

NCERT Book Notes
Class 10th English (First Flight)

Chapter 1 – A Letter to God

1. What did Lencho hope for?

Ans: Lencho was a farmer. The only thing he desired and prayed for were showers for his field of ripe crop, so that it could harvest well. If the showers did not come, the crop would die, and it would lead to a big loss.

2. Why did Lencho say the raindrops were like ‘new coins’?

Ans: Lencho had planted corn crops that were ready to be harvested. The crops still required some rain to provide a proper harvest. Since his profit depended on the rain, he called the raindrops ‘new coins.’ Also, he represented big drops as ten cents and smaller ones as fives.

3. How did the rain change? What happened to Lencho’s fields?

Ans: The season welcomed good rains and Lencho was certain he would get a good harvest this time. But the rains soon turned into storms and were accompanied by winds and hailstorms. The harsh weather destroyed his crops completely.

4. What were Lencho’s feelings when the hail stopped?

Ans: Lencho had to see the ripe harvest getting destroyed in front of his eyes because of the hailstorm. His soul was filled with sadness at the sight of his damaged crop. The lack of harvest meant shortage of food and money which would make survival difficult for the family. All he could see was a dark, gloomy future ahead.

5. Who or what did Lencho have faith in? What did he do?

Ans: Amidst the adversity Lencho was in, he still had faith in God. He believed that God from the heaven above, had seen him suffering and would ease his pain. His faith was so strong that he wrote a letter to God stating that he wanted a hundred pesos to cultivate a new crop again, as the previous crop was destroyed by the hailstorm.

6. Who reads the letter?

Ans: The postmaster read the letter since the letter had an address that was too absurd.

7. What did the postmaster do then?

Ans: When the postmaster first saw the address, he laughed at the stupidity the sender did. But after that he thought it may imply something serious and hence out of curiosity checked the letter. After going through the letter, the feelings of the writer really touched him, and he decided to help the writer somehow. For this, the postman contributed a part of his salary, and collected some money from his acquaintances, friends and relatives, and sent it to the writer of the letter(Lencho).

8. Was Lencho surprised to find a letter for him with money in it?

Ans: Lencho had blind faith in God, and he was sure God would address his problem. He was not surprised to find the letter with money in it.

9. What made him angry?

Ans: After he received the letter, he started counting the money that God sent him. On counting he found out that he had received only seventy pesos. Since he demanded a hundred pesos and did not receive the exact amount, he was furious. But he trusted God and knew God would not turn him down, so he concluded that the post office employees stole his money.

10. Who does Lencho have complete faith in? Which sentences in the story tell you this?

Ans: Lencho had blind faith and trust in God, and he knew he would address and find a solution to all his problems. The following sentences from the story tells us about the same:

- a. But in the hearts of all who lived in that solitary house in the middle of the valley, there was a single hope: help from God.
- b. All through the night, Lencho thought only of his one hope: the help of God, whose eyes, as he had been instructed, see everything, even what is deep in one's conscience.
- c. "God," he wrote, "if you don't help me, my family and I will go hungry this year."
- d. God could not have made a mistake, nor could he have denied Lencho what he had requested.
- e. He wrote 'To God' on the envelope, put the letter inside and, still troubled, went to town.
- f. It said: "God: of the money that I asked for, only seventy pesos reached me. Send me the rest since I need it very much."

11. Why does the postmaster send money to Lencho? Why does he sign the letter 'God'?

Ans: Humans always had faith in God, and they rely on him for their problems. But Lencho's faith was beyond anyone else's. He wrote a letter to God and demanded money from him as if asking a friend for financial assistance. Since the postmaster was touched by Lencho's letter to God, he wanted Lencho to maintain the faith he had in the almighty, hence, he sent him seventy pesos and signed the letter as God.

12. Did Lencho try to find out who had sent the money to him? Why/Why not?

Ans: No, Lencho had trust and faith in God. When he received the letter, he was so sure that it was sent by God that he did not even bother to find out who actually sent the amount to him. He was so sure about it that he even went to the post office to fight with the postmaster about the amount being less than a hundred pesos because he knew God will not leave his wish partially unfulfilled.

13. Who does Lencho think has taken the rest of the money? What is the irony in the situation? [Remember that the irony of a situation is an unexpected aspect of it. An ironic situation is strange or amusing because it is the opposite of what is expected.]

Ans: Lencho blames the postmaster for stealing money from his envelope that was sent by God since he received thirty pesos less than asked. The irony of the situation was that it was not God who actually sent him the amount but the postmaster himself, whom he was accusing of the crime.

14. Are there people like Lencho in the real world? What kind of a person would you say he is? You may select appropriate words from the box to answer the question.

**Greedy Naive Stupid Ungrateful Selfish Comical
Unquestioning**

Ans: Humans as a civilization have always worshiped or looked upon a greater power for assistance during challenging times but Lencho's faith was beyond comprehension. I do not think people like him exist in the world who would actually write a letter to God and demand him for money. He was very naive and unquestioning in his reasoning by displaying such blind faith in God.

15. There are two kinds of conflict in the story: between humans and nature, and between humans themselves. How are these conflicts illustrated?

Ans: Lencho's destruction of crops by nature is a sheer display of power that nature has over us. His crops were ripe and ready for harvest but were destroyed by the hailstorm and he could not do anything about it apart from cursing his luck and blaming God for it. He was very gloomy after the incident and had no resort

other than writing a letter to God, complaining about the same and asking him to compensate.

Conflict between human and human is displayed by the conflict the postmaster and Lencho had. The postmaster felt bad for Lencho for having written a letter to God and having such blind faith in him. He did not want to shatter his hope and hence collected seventy pesos for him and sent it under the name of God. His good deed was not reciprocated well by Lencho, and he accused him of stealing money from his envelope. It shows the deep distrust humans have amongst themselves.

16. Look at the following sentence from the story. Suddenly a strong wind began to blow and along with the rain very large hailstones began to fall. ‘Hailstones’ are small balls of ice that fall like rain. A storm in which hailstones fall is a ‘hailstorm’. You know that a storm is bad weather with strong winds, rain, thunder and lightning.

There are different names in different parts of the world for storms, depending on their nature. Can you match the names in the box with their descriptions below, and fill in the blanks? You may use a dictionary to help you.

gale, whirlwind, cyclone, hurricane, tornado, typhoon

1. A violent tropical storm in which strong winds move in a circle: _ _ c _ _ _
Ans: Cyclone

2. An extremely strong wind: _ a _ _
Ans: Gale

3. A violent tropical storm with very strong winds: _ _ p _ _ _ _
Ans: Typhoon

4. A violent storm whose centre is a cloud in the shape of a funnel: _ _ _ n _ _
Ans: Tornado

5. A violent storm with very strong winds, especially in the western Atlantic Ocean: _ _ r _ _ _ _ _ _
Ans: Hurricane

6. A very strong wind that moves very fast in a spinning movement and causes a lot of damage: _ _ _ _ _ l _ _ _ _ _
Ans: Whirlwind

17. Notice how the word ‘hope’ is used in these sentences from the story:

- (a) I hope it (the hailstorm) passes quickly.
 (b) There was a single hope: help from God.

In the first example, 'hope' is a verb which means you wish for something to happen. In the second example it is a noun meaning a chance for something to happen.

Match the sentences in Column A with the meanings of 'hope' in Column B.

A	B
Will you get the subjects you want to study in college? I hope so.	a feeling that something good will probably happen
I hope you do not mind my saying this, but I do not like the way you are arguing.	thinking that this would happen (It may or may not have happened).
This discovery will give new hope to HIV/AIDS sufferers.	stopped believing that this good thing would happen
We were hoping against hope that the judges would not notice our mistakes.	wanting something to happen (and thinking it quite possible)
I called early in the hope of speaking to her before she went to school.	showing concern that what you say should not offend or disturb the other person: a way of being polite
Just when everybody had given up hope, the fishermen came back, seven days after the cyclone.	wishing for something to happen, although this is very unlikely

Ans: The matched sentences are given below:

A	B
Will you get the subjects you want to study in college? I hope so.	wanting something to happen (and thinking it quite possible)
I hope you do not mind my saying this, but I do not like the way you are arguing.	showing concern that what you say should not offend or disturb the other person: a way of being polite
This discovery will give new hope to HIV/AIDS sufferers.	a feeling that something good will probably happen

We were hoping against hope that the judges would not notice our mistakes.	wishing for something to happen, although this is very unlikely
I called early in the hope of speaking to her before she went to school.	thinking that this would happen (It may or may not have happened).
Just when everybody had given up hope, the fishermen came back, seven days after the cyclone.	stopped believing that this good thing would happen

18. Relative Clauses Look at these sentences

(a) **All morning Lencho — who knew his fields intimately — looked at the sky.**

(b) **The woman, who was preparing supper, replied, “Yes, God willing.”**
The italicised parts of the sentences give us more information about Lencho and the woman. We call them relative clauses. Notice that they begin with a relative pronoun who. Other common relative pronouns are whom, whose, and which.

The relative clauses in (a) and (b) above are called non-defining, because we already know the identity of the person they describe. Lencho is a particular person, and there is a particular woman he speaks to. We don’t need the information in the relative clause to pick these people out from a larger set. A non-defining relative clause usually has a comma in front of it and a comma after it (some writers use a dash (—) instead, as in the story). If the relative clause comes at the end, we just put a full stop.

Join the sentences given below using who, whom, whose, which as suggested.

1. I often go to Mumbai. Mumbai is the commercial capital of India. (which)

Ans: I often go to Mumbai, which is the commercial capital of India.

2. My mother is going to host a TV show on cooking. She cooks very well. (who)

Ans: My mother, who cooks very well, is going to host a TV show on cooking.

3. These sportspersons are going to meet the President. Their performance has been excellent. (whose)

Ans: These sportspersons, whose performance has been excellent, are going to meet the President.

4. Lencho prayed to God. His eyes see into our minds. (whose)

Ans: Lencho prayed to God, whose eyes see into our minds.

5. This man cheated me. I trusted him. (whom)

Ans: This man, whom I trusted, cheated me.

19. Using Negatives for Emphasis We know that sentences with words such as **no, not or nothing** show the absence of something, or contradict something.

For example:

(a) This year we will have no corn. (Corn will be absent)

(b) The hail has left nothing. (Absence of a crop)

(c) These aren't raindrops falling from the sky, they are new coins. (Contradicts the common idea of what the drops of water falling from the sky are).

But sometimes negative words are used just to emphasize an idea. Look at these sentences from the story:

(d) Lencho...had done nothing else but see the sky towards the northeast. (He had done only this)

(e) The man went out for no other reason than to have the pleasure of feeling the rain on his body. (He had only this reason)

(f) Lencho showed not the slightest surprise on seeing the money. (He showed no surprise at all)

Now look back at example (c). Notice that the contradiction in fact serves to emphasise the value or usefulness of the rain to the farmer.

Find sentences in the story with negative words, which express the following ideas emphatically.

1. The trees lost all their leaves.

Ans: Not a leaf remained on the trees.

2. The letter was addressed to God himself.

Ans: It was nothing less than a letter to God.

3. The postman saw this address for the first time in his career.

Ans: Never in his career as a postman had he known that address.

20. Metaphors The word metaphor comes from a Greek word meaning 'transfer'. Metaphors compare two things or ideas: a quality or feature of one thing is transferred to another thing. Some common metaphors are

● **the leg of the table:** The leg supports our body. So the object that supports a table is described as a leg.

● **the heart of the city:** The heart is an important organ in the centre of our body. So this word is used to describe the central area of a city. In pairs, find metaphors from the story to complete the table below. Try to say what qualities are being compared. One has been done for you.

Object	Metaphor	Quality or Feature Compared
Cloud	Huge mountains of clouds	The mass or ‘hugeness’ of mountains
Raindrops		
Hailstones		
Locusts		
		An epidemic (a disease) that spreads very rapidly and leaves many people dead
	An ox of a man	

Ans: The metaphors are:

Object	Metaphor	Quality or Feature Compared
Cloud	Huge mountains of clouds	The mass or ‘hugeness’ of mountains
Raindrops	A curtain of rain Coins	The draping or covering of an area like a curtain by heavy raindrops. The money that would be earned when the crops will be sold.
Hailstones	The frozen pearls	The resemblance in color and hardness of a pearl
Locusts	A plague of locusts	The consequences (destruction) of plague
Locusts	A plague of locusts	An epidemic (a disease) that spreads very rapidly and leaves many people dead
Man	An ox of a man	Working hard for something

Speaking

21. Have you ever been in great difficulty, and felt that only a miracle could help you? How was your problem solved? Speak about this in class with your teacher.

Ans: There are various instances in life where we can be in great difficulty and only a miracle could save us.

I had a graded college project in which we were asked to make groups and volunteer. My friends and I were already late for work, so we planned a distribution event only about a week before the deadline. We did not check the weather report for the day and went ahead, feeling content about our plan. Unfortunately, on the day of the distribution, the sky was overcast with clouds and there was no chance we could proceed with the distribution. We just went ahead in the hope that it would not rain for the time being. But the clouds and wind declared otherwise.

We left our homes but were still very anxious seeing the dark clouds in the sky. We started our distribution along the streets, praying the whole time. I believe it was a miracle that saved our day, and it didn't rain for the two hours we were proceeding with the work. After we all reached back home it started raining heavily. It appeared as if the rain was waiting for us.

Listening

22. Listen to the letter (given under 'In This Lesson') read out by your teacher/on the audio tape. As you listen fill in the table given below.

The writer apologizes (says sorry) because	
The writer has sent this to the reader	
The writer sent it in the month of	
The reason for not writing earlier	
Sarah goes to	
Who is writing to whom?	
Where and when were they last together?	

Ans: The filled table is shown below:

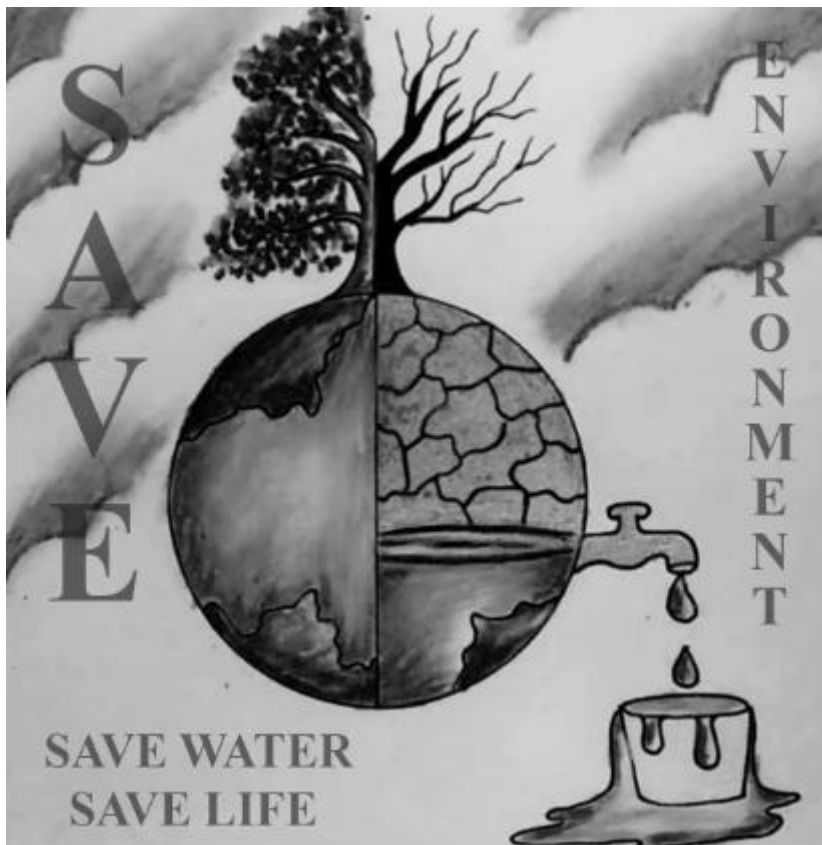
The writer apologizes (says sorry) because	She has not written about art for long.
The writer has sent this to the reader	After sending the birthday card.
The writer sent it in the month of	September 2005

The reason for not writing earlier	Was the writer shifting from Bangalore to Kanpur
Sarah goes to	'Little Feet', a primary school.
Who is writing to whom?	Jaya is writing to Arti.
Where and when were they last together?	They were in Bangalore

Writing

23. Lencho suffered first due to drought and then by floods. Our country is also facing such situations in the recent years. There is flood and there is drought. There is a need to save water through water harvesting. Design a poster or prepare a documentary (PPT) for your area on how to save water during summer and when it is available in excess.

Ans: The poster is given below:



Activity

24. One of the cheapest ways to send money to someone is through the post office. Have you ever sent or received money in this way? Here's what you have to do. (As you read the instructions, discuss with your teacher in class the meanings of these words: counter, counter clerk, appropriate, acknowledgement, counterfoil, record. Consult a dictionary if necessary. Are there words corresponding to these English words in your languages?)

Ans: Yes, I have sent and received money from relatives in this way.

The meaning of the words are:

- **Counter:** A long fitment across which business is conducted.
- **Counter clerk:** A person who completes customer orders and aids the payment procedure.
- **Appropriate:** Proper
- **Acknowledgement:** Acceptance
- **Counterfoil:** A part of cheque, kept as a record.
- **Record:** Sum of the tasks done or achieved by a person or organization.

25. Fill out the Money Order form given below using the clues that follow the form.

M.O.-8
Bhartiya Daak

DEPARTMENT OF POSTS, INDIA
MONEY ORDER

50 paise

INDIA POST
PAY RUPEES.....

To..... RS

..... PIN

Date..... Senders Signature

M.O.No..... Date.....
 Rupees.....
RS.....

Combined Oblong Stamp Assistant Postmaster

(For Official Use Only)

Received Rupees.....
.....

Round M.O. Stamp Signature of Payee

Signature of witness / identifier

Oblong Stamp Signature of Paying official

M.O.ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

M.O.No..... Date.....

Senders Name & Address 423

.....

..... PIN

Received Rupees.....
..... On.....

Data Stamp Signature of Payee

Space for communication

- Think about who you will send the money to, and how much. You might want to send money for a magazine subscription, or to a relative or a friend.
- Or you may fill out the form with yourself as sender and your partner as receiver. Use a part of your pocket money, and submit the form at the nearest post office to see how it's done. See how your partner enjoys getting money by post!
- Notice that the form has three parts — the Money Order form, the part for official use and the Acknowledgement. What would you write in the 'Space for Communication'?

Ans: The filled form is shown below:

M.O.-8
Bhartiya Daak

DEPARTMENT OF POSTS, INDIA
MONEY ORDER

50 paise

INDIA POST
PAY RUPEES. 2000

To Prakash Yadav

RS 2000

Pin 2 6 3 1 5 3

Date

Senders Signature

M.O.No. _____ Date 27 / 08 / 2021

Rupees Two Thousand

RS 2000

Combined Oblong Stamp Assistant Postmaster

Received Rupees Two Thousand

Round M.O. Stamp Signature of Payee

Oblong Stamp Signature of witness / identifier

Oblong Stamp Signature of Paying official

M.O.ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

M.O.No. _____ Date 27 / 08 / 2021

Senders Name & Address 423
Vandana Yadav
V-13 Ground Floor , Single Colony
Rudrapur, Uttarakhand

Pin 2 6 3 1 5 3

Received Rupees Two Thousand
On 30 / 08 / 2021

Data Stamp Signature of Payee

Space for communication

Now complete the following statements.

(i) In addition to the sender, the form has to be signed by the _____.

Ans: payee

(ii) The 'Acknowledgement' section of the form is sent back by the post office to the _____ after the _____ signs it.

Ans: sender, payee

(iii) The 'Space for Communication' section is used for _____.

Ans: writing a note to the payee

(iv) The form has six sections. The sender needs to fill out _____ sections and the receiver _____.

Ans: four, two