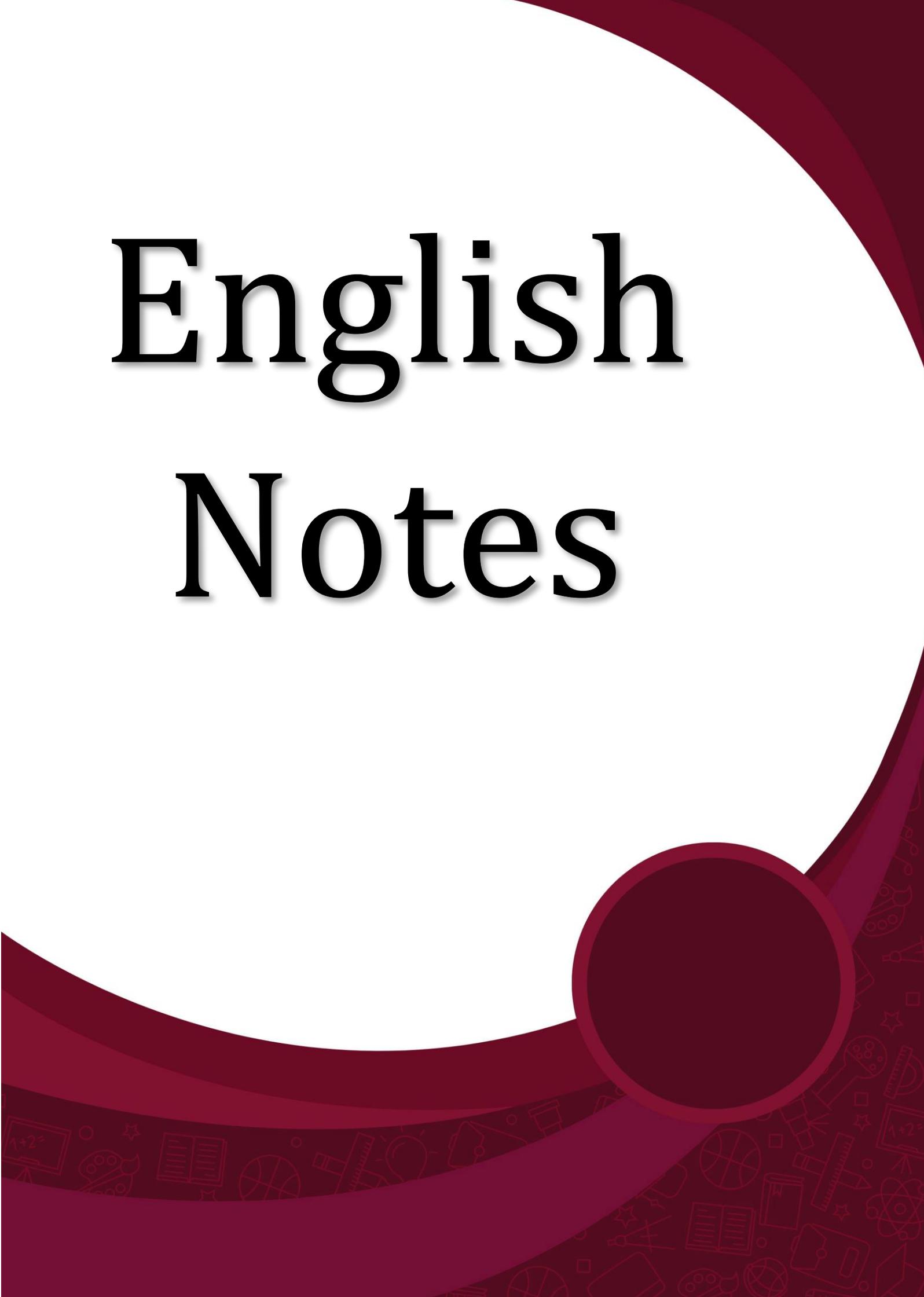


English Notes

The background features a large white circle on a maroon background. A maroon arc curves across the bottom right, containing a circular inset. The bottom right corner is filled with a pattern of small, light maroon icons representing various educational subjects like math, science, and literature.

Flamingo Chapter-3 Keeping Quiet

About the Author – Asokamitran

Asokamitran (1931–2017) was a famous Tamil writer known for his simple, realistic and humorous style.

- He worked at Gemini Studios in Chennai.
- His book **My Years with Boss** is based on his experiences in the film industry.
- This chapter is an excerpt from that memoir.
- He gives a realistic and satirical description of early Indian cinema.

Meaning of Important Expressions

- **blew over** → emotional outburst / gussa ho jana
- **was struck dumb** → shock se chup ho jana
- **catapulted into** → achanak kisi position me pahunch jana
- **a coat of mail** → heavy armour jaisa coat
- **played into their hands** → kisi ke plan ko unknowingly support karna
- **the favourite haunt** → pasandida jagah
- **heard a bell ringing** → kuch yaad aana

Theme of the Chapter

- Early days of Indian cinema
- Film studio culture
- Writers and poets in film industry
- Satire on politics and human nature
- Contrast between art and commercial cinema

Sub-theme:

- 👉 Film industry me kaam karne wale logon ki ambitions aur frustrations.

Central Idea

The chapter gives a humorous description of the environment at Gemini Studios.

Author shows:

- Film glamour ke peeche ki reality
- Politics and hierarchy
- Jealousy and insecurity
- Unrealised dreams

Through satire, he exposes human weaknesses and studio politics.

Main Characters

1 The Author – Asokamitran

- Worked in Publicity Department.
- Collected newspaper clippings.
- Had an insignificant job.
- But was one of the most informed persons.
- Observant, witty and humorous narrator.

2 The Office Boy

- Worked in Make-up Department.
- Wanted to become actor or poet.
- Blamed Kothamangalam Subbu for his failure.
- Frustrated and jealous personality.

 **Symbol:** Unrealised ambitions.

3 Kothamangalam Subbu

- No. 2 person at Gemini Studios.
- Multi-talented: writer, poet, actor.
- Loyal to S. S. Vasam (The Boss).
- Wrote famous Tamil novel *Thillana Mohanambal*.
- Cheerful, creative and adaptable.

 **Symbol:** Versatile genius.

4 The Boss – S. S. Vasam

- Founder of Gemini Studios.
- Powerful and dominating personality.
- Film producer and editor.

5 Legal Adviser

- Member of Story Department.
- Wore formal coat and tie.
- Logical and serious.
- Secretly recorded an actress's outburst, which ended her career.
- Later Story Department was closed.

6 Stephen Spender

- English poet and editor.
- Visited Gemini Studios.
- Staff did not understand his speech.
- Later author realised he was editor of *The Encounter*.
- Shows communication gap and lack of literary awareness.

Detailed Summary (Point-wise)

1 Pancake & Make-up Department

“Pancake” was heavy make-up used in films.

- Actors ko heavy make-up lagaya jata tha.
- Department me strict hierarchy thi.
- Office boy actors ko paint karta tha.

 Satire: Film glamour is artificial and fake.

2 Office Boy's Frustration

- Poet/actor banna chahta tha.
- Subbu se jealous tha.
- Apni failure ka blame dusron par karta tha.

 Represents frustration and insecurity.

3 Kothamangalam Subbu

- Extremely talented and loyal.
- Film aur literature dono me successful.
- Critics ne unki literary talent ko underestimate kiya.

4 Story Department & Legal Adviser

- Writers aur poets ka group.
- Ek actress ka emotional outburst secretly record kiya gaya.
- Iske baad uska career khatam ho gaya.
- Later department close ho gaya.

 Shows politics and insecurity.

5 Political Environment

- Most people wore khadi.

- Mahatma Gandhi ko respect karte the.
- Strong anti-communist bias tha.

Studio ka environment political influence se free nahi tha.

6 Moral Re-Armament (MRA)

- Anti-communist movement.
- Gemini Studios ne warmly welcome kiya.
- Plays ka influence Tamil theatre par pada.

7 Visit of Stephen Spender

Stephen Spender studio visit karte hain.

- Speech diya.
- Audience confused aur silent thi.
- Communication gap tha.
- Later author ne discover kiya ki woh famous editor the.

Importance of the Chapter

- ✓ Early Indian film culture ka realistic picture
- ✓ Brilliant humour and satire
- ✓ Art vs commercial cinema
- ✓ Politics ka indirect reference
- ✓ Human ambition aur frustration ka portrayal

Detailed Summary

Here is a **more detailed, structured and exam-ready summary** for the chapter **Poets and Pancakes** from the book **Flamingo**.

Detailed Summary – *Poets and Pancakes*

The chapter *Poets and Pancakes* is written by **Asokamitran**, who worked for many years at **Gemini Studios**, one of the most famous film studios in South India. This chapter is an excerpt from his memoir **My Years with Boss**, where he humorously describes the working culture, people, and atmosphere of the studio. Through satire and personal observation, the author reveals the reality behind the glamorous world of cinema.

At Gemini Studios, a large part of the daily activity revolved around the make-up department. The most important make-up material used there was “pancake”, which was applied in thick layers on actors’ faces to make them look good under strong studio lights. The make-up department had a strict

hierarchy and several people worked together to paint the actors' faces. The author humorously describes how actors of all complexions were covered with the same thick make-up, making them appear unnatural. This description exposes the artificial nature of the film industry.

Among the employees of the make-up department was an office boy who constantly complained about his job. He believed that he deserved a higher position and often blamed others for his failures. He especially disliked **Kothamangalam Subbu**, a highly talented and important person at the studio. The office boy believed that Subbu was responsible for his lack of success as a poet or actor. His frustration reflects the unfulfilled ambitions that many people in the film industry carried.

Kothamangalam Subbu was one of the most remarkable personalities at Gemini Studios. He was a writer, poet, actor, and film personality who worked closely with the studio head **S. S. Vasan**. Subbu was extremely loyal to Vasan and possessed great creativity and intelligence. He could easily solve problems, contribute ideas for films, and entertain people with his storytelling skills. Although he was very talented, literary critics often failed to recognise his true abilities.

Another important part of Gemini Studios was the story department, where several writers and poets were employed to develop ideas for films. However, the department did not function very effectively. One of its members was a legal adviser who always dressed formally and behaved in a serious manner. At one point, an actress visited the studio and had an emotional outburst against the management. The legal adviser secretly recorded her speech, which later led to the end of her career. Eventually, the story department itself was closed down.

The chapter also highlights the political atmosphere of that period. Many people at the studio wore khadi and respected the ideas of **Mahatma Gandhi**. At the same time, there was a strong dislike for communism. This political bias became evident when a group called Moral Re-Armament (MRA), which promoted anti-communist ideas, visited the studio. Their plays and messages were warmly welcomed and even influenced Tamil theatre and cinema.

One of the most interesting incidents described in the chapter is the visit of the English poet **Stephen Spender**. The studio arranged a special meeting where he delivered a speech. However, most of the audience could not understand what he was saying and remained silent. The author himself did not recognise Spender at that time. Later, when he came across a magazine called *Encounter*, he realised that Stephen Spender was actually its editor and a well-known literary figure. This incident highlights the gap between the literary world and the film industry.

Through these experiences, Asokamitran provides readers with a realistic and humorous picture of life inside a film studio. Instead of focusing on glamour, he reveals the ordinary routines, human weaknesses, ambitions, frustrations, and politics that existed behind the scenes. The chapter ultimately shows that the world of cinema, like any other workplace, is full of complex personalities and situations.