

Text Book : Moments

Lesson 1 - Prose “ The Lost Child ” by Mulkraj Anand

New Words :

Alleys
Tyrant
Gaudy
Fluttering
Wailed



Word Meanings :

Suppress = Put an end to
Intently = Attentively
Heeded = Listened to
Convulsed = Shook violently
Persuasively = Convincingly

Lesson explanation :



The Lost Child is the story of a small child who gets lost in a fair. He had gone with his parents to the fair but loses them when he gets engrossed in looking at a roundabout swing. The story highlights the bond of love and affection that the child shares with his parents. Before losing them he had been demanding

different things like sweets, balloons, flowers, swings, etc. Once he loses them, he is picked up by a stranger. The stranger tries to quieted the child by offering him all these things that he had demanded from his parents but the child does not want them any more. He wants his parents first.

The Lost Child Summary

It was the season of spring. The people of the village came out of their houses, in colourful attire and walked towards the fair. A child along with his parents was going to the fair and was very excited and happy. He was attracted to the stalls of toys and sweets. Though, his father got angry but his mother pacified him and diverted his attention towards other things. The child moved forward but once again lagged behind because his eyes were caught by one thing or the other every now and then.

As they moved forward, the child wanted the various things on the stalls. His mouth watered seeing sweets decorated with gold and silver leaves. He wanted his favourite burfi but knowing that his parents would refuse on the ground that he was greedy, he walked ahead. Then he saw beautiful garlands of gulmohur but didn't ask for it, then he saw balloons but he knew very well that his parents would deny due to the fact that he was too old to play with balloons, so he walked away.

Then he saw a snake charmer and a roundabout swing. As he stopped to ask his parents for permission to enjoy the swing, to his astonishment, there was no reply. Neither his father nor his mother was there. Now the child realized that he was lost. He ran here and there but could not find them. The place was overcrowded. He got terrified but suddenly a kind hearted man took him up in his arms and consoled the bitterly weeping child. He asked if he would like to have a joyride but the child sobbed "I want my father, I want my mother." The man offered him sweets, balloons and garland but the child kept sobbing "I want my father, I want my mother."

The Lost Child Explanation

IT was the festival of spring. From the wintry shades of narrow lanes and alleys emerged a gaily clad humanity. Some walked, some rode on horses, others sat, being carried in bamboo and bullock carts. One little boy ran between his father's legs, brimming over with life and laughter.

wintry shades of narrow lanes and alleys: in the winter season, the narrow lanes were full of shade.

Emerged: came out

Brimming over: to be full of something

The story is set in the spring season. As the winter season had just ended, all the people came out of their houses. They were cheerful as the chilling cold weather had ended. People conveyed through different modes - foot, horses, bamboo carts and bullock carts. A little child was accompanied by his parents. He ran excitedly and often banged into his father's legs. He was full of life, excitement and laughter.

"Come, child, come," called his parents, as he lagged behind, fascinated by the toys in the shops that lined the way.

Lagged behind: was left behind

Fascinated by: attracted to

Lined the way: were set up along the way.

The child was attracted to the toys which were displayed at the various stalls. As he would be left behind, his parents would call him to come with them.

He hurried towards his parents, his feet obedient to their call, his eyes still lingering on the receding toys. As he came to where they had stopped to wait for him, he could not suppress the desire of his heart, even though he well knew the old, cold stare of refusal in their eyes.

Lingering: lasting for a long time

Receding: left behind as he walked ahead

Suppress: put an end to

Cold: without any feelings, emotions

The child was obedient and would walk towards them on being called but his eyes would keep on looking at the toys that he wanted. As he reached them, he couldn't control his desire to buy a toy. He was familiar to the reaction that they would give. He knew that they would stare him indicating denial to buy him the toy. The child knew the emotionless way in which they would stare at him.

"I want that toy," he pleaded.

The child was unable to control his desire any longer. He said that he wanted to buy the toy.

His father looked at him red-eyed, in his familiar tyrant's way.

Tyrant: a cruel and oppressive ruler



The father's eyes grew red with anger. He looked at the child just like a cruel ruler who was trying to oppress him.

His mother, melted by the free spirit of the day was tender and, giving him her finger to hold, said, "Look, child, what is before you!"

Melted: became tender and loving

The mother became emotional due to the cheerful mood. Lovingly, she gave her finger to the child to hold and guided him to a place. She asked him to see what was in front of him.

It was a flowering mustard-field, pale like melting gold as it swept across miles and miles of even land. A group of dragonflies were bustling about on their gaudy purple wings, intercepting the flight of a lone black bee or butterfly in search of sweetness from the flowers. The child followed them in the air with his gaze, till one of them would still its wings and rest, and he would try to catch it. But it would go fluttering, flapping, up into the air, when he had almost caught it in his hands. Then his mother gave a cautionary call: "Come, child, come, come on to the footpath."

Pale: dull, colourless

Gaudy: extremely bright and showy

streams of gold and were widespread. A group of dragonflies, black bees and butterflies buzzed around, sucking the nectar from the flowers. The child looked at them as they flew around. When one of them sat somewhere, he tried to catch them but the tiny creatures would fly away the next instance. The mother called out to him as they started walking down the footpath.

He ran towards his parents gaily and walked abreast of them for a while, being, however, soon left behind, attracted by the little insects and worms along the footpath that were teeming out from their hiding places to enjoy the sunshine.

Abreast: side by side and facing the same way

Teeming out: to pour or empty out

The child ran towards his parents. He walked next to them but after few steps, he stopped to see the insects who were coming out of the soil. Once again the child was left behind.

“Come, child, come!” his parents called from the shade of a grove where they had seated themselves on the edge of a well. He ran towards them.

Grove: a small wood or group of trees

The parents called him. They sat next to a well under the shady trees. The child once again ran and joined his parents.



A shower of young flowers fell upon the child as he entered the grove, and, forgetting his parents, he began to gather the raining petals in his hands. But lo! he heard the cooing of doves and ran towards his parents, shouting, “The dove! The dove!” The raining petals dropped from his forgotten hands.

As the child entered the shady forested area, he was welcomed by a shower of flowers. He forgot his parents and started collecting the petals that had fallen. Just then he heard the cooing of doves and was excited to see them. He started chasing the birds and in the process, the petals fell from his hand. (This shows that as the child got attracted towards the next thing, he forgot what he had been doing earlier).



“Come, child, come!” they called to the child, who had now gone running in wild capers round the banyan tree, and gathering him up they took the narrow, winding footpath which led to the fair through the mustard fields.

Capers: a playful skipping movement

The parents called the child who was running and playing around a banyan tree. They lifted him and walked down a narrow, twisting lane through which they crossed the mustard fields and reached the fair.

As they neared the village the child could see many other footpaths full of throngs, converging to the whirlpool of the fair, and felt at once repelled and fascinated by the confusion of the world he was entering.

Throngs: huge crowds

Converging: gathering

As they were about to reach the fair, the child saw huge crowds of people walking from all directions towards the fair. The dense crowd scared him and he stepped back for a while but the next moment, he got attracted to the mind - boggling crowd of humanity.



A sweetmeat seller hawked, “gulab-jaman, rasagulla, burfi, jalebi,” at the corner of the entrance and a crowd pressed round his counter at the foot of an architecture of many coloured sweets, decorated with leaves of silver and gold. The child stared open-eyed and his mouth watered for the burfi that was his favourite sweet. “I want that burfi,” he slowly murmured. But he half knew as he begged that his plea would not be heeded because his parents would say he was greedy. So without waiting for an answer he moved on.

Heeded: paid attention to

At the entrance of the fair, to one corner, a sweetmeat seller had set up a shop. He was selling various sweets like gulab jamun, rasgulla, burfi and jalebi. The sweets were displayed at different heights and were covered with foils of gold and silver. The boy's mouth watered when he sighted his favourite burfi. He expressed his desire to get one in a low voice because he knew that his request would be refuted by his parents. They would say that he was greedy for the burfi. As he did not expect that his demand would be fulfilled, he walked further.



A flower-seller hawked, "A garland of gulmohur, a garland of gulmohur!" The child seemed irresistibly drawn. He went towards the basket where the flowers lay heaped and half murmured, "I want that garland." But he well knew his parents would refuse to buy him those flowers because they would say that they were cheap. So, without waiting for an answer, he moved on.

The next stall was that of a flower seller. He announced that he was selling garlands of gulmohur flowers. The child wanted one of those. He walked towards the basket of lowers and again announced his desire to have one in a low voice because he knew that his demand would not be fulfilled. They would refuse to buy him the flowers as they would say that they were cheap. Again, the boy walked ahead without expecting a reply from his parents.

A man stood holding a pole with yellow, red, green and purple balloons flying from it. The child was simply carried away by the rainbow glory of their silken colours and he was filled with an overwhelming desire to possess them all. But he well knew his parents would never buy him the balloons because they would say he was too old to play with such toys. So he walked on further.

Overwhelming: a very strong emotion

The next thing that the child came across was a balloon seller selling balloons of different colours of the rainbow. The boy was attracted to the shiny colours of the balloons and wanted to have them all. He knew that his parents would not buy the balloons for him as they would reason that he was too old to play with them. So, the child walked further.



A snake-charmer stood playing a flute to a snake which coiled itself in a basket, its head raised in a graceful bend like the neck of a swan, while the music stole into its invisible ears like the gentle rippling of an invisible waterfall. The child went towards the snake-charmer. But, knowing his parents had forbidden him to hear such coarse music as the snake-charmer played, he proceeded farther.

Forbidden: not allowed

Coarse: unpleasant

Then he paused at a snake charmer who was playing a flute and the snake was twisting its neck to the music. The snake had coiled itself in a basket and had raised its head out. It bent and moved its neck gracefully like a swan. It seemed that the music of the flute was heard by the snake's invisible ears and created the effect of a waterfall on it because it swayed its neck in a similar way. The boy walked towards the snake charmer but as his parents had warned him to remain away from the unpleasant music played by such men, he walked further.



There was a roundabout in full swing. Men, women and children, carried away in a whirling motion, shrieked and cried with dizzy laughter. The child watched them intently and then he made a bold request: “I want to go on the roundabout, please, Father, Mother.”

Then he saw the roundabout swing. It was full of men, women and children who were enjoying the ride. The boy watched the people on the roundabout and then with a lot of courage, expressed his desire to go on the roundabout.



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There was no reply. He turned to look at his parents. They were not there, ahead of him. He turned to look on either side. They were not there. He looked behind. There was no sign of them.

When his parents did not reply, he turned towards them. He saw that they were nowhere around. He looked around and behind but his parents were nowhere to be seen.



A full, deep cry rose within his dry throat and with a sudden jerk of his body he ran from where he stood, crying in real fear, “Mother, Father.” Tears rolled down from his eyes, hot and fierce; his flushed face was convulsed with fear. Panic-stricken, he ran to one side first, then to the other, hither and thither in all directions, knowing not where to go. “Mother, Father,” he wailed. His yellow turban came untied and his clothes became muddy.

Hither and thither: here and there

The boy cried loudly, jerked his body and ran here and there calling out for his parents. He was full of fear and tears started rolling down his cheeks. As he wailed and ran around his turban opened and his clothes became muddy.

Having run to and fro in a rage of running for a while, he stood defeated, his cries suppressed into sobs. At little distances on the green grass he could see, through his filmy eyes, men and women talking. He tried to look intently among the patches of bright yellow clothes, but there was no sign of his father and mother among these people, who seemed to laugh and talk just for the sake of laughing and talking.

Intently: carefully

After some time he gave up. The loud cries turned into mild sobs. He saw some people standing and talking and tried to find if his parents were among them. The laughter and talks of the people were meaningless for the child. He was simply searching for his parents.

He ran quickly again, this time to a shrine to which people seemed to be crowding. Every little inch of space here was congested with men, but he ran through people's legs, his little sob lingering: "Mother, Father!" Near the entrance to the temple, however, the crowd became very thick: men jostled each other, heavy men, with flashing, murderous eyes and hefty shoulders. The poor child struggled to thrust a way between their feet but, knocked to and fro by their brutal movements, he might have been trampled underfoot, had he not shrieked at the highest pitch of his voice, "Father, Mother!" A man in the surging crowd heard his cry and, stooping with great difficulty, lifted him up in his arms.

Congested: full of

Hefty: large and heavy

Thrust: push

Knocked: hit

Brutal: harsh, rough

Trampled: crushed

Surging: powerful

The boy ran towards a temple which was crowded with people. He ran through the legs of men, calling out for his parents. The crowd was pushing each other as he neared the entrance of the temple. The boy got scared of huge strong men who starred people with their murderous eyes and pushed them with their strong and big shoulders. The boy could have been crushed under the feet of the men had his cries not been heard by a man in the crowd. He lifted the child.



"How did you get here, child? Whose baby are you?" the man asked as he steered clear of the mass. The child wept more bitterly than ever now and only cried, "I want my mother, I want my father!"

As the man got the child out of the crowd, he asked him how he had reached there and what were his parents' names. The boy cried even more and repeated that he wanted to go to his parents.

The man tried to soothe him by taking him to the roundabout. “Will you have a ride on the horse?” he gently asked as he approached the ring. The child’s throat tore into a thousand shrill sobs and he only shouted, “I want my mother, I want my father!”

Soothe: relax, comfort

The man tried to relax the child by taking him to the roundabout swing. He offered him a ride but the child screamed and wept loudly that he wanted his parents.

The man headed towards the place where the snake-charmer still played on the flute to the swaying cobra. “Listen to that nice music, child!” he pleaded. But the child shut his ears with

his fingers and shouted his double-pitched strain: “I want my mother, I want my father!” The man took him near the balloons, thinking the bright colours of the balloons would distract the

child’s attention and quieted him. “Would you like a rainbow coloured balloon?” he persuasively asked. The child turned his eyes from the flying balloons and just sobbed, “I want my mother, I want my father!”

Pleaded: requested

Double - pitched strain: usage of a lot of force

The man started walking back on the same route which the child had taken. So he took the child to the snake charmer. He asked him to listen to the nice music being played by the snake - charmer. The child shut his ears with his fingers and screamed loudly that he wanted his parents. The man took the child to the bright coloured balloons, hoping that he might get cheered by seeing them. He offered a balloon to the child but he turned away and wept for father,

The man, still trying to make the child happy, bore him to the gate where the flower-seller sat. “Look! Can you smell those nice flowers, child! Would you like a garland to put round your neck?”

Bore: carried

The man tried to make the child happy and took him to the flower seller. He asked him to smell the fragrance of the flowers and offered him a garland.

The child turned his nose away from the basket and reiterated his sob, “I want my mother, I want my father!”

Reiterated: repeated

The child refused to smell the flowers that he wanted to buy earlier because now, his priority was to get his parents.

Thinking to humour his disconsolate charge by a gift of sweets, the man took him to the counter of the sweet shop. "What sweets would you like, child?" he asked. The child turned his face from the sweet shop and only sobbed, "I want my mother, I want my father!"

Disconsolate: very unhappy and unable to be comforted

Charge: a person or thing entrusted to the care of someone

Finally, the man took him to the sweet meat seller and offered to buy sweets for him. Still, the child did not want his favorite sweet but wanted his parents.

I Answer the following questions in 30 to 40 words:

a) Where did the child go with his parents ? What did he want there ?

Ans :The child went to a fair with his parents. He wanted garlands , balloons and sweets over there . He also wanted to see a snack and also wanted to take a ride on the swing.

b) What happened when the lost child reached the temple door ?

Ans :When the child reached the temple door , men jostled each other. The poor child struggled to thrust his way out but was knocked. He might have been trampled if he had not shouted at his highest pith.

c) How was the child separated from his parents ?

Ans :The boy was attracted to toys , balloons and sweets in the fair He got fascinated with the flute, music being played the snack charmer. While watching the roundabout swing he got separated from his parents.

II Answer the following question in 100 – 150 words :

a) Difficult situations mark the development of certain qualities in us . Explain with reference to the story the lost child.

Ans :It is true that difficult situations mark the development of certain qualities in us. What we require is that we must have courage in our heart, trust over ourself and tolerance . It comes to be true in the story the lost child . Before separation, the child was very happy and excited at the fair. He was fascinated with all the things that were displayed at the stalls . H wanted to have all the things like his favourite toys, sweet, flowers etc, but after separation, the boy just wanted to be with his patents. He takes him to every other place which the child had desired earlier but, he denies and only wants to meet his parents. In this way , it is seen that certain qualities develop in difficult situation

b) Compare the attitude of the child before and after his separation from his parents.

Ans: Before separation the child was very happy and excited at the fair. He was fascinated with all the things that were displayed at the stalls .. He wanted to have all the things like his favourite toys, sweets , flowers, etc.. He also wanted to go for a ride. But after separation the boy just wanted to be with his parents . He was not interested in any of those things which he kept asking to have from stalls. In the absence of his parents these things did not give him any satisfaction.