



Grade IX

Lesson 3 - The Little Girl

- Katherine Mansfield

Prose

Soul of the Chapter

All fathers are not alike. Some show their love and affection for their children and play with them. Others also love and care for their children but they show it by working hard for them and giving them instructions and advice.

Kezia's father belonged to the second category. He was very strict. Kezia always avoided her father. He was a figure of fear for her. She always stuttered before him. Kezia's grandmother always encouraged her to talk with her parents. But Kezia always found them busy. One day, Kezia's grandmother suggested her to gift her father a pin-cushion of yellow silk on his birthday. Kezia made it. She needed something to stuff the pin-cushion. She searched for some papers. She found some sheets, tore them and filled in the cushion. These papers contained the speech of her father which was to be delivered the next day.

There was a hue and cry in the house. The papers were missing. Everyone at home was questioned. Kezia did not tell a lie. She confessed that she had torn the papers. Her father punished her. Hours later, she sobbed, 'What did God make fathers for?'

There was another mother was admitted in a hospital. Her grandmother had to go there. She was left alone Kezia had a nightmare. She was a butcher with a knife and rope. She screamed and woke up her father. He took Kezia with him and asked her to rub her feet against his legs to get them warm. Kezia found him harder than grandmother. She realised that her father had to work harder. He was too tired to play with her. Now she began to understand him. She felt that her hatred for him had been all wrong.

NCERT Questions

Thinking about the Text

I. Given below are some emotions that Kezia felt. Match the emotions in Column A with the items in Column B.

A	B
1. fear or terror	i. father comes into her room to give her a goodbye kiss
2. glad sense of relief	ii. noise of the carriage grows fainter
3. a "funny" feeling, perhaps of understanding	iii. father comes home
	iv. speaking to father
	v. going to bed when alone at home
	vi. father comforts her and falls asleep
	vii. father stretched out on the sofa, snoring.

II. Answer the following questions in one or two sentences.

1. Why was Kezia afraid of her father?

Kezia was afraid of her father because he was very strict and always used to give commands to everybody else in the house. He never played with her. He had big hands and heavy face especially his mouth when he yawned were big and she was especially terrified with the manner in which he looked at her over his spectacles.

2. Who were the people in Kezia's family?

Kezia's family consisted of her father, mother, grandmother and herself.

3. What was Kezia's father's routine (i) before going to his office? (ii) after coming back from his office? (iii) on Sundays?

i. Before going to his office, Kezia's father usually went into her room to give her a casual kiss.

ii. After coming back from his office, he ordered for tea to bring into the drawing room. He also asked his mother to bring him the newspaper and his slippers, and Kezia to pull off his boots.

iii. On Sunday, Kezia's father would stretch out on the sofa. He would cover his face with his handkerchief, put his feet on one of the cushions and sleep soundly.



4. In what ways did Kezia's grandmother encourage her to get to know her father better?

Kezia's grandmother encouraged her to get to know her father better by sending her to the drawing room to talk to her parents on Sundays. She also suggested Kezia to make a pin-cushion out of a beautiful piece of yellow silk as a gift for her father's birthday.

III. Discuss these questions in class with your teacher and then write down your answers in two or three paragraphs each.

1. Kezia's efforts to please her father resulted in displeasing him very much. How did this happen?

Kezia was always afraid of her father. She always stuttered before him. She tried to please her father on various occasions but her efforts resulted in displeasing him very much. When he asked her to take off his shoes, he would ask her if she had been a good girl. The moment she stuttered, her father got irritated and called her 'a little brown owl'. Kezia wanted to please her father by making a pin-cushion. She did so but she used her father's important papers as scrap to fill in the pin-cushion. It displeased her father and she was punished for it.

2. Kezia decides that there are "different kinds of father". What kind of father was Mr. Macdonald, and how was he different from Kezia's father?

Kezia compared her father with Mr. Macdonald. She found Mr. Macdonald to be a different kind of father. He was a nice man. He played with his children. He put baby Mao on his shoulder and his daughters hung on to his coat's pockets. They ran round and round the flower-beds laughing. Kezia's father was just opposite to Mr. Macdonald. He never played with Kezia. He was very strict and harsh with her. This made Kezia decide that there are different kinds of fathers.

3. How does Kezia begin to see her father as a human being who needs her sympathy?

One night, Kezia was alone in the house. She had a nightmare and started crying. She saw a butcher with a knife and a rope. Her father heard her crying. He took her to his bedroom and made her comfortable. This changed her feelings for him. She realised that her father was not so cruel as she thought. She understood how he got tired after day's work. She began to see him as a human being who needed her sympathy.

Thinking About Language



1. Look at the following sentence.

There was a *glad* sense of relief when she heard the noise of the carriage growing fainter.....

Here, *glad* means happy about something.

Glad, happy, pleased, delighted, thrilled and *overjoyed* are synonyms (works or expressions that have the same or nearly the same meaning). However, they express happiness in certain ways.

Read the sentences below.

- She was *glad* when the meeting was over.
- The chief guest was *pleased* to announce the name of the winner.

1. Use an appropriate word from the synonyms given above in the following sentences.

Clues are given in brackets.

- She was _____ by the news of her brother's wedding (very pleased)
- I was _____ to be invite to the party (extremely pleased and excited about)
- She was _____ at the birth of her granddaughter. (Extremely happy)
- The coach was _____ with his performance. (Satisfied about)
- She was very _____ with her results. (happy about something that has happened)

- i) thrilled ii) Delighted iii) Overjoyed iv) Pleased v) happy

2. Study the use if the word *big* in the following sentence.

He was so *big* - his hands and his neck, especially his mouth.....

Here, *big* means *large* in size.

Now, consult a dictionary and find out the meaning of *big* in the following sentences. The first one has been done for you.

- You are a *big* girl now. *Older*
- Today you are going to take the *biggest* decision of your career. _____
- Their project is full of *big* ideas. _____
- Cricket is a *big* game in our country. _____
- I am a *big* fan of Lata Mangeskar. _____
- You have to cook a bit more as my friend is a *big* eater. _____
- What a *big* heart you've got, Father dear. _____



ii. most important

iii. Innovation

iv. Popular

v. great

vi. Gourmand

vii. Generous

II. Verbs of Reporting

Study the following sentences.

- "What!" *screamed* Mother.
- "N-n-no", she *whispered*.
- "Sit up", he *ordered*.

The italicised words are verbs of reporting. We quote or report what someone has said or thought by using a reporting verb. Every reporting clause contains a reporting verb.

For example:

- He *promised* to help in my project.
- "How are you doing?" Seema *asked*.

We use verbs of reporting to advise, order, report statements, thoughts, intentions, questions, requests, apologies, manner of speaking and so on.

1. Underline the verbs of reporting in the following sentences.

- He **says** he will enjoy the ride.
- Father **mentioned** that he was going on a holiday.
- No one **told** us that the shop was closed.
- He **answered** that the price would go up.
- I **wondered** why he was screaming.
- Ben **told** her to wake him up.
- Ratan **apologised** for coming late to the party.

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2. Some verbs of reporting are given in the box. Choose the appropriate verbs and fill in



the blanks in the following

were complaining, shouted, relied, remarked, ordered, suggested

- i. "I am not afraid," _____ the woman.
- ii. "Leave me alone," my mother _____.
- iii. The children _____ that the roads were crowded and noisy.
- iv. "Perhaps he isn't a bad sort of a chap after all," _____ the master.
- v. "Let's go and look at the school ground," _____ the sports teacher.
- vi. The traffic police _____ all the passers-by to keep off the road.

- i. "I am not afraid," replied the woman.
- ii. "Leave me alone," my mother shouted.
- iii. The children were complaining that the roads were crowded and noisy.
- iv. "Perhaps he isn't a bad sort of a chap after all," remarked the master.
- v. "Let's go and look at the school ground," suggested the sports teacher.
- vi. The traffic police ordered all the passers-by to keep off the road.

NCERT Workbook Questions

1. Look at the words - see, watch, look at, view, observe, catch, glimpse. These are all synonyms. Fill in the blanks with appropriate words. You can change the tense where it is required.

- a. We _____ a television programme on tourism in India. It was very informative.
- b. Somebody is keeping a _____ over the tower.
- c. The _____ from the cliff is panoramic.
- d. You can't afford to fall sick again, _____ your diet.
- e. She _____ the amazing view and drew a picture.
- f. If you are able to _____ a _____ of dancing dolphins, you are lucky.

a. watched b. watch c. view d. watch e. observed f. catch, glimpse

2. Look at the following sentence:



By that time he had his spectacles on and looked at her over them....

Here, look means lay one's eye on or to direct one's gaze in specified direction.

Use appropriate words from the synonyms given below in the following sentences.

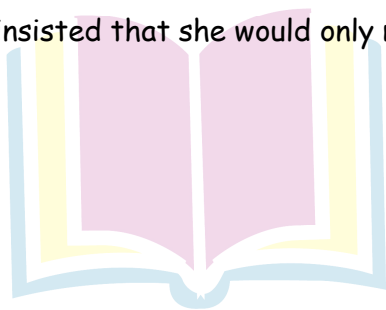
Glance, gaze, stare, peep, watch, see, observe

- a. Ginny _____ at her watch. (take a brief or hurried look)
- b. The door was ajar and she couldn't resist _____ in. (Look quickly and furtively at something)
- c. Lucy _____ him playing. (Look at or observe attentively over a period of time)
- d. He could only _____ her in astonishment. (Look steadily and intently, especially in admiration, surprise or thought)
- e. She _____ that all the seats were already occupied. (notice or perceive something)
- f. In the distance, she could _____ the blue horizon. (Perceive with the eyes)
- g. He _____ at her in amazement. (Look fixed or vacantly at someone or something with one's eyes wide open)

- | | | | |
|------------|------------|-------------|---------|
| a. glanced | b. peeping | c. observed | d. gaze |
| e. saw | f. watch | g. started | |

3. Read the following passage and underline the reporting verbs.

- i. Anu's mother agreed that Anu could go to the party but cautioned her to have too many sweets. The dentist had advised her not to eat too many sweets.
- ii. Anita reminded Leena to buy milk and keep it in the fridge because Vrinda wanted to have coffee in the evening. Leena insisted that she would only make coffee. Agreed to her request.



- iii. We decided to go to our village near Goa on holiday. Mona recommended going to the beach. The coast guard advised us against going into the water. He also warned the weak bridge. He warned the children not to cross the bridge there. We thanked him and went back.
- iv. The teacher explained the functioning of the reminded us that the classes would resume



1. To the little girl he was a figure to be feared and avoided. Every morning before going to work he came into her room and gave her a casual kiss, to which she responded with "Goodbye, Father". And oh, there was a glad sense of relief when she heard the noise of the carriage growing fainter and fainter down the long road!

a. "Little girl" in the above lines has been used for _____.

Kezia

b. _____ was a figure to be feared and avoided.

Kezia's father

c. the little girl used to feel a sense of comfort when her father would come from office.

False

d. The word _____ in the above lines is opposite of 'louder'.

'Fainter'

2. She never stuttered with other people - had quite given it up - but only with Father, because then she was trying so hard to say the words properly.

"What's the matter? What are you looking so wretched about? Mother, I wish you taught this child not to appear on the brink of suicide..... Here, Kezia, carry my teacup back to the table carefully". He was so big - his hands and his neck, especially his mouth when he yawned. Thinking about him alone was like thinking about a giant.

a. _____ had a very big neck and mouth.

Kezia's father

b. 'Father' in the above lines has been compared to a _____.

Giant

c. Kezia normally used to stammer while talking to people.

False

d. In the phrase 'the brink of suicide', the word 'brink' means _____.

'Verge'

3. Laboriously, with a double cotton, the little girl stitched three sides. But what to fill it with? That was the question. The grandmother was out in the garden, and she wandered into Mother's bedroom to look for scraps. On the bed-table, she discovered a great many sheets of fine paper, gathered them up, tore them into tiny pieces, and stuffed her case, then sewed up the fourth side.



a. Kezia was searching for _____ in her mother's bedroom.

Scraps

b. She finally found _____ for the stuffing to sew up three sides.

Sheets of fine paper

c. The question hovering Kezia's mind was _____ in the fourth side of the pin-cushion.

What to fill

d. The word _____ in the above lines means the same as in a way that takes a lot of time and effort'.

'Laboriously'

4. But the child never forgot. Next time she saw him, she quickly put both hands behind her back and a red colour flew into her cheeks. The Macdonalds lived next door. They had five children. Looking through a gap in the fence the little girl saw them playing 'tag' in the evening.

a. The Macdonalds were _____ neighbours.

Kezia's

b. The phrase 'a red colour flew into her cheeks' means Kezia's was _____.

Scared/afraid

c. The little girl would always play 'tag' in the evening with Macdonald's children.

False

d. The Child i.e. Kezia never forgot the _____ given by her father.

Punishment

5. "Oh, a butcher - a knife - I want Grannie." He blew out the candle, bent down and caught up the child in his arms, carrying her along the passage to the big bedroom. A newspaper was on the bed - a half-smoked cigar was near his reading-lamp. He put away the paper, threw the cigar into the fireplace, then carefully tucked up the child. He lay down beside her.

a. "Oh, a butcher - a knife - I want Grannie." was being uttered by _____.

Kezia

b. The girl was uttering in her _____.

Dream

c. A half smoked cigar and newspaper was lying on Kezia's father's bed.

True



d. The word that is opposite of 'carefully' is _____.

'Carelessly'

Short Answer Questions

1. Why was Kezia afraid of her father?

Kezia was a little girl. She was afraid of her father. He was very strict. He had big hands and heavy face. He never played with her. He was a figure to be feared.

2. What was the morning routine of Kezia and her father?

Before going to his office, Kezia's father used to visit Kezia in the room. He would give Kezia a causal kiss. She responded with "Goodbye, father". Since she was afraid of him, she always felt relieved after his departure.

3. What was the nightmare that Kezia had?

Kezia always had a nightmare. It was a butcher with a knife and a rope, who came nearer and nearer. The butcher had a smile on his face. Kezia could only stand still. She used to cry out 'Grandma! Grandma!'

4. Why was Kezia scared when her mother and grandmother were not at home?

One day Kezia was alone. Her mother and grandmother had gone to hospital. Kezia had the same nightmare of a butcher with a knife in hand and a dreadful smile on his face. Kezia was scared.

5. Who was Mr MacDonald? How was he different from Kezia's father?

Mr Macdonald was Kezia's next door neighbour. He had a happy family of five children. He was always happy with his family and could be seen playing with his children in the garden. He was not a hard and harsh father.

6. How did Kezia's grandmother console her after she was punished by her father?

Kezia was punished by her father for tearing his important papers. Her grandmother wrapped her in a shawl after she was beaten by her father. Her grandmother gave her a hanky and sent her to her bed.

7. Why did Kezia always stutter while talking to her father?



Kezia was a normal girl but whenever she was in front of her father she felt nervous. She would try hard to speak words but would end up in stuttering. She was very afraid of her father.

8. What did Kezia usually find when she wanted to interact with her parents?

Kezia's grandmother used to send Kezia to her parents to talk to them. When she would go to the drawing room, she would find her mother reading some books and her father sleeping soundly and snoring.

9. How did Kezia make a pin-cushion for her father?

Kezia's grandmother advised her to make a pin-cushion for her father on his birthday. She made it out a beautiful piece of yellow silk. She wanted something to fill it with. She found some sheets of papers lying on the bed table. She tore them up and filled in the pin-cushion.

10. Why was Kezia punished by her father?

Kezia wanted to give pin-cushion to her father on his birthday. She filled it with some papers. These papers contained an important speech for the Port Authority. When her father came to know about it, he punished Kezia.

11. What orders were passed to Kezia in the evening when father returned home from office?

When father returned home from office, in his loud voice he ordered Kezia to bring tea for him in the drawing room. He also asked whether the paper had come. He also asked her to bring his slippers.



Long Answer Questions

- 1. Why was Kezia punished by her father? Do you think Kezia deserved this? What should father have done instead?**



Kezia wanted to present a pin-cushion to her father on his birthday. She wanted to make it herself. She took a fine piece of silk and made a case of pin-cushion. To fill, she used documents which were very important for her father.

She tore those papers and stuffed the pin-cushion case with them. The papers contained her father's speech for her Port Authority. She had spoiled them unknowingly and innocently. Kezia admitted her mistake. Her father wanted to teach Kezia that she should not touch the things that did not belong to her. So, he took a ruler and hit her pink and little palms. Kezia thought her father was very cruel. No she did not deserve this punishment. She did not have any bad intention. Her father should have not been so harsh. He should make the little girl realise her mistake tactfully.

2. Why did Kezia like Mr. Macdonald and hate her father?

Kezia did not like her father. She was afraid of him because of his harsh attitude. She found him very cruel and harsh. On the other hand, she liked her neighbour, Mr Macdonald who had five children. She found him always smiling, playing, laughing and running with his children. Seeing them playing and laughing, she thought that there were different sorts of fathers. She found that Macdonald was a happy man with pleasant nature. His children were not afraid of him. He was a great father. She wished her father to be like him. Yes, sharing is very important in good relationship. Parents should spare sometime to spend with their kids. They should have a friendly and caring relationship with them.

3. How did Kezia's attitude towards her father change? What brought them closer?

One day, Kezia was alone in her room. Her father was in the next room. After slept, the same old nightmare came - the butcher with a knife and a rope. She cried out. Her father took her to his room. She was shivering with fear. Her father asked her to rub her feet against his legs to get them warmed. He tried to make her comfortable and warm with his loving care. She realised that her father was not cruel. She found him very caring. She changed her opinion about him. She was no more afraid of him. It was the affection and care that brought them closer.

4. Suppose you are Kezia. Write a page of your diary expressing your feelings after the punishment.

Dear Diary

Wednesday, 10 p.m



I don't know what God made fathers for. Today, my father punished me. It was not my fault at all. I did not tear his papers intentionally. I wanted to make a beautiful pin-cushion for him. I made it by stuffing a cover of satin with scraps of paper. I took these papers from my father's room. I did not know that these papers were important. I realised that I had torn some important papers. I told the truth. He was angry and punished me hard with a ruler. I wanted to tell him that I had made a pin-cushion for him. But I was so terrified that I could say nothing. I wish he would have listened to me.

5. You are Kezia. Describe the change of heart after the night when the father took care of you.

I have always known my father as a tough, stern and rude man. I always find him a figure to be feared and avoided. But yesterday's incident changed my views about him. He is not so bad as I used to think of him. Yesterday, I was alone in my room. I had a nightmare. I began to cry. My father took me to his room and comforted me. It aroused in me a feeling of trust and love for him. I felt the love of a father for the first time. I think he does not have enough time to play with me. Now I have understood him. I love he loves him and he loves me. If he is strict, that is for my own good.

6. Do you think Kezia's father was a bad father? Why/Why not?

Kezia's father was stern and harsh. But I don't think he was a bad father. He was not demonstrative. He always thought and acted for the well being of his child. He did not believe in showing his affection for Kezia. He wanted his daughter to become a disciplined and well mannered girl. He wanted her to know her responsibilities and his compulsion. He beat her for her serious mistake. Before leaving for work, he always gave her a casual kiss. At heart, he cared and loved Kezia very much. When she got frightened due to a nightmare, he immediately came to her with a candle to know what had happened to her. It shows that he cared her very much. He also comforted her when she was afraid. It also showed his affection for the little girl. In the end, Kezia understood her father in the truest sense.

7. Do you think Kezia was at fault when she tore up the important papers of her father? Why/Why not?

Yes, Kezia was at fault when she tore up the important papers of her father. Her intention was not wrong but she should not have taken the paper without his father's permission. It is



not good to take or use anything that does not belong to us. We should always ask for permission before its use. Kezia could use waste papers for the purpose. Or she could ask her mother or grandmother before its use. But she used it inadvertently and was punished literally for her fault. In fact, she was making a pin-cushion for her father. She was looking for scraps with which she could fill the cushion. She found many sheets of fine paper, gathered them and tore them into tiny pieces, and then sewed the fourth side of the cushion. These papers were very important to her father as it contained a great speech of the port Authority. So the damage was a great loss for her father.

- 8. You are Kezia. You tried to please your father by giving him a gift on his birthday. But everything went wrong. Write a letter to your friend Arya expressing your feelings after a punishment from your father.**

Dear Arya

I planned to give a surprise gift to my father on his birthday. I prepared a pin-cushion. I stuffed it with very important papers of my father. When these papers were not found in the house, there was a lot of hue and cry. When I told about it, my dad hit me on my tender palms with a ruler.

How could I tell him that I just wanted to please him? I wanted someone who could console me but I wept all alone.

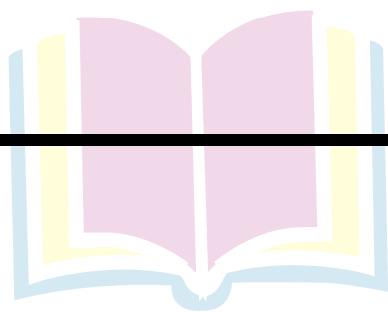
Anyway, it was my fault and I was punished for it.

I have learnt a lesson from this episode not to take anything without his permission.

Take care.

Your friend

Kezia



Next Generation School