

Should Wizard Hit Mommy?

"Should Wizard Hit Mommy?" is a lesson written by John Updike. The writer here shows the worldview of a little child. In this lesson Jack used to tell stories to his four-year old daughter Jo in the evenings and for Saturdays naps. He made his own stories to tell his daughter. This custom began when she was two. It continued nearly for two years. Each new story was a slight variation of the basic tale. Every story had a small creature, usually named Roger. It could be Roger Fish, Roger Squirrel or Roger Chipmunk. In every story Roger went to the wise owl and the owl would send Roger to the wizard.

Today's story was about Roger Skunk. It was a new animal. They must talk about it at nursery school. Jack had got a new hero. He started the story : "Once upon a time , in the deep dark woods, there was a tiny little creature by the name of Roger Skunk." He smelled very bad. He smelled so bad that other little creatures would not play with him. They would run away. Roger Skunk would stand there all alone. Two round tears would fall from his eyes. Little Jo could already guess what would be the storyline next. She asked "Won't he see the owl?" Jack continued. There lived a big wise owl in the tip top of a tree. Roger Skunk told him his pathetic tale. The wise owl advised him to go to the wizard.

At last, Roger Skunk came to a little white house. He had to cross the dark woods and the swamp. A little old man came out. He had a long white beard and a pointed blue hat. Roger Skunk told the wizard how all the little animals ran away from him. He smelled very bad. The wizard asked Roger not to get very close to him. Inside the house, all magic things were jumbled together in a big dusty heap. The wizard demanded seven pennies. Roger had only four. He started crying. The wizard sent him to a magic well where Roger found three pennies. He took them back to the wizard. The wizard was very happy and made him smell so good. They played games and laughed all afternoon.

Roger Skunk's mommy asked him what that 'awful smell' was. Roger replied that he himself smelled like roses. The wizard made him smell like that. She told Roger that they were going right back to "that very awful wizard". But Roger cried that he smelled so bad before that all other animals ran away. The mother said that she didn't care for that. Roger Skunk used to smell the way a little Skunk should have smelled. They went to the wizard. She went there with an umbrella and hit that wizard right over his head. The wizard made him smell very bad again.

The daughter of Jack was not satisfied with the end of the story. Little Roger Skunk was made to smell bad again. She wanted her father to make a little change in the story. Jo wanted her father to tell her that the wizard took "that magic wand and hit that mommy". But he asked her to sleep and he went downstairs to help his wife Clare.

WORD- MEANING:

Variation=difference, **Basic**= fundamental, **Wizard**= magician, **Swamp**= marshy land, **Awful**= terrible,

POINTS TO REMEMBER

1. Jo's father used to tell her stories.
2. Every story had a little variation from the basic tale.
3. Each story had a little creature Roger, a wise old owl and a wizard.
4. New story was about Roger Skunk.
5. Roger Skunk smelled very badly.
6. None of the other little creatures of the forest would play with him.
7. He went to the wise old owl who advised him to go to the wizard.
8. The wizard demanded seven pennies. Roger had four and found three more in a magic well.
9. He gave the wizard seven pennies who made Roger Skunk smell like roses.
10. Roger became happy and other animals began to play with him again.
11. Roger's mother got angry.
12. His mother took him straight back to the wizard and hit the wizard on his head.
13. The wizard made Roger Skunk smell bad again.
14. Roger's mother was very happy now.
15. But Jo wanted another end of the story.
16. She wanted that the wizard hit the mommy and Roger smelled roses again.
17. But Jack made no changes in the ending.

SHORT ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS

1. Who is Jo?

Ans: Jo is a four – year- old girl. Her full name was Joanne.

2. What was the sequence of the stories which Jack told his daughter ?

Ans: The hero of the stories was a small animal. When he had a problem, he went to an old wise owl who directed him to a wizard for the solution of the problem.

3. How did Jo feel about her father's stories ?

Ans: Jo felt inclined about her father's stories. She took interest in them.

4. Describe Roger Skunk ? What was his main problem ?

Ans: Roger Skunk was a little animal. He smelled very badly. All other animal kept away from him. Two round tears rolled down from his eyes.

5. What did Roger Skunk say to the wizard ?

Ans: He said that all the little animal ran away from him because he smelled very badly. Nobody liked to come or play with him.

6. What did the wizard do when Roger begged him for help ?

Ans: The wizard took his magic wand and chanted a spell. The whole of the wizard house was full of roses.

7. How did Roger Skunk find three more pennies?

Ans: The wizard asked him to go to the end of the lane and turn around three times. He would find three pennies on the well. Roger obeyed.

8. What part of the story did Jack himself enjoy the most ?

Ans: Jack himself enjoyed the wizard's conversation with the little Skunk the most. The wizard's voice was one of Jack's own favourite effects.

9. Why didn't Roger Skunk's mommy like her son smelling like roses ?

Ans: Roger Skunk smelled very badly. His mother didn't care for such things. Roger was a Skunk. He must smell like a Skunk and not like roses.

10. Why did Roger Skunk's mommy go to the wizard ?

Ans: She went to the wizard to make Roger Skunk smell like Skunk not like roses. The wizard made him smell very bad again.

11. What is the logic by which, according to Jo, the wizard should hit mommy ?

Ans: Jo thought the wizard had great power of magic, he should have hit mommy when she hit her umbrella right over his head.

12. How does Jo want the story to end ?

Ans: Jo wanted that the stupid mommy should have been punished. The wizard should have taken the magic wand and hit it very hard on her head. Jo wanted her little hero smell of roses.

13. Why does Jack think the end of the story should not be changed ?

Ans: Jack thinks that if the end of the story is changed, the purpose of the story fails. The point is that the little Skunk loved his mommy more than he loved all the other little animals and she knew what was right.

14. What is Jo's perspective and how does it differ with Jack's ?

Ans: The world of adults lacks romance and beauty. Jo's world is a dreamy world of romance and beauty. She can't afford to see her hero Roger smelling very bad again. He must smell of roses.

References:-

1. Vistas supplementary reader prescribed by Education Board of Uttarakhand.

