

Poetry

Lesson 7. Vocation

Summary of the poem

The child was walking to his school in the morning. He saw a hawker, selling bangles in his lane. The hawker was not in a hurry and moved from one place to another at his own will. The hawker could take any road and return home when he wants. There was no restriction on him. The child wanted to be a hawker in order to be free and happy.

The child returned from his school in the afternoon. He saw a gardener outside the house. He was digging the ground with his spade. His clothes were dirty with soil and he was working under the Sun. Nobody tried to stop him and he continued working at his own will. The child wanted to be like him, so that nobody can punish him for digging the ground. He wanted to pay with soil.

When it gets dark in the evening, the child's mother sends him to bed. She orders him to sleep. The child saw a watchman through his window. He was walking up and down. The road was dark and lonely, but nobody stopped the watchman. The watchman took his lantern and walked along with his shadow. He did not sleep. The child wanted to be a watchman, walking the street all night without any restriction.

Stanza wise Explanation of The poem

Stanza 1

When the gong should ten in the morning and

I walk to school by our lane,

Every day I meet the hawker crying, "Bangles,

Crystal bangles!"

There is nothing to hurry him on, there is no

road he must take, no place he must go to, no

time when he must come home.

I wish I were a hawker, spending my day in the
road, crying, "Bangles, crystal bangles!"

Reference: The above lines have been taken from the poem 'Vocation.' It has been written by Rabindranath Tagore.

Context: The poem describes the wish of the child to become a hawker.

Explanation: The child was walking to his school in the morning. In his way, he saw a hawker, selling bangles in his lane. The hawker was not in a hurry and moved from one place to another at his own will. The hawker could take any road and return home when he wants. The child thought there was no restriction on him. Therefore, he wanted to be a hawker in order to be free and happy. He wanted to sell bangles like the hawker.

Stanza 2

When at four in the afternoon I come back from
the school, I can see through the gate of that house
the gardener digging the ground.

He does what he likes with his spade, he soils
his clothes with dust, nobody takes him to
task, if he gets baked in the sun or gets wet.

I wish I were a gardener digging away at
the garden with nobody to stop me from digging.

Reference: Same as in stanza 1

Context: The child hoped to become a gardener, so that nobody could stop him to dig the ground.

Explanation: The child returned from his school in the afternoon. He saw a gardener outside the house. He was digging the ground continuously with his spade. His clothes were dirty with soil and he was working under the Sun. Nobody tried to stop him and he continued working at his own will. He was free to dig the ground. The child wanted to be like him so that nobody can punish him for digging the ground under scorching heat.

Stanza 2

Just as it gets dark in the evening and my
mother sends me to bed,
I can see through my open window the
Watchman walking up and down.
The lane is dark and lonely, and the street-
lamp stands like a giant with one red eye in its head.
The watchman swings his lantern and walks with his
Shadow at his side, and never once
Goes to bed in his life.
I wish I were a watchman walking the street
all night, chasing the shadows with my lantern.

Reference: Same as in stanza 1

Context: The child wanted to be a watchman, so that he could roam around all night with his lantern, chasing his shadows like him.

Explanation: The child's mother sends him to bed during the night. She ordered him to sleep. The child saw a watchman through his window, walking up and down. The road was dark and lonely, but nobody stopped the watchman. The lamp post looked like a giant with one red eye.

The watchman took his lantern and walked along with his shadow. He was free to move wherever he wants. It seemed that the watchman to be a watchman, walking the street all night without any restriction, chasing his shadows

NCERT Corner

Working with the poem

1. Your partner and you may now be able to answer these questions.

- (i) **Who is the speaker in the poem? Who are the people the speaker meets? What are they doing?**

The speaker in this poem is a school-going child. The speaker met a hawker, selling bangles on a road. He saw a gardener, digging the ground outside his house. He saw a watchman, moving with his lantern in streets.

- (ii) **What wishes does the child in the poem make? Why does the child want to be a hawker, a gardener, or a watchman? Pick out the lines in each stanza, which tell us this.**

The child wanted to be a hawker or a gardener or a watchman in the poem because he was fed up with all the restrictions put on him. He wanted to enjoy freedom like them.

The child says

- (a) I wish I were a hawker, spending my day in the road.
- (b) I wish I were a gardener digging away at the garden.
- (c) I wish I were a watchman walking the street all night.

- (iii) **From the way the child envies the hawker, the gardener and the watchman, we can guess that there are many things the child has to do, or must not do. Make a list of the do's and don'ts that the child doesn't like. The first line is done for you.**

The child must
come home at a fixed time.

.....
.....
.....

The child must not
get his clothes dirty in the dust.

.....
.....

Now add to the list your own complaints about the things you have to do or must not do.

Ans.

- | Do's | Don'ts |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------|
| (a) Do homework regularly | Never tell a lie |
| (b) Be on time in school | Don't eat junk food |
| (c) Respect your elders and Obey them | Don't fight |
| (d) Sleep early | Don't tease |

- (iv) Like the child in the poem, you perhaps have your own wishes for yourself. Talk to your friend, using "I wish were...."

Do it yourself.

2. Find out the different kinds of work done by the people in your neighbourhood. Make different cards for different kinds of work. You can make the card colorful with pictures of the persons doing the work.

Do it yourself.

Chapter Practice

Very Short Answer Type Questions

1. Where did the child meet a hawker?

The child met a hawker on the road when he was going to his school in the morning.

2. When did the child see a gardener?

The poet saw the gardener outside his house in the afternoon after returning from his school.

3. Why did the child want to be a gardener?

The child wanted to become a gardener so that he could dig the ground and nobody could stop him.

4. How did the child see a watchman?

The child was told to sleep when he saw the watchman through an open window.

Short Answer Type Questions

1. What did the child mention about the hawker?

The poet said that the hawker was not in a hurry. There was no specific road which he must take. There was no fixed time for him to return his home.

2. Describe the activity of the watchman.

The watchman was walking on the dark and lonely lane with his lantern. He was following his shadow at one side. He never went to bed in his life, according to the child.

3. What kind of life is led by the hawker, watchman and gardener?

The hawker, watchman and gardener are performing vocational tasks. They are leading their life the way they want to. There is no restriction on them.

Value Based Questions

Why did the child find others' life interesting?

The child found others' life more interesting because he was under strict control of his family. He was not allowed to move anywhere and return home anytime. He was fed up with his life due to restrictions imposed on him. He thought that the hawker gardener and watchman were very happy as they could do things at their own wish. They can go anywhere at any time.

Nobody restricts them and they are free to enjoy their life. So, the child wants to exchange his life with that of a hawker, a gardener and a watchman.

Extract Based Questions

Extract 1

Directions (Q. Nos. 1-6) Read the extract given below and answer the following questions.

When the gong should toll in the morning and

I walk to school by our lane,

Every day I meet the hawker crying, "Bangles,

Crystal bangles!"

There is nothing to hurry him on, there is no

road he must take, no place he must go to, no

time when he must come home.

I wish I were a hawker, spending my day in the
road, crying, "Bangles, crystal bangles!"

1. Who used to cry "bangles, crystal bangles"?

A hawker used to cry "bangles, crystal bangles" every morning on the road.

2. What was the routine of the hawker?

The hawker was seen in the morning and was never in a hurry. He can take any road, go anywhere and return his home anytime.

3. Why did the child want to be a hawker?

The child wanted to become a hawker, so that he could spend his entire day on the road.

4. Write synonym for the word 'hurry.'

- (a) Hawker (b) Rush (c) Walk (d) Child
(b) Rush

5. Give one word substitute for a person who sells goods by moving on roads.

- (a) Teacher (b) Cobbler (c) Gardener (d) Hawker
(d) Hawker

6. The hawker passes time

- (a) Tensely (b) Quarrling (c) Happily (d) Bored
(b) Happily

Extract 2

Directions (Q. Nos. 1-6) Read the extract given below and answer the following questions.

When at four in the afternoon

I come back from the school,

I can see through the gate of that house

the gardener digging the ground.

He does what he likes with his spade,

he soils his clothes with dust,

nobody takes him t task,

if he gets baked in the sun or gets wet.

I wish I were a gardener digging away at the
garden with nobody to stop me from digging.

1. Who was digging the ground?

The gardener was digging the ground with his spade outside the house.

2. What did the child notice about the gardener?

The child noticed that the gardener has spread soil all over his clothes and nobody punished him for getting baked under the Sun.

3. Name the poet of the above lines.

The poet of the above lines is Rabindranth Tagore.

4. Give synonym for the word 'bake'.

(a) Burn roast (b) Garden (c) Sun (d) Stop

(a) Burn roast

5. Give antonym for the word 'wet'.

(a) Move (b) Continue (c) Soaked (d) Dry

(d) Dry

6. Who is the speaker of the above lines?

(a) A small boy (b) An adult man (c) A hawker (d) An old man

(a) A small boy



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