

ENGLISH

CHAPTER 4: CHIVY



CHIVY

~Summary~

-by Michael Wayne Rosen

The poem "Chivy" by **Michael Rosen** talks about how **parents** and **elders** try to impose **rules** on children and order them about. He talks about how they ask **children** to sit or stand according to their wish. They ask them to **speak up** rather than helping them with it. Children are even taught to eat food, not to talk when they have food, not to rest their **elbows** on table etc. They are also taught **good manners**, but the **purpose** behind it is not explained. They are taught not to **point** at anyone or stare at anything as it might grab attention. They are taught to use **polite words** like thank you and please, but are not told when and why one must use them. They are always expected to be **active**, not to slouch or drag their feet. Normal things like **making noise** is looked down upon. The poet finally questions how one can expect a child to make its own **decision** when every order is already given to them.

~Conclusion~

The poem 'Chivvy' is a catalogues of various do's and don'ts that the grown-ups dictate to young children. The adults constantly give a list of instructions to the children about how to sit, how to talk, how to eat and so on.

NCERT SOLUTIONS

Questions (Page No. 70) (Working with the Poem)

Question 1. Discuss these questions in small groups before you answer them.

- a. When is a grown-up likely to say this?

Don't talk with your mouth full.

- b. When are you likely to be told this?

Say thank you.

- c. When do you think an adult would say this?

No one thinks you are funny.

Answer:

- a. The grown-ups are likely to say this when kids are eating and have their mouths full and alongside are trying to speak.
- b. Grown-ups instruct kids to say thank you when someone offers them something or when someone helps them.
- c. Adults would say this when children are told to perform some activity and they are feeling shy.

Question 2. The last two lines of the poem are not prohibitions or instructions. What is the adult now asking the child to do? Do you think the poet is suggesting that this is unreasonable? Why?

Answer: The last two lines of the poem are not prohibitions or instructions. Instead, the last two lines pose an irony.

In these lines, the adult is now asking the children to take independent decisions.

Yes, the poet is suggesting that this is unreasonable because at all times, the grown-ups expect children to listen and follow the instructions of the adults blindly. And suddenly they want them to take their decisions.

Question 3. Why do you think grown-ups say the kind of things mentioned in the poem? Is it important that they teach children good manners, and how to behave in public?

Answer: I think the grown-ups say the kind of things mentioned in the poem in order to teach children the decent and proper ways of doing things. Yes, it is important that the adults teach children good manners and how to behave in public because they have experienced and learnt these things. But sometimes adults become so strict with children that they lose their innocence and playfulness.

Question 4. If you had to make some rules for grown-ups to follow, what would you say? Make at least five such rules. Arrange the lines as in a poem.

Answer: Don't shout at children.

Don't beat them.

Don't use mobile while eating.

Don't use abusive language for anyone.

Spend more time with pets and children.

Don't stop children from playing.