



Learn English Through Stories

G Series

G84

Adapted and modified by

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1. I Will Do It

Adapted from Sudha Murty

He was short, unassuming, with a quiet demeanour that could easily blend into a crowd. But beneath his modest exterior burned a fierce intellect, sharp as a blade and quick as lightning. In the small, sleepy town of Mysore, he was the brightest boy in his class, a prodigy in Physics and Mathematics. Seniors sought him out, not for his presence, but for his mind—his ability to unravel complex problems with ease. His eyes would spark with life at the mere mention of a scientific conundrum, and he grasped theories faster than most could dream.

He hailed from a poor but educated family. His father, a high-school teacher with a deep love for English literature, instilled in him a reverence for knowledge. Like many boys his age in the early 1960s, his ambition was fixed on securing a spot in an engineering college. The brightest among them, however, set their sights higher—on the prestigious Indian Institutes of Technology, the IITs, gateways to a future of promise and prestige. Admission required passing a gruelling entrance exam, a challenge that separated the exceptional from the ordinary.

He and his friends applied for the IIT entrance test, driven by dreams but limited by resources. They had no access to special coaching or expensive preparatory books. Instead, they gathered under the shade of a stone mandap near Chamundi Hills, a serene spot overlooking Mysore's tranquil landscape. There, amid the rustle of leaves and the distant hum of the town, they pored over old question papers. He was their guide, the quiet leader who solved problems with a shy smile while others wrestled with equations. Alone under a tree, he would lose himself in thought, imagining a future at IIT—a dream that felt both tantalizingly close and impossibly distant. At sixteen, the world seemed full of possibilities, and IIT was the ultimate prize.

The day of the entrance exam arrived. He travelled to Bangalore, staying with relatives in a modest home that buzzed with the nervous energy of other aspirants. The test was a marathon of intellect, a crucible for young minds. He tackled it with focus, emerging confident but characteristically understated. When asked how he fared, he offered only a quiet “ok,” a word that carried layers of meaning in his understated lexicon. For him, “ok” could mean failure when it came to food, “good” meant passable, and “excellent” was reserved for what was merely good. His principle was simple: never hurt anyone with harsh words, even unintentionally.

Weeks later, the IIT results were announced. He had not only passed but secured a high rank—a feat that would make any student’s heart soar. Elation coursed through him as he rushed to share the news with his father, who was engrossed in his newspaper, a daily ritual of quiet reflection.

“Anna, I passed the exam,” he said, his voice steady but brimming with pride. His father looked up, his face softening. “Well done, my boy.” I want to join IIT.” The air grew heavy. His father set the newspaper down, his eyes meeting his son’s with a mix of pride and sorrow. “My son, you are a bright boy. You know our financial situation. I have five daughters to marry and three sons to educate. I am a salaried man. I cannot afford your expenses at IIT. You can stay in Mysore and study as much as you want.”

The words landed like a blow, though they were spoken with love. For a father to deny his gifted son such an opportunity was a wound to both. In those days, it was common for one breadwinner to shoulder the burden of a large family, and his father was no exception. The reality was stark, the family’s resources stretched thin. The boy saw the pain in his father’s eyes, the weight of a truth neither could escape.

Disappointment crashed over him like a wave. His dream, so vivid and close, crumbled into ashes. He had come so far, only to be stopped by circumstances beyond his control. His heart sank, heavy with sorrow, yet he remained silent. An introvert by nature, he kept his pain locked within, never burdening others with his struggles. He didn’t lash out or blame anyone—not his father, not fate. Instead, he absorbed the hurt, letting it settle deep inside.

The day his classmates left for IIT was one of the hardest. They were bound for Madras (now Chennai), travelling by train from Mysore. These were his friends, companions through years of shared laughter and late-night study sessions. He went to the station to see them off, a final act of camaraderie. The platform buzzed with excitement, their voices like the chatter of birds, alive with talk of new hostels, new courses, and the bright futures awaiting them. He stood apart, a silent figure amid the noise, his heart heavy with what could have been.

One friend noticed his quietness. “You should have made it,” he said, his tone a mix of sympathy and regret. He didn’t respond. He only smiled, wished them well, and waved as the train pulled away. Their hands fluttered from the windows, growing smaller until they vanished. The platform emptied, but he remained, rooted to the spot. It was June 1962, and the monsoon had arrived in Mysore. Dark clouds gathered, and a light drizzle began to fall, cloaking the city in a sombre veil. Yet he stood motionless, raindrops mingling with the weight of his thoughts.

In that moment, something shifted. A quiet resolve took root. He spoke to himself, not with anger or envy, but with clarity: “All students from the IITs study well and do big things in life. But it is not the institution—ultimately, it is you and you alone who can change your life by hard work.”

Perhaps unknowingly, he was echoing the timeless wisdom of the Bhagavad Gita: “Your best friend is yourself, and your worst enemy is yourself.” The institution, the prestige, the opportunities—they mattered, but they were not the whole story. His path would be different, but he would carve it with his own hands.

From that day, he threw himself into his work with unrelenting focus. He enrolled in a local college in Mysore, studying engineering with the same fervour he would have brought to IIT. He didn’t dwell on what he had lost or seek shortcuts through caste, community, or political connections. His was a path of integrity, driven by intellect and discipline. Personal comforts took a backseat; his ambition was singular, his resolve unbreakable.

Years passed, and his hard work bore fruit. He joined Patni Computer Systems, where he honed his skills and began to see the potential of a nascent industry—software. In 1981, with a small group of like-minded colleagues, he took a leap of faith. With modest savings and a vision far larger than their resources, they founded a company in a tiny apartment in Pune. They called it Infosys.

The early days were gruelling. Funds were scarce, infrastructure was limited, and India’s bureaucratic landscape was a maze of obstacles. Yet he led with a quiet strength, building a team of individuals who shared his commitment to excellence. He believed in values—transparency, fairness, and uncompromising quality. He shared his wealth with his team, fostering loyalty and trust. Together, they turned Infosys into a pioneer of India’s software industry, sparking the Information Technology revolution that would transform the nation’s economy.

His journey was not just about building a company; it was about proving that success could be achieved ethically. He showed that a son of a schoolteacher, armed with nothing but intellect and determination, could rise to global prominence without compromising his principles. He became a philanthropist, giving back to society with the same generosity he had always shown his colleagues. His life became a testament to his motto: “Powered by intellect and driven by values.”

Today, Nagavara Ramarao Narayana Murthy is an icon—not just of business, but of simplicity and integrity. The boy who stood alone on a rainy platform in 1962, watching his dreams slip away, became the man who reshaped India’s future. His story is a reminder that while institutions can open doors, it is the individual’s resolve that builds empires. Through sheer hard work, he didn’t just change his own life—he changed the world.

Comprehension Questions

Question 1: What were the boy's strongest subjects in school?

Question 2: Where did the boy and his friends study for the IIT entrance exam?

Question 3: Why couldn’t the boy attend IIT despite passing the entrance exam?

Question 4: How did the boy react when his father told him he couldn’t afford IIT?

Question 5: What did the boy do at the train station when his friends left for IIT?

Question 6: What realization did the boy have while standing at the train station?

Question 7: What philosophy from the Bhagavad Gita did the boy unknowingly follow?

Question 8: What company did the boy later help found? Question 9: What values did the boy emphasize in his professional life?

Question 10: Who is the boy in the story?

Answers

Answer 1: The boy's strongest subjects were Physics and Mathematics.

Answer 2: They studied under the shade of a stone mandap near Chamundi Hills in Mysore.

Answer 3: His family couldn't afford the expenses because his father, a salaried teacher, had to support five daughters and three sons.

Answer 4: He remained silent, kept his disappointment to himself, and didn't get angry or blame anyone.

Answer 5: He wished his friends well, waved as their train left, and stood motionless on the platform afterward.

Answer 6: He realized that it's not the institution but one's own hard work that changes life.

Answer 7: The philosophy that "Your best friend is yourself, and your worst enemy is yourself."

Answer 8: He helped found Infosys.

Answer 9: He emphasized transparency, fairness, and uncompromising quality.

Answer 10: The boy is Nagavara Ramarao Narayana Murthy.

3. Grammar Page

Unit
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there ... and it ...

A Study this example:



We use **there** ... when we talk about something for the first time, to say that it exists:

- There's** a new restaurant in Hill Street.
- I'm sorry I'm late. **There was** a lot of traffic. (*not* It was a lot of traffic)
- Things are very expensive now. **There has been** a big rise in the cost of living.

It = a specific thing, place, fact, situation etc. :

- We went to the new restaurant. **It's** very good. (**It** = the restaurant)
- I wasn't expecting her to call me. **It** was a complete surprise. (**It** = that she called)

Compare **there** and **it**:

- I like this town. **There's** a lot to do here. **It's** an interesting place.

There also means 'to/at/in that place':

- The house is unoccupied. **There's** nobody living **there**. (= in the house)

B You can say:

there will be there must be there might be etc.	there must have been there should have been there would have been etc.	there is sure to be there is bound to be there is going to be	there is likely to be there is supposed to be there used to be
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- 'Is **there** a flight to Rome tonight?' 'There **might be**. I'll check online.'
- If people drove more carefully, **there wouldn't be** so many accidents.
- I could hear music coming from the house. **There must have been** somebody at home.
- There's bound to be** a cafe somewhere near here. (= **There's sure** to be ...)

Compare **there** and **it**:

- They live on a busy road. **There must be** a lot of noise from the traffic.
They live on a busy road. **It must be** very noisy. (**It** = living on a busy road)
- There used to be** a cinema here, but it closed a few years ago.
That building is now a supermarket. **It used to be** a cinema. (**It** = that building)
- There's sure to be** a flight to Rome tonight.
There's a flight to Rome tonight, but **it's sure to be** full. (**it** = the flight)

C We say:

- It's** dangerous **to walk in the road**. (*not* To walk in the road is dangerous)

Normally we use **It** ... at the beginning of sentences like this. Some more examples:

- It** didn't take us long **to get** here.
- It's** a shame (**that**) **you can't come to the party**.
- It's** not worth **waiting any longer**. Let's go.

We also use **it** to talk about distance, time and weather:

- How far is it** from here to the airport?
- It's a long time** since we last saw you.

Compare **it** and **there**:

- It** was **windy**. *but* **There** was a cold wind.