

RESONANCE - I

General English Text Book

I SEMESTER

B.A /B.S.W/B. Music

BENGALURU CENTRAL UNIVERSITY

Central College Campus

Members of the Board of Studies

1. VACHANAS OF AKKAMAHADEVI AND SATYAKKA

Pre-reading Activity:

- *Women are capable of achieving great heights. Discuss.*
- *What is Mysticism? Name some women who reached mystic heights.*



Note on the Author:

Akkamahadevi (1130–1160) was one of the early women poets of the Kannada language and a prominent personality in the 12th century. Her *Vachanas*, *Mantrigopya* and the *Yogangatrividhi* are considered her most notable contributions to Kannada literature. She achieved the height of mysticism, and raised her voice against patriarchy, monarchy, rigid customs and traditions.

She rejected the institution of marriage and accepted the immortal, Omnipresent Lord Chennamallikarjuna as her husband thereby conforming to ‘bridal mysticism’, a concept of Bhakti Movement. The intensity of emotion, the difficulties she faces and her longing for Chennamallikarjuna, are the recurring themes. The following Vachana depicts how the poet accepts the immortal Lord as her husband.

Satyakka:



Satyakka (12th Century) was from Hirejamburu near Shiralakoppa of Shimoga district. Hailing from a humble background of a sweeper family, a dalit woman writer was able to rise to the status of sainthood. It was because of the 12th century Bhakti Movement which gave the right to freedom of expression and equal status to women in the society. Twenty-nine of her Vachanas have been found with the signature, Shambu Jakkeshwara. Apart from the supremacy of Lord Shiva, she focuses on gender equality. The present Vachana is about the formless immortal Lord and the realisation of one’s inner-self. (ಅರಿವೇ ಗುರು)

Akkamahadevi:

*I loved a handsome youth,
Formless, deathless and beyond destruction.*

*I loved a handsome youth,
Placeless, infinite, entire
And without a sign, O mothers!*

*I loved a handsome youth,
Who is birthless and fearless and bold,*

*I loved a youth
Who being boundless is immeasurable.*

*O Mothers, I loved my husband
Chennamallikarjuna passionately!*

Satyakka:

Thinking that he is outside

I talked foolishly.

He lives in my heart

Without letting me know it.

I cannot describe the unborn,

Who is everywhere?

I lost my heart in his void.

What shall I do, O mother, O mother,

If I forget, my formless husband reminds me?

Our Sambhu Jakkesvara

Is good to those who know Him.

Glossary:

formless	: Without a clear or definite shape or structure. Here the abstract God.
everywhere	: In various forms of flora and fauna, in every creature.
deathless	: eternal.
Chennamallikarjuna	: Akkamahadevi's tutelary deity and her signature.
Sambhu Jakkeshwara	: Presiding deity of Satyakka's native place, Hirejamburu and her signature.

Comprehension Questions:

I Answer the following in a word or two:

1. Who is the 'handsome youth' in Akka's Vachana?
2. Why does Akka call him formless and deathless?
3. Who is the 'I' referred to in Satyakka's Vachana?
4. Who does Satyakka refer to as 'the formless'?
5. Why is Satyakka unable to describe the Lord?
6. What does the formless husband of Satyakka remind her of?

II Answer the following in about a page:

1. How does Akkamahadevi express her feelings about her eternal, formless husband?
2. Write about Satyakka's views on the Lord Shiva.

III Answer the following in about two pages:

1. Compare and contrast the concepts in the two Vachanas.
2. The Vachanas exhibit the single-minded devotion to Lord Shiva. Elaborate.
3. The Lord is Omnipresent and formless. Do you agree? Discuss.

Suggested Reading:

Vachanas of Women Saints - Dr. Yaravinatelimath
Shivashraneyara Vachanasamputa (Kannada) -Dr.Veeranna Rajur

Extended Activity:

Have a discussion on the moral and philosophical ideas of great thinkers.
Listen to the CD, 'Kadaliya Banadalli' Akkamahadevi Samithi Udutadi, Shimoga
Listen to the CD, 'Vachana Darshana' Akkamahadevi Vachana Vyakhayana -
Veena Bannanje

4. A WHITE HERON

- Sarah Orne Jewett

Pre-reading activity

- *Industrialization versus return to nature. Discuss the polarity in the present situation.*
- *What are eco-narratives? How can they make you socially responsible towards conservation of your environment?*



Note on the Author:

Sarah Orne Jewett (September 3, 1849 – June 24, 1909) was an American novelist, short story writer and poet, best known for her local color works set along or near the southern seacoast of Maine. Jewett is recognized as an important practitioner of American literary regionalism. At age 19, Jewett published her first important story in the *Atlantic Monthly*, and her reputation grew throughout the 1870s and 1880s. Some of Jewett's poetry was collected in 'Verses' (1916), and she also wrote three children's books. Willa Cather described Jewett as a significant influence on her development as a writer. Feminist critics have since championed her writing for its rich account of women's lives and voices. 'A White Heron' (1886), is a collection of short stories and is one of her finest works.

The story deals with the strong bond between nature and human beings. The subtle eco-concern of the women is woven dexterously by the author.

The woods were already filled with shadows one June evening, just before eight o'clock, though a bright sunset still glimmered faintly among the trunks of the trees. A little girl was driving home her cow, a plodding, dilatory, provoking creature in her behavior, but a valued companion for all that. They were going away from whatever light there was, and striking deep into the woods, but their feet were familiar with the path, and it was no matter whether their eyes could see it or not. There was hardly a night the summer through when the old cow could be found waiting at the pasture bars; on the contrary, it was her greatest pleasure to hide herself away among the huckleberry bushes, and though she wore a loud bell she had made the discovery that if one stood perfectly still it would not ring. So Sylvia had to hunt for her until she found her, and call Co'! Co'! With never an answering Moo, until her childish patience was quite spent. If the creature had not given good milk and plenty of it, the case would have seemed very different to her owners. Besides, Sylvia had all the time there was, and very little use to make of it. Sometimes in pleasant weather it was a consolation to look upon the cow's pranks as an intelligent attempt to play hide and seek, and as the child had no playmates she lent herself to this amusement with a good deal of zest. Though this chase had been so long that the wary animal herself had given an unusual signal of her whereabouts, Sylvia had only laughed when she came upon Mistress Moolly at the swamp-side, and urged her affectionately homeward with a twig of birch leaves. The old cow was not inclined to wander farther, she even turned in the right direction for once as they left the pasture, and stepped along the road at a good pace. She was quite ready to be milked now, and seldom stopped to browse. Sylvia wondered what her grandmother would say because they were so late. It was a great while since she had left home at half-past five o'clock, but everybody knew the difficulty of making this errand a short one. Mrs. Tilley had chased the horned torment too many summer evenings herself to blame anyone else for lingering, and was only thankful as she waited that she had Sylvia, nowadays, to give such valuable assistance. The good woman suspected that Sylvia loitered occasionally on her own account; there never was such a child for straying about out-of-doors since the world was made! Everybody said that it was a good change for a little maid who had tried to grow for eight years in a crowded manufacturing town, but, as for Sylvia herself, it seemed as if she never had been alive at all before she came to live at the farm. She thought often with wistful compassion of a wretched geranium that belonged to a town neighbor.

"'Afraid of folks,'" old Mrs. Tilley said to herself, with a smile, after she had made the unlikely choice of Sylvia from her daughter's houseful of children, and was returning to the farm. "'Afraid of folks,' they said! I guess she won't be troubled no great with 'em up to the old place!" When they reached the door of the lonely house and stopped to unlock it, and the cat came to purr loudly, and rub against them, a deserted pussy, indeed, but fat with young robins, Sylvia whispered that this was a beautiful place to live in, and she never should wish to go home.

The companions followed the shady wood-road, the cow taking slow steps and the child very fast ones. The cow stopped long at the brook to drink, as if the pasture were not half a swamp, and Sylvia stood still and waited, letting her bare feet cool themselves in the shoal water, while the great twilight moths struck softly against her. She waded on through the brook as the cow moved away, and listened to the thrushes with a heart that beat fast with pleasure. There was a stirring in the great boughs overhead. They were full of little birds and beasts that seemed to be wide awake, and going about their world, or else saying good-night to each other in sleepy twitters. Sylvia herself felt sleepy as she walked along. However, it was not much farther to the house, and the air was soft and sweet. She was not often in the woods so late as this, and it made her feel as if she were a part of the gray shadows and the moving leaves. She was just thinking how long it seemed since she first came to the farm a year ago, and wondering if everything went on in the noisy town just the same as when she was there, the thought of the great red-faced boy who used to chase and frighten her made her hurry along the path to escape from the shadow of the trees.

Suddenly, this little woods-girl is horror-stricken to hear a clear whistle not very far away. Not a bird's-whistle, which would have a sort of friendliness, but a boy's whistle, determined, and somewhat aggressive. Sylvia left the cow to whatever sad fate might await her, and stepped discreetly aside into the bushes, but she was just too late. The enemy had discovered her, and called out in a very cheerful and persuasive tone, "Halloa, little girl, how far is it to the road?" and trembling Sylvia answered almost inaudibly, "A good ways."

She did not dare to look boldly at the tall young man, who carried a gun over his shoulder, but she came out of her bush and again followed the cow, while he walked alongside.

"I have been hunting for some birds," the stranger said kindly, "and I have lost my way, and need a friend very much. Don't be afraid," he added gallantly. "Speak up

and tell me what your name is, and whether you think I can spend the night at your house, and go out gunning early in the morning."

Sylvia was more alarmed than before. Would not her grandmother consider her much to blame? But who could have foreseen such an accident as this? It did not seem to be her fault, and she hung her head as if the stem of it were broken, but managed to answer "Sylvy," with much effort when her companion again asked her name.

Mrs. Tilley was standing in the doorway when the trio came into view. The cow gave a loud moo by way of explanation.

"Yes, you'd better speak up for yourself, you old trial! Where'd she tucked herself away this time, Sylvy?" But Sylvia kept an awed silence; she knew by instinct that her grandmother did not comprehend the gravity of the situation. She must be mistaking the stranger for one of the farmer-lads of the region.

The young man stood his gun beside the door, and dropped a lumpy game-bag beside it; then he bade Mrs. Tilley good-evening, and repeated his wayfarer's story, and asked if he could have a night's lodging.

"Put me anywhere you like," he said. "I must be off early in the morning, before day; but I am very hungry, indeed. You can give me some milk at any rate, that's plain."

"Dear sakes, yes," responded the hostess, whose long slumbering hospitality seemed to be easily awakened. "You might fare better if you went out to the main road a mile or so, but you're welcome to what we've got. I'll milk right off, and you make yourself at home. You can sleep on husks or feathers," she proffered graciously. "I raised them all myself. There's good pasturing for geese just below here towards the ma'sh. Now step round and set a plate for the gentleman, Sylvy!" And Sylvia promptly stepped. She was glad to have something to do, and she was hungry herself. It was a surprise to find so clean and comfortable a little dwelling in this New England wilderness. The young man had known the horrors of its most primitive housekeeping, and the dreary squalor of that level of society which does not rebel at the companionship of hens. This was the best thrift of an old-fashioned farmstead, though on such a small scale that it seemed like a hermitage. He listened eagerly to the old woman's quaint talk, he watched Sylvia's pale face and shining grey eyes with ever growing enthusiasm, and insisted that this was the best supper he had eaten for a month, and afterward the new-made friends sat down in the door-way together while the moon came up.

Soon it would be berry-time, and Sylvia was a great help at picking. The cow was a good milker, though a plaguy thing to keep track of, the hostess gossiped frankly, adding presently that she had buried four children, so Sylvia's mother, and a son (who might be dead) in California were all the children she had left. "Dan, my boy, was a great hand to go gunning," she explained sadly. "I never wanted for pa'tridges or gray squer'ls while he was to home. He's been a great wand'rer, I expect, and he's no hand to write letters. There, I don't blame him, I'd ha' seen the world myself if it had been so I could.

"Sylvy takes after him," the grandmother continued affectionately, after a minute's pause. "There ain't a foot o' ground she don't know her way over, and the wild creaturs counts her one o' themselves. Squer'ls she'll tame to come an' feed right out o' her hands, and all sorts o' birds. Last winter she got the jay-birds to bangeing here, and I believe she'd 'a' scanted herself of her own meals to have plenty to throw out amongst 'em, if I hadn't kep' watch. Anything but crows, I tell her, I'm willin' to help support — though Dan he had a tamed one o' them that did seem to have reason same as folks. It was round here a good spell after he went away. Dan an' his father they didn't hitch, — but he never held up his head ag'in after Dan had dared him an' gone off."

The guest did not notice this hint of family sorrows in his eager interest in something else.

"So Sylvy knows all about birds, does she?" he exclaimed, as he looked round at the little girl who sat, very demure but increasingly sleepy, in the moonlight. "I am making a collection of birds myself. I have been at it ever since I was a boy." (Mrs. Tilley smiled.) "There are two or three very rare ones I have been hunting for these five years. I mean to get them on my own ground if they can be found."

"Do you cage 'em up?" asked Mrs. Tilley doubtfully, in response to this enthusiastic announcement.

"Oh no, they're stuffed and preserved, dozens and dozens of them," said the ornithologist, "and I have shot or snared every one myself. I caught a glimpse of a white heron a few miles from here on Saturday, and I have followed it in this direction. They have never been found in this district at all. The little white heron, it is," and he turned again to look at Sylvia with the hope of discovering that the rare bird was one of her acquaintances.

But Sylvia was watching a hop-toad in the narrow footpath.

"You would know the heron if you saw it," the stranger continued eagerly. "A queer tall white bird with soft feathers and long thin legs. And it would have a nest perhaps in the top of a high tree, made of sticks, something like a hawk's nest."

Sylvia's heart gave a wild beat; she knew that strange white bird, and had once stolen softly near where it stood in some bright green swamp grass, away over at the other side of the woods. There was an open place where the sunshine always seemed strangely yellow and hot, where tall, nodding rushes grew, and her grandmother had warned her that she might sink in the soft black mud underneath and never be heard of more. Not far beyond were the salt marshes just this side the sea itself, which Sylvia wondered and dreamed much about, but never had seen, whose great voice could sometimes be heard above the noise of the woods on stormy nights.

"I can't think of anything I should like so much as to find that heron's nest," the handsome stranger was saying. "I would give ten dollars to anybody who could show it to me," he added desperately, "and I mean to spend my whole vacation hunting for it if need be. Perhaps it was only migrating, or had been chased out of its own region by some bird of prey."

Mrs. Tilley gave amazed attention to all this, but Sylvia still watched the toad, not divining, as she might have done at some calmer time, that the creature wished to get to its hole under the door-step, and was much hindered by the unusual spectators at that hour of the evening. No amount of thought, that night, could decide how many wished—for treasures the ten dollars, so lightly spoken of, would buy.

The next day the young sportsman hovered about the woods, and Sylvia kept him company, having lost her first fear of the friendly lad, who proved to be most kind and sympathetic. He told her many things about the birds and what they knew and where they lived and what they did with themselves. And he gave her a jack-knife, which she thought as great a treasure as if she were a desert-islander. All day long he did not once make her troubled or afraid except when he brought down some unsuspecting singing creature from its bough. Sylvia would have liked him vastly better without his gun; she could not understand why he killed the very birds he seemed to like so much. But as the day waned, Sylvia still watched the young man with loving admiration. She had never seen anybody so charming and delightful; the woman's heart, asleep in the child, was vaguely thrilled by a dream of love. Some premonition of that great power stirred and swayed these young creatures who traversed the solemn woodlands with soft-footed silent care. They stopped to listen to a bird's song; they pressed forward again eagerly, parting the branches —

speaking to each other rarely and in whispers; the young man going first and Sylvia following, fascinated, a few steps behind, with her grey eyes dark with excitement. She grieved because the longed-for white heron was elusive, but she did not lead the guest, she only followed, and there was no such thing as speaking first. The sound of her own unquestioned voice would have terrified her — it was hard enough to answer yes or no when there was need of that. At last evening began to fall, and they drove the cow home together, and Sylvia smiled with pleasure when they came to the place where she heard the whistle and was afraid only the night before.

II.

Half a mile from home, at the farther edge of the woods, where the land was highest, a great pine-tree stood, the last of its generation. Whether it was left for a boundary mark, or for what reason, no one could say; the woodchoppers who had felled its mates were dead and gone long ago, and a whole forest of sturdy trees, pines and oaks and maples, had grown again. But the stately head of this old pine towered above them all and made a landmark for sea and shore miles and miles away. Sylvia knew it well. She had always believed that whoever climbed to the top of it could see the ocean; and the little girl had often laid her hand on the great rough trunk and looked up wistfully at those dark boughs that the wind always stirred, no matter how hot and still the air might be below. Now she thought of the tree with a new excitement, for why, if one climbed it at break of day, could not one see all the world, and easily discover from whence the white heron flew, and mark the place, and find the hidden nest?

What a spirit of adventure, what wild ambition! What fancied triumph and delight and glory for the later morning when she could make known the secret! It was almost too real and too great for the childish heart to bear.

All night the door of the little house stood open and the whippoorwills came and sang upon the very step. The young sportsman and his old hostess were sound asleep, but Sylvia's great design kept her broad awake and watching. She forgot to think of sleep. The short summer night seemed as long as the winter darkness, and at last when the whippoorwills ceased, and she was afraid the morning would after all come too soon, she stole out of the house and followed the pasture path through the woods, hastening toward the open ground beyond, listening with a sense of comfort and companionship to the drowsy twitter of a half-awakened bird, whose perch she had

jarred in passing. Alas, if the great wave of human interest which flooded for the first time this dull little life should sweep away the satisfactions of an existence heart to heart with nature and the dumb life of the forest!

There was the huge tree asleep yet in the paling moonlight, and small and silly Sylvia began with utmost bravery to mount to the top of it, with tingling, eager blood coursing the channels of her whole frame, with her bare feet and fingers, that pinched and held like bird's claws to the monstrous ladder reaching up, up, almost to the sky itself. First she must mount the white oak tree that grew alongside, where she was almost lost among the dark branches and the green leaves heavy and wet with dew; a bird fluttered off its nest, and a red squirrel ran to and fro and scolded pettishly at the harmless housebreaker. Sylvia felt her way easily. She had often climbed there, and knew that higher still one of the oak's upper branches chafed against the pine trunk, just where its lower boughs were set close together. There, when she made the dangerous pass from one tree to the other, the great enterprise would really begin. She crept out along the swaying oak limb at last, and took the daring step across into the old pine-tree. The way was harder than she thought; she must reach far and hold fast, the sharp dry twigs caught and held her and scratched her like angry talons, the pitch made her thin little fingers clumsy and stiff as she went round and round the tree's great stem, higher and higher upward. The sparrows and robins in the woods below were beginning to wake and twitter to the dawn, yet it seemed much lighter there aloft in the pine-tree, and the child knew she must hurry if her project were to be of any use.

The tree seemed to lengthen itself out as she went up, and to reach farther and farther upward. It was like a great main-mast to the voyaging earth; it must truly have been amazed that morning through all its ponderous frame as it felt this determined spark of human spirit wending its way from higher branch to branch. Who knows how steadily the least twigs held themselves to advantage this light, weak creature on her way! The old pine must have loved his new dependent. More than all the hawks, and bats, and moths, and even the sweet voiced thrushes, was the brave, beating heart of the solitary gray-eyed child. And the tree stood still and frowned away the winds that June morning while the dawn grew bright in the east.

Sylvia's face was like a pale star, if one had seen it from the ground, when the last thorny bough was past, and she stood trembling and tired but wholly triumphant, high in the tree-top. Yes, there was the sea with the dawning sun making a golden dazzle over it, and toward that glorious east flew two hawks with slow-moving

pinions. How low they looked in the air from that height when one had only seen them before far up, and dark against the blue sky. Their gray feathers were as soft as moths; they seemed only a little way from the tree, and Sylvia felt as if she too could go flying away among the clouds. Westward, the woodlands and farms reached miles and miles into the distance; here and there were church steeples, and white villages, truly it was a vast and awesome world

The birds sang louder and louder. At last the sun came up bewilderingly bright. Sylvia could see the white sails of ships out at sea, and the clouds that were purple and rose-colored and yellow at first began to fade away. Where was the white heron's nest in the sea of green branches, and was this wonderful sight and pageant of the world the only reward for having climbed to such a giddy height? Now look down again, Sylvia, where the green marsh is set among the shining birches and dark hemlocks; there where you saw the white heron once you will see him again; look, look! a white spot of him like a single floating feather comes up from the dead hemlock and grows larger, and rises, and comes close at last, and goes by the landmark pine with steady sweep of wing and outstretched slender neck and crested head. And wait! Wait! Do not move a foot or a finger, little girl, do not send an arrow of light and consciousness from your two eager eyes, for the heron has perched on a pine bough not far beyond yours, and cries back to his mate on the nest and plumes his feathers for the new day.

The child gives a long sigh a minute later when a company of shouting cat-birds comes also to the tree, and vexed by their fluttering and lawlessness the solemn heron goes away. She knows his secret now, the wild, light, slender bird that floats and wavers, and goes back like an arrow presently to his home in the green world beneath. Then Sylvia, well satisfied, makes her perilous way down again, not daring to look far below the branch she stands on, ready to cry sometimes because her fingers ache and her lamed feet slip. Wondering over and over again what the stranger would say to her, and what he would think when she told him how to find his way straight to the heron's nest.

"Sylvy, Sylvy!" called the busy old grandmother again and again, but nobody answered, and the small husk bed was empty and Sylvia had disappeared.

The guest waked from a dream, and remembering his day's pleasure hurried to dress himself that might it sooner begin. He was sure from the way the shy little girl looked once or twice yesterday that she had at least seen the white heron, and now she must really be made to tell. Here she comes now, paler than ever, and her worn old frock

is torn and tattered, and smeared with pine pitch. The grandmother and the sportsman stand in the door together and question her, and the splendid moment has come to speak of the dead hemlock—tree by the green marsh.

But Sylvia does not speak after all, though the old grandmother fretfully rebukes her, and the young man's kind, appealing eyes are looking straight in her own. He can make them rich with money; he has promised it, and they are poor now. He is so well worth making happy, and he waits to hear the story she can tell.

No, she must keep silence! What is it that suddenly forbids her and makes her dumb? Has she been nine years growing and now, when the great world for the first time puts out a hand to her, must she thrust it aside for a bird's sake? The murmur of the pine's green branches is in her ears, she remembers how the white heron came flying through the golden air and how they watched the sea and the morning together, and Sylvia cannot speak; she cannot tell the heron's secret and give its life away.

Dear loyalty, that suffered a sharp pang as the guest went away disappointed later in the day that could have served and followed him and loved him as a dog loves! Many a night Sylvia heard the echo of his whistle haunting the pasture path as she came home with the loitering cow. She forgot even her sorrow at the sharp report of his gun and the sight of thrushes and sparrows dropping silent to the ground, their songs hushed and their pretty feathers stained and wet with blood. Were the birds' better friends than their hunter might have been, — who can tell? Whatever treasures were lost to her, woodlands and summer—time, remember! Bring your gifts and graces and tell your secrets to this lonely country child!

Glossary:

inclined	: in the mood.
wistful	: with longing or unfulfilled desire.
ceased	: stopped or discontinued.
ponderous	: slow and clumsy because of great weight.
premonition	: a feeling, not based on reason, that something is so or will happen.
provoke	: tending to cause a reaction — typically an emotional reaction such as anger.
waned	: grew smaller (in this context, the amount of day that is left).
twilight	: the time of day between daylight and darkness, just after sunset.

wavers	: moving back and forth.
discreetly	: inconspicuously, in a manner unlikely to attract attention.
talons	: sharp hooked claws.
wary	: nervous or distrustful.
torment	: to cause or to experience great mental or physical suffering.
wretched	: very bad.
dilatory	: slow, inclined to cause delay.
shoal	: stretch of shallow water.
demure	: modest, quiet and shy.
elusive	: difficult to get a hold of.
proffered	: offered, in this context a suggestion.
rebuke	: criticize severely.
quaint	: unusual but in an interesting or pleasing way.

Comprehension Questions:

I Answer the following in a word or sentence:

1. Who are Sylvia and Mistress Moolly? How does Sylvia feel about Mistress Moolly?
2. Why is Moolly considered a ‘valued companion’ of Sylvia?
3. What was the reaction of Sylvia when she heard the whistling sound of the stranger?
4. Why does the young man decide to stay at Mrs. Tilley’s cottage?
5. How does living in the farm suit Sylvia’s nature and personality?
6. How does the hunter describe the heron to Sylvia?
7. Why is the hunter determined to add a White Heron to his collection? What are some details that show this determination?
8. How would Sylvia’s and her grandmother’s lives have changed if they had the ten dollars from the stranger?

9. What creates suspicion in the grandmother's and the hunter's mind that Sylvia has seen the white heron at some time?

II Answer the following in about a page:

1. Describe Sylvia's life in her grandmother's farm.
2. Bring out the cordiality between Sylvia and her grandmother.
3. Do you think the stranger tries to exploit Sylvia's fondness for him and Mrs. Tilley's need for money? Explain.
4. Describe the efforts made by Sylvia to locate the heron's nest?
5. How does the author bring nature into the story through the landscape of the farm and the area that surrounds it?

III Answer the following in about two pages:

1. The writer blends the plot seamlessly with the pristine beauty of nature. Elucidate.
2. Nature nurtures while the hunter destroys. Discuss the reassertion of gender stereotypes in the story.
3. Sylvia's sacrifice shows her undying love for the White Heron. Substantiate.
4. Sylvia's love for nature and the hunter's passion for taxidermy are juxtaposed in the story. Discuss.
4. Sylvia is an ecofeminist in her own right. Elaborate.

Suggested Reading:

1. Farmer Finch- Sarah Orne Jewett
2. The Evacuee (Poem) -R.S.Thomas
3. On Killing a Tree (Poem) -G. Patel

Extended Activity:

1. Visit a Bird Sanctuary.
2. Make a list of the endangered birds of India.
3. Volunteer to become a member of the ZED Foundation which runs the *Gubbhi Goodu* (Sparrow's Nest). 'Bring Sparrows back to Bangalore' campaign.

e -source:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saalumarada_Thimmakka

7. SWAMI VIVEKANANDA'S CHICAGO SPEECH OF 1893

Pre reading Activities:

- *Mention your favourite motivational speaker who has inspired you to change your personality?*
- *Who do you consider as an icon for the youth in the present times?*
- *'Love for all Religions' display this ideology through various forms of non-scholastic activities.*



Note on the speaker:

Swami Vivekananda (12 January 1863-4 July 1902) born Narendranath Datta was an Indian Hindu monk, and a chief disciple of Sri Ramakrishna Paramhansa. Vivekananda played a key role in the introduction of Indian Yoga and Vedanta philosophy in the West. He taught a philosophy of traditional meditation and selfless service.

The excerpt from the speech educates us on the cause of variance in religions and overcoming this variance through virtues of tolerance, harmony and peace. Swami Vivekananda had been an inspiration for the youth of his time, and continues to be an inspiration for the youth of today.

Swami Vivekananda heard about the **World's Parliament of Religions to be held in Chicago in 1893**. His friends and admirers in India wanted him to attend the Parliament. He too felt that the Parliament would provide the right forum to present his master's message to the world, and so he decided to go to America. Another reason which prompted Swami Vivekananda to go to America was to seek financial help for his project of uplifting the masses. Swami Vivekananda, however, wanted to have an inner certitude and divine call regarding his mission. Both of these he got while he sat in deep meditation on the rock-island at Kanyakumari. With the funds partly collected by his Chennai disciples and partly provided by the Raja of Khetri, Swami Vivekananda left for America from Mumbai on 31 May 1893. Swami Vivekananda was overwhelmed by the grand

welcome accorded to him at the World's Parliament of Religions, to which he responded through his mesmerizing speech.....

RESPONSE TO WELCOME

Sisters and Brothers of America,

It fills my heart with joy unspeakable to rise in response to the warm and cordial welcome which you have given us. I thank you in the name of the most ancient order of monks in the world; I thank you in the name of the mother of religions; and I thank you in the name of millions and millions of Hindu people of all classes and sects. My thanks, also, to some of the speakers on this platform who, referring to the delegates from the Orient, have told you that these men from far-off nations may well claim the honour of bearing to different lands the idea of toleration. I am proud to belong to a religion which has taught the world both tolerance and universal acceptance. We believe not only in universal toleration, but we accept all religions as true. I am proud to belong to a nation which has sheltered the persecuted and the refugees of all religions and all nations of the earth. I am proud to tell you that we have gathered in our bosom the purest remnant of the Israelites, who came to Southern India and took refuge with us in the very year in which their holy temple was shattered to pieces by Roman tyranny....

Why We Disagree 15 Sep 1893

I will tell you a little story. You have heard the eloquent speaker who has just finished say, "Let us cease from abusing each other," and he was very sorry that there should be always so much variance. But I think I should tell you a story which would illustrate the cause of this variance.

A frog lived in a well.

It had lived there for a long time. It was born there and brought up there, and yet was a little, small frog. Of course the evolutionists were not there then to tell us whether the frog lost its eyes or not, but, for our story's sake, we must take it for granted that it had its eyes, and that it every day cleansed the water of all the worms and bacilli that lived in it with an energy that would do credit to our modern bacteriologists. In this way it went on and became a little sleek and fat.

Well, one day another frog that lived in the sea came and fell into the well

"Where are you from?"

"I am from the sea."

"The sea! How big is that? Is it as big as my well?" and he took a leap from one side of the well to the other.

"My friend," said the frog of the sea, "how do you compare the sea with your little well?"

Then the frog took another leap and asked, "Is your sea so big?" "What nonsense you speak, to compare the sea with your well!"

"Well, then," said the frog of the well, "nothing can be bigger than my well; there can be nothing bigger than this; this fellow is a liar, so turn him out."

That has been the difficulty all the while. I am a Hindu. I am sitting in my own little well and thinking that the whole world is my little well.

The Christian sits in his little well and thinks the whole world is his well. The Mohammedan sits in his little well and thinks that is the whole world. I have to thank you of America for the great attempt you are making to break down the barriers of this little world of ours, and hope that, in the future, the Lord will help you to accomplish your purpose.

Paper on Hinduism Read at the Parliament on 19th September, 1893

The Hindus have received their religion through revelation, the Vedas. They hold that the Vedas are without beginning and without end. It may sound ludicrous to this audience, how a book can be without beginning or end. But by the Vedas no books are meant. They mean the accumulated treasury of spiritual laws discovered by different persons in different times. Just as the law of gravitation existed before its discovery, and would exist if all humanity forgot it, so is it with the laws that govern the spiritual world. The moral, ethical, and spiritual relations between soul and soul and between individual spirits and the Father of all spirits, were there before their discovery, and would remain even if we forgot them.

The discoverers of these laws are called Rishis, and we honour them as perfected beings. I am glad to tell this audience that some of the very greatest of them were women. Here it may be said that these laws as laws may be without end, but they must have had a beginning. The Vedas teach us that creation is without beginning or end.

The Vedas declare, "No". I am a spirit living in a body. I am not the body. The body will die, but I shall not die. Here am I in this body; it will fall, but I shall go on living. I had also a past. The soul was not created, for creation means a combination which means a certain future dissolution. If then the soul was created, it must die. Some are born happy; enjoy perfect health, with beautiful body, mental vigor and all wants

supplied. Others are born miserable, some are without hands or feet, others again are idiots and only drag on a wretched existence. Why, if they are all created, why does a just and merciful God create one happy and another unhappy, why is He so partial? Nor would it mend matters in the least to hold that those who are miserable in this life will be happy in a future one. Why should a man be miserable even here in the reign of a just and merciful God? In the second place, the idea of a creator God does not explain the anomaly, but simply expresses the cruel fiat of an all-powerful being. There must have been causes, then, before his birth, to make a man miserable or happy and those were his past actions. There are other tendencies peculiar to a soul caused by its past actions. And a soul with a certain tendency would by the laws of affinity take birth in a body which is the fittest instrument for the display of that tendency. This is in accord with science wants to explain everything by habit, and habit is got through repetitions. So repetitions are necessary to explain the natural habits of a new-born soul. And since they were not obtained in this present life, they must have come down from past lives.....

And what is God's nature? He is everywhere, the pure and formless One, the Almighty and the All-merciful. "Thou art our father, Thou art our mother, Thou art our beloved friend, Thou art the source of all strength; give us strength. Thou art He that beareth the burdens of the universe; help me bear the little burden of this life." Thus sang the Rishis of the Vedas. And how to worship Him? Through love. "He is to be worshipped as the one beloved, dearer than everything in this and the next life." This is the doctrine of love declared in the Vedas....

It is good to love God for hope of reward in this or the next world, but it is better to love God for love's sake, and the prayer goes: "Lord, I do not want wealth, or children, or learning. If it be Thy will, I shall go from birth to birth, but grant me this, that I may love Thee without the hope of reward--love unselfishly for love's sake." One of the disciples of Krishna, the then Emperor of India, was driven from his kingdom by his enemies and had to take shelter with his queen in a forest in the Himalayas, and there one day the queen asked him how it was that he, the most virtuous of men, should suffer so much misery. Yudhishtira answered, "Behold, my queen, the Himalayas, how grand and beautiful they are; I love them. They do not give me anything, but my nature is to love the grand, the beautiful, therefore I love them. Similarly, I love the Lord. He is the source of all beauty, of all sublimity. He is the only object to be loved; my nature is to love Him, and therefore I love. I

do not pray for anything; I do not ask for anything. Let Him place me wherever He likes. I must love Him for love's sake. I cannot trade love."

The Vedas teach that the soul is divine, only held in the bondage of matter; perfection will be reached when this bond will burst, and the word they use for it is therefore, Mukti-- freedom, freedom from the bonds of imperfection, freedom from death and misery. And this bondage can only fall off through the mercy of God, and this mercy comes on the pure. So purity is the condition of His mercy. How does that mercy act? He reveals Himself to the pure heart; the pure and the stainless see God, yea, even in this life; then and then only all the crookedness of the heart is made straight. Then all doubt ceases. He is no more the freak of a terrible law of causation. This is the very centre, the very vital conception of Hinduism.....

Address at the Final Session 27th September, 1893.

The World's Parliament of Religions has become an accomplished fact, and the merciful Father has helped those who laboured to bring it into existence, and crowned with success their most unselfish labour. My thanks to those noble souls whose large hearts and love of truth first dreamed this wonderful dream and then realised it. My thanks to the shower of liberal sentiments that has overflowed this platform. My thanks to this enlightened audience for their uniform kindness to me and for their appreciation of every thought that tends to smooth the friction of religions. A few jarring notes were heard from time to time in this harmony. My special thanks to them, for they have, by their striking contrast, made general harmony the sweeter.

Much has been said of the common ground of religious unity. I am not going just now to venture my own theory. But if anyone here hopes that this unity will come by the triumph of any one of the religions and the destruction of the other, to him I say, "Brother, yours is an impossible hope." Do I wish that the Christian would become Hindu? God forbid. Do I wish that the Hindu or Buddhist would become Christian? God forbid. The seed is put in the ground, and earth and air and water are placed around it. Does the seed become the earth, or the air, or the water? No. It becomes a plant, it develops after the law of its own growth, assimilates the air, the earth, and the water, converts them into plant substance, and grows into a plant.

Similar is the case with religion. The Christian is not to become a Hindu or a Buddhist, nor a Hindu or a Buddhist to become a Christian. But each must assimilate

the spirit of the others and yet preserve his individuality and grow according to his own law of growth. If the Parliament of Religions has shown anything to the world it is this: It has proved to the world that holiness, purity and charity are not the exclusive possessions of any church in the world, and that every system has produced men and women of the most exalted character. In the face of this evidence, if anybody dreams of the exclusive survival of his own religion and the destruction of the others, I pity him from the bottom of my heart, and point out to him that upon the banner of every religion will soon be written, in spite of resistance: "Help and not Fight," "Assimilation and not Destruction," "Harmony and Peace and not Dissension."

GLOSSARY:

affinity	: natural liking or understanding
ludicrous	: ridiculous, unreasonable
treasury	: the funds or revenue of a state.
grovelling	: act humbly to obtain forgiveness
vigour	: physical strength and good health
delusive	: a mistaken belief
dissension	: disagreement within a group.
assimilation	: absorb into a larger group
anomaly	: something that deviates from what is normal or standard
revelation	: the act of revealing.
fiat	: an official order.

Comprehension Questions:

I Answer the following in a word or sentence:

1. What has Swami Vivekananda's religion taught the world?
2. What makes Swami Vivekananda proud of his nation?
3. *Mukti*-- freedom, freedom from the bonds of _____, freedom
From _____ and misery.
4. What do Vedas teach us?
5. What is the doctrine of love declared in the Vedas?
6. According to Swami Vivekananda, Vedas are_____.

II Answer the following in about a page:

1. How did Swami Vivekananda respond to the welcome given to him at the World's Parliament of Religions in Chicago?
2. What story does Swami Vivekananda narrate to illustrate the cause of variance in religions?
3. Discuss Swami Vivekananda's views on creation of body and spirit.
4. What is Swami Vivekananda's perspective of God?
5. How does Swami Vivekananda put forth his views about, love of God through the example of Yudhisthira?

III Answer the following in about two pages:

1. According to Swami Vivekananda, the banner of all religions will be 'Assimilation and not Destruction, Harmony and Peace and not Dissension' – Justify .
2. It is good to love God for hope of reward in this or the next world, but it is better to love God for love's sake—Elucidate.
3. Swami Vivekananda's speech conveys the message of Indian wisdom to the world. Substantiate.

Suggested Reading:

Biography of Swami Vivekananda.

'Long Walk to freedom' - Nelson Mandela.

'Steve Jobs' - Walter Isaacson.

Extended Activity:

Have a Declamation Competition in the class.

Listen to motivational speeches in the audio-visual room.

Conduct awareness programmes/role plays, depicting the importance of Unity of Religions.

e– source:

<https://www.daytranslations.com/blog/2017/08/inspiring-speeches-history-9514/>