



**INDIAN SCHOOL DARSAIT
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH**



Subject : English Lesson : A Roadside Stand

Date of Worksheet : October 2019

Name of the Student : _____

Date: _____

Class & Div : XII

Roll Number :

Summary

In this poem, Robert Frost, who is regarded for his realistic depiction of rural life, has brought out the apathy of the rich, city dwellers towards the poor, roadside shed owners. The owner has made a new shed with a hope of selling his vegetables and fruits to the city dwellers who pass by in their cars. But unfortunately, the rich and sophisticated people of the city are insensitive to the needs of the shed owners, the latter's desire is to sell their goods and earn an amount sufficient for their survival. The powerful and influential people had promised them support but now the shed owners feel let down and cheated. They have also heard that they would be moved to villages, closed to the market area and theatre. Here, they are told that they will not have to worry about their earnings and would sleep peacefully at night. In reality, the so called benefactors would benefit from this move and not the shed owners. They would simply lose their hold on their land and would be dislodged, giving them sleepless nights once again. The poet is unable to bear the pitiable plight of the shed owners who wait for a car to stop. The cars do stop occasionally but the passengers have their own selfish motives to achieve. One of them stops to inquire the prices of the vegetables, another stops to reverse the car and yet another to merely ask where the road leads. The poet is alarmed when someone stops at a shed to ask for a gallon of gas. The poet is agonized to see the miseries of the shed owners and he hopes that one day someone would come to their rescue.

Theme

The existing divide between the rich and the poor in the society. The poet's plea for consideration for the simple people of the countryside whose lives have shown no progress. He expresses his pain at their sadness and sorrow and seeks support and relief for them. He hopes someone would work unselfishly for their rehabilitation and not exploit them. He brings out the wide disparity between the 'haves' and the 'have-nots' with pitiless clarity and humanity and seems to suggest that the economic well being of a country depends on a balanced development of villages and cities.

I Answer the following questions in 30-40 words.

1. **Why was the 'little old house' extended towards the road?** 2
The little old house, the roadside stand, existed on the roadside to make a living out of the city money. The owners of the roadside stand expected to attract the rich city men by extending the stand closer to the road.
2. **Which traffic is referred to here? Why are they 'speeding'?** 2
The traffic referred to here is the cars and other vehicles of the rich people from and to various cities. These rich city men are in great hurry to make money by doing business in the city.
3. **Why is the Stand's existence said to be 'pathetic'?** 2
The roadside stand's sole expectation is the flow of city-money into their hands. But their expectations are never fulfilled as the rich men are not considerate about them and hence a pathetic existence for the roadside stand.

4. **How do the poor people look at the city money?** 2
For the poor people at the roadside stand money is very essential for growth and survival. It boosts the growth of the city and the city people.
5. **What is the flower of the cities?** 2
Prosperity/growth is the flower of the cities. As the flower is the crowning glory of a plant, growth becomes the flower of a city. The city men – rich enough to be insensitive to the sufferers – pass by, in their cars. While passing by the roadside stand, they grow angry and speed away, cursing the poor.
6. **Explain, ‘passed with a mind ahead.’** 2
The city people who passed by the roadside stand were self-centered and their minds were restless with greed for money and ambitions for great profits in their business.
7. **What are the usual complaints made by the city men when they stop at the roadside stand?** 2
The rich people to and from the cities usually have the same sets of complaints. Having failed to see the wretchedness of the poor, they complain that the roadside stand, with its artless paint, ruined the beauty of the nature. Another complaint is that the letters are wrongly written.
8. **How senseless do the rich men’s complaints sound to the poor people?** 2
For the poor people of the roadside stand, the rich men’s complaints, that the landscape is distorted with their poor sense of color, that they sell poor quality fruits and that they have a low literacy level, sound to be childish and infuriating and senseless.
9. **How did the poor people “mar” the landscape?** 2
The poor people mar/ruin the beauty of the landscape by putting road side stand on the roadside and with the artless paint of signs that with N turned wrong and S turned wrong.
10. **What does, ‘beauty rest in a mountain scene’ mean?** 2
Beauty resting in a mountain scene is probably a scenic painting made by the inhabitants of the roadside stand meant for selling to the rich people.
11. **What do the poor people of the roadside stand feel when the city men decline from buying anything?** 2
When the rich city men decline to buy articles from the roadside stand, the poor runners of the stand feel dejected and angry. They ask the city men to keep their money with them and leave the roadside stand without further bargain or comments.
12. **Why is the poet’s complaint different from that of the rich city men?** 2
The rich city men have their hollow complaints that come out of their failure to understand the core level struggles of the poor. But the poet is concerned for the poor and therefore his complaints are relevant.
13. **What do you mean by the trusting sorrow of the poor people?** 2
The poor people are instinctively sensitive and expectant to the promises of the rich and the mighty. They believe their hollow promises and wait for their realization. But finally their hopes give way to the miserable realization that the promises made by the rich are not meant to be fulfilled.
14. **What do you understand when the poet says that the trusting sorrow of the poor people is ‘unsaid?’** 2
The poor people place their trust in the fake promises of the rich people and the ruling parties

and consequently become sorrowful. The poet complains that this sorrow of the poor people has not been brought to the serious concern of the concerned authorities, media and the public.

15 **How are the rich politicians responsible for the misery of the poor people?** 2

The rich and corrupted politicians keep the money assigned by the government for the poor people in their own malicious hands and make selfish use of them, thus depriving the poor people of their rights, happiness and all that they deserve.

16 **How do the rich ‘enforce benefits’ on the poor?** 2

In business, promises wrapped up in glossy appearances have great value. The rich business people convince the poor of the advantages of their new schemes and promotions and make them buy their products and be their customers.

17 **What sort of calculation is made to ‘soothe the wits of the poor?’ How does this calculation work?** 2

The business minded city people attract the poor people with their well-planned promotional offers and promises. These promises and offers are such a way calculated that the poor people cannot escape the traps of the rich. The business man’s calculations work well as there is a more efficient brain behind all these promises

18 **Why do the people at the roadside stand talk ‘crossly’ with the rich people?** 2

The poor people sometimes become angry with the rich people. The latter refuse to buy the wild berries at the stand at a price demanded by the owners of the stand. They indulge in bargain and blame the berries and squash. But the poor, who know the rich people are so mean, grow angry at their unwillingness to help them by parting with a little amount of their money.

19 **How is money important for the village people?** 2

The village people think that money is important for growth in the village. They hope to make improvements in their wretched state of life.

20 **What are the two significant roles of money in the lives of the poor people?** 2

Money is the measuring rod of growth for the village people. They estimate their economic growth by means of the small amount of money at hand. Similarly, money is necessary for a villager to feel confident. He feels a ‘lift of spirit’ with money in reach.

21 **Why is money never found in the villages?** 2

It is a common truth that countryside is backward and therefore it remains poor and penniless. Moreover the country folks are easy targets of the politicians and business-men and therefore they are easily cheated and looted. Besides, if these poor people are given money then they will migrate to prosperous cities or make a city in the place of their village.

II Read the extract and answer the questions that follow: 4

A *‘It would not be fair to say for a dole of bread,
But for some money, the cash, whose flow supports
The flower of cities from sinking and withering faint.’*

1. **Why is it unfair to say that these people are begging for a ‘dole of bread?’** 1

2. **What do the poor people really expect from the rich?** 1

3. **How do the poor people look at the city money?** 1

4. **What is the flower of the cities? How?** 1

- B** *'The polished traffic passed with a mind ahead,
Or if ever aside a moment, then out of sorts...wrong'*
1. What do you mean by 'polished traffic?' 1
 2. Explain, 'passed with a mind ahead.' 1
 3. What are the usual complaints made by the city men when they stop at the roadside stand? 1
 4. What does 'of signs with S turned wrong and N turned wrong' convey? 1
- C** *'Offered for sale wild berries in wooden quarts,
Or crook necked golden squash with silver warts,
or beauty rest in a beautiful mountain scene,
You have the money, but if you want to be mean.'*
1. What articles are 'offered for sale' at the stand? 1
 2. What qualities of the 'offered articles' make them unfit for sale? 1
 3. What does, 'beauty rest in a mountain scene' mean? 1
 4. The shed owner concluded that the rich passers-by had the _____ 1
- D** *'While greedy good-doers, beneficent beasts of prey,
Swarm over their lives enforcing benefits
That are calculated to soothe them out of their wits,
And by teaching them how to sleep they sleep all day,
Destroy their sleeping at night the ancient way.'*
1. The welfare workers are enforcing benefits on the poor settlers. **True / False** 1
 2. The welfare measures being introduced has deprived the poor of their resourceful ways. **True / False** 1
 3. The welfare measures have taught the settlers to _____ all day. 1
 4. By sleeping all day, the villagers' sleep at night is _____. 1
- E** *'And another to ask could they sell it a gallon of gas
They couldn't (this crossly); they had none, didn't it see?'*
1. The 'another' in the passage indicates another shed owner. **True / False** 1
 2. The amount of gas that the buyer wanted was a ton. **True / False** 1
 3. Though the shed owner sold gas, he has none at that time. **True / False** 1
 4. A passing traveller asked the settlers if they could sell him a _____ of gas. 1
- F** *'No, in country money, the country scale of gain,
The requisite lift of spirit has never been found,
Or so the voice of the country seems to complain,
I can't help owing the great relief it would be
To put these people at one stroke out of their pain.'*
1. Why can't the poet help 'own' the relief of helping the poor out of their poverty at one stroke? 1
 2. What is the voice of the country? 1
 3. Name the poem and the poet. 1
 4. Which phrase in the above lines means 'instantly'? 1

A.

1. Why is it unfair to say that these people are begging for a ‘dole of bread?’

One may think that the poor people at the roadside stand are beggars, but they are not. Unlike the beggars, who beg unconditionally, shamelessly and sometimes unreasonably, the people of the roadside stand have something to sell, some information to share and a noble reason behind their pleading.

B. 2. What do the poor people really expect from the rich?

The poor people expect a small share of the money from the rich people.

3. How do the poor people look at the city money?

For the poor people at the roadside stand money is very essential for growth and survival. It boosts the growth of the city and the city people.

4. What is the flower of the cities? How?

Prosperity/growth is the flower of the cities. As the flower is the crowning glory of a plant, growth becomes the flower of a city.

B.

1. What do you mean by ‘polished traffic?’

Polished traffic portrays the insensitive attitude and gentlemanly appearances of the city-men. They appear to be ‘polished’ outside but their minds do not understand the sufferings of the poor people.

2. Explain, ‘passed with a mind ahead.’

The city people who passed by the roadside stand were self-centered and their minds were restless with greed for money and ambitions for great profits in their business.

3. What are the usual complaints made by the city men when they stop at the roadside stand?

The rich people to and from the cities usually have the same sets of complaints. Having failed to see the wretchedness of the poor, they complain that the roadside stand, with its artless paint, ruined the beauty of the nature. Another complaint is that the letters are wrongly written.

4. How senseless do the rich men’s complaints sound to the poor people?

For the poor people of the roadside stand, the rich men’s complaints, that the landscape is distorted with their poor sense of color, that they sell poor quality fruits and that they have a low literacy level, sound to be childish and infuriating and senseless.

5. How did the poor people “mar” the landscape?

The poor people mar/ruin the beauty of the landscape by putting up on the roadside. Their houses are painted in the most unprofessional manner with the most mismatching paint.

6. What does ‘of signs with S turned wrong and N turned wrong’ convey?

The Roadside STAND has an S and an N in Stand. The owner of the stand is illiterate so he has erected the board with wrong spelling with S and N inverted.

C

1. **What articles are ‘offered for sale’ at the stand?**
Wild berries in wooden containers, crook-necked golden squash with silver warts and paintings of mountain scenery are for sale at the roadside stand.
2. **What qualities of the ‘offered articles’ make them unfit for sale?**
The articles for sale at the roadside stand are wild and therefore lack the polished look of the similar articles available in the cities. Moreover these articles are not packaged properly and they are far expensive than those in the cities.
3. **What does, ‘beauty rest in a mountain scene’ mean?**
Beauty resting in a mountain scene is probably a scenic painting made by the inhabitants of the roadside stand meant for selling to the rich people.

F

1. **What is the voice of the country?**
The voice of the country is that the rich people have no concern for them, and that they are being exploited, cheated and given false promises by the parties in power, and that there is no end for their miseries.
2. **Why can’t the poet help ‘own’ the relief of helping the poor out of their poverty at one stroke?**
The poet wants to see that the poor people are given some kind of help and support by the rich people but he knows that this would not happen. When he fails to see this, he allows himself to dream that these poor people have been helped by some supernatural powers to alleviate their miseries.
3. **A Roadside stand by Robert Frost**
4. **One Stroke**

Extra Questions

5. **What kind of a relief does the poet dream for the poor people?**
The poet dreams of a supernatural help for the poor people, a touch of magic or the like, so that the poor people will be redeemed from their state of poverty and misery instantly.
6. **Why does the poet seek an unrealistic solution for the poor people’s distress even though he himself blamed them earlier for their ‘childish longing in vain?’**
The poet, unlike the greedy good-doers, genuinely wishes to get the poor people out of their pain, poverty and endless miseries but he is sad and helpless to see that there is no one to help them come out of their poverty. This helplessness drives the poet to seek an unrealistic solution for the poor people’s misery.