Tulip Series Book - VI

Vocation

LET'S BEGIN





On your way to school or market you see many people at work. In pairs, discuss what you have noticed. Then read this poem. You may read it aloud with a partner, if you like.

When the gong sounds 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!" When at four in the afternoon, I come back from 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. Just as it gets dark in the evening and my mother sends me to bed.

Tulip Series Book - VI

I can see through my open window the watchman walking up and down.

The lane is dark and lonely, and the streetlamp 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.

Rabindranath Tagore

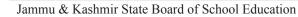
Glossary

gong:	a metal disc which is hung in the frame and hit with a stick to		
	produce sound		
hawker:	a person who travels about selling goods		
swing:	move to and fro; sway		
chase:	run after; pursue		

THINKING ABOUT 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?
 - 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.
 - 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 do's and don'ts. The first line is done for you.



Tulip Series Book - VI		
The child must	The child must not	
come home at a fixed time.	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.

- iv. Like the child in the poem, you perhaps have your own wishes for yourself. Talk to your friend, using "I wish I were..."
- 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 colourful with pictures of the persons doing the work.

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