

Unit

# 4

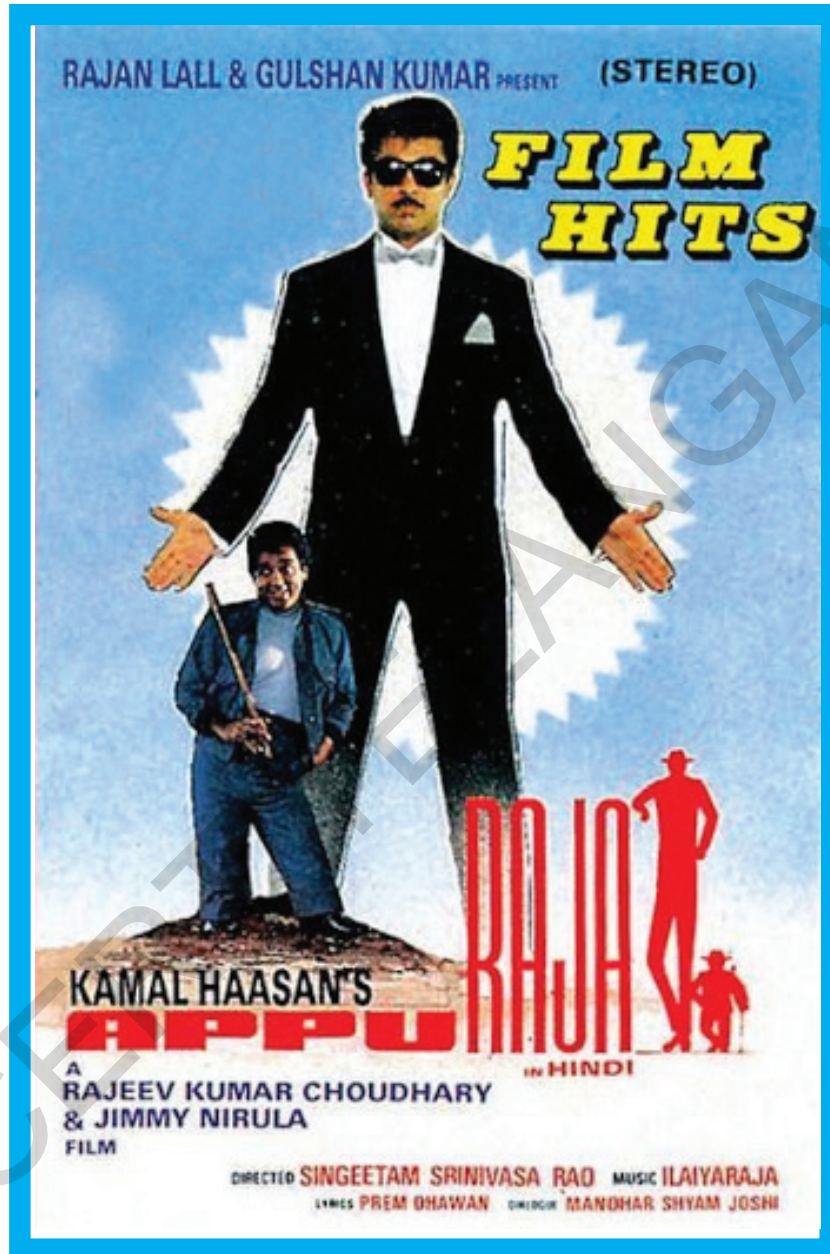


- A - Rendezvous with Ray
- B - Maya Bazaar
- C - A Tribute

## Films and Theatre

## 4. Films and Theatre

Look at the picture and answer the questions that follow.

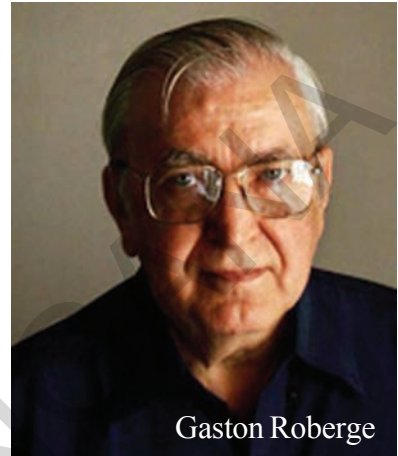


1. Is this picture (a) a poster, (b) an advertisement, or (c) a painting? Justify your option.
2. Who is the director of the film?
3. Who are the people involved in the film making?

**Oral Discourse :** Talk about your favourite actor/film maker/film. Give reasons, why you like him/her/it.

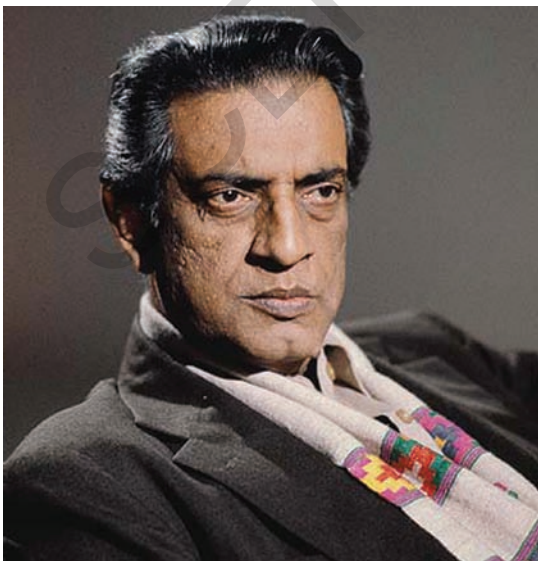
## Rendezvous with Ray

It was a unique friendship that developed between a French-Canadian priest and one of the world’s greatest film directors, and had a singular impact on Bengali films both academically and practically. It was enroute to India in 1961, at a stopover in New York, that 26-year-old Fr. Gaston Roberge was acquainted with the works of Satyajit Ray through the Apu Trilogy. He found the world of Apu so fascinating that he saw all three films in one sitting; and there began his longstanding love affair with the people of India and Bengali cinema and culture, which led to path-breaking work in those fields. In his latest book, *Satyajit Ray, Essays: 1970-2005*, a compilation of his essays as the name suggests, being published by Manohar Publishers, New Delhi, Roberge provides a scholarly, original analysis of Ray’s works, giving an insight into the greatness of Ray both as a person and as an artist.

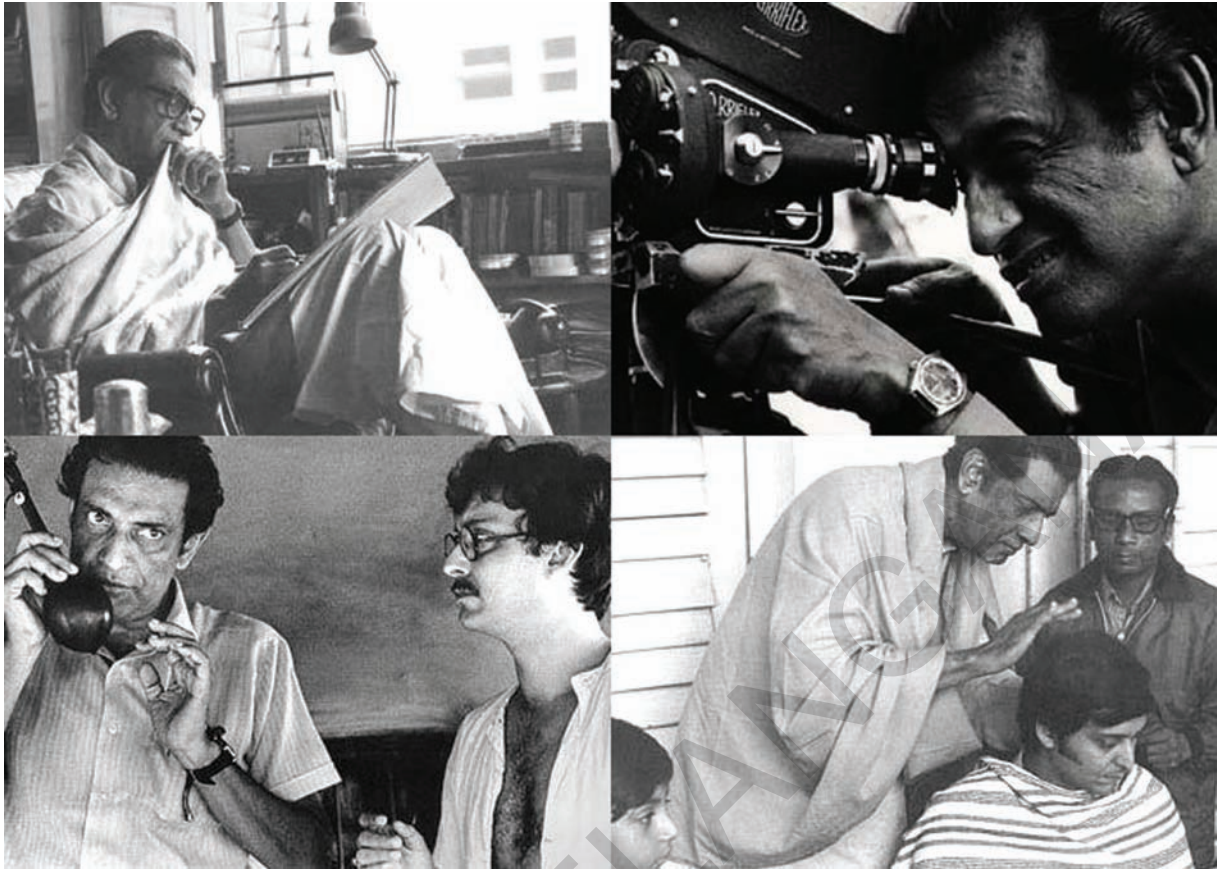


Gaston Roberge

“The Apu Trilogy was, in fact, my first portal to West Bengal and its people,” he told *Frontline*. In his youth, all he knew of Bengal was through Mircea Eliade’s *La Nuit Bengalie*, some of Tagore’s poems, and a *Reader’s Digest* article on Mother Teresa. If the harsh image of poverty brought out by the article on the “Saint of the Slums” haunted him, Apu’s world came as a reassurance. “No. Apu, Sarbajaya, even Harihar did not need my help-but how not to love them? I thought it was fortunate that I would soon be among them,” he wrote.



Roberge does not endorse the accusation of Ray’s detractors that the master director made his reputation selling India’s poverty to the West. “What struck me most was not the material poverty depicted in the films, but the enormous spiritual poverty of some rich people is much more deplorable than material poverty,” he said. Roberge does not speak with the arrogance of the West. “I was here on a quest to know the world and in the process know



myself. I did not come here to convert. In fact, I am the one who got converted,” he said.

But it took him nine years after reaching Calcutta (now Kolkata) and joining St. Xavier’s College, to muster up the confidence to meet Ray in person. “Although I wanted to meet him right away, I didn’t want to just go and see him like he was a living museum piece. I wanted to prepare myself, get to know his works more, so that when we met, there could be a worthwhile dialogue,” he said. When they finally met, it was the beginning of a close friendship that lasted 22 years- until Ray’s death in 1992.

“It was a very quiet friendship that developed over the years. Manikda [as Ray was affectionately called by his friends] was a shy person and always very discreet about displaying his emotions,” said Roberge. Though to outsiders, Ray’s massive stature- physical and intellectual- might have made him come across as cold, aloof and even intimidating, he was in reality a very simple and unassuming man with a subtle sense of humour. It was an unspoken arrangement between the two of them to meet on Sundays at 9 a.m. at Ray’s residence on Bishop Lefroy Road, Kolkata. Ray would invite Roberge over for private screenings of his latest films and welcomed comments on them. But this happened only after the friendship had cemented, for in the early days of their dialogue Ray’s shyness prevented him from talking about his own films.

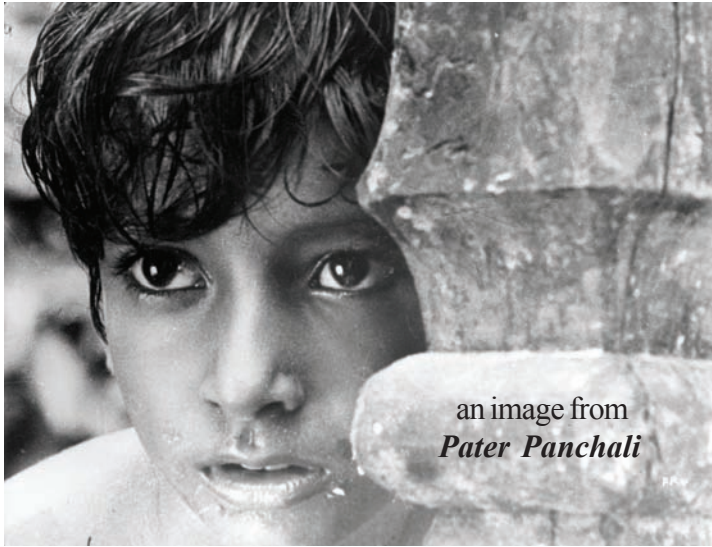
“He was even shy of receiving compliments,” said Roberge. To Roberge, the greatest mark of Ray’s appreciation for him was that he often addressed the French-speaking priest in Bengali, “in spite of my lack of elegance in that language, and the fact that Ray knew both English and Bengali so well.”

“Ray’s screenplay manuscripts were an art by themselves,” Roberge says, “handwritten in Bengali, with notes in English for his set-designer, with sketches here and there, and occasional staff notation of fragments of music”. One Sunday morning, Roberge found Ray in a disturbed mood. A few well-known personalities of the city had visited him earlier to go through some of his manuscripts. After they left Ray found the *Charulatha* screenplay missing. Ray was almost sure who the culprit was. “I asked him whether he was planning to take any action, and he said no, and explained to me that he did not want to hurt the reputation of the person. I was absolutely stunned by his humane concern,” said Roberge.

Like Rabindranath Tagore, Ray strode his time like a colossus. Roberge writes, “It is as if all Bengal was in Manikda: the rich and the poor, the powerful and the humble, the peasants and the city persons, children, teenagers, adults and old people, men and women.”

Philosophically too, Roberge feels, Ray took off where Tagore signed out. If one compares the last major prose piece by Tagore, “Shabhyatar Sankat” (Crisis of Civilisation), which he wrote at the beginning of the Second World War, which contains his immortal





an image from  
*Pater Panchali*

dictum that in spite of what was happening it would be a sin to lose faith in Man, and the last three films of Ray- *Ganashatru*, *Shakha Prashakha*, and *Agantuk*- the analogy becomes clear.

“In these three films Ray was at his most personal and when some critics saw the films as didactic and verbose, he felt deeply hurt. For, in these last films, Satyajit was directly talking to us, conveying his

personal message on society and civilization. If the impulse that motivated his earlier films was aesthetics, in the last three it was self-expression. And there we were denying him his right to speak. As the saying goes, no one is a prophet in one’s own country,” said Roberge. An agnostic throughout his life, it is possible, Roberge feels, that in the face of death Ray was searching for an answer. This was suggested by some of the music that he used in *Shakha Prashakha*.

The last time the two friends met, Ray was in hospital, on his deathbed. It was a Sunday and Roberge, true to habit, arrived on the dot at 9 a.m. “He had grown so weak that he looked frail as a child. I did not stay long, and as I was leaving, Manikda said, ‘*Bhalo laglo*’ [it was nice]. Those were his last words to me,” said Roberge.

One important fallout of this friendship was the establishment of Chitrabani, a communication and film institute, the first of its kind in West Bengal, which Roberge founded in 1970 and to which Ray, as a token of friendship, lent his name as co-founder. Ray was in the first governing body and after a few terms readily agreed to be the institute’s adviser. Roberge arranged most of the initial funding from Canadian agencies. “I had no reservations applying for them, for I feel richer countries in the West are indebted to countries like India,” he said.

For 26 years Roberge was the director of Chitrabani and under him the institute not only produced important documentary features, but also became breeding ground for local talent for film-making...

*Frontline, July29-August11, 2006*

## Glossary

en route ( <i>adv</i> )	:	on the way
stopover ( <i>n</i> )	:	a halt in a long journey
path-breaking ( <i>adj</i> )	:	totally new
portal ( <i>n</i> )	:	an entrance
trilogy ( <i>n</i> )	:	a set of three films with the same artists or characters
haunted ( <i>v</i> )	:	obsessed
accusation ( <i>n</i> )	:	the act of charging somebody
detractors ( <i>n</i> )	:	people who criticise
arrogance ( <i>n</i> )	:	showing pride
muster up confidence ( <i>idiom</i> )	:	gain confidence
dictum ( <i>n</i> )	:	a statement that is believed to be true and followed
analogy ( <i>n</i> )	:	a feature that is similar
aesthetics ( <i>n</i> )	:	the art of judging beauty
fallout ( <i>n</i> )	:	result
agnostic ( <i>n</i> )	:	a person who does not know whether God exists

## Comprehension

### I. Answer the following questions.

1. What did Ray's detractors accuse him of? Did Roberge agree to their accusation? If not, why?
2. 'I didn't come here to convert. In fact, I am the one who got converted.' Who said these words? What different shades of meanings do you find in the words of the speaker?

3. Roberge took nine years to meet Ray in person after joining St. Xavier's college. Why did he take so long? What would you do if you were in his place?
4. How was Ray perceived by the outsiders? Was this perception true of Ray's real character?
5. What is meant by the line, 'Ray took off where Tagore signed out.' What was Ray searching for?
6. How did Roberge try to take 'Chitrabani' forward? How did 'Chitrabani' help film-making in Bengali?
7. The theme of ' Rendezvous with Ray' is... (Tick any two options.)
  - a) To explain the efforts of Chitrabani.
  - b) To picturize the illustrious life of Ray.
  - c) To explain the experiences of Roberge with Ray

## Vocabulary

### I. Read the following passage and notice the underlined words.

It was a Sunday evening. It was already dark. We wanted to watch the film 'Gajani'. We had a square meal and came out. There were no lights. There was a power cut. It was pitch dark. It was bitterly cold. We looked here and there.....

The word pairs 'square meal', 'pitch dark' and 'bitterly cold' are found together. That means they co-occur. Such co-occurring words or word combinations are called collocations (co + locate = collocare). These expressions are natural.

### Let us look at another example.

We say	We don't say
Ride a motor cycle	Drive a motor cycle

### Read the following report and fill in the blanks with the word from the box below that collocates with the underlined words or phrases.

standing	fitting	outstanding	thunderous
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The venue of the celebration was 'Ravindra Bharathi', Hyderabad. It was the 100 days' celebration of the film 'Animals Forever'. Avinash, the hero, was full of life with his \_\_\_\_\_ performance in the film. He was admired by everyone. In fact, he was considered to be the main reason for the success of the film. The hall resonated with \_\_\_\_\_ clapping when he came onto the dais. The auditorium with packed audience honoured him with a \_\_\_\_\_ ovation. The producer felicitated every one in the unit in a \_\_\_\_\_ manner. The event was momentous and unforgettable.

## II. One-word substitutes

'Rendezvous' is a one-word substitute for 'a meeting place'.

**You can work in groups and pick out similar one-word substitutes from the text equivalent to the meanings given below:**

1. A short stay between two places in one's journey
2. A person who brings out new books
3. A group of three films that has the same characters or subject
4. An impressive entrance to a building
5. A person who tries to make something less good by criticising it
6. A person who is extremely important or large in size
7. A person who is responsible for a problem or a crime
8. A hand written document
9. A statement that expresses something people believe is true and is to be followed
10. Using more words than needed
11. Something designed to teach people some moral
12. A person who is not sure about the existence of God
13. A branch of philosophy that studies the principles of beauty in art
14. A result of a situation or of an action
15. A film that gives facts about something

**III. In the lesson 'Rendezvous with Ray' we come across certain words / expressions that are not from English. e.g.: en route. This means 'on the way'. These expressions are taken from languages like Latin, Greek, and Portuguese and so on. There are certain instances where these expressions are used in English perhaps because of their precision in meaning. Some of them along with their meanings are given below...**

1. *en masse* = all together, in large numbers.
2. *viva voce* = a spoken exam
3. *in toto* = totally
4. *alma mater* = mother of the soul (school or university)
5. *ex officio* = included because of the rank or job/ by virtue of office
6. *in absentia* = in the absence of
7. *detour* = a longer route we take to avoid a danger
8. *verbatim* = word for word, exactly as spoken or written
9. *status quo* = situation as it is now
10. *ad hoc* = not planned in advance
11. *bona fide* = genuine, real or legal
12. *lingua franca* = link language
13. *magnum opus* = the greatest work
14. *sine die* = indefinitely

**Read the following paragraph and fill in the blanks with appropriate expressions given in the list above.**

### **Children for Films**

On the 14th november, on the occasion of children's day, the children across the state requested the officials to conduct children's film festivals more often. They submitted a memorandum to the Secretary to the Government in Hyderabad in this regard.

The Government conceded to the request and came out with a proposal to set up an \_\_\_\_\_ committee to serve the purpose before a permanent body is in place. It was proposed by the Government that the committee would be led by a department official as an \_\_\_\_\_ president. The committee should conduct a written exam along with a \_\_\_\_\_ to identify student representatives at mandal, district and state level to strengthen the culture of film festivals among the children. The \_\_\_\_\_ of the students should be verified for such identification. The proposal made the screening of at least a \_\_\_\_\_ of a director mandatory every year. The children were thrilled to bits on this.

## Grammar

**I. Arrange the following sentences in proper order and write a paragraph. You may insert appropriate linkers wherever necessary.**

### Stream of Comedy

In every Indian language, a comedian is an essential character of films. In Telugu, Relangi and Ramanareddy provided comedy which made the audience laugh heartily. Their appearance appealed to the film lovers.

Relangi was fat and short.

Their accent amused the film lovers.

Ramana Reddy was lean and tall.

Padmanabham and Allu Ramalingaiah followed their footsteps.

His name found place in the Guinness Book of World Records.

Rao Gopal Rao's stint as villain-cum-comedian has been admired by all.

Mr. 101 Districts, Nutan Prasad left an indelible mark in the hearts of the audience.

Ali and Sunil are comedians.

He has a world record.

Brahmanandam has had a long career.

People have been laughing.

Rajababu came later.

Sorrows of people are taking a back seat.

He amused the people for long.

They are also considered heroes.

## II. Prepositions following 'adjectives' and 'verbs':

In 'Rendezvous with Ray' we come across certain verbs and adjectives followed by Prepositions. For example, *acquainted with*, *brought out*, *prevented from*, *explained to*

### Read the following sentences and observe the underlined words.

1. I am amazed at you, Victoria.
2. Victoria, a precocious girl of ten, was dressed in colours.
3. He is trying to adapt himself to the regrettable occasion.
4. He was very fond of Jimmy.
5. I am sure I am sorry for it.
6. You've been waiting for me to begin tea.
7. I see the little trifles that belonged to father lying around.
8. This always appealed to me.

In the above sentences, the underlined adjectives and verbs are usually followed by certain prepositions.

**A. Here is a list of adjectives and verbs. Tick(✓)the prepositions that follow the adjectives and the verbs.Later, use them in sentences of your own. You may use a dictionary.**

Adjective / Verb	Preposition(s) that follow(s)							
	of	with	in	to	at	from	on	for
proud								
married								
good								
different								
keen								
famous								
capable								
responsible								
believe								
shout								
think								
agree								
depend								
recover								
belong								
apply								

**B. Fill in the blanks with suitable prepositions.**

1. All last winter Sharath suffered \_\_\_\_\_ coughs and colds.
2. Anand is unaccustomed \_\_\_\_\_ the heat.
3. Kumar was afraid \_\_\_\_\_ his enemies.
4. Sriram was always arguing \_\_\_\_\_ his brother.
5. Sindhu was dedicated \_\_\_\_\_ her job.
6. Priyanka was shocked \_\_\_\_\_ the hatred they had shown.
7. I said \_\_\_\_\_ you, "I am thinking \_\_\_\_\_ going to America. I have actually dreamt \_\_\_\_\_ it."
8. I want to talk \_\_\_\_\_ the group about their exams.
9. I was terrified \_\_\_\_\_ her.
10. I've always been terribly fond \_\_\_\_\_ you.
11. If you continue to support someone who is in trouble you are loyal \_\_\_\_\_ them.
12. If you don't understand any of these words, you could refer \_\_\_\_\_ a dictionary.
13. It wasn't his car, in fact I don't know who it belongs \_\_\_\_\_.
14. My problems are very similar \_\_\_\_\_ yours.
15. People started to shout \_\_\_\_\_ the driver.
16. She had always been bad \_\_\_\_\_ languages.
17. She listened \_\_\_\_\_ me and then told me \_\_\_\_\_ her problems.
18. The accident sadly resulted \_\_\_\_\_ the death of a man.
19. The buses are often late, so you can't depend \_\_\_\_\_ them.
20. They may feel jealous \_\_\_\_\_ your success.

**III. Read the following paragraph and notice the use of the past perfect and simple past.**

- A. As all the actors had taken their positions, the curtain rose. They started acting as the director had asked them to. The audience enjoyed the play very much. The hero kicked the comedian since the comedian had done mischievous things. The musician fell off his chair after the comedian had fallen on him. The power went off after the musician

had landed on the cables. There was darkness and silence everywhere. After a while two persons in the audience started a conversation.

**B Read the following conversation and fill in the blanks with appropriate verb forms ie., past perfect / simple past.**

**Sarath** : Oh! What \_\_\_\_\_ (happen)? Everything \_\_\_\_\_ (be) disturbed before the play \_\_\_\_\_ (come) to an end.

**Bharath** : Damn it! The play \_\_\_\_\_ (be) very interesting. Someone on the stage \_\_\_\_\_ (do) something when the hero \_\_\_\_\_ (throw) him off.

**Sarath** : I too \_\_\_\_\_ (see) it. It was the comedian. The hero \_\_\_\_\_ (hurl) him since he \_\_\_\_\_ (do) a mischievous thing.

**Bharath** : How disgusting! I \_\_\_\_\_ (pay) one hundred rupees before I \_\_\_\_\_ (enter) this theatre. Everything has become a chaos.

**Sarath** : Where \_\_\_\_\_ (be) the director? Had he \_\_\_\_\_ (try) to set things right before the audience \_\_\_\_\_ (start) leaving, it would have been nice.

**Bharath** : The electrician \_\_\_\_\_ (restore) the power before the audience \_\_\_\_\_ (leave). Thank God! At last the play resumed.

**IV. Editing**

**Given below is a paragraph with ten errors in the areas of 'concord, tense, prepositions, punctuation and articles'. Edit the paragraph.**

The Indian film industry has witnessed sweeping changes in the past hundred years. It started of with mute (*mooki*) films . Even then, people liked this new form of entertainment. There was several intervals in a film show because of a single projector. Later, the technological changes made a talkie films possible. A theatre of those days is like a rice mill. This type of theatre were called 'Touring Talkies'. But these didn't tour. There were bamboo screens to served the purpose of walls of the modern theatre. 'Cut Shows' were a luxury of those days. Have you ever watch them Now, the modern theatres is completely different. Multiplexes with dts, 3D and 4D are a present reality.

