A Short Monsoon Diary

Some extracts from the diary of a nature lover who enjoys the monsoon in the hills and observes the accompanying changes in the world of flora and fauna.

Activities under working with language are numerous and of different types. Spend sufficient time on each activity and devise, wherever necessary, new but related exercises for further practice.

The following project may be tried under writing.
- Do you notice the changes that occur in nature as the seasons change? Write five or six sentences about what you see in nature in your part of the country during the months of May, August and December.
- Record the daily temperature for a fortnight and note down the maximum and minimum temperatures.
- Comment on the rise and fall in temperature.
- Record the time of sunrise and sunset for a fortnight and check if there is any appreciable change in the time.

On the Grasshopper and Cricket

This poem is relatively difficult. The difficulty lies in its brevity of expression and complexity of thought.

The introductory note and activities under working with the poem should be done elaborately adding additional explanatory notes/tasks, wherever necessary.

Compare it with The Ant and the Cricket to bring out differences of style and theme clearly with examples.

To concretise ‘the poetry of earth’ or ‘the sounds of nature’, use the poem given below, which is all about animal cries.
Ask children to rearrange the lines taking note of the words that rhyme. The last line of each stanza begins with ‘But’.

Cows moo.
Lions roar.
But I speak.
Bears snore.
Doves coo.
Crickets creak.
Dogs growl.
Horses neigh.
But I talk.
Wolves howl.
Donkeys bray.
Parrots squawk.

The Great Stone Face – I and II

A classic piece of American fiction juxtaposing mellowness of humanism with magnificence of art. Ernest, an unschooled dweller of the valley, has close affinity with the ‘Stone Face’ atop the hills beyond. Who resembles the splendid Stone Face — not someone for all his wealth, not someone else for all his heroic deeds, and not someone else yet again for his poetry and sublime ideas. It is none other than Ernest who personifies a rare blend of basic simplicity, practical wisdom and deep love for humanity.

The original story has been heavily abridged. Simplification has been avoided in the interest of authenticity. You may like to read the unabridged text for pleasure and edification.

Design three or four while-reading comprehension questions for each section of the text (parts I and II)

The writing activity (Part-II : IV) is for further practice in language analysis. Rearranging phrases to construct sentences and then rearranging sentences to construct a paragraph will provide many opportunities for thinking about cohesion and coherence.

Activities 1 and 2 under working with language (Part I) on adding -ness and -ity for forming nouns and adding -ly to adjectives for forming adverbs should be completed in three or four sessions. One period may be devoted to each item including resolving intermittent queries and offering explanations and the writing work involved.