

## MAIN POINTS

- The play Mother's Day by J.B Priestley shows how a mother's efforts are ignored by her own family.
- Mrs Pearson is a dedicated wife who fulfils every demand of her husband George and children Doris and Cyril.
- Mrs Fitzgerald a fortune teller who helps Mrs Pearson to teach her family the importance of mother's selfless love. She brings about a positive change in her family's behaviour.
- Mrs Pearson and Mrs. Fitzgerald were two contrasting characters. Mrs Pearson was gentle and timid. Mrs Fitzgerald was strong and dominating.
- Mrs Fitzgerald knows how the spoiled children of Mrs Pearson and her husband made her work all day like a servant.
- Mrs Fitzgerald decided to set the spoiled members of Mrs Pearson's family right. For this purpose she caused the exchange of personalities.
- Now Mrs Pearson got the personality traits of Mrs Fitzgerald, she was transformed into a strong and dominating woman.
- She encountered Doris and rejected her order of ironing her yellow silk.
- Then came Cyril, Mrs Pearson shocked him by refusing his order of making tea.
- Doris and Cyril were further shocked to see their mother smoking and drinking.
- Mrs Pearson Taunted Mr Pearson for spending most of his time at the club.
- The real Mrs Pearson could not bear the drama anymore. She found her children and husband in a miserable condition now.
- Mrs Pearson was once again in her real self. She declared that they were going to play a family game of rummy, then children would prepare supper while she would talk with her father.
- Finally, Mrs Pearson became the real mistress and boss of her family.

## MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS

1. **What message does the author of "Mother's Day" try to convey?**
  - a. To appreciate wives/ mothers for their work
  - b. To work hard for your mother
  - c. To spend time with family
  - d. To respect everyone
2. **Mrs Fitzgerald asks Mrs Pearson to be \_\_\_\_\_ with her family.**
  - a. rude
  - b. polite
  - c. ignorant
  - d. firm
3. **Mrs Pearson's family had been \_\_\_\_\_ towards Mrs Pearson.**
  - a. respectful
  - b. polite
  - c. biased
  - d. unappreciative
4. **"It's that silly old bag from next door- Mrs Fitzgerald." Who said this?**
  - a. Doris
  - b. Cyril
  - c. George
  - d. Mrs Pearson
5. **What does George mean when he says 'we're at sixes and sevens here'?**
  - a. In a state of confusion and disorder
  - b. In a middle of a conflict
  - c. In a middle of taking a decision
  - d. In a state of agony
6. **How does the author describe George Pearson?**
  - a. Pompous
  - b. Solemn
  - c. Man in his fifties
  - d. All of the above
7. **According to Mrs Pearson, where had Cyril been wasting his time and money?**
  - a. Races
  - b. Ice shows
  - c. Both (a) and (b)
  - d. Clubbing
8. **How does Mrs Pearson describe her family members?**
  - a. Thoughtless and selfish
  - b. Pleasant and helpful
  - c. Hardworking
  - d. Mindful

9. **What was George's reaction when he saw his wife drinking stout during day time?**
  - a. He did not like it
  - b. He did not mind
  - c. He accompanied her
  - d. He ignored her
10. **"Well, she's suddenly all different." Who said this and for whom?**
  - a. Cyril for Doris
  - b. Doris for her mother
  - c. Cyril for his mother
  - d. George for Doris
11. **Mrs Pearson was \_\_\_\_\_ about Mrs Fitzgerald's plan.**
  - a. excited
  - b. hesitant
  - c. sure
  - d. envious
12. **What does Mrs Pearson suggest for them to do that night?**
  - a. Family game of rummy
  - b. Getting the supper ready
  - c. Both (a) and (b)
  - d. None of the above
13. **What are the 'changes' that Mrs Pearson referred to Cyril?**
  - a. Change in the way she is treated by the family
  - b. Changes in her daily routine
  - c. Changes related to her work
  - d. None of the above
14. **Where was Doris headed for the night?**
  - a. She had to work overtime
  - b. She was going out with Charlie Spence
  - c. She was going for her friend's birthday
  - d. She had some appointments
15. **What is the first thing that Doris does as soon as she enters the house?**
  - a. Asks her mother to give her tea
  - b. Asks her mother to cook something for her
  - c. Asks her mother about her day
  - d. Asks her mother to iron her yellow silk
16. **What makes Doris astounded as soon as she enters the house?**
  - a. The sight of her mother smoking
  - b. Because the tea was not ready
  - c. Because her mother was not there
  - d. None of the above
17. **How would you describe Mrs Pearson?**
  - a. Dominating
  - b. Considerate
  - c. Compliant
  - d. Both (b) and (c)
18. **In what endeavour does Mrs Fitzgerald help Mrs Pearson?**
  - a. To see future
  - b. To make her family treat her well
  - c. To run errands
  - d. None of the above
19. **Why was Doris red-eyed?**
  - a. Because of an infection
  - b. Because of a fight
  - c. Because of crying
  - d. Because she was getting ready to head out
20. **"Buck teeth and half-witted..." Who has been described here?**
  - a. Cyril Pearson
  - b. George Pearson
  - c. Charlie Spence
  - d. Mrs Fitzgerald
21. **Mrs Fitzgerald is a \_\_\_\_\_ of Mrs Pearson.**
  - a. friend
  - b. neighbour
  - c. maid
  - d. relative
22. **How does the author describe Mrs Fitzgerald?**
  - a. Worried looking
  - b. Sinister looking
  - c. Short tempered person
  - d. Both (b) and (c)
23. **What does the play "Mother's Day" talk about?**
  - a. Status of the mother in the family
  - b. Status of the son in the family
  - c. Status of the neighbour in the society
  - d. Status of the daughter in the family
24. **Does the attitude of Mrs Pearson's family change towards her?**
  - a. No
  - b. Yes
  - c. Maybe
  - d. Not clear from the story
25. **When do Mrs Pearson and Mrs Fitzgerald get back to their original selves?**
  - a. When Mrs Pearson's family gets to know about them
  - b. When they both get bored
  - c. When the situation goes out of hand
  - d. None of the above

26. Mrs Pearson tells George that he is being \_\_\_\_\_ at the club.
- respected
  - laughed upon
  - called names
  - Both (b) and (c)

### ANSWER KEY

1-a, 2-d, 3-d, 4-b, 5-a, 6-d, 7-c, 8-a, 9-a, 10-b, 11-b, 12-a, 13-b, 14-b, 15-d, 16-a, 17-d, 18-b, 19-c, 20-c, 21-b, 22-d, 23-a, 24-b, 25-c, 26-d

### VERY SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS

1. What does Mrs Fitzgerald mean by 'let me do this'?

Ans. She has an unusual solution to the problem.

2. Who are the members of the Pearson family?

Ans. The members of the Pearson family are Mr George Pearson, his wife Mrs Annie Pearson, their daughter Doris Pearson and their son Cyril Pearson.

3. Where does the drama take place?

Ans. The drama takes place in the living room of Pearson villa in the suburbs of London.

4. Write the meaning of the word laconic?

Ans. Concise

5. What was Mrs Pearson drinking ?

Ans. Mrs Pearson was drinking stout, a type of beer.

6. What does guffaw mean?

Ans. A loud laugh

7. What was Mrs Fitzgerald's advice to Mrs Pearson?

Ans. She advised Mrs Pearson to be the boss of her family.

8. What was the name of Mrs Pearson's husband?

Ans. George

9. Mrs Pearson was a \_\_\_\_\_ housewife.

Ans. Docile

10. In the play Mother's day who is the most neglected person in the family?

Ans. Mrs Pearson was the most neglected person in the family.

### SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS

1. Who is Mrs Pearson?

Ans. Mrs Pearson is the protagonist of the play. She is neglected by her family and treated as a slave. Living her life in servitude, she has forgotten her individuality and the respect that she deserves in her family. She lives for her family and has forgotten that she has a life of her own.

2. Who is Mrs Fitzgerald? What does she advise Mrs Pearson?

Ans. Mrs Fitzgerald is Mrs Pearson's neighbour and friend, a fortune teller, who had learnt the art from the East, tells Mrs Pearson that her fortune could turn either way. With effort and counsel, the situation would swing in her favour. She advised her to assert herself as the boss of the house.

3. How did the two women react after their bodies were changed?

Ans. When Mrs Pearson looked down at herself in Mrs Fitzgerald's body, she gave a scream of fright. On the other hand, Mrs Fitzgerald is rather pleased and feels that the transition was so neat that she did not even know that she had it in her.

4. What does Mrs Fitzgerald offer to do for her?

Ans. Mrs Fitzgerald sensed that Mrs Pearson was far too gentle, submissive and generous to tackle her family. Mrs Fitzgerald offered to make them realise the error in their ways not as Mrs Fitzgerald but as Mrs Pearson. She offered to change their bodies and change back again.

5. What did Doris want her mother to do? How did the mother react?

Ans. Doris wanted her to iron her yellow silk dress that she 'must wear' that night. She also wanted her mother to make tea for her. She refused to get her tea and iron her dress, telling her that she put in twice the hours Doris did, but got neither wages, nor thanks for it.

6. What does Mrs Pearson say to Doris that really bothered her?

Ans. Mrs Pearson asked where Doris would wear her yellow silk dress. She said that she planned to go out with Charlie Spence. Mrs Pearson told her to find somebody better, and insulted Charlie Spence by calling him buck-toothed and half-witted.

7. What reason does she give Cyril for not making the tea?

Ans. When Cyril again asks for tea as he had been working for an eight-hour day, Mrs Pearson replies

that she had done her eight hours and henceforth she would work only for forty hours a week. She declared that she would have her two days off on the weekend.

**8. What, according to Mrs Pearson, were her plans for the weekends?**

Ans. Mrs Pearson tells her children that at the weekend she would have two days off. She agreed to make beds and cook a little as a favour, conditional to how she was treated. Mrs Pearson tells her children that in case they did not like the arrangement, she would go elsewhere for the weekend.

**9. What do Doris and Cyril feel about Mrs Pearson's changed behaviour?**

Ans. Doris and Cyril discuss that there is something wrong with their mother as she is not behaving in character. They discuss how Mrs Pearson behaved oddly with each of them. They try to fathom if she had gone crazy or had a concussion.

**10. What did Mrs Pearson say to her husband when he was angry with her for not making tea?**

Ans. Mr Pearson informed Mrs Pearson that he did not want tea but grew angry at being told that tea was not ready. She taunted him that if he went up to the bar at the club and refused a glass of beer and showed irritation because they had not served it earlier, he would invite ridicule.

**11. What were the two slips that could have let out the real identity of Mrs Fitzgerald?**

Ans. Mrs Fitzgerald, in her nervousness, addresses Mr Pearson, as George. Mr Pearson is surprised to be called thus, but Mrs Pearson covers up for Mrs Fitzgerald. Later, when Mrs Fitzgerald attempts to slap George, following an argument, the real Mrs Pearson exclaims and calls out to her, 'Mrs Fitzgerald', which confuses George.

**12. What was Mrs Fitzgerald's advice to Mrs Pearson after she had put back the family members in their proper place?**

Ans. Mrs Fitzgerald advised Mrs Pearson not to be soft and waste all the efforts she had put in to change the attitude of her family for the better. Mrs Pearson is unsure how she would explain her behaviour. But Mrs Fitzgerald warns her not to yield.

**13. What was the change that came over the Pearson family in the end?**

Ans. When Mrs Fitzgerald left, Mrs Pearson's family was relieved to see her smile. Mr Pearson decides to stay home for a family game of rummy, and have the children prepare dinner. They readily agree and gather around Mrs Pearson and the play ends.

## LONG ANSWER QUESTIONS

**1. Draw a character sketch of Mrs Pearson.**

Ans. Mrs Pearson is a woman whose identity is confined within the house. She is a loving wife and mother. She is simple hearted and gentle to a fault. This means that she is a homemaker, who does all the tasks of the home, like taking care of her children, cooking, cleaning, serving her husband,. In fact, for that she endures everything without any murmur or protest. We feel sympathy for her . But even though she works so hard she receives no recognition for her hard work. Rather, her own children and her husband look down upon her and consider her work to be menial. On the other hand, Mrs Fitzgerald is an assertive woman, she is a stern woman who wants Mrs Pearson to grow some character and stand for herself. Mrs Fitzgerald brings about a change in her personality. She helps her to become more assertive and dominating at the end.

**2. How does Mrs Fitzgerald put George, Doris and Cyril in their places?**

Ans. Mrs Fitzgerald knows some magic. She uses her magic to change her personality with that of Mrs Pearson's. Soon Mrs Pearson's daughter Doris comes in and asks her mother for tea, but her mother says that there is no tea ready for her. She had wanted her mother to iron her yellow silk dress but the mother refuses to do any ironing for her. Her daughter has never seen her mother behave like this, so, she got into tears. When George and Cyril come inside the room they too receive the same kind of treatment. Mrs Pearson says that she will also work only 8 hours a day and 5 days in a week like the rest of the family members. While all of this was going on, the two ladies change back into their real personalities. The other members of the Pearson family take a sigh of relief when Mrs Pearson calls them back with a smile. But now they have learnt the lesson hence they all fall into their places.

**3. Give a brief character sketch of Mrs Fitzgerald ?**

Ans. Mrs Fitzgerald is Mrs Pearson's neighbour. She is a strong minded woman, she has a dominating nature. She believes in equal rights of women with men. She believes that women also have the liberty to do anything that men have .She strongly feels that a woman should be the boss of her family. She is very intelligent so she handled George, Cyril and Doris very well and gave them a good pounding. She helps Mrs Pearson to attain the required place and value in her family. She made Mrs Pearson's husband and children realise the real value of a mother and a homemaker.