

Lesson-2 (Class IX-X)

Reading Techniques

Materials Designed by BRAC University Centre for Languages (CfL)

Dear readers,
Four issues of 'English in Schools' are published every month; two for class VI-VIII and the remaining two for class IX-X. The issues for class IX-X mainly focus on reading comprehension and exercises, and are specially designed for your preparation for the S.S.C Examination. Additionally, you can find many interesting texts and activities such as puzzles, cartoons and articles in this page.

Another interesting information is that each issue introduces some important words and their meanings. For learning English these words will help you a lot. Moreover, 'English in Schools' is going to organize a national level 'spelling competition' which will be based on the words you find in this page.

So, keep reading, have fun and prepare yourself for the S.S.C Examination and for the 'spelling competition'!

World's biggest flower!!

Do you know which flower is the biggest in the world? Where is it available? How does it smell? Read the following text to know all these answers:



The Rafflesia plant shown above ranks as the largest known individual bloom

Rafflesia plant was first discovered in the Indonesian rainforest by an Indonesian tourist guide in 1818. It was named after Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles, the leader of that expedition. The flower has approximately 27 species. All are found in south-eastern Asia, on the Malay Peninsula (neck of land), Borneo, Sumatra, and the Philippines. Rafflesia plant is a parasite. It has no stems, leaves or true roots. They are members of the grapevine family. It takes pride as the world's largest known flower in existence. It can weigh up to 10 Kilograms with bud (the size of a basketball) and the bloom can stretch 39 inches in diameter. This is also the worst scented flower on earth having smell of rotten flesh that attracts insects for pollination. That is why its nickname is "corpse flower" or "meat flower". People hardly can see it as the bud takes many months to develop and the flower lasts for just a few days.



Vocabulary of the Week

- Apprehend** (verb): to understand something
- Controversy** (noun): disagreement or argument about something
- Expedition** (noun): an organized journey for a particular purpose
- Nag** (verb): to criticize or complain often in an annoying way
- Parasite** (noun): an animal or plant that lives on or in another animal or plant of a different type and feeds from it
- Pollination** (noun): a powder produced by the male part of a flower, which is carried by insects or the wind and causes the female part of the same type of flower to produce seeds
- Skeleton** (noun): the frame of bones supporting a human or animal body
- Spectacular** (adjective): very exciting to look at
- Vicious** (adjective): describes people or actions that show a wish to hurt someone or something very badly

[Source: www.dictionary.cambridge.org]



Ratty the rat and Catty the cat are living in the same house for a long time. Catty chases Ratty whenever it gets the opportunity. However, Ratty, having a great sense of smell and eyesight, can apprehend the presence of Catty the cat any time it comes near to it. One day, all of a sudden, Ratty hits upon a plan to get rid of Catty and to teach her a good lesson. Therefore, having all the plans, the rat invites the cat at a suitable place in the kitchen. While having a conversation, the rat nags and annoys the cat and challenges her saying, "Catty Catty, catch me if you can." The cat being annoyed chases the rat. Ratty, following her vicious plan, jumps into a big bowl of milk thinking that she herself can get out of there as she can swim. Moreover, she thought that the cat would jump into the bowl to get her and would immediately drown as she can't swim. But, to Ratty's utter surprise, the cat drinks half of the milk of the bowl and ruthlessly kills Ratty. Then, at last, Catty the cat jumps out of the big bowl and the chase ends for ever.

After reading the story, can you think of the moral (message) of it? Share your understanding with your friends. You may also find an answer somewhere in this page.

Reading TIPS!

Before reading any text, take a look at the headline and the pictures or cartoons (if there is any) first. Try to guess what the reading text is about.

Then, take a look at the organization of the text and read the bold words or numbers or dates/ years. This will give you a general idea about the text. This technique is called SKIMMING (as in 'Bird's Nest' the titles of paragraphs give you the rough idea about the content of the write-up).

For finding some specific information, such as to get the answers of the questions about the biggest flower of the world (see the reading text World's biggest flower!!), you can only look for the specific information in the text. This technique is called SCANNING.

If you don't know the meaning of some words, do not look them up in the dictionary straight away; try to guess the meaning from the context. This technique is called INFERENCE. For more clarification, check the dictionary later after you've finished reading the text (you can apply this technique while reading the story Ratty and Catty).

While reading, try to relate the content of the text to your personal experience.

Remember, the more you read, the more your reading skills will improve. Make English reading a leisure-time activity and you will find this habit rewarding!

Being nervous Shanto starts barking....

Ratul becomes curiousa little nervous too...

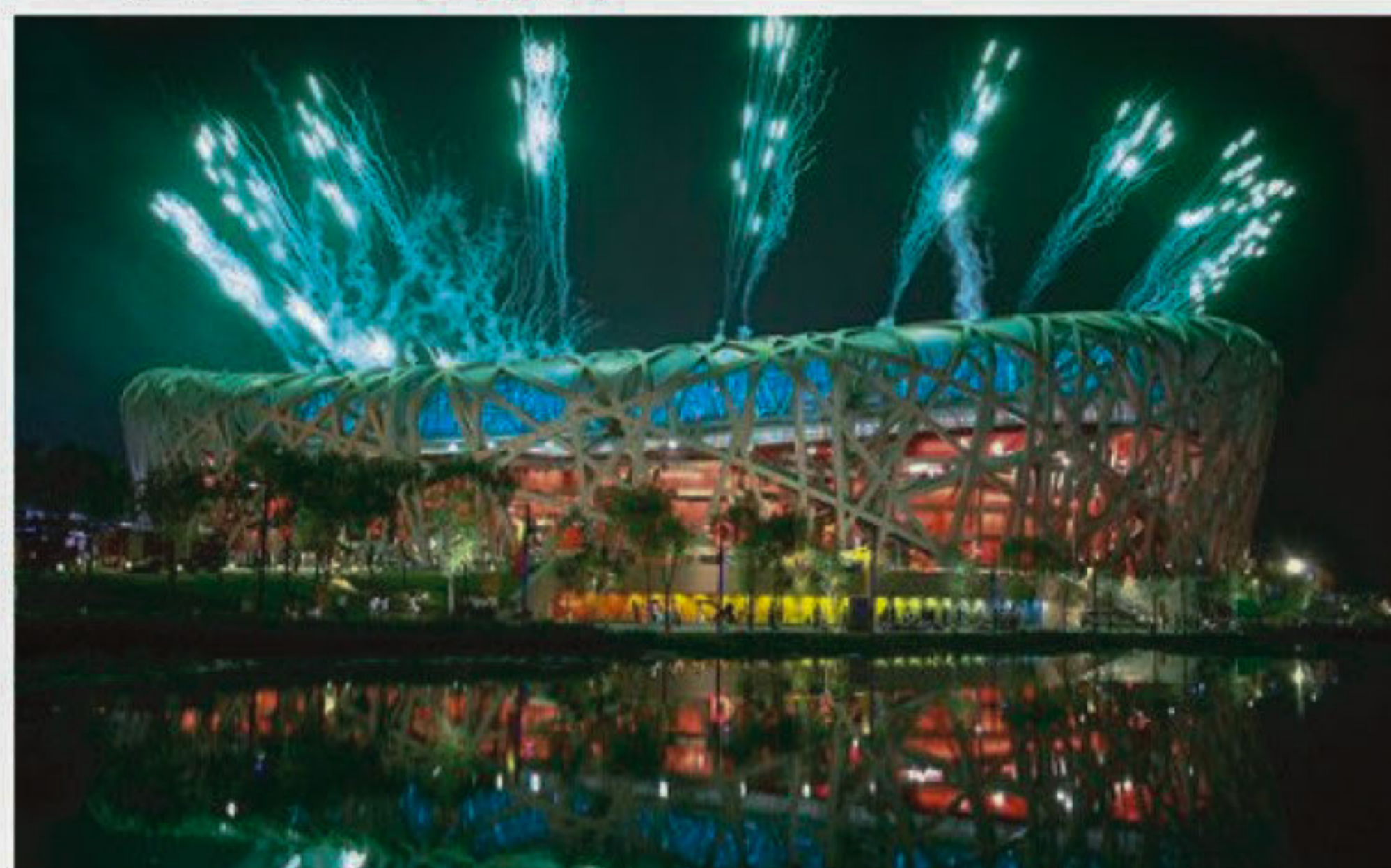
Gew... gew... g...ggggggg

He picks up his little torchlight and starts walking towards the source of the sound....

Shanto silently follows his master....

Read the following write-up on Bird's Nest, the famous Olympic Stadium of China and follow the instruction given below:

Bird's Nest



Paragraph A

The spectacular Bird's Nest stadium of China, the pride and joy of the most expensive Olympic in history, is full of hidden meanings. In Chinese tradition the sun is considered as a circular thing and the moon a square. The architecture of Bird's Nest represents both the sun and the moon together. The shapes at the same time portray the Chinese symbols of male and female.

Paragraph B

Swiss architects Herzog & de Meuron are the designers of this revolutionary architectural site. The stadium contains an outer skeleton of 42,000 tons of steel, making it three times heavier than proposed London 2012 stadium. It has an inner 'skin' of double-layered plastic which keeps out wind and rain and filters out Ultraviolet rays. It is designed to last for 100 years and endure a force of eight magnitude earthquake.

Paragraph C

The 91,000-seater venue has a four-star hotel with 80 rooms under one of its sides. It has an elegant restaurant from where the athletics track and a twin-level underground shopping centre can be seen. It is claimed that Bird's Nest is the most environment-friendly stadium in the world as the under-soil geothermal pipes help heat indoor parts of the stadium in winter and rainwater is collected and stored in underground containers for irrigation, and to flush the toilets.

Paragraph D

About £250 million, approximately 13600 crore Taka has been spent for the construction of Bird's Nest which is more than the double of the budget for London 2012 Olympic. However, the stadium has some controversies as about 6,000 homes were demolished to make way for it and there were claims that 10 people died in accidents during the four years of construction.

Now, read the following titles carefully. Each of them is suitable for a paragraph of the above composition. Match each title with a paragraph (A, B, C or D):

- The facilities
- The cost and the controversy
- The history
- The design



Solution of the previous puzzle

Moral of the story: confidence brings success, over-confidence causes failure.



Save green, Live green

The world has a limited amount of green canopies- some of which are already depleted. In Bangladesh the scenario is more threatening. We save money for our future but if we don't ensure clean air, water and soil for future generation, no saving will be worthy.

Let us save our environment, our future.