

# The Split Cherry Tree

## Bagrut Questions and Answers

Moed Bet 2017 F

Pa is not happy with the school Dave goes to because (—).

- (i) it costs too much money
- (ii) there is too much homework
- (iii) the children go on field trips
- (iv) the children must clean the school

Answer: iii) the children go on field trips

What does Pa learn at school?

- (i) How to dissect snakes.
- (ii) How to be polite.
- (iii) What it means to be honest.
- (iv) What germs look like.

Answer: iv) What germs look like.

When Pa decides to go to Dave's school, he takes a gun with him. What does this tell you about Pa? Give information from the story to support your answer.

Answer: Pa believes that one must show strength and power. / According to Pa, problems can be solved by using violence (and not talking). He is sure that his gun can solve any conflict. Supporting information: Pa puts his gun in front of Professor Herbert to threaten him / Dave says that Pa takes his gun whenever he needs to settle disputes. / Dave's mother tells Pa not to go to the school or he'll end up in jail. / Pa believes in whipping his children until they are 21. / Pa believes that if you spare the rod, you spoil the child.

For this question, choose ONE of the thinking skills Use this thinking skill when answering the question.

At the end of the story Professor Herbert tells Pa, "I'm going to cancel the debt... I just wanted you to understand." Explain why Pa doesn't accept this offer.

Give information from the story to support your answer.

**Answer:** Possible thinking skill: Explaining cause and effect Pa now understands why Professor Herbert gave Dave this punishment. Pa realizes that the Professor is a good/just man and he did not discriminate against his son. As a result, he refuses to accept Professor Herbert's offer to cancel the debt. / Pa is a proud man. Because of that, he sticks to his values. Supporting information: Pa believes that people who have debts must pay them. // Pa says he knows the difference between right and wrong.

## Winter 2017 F

### BRIDGING

"Education is not only about knowledge. All teachers can teach facts and figures. However, a true educator teaches values and morals as well." — Jesse Stuart Make a connection between the above quote and the story. Give information from the story to support your answer.

Answer: This story is like the quote because it shows us that education is much more than getting knowledge from books. In the beginning, Pa is convinced that the purpose of school is to learn "facts and figures." However, when Pa goes to the school, he realizes that the Professor takes the pupils on trips to teach them about life. Pa also realizes that the punishment that Dave receives for breaking the cherry tree is meant to teach him values and responsibility. The pupils learn from Pa that they should take care of all creatures when he says he doesn't kill snakes. Dave learns from Pa that he must always be honest and pay his debts.

## Moed Bet 2016 F

### BRIDGING

"One mark of a great educator is the ability to lead students out to new places" - Thomas Groome

Make a connection between the above quote and the story. Give information from the story to support your answer.

Answer: This quote helps me understand the story better because it connects to the story. In the story, we read about Dave's teacher, Professor Herbert, who has special methods for teaching his students. For example, instead of teaching only in class with books, Professor Herbert takes his students outdoor to field trips. In addition, he gives his students educational punishments with moral lessons. When Dave and some other boys break the cherry tree, he charges one dollar each. We can see that Professor Herbert is a real educator, who gives his students much more than standard teaching. This fits in with the quote which says that a great educator has special ways of teaching his students and as a result, exposing them to things they don't know.

## Summer 2016 F

### LOTS

1. Why does Professor Herbert want Pa to spend the day with him at the school?

Answer: Professor Herbert wants to show Pa his teaching methods. He also wants to prove him that his educational philosophy is right

2. Towards the end of the story, the students seem to like Pa better. Why?

- (i) Pa learns how to use a microscope.
- (ii) Pa says he doesn't need to use his gun.
- (iii) Pa says he doesn't kill black snakes.
- (iv) Pa eats lunch with Professor Herbert.

Answer: (iii) Pa says he doesn't kill black snakes.

## HOTS

1. What do we learn about Professor Herbert from the way he relates to Pa? Give information from the story to support your answer.

Answer: Through the story, Professor Herbert relates to Pa kindly. He doesn't call the police though Pa came to school with a gun. He shows Pa the school, and sits with him for lunch. It is very important for Professor Herbert to show Pa that germs really exist. In addition, he accepts Pa's request not to kill the snake. From these examples, I can learn that Professor Herbert is a real educator, who is willing to teach every person. He is also a good man who respects all kinds of people.

2. At the end of the story, Pa tells Dave, "**Your hands will be softer than mine. Your clothes will be better. ... Jist remember, Dave, to pay your debts and be honest. Jist be kind to animals...**"

Explain why he says this at this point in the story. Give information from the story to support your answer.

Answer: Distinguishing different perspectives/ Explaining cause and effect

The quote above reflects the change Pa went through the story. In the beginning, Pa doesn't accept Dave's punishment and the school methods. During the day Pa spends with Professor Herbert, he learns that school has gone through a positive change. He sees, for example, owing to advanced technology, such as the microscope, that germs really exist. As a result, in the end, Pa changes his attitude towards Dave's punishment and school. At this point, Pa understands that Dave's future will be better than his, and thanks to the education he gets, he will probably have a better job. Pa also understands that Dave's punishment was right and Dave should pay his debts.

## Moed Bet 2015 F

### Bridging

"I knew my father had done the best he could and I had no regrets about the way I turned out. Regrets about the journey, maybe, but not the destination." — Nicholas Sparks, *The Notebook* Make a connection between the above information and the story. Give information from the story to support your answer.

ANSWER: Nicholas Sparks says in his book that he knows his father had done the best he could for him. He appreciates everything his father had done. He admits that the way his father acted might not have been smooth but the results were positive and successful. In our story, "The Split Cherry Tree" we see that Pa sends Dave to a modern school but he also wants him to help him in the farm. Pa isn't an easy person but he finally understands that the world has changed. His son's hands will be softer than his and his son's clothes will be cleaner. Pa knows that he is a dead leaf and the bright future is waiting for his son

## Summer 2015 F

### Bridging

"Jesse Stuart... saw the role of teachers as one that would lead all people to have more meaningful lives. He strongly believed that a sense of adventure and excitement had to get back into the classroom and always said that for him 'teaching had to go beyond the subject matter.'" – Adapted from doctoral thesis by Newton Smith Make a connection between the above information and the story. Give information from the story to support your answer.

Answer: Just as in the quote the professor in the story believes in getting students excited about their studies. He does this by teaching them to experience things and not just to read books. The professor not only inspires his students but Dave's father as well. Supporting information: The students go out into nature and look for animals and plants. / The children learn that they have to pay for something they break.

## Winter 2015 F Exam

### LOTS

After Dave told P why he was late getting home from school, Pa decided to (-) (5 points)

1. give Dave extra money.
2. allow Dave to finish his homework
3. go with Dave to school the next morning
4. send Dave to bed without supper

Answer: go with Dave to school the next morning

At the end of the story, what does Pa do? (5 points)

5. He plants a cherry tree.
6. He begins to work at the school.
7. He helps his son sweep the floor.
8. He brings snakes to the classroom

Answer: He helps his son sweep the floor.

Even though Pa and Professor Herbert are very different kinds of people, they learn to respect each other by the end of the story. Why do you think this happens? Relate to both characters. (10 points)

Answer: Pa and Professor Herbert get to know each other, and so learn to respect each other. Pa understands that Professor Herbert is a teacher who cares for his students. He realizes that punishing Dave was Professor Herbert's way of educating the boy. Moreover, Pa accepts Professor Herbert's teaching philosophy. He understands that teaching children about animals and germs is important. Although Pa is aggressive and uneducated, Professor Herbert realizes that he is open minded and willing to learn. He sees that Pa is also interested in educating Dave, but in his old – fashioned way. Throughout the story, Professor Herbert sees that Pa is curious about how the school works and interested in learning new things. Moreover, when Pa asks Professor Herbert not to hurt the black snake, Professor Herbert understands that Pa is a good man.

## HOTS

After Dave tells Pa about his punishment, Pa says' "A bullet will go in a professor same as it will any man." Why does Pa react to Dave's punishment in this way? Give information from the story to support your answer. (15 points)

Answer: Thinking skill: Inferring. Pa doesn't accept the fact that, because he is poor, Dave's punishment is different from that of the other boys. I assume that his aggressive reaction to the punishment, which is shown in the above quote, is Pa's way of delivering the message, that poor and rich people should be treated the same way.

Thinking skill: Explaining Cause and Effect. Pa is an old – fashioned and aggressive man, who becomes violent when he gets angry. When he hears that Dave's punishment is different than that of the other boys, because he is poor and can't pay the dollar for the broken tree, Pa gets very angry. As a result, he wants to go to school and hurt Professor Herbert.

## ALTERNATIVE QUESTIONS

Compare and contrast Pa's opinion of Dave's school before and after he goes there. Give information from the story to support your answer. (7 points)

Answer: Before Pa goes to Dave's school, he doesn't like the school's way of teaching and educating. He doesn't accept the way Professor Herbert punishes Dave, and he criticizes the fact that children learn through exploring nature and field trips. After spending time at school, Pa learns to appreciate it. He understands that teaching children about animals and nature is effective and that times have changed. Moreover, he is convinced that Professor Herbert was right to punish Dave the way he did. At the end of the story, he admits it before Dave and Professor Herbert.

At the end of the story Dave says, "...he must pay his debt fer th' tree and I'm goin' to hep 'im."  
What can we learn about Pa's character from this quote? Give information from the story to support your answer

Answer: Pa is open minded and willing to learn and change. Before he goes to school, he disagrees with the punishment that professor Herbert gave to Dave, and goes there to cancel it. However, at the end of the story, he understands that Professor Herbert was right, and supports him with the above sentence.

### **Moed Bet 2014 F Exam**

#### **BRIDGING**

"Now what I want is Facts. Teach these boys and girls nothing but Facts. Facts alone are wanted in life. Plant nothing else, and root out everything else." — Charles Dickens, *Hard Times*." Make a connection between the above quote and the poem. Give information from the poem to support your answer

Answer: This quote shows the difference between the two theories of education presented in the story. At the beginning of the story, according to Pa, the teacher's job is to fill children's minds with facts and information, as in the Dickens quote. During the story Pa learns to accept the fact that going to school is different now than when he was a child. He realizes that Professor Herbert wants his pupils to be motivated and discover new things for themselves. Professor Herbert believes in field trips and studying biology by actually holding insects, snakes, etc. Pa changes his opinion and encourages Dave to go on with his education. When he gets home, he wants to teach Ma all about germs as well.

### **Summer 2014 F Exam**

#### **BRIDGING**

"Don't limit a child to your own learning, for he was born in another time." – Rabindranath Tagore, Indian poet. Make a connection between the above quote and the story. Give information from the story to support your answer.

Answer: This quote talks about how adults shouldn't stop children from learning new things. For example, in the story Pa has to learn to accept the fact that his son is learning new things in school – things he never learned when he went to school. Pa is angry and surprised that the students go out on field trips and learn about biology until Professor Herbert shows him germs under a microscope – a thing he never knew existed. // The quote points out that children are born into a different time as in the story. Pa realizes that the world is changing and that his son needs to learn new things in order to fit in and do well. He also understands that his own learning is limited / old-fashioned.

## Winter 2014 F Exam

### LOTS

At the beginning of the story, Dave finished his chores later than usual because (-) (5 points)

- (i) he did his homework first
- (ii) he walked home slowly
- (iii) he had to stay at school
- (iv) he wanted to visit his friends

Answer: he had to stay at school

Why does Pa take his gun to the school? (5 points)

Answer: Because he might shoot the Professor. Because he wants to threaten the Professor. Because he wants to frighten the Professor. Because he is angry with Professor Herbert. Because he is a person who solves conflicts with violence.

Before he went to the school with Pa, Dave thought to himself, "I knew that Pa wouldn't be at home in the high school." Why did Dave think this? Give information from the story to support your answer. (10 points)

Answer: Dave thought that Pa wouldn't be at home in the high school because his father was a farmer and not an educated man. Pa wore work clothes and he will look different from the other people in the school. / Pa had never been to high school. Pa felt that he wasn't as good at the other boys' fathers because he was poor. Supporting detail: The other boys had the money to pay for the broken tree. Dave thought he would feel out of place because Pa was a simple man. Supporting details: He had never been to high school. / He wore simple clothes and used simple language when he spoke. Pa is only a farmer. Supporting detail: He works in the fields all day.

### HOTS

"You've heard of germs, Mr. Sexton, haven't you?" says Professor Herbert. "Jist call me uster, if you don't mind," says Pa, very casual-like." How has the relationship between Pa and the Professor changed at this point in the story? Give information from the story to support your answer. (15 points)

Answer: Possible thinking skills: Distinguishing different perspectives / Inferring / Explaining cause and effect / Comparing and contrasting

Distinguishing different perspectives: The relationship has changed because Pa now sees the Professor as a teacher and friend who is going to show him and teach him about things he has never heard of before. Supporting details: Pa wants to learn about germs and is interested in what the Professor has to say to him. This is different from when they met at the beginning when Pa tried to frighten the Professor.

Inferring: The relationship has changed because Pa no longer feels like an outsider or inferior.  
Supporting details: The Professor has taught Pa something new and shows that he respects Pa. Pa no longer needs to be called by his last name, but prefers for the Professor to use his first name, in a casual, less formal way. Pa goes home to share his new knowledge with Ma.  
Explaining cause and effect: The Professor wants to teach Pa something new (Supporting detail: He wants to teach him about germs.) and this has caused a change in Pa's attitude towards the Professor. He no longer feels the need to threaten him.  
Comparing and contrasting: Before the Professor taught him something new, Pa felt inferior. Afterwards, he sees the Professor as a teacher and a friend. Supporting details: Pa wants to learn about germs and is interested in what the professor has to say to him. Before this point, he felt the need to threaten him.

### **ALTERNATIVE QUESTIONS**

At the end of the story, "Pa... told Mom he was going to take her and show her a germ sometime."

How has Pa's perspective of the world changed by the end of the story? (8 points)

Answer: Pa has realized by the end of the story that there are things in the world that he doesn't know (like germs) and that the world is changing / has changed. AND/OR: Pa has also learned that he can learn new things and he understands the importance of education.

How has Pa's experience at the school changed his relationship with his son? Give information from the story to support your answer. (7 points)

Answer: Pa's relationship with Dave changed after he went to the school. Pa is more supportive / understanding of Dave. Supporting details: Pa now encourages Dave to go on with his education. At the end of the story he helps Dave sweep up at the school. Dave saw his father in a new light and this made them closer. Pa understood the importance of education and was willing to learn new things himself. Supporting detail: Pa learned about germs from the Professor.

### **Moed Bet 2013 F Exam**

#### **LOTS**

Why does Dave say to Professor Herbert, "I wish it would be quicker punishment"? (5 points)

- (i) Because he needs to get home.
- (ii) Because he is embarrassed to clean floors.
- (iii) Because he wants to play with his friends.
- (iv) Because he finds it too difficult to do.

Answer: Because he needs to get home.



Before Pa goes to the school, Dave says that Pa won't understand "that school had changed in the hills from the way it was when he was a boy..." How is Dave's education different from his father's expectations? (5 points)

Answer: In Dave's school pupils study science by doing experiments and going out into nature. Dave's father expects pupils to sit in school and learn to read and write and do arithmetic from books.

When Dave comes home late at the beginning of the story, Pa says, "Make a gentleman out'n one boy in th' family and this is what you get!" What does Pa mean by this? (10 points)

Answer: He means that Dave is the first in the family to go to school and get an education. As a result, he thinks that Dave is becoming too proud to do his chores. Pa doesn't know why Dave came home late and so he thinks that it is because Dave only wants to spend time at school and that he no longer cares about his home.

## **HOTS**

How do Dave's feelings towards his father change by the end of the story? Give information from the story to support your answer. (15 points)

Answer: Comparing and contrasting

At the beginning of the story, Dave is embarrassed / afraid when his father says he will shoot Prof. Herbert. He feels helpless and doesn't argue with him. At the end of the story Dave feels a lot more confident. He is not afraid to tell his father that he was wrong to bring the pistol to school. / He is proud of his father because he showed that he was a moral person.

## **ALTERNATIVE QUESTIONS**

How does Pa's meeting with Professor Herbert at school change Pa's perspective of the professor? Give information from the story to support your answer.

Answer: After the meeting Pa respects Professor Herbert and likes him. He accepts the way the professor educates children. He learns that the professor is a fair person. He also learns that the professor has knowledge about things he doesn't know about, like biology.

How does Professor Herbert's opinion of Pa change during the story? Give information from the story to support your answer.

Answer: At first Professor Herbert is afraid of Pa when he comes to the school with a gun. But he soon sees that Pa is interested in learning and wants to know more things so he educates him. He sees that Pa respects animals when he says they should not kill the snake. He also understands how hard it is for Pa without Dave working at home and offers to pay the debt.

## Summer 2013 F Exam

### LOTS

Why didn't the other boys who broke the tree have to stay after school?

Answer: The other boys' parents had money and could pay the fine for breaking the tree.

On the night before Pa comes to the school, Dave says, "I studied plane geometry. Then I studied my biology lesson. I could hardly study for thinking about Pa." Why was Dave so worried?

Answer: Dave was afraid his father would do something terrible at the school, such as shoot Professor Herbert.

"'He's too big to whip,' says Professor Herbert, pointing to me. 'He's a man in size.' 'He's not too big fer me to whip,' says Pa. 'They ain't too big until they're over twenty-one!'"

What does this quote show us about the differences between Pa's and Herbert's approaches to educating children?

Answer: Prof. Herbert thinks Dave is old enough to take responsibility like an adult. Dave broke something, and he has to pay the fine. However, Pa comes from a more traditional background and believes in physical punishment as a way to "teach" boys how to behave

### HOTS

At the end of the story Pa says, "I ain't got much larnin' myself but I do know right from wrong after I see through a thing." How does Pa's behavior in the story support his description of himself? Give information from the story to support your answer.

Answer: Possible thinking skills: Comparing and contrasting / Distinguishing different perspectives

Before his visit to the school Pa was very critical of the education there. Pa wanted to threaten Professor Herbert with his gun. During his visit he shows he is moral when he asks Professor Herbert not to kill the snake. After his visit he admits that he was wrong. He tells Dave that he must pay for what he broke and that taking money from Professor Herbert would not be right. He also stays behind to help Dave pay off his debt.

When Pa arrives at the school, Dave thinks to himself: "I'd never seen Pa in a schoolhouse before. I'd seen Professor Herbert. He'd always looked big before to me. He didn't look big standing beside of Pa."

What is Dave's perspective of his father at this point in the story?

Answer: At this point in the story he sees his father as a strong, powerful man who might use violence to punish Professor Herbert. He is afraid of him and embarrassed by him.

How does Dave see his father at the end of the story?

Answer: He is no longer afraid of him. He sees him as small and out of place in the modern world. But he also sees that he is a moral, kind man and that he is capable of learning new things and listening to other people.

### Winter 2013 F Exam

#### BRIDGING

Jesse Stuart, who always said that his stories were based on true stories that had happened to himself or people he knew, grew up in the mountains of Kentucky. His parents were poor farmers who needed their sons to help out with farm work. His father, like many mountain men, could neither read nor write and his mother had only a second grade education. But both parents taught their two sons and three daughters to value education. –

<http://www.shortnorth.com/Deeds/JesseStuart> . Make a connection between the above description and the story. Support your answer with information from the story.

Answer: The answer should include some of the following: Like Jesse Stuart, Dave comes from a family of farmers. He has to do farm work. Dave's family was poor. Pa received only a basic education. Pa taught Dave to value education. Unlike Jesse Stuart Pa was distrustful of school education at the beginning and thought it was a waste of time. But after visiting the school he learned to appreciate it. One comparison between the story and the quote is sufficient.

### Moed Bet 2011 F

#### BRIDGING

Jesse Stuart won many honors throughout his life. But the most important thing to him was being an educator. He once said, "First, last, always, I am a school teacher." Stuart's love for educating shines through in his books. How does the above information add to your understanding of the story The Split Cherry Tree? Support your answer with examples from the story.

Answer: he answer should include some of the following: Like Jesse Stuart, Dave comes from a family of farmers. He has to do farm work. Dave's family was poor. Pa received only a basic education. Pa taught Dave to value education. Unlike Jesse Stuart Pa was distrustful of school education at the beginning and thought it was a waste of time. But after visiting the school he learned to appreciate it. One comparison between the story and the quote is sufficient.

## Summer 2011 F Exam

### LOTS

What changed Pa's opinion about his son's studies?

Answer: Pa's opinion about his son's studies changed when he visited the school and saw that real learning was taking place there. / Pa realized that the children were learning something valuable even when they took hikes outside, because they studied nature scientifically

What changed the pupils' opinion about Pa?

Answer: The pupil saw that Pa was against killing snakes and/or that he believed that people shouldn't hurt animals because they can't defend themselves. Because of this the pupils had more respect for Pa than they had when they first saw him.

Why does Pa say that Professor Herbert is "a good man" at the end of the story?

Answers: Pa realizes that Professor Herbert is a true educator who is trying to teach his son a valuable lesson. Because Pa has more respect for the school, he has more respect for Professor Herbert as well, and believes the professor must be obeyed.

### HOTS

How does the meeting between Pa and Professor Herbert affect the boy?

Answer: Possible thinking skills: Explaining cause and effect / Different perspectives / Inference

The meeting between Pa and Professor Herbert allows Dave to look at his father from a different perspective. He sees that the boys in his class respect his father for his attitudes towards animals and Dave begins to look at his father as the boys do, as worthy of respect. Dave was afraid, too, that Professor Herbert would look down on his father but the opposite happened; Professor Herbert saw there was a lot he could learn from Pa. Dave saw this and began to see his father in a new, more admiring light. Before his father came to the school, Dave didn't understand that his father could also teach him things about the real world and how one should behave. Dave learns from his father that you must always pay your debts, be honest and be kind to animals. Dave sees that it is not beneath his father to do a woman's job (sweep the floor) in order to pay off one's debts. Dave realizes that getting an education is not only what you learn in school but also what you take from home.

What was Professor Herbert's motive for punishing the boy the way he did?

Answer: Professor Herbert is an educator. His motive for punishing the boy the way he did was to teach him a sense of responsibility and that every action has consequences, in this case: if you break something, either pay for it or work to pay it off.

Was Professor Herbert right to punish the boy in this way? Explain.

Answer: Yes, Professor Herbert was right. Teaching a child to have a sense of responsibility is important and by making the child face the consequences of what s/he has done, s/he will not forget the lesson. If Professor Herbert had just explained to the boy what he'd done wrong, it would not have been as effective. OR: No, Professor Herbert was wrong. He should have known that the punishment was unfair, since the families of the other five boys paid for the damage. The narrator was the only one who had work to pay for the tree. The punishment should have been the same for all.