

Class 4, Unit 5: Prose

Helen Keller

Note:

There are quite a few videos available on YouTube that document the life of Helen Keller. However, most of them carry more information than what is provided in the lesson. Therefore, to avoid confusing the learners, any such documentaries/short films/films can be shown at the end of the class.

The link to one such video is as follows:

<https://youtu.be/TbLuYUGzvcQ>

OR

<https://youtu.be/txROK2db5C0>

The lesson has been divided into 4 parts. A day is required to cover each part. Every part includes picture interactions (textual and external), narratives, reading processes, and home assignments. Comprehension and extrapolative questions can also be included at the end of each part.

Day 1

Reading Segment 1

Picture Interaction

- *Show the picture given below to the students and elicit their thoughts about it.*



Picture 1 (textual picture)

The following questions can be asked:

- 1) What does the picture show?
- 2) Who all are there in the picture?
- 3) Do you think it is a healthy baby?
- 4) Is it a happy family?

Listen to the story.

Mr. and Mrs. Keller lived in a big house in Alabama.

- *Write down the word “Alabama” on the blackboard.*

In 1880, a baby girl was born in the family.

“She’s a healthy baby, isn’t she?” said Mrs. Keller.

“Yes, she is. And she’s beautiful.”

“We’ll call her Helen,” said Mr. Keller.

Thus, the baby girl was named Helen Keller.

- Write *“Helen Keller”* and *“a healthy baby girl”* on the blackboard.

The parents were very happy.

“We love you, dear,” they would say.

The baby would look at them with her beautiful eyes.

Her parents loved her very much.

But, one day, something sad happened. Do you know what it was?

Show the pictures 2 and 3 given below:



Picture 2

Picture 3

Why does the mother look sad?

What has happened to the child?

What did the parents do?

What did everyone try to do?

- *Elicit possible responses from the students*
- *Write down the following ideas on the blackboard.*

The baby became ill.

Everyone tried to help her to get better.

Listen to the story now.

Narration

Helen fell ill. She had a very high fever.

“The baby’s fever does not come down,” cried Mrs. Keller.

“Don’t worry, dear,” said Mr. Keller, “We’ll take her to the doctor.”

They took the child to the doctor. The doctor examined the child.

“I am sorry, Mr. Keller,” said the doctor, “There is nothing more we can do. The baby may not live.”

“Oh no!” cried Mrs. Keller.

Interaction

Do you think the baby lived? Why?

- *Elicit a few responses from the students.*

What did the doctor say?

Elicit and write “There is nothing we can do. The baby may not live.”

Reading from the Blackboard

- Note: Before reading out the passage from the textbook, let the students read the text written on the blackboard. Thus, be sure to take care while generating and writing the subtext on the blackboard.

The subtext possible for this part of the passage will look like something like the following:

<p><i>Alabama</i></p> <p><i>Helen Keller</i></p> <p><i>A healthy baby girl</i></p>	<p><i>The baby became ill.</i></p> <p><i>Everyone tried to help her to get better.</i></p> <p><i>There is nothing we can do.</i></p> <p><i>The baby may not live.</i></p>
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- *Place the learners in small teams (two or three) and call them to the front of the class. Ask them to read from the blackboard using a pointer.*
- *Cross check whether they all are reading.*

Interaction

You can read more about the child from the passage. Read the first two paragraphs on page 81 (From “**It was the summer of 1880**” to “**The child could not see or hear**”).

- *Follow the protocols of reading (Individual reading, collaborative reading, asking comprehension and analytical questions, and reading aloud).*

Home Assignment

Write a paragraph about what you have learnt from the first part of the passage. The questions given here will help you compose the paragraph. Do not number the sentences.

1. Where was she born?
2. When was she born?
3. How was her health when she was born?
4. What happened to her one day?

5. What did everyone do?
6. What did the doctor say?

Day 2

Reading Segment 2

- *Begin with a review of the previous day's assignment.*
- *Ask a few students to read out what they have written.*
- *Provide feedback on their write-ups.*

Did you include all the details?

Do you want to add something more?

Do you think the sentences are fine (without having missing words, excess words, and word-order problems)?

Narration

Let us continue the story of Helen Keller.

Helen was ill. Her parents feared that she might die. But, luckily, that did not happen. Helen lived.

But, she was not the same after her illness. Quite often, she would fall down.

Sometimes, she would walk straight to the door and bump her head.

Sometimes, without any reason, she would start crying.

“Why are you crying, Helen?” her mother would ask.

“What has happened to the child?” everyone asked.

There was no way to find out.

“Something is very wrong,” her mother said.

Interaction

Can you guess what was wrong with the child?

- *Elicit some probable responses from the students.*

Narration

One day when the family was having their dinner, the servant came in with a tray in her hands.

There was a glass jug and a few glasses on the table.

The jug was filled with water.

Suddenly, the servant slipped.

‘THUD!’

The jug fell down from the table with a loud sound and broke into pieces.

Everyone was shocked by the sound and looked at the broken jug.

At that time, Helen was walking on the floor. She did not hear the sound. She walked straight towards the broken jug, waving her hands in the air.

Her little foot hit the broken jar. She started crying.

“My God!” her mother cried, “Now I know what is wrong with her.”

Everyone understood what was wrong with the child.

Interaction

Why did the child’s mother cry aloud?

What did they find out?

What was wrong with the child?

- *Elicit and write down the following ideas from the students:*

They found out what was wrong.

The child could not see or hear.

Reading from the Blackboard.

- *Read the subtext written on the blackboard. Follow the same process that was followed in the earlier segment.*

Interaction

Everyone understood that Helen could not see or hear. How did her parents feel about her?

Do you think Helen was a bright girl? Would she be able to learn anything?

Would people think that Helen would be able to learn anything?

- *Elicit probable answers from the students.*
- *You can read about these things from the textbook passage.*

Reading the textbook passage

Read from “**The baby grew into a little girl...**” to “**She is locked up inside herself**”.

Reading the textbook passage

- *Follow the protocols of reading, including reading aloud.*
- *Ask a few comprehension questions and analytical questions that are relevant for this part of the text. Don't forget to include the questions given in the textbook.*

Home assignment

What was wrong with Helen? How did everyone come to know about it?

Write a narrative about this. Use a few dialogues and self-talks also. You may include the following events:

- Helen recovered from her illness.
- Her mother noticed that there was a change in her behaviour.
- Helen's mother noticed that she was always crying.

Day 3

Reading Segment 3

- *Presentation of the home assignment by a few learners*
- *Providing feedback on their write-ups*

Narration

We will with continue Helen's story.

- *Display the pictures marked 4 to 6 given below:*



Picture 4

Picture 5



Picture 6

Look at these pictures. Who are the people shown in these pictures?

What is the maid doing in the first picture?

What is Helen doing?

What do you see in the third picture?

What do these pictures tell us about Helen?

- *Elicit what the learners think about the pictures.*

Narration

Helen was growing wild. She always got angry and broke things at home.

One day, she was screaming aloud and running around. She was in dirty clothes. Her hair was uncombed.

“Helen,” called out her mother, “Stop running and come here.”

Helen did not go near her mother. She screamed aloud.

Her mother went near her.

“Let me comb your hair.”

Helen screamed and pushed her mother away.

Her clothes were always dirty. She did not allow anyone to change them.

Sometimes, she lay down on the floor and kicked her feet.

Interaction

How did Helen begin to grow? Was she a good girl or a wild girl?

What actions of Helen tell us that Helen was growing wild?

- *Elicit ideas like the ones given below:*

She began to grow as a wild girl.

She was often angry.

She would not let anyone comb her hair.

Her clothes were always dirty.

Sometimes, she even lay on the floor and kicked her feet.

Narration

Helen's parents were really worried. Her father even got angry sometimes.

“Look at the house ... Broken glasses, plates ... We cannot allow this to happen,” complained Mr. Keller.

“What shall we do, my dear? She is our only child,” replied Mrs. Keller with tears in her eyes.

“I don't think we can manage her at home. We must lock her in a room,” suggested Mr. Keller.

“That's not fair,” cried Mrs. Keller, “She is a bright girl. We should try to get a teacher for her.”

“Who will be there to teach Helen?” asked Mr. Keller, “Anyway, let me try.”

They looked for a teacher. Finally, they came to a young lady, Miss Sullivan.

● *Write **Miss Sullivan** on the blackboard.*

“Would you come to our home as Helen's teacher?” asked Helen's parents.

Miss Sullivan agreed to help them.

“I will help the girl to see the world,” said Sullivan, and she came to Helen's home.

Look at the picture.



Picture 7

Who do you see in this picture?

This is Miss Sullivan. She has come to Helen's home.

Why has she come to Helen's home?

Elicit the idea “**To help Helen learn to see the world**” and write it down on the blackboard.

Reading from the Blackboard

Reading from the textbook

Write a paragraph narrating how Helen began to grow as a wild girl.

Day 4

Reading Segment 4

Picture Interaction



Picture 8 (textual picture)

Questions for interaction

- 1) Who do you think is the lady in this picture?
- 2) What is she doing?

[If the students respond “teacher”, the next question can be framed as “How would the teacher teach Helen?”]

Let’s find out who she is and how the teacher would teach Helen.

Reading

Individual reading

Read the remaining part of the text.

Follow the abovementioned processes while reading.

Comprehension questions

- 1) How did the teacher teach Helen? [She taught Helen to spell words with her fingers using special hand signs].

2) Why did Helen like Miss Sullivan? [She was strict but kind.]

Extrapolative question

Do you think Helen would become a successful person in life?

[She went on to write a book about her life (*The Story of My Life*). She also wrote articles about prevention of blindness and about the education and special problems of the blind.]

