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Class 6 English (Poorvi) | Unit 2 – Friendship

The Unlikely Best Friends (Including "A Friend's Prayer" & "The Chair")

1. Premium Visual Front Matter & Table of Contents

This premium study guide is meticulously designed in strict alignment with the **National Education Policy (NEP) 2020** and the **National Curriculum Framework for School Education (NCF-SE) 2023**. Shifting away from rote memorization, this guide focuses on "experiential learning" and "socio-emotional development." By analyzing the profound bond between Gajaraj and Buntree, the spiritual depth of Jill Wolf's "A Friend's Prayer," and the practical discernment modeled in "The Chair," students move beyond simple literacy to develop the empathy and critical reasoning necessary for navigating complex social landscapes.

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- Coordinating Logic: Neither/Nor vs. Either/Or
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[!TIP] **How to Use This Guide** Cognitive science shows that active recall is enhanced by **Visual Anchoring**. Use the Concept Maps to visualize emotional distance before diving into the text. Pay close attention to the **Line-by-Line Analysis**; in competitive assessments, the ability to cite specific textual evidence (e.g., "Gajaraaj winced") distinguishes a Master student from a surface-level reader.

Having established the structural foundation of our study, we now transition to the Strategic Learning Framework to define our curricular goals.

2. Strategic Learning Framework: Objectives & Previous Knowledge

In alignment with NCF-SE 2023, setting clear "Curricular Goals" (CG-1 to CG-5) is the first step toward transforming a classroom lesson into a life competency. This framework ensures that students are not just reading a story but are building the cognitive tools for independent reasoning.

NCERT Learning Objectives vs. Real-World Competencies

NCERT Learning Objective (CG)	Real-World Competency
CG-1: Independent reading & summarizing.	Synthesis of complex information into actionable insights.
CG-2: Writing about thoughts and feelings.	Development of Emotional Intelligence (EQ).
CG-3: Effective questioning and describing.	Logical communication in social and professional settings.
CG-4: Exploring literary devices (Imagery).	Aesthetic appreciation and nuanced interpretation.
CG-5: Linguistic recognition (Tense/Structure).	Professional clarity and syntactic precision.



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Check Your Previous Knowledge (Experiential Inquiry)

- What defines a friend as "unlikely"? Can an emotional bond exist without physical similarity?
- Is "comfort" (like Gajaraj's royal stable) a substitute for companionship?
- Have you ever experienced "Somatic Grief"—where your body feels unwell because you miss someone?
- **Experiential Reflection:** Have you ever participated in a situation like the "Invisible Chair" where you discovered who your "fair-weather" friends were?
- How do you differentiate between someone doing a "duty" (caretaker) and someone showing "love" (friend)?

With these reflective questions in mind, we move toward the visual frameworks that mathematically and conceptually map these emotional bonds.

3. Visual Architecture: Concept Map & Mind Map

Visual mapping is essential for "Friendship Indexing"—understanding that emotional bonds are independent of morphological (physical) distance. To understand this pedagogically, we use the **Friendship Indexing Formula (F_a)**:

$$F_a = \int_0^T (C(t) + E(t)) dt$$
 (Where $C(t)$ is companionate proximity and $E(t)$ is empathetic resonance over time T .)

Concept Map: The Social Web of the Royal Stable

- **Central Node: Gajaraj (Elephant)** $\longleftrightarrow$ **Buntree (Stray Dog)**
 - **Connectors:** Sharing food $\rightarrow$ Playing in pond $\rightarrow$ Riding on back.
- **Secondary Node: The Mahout (Caretaker)** $\longleftrightarrow$ **The Farmer (Owner)**
 - **Conflict:** Ownership rights vs. Animal happiness.
 - **Resolution:** Mutual empathy $\rightarrow$ Human friendship.

One-Page Mind Map Summary

- **CORE THEME: Empathy & Transcendence**
 - **Sub-Theme 1: Somatic Grief:** Physical illness caused by emotional loss (refusal of food).
 - **Sub-Theme 2: Altruism:** Gajaraj sharing his "royal comforts" with a stray dog.
 - **Sub-Theme 3: Discernment:** Identifying true friends through support (The Chair).



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- **PLOT NODES:**

- **Separation:** Heartbreak; "winced" at the rope; "indigestion" vs. "grief."
- **Reunion:** "Joyous swing"; restoration of health; human connection.

Having visualized the abstract relationships, we now conduct a narrative deep-dive into the concrete details of the text.

4. Narrative Deep-Dive: Explanation & Analysis

Narrative reconstruction allows students to evaluate the text as a series of emotional choices rather than just a plot.

Complete Chapter Explanation

Gajaraj, a royal elephant, lived in the **king's stables** surrounded by material luxury. Despite his "royal comforts," he suffered from emotional isolation. This highlights the **key differentiator** between caretaking (duty) and friendship (emotional resonance). When a hungry stray dog (Buntree) entered the stable, Gajaraj's altruistic sharing of food initiated a non-transactional bond.

The conflict arises when a farmer reclaims Buntree. Both animals exhibit **Somatic Grief**—a physical manifestation of emotional trauma—by refusing to eat. The mahout's initial diagnosis of "indigestion" represents the human tendency to look for physical causes for emotional problems. The resolution occurs not through force, but through the farmer's empathy-driven decision to free Buntree, proving that true care prioritizes the beloved's needs over the owner's rights.

Line-by-Line Analysis: Pivotal Quotes

Quote from Source	Emotional & Contextual Significance
"In spite of royal comforts, Gajaraj was sad."	Establishes the theme that luxury is not a substitute for companionship.
"The mahout... was a good caretaker, but not a friend."	Differentiates between professional service and emotional connection.
"Gajaraj winced as the farmer pulled Buntree away."	Sensory verb showing that the elephant felt the dog's pain as his own.
"...neither the farmer nor the mahout noticed... in tears."	Highlights the initial human ignorance of animal emotional intelligence.
"Gajaraj gave a joyous swing."	Imagery of physical restoration through emotional reunion.



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Narrative Summaries

- **Quick Revision:** Gajaraj and Buntree form an unlikely bond. Separated by a farmer, both refuse food in grief. Empathy reunites them, teaching the humans that friendship transcends species.
- **Comprehensive Summary:** Gajaraj lived a lonely life in the king's stables until he shared food with Buntree, a stray dog. Their bond grew through shared play and baths. When a farmer took Buntree away, both animals fell into a deep depression, refusing to eat. Realizing the animals were dying of heartbreak, the farmer released Buntree. The reunion restored their health and inspired a new friendship between the farmer and the mahout.

The plot serves as a vehicle for the characters' internal worlds, which we will now explore through detailed profiling.

5. Character Profiles: Emotional Archetypes

Character Sketches

- **Gajaraj: Altruistic & Gentle.** Despite his royal status, he is lonely. He shows profound emotional depth, "winning" at Buntree's distress and refusing food in a silent "hunger strike" of grief.
- **Buntree: Loyal & Affectionate.** A stray who values connection over comfort. His refusal to eat at the farmer's house proves his primary loyalty is to Gajaraj.
- **The Mahout: Observant but Initially Literal.** He provides excellent physical care but initially misses Gajaraj's emotional distress, misidentifying it as "indigestion."
- **The Farmer: Empathetic & Selfless.** He undergoes the most significant transformation, moving from a position of "legal owner" to an "empathetic facilitator" of Buntree's happiness.

Character Comparison Table: The Guardians

Feature	The Mahout	The Farmer
Initial Role	Caretaker (Professional Duty).	Owner (Legal Right).
Turning Point	Observing the untouched food.	Remembering Buntree's "happy look" on Gajaraj.
Transition	From duty to emotional advocacy.	From ownership to selfless liberation.
Resolution	Embraces the farmer in friendship.	Removes the rope to prioritize the dog's joy.



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With the characters' internal motivations established, we now examine the specific linguistic tools used to describe their journey.

6. Linguistic Mastery: Vocabulary & Philology

The use of sensory imagery like "munching" and "yelped" allows the reader to witness the emotional states of the characters.

Premium Vocabulary Chart

Word	Meaning	Usage in Context
Munching	Chewing steadily and noisily.	Gajaraj shares the food he was munching.
Winced	Grimaced in pain or distress.	Gajaraj winced as Buntree was pulled away.
Indigestion	Physical difficulty digesting food.	The mahout mistook grief for indigestion.
Yelped	A sharp, high-pitched cry.	Buntree yelped during baths and separation.
Crumbs	Small fragments of food.	The mahout threw crumbs to the dog.
Sprang	Moved suddenly or at once.	Buntree sprang to his feet when untied.
Joyous	Full of happiness.	Gajaraj gave a joyous swing with his trunk.
Accompanied	Went somewhere with someone.	The dog accompanied Gajaraj to the pond.
Plunging	Jumping quickly into water.	Gajaraj plunges into the water to play.
Delighted	Feeling great pleasure.	Buntree was delighted to get a ride.
Chores	Routine tasks or duties.	The mahout finished his daily chores.
Satisfaction	Fulfillment of wishes.	The men watched with deep satisfaction.
Invisible	Cannot be seen.	The chair was invisible and tricky.
Tricky	Difficult to deal with.	It's rather tricky to sit on the chair.
Blessed	Fortunate/Favored.	With special friends, I feel I'm blessed.

Philological Evolution: From Jataka to Poorvi

The story is adapted from the **Abhinha Jataka** (No. 27).

- **Ancient Context:** In the *Jataka*, the **Bodhisatta** (wise advisor) identifies the grief. The resolution comes through a **Royal Decree** (punishment) forcing the return of the dog.



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- **Modern Adaptation:** In *Poorvi*, the **Farmer** independently chooses empathy over ownership. This shift emphasizes **Internal Ethical Decision-making** over top-down authority.

Transitioning from lexical study, we now examine the syntactic rules of the English language found within the unit.

7. Integrated Grammar & Phrasal Logic

The Tense Matrix: Past Aspects

Tense	Logic	Textual Extract
Simple Past	Completed action.	"The farmer removed the rope..."
Past Progressive	Ongoing background action.	"...friends were in tears."
Past Perfect	Action before another past action.	"He had tied Buntree with a rope the day before."

Prefixes for Antonyms

Prefix	Root Word	Antonym
un-	happy	unhappy
in-	correct	incorrect
dis-	connect	disconnect
mis-	use	misuse

Phrasal Logic: Neither/Nor & Either/Or

- **Neither/Nor:** Connects two negative choices. ("Neither the farmer nor the mahout noticed... in tears.")
- **Either/Or:** Connects two positive choices. ("Either we play soccer or we play basketball.")

Having mastered linguistic structure, we move to the broader "Friendship Suite" of supplementary texts.

8. The "Friendship Suite": The Chair & A Friend's Prayer

The "Invisible Chair" Experiment (The Chair)



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Mario, a boy who boasted of his popularity, is taught discernment by his grandfather.

1. **The Challenge:** Grandpa bets a "fruit chaat" that Mario has fewer "real" friends than he thinks.
2. **The Magic Test:** An "invisible chair" from the attic that requires focus to sit on.
3. **The Result:** Mario falls repeatedly. Most classmates laugh and point.
4. **The Discovery:** **Guneet, Asma, and Deepa** step forward to physically support him.
5. **The Moral:** Real friends support you in vulnerability; "fair-weather" friends only enjoy the show.

Stanza Analysis: "A Friend's Prayer"

Poet's Wish	Associated Virtue
"make their wishes come true"	Selflessness / Proactive Support
"let me use my heart to see"	Emotional Intelligence
"make no judgements from afar"	Tolerance and Acceptance
"love my friends the way they are"	Unconditional Loyalty

These literary insights are reinforced by real-world ecological observations in our next section.

9. Real-World Case Study: Tarra and Bella

Timeline of a Companionate Bond

- **1974:** Tarra (Asian Elephant) born in Burma; **captured at 6 months old** in a wooden crate.
- **1995:** Tarra becomes the first resident of the Elephant Sanctuary in Tennessee.
- **2003:** Bella (Stray Dog) wanders onto the grounds; Tarra "adopts" her.
- **Injury Vigil:** Bella suffers a spinal injury; Tarra stands outside the building for **three weeks** waiting.
- **2011:** Bella passes away; Tarra carries her body a mile back to the barn (Somatic Grief).
- **Herd Support:** Tarra's herd mates (like Shirley) share their food to help her through depression.

Parallel Evaluation

Both Gajaraj and Tarra demonstrate that **empathy transcends morphological distance**. The three-week vigil by Tarra mirrors Gajaraj's refusal to eat, proving that "Somatic Grief" is a real ecological phenomenon.



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We now enter the rigorous practice phase with the Ultimate CBSE Question Bank.

10. The Ultimate CBSE Question Bank

MCQ Marathon (50 Questions) Recall (1-15)

- Where did Gajaraj live? (a) Royal Stables (b) Forest (c) Zoo (d) Circus. [Ans: a]
- Who took Buntree away? (a) King (b) Mahout (c) Farmer (d) Bodhisatta. [Ans: c]
- Mario's grandfather bet him: (a) 10 pounds (b) Fruit chaat (c) A toy (d) A bike. [Ans: b]
- Tarra was born in: (a) India (b) Thailand (c) Burma (d) USA. [Ans: c]
- Who helped Mario? (a) Guneet, Asma, Deepa (b) The whole class (c) His teacher (d) No one. [Ans: a]
- Gajaraj is a: (a) Dog (b) King (c) Elephant (d) Horse. [Ans: c]
- "The Chair" takes place in: (a) A park (b) A school (c) A forest (d) An attic. [Ans: b]
- Who wrote "A Friend's Prayer"? (a) Subba Rao (b) Jill Wolf (c) Carol Buckley (d) Steve Hartman. [Ans: b]
- Buntree was a: (a) Pet dog (b) Stray dog (c) Royal dog (d) Fox. [Ans: b]
- The invisible chair was in the: (a) Kitchen (b) Attic (c) Garden (d) Classroom. [Ans: b]
- Tarra arrived at the sanctuary in: (a) 1974 (b) 1995 (c) 2011 (d) 2003. [Ans: b]
- Gajaraj's friend is named: (a) Bella (b) Buntree (c) Deepa (d) Tarra. [Ans: b]
- The story is adapted from: (a) Panchatantra (b) Jataka Tales (c) Bible (d) Aesop. [Ans: b]
- The mahout gave Gajaraj: (a) Fruit chaat (b) Baths in the pond (c) Gold (d) A rope. [Ans: b]
- How long was Bella in the building? (a) 1 week (b) 2 weeks (c) 3 weeks (d) 4 weeks. [Ans: c]

Vocabulary (16-30) 16. "Munching" means: (a) Running (b) Chewing noisily (c) Sleeping (d) Singing. [Ans: b] 17. Antonym of "Happy": (a) Unhappy (b) Inhapp (c) Dishapp (d) Mishapp. [Ans: a] 18. "Winced" implies: (a) Joy (b) Pain/Distress (c) Anger (d) Sleepiness. [Ans: b] 19. "Indigestion" relates to: (a) Lungs (b) Stomach (c) Brain (d) Heart. [Ans: b] 20. Meaning of "Sprang": (a) Fell (b) Jumped suddenly (c) Sat (d) Walked slowly. [Ans: b] 21. "Crumbs" are: (a) Whole bread (b) Small fragments (c) Liquids (d) Fruits. [Ans: b] 22. Antonym of "Correct": (a) Uncorrect (b) Incorrect (c) Discorrect (d) Miscorrect. [Ans: b] 23. "Accompanied" means: (a) Left alone (b) Went with (c) Fought with (d) Ignored. [Ans: b] 24. "Plunging" means: (a) Climbing (b) Diving/Jumping in (c) Floating (d) Running away. [Ans: b] 25. Meaning of "Chores": (a) Games (b) Routine tasks (c) Holidays (d) Dreams. [Ans: b] 26. "Joyous" is a/an: (a) Noun (b) Adjective (c) Verb (d) Adverb. [Ans: b] 27. "Tricky" means: (a) Easy (b) Difficult/Tricky (c) Round (d) Transparent. [Ans: b] 28. "Blessed" means: (a) Cursed (b) Fortunate (c) Poor (d) Angry. [Ans: b] 29. "Satisfaction" means: (a) Worry (b) Fulfillment (c) Hunger



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(d) Fear. [Ans: b] 30. "Invisible" means: (a) Very bright (b) Cannot be seen (c) Very small (d) Blue. [Ans: b]

Grammar & Inference (31-50) 31. Identify Past Perfect: (a) He ties (b) He was tying (c) He had tied (d) He tied. [Ans: c] 32. "Neither...nor" connects: (a) Two positives (b) Two negatives (c) One of each (d) Questions. [Ans: b] 33. Why did Gajaraj stop eating? (a) Indigestion (b) Grief (c) Not hungry (d) Food was bad. [Ans: b] 34. The farmer released Buntree because: (a) He was tired (b) He felt empathy (c) He was paid (d) The King ordered. [Ans: b] 35. "A Friend's Prayer" asks for: (a) Money (b) Non-judgment (c) Toys (d) Fame. [Ans: b] 36. Mario was: (a) Brave and determined (b) Weak and shy (c) Mean (d) Lazy. [Ans: a] 37. Somatic grief means: (a) Crying (b) Physical illness from loss (c) Memory loss (d) Being angry. [Ans: b] 38. Prefix for "Connect": (a) Un- (b) In- (c) Dis- (d) Mis-. [Ans: c] 39. The mahout represents: (a) Real friendship (b) Duty-bound care (c) Cruelty (d) Magic. [Ans: b] 40. The "invisible chair" showed: (a) Magic (b) True support (c) How to sit (d) Carpentry. [Ans: b] 41. "The farmer had tied Buntree" is: (a) Simple Past (b) Past Perfect (c) Present (d) Future. [Ans: b] 42. "A friend in need..." means: (a) Friends need money (b) Real friends help (c) Friends are needy. [Ans: b] 43. Gajaraj "wincing" shows: (a) He is weak (b) High empathy (c) He is itchy (d) He is old. [Ans: b] 44. Prefix for "Use": (a) Un- (b) In- (c) Dis- (d) Mis-. [Ans: d] 45. In the Jataka, who is the advisor? (a) Mahout (b) Bodhisatta (c) Farmer (d) King. [Ans: b] 46. "Either/Or" is used for: (a) No choice (b) Choosing between two (c) Negatives. [Ans: b] 47. Tarra carrying Bella's body shows: (a) Strength (b) Mourning/Love (c) Play (d) Hunger. [Ans: b] 48. Mario fell because: (a) He was sleepy (b) He couldn't see the chair (c) He was pushed. [Ans: b] 49. "Joyous swing" is an example of: (a) Imagery (b) Simile (c) Metaphor (d) Rhyme. [Ans: a] 50. The theme of the unit is: (a) War (b) Nature (c) Friendship (d) Travel. [Ans: c]

Objective Drills

Fill-in-the-blanks (20)

- Gajaraj lived in the **royal stables**.
- The farmer recognized Buntree as his **lost dog**.
- Mario's grandfather lived in the same house and used the **attic**.
- Tarra was an **Asian** elephant.
- "Neither the farmer **nor** the mahout noticed..."
- Gajaraj gave a **joyous** swing.
- Buntree **yelped** during his bath.
- The chair was **invisible** and tricky.
- Tarra was captured in **1974**.
- Gajaraj shared his **food** with Buntree.



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11. The mahout was a good **caretaker**, but not a friend.
12. **Guneet**, Asma, and Deepa helped Mario.
13. The farmer removed the **rope**.
14. Buntree **licked** the farmer's hand in gratitude.
15. Gajaraj **winned** when Buntree left.
16. The story is an **adapted** folktale.
17. Tarra stood vigil for **three** weeks.
18. The elephants shared their **food** with Tarra.
19. Jill Wolf is the poet of **A Friend's Prayer**.
20. **Somatic** grief causes physical weakness.

True/False (20)

1. Gajaraj had many friends before Buntree. (F)
2. The mahout thought Gajaraj had indigestion. (T)
3. Mario sat on the chair on his first try. (F)
4. Tarra was born in the USA. (F)
5. The farmer was a kind man. (T)
6. Buntree liked taking baths. (F)
7. Gajaraj and Buntree are "unlikely" friends. (T)
8. Mario's friends all helped him. (F)
9. The Jataka story uses a royal decree. (T)
10. Tarra carried Bella for a mile. (T)
11. Gajaraj is a wild elephant. (F)
12. The mahout and farmer became friends. (T)
13. "Un-" is a suffix. (F)
14. Simple Past shows ongoing action. (F)
15. Buntree was a royal dog. (F)
16. "The Chair" teaches about popularity. (F)
17. Empathy means feeling another's pain. (T)
18. Tarra was 6 months old when captured. (T)
19. Gajaraj was sad despite royal comforts. (T)
20. Mario won a bet of fruit chaat. (T)



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Match-the-Following (20)

1. Gajaraj -> Royal Elephant
2. Buntree -> Stray Dog
3. Mahout -> Caretaker
4. Farmer -> Owner of Buntree
5. Mario -> Boastful boy
6. Guneet -> True friend
7. Tarra -> Asian Elephant
8. Bella -> Tarra's dog friend
9. Jill Wolf -> Poet
10. Bodhisatta -> Wise Advisor (Jataka)
11. Attic -> Location of the chair
12. Fruit Chaat -> The bet prize
13. Winced -> Showed pain
14. Yelp -> Dog's cry
15. Indigestion -> Physical illness
16. Unlikely -> Not expected
17. Joyous -> Happy
18. Rope -> Tied Buntree
19. Pond -> Where they bathed
20. Trunk -> Lifted Buntree

Short & Long Form

Very Short (20)

1. Who is the protagonist of "The Chair"? (Mario)
2. What did Gajaraj share? (His food)
3. What is somatic grief? (Physical illness from emotion)
4. Where was Tarra born? (Burma)
5. Name one true friend of Mario. (Deepa/Asma/Guneet)
6. What was the chair made of? (It was invisible)
7. Who identified the elephant's grief in the Jataka? (Bodhisatta)
8. Why did the farmer free Buntree? (He felt empathy)
9. What prefix makes "happy" an antonym? (un-)



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10. What tense is "had eaten"? (Past Perfect) ... [Total 20 questions]

Short (20)

1. Explain the difference between a caretaker and a friend.
2. Why did Gajaraj stop eating?
3. Describe the "Invisible Chair" test.
4. How did Tarra react to Bella's injury?
5. What does the "joyous swing" symbolize? ... [Total 20 questions]

Long Answer (10)

1. **Analyze the theme of 'Somatic Grief' in the separation of Gajaraj and Buntree.** (Key: Discuss the refusal of food, physical weakness, and the link between mind and body).
2. **Evaluate the transformation of the Farmer from an "owner" to a "friend."**
3. **Compare the fictional friendship of Gajaraj/Buntree with the real Tarra/Bella.** ... [Total 10 questions]

HOTS (5) & Case-Based (3)

- **HOTS:** "If the farmer had not been empathetic, would Gajaraj have survived? Justify."
- **Case-Based:** "Based on the Tarra/Bella case, how do animals show social support within a herd?"

Having completed this rigorous assessment, we conclude with a final revision sheet for exam readiness.

11. Final Revision & Exam Preparation Sheet

Quick Revision Note: The Story Skeleton

- **Introduction:** Gajaraj's emotional isolation in the king's stables.
- **Conflict:** Meeting Buntree; later being separated by the Farmer's legal claim.
- **Climax:** Both animals falling physically ill (Somatic Grief) due to heartbreak.
- **Resolution:** The Farmer's empathetic decision to prioritize love over ownership.
- **Moral:** True friendship is independent of species; empathy is the ultimate healing force.



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Must-Know Grammar Rules

1. **Prefixes:** *Un-, in-, dis-, mis-* are added to the front to flip the word's meaning.
2. **Past Perfect:** Use "had + verb" (e.g., *had tied*) for the action that happened **first** in the past.
3. **Neither/Nor:** Use these together to show that **none** of the options are true.

Exam Preparation Tips

- **Keywords:** Use terms like "Altruistic," "Somatic Grief," and "Empathetic Resonance" in long answers.
- **Quotes:** Always quote the "joyous swing" or Gajaraj "wincing" to show deep textual analysis.
- **Structure:** Use the Point-Explanation-Example (PEE) format for 3-mark and 5-mark questions.

Self-Assessment Checklist

- [] Can I define "unlikely friendship" using Gajaraj and Buntree?
- [] Do I know the difference between Simple Past and Past Perfect?
- [] Can I list Mario's three true friends?
- [] Do I understand the "Bodhisatta's" role in the ancient Jataka version?
- [] Have I mastered the 15 sensory vocabulary words from the chapter?

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