



মণিপুরৰ শিক্ষণ বিভাগ (সংস্কৃত)

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION (S)

Government of Manipur

Lesson- 7

WILLIAM TELL

Summary: The story is about a brave man called William Tell from the lakeside town of Aldorf in Switzerland. He was popular among his people. He could sail fast on Lake Lucerne and shoot an arrow more accurately than anybody else in and around Aldorf.

Duke Gessler was appointed by a foreign power to rule over the district of Aldorf. He was a cruel man who made the people pay heavy taxes and they were afraid of him. But Gessler hated William Tell because he was very popular and was also afraid of him because Tell was the only man who stood against him.

William Tell had a son whom he loved dearly then his own life. He went to live peacefully in the mountains with his son to keep him out of Gessler's way. However, William had to go down to the market square in the town to buy food sometimes. But one day, he was surprised to see people bowing down before a tall pole with a hat on top. A woman told Tell that the Duke had ordered everyone to bow down. William Tell became very angry when heard this and refused to bow. He held his head high and walked across the square with his son. He was arrested at once by a group of soldiers and was taken to Duke's court. Gessler became delighted to have got Tell in his power. He told Tell to be afraid and to beg for mercy. But Tell stood straight and looked at Gessler without any sign of fear. Gessler thought of a wicked plan to punish Tell; he told Tell to cut an apple into two from a distance of two hundred paces but the apple was to be put on his son's head who was tied to a tree. That was how, he bargained for Tell's freedom.

Tell became nervous, because his son was everything for him, he could not take such chance with his son's life. But the son encouraged his father to shoot the arrow. Tell shot and the apple fell into two halves at the boy's feet. Gessler became very angry, then another arrow fell from Tell's coat. Gessler asked why he carried two arrows to which Tell answered that if he had killed his son with first, he would have shot the second one into Gessler's black heart. Gessler charged Tell for treason and punished him to death. Tell was taken across the Lake to Kossandit Castle to throw him to the animals in the cellar. As the boat reached deep water, a storm blew up and the boat was caught by large waves and rocked the boat. The soldiers

became frightened and the captain knew that only William Tell could ride in such a weather. He was untied but the boat hit a large rock and it was broken into two halves. Tell quickly leapt out of the sinking boat and scrambled to safety by holding on the branches of a tree on the shore. The soldiers were drowned in the lake.

On the far shore Gessler watched helplessly as he lost his soldiers forever. William Tell shoot an arrow at perfect aim across the stormy lake straight into Gessler's black heart. Then he went to live peacefully with his son in the mountains. A few years later Switzerland broke free from foreign rule and the people lived in peace forever.

Glossary

- Popular - liked and admired
- Arrogant - proud, of superior manner
- Jagged - uneven edges
- Crossbow - old kind of bow placed across a wooden support used for shooting arrows
- Scrambled - climbed

