

► By P.G. Wodehouse

Summary

Mr and Mrs Bramble were immensely proud of their son Harold. Harold was ten years old, a prodigy and an exceptional child by all standards. An intellectual, he won prizes in competitions. He was very classy and so superior that even his parents developed a complex. Harold was a model of excellent behaviour and he respected his parents a lot. Mr Bramble was a professional boxer and had been proud of his fame but ever since Harold was born, he had kept this as a secret. Harold was told that his father was a commercial traveller. Mr Bramble who had thrived on his feats in the boxing ring, trembled to see his name in print now. Both Mr and Mrs Bramble were secretly a little afraid of their son and did not wish to fall in his esteem. Mr Bramble was already thirty-one years old and he had decided to have his last boxing match and then retire. A week away, Bill Bramble was scheduled to have his last fight, the twenty-round contest with American Murphy at the National Sporting Club, for which he was training at the White Hart down the road.

Mrs Bramble sends Harold for a walk but she is surprised to see her husband and her brother, Major Percy Stokes in the doorway. She is shocked to know that Bill has decided not to fight and there is lot of discussion regarding his decision with Percy Stokes. Mrs Bramble makes it clear that this step was unacceptable to her, even if she did not like her husband's profession. Bill Bramble was supposed to win five hundred pounds, and one hundred and twenty, even if he lost. This money was very much needed to cater to Harold's education. The trainer, Jerry Fisher, enters at this juncture and he is also shocked to discover that Bill has decided to back out at the eleventh hour.

Jerry begs, pleads, cries and tempts Bill but he is steadfast in his decision because this fight will be covered by all newspapers and Harold will discover this secret. Tempers are running high, and at this critical moment, Harold makes his entry. Mr Jerry Fisher feels cheated, he wants his revenge. So he spills over the entire story to Harold, despite all opposition. Bill feels let down in front of his son and tells him frankly that he was not a man of wrath but just a professional boxer and he is withdrawing from his last match. Harold who had been watching all, suddenly surprises everyone. He is angry with his parents for hiding this secret but the content of his speech takes everyone's breath away. Harold reveals that he was betting

his pocket money on the defeat of Jimmy Murphy and his friends would have been awfully proud of him, had they known that his father was 'Young Porky'. He even requests for a photograph of his father to impress his friends. This talk encourages Jerry Fischer and Bill also goes to complete his training. Harold reverts back to playing games with his mother and continues with his affectionate chat.

सारांश

श्री एवं श्रीमति ब्रैम्बल को अपने पुत्र हैरल्ड पर बहुत गर्व था वह केवल दस वर्ष का था परन्तु बहुत ही बुद्धिमान और प्रतिभाशाली बालक था। वह बुद्धिजीवी था और उसने बहुत सी प्रतियोगिताओं में पारितोषिक जीते थे। उसकी आसाधारण प्रतिभा के आगे उसके माता-पिता भी झुक गये थे। उसका आचरण आदर्श समान था और वह अपने माता-पिता का बहुत आदर करता था। श्री ब्रैम्बल एक व्यावसायिक मुक्केबाज थे और उन्हें अपनी योग्यता पर मान था। परन्तु जबसे हैरल्ड पैदा हुआ, उन्होंने यह बात उससे छुपाई। हैरल्ड को बताया गया कि उसके पिता एक व्यावसायिक यात्री हैं। श्री ब्रैम्बल, जिन्होंने एक मुक्केबाज के रूप में ख्याति प्राप्त की थी, अब अपना नाम समाचार पत्रों में देखने से डरते थे। दोनों पति-पत्नी दिल ही दिल में अपने पुत्र से डरते थे और उसकी नज़रों में गिरना नहीं चाहते थे। श्री ब्रैम्बल अब 31 वर्ष के हो गए थे और एक आखिरी मैच खेलना चाहते थे। उसके बाद वह खेल से अवकाश प्राप्त करना चाहते थे। एक हफ्ते बाद उनकी आखिरी प्रतियोगिता अमरीकन मर्फी से नैशनल स्पोर्टिंग क्लब में होनी थी। वह उसके लिए प्रशिक्षण भी ले रहे थे।

श्रीमती ब्रैम्बल ने हैरल्ड को सैर के लिए भेजा और वह दरवाजे पर अपने पति और भाई मेजर पर्सी स्टोक्स को देखकर अचम्भित रह गई। उन्हें पता चला कि उनके पति ने प्रतियोगिता में भाग लेने से इन्कार कर दिया और इसी बात पर उनके भाई के साथ बहुत बहस हुई है। यद्यपि उन्हें अपने पति का खेल बिल्कुल पसंद नहीं था तब भी उनके इस निर्णय से वह सहमत नहीं थीं। उनके पति को जीतने पर पाँच सौ पाउंड मिलने वाले थे और हारने पर भी एक सौ बीस पाउंड मिलते। उन्हें इन पैसों की बहुत आवश्यकता थी, इससे हैरल्ड की शिक्षा हो सकती थी। इस समय ब्रैम्बल का ट्रेनर जैरी भी वहाँ पहुँचा गया और उसे भी ब्रैम्बल के आखिरी मिनट के फैसले से बहुत धक्का पहुँचा।

जैरी ने हर प्रकार से ब्रैम्बल को समझाया, विनती की और लालच भी दिया पर वह टस से मस नहीं हुए क्योंकि सभी समाचार

पत्रों में इस मैच की खबर छपेगी और हैरलड को सच मालूम हो जाएगा। जब सबके गुस्से का पारा चढ़ता जा रहा था। उसी समय हैरलड घर में घुसा। जैरी फिशर को इतना गुस्सा चढ़ा था कि उन्होंने बदले की भावना से प्रेरित होकर हैरलड को सब कुछ बता दिया। ब्रैम्बल दुखी होकर अपने पुत्र से कभी भी मैच न खेलने की घोषणा करते हैं। हैरलड, जो सब कुछ देख सुन रहा था, सबको अपने शब्दों से हैरान कर देता है। वह अपने पिता से नाराज़ है कि उन्होंने यह सत्य उससे छिपाया, वह तो जिमी मर्फी की हार पर पैसे लगा रहा था (सट्टा खेल रहा था) और वह और उसके मित्र बहुत ही खुश होते जब उन्हें पता चलता कि हैरलड के पिता ही “यंग पोर्की” हैं। वह अपने पिता से उनकी एक तस्वीर अपने मित्रों को दिखाने के लिए माँगता है। उसकी बातों से खुश होकर फिशर चला जाता है और ब्रैम्बल भी प्रशिक्षण के लिए चला जाता है। हैरलड फिर से अपनी माँ से खेलने लग जाता है और पहले की तरह प्रेमपूर्वक बच्चे जैसा व्यवहार करता है।

Word-Meaning

• **Amiable** – friendly • **Pursed** – form the lips into a tight round shape • **Jarred** – made a harsh sound
 • **Prodigy** – unusually intelligent person • **Evasions** – avoidance • **Broach** – to discuss • **Persuasive** – one who can influence others • **Genial** – cheering • **Acquaintances** – persons you know • **Imbued** – filled with a feeling • **Heredity** – the passing on of features from one generation to another • **Pattered** – moved with quick audible steps • **Diffident** – not having much self-confidence • **Ruffled** – upset or worry • **Resilient** – able to recover from a difficult situation • **Chivalrous** – acting in a polite way • **Crooning** – in a low under tone • **Spiteful** – full of ill will • **Swanking** – showing off • **Abstracted** – preoccupied

SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT

TEXTBOOK QUESTIONS (SOLVED)

1. Based on your reading of the story, answer the following questions by choosing the correct option.

(a) *Mrs. Bramble was a proud woman because*

- _____ .
 (i) she was the wife of a famous boxer.
 (ii) she had motivated her husband.
 (iii) she was a good housewife.
 (iv) she was the mother of a child prodigy.

Ans : (iv) she was the mother of a child prodigy.

(b) *“The very naming of Harold had caused a sacrifice on his part.” The writer’s tone here is _____ .*

- (i) admiring (ii) assertive
 (iii) satirical (iv) gentle

Ans : (iii) satirical

(c) *Harold had defied the laws of heredity by _____ .*

- (i) becoming a sportsperson
 (ii) being good at academics
 (iii) being well-built and muscular
 (iv) respecting his parents

Ans : (ii) being good at academics

(d) *Harold felt that he was deprived of the respect his classmates would give him as _____ .*

- (i) they did not know his father was the famous boxer, ‘Young Porky’.
 (ii) his hero, Jimmy Murphy had not won the wrestling match.

(iii) he had not got Phil Scott’s autograph.

(iv) Sid Simpson had lost the Lonsdale belt.

Ans : (i) they did not know his father was the famous boxer ‘Young Porky’.

2. Answer the following questions :

(a) *What was strange about the manner in which Mrs. Bramble addressed her son? What did he feel about it?*

Ans : Mrs. Bramble always referred to herself in the third person and treated ten-year-old Harold as a baby. He would feel irritated and wished that his mother would give him due credit of being a grown-up boy who had won prizes in spellings and dictation.

(b) *Why was it necessary to keep Harold’s father’s profession a secret from him?*

Ans. Harold was too perfect, a model of ideal behaviour and gave an inferiority complex to his parents. Mr. and Mrs. Bramble felt that if Harold discovered that his father was a professional boxer, he would fall in his esteem. Harold might feel that boxing was ‘uncultured’, ‘shady’ or for people of ‘wrath’. So they kept this as a secret from him.

(c) *When Mr. Bramble came to know that he was to become a father, what were some of the names he decided upon? Why?*

Ans. Mr. Bramble expressed a desire that the child should be named John after Mr. John L. Sullivan and if it was a girl, then she should be named Marie, after Miss Mary Lloyd.

(d) Describe Mr. Bramble as he has been described in the story?

Ans : Mr. Bramble was thirty one years old, of athletic built and weighed eight stone four. There was no one whom he could not defeat in the twenty round contest of boxing. Very famous, his feats in the ring were well known. But by nature he was too timid and could never have his way with his wife. He was a very devoted and an overprotective father.

(e) Why was Mrs. Bramble upset when she came to hear that Bill had decided not to fight?

Ans. Mrs. Bramble had personally never liked Bill's profession but since boxing brought in decent money, she had accepted it. Now money was required to provide good education for Harold, so she was really upset to know that Bill had backed out from the fight.

(f) Who was Jerry Fisher? What did he say to convince Bill to change his mind?

Ans. Jerry Fisher was Bill's trainer and he had been working hard at White Hart to train Bill for the boxing match, scheduled next week. Jerry tried to tempt Bill with the prize money and when he failed then he tried to emotionally blackmail him. If Bill withdrew, even Jerry's career and reputation as a trainer would suffer. All the hard work they had put in together would go down the gutter.

(g) How did Harold come to know that his father was a boxer?

Ans. Jerry Fisher, Mrs. Bramble and her brother were trying to convince Bill not to back out from the fight. When Harold entered, Jerry Fisher told him the truth that his father was a professional boxer.

(h) Why was Harold upset that his father had not told him about his true identity? Give two reasons.

- Ans :**
- Harold was very hurt to know that his parents kept such a secret from him.
 - Harold felt that he had missed the golden chance of winning respect and being the

subject of envy of his classmates if they had known that his father was the famous boxer, 'Young Porky'.

3. The sequence of events has been jumbled up. Rearrange them and complete the given flowchart.

1. Major Percy and Bill come to the house.
2. Harold comes to know that his father is a boxer.
3. Bill tells his wife that he is doing it for Harold.
4. Jerry Fisher tries to convince Bill to reconsider.
5. Mrs. Bramble is amazed to think that she has brought such a prodigy as Harold into the world.
6. Harold wants to know what will happen to the money he had bet on Murphy losing.
7. Mrs. Bramble is informed that Bill had decided not to fight.
8. Mrs. Bramble resumes work of darning the sock.
9. Harold is alone with his mother in their home.

- Ans.**
1. Harold is alone with his mother in their home.
 2. Mrs. Bramble is amazed to think that she has brought such a prodigy as Harold into the world.
 3. Mrs. Bramble resumes work of darning the sock.
 4. Major Percy and Bill come to the house.
 5. Mrs. Bramble is informed that Bill had decided not to fight.
 6. Bill tells his wife that he is doing it for Harold.
 7. Jerry Fisher tries to convince Bill to reconsider.
 8. Harold comes to know that his father is a boxer.
 9. Harold wants to know what will happen to the money he had bet on Murphy losing.

4. Choose extracts from the story that illustrate the characters of these people in it.

Person	Extracts from the story	What this tells us about their characters
Mrs. Bramble	(Para 12) "Bill we must keep it from Harold"	She was not honest and open with her son; concerned mother
Mr. Bramble	(Para 33)	
Percy	(Para 109)	
Jerry Fisher	(Para 110)	

Ans :

Person	Extracts from the story	What this tells us about their characters
Mrs. Bramble	(Para 12) "Bill we must keep it from Harold"	She was not honest and open with her son; concerned mother
Mr. Bramble	(Para 33) "The scales have fallen from his eyes."	Too concerned for his son Harold; was having a sense of sacrifice.
Percy	(Para 109) "Respect a father's feeling."	Pretentious; concerned for Harold
Jerry Fisher	(Para 110) "He is a fighting man, doing his eight-stone-four ringside, and known to all the heads as "Young Porky".	Honest; revengeful; sincere to Bill and wishes that he must fight

MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS

Read the extract and answer the questions that follow by choosing the option you consider the most appropriate.

1. 'Certainly he was very persuasive. Mr. Bramble had fallen in with the suggestions without demur.'

- (a) Who is 'he' referred to here?
 (i) Mr. Bramble (ii) Major Percy Stokes
 (iii) Harold (iv) Jerry Fischer
- (b) What was 'he' trying to persuade?
 (i) That Harold should change his school.
 (ii) That Mrs. Bramble should take up a job.
 (iii) That Mr. Bramble's boxing career should be hidden from Harold.
 (iv) That Mr. Bramble should carry on working as a commercial traveller.
- (c) What is meant by 'without demur'?
 (i) With sadness (ii) Without any charm
 (iii) Without delay (iv) Without objection

Ans : (a) (ii) (b) (iii) (c) (iv)

2. 'A week from tonight would see the end of all her anxieties.'

- (a) Who is 'her' referred to?
 (i) Mrs. Stokes (ii) Mrs. Fisher
 (iii) Miss Mary hoyd (iv) Mrs. Bramble
- (b) Why is she anxious?
 (i) About her son's health
 (ii) About her son's education

- (iii) About her husband's debts
 (iv) About her own job

(c) What would end her anxieties?

- (i) Her husband's boxing fight with Murphy
 (ii) Her son's admission in a new school
 (iii) Getting a new loan
 (iv) Buying a new house

Ans : (a) (iv) (b) (ii) (c) (i)

3. 'He considered that he had been badly treated, and what he wanted most at the moment was revenge.'

(a) 'He' here refers to

- (i) Bill (ii) Percy
 (iii) Jerry (iv) Harold

(b) Why did he want to take revenge?

- (i) Bill had refused to fight on Monday
 (ii) Percy had ill-treated him
 (iii) Mrs. Bramble had been inhospitable to him
 (iv) He had lost the boxing game

(c) What had been his relations with Bill in the past?

- (i) Hostile
 (ii) Formal
 (iii) He had been fond and proud of Bill
 (iv) He had used Bill for his interests

Ans : (a) (iii) (b) (i) (c) (iii)

NON-MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS

Read the extract and answers the questions that follow.

1. "A slight frown, marred the smoothness of Harold Bramble's brow."

(a) What made Harold 'frown' ?

Ans. His mother's habit of treating him like a little baby made Harold frown.

(b) What kind of student was Harold ?

Ans. Harold was an excellent student. His mother was very proud to have given birth to a genius.

(c) What type of prizes had he won in the last term ?

Ans. In the last term he had won many prizes in spelling and dictation competitions.

2. "The fight's over And Bill's won, with me seconding him".

(i) What is the context of the above statement?

(ii) Who makes the above statement?

(iii) Why does he make such statement?

Ans. (i) The above statement is about the boxing fight which Bill was going to have with Murphy on the coming Monday.

(ii) This statement is made by Major Percy to his sister, Mrs. Bramble about Bill's boxing contest.

(iii) He refers to Bill's step of withdrawing from the contest as his (Bill's) victory.

3. "You were such a pleasure to train as a rule? It all comes of getting with bad companions".

(i) Who is the speaker and who is the listener?

(ii) Who is being accused of being in a bad company? Why ?

(iii) Why is he being accused ?

Ans. (i) The speaker here is Mr. Jerry Fisher, Bill's trainer and the listener is Mr. Bramble.

(ii) Mr. Bramble is being accused of being in a bad company of Major Percy.

(iii) Fisher is charging Percy with having played an evil role in provoking Mr. Bramble and forcing him to withdraw from the boxing fight.

4. 'There's a fellow at our school who goes about swanking in the most rotten way because he once got Phil Scott's autograph.'

(i) Who is the speaker and what is the reason of the above statement?

(ii) Explain 'swanking'.

(iii) Do you feel the speaker is hurt at being deprived of something?

Ans. (i) The speaker is Harold. He tells everyone that he is proud of being the son of 'Young Porky'.

(ii) "Swanking" means "Showing off".

(iii) The speaker, Harold, is hurt at having been deprived of the truth of his father's real profession.

SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS

1. Give two reasons to prove that Bill was a 'domestic creature'.

Ans. At one place, when Major Percy was persuading Mr. Bramble to hide his career from his son, he agreed to it without any objection. In private life, he was the mildest and most obliging of men and always yielded to everybody. At another place, he tells Jerry that he was sorry for withdrawing from the boxing fight as it was important for Harold. So, both the instances show how his decisions were focussed on the well-being of his family.

2. Why was Mrs. Bramble amazed by bringing forth such a prodigy like Harold?

Ans. Mrs. Bramble was amazed at having brought forth such a prodigy like Harold because he was so much different from ordinary children, was devoted to his books, was a model of good behaviour, and was highly admirable. He was, in fact, almost a symbol of perfectionism.

3. Give two character traits of Major Percy Stokes.

Ans. (i) Major Percy Stokes is persuasive by nature. He is successful in persuading Mr. Bramble to give up his boxing fight with Murphy, stating the reason that this profession was below his dignity as it involved a lot of anger; thus Bill should not only give it up but also hide his profession from his son Harold.

(ii) He is very scornful and loves to trouble others. He enjoys the argument between Mr. and Mrs. Bramble over the issue of going for a boxing fight on Monday. He likes to be in a dominant position, for which he doesn't even mind harming his own sister's (Mrs. Bramble's) family needs and interests.

4. How did the birth of Harold change the Bramble household?

Ans. Before the birth of Harold, Mr. Bramble had been proud of being a professional boxer. He was delighted to be the possessor of a left hook which had won the approval of the newspapers. Now since Harold had come into his

life, he was afraid of his name in the newspaper and kept his profession secret from his son. Actually Harold was a prodigy child and both Mr. and Mrs. Bramble thought that

the profession of boxing was too disgraceful for their son, and so they hid Bramble's profession from him.

LONG ANSWER QUESTIONS

1. Harold's parents were too perceptive and concerned. Yet they failed to see the reality of their son's interests. Bring out the truth of this statement by giving evidence from the text.

Ans. Harold's parents were extremely proud of his intelligence. They knew that he was a prodigy and were highly concerned that Bill's profession should be hidden from him. They regarded him as a person showing a bit too much class for them. But they failed to see the reality of their son's interests. This is evident from the reaction of Harold when he comes to know the reality. He cries and says that it was a rotten thing to hide everything from him. He tells them that he had a bet with his friend, Dicky Saunders, that Jimmy Murphy would not last ten rounds. Harold also tells Jerry that he's been interested in all these things since he was a kid. He also says that all the fellows with him were very keen on discussing about the boxers' performances. Harold himself names the boxers one after the other, which amazingly shows his field of interest which his parents were completely unaware of.

2. Do you agree that Mrs Bramble is obsessed of dominating not only her husband but also her son?

Ans. I do believe that Mrs. Bramble is obsessed with dominating both her husband and her son. She refers to herself in the third person when she talks to her son. Harold doesn't like this because he feels that she does so as she considers him a baby.

While talking to her husband too, Mrs. Bramble is quite blunt. When she sees Bill who has come home while he was supposed to be training, she gets angry and says, "I want a plain answer to a plain question. What are you doing here, Bill, instead of being at the 'White Hart?'" When Bill tells her that he is not going to fight with Murphy, she's furious and says, "How about the money?" She also says, "Goodness knows I've never liked your profession, Bill ...". These instances show clearly that she fully dominates and controls the life of her husband too.

3. Life will never be the same again for Harold. In a day his world has changed. Unable to keep the suspense that his father is a famous boxer 'Young Porky', he writes a letter to his friend Philip, expressing his happiness. Write this letter for him.

Ans. May 2, 2011

Dear Philip

I have got some big news to share with you and cannot wait.

You know we were talking too often about the game of boxing? In school also, I have friends with whom I used to have bets for the victory of our favourite boxers. But the most shocking discovery for me is that my father himself is the most famous boxer, 'Young Porky.' Shocked?

It so happened that my parents kept it hidden from me that my father was a professional boxer. They had told me that he was a commercial traveller. They told me that they had hidden this fact from me because this profession involved lot of wrath, and they thought that it would hurt me to know that my father was doing something so disgraceful. Phillip, I'm just taken aback by their simplicity, love and care for me!

I am so happy and proud of being the son of such a famous boxer. For the coming contest, I had a bet with my friend, Dicky Saunders that 'Young Porky' would defeat Jimmy Murphy — not knowing that my father was Young Porky. Do you know Philip that students tease me in school by calling me 'Goggles'. Had they known that my father is 'Young Porky', they would never dare to do so. I am so happy that now I can really boast about this among my schoolmates. I can't tell you how full of pride I am that it's my father who has achieved that level of admiration of people which many others yearn for!

It will really take quite some time for me to get used to this happiness. At present, I'm just numb with the excitement of being the son of such a great person. I can even imagine your reaction at reading this letter.

How's everybody at you place? Do reply soon.

Your friend

Harold

4. Bill has made a comeback. He has gone back to what he liked best – boxing. He makes a diary entry revealing his feelings and surprise at failing to judge his son.

Ans. May 3, 2011

Dear Diary

I had decided to fight my last boxing fight, the twenty-round contest with Murphy at the National Sporting Club, for which I was training at the White Hart. I had thought that I would retire from the boxing profession after this and join some school or college as an instructor. Jane and I were so afraid that if Harold, our child with such high intellectual capabilities, would come to know of my

boxing profession, he would die of shame. But when I decided to withdraw from this last contest too, Jerry, the trainer became too wild, and in a fit of anger, told the truth to Harold. I was shocked to death at this!

The way Harold reacted jolted me out of an unreasonable feeling of guilt. I am so ashamed that I had misjudged my own son! In fact, Harold cried and was sad that I had hidden this fact from him. He was so proud of the fact that I was 'Young Porky' for whose victory he was betting with his friends in the school. I am so amazed at the fact that Jane and I, who were so concerned about the welfare of our son, did not have the least idea that he was so fond of boxing. How I repent about all the years that I have wasted by not sharing my achievement with my son! He would have been so happy and proud of it — only if we had understood his likes and dislikes. On our part, both Jane and I were extra cautious about Harold's intellectual bent of mind, and did not want to hurt him at all. Anyway, now when everything is clear, I have decided not only to carry on with my boxing career, but also to excel in it further. Even Jane, who did not earlier approve of my profession, will be proud of it. Harold has really been far maturer than we thought him to be.

Bill Bramble

5. Give a character-sketch of Harold.

OR

Harold was just like any other child. How was his personality reflected in the end different from what you had read in the beginning? Discuss.

[CBSE 2010 (Term-II)]

Ans. Harold is just ten-years old, and for his age he has achieved far more. He is a 'prodigy', a child who has exceptional intellectual qualities, and so his parents regard him as 'being of a superior order'. He is hard working and a brilliant student, who is devoted to his books. His behaviour is also exemplary, and he is a model of goodness and perfect intelligence. In spite of all this, he is not proud of his intellectual level. In fact, when he comes to know of his father's boxing profession, the way he associates so much value to it, is amazing for everybody present there. He is an absolutely down-to-earth person, with no airs about himself. His character surely reveals that he believes in perfection and has a lot of respect for excellence, be it in the field of studies or sports. He is not a dumb bookworm, but an active and smart person who carries his own opinion, and knows how to express it too.

6. Do you think Bill Bramble was cut out to be a professional boxer on all counts?

Ans. Bill Bramble's character reveals that to be a professional boxer one need not be violent in nature, specially with people in one's private life. So far as his

profession was concerned, he was a tough boxer to fight with. This is evident from the admiration millions of people had for him, and from the way newspapers liked to cover his achievements. So his nature and his profession can be considered as absolutely contradictory to each other. But his ability to hit his fellow-man in the eye while apparently aiming an attack on his stomach, and vice versa, had won him laurels. Among the London's teeming millions there was not a man, weighing eight stone four, whom he could not overcome in a twenty round contest.

Thus in my opinion he was surely cut out to be a professional boxer on all counts.

7. Mrs. Bramble has finally realised that Harold has grown up. He is no more her pet, he is a mature young boy with his private likes, dislikes and convictions. She writes a diary entry, expressing her surprise and her failure in misjudging the other dimensions of Harold's personality. Write this diary for her.

Ans.

May 3, 2010

Dear Diary

For me, Harold was always a very small child, and I talked to him as if he was a baby. I could sometimes feel that he did not like to be addressed in such a way as I could see a slight frown on his brow. But the way he handled the entire situation, the entire tension, told us that he is a mature young boy and has his private likes, dislikes and convictions. I am absolutely shocked at my failure to judge my own son's personality. I never had even the slightest inkling that he was so fond of boxing and that he had so much respect and admiration for 'Young Porky'. Both Bill and I were hiding the fact that his own father was 'Young Porky' because we thought, he being such a brilliant student academically, would be ashamed of his father's profession. But were proved wrong. In fact, he felt bad that we had hidden this fact from him. He said that he was proud of his father being 'Young Porky', and that he would feel great telling his friends about it. We are so relieved and admire our son all the more now. I must say that Harold is not a baby as I used to think but a mature person with a well defined personality, and I'm very happy about it.

Jane Bramble

8. Do you think that Harold's parents did the right thing by hiding that his father was a professional boxer?

Ans. The bond between parents and a child is not only very close and emotional, but also based on the firm ground of total trust. All ethics, values are imparted to the child by his parents. Love, tender care grows manifold as the child grows. In case of the Bramble family, they thrived in the glory of their prodigy—Harold. No wonder, Harold always performed better than their expectations. He

was of keen intellect, winning prizes everywhere. In fact they basked so much in the sunshine of his achievements that they started getting an inferiority complex. They hesitated to do anything that would bring disgrace or make him feel that they were less respectable than others.

Bill Bramble had immense pride in his boxing skills. Media, fame, money that once attracted him the most, faded away once Harold was born. They thought that boxing was uncultured, was meant for “men of wrath and they could never bring anything of this type to Harold’s notice. So began the season of deceit, hiding secrets, though it is all for their dear son’s welfare.

In the process of hiding the truth, they end up hurting their son the most. Parent’s achievements means the world for the children. This falsehood had caused permanent scars on the psyche of Harold. He may not show, but deep within, he would never forgive his parents. In their over protectiveness, they had failed to note that Harold was a young boy, with natural craze for games and betting. He suffered due to peer-pressure; his natural desire was the subject of envy among his classmates, which his parents had deprived him of.

So parents should be cautious, shield their child from problems, but not overshadow his growth. Honesty and trust are the most important factors for any relationship to grow.

9. How was Mr. Bramble’s nature in total contrast to his physical abilities?

Ans. Mr. Bramble was a successful boxer by profession, which requires immense physical strength to defeat the opponent. He was a tough fighter and was affectionately known to a large section of the inhabitants of London, as “Young Porky”. Among all London’s teeming millions, there was not a man, weighing eight stone four, whom he could not overcome in a twenty round contest.

But Mr. Bramble’s nature was a total contrast to his physical abilities. In private life, he was the mildest and the most obliging of men, and always yielded to everybody. At one place in the story, the writer describes his walk as that of a ‘diffident crab’ implying that he did not have much self-confidence. His sensitive nature and sense of sacrifice for his son also show how soft he was at heart.

FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT

(A) LISTENING / READING

Locate the profile of your favourite sportsman

- Read it aloud
- Share and hold a discussion

(B) WRITING

Write a brief composition on the topic, “Sports as a career option”.

(C) CLASS DISCUSSION / DEBATE

Have a class-discussion on the topic, “Is Boxing a sport only for men of wrath?”

- Agree / disagree
- Share the outcome

(D) PROJECT

Make a powerpoint presentation on “The highs and lows of Muhammad Ali”.