

Page No: 10 Thinking About Text

I. Answer these questions in a few words or a couple of sentences each.

1. How old are Margie and Tommy?
2. What did Margie write in her diary?
3. Had Margie ever seen a book before?
4. What things about the book did she find strange?
5. What do you think a telebook is?
6. Where was Margie's school? Did she have any classmates?
7. What subjects did Margie and Tommy learn?

Ans: 1. Margie is eleven and Tommy is thirteen years old.

2. In her diary on the page headed 17 May, 2157 Margie wrote, "Today Tommy found a real book!".

3. No, Margie had never seen a book before but she had heard about it from her grandfather.

4. The very idea of printed book with still words instead of moving the way they did on a screen was strange for her. She just found it odd that for centuries the words on a page always remained the same without any change. Besides, the idea that someone would write a book about schools was itself strange for Margie.

5. A book that can be displayed on a television screen is called telebook.

6. Margie's school was just a room called schoolroom in her home itself, right next to her bedroom. No, she did not have any classmates and even in the name of teacher, a mechanical teacher flashed on the screen.

7. Margie and Tommy learned three subjects i.e. geography, history and arithmetic.

II. Answer the following with reference to the story.

1. "I wouldn't throw it away."

(i) Who says these words?

(ii) What does 'it' refer to?

(iii) What is it being compared with by the speaker?

Ans: (i) Tommy says these words to Margie.

(ii) 'It' refers to the television screen, on which over a million books were available.

(iii) The television screen is being compared to real printed books of earlier times by Tommy. He finds printed books a waste to be thrown away after reading whereas his telebooks are really useful and needn't to be thrown away.

2. "Sure they had a teacher, but it wasn't a regular teacher. It was a man."

(i) Who does 'they' refer to?

(ii) What does 'regular' mean here?

(iii) What is it contrasted with?

Ans: (i) 'They' refers to the students of earlier times i.e. centuries before who went to old styled schools.

(ii) Here, 'regular' means the mechanical teachers that Tommy and Margie had.

(iii) The mechanical teacher is contrasted with the school teacher of earlier times, who happens to be a 'man'.

III. Answer each of these questions in a short paragraph (about 30 words).

1. What kind of teachers did Margie and Tommy have?

Ans: Margie and Tommy had mechanical teachers. They were large and black and ugly and flashed on large black screens on which all the lessons were shown and questions were asked. These mechanical teachers had a slot in which the students had to put their homework. Students had to write their answers in a punch code and the mechanical teacher calculated the marks immediately.

2. Why did Margie's mother send for the County Inspector?

Ans: Margie had been given many tests in geography by the mechanical teacher, but there was no improvement in her performance. It only kept on worsening therefore Margie's mother sent for the County Inspector to find out the reason behind that.

3. What did he do?

Ans: The County Inspector was a round little man with a red face, he smiled at Margie and gave an apple to her and started working on the mechanical teacher. He took it apart and then checked it. Margie wished that the Inspector would not know how to put the mechanical teacher together again, but he managed to reassemble it. He slowed down the geography sector of the teacher because it was geared a little too quick for an average ten year old.

4. Why was Margie doing badly in geography? What did the County Inspector do to help her?

Ans: Margie was doing badly in geography because the geography sector of the mechanical teacher had been geared a little too quick and she couldn't cope with that speed. The County Inspector rightly told her that she should not be blamed for her poor performance. The County Inspector slowed down the geography sector of the mechanical teacher to an average ten year level. He also told Mrs. Jones that Margie's overall progress pattern was satisfactory.

5. What had once happened to Tommy's teacher?

Ans: Once, the history sector of Tommy's teacher had blanked out completely.

6. Did Margie have regular days and hours for school? If so, why?

Ans: Yes, Margie had regular days and hours for school, because her mother believed that learning at regular hours helped little girls learn better. That was why mechanical teacher was also on at the same time everyday except Saturday and Sunday.

7. How does Tommy describe the old kind of school?

Ans: Tommy describes the old kind of school as a special building where all kids studied together. There hundreds of students were studying and playing together. They used to shout and laugh together in an open yard. They had a teacher who wasn't a regular teacher but was a 'man'.

8. How does he describe the old kind of teachers?

Ans: Tommy said that the old kind of teachers were men i.e. human being, who didn't stay at anyone's house but taught the students inside a special building called school. The teachers

taught the children in groups and gave them homework and asked them questions. They were smart enough to know all the facts.

IV. Answer each of these questions in two or three paragraphs (100 –150 words).

1. What are the main features of the mechanical teachers and the schoolrooms that Margie and Tommy have in the story?

Ans: Margie and Tommy had mechanical teachers flashing on large black screens on which all the lessons were shown and questions were asked. They had a slot in which students had to put their homework . They had to write their answers in a punch code and the mechanical teacher calculated the marks immediately. Their schools were in their homes itself. They did not have any classmates. They learned geography, history and arithmetic. They had regular days and hours for school. Margie's school was right next to her bedroom. The mechanical teacher always turned on at the same time every day except Saturdays and Sundays because her mother said that little girls learned better when they learned at regular hours.

2. Why did Margie hate school? Why did she think the old kind of school must have been fun?

Ans: Margie hated school because it was not fun. A mechanical teacher used to teach her everyday at a fixed time. The part that she hated the most was inserting the homework and in the slot on the mechanical teacher. She did not like the fact that she had to write her answers in a punch code. She also disliked that the mechanical teacher calculated the marks immediately. She found her school detached and uninteresting. She thought that the old kind of school must have been fun as she imagined all the kids from the entire neighbourhood coming together, laughing and shouting in the schoolyard. She imagined that they would sit together in the classroom and go home together at the end of the day. They would learn the same things and could help one another with the homework and talk about it. Also, the teachers were human. All these aspects made her believe that the old kind of schools must have been fun.

3. Do you agree with Margie that schools today are more fun than the school in the story? Give reasons for your answer.

Ans: Yes, I agree that schools today are more fun than the school in the story. In the story,

there is no interaction among students regarding studies. Studying and answering questions seems to be a boring idea. Doing homework without anybody's help and writing them in a punch code would also be a tedious job. Moreover, children develop a better understanding about each other and of their surroundings when they go to a school and interact with each other. It is a healthier way of learning.

Having teachers explaining lessons is always more interesting than reading the entire lesson on a mechanical computer. Moreover, if any student faces any problem with the subject or in homework, he can discuss it with the teacher and other kids. It is impossible to discuss problems and situations with a mechanical teacher that is only programmed to teach in a particular manner.

The excitement of waiting to know the marks scored in exams is greater when one is sitting in a classroom with other students. It does not have the same effect when the marks are calculated immediately after each test, that too in a lonely room.

Finally, the friends that you make at school are most probably the best friends that you will ever make in your entire life. The various qualities that you learn in school like obedience, respect, kindness for others, sharing, taking part in school games, sports, and other activities are all a part of school education today. Therefore, schools today are more fun than the school in the story as these are more interactive. Today's schools promote a healthy environment for the students to study and learn.

Page No: 11 Thinking about Language

1. Find the sentences in the lesson which have the adverbs given in the box below.

Awfully, sorrowfully, completely, loftily, carefully, differently, quickly, nonchalantly

Ans: They turned the pages, which were yellow and crinkly, and it was awfully funny to read words that stood still instead of moving the way they were supposed to – on a screen, you know.

The mechanical teacher had been giving her test after test in geography and she had been doing worse and worse until her mother had shaken her head sorrowfully and sent for the County Inspector.

They had once taken Tommy's teacher away for nearly a month because the history sector had blanked out completely.

He added loftily, pronouncing the word carefully, "Centuries ago."

“But my mother says a teacher has to be adjusted to fit the mind of each boy and girl it teaches and that each kid has to be taught differently.”

“I didn’t say I didn’t like it,” Margie said quickly.

“May be,” he said nonchalantly.

2. Now use these adverbs to fill in the blanks in the sentences below.

(i) The report must be read _____ so that performance can be improved.

(ii) At the interview, Sameer answered our questions _____, shrugging his shoulders.

(iii) We all behave _____ when we are tired or hungry.

(iv) The teacher shook her head _____ when Ravi lied to her.

(v) I _____ forgot about it.

(vi) When I complimented Revathi on her success, she just smiled _____ and turned away.

(vii) The President of the Company is _____ busy and will not be able to meet you.

(viii) I finished my work _____ so that I could go out to play.

Ans: (i) The report must be read carefully so that performance can be improved.

(ii) At the interview, Sameer answered our questions loftily, shrugging his shoulders.

(iii) We all behave differently when we are tired or hungry.

(iv) The teacher shook her head sorrowfully when Ravi lied to her.

(v) I completely forgot about it.

(vi) When I complimented Revathi on her success, she just smiled nonchalantly and turned away.

(vii) The President of the Company is awfully busy and will not be able to meet you.

(viii) I finished my work quickly so that I could go out to play.

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3. Make adverbs from these adjectives.

(i) angry _____

(ii) happy _____

(iii) merry _____

(iv) sleepy _____

(v) easy _____

- (v) easy _____
- (vi) noisy _____
- (vii) tidy _____
- (viii) gloomy _____

Ans: (i) angrily

(ii) happily

(iii) merrily

(iv) sleepily

(v) easily

(vi) noisily

(vii) tidily

(viii) gloomily

II. Complete the following conditional sentences. Use the correct form of the verb.

1. If I don't go to Anu's party tonight, _____
2. If you don't telephone the hotel to order food, _____
3. Unless you promise to write back, I _____
4. If she doesn't play any games, _____
5. Unless that little bird flies away quickly, the cat _____

Ans: 1. If I don't go to Anu's party tonight, she will get angry.

2. If you don't telephone the hotel to order food, you will miss your evening meal.

3. Unless you promise to write back, I will not write to you.

4. If she doesn't play any games, she feels dull and lazy.

5. Unless that little bird flies away quickly, the cat will pounce on it.