

Keeping it from Harold

1.

(a) What are the different weight categories in Boxing?

The different weight categories in Boxing are –

1. Heavy weight,
2. Light heavy weight,
3. Cruiser weight,
4. Super middle weight,
5. Middle weight,
6. Light middle weight,
7. Welter weight,
8. Light welter weight,
9. Light weight,
10. Super feather weight,
11. Feather weight,
12. Bantam weight,
13. Super bantam weight,
14. Fly weight,
15. Super fly weight,
16. Light fly weight,
17. Minimum weight.

(b) Have you ever heard the song whose lyrics go like ... “He floats like a butterfly and stings like a bee”? Who does ‘he’ refer to? He is also known as “The Greatest” boxer of all time. What was his original name? How many times did he win the World Heavyweight Belt?

Yes. Here, ‘he’ refers to Mohammad Ali who is also known as “The Greatest Boxer” of all time. His original name is Casius Clay. He won World Heavyweight Belt three times.

(c) Find out from your friend if he/she watches WWE and who is his/her favourite wrestler. Also find out why he/she likes this wrestler.

Yes, my friend Loyd watches WWE. His favourite wrestler is Beth Phoenix. His punching is stylish and entertaining.

(d) Discuss with your friend as to why these wrestlers have such a large fan following. Has the perception of people changed over the century with respect to those who fight in the ring?

Yes, the perception of the people has changed over the time with respect to those who fight in the ring. Now they are celebrities. They earn lot of money and fame. They have fans all over the world and people see them with great respect.

2. Answer the following questions by choosing the correct option:

(a) Mrs.Bramble was a proud woman because _____.

She was the mother of child prodigy.

(b) "The very naming of Harold had caused a sacrifice on his part." The writer's tone here is _____.

Admiring

(c) Harold had defined the laws of heredity by _____.

Being good at academics.

(d) Harold felt that he was deprived of the respect that his classmates would give him as _____.

They did not know his father was the famous boxer, 'Young Porky'.

3. Answer the following questions:

(a) What was the strange about the manner in which Mrs.Bramble addressed her son? What did he feel about it?

Mrs.Bramble used to speak to her son as if he were a baby, and not a young man of ten. She referred to herself in the third person. He disliked this habit of his mother.

(b) Why was it necessary to keep Harold's father's profession a secret from him?

Harold's father was a professional boxer. And Harold was a scholarly child with a very gentle and sophisticated behaviour. Mr.Bramble and his wife considered that boxing was an inferior profession and it may become difficult for Harold to accept the image and qualities of his father as displayed by any professional boxer. Hence, they thought it was necessary to hide his father's profession from him.

(c) When Mr.Bramble came to know that he was to become a father what were some of the names he decided upon? Why?

When Mr.Bramble came to know that he was to become a father he decided that the child should be named John, if it was a boy after Mr.John Sullivan and if it was a girl, she should be named Marie, after Miss Marie Lloyd.

(d) Describe Mr. Bramble as he has been described in the story.

Mr. Bramble was a professional boxer. Yet he was an amiable and a very gentle person. He was proud of being a professional boxer. There was no man weighing eight stone four in London whom he could not overcome.

(e) Why was Mr. Bramble upset when she came to hear that Bill had decided not to fight?

Mrs. Bramble did not like her husband's profession which she kept aloof from Harold. But Mr. Bramble used to earn lot of money that helped them to give a good education to Harold as they desired. She was upset because if her husband did not fight Murphy, he was not going to get the money they needed to give Harold a good future.

(f) Who was Jerry Fisher? What did he say to try to convince Bill to change his mind?

Jerry Fisher was Bill's trainer at White Hart. He had been preparing Bill for the fight with Murphy. When Bill decided not to fight with Murphy, he tried to convince Bill to change his mind. Fisher told him that if he did not fight he would lose a lot of money. The spectators would also be disappointed and the media would not rightly be kind of him. On the other hand, a win against Murphy would bring him not only money, but also a huge popularity.

(g) How did Harold come to know that his father was a boxer?

Just when Jerry was trying to convince Bill not to give up the idea of fighting, Harold came in. He wanted to know what they were talking about him. Here Jerry told him that his father was not a commercial agent but a fighting man, a professional boxer who was popularly known as 'Young Porky'.

(h) Why was Harold upset that his father had not told him about his true identity? Give two reasons.

Here are the two reasons why Harold became upset when he came to know that his father had not told him about his true identity:

(1) Harold was deeply interested in boxing. He had betted Dicky Sauder's that Jimmy Murphy wouldn't last ten rounds against Young Porky. If his father did not fight he was sure to lose the bet.

(2) He was also upset because his father had kept from him his true identity. Boys at school had nicknamed him 'Goggles'. If they knew that he was the son of Young Porky, they would hold him in awe. By hiding his true identity, his father had deprived him of the pride and respect he would have got from his schoolmates.

(i) Do you agree with Harold's parents' decision of hiding from him the fact that his father was a boxer? Why/Why not?

I agree with Harold's parents' decision of hiding from him the fact that his father was a boxer. They considered that a professional boxer was looked upon as a low-profile entertainer, and most of the people in the society did not respect a boxer. By hiding father's true identity from their son was they wanted to save Harold from the agony of being called the son of a petty boxer or fighter. But they did not have idea that time had changed and boxers were the heroes of younger generation and enjoy fans around the world.

Questions and Answers

1. What sort of a domestic creature was Mrs.Bramble?

Mrs.Bramble was such a domestic creature whose life was meant and spent for her very popular husband and her very genius son Harold. She was often lost in reveries meditating on her family's sound future.

2. What did Harold dislike of his mother?

Harold disliked his mother's referring to him in third person, that is, addressing herself 'mother' rather than I and calling him dearie or precious which sounded rather against his impressions of himself. In fact Harold liked to be considered as a young man of ten years.

3. What was a constant source of amazement to Mrs Bramble?

The constant source of amazement for Mrs Bramble was that her son Harold had no character traits of his father, the nationally acclaimed Young Porky, the boxer. Unlike his father, Harold was a model student for his class.

4. Why was Harold's perfection a trouble for his parents?

Harold was perfect in everything, right from his studies to his behaviour. Because he was very precise and that an evasive answer could not satisfy his questions, his parents could not simply mix their definition of a boxer. They had to, therefore say that Mr.Bill was a commercial traveller.

5. What was to be kept from Harold? Why was it to be kept from Harold?

The fact that his father was a boxer was to be kept from Harold. It was so decided by his parents because they feared that the child would be hurt to know that his father was a man of wrath and made a living by injuring people. Harold had already become a model student in his school and a model of goodness and intelligence among his friends and teachers.

6. What sacrifice did Mr.Bill do for his wife?

Though a nationally acclaimed boxer and the worst in the ring, Mr.Bramble was so soft outside the ring. When Harold was about to be born, he wished to name the baby John after Mr.John L Sullivan or Marie if the baby were a girl, after Miss Marie Lloyd but he withdrew his wishes with good humour seeing that his wife loved to call the baby Harold.

7. He was a professional boxer but that was the trouble. Explain.

If Mr.Bill were an unknown boxer, there were no troubles running into his family life. Being a very popular boxer in the country, already a sensation across, Bill had no means to stop him from reaching his son's sensitive world. The trouble was his anxiety that one day, very soon, Harold would come to know that he had been the son of Young Porky and would be shocked and embarrassed.

8. How was Bill's normal life different from his life in the ring?

In his normal life, as a caring father, as a compromising husband and as a gullible brother-in-law, boxer Bill was different. He had the ability to smash his opponent's cheek and skull with a single blow by giving the assumption to hit his stomach.

9. Who was Young Porky?

Young Porky was the most loved nickname given to Bill Bramble for his superstardom in the boxing world by the media and his fans in London.

10. How did Harold defy the law of heredity? How was it found later that he had not defied the law after all?"

Harold was the son of a most dangerous, most loved and most feared boxer. Instead of exhibiting his father's behavioural traits or genetic craves for the ring, Harold grew up like an ideal, peace-loving, model in his schools and Sunday classes. He stood first in the class and won many prizes in poem recitation while his father won name as the Young Porky of his country.