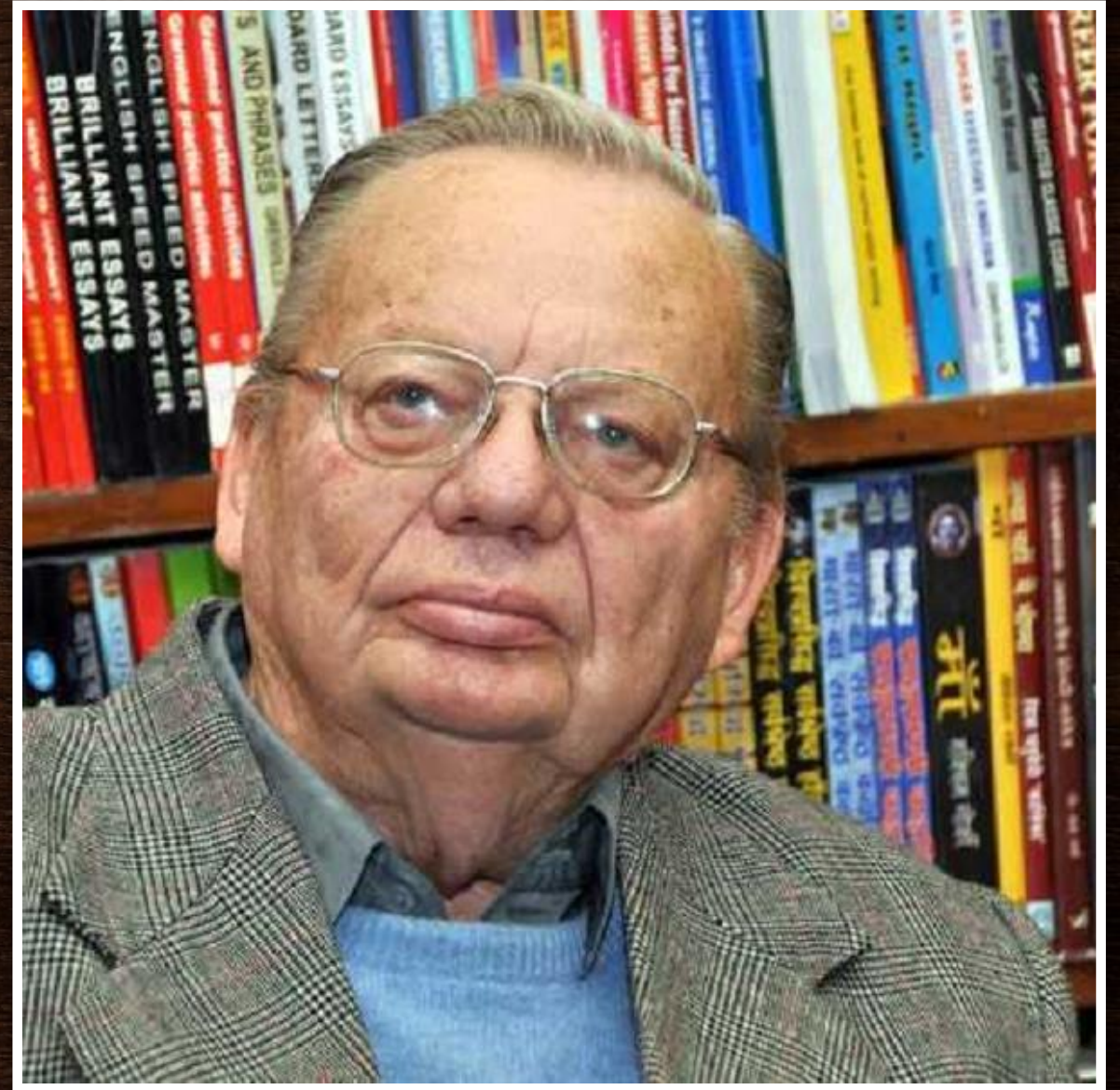# A SHORT MONSOON DIARY

BY RUSKIN BOND

Ruskin Bond (born 19 May 1934) is an Indian author of British descent. He lives with his adopted family in Landour, Mussoorie, India. The Indian Council for Child Education has recognised his role in the growth of children's literature in India. He was awarded the Sahitya Academy Award in 1992 for *Our Trees Still Grow in Dehra*, his novel in English. He was awarded the Padma Shri in 1999 and the Padma Bhushan in 2014.

RECAPITULATION

This chapter consists of a few extracts from the diary of Ruskin Bond. The chapter describes the author's experiences in Mussoorie during the monsoons. On the first day of monsoon, the mist covered the hills. Bijju was calling his sister but the author could not see him due to mist. The next day the rain was warm and humid. Due to the monsoon, one can see leeches, leopard, and birds.

After a few days, rain stops and the Sun shines. Animals, birds, and people are out once again. It rained non-stop for more than a week which made everything damp. One can see the monsoon growth everywhere. The author says that this year monsoon continued for longer than usual. In January, Ruskin Bond wrote a poem on winter rain. He feels lonely now. In March, the winter ends and one can see a rainbow.

NEW WORDS LEARNT

- Melancholy – very sad

- Blankets – covers

- Fern – a flowerless plant with feathery green leaves

- Heralded – announced or brought the news of

- Imprecations – curses

- Blood letting – losing blood

- Scarlet minivet – bright red bird like a cuckoo

NEW WORDS LEARNT

- Drongo – a song-bird with a stout bill
- Drumming – falling noisily
- Disconsolately – unhappily
- Ravine – valley
- Crevices – narrow openings or cracks in rock or wall
- Caress – touching or holding lovingly
- Menace – threaten

COMPREHENSION CHECK – 1

1.   Why is the author not able to see Bijju?

ANS: The author was unable to see Bijju because of monsoon mist.

2.   What are the two ways in which the hills appear to change when the mist comes up?

ANS: The mist climbs up the hill and conceals it. It also blankets the mist in silence.

COMPREHENSION CHECK – 2

1.   When does the monsoon season begin and when does it end? How do you prepare to face the monsoon?

ANS: The monsoon season begins in the month of June and ends by the time August comes to an end. One prepares for the season by arranging umbrellas and raincoats.

2.   Which hill-station does the author describe in this diary entry?

ANS: The author was sharing details about Musoorie.

3.   For how many days does it rain without stopping? What does the author do on these days?

ANS: It rained for almost eight to nine days continuously. The author could not do anything much or go anywhere because of the rains. He would only pace up and down the room and gaze out of the windows.

4.   Where do the snakes and rodents take shelter? Why?

ANS: The snakes and rodents that had flooded out of their holes because of rain water take shelter in the roofs, attics and godowns.

5.   What did the author receive in the mail?

ANS: The author received a cheque of small amount in his mail.

WORKING WITH THE TEXT

1. Look carefully at the diary entries for 24-25th June, 2nd August and 23rd March. Now write down the changes that happen as the rains progress from June to March.

ANS: 24th June was the first day of the monsoon. More than the monsoon, there are descriptions of the mist. 25th June one witnesses the first real shower. All aspects of nature welcome the rainy season. It is no less than a 'paradise'. 2nd August indicates that the rains have been on for a considerable time. And though the writer admires the rains, there is also certain monotony in the pattern of the rains that makes this period. 23rd March nearly marks the end of winter. The rains are replaced by rainbows.

WORKING WITH THE TEXT

2.   Why did the grandmother ask the children not to kill the chuchundar?

ANS: The grandmother asks the children not to kill the children because she   believed that the 'chuchundars' brought luck and money.

3.   What signs do we find in nature which show that the monsoons are about to end?

ANS: The blackest clouds that were cast over the sky hailed marbles for half an hour to clear the sky. Soon after this, the rainbow appeared in the sky. These were clear indications that monsoons had come to an end.

WORKING WITH THE TEXT

4.   Complete the following sentences.

(i) Bijju is not seen but his voice is heard because ………………

(ii) The writer describes the hill station and valley as ………………

(iii) The leopard was successful in …………. but had to flee when ……………

(iv) The minivets are easily noticed because ………………

(v) It looks like a fashion display on the slopes when …………..

(vi) During the monsoon season, snakes and rodents are found in roofs and atticks because ………………

WORKING WITH THE TEXT

4.   Complete the following sentences.

ANS: (i) of the mist that concealed everything.

(ii) a paradise that might have been.

(iii) attacking Bijju's cow, the grandmother screamed at it.

(iv) of their attractive and bright colours.

(v) its ferns start turning yellow and colourful orchids and butterflies appear on the scene.

(vi) the rain water floods their holes.

WORKING WITH THE TEXT

5.   'Although tin roofs are given to springing unaccountable leaks, there is a feeling of being untouched by and yet in touch with, the rain.'

(i)   Why has the writer used the word, 'springing'?

ANS: The author uses the word 'springing' to suggest that the roof tins begin to leak without giving any warning.

(ii)   How is the writer untouched by the rain?

ANS: The writer is literally untouched by the rain because he is inside the room and that protects him from the same.

(iii)   How is the writer in touch with the rain at the same time?

ANS: The writer hears the loud sounds produced by the rain falling on the tin roof. Also, the leaks in the tin roof make the rain water enter the room like a distant shower.

WORKING WITH THE TEXT

6.   Mention a few things that can happen when there is endless rain for days together.

ANS: Endless rains create a number of problems. The work gets obstructed as it makes difficult for people to step outside their homes. If there is no proper drainage system, it leads to problems of water logging and traffic jams on roads. During rains, there is an increase in the insect population, which could also cause diseases. Sometimes, due to excessive rains, the crop gets destroyed.

7.   What is the significance of cobra lily in relation to the monsoon season, its baginning and end?

ANS: The popping up of cobra lily is an indication that the monsoons have arrived. As the seeds of cobra lily turn red, it signifies the end of the season.

RELATED WORDS

Related words are words whose meanings are close enough to the synonymy group or have a common connection to a bigger concept. These related words do not qualify as synonyms because they have meanings that differ from the basic meaning shared by the synonymy group in some significant way. There is a close relationship between two or more words which are then listed as related words.

You will see that in most cases there are more related words than synonyms. That is because there is much more flexibility in choosing words for these lists. They do not have to match the shared meaning, they only need to relate to some aspect of it.
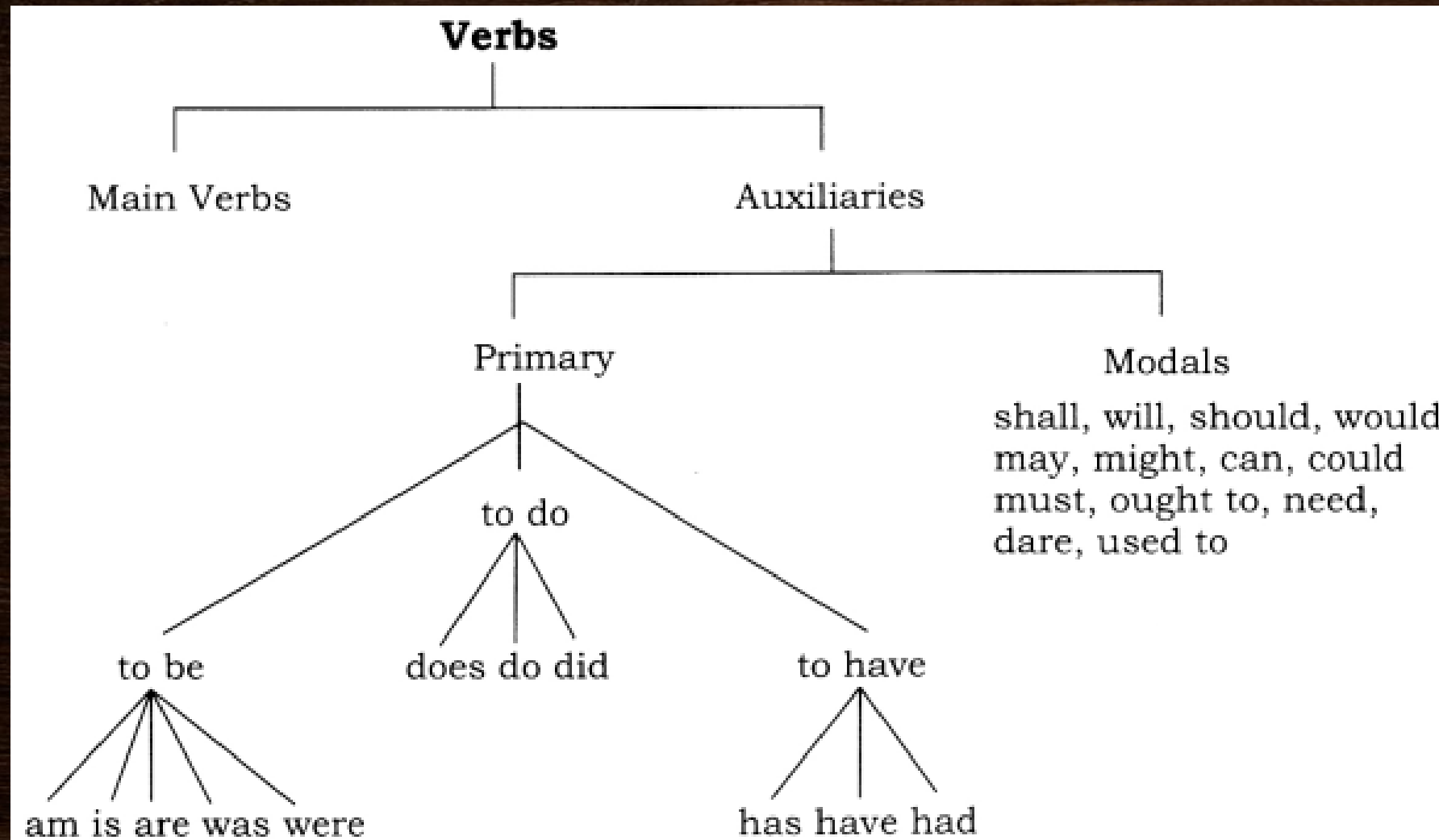
VERBS

The verb is a word that expresses some action, feeling or existence. It tells us something about the subject.

Verbs are divided in two parts:

A. Main Verbs (also called lexical verbs)

B. Helping Verbs (Auxiliaries—Primary and Modals)

All verbs in English except the __24__ helping verbs are main verbs. Look at the chart below:

Verbs

Main Verbs

Auxiliaries

Primary

Modals

shall, will, should, would
may, might, can, could
must, ought to, need,
dare, used to

to do

to be

does do did

to have

am is are was were

has have had

MAIN VERBS

Main Verbs are also of two kinds :
(a) Finite verbs
(b) Non-finite verbs

Finite verbs change their forms according to the person and number of the subject and the tense also, e.g.

He reads.   I read.   They read.

She goes.   I go.   They go.

Non-finite verbs do not change their forms according to the number, person or tense of the subject. The infinitives, gerunds and participles are called non-finites.

MAIN VERBS

- **Infinitives** are forms like *to work, to sing and to break*. The 'to' is not exactly a part of the infinitive. In fact, the infinitive is sometimes used without 'to'. For example, you can say "I walk to school" or "I like to walk."

- A **gerund** is the *–ing* form of a verb that functions the same as a **noun**. For example,

    Running is fun.

    In this sentence, "running" is the gerund. It acts just like a noun.

- **Participles** are words derived from verbs that can function as adjectives or as parts of verb phrases. Put simply, a participle will look like a verb but may have a different role in the sentence. For example:

    The running water.

    That participle is describing the water and performing the function of an adjective.

MAIN VERBS

THE PRESENT PARTICIPLE

Adding -ing to a verb

example:
eat is eating

THE PAST PARTICIPLE

Adding -ed to regular verbs **example:** cook is cooked

irregular verbs may have endings like -en, -t, -d, and -n **example**: swollen

can also function as adjective that modify nouns **example:** cut flowers

PERFECT PARTICIPLES

Combining the word having with the past participle of a word

example:
having slept

MAIN VERBS

A Verb in the **past tense** refers to things that happened in the past. To make the past tense of regular verbs, the ending *-ed* is added to the infinitive ('I *asked* her a question').

The **present participle** refers to things that are still happening. To make the present participle, the ending *-ing* is added to the infinitive ('I am *asking* her a question').

Often there's no need to make any other spelling changes when you add *-ed* and *-ing* to the infinitive but there are some cases when it's necessary to do so.

PHRASES

A phrase is a group of words that express a concept and is used as a unit within a sentence. It stands together as a single grammatical unit, typically as part of a clause or a sentence. A phrase does not contain a subject and verb and, consequently, cannot convey a complete thought. A phrase contrasts with a clause. A clause does contain a subject and verb, and it can convey a complete idea.

HOME ASSIGNMENT

- Write a paragraph describing an incident that occurred during the rains which you can never forget.

- Write a poem of your own about the season of spring when trees are in full bloom.