

The Longest Train Journey

Before you read :

- * *Have you ever travelled a long distance by a train ?*
- * *Do you know which is the longest running train in India ?*

(Malabika and Shikha went to Kanyakumari last year by the Vivek Express. Given below is an extract from Malabika's experience during the journey.)

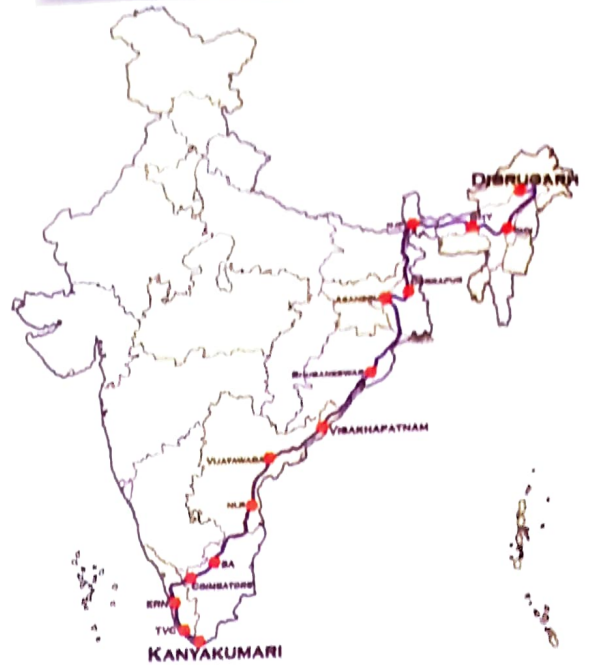
At last the long awaited summer vacation arrived. I chose Kanyakumari as my summer destination. I preferred to travel by train. Train journeys are quite exciting. I have travelled to several places in India by train and had made some of the best memories during those journeys. It is fascinating how a train journey enhances our knowledge about cultures, regions, languages and cuisines. Another advantage of a train journey is that it gives an opportunity to interact with different people.

My colleague Shikha also wished to accompany me in this journey. So we booked two tickets for the Vivek Express. We also made all the necessary arrangements for the trip. As Shikha and I are the residents of Murkongselek, a village in Dhemaji district, we had to go to Guwahati a day in advance of our Kanyakumari trip. Accordingly we arrived at Guwahati by the Kamakhya-Murkongselek Lachit Express. We spent the night in Guwahati. Next day we arrived at the Guwahati Railway Station with our luggage.



The Dibrugarh-Kanyakumari Vivek Express is a weekly express train. It runs from Dibrugarh, Assam to Kanyakumari, Tamil Nadu. This Vivek Express was started to commemorate the 150th birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda. The train takes

about 83 hours to reach Kanyakumari from Dibrugarh. It covers a distance of 4,233 kilometres and passes through eight states in India. In the Indian subcontinent it holds the record of being the longest running train in terms of both distance and time. The train has 56 halts across its route. It passes through Assam, Nagaland, West Bengal, Bihar, Odisha, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala and Tamil Nadu.



When we reached the Guwahati Railway Station to board the Vivek Express, it presented a scene of confusion. Besides the passengers, it was crowded with people who had come to see off their friends and relatives. At 11.30 a.m. the Vivek Express arrived at the station. The passengers made a great rush to board the train. We got into our compartment. People of all communities were huddled together in the compartment. Some of the passengers were rude and some were polite. At 11.45 a.m. the guard blew his whistle and waved off the green flag. The bell rang and the engine with a loud whistle glided smoothly out of the station.

At last our most awaited journey began. After two hours we reached Goalpara. We crossed the Naranarayan Setu which is over the mighty river Brahmaputra. This is really a beautiful bridge. It has double decks with a railway track on the lower deck and a road on the upper deck. At 3 p.m. we reached the New Bongaigaon Station. We had some snacks and tea there. The Travelling Ticket Examiner (TTE) came around and checked our tickets.

At about 4.45 p.m. we reached the Alipur Duar Junction in West Bengal. Since the train was passing through the countryside of different places I was overwhelmed to see the scenic beauty of rural India. We saw paddy fields where farmers were harvesting crops. Cattle were also grazing on the open meadows.

Our train left the Alipur Duar Junction and continued its journey from state to state. At about 8.30 p.m. we had our dinner. The food was good. After dinner

Shikha and I began to chat with each other about our train journeys. She told me that once she along with her maternal uncle and aunt had travelled by the Maharajas' Express which is the most expensive luxury train in India. They travelled to places like Delhi, Agra, Jaipur, Bikaner, Jodhpur, Udaipur, the Ranthambore National Park, Khajuraho, Varanasi, Lucknow, Mumbai and Aurangabad. At 10 p.m. we reached New Jalpaiguri. Then I told Shikha that I wanted to take rest. As I was on a side lower berth, with windows open, I closed the windows and tried to sleep. Next day at 8 a.m. we reached Durgapur and had our breakfast. After breakfast, we chatted with our co-passengers. It was real fun.

At 4.30 p.m. we reached Cuttack. Thus we entered Odisha. At 5.10 p.m. we reached Bhubaneswar. It is the capital of Odisha and one of the largest cities of India. It is called the 'Temple City of India'. That day also we had our dinner at 8.30 p.m. but this time we ordered chapati and matar-paneer in place of rice and dal.

We bought some interesting novels in Cuttack. To get relief from the boredom of such a long journey, both of us decided to go through some of these novels. Two interesting novels that we bought were Khaled Hosseini's *The Kite Runner* and *A Thousand Splendid Suns*. Both of us decided to read these two books. While going through the books we discussed the writing style and themes of the books. In this way, after spending about 83 hours in the Vivek Express, we at last reached our destination Kanyakumari.

Kanyakumari is a city of Tamil Nadu. We stayed there for a week in a hotel. Notable landmarks of Kanyakumari are the Thiruvalluvar Statue, the Vivekananda Rock Memorial, the Gandhi Memorial Mandapam, the Tsunami Memorial Park etc. During our stay we visited all these landmarks. We also went for shopping and bought some traditional attire, bags, show pieces etc. After spending the week there we made our return journey.



Thiruvalluvar Statue

Word Notes :

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cuisine	:	a style of cooking
commemorate	:	memorialize
Swami Vivekananda	:	(12 January, 1863 --- 4 July, 1902) born as Narendranath Datta, was an Indian Hindu monk, who introduced Indian philosophy to the Western world
subcontinent	:	a large landmass that forms part of a continent
halt	:	to stop
compartment	:	one of the separate sections of a coach on a train
huddle	:	to gather closely together
deck	:	the roadway of a bridge
landmark	:	something that is officially designated and set aside for preservation

Remember the words

awaited	vacation	destination	fascinating	advantage
opportunity	accompany	necessary	arrangements	luggage
weekly	commemorate	anniversary	distance	subcontinent
passengers	crowded	relatives	compartment	community
huddled	whistle	glided	smoothly	junction
harvesting	capital	landmarks	traditional	journey

For the teacher only

The students are expected to learn the use of conditionals or If clauses in sentences and some common errors in sentences.

Comprehension

1. Answer the following questions in complete sentences.
 - a) What is the summer destination of the narrator ?
 - b) Who accompanied the narrator in her journey ?
 - c) At what time did the Vivek Express arrive at the Guwahati Railway Station ?
 - d) Name the bridge over the mighty river Brahmaputra mentioned in the lesson.

- e) Which is the most expensive luxury train in India ?
f) Which city is called the 'Temple City of India' ?
2. What are the landmarks of Kanyakumari ?
 3. Write about the Vivek Express.
 4. Look at the following example.

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train : passengers, compartments, coach, tickets, TTE

Now write some related words of the following.

station, journey, river, breakfast

5. Write the different forms of degrees of the following.

good, fascinating, long, polite, great, loud,
luxurious, low, interesting, famous

Grammar and usage

A. Conditionals or If clauses

A conditional sentence has two clauses : one main clause and one subordinate clause. These two clauses depend on each other. In other words what we express in the main clause depends on what we express in the subordinate 'if' clause.

There are three types of conditions :

- a) Real condition
- b) Unreal condition
- c) Unfulfilled condition in the past.

a) Real Condition (factual and habitual) :

If one condition is fulfilled, the other will also be fulfilled.

Examples :

- i) If I have time, I will go there.
- ii) If you work hard, you will succeed.
- iii) If it rains, we shall not go out.
- iv) If you take a bath, you will feel fresh.
- v) If you eat junk food, you will fall sick.

b) Unreal Condition :

In such sentences the 'if' condition is never fulfilled.

Examples :

- i) If today were Saturday, it would be fun.
- ii) If I were a king, I could do many things.
- iii) If I were rich, I would travel around the world.

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c) Unfulfilled condition :

The condition here could have been fulfilled but it has not. There is no chance of it being fulfilled now.

Examples :

- i) If he had studied regularly, he would have passed the examination.
- ii) If you had left earlier, you would have caught the train.
- iii) If the firemen hadn't arrived in time, they couldn't have saved the house.
- iv) Ramesh would have offered us coffee if he had had milk in the canteen.

(Note : If the boy had known English, he would have written the application in English.)

or

The boy would have written the application in English if he had known English.)

Some other types of conditionals :

- If I eat butter, I grow fat.
- If water freezes, it turns to ice.
- If water boils, it changes into vapour.
- If you heat ice, it melts.

Activity 1

Fill in the blanks with the correct form of the verbs given in brackets.

- i) If he comes, I — (go) for a walk.
- ii) If you — (eat) too much, you will be ill.
- iii) He — (come) if you called him.
- iv) If he — (see) you, he would speak to you.

- v) If you had come, he — (meet) you.
- vi) If you — (listen) to my advice, you would not have had this problem.
- vii) My son always wakes up if he — (hear) any noise.
- viii) If they — (know) him, they — (talk) to him.
- ix) They would understand if you — (speak) to them politely.
- x) If you — (see) her, please — (ask) her to meet me.
- xi) If I — (know) this, I — (not make) such a mistake.

Activity 2

Rewrite the sentences as shown in the example.

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- i) I did not see him because I did not go there.

Ans : If I had gone there I would have seen him.

- ii) I was in a hurry and so I spilled the milk.

Ans : If I ____ (not be) in a hurry, I ____ (not spill) the milk.

- iii) I did not know her, so I did not talk to her.

Ans : ____ I ____ (know) her, I ____ (talk) to her.

- iv) You did not try again, so you failed.

Ans : If you ____ (try) again, you ____ (not fail).

- v) She did not have a degree, so she did not get the job.

Ans : If she ____ (have) a degree, she ____ (get) the job.

B.

Common Errors

(in using tenses)

Incorrect

1. He did not **wrote** the letter.
2. She **is going** to office by her car every day.
3. Ronit told me that he **will** give me a book.
4. He **did** not yet finished his assignment.
5. I wanted to **went** there.
6. The sun **is rising** in the east.
7. The girl **is** reading in this school since 2016.

Correct

- write
- goes
- would
- has
- go
- rises
- has been

Incorrect

Correct

8. Rupali is seeing a butterfly in the garden.
9. They are hearing a noise in the street.
10. I am feeling unwell.
11. He is understanding the poem now.
12. Chandana is knowing me well.
13. If I was a bird, I could fly.
14. He acts as if he is a magician.
15. The boy acted as though he was a superman.

- sees
hear
feel
understands
knows
were
were
were

(in using determiners)

16. The children are making noise.
17. Don't make a noise.
18. He lent me hundred rupees.
19. He always speaks truth.
20. It is a slip of pen.
21. It was a slip of tongue.
22. Is your father in hurry ?
23. Cow is a domestic animal.
24. The elephants are big animals.
25. He is an European.
26. Gitartha always goes to the school with his sister.
27. The child is as busy as bee.
28. The gold is a precious metal.
29. Earth is round.
30. Sky is blue.

- a noise
noise
a/one hundred
the truth
the pen
the tongue
a hurry
The cow
Elephants
a
school
a bee
Gold
The earth
The sky

Activity 3

Correct the following sentences.

- i) They have read the stories for one hour last night.
- ii) I am seeing a flock of birds in the sky now.
- iii) My grandmother reads Ramayana every evening.

- iv) I am teaching in this college since 2015.
- v) He knows me for six years.
- vi) The teacher left the school before I reached.
- vii) The boy is not coming from the market yet.

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Phrasal Verbs

- Keep on : The children **kept on** shouting with delight.
- Look up : I **looked up** the word in the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary.
- Look into : The principal will **look into** the matter.
- Look over : The teacher is **looking over** the answerscripts.

Idioms

- Beggar description : The beauty of theTaj Mahal **beggars description**.
- Bird's-eye-view : He took a **bird's-eye-view** of the flood stricken area from a helicopter.
- Birds of a feather : **Birds of a feather** flock together.

Writing Activity (Story writing)

Look at the following two pictures and write two meaningful stories.



(a)



(b)



- i) a nest / colony / swarm of ants
- ii) a sounder of wild boars / pigs
- iii) a gang of buffaloes / robbers / thieves
- iv) a brood of chickens
- v) a murder of crows
- vi) a memory of elephants
- vii) a gaggle of geese / ducks
- viii) a prickle of porcupines
- ix) a pack of wolves
- x) a knot of snakes
- xi) a troop of apes
- xii) a sloth of bears
- xiii) a flutter of butterflies
- xiv) an intrusion of cockroaches
- xv) a convocation of eagles
- xvi) a cloud of flies/bats
- xvii) a tower of giraffes
- xviii) a zeal/dazzle of zebras
- xix) a crash of rhinos
- xx) a muster of peacocks

