

CLASS NOTES

Class: IX

Topic: THE FUN THEY HAD

Subject: ENGLISH

TEXTUAL QUESTIONS:-

1. How old are Margie and Tommy?
2. What did Margie write in her diary?
3. Had Margie ever seen a book before?
4. What things about the book did she find strange?
5. What do you think a telebook is?
6. Where was Margie's school? Did she have any classmates?
7. What subjects did Margie and Tommy learn?

Answer:

1. Margie is eleven year old and Tommy is thirteen year old.
2. Margie wrote, "Today Tommy found a real book!".
3. No, Margie had never seen a book before.
4. Margie found it strange that the book had yellow and wrinkled pages. Words in the book were still and did not move the way they were supposed to on a screen.
5. A book that can be displayed on a screen is called a telebook.
6. Margie's school was in her home itself, right next to her bedroom. No, she did not have any classmates.
7. Margie and Tommy learned geography, history and arithmetic.

SAQ

TEXTUAL QUESTIONS:-

1. What kind of teachers did Margie and Tommy have?
A. Margie and Tommy had mechanical teachers. They were computers which had preloaded lessons on different subjects according to the learner's level. Whenever they malfunctioned, they were opened and repaired.
2. Why did Margie's mother send her for the County Inspector?
A. Margie's mother called the County Inspector to check Margie's teacher. She thought that probably, Margie's teacher had a malfunction. Margie was failing the Geography tests repeatedly which could be due to a fault in the teacher.

3. What did he do?

A. The County Inspector was trained to repair the computer teacher. He opened the machine and checked it. The Geography sector was set on a higher level. He reset it to Margie's level and closed the teacher.

4. Why was Margie doing badly in geography? What did the County Inspector Do to help her

A. Margie was failing in the Geography tests as the teacher had developed a fault. The County Inspector told Margie's mother that Margie was not at fault. Her progress was good. He reset the teacher to Margie's level.

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

A. Once Tommy's teacher had developed a fault as the entire section on History had been deleted. His teacher had been taken for repairs and it took them a month to set it right.

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

A. Margie studied at the same time everyday, except Saturdays and Sunday. Her mother was very particular and had told Margie that she would learn better if she studied at the same time every day.

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

A. Tommy said that in the old kind of schools, there was a man teacher who told a few things to the students, gave them home work and then asked them questions. The man teacher was as knowledgeable as the machine teacher.

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

A. He says that the old teachers were not the regular kind they had. They were human beings and not machines.

EXTRA QUESTIONS:- (Sarvodaya Content)

1. Where had Tommy found the book? How was it different from the books Margie and Tommy were used to?

Tommy found a real book in the attic of his house. The book was at least two hundred years old so pages had turned yellow and crinkly. It was a different from the books Margie and Tommy were used to because they had telebooks to read from while the book Tommy found was printed on paper.

2. "What a waste!" What is Tommy referring to as a 'waste'? Is it really a waste? Why/Why not?

Answer:

Tommy thought the paper book he found in his attic with words that were printed and did not move was a waste. Once a book had been read, it became useless and must be thrown away because it had the same content.

Yes: Printed books are a waste as telebooks are more accessible. They can be stored in a television and read again and again. They occupy very little space as compared to the printed books and need not be discarded once they have been read. In addition, paper books consume resources like trees from which paper is made and water that is consumed in the

process of making paper.

No: Printed books are not a waste as they can be read by many people over and over again and can be preserved for future generations. Moreover, the data in a telebook can be lost or stolen, but in a printed book, the data printed on a page remains forever.

3. Margie's mother was very particular about her studies. Justify with evidence from the story.

Margie's mother was very particular about her studies and made sure that Margie attended her tele-school regularly and at fixed times as she felt little girls learned better if they learned at regular hours. She took a keen interest in Margie's performance and when she felt she was not doing too well in a particular subject, she called the County Inspector to have a look at the mechanical teacher.

Long Answer Questions:-

TEXTUAL QUESTIONS:-

1. What are the main features of the mechanical teachers and the schoolrooms that Margie and Tommy have in the story?

A. Margie and Tommy were taught by mechanical teachers. They had large black screens on which the lessons appeared. The lessons were followed by questions. The students had to insert homework and test papers in the slots provided. They had to write down the work in a punch code which was a computing language. The mechanical teacher checked the papers and gave them marks within a few seconds. These classrooms were in the student's home itself. Every student studied from his respective mechanical teacher. Each teacher was adjusted according to the level of the learner. They did not have classmates. They studied various subjects like Geography, History and Mathematics. Margie studied everyday at the same time except Saturdays and Sundays. Her mother said that she would learn better if she studied that way. The learning process was mechanical, dull and boring for them.

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

A. Margie hated school because it was not fun. There was a mechanical teacher and the learning process lacked life. It was like a machine carrying out the usual working, there was nothing new, no fun or laughter. Margie's mechanical teacher was giving her tests in Geography and she was performing bad at them. Later it was discovered that the teacher had developed a fault due to which it was giving her tests of a higher level. Margie's mother called the County Inspector. He opened the teacher, found the fault and rectified it. Margie disliked the teacher and hoped that he would not be able to repair it. She hated inserting the homework and test papers into the slot provided.

She thought that the children in the past must have had a lot of fun when they went to school with fellow children. She found it amazing that all the children studied together, the same things and could discuss studies and help each other with the homework too. As the

teachers were people, they would not behave like machines. The human aspect of education in the past made her feel that the schools of the past were fun.

3. Do you agree with Margie that schools today are better than the schools in the story 'The Fun They Had'. Give reasons for your answer.

Yes: In the story The Fun They Had writer Isaac Asimov talks about the schools of the future. In this future, school is a room in the house where each child is taught by a mechanical teacher and there are telebooks on television screens.

After reading the story, I think that we pupils in the present should be satisfied. I agree an individual teacher for each child can work better and more intensively with the pupil and when the parents set the school time a child can have flexible school hours. If the school(room) is at home, the children do not have to walk or drive so far and this saves time and money.

But on the other hand, we lose an opportunity for social contacts. The most important advantage we have today is we have contact with other kids, in the breaks we can talk to each other and we have fun with them. Pupils solve problems together – very important for the later life and the development of a child. And a human teacher is definitely a better educator than a machine because he knows the problems of humans and children. A machine will never be able to feel like a human. Moreover, a human teacher can provide valuable guidance and values that a mechanical teacher cannot.

EXTRA QUESTION:- (Sarvodaya Content)

1. Do you think Asimov is warning us about the dangers of too much computerisation?

Answer:

In his short story "The Fun They Had" Isaac Asimov depicts the school system in 2157 which is based on technical advancement. Thirteen-year-old Tommy and eleven-year-old girl Margie both study with a computer teacher at home. While the individual teaching can train the personal talents and it is a perfect way to give every child knowledge and information based on the child's capacity, but there are some disadvantages, too.

Pupils do not learn like a computer. Learning has to be fun, otherwise the probability of forgetting is higher. Another disadvantage is that there are no social relationships like at school today. Learning with friends at school can be a motivation. Students improve their communication skills and their behavior in a group. A mechanical teacher cannot give moral values to the children.

I think Asimov is trying to warn us that the school system which is being followed in 2157 is a good way of giving children knowledge and information for jobs, but it is not good at giving ability for interpersonal relationships. In my opinion the disadvantages are more serious than the advantages and I feel this is a warning given by Isaac Asimov that this kind of schooling may not, in fact, be an ideal option for students.

Extract Based Question:-

Read the following extract carefully and choose the correct option.

'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."

i) Tommy calls this old book a waste because

- a) it could not be stored
- b) it was costly
- c) pages could not be turned
- d) did not teach anything

ii) The old book was about

- a) movies
- b) paintings
- c) school
- d) house

iii) Which word in the passage is antonym of 'less'?

- a) Million
- b) Slight
- c) Plenty of
- d) Deficient

iv) What is a telebook?

- a) It is made of pages
- b) Full of printed words
- c) Book on screen

d) Book on cartoons

Answer :

i) a) it could not be stored

ii) c) school

iii) c) plenty of

iv) c) Book on screen

Content prepared at home by KPT.