

THE LAST TRUCK RIDE

Note: The transactional processes suggested in CISCE curriculum are highlighted in grey.

Learning Outcomes

- To realise the importance of conservation
- To note the importance of interdependence
- To evaluate and sum up the ideas presented
- To observe the use of the senses in the story



Pre-reading

This section focuses on *assessment for learning* as it informs the reader that it is a lesson about the environment and environmental hazards.

Pair work

Encourage students to do the Pre-reading exercise given in the Reader. Let pairs share their points with the entire class.

Discuss the harmful effects of deforestation.

Some points for discussion: *Plants and animals are on the verge of extinction due to deforestation. Many wild animals have started moving to urban areas as a result of deforestation. Trees absorb carbon dioxide and release oxygen, thus acting as natural friends of humans. Deforestation increases the amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere leading to global warming. Trees absorb water in large quantities during heavy rains. With deforestation, there are fewer trees to retain water, causing heavy floods and loss of life and property. Deforestation has led to a rise in average temperatures on the earth. This would lead to melting of glaciers which in turn would lead to a rise in the sea levels, leading to submersion of coastal areas.*

Now ask

- what quarrying means. (Cut into rock or ground to obtain stone or other materials.)
- why people do this. (To obtain material for construction purposes, etc)

Proceed to tell students that they will be reading a story by Ruskin Bond that subtly talks about the importance of trees and vast stretches of barren land that can result from deforestation.

Through the course of the reading exercise, pause to ask students what they see, hear, smell and feel in the way the text is presented. Explain that such descriptions help readers experience the situations the way the writer himself does. Encourage or assist students to identify the words that helped them create the mental image and emotions.

Note: The input given in the table is for the teacher's reference. Do not share with the class. Allow students to identify the words that relate to the headings.

READING

Students read to analyse, scan for details, categorise

See (visual display)	Hear	Smell	Feel
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A herd of goats... enveloped the goat herds...hill road ● (Description of Nathu and Pritam) grey moustache, sturdy boy ... face ● Bare and dry hills, few scraggy oaks ... hillside, scarred hills ● The dust was everywhere... his lips ● hillside blossomed outwards ● shrubs and small trees were flung...destroyed ● sky above...below saw Pritam's arm...chest 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A horn blared, shattering the silence of the mountains ● Rattled ... road ● Pritam ... music to his ears ● sharp crack of explosives ● pressed hard on his horn ... chunks of rock ● banging his door shut 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Smell rain ... north 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Different kind of dust, stinging the eyes, irritating the nostrils ● Smarting all over ● Steering wheel...chest

Beginning

- A horn blared...scarred by quarrying

Who are the two people in the truck? How do you think they make a living? The sound of his horn was music to Pritam's ears. Would it be the same for the others on the road? Why would it be different? (Pritam was a truck driver and spent most of his time driving and sounding his horn. It did not disturb him in any way as he was used to it. The same sound would be annoying for a bystander as it would be nothing other than noise pollution.) 'The hills were bare... quarrying': What does the paragraph convey?

- "Are your hills ... The blasting was in progress.

What do these paragraphs tell us? (the damage caused by deforestation through quarrying; The contrast projected — the barren land set against the hills near Nathu's house which are still green with fruit-trees; the absence of rain could be due to the absence of sufficient trees; the rain that is expected can only help settle the dust; the harmful dust was not just affecting plants but humans as well)

Middle

- Pritam Singh brought...rattled on its hinges

Ask students: What did they see through the windscreen?

What 'signs of life' are being referred to here? Why do you think they are missing?

This section focuses on *assessment for learning* as it indicates to the reader the kind of destruction that takes place due to the blasting of the explosives.

(Ans: The 'signs of life' that are being referred to here are common things found in the mountains such as brooks and streams, birdsong, goats and cattle, people, plants and trees, wind blowing through the trees and so on. These signs are missing because the mountains have been blasted to bits. Therefore, there is no place for these living things here.

Suggested answer. Accept any logical answer.)



What did the sight reflect? What was Nathu's worry?

What sounds have we heard up to now? Do we naturally associate these sounds with the mountains? Why or why not?

This section focuses on *assessment for learning*. It invites the reader to experience the emotions of Pritam and Nathu at the quarry.

(Ans: Until now, we have heard the sounds of horns blaring, the rattling of vehicles, explosives, rocks earth and vegetation getting blown up. No, we do not associate these sounds with the mountains because they are not naturally found there.)

Suggested answer. Accept any logical answer.

Who was affected more by the quarrying – Pritam or Nathu? Explain why you think so.

End

- *Not so fast... bottom of the gorge.*

Why did Nathu ask Pritam to be careful that day? (Explain the term premonition: a feeling of anxiety over a future event) As they swung round... narrow road: How does this paragraph create a feeling of fear/excitement/uneasiness? What was the reason for the truck tipping over the edge? How did Nathu escape? What prevented the truck from hurtling down further? If the oak tree could talk, what would it have said? (Allow free response)

- *Nathu had landed on a bed ... "I'll remember," said Nathu.*

How did Nathu make his way towards Pritam? In what condition did Nathu find Pritam? Why was Nathu terrified and not relieved upon finding Pritam?

What saved Nathu and Pritam?

This section focuses on *assessment for learning*. It reveals to the reader the irony of the situation.

(Ans: The tree saved Nathu and Pritam.)

What was Nathu's plan?

Why are they silent? What could they be thinking at this time?

This section focuses on *assessment for learning*. The question helps the reader ponder at the intensity of the silence – a silence that recognises the extent to which man has destroyed Nature and the need for an end to this destruction.

(Ans: They are silent because they are shocked and overwhelmed by what happened. They have felt the impact of unchecked development in a way that they never imagined. They are probably thinking of what might have happened had the tree not been there.)

Suggested answer. Accept any logical answer.

What does Pritam's last message tell us? (Life is all about interdependence; destroying trees would eventually lead to our own downfall.)

Post-reading

Work in groups and write a passage on how Ruskin Bond has used Nathu to convey a message.

GRAMMAR

Future time

Call two students to the front of the class to role-play the dialogue given.

1. Rima: *I'm going to visit Ms Agarwal, our old English teacher, tomorrow.*
2. Maya: *I'll come with you.*

3. Rima: *I think Anita will join us. She too likes Ms Agarwal.*
4. Maya: *Let's walk home fast! It's going to rain soon.*

Ask students:

Did Rima make the decision to visit now or earlier? (Earlier)

Did Maya decide now or earlier? (Now)

Is Rima sure about Anita joining them? (No, she only predicts it.)

How does Maya predict that it's going to rain soon? (Perhaps clouds are gathering fast and it is getting dark.)

Underline *will* and *going to* in the sentences now.

Tell students:

Sentence 1: *Going to* is used to **talk about plans made earlier.**

Sentence 4: *Going to* is used to **talk about predictions that are sure to happen.**

Sentence 2: *Will* is used to talk **about plans made just before talking.**

Sentence 3: *Will* is used to **talk about predictions that may or may not happen.**

Write the following sentences on the board:

I think it will be cold tonight. / I will call you tomorrow. / I will switch on the fan. / We are going to buy a new car. / It is going to rain. / I am watching the movie 'Avatar' on Saturday. / Our principal is flying to Delhi tomorrow to attend a meeting. / Our new term starts in June. / The plane leaves at 5 o'clock.

Write down the following words:

talking about possible future events, intentions, decisions made at the time of talking, actions planned or decided, actions which we see coming now, fixed plans with time and place decided, timetable/schedule

Ask students to match these words with the sentences. Ask them if they are talking about the past, present or future.

Write on the board:

By the end of this year my sister will have saved enough money to buy a doll's house.

The boys will have finished their homework by the time we get back home.

Tell students that the underlined words are the future perfect tense.

We use the **future perfect tense** to **describe an action that will be completed or finished at a point in the future.**

Now with the help of the inputs in the Reader, complete the exercises given.

VOCABULARY

Reporting words

Write the following words on the board.

asked – argued – warned – complained – advised

Pair work

Write the sentences on the board and ask pairs to state the words that can replace *said* in each sentence.

1. *Reema said "Nobody informed me about the programme. That's not fair"*
2. *"Do not play near the fire." Tommy said.*
3. *I don't agree with what you just stated! said Sharad*
4. *"Can you hear me now?" said Gita.*
5. *"You should walk for an hour every day", said the doctor.*

Explain how these words convey a clear way of expressing when used.

Encourage students to come up with a few more words and use them in sentences appropriately.

LISTENING

While listening – global warming passage

Tell students that they will be listening to a passage on global warming. Instruct them to listen carefully and fill in the blanks as they listen.

Play the audio track once and let students do the task. Play it once again, so that students fill in the answers that they may have missed out / check their work.

Review the answers.

Take it further by brainstorming for more ideas to prevent global warming other than what they have heard.

(Use less heat and air-conditioning; Use energy efficient products; Save electricity by switching off lights and fans when not required; Plant more trees; Use less hot water as it takes a lot of energy to heat water...)

SPEAKING

Make and respond to suggestions

This task can be used for *assessment as learning* as students learn to make suggestions and respond to them politely. The class assesses the students while they communicate using the right words and expressions.

Explain to students the importance of being polite while talking.

Tell the class:

- When you ask someone to do something, give them the option to refuse or accept. Let them make the choice between what you want and what they want and feel free to say *'I'm sorry, I'd rather not do that'* if they do not agree.
- If you have a suggestion, give people the option to accept or refuse it, and give them the option to think of a suggestion of their own.

Read the sample conversation and the different ways to make suggestions and to respond.

Let students work in pairs and do the task.

Monitor the activity.



WRITING

Essay

Note: Help students set their objectives (*Why do I want to write this?*)

Guide students through every step. Share the sample passage and guidelines with them but encourage them to write their own composition.

Using notes to write an essay

What is an essay?

An essay is a piece of writing that is usually written in a formal style expressing one's views on a topic.

Why do I write this essay?

- To introduce the subject and opinion
- To present various ideas in a coherent manner

How do I write an essay with the given input?

Collect the material for the essay: It is important to collect information that is relevant to the topic and you can begin by jotting down what you already know about the topic. Use this information to expand on the given ideas. You can also discuss with your partner before writing.

Begin the essay with an introduction: A good introduction reflects what you are talking about. This should contain some information on the topic of the essay or some explanation of what you understand by the topic.

Follow this up with the body of the essay. The body comprises 4-5 paragraphs and develops the main points with examples and illustrations. This is where you will need to think about the structure of your essay and make sure your points are in order. Refer to the given notes carefully and organise the ideas coherently.

Use the points given at the end to conclude the essay. The conclusion summarises the main idea.

LIFE SKILLS

Discussing the question in this section will focus on *Naturalistic intelligence* which is related to environmental issues, plants and animals. Students will develop sensitivity towards conserving our environment.

STUDENTS' BOOK ANSWER KEY

The Last Truck Ride

Pre-reading

- Free response*
- This can destroy the environment and everything that lives in it.
Suggested answer. Accept any logical answer.

Comprehension

- A.** 1. Rising Action – Pritam and Nathu, with a truckload of limestone rocks, set out on a mountain road. While Pritam drove swiftly along the sharp bends, Nathu felt nervous and dizzy and asked Pritam to drive slower.
Climax – As the road started descending steeply to the valley, a stray mule suddenly appeared on the road. Pritam swung the steering wheel to the right; but the road turned left and so the truck went straight over the edge. The truck tipped over, hanging for a few seconds on the edge of the cliff. Then, it pitched forward, and as it struck a rocky outcrop, the door near Nathu burst open. He was thrown out. The truck hurtled forward, bouncing over the rocks, turning over on its side and rolling over twice before coming to rest against the trunk of a scraggy old oak tree.
Falling Action – Nathu had landed on a bed of nettles. He was smarting all over, but he wasn't really hurt. He skidded down the steep slope, calling out Pritam's name but there was no answer. Then he saw Pritam's arm and half his body jutting out of the open door of the truck. When Nathu came nearer, he saw Pritam jammed in the driver's seat, held there by the steering wheel which was pressed hard against his chest. Nathu thought he was dead. Pritam opened one blackened swollen eye and looked straight up at Nathu.
Conclusion – After recovering from the accident both Pritam and Nathu decided to discontinue their work on the mountains and go back to their respective villages. Nathu concluded that it was better to grow something instead of blasting rocks. And Pritam, in particular, understood the importance of trees as one scraggy old oak tree had saved his life.
- B.** 1. a. The hills were bare and dry because quarrying for limestone had destroyed the surface of the hills and consequently, affected the soil and water. This, in turn, led to the destruction of the natural vegetation in the region.
b. They were going to a quarrying site to collect a truckload of limestone rocks.
c. The hills near Nathu's village were different in the sense that quarrying had not begun there yet and so, there were still a few trees and some of them, like the walnut tree in front of Nathu's house, still produced some fruit.
2. a. These lines describe the act of quarrying and what it does to the land. In the text, these lines refer to the blasting of the mountains for limestone and tell us how the mountains were reduced to rubble.
b. As Nathu watched the sight, he felt awestruck at the sheer force with which the mountains and vegetation were being torn apart. He felt fear when he saw the trees being torn from their roots and flung aside. He also became worried for the trees in and around his native village and wondered if they too would meet the same fate.
c. Yes, Pritam seemed to be indifferent to the blasting and its effects. He just blew the horn of his truck loudly to let the people at the site know that he had come.
3. a. Nathu said this to Pritam.
b. Nathu was talking about feeling dizzy and uncomfortable from Pritam's fast driving along the narrow mountain roads. He also mentioned a feeling of nervousness that seemed to emerge from a sense that something was not right.
c. Nathu's feeling turned out to be true when they met with an accident and their truck went over the cliff.

- C.** 1. Yes, Pritam Singh and Nathu share a deep relationship. Both Pritam and Nathu discuss how the hills are being destroyed by continuous blasting and quarrying as well as a fondness for the land which is their home. These shared feelings about the common region that they call home show the bond between them. Later, when Nathu searches for Pritam after the truck accident, we notice that he is terrified to see Pritam jammed in his driver's seat and is relieved to find him alive. Later, he goes to see how he is doing. This is followed by Pritam suggesting where and how Nathu can find work, after which he offers wise advice to Nathu, on respecting and looking after the environment. This shows that Pritam cares for Nathu and looks upon him with affection.
2. a. 1. iii 2. i 3. ii
- b. To show his concern about the destruction of natural resources, the author, Ruskin Bond depicts how a manmade activity, like limestone quarrying, leaves the mountain regions scarred, barren and deserted. The author presents a bare and dry picture of the hills. Trees are gradually disappearing and the hills are being scarred by quarrying. A moving picture is presented as Nathu is awestruck at seeing shrubs and trees flung into the air and destroyed after blasting. Nathu wonders if the trees in his village would suffer the same fate. Nathu's feelings reflect the author's concern.
- He has tried to compare the areas which have not yet been subjected to quarrying, to this particular quarrying site in the text in order to highlight the fast depleting natural resources. The author conveys the message that the earth would soon be bare and dusty like the hills in the story, without trees and water and that, in order to save ourselves and the planet, we must stop destroying nature. The last comment by Pritam Singh to Nathu, presents the author's own views to the reader—'It was the tree that saved me. Remember that, boy.'
- c. At the end of the story, the reader does feel that all hope is not lost because both the characters, Pritam Singh and Nathu decide to go back to their homes. Pritam resolves to grow something on the land rather than to blast something out of it. Also, Pritam Singh serves as the author's mouthpiece at the end by asking the readers to remember the importance of trees. The story ends on an optimistic note. The tree that prevents Pritam's truck from falling into the gorge acts as a symbol for the preservation of nature. This indicates that a single tree can save a life. Therefore, it is conveyed that there is still scope for survival if we begin to conserve nature immediately.

Grammar

- A.** 2. We are going to take our exams next month.
 3. The theatre will open at 9 pm next Tuesday.
 4. My friend will play her first football match on Sunday.
 5. When are you going to return from Coorg?
 6. I feel that the team is going to win the match tomorrow.
 7. The vet believes that the cat will recover soon.
- B.** 2. will have turned 3. will have lived 4. will have addressed
 5. will have made 6. will have risen

Vocabulary

1. exclaimed 2. protested 3. insisted 4. requested 5. admitted

Listening

Listening text

Listen to a passage on ways to prevent global warming. As you listen, complete these sentences.

Global warming is a problem that affects every country and every person in the world. First of all, governments must agree to stop the destruction of the world's rainforests. Secondly, they must agree to reduce the amount of carbon dioxide that vehicles and industries emit into the atmosphere. And we can all play a part as well. We should all try to reduce the amount of carbon dioxide we emit into the atmosphere. This can be done by driving fuel-efficient vehicles and by driving only when we have to. Possibly the best thing we can do is to use public transport as much as possible, instead of cars or motorcycles. Finally, we must plant more trees in our cities and in our neighbourhoods.

- Answers:** 1. stop the destruction 2. vehicles and industries 3. try to reduce
4. fuel-efficient vehicles 5. public transport 6. plant more trees

Speaking

Free response

Writing

Free response

Spelling

1. accommodation 2. quarry 3. manageable 4. terrified
5. approached 6. development 7. desperate 8. environment

Life Skills

Free response

ANSWER KEY TO WORKSHEET 11

- A.** 1. She is going to come to your house tomorrow.
2. I will go to the dentist tomorrow.
3. Abhi is going to bake a cake for his brother.
4. Preeti will turn eleven years old next week.
- B.** 1. will have bloomed 2. will have finished 3. will have returned
4. will have read 5. will have left 6. will have dried
7. will have started
- C.** 1. pleaded 2. roared 3. murmuring
4. ordered 5. babbled 6. blurted
- D.** 1. unchecked development, human greed, climate change, harmful chemicals
2. The activities in the picture cause great harm to the environment by spoiling the

air, water and land thus ruining it for all the animals and plants that depend on it for survival.

Suggested answer. Accept any logical answer.

3. The picture reminds that these activities are harmful to the environment and are going on unchecked and that we need to stop doing this before it is too late.

Suggested answer. Accept any logical answer.

4. use clean energy, reduce and aim to prevent pollution, stop unchecked development especially when it can harm the environment, reduce our consumption of resources and avoid wasting them

Suggested answer. Accept any logical answer.

5. *Free response*

QUESTION BANK

The Last Truck

A. Answer in brief.

1. How were the hills where Nathu's village was located, different from the range of hills with quarries?

Ans: The hills where Nathu lived still had a few trees. There was a walnut tree in front of his house and there was also a river from where they could get water. The hill with the quarry was without any trees and they were bare and dry due to quarrying.

2. Describe the atmosphere around the quarry.

Ans: There was dust everywhere. Even the truck was full of it. There was thick dust on the leaves, shrubs and on the few trees around the quarry. Closer to the quarry, it was even worse as the white limestone dust stung the eyes and irritated the nostrils. The limestone dust was hanging in the air.

B. Answer in detail.

1. What was Nathu frightened of? Why?

Ans: As the blasting of the limestone on the hill was in progress, both Nathu and Pritam sat and watched the shrubs and small trees getting flung into the air. This scene frightened Nathu as he remembered his own village in the hills. He had a walnut tree in front of his house which gave them two baskets of walnuts every year. He wondered if he would lose that tree and the other trees, in which case they would also suffer the same fate as the trees on this range. He was afraid that the mountains there too would become barren with no water, grass or trees and only the choking dust of the quarries would remain.

2. What caused the accident of the truck? What happened to Nathu and Pritam?

Ans: Pritam got into the truck after filling the truck with stones. He was in good spirits and swung the vehicle very fast around the sharp bends of the winding mountain road, much to Nathu's discomfort. Despite Nathu's request not to drive fast, Pritam continued driving fast. After maneuvering a few hairpin bends, Pritam had to drive the truck downhill when he had to swerve right to avoid a stray mule in the middle of the road but the road turned left taking the truck straight over the

edge. It hurtled forward and bouncing over, and came to a halt against the trunk of an old oak tree on the side of the cliff. Both Nathu and Pritam survived the accident, though Pritam Singh was severely injured.

C. Choose the correct answer.

What did Pritam and Nathu learn from the accident?

- Quarries produce a lot of dust and increases air pollution.
- Driving fast on a hairpin bend can cause disaster.
- Trees play an important role in our lives and we must not destroy them.

Ans: c

D. Read the lines and answer the questions.

"Let's wait a bit," he said.

- Who speaks the above line and to whom?
- Why did they halt?
- What did they witness from their seats in the truck?

Ans: a. The above is spoken by Pritam Singh to his cleaner boy Nathu.

- The blasting in the quarry was in progress. Hence they had to halt till the dust cleared.
- They saw there were no signs of life around them. Suddenly they saw the hill explode with earth and rock hurtling down the hillside.

E. Answer in brief. (Think and answer)

- Ruskin Bond has used words like *scraggy, scarred, blast, choke, bare* and so on in the text to suggest something. What picture do these words bring to your mind?

Ans: The words used bring out the picture of polluted, dry and barren atmosphere prevailing in the hills in place of forests, greenery and pleasant weather. Ruskin Bond has painted a very drab picture of the hill to bring out the negative effects of quarrying. It is unfortunate that we have not done anything to preserve the natural beauty that is abundant in the hills.

- Do you agree that Nathu has taken the right decision of going back to his home and working on the land? Give reasons.

Ans: Yes, I agree with Nathu's decision. It was evident that he was unhappy about the way the beautiful hills were getting destroyed. He was afraid that the hills surrounding his village would also be destroyed soon. He wanted to do something in his own small way to protect the environment. So his decision was right.

F. Answer in detail. (Think and answer)

Why was Pritam Singh indebted to the tree at the end? What is the message conveyed here?

Ans: Pritam and Nathu were involved in a terrible accident on the hill road. Nathu was lucky to be thrown out of the truck and did not get injured much. Pritam on the other hand was in the truck when it rolled over the edge and was about to plunge into the gorge, but for the trunk of an old oak tree which held the truck from falling down. It was the tree that saved his life. The underlying message here is to remind us about the importance of preserving our environment. Trees are ruthlessly being cut everywhere for commercialisation. In the case of Pritam, it is a single tree, but we have no idea of the many different ways protection of our environment can help save our lives in future.