

The Little Girl

by Katherine Mansfield

Chapter Sketch

This story is about the relationship between a strict father and his daughter. Initially, the father is shown as very hardworking and a strict disciplinarian, showing his anger when the daughter puts an obstacle in his work without knowing it. However, in the end, the girl's perception of her father changes when her mother is hospitalised and her father takes care of her with love and sympathy.

About the Characters

Kezia She is the daughter who is very afraid of her father at the beginning. Kezia's perception changes at the end due to care taken by her father in her mother's absence.

Kezia's Father A hardworking and strict disciplinarian, (a person to be feared and avoided), whose tender side is revealed at the end of the story.

Summary of the Chapter

Kezia is Afraid of her Father

The little girl Kezia was afraid of her father. She always wanted to avoid meeting him. She felt relieved when he went out of the house as his presence made her uncomfortable out of fear. Kezia used to stammer in front of her father whereas with others she used to talk normally. He appeared so big to Kezia that she would compare him with a giant. Kezia's grandmother wanted that Kezia should talk to her parents more and therefore on Sunday afternoons she would send her to the drawing room to talk to them, where they would be relaxing.

Kezia Makes a Birthday Gift for her Father

When one day Kezia had a cold and she did not go to school, her grandmother suggested her to make with her own hands a pin-cushion as a birthday gift for her father, whose birthday was next week. So Kezia stitched three sides of it. Then, not finding any scraps to fill it with, she filled it by tearing into small pieces some papers which she found on her mother's bedroom table.

Then, she completed the pin-cushion by sewing its fourth side. Later, her father was very angry when he could not find the papers on which he had written the speech to be given to the Port Authority next day. When Kezia was asked, she told her father that she had torn up and stuffed the papers in the pin-cushion she had made! So her father punished her by hitting her hand with a ruler to teach her not to touch anything that did not belong to her.

Kezia's Neighbours: The Macdonalds

Kezia was jealous of the happy family living next door – Mr Macdonald, his wife and five children. Mr Macdonald was always playing with his children when he was free. They were laughing and enjoying each others' company. That is when Kezia realised that there were different kinds of fathers.

Kezia's Opinion about her Father Finally Changed

When Kezia's mother fell ill and had to be hospitalised, Kezia's grandmother went to look after her, leaving Kezia to be looked after by Alice, the cook. While sleeping, Kezia had a frightful nightmare of a butcher with a knife and rope and woke up crying, to find her father standing there. He took Kezia with her to his room and lay down beside her to give her comfort. He slept off due to being tired. That is when Kezia realised that he had to work very hard and felt sorry for tearing up his papers. She told him that he had a very big heart.

» Chapter Highlights

- 1 The little girl Kezia is very afraid of her father because of his hard and overbearing attitude. She stammer in his presence.
- 2 Her grandmother encourages Kezia to get to know her parents better in their free time on Sundays.
- 3 As part of this, she suggests Kezia to make a pin-cushion as a gift for her father on his birthday the following week.
- 4 Kezia made the pin-cushion, filling it by tearing up into small pieces some papers she found on her mother's bedroom table.
- 5 That night there was an uproar in the house because her father could not find the papers on which he had written the speech to be given to the Port Authority next day. Kezia had unknowingly torn it up and stuffed the pieces into the pin-cushion.
- 6 When her father came to know this, he punished Kezia by hitting her on her palms with a ruler.
- 7 Kezia was jealous of the Macdonald family living next door because the father played with his children in his free time. She realised then that there were different kinds of fathers.
- 8 One day when Kezia's mother fell ill and was hospitalised, the grandmother had to accompany her. This left Kezia only with her father in the house at night.
- 9 Kezia had a nightmare while asleep. She woke up in fright and found her father by her bedside.
- 10 Her father took Kezia to his own bed to comfort her and he slept off, as he was tired.
- 11 Kezia suddenly realised that her father was lovable and had a big heart.

Word Meanings

The given page nos. correspond to the pages in the prescribed text book.

Word	Meaning
PAGE 32	
figure	person
casual	without feeling
fainter	lesser
slip	move noiselessly
PAGE 33	
stutter	having difficulty in talking
wretched	miserable
on the brink of	about to commit
stretched out	lying
soundly	undisturbed
snoring	making snorting sound while sleeping
PAGE 34	
gravely	seriously
kept indoors	not allowed to go outside the house
pin cushion	a small pad for holding pins
laboriously	with much time and effort
wandered	walked
hue and cry	angry protest or commotion
Port Authority	the office of the port
this instant	immediately
damned thing	refers to pin cushion
PAGE 35	
shadowed	poorly lighted
sad little pattern	light and shade pattern making a person feel sad
flew to	appeared on
sorts	types
PAGE 36	
nightmare	frightening dream
whispery	scary
PAGE 37	
butcher	person who kills animals for removing their flesh
tucked up	covered up properly in bed
snuggled	moved into a comfortable position
nice hardness	good strictness

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NCERT FOLDER

(Here we have covered questions given in the NCERT textbook along with their answers.)

Thinking About the Text (Page 38)

- 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

Ans.

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

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

1 Why was Kezia afraid of her father?

Ans. Kezia was afraid of her father because he was very strict, always commanding everybody else in the house. He never played with her. He had big hands and a heavy face; particularly his mouth looked big to Kezia when he yawned. 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?

Ans. Kezia's family consisted of her mother, father, grandmother and herself, besides Alice, the cook.

3 What was Kezia's father's routine

- (i) before going to his office?
(iii) on Sundays?

- (ii) after coming back from his office?

Ans. (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 be brought into the drawing-room. He also asked his mother to bring him the newspaper and his slippers and asked Kezia to pull off his boots and leave them outside.
(iii) On Sundays, 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 snore while sleeping soundly.

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

Ans. 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 Sunday afternoons. 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?

Ans. Kezia's efforts to please her father resulted in displeasing him. On every Sunday, her grandmother sent her down to the drawing-room to talk to her father and mother. But, her presence always irritated her father. He used to call her a 'little brown owl'. The next effort was when her grandmother suggested that she should make a pin-cushion as a birthday gift for her father, whose birthday was falling next week. She worked diligently on making the pin-cushion, stitching three sides of the cushion with double cotton with great care and effort.

She could not find anything to stuff it with and as her grandmother was busy in the garden, she searched her mother's bedroom for scraps. Finally, she discovered some sheets of fine paper on the bed-table. She gathered them up, tore them into pieces and filled the cushion with them. She did not know that the sheets of fine paper she had torn up were written with her father's speech to be given in the Port Authority the next day. Her father scolded her for touching things that did not belong to her and punished her by hitting her palm with a ruler.

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

Ans. Kezia compared her father with Mr Macdonald, their next door neighbour, who had five children. He was a loving, gentle and forgiving father. Whenever she looked at their house, she saw that he was always smiling and playing with his children. He treated his children in a friendly manner.

He was just opposite to Kezia's father. Unlike Kezia's father, he never punished his children. He played with them whenever he was free. However, Kezia's father was very harsh and a strict disciplinarian besides never playing with her. Kezia's father was a busyman and never expressed his concern or affection to the little girl who was really scared of him. She was so afraid of her father that whenever she communicated with him, she would stutter.

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

Ans. When Kezia's mother fell ill, Kezia's grandmother accompanied her to the hospital. Kezia was left at home in the care of Alice, the cook. At night, after she was put to bed by the cook, she had a nightmare. In the nightmare, she saw a butcher with a knife and rope. She woke up shivering with fright. She called for her grandmother but, to her surprise, she found her father standing near her bed. He took her in his arms and made her sleep next to him in his bed. Half asleep, she crept close to him, snuggled her head under his arm and held tightly to his shirt. Her father asked her to rub her feet against his legs for warmth. Her father went off to sleep before her. This made her understand that he has to work hard every day and this leaves him too tired to be like Mr Macdonald. She expressed her altered feelings for her father by telling him that he had a 'big heart'.

Thinking about Language (Page 38)

- I. 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 (words 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.

- (i) She was by the news of her brother's wedding. (very pleased)
- (ii) I was to be invited to the party. (extremely pleased and excited about)
- (iii) She was at the birth of her granddaughter. (extremely happy)

(iv) The coach was with his performance.
(satisfied about)

(v) She was very with her results. (happy
about something that has happened)

- Ans. (i) thrilled (ii) delighted
(iii) overjoyed (iv) pleased
(v) happy

2 Study the use of 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.

- (i) You are a big girl now. (*older*)
(ii) Today you are going to take the biggest decision of your career.
(iii) Their project is full of big ideas.
(iv) Cricket is a big game in our country.
(v) I am a big fan of Lata Mangeshkar.
(vi) You have to cook a bit more as my friend is a big eater.
(vii) What a big heart you've got, father dear.

- Ans. (ii) most important (iii) innovative
(iv) popular (v) great
(vi) gourmet (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. e.g.

- 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.

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

- Ans. (i) says (ii) mentioned
(iii) told (iv) answered
(v) wondered (vi) told
(vii) apologised

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

were complaining shouted replied
ordered suggested remarked

- (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.

- Ans. (i) replied (ii) shouted
(iii) were complaining (iv) remarked
(v) suggested (vi) ordered

Speaking (Page 40)

Form pairs or groups and discuss the following questions.

- 1** This story is not an Indian story. But do you think there are fathers, mothers and grandmothers like the ones portrayed in the story in our own country?

- Ans. Yes, Indian families also have fathers, mothers and grandmothers like the ones portrayed in the story. All parents want to succeed so that their children have a secure future.

But, due to their busy schedule, they neglect their children, making them feel isolated. Children need the time and love of their parents regularly. Children want their parents to interact with them without hurting their feelings. Emotional support of parents is very important for child's balanced development.

- 2 Was Kezia's father right to punish her? What kind of a person was he? You might find some of these words useful in describing him:

undemonstrative	loving	strict
hard-working	responsible	unkind
disciplinarian	short-tempered	
affectionate	indifferent	caring

Ans. Unfortunately people feel that Kezia's father was not right to punish her in the way he did, meaning that violence is not tolerated. Kezia's father should have thought of punishing her in some other way. The kind of punishment he gave to Kezia (hitting on her palms) with a ruler was not correct as corporal

punishment always hurts the child and it could affect her physical and mental development also.

Parents should be kind and affectionate while dealing with children. If a child makes a mistake, they should explain to him/her what mistakes he has made and how harmful it could be for family or for himself/herself. Kezia's father was somewhat arrogant and lost his temper.

Writing (Page 40)

- 1 Has your life been different from or similar to that of Kezia when you were a child? Has your perception about your parents changed now? Do you find any change in your parents' behaviour vis-à-vis yours? Who has become more understanding? What steps would you like to take to build a relationship based on understanding? Write three or four paragraphs (150–200 words) discussing these issues from your own experience.

Ans. Do it yourself.

Exam Practice

Extract Based Questions

[4 Marks each]

Read the following extracts carefully and choose the correct option.

- 1 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.

- (i) What did the child never forget?
 - (a) Tearing father's speech
 - (b) Sleeping alone
 - (c) Beating by her father
 - (d) Scolding by her mother
- (ii) Why did the little girl put behind both hands whenever she saw her father?
 - (a) Scared
 - (b) To avoid being hit at hands
 - (c) To escape doing work
 - (d) For fun
- (iii) What will be the similar meaning word from the passage for 'Blank out'?
 - (a) Saw
 - (b) Flew
 - (c) Forgot
 - (d) Restrained
- (iv) Why did the little girl's cheek become red?
 - (a) Due to fear
 - (b) Felt nervous
 - (c) Felt guilty
 - (d) Due to anger

Ans. (i) (c) Beating by her father
(ii) (b) To avoid being hit at hands
(iii) (c) Forgot
(iv) (a) Due to fear

- 2 On Sunday afternoon grandmother sent her down to the drawing room to have a 'nice talk with father and mother'. But the little girl always found mother reading and father stretched out on the sofa, his handkerchief on his face, his feet on one of the best cushions, sleeping soundly and snoring.

- (i) Why did the grandmother send her down on Sunday?
 - (a) To play
 - (b) To spend time with parents
 - (c) To eat
 - (d) To go to church
- (ii) What did she notice about her parents?
 - (a) Busy in themselves
 - (b) Eating lunch
 - (c) Sitting in the garden
 - (d) Fighting with each other

- (iii) Trace an adverb from the passage that means 'Undisturbed'.
 - (a) Anxiously
 - (b) Nicely
 - (c) Joyfully
 - (d) Soundly

- (iv) What was the need of the 'nice talk' with father and mother?
 - (a) To bring her closer to father
 - (b) To tell them stories
 - (c) To get some money
 - (d) To relax

Ans. (i) (b) To spend time with parents
(ii) (a) Busy in themselves
(iii) (d) Soundly
(iv) (a) To bring her closer to father

- 3 One day, when she was kept indoors with a cold, her grandmother told her that father's birthday was next week and suggested she should make him a pin-cushion for a gift out of a beautiful piece of yellow silk. Laboriously with a double cotton, the little girl stitched three sides.

- (i) Why was the little girl kept indoors?
 - (a) Had cold
 - (b) As a punishment
 - (c) Due to many guests
 - (d) To make gift
- (ii) What information did grandmother give to the girl about the next week?
 - (a) Mother's birthday
 - (b) Grandmother's 80th birthday
 - (c) Father's birthday
 - (d) Family picnic
- (iii) What suggestion was given by grandmother to the little girl?
 - (a) To get friendly with papa
 - (b) Listen to mother
 - (c) Make a birthday gift for father
 - (d) Go out and play
- (iv) Explain the word 'laboriously'.
 - (a) with full attention
 - (b) back-breaking or very hard work
 - (c) playfully
 - (d) joyfully

Ans. (i) (a) Had cold
(ii) (c) Father's birthday
(iii) (c) Make a birthday gift for father
(iv) (b) back-breaking or very hard work

4 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.

- (i) What gift the little girl stitch for her father?
 - (a) Silk scarf (b) A pin-cushion
 - (c) Silk dress (d) A toy
- (ii) What was the question in front of Kezia while preparing pin-cushion?
 - (a) How to stitch it (b) What to fill inside
 - (c) How to pack the gift (d) How to make it soft
- (iii) Why did she go inside her mother's room?
 - (a) To seek mother's advice
 - (b) To get some cotton
 - (c) To get some scraps
 - (d) To meet father
- (iv) What is the antonym of the word 'stayed'?
 - (a) Strayed (b) Rolled
 - (c) Wandered (d) Roamed

Ans. (i) (b) A pin-cushion
 (ii) (b) What to fill inside
 (iii) (c) To get some scraps
 (iv) (c) Wandered

5 That night there was a hue and cry in the house. Father's great speech for the Port Authority had been lost. Rooms were searched; servants questioned. Finally mother came into Kezia's room.

- (i) Why was there as 'hue and cry' in the house that night?
 - (a) Due to robbery
 - (b) The neighbours were fighting
 - (c) Father's important speech was missing
 - (d) Grandmother had died
- (ii) Explain the idiom 'hue and cry'.
 - (a) Loud laughter (b) Loud noise
 - (c) Public protest (d) Protests
- (iii) Why did mother come to Kezia's room?
 - (a) To search father's papers
 - (b) To ask her if she had seen some papers lying on the table
 - (c) To scold Kezia
 - (d) To give her food
- (iv) What all was done to find out the papers?
 - (a) Servants questioned
 - (b) Rooms searched
 - (c) Kezia was questioned
 - (d) All the shelves were searched

Ans. (i) (c) Father's important speech was missing
 (ii) (b) Loud noise

- (iii) (b) To ask her if she had seen some papers lying on the table
- (iv) (c) Kezia was questioned

6 "But it was for your b-b-birth day." Down came the ruler on her little, pink palms. Hours later, when grandmother had wrapped her in a shawl and rocked her in the rocking-chair, the child clung to her soft body. "What did God make fathers for?" She sobbed.

- (i) Who is speaking these words?
 - (a) Mother
 - (b) Servant's daughter
 - (c) Kezia
 - (d) Neighbour's daughter
- (ii) Who beat Kezia on her hands with a ruler?
 - (a) Kezia's father (b) Her teacher
 - (c) Kezia's grandmother (d) Kezia's mother
- (iii) Find out the synonym of the word 'covered' from the passage.
 - (a) Rocked (b) Hidden
 - (c) Clung (d) Wrapped
- (iv) To whom did Kezia go to find some comfort?
 - (a) To her governors (b) To mother
 - (c) To grandmother (d) To no one

Ans. (i) (c) Kezia
 (ii) (a) Kezia's father
 (iii) (d) Wrapped
 (iv) (c) To grandmother

7 But the same old nightmare came - the butcher with a knife and a rope, who came nearer and nearer, smiling that dreadful smile, while she could not move, only stand still, crying out "Grandma! Grandma!" She woke shivering to see father beside her bed, a candle in his hand. "What's the matter?" he said.

- (i) Why did Kezia get a nightmare?
 - (a) She was scared
 - (b) Afraid of everyone
 - (c) Mother and grandmother were away
 - (d) Both 'a' and 'c'
- (ii) Where was the butcher?
 - (a) In her room
 - (b) In her grandmother's house
 - (c) In her nightmare
 - (d) In her father's room
- (iii) Find a word from the passage that means 'shaking in fear or due to cold'.
 - (a) Nightmare (b) Butcher
 - (c) Dreadful (d) Shivering

- (iv) Whom did she find near her bed when she woke up after the nightmare?
- (a) Her grandmother (b) Her mother
(c) Her father (d) No one

- Ans. (i) (d) Both 'a' and 'c'
(ii) (c) In her nightmare
(iii) (d) Shivering (iv) (c) Her father

Short Answer (SA) Type Questions

[2 Marks each]

- 1 Why was Kezia fond of her grandmother?

Ans. Kezia was fond of her grandmother because her father and mother had no time for her; grandma loved Kezia and was always very warm towards her. She was the only companion Kezia could confide in.

- 2 Describe Kezia's father as she sees him.

Or What kind of a person was Kezia's father?

Ans. Kezia saw her father as a hard-working but short-tempered man and a strict disciplinarian. Actually, he was a quiet man who did not spend much time with his children and did not play with them unlike Mr Macdonald. But he cared for his family and took care of Kezia when she needed it most.

- 3 Why was Kezia afraid of her father?

Or Why did Kezia stutter only with her father?

Ans. Kezia was afraid of her father because he never looked at her lovingly nor ever played with her. She thought he was a cruel man. She stuttered only with her father because with him she was trying very hard to say the words properly and could not do so because of her fear of him.

- 4 Why did Kezia's grandmother send her to the drawing-room on Sunday afternoons? How did she find her parents there?

Or What did Kezia find whenever on Sunday afternoons her grandmother sent her down to have a talk with her parents?

Ans. On Sunday afternoons, Kezia's grandmother sent her down to the drawing-room to have a 'nice talk with father and mother' meaning that Kezia would get to know them better. But, she always found mother reading and father stretched out on the sofa, sleeping.

So she never got time to have conversation with her parents.

- 5 Why was Kezia severely punished and beaten by her father?

Or What made Kezia's father punish her?

Ans. Kezia's father punished and beat her because she had unknowingly torn up his important papers lying on mother's bedroom table (a speech written for the Port Authority) to stuff in the pin-cushion she was making as a birthday gift to present to her father. Father lost his temper and punished her with a ruler to teach her a lesson.

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

Ans. The orders passed to Kezia, in the evening when father returned home from office, were to go down, take off father's shoes and put them outside and also to put her father's tea cup on the tea table. These orders were received by her very passively.

- 7 Why did Kezia stammer in front of her father?

Ans. Kezia stammered in front of her father because she was frightened of him and felt difficulty in speaking in front of him. Whenever fear overcomes the mind, speech becomes stuttered.

- 8 How did the father comfort the little girl, Kezia, when she got scared in her sleep?

Ans. Her father comforted the little girl, Kezia, when she got scared in her sleep, by coming to her room and taking her with him to his own bed, lying down beside her and holding her close to him. She held his shirt and snuggled closer to her father.

Long Answer (LA) Type Questions

[8 Marks each]

- 1 Kezia's feelings for her father had changed from fear to understanding. Explain with reference to the chapter.

Or When does Kezia begin to sympathise with her father? How does her opinion about her father change completely?

Or What were the circumstances that forced Kezia to change her opinion about her father?

Ans. Circumstances make you what you are and it leads you to the expected or unexpected events. This is very evident in the case of Kezia because there was such a circumstance that her father was a statue of

fear and death to her. Kezia was very scared of her father initially, as he often scolded her. Once Kezia's mother became ill and grandmother went to hospital with her. Kezia was left alone with Alice, the cook. Earlier, when Kezia had a nightmare, Grannie took her into her bed. Now Kezia again had a nightmare and screamed, calling out for grandma. Father heard her and came to her room, picked up the little girl in his arms and took her to his own bed.

He lay down beside her. Kezia crept close to her father, snuggled her head under his arm and held his shirt tightly. She realised father was not that bad, had a big heart and she could hear it beating.

This made her understand that her father was a normal human being too who needs support, affection and love for he always gets tired with his work. So, we can definitely say that the circumstances lead Kezia's change of attitude towards her father and that change was a nice one.

- 2 How is Kezia's father different from Mr Macdonald?

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

Or Compare Kezia's father with Mr Macdonald. Do you think sharing with kids is necessary?

Ans. Mr Macdonald was their next door neighbour. Kezia saw the Macdonald family playing 'tag' in the evening. The father had the baby, Mao, on his shoulders, with his two little daughters hanging on to his coat pockets. They ran round and round, shaking with laughter. It was all fun with the father Macdonald. Kezia would look at him eagerly and wish her father to be the same. She longed her father to be as playful as Macdonald but it was not so. On the other hand, Kezia's father was very disciplined and strict. He never played with her and did not interact with her except for beating her for her little mistakes. These things made her afraid of her father. She would feel retarded when she did not receive affinity from him. Continuous scolding and sometimes beating would add to her fear.

Yes, sharing is very important in good relationship. Parents should spare some time with their kids. They should have friendly and caring relationship with them.

- 3 How did Kezia feel in the presence of her father?

Ans. Initially Kezia felt scared in the presence of her father. He appeared like a giant to her. Every morning he gave her a good bye kiss but she felt uncomfortable till father had left for office. When her father would leave the house for office, she would feel a sigh of relief. She always deterred from going closer to her father. Even on Sundays when her grandma forced her to go to drawing room to have a talk to her father, she would step out with most feeble steps.

She always stammered when answering her father. One day, he scolded her and beat her for unknowingly tearing up some of his important papers. Another night when her mother and grandmother were in hospital, Kezia cried out in the night when she had a nightmare. Her father came and carried her to his room tenderly and with affection. This changed her perception of him.

- 4 How did Kezia's effort to please her father resulted in displeasing him very much? Elaborate.

Or Why was Kezia punished by her father? Do you think Kezia deserved this? What should father had done instead?

Ans. Kezia was scared of her father and stuttered while talking to him which annoyed him. When she waited and stared at him to have a 'nice talk' he did not like it and told her that she looked like a little brown owl. But the incident which displeased her father the most when she tried to please him by making a pin-cushion as a gift for him on his birthday (on her grandmother's suggestion). She unknowingly tore up his important papers to stuff the pin-cushion with. This displeased him so much that he got angry at her and punished her by beating her palms with a ruler.

No, Kezia did not deserve this punishment. She did not have any bad intention. Her father should not have been so harsh. He should make the little girl realise her mistake factfully. Had she done it deliberately then it would have been another stance. But, she did not commit it intentionally, so she should have been made to understand that anything that did not belong to her, must not be touched upon. This would have done a lot of good in place of that beating.

Self Assessment

Extract Based Questions

Read the following extracts carefully and choose the correct option.

- 1 A funny feeling came over her. Poor father not so big, after all and with no one to look after him. He was harder than grandmother, but it was a nice hardness.
- (i) Why does she call her father 'poor father'?
 - ☒ (a) She feels sympathetic
 - (b) She is not scared of him
 - (c) She finds her father nice
 - (d) She feels father has too much to do
 - (ii) What was the funny feeling that came over Kezia?
 - (a) She was thinking of mother
 - (b) She was thinking of her father
 - ☒ (c) Her fear of father had reduced
 - (d) She loved her father
 - (iii) What does the word 'harder' here refer to?
 - (a) Masculine
 - ☒ (b) Having strong body
 - (c) Hard hearted
 - (d) Cruel
 - (iv) Do you think Kezia's views about her father are changing?
 - ☒ (a) Yes
 - (b) No
 - (c) Can't say
 - (d) False
- 2 She sat on a stool, gravely watched him until he woke and stretched, and asked the time – then looked at her. "Don't stare so, Kezia. You look like a little brown owl".
- (i) Where is Kezia?
 - (a) In her room
 - ☒ (c) In drawing room where father is resting
 - (b) In a hospital
 - (d) In her garden
 - (ii) Who is Kezia watching very seriously?
 - (a) Her mother
 - (b) Her grandmother
 - (c) Her neighbour
 - ☒ (d) Her sleeping father
 - (iii) What is antonym of the word 'gravely'?
 - (a) Mockingly
 - ☒ (b) Jokingly
 - (c) Seriously
 - (d) Attentively
 - (iv) 'Staring and looking like a brown owl' this comment of father suggests.
 - (a) Kezia giving a foolish look
 - (b) Looking very sad
 - ☒ (d) Appearing very frightened

Short Answer (SA) Type Questions

- 3 What were Kezia's duties in the evening when her father returned home from office?
- 4 What were Kezia's feelings towards her father at the end of the story?
- 5 Why did Kezia's father beat her palms with a ruler?
- 6 Why did Kezia like her grandmother more than anyone else in the family?
- 7 Why was Kezia left alone in the house with her cook only?

Long Answer (LA) Type Questions

- 8 Kezia's father was actually different from what he appeared to Kezia. Justify.
- 9 Write a character sketch of Kezia.
- 10 How does Kezia begin to see her father as a human being who needs her sympathy?