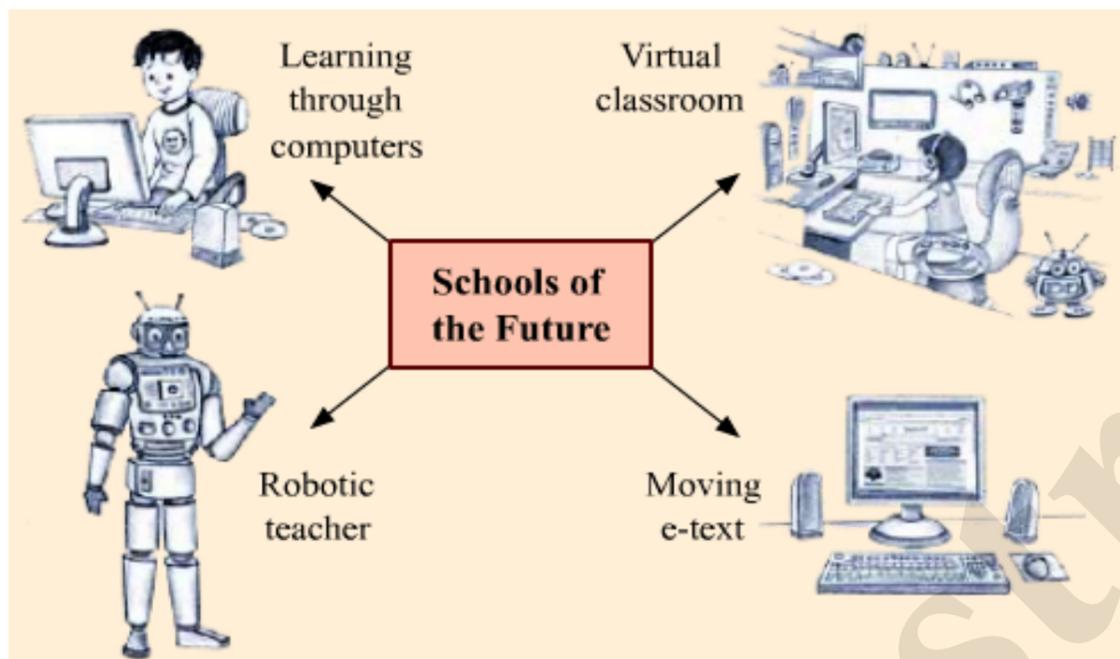


Chapter 1: The Fun They Had

BEFORE YOU READ**Question 1:**

The story we shall read is set in the future, when books and schools as we now know them will perhaps not exist. How will children study then? The diagram below may give you some ideas.

**Answer:**

In future, students will perhaps study in virtual classrooms and read e-texts on computers. More and more dependence on computers and technology for learning purposes is expected; and it is not unlikely that human teachers would be replaced by robotic ones.

(A model answer has been provided for students' reference. It is strongly recommended that students prepare the answer based on their own understanding.)

Question 2:

In pairs, discuss three things that you like the best about your school and three things about your school that you would like to change. Write them down.

Answer:

Three things that I like best about my school are:

1. the morning assembly, which gives a good start to our day.
2. the time to pursue a vocational activity of our choice in the extracurricular activity period.
3. the teachers of my school, who clear all our doubts patiently.

Three things I would like to change about my school are:

1. the small options of food items that are offered in the school canteen.
2. the limited time period of our recess.
3. the number of school trips.

(The above given points are suggestive. It is strongly recommended that students prepare the answer on their own.)

Question 3:

Have you ever read words on the television (or computer) screen? Can you imagine a time when all books will be on computers, and there will be no books printed on paper? Would you like such books better?

Answer:

Yes, I have read e-texts on the computer screen.

Now-a-days, most of the books can also be read online. It can be foreseen that in the future, online and electronic texts shall replace the printed books.

I think such books are better in some respects because, through them, we can extend our scope of knowledge. These books are durable and environment friendly. They do not damage the forest cover of our planet. However, learning without reading from the printed books can turn it into a mechanical activity.

(A model answer has been provided for students' reference. It is strongly recommended that students prepare the answer based on their own experience and understanding.)

Thinking about the Text

Activity: Calculate how many years and months ahead from now Margie's diary entry is.

Answer:

Directions for activity: The answer is to be calculated by deducting the present date from the date of Margie's diary entry, i.e. 17 May 2157. If the present date is 17 June 2021, the answer will be 136 years and 11 months. Hence, for this particular date, the answer to this question will be as follows:

Margie's diary entry is 136 years and 11 months ahead from now.

Question I: Answer these questions in a few words or a couple of sentences each.

1. How old are Margie and Tommy?

Answer:

Margie is eleven while Tommy is thirteen years old.

2. What did Margie write in her diary?

Answer:

Margie wrote in her diary, Today Tommy found a real book!

3. Had Margie ever seen a book before?

Answer:

No, Margie had never seen a book before.

4. What things about the book did she find strange?

Answer:

Margie found it strange that the words printed on a book stood still instead of moving the way they did on a screen. She also found it odd that the words on a page always remained the same as the first time they were read. Besides, the idea that someone would write a book about schools was itself strange for Margie.

5. What do you think a telebook is?

Answer:

A telebook is a book that can be read on screen. Words move on the screen for the readers to read.

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

Answer:

Margie's school was in her home itself, right next to her bedroom.

No, she did not have any classmates.

7. What subjects did Margie and Tommy learn?

Answer:

Margie and Tommy learnt geography, history and arithmetic.

Question II: Answer the following with reference to the story.

1. 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 says these words.
- (ii) It refers to the television screen.
- (iii) Tommy is comparing the television screen with printed books of the earlier times.

2. 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) The word they refers to the students who studied in the old kind of schools, centuries before the time the story is set in.
- (ii) Here, the term regular refers to the mechanical teachers that Tommy and Margie has.
- (iii) The mechanical teacher is contrasted with the teacher of the earlier times, who was a man.

Question III: Answer each of these questions in a short paragraph (about 30 words).

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

Answer:

Margie and Tommy had mechanical teachers with large black screens that flashed lessons and questions. These teachers had slots where the students had to put their homework and test papers.

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

Answer:

Margie had been consistently failing to perform well in the geography tests given by her mechanical teacher. In order to find out the reason behind this, her mother sent for the County Inspector.

3. What did he do?

Answer:

The County Inspector took apart the teacher and after examining it, assembled it again. He slowed up the geography sector of the teacher because it was 'geared up a little too quick' for an average ten-year old.

4. 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 adjusted at a higher level.

In order to help her, the County Inspector slowed down this sector to an average ten-year level.

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

Answer:

Once, Tommy's teacher was taken away for nearly a month because its history sector had blanked out completely.

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

Answer:

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

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

Answer:

Tommy says that the old kind of school existed 'centuries ago'. They had a teacher, who was a man. This teacher taught in a special building, where all the kids assembled and learned the same things according to their respective ages.

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

Answer:

Tommy says that the teacher of the old kind were men, who taught the students inside a special building. The teachers taught the children in groups and gave them homework and asked them questions.

Question IV: Answer each of these questions in two or three paragraphs (100 - 150 words)

1. 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. These teachers were basically large black screens on which the lessons were shown and questions were asked. These teachers were adjusted according to the age and potential of the student concerned. They had a slot in which the students had to put their homework and test papers. The mechanical teacher immediately calculated the marks for the answers written in punch codes by the students. However, these teachers were prone to technical and mechanical failure and troubles.

Their schools were in their homes itself. In fact, Margie's school was right next to her bedroom. Students did not have classmates. They had regular days and hours for school. The mechanical teacher always turned on at the same time every day except Saturdays and Sundays.

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

Answer:

Margie hated school because it was not fun. She hated the large black screen and the way she had to insert the homework and test papers in the slot on the mechanical teacher. She disliked the fact that she had to write her answers in a punch code. Besides, her hatred for school was amplified by her failure to fare well in the geography tests given by her mechanical teacher.

Margie imagined the old kind of school with kids from the entire neighbourhood coming together, laughing and shouting in the schoolyard. She imagined that they would sit together in the classroom and go home together at the end of the day. They would learn the same things and could help one another with the homework. Also, the teachers were people, making the learning process more interactive. All these aspects made her believe that the old kind of school must have been fun.

3. 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 than the school in the story. Studying and answering questions seems to be a boring idea without the presence of classmates. Writing homework in punch codes and that too without anybody's help would be draining. Children develop a better understanding about each other and their surroundings when they go to a school and interact with others.

Human teachers are people are more understanding and accommodating than mechanical ones that are programmed to teach in a specific way. The excitement in waiting for the marks scored in exams is greater when one is sitting in a classroom with fellow students. It does not have the same effect when marks are calculated immediately after a test has been taken. Therefore, schools today are more fun than the school in the story as they are more interactive and promote a healthier way of learning.

Thinking about Language

Question 1:

1. 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. (i) Awfully

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.

(ii) Sorrowfully

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.

(iii) Completely

They had once taken Tommy's teacher away for nearly a month because the history sector had blanked out completely.

(iv) Loftily

He added loftily, pronouncing the word carefully, "Centuries ago."

(v) Carefully

He added loftily, pronouncing the word carefully, "Centuries ago."

(vi) Differently

"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."

(vii) Quickly

"I didn't say I didn't like it," Margie said quickly.

(viii) Nonchalantly

"May be," he said nonchalantly.

2. 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.

3. Make adverbs from these adjectives.

(i) angry _____

(iii) merry _____

(v) easy _____

(vii) tidy _____

(ii) happy _____

(iv) sleepy _____

(vi) nosiy _____

(viii) gloomy _____

Answer:

(i) angry Angrily

(iii) merry Merrily

(v) easy Easily

(vii) tidy Tidily

(ii) happy Happily

(iv) sleepy Sleepily

(vi) nosiy Noisily

(viii) gloomy Gloomily

Question II:

If **Not** and **Unless**

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

Answer:

1. If I don't go to Anu's party tonight, she will be angry.
2. If you don't telephone the hotel to order food, you will miss your evening meal.
3. Unless you promise to write back, I will not write to you.
4. If she doesn't play any games, she will become dull and lazy.
5. Unless that little bird flies away quickly, the cat will pounce on it.

Writing

Question 1:

A new revised volume of Isaac 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 to you by Value Payable Post (VPP), and giving your address. Your letter will have the following parts.

- Addresses of the sender and receiver
- The salutation
- The body of the letter
- The closing phrases and signature

Answer:

House no. 23

Tilak Nagar

Delhi- 95

12 December 2013

The Publisher

Mindfame Private Limited

1632, Asaf Ali Road

New Delhi

Sir,

Subject: Order for one set of Isaac Asimov's revised volume of short stories

This is to place an order for one set of Isaac Asimov's revised volume of short stories that has been recently released. The details of the required book have been given below:

Name of the Book	Author	Quantity
New Collection of Short Stories(Revised)	Isaac Asimov	One set

Enclosed is a demand draft of Rupees three hundred and fifty five only, which includes the VPP charges. I shall appreciate your prompt delivery by VPP at the address mentioned above.

Yours sincerely,

Pulkit Rana.

Speaking

In groups of four discuss the following topic.

The Schools of the Future Will Have No Books and No Teachers!

Your group can decide to speak for or against the motion. After this, each group will select a speaker to present its views to the entire class.

Answer:

(This is a creative exercise meant to be done by the students through discussions in class. However, a few pointers are being given below that may help in framing your arguments.)

For

- with advancement in science and technology, education system would change
- books replaced by electronic texts
- paper-free books help in controlling the loss of forest cover
- electronic books are more durable
- regular timings for schools will make students more disciplined
- no transportation required; schools in homes itself
- mechanical teachers can be adjusted according to the potential of each individual children

Against

- personal interaction with teachers and fellow students will be lost

- this will result in reduction of social activity
- no extracurricular activities
- too much dependent on technology will make the learning process mechanical
- health problems due to extensive use of computers
- aesthetic pleasure associated with books will be lost

Champpstreet