

him even from his heavenly abode.

### Pre reading task - 1

1. What is a mace?  
A. A mace is a simple weapon.
2. What are the features of a mace?  
A. A mace has a heavy wooden or metal shaft, often reinforced with metal featuring a head made of stones, copper, bronze, iron or steel. It was used in traditional warfare.
3. What are the uses of a mace?  
A. Traditionally they were used in warfare. Today they are used as symbol of authority in the emblems of a number of government bodies, universities, and academic, parliamentary or civic rituals.

### Pre reading task - 2

1. What is a 'parasol'?  
A. It is a light, usually small umbrella used to give shade and protection from the sun.
2. Where is it used?  
A. It is used in the terraces of homes for relaxation, in religious processions it is placed over the deity, during weddings-especially the royal Indian weddings, in beaches, in kiosks where new products are introduced in the markets etc.
3. Why is it used?  
A. It is used to protect oneself from light rain or sunshine.

I. Comprehension

A. Answer the following questions in one or two sentences each:-

1. What was the name of the beautiful princess of Pragjyotisha?

A. The name of the beautiful princess of Pragjyotisha was Amritaprabha.

2. What was arranged for her, when she attained the age of marriage?

A. When she attained the age of marriage, the king, her father arranged for a swayamvara to enable her to choose her husband.

3. Who was Meghavahana?

A. Meghavahana was the great-grandson of a former king of Kashmir.

4. Why did the priest cry out in surprise?

A. The priest cried out in surprise because he could see the shadow of the parasol of Varuna cast over prince Meghavahana.

5. What was the uniqueness of the parasol?

A. The uniqueness of the parasol was that it would cast its shadow on none other than on the one destined to be the sovereign of the world.

6. Why did the ministers of the Kashmir court make an offer to Meghavahana to be their king?

A. The present king of Kashmir had devoted his life to praying, thereby neglecting the affairs of the kingdom. The citizens of Kashmir were unhappy and dissatisfied with their king. Therefore the Kashmir's ministers of the court made an offer to Meghavahana to be their king.

7. What was the law imposed by Meghavahana in his kingdom?

A. Meghavahana imposed a law that no living beings would be killed in his kingdom henceforth.

8. Why did Meghavahana want to conquer the island of Lanka?

A. Meghavahana wanted to conquer the island of Lanka, which was known as the land of the demons, in order to teach them the ways of peace.

9. What did Meghavahana witness in the middle of the woods?  
A. In the middle of the woods Meghavahana witnessed a sort of human sacrifice in progress on the steps of the temple of Chandika (Durga).
10. Why did the barbarian want to kill an innocent man?  
A. The barbarian wanted to kill an innocent man because he believed that the Gods would be pleased with the human sacrifice and would thereby save his ailing son.
11. How did Meghavahana rescue both the victim and the barbarian's son?  
A. Meghavahana offered himself to be sacrificed to the Gods instead of the innocent man. Thus he wanted to save both the victim as well as the barbarian's son.
12. What happened when Meghavahana was about to strike himself?  
A. When Meghavahana was about to strike himself, his head was covered with divine flowers of exquisite colours and perfume and someone held back his arm.

II Read the following statements and answer the questions given below:

1. "It casts its shade on none else but a sovereign of the whole world ...."

(a) Who said this?

A. This was said by the King of Pragjyotisha.

(b) Who was it said to ?

A. It was said to prince Meghavahana.

(c) When was it said?

A. It was said when Meghavahana looked up in surprise, wondering at the meaning of the king's remark 'My son, you are favoured by

the Gods'. and he saw a beautiful, dazzling, white parasol with exquisite decorations casting its shadow over him.

2. "You wretch! You dare to threaten another's life in my realm"

(a) Who did this?

A. This was said by Meghavahana.

(b) To whom was it said?

A. It was said to the barbarian who was brandishing his sword over his victim.

(c) Why was it said?

A. It was said by the king who was shocked at the sight of a human sacrifice in progress, because he had prohibited such acts in his kingdom.

3. "If you cannot bring yourself to strike at me, I will use my own sword for the purpose".

(a) Who said this?

A. It was said by Meghavahana.

(b) Who was the listener?

A. The barbarian was the listener.

(c) What meaning does this sentence convey?

A. It very strongly conveys the message that the king cared for the welfare of his subjects and was willing to sacrifice his life for their happiness. It also displays his compassion and love towards his citizens.

### III. Language activity:

Fill in the blanks with appropriate prepositions:

1. Due to heavy rainfall the huge tree fell \_\_\_\_\_ and unfortunately Shamu was caught \_\_\_\_\_ the tree. (under, down, below)
2. There is a roof \_\_\_\_\_ us. (above, over)
3. I bought a gift \_\_\_\_\_ my brother. (to, for)
4. Sheetal, took leave \_\_\_\_\_ her office. (of, from)
5. They climbed \_\_\_\_\_ the stairs and went \_\_\_\_\_ the terrace, to have a view of the star studded sky. (to, up, above)
6. I have to go to a meeting \_\_\_\_\_ 12.30 p.m. (at, on)

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7. I cried "Help, Help" when the boy fell \_\_\_\_\_ the well. (down, into)
8. Shika travels \_\_\_\_\_ Chandigarh \_\_\_\_\_ Delhi every week (on, from, to)
9. My sister's wedding is \_\_\_\_\_ Hotel Taj \_\_\_\_\_ Mumbai (in, on, at)
10. Shashank took an express bus to Mysore, which goes \_\_\_\_\_ Mandya. (by, through)

Ans : 1 - down, under,                      2 - over,                      3 - for, 4 - from,  
5 - up, to,                                      6 - at,                                      7 - into,  
8 - to, from, (or) from, to  
9 - at, in,                                      10 - through