

Should Wizard Hit Mommy

–By John Updike

Points to Remember

1. Jack fabricated a story to tell to his two year old daughter Jo.
2. He created a basic plot there was an animal named Roger, a small creature.
3. The animal had a problem which was to be solved by the wizard.
4. The wizard solved the problem and sent the animal to the wise owl to guide him how to get the required pennies.
5. Jack told Jo a story about Roger Skunk who smelled so bad that the other animals ran away from him.
6. Roger Skunk went to the wizard who changed his foul smell to sweet smell of roses.
7. The wizard sent him to the wise owl to collect the required pennies.
8. Roger Skunk was ecstatic and ran to the jungle to play with other animals, who loved his smell very much.
9. When he reached his house, his mother detected the new smell and scolded him for the new smell.
10. The mother scolded Roger Skunk and took him to the wizard.
11. Roger's mother shouted at the wizard and hit him hard over the head.
12. The little Roger got the foul smell again and was very sad.
13. Jo did not like the behaviour of the mommy and wanted her father to hit mommy.
14. Jo's mother is annoyed at Jack's taking so much time in telling the story.

15. Jack is in confusion whether to go to help his wife in her work or to change the end of the story of his daughter.

Short Answer Questions

1. How did the wizard help Roger Skunk?

Ans. The wizard was moved by Roger skunk's story. On finding his magic wand - chanted some magic words & granted that Roger should smell like roses.

2. How did Roger Skunk's Mommy react when he went home smelling of roses? How did the Skunk's mother get him his old smell back?

Ans. Roger Skunk began to smell like roses. Mommy asked about the smell. Roger Skunk replied that the wizard had made him smell like that the mother did not like that and asked Roger to come with her. Mother was furious to learn about the wizard who changed the original smell. She immediately visited the wizard and hit him on his head and asked him to restore the original smell.

3. Who is Jo? How did Jo behave in 'reality phase'?

Ans. Jo is Jack's 4 year old daughter. She is not a patient listener. She does not take things for granted and tries to see things in her own way.

4. Why did Jo want the wizard to hit mommy?

Ans. Jo was mentally drawing a parallel between mommy skunk and her own mother. She perceived both of them as interfering factor in independent growth of their children. So, she wanted wizard to hit mommy as she had failed to empathize with her son's (baby skunk) problem of not having anyone for his company.

5. Was Roger skunk's mother justified in forcing him to retain his original smell?

Ans. Up to some extent, I agree with the point of view of mother but not with the way she opted for. She wanted her child to retain his unique identity. But, she resented the rose smell very sternly. Rather, it should be not forced. The child should be taken in confidence before being convinced and should be made aware of the pros and cons.

Short Answer Questions for Practice

1. Why did Roger Skunk go to the Wizard?
2. Why did Roger Skunk go to visit the owl?
3. How did the Wizard fulfil young Skunk's wish?
4. What was the cause of Roger Skunk's sadness?
5. Do you think that the father in the story is more or less, an alter ego of the author, as far as the child is concerned? Why?
6. Why was Skunk happy after meeting the Wizard?
7. What was unique about story that Jack told?

Long Answer Questions

1. How does Jo want the story to end? Why?

Ans. Children have a very different view of life than that of adults. They dream and live in their imaginative world. Jo does not like the ending that mommy should hit the wizard. Rather she wants that the Wizard should hit the Mommy for her failure to realize the problems of Roger Skunk. She calls her 'Stupid Mommy' and insists for a change in the storyline. She has got sympathy for Roger Skunk. She thinks it to be unfair on the part of Roger Skunk's Mommy to go to Wizard and get Roger smell bad again.

2. Drawing inference from lesson "Should Wizard Hit Mommy", elucidate perception of imposing parents?

Ans. In the lesson 'should wizard hit mommy', mother skunk was not supporting the idea of changed identity of baby skunk. The story presents that Roger skunk felt alienated because of his bad smell. The elders failed to recognize his feelings and pain. His mother vehemently opposed the changed smell though it was pleasant to smell. She perceived the stink as unique characteristic means the individuality. But, her reaction was impulsive.

Taking a clue from thoughtful parenting, she could respond in a subtle manner. So as to make the child to understand her point of view. A healthy discussion in an amiable environment leads to agreeable solution. It is always preferable to adopt time tested strategies of give and take to make people convince.

Long Answer Questions for Practice

1. What is Jack's way of telling stories? Why is it appealing?
2. What does Jack want to convey through the story of Roger Skunk?
3. How is Jack's childhood interwoven in the story of the stinky skunk?
4. How does Jack assert his authority as a father over his daughter?
5. What part of the story did Jack himself enjoy the most? Why?
6. Why does Jo want the Wizard to hit Mommy? Justify your answer on the basis of the story?

Value Based Questions

1. "The parents sometimes do not understand the moral fibre of the children. As a result they feel isolated." Justify the statement in context of the lesson.
2. Roger Shuk's mother did not want to retain the changed smell of the young Roger. Why are mothers so strict with their children? Are they justified? Why or why not?