Class 9 English Kaveri – Chapter 2

The Pot Maker & Gifts of Grace: Honouring Our Vocations

SUMMARY • 2026–27

The Pot Maker is an abridged story by Temsula Ao about Sentila, a young girl who dreams of becoming a pot maker like her mother and grandmother. Her mother, Arenla, wants her to learn weaving because pottery is physically demanding, time-consuming and poorly paid. However, Sentila remains fascinated by the craft and secretly watches expert potters at work. She carefully observes how clay is prepared, shaped, dried and fired in a kiln.

As Sentila's interest becomes known in the village, the village council questions why Arenla is not passing the skill on to her daughter. The elders explain that pot making is not merely an individual possession; it is part of the community's tradition and history and should be passed from one generation to another. Arenla eventually begins teaching Sentila, but Sentila struggles to shape the clay and remains unsuccessful for almost a year.

Onula, a kind woman supervising the girls' dormitory, notices Sentila practising alone. She recognises that Sentila is too tense and encourages her instead of letting her lose confidence. With Onula's guidance, Sentila makes her first beautiful pot. Onula then advises her to observe her mother more carefully, especially when shaping the mouth and rim of the pot.

The next time Sentila works with Arenla, she observes every movement closely. When Arenla asks her to continue making pots, Sentila suddenly develops confidence, momentum and dexterity. She makes pot after pot and produces only one fewer than her mother's tally. The achievement shows that her passion, observation and perseverance have finally brought her talent to the surface.

When Sentila goes to find her mother for lunch, she discovers that Arenla has died. After the funeral, Onula enters the work shed and sees two neat rows of pots. She realises that the two batches were made by two people and understands that Sentila has become a pot maker. The story ends with the significant statement: "A new pot maker was born."

Central Idea: The story highlights the importance of pursuing one's passion, persevering through failure, learning through observation and receiving encouragement. It also emphasises the value of traditional skills and the responsibility of passing them to future generations.

Gifts of Grace: Honouring Our Vocations

The anonymous poem Gifts of Grace: Honouring Our Vocations celebrates people engaged in different occupations. It describes craftspersons, artisans, carpenters, electricians, boatmen, shoemakers, cooks, designers and masons, showing how each contributes to society through skill and dedicated work.

The poem presents work as more than a way of earning a living. Each vocation expresses the worker's skill, creativity and identity. The electricians brighten lives, carpenters create with precision, boatmen work and sing at sea, shoemakers take pride in quality, and other workers celebrate what belongs uniquely to their craft.

The poem uses sensory imagery, repetition, personification, metaphor and alliteration to create a lively celebration of everyday work. The repeated line "I hear Bharat celebrating, the varied vocations I hear!" reinforces the idea that the many occupations together form a vibrant part of Bharat's social and cultural life.

Central Idea: Every honest vocation deserves recognition and respect. The poem celebrates the dignity, individuality and social value of different kinds of work.

Quick Revision

- Sentila dreams of becoming a pot maker.
- Arenla initially prefers weaving for her daughter.
- Sentila learns by observing expert potters and later her mother.
- The village council stresses the importance of passing traditional skills on.

- Onula gives Sentila confidence and practical guidance.
- Sentila eventually makes almost as many pots as her mother.
- The story ends with the birth of a new pot maker.
- The poem celebrates diverse vocations and their contribution to society.
- Both texts emphasise skill, dedication, identity and the value of work.

Source note: This summary is based on the uploaded Chapter 2 textbook, including pages 34–41 for “The Pot Maker” and pages 58–59 for “Gifts of Grace: Honouring Our Vocations.”