

## 3

## A Naughty Little Comet

Ella Wheeler Wilcox

There was a little comet who lived near the Milky Way!  
She loved to wander out at night and jump about and play.

The mother of the comet was a very good old star;  
She used to scold her **reckless** child for venturing out too far.

She told her of the **ogre**, Sun, who loved on stars to sup,  
And who asked no better pastime than gobbling comets up.

But instead of growing cautious and of showing proper fear,  
The foolish little comet edged up nearer, and more near.

She switched her **saucy** tail along right where the Sun could see,  
And **flirted** with old Mars, and was as bold as bold could be.

She laughed to scorn the quiet stars who never **frisked about**;  
She said there was no fun in life unless you ventured out.

She liked to make the planets stare, and wished no better **mirth**  
Than just to see the telescopes aimed at her from the Earth.

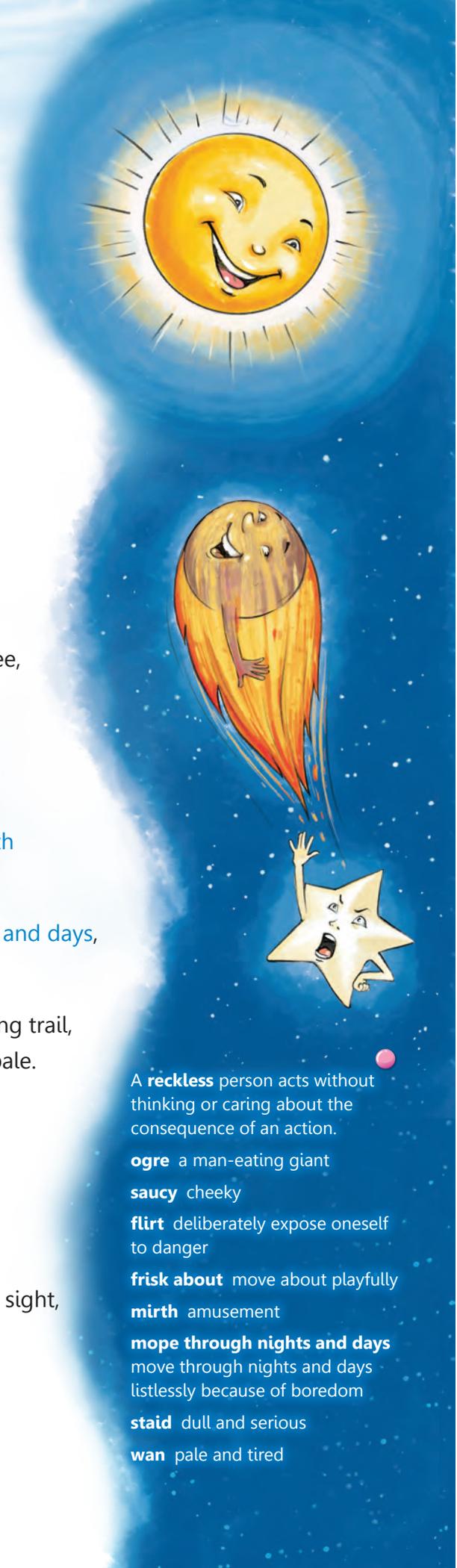
She wondered how so many stars could **mope through nights and days**,  
And let the sickly faced old Moon get all the love and praise.

And as she talked and tossed her head and switched her shining trail,  
The **staid** old mother star grew sad, her cheek grew **wan** and pale.

For she had lived there in the skies a million years or more,  
And she had heard gay comets talk in just this way before.

And by and by there came an end to this gay comet's fun.  
She went a tiny bit too far—and vanished in the Sun!

No more she swings her shining trail before the whole world's sight,  
But quiet stars she laughed to scorn are twinkling every night.



A **reckless** person acts without thinking or caring about the consequence of an action.

**ogre** a man-eating giant

**saucy** cheeky

**flirt** deliberately expose oneself to danger

**frisk about** move about playfully

**mirth** amusement

**mope through nights and days** move through nights and days listlessly because of boredom

**staid** dull and serious

**wan** pale and tired



### Warm Up

Cyberspace (the world of computers and their networks) is full of interesting words. For example, you can't eat a **cookie** here, a **Trojan horse** is not a horse, **surfing** has nothing to do with the sea, and a **virus** cannot infect you as in the real world. Make a list of some more interesting words from cyberspace.

The computer was Shree's friend. She always found time for it—using it to find information for school projects and to send emails. Shree lived in an apartment in a small town called Katpadi. Her mother (Amma) worked in a jewellery shop. Her father (Appa) was a taxi driver. They were pleased that she was learning to use the computer.

Shree's aunt, fondly called Akka, stayed with them. She spent most of her time watching her favourite old films on TV. She made delicious stuff for Shree, like hot dosas stuffed with spicy noodles. After lunch, Shree liked to play games on the computer.

Shree also enjoyed spending time on FriendsNet, a website that connected her to friends. She had joined it two months ago, on her thirteenth birthday. Every day after tea and snacks, she would sit in front of the computer and chat with her school friends. Today, they were talking about what they had at teatime. Shree said she got extra sugar with her tea. One friend said, "That you get every day."

Shree said, "And I also got mutton-flavoured noodles with my dosa."

Another friend teased, "Do you do anything other than eat?"

Shree got angry. She decided to 'unfriend' them. Afterwards, she missed them. But before she could tell them she was sorry, she got a new friend request—from a girl called Chaitra. She was very pretty, like a film star. One click, and they became friends. They started chatting at once.



Akka looked over Shree's shoulder at Chaitra's profile picture. "But that's Madhoo, the film actress I like so much. Is she your friend?"

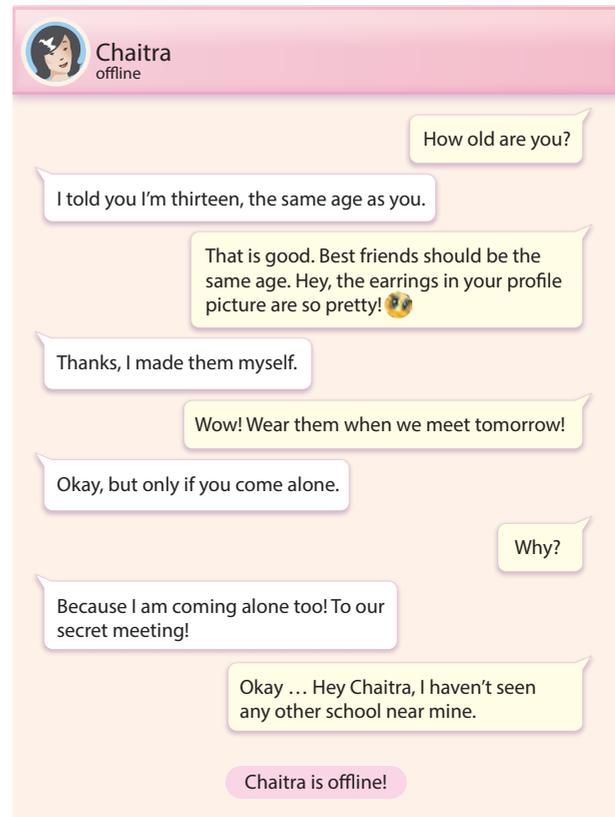
"Yes, but her name is Chaitra."

Akka laughed and shook her head. "That's Madhoo, I've watched all her films. She must be so old now."

"She's the same age as me!" insisted Shree.

"No, no, she's as old as I am," said Akka. "That picture was taken when she was still in school. It is from her first movie."

Shree was angry with Akka, then stopped to think. Was Chaitra using someone else's picture—a film star's?



Was there something strange about her new friend? Had she been lying? Shree was very confused and could not focus on her homework. "Akka?" she asked.

"Yes, my dear," said Akka, "What is worrying you?"

Shree decided to be honest and told Akka all about her new friend. "Akka, I think she is lying. What should I do?"



A sentence with an intransitive verb (without an object) can't be written in the passive voice. For example:  
**The lion roars loudly. Pramila paints beautifully.**

**F. State whether the sentences are in the active voice (AV) or passive voice (PV).**

1. The children made rakhis. \_\_\_\_\_
2. Our room is cleaned every day. \_\_\_\_\_
3. Alia is making pasta now. \_\_\_\_\_
4. The results were announced. \_\_\_\_\_
5. My friend has composed the song. \_\_\_\_\_
6. The building is painted every year. \_\_\_\_\_
7. The train had departed on time. \_\_\_\_\_
8. The letters were mailed last week. \_\_\_\_\_

Read the sentences in the table. They are in the passive voice. The subject is followed by the 'be verb' in the correct tense form and the past participle of the action verb.

[subject + 'be' verb + past participle]

	Simple	Continuous	Perfect
Present tense	A lot of books <b>are written</b> every day.	A lot of books <b>are being written</b> now.	A lot of books <b>have been written</b> .
Past tense	A lot of books <b>were written</b> last year.	A lot of books <b>were being written</b> at this time last year.	A lot of books <b>had been written</b> before ebooks arrived.
Future tense	A lot of books <b>will be written</b> next year.		A lot of books <b>will have been written</b> by the end of the year.

**Read these sentences.**

- A lot of rice is grown in India.
- The prisoner will be released tomorrow.
- A play was performed by the students.
- A vaccine has not been developed for this disease.



The passive voice is generally used when the action is more important than the doer.

**Read these sentences, which do not mention the doer in the passive voice.**

- The thief was arrested. (*The doer is understood.*)
- A lot of money has been stolen. (*The doer is not known.*)
- He was asked to be polite to the customers. (*We do not wish to mention the doer.*)
- The tickets can be purchased online. (*It is clear that people in general are the doers.*)
- Grandma's pickles are made with love and care. (*The doer has already been mentioned.*)
- When making tea, water is first boiled in a pan. (*A common process involving steps is described.*)
- All living organisms are classified into groups. (*in scientific or formal writing*)

## Let's Write

Read this note by the little prince describing his planet.

My home is a tiny planet, hardly the size of a house. It is an asteroid called B 612. It is not so grand like your Earth. There are three tiny volcanoes, of which two are active and one extinct. The day I left for my trip I cleaned my volcanoes. The active ones are useful for heating my breakfast every morning. You see, a clean volcano burns slowly and steadily without explosions.

There are also some good and bad plants on my planet. There is a beautiful flower that I love very much. It has four thorns to protect it from animals. I take care of this flower. Just before I left, I covered it with a glass globe to keep it safe from the wind. But bad plants like the baobabs are different. I root them out before they become too big. You see, their huge roots could destroy my tiny planet!

M. Write a note describing your own planet (Earth) to the little prince. Explain how it is different from his tiny planet. Here are some points of difference you can write about.

Size

much bigger

Features

many oceans, mountains, volcanoes, rivers, lakes, deserts

Plants

variety of plants, beautiful trees and flowers, forests and grasslands

Animals

variety of animals, birds, insects, fishes, and big animals like elephants and whales

People

billions of people; many countries, cities and villages; people with different languages and cultures

Words you can use to show that things are different

unlike    instead    differ    compared with/to  
in contrast to    furthermore  
on the other hand    however




**Warm Up**

Tell the class about a woman you admire a lot and why. Is it because she is strong, patient, kind, understanding, helpful, courageous and just or has some other quality?

I admire Grandma.  
She is just and kind.

I admire my sister. She is a pilot  
with the Indian Air Force.

Dear Diary,

Guess what I saw when I was getting onto the school bus this morning? A lady auto driver. Yes! Female gender. At first I thought she was wearing her husband's brown coat. Then that aunty from the pink bungalow murmured something to her and got into the auto. And the lady in the brown coat turned on the meter and whizzed past our bus. So, two new things for the day—a lady auto driver and an auto driver turning on the meter. ☺



As usual, Najju Paati was home when Shanky and I got back from school. She's become like one permanent resident of Flat 201. Also, Amma and she are getting dangerously close. I hope Najju Paati doesn't start giving me lectures like Amma does. Actually, knowing Paati, she will teach Amma to be cool like her.

"There comes my favourite twelve-year-old," she shouted when she saw us. Ha! She never says 'There comes my favourite nine-year-old' about Shanky. But then, I don't know if it's a compliment to me because I am the only twelve-year-old she knows. Still, at least she said something, so I went and gave her a sloppy kiss, something she herself had taught me. It's a good weapon to have. Whenever Amma asks Shanky and me to call it a truce after one of our big battles, I extend my peace handshake and give him a sloppy kiss. He hates that! ☺

"Guess what I saw today!" I said as I sat down to join the ladies for tea. No tea for me though. Only milk.

"A four-headed auto driver." Sometimes Najju Paati ruins my moments with her ridiculous jokes. But this time she was on the right track.

"Not bad, Ms Najju. Half a point to you. But not a four-headed auto driver. This one had a woman's head," I replied in my quizmaster's voice.

Shanky burst into the conversation and said I was making things up. Najju Paati asked him why he thought so. He said women couldn't be auto drivers.

"Why?"

paati (Tamil) grandmother  
sloppy watery

## Let's Talk

H. Form groups and do a role-play based on a simple story with two or more characters. One of the students in each group can be the narrator, if required. Here are some stories you can use: **The Fox and the Stork**, **The Hare and the Tortoise**, **The Two Goats**, **The Fox and the Crow**.

## Let's Write

A dialogue is a conversation between two or more people. It takes the story forward and tells us about the characters' thoughts and feelings. Here is a dialogue between a man and a chemist.

**Man** I need a medicine for a bad headache.  
**Chemist** Here, try this syrup. It's very good.  
**Man** Ugh, this smells so bad. It's making me sick.  
**Chemist** But hasn't it cured your headache instantly?  
**Man** Fool! It's my wife who has the headache.



I. Fill in the gaps to complete the dialogue between Mira and her mother.

**Mother** You look lost in thought, Mira. What's up?

**Mira** It's my best friend's \_\_\_\_\_ next week. I'm wondering what to give her.

**Mother** Well, how about a nice chocolate \_\_\_\_\_?

**Mira** Irena is already baking a black forest cake for her. She's an excellent baker.

**Mother** What does your friend like?

**Mira** Well, she's fond of reading, gardening and ... .

**Mother** Why don't you give her a book on \_\_\_\_\_?

**Mira** That's an excellent \_\_\_\_\_. That's what I'll do. Thanks, Mom.

**Mother** You're welcome.



J. Write a dialogue between Rohit and Suma. Rohit is sorry. He had borrowed Suma's notebook and has forgotten to bring it back today. The school vacation starts tomorrow.

K. Write a dialogue between a class teacher and a student who wants to be the class captain. The teacher tells the student what the captain should be like, and the student explains why he / she is the right person to be the captain.

Savitribai Phule is considered the first female teacher of India. She was born in an **era** when girls were not allowed in school. Only boys of 'upper-caste' families received education. Children were also married early. In keeping with this custom, nine-year-old Savitribai was married to thirteen-year-old Jyotirao Govindrao Phule in 1840. Jyotirao (fondly addressed as Jyotiba) soon found that his young wife had a passion for learning. He began to teach her the alphabet in secret.

Gradually, Savitribai realised that not only did she like to learn, she also liked to spread that knowledge. With her husband's support, she trained to become a teacher at Miss Farrar's Institution in Ahmednagar and at the Normal School of Miss Mitchell in Pune. She became a qualified teacher in 1847.

The husband and wife began to meet with girls' families and even tried to start a school for girls in their own house. There was a lot of opposition to this, and Jyotiba's father gave in to societal pressure. He asked the young couple to choose between living in his house and starting the school. Thus, when Jyotiba was 21 and Savitribai, 17, they left their home so that they could teach girls.

The couple found support from Jyotiba's friend Usman Sheikh and his sister Fatima, who had also qualified to become a teacher along with Savitribai. Together, in 1848, they started a school for girls in the Sheikhs' house. They called it the Indigenous Library. Savitribai became the first ever Indian headmistress of a school.

**era** a period of time

Born to Lakshmi and Khandoji Neveshe Patil on 3 January 1831, Naigaon, Maharashtra

Married to Jyotirao Phule in 1840

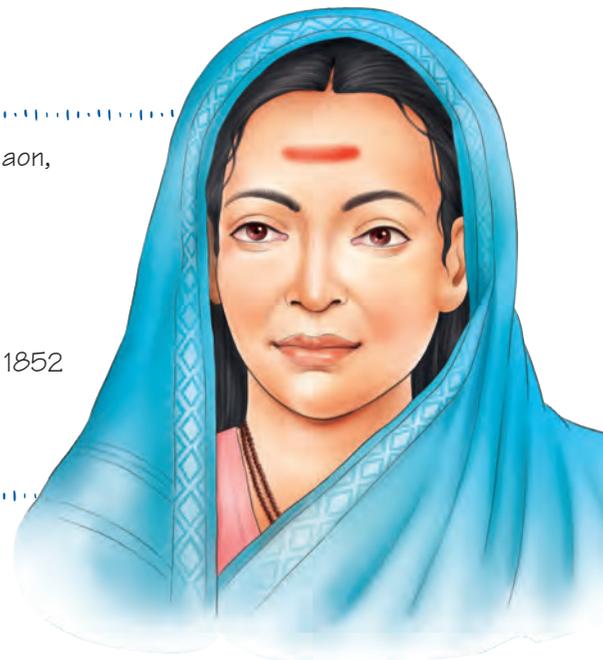
Became a teacher in 1847

Opened India's first school for women in 1848

Declared the best teacher in the state by the British government in 1852

Opened a shelter for destitute women in 1864

Died trying to save a plague victim on 10 March 1897



## Grammar in Use

**Phrases** are groups of words that convey some meaning together. They do not contain the main verb of a sentence. Phrases are part of, rather than the whole of, a sentence. They are of different types.

### ► Noun phrases

Read these sentences.

subject (noun)	verb	object (noun phrase)	subject (noun phrase)	verb	object (noun phrase)
<u>Savitribai</u>	<u>opened</u>	<u>the first school for girls.</u>	<u>The husband and wife</u>	<u>met</u>	<u>the girls' families.</u>

In these sentences, the subject is either a noun (Savitribai) or a noun phrase (the husband and wife). A noun phrase can also be the object (the first school for girls, the girls' families). A **noun phrase** is a group of words that acts as a noun in a sentence.

### F. Circle the verbs. Underline the noun phrases.

1. My mother and aunt live in Dehradun.
2. Sumita and Mahesh cycle every day. Mahesh is a maternal cousin.
3. Savitribai helped the needy girls.
4. The brown dog with black spots is sleeping.
5. Raman adopted an injured bird.
6. The Phules started the first school for girls.
7. Sumitra has written a letter to her grandparents. She misses her cousins and grandparents.



### ► Adjective phrases

Sometimes a group of words does the work of an adjective. Here are some examples (in blue).

The king wore a **golden** crown.

The **village** children swim in this pond.

The king wore a crown **made of gold**.

The children **of the village** swim in this pond.

A group of words that does the work of an adjective is an **adjective phrase**.

### G. Rewrite the sentences replacing the adjectives in colour with adjective phrases. Use the words in brackets. One has been done for you.

1. This is a very **valuable** bat as it belongs to Rahul Dravid. (great value)  
*This is a bat of great value as it belongs to Rahul Dravid.*
2. Abhas passed two **sleepless** nights. (without)
3. This book has been very **useful** to me. (of great)





# Spotlight 2

## ► Punctuation: comma

A comma is a ‘separator’ that can do many things. Here are a few of its uses.

<p>I need milk, butter, sugar and brown eggs. The bag had a bottle of medicine, a toothbrush, a pair of scissors and a tiny key.</p>	<p>in lists</p>
<p>Oh dear, I hurt myself! Maria, can you help? Well, that’s exactly my point. Slowly but surely, things will change.</p>	<p>after a word or phrase that comes before and is separate from the main clause</p>
<p>Suddenly, the rain started pouring. Waving his arms wildly, the boy ran after the bus. Grabbing a sandwich, Nita rushed out of the house. Worried about the fees, Kunal didn’t go to the hospital.</p>	<p>to separate an introductory word or phrase from the main clause</p>
<p>I have to leave now, I’m afraid. We will meet again, perhaps. You must keep quiet, Ravi. The alarm rang loudly, making Jaya jump. The players left the field, laughing and clapping.</p>	<p>before a word or phrase that comes after and is separate from the main clause</p>
<p>If it stops raining, we can go out. Unless they stop talking, I can’t hear you.</p>	<p>after a dependent (subordinate) clause at the beginning of a sentence</p>
<p>I agree with you. However, I don’t agree with Sam. Your shirt is nice. Your coat, however, is too faded. The train was late, yet I missed it. It was dark, so I walked carefully. I like all sports, especially cricket and football.</p>	<p>with words like ‘however’, ‘yet’, ‘so’, ‘especially’ (as shown in the examples)</p>
<p>Mr Kumar, the Hindi teacher, is coordinating the event. Sheila, aged 80, lives alone in a large house. Sam, the youngest contestant, was declared the winner. Lata, who is usually very punctual, is late today. The train, luckily for me, was quite delayed.</p>	<p>when a word, phrase or clause is added in the middle of a sentence to give some extra information (The pair of commas acts as parentheses.)</p>
<p>The exam was on Saturday, July 25, 2020. (but Saturday, 25 July 2020)</p>	<p>in dates</p>
<p>Looking at her, Aunt Mina spoke angrily. Can we eat, Father? Before eating, the family said a prayer. Seeing the creature so near, Naina turned pale. No, eggs <i>have</i> to be used in this recipe.</p>	<p>to make the meaning clear and avoid any confusion (Try to read the sentences without the commas and see for yourself.)</p>