

Chapter 27

Chuskit Goes to School



Chuskit's Dream

Today is a special day for Chuskit. It is so special that last night Chuskit could not even sleep. Do you know why? Chuskit is ten years old, but today she is going to school for the first time. She has been waiting for this day since long.

Chuskit's school is not very far from her house. You have to take the big road and then walk along the lake. Cross the river near the poplar trees, and then after a small climb, you reach the school. This is how all the children of Skitpo Pul village reach their school. All the children, but not Chuskit.



Chuskit amongst photographs from Ladakh

- 🕒 How do you go to school?
- 🕒 Find out where Ladakh is. What kind of a place is it?

At first Chuskit did not know that she was different from other children. But slowly she found that she could not do the things that other children could. It was because of her legs. Since birth, Chuskit could not use her legs.

Chuskit's Chair

All day, Chuskit used to sit near the window and draw pictures. Her mother (*Aama-le*) said that Chuskit made the best drawings. This made Chuskit happy. But Chuskit was happier when one day her father (*Aaba-le*) got a chair which had wheels. She quickly learnt how to sit in the chair and how to move it – back



and forth. Chuskit was so happy because now she did not need her father to carry her everywhere. When she wanted to go out she would tell her mother to put her in the wheel chair. Now, she could come outside on her own.

Chuskit would see the other children every morning. They would be laughing and playing on their way to school. She wished that she could also go with them.

One day Abdul came to her house with a letter. When he saw Chuskit, he asked her why she did not go to school. Chuskit told him sadly, "I can not walk. *Aaba-le* cannot carry me all the way to school everyday. I cannot even wheel my chair as the road to school is not level. Also, how can I cross the river?"

Abdul asked, "But would you want to go to school if you could?" Chuskit was excited. She said, "Of course I want to go to school just like all of you. I want to study and play... ."

Her *Meme-le* (grandfather) stopped her and said, "Chuskit do not dream. You know that this is not possible."

☺ What are the things that you enjoy doing in school?

☺ Do you like going to school?

☺ Would you like it if you never could go to school?

A Good Idea

Abdul went back from Chuskit's house, but he had started thinking of how to get Chuskit to school. He explained about Chuskit to the Headmaster and talked to the teachers till they agreed with his thoughts. Now everyone got together to work so that Chuskit's problem could be solved. They made a plan so that Chuskit could bring her wheel-chair by road to school.



For this, the uneven road had to be made level. One group of children started to level the road. Another group worked to level the area near the river. But there was still a problem. How would Chuskit cross the river? The older children took help from the teacher to make a small bridge with wood across the river. Everyone happily worked hard. They wanted Chuskit to come to school.

Chuskit's *Aama-le* and *Aaba-le* gave hot tea and biscuits to everyone. Chuskit's *Meme-le* had tears in his eyes – not because he was sad, but because he was very happy!

By the evening, the work was done. All the children were happy. But the happiest of all was Chuskit. Her dream was about to come true.

And today, it was that special day. Chuskit was all ready. She was eager to go to school!



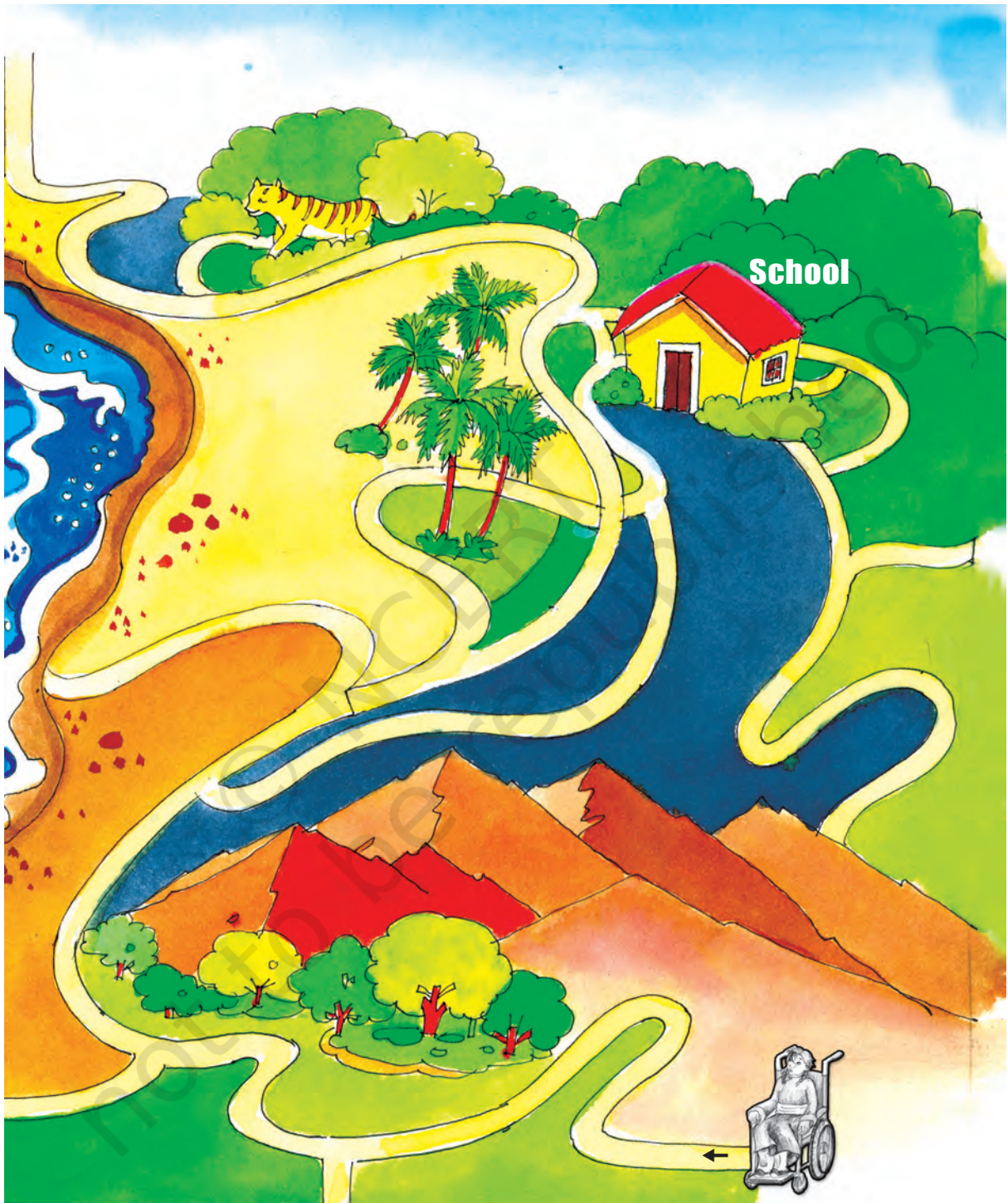
Talk about it

- ☉ Who all helped Chuskit to reach school?
- ☉ If you were Abdul what would you have done?
- ☉ At last, Chuskit could reach school. Do you think that she may face some difficulties in school? What kind of difficulties? If you were Chuskit's friend, how would you help her?
- ☉ Do you have ramps in your school on which a wheelchair can move?
- ☉ Do you know any child near your house who cannot go to school because of some difficulty? Would you like to help such a child? How will you help?
- ☉ Look at the buildings around your house. Can a wheelchair go inside the building?

Let us do

- ☉ Draw pictures of a ramp and a wheelchair in your notebook.
- ☉ Why not make your own bridge? For this, use material that you can find around you – Ice cream sticks, plastic spoons, small sticks, rope, string etc. Your friends can also make bridge.
- ☉ In a group of friends make a model showing fields, rivers, mountains, roads, and railway tracks, etc. You can use clay, sand, pebbles, twigs, leaves. Place your bridges at different positions on this model.

Chuskit and her School



Help Chuskit to reach school