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Oral Comprehension Check

1. Why was Mr Keesing annoyed with Anne? What did he ask her to do?

Answer:

Mr. Keesing was annoyed with Anne because she talked very much in the class. He assigned her extra homework, asking her to write an essay on the subject, 'A Chatterbox'.

2. How did Anne justify her being a chatterbox in her essay?

Answer:

She gave two arguments to justify her 'Chatterbox', one that chatting in student's traits and other reason that nothing can be done about the inherited traits.

3. Do you think Mr Keesing was a strict teacher?

Answer:

Mr. Keesing was a strict teacher. However, he was not rigidly strict. He expected discipline and silence in his class while he was teaching, which is acceptable. He punished Anne by asking her to write an essay on 'A Chatterbox'. When Anne wrote a convincing essay on it, he received it with a good laugh. However, when Anne continued with her talking, he punished her again by asking her to write another essay; this time the topic was 'An Incurable Chatterbox'. Even after this when she kept talking, he asked her to write on the topic 'Quack Quack Quack, said Mistress Chatterbox'. He was trying to play a joke on her. However, she came up with a brilliant poem, and he read this poem in the class, acknowledging its content. Therefore, in regard of these events, Mr. Keesing cannot be entirely labelled as a strict teacher. He was fun-loving too.

4. What made Mr Keesing allow Anne to talk in class?

Answer:

Anne was able to justify her talkative nature every time she was punished by Mr. Keesing. On three occasions, as punishment, he gave her topics to write essays on. However, on each occasion he was impressed by the manner in which she presented her arguments. Finally, Mr. Keesing accepted the fact that Anne would always be that way. Hence, she was allowed to talk in class.

Thinking about the Text

1. Was Anne right when she said that the world would not be interested in the musings of a thirteen-year-old girl?

Answer:

No, Anne was not right when she said that the world would not be interested in the musings of a thirteen-year-old girl.

2. There are some examples of diary or journal entries in the 'Before You Read' section. Compare these with what Anne writes in her diary. What language was the diary originally written in? In what way is Anne's diary different?

Answer:

Anne's diary was originally written in Dutch. Her diary is different from the others in many aspects. She had named her diary 'Kitty'.

She thought of it as her only true friend whom she could confide in. She treated it as another person who was listening to her daily accounts. She wrote all her stories in it. She started by writing 'Dearest kitty' and ended the account by writing, 'Yours, Anne'. Her diary was a lot more personal than other diaries.

3. Why does Anne need to give a brief sketch about her family? Does she treat 'Kitty' as an insider or an outsider?

Answer:

Anne Frank claims that paper has more patience than people. She usually sits depressed and all alone. She claims of having no real friend. This lends the reader the perception that there isn't any body to take care of Anne Frank. To clear the clouds of doubt, Anne Frank gives the sketch of her adorable father, compassionate mother, kind grandmother, and loving sister.

She treated Kitty as an insider because she called it her best friend and was ready to confide in it.

4. How does Anne feel about her father, her grandmother, Mrs Kuperus and Mr Keesing? What do these tell you about her?

Answer:

Anne felt that her father was the most adorable father she had ever seen.

Anne remembered her grandmother even after her death. She wrote in her diary that no one knew how often she thought of her grandmother and still loved her. In the sixth form at the Montessori nursery school, her teacher was Mrs Kuperus, who was also the headmistress. At the end of the year, they were both in tears as they said a heartbreaking farewell.

Mr Keesing was her Maths teacher. He was annoyed with her because she talked too much. However, Anne was able to justify her talkative nature every time she was punished by Mr. Keesing. On each occasion he was impressed by the manner in which she presented her arguments.

All these incidents show how lovable and smart Anne was.

Everybody was attached to her, and even Mr Keesing could not help but laugh at her essays and acknowledge her smart mind.

5. What does Anne write in her first essay?

Answer:

In her first essay, titled 'A Chatterbox', Anne wanted to come up with convincing arguments to prove the necessity of talking. She began thinking about the subject. She wrote three pages and was satisfied. She argued that talking was a student's trait and that she would do her best to keep it under control. She further wrote that she would never be able to cure herself of the habit since her mother talked as much as she did. There was not much that one could do about inherited traits. Mr Keesing too had a good laugh reading her arguments.

6. Anne says teachers are most unpredictable. Is Mr Keesing unpredictable? How?

Answer:

Anne felt that a quarter of her class was dumb, and should be kept back and not promoted to the next class. However, she also felt that teachers were the most unpredictable creatures on earth. Mr Keesing could be termed as unpredictable. The way Anne always talked while the class was going on, any teacher would lose his temper. However, after several warnings, all Mr Keesing did was to assign her extra homework. She had to write an essay on 'A Chatterbox'. In this way, he tried to play a joke on her. Each time that he asked her to write such essays, she wrote very well. She kept countering his jokes. One could not have predicted that he would take all the jokes in the right spirit. Finally, when she wrote an entire essay in verse he accepted her talkative nature and actually allowed her to talk in class. He did not even assign her any more

extra homework. That is why it can be said that Mr Keesing was unpredictable.

7. What do these statements tell you about Anne Frank as a person?

(i) We don't seem to be able to get any closer, and that's the problem. Maybe it's my fault that we don't confide in each other.

(ii) I don't want to jot down the facts in this diary the way most people would, but I want the diary to be my friend.

(iii) Margot went to Holland in December, and I followed in February, when I was plunked down on the table as a birthday present for Margot.

(iv) If you ask me, there are so many dummies that about a quarter of the class should be kept back, but teachers are the most unpredictable creatures on earth.

(v) Anyone could ramble on and leave big spaces between the words, but the trick was to come up with convincing arguments to prove the necessity of talking.

Answer:

(i) These lines show that Anne had no true friend whom she could confide in. She even put the blame on herself that the fault might be hers.

(ii) This line shows that Anne really considered her diary as a friend whom she could trust and narrate all her stories to. She did not want just a diary in which she could write down the facts like others did. She considered it as her friend and named her Kitty.

(iii) This statement shows that Anne was a fun-loving person. She was witty and knew how to present things in a funny way. She narrated this incident with a lot of fun. The use of 'plunked down' shows her sense of humour.

(iv) This statement shows that she had an opinion on everything. She thought that a quarter of her class was full of dummies, signifying that she herself was intelligent enough to make it to the next class. She thought of teachers as the most unpredictable creatures on earth because nobody could say which students they would fail and which students would be passed on to the next class.

(v) This statement shows that Anne knew a lot about writing. She was given the task of writing an essay as a punishment. She took it on with full vigour. She did not want to write it like others who merely left big spaces between the words to make the essay look voluminous. She knew that the trick was to come up with a convincing argument to prove the necessity of talking. She was different in her approach from everybody else.

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