



THINGS TO DO

The beauty of the glass bangles of Firozabad contrasts with the misery of people who produce them. This paradox is also found in some other situations, for example, those who work in gold and diamond mines, or carpet weaving factories, and the products of their labour, the lives of construction workers and the buildings they build.

- Look around and find examples of such paradoxes.
- Write a paragraph of about 200 to 250 words on any one of them. You can start by making notes.

Here is an example of how one such paragraph may begin:
You never see the poor in this town. By day they toil, working cranes and earth movers, squirreling deep into the hot sand to lay the foundations of chrome. By night they are banished to bleak labour camps at the outskirts of the city
Ans. For self-attempt.

MORE QUESTIONS SOLVED

SHORT ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS

Q1. Who was Saheb? What was he doing and why?

Ans: Saheb was a young boy of school-going age. He was looking for gold in the garbage dumps of the big city. He had left his home in Dhaka, Bangladesh and came to the big city in search of living. He has nothing else to do but pick rags.

Q2. "But promises like mine abound in every corner of his bleak world." What promise does the author recall? In what context was it made? Was it fulfilled?

Ans: The author asked Saheb about going to school. Saheb explained that there was no school in his neighbourhood. He promised to go to school when they built one. Half joking, the author asked whether he would come in case she started one. Saheb smiled broadly and agreed to come. After a few days, he ran upto the author and asked if the school was ready. The author felt embarrassed. She had made a promise that was not meant.

Q3. What is the meaning of Saheb's full name? Does he know it? How does he conduct himself?

Ans: His full name is "Saheb-e-Alam". It means the lord of the universe. He does not know it. If he knew it, he would hardly believe it. He roams the streets barefoot with other rag-pickers. This army of arefoot boys appears in the morning and disappears at noon.

Q4. How does the author focus on the 'perpetual state of poverty' of the children not wearing footwear?

Ans: The author notices that most of the young children engaged in rag picking are not wearing footwear. Some of them do not have chappals. Others want to wear shoes. Some say it is tradition to stay barefoot. To the author it seems lack of money. Poverty forces them to walk without footwear.

Q5. Explain: "For children, garbage has a meaning different from what it means to their parents."

Ans: Small children scrounge heaps of garbage. They expect to get

some coin, note or valuable thing in it. Sometimes they find a rupee or even a ten rupee note. This gives the hope of finding more. They search it excitedly. For children, garbage is wrapped in wonder. For the elders it is a means of survival. Thus, garbage has two different meanings.

Q6. Where does the author find Saheb one winter morning? What explanation does Saheb offer?

Ans: The author finds Saheb standing by the fenced gate of a neighbourhood club. He is watching two young men, dressed in white, playing tennis. Saheb says that he likes the game, but he is content to watch it standing behind the fence. He goes inside when no one is around. He uses the swing there.

Q7. What job did Saheb take up? Was he happy ? [All India 2014]

Ans: Saheb took up the job at a tea-stall. But he was not happy with it. He was no longer his own master. His face had lost the carefree look. Although he earned ? 800, even then he was not satisfied.

Q8. How has “a dream come true” for Saheb but what is “out of his reach?”

Ans: Saheb is wearing discarded tennis shoes. One of them has a hole. Saheb does not bother about the hole. For one who has walked barefoot, even shoes with a hole is a dream come true. But tennis, the game he is watching so intently, is out of his reach.

Q9. How does Saheb’s life change when he starts working at the tea-stall?

Ans: Saheb now has a regular income. He is paid 800 rupees and all his meals. Thus, food is no problem. But his face has lost the carefree look. The steel canister in his hand now seems a burden. He is no longer his own master. He may have to work for longer hours. The helplessness of doing things at his own will makes him sad.

Q10. Who is Mukesh? What is his dream? Why does it look like “a mirage amidst the dust?”

Ans: Mukesh is the son of a poor bangle-maker of Firozabad, where every other family is engaged in making bangles. His poor father has failed to renovate his house or send his two sons to school. Mukesh insists on being his own master. His dream is to be a motor mechanic. He wants to drive a car. Given the conditions of existence, his dream looks like a mirage amidst the dust.

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