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Notes

READING WITH UNDERSTANDING



OBJECTIVES

At the end of this lesson you will be able to:

- understand short theme-based passages; and
- answer questions on those passages.

3.1 SECTION I

*T*himmakka and her husband Bikkalu Chikkaiah, a childless couple of Hulikal village in Karnataka, decided to adopt children. But the children they chose to rear were 284 banyan trees along a 3km stretch of what is now National Highway 48 in Karnataka. The trees filled up a void in their lives. And just recently, Thimmakka received the National Citizens Award (for social forestry) from the Prime Minister.

In the 1950s, it was a Thimmakka, who tired of her neighbour's jibes directed at her childlessness hit upon the plan. "Why not plant banyan trees and rear them like our children?" she thought. So the lonely couple decided to plant trees. Thimmakka's husband was a disabled person, hence she had to work as a labourer every day and did not have the time for much else. But firm in their resolve, they took great pains to dig pits on either side of the road. Their next task was to choose suitable banyan saplings. They finally planted 300 saplings and put up thorny bushes around, to ensure that the cattle did not eat up the tender trees.

Thimmakka brought water in pots from a long distance and poured it at the foot of the saplings every day. During the rainy season she poked at the roots of the trees to make them go deep and, as the area was not fenced, she kept a constant vigil



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and nursed the plants for 10 years. It was time spent well, as it gave her fulfilment and pride. Even as the couple nursed the saplings, she was working in a quarry for their hand-to-mouth existence. If she could not go to the quarry they would have nothing to eat that day. True, her work was back-breaking, but she could not neglect the trees either. She would go to the Kudur road and attend to the saplings before the break of dawn. And the trees, like children who live in an atmosphere of love and caring responded to her call and grew up. Now in the prime of their lives, the 284 that took root provide a green canopy for 3 km, nests for birds and prevent soil erosion. They are also worth an estimated Rs. 85 crore.

**INTEXT QUESTIONS 3.1**

1. Choose and tick the correct answer:
 - a) Did the couple look after the saplings because:
 1. they earned money from it?
 2. it gave them happiness and satisfaction?
 3. it would get them an award?
 - b) The trees provided:
 1. employment to some people
 2. food for the animals
 3. shade along the 3 km stretch of road.
2. Select the correct information from the box and write it in the blanks:

1950s	10	284
3 km	300	85

- i. Trees were planted along a _____ stretch of road.
- ii. The trees were planted in the _____.
- iii. Thimmakka planted _____ saplings.
- iv. They looked after the trees for _____ years.
- v. _____ trees grew along the National Highway.
- vi. The approximate cost of the trees are _____ crores.



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3. Answer the following questions:
 - a) Why did Thimakka receive the National Citizens Award?
 - b) What made Thimmakka and her husband decide to plant banyan trees along the highway?
 - c) What did Thimmakka do to ensure the safety of the plants?
4. Complete the sentences:
 - a) To take good care of the saplings after ensuring their safety Thimmakka had to:
 - (i) _____
 - (ii) _____
 - (iii) _____
 - b) Thimmakka's banyan trees have benefited the environment by:
 - (i) _____
 - (ii) _____
 - (iii) _____
5. Find a word in the passage which means 'a cover'.
6. Thimmakka was a poor woman who found time to plant trees on the highway and look after them as if they were her own children thereby making her life purposeful and rendering service to the community and to the environment in general.
 - i) How would you, as a young person, make your life purposeful?
You could:
 - (a) encourage rain-water harvesting in your neighbourhood.
 - (b) clean the area around your house.
 - (c) create awareness about the dangers of allowing water to stagnate
 - (ii) Organise a team of five to ten young people like you to plan and implement one of the above.

Read the following passage and answer the questions that follow:

3.2 SECTION II

Why do Astronomers think there may be life on Mars?

As you know, scientists are now conducting all kinds of experiments to see if life can be found anywhere else in the universe. Naturally, it is easier to explore our own solar system for signs of life than it is to probe outer space. And one of the



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places where some scientists believe a form of life might be found is the planet Mars.

Why did they pick Mars? Well, Mars is considered to be a sort of twin of our own planet earth. It is the next planet beyond the earth in distance from the sun. Mars is about half the diameter of the earth and it rotates around the Sun in just under two years. But Mars has a day that is almost equal in length to our day here on earth.

In observing Mars, astronomers have noticed certain things that indicate a form of life may be possible there. First of all, Mars has seasons like the earth. In fact, as the seasons change in Mars, there seem to be changes on its surface. The dark areas get stronger in the spring and summer, and the colour changes from bluish-green to yellow. Could this be vegetation?

Astronomers also believe that there is at least a small amount of water vapour in the atmosphere of Mars, and this would be helpful in supporting life. Then, too, in 1887, an Italian astronomer, Giovanni reported seeing markings on the surface of Mars that resembled canals. "Could these have been built by Martians in order to carry water from the polar regions to the desert areas?" scientists wondered.

In 1976, two American Viking space probes landed on the surface of Mars. The instruments in the space probes searched the surrounding soil for signs of life and radioed their results back to earth. These results showed that either there are germs in the soil or that the soil is very unusual and not like that on earth. If life does exist on Mars, it would be a very simple form of life.

**INTEXT QUESTIONS 3.2**

1. Tick the correct answers
 - (i) The scientists are looking for
 - (a) new species of life.
 - (b) life in other parts of the universe.
 - (c) Mars.
 - (ii) The size of Mars is
 - a) about half of earth.
 - b) half the diameter of earth.
 - c) half the diameter of sun.



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- (iii) The changes in the colour of the surface of Mars may be due to the
- canals
 - changes in the season,
 - changes in the vegetation due to the changes in the seasons.
- (iv) Giovanni, the Italian astronomer found
- Mars.
 - rivers on Mars.
 - markings on Mars resembling canals.
2. Answer the following questions
- What is the similarity between Mars and the Earth? List them.
 - Why do the astronomers think there may be life on Mars?
 - List two reasons why the scientists selected Mars.
3. Complete the following sentences
- Two American Viking probes landed on Mars in _____.
 - They looked for _____ in the surrounding soil and _____.
 - The two things that they found were
 - _____
 - _____

**CHECK YOUR ANSWERS****Intext Question 3.1**

- it gave them satisfaction
 - Shade along the 3 k.m. stretch
- 3 km.
 - 1950s
 - 300
 - 10
 - 284
 - 85 crore
- For planting 284 banyan trees along a 3 km stretch of a National Highway.
 - They didn't have children so they decided to adopt trees as their children.
 - put thorny bushes.



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4. a) i) bring pots of water from a long distance
 ii) poked at the roots during rainy season.
 iii) kept constant vigil/nursed them for 10 years.
- b) i) providing a green canopy for 3 km.
 ii) providing nests for birds.
 iii) preventing soil erosion.
5. Canopy

Intext Questions 3.2

1. 1 – b, 2 – b, 3 – c, 4 – c

Ex – 2

- (i) ● a day almost equal in length as the earth
 ● a small amount of water vapour in the air.
 ● Mars may have seasons like earth.
- (ii) They noticed certain things that indicate a form of life may be possible.
- (iii) – it is the closest planet to the earth
 – they believe a form of life might be found on Mars.
 – Certain findings indicate that there may be life on Mars.
3. 1 – 1976, 2 – signs of life, radioed back to earth. 3 – There are germs in the soil, or soil is unusual unlike earth.