

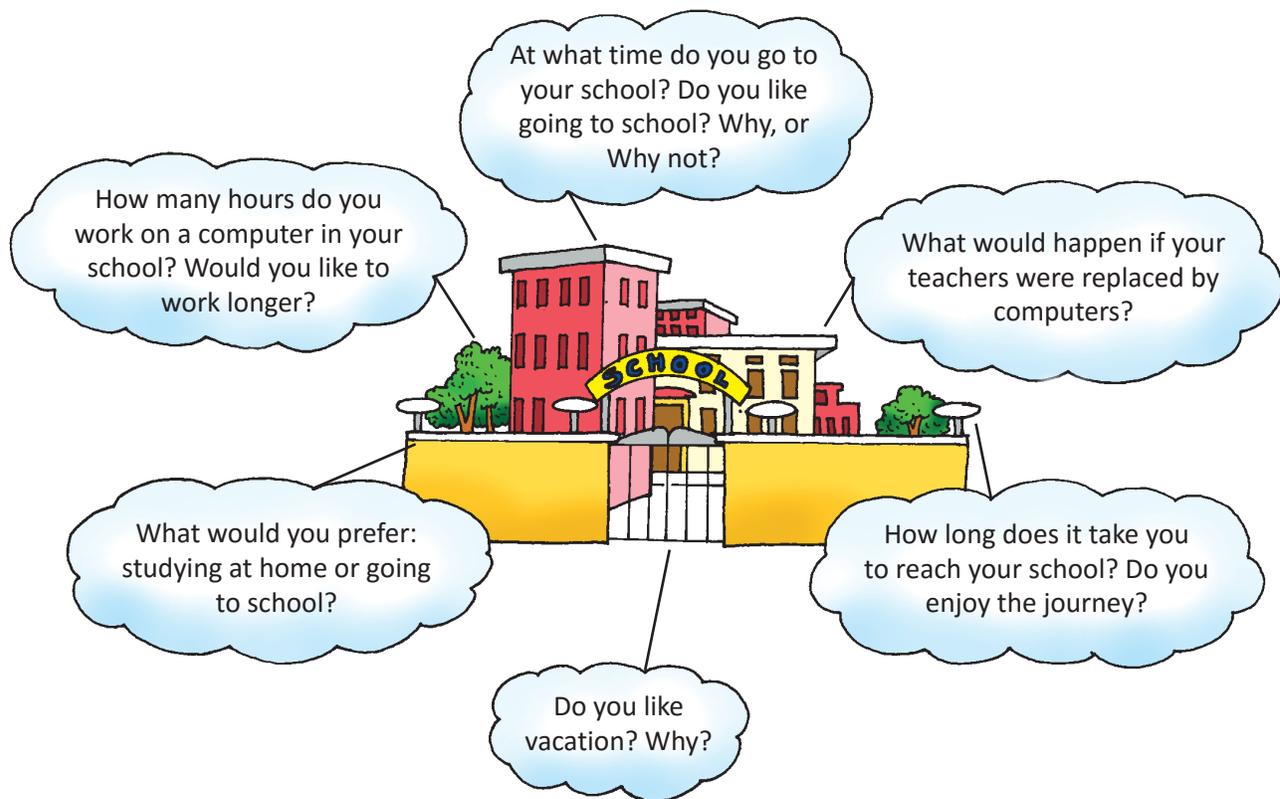
3

The Fun They Had

by Isaac Asimov

Pre-reading Task

1. Read these questions and share your responses with your partner.



Now read this story by Isaac Asimov about the school experience of two children living in 2155.

Margie even wrote about it that night in her diary. On the page headed 17 May, 2155, she wrote, 'Today Tommy found a real book!'

It was a very old book. Margie's grandfather once said that when he was a little boy *his* grandfather told him that there was a time when all stories were printed on paper.



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. And then, when they turned back to the page before, it had the same words on it that it had when they read it the first time.

‘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?’

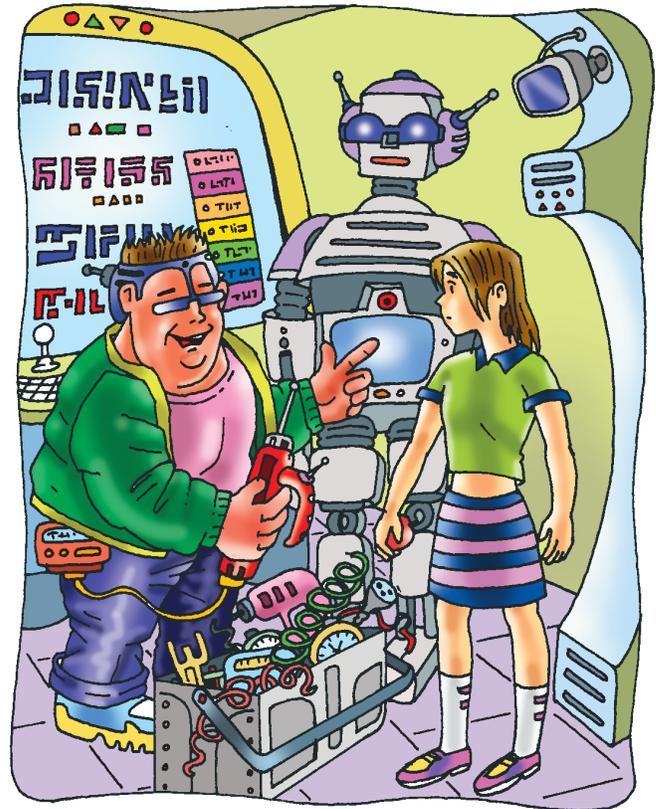
‘In my house.’ He pointed without looking, because he was busy reading. ‘In the **attic**.’

‘What’s it about?’

‘School.’

Margie was scornful. ‘School? What’s there to write about school? I hate school.’ 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.

He was a round little man with a red face and a whole box of tools with dials and wires. He smiled at her and gave her an apple, then took the teacher apart. Margie had hoped he wouldn’t know how to put it together again,



crinkly: wrinkled

attic: a room at the top of a building

but he knew how to set it all right and after an hour or so, there it was again, large and black and ugly with a big screen on which all the lessons were shown and the questions were asked. That wasn't so bad. The part she hated most was the slot where she had to put homework and test papers. She always had to write them out in a punch code they made her learn when she was six years old, and the mechanical teacher calculated the marks in no time.

The Inspector had smiled after he was finished and patted her head. He said to her mother, 'It's not the little girl's fault, Mrs Jones. I think the geography sector was geared a little too quick. Those things happen sometimes. I've slowed it up to an average ten-year level. Actually, the overall pattern of her progress is quite satisfactory.' And he patted Margie's head again.

Margie was disappointed. She had been hoping they would take the teacher away altogether. They had once taken Tommy's teacher away for nearly a month because his history sector had blanked out completely.

So she said to Tommy, 'Why would anyone write about school?'

Tommy looked at her with very superior eyes. 'Because it's not our kind of school, stupid. This is the old kind of school that they had hundreds and hundreds of years ago.' He added loftily, pronouncing the words carefully, '*Centuries ago.*'

Margie was hurt. 'Well, I don't know what kind of school they had all that time ago.' She read the book over his shoulder for a while, then said, 'Anyway, they had a teacher.'

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

'A man? How could a man be a teacher?'

'Well, he just told the boys and girls things and gave them homework and asked them questions.'

'A man isn't smart enough.'

'Sure he is. My father knows as much as my teacher.'

'He can't. A man can't know as much as a teacher.'

'He knows almost as much, I bet.'

Margie wasn't prepared to dispute that. She said, 'I wouldn't want a strange man in my house to teach me.'

Tommy screamed with laughter, 'You don't know much, Margie. The teachers didn't live in the house. They had a special building and all the kids went there.'

‘And all the kids learned the same thing?’

‘Sure, if they were the same age.’

‘But my mother says a teacher had to be adjusted to fit the mind of each boy and girl it teaches and that each kid has to be taught differently.’

‘Just the same, they didn’t do it that way then. If you don’t like it, you don’t have to read the book.’



‘I didn’t say I didn’t like it,’ Margie said quickly. She wanted to read about those funny schools.

They weren’t even half finished when Margie’s mother called, ‘Margie! School!’

Margie looked up. ‘Not yet, mamma.’

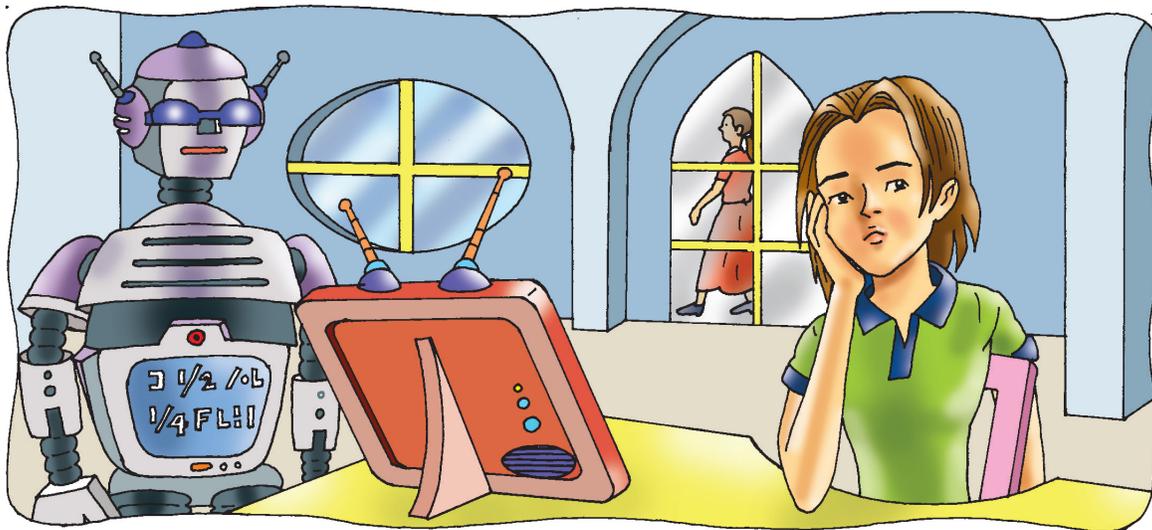
‘Now,’ said Mrs Jones. ‘And it’s probably time for Tommy, too.’

Margie said to Tommy, ‘Can I read the book some more with you after school?’

‘Maybe,’ he said, **nonchalantly**. He walked away whistling, the dusty old book tucked beneath his arm.

Margie went into the schoolroom. It was right next to her bedroom, and the mechanical teacher was on and waiting for her. It was always on at the same time every day except Saturday and Sunday, because her mother said little girls learned better if they learned at regular hours.

The screen was lit up, and it said, ‘Today’s arithmetic lesson is on the addition of proper fractions. Please insert yesterday’s homework in the proper slot.’



nonchalantly: calmly

Margie did so with a sigh. She was thinking about the old schools they had when her grandfather's grandfather was a little boy. All the kids from the whole neighbourhood came laughing and shouting in the schoolyard, sitting together in the schoolroom, going home together at the end of the day. They learned the same things so they could help one another in the homework and talk about it.

And the teachers were people....

The mechanical teacher was flashing on the screen: 'When we add the fractions $\frac{1}{2}$ and $\frac{1}{4}$ —'

Margie was thinking about how the kids must have loved it in the old days. She was thinking about the fun they had.

I Understanding the Story

A. Complete the following statements.

1. Tommy found a real book about _____

2. The part of her mechanical teacher that Margie hated the most was _____

3. Once the inspector had taken away Tommy's teacher because _____
_____.
4. Margie wrote her homework in _____, which she had been taught when she was six years old.
5. Margie's school was located _____.
6. Margie's school was off on _____ and _____.

B. Answer the following questions in about 30 words each.

1. What was awfully funny about the words written in the book found by Tommy?
2. Why had Margie started hating her school more than ever?
3. What was the complication in the geography sector of Margie's teacher?
4. 'Margie thought he would not know how to put it together again.'

Whom do 'he' and 'it' refer to? Why did Margie not want 'it' to be put together again?



II HOTS

- A. 'What a waste!' What is Tommy referring to as a waste? Is it really a waste? Discuss.
- B. 'How could a man be a teacher?' says Margie. But we do have human teachers. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of having a computer as a teacher as compared to a human teacher.

III Life Skills

Respond to the points given in the first column and complete the table. You may discuss them with your partner.

Points	The school in which you study	The school in which Margie studied
Distance to be travelled to reach the school		
Interaction with the peer group		
Percentage of time devoted to academic development in school		
Availability of sports and fitness-related exercises		
Availability of co-curricular activities		
The use of technology in the teaching-learning process		
Cultivation of human values during the prayer time or story-telling sessions		
Competence and knowledge levels of the teachers		

IV Values

'Margie was thinking about the fun, they, who went to a school to study along with their friends, had.' Why did Margie think going to school could be fun? Do you and your friends also think so? Discuss.

V Writing Skills

After discussing the pros and cons of the two types of schools, can we try to create a situation wherein the best aspects of both the schools are included? Write an article for your school magazine expressing your opinion about the perfect school you dream of.

About the Author

Isaac Asimov (1920–92) was a prolific Russian-born American writer well-known for his science fiction. He had the canny knack of transporting young reader's imagination to the future world dominated by computers and robots. It is a world of fun and fantasy, but the frightening spectacle of totally mechanical existence leads to meaningful introspection too. Asimov's popular works include *Nightfall*, *Foundation*, *Second Foundation*, *The Caves of Steel* and *The End of Eternity*.



4

Father's Help

by R. K. Narayan

Pre-reading Task

1. Have you ever experienced Monday morning blues while going to school after an enjoyable weekend? Share some such experiences with your friends.
2. Suppose you do not wish to go to school some day. Do you—
 - pretend to have a headache,
 - tell your parents that you do not have any important class,
 - tell your parents the truth,
 - make some other excuse?

Share your response with your friends.

Now read the following story about Swaminathan, whose excuse for not going to school lands him into trouble.

Lying in bed, Swami realised with a shudder that it was Monday morning. It looked as though only a moment ago it had been the last period on Friday; already Monday was here. He hoped that an earthquake would reduce the school building to dust, but that good building—Albert Mission School—had withstood similar prayers for over a hundred years now. At nine o'clock Swaminathan **wailed**, 'I have a headache.' His mother said, 'Why don't you go to school in a **jutka**?'

'So that I may be completely dead at the other end? Have you any idea what it means to be jolted in a **jutka**?'

'Have you many important lessons today?'

'Important! Bah! That geography teacher has been teaching the same lesson for over a year now. And we have arithmetic, which means for a whole period we are going to be beaten by the teacher.Important lessons!'



wailed: cried with pain

jutka: rickshaw

And mother generously suggested that Swami might stay at home.

At 9:30, when he ought to have been shouting in the school prayer hall, Swami was lying on the bench in mother's room. Father asked him, 'Have you no school today?'

'Headache,' Swami replied.

'Nonsense! Dress up and go.'

'Headache.'

'Loaf about less on Sundays and you will be without a headache on Monday.'

Swami knew how **stubborn** his father could be and changed his tactics. 'I can't go so late to the class.'

'I agree, but you'll have to; it is your own fault. You should have asked me before deciding to stay away.'

'What will the teacher think if I go so late?'

'Tell him you had a headache and so are late.'

'He will beat me if I say so.'

'Will he? Let us see. What is his name?'

'Samuel.'

'Does he beat the boys?'

'He is very violent, especially with boys who come late. Some days ago a boy was made to stay on his knees for a whole period in a corner of the class because he came late, and that too after getting six cuts from the cane and having his ears twisted. I wouldn't like to go late to Samuel's class.'

'If he is so violent, why not tell your headmaster about it?'

'They say that even the headmaster is afraid of him. He is such a violent man.'

And then Swami gave a **lurid** account of Samuel's violence; how when he started caning he would not stop till he saw blood on the boy's hand, which he made the boy press to his forehead like a vermilion marking. Swami hoped that with this his father would be made to see that he couldn't go to his class late. But Father's behaviour took an unexpected turn. He became excited. 'What do these swine mean by beating our children? They must be driven out of service. I will see...'



stubborn: obstinate

lurid: shocking

The result was he proposed to send Swami late to his class as a kind of challenge. He was also going to send a letter with Swami to the headmaster. No amount of protest from Swami was of any avail; Swami had to go to school.

By the time he was ready, Father had composed a long letter to the headmaster, put it in an envelope and sealed it.

‘What have you written, Father?’ Swaminathan asked **apprehensively**.

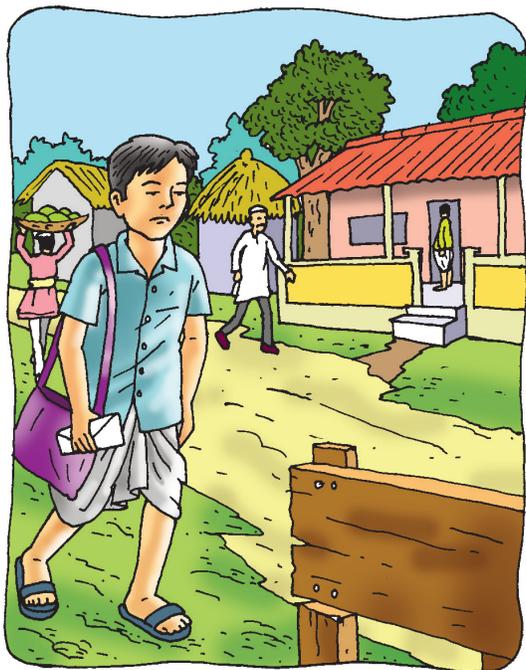
‘Nothing for you. Give it to your headmaster and go to your class.’

‘Have you written anything about our teacher Samuel?’

‘Plenty of things about him. When your headmaster reads it, he will probably dismiss Samuel from the school and hand him over to the police.’

‘What has he done, Father?’

‘Well, there is a full account of everything he has done in the letter. Give it to your headmaster and go to your class. You must bring an acknowledgement from him in the evening.’



Swami went to school feeling that he was the worst **perjurer** on earth. His conscience bothered him: he wasn't at all sure if he had been accurate in his description of Samuel. He could not decide how much of what he had said was imagined and how much of it was real. He stopped for a moment on the roadside to make up his mind about Samuel: he was not such a bad man after all. Personally he was much more **genial** than the rest; often he cracked a joke or two centring around Swami's inactions, and Swami took it as a mark of Samuel's personal regard for him. But there was no doubt that he treated people badly... His cane skinned people's hands. Swami cast his mind about for an instance of this. There was none within his knowledge. Years and years ago he was reputed to

apprehensively: anxiously

perjurer: false witness

genial: friendly and pleasant



have skinned the knuckles of a boy in First Standard and made him smear the blood on his face. No one had actually seen it. But year after year the story persisted among the boys... Swami's head was dizzy with confusion in regard to Samuel's character—whether he was good or bad, whether he deserved the **allegations** in the letter or not... Swami felt an **impulse** to run home and beg his father to take back the letter. But Father was an obstinate man.

As he approached the yellow building he realised that he was perjuring himself and was ruining his teacher. Probably the headmaster would dismiss Samuel and then the police would chain him and put him in jail. For all this disgrace, humiliation and suffering who would be responsible? Swami shuddered. The more he thought of Samuel, the more he grieved for him—the dark face, his small red-streaked eyes, his thin line of moustache, his unshaven cheek and chin, his yellow coat; everything filled Swami with sorrow. As he felt the **bulge** of the letter in his pocket, he felt like an **executioner**. For a moment he was angry with his father and wondered why he should not fling into the gutter the letter of a man so unreasonable and stubborn.

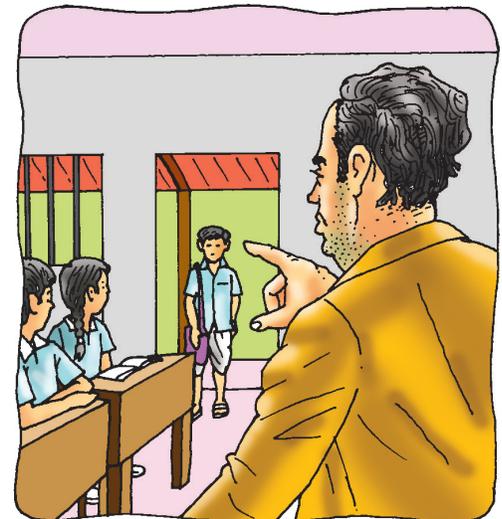
As he entered the school gate an idea occurred to him, a sort of solution. He wouldn't deliver the letter to the headmaster immediately, but at the end of the day—to that extent he would disobey his father and exercise his independence. There was nothing wrong in it, and Father would not know it anyway. If the letter was given at the end of the day there was a chance that Samuel might do something to justify the letter.

Swami stood at the entrance to his class. Samuel was teaching arithmetic. He looked at Swami for a moment. Swami stood hoping that Samuel would fall on him and tear his skin off. But Samuel merely asked, 'Are you just coming to the class?'

'Yes, sir.'

'You are half an hour late.'

'I know it.' Swami hoped that he would be attacked now. He almost prayed: 'God of Thirupathi, please make Samuel beat me.'



allegations: charges
executioner: hangman

impulse: urge

bulge: big size

‘Why are you late?’

Swami wanted to reply, ‘Just to see what you can do.’ But he merely said, ‘I have a headache, sir.’

‘Then why did you come to the school at all?’

A most unexpected question from Samuel. ‘My father said that I shouldn’t miss the class, sir,’ said Swami.

This seemed to impress Samuel. ‘Your father is quite right; a very sensible man. We want more parents like him.’

‘Oh, dear!’ Swami thought. ‘You don’t know what my father has done to you.’ He was more puzzled than ever about Samuel’s character.

‘All right, go to your seat. Have you still a headache?’

‘Slightly, sir.’

Swami went to his seat with a bleeding heart. He had never met a man so good as Samuel. The teacher was inspecting the home lessons, which usually produced (at least, according to Swami’s impression) scenes of great violence. Notebooks would be flung at faces, boys would be abused, caned and made to stand up on benches. But today Samuel appeared to have developed more tolerance and gentleness. He pushed away the bad books, just touched people with the cane, never made anyone stand up for more than a few minutes. Swami’s turn came. He almost thanked God for the chance.

‘Swaminathan, where is your homework?’

‘I have not done any homework, sir,’ he said **blandly**. There was a pause.

‘Why—headache?’ asked Samuel.

‘Yes, sir.’

‘All right, sit down.’ Swami sat down, wondering what had come over Samuel. The period came to an end, and Swami felt **desolate**. The last period for the day was again taken by Samuel. He came this time to teach them Indian history. The period began at 3:45 and ended at 4:30. Swaminathan had sat through the previous periods thinking acutely. He could not devise any means of provoking Samuel. When the clock struck four, Swami felt desperate. Half an hour more. Samuel was reading the red text, the portion describing Vasco da Gama’s arrival in India. The boys listened **in half-languor**. Swami suddenly asked at the top of his voice, ‘Why did not Columbus come to India, sir?’



blandly: gently

desolate: miserable

in half-languor: with a dull mind

'He lost his way.'

'I can't believe it; it is unbelievable, sir.'

'Why?'

'Such a great man. Would he have not known the way?'

'Don't shout. I can hear you quite well.'

'I am not shouting, sir; this is my ordinary voice, which God has given me. How can I help it?'

'Shut up and sit down.'

Swaminathan sat down, feeling slightly happy at his success. The teacher threw a puzzled, suspicious glance at him and resumed his lessons.

His next chance occurred when Sankar of the first bench got up and asked, 'Sir, was Vasco da Gama the very first person to come to India?'

Before the teacher could answer, Swami shouted from the back bench, 'That's what they say.'

The teacher and all the boys looked at Swami. The teacher was puzzled by Swami's **obtrusive** behaviour today. 'Swaminathan, you are shouting again.'

'I am not shouting, sir. How can I help my voice, given by God?' The school clock struck a quarter-hour. A quarter more. Swami felt he must do something drastic in fifteen minutes. Samuel had no doubt **scowled** at him and snubbed him, but it was hardly adequate. Swami felt that with a little more effort Samuel could be made to deserve dismissal and imprisonment.

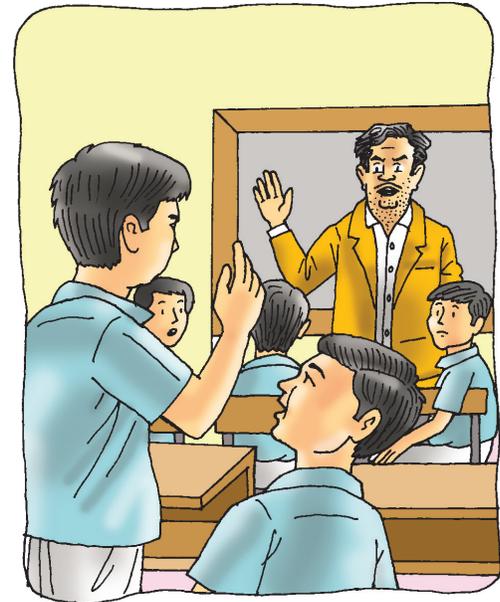
The teacher came to the end of a section in the textbook and stopped. He proposed to spend the remaining few minutes putting questions to the boys. He ordered the whole class to put away their books, and asked someone in the second row, 'What is the date of Vasco da Gama's arrival in India?'

Swaminathan shot up and screeched, '1648, December 20.'

'You needn't shout,' said the teacher. He asked. 'Has your headache made you mad?'

'I have no headache now, sir,' replied the thunderer brightly.

'Sit down, you idiot.' Swami was thrilled at being called an idiot. 'If you get up again, I will cane you,' said the teacher. Swami sat down, feeling happy at the promise. The



obtrusive: difficult to understand

scowled: looked angrily

teacher then asked, 'I am going to put a few questions on the Mughal period. Among the Mughal emperors, whom would you call the greatest, whom the strongest and whom the most religious emperor?'

Swami got up. As soon as he was seen, the teacher said emphatically, 'Sit down.'

'I want to answer, sir.'

'Sit down.'

'No, sir; I want to answer.'

'What did I say I'd do if you got up again?'

'You said you would cane me and peel the skin off my knuckles and make me press it on my forehead.'

'All right; come here.'

Swaminathan left his seat joyfully and hopped on the platform. The teacher took out his cane from the drawer and shouted angrily, 'Open your hand, you little devil.' He whacked three wholesome cuts on each palm. Swami received them without **blenching**.

After half a dozen the teacher asked, 'Will these do, or do you want some more?'

Swami merely held out his hand again, and received two more; and the bell rang. Swami jumped down from the platform with a light heart, though his hands were smarting. He picked up his books, took out the letter lying in his pocket and ran to the headmaster's room. He found the door locked.

He asked the peon, 'Where is the headmaster?'

'Why do you want him?'

'My father has sent a letter for him.'

'He has taken the afternoon off and won't come back for a week. You can give the letter to the assistant headmaster. He will be here now.'

'Who is he?'

'Your teacher, Samuel. He will be here in a second.'



blenching: showing signs of fear

Swaminathan fled from the place. As soon as Swami went home with the letter, Father remarked, 'I knew you wouldn't deliver it, you coward.'

'I swear our headmaster is on leave,' Swaminathan began.

Father replied, 'Don't lie in addition to being a coward...'

Swami held up the envelope and said, 'I will give this to the headmaster as soon as he is back...' Father snatched it from his hand, tore it up and thrust it into the wastepaper basket under his table. He muttered, 'Don't come to me for help even if Samuel **throttles** you. You deserve your Samuel.'

I Understanding the Story

A. Tick 'T' for true statements and 'F' for false ones.

1. Swami did not want to go to school because he had a headache. T F
2. Swami's school began at 9:00 a.m. T F
3. Samuel taught arithmetic and history to Swami and his class-fellows. T F
4. Swami decided to fling the complaint letter written by his father into a gutter. T F
5. Swami was overjoyed at getting the complaint letter against Samuel. T F
6. Swami reached the school an hour late. T F
7. Samuel had two arithmetic periods with Swami's class on Monday. T F
8. Samuel gave Swami eight cuts of cane. T F
9. Swami delivered the complaint letter to the headmaster after the last bell rang. T F

B. Answer the following questions in about 30 words each.

1. How did Swami's father react when Swami told him that he was not going to school? How different was his reaction from that of Swami's mother?
2. 'Father's behaviour took an unexpected turn.' What was unexpected about Swami's father's behaviour?

throttles: strangles

3. Why didn't Swami hand over the complaint letter to the headmaster in the morning?
4. Could Swami deliver the complaint letter to the headmaster after the school? Why/Why not?

II HOTS

'Swami went to school feeling that he was the worst perjurer on earth.' Describe Swami's feelings at this point. Why did he feel like 'the worst perjurer'? (About 60-80 words)

III Life Skills

What impression have you formed of Swami's relation with his father? How should children and their parents behave with each other?

IV Values

Swami gives a very unfair description of Samuel to his father. How would you have behaved, had you been in Swami's place?

V Writing Skills

- A. Imagine that you are Swami. Write a diary entry relating your experience with Samuel in the school.
- B. Imagine that you are Samuel. Write a diary entry expressing your surprise at Swami's strange behaviour in the class and your feelings at caning him.

About the Author

R. K. Narayan (1906-2001) was born in Madras (now Chennai) and was educated at Maharaja's College in Mysore. His first novel *Swami and Friends* became immensely popular amongst children. His novel *The Guide* won him the National Prize of the Indian Literary Academy. Most of Narayan's stories are set in a fictitious village in South India—Malgudi. Many of his stories have been adapted for screening on television. 'Swami' and 'The Talkative Man' remain two of his most famous characters.



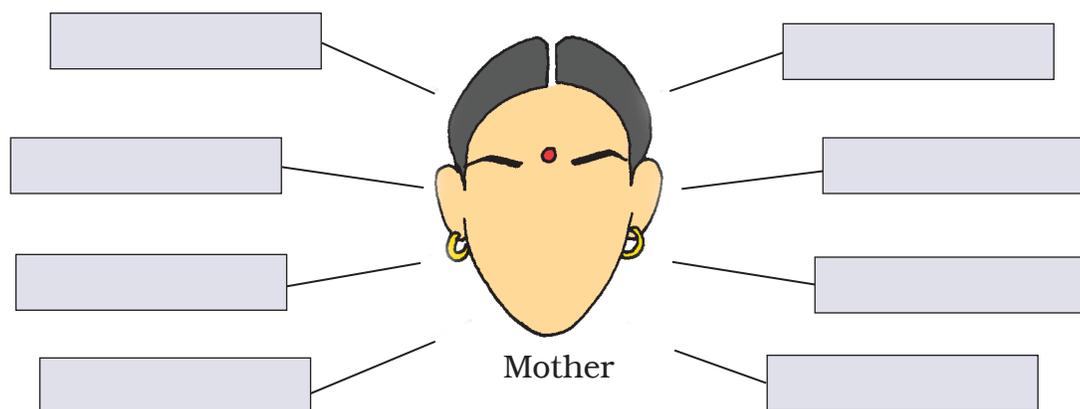
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My Mother

by A. P. J. Abdul Kalam

Pre-reading Task

1. 'God could not be everywhere, so he made mother.' What does this statement mean? Is the comparison between God and mother justified? Share your views with the class.
2. The word 'mother' brings up certain emotions in everyone. Think of some words that you would like to associate with this most wonderful creation of God and write them in the web chart below.

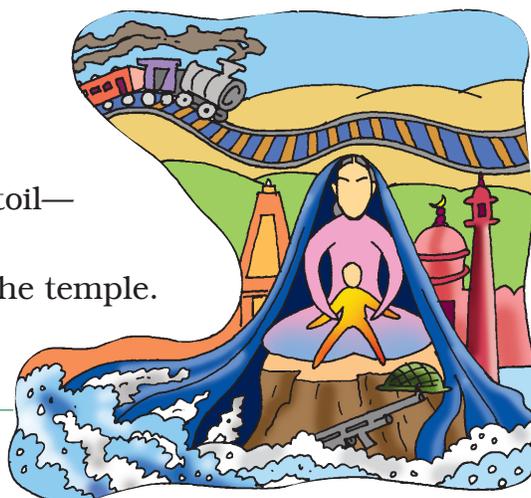


Now read the poem 'My Mother' by A. P. J. Abdul Kalam.

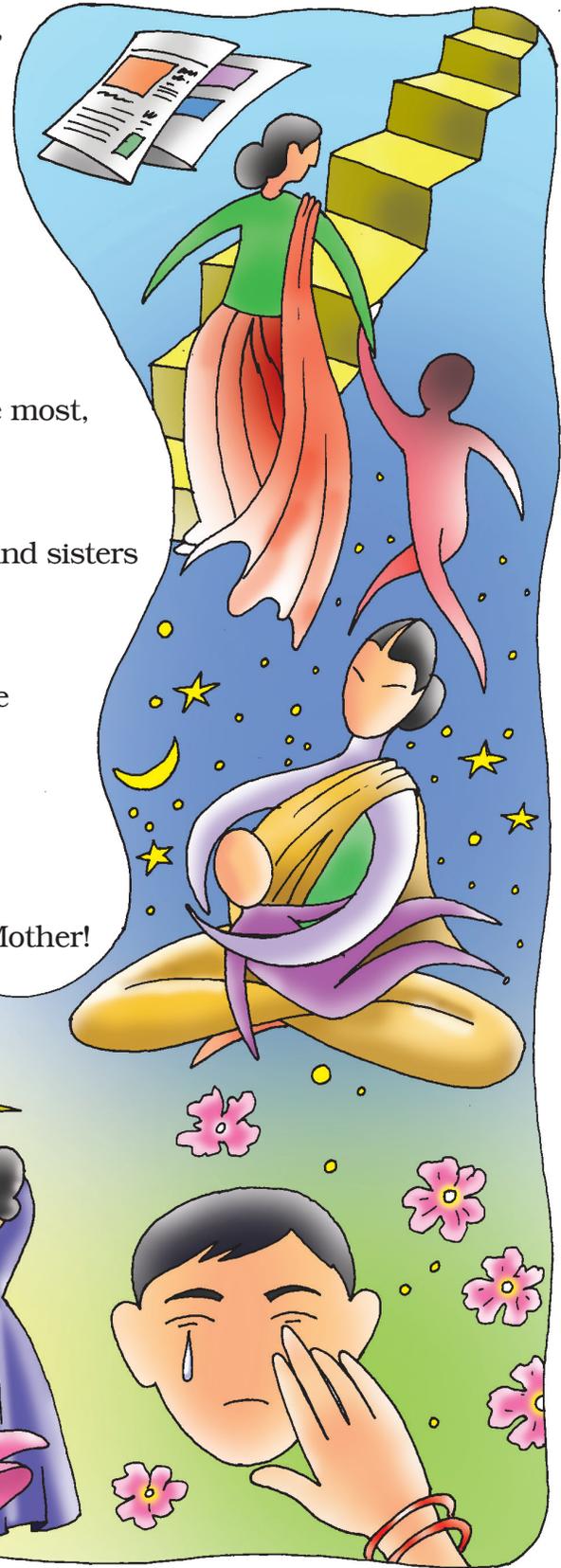
Sea waves, golden sand, pilgrims' faith,
Rameswaram Mosque Street, all merge into one,
 My Mother!
 You come to me like heaven's caring arms.
 I remember the **war days** when life was challenge and toil—
 Miles to walk, hours before sunrise,
 Walking to take lessons from the saintly teacher near the temple.
 Again miles to the Arab teaching school,

Rameswaram Mosque Street: The poet lived in a house on the Mosque Street in Rameswaram.

war days: A. P. J. Abdul Kalam was born on October 15, 1931. So the reference is to World War II, that broke out in 1939.



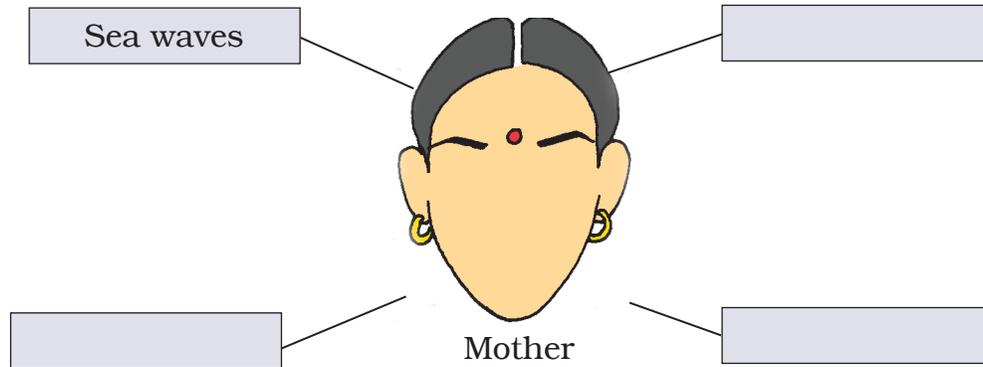
Climb sandy hills to Railway Station Road,
 Collect, **distribute newspapers** to temple city citizens,
 Few hours after sunrise, going to school.
 Evening, business times before study at night.
 All this pain of a young boy,
 My Mother you transformed into pious strength
 With kneeling and bowing five times
 For the Grace of the Almighty only, My Mother.
 Your strong piety is your children's strength,
 You always shared your best with whoever needed the most,
 You always gave, and gave with faith in Him.
 I still remember the day when I was ten.
 Sleeping on your lap to the envy of my elder brothers and sisters
 It was full moon night, my world only you knew
 Mother! My Mother!
 When at midnight I woke with tears falling on my knee
 You knew the pain of your child, My Mother,
 Your caring hands, tenderly removing the pain
 Your love, your care, your faith gave me strength
 To face the world without fear and with His strength.
 We will meet again on the great Judgement Day, My Mother!



distribute newspapers: The poet helped his cousin to distribute newspapers and earned his first wages.

I Understanding the Poem

- A. As the poet thinks of his mother, several images flash across his mind. Write those images in the web chart below.



- B. The poet has beautifully described some personal qualities of his mother. In the table given below, Column A has a list of qualities and Column B has extracts from the poem that suggest those qualities. Match the columns. Some words are given in italics to help you.

Column A
1. helpful
2. understanding
3. religious
4. tender

Column B
you always gave and gave with <i>faith in Him</i> .
your caring hand <i>tenderly</i> removing the pain.
you <i>knew</i> the pain of your child.
<i>shared</i> your best with whoever needed the most.

- C. The poet's childhood days were full of struggle. Find out a few things that the poet had to do in his childhood to help the family.

D. Read the extracts given below and answer the questions that follow.

1. You come to me like heaven's caring arms.

I remember the war days when life was challenge and toil—
Miles to walk, hours before sunrise,

- (a) Who are 'you' and 'me' in the above lines?
- (b) Identify the figure of speech used in the first line and explain it.
- (c) Mention two things that made the poet's life difficult.
- (d) Why did the poet have to walk so much early in the morning?

2. All this pain of a young boy,

My Mother you transformed into pious strength
With kneeling and bowing five times

- (a) Who is the young boy?
- (b) What pain is he talking about?
- (c) What was this pain transformed into? How did this transformation take place?
- (d) What do you understand by 'kneeling and bowing five times'?

II HOTS

How did the poet's mother act as a source of inspiration to the poet?

III Life Skills

'There are many ups and downs in man's life but one should not lose hope.'

Discuss this statement with reference to Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, who became the President of India.

IV Values

'Sleeping on your lap to the envy of elder brothers and sisters...'

Why were the elder brothers and sisters envious of the poet? Is envy good? Discuss.

The word 'mother' evokes powerful emotions in everyone. Think about your mother and write a short poem about her, thanking her for everything she does for you.

About the Author

Late Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam (1931–2015) was the President of India from 2002 to 2007. Popularly known as the 'Missile Man of India', he was known for his dedication to science and commitment to professional excellence. Dr. Kalam had a multi-faceted personality. Besides being a scientist and humanist, he was also an excellent writer. *Wings of Fire* and *Ignited Minds* are two of his very popular books. The poem 'My Mother' has been taken from *Wings of Fire*.

