



**LITTERA PUBLIC SCHOOL**

**CLASS – 8**

**ENGLISH**

**CHAPTER – 7**

**A VISIT TO CAMBRIDGE**

### **Learning Outcomes :-**

- Comprehend the extract and read it aloud with fluency and expression
- Learn new words and their meanings
- Draw from personal experiences or real life situations

### **• About the Author :-**

The author of A Visit to Cambridge is Firdaus Kanga. He was a journalist and had travelled all over the world. He was also handicapped but he never let that become his disability in any way. Also, he was an inspiration to the people around him.

### **• A Visit to Cambridge – Introduction :-**

A Visit to Cambridge is written by Firdaus Kanga, writer and journalist from Mumbai. He was born with 'brittle bones' that tended to break easily when he was a child. The lesson gives us a glimpse of the meeting between Firdaus Kanga and Stephen Hawking. Stephen Hawking, one of the greatest scientists of our time suffered from a form of paralysis that confined him to a

wheelchair, and allowed him to 'speak' only by punching buttons on a computer, which speaks for him in a machine-like voice. Both these men moved around in wheelchairs. It was during Firdaus Kanga's visit to Cambridge that they met each other.

### • **A Visit to Cambridge- Summary :-**

A Visit to Cambridge by Firdaus Kanga begins with him taking a walking tour through Cambridge. During this tour, his guide mentioned that the famous astrophysicist Stephen Hawking lived there. The author had completely forgotten about this and just as his tour ended, he went to a phone booth to contact him. He was able to talk to Hawking's assistant and explain to him that he had come all the way from India on a wheelchair. The assistant allowed him half an hour with the scientist, from three-thirty to four. The writer mentions how people often ask differently-abled people to cheer-up as if they have a courage account they are too lazy to draw a check on. He feels the only thing that can make you stronger is seeing someone like you achieve something great. Stephen Hawking told him that he hadn't been brave and this was the only choice he had, although the writer is of a conflicting view. The author was guilty of making the scientist speak as it took a lot of effort for him to tap on his little switch and find words in his computer. He was a man with a bright mind but his computerized voice made his thoughts come out as frozen phrases. Stephen mentions that he finds it amusing when people patronize him. The writer then gives a description of Hawkins as to how he looks like a three-dimensional version of all his photographs in magazines. First impression of his appearance is shocking but he is the embodiment of inner glow in a man. He made the author believe in eternal souls and that everything else is just an accessory. Hawkins thinks there is nothing good about being disabled but the writer is of the view that it makes you realize the existence of kindness in the world. Further, upon being asked, if he inspires a lot of people makes it any better for Stephen, he answered that it doesn't. For someone

whose body is like a claustrophobic room whose walls are getting narrower day by day, it doesn't make much of a difference. The only advice Stephen had to offer to differently-abled people is only to focus on things they are good at. The half an hour came to an end and it was time for the writer to leave but the scientist made him stay. He offered the writer tea and a tour of his garden. His garden was as big as a park but Stephen covered every inch of it in his wheelchair while the writer dodged himself out of his way. They did not talk much in the sun. When it was time to leave, the author touched his shoulder and wheeled out. As he looked back, he could see an embodiment of his bravest self, the one he was moving towards and the one he had believed in for so many years.

- **Word meanings :-**

**Metaphor - Comparing two things that have similar features**

**Strange - Unusual**

**Guide - A person who helps in showing tourists around**

**Disabled - A condition that limits movements, senses or activities**

**University - An educational institution which helps students get degree**

**Successor - The next person that takes over**

**Travelogue - A book that narrates one's travel experiences**

**Astrophysics - A branch of science that aims to explain the birth or death of objects in the Universe**

**Gravity - The force that attracts the body towards the centre of earth**

**Architecture - The structure or design of buildings**

**Paralysed - Inability to move a part of the body**

**Cord - String made of twisted strands**

**Residence - House, Place of dwelling**

**Propelled - Push around**

**Big bang theory - The belief that universe began at a single point and then expanded**

**Black hole - A region of space where gravity is forceful**

**Courage - The ability to do something that frightens one**

**Haste - In a hurry**

**Curiosity - Eager to learn or know**

**Reverence - Utmost respect**

**Privileges - Special advantages and rights**

**Cheque - Form to pay a stated amount from a bank**

**Empathise - Understand and share the feeling of the other**

**Superficial - Partially true**

**Toxic - Harmful**

**Idol - A person who is highly adored**

**Disembodied - Separated from the body, without form**

**Disintegrated - Break into small pieces**

**Guilty - Feeling bad about something**

**Pale - Light in colour**

**Frustrated - Feeling irritated about not being able to do something**

**Exhaustion - Tired**

**Buoyant - Cheerful and happy thoughts**

**Corpse - A dead body**

**Chronically - Continuous and recurring**

**Patronize - Offering help only to show that one is superior**

**Glimpse - A momentary view**

**Sentimental - Prompted by a feeling of sadness**

**Annoying - Irritating**

**Three dimensional - Appearing to have length, breadth and depth**

**Slump - Fall heavily**

**Torso - The part of the body that excludes head, limbs and legs**

**Flash - All of a sudden**

**Lantern - A lamp**

**Incandescence - The emission of light from the body**

**Accessory - A thing added to make it more necessary**

**Irrelevant - Not important**

**Eternal - Forever**

**Inflection - Change in the form of words to express tense, gender etc**

**Exhilaration- A feeling of excitement**

**Cliché - A phrase that is overused**

**Claustrophobic - Fear for closed spaces**

**Wrist - The joint that connects the forearm and hand**

**Gleefully - Happily**

**Reluctant- Unwilling to do something**

**Grinning - Smiling widely**

**Rumbling - To travel with a sound**

**Glare - Shine brightly**

**Embodiment - The visible form of an idea**

**• Hard Words :-**

**Accessory**  
**Amusing**  
**Anguish**  
**Astrophysicist**  
**Buoyant**  
**Chronically**  
**Claustrophobic**  
**Disembodied**  
**Exhilaration**  
**Gleefully**  
**Inflection**  
**Metaphor**  
**Patronise**  
**Propelled**  
**Rumbling**  
**Sentimental**  
**Slump**  
**Synthesiser**  
**Torso**  
**Wasted**

• **Synonyms :-**

**Presently - Soon**

**Migrate - Relocate**

**Hardly - Scarcely**

**Self-Possessed - Composed**

**Meantime - Meanwhile**

**Retreat - Withdraw /Haven**

**Mope - Brood**

**Division - Section**

**Sufficient - Enough**

**Caller - Visitor**

**Restful - Calm / Peaceful**

**Engulf - Submerge**

**Treacherous - Dangerous**

**Recover - Found**

**Bound - Jump**

**Shudder - Shiver**

**Amusing - Entertaining**

**Scarcity - Lack**

**Ghastly - Scary / Eerie**

**Conscious - Aware**

**Fragment - Part**

**Comprehension - Understanding**

**Bolted - Dashed**

**Speciality – Forte**



- **Antonyms :-**

Presently – eventually

Migrate – abide

Hardly – softly

Meantime – open interval

Scarcity – abundance

Ghastly – pleasant

Fragment – absoluteness

Speciality – inability

Bolted – broken