

English | Passage | Class 6

Read the passages given below and answer the questions that follow:

Conversation is a fine art. It is the art of exchanging thought. It is an art which anybody can cultivate or master. Not everybody can paint or play music, but almost everyone can talk. Thus it affords the greatest pleasure to the greatest number. "To talk", says R.L. Sleverson, "is our chief business in the world. And talk is by far the most accessible of pleasures. It costs nothing in money, it is all profit. It completes our education, makes friends and can be enjoyed at any age. Conversation is indeed the most teachable of all the arts. All you need to do is to find a subject that interests you and your listeners.

Hobbies are for example, numberless hobbies to talk about. But the important thing is that you must talk about the other fellow's hobby rather than your own. Therein lies the secret of your popularity. There is nothing that pleases people so much as your interest in their interest.

It is just as important to know what subjects to avoid and what subjects to select for good conversation. If you don't want to be set down as a bore, avoid certain unpleasant topics. Avoid talking about yourself unless you are asked to do so. Sickness or death bores everybody. The only one who willingly listens to such talk is, the doctor, but he gets paid for it. You must also know not only what to say but also how to say it.

Questions:

1. Answer the following questions briefly:

- (a) How does the author define and explain the art of conversation?
- (b) How is talking easier to learn than other fine arts?
- (c) What are the subjects one can easily talk about?
- (d) Which topics usually bore the listener?
- (e) What should be avoided unless you are asked to do so?

2. Find out words from the above passage similar in meaning to the following:

- (a) acquire or develop
- (b) within reach
- (c) make happy