

1 The Fun They Had

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

Question 1.

How old are Margie and Tommy?

Answer:

Margie is eleven and Tommy is thirteen years old.

Question 2.

What did Margie write in her diary?

Answer:

Margie wrote in her diary. "Today, 17 May, 2157, Tommy found a real book."

Question 3.

Had Margie ever seen a book before?

Answer:

No, Margie had never seen a book before.

Question 4.

What things about the book did she find strange?

Answer:

The book had yellow and wrinkled pages. The words of the book were still. They did not move as the words move on the computer screen. She found these things strange.

Question 5.

What do you think a telebook is?

Answer:

A telebook is displayed on the television screen and the text of a telebook is similar to a book.

Question 6.

Where was Margie's school? Did she have any classmates?

Answer:

Margie's school was near her own bedroom. She did not have any classmate.

Question 7.

What subjects did Margie and Tommy learn?

Answer:

Margie learnt Geography and Mathematics. Tommy learnt History and Mathematics.

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

Question 1.

What kind of teachers did Margie and Tommy have?

Answer:

Margie and Tommy had mechanical teachers. They were taught on computers and television screens. They didn't have a living person as a teacher who would teach the pupils in a classroom.

Question 2.

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

Answer:

Margie's mother sent for the County Inspector because the mechanical teacher was not functioning efficiently. It had been giving her test after test in geography and she had been doing worse and worse.

Question 3.

What did he do?

Answer:

He slowed down the mechanical teacher's speed upto an average ten-year level. The mechanical teacher's speed was controlled and adjusted according to the IQ level of Margie.

Question 4.

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

Answer:

Margie had been doing badly in geography. This was because the mechanical teacher was very fast in displaying the questionnaire. The County Inspector adjusted its speed upto an average ten-year level. Thus, the mechanical teacher's speed was controlled appropriately. The County Inspector assured that the overall pattern of Margie's progress was quite satisfactory.

Question 5.

What had once happened to Tommy's teacher?

Answer:

Tommy's teacher was taken away for nearly a month because the history sector had blanked out completely. So, Tommy had nothing to do during that period. He only relaxed and enjoyed.

Question 6.

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

Answer:

Yes, Margie had regular days and hours for school because her mother said little girls learned better if they learned at regular hours.

Question 7.

How does Tommy describe the old kind of school?

Answer:

Tommy says that the old schools were different. They had a special building and all the kids went there to study. They laughed and shouted in the schoolyard. They enjoyed time together and learned lessons together in a classroom.

Question 8.

How does he describe the old kind of teachers?

Answer:

He says that the old teachers did not live in the house. They had a special building and all the kids went there. They gave homework to students. They were not mechanical teachers, but living human beings.

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

Question 1.

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

Answer:

Margie and Tommy have mechanical teachers. They need not go to school for getting a formal education. The mechanical teacher is placed in one of the rooms of the house and they can get the knowledge of various subjects of individually from the mechanical teacher. They don't have such classrooms where students sit together. They study from the telebooks. So they don't require books and exercise books. The examination system is very different. They do homework in a different way. Margie has to write them out in a punch code. She learnt it when she was six years old. So the system of their education is technologically advanced and not based on printed books.

Question 2.

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

Answer:

Margie hated her school because she had a mechanical teacher. It was in her house. She was supposed to sit in that room alone to complete her homework or assignments. The part Margie hated most was the slot where she had to put homework and test papers. She thought that the old schools must have been fun because the students used to sit together in the classroom. They enjoyed, laughed and shouted in the schoolyard. Children needed company to enhance their skills. If they are isolated, they get depressed and dejected.

Question 3.

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

Answer:

There is no doubt that today's schools are more funny than the future school discussed in the story. This school has nothing but a mechanical teacher with no emotions and sentiments. It does not have the ability to understand the psychology of a child. Moreover, it guides a pupil according to its adjusted modes. But today's schools work for the overall development of a child. They learn the same thing. The teaches are real human beings. They learn how to adapt themselves to the new surroundings and cope with the strangers. The students sit and learn together. These activities don't give vent to the feelings of depression, alienation and segregation.