

## 10

## UNIT

# The Silent Predator and the Majestic Prey – Snow Leopard and Markhor

## Learning Outcomes:

**By the end of this unit, students will be able to:**

- give an informed personal and analytical response to a descriptive and informative text.
- reading to analyse descriptive/argumentative essays.
- distinguish between the connotative and denotative meanings of words, both similar and dissimilar denotations and their appropriate use in a variety of writing, and texts.
- acquire and use appropriate words and phrases for reading, writing, speaking, and listening; independently gather vocabulary when considering a word or phrase important for comprehension or expression.
- use hyphens (hyphenated nouns and adjectives) in words, letter string –ough /words.
- write a descriptive composition (giving physical description and characteristics/traits of a person/object/place moving from general to specific), using correct punctuation and spelling, by using the process approach – brainstorming, mind mapping, and writing a first draft.
- demonstrate attentive listening skills to respond orally with standard pronunciation and intonation.

## Pre-reading:

### K-W-L Chart

#### Before Reading

**Make predictions about the text's content in the W (Want to Know) columns:**

- **K Column:** Write down everything you know about the snow leopard and the markhor. Think about their habitats, characteristics, and interesting facts you already know about these animals.
- **W Column:** List questions or things you want to learn about the snow leopard and the markhor from the text. Consider what interests you about these animals or what you are curious about their survival and interaction in the wild.

#### After Reading the Text

**Complete the L Column to compare the predictions with the actual content:**

- **L Column:** After you have read the text, write down what you have learned about the snow leopard and the markhor. Reflect on the answers to your questions from the W column and any new information you found interesting or important.

K (Know)	W (Want to Know)	L (Learned)

1. In the high-altitude regions of Pakistan, where the peaks of the Himalayas, Karakoram, and Hindu Kush touch the sky, two extraordinary animals have made

these **rugged** landscapes home for centuries. The snow leopard and the markhor, **predator** and prey, represent the delicate balance of nature in some of the most remote areas of the world. Both species are not only fascinating in their own outlook but are also symbols of Pakistan's wild beauty and the need for **conservation**.

### **The Ghost of the Mountains – Snow Leopard**

2. The snow leopard is one of the most **elusive** animals on the planet. With its thick, spotted coat and piercing blue eyes, it blends perfectly with the rocky mountains. Often referred to as the "Ghost of the Mountains," the snow leopard roams at altitudes as high as 5,500 metres, surviving the cold with its dense fur and muscular build.

3. Snow leopards are highly adapted to their mountain habitats. Their wide, fur-covered paws allow them to walk on snow without sinking, and their long tails help them balance on narrow ledges. But despite their strength and **agility**, snow leopards are rarely seen by humans. This mysterious predator is shy and solitary, avoiding human contact whenever possible.

Why are snow leopards rarely seen by humans?

4. The snow leopard's primary prey is the markhor, though it also hunts ibex and wild sheep. As a top predator in the **ecosystem**, it plays a crucial role in maintaining the natural balance. If the snow leopard were to disappear, it would create a **ripple** effect, disturbing the populations of other animals and the overall health of the mountain environment.

### **The Majestic Markhor – A National Symbol**

5. The markhor, with its impressive corkscrew-shaped horns, is Pakistan's national animal. Found in the mountainous regions of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Gilgit-Baltistan, Balochistan, and parts of Azad Jammu and Kashmir, the markhor is perfectly adapted to the steep and rocky terrain. Its wide hooves help it climb cliffs with ease, while its coat changes with the seasons, providing warmth in winter and shedding in summer.

6. The markhor is a **herbivore**, feeding on grasses, shrubs, and leaves. Living at altitudes of up to 3,600 metres, these animals are often seen perched on narrow ledges, grazing on vegetation. Males are known for their long, twisted horns, which can grow up to 1.5 metres.

What do markhors eat?

7. The name "markhor" means "snake-eater" in Persian, a reference to the twisting horns that resemble coiled snakes. The markhor holds a special place in

Pakistan's cultural and environmental **heritage**, but like the snow leopard, it has faced numerous challenges.

### **A Fragile Balance – Predator and Prey**

**8.** The relationship between the snow leopard and the markhor is a classic example of predator and prey. Snow leopards rely on markhors for food, and markhors have evolved to escape these powerful predators by living in steep, rocky areas where they can quickly flee.

**9.** However, human activities have upset this delicate balance. Poaching, habitat destruction, and climate change have reduced populations of both the species. Markhors have been hunted for their valuable horns, while snow leopards have been killed by herders trying to protect their livestock.

### **Conservation Success and Future Challenges**

**10.** Despite these threats, both the snow leopard and the markhor have benefited from successful conservation efforts in Pakistan. Organisations such as the Snow Leopard Foundation and the WWF-Pakistan have worked tirelessly to protect these species. In areas like Chitral National Park and the Toshi Game Reserve, local communities, in collaboration with the government, have established trophy hunting programmes. These programmes allow foreign hunters to hunt a limited number of markhors under strict regulations. The revenue generated is used for wildlife conservation and to provide financial incentives for local people to protect the animals.

**11.** Thanks to the efforts to reduce human-leopard conflict by which an improvement in the numbers of snow leopard has also been seen. By compensating herders who lose livestock due to snow leopard attacks and raising awareness of the species' importance, conservationists have reduced the killings of these endangered cats.

How have conservation efforts helped increase snow leopard numbers?

**12.** Despite these successes, both the species remain **vulnerable**. Continued efforts are needed to protect their habitats and prevent illegal hunting. By preserving the snow leopard and the markhor, Pakistan is also preserving its natural heritage and the balance of life in its wildest regions.

### **The Role of Pakistan's Mountain Ecosystems**

**13.** The survival of the snow leopard and the markhor is essential for the health of Pakistan's mountain ecosystems. Snow leopards keep the populations of herbivores like the markhor in check, ensuring that plant life in these areas

remains balanced. Markhors, in turn, are critical for maintaining the vegetation of the mountain slopes, preventing overgrazing and soil erosion.

**14.** Without these two species, the entire ecosystem would be at risk. Protecting them is not only about saving two **magnificent** animals but also preserving the very environment they inhabit.

### Theme

The central theme of the text is delicate balance of nature through the predator-prey relationship between the snow leopard and the markhor in Pakistan's mountains. Both the species are crucial for maintaining the ecosystem's health but face threats from poaching, habitat loss, and climate change. The markhor, as Pakistan's national animal, also holds cultural significance. Conservation efforts by organizations like the Snow Leopard Foundation and WWF-Pakistan aim to protect these animals and **preserve** the fragile ecosystem. This theme highlights the importance of biodiversity, adaptation, and human responsibility in conservation.

### Glossary:

Words	Meanings
agility	the ability to move quickly and easily
conservation	the protection of the natural environment
ecosystem	all the plants and living creatures in a particular area considered in relation to their physical environment
elusive	difficult to find, define or achieve
herbivore	any animal that eats only plants
heritage	the history, traditions, buildings and objects that a country or society has had for many years and that are considered an important part of its character
magnificent	extremely attractive and impressive; deserving praise
predator	an animal that kills and eats other animals
preserve	to keep a particular quality, feature, etc.; to make sure that something is kept
ripple	a small wave on the surface of a liquid, especially water in a lake, etc.
rugged	not level or smooth and having rocks rather than plants or trees
vulnerable	weak and easily hurt physically or emotionally

## Reading and Critical Thinking

### A. Answer the following questions:

1. Why is the predator-prey relationship between the snow leopard and the markhor important for the ecosystem?
2. How do the snow leopard and the markhor's adaptations help them survive in the mountains?
3. What are the benefits and potential concerns of community-led conservation programmes like trophy hunting?
4. What might happen to the mountain ecosystem if either the snow leopard or the markhor disappeared?
5. How do human activities like poaching and habitat destruction threaten the balance between the snow leopard and the markhor?
6. How is the markhor adapted to living in mountainous regions?
7. What more can be done to raise awareness about protecting endangered species like the snow leopard and the markhor?
8. How did the description of the snow leopard and the markhor impact your understanding of these animals and their environment?

### B. Choose the correct option for each question.

1. What might be the long-term impact on the ecosystem if the snow leopard were to become extinct?
  - a. The population of herbivores like markhor would increase, leading to overgrazing.
  - b. The markhor population would decrease due to a lack of protection.
  - c. The ecosystem would become healthier without predators.
  - d. The environment would remain unchanged.
2. How do community-based conservation efforts, such as trophy hunting, benefit both wildlife and local people?
  - a. They reduce human-wildlife conflict by eliminating predators.
  - b. They generate income for locals and fund wildlife protection efforts.
  - c. They help introduce foreign species into local ecosystems.
  - d. They allow uncontrolled hunting, reducing animal populations.
3. What lesson can be learned from the successful conservation efforts of the snow leopard and the markhor?
  - a. Conservation only works if predators are removed from the ecosystem.
  - b. Animals can survive without human intervention.

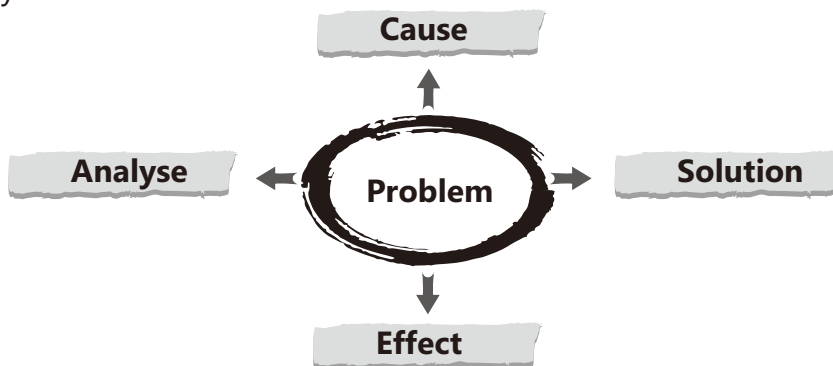
- c. Involving local communities in conservation efforts leads to better outcomes.
- d. Conservation is not necessary for naturally strong species.
- 4. Why is it important to maintain the balance between predator and prey in ecosystems like those of the snow leopard and the markhor?
  - a. to increase tourism in mountain regions
  - b. to ensure that predators do not starve
  - c. to keep herbivore populations in check and protect vegetation
  - d. to help predators dominate the ecosystem
- 5. What is one potential drawback of trophy hunting programmes, even when they help conservation efforts?
  - a. They may lead to uncontrolled hunting of species.
  - b. They only focus on predators like the snow leopard.
  - c. They may prioritise financial gain over the welfare of animals.
  - d. They do not involve local communities in any way.

**C. Read the following text and put relevant information into the graphic organiser.**

There is a serious threat to the snow leopard and the markhor in Pakistan's mountains. Poaching and habitat loss have decreased their numbers. Snow leopards are also killed by herders protecting their livestock.

These problems lead to an imbalance in the ecosystem. Without snow leopards, the markhor population can increase, causing overgrazing and damaging the environment.

Conservation efforts include trophy hunting programmes that help protect wildlife. Compensation for herders also reduces the killing of snow leopards. These actions aim to save both species and protect the ecosystem.



## Vocabulary

**A. Distinguish between the connotative and denotative meanings of the following words using context clues from the text.**

Words	Context Clues	Denotative Meanings	Connotative Meanings
balance			
elusive			
heritage			
predator			
vulnerable			

## Grammar

### Hyphenated Nouns and Adjectives

A **hyphen** (-) is used to join two or more words together to form a single idea. This can happen with both nouns and adjectives. Hyphens are especially helpful when two words work together as a single unit or when a compound adjective appears before a noun.

- **Hyphenated Nouns:** Some compound nouns use hyphens to connect words, making them one concept.

**Example:** mother-in-law, well-being

- **Hyphenated Adjectives:** Compound adjectives (two or more words that describe a noun) are often hyphenated, especially when they come before a noun.

**Example:** well-known author, high-speed train

### Words with the Letter String “-ough”

The letter string **-ough** is tricky in English because it can be pronounced in many different ways depending on the word.

- **Examples of -ough words:**
  - **though** (as in *although*): Pronounced /thō/
  - **through**: Pronounced /throo/
  - **rough**: Pronounced /ruff/
  - **enough**: Pronounced /enuff/
  - **thought**: Pronounced /thawt/

**A. Add hyphens to the following compound nouns and adjectives where needed.**

1. The editor in chief made several changes to the manuscript.

2. The student gave a well written essay.
3. The city is famous for its state of the art infrastructure.
4. He works as a part time teacher.
5. My brother in law is visiting this weekend.

**B. Identify the correct pronunciation of the -ough words and fill in the blanks with the appropriate word.**

1. The river runs \_\_\_\_\_ the city. (Pronounced /throo/)
2. She had a difficult day, but she smiled, as if she hadn't gone \_\_\_\_\_ so much. (Pronounced /thō/)
3. The fabric of the sweater felt very \_\_\_\_\_ against my skin. (Pronounced /ruff/)
4. He hadn't \_\_\_\_\_ much about the topic before the presentation. (Pronounced /thawt/)
5. We don't have \_\_\_\_\_ money to buy that car. (Pronounced /enuff/)

**C. Make three hyphenated nouns or adjectives using the prefixes provided below.**

(Examples: anti-corruption, anti-riot, anti-inflammatory)

Prefix	Hyphenated Words
self ex co non	

**D. Fill in the blanks with the correct words ending in -ough from the options provided.**

1. We played outside \_\_\_\_\_ it was drizzling. (though, through, thought)
2. There wasn't \_\_\_\_\_ sugar left for tea. (although, enough, brought)
3. Salma kneaded the \_\_\_\_\_ to make bread. (cough, dough, bough)
4. The storm blew the leaves off the \_\_\_\_\_. (bough, through, though)
5. He had a severe \_\_\_\_\_ throughout the day. (rough, cough, thought)

## Oral Communication Skills

**A. Respond to the text through oral discussion.**

- i. Get into small groups. Each group will be responsible for discussing a specific section of the text.
- ii. Within your group, choose roles such as **discussion leader, note-taker,**

and **presenter**. The **discussion leader** will guide the conversation, the **note-taker** will summarize key points, and the **presenter** will share the findings with the class.

iii. Discuss the assigned section and answer the following questions:

- What is the main idea?
- What supporting details are provided?

iv. Present your group's findings to the class.

v. Participate in a whole-class discussion based on the groups' presentations.

**B. Respond to the text by telling short stories and role-play.**

i. Individually or in pairs, choose to research one of the **conservation efforts** mentioned in the text (such as the Snow Leopard Foundation or WWF-Pakistan).

ii. Find out how these organizations are helping to protect the snow leopard and the markhor. Focus on **key moments** like successes, challenges, and impact on the community. Once you've researched, prepare a short **story** to tell your classmates. Focus on:

- **What** the organization does.
- **How** it is helping to protect wildlife.
- **Why** their work matters.

iii. Pair up with another student and **tell them your story**. Listen to their story as well.

iv. After sharing, reflect together: How do these efforts help create a balance in nature?

**C. Role-play a Community Conservation Meeting**

Imagine you're part of a **community meeting** about protecting the snow leopard and the markhor.

**Characters:**

- Wildlife Conservationists
- Community Members
- Government Officials
- Local Entrepreneurs

**Script Outline:**

With your group, brainstorm what each character might say. For example:

- **Wildlife Conservationist:** Discusses the importance of preserving the ecosystem.

- **Community Member:** Shares how the wildlife conservation efforts impact their daily life.
- **Government Official:** Talks about potential support for conservation programmes.
- **Local Entrepreneur:** Explores how eco-friendly businesses could support conservation.

### **Role-play Dialogue:**

Act out your community meeting in front of the class. Focus on discussing conservation strategies and how to overcome challenges faced by the snow leopard and the markhor.

#### **D. Discussion on Handling of Challenges.**

- After the role-play, discuss as a class:
  - How does **community involvement** help wildlife conservation?
  - What were some of the challenges your characters faced, and how were they addressed?

#### **Discussion Point: Can Both Predator and Prey Be Saved?**

- Half of the class will argue that saving the snow leopard is more important for maintaining the balance in the ecosystem.
- The other half will argue that saving the markhor is equally important due to its role in preventing overgrazing and its cultural significance.

#### **E. Demonstrate attentive listening skills to respond orally with standard pronunciation and intonation.**

(The teacher will read aloud the text in the unit emphasizing accurate pronunciation and intonation. The students will listen it with full attention whereby looking at the text in their books. The students will be required to speak different words or sentences with the correct pronunciation and intonation.)

## **Writing Skills**

- Write a descriptive composition about the snow leopard or the markhor, moving from general to specific. Use brainstorming, mind mapping, and writing a first draft while paying attention to correct punctuation and spelling.**

### **Step 1: Brainstorming**

#### **i. Brainstorm Ideas:**

- Think about the snow leopard or the markhor. Write down everything you know about:

- Their **habitat** (Where do they live?)
- Their **appearance** (What do they look like?)
- Their **behaviour** (How do they behave in the wild?)
- Their **importance** (Why are they significant?)

## ii. Prompts to Help You Brainstorm:

- What is the first thing people notice about the snow leopard or the markhor?
- How are they adapted to live in their habitat?
- What unique physical traits do they have?
- How do they interact with other animals or their environment?

## iii. Brainstorming Activity:

- Write down all your ideas on a piece of paper without worrying about order.

## Step 2: Mind mapping

### i. Create a Mind map:

- Start with the name of the animal (**snow leopard** or **markhor**) in the centre.
- Create branches for:
  - **Habitat** (mountains, altitude)
  - **Appearance** (fur, horns, size)
  - **Adaptations** (climbing, hunting, grazing)
  - **Behaviour** (predator, prey, social, solitary)
  - **Importance** (role in the ecosystem, cultural significance)

### ii. Fill in Details:

- Add specific details under each branch based on your brainstorming notes.

### iii. Mind mapping Activity:

- Draw a mind map on a blank sheet of paper, starting with the animal in the center, and branch out with categories and details.

## Step 3: First Draft

### i. Write the First Draft:

- **Introduction** (General Information):
  - Start with a broad description of the snow leopard or the markhor. Where do they live? Why are they important?
- **Body Paragraph 1** (Appearance):
  - Move to specifics. Describe their physical features, like their fur, size, or horns.
- **Body Paragraph 2** (Adaptations):
  - Explain how their physical traits help them survive in their environment. For example, how do their paws, hooves, or horns help them in the

mountains?

- **Body Paragraph 3** (Behaviour and Importance):
  - Discuss their behaviour in the wild (solitary or social, predator or prey). Why are they important to the ecosystem or culturally significant to Pakistan?

**ii. Pay Attention to:**

- Correct **punctuation**: Use commas, periods, and hyphens correctly in your writing.

**Spelling**: Make sure all words are spelled correctly, especially tricky words like "altitude" or "herbivore."

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