

CBSE TEST PAPER - 02

Class - 12 English Core (An elementary school classroom in a slum)

General Instruction:

- Question No. 1 to 3 carry four marks each.
 - Question No. 4 to 10 carry three marks each.
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1. And yet, for these

children ,these windows, not this map, their world,

where all their future's painted with a fog,

A narrow street sewed in with a lead sky

Far far from rivers, capes and stars of words.

- a. What does the map on the wall signify?
- b. Who are these children? What is their world like?
- c. What is the future of these children?
- d. What are the 'narrow street' and 'lead sky' indicative of?

2. Surely, Shakespeare is wicked, the map a bad example,

With ships and sun and love tempting them to steal

For lives that slightly turn in their cramped holes

From fog to endless night?

- a. Who are 'them' referred to in the second line?
- b. What tempts them and why?
- c. What does the poet say about their lives?
- d. Explain "from fog to endless night."

3. On their slag heap, these children

Wear skins peeped through by bones and spectacles of steel

With mended glass, like bottle bits on stones.

All of their time and space are foggy slum

So blot their maps with slums as big as doom.

- a. Which two images are used to describe these slums?
- b. Which figure of speech is used in the last line?
- c. What does 'slag heap' refer to?

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- d. What 'blot their maps'? Whose maps?
4. Why does Stephen Spender use the images of despair and disease in the first stanza of the poem and with what effect?
 5. In spite of despair and disease pervading the lives of the slum children, they are not devoid of hope. Give an example of their hope or dream.
 6. The poet says, 'And yet, for these children, these windows, not this map, their world'. Which world do these children belong to? Which world is inaccessible to them?
 7. How does the poet describe the classroom walls?
 8. Elaborate on the optimistic note of the poem.
 9. How does the poet see the slum children as victims of social injustice?
 10. What does the poet want for the children of the slum?

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Answers

1.
 - a. The map on the wall signifies the world drawn and bartered by the rich and the mighty.
 - b. These children are poor and deprived children living in a slum. Their world is narrow, polluted and foggy.
 - c. The future of these children is bleak and uncertain.
 - d. The 'narrow streets' are indicative of restricted and confined lives of slum children. 'Lead sky' signifies dullness, dreariness and despair invading the lives of the slum dwellers.
2.
 - a. 'Them' refers to the children studying in a slum school.
 - b. Ship, sun and love are all such beautiful things tempt these children as they don't possess them.
 - c. The children of the slum live amidst dirty surroundings and in cramped houses which are dark and unpleasant.
 - d. 'Fog' stands for obscurity and uncertainty and 'endless night' signifies endless darkness and misery. The phrase means that slum children have no hope of progress and prosperity.
3.
 - a. The images used to describe the slums are 'foggy slum' and 'slums as big as doom'.
 - b. The figure of speech used in the last line is a simile - slums as big as doom.
 - c. 'Slag heap' refers to the hunger-stricken bodies of the slim children, which seem to be like garbage heaps.
 - d. These dirty slums 'blot their maps'. These are the maps of the civilized world - the world of the rich and the great.
4. He uses the images of despair and disease to describe the miserable and pathetic lives of the children living in the slums. The faces of these children are pale and lifeless. Their hair is like 'rootless weeds'. The burden of life makes them sit with their head 'weighed down'. The stunted growth is depicted by 'the paper seeming boy' and 'the stunted unlucky heir of twisted bones'. Their weak bodies recite their fathers' gnarled disease.
5. The burden of poverty and disease crushes the bodies of these slum children but not their souls. They still have dreams. Even their foggy future has not crashed all their hopes.

They dream of open seas, green fields and about the games that a squirrel plays in the tree room.

6. The children belong to the world of poverty and misery in the dingy slum areas. For them the world is not the one shown in those pictures and but it is the one they see out of the class room window. The world of the rich, with all the comforts and luxuries of life, is inaccessible to them.
7. The walls of the classroom are pale and dirty. They are decorated with the donated pictures of Shakespeare, world map and beautiful valleys, which stand in sharp contrast to the dingy, dismal and gloomy atmosphere in which these slum children live.
8. The poem begins with sense of despair and ends on an optimistic note. According to the poet, the slum children's miserable plight could be improved if the powerful people take an initiative to bring them out of the catacomb of poverty and provide them a proper education.
9. The slum children are deprived of good educational opportunities. They study in dim and dingy classroom having colorless walls. Their impoverished and emaciated condition shows that they are not provided with proper health facilities. They are deprived of the bounties of the world and their world comprised of narrow and dirty lanes.
10. The poet wants a better life and future for the children of the slums. They should have access to education as it is the key to prosperity and emancipation. They should be given endless opportunities to explore the world. The need to break-free from the confines of the weak world and should be greeted by the world with open arms. The self-centred attitude of the affluent classes should be broken to relieve them from all their miseries.