



INDIAN SCHOOL AL WADI AL KABIR

Class: VIII	Department: ENGLISH	Date of submission: November 2025
Worksheet No: 23	Topic: THE OPEN WINDOW	Note: TO BE DONE IN PROSE NOTEBOOK

➤ ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Hector Hugh Munro, also known as H. H. Munro, was an English writer who satirized Edwardian society and culture with his witty, mischievous, and occasionally ghastly writings. He is regarded as a master of the short story by English scholars and is frequently compared to great writers such as O. Henry and Dorothy Parker. Munro wrote under the pen name "Saki".

H. H. Munro (Saki)



Munro was born on 18th December 1870 in Burma (which was then part of British India) but grew up in England following his mother's death in 1872. His father, Charles Augustus Munro, was an Inspector General for the Indian Imperial Police, and his mother, Mary Frances Mercer, was the daughter of a major-general in the Royal Navy. Munro began his writing career as a journalist for newspapers and magazines. He wrote political satires for the *Westminster Gazette* and in 1900 published "The Rise of the Russian Empire", a serious historical work. His first attempt at a short story was "Dogged", published under his real name in *St Paul's* in February 1899.

Among his most frequently anthologized works are "Tobermory", "The Open Window", "Sredni Vashtar", "Laura", and "The Schartz-Metterklume Method".

➤ SUMMARY

"The Open Window" is a short story written by Saki (H. H. Munro). It deals with a curious encounter between Mr Nuttel and Vera.

Framton Nuttel, a man with a nervous disorder, travels to the country to improve his health; he also carries the letters of introduction from his sister. As Mr Nuttel visits and awaits Mrs Sappleton, Vera, her fifteen-year-old niece, receives and entertains him. Vera informs Mr Nuttel that Mrs Sappleton keeps the French window open because she believes that her husband and brothers, who died in a bog three years ago, would return one day. When Mrs Sappleton arrives, she promptly excuses herself for the open window and informs him that she expects the men to return from shooting anytime soon. Mr Nuttel, believing that Mrs Sappleton is mentally unstable, becomes uncomfortable and tries to change the topic by talking about his illness. Later, much to his surprise, he sees the "dead" men and their dog approaching the window. Believing that they are ghosts, he flees.

As the men enter, the husband enquires Mrs Sappleton about the strange man who had then bolted. Mrs Sappleton, on the other hand, is confused as to why Mr Nuttel had fled. Vera then tells her family that the sight of their little spaniel must have scared their guest away. She recounted an incident when Mr Nuttel was supposedly chased by a pack of stray dogs in India. He then had to spend the night in a freshly dug grave in a cemetery with 'those creatures snarling and foaming above him'.

Finally, the author concludes by stating that 'romance at short notice was Vera's speciality', revealing how both the incidents narrated by Vera were invented and baseless. The story's ending discloses the irony of Mr Nuttel's situation: he had come to cure his nerves but ended up making them worse.

VOCABULARY

1. **self-possessed:** calm and confident; sure of herself
2. **endeavoured:** tried
3. **flatter:** make (her) happy
4. **suggest masculine habitation:** suggest that the room belonged to a man
5. **moor:** grassland
6. **treacherous:** dangerous (though it seems safe)
7. **bog:** wet, spongy ground (one may sink into it)
8. **falteringly:** a 'faltering' voice is shaky, hesitant; haltingly
9. **bustled:** entered (the room) noisily
10. **whirl of apologies:** many apologies (in quick succession)
11. **snipe:** water bird that lives in marshes
12. **rattled on:** went on
13. **scarcity of birds:** no birds or very few ('scarcity' means acute shortage)
14. **straying:** moving (she was not looking at him)
15. **delusion:** false impression or belief
16. **ailments and infirmities:** (relating to health) complaints of sickness/weakness
17. **sympathetic comprehension:** understanding and showing sympathy
18. **uncanny coincidence:** unnatural/unexpected/strange event

➤ *Comprehension Check (Page 57)*



1. Why had Framton Nuttel come to the “rural retreat”?

Ans. Mr. Framton Nuttel was suffering from a nerve disorder and was worried about his health condition. His doctor recommended that he should take a break from his city life. Hence, he had come to the “rural retreat” as a measure to undergo treatment for his nerve problem in the peaceful environment of the countryside.

2. Why had his sister given him letters of introduction to people living there?

Ans. Nuttel did not know people in the countryside. Hence, his sister gave him letters of introduction to people living there so that he would not feel lonely and isolated while he visited the countryside for his nerve ailment treatment. She was aware that he would speak less and his nerve disorder would get worse from moping. One among those letters of introduction was to Mrs. Sappleton.

3. What had happened in the Sappleton family as narrated by the niece?

Ans. The niece played a practical joke on Nuttel when she came to know that he was a total stranger. She said that her aunt’s husband, two brothers and a dog had gone for hunting through the window three years ago. They never returned. But the aunt was still hoping to see them back through the open window.

➤ *Comprehension Check (Page 60)*

1. What did Mrs Sappleton say about the open window?

Ans. When Mrs. Sappleton met Mr. Nuttel, she said that her husband and her two young brothers would enter the house through the open window. Hence, she kept it open till it was dark and hoped that Mr. Nuttel had no problem in keeping the window open.

2. The horror on the girl’s face made Framton swing around in his seat.

What did he see?

Ans. Framton swung around to know the reason for the girl's horror. Soon he saw three figures coming towards the window.

➤ **Comprehension Check (Page 61)**



1. Why did Framton rush out wildly?

Ans. Vera told Mr. Nuttel that her aunt, Mrs. Sappleton's husband and her two young brothers had been missing for three years. When Framton saw a silhouette of three men with guns and a dog in the midst of evening light, he thought these were their ghosts, and he rushed out wildly in fear.

2. What was the girl's explanation for his lightning exit?

Ans. The girl explained that Framton had a bitter experience of the dogs. So, he made a sudden exit on seeing the dog.
