**Summary of On the Face of It**

On the Face of It is a play written by English novelist and playwright Susan Hill. This play talks about a young boy named Derek who is embarrassed and troubled by people commenting and talking about his face because it is half burnt by acid. Derek does not like his name and prefers to be called Derry. The play has used the name Derry for the character and also throughout all dialogues written in it. Another character named Mr Lamb tries to show him how to accept his flaws as a part of his life. He advises Derry to pay no heed to people’s conversations and reactions towards his face and focus on using his abilities to the best of his potential and achieving success in life. Summary of One the Face of It is a part of BYJU’S CBSE Summary. Students can also refer to [CBSE Notes](https://byjus.com/cbse-notes/) for learning materials on topics like writing anf grammar related to the Class 12 CBSE English syllabus.

**CBSE Class 12 English On the Face of It Summary**

Derry enters an isolated garden and walks cautiously around it. A while later, to Derry’s surprise, he finds the garden is owned by Mr Lamb, who strikes up a conversation with him. Derry plans to leave immediately when Mr Lamb informs him that everyone is welcome in his garden and that Derry looks mature enough not to steal anything from his garden. Derry explains to Mr Lamb that he is not scared of him. Instead, it was other people who were always frightened of him.

Mr Lamb finds this unusual and asks Derry why he feels this way. Derry says that it does not matter what people say; he can easily figure out what they think of his face. He believes that people find his face ugly. He tells Mr Lamb that even he finds his face ugly when he looks in the mirror. Mr Lamb does not say much about it and starts talking about plucking crab apples to make jelly. Derry assumes that Mr Lamb is just trying to change the topic of conversation as other people do. He asks Mr Lamb to question him about his condition and stop pretending there is nothing wrong with his face.

Mr Lamb tries to guess the cause behind his burnt face. Derry reveals that one side of his face was burnt due to exposure to acid, and it will remain the same forever. Derry finds Mr Lamb’s composed reaction to this piece of information a bit odd. He asks Mr Lamb astonishingly if he is not interested in it. The latter reasons that everything created by God is interesting. Every living thing is the same no matter what. Mr Lamb talks about how he has a tin leg and kids call him ‘Lamey-Lamb’. Some people notice and talk about his tin leg, while some do not. But it does not bother him. Mr Lamb tries to compare this phenomenon to the fairy tale of ‘Beauty and the Beast’.

Derry reminds Mr Lamb that he has heard about this tale in which a girl’s kiss turns a monstrous beast into a handsome prince. But in his case, he remains a monster. His mother only kissed him on the unburnt side of his face. He fears that no one would like him or look at him. Mr Lamb contradicts this by saying that Derry might not have a whole face, but the world has one, which is to be looked at. Talking about Mr Lamb’s tin leg during winters, Derry reveals how he has been told of the blind, deaf and dumb who were worse off than him; how people he has heard people whisper nasty things about him to each other. Mr Lamb advises him to stop listening to what people say about him.

Derry does not like to see people being scared of him. Mr Lamb tells the story of a man who was so scared of anything wrong happening to him that he stopped going out of the house but was killed, nonetheless, by a picture frame that fell on him. Mr Lamb explains to Derry that his hatred of people could do more harm than what acid had done to his face.

Derry likes Mr Lamb’s house and garden and expresses his desire to return to the place some other time. Mr Lamb welcomes this proposal gladly and warns him that he might meet plenty of other people also who are his friends. He could make friends with them because he was not scared of them and vice versa. Derry wants to help Mr Lamb with plucking the crab apples. He is worried about his family not knowing his whereabouts. So, he rushes home to inform his mother and promises Mr lamb to return soon. Meanwhile, we see that Mr Lamb thinks aloud to himself about no one ever returning back.

At home, Derry’s mother refuses to send Derry again to Mr Lamb’s. Derry retaliates by saying that he likes Mr Lamb’s house and wants to go there to think about things. His mother refuses again, and Derry expresses his hatred towards his home. He runs away from his house, saying that if he does not go to Mr Lamb’s, he will never be able to go anywhere, and finally reaches Mr Lamb’s garden to find him dead under an apple tree.

**Conclusion of On the Face of It**

Summary of On the Face of It teaches us critical morale – to accept ourselves for whatever we are. The advice given by an experienced and wise man like Mr Lamb boosts Derry’s self-esteem and inspires him to start working on himself anew. Towards the end of the play, we can see that Derry wants to help Mr Lamb with plucking apples. He also has some more positive vibes towards socialising – as we can see, Derry harbours a desire to return to Mr Lamb’s garden again for a visit sometime. Derry finally realises the worth of living a positive and fruitful life, but the death of Mr Lamb is an unfortunate incident. He played a very small but powerful role in Derry’s life. He gave a new meaning to his existence.