



Learn English Through Stories

G Series

G78

Adapted and modified by

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A Journey of Dreams

By Kulwant Sandhu

In a bustling city in India, where honking rickshaws and vibrant markets painted the streets with life, lived Aarav, a young man with big dreams. Aarav was a student at a local college, studying engineering, and his English was at a C2 level, polished through years of reading novels and watching English films. He was determined to secure a scholarship to study abroad, a dream that seemed like a long shot but burned brightly in his heart.

One humid morning, Aarav sat in his small, cluttered room, poring over scholarship applications. His friend, Priya, burst in, her eyes wide with excitement. "Aarav, have you heard? There's a new international scholarship program at the university! Apparently, they're looking for students with exceptional skills in STEM fields!"

Aarav's heart skipped a beat. "Really? That's incredible!" he said, his voice tinged with hope. "But, to be perfectly honest, I'm not sure I stand a chance. There are so many brilliant students out there."

Priya rolled her eyes. "Oh, come on, Aarav. You're selling yourself short. You've been acing every exam, and your projects are always the talk of the department. You've got this in the bag!"

Aarav smiled, though doubt lingered. Presumably, the competition would be fierce, with students from top institutes across India applying. Still, he decided to give it a shot. He spent the next few days preparing his application, writing essays, and gathering recommendation letters. His professor, Dr. Sharma, was particularly supportive. "Aarav," she said, "your work on sustainable energy solutions is remarkable. Naturally, you're a strong candidate for this scholarship."

Encouraged, Aarav submitted his application, though he couldn't shake the feeling that he was just one of many. Days turned into weeks, and the wait was agonizing. He kept himself busy with classes and his part-time job at a local café, where he served chai and chatted with customers in fluent English. Strangely enough, these conversations often gave him perspective. One regular customer, an elderly man named Mr. Gupta, shared stories of his own youth, when he had dreamed of studying abroad but never got the chance. "Don't let fear hold you back, Aarav," Mr. Gupta advised. "Seize the day, or you'll regret it."

One evening, as Aarav wiped down tables at the café, his phone buzzed with an email. His heart raced as he opened it. The subject line read: "Scholarship

Decision.” He took a deep breath and clicked. The words blurred before his eyes: “Congratulations, Aarav! You have been selected...” He let out a whoop, startling the customers. He had done it! He was going to study in London!

But the journey wasn't over. The scholarship covered tuition, but Aarav needed to fund his travel and living expenses. Basically, he was back to square one financially. He decided to take on extra shifts at the café and started tutoring younger students in English and math. Priya, ever the optimist, helped him brainstorm fundraising ideas. “Why not start a crowdfunding campaign?” she suggested. “You can share your story online. People love supporting dreamers like you.”

Aarav was hesitant. “Do you think anyone would care?” he asked.

“To be perfectly honest, Aarav, your story is inspiring,” Priya said. “You're not just chasing a degree; you're chasing a better future for yourself and your family. People will connect with that.”

So, Aarav created a crowdfunding page, sharing his journey from a small-town boy to a scholarship winner. He poured his heart into the story, explaining how education had been his ticket out of a rut. To his surprise, donations started trickling in. Friends, neighbours, and even strangers contributed. Strangely enough, Mr. Gupta, the café regular, donated a significant amount, writing, “You remind me of myself, Aarav. Go make us proud.”

As the departure date approached, Aarav faced another hurdle: the visa process. He spent hours at the embassy, filling out forms and answering questions. The officer, a stern woman with a clipped British accent, asked, “Why should we grant you this visa?” Aarav, nervous but composed, explained his passion for engineering and his desire to contribute to global sustainability. Apparently, his sincerity shone through, as the officer nodded and stamped his passport. He was officially London-bound.

The day before his flight, Aarav's family threw a small farewell party. His mother, tears in her eyes, hugged him tightly. “We're so proud, beta,” she said. “Ultimately, all your hard work has paid off.” His younger sister, Riya, handed him a handmade card with a drawing of a plane soaring over the Taj Mahal. “Don't forget us when you're a big-shot engineer!” she teased.

Aarav laughed, but his chest tightened. Leaving home was bittersweet. Naturally, he was thrilled about the opportunity, but he couldn't help feeling a pang of guilt for leaving his family behind. Still, he knew this was his chance to make it big.

In London, Aarav's new life was a whirlwind. The city was a stark contrast to his hometown, with its grey skies and orderly streets. His university was a hub of innovation, and his classmates came from all over the world. At first, he felt like a fish out of water, struggling to keep up with the fast-paced lectures and unfamiliar accents. But he adapted quickly, thanks to his strong English skills and determination. Basically, he was living his dream, even if it came with challenges.

One day, during a group project, Aarav's team faced a setback. Their prototype for a solar-powered water purifier kept malfunctioning. Frustrated, Aarav suggested a new approach based on a technique he'd learned back in India. His teammates were sceptical, but Aarav persisted. "To be perfectly honest, this method is unconventional, but I've seen it work," he said. They gave it a try, and ultimately, the prototype succeeded, earning praise from their professor.

As months passed, Aarav grew more confident. He made friends, explored London, and even started a blog to share his experiences with aspiring Indian students. Presumably, his story inspired others, as he began receiving messages from students back home asking for advice. He wrote about the importance of perseverance, the value of hard work, and the courage to chase dreams, no matter how daunting they seemed.

One evening, as Aarav sat by the Thames, watching the city lights reflect on the water, he reflected on his journey. Strangely enough, the boy who once doubted himself was now thriving in a foreign land. He thought of Mr. Gupta's words: "Seize the day." Aarav had done just that, and it had changed his life. Ultimately, he realized that success wasn't just about reaching a destination; it was about the courage to take the first step, the resilience to keep going, and the heart to stay connected to his roots.

As he looked out at the glittering skyline, Aarav knew this was only the beginning. His dreams, once a long shot, were now within reach, and he was ready to soar.

2. Comprehension Questions and Answers

Question 1: What was Aarav's main goal in the story?

Question 2: How did Priya encourage Aarav when he doubted himself?

Question 3: What does the idiom "long shot" mean in the context of Aarav's scholarship application?

Question 4: How did Aarav use the adverb "apparently" in the story?

Question 5: What financial challenge did Aarav face after winning the scholarship?

Question 6: What does the idiom "seize the day" mean, and who used it in the story?

Question 7: How did Aarav's community support his journey to London?

Question 8: What does the adverb "ultimately" reveal about Aarav's success in the story?

Question 9: What role did Aarav's English skills play in his journey?

Question 10: How did Aarav use the idiom "ticket out of a rut" in his crowdfunding campaign?

Answers

Answer 1: Aarav's main goal was to secure a scholarship to study abroad.

Answer 2: Priya told Aarav he was "selling himself short" and that he had the scholarship "in the bag" due to his excellent academic record.

Answer 3: It means the scholarship seemed unlikely to achieve due to fierce competition, like climbing a steep mountain.

Answer 4: Aarav used "apparently" when Priya told him about the new scholarship program, indicating she heard it from someone else.

Answer 5: He needed to fund his travel and living expenses, which felt like being "back to square one" financially.

Answer 6: It means to take advantage of opportunities immediately. Mr. Gupta used it to encourage Aarav to pursue his dreams without fear.

Answer 7: Friends, neighbours, and strangers donated to his crowdfunding campaign, and Mr. Gupta gave a significant amount.

Answer 8: It shows that his hard work paid off in the end, as he won the scholarship and succeeded in London.

Answer 9: His C2-level English helped him communicate confidently at the visa interview and adapt to university life in London.

Answer 10: He described education as his "ticket out of a rut," meaning it was his way to escape a difficult situation and improve his life.

3. Grammar Page

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Names with and without **the** 2

A Names without **the**

We do not use **the** with names of most city streets/roads/squares/parks etc. :

Union Street (*not the ...*) **Fifth Avenue** **Hyde Park**
Abbey Road **Broadway** **Times Square**

Names of many public buildings and institutions (airports, stations, universities etc.), and also some geographical names, are two words:

Manchester Airport **Harvard University**

The first word is the name of a place ('Manchester') or a person ('Harvard'). These names are usually without **the**. In the same way, we say:

Victoria Station (*not the ...*) **Canterbury Cathedral** **Edinburgh Castle**
Buckingham Palace **Cambridge University** **Sydney Harbour**

Compare:

Buckingham Palace (*not the ...*) *but* **the Royal Palace**
(*'Royal'* is an adjective – it is not a name like 'Buckingham')

B Most other buildings have names with **the**. For example:

<i>hotels</i>	the Sheraton Hotel, the Holiday Inn
<i>theatres/cinemas</i>	the Palace Theatre, the Odeon (cinema)
<i>museums</i>	the Guggenheim Museum, the National Gallery
<i>other buildings</i>	the Empire State (Building), the White House, the Eiffel Tower

We often leave out the noun:

the Sheraton (Hotel) **the Palace** (Theatre) **the Guggenheim** (Museum)

Some names are only **the** + *noun*, for example:

the Acropolis **the Kremlin** **the Pentagon**

C Names with **of** usually have **the**. For example:

the Bank **of** England **the** Museum **of** Modern Art
the Great Wall **of** China **the** Tower **of** London

Note that we say:

the University **of** Cambridge *but* **Cambridge University** (*without the*)

D Many shops, restaurants, hotels etc. are named after people. These names end in **-s** or **-s**. We do not use **the** with these names:

McDonald's (*not the ...*) **Barclays** (bank)
Joe's Diner (restaurant) **Macy's** (department store)

Churches are often named after saints (St = Saint):

St John's Church (*not the ...*) **St Patrick's Cathedral**