

Illustration: Trisha Biswas  
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I Scream, You Scream, We All Scream For...

# ...Ice cream

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**Narrator:** Hello, hello, hello! The wait is finally over. The fantastic ice cream teller is now in business. Answer one simple question and he'll guess if you're amazingly awesome or blatantly boresome. Yes, you simple lady, come in and know thyself.

*The lady, shy and scared, steps into the secret room filled with ice cream paraphernalia. From posters of colourful scoops to machines that churns on their own, the room is majestic. Amidst it, sits a mysterious man who urges the lady to take the seat in front of him.*

**Ice cream teller:** Oh, clear lady, tell me the flavour your heart desires. What ice cream will soothe your stomach's fire?

**The lady:** Vanilla!

**Ice cream teller:** Oh, no, not a vanilla enthusiast When so many unique flavours exist Set on boring vanilla, why are you so? Don't you know it is the flavour of the old? It says that you, too, are just as bland With nothing fun ever in your hands Now, go and ruin someone else's mood That's expected of you, vanilla-loving brood.

*The lady runs out of the room in tears, as a college student enters.*

**College student:** I'll have a mint chocolate.

**Ice cream teller:** Isn't brushing enough for you Now you want to eat toothpaste, too?

This flavour is for the ones with no taste buds

So with weird taste their mouth they flood  
You have no sense of right or wrong  
Nobody wants you to ever come along  
Either eat mint, or eat the choco  
I swear, you make everyone loco.

*The college student exits; a small child enters.*

**Child:** I want chocolate with extra chocolate syrup.

**Ice cream teller:** Alas, the pain of teeth is ignored  
Because kids do not know that diabetes is not cured  
"Mumma final baar," you chocolate-lovers claim  
But I know your obsession can never be tamed  
So much sweetness and so much sugar rush  
Rotten teeth, fixed by no toothpaste and brush  
But I know it can help put the sadness away  
So, eat it, only when your mumma says.

*The kid leaves; an Instagram influencer enters with their DSLR and phone ready to capture every minute of the 'exotic' experience.*

**Influencer:** So, guys, today, I will order watermelon sorbet. Stay tuned to find out what happens.

**Ice cream teller:** Call the lady, student, or child  
But I cannot deal with this request wild  
Sorbet is not even a type of ice cream  
If you like it, you're not a part of the team  
You are the Brutus, the one disliked by all  
You'll be the reason for your own downfall  
Nobody will like you wherever you go  
Which is why on Instagram you find hope.

*The day was finally over; so the ice cream teller packed up his tent and left for another town, ready to terrorise another set of ice cream choices.*

## WRITING THE RIGHT WAY

### Unravelling The Narrative Of Paper

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From journaling to jotting down to-do lists, writing serves as a method of expression, storing information and passing the same through generations. Let's journey back to ancient Mesopotamia and delve into the origins of writing and the materials used to convey thoughts.

#### Birth of the script

In Mesopotamia (3500 BC), as temple officials struggled with tracking temple goods and wealth, they devised a reliable way to do so. They used wet clay lumps marked with rudimentary drawings, which were hardened in the sun, and inscribed using reed as a writing implement.

#### The Egyptian papyrus

The Egyptians crafted papyrus from the pith of the papyrus plant in 3000 BC, revolutionising the writing surface. Papyrus spurred the demand for scribes, enabling more fluid inscriptions compared to those on plaster.

#### Bamboo books

In 1500 BC China, bamboo emerged as a medium well suited for the vertical columns of the Chinese alphabet. Bound together with threads, bamboo strips formed books, facilitating communication in the empire despite linguistic variations.

#### Wax, leaves and wood

In fifth century BC, various me-

diams were used for writing. Wax surfaces were useful as they could be used multiple times, while palm leaves and birch bark served as documentation materials in ancient India. Romans utilised wood-based tablets when papyrus was scarce.

#### Vellum and parchment

In second century BC, an expensive alternative for papyrus was used. Made from animal leather, parchment allowed writing on both sides, enabling extensive manuscripts and illuminated texts. Due to this, Vellum became synonymous with prestigious manuscripts.

#### The discovery of paper

In 105 AD, the discovery of paper in China marked a significant milestone. Initially made from rags, mulberry fibres, laurel, and Chinese grass, paper offered a thinner, more flexible, and easier to produce alternative to parchment or papyrus, eventually spreading to the West.

#### The rotary press

In 19th century, the rotary press, invented by Richard March Hoe, revolutionised the printing industry, printing 8,000 pages in one hour. This increased paper demand led to innovations in production, with wood pulp becoming a primary source, meeting mass market needs.

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