

Long Answer Questions

Q. 1. Write the stages of production of cloth making.

Ans. (i) The first stage of production was spinning, a work done mostly by women. The charkha and the takli were household spinning instruments. The thread was spun on the charkha and rolled on the takli.

(ii) The second stage was when the spinning was over the thread was woven into cloth by the weaver. In most communities weaving was a task done by men. For coloured textiles, the thread was dyed by the dyer known as rangrez. For printed cloth the weavers needed the help of specialist block printers known as chhipigars.

Q. 2. Where were the major centres of weaving in the late eighteenth century?

Ans. (i) Bengal was one of the most important centres, located along the numerous rivers in the delta, the production centres in Bengal could easily transport goods to distant places.

(ii) Dacca in Eastern Bengal—now Bangladesh was the foremost textile centre in the 18th century, it was famous for its mulmul and jamdani weaving.

(iii) There were also cotton weaving centres along the Coromandel coast stretching from Madras to Northern Andhra Pradesh.

(iv) On the western coast there were important weaving centres in Gujarat.

Q. 3. Describe the status of Indian Textiles during 18th century in European markets?

Ans. Indian Textiles had gained popularity by the early 18th century. So, it was difficult for the English producers to compete with Indian textiles. This competition made wool and silk makers in England to protest against the import of Indian cotton textiles. British government enacted Calico Act. Secondly, this competition with Indian textiles led to a search for technological innovation in England. 'Spinning Jenny' was invented by James Hargreaves in 1764, which increased the productivity of the traditional spindles.

Then came steam engine. Invented by Richard Arkwright in 1786, steam engine revolutionised cotton textile weaving. Cloth could now be woven in immense quantities and at cheap rates too. In spite of all this, Indian textiles continued to dominate world trade till the end of the 18th century.

Q. 4. How did iron and steel factories come up in India?

Ans. Jamsetji Tata had decided to spend a huge part of his fortune to build a big iron and steel industry in India. But this could not be done without identifying the source of fine quality iron ore with an aim to build a big iron and steel industry, search and

research had to be done. Dorabji Tata and American geologist, Charles Weld, travelled in Chhatisgarh in search of iron ore deposits.

One day, they found a group of men and women carrying basketloads of iron ore. These people were the Agarias. When asked where they had found the iron ore, the Agarias pointed to a hill in the distance. Weld and Dorabji reached the hill after an exhausting trek through dense forests. On exploring the hill the geologist declared that they had at last found what they had been looking for. Rajhara Hills had one of the finest ores in the world.

But there was an issue. The province was dry and water – necessary for running the factory – was not to be found nearby. The Tatas had to continue their search for a more suitable place to set up their factory. However, the Agarias helped in the discovery of a source of iron ore that would later supply the Bhilai Steel Plant.

A few years later, a large area of forest was cleared on the banks of the river Subarnarekha to set up the factory and an industrial township – Jamshedpur. Here there was water near iron ore deposits. The Tata Iron and Steel Company (TISCO) that came up began producing steel in 1912.