

Chapter -5 One Centimetre

Understanding The Text

Question 1.

How did Tao Ying's son influence the way she led her life?

Answer:

Tao Ying was not from a very educated background, and lived a humble life, but she liked to be gentle and gracious in front of her son and wanted to set a good example for her son. She often changed her ways to set a good standard for Xiao Ye, going to great lengths to preserve her respect that her son had for her.

Question 2.

Pick out instances from the story to show that official rules are often arbitrary.

Answer:

Rules being arbitrary are shown by how the Tao Ying gets a ticket for Xiao Ye, even though he doesn't require one, and how the old woman's scales were inaccurate on purpose to make people feel better about themselves, showing how self-esteem and standards of beauty often matter more than simple rules.

Question 3.

Tao Ying was very careful about spending money. What were her reasons for refusing the compensation offered by the temple officials?

Answer:

For Tao Ying, how Xiao Ye thought of her mattered more than the compensation offered by the temple officials. For Tao Ying, that day's happiness cannot be bought, nor that can that place have good memories for her and her son.

Question 4.

Why was her final vindication important to Tao Ying?

Answer:

For Tao Ying, it was important for Xiao Ye to know that she wasn't wrong about his height, and wasn't trying to intentionally exempt him from a ticket. Xiao Ye's trust in Tao Ying was,

therefore, more important than any compensation, and her vindication was supposed to be understood by Xiao Ye.

Talking About The Text

Question 1.

The way a child looks at the world is very different from that of an adult.

Answer:

Since children are quick to form opinions and don't think as rationally as adults. What they learn from the world, how they view people and how they expect people to act affects them as well. Being very impressionable, children can learn strongly from minor situations, often ignoring the circumstances leading to it.

Question 2.

There is always a gap between what we really are and what we wish to appear to be to others.

Answer:

We are often expected to show the best version of ourselves in order to be a good example to others. Whether or not we are such people, we are often tied to the ways we're supposed to be seen by the society. Thus, there's always some distinction between how we show ourselves to be and who we really are.

Appreciation

Question 1.

Comment on the significance of the first sentence of the story to its theme.

Answer:

The first sentence of the story mentions the arbitrary nature of rules and how Tao Ying's perception of the world was based around her own values, which didn't always coincide with the rules and regulations.

Question 2.

Would you describe the author's portrayal of Tao Ying's character in the story as sympathetic, critical or realistic?

Answer:

Tao Ying's character, as portrayed by the author, is realistic, as she assesses the situation she's in before acting, and goes to great lengths to make sure her values are preserved as an example for her son.

Question 3.

Identify the episodes that bring out the ambivalent attitude to ethics commonly seen in human life?

Answer:

Tao Ying's paying for her son's bus ticket, which she normally wouldn't do, or the old lady's scales, which tell inaccurate but flattering readings, are a few instances from the story that illustrate the ambivalent attitude to ethics commonly seen in human life.

Question 4.

How effectively does the narrative technique adopted in this story illustrate 'unity of thought'?

Answer:

As the author stresses on every emotion that the characters of the story experience, it builds up a mental picture where the reader follows along with the characters, their reactions, their thoughts, thus 'uniting' them with the narrative technique.

Stop And Think Page-75

Question 1.

What made Tao Ying decide whether to buy a ticket or not when she rode a bus alone?

Answer:

When Tao Ying rides the bus alone, she usually doesn't pay for the ticket, as she thinks that her paying or not doesn't change the routine of the bus, but she acts according to the situation, as she pays for the ticket when the conductor looks responsible but doesn't when he looks casual and careless.

Question 2.

Why did she insist on buying tickets both for herself and her son that day?

Answer:

That day, Xiao Ye was insisting to get a ticket for himself, but even though he didn't need one, Tao Ying bought one for him as a symbol of upholding his esteem.

Stop And Think Page-81

Question 1.

Did Tao Ying really intend to cheat at the temple?

Answer:

Tao Ying didn't intend to cheat at the temple, as she knew that Xiao Ye was shorter than one hundred and ten centimetres, so he would be exempt from getting a ticket. However, he measured more on the scale at the temple, which surprised her.

Question 2.

Why did Tao Ying change her intention to buy another ticket?

Answer:

As a crowd gathered, and the ticket seller grew impatient, Tao Ying knew she couldn't argue against a scale. She saw her son thinking of her in a bad way, so she decided to buy a ticket.

Stop And Think Page-82

Question 1.

Were the old lady's scales a reliable measure of height and weight? What convoluted logic were her measurements based on?

Answer:

The old lady's scales weren't a reliable way of measuring height and weight. Being old and inaccurate, they showed the weight as lesser than it actually was, and the lady had adjusted them to show more height. Her logic was that people liked to see themselves as leaner and taller, thus they were flattering to the people.

Question 2.

What was the conflict between the mother and son?

Answer:

Xiao Ye thought that Tao Ying only said that he's short so she could get away with not paying for his ticket, when in fact he thought he was tall, and didn't trust his mother. This resulted in a conflict between the mother and the son.