

Short-Answer Questions

Q.1. Why did Roger Skunk go in search of the wizard?

[CBSE SQP 2008]

OR

Why did Roger Skunk go to the wizard?

[CBSE Sample Paper 2015]

Ans. Roger Skunk had no friends to play with, since he smelled very bad. Everybody made fun of him. This upset him. He went to the owl to ask for help, who directed him to the wizard.

Q.2. How did the Skunk's mother get Roger Skunk's old smell back?

[CBSE Delhi 2008]

Ans. Roger Skunk's mother went to the wizard and hit him on his head and asked him to give back Roger Skunk's smell. The wizard obliged and gave the baby skunk's smell back.

Q.3. What help did Roger Skunk get from the wizard?

[CBSE Delhi 2008C, 2009, 2012]

Ans. The wizard helped Roger Skunk by casting a spell on him, which made him smell like roses. This helped Roger Skunk get friends to play with and made him happy.

Q.4. Why did Jo disapprove of Jack's ending of the story of Roger Skunk? How did she want it to end?

[CBSE Delhi 2009; (AI) 2011C]

Ans. In Jack's story, the protagonist, Roger Skunk, is shown as an obedient child. He meekly goes with his mother to get his previous smell back. This was against his wishes and he would have rather wished the smell of roses, since it would have enabled him to have friends to play with. Jo is a child and from a child's perspective, playing with friends is very important. Therefore she wanted it to end it with Roger Skunk smelling like roses and being able to play with his friends. She also wanted the wizard to hit the mother.

Q.5. What impression do you form of Jack as a father in the story, 'Should Wizard Hit Mommy'?

[CBSE Delhi 2009]

Ans. Jack is portrayed as a loving father, who loves telling stories to his four-year old daughter, Jo. He brings in the dramatic element in his otherwise lame and boring story by using a lot of gestures and dramatic voices. This thrills his daughter, which eventually thrills him. Everything is fine till one day his daughter starts questioning his stories. She views each statement that her father makes with a critical eye and has a lot of questions. Instead of pacifying her by answering her questions, Jack tried to enforce his views on her. Therefore, we can say that though Jack is loving and responsible but slightly an immature father.

Q.6. Why did Jo think Roger Skunk was better off with the new smell?

[CBSE Delhi 2010]

Ans. Jo thought about Roger Skunk and his wish to smell better in order to play with his friends from a child's perspective. For her, it was important that wishes are fulfilled, and a wish of being able to play was the foremost.

Q.7. Why was Roger Skunk's mummy angry with him? What did she finally tell him?

[CBSE Delhi 2010]

Ans. Roger Skunk's mother was angry with him since he no longer smelled the way all skunks smelled. Though the other animals felt it to be a stink, for her it was an identity. Finally she asked Roger Skunk to go along with her to the wizard to revoke the spell.

Q.8. How did Roger Skunk pay the wizard?

[CBSE (AI) 2010]

Ans. Roger Skunk only had four shillings to pay the wizard. The wizard wanted seven shillings. On seeing Roger Skunk's sad face, the wizard takes pity on him and directs him for the remaining three shillings. Roger Skunk goes in search of them and eventually pays the wizard the money.

Q.9. What did Jo want Roger Skunk's mother to be punished for?

[CBSE Sample Paper 2015]

Ans. Jo believed that the mother was insensitive, cruel and unfair. Roger Skunk's mother didn't let him retain the smell of roses which he had got from the wizard. It would have helped him make friends.

Q.10. Which do you think is a better ending of Roger Skunk's story, Jo's or her father's? Why?

[CBSE Delhi 2015]

Ans. A better ending of Roger Skunk's story would have been Jo's—for Roger Skunk to smell like roses forever. The mother need not have interfered in the matter. Roger

Skunk would have, over a period of time, understood himself whether it was right or wrong. I believe that Jo's idea of the wizard hitting the mother is wrong, just like it was wrong on the part of the mother to hit the wizard.

Long-Answer Questions

Q.1. Roger Skunk's mother hit the wizard on his head. Do you think it was right on her part to do so? Should the wizard hit Roger Skunk's mother?

Ans. Roger Skunk's mother was angry at the wizard for changing the smell of her young one. The smell was what made a skunk different from the other animals. In fact, this was what created the individuality which she was so proud of. For her, it was more important to retain that individual characteristic rather than having friends. So when the wizard changed Roger Skunk's smell into the beautiful smell of roses, it made her very angry. In her anger and without waiting for any justification from her son, she marched towards the wizard's house, hit him on his head and demanded the young Skunk to be given back its smell.

In my opinion, it was wrong on the part of Roger Skunk's mother to hit the wizard since the wizard did not force Roger to change his smell and was in fact abiding by his wishes, trying to make him happy. Instead of checking up on the reason, she went and hit, which I believe was absolutely wrong. She could have instead talked and sorted it out with him.

No, it would be wrong for the wizard to hit Roger Skunk's mother. First, her actions were a result of her love for her young one. Second, hitting in response would have only made it a bigger issue and then there would have been no end to the whole thing.

Q.2. Draw the character sketch of Jack.

Ans. Jack is the protagonist of the story 'Should Wizard Hit Mommy?'. This story examines the issue of parenting, the adult tendency to suppress the curiosity of a child and the belief that the viewpoint of the adult represents the only valid one. Jack is conscious of his duties as a father and husband. He had been telling stories to his daughter Jo since she was two years old, before her Saturday and evening naps, but now two and a half years later he was fatigued and confused by her constant questioning, pointing out errors (Roger fish instead of skunk), asking for clarifications and suggesting alternatives. He has the typical parental attitude and opinion that parents know what is best for their children and stifles her objections and amendments shown by his defending, the skunk's mother (and indirectly his own). Jack feels caught in an ugly middle position physically, emotionally and mentally. He did not like women to take anything for granted, to the extent that he extends the story, changing the ending, giving it the face that he wants to. This despite the fact that he knows that he should be helping his pregnant wife paint the woodwork. Jack is someone who is not used to his authority being questioned and so is confused by Jo's questioning. Though a loving parent he finds it hard to accept the fact that Jo now has a mind of her own. His

insensitivity and impatience comes across in his dealings with his daughter, and the fact that an adult's viewpoint is different from a child's perspective.

Q.3. Why does Jo want that the wizard should hit the mommy? Does her stand reflect a child's perspective on life? What is your choice?

Ans. Children look at the world from a different perspective. They look at people and things quite differently than the way adults do. Their perspective on life reflects simplicity and innocence. Jo has deep sympathy for Roger Skunk. Roger's bad smell kept all little animals away from him. The little Skunk stood alone and wept. The wizard made Roger smell of roses which made him very happy. Other little animals were now attracted towards him. They now played and danced with him.

Jo's main anger is against the Roger Skunk's stupid mommy. It was she who forced the wizard to make Roger Skunk smell very bad again. The hero of the story is always a role model for children. The tender-hearted Jo is shocked at the attitude of the 'stupid' mommy. She wants Roger's mommy to be punished. The wizard must hit on her head hard with his magic wand.

I think Roger's mother doesn't deserve such a bad punishment. For her, Roger must smell like her young one. She is shocked when he starts smelling of roses. A mother always loves her child. His complexion and smell don't count for her at all. Her love transcends all such minor things.

Q.4. Do you think Jack shared an affinity with Roger Skunk? Explain.

[CBSE Sample Paper 2016]

Ans. No, Jack did not share any affinity with Roger Skunk. Jo's constant question and her non acceptance of Jack's ending of the story appears to be a threat to his authority. He believes that adults know best! Jack feels threatened by Jo's attitude and when he finds that she is restless after he has come downstairs, he uses the ultimate weapon of adult authority—does she want him to spank her, he asks. He is reminded of his own upbringing. He was told that Mother is always right. So, the message is clear—adults know best. He tries to enforce his views on her. He has the typical parental attitude and opinion that parents know what is best for their children and stifles her objections and amendments shown by his defending the Skunk's mother (and indirectly his own).

Q.5. What made Jack realise that his custom of telling a story was turning futile?

Ans. Jack had been telling bedtime stories and Saturday naptime stories since his daughter, Jo was two. Now she was four. All these years, she never questioned anything and would go off to sleep listening to the story. Through his stories, he also wanted to inculcate his values in her and this included not questioning anything. However, Jo had started questioning everything. Now she questioned not only the story but also every statement that her parents made. She had also developed a critical eye

for the things. All this made Jack realise that his custom of story-telling was turning futile.