

CHAPTER 02

Mother's Day

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Chapter Summary

Chapter Sketch

This humorous play portrays the status of a mother in the family. The author brings out the plight of the mother very realistically in the play. Mrs Annie Pearson, the mother, is not treated well by her husband and children. With the help of her neighbour, Mrs Fitzgerald and a magic spell which temporarily allows them to interchange their roles, she stands up for her rights. Mrs Annie Pearson's family is shocked at the change, but they learn to behave properly with her so that she gets the respect that she deserved.

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 an older and heavier woman with a strong personality. Annie has a soft voice whereas Mrs Fitzgerald has a deep, throaty voice.

Mrs Fitzgerald is a fortune-teller and is reading Annie's fortune. She advises Annie to be strict and become the 'boss' in her family.

Annie or Mrs. Pearson had been taken granted by her family. Her husband, son and daughter are so spoilt that they don't do any work or help their wife or mother. Instead, they treat her disrespectfully and ungratefully. Mrs. Fitzgerald is enraged at such a treatment and asks Mrs. Pearson to take action. However, Mrs. Pearson is reluctant. Even though she wants others in her family to respect her, she cannot be unpleasant with them. So she is constantly worried about them.

Mrs Fitzgerald Outlines the Plan to Reform Annie's Family

Mrs Fitzgerald, suggests that they should temporarily exchange their personalities by using a magic spell that she had learnt in the East. She takes Annie's hand and chants a spell. 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.

Doris Gets a Shock

Doris, the daughter of Mrs Annie Pearson, a beautiful 20 year old girl enters the house. She gets shocked at seeing her mother smoking and playing cards alone. She enquires about tea and her yellow silk dress but gets a rude reply from her mother. Annie tells her to make tea for herself and iron her clothes herself too. She tells Doris

that she works much more than her and does not even get a pay.

Further, when Doris informs her mother about her plans with Charlie Spence, Annie makes fun of him. She calls him buck teeth and half-witted. Annie also tells Doris that if she were her age, she would have found someone better.

All of this hurts Doris who runs away crying.

Cyril also gets a Shock

After Doris leaves, Cyril, Annie's son enters the room, asking for tea, when Annie tells him it isn't, he gets annoyed and angry. He tells his mother to get the tea ready as he doesn't have much time but Annie doesn't do anything. Even when he asks about his clothes, Annie refuses to do anything.

Cyril gets anguished by his mother's strange behaviour. He tells her that she was not talking nicely. His mother coldly replies that they all talk to her like that. They do what they want to do and now she has joined them.

Just then Doris enters the scene wearing a shoulder wrap. She had been crying. Annie, upon seeing Doris, remarks that she was looking terrible. Doris tells her mother that it was because she made her cry. Annie now goes to get stout to drink.

Discussion 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 her 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 weird manner in front of their father.

Annie's Remarks About her Family

When Annie sees Doris and Cyril giggling she remarks that it was high time they grew up. Doris then asked her if they had done something wrong. Annie tells them that it is actually their behaviour that bothered her the most. They always came, asked for something and went without bothering to know whether she wanted to go out or how she was feeling. She always does her best to keep everybody happy but all three of them were not bothered about her.

Annie also remarks that while the three of them do a job of eight hours a day with two days off at the weekend, she goes on working seven days round the clock. She informs them that on weekends, she might also be going away.

Doris is really worried about what will happen if her mother takes a holiday on weekends. However, Annie assures Doris that she would do some work on Saturday and Sunday only when she is requested and thanked for whatever she does. She adds that she might go out for weekends as she was fed up of staying in the house. When Doris enquires about it, Annie tells her that she is just going to be like them. The only difference will be that she will be able to look after herself.

Hearing this, Doris expresses her concern but Annie rudely shuts her down.

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 as a very important person. He gets annoyed at his wife who is sipping stout when he enters. He tells her that he does not want any tea as he has to go to the club for supper. Annie tells him that she has not prepared any tea anyway. At this, George gets annoyed that his wife is not bothered 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' due to his self-important behaviour. George cannot believe what Annie says and confirms the truth from his son, Cyril.

When Cyril tells his mother that she has hurt their feelings, Annie tells him that it does people good to have their feelings hurt. She also tells Cyril that he has no future. Just then there is a knock. Cyril checks on the door and reports that it was the 'silly old bag' Mrs Fitzgerald. Hearing this, Annie rebukes him and asks him to let her in.

The Real Mrs Annie Pearson Returns

Mrs. Fitzgerald (actually Mrs. Pearson) is worried for her family. When she expresses it, Cyril rudely answers her. Such a disrespectful behaviour earns a scolding from Annie (Mrs. Fitzgerald). After Cyril leaves, Mrs. Fitzgerald and Mrs. Pearson start talking. Annie says that she is putting everyone in their places telling them how they really are.

While they are talking, George enters the room and gets angry and rude towards Mrs. Fitzgerald for entering their quarrel. He is also angry at Annie for ruining their mood. But Annie remains unaffected. In fact, she tells him to be respectful and mannerful in front of guests and neighbors. Hearing this George is enraged which gets Annie to threaten him. Seeing his angry wife, George is intimidated.

Doris again enters the scene. She, like her brother and father, is also disrespectful towards Mrs. Fitzgerald and thus gets reprimanded too.

Mrs Annie Pearson and Mrs Fitzgerald Go Back 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 she can see all of them are miserable and now it is time to change back into their true selves. Mrs. Fitzgerald agrees and they again get back to their own selves. After they come back in their original forms, Mrs. Fitzgerald tells Mrs. Pearson to be firm and strict, if required. She even 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 wanted them to behave in the right manner.

Mrs. Fitzgerald wants Mrs Pearson to test it out. When she leaves, she calls the family inside and hides herself to hear/see the change.

The Changed Pearson Family

When Doris, Cyril and George enter the room, they get relieved seeing Mrs. Pearson smile. She tells her family that she wants to play a game of rummy with her family. After that, the children can prepare supper while she talks to George. Everyone agrees while Doris is hesitant. However, a sharp tone of Mrs. Pearson makes her agree.

The play ends with the family surrounding Mrs. Pearson ready to do whatever she suggests.

Word Meanings

The given page numbers correspond to the pages in the prescribed NCERT textbook.

Word	Meaning
Page 32	
suburb	outlying area of a city
muslin-covered	covered with a muslin curtain
settee	sofa
Page 33	
sinister	strong
flurried	nervous and confused due to overwork
Cockney	style of speaking of people living in the East end of London
Irish	style of speaking of people living in Ireland
fortune teller	person claiming to have magic powers
out East	in the British colonies in Asia
Page 34	
Lieutenant Quartermaster	non-commissioned officer in British Army
put your foot down	be very strict
mistress	woman with authority
apologetically	as if feeling sorry
treating 'em like dirt	showing lack of respect
dubiously	in an unsure manner
unpleasantness	quarrelling
have it out	settle it finally
good gracious	an expression of surprise
Page 35	
got the idea	understood me
gimme	give me
Page 36	
go lax	looking like they are dead
puffing	smoking

Word	Meaning
complacently	feeling happy and satisfied
Page 37	
patience	a card game played by a single person
taken anything in	understood what is going on
square meal	full and satisfying meal
Page 38	
indignantly	with annoyance
be seen dead	like to be seen
buck teeth	upper set of teeth sticking out
half-witted	stupid
masculine counterpart	brother
Page 39	
off-colour	not feeling well
get cracking	work quickly
aggressively	forcefully
put my things out	lay out my clothes
laconic and sinister	briefly and meaningfully
wear that face	look so bad
Union	association of employees
bar	stop
movement	association of employees
Page 40	
never you mind	don't bother
stout	strong beer
clot	idiot
in a huddle	come close together to talk
barmy	insane
fathead	idiot
concussion	serious injury to her head
guffaw	laugh loudly
Page 41	
be your age	behave properly as per your age
do with	appreciate
Page 42	
a bit thick	unreasonable
airily	carelessly
Page 43	
aghast	horrified
passionately	with much emotion
blubbing	crying like a baby

Word	Meaning
bulge	stick out
Page 44	
bewildered	confused, puzzled
distaste	dislike
Page 45	
indignantly	in a displeased tone
standing jokes	permanent amusements
Page 46	
greyhound races	races run by tall, slender dogs
dirt tracks	racing courses for motorcycles
ice shows	entertainment shows performed by ice skaters
sulkily	showing an irritated feeling
old bag	unpleasant elderly woman
smacking	bringing together with force so they make a sound
piecan	stupid person
Page 47	
putting 'em in their places	making them behave properly

Word	Meaning
doing 'em all a world of good	helping them to learn how to behave properly
eating out of your hand	completely under your control
crying her eyes out	crying uncontrollably
Page 48	
at sixes and sevens	in total confusion
Page 49	
tiddly	slightly drunk
in despair	hopelessly
a flash of temper	sudden anger
ticking her off	reprimanding her
Page 50	
'cos	because
Page 51-52	
go soft on	treat gently
spirit	enthusiasm
apprehensively	anxiously
rummy	a card game
cluster round	surround

Chapter Practice

PART 1

Objective Questions

• Multiple Choice Questions

1. What is the play 'Mother's Day' about?

- (a) It is about a family celebrating Mother's Day
- (b) It is about a family's treatment of the mother
- (c) It depicts the sick mother and her struggles
- (d) It depicts the status of Mrs. Fitzgerald in her family

Ans. (b) The play 'Mother's Day' is about the Pearson family and their treatment of the mother, Mrs. Pearson.

2. Choose the statement(s) that is/are correct about the play.

- I. Mrs. Fitzgerald learnt the art of fortune telling in the East.
- II. Mrs. Pearson was very happy with her family.
- III. Mrs. Fitzgerald looked aiding and has a high-pitched voice.

- (a) Only I (b) Only II (c) Only III (d) I and III

Ans. (a) It is true that Mrs. Fitzgerald learnt the art of fortune telling in the East but she had a sinister looking face and a deep voice. Mrs. Pearson was not very happy with her family's treatment of her.

3. "Besides I'm so fond of them even if they are so thoughtless and selfish."

In the given line, Mrs. Pearson is trying to

.....

- (a) Defend her family members
- (b) Defend her own disposition
- (c) Blame her subservient personality
- (d) State that she won't be able to do anything

Ans. (b) By stating that she is fond of them, Mrs. Pearson is trying to defend her position as a subservient mother and wife.

4. In what endeavour does Mrs. Fitzgerald help Mrs. Pearson?

- (a) To see future
- (b) To make her family treat her well
- (c) To run errands
- (d) None of the above

Ans. (b) Mrs. Fitzgerald helps Mrs. Pearson by making sure that her family learns to treat her well by teaching them a lesson.

5. How does Mrs. Fitzgerald plan to help Mrs. Pearson?

- (a) By talking to Mrs. Pearson's family
- (b) By listening to Mrs. Pearson's rants
- (c) By swapping personalities with Mrs. Pearson
- (d) Both (a) and (b)

Ans. (c) Mrs. Fitzgerald plans to help Mrs. Pearson by swapping personalities with her and then teaching the family a lesson.

6. Mrs. Pearson was about Mrs. Fitzgerald's plan.

- (a) excited (b) hesitant
- (c) sure (d) envious

Ans. (b) Mrs. Pearson was hesitant about Mrs. Fitzgerald's plan to swap personalities.

7. Select the suitable option for the given statements, based on your reading of 'Mother's Day.'

- (i) Mrs. Pearson is not appreciative of the fact that Mrs. Fitzgerald wants to teach her family a lesson.
- (ii) Mrs. Fitzgerald wants Mrs. Pearson to get respect from her family members.

- (a) (i) is false but (ii) is true
- (b) Both (i) and (ii) are true
- (c) (ii) is a fact but unrelated to (i)
- (d) (i) is the cause for (ii)

Ans. (a)

8. Select the suitable option for the given statements, based on your reading of 'Mother's Day.'

- (i) Doris is used to her mother doing everything for her.
- (ii) Doris's dominating attitude is a reflection of Mrs. Pearson's submissive behaviour.

- (a) (i) is false but (ii) is true
- (b) Both (i) and (ii) are true
- (c) (ii) is a fact but unrelated to (i)
- (d) (i) is the cause for (ii)

Ans. (d) Doris is dominating because her mother is subservient to her and does every little thing for her.

9. 'Cyril Pearson is a male version of Doris Pearson.' Select the option that explains it.

- (a) They both are similar in nature- arrogant.
- (b) They both do not treat their mother with respect.
- (c) They both want Mrs. Pearson to do their work.
- (d) All of the above

Ans. (d) All the options explain the given statement.

10. Cyril says, 'that's different'. What is he talking about?

- (a) Working day (b) Way of talking
- (c) Overall behaviour (d) His behaviour

Ans. (a) Cyril believes that his working day is different from his mother's working day.

11. What was George's reaction when he saw his wife drinking stout during the daytime?

- (a) He did not like it
- (b) He did not mind
- (c) He accompanied her
- (d) He ignored her

Ans. (a) George was furious and expressed that he did not like his wife drinking stout during the day time as he saw her doing so.

12. Choose the correct statements about the play.

- I. Cyril asks his mother to snap out of her new change.
 - II. Doris gets a red eye as she cries immensely.
 - III. George is well-respected at the club he goes to.
 - IV. Mrs. Pearson was drinking coffee as she was smoking.
- (a) I and III (b) I and II
 - (c) II and III (d) III and IV

Ans. (b) Out of the above statements, only I and II are correct as George is ridiculed by the club members in his absence and Annie wasn't drinking coffee while smoking.

13. Classify (1) to (4) as Fact (F) or Opinion (O), based on your reading of 'Mother's day.'

- 1. Mrs. Pearson should not have told George what people thought about him.
- 2. Mrs. Pearson, actually Mrs. Fitzgerald, went overboard in insulting the Pearson family.
- 3. Mrs. Fitzgerald's entry led to the climax of the play.
- 4. Mrs. Fitzgerald, actually Mrs. Pearson, should have let her family alone for some more hours.

- (a) F-1, 3, 4; O-2
- (b) F-2, 3; O-1, 4
- (c) F-2; O-1, 3, 4
- (d) F-3, 4; O-1, 2

Ans. (c)

14. The family members are annoyed at Mrs. Pearson, but commonly for a few reasons. Identify them.

- I. Mrs. Pearson made no tea for them.
 - II. Mrs. Pearson was busy talking to her friends on the phone.
 - III. Mrs. Pearson expected them to change their selfish behaviours.
- (a) I and III (b) I and II
 - (c) II and III (d) Only II

Ans. (a) The Pearson family members are mad at Mrs. Pearson for two common reasons. Firstly, she did not prepare any tea for them and secondly, she expected them to respect her work and change their selfish behaviours towards her.

15. What message does the author of 'Mother's Day' try to convey?

- (a) To work hard for your mother
- (b) To spend time with family
- (c) To appreciate wives/ mothers for their work
- (d) To respect everyone

Ans. (c)

● Extract Based MCQs

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

"[As she is about to rise, Mrs. Fitzgerald reaches out across the table and pulls her down.]

Mrs. Fitzgerald Let 'em wait or look after themselves for once. This is where your foot goes down. Start now. [She lights a cigarette from the one she has just finished.]

Mrs. Pearson [Embarrassed] Mrs. Fitzgerald—I know you mean well—in fact, I agree with you—but I just can't—and it's no use you trying to make me. If I promise you I'd really have it out with them, I know I wouldn't be able to keep my promise.

Mrs. Fitzgerald Then let me do it.

Mrs. Pearson [Flustered] Oh no—thank you very much, Mrs Fitzgerald—but that wouldn't do at all. It couldn't possibly be somebody else— they'd resent it at once and wouldn't listen— and really I couldn't blame them. I know I ought to do it—but you see how it is? [She looks apologetically across the table, smiling rather miserably.]

Mrs. Fitzgerald [Coolly] You haven't got the idea."

(i) What is the contrast in the personalities of the two women?

- (a) Polite vs Assertive
- (b) Gentle vs Sensible
- (c) Scared vs Brave
- (d) They have nothing to contrast

Ans. (a) The two women, Mrs. Pearson and Mrs. Fitzgerald contrasts the former's politeness and the latter's assertiveness. While Mrs. Pearson thinks about dropping hints and being polite to explain to her family about some things, Mrs. Fitzgerald believes in being assertive and confrontational about it.

(ii) Which of the following explains "This is where your foot goes down"?

- (a) To physically fix your foot down to the floor
- (b) To restraint yourself against a strong person
- (c) To adopt a firm policy when faced with opposition or disobedience
- (d) To give into what is expected

Ans. (c) The phrase 'to put your foot down' means to adopt a firm policy when faced with opposition or disobedience. Herein, it means to teach a lesson to the family about respecting her.

- (a) About a neighbouring family
(b) About Mrs. Fitzgerald's family
(c) About a group of their friends
(d) About Mrs. Pearson's family

(iv) What does Mrs. Fitzgerald mean by ‘let me do it’?
Select the option that explains it.

- (a) She wants to confront Mrs. Pearson's family
- (b) She has an unusual solution to the problem
- (c) It is unclear that she wants to help
- (d) She wants to teach confrontational skills to Mrs. Pearson

(v) Why does Mrs. Fitzgerald's idea embarrass Mrs. Pearson?

- (a) Because she knows her family will disrespect her
- (b) Because she knows that it would be useless
- (c) Because she does not want anything to change
- (d) Because she hadn't expected such a solution

2. Read the extract to attempt the questions that follow.

Doris [Staring at her] Mum—what's the matter with you?

Doris [Indignantly] It's not me that'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?

Doris [Indignantly] Of course I like it. And I'm going to wear it tonight. So I want it ironed.

(i) Identify the tone in which Mrs. Pearson talks.

- (a) Cool and incisive
(b) Flattering and apologetic
(c) Brave and strong
(d) Taunting and angry

(ii) Why is Doris consistently reacting ‘indignantly’ towards her mother Mrs. Pearson?

- (a) The mother is not listening to her
(b) The mother is angry at her as well
(c) The mother is acting unusual
(d) All of the above

(iii) Choose the words that describe Doris's personality, on the basis of the passage.

- | | |
|-------------------|-----------------|
| I. Spoilt | II. Independent |
| III. Bad tempered | IV. Kind |

- (a) I and II (b) I and III (c) II and IV (d) II and III

(iv) What does the passage reflect upon the relationship between Doris and Mrs. Pearson?

- (a) Doris only talks to her mother to get her work done
(b) Doris cherishes her mother and likes to spend time with her
(c) Doris uses her mother's dresses to look better
(d) Both (b) and (c)

(v) Mrs. Pearson is Doris for getting over dependent on her.

- (a) taunting (b) scolding (c) hinting (d) comical

Ans. (b) Mrs. Pearson (actually Mrs. Fitzgerald) wants Doris and other family members to treat Mrs. Pearson with respect. For the same, she scolds and even berates everyone so that they understand how they had taken Annie for granted.

Subjective Questions

• Short Answer Type Questions

- 1. How did Mrs. Fitzgerald utilise her husband's posting in the East?**

Ans. Mrs. Fitzgerald's husband was posted in the East (meaning the British colonies in Asia) for twelve years. She utilised her time there by learning fortune-telling and how to use magic spells to exchange personalities. She used this knowledge in temporarily exchanging her strong personality with the weak personality of Mrs. Annie Pearson to help her resolve her problems with her family.

- 2.** What advice did Mrs. Fitzgerald give to Annie?

Ans. Mrs. Fitzgerald was very bold and dominating in nature; she knew how to control the family members. So, Mrs Fitzgerald felt that it was time for Annie to set her family right and teach them a lesson. Mrs. Fitzgerald advised her to put her foot down and be the 'boss' in her family.

3. How was Annie responsible for her own fate?

Ans. To a certain level, Annie was herself responsible for her own fate. She was soft, loving and caring. Unfortunately her children and husband never acknowledged her role and failed to understand her worth. She wanted to correct them but could not do so due to fear of hurting their feelings.

4. What was wrong in Mrs. Annie Pearson's family?

Ans. The members of the Annie's family, George (her husband), Doris and Cyril (her children) were self-centred and took Annie for granted, whereas she took care of all their needs without demanding anything. Annie tolerated their behaviour but she wanted her presence and work to be acknowledged by all family members.

5. "Then let me do it." What did Mrs Fitzgerald want to do?

Ans. Annie got miserable treatment at home. Her family treated her shabbily. But Annie couldn't even raise her voice, let alone teach her family a lesson. Mrs Fitzgerald cared for her friend and wanted her to earn some respect. She suggested that if Annie couldn't handle them then she would teach them a lesson by temporarily changing her behaviour.

6. Who is the first one to face the mother's ire and how?

Ans. Doris, Annie's daughter, is the first one to face her ire (anger). She comes home and asks about her yellow dress. Mrs. Fitzgerald, in the body of Annie, doesn't even pay attention to her. Doris asks her about tea; Mrs. Fitzgerald replies that she should make it herself. She even ridicules her boyfriend and Doris starts crying at her unusual behaviour.

7. Who is Doris? How does Doris treat her mother?

Ans. Doris is Annie's spoilt daughter. She is a pretty girl in her early twenties. She makes her mother run after her all the time. She expects her mother to do all tasks that she asks her to do without questioning her. She thinks nothing of her mother.

8. Who is Cyril? How does he behave with his mother?

Ans. Cyril is the son of Annie. He treats his mother with indifference. He wants that whatever he commands his mother to do must be done with utmost urgency. He lacks any concern for his mother and tries to show that he is a busy man by working eight hours a day.

9. Mention some remarkable changes in Mrs Annie Pearson's behaviour that shocked both Doris and Cyril. What possible reasons for this change were thought of by her children?

Ans. The remarkable changes in Mrs Annie Pearson's behaviour that shocked both her children were

- She was smoking (which she had never done before her family) and playing cards with herself, both unusual.
- She had not carried out any of the work she normally did, like making tea for the family and ironing their clothes.
- The children thought that either she had hit her head so badly that it affected her brain or that she had gone mad.

10. Do you agree that Doris and Cyril's behaviour with their mother was extremely rude and unheard of?

Ans. Yes, Doris and Cyril were extremely rude to their mother. We generally don't see children speaking to their mother in such a rude manner. Their words 'Is tea ready' and 'you are going to iron it for me' are rude and demanding. This shows the children were extremely selfish, badly behaved and self-centred. They ordered their mother as if she was their servant.

11. How does Annie plan to spend her weekends in future?

Ans. Annie informs her children that she would also work for only eight hours a day and take two days off every week on Saturday and Sunday. She said that on these days she would do some work only and that also will depend how she was treated and if they requested her to do the work.

12. Who is George? How does he treat his wife?

Ans. George is Annie's husband. He thinks too much of himself and makes his wife do whatever he commands. That is why he told her that he did not expect her to drink strong beer at that time of the evening and she should follow his instructions to stop drinking it. George has dominated his wife so far, so he did not expect this changed behaviour from her.

13. George was angry that there was no tea even though he didn't want any. What does this reflect about his character?

Ans. George came home and said that he wouldn't be having tea. However, his wife rudely replied that she didn't bother to prepare any in the first place. He got agitated even though he didn't want to drink tea. This shows that he is overbearing and self-centred, besides expecting his wife to behave like his servant.

14. Describe George's attitude towards his wife. How is he taught a lesson by Mrs. Fitzgerald?

Ans. George's male ego suffers a jolt when he comes to know that his wife has not kept tea ready for him. Whether he needs it or not, she should have kept his tea ready like an obedient servant. He is always at the club at night and spends little time with his wife. After exchanging her personality with Annie, Mrs. Fitzgerald, ridicules him saying that he has become a standing joke for the people at the club.

15. What change can be seen in Annie's family in the end?

Ans. After being treated very rudely and roughly by Mrs. Fitzgerald, all the family members respond properly to Mrs. Annie Pearson's smile and decide to stay back and spend time with her. They also responded properly to whatever she says.

16. Mrs. Annie Pearson and Mrs. Fitzgerald are totally opposite to each other in their attitude. Show the difference in their personalities.

Ans. Mrs. Annie Pearson is submissive, soft-spoken and wears a worried look as she is being treated more like a slave than like a mother or wife.

Mrs Fitzgerald is well-versed in many arts, bold and strong in her opinion and knows how to make people behave properly.

Annie doesn't want to hurt people but Mrs Fitzgerald is willing to take any step to discipline people, even if it hurts their feelings.

● Long Answer Type Questions

1. Mother is the axis around which the family revolves. Mother should always be respected. Elaborate.

Ans. A mother has been expected to contribute her whole life caring for her family. A mother is someone who holds a family together, because it is up to her to provide the love, care, attention and support needed. She is a good listener, problem solver and guide, as well as being always available for her children.

Unfortunately, so many times a mother's love is not reciprocated the way it should have been. Some children do not recognise the importance of what their mother is doing for them. They do not take into account the sacrifices she makes so that her children could be reared in the best possible way.

As children grow up they want to be totally independent and consider mother's concern for them an interference, not wanting to be checked at any point of time. Some children are so self-centred that they even insult their mother, which is totally unacceptable. A mother demands respect and at any cost it should be given by her family members in return for what a mother does for them.

2. Today a woman shoulders all the responsibilities at home as well as outside, but she is still exploited. Write your views on the 'Need for Woman Empowerment'.

Ans. Today's woman shoulders all the responsibilities at home as well as outside as she is educated, responsible and can take independent decisions. But still the subject of empowerment of women is a burning issue all over the world, especially India.

Inequality between men and women and discrimination against women have been age old issues. But women are still exploited, as men refuse to accept the rising status of women.

They try to find ways to insult women and degrade them. People still think of women as a means of entertainment and not as an individual who should be respected. Increasing rapes in the country are an indication of men's poor thinking about women.

Laws are there to protect women. But unless men are taught by their mothers to respect the women in their lives, woman empowerment seems a distant dream.

3. The play, 'Mother's Day' is a humorous and satirical depiction of the status of the mother in the family. Express your relationship with your mother.

Ans. The play very humorously and interestingly depicts the status of the mother in a family. Through the character of Mrs. Annie Pearson, the play very subtly depicts the plight of women, especially the housewives.

Playing of magic, exchange of personalities and the shocking behaviour of Mrs. Annie Pearson's family members are all humorous as well as satirical.

My relations with my mother are very healthy and friendly. We are more like friends and enjoy each other's company.

I try to help my mother in the kitchen as well as in other household work. I realise that my mother keeps busy the whole day taking care of everyone's needs. I try to help her as much as I can and really appreciate her selfless efforts without demanding anything. I respect my mother and have much regard for her.

● Extract Based Questions

1. Read the extract to attempt the questions that follow.

"No doubt about it at all. Who's the better for being spoilt— grown man, lad or girl? Nobody. You think it does 'em good when you run after them all the time, take their orders as if you were the servant in the house, stay at home every night while they go out enjoying themselves? Never in all your life. It's the ruin of them as well as you. Husbands, sons, daughters should be taking notice of wives an' mothers, not giving 'em orders an' treating 'em like dirt. An' don't tell me you don't know what I mean, for I know more than you've told me."

- (i) Who is speaking these lines and to whom?
- (ii) What is the speaker talking about?
- (iii) How will you characterise the Pearson family?
- (iv) Do you think the speaker is happy with the listener?
- (v) What does the speaker want Mrs. Pearson to do?

Ans. (i) Mrs. Fitzgerald is speaking these lines to Mrs. Pearson.
(ii) The speaker is talking about how Mrs. Pearson's family is ill-treating her.
(iii) The Pearson family can be characterised as selfish and uncaring.
(iv) No, I don't think that the speaker, Mrs. Fitzgerald, is happy with Mrs. Pearson, the listener, as she thinks that Mrs. Pearson is the one who is promoting her family's ill-behaviour.
(v) The speaker wants Mrs. Pearson to stop attending to her family's needs and let them know about their behaviour.

2. Read the extract to attempt questions that follow.

"Mrs. Pearson [Coolly] Can't remember. But I doubt it.

Cyril [Moving to the table; protesting] Now—look. When I asked you this morning, you promised. You said you'd have to look through 'em first in case there was any mending.

Mrs. Pearson Yes — well now I've decided I don't like mending.

Cyril That's a nice way to talk — what would happen if we all talked like that?

Mrs. Pearson You all do talk like that. If there's something at home you don't want to do, you don't do it. If it's something at your work, you get the Union to bar it. Now all that's happened is that I've joined the movement.

Cyril [staggered] I don't get this, Mum. What's going on?

Mrs. Pearson [laconic and sinister] Changes."

- (i) How does Cyril react to his mother's changed behaviour?
- (ii) 'That's nice way to talk'. Explain the way of talking.
- (iii) Does Cyril like 'the way of talking'?
- (iv) Why do you think is Mrs. Pearson acting so strangely?
- (v) Mrs. Pearson says 'I've joined the movement'. What does this mean?

- Ans.**
- (i) Cyril is not at all happy with his mother's changed behaviour as she is not doing anything that he asks her to.
 - (ii) The way of talking referred to in the extract is cool and uncaring.
 - (iii) No, Cyril does not like the way her mother is talking as she is coolly refusing to do anything for him.
 - (iv) Mrs. Pearson is acting so strangely because she is actually Mrs. Fitzgerald in Mrs. Pearson's body and she had taken a task to teach a lesson to the Pearson family.
 - (v) The statement by Mrs. Pearson means that she is also going to be as uncaring as her daughter, son and husband.

3. Read the extract to attempt the questions that follow.

"Mrs. Pearson [With spirit] It's all right for you, Mrs Fitzgerald. After all, they aren't your husband and children...

Mrs Fitzgerald [impressively] Now you listen to me. You admitted yourself you were spoiling 'em

— and they didn't appreciate you. Any apologies—any explanations—an' you'll be straight back where you were. I'm warning you, dear. Just give 'em a look—a tone of voice— now an' again, to suggest you might be tough with 'em if you wanted to be— an' it ought to work. Anyhow, we can test it.

Mrs. Pearson How?

Mrs. Fitzgerald Well, what is it you'd like 'em to do that they don't do? Stop at home for once?

Mrs. Pearson Yes— and give me a hand with supper...

Mrs. Fitzgerald Anything you'd like 'em to do—that you enjoy whether they do or not?"

- (i) Why does Mrs. Fitzgerald ask Mrs. Pearson to not give any explanations?
- (ii) What does Mrs. Pearson feel in the given extract?
- (iii) How does Mrs. Fitzgerald want Mrs. Pearson to test the change?
- (iv) Do you think the Pearson family would do as Mrs. Pearson says?
- (v) "Just give 'em a look—a tone of voice—." Explain.

- Ans.**
- (i) Mrs. Fitzgerald asks Mrs. Pearson to not give any explanations as she feel that it would ruin everything that she had done.
 - (ii) Mrs. Pearson feels sorry for her family in the given extract and does not feel that any change would come upon her family.
 - (iii) Mrs. Fitzgerald wants Mrs. Pearson to order her children and husband to do what she wants to do.
 - (iv) Yes, I think that the Pearson family would do as have Mrs. Pearson says because they have been scared by her unusual behaviour and fear what would happen if she continued with it.
 - (v) The given phrase has been uttered by Mrs. Fitzgerald wherein she tells Mrs. Pearson to be rough and angry at her family so that they learn to respect her.