

Lesson 14

To Err is Human

Scene I

[ The living room in Rashmi's house. Rashmi's friends Rahul, Nitin, Mrinal, Rubi and Radha are chatting. They all have gathered there for Rashmi's birthday. Rashmi enters there in good attire. ]



All : Happy birthday !

Nitin : Many happy returns of this day.  
[ They present her a book. ]

Rashmi : Thanks a lot for this !  
[ Rahul presents her a 'neem' sapling. ]

- Rahul : May this 'neem' bring freshness to your life !
- Rashmi : How nice ! I'll plant this in the front yard.  
*[Rashmi's mother enters wiping her hands on a clean towel.]*
- Mother : Come children. At first do take some food. Later on you can have a good chat.
- Rahul : You are great aunt. I'm so hungry.
- All : We are too !
- Radha : Mini has not yet come. I should wait for her.
- Rashmi : Oh, she won't come. She refused to attend the party, the day I went to her house for giving the invitation.
- All : Why ? *[They are shocked.]*
- Mrinal : She does not want to mix up with friends. She likes to stand aloof from her friends, specially from our group.
- Rubi : Something is wrong ! *[To herself.]*  
*[Ignoring Mini's absence they enjoy the party very much. Rashmi's mother enjoys the chatting of children. Rubi seems to remain a little indifferent to her friends.]*

## Scene II

*[Mini's house. Her mother Mrs Baruah is sitting in the verandah, reading a newspaper. Rubi opens the gate and slowly walks towards the house. Mrs Baruah does not notice her.]*

- Rubi : Hello aunt !
- Mrs Baruah : Oh, Rubi ! Please come. How are you ?
- Rubi : I'm fine. Is Mini at home ? I've come to see her. I mean... want to discuss a difficult chapter with her.
- Mrs Baruah : These days she's working hard for the examination.

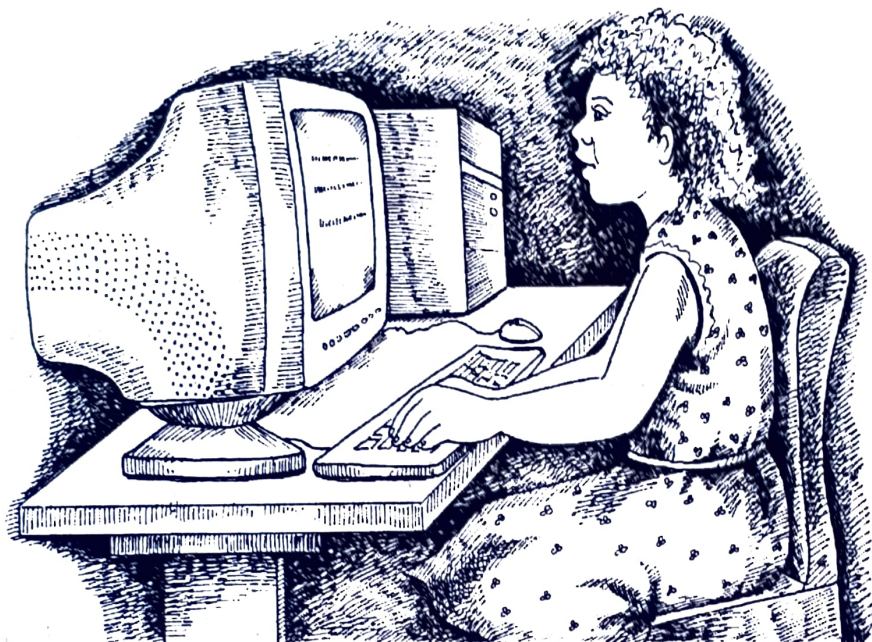
Rubi : After fifteen days, our examination starts. So we have to.

Mrs Baruah : It's very good. Go. Mini is in her room.

*[Rubi smiles at her and walks along the corridor. She knocks at the door. From inside the room come the words.]*

Mini : Who's there ?

Rubi : It's me ! Rubi.



*[Mini unbolts the door. She looks very dull and gloomy.]*

Mini : Come Rubi, sit here.

*[Rubi finds the atmosphere of the room very suffocating. The light is off, curtains drawn.]*

Rubi : *[Shouts]* Hey ! Switch on the light ! What the hell is going on here ?

*[Saying this she draws back all the curtains and opens the windows and lets fresh air come in through. Mini shuts down the computer.]*

Mini : *[Stretching out the hands and yawning]* You've spoiled the mood of watching the film.

- Rubi : Aunt said that you were studying! But you are...  
Mini : Watching a horror film. [*Very reluctantly*]  
Rubi : Mini you should not watch this kind of films. These give no positive message.  
Mini : You are so weak! I enjoy it. It gives me much thrill and excitement.  
Rubi : Have you forgotten that we are going to take examination just after fifteen days?  
Mini : Just don't spoil the mood. Do keep silence.  
[*Mini becomes a little irritated.*]  
Rubi : Sorry, I'm leaving...  
Mini : OK. [*Not paying any heed.*]  
[*Rubi steps out of the room feeling very bad. She hears some rattling of cups and saucers coming from the kitchen and gets that Mini's mother is busy in the kitchen.*]

## Scene III

[*The examination is over. The leisure time in the school. Rahul, Nitin, Rubi and Rashmi are all sitting inside their classroom. Rubi seems to be absorbed in deep thoughts. All of them are waiting for the room to be deserted.*]

- Nitin : Rubi, you said that you were going to tell us something. What's that?  
Rahul : You seem to be worried.  
Rashmi : Any problem?  
Rubi : Yes, very big! [*She gazed down at the floor.*]  
Rashmi : Oh, come on... will you say?  
Rubi : Mini is soon going to be ruined.  
Nitin : Don't say anything about her. She has changed completely. [*A little aggressively*] No need to mention her

name in our discussion. These days she does not even look at us. She thinks herself to be more intelligent than anybody else.

Rahul : She has made friends with Anu, Akash and Nipu. Always stays close with them.



Rashmi : She's started a bad habit of talking inside the classroom. Earlier she was not so.

Rahul : Not at all. In fact, she was a very good girl.

Rubi : Exactly. That's the point I want to emphasize. The companions she keeps are to blame. In the last class test she got very poor marks in almost all the subjects.

Rashmi : Today in the morning she complained of a headache when our teacher asked her to solve a sum on the board.

Rahul : She's also started lying! *[In a surprising tone.]*

Rubi : I think it's not a lie. People might get this after watching a horror film.

Nitin : *[Being very curious]* What do you mean ?

Rashmi : Some days ago I got an information that Mini and her friends exchange different types of VCDs and books and many other things secretly. I've said it to Rubi. Haven't I?

Rubi : Yes, I recall. Considering this, I went to her house to talk to her. And... *[She describes the whole story to her friends.]*

Nitin : Umm. I see. We should do something. What do you say?

All : We should do something immediately.

Rahul : We should try to solve this secretly so that no one knows about it.

Rashmi : You are right... or else there will be an unnecessary gossip in the school.

Nitin : Let's start our mission right now.

*[All of them come closer to discuss something.]*

### Scene IV

*[After fifteen days, in Rubi's house. The living room. Rahul, Rashmi, Nitin, Radha and Rubi are busy discussing something. Mini enters with a smiling face.]*

Rubi : Hello Mini, please come.

Nitin : How are you Mini?

Radha : You seem to be very happy today! What's the matter?

Mini : At first, I'd like to thank all of you. You have saved me from being ruined.

Rashmi : Oh, come on! Just forget this. This was an accident.

Mini : Actually I've learned from this accident that one should always keep good company. They gave me many wrong ideas. You are my true friends. If you'd not been there, I'd have gone astray.

- Radha : The most important thing is that you've realized.
- Mini : I'm grateful to you all. Now I realize that it is very bad to spend much time in watching films and reading useless books.
- Nitin : This is the time to form and shape our character. We should never ignore our duty. We have also a responsibility towards the society. The juniors will follow us. So, as seniors we have to show them what is good and what is bad.
- [Everybody looks at him.]*
- Rahul : How great you are! *[Makes a joke.]*
- Rubi : Rahul, be serious! What he's saying is true.
- Nitin : My mother always tells me this. I love and respect her. I'm always careful that she's not hurt.
- Rashmi : Our parents have much faith upon us. We should never be untruthful towards them. Only then we can prosper in life.
- Mini : I'm very lucky to have you as my friends. I became very weak both physically and mentally when I indulged myself in the harmful activities and ignored my study. But now I feel much better and inspired. I'll study hard. I'll work hard.
- Rubi : Very good. Let's have tea and biscuits.
- Rahul : Now we can discuss our new plan of forming a Science Club in our school.
- Rashmi : Have you all forgotten that we had to fix a date for the next meeting of the Readers' Club?
- Nitin : This is the file.
- [They all happily take tea as Nitin starts opening the file.]*
- Mini : Thank God! *[Nobody hears her.]*

**[Curtain falls]**

**Wordnote**

chat (v)	: to talk in a friendly informal way
attire (n)	: clothes
sapling (n)	: a young tree
stand aloof (idiom)	: to show no friendship towards others
indifferent (adj)	: not having interest
unbolt (v)	: to open a window / door by sliding a bolt across
gloomy (adj)	: sad and without hope
suffocating (adj)	: making it difficult to breathe normally
thrill (n)	: a strong feeling of excitement and pleasure
absorbed (adj)	: very interested in something and not paying attention to anything else
deserted (adj)	: with no people in it
gaze (v)	: to look steadily
gossip (v)	: to talk about other people's private lives
go astray (idiom)	: to go in the wrong direction
rattling of cups and saucers	: short, loud sounds of cups and saucers

**EXERCISE**

**Comprehension**

- Answer the following questions in single sentences from your text. 1×10=10
  - Why have Rashmi's friends gathered in her house?
  - What does Rahul wish Rashmi while presenting her the 'neem' sapling?
  - Why has Mini not come to Rashmi's house to attend the birthday party?
  - What was Mini doing in her room when Rubi went to meet her?



- e) Why does Mini like to watch horror film ?
- f) What bad habit has Mini started ?
- g) What did Mini do when she was asked to solve a sum on the board ?
- h) Why did Rashmi and her friends try to solve the problem secretly ?
- i) Why is Mini happy ?
- j) What new plan does Rahul talk about ?

2. Give brief answers to the following questions.  $2 \times 5 = 10$

- a) What did Rubi experience in Mini's room ?
- b) What did Nitin say about Mini ?
- c) What information does Rashmi get about Mini ? Who does she tell it ?
- d) What lesson does Mini learn ? Why is she grateful towards her friends ?
- e) What does Nitin say about the responsibility of a student towards the society ?

3. What does Mini realize after giving up the bad company ? What does she decide to do now ?  $3 + 2 = 5$

4. Write whether the following statements are true or false.

$$\frac{1}{2} \times 6 = 3$$

- a) Rashmi's friends present her a book on her birthday.
- b) Rahul wants to wait for Mini.
- c) Rubi finds the atmosphere of Mini's room very suffocating.
- d) Rashmi's mother does not enjoy the chatting of children.
- e) The children are going to take their examination after fifteen days.

- f) They had to fix a date for the next meeting of the Science Club.

### Grammar and usage

DAILY ASSAM

A. Whatever we speak is called our SPEECH.

- i) We use our SPEECH to express our own ideas.

(Direct speech)

- ii) We also speak to report the SPEECH of other people.

(Indirect speech)

Let's take an example from the text.

- a) Rubi says, "After fifteen days our examination starts."

This is the 'direct speech' of Rubi.

- b) Rubi says that after fifteen days their examination starts.

This is the 'indirect speech' of Rubi.

5. Answer the following questions. (One is done for you.)

- a) Rani : I am hungry now.

Question : What did Rani say ?

Answer : Rani said that she was hungry then.

- b) Teacher : Saurav is the best boy in my class.

Question : What did the teacher say ?

Answer :

- c) Mohan : Are the grapes sour ?

Question : What did Mohan ask ?

Answer :

- d) The guest : Does the dog bite ?

Question : What did the guest ask ?

Answer :

- e) Father : Why is the child crying ?

Question : What did the father ask ?

Answer :

B. Look at the following table.

Kinds of sentences	Direct speech	Indirect speech
<b>Imperative</b> (Order, advice, request, warning, proposal etc.)	The father said to his son, "Don't waste your time."	The father advised his son not to waste his time.
<b>Optative</b> (Wish, prayer, curse etc.)	The grandmother said to her grandson, "May you live long."	The grandmother wished that her grandson might live long.
<b>Exclamatory</b> (Exclamation, confession, scolding etc.)	She said, "How beautiful the flower is!"	She exclaimed with wonder that the flower was very beautiful.

6. Now rewrite the following sentences in the direct speech.
- Mother warned me not to run in the sun.
  - We all wished that our motherland might prosper.
  - The priest prayed that God might bless me.
  - The little girl exclaimed with wonder that the butterfly was very beautiful.
  - Father requested me to bring him a glass of water.

### Vocabulary

7. Choose the correct meaning of the sentences from the alternatives given.
- She's a very good student.
    - She is a very good student.
    - She has a very good student.

- b) He'd have a glass of milk every morning.  
i) He had have a glass of milk every morning.  
ii) He would have a glass of milk every morning.
- c) Who's your favourite singer ?  
i) Whose your favourite singer ?  
ii) Who is your favourite singer ?
- d) Mitu's gone out.  
i) Mitu is gone out.  
ii) Mitu has gone out.

### Composition

8. You four are very good friends. One of your group has suddenly met with an accident and hurt one of his / her legs very badly. He / She won't be able to appear in the Half-yearly Examination and that is why very sad.  
How will the three of you console and encourage your friend ?  
Write your discussion in dialogues.

### Spoken activity

9. Discuss with your friends the duties that you perform as a student.

### Note to the teacher

In this chapter, the students should be taught the rules of changing narration in detail. Much emphasis should be given on changing narration of imperative, optative and exclamatory sentences. The students are expected to learn to use the short forms of the auxiliaries in their spoken English. The students are to be encouraged to learn social and moral responsibility through this lesson.