

01. The Fun They Had

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

1. How old are Margie and Tommy?

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

2. What did Margie write in her diary?

Ans. Margie dated in her dairy 17 May 2157 and wrote Today Tommy found a real book.

3. Had Margie ever seen a book before?

Ans. Margie had never seen a real book before.

4. What things about the book did she find strange?

Ans. She noticed the pages of the book were yellow and crinkly and were not moving.

5. What do you think a telebook is?

Ans. A telebook is a virtual book that can be read on a screen.

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

Ans. Margie's school was next to her bedroom. She didn't have any classmates

7. What subjects did Margie and Tommy learn?

Ans. Margie and Tommy learnt History, Geography and Arithmetic.

II. Answer the following with reference to the story.

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

(i) Who says these words?

Ans. Tommy says these words.

(ii) What does it refer to

Ans. It refers to the television screen in which millions of telebooks were stored.

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

Ans. The real book is being compared with the millions of telebooks by the speaker.

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

(i) Who does 'they' refer to?

Ans. 'They' refers to the children from centuries ago who read the real book.

(ii) What does 'regular' mean here?

Ans. 'Regular' here means normal. It wasn't a regular teacher means it was not a mechanical teacher.

(iii) What is it contrasted with?

Ans. It is contrasted with a human teacher who was an actual living being.

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

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

Ans. Margie and Tommy were taught by a mechanical teacher on the computer screens. The lessons were flashed on the screen and the questions were asked. A slot was provided in the machine to insert all their homework and test papers.

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

Ans. Margie's mother sent for the County Inspector because Margie's performance in geography tests was decreasing and the mechanical teacher was malfunctioning and giving her tests after tests.

3. What did he do?

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Ans. The County Inspector took the mechanical teacher apart. He showed up the geography section up to an average ten-year level. Then he assembled the teacher back again.

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 subject was set at a higher level in the mechanical teacher. The County Inspector told her mother that Margie was not to be blamed for the drop in performance. He slowed down the level to suit Margie's age and assured her mother that her progress was satisfactory.

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

Ans. Tommy's history teacher was once blanked out completely. So, the County Inspector took his history teacher for nearly a whole month.

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

Ans. Yes, Margie had regular days and hours for school. Marge had to attend her school at the same time every day except on Saturday and Sunday. Her mother insisted that little girls learned better if they learned at regular hours.

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

Ans. Tommy said that the old kind of school existed centuries ago. They had a man to teach them. All students went to a special building where they were taught the same thing, according to their respective ages.

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

Ans. Tommy described the old kind of teachers to be people who did not live in a house but in a special building. The students would go to this building to learn, where they were taught lessons, according to their respective ages. The teacher gave them homework and asked

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them questions. A teacher used to taught many children at the same time.

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. The main features of the mechanical teachers that Margie and Tommy have are as follows:

The mechanical teachers have big black screens on which lessons are displayed and questions are asked. The students need to put their homework and test papers in a slot that is present in the mechanical teacher. The students write answers in punch code and the mechanical teacher calculates the results right away.

The main features of the schoolrooms that Margie and Tommy have are given below:

In the story, the schools are there in the homes. For instance, Margie's school was right next to her bedroom. The students do not have classmates. They study subjects like arithmetic, history, geography, etc. The mechanical teacher would turn on at the same time every day except on the weekends.

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

Ans. Margie hated school because she felt it boring. The mechanical teacher started the class at the same time regularly. Margie's mechanical teacher was giving her test after test on Geography and she was performing badly.

Margie also did not like inserting homework and test papers in the slot on the mechanical teacher.

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She thought that the old kind of school must have been fun because it would have had kids from various places of the neighbourhood. It would have been so interesting to sit together in the classroom and leave the school together at the end of the day. All the kids learned the same things so they could help each other in studies and homework.

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 with Margie that schools today are more fun than the school in the story. In the story, the schools are in the students' homes. This gives no space for interaction between students. Studying from screen and taking up tests sounds boring. Inserting homework and test papers in a slot on a mechanical teacher every day is monotonous. Writing answers in punch codes is even more draining. Learning together in a class gives students a wider view of the people. Students also get familiar with others and learn how to interact and socialize. Getting taught by human teachers is way more dynamic than being taught by a machine. If there is any issue with any lesson or concept, the student can ask the human teacher then and there. But mechanical teachers are programmed with a certain lesson and concept for a particular day. When the student solves homework, he/she can get help from classmates. That's how the schools today are more fun than the school in the story.

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