



## Grade IX

### Lesson 1 - The Fun They Had

Prose

#### Soul of the Chapter

This story is set in the future when children don't have traditional books and schools. It is set about 150 years ahead. One day, Margie, a little girl in the story, makes a diary entry - 'Today Tommy found a real book'. Tommy, a boy of thirteen years, finds an old book. He has heard from his grandfather that there used to be books and separate spacious buildings for schools. When he finds a real book from the attic in his house, he is excited. Tommy and Margie start reading the book and find a lot of new information about the old system of education.

Tommy and Margie do not have formal schools and human teachers. The next room to their bedroom is their schoolroom. They have mechanical teachers. The teacher has a big screen showing all the lessons and questions. There is a slot where each child has to put homework and assignments for evaluation. The mechanical teachers can be adjusted to fit the mind of the students. If there is any fault, it can be corrected. When Margie's performance is not up to the mark in geography, her teacher is readjusted.

When Margie comes to know about the old schools from the book, she starts hating her school. She likes the old schools more than her own school. She thinks what fun the kids might be having - studying, playing and enjoying together.

#### NCERT Folder

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

1. How old are Margie and Tommy?

Margie is eleven and Tommy is thirteen-year old.

2. What did Margie write in her diary?

Margie wrote, "Today Tommy found a real book!"



**3. Had Margie ever seen a book before?**

No, Margie had never seen a book before.

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

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.

**5. What do you think a telebook is?**

A book that can be displayed on a screen is called a telebook.

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

Margie's school was in her home itself. It was right next to her bedroom. No, she did not have any classmates.

**7. What subjects did Margie and Tommy learn?**

Margie and Tommy learn geography, history and arithmetic.

**II. Answer the following with reference to the story.**

**1. "I wouldn't throw it away".**

**a) Who says these words?**

Tommy said these words.

**b) What does 'it' refer to?**

'It' refers to the television screen.

**c) What is it being compared with by the speaker?**

What is comparing the television screen to the real books. He thought that after reading such books, one would have to throw them away but he would never throw away his telebooks.

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

**a) Who does 'they' refer to?**

They refers to the students who studied in the old kind of schools.

**b) What does 'regular' mean here?**

Here, 'regular' refers to the mechanical teachers.

**c) What is it contrasted with?**

The mechanical teacher is contrasted with the human teachers of the earlier times.



### III. Answer each these questions in a short paragraph (about 30 words).

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

The teachers of Margie and Tommy were different from the teachers of today. They were robotic teachers. They were confined to study rooms and taught mechanically.

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

Margie was working hard in geography under the guidance of the mechanical teacher, but there was no improvement in her performance. It only kept getting worse. So Margie's mother sent for the Country Inspector to find out the fault and settle it.

#### 3. What did he do?

The Country Inspector gave Margie an apple and started working on the mechanical teacher. He took it apart and then checked it. Margie wished that the Inspector would not know how to put the mechanical teacher together again. But he managed to reassemble it. He slowed down the geography sector of the teacher which was geared a little faster for an average ten-year-old.

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

Margie was doing badly in geography because the geography sector of the mechanical teacher had been geared a little faster. The Country Inspector rightly told her that she could not be blamed for her poor performance.

The Country Inspector slowed down the geography sector of the mechanical teacher to an average ten-year-level.

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

Once the history sector of Tommy's teacher had blanked out completely.

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

Yes, Margie had regular days and hours for school. This was because her mother believed that learning at regular hours helped little girls learn better. Her mechanical teacher was also on at the same time every day except Saturday and Sunday.

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

Tommy describes the old kind of school as a special building where all kids studied together. There are hundreds of students studying and playing together. They used to shout and laugh together in an open yard.



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

According to Tommy, the old kind of teachers were human beings who taught the students inside a special building. The teachers taught the children in groups and gave them homework and asked them questions.

#### IV. Answer each of these questions in two or three paragraphs (100 - 150)

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

Margie and Tommy have mechanical teachers in their schools. They do not have separate buildings for their schools. The next room to their bedroom is the schoolroom for them. Their teachers are, in fact, robotic teachers. They have sectors of different subjects having set text, speed and level.

The mechanical teachers have a big screen showing lessons and test papers. There is a slot where each child has to put in his homework and test assignments for evaluation. These teachers could evaluate the assignment in no time. They could tell how a child was performing but could never tell why the child was performing badly.

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

Margie did not like her school. The room next to her bedroom was her schoolroom where a robotic teacher used to teach her every day at a fixed time. She did not like taking tests every day. Her robotic teacher was giving her test after test in geography. Her performance was worsening day by day.

She learnt about the old schools from the book found by Tommy. She learnt that the old schools were located in spacious buildings. All the children from the neighbourhood used to go there together. They laughed, shouted and played together. They learnt the same thing and could help one another in their homework. She thought that these schools must have been fun.

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

Yes, I agree with Margie. In the story, there are no schools as such. The room next to their bedroom is their school. They are taught by a mechanical teacher. There are no human feelings. Everything is monotonous. The child has to complete its homework and put it in the



slot meant for it in the machine. But, in the schools today, there are spacious buildings where all the kids from the neighbourhood go together. They are taught by the human teachers. They study and play together. They learn the same things so that they can help one another in their homework.

### Thinking About Language

#### I.

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

Awfully, sorrowfully, completely, loftily, carefully, differently, quickly, nonchalantly

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.

The mechanical teacher had been giving her test after test in geography and she had been doing worse and worse until her mother had head sorrowfully and sent for the Country Inspector.

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

"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".

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

"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.





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- 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 _____   | ii. Happy _____    |
| iii. merry _____ | iv. Sleepy _____   |
| v. easy _____    | vi. Noisy _____    |
| vii. tidy _____  | viii. Gloomy _____ |

- |             |                |              |              |           |             |
|-------------|----------------|--------------|--------------|-----------|-------------|
| i. angrily  | ii. Happily    | iii. Merrily | iv. Sleepily | v. easily | vi. Noisily |
| vii. Tidily | viii. Gloomily |              |              |           |             |

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

1. If don't go to Anu's party tonight, \_\_\_\_\_

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, \_\_\_\_\_

If you don't telephone the hotel to order food, you will miss your evening meal.

3. Unless you promise to write back, I \_\_\_\_\_

Unless you promise to write back, I will not write to you.

4. If she doesn't play any games, \_\_\_\_\_

If she doesn't play any games, she will become dull and lazy.

5. Unless that little bird flies away quickly, the cat \_\_\_\_\_.

Unless that little bird flies away quickly, the cat will pounce on it.



## NCERT WORKBOOK QUESTIONS

1. Go back to the chapter 'The Fun They Had' given in your textbook, Beehive, and identify words that mean the following. The paragraph numbers are given in brackets.

- a. sadly (3) \_\_\_\_\_
- b. unfamiliar (7) \_\_\_\_\_
- c. quite likely (8) \_\_\_\_\_
- d. in a casual, calm and relaxed manner (9) \_\_\_\_\_
- e. something beaming and shining (10) \_\_\_\_\_

- a. sorrowfully
- b. strange
- c. probably
- d. nonchalantly
- e. flashing

2. Find the odd one out.

- a. pleasure, misery, happiness, delight \_\_\_\_\_.
- b. note, diary, book, copy \_\_\_\_\_
- c. TV, computer, mobile, scanner \_\_\_\_\_
- d. display, exhibit, appear, show \_\_\_\_\_
- e. scornful, contemptuous, mocking, diversity \_\_\_\_\_
- f. illuminating, gladdening, pleasing, gratifying \_\_\_\_\_

- a. misery
- b. note
- c. TV
- d. appear
- e. diversity
- f. illuminating

3. You would have come across the use of prefixes like 'dis', 'un', 'mis', 'in', etc., to make opposite words. For example, 'consolate - disconsolate'. Write the opposites of the following.

- a. use \_\_\_\_\_
- b. agree \_\_\_\_\_
- c. engage \_\_\_\_\_
- d. understand \_\_\_\_\_
- e. fold \_\_\_\_\_
- f. spell \_\_\_\_\_
- g. connect \_\_\_\_\_
- h. like \_\_\_\_\_
- i. visible \_\_\_\_\_
- j. predictable \_\_\_\_\_



- |                  |             |              |
|------------------|-------------|--------------|
| a. misuse        | b. disagree | c. disengage |
| d. misunderstand | e. unfold   | f. misspell  |
| g. disconnect    | h. dislike  | i. invisible |
| j. unpredictable |             |              |

4. The suffixes are used to get adjective form of the words.

(Example: danger - dangerous). Use the correct suffix to the following to make adjectives.

- |               |              |              |
|---------------|--------------|--------------|
| a. comfort    | b. sunny     | c. readable  |
| d. beautiful  | e. enjoyable | f. suitable  |
| g. helpful    | h. useful    | i. hazardous |
| j. impressive |              |              |

**SOLVED QUESTION BANK**

**Reference-to-Context Questions**

Q. Read the following extracts carefully and answer the questions.

1. 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.

a. The book being talked about in the above lines is the book that was found \_\_\_\_\_

By Tommy from his attic

b. After seeing the real book children didn't react at all.

False

c. According to the grandfather the old book was still valuable because all stories were \_\_\_\_\_

Printed on the paper very clearly

d. The word that means the same as 'bygone' is \_\_\_\_\_

'Old'

2. 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.

a. The pages were being turned by \_\_\_\_\_

Tommy and Margie





b. The colour of the pages, 'yellow and crinkly' shows that the book was \_\_\_\_\_.

Very old

c. The words in the book were moving here and there.

False

d. The word in the above line that is opposite of 'moving' is \_\_\_\_\_.

'Still'

3. 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".

a. Margie was \_\_\_\_\_ years old.

Eleven

b. Tommy had seen more telebooks than Margie.

True

c. Tommy didn't look up to answer Margie's question because \_\_\_\_\_.

He was busy reading.

d. \_\_\_\_\_ is the word in the above lines which means the same as 'the space or room at the top of a building'.

'Attic'

4. Margie always hated school, but now she hated it more than ever. 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.

a. Margie had been performing badly especially in \_\_\_\_\_

Geography

b. The teachers at Margie's school were \_\_\_\_\_

Mechanical

c. With the passage of time Margie started liking her school.

False

d. The word in the passage which is opposite of the word 'gladly' is \_\_\_\_\_.

'Sorrowfully'



5. That was not so bad. The part Margie 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.

- a. The \_\_\_\_\_ was not so bad at teaching.  
Mechanical teacher
- b. To \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ was hated the most by Margie.  
Submit homework, test papers.
- c. The mechanical teachers were too rapid in calculating the marks.  
True
- d. The word which means same as 'detested' is \_\_\_\_\_.

6. The Inspector had smiled after he had smiled after he was finished and patted Margie's 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".

- a. Margie's \_\_\_\_\_ performance was not at all her fault.  
Worsening
- b. The fault was with \_\_\_\_\_ which was adjusted too quick.  
Geography sector
- c. Sometimes the mechanical teachers are not geared too quick.  
False
- d. The word which is the same as 'tapped or touched' is \_\_\_\_\_.  
'Patted'

7. "\_\_\_\_\_ 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.

- a. According to the \_\_\_\_\_, the overall pattern of Margie's progress was satisfactory.  
Inspector
- b. Margie was not happy as \_\_\_\_\_.  
The teacher was not taken away.



c. 'He' in the passage refers to Tommy.

False

d. Find a word from the extract which is the opposite of 'unsatisfactory'.

'Satisfactory'

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

a. Regular teacher in the above lines refers to the \_\_\_\_\_.

Mechanical teacher

b. Tommy and Margie were not taught by a regular teacher.

False

c. They were taught by a man. 'They' refers to people of \_\_\_\_\_.

The olden times

d. Find the synonym of 'customary' from the extract.

'Regular'

9. 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 with the homework and talk about it.

a. Margie seems to be engrossed in the thoughts of \_\_\_\_\_.

Schools of olden times

b. Margie has actually travelled into the future.

False

c. All children used to have a good time in the \_\_\_\_\_.

Schoolyard

d. Find a word from the extract that is similar in meaning 'to give assistance to'.

'Help'

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### Short Answer Questions

1. What kind of teachers did Margie and Tommy have? Did they like them?

The teachers of Margie and Tommy were different from the teachers of today. They were robotic teachers. They were confined to study rooms and thought mechanically. No, Margie and Tommy did not like them.



**2. Why was Margie not doing well in geography? What did her mother do to help her?**

Margie was not doing well in geography. Her performance was getting worse day by day. Her mother sent for the County Inspector to help her. He told that the geography sector in Margie's mechanical teacher was geared up a little too quick.

**3. Why did Margie get disappointed after the geography sector of her teacher was set right?**

Margie had a robotic teacher. It had developed some technical snag in its geographic sector, her mother had asked for the County Inspector. Margie hoped that her mechanical teacher would be taken away for some time. But she was disappointed when the County Inspector set the mechanical teacher right there and then.

**4. How were Margie and Tommy assessed in their subjects?**

Margie and Tommy had tele-assignments. They used to write their answers in a punch card. They were trained in it. They would insert their special answer sheets in the slot made in the mechanical teacher. Then their marks were calculated in no time.

**5. Today Tommy found a real book! From where was the book found and why did it seem peculiar to him and Margie?**

Tommy found an old book from the attic of his home. It was a peculiar object for them because they had different books. They had telebooks while it was printed on paper.

**6. Why did Margie hate school?**

Margie never liked her school. It was monotonous for her. She had mechanical teachers and telebooks. She hated it now more than ever. Her mechanical teacher had been giving her test after test in geography and her performance was getting worse day by day.

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

The book that Tommy found in the attic of his home was a real and old book. It was quite different from his telebooks. The old book was printed on paper and can be thrown after reading, but his telebooks read on the screen can be stored. It cannot be thrown and can be used whenever required.

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Next Generation School



## Long Answer Questions

1. **Compare and contrast the futuristic schools in the story with the schools of today. Do you think the futuristic schools will be a reality?**

The futuristic schools in the story are totally different from the schools of today. The schools in the story are located in the house itself. The room next to their bedroom is their school. There is a single mechanical teacher having various sectors geared up according to the level of the child. There is no companion, no playground and no fun at all. The teaching is mechanical and monotonous. Today's schools have separate spacious buildings with human teachers. All the kids from the neighbourhood come together for studies. They play, laugh and enjoy together. There is fun in the school. Yes, I think the futuristic schools will be a reality in future. Nowadays we have online studies and universities. These will be futuristic schools.

2. **What problem was Margie facing with her mechanical teacher? Why did she not like it? Do you think that teachers should be flexible in their approach if teaching?**

Margie had a mechanical teacher. It was geared up faster than her mental level. It had been giving her a lot of homework in geography. The work was very difficult. Her performance in tests was also worsening day by day. Her mother was not happy with her performance. It disappointed Margie. She hated her mechanical teacher who was geared up too quick. It was slowed down up to an average ten-year level. Margie was not happy when her mechanical teacher was repaired. In fact, she wanted to get rid of it. Yes, a good teacher should be flexible in his approach. He should change his speed and method according to the need of the child. He should not be mechanical.

3. **Margie always hated school, but now she hated it more than ever. Why did she do so? According to you, what makes a school a lovely place?**

Margie hated school because she was taught by a mechanical teacher. She had to complete her homework of assignments, sitting alone in her room. The part that she hated most was the slot where she had to put homework and test papers. Moreover, Margie had been doing badly in geography because her mechanical teacher was very fast in displaying questionnaire. Indeed, it became a boring place to her due to lack of activities. So, she hated school more than ever.

I think, a school becomes a lovely place only when studies become interesting, joyful and stress-free. The pupils can sit together and enjoy each other's company. They can also make





fun and enhance their skills. Here students are taught by human teachers, not by mechanical teachers. To Margie, all this appears to be fun and interesting which is completely missing in her school.

- 4. It's not the little girl's fault, Mrs. Jones. I think the geography sector was geared a little too quickly. What, according to you, was wrong with the geography sector? Can a machine be a good teacher?**

I think, geography sector was geared up so quickly that it was above the level of Margie's age and intelligence. So, she was not doing well in geography. The mechanical teacher was giving her a lot of geography homework. It was very difficult for her to complete the homework. So, her mother was not happy with her performance in geography. However, the County Inspector told her mother that it was not Margie's fault, but the fault was in the mechanical teacher as it was displaying the geography questionnaire so fast that a child could not grasp at all.

How can a machine be a good teacher when it has no emotions, feelings and sentiments? It does not have the ability to understand the psychology of a child. Moreover, the machine only can guide a pupil according to its adjusted modes. So, the machine can never replace the human teacher.

- 5. Would you like to be taught by a mechanical or a human teacher? Why?**

No, I would never like to be taught by a mechanical teacher because a mechanical teacher cannot make teaching interesting or joyful to the pupils. I am supposed to sit in the room alone to complete my homework. There is no enriched activity. He guided me according to adjusted codes. This method of teaching is monotonous and boring to me. Besides, he has no feelings and sentiments. He does not have the ability to understand the psychology of a pupil. On the other hand, I like today's human teacher who looks into the overall development of the child. In the classroom, I can enjoy fun with classmates. Moreover, today's school is a lovely place because here method of teaching is joyful and stress-free.

- 6. In which respect is your school system different from that of Margie? Which one do you like and why?**

My school system is completely different from the school where Margie studies. In fact, they don't have a school at all. They are being taught in their room by a mechanical teacher only. My school is located at a different place. I have a large building and spacious ground. I am taught with my friends. So, I can enjoy their company in the class. I also take interest in





enriched activities taught in the class. To Margie, all this appears to be a fun which is completely missing in her mechanical school. I have good teachers who are humans with human feelings. My school is a lovely place for me because studies here become joyful and stress-free, whereas Margie is being taught and tested by lifeless machines. I am happy with my school system of teaching and love it. Margie hates her school system for being monotonous and boring, sitting in the room with the mechanical teacher.

**7. 'Machines can't replace human beings'. Explain this in 100-150 words in reference to the lesson 'The Fun They Had'.**

No doubt machines can teach students more efficiently than humans do. The mechanical teachers are robotic and they can evaluate the assignment in no time. They can tell how a child is performing but can never tell why the child is performing badly. In the story, 'The Fun They Had' Margie was doing badly in Geography because her mechanical teacher was very fast in displaying questionnaire. Moreover, it was above the level of her age and intelligence. The machine could not understand Margie's ability to understand his style of teaching. So, the mechanical teacher was boring to her, and failed to develop an affectionate bond with the child. Whereas, the human teacher can understand the psychology of a pupil. He or she can look into the overall development of the child. Moreover cannot replace the human teacher.



Next Generation School