

Comprehension Passages

Passage 1

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

This woman had been despised, scoffed at, and angrily denounced by nearly every man, woman, and child in the village; but now, as the fact of her death was passed from lip to lip, in subdued tones, pity took the place of anger, and sorrow of denunciation.

Neighbours went hastily to the old tumble-down hut, in which she had secured little more than a place of shelter from summer heats and winter cold: some with grave-clothes for a decent interment of the body; and some with food for the half-starving children, three in number. Of these, John, the oldest, a boy of twelve, was a stout lad, able to earn his living with any farmer. Kate, between ten and eleven, was bright, active girl, out of whom something clever might be made, if in good hands; but poor little Maggie, the youngest, was hopelessly diseased. Two years before a fall from a window had injured her spine, and she had not been able to leave her bed since, except when lifted in the arms of her mother.

“What is to be done with the children?” That was the chief question now. The dead mother would go underground, and be forever beyond all care or concern of the villagers. But the children must not be left to starve.

Question 1.

Why was the dead woman despised and hated by all the people of the village?

Answer:

The dead woman was an alcoholic and despised because of her idleness and addiction to liquor.

Question 2.

Why did the neighbour's attitude change when they heard the news of her death?

Answer:

The neighbour's attitude changed when they heard the news of her death because they felt pity for her three children left destitute and with no one to care for them after her death.

Question 3.

What did the neighbours do to help?

Answer:

The neighbours rushed to the dilapidated cottage of the woman to help. Some carried grave-clothes for a decent interment of the body; and some with food for the half-starving children, three in number.

Question 4.

Describe the three children.

Answer:

The dead woman had three children. John, the oldest, a boy of twelve, was a stout lad, able to earn his living with any farmer. Kate, between ten and eleven, was bright, active girl, out of whom something clever might be made, if in good hands; but poor little Maggie, the youngest, was hopelessly diseased. Two years before a fall from a window had injured her spine, and she had not been able to leave her bed since, except when lifted in the arms of her mother.

Question 5.

What was a matter of concern now that the woman was dead?

Answer:

What concerned the villagers now that the woman was dead was the question of the care of her three children. They were too young to fend for themselves and could not be left alone to fend for themselves.

Passage 2

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

After considering the matter, and talking it over with his wife, farmer Jones said that he would take John, and do well by him, now that his mother was out of the way; and Mrs. Ellis, who had been looking out for a bound girl, concluded that it would be charitable in her to make choice of Katy, even though she was too young to be of much use for several years.

"I could do much better, I know," said Mrs. Ellis; "but as no one seems inclined to take her, I must act from a sense of duty expect to have trouble with the child; for she's an undisciplined thing—used to having her own way."

But no one said "I'll take Maggie." Pitying glances were cast on her wan and wasted form and thoughts were troubled on her account. Mothers brought cast-off garments and, removing her soiled and ragged clothes, dressed her in clean attire. The sad eyes and patient face of the little one touched many hearts, and even knocked at them for entrance. But none opened to take her in. Who wanted a bed-ridden child?

"Take her to the poorhouse," said a rough man, of whom the question "What's to be done with Maggie?" was asked. "Nobody's going to be bothered with her."

"The poorhouse is a sad place for a sick and helpless child," answered one.

"For your child or mine," said the other, lightly speaking; "but for tis brat it will prove a blessed change, she will be kept clean, have healthy food, and be doctored, which is more than can be said of her past condition."

Question 1.

Who offered to take John? Why?

Answer:

Farmer Jones offered to take the boy John with him as John was stout and the farmer could make him work in his fields.

Question 2.

Who took Katy? Why?

Answer:

Mrs Ellis took Katy as she had been looking for a bound girl to work in her house. However, Mrs Ellis pretended that she was doing charity as she said the girl would be of no use for several years and would surely cause trouble as she seemed headstrong.

Question 3.

How did the villagers look at Maggie? Why did no one want to take her?

Answer:

The villagers looked at Maggie with pity because she was thin and diseased. They showed concern for the poor child and many mothers even brought cast-off garments and, removed her soiled and ragged clothes and dressed her in clean attire. They felt sympathy and concern for the sad eyes and patient face of the little but none of them wanted to take, her with them as she was disabled and of no use to them.

Question 4.

What solution did the rough man suggest for Maggie? Why would the poorhouse be a good place for Maggie?

Answer:

The rough man suggested that Maggie be taken to a poorhouse which was meant for destitute and orphans like Maggie who had no one to take care of them. It was felt that it would be the best place for her because she would be kept clean, have healthy food, and be doctored, which was more than could be said of her past condition or her life with her alcoholic mother.

Question 5.

Who came to mourn the dead woman? Why did no one follow the dead cart?

Ans.

A few neighbours came to mourn the dead woman but none followed the dead cart because they did not feel she deserved any respect or sympathy.

Passage 3

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

It's a cruel thing to leave her so."

"Then take her to the poorhouse: she'll have to go there," answered the blacksmith's wife, springing away, and leaving Joe behind.

For a little while the man stood with a puzzled air; then he turned back, and went into the hovel again. Maggie with painful effort, had raised herself to an upright position and was sitting on the bed, straining her eyes upon the door out of which all had just departed, A vague terror had come into her thin white face.

"O, Mr. Thompson!" she cried out, catching her suspended breath, "don't leave me here all alone!"

Though rough in exterior, Joe Thompson, the wheelwright, had a heart, and it was very tender in some places. He liked children, and was pleased to have them come to his shop, where sleds and wagons were made or mended for the village lads without a draft on their hoarded sixpences.

"No, dear," he answered, in a kind voice, going to the bed, and stooping down over the child, "You she'n't be left here alone." Then he wrapped her with the gentleness almost of a woman, in the clean bedclothes which some neighbor had brought; and, lifting her in his strong arms, bore her out into the air and across the field that lay between the hovel and his home.

Question 1.

Who said, 'It's a cruel thing to leave her so.' Why did he say this?

Answer:

The wheelwright man named Joe Thompson said this when all the villagers showed that in spite of pity for the disabled child none of them wanted to take her home and were ready to leave her alone in the hovel.

Question 2.

Describe the feelings and plight of Maggie when she was left alone.

Answer:

Maggie felt desolate and frightened at being left helpless in the rundown cottage that was the only home she had known. Her spine was broken so with a painful effort, she raised herself to an

upright position and tried to sit on the bed, in an effort to strain her eyes upon the door out of which all had just departed, uncaring that she was alone and not in a position to help herself. Her thin white face reflected a vague terror at the thought of the dark future she could foresee for herself.

Question 3.

What did Maggie say to Mr Thompson? What do her words show?

Answer:

Maggie pitifully begged Joe Thompson saying, "O, Mr. Thompson! don't leave me here all alone!" She was almost not able to breathe due to the fear of being left alone.

Question 4.

What assurance did Joe Thompson give Maggie? What did he do?

Answer:

Joe Thompson was a kind man and he assured Maggie by saying, "No, dear," "You she'n't be left here alone." Mr Thompson went to the bed, and stooping down he wrapped her with the gentleness almost of a woman, in the clean bedclothes which some neighbour had brought. He then lifted her in his strong arms and bore her out into the air and across the field to his home.

Question 5.

What idea do we get of the character of Mr Thompson?

Answer:

Mr Thompson is revealed by his actions as a kind hearted man. Although he had a rough exterior, Joe Thompson, the wheelwright, had a heart, and it was very tender in some places. He liked children, and was pleased to have them come to his shop, where sleds and wagons were made or mended for the village lads free of cost without taking anything from their hoarded six pences.

Passage 4

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

"You haven't brought home that sick brat!" Anger and astonishment were in the tones of Mrs. Joe Thompson; her face was in a flame.

"I think women's hearts are sometimes very hard," said Joe. Usually Joe Thompson got out of his wife's way, or kept rigidly silent and non-combative when she fired up on any subject; it was with some surprise, therefore, that she now encountered a firmly-set countenance and a resolute pair of eyes.

"Women's hearts are not half so hard as men's!"

Joe saw, by a quick intuition, that his resolute bearing had impressed his wife and he answered quickly, and with real indignation, "Be that as it may, every woman at the funeral turned her eyes steadily from the sick child's face, and when the cart went off with her dead mother, hurried away, and left her alone in that old hut, with the sun not an hour in the sky."

"Where were John and Kate?" asked Mrs. Thompson.

"Farmer Jones tossed John into his wagon, and drove off. Katie went home with Mrs. Ellis; but nobody wanted the poor sick one. 'Send her to the poorhouse,' was the cry."

"Why didn't you let her go, then. What did you bring her here for?"

"She can't walk to the poorhouse," said Joe; "somebody's arms must carry her, and mine are strong enough for that task."

Question 1.

What was Mrs. Thompson's reaction on seeing Maggie?

Answer:

Mrs Thompson showed anger and astonishment when she saw Maggie being brought home by Mr Thompson.

Question 2.

How did Joe counter his wife on her remark about Maggie?

Answer:

Generally Joe kept got out of his wife's way, or kept rigidly silent and non-combative when she fired up on any subject but her remark about Maggie upset him and he reacted with a firmly-set countenance and a resolute pair of eyes. He said in anger, "I think women's hearts are sometimes very hard."

Question 3.

What kind of person does Mrs Thompson appear to be?

Answer:

Mr Thompson was childless, and not a woman of saintly temper, nor much given to self denial for others' good. The author describes her as a 'vinegar-tempered' person.

Question 4.

What does Mr Thompson feel about the other women who had left Maggie alone and gone away?

Answer:

Mr Thompson has nothing but disdain and indignation for the women who had mouthed verbal sympathy for Maggie and then abandoned her alone and helpless in the cottage and gone away.

Question 5.

Does the attitude of the villagers convey some truth about society at large?

Answer:

Yes, the harsh and selfish attitude of the villagers shows that in this world people help only those from whom they can gain something. Very few people like Mr Thompson genuinely are concerned about the destitute and want to help.

Passage 5

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

"Jane," said the wheelwright, with an impressiveness of tone that greatly subdued his wife, "I read in the Bible sometimes, and find much said about little children. How the Savior rebuked the disciples who would not receive them; how he took them up in his arms, and blessed them; and how he said that 'whosoever gave them even a cup of cold water should not go unrewarded.' Now, it is a small thing for us to keep this poor motherless little one for a single night; to be kind to her for a single night; to make her life comfortable for a single night."

The voice of the strong, rough man shook, and he turned his head away, so that the moisture in his eyes might not be seen. Mrs. Thompson did not answer, but a soft feeling crept into her heart.

"Look at her kindly, Jane; speak to her kindly," said Joe. "Think of her dead mother, and the loneliness, the pain, the sorrow that must be on all her coming life." The softness of his heart gave unwonted eloquence to his lips.

Question 1.

What did Joe want to convey to his wife from his quotes from the Bible?

Answer:

By quoting from the Bible Joe wanted to tell his wife that even their religion advocated love for children. He wanted her to feel sympathy and love for the disabled, lonely and abandoned Maggie.

Question 2.

Why does the author make the character repeat the phrase, 'a single night'?

Answer:

The author uses repetition to lay emphasis on the last words of the sentence and to convey his point and to make the story interesting.

Question 3.

What impact does Joe's words have on Mr Thompson?

Answer:

Joe's words were so emotional and heart felt that Mrs Thompson melted and a softness crept in her heart.

Question 4.

What did Joe say to his wife?

Answer:

Joe quoted from the Bible and told his wife how Christ had also said that kindness to children would not go unrewarded. He invoked her emotions and her feelings of pity and sympathy by asking her to imagine the plight of Maggie who had lost her mother and the loneliness, pain and suffering which was her fate.

Question 5.

What brought eloquence to Joe's lips when he spoke to his wife?

Answer:

The kindness and love that Joe felt for the abandoned Maggie, alone in the world and helpless, made Joe emotional and eloquent.

Passage 6

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

Mrs. Thompson did not reply, but presently turned towards the little chamber where her husband had deposited Maggie; and, pushing open the door, went quietly in. Joe did not follow; he saw that her state had changed, and felt that it would be best to leave her alone with the child. So he went to his shop, which stood near the house, and worked until dusky evening released him from labor. A light shining through the little chamber windows was the first object that attracted Joe's attention on turning towards the house: it was a good omen. The path led him by this windows and, when opposite, he could not help pausing to look in. It was now dark enough outside to screen him from observation. Maggie lay, a little raised on the pillow with the lamp shining full upon her face. Mrs. Thompson was sitting by the bed, talking to the child; but her back was towards the window, so that her countenance was not seen. From Maggie's face, therefore, Joe must read the character of their intercourse. He saw that her eyes were intently fixed upon his wife; that now and then a few words came, as if in answers from her lips; that her expression was sad and tender; but he saw nothing of bitterness or pain. A deep-drawn breath was followed by one of relief, as a weight lifted itself from his heart.

Question 1.

Why did Joe not follow Mrs Thompson? What had changed her?

Answer:

Joe did not follow Mrs Thompson because she realised that his eloquent words and quotes from the Bible had affected her and her mindset had changed.

Question 2.

What attracted Joe's attention after he returned from the day's work?

Answer:

A light shining through the little chamber windows was the first object that attracted Joe's attention on turning towards the house. He considered it a good sign.

Question 3.

What did Joe see from the window?

Answer:

Joe saw a pleasant scene from the widow. He saw Maggie lying a little raised on the pillow, with the lamp shining on her face which was devoid of any bitterness or pain although it was sad. She seemed to be in conversation with his wife who had her back to the window and it was obvious to him that they were developing a bond.

Question 4.

Why was Joe relieved?

Answer:

Joe felt relieved to see that his wife was no longer resentful of Maggie being in their house and was infect talking tenderly with the child.

Passage 7

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

After washing from his hands and face the dust and soil of work, Joe left the kitchen, and went to the little bedroom. A pair of large bright eyes looked up at him from the snowy bed; looked at him tenderly, gratefully, pleadingly. How his heart swelled in his bosom! With what a quicker motion came the heart-beats! Joe sat down, and now, for the first time, examining the thin free carefully under the lamp light, saw that it was an attractive face, and full of a childish sweetness which suffering had not been able to obliterate.

"Your name is Maggie?" he said, as he sat down and took her soft little hand in his.

"Yes, sir." Her voice struck a chord that quivered in a low strain of music.

"Have you been sick long?"

"Yes, sir." What a sweet patience was in her tone!

"Has the doctor been to see you?"

"He used to come"

"But not lately?"

"No, sir."

Question 1.

How did Maggie look at Joe when he entered her room?

Answer:

Maggie looked at Joe tenderly, gratefully, pleadingly with her large bright eyes.

Question 2.

What was Joe's reaction to the look Maggie gave him?

Answer:

Joe experienced a surge of tender emotions. His heart swelled in his bosom and his heartbeats quickened because he was overcome with love and pity for Maggie.

Question 3.

What did Joe notice about Maggie in the light of the lamp?

Answer:

Joe saw Maggie's thin face under the lamp light. He observed that it was an attractive face, and full of a childish sweetness which suffering had not been able to obliterate.

Question 4.

What does Maggie tell Joe?

Answer:

Maggie tells Joe that she had been sick for a long time and initially the Doctor came but not lately. Her back had pained on her hard bed but there was less pain now as the bed in Joe's house was soft.

Passage 8

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

Joe did not see the Guardians of the Poor on that day, on the next, nor on the day following. In fact, he never saw them at all on Maggie's account, for in less than a week Mrs. Joe Thompson would as soon leave thought of taking up her own abode in the almshouse as sending Maggie there.

What light and blessing did that sick and helpless child bring to the home of Joe Thompson, the poor wheelwright! It had been dark, and cold, and miserable there for a long time just because his wife had nothing to love and care for out of herself, and so became so, irritable, ill-tempered, and self-afflicting in the desolation of her woman's nature. Now the sweetness of that sick child, looking ever to her in love, patience, and gratitude, was as honey to her soul, and she carried her in her heart as well as in her arms, a precious burden. As for Joe Thompson, there was not a man in all the neighbourhood who drank daily of a more precious wine of life than he. An angel had come into his house, disguised as a sick, helpless, and miserable child, and filled all its dreary chambers with the sunshine of love.

Question 1.

Why did Joe not see the Guardians of the poor on that day or ever again?

Answer:

Joe did not see the Guardians of the Poor on that day, on the next, nor on the day following. In fact, he never saw them at all on Maggie's account because Mrs Thompson had changed and had started loving Maggie. They decided to adopt her as their own child.

Question 2.

What had changed Mrs Thompson?

Answer:

The love and tenderness that Maggie gave to Mrs Thompson changed her and she wanted Maggie to stay with them forever.

Question 3.

What kind of person was Mrs Thompson before Maggie came into her life?

Answer:

Mrs Thompson was a bitter and angry person before Maggie came into her life. She had nothing to love and care for out of herself, and so became so, irritable, ill-tempered, and self-afflicting in the desolation of her woman's nature.

Question 4.

What changed her? Describe the change in her.

Answer:

Maggie and her love changed Mrs Thompson. The sweetness of that sick child, looking ever to her in love, patience, and gratitude, was as honey to her soul, and she carried her in her heart as well as in her arms like a precious burden.

Question 5.

Who was the angel? Why does the author say she was disguised?

Answer:

Maggie was the angel who came into their house. She came disguised as a sick, helpless, and miserable child, and filled all its dreary chambers with the sunshine of love. The author says she is disguised because her true self of love and beauty was hidden from the eyes of everyone and only when the Thompsons selflessly cared and loved her did the angel shower them with happiness in their lives.

Assignment

Question 1.

Discuss with reference to the story An Angel in Disguise how love has the power to transform.

Answer:

An Angel in Disguise recounts one of the more troubling times in America; set in a small village, where life is made difficult. Mr. and Mrs. Thompson, who are the “heroes” in the short story, rescue a young child by the name of Maggie, who is ill, bedridden, and unable bodied. Because no one else takes the initiative to help this young child, Mr. Thompson takes it upon himself to. Mr. Thompson is revered as an older quiet, kind soul, who resides with his wife, who is introduced as one who holds a temper, and a bitter attitude. Maggie is the “angel in disguise”, and is an ailing, innocent, young girl, who yearns for love, and acceptance. The root problem that drives the story is the absence of love in both Maggie, and Mr. and Mrs. Thompson’s life. In Maggie’s case, it is the absence of love from a parental figure, and in the Thompson’s situation, it is the absence of love from a child that has plagued their relationship, and their lives; with the passing of Maggie’s mother, also comes the scattering of her siblings into other families, and her foreboding loneliness, the Thompson’s in turn, are unable to bear children, which stimulates the bitter and tempered demeanor of Mrs. Thompson. The gray town is overcome with pity for the children, despite their scorn towards the children’s now deceased mother, they pay their respects and some decide to care for the fending children. However, no one decided to care for Maggie, the bed ridden ill-borne; whispers of pity and charitable words were often uttered, but none were taken into action. That is until, the heart of Mr. Thompson went out to the young ailing girl, who grabbed hold of it in her paling grip, frightened of loneliness. Mr. Thompson returned home with Maggie, and laid her to sleep, at first, his sullen wife did not approve of the harboring of such a child, but after some time spent with her, and the sudden, unexpected rise of resistance from her husband, she grew to care for the child, and the hole in heart which propelled all the waves of bitter anger, and pain of being infertile was filled with what their family so longed for, a child. And in sequence, the child had what she had always so longed for, someone to stay by her bedside. Maggie was their “angel in disguise”. This story was one that held promise of a sombre tale, but it delivered that sombre, sincere quality in a way that was bursting with tender affection. The saying that love binds all things, has never been more legitimate, after reading T.S. Arthur’s An Angel in Disguise. The absence of such love truly did plague the lives of the Thompson’s, and Maggie. Notwithstanding the negative comments against Arthur’s writing, this story was pieced together with articulate brilliance, and honest morale; a realistic depiction of the deprivation of love, in the hearts of both the young, Maggie, and old, Mr. and Mrs. Thompson. A tale to remind us of the importance of love in everyone’s lives.

Question 2.

Show with references from the story how T.S Arthur uses direct and indirect characterisation to highlight the traits of the characters.

Answer:

The writer reveals all the characters by means of both direct and indirect characterization. For

example, at the very beginning of the story the author introduces us some characters by direct characterization: 'This woman had been despised, scoffed at, and angrily denounced by nearly every man, woman, and child in the village'; judging by these words, we may assume that the woman's life was very hard, there was nobody to support her, to help her. About her children the author says: 'John, the oldest, a boy of twelve, was a stout lad, able to earn his living with any farmer. Kate, between ten and eleven, was bright, active girl, out of whom something clever might be made, if in good hands; but poor little Maggie, the youngest, was hopelessly diseased'. Mr. Thompson's personality is vividly revealed: 'Though rough in exterior, Joe Thompson, the wheelwright, had a heart, and it was very tender in some places. He liked children, and was pleased to have them come to his shop...' judging by this phrase we get to know that Mr. Thompson is really a kind-hearted sort of person, who loves to spend his time with children. Then in a nutshell, using direct characterization, the author's point of view is expressed in black and white.

Using indirect characterization, the author doesn't give his direct appreciation of what the character does but leaves us to draw conclusions as to the person's actions. For example: 'The voice of the strong, rough man shook, and he turned his head away, so that the moisture in his eyes might not be seen. Mrs. Thompson did not answer, but a soft feeling crept into her heart'. The first sentence of this example proves that a man's strength is not in 'the voice', but in the actions. Mr. Thompson is a strong man, but the experience with Maggie touched him greatly, that's why he cried a little bit. And what is more, those tears proved that he was happy that his wife had changed. This example shows changes in Mrs. Thompson's personality also. At first, she was absolutely against taking care of Maggie, T.S. Arthur renders her mood by speech characterisation: 'Why didn't you let her go, then. What did you bring her here for?', 'Then why didn't you keep on? Why did you stop here?', but suddenly her heart opened and she loved that small child: 'What are you going to do with that child? ... Mrs. Thompson looked rather strangely at her husband for some moments, and then dropped her eyes'. We may just imagine how sad were the Thompsons because they didn't have children and one day 'An angel had come into his house, disguised as a sick, helpless, and miserable child, and filled all its dreary chambers with the sunshine of love'.

Farmer Jones and Mrs. Ellis, are minor characters and presented in the story, so to say, just directly: 'Farmer Jones, after the coffin was taken out, placed John in his wagon and drove away, satisfied that he had done his part. Mrs. Ellis spoke to Kate with a hurried air, 'Bid your sister good by,' and drew the tearful children apart ere scarcely their lips had touched in a sobbing farewell'. However, we may imagine what kind of people they are. They weren't interested in Maggie's life, they took children as things. They left Maggie alone and no one cared about her future life, to send Maggie to the poorhouse was the easiest way out. There is one more example of indirect characterisation: 'For a little while the man stood with a puzzled air; then he turned back, and went into the hovel again'. While reading this sentence we imagine Joe Thompson hesitating about his actions, he is not sure what to do: whether to take Maggie or not. Such dreadful situation festers his soul and he can't be apart from it. The next example is a direct proof to show how Mrs. Thompson was shocked: 'Anger and astonishment were in the tones of Mrs. Joe Thompson; her face was in a flame'. Actually, she was seething with anger, she couldn't utter a word.

Maggie, is described as a weak person, but quite experienced. She didn't talk a lot, the author pays special attention to her personality indirectly, but very masterfully. From the very beginning of the story one can feel how much Maggie was afraid to stay alone: 'But no one said 'I'll take Maggie'. Pitying glances were cast on her wan and wasted form and thoughts were troubled on her account. Mothers brought cast-off garments and, removing her soiled and ragged clothes, dressed her in clean attire. The sad eyes and patient face of the little one touched many hearts, and even knocked at them for entrance'. She kept silent, her eyes told more. By all means, she understood that 'But none opened to take her in. Who wanted a bed-ridden child?', thus the author shows us a remarkable piece of realistic character drawing. The author renders the atmosphere of her loneliness very artfully. Usage of such words as 'tearful', 'scarcely', 'a sobbing farewell', 'refraining from a look', 'alone' evoke an emotional response and the reader gets the vivid notion of the situation described. 'O, Mr. Thompson!' she cried out, catching her suspended breath, 'don't leave

me here all alone!', it has a very specific emotional colouring and the author conveys much while saying little. The author gives a very bright indirect characterization of Maggie's personality: '... somebody's arms must carry her, and mine are strong enough for that task'. On the one hand, this example shows how weak and helpless Maggie is and, on the other hand, the example demonstrates Mr. Thompson's responsibility, his strong character. Besides, the author uses speech characterization to reveal Maggie's personality. There is a dialogue which shows the personality of a small child, who is in despair, who has just lost her family but now has other parents, who is happy and sad at the same time, who doesn't know what to expect next. In the dialogue Maggie gives very short replies. For example: 'Yes, sir', 'He used to come', 'No, sir'. She is very polite, always said 'sir'. Thus the author masterfully describes the characters, they are life-like and T. S. Arthur uses indirect and speech characterization to bring his characters alive.

Question 3.

Discuss the conflict in the story, An Angel In Disguise.

Answer:

Two of the major internal conflicts in the story are Joe and Mrs. Thompson's feelings about Maggie. Joe couldn't find it in himself to let Maggie go to the poor house all alone and sick so Joe decided to take her home. He tells his wife, "Look at her kindly, Jane; speak to her kindly," said Joe. "Think of her dead mother, and the loneliness, the pain, the sorrow that must be on all her coming life." However, Mrs. Thompson had the opposite problem and couldn't find it in herself to let Maggie stay with them. When she sees Maggie with Joe she loses control and gives vent, "You haven't brought home that sick brat!" Anger and astonishment were in the tones of Mrs. Joe Thompson; her face was in a flame. But eventually Mrs. Thompson changed her mind because of Maggie's kindness towards them. 'Joe did not follow; he saw that, her state had changed, and felt that it would be best to leave her alone with the child.'

The other conflict that was external were between Mr. and Mrs. Thompson and Maggie. Maggie was ill and bedridden and that caused nobody to want to adopt her. Joe decided that he couldn't leave her there and took her to live with him and his wife. When Maggie begged him not to leave her alone he with all the compassion inside him answered, "No, dear," he answered, in a kind voice, going to the bed, and stooping down over the child, "You sha'n't be left here alone."

Another conflict was that Mr. and Mrs. disagreed on the idea of adopting Maggie. "What are you going to do with that child?"

"I thought you understood me that she was to go to the poorhouse," replied Joe, as if surprised at her question.

This was resolved when later in the story Maggie has a positive impact on their lives and they finally decided she would stay. The author tells us, 'Joe did not see the Guardians of the Poor on that day, on the next, nor on the day following. In fact, he never saw them at all on Maggie's account, for in less than a week Mrs. Joe Thompson would as soon leave thought of taking up her own abode in the almshouse as sending Maggie there.'

Question 4.

Is the story Didactic and gives a moral?

Answer:

Being born to highly religious parents, many of T. S. Arthur's works are moralistic in nature. He was also a strong proponent of temperance and the tone of the story is didactic. His short story, An Angel in Disguise features both his characteristic moral message, and his strong views on the consumption of alcohol. It shows that you can always find good in people, despite their lives, and how they look. The man found the pureness of the little girl and called her an angel because to him, she was one, in disguise. The tone to us was peaceful, because everything worked out in the end. The evil people try and shun a motherless, poor and disabled girl. A man with a mean wife takes in the girl to find that she's an innocent, pure soul. They tend to her and care for her due to

her condition, physically, mentally and emotionally, and see that she's An Angel in Disguise. The moral of the story is to not judge a book by its cover, and to give people or things a chance before you push it away. The man gave her a chance while everyone judged her for being motherless and disabled and unwashed. He welcomed her into their childless home. He didn't judge her while everyone else did, and we think that was the intended message.

The author quotes extensively from the Bible to uphold his didactic theme that one must help the disabled and children. Joe lectures his wife on the virtue of selfless benevolence to children. He says, 'How the Savior rebuked the disciples who would not receive them; how he took them up in his arms, and blessed them; and how he said that 'whosoever gave them even a cup of cold water should not go unrewarded'.

Thus the story carries a message about love, kindness, human feelings and bereavement. The author's message is to help other people, because we should be kind, sympathetic and tender. We should help poor and hopelessly diseased children, because there could be an angel in disguise for us. The main theme of the story is that people can change and feel the plight of other people.

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