

# THE PARROT WHO WOULDN'T TALK

## LESSON OVERVIEW

L.No.	Title of the Lesson	Skills			Grammar/Figures of speech	Activity	Life Skills
		Listening/ speaking	Reading	Writing			
27	The Parrot Who Wouldn't Talk	Making Verbal requests, Ideas and instruction	Prose story	Describing people Summarising	Present Perfect Continous tense; Past Perfect Continous tense; Modals	Collecting information about PETA organisation	Love, care and empathy

### SUMMARY

It is a humorous short story about a parrot kept as a pet by the author's aunt, Ruby. The aunt bought a parrot and kept it in an ornamental cage. She tried hard to teach the parrot to talk but it would not talk. In fact, the parrot disliked the aunt from the very beginning.

One day, when the aunt asked the parrot for a kiss and put her face close to the cage, the parrot in anger knocked her specs off her nose. She felt humiliated. She stopped feeding the parrot, started making faces at it and saying nasty things to it.

The author, who was then 10 years old, was given the duty to feed the parrot. He lovingly executed his duty. The parrot seemed to like him. One day, he deliberately left the door of the cage open. The parrot flew away. After a few days, it started visiting them frequently, perhaps, to have its favourite food (chilies and mangoes) from the author. Whenever it happened to see aunt Ruby it would repeat the same nasty things to her which she used to utter. This made aunt feel embarrassed.

### PRINCIPAL POINTS

- The author humorously conveys the message that even pets like birds understand our feelings towards them. If we show love they will love us but if we nurse negative feelings, they respond in the same way.
- Pets need to be treated with love and respect.
- It is wrong to keep birds in captivity. They need their natural space in the free air.

### LET'S LEARN NEW EXPRESSIONS

Study the meaning of some of the difficult words and expressions used in the story.

**Glared morosely:** looked sadly with angry/ wide open eyes

**Aunt Ruby would coo:** talked fondly / appreciatively in a soft low voice

**Nasty comments:** unpleasant remarks

**With its head cocked to one side:** bending its head sideways

**Perching on:** sitting on a high place (branch of tree/plant.)

**ENHANCE YOUR PERFORMANCE****Describing People**

For describing a lost person, you need to include the following points.

- Physical appearance: give the approximate age, height, built, colour and length of hair, colour, shape and size of eyes, shape of face, complexion, lips, shape and size of nose.
- Special mark of Identification: a mole, scar, lame, blind of one eye, wearing specs, beard and moustache if any and their style and length.
- Clothes: What the person was wearing, type, style and colour of clothes

Accent and language spoken

- Place where last seen

**Describing a known person**

In addition to physical appearance, you should include the following points.

- Profession
- Habits, plus and minus points (cheerful, friendly, energetic, sensitive, secretive, short tempered, etc.)
- Special characteristics of life
- Achievements

**GRAMMAR****Modals**

Modals are such auxiliaries that express the mode of action of the main verb. They add more meaning to the sentence.

- Modals are used to express

- |                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| (i) Ability                          | - I can speak French.                            |
| (ii) Duty                            | - You must obey traffic rules.                   |
| (iii) Advice                         | - You should revise the course before the exams. |
| (iv) Permission                      | - You may go now.                                |
| (v) Possibility                      | - It is cloudy. It may rain.                     |
| (vi) Promise                         | - I will definitely visit you next Sunday.       |
| (vii) Request                        | - Could you lend me your pen?                    |
| (viii) Offer                         | - Would you like to have some coffee?            |
| (ix) Threat                          | - He shall be punished for his rudeness.         |
| (x) Moral obligation                 | - You ought to help the needy.                   |
| (xi) Negative or interrogative sense | - How dare you insult me?                        |

**Points to Remember**

1. Modals are never used alone. They are used together with the main verb.
2. They do not change with the change of person or number.
3. They always take the 1st form of verb.
4. They express imaginary actions like ability, power, permission, possibility, advice, duty, etc.

**Present Perfect Continuous Tense**

Present Perfect Continuous Tense indicates that the action that began in the past is still continuing, e.g.

It has been raining since morning.

It is also used to express an action that began in the past and has just been completed but the result of that is still there e.g. I have been working since morning. Thank God it has finished now.

**Past Perfect Continuous Tense**

Past Perfect Continuous Tense is used for an action started in the Past, continued for some time, then was completed in the past e.g.

I had been living in Mumbai for 10 years before coming to Delhi.

How had you been working on that project?

**Points to Remember**

1. We use 'for' to denote period of time e.g. for 3 hours/days/months/years.
2. We use 'since' to denote point of time e.g. since morning/8 a.m./last Monday/2005

**TEST TYPES****1. MCQ /Objective type question (inference)**

Complete the following statement with the best option from the ones given below:

The parrot did not talk because:

- A. he had a problem with his vocal cords
- B. he did not like aunt Ruby
- C. he liked only the boy.
- D. he hated being caged

**2. VSA (inference)**

Why did aunt Ruby stop feeding her pet parrot?

**3. SA (application)**

The author deliberately left the door of parrot's cage open. Do you think he did the right thing? Justify your answer.

**4. LA (extrapolatory)**

What message does the author convey through this story? Do you think a story is always the best way to convey an important message? Why /why not?

