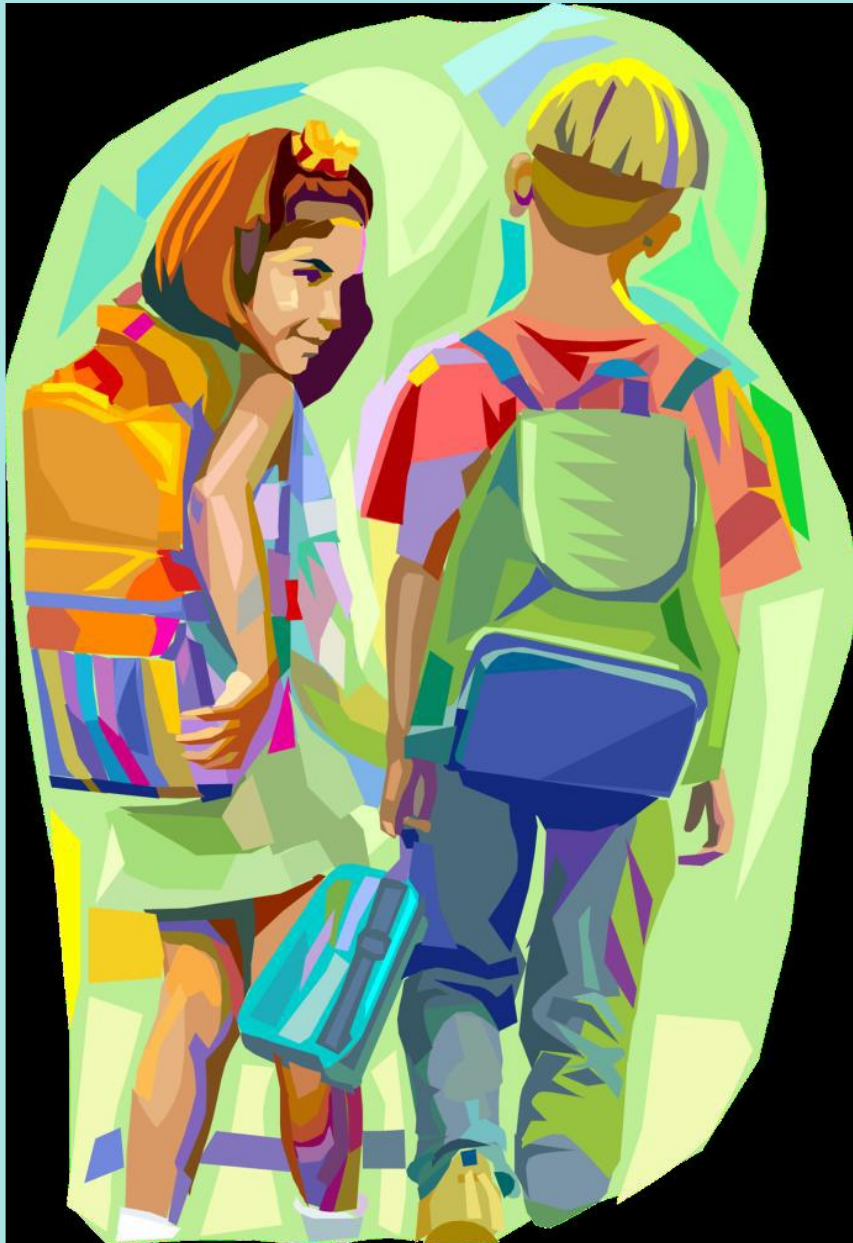


The Fun They Had

by Isaac Asimov

A Teaching Guide

with Common Core State Standards Alignment



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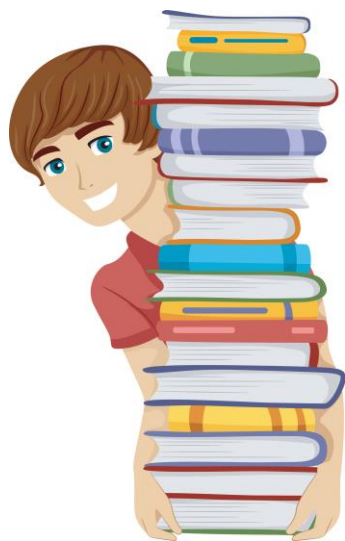
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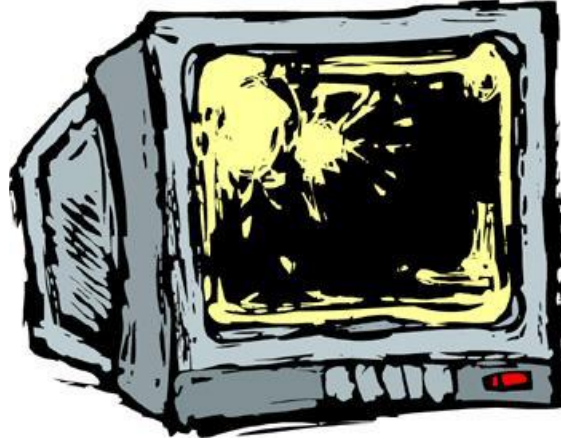
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The Fun They Had

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Goals Statement

One of the goals of this teaching guide is to provide teachers with no-prep materials for a compelling, kid-friendly short story that can be readily used as a back-to-school activity.

Isaac Asimov's **The Fun They Had** is a title that I used with my 6th, 7th, and 8th graders year after year, so I know students like the story. And it's about school. It fits all the criteria.

During my teaching career, I compiled a long list of short stories that my students loved and I enjoyed teaching. I found them in old reading texts and books from my personal library. **The Fun They Had** was an all-around favorite.

Early on, I developed the habit of reading aloud to my students, though it was not common practice in other classrooms. Nevertheless, I never had a complaint. Eventually, Friday became listen-to-a-short-story day.

Since then, research has reinforced what teachers have known instinctively for ages. There is great value in reading aloud to children, and not just for the little guys—the older ones benefit as well. Today, we have the green light to take advantage of this pleasurable, fun, bonding learning experience.

I hope that's just what you do!

About Your Short Story Teaching Guide. . .

Common Core State Standards

Applicable Common Core State Standards Alignments for 4th- 8th grade ELA are included in the **Answer Keys** for each question and activity.

Additional Common Core Standards will be met if students are required to listen to the story and then respond to questions. However, if the teacher chooses to use the story as an independent, partners, or small group reading assignment, the listed Common Core Standards still apply. More standards will align with written responses to prompts in **Something to Think About/Something to Write About**.

The Activities

Short Answer Questions:

The ten questions are factual in nature. They do not require interpretation or skill application, but they do require some specific recall. This page is suitable as a partners' activity as well as an individual or small group assignment.

Vocabulary:

The **Vocabulary** page presents six story words in context and challenges students to determine their meanings from surrounding clues. **Dictionary Digs** requires students to use and interpret definitions and usage of the same six words.

Something to Think About/Something to Write About

This group of prompts purposely stretches across a wide range of ability and skill levels so that teachers may pick and choose to meet the needs of their students. In some cases, the difficulty level will require that students have a copy of the story in order to respond to the prompt. Individual items may be presented orally or on paper and assigned as a whole class, group, or partner task.

Graphic Organizer for Writing:

The last item from **Something to Think About/Something to Write About** has been expanded into a graphic organizer for writing. A suggested **Grading Rubric** for this and other writing activities is included.

Answer Keys

Full answer keys are provided, including suggested responses for open-ended questions.

Short Answer Questions

1. When and where does this story take place? What type of story is it?
2. How did Margie know that books had once existed?
3. Why did the words in the book look funny to Margie and Tommy?
4. How old were Margie and Tommy?
5. Where had Tommy found the book and what was it about?

10 Questions in Complete File

Vocabulary: Context Clues

1. The author wrote that the pages of the old book were yellow and **crinkly**. What do you think *crinkly* means? Explain how you formed an answer.
2. After Tommy told Margie that the book he found was about school, we read that Margie was **scornful**. She continued, “*School? What’s there to write about school? I hate school.*”
What phrase from Margie’s comment is a clue that *scornful* means Margie was not happy with the book’s topic?

5 Questions in Complete File

Vocabulary: Dictionary Digs

Dig into your favorite dictionary (print or digital) to answer the following questions about six words from the story. Write the **letter** of the correct answer in the blank to the left.

- _____ 1. Of the four possible answer choices, which one is **not** a correct definition for the word **superior**?
- (A) more advanced (C) of a lower quality
(B) more skillful or intelligent (D) exceptional

- _____ 2. Which of the following cartoons *best* illustrates a **dispute**?



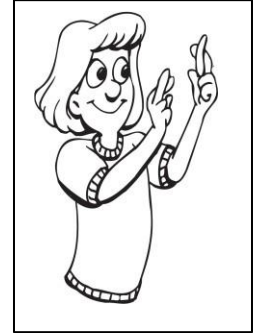
(A)



(B)



(C)



(D)

6 Items in Complete File

Something to Think About/ Something to Write About

1. Tommy is not Margie's brother. Who is he? Find story clues to support your answer.
2. Margie knew about books because of her grandfather, who had heard about them from his own grandfather. He knew there had been a time when all stories had been printed on paper. Using a span of 30 years as a generation, estimate the number of years that have passed since there have been books.
3. Tommy said of the book, "What a waste. When you're through. . . you just throw it away." What evidence can you find in the story to prove that Tommy actually liked the book?
4. The book that Tommy found was about school.
What kind of book do you suppose it was? A history book? A story book?
 - If Tommy had found a textbook rather than a story book or a history book would it change anything about the story? Explain your answer.
 - If Tommy had chosen NOT to share the book with Margie, how would that have changed the story? How would it have stayed the same.

16 Items in Complete File