

The Fun They Had – Important Questions

Q. How was the book that Tommy found different from his own books?

Ans. The book that Tommy found was an old, real book which belonged to his grandfather's grandfather. It had crinkly, yellow pages whereas, Tommy's books were telebooks and were taught by mechanical teachers and computers.

Q. What kind of book did Tommy show to Margie?

Ans. The book that Tommy showed to Margie was an old, real book which belonged to his grandfather's grandfather. It had crinkly yellow pages, where all the stories were printed on paper and the words stood still.

Q. Why did Margie find the book strange?

Ans. The book had yellow and crinkly pages and the words were standing still unlike moving on a screen. When they turned back to the pages read before, there were the same words on it when they read it the first time. All these things were strange for Margie.

Q. Tommy thought the old books were funny and a big waste. Why?

Ans. Tommy thought that the old books were a waste because the words stood still and did not run. He also thought that they were a big waste because, they could not be reused like the screen of their mechanical teacher.

Q. Why did Margie hate school?

Ans. Margie hated school, which was a room in her house only, because her teacher was a mechanical one. It kept giving her test papers where answers had to be written as punch codes. The results were given instantly.

Q. What differences do you find in present school and the school described in the lesson 'The Fun They Had'?

Ans. In present day schools, students studied together in a separate building and teachers are human beings whereas, according to the lesson the school was at home and the teacher was mechanical.

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

Ans. Earlier, the teachers were not mechanical teachers, they taught the children in a special building where all children went to learn. They asked questions and gave them home work. They used to teach face to face.

Q. Describe Margie and Tommy's first experience of reading a printed book.

Ans. Margie's and Tommy's first experience of reading a printed book was good. It was a very old book with yellow crinkly pages. It was funny for them to read words which stood still and find the same words on turning back to the pages before. Both of them felt that printed books were waste because they had to be thrown away from reading.

Q. What did Margie and Tommy's mother tell them about a teacher?

Ans. Margie and Tommy's mother told them that a teacher had to be adjusted to fit the mind of each boy and girl it teaches and that each kid had to be taught differently.

Q. Why did Margie's mother send for the County Inspector? What did he do ?

Ans. Margie was not performing well in her Geography tests. The County Inspector took the teacher apart and put it together again as its geography sector was geared a little too quick.

Q. Why did the County Inspector's visit disappoint Margie?

Ans. The County Inspector's visit disappointed Margie because she had expected that he would take her teacher (computer) away for a month like Tommy's teacher. She also hoped that the inspector wouldn't know how to put the teacher back (i.e., to re-assemble the components of computer) after opening it. But nothing like that happened.

Q. Why did Margie hope that the County Inspector would take away her mechanical teacher?

Ans. Margie hoped that the County Inspector would take away her mechanical teacher because once Tommy's teacher had been taken away for nearly a month as the History sector had blocked out completely. She hoped the same for her teacher as well.

Q. What did County Inspector do to improve Margie's performance?

Ans. The County Inspector found that the Geography sector had been geared too quick. He slowed it up to an average 10 years level. He found the overall pattern of Margie quite satisfactory.

Q. Did Tommy and Margie have the same attitude towards the printed book in the beginning ?

Ans. No, Tommy and Margie didn't have the same attitude towards the printed book in the beginning. While Tommy was curious and positive about the book, Margie was scornful.

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

Ans. Margie and Tommy had mechanical teachers, computer and telebooks. Their school had no separate building. They had robotic teachers showing lessons and testing papers. Their teachers were always on and kept waiting for them.

Q. How was Margie's school different from the schools that existed hundreds of years ago?

Ans. Margie's school was at home. She had a mechanical teacher, telebooks, no other students were there in the class and work was fed in by the mechanical teacher by punch codes. Whereas, the old schools had proper buildings, many students, human teachers who gave homework and asked questions. Everyone learned the same things and the books were written on paper. So, it is clearly visible that Margie's school was totally different from the schools that existed hundreds of years ago.

Q. Given a chance to design your mechanical teacher or robot, how would you like it to be? Why? Explain with reference to the story 'The fun they had'.

Ans. If given a chance to design my mechanical teacher or robot, I would like it to be like me only without flesh and blood. It shouldn't be pre-programmed. I would like it to be a friend with knowledge about everything because if it is of my age, I can share my joys and sorrows with it. It should be all-knowledgeable because it is my teacher. I would also like it to be humorous and witty. It should be a good conversation-maker because conversations are interesting and enjoyable. They help us to reflect, think critically and debate. Unlike Maggie's mechanical robot teacher, it should not just give me lessons and tests but be an all-round company like a human teacher about whom Tommy and margie read in the old printed book. I would like to build a relationship with my robot teacher because otherwise learning will not be fun for me like for Maggie.