin-tappers." Saruli's brown eyes opened wide. "I wondered how so many trees had fallen down". Diwan Singh said, "First they only made one cut on the trees to tap resin. Now they keep on making gashes till the trees are utterly drained. Even a moderately strong wind can blow them over, they are so dry." "Can't... can't someone stop them?" Saruli asked, horrified. Diwan sighed. "Who can stop them, girl? The contractors are rich, influential people. They pay a lot of money to tap the trees."



Saruli got up to go home. As she stood up, she glanced at Diwan Singh's strange nursery. He was growing saplings. Not the baby pines which sprang up themselves in the rains, but shoots of oak and deodar – the native trees of the hills. Diwan Singh told Saruli, "When I was a boy this was a forest of oak and deodar. The British Government cut them down and planted pines."

"But, why?" She had asked. **resin** - a substance got from the sap of a tree

"Because pine trees can be tapped for resin and resin has many uses. But they forgot that oaks bring rain and trap the water. Pines dry out the land."

It was a holiday. Saruli took her cow to graze in the forest. The sight of the fallen tree trunks was depressing. Many of the children from other villages were there too, with their goats and cows. "Come and play hide and seek!" Jaman called. But Saruli shook her head. She sat on a rock, lost in her thought. How could they save their forest?



"What is the matter?" Jaman asked after a while.

"I am scared," she replied, after a short pause. "Suppose another storm comes along and all the trees are blown down. What will we do then?"

"The contractors pay money to the Forest Department to tap the trees. They are allowed to do it," said Jaman in a low voice.

But Saruli was rushing to the nearest pine tree. There she found several gashes which had gone dry. At the end of one, there was a conical tin cup, into which the sticky resin fell, drop by drop. She wrenched off the tin cup and threw it away. "That is what we can do!" She cried triumphantly. Jaman put some clay to seal the gashes.

The other children gathered around curiously. Saruli cried excitedly. "Come on, help me to save our forest!"

She raced around pulling the tin cups off the trees. And Jaman followed with the clay. The others joined in enthusiastically.

A week passed. The little group managed to remove the tin containers from a large portion of the jungle. Then, one morning, four men entered the forest to collect resin. Saruli's heart **thudded** suddenly. The showdown had come. But she had to stay calm. She could hear their muttered exclamations of surprise which turned into anger to find the trees devoid of the resin containers.

**thudded-** beat loudly

Finally, they came up to the children who were swarming around a tree. "Do you know who has done this?" one of them demanded. Saruli had seen him around. He was called Lal Singh.

The children looked at each other, not knowing what to say. Then Saruli jumped down from the *kafal* tree. "We did it," she said.

"Wha-at?" the man seemed unable to understand.

"Yes," Saruli said quietly. "We threw away the containers".

"You brats! How dare you!" Lal Singh **exploded**. His companions swore and muttered angrily. "Now we will have to put them again," Lal Singh continued. "Don't you dare touch the trees now."

**exploded** - shouted angrily

He produced a chisel-like tool and began to scrape off the mud plaster the children had applied.

"Stop!" Saruli cried, hurling herself at him. He pushed her aside roughly but Jaman and the others joined Saruli.



“Run, Radha!” Saruli cried. “Get help from the village. We have got to save the forest!”

Radha ran fast. But the taller man caught up with her quickly. He was about to grab her. Suddenly, a jeep jerked to an abrupt halt. “What is going on?” a voice spoke from inside.



Lal Singh sprang forward eagerly. Jaman followed. Then his eyes fell on what was written on the number plate. “The D.F.O. Sir!” he muttered nervously.

The District Forest Officer jumped out of the jeep. One of the men who held Radha by the arm was gesticulating and pointing to the trees. Radha looked terrified!

“What is the meaning of all this?” the D.F.O. asked.

“She is the ring leader,” Lal Singh said accusingly.

“Sir, we are only trying to save our forest!” Saruli said vehemently.

Taken aback by Saruli's **impassioned** outburst, the D.F.O. followed her to the edge of the forest. He stared at the fallen tree-trunks and frowned.

“It is the resin-tapping, Sir,” Saruli repeated. “If all the trees fall down, what will we do?”

**impassioned** - deeply felt

But the D.F.O. was lost in thought. “I shall have to think about it,” he said finally. “Our job is to preserve the forests. Tell your contractor to talk to me.”

Lal Singh's eyes almost fell out with shock, but the children clapped **gleefully**. The D.F.O. got into his jeep and drove away.

**gleefully** - happily

A month went by. The resin-tappers did not come again and the children continued to remove the containers. They had almost finished when the first monsoon showers came down. That evening when Saruli went home, Diwan Singh called out to her, “Girl, the rains have come. Let's plant the deodars.”

She smiled happily up at him. Just then, they saw a familiar jeep. "D.F.O. Sir!" said Diwan Singh.

The D.F.O. got off the jeep and smiled at Saruli. "Keep it up," he patted her back. "The resin tappers will not trouble you again."

"Thank you, Sir, thank you!" chanted a chorus of voices. The jeep sped down the road. A breeze rustled through the trees making them sound like a distant waterfall. Saruli sighed happily. They would continue to hear that sound. They had achieved their goal. They had saved the forest.



Nothing would destroy their forest now.

**LET US REMEMBER:**

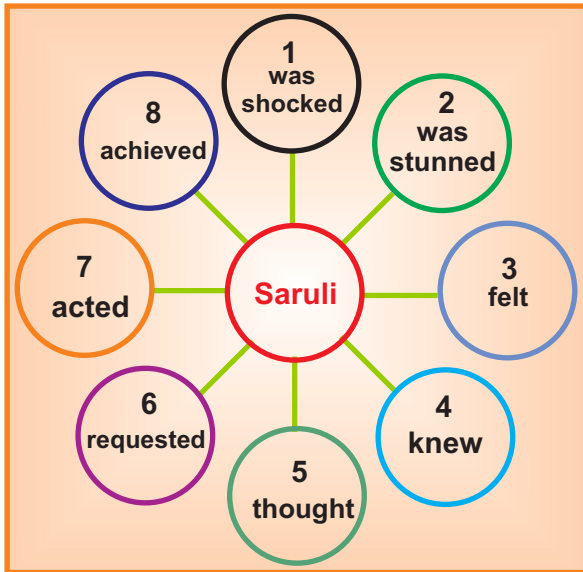
*Complete the following sentences:*

1. Saruli clung to her mother when \_\_\_\_\_
2. Saruli was stunned to see \_\_\_\_\_
3. Suppose... suppose all the trees fell down \_\_\_\_\_
4. "It was to be expected", Diwan Singh said slowly \_\_\_\_\_
5. "Oaks bring rain and trap water, Pines \_\_\_\_\_
6. Saruli found several gashes which \_\_\_\_\_
7. The tin cups were wrenched and thrown off and \_\_\_\_\_
8. "Now, we will have to put them again," Lal Singh continued, \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ .
9. "Girl, the rains \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ .



**LET US UNDERSTAND:**

Using this frame, match Saruli's feelings [indicated by the numbers] with the line that communicates it.



\_\_\_ that they should put an end to resin tapping.  5

\_\_\_ that they had \_\_\_ their goal.

\_\_\_ that the contractors got resin by making gashes on the trees.

\_\_\_ to know that the wind could blow down the trees.

\_\_\_ her friends to help her put a stop to the unlawful tapping.

\_\_\_ quickly and wrenched off the tin cups and slapped clay on the gashes.

\_\_\_ how desolate the forest would be without the trees!

\_\_\_ when she saw that many trees had fallen down.

Write a paragraph on how Saruli saved the forest.

**ACTIVITY :**

Prepare a play and enact the incidents in the story with your friends.

In this unit, an attempt has been made to make the students aware of the importance of coexisting with all species on earth, especially the colourful and sweet-singing birds, and the ferocious, magnificent tiger. The prose text **Our Winged Friends** is an excerpt from Zai Whitaker's biography of Dr. Salim Ali, '*Salim Ali for Schools*.' It enlightens the students on different types of birds and their strange and unique behaviours, and also encourages them to take up bird watching as a hobby. There is a poem by the famous poet, Laurence Dunbar, given as extra reading, which would sensitize children to the deeper dimensions of freedom, using the metaphor of a caged bird.

This unit presents a frame to maximize active learning. There are many language exercises like semantic mapping, which effectively facilitate students in their learning of the language and can be used to motivate them. Students are given tips for essay writing which would enhance their writing skills.

The second part of this unit has a poem **A Tiger in the Zoo** by Leslie Norris which evocatively portrays the raw feelings of a caged tiger in the zoo. Students learn to respect animals' rights and their freedom. The questions asked here help them to reflect on this issue.

The Supplementary Unit is an interesting story from Zimbabwe, **The Anteater and the Dassie** written by Lakshmi Mukundan. The backdrop of this story is a conversation between a boy called Tendai and his grandmother. The story which features a race between two friends, a pangolin and a dassie, communicates how smartness can win over strength.

The activities given, help the students to read, comprehend and interact in small and large groups. The grammar taught in this section is Reported Speech. Rules regarding reported speech are given with examples. Focus is mainly on Statements and Imperatives. Formal letter writing is included in this unit to enable the students to correspond with officials if necessary. Familiarize the students with the format as labelled. Please focus more on the content of letters.

There is a suggested extension activity on debating and two projects have also been given.



## PROSE

# OUR WINGED FRIENDS

-Excerpt of Zai Whitaker's 'Salim Ali For Schools'

### In Preparation

Dr. Salim Ali, the Birdman of India, is one of the world's most famous **ornithologists**. He made many discoveries about Indian birds and wrote the "The Book of Indian Birds", which has become a classic. He also fought for the conservation of many important forests including the Bharatpur Bird Sanctuary in Rajasthan and Silent Valley in Kerala.



**or-ni-tho-lo-gists-** people who study birds

**Read and think:** Have you watched birds around you? People have done so for centuries! Birds seem to represent the spirit of freedom because they roam the skies. Birds which were once used as messengers are now often hunted and caged. Here is a poem by a Black American poet about a caged bird.



I know why the caged bird sings, ah me,  
When his wing is **bruised** and his **bosom** sore,  
When he beats his **bars** and would be free;  
It is not a **carol** of joy or glee,  
But a prayer that he sends from his heart's deep core,  
But a **plea**, that upward to Heaven he **flings** –  
I know why the caged bird sings.

*Paul Laurence Dunbar*

<b>bruised</b>	: hurt	<b>bosom</b>	: chest	<b>bars</b>	: cage
<b>carol</b>	: sacred song	<b>flings</b>	: throws up	<b>plea</b>	: request



Many years ago in China, the government decided to kill the sparrows. They thought sparrows destroyed the crops. But when all the sparrows had been killed, there was a huge explosion in the population of insects. The Chinese had forgotten that though the sparrows eat grain, they also eat insects- many of which are pests that are the main enemy of the farmer. In the same way, the fishermen **gnash** their teeth at crocodiles because they eat up fish, especially the type we use to make curries. So, like birds, they may do a bit of harm to the humans, but **gnash-** to clash the teeth in anger they also do a lot of good.

Have you observed anything unique about any bird?

**Write it down**

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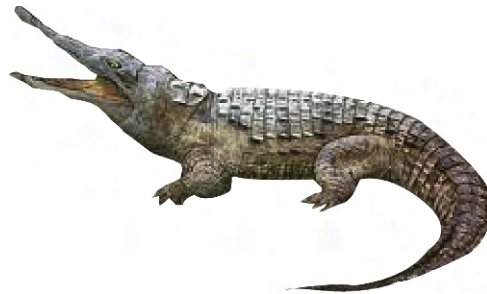
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**Crocodile**

**Crocodiles** are more than 200 million years old. They play an important role in wetland environment. They also have a role in maintaining the balance in the complex web of life.

Birds have lovely calls and songs, they don't bite and most of them are beautiful to look at. The

songs and colours of birds have inspired great poetry, music and art. But birds were not put on earth just for our enjoyment. They are one of the most important aspects in the environment. They are master pollinators who transfer pollen from place to place. Many seeds do not **germinate** unless they are first eaten and digested by birds. So they are wonderful seed carriers too. This way birds help in the growth of forests. Every bird plays a **unique** part in its **habitat**.

Some birds like living near streams, some in trees and cities. But many species of birds are perplexed and alarmed that human beings seem

**germinate** - to sprout  
**unique** - special  
**habitat** - animal's home