

St. Peter's Senior Secondary School
English Core (301)
Class 12
Assignment 6

TEXTBOOK: FLAMINGO

LESSON: **Lost Spring** *Stories of Stolen Childhood* By **Anees Jung**

- Read the text and underline important words and ideas. (Refer to the dictionary to find the meaning of difficult words.)
- Revise the text through the following notes.

Characters:

- Saheb-e-Alam: A rag picker
- Mukesh: Son of a bangle maker

Introduction:

The story, "Lost Spring" describes the pitiable condition of poor children who have been forced to miss the joy of childhood due to the socio-economic condition that prevails in this man-made world. These children are denied the opportunity of schooling and forced into labour early in life. Anees Jung gives voice to eliminate child labour by educating the children and to enforce the laws against child labour by the governments strictly. The call is to end child exploitation and let the children enjoy the days of the spring that bring joy under their feet.

Gist of the lesson:

Sometimes I find a rupee in garbage

- The author examines and analyses the impoverished conditions and traditions that condemn children to a life of exploitation these children are denied an 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 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.

I want to drive a car

- The author then tells about another victim, Mukesh who wants to be a motor mechanic.

- He has always worked in the glass making industry.
- 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.
- So burdened are the bangle makers of Firozabad that they have lost their ability to dream unlike Mukesh who dreams of driving a car.

THEME & TITLE:

The "lost spring" has a tinge of irony. Spring is the best season of a year. Being full of color, fragrance and freshness, it is also a season of renewal and growth. The childhood of human life is often likened to spring, as it marks the beginning of human life and has a tremendous scope for growth. It is full of joy, pleasure and play. Children anywhere in the world are a source of great joy. But, ironically, millions of children like Saheb and Mukesh experience no spring in their lives, for their childhood is consumed in making a living. Education, play and pleasure are not for them to enjoy. They must work to support themselves and their families. Thus the title brings out the depravity of child labor in a very telling way.

Loss of Childhood means:

- Loss of Freedom to enjoy
- Involvement in menial jobs
- Physical & mental sufferings
- Don't get education

MCQs:

1. What does the title 'Lost Spring' symbolise?
 - a) lost blooming childhood
 - b) autumn season
 - c) lost money
 - d) lost age
2. What forced Saheb to be a ragpicker?
 - a) hard work
 - b) destiny
 - c) people around him
 - d) acute poverty
3. Is your school ready? Who asked this question?
 - a) Saheb's mother
 - b) Saheb's friends
 - c) the author
 - d) Saheb

4. Saheb's full name was
 - a) Mughal-e-Azam
 - b) Saheb-e-Alam
 - c) Shahenshah-e-Alam
 - d) Shah Jahan

5. Saheb's home, before Delhi, was in
 - a) Bengal
 - b) Orissa
 - c) Dhaka
 - d) Bihar

Answer the following questions in 30-40 words:

6. Why did the author feel embarrassed?
7. What is the irony in the name "Saheb-e-Alam"?
8. Describe the lives of these rag pickers in brief.
9. What does the writer mean when she says that they were looking for gold in the garbage?
10. Describe the life of the children working in Firozabad?
11. What does the writer mean when he says, 'Saheb is no longer his own master'?
12. How is Mukesh different from the other bangle makers of Firozabad?
13. 'It is a tradition to stay barefoot.....'What is the attitude of the ragpickers of Seemapuri towards wearing shoes?
14. Why does the author say that the bangle makers are caught in a vicious web?
15. Is it possible for Mukesh to realize his dream? Justify your answer.

Answer the following questions in 120-150 words:

16. Justify the title lost spring.
17. 'Lost Spring' explains the grinding poverty and traditions that condemn thousands of people to a life of abject poverty. Do you agree? Why/Why not?