Class 9 English Kaveri – Chapter 5

The World of Limitless Possibilities

DETAILED NOTES • Prose + Poem • CBSE 2026–27

Poem: Nine Gold Medals – David Roth

Chapter focus: resilience • determination • self-belief • inclusion • advocacy • empathy • sportsmanship

These notes follow the uploaded Kaveri Chapter 5 textbook and organise its prose, interview, poem, vocabulary, grammar, communication and writing work for detailed study and revision.

Chapter at a glance

Section	Main content
Opening	Sheetal Devi and reflection on para-athletics.
Prose	Paralympics and an interview with Dr. Deepa Malik.
Poem	Nine Gold Medals by David Roth.
Grammar	Fact-opinion, cause-effect, modals and reported speech.
Language	Vocabulary, phrases, movement word cline and collocations.
Communication	Listening and speaking activities on inclusion and sport.
Writing	Notice, slogan and poster writing.
Beyond the text	Paralympics, Olympics, Special Olympics and Indian athletes.

1. Prose: The World of Limitless Possibilities

The chapter opens with a picture of Sheetal Devi, identified in the textbook as a para-archer who was honoured with the Arjuna Award in January 2024. Students are asked to observe the picture, discuss whether she inspires them and create a caption. This opening prepares learners for the chapter's central focus on para-athletes and possibility.

The reading then introduces the Paralympic Games as a global celebration of resilience and extraordinary talent among athletes with locomotor, sensory or intellectual disabilities. The chapter emphasises that Paralympics go beyond competition by challenging stereotypes and redefining possibilities.

Indian Paralympic context

The textbook states that Bharat's debut in the Paralympics dates back to 1968 and that the first medal was won in swimming in 1972. It then introduces Dr. Deepa Malik as a prominent Indian Paralympian and the subject of the interview.

Dr. Deepa Malik's turning point

Dr. Malik explains that she was 29 when she was diagnosed with a spinal tumour. After surgery, she was told that she would be paralysed from the waist down and would need a wheelchair for the rest of her life. She presents two possible responses to this situation: remaining in remorse or transforming her life into a world of limitless possibilities.

Her earlier love of sports and experience as a swimmer helped her move towards para-athletics. She describes the 2016 Rio Paralympic Games as her breakthrough moment because she secured a silver medal in the shot-put event. In retrospect, she views the achievement as a personal victory and as a step towards changing perceptions.

Achievements and recognition

The interviewer describes Dr. Malik as a trailblazer. The textbook states that she became the first Indian female para-athlete to win an Asian Games medal in athletics and India's first female Paralympics medallist across any sport. The interview also mentions her Khel Ratna, Arjuna and Padma Shri awards.

Dr. Malik says these achievements support her belief that physical limitations do not define a person's potential. She supports the idea of "ability beyond disability."

2. Prose: Challenges, Resilience and Inclusion

One of the major challenges Dr. Malik identifies is societal perception. She says that people often underestimated her abilities. The chapter therefore shows that a person may face not only physical challenges but also assumptions and attitudes from society.

She explains that overcoming these perceptions required physical strength as well as mental resilience. She chose to treat challenges as opportunities to prove her capabilities. The support of her family, together with her fortitude, helped her turn obstacles into stepping stones.

Sports and changing attitudes

Dr. Malik believes that sports, especially the Paralympics, can challenge stereotypes and change attitudes towards disability. When people see the strength, skill and competitive spirit of para-athletes, preconceived notions can be questioned. The Paralympics therefore become a platform for both sporting participation and social change.

Advocacy

Dr. Malik says advocacy is integral to her mission. She supports work related to the emotional health of persons with challenges, empowerment of women through outdoor sports and adventure activities, people from lower socio-economic strata, and para-sportspersons who need equipment.

She also describes disability-sports awareness and advocacy sessions in schools and colleges. Her stated goal is a society where everyone, regardless of ability, is treated with dignity and given a fair chance to succeed.

Advice to people facing setbacks

Her advice is to see every setback as an opportunity to prove strength, surround oneself with a support system, believe in oneself and let one’s journey inspire others. The chapter ends this interview section by presenting disability not simply as a limitation but as a potential source of unique strength.

Important themes

- Resilience: recovering from difficult circumstances and continuing forward.
- Determination: remaining committed despite obstacles.
- Self-belief: trusting one’s abilities and potential.
- Changing perceptions: challenging assumptions through achievement and participation.
- Support: recognising the importance of family and wider support systems.
- Inclusion and accessibility: creating fair opportunities and treating everyone with dignity.
- Advocacy: supporting awareness, rights and participation.
- Ability beyond disability: refusing to define a person only by physical limitations.

3. Important Vocabulary – Prose

Word / Phrase	Meaning
resilience	ability to recover quickly from difficult circumstances
locomotor	related to bones, joints or muscles
quell	overcome
indelible	enduring or permanent
squander	waste
remorse	regret
trailblazer	pioneer or leader
accolades	praise and honours
coveted	strongly desired by many
proponent	a person who speaks in support of an idea or action
fortitude	strength to face adversity or difficulty
testament	proof
preconceived notions	opinions formed before knowing the truth
inclusivity	including everyone and treating them equally
advocating	supporting or suggesting an idea
unleashed	released; something powerful set free

Important phrases in context

Phrase	Contextual meaning
defy the odds	succeed when circumstances make success difficult
a new lease of life	a renewed opportunity or fresh energy
in hindsight	understanding something after it has happened
breakthrough moment	a time of important progress or development
turn obstacles into stepping stones	use difficulties as opportunities for progress

Revision tip

Learn the textbook meanings first, then practise using each word or phrase in a new sentence. This is especially useful for vocabulary-in-context questions.

4. Poem: Nine Gold Medals

Poet: David Roth

The poem begins with athletes arriving from across the country. They have trained for many weeks and months and have come to compete for medals. Spectators gather around the field and excitement grows as the final event approaches.

Nine athletes prepare at the starting line for the hundred-yard dash. When the starting signal is given, the runners charge forward. The smallest athlete stumbles, staggers and falls on the asphalt. He cries out in frustration and anguish because his dream and effort appear to have been ruined.

The turning point comes when the other eight runners stop. Instead of continuing towards individual victory, they turn back and help the fallen athlete to his feet. All nine then join hands and continue the race together, walking instead of running.

At the finish line, all nine athletes arrive together. They receive nine gold medals and a standing ovation. The ending changes the meaning of victory: the athletes have demonstrated compassion, unity and sportsmanship rather than simply speed.

Stanza-wise explanation

Stanza	Explanation
1	Athletes from different places have trained for months and arrive with hopes of winning medals.
2	Spectators gather and the excitement rises before the final event.
3	Nine determined athletes take their places at the starting line.
4	The race begins; the smallest athlete stumbles and falls.
5	The fallen athlete experiences frustration and anguish as his dream appears shattered.
6	The other eight runners stop, return and help him stand.
7	All nine join hands and walk together to complete the race.
8	They cross the finish line together, receive nine gold medals and a standing ovation.

5. Poem Appreciation

Central idea

The poem shows that empathy, compassion, cooperation and sportsmanship can be more meaningful than individual victory. The runners' decision to help a fallen competitor transforms the race into a shared act of humanity.

Tone and mood

The beginning creates anticipation and excitement. The fall introduces disappointment and tension. The runners' decision to help creates a compassionate and hopeful tone, while the final scene becomes celebratory through the shared finish and standing ovation.

Imagery

The poem creates visual images of the field, spectators, starting blocks, runners charging forward, the fallen athlete, the runners returning, joined hands and smiling faces. Auditory imagery is associated with the starting signal. These details help readers picture and experience the event.

Important symbols

- Nine gold medals: shared achievement and collective victory.
- Joined hands: unity and cooperation.
- Walking together: a change from individual speed to collective support.
- Standing ovation: appreciation for the athletes' action.
- Finish line: a place where the meaning of success is redefined.

Poetic devices to revise

Alliteration: repetition of initial consonant sounds in nearby words. The textbook asks students to identify examples from the poem.

Visual imagery: language that helps the reader see the scene in the mind.

Auditory imagery: language connected with sounds, such as the starting signal.

Contrast: the poem contrasts individual competition at the beginning with collective support at the end.

Message

> **The poem suggests that the true spirit of sport can be seen in how competitors respond to another person's difficulty. Helping another athlete can turn a race into a shared victory.**

6. Language and Grammar

A. Fact and Opinion

Fact is evidence or factual information that can be proved. Opinion is a writer's or speaker's belief, perception or judgement. The chapter asks learners to distinguish these when analysing Dr. Malik's statements.

B. Cause and Effect

Cause is an action or event; effect is the result. Recognising this relationship helps students understand why an event happened and what followed from it.

C. Modal auxiliaries

Modal	Functions given in Chapter 5
could	possibility; unreal ability; request; suggestion
couldn't	inability
should	probability; advice
would	request; past habit

The same modal can have different meanings according to context. Students should identify the function of the modal in the complete sentence.

D. Direct and Reported Speech

The chapter demonstrates changes from direct speech to reported speech using the interview. The textbook's steps are: use reporting verbs such as said, told or says; remove quotation marks; and add the linking word that where appropriate. Pronouns and verb forms may also change according to the reporting context.

Example pattern

Direct: The speaker says, "I love sports."
Reported: The speaker says that she loves sports.

E. Movement word cline

The textbook asks students to arrange movement words according to increasing pace. The given vocabulary includes crawl, amble, walk, jog, saunter, dart, sprint, stroll, run, plod and creep.

F. Collocations

A collocation is a pair or group of words that commonly appear together. The poem section uses standing ovation as an adjective–noun collocation and asks learners to create further combinations with adjectives such as big, heavy, strong, large and great.

7. Listening and Speaking Skills

Listening – Prose

Students listen to an announcement for a special school assembly and fill in blanks using one or two exact words. The questions focus on specific details such as the venue, a presentation on inclusion, themes of a performance, an activity by experts and the closing event.

Speaking – Prose

Students interview the Sports Captain and Sports Coach. The Sports Captain interview is informal, while the Sports Coach interview is formal. Learners practise appropriate greetings, questions and expressions for each situation.

Listening – Poem

Students listen to a radio talk about Patrick Gomes, a coach of special athletes. The tasks ask learners to identify true/false information and choose correct options about his sporting career, coaching role, a turning point and his view that sports support fitness and a positive outlook.

Speaking – Poem

Students express their points of view regarding Special Olympics. The suggested areas are its importance in promoting inclusion, its impact on sportspersons with special abilities and ways to create awareness.

Useful expressions

- Asking: What is your opinion on…? / How do you feel about…? / In your view, is…? / What is your take on…? / Do you think that…?
- Expressing: Personally, I believe that… / I hold the opinion that… / It’s my belief that… / I have a strong feeling that… / From my perspective…

8. Writing Skills

Notice writing

A notice conveys information to students or a specific group. The textbook lists events, celebrations, competitions, important information and lost/found articles as possible subjects.

Part	Purpose
Name of organisation	Identifies the issuing school or organisation.
NOTICE	Main heading.
Date	Date of the notice.
Heading	Short title showing the subject.
Details	Essential information for the reader.
Signature / Name / Designation	Identifies the writer and position.

Textbook practice: The Sports Club is organising an Inter-school Athletic Meet. As Sports Captain, the learner must write a notice of not more than 50 words asking interested students to register for selection in different events.

Slogan writing

The poem section asks learners to write three creative slogans on Special Olympics. The textbook advises students to understand the theme, brainstorm, keep the slogan brief and simple, make it catchy and keep it to about eight to ten words.

Poster making

The poster should include vital information, the slogan, supporting ideas, illustrations and a call for action when appropriate. Colour and decoration should support the message. The finished poster is presented as a box item.

9. Learning Beyond the Text

History of the Paralympics

The textbook traces the origin of the Paralympics to 1948, when Sir Ludwig Guttmann organised a sports competition in England for war veterans with spinal cord-related injuries. It explains the development of the Stoke Mandeville Games and notes Rome 1960 as the first organisation of the Games in that form.

The textbook also states that the Paralympics are divided into Summer and Winter Games, alternating every two years. Since the late twentieth century, it says, the Paralympics have been held in the same city as the corresponding Olympic Games and follow shortly after the Olympics.

Group presentation

Students can research either two lesser-known Paralympic sports, such as para equestrian or para rowing, or two Paralympians from India. The textbook recommends an introductory slide, two slides on the origin and brief history of the Paralympics, four to five slides on the selected topic and a concluding slide, with a good balance between text and images.

Special Olympics athletes highlighted in the textbook

- Ravimathi Arumugam: gold medal in the 400 metre, Level C women’s race at the Special Olympic Games 2023 in Berlin.
- Aanchal Goyal: gold medal in the 400 metre, Level B women’s race.
- Saket Kundu: silver in the Level B mini javelin event and bronze in the Level B 400 metre men’s race.

10. Olympics, Paralympics and Special Olympics

The final infographic in the textbook provides a comparison-oriented overview.

Event / Movement	Textbook information
Olympic Games	The infographic states that the first Olympic Game took place in 776 BC as part of an ancient Greek fes
Paralympics	For athletes with disabilities, showcasing para-athletes in various sports. The Paralympic symbol is calle
Special Olympics	Provides sports training and athletic competition in Olympic-type sports for children and adults with int

Final exam revision

- Know Dr. Deepa Malik’s diagnosis, response, switch to para-athletics and 2016 Rio achievement.
- Remember the role of family support, mental resilience and changing societal perceptions.
- Understand the ideas of inclusion, accessibility and advocacy.
- Know the sequence of events in Nine Gold Medals and why the eight runners stop.
- Explain the significance of the nine gold medals and standing ovation.
- Revise the meanings of the chapter’s important vocabulary and phrases.
- Practise fact versus opinion and cause-effect.
- Revise could, couldn’t, should and would and their functions.
- Revise the basic changes in reported speech.
- Practise notice, slogan and poster writing.
- Revise the differences among Olympics, Paralympics and Special Olympics as presented in the textbook.

Source note: These detailed notes are based on the uploaded Kaveri Chapter 5 textbook PDF, Unit 5, pages 137–168. They paraphrase and organise the textbook content for study rather than reproducing the textbook.