

Chapter 1  
Question and  
Answers  
Solve the  
questions  
based on your  
reading and  
write them in  
your notebook. |

**B. Answer these questions with reference to the context.**

1. "Listen! Someone is singing!"

- a. Where did the sound of singing come from? House at the back.
- b. Where were the girls when they heard the singing? in the Kitchen
- c. What did the girls do when they heard the singing? Borrow candles. went to

2. "You will love it here, I'm sure. There is so much to see around!"

- a. Who said these words? Miss Evelyn Brown
- b. Which place is the speaker referring to? Narital
- c. The speaker lists the things to see there. Name two. Clock tower, sparkling lake

3. "Funny how time must have almost stood still while we were in there!"

- a. Whom does 'we' refer to? Indu & Vandana
- b. Which place is 'there'? To the old lady's house / Miss Brown's house
- c. How much time did the speaker think they spent there? 30 min.

**C. Answer these questions.**

1. What did Mrs Sharma ask the two girls to do while she and Mr Sharma were out?  
Did the girls follow her instructions?



IDENTIFYING DETAILS

DRAWING  
CONCLUSIONS

2. Why was Vandana reluctant to help Indu unpack?
3. Why did the girls decide to go over to the house at the back?
4. Describe Miss Brown's house. What made the girls feel like they had stepped into a different age?
5. Who is Jim Corbett? Why were the girls surprised when Miss Brown mentioned him?
6. Who was Rahim Chacha? What did he tell the girls about Miss Brown?

### Think and Answer

- D. Even before the girls learnt the truth about Miss Brown from Rahim Chacha, there were things that raised their suspicions. Read Section 2 again and identify three clues that hint that there is something amiss.
- E. While the two girls are very different from each other, there are some similarities in their behaviour. Read the story again. Complete this table to describe the differences and similarities between Indu's and Vandana's reactions to the events in the story.

SIMILARITIES	DIFFERENCES
<i>Indu was a girl who was very shy and timid.</i>	<i>Vandana was a girl who was very confident and outgoing.</i>

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COMPARING AND  
CONTRASTING

Chapter 2  
Question and  
Answers  
Solve the  
questions  
based on your  
reading and  
write them in  
your notebook.

**B. Answer these questions.**

1. How does the poet describe the mountain air? *wood smoke, mist, sweet smell*
2. What are the things that a person who has lived with mountains will come back for?
3. How does the poet describe the buttercup?
4. Why does the poet say the moon is brighter in the mountains?
5. Why does the poet call a person who has lived with mountains God's favourite?

**C. Answer these questions with reference to the context.**

1. Under the benedictory pines

And deodars, near stars

- a. Why does the poet say that the pines are 'benedictory'? *they are near stars when they are pray*
- b. Why is living in the mountains being nearer to the stars? *they are for*

2. Once you have lived with these,

Blessed, God's favourite then,

- a. Who does 'you' refer to? *person who lived near mountains*
- b. What does 'these' refer to? *Mountains*



UNDERSTAND THE POEM

A. Tick the correct options.

- The poet thinks that the moon is brighter in the mountains.
  - brighter
  - bigger
  - benedictory
- The poet says that one is fortunate to live on the mountains.
  - fortunate
  - religious
  - unlucky
- Someone who has lived with the mountains will want to relive the experience.
  - cherish
  - forget
  - relive
- The poet describes the pine trees as blessing those standing underneath.
  - blessing those standing underneath
  - touching the sky.
  - beautiful.

B. Answer these questions.

- How does the poet describe the mountain air? wood smoke, mist, sweet smell
- What are the things that a person who has lived with mountains will come back for?
- How does the poet describe the buttercup?
- Why does the poet say the moon is brighter in the mountains?
- Why does the poet call a person who has lived with mountains God's favourite?

C. Answer these questions with reference to the context.

- Under the benedictory pines  
And deodars, near stars
  - Why does the poet say that the pines are 'benedictory'? they are near stars when they are full
  - Why is living in the mountains being nearer to the stars? they are full
- Once you have lived with these,  
Blessed, God's favourite then,
  - Who does 'you' refer to? person who lived near mountains
  - What does 'these' refer to? mountains
- You will return,  
You will come back
  - Where will the person return to? the mountains
  - Why will they return? to touch the trees and grass and



Q-Read the chapter. A short summary is attached with it.

Solve the question and answers. |

# 2

## A Well is Born

### Get Set!

- A. Have you seen a well? Where was it? Do you know what it was used for?
- B. What is the importance of wells? Discuss in groups.



Inspired by an African myth and the ideas of a sixth-century astronomer and mathematician from India, this is a story in verse. Do science and age-old wisdom go together? Read this poem to understand not only the significance of water but also the importance of combining wisdom and technology.

### SECTION 1

Listen to your teacher read this section and then answer these questions.

In what ways would the well help the villagers?

Why did the engineer feel he would find water easily?

List the things the engineer and his team took with them when they went of the hill.

For detailed instructions, see inside front cover.



The Engineer stood before the big crowd and spoke in a voice both cheerful and loud. "By evening tomorrow, I can foretell, your dry little village will have its own well."

The villagers burst into joyful chatter: after so long, the promise of water! An end to all their problems – at last. Dreading a drought? A thing of the past!

"No more carrying pots for miles and miles," whispered the women, **all wreathed in smiles**. The men remembered their lands so barren, and how they'd worried about a famine.

With a well, they could irrigate their fields, with a well, they could get better crop yields, with a well, they'd be free of the terrible fear that the rains would be late again this year.

Hopeful, excited, they loudly **clamoured**, "Engineer Saheb, d'you give us your word? Will we truly be blessed with a well this week? Will we finally gain the water we seek?"

"A week? Oh much sooner than that, I say, you'll have your well by the end of the day. I'm an expert in water and wells and drilling," he said to the crowd around him **milling**.

"I've looked at reports, I've studied the maps. My knowledge of wells simply has no gaps. I have surveyed the land for miles around, and I'm sure there's water here to be found."

Early next day when the sun was still low, and the sky **suffused with** a pinkish glow, the Engineer addressed his trusted team, "Come, let us fulfil the villagers' dream."

**all wreathed in smiles** here, all of them were smiling  
**clamoured** demanded urgently  
**milling** here, surrounding  
**suffused with** filled with

Armed with maps, reports, a truck and a drill,  
they went straight to the base of a small hill  
wearing safety helmets, bright and yellow,  
– the Engineer was a careful fellow.

They stopped in the shade of the rocky mound  
and assembled their stuff on the stony ground.  
“If we drill here, of this I am sure:  
we will find water, both sweet and pure,”

Said the Engineer, with much confidence.  
(And it can be said, in his defence,  
that all the wells he had ever drilled,  
had been with abundant water filled.)

The team got ready to work at the spot.  
We’ll have a well by noon, they thought.  
The drill began to groan and moan  
as it tore through layers of rock and stone.

The villagers heard the deafening sound  
and a **horde** of them headed to the mound,  
leaving the farming and cooking behind –  
how could they work, with this on their mind?

Women and children, young men and old,  
hoping and praying that they would behold  
a **wondrous** sight – the birth of a well –  
taking their village to heaven from hell.

A cloud of dust **hovered** over the **hillock**  
as the crew fought with the **adamant rock**.  
By noon the team had reached its goal  
of piercing the ground with a deep, deep hole.

At mid-day the hot sun scorched and blazed.  
Puzzled, the Engineer stood there and gazed  
at the team, at the hole, at the dusty cloud.  
He scratched his head, he wondered aloud.

<b>horde</b>	large number
<b>wondrous</b>	beautiful; magnificent
<b>hovered</b>	here, floated; stayed in one place
<b>hillock</b>	small hill
<b>adamant rock</b>	here, tough, solid rock through which drilling was proving to be difficult



"Hmm. We should have struck some water by now, perhaps it lies a few metres below. Let's make the hole deeper, let's drill some more." Again there sounded that thunderous roar.

## SECTION 2

Read this section in pairs. Underline the lines that describe how the expressions on the engineer's face change with each development.



In the evening sky the sun drew lower, the Engineer's face began to **glower**. By twilight the matter became quite clear: if there was water, it was not here.

The Engineer turned to the waiting crowd, his shoulders **sagged**, his head was bowed. "I am sorry that I failed you today. We'll do it tomorrow, that's all I can say."

The very next day he picked a new spot, they bored a deep hole, but no water they got. The Engineer's face grew anxious and grey, as a fresh site they attempted on the third day.

When even the third hole was dry and rejected, the Engineer looked so **bleak** and dejected, that his maps and reports he began to tear. The villagers were filled with **dark despair**.

Just then a farmer with kind and wise eyes said, "If you don't mind, I have some advice. I believe that water can be found there." He pointed to a termite mound.

**glower** show anger  
**sagged** slumped or hung downwards in sorrow or defeat  
**bleak** without any hope  
**dark despair** a feeling of utter helplessness

"And in case you think that it's a trick,  
I assure you – it's quite scientific.  
I've noticed," said he, in a gravelly voice,  
"termite hills are always damp and moist.

No matter how dry the summer can get,  
termites find water to keep their nest wet.  
So if you drill there, of this I am sure:  
you will find water, both sweet and pure."

The Engineer listened to what he'd just heard,  
there was much sense in the old farmer's words.  
They filled him afresh with vigour and zest.  
He started to work near the termite nest.

They'd just punched a hole a few metres deep  
when they saw a sight that made their hearts leap.  
Water sprayed up – a fountain of joy,  
with bright rainbow colours misting the sky.

"Bring out the drums, bring out the horn!  
Let's celebrate, a well is born!"  
The villagers sang, the villagers danced.  
The vision of water had them entranced.

When the gushing water the Engineer saw,  
he said to the farmer in shock and awe,  
"Who'd have thought a well could be found  
situated near a termite mound?"

Where did you get this amazing knowledge?  
I didn't realise you'd been to college!"  
The old farmer smiled and said, amused,  
"I don't blame you for feeling confused.

If you want tips on how to find water,  
I'll tell you the verse in the *Brihat Sambita*.  
I recommend this ancient *treatise*  
written by *Varahamihira* the wise."



**gravelly** low and rough

**entranced** captivated; filled with pleasure and happiness

**Brihat Samhita** an ancient text on astrology and a wide range of other subjects

**treatise** a long and serious piece of writing on a particular subject

**Varahamihira** a sixth-century astronomer and hydrologist who wrote the *Brihat Samhita*. He lists termite mounds as a good indicator for groundwater.

It's all about observing life, you know,  
 where insects live, how the trees grow.  
 If to nature's clues we pay careful heed,  
 the secrets of the earth are quite easy to read."

The thankful Engineer departed  
 rich with knowledge the farmer'd imparted.  
 He resolved to take this learning and  
 spread it far and wide, across the land.

If I may make a suggestion bold:  
 Let us combine new science and old.  
 Then this earth of ours will be truly blessed  
 with the wisdom of East and West.

*Radhika Chadha*



**READ AND UNDERSTAND**

**Worksheet**

IDENTIFYING DETAILS

A. Read these statements. Write True or False. Write NI if the poem does not give information about them.

1. The engineer thought he could have the well ready in a day.
2. The engineer had not looked at the map of the village.
3. The engineer had never had any trouble finding water in the past.
4. The engineer's team followed all his orders without argument.
5. The farmer was a village elder.
6. The farmer thought the engineer would not take his advice seriously.

True  
 False  
 True  
 True  
 True  
 False

INFERRING

B. What do these sentences tell you about the engineer and the farmer? Tick the correct options.

1. "My knowledge of wells simply has no gaps."
  - a. He is college-educated.
  - b. He is confident.
  - c. He has a big team.
2. "Come, let us fulfil the villagers' dream."
  - a. He is arrogant.
  - b. He wants to help.
  - c. He is creative.



3. All the wells he had ever drilled had been with abundant water filled.
- a. He is cautious.
  - b. He is proud.
  - c. He has a lot of experience.

4. "If you don't mind, I have some advice."
- a. He is proud and arrogant.
  - b. He is polite and helpful.
  - c. He likes to show off his knowledge.

5. "No matter how dry the summer can get, termites find water to keep their nest wet."
- a. He is imaginative but uneducated.
  - b. He observes everything carefully.
  - c. He thinks the engineer is ignorant.

**C. Answer these questions with reference to the context.**

1. The villagers burst into joyful chatter: after so long, the promise of water! An end to all their problems - at last. Dreading a drought? A thing of the past!
- a. Why were the villagers so excited?
  - b. What problems were the villagers facing?
  - c. Why was the fear of drought going to be 'a thing of the past'?

2. The villagers heard the deafening sound and a horde of them headed to the mound, leaving the farming and cooking behind - how could they work, with this on their mind?
- a. What was the 'deafening sound'?
  - b. Why did the villagers go towards the mound?
  - c. Why did the villagers find it difficult to work?

*the noise of the drill was very loud & very*

3. When even the third hole was dry and rejected the Engineer looked so bleak and dejected, that his maps and reports he began to tear. The villagers were filled with dark despair.

- a. What did they expect to find in the third hole? *Water*
- b. What caused the Engineer to tear his maps and reports? *Frustrated*
- c. Why were the villagers filled with 'dark despair'? *No water found*

4. Just then a farmer with kind and wise eyes said, "If you don't mind, I have some advice. I believe that water can be found there." He pointed to a termite mound.

- a. Why did the farmer think that water would be found near the termite mound?
- b. Did the Engineer take his advice? Why?

6. **A Well is Born** A lovely tale told in prose form. This form is very dear to my heart and I loved the way the author Radhika Chadha has written it. I also liked the moral, if you will, at the end of the story. Of the wisdom of the East working with the Science of the West to create wonderful innovations to help the mankind. The poem maybe a little too long for very young children, but it may appeal to older kids. *Narad rating – 3/5*