



Lesson: 6

The Woman on the Bus

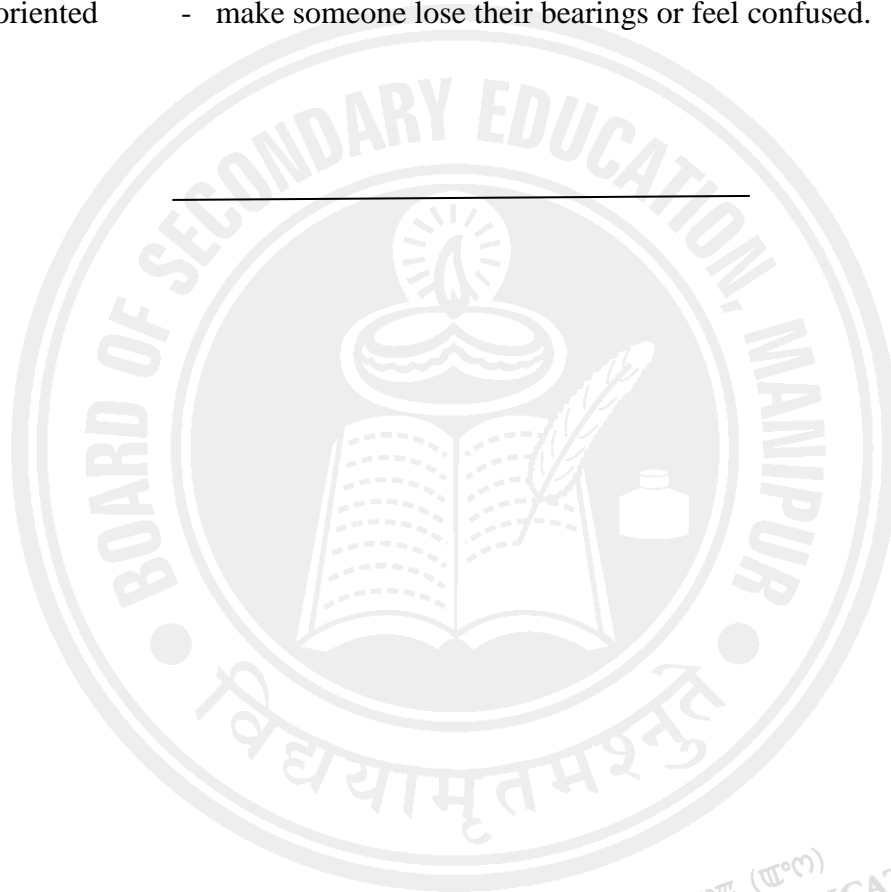
NOTES:

SUMMARY:

The lesson written by Antonia Moreno is about the story of a soldier named Jack and his experiences in the Vietnam War. Jack joined the school as a Spanish teacher and he was quite popular but a private person who was reluctant to talk about his experiences in the war. Even one in the school know very little personal facts about Jack like his wife and family and how proud he was of his three sons Andrew, Nick and Daniel, his parents, where he had gone to college etc. But that's all they knew about him. However on that particular day he came to the school quite nervous and excited and was looking expectantly for someone to talk to. Since Jack and author had free periods they began talking. While Jack was returning back to his home at New Hampshire Avenue bus he saw a familiar face though he could not exactly remember her. So he went over to the woman and sat next to her and asked who she was. Then he remembered she was the North Vietnamese woman soldier he had encountered and thought killed her during the war. Then Jack went on and told the author his experience in Vietnam. He had been drafted after the Tet offensive and sent to the large air base at Da Nang and stayed there without taking part in any fighting for several months. Then he was transferred to an outfit in the central highlands. On one particular day while patrolling to examine a hill position held by the North Vietnamese or the Viet cong he encounter the woman soldier in a shell hole and left her for dead after emptying his gun into her. He left hand was also bleeding badly because had she fired back. Disoriented, frightened and in confusion he ran directly into a North Vietnamese Army position and he was taken prisoner. He was sent to a prisoner-of-war camp near the border with Laos and spent the rest of the war there. His hand got infected and he had never had full use of it since then. The camp was hard. Food and sanitary condition were terrible and they had to work twelve hours a day and were beaten up for no reason at all Jack hated the Vietnamese and was always thinking of how to get back to them. He had even thought of searching them after the war and killed them with their families. But now after meeting the woman soldier on the bus his attitude change. He was relieved that he had only wounded her slightly. She was a pleasant quite sort of person and they talked for a while about themselves and thus families and Jack had even inviter her and his family. Jack was a happy man now who was glad that he had never killed anyone in the Vietnam War.

Word Meanings:-

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| 1. Lounge | - a sitting room. |
| 2. Grape vine | - talking through an informal way to other people. |
| 3. Reluctant | - unwilling and hesitant. |
| 4. Excited | - make someone feel very enthusiastic and eager. |
| 5. Notion | - an idea or belief. |
| 6. Visualize | - form an image of something in the mind. |
| 7. Anxious | - feeling worried or nervous. |
| 8. Disoriented | - make someone lose their bearings or feel confused. |



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