

# Unit 4

Reading A : The Fun They Had

Reading B : Preteen Pretext (Poem)

Reading C : The Computer Game



# Science and Technology

Look at the pictures and answer the questions that follow.



1. What do you see in these pictures?
2. What do they tell us?

## A Reading

# The Fun They Had

MARGIE even wrote about it that night in her diary. On the page headed 17 May 2157, she wrote, “Today Tommy found a real book!”

It was a very old book. Margie’s grandfather once said that when he was a little boy his grandfather told him that there was a time when all stories were printed on paper.

They turned the pages, which were yellow and crinkly, and it was awfully funny to read words that stood still instead of moving the way they were supposed to – on a screen, you know. And then when they turned back to the page before, it had the same words on it that it had had when they read it the first time.

“Gee,” said Tommy, “What a waste!” When you’re through with the book, you just throw it away. I guess. Our television screen must have had a million books on it and it’s good for plenty more. I wouldn’t throw it away.”

“Same with mine,” said Margie. She was eleven and hadn’t seen as many telebooks as Tommy had. He was thirteen.

She said, “Where did you find it?”

“In my house.” He pointed without looking, because he was busy reading.

“In the attic.”

“What’s it about?”

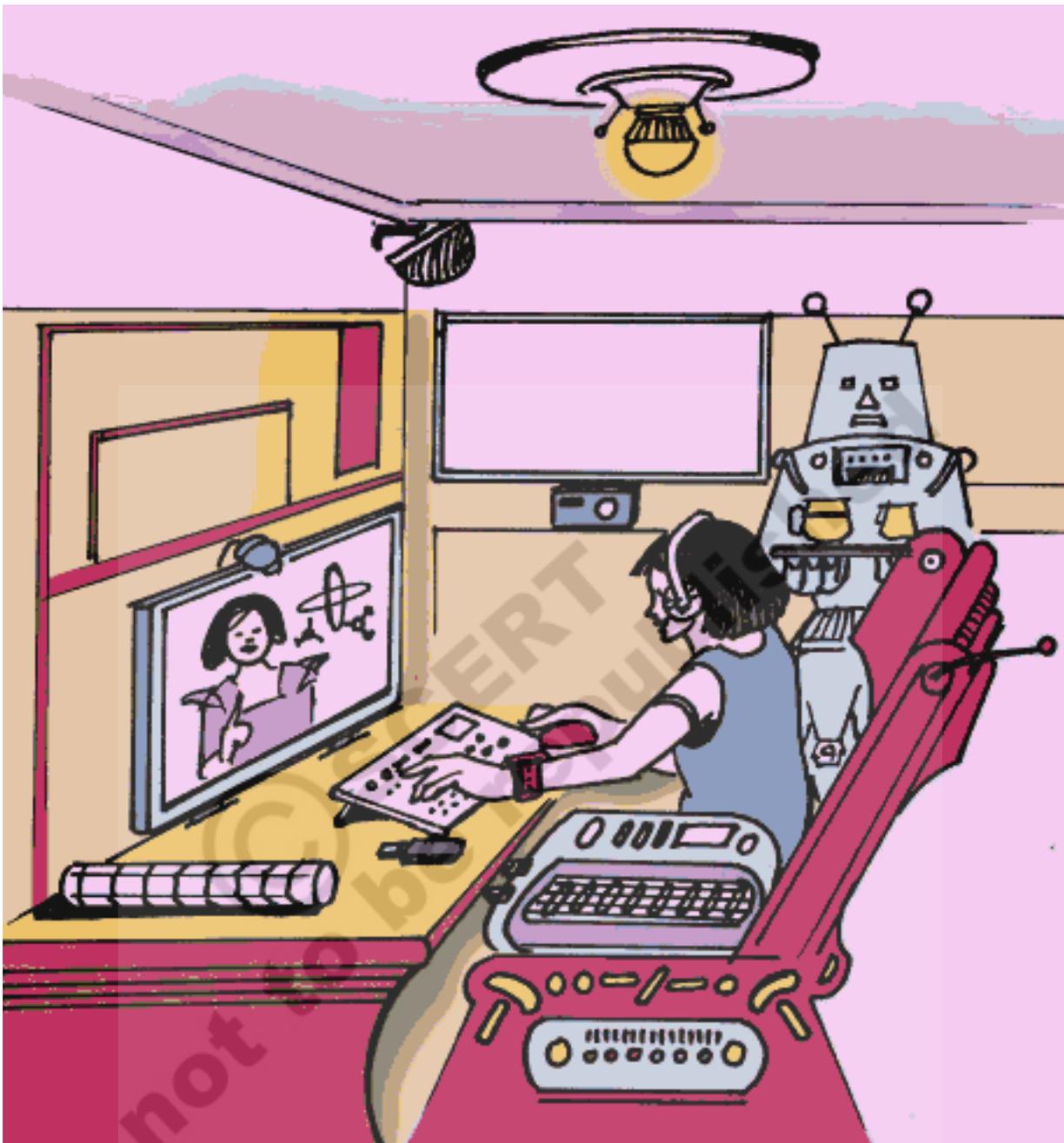
“School.”

Margie was scornful.

“School? What’s there to write about school? I hate school.”

Margie always hated school, but now she hated it more than ever. The mechanical teacher had been giving her test after test in





geography and she had been doing worse and worse until her mother had shaken her head sorrowfully and sent for the County Inspector.

He was a round little man with a red face and a whole box of tools with dials and wires. He smiled at Margie and gave her an apple, then took the teacher apart. Margie had hoped he wouldn't know how to put it together again, but he knew how all right, and, after an hour or so, there it was again, large and black and ugly, with a big screen on which all the lessons were shown and the questions were asked. That wasn't so bad. The part Margie hated most

was the slot where she had to put homework and test papers. She always had to write them out in a punch code they made her learn when she was six years old, and the mechanical teacher calculated the marks in no time.

The Inspector had smiled after he was finished and patted Margie's head. He said to her mother, "It's not the little girl's fault. Mrs. Jones, I think the geography sector was geared a little too quickly. Those things happen sometimes. I've slowed it up to an average ten – year level. Actually, the overall pattern of her progress is quite satisfactory." And he patted Margie's head again.

Margie was disappointed. She had been hoping they would take the teacher away altogether. They had once taken Tommy's teacher away for nearly a month because the history sector had blanked out completely.

So she said to Tommy, "Why would anyone write about school?"

Tommy looked at her with very superior eyes. "Because it's not our kind of school, stupid. This is the old kind of school that they had hundreds and hundreds of years ago." He added loftily, pronouncing the word carefully. "Centuries ago."

Margie was hurt. "Well, I don't know what kind of school they had all that time ago," She read the book over his shoulder for a while, then said, "Anyway, they had a teacher."

"Sure they had a teacher, but it wasn't a regular teacher. It was a man."

"A man? How could a man be a teacher?"

"Well, he just told the boys and girls things and gave them homework and asked them questions."

"A man isn't smart enough."

"Sure he is. My father knows as much as my teacher."

"He knows almost as much. I betcha."

Margie wasn't prepared to dispute that. She said, "I wouldn't want a strange man in my house to teach me."

"Tommy screamed with laughter. "You don't know much, Margie. The teachers didn't live in the house. They had a special building and all the kids went there."

"And all the kids learned the same thing?"

"Sure, if they were the same age."

“But my mother says a teacher has to be adjusted to fit the mind of each boy and girl it teaches and that each kid has to be taught differently.”

“Just the same they didn’t do it that way then. If you don’t like it, you don’t have to read the book.”

“I didn’t say I didn’t like it,” Margie said quickly. She wanted to read about those funny schools.

They weren’t even half finished when Margie’s mother called, “Margie! School!”

Margie looked up. “Not yet, Mamma.”

“Now!” said Mrs Jones. “And it’s probably time for Tommy, too.”

Margie said to Tommy. “Can I read the book some more with you after school?”

“Maybe,” he said nonchalantly. He walked away whistling, the dusty old book tucked beneath his arm.

Margie went into the schoolroom. It was right next to her bedroom, and the mechanical teacher was on and waiting for her. It was always on at the same time every day except Saturday and Sunday, because her mother said little girls learned better if they learned at regular hours.

The screen was lit up, and it said: “Today’s arithmetic lesson is on the addition of proper fractions. Please insert yesterday’s homework in the proper slot.”

Margie did so with a sigh. She was thinking about the old schools they had when her grandfather’s grandfather was a little boy. All the kids from the whole neighbourhood came, laughing and shouting in the schoolyard, sitting together in the schoolroom, going home together at the end of the day. They learned the same things, so they could help one another with the homework and talk about it.

And the teachers were people...

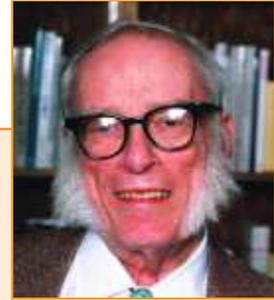
The mechanical teacher was flashing on the screen. “When we add fractions  $\frac{1}{2}$  and  $\frac{1}{4}$ ...”

Margie was thinking about how the kids must have loved it in the old days. She was thinking about the fun they had.

*- by Isaac Asimov*

## About the author

**Isaac Asimov** (1920 - 1992) was an American author best known for his science fiction. He was the professor of biochemistry at Boston University. He is considered the master of science fiction. Most of his works explain scientific concepts in a historical way. He worked as the president of AHA (American Humanist Association). He earned a credit on 'Star Trek', a movie on science fiction. His famous works are 'the Foundation Series', 'The Robot Series' and 'the Galactic Empire Series'.



## Glossary

crinkly ( <i>adj</i> )	:	with many folds or lines
awful ( <i>adj, adv</i> )	:	very bad, unpleasant
million ( <i>n</i> )	:	ten lakhs
telebooks ( <i>n</i> )	:	books seen or read on a television or computer screen
attic ( <i>n</i> )	:	a space just below the roof, used as a storeroom
scornful ( <i>adj</i> )	:	contemptuous; think something is worthless
slot ( <i>n</i> )	:	a given space, time or position
geared ( <i>v</i> )	:	adjusted to a particular standard or level
loftily ( <i>adv</i> )	:	in a superior way
regular teacher ( <i>n.phr</i> ):	:	a mechanical teacher (here)
betcha ( <i>exp</i> )	:	(bet you) I'm sure
dispute ( <i>v</i> )	:	disagree with
screamed ( <i>v</i> )	:	give a loud cry
nonchalantly ( <i>adv</i> )	:	not showing much interest
beneath ( <i>prep.</i> )	:	below
mechanical ( <i>adj</i> )	:	connected with machines operated by power
patted ( <i>v</i> )	:	repeated hitting
disappointed ( <i>adj</i> )	:	upset
probably ( <i>adv</i> )	:	is likely to happen



## Comprehension

Answer the following questions.

1. What did Margie write in her diary?
2. What things about the book did Margie find strange?
3. Why do you think Margie was disappointed?
4. Why did she think the old kind of school must have been fun?
- \*5. Margie says old school was better than the future school! .... Do you agree with this statement? Give reasons.
- \*6. What kind of school do you wish to have after 30 years?
- \*7. 'And the teachers were people.' What do you understand by this expression?



## Vocabulary

I. Fill in the blanks with the words from the box.

slots, loftily, dispute, screamed, scornful
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1. We look \_\_\_\_\_ when we show something useless.
2. Your workbook does not have \_\_\_\_\_ for writing.
3. Why do you always \_\_\_\_\_ your younger brother's statements?
4. The commander ordered \_\_\_\_\_ to the soldiers, "Open fire".
5. All the boys \_\_\_\_\_ when they saw a snake in their class room.

II. Pick out the opposites for the following words from the story and use them in your own sentences.

1. serious : \_\_\_\_\_
2. scarce : \_\_\_\_\_
3. idle : \_\_\_\_\_
4. agree : \_\_\_\_\_
5. create : \_\_\_\_\_
6. knowingly : \_\_\_\_\_

### III. Look at the underlined words in the following sentence taken from the text.

He was a round little man with a red face.

As you can see, there are two adjectives that precede the noun 'man'. The adjective 'round' and 'little' appear in a certain order. The adjective 'little' refers to the 'size' and 'round' indicates the 'shape'.

Think of two adjectives of size and shape for the following objects and put them before the nouns.

- |    |       |       |          |
|----|-------|-------|----------|
| 1. | _____ | _____ | table    |
| 2. | _____ | _____ | pencil   |
| 3. | _____ | _____ | room     |
| 4. | _____ | _____ | chapathi |
| 5. | _____ | _____ | cat      |



## Grammar

### I. Read the sentence taken from the text.

He added loftily, pronouncing the word carefully, "Centuries ago".

In this sentence the words 'carefully' and 'loftily' are adverbs of manner, because they tell us about how the action is done.

### 1. Pick out some more verbs and the adverbs that go with them from the story or elsewhere use them in your own sentences.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

### 2. Now look at the adverbs given in the box and fill in the blanks.

nonchalantly, quickly, completely, sorrowfully, awfully, carefully, differently

1. We all behave \_\_\_\_\_ when we don't have any anxiety.
2. I \_\_\_\_\_ forgot about it.

3. The report must be read \_\_\_\_\_ then the action will be taken.
4. The teacher shook her head \_\_\_\_\_ when her student lied to her.
5. The two teams played \_\_\_\_\_.

**II. Read the following sentences and notice the underlined part in each sentence.**

1. They turned the pages, which were yellow and crinkly.
2. It was awfully funny to read words that stood still instead of moving the way they were supposed to – on a screen.

What, according to you, is the function of the underlined clause? Which part in the sentence does it modify? The underlined parts in these sentences are Relative Clauses.

A Relative Clause gives extra informaton about or identifies a person, place, time or thing. It normally begins with a relative pronoun such as who, where, when, what or that. It functions like an adjective. They are known as adjective clauses.

Now, read the following sentences and underline the relative clauses.

- a) The part Margie hated most was the slot where she had to put homework and test papers.
- b) This is the old kind of school that they had hundreds and hundreds of years ago.
- c) My mother says a teacher has to be adjusted to fit the mind of each boy and girl it teaches and that each kid has to be taught differently.

**III. Combine the sentences using where, who, which and that.**

1. Mahi always tells funny stories. We all like them.  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Dolly ate all the biscuits. I bought them for Chandu.  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. An old man visited us last night. He was my grandfather.  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. We should remember the place. We used to meet often.  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. Divija gave me a camera. It was not working.  
The \_\_\_\_\_

**IV. Complete the following sentences using with suitable relative clauses.**

1. I know the boy \_\_\_\_\_.
2. I visited the place \_\_\_\_\_.
3. He told me the time \_\_\_\_\_.
4. This is the book \_\_\_\_\_.



**Writing**

**I. Margie is a girl studying in class eight. Read the following letter that she wrote to her friend Candy.**

Wonderland,  
Computer Town.  
20th Sept 2012.

Dear Candy,

I am very glad to say that I have established a computer teaching lab, which gives me full information with the help of a mechanical teacher. It's an up to date lab. Technology is growing fast, isn't it? Imagine our classroom in 30 years. Reply soon.

With warm regards,

Your loving friend,  
Margie.

To  
Candy,  
Winterland,  
Technical Country.

**Write a reply imagining how our future classrooms will be in the next 30 years' You may use the following hints while writing.**

e-library    robot teacher    online evaluation    e-screen    e-mail



## Listening

Listen to a message from space by Sunitha Williams and answer the following questions.

1. What is the text about?
2. Where was Sunitha Williams when she sent the message?
3. On which occasion did she send the message?
4. What are the two things Sunitha received from her father?
5. In what way did the *Upanishads* help Sunitha?



## Study Skills

Here are posters about two schools. Read them carefully.

**GOVT. MODEL SCHOOL**  
Road No. 10, Jubilee Hills, Hyderabad.

For those who want to stand at the right place in the competitive world, here is an excellent opportunity.

- Stress free education
- Individualized learning
  - Digital class room
  - Special class for IIT and AIEEE
  - Experienced faculty
  - Experiments and projects
  - Located in the heart of the city

For details contact

The Principal, Govt Model School,  
Road No. 10, Jubilee Hills, Hyderabad.

# Z.P.HIGH SCHOOL

Street No. 8, Vanasthalipuram, Hyderabad.

The only school that enhances all-round development of the children.

## Salient Features:

- Located in the midst of nature
- Focus on all-round development of your child
- Individual attention
- Focus on social values
- Yoga and meditation
- Games and sports
- Dance and music
- Digital classrooms
- Moral education
- Indian heritage

For details contact

The headmaster, Z.P.High School, Street No. 8, Vanasthalipuram, Hyderabad.

**Every one of you have an aspiration. Some one wants to become a sportsperson, a software engineer etc., As a student in which school do you want to join? Why? Write your opinion here.**

## B Reading

# Preteen Pretext

My teenybopper has a phone;  
She really never is alone.  
It beeps and jitters day and night,  
Emitting tiny bluish light.

Her ring tone is the latest rage,  
As other preteens text and page.  
One- liner messages appear  
That make her grin from ear to ear.

The latest crisis, who likes whom,  
The rock star with the best perfume;  
Such weight matters cause her thrill  
And elevate our monthly bill.

And yet, the silver lining glows,  
For we have never come to blows.  
I never have to raise my voice,  
Because I have a high-tech choice.

If school assignments pile sky-high,  
I exhale with a weighty sigh.  
Like every modern mom who cares,  
I simply telephone upstairs.





When chores demand her energies,  
I simply text her, asking “Please!”  
No alibis or missing word,  
Because it’s clear that she has heard.

And if my daughter goes outside  
To visit friends, both far and wide,  
Her curfew’s easy to enforce  
With her new cellular resource.

This beeping tether holds her close,  
While helping her feel grandiose.  
If separation e'er occurs,  
My speed-dial links my heart to hers.

Our handy cell phones help us out,  
Convenient, easy, with no doubt.  
Yes, certainly, they have their place.  
But can't we talk once, face to face?

- *Linda Ann Nickerson*



## Glossary

jitters ( <i>v</i> )	:	makes nervous
emitting ( <i>v</i> )	:	sending out light
bluish ( <i>adj</i> )	:	bright
grin ( <i>v</i> )	:	smile broadly
elevate ( <i>v</i> )	:	raise to a higher level
pile ( <i>n</i> )	:	things lying one on top of another
exhale ( <i>v</i> )	:	breathe out
chores ( <i>n</i> )	:	routine tasks
alibis ( <i>n</i> )	:	excuses
tether ( <i>n</i> )	:	a rope for tying an animal
grandiose ( <i>adj</i> )	:	planned on a large scale



## Comprehension

**Answer the following questions.**

1. Who do you think is the speaker of the lines?
2. What attitude of the speaker is conveyed through the last two lines of the first stanza?
- \*3. In what ways are the cell phones useful for us according to the poem?
4. What does the last line of the poem convey to us?

# The Computer Game

## CHARACTERS

Gary Lopez  
(Television game host)

Joan Robinson

MT2, a computer

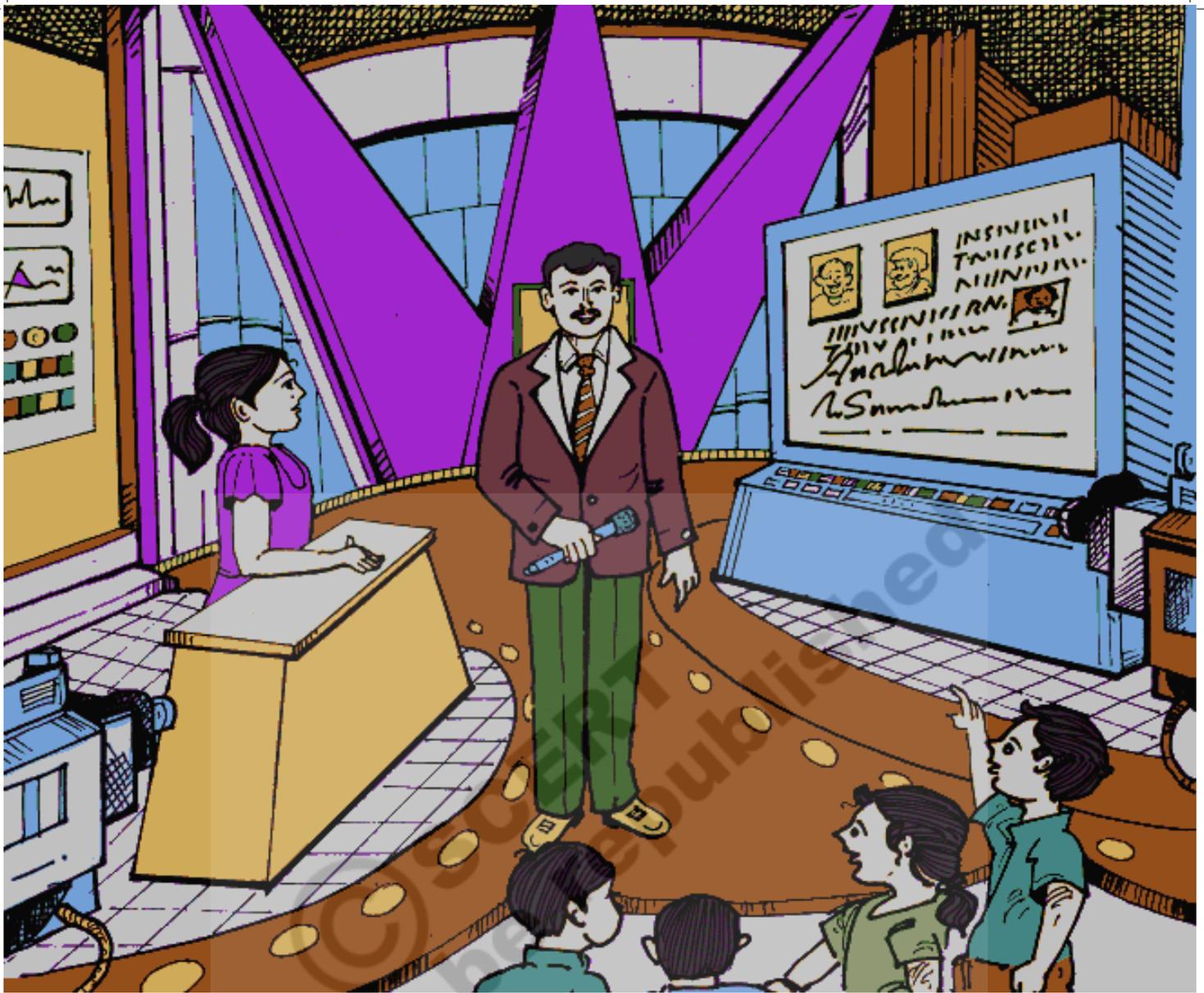
First Noisemaker

Second Noisemaker

A boy and a girl from the audience

(Scene: A television studio)

- Gary Lopez** : Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. Welcome to The Computer Game. Today another human player gets a chance to match wits with our very own computer – MT2!  
(MT2 blinks its lights and the studio audience claps loudly.)
- Gary Lopez** : Today’s player is Joan Robinson for the Oak Street School. Feeling smart, Joan?
- Joan** : Ready!
- Gary Lopez** : I hope so! may I remind you no one has beat MT2 yet. Now, here’s how we play the game. I’ll ask a question. The first player to sound a noise maker and give the correct answer scores one point. The first player to earn three points wins the game. Ready, players?
- Joan** : Ready!
- MT2 (in flat voice)** : I am prepared to play.
- Gary Lopez** : First question. How much is 62,415 times 78,921?
- First Noisemaker** : BLEEP!
- MT2** : The correct answer is 4,925,854,215.
- Gary Lopez** : Right! One point for the computer!  
(The audience claps politely.) Next question. Listen carefully. What date in history did the pilgrims land at Plymouth Rock?
- Second Noisemaker** : BUZZ!
- Joan** : 1620!
- Gary Lopez** : I’m sorry. That’s not an exact enough answer.
- First Noisemaker** : BLEEP!
- MT2** : The pilgrims landed at Plymouth Rock on December 21 of the year 1620.



- Gary Lopez** : Right! Two points for the computer! If MT2 answers the next question correctly, it's all over, Joan!
- Boy in audience** : Come on, Joan!
- Girl in audience** : You can beat that talking tin can!
- Gary Lopez** : Quiet, please. And here's the next question –
- Joan** : Wait!
- Gary Lopez** : What's the matter?
- Joan** : Could someone else ask the question, please?
- Gary Lopez** : What for?
- Joan** : Maybe I'll have better luck with someone else.
- Girl** : (coming up on stage): I'll ask it, Joan!
- Joan** : (whispering to her): Put it in the form of a command. I think the computer's only programmed for questions.

- Girl** : (looking at question): Spell the word “chrysanthemum.”
- First Noisemaker** : BLEEP!
- MT2** : Chrysanthemum is spelled ... is spelled ...
- Girl** : Yes?
- MT2** : I do not follow the question. Please repeat in the programmed form.
- Second Noisemaker** : BUZZ!
- Joan** : Chrysanthemum. C-H-R-Y-S-A-N-T-H-E-M-U-M.
- Girl** : Right! One point for Joan!
- Boy** : Hurrah!
- MT2** : (slowing down): I am MT2, Computer ... I am MT2...  
I am MT... MT.... M.....T....
- Gary Lopez** : The computer’s breaking down!
- Boy** : Then Joan’s the winner!  
(Suddenly MT2’s lights begin flashing wildly. Smoke pours out of its top.)
- Gary Lopez** : Look what you’ve done. It’s blown a fuse!
- Joan** : Now that’s what I call a poor loser!

- *Steven Otfinoski*



### Answer the questions.

1. Who was the quiz master?
2. What will the winner get?
3. Who won the game at the end?
4. How did the boy counter the computer?
5. Why do you think the computer failed to answer the girl’s question?
- \*6. If you were to ask a question, what question would you ask?



Imagine you owned a robot that could do anything you wanted. But suddenly there was a problem in it and it started doing something different from what you said. Create a funny situation and write the dialogue between you and the robot, and present it before the class.



## Oral Activity

Discuss in groups and write a script for a funny situation between you and robot and role play it based on those actions and dialogues.



## Project Work

Here are four different mobiles and their features. If you want to buy a mobile, which one would you like to buy? Why? Write a paragraph and present it in the class.

Sokia	Strawberry	Sungung	MinimaxX
Large screen (7.1 inches)	Wi-Fi	High Speed Internet	Free Travel bag
Long lasting battery	Blue tooth	Full touch screen	Rocking sound
Blue tooth	Qwerty key pad	Blue tooth	Low price
Music player	MP3 Player	MP3	5 Mega Pixel Camera
VGA Camera	5.0 MP Camera	3.2 MP Camera	

## Self Assessment

How well have I understood this unit?

Read and tick (✓) in the appropriate box.

Indicators	Yes	Somewhat	No
I read and understood the text:			
A. The Fun They Had			
B. Preteen Pretext			
C. The Computer Game			
I was able to use the words in my own sentences, given under 'Vocabulary'.			
I was able to identify and use relative pronouns and relative clauses given under 'Grammar'.			
I was able to write a reply letter given under 'Writing'.			
I was able to read, understand and compare the pamphlets given under 'Study Skills'.			
I listened to and understood 'Message from Space' and answered the questions given under 'Listening'.			
I was able to analyze the information about different features in mobiles and choose the best one given under 'Project Work'.			