

Class- 12

Sub.-English (Reader)

Chap- Indigo

Write and learn the following Questions.

Q3 :

Why is Rajkumar Shukla described as being 'resolute'?

Answer :

Rajkumar Shukla is described as being 'resolute' because even after being told about the prior engagements of Gandhi at Cawnpore and other parts across the county, he does not quit. He continues to accompany Gandhi everywhere. Furthermore, he persistently asks Gandhi to fix a date for his visit to his native district of Champaran. His resolution and determination finally impresses Gandhi and the latter complies with his request.

Q4 :

Why do you think the servants thought Gandhi to be another peasant?

Answer :

Gandhi was a simple and humble man dressed in a plain 'dhoti' (loincloth). To the servants, he must have looked like just another poor farmer in this country. Moreover, he was accompanied by Rajkumar Shukla whom they knew to be a poor indigo sharecropper. Thus, when the servants saw them both together, they mistook Gandhi to be another peasant.

Q5 :

List the places that Gandhi visited between his first meeting with Shukla and his arrival at Champaran.

Answer :

After his first meeting with Shukla, Gandhi visited Cawnpore, his ashram near Ahmedabad, Calcutta, Patna and Muzzafarpur before he reached Champaran.

Q6 :

What did the peasants pay the British landlords as rent? What did the British now want instead and why? What would be the impact of synthetic indigo on the prices of natural indigo?

Answer :

According to the long-term contract, the peasants were forced to plant fifteen percent of their holdings with indigo and pay the entire harvest as rent.

Now, with the development of synthetic indigo in Germany, the British landlords did not want indigo from these plantations. Hence, the shrewd landlords decided to release the peasants of Champaran from the fifteen percent arrangement on the payment of a compensation.

Development of synthetic indigo would lead to an increase in the price of natural indigo.

Q7 :

The events in this part of the text illustrate Gandhi's method of working. Can you identify some instances of this method and link them to his ideas of *satyagraha* and non-violence?

Answer :

There are many instances in the narrative that can be linked to Gandhi's idea of non-cooperation and *satyagraha*. One such instance is Gandhi's refusal to obey the court order asking him to leave Champaran immediately. Besides that, Gandhi's protest against the delay of the court proceedings is also an instance of his belief in civil disobedience.

Furthermore, Gandhi does not falter to plead guilty in front of the court. He accepts his guilt but presents a rational case as to what made him disobey the law. For him, truth is

above everything and, thus, he decides to follow the voice of conscience and obey the "higher law of our being".

Q8 :

Why did Gandhi agree to a settlement of 25 per cent refund to the farmers?

Answer :

For Gandhi, it was not the money but the principles that were of utmost importance. He believed that the very fact that the British landlords surrendered was of more significance than the percentage of refund. He wanted the poor farmers to realise that they too had rights and that they need not really live in fear of the British landlords. Therefore, although he had initially quoted a 50 percent refund, he later agreed to a settlement of 25 percent refund to the farmers. Besides, Gandhi was interested in long-term solutions rather than immediate benefits. His decision was proved right when, years later, the British landlords decided to leave their estates, putting an end to the sharecropping arrangement.

Q9 :

How did the episode change the plight of the peasants?

Answer :

The episode of Champaran brought more than one change in the plight of the peasants of that district. These peasants gained confidence which was evident in their spontaneous demonstration on the morning of Gandhi's trial. After the successful refund of the compensation, the peasants, for the first time, realised their own rights and were liberated from the fear that had plagued them.

This episode brought an end to the fifteen percent arrangement of sharecropping. However, the most radical change that the episode brought about was in their social and cultural standard. Gandhi opened schools in six villages. His wife took pains to make the peasants aware of the importance of general sanitation and personal hygiene. He even appointed a doctor.

