

Class 10

Unit 4, Lesson 2

Read the passage

May Day or International Workers' Day is observed on May 1 all over the world today to commemorate the historical struggle and sacrifices of the working people to establish an eight-hour workday. It is a public holiday in almost all the countries of the world.

Since the industrial revolution in the 18th and 19th centuries in Europe and the US, the workers in mills and factories had been working a long shift, fourteen or even more hours a day.

On May 1st in 1886, inspired by the trade unions, half of the workers at the McCormick Harvesting Machine Company in Chicago went on strike demanding an eight-hour workday. Two days later, a workers' rally was held near the McCormick Harvesting Machine Company and about 6000 workers joined it. The rally was addressed by the labour leaders. They urged the workers to stand together, to go on with their struggle and not to give in to their bosses. At one point of the rally, some strike breakers started leaving the meeting place. The strikers went down the street to bring them back. Suddenly about 200 policemen attacked them with clubs and revolvers. One striker was killed instantly, five or six others were seriously wounded and many others were injured.

The events of May 1, 1886 are a reminder that workers will continue to be exploited until they stand up and speak out to gain better working conditions, better pay and better lives.

Now try to find out the best answer from the four alternatives

(a) International Workers' Day is observed on-----

(i) June 21

(ii) May 10

(iii) May 1

(iv) July 1

(b) The rally was addressed by the-----

(i) Labourers

(ii) Political leaders

(iii) Labour leaders

(iv) Public leaders

(c) The labour leaders urged the workers to stand together, to go on with their struggle and not to

give in to their bosses. What does the underlined phrase mean?

(i) Start protesting

(ii) Surrender

(iii) Give something

(iv) Hit their bosses

(d) -----was one of the most important demands of the workers.

(i) High Salary

(ii) Residential facilities

(iii) Pay scale

(iv) Eight-hour workday

(e) The----- worked fourteen or even more hours a day.

(i) farmers

(ii) students

(iii) workers

(iv) teachers

(f) About ----- workers joined the rally.

(i) 600

(ii) 6000

(iii) 1600

(iv) 160

(g) The McCormick Harvesting Machine Company was in-----

(i) Dhaka

(ii) London

(iii) Chicago

(iv) New York

Try to find out the answers of the following questions from the passage

(a) Why is May Day observed today ?

(b) What was the demand of the workers ?

(c) How were the strikers attacked ?

(d) What lesson do you get from the events of 1st May, 1886 ?

(e) Who inspired the workers ?

(f) Who addressed the rally ?

(g) How many workers joined the rally ?

(h) How long did the workers have to work before 1886 ?