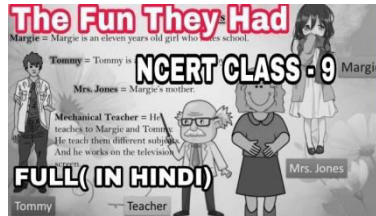


## Extra Questions and Notes



### The Fun They Had

#### INTRODUCTION

This story is set in future when books and schools as we have now perhaps will not exist. Two students of that period about 150 years advance from today find a printed book. They are surprised very much. They talk about the schools and books of the old period. They compare those schools with those of their own which are situated in their homes and have mechanical teachers to teach them. They find their own schools dull and boring. They think that it was great fun to study in the schools of old times when all the kids in the area went there to learn the same thing by a man teacher.

( इस कहानी की रचना भविष्य काल में की गई है जब शायद आज की तरह के स्कूल और पुस्तकें उपलब्ध नहीं होंगे । आज से लगभग 150 वर्ष बाद के काल में दो विद्यार्थी एक छपी हुई पुस्तक को देखते हैं । वे बहुत हैरान हो जाते हैं । वे पुराने जमाने के स्कूल और पुस्तकों के बारे में बात

करते हैं वे उस ज़माने के स्कूलों की अपने जमाने के स्कूलों के साथ तुलना करते हैं, जोकि उनके घरों में स्थित है और उन्हें पढ़ाने वाले शिक्षक तकनीकी शिक्षक है । उन्हें अपने स्कूल भददे और नीरस लगते हैं। वे सोचते हैं कि पुराने जमाने के स्कूलों में अध्ययन करना बहुत ही रोचक होता था , जब क्षेत्र के सभी बच्चे एक मनुष्य अध्यापक से एक जैसा सबक सीखने के लिए जाते थे ।)

### **Plot/ Theme / Analysis of The Fun They Had/ Main Idea**

The story “The Fun They Had” by Isaac Asimov is about the year 2157 when every child has his own machine teacher and schools like today do not exist anymore. Asimov wrote this story in 1951 for a syndicated newspaper page. Later “The Fun They Had” was published in “Fantasy and Science Fiction” magazine.

In the year 2157, the thirteen-year-old Tommy finds an old book. He and Margie, who is eleven, find it strange that the words on paper do not move after having been read. Nowadays they only read stories on the computer screen. The book is about school centuries ago. Margie is very surprised that in the past pupils had a person as a teacher and that all children of

the same age learnt the same thing and went to a schoolhouse with other children. Margie wants to read more of the book but first, she has to learn with her machine teacher whose level is too advanced for her and she thinks the school in those days was much better than today. Ultimately the theme is to understand the importance of the present time lively school atmosphere in which we keep on finding faults over nothing.

### **Theme**

The main theme in the short story 'The Fun They Had' is that of education. More specifically, the narrative deals with the future of education which will become increasingly Computerized and estranged from social interactions.

### **Message**

The author's message is one of warning against the dangers of computerized homeschooling which deprives children of the benefits of the personal interactions between students and teachers, which help them to develop many social skills.

### **JUSTIFICATION OF THE TITLE**

The title quite suits the story, "The Fun They Had". Tommy and Margie find an old book and learn how the schools were different in the past from their time and how much fun the children studying in those school had. It also gives us a glimpse of future education.

### **Moral/ Message of the lesson – The Fun They Had**

The author's message is one of warnings against the dangers of computerized homeschooling which keeps away the children

from the benefits of the personal interactions between students and teachers, which help them develop social skills as well as many more things. So without criticising the present schooling we should understand the value of the present lively education system and enjoy it to the fullest.

## **CHARACTERS**

### **Margie**

Margie is an eleven-year-old girl who represents future students in the twenty-second century. She is a typical young girl who dislikes school which is highly personalised and includes a television and a mechanical teacher. She studies in the comfort of her home. Her homework is checked by her mechanised teacher, a computer, and she also gets lessons from it. Margie does not like her school because she is confined to a room and has to study alone at a fixed time every day.

Margie is a curious girl. When she finds a real book in Tommy's hands, she is eager to know about its contents. In fact, she

wants to read the book herself. However, she is surprised that the book describes a school of the yesteryears which had real men as teachers and classes were conducted in a special building. She is fascinated to learn that in those times the students of the same level studied together. She concludes that the old system was much better as the students had so much fun when they studied together and could help each other. It is through Margie that the author has projected a contrast between the schools of today and the schools of the future.

## **Tommy**

Tommy, a young boy of thirteen years, plays an important role in the story as he is the one who finds a book about the schools from yesteryears. The entire action of the story begins after that. He represents the students of the future era when education will be absolutely mechanised and automated.

Tommy is very curious. As soon as he discovers a real book, he starts reading it. However, he does not like the idea of printed

books which, according to him, are a waste once they have been read.

Compared to Margie, he is not as sensitive to the contents of the book. He has an air of superiority – he snubs Margie when she expresses her ignorance about old schools. But he does believe in sharing, and when Margie’s mother calls her to attend the school he assures her that they can finish the book later. Tommy has been used by the author to contrast the school education of the twentieth-century with that of the twenty-second.

### **DETAILED SUMMARY**

On the day of 17 May 2157, Tommy found a real book. He showed it to Margie. Margie was eleven years old. She had never seen a real book before. She had once heard from her grandfather about the printed books. It was a very old book. Its pages have turned yellow and crinkly. They turned its pages and read them. Tommy found it just a waste. They had no printed books. Their books flashed on the television screen.

Tommy who was of thirteen had read more books on the television screen than Margie.

Tommy told Margie that it was a book about school. Margie always hated school. Her school was situated in a room in her home. It was in the room next to her bedroom. Her Mechanical teacher flashed on her television screen at a fixed time daily except on Saturday and Sunday. She had to attend alone. This mechanical teacher asked her questions, gave her homework and checked it. It also checked the assignment test papers and awarded them.

Margie's mechanical teacher had been giving her test after test. Margie's performance had been going from worse to worst. Her mother called for the County Inspector. He set the speed of the mechanical teacher right up to the level of an average ten-year child. Tommy told Margie that hundreds and hundreds of years ago there was old kind of schools. Those schools were situated in a special building. Men teachers taught in them. All the kids in the area went there and learnt the same thing. Margie thought that it would be great fun to study in those schools. She wanted to read about those funny schools.



Just then Margie's mother called Margie to attend her school. Margie was reluctant but she had to go inside her schoolroom nonchalantly. It was right next to her bedroom. Her mechanical teacher was on and waiting for her. It asked Margie to put her homework in the proper slot. Margie did so with a sigh. the mechanical teacher was teaching her the mathematics topic of fractions but she was thinking about the schools of the old days and the fun they had.

### **DETAILED SUMMARY in Hindi**

17 मई 2157 के दिन टॉमी को वास्तविक पुस्तक मिली उसने इसे मार्गी को दिखाया । मार्गी ग्यारह वर्ष की थी । इससे पहले उसने कभी भी वास्तविक पुस्तक नहीं देखी थी । एक बार उसने दादाजी जी से वास्तविक मुद्रित (छपी) पुस्तकों के बारे में सुना था । यह एक बहुत पुरानी पुस्तक थी । इसके पन्ने पीले और सलवटों वाले हो गये थे । उन्होंने इसके पन्नों को पलटा और उन्हें पढा । टॉमी को यह बाते व्यर्थ सी लगी । उनके पास छपी हुई पुस्तकें नहीं थीं । उनकी पुस्तकें टेलीविजन के पर्दे

पर चमकती थीं टॉमी जोकि तेरह वर्ष का था मार्गी की तुलना में टेलीविजन के पर्दे पर अधिक पुस्तकें पढ़ चुका था ।

टॉमी ने मार्गी को बताया कि यह पुस्तक स्कूल के बारे में है मार्गी हमेशा से ही स्कूल से घृणा करती थी । उसका स्कूल उसके घर पर एक कमरे में स्थित था । यह उसके शयनकक्ष से अगले कमरे में स्थित था । शनिवार और रविवार के दिनों को छोड़कर उसका तकनीकी शिक्षक प्रतिदिन टेलीविजन के पर्दे पर एक निर्धारित समय पर चमकता था । उसे अकेले ही उसके सामने उपस्थित होना पड़ता था । यह तकनीकी शिक्षक उससे प्रश्न पूछता था । उसे गृहकार्य देता था और उसे चेक करता था । वह परीक्षा पत्रों को भी चेक करता था और उनके अंक देता था।

मार्गी का तकनीकी शिक्षक उसे एक के बाद एक टेस्ट देता रहता था । मार्गी का प्रदर्शन बंद से बदतर होता जा रहा था । उसकी माँ ने काउंटी इंस्पेक्टर को बुला भेजा । उसने तकनीकी शिक्षक की गति को एक औसत दस वर्ष के बच्चे के स्तर पर का दिया ।

टॉमी ने मार्गी को बताया कि सैकड़ों वर्ष पूर्व यहाँ पुरानी किस्म के स्कूल हुआ करते थे । वे स्कूल विशेष किस्म के भवनों में स्थित होते थे ।

उन स्कूलों में पुरुष अध्यापक पढाते थे । क्षेत्र के सभी बच्चे यहाँ जाते थे और एक जैसा सबक सीखते थे । मार्गी ने सोचा कि उन स्कूलों में अध्ययन करना बहुत रोचक होता होगा । यह उन रोचक स्कूलों के बारे में पढना चाहती थी ।

तभी मार्गी की माँ ने उसे स्कूल में उपस्थित होने के लिए बुला लिया । मार्गी स्कूल से उपस्थित नहीं होना चाहती थी परन्तु वह अनिच्छापूर्वक स्कूल कक्ष के अंदर चली गई । यह उसके शयनकक्ष से आगे कमरे में स्थित था । उसका तकनीकी शिक्षक कार्यरत अवस्था में था और उसकी प्रतीक्षा कर रहा था । उसने मार्गी से कहा कि यह उचित दराज में अपना गृहकार्य डाल दे । मार्गी ने एक भारी सांस के साथ ऐसा किया । तकनीकी शिक्षक उसे गणित विषय का भिन्न वाला पाठ पढा रहा था लेकिन मार्गी पुराने ज़माने के स्कूलों और उनमें होने वाली रोचकता के विषय में सोच रही थी ।

### Character Sketch

**Margie Jones:** Margie Jones is an eleven-year-old girl living in 2157. She is homeschooled by a mechanical teacher. She has a friend named Tommy. Margie has a diary in which she writes about finding a 'real book'. The event had a strong impact on her. From her conversation with Tommy about the book and school in the past, Margie comes across as naive, having little knowledge about the way school was in the past.

**Tommy:** Tommy is Margie's friend, who is older than her, being thirteen years old. He comes across smarter than the little girl because he has seen more tele-books and he has more knowledge about how the school was "centuries ago".

### **The Fun They Had Extra Questions and Answers**

**On which date did Margie make an entry in her diary about schools ?**

(A) 17 May 2156

(B) 17 May 2157

(C) 17 May 2158

(D) 17 May 2159

Ans. (B) 17 May 2157

Who found a real book ?

(A) Tommy

(B) Margie

(C) Tommy's teacher  
teacher

(D) The mechanical

Ans. Tommy

What did Margie write about in her diary ?

(A) a real school

(B) a real teacher

(C) a real book  
grandfather

(D) Tommy her

Ans. (A) a real school

Who told Margie once about real books ?

(A) her father

(B) Tommy

(C) the mechanical teacher

(D) her grandfather

Ans. (D) her grandfather

Why were the pages of the book were yellow and crinkly

(A) it was a very old book  
yellow

(B) Its colour was

(C) they were yellow because

(D) none of these

written in yellow ink .

Ans. (A) it was a very old book

How were the words in the book?

(A) moving

(B) Steady

(C) getting unprinted after reading options is right

(D) none of these

Ans. (B) steady

How old was Margie?

(A) ten years

(B) eleven years

(C) twelve years

(d) thirteen years

Ans. (B) eleven years

How old was Tommy?

(A) ten years

(B) eleven years

(C) 14, /elve years

(D) thirteen years

Ans. (D) thirteen years

Where did Tommy find the book?

(A) in the attic

(B) in the school

(C) in a shop

(D) in a library

Ans. (A) in the attic

What was Margie scornful about?

(A) the printed book

(B) the school

(C) Tommy

(D) e-mail books



Ans. (B) the school

What do you mean by a mechanical teacher?

(A) television  
teaches with instruments

(B) a teacher who

(C) a real teacher  
correct

(D) all the options are

Ans. (A) television

What was Margie's mechanical teacher giving her?

(A) tests in mathematics  
geography

(B) tests in

(C) a sound beating

(D) good marks

Ans. (B) tests in geography

Margie's mother called the County Inspector to

(A) teach Margie  
marks

(B) give her good

(C) take her to other schools (D) set the mechanical teacher  
right

Ans. (D) set the mechanical teacher right

Margie's mother shaken her head sorrowfully :

(A) at Margie's poor performance in tests (B) at the old times  
of schools

(C) at the printed books  
teacher

(D) at the mechanical

Ans. (A) at Margie's poor performance in tests

L5. Who was around little man?

(A) the County Inspector  
teacher

(B) the mechanical

(C) the real teacher

(D) Tommy

Ans. (A) the County Inspector

Why had the inspector tools and wires with him?

- (A) he was to set Margie right (B) he was to set the mechanical teacher right (C) he was to check Margie's mother (D) none of these options

Ans. (B) he was to set the mechanical teacher right

How long did it take the inspector to set the mechanical teacher right?

- (A) one hour (B) thirty minutes  
(C) two hours (D) one month

Ans. (A) one hour

Which part of the mechanical teacher did Margie hate most?

- (A) screen (B) the whole box  
(C) slot (D) none of these

Ans. (C) slot

How did Margie feed her homework in the mechanical teacher?

(A) in a punch code

(B) in written papers

(C) by speaking  
options

(D) none of these

Ans. (A) in a punch code

Margie was doing worse and worse in?

(A) Geography

(B) Maths

(C) Physics

(D) English

Ans. (A) Geography

What did Tommy and Margie mean by a regular teacher

(A) a male teacher

(B) a female teacher

(C) a good teacher  
teacher

(D) a mechanical

Ans. (D) a mechanical teacher

Select the title of the story of Tommy and Margie

(A) A Real Book.

(B) The Fun They Had

(C) The Fun with Printed Books

(D) A Printed Book

Ans. (B) The Fun They Had

## The line to Line Explanation in Hindi- The Fun They Had

### [PAGE 1]

जो कहानी हम पढ़ेंगे वह भविष्य के उस समय में लिखी गई है जब आज की तरह पुस्तकें और स्कूल अस्तित्व में नहीं होंगे। तब बच्चे पढ़ाई कैसे करेंगे ?

नीचे दिया गया चित्र आपको कुछ जानकारी प्रदान कर सकता है।

समूह बनाकर अपने विद्यालय से संबंधित तीन ऐसी चीजों के बारे में विचार विमर्श कीजिये जो आपको अच्छी लगती हैं और तीन ऐसी चीजें जिन्हें आप बदलना चाहते हैं। उन्हें लिख लीजिए।

क्या आपने टेलीविजन या कंप्यूटर की स्क्रीन (पर्दे) पर शब्दों को पढ़ा है ? क्या आप ऐसे समय की कल्पना कर सकते हैं जब सभी पुस्तकें कंप्यूटर पर उपलब्ध होंगी, और कागज पर छपी पुस्तकें नहीं होंगी ? क्या आपको ऐसी पुस्तकें अच्छी लगेंगी ?

मार्गी ने आज रात ही इसके बारे में अपनी डायरी में लिखा था । पृष्ठ शीर्षक 17 मई, 2157 पर उसने लिखा आज टॉमी को एक वास्तविक पुस्तक मिली । वह एक बहुत पुरानी पुस्तक थी । एक बार मार्गी के दादा जी ने

## [PAGE 2]

कहा था कि जब वह एक छोटे बालक थे तो उनके दादा जी उन्हें बताया करते थे कि एक समय ऐसा था जब सभी कहानियों की छपाई कागज पर होती थी ।

वे पीले पड़ चुके और सलवटों वाले पन्नों को बदल रहे थे , और उन्हें यह बहुत अधिक हास्यास्पद लग रहा है कि वे शब्द उसकी टेलीविजन की स्क्रीन से भिन्न केवल एक ही स्थान पर खड़े हुए थे । और जब वे पहले पढ़ चुके पृष्ठ को निकालते थे तो उन्हें वे शब्द बिल्कुल उसी स्थान पर मिलते थे जहाँ पर उस समय थे जहाँ उन्होंने पुस्तक को पहले पढ़ा था ।

‘छी , टॉमी ने कहा, ‘यह कितनी व्यर्थ बात है । जब आपने पुस्तक पढ़ ली है’ तो इसे फेंक दीजिए, मेरा तो यहीं मानना है ।

हमारे टेलीविजन की स्क्रीन (पर्दे) पर लाखों पुस्तकें हैं और इस पर और बहुत-सी पुस्तकें हो सकती हैं । मैं उसे नहीं फैंकूंगा । ‘मेरे टेलीविजन पर भी ऐसा ही हैं,’ मार्गी ने कहा । वह ग्यारह वर्ष की थी और उसने अभी



उतनी पुस्तकें नहीं देखी थी जितनी टॉमी ने देखी थीं। वह तेरह वर्ष का था।

उसने कहा, 'तुम्हें यह पुस्तक कहाँ से मिली ?'

'मेरे घर से।' उसने बिना ऊपर देखे इशारा किया, क्योंकि वह पढने में व्यस्त था। 'अटारी में '

यह किसके बारे में है ?'

'स्कूल के बारे में।' .

मार्गी ने तिरस्कारपूर्वक ढंग से कहा। 'स्कूल ? स्कूल के बारे में लिखने की क्या बात है हैं मुझे स्कूल से घृणा है। '

मार्गी हमेशा से ही स्कूलों से घृणा करती थी , लेकिन अब यह इसे पहले से भी अधिक नफरत करने लगी। तकनीकी शिक्षक उसे भूगोल में टेस्ट के बाद टैस्ट (परीक्षा) दे रहा था और वह बार-बार बुरा प्रदर्शन करती रही थी और उसकी माँ ने दुःख से अपना सिर हिलाया काउंटी इंस्पैक्टर को बुला भेजा।

4. वह एक लाल चेहरे वाला छोटे कद गोल-मटोल-सा व्यक्ति था और वह अपने साथ औजारों और तारों का का बक्शा लेकर आया था वह मार्गी पर मुस्कराया और उसे एक सेब दिया, तब उसने शिक्षक को खोल दिया। मार्गी को आशा थी कि उसे इसे दोबारा से जोड़ने के बारे में नहीं पता होगा, लेकिन वह इसके बारे में सब कुछ ठीक तरह से जानता था और लगभग आधे घंटे के पश्चात और एक बार फिर काफी बड़ा और काले तथा भददे रूप एक बड़ी स्कीन वाला जिस पर सभी प्रकार के पाठ दिखाए जाते थे और प्रश्न पूछे जाते थे। वह इतना बुरा नहीं था

[PAGE 3]

जिस भाग को मार्गी सबसे अधिक घ्रणा करती थी वह था 'दराज' जिसमें उसे अपना गृहकार्य और परीक्षा पुस्तिकाएँ डालनी पड़ती थी। वह उन्हें हमेशा ही एक छिद्र कोड के रूप में छः वर्ष की आयु से ही सीखती रही थी, और तकनीकी शिक्षक देर में ही अंकों की गणना का देता था।

काम समाप्त होने पश्चात इंस्पेक्टर मुस्कराया और मार्गी के सर को थपथपाया। उसने उसकी (मार्गी) की माँ को कहा, 'इसमें छोटी लड़की की गलती नहीं है, श्रीमती जोन्स। मुझे लगता है कि भूगोल वाले हिस्से की गति थोड़ी अधिक हो गयी थी। ऐसी चीजे कई बार हो जाती है। अब मैंने इसकी गति को एक औसत दस वर्ष की लड़की के स्तर पर कर दिया है

वास्तविकता यह है कि उसकी प्रगति का संपूर्ण प्रदर्शन बिल्कुल संतोषजनक था और उसने मार्गी के सिर को थपथपाया

मार्गी निराश थी । उसे आशा थी कि वह अध्यापक को अपने साथ ले जाएगा । एक बार वे टॉमी के शिक्षक को लगभग एक माह के लिए ले गए थे क्योंकि इतिहास वाला भाग एकदम से बिल्कुल साफ हो गया था । इस लिए उसने टॉमी से कहा , ‘ कोई स्कूलों के बारे क्यों लिखेगा ? ’

टॉमी ने बहुत ही विशिष्ट नजरों से उसकी ओर देखा।

‘क्योंकि यह हमारी तरह का स्कूल नहीं है, मूर्ख । यह पुरानी किस्म का स्कूल या जोकि सैकड़ों वर्ष पहले हुआ करते थे ,’

उसने विशिष्ट अंदाज में शब्दों का सावधानीपूर्वक उच्चारण करते हुए कहा, “शताब्दियों पहले’ ।

मार्गी आहत थी । 'ठीक है, मुझे नहीं मालूम कि उस समय उनके किस प्रकार के स्कूल हुआ करते थे ।' उसने उसके के ऊपर से झुककर के थोड़ी देर के लिए पुस्तक को पढा, तब बोली , ' चाहे जो भी हो, उनका भी तो शिक्षक होता था ।'

'अवश्य ही उनका शिक्षक होता था, लेकिन यह एक नियमित शिक्षक नहीं होता था । वह एक इंसान होता था ।' –

'इंसान ? इंसान शिक्षक कैसे हो सकता है ?' –

"अच्छहा वह लड़कों और लड़कियों को चीजों के बारे में बताता होगा भी उन्हें गृहकार्य देता होगा और उनसे प्रश्न पूछता होगा ।"

'एक इंसान शिक्षक इतना तीक्ष्ण बुद्धि वाला नहीं हो सकता ।'

"वह अवश्य ही हो सकता है। मैं पिता जी मेरे शिक्षक जितना ज्ञान रखते थे ।"

‘वह उस जितना जानता है, मैं शर्त लगाता हूँ।’ –

मार्गी इस विषय पर विवाद पैदा नहीं करना चाहती थी। उसने कहा यहा, ‘मैं नहीं चाहूँगी कि एक अजनबी व्यक्ति मेरे घर में मुझे पढाने आए।’

टॉमी हंसी से चिल्लाया। ‘मार्गी तुम अधिक नहीं जानती हो। अध्यापक घरों में नहीं रहते थे। उनके पास एक विशेष इमारत होती थी और सभी बच्चे वहाँ जाते थे।’

‘और सभी बच्चे एक ही बात सीखते थे?’

‘अवश्य ही, यदि वे एक ही आयु के होते।’

8. ‘लेकिन मेरी माता जी कहती हैं कि एक शिक्षक को तो प्रत्येक लड़के या लड़की, जिसको वह पढ़ाता है, के मानसिक स्तर के अनुसार समायोजित किया जाता है और प्रत्येक बच्चे को अलगअलग प्रकार से पढ़ाना पड़ता है।’

‘इस प्रकार का कार्य वे (दिदूयार्थी) उस समय नहीं करते थे ।’ यदि तुम इसे पसंद नहीं करती हो तो तुम्हें पुस्तक को पढ़ने की आवश्यकता नहीं है।

‘मैंने यह तो नहीं कहा कि मैं इसे पसंद नहीं करती हूँ,’ मार्गी ने एकदम से कहा ।

[PAGE 4]

वह उन मजाकिया स्कूलों के बोरे में पढ़ना चाहती थी ।

उन्होंने अभी आधी पुस्तक भी नहीं पढ़ी थी कि तभी मार्गी की माँ ने आबाज लगा दी , ‘मार्गी !,स्कूल !’ मार्गी ने ऊपर की ओर देखा ‘मम्मी, अभी नहीं ।’

‘अभी ! श्रीमती जोन्स ने कहा । ‘और शायद टॉमी का भी समय हो गया होगा ।

मार्गी ने टॉमी से कहा “क्या स्कूल के पश्चात मैं पुस्तक को तुम्हारे साथ कुछ और समय के

पढ़ सकती हूँ ?’

‘शायद’, उसने लापरवाहीपूर्ण ढंग से कहा । यह सीटी बजाता हुआ चला गया, धूल भरी पुरानी पुस्तक उसकी बाजू के नीचे दबी हुई थी ।

मार्गी स्कूल के कमरे के चली गई । यह कमरा उसके शयनकक्ष से अगले वाला था और तकनीकी शिक्षक कार्यरत अवस्था में था और उसकी प्रतीक्षा कर रहा था । वह शनिवार और रविवार को छोड़कर प्रत्येक दिन उस समय चालू (कार्यरत) अवस्था में होता था , क्योंकि उसकी माँ कहती थी कि यही छोटी लड़की नियमित समय पर सीखती हैं तो वैसे अच्छे से सीख जाती है ।

स्कीन प्रकाशित हुई , और उसने कहा , आज का अंकगणित का सबक सही भिन्नों का योग करने के बारे में है । कृपया कल का गृहकार्य उचित दराज में डाल दो ।’

मार्गी ने एक आह के साथ ऐसा किया। वह पुराने ज़माने के उन स्कूलों के बारे में सोच रही थी जब उसके दादा के दादा एक छोटे बच्चे थे। पुरे पड़ोस के सरे बच्चे आते थे, स्कूल के प्रांगण में हँसते और चिल्लाते रहते थे, कक्षा के कमरे में इकट्ठे बैठते थे और (छुट्टी के पश्चात सभी) शाम के समय इकट्ठे ही घर जाया करते थे। वे एक जैसा सबक सीखते थे, इसलिए गृह कार्य के बारे में एक दूसरे की मदद कर सकते थे और आपस में गृहकार्य के बारे में बातें कर सकते थे।

और शिक्षक इंसान होते थे .....

तकनीकी शिक्षक स्क्रीन पर चमक रहा था : जब हम भिन्नों  $1/2$  और  $1/4$  को जोड़ते हैं तो -'

मार्गी इस विषय में सोच रही थी कि पुराने दिनों में बच्चे उस स्कूल को कितना पसंद करते थे। वह उस मजाक के बारे में सोच रही थी जो वे किया करते थे।

**Read the extracts and answer the questions that follow.**

**EXTRACT**



Margie even wrote about it that night in her diary. On the page headed 17 May 2157, she wrote, 'Today Tommy found a real book!' It was a very old book. Margie's grandfather once said that when he was a little boy his grandfather told him that there was a time when all stories were printed on paper. They turned the pages, which were yellow and crinkly, and it was awfully funny to read words that stood still instead of moving the way they were supposed to — on a screen, you know. And then when they turned back to the page before, it had the same words on it that it had had when they read it the first time.

### **Questions :**

**(i) What did Margie write in her diary?**

Answers : On the page headed 17 May 2157, Margie wrote, 'Today Tommy found a real book!'

**(ii) Had Margie ever seen a book before?**

Answers : No, Margie had never seen a book before.

**(iii) 'They' turned the pages. Who does 'They' refer to?**

Answers : They are Margie and Tommy.

**(iv) What was funny about the book?**

Answers : The words in the book stand still instead of moving.

**(v) Why had the pages of the book turned yellow and crinkly?**

Answers : The pages of the book had turned yellow and crinkly because it was very old.

## EXTRACT

'Gee,' said Tommy. 'What a waste. When you're through with the book. you just throw it away. I guess. Our television screen must have had a million books on it and it's good for plenty more. I wouldn't throw it away.' 'Same with mine,' said Margie. She was eleven and hadn't seen as many telebooks as Tommy had. He was thirteen. She said, 'Where did you find it?' 'In my house.' He pointed without looking because he was busy reading. 'In the attic.' 'What's it about?' 'School.

### ' Questions :

**(I) What is a waste for Tommy?**

Answers : Printing books on paper is a waste for Tommy.

**(ii) What sort of books did Margie and Tommy have in their schools?**

Answers : They have moving books on their television screen.

**(iii) How old were Margie and Tommy?**

Answers : Margie was eleven and Tommy was thirteen years old

**(iv) Where did Tommy find the book?**

Answers : Tommy found the book in his house in the attic.

**(v) What was that book about?**

Answers : It was about 'School'.

### **EXTRACT**

Margie was scornful. 'School? What's there to write about school? I hate school.' Margie always hated school, but now she hated it more than ever. The mechanical teacher had been giving her test after test in geography and she had been doing worse and worse until her mother had shaken her head sorrowfully and sent for the County Inspector.

**Questions :**

**(i) Name the writer of the story 'The Fun They Had'.**

Answers :Issac Asimov.

**(ii) What was Margie's opinion about school?**

Answers :Margie hated school.

**(iii) What had been doing her mechanical teacher?**

Answers :Her mechanical teacher had been giving her test after test in geography.

**(iv) What were Margie's responses?**

Answers :Margie's responses were very poor.

**(v) Why was the County Inspector sent for?**

Answers :The County Inspector was sent to check the mechanical teacher.

**EXTRACT**

He was around the little man with a red face and a whole box of tools with dials and wires. He smiled at Margie and gave her an apple, then took the teacher apart. Margie had hoped he wouldn't know how to put it together again, but he knew how all right, and, after an hour or so, there it was again, large and black and ugly, with a big screen on which all the lessons were shown and the questions were asked. That wasn't so bad. The part Margie hated most was the slot where she had to put homework and test papers. She always had to write them out in a punch code they made her learn when she was six years old, and the mechanical teacher calculated the mark in no time.

### **Questions :**

#### **Who was around little man?**

Answers :The County Inspector was a round little man.

#### **What did he do to the teacher?**

Answers :He took the mechanical teacher into pieces.

### **What had Margie hoped?**

Answers :Margie had hoped that the County Inspector would not know how to put it together

### **Which part of the mechanical teacher did she hate most and why?**

Answers :She hated the slot most because she had to put her homework and test papers in it.

### **(v) How did she write her test papers?**

Answers :She wrote her test papers in a punch code.

**EXTRACT**

The Inspector had smiled after he was finished and patted Margie's head. He said to her mother, 'It's not the little girl's fault, Mrs Jones. I think the geography sector was geared a little too quick. Those things happen sometimes. I've slowed it up to an average ten-year level. Actually, the overall pattern of her progress is quite satisfactory.' And he patted Margie's head again.

Margie was disappointed. She had been hoping they would take the teacher away altogether. They had once taken Tommy's teacher away for nearly a month because the history sector had blanked out completely. So she said to Tommy, 'Why would anyone write about school?'

### **Questions :**

**(i) 'The Inspector smiled after he was finished'. What was finished?**

Answers :He had reassembled the mechanical teacher all right.



**(ii) What was the problem with the mechanical teacher?**

Answers :Its geography sector was geared a little too quick.

**(iii) At what level did the Inspector set it?**

Answers :He set it up to an average ten-year child level.

**(iv) The mechanical teacher was set right but Margie was disappointed, why?**

Answers :She had hoped that she would get a long vacation until her mechanical teacher was repaired.

**(v) What trouble had been there once with Tommy's teacher?**

Answers :Its history sector had completely blanked out.

## EXTRACT

'Maybe' he said nonchalantly. He walked away whistling, the dusty old book tucked beneath his arm. Margie went into the schoolroom. It was right next to her bedroom, and the mechanical teacher was on and waiting for her. It was always on at the same time every day except Saturday and Sunday because her mother said little girls learned better if they learned at regular hours. The screen was lit up, and it said: 'Today's arithmetic lesson is on the addition of proper fractions. Please insert yesterday's homework in the proper slot.'

### Questions :

(i) 'Maybe', he said nonchalantly. Who does 'he' refer to?

Answers : 'He' refers to Tommy.

**(ii) Where was Margie's school situated?**

Answers :In her house in the room next to her bedroom.

**(iii) What was the routine of Margie's mechanical teacher?**

Answers :It flashed at the right time daily except on Saturday and Sunday.

**(iv) What topic was Margie going to learn that day?**

Answers :She was going to learn the addition of proper fractions.

**(v) Find a word from the passage which has the meaning same as 'showing not any interest'.**

Answers :Nonchalantly.

## **EXTRACT**

Margie's grandfather once said that when he was a little boy his grandfather told him that there was a time when all stories were printed on paper. They turned the pages, which were yellow and crinkly, and it was awfully funny to read words that stood still instead of moving the way they were supposed to—on a screen, you know.

### **Questions**

**(i) What did great grandfather tell about stories?**

Answers :The great grandfather told that there was a time when stories were printed on paper.

**(ii) How were the pages of a real book?**

Answers :The pages of the real book were yellow and crinkly.

**(iii) Why were the words funny?**

Answers :The words were funny because they were stood still.

**(iv) What did Margie think about the words?**

Answers :Margie thought that the words were supposed to move on a screen.

**EXTRACT**

Margie always hated school, but now she hated it more than ever. The mechanical teacher had been giving her test after test in geography and she had been doing worse and worse until her mother had shaken her head sorrowfully **and sent for the County Inspector.**

## Questions

**(i) Who was Margie?**

Answers :Margie was a girl of eleven years.

**(ii) Who was the County Inspector?**

Answers :He was a computer mechanic.

**(iii) How did Margie perform in geography?**

Answers :In geography, her performance was worse.

**(iv) Why was the Country Inspector called for?**

Answers :The Country Inspector has called for the repairment of her mechanical teacher who was not functioning properly.

## EXTRACT

**He was around the little man with a red face and a whole box of tools with dials and wires. He smiled at Margie and gave**

**her an apple, then took the teacher apart. Margie had hoped he wouldn't know how to put it together again,**

## **Questions**

(i) Who is 'he' here?

(ii) Why did the man have a box of tools?

(iii) Why did he take the teacher apart?

(iv) What was Margie's hope?

## Answers

(i) 'He' is the Country Inspector here.

(ii) The man had a box of tools because he was a computer mechanic who repaired dysfunctions of mechanical teachers.

(iii) He took the teacher apart for repairing it.

(iv) Margie hoped that the mechanic would not know who to put the teacher together again.

The Inspector had smiled after he was finished and patted Margie's head. He said to her mother, "It's not the little girl's fault, Mrs Jones. I think the geography sector was geared a little too quick".

## Questions

(i) Why did the Inspector pat Margie's head?

(ii) Who was Mrs Jones?



(iii) What did the Inspector say to Mrs Jones?

(iv) Why did Margie not do good in geography?

### Answers

(i) Inspector patted Margie's head to cheer her up because her performance was not as bad in geography as it was considered by her teacher.

(ii) Mrs Jones was Margie's mother.

(iii) The Inspector said to Mrs Jones that it was not Margie's fault that she could not do good in geography.

(iv) Margie did not do good in geography because the geography sector of the mechanical teacher has geared a little too quick.

Margie was hurt, “Well, I don’t know what kind of school they had all that time ago”. She read the book over his shoulder for a while, then said, “Anyway, they had a teacher”.

### Questions

(i) Why was Margie hurt?

(ii) Which book did she read for some time?

(iii) When was the school in the old book in existence?

(iv) What was Margie sure about?

### Answers

(i) Margie was hurt because Tommy called her stupid.

(ii) She read the old book that Tommy found for some time.

(iii) It was in existence centuries before.

(iv) Margie was sure about the teacher that the children had in school centuries ago.

Margie wasn't prepared to dispute that. She said, "I wouldn't want a strange man in my house to teach me."

Tommy screamed with laughter. "You don't know much, Margie. The teachers didn't live in the house. They had a special building and all the kids went there."

"And all the kids learned the same thing?"

"Sure, if they were the same age."

## Questions

(i) What was the dispute?

(ii) According to Tommy, where do teachers live?

(iii) What did the kids learn in old school?

(iv) What can be said about the old school?

## Answers

(i) The dispute was about the teacher of the old school.

(ii) They live in a special building.

(iii) In the old school, all the kids learnt the same thing.

(iv) The old school was a special building and all the kids went there.

“But my mother says a teacher has to be adjusted to fit the mind of each boy and girl it teaches and that each kid has to be taught differently.”

“Just the same they didn’t do it that way then. If you don’t like it, you don’t have to read the book.”

Questions

(i) Why should a teacher be adjusted?

(ii) Who said it and to whom?

(iii) How should each kid be taught?

(iv) Who does 'they' refer to here?

### Answers

(i) A teacher should be adjusted to fit the mind of each boy and girl.

(ii) Tommy's mother said to Tommy.

(iii) Each kid should be taught differently as per his/her level of understanding.

(iv) Here 'they' refers to 'men as teachers' in the past schools.

Margie went into the schoolroom. It was right next to her bedroom, and the mechanical teacher was on and waiting for her. It was always on at the same time every day except Saturday and Sunday because her mother said little girls learned better if they learned at regular hours.

The screen was lit up, and it said: "Today's arithmetic lesson is on the addition of proper fractions. Please insert yesterday's homework in the proper slot."

## Questions

(i) Who was waiting for Margie in her schoolroom?

(ii) What did Margie's mother say about little girls?

(iii) What was the mechanical teacher famous for?

(iv) What did Margie learn that day?

## Answers

(i) Margie's mechanical teacher was waiting for her in the schoolroom.

(ii) Margie's mother said that little girls learned better if they learned at regular hours.

(iii) He was always punctual.

(iv) That day, there was an arithmetic lesson in which she learnt the addition of proper fractions.

She was thinking about the old schools they had when her grandfather's grandfather was a little boy. All the kids from the whole neighbourhood came, laughing and shouting in the



schoolyard, sitting together in the schoolroom, going home together at the end of the day.

## Questions

(i) Who is 'she' here?

(ii) Where did her grandfather's grandfather read?

(iii) Where did the kids in the old school read?

(iv) What similarity do you find in the kids of old school?

## Answers

(i) 'She' is Margie here.

(ii) He read in the old school.

(iii) They read in the schoolroom.

(iv) All the kids learned the same lesson and helped one another with homework.

All the kids from the whole neighbourhood came, laughing and shouting in the schoolyard, sitting together in the schoolroom, going home together at the end of the day. They learned the same things, so they could help one another with the homework and talk about it.

And the teachers were people...

## Questions

(i) What kind of school Margie's great grandfather read in?

(ii) What kind of teachers taught in the old school?

(iii) Why were the kids given the same homework in the old school?

(iv) How did the kids of the old school have a great sense of cooperation?

### Answers

(i) He read in the old school.

(ii) The teachers were people and taught in the old school.

(iii) In the old school, the kids were given the same homework because they learned the same thing in the old school.

(iv) The kids of the old school had a great sense of cooperation as they sat together, learned the same thing and helped one another with homework.

### **Main Characters of the Story- The Fun They Had**

The most important character in the short story “The Fun They Had” by Isaac Asimov is Margie. She is the main character whose perspective has been followed by the narrator. Secondary characters are Tommy, Mrs Jones and the County Inspector.

### **character sketch**

#### **Margie Jones**

Margie Jones is an eleven-year-old girl living in 2155. Except for this information, nothing much is revealed about the girl’s outer characterization. We also know that she is homeschooled by a mechanical teacher and that she has a friend named Tommy. Margie’s inner characterization is revealed through her

actions and her attitude towards school in her time and the past. The fact that Margie has a diary in which she writes about finding a 'real book' indicates the event had a strong impact on her. From her conversation with Tommy about the book and school in the past, Margie comes across as naive, having little knowledge about the way school was in the past, and very mistrustful.

### **character sketch of Tommy**

#### **Tommy**

Tommy is Margie's friend, who is older than her, being thirteen years old. He comes across as smarter than the little girl because he has seen more telebooks and because he has more knowledge about how school was "centuries ago".

### ***Extra Very Short Answer Type Important Questions***

**On what date did Margie make an entry in her diary about the real book?**

Ans. She did so on 17 May 2157.

**What did Tommy find?**

Ans. He found a real book.

**How old was Margie?**

Ans. She was eleven years old.

**How old was Tommy?**

Ans. He was thirteen years old.

**What was the real book, that Tommy found, about?**

Ans. It was about 'School'.

**What did Margie hate?**

Ans. She hated school.

### **What had the mechanical teacher been giving to Margie?**

Ans. The mechanical teacher had been giving test after test to Margie in geography.

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

Ans. She sent for the County Inspector because Margie had been doing worse and worse in her geography tests.

### **Why did Margie hate slot most?**

Ans. Margie hated slot most because she had to put homework and test papers in it.

**What was wrong with the geography sector of Margie's mechanical teacher?**

Ans. The geography sector of Margie's mechanical teacher was geared a little too quick.

**What do you mean by a regular teacher?**

Ans. It means the mechanical teacher that appears on the television screen at the fixed time.

**. What is the name of Margie's mother?**

Ans. Her name is Mrs Jones.



**On which two days there came no mechanical teacher on the TN. screen?**

Ans. On Saturday and Sunday.

**What subject did Tommy learn?**

Ans. He learnt history.

**Name the writer of the lesson 'The Fun They Had'.**

Ans. Isaac Asimov.

### **SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS**

**Q. Who are Tommy and Margie? How old are they?**

Ans. Tommy and Margie are students from the year 2157. They are neighbours and spend time together like children of their age usually do. Tommy is a thirteen-year-old boy and Margie is an eleven-year-old girl.

**Q. What did Margie write in her diary?**

Ans. On 17 May 2157 Margie recorded in her diary the discovery of a real book by Tommy. It was a very old paper book with yellow and crinkly pages.

**Q. Where did Tommy find the book and in what condition?**

**Or**

**Describe the book that Tommy had found in the attic.**

Ans. Tommy found a real book in the attic of his house. The pages had turned yellow and crinkly because it was at least two hundred years old. Moreover, it was all covered with dust as it had been lying in the attic for ages.

**Q. Had Margie ever seen a book before?**

Ans.No, Margie had never seen a book before till she saw the one that Tommy had found in the attic of his house. She had only heard about books from her grandfather who himself had not seen any. He too had heard about a printed book from his own grandfather.

**Q. Did Margie like the printed book? Why/Why not?**

Ans. Margie was so excited to know that Tommy had found a 'real' book which was unlike the on-screen books the two were used to reading, that she recorded the discovery in her diary. As she turned the yellow and crinkly pages of the book with Tommy, she found it awfully funny to read it. While Tommy found it a waste, Margie was fascinated by it and liked it.

### **Q6. What things about the book did Margie find strange?**

Ans. Margie lived in an era of mechanical education with telebooks stored in a machine. So she found it strange that the words in the printed book remained fixed unlike the moving ones on her television screen.

### **Q. “What a waste!” What is Tommy referring to as a ‘waste’? Is it really a waste?**

Ans. Tommy thinks that the paper books with words printed and fixed on them are a waste. Once a book is read, it becomes useless and must be thrown away because it has the same content. Actually, printed books are not a waste. They can be read by many people over and over again and should be preserved for future generations.

### **Q. What do you think a telebook is?**

Ans. A telebook is a compact book in an electronic form. It is stored in a computer and can be read by scrolling its pages up, down or sideways on a screen.

**Q. How does Tommy find the telebooks of his own time to be better?**

Ans. Tommy felt that his telebooks were better than the printed books of the ancient times because they could be stored on television and read again and again. They occupied very little space as compared to the printed books and need not be discarded once they had been read.

**Q10. Where was Margie's school? Did she have any classmates?**

Ans. Margie's school was inside the comfort of her house. It was just next to her bedroom. It was a customised school, set

up exclusively for her according to her level and needs. No, she did not have any classmates.

**Q. Why had Margie started hating her school?**

Ans. Margie never liked school. But recently her hatred had increased because of her poor performance in geography tests. Her mechanical teacher gave her one test after another and her performance went on becoming worse and worse.

**Q. Which part of her school did Margie hate the most?**

**Or**

**What did Margie hate the most about her school?**

Ans. The part that Margie hated most was the slot where she had to put homework and test papers. She always had to write

them in a punch code that she was made to learn at the tender age of six. Besides, the mechanical teacher calculated her marks in no time which left no scope for Margie to relax after submitting the assigned tasks.

**Q13. What subjects did Tommy and Margie learn?**

Ans. Tommy and Margie learnt a lot of subjects like History, Geography and Mathematics.

**Q14. What kind of teachers did Margie and Tommy have?**

Ans. Margie and Tommy had mechanical teachers. They were not real persons but televisions which had different subject sectors. These teachers were customised to the level of a student. In case of malfunction, they were disbanded and repaired.

**Q. Why did Margie's mother send for the County Inspector?  
(Textual) Or**

**Why did Margie's mother shook her head one day and send for the County Inspector?**

Ans. Margie's mother sent for the County Inspector because Margie had been performing poorly in Geography. The repeated fall in her daughter's performance disappointed her. So, she decided to call a specialist, the County Inspector, who could locate the problem and correct it.

**Q. What views did Margie's mother have about teachers and learning?**

Ans. Margie's mother was very particular about her child's education and made sure that Margie attended her tele-school regularly and studied properly and punctually. She believed that a tele-teacher had to be adjusted to the mind of each



student and that each student had to be taught differently. Whenever she noticed a snag in Margie's tele-teacher, she sent for the County Inspector to get the snag removed so that Margie did not miss Out of her school and learning.

**Q. What was the County Inspector trained to do?**

Ans. The County Inspector worked as a technical expert. He was trained to identify and rectify errors in the functioning of the system installed in the mechanical teachers.

**Q. What idea do you form of the County Inspector as a person?**

Ans. The County Inspector was certainly a kind-hearted man. Instead of finding fault with Margie, he gave her an apple and told her mother that if Margie was not performing well, it was not her fault, but the fault of the mechanical teacher. He aligned the speed of the geography sector keeping in mind the level of the girl. Before leaving, he patted Margie on the head and expressed satisfaction at her performance.

**Q19. Why was Margie doing badly in geography? What did the County Inspector do to help her?**

Ans. Margie was doing badly because the speed of the geography sector had been fixed too fast for her level. The County Inspector slowed down the speed to suit the level of an average ten-year-old. As Margie was of eleven years, she was comfortable with the new level set by the County Inspector.

**Q. “Margie was disappointed,” says the author. Why was she disappointed?**

**Or**

**How did the County Inspector disappoint Margie?**

Ans. Margie was disappointed because she hated school and hoped that her mechanical teacher would be taken away for repairs as Tommy’s teacher was once taken away for a month. But when the County Inspector promptly repaired and reset it at her home itself, she was unhappy.

**Q. What had once happened to Tommy's teacher?**

Ans. Once, Tommy's mechanical teacher had developed a fault and its history sector had blanked out absolutely. The teacher had to be taken away for repairs and it had taken a month to put it in order.

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

Ans. Yes, Margie had regular days and hours for school. She studied from Monday to Friday at the same time every day. Although her school was a large black television screen installed in her own house, she had to attend it regularly. Her mother thought that young girls learnt things better if they studied them at regular hours.

**Q. How does Tommy describe the old kind of school?**

Ans. Tommy describes the old school as a special building where all the children went to study together. The students of the same age-group learnt the same things which were taught by human teachers.

**Q. How does Tommy describe the old kind of teachers?**

Ans. Tommy tells Margie that the teachers in olden times were not mechanical but real men. They taught various things to boys and girls, gave them homework and also asked them questions. The teachers went to a special building called the school where they taught the children in the classrooms.

**Q. How did Margie react when Tommy told her that twentieth-century schools had human teachers?**

**Or**

### **Why did Margie remark, “How could a man be a teacher”?**

Ans. Margie made this remark when she heard Tommy mention that children were taught by human teachers in the times gone by. She could not believe the truth of Tommy’s comment because she had not seen any human teacher; she was used to studying with the help of her mechanical tele-teacher only. Moreover, she believed that a human teacher could not match the mechanical teacher in intelligence and knowledge.

### **Q. Who interrupts Margie and Tommy’s conversation? Why?**

Ans. Margie and Tommy were lost in unravelling the exciting mystery of the ‘real’ book that the latter had found in his attic, when Margie’s mother interrupted them saying “Margie! School!” and she even suggested to Tommy that it was time for him to attend school, too.

**Q. When Margie went to her school, what did the teacher on the screen teach?**

Ans. When Margie went to her school, which was a room next to her bedroom, the mechanical teacher taught an arithmetic lesson on the addition of proper fractions. It taught her how to add the fractions  $\frac{1}{2}$  and  $\frac{1}{4}$ .

**Q. Why couldn't Margie concentrate on the Arithmetic lesson?**

Ans. Margie could not concentrate on the arithmetic lesson because her mind was pre-occupied with the thoughts about the school that Tommy had just described her. She was awestruck to learn that children studied together and were taught by real persons in these old schools. She thought how much fun those students must have had while studying together.

**Q. Why did Margie think that children must have loved to go to school when her grandfather's grandfather was a little boy?**

**Or**

**Why did Margie feel that children in old times had fun while studying in school?**

**Or**

**why does Margie feel that learning was fun in the schools of the past?**

Ans. Margie attends a tele-school, which is just a machine in the room next to her bedroom and she studies alone unlike students of the schools in the bygone times. She feels that

learning was more fun in those days because hundreds of children had the opportunity of congregating and studying together with the help of human teachers and printed books. Schools were huge buildings where a lot of activities could be carried out by students in groups. Compared to that, her present school is much too mechanical, boring, monotonous and demanding, and she hates it.

**Q. What was Tommy's opinion about the 'real book'?**

Ans. Tommy found the 'real book' a waste as once read you, just throw it away. It did not seem interesting and useful. The words were fixed on it and not any other thing can be printed on it.

**Q. How does Tommy describe the old kind of teachers?**

Ans. 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 human beings.



**Q. Who was the Country Inspector? What was his work?**

Ans. The country Inspector was the man who repaired the mechanical teacher. He adjusted the level of the teacher as per the child's requirements and intelligence.

**Q. Why was Margie doing worse in geography? What did the County Inspector do to help her?**

Ans. Margie had been doing worse in geography because the mechanical teacher was very fast in displaying the questionnaire. The County Inspector adjusted its speed up to 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.

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

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

**Q. Why did Tommy pronounce the word 'centuries ago' carefully?**

Ans. Tommy pronounced the word carefully because he wanted to lay stress on the fact that the school was very old and it was quite different from theirs.

**Q. What had once happened to Tommy's teacher?**

Ans. Once Tommy's teacher was taken away for about a month because the history sector had blanked out completely.

**Q. What is the 'slot'? Why does Margie hate it?**

Ans. 'Slot' was a space in the mechanical teacher where each student is to put his homework and test assignments for marking. Margie hates it the most because she has to work hard to punch code for answering homework.

**Q. Evaluate 'The Fun They Had' as a futuristic story.**

Ans. 'The Fun They Had' is a futuristic story. It tells us about the revolutionary changes that will come in the field of education in the 22nd century. Technology will replace the concept of old schools and printed books. Margie and Tommy are the students of the year 2157. They are taught in their bedrooms serving as virtual classrooms. A mechanical teacher will replace a human teacher. Computers and e-books will replace old printed books.

**Q. How will the e-books be different from the old books that existed centuries ago?**

Ans. The very concept of 'the books' will change in the 22nd century. The e-books will replace old books. The books will not be printed on papers. The words will move on a TV/computer screen. The television screen may have more than a million

books on it.

**What did Margie's mother think about the teacher' and 'the school'?**

Ans. Margie's mother thought that every child had a different intelligence and capacity to understand things. The mechanical teacher should be adjusted to fit the mind of each boy and girl it taught. Each kid had to be taught differently. She thought that little girls and boys would learn better if they learned at regular hours at the 'school'.

**Q. Describe the characteristics of the old school? How did it influence Margie?**

Ans. The old school had several characteristics — the children went to a big building. The man worked as a teacher and taught the boys and girls. The teacher gave them homework. He also asked them questions. They sat together and studied the same subject. In the old school, children studied and played together.

It was quite opposite to the school that has been talked about in the chapter. Margie was very much influenced by the old school. In her class, she was busy thinking about the fun the children had at that time.

**Q. Will future schools be completely devoid of humans and human values? Give a reasoned answer.**

Ans. Certainly, a revolutionary change will come in the field of education in future. The mechanical teachers and tele-books will dominate the scene. Every student will be taught by the mechanical teacher according to his or her ability. However, the institution of schools will remain in one form or the other. Human teachers will not disappear altogether. Education will never be completely devoid of humans and human values.

**Q. Why did Tommy and Margie think the old book a wastage of resources?**

Ans. Because they found the words in the old book not moving. The pages had turned yellow and crinkly. Moreover, the old book could not last long.

**Q. What difference did Margie's mother find in the old school?**

Ans. Margie's mother was of the opinion that children should be taught according to their individual needs. But in the old school, the children of the same age group studied the same things

### **Important Long Answer Type Questions**

**Q. Suppose you are Margie. Write a diary entry dated 17th May 2157 about Tommy's real book that he found in his attic.**

Ans.

Tuesday,

17th May 2157

10.00 p.m.

Dear Diary

It has been a wonderful day for me as I have seen a real, hard-bound printed paper book. In fact, Tommy found the book in the attic of his house when he was cleaning the cupboard of his grandfather. It consists of about 200 pages which have become yellow and crinkly with time. It is a strange experience to read the words fixed on its papers unlike the ones in my telebooks that keep moving as I scroll.

When I turn the page, I find the same words again. The book is about a school from olden times, about two centuries ago. Can you believe that in those times a school was not a room in one's own house but a special building dedicated to the purpose of teaching and learning! The students of the same level studied the same things sitting together in the same classroom. It is really wonderful to think that the teachers were men and not machines. I really believe that it must have been great fun for children to go to such schools together, laughing, joking, playing, and teasing each other. How wonderful it must have been that the students helped each other with lessons as well! I wish I could travel back in time and study in one of those schools.

Margie

**Q. Describe the characteristics of old schools. How did they arouse so much interest in Margie and Tommy?**

Ans. The good old students reflected the charm and romance of their times. Every school had its own buildings. Students from different parts of the town went there for studies. All the students in a class were taught the same things. They received



the same kinds of homework. Hence, students could help one another. The teachers were real human beings. The books were printed on papers.

There was an air of romance about the old schools. Margie's interest was around about them. She got the relevant information about them from Tommy. In comparison to her mechanical teacher and her 'school', the old schools charmed Margie. She was fascinated by the way children went to their schools. They studied together. They were taught the same things. It was easier for them to help one another. Margie was rather envious of the fun the children had in old schools.

**Q. Can you imagine a school without teachers and books? Give your opinion on the basis of the lesson 'The Fun They Had'.**

Ans. No one can deny the role of modern technologies in our lives and in our studies. Nowadays education is changing but schools without teachers and without books are beyond

imagination. Without teachers, teaching would not be good because no one would be there to explain and to teach as well. No student would like the environment, it would be like an office. Teachers are very important for education. Teachers not only teach us different subjects but they also teach us to live in discipline and to live together. Teachers resolve the student's problem and doubt and if they aren't in schools the students don't study enough. As in the lesson Margie does not like her school, she finds it tedious as she does not have the opportunity to be with other students and to do every work together. Modern technologies can be taken as an aid to improve the standard of studies but the schools without books and teachers will never be preferred.

**Q. What is the role of a teacher in the life of a student? How is a human teacher better than a mechanical teacher?**

Ans. Teachers play a very important role in the life of a student. They not only provide bookish knowledge but also inspire their student to live a meaningful and successful life. They burn themselves like a candle throughout their lives to remove the darkness and ignorance from their student's life. This can be done by a human teacher only. A mechanical teacher can provide ample knowledge on various subjects but he/she can

not boost up their student to do something distinguished. There is a single mechanical teacher having various sectors geared up according to the level of the child. There is no companion, no playground and no fun at all. The teaching is mechanical and monotonous. Thus the human teachers are better than the mechanical teachers in many ways. They know individually intellect of their students which help them to guide them individually according to the mental level of students.

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

Ans. Margie hated school because she had a mechanical teacher. It was at her house. She was supposed to sit in that room alone to complete her home task or assignments. The part Margie hated the 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, going home together at the end of the day. They learned the same things so that they could help one another with homework and talk about it. All the teacher were people.

Children needed a company to enhance their skills. If they are isolated, they get depressed and dejected.

**Q. The old schools are considered fun by the modern generation. Explain.**

Ans. The ancient schools consisted of Gurukuls in which the students stayed in the building with the guru. Then with the change of time Gurukuls changed into schools. Hence the teacher and the student have a formal relationship. In these schools, teachers are human beings and books are real ones made of paper. Now with times, the modern generation's school replaced by e-text and computers. The future generation would envy when they come to know about the old system of education in which all the kids went to school together. They studied together, played together. They could have better innovative minds as they got a chance to discuss things with each other. The old system of education in which 'man' as a teacher could influence his students by the charisma of his personality. Future generation would utter what fun the schools were long ago.

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

Ans. There is no doubt that today's schools have more fun than the 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 are given training in leadership, sports, politics and science. They learn how to adapt themselves to the new surroundings and cope with strangers. The students sit and learn together forgetting their caste, colour and creed. These activities don't give vent to the feelings of depression, alienation and segregation.

**Q. Will the existing schools and teachers become totally irrelevant in future 'school'? Give a reasoned answer.**

Ans. Naturally, schools that existed centuries ago will not be the same in the coming centuries. The system of education will be highly computerised and mechanical. The 'school' will have no separate building. Nor will they be taught the same thing

together. The mechanical teacher will be a big TV screen, good for a million books. The mechanical teacher will be adjusted according to the age and capacity of the student. But it will be an exaggeration to say that everything about the old schools will disappear. Even the future schools can't be completely devoid of the human angle. Perhaps the institution of the old schools and teachers will remain. Human involvement can't disappear altogether.

## **PRACTICE (UNSOLVED)**

### **EXTRACT**

Tommy looked at her with very superior eyes. 'Because it's not our kind of school, stupid. This is the old kind of school that they had hundreds and hundreds of years ago.' He added loftily, pronouncing the word carefully, 'Centuries ago.' Margie was hurt. 'Well, I don't know what kind of school they had all that time ago.' She read the book over his shoulder for a while, then said, 'Anyway, they had a teacher.' 'Sure they had a teacher, but it wasn't a regular teacher. It was a man.' 'A man? How could a man be a teacher?' 'Well, he just told the boys and

girls things and gave them homework and asked them questions.'

Questions :

(i) Name the lesson and its author.

(ii) 'Tommy looked at her with very superior eyes.' Who does 'her' refer to?

(iii) Which schools were Tommy talking about?

(iv) 'But it wasn't a regular teacher. It was a man.' With reference to this lesson tell who was a regular teacher.

(v) 'A man? How could a man be a teacher ?' Who said this?

**EXTRACT**

Margie did so with a sigh. She was thinking about the old schools they had when her grandfather's grandfather was a little boy. All the kids from the whole neighbourhood came, laughing and shouting in the schoolyard, sitting together in the schoolroom, going home together at the end of the day. They learned the same things, so they could help one another on the homework and talk about it. And the teachers were people. The mechanical teacher was flashing on the screen: 'When we add fractions 'A and 'A -' Margie was thinking about how the kids must have loved it in the old days. She was thinking about the fun they had.

Questions :

'Margie did so with a sigh.' What did Margie do with a sigh?

What was a special feature of the schools in the old times?

(iii) What was the feature of learning in the schools of old times?

(iv) What topic was the mechanical teacher teaching her?

(v) What was Margie thinking about