

# Unit 2

**Reading A** : Oliver Asks for More

**Reading B** : The Cry of Children (Poem)

**Reading C** : Reaching the Unreached

## Social Issues



## Social Issues

Read the saying given below.

Home is the happiest place  
in the world.

Answer the following questions.

1. What does the sentence mean ?
2. Do you agree / disagree with the view expressed in it? Why?

## Oliver Asks for More

(This is an extract from the novel ‘OLIVER TWIST’ written by the British novelist Charles Dickens (1812- 70). It is the story of an orphan boy named Oliver, who is brought to a children’s home.)

Mr. Bumble walked on with long strides. Little Oliver, firmly grasping his gold – laced cuff, trotted beside him.

Oliver had not been within the walls of the workhouse a quarter of an hour, when Mr. Bumble informed him that the board had said he was to appear before it forthwith.

Not having a very clearly defined notion of what a live board was, Oliver was rather astonished by this information, and was not quite certain whether he ought to laugh or cry. He had no time to think about the matter. Mr. Bumble asked Oliver to follow him into a large white – washed room where eight or ten fat gentlemen were sitting round a table.

At the top of the table, seated in an armchair rather higher than the rest, was a particularly fat gentleman with a very round, red face.

‘Bow to the board,’ said Bumble. Oliver brushed away two or three tears that were lingering in his eyes; and seeing no board but the table, bowed to that.

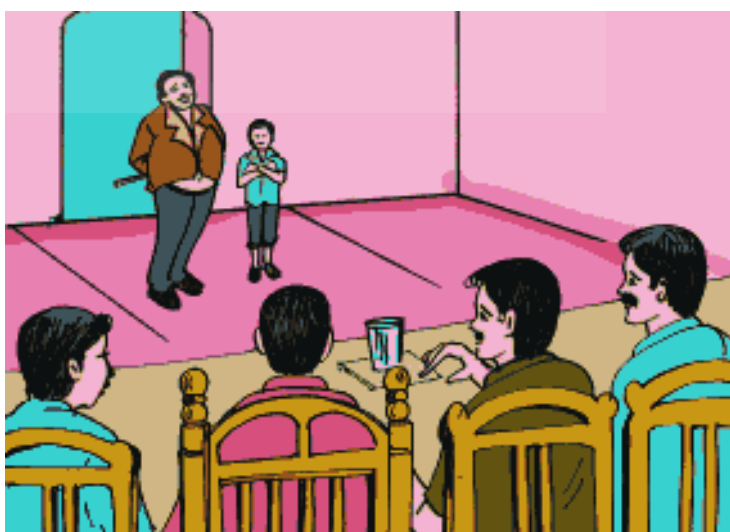
‘What’s your name, boy?’ said the gentleman in the high chair.

Oliver was frightened at the sight of so many gentlemen, which made him tremble. The beadle gave him a tap on his back with his cane, which made him cry.

‘Boy,’ said the gentleman in the high chair, ‘listen to me. You know you’re an orphan, I suppose?’

‘What’s that, sir?’ inquired poor Oliver.

‘The boy is a fool - I thought he was,’ said the gentleman in the white waistcoat.



‘Hush!’ said the gentleman who had spoken first. ‘You know you’ve got no father or mother, and that you were brought up by the parish, weren’t you?’

‘Yes, sir,’ replied Oliver, weeping bitterly.

‘What are you crying for?’ inquired the gentleman in the white waistcoat.

‘I hope you say your prayers every night,’ said another gentleman in a gruff voice; ‘and pray for the people who feed you, and take care of you-like a Christian.’

‘Yes, sir,’ stammered the boy.

‘Well! You have come here to be educated, and taught a useful trade,’ said the red-faced gentleman in the high chair.

‘So you’ll begin to pick oakum tomorrow morning at six o’clock,’ added the surly one in the white waistcoat.

Oliver bowed low, directed by the beadle, and was then hurried away to a large ward; where, on a rough, hard bed, he sobbed himself to sleep.

Poor Oliver! As he lay sleeping, unconscious of everything around him, the board had taken a decision that would change the course of his life.

The members of this board were very wise and philosophical men. As they turned their attention to the workhouse, they discovered that it was the regular place of public entertainment for the poorer classes. It was the place where they had breakfast, dinner, tea, and supper all the year round and free; where it was all play and no work. This was really shocking state of affairs, they were of the opinion that the poor should be given only two alternatives, Either to starve quickly outside the workhouse, or gradually inside the house. With this view, they decided that the inmates of the workhouse would be issued three meals of thin gruel a day, with an onion twice a week.

For the first six months after Oliver Twist was moved in, the system was in full operation. As a result, during this period, the number of workhouse inmates got smaller, and the inmates themselves shrank in size and became thinner.

The room in which the boys were fed, was a large stone hall, with a big copper bowl at one end, out of which the master, dressed in an apron for the purpose, and assisted by one or two women, ladled the gruel at mealtime. Of this festive composition each boy had one basinful, and no more-except on occasions of great public rejoicing, when he had two ounces and a quarter of bread besides.

The basins never wanted washing. The boys polished them with their spoons till they shone again. When they had performed this operation they would sit staring at the copper bowl, with such eager eyes, as if they could have devoured the big bowl itself and everything in it. At the same time they sucked their fingers most carefully to catch up any stray splashes of gruel that might have stuck thereon. Boys have generally excellent appetite. Oliver Twist and his companions suffered the tortures of slow starvation for three months; at last they

got so voracious and wild with hunger, that one boy, who was tall for his age, and hadn't been used to that sort of thing (for his father had kept a small cook-shop), hinted darkly to his companions, that unless he had another basin of gruel per day, he was afraid he might some night happen to eat the boy who slept next to him, who happened to be a weakly youth of tender age. He had a wild, hungry eye; and they believed him. A council was held; lots were cast who should walk up to the master after supper that evening, and ask for more; and it fell to Oliver Twist.

The evening arrived; the boys took their places. The master, in his cook's uniform, stationed himself at the copper; his assistants ranged themselves behind him; the gruel was served out. The gruel disappeared; the boys whispered to each other, and winked at Oliver, while his next neighbours nudged him. Child as he was, he was desperate with hunger, and reckless with misery. He rose from the table; and advancing to the master, basin and spoon in hand, said: somewhat alarmed at his own courage.

'Please, sir, I want some more.'

The master was a fat, healthy man; but he turned very pale. He gazed in stupefied astonishment on the small rebel for some seconds, and then clung for support to the copper. The assistants were paralyzed with wonder; the boys with fear.

'What!' said the master at length, in a faint voice.

'Please, sir,' replied Oliver, 'I want some more.'

The master aimed a blow at Oliver's head with the ladle; and shrieked aloud for the beadle.

The board was sitting in solemn meeting, when Mr. Bumble rushed into the room in great excitement, and addressing the gentleman in the high chair, said, 'Mr. Limbkins, I beg your pardon, sir! Oliver Twist has asked for more!'

There was a general start. Horror was depicted on every countenance.

'For more!' said Mr. Limbkins. 'Compose yourself, Bumble, and answer me distinctly. Do I understand that he asked for more, after he had eaten the supper allotted by the board?'

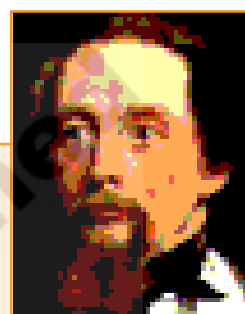
'He did, sir,' replied Bumble.



‘That boy will be hung’, said the gentleman in the white waistcoat. ‘I know that boy will be hung.’

Nobody contradicted the prophetic gentleman’s opinion. An excited discussion took place. Oliver was ordered into instant confinement; and a bill was next morning pasted on the outside of the gate, offering a reward of five pounds to anybody who would take Oliver Twist off the hands of the parish. In other words, five pounds and Oliver Twist were offered to any man or woman who wanted an apprentice to any trade, business, or calling.

- Charles Dickens



### About the author

**Charles Dickens** (1812-1870) is a well known English novelist. Due to his father’s imprisonment Charles left school and worked in a shoe factory. While he was working as a office boy he launched his writing career. His novels *Oliver Twist*, *Great Expectations*, *Pickwick Papers*, *Bleak House*, *A Tale of two Cities* and *David Copperfield* brought him name all over the world. He went on lecture tours to America and got literary reputation. He focussed on social issues and human ailments in his works.

### Glossary

- beadle (*n*) : an official of a church
- parish (*n*) : a church committee
- oakum (*n*) : loose fibre obtained by untwisting and picking apart old ropes
- surly (*adj*) : serious or angry
- gruel (*n*) : a thin liquid food of oats, rice, etc.
- devoured (*v*) : ate hungrily or quickly
- appetite (*n*) : the desire to eat, hunger
- voracious (*adj*) : wanting great quantities of food
- stupefied (*adj*) : shocked
- paralyzed (*v*) : became motionless
- ladle (*n*) : a long handled spoon used to serve liquids
- countenance (*n*) : a person’s face or facial expression



confinement (n) : putting in a prison or a closed room.  
apprentice (n) : one who works under a skilled person.



## Comprehension

**Answer the following questions.**

1. How did Oliver feel when he was told to appear before the live board?
2. Why did Oliver tremble and cry in the white-washed room?
3. “What is that, sir?” inquired poor Oliver. What does ‘that’ refer to?
- \*4. What kind of people were the members of the board? Justify your opinion.
5. What main differences do you notice between the children and master? (Observe the physical appearances, dress, behaviour, etc.) What can you infer from these differences?
6. How do you look at Oliver’s request, “Please, sir, I want some more!”? What compelled him to say this?
7. What happened to Oliver at the end of the story?
- \*8. Do you find children like Oliver around you ? How would you help them to live better?



## Vocabulary

**I. Look at the underlined part in the following sentence.**

“You have come here to be educated...” said the red-faced gentleman.

The word ‘red-faced’ is called a Compound Adjective.

The phrase ‘red-faced gentleman’ is a short form of ‘a gentleman with a red face’.

**1. Pick out the phrases with Compound Adjectives from the story or elsewhere and write how they can be rewritten to express the same meaning.**

- a. \_\_\_\_\_
- b. \_\_\_\_\_
- c. \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Change the underlined parts in the following paragraph into compound adjectives. Rewrite the paragraph in your note book.**

Sachin Tendulkar is a cricketer who is famous all over the world. He is a batsman playing with right hand. He has many world records to his credit

which are mind blowing. Besides all these, he is a person with a kind heart. He works with an NGO (Non-Governmental Organization) based in Mumbai to help more than 200 orphans every year..

**3. Fill in the blanks with appropriate compound adjectives from the box given below.**

deep-rooted, old-fashioned, well-mannered, softspoken, brand-new

Latha is a \_\_\_\_\_ girl. She speaks kindly with her classmates. Look at her, she is wearing an \_\_\_\_\_ dress. She does not like to wear \_\_\_\_\_ dresses. Don't you think Latha is a \_\_\_\_\_ girl?



## Grammar

**I. Look at the following sentence taken from the story.**

**'The boy is a fool,'** said the gentleman in the white waistcoat.

As you know, the above underlined expression, can be changed in to a question.

How do we change the above statement into a question? By putting the auxiliary verb before the subject **'the boy'**.

The boy is a fool.

Is the boy a fool?

**Look at some more sentences.**

1. 'I understand that he asked for more.'

'Do I understand that he asked for more?'

2. 'Oliver asks for more'

Does Oliver ask for more?

3. 'The boys took their places.'

Did the boys take their places?

These sentences are changed into a question by placing **'do/does/did'** at the beginning, such questions are called Yes / No questions.



**Change the following statements into Yes/ No questions.**

1. Oliver was frightened at the sight of so many gentlemen.

\_\_\_\_\_

2. You are an orphan.

\_\_\_\_\_

3. You say your prayers every night.

\_\_\_\_\_

4. You will pick oakum tomorrow morning.

\_\_\_\_\_

5. Mr. Bumble rushed into the room.

\_\_\_\_\_

6. They can devour the big bowl.

\_\_\_\_\_

7. Boys have generally excellent appetites.

\_\_\_\_\_

**II. Read the following sentence taken from the story.**

“You were brought up by the parish, weren’t you?”

In this sentence ‘weren’t you?’ at the end is called a question tag. Question tags are used to get information or confirmation. The question tags are positive if the statements are negative. And if the statements are positive, questions tags are negative. These tags are short / contracted form of questions. If the statement has an auxiliary, the tag begins with an auxiliary. In case it does not have an auxiliary, it will begin with do / does / did.

**Read the following dialogue to understand the usage of question tags.**

Ramu : The weather is good today, isn’t it?

Vijay : Indeed, Ramu.

Ramu : How about going out now? Hope you’ll join me, won’t you?

Vijay : I’ve got an important work now, I am afraid.

**Read the following dialogue that took place at a party. Add suitable question tags to complete it.**

Rohit : Hi, I've met you before, \_\_\_\_\_

Suma : No, I don't think so.

Rohit : But your name is Vani, \_\_\_\_\_

Suma : No, it's Suma! Anyway, glad to meet you.

Rohit : Me too. This is Rohit. The party seems to be really lively, \_\_\_\_\_

Suma : Yes, definitely. We enjoy ourselves a lot on such occasions \_\_\_\_\_

Rohit : Yeah, we do.



## Writing

Anne Frank was a little girl of thirteen. She was as lonely as Oliver Twist. When the German army invaded her country, she had to hide in a small building with her family. She suffered a lot. She recorded her feelings and thoughts in her diary.

Friday, 1st October, 1942.

Just for fun, I am going to tell you each person's first wish, when we are allowed to go out again. Mrs. Van says, 'If I go out, I'll eat cream cakes.' Dussel says, 'If I am let free, I'll run to see my wife Lotje.' Mummy says, 'I will have a cup of coffee.' Peter says, 'I will go to the cinema.' I long for so many things. But I long for a home of our own.

1. What did Anne write in her diary?
  - ◆ personal feelings/thoughts/reflections
  - ◆ events other than routine
  - ◆ future plans
2. Did you notice any variety in the sentences ?
3. Are all the sentences connected with each other properly ?

**Imagine you are Oliver Twist. Attempt a diary entry with the above features in mind after facing the live board, Oliver returned to his bed crying. He sat up to write his diary.**

## B Reading

# The Cry of Children

“For oh,” say the children, “we are weary  
And we cannot run or leap;  
If we cared for any meadows, it were merely  
To drop down in them and sleep.  
Our knees tremble sorely in the stooping,  
We fall upon our faces, trying to go;  
And underneath our heavy eyelids drooping  
The reddest flower would look as pale as snow.

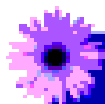
For, all day, we drag our burden tiring  
Through the coal – dark, underground;  
Or, all day we drive the wheels or iron  
In the factories, round and round.”

- *Elizabeth Barrett Browning*



## About the poet

**Elizabeth Barrett Browning** (1806-1861) was a great poet of English language. She published a collection of poems, *Sonnets from the Portuguese*, *Aurora Leigh*, *The Seraphim* and *Other Poems*. She married Robert Browning, a famous English poet and moved to Italy. Most of her poems deal with human emotions.



## Glossary

- weary (*adj*) : tired and lost all the strength  
meadows (*n*) : land that is covered with grass  
merely (*adv*) : only

sorely (*adv*) : in a painful manner  
drooping (*adj*) : hanging downward  
pale (*adj*) : not bright/ light in colour



### Comprehension

Answer the following questions.

1. What kind of places are the children working in?
2. 'The reddest flower would look as pale as snow.' What does the phrase 'reddest flower' refer to? Why does it become pale?
3. How does the work affect the children?
4. Do children enjoy their lives when engaged in work?
- \*5. If the poem were written from the point of view of a factory owner, what kind of things would he say about children?
6. What is the poet's attitude towards child labour? Pick out the words / expressions that reveal her attitude.

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### C Reading

## Reaching the Unreached

Romesh was fourteen years old. He left his widowed mother and three younger sisters back in Bihar. He took up a long travel of hundreds of miles to find a new future. He reached Hyderabad, one of the main cities in India.

On reaching the city, he found that the streets were not paved with gold. Finding a job was not an easy task. Cursed by hunger, he joined a group of rag pickers. He started working early in the morning and toiled until late evening, only to earn a mere Rs. 10 a day. Life was not a dream for him.

Luckily, he got a helping hand from "The Child Line" when some rescuer called 1098 helpline. Romesh is now one of the beneficiaries of Andhra Pradesh State based project for the Elimination of Child Labour.

Many such children fall to similar fate due to domestic violence and abject poverty. One such example was Shanti, a nine year old kid. She was taken out of the school by her

parents and sent to Hyderabad to work in a middle – class home. She suffered all day long spending her energy on cooking, moping, cleaning and washing clothes.

Worse was to come, the owners locked her up in a tiny room when they went out. She stayed alone waiting for the day to pass. She recalled her memories with friends at school, and she wept.



As a direct result of awareness campaigns, the neighbours informed the “Child Labour Enforcement Team.” She was rescued and is now placed in a girls’ transit home.

Who knows, how many such unreached are waiting to be rescued!

Child Rights and You (CRY) is an organization that believes that children are citizens and they have their own rights. At CRY, they do not believe in charity. Nor do they run schools or orphanages. Instead they partner some basic level organizations working for children, their parents and communities. CRY’s role is that of a bridge between child developmental organizations and people working for marginalized children. They gather the support, money and time of the Indians around the world and thousands of field workers across India who struggle to enrich the lives of children.

CRY has freed more than 1 lakh children from hunger, exploitation and illiteracy in more than 13000 villages and slums. The organization has successfully prevented child labour in 648 villages across the nation and liberated 1152 villages from child marriages. It also has 21, 676 out of school children in its account who have now joined schools. These children are into their childhood with all due opportunities of life.

### **Save our Soul (SOS)**

SOS Children’s Villages is an independent, non-governmental, social development organisation that provides family-based care for children in India since 1964. It advocates the concerns, rights and needs of children. More than 6000 children and young people live in 33 SOS Children’s Villages and 27 SOS Youth Facilities in India.

At SOS Children’s Villages, the organisers believe that every child should grow up in a strong family environment, and so their work helps families to create a loving, caring home. Their work focuses on strengthening families, helping them to stay together during difficult times and provide the best care possible to their children. The needs of a family can be varied. SOS Children’s Village experts work with families to help them develop a wide range of skills, from house-hold budget planning, how to get a job and earning a living, to bonding with a child or young person and learning to create a stable family life at home.

Sometimes, however, it is not possible for a child to stay in the family. In these cases, the organisation works to find tailor-made solutions that respond to each situation, keeping the best interest of each child or young person's in mind. SOS Children's Villages is the only organisation of global impact that provides direct care to children who can no longer stay with their families.

Finally, through advocacy, SOS Children's Villages aims to improve the overall framework conditions for children whose parents cannot take care of them, or who are at risk of losing the care of their families. Successful advocacy, based on their experience as a practitioner, brings about changes in policies and practices that weaken children's rights leads to sustainable changes to improve the situation for children and families everywhere.



### Comprehension

**Answer the following questions.**

1. Complete the following table based on the above article.

Sl. No.	Name of the child	Age	Nature of work for which engaged

2. Who rescued the two children? Where did they take them to?
- \*3. Many households in your and neighbourhood employ children to do the menial jobs. What will you do to save those children?
4. What is the role of CRY ?
5. Two organisations are working to save the destitutes. What are they ?
6. How does SOS work ?



### Study Skills

**Read the following passage extracted from the story 'Oliver Asks for More' and the notes made on it.**

The members of this board were very wise and philosophical men. As they turned their attention to the workhouse, they discovered that it was a regular place of public entertainment for the poorer classes. It was the place where they had breakfast, dinner, tea, and supper all the year round and free; where it was all play and no work. This was really shocking state of affairs, they were of the opinion that the poor should be given only two alternatives: Either to starve quickly outside the workhouse, or gradually inside the house.



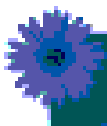
view, they decided that the inmates of the workhouse would be issued three meals of thin gruel a day, with an onion twice a week.

For the first six months after Oliver Twist was moved in, the system was in full operation. As a result, during this period, the number of workhouse inmates got smaller, and the inmates themselves shrank in size and became thinner.

**Observe the notes made from the above passage.**

1. The board
  - a. very wise and philosophical men
  - b. their attention to the workhouse
  - c. was a regular place of public entertainment
    - i. had breakfast, dinner, tea and supper
    - ii. all play and no work
2. The decision
  - a. to starve quickly outside the workhouse
  - b. gradually inside the house
    - i. issued three meals of thin gruel
    - ii. an onion twice a week
3. Result of the decision
  - a. the inmates of the work house got smaller
  - b. shrank in size
  - c. became thinner

**Now, read the passage Child Rights and You (CRY) once again and make notes with another suitable title.**



## Listening

**Listen to the song your teachers sings and answer the following questions.**

1. What is the song about?
2. Where does the child live?
3. How old is the child in the poem?



## Project Work

In your village/city you may come across children who are working in some households, factories, shops, hotels and construction work for daily wages. Collect the following information about one child. Make a brief profile of the child you have met and present it in the class.

### Profile:

Age :  
Gender (M/F) :  
Nature of work he/she is engaged in :  
Wages :  
No. of working hours :  
Why did he/she take up the work? :  
Has he/she ever gone to school? :  
At what level did he/she drop out? :  
Is he/she willing to join school? :

**Work in groups and analyze the data by using the following questions and present it before your class.**

1. Why do children take up jobs?
2. How poorly are they paid?
3. How many are willing to leave the work and join school?

## 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. Oliver Asks for More			
B. The Cry of Children			
C. Reaching the Unreached			
I was able to do the exercises given under 'Vocabulary'.			
I was able to understand framing Yes/No type questions and frame the Question Tags.			
I was able to understand and write a diary entry given under 'Writing'.			
I was able to prepare notes given under 'Study Skills'.			
I listened to and understood "Homeless Children" and answered the questions given under 'Listening'.			
I was able to prepare the profile of child given under 'Project Work'.			