

Story:1

The Blanket

By: Floyed Dell (1887-1969)

Comprehension Questions

1. Why is *Granddad* being sent away?
2. How old is *Petey*?
3. What makes *Petey* realize that *Granddad* is really going to the nursing home?
4. What excuses does *Granddad* make for his son's plan to send him away?
5. How would you describe the woman that *Petey's* father intends to marry?
6. Do you think that *Dad* will change his mind about sending *Granddad* away, at this point?
Find sentence from the story that support your opinion.

Elements of the Story

7. Discuss the plot structure of the story?
8. Who is the protagonist in the story?
9. Who is the antagonist?
10. What conflict does the protagonist encounter?
11. Analyze the conflict in the story? How is resolved?
12. What other important characters are involved in the conflict?
13. What kind of person is the protagonist?
14. What evidence in the story leads you to this opinion of the protagonist?
15. Where and when does this story take place?
16. How would you describe the mood? How does the author establish this mood?
17. Discuss the role of setting in establishing the meaning of the story? What does it symbolize?
18. Summarize the theme of this short story.
19. Is there a sentence or short passage that states or strongly implies the theme? If so, what is it?
20. Analyze the story in terms of poetic justice. Discuss each character's actions and the things that happen to each character at the end of the story.

Critical Questioning

- 1- If *Petey* has been exposed to social media or internet, would he have developed the same intimacy with the granddad as has been shown in the story?
- 2- Why does *Petey* dislike the woman that his father intends to marry?
- 3- Do you think that *Petey's* father will ever marry his fiancée? Why or why not?

- 4- *What is the real reason that Petey's bought the blanket?*
- 5- *Nice people sometimes do unkind things. Give an example from your own experience or from another story you have read.*
- 6- *What lesson do you think Petey's father learned? In your opinion, did the fiancée get what she deserved?*
- 7- *Why did Petey's father intend to send Granddad away?*
- 8- *Why did the fiancée object to the gift of the blanket?*
- 9- *Why does the author describe Dad's fiancée as "the pretty girl with the **hard**, bright face like a china doll's"? What does he want to emphasize?*
- 10- *Why does Petey's Dad get angry with the girl he was going to marry?*
- 11- *What is your first impression on each of the following characters in the story? Does the character remind you of anyone in your life? At this moment, what do you think of that character? The characters are: Petey, Granddad, Dad, and Dad's fiancée.*
- 12- *As you read lines 66-74 of the story, do you notice any changes in Dad's fiancée words and manner? Describe that change and mention the reasons of her change.*

Writing Assignment

- 1- *Write a summary of the story in two or three paragraphs. Make sure to include all the major events.*
- 2- *Why do some people cry when they are happy? Write a short essay about an experience when you or someone you knew cried for?*
- 3- *Make up a conversation between Petey and Granddad the morning after the incident with the blanket.*
- 4- *People often buy gifts to cover up a guilty feeling. Compare the father's gift to Granddad with a present that was given to you because someone else felt guilty.*
- 5- *Discuss some of the problems grown children sometimes face with their parents. What problems do parents have relating to adult children?*
- 6- *What is your opinion on each of the following characters in the story now? What kind of person is that character? Give your personal evidence concerning your claims; what kind of feeling do you have toward that character? The characters are: Petey, Granddad, Dad, and Dad's fiancée.*
- 7- *Which part of the story do you like? Why? Explain. Which part of the story you do not like? Why? Explain.*
- 8- *How would the story be different if (a) Dad did not buy the blanket? (b) Character Petty was removed from the story? (c) The story was narrated from*

*the girl's (dad's fiancée) point of view? (D)Dad did not want to marry that girl?
(E)It was a chilly January night?*

9- Write a letter to each of the following characters in the story? Tell him/her what you wish to tell him expressing your real feelings toward him/her. Would you like to advice that character, for example? How would the story be different if the character took the advice?

10- Write a diary entry stating your experience with the story. What did you learn from this story? What do you think the value and beliefs of this author to be? Do you like this author be one you like to have influence your students or your children in the future? Why or why not?

Story: 2

Charles

By: Shirly Jackson (1916-1965)

Comprehension Questions

1. How does Laurie's mother express to the reader that Laurie was growing up? According to her, how did Laurie change when he started kindergarten?
2. When was Charles first mentioned in Laurie's home? Explain what he had done?
3. Explain how Charles became a household joke at Laurie's home.
4. Provide 3 examples of Laurie's bad behavior at home.
5. List 5 examples of Charles's bad behavior in the kindergarten?
6. What did the teacher do to correct those behaviors?
7. Provide 3 ways Charles's teacher punishes him?
8. How do Laurie's parents react to his stories about Charles?
9. How does the kindergarten teacher reward Charles for his good behavior?
10. Why does Laurie's mother miss the first PTA meeting?
11. Why does Laurie's mother want to attend the PTA meeting?
12. What is the surprise at the end of the story?

Elements of Short Stories

- 1- Discuss the plot structure of the story.
- 2-Who is the protagonist in the story?
- 3- Who is the antagonist?
- 4-What conflict does the protagonist encounter?
- 5- Analyze the conflict in the story? How is resolved?
- 6- What other important characters are involved in the conflict?
- 7- What kind of person is the protagonist?

- 8- What evidence in the story leads you to this opinion of the protagonist?
- 9- List the characteristics of Charles and Laurie in your notebook and provide evidence (a quote, an action, etc., and the page number) to support the characteristics.
- 10- What is your impression on Laurie's parents, were they kind parents? were they wise parents? What in the story makes you think so?
- 11- Describe the setting of the story: How does the use of two different places as the setting impact the story?
- 12- How would you describe the mood? What are some examples of this mood in the story?
- 13- How does the story being told from Laurie's mother's point of view impact the story?
- 14- How does Laurie's mother describe Laurie at the beginning of the story? (What do you think about Laurie after reading the first paragraph?)
- 15- How does this impact the reader's view of Laurie?
- 16- What is the theme (or moral) of the story, and provide evidence (a quote, an action, etc., and the page number) to support that theme?
- 17- Irony is one of the elements of fiction, what is ironic in the story Charles, what kind of irony there is? Provide evidence to support your answer.

Critical Questioning

1. Why does the author use Laurie's mother as the narrator of the story? If the story were told from teacher's point of viewpoint, what would change?
2. How may Laurie's version of this story be different? Pretend that you are Laurie and tell us about your first days of kindergarten and about your parents.
3. How was Laurie at home like and unlike "Charles" at school?
4. What do these similarities and differences lead you to infer about Laurie? Why may have Laurie made "Charles" up? Why may have Laurie misbehaved at school?
5. How does Laurie describe Charles to his father? Why do you think he tells him only about Charles's size and clothes?
6. Why did Laurie's parents take so long to find out the truth about Charles?
7. Why did Laurie create the imaginary boy, Charles?
8. At any point in the story did you suspect that Charles is Laurie? When?
9. There are hints and clues to the fact that Laurie could be Charles from the beginning of the story. What clue to the identity of Charles can you find in the opening paragraph of the story? This type of literary element is called

foreshadowing. Foreshadowing is the use of hints or clues in a narrative to suggest what action is to come.

Making Inferences

1. How do you think Laurie's mom felt about Laurie growing up (making inferences)?
2. As the reader, what can we infer about Laurie's mother's expectations of Laurie? Why?
3. Do you think Laurie's mother would have missed the first PTA meeting if she knew her son was the one behaving poorly? Why or why not?
4. How does Laurie respond when his dad asks, "What are they going to do about Charles, do you suppose?"
5. Based on this answer do you think Laurie is concerned with the consequences? Why or why not?
6. How do we know Laurie's father is not as concerned about Charles as Laurie's mother?
7. What do you think Laurie's mother (and father?) did about Laurie when she came home from the PTA meeting with his teacher. What in the story makes you infer this likelihood?
8. Why did Laurie look at his bread and butter when he first told his parents the teacher had spanked a boy?
9. Why did Laurie come home late on Monday of the second week?
10. Why did Laurie whisper the bad word to his father joyfully?

Writing Assignment

- 1- Write a summary of the story in two or three paragraphs. Make sure to include all the major events.
- 2- Create a dialogue between Laurie's parents when his mother comes home from PTA meeting. (Providing a continuation to the story)
- 3- Pretend to be Laurie's teacher. Write your thoughts (reflect) about Laurie's behavior, and how you intend to deal with him.
- 4- As a teacher, write a diary entry the day after the PTA meeting.
- 5- Write a letter to Laurie's parents: -Diplomatically explain the problems Laurie is creating in class -Disciplinary steps that have been taken by you (the teacher) -Ask the parents for help on how to remedy the behaviors exhibited by Charles - Include whether or not Charles may need learning accommodations inside the classroom and/or may need to be tested for a disorder.

6- Describe the little girl that Laurie told to say the bad word twice. Include her reaction after she was punished by the teacher. (Providing a continuation to the story)

7- Create a scene when Laurie's mother first sees Laurie after the PTA meeting. (Providing a continuation to the story)

8- *What is your opinion on each of the following characters in the story now? What kind of person is that character? Give your personal evidence concerning your claims; what kind of feeling do you have toward that character? The characters are: Laurie, Laurie's Mom, Laurie's Dad, and the teacher.*

9- *Which part of the story do you like? Why? Explain. Which part of the story you do not like? Why? Explain. (Reading log)*

10- *How would the story be different if (a) Laurie did not lie about kindergarten? (b) Character Charles was removed from the story? (C) The story was narrated from the teacher's point of view? (D) The teacher did not punish Laurie?*

11- *Write a letter to each of the following characters in the story. Tell him/her what you wish to tell him expressing your real feelings toward him/her. Would you like to advice that character, for example? How would the story be different if the character took the advice?*

12- *Write a diary entry stating your experience with the story. What did you learn from this story? What do you think the value and beliefs of this author to be? Do you like this author be one you like to have influence your students or your children in the future? Why or why not?*

Story:3

The Fun They Had

By: Issac Asimov (1920-1992)

Comprehension Question

1. When does the story take place?
2. Who finds a real book and where does he find it?
3. How is the book that Tommy found different from the books that Margie and Tommy are familiar with? What is it about?
4. How do students in Margie and Tommy's time learn? Where do they go to school? Who are their teachers?
5. How does Margie feel about school? Why?
6. How does Tommy describe the old kind of teachers?
7. Describe Margie and Tommy's first experience of reading a printed book.
8. What had Margie grandfather told her once?
9. They turned the pages. What does 'they' refer to?

10. What is funny about the book?
 11. Find a word in the passage that means 'very much'.
 12. Find a word in the passage, the opposite of which is 'save'.
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1. "May be," he said nonchalantly. Who does 'he' refer to?
 2. What topic is Margie going to learn that day?
 3. Find a word from the passage which has the meaning same as 'showing not any interest'.
 4. It was right next to her bedroom. What does 'it' refer to?
 5. What does Margie and Tommy's mother tell them about a teacher?
 6. Why does Margie's Mother send for the County Inspector? What does he do?
 7. What does Margie hope will happen when the County Inspector visits Margie? What does happen?
 8. What is wrong with the geography sector of Margie's mechanical teacher?
 9. What does County Inspector do to improve Margie's performance?
 10. At the beginning of the story, what is Margie's attitude towards the book Tommy found? What is her attitude at the end of the story?
 11. Did Tommy and Margie have the same attitude towards the printed book at the beginning?
 12. What kind of teachers do Margie and Tommy have?
 13. What does their television screen show?

Elements of the Short Story

- 1- Discuss the plot structure of the story.
- 2- Who is the protagonist in the story?
- 3- Who is the antagonist?
- 4- What conflict does the protagonist encounter?
- 5- Analyze the conflict in the story? How is resolved?
- 6- What other important characters are involved in the conflict?
- 7- What kind of person is the protagonist?
- 8- What evidence in the story leads you to this opinion of the protagonist?
- 9- Describe the mechanical teacher?
- 10- What idea do you form of the county inspector as a person?
- 11- How is Margie's school setting? How does the setting affect Margie and her feelings about school?
- 12- How would you describe the mood? What are some examples of this mood in the story?

13- How does the story being told (narrated)? How that point of view impact the story?

14- What is the theme (or moral) of the story, and provide evidence (a quote, an action, etc., and the page number) to support that theme?

Critical Questioning

1. What does Margie write in her diary? Why does she choose to write this?
2. Why does Margie find the book strange?
3. Why has Margie started hating her school?
4. Tommy thinks the old books are funny and a big waste. Why?
5. Why does Margie say, "How could a Man be a teacher"?
6. What views does Margie's mother have about teachers and learning?
7. Why does Margie hope that the County Inspector will take away her mechanical teacher?
8. How does County Inspector disappoint Margie?
9. Why does Margie feel that learning was fun in the schools of the past?
10. How is Margie's school different from the schools that existed hundreds of years ago?
11. What differences do you find in present school and the school described in the story "The Fun They Had"?
12. How is Margie's "mechanical teacher" similar to a desktop computer of today?
13. Is this science fiction story believable? Why or why not?
14. Would you want to learn the way Margie and Tommy do? Explain.
15. Do you think the way Margie and Tommy learn would be better for some students than the way we learn now? Why or why not?
16. How do you think telebooks work? Do you like to read telebooks instead of regular books? Explain
17. How can we conclude from the story in terms of what their schooling involves compared to schooling today?

Writing Assignment

1. How do you feel about a system of education where students learn only by computer? What do you think the advantages and disadvantages of such a system would be for middle school students?
2. The author of "The Fun They Had" wrote in the 1950s about life as it could be in the 2150s. How accurate do you think his predictions may be? What do you think school will be like in the 2150s?

3. How does the old book's portrayal (picture) of school compare to your school life? How is it different? What is your idea of a perfect school?
4. Think about Margie's reaction to school. What do you think the author is trying to say about how we use technology? What are your thoughts, what are the benefits and disadvantages of technology in today's world?
5. Do you think a robot should replace the human teacher? Give reasons in support of your answer and write on it.
6. Imagining yourself as Margie, write a diary entry stating how happy you would have been to study in the old kind of school. Your diary entry should be dated 20th April, 2157.
7. Write a dialogue between Margie and her mother, in which Margie tells her mother about the book and the schools described in it. How does her mother respond? What is Margie's reaction?
8. In a well-developed argument, make a claim and provide support based on this prompt: Do you believe that Margie and her friends learned more from an individual computer-based tutor (teacher) in her home than in a traditional school? Use information from the text and your discussions to support your answer.
9. Given a chance to design your mechanical teacher or robot, how would you like it to be? Why? Explain with reference to the story 'The fun they had'. In which aspects you like it to be like Margie and Tommy's mechanical teacher. In which aspect you liked to be different.
10. Do you agree with Margie that schools today are more fun than the school in the story? Give reasons for your answers.
11. In "The Fun They Had," Tommy tells Margie about what schools were like long ago. This information is new and fascinating to Margie. Think of a time when you found information fascinating. What did someone tell you about? Why did it fascinate you?
12. If you could design a system of education, what would this system be like? Describe the kind of school you think would be best.
13. **Compare and Contrast between the Following Pair of things, Critically Examine the Pros and Cons of each of them:**
 - current versus futuristic education,
 - books versus e- books,
 - human teachers versus mechanical teachers
14. **Write an article** on - The schools of the future will have no books and no teachers.

15. **Write a letter** to a friend describing how honored you feel to be a part of the present school system creatively.
16. Compare and contrast between Tommy and Margie. Explain the way how Tommy treats Margie. Support your explanation by giving examples from the story.
17. Explain your opinion on the County Inspector. What kind of person is that character? Give your personal reason (evidence) concerning your claims, what kind of feeling do you have towards that character?
18. Compare and contrast between the County Inspector and Tommy in terms of the way how they treat Margie. Support your ideas with examples from the story.

Story: 4

Blue Eyes Far Away

By: Mackinlay Kantor (1904-1977)

Comprehension Questions

1. What bad news do Esther Lee's neighbors bring to her? How does she react?
2. Where does Esther Lee live?
3. How old is Esther Lee?
4. What is the name of Esther Lee's husband?
5. What crime was Archie Stolt charged with?
6. What is Archie Stolt's first reaction to the charge?
7. Why did Archie Stolt and the defense think that Esther Lee was not telling the truth about seeing the accident?
8. How could Esther Lee see the accident in which her husband met his death?
9. What is the surprise ending?
10. Where is the ending of the story set in?

Elements of the Short Story

- 1- What happen first in the plot of the story?
- 2-Discuss the plot structure of the story.
- 2-Who is the protagonist in the story?
- 3- Who is the antagonist?
- 4-What conflict does the protagonist encounter?
- 5- Analyze the conflict in the story? How is resolved?
- 6- What other important characters are involved in the conflict?
- 7- What kind of person is the protagonist?
- 8- What evidence in the story leads you to this opinion of the protagonist?

- 9-Describe Esther Lee? What kind of person is she?
- 10- What idea do you form of Archie Stolt as a person?
- 11- How is the setting of the story? How does the setting of the car accident and Mrs. Lee's house affect the what will happen to Archie Stolt's conviction?
- 12- How would you describe the mood? What are some examples of this mood in the story?
- 13- How does the story being told (narrated)? How that point of view impact the story?
- 15- What is the theme (or moral) of the story, and provide evidence (a quote, an action, etc., and the page number) to support that theme?

Critical Questioning

1. Why did the neighbors think Mrs. Lee would be shocked when they told her the news about her husband's car accident?
2. Why did Esther Lee's neighbors find their task easier than they expected by the time when they went to bring her the news of her husband's death?
3. How does the atmosphere in the courtroom change? Find sentences to support your answer from the middle and the end of the story.
4. Describe what you think the most exciting part of the story is, and say why.
5. What is the meaning of the title? How does this title explain the theme of the story?
6. What kind of man is Archie Stolt? Give an example of his behavior from the story that shows his character.
7. When Archie Stolt entered the courtroom, he did not appear worried, why?
8. How do you think Ester feels? Give reason for your answer by finding sentences in the text that describe her feelings. Do you feel sympathy for her? Why?
9. What is one of the first indication that Esther Lee knew about the automobile accident before her neighbors told her?
10. Why did Esther Lee go to visit the prosecutor the night before the trial?
11. Why was the defense confident that Archie Stolt would not be convicted?
12. Why, at first, it appeared that Archie Stolt would be found innocent?
13. Why did the court think Esther Lee is lying about seeing the crime?

Writing Assignment

1. The judge warned Ester Lee about telling a lie in court. Why did it appear, at first, that Mrs. Lee was lying? What reason might she have had for telling a lie?
2. Mrs. Lee loved her husband very much. Find evidence from the story to support that statement.
3. What, do you think, will happen as a result of what Mrs. Lee told the jury? Give reasons for your answer.
4. The night before the trial began, Esther Lee went to see the prosecutor. Write the dialogue between Esther and the prosecutor.
5. When Esther Lee tells the judge what she saw through the telescope, the trial changes. Write the next part of the story and provide a continuation to the story.
6. Imagine you are a reporter assigned to write an article on the trial. Write an account of the case for your newspaper.
7. Write an entry in Esther Lee's diary the day she received the bad news that Joseph had been in an accident.
8. *Write a letter to Archie Stolt. Tell him what you wish to tell him expressing your real feelings toward him. Would you like to advise that character, for example? How would the story be different if the character took the advice?*
9. *How would the story be different if Esther Lee was the narrator of the story? Re-write the story this time from Esther Lee's point of view?*
10. *What is your opinion on each of the following characters in the story? What kind of person is that character? Give your personal evidence concerning your claims; what kind of feeling do you have toward that character? The characters are Esther Lee, Archie Stolt, The defence lawyer, and the prosecutor.*
11. *How would the story be different if (a) Mr. Lee did not die in that accident? (b) Character Archie Stolt was removed from the story? (c) The story was narrated from the Archie Stolt's point of view? (d) Mrs. Lee could not witness the accident? Mr. Lee was wealthy and well-known person? Archie Stolt was a poor man?*

Story: 5

The Woman

By: Zona Gale (1874-1938)

Comprehension Questions

1. Why does young Bellard pity the older man when he saw sitting on the porch?
2. What event changes Bellard's plans for the future?
3. How does Lucile make Bellard happy? What did she want most in this world?

4. How do Bellard's children react when his business fails? Who does his daughter blame for the failure? Why?
5. How does the story end? Is it a happy or sad ending? Why?

Elements of the Short Story

- 1- What happen first in the plot of the story?
- 2-Discuss the plot structure of the story.
- 2-Who is the protagonist in the story?
- 3- Who is the antagonist?
- 4-What conflict does the protagonist encounter?
- 5- Analyze the conflict in the story? How is resolved?
- 6- What other important characters are involved in the conflict?
- 7- What kind of person is the protagonist?
- 8- What evidence in the story leads you to this opinion of the protagonist?
- 9-Describe Lucile? What kind of person is she?
- 10- What idea do you form of Bellard as a person?
- 11- How is the setting of the story? How does the setting of the story affects what change happen to Bellard's ideas of happiness ?
- 12- How would you describe the mood? What are some examples of this mood in the story?
- 13- How does the story being told (narrated)? How that point of view impact the story?
- 15- What is the theme (or moral) of the story, and provide evidence (a quote, an action, etc., and the page number) to support that theme?

Critical Questioning

1. What does Bellard mean when he describes Lucile as "silent and fragrant, and hopeful like a flower"?
2. Does Lucile understand her husband? What does she say about him to her friend? To her children?
3. What's your opinion of Bellard and Lucile's children? Were you surprised that they acted the way they did? What do you think the author's attitude is toward these two characters?
4. Why did the author use almost the exact same words to begin and end the story? Do you think it was a good idea? Did it make the story easier to understand? Why or why not?

5. Why do you think Zona Gale named the story “The Woman”? Can you think of two other titles that the author could have used instead?
6. What did Lucile mean in talking about her husband when she said, “But he seems to know that living is something else...”
7. Why did Bellard say Lucile “has genius for being alive.”
8. Imagine that Zona Gale wrote “The woman” as a fable, which is a short story that teaches a moral. What’s the lesson of the story?

Writing Assignment

1. Do you know anyone like Bellard or Lucile? Write a character description of that person?
2. How do you think Bellard’s life would have been different if he had become a successful financier? Write a new version of “the woman” in two to three paragraphs, telling what his life would have been like as a wealthy man.
3. *Write a letter to Bellard and Lucile’s children. Tell them what you wish to tell them expressing your real feelings toward them. Would you like to advise these two characters, for example? How would the story be different if the characters took the advice?*
4. *How would the story be different if Bellard and Lucile’s daughter was the narrator of the story? Re-write the story this time from her point of view?*
5. *How would the story be different if Bellard and Lucile’s son was the narrator of the story? Re-write the story this time from his point of view?*
6. *What is your opinion on Bellard as a character in the story? What kind of person is that character? Give your personal evidence concerning your claims; what kind of feeling do you have toward that character? In your opinion what action should he take to save his family from poverty?*
7. *What is your opinion on Lucile as a character in the story? What kind of person is that character? Give your personal evidence concerning your claims; what kind of feeling do you have toward that character? In your opinion what action should she take to save her family from poverty?*

