

8th class worksheet 25

Learning Outcome 8.11:

Thinks critically and respond to questions based on texts (from books or other resources), events, characters, ideas or themes.

LEARNING SHEET 32

Activity 1:

Read the lesson 'A Day in the Ashram' and complete the activities.

A DAY IN THE ASHRAM

- C.F. Andrews

Words cannot picture to you the beauty of Shantiniketan. Our own poet and teacher, whom we call Gurudeva, has named it in his song, "The darling of our hearts," and it is worthy of the name.

If I were to describe to you one day in the Ashram with the boys, that would perhaps best bring home to you its inner beauty. Long before sunrise, like the birds in our own amlaki groves, our boys are awake. The choristers are the first to rise, and they go round the Ashram, singing their morning hymn. The beauty of the sound in the silent morning air and the sense of joy and reverence which it brings, give peace to the soul.

After an interval, each boy takes his asan, his square of carpet, into the fields and sits down on it to meditate in his own place alone. Later on, before the school work begins, the boys all stand together in the shade of the trees and sing their hymn.

Till about half past ten the work of the school goes on. We have no classrooms. The boys sit with their teachers, in the open air, under the trees. A group of eight or ten boys are seated round the teacher, asking him questions. Very few books are used. A greater part is carried on through conversation. The boys soon learn to open out all their difficulties to their teachers, and the teachers get keenly interested in the boys' questions and answers. Such living education can never be dull. When the morning work is over, the boys bathe and go to their meal.

About two o'clock in the afternoon the classes begin again; but at this time the work is chiefly with the hands as well as with the mind. Handiwork is practised, and the boys' own natural tastes are very soon discovered. Some prefer carpentry; others prefer mechanical work; others enjoy spinning and weaving; others become skilled draftsmen or painters; others are musicians.

There is very little book-work in the afternoon. School is over at about four o'clock, and then there is a rush to get first into the great open fields for football. Our Shantiniketan boys are famous everywhere for their sports and games. In the evening, at sunset, they sit down once more, to meditate in silence.

As night comes, fairy tales are told; short dramas are recited; our Gurudeva's songs are sung; and different school gatherings are held.

By nine o' clock all are glad to retire to rest; and again, the choristers go round the Ashram singing their last evening hymn. Their faces tell the story of their joy and their freedom. There is no freer life in India than the life of our children at Shantiniketan.

Glossary and Notes:

choristers: members who sing in the choir of a church

choir: a group of singers singing hymns

hymn: a song of praise to God

amloki: a tree, like a mango tree

reverence: respect

meditate: to pray silently

draftsman: a designer or one who makes plans

recite: sing [a poem or a story] from memory

Activity 1.1: Read and discuss your responses with your partner. Then write.

1. The classes held in the afternoon in Shantiniketan are very important. Why?

Answer: The classes held in the afternoon in Shantiniketan are very important. Because The boys sit with their teachers, in the open air, under the trees. A group of eight or ten boys are seated round the teacher, asking him questions. Very few books are used. A greater part is carried on through conversation. The boys soon learn to open out all their difficulties to their teachers, and the teachers get keenly interested in the boys' questions and answers.

2. How do the boys spend their evenings in Shantiniketan?

Answer: In the evening, at sunset, they sit down once more, to meditate in silence. Thus the boys spend their evenings in Shantiniketan.

3. How are the classes at Shantiniketan different from the classes in other schools?

Answer: In other schools, the classes were held into the classroom but in Shantiniketan, classes were held under the tree. They believe that students have to learn on the nap of nature. In other schools, free food and free education are not provided but in Shantiniketan free education and free food are provided.

4. How does Shantiniketan prepare the boys for life?

Answer: The education here is the living education. Boys are taught according to their tastes and preferences. They enjoy learning and become experts in the subject of their liking. That is how Shantiniketan prepares boys for life.