



Learn English Through Stories

F Series

F49

**Adapted and modified by
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1. From Both Sides

By Premchand

1

Pandit Shyamswaroop was a young lawyer from Patna. He was not like the jaded young lawyers of today who are seen in smart circles, and whose physical and intellectual abilities, and visible and secret strengths seem to be concentrated on their tongues. No, our Panditji was not one of those young men who had grown old mentally. He was full of life and vigour. Although frugal with his words, his heart and mind pulsed with vitality and his hands and feet were all the more active. Once he settled on a course of action he remained steadfast. Another noteworthy quality that he possessed was that he did not take up too many tasks at one time. Those who put their fingers into many pies do not achieve anything. Stupid people might expect a fellow who is a secretary of a dozen committees and the president of half a dozen societies to do something really worthwhile. No sensible person would expect much of such an individual. All his energy and ability would be dissipated in empty talk.

Panditji understood this very well. He started a small organization for the untouchables and devoted a small part of his income and time to this noble cause. In the evenings he returned from his office, took some snacks, picked up his bicycle and went off to the villages adjoining the town. There he was seen conversing with the Dalits or chatting with the Doms about their culture in their colloquial dialects. He had no qualms in taking their children in his arms and showing them affection. On Sundays or any other holiday, he organized magic shows. Within a year, his interest in their welfare and constant companionship had led to considerable improvements in the lives of the untouchables of the region. Eating the flesh of dead animals stopped completely; and alcoholism, though not completely eradicated, was on the decline. In fact, the sundry unpleasant incidents caused by drunkenness had definitely reduced— much to the chagrin of Hamid Khan, the police inspector.

Panditji's kindness strengthened his bond of fellowship with the untouchables. There were around three hundred wards in his district and the number of people from upper castes was no less than six thousand. With all of them, he shared a warm, fraternal bond. He joined them in their wedding celebrations and accepted offerings according to the custom. If a conflict arose, the complaint was often taken to him. It was impossible for Panditji to hear about someone's sickness and not visit him to inquire after his health. He had some knowledge of indigenous medicine. He personally attended to the sick and

even offered money, if needed. Most often, his affection and sympathy would suffice. Such occasions didn't require money as much as an urge for community service. His firm commitment and constant efforts brought about a radical change in the community within a year. Their homes and huts, their food and clothes, their manners and demeanour, improved very much.

The most important thing to happen was that these people learnt to respect themselves. Some boorish zamindars tried to threaten him but when they found that he was a man on a mission, they backed off. Some nincompoops tried to involve the police in the matter. Hamid Khan, the police inspector, was ready to interfere, but the Doms and the Dalits had nothing to offer him. Panditji's bond with them strengthened with the passage of time. Finally, a time came when Panditji not only attended the wedding of their chief's daughter but also shared a meal with them.

2

Pandit Shyamswaroop's wife was Kolesari Devi. Like most Indian women, she loved her husband deeply. She wasn't very educated, but living with Panditji helped her develop an awareness of the issues that concerned the nation and culture. She had just one weakness—she didn't have much patience for people's comments and opinions. She was not one with a very sharp tongue and she didn't make a fuss about every little thing. But a snide remark or a sardonic comment left her deeply troubled. She lent a patient ear to whatever was said to her and did not answer back. But she had a habit of nurturing grievances in her mind. Panditji knew about this and refrained from saying anything that would hurt her. He learnt this many years ago when, in the early years of his law practice, his income was meagre and expenses had to be balanced every day.

On the day of *sankranti*, Kolesari was generous enough to distribute five rupees worth of khichri to the poor. After spending the entire day without work at the court, when Panditji returned home empty-handed, he was annoyed to see the state of things.

He said harshly, 'I have to wander about and work hard for every single penny and here you are squandering money on unnecessary things. If this is what you wanted to do, you should've asked your father to marry you to a king or an emperor.'

Kolesari heard him out silently, her head down. She didn't retort, complain or shed tears. But she fell sick with fever and liver troubles for six months. Panditji had learnt the lesson of a lifetime.

He returned home after having a meal with Ramphal Chaudhary and, within moments, the news spread all over the town. The next day, Kolesari went to take a dip in the Ganga. It was probably the *Somwari amavas*. Women from other well-to-do families had also come to take a dip. When they saw Kolesari, they began to whisper among themselves and gesture at her. One of them, who appeared to come from a rich family, said to the women next to her, 'Just take a look at this queen! Her husband goes about breaking bread with the Dalits and she comes to bathe in the Ganga.'

Kolesari overheard this. In fact, it was meant for her ears. Just as the potter's string pierces the clay, a harsh comment pierces the heart. Kolesari was deeply disturbed. She felt as though someone had driven a sharp knife into her heart.

She forgot about the bath in the Ganga, retraced her steps and returned home. It was as if a snake's poison coursed through her body. She fed Panditji who left for the court. He had received a brief from a rich client that day. Excited at the prospect, he did not pay attention to his wife's changed mood. In the evening, when he returned home happy, he found her lying in bed with her head covered. He asked her, 'Kola, why are you lying in bed at this hour? Are you all right?'

Kolesari quickly sat up and said, 'I'm fine, I was just resting.'

But this answer did not convince Panditji. If she was fine, where was the red of the paan on her lips? Why was her hair dishevelled? Why this forlorn look on her face? Why had she not ordered ice for him? These thoughts ran through Panditji's mind.

He changed, ate a snack, chatted about his daily affairs, even cracked a couple of jokes. But these mantras did not mitigate the poison of the snake. Kolesari merely shook her head to whatever he said. The poison had shut her ears to everything. It was evening when Panditji went out for a spin. He took his bicycle and set off. But Kolesari's melancholic face haunted him. That day, there was a wedding of the Pasis in Maajh village. He went there.

The groom's party had come from a far-off village. They were asking for liquor be served to them; the girl's people flatly refused to oblige them. The groom's people also demanded that the women of the community dance at the doorstep to welcome them, as was the custom, and that the drum be beaten. The hosts said they did not follow this practice any more. Panditji's efforts had brought about a welcome change in Maajh village. The people from the

groom's side were untouched by his influence. When Panditji reached the venue, he explained things to the guests and pacified them.

On such days, he would usually return home by nine or ten at night, as his counselling on such occasions had great impact. But today his heart was not in what he was doing. Kolesari's forlorn, withered face flashed before his eyes. He kept wondering whether he had said something that pained her. He couldn't remember any such thing.

'What is troubling her, then? There must be a reason.' Troubled by such thoughts, he returned home by seven o'clock.

3

Panditji ate his dinner and went to bed. Kolesari couldn't eat even a morsel. She was still looking glum. Finally, Panditji asked her, 'Kola, why are you so sad?'

'I'm not sad.'

'Are you all right?'

'Of course. I'm sitting before you hale and hearty.'

'I don't believe you. There must be some reason for your sadness. Don't I have a right to know?'

'You are my master. You certainly have the right to know before anyone else.'

'Then why this veil of secrecy between us? I don't keep any secrets from you.'

Kolesari lowered her eyes and asked, 'Do I hide things from you?'

'So far, you haven't, but today you're definitely hiding something from me.'

Look into my eyes. People say that women can gauge a man's love in an instant. Probably you haven't yet understood the depth of my love. Believe me, your melancholic face has made me restless the whole day. If you don't tell me now, I'll assume you don't trust me.'

Kolesari's eyes filled with tears. She looked at him and said, 'Will you remove the thorn that rankles my heart?'

Shyamswaroop was stung.

He sat up, filled with all kinds of apprehensions and managed to say tremulously, 'Kola, you are being unfair to me by asking such a question. I am yours and all that I have is yours. You shouldn't have any misgivings about me.'

Kolesari realized that she had said something she didn't mean, so she quickly corrected herself. 'God knows that I've never doubted your love. I asked the question because I thought when you know the reason for my sadness, you might laugh it off. I know that I shouldn't be saying this. I also know it'll hurt you deeply to agree to my request. That is why I wanted to hide my feelings from you. I would've forgotten all about it in a few months. But your entreaties have forced me to speak up. Do you realize what'll happen to me when you really believe that I don't trust you? It is your plea that is forcing me to speak.'

'Come on, tell me without fear. I can't bear the suspense anymore.'

'Please stop mixing with the untouchables and eating with them.'

Just as an innocent prisoner, condemned by the judge, lets out a deep sigh, Panditji also heaved a deep sigh in total puzzlement and lay down on his bed silently.

Then he stood up and said, 'All right. I shall obey your order. My heart will bleed, but let that be. But tell me one thing, is this your idea or has someone put you up to it?'

'Women mock me. I cannot put up with this. I have no control over their tongues, they can say anything. But I have some rights over you, so I made the request.'

'All right. What you say will be done.'

'I have one more request to make. I've told you candidly what was in my heart. Men are not as bothered by people's jibes as women who are weak. Our hearts are weak; harsh comments affect us deeply. But don't pay attention to this. Don't be violent to yourself to protect me from people's taunts. I'll put up with them. If they hurt me too much, I'll stop going out and meeting these women.'

Shyamswaroop hugged Kolesari and said, 'Kola, I can't take it that you have to listen to people's taunts because of me. I won't allow your sensitive heart to be wounded by taunts. Should your heart be filled with pain, where would my love find shelter? Now, cheer up and sing me your favourite song.'

Kolesari's face lit up with joy. She picked up the harmonium and began to sing in a sweet melodious tone.

Piya milan hai kathin bawri . . .

Love's union is difficult, O my crazy heart . . .

A week passed and Panditji did not visit the villages. It was his life's mission to form a fraternal bond with the untouchables, to make them aware about their self-worth as human beings and to pull them out of the cesspool of ignorance and superstition. Whenever a spanner was thrown in the works, derailing his hopes, he was sad and distressed.

Human beings enjoy life as long as they feel they are doing something worthwhile. Of course, there are many in this world who do not know what their social or personal responsibilities are. But then it is wrong to call such people humans. Those who become accustomed to doing wrong things cannot refrain from them, even if they know what they are doing is wrong. And if fair means are not available, they take recourse to foul means to get what they want. You may warn or threaten a gambler as much as you want but he won't give up playing the game. You may throw a drunkard in prison, but the moment he is set free he will rush to the pub. Wicked deeds have their own excitement. But the passion for doing good excites one many times over. His daily chores would keep Panditji occupied through the day but, come evening, when it was time for the activities closer to his heart, he felt restless. He had to be violent to his true self by giving preference to his personal duty over his social responsibility. When he sat alone in the evening in his little garden, he would argue with himself. At times, he became terribly annoyed at his own helplessness and felt like walking up to Kolesari and telling her firmly that he couldn't sacrifice the good of the community for personal interest.

'But what will be the effect of these words on Kola? She is a simple, innocent soul, blind in her love for me. Won't it pain her deeply? No, Kola, I love you more than my life. You who are so precious to me, how can I think of myself as unfortunate when I have you? I will bear everything to keep you happy. If only you knew how restless I was right now, I am sure you won't care about people's jibes. No, you won't care even if all the people in the whole world pointed their fingers at you. What can I offer you in return for your unwavering love? The duty towards one's community is perhaps the highest of all obligations.

However, in special circumstances, sometimes one has to abandon the community to maintain domestic peace. It was the duty of King Ramachandra to stay back in Ayodhya and be a just ruler to his people, ensuring peace and prosperity. But for him, his father's command took precedence, which was a personal duty. It was also the duty of King Dasharath to hand over the throne

to Rama who was loved by the people of Avadh. But he abandoned this national duty to honour a personal vow that he had made.'

Pandit Shyamswaroop, however, was wrong in assuming that Kolesari was unaware of the struggle in his heart. Since the night she had brought up the issue, she was constantly haunted by the thought that she had been unfair to him. She could see that his face did not reflect joy and contentment, as it did before. He didn't show the same interest in his food and drink. His conversations barely concealed the pain in his heart. Kolesari could see what was happening to him as clearly as her reflection in a mirror.

She reproached herself. 'How selfish I am! How can I allow myself to be affected by a low, ill-tongued and shallow woman as to be so unfair to my husband? He has endured so much for my sake and I was affected by a mere taunt?'

These thoughts made her feel she must free him from the vow that he had taken. But Panditji didn't give her any opportunity to bring up the issue.

5

Pandit Shyamswaroop's untouchable brothers waited for him for a week. 'Maybe he's unwell,' they thought, 'or busy in a court case or out on vacation.' For a week, they kept themselves content with these thoughts. But after that, their patience ran out. Crowds of them descended on his home, wearing thick shawls, white turbans on their heads, feet shod in leather, and walking sticks on their shoulders. They wanted to know if all was well. Panditji had to offer an excuse for his absence and the only excuse he could think of at that moment was that his wife had been sick. From morning till evening, the stream of visitors continued unabated. As visitors from one village left, those from another would arrive. He had to offer the same excuse to all. He had no other option.

The second week passed but at Panditji's house the pretence of sickness continued. One evening, he was sitting at his doorstep when Ramdeen Pasi, Ballu Chaudhary and Gobari Pansphod arrived with Hakim Nadir Ali Khan in their tow. Hakim Sahib was the Ibn-e-Sina of his times. Just as Satan takes to his heels with the chanting of *ism-e aazam*, ailments, however chronic or complicated, vanished with Hakim Sahib's arrival. And sometimes, his patients vanished too.

Panditji was nonplussed to see Hakim Sahib. 'Now what trick should I play?' he thought to himself. 'I'll be completely exposed! What made these stupid fellows fetch this hakim here? And how on earth was this gentleman ready to come here like the angel of death?'

He was indeed in a fix and there was no time to mull over things. At that moment, despite his deep love for Kolesari, he wished that she indeed had fever. It would have helped him save face. But then, death never comes when one invokes it!

Hakim Sahib said, 'I was so sorry to hear that your esteemed wife has been sick for the last two weeks. I am unhappier with you, Sir, that you did not inform me of her illness. If you did, the sickness wouldn't have lasted so long. What is her complaint?'

Panditji scratched his head, coughed once or twice, changed his posture, lowered his head and replied, 'It's one of those women's problems, but she's much better now. A lady doctor is seeing her. You know very well how people are embracing Western culture. They have more faith in Western medicine. And then, you also know that patients show improvement if they have faith in the doctor and the mode of treatment. It is for this reason that I didn't think it proper to trouble you.'

'Yes, you're right. Which lady doctor is treating her?'

Panditji scratched his head again and replied, 'Miss Bogan . . .'

Shyamswaroop had to employ all his legal skills to deal with the situation. But it was clearly not a good day for him. The situation, instead of easing up, was becoming more complicated. Even as they were speaking, he saw Kallu Chaudhary, Hardas Bhar and Jugga Dhobi arriving in the company of Miss Bogan, who was riding a horse. Panditji became tense and all the colour drained from his face. In his heart he cursed Miss Bogan, wondering how she had landed there at that hour! But this was not the occasion to show his annoyance. He quickly rose from his chair, shook hands with Miss Bogan and, before she could utter a word, guided her to the sitting room in the women's section.

He then went up to Kolesari and said, 'We're stuck in a peculiar situation. I'd made a pretence of your sickness to get rid of these people. But today, they've brought over Hakim Nadir Ali Khan and Miss Bogan to treat you. Miss Bogan is sitting in the drawing room. Now tell me what to do.'

'Shall I pretend to be sick then?'

'May your enemies fall sick!' laughed Panditji.

‘Even if they do, it won’t help right now. You bring Miss Bogan. I’ll get under the blanket.’

Panditji went to the sitting room to fetch Miss Bogan. In the meanwhile, Kolesari covered herself with a blanket from head to toe and started groaning as though she were in great pain. Miss Bogan checked her temperature with a thermometer, examined her tongue, made a face and said, ‘The illness has taken deep root. It’s hysteria. Apparently, there’s no fever in your body, but you must be feeling it in your chest. You have a headache, don’t you?’

‘I feel as though my head will burst. There’s an abscess.’

‘You don’t feel hungry, do you?’

‘Can’t even bear to look at food!’

Miss Bogan completed her diagnosis. She wrote down the prescription and left. Hakim Nadir Ali thought it futile to stay on any longer as he had already collected his fees.

Panditji came out and told his well-wishers, ‘You have taken the trouble for no reason. She’s much better now. I am very grateful to all of you.’

Once the guests had taken his leave, Panditji went inside and laughed to his heart’s content. Then he thought to himself, ‘Today, I had to do things that should never have been done. Won’t the lady understand even now?’

But Kolesari found it difficult to laugh.

6

After his meal, Pandit Shyamswaroop went to bed and fell asleep, but Kolesari was unable to sleep. She kept tossing and turning. Sometimes she would stand up and start pacing up and down, or she would sit at the table in an effort to read a book in the light of the table lamp. But she couldn’t set her mind to anything. Her thoughts rebounded like the rays of the moon streaming through a tree being buffeted by a storm.

She thought to herself—*How unfair I’ve been to him. What pain he must have gone through today. A man who has never uttered a lie in his entire life had to tell so many today! And all because of me! If he were accustomed to telling lies, we would be the owners of the vast Didarganj estate today! I’ve reduced a truthful man to such a plight! Is it for this that I am to share his destiny? It’s my duty to support him, to assist him in his endeavours, to give him the right*

advice and see to it that he is at peace. Instead, I've trapped him in a web of lies. May God forgive my sins!

It was my duty to assist him in his good deeds. These villagers are so simple, guileless and generous. I've stopped my husband from working for such good people! Why? Just because an ill-tongued woman made a jibe at me? I was so incensed that I forced him to lie! Despite my mean-spirited torments, my generous and pure-hearted husband has remained unchanged. He has been more virtuous than virtue, and more honest than honesty. He knows I'm silly and stupid, ignorant and weak and obstinate, yet he hides my follies and continues to love me. How narrow-minded I am! I'm not worthy of even washing his feet!

Today, how he laughed when he returned after seeing Miss Bogan off. What a guileless laughter it was! Just to keep my spirits up and to mitigate my guilt. My love, I'm downright evil! I'm petty-minded. But please remember, I'm your slave

...

As these thoughts ran through her mind, she turned to look at Pandit Shyamswaroop's face. It appeared content because of a restful sleep. A faint smile played on his lips. As she gazed at her husband, she felt a lump in her throat. Like the high tides in the sea, there are times when human hearts, too, experience the tide of love. At that moment, it seemed as if a river of love had welled up in Kolesari's eyes. Overwhelmed with emotion, she clung to his chest which contained deep love for her. Just as a thief plunders a house freely if the owner is asleep, Kolesari drew her husband's love. And just as a thief fears lest the owner wake up, she, too, was fearful of her husband waking up. A woman's love is restrained. A sense of shame stops her from being demonstrative. The fear that her enthusiasm might be construed as exhibitionist or phoney restrained her from an untrammelled expression of her love. But at that moment Kolesari was free from such fears. When the sea swells in high tide, the waves carry parts of damaged ships, scraps and shells to the shore. The tide of love in Kolesari's mind swept away all the fetters that had kept her bound for so long.

When Panditji returned home from the court the following day, he said to Kolesari, 'Can I have your permission to go out for a couple of days?'

'Why? Where are you going?'

'I've taken up a case outside the city. I've to go to Bhagalpur.'

'Right now?'

'The hearing is fixed for tomorrow.'

At six in the evening, Panditji left for Bhagalpur. The case kept him occupied for the next four days. He had promised to return in three days, but his work took four days. It was only on the fifth day that he was free of the case and, by three that afternoon, he reached Patna and made his way home. As he entered his neighbourhood, he ran into Sanpat Chaudhary of Majh village.

He asked him, 'Chaudhary, where are you headed?'

Chaudhary looked up in surprise and replied, 'Greetings, Sir. Weren't you expected to return yesterday? What delayed you?'

'I couldn't make it yesterday. Is everything fine with you?'

'By your grace. A big event is going on at your place.' 'My place? What kind of event?' he asked in astonishment.

'Bahuji has arranged a get-together. All our women were invited.'

Filled with joy, Panditji proceeded towards his home. He encountered many familiar faces on the way. It seemed as though a lot of villagers had come to attend a wedding. After exchanging greetings with them he finally reached home and saw a huge crowd gathered there. Many guests were sitting on the floor and smoking hookahs. Kolesari had invited the women. These men had chaperoned their women.

Panditji went to the sitting room and changed his clothes. He instructed the servants to not tell anyone of his arrival. He took his position at the window and began to observe what was happening.

The inner courtyard was covered with clean white sheets and on them sat about three to four hundred village women, all dressed for the occasion. Some were laughing while others were chatting amongst themselves. He saw Kolesari distributing paan and cardamom on a platter among guests. After the distribution of paan, the singing began. Kolesari was wearing a simple sari of thick weave and no jewellery. She drummed the dhol and began singing along

with the women. As Panditji watched this, his heart swelled with great joy. He felt like rushing to Kola and holding her close to his heart.

When the singing was over, Kola addressed the women for fifteen minutes in their colloquial language. After that, the women dispersed. Kolesari gave each one of them a warm hug before saying goodbye. One of the women was very old. When she came forward to receive the hug, Kolesari bent down to touch her feet to seek her blessings. Panditji was so thrilled by Kolesari's courtesy and humility that he actually jumped with joy a couple of times. Unable to restrain himself any longer, he left the sitting room and walked to the inner courtyard.

He called Kolesari into the room and took her in his arms.

She asked, 'Why were you delayed? Had you not returned today, I would've come to see what's wrong.' But Panditji had no time to listen to pleasantries.

He hugged her again and again.

Embarrassed, Kolesari said, 'That's enough. Do you want to expend all your love today?'

'What can I say? It does not seem enough to me. The more I love, the more I want to love you. You are truly a goddess.'

Maybe not a kingdom, but if Panditji had been given a large estate, he would not have felt the joy that he had experienced that day.

After showering his wife with affection, he stood in the courtyard and addressed the village women: 'Sisters, Kola was not sick. She had forbidden me to mix with all of you. But today, by inviting all of you, she's created the bond of sisterhood. I cannot describe in words the joy I feel at this moment. As an expression of my happiness, I've decided to open *kothis* for transactions of loans in ten villages with the capital of a thousand rupees each. There, you'll be given loans free of interest. When you borrow from moneylenders you're made to pay an interest of one or two anna per rupee borrowed. With the opening of this facility, you'll be free from the clutches of the moneylenders. These kothis will be managed by the lady who's invited you all here today.'

The women raised their hands in appreciation and blessed Panditji. Kolesari said to her husband, 'You've given me such a great responsibility.'

'Now that you've stepped into the water, you'll soon learn to swim,' Panditji said, smiling.

'But do I know anything about keeping accounts and ledgers?'

‘You’ll learn automatically. Did you know how to counsel people? You were too shy to even speak to women. Only two weeks earlier, you forbade me to meet these people and today you’re treating them as your sisters! You’ve had your way earlier, now it’s my turn.’

‘You set the net to trap me, didn’t you?’ laughed Kolesari. ‘It’s a trap we set for each other.’

2. Grammar Page



GRAMMAR STUDY: AT, IN, ON

AT

<i>fixed watch time</i>	at 5 o'clock, at 2 pm, at 6:30
<i>specific time</i>	at mealtimes, at lunch time, at tiffin time
<i>parts of the day</i>	at night, at midnight, at noon
<i>expressions with 'end'</i>	at the weekend, at the end of this month
<i>festivals and celebrations</i>	at Dashain, at ID, at Chhat, at Tihar
<i>with the expressions of place</i>	at the end, at the entrance, at the top, at the bottom
<i>specific location</i>	at the airport, at the table, at the park, at the bus stop
<i>an activity</i>	at work, at school, at play
<i>superlatives</i>	at least, at the worst, at its best
<i>order</i>	at first, at last, at the first attempt, at the second attempt
<i>towards</i>	Look at me. She waved at them.
<i>certain age/speed/temperature</i>	He died at ninety. Water boils at 100° Celsius.
<i>rate/price</i>	She bought some oranges at Rs. 50 a kilo.

IN

<i>months</i>	in May, in December, in Baishakh, in Ashwin
<i>years</i>	in 2005, in 1985, in 1920s
<i>seasons</i>	in spring, in winter, in summer, in autumn
<i>parts of the day</i>	in the morning, in the afternoon, in the evening
<i>duration/within a certain time</i>	in a minute, in two weeks, in three years, in six months
<i>place thought of as an area</i>	in Nepal, in Asia, in Delhi, in Singapore, in Britain
<i>within a location</i>	in the room, in the building, in the office, in the kitchen
<i>wearing</i>	the boy in the blue shirt, the girl in the red sari
<i>condition</i>	in doubt, in a hurry, in love, in tears, in good health
<i>in a line/row/queue/street</i>	He is standing in a queue.
<i>colours and types</i>	He printed his name in red in capital letters.
<i>a member of</i>	He is in the army. Are you in the navy?
<i>small vehicles</i>	He will come here in his car.

ON

<i>days of a week</i>	on Sunday, on Friday, on Wednesday
<i>dates</i>	on May 20 th , on 5 th December, on 22 nd June
<i>special days</i>	on my birthday, on New Year's day, on Children's Day
<i>touching the surface of</i>	on the table, on the wall, on the ceiling, on his shirt
<i>about</i>	a book on engineering, a poem on child rights
<i>a state or condition</i>	on strike, on fire, on holiday, on sale, on credit
<i>through the medium of</i>	on the radio, on television, on computer
<i>to talk about dependence or survival</i>	These insects live on potatoes. These machines run on diesel oil.
<i>as soon as something happens</i>	On reaching at the airport, I rang you up. On returning, he checked his bag.
<i>to talk about films and plays</i>	What's on TV tonight? What's on at the Kumari?
<i>large vehicles</i>	on a bus, on a train, on a ship
<i>rides</i>	on a bicycle, on a horse, on an elephant
<i>physical positions</i>	on the right, on the left