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PROSE

Mother's Day

—J.B. Priestly



This play focuses on the challenging circumstances faced by mothers and wives in households. They tirelessly work and care for every family member, yet receive little appreciation or assistance. Their pivotal role is often overlooked, and their efforts go unacknowledged. Mrs. Pearson, portrayed as a mother mistreated by her husband and children, seeks help from her friend, Mrs. Fitzgerald, to bring about a transformation in her family. Eventually, all family members recognize their wrongdoing, leading to a change in their attitudes and behavior towards Mrs. Pearson.

Topic Notes

-  Characters in Brief
-  Chapter in Detail
-  Significant Morals
-  Dictionary





Characters in Brief

Mrs. Fitzgerald– She is Mrs. Annie Pearson's neighbour. She is quite strong-willed, knows magic, and helps Mrs. Annie Pearson rehabilitate the spoiled members of her family.

Mrs. Annie Pearson– She is a pleasant but anxious woman whose excessive love and care has spoiled her two children and husband.

Doris Pearson– She is Mrs. Annie Pearson's daughter, aged around twenty years. She fails to understand

her mother's struggle and doesn't help her with home duties.

Cyril Pearson– He is Mrs. Annie Pearson's son, who is equally demanding and never sympathises with his mother.

Mr. George Pearson– He is Mrs. Annie Pearson's proud husband who is not as respected in society as one expects. He dominates his wife, but is ridiculed in the club where he is a member.



Chapter in Detail

Introduction of Mrs. Annie Pearson and Mrs. Fitzgerald

Mrs. Annie Pearson and Mrs. Fitzgerald are next-door neighbours. Apart from this, there is no similarity between them. Annie is a pleasant and nervous-looking woman in her forties. Fitzgerald is older and heavier, with a bold personality. Annie has a soft voice, whereas Mrs. Fitzgerald has a deep, throaty voice.

Mrs. Fitzgerald is a fortune teller. She has learned this art from the East. She is reading Annie's fortune. She advises Annie to be strict and become the 'boss' in her family. Actually, Annie is not treated well by her family. At present, Mrs. Annie Pearson has been reduced to the status of an unpaid domestic servant who does all the work at home without even being requested for it or thanked later on.



Character's Mood

→ Sad; burdened

Example 1. Extract Based:

Read the extract given below and answer the questions that follow:

MRS. PEARSON: [dubiously] I—keep dropping a hint...

MRS. FITZGERALD: Hint? It's more than hints your family needs, Mrs. Pearson.

MRS. PEARSON: [dubiously] I suppose it is. But I do hate any unpleasantness. And it's so hard to know where to start. I keep making up my mind to have it out with them but somehow I don't know how to begin. [She glances at her watch or at a clock] Oh—good gracious! Look at the time. Nothing ready and they'll be home any minute and probably all in a hurry to go out again.

(A) In the above extract, 'them' refers to:

- (a) the daughter of Mrs. Pearson.
- (b) the family of Mrs Fitzgerald.

(c) Mr. Pearson and his son.

(d) both (a) and (c)

(B) Explain any one possible inference that can be drawn about Mrs. Pearson's personality after reading the extract.

(C) Mrs. Pearson - I keep dropping a hint...

Why, according to you, has the author used ellipsis points? What does it suggest?

(D) Complete the sentence with ONE word.

Mrs. Fitzgerald is the of Mrs. Pearson.

(E) Mention an assumption that can be made regarding the connection between Mrs. Fitzgerald and Mrs. Pearson based on your reading of the extract.

Ans. (A) (d) both (a) and (c)

Explanation: In the above extract, Mrs. Pearson is talking to Mrs. Fitzgerald that she wants to take her stand in front of her family but she just doesn't know how to take the first step. Hence, (d) is correct.

(B) One can infer that Mrs. Pearson has a submissive personality. She is a woman who easily gets worried when her house chores are not completed on time. She can't tolerate her family disrespecting her anymore, but she doesn't know how to express her true feelings and make them understand.

(C) The author has used ellipses points to suggest that Mrs. Pearson was hesitant to stand up for herself in front of her family members. Unlike Mrs. Fitzgerald, she doesn't have a bold and strong personality.

(D) neighbour

(E) One can infer that Mrs. Fitzgerald and Mrs. Pearson shared a close bond with each other. Mrs. Pearson shares her family problems and her feelings with Mrs. Fitzgerald. She seems deeply concerned

about Mrs. Pearson, and is willing to go to any extent to restore Mrs. Pearson's respect in the family.

Mrs. Fitzgerald Outlines the Plan to Reform Annie's Family

Mrs. Fitzgerald is very angry at the way Annie is treated by her family. One day, she suggests that they should temporarily exchange their personalities by using a magic spell that she had learned in the East. She takes Annie's hand and speaks some magic words. A transformation takes place, and the personality of Mrs. Fitzgerald shifts into the body of Annie and vice versa.

Annie is scared, but Mrs. Fitzgerald assures her that the change is reversible. Mrs. Fitzgerald, now in the body of Annie, stays at Annie's house and sends Annie (in Mrs. Fitzgerald's body) to her house, where she can relax.

Example 2. Explain the offer given by Mrs. Fitzgerald to Mrs. Pearson to deal with her problems. [Diksha]

Ans. Mrs. Pearson shares with Mrs. Fitzgerald that she is not treated well by her family members, and has been reduced to the status of an unpaid domestic servant. Mrs. Fitzgerald advises her to be firm and to put her foot down. She also offers her a swap of personalities.

Doris Gets a Shock

Doris, the daughter of Mrs. Annie Pearson, a beautiful girl aged 20, enters the house. She gets shocked after seeing her mother smoking and playing cards alone. Doris asks about her yellow dress, but her mother does not respond. She asks for tea, and her mother answers rudely, telling her to iron her dress herself and make tea if she wants to. Doris gets angry and gets a good scolding from her mother. Then Annie makes fun of Doris' boyfriend, Charlie Spence, for having projecting teeth and being stupid. She tells Doris frankly that, at her age, she would have found somebody better than Charlie Spence. This strange behaviour is too much for her, and she goes out of the room crying.



Character's Mood

➡ Shocked; surprised

Example 3. Describe the opinion of Mrs. Pearson about Charlie Spence. [Diksha]

Ans. Mrs. Pearson does not approve of Charlie Spence and feels that he is not suitable for her daughter. She calls him buck teeth and half-witted. She further tells her daughter that she would have found a better person at her age.

Example 4. Extract Based:

Read the extract given below and answer the questions that follow:

It's not me tat's being silly—and I must say it's a bit much when I've been working hard all day and you can't even bother to get my tea ready. Did you hear what I said about my yellow silk?

- (A) After reading the extract, what do you learn about the speaker's behaviour?
- (B) Why did the speaker want Mrs. Pearson to iron the yellow silk dress?
- (C) The speaker in the above lines is:
 - (a) Mrs. Fitzgerald (b) Cyril
 - (c) Doris (d) Mrs. Pearson
- (D) State whether the given statement is TRUE or FALSE.

The speaker starts sobbing when Mrs. Pearson refuses to do the task.
- (E) Do you believe Mrs. Pearson ought to take responsibility for how her family treats her? State an appropriate reason.

[Delhi Gov. QB 2022]

- Ans.** (A) After reading the extract, one can infer that the speaker is a domineering person who makes her mother run after her all the time. She expects her mother to complete all her tasks without any fail. She doesn't respect her mother's feelings.
- (B) Doris ordered Mrs. Pearson to iron her yellow silk dress because she was heading out with her boyfriend, Charlie Spence.
- (C) (c) Doris
- Explanation:** The speaker in the above lines is Doris Pearson. She is talking to her mother Mrs. Pearson. She expects her to iron her yellow dress. Hence, (c) is correct.
- (D) The above statement is False. When Mrs. Pearson refuses to iron the yellow silk dress that Doris had to wear that night, Doris gets annoyed.
- (E) Yes, Mrs. Pearson is accountable for the way her husband and children treat her. She is a weak person who is unable to stand up for herself. She seeks the help of Mrs. Fitzgerald but hesitates to bother her family when Mrs. Fitzgerald offers her a solution. If she had been strict with her family members, they would have treated her with respect.

Cyril is also Shocked

Cyril, Annie's son, enters the house and asks for tea in a demanding and angry manner. Annie tells him that she has not bothered to get tea ready. Cyril asks her if everything is all right with her. She replies

that she has never felt better in her life. When Cyril inquires why she has not got the tea ready, Annie replies that she wanted a change, and that's why she has not bothered to make tea. Cyril announces that he is short on time, so she should get the tea ready immediately.

Cyril further inquires whether she has his clothes ready. When she says no, he gets anguished. He asks his mother what would happen if they all talked like she was talking that day. Annie coldly replies that all three of them always talk to her like that, so what was wrong with her talking in the same tone. She says that if he does not want to do anything at home, he doesn't have to. She adds that she has become a member of the union so that she gets what she deserves.



Character's Mood

➔ *Annoyed, bored*

An Argument between Doris and Mrs. Pearson

Doris appears on the scene wearing a shoulder wrap. Annie remarks sarcastically about her dress. An argument starts between Doris and Annie. Doris comments that if she is looking awful, it is because of her mother only, who made her cry. Then Annie inquires if any strong beer is left. Cyril is shocked to know that his mother wants to drink. He is unable to understand what is going on.



Character's Mood:

➔ *Hurt*

Discussion Starts between Doris and Cyril

Both Doris and Cyril are filled with horror and shock at their mother's behaviour. Both wonder what has happened to their mother suddenly. Doris thinks that she got hit on the head by something. She says that the manner in which their mother spoke hurt her the most and made her cry. Both start giggling at the thought of what will happen if their mother keeps behaving in this rude manner in front of their father.

Example 5. What issues does the play raise? How are these issues finally resolved? [Mod. NCERT]

Ans. In the play, 'Mother's Day', the author talks about genuine issues that every homemaker has to face in her family. Though they work tirelessly from morning until night, their work is never appreciated, and they are taken for granted. They are regarded as nothing more than dust.

The second issue being raised is that the mistress of the house should boldly take a

stand for herself rather than surrender to the demands of the family. She should put her well - being first and create healthy boundaries for herself.

The play resolves the issues by letting the family of Mrs. Pearson know what happens if the mother stops doing her duties. The family agrees to stay and help Mrs. Pearson with her daily chores and realise their mistake.

Annie's Remarks About Her Family

Annie remarks that it is high time they grow up. Doris then asks her if they had done something wrong. Annie tells them that it is actually her children's and her husband's behaviour that bothers her the most. They always come, ask for something, and go out without bothering to know whether she wants to go out or how she is feeling. She always does her best to keep everybody happy, but all three of them are never concerned about her well - being.

Annie also remarks that while the three of them work for eight hours a day with two days off at the weekend, she goes on working seven days round the clock. She warns them, she will also take two days off on weekends.

Doris is really worried about what will happen if her mother takes a holiday on the weekends. However, Annie assures Doris that she will do some work on Saturday and Sunday only when she is requested for it and thanked for whatever she does. She might go out on weekends also, as she is fed up of staying in the house for years. None of them have ever bothered to take her out.

Mr. George Pearson is Shocked at his Wife's Behaviour

Mr. George Pearson now enters the house. He is about 50 years old and considers himself a very important person. He gets annoyed at his wife, who is drinking beer when he enters. He tells her that he does not want any tea as he has to go to the club for supper. The wife tells him that she has not prepared any tea anyway. At this point, George gets annoyed that his wife is not concerned about him.

Annie continues to rebuke him, telling him that he is not respected in the club where he keeps going every day. She tells him that people at the bar in the club call him 'Pompy-ompy Pearson' because they think he is so slow and pompous. George doesn't believe what Annie says and confirms the truth with his son, Cyril.

Annie tells her son that sometimes it does people good to have their feelings hurt. On hearing a knock, Cyril checks who it is and reports to Annie that it is Mrs. Fitzgerald at the door. Annie tells him to let her come in.



Character's Mood

➔ *Astonished; annoyed*

The Real Mrs. Annie Pearson Returns

Mrs. Fitzgerald (actually Mrs. Annie Pearson) enters and finds Doris in tears. Her family continues to get a scolding in front of her as well. Mrs. Annie Pearson (actually Mrs. Fitzgerald) informs her that she is putting everyone in their place. When Mr. George Pearson shouts at his wife, she threatens to slap his big, fat, silly face.

Mrs. Annie Pearson and Mrs. Fitzgerald Return to their Original Personalities

The real Mrs. Annie Pearson (now Mrs. Fitzgerald) gets really disturbed and wants everyone to leave as she wants to talk in private with Annie (the real Mrs. Fitzgerald).

She tells Mrs. Fitzgerald that it is enough. Let them change back into their true selves. Mrs. Fitzgerald again speaks some magic words, and they return to

their original personalities. Mrs. Fitzgerald says that she enjoyed every moment of her changed. Annie remarks that she did not enjoy this change. Mrs. Fitzgerald wants Annie not to be soft on her family. She wants her to remain firm.

Annie says that she will be able to manage her husband and children now. Mrs. Fitzgerald warns her not to give any apology or explanation, otherwise, they will again start treating her indifferently. She must wear a tough look and talk to them rudely if she wants them to behave in the right manner. For a change, when Annie smiles, her family members smile back and feel very relaxed. As they had cancelled their outing, Annie feels that they all, as a family, should play a game of rummy. She also asks her children to prepare supper for the family, for which they readily agree. She also wants to have a talk with George, her husband, - which everybody agrees on. The play ends on a happy note, where the children and husband are willing to do whatever Mrs. Annie Pearson suggests.



Character's Mood

➔ *Joyful; relieved*



Significant Morals

- (1) The woman in the house needs to be appreciated for all her efforts in keeping the house and the family in order.
- (2) Our mothers and wives work hard every day, turning our houses into homes.
- (3) They receive no wages, have no weekends off, and work continuously.
- (4) Our mothers act as the glue that holds the family together and promote harmonious relationships.



Dictionary

Word	Meaning	Synonym	Antonym
Guffaw	laugh loudly	shriek of laughter	cry
contempt	disgust	scorn	respect
Airily	carelessly	lightly	thoughtfully
Aghast	horrified	shocked	unmoved
Bewildered	confused	puzzled	clear
Aggrieved	feeling hurt	pained	pleased
Dazed	totally astonished	startle	clearheaded
Gloomily	sadly	melancholic	elated
Sulkily	showing an irritated feeling	temper	cheerful
Bulge	stick out	swelling	contract
Blubbing	crying like a baby	weeping	smiling

OBJECTIVE Type Questions

[1 mark]

Multiple Choice Questions

1. The play *Mother's Day* talks about:

- (a) family issues.
- (b) coldheartedness and selfishness of family members.
- (c) status of a mother in the family.
- (d) status of a father in the family.

Ans. (c) *status of a mother in the family*

Explanation: The play, *Mother's Day* portrays the status of a mother in the family. The author brings about the plight of the mother very realistically through several instances. Hence, (c) is correct.

2. Mrs. Pearson describes her family members as:

- (a) obedient
- (b) selfish and inconsiderate
- (c) pleasant
- (d) helpful

Ans. (b) *selfish and inconsiderate*

Explanation: Mrs. Pearson said that it would not be easy to put her family members in place as she was very fond of them. She knew that they were thoughtless and selfish but felt, perhaps, they did not mean to be so. Hence, (b) is correct.

3. Doris was red-eyed because:

- (a) she was angry
- (b) she was not feeling well
- (c) she was crying
- (d) she had an eye infection

Ans. (c) *she was crying*

Explanation: Doris cried her heart out because her mother had questioned her taste in men considering the fact that she was going out with Charlie Spence. Hence, (c) is correct.

4. The author describes George Pearson as:

- (a) pompous
- (b) rude
- (c) selfish
- (d) stupid

Ans. (a) *pompous*

Explanation: George Pearson is Mrs. Pearson's spoilt husband. He is about fifty years old. He is fundamentally decent but solemn, self-important, pompous, heavy, and slow-moving type man. Hence, (a) is correct.

5. Mrs. Fitzgerald tries to help Mrs. Pearson:

- (a) by listening to Mrs. Pearson's problems.
- (b) by swapping personalities with Mrs. Pearson.

(c) by resolving issues with Mrs. Pearson's family.

(d) by insulting Mrs. Pearson's family members.

Ans. (b) *by swapping personalities with Mrs. Pearson.*

Explanation: Mrs. Fitzgerald tries to help Mrs. Pearson by swapping personalities with her. She says that by exchanging souls, she can help Mrs. Pearson take bold and strong steps and ask her family to treat her with respect and kindness. Hence, (b) is correct.

6. Mrs. Pearson tells George that he is being at the club.

- (a) respected
- (b) laughed upon
- (c) called names
- (d) both (b) and (c) [Delhi Gov. QB 2022]

Ans. (d) *both (b) and (c)*

Explanation: Mrs. Pearson tells her husband, George Pearson that he is famously made fun about at the club and they call him, "Pompy-ompy Pearson" because they think he is slow and pompous. Hence, (d) is correct.

7. Doris and Cyril are shocked to see their mother:

- (a) laughing alone.
- (b) talking sweetly to them.
- (c) smoking, drinking and playing cards.
- (d) busy with her friends. [Diksha]

Ans. (c) *smoking, drinking and playing cards.*

Explanation: Doris and Cyril are shocked to see Mrs. Pearson smoking, drinking, and playing cards. Until now, Mrs. Pearson has been a quiet woman who would keep herself occupied in her house chores. However, when they find Mrs. Pearson smoking, they feel shocked. Hence, (c) is correct.

Extract Based Questions

8. Read the extract given below and answer the questions that follow:

Mrs. FITZGERALD: How do you know? Ever tried it?

Mrs. PEARSON: No, of course not.

Mrs. FITZGERALD: [calmly] I have. Not for some time but it still ought to work. Won't last long, but long enough for what we want to do. Learnt it out East, of course, where they're

up to all these tricks. [She holds her hand out across the table, keeping the cigarette in her mouth] Gimme your hands, dear.

- (A) The question - 'How do you know?' talks about:
- (a) Mrs. Pearson's family.
 - (b) changing bodies.
 - (c) fortune-telling.
 - (d) teaching Mrs. Pearson's family a lesson.
- (B) What message do these lines convey in the context of Mrs. Pearson and Mrs. Fitzgerald's relationship?
- (C) What do the given lines reveal about Mrs. Fitzgerald?
- (D) Complete the sentence appropriately.

As soon as Doris enters her house, she

Ans. (A) (b) changing bodies

Explanation: When Mrs. Fitzgerald suggests that they should change their bodies, Mrs. Pearson expresses that it is impossible. Then, Mrs. Fitzgerald questions her reply by asking if she ever tried it. Hence, (b) is correct.

- (B) The above lines convey that Mrs. Fitzgerald was concerned about how Mrs. Pearson was treated by her family members. They both shared a strong relationship. Mrs. Pearson didn't hesitate to share her true feelings to Mrs. Fitzgerald.
- (C) Mrs. Fitzgerald comes across as a courageous woman with a strong personality. She takes on the role of Mrs. Pearson to teach her family a lesson, as she would never be able to do it on her own.
- (D) As soon as Doris enters her house, she asks her mother to iron her yellow silk dress. She is going out with Charlie Spence.

9. Read the extract given below and answer the questions that follow:

CYRIL: [moving to the table; annoyed] Why not?

MRS. PEARSON: [calmly] I couldn't bother.

CYRIL: Feeling off-colour or something?

MRS. PEARSON: Never felt better in my life.

CYRIL: [aggressively] What's the idea then?

MRS. PEARSON: Just a change.

CYRIL: [briskly] Well, snap out of it, Ma —and get cracking. Haven't too much time.

- (A) What do the given lines reveal about the personality of Cyril?

- (B) Fill in the blank.

The phrase 'feeling off colour' means

- (C) Cyril gets aggressive when Mrs. Pearson refuses to prepare tea for him. What does this suggest about Mrs. Pearson's relationship with her family?

- (D) Mrs. Pearson refuses to prepare tea for Cyril because:

- (a) she is tired.
- (b) she is busy smoking and drinking.
- (c) she wants him to do his work.
- (d) she wants to break the monotony.

Ans. (A) We can say that Cyril is a bit hyperactive, too aggressive, and has a bit of an anger issue. He wants his work done immediately and does not care about his mother's feelings. When Mrs. Pearson tells him that the tea is not ready, he gets annoyed and later, turns argumentative.

- (B) feeling ill

Explanation: The phrase 'feeling off colour' means feeling ill. As soon as Cyril reaches his home, he asks Mrs. Pearson if the tea is made or not. Mrs. Pearson tells him that she didn't bother making tea for him. Cyril asks her if all is good with her.

- (C) Cyril acts aggressively because his mother has not prepared the tea for him. This indicates that Mrs. Pearson is not treated nicely by her family members. They take her for granted, and expect her to do their work while they unwind.

- (D) (d) she wants to break the monotony.

Explanation: Mrs. Pearson explains Cyril that she didn't bother to prepare tea for him because she wants to break the monotony. She is bored of doing the same thing every single day. Hence, (d) is correct.

SHORT ANSWER Type Questions (SA)

[2 marks]

Answer the following questions in about 40 - 50 words:

- 10. How did Mrs. Fitzgerald make use of her husband's posting in the East?**

Ans. Mrs. Fitzgerald utilized her time by learning fortune - telling and how to use magic spells to exchange personalities. She used this knowledge in temporarily swapping her

personality with Mrs. Pearson's personality to resolve her problem with her family.

11. Do you think Mrs. Pearson was to blame for her own fate? Explain.

Ans. Yes, one can certainly agree that Annie was responsible for her own fate. She was a frail woman who couldn't defend herself and continued to get mistreated by her family members. She didn't want to hurt the feelings of her children and her husband, even though they always disrespected her.

12. What does Mrs. Pearson tell Mrs. Fitzgerald about her family?

Ans. Mrs. Pearson tells Mrs. Fitzgerald that her husband and children are very thoughtless and selfish. She has to work very hard to fulfil their demands. However, she is very fond of them. She loves her family even if they ignore her needs and show no concern towards her feelings. She loves to provide for them even if they are self-centered.

13. What does Mrs. Fitzgerald offer to do for Mrs. Pearson?

Ans. Mrs. Fitzgerald wants Mrs. Pearson's family to treat her with kindness and respect. However, Mrs. Pearson is hesitant to speak for herself, so, Mrs. Fitzgerald proposes that they switch their places or in other words, swap bodies. In this way, she would go to Mrs. Pearson's house as Mrs. Pearson and take certain actions.

14. What does Mrs. Fitzgerald tell Mrs. Pearson about the duties of children and husbands?

Ans. Mrs. Fitzgerald says that children should take care of their mothers and it is the moral duty of a husband to respect his wife. They should not give them orders and treat them like dirt.

15. Who is Doris Pearson?

Ans. Doris is Mrs. Pearson's spoilt daughter. She is a pretty girl in her mid twenties. She never cares about her mother. She just gives her order and expects her to do all her tasks without questioning her. She shows no concern towards her mother and is only interested in spending quality time with her boyfriend, Charlie Spence.

16. What does Doris want from her mother?

Ans. Doris wants her mother to iron her yellow silk dress and to prepare tea for her. She is going to wear the dress at night, as she is heading out with her boyfriend, Charlie Spence.

17. How does Mrs. Pearson treat Doris?

Ans. Mrs. Pearson (Mrs. Fitzgerald's personality) refuses to prepare tea for Doris. She also refuses to iron her yellow dress. She calls her boyfriend Charlie Spence a buck-toothed and half-witted fellow. Astonished by the strange behavior of Mrs. Pearson, Doris asks her if she had fallen or hit herself with something. Mrs. Pearson after hearing this, threatens to hit her with something if she doesn't stop her silly questions.

18. Who is Cyril Pearson? What does he want from Mrs. Pearson?

Ans. Cyril Pearson is Mrs. Pearson's son. He is also spoilt like his sister. He doesn't show any concern towards his mother. He wants his work to be done immediately by his mother without any excuse. He wants his mother to prepare tea for him and fix his shirt. However, Mrs. Pearson bluntly refuses to do so.

19. How does Mrs. Pearson react when Cyril tells her that he had worked eight hours a day?

Ans. Cyril attempts to make his mother feel obligated to prepare tea for him and pretends to have been working eight hours a day. At this, Mrs. Pearson says that she too has completed her eight hour shift. She further informs them that from now onwards, she will only work for forty hours a week just like everyone else.

20. Who is George Pearson? What made him annoyed?

Ans. George Pearson is Mrs. Pearson's husband. He is a man in his fifties, who is described as self-important and pompous. He tells his wife that he won't be needing any tea, since there is a snooker match at the club, followed by supper. However, Mrs. Pearson replies him that she has not prepared any tea for him and it's fine even if he forgot to convey. As a result, he becomes annoyed with his wife.

21. What do the people at the club say about George Pearson? Why?

Ans. The people at the club call George Pompy-ompy Pearson. It is because they think that he is slow and pompous. They laugh at him because he goes to the club too often.

22. What does Mrs. Pearson plan to do at the weekends?

Ans. Mrs. Pearson informs her children that she intends to take a break at the weekend like any other member of her family. She agrees to make beds and cook a little as a favour, depending on how she is treated. She also plans of going out to have some enjoyment.

23. Why is everyone in the family unpleasantly surprised, when they see Mrs. Fitzgerald at home?

Ans. When everyone sees Mrs. Fitzgerald at home, they feel unpleasantly surprised. It is because the family was in depressing state. All of them were brutally treated by Mrs. Pearson (Mrs. Fitzgerald), Doris was weeping, Cyril had to get something from the kitchen to eat, and George was feeling disappointed, after learning that everyone in the club made fun of him.

24. What is the final advice given by Mrs. Fitzgerald to Mrs. Pearson?

Ans. Mrs. Fitzgerald advises Mrs. Pearson to be strict with her family. She also advises Mrs. Pearson to not give any explanation for her behaviour or else her family members would treat her differently. All her efforts would go to waste.

25. How is Mrs. Pearson different from Mrs. Fitzgerald? [Delhi Gov. QB 2022]

Ans. Mrs. Pearson is a pleasant but troubled looking woman in her forties. Mrs. Fitzgerald is older than Mrs. Pearson and has a strong and sinister personality. Mrs. Pearson is soft spoken with a touch of suburbanity while Mrs. Fitzgerald has a deep voice with an Irish accent.

26. What social message does the play 'Mother's Day' convey? How relevant is it in the present day context?

[Delhi Gov. QB 2022]

Ans. Through the play, J.B. Priestly reveals how a mother's efforts are ignored by her family members. Despite of working tirelessly without complaining, she is not given the respect she deserves. It gives a message that every woman

deserves to be treated with utmost care and respect. The play's message is relevant in the present day context as in a country like India, a homemaker is considered illiterate and is not given any independence to share her perspective.

27. Why does Doris say, 'Did you fall or hit yourself with something'?

[Delhi Gov. QB 2022]

Ans. Mrs. Pearson shares her plan for the weekends with Doris. She tells her that she intends to take a break at the weekend and will only prepare beds and do a bit of cooking as a favour. She further tells her that she can better look after herself. Doris feels shocked to see her mother talking like this and inquires if has fallen or hit herself with something.

28. Why does Cyril call his mother 'barmy' when he returns home?

[Delhi Gov. QB 2022]

Ans. Doris tells Cyril that their mother's peculiar behaviour has made her seem suddenly different. Listening to this, Cyril asks Doris if Mrs. Pearson has lost her mind. They have never witnessed her behaving in such a disrespectful manner before.

29. What does George accuse Mrs. Pearson of?

[Mod. Diksha]

Ans. George accuses Mrs. Pearson of creating a scene in front of their neighbour, Mrs. Fitzgerald. He tells Mrs. Pearson to continue talking and not mind his presence while laughing at him in front of Mrs. Fitzgerald. He loses his temper and starts yelling.

LONG ANSWER Type Questions (LA)

[5 marks]

Answer the following questions in about 120 - 150 words:

30. Today is Mother's Day. Doris has decided to make her day special by surprising her. She is in guilt for not respecting her mother before and wants to make amends for it. As Doris, create a diary entry expressing your feelings and share your plans for the day.

Ans. 12th February, 2001

Friday

Dear Diary,

Today is Mother's Day, a day dedicated to appreciating the most important person in my life, my mother. Today, I woke up with a sense

of guilt in my heart. My mother has always been there with us through thick and thin, but we have always disappointed her with our rude behavior. Yesterday, I asked her to iron my dress, and when she refused to do so, I got annoyed with her. Hence, I have decided to make amends with her.

To begin with, I have prepared her favourite pancakes and brewed a fresh pot of coffee.

After breakfast, we will spend the day at her favourite cafe and click pictures. Later, we will go for a leisurely walk in the park.

We will end our day with a surprise family gathering at home. I have invited Mrs. Fitzgerald to join us in our celebration.

I am grateful for this chance to honour my mother. She deserves all the love and respect in the world.

Doris

- 31. 'Mrs. Fitzgerald acts a saviour to Mrs. Pearson'. What impression do you form about Mrs. Fitzgerald after reading the story? [Delhi Gov. QB 2022]**

Ans. One can agree with that Mrs. Fitzgerald's efforts were crucial in helping Mrs. Pearson win her family's respect.

Mrs. Fitzgerald can be characterised as a fearless, strong, and liberated woman who understands the difference between right and wrong. She is also a good friend and is willing to go above and beyond to help her neighbour. When Annie shares her plight with Mrs. Fitzgerald, without hesitation, she decides to set her family right and teach them a lesson. With the help of magic, she temporarily swaps her strong personality with Annie's weak personality to resolve her problem. She urges Mrs. Pearson's children to behave morally and act responsibly. She also advises Annie to be strict with her children and not allow anyone to take her for granted. She serves as a central figure in the play, as without her, Annie would never have had the courage to take a stand for herself.

- 32. What, according to you, is the theme of the play? How has it been showcased?**

Ans. The play, Mother's Day by J.B. Priestly talks about the central issue, which is the status of a woman in her own household. A housewife gives her efforts, dedication, and sincerity to the people of her home, but she fails to receive the appreciation and respect that she deserves. She is reduced to the status of an unpaid servant in her own home. This is because of her leniency and choice to put others' feelings before her.

These issues are raised through the portrayal of Mrs. Pearson's family. Her daughter Doris, her son Cyril, and her husband George have all grown arrogant and self-centered. They take her efforts for granted and continue to give her orders. The interchange of personalities and the harsh treatment they receive from Mrs. Fitzgerald (in Mrs. Pearson's body) change them, and they learn to respect her.

- 33. What sort of relationship does Mrs. Pearson have with her children and her husband?**

Ans. Doris, Cyril and George are all very ungrateful people. Doris is Mrs. Fitzgerald's spoilt daughter. She makes her mother run after her all the time and expect her to complete her orders without any questioning. She doesn't care about the feelings of Mrs. Pearson. She instructs her to iron her yellow dress and gets annoyed to hear that the tea hasn't been prepared yet.

Cyril is Mrs. Pearson's son. He is 'spoilt' like his sister and has a habit of treating his mother lightly. He lacks any concern for her and shows that he is a busy man by working eight hours a day. He orders his mother to prepare tea for him and mend his shirt. He is as thoughtless as Doris. He never thinks about the comfort of his mother.

George Pearson is Mrs. Pearson's husband. He is slow moving and pompous fellow. He thinks too high of himself and wants his wife to do whatever he commands. That's why he tells her that he did not expect her to drink alcohol, and she should follow his orders to stop drinking it.

- 34. The play is an ironical portrayal of the status of the mother in a family. Write a speech stressing the need to value women.**

[Mod. Delhi Gov. QB 2022]

Ans. Exploitation of Women in Domestic Settings

Respected Principal, teachers, and my dear friends. I am Roshni of Class XI. Today, I would like to share my views on the exploitation of women.

A woman shoulders all the responsibilities at home and works for long hours day and night. Nevertheless, she gets mistreated by her family members. This is a burning issue all over the world.

A homemaker is regarded as an unpaid domestic servant. Her tolerance is taken for granted by her children and husband. They expect her to complete their tasks without any questioning, and if she refuses to do so, they get irritated. A feeble woman continues to get mentally tortured as she is unable to speak out against these harmful acts.

There is an urgent need to protect such women. A union should be established to aware them of their rights. They deserve all the respect and appreciation in the world. I hope my words will make you think about the issue.

