



QUESTION BANK – THE LOST CHILD

Class: IX

Sub: ENGLISH

1. Comment on the theme of the lesson ‘The Lost Child’

The underlying theme of the story ‘The Lost Child’ is the universality of a child's desire for everything that he lays his eyes on. All that the child witnesses from the toys lining the street, to the dragon flies in the mustard field to the snake swaying to the tunes of a pungi obsesses the child. It is a visual assault on his senses. He looks at everything in wonder, his senses almost rejoicing being alive. His parents on the other hand are like a parental control filter, abstaining him from the lures of the illusionary world as if secretly knowing that what he needs most is entirely something else. A quick reminder conveyed in the text is that the child must learn to prioritize what's important and what's not in life. In the end when the child loses his parents he understands what his parent's silent gestures and reprimands were trying to teach him. He realizes now that what he wanted most was his parent. He continuously refuses everything that the kind stranger offers to console him with - exactly the very same things he was goading his parents a moment ago. Within minutes his life changes and offers him an entirely new perspective of looking at life and understanding it for what it really is.

2. Bring out the message in the story, ‘The Lost Child.’

The story conveys the message that children love their parents unconditionally. The lost child thinks of his father as a strict person when he demands toys from him. He does not press his parents for sweets or garlands etc because he accepts that they will never grant him his wish. However, he gets scared when he realizes that he is lost. He cries inconsolably for his parents and forgets all about his cravings for sweets, garlands, snake-charmers shows, and even the ride on a roundabout. This message of the story makes the reader understand the worth of parents in the life of a child. During childhood, we long for so many things we see in day-to-day life. The child is attracted towards so many things he comes across. But very often he does not understand the true value of his parents and takes them for granted. The significance of parents is only realized when they are out of sight and we start longing for them. We realize that we cannot carry on without the help of our parents. This is what the child realizes once he got lost in the fair. In the fair, the child comes across many things he wants to buy. But is refused by his parents. Finally, he is attracted by the roundabout and goes near it. He gets separated from his parents and suddenly misses them. Though a man tries to calm the child by offering many things, the child wanted only his parents.

3. The man who had rescued the child was compassionate and kind. Discuss.

Or

What values of humanity are reflected through the character of the kind man?

Ans: The man who had rescued the child had a heart full of goodness. He did not ignore the painful shrieks of the boy calling for his parents. Risking his own safety, he bent down in the

crowd to rescue the child from getting trampled. He forgot his own purpose of visiting the shrine, did his best to comfort and soothe the scared boy. He talked to him very kindly and inquired about his parents. When he did not get any response from the child, he did not lose patience. Instead, he tried to make him feel at ease by offering him the little things that children love. The man sincerely tried to pacify the child so that he could help him to find his parents. His character thus reflects the human values of kindness, compassion, care and love.

4. The child was denied everything by his parents. Why then did his love for them not lessen in any way?

Ans: The child had come to the fair with his parents to have fun and to enjoy the festive spirit like others. Although he wanted to have many things at the fair, he knew that he could not have them because his parents disliked those things. Although he was denied everything that he asked for, his love for them did not lessen. He enjoyed the natural beauty and satisfied himself by simply looking at the things he liked but could not have. He accompanied them obediently and did not throw any tantrums or compel them in any way to buy him sweets, garlands, balloons etc. His deep love for them can be seen when he gets separated from them. He misses them terribly and feels lonely. At that time his only concern is to get them back.

5. When the child got lost in the fair a stranger helped him and tried to solve his problem. What do you feel about the behaviour of the stranger?

Ans. The stranger was certainly a kind-hearted man. He saved the child from being trampled under the feet. He loved children very much. He lifted the lost child in his lap and offered him all those things which the child desired to have earlier. He also offered the child to go on the roundabout. Obviously, such persons are rare and their responsibility gets increased in the fair. The stranger showed the love of parents in his behaviour towards the lost child. He tried to assure the child that he should not be afraid of anything in the fair. He will find the parents and hand over the lost child to him. The stranger also knew that the lost child could not live with his parents because he was weeping bitterly for his parents. Still, he tried to make the lost child happy. With his kind behaviour, the stranger proved that everybody has immense love for children.

6. Compare the child's behaviour before and after he lost his parents.

Ans: Before losing his parents, the child is in a happy, cheerful and playful mood. He gets attracted to many things on the way but follows his parents' call whenever they ask him to. He is amazed by the beauty of nature and enjoys it in his innocent way. He feels secure in the presence of his parents and so he does not even wait for their response when he demands things from them. However, on getting separated, he is filled with fear and panic. He cries inconsolably and gets lost in a large crowd of people all around. He refuses to accept even those things that he had wanted a little while ago. Everything else loses value in his eyes in the absence of his parents. His laughter and happiness are replaced by insecurity and fear.

7. What was the child's immediate reaction on being separated from his parents?

A full, deep cry rose within his dry throat. With a sudden jerk of his body he ran from where he stood, crying in real fear, "Mother, Father." Tears rolled down from his eyes, hot and fierce; His flushed face was convulsed with fear. Panic-stricken, he ran to one side first, then to the other, hither and thither in all directions, knowing not where to go. "Mother, Father," he wailed. His yellow turban came untied and his clothes became muddy.

8. Describe the village scene when people were heading towards the fair.

It was springtime. A crowd of men, women and children were going to the fair. They were dressed in colourful clothes. Some of them were on foot, some rode on horses, while others went in bullock carts. There were many shops on the way. People were in a joyful mood.

9. There were some things he knew his parents would not buy for him, so he did not ask for them. What were those things?

The child knew his parents well. He wanted to have a garland of gulmohur flowers. But he knew that his parents would say that the flowers were very cheap. Then he wanted to buy balloons. But he knew that his parents would say that he was too big to play with them. So, he did not ask his parents for garlands and balloons.

10. How did the child enjoy the beauty of nature on his way to the fair?

On his way to the fair, the child saw a flowering mustard field. He stopped there to watch the little insects and worms that were coming out from their hiding places. He then tried to gather the petals of falling flowers and ran gaily in circles around a banyan tree.

11. How can you say that the child was scared of his father?

The child was tempted by many things, but he asked for them only in slow murmurs. This shows that he was scared of his father and could not express his demands as rightfully as some other children.

12. How did the mother distract the child's mind from the toy seller?

The child's mother drew his attention to the flowering mustard field to distract his mind from the toy seller. There he saw colourful dragon-flies with gaudy purple wings, black bee and butterflies. He gazed at them as they flew in the air.

13. What happened when the little child entered the grove? How did he enjoy there?

When the little child entered the grove, a shower of young flowers fell upon him. He forgot all about his parents and began to gather the petals. Then he heard the cooing of doves and he ran excitedly to his parents, dropping the flowers he had gathered.

14. How did the child realise that his parents were not with him? What was his immediate reaction?

On not getting any reply to his bold request for a ride on a roundabout, the child turned back and noticed that his parents were not there. He realised at that moment that he had got lost. Filled with fear and panic, he ran wailing in all directions calling aloud for his parents.

15. What was the first reaction of the child when he realised that he had lost his parents?

On realising that he had lost his parents, the child got confused. He panicked when he could not spot his parents in the large crowd of people around him. He ran all over looking for them. Feeling lonely and afraid, he cried inconsolably.

16. What happened when the lost child reached the temple door?

On reaching the temple door, the lost child got caught between the legs of the crowd that was jostling with each other to get into the shrine. The child got knocked down and would have got trampled if the 'kind man' had not rescued him after hearing his loud cry.

17. Who rescued the lost child? What did he offer to buy?

A kind man in the shrine heard the child's cry and lifted him in his arms. To pacify the wailing child, he offered to buy all those things that he had asked for from his parents – horse ride, a multi-coloured balloon, garland, snake-charmers show, and a sweetmeat.

18. Why did the man offer to buy things for the child?

The child kept weeping inconsolably in the arms of the man who had rescued him from getting trampled at the shrine. The man offered to buy him things in order to pacify the child, to make him feel secure and to ask him about his parents and home.

19. How can you say that the child was an obedient boy?

The child was fascinated by the fair. He was attracted towards many things in the fair, but he did not insist his parents buy any of them. He followed his parents in the fair like an obedient child. Though he longed for the things, yet he did not express his desire before his parents because he knew that his parents would not allow him to get them.

20. Read the following extracts and answer the questions that follow:-

“His father looked at him red-eyed, in his familiar tyrant's way. His mother, melted by the free spirit of the day was tender and, giving him her finger to hold, said, “Look, child, what is before you!”

(a) When did the father look red-eyed at the child?

The father looked red-eyed at the child when he pleaded for toys that were in the shops lined on the way to the fair.

(b) Who is a tyrant? Was the father a tyrant?

A tyrant is a cruel man who always keeps his self-interest supreme. The father was not a tyrant in this context. He was simply a strict disciplinarian as a parent.

(c) What was the ‘free spirit of the day’ that made the mother ‘tender’?

It was the day of the festival of spring and all were in a mood to rejoice. The mood of festivity was the free spirit that made the mother soft-hearted.

(d) Why did the mother ask the child to look before him?

The mother asked the child to look before him because she wanted to divert his attention from the toys in the shops without upsetting him after his father's stern refusal.

21. *But he half knew as he begged that his plea would not be heeded because his parents would say he was greedy.*

(a) Who is ‘he’ in this line?

‘He’ is the little boy from the story, “The Lost Child.”

(b) What was the plea made by him?

He made the plea to his parents to buy him the sweetmeat *burfi* being sold at the entrance of the fair.

(c) How did he ‘half knew’ that his plea would not be heeded?

The child’s parents were strict disciplinarians and would generally refuse to grant him his wish. So, he somewhat knew that his request would not be heeded to that time as well.

(d) What did ‘he’ do after this?

He moved on without waiting for an answer from his parents, assuming their silence to be a refusal.

22. The poor child struggled to thrust away between their feet but, knocked to and fro by their brutal movements, he might have been trampled underfoot, had he not shrieked at the highest pitch of his voice.

(a) Where was the child currently? Why?

The child was amid a crowd of people in the shrine because he got separated from his parents and was desperately looking for them.

(b) What was he trying to do?

He was trying to make his way through the feet of the crowd in order to find his parents.

(c) Why could the child have got trampled?

The child could have got trampled because the shrine was crowded, and he was so small that people did not realise his presence around their feet.

(d) Why did the child shriek?

The child shrieked “Father, Mother!” because he was terribly scared about getting lost.

23. “Will you have a ride on the horse?” he gently asked as he approached the ring. The child’s throat tore into a thousand shrill sobs and he only shouted, “I want my mother, I want my father!”

(a) Who is ‘he’ in the first line of the extract? Whom is ‘he’ offering a ride on the horse?

‘He’ is the kind man who rescues the child from getting trampled in the shrine. ‘He’ asks the lost child for a ride on the horse.

(b) Why does ‘he’ ask for a ride?

The kind man asks for a ride because the child was crying inconsolably for his parents and he wanted to quieten the child by diverting his attention.

(c) Why did the child’s throat ‘tore into a thousand shrill sobs’?

The child’s throat tore into a thousand shrill sobs because he was extremely scared and wanted to be united immediately with his parents.

(d) Why did the child shout, “I want my mother, I want my father!”?

The child shouted for his father and mother because he felt insecure in their absence. They were more important to him than toys, sweets, garlands or ride on a roundabout.

MULTIPLE CHOICE

1. What festivals were the people going to celebrate?
The festival of Spring
The festival of Dussehra
Festival of Autumn

2. Who was the little boy going with?
His father
His mother
His parents
His stranger

3. What did the father do when the child said, 'I want that toy?'
He at once bought the toy for the child
He said, 'Look child, what is before you.'
He looked at the child red-eyed
He ran away from the child.

4. How did the flowering mustard field look?
White like silver
Red like rose
Pale like melting gold
Lovely like a rainbow

5. What was it that attracted the child on the footpath?
The butterflies
The dragon-flies
The doves
The little insects and worms

6. What shop was there at the entrance of the fair?
A toy shop
A balloon shop
A sweetmeat shop
A flower shop

7. At what point in the fair did the child lose his parents?
At the sweetmeat shop
At the flower shop
At the balloon sellers
At the roundabout

8. The child wanted to have balloons yet he walked on. Why?
He knew his parents would never buy him the balloons
He knew his parents would say he was too old to play with such toys
Both A and B above
Neither A nor B