

# Churchill: Unkindest Cut of All

by Saleh Akram

WHO could have thought that Churchill could say such things? But he did, at least according to a news despatch of AFP which was carried by a leading national daily in one of its recent issues. The item quoted excerpts from a new biography of Winston Churchill entitled "Eminent Churchillians" authored by Mr Andrew Roberts and to be published in July. There are startling revelations in the book about Churchill's disdain for blacks, the Arabs, the Chinese, the Italians, the Indians and 'other inferior races'. He has called Negroes "niggers" or "Blackmoors", Arabs "worthless", Chinese "chinks" or "pigtales" and other black races "baboons" or "hottentots". He found the Indians as "the beastliest people in the world, next to the Germans". The book depicts Britain's wartime Prime Minister as a blatant racist. The author went on to write that "During the 1943 Bengal famine, he reassured the Secretary of State for India, Leo Amery, that the Indians would nevertheless continue to breed 'like rabbits'." The author presents a large number of evidences to substantiate his claim that 'by the standards of today and possibly even of his own time, Winston Churchill was a convinced racist'.

For those of us who live in this part of the world, the reaction to such comments is one of simultaneous shock and surprise. More so as they came from someone who has always been held in high esteem here, as elsewhere in the world, for his wit, wisdom and

most remarkable race which has ever appeared in the world". The author adds, "He felt an instinctive affinity for their genius as well as a historian's respect for their trials, and he supported Jewish aspirations whenever they did not clash with those of the Empire."

These unkind remarks have already raised an uproar in the United Kingdom itself of which Winston Churchill was a mentor and where he was long worshipped as a war hero. We feel concerned because those were uttered at a time when there was an undivided India and we were a part of it. How can Indians be called a beastly people, let alone beastliest of all? History witnesses that the Indians themselves were subjected to beastly treatment by the external invaders like the British, the Portuguese, the Huns, the Shawks and the like. By no stretch of imagination can the Indians be accused of a Jallianwalabag or a Mai Lai or a Hiroshima or a Nagasaki? They did not set up any gas chamber to stifle innocent people to death. This part of the globe has historically been a seat of learning, a place of religious devotion and of non-violence. It is the nursery of one of the world's most ancient cultures.

I reckon, it will be needless to put down here what the impressions of many other great men about this part of the world were. Because that will actually increase the length of this article which is not my intention. Truly, the logic behind Churchill's remarks (or the lack of it) is incomprehensible, to say the least. What do you think?

INDEED, the 215 items, including some real masterpieces, chosen for this exhibition held at the Petit-Palais, come from a museum which is just like Sleeping Beauty's castle, although it is located in the heart of Moscow, in Red Square. The National Historical Museum of Moscow, founded in 1872, and which played the dual part of being the museum of the Federation of Russia and of the City of Moscow, has been closed for dozens of years. Nobody, apart from a few specialists, has access to the four million objects and 60,000 documents locked in this treasure chest.

This is what moved the dynamic head of the Petit-Palais museum, Therese Burrollet, who, rather than drawing on the treasures of better-known Russian museums, such as that of the Kremlin or of the Hermitage in Saint Petersburg, chose to create her "Splendours of Russia" exhibition with the treasures of this sleeping museum which include objects from everyday life as well as icons, church ornaments and royal jewels.

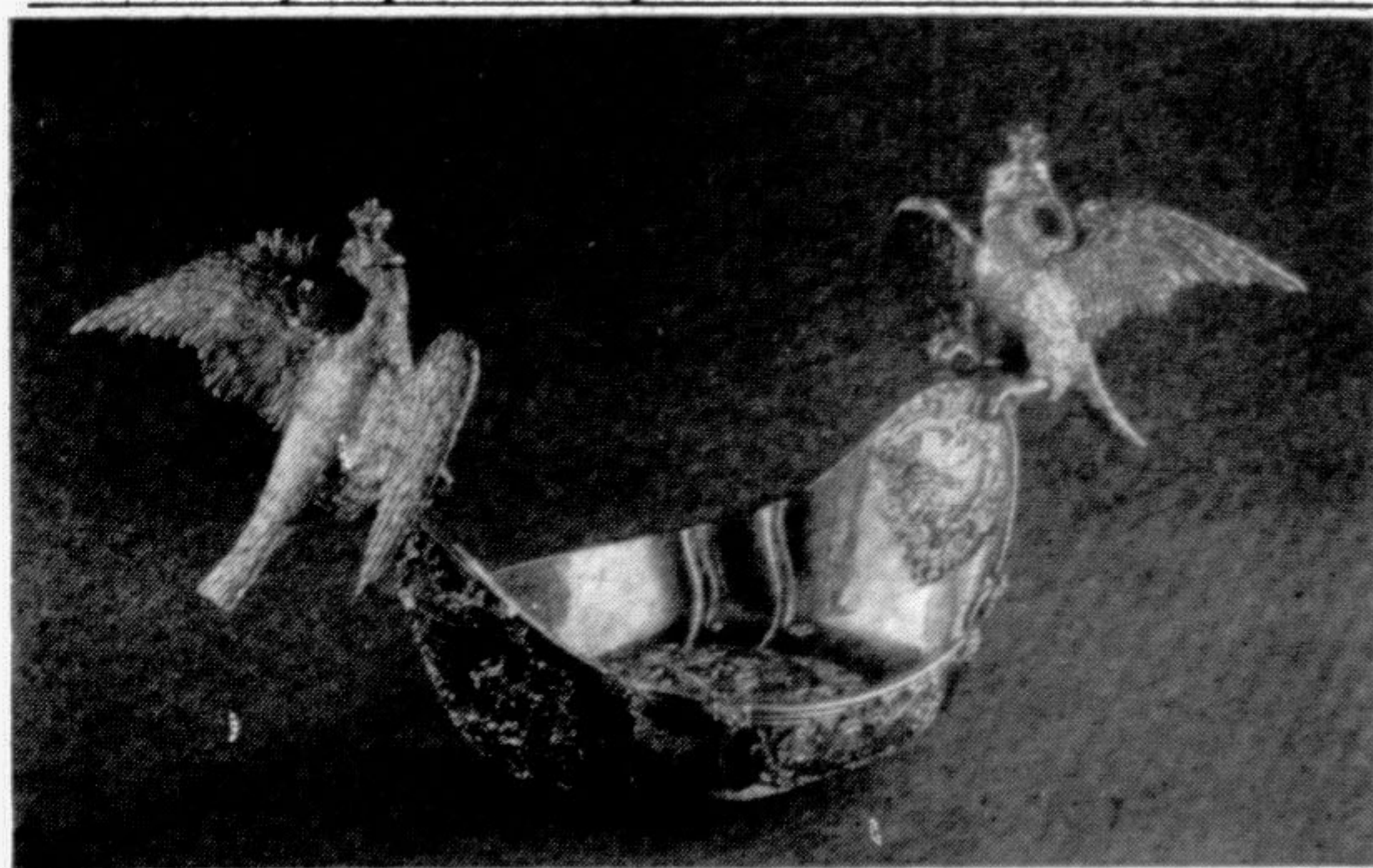
The presentation of this exhibition had already been planned in the vast co-operation agreement between Paris and Moscow, signed in Paris in December 1991 by the mayors of the two capitals. It is quite ironical that, while the museum of Moscow used to be called the Imperial Alexander III Museum, the Petit-Palais is located in a road which is a direct continuation of a bridge named after that same Czar who formerly signed a treaty of alliance with France.

Simple chronological order was chosen to show the richness and originality of precious metalwork in Russia,

# Splendours of Russia The Treasures of the Sleeping Museum

by Pascale Teinac

A thousand years of Russian goldware, presented in Paris, was a spectacular event, not only by the quality of the objects exhibited, but also by the history of these objects, which have never been shown before, and by the place that they come from.



The decorative ladle dating back to 1756.

from the christening of the Grand-Prince Vladimir of Kiev right to the 1917 revolution. Medieval Russia was born in the 9th century from the union between the eastern Slavs and the Varangian tribes, with Kiev as the capital. After Grand Prince Vladimir's conversion to Christianity in 988 and his marriage to a Byzantine princess, Anne, Emperor Basil II's

crosses for wearing on the chest, reliquaries, plates for church doors and small icons. After the liberation of Moscow from the Mongol yoke, the installation of the grand princes in Moscow and the coronation of Ivan the Terrible as Czar, Russia became an imperial power. At the same time as the blossoming of religious goldcraft (chalices, incense burners and rich icons in churches in the Kremlin) in Moscow, Novgorod and Pskov, civil goldcraft also developed. There was to be a new boom in the latter under the first Romanovs, with growing numbers of finely carved pieces of gold and silver tableware: plates, goblets, bowls, ladies and enamelled chests and boxes. The bishop's mitre became as sumptuous as an imperial crown and was decorated with diamonds and precious stones. A magnificent silver incense burner was made in the shape of a domed orthodox church.

## The Gifts of the Empresses to the Tax Collectors

At the time of Peter the Great, the goldsmith's craft became mainly secular and was used for utilitarian purposes, economising on precious metals. At the court of the empresses who reigned after him, Anna Ivanovna and Elizabeth, the rococo style, coming from the west, made its appearance in Russian decoration, and gold and silverware for domestic use (soup tureens, salt cellars, teapots, milk jugs and sugar basins, tobacco jars and cigar cutters) developed.

In order to thank tax inspectors for their "faithful services" and the Cossacks of the Don army, the empresses gave them "kovshs" as a bonus. These were sumptuous dunking bowls made of silver gilt with one or two handles in the shape of the imperial eagle or plants. One of these curious objects bears the engraved inscription: "This kovsh, coming from her imperial majesty's treasure, is offered as a bonus to the merchant of the first guild of Moscow, Mikhail Gussiatnikov, for his zeal in wanting to increase the revenue of the Treasury for the year 1754".

Samovars appeared in the middle of the 18th century and, at the time of Catherine the Great, steel started to be used by craftsmen for all kinds of things including furniture. The exhibition presented a folding chair (1746), decorated with gold and with copper.

L'Actualite en France

# HAPPINESS is the ultimate goal of human life. The Quest for Happiness

by Dr T Hossain

PERSON can appreciate the cosmology, the more one falls in love with the objective reality of the Universe.

Naturally, a thinking-being tries to appreciate the universe, contemplates its beginning and its end. The latest human understanding appreciates that the universe has no beginning, has no end. It exists as such undergoing constant change. The more one can understand the astronomy, the more one can appreciate the concept of eternity is infinite. The concept of time is circumscribed to human understanding based on the sunrise and the sunset, day and

night. It is circumscribed to the rotation of the small planet know as earth. Man is the only species which conceived time in relation to the planet's rotation and living organism's age. The universe is composed of known elements (some night still remain unknown and be discovered later). It is known that the elements are indestructible. They combine in different forms to constitute different substances under the regulation of the law governing the Universe. The Universe, being law-governed, is a cosmos and not a chaos. So, the

universe has its rhythm. The rhythm of the cosmos is reflected in all its components including the functions of the organ-systems of a living being.

Man is the leader of life. And life evolved on this planet in the process of evolution of earth itself. The origin of life and its evolution over the period of more than four billion years constitutes a fascinating story for any learner who is so interested.

The engagement of mind to appreciate that fascinating story so far described by the scientists is also a source of happiness. The basic source of happiness is interest in the

fulfilment of a desire. If a man is engaged in understanding cosmology, he finally feels happy when he obtains correct conception of the subject, in the same way as Archimedes, shouted Eureka, Eureka in his bath tub.

We are confined now with the word beauty. Appreciation of beauty makes a person happy. What is the definition of beauty? To a person, any thing loved is beautiful. When one says, 'rose is a beautiful flower', it implies that the person loves the rose. Anything that is loved, can be described as beautiful. Poet Tagore was an universal lover. He loved the universe. His imagination is extended to identify the Creator of the universe and, as such, he loved the Creator. In this context, he is a spiritualist. As

opposed to him, Mr N Roy is a materialist who also loves the universe. Spiritualism is imaginative, materialism is calculative. The materialist philosopher says that there is nothing distinct and separate other than the function of the matter. The function of matter is the spirit. If there is no matter, there cannot be any spirit. So, the separate identity of the spirit is baseless. As a living human organism with normal function of all organs, one can concentrate and develop some desire, ideals, will power, incentives and motivations. All these factors lead one to come to a conclusion. Such conclusion may lead to a decision. The stronger the forces of logic behind such decision, the stronger is the will power. The

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## Articulated Bracelets and the Earliest Icons

Superb jewellery, such as the gold and cloisonne enamel pendants or the niello-work silver bracelets, made of two articulated parts, bear witness to the quality of the work of goldsmiths in ancient Russia where the earliest icons, which were tiny and delicately carved, also appeared.

The Mongol occupation from 1240 to 1460, with its series of destructions and pillaging, and the break in trading links between Russia and the countries of the Far East and of Europe where the precious metals came from dealt a severe blow to the goldsmith's craft. However, the monasteries maintained an essentially religious art tradition with

# The British Council Language Matters

## The Intro

Today we have a Wobbly Words puzzle and also a Wobbly Sentences.

The Wobbly Sentences puzzle is an example of how you can

revise or reinforce something that you have already covered in a fun way. The key word in the sentence is one of those in the vocabulary focus in last week's Language Lab.

This week's Language Lab is also a follow up to the word puzzle from last week. It is

an interesting way of expanding your vocabulary when you try to find synonyms. But it is very important to realise that words are rarely synonyms in all ways. Sometimes they are used differently or it may be that they have important differences in meaning.

one that is used in a different way in standard English to its local English usage.

A hijacker does not really steal things. He or she forces an aeroplane (or perhaps a bus or train) to go to a different destination where the vehicle and usually its occupants are held until the hijackers demands are met. These demands may be for money (ransom) but are also often for political reasons.

6. Highwayman - This word has rather fallen out of use. It means someone who holds up a vehicle and forces the occupants to hand over their money and valuables. In Britain we generally think of someone on a horse holding up others on horses - you can see why it has fallen out of use! This kind of robbery has become rather uncommon in Britain.

If you want to write to us with any questions you have, simple or complicated, please write to The Language Lab, c/o The Daily Star.

## The Language Lab

In this column we want you to write to us about any little problems that you have with English and we will see if we can 'analyse' them. We will try to give the best answer possible in the space available.

This week's Language Lab again has a vocabulary focus and follows the Wobbly Words puzzle from last week. If you remember, there were a number of words for people who steal things.

We have noticed from our own students that there is often some confusion about these words and that, in addition, some of them have a slightly different meaning in local English to their standard English 'dictionary' definition.

1. Thief - This is the basic word for someone who steals things. It can be used in most contexts.

2. Burglar - This means a

thief who breaks into houses and steals their contents. A typical burglar would be someone who breaks in during the night or when everyone is out. There is not usually any violence involved.

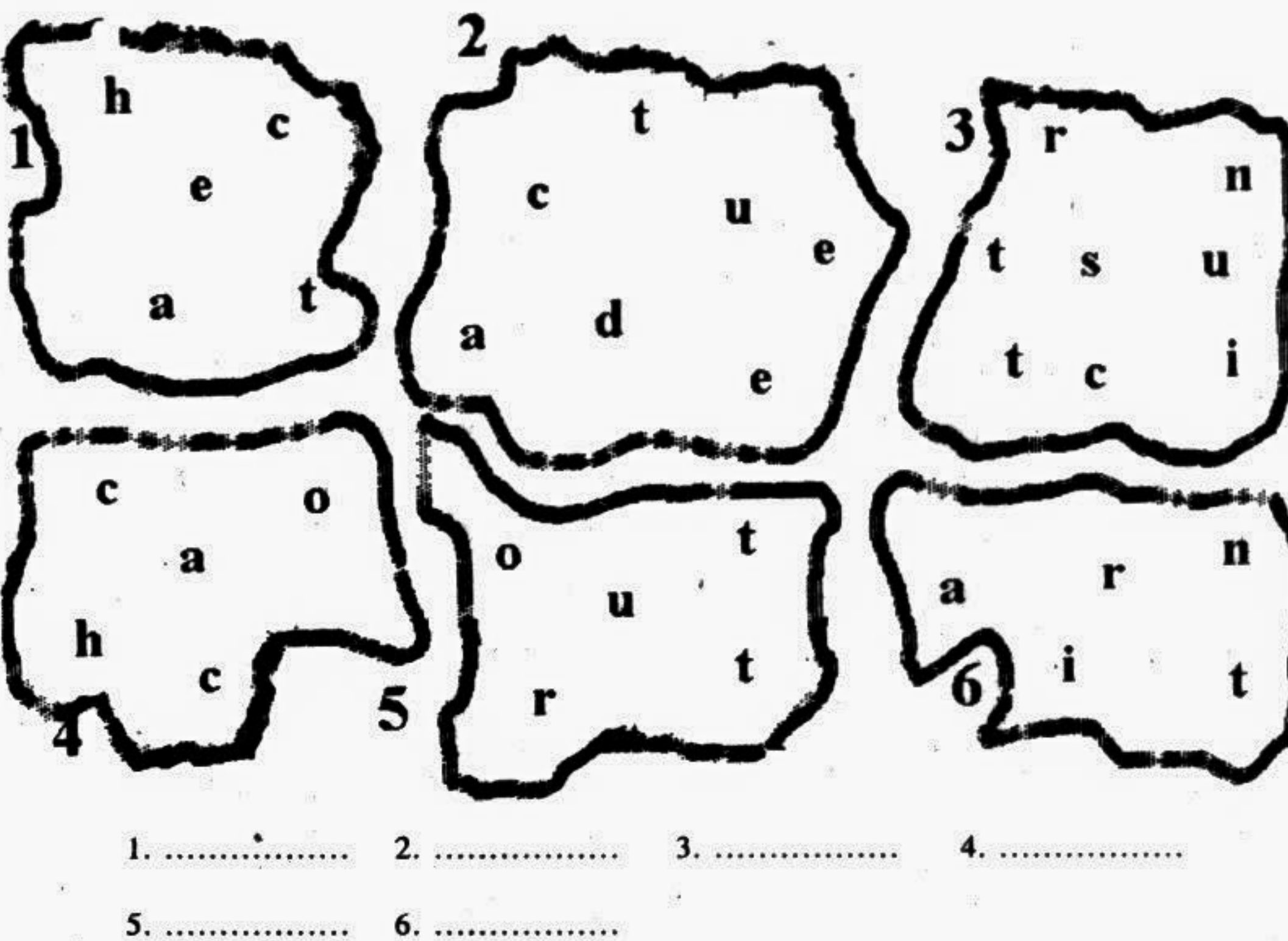
3. Pickpocket - This is someone who takes things from your pockets or bag usually without you realising. Someone who attacks you or holds you up with a gun or knife in order to steal things from you is more likely to be called a mugger.

4. Robber - A robber operates on a much larger scale than a burglar. Robbers steal from banks and shops for example. There is an increasing tendency for there to be violence and you often hear of armed robbers. Unlike a burglar, who will often work alone or perhaps with one accomplice, robbers usually operate in gangs.

5. Hijacker - This word is

## Wobbly Words

Try this word puzzle. In each shape the letters are jumbled up. Put them in the correct order, but be careful - some may have more than one word. What do all of them have in common?



## Wobbly Sentences

Try this exercise to help you practise word order. There is only one sentence but the words are mixed up. You must sort them out, put the words in the correct order and make sure you use the punctuation marks.

the hand into the bank cashier the to robbers burst over forced the

Correct sentence .....

## Back to My Home Town

by Mahjabeen Hassan

AFTER the terrible bomb explosion in Rochester I was not only homeless but an orphan. I was only eight years old then. My parents were dead and our house was burnt down. Since then I went to live with my maternal grandma, Mrs. Godfrey in West Valley. And from then on I lived with her and went to a school there. The other kids would tease me and wouldn't let me play with them. Even the teacher wasn't kind to me. It seemed like it was all my fault that I was an orphan. I was so depressed about these happenings in school that I paid less attention to my school work. And so I didn't secure a good position that year.

The other kids teased me and I was more and more depressed. My granny noticed this sudden change in me and complained to the Head Mistress. After this the kids didn't tease me nor did they talk with me.

When I was 11 years old my grandma Mrs. Godfrey caught bronchitis and was ill in bed. After two months she died. I was again left homeless and without a guardian, like a plant without sunlight and water. I needed protection and care. As I had no other close relatives, I was sent to an orphanage in London. It was called "Little Flower Orphan Asylum". It was a two-storeyed, half-run down building. I was completely alone there as there was no girls exactly of my own age there.

Several years passed, I was 21 years old. It was time for me to leave the Asylum and go out to the wide world which was telling me to get out of the Asylum in which I have passed 10 years of my miserable life.

Yes, I had to get out of this dark building and go out to the world which welcomed me to explore.

So, I caught the next train back to Rochester. But, it was not the old Rochester I had left 13 years back. My home town had changed and so had I.

## Messages Made of Petals

by Samir Asaf

A million miles away from you, So many mountains and oceans in between, You are raining on me tonight!

In this garden, we are only strangers And I know not, which flower to pluck for you For I have seen you but once!

Roses mustn't blossom in hasty weather, This page mustn't carry emotions, Let it still, be the messenger between you and I.

My diamonds aren't made of stones, But on you they will shine Even in the dark.

And if this rainbow fades away, In my chalet I will be waiting Until the storm has passed by.

Contributors: Marina Burns, Dennis O'Brien, Janet Raynor.

Answers: 1. teach 2. educate 3. instruct 4. coach 5. tutor 6. train

Wobbly Words

Wobbly Sentences

The sentence is: The armed robbers burst into the bank and forced the cashier to hand over the money.

What do you think is the difference between them? Teach - but there are important differences. They are all verbs that mean to instruct. They are used in different contexts.