

ANSWER KEY & MARKING SCHEME · CBSE CLASS 9**The Fun They Had (Beehive)**

English · Chapter 1 · Use this with the Board Paper · Companion to Quick Drill

HOW TO USE

Attempt the Board Paper first (closed-book, full time). Then come here. For 2-mark+ questions, compare your answer to the model. For 3-4 mark questions, also consult the **Topper Templates** below — these show the exact step-by-step structure that scores full marks per CBSE marking-scheme conventions.

MODEL ANSWERS · BOARD PAPER**Section A — Reference-to-Context (extract-based, 6 marks)**

Q1. Read the extract and answer: 'They turned the pages, which were yellow and crinkly, and it was awfully funny to read words that stood still instead of moving the way they were supposed to.' (a) Who are 'they', and what are they reading? (b) Why did the words 'standing still' seem funny to them? (c) What does this reveal about the world they live in? [3 marks]

Ans: (a) 'They' are Margie and Tommy; they are reading the real, printed paper book Tommy found in his attic. (b) In their time, books were 'telebooks' on a screen where the text moved; printed words that stood still on paper were therefore strange and amusing to them. (c) It reveals a highly technological future (set in 2157) in which paper books have vanished and all reading is done on screens — underlining how alien the past has become to these children.

Q2. Read the extract and answer: 'She was thinking about the old schools they had when her grandfather's grandfather was a little boy. All the kids from the whole neighbourhood came...' (a) Who is 'she'? (b) What is she imagining about the old schools? (c) What feeling does this passage create, and how does it connect to the story's title? [3 marks]

Ans: (a) 'She' is Margie. (b) She imagines the old kind of school — a special building where all the children of the neighbourhood came together, learnt the same things, helped one another and played in the schoolyard. (c) It creates a wistful, longing feeling — Margie envies the togetherness she has never known. This connects directly to the title 'The Fun They Had', which refers to the shared joy of those old-school children that her own solitary, machine-taught world lacks.

Section B — Short-Answer Comprehension (2 marks each, 3 Qs)

Q3. Why did Margie hate school, and what did she hope the County Inspector would do? (30-40 words) [2 marks]

Ans: Margie hated school because her mechanical teacher's geography sector had been geared too fast, giving her poorer and poorer test scores. She hoped the County Inspector would take the whole teacher away — as had once happened to a boy's history teacher.

Q4. What did the County Inspector actually do, and how did this affect Margie's hopes? (30-40 words) [2 marks]

Ans: The inspector took the teacher apart, found the geography sector geared a little too quick, slowed it to the average ten-year-old level, and reassembled it — reassuring Margie's mother that her progress was satisfactory. The teacher was repaired, not removed, so Margie's hope was disappointed.

Q5. How was the old kind of school different from Margie and Tommy's schooling? Give any two differences. (30-40 words) [2 marks]

Ans: The old school was a special building where all neighbourhood children of the same age learnt together with human teachers, helping one another and playing in the schoolyard. Margie and Tommy, by contrast, study alone at home, each taught by an individual mechanical teacher from telebooks.

Section C — Long / Value-Based Answer (1 Q)

Q6. 'The Fun They Had' is set in the year 2157, yet the children long for the OLD kind of school. What does Asimov suggest about education and human connection? Support your answer with evidence from the text. (100-120 words) [6 marks]

Ans: Set in 2157, Asimov imagines a world with no school buildings and no human teachers — Margie and Tommy are each taught alone at home by a mechanical teacher, reading from telebooks. Yet, surrounded by this advanced technology, the children ENVY the old kind of school. When Tommy's real book reveals that children once gathered in one building, learnt the same lessons, helped one another and laughed in the schoolyard, Margie finds the idea wonderful. Asimov's point is that education is not just the transfer of information; the warmth of human teachers and the company of classmates are irreplaceable. In our own age of screens, the story warns us not to lose the social joy of learning together — exactly the lost treasure in 'the fun they had'.

Section D — Grammar & Vocabulary from the lesson + Poem (4 Qs)

Q7. Give the meaning of any FOUR of these words from the lesson: (i) loftily (ii) nonchalantly (iii) scornful (iv) dispute (v) sorrowfully. [4 marks]

Ans: (i) loftily — in a superior, proud manner; (ii) nonchalantly — in a casual, unconcerned way; (iii) scornful — showing contempt or disdain; (iv) dispute — a disagreement or argument; (v) sorrowfully — in a sad, mournful way. (Any four.)

Q8. Fill in the blanks with the correct form (past habit / past tense) based on the story: (a) In the old days, children ___ (go) to a special building called a school. (b) Margie ___ (hate) her mechanical teacher. (c) Tommy ___ (find) a real book in the attic. (d) They ___ (use) to read from telebooks. [4 marks]

Ans: (a) went / used to go; (b) hated; (c) found; (d) used.

Q9. In 'The Road Not Taken', identify the central metaphor and explain what the speaker realises about his choice. (40-50 words) [2 marks]

Ans: The two diverging roads in the 'yellow wood' are a metaphor for the choices we make in life. The speaker realises that choosing one path means giving up the other; though he keeps the first 'for another day', he doubts he will ever return, because in life one choice leads on to the next.

Q10. Many readers take the last lines of 'The Road Not Taken' as a message to 'always be different'. Why is this reading too simple? (40-50 words) [2 marks]

Ans: Frost earlier admits both roads were 'really about the same' and equally untrodden that morning, so neither was truly 'less travelled'. The 'difference' is something the speaker imagines telling 'with a sigh' ages later — an ambiguous story we tell about our past, not a clear rule to be different.

★ TOPPER TEMPLATE — 5-6 mark long/value-based: 'What does The Fun They Had suggest about the future of education and human connection?'

Annual exam favourite

Step 1 [1 mark]	Frame the futuristic setting briefly	Open by anchoring the answer in the story: 'Set in 2157, Asimov imagines a world where Margie and Tommy are taught at home by individual mechanical teachers, with telebooks instead of printed books and no school building.' One or two sentences only — do not retell the whole plot.
Step 2 [2 marks]	State the central irony with textual evidence	Make the key point: despite superior technology, the children ENVY the old kind of school. Quote/paraphrase Margie imagining children of the whole neighbourhood coming together, learning the same things, helping one another and laughing in the schoolyard. The future has efficiency but no companionship.
Step 3 [2 marks]	Draw the value/message and connect to today	Conclude with the author's message: education is not only information delivery; the warmth of human teachers and the company of fellow learners are irreplaceable. Link to the present — as screens and apps grow in our own classrooms, Asimov warns us not to lose the human, social joy of learning together. End on the ironic title — Margie wistfully thinks of 'the fun they had'.

COMMON LOSS OF MARKS:

- Merely retelling the plot without naming the THEME or the irony (caps at half marks).
- Forgetting to use any evidence from the text (examiners reward at least one specific detail — telebook, mechanical teacher, schoolyard).
- Writing far over the word limit (100-120 words) — concise, well-structured answers score higher.

★ TOPPER TEMPLATE — 5-mark character sketch of Margie (with textual evidence).

Annual + revision tests

Step 1 [1 mark]	Identify + one-line placement	Begin: 'Margie Jones is the eleven-year-old protagonist of the story, whose diary entry of 17 May 2157 frames the narrative.' Establish age and role immediately.
Step 2 [2 marks]	Two or three traits, each with proof	Pick traits and support each: (i) CURIOUS and imaginative — she is fascinated by the real book and longs to know about old schools; (ii) DISCONTENTED with her schooling — she hates the mechanical teacher, especially the geography sector, and hopes the inspector will take it away; (iii) LONELY — she envies the togetherness of the old school. Each trait must carry a textual reason, not a bare adjective.
Step 3 [2 marks]	Conclude with her emotional arc	Close on her final mood: by the end she sits thinking wistfully about 'the fun they had' in the old schools — a child quietly aware that something valuable has been lost to progress. This emotional close lifts the sketch beyond a list of traits.

COMMON LOSS OF MARKS:

- Listing adjectives with no evidence ('she is curious, she is sad') — examiners want proof.
- Confusing Margie's and Tommy's traits (Tommy is the slightly superior, older one).
- Omitting the ending mood, which is the heart of her character.

★ TOPPER TEMPLATE — 3-4 mark reference-to-context: an extract is given with sub-questions (who/where, meaning, inference).

Recur across SQP and annual papers

Step 1 [1 mark]	Name speaker/context precisely	Answer the 'who said this / where does it occur' part exactly: e.g. 'These are Margie's thoughts (or Tommy's words) when they discover/discuss the real printed book Tommy found in his attic.' Pin it to the moment in the story.
Step 2 [1 mark]	Explain the meaning in own words	Paraphrase the extract's sense — do NOT copy the lines back. Show you understand what the words mean in context (e.g. why the children find the still, printed words strange compared with their moving telebook screens).
Step 3 [1 mark]	Add the inference / significance	Give the deeper point the examiner is probing: what the extract reveals about the characters or the theme (e.g. it shows how alien printed books have become, underlining the gap between the future and the past).

COMMON LOSS OF MARKS:

- Copying the extract verbatim instead of explaining it (no marks for the meaning part).
- Wrong speaker or wrong moment in the 'context' sub-question.
- Skipping the inference sub-question, which usually carries the differentiating mark.

MARKING SCHEME — GENERAL NOTES

- Reference-to-context: the 'meaning/explanation' sub-part must be in the student's own words — copying the extract earns no credit for that part.
- Short answers should stay within 30-40 words; full marks need the specific textual detail, not a vague paraphrase.

- Long/value-based answer: award marks for (i) framing the setting, (ii) naming the irony with evidence, (iii) stating the theme/value and linking to the present — plot retelling alone caps at half marks.
- Character/theme answers must carry at least one piece of textual evidence for full credit.
- Poem answers must name the central metaphor (roads = life's choices) and should avoid the oversimplified 'be different' reading for full marks.
- Vocabulary/grammar items are drawn from the lesson; accept any reasonable correct synonym or correct verb form.