

Glimpses of India

1. A Baker from Goa

Answer the following questions in 30-40 words:

1. What do the elders reminisce about and why?

Ans: The elders reminisce nostalgically about the good old Portuguese days and the Portuguese loaves of bread. The loaves of bread were an integral part of Goan's life. Marriages were meaningless without sweet bread. The lady of the house must prepare sandwiches on her daughter's engagement. Christmas and other festivals must have cakes and Bolinhas. They still remember the jingling thud of the baker in the morning.

2. How can you say that the makers of the famous Goan loaves are still there?

Ans: Many of those eaters of loaves might have died but their makers still exist. The mixers, the moulders and those who bake the loaves are still there in Goa. The fire in the furnaces has not yet been extinguished and the thud and jingle of the baker's bamboo can still be heard in the morning in some places. These bakers, known as padders, exist in Goa even today. The family profession is still carried on.

Long answers type question (100-120)

1. Instead of enjoying their childhood, the children today are keen to enter adulthood. After reading about all the joys that the author Lucio Rodrigues had in his childhood do you think such a keenness on the part of children is desirable?

Ans: I don't think that the keenness of the children these days to enter adulthood is desirable.

Children these days are in a hurry to enter adulthood and have access to technology. Due to this they are learning things earlier than usual and getting matured beyond their age.

Hence, they are losing out their childhood and missing the joys that it brings with it. As per my thinking, they should grow at a slow pace and enjoy their childhood to the fullest. Children who miss out on their childhood cannot be a complete adult. So, they should not hurry up to be an adult and grow at nature's pace

2. After reading the story 'A Baker from Goa', do you think our traditions, heritage, values and practices are the roots that nourish us? Why/why not?

Ans: 'A Baker from Goa' highlights the importance of the traditional practice of making breads for every occasion and festival of the Goan people. This tradition continues even today. This shows how our traditional practices can keep us to our past and heritage. Traditional values shape our personality and also provide us emotional support. They enable us to face difficult situations and makes us mentally strong. Traditional practices also have an impact on our behavioural pattern towards the other people in society

3. 'During our childhood in Goa, the baker used to be our friend, companion and guide.' What does this statement imply in relation to the character of the baker?

Ans: This statement tells us that the baker was a very respected person in the Goan society because he would guide the children about good behaviour (when he mildly rebuked them for peeping into his basket and giving respect to the elders (when he wished "Good morning" to the lady of the house) etc. He was very informal with the children and so the author

considered him as a friend and companion. He was not simply a vendor interested in selling what he made. Thus, he was an important character in the Goan society of those days

2. Coorg

Answer the following questions in 30-40 words:

1. Describe the climate, birds and animals of Coorg.

Ans. During the monsoons, Coorg has a lot of rains. It pours enough to keep many tourists away. The best tourist season starts from September and continues till March. The very air of Coorg smells of Coffee. Kingfishers, squirrels, langurs, wild elephants, bees and butterflies abound in the rainforests of Coorg.

2. Describe the possible descent of the people of Coorg.

Ans. The people of Coorg, their rituals and traditions are quite different from the Hindu mainstream. According to one story, a part of Alexander's army travelling the coast, settled here as their return became impractical. So, they are believed to be of Greek origin. The Coorgi dress, a long, black coat with an embroidered waist-belt resembles the Kuffia worn by the Arabs. So, some think that they are of Arabic origin.

3. How do the most laidback individuals become the life of high-energy adventures in Coorg?

Ans. Coorg offers many outdoor high-energy adventures. Even the most laidback individuals become converts to the life of high-energy adventures. They enjoy river rafting, canoeing, rappelling, rock climbing and mountain biking. Numerous walking trails in Coorg are a favourite with trekkers.

Long answers type question (100-120)

1. The Coorgis are the descendants of the Greeks or the Arabs and are still able to maintain their traditional practices. Do you agree that following these practices today is important? Why or why not?

Ans: After reading the text, I feel that it is important to follow the traditional practices, as it has kept the tradition of Coorgis known to the people even today. If the people of Coorg had not followed it, their tradition would have perished and nobody would have remembered them today because of their culture and traditional practices. According to the text, their traditions can be seen in the martial traditions, religious rites and marriages. The Kodavus even wear the dress which resembles Arabs. Traditional practices also play a very important role in maintaining values amongst people and have an impact on shaping the behaviour of people.

2. How do Coorg's location, people and natural features add to the diversity of India?

Ans: Coorg, or Kodagu, the smallest district of Karnataka, is home to evergreen rainforests, spices and coffee plantations. Evergreen rainforests cover thirty percent of this district. During the monsoons, it pours enough to keep many visitors away. The season of joy commences from September and continues till March. The weather is perfect, with some showers thrown in for good measure. The air breathes of invigorating coffee. Coffee estates and colonial bungalows stand tucked under tree canopies in prime corners.

Coorg is beautifully located and described as a piece of heaven that must have drifted from the kingdom of God. It has rolling hillsides with a pollution free river and forests teeming with wildlife. Here nature exists in its pristine glory, which adds to the diversity of India. Further, it has coffee and spice plantations, quite different from the rest of India. The local people, the Kodavus, are a martial race. Of course, they are well known for

their hospitality, just like all Indians. All these features of Coorg add to the diversity of our country.

3. Tea from Assam

Answer the following questions in 30-40 words:

1. Where were Rajvir and Pranjol going and why?

Ans: Rajvir and Pranjol were going to Assam as Pranjol had invited Rajvir to spend summer vacation there.

2. What did Rajvir see while looking outside from the train?

Ans: Rajvir saw much greenery while looking outside from the train. He was amazed to see the soft green paddy fields first and then the green tea bushes.

3. 'This is a tea country now'. Explain this with reference to Assam.

Ans: Assam has the world's largest concentration of tea plantations in the world. A large number of tea gardens can be found there. Most of the tea grown in Assam is supplied all over the world.

4. In what ways is China related to tea?

Ans: Tea was first drunk in China. The words 'chai' and 'chini' are from Chinese.

5. Why did Pranjol's father say that Rajvir had done his homework before visiting Assam?

Ans: Rajvir was very excited about visiting the tea garden and thus, he studied a lot about it before visiting the tea garden. Thus, Pranjol's father said that Rajvir had already done his homework before visiting Assam.

Long answers type question (100-120)

1. It seems that Rajvir had done a lot of homework regarding tea and its history. Do you support Pranjol's father's statement that he gave about Rajvir's knowledge in this regard?

Ans. It is true that Rajvir had never visited a tea estate ever before in his life. His visit to Dhekiabari Tea Estate was at the invitation of his classmate Pranjol whose father managed the estate. But Rajvir seemed to have done a lot of homework and reading about tea and tea plantations before coming to Assam. He told Pranjol that tea is one of the most popular beverages in the world. More than eighty crores of cups of tea is drunk every day throughout the world. When he saw an ugly building with smoke billowing out of its tall buildings, he at once cried "Hey, a tea garden!". Actually, he had been reading as much about tea as he could. He narrated different legends regarding the discovery of tea leaves. It was Rajvir who narrated the legends describing how tea leaves were discovered in India and China. Rajvir impressed and surprised Pranjol's father about his deep knowledge of tea-leaves. When he saw a tractor pulling a trailer load of tea leaves, he recognised that it was the second-flush or sprouting period. He also knew that it continues from May and to July and yields the best tea.

2. Pranjol was born and brought up on a tea estate in Assam but he was Rajvir who knew much about tea leaves and the legends associated with tea. Base your answer on their visit to Dhekiabari Tea Estate in Assam.

Ans. It is true that Pranjol was born and brought up on a tea plantation. His father managed Dhekiabari Tea Estate in Assam. However, his friend Rajvir's knowledge about tea and its history was more profound than him. The reason was simple. Rajvir had done a lot of reading about tea and its history. He even surprised Pranjol's father with his in-depth knowledge of the subject.

Rajvir's visit to Dhekiabari was an opportunity for him to connect his reading and knowledge to the real existing tea plantation. He was fascinated by the magnificent sea of tea bushes stretching as far as his eyes could go. He saw with his own eyes the groups of tea pluckers, with bamboo baskets on their backs, plucking the newly-sprouted leaves. His studies helped him to recognise that the trailer-load of tea leaves were the second-flush or the sprouting period that gave the best tea.

3. According to the text, Assam is said to be 'tea country'. Do you believe that Assam has some of the best plantations in the world that makes it a unique country?

Ans: In India, some of the best plantations like tea and coffee are grown in huge quantities. India is also a home to many spices like haldi and while Assam is home to tea, Coorg is home to coffee. Others which are grown exclusively in India and exported to various countries. These plantations make India a unique country which has not just traditional spices and beverage plants growing within it but also follows traditional agricultural practices.

4. What are the legends related to the discovery of tea?

Ans. There are many popular legends about the discovery of tea. Two of them are as follows: A Chinese emperor was used to drinking boiled water. One day a twig from the fire fell into the pot in which water was being boiled. It gave a delicious flavour to the drink. It is said that those were tea leaves.

An Indian legend goes like this. Once there was a Buddhist ascetic who used to feel sleepy during meditations. So, he cut off his eyelids. Ten tea plants grew out of the eyelids. When the leaves from these plants were put in hot water and drunk, they banished sleep.