

NURTURING NATURE

NEEM BABA

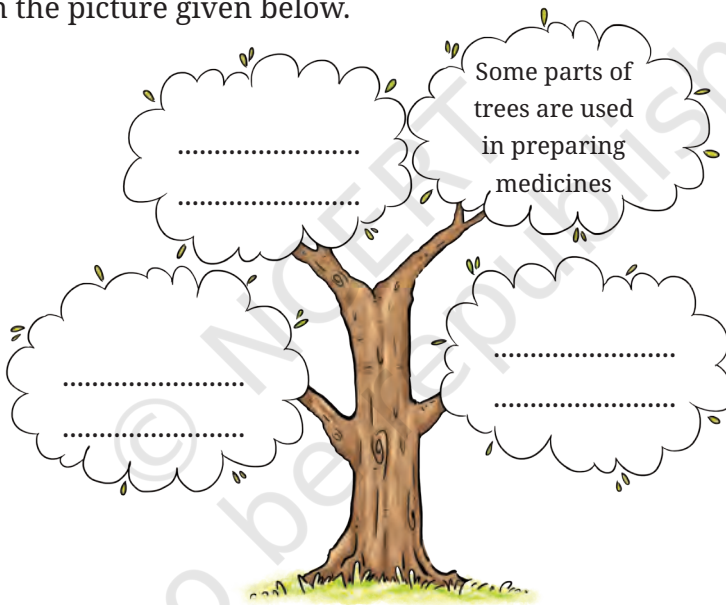


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Let us do these activities before we read.

1. A tree is useful to us in many ways. Mention some of these uses. Write them in the picture given below.



2. Neem is a common tree in our country. Discuss in groups of four and fill Columns A and B with what you know about the neem tree and what you want to know.

Column A What do you know?	Column B What do you want to know?
•	•
•	•
•	•
•	•



Let us read

Amber returned from school and sat down in the shade of the neem tree in her courtyard. She felt that the tree was whispering to her. She looked at the tree and spoke to the tree.



I

Amber : *Namaste!* I am Amber. I would like to talk to you. May I?

Neem Baba : Sure, dear Amber. I know you. You played in my shade in your childhood. You may call me 'Neem Baba'.

Amber : I have seen you almost everywhere. Please tell me something more about yourself.

Neem Baba : I am very old. I was born millions of years ago somewhere in North India or Myanmar. Soon, my family spread outside India.

Amber : Outside India? Where else can neem be found?

Neem Baba : My family can be found in many Asian and African countries and even in some parts of America.

Amber : That's wonderful! Who gave you your name?



Neem Baba : The story of my name is very **thought-provoking**. I was born in India and given Sanskrit names such as *Arishta* (the one who cures diseases), *Nimba* and *Nimbaca*. The name 'Neem' is given by the Iranians.

Amber : Really?

Neem Baba : Yes, in Hindi, my name is *Nimb*. In India, I have other names—*Nim*, *Leemba*, *Nimori*, *Nimbamond*, *Nimbe* and *Nimo*.

Amber : You are so well known! That is wonderful.

Neem Baba : Dear Amber, we become well known for what we do. People find us useful and that is why they know us. Scientists call us 'bitter **grace** of God', 'nature's gift to man', and 'cleanliness-parting tree'. Some even call us 'magic tree' and 'the tree of the twentieth century'.

thought-provoking:
interesting

grace: blessing

Let us discuss

Amber found many facts about the neem tree from Neem Baba. Fill up the fact sheet based on what Neem Baba told her.



LET US KNOW OUR NEEM		
Common name:		Given by:
Period of birth:		
Born at:		
Found in:		
Common names:		
Names given by scientists:	1.	2.
Names given by others:	1.	2.

II

Amber

: I know that people clean teeth with your **twigs** and protect clothes with your leaves. Sometime back, when my brother had **measles**, the doctor told us to put neem leaves on his bed and make him lie down on them. Can you explain why?

twigs: small thin branches

measles: disease with fever and red spots on skin

Neem Baba

: The doctors know that neem leaves have chemical properties that destroy germs. Measles cause **itching** all over the body. Neem leaves give comfort and do not allow germs to **breed**. Neem leaves, bark, flowers, fruits and even roots can be used to make medicines to cure many diseases.

itching: feeling the need to scratch

breed: grow



Amber : Yes, I once had a cough and I could not breathe properly. My grandmother cured me with a medicine made from neem bark. And when my father had itching in the eyes, she prepared a kajal from neem flowers, which cured him.

Neem Baba : Oh, little Amber, you know so much. Remember, these remedies are to be used only by people who are well trained and have a lot of experience.

Amber : Yes, I will. Tell me Neem Baba, is there any use of neem for the farmers?

Neem Baba : Yes. If the powder of neem seeds is mixed in water and sprayed on plants and trees, then **locusts** don't eat them. If it is used in rice fields, where water remains standing, it stops mosquito breeding and helps to increase crop yield. It also saves the crop from **termites**, which eat roots of the crop, and it also stops breeding of other insects that eat crops.

Amber : That means, if we put the powder of neem seeds in **stagnant** water around our homes, mosquitoes

locusts: flying insects that damage crops

termites: insects that damage wood and buildings

stagnant: not flowing



won't breed in them! This must be a **cost-effective** method to stop mosquitoes from breeding. Please tell me other uses of neem in our daily life.

Neem Baba : Of course. People save their stored grains from insects by adding neem seed powder to them. Neem oil is also used to make soaps and toothpaste. Furniture made from neem wood is not eaten by termites. Neem also **purifies** the air. There are many qualities yet to be discovered. Will you discover them when you grow up?

Amber : Yes, Neem Baba. I will. Thank you for your time today!

Neem Baba : Bless you, my child!

Adapted from Neem Baba
BY S. I. FAROOQI

cost-effective:
good outcome in
least amount of
resources

purifies:
removes harmful
particles

Let us discuss

1. How is neem useful to farmers?
2. Mention some of the uses of the neem tree.





Let us think and reflect

1. You just read about the Neem tree. Write any two facts that surprised you the most.
2. Complete the following sentences.
 - (a) The old man asked Amber to call him Neem Baba because _____.
 - (b) Neem seed powder protects crops from _____.
 - (c) _____ is a cost-effective method to stop mosquitoes from breeding in stagnant water.
 - (d) One reason why doctors advise us to use neem leaves for someone suffering from measles is _____.
3. Why can Neem Baba not remember the year when he was born?
4. Which parts of the neem tree are used to make medicines?



Let us learn

1. Study these words from the text.

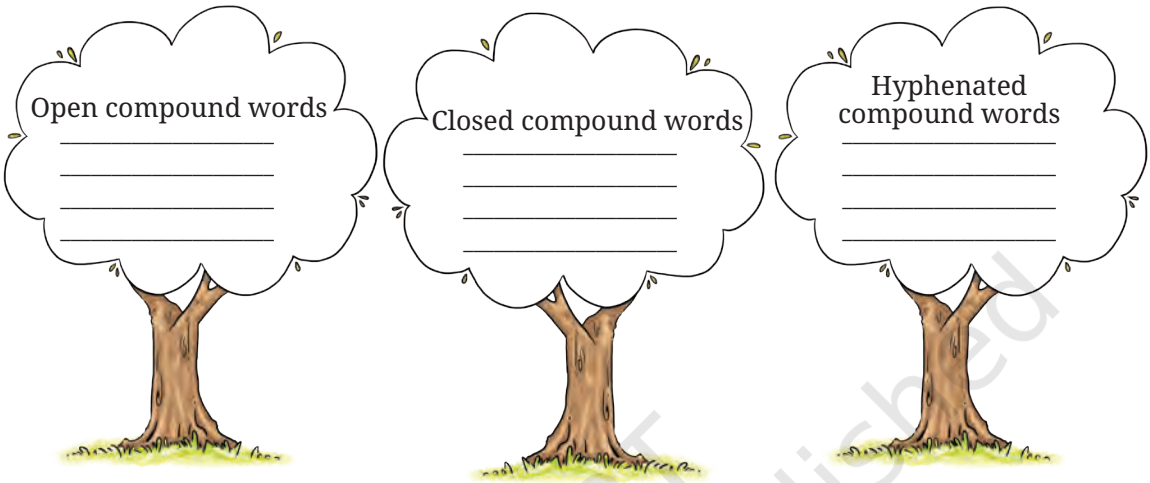
- | | | |
|--------------|----------------|-----------------------|
| • something | • neem oil | • cleanliness-parting |
| • well known | • grandmother | • seed powder |
| • childhood | • well trained | • thought-provoking |

Put the compound words given above in their trees.

These words are known as compound words. There are three types of compound words, based on how the words are separated.

- Open compound words: spaces between the words.
- Closed compound words: no spaces between the words.
- Hyphenated compound words: hyphens between the words.

You may add some more words:



2. Words that tell us what a person is doing are called verbs. In the table given below, match the verbs in the first column showing action in the present to verbs in the second column showing action in the past. Make a sentence with any one form of the verb. One has been done for you.

Present	Past	Answer	Sentence
1. become	a. made	1. d.	I want to become a teacher when I grow up.
2. find	b. gave		
3. make	c. told		
4. discover	d. became		
5. tell	e. found		
6. give	f. discovered		



3. Neem Baba speaks to Amber as if he is a person. This figure of speech is called **personification**. Let us look at some more examples.

- The leaves whispered in the wind.
- The flowers danced merrily in the breeze.

Now, discuss it with your classmates and teacher.



Let us listen

You will now listen to a boy speaking to his mother. As you listen, select the correct statements. (*refer to page 101 for transcript*)

- The mother was surprised to know that Peepal Baba had planted trees all over the country.
- The mother disliked the work being done by Peepal Baba.
- The mother wanted to know more about Peepal Baba.
- The boy decided to take care of trees by listening to Peepal Baba's journey.
- The boy was worried about what his teacher had told him.



Let us speak

Collect dry leaves of four different trees and plants around you.

- Make one card as given below. On the top, draw the shape of the leaf looking at the dry leaf and colour it. Inside the card, write the name of the tree/plant the leaf is taken from and one of its uses.
- Now, speak about the whole process of making the card in front of the class.
- Ask your classmates to identify the leaf and tell them one of its uses. After they answer, open the card, and share what you have written.





Let us write

You have read about Neem Baba and learnt many things about the neem tree. Look at the trees in your neighbourhood and write a paragraph about any one tree that you like.

- Where it is (roadside/park, etc.)
- How it looks (height, tree trunk, leaves, flowers, etc.)
- Why you like it (shade, medicinal properties, shelter, beauty, etc.)
- Give a title to your paragraph.



Let us explore

When people from Persia came to India and saw that a common tree of their country was freely growing here, they started calling the tree *Azad Darakhte Hindi*. So, the scientific name of Neem in Latin became *Azadirachta indica*.

Neem has different names in the Indian languages. Discuss with your teacher and find out which Indian languages these names belong to.

Name	<i>Nimb</i>	<i>Nim</i>	<i>Leemba</i>	<i>Nimori</i>	<i>Nimbamond</i>	<i>Nimbe</i>	<i>Nimo</i>
Indian							

