

English Honeydew Chapter 1 The Best Christmas Present in the World

- by Michael Morpurgo

Comprehension check (page 13)

1.What did the author find in a junk shop ?

Answer:

The author found a roll-top desk in a junk shop.

2.What did he find in a secret drawer ? Who do you think had put it in there?

Answer:

He found a small tin box there. It had been placed there by Mrs. Macpherson as I think.

Comprehension check (Page-14)

1.Who had written the letter, to whom, and when ?

Answer:

Jim Macpherson wrote the letter to his wife, Connie, on the Christmas Eve from the battlefield.

2.Why was the letter written–what was the wonderful thing that had happened?

Answer:

The letter was written to describe an unusual thing/event happened on the Christmas eve at the battlefield.Both the enemies celebrated the eve in the ferocity of war. They enjoyed together German drinks and sausage. And their carols were praised by each other. It was the wonderful event that had happened on the battlefield.

3.What jobs did Hans Wolf and Jim Macpherson have when they were not soldiers?

Answer:

Jim Macpherson was a school-teacher whereas Hans Wolf used to play a cello in the orchestra.

4.Had Hans Wolf ever been to Dorset ? Why did he say he knew it ?

Answer:

No, he had never been to Dorset. He learned about the place from school and reading books in English

5.Do you think Jim Macpherson came back from the war ? How do you know this ?

Answer:

Jim Macpherson did not return from the war. On tin box, it was written in a clumsy handwriting : “Jim’s last letter, received January 25, 1915. To be buried with me when the time comes.” This line supports our answer

Comprehension check (Page – 15)

1.Why did the author go to Bridport ?

Answer:

The author went to Bridport in search of Mrs. Connie Macpherson.

2.How old was Mrs. Macpherson now ? Where was she ?

Answer:

Mrs. Macpherson was 101 years old. She was in a Nursing Home situated at Dorchester Road named as Burlington House. The place was on the other side of the town.

Comprehension check (Page – 16)

1.Who did Connie Macpherson think her visitor was?

Answer:

Connie Macpherson thought her visitor was her own husband, Jim Macpherson.

2.Which sentence in the text shows that the visitor did not try to hide his identity

Answer:

The sentence ‘I said I was a friend come to visit Mrs. Macpherson to bring her a Christmas present’ shows that the visitor did not try to hide his identity.

Working With the Text (Page-16)

1. For how long do you think Connie had kept Jim's letter? Give reasons for your answer.

Answer:

Connie kept Jim's letter for a long period of time. We understand this from the fact that she told the narrator how she used to read the letter every day and could feel Jim's presence around her always.

2. Why do you think the desk had been sold, and when?

Answer:

The desk must have been sold when Connie's house had burnt. The table had been damaged by fire as well as water.

3. Why do Jim and Hans think that games or sports are good ways of resolving conflicts? Do you agree?

Answer:

Both Jim and Hans were soldiers. Both were warm hearted. They had seen the sufferings of war. So it was natural for them to hate war. They favoured a peaceful solution to settle disputes. Games or sports, they said, were good ways of resolving conflicts. I also quite agree with them.

4. Do you think the soldiers of the two armies are like each other, or different from each other? Find evidence from the story to support your answer.

Answer:

Soldiers are like each other and they are not at all different. Both wanted peace and harmony. They enjoyed wine and meat together, celebrated Christmas on the battlefield. Moreover they played football. At night they applauded each other by singing carols. Hans Wolf also narrated that each soldier must wish the fight to end soon and they wanted to go home. Even they wanted to resolve the conflicts by sports.

5. Mention the various ways in which the British and the German soldiers become friends and find things in common at Christmas.

Answer:

The Germans wished Happy Christmas to the British soldiers. After that they thought of having a party at no-man's land with schnapps and sausages. The British responded it bravely and warm-heartedly. They became friends and shared each other's goodwill and time of peace by enjoying, eating, laughing, drinking and talking. Besides, they played football that was won by the Germans by two goals to one.

6. What is Connie's Christmas present? Why is it "the best Christmas present in the world"?

Answer:

Jim's last letter was Connie's Christmas present. He was away on the front. She had been waiting for his return. Unfortunately her house caught fire and she had lost everything. So, after so many years when she got her husband's letter on the Christmas Eve, she lost in memory. So it is the best Christmas present in the world 'for her'.

7. Do you think the title of this story is suitable for it? Can you think of any other title(s)?

Answer:

The entire story revolves around the letter that belongs to Mrs. Macpherson. It is really valuable for Connie Macpherson as it turns out to be the best Christmas gift for her. Nothing can be thought beyond the letter. Some other titles may be: An extraordinary Christmas present, the most adorable Christmas present.