



Reading A : True Height

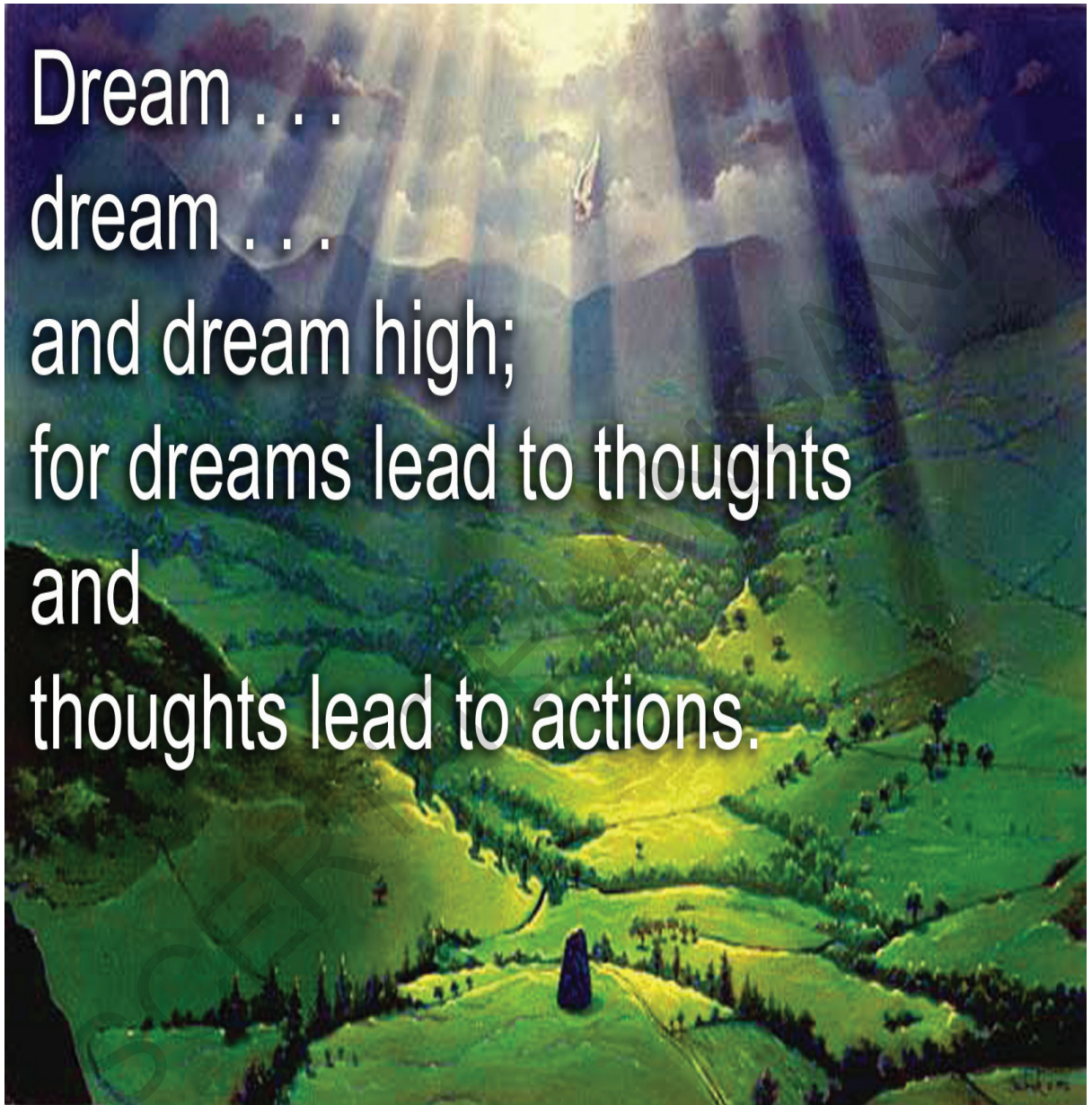
Reading B : What Is a Player? (Poem)

**Reading C : V.V.S. Laxman,
Very Very Special**



Games and Sports

Read the following quotation and answer the questions that follow.



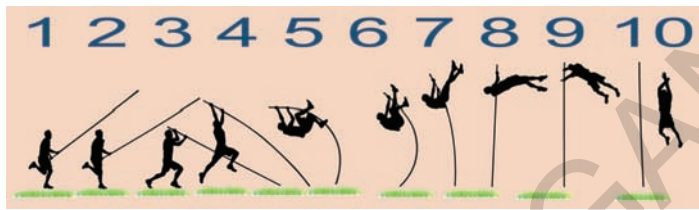
Dream . . .
dream . . .
and dream high;
for dreams lead to thoughts
and
thoughts lead to actions.

1. What, according to you, does this quotation express?
2. Is it essential to dream high? How can one make one's dream come true?

Oral activity: Speech - “The dream of my life and how I am going to achieve it.”

True Height

This story talks about the feelings of an athlete as he pursues his dream. Read about a nerve-wracking day in Michael Stone's life as he prepares to take the ultimate test of his sports career. It is an awe-inspiring achievement that will leave you breathless.



His palms were sweating. He needed a towel to dry his grip. A glass of ice water quenched his thirst but hardly cooled his intensity. The astroturf he sat on was as hot as the competition he faced today at the National Junior Olympics. The pole was set at 17 feet. That was three inches higher than his personal best. Michael Stone confronted the most challenging day of his pole-vaulting career. The stands were still filled with about twenty thousand people, even though the final race had ended an hour earlier.

The pole vault is truly the glamorous event of any track and field competition. The sportsman combines the grace of a gymnast with the strength of a bodybuilder. Pole-vaulting also has the element of flying, and the thought of flying as high as a two-storeyed building is a mere fantasy to anyone watching such an event. Today it is not only Michael Stone's reality and dream – it is his quest.

As long as Michael could remember, he had always dreamed of flying. Michael's mother read him numerous stories about flying when he was growing up. Her stories were always the ones that described the land from a bird's-eye view. Her excitement and passion for details made Michael's dreams full of colour and beauty. Michael had this one recurring dream. He would be running down a country road. He could feel the rocks and chunks of dirt at his feet. As he raced down the golden-lined wheat fields, he would always outrun the locomotives passing by. He would begin soaring like an eagle.

Where he flew would always coincide with his mother's stories. His dad, on the other hand, was not a dreamer. Bert Stone was a hard-core realist. He believed in hard work and sweat. His motto: If you want something, work for it!

From the age of fourteen, Michael did just that. He began a very careful and regimented weightlifting programme. He worked out every other day with weights, with some kind of running work on alternate days. The programme was carefully monitored by Michael's coach, trainer and father. Michael's dedication, determination and discipline was a coach's dream.

Besides being an honest student, Michael Stone continued to help his parents with their farm chores. Michael's persistence in striving for perfection was not only his obsession but his passion.

Mildred Stone, Michael's mother, wished that he could relax a bit more and be that 'free dreaming' little boy. On one occasion she attempted to talk to him and his father about this, but his dad quickly interrupted, smiled and said, "You want something, work for it!"

All of Michael's vaults today seemed to be the reward for his hard work. If Michael Stone was surprised, thrilled or arrogant about clearing the bar at 17 feet, you couldn't tell. As soon as he landed on the inflated landing mat, and with the crowd on its feet, Michael immediately began preparing for his next attempt at flight. He seemed oblivious of the fact that he had just surpassed his personal best by three inches and that he was one of the final two competitors in the pole-vaulting event at the National Junior Olympics.

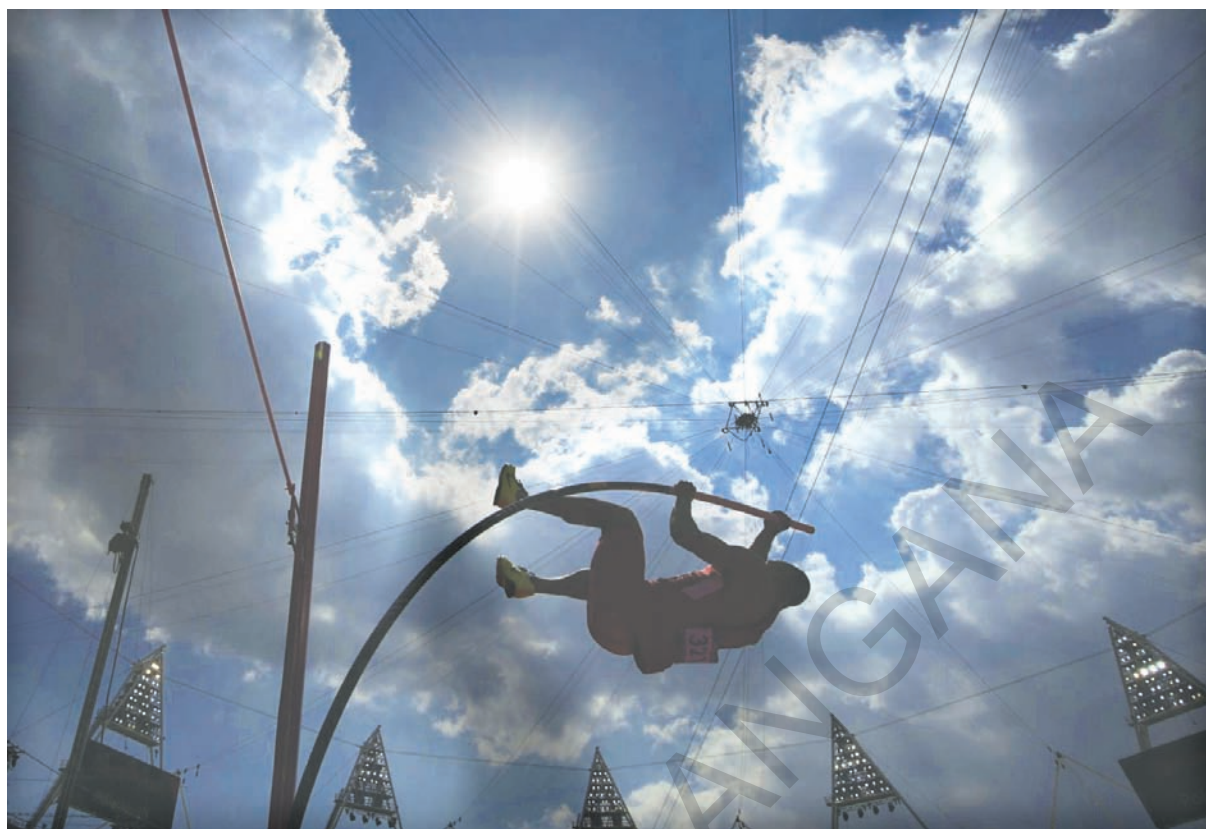
Michael cleared the bar at 17 feet and 2 inches and 17 feet 4 inches; again he showed no emotion. Constant preparation and determination were his vision. As he lay on his back and heard the crowd groan, he knew the other vaulter had missed his final jump. He knew it was time for his final jump. Since the other vaulter had fewer misses, Michael needed to clear this vault to win. A miss would get him second place. Nothing to be ashamed of, but Michael would not allow himself the thought of not winning first place.

He rolled over and did his ritual of three finger-tipped push-ups. He found his pole, stood and stepped on the runway that led to the most challenging event of his seventeen-year-old life.

The runway felt different this time. It startled him for a brief moment. Then it all hit him like a wet bale of hay. The bar was set at nine inches higher than his personal best. "That's only one inch off the National record," he thought. The intensity of the moment filled his mind with anxiety. He began shaking off the tension from his body. It wasn't working. He became more tense. "Why is this happening to me now?" he thought. He began to get nervous. Fear would be a more accurate description. What was he going to do? He had never experienced these feelings. Then out of nowhere, and from the deepest depths of his souls, he envisioned his mother. Why now? What was his mother doing in his thoughts at a time like this? It was simple. His mother always used to tell him whenever he felt tense, anxious or even scared, to take deep breaths.

So he did. Along with shaking the tension from legs, he gently laid his pole at his feet. He began to stretch out his arm and upper body. The light breeze that was once there was now gone. He could feel a trickle of cold sweat running down his back. He carefully picked up his pole. He felt his heart pounding. He was sure the crowd did, too. The silence was deafening. When he heard the singing of some distant robins in flight, he knew it was his time to fly.

As he began sprinting down the runway, something felt wonderfully different, yet familiar. The surface below him felt like the country road he used to dream about. The rocks and chunks of dirt, the visions of the golden wheat fields seemed to fill his thoughts.



When he took a deep breath, it happened. He began to fly. His take-off was effortless. Michael Stone was flying, just as in his childhood dreams. Only this time he knew he wasn't dreaming. This was real. Everything seemed to be moving in slow motion. The air around him was the purest and freshest he had ever sensed. Michael was soaring with the majesty of an eagle.

It was either the eruption of the people in the stands or the thump of his landing that brought Michael back to earth. On his back with that wonderful hot sun on his face, he could only envision the smile on his mother's face. He knew his dad was probably smiling too, even laughing. Bert would always do that when he got excited, smile and then sort of giggle. What he didn't know was that his dad was hugging his wife and crying. He was crying harder than Mildred had ever seen before. She also knew he was crying the greatest tears of all: tears of pride.

Michael was immediately swarmed with people hugging and congratulating him on the greatest accomplishment of his life. He later went on that day to clear 17 feet 6½ inches – a National and International Junior Olympics record.

With all the media attention and heartfelt congratulations, Michael's life would never be the same. It wasn't just because he won the National Junior Olympics and set a new world record. And it wasn't because he had just increased his personal best by 9½ inches. It was simply because. . . Michael Stone was blind.

- David Naster



Glossary

astroturf (<i>n</i>)	: a type of artificial grass surface used especially for sports grounds
pole vault (<i>n</i>)	: a sport in which you use a long pole to swing over a high barrier
a bird's-eye view (<i>n.phr</i>)	: view of all the aspects of something
hard-core (<i>adj</i>)	: strong
motto (<i>n</i>)	: a saying that expresses aims and beliefs of a person
regimented (<i>adj</i>)	: strict and organized
obsession (<i>n</i>)	: a state in which a person's mind is completely filled with a thought of one particular thing / person
oblivious (<i>adj</i>)	: not aware of something / unaware
ritual (<i>n</i>)	: any customary observance or practice
finger-tipped (<i>adj</i>)	: the tips of fingers touching the ground
envision (<i>v</i>)	: have a vision of somebody or something
runway (<i>n</i>)	: (here) running track
sprinting down (<i>v</i>)	: running very fast
swarmed with (<i>v</i>)	: surrounded by

Answer the following questions.

1. What was Michael Stone's dream?
2. What impact did the mother's stories have on Michael?
3. How did Michael prepare himself to become an Olympic champion?
4. Michael's mother and father had different ideas about training. How did these two approaches help Michael fulfil his dream?
5. What was so special about Michael's achievement?



Vocabulary

Synonyms

Use a thesaurus / dictionary to find out synonyms of these words from the story you have read and use them in your own sentences.

Word	Synonyms
quench	
glamour	
passion	
persistence	
arrogant	
pounding	

Collocations

A collocation is an arrangement of words or other elements, especially those that commonly co-occur.

e.g. *heart-felt congratulation*.

There are certain word combinations.

- Adjective+ Noun e.g. bright/harsh/intense/strong *light*
- Verb+ Noun e.g. cast/ emit/give/provide/shed *light*
- Noun+ Verb e.g. *light* gleams/glows/shines
- Noun + Noun e.g. a *light* source
- Preposition+ Noun e.g. by the *light* of the moon
- Noun+ Preposition e.g. the *light* from the window
- Quantifier+ Noun e.g. (of) a beam / ray of *light*

Use a dictionary and write which word in column 1 can collocate with those in the next five columns. Put a tick (✓) mark in the relevant column. Use the apt collocations in your own sentences.

word	sympathy	opinion	welcome	congratulations	dream
heart-felt					
deep					
childhood					
express					
strong					
warm					



Grammar

Look at the following sentences taken from the reading passage.

1. As he raced down the golden-lined wheat fields, he would always outrun the locomotives passing by.
2. When he heard the singing of some distant robins in flight, he knew it was his time to fly.
3. Since the other vaulter had fewer misses, Michael needed to clear this vault to win.

The above three sentences have two parts. In one part of the sentence is separated by 'Comma' which lacks complete sense. It has to depend on the other part of the sentence for complete sense.

The sentence part that is incomplete is dependent clause and the sentence part that has complete sense is independent clause.

In the above sentences the clauses with **as** and **when** denote time whereas **since** denotes reason. **As** and **when** refer to time and the other parts state what happened at that time. In the third sentence, the clause beginning with **since** states the reason and the other states the consequence.

The words **as**, **when**, **since** are conjunctions, which connect two sentences (clauses). The clauses containing these words are called **Adverbial clauses**. These adverbial clauses cannot stand independently, so they are called **Dependent clauses** or

Subordinate clauses. The clause that stands on its own is an **Independent clause** or **Main clause**.

The linkers *as*, *when* and *since* (Adverbs) are placed before the clauses to make them Subordinate clause.

Now, read the biographical account once again and pick out the Adverbial clauses and Main clauses and write them in the table or in your notebook.

Sentence from the text	Adverbial / Dependent Clause	Main / Independent Clause

Complete the following sentences with appropriate Adverbial clauses. Use the adverbs wherever they are given in brackets.

1. The teacher entered the class, _____.
2. The dog ran into a speeding car, _____.
3. I was in deep sleep, _____.
4. Someone knocked at the door, _____.
5. The crowd cheered Michael Stone, _____. (*as soon as*)
6. It is high time the cricket board thought of different alternatives, _____. (*as*)

Editing

Read the following passage. Every numbered sentence has an error. Identify and edit it.

(1)The fisherman has a daughter. She was seventeen years old. That was the age of marriage for girls in those days. (2)So the fisherman was looking for a good bride for his daughter. (3)He found several young men, but he does not have enough money to get his daughter married to one of them. (4)Some of his friend advised him to see the Raja who ruled the town and ask him for help. (5)He was ready to took their advice, but he did not wish to go to the Raja without any gifts.



Writing

You have read the story of Michael Stone. Think of some world-famous sporting personalities from India. Collect information about any one of them and write a biographical sketch.

You may include the following.

1. Date and place of birth
2. Information about the family
3. Hardships/difficulties faced.
4. Achievements of the person: awards, prizes, honours etc.
5. Important events in the life of the person: education, marriage, profession etc.
6. Inspiration to others / message to the society
7. Contribution to his/her field and society



Study Skills

You have finished reading the text “True Height”. Write a few lines about your self.

Use the following ideas to complete your summary effectively.

- What is your goal at present?
- How could you go about achieving it?
- Which famous personality would be your inspiration?
- How will achieving this goal benefit you / others?

Note:

Use appropriate linkers.

Focus on the words/ phrases that express the essence of the text.

Present the ideas briefly in your own words.



Listening

Listen to the commentary on a cricket match read by your teacher and answer the questions.

I. Tick (✓) only the correct ones from the statements given below.

1. Sachin and Gambhir opened the Indian innings. ()
2. Umar Gul opened the Pakistan's attack. ()
3. Laxman is one among the Indian squad. ()
4. Gul bowled out Gambhir. ()
5. India is 15 without loss after the fourth ball of the first over. ()

II. Answer the following questions.

1. Which two world teams of cricket do you like? Why?
2. Who are the openers?
3. Who are the commentators?

III. Complete the Score Board given below:

India Vs Pakistan

Name of the batsman	Runs scored	No. of balls faced	Fours	Sixes
1. Sehwag				
2. Gambhir				
Extras		No. of balls bowled		
Total		No. of wickets lost		



Oral Activity

Imagine, you were listening to the commentary, your father came there and reminded you of the ensuing examinations. He said, "Listening to cricket commentary is a waste of time."

Now develop a conversation between you and your father and role play it.