

7

Carrier of Words

Summary

The chapter describes the life of Khetaram, a Gramin Dak Sewak who delivers letters in the harsh Thar Desert. Despite extreme heat, long distances, and difficult conditions, he continues his duty with dedication. These rural postmen play an important role in connecting remote villages with the outside world. They are trusted and respected by people, helping them stay in touch with their families. Khetaram's work shows commitment, service, and the importance of human connection.

- **Message:** Hard work, dedication, and a sense of duty can make a big difference in society. Even small roles, when performed sincerely, become valuable and meaningful for others.

New Terms

- **Gramin Dak Sewak (GDS)** – A rural postal worker who delivers letters in remote areas.
- **Railhead** – The last station on a railway line.
- **Dhaani** – A small village or group of huts (common in Rajasthan).
- **Hefted** – Lifted or carried with effort.
- **Regulations** – Official rules.
- **Sizzle** – To be extremely hot.
- **Mojri** – Traditional leather footwear worn in Rajasthan.
- **Postpone** – To delay something to a later time.
- **Swirling** – Moving in a circular or spinning way.
- **Furies** – Violent or powerful forces (like strong winds).
- **Devoid** – Completely lacking something.
- **Invaluable** – Extremely useful or important.
- **Ambit** – Range or scope of something.
- **Criterion** – A standard or rule for judging something.
- **Livelihood** – Means of earning a living.
- **Akaal** – Famine (shortage of food).
- **Remitted** – Sent money, usually from one place to another.
- **Entrust** – To give responsibility to someone you trust.
- **Patwari** – A village officer who keeps land records.
- **Missive** – A letter or written message.
- **Ashubh Samachar** – Bad or inauspicious news.
- **Desolate** – Empty, lonely, and without life.
- **Stride** – To walk with long, confident steps.
- **Mandate** – Official order or duty.

Reflect and Respond

I. Look at the pictures given below of persons engaged in the same profession.



Discuss in pairs and share your answers with your classmates and teacher.

1. Which profession do they belong to?

Ans. They belong to professions like postman / delivery worker / communication service providers.

2. Do they face any difficulties while doing their duty?

Ans. Yes, they face many difficulties such as:

- Long distances to travel
- Extreme weather (heat, rain, cold)
- Carrying heavy loads
- Reaching remote or difficult areas

3. How does their profession affect the people they meet?

Ans. Their work helps people:

- Stay connected with family and friends
- Receive important news and money
- Feel supported and cared for

II. Discuss in groups.

1. How can 'words' be 'carried'?

Ans. 'Words' can be 'carried' through different ways of communication, such as:

- Letters and postcards (postal services)
- Phone calls and messages
- Emails and social media
- Through people like postmen, messengers, teachers, or speakers

2. Who could be a carrier of words?

Ans. A carrier of words is someone who delivers messages from one person to another.

Examples include:

- Postmen (like Gramin Dak Sewaks)
- Couriers or delivery persons
- Messengers
- Teachers
- Writers and journalists
- Digital platforms (mobile phones, internet)

3. What are the means for people to stay connected?

Ans. People can stay connected through different means such as:

- Postal system (letters, postcards, money orders)
- Mobile phones (calls, SMS)
- Internet (emails, chats, video calls, social media)
- Television and radio (news and information)

III. Read the words given in the box below and place them in their appropriate context in the following passage.

slumped	dunes	defying
hamlets	signals	devoid

- We stepped out of the vehicle at the end of the road. Immediately, our body sent 1. _____ that our decision to visit the sand 2. _____ in the afternoon was insane. We had passed a few 3. _____ on our way to the desert. We could not find even a single soul outdoors, 4. _____ the blazing sun. Even the camels were 5. _____ in the little shade offered by the khejri trees. In this remote place people relied on Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) to connect to the world as the area was 6. _____ of any other network service.

Ans. Fill in the blanks

1. signals 2. dunes 3. hamlets 4. defying 5. slumped
6. devoid

Passage:

- We stepped out of the vehicle at the end of the road. Immediately, our body sent 1. signals that our decision to visit the sand 2. dunes in the afternoon was insane. We had passed a few 3. hamlets on our way to the desert. We could not find even a single soul outdoors, 4. defying the blazing sun. Even the camels were 5. slumped in the little shade offered by the khejri trees. In this remote place people relied on Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) to connect to the world as the area was 6. devoid of any other network service.

Check Your Understanding

- I. Khetaram needs to submit information about himself for getting an identity card. While reading the text, fill up the following information sheet for Khetaram.

Name	Khetaram
Position	
Employer	
Official address	
Mode of transport used	
Key responsibilities	+ _____ + _____ + _____ + _____

Ans. Here is the filled information sheet for Khetaram:

Name: Khetaram

Position: Gramin Dak Sewak (Postman)

Employer: India Post

Official address: Somarad Branch Post Office, Barmer district, Rajasthan

Mode of transport used: On foot (walking across sand dunes)

Key responsibilities:

- Deliver letters and parcels to remote villages
- Carry and distribute money orders
- Read letters and write replies for villagers
- Connect people in remote areas with their families and the outside world

II. Discuss with your teacher.**1. Why do you think Khetaram has taken up this challenging job?**

Ans. Khetaram has taken up this job to earn a livelihood and support his family. In his area, farming is uncertain due to frequent droughts, so this job gives him a stable income. He also feels a sense of duty in serving people and helping them stay connected.

2. How do you think Khetaram would feel about taking up this challenging task every day?

Ans. Khetaram may feel tired because of the harsh conditions, but he is also proud and satisfied with his work. Helping people and being trusted by them gives him a sense of purpose and happiness despite the difficulties.

Check Your Understanding**I. Complete the table given below with the situations given in Column 1 and the reasons in Column 2.**

Column 1	Column 2
	When the temperature is recorded as 50 degrees celsius and above, a state holiday has to be declared.
Khetaram can dwell on any threshold.	
BSF always gave Khetaram a lift.	

Ans.

Column 1 (Situation)	Column 2 (Reason)
- When the temperature is recorded as 50°C and above, a state holiday has to be declared. - Khetaram can dwell on any threshold. - BSF always gave Khetaram a lift.	- Because extreme heat is dangerous for people, so work is stopped for safety. - Because people trust him and welcome him warmly into their homes. - Because they respect his work and want to help him travel easily in difficult areas.

II. Why was a piece of jaggery offered in the village when he brought news of a birth or weddings?

Ans. A piece of jaggery was offered to Khetaram as a traditional and simple way of celebrating joyful occasions like births and weddings. It was also a gesture of respect, gratitude, and hospitality towards him for bringing good news to the village.

III. How would phone lines help Khetaram in his job?

Ans. Phone lines would make Khetaram's job easier by improving communication. They would reduce the need for long-distance travel, allow messages to be delivered quickly, and help him take on the role of a Gramin Sanchar Sewak, handling both calls and postal services.

Critical Reflection

I. Read the extracts given below and answer the questions.

1. "Akaal or famine is a way of life here. In a good year, I get one crop of bajra. That cannot feed my family of five. We would starve without this job," he says. And for each family which resides in this arid land, survival is partly dependent on money orders remitted by a relative.

(i) Complete the sentence given below with an appropriate reason.

- One crop of bajra makes a little difference for people like Khetaram because _____.

Ans. One crop of bajra makes a little difference for people like Khetaram because it is not enough to feed his whole family for the entire year.

(ii) Why did Khetaram term famine as 'a way of life'?

Ans. Khetaram called famine 'a way of life' because drought and shortage of food are very common in his region.

(iii) Give one reason why Khetaram had to take up a job to help his family to survive.

Ans. Khetaram had to take up a job because farming alone could not support his family's needs.

(iv) Complete the analogy given below with a word from the extract.

- Other families: Money orders:: Khetaram: _____

Ans. Other families: Money orders :: Khetaram: Job (GDS work)

(v) What would 'a good year' signify?

Ans. 'A good year' signifies a year with enough rainfall and a better crop yield.

2. There is one letter delivery he dreads. The envelope with the right corner torn off, which signifies that the missive bears news of death. "Ashubh Samachar cannot be carried into the house," says Khetaram. So, he stands outside, reads out the letter twice, then tears it to bits. "Bad news must be destroyed," he mutters philosophically.

(i) Choose the correct option for the following question.

- Who could have torn the right corner of the envelope?

A. Khetaram	B. Sender of the letter
C. Receiver of the letter	D. The postmaster

Ans. B. Sender of the letter

(ii) Complete the sentence with an appropriate reason.

- The most likely reason for Khetaram reading the letter twice is because _____.

Ans. The most likely reason for Khetaram reading the letter twice is because he wants to ensure the message is clearly understood by the listener.

(iii) What was Khetaram's philosophy regarding bad news, and how did he act upon it?

Ans. Khetaram believed that bad news should not be carried inside the house and must be destroyed, so he reads the letter outside and tears it afterwards.

(iv) State whether the following sentence is true or false.

- Khetaram's action of tearing the letter differed from his beliefs.

Ans. False (His actions match his beliefs.)

(v) Mention any one aspect of Khetaram's temperament which is revealed through this extract.

Ans. One aspect of Khetaram's temperament is that he is sensitive and thoughtful.

II. Answer the following questions.

1. Justify the statement made by Postmaster-General, Rajasthan Western Region stating that the role of GDS is 'invaluable'.

Ans. The role of GDS is 'invaluable' because they connect remote and inaccessible areas with the rest of the country by delivering letters, money, and essential services despite harsh conditions.

2. How was the purpose of India Post different from that of the British postal system?

Ans. India Post aimed to serve and connect people across the country, especially in rural areas, whereas the British postal system was mainly meant for administrative control and official communication.

3. People trusted Gramin Dak Sewaks. Support this statement with any two instances from the text.

Ans. People trusted Gramin Dak Sewaks because:

- They read letters and write replies for villagers.
- They safely deliver money orders and important messages.

4. Infer the most likely reason that Khetaram was grateful to continue as GDS, even after the age of 60.

Ans. Khetaram was grateful to continue as GDS because the job provided him with a steady income and allowed him to support his family even after 60.

5. Explain why the author pays tribute to people like Khetaram.

Ans. The author pays tribute to people like Khetaram because they work selflessly in difficult conditions and play an important role in keeping people connected.

Vocabulary and Structures in Context

I. Study the phrases given in Column 1 and match them with their meanings in Column 2.

Column 1	Column 2
1. crumbles into sand	(i) get a chance to continue living
2. give a new lease of life	(ii) carrying letters to less populated areas
3. turn into a trickle before drying out	(iii) disappears in the desert
4. bearing words across this desolate geography	(iv) lessen gradually and then finally stop

Now, use the phrases from Column 1 in sentences of your own.

Ans. Matching the phrases with their meanings:

Column 1 (Phrase)	Column 2 (Meaning)
1. crumbles into sand	- (iii) disappears in the desert
2. give a new lease of life	- (i) get a chance to continue living
3. turn into a trickle before drying out	- (iv) lessen gradually and then finally stop
4. bearing words across this desolate geography	- (ii) carrying letters to less populated areas

Sentences using the phrases:

- crumbles into sand** - The old road slowly crumbles into sand in the desert area.
- give a new lease of life** - The rains give a new lease of life to dry crops.
- turn into a trickle before drying out** - The river turns into a trickle before drying out in summer.
- bearing words across this desolate geography** - The postman travels long distances, bearing words across this desolate geography.

II. Identify examples of alliteration and metaphor in the extract given below.

- Khetaram's khaki turban and uniform are his only protection against the desert's furies, the scorching summer winds and swirling sandstorms which turn him into a walking sandman.

Ans.

- Alliteration** - "Khetaram's khaki" - Repetition of the 'k' sound creates a rhythmic effect.
- Alliteration** - "scorching summer" - Repetition of the 's' sound adds emphasis and flow.
- Alliteration** - "swirling sandstorms" - Repetition of the 's' sound highlights the harsh desert conditions.
- Metaphor** - "turn him into a walking sandman" - Khetaram is compared to a "sandman," suggesting he is covered in sand and becomes part of the desert, without using "like" or "as."

III. Match the words in Column 1 to what they suggest in Column 2 in the context of the chapter.

Column 1	Column 2
1. arid	(i) interest rate for the farmers
2. concessional	(ii) corner of the world
3. gaunt	(iii) farmland without much yield
4. remote	(iv) desert stretching far and wide
5. desolate	(v) farmer waiting for the rains

Now, use the words from Column 1 in sentences of your own.**Ans.**

Column 1 (Word)	Column 2 (Meaning)
1. arid	- (iii) farmland without much yield
2. concessional	- (i) interest rate for the farmers
3. gaunt	- (v) farmer waiting for the rains
4. remote	- (ii) corner of the world
5. desolate	- (iv) desert stretching far and wide

Sentences using the words:

- arid** - The arid land could not support many crops.
- concessional** - The bank provided a concessional loan to the farmers.
- gaunt** - The gaunt farmer looked tired due to lack of rain.
- remote** - The village is located in a remote area.
- desolate** - The travellers walked through a desolate desert.

IV. Read the underlined verbs in the sentences given in Column 1 and their functions in Column 2.

Column 1	Column 2
1. She <u>has found</u> her book.	(i) finished actions (past event—present result)
2. I <u>have</u> just <u>eaten</u> a mango.	(ii) recently completed action
3. <u>Have</u> you ever <u>seen</u> a play before?	(iii) life experiences
4. I <u>have finished</u> my project.	(iv) accomplishment
5. Ajay <u>has become</u> a good bowler in five years.	(v) changes over time
6. I <u>have seen</u> this book in the library many times.	(vi) multiple actions at different times
7. I <u>have studied</u> in this school for six years.	(vii) action completed in the past but has its impact in present

All the verbs in the sentences in Column 1 are in **present perfect tense**.

The structure is: has/have + past participle (third form of the verb).

- Now, fill in the blanks by using the present perfect form of the verbs given in the brackets to complete the following paragraph.

- 1. I _____ (has/have) just _____ (get) a collection of postage stamps from my grandfather. He 2. _____ (collect) these stamps over a period of 20 years. I 3. _____ (study) most of the stamps in his collection and loved all of them. I 4. _____ (begin) my own collection of postage stamps. Grandfather 5. _____ truly _____ (inspire) me.

Ans.

Column 1 (Sentence)	Column 2 (Function)
1. She has found her book.	- (i) finished actions (past event—present result)
2. I have just eaten a mango.	- (ii) recently completed action
3. Have you ever seen a play before?	- (iii) life experiences
4. I have finished my project.	- (iv) accomplishment
5. Ajay has become a good bowler in five years.	- (v) changes over time
6. I have seen this book in the library many times.	- (vi) multiple actions at different times
7. I have studied in this school for six years.	- (vii) action completed in the past but has its impact in present

Correctly completed paragraph:(Present Perfect Tense)

- I have just got a collection of postage stamps from my grandfather. He has collected these stamps over a period of 20 years. I have studied most of the stamps in his collection and loved all of them. I have begun my own collection of postage stamps. Grandfather has truly inspired me.

V. Study the sentences given below.

1. GDS delivers the mail at the border.

- When the subject does the action, the sentence is in active voice.

2. The mail is delivered by the GDS at the border.

- This implies that the 'mail' receives the action 'deliver'.
- This sentence is in passive voice because the subject is receiving the action.

3. Khetaram's nephew wants to join the GDS. He asks Khetaram how to prepare for it. Khetaram gives him the following advice.

- (i) You will need a lot of stamina for this job.
- (ii) Practise reading clearly as some of the villagers will expect you to read out the letters.
- (iii) Write words neatly as some villagers will ask you to draft replies.
- (iv) Wear full-sleeved shirts and trousers to protect yourself from the heat.

Now, complete the following paragraph about the advice given by Khetaram. One example has been done for you.

- To begin with, a lot of stamina will be needed for this job. Next, reading clearly A. _____, as you B. _____ to read out the letters by some of the villagers. Words C. _____ neatly as you D. _____ to draft replies by some villagers. Full sleeved-shirts and trousers E. _____ to protect yourself from the heat.

Ans. Fill in the blanks:

A. will be practised

B. will be expected

C. will be written

D. will be asked

E. should be worn

Correctly completed paragraph:

- To begin with, a lot of stamina will be needed for this job. Next, reading clearly A. will be practised, as you B. will be expected to read out the letters by some of the villagers. Words C. will be written neatly as you D. will be asked to draft replies by some villagers. Full sleeved-shirts and trousers E. should be worn to protect yourself from the heat.

Listen and Respond

I. You will listen to a girl talking about an event. As you listen, fill in the blank with the suitable word from the brackets. (Transcript for teacher on page 272)

- The speaker concluded her talk with a _____. (suggestion/request/advice)

Good morning. Respected Principal, teachers, and my dear friends, I, Bhavna of Grade 9 B, would like to share some information about the celebration of Indian Postal Day in our school. It is celebrated on 10 October to commemorate the service of India Post, the most widely functioning government postal service in the world.

We will be celebrating it by organising 'Daakroom'—a letter writing carnival at our school. Its name comes from the Hindi word 'daak' which means 'post'. The objective behind this carnival is to get all of us excited about letter writing, a forgotten art form. The carnival will have various competitions, events and workshops such as letter writing, stamp collecting, calligraphy, origami, graphology—which means the study of handwriting and postcard making. This carnival will also feature music, theatre, and dance.

It will also include interactive demonstrations by the postal department. I request all the students to actively participate and make this event a grand success.

Thank you.

II. You will listen to the girl talking about the event again. As you listen, choose the correct option for the following questions.

1. What was the occasion that the speaker was talking about?

- (i) Letter writing carnival
- (ii) Philately day
- (iii) Indian Postal Day

Ans. (iii) Indian Postal Day

2. India Post is famous for having the most extensive network _____.

- (i) in India
- (ii) in the world
- (iii) among design institutes

Ans. (ii) in the world

3. Letter writing is being revived as this art form has been _____.

- (i) celebrated
- (ii) appreciated
- (iii) forgotten

Ans. (iii) forgotten

4. Which of the following will be a part of the letter writing carnival?

- (i) calligraphy and graphology
- (ii) origami and designing
- (iii) letter posting and philately

Ans. (i) calligraphy and graphology

5. What will the postal department add to the event?

- (i) interactive demonstrations
- (ii) theatre and dance
- (iii) workshop for letter writing

Ans. (i) interactive demonstrations

Speaking Activity

I. The postcard, inland letter, envelope, and money order form were engaged in a discussion on who the most important one was.



- In groups of four, select one each and reason with each other logically. You may use the points for discussion given in Column 1 and the cues given in Column 2 to express your opinion.

Column 1 (Points for discussion)	Column 2 (Verbal cues to present opinion)
✚ utility	It seems to me that...
✚ cost effective	Some people say that...
✚ privacy	I would like to point out that...
✚ space to write	I totally agree that...
✚ possibility of enclosures	That's one way to look at it but...

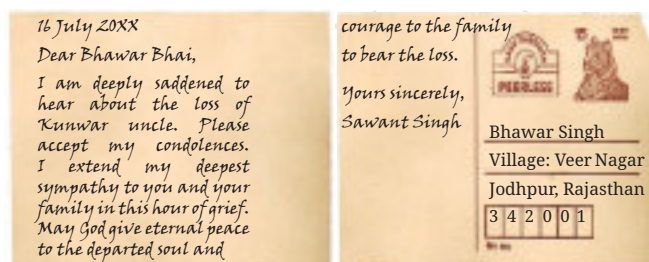
Ans. Here is a sample group discussion answer using the given cues:

- Postcard:** It seems to me that I am the most important because I am very cost-effective and can be used by everyone, even poor people.
- Inland Letter:** I would like to point out that I provide more space to write and also maintain better privacy than a postcard.
- Envelope:** That's one way to look at it but I offer the best privacy and also allow the possibility of enclosures like photos and documents.
- Money Order Form:** I totally agree that all of you are useful, but I am very important because I help people send money safely, which is a great utility.

Writing Task

A condolence message communicates your feelings to someone whose relative or a person close to them has just passed away. It mentions how sorry you feel for the loss and your prayers for strength to the family members.

- I. I Khetaram saw a letter with a torn corner. It had news about Bhawar Singh's uncle passing away. Read the condolence message that Sawant Singh sent to his cousin as a reply to the letter.



- Now, on behalf of your parents draft an imaginary condolence message for your aunt on the recent passing away of her father.

Ans. Here is a suitable condolence message:

16 July 20XX

Dear Aunt,

We are deeply saddened to hear about the passing away of your father. Please accept our heartfelt condolences. We can only imagine the pain and grief you are going through at this difficult time.

May God give you and your family the strength to bear this great loss. May his soul rest in eternal peace.

With deepest sympathy,

Your loving family