



Grandma Climbs a Tree

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Notes and Solved Textbook Questions

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CHAPTER SUMMARY

- Rhyming scheme - aabbcc ddeeff
- Summary
 - i. Speaker's grandmother has loved climbing trees since childhood. She had climbed all the trees in the garden.
 - ii. She could climb tall and wide trees and was taught to climb trees by her brother at age 6.
 - iii. She was told to stop climbing trees as she was getting old, but she disagreed.
 - iv. Her family was worried she would fall, but one day she climbed up a tree and couldn't climb down.
 - v. The doctor recommended that she rest in bed for a week.
 - vi. The grandmother was uncomfortable and demanded that the speaker's father build her a tree house.
 - vii. The grandmother started living in the treehouse and would drink sherry with the speaker.

Phrase	Figure of Speech
1. '...while every breeze whispered of summer and dancing leaves..'	Personification - Breeze, a non-living entity is given the living characteristic of 'whispering'. Also, largely stationary leaves are described as 'dancing'.
2. '...was what she now wanted..'	Alliteration - was, what and wanted all start with a /w/ sound
3. '...It was like a brief season in hell...'	Simile - The grandmother being asked to rest in bed is compared to a painful and torturous time.
4. '...there wasn't a tree... She hadn't been up...'	Double negative - wasn't and hadn't are two negative words used to convey the opposite meaning. Here the sentence means 'she had been up all the trees'.

Understand the Poem Questions - Solved

1. The speaker in the poem does not call his grandmother 'childish'. What else was she according to him? Why does he consider her to be so? {lines 1-4}

Answer: According to the speaker, his grandmother was a genius and not childish because she could climb trees very quickly even at the age of sixty-two.

2. Grandma had been in the habit of climbing trees for a very long period. Identify the lines that suggest this.

Answer: The lines are:

"...When last she climbed a tree she was sixty-two.
Ever since childhood, she'd had this gift..."

3. Look at the lines 7 and 8. 'She would be told'. Who do you think would tell her so?

Answer: The speaker's grandmother would most likely be advised against climbing trees by her neighbours and relatives.

4. Do you find anything odd in the reply given by the grandma? If so, why do you think it is odd? {lines 10-11}

Answer: I do think that the grandma's reply was odd because it is unusual to see an old person wanting to climb trees and not caring about aging gracefully.

5. Others had feared that granny would fall from a tree one day or the other. Did this happen? Or did something else happen? {lines 15-18}

Answer: No, the speaker's grandmother didn't fall from the tree. Instead, one day when the speaker and his family were in town, the grandmother climbed a tree and was stuck up there as she couldn't climb down.

6. What had the doctor recommended? What was the reaction of the kids to this advice?

Answer: The doctor recommended that the speaker's grandmother spend a quiet week in bed. The kids were relieved upon hearing the advice.

7. Quote the lines which suggest how wholeheartedly granny enjoyed climbing a tree.

Answer: The line is

"...For being happier in a tree than in a lift; ..."

8. 'My dad knew his duties'. What did he think his duty was?

Answer: The speaker's father thought his duty was to obey the grandmother and fulfil her wish of living in a treehouse so that she could be happy.

9. Look at the picture given below the title. Quote the lines that might have guided the artist to draw that

Answer: The lines are

"...With my expert assistance, he soon finished the chore:
Made her a tree - house with windows and a door.
So granny moved up, and now every day
I climb to her room with glasses and tray.
She sits there in state and drinks sherry with me.
Upholding her right to reside in a tree."

Read and Appreciate Questions - Solved

A.

1. Read the poem again. Does the behaviour of grandma strike you as unusual? If so, support your view quoting her ways and responses to others. One is done for you.

- Grandma climbing a tree. (way 1)
- ----- (response)
- ----- (response)

Answer: Yes, the behaviour of the grandmother does strike me as unusual. She had passion to do things that people her age didn't usually do. She loved climbing trees and when people opposed her, she just laughed it off and declared that she would grow old disgracefully. Also, towards the end of the poem she gets her son to build her a tree house and she moves to live on top of a tree - yet another unusual behaviour. The lines from the poem are:

- "...She'd laugh and say, 'Well I'll grow disgracefully, ...'" (way 2)
- "...That a house in a treetop was what she now wanted." (way 3)

2. 'Growing old gracefully' is an expression used in the poem. Discuss with your partner whether what the grandma was doing was graceful or otherwise.

Answer: According to me what the grandma was doing could also be called graceful. In the poem, 'growing old gracefully' is used to mean that the grandmother must give up doing things she loves and be quiet and refined in manner. However, I think that the grandmother sticks to what she believes in and has a lot of skill and passion and that is also graceful in itself.

3. Both the narrator (speaker in the poem) and his father were very considerate towards Grandma. Substantiate the statement with textual support.

Answer: After the grandmother gets stuck on a treetop, the doctor advises that she rest in bed for a week. Disliking being confined, the grandmother asks the speaker's father to build her a tree house. The father promptly obeys, and the speaker helps him. After the tree house is built and the grandmother moves in, the speaker visits every day which shows that they were considerate towards the grandmother.

4. If you were to divide the entire poem into two parts, which line would you pick up to be the beginning of the second part? Why?

Answer: For me, beginning of the second part would be the lines:

"But she had held her peace till she felt stronger.

Then she sat up and said, 'I'll lie here no longer!' ..."

For me, this marks the beginning of a different situation for the grandmother. Until then, she continued climbing trees and there wasn't much acceptance of her situation. In the second part (according to me) her son and grandkids have accepted that she will live on a tree, and she doesn't have to face criticism or danger of climbing trees every day. It marks the beginning of true happiness for her.

B.

1. Have a close look at the rhyme-scheme. Write at least 5 pairs of the rhyming words. e.g. said - bed.

Answer: Five pairs of rhyming words in the poem are:

- Why - high
- You - two
- Gift - lift

- Told - old
- Agree - Tree

2. "It was like a brief season". Name the figure of speech in the sentence. What are the two things compared? Explain.

Answer: The figure of speech in the given sentence is simile. The grandmother being asked to rest in bed for a week is compared to the experience of hell. The grandmother doesn't enjoy sitting in one place and not climbing trees and hence resting in bed is a torturous experience for her.

3. 'For being happier in a tree than in a lift'. What is suggested through this line? Exchange your views with your partner.

Answer: This line suggests that the speaker's grandmother is happiest when she's climbing trees. A lift does the same job of taking her to a high point, however that doesn't bring the same amount of joy.

4. 'There was not a tree, she hadn't been up' is an expression.

Rewrite the above sentence without using 'not' (note: the meaning should be the same).

Give some more examples from outside the text to illustrate the effective use of double negatives.

Answer: Rewritten sentence: She had been up all the trees.

Examples of double negative statements:

- Her performance in the play was so powerful that there was no audience member who wasn't impressed.
- Things got so busy at work that no employee could sit and not move a muscle.
