THE LAST STONE MASON

Our traditional arts and crafts which are an important part of our culture and heritage are dying out. Why are these traditional crafts dying out? Maybe it is because the handicrafts trade does not fetch much money. Artisans struggle hard to make both ends meet. They don’t have adequate material to make products. They need markets to sell their products but there isn’t much demand for their products. Young artisans want to earn more money and are in favour of mass production of items than can be produced quickly rather than by hand. This makes them leave their family handicraft industry. Should they do this? Should we let our traditional arts and crafts die out? Can we do anything to stop it? This lesson will make you think about all these questions, about the problems faced by young artisans, and what we need to do to solve these problems.

OBJECTIVES

After completing this lesson you will be able to:

• explain the theme of the story;
• analyse the character of the father in the story;
• explain the importance of co-operation and understanding among the members of a family through effective communication;
• deduce that the urge to learn helps in mastering a skill;
• justify your point of view (agree, disagree);
• enhance your vocabulary;
• identify the different functions of verbs ending with ‘ing’;
• use the present perfect tense;
• use adverbs of manner, and
• write a report.
A sculptor loves to carve beautiful statues. He loves his art and is totally committed to it regardless of the financial difficulties he faces in doing his work.

Let us enter into the small world of an old artist and see what his son has to say to his father.

The young man threw the hammer and the chisel to the ground and cried: “I’m leaving you, father, I’m leaving you and your work. Look what it has brought us”.

He spread out his arms, looked at the small, congested dark room, the slabs of stone and marble stacked up in one corner, the cot covered with heaps of used clothes. The paint of white-washed walls has come off. “Look what it has brought us - nothing, nothing!” the young man repeated in anger. “This kind of work just doesn’t pay.”

The old man stared at his son. His voice, though trembling, had not lost its usual gentleness. “It is not the money alone that matters, son. It is the service, our service to God.”
“Father, times have changed, and so has the stone mason’s work. You cannot live carving sculptures for temples only. Come on, father! You have to mass produce like all the other people in Agra.”

The lines around the old man’s mouth tightened. He said, “No, my son. This is the work I have learnt from my father and he had learnt from his father. We have kept up this tradition for hundreds of years. And I hoped you would continue our work.”

“No, father, there is so much more money in candle stands, paper-weights, ashtrays and plates for tourists”. The young man walked out of the room angrily.

The old man sat before the half finished marble statues of Radha and Krishna.

He dropped his hands into his lap and closed his eyes. He was praying. He did not seem to listen to the hesitant, “goodbye”, the son called out from the door. He sat still.

“Masterjee. Masterjee” Salim, the servant boy entered the workshop. His voice was filled with concern. He held a cup of tea in his hand. The old man lifted his head. He had a pale face and looked old and tired. He said, “Salim, soon I’ll be the last stone mason here, as everyone has gone to Agra. Look, Gopal my son has gone too. Now I’ll have to finish this sculpture all by myself”. The old man looked at the orphaned boy Salim and said, “I have very little strength. I can’t work with the chisel the way I used to. Carving takes too long a time. I have to finish the work and I will.”

The boy offered tea to the man and said, “Please drink this. It will do you good. Yes, I know you will finish this work.”

The old man sighed and picked up the chisel and the hammer. He loved his work and didn’t want to change it for any other work in the world. For days together the man worked continuously without taking any rest. His one desire was to finish the sculpture, which would be his last. He worked till his hands began to tremble and his shoulders started to ache. His arms grew heavy and his eyes grew tired. And then he couldn’t see anymore.

At that moment Salim returned. He saw the old man and asked him to eat some food. The old man whispered, “I am not going to finish it. I will not complete it. If Gopal was here, it would have been different, although he was not a good sculptor. He had difficulty in carving the face and hands properly. There was something missing in his fingers, and that something can’t be taught.”

Salim whispered, “Because it comes from somewhere deep inside you.” “You are right Salim.” And then the old man added, “And if you don’t have it inside you, then you’d better go to Agra and mass produce ashtrays for the tourists.”

The boy asked Masterjee to eat, and after feeling a little better the old man picked up his
The Last Stone Mason

The young man……………….. He sat still.

There are often differences in young people’s ideas and opinions and older people’s ideas. Do these differences cause problems between young and old people, between parents and children? This is a story about a difference of opinion between an old man and his son, and what happens as a result. The old man makes statues. He is a sculptor. He is poor but he loves his work. He believes that making statues of gods and goddesses out of stone is like worshipping God because this is the work God wants him to do. He makes each statue lovingly and patiently. He wants his son to learn the same art and continue the family tradition. But his son thinks that carving statues for temples by hand takes too long and does not help them earn much money. He wants to make things that will be easier and
faster to carve, so that he will be able to make them in large numbers for rich tourists to buy. In this way it will be possible to earn much more money and end their poverty. He says goodbye to his sad father and the family profession, and leaves his home angrily.

LET US DO 13.1

You belong to a family of artisans and some of them have won awards. You are educated and qualified for an office job. Your parents want you to carry forward their traditional craft, but they have given you freedom to take your own decision. What would you do? Explain with reasons in two sentences. You may consider the following:

a. You would give up your traditional craft
b. You would continue with your craft
c. You would accept the other job but at the same time would continue with the traditional craft too.
d. Any other choice

INTEXT QUESTIONS 13.1

A. Based on your understanding of Part I answer the following questions.

1. What was the old man’s profession? What was his attitude to his work?
2. The young man threw his hammer and the chisel to the ground. Why do you think he did so?
3. How did the old man learn carving? What did he expect from his son?
4. Tick, ☑ the suitable option to complete the statement given below.
   The young man decided to leave his father and his work because:
   a. he was not good at carving.
   b. he did not love his father.
   c. he wanted to earn more money.
   d. he wanted to enjoy city life.
5. What was the young man’s opinion about his father’s work? Do you think he was right?
6. What did Gopal suggest to his father? What was his father’s response?

B. Use suitable words / phrases from the box to replace the italicized part of the sentences given below.

| tradition | came off |
| heaps     | stacked up |
1. *Piles* of old and discarded things lay in the courtyard for a number of days after Suman’s house was whitewashed. This marred the beauty of the house.

2. The dowry system in Indian society is a bad *custom*. It must be abolished.

3. When we visited the construction site of our new house we found a lot of bricks *piled up neatly* near the fence.

4. The sales man could not tell us the price of the shirt I liked because its price tag *got removed* when he was arranging the new stock on the shelves.

C. Suppose you are the old stone mason. Your son has left you and the family business and has gone away. Express in 50-60 words what sort of thoughts came to your mind at his behaviour?

**LET US DO 13.2**

Choose one of the following options and complete the statement.

A true artist feels a sense of fulfillment if ______________________

- he gets an award for his work.
- his products are popular in the market.
- he feels he has created a real piece of art.
- he makes a lot of money.

**DO YOU KNOW**

Our government is making every possible effort to promote and encourage artisans to innovate and achieve excellence in their work. The Handicrafts Board and NGOs organise exhibitions, craft bazaars, and handicraft melas in big cities to provide markets for the sale of their products. Given below are some examples of these initiatives:

- Suraj Kund
- Dastkar Nature Bazaar
- Dilli Haat
- Central Cottage Industries Emporium

Natural materials such as coconut shells, paper and fibre are made available to the artisans by these bodies. Prestigious awards such as National Awards are bestowed upon distinguished artisans for their work.
13.2.2 PART 2

Masterjee, Masterjee …………………dropped to the ground and he fainted.

After his son leaves home the old stone mason is sad and upset. Salim, the young boy who works for him finds the old man in a very bad state of health and emotionally stressed after his son leaves home. The old man is tired and weak. He worries about how he will complete the statue without help from his son even though he knows that his son is not a very good sculptor. Salim takes care of the old man and brings him tea and food to give him strength to finish the statue he is carving. The old man works day and night without any rest for several days. Even though he is extremely tired, he continues to work and finally early one morning he faints.

INTEXT QUESTIONS 13.2

I. On the basis of your understanding of Part 2 answer the questions given below:

1. When Salim came to the old man to serve him tea, “his voice was filled with concern.” What do you think Salim was concerned about?

2. Who was Salim? What was his relation with the old man?

3. What was the old man’s worried about?

4. Why did he wish Gopal was with him?

5. Salim said “… it comes from somewhere deep inside you.” Explain the meaning of the phrase in your own words in 2-3 sentences.

II. 1. Which word in para I of Part 2 means the same as ‘worry’?

2. Which word in para 3 of Part 2 means the same as ‘job’?

3. Pick out the word from para 4 of Part 2 which means the opposite of ‘spoke loudly’.

4. Which word in para 6 of Part 2 means the opposite of ‘weakness’?

III. Imagine you are Salim. You served the old man after his son left him. What inspired you to help him? Express yourself in 50-60 words.

LET US DO 13.3

You must have heard about the success stories of people in different fields such as business, academics, research, sports, and so on. Have you ever thought about what has made
them succeed? What lies behind their achievement? Think over it and write at least two things that inspire people to excel in whatever they do.

1. _ _ _ _ _ _ _
2. _ _ _ _ _ _ _

**DO YOU KNOW**

Dastkar Nature Bazaar, which is held every year at Indira Gandhi National Centre for Arts began in Delhi seventeen years ago. Along with environmentalists, ‘Dastkar’ worked on the idea that craftsmen and artisans should go back to nature as a source of inspiration and use natural material and fibres. The eleven day Dastkar Nature Bazaar links nature and craft, tradition and change, age old skills and innovative solutions.

13.2.3 PART 3

*When the old man ………………………….best stone masons India will ever have.*

When the old man opens his eyes he finds himself on his bed. He hears someone working with a hammer and thinks that his son Gopal has come back home. He feels happy. He thinks that with Gopal’s help he will now be able to complete the statue he is carving. But he finds that it is not Gopal but Salim who is working on the statue with the hammer. He is surprised because he has never taught Salim how to carve statues. Salim looks at the old man and explains that he wants to help him. He says that he has been practising carving on his own, and is willing to learn from the old stone mason if he teaches him how to do it, the old man is full of admiration and respect for Salim. The old man recognizes Salim’s talent and will to work hard and excell. He tells Salim that there is nothing he can teach him. He tells Salim that he will be one of the best stone masons in India.

**INTEXT QUESTIONS 13.3**

I. On the basis of your understanding of Part 3 of the story answer the following questions.

1. ‘When the old man opened his eyes he found himself on the cot in his room’. Who do you think put him on the cot?
2. The old man heard the sound of ‘strong blows of hammer on chisel’. What was the first thought that came to his mind?

3. Why did the old man admire Salim?

4. Why did the old man believe that there was nothing that he could teach Salim?

II. Based on your understanding of Part 3, complete the following sentences:

1. The old man was stunned to see Salim working on the statue because ____________________________.

2. Salim was able to help the old man in finishing the sculpture because ____________________________.

III. 1. Pick out the word in para 1 Part 3 which means the same as ‘surprised’.

2. Which word in para 1 Part 3 means the opposite of ‘heavy’?

3. Look at the word ‘admiration’ in para 1 Part 3. Different meanings of this word are given in the box below. Tick the most suitable meaning in the given context.

   praise, appreciation, respect, adore,
   think highly of somebody

IV. If you were in Salim’s place what would you do to improve the relationship between the old stone mason and his son? Express yourself in 50-60 words.

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**LET US LEARN NEW WORDS 13.1**

Read the following sentence:

- The one who carves a statue is a ‘sculptor’
  (the profession or work of a sculptor is to carve statues)

I. Complete the following sentences appropriately.

1. A person who treats patients is a ________.

2. A person who writes poems is a ________.

3. A person who teaches is a ________.

4. A person who works on clay pots is a ________.

5. A person who makes wooden furniture is a ________.

6. A person whose job is to weave cloth or carpets is a ________.
1. Read the following dialogue:

Preeti: Shruti, look at Geeta. She is wearing such an expensive dress.

Shruti: You’re right, Preeti. Her dress seems to be very costly. She always buys expensive clothes because her parents are very rich.

Preeti: That’s alright. But I don’t think that she should go for expensive things just because she’s got a lot of money.

Shruti: I think there is no harm in spending money if you can afford it.

Preeti: No, Shruti, I beg to differ. One should not develop expensive habits. Sometimes when you cannot afford expensive things you tend to do dishonest things to buy these things.

Shruti: In that way you’re right. I agree with you Preeti.

While speaking we tend to use contracted forms such as ‘don’t’ instead of ‘do not’, ‘can’t’ instead of ‘cannot’. To show that we agree we use expressions such as ‘I agree’, ‘I think you’re right’, ‘I think so’, ‘she’s right’. For disagreeing we use ‘I don’t agree’, ‘I don’t think so’, ‘I beg to differ’, ‘on the contrary’.

2. SPEAKING TASK

You are Hamid Khan, the winner of a National Award. You have to address a group of young craftsmen, to motivate them to carry forward their traditional crafts, to be innovative and creative, and to achieve excellence in their work. You know about their problems and their doubts.

Write down in about 100 words what you will say to them in the form and style of a speech. You may use the contractions as given in the box above in your speech and practise the speech in the company of your friends, members of family or even in front of a mirror. Using expressions, gestures, body language changing the modulation of your voice to make your speech effective and inspiring.

Some ideas and information for your speech are provided in the following box:

- Handicrafts trade is less lucrative; but for an artist his work is worship for him. He works for the sake of art.
- Exhibitions, handicrafts melas, bazaars at places like Suraj Kund and Dilli Haat provide markets for the sale of their craft products.
- Good and skilful artists are given national awards, certificates.
- Seminars and workshops may be used for discussions about their problems and for finding solutions.
- Advise artisans to use natural materials to make low cost and eco-friendly products.
13.3 LET US LEARN GRAMMAR

Present Perfect Tense

Read the following sentences from the lesson and study the underlined verb patterns.

• Look what it has brought us!
• We have kept up the tradition.
• I have learnt this from my father.

In the above sentences the verb pattern is the Present Perfect tense. It is constructed by using has/have + the past participle of the verb.

The Present Perfect tense denotes that an action has been completed very recently.

Example: India has won the cricket match against Sri Lanka.

To make a negative sentence in the Present Perfect tense we use not/never between has/have and the past participle.

Example: He has travelled all over India but he has never gone abroad.

Exercise 1

1. Fill in the blanks in the following sentences with the present perfect form of the verbs given in brackets.
   a. Meena _______(purchase) from Dastkar Bazaar a beautiful lamp shade to gift to her friend.
   b. I cannot accompany you because I ______ not______ (finish) my home work yet.
   c. He ______ (give) me a beautiful pen.
   d. Saina Nehwal __________ (bring) glory to India by her thrilling victory in the commonwealth games 2010.
   e. The Prime Minister_______ (announce) that the victims of the recent floods shall be given all the necessary help for their rehabilitation.

Now look at the following sentences and study the verb pattern.

• Have you seen my purse? It is blue in colour.
• How much time have you spent in making his sweater?
• What have you brought from the market?
The above sentences are in question form. They begin with ‘has’/’have’ and interrogative words ‘how’/’how’ much. The verb form is the present perfect. The structure has changed from a statement to a question.

**Exercise 2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>what, which, how much, where, who, why, when, how many</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

1. Write a question against each sentence keeping in mind the underlined words. Choose the appropriate interrogative words from the above box.

   The first sentence is done as an example for you.

   **Statement:** I have bought a new cane chair in the in Defence Colony.

   **Question:** Where have you bought this cane chair from?

   a. **Statement:** Seema has brought a pair of jeans for you from Mumbai.

   **Question:** ____________________________________________

   b. **Statement:** They have visited the Golden Temple in Amritsar four times.

   **Question:** ______________________________________________

   c. **Statement:** He has gone to Mumbai to study engineering.

   **Question:** _______________________________________________

   d. **Statement:** Ramesh has given you a shirt for your birthday.

   **Question:** ________________________________________________

   e. **Statement:** My father has spent three hours in writing the story.

   **Question:** _______________________________________________

**Non-finites**

Read the following sentences and study the function of the word ‘swimming’.

- The children are swimming in the swimming pool in their school.

   You must have noticed that the first use of ‘swimming’ in the above sentence is as a verb of the progressive tense. It denotes an action in continuation. It is the main verb. The second use of ‘swimming’ in the sentence describes the purpose of the pool. It acts as a describing word.

- Swimming is a very good exercise for health.
Swimming’ in the above sentence denotes an activity in itself. In this sentence ‘Swimming’ functions as the subject to the verb.

He enjoys swimming during the summer.

In the above sentence ‘swimming’ functions as an object.

**Note:** ‘Swimming’ as a verb in the first sentence is an example of a ‘finite’ verb. The other uses of ‘swimming’ in the above sentences are examples of ‘non-finites’.

**Exercise 3**

1. Read the following sentences and circle the ‘-ing’ words which are not main verbs.
   a. When I went to see him he was reading the ‘Bhagvad Gita’.
   b. He likes reading detective stories.
   c. Reading is a very good hobby.
   d. He starts meditating when he is under stress.
   e. We relaxed in the waiting room at the railway station when the train was late.

2. Add ‘ing’ to the words given in the box and use them in the sentences given below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>travel</th>
<th>cross</th>
<th>work</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>prepare</td>
<td>read</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>play</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

   a. They are ____________ seriously for their Board exams.
   b. I like __________ by train.
   c. He spends two hours ________ reading books.
   d. We should always look at left right and left ________ the road
   e. The manager was not happy about the ________ conditions in his office.
   f. He is good at ________cricket.

Look at the following sentences which you have read in Unit III of your text.

He heard correctly. (para 1 Unit III)

Weakly he walked to the door. (para 1 Unit III)

I have been practising secretly. (para II Unit III)

Notice the underlined words in the above sentences. They all show how something happened or how an action is performed.
These words are ‘adverbs of manner’.

Some words which show how an action is or was performed are angrily, suddenly, seriously, and so on.

**Exercise 4**

I. Some adverbs of manner are given in the box below. Select suitable adverbs from the box and complete the given sentences.

- quickly, quietly, fast, angrily, easily, loudly, patiently, beautifully

1. I ran ________ to catch the bus.
2. We could cross the road ________ as there was no traffic congestion at that time.
3. The thief entered the bedroom ________ and stole the keys from under the pillow.
4. Mother asked Raju to finish his homework ________ if he wanted to go out to play.
5. The teacher said to Satish, “Speak______ so that all of us can hear you.”
6. The doctor listened to me ________ and said, “There is nothing seriously wrong, you’ll be alright if you take your medicine regularly.”
7. Geeta has decorated her children’s room very_______.
8. He was frightened when his father spoke to him ________.

**13.4 LET US WRITE**

**Report Writing**

You are Munish, a resident of Krishna Enclave, Rohtak Road. You visited the Crafts Bazaar at Dilli Haat. Various crafts were displayed and the artisans were at work on their product. You talked with some of these artisans about their life, their attitude towards their craft, their commitment and dedication, their problems, their expectations from the government in order to carry forward their traditional work.

You made the following notes while you were speaking to the artisans:

- Craft Bazaar is a place for talented craftsmen from different parts of the country meet.
- they have to struggle hard to make both ends meet but they love their craft
- use of natural materials such as coconut shells, coconut wood, paper, clay, ceramics to make products
The Last Stone Mason

Notes

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- their products are eco-friendly
- workshops for children is an important activity
- artisans want their own children to carry forward their crafts
- they want help from the government and the Handicrafts Board and other NGOs in the form of opportunities to visit other states, markets to sell their products, financial help, supply of natural materials
- only National Awards for their work cannot make their life better.

Exercise

Based on the above notes write a report in about 100 words for the monthly time magazine

WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNT

Our traditional arts and crafts are slowly disappearing, and will eventually die out if we don’t take some steps. Young people do not want to carry on their family’s traditional handicraft business because it does not help them earn much money due to slow speed of production and the less demand for handicrafts. The younger artisans want to make large quantities of products for tourists because this will help them earn more money. This is possible only if the crafts are machine made. However machine made products lack the uniqueness of handmade crafts; they all look the same. Older artisans are unable to convince their children that they should continue to practise the family art with commitment because it is a service to society. As family relationships become weak, and as the young people leave their family handicrafts businesses. We all need to think about the problems of our artisans. We need to help them by formal training buying their products and spreading awareness of their problems. We also need to know that the value and beauty of a handmade item lies in its uniqueness and we should be willing to pay a higher price for it.

TERMINAL QUESTIONS

I. Read the following statement and write ‘true’, ‘false’ or ‘not sure’ against each one.

1. The old man was committed to his work.
2. Salim was an orphaned boy.
3. Salim lived with the old man in his room.
4. Gopal was an ambitious boy and wanted to earn more.
5. The old man fainted because of Gopal’s behaviour not only physical exhaustion.
6. Gopal had requested Salim to look after his father during his absence.

7. The old man trained Salim in the art of carving.

II. Write your impression of the old stone mason as an artist in about 100 words.

III. Imagine you are the old stone mason. You are stunned to see Salim working on the statue. The sight makes you compare Salim with your son Gopal. Express your thoughts on how Salim is different from Gopal. Write your answer in 100 words.

ANSWERS

13.2.1 PART 1

INTEXT QUESTIONS 13.1

I. 1. carving stone and making statues,

   He was dedicated to his work. For him work is worship.

   2. He was angry/dissatisfied with his work and his life, as it didn’t pay enough.

   3. He learnt carving from his father.

   He expected his son to carry forward his traditional craft.

   4. c. He wanted to earn more money.

   5. He thought his father’s work didn’t fetch money. Individual responses with reasons.

   6. He suggested that his father should shift to Agra and change his profession. The old man’s response was that it was service to God and that he wanted to keep the 100 year old tradition and continue to do his work.

II. 1. heaps

   2. tradition

   3. stacked up

   4. came off

III. Individual responses

13.2.2 PART 2

INTEXT QUESTIONS 13.2

I. 1. His concern was about the old man’s physical condition.

   2. Salim was a boy who worked in the stone mason’s house, served him tea and took care of him. He was a servant boy and the old man was his master.
3. He was worried about how he would finish the statue all by himself.

4. He was not good at carving the face and hands of statues. He wished Gopal was with him to help him to finish the statue, because he himself was too weak to use the hammer vigorously.

5. “It” refers to the ability to master the skill

II. 1. concern
2. work
3. whispered
4. strength

III. Individual responses

13.2.3 PART 3

INTEXT QUESTIONS 13.3

I. 1. Salim
2. He thought his son Gopal had come back.
3. Salim’s concern for the old stone mason, his timely help in carving the statue, and his skill in carving made the old man admire Salim.
4. Salim was carving the face of the statue like an expert craftsman.

II. 1. …because he had expected to see Gopal, and because Salim was working on the face of the statue like a perfect sculptor, because he had not expected that Salim could carve stone.
2. …because he had been practising carving secretly at the quarry.

III. 1. stunned
2. light
3. think highly of somebody

IV. Individual responses

LET US LEARN NEW WORDS 13.1

I. 1. doctor
2. poet
3. teacher
4. potter
5. carpenter
6. weaver

13.3 LET US LEARN GRAMMAR

Exercise 1
1. has purchased
2. have (not) finished.
3. has given
4. has brought
5. has announced

Exercise 2
1. a. What has Seema brought for you from Mumbai?
   b. How many times have they visited the Golden Temple in Amritsar?
   c. Where has he gone to study engineering?
   d. Who has given you a shirt for your birthday?
   e. How much money has your father given you for Diwali?

Exercise 3
1 b. He likes reading detective stories. (object)
   c. Reading is an ideal hobby. (subject)
   d. He starts smoking when he is under stress. (object)
   e. We relaxed in the waiting room at the railway station when the train was late. (describing word)

Exercise 4
1 1. fast 2. easily 3. quietly
   4. quickly 5. loudly 6. patiently
   7. beautifully 8. angrily
13.4 LET US WRITE
Writing Task
Individual responses

TERMINAL QUESTIONS

I. 1. True 2. True 3. False
    4. True 5. False 6. False
    7. False

II. Individual responses

  Suggested response:

  Focus on love for his work, commitment, dedication, work is worship,
  money is not important for an artist.

III. Gopal Salim

  lacks spirit of an artist  orphaned boy but more human and helpful
  ambitious to earn money  feels concern for old man’s health.
  inconsiderate to parents  urge for learning
  no a good sculpture  practises carving secretly
  no dedication and commitment  no formal training in skills
  towards his traditional work  humble and considerate, sense of responsibility