



THINK AS YOU READ

Q1. What is Saheb looking for in the garbage dumps? Where is he and where has he come from?

Ans: Saheb is looking for gold in the garbage dumps. He is in the neighbourhood of the author. Saheb has come from Bangladesh. He Came with his mother in 1971. His house was set amidst the green fields of Dhaka. Storms swept away their fields and homes. So they left the country.

Q2. What explanations does the author offer for the children not wearing footwear?

Ans: One explanation offered by the author is that it is a tradition to stay barefoot. It is not lack of money. He wonders if this is only an excuse to explain away a perpetual state of poverty. He also remembers the story of a poor body who prayed to the goddess for a pair of shoes.

Q3. Is Saheb happy working at the tea-stall? Explain.

Ans: No, Saheb is not happy working at the tea-stall. He is no longer his own master. His face has lost the carefree look. The steel canister seems heavier than the plastic bag he would carry so lightly over his shoulder. The bag was his. The canister belongs to the man who owns the tea-shop.

THINK AS YOU READ

Q1. What makes the city of Firozabad famous?

Ans: The city of Firozabad is famous for its bangles. Every other family in Firozabad is engaged in making bangles. It is the centre of India's glass-blowing industry. Families have spent generations working around furnaces, welding glass, making bangles for the women in the land.

Q2. Mention the hazards of working in the glass bangles industry?

Ans: Boys and girls with their fathers and mothers sit in dark hutments, next to lines of flames of flickering oil lamps. They weld pieces of coloured glass into circles of bangles. Their eyes are more adjusted to the dark than to the light outside. They often end up losing eyesight before they become adults. Even the dust from polishing the glass of bangles is injurious to eyes. Many workers have become blind. The furnaces have very high temperature and therefore very dangerous.

Q3. How is Mukesh's attitude to his situation different from that of his family?

Ans: Mukesh's grandmother thinks that the god-given lineage can never be broken. Her son and grandsons are born in the caste of bangle makers. They have seen nothing but bangles. Mukesh's father has taught them what he knows—the art of making bangles. But Mukesh wants to be a motor mechanic. He will go to a garage and learn, though the garage is far away from his home.

UNDERSTANDING THE TEXT

Q1. What could be some of the reasons for the migration of people from villages to cities?

Ans: People migrate from villages to cities in search of livelihood. Their fields fail to provide them means of survival. Cities provide

employment, jobs or other means of getting food. The problem in case of the poor is to feed the hungry members. Survival is of primary concern.

Q2. Would you agree that promises made to the poor children are rarely kept? Why do you think this happens in the incidents narrated in the text?

Ans: The promises made to the poor are rarely kept. The author asks Saheb half-joking, whether he will come to her school if she starts one. Saheb agrees to do so. A few days later he asks if the school is ready. The writer feels embarrassed at having made a promise that was not meant. Promises like hers abound in every corner of their bleak world.

Q3. What forces conspire to keep the workers in bangle industry of Firozabad in poverty?

Ans: Certain forces conspire to keep the workers in bangle industry of Firozabad in poverty. These include the moneylenders, the middlemen, the policemen, the keepers of law, the bureaucrats and the politicians. Together they impose a heavy burden on the child.

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