Class 9 English Kaveri – Chapter 2

The Pot Maker & Gifts of Grace: Honouring Our Vocations

DETAILED NOTES • 2026–27

Prepared directly from the uploaded Chapter 2 textbook. Includes prose, poem, vocabulary, language structures, speaking, writing and learning beyond the text.

1. Chapter Overview

The Pot Maker is an abridged story by Temsula Ao. It follows Sentila, a young girl who dreams of becoming a pot maker like her mother and grandmother. Although her mother initially wants her to learn weaving, Sentila remains deeply interested in pottery. With the support of Onula and through careful observation and perseverance, she eventually discovers her ability to make pots.

Gifts of Grace: Honouring Our Vocations is an anonymous poem celebrating people engaged in different occupations. It presents vocations as expressions of identity and recognises the contribution of craftspersons, carpenters, electricians, boatmen, shoemakers, cooks, designers and masons.

2. The Pot Maker – Detailed Notes

Sentila's Dream

• Sentila develops a dream of becoming a pot maker after accompanying her mother to the fields and forests.

• She wants to follow the vocation of her mother and grandmother.

• Her mother, Arenla, prefers weaving for Sentila because she considers it cleaner, easier to do indoors and financially more rewarding.

• Sentila secretly visits expert potters because she does not want to give up her passion.

Why Arenla Dislikes Pot Making

• The grey and red clay is found about sixteen kilometres from the village.

• A pot maker must climb down to the riverbank, carry heavy clay uphill and pound stubborn clay to soften it.

• The work is tiring and time-consuming, while the financial return is small.

• Arenla believes weaving can provide more money and cloth for the family.

Sentila Observes the Expert Potters

• Sentila watches how clay is mixed with water and pounded.

• The softened clay is rotated and shaped with a spatula.

• The pots are given a final touch-up and tested for consistency.

• They are dried in the sun and then carefully arranged in a kiln.

• The fire must be tended carefully because over-firing or under-firing can ruin the whole batch.

The Village Council

• Sentila's visits become village gossip.

• The villagers worry that if pot makers stop passing on their skills, there may be no expert potters in the future.

• Mesoba is called before the village council.

• The elders remind him that pot making is a skill handed down from generation to generation.

• They state that such skills symbolise the tradition and history of the community and should not be treated as the property of one individual.

• Experts are expected to pass their skills to their children and to anyone who sincerely wishes to learn.

Arenla Teaches Sentila

• Arenla eventually takes Sentila to the riverbank and teaches her the stages of preparing clay.

• Sentila quickly learns to turn the clay into malleable dough.

• However, she struggles to shape the clay into a pot.

• For almost a year, she cannot learn successfully from her mother and feels shame and frustration.

Onula's Support

• Onula is a kind middle-aged widow who supervises the girls' dormitory.

• She notices Sentila's tense and clumsy attempts at pottery.

• Onula encourages her instead of criticising her and demonstrates how to make a pot.

• Sentila gains confidence and successfully makes a beautiful pot.

• Onula points out that the mouth of the pot needs improvement and advises Sentila to observe her mother carefully.

The Turning Point

• Sentila carefully watches how Arenla holds her hand and spatula, changes the rhythm and adds dough to form the rim.

• One day Arenla asks Sentila to continue making pots while she rests because of a headache and backache.

• Sentila begins working in coordination with her left hand and soon develops momentum.

• She makes pot after pot with the speed and dexterity she had observed in her mother.

• She produces only one pot fewer than her mother's tally.

The Ending

• When Sentila returns to the house, she finds Arenla lying on the floor and not breathing.

• After Arenla's funeral, Onula discovers two neat rows of pots in the work shed.

• She realises that the two batches were made by two people and that Sentila has truly become a pot maker.

• The concluding line, "A new pot maker was born," represents Sentila's achievement and the continuation of the traditional craft.

3. Major Themes

• Following one's passion: Sentila continues to pursue pottery despite discouragement.

• Perseverance: She does not abandon her dream after repeated failure.

• Learning through observation: Careful observation of expert potters and her mother helps Sentila improve.

• Importance of encouragement: Onula's confidence in Sentila helps her overcome tension and frustration.

• Traditional knowledge: Pot making is presented as a skill connected with community history and tradition.

• Passing skills to future generations: The village elders stress the responsibility of experts to pass on their knowledge.

• Work and livelihood: The story also considers the financial realities of traditional occupations.

4. Character Notes

Sentila

• Passionate, curious and determined.

• Observant and willing to learn.

• Experiences frustration but continues trying.

• Responds strongly to encouragement and develops confidence.

• Eventually demonstrates skill and becomes a pot maker.

Arenla

• Sentila's mother and an experienced pot maker.

• Initially discourages Sentila from choosing pottery because of its physical difficulty and low income.

• Eventually teaches Sentila and provides the opportunity for her to practise.

Mesoba

• Sentila's father.

• Explains the family's position to the village council.

• Supports the continuation of the pottery tradition.

Onula

• A supportive and perceptive mentor figure.

• Recognises Sentila's tension and encourages her.

• Provides practical guidance and helps Sentila build confidence.

5. Important Vocabulary

Word	Meaning
outgrow	lose interest in something as one grows older
indifference	lack of interest in something
pittance	a small amount of money received as income

Word	Meaning
pounding	repeated beating
tedious	tiring
deftly	skillfully
spatula	a tool used by a potter to shape a pot
tend	take care of
followed suit	did the same thing as somebody else
dao	an instrument used to dig
malleable	able to be put into shape without breaking or cracking
dormitories	large rooms containing many beds, as in a hostel
resolved	determined
wearily	tiredly
slackened	relaxed
momentum	driving force
dexterity	skill
tally	a count, here of pots
threshold	entrance of a room
intuitively	based on feelings
momentous	of great significance
phenomenon	an unusual incident
profound	powerful
revelation	a moment of realisation

6. Vocabulary & Structures in Context

Tools, Raw Materials and Processes

• Tools/Implements: dao, bamboo, kiln, spatula, basket, cylinders

• Raw materials: dough, clay, bed of hay

• Processes: pounding, rotating, shaping

Livelihood and Economic Vocabulary

• pittance, rupees, reward, return – words connected with income and economic return.

• The textbook also asks students to explore: bankrupt, credit, currency, debt, fiscal, inflation, investment and interest.

7. Grammar – Noun Clauses

A noun clause is a subordinate clause that acts like a noun and performs the function of a subject or object.

• Textbook example: “she realised that the pot was ready.”

• Textbook example: “She intuitively sensed that something momentous had happened.”

Exam Tip

• A noun clause often begins with words such as that, why, what, whether or how, depending on its function.

8. Grammar – Adjectival / Relative Clauses

An adjectival or relative clause acts like an adjective and gives further information about a noun.

• “Arenla took Sentila to the riverbank where the grey and red clay was found.”

• “...like a sprinter who had suddenly found momentum...”

• “skills such as pot making, which not only catered to the needs of the people...”

Common relative words

• who – generally used for people.

• which – generally used for things.

• where – used for places.

• whose – shows possession.

9. Grammar – Determiners

Determiners come before nouns and specify quantity, definiteness or ownership.

• Articles: a, an, the

• Demonstratives: this, that, these, those

• Possessives: my, our, your, his, her, its, their, one’s

• Definite numerals: one, two, three, etc.

• Indefinite numerals: some, any, no, all, both, much, many, few, less, several, little

• Distributives: each, every, either, neither

Examples from the chapter

• “some clay” – indefinite quantity

• “many pots” – indefinite quantity

• “any individual” – indefinite reference

• “this place” – demonstrative

• “enough days” – quantity

10. Critical Reflection – Key Points

• Arenla considers pot making exhausting, time-consuming and poorly paid, while weaving appears cleaner, faster and more profitable.

• The question “And the reward?” emphasises the small financial return compared with the labour involved.

• Sentila’s early failures show that skill development may require patience, confidence and appropriate guidance.

• Onula’s support changes Sentila’s attitude and helps her work with greater confidence.

• The village council’s view highlights the community value of traditional skills.

• The two rows of pots become evidence of Sentila’s successful learning and the continuation of the craft.

11. Gifts of Grace: Honouring Our Vocations – Poem Notes

The anonymous poem celebrates the many vocations that contribute to everyday life. The speaker presents workers and artisans as people whose skills, creativity and labour give them a distinct identity.

Vocations Celebrated

• Craftspersons – create products through skill and craftsmanship.

• Artisans – use instruments and artistic skills to express emotions and dreams.

• Carpenters – create objects from wood with precision.

• Electricians – work with cables and wires to brighten lives.

• Boatmen – gather nets, sail and work at sea.

• Shoemakers – create quality footwear for people who walk, dance, run and jump.

• Cooks, designers and masons – each celebrate and contribute through their own work.

Central Idea

Every honest vocation has value. Work is not merely a means of earning a livelihood; it can also express a person's identity, skill, creativity and contribution to society.

Key Line

"The voice of their vocation is the voice of their identity." This connects a person's work with their identity and individuality.

12. Poetic Features

Rhyme Scheme and Lineation

• The textbook asks whether the poem strictly follows a rhyme scheme or is written in free verse.

• The lines vary in length, creating a natural flowing rhythm suited to the celebration of different occupations.

Tone and Mood

• The tone is reverential and celebratory, expressing admiration and respect for artisans and workers.

• The mood is joyful, reflecting the vibrancy of occupations and cultural traditions.

Imagery

• The poem uses visual and auditory imagery to make occupations vivid.

• Examples include artisans with lutes, electricians humming, boatmen sailing and singing, and the rhythmic work of designers and masons.

Metaphor

• The phrase "delicious singing of the cook" metaphorically connects the cook's work with something pleasurable and enjoyable.

Personification

• Vocations are presented as if they have voices and can celebrate, giving them human-like qualities.

Repetition

• The opening and closing line, "I hear Bharat celebrating, the varied vocations I hear!", reinforces the central idea of collective celebration.

Alliteration

• The poem contains repeated consonant sounds that add musical quality to its lines.

Symbolism

• Each vocation symbolises more than a job: it represents skill, identity, dignity of work and contribution to society.

13. Vocabulary from the Poem

Word	Meaning
myriad	a very large or countless number
hues	colours or shades
precision	exactness or accuracy
varied	assorted or diverse
delicious	very pleasant or enjoyable to the senses

Word	Meaning
affirm	declare or state with confidence
vocation	a type of work or occupation, especially one regarded as a calling
craftsperson	a skilled person who makes things by hand
artisan	a skilled craft worker
sericulturist	a producer of raw silk
horticulturist	a person who studies or grows garden plants
confectioner	a person who makes or sells sweets and chocolates
goldsmith	a metalworker specialising in precious metals
welder	a person who fuses materials together
ASHA worker	a trained female community health worker

14. Speaking Skills

• Work in pairs and choose Sentila plus one other character: Arenla, Mesoba, Onula or a village elder.

• Prepare the role-play from the chosen character's perspective using information from the story.

• Cover Sentila's desire to learn pottery, the challenges she faces, and the advice or perspective offered by the other character.

• Useful sentence prompts: "I feel/felt _____ because..."; "I wish/wished _____ because..."; "When you said/did _____, it made me feel/think _____ because..."

• For the poem, groups of five can represent five different vocations and speak for 1–2 minutes about their work, workplace, experiences, challenges and message to others.

15. Writing Skills

Reflective Writing – Identifying Skills and Passion

• Step 1 – Introduction: Reflect on your passions and skills.

• Step 2 – Describing skills: Describe activities, classes, workshops, hobbies or projects used to develop them.

• Step 3 – Passion into profession: Explain which skills could potentially become a profession and why.

• Step 4 – Examples and reflection: Give examples or anecdotes and explain how they shaped your aspirations.

• Step 5 – Conclusion: Summarise insights about yourself, your skills and career ambitions.

Career Mela Poster

• A poster announces an event and should be visually attractive and concise.

• The textbook specifies: place it in a box, use different font sizes, maintain proportionate spacing and keep it within 50 words.

• Include event name, purpose, date, time, venue, highlights, slogan, entry information, sponsors and issuing authority as appropriate.

16. Learning Beyond the Text

Indian Pottery Styles Mentioned

• Khurja pottery – Uttar Pradesh

• Blue pottery – Jaipur

• Terracotta – West Bengal

• Andretta pottery – Himachal Pradesh

• Karigari pottery – Tamil Nadu

• Longpi Black pottery – Manipur

'Quality' by John Galsworthy

The textbook includes an abridged version of Quality as an extension activity. It presents Mr Gessler, a bootmaker who is deeply committed to craftsmanship and makes high-quality boots. The story raises the contrast between traditional craftsmanship and industrialisation/mass-produced goods.

• Mr Gessler makes boots only to order and takes great care with fit and quality.

• His work is presented as an art and a source of pride.

• Competition and advertising by larger firms reduce his business.

• The supplementary story invites students to review the text and discuss the decline of traditional crafts and skills in comparison with industrialisation and mass production.

‘The Lamplighter’

The supplementary poem by R. L. Stevenson presents a child fascinated by the lamplighter’s work. The child imagines becoming a lamplighter when grown up, showing childhood curiosity about occupations.

Haiku

The chapter introduces Haiku as a traditional Japanese poetry form consisting of three lines with 17 syllables: 5 syllables in the first line, 7 in the second and 5 in the third.

17. Quick Revision

• Sentila’s dream: to become a pot maker.

• Arenla’s preference: weaving, because it appears less tiring and more financially rewarding.

• Village council: traditional skills should be passed from generation to generation.

• Onula: encourages Sentila and helps her gain confidence.

• Climax: Sentila successfully makes nearly as many pots as her mother.

• Ending: Onula recognises that a new pot maker has emerged.

• Main themes: passion, perseverance, encouragement, traditional knowledge and dignity of work.

• Grammar: noun clauses, relative/adjectival clauses and determiners.

• Poem: celebrates diverse vocations and connects work with identity.

• Writing: reflective writing and Career Mela poster.

Source note: These notes are based on the uploaded Chapter 2 textbook, including the prose, poem, language activities, speaking/writing tasks and learning-beyond-the-text sections. Listening activities refer to teacher transcripts on page 261/262, which are not included in the uploaded 36-page student file; no listening answers have therefore been invented.