
UNIT 16

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16.1 OBJECTIVES

In this unit our aim is to give you practice in reading comprehension by

- i) giving you a mystery story to read : ‘The Affair at Grover Station’ by Willa Cather, and
- ii) giving a glossary of difficult words and questions on comprehension.

We have also set an exercise on selected items of vocabulary.

In the section on grammar and usage we have discussed indirect speech and how statements and questions are reported.

We have also asked you to write a short narrative composition based on your own experience.

After completing the unit you should be able to

- read and appreciate a mystery story,
- use some of the words in different meanings,
- report statements and questions correctly, and
- write a short narrative composition based on your own experience.

16.2 READING COMPREHENSION

16.2.1 Passage for Reading

The Affair at Grover Station

by Willa Cather

1. I heard this story sitting on the rear platform of an accommodation freight that crawled along through the brown, sun-dried wilderness between Grover Station and Cheyenne. The narrator was "Terrapin" Rodgers, who had been a classmate of mine at Princeton, and who was then cashier in the B-railroad office at Cheyenne.

.....
As the little red station house at Grover faded into the distance, I asked him point blank what he knew about the murder of Lawrence O'Toole. Rodgers took a long pull at his black-briar pipe as he answered me.

2. "Well, yes. I could tell you something about it, but the question is how much you'd believe. I never told the story but once, and then it was to the Division Superintendent, and when I finished the old gentlemen asked if I were a drinking man, and remarking that a fertile imagination was not a desirable quality in a railroad employee, said it would be just as well if the story went no further. You see it's gruesome tale, and somehow we don't like to be reminded that there are more things in heaven and earth than our systems of philosophy can grapple with.

3. "It was the thirty-first of December, the morning of the incoming Governor's inaugural ball, and I got down to the office early, for I had a heavy day's work ahead of me, and I was going to the dance and wanted to close up by six o'clock. I had scarcely unlocked the door when I heard someone calling Cheyenne on the wire, and hurried over to the instrument to see what was wanted. It was Lawrence O'Toole, at Grover, and he said he was coming up for all the ball on the extra, due to Cheyenne at nine o'clock that night. He wanted me to go up to see Miss Masterson and ask her if she could go with him. He had some trouble in getting leave of absence, as the last regular train for Cheyenne then left Grover at 5 : 45 in the afternoon, and as there was an east bound going through Grover at 7 : 30, the dispatcher didn't want him away, in case there should be orders for the 7 : 30 train. Larry had made no arrangement with Miss Masterson, as he was uncertain about getting up until he was notified about the extra.

4. "I telephoned Miss Masterson and delivered Larry's message. She replied that she had made an arrangement to go to the dance with Mr. Freymark, but added laughingly that no other arrangement held when Larry could come.
5. "About noon Freymark dropped in at the office, and I suspected he'd got his time from Miss Masterson. While he was hanging around, Larry called me up to tell me that Helen's flowers would be up from Denver on the Union Pacific passenger at five, and he asked me to have them sent up to her promptly and to call for her that evening in case the extra should be late. Freymark, of course, listened to the message, and when the sounder stopped, he smiled in a slow, disagreeable way, and saying. 'Thank you. That's all I wanted to know.' left the office.
6. "Lawrence O'Toole had been my predecessor in the cashier's office at Cheyenne. I've found that there are a great many good fellows in the world, but I've not found many better than Larry. I think I can say, without stretching a point, that he was the most popular man on the Division. He had a faculty of making everyone like him that amounted to a sort of genius.
7. "Freymark was cashier at the Cheyenne office then, but he had been up to some dirty work with the company, and when it fell in the line of Larry's duty to expose him, he did so without hesitating. Eventually Freymark was discharged, and Larry was made cashier in his place. There was, after that, naturally, little love lost between them, and to make matters worse, Helen Masterson took a fancy to Larry, and Freymark had begun to consider himself pretty solid in that direction.
.....
8. "About a week before the dance, Larry's cousin, Harry Burns, who was a reporter on the London Times, stopped in Cheyenne on his way to 'Firsco, and Larry came up to meet him. We took Burns up to the club, and I noticed that he acted rather queerly when Freymark came in. Burns went down to Grover to spend a day with Larry, and on Saturday Larry wired me to come down and spend Sunday with him, as he had important news for me.
9. "I went, and the gist of his information was that Freymark, then going by another name, had figured in a particularly ugly London scandal that happened to be in Burns's beat, and his record had been exposed. His father was a French soldier who, during his service in the East, had bought a Chinese slave girl, had become attached to her, and married her, and after her death had brought her child back to Europe with him.

He had entered the civil service and held several subordinate offices in the capital, where his son was educated. The boy, socially ambitious and extremely sensitive about his Asiatic blood, after having been blackballed at a club, had left and lived by an exceedingly questionable traffic in London.

10. "Of course, the question at once came up as to what ought to be done with Burn's information. Cheyenne clubs are not exclusive, but a Chinaman who had been engaged in Freymark's peculiarly unsavoury traffic would be disbarred in almost any region outside of Whitechapel. One thing was sure : Miss Masterson must be informed of the matter at once.
11. "On second thought, 'said Larry, 'I guess I'd better tell her myself. It will have to be done easy like, not to hurt her self-respect too much. Like as not I'll go off my head the first time I see him and call him rat-eater to his face.'
12. "Well to get back to the day of the dance, I was wondering whether Larry would stay over to tell Miss Masterson about it the next day, for of course he couldn't spring such a thing on a girl at a party.
13. "That evening I dressed early and went down to the station at nine to meet Larry. The extra came in, but on Larry. I saw Connelly, the conductor, and asked him if he had seen anything of O'Toole, but he said he hadn't, that the station at Grover was open when he came through, but that he found no train orders and couldn't raise anyone, so he supposed O'Toole had come up on 153. I went back to the office and called Grover, but got no answer. Then I sat down at the instrument and called for fifteen minutes straight. I wanted to go then and hunt up the conductor on 153, the passenger that went through Grover at 5 : 30 in the afternoon, and ask him what he knew about Larry, but it was then 9 : 45 and I knew Miss Masterson would be waiting, so I jumped into the carriage and told the driver to make up time. On my way to the Mastersons' I did some tall thinking. I could find no explanation for O'Toole's non-appearance, but the business of the moment was to invent one for Miss Masterson that would neither alarm nor offend her. I couldn't exactly tell her he wasn't coming, for he might show up yet, so I decided to say the extra was late, and I didn't know when it would be in.
"I bungled at my explanation and she thanked me for coming but she couldn't hide her disappointment, and scarcely glanced at herself in the mirror as I put her wrap about her shoulders.
14. "The dances I had with Miss Masterson were torture. She began to

question and cross-question me, and when I got tangled up in my lies, she became indignant. Freymark was late in arriving. It must have been after midnight when he appeared, correct and smiling, having driven in from his ranch. He was effusively gay and insisted upon shaking hands with me, though I never willingly touched those clammy hands of his. He was constantly dangling about Miss Masterson, who made rather a point of being gracious to him. I couldn't much blame her under the circumstances, but it irritated me, and I'm not ashamed to say that I rather spied on them. When they were on the balcony I heard him say: 'You see I've forgiven this morning entirely.'

"She answered him rather coolly: 'Ah, but you are constitutionally forgiving. However, I'll be fair and forgive too. It's more comfortable.'

15. "As they came in, I saw him slip one of Larry's red roses into his pocket. "It was not until near the end of the dance that the clock of destiny sounded the first stroke of the tragedy. I was not dancing myself then, and suddenly noticed some confusion among the waiters who stood watching by one of the doors, and Larry's black dog, Duke, all foam at the mouth, shot in the side and bleeding, dashed in through the door and eluding the caterer's men, ran half the length of the hall and threw himself at Freymark's feet, uttering a howl piteous enough to herald any sort of calamity. Freymark, who had not seen him before, turned with an exclamation of rage and a face absolutely livid and kicked the wounded brute half-way across the slippery floor. There was something fiendishly brutal and horrible in the episode. The music stopped, people began moving about in a confused mass, and I saw Helen's eyes seeking mine appealingly. I hurried to her, and by the time I reached her Freymark and disappeared.
16. "'Get the carriage and take care to Duke,' she said, and her voice trembled like that of one shivering with cold.
- "When we were in the carriage, she spread one of the robes on her knee, and I lifted the dog up to her, and she took him in her arms, comforting him.
- "'Where is Larry, and what does all this mean?' she asked. 'You can't put me off any longer, for I danced with a man who came up on the extra.'
- "Then I made a clean breast of it, and told her what I knew, which was little enough.
- "Do you think he is ill?" she asked.

"I replied, 'I don't know what to think. I'm all at sea.'—For since the appearance of the dog, I was genuinely alarmed.

17. "She was silent for a long time, but when the rays of the electric street lights flashed at intervals into the carriage, I could see that she was leaning back with her eyes closed and the dog's nose against her throat. At last she said with a note of entreaty in her voice, 'Can't you think of anything?' I saw that she was thoroughly frightened and told her that it would probably all end in a joke, and that I would telephone her as soon as I heard from Larry, and would more than likely have something amusing to tell her.

18. "I got down to the office late next morning, and before I had time to try Grover, the dispatcher at Holyoke called me up to ask whether Larry were still in Cheyenne. He couldn't raise Grover, he said, and he wanted to give Larry train orders for 151, the east bound passenger. When he heard what I had to say, he told me I had better go down to Grover on 151 myself.

"I had the veterinary surgeon fix up Duke's side, and I put him in the express car, and boarded 151 with a mightily cold, uncomfortable sensation in the region of my diaphragm.

"It had snowed all night long, and the storm had developed into a blizzard, and the passenger had difficulty in making any headway at all.

"When we got into Grover I thought it was the most desolate spot I had ever looked on, and as the train pulled out, leaving me there, I felt like sending a message of farewell to the world.

19. "When I opened the station door, the snow fell in upon the floor, and Duke sat down by the empty, fireless stove and began to howl and whine in a heart breaking fashion. Larry's sleeping room upstairs was empty. Downstairs, everything was in order, and all the station work had been done up. Apparently the last thing Larry had done was to bill out a car of wool from the Oasis sheep ranch for Dewey, Gould & Co, Boston. The car had gone out on 153, the east bound that left Grover at seven o'clock the night before, so he must have been there at that time. I copied the bill in the copy book, and went over to the section house to make inquiries.

20. "The section boss said he had seen O'Toole at 5:30, when the west bound passenger went through, and not having seen him since, supposed he was still in Cheyenne. I went over to Larry's boarding house, and the woman said he must be in Cheyenne, as he had eaten his supper at five

o'clock the night before, so that he would have time to get his station work done and dress. The little girl, she said, had gone over at five to tell him that supper was ready. I questioned the child carefully. She said there was another man, a stranger, in the station with Larry when she went in and that though she didn't hear anything they said, and Larry was sitting with his chair tilted back and his feet on the stove, she somehow had thought they were quarrelling. The stranger, she said, was standing; he had a fur coat on and his eyes snapped like he was mad, and she was afraid of him. I asked her if she could recall anything else about him, and she said, 'Yes, he had very red lips.' When I heard that, my heart grew cold as a snow lump, and when I went out the wind seemed to go clear through me. It was evident enough that Freymark had gone down there to make trouble, had quarrelled with Larry and had boarded either the 5:30 passenger or the extra, and got the conductor to let him off at his ranch, and accounted for his late appearance at the dance.

"It was five o'clock then, but the 5:30 train was two hours late, so there was nothing to do but sit down and wait for the conductor, who had gone out on the seven o'clock east bound the night before, and who must have seen Larry when he picked up the car of wool.

21. "I was never so glad to hear anything as that whistle, when old 153 came lumbering and groaning in through the snow. I ran out on the platform to meet her, and her headlight looked like the face of an old friend. I caught the conductor's arm the minute he stepped off the train, but he wouldn't talk until he got in by the fire. He said he hadn't seen O'Toole at all the night before, but he had found the bill for the wool car on the table, with a note Larry asking him to take the car out on the Q.T., and he had concluded that Larry had gone up to Cheyenne on 5:30. I wired the Cheyenne office and managed to catch the express clerk who had gone through on the extra the night before. He wired me saying that he had not seen Larry board the extra, but that his dog had crept into his usual place in the express car, and he had supposed Larry was in the coach. He had seen Freymark get on at Grover, and the train had slowed up a trifle at his ranch to let him off, for Freymark stood in with some of the boys and sent his cattle shipments our way.
22. "I put on my ulster and went outside.....I went back to the office and took the big station lamp upstairs to make a more careful examination of Larry's sleeping room. His dress suit was missing, so there was no doubt that he had dressed for the party. He was a dainty fellow about his shoes and I knew his collection pretty well. I went to his closet and

found them all there. Even granting him a prejudice against overcoats. I couldn't conceive of his going out in that stinging weather without shoes. I noticed that a surgeon's case, such as are carried on passenger trains, and which Larry had once appropriated in Cheyenne, was open, and that the roll of medicated cotton had been pulled out and recently used. Each discovery I made served only to add to my perplexity. Granted that Freymark had been there, and granted that he had played the boy an ugly trick, he could not have spirited him away without the knowledge of the train crew.

23. " 'Duke, old doggy,' I said to the poor spaniel who was sniffing and whining about the bed. 'You haven't done your duty. You ought to be able to give me a tip of some sort.'
24. "I decided to go to bed and made a fresh start on the ugly business in the morning.
"Larry always kept a supply of brandy and soda on hand, so I made myself a stiff drink and filled the stove and locked the door, turned down the lamp and lay down on the operator's table. I had often slept there when I was night operator. The situation was gruesome enough, but the liquor had made me drowsy and at last I fell asleep.
25. "It must have been about three o'clock in the morning that I was awakened by the crying of the dog, a whimper low, continuous and pitiful, and indescribably human. While I was blinking my eyes in an effort to get thoroughly awake, I heard another sound, the grating sound of chalk on a wooden black board, or of a soft pencil on a slate. I turned my head to the right, and saw a man standing with his back to me, chalking something on the bulletin board. At a glance I recognized the broad, high shoulders and the handsome head of my friend. Yet there was that about the figure which kept me from calling his name or from moving a muscle where I lay. He finished his writing and dropped the chalk, and I distinctly heard its click as it fell. He then turned facing me, holding his left hand in front of his mouth. He began moving toward the door silently as a shadow in his black stocking feet. When he reached the door, he lowered the hand he held before his mouth to lift the latch. His face was turned squarely toward me, and the lower jaw had fallen and was set rigidly upon his collar, the mouth was wide open and was *stuffed full of white cotton!* Then I knew it was a dead man's face I looked upon.
26. "The door opened, and that stiff black figure in stockings walked as noiselessly as a cat out into the night. I think I went quite mad then. I dimly remember that I rushed out upon the siding and ran up and down

screaming, 'Larry, Larry!' I could see nothing but the wide white plain, not even a dark shadow anywhere. When at last I found myself back in the station, I saw Duke lying before the door and dropped on my knees beside him calling him by name. But Duke was past calling back. Master and dog had gone together, and I dragged him into the corner and covered his face for his eyes were colorless and soft, like the eyes of that horrible face once so beloved.

27. "The black board? O, I didn't forget that. I had chalked the time of the accommodation on it the night before, from sheer force of habit, for isn't customary to mark the time of trains in unimportant stations like Grover. My writing had been rubbed out by a moist hand, for I could see the finger marks clearly, and in place of it was written in blue chalk simple. C. B. & O. 26378.
28. "I sat there drinking brandy and muttering to myself. At last an idea flashed upon me. I snatched the way bill off the hook. The car of wool that had left Grover for Boston the night before was numbered 26387.
29. "I must have got through the rest of the night somehow, for when the sun came up red and angry over the white plains, the section boss found me sitting by the stove, the lamp burning full blaze, the brandy bottle empty beside me, and with but one idea in my head, that box car 26387 must be stopped and opened as soon as possible, and that somehow it would explain.
30. "I figured that we could easily catch it in Omaha, and wired the freight agent there to go through it carefully and report anything unusual. That night I got a wire from the agent stating that the body of a man had been found under a woolsack at one end of the car with a fan and an invitation to the inaugural ball at Cheyenne in the pocket of his dress coat. I wired him not to disturb the body unit I arrived, and started for Omaha. Before I left Grover the Cheyenne office wired me that Freymerk had left town, going west over the Union Pacific. The company detectives never found him.
31. "The matter was clear enough then. Being a railroad man, he had hidden the body and sealed up the car and billed it out, leaving a note for the conductor.
32. "When I saw Larry O'Toole again, he was lying stiff and stark in undertakers' rooms in Omaha. He was clad in his dress clothes, with black stockings on his feet, as I had seen him forty-eight hours before. Helen Masterson's fan was in his pocket. His mouth was wide open and stuffed full of white cotton.

33. "He had been shot in the mouth, the bullet lodging between the third and fourth vertebrae. The hemorrhage had been very slight and had been checked by the cotton. The quarrel had taken place about five in the afternoon. After supper Larry had dressed, all but his shoes, and had lain down to snatch a wink of sleep, trusting to the whistle of the extra to waken him. Freymark had gone back and shot him while he was asleep, afterward placing his body in the wool car, which, but for my telegram, would not have been opened for weeks.
34. "That's the whole story. There is nothing more to tell except one detail that I did not mention to the superintendent. When I said goodbye to the boy before the undertaker and coroner took charge of the body, I lifted his right hand to take off a ring that Miss Masterson had given him and the ends of the fingers were covered with blue chalk."
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16.2.2 Glossary

- 1 **rear**/rie/: back
 'platform/'Plætfɔ:m/: the open part at the end of a train
freight/fréɪt/: a goods train
briar/braɪə/: a tobacco pipe made from the root of a wild bush
- 2 'gruesome/'gru:səm/: shocking and sickening
 'grapple with : work hard to deal with (a difficulty)
- 3 **ball** : a large formal occasion for social dancing
 'extra : something added, (here) an additional train
- 5 'sounder : telegraphic receiving instrument
- 6 'predecessor : a person who held an official position before someone else
ca'shier : a person in charge of money receipts and payments
 'genius : a person of great ability
- 7 **ex'pose** : make known a secretly guilty person
 'little'love'lost : not much friendship
- 9 'scandal : an action which offends people's ideas of what is right and proper
beat (n) : the usual part followed by someone on duty
- 10 **ex'clusive** : that exclude socially unsuitable people
un'savory (American spelling) : unpleasant or unacceptable in moral value
 'traffic : trade

14. **ranch** /ra:ntf/ American /r ntʃ/: a large farm
ef'fusively : houring out feelings without control
gay : cheerful, merry
'clammy : unpleasantly sticky
'dangling : hanging loosely
'gracious : polite, kind, and pleasant
16. **at'sea** : lost in mind
17. **en'treaty** : an act of begging very seriously
18. **'diaphragm** /'daɪəfræm/: the muscle that separates the lungs from the stomach
'blizzard : a long severe snowstorm
19. **whine** (n) : make a high sad sound
21. **'lumbering** : moving in a heavy, awkward manner
'groaning : making a sound like that caused by the movement of metal parts heavily loaded
'trifle : to some degree
stood 'in with : enjoyed the favour of
22. **'dress'suit** : a suit for a formal occasion
'dainty : not easy to please
'closet /'klozɪt/: (in America) a cupboard build into the wall of a room
ap'propriated : taken for himself, stolen
23. **'spaniel** : a breed of small short-legged dogs with long ears and long wavy hair
'sniffing : drawing air into the nose to discover a smell
25. **'whimper** : a small weak cry of pain
33. **'vertebrae** /'vɜ:tɪbrɪ:/: the small hollow bones the centre of the back which form the backbone
'hemorrhage /'hemərɪdʒ/: a flow of blood
34. **'undertaker** : a person whose job it is to arrange funerals
'coroner : a public official who inquirer into the cause of a person's death when it is not clearly the result of natural causes

16.2.3 Comprehension Questions

Exercise 1

1. What kind of story did Rodgers tell the author?
- a mystery story
 - a ghost story
 - a lover story

2. Do you think the Divisional superintendent believed in ghosts? Give the lines from the story that support your answer.

3. Why was there "little love lost" between Larry and Freymark?

4. What secret about Freymark did Burns reveal?

5. Miss Masterson cared only for Larry's admiration. Do you agree? Give a reason for your answer.

6. "There was something friendishly brutal and horrible in the episode." What was this episode?

7. What had the apparition written on the blackboard? What was its significance?

8. What was the one detail which convinced the author that the ghost had been Larry's?

16.3 VOCABULARY

Exercise 2

All the words below are taken from the story. Each has more than one meaning. Write down the meaning of each word as it is used in the story. Then use each of these words in a different meaning.

- | | | | |
|---|-----------------------|----|----------------------|
| 1 | ball (section 3) | 10 | herald (section 15) |
| 2 | wire (section 3) | 11 | mass (section 15) |
| 3 | faculty (section 3) | 12 | lumber (section 21) |
| 4 | club (section 3) | 13 | coach (section 21) |
| 5 | beat (section 3) | 14 | trifle (section 21) |
| 6 | record (section 3) | 15 | grating (section 25) |
| 7 | traffic (section 10) | 16 | board (section 25) |
| 8 | carriage (section 13) | 17 | facing (section 25) |
| 9 | alarm (section 13) | 18 | slight (section 33) |

16.4 GRAMMAR AND USAGE

Direct and Indirect Speech

i) Statements

When we repeat the actual words of a speaker without making any changes, it is called **direct speech**. when we tell a person what somebody said without repeating the actual words, it is called **indirect speech** or **reported speech**.

Examples :

He said, "I'm hungry." (Direct speech)

He said (that) he was hungry. (Indirect or Reported speech)

Notice

- i) In direct speech, the actual words of a speaker are placed within **quotation marks** (" ").
- ii) In indirect speech the reporting verb in the case of a statement (e.g. *said* in the sentence given above) is often followed by *that*.

- iii) The pronouns are changed in indirect speech. For example, *I* in direct speech is changed to *he* (referring to the speaker, the subject of the verb *said*) in indirect speech.
- iv) If the reporting verb (*said* in this case) is in the past tense, the verb in indirect speech is also changed from the present to the past form. (*am* changed to *was*)

Here are some more examples :

- 1 He said, "I don't like to be reminded of it." (Direct speech)
He said (that) he didn't like to be reminded of it. (Indirect speech)
that in brackets indicates that it is optional.
- 2 Rodgers said to me, "I have a heavy day's work ahead of him. (Indirect speech) Notice that *said to me* has been replaced by *told me*.

Exercise 3

Turn the following statements into indirect speech :

- 1 Miss Masterson said, "I have made an arrangement to go to the dance with Mr. Freymark."

- 2 I replied, "I don't know what to think."

- 3 He said, "It snowed all night long and the storm developed into a blizzard." (The past simple tense in direct speech will be changed to past perfect in indirect speech).

- 4 The section boss said, "I saw O'Toole at 5:30."

- 5 I said to Duke, "You haven't done your duty."

ii) Questions

Look at the following sentences :

I asked him what he knew about the murder of Lawrence O'Toole.

This is a reported question.

In direct speech, the question will be

“What do you know about the murder of Lawrence O’Toole?” I asked him.

Notice that :

- i) The question pattern in direct speech (question word + auxiliary verb + subject + main verb) is changed to the statement pattern (question + subject + main verb) in indirect speech.

What do you know? what he knew

- ii) *you* in direct speech is changed to *he* (referring to the person addressed, the object of the verb *asked*), in indirect speech.

- iii) the verb in the simple present (*do know*) is changed to *knew* (past simple) as the reporting verb *asked* is in the past tense.

Now look at this sentence :

The old gentleman asked me if I was a drinking man.

This is a reported question. In direct speech, the question will be

The old gentleman asked me, “Are you drinking man?”

Notice that in *yes-no* question, the word *is* (or *whether*) is introduced at the beginning of the reported question, which is then given the statement pattern.

Are you? ® If I was

Exercise 4

A Here are some *reported questions*. Change them into *direct questions*.

- 1 He asked her if she could come with him.

- 2 He asked me if I would have flowers sent up to her promptly.

- 3 I asked him if he had seen anything of O’Toole.

- 4 I asked him what he knew of Larry.

- 5 The dispatcher asked if Larry was still in Cheyenne.

- 6 I asked her if she could recall anything else about him.

B Now change the following direct questions into reported questions :

1 "What do you want?" I asked Freyremark.

2 "What are you doing during the week-end?" Lawrence asked Burns.

3 "Why hasn't he come yet?" asked Miss Masterson.

4 "Where is Larry and what does this mean?" she asked me.

5 "Do you think he is ill?" she asked me.

6 "Can't you think of anything else?" Miss Masterson asked me.

16.5 WRITING

Exercise 5

Give an account of an exciting or interesting train journey you have had. The following points may help you :

1 Name of the train

2 Date and time of departure

3 Route

4 Companions-conversations

5 Any exciting incident :

i) ticketless traveller caught

ii) a thief caught

iii) the alarm-chain is pulled—the reason for it

iv) a hold-up

v) a derailment

6 Time when you finally reached your destination

7 Why you remember this particular journey

16.6 LET US SUM UP

In this unit we have given you practice in

- reading and appreciating a mystery story,
- using some of the words in different meanings,
- using indirect speech to report statements and questions, and
- writing a short narrative composition based on your own experience.

16.7 KEY WORDS

de'railment : running off the rails

direct 'speech : the actual words of a speaker repeated without any changes, e.g., He said, "I am hungry."

indirect 'speech (also **reported 'speech**) : telling what somebody said without repeating the actual words. e.g., He said (that) he didn't want to go.

'mystery : something which cannot be explained

quo'tation marks : a pair of marks (" ") of (') showing the beginning and end of words said by somebody else.

16.8 SUGGESTED READING

Early Stories of Willa Cather, selected by Mildred Bennett; Dodd Mead & Co. Inc.

16.9 ANSWERS TO EXERCISES

Exercise 1

- 1 b. a ghost story.
- 2 No. "When I finished, the old gentleman asked if I were a drinking man, and remarking that a fertile imagination was not a desirable quality in a railroad employee, said it would be just as well if the story went no further."
- 3 Because Larry had exposed Freymark's illegal activities and been responsible for his discharge. Larry had also been appointed cashier in his place. In addition, they were rivals in love, both aspiring to marry Miss Helen Masterson.
- 4 That Freymark was the son of a Chinese slave girl, whom his father had married while in the east.

- 5 Yes. When she realised that Larry had not come, she could not hide her disappointment and scarcely glanced at herself in the mirror as she passed it.
- 6 When the gaiety of the hall was at its height, with the ballroom filled with music, laughter, and the fragrance of flowers, Larry's dog Duke rushed into the ball-room bleeding and foaming at the mouth, and threw himself at Freymark's feet. Freymark, in a rage, kicked the poor wounded animal halfway across the room.
- 7 It had written C.B. & Q 26387 on the board. This was the number of the car of wool that had left Grover for Boston the previous evening, and in which, ultimately, Larry's body was discovered.
- 8 The ends of the fingers of the corpse were covered with the same blue chalk as had been used by the ghost to write the wagon number on the board.

Exercise 2

- a)
 - 1 a social gathering for dancing
 - 2 telephone
 - 3 the power of doing things
 - 4 a society of people who join together to provide themselves with sport, entertainment, etc.
 - 5 the usual path followed by someone on duty; one's regular course of work
 - 6 facts known about someone's past
 - 7 Trading, commerce
 - 8 vehicle, especially on four wheels, pulled by a horse or horses
 - 9 cause anxiety to
 - 10 proclaim the approach of
 - 11 a large number
 - 12 move in a heavy, clumsy way
 - 13 railway carriage
 - 14 a little, somewhat
 - 15 making a harsh noise by rubbing
 - 16 a flat piece of wood or other material for a special purpose
 - 17 turning the face in the direction of
 - 18 small; not serious or important
- b)
 - 1 Please throw that ball to me.
 - 2 We need a piece of wire to connect our table fan to the electric socket.

- 3 I wish to join the science faculty at this university.
- 4 Take a club with you; you may need it if you meet a robber.
- 5 There will be one beat of the drum every minute.
- 6 Keep a record of how much you spend.
- 7 There is too much traffic on the roads here.
- 8 I'll be in the third carriage from the front of the train.
- 9 I gave the alarm as soon as I saw what was happening.
- 10 The king sent heralds to the rulers of the neighbouring countries.
- 11 The ship cut its way through masses of ice.
- 12 The suppliers have lumbered me with 60 tins of oil I didn't want.
- 13 We need a coach to train our players.
- 14 You are wasting your money on trifles.
- 15 She caught her heel in a grating at the side of the road.
- 16 I pay Rs. 1,000/- a month for board and lodging.
- 17 The difficulty facing us today is that of supplying food to those in need.
- 18 He took your remark as a slight to his work.

Exercise 3

- 1 Miss Masterson said she had made an arrangement to go to the dance with Mr. Freymark.
- 2 I replied that I didn't know what to think.
- 3 He said it had snowed all night long and the storm had developed into a blizzard.
- 4 The section boss said he had seen O'Toole at 5:30.
- 5 I told Duke he hadn't done his duty.

Exercise 4

- A
- 1 "Can you come with me?" he asked her.
 - 2 "Will you have the flowers sent up to her promptly?"
 - 3 "Have you seen anything of O'Toole?" I asked him.
 - 4 "What do you know of Larry?" I asked him.
 - 5 "Is Larry still in Cheyenne?" asked the dispatcher.
 - 6 "Can you recall anything else about him?" I asked her.
- B
- 1 I asked Freymark what he wanted.
 - 2 Lawrence asked Burns what he was doing during the week-end.
 - 3 Miss Masterson enquired why he hadn't come till then.
 - 4 She asked me where Larry was and what it meant.
 - 5 She asked me if I thought he was ill.
 - 6 Miss Masterson asked me if I couldn't think of anything else.