

Lost Spring

1. Read the following extracts and answer the questions. (2024)

They have lived here for more than thirty years without an identity, without permits but with ration cards that get their names on voters' lists and enable them to buy grain. Food is more important for survival than identity. "If at the end of the day we can feed our families and go to bed without an aching stomach, we would rather live here than in the fields that gave us no grain," say a group of women in tattered saris when I asked them why they left their beautiful land of green fields and rivers. Wherever they find food, they pitch their tents.

(i) The ragpickers have been living there for _____ decades.

- (A) three
- (B) four
- (C) two
- (D) five

Ans. (A) three

(ii) Why do these people have ration cards ?

Ans. get their names on voters' lists / enable them to buy grain.

(iii) What do you infer about their lifestyle from the phrase 'pitch their tents'?

Ans. wherever they find food / refugees from Dhaka / poverty stricken / nomads

(iv) In spite of the hardships, they are not willing to go back to their homeland because _____.

Ans. food is more important for survival than identity / no food there

(v) The women had a/an _____ approach towards life.

- (A) idealistic
- (B) passive
- (C) indifferent
- (D) practical

Ans. (D) practical

(vi) What does the term 'go to bed without an aching stomach' indicate ?

Ans. not to go hungry / have food and go to sleep

Previous Years' CBSE Board Questions

MCQ (1 mark)

1. The young men echo the lament of their elders'. Select the option which indicates Anees Jung's view on young men.

- (a) They don't take any initiative.
- (b) They are as poor as their elders.
- (c) They are as helpless as their elders.
- (d) They don't support their elders.

(Term I, 2021-22)

SA I (2 marks)

- 2. The description of Seemapuri creates a very dismal picture. Explain. (2023)
- 3. What makes the city of Firozabad famous? (2020 C)
- 4. Why do bangle makers end up losing their eyesight? (2020 C)
- 5. How bad were the living conditions in which Mukesh and his family survived? (2020)
- 6. Mention any two difficulties faced by the bangle sellers of Firozabad. (2020)
- 7. How is Mukesh different from the other bangle makers of Firozabad? (Delhi 2014)
- 8. What job did Saheb take up? Was he happy? (AI 2014)
- 9. In what sense is garbage gold to the ragpickers? (AI 2014C)
- 10. Why did Saheb's parents leave Dhaka and migrate to India? (Delhi 2014C)
- 11. What is Mukesh's dream? Do you think he will be able to fulfil his dream? Why not? Why? (Delhi 2014C)
- 12. Whom does Anees Jung blame for the sorry plight of the bangle makers? (AI 2014C)

SA II (3 marks)

13. What makes Mukesh different from the other boys of his age? (2019 C)
14. "Listening to them, I see two distinct worlds....." In the context of Mukesh, the bangle maker's son, which two worlds is Anees Jung referring to? (2018)
15. Describe the irony in Saheb's name. (Delhi 2016)
16. What does the reference to chappals in 'Lost Spring' tell us about the economic condition of the ragpickers? (AI 2016)
17. How did Saheb's life change at the tea stall? (Foreign 2016)
18. What is Mukesh's attitude towards the family business of making bangles? (Foreign 2016)
19. What did garbage mean to the children of Seemapuri and to their parents? (AI 2015)
20. What does Saheb look for in the garbage dumps? (AI 2015)
21. "It is his Karam, his destiny," What is Mukesh's family's attitude towards their situation? (AI 2015)
22. Describe Mukesh as an ambitious person. (Foreign 2015)
23. What kind of gold did the people of Seemapuri look for in the garbage? (Foreign 2015)

LA I (5 marks)

24. Read the extract given below to attempt the questions that follow:

Mukesh insists on being his own master. "I will be a motor mechanic", he announces.

'Do you know anything about cars?' I ask.

"I will learn to drive a car," he answers, looking straight into my eyes. His dream looms like a mirage amidst the dust of streets that fill his town Firozabad, famous for its bangles. Every other family in Firozabad is engaged in making bangles. It is the centre of India's glass blowing industry where families have spent generations working around furnaces, welding glass, making bangles for all the women in the land it seems. Mukesh's family is among them. None of them know that it is illegal for children like him to work in the furnaces with high temperatures,....

(Term I, 2021-22)

- (i) What does the author try to convey by the expression 'being his own master'?
- (a) Mukesh is disobedient to the elders.

(b) Mukesh is adamant in his behavior.

(c) Mukesh takes his own decisions.

(d) Mukesh does not listen to others.

(ii) Through the expression..... looking straight into my eyes" the narrator is trying to convey.

(a) Mukesh displayed no fear in his eyes.

(b) Mukesh was not feeling shy while speaking to the narrator.

(c) Mukesh was conversing in a very friendly manner with the narrator.

(d) Mukesh displayed his courage and determination in expressing his opinion.

(iii) 'His dream looms like a mirage! This indicates

(a) Mukesh has no clear vision of his dream.

(b) His dream is distorted and misleading.

(c) His dream is illusive and elusive.

(d) Mukesh's dream is different from others.

(iv) "None of them know that it is illegal for children to work in glass furnaces." Select the inference in reference to the above statement.

(a) The children are innocent and do not realise the hardships of life.

(b) Their illiteracy and ignorance are exploited by the unscrupulous businessmen.

(c) They have no one to support them legally to get out of the situation.

(d) The children are ready to work in glass furnaces due to their poverty.

(v) Select the option that lists the facts about Firozabad.

i. Almost all the families are engaged in bangle making.

ii. The children work as motor - mechanics.

iii. The children work in a hazardous situation.

iv. Firozabad is the centre for car making.

(a) i and ii

(b) ii and iii

(c) i and iii

(d) iii and iv

25. Most of us do not raise our voice against injustice in our society and tend to remain mute spectators. Anees Jung in her article, "Lost Spring" vividly highlights

the miserable life of street children and bangle makers of Firozabad. She wants us to act. Which qualities does she want the children to develop?

(Delhi 2014C)

LA II (6 marks)

26. "I sometimes find a rupee, even a ten rupee note". Saheb says, his eyes lighting up when you can find a silver coin in a heap of garbage, you don't stop scrounging, for there is hope of finding more. It seems that for children garbage, has a meaning different from what it means to their parents. For the children it is wrapped in wonder, for the elders it is a means of survival.

One winter morning I see Saheb standing by the fenced gate of the neighborhood club, watching two young men dressed in white, playing tennis. "I like game" he hums, content to watch it standing behind the fence. "I go inside when no one is around" he admits. "The gate keeper lets me use the swing"

(2023)

(i) Saheb found a rupee

(a) on the street

(b) in the garbage dump

(c) in Firozabad

(d) on the tennis court

(ii) Which emotion of Saheb is revealed in the phrase 'his eyes lighting up'?

(a) anxiety

(b) envy

(c) happiness

(d) greed

(iii) For the elder's garbage is _____ and for children it is _____.

(iv) On the basis of the extract, choose the correct option with reference to I and II given below.

I. Saheb watches the game from outside.

II. Saheb had lost the previous match

(a) is true but II is not

(b) II is true but I is not

(c) Both I and II are true

(d) Both I and II are untrue

(v) 'Scrounging' in the passage most nearly means

(a) digging

(b) searching

(c) flinging

(d) burying

(vi) 'There is hope for finding more. Explain with reference to the above extract.

27. "Seemapuri, a place on the periphery of Delhi yet miles away from it, metaphorically." Explain. **(Delhi 2019)**

28. Garbage to them is gold. How do ragpickers of Seemapuri survive?
(Delhi 2015)

29. Describe the difficulties the bangle makers of Firozabad have to face in their lives. **(Delhi 2015)**

30. Describe the circumstances which keep the workers in the bangle industry in poverty. **(Delhi, 2015)**

31. How is Mukesh's attitude towards his situation different from that of Saheb? Why? **(Delhi 2015)**

32. "It is his Karam, his destiny" that made Mukesh's grandfather go blind. How did Mukesh disprove this belief by choosing a new vocation and making his own destiny?
(AI 2015)

CBSE Sample Questions

MCQ (1 mark)

1. Select the suitable option for the given statements, based on your reading of Lost Spring.

- (1) The writer notices that Saheb has lost his carefree look.
- (2) Saheb has had to surrender his freedom for Rs. 800 per month.
- (a) (1) is false but (2) is true.
- (b) Both (1) and (2) are true.
- (c) (2) is a fact but unrelated to (1)
- (d) (1) is the cause for (2).

(Term I, 2021-22)

SA I (2 marks)

2. What do we come to know about the author of Lost Spring, Anees Jung, through her interactions with Saheb and Mukesh?

(2022-23)

3. 'Little has moved with time, it seems, in Firozabad'? State any one reason why the writer says this.

(2020-21)

LA I (5 marks)

4. Read the given extract to attempt questions that follow:

"I have nothing else to do," he mutters, looking away.

"Go to school," I say glibly, realising immediately how hollow the advice must sound.

"There is no school in my neighbourhood. When they build one, I will go."

"If I start a school, will you come?" I ask, half-joking.

"Yes," he says, smiling broadly.

A few days later I see him running up to me. "Is your school ready?"

"It takes longer to build a school," I say, embarrassed at having made a promise that was not meant. But promises like mine abound in every corner of his bleak world.

(Term I, 2021-22)

(i) Saheb's muttering and 'looking away' suggests his

- (a) anger
- (b) shyness
- (c) embarrassment
- (d) anxiety

(ii) of the four meanings of 'glibly', select the option that matches in meaning with its usage in the extract.

- (a) showing a degree of informality
- (b) lacking depth and substance
- (c) being insincere and deceitful
- (d) speaking with fluency

(iii) Who do you think Saheb is referring to as 'they', in the given sentence?

"When they build one, I will go"

- (a) The officials
- (b) The inhabitants
- (c) The teachers
- (d) The journalists

(iv) Select the option that lists the feelings and attitudes corresponding to the following:

(1) I ask half-joking

(2) ... he says, smiling broadly

- | | |
|-----|--------------------------------------|
| (a) | (1) part arrogance, part seriousness |
| | (2) hesitation |
| (b) | (1) part amusement, part irritation |
| | (2) submissiveness |
| (c) | (1) part concern, part hurt |
| | (2) pride |
| (d) | (1) part humour, part earnestness |
| | (2) self-belief |

(v) Select the option that lists reasons why Saheb's world has been called 'bleak'

- (1) The absence of parental presence.
- (2) The poor socio-economic conditions.
- (3) His inability to address problems.
- (4) His lack of life-skills.

(5) The denied opportunities of schooling.

(a) (1) and (4)

(b) (2) and (5)

(c) (3) and (5)

(d) (2) and (4)

ANSWERS

Previous Years' CBSE Board Questions

1. (c) They are as helpless as their elders.

2. Seemapuri is a place on the outskirts of Delhi where 10,000 ragpickers, who migrated from Bangladesh to Delhi in 1971, live with their families. They live in structures made of mud with roofs made of tin and tarpaulin, devoid of sewage, drainage, or running water. No one can imagine such a place exists on the periphery of the capital city, Delhi. This description of Seemapuri creates a very dismal picture for the readers.

3. Firozabad is famous for the glass bangles that people like Mukesh makes. Its streets and homes are filled with bangles of all ranges and shades, be it sunny gold, paddy green, royal blue, pink, purple, every colour born out of the seven colours of the rainbow.

4. The bangle makers of Firozabad had to work in dark hutments, next to lines of flames of flickering oil lamps and wield pieces of coloured glasses into circles of bangles. This made their eyes more adjusted to the dark than the light outside. So, the bangle makers often end up losing their eyesight before they become adults.

5. Mukesh and his family lived in deplorable conditions, in stinking lanes choked with garbage, with crumbling walls, wobbly doors, no windows, crowded with families of humans and animals coexisting in a primeval state.

6. They work in the dingy cells without air and light. Dust from polishing bangles affect their eyes making them lose their eyesight very often. They are not able to organize themselves, look for other opportunities due to bullying and exploitation by the politicians, authorities, moneylenders and middlemen.

7. Mukesh is different from the other bangle makers of Firozabad because he dares to dream. He refuses to carry on the family tradition of bangle making. Instead, he insists on being his own master. He wants to become a motor mechanic and is focussed and determined to achieve it.

8. Saheb took up a job at a tea-stall, which paid him 800 rupees and all his meals. No, he was not happy with the job because his 'carefree' days were over, he now had a master to work under; he was no longer his own master.

9. Garbage is like gold to the ragpickers in the sense that it is a means of sustenance for them. Garbage gives them their daily bread and provides a roof over their heads.

10. Saheb's parents left Dhaka because repeated floods swept away their fields and homes leaving them on the verge of starvation. This led to their migration to India, where they hoped to find better living conditions and livelihood opportunities.

11. Mukesh's aim in life is to become a motor mechanic. Yes, it is indeed possible for Mukesh to achieve his dreams through hard work and determination. He is willing to walk all the way to the garage and learn even though the garage is quite far from his house.

12. For the sorry plight of the bangle makers, Anees Jung blames the sahuikars, policemen, middlemen, bureaucrats, politicians and, to quite an extent, the lineage of the bangle makers and the stigmas with their caste.

13. Mukesh is the son of a poor bangle-maker in Firozabad. His family has been working in the glass bangle factory for generations and did not know any other occupation. He refuses to be stuck in the family's tradition of bangle making.

Unlike the young people in and around him, Mukesh dares to dream. He dreamt of becoming a car mechanic. When asked by the narrator how he will become one when he knew nothing about cars, Mukesh replied that he will learn to drive a car. This shows his determination to steer away from the 'accepted' norm of working in the glass-bangle factories. He is even willing to walk the long distance from his home to the garage where he wishes to train. All these proves that he is determined to change his fate and do what he wants.

14. The two worlds, which Anees Jung is referring to are one in which Mukesh and his family is living in extreme poverty, unable to shake off the burden of caste related stigma; the second one consists of the sahuikars, middlemen, the keepers of the law, politicians, etc. who are ready to exploit the already powerless oppressed class of the society.

15. The full name of Saheb is Saheb-e-Alam, which means Lord of the Universe. He does not know the meaning of his name. The irony here is that Saheb in reality is a ragpicker and a refugee from Bangladesh. He is not the 'Lord of the Universe'.

16. The narrator, Anees Jung feels that the rag-pickers not wearing chappals is a subtle reference to their economic condition, which is a perpetual state of poverty. They live in unhygienic conditions, and due to their hand-to-mouth existence, the children are forced into labour early in life. As a result, they are denied the opportunity of studying and escaping such a life.

17. Saheb's life changed at the tea-stall as he is not happy working at the tea-stall. Although he is paid 800 rupees and is given all his meals, it bothers him that he is no longer his own master. His face has lost the carefree look. The steel canister seems heavier than the plastic bag he used to carry so lightly over his shoulder. The bag was his, the canister belongs to the man who owns the tea-shop.

18. Mukesh's attitude towards the family business of making bangles is that of reluctance. He wants to break free from the family tradition and dares to rebel. Mukesh dreams of becoming a motor mechanic for which he is willing to walk the long distance from his home to the garage every day.

19. The writer says that garbage is gold for the ragpickers because for children, garbage is wrapped in wonder. They expect to get some coins, notes or valuables in it. If fate permits, sometimes, they find a rupee or even a ten-rupee note. For adults, garbage is a means of livelihood.

20. The writer says that garbage is gold for the ragpickers because for Saheb and the other ragpickers, garbage is wrapped in wonder. They expect to get some coins, notes or valuables in it. If fate permits, sometimes, they find a rupee or even a ten-rupee note.

21. Mukesh's family's attitude towards their situation is that of mute acceptance. They view bangle making as their destiny. They do not dream of any other option because there is no will, to take the initiative, left in them.

22. Mukesh is the son of a poor bangle-maker in Firozabad. Although Mukesh helps his father to make bangles, he dreams of becoming a car mechanic for which he is willing to walk the long distance from his home to the garage where he wishes to train.

23. The writer says that garbage is gold for the ragpickers because for children, garbage is wrapped in wonder. They expect to get some coins, notes or valuables in it. If fate permits, sometimes, they find a rupee or even a ten-rupee note. For adults, garbage is a means of livelihood.

24. (i) (c) Mukesh takes his own decisions.

(ii) (d) Mukesh displayed his courage and determination in expressing his opinion.

(iii) (c) His dream is illusive and elusive.

(iv) (b) Their illiteracy and ignorance are exploited by the unscrupulous businessmen.

(v) (c) i and iii

25. Anees Jung, in 'Lost Spring' vividly highlights the miserable life of street children and bangle makers of Firozabad. Through children, like Saheb, Savita and Mukesh, she delves deep into the poverty and tradition, which forces a life of exploitation on these three and many others like them.

It is sad that they are caught in the vicious circle of poverty and exploitation generations after generations. It is not easy to escape it because there is the stigma of caste in which they are born. Moreover, the sahuikars, the middlemen, policemen, keepers of law, bureaucrats, etc. make their lives more difficult for them than it already is. Anees Jung wants us to act, raise our voice against the injustice prevailing in our society.

The underprivileged often find themselves helpless and at the mercy of their exploiters. Thus, Anees Jung wants the children to develop compassion for the oppressed and the will and courage to work for social and economic changes in the society.

26. (i) (b) in the garbage dump

(ii) (c) happiness

(ii) For the elder's garbage is a means of survival and for children it is wrapped in wonder.

(iv) (a) is true but II is not

(v) (a) digging

(vi) "There is hope for finding more" refers to Saheb, who sometimes finds a silver coin in the garbage dump and then digs it again in hope of finding more.

27. Seemapuri is a place on the outskirts of Delhi where 10,000 ragpickers, who migrated from Bangladesh to Delhi in 1971, live with their families. They live in structures of mud, with roofs of tin and tarpaulin, devoid of sewage, drainage or running water. No one can imagine that such a place exists on the periphery of Delhi, the capital of India. It stands in stark contrast to the metropolitan city of Delhi.

In Delhi, there is luxury and affluence, there are a host of opportunities and dreams. On the contrary, in Seemapuri there is squalor, hopelessness and despair. The inhabitants here live in abject poverty and are illegal occupants. Ironically, the ragpickers have lived here for thirty years without a sanction or an identity. The only thing they do have are the ration cards, which not only enable them to buy grains, but also get their names on the voters' list. There is no chance for the people of Seemapuri to strive towards the attainment of the opportunities offered by Delhi. Thus, although Seemapuri is located at the periphery of Delhi, in the real sense, Delhi is as far as miles away from it.

28. The Ragpickers of Seemapuri emigrated to Delhi from Bangladesh, in 1971 in the hopes of a bright and promising future. However, their situation in the city is not as comfortable as they expected. The ragpickers of Seemapuri live in structures of mud, with roofs of tin and tarpaulin. It lacks proper sewage and drainage system or running water. All these years, they have lived without an identity and they are still living like that. In spite of no proper identity and permits, they are surviving. They all have ration cards, which puts them on voters' list. This enables them to buy grain. Survival is all that matters to them. This is why they pitch their tents wherever there is food. Garbage and ragpicking are means of survival for the people in Seemapuri, it earns them their daily bread and puts a roof over their head. Sometimes, while scrounging, the garbage, finding money, whether one rupee or ten, is the highlight of their day, especially for the children; it gives them hope. Therefore, the writer is right when she says, "garbage to them is gold."

29. Difficulties faced by the bangle makers of Firozabad are many. They live in a state of perpetual poverty, in ready-to-crumble houses, crowded with a number of families. Besides remaining uneducated for the rest of their lives, they have to work extremely hard for long hours in the glass furnaces in high temperature. Since they work in the dark and dingy cells, many lose their eyesight at a young age. Their difficulties are not limited to just health problems. They are set at a much deeper level. The bangle makers are burdened by the stigma of the caste in which they are born. An adult bangle maker knows nothing except how to make bangles. So, that is all that he can teach his young ones and this continues for generations. The bangle makers cannot escape the vicious circle of exploitation by middlemen, money lenders, police and bureaucrats. They cannot even organise themselves into a cooperative due to the fear that it might be treated as being illegal. This is why there are no leaders who would raise their problems. The bangle makers continue to face apathy and injustice all their lives.

30. Difficulties faced by the bangle makers of Firozabad are many. They live in a state of perpetual poverty, in ready-to-crumble houses, crowded with a number of families. Besides remaining uneducated for the rest of their lives, they have to work extremely hard for long hours in the glass furnaces in high temperature. Since they work in the dark and dingy cells, many lose their eyesight at a young age. Their difficulties are not limited to just health problems. They are set at a much deeper level. The bangle makers are burdened by the stigma of the caste in which they are born. An adult bangle maker knows nothing except how to make bangles. So, that is all that he can teach his young ones and this continues for generations. The bangle makers cannot escape the vicious circle of exploitation by middlemen, money lenders, police and bureaucrats. They cannot even organise themselves into a cooperative due to the fear that it might be treated as

being illegal. This is why there are no leaders who would raise their problems. The bangle makers continue to face apathy and injustice all their lives.

31. Mukesh's attitude towards his situation is different from that of Saheb because unlike Saheb, Mukesh is ambitious. Mukesh has his roots in Firozabad. He is born in a family of bangle makers and must follow his father's footsteps for now. However, he wants to break the family tradition and become a motor mechanic.

Saheb, on the other hand, is a rootless migrant from Bangladesh who is content being a ragpicker at Seemapuri. Although, he fancies the idea of going to school, he starts working at a tea stall because the salary is good. Mukesh too is greatly unhappy about his prevailing poverty. However, he is determined to change it. He is ready to walk a long distance every day to a garage and train to become a motor mechanic.

32. Mukesh had seen his parents and other bangle makers of Firozabad suffer all their life. He had witnessed them being unable to escape the vicious circle of poverty and exploitation. While others believed that it was their destiny to be born poor and poverty stricken, Mukesh wanted to disprove this belief by choosing a new line of work. Unlike other children of his age in the town of Firozabad, he had the courage to break free from the family vocation of bangle-making. He wanted to be a motor mechanic and make his own destiny. He was determined to achieve his goal and was prepared to work hard for it. Although the garage, where Mukesh wanted to train to be a motor mechanic, was quite far from his house, he was willing to walk the long distance for the sake of his dreams.

CBSE Sample Questions

1. (b) Both (1) and (2) are true.

2. Anees Jung is sympathetic to the situation of Saheb and Mukesh. She wants the children to become free from their situation and the vicious cycle of poverty they are trapped in. She feels sorry for them and she blames the middlemen, sahu-kars and law enforcement officials for their situation. She wants them to be bold enough to raise their voice against their oppressors. She wants them to be fearless and optimistic so they can dream of taking up other occupations that are not their traditional occupation.

3. Though laws have been made against child labour, children still continue to work in the bangle industry in Firozabad. The children working in this industry are exploited by money lenders, the middlemen and the bureaucrats. Even the

police do not protect them. They lead a miserable and hard life. They live and work in inhuman conditions. In fact, little has moved with the time in the city of bangle makers. They are as poor and miserable as they were before.

4. (i) (c) embarrassment

(ii) (b) lacking depth and substance

(iii) (a) The officials

(iv) (d)

(1)	part humour, part earnestness
(2)	self-belief

(v) (b) (2) and (5)