



## THE LITTLE MATCH GIRL

*A Vision of Hope in the Cold*

**Introduction (B1)** - “The Little Match Girl” by Hans Christian Andersen (1845) explores the contrast between extreme poverty and the persistence of hope.

[1] The year was ending, and a freezing wind blew through the dark streets. It was New Year’s Eve. Snow fell on a poor little girl who walked alone in the cold. She carried matches in her hand to sell, but her day had been very difficult. She was barefoot because she had lost her slippers while crossing the street. One slipper had disappeared in the snow, and a rude boy had run away with the other.

[2] Her tiny feet were red and blue from the cold. She clutched her matchbox, but no one had bought anything from her all day. She was shivering and hungry, and she could smell the delicious roast goose cooking in the nearby houses. The lights from the windows danced in the snow, making her feel even more alone.

[3] She was afraid to go home because her father would be angry that she had made no money. Besides, her house was almost as cold as the street. She sat down in a corner between two houses. Her hands felt completely frozen. She thought, “Perhaps just one match could warm me.” She struck it against the wall. *Scritch!* A bright flame appeared. It felt as if she were sitting in front of a large, beautiful iron stove. The fire was warm and wonderful, but just as she reached out her feet, the match went out. The stove vanished.

[4] She struck a second match. The light made the wall look like a thin curtain. Through it, she saw a grand room with a table covered in a white cloth. A roast goose was waiting on the table. To her surprise, the goose jumped down and started

towards her! But the match went out, and the vision was replaced by the cold, dark wall.

[5] With the third match, she found herself under a magnificent Christmas tree. Thousands of candles sparkled on the branches. As she reached for them, the match went out and the lights rose higher, turning into stars. One star fell, leaving a trail of fire. "Someone is dying," she whispered. Her old grandmother had told her that a falling star meant a soul was going to heaven.

[6] She struck another match, and there stood her grandmother, looking kind and bright. "Grandmother!" she cried. "Take me with you!" She quickly lit the rest of her matches to keep the vision alive. They burned brighter than the day. Her grandmother took the little girl in her arms, and they both flew high into the sky, far away from the cold and the hunger.

[7] The next morning, the townspeople found the little girl. She was sitting in the corner with a peaceful smile, but she had frozen to death. "She was trying to keep warm," they said. No one knew the beautiful things she had seen, or the joy she felt as she entered the New Year with her grandmother.

**1. According to the text, why did the girl not return home?**

- A. She had lost her way in the dark and snow.
- B. She was afraid of being hit by her father for earning no money.
- C. Her house was even colder and more dangerous than the street.
- D. She wanted to stay and watch the people celebrate New Year's Eve.

**2. The girl's hands were so cold that she could no longer feel them before she lit the first match.**

- A. True
- B. False

**3. In paragraph [3], how does the writer use the description of the 'iron stove' to show the girl's feelings?**

- A. To show that she was angry about her situation.
- B. To show how much she desired warmth and comfort.
- C. To explain the type of furniture people had in 1845.
- D. To warn the reader about the dangers of fire.

**4. What did the falling star represent to the little girl?**

- A. That a cold winter storm was approaching.
- B. That a soul was ascending to God.
- C. That her matches were about to run out.
- D. That the New Year's celebrations had begun.

**5. Why did the girl light the whole bundle of matches at the end?**

- A. She wanted to be found by the townspeople more easily.
- B. She was trying to start a fire to keep her grandmother.
- C. She wanted to keep the vision of her grandmother from disappearing.
- D. She was trying to use up all the matches so she wouldn't have to sell them.

**6. What is the significance of the girl's 'smile' found the next morning?**

- A. It shows she was glad to be free from her father.
- B. It suggests she had a happy experience before dying, which the people didn't see.
- C. It indicates that she had finally sold all her matches.
- D. It shows that she was warmer than the people expected.

**Key Summary:** (1) B (2) A (3) B (4) B (5) C (6) B

**Q1: According to the text, why did the girl not return home?**

**Answer:** B

**Explanation:** The text explicitly states she feared punishment from her father.

**Q2: The girl's hands were so cold that she could no longer feel them before she lit the first match.**

**Answer:** A

**Explanation:** The text says her hands were almost frozen, indicating extreme cold and lack of feeling.

**Q3: In paragraph [3], how does the writer use the description of the 'iron stove' to show the girl's feelings?**

**Answer:** B

**Explanation:** The stove represents the warmth and security she desperately lacks in reality.

**Q4: What did the falling star represent to the little girl?**

**Answer:** B

**Explanation:** The girl's grandmother had taught her this spiritual meaning of a falling star.

**Q5: Why did the girl light the whole bundle of matches at the end?**

**Answer:** C

**Explanation:** The girl acted out of desperation to prevent the vision from vanishing like the previous ones.

**Q6: What is the significance of the girl's 'smile' found the next morning?**

**Answer:** B

**Explanation:** The smile symbolizes her internal joy and peace, contrasting with the tragic reality seen by the townspeople.