

11

UNIT

The Dear Departed

(one-act play)

William Stanley Houghton (1881–1913)

Learning Outcomes:

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

- explore simple to complex ideas and issues in one-act play, or assembly/class presentation
- analyse organisational patterns in a text to list/ sequence of ideas/events, comparison-contrast, cause-effect, problem-solution, reasons/ assumptions-conclusion
- change into indirect/direct speech (present, past and perfect tenses, future, modals, time and questions, orders, requests, suggestions and advice) in speech and writing.
- write multiple paragraphs essays or stories, poems or playscript using mechanics for correct writing.
- write a dialogue between multiple people, giving narration/background in brackets, using conventions of the director's notes. Use vocabulary, tone and style appropriate to the context and relationship between the addresser and addressee.

Pre-reading:

- What feelings or situations come to mind when you hear the title?
- Do you think the tone will be serious or humorous? Why?

Characters and their relationships in 'The Dear Departed' by Stanley Houghton

1. Mrs. Amelia Slater

- daughter of Mr. Abel Merryweather and sister of Mrs. Elizabeth Jordan
- married to Henry Slater
- mother of Victoria Slater

2. Henry Slater

- husband of Amelia Slater
- son-in-law of Mr. Abel Merryweather
- father of Victoria Slater



For the Teacher:

- Explain about one-act plays and their common characteristics.
- Tell students about this playwright ----- Stanley Houghton.
- Tell students about the elements/ essentials of one-act plays. Help them understand the difference between a one-act play and a multiple-act play.

3. Mrs. Elizabeth Jordan

- daughter of Mr. Abel Merryweather and sister of Mrs. Amelia Slater
- married to Ben Jordan

4. Ben Jordan

- husband of Elizabeth Jordan
- son-in-law of Mr. Abel Merryweather

5. Victoria Slater

- daughter of Amelia and Henry Slater
- granddaughter of Mr. Abel Merryweather
- niece of Elizabeth and Ben Jordan

6. Mr. Abel Merryweather

- father of Amelia Slater and Elizabeth Jordan
- grandfather of Victoria Slater

The opening scene of 'The Dear Departed' is set in the living room of the Slater family's house, designed in the style of an early 20th century Edwardian home. The room is modest and functional, reflecting the middle-class status of the family. It serves as the play's sole location, creating an intimate and focused environment for the events that unfold.

What do you think the room looks like?

As the scene opens, the living room is arranged with a large central dining table covered with a white cloth. The table is surrounded by chairs. To one side of the room, there is a sofa positioned for seating, while other simple chairs and a small side table complete the arrangement. The furniture is practical

How do you think the room is arranged?



For the Teacher:

- If possible, use pictures or illustrations of Edwardian living rooms to help students better visualise the space. Compare these visuals with the scene described in the play and ask students to identify the similarities and differences.
- Have students conduct brief research or provide a short presentation on life in Edwardian England, focusing on social class and family structures. Discuss how the time period might influence the themes and characters in the play.
- Encourage students to engage with the space through a role-playing activity. Ask them to imagine where they would place themselves if they were a character in the scene. This helps them understand the layout and how it influences movement and interactions.

and slightly worn, consistent with the family's lifestyle. At the back of the room, there is a staircase leading to the upper part of the house.

The decor in the room is simple and functional. A mantelpiece displays a clock. There may also be a sideboard or a cabinet against one wall. Framed photographs hang on the walls, enhancing the everyday family atmosphere.

The lighting is soft, provided by lamps or candles, casting a warm but slightly dim glow. The overall atmosphere is calm, with an air of formality typical of the period. The muted colour palette of brown, cream, and grey adds to the conservative and somewhat sombre tone of the room. The room also has a door leading outside, positioned to one side.

One-act play

A one-act play is a short dramatic work that is structured within a single act, meaning it does not have multiple acts like traditional plays. It typically runs for about 15 to 60 minutes, depending on the length of the script, and features a straightforward plot, limited characters, and a single setting.

Characteristics of a one-act play:

1. Single Act Structure:

- Unlike full-length plays divided into multiple acts and scenes, a one-act play unfolds within one continuous act.

2. Focused Plot:

- The story is often concise, focusing on a specific situation, conflict, or theme that can be resolved or explored within a short timeframe.
- There is usually no time for subplots, and the narrative stays focused on the central issue or event.

3. Limited Characters:

- One-act plays generally have a small cast of characters, making it easier for the audience to engage with and understand the relationships and dynamics quickly.

4. Single Setting:

- The action typically takes place in one location, such as a room, a park, or any other confined space, which helps maintain continuity and focus.

5. Intense or Quick-Paced:

- Owing to its shorter duration, a one-act play often jumps directly into the action or conflict, building intensity quickly to keep the audience engaged.

6. Theme-Centered:

- One-act plays usually revolve around a central theme, such as justice, morality, or a social issue, allowing the playwright to convey a powerful message concisely.

Purpose of a one-act play:

- One-act plays are often used to explore a single idea or a moment in depth, providing the audience with a focused and impactful experience.
- They are popular in school productions, theatre festivals, and community theatres because of their simplicity, shorter runtime, and ease of production.

Mrs. Slater (*sharply*) Victoria, Victoria! D'ye hear? Come in, will you? (Mrs. Slater closes window and puts the blind straight and then returns to her work at the table. Victoria, a **precocious** girl often, dressed in colours, enters.)

Mrs. Slater I'm amazed at you, Victoria! I really am. How you can **gallivanting** about in the street with your grandfather lying dead and cold upstairs, I don't know. Be off now, and change your dress before your Aunt Elizabeth and your Uncle Ben come. It would never do for them to find you in colours.

Victoria What are they coming for? They haven't been here for ages.

Mrs. Slater They're coming to talk over poor grandpa's affairs. Your father sent them a telegram as soon as we found he was dead. (*A noise is heard.*) Good gracious, that's never them. (Mrs. Slater: *hurries to the door and opens it.*) No, thank goodness! It's only your father. (Henry Slater, a stooping, heavy man with a drooping moustache, enters. He is wearing a black tailcoat, grey trousers, a black tie and a bowler hat. He carries a little paper parcel.)

Henry Not come yet, eh?

Mrs. Slater You can see they haven't, can't you? Now, Victoria, be off upstairs and that quick. Put your white frock on with a black sash. (Victoria goes out.)

Mrs. Slater (*to Henry*): I'm not satisfied, but it's the best we can do till our new black's ready, and Ben and Elizabeth will never have thought about mourning yet, so we'll outshine them there-



(Henry *sits in the armchair by the fire.*) Get your boots off, Henry; Elizabeth's that prying she notices the least **speck** of dirt.

Henry

I'm wondering if they'll come at all. When you and Elizabeth quarrelled she said she'd never set foot in your house again.

Mrs. Slater

She'll come fast enough after her share of what grandfather's left. You know how hard she can be when she likes. Where she gets it from, I can't tell (Mrs. Slater: *unwraps the parcel Henry has brought. It contains an apple pie, which she puts on a dish on the table.*)

Henry

I suppose it's in the family.

Mrs. Slater

What do you mean by that. Henry Slater?

Henry

I was referring to your father, not to you. Where are my slippers?

Mrs. Slater

In the kitchen; but you want a new pair, those old ones, are nearly worn out. (*Nearly breaking down.*) You don't seem to realize what it's costing me to bear up like I am doing. My heart's fit to break when I see the little trifles that belonged to grandfather lying around, and think he'll never use them again. (*Briskly*) Here! You'd better wear these slippers of grandfather's now. It's lucky he'd just got a new pair-

Henry

They'll be very small for me, my dear.

Mrs. Slater

They'll stretch, won't they? I'm not going to have them wasted. (*She has finished laying the table.*) Henry, I've been thinking about that **bureau** of grandfather's that's in his bedroom. You know I always wanted to have it after he died.

Henry

You must arrange with Elizabeth when you're dividing things up.

Mrs. Slater

Elizabeth's that sharp she'll see I'm after it, and she'll drive a hard bargain over it. Eh, what it is to have a low money – grubbing spirit!

Henry

Perhaps she's got her eye on the bureau as well.

Mrs. Slater

She's never been here since grandfather bought it. If it was only down here instead of in his room, she'd never guess it wasn't our own.

Henry

(*startled*) Amelia! (*He rises.*)

Mrs. Slater

Henry, why shouldn't we bring that bureau down here now? We could do it before they come.

Henry (*stupefied*) I wouldn't care to.

Mrs. Slater Don't look so daft. Why not?

Henry It doesn't seem delicate, somehow.

Mrs. Slater We could put that **shabby** old chest of drawers upstairs where the bureau is now. Elizabeth could have that and welcome. I've always wanted to get rid of it.
(*She points to the drawers.*)

Henry Suppose they come when we're doing it.

Mrs. Slater I'll fasten the front door. Get your coat off. Henry; we'll change it. (*Mrs. Slater goes out to fasten the front door. Henry takes his coat off. Mrs. Slater reappears.*)

Mrs. Slater I'll run up and move the chairs out of the way.
(*Victoria appears, dressed according to her mother's instructions.*)

Victoria Will you fasten my frock up the back, mother?

Mrs. Slater I'm busy; get your father to do it.
(*Mrs. Slater: hurries upstairs, and Henry fastens the frock.*)

Victoria What have you got your coat off for, Father?

Henry Mother and me is going to bring grandfather's bureau down here.

Victoria (*after a moment's thought*) Are we pinching it before Aunt Elizabeth comes?

Henry (*shocked*) No, my child. Grandpa gave it to your mother before he died.

Victoria This morning?

Henry Yes.

Victoria Ah! He was drunk this morning.

Henry Hush; you mustn't ever say he was drunk, now. (*Henry has fastened the frock, and Mrs. Slater appears carrying a handsome clock under her arm.*)

Mrs. Slater I thought I'd fetch this down as well. (*She puts it on the mantelpiece.*) Our clock's worth nothing and this always appealed to me.

Victoria That's grandpa's clock.

Mrs. Slater Be quit! It's ours now. Come Henry, lift your end. Victoria, don't breathe a word to your aunt about the clock and the bureau. (*They carry the chest of drawers through the doorway.*)

Victoria (to herself) I thought we'd pinched them.
(After a short pause there is a sharp knock at the front door.)

Mrs. Slater (from upstairs) Victoria, if that's your aunt and uncle you're not to open the door.
(Victoria peeps through the window.)

Victoria Mother, it's them.

Mrs. Slater You're not to open the door till I come down. (Knocking repeated.) Let them knock away. (There is a heavy bumping noise.) Mind the wall. Henry. (Henry and Mrs. Slater, very hot and flushed, stagger in with a pretty old-fashioned bureau containing a locked desk. They put it where the chest of drawers was, and straighten the ornaments, etc. The knocking is repeated.)

Mrs. Slater That was a near thing. Open the door, Victoria. Now, Henry, get your coat on. (She helps him.)

Henry Did we knock much plaster off the wall?

Mrs. Slater Never mind the plaster. Do I look all right? (Straightening her hair at the glass.) Just watch Elizabeth's face when she sees we're all in half-mourning. (Throwing him Tit-Bits.) Take this and sit down. Try and look as if we'd been waiting for them. (Henry sits in the armchair and Mrs. Slater left of table. They read ostentatiously. Victoria ushers in Ben and Mrs. Jordan. The latter is a stout, complacent woman with an **impassive** and an irritating air of being always right. She is wearing a complete and deadly outfit of new mourning crowned by a great black hat with plumes. Ben is also in complete new mourning, with black gloves and a band round his hat. He is rather a jolly little man, accustomed to being humorous, but at present trying to adapt himself to the regrettable occasion. He has a bright, chirpy little voice. Mrs. Jordan sails into the room and solemnly goes straight to Mrs. Slater and kisses her. The men shake hands. Not a word is spoken. Mrs. Slater furtively inspects the new mourning.)

Mrs. Jordan Well, Amelia, and he's gone at last.

Mrs. Slater Yes, he's gone. He was seventy-two a fortnight last Sunday.
(She sniffs back a tear. Mrs. Jordan sits on the left of the table. Mrs. Slater on the right. Henry in the armchair. Ben on the sofa



- with Victoria near him.)*
- Ben** *(chirpily)* Now, Amelia, you mustn't give way. We've all got to die some time or other. It might have been worse.
- Mrs. Slater** I don't see how.
- Ben** It might have been one of us.
- Henry** It's taken you a long time to get here, Elizabeth.
- Mrs. Jordan** Oh, I couldn't do it. I really couldn't do it.
- Mrs. Slater** *(suspiciously)* Couldn't do what?
- Mrs. Jordan** I couldn't start without getting the mourning. *(Glancing at her sister.)*
- Mrs. Slater** We've ordered ours, you may be sure. *(Acidly)* I never could fancy buying ready-made things.
- Mrs. Jordan** No? For myself it's such a relief to get into the black. And now perhaps you'll tell us all about it. What did the doctor say?
- Mrs. Slater** Oh, he's not been near yet.
- Mrs. Jordan** Not been near?
- Ben** *(in the same breath)* Didn't you send for him at once?
- Mrs. Slater** Of course I did. Do you take me for a fool? I sent Henry at once for Dr. Pringle but he was out.
- Ben** You should have gone for another. Eh, Eliza?
- Mrs. Jordan** Oh, yes. It's a fatal mistake.
- Mrs. Slater** Pringle attended him when he was alive and Pringle shall attend him when he's dead. That's professional etiquette.
- Ben** Well, you know your own business best, but-
- Mrs. Jordan** Yes—it's a fatal mistake.
- Mrs. Slater** Don't talk so silly, Elizabeth. What good could a doctor have done?
- Mrs. Jordan** Look at the many cases of persons being restored to life hours after they were thought to be 'gone'.
- Henry** That's when they've been drowned. Your father wasn't drowned, Elizabeth.
- Ben** *(humorously)* There wasn't much fear of that. If there was one thing he couldn't bear it was water. *(He laughs, but no one else does.)*
- Mrs. Jordan** *(pained)* Ben! *(Ben is crushed at once.)*

- Mrs. Slater** (*piqued*) I'm sure he washed regular enough.
- Mrs. Jordan** If he did take a drop too much at times, we'll not dwell on that, now.
- Mrs. Slater** Father had been 'merry' this morning. He went out soon after breakfast to pay his insurance.
- Ben** It's a good thing he did.
- Mrs. Jordan** He always was thoughtful in that way. He was too honourable to have 'gone' without paying his premium.
- Mrs. Slater** Well, he must have gone round to the 'Rine-o'-Bells' afterwards, for he came in as merry as a sand boy. I say, 'We're only waiting Henry to start dinner'. 'Dinner', he says 'I don't want no dinner. I'm going to bed!'
- Ben** (*shaking his head*) Ah! Dear, dear.
- Henry** And when I came in I found him undressed sure enough and snug in bed.
(*He rises and stands on the **hearth** rug.*)
- Mrs. Jordan** (*definitely*) Yes, he'd had a 'warning'. I'm sure of that. Did he know you?
- Henry** Yes. He spoke to me.
- Mrs. Jordan** Did he say he'd had a 'warning'?
- Henry** No. He said, 'Henry, would you mind taking my boots off? I forgot before I got into bed'.
- Mrs. Jordan** He must have been wandering.
- Henry** No, he'd got 'em on all right.
- Mrs. Slater** And when we'd finished dinner, I thought I'd take up a bit of something on a tray. He was lying there for all the world as if he was asleep, so I put the tray down on the bureau - (correcting herself) on the chest of drawers - and went to waken him. (A pause.) He was quite cold.
- Henry** Then I heard Amelia calling for me, and I ran upstairs.
- Mrs. Slater** Of course we could do nothing.
- Mrs. Jordan** He was 'gone'?
- Henry** There wasn't any doubt.
- Mrs. Jordan** I always knew he'd go sudden in the end. (A pause. They wipe their eyes and sniff back tears.)

Mrs. Slater (rising briskly at length in a business-like tone) Well, will you go up and look at him now, or shall we have tea?

Mrs. Jordan What do you say, Ben?

Ben I'm not particular.

Mrs. Jordan (surveying the table) Well, then, if the kettle's ready we may as well have tea first.
(Mrs. Slater puts the kettle on the fire and gets tea ready.)

Henry One thing we may as well decide now; the announcement in the papers.

Mrs. Jordan I was thinking of that. What would you put?

Mrs. Slater At the residence of his daughter, 235 Upper Corn Bank Street, etc.

Henry You wouldn't care for a bit of poetry?

Mrs. Jordan I like 'Never Forgotten'. It's refined.

Henry Yes, but it's rather soon for that.

Ben You couldn't very well have forgot him the day after.

Mrs. Slater I always fancy, 'A loving husband, a kind father, and a faithful friend'.

Ben (doubtfully) Do you think that's right?

Henry I don't think it matters whether it's right or not.

Mrs. Jordan No, it's more for the look of the thing.

Henry I saw a verse in the Evening News yesterday. Proper poetry it was. It rhymed.
(He gets the paper and reads.)
*"Despised and forgotten by some you may be
But the spot that contains you is sacred to we."*

Mrs. Jordan That'll never do. You don't say 'sacred to we'.

Henry It's in the paper.

Mrs. Slater You wouldn't say it if you were speaking properly, but it's different in poetry.

Henry Poetic license, you know.

Mrs. Jordan No, that'll never do. We want a verse that says how much we loved him and refers to all his good qualities and says what a heavy loss we've had.

Mrs. Slater You want a whole poem. That'll cost a good lot.

Mrs. Jordan Well, we'll think about it after tea, and then we'll look through his bits of things and make a list of them. There's all the furniture in his room.

Henry There's no jewellery or valuables of that sort.

Mrs. Jordan Except his gold watch. He promised that to our Jimmy.

Mrs. Slater Promised your Jimmy! I never heard of that.

Mrs. Jordan Oh, but he did, Amelia, when he was living with us. He was very fond of Jimmy.

Mrs. Slater Well. (*Amazed.*) I don't know!

Ben Anyhow, there's his insurance money. Have you got the receipt for the premium he paid this morning?

Mrs. Slater I've not seen it. (*Victoria, jumps up from the sofa and comes behind the table.*)

Victoria Mother, I don't think Grandpa went to pay his insurance this morning.

Mrs. Slater He went out.

Victoria Yes, but he didn't go into the town. He met old Mr. Tattersall down the street, and they went off past St. Philip's Church.

Mrs. Slater To the 'Ring-o'-Bells', I'll be bound.

Ben The 'Ring-o'-Bells'?

Mrs. Slater That public-house that John Shorrock's widow keeps. He is always hanging about there. Oh, if he hasn't paid it –

Ben Do you think he hasn't paid it? Was it overdue?

Mrs. Slater I should think it was overdue.

Mrs. Jordan Something tells me he's not paid it. I've a 'warning', I know it; he's not paid it.

Ben The drunken old beggar.

Mrs. Jordan He's done it on purpose, just to annoy us.

Mrs. Slater After all I've done for him, having to put up with him in the house these three years. It's nothing short of swindling.

Mrs. Jordan I had to put up with him for five years.

Mrs. Slater And you were trying to turn him over to us all the time.

Henry But we don't know for certain that he's not paid the premium.

Mrs. Jordan I do. It's come over me all at once that he hasn't.

Mrs. Slater Victoria, run upstairs and fetch that bunch of keys that's on your



- grandpa's dressing table.
- Victoria** *(timidly)* In Grandpa's room?
- Mrs. Slater** Yes.
- Victoria** I — I don't like to.
- Mrs. Slater** Don't talk so silly. There's no one can hurt you. *(Victoria goes out reluctantly.)* We'll see if he's locked the receipt up in the bureau.
- Ben** In where? In this thing? *(He rises and examines it.)*
- Mrs. Jordan** *(also rising)* Where did you pick that up, Amelia It's new since last I was here. *(They examine it closely.)*
- Mrs. Slater** Oh — Henry picked it up one day.
- Mrs. Jordan** I like it. It's artistic. Did you buy it at an auction?
- Henry** Eh! Where did I buy it, Amelia?
- Mrs. Slater** Yes, at an auction.
- Ben** *(disparagingly)* Oh, second-hand.
- Mrs. Jordan** Don't show your ignorance, Ben. All artistic things are second-hand. Look at those old masters. *(Victoria returns, very scared. She closes the door after her.)*
- Victoria** Mother! Mother!
- Mrs. Slater** What is it, child?
- Victoria** Grandpa's getting up.
- Ben** What?
- Mrs. Slater** What do you say?
- Victoria** Grandpa's getting up.
- Mrs. Jordan** The child's crazy.
- Mrs. Slater** Don't talk so silly. Don't you know your grandpa's dead?
- Victoria** No, no; he's getting up. I saw him. *(They are transfixed with amazement: Ben and Mrs. Jordan left. Victoria clings to Mrs. Slater, right of table; Henry near fireplace.)*
- Mrs. Jordan** You'd better go up and see for yourself, Amelia.
- Mrs. Slater** Here — come with me, Henry. *(Henry draws back terrified.)*
- Ben** *(suddenly)* Hist! Listen.
(They look at the door. A slight chuckling is heard outside. The door opens, revealing an old man clad in a faded but gay dressing-gown. He is in his stockinged feet. Although over seventy he is



*vigorous and well coloured; his bright, **malicious** eyes twinkle under his heavy, reddish-grey eyebrows. He is obviously either Grandfather Abel Merryweather or else his ghost.)*

Abel

What's the matter with little Vicky? (He sees Ben and Mrs. Jordan.; Hello! What brings you here? How's yourself, Ben? (Abel thrusts his hand at Ben, who skips back smartly and retreats with Mrs. Jordan to a safe distance below the sofa.)

Mrs. Slater

(approaching Abel gingerly) Grandfather, is that you? (She pokes him with her hand to see if he is solid.)

Abel

Of course it's me. Don't do that, 'Melia. What the devil do you mean by this tomfoolery?

Mrs. Slater

(to the others) He's not dead.

Ben

Doesn't seem like it.

Abel

(irritated by the whispering) You've kept away long enough, Lizzie; and now you've come you don't seem over-pleased to see me.

Mrs. Jordan

You took us by surprise, father. Are you keeping quite well?

Abel

(trying to catch the words.) Eh? What?

Mrs. Jordan

Are you quite well?

Abel

Aye, I'm right enough but for a bit of a headache. I wouldn't mind betting that I'm not the first in this house to be carried to the cemetery. I always think Henry there looks none too healthy.

Mrs. Jordan

Well, I never! (Abel crosses to the armchair and Henry gets out of his way to the front of the table.)

Abel

'Melia, what the dickens did I do with my new slippers?

Mrs. Slater

(confused) Aren't they by the hearth, grandfather?

Abel

I don't see them. (Observing Henry trying to remove the slippers.) Why, you've got 'em on. Henry.

Mrs. Slater

(promptly) I told him to put them on to stretch them; they were that new and hard. Now, Henry. (Mrs. Slater snatches the slippers from Henry and gives them to Abel, who puts them on and sits in armchair)

Mrs. Jordan

(to Ben) Well, I don't call that delicate, stepping into a dead man's shoes in such haste. (Henry goes up to the window and pulls up the blind Victoria runs across to Abel and sits on the floor at his feet.)

Victoria Oh, Grandpa, I'm so glad you're not dead.

Mrs. Slater (*in a vindictive whisper*) Hold your tongue, Victoria.

Abel Eh? What's that? Who's gone dead?

Mrs. Slater (*Loudly*) Victoria says she's sorry about your head.

Abel Ah, thank you, Vicky, but I'm feeling better.

Mrs. Slater (*to Mrs. Jordan*) He's so fond of Victoria.

Mrs. Jordan (*to Mrs. Slater*) Yes; he's fond of our Jimmy, too.

Mrs. Slater You'd better ask him if he promised your Jimmy his gold watch.

Mrs. Jordan (*disconcerted*) I couldn't just now. I don't feel equal to it.

Abel Why, Ben, you're in mourning! And Lizzie too. And 'Melia, and Henry and little Vicky! Who's gone dead? It's someone in the family. (*He chuckles.*)

Mrs. Slater No one you know, father. A relation of Ben's.

Abel And what relation of Ben's?

Mrs. Slater His brother.

Ben (*to Mrs. Slater*) Hang it, I never had one.

Abel Dear, dear. And what was his name, Ben?

Ben (*at a loss*) Er — er. (*He crosses to front of table.*)

Mrs. Slater (*R. of table, prompting*) Frederick.

Mrs. Jordan (*L. of table, prompting*) Albert.

Ben Er — Fed Alb — Issac.

Abel Issac? And where did your brother Isaac die?

Ben In — er — in Australia.

Abel Dear, dear. He'd be older than you, eh?

Ben Yes, five years.

Abel Aye, aye. Are you going to the funeral?

Ben Oh, yes.

Mrs. Slater and Mrs. Jordan No, no.

Ben No, of course not. (*He retires to L.*)

Abel (*rising*) Well, I suppose you've only been waiting for me to begin tea. I'm feeling hungry.

Mrs. Slater (*taking up the kettle*) I'll make tea.

Abel Come along, now; sit you down and let's be jolly.

(Abel sits at the head of the fable, facing spectators. Ben and Mrs. Jordan on the left. Victoria brings a chair and sits by Abel. Mrs. Slater and Henry sit on the right. Both the women are next to Abel.)

Mrs. Slater Henry, give grandpa some pie.

Abel Thank you. I'll make a start.

(He helps himself to bread and butter.) (Henry serves the pie and Mrs. Slater pours out tea. Only Abel eats with any heartiness.)

Ben Glad to see you've got an appetite, Mr. Merryweather, although you've not been so well.

Abel Nothing serious. I've been lying down for a bit.

Mrs. Slater Been to sleep, grandfather?

Abel No, I've not been to sleep.

Mrs. Slater Oh!

Abel (eating and drinking) I can't exactly call everything to mind, but I remember I was a bit dazed, like- I couldn't move an inch, hand or foot.

Ben And could you see and hear, Mr. Merryweather?

Abel Yes, but I don't remember seeing anything particular. Mustard Ben.

(Ben passes the mustard.)

Mrs. Slater Of course not, grandfather. It was all your fancy. You must have been asleep.

Abel *(snappishly)* I tell you I wasn't asleep. 'Melia. Damn it, I ought to know.

Mrs. Jordan Didn't you see Henry or Amelia come into the room?

Abel *(scratching his head)* Now let me think----

Mrs. Slater I wouldn't press him Elizabeth. Don't press him.

Henry I wouldn't worry him.

Abel *(suddenly recollecting)* Ay, begad! 'Melia and Henry, what the devil did you mean by shifting my bureau out of my bedroom? *(Henry and Mrs. Slater are speechless).* D' you hear me? Henry! 'Melia!

Mrs. Jordan What bureau was that, Father?

Abel Why, my bureau, the one I bought -----

Mrs. Jordan (*pointing to the bureau*) Was it that one, Father?

Abel Ah, that's it. What's it doing here? Eh? (*A pause. The clock on the mantelpiece strikes six. Everyone looks at it.*) Drat me if that isn't my clock too. What the devil's been going on in this house? (*A slight pause.*)

Ben Well, I'll be hanged.

Mrs. Jordan I'll tell you what's been going on in this house, Father. Nothing short or robbery.

Mrs. Slater Be quiet, Elizabeth.

Mrs. Jordan I'll not be quiet. Oh, I call it double-----faced.

Henry Not now, Elizabeth.

Mrs. Jordan And you, too. Are you such a poor creature that you must do every dirty thing she tells you?

Mrs. Slater (*rising*) Remember where you are, Elizabeth.

Henry (*rising*) Come, come. No quarrelling.

Ben (*rising*) My wife's every right to speak her own mind.

Mrs. Slater Then she can speak it outside, not here.

Abel (*rising: thumping the table*) Damn it all, will some one tell me what's been going on?

Mrs. Jordan Yes, I will. I'll not see you robbed.

Abel Who's been robbing me?

Mrs. Jordan Amelia and Henry. They've stolen your clock and bureau. (*Working herself up.*) They sneaked into your room like a thief in the night and stole them after you were dead.

Henry and Mrs. Slater Hush! Quiet, Elizabeth!

Mrs. Jordan I'll not be stopped. After you were dead, I say.

Abel After who was dead?

Mrs. Jordan You.

Abel But I'm not dead.

Mrs. Jordan No, but they thought you were. (*A pause. Abel gazes round at them.*)

Abel Oho! So that's why you're all in black today. You thought I was dead. (*He chuckles.*) That was a big mistake. (*He sits and resumes his tea.*)

Mrs. Slater (sobbing) Grandfather.

Abel It didn't take you long to start dividing my things between you.

Mrs. Jordan No, father; you mustn't think that. Amelia was simply getting hold of them on her own account.

Abel You always were a keen one, Amelia. I suppose you thought the will wasn't fair.

Henry Did you make a will?

Abel Yes, it was locked up in the bureau.

Mrs. Jordan And what was in it, father?

Abel That doesn't matter now. I'm thinking of destroying it and making another.

Mrs. Slater (sobbing) Grandfather, you'll not be hard on me.

Abel I'll trouble you for another cup of tea, 'Melia; two lumps and plenty of milk.

Mrs. Slater With pleasure. Grandfather. (*She pours out the tea.*)

Abel I don't want to be hard on anyone. I'll tell you what I'm going to do. Since your mother died, I've lived part of the time with you, 'Melia, and part with you, Lizzie. Well, I shall make a new will, leaving all my bits of things to whomever I'm living with when I die. How does that strike you?

Henry It's a bit of a lottery, like.

Mrs. Jordan And who do you intend to live with from now?

Abel (*drinking his tea*) I'm just coming to that.

Mrs. Jordan You know, father, it's quite time you came to live with us again. We'd make you very comfortable.

Mrs. Slater No, he's not been with us as long as he was with you.

Mrs. Jordan I may be wrong, but I don't think father will fancy living on with you after what's happened today.

Abel So you'd like to have me again, Lizzie?

Mrs. Jordan You know we're ready for you to make your home with us for a long you please.

Abel What do you say to that, 'Melia?

Mrs. Slater All I can say is that Elizabeth's changed her mind in the last two years. (*Rising.*) Grandfather, do you know what the quarrel



between us was about?

Mrs. Jordan Amelia, don't be a fool; sit down.

Mrs. Slater No, if I'm not to have him, you shan't either. We quarrelled because Elizabeth said she wouldn't take you off our hands at any price. She said she'd enough of you to last a lifetime, and we'd got to keep you.

Abel It seems to me that neither of you has any cause to feel proud about the way you've treated me.

Mrs. Slater If I've done anything wrong. I'm sure I'm sorry for it.

Mrs. Jordan And I can't say more than that, too.

Abel It's a bit late to say it, now. You neither of you cared to put up with me.

**Mrs. Slater
and Mrs.
Jordan**

No, no grandfather.

Abel Aye, you both say that because of what I've told you about leaving my money. Well, since you don't want me I'll go to someone that does.

Ben Come Mr. Merryweather, you've got to live with one of your daughters.

Abel I'll tell you what I've got to do. On Monday next I've got to do three things. I've got to go to the lawyer's and alter my will; and I've got to go to the insurance office and pay my premium; and I've got to go to St. Philip's Church and get married.

**Ben and
Henry**

What!

Mrs. Jordan Get married!

Mrs. Slater He's out of his senses. (General consternation.)

Abel I say I'm going to get married.

Mrs. Slater Who to?

Abel To Mrs. John Shorrocks who keeps the 'Ring-o' -Bells. We've had it fixed up a good while now, but I was keeping it for a pleasant surprise. (He rises.) I felt I was a bit of a burden to you, so I found someone who'd think it a pleasure to look after me. We shall be very glad to see you at the ceremony. (*He gets to*

the door.) Till Monday, then. Twelve o' clock at St. Philip's Church. (Opening the door.) It's a good thing you brought that bureau downstairs, 'Melia. It'll be handier to carry across to the 'Ring-o' -Bells on Monday. (He goes out.)

THE CURTAIN FALLS

Background of the Play "The Dear Departed"

The Dear Departed, written by Stanley Houghton in 1908, reflects early 20th century Edwardian Society, focusing on the middle-class family dynamics and attitudes towards inheritance. The play critiques the materialism and superficiality within families when possessions come into question. Part of the "Manchester School" of realistic drama, it uses a modest living room setting to expose characters' greed and self-interest, encouraging audience to reflect on their own values regarding family and wealth.

About the Playwright: William Stanley Houghton

Stanley Houghton (1881–1913) was an English playwright associated with the "Manchester School" of dramatists, known for his social commentary and sharp wit. Houghton critiqued the middle-class values and hypocrisies of the Edwardian Society. His most famous play, *Hindle Wakes* (1912), challenged traditional gender roles and morality by portraying an independent female character. Another notable work, *The Dear Departed* (1908), satirizes greed and materialism within family dynamics.

Despite his short career — he died at 32 — Houghton made a significant impact on the British theatre through his realistic, socially conscious dramas.

Theme

The theme of *The Dear Departed* revolves around **materialism and hypocrisy** in family relationships. The play highlights how greed and self-interest often overshadow genuine care and affection, especially when inheritance is involved. It exposes the superficiality of familial bonds and critiques the way people can become opportunistic and selfish when there are material gains at stake. Through dark humour and satire, Stanley Houghton underscores the moral decay and lack of sincerity that can exist within families, prompting reflection on the true nature of familial love and values.

Glossary:

Words	Meanings
bureau	a desk with drawers and usually a top that opens down to make a table to write on
gallivanting	to go from place to place enjoying yourself
hearth	the floor at the bottom of a fireplace
impassive	not showing any feeling or emotion
malicious	having or showing a desire to harm somebody or hurt their feelings, caused by a feeling of hate
piqued	annoyed or upset
precocious	having developed particular abilities and ways of behaving at a much younger age than usual
shabby	(of buildings, clothes, objects, etc.) in poor condition because they have been used a lot
speck	a very small spot; a small piece of dirt, etc.
stupefied	to surprise or shock somebody; to make somebody unable to think clearly

Reading and Critical Thinking

A. Answer the following questions:

1. What do the actions and words of Mrs. Slater and Mrs. Jordan reveal about their true motivations? How do these motivations influence their behaviour throughout the play?
2. How does the conflict over Mr. Merryweather's possessions drive the plot of the play? What does this conflict reveal about the characters' values and priorities?
3. In what ways does Stanley Houghton use satire to criticize family dynamics and social values in the play? How effective is this approach in



For the Teacher:

- Facilitate students to read, view and analyse a variety of readings like poems of William Wordsworth, William Shakespear and John Keats, etc., short stories, advertisements in the newspapers, notices and emails, motivational books on personality development, more plays of Stanley Houghton and of other playwrights, etc. from print material in the school library and the internet sources.

conveying his message?

4. How does the play challenge the traditional idea of family unity and affection? What does *The Dear Departed* suggest about the nature of family ties when material wealth is involved?
5. What role does the clock on the mantelpiece play in the story? How might it symbolize the characters' attitude towards time, routine, or even inheritance?
6. How does Victoria's character differ from the adults' around her? What does her perspective tell us about the younger generation's view of the family's behaviour?
7. How do the characters display hypocrisy throughout the play? What are some examples where their words contradict their actions?
8. How does the setting of the play — a single, confined living room — affect the way the characters interact with each other? What might this confined space suggest about the nature of their relationships?
9. How does Stanley Houghton organise the sequence of events in *The Dear Departed* to build tension and reveal the characters' true motives?
10. How do the themes of *The Dear Departed* remain relevant in modern society? Can you think of contemporary examples where materialism impacts family relationships in a similar way?

B. Choose the correct option for each question.

1. What does the behaviour of Mrs. Slater and Mrs. Jordan primarily reveal about their characters?
 - a. They are affectionate and caring daughters.
 - b. They value material wealth over family bonds.
 - c. They respect their father's memory and legacy.
 - d. They are indifferent to their father's possessions.
2. Why is the setting of a single room (the living room) significant in the play?
 - a. It highlights the family's financial struggles.
 - b. It creates an intimate space where the characters' true natures are revealed.
 - c. It allows for more dramatic costume changes.
 - d. It serves as a symbol of the family's closeness and unity.
3. How does Victoria's reaction differ from the adults when discussing Mr.

Merryweather's possessions?

- a. She is indifferent and doesn't care about the inheritance.
 - b. She criticizes the adults for their materialism.
 - c. She shows confusion, hinting at her innocence compared to the adults' greed.
 - d. She eagerly participates in claiming possessions.
4. How does Stanley Houghton use satire in *The Dear Departed*?
- a. to exaggerate the family's love for each other
 - b. to humorously criticize the characters' hypocrisy and greed
 - c. to create tension and suspense among the characters
 - d. to present a tragic view of death and mourning
5. The clock on the mantelpiece can be interpreted as a symbol of:
- a. The passing of time and routine in the family's life.
 - b. The wealth and prosperity of Mr. Merryweather.
 - c. The bond between the Slater sisters.
 - d. The memories that the family cherishes.

C. Discuss the plot of the play. Use the 'Plot Diagram' given in the Unit 6 to discuss one-act play.

Vocabulary

A. Find the connotative and denotative meanings of these words.

Words	Denotative Meanings	Connotative Meanings
precocious		
gallivanting		
speck		
bureau		
impassive		
hearth		

B. Choose the correct option.

1. The antonym of "shabby":
a. cooperative b. elegant c. jolly d. sincere
2. The antonym of "impassive":
a. greedy b. fast c. cowardly d. expressive

3. The antonym of "delicate":

a. passionate

b. loyal

c. tough

d. robust

4. The antonym of "precocious":

a. gifted

b. advanced

c. talented

d. belated

5. The antonym of "heartiness":

a. indifference

b. enthusiasm

c. friendliness

d. cheerfulness

C. Make as many words as you can from these root words.

An example has been given for you.

Aud (hear): audio, audible, audition, audience, auditorium

colour: _____

count: _____

play: _____

work: _____

faith: _____

Grammar

Direct and Indirect Narration

Direct speech means the actual words of a speaker. These are enclosed with quotation marks, which are called inverted commas.

Indirect speech does not consist of the actual words of the speaker but conveys the full sense of what someone said.

Examples

1. **Direct speech:** He said, "I am happy."

Indirect speech: He said that he was happy.

2. They said, "We love our country."

They said that they loved their country.

3. Rafia said, "I will buy a computer."

Rafia said that she would buy a computer.

4. She said, "She can drive a car."

She said that she could drive a car.

5. Zeeshaan said, "Guests might come today."

Zeeshaan said that guests might come that day.

6. They said, "They will come tomorrow."

They said that they would come the next day.

A. Recapitulate your previous knowledge about direct and indirect narration and change the narration of the following sentences:

1. My father said to me, "My son, never cheat anyone."
2. My friend said to me, "Let us watch a documentary."
3. The captain said to the soldier angrily, "Always obey your seniors."
4. My mother said, "May you prosper!"
5. He said, "I did not go to school yesterday."
6. The officer said, "Call the next visitor."
7. The teacher said, "Whose pen is it?"
8. She said to me, "What are you looking for?"
9. Zeeshaan said, "Alas! I have failed the examination."
10. He said, "Where are you going?"
11. He said to me, "Please excuse me as I am too tired to go to market."
12. She said, "Listen! Can you hear someone coming?"
13. Our teacher said, "The sun rises in the east."
14. He requested his teacher to explain that theory again.
15. He applauded them that they had played well.
16. He bade me good morning.
17. He said to me, "When will you have completed your work?"

B. Change the following passage into direct speech.

The father explained to his daughter that the internet had many useful applications. He mentioned that it could be used for educational purposes, such as researching information for school projects and accessing online courses. He also told her that the internet was a valuable tool for communication, allowing people to stay in touch with friends and family through emails and social media. However, he warned her that it was important to use the internet responsibly. He emphasized the need to be cautious about sharing personal information. He suggested that she should balance her internet use with other activities, such as reading books, playing outside, and spending time with family.



For the Teacher:

- Help students understand the rules of changing the direct speech into indirect speech and vice versa regarding present, past and perfect tenses, future, modals, time and questions, orders, requests, suggestions and advice in speech and writing.
- Engage students in changing narration with more diverse examples.

Oral Communication Skills

A. Respond to the play through oral discussion.

- i. Get into small groups, and each group will take up a specific part of the play, *'The Dear Departed'*.
- ii. Discuss the assigned part and answer the following questions:
 - What is the main idea or conflict in this section?
 - What details or dialogues reveal the characters' true motivations or attitudes?
- iii. Present your group's findings to the class.
- iv. Participate in a whole-class discussion based on the presentations from each group.

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

- i. Research **Stanley Houghton**, the playwright of *The Dear Departed*. Focus on his life, the Edwardian era, and why did he write the play.
 - Who was Stanley Houghton, and what are some key facts about his life?
 - What inspired Houghton to write *The Dear Departed*?
 - How did the society of his time influence the themes and characters in the play?
- ii. Narrate a short story or scene based on the play:
 - Describe a moment where a character shows his true intentions.
 - How do the surroundings (like the living room setting) influence the characters' interactions?
 - What might a character be feeling during a key moment (e.g., when Mr. Merryweather unexpectedly reappears)?
- iii. Perform a scene or create a role-play:
 - Act out a scene where Mrs. Slater and Mrs. Jordan discuss Mr. Merryweather's possessions. Pay attention to their tone and body language.
 - Role-play a conversation where Victoria questions the adults' behaviour, showing the contrast between her innocence and the adults' intentions.
 - Perform the moment when Mr. Merryweather returns. Show each character's reaction to highlight their personalities and motivations.

C. Enact this one act-play in the class.

D. What role does humour play in "The Dear Departed"?

E. Can you relate any part of this one-act play to your own experiences

with regard to family relationships or societal expectations?

Writing Skills

A. Practise identifying and using the mechanics of play writing — structure, dialogue, punctuation, and stage directions — in a play format by following these steps:

1. Read the following excerpt from a play, *The Dear Departed*, focusing on how the scene is structured.

Characters:

- **Mrs. Slater:** One of the daughters of Mr. Merryweather, practical and materialistic.
- **Mrs. Jordan:** Mrs. Slater's sister, equally concerned with material wealth.
- **Henry:** Mrs. Slater's husband.

Scene: The living room of the Slater family's house. Mrs. Slater and Henry are arranging the room when Mrs. Jordan enters.

Mrs. Slater: (Briskly) Did you bring the new mourning dress, Lizzie?

Mrs. Jordan: (Looking annoyed) Oh, don't talk to me about mourning dresses. I had to borrow it from Mrs. Parker, and it's half a size too tight!

Henry: (Clearing his throat) Well, we should be grateful, we're all together. (Pauses and looks towards the clock) What time did you say the will is to be read?

Mrs. Slater: (Ignoring Henry's comment) And have you seen what she's done to his belongings? She's taken everything that's worth a penny!

Mrs. Jordan: (Defensively) Don't start with me, Amelia! You were the one who insisted on taking his clock down before I arrived!

Henry: (Sighs, rubbing his forehead) Now, now, let's not argue. We're here for Father's sake.

Stage Directions: [Mrs. Slater stands with her hands on her hips, glaring at Mrs. Jordan. Mrs. Jordan folds her arms, looking away, while Henry shifts uncomfortably between them.]

2. Identify the mechanics:

- Look at how dialogue is written to convey the character's emotions or intentions.
- Observe the punctuation used (e.g., commas, full stops, question

marks, ellipses) to understand how it affects the pacing and delivery of lines.

- Find stage directions (typically in italics or brackets) and note how they guide the characters' actions, movements, and tone.
- Notice how character's names are formatted (in bold or capital letters) before their lines.

3. Discuss with a partner or group how these elements work together to create an engaging and understandable scene.

4. Write your own short scene using the mechanics identified:

- Ensure each character's dialogue is natural and expressive.
- Use punctuation to show pauses, emphasis, and tone.
- Include stage directions to describe actions and emotions.
- Format character's names correctly before their lines.

5. Perform or share your scene and reflect on how effectively you used these mechanics to make the scene clear and engaging.

B. Practise writing a dialogue between multiple characters using narration and the conventions of director's notes.

Follow these steps:

1. Choose a Scenario:

- Select a scenario involving multiple characters. Some examples include:
 - A disagreement between family members over a decision.
 - A discussion among friends planning a surprise party.
 - A debate between classmates over a school project idea.

2. Create Characters:

- Develop at least three characters, each with a distinct personality and perspective (e.g., assertive, shy, humorous, thoughtful). Write brief notes about each character to guide their dialogue.

3. Set the Scene:

- Start your dialogue with a short **scene description** in brackets to establish context (e.g., *The kitchen. A bright afternoon. The table is set for tea, and the characters are seated around it, looking tense.*).

4. Write the Dialogue:

- Write dialogue lines for each character, making sure to:
 - Use **capital letters** for character names before each line.
 - Incorporate **punctuation** (commas, full stops, question marks, ellipses) to show pauses and emphasis.

- Include **director's notes** in brackets throughout the dialogue to describe actions, movements, or emotions (e.g., *JANE crosses her arms, frowning. MARK hesitates, looking down at the floor.*).
- Aim for at least 15-20 lines, ensuring that characters respond and interact naturally based on the scenario.

5. Add Background/Narration:

- Use **brackets** for background information or to narrate important shifts in the scene (e.g., *The door creaks open, and LUCAS enters the room, looking exhausted.*).
- Keep these notes brief but descriptive enough to help visualize the scene.

6. Conventions Checklist:

- Review your work to ensure you have correctly applied the following:
 - Character's names in **bold** or **capital letters**.
 - **Director's notes** (in brackets) to describe actions, emotions, and movements.
 - Proper **punctuation** for pauses, emphasis, and tone.
 - Scene setting and background narration in brackets.

Example:

[The living room. A warm afternoon. The tea table is set, and the characters are seated around it, looking tense.]

Sana: (Crossing her arms) I told you we should have called earlier. Now it's too late.

Amir: (Leaning back, looking at Sana) We didn't know it would end like this. How could we?

Hina: (Nervously tapping her fingers on the table) But now what? Do we just wait?

[The door creaks open, and Aslam enters the room, looking exhausted.]

Aslam: (Sighing) I spoke to her. She's not happy about any of it.

Sana: (Standing up quickly) See? I knew this would happen!

7. Peer Review:

- Exchange your dialogue with a partner and review each other's work. Check if all conventions are used correctly and provide feedback on how the director's notes and narration enhance the scene.

Reading and Critical Thinking

A. Answer the following questions:

1. Do you think the advice given in *If* — is relevant in today's world? Why or why not?
2. How has globalisation influenced the spread of cultural practices and traditions across the world? Can you provide examples of this cultural exchange?
3. Identify the main problems faced by the snow leopard and the markhor populations. What solutions have been implemented to address these problems, and how effective do you think they are?
4. What does the title 'The Dear Departed' suggest about the play's theme, and how is it ironic in the context of the story?
5. What role does humour play in 'The Dear Departed'? How does Houghton use humour to convey serious themes like family conflict and hypocrisy?

Vocabulary

A. Use a dictionary to find the following information for each word.

Words	Pronunciation	Dictionary Meaning	Part of Speech
globalisation			
crucial			
population			
sustainable			
departed			

B. Use the following pair of words in your own sentences:

compliment, complement eligible, illegible foul, fowl
gentle, genteel respectable, respectful wander, wonder
yoke, yolk

C. Make as many words as you can from these root words.

An example has been given for you.

Aud (hear): audio, audible, audition, audience, auditorium

colour: _____

count: _____

play: _____

work: _____

faith: _____

Grammar

A. Fill in the blanks using the appropriate conjunctions from the given options.

1. We can go to the beach _____ we can visit the museum. (and / or / but)
2. He missed the bus _____ he woke up late. (because / so / although)
3. _____ you finish your homework; you cannot go outside. (If / So / Until)
4. Neither Ali _____ his sister wanted to join the game. (and / nor / or)
5. She is tired _____ she kept working until midnight. (because / although / but)

B. Read each sentence carefully and determine whether it is a simple sentence or a complex sentence. Write your answer and explain why it fits that category.

1. The cat sat on the windowsill and watched the birds.
2. Even though it was raining, the children continued to play outside.
3. He finished his homework before dinner.
4. Because she studied hard, Maria passed the exam with flying colours.
5. The sun set behind the mountains.

C. Read each sentence carefully and change it from direct speech to indirect speech.

1. Sarah said, "I am going to the market."
2. The teacher said, "Have you completed your homework?"
3. Tahir said, "I will finish my project by tomorrow."
4. She said, "What a beautiful painting!"
5. Javed said, "When are we leaving for the trip?"

Oral Communication Skills

A. Practise converting direct speech to indirect speech and vice versa through a realistic teacher-student interaction.

1. **Pair Up:** Find a partner. One of you will play the role of the **teacher**, and the other will play the role of the **student**.

2. Teacher's Role:

- You will ask the student questions in direct speech. Use the questions below or create your own:
 - "Did you complete your homework?"
 - "What was the most challenging part?"
 - "When are you planning to submit your project?"
 - "Have you studied for the upcoming test?"

3. Student's Role:

- Answer the teacher's questions in direct speech. Be clear and specific with your responses. Example responses include:
 - "Yes, I finished it last night."
 - "I found the math problems difficult."
 - "I will submit it by the end of the week."
 - "I am planning to study tonight."

4. Practise Converting:

- After the student responds, the teacher must convert the student's response from direct speech to indirect speech. For example:
 - Direct: "I finished it last night."
 - Indirect: "The student said that he had finished it the previous night."

5. Switch Roles:

- After a few questions, switch roles so that both partners have the opportunity to practise as the teacher and as the student.

B. Divide the seventeen (17) Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) among the students to present ONE minute speech on the given SDG.

C. The teacher will divide the students into groups. The students of each group will share their personal experiences related to Wildlife Vignette. Each group will share a short story.

D. Work in groups. Each group will discuss the theme/ message in the one-act play "The Dear Departed" with regard to human relationships in a society.

Writing Skills

A. Paraphrase the opening lines of the poem:

If you can keep your head when all about you
Are losing theirs and blaming it on you,

B. Write a descriptive composition about the importance and characteristics of quality education, using brainstorming, mind mapping, and drafting techniques.

Step 1: Brainstorming

Take 5-10 minutes to brainstorm your ideas about quality education. Write down everything that comes to mind when you think of quality education. Consider the following prompts:

- What does quality education mean?
- What are the key elements of quality education? (e.g., trained teachers, engaging curriculum, safe learning environment, access to technology and resources)
- How does quality education benefit individuals and society?
- What challenges might affect the delivery of quality education?

Step 2: Mind mapping

Now, organize your ideas into a mind map. This will help you structure your composition logically. Follow these steps:

1. Write "Quality Education" in the center of your mind map.
2. Create branches for the main ideas you brainstormed. Examples:
 - Key Elements: Trained teachers, engaging curriculum, safe learning environment, access to technology and resources.
 - Benefits: Empowers individuals, reduces poverty, improves communities, builds skills.
 - Challenges: Lack of resources, overcrowded classrooms, inequality, inadequate training for teachers.
3. Add details to each branch based on your brainstorming. For instance:
 - Under Key Elements, add sub-branches like "modern classrooms" or "interactive lessons."
 - Under Benefits, add details like "provides better job opportunities" or "promotes social equality."

Step 3: Writing the First Draft

Using your mind map as a guide, write the first draft of your descriptive

composition on quality education. Remember to move from general to specific as you write.

Follow this structure:

1. Introduction:

- Start with a general statement about the importance of quality education.
- Briefly mention what makes education “quality” and why it is essential for both individuals and society.

2. Body Paragraph 1 (Key Elements):

- Describe the key components of quality education, such as trained teachers, engaging curriculum, safe learning environment, access to technology and resources.
- Use descriptive language to explain why these elements are important.

3. Body Paragraph 2 (Benefits):

- Explain the benefits of quality education. Describe how it empowers individuals, creates opportunities, and positively impacts communities.

4. Body Paragraph 3 (Challenges):

- Discuss some of the challenges that affect the delivery of quality education. Describe how these obstacles can be overcome to ensure that education is effective and accessible to all.

5. Conclusion:

- Summarize the importance of quality education. End with a call to action or a thought-provoking statement about how improving education can lead to a better future.

C. Write a well-structured paragraph on "My Service to Society".