

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

This study is on 'Free Writing Ability of Grade Eight Students'. It consists of background, statements of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, delimitations of the study and operational definition of the key terms.

1.1 Background

We use language in terms of four skills, i.e. listening, speaking, reading and writing with their sub skills. The four language skills may rarely work in isolation. They are integrated to make communication meaningful and effective. The skills are often divided into two types: receptive and productive. According to Harmer (2007, p. 265), "Receptive skill is a term used for reading and listening skills, where meaning is extracted from the discourse. A productive skill is the term for speaking and writing skills, where students actually have to produce language themselves." Teaching language involves the teaching of all four skills of language. They are; listening skill, speaking skill, reading skill and writing skill.

Writing skill is the fourth skill of the language to be taught to develop communicative competence. Students should be engaged in more productive and creative exercises, such as describing a situation, narrating an event, expressing opening, and so on. In teaching writing skill, teachers should focus on developing its sub-skills, such as handwriting, spelling, punctuating, and constructing grammatical sentences. For writing on any topic at first every individual has good knowledge about the subject matter but only knowledge over subject matter is not sufficient for good writing. For this we should develop our writing skill. To develop writing skill, one should be the habitual for writing. Without writing practice we cannot produce better text upon any topic. So, free writings can be the best options to develop learners' writing skill. Free writing helps the learners to

brainstorm for the particular topic and helps them to organize focusing cohesion and coherence of the text with components of writing and mechanism of writing.

1.2 Statement of the Problems

In the context of Nepal, since the English language has been taught as a foreign language, students are facing problems to develop skills of language. Here, my concern is to find out free writing ability of grade VIII students; a case of essay writing. Writing ability is not same between the students of government school and private-aided school. Their writing proficiency level depends on their background knowledge. Developing writing skill ability in a learner is not easy task. This will be more problematic for the beginners. The learners should be conscious about various elements related to writing. Thus, the developing writing skill, students may face various problems which they may face difficulties in writing.

The impact of free writing on pupil's learning and achievement is really good. It simply increases greater engagement of learners towards read the new topics of various subject matter and pupil engagement in writing. and of children who 'say that they enjoy writing, especially when they are given an element of choice in either what they write about, or which genre they can write in. Similarly, pupils had more opportunity to think and talk. Out of these, Pupils are generally better equipped to write with a greater array of tools, both technical and imaginative; they have developed the approaches they need to be good writers. They are able to refine the use of writing skills to match task, purpose and audience with some adult guidance. This has resulted in improved progress rates as well. Likewise, free writing increases higher levels of motivation towards writing and helps to get improved test results.

The main problems in free writing in the case of Nepal might be the less habit of reading of learners. As a result they don't have sufficient knowledge and cannot write on the given topic. Similarly another problem might be related to the teaching methodology; teacher centered teaching method, where learners are

passive. Since they are passive, they don't have any involvement in teaching learning activities and they are unable to develop productive skills like; speaking and writing. Thus, I want to find out whether free writing helps to develop writing skills or not.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study were as follows:

- I. To find out the free writing ability of grade VIII students especially in case of descriptive essay writing.
- II. To suggest some pedagogical implications.

1.4 Research Questions

The research was oriented to answer the following questions.

- i. What is the free writing ability of grade VIII students in terms of spelling, grammar, cohesion and coherence?

1.5 Significance of the Study

Though all four language skills are inseparable from the teaching learning activities, Nepalese students learn the English language for the literacy purpose rather than linguistic purpose. Out of four language skills, reading and writing laid priority for language learning program. In our context, writing skill has been given priority. Writing is one of the best ways to represent anything for long time. So, it is important to get mastery over writing. Thus, this study focuses on the writing proficiency of eight graders.

This study will be significant mainly for the language teachers' teaching English at grade eight to know the areas of difficulties to design materials and provide necessary help to them. This study will be significant for those people who are engaged in ESL teaching. They are the people who can develop remedial techniques or materials for effective writing. The problems that will be detected by

this study will be obviously remedies for those people who want to enhance their writing. So, in one sentence it can be said that it will be significant for students, teachers, EFL/ESL trainers, and to all those who are directly or indirectly involved in teaching and learning English as second language in the country like Nepal.

1.6 Delimitations of the Study

- I. The population of the study was limited to the students of grade eight of Beldandi Navjyoti public school , Beldandi, Kanchanpur.
- II. It was limited to 24 days only.
- III. It was limited to mainly the proficiency of the grade eight students' in terms of spelling, grammar, cohesion and coherences.
- IV. The findings were based on the analysis and interpretation of the test scores obtained through tests..

1.7 Operational Definitions of Key Terms

- Proficiency** : Level of grade eight students' and their ability in free writing
- Discourse** : A long and serious statements or discussion of subject in free writing.
- Spelling** : The way in which a word is spelled.
- Grammar** : The whole structure of written text including the rules for the way words are formed and their relationship to each other in sentence.
- Free Writing** : Free writing refers to the type of writing in any topic which gives complete freedom of expression; in descriptive essay.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Review of Related Theoretical Literature

The existing theories related to teaching free writing: A case of essay writing was taken as theoretical literature in this study. I reviewed the following theoretical concepts in this study.

2.1.1 An Introduction to writing

Writing, the visual representation of our thoughts, feelings, emotions and ideas is one of the language skills. The thing that we speak is temporary but the things imprinted as a written work can be kept for future and coming generation that they can experience the flavor of that material. So, to keep it as a memorandum or say the long term document written work or the written work is needed.

If we go back to the history of writing it has long bygone. Harmer (2004, p.49) says:

The history of writing is as ancient as Indus civilization. Some of the earliest writing found so far dates from about 5,500 years ago, it was found at a place called Harappa in the region where the great Harappa or Indus civilization once flourished. There is incomplete agreement about the meaning of the symbols that were discovered. However, when the discovery was made archaeologist Richard Meadow stated that the inscriptions had similarities to what became the Indus script- the first

recognized written language. Since then, many different writing systems have evolved around the world.

Writing started with our civilization. Human beings started representing their thoughts and feelings day by day that became a tradition. We have such evidence for such writing which are dated about 5500 years ago. It has been so long that writing became the part of our life and started keeping something for future. In such a way the writing originated in the world and became the part of our life. Harmer (1997, p.16) says:

Our choice of language may depend upon the channel of communication. If we examine this concept more fully we can identify language skills that native speakers and competent language user process. They will be able to speak on the telephone, write letters listen to the radio or read books. In other words they pose the four basic language skills of writing, speaking, reading and listening. Speaking and writing involve language production so they productive skills.

Each and every skill has its own specific significance; writing is one of the language skills necessary in both educational field and future career. One will be judged in part by one's ability to put ideas down in paper. It is an art which gives one to be heard and to influence others. Moreover, writing is thought as a medium of expression of ideas and views; it is one of the language skills equally necessary to be mastered by a language learner. It develops through various and continuous steps of progress and makes the students active in it. The main purpose of writing is to enable the learners for free compositions and creativity.

Writing is a task assigned to the students with some specific topic. There is no such restriction or boundary in any writing task. Free writing is the final stage in the development of the writing skill. Writing involves the individual selection of vocabulary and structure for the expression of personal meaning; however, the teacher may help the students in the collection of ideas, developing an outline and supplying some language materials, writing composition is open ended in nature.

Thus, writing is a difficult task which needs systematic progress from stage to stage. Practice of free writing decreases the teacher dependency of students day by day. And, lastly they can be the proficient writer. So, free writing is like swimming in the ocean where there is no certainty of length and depth. But, we must dive to check our swimming ability into that vast ocean. We never sink if we are a proficient swimmer.

2.1.2 Components of Writing

Writing is an art of manipulating words and sentences in an effective way. But, it is a very complex task to write clearly and explicitly. In this context, Richards (1985, p.100) says:

Learning to write in either a first language or a second language is one of the most difficult tasks. Learning to write is a difficult and lengthy process, that one includes anxiety and frustration in many learners. Yet good writing skills are essential to academic success and a requirement for many occupation and professions.

Writing is not the random juxtaposition of words and sentences to construct a text. Rather it is an art of manipulating words and sentences in an effective way. But it is very complex task to write clearly and explicitly.

The components of writing can be divided into three main stages of writing skills. The first one is known as ‘mechanics’ in which the learner simply manipulates the shapes of the graphic components of the phonological items or spoken words in its written forms. In the same way the second component is known as ‘structuring’ where the learner learns the spelling of words, syntactic rules of structuring words, sentences, paragraphs and forming a text.

Similarly, the third or the highest level of writing process is called ‘Semantic stage’ where learner learns not only the mechanics and structuring of the rules but also the significance of using a words, phrases, or sentences in the overall context of entire written script.

2.1.2.1 Mechanics of Writing

Mechanics of writing is known as graph logical system which mainly includes capitalization, spelling and punctuation. Learners must have the knowledge of mechanics of writing. Mastery over the mechanics of writing and practice on the basic skills are necessary first step for child or adult learner. Under mechanics of writing, the learner should learn the alphabets, direction, upper and lower cases, capitalization, spelling patterns and sentence punctuation.

i) Capitalization (upper case/lower case)

Capitalization refers to the correct use of capital letters. Appropriate capitalization is the matter of convention. Most of the conventions i.e. capitalizing the first letter of the first word of a sentence, the pronoun I, the first letter in the first word of the quotation and so on are very familiar to us. However, some capitalizations are matter of style rather than convention. There are rules of capitalization i.e. when and where to use a capital letters. The knowledge of using capital letters is important for writing.

ii) Spelling

Spelling is to write the letters of a word in their correct order. Although incorrect spelling does not often prevent the understanding of a written message. It can adversely affect the reader' judgment. However slight change in spelling can bring change in meaning that carries. Spelling plays a vital important role since addition, deletion, omission or replacement of one letter with another can change the entire meaning of the word or of the whole message. Mastery of writing system requires the ability to spell. Therefore the mastery in spelling is needed.

iii) Punctuation

Punctuation is an art or systems of inserting marks or points in writing or printing in order to make the meaning clear. The proper use of punctuation marks such as comma, colon, semicolon, hyphen, dash, parenthesis, quotation marks, and apostrophe and so on helps the writer to organize written language and clarify relation between words and clauses.

2.1.2.2 Structuring

The second stage of writing is 'structuring'. In this stage of writing, the learner learns the syntactic rules of structuring words, sentences paragraphs and forming a text. This is the level up to sentence, where it tells about the structuring of words, phrases and sentences to construct a compact text. It pays attention to syntax and semantics that looks on appropriateness and accuracy.

2.1.2.3 Discourse

Discourse can be defined as the stretch of language which communicates something either in oral or in written form. Discourse analysis examines how stretches of language, considers in their full textual social and psychological context becomes meaningful and unified for their users. It provides the insights into the problems and process of language use. In this regard, Cook (1996, p.6) says, "the language which is used to communicate something and felt to be

coherent; may or may not correspond a correct series or series of correct sentences; due to linguistic elements of discourse. So, the language in use for communication is called discourse.”

Thus, the sentences which communicate some message to the reader in written form can be said written discourse. The elements that the discourse contains can be presented as follows:

i) Coherence

Coherence can be defined as the semantic relationship of different sense units between and among the utterances. It is the relationship between different sentences based on the meaning it conveys not solely on denotative meaning. It makes our written text more logical, well organized, and easy to understand and clear. According to Harmer (2004, pp.24-25),

Texts to have coherence it needs to have some kinds of internal logic which the reader can follow with or without the use of the prominent cohesive devices when text is coherent the reader can understand at least two things:

i) the writer’s purpose-the reader should be able to understand what the writer’s purpose is. Is it to give information, suggest a course of action make a judgment on a book or a play, or express an opinion about old events, for example, A coherent text will not mask the writer’s purpose: ii)

The writer’s line of thought the reader should be able to follow the writer’s line of reasoning if the text is discursive piece. If, on the other hand, it is a narrative, the reader should be able to follow the story and not get

confused by the time jumps, a too many characters, etc.

Thus, coherence refers to the relationship between utterances and the meaning it conveys or we can say it is the situation in which all the parts of something fit together well into the text. When the text is coherent the reader can understand writers' purpose and the writers' line of thoughts.

ii) Cohesion

Cohesion can be defined as the grammatical or lexical relationship between different elements of text. Cohesion may not only refer to the relationship between different sentences but it may be the relationship between different parts of the sentences. The main contribution of cohesion in written text is that it makes the written text more compact and smooth. Harmer (2004, p.22) says:

When we write a text we have a number of linguistic techniques at our disposal to make sure that our prose 'sticks together'. We can, for example, use lexical repetition and/or chains of words within same lexical set through a text to have this effect. We can use various grammatical devices to help the reader understand what is being referred to all the times, even when words are left out or pronouns are substituted for nouns.

To sum up, cohesion refers to the grammatical and/or lexical relationship between different elements of text either into a sentence or different sentences. We can use various grammatical devices to like pronoun to help readers to understand what has been referred all the time and reduces the unnecessary repetition of the same words or phrases.

2.1.3 Writing Process

To produce a coherent and appropriate text for the readers is not easy. While producing a coherent and appropriate text, the writer should go with numbers of conflicting theories of writing and one of them is process writing. Harmer (2004, p.4) says, “It is the stage a writer goes through in order to produce something in its final written form”. He further says that process may be affected by the content (subject matter) of the writing, type of the writing and the medium it is written in.

Harmer (2004, p. 48), has suggested the following four main elements of writing process.

i. Planning

Planning is pre-writing activity. It is a stage where writers decide what they are going to write. In this stage, some writers involve in making detailed notes and for others few jotted words may be enough. Still others may do all their planning in their heads. But the fact is that writers will have plan in this stage.

ii. Drafting

Drafting may refer to the first version of piece of writing as a draft. Harmer (2004, p. 49), says, “This first ‘go’ at a text is often done on the assumption that it will be amended later. The writer being immersed in phrases painfully consenting, it was like darting fish with hooks in their gills, dragged from the depths of an unplumbed pool.” Activities in this section mark the move from the so-called pre-writing stage to actually writing a first draft.

iii. Editing

Once the writers have produced a draft they then usually read through what they have written to see where it works and how it differs than others. Perhaps, the order of the information is not clear or confusing. Writers may then move paragraphs around or write a new introduction, this is what we call editing.

iv. Final Version

Producing a final version is the main goal of the writing process. It is a post writing activity. It is the sum total of planning, drafting and editing in other words once the writers have edited the draft making the changes they consider to be necessary they produce their final version. This may look considerably different from both original plan and the first draft because things have changed in the editing process.

2.1.4 Writing Proficiency

Proficiency tests are designed to measure peoples' ability in a language, regardless of any training they may have in that language. The content of proficiency test, therefore is not based on the content or objectives of language courses that people taking the test may have followed rather it is based on a specification of what candidates have to be able to do in the language in order to be considered proficient.

In some sort of proficiency test, 'proficient means having sufficient command of the language for a particular purpose. An example of this would be a test used to determine whether a student's English is good enough to follow a course of study at some certain university. Such test may even attempt to take in to account the level and kind of English needed to follow course in particular subject areas.

Writing proficiency is the ability of an individual to write or perform in an acquired language. The writing proficiency plays a vital role in securing good marks in the examination and it can spread our knowledge and experience to others. It is concerned with specific skills and abilities rather than general abilities. It helps to select people from different institutions and countries in affair manner.

Writing proficiency is one of the most important components of language proficiency. People have realized the critical importance of the search for excellence in developing writing assessment instruments that provide the best possible information about student proficiency which is quite difficult to realize,

the direct topic approach has high validity but while quite typical, this method has a serious drawbacks. It will be accompanied into a smaller store range that may occur. If writers were able to find their own level by writing on to topic, then they feel comfortable. The indirect objectives approach is not easily affected scores, but the validity of this method has been doubted

In order to be proficient in writing, one has to be able to express his or her ideas, feelings, emotions, and desires by using his or her own language. That is known as free writing or composition. Then, the question arises about how to test writing. According to Hughes (2003, p.83)

The best way to test people's writing ability is to get them to write. This is not an unreasonable assumption. Even professional testing institutions are unable to construct indirect tests which measure writing ability accurately. And if, in fact satisfactory accuracy were a real possibility, considerations of backwash and ease of construction would still argue for the direct testing of writing within teaching institutions.

Given the decision to test writing ability directly, we are in opposition to test the testing problem, in general forms for writing. This has the following three parts:

1. We have to set writing tasks that are properly representative of the population of tasks that we should expect the students to be able to perform.
2. The tasks should elicit samples of writing which truly represent the student's ability.
3. It is essential that the samples of writing can and will be scored reliably.

Regarding this, Weir (1993, p.58) states:

Two different approaches for assessing writing ability can be adopted.

Firstly, writing can be divided into discrete levels, e.g. grammar, vocabulary, spelling and punctuation, and these elements can be tested separately by the use of objective tests. Secondly more direct extended writing tasks of various types should be constructed. These would have greater construct content, face and wash back validity but would require a more subjective assessment.

Thus, testing writing is a very complex task because it includes infinite number of things such as spelling, cohesion, coherence, etc. beside this, the complexity of testing writing increases due to the fact that writing is not restricted to articles, books, letters, etc on paper alone. Today computer offers a wide range of opportunities to write documents, e-mails, faxes or which have made writing a more complex process because the writer has to be familiar the dazzling array of tools with which to prepare, organize and present his write ups. The whole writing is judged classifying it in five different topics viz. ideas, organization, wording, flavor and mechanics.

2.1.5 Essay Writing and its Structure

An essay is a written form of composition, in which the writer expresses his/her ideas, information, knowledge, emotions, etc. in well defined parts of its own. In every essay, the writer wants to convince the readers on a particular point or topic and tries to persuade the readers. The creation of professional essay requires a lot of knowledge from the writer. But first thing to know and to remember is the particularity of the essay's structure. Each and every essay is written according to a

basic structure. Following are the structures of an essay:

(a) The Introduction

Introduction is the first part of the essay. As the name suggests it simply introduces the subject matter by giving general introduction of the topic. An effective introduction captures the interest of the readers and motivates them to continue their reading. The main purpose of the introduction is to arrest or draw the attention of the reader. For that, in introduction paragraph, the writer should use proverb or quotation or general statement and so on. Generally, introduction is written in paragraph but sometime it may be more than one paragraph.

The length of introduction may be, it should be clear, simple, complete and impressive or effective to give the exact account of the subject.

(b) The Body

This is the second and most important part of the essay. In this part the writer elaborates the subject matter. Illustrations, description or elaboration or the supplementary details of the central idea or theme should be presented in body paragraph of the essay. It contains appropriate facts, figures, examples, logic and so on what are need to clarify the subject matter or topic. Body part is also called the discussion part. In this part, coherence should be well maintained because the description should follow the logical order according to the requirements. The body part of the essay may contain more than one paragraph. But each paragraph should have a topic sentence along with the supporting details. The topic sentence contains main idea of the whole paragraph. In the same way, the writer's opinions, experience, reasons should be described in this part of the essay. The body part of the essay is complete within itself, because everything is clearly mentioned in body part of the essay.

(c) The Conclusion

The conclusion is the final part of the essay. It gives the logical ending of the whole essay. The interest of the readers which has aroused in the introduction part should be satisfied in the conclusion. Generally, introduction makes from general to particular whereas conclusion moves from particular to general. The conclusion should be neither too long nor too short. It should be moderate in length.

2.1.6 Importance of Writing at Lower Secondary Level

English is the appropriate international language for Nepal, and vital tool for all students to become successful in local, national and international communication. Undoubtedly, English is the means to communicate globally and is also the major world language. English language is taught as a foreign language in all the schools of Nepal starting from Grade 1 and up to Grade 12 in community schools and from pre-primary level in private schools. It is also taught as a compulsory subject up to Bachelor level¹ in different universities of the country. The lower secondary level English curriculum has two main purposes. One is to enable students to exchange ideas with people of any nationality who speaks or write English and the other is to expose them to the vast treasures of knowledge and pleasure available in written and spoken English.

Curriculum development centre has prepared the curriculum in order to make the lower secondary course more applicable to society, both in Nepal and outside world. Language, here, is seen as a skill that allows one to get things done. The things done through language are described as function such as expressing likes and dislikes, good wishes, etc. A single language function can usually be expressed through more than one grammatical structures or set of vocabulary items. The grammar is inbuilt with the structure of language functions. Therefore, students are expected to internalize grammar rules naturally and use correct and grammatical language both in written and spoken expression. English introduced in the primary level is much simpler than the English used at lower secondary level. The functions remain the same at this advanced level but they are recycled

with an increasing expansion of structure, vocabulary and register. The curriculum also includes instructional objectives and skills in content areas, and scope and sequence chart specifying the number of periods for each unit. Further assessment procedures have also been established to assist the educational development of the students.

In short, it is hoped that curriculum will support to promote and strengthen the aspirations and interest of the nation. The course includes listening, speaking, reading and writing components.

2.2 Review Empirical Literature

In the department of English Education, TU, several studies have been conducted on 'Writing Proficiency' by different researchers. Some of the studies in the past which are related to the area of this study are as follows:

Bhattarai (2002) carried out a research entitled "A comparative study of writing proficiency of the Bachelor's level students". The main objective of this study was to investigate the writing proficiency of Bachelor's level students in free and guided compositions on the basis of different variables. He conducted the research using action research design using test as data collection tools and he found that greater proficiency in guided composition than in free composition. The study also explicitly showed that the students of Institutes have greater proficiency in writing than the students of faculties.

Sah (2003) conducted the study on the topic "A study of proficiency of class nine students in writing skill." The main objective of this study was to find out the grade nine students writing proficiency in terms of holistic description; personal letters and condolence/sympathy letters. The research was conducted action research design using test as data collecting tools. The finding of his research showed that students showed better performance in writing personal letter than the sympathy / condolence letters.

Similarly, Sharma (2009) also studied under the title "Writing proficiency of the

student of lower secondary". The main purpose of his study was to find out writing proficiency in punctuation, articles, subject-verb arrangement and prepositions in the writing of grader of the faculty of Education in the Kathmandu valley. He conducted the research using action research design using test to collect data. He found the students were found better in the use of punctuation than in the use of article, subject-verb arrangement and preposition and the research showed that the overall proficiency of secondary level students in the use of punctuation.

Karki (2010) studied on the topic "Grade seven students writing proficiency in Guided writing". His objective of the study was to find out the grade seven students' proficiency compare the proficiency of boys and girls of government aided schools. He conducted action research using test as data collection tools. The findings showed that the proficiency of boys was better than that of girls.

Neupane (2011) carried out the research on the title "Writing proficiency of adult women students". The main objectives of his study were to find out the proficiency of adult women of grade ten in guided and free writing. He conducted research using action research design using test as data collecting tools. The result of that study was proficiency of the students in free writing was not satisfactory. So, he recommended in his thesis that the students should be made free to express themselves in various writing contexts such as essay writing, story writing, article writing, report writing, application writing, application writing and poem writing and so on.

Pant (2011) conducted the research entitled "Proficiency in free writing". The objective of this study was to find out free writing proficiency of higher secondary level students of Kanchanpur district. She conducted research work using action research design and used test as data collection tools. Her study also aimed to compare their free writing proficiency of the basis of different variables. She found that total free writing proficiency of the student was not found satisfactory.

Although, several research works have been conducted and submitted to department of English Education, T.U., Kirtipur to find out students writing

proficiency in different levels. But my research work, “Free Writing Ability of Grade Eight Students”, was entirely different than those of all mentioned above and conducted under any other universities. No research has been conducted on 'writing proficiency of grade eight students: A case of 'Essay writing' This study is completely concerned to measure students' proficiency especially in case of essay writing of the students of kanchanpur district.

2.3 Implications of the Study

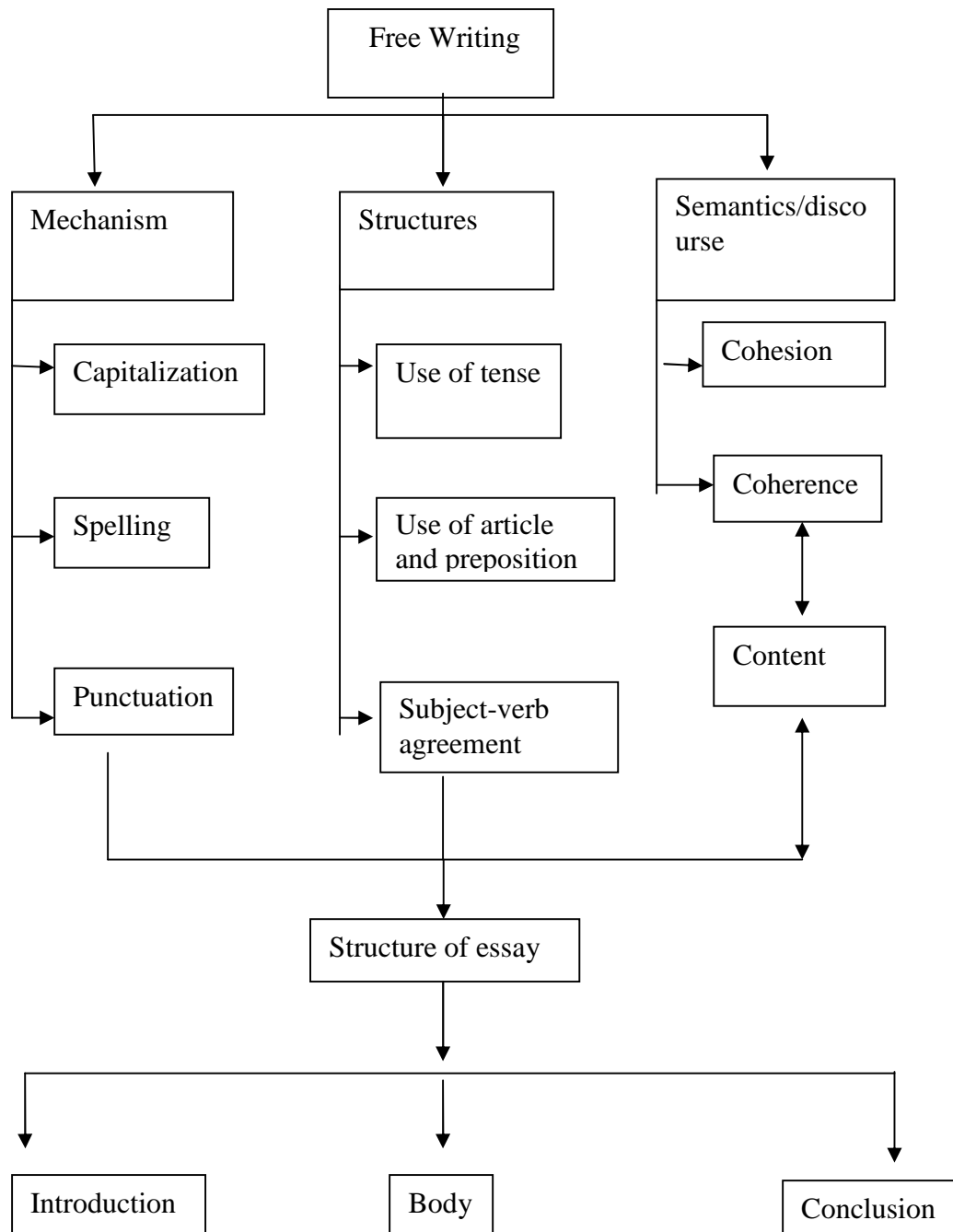
Every literature review has its own importance for researchers. It helps to bring the clarity and focuses on research problems, improve methodology and conclude the findings. Kumar (2009, p. p. 30) states that literature has a number of implications.

They are:

- a. It provides a theoretical background of the study.
- b. It helps us to refine our research methodology.
- c. Through the literatures review, we are able to show how our findings have contributed to the existing body of knowledge in our profession.
- d. It enables us to contextualize our findings.

Above mentioned implications are true and implied in my research as well. From the review of different scholars I got lots of ideas regarding the challenge of English teachers through reviewing the literature. These reviews helped me to strength in the theoretical background. Similarly through the research works, I reviewed like Bhattraï (2002), Shah (2003), Sharma (2009), Karki (2010), Neupane (2011), Pant (2002), I got a lot of ideas about the research design, process of conducting the research, methodology of the study, selection of appropriate research tools, developing the data collection tools as well as to go forward to my study properly.

2.4 Contextual Framework



CHAPTER THREE

METHODS AND PROCEDURE OF THE STUDY

Methodology is a vital element of a research work. So it was designed in such a way that helps to carry out the study. It refers to the procedures used in carrying out an investigation including the method used to collect and analyzed data. Hence, to fulfill objectives of the study, the following methodology was adopted:

3.1 Design and method of the Study

To find out the free writing ability of Grade Eight Students I followed qualitative research design in general and the survey research design in particular. In this type of research the researcher visits in a large number of populations in order to find out the public opinion on certain issues, to assess certain educational programme. An educational survey involved the collection of data from the associates (students, teachers and other concerns) and its analysis to eliminate the problems related to education.

According to Nunan (1992, p.140)," The main purpose of a survey research is to obtain a snapshot of conditions, attitudes and events at a single point of time." It is used to study large and small population or universe by selecting and studying sample chosen from the population.

In nutshell, survey research is conducted to eliminate important educational issues and data are collected from the population. Than those answers which are given by the sample are thought that whole group has given same type of information. It means, researchers generalize the result obtained from the sample to the whole population.

Research is a systematic process of investigating. We cannot conduct research haphazardly. In order to carried out a research the researcher has to pass through a series of systematic steps. For this different scholars have suggested the survey research procedure differently in their own style.

Cohen, Manion, and Morrison, (2010, p. 209) have suggested the following fourteen-step procedure of survey research.

1. Define the objectives

2. Decide the kind of survey required (e.g. longitudinal, cross sectional, cohort study, etc.)
3. Formulate research question or hypothesis (the null hypothesis and alternative hypothesis)
4. Decide the issue on which to focus
5. Decide the information that is needed to address the issues.
6. Decide the sampling required.
7. Decide the instrumentation
8. Generate the data collection instruments
9. Decide how the data will be collected
10. Pilot the instruments and refine them
11. Train the interviewers(if appropriate)
12. Collect the data
13. Analyze the data
14. Report the results

3.2 Population and Sample of the Study

The population of my study was all the students of grade eight of Beldandi Nabjyoti public school, Beldandi, Kanchanpur. Altogether 18 students studying in grade eight were the sample and population of the study.

3.3 Sampling Procedure

For this research, Beldadi Nabjyoti public school, Beldandi, Kanchanpur was selected through purposive, non-random sampling procedures. All the 18 students of grade eight were the sample of this study and they were selected using purposive non-random sample procedure.

3.4 Data Collection Tools and Techniques

The tools I used to collect the data were test items. It consisted five questions and they were related to find out free writing ability of grade eight students in descriptive essays.

3.5 Data Collection Procedure

I collected the data from primary source by conducting the following process.

- a. First of all I visited the school head teacher. I asked for his permission to carry out research on the students of grade eight.
- b. After then the permission from the head teacher, I talked to the subject teacher for necessary assistance.
- c. In collaboration of the head teacher and the subject teacher, I got the period fixed for carrying out research.
- d. Then, I administered the test items that I had already prepared for accessing the students' initial proficiency level on selected essay writing given in their textbook.
- e. I collected the questionnaire thanking the respondents.
- f. Finally, I analyzed the individual scores secured by the respondents in questionnaire.
- g. Then the result was compared to determine the ability of grade eight students in free writing using tables.

3.6 Data Analysis and Interpretation Procedure

The collected data was arranged systematically and analyzed and interpreted descriptively using appropriate table, diagrams, illustrations, list and so on.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter is concerned with the presentation, analysis and interpretation of data collected from the primary sources to fulfill the set of objectives. The data has been analyzed descriptively and prescriptively. The primary sources of data were eighteen students of grade eight. I used tests to collect the data. Therefore, the analysis and interpretation of data has been done under the following headings; such as holistic analysis, question wise analysis and gender wise analysis.

4.1 Results

The aim of this study was to find out writing proficiency of grade eight students. The main findings of the study were:

- a. It was found that in the first test total average marks was 15. Out of 18, only 6 (i.e. 33.33%) students got above average marks and 12 (i.e. 66.66%) students got below average marks. Similarly in this test only 1 student (i.e. 5.56%) secured good marks, 1 (i.e. 5.56%) student secured poor marks and 16 (i.e. 88.89%) students secured very poor marks in first test. By analyzing the result, we can state that the result was not satisfactory in first ability test.
- b. In the second test, the total average marks was 19.5. In this test 8 (i.e. 44.44%) secured above average marks and 10 (i.e. 55.55%) students got below average marks. Similarly, only 1 (i.e. 5.56%) students got very good marks, 1 (i.e. 5.56%) students got good marks, 1 (i.e. 5.56%) students got satisfactory. On the other hand, in this test, 5 (i.e. 27.78%) students got poor marks and 10 (i.e. 55.56%) students got very poor marks. By looking the scenario in second test, the result is found not satisfactory.
- c. In the third test, the total average marks was 30.44. It was found that 12 (i.e. 66.66%) students secured above average marks and 6 (i.e. 33.33%) secured below average marks. In the category of the secured marks, only 1 (i.e. 5.56%) students got excellent marks, 8 (i.e. 44.44%) students got very good marks, 3 (i.e. 16.67%) students got good marks, 4 (i.e. 22.22%) students got

satisfactory. Similarly, 2 (i.e. 11.11%) students got poor marks and none students got very poor marks. Thus, we can say that in the third test, the result was good.

- d. In comparison of first and second test, it was found that, proficiency of students in the second test was a bit satisfactory than first test in the sense that students who got above average marks was increased by 11.11% in the second test. Similarly, in the second test, 5.56% of the students got very good, good and satisfactory marks respectively where as in first test only 5.56% students secured good marks. Rest of the students secured poor and very poor marks in the first test.
- e. The students who secured above average marks in the third test were 12 (i.e. 66.66%), which was increased by 22.22% than second ability test where total average marks was 30.44. Likewise, in the third ability test, 5.56% of the students excellent marks, 44.44% of the students got very good marks, 16.67% of the students got good marks, 22.22% of the students got satisfactory marks. Whereas, in the second ability test, only 5.56% of the students got very good, 5.56% of the students got good and similar number of the students (i.e. 5.56%) got satisfactory marks. Thus it was found that the result in the third test was far better than second test.
- f. In the comparison of first and third ability test, the result was far better in the third ability test in the sense that, only 6 students got above average marks in the first ability test, on the other hand in the third ability test it was increased by 33.33%. Altogether 12 students got above average marks in the third ability test. Similarly, in the first ability test, only 5.56% student secured good marks, 5.56% student's secured poor marks and rest of the 16 students (i.e. 88.89%) got very poor marks. But in the third ability test, i.e. 5.56% students got excellent marks, 44.44% students got very good marks, 16.67% students got good marks, 22.22% students got satisfactory.
- g. Students got better result in third test than first and second tests.
- h. It was found that students used better grammatical and punctuation aspect of writing in second and third test.

It means before the test was taken they didn't have the habit of writing. Similarly, students were found better in the use of grammatical aspects than in the use of other punctuation.

4.2 Discussion

Under discussion, the responses obtained from students are interpreted and analyzed using qualitative approach of data analysis. This chapter deals with the analysis and interpretations of the data collected from the lower secondary level students of Kanchanpur district. This chapter concentrates on the analysis and interpretations of the students' ability in free writing in the case of essay writing. Marks obtained by the students are statistically grouped and analyzed. The average marks and percentages of the marks secured by the students are observed. The analysis is further divided into the following sub-headings:

4.2.1 Holistic Analysis

4.2.2 Test wise analysis

Data were collected from 18 students with the help of the test items containing 5 questions related to free writing. The full marks of those questions were 50 (each question contained full mark 10). Questions of the first and third tests contained the topics like 'my school', 'computer', 'Cow' etc. Similarly, 'Gaura parba,' 'Discipline,' 'Goat' and 'Importance of book' were asked in second test.

4.2.1 Holistic Analysis

Holistic analysis refers to the analysis of free writing proficiency of all students in three different tests as a whole. The following table displays the total free writing proficiency of the students of Shree Beldandi Nav Jyoti Public School Beldadi.

Table No. 1; Free Writing Proficiency of Grade 8 Students

Test	Total Average	Above Average		Below Average		Total Students	F. M.
		N. St.	(%)	N. St.	(%)		
First test	15	6	33.33	12	66.66	18	50
Second test	19.5	8	44.44	10	55.55	18	50
Third test	30.44	12	66.66	6	33.33	18	50

As shown in the table above, tests were taken in the three levels; first test, second test and third test. Total number of the students was 18. Each question contained 10 full marks. In first test, total average was 15. Among 18 students, 6 students (i.e. 33.33%) got the above average marks and 12 students (i.e. 66.66%) students got below average marks. Similarly in the second test total average was 19.5. Out of 18 students, 8 (i.e. 44.44%) students were above average and 10 students (i.e. 55.55%) students were below average. Likewise in the third test 30.44 was the total average and among 18 students, 12 (i.e.66.66%) were above average and 6 students (i.e. 33.33%) were below average.

The number of students obtained above average marks rate is increased in second test than first test and similarly it was increased in third test than second test. Thus, we can say that the result was satisfactory.

4.2.2 Test Wise Analysis

In this part the test wise analysis in free writing ability of grade eight students has been analyzed. The items in those tests were related to check the ability of students in free writing. The data has been presented in the following table:

Table No. 2; Free Writing Ability and Category of Students Marks in First Ability Test

Student No.	F.M.	Marks obtained	% of Obtained marks	Remarks
1	50	31	62	Good
2	50	10	20	Very poor
3	50	16	32	Very poor
4	50	13	26	Very poor
5	50	13	26	Very poor
6	50	19	38	Very poor
7	50	14	28	Very poor
8	50	16	32	Very poor
9	50	19	38	Very poor
10	50	14	28	Very poor
11	50	14	28	Very poor
12	50	13	26	Very poor
13	50	13	26	Very poor
14	50	8	16	Very poor
15	50	9	18	Very poor
16	50	24	48	Poor
17	50	13	26	Very poor
18	50	11	22	Very poor

Excellent: 80% Above

Very good: 70%-79%

Good: 60%- 69%

Satisfactory: 50%- 59%

Poor: 40%-49%

Very poor: 30%-39%

The above table shows out of 18 students, only 1 student (i.e. 5.56%) secured good marks, 1 (i.e. 5.56%) student secured poor marks and 16 (i.e. 88.89%) students secured very poor marks. By analyzing the result, we can state that the result was not satisfactory in first ability test.

Table No. 3; Free Writing Ability and Category of Students Marks in Second Ability Test

Student No.	F.M.	Marks obtained	% of Obtained marks	Remarks
1	50	35	70	Very Good
2	50	19	38	Very poor
3	50	20	40	Poor
4	50	21	42	Poor
5	50	20	40	Poor
6	50	27	54	Satisfactory
7	50	15	30	Very poor
8	50	22	44	Poor
9	50	22	44	Poor
10	50	17	34	Very poor
11	50	18	36	Very poor
12	50	17	34	Very poor
13	50	19	38	Very poor
14	50	16	32	Very poor
15	50	15	30	Very poor
16	50	30	60	Good
17	50	18	36	Very poor
18	50	14	28	Very poor

Excellent: 80% Above

Very good: 70%-79%

Good: 60%- 69%

Satisfactory: 50%- 59%

Poor: 40%-49%

Very poor: 30%-39%

In the second test, out of 18 students only 1(i.e. 5.56%) students got very good marks, 1 (i.e. 5.56%) students got good marks, 1 (i.e. 5.56%) students got satisfactory. Similarly in second test, 5 (i.e. 27.78%) students got poor marks and 10 (i.e. 55.56%) students got very poor marks. Thus, the result is found a bit progressive because percentage of the students in very poor category has been decreased and the students in good and satisfactory category have been increased.

Table No. 4; Free Writing Ability and Category of Students Marks in Third Ability Test

Students No.	F.M.	Marks obtained	% of Obtained marks	Remarks
1	50	40	80	Excellent
2	50	32	64	Good
3	50	32	64	Good
4	50	26	52	Satisfactory
5	50	31	62	Good
6	50	35	70	Very Good
7	50	31	62	Good
8	50	32	64	Good
9	50	35	70	Very Good
10	50	31	62	Good
11	50	31	62	Good
12	50	24	48	Poor
13	50	26	52	Satisfactory
14	50	25	50	Satisfactory
15	50	27	54	Satisfactory
16	50	36	72	Very good
17	50	32	64	Good
18	50	21	42	Poor

Excellent: 80% Above

Very good: 70%-79%

Good: 60%- 69%

Satisfactory: 50%- 59%

Poor: 40%-49%

Very poor: 30%-39%

In the third test, out of 18 students only 1 (i.e. 5.56%) students got excellent marks, 8 (i.e. 44.44%) students got very good marks, 3 (i.e. 16.67%) students got good marks, 4 (i.e. 22.22%) students got satisfactory. Similarly in third test, 2 (i.e. 11.11%) students got poor marks and none students got very poor marks. Thus, we can say that in the third test, the result was good since out of 18 students 5.56% got excellent marks, 44.44% students got very good marks, 16.67% students got good marks. Only 22.22% students out of 18 got poor marks. In the comparison of first and second test, it was very good and students had improved a lot in their writing ability.

CHAPTER-FIVE

SUMMARY CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

This final chapter of this research report deals with summary, conclusion and implication which has been made after analyzing the data. This chapter is divided into three parts; summary, conclusion and implication.

5.1 Summary

The topic of the study is ‘Free Writing Ability of Grade Eight Students’. It was an Survey and qualitative research. To find out the free writing ability of grade VIII students especially in the case of descriptive essay writing was the objective of the study. In this study, the Survey research design has been used.

For this study, the total population was eighteen students of grade eight students of Shree Beldadi Nav Jyoti Public School, Beldandi, Kanchanpur. By using purposive non random sampling procedure, at first one private-aided school was selected and all the students were selected by applying purposive non random sampling procedure. To collect the required data for the study, I used questionnaire as the data collection tools.

The collected data was described and interpreted by applying qualitative analysis procedure. The interpretation and analysis of data was presented in two sections. In the first section Holistic analysis has been presented and in the second section, test wised analysis has been included. After applying all the procedures required for the survey research, following findings were carried out. Students got better result in third test than first and second tests. It was found that students used better grammatical and punctuation aspect of writing in second and third test. The writing proficiency of the students in first ability test was not satisfied since 5.56% out of 18 students only got good marks and 33.33% students got above average marks. In the second ability test also the result was not satisfactory in the since that only 5.56% students got very good marks, similar number i.e. 5.56% students got good marks and 27. 78% students got satisfactory marks. Similarly, in the second ability test 44.44% students got above

average marks. Similarly, In the third test, 5.56% students got excellent marks, 44.44% students got very good marks, 16.67% students got good marks, 22.22% students got satisfactory. Similarly, 66.66% students got above average marks in the third test. Thus we can say that the result in the third test was good. Similarly, it was found that students studied some tests related to the topic and they developed their writing habit. Moreover, it was found that, for good writing, students must have knowledge upon the subject matter and writing habit.

5.2 Conclusion

Since my study was conducted to describe free writing ability of grade eight students especially in the case of essay writing, I prepared questionnaire to collect responses required to the study and presented descriptively. On the basis of analysis and interpretation of the information collected from eighteen respondents, I reached in the following conclusion.

The writing proficiency of the students in first and second ability test was not satisfied. However, in the second ability test, it was found that, proficiency of students was a bit satisfactory than first test in the sense that students who got above average marks was increased by 11.11%. In the third test, the marks obtained by the students were very good and percentage of students who got above average marks was increased by 22.22% than second ability test. Similarly, while comparing the first and third ability test it was found that the students who got above average marks was increased by 33.33% than first ability test. Likewise, it was found that students studied some tests related to the topic outside of the classroom and they developed their writing habit. Moreover, for good writing, students must have knowledge upon the subject matter and writing habit.

It was found that students used better grammatical and punctuation aspect of writing in second and third test.

5.3 Implications

The present research work is researchers' sincere effort to present to find out the free writing ability of grade VIII students. It is one step of discovery which is not discovered yet. All my findings are helpful in teaching, learning, material production related to the language teaching in our country.

The main implication of the study for educational practice can be presented under the following three levels.

5.3.1 Policy level

Policy is a course of action of a government to systematize the activities of the people belonging to the particular field. It is the long term vision of the nation. Policy helps to achieve the objectives.

In the case of Nepal, many policies are made without adequate study. Due to inadequate study, they cannot be successful; therefore, immediately after formulating policies they are compelled to change. The study conducted on free writing ability of grade VIII students, would be highly helpful for the policy makers of Nepal to formulate policy related to teaching and learning. The main implications of this level are:

- a. The study will be highly helpful to the policy makers in the field of education in general and in the field of English language education in particular for making policy related to the teaching and learning of writing skill.
- b. It will be highly effective for ministry of education to design various educational plans about ELT and to implement them because it would be effective to train the teachers regarding the classroom procedures and materials production for teaching writing skills of English language.
- c. DOE can take benefit from the study to achieve its goal in implementing different programme related to the mother tongue Education.

- d. It will be highly beneficial for curriculum development centre for designing new curriculum, revise and improve existing curriculum.
- e. The universities can utilize the study to make policies in related field.

5.3.2 Practice Level

The implication of the research studies in the practical field or day to day life is categorized under practice level. This study directly related to the practical field of the English language teaching. The practitioners of ELT such as curriculum developer, teachers, textbook writers, material producers, linguists principal and supervisors and so on can effectively utilize the study. The major implications of the study in practice level are:

- a. Particularly English teachers can take help from the findings of the study to teach writing skills of English, to improve their teaching by using free writings tests while teaching writing test.
- b. It becomes asset for the school management committee, school administration and headmasters to improve quality of education and increase participation of the learners as well as teachers in teaching and learning writing activities.
- c. Textbook writers and instructional material producers will also get feedback from it.
- d. ELT supervisors can take help from the findings of the study summarized in this study.

5.3.3 Further Research

I hope the present study would be fruitful to conduct further research. It is one step of study in 'Free Writing Ability of Grade Eight Students'. Checking the students ability by using free writings essays are very effective and important tools for teaching writing skills, so the scope of this study is too much fruitful. The new researchers can analyze the other field of teaching like; teaching guided writings, teaching writing through half dialogue. All the new researchers who are interested in this field would certainly be benefited from the findings of this study.

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Appendix – I

First test and Third test

Full Marks: 50

Pass Marks: 20

Time: 2.30 hrs

This questionnaire is prepared to collect to the data for the purpose of research study on Free Writing Ability of Grade Eight Students' to fulfill the master's degree. I promise that your concern will be confidential, Please, supply required information in the following format.

Name of School:

Class:

Name of Student:

Roll No.:

Sex:

Subject:

Students are required to give their answer in their own words as far as possible.

Attempt all the questions:

1. Write an essay about the computer in 120 words. [10]
2. Write an essay about "My School". [10]
3. Write an essay about "Cow" in 120 words. [10]
4. Write an essay about "Forest of Nepal". [10]
5. Write an essay about "Student Life". [10]

Appendix – II

Second Test

Full Marks: 50

Pass Marks: 15

Time: 45 minute per test

This questionnaire is prepared to collect to the data for the purpose of research study on Free Writing Ability of Grade Eight Students' to fulfill the master's degree. I promise that your concern will be confidential, Please, supply required information in the following format.

Name of School:

Class:

Name of Student:

Roll No.:

Sex:

Subject:

Students are required to give their answer in their own words as far as possible.

Attempt all the questions:

6. Write an essay about the Gaura Parba in 120 words. [10]
7. Write an essay about "Goat". [10]
8. Write an essay about "Discipline" in 120 words. [10]
9. Write an essay about "Importance of Book". [10]
10. Write an essay about "Sanitation". [10]

Appendix - III

The essay will be checked on the basis of following mark scheme.

Aspect	Marks
Cohesion	1.5
Coherence	1.5
Grammar and spelling	3
Content, Introduction, Body and conclusion	4
Total	10