

CBSE Class –VIII English
NCERT Solutions
Chapter - 2
Children at Work

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Comprehensive Check

1. Velu stood on the platform but he felt "as if he was still on a moving train". Why?

Ans: Velu, who had run away from his home to Chennai, catching Kanyakumari Express, stood on the platform. He had never travelled in a train so he felt as if he was still on a moving train because his legs were still wobbly and shaky after the journey to Chennai. Usually, the effect of a moving train stays for some time after the end of the journey.

2. What made him feel miserable?

Ans: Velu felt miserable and exhausted because he had run away from his village two days ago fed up of his drunkard father. He had not eaten anything except some peanuts and a piece of jaggery for the last two days. And in this big city he does not know what to do.

3. (i) Velu travelled without a ticket. Why?

(ii) How did he escape the ticket collector's attention?

Ans: (i) Velu had left his village fed up of his drunkard father who used to snatch away his earning. So he travelled without a ticket because he had no money to buy a ticket.

(ii) He escaped the ticket collector's attention because luckily the ticket collector did not come to the unreserved compartment where he was sitting on the floor.

4. Why had Velu run away from home?

Ans: Velu belonged to a poor family. He and his sibling had to earn for their living. But his drunkard father used to beat him every day. His father would also spend the money earned by Velu and his sisters on drinking. So fed up all such thing he ran away from home.

5. Why did he decide to follow the 'strange' girl?

Ans: He decided to follow the 'strange' girl because he did not know where to go and what to do in a big city like Chennai. At the same time he was extremely hungry and he had not taken

anything for the last two days.

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1. Can Velu read Tamil and English? How do you know?

Ans: Velu can read only Tamil but not English. He fails to read the signboards in English. However, he can read front. Velu read the Tamil sign, Central Jail.

2. “If you are not careful, you will soon be counting bars there,” the girl said.

(i) What is she referring to?

(ii) What does she mean when she says “If you are not careful...”? (She says something a little later which means the same. Find that sentence.)

Ans: (i) She was referring to the Central Jail.

(ii) When she said “If you are not careful...” to Velu, she meant that he should not get caught. All he had to do to stay away from jail was to not do something stupid and get caught by policemen.

3. (i) Where did the girl lead Velu to?

(ii) What did they get to eat?

Ans: (i) The Girl led Velu to the back of a wedding hall where lot of left over of food were thrown. She was sure that Velu who was starving, could manage to get some food there

(ii) Velu got a banana and a vada, while the girl got only one banana to eat.

4. What work did she do? Think of a one-word Ans.

Ans: Rag picking.

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1. (i) What material are the 'strange' huts made out of?

(ii) Why does Velu find them strange?

Ans: (i) The 'strange' huts were made out of metal sheets, tyres, bricks, wood, and plastic.

(ii) Velu found the huts strange because in his village, the houses were made of mud and palm leaves. The huts he saw were made up of all sorts of things like metal sheets, tyres, bricks, wood and plastic and looked like they could fall any moment. He had never seen the slum area where the dwellers build their house out of the things which they manage to get.

2. What sort of things did Jaya and children like her collect and what did they do with those things?

Ans: Jaya and children like her collected paper, plastic, glass, and other such things. They sold these items to Jam Bazaar Jaggu, who further sold it to a factory.

3. Is Velu happy or unhappy to find work? Give a reason for your Ans.

Ans: Velu was unhappy to find work because he had not run away from home to dig through garbage bins. The only work he had ever done was weeding and taking cows out to graze. However, since he did not know Chennai too well, he decided to work as a ragpicker till the time he found a better job.

Exercise

1. Is Velu a smart boy? Which instances in the text show that he is or isn't?

Ans: Yes. Velu seems to be a smart boy. He makes determination to leave his village at the age of twelve as he could not stand his father's beating. When he reaches Chennai, the girl, who is a ragpicker, tries to help him. Initially, he thinks of not taking her help. However, he is smart enough to realize that he is very hungry and does not know where to go. Therefore, he follows the girl. He knows how to read Tamil. When the girl tells him to eat the banana that she finds in the garbage, he refuses at first. However, he quickly realizes that he is very hungry and therefore, eats it. Even though he finds the place and even the girl very strange, he continues to walk along with her. He tries to understand why she collects rubbish. He knows that he has not come to the big city to collect rubbish; however, he adjusts to the circumstances and decides to do the same work till he finds a better job.

2. Do you think Jaya is a brave and sensitive child with a sense of humour? Find instances of her courage, kind nature and humour in the text.

Ans: Jaya is a brave and sensitive child with sense of humour. She was of Velu's age. She was a ragpicker and knows how to live in the city. Jaya knows her way around Chennai, which is a fairly big city. She knows from where to find food. She knows that one has to be careful to not get caught by the police.

Jaya is also a very sensitive and kind girl as she helps Velu in all possible ways. She gives him a pair of shoes because his feet burnt in burning sun on far road.

Jaya is also of a humorous nature. When she sees Velu sitting at the platform, she asks him if he is there to become rich. When Velu is not able to cross the road, she drags him to the other

side of the road and said “What do you think you're doing? Grazing cows? If you stand around in the middle of the road like that, you'll be chutney.”

3. What one throws away as waste may be valuable to others. Do you find this sentence meaningful in the context of this story? How?

Ans: The story 'Children at work' gives a vivid picture of the plight of the slum dwellers basically the children. It tells us about the cruel reality that what is thrown out as rubbish can become a source of living for other. People throw away bottles, paper leftover of food which these children pick and earn some money. Our waste is valuable and blessing for them as their life depends on them. Circumstance force them to do such thing.