

# Chapter 1

## The Fun They Had

### Thinking About the Text

Q.1 Calculate how many years and months ahead from now Margie's entry is.

**Answer:** It is about 139 years and 5 months ahead of present time. (This will change with time. The time is to be calculated from 17 May 2157 to present day)

Q.1A Answer these questions in a few words or a couple of sentences each.

How old are Margie and Tommy?

**Answer:** Margie is eleven and Tommy is thirteen years old.

Q.1B Answer these questions in a few words or a couple of sentences each.

What did Margie write in her diary?

**Answer:** Margie wrote in her diary "Today Tommy found a real book!"

Q.1C Answer these questions in a few words or a couple of sentences each.

Had Margie ever seen a book before?

**Answer:** No, Margie had never seen a book before. Margie and Tommy had only a mechanical teacher. The machine used to teach them in a fixed time daily.

Q.1D Answer these questions in a few words or a couple of sentences each.

What things about the book did she find strange?

**Answer:** Margie was surprised to see the yellow and crinkly pages of the book and found it awfully funny to read words that stood still instead of moving the way they were supposed to on a screen. Furthermore, when she turned back to the previous page, it had the same words on it which she read for the first time.

Q.1E Answer these questions in a few words or a couple of sentences each.

What do you think a telebook is?

**Answer:** A telebook is a book that can be read on screen.

Q.1F Answer these questions in a few words or a couple of sentences each.

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

**Answer:** Margie's school was a computer in her home itself, right next to her bedroom. No, she did not have any classmates.

Q.1G Answer these questions in a few words or a couple of sentences each.

What subjects did Margie and Tommy learn?

**Answer:** Margie and Tommy learned History, Geography and Arithmetic. They had mechanical teachers. They were not real persons but televisions which had different subject sectors.

Q.2A Answer the following with reference to the story:

“I wouldn't throw it away.”

(i) Who says these words?

- (ii) What does 'it' refer to?
- (iii) What is it being compared with by the speaker?

**Answer:** (i) Tommy said these words.

- (ii) 'It' refers to the television screen, which had a million books on it.
- (iii) Tommy is comparing the television screen to the books of the earlier times in which words were printed on paper. He thought that after reading such books, one would have to throw them away. However, he would never have to throw away his telebook.

Q.2B Answer the following with reference to the story:

“Sure they had a teacher, but, it wasn't a regular teacher. It was a man.”

- (i) Who does 'they' refer to?
- (ii) What does 'regular' mean here?
- (iii) What is it contrasted with?

**Answer:** (i) 'They' refers to the students who studied in the old kind of schools centuries before the time this story is set in.

(ii) 'Regular' refers to the mechanical teachers that Tommy and Margie had.

(iii) The mechanical teacher is contrasted with the teacher of the earlier times, who was a human being.

Q.3A Answer each of these questions in a short paragraph (or about 30 words):

What kind of teachers did Margie and Tommy have?

**Answer:** Margie and Tommy had mechanical teachers. They had large black screens on which all the lessons were shown and questions were asked in addition to a slot in which the students had to put their homework and test papers. They had to write their answers in a punch code and the mechanical teacher calculated the marks instantly.

Q.3B Answer each of these questions in a short paragraph (or about 30 words):

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

**Answer:** Margie had been given many tests in geography by the mechanical teacher, but there were no signs of improvement in her performance. It only kept getting worse and in order to find out its reason, Margie's mother sent for the County Inspector.

Q.3C Answer each of these questions in a short paragraph (or about 30 words):

What did he do?

**Answer:** The County Inspector gave Margie an apple and then began working on the mechanical teacher. He took it apart and checked it thoroughly. Meanwhile, Margie hoped that the inspector would not know how to put the mechanical teacher together again. However, to her disappointment, he managed to reassemble it. Also, he slowed down the geography sector of the teacher which was a little too quick for an average ten-year-old student.

Q.3D Answer each of these questions in a short paragraph (or about 30 words):

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

**Answer:** Margie was doing badly in geography because the geography sector of the mechanical teacher had been geared a little too quick for an average eleven-year-old student. The County Inspector assessed the problem accurately and told her that she could not be blamed for her poor performance, besides; her overall progress was quite satisfactory. In order to rectify the situation, the County Inspector slowed down the geography sector of the mechanical teacher to an average eleven year level.

Q.3E Answer each of these questions in a short paragraph (or about 30 words):

What had once happened to Tommy's teacher?

**Answer:** Once, the history sector of Tommy's teacher had blanked out completely. It had to be taken out for a month by the county inspector. Margie was thinking he would take her mechanical teacher too with himself to repair it.

Q.3F Answer each of these questions in a short paragraph (or about 30 words):

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

**Answer:** Yes, Margie had regular days and hours for school because her mother strongly believed that learning at regular hours helped little girls learn better. The mechanical teacher was always available at the same time every day except Saturdays and Sundays.

Q.3G Answer each of these questions in a short paragraph (or about 30 words):

How does Tommy describe the old kind of school?

**Answer:** Tommy described the old kind of school as a special building where all the students assembled and studied the same concepts according to their respective ages. There were hundreds of students (boys and girls) who not only studied but played, laughed and shouted in the open yard and enjoyed with one another at the same time. Also, at the end of their day at school, they collectively left for their houses.

Q.3H Answer each of these questions in a short paragraph (or about 30 words):

How does he describe the old kind of teachers?

**Answer:** Tommy said that the old kind of teacher was a man, who taught the students inside a special building. He asked them questions and gave them homework. However, when Margie said that a man was not smart enough to be a teacher, he contradicted her by saying that his father knew as much as his mechanical teacher.

Q.4A Answer each of these questions in two or three paragraphs (100-150 words).

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

**Answer:** Margie and Tommy had mechanical teachers. They had large black screens on which all the lessons were shown and questions were asked in addition to a slot in which the students had to put their homework and test papers. They had to write their answers in a punch code and the mechanical teacher calculated the marks instantly.

Their schools were in their homes itself and they did not have any classmates. However, they had regular days and fixed duration of study in which they learned history, geography and arithmetic.

Q.4B Answer each of these questions in two or three paragraphs (100-150 words).

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

**Answer:** Margie hated school because she considered it to be a highly tedious task. A mechanical teacher used to teach her every day at a fixed time for regular hours and as the story mentions of her poor performance in geography, she kept on losing interest in her studies. The part that she

hated the most was inserting the homework and test papers in the particular slot and writing all the answers in a punch code.

She disapproved of the method of the teaching and considered the old kind of school to be a fun filled place as she imagined all the students from the neighbourhood coming together, laughing, shouting and enjoying in the open yard of the school. She thought that learning the same concepts together; they could help each other with their homework and other things. She further imagined students sitting together in a classroom and going home together at the end of the day. Altogether, these aspects compelled Margie to think of the old kind of school to be much fascinating and interactive.

Q.4C Answer each of these questions in two or three paragraphs (100-150 words).

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

**Answer :** Yes, I agree that schools today are more fun-filled than the school in the story. In the story, it is not an interactive place where students communicate and express themselves in a free environment. The mechanical method of teaching, as well as the method of learning and writing answers in a punch code, is draining. The environment is solitary in nature where the student is isolated from his own surroundings.

Children develop a better understanding by listening to the teachers explaining lessons and it is more interesting than reading the lesson on a mechanical device. It tends to create a healthy environment of learning where students can discuss and solve their problems at the same time

which is not possible with a mechanical teacher who is programmed to teach only in a certain way.

Children also get the opportunity to explore the meaning of friendship and healthy relationships with others. Moreover, the moral values of obedience, kindness, respect and sharing can be inculcated only in the free environment of a classroom. In addition to this, taking part in various sports and extra-curricular activities contribute to a strong personality and overall development of the students.

### Thinking about Language

Q.1A Read this sentence taken from the story: They had once taken Tommy's teacher away for nearly a month because the history sector had blanked out completely.

The word complete is adjective. When you add -ly to it, it becomes an adverb.

Find the sentences in the lesson which have the adverbs given in the box below.

Awfully, Sorrowfully, Completely, loftily, carefully, differently, quickly, nonchalantly.

### Answer:

1. 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.
2. 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.



3. They had once taken Tommy's teacher away for nearly a month because the history sector had blanked out completely.
4. He added loftily, pronouncing the word carefully, "Centuries ago."
5. "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."
6. "I didn't say I didn't like it," Margie said quickly.
7. "May be," he said nonchalantly.

**Q.1B Now use these adverbs to fill in the blanks in the sentences below:**

- (i) The report must be read \_\_\_\_\_ so that performance can be improved.
- (ii) At the interview, Sameer answered our questions \_\_\_\_\_ shrugging his shoulders.
- (iii) We all behave \_\_\_\_\_ when we are tired or hungry.
- (iv) The teacher shook her head \_\_\_\_\_ when Ravi lied to her.
- (v) I \_\_\_\_\_ forgot about it.
- (vi) When I complimented Revathi on her success, she just smiled \_\_\_\_\_ and turned away.
- (vii) The President of the company is \_\_\_\_\_ busy and will not be able to meet you.
- (viii) I finished my work \_\_\_\_\_ so that I could go out to play.

**Answer :**

(i) The report must be read carefully so that performance can be improved.

(ii) At the interview, Sameer answered our questions loftily shrugging his shoulders.

(iii) We all behave differently when we are tired or hungry.

(iv) The teacher shook her head sorrowfully when Ravi lied to her.

(v) I completely forgot about it.

(vi) When I complimented Revathi on her success, she just smiled nonchalantly and turned away.

(vii) The President of the company is awfully busy and will not be able to meet you.

(viii) I finished my work quickly so that I could go out to play.

Q.1C Make adverbs from these adjectives.

- (a) angry\_\_\_\_\_ (b) happy\_\_\_\_\_ (c) merry\_\_\_\_\_  
(d) sleepy\_\_\_\_\_ (e) easy\_\_\_\_\_ (f) noisy\_\_\_\_\_  
(g) tidy\_\_\_\_\_ (h) gloomy\_\_\_\_\_

**Answer :**

- (a) angry - angrily  
(b) happy - happily  
(c) merry - merrily  
(d) sleepy - sleepily  
(e) easy -easily  
(f) noisy - noisily  
(g) tidy - tidily  
(h) gloomy- gloomily

Q.2A (i) Imagine that Margie's mother told her, "You'll feel awful if you don't finish your history lesson."

(ii) She could also say: "you'll feel awful unless you finish your history lesson."

Unless means if not. Sentences with unless or if not are negative conditional sentences.

Notice that these sentences have two parts. The part that begins with if not or unless tells us the condition. This part has a verb in the present tense (look at the verbs don't finish, finish in the sentences no (i) and (ii) above).

The other part of the sentence tells us about a possible result. It tells us what will happen (if something else doesn't happen). The verb in this part of the sentence is in the future tense (you'll feel/ you will feel.)

Notice these two tense again in the following examples:

(Future Tense)		(Present Tense)
1. There won't be any books left	Unless	we preserve them.
2. You won't learn your lessons.	If	You don't study regularly.
3. Tommy will have an accident.	Unless	he drives more slowly.

Complete the following conditional sentences. Use the correct form of the verb.

- (i) If I don't go to Anu's party tonight, \_\_\_\_\_.
- (ii) If you don't telephone the hotel to order food, \_\_\_\_\_.
- (iii) Unless you promise to write back, I \_\_\_\_\_.
- (iv) If she doesn't play any games, \_\_\_\_\_.
- (v) Unless that little bird flies away quickly, the cat \_\_\_\_\_.

**Answer :**

- (i) If I don't go to Anu's party tonight, she will be disappointed.
- (ii) If you don't telephone the hotel to order food, you will miss your evening meal.
- (iii) Unless you promise to write back, I will not write to you.
- (iv) If she doesn't play any games, she will become inactive and lazy.
- (v) Unless that little bird flies away quickly, the cat will pounce and eat it up.

## Writing

Q.1 A new revised volume of Issac Asimov's short stories has just been released. Order one set. Write a letter to the publisher Mindfame Private Limited, 1632 Asaf Ali Road, New Delhi, requesting that a set be sent you by Value Payable Post (VPP), and giving your address. Your letter will have the following parts:-

1. Addresses of the sender and receiver
2. The salutation
3. The body of the letter
4. The closing phrases and signature.

**Answer :**

15/21 GK International School

Faridabad, Haryana

5 April 2017

1632, Asaf Ali Road

M/s Mindfame Private Limited

New Delhi - 2

Respected Sir,

It has come to my knowledge that a newly revised volume of Issac Asimov's short stories has recently been released. The stories are both interesting and entertaining for students. They enhance their morale and boost fellow-feeling along with a sense of patriotism. I would like to place

an order of one set of the same via Value Payable Post on the address mentioned above. Kindly send it at the earliest and please allow the reasonable discount meant for our institution. Request your packer to ensure proper safety of the set.

Yours Sincerely  
Signature

### **The Road not Taken**

Q.1A Where does the traveller find himself? What problem does he face?

Ans.: The traveller finds himself at a point where two roads diverged in a yellow wood. As he is a sole traveller, he faces the situation of choosing one among the two diverging paths.

Q.1 B Discuss what these phrases mean to you:

- (i) A yellow wood.
- (ii) It was grassy and wanted wear.
- (iii) The passing there.
- (iv) Leaves no step had trodden black.
- (v) How way leads on to way.

Ans. : (i) A yellow wood: A yellow wood symbolizes decaying and decomposing leaves which had turned yellow and filled the jungle.

(ii) It was grassy and wanted wear: The phrase describes the road which is full of grass. Wanted wear further throws light on the idea that it had not been used much by travellers.

(iii) The passing there: The path used by the passersby.

(iv) Leaves no step had trodden black: The leaves had not turned black in colour because of less people stepping on them. It could have represented a path which was not chosen often by travellers due to uncertainty.

(v) How way leads on to way: This phrase symbolizes certain decisions that an individual takes in life which could pave the way for many other decisions in future.

Q.1 C Is there any difference between the two roads as the poet describes them -

(i) In stanzas two and three?

(ii) In the last two lines of the poem?

Ans.: (i) In stanza two, the poet explains that the only difference between the two roads was that the road he took had a better claim because it was covered with grass and not much travellers seemed to have used that path. Besides this, both the roads had been equally worn down by the passersby travelling on them.

In stanza three, the poet puts forward his observation that both the roads were equally covered with leaves on which no one seemed to have stepped.

(ii) In the last two lines of the poem, the poet says that there is a difference between the two roads and conveys the message that he took the decision of travelling on the less used path and it is this decision which made a substantial difference to his life and experience.

Q.1 D What do you think the last two lines of the poem mean? (Looking back, does the poet regret his choice or accept it?)

Ans.: The poet makes a different choice by choosing the road that was less used by other people which he feels has been responsible for shaping his journey and bringing about a change in his life.

No, he does not regret taking such a decision and instead accepts the reality of the challenging path he chose to walk on.

Q. 2A Have you ever had to make a difficult choice (or do you think you will have difficult choices to make)? How will you make the choice (for what reasons)?

Ans. : No, So far I have never been in a situation where I had to make a difficult choice. However, sooner or later I feel I might come across such a situation in my life. After completing my tenth standard, I will have to choose my subjects and field of study from a wide array of options. This decision I feel would be my first challenging decision as it will surely have a decisive impact on my completion of higher education and further studies. Therefore, I will take this decision carefully keeping in mind my interests and strong points and face the situation courageously.

NOTE\* - Students should express their opinion and share their experiences if any. This is a sample for you reference.

Q. 2B After you have made a choice, do you always think about what might have been, or do you accept the reality?

Ans.: Life is full of struggle and challenges and taking important and crucial decisions is a part of life. I feel that one should never regret after taking a particular decision as it brings about obstacles in having a positive approach towards situations in life. Hence, I believe in sticking to my decisions and face every challenge fearlessly.

NOTE\* - Students should express their opinion and share their experiences if any. This is a sample for you reference.