UNIT 2 HUMAN ENVIRONMENT - A SPEECH

Structure
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2.0 OBJECTIVES

After completing this unit you should be able to:

- read speeches on matters of current interest with understanding;
- distinguish between pairs of words with related meanings;
- use concord of number and person correctly;
- write paragraphs forming part of a short essay with the help of a given outline;
- listen to a conversation and answer questions on it.

2.1 READING COMPREHENSION: ‘HUMAN ENVIRONMENT’ - A SPEECH BY INDIRA GANDHI

Study Guide

Think critically, think deep, think hard. No matter what you are studying, the habit of thinking things through is vital. Force yourself to ask questions before you begin, while you are studying and when you have finished. The main questions are: WHAT, WHY, WHEN, WHERE, HOW and WHO.

Read the passage and answer all the comprehension questions that follow it. You should then check your answers with those given by us at the end of the unit.

One cannot be truly human and civilized unless one looks upon not only all fellow-men but all creation with the eyes of a friend. Throughout India, edicts carved on rocks and iron pillars are reminders that 22 centuries ago Emperor Ashoka defined a king’s duty as not merely to protect citizens and punish wrong-doers but also to preserve animal life and forest trees. Ashoka was the first and perhaps the only monarch until very recently, to forbid the killing of a large number of species of animals for sport or food. He went further, regretting the carnage of his military conquests and enjoining upon his successors to find “their only pleasure in the peace that comes through righteousness.”

Along with the rest of mankind, we in India in spite of Ashoka have been guilty of wanton disregard for the sources of our sustenance. We share your
The Environment

concern at the rapid deterioration of flora and fauna. Some of our own wild life has been wiped out, miles of forests with beautiful old trees, mute witnesses of history, have been destroyed. Even though our industrial development is in its infancy, and at its most difficult stage, we are taking various steps to deal with incipient environmental imbalances; the more so because of our concern for the human being—a species which is also imperiled. In poverty he is threatened by malnutrition and disease, in weakness by war, in richness by the pollution brought about by his own prosperity.

On the one hand, the rich look askance at our continuing poverty; on the other, they warn us against their own methods. We do not wish to impoverish the environment any further and yet we cannot for a moment forget the grim poverty of large numbers of people. Are not poverty and need the greatest polluters? For instance, unless we are in a position to provide employment and purchasing power for the daily necessities of the tribal people and those who live in or around jungles, we cannot prevent them from combing the forest for food and livelihood, from poaching and from despoiling the vegetation. When they themselves feel deprived, how can we urge the preservation of animals? How can we speak to those who live in villages or slums about keeping the oceans, the rivers and air clean when their own lives are contaminated at the source? The environment cannot be improved in conditions of poverty. Nor can poverty be eradicated without the use of science and technology.

Must there be conflict between technology and a truly better world or between enlightenment of the spirit and a higher standard of living? Foreigners sometimes ask what to us seems a very strange question, whether progress in India would not mean a diminishing of her spirituality or her values. Is spiritual quality so superficial as to be dependent upon the lack of material comfort? As a country we are not more or less spiritual than any other but traditionally our people have respected the spirit of detachment and renunciation.

The Government of India is one of the few which has an officially sponsored programme of family planning and this is making some progress. We believe that planned families will make for a healthier and more conscious population but we know also that no programme of population control can be effective without education and without a visible rise in the standard of living. Our own programmes have succeeded in the urban or semi-urban areas. To the very poor, every child is an earner and a helper. We are experimenting with new approaches and the family planning programme is being combined with those of maternity and child welfare, nutrition and development in general.

It is an over-simplification to blame all the world’s problems on increasing population. Countries with about a small fraction of the world population consume the bulk of the world’s production of minerals, fossil fuels and so on. Thus, we see that when it comes to the depletion of natural resources and environmental pollution the increase of one inhabitant in an affluent country, at his level of living, is equivalent to an increase of many Asians, Africans or Latin Americans at their current material levels of living.

[From Indira Gandhi’s address at the United Nations Conference in 1972]

Comprehension Questions

Check Your Progress 1

1. What is the main idea of the speech? Circle some of the points that were raised in the speech from the list given below.
2. How does Indira Gandhi establish India’s long history of peaceful co-existence?

3. The environment around us has been destroyed. What are the three examples given?

4. It is not only the environment but human beings also who are in danger.
   i) What dangers face them when they are poor?
   ii) What dangers face them when they are politically weak?
   iii) What dangers face them when they are rich?

5. Mention the ways in which the poor are compelled to spoil the environment.

6. How can poverty be removed?

7. What have Indians down the ages respected?

8. When can a programme of population control be successful?

9. Why do some poor people want large families?

10. Natural resources are being depleted.
    i) How are the developed countries responsible for this?
    ii) How are the developing countries responsible for this?
2.2 VOCABULARY: SIMILAR WORDS USED IN DIFFERENT CONTEXTS

Check Your Progress 2
Fill in the blanks with suitable words out of those given in brackets.

i. a) Children in this orphanage are happy because they are well .............
    b) Many trees in the jungles are now ................ by the Forest Department. (preserved, looked after)

ii. a) We are ................ to speak loudly in the library.
    b) Smoking in cinema halls is ............... (prohibited, forbidden)

iii. a) Many trees in the forests have been ................
    b) Standards of morality have been .......... (destroyed, deteriorated)

iv. a) We .................... reading stories.
    b) It is a ............... walking in the hills. (pleasure, enjoy)

v. a) They spent a lot of money on their daughter’s wedding, so their bank balance has now been ............
    b) Mr. Lal has been unemployed for four years now. He and his family are quite .................. (impoverished, depleted)

Check Your Progress 3
Use the following words in sentences. Use a dictionary, if necessary.
empty, vacant
environment, neighbourhood
employment, job

clean, pure

2.3 GRAMMAR AND USAGE: CONCORD OF NUMBER AND PERSON-II

In this section you will learn how verbs in the present tense agree with their subjects in number and person.

Look at these examples from the reading passage in Section 2.1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paragraph 1</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Verb</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paragraph 2</td>
<td>one</td>
<td>looks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paragraph 3</td>
<td>we</td>
<td>share</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>they</td>
<td>warn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>they</td>
<td>feel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paragraph 4</td>
<td>foreigners</td>
<td>ask</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paragraph 5</td>
<td>we</td>
<td>believe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>we</td>
<td>know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paragraph 6</td>
<td>countries</td>
<td>consume</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>we</td>
<td>see</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>it</td>
<td>comes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
You will find more examples in the following extract from a newspaper. The verbs are printed in bold type. Notice how they agree with their subjects in number.

Almost every full moon night, the officials in Andaman and Nicobar Islands take part in a curious ritual. The tribesmen watch from a safe distance as the officials approach the island in a boat carrying gifts for them. The islanders come forward hesitantly only after the officials have dumped the coconuts brought for them onto the beach and begin sailing away from their small island. On some nights the tribals even muster enough courage to swim up to a few feet away from the boat.

The Lieutenant Governor maintains that they do not want to interfere with the way of life of the tribals. The islands rely heavily on the mainland for most goods. (from The Times of India)

In verbs that have regular forms the third person singular of the present simple tense is formed by the addition of -s or -es (for example looks, comes, maintains, relies, passes, mixes, reaches, pushes). The simple form is used in all other cases.

Examples:

1. Government officials give the islanders coconuts as gifts. The Lieutenant governor gives the islanders food and medicines.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I</th>
<th>like reading stories.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All of us</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most children</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. 3rd person singular subject  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>My Friend Suresh</th>
<th>likes reading poems.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The doctor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No one</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One of my friends</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Check Your Progress 4

1. Fill in the blanks with the correct present tense forms of the verbs given below:
   (say, show, come, be, change, need, try, want, spend, speak)
   i) Animal lovers ............... to find a shelter for injured animals.
   ii) There ...............a number of good schools in this city.
   iii) What we ...............is a sound philosophy of education.
   iv) You ...............advised not to be too generous with your time.
   v) He ...............no English.
   vi) He ...............more time in India than anywhere else in the world.
   vii) Faith, they ...............can move mountains.
   viii) They ...............here to satisfy their curiosity.
     ix) He ...............to come here as a guest.
     x) My watch ...............the date as well as the time. The date ...............automatically at midnight.
2. Fill in the blanks with appropriate words in the present tense.

Our country ..........rich in indigenous plants, trees and wildlife, called flora and fauna. We .......... many natural resources. However, we .......... in danger of losing these resources if we ..........not look after them properly. Everyone ..........to be involved in finding ways to protect and manage India’s natural resources. Think about a list of small things you can do to protect your environment. Think of ways in which technology, for example .......... help to protect our environment.

2.4 LISTENING: CONVERSATION BETWEEN FRIENDS

Listen to this discussion between two friends. Listen to it again to answer the following questions. It will help to read the questions before you listen to the discussion.

Anil: Hi Susan! Long time, no see. Where have you been? Didn’t see you in class yesterday.

Susan: Yes, just got back this morning. Had taken a group of school kids to a village near Saharanpur.

Anil: You! To a village near Saharanpur? With kids? Can’t believe it! You’ve changed so much! Why to a village? What’s there in a village to see?

Susan: When will you grow up, Anil? You talk like a child; you aren’t aware of the great things happening in the development sector.

Anil: You mean NGOs and things like that?

Susan: Yes, I took a school trip to DISHA. It’s an NGO working in Saharanpur for over two decades. I went as a facilitator to make the exposure to rural life a good experience for the urban children.

Anil: Did the children like it? No ACs, no toilets!

Susan: You haven’t a clue how the rural scene is changing! Technology and education has had a positive impact. Farmers there are also into organic farming. Harmful pesticides and chemical fertilizers are not used. And the educated village youth are involved in all these projects.

Anil: I think technology, social commitment and good planning is reducing the rural and urban divide. Good show! How did you get involved in all this?

Susan: That’s a long story. I once went for a talk on ....

Check Your Progress 5

1. Say whether the following statements are True (T) or False (F) or Not Given (NG):-
   i) Susan has been coming to college regularly.
   ii) Anil went to Saharanpur.
   iii) Susan loves children.
   iv) Susan is a part-time teacher at a school.
   v) All the school children loved the trip.
   vi) Educated village youth work in cities.
   vii) Technology and education have had a positive impact on village life.
2. In her speech Indira Gandhi discusses the close relationship between technology, education and environment. Pick two examples of this from the conversation you have just heard.

........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................

2.5 WRITING: AN ESSAY

Check Your Progress 6

Complete this essay on ‘Trees are our best friends’ by writing Paragraph 3 and 4 with the help of the outline given.

1. Trees are useful to human beings in three important ways: they provide them with wood and other products; they give them shade; and they help to prevent droughts and floods.

2. Unfortunately human beings have not realized that the last of these services is the most important. In their eagerness to make quick money, they have cut down trees in large numbers, only to find that with them they have lost the best friend they had.

3. Two thousand years ago – a powerful country cut down trees – to build warships – conquered – a large empire – but without trees the soil became hard – poor – country faced flood and starvation.

4. Governments realize importance of trees – difficult to persuade the poor person – wood to cook – make charcoal – people too careless to plant new trees – essential to educate people – otherwise forests will disappear.
2.6 LET US SUM UP

In this unit we have given you practice in

- understanding an extract from Indira Gandhi’s speech on ‘Human Environment’,
- distinguishing between pairs of words that have related meanings and using them in appropriate contexts,
- concord of number and person,
- writing paragraphs of an essay with the help of a given outline, and
- listening to a conversation.

2.7 ANSWERS

Check Your Progress 1

1. Preservation of environment — problems and solutions.
2. Refers to King Ashoka and his edicts. Kings duty to protect all creation.
3. i) Some of the wild animals have been destroyed completely,
   ii) Some of the forests have also been destroyed, and
   iii) Industrial development has upset the balance in our environment.
4. i) They face the danger of poor nutrition and disease.
   ii) They face the danger of war.
   iii) They face the danger of an impure environment.
5. When the poor people living around the jungles cannot get employment and cannot afford their basic necessities, they have to search for food in the forests, kill animals there, and cut down trees and plants.
6. By the use of science and technology.
7. Detachment and renunciation.
8. When we spread education and raise the standard of living of the people.
9. They think every child is an earner and a helper.
10. i) The developed countries consume most of the world’s production of minerals and fossil fuels.
    ii) In developing countries people are so poor and their lives are so contaminated that they cannot think of keeping the air, the rivers, and the oceans clean.

Check Your Progress 2

i. a) looked after       iv. a) enjoy
   b) preserved
ii. a) prohibited       v. a) depleted
   b) forbidden
iii. a) destroyed       b) impoverished
   b) deteriorated
Check Your Progress 3

Sample answer

This water bottle is empty. I must fill it again.

The post of Principal at this college has been vacant for some time.

A man’s character is influenced by his environment.

There are some very friendly people in our neighbourhood.

A large number of educated people in India cannot get suitable employment.

If you do not like your present job, try to find another one.

To avoid disease, we should keep our environment clean.

The air in our cities is not pure because of the number of vehicles plying.

Check Your Progress 4

1. i- try, ii- are, iii- need, iv- are, v- speaks, vi- spends, vii- say,

   viii- are/come, ix- wants, x- shows, changes

2. Our country is rich in indigenous plants, trees and wildlife, called flora and fauna. We have many natural resources. However, we are in danger of losing these resources if we do not look after them properly. Everyone needs to be involved in finding ways to protect and manage India’s natural resources. Think about a list of small things you can do to protect your environment. Think of ways in which technology, for example, can help to protect our environment.

Check Your Progress 5


2. i) Educated village youth work in all development projects.

   ii) Farmers have turned to organic farming.

Check Your Progress 6

Do it yourself.