

F.4 Keeping It From Harold

by P.G. Wodehouse

1.A. Before you read “Keeping It From Harold”, the teacher will encourage you to answer or discuss the following.

- What are the different weight categories in boxing?
- Have you ever heard the song whose lyrics go like....”He floats like a butterfly and stings like a bee”? Who does ‘he’ refer to? He is also known as ‘The Greatest’ boxer of all times. What was his original name? How many times did he win the World Heavyweight Belt?
- Find out from your friend if he /she watches WWE and who is his/her favourite wrestler. Also find out why he/she likes this wrestler.
- Discuss with your friend as to why these wrestlers have such a large fan following. Has the perception of the people changed over the century with respect to those who fight in the ring?

1.B. Discuss

- Do sports like chess, boxing and fencing require as much hard work and dedication as other sports like cricket, hockey and swimming? Why do you say so?
- Are all sports equally respected in the area where you live? Elaborate.

2. Now read the story

1. “Ma!” Mrs. Bramble looked up, beaming with a kind of amiable **fat-headedness**. A domestic creature, wrapped up in Bill, her husband, and Harold, her son. At the present moment only the latter was with her. He sat on the other side of the table, his lips gravely pursed and his eyes a trifle cloudy behind their spectacles. Before him on the red tablecloth lay an open book. His powerful brain was plainly busy.
2. “Yes, dearie?”

3. "Will you hear me?"
4. Mrs. Bramble took the book.
5. "Yes, mother will hear you, precious."
6. A slight frown, marred the smoothness of Harold Bramble's brow. It jarred upon him, this habit of his mother's, of referring to herself in the third person, as if she were addressing a baby, instead of a young man of ten who had taken the spelling and dictation prize last term on his head.
7. He cleared his throat and fixed his eyes upon the cut-glass hangings of the chandelier.
8. "Be good, sweet maid," he began, with the toneless rapidity affected by youths of his age when reciting poetry.....
9. "You do study so hard, dearie, you'll give yourself a headache. Why don't you take a nice walk by the river for half an hour, and come back nice and fresh?"
10. The spectacled child considered the point for a moment gravely. Then nodding, he arranged his books in readiness for his return and went out. The front door closed with a **decorous** softness.
11. It was a constant source of amazement to Mrs. Bramble that she should have brought such a prodigy as Harold into the world. Harold was so different from ordinary children, so devoted to his books, such a model of behaviour, so altogether admirable. The only drawback was, that his very 'perfection' had made necessary a series of evasions and even deliberate falsehoods, on the part of herself and her husband, highly distasteful to both. They were lovers of truth, but they had realized that there are times when truth must be sacrificed. At any cost, the facts concerning Mr. Bramble's profession must be kept from Harold.
12. While he was a baby it had not mattered so much. But when he began to move about and take notice, Mrs. Bramble said to Mr. Bramble, "Bill, we must keep it from Harold." A little later, when the child had begun to show signs of being about to become a model of goodness and intelligence, and had already taken two prizes at the Sunday-school, the senior curate of the parish, meeting Mr. Bramble one morning, said nervously-for after all, it was a delicate subject to broach, "Er- Bramble, I think, on the whole, it would be as well to-er-keep it from Harold."



13. And only the other day, Mrs. Bramble's brother, Major Percy Stokes, dropping in for a cup of tea, had said, "I hope you are keeping it from Harold. It is the least you can do", and had gone on to make one or two remarks about men of **wrath** which, considering that his cheek-bones were glistening with Mr. Bramble's buttered toast, were in poor taste. But Percy was like that. Enemies said that he liked the sound of his own voice.
14. Certainly he was very persuasive. Mr. Bramble had fallen in with the suggestion without **demur**. In private life he was the mildest and most obliging of men, and always yielded to everybody. The very naming of Harold had caused a sacrifice on his part.
15. When it was certain that he was about to become a father, he had expressed a desire that the child should be named John, if a boy, after **Mr John L. Sullivan**, or, if a girl, Marie, after **Miss Marie Lloyd**. But Mrs Bramble saying that Harold was such a sweet name, he had withdrawn his suggestions with the utmost good- humour.
16. Nobody could help liking this excellent man which made it all the greater pity that his walk in life was of such a nature that it simply had to be kept from Harold.
17. He was a professional boxer. That was the trouble.
18. Before the coming of Harold, he had been proud of being a professional boxer. His ability to paste his fellow-man in the eye while apparently meditating an attack on his stomach, and vice versa, had filled him with that genial glow of self-satisfaction which comes to **philanthropists** and other benefactors of the species. It had seemed to him a thing on which to congratulate himself that of all London's teeming millions there was not a man, weighing eight stone four, whom he could not overcome in a twenty-round contest. He was delighted to be the possessor of a left hook which had won the approval of the newspapers.
19. And then Harold had come into his life, and changed him into a **furtive** practitioner of shady deeds. Before, he had gone about the world with a match-box full of press-notices, which he would extract with a pin and read to casual acquaintances. Now, he **quailed** at the sight of his name in print, so thoroughly had he become imbued with the necessity of keeping it from Harold.

wrath : intense anger

demur : reluctance / objection

Mr John L. Sullivan : American Boxing legend (1858-1918), lasting the bare-knuckled boxing championship, World heavyweight boxing champion from 1882-1892

Miss Marie Lloyd : Music hall artist 1870-1922

philanthropist : people who give donations or care about others

furtive : cautious or secretive

quailed : showed fear

20. With an ordinary boy it would not have mattered. However, Harold was different. Secretly proud of him as they were, both Bill and his wife were a little afraid of their wonderful child. The fact was, as Bill himself put it, Harold was showing a bit too much class for them. He had **formed a corner** in brains, as far as the Bramble family was concerned. They had come to regard him as being of a superior order.
21. Yet Harold, defying the laws of heredity, had run to intellect as his father had run to muscle. He had learned to read and write with amazing quickness. He sang in the choir.
22. And now, at the age of ten, a pupil at a local private school where they wore mortar boards and generally **comported** themselves like young dons, he had already won a prize for spelling and dictation. You simply couldn't take a boy like that aside and tell him that the father whom he believed to be a **commercial traveller** was affectionately known to a large section of the inhabitants of London, as "Young Porky." There were no two ways about it. You had to keep it from him.
23. So, Harold grew in stature and intelligence, without a suspicion of the real identity of the square-jawed man with the irregularly-shaped nose who came and went mysteriously in their semi-detached, red-brick home. He was a self-centred child, and, accepting the commercial traveller fiction, dismissed the subject from his mind and busied himself with things of more **moment**. And time slipped by.
24. Mrs. Bramble, left alone, resumed work on the sock which she was darning. For the first time since Harold had reached years of intelligence she was easy in her mind about the future. A week from tonight would see the end of all her anxieties. On that day Bill would fight his last fight, the twenty-round contest with that American Murphy at the National Sporting Club for which he was now training at the White Hart down the road. He had promised that it would be the last. He was getting on. He was thirty-one, and he said himself that he would have to be chucking the game before it chucked him. His idea was to retire from active work and try for a job as an instructor at one of these big schools or colleges. He had a splendid record for respectability and sobriety and all the other qualities which headmasters demanded in those who taught their young gentlemen to box and several of his friends who had obtained similar posts described the job in question as extremely soft. So that it seemed to Mrs. Bramble, that all might now be considered well. She smiled happily to herself as she darned her sock.
25. She was interrupted in her meditations by a knock at the front door. She put down her sock and listened.

formed a corner : attained mastery in; gained monopoly

comported : conducted oneself; behaved

a commercial traveller: firm's representative visiting shops etc to get orders.

moment: importance

26. Martha, **the general**, pattered along the passage, and then there came the sound of voices speaking in an undertone. Footsteps made themselves heard in the passage. The door opened. The head and shoulders of Major Percy Stokes **insinuated** themselves into the room.
27. The Major cocked a mild blue eye at her.
28. "Harold anywhere about?"
29. "He's gone out for a nice walk. Whatever brings you here, Percy, so late? "
30. Percy made no answer. He withdrew his head.
31. He then reappeared, this time in his entirety, and remained holding the door open. More footsteps in the passage, and through the doorway in a sideways fashion suggestive of a **diffident** crab, came a short, sturdy, red-headed man with a broken nose and a **propitiatory** smile, at the sight of whom Mrs. Bramble, dropping her sock, rose as if propelled by powerful machinery, and exclaimed, "Bill!"
32. Mr. Bramble - for it was he - scratched his head, grinned feebly, and looked for assistance to the Major.
33. "The scales have fallen from his eyes."
34. "What scales?" demanded Mrs. Bramble, a literal-minded woman. "And what are you doing here, Bill, when you ought to be at the White Hart, training?"
35. "That's just what I'm telling you," said Percy. "I've been wrestling with Bill, and I have been **vouchsafed** the victory."
36. "You!" said Mrs. Bramble, with uncomplimentary astonishment, letting her gaze wander over her brother's **weedy** form.
37. "Jerry Fisher's a hard nut," said Mr. Bramble, apologetically. "He don't like people coming round talking to a man he's training, unless he introduces them or they're newspaper gents."
38. "After that I kept away. But I wrote the letters and I sent the tracts. Bill, which of the tracts was it that snatched you from the **primrose path**?"
39. "It wasn't so much the letters, Perce. It was what you wrote about Harold. You see, Jane—"
40. "Perhaps you'll kindly allow me to get a word in edgeways, you two," said Mrs.

the general : (here) a servant who serves as an all purpose help/maid.

insinuated : suggested something bad indirectly

propitiatory : appeasing

vouchsafed : guaranteed

weedy : thin or weak

primrose path : pursuit of pleasure

diffident : lacking confidence in ones own ability

- Bramble, her temper for once becoming ruffled. "You can stop talking for half an instant, Percy, if you know how, while Bill tells me what he's doing here when he ought to be at the White Hart with Mr. Fisher, doing his bit of training."
41. Mr. Bramble met her eye and blinked awkwardly.
 42. "Percy's just been telling you, Jane. He wrote—"
 43. "I haven't made head or tail of a single word that Percy's said, and I don't expect to. All I want is a plain answer to a plain question. What are you doing here, Bill, instead of being at the White Hart? "
 44. "I've come home, Jane."
 45. "Glory!" exclaimed the Major.
 46. "Percy, if you don't keep quiet, I'll forget I'm your sister and let you have one. What do you mean, Bill, you've come home? Isn't there going to be the fight next week, after all?"
 47. "The fight's over," said the unsuppressed Major, joyfully, "and Bill's won, with me seconding him."
 48. "Percy!"
 49. Mr. Bramble pulled himself together with a visible effort.
 50. "I'm not going to fight, Jane," he said, in a small voice.
 51. "You're not going—!"
 52. "He's seen the error of his ways," cried Percy, the resilient. "That's what he's gone and done. At the eleventh hour."
 53. "Oh! I have waited for this joyful moment. I have watched for it. I—"
 54. "You're not going to fight!"
 55. Mr. Bramble, avoiding his wife's eye, shook his head.
 56. "And how about the money?"
 57. "What's money? " said the Major, scornfully.
 58. "You ought to know," snapped Mrs. Bramble, turning on him. "You've borrowed enough of it from me in your time."
 59. The Major waved a hand in wounded silence. He considered the remark in poor taste.
 60. "How about the money?" repeated Mrs. Bramble. "Goodness knows I've never liked your profession, Bill, but there is this to be said for it, that it's earned you good money and made it possible for us to give Harold as good an education as any Duke ever had, I'm sure. And you know, you yourself said that the five hundred pounds you were going to get if you beat this Murphy, and even if you

lost it would be a hundred and twenty, was going to be a blessing, because it would let us finish him off proper and give him a better start in life than you or me ever had, and now you let this Percy come over you with his foolish talk, and now I don't know what will happen."

61. There was an uncomfortable silence. Even Percy seemed to be at a loss for words. Mrs. Bramble sat down and began to sob. Mr. Bramble shuffled his feet.
62. "Talking of Harold," said Mr. Bramble at last, "That's , really what I'm driving at. It was him only whom I was thinking of when I hopped it from the White Hart. It would be written up in all the papers, instead of only in the sporting ones. As likely as not there would be a piece about it in the Mail, with a photograph of me. And you know Harold reads his Mail regularly. And then, don't you see, **the fat would be in the fire**." "That's what Percy pointed out to me, and I seen what he meant, so I hopped it."
63. "At the eleventh hour," added the Major, rubbing in the point.
64. "You see, Jane—" Mr. Bramble was beginning, when there was a knock at the door, and a little, **ferret**-faced man in a woollen sweater and cycling **knickerbockers** entered, removing as he did so a somewhat battered bowler hat.
65. "Beg pardon, Mrs. Bramble," he said, "coming in like this. Found the front door ajar, so came in, to ask if you'd happened to have seen—"
66. He broke off and stood staring wildly at the little group.
67. "I thought so!" he said, and shot through the air towards Percy.
68. "Jerry !" said Bill
69. "Mr. Fisher!" said Mrs. Bramble,
70. "Be reasonable," said the Major, diving underneath the table and coming up the other side like a performing seal.
71. "Let me get at him," begged the intruder, struggling to free himself from Bill's restraining arms.
72. Mrs. Bramble rapped on the table.
73. "Kindly remember there's a lady present, Mr. Fisher."
74. The little man's face became a battlefield on which rage, misery, and a respect for the decencies of social life struggled for mastery.
75. "It's hard," he said at length, in a choked voice. "I just wanted to break his neck for him, but I suppose it's not to be. I know it's him that's at the bottom of it. And

the fat would be in the fire : there would be trouble

ferret : a small yellowish white animal related to the weasel

knickerbockers : loose-fitting trousers or knickers gathered at the knee or calf.

- here I find them together, so I know it's him. Well, if you say so, Mrs. B., I suppose I mustn't put a hand on him. But it's hard. Bill, you come back along with me to the White Hart. I'm surprised at you. Ashamed of you, I am. All the time you and me have known each other, I've never known you do such a thing. You are such a pleasure to train as a rule. It all comes of getting with bad companions."
76. Mr. Bramble looked at his brother-in-law miserably.
77. "You tell him," he said.
78. "You tell him, Jane," said the Major.
79. "I won't," said Mrs. Bramble.
80. "Tell him what?" asked the puzzled trainer.
81. "Well?"
82. "It's only that I'm not going to fight on Monday."
83. "What!"
84. "Bill has seen a sudden bright light," said Percy, edging a few inches to the left, so that the table was exactly between the trainer and himself. "At the eleventh hour, he has turned from his wicked ways. You ought to be singing with joy, Mr. Fisher, if you really loved Bill. This ought to be the happiest evening you've ever known. You ought to be singing like a little child."
85. A strange, **guttural** noise escaped the trainer. It may have been a song, but it did not sound like it.
86. "It's true, Jerry," said Bill, unhappily. "I have been thinking it over, and I'm not going to fight on Monday."
87. "Glory!" said the Major, tactlessly.
88. Jerry Fisher's face was a study in violent emotions. His eyes seemed to protrude from their sockets like a snail's. He clutched the tablecloth.
89. "I'm sorry, Jerry," said Bill. "I know it's hard on you. But I've got to think of Harold. This fight with Jimmy Murphy being what you might call a kind of national affair, in a way of speaking, will be reported in The Mail as like as not, with a photograph of me, and Harold reads The Mail regular. We've been keeping it from him all these years that I'm in the profession, and we can't let him know now. He would die of shame, Jerry."
90. Tears appeared in Jerry Fisher's eyes.
91. "Bill," he cried, "you're off your head. Think of the purse!"
92. "Ah!" said Mrs. Bramble.

93. "Think of all the swells that'll be coming to see you. Think of what the papers'll say. Think of me."
94. "I know, Jerry, it's chronic. But Harold—"
95. "Think of all the trouble you've taken for the last few weeks getting yourself into condition."
96. "I know. But Har—"
97. "You can't not fight on Monday."
98. "But Harold, Jerry. He'd die of the disgrace of it. He ain't like you and me, Jerry. He's a little gentleman. I got to think of Harold"
99. "What about me, pa?" said a youthful voice at the door; and Bill's honest blood froze at the sound. His jaw fell, and he goggled dumbly.
100. There, his spectacles gleaming in the gaslight, his cheeks glowing with the exertion of the nice walk, his eyebrows slightly elevated with surprise, stood Harold himself.
101. "Halloa, pa! Halloa, Uncle Percy! Somebody's left the front door open. What were you saying about thinking about me, pa? Ma, will you hear me, my piece of poetry again? I think I've forgotten it."
102. The four adults surveyed the innocent child in silence.
103. On the faces of three of them **consternation** was written. In the eyes of the fourth, Mr. Fisher, there glittered that nasty, steely expression of the man, who sees his way to getting a bit of his own back, Mr. Fisher's was not an un-mixedly chivalrous nature. He considered that he had been badly treated, and what he wanted most at the moment was revenge. He had been fond and proud of Bill Bramble, but those emotions belonged to the dead past. Just at present, he felt that he disliked Bill rather more than anyone else in the world, with the possible exception of Major Percy Stokes.
104. "So you're Harold, are you, Tommy?" he said, in a metallic voice." Then just you listen here a minute."
105. "Jerry," cried Bill, advancing, "you keep your mouth shut, or I'll dot you one."
106. Mr. Fisher retreated and, grasping a chair, swung it above his head.
107. "You better!" he said, curtly.
108. "Mr. Fisher, do be a gentleman," entreated Mrs. Bramble.
109. "My dear sir." There was a crooning winningness in Percy's voice.
"My dear sir, do nothing hasty. Think before you speak. Don't go and be so silly as to act like a mutton-head. I'd be ashamed to be so spiteful. Respect a father's feelings."

110. "Tommy," said Mr. Fisher, ignoring them all, "you think your pa's a commercial. He ain't. He's a fighting-man, doing his eight-stone-four ringside, and known to all the heads as 'Young Porky.'" "
111. Bill sank into a chair. He could see Harold's round eyes staring at him.
112. "I'd never have thought it of you, Jerry," he said, miserably. "If anyone had come to me and told me that you could have acted so raw I'd have dotted him one."
113. "And if anyone had come to me and told me that I should live to see the day when you broke training a week before a fight at the National, I'd given him one for himself."
114. "Harold, my lad," said Percy, "you mustn't think none the worse of your pa for having been a man of wrath. He hadn't seen the bright light then. It's all over now. He's given it up for ever, and there's no call for you to feel ashamed."
115. Bill seized on the point.
116. "That's right, Harold," he said, reviving, "I've given it up. I was going to fight an American named Murphy at the National next Monday, but I ain't going to now, not if they come to me on their bended knees. Not even if the King of England came to me on his bended knees."
117. Harold drew a deep breath.
118. "Oh!" he cried, shrilly. "Oh, aren't you? Then what about my two bob? What about my two bob, I've betted Dicky Saunders that Jimmy Murphy won't last ten rounds?"
119. He looked round the room wrathfully.
120. "It's thick," he said in the crisp, gentlemanly, voice of which his parents were so proud. "It's jolly thick. That's what it is. A chap takes the trouble to study form and saves up his pocket-money to have a bet on a good thing, and then he goes and gets let down like this. It may be funny to you, but I call it rotten. And another thing I call rotten is you having kept it from me all this time that you were 'Young Porky,' pa. That's what I call so jolly rotten! There's a fellow at our school who goes about **swanking** in the most rotten way because he once got Phil Scott's autograph.

Fellows look up to him most awfully, and all the time they might have been doing it to me. That's what makes me so jolly sick. How long do you suppose they'd go on calling me, 'Goggles' if they knew that you were my father? They'd chuck it tomorrow, and look up to me like anything, I do call it rotten. And chucking it up like this is the limit. What do you want to do it for? It's the silliest idea, I've ever heard. Why, if you beat Jimmy Murphy they'll have to give you the next chance with Sid Sampson for the Lonsdale belt. Jimmy beat Ted Richards, and

Ted beat the Ginger Nut, and the Ginger Nut only lost on a foul to Sid Sampson, and you beat Ted Richards, so they couldn't help letting you have the next go at Sid."

121. Mr. Fisher beamed approval.
122. "If I've told your pa that once, I've told him twenty times," he said. "You certainly know a thing or two, Tommy."
123. "Well, I've made a study of it since I was a kid, so I jolly well ought to. All the fellows at our place are frightfully keen on it. One chap's got a snapshot of Jimmy Wilde. At least, he says it's Jimmy Wilde, but I believe it's just some ordinary fellow. Anyhow, it's jolly blurred, so it might be anyone. Pa, can't you give me a picture of yourself boxing? I could swank like anything. And you don't know how sick a chap gets of having chaps call him, 'Goggles.' "
124. "Bill," said Mr. Fisher, "you and me had better be getting back to the White Hart."
125. Bill rose and followed him without a word.
126. Harold broke the silence which followed their departure. The animated expression which had been on his face as he discussed the relative merits of Sid Sampson and the Ginger Nut had given place to the abstracted gravity of the student.
127. "Ma!"
128. Mrs. Bramble started **convulsively**.
129. "Yes, dearie?"
130. "Will you hear me? "
131. Mrs. Bramble took the book.
132. "Yes, mother will hear you, precious," she said, mechanically.
133. Harold fixed his eyes upon the cut-glass hangings of the chandelier.
134. "Be good, sweet maid, and let who will be clever-clever. Do noble things.. "

About the Author

Sir Pelham Grenville Wodehouse, KBE (15 October 1881 - 14 February 1975) was a comic writer who enjoyed enormous popular success during his career as an acknowledged master of English prose. Wodehouse has been admired both by his contemporaries such as Hilaire Belloc, Evelyn Waugh and Rudyard Kipling and by modern writers such as Douglas Adams, Salman Rushdie, Zadie Smith and Terry Pratchett.

Best known today for his **Jeeves and Blandings** Castle novels and short stories, Wodehouse was also a playwright and lyricist who was part author and writer of 15 plays and of 250 lyrics for some 30 musical comedies. He worked with **Cole Porter** on the musical '**Anything Goes**' (1934) and frequently collaborated with **Jerome Kern** and **Guy Bolton**. He wrote the lyrics for the hit song "**Bill**" in Kern's **Show Boat** (1927), wrote the lyrics for the **Gershwin - Romberg's** musical **Rosalie** (1928) and collaborated with **Rudolf Friml** on a musical version of **The Three Musketeers** (1928).

3. **The sequence of events has been jumbled up. Rearrange them and complete the given flowchart.**

- 1) Major Percy and Bill come to the house.
- 2) Harold comes to know that his father is a boxer.
- 3) Bill tells his wife that he is doing it for Harold.
- 4) Jerry Fisher tries to convince Bill to reconsider.
- 5) Mrs. Bramble is amazed to think that she has brought such a prodigy as Harold into the world.
- 6) Harold wants to know what will happen to the money he had bet on Murphy losing.
- 7) Mrs. Bramble is informed that Bill had decided not to fight.
- 8) Mrs. Bramble resumes work of darning the sock.
- 9) Harold is alone with his mother in their home.

Mrs. Bramble is amazed to think that she has brought such a prodigy as Harold into the world.

4.A. **Based on your reading of the story, answer the following questions by choosing the correct option.**

- (a) Mrs Bramble was a proud woman because
- (i) she was the wife of a famous boxer.
 - (ii) she had motivated her husband.
 - (iii) she was a good housewife
 - (iv) she was the mother of a child prodigy.
- (b) “The very naming of Harold had caused a sacrifice on his part.” The writer’s tone here is
- (i) admiring
 - (ii) assertive
 - (iii) satirical
 - (iv) gentle
- (c) Harold had defied the laws of heredity by
- (i) becoming a sports person.
 - (ii) being good at academics.
 - (iii) being well-built and muscular
 - (iv) respecting his parents
- (d) Harold felt that he was deprived of the respect that his classmates would give him as _____
- (i) they did not know his father was the famous boxer, ‘Young Porky’.
 - (ii) his hero, Jimmy Murphy had not won the wrestling match.
 - (iii) he had not got Phil Scott’s autograph.
 - (iv) Sid Simpson had lost the Lonsdale belt.

- (e) 'It's hard,' he said at length in a choked voice.

What was hard according to Mr. Fisher?

- (i) To accept the truth.
 - (ii) To fight with American Murphy.
 - (iii) To control his anger.
 - (iv) To give up boxing.
- (f) What do you gauge about Major Percy Stokes' character from the story? Select the most appropriate option from the following.
- (1) man of wrath
 - (2) persuasive
 - (3) argumentative
 - (4) interfering
 - (5) self-important
- (i) (1), (3) and (5)
 - (ii) (1), (2) and (4)
 - (iii) (2), (4) and (5)
 - (iv) (3), (4) and (5)

4.B. Read the given extracts and answer the questions by selecting the correct options.

1. *The only drawback was that his very 'perfection had made necessary a series of evasions and even deliberate falsehoods on the part of herself and her husband, highly distasteful to both. They were lovers of truth, but they had realized that there are times when truth must be sacrificed. At any cost, the facts concerning Mr. Bramble's profession must be kept from Harold.*

- (i) His very 'perfection' refers to Harold's
 - (1) gentlemanly manners.
 - (2) aspiration to be the best.
 - (3) exceptional intelligence.
 - (4) obsession with cleanliness.
- A. (1) and (3)
 - B. (2) and (3)
 - C. (1) and (4)
 - D. (2) and (4)

- (ii) What was highly distasteful to both Mrs. and Mr. Bramble?
- A. Consciously choosing to lie.
 - B. Harold's perfection.
 - C. Mr. Bramble's profession.
 - D. Their relationship with each other.
- (iii) The facts concerning Mr. Bramble's profession 'must be kept' from Harold because it would make him feel
- A. afraid.
 - B. ashamed.
 - C. weird.
 - D. angry.

2. *On the faces of three of them consternation was written. In the eyes of the fourth, Mr. Fisher, there glittered that nasty, steely expression of the man, who sees his way to getting a bit of his own back, Mr. Fisher's was not an un-mixedly chivalrous nature. He considered that he had been treated badly...*

- (i) Three of them felt anxious because
- A. Mr. Fisher was about to hit Major Percy.
 - B. they suspected Mr. Fisher would take revenge.
 - C. Harold had heard a part of their conversation.
 - D. Harold did not like arguments at home.
- (ii) Get a bit of his own back implies _____
- A. feeling offended.
 - B. getting his way.
 - C. being forceful.
 - D. taking revenge.
- (iii) How was Mr. Fisher planning to get his own back?
- A. By telling Harold the truth about his father.
 - B. By persuading Mr. Bramble to change his mind.
 - C. By hitting Major Percy and Mr. Bramble.
 - D. By kidnapping Harold and blackmailing Brambles.
- (iv) Mr. Fisher felt he had been treated badly because Mr. Bramble had
- A. cheated him and lied
 - B. called off his fight with Murphy.
 - C. been spending time with Percy.
 - D. been insensitive and aggressive.

5.A. Answer the following questions briefly.

- (a) Why was it necessary to keep Harold's father's profession a secret from him?
- (b) Describe Mr. Bramble as he has been described in the story.
- (c) Who was Jerry Fisher? What did he say to try and convince Bill to change his mind?
- (d) Why was Harold upset that his father had not told him about his true identity? Give two reasons.
- (e) Do you agree with the decision of Harold's parents of hiding the fact that his father was a boxer? Why / Why not?
- (f) Why did Mr. Bramble decide at the last minute not to fight with American Murphy at the National Sporting Club?
- (g) 'There are times when truth must be sacrificed.' Do you agree? Why / why not?
- (h) "Don't judge a book by its cover." Discuss with reference to Mr. Bramble's personality.

5.B. Answer in detail.

- (a) Did Harold react the way his parents expected him to on finding out about his father's true profession? Give reasons for your answer.
- (b) Assuming you are Harold, write a letter to your father expressing how you have always admired Young Pokey, little realizing it was his Pa.
- (c) We often go with preconceived notions which are usually baseless. Do you think this was the case with Mrs. and Mr. Bramble? Give reasons for your answer.
- (d) Imagine you are Bill Bramble, write a diary entry expressing how life changed after your son's birth and how you feel currently after the truth about your profession has been revealed to your son.

6. Choose extracts from the story that illustrate the characters of these people in it.

Person character	Extracts from the story	What does it tell us about their character
Mrs Bramble	(Para 12) "Bill we must keep it from Harold"	She was not honest and open with her son; concerned mother
Mr Bramble	(Para 33)	
Percy	(Para 109)	
Jerry Fisher	(Para 110)	

LISTENING TASK

7. *The teacher will ask the students to answer these questions based on an interview given on page no. 146, by the legendary WWE wrestler, Kane to Chris Carle of IGN. The students should be made to listen to the interview. Teacher / student will read it out for the class.*

1. What were the video games that Kane liked playing earlier and which games did he enjoy later?

2. Who was Kane's favourite wrestler when he was first getting into wrestling and who were some of the other wrestlers who influenced him into taking up wrestling?

3. How according to Kane had the WWE changed in the past ten years?

4. Does Kane prefer performing with the mask or without the mask?

5. Why does Kane wrestle these days even though he has accomplished almost everything?

6. What is your impression of Kane as a person after you have heard this interview?

WRITING TASK

8. *Many people are of the opinion that violent, physical sports such as boxing, kick boxing and wrestling, to name a few should be banned while others think otherwise. Express your opinion on the topic by either writing in favour of banning these sports or against banning them. While writing, you should also include the rebuttal to your questions. Try not to go beyond 200 words.*

9. *A large part of the story is composed of conversation between the characters. Can you convert it into a play and in groups, present your version of the play before the class? Before that, decide on the members of the cast, minimum props required and also the costumes.*