



INDIAN SCHOOL DARSAIT DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH



Subject : ENGLISH

Topic : The Lost Spring

Worksheet : _____5_____

Name of the Student : _____ Class: XII Division : _____ Roll Number : _____

Summary

- The author examines and analyses the impoverished conditions and traditions that condemn children to a life of exploitation these children are denied education and forced into hardships early in their lives.
- The writer encounters Saheb - a rag picker whose parents have left behind the life of poverty in Dhaka to earn a living in Delhi.
- His family like many other families of rag pickers lives in Seemapuri. They do not have other identification other than a ration card.
- The children do not go to school and they are excited at the prospect of finding a coin or even a ten rupee note for rummaging in the garbage.
- It is the only way of earning the life they live in impoverished conditions but are resigned to their fate.
- The writer is pained to see Saheb, a rag picker whose name means the ruler of earth, lose the spark of childhood and roams barefooted with his friends.
- From morning to noon the author encounters him in a tea stall and is paid Rs. 800. He sadly realizes that he is no longer his own master and this loss of identity weighs heavily on his tender shoulders.
- The author then tells about another victim, Mukesh who wants to be a motor mechanic.
- Hailing from Firozabad, the centre of India's bangle making and glass blowing industry, he has always worked in the glass making industry.
- His family like the others there do not know that it is illegal for children to work in such close proximity to furnaces, in such high temperatures.
- They are exposed to various health hazards like losing their eyesight as they work in abysmal conditions, in dark and dingy cells.
- Mukesh's father is blind as were his father and grandfather before him.
- They lead a hand to mouth existence as they are caught in the vicious web of the moneylenders, middlemen, police and the

traditions

- So burdened are the bangle makers of Firozabad that they have lost their ability to dream unlike Mukesh who dreams of driving a car.

Short answers questions

3

1. What does Anees Jung want to reveal in her story 'Lost Spring'?
Ans: Anees Jung has portrayed two stories in 'Lost Spring' and both depict the grinding poverty, pitiable condition of life and the other traditions that condemn the children to a life of exploitation. For the rag-pickers of Seemapuri, garbage is gold and means of survival. The bangle-makers of Firozabad live in dingy cells and stinking lanes. Even after much toil, they do not get full meal.
2. Why does the author say that the bangle-makers are caught in a vicious web?
Ans: The family of bangle makers was caught in the vicious web of poverty. They are forced to practice their ancestral profession. They remain ill-fed and ill-clad throughout life. They have no money to switch over their profession. Their hard work is mind numbing. The police do not allow them to form co-operatives.
3. "Saheb is no longer his own master", says the writer. What does she mean?
Ans: The writer means that having accepted the job with the tea-stall, Saheb has lost the independence that he enjoyed as a rag picker, even though he was poor. Although he will now be able to supplement the family income, it will be at the cost of his freedom, which is difficult, binding and unfair for someone so young.
- 4.. What trade does the family of Mukesh follow? Why does the writer feel that it will be difficult for Mukesh to break away from this tradition?
Ans: Engaged in bangle making-difficult to break away from this trade, he belongs to the caste of bangle makers. His family is caught in the web of sahkars, the middlemen, policemen, politicians and bureaucrats, from which there is no escape.
5. What does the title 'Lost Spring' convey?
Ans: The title 'Lost Spring' conveys and picturizes that childhood is like the spring. As everything blooms in this season, in the same way the childhood should bloom but through the poverty of Saheb and Mukesh, we come to know about their stolen childhood. It is being destroyed and dumped in the web of poverty, dirt and dust.
6. What does Saheb do for living? Why?
Ans: Saheb is a rag picker. His family has left the life of poverty behind in Dhaka in to pursue their dream of finding a better life. The children like him have no access to Education and are forced into rag picking.
7. Why don't the bangle makers of Firozabad organize themselves?

Ans. The bangle makers are trapped in the vicious circle of middlemen and police. If they organize a co-operative, they will be hauled up, beaten and dragged to jail by the police for doing something illegal. There is no leader to help them out from their misery. They are the victims of greed and injustice.

- 8.. What makes the author embarrassed at having made a promise that was not meant?

Ans: On encountering with Saheb, the writer asks him to go to school. Immediately at the second thought, she realizes that the advice must sound very hollow. On the other hand, Saheb replies that there is no school in his neighbourhood. And he will go if the authorities make one. The writer asks half-jokingly if she starts a school, "will he go?" Saheb goes on asking her "Is your school ready?" She feels embarrassed at having made a promise that was not meant.

9. What is Saheb looking for in the garbage dumps? Where is he and where has he come from?

Ans. Saheb is scrounging for anything in the garbage dump that he can sell and make money. This is the only means of survival. He sometimes manages to find a rupee or even ten rupees. He now lives with his family in Seemapuri, a slum on the outskirts of Delhi. His family has migrated from Bangladesh in search of a better life.

Long Answer Questions

1. What forces conspire to keep the workers in the bangle industry of Firozabad in poverty? 6

Ans: The bangle makers firmly believe that having been born in the caste and community of bangle makers, they cannot escape their fate and must remain where they are. They believe that bangle making is the only skill they possess and that they must pass on the legacy to their children. Bangle making is not a lucrative source of income but they have no alternative and hence remain entrenched in the same. They have fallen into the vicious clutches of middlemen who had trapped their fathers and their forefathers. They are afraid to form cooperatives to safeguard themselves because they feel that they will be beaten up by the police and jailed for doing something illegal. Steeped in despair and apathy, they no longer have the will to aspire and better their lot. Some of the industrialists conspire in unison with the sahkars, the middlemen, the policemen and the politicians and then go on exploiting them. They see very little hope of escaping from their impoverished life of misery and privation.

2. Why should child labour be eliminated and how? 6

Ans: Child labour should be eliminated because it takes away from the child his childhood and the prospect of elementary education. Moreover, since the child labourers are cheap, and consequently engaged in

hazardous and dangerous employment, they are often vulnerable to mental and physical illness. In order to curb this problem, it is important to make education easily accessible. Apart from that, the parents must be made aware of the consequences of working in harmful environments. It is also important to make the public aware of the fact that child labour is a criminal offence and is punishable under law. The government must ensure stricter child labour laws and that the offenders are punished.

3. Mention the hazards of working in the glass bangles industry

OR

Describe the difficulties the bangle makers of Firozabad have to face in their lives.

Ans. The glass blowing industry of Firozabad employs local families and these families have spent generations working around furnaces, welding glass and making bangles of different colours. Working around the high temperature furnaces is very injurious to our growing bodies. The dark dingy cells without light and air worsen the working conditions of the children. The dazzling and sparking of welding light and the high temperature render the situation hellish.

About 20,000 children slog their day light hours and often lose the brightness of their eyes before they become adults.

The bangle-makers lead their life in utter miseries and grinding poverty. They could never prosper working in this industry. They hardly get a belly full of meal in their lifetime. Thus they are not only underfed but also prone to ailments. The dingy cells and stinking smell of garbage choke their bodies. There are flames of flickering oil lamps, the blinding polishing and the welding work put a deep impact on their bodies. Those who work in bangle industries, lose their eyesight before they become adult.

III SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS FOR PRACTICE

- What does the title of the story 'Lost Spring' imply?
- Where has Saheb come from and why?
- How is Saheb's name full of irony?
- "Promises made to poor children are never kept." Explain with examples from the lesson.
- Mention the hazards of working in the bangle industry.
- 'His dreams loom like a mirage'. Whose dreams are being referred to and why are they compared to a mirage?

Long Answer Question:

- Like all children of his age, Saheb also had many hopes and dreams. Do you think children like Saheb are able to fulfill their dreams?

