



**BAL BHARATI PUBLIC SCHOOL, PITAMPURA, DELHI – 110034**

**SUBJECT:-ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE**

**Class- X**

**Week : 2<sup>nd</sup> Nov. to 6<sup>th</sup> Nov.**

**No. of Blocks : 3**

**TOPIC :**

**THE PROPOSAL**  
by ANTON CHEKOV

**SUBTOPIC :** *Draw the similarities in Indian and Russian weddings (if any). Reading of the play. The issues involved in arrange marriages. New Vocabulary words, Character sketches, Figurative use of language.*

**AIDS :** *Textbook  
You-tube  
Screen-sharing  
Class discussion  
Link of e-textbook*

<https://ncert.nic.in/textbook.php?jeff1=11-11>

**BLOCK I**

**LEARNING OBJECTIVES :**

*Each students will be able to :*

- *Read and comprehend the play*
- *Deduce the meanings of difficult words and use them in sentences*
- *Make a graphic organizer*

**ACTIVITY :** *Meaning of the word 'proposal' to be discussed. Role play to read the play. Students to be asked to complete the table in their textbook,*

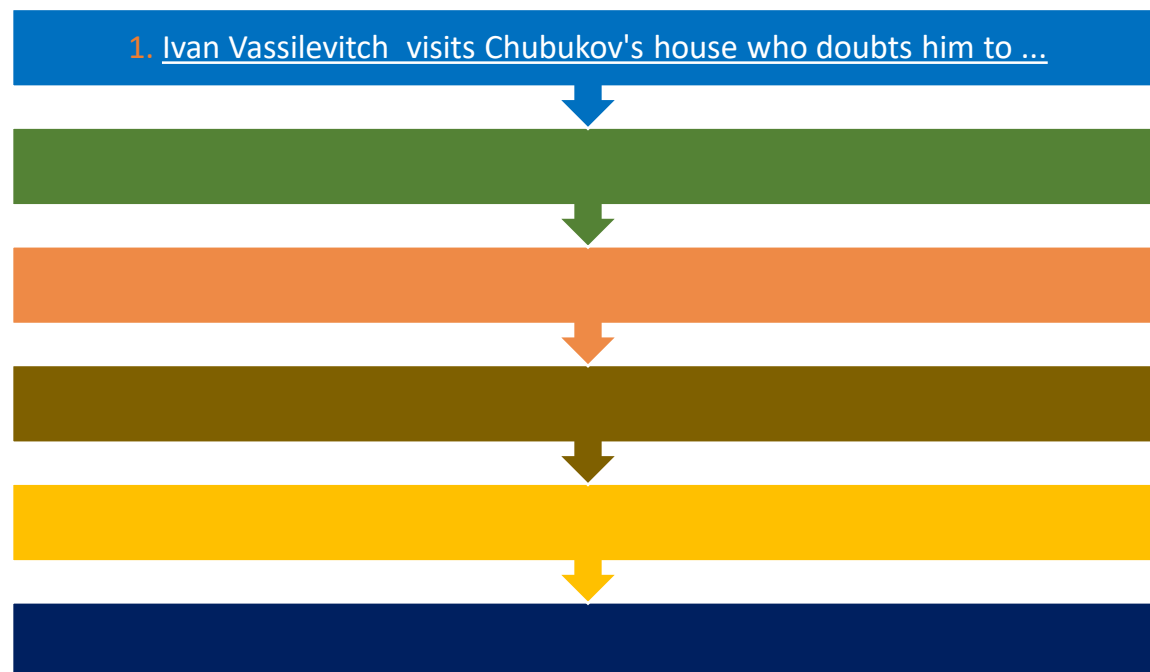
*AAC activity* - Excerpts given in the textbook regarding the Russian wedding and Indian Weddings to be read and students to be asked to draw a comparison and on the basis of that complete the table (Ques.2) given in the textbook.

### **LESSON DEVELOPMENT :**

*Pre-reading activity (Brainstorming)* - Students to be asked to infer the meaning of the word 'proposal'. AAC activity to be done. A brief introduction about the background of the play to be shared with students. Role-play to read the play.

*Post-reading activity* : A brief introduction about the playwright to be given. Students to be asked to deduce the meanings of new and difficult words, Summarize the story of the play in their own words.

*Task* : Complete the graphic organiser to list out the main events in a chronological order.



### **ANTON CHEKHOV (PLAYWRIGHT)**

*Anton Pavlovich Chekhov was a Russian playwright and short-story writer who is considered to be among the greatest writers of short fiction in History. His career as a playwright produced four classics, and his best short stories are held in high esteem by writers and critics.*

*Along with Henrik Ibsen and August Strindberg, Chekhov is often referred to as one of the three seminal figures in the birth of early modernism in the theatre. Chekhov practiced as a medical doctor throughout most of his literary career: "Medicine is my lawful wife", he once said, "and literature is my mistress."*

## **THE CHARACTERS :**

*Ivan Vassilevitch Lomov, the main character, is a heavy-set man in his mid-thirties, prone to anxiety, stubbornness, and hypochondria. These flaws are further amplified because he becomes a nervous wreck when he tries to propose marriage.*

*Stepan Stephanovitch Chubukov owns land next to Ivan. A man in his early seventies, he gladly grants permission to Ivan, but soon calls off the engagement when an argument over property ensues. His chief concerns are maintaining his wealth and keeping his daughter happy.*

*Natalya Stepanovna is the female lead in this three-person play. She can be jovial and welcoming, yet stubborn, proud and possessive, just like her male counterparts.*

## **SUMMARY :**

*The play is set in the rural countryside of Russia during the late 1800s. When Ivan arrives at the home of the Chubukov family, the elderly Stepan assumes that the well-dressed young man has come to borrow money.*

*Instead, Stepan is pleased when Ivan asks for his daughter's hand in marriage. Stepan wholeheartedly bestows his blessing, declaring that he already loves him like a son. The old man then leaves to fetch his daughter, assuring the younger man that Natalya will graciously accept the proposal.*

*While alone, Ivan delivers a soliloquy explaining his high level of nervousness, as well as a number of physical ailments that have recently plagued his daily life. This monologue sets up everything that unfolds next.*

*Everything is going well when Natalya first enters the room. They chat pleasantly about the weather and agriculture. Ivan attempts to bring up the subject of marriage by first stating how he has known her family since childhood.*

*As he touches upon his past, he mentions his family's ownership of the Oxen Meadows. Natalya stops the conversation to clarify. She believes that her family has always owned the*

meadows, and this disagreement ignites a caustic debate, one that sends tempers flaring and Ivan's heart palpitating.

After they yell at each other, Ivan feels dizzy and tries to calm himself down and change the subject back to matrimony, only to get immersed in the argument yet again. Natalya's father joins the battle, siding with his daughter, and angrily demanding that Ivan leave at once.

As soon as Ivan is gone, Stepan reveals that the young man has planned to propose to Natalya. Shocked and apparently desperate to be married, Natalya insists that her father brings him back.

Once Ivan has returned, she tries to bend the subject toward romance. However, instead of discussing marriage, they begin to argue over which of their dogs is a better hound. This seemingly innocuous topic launches into yet another heated argument.

Finally, Ivan's heart cannot take it anymore and he flops down dead. At least that's what Stepan and Natalya believe for a moment. Fortunately, Ivan breaks out of his fainting spell and regains his senses enough for him to propose to Natalya. She accepts, but before the curtain falls, they return to their old argument regarding who owns the better dog.

In short, "The Proposal" is a delightful gem of a comedy. It makes one wonder why so much of Chekhov's full-length plays (even the ones labelled as comedies) seem so thematically heavy. "The Proposal" is a humorous microcosm of marital unions among the Russian upper class in late 19th century Russia. This was Chekhov's world during his late 20s.

## BLOCK II

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES :

Each students will be able to :



- Infer the theme
- Infer the use of figurative language
- Assess Characters

**ACTIVITY :** List out the characteristic features of the main characters. Infer the theme and use of figurative language in the play. Underline the examples of humour in the textbook.

**LESSON DEVELOPMENT :** Recapitulation of the play as the students read out the graphic organizer. Discussion of new vocabulary words like - *pettifogger, guzzling, impudence, wizen-faced frump*... Theme and humour in the play to be discussed. Characteristic features of the main characters to be listed.

Task: List out the most prominent characteristic features of each character in the table given below:

<u>Ivan Vassilevitch Lomov</u>	<u>Stepan Stephanovitch</u>	<u>Natalya Stepanovna</u>
	<u>Chubukov</u>	

Link of the video :

<https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=anton+chekhov+the+proposal&docid=608002404093854416&mid=D32631153FC35E64E53DD32631153FC35E64E53D&view=detaile&FORM=VIRE>

### THE THEME OF THE PLAY :

'The Proposal' is a one-act play. Actually, it is a farce written by Anton Chekhov in 1888-89. The play is about the tendency of wealthy families to seek matrimonial ties. The real purpose is to increase their estates and landed properties. Ivan Lomov was a wealthy neighbour of another wealthy farmer Stepan Chubukov. Lomov comes to seek the hand of Chubukov's twenty-five-year-old daughter, Natalya. Lomov, Chubukov and Natalya - all three are quarrelsome people. They quarrel over petty or small issues. Each one of them has a claim over a particular piece of land. They also quarrel over their dogs. Amidst this quarrelling, they completely forget the real issue — the marriage proposal. But good sense prevails in the end.

*Economic good sense ensures that the proposal is made. Chubukov doesn't want to miss the opportunity. He puts his daughter's hand into Lomov's hands. He doesn't waste any time and blesses them. However, old habits die hard. The newly married couple starts their married life with a fresh quarrel.*

### BLOCK III

#### LEARNING OBJECTIVES :

*Each students will be able to :*

- *Answer Ques. given in the textbook*
- *Attempt Assignment Questions*
- *Attempt Vocabulary Exercise*

**ACTIVITY :** *Discussion of questions given in the textbook. Assignment questions also to be discussed.*

**LESSON DEVELOPMENT :** *Discussion of questions given at the back of the lesson in the textbook followed by discussion of assignment questions.*

### ASSIGNMENT QUESTIONS

**NOTE : ALL QUESTIONS ARE TO BE DONE IN THE FAIR NOTEBOOK:**

**SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS :**

- What is Chubukov's reaction when he comes to know that Lomov has come to marry his daughter?*
- How did Oxen Meadows become a bone of contention between Lomov's and Natalya's family?*
- What makes Lomov feel that Natalaya will be an ideal wife for him?*
- Draw a pen portrait of Natalaya.*
- Justify the title of the play 'The Proposal'.*

## REFERENCE TO THE CONTEXT :

*“Hear me out, I implore you! The peasants of your father’s grandfather, as I have already had the honour of explaining to you, used to bake bricks for my aunt’s grandmother. Now my aunt’s grandmother, wishing to make them a peasant...”*

- (a) Who is the speaker here?
- (b) What did the peasants do?
- (c) Find the exact word from the extract which means ‘to ask something in a very serious way’
- (d) Find a synonym of ‘high respect’ from the above lines?

*Never mind about my people! The Lomov have all been honourable people, and not one has ever been tried for embezzlement, like your grandfather!*

- (a) Whom does the speaker say the above lines to?
- (b) How did Lomov describes his people?
- (c) Find the word from the extract which means ‘theft of funds’.
- (d) Explain ‘Never mind about my People’.

*NATALYA : What proposal?*

*CHUBUKOV : Why, he came here to propose to you.*

*NATALYA : To propose? To me? Why didn’t you tell me so before?*

*CHUBUKOV : So he dresses up in evening clothes. The stuffed sausage!  
The wizen-faced frump!*

- (a) Who is being referred to as ‘he’?
- (b) Why did he meet Chubukov?
- (c) Find the word from the extract which means ‘Make an offer of marriage to someone’.
- (d) Who was dressed in as a stuffed sausage?

## LONG ANSWER QUESTIONS:

- a) The characters Natalya and Lomov lose their temper on trivial issues. It reflects that both of them are immature and childish. Comment.
- b) Do you find the play humorous. Cite examples from the text in support of your answer.

## LANGUAGE EXERCISE :

II. Attempt Ques.II (Reported Speech) on page no.158 of the textbook.

**VOCABULARY EXERCISE:**

*Find out the meaning of the following words using a dictionary and find out how to pronounce them correctly. Pay attention to how many syllables are there in each word and which syllables are stressed.*

Palpitations	interfere	implore	thoroughbred
Pedigree	principle	evidence	misfortune
Malicious	embezzlement	architect	neighbours
Accustomed	temporary	behaviour	documents

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