

# “THE UMBRELLA MAN”

## A. READ FROM LINE 1 TO LINE 12.

1. WHO ? Who are the characters ? \* a girl \* her mother \* a man

2. WHO is the narrator ? **the girl**

The tone is  serious  sad  **childish**

Explain your choice in French : **Les phrases sont courtes et simples.**

3. WHEN does the action take place ? **yesterday evening / when the girl was 12.**

4. WHERE ? City : **London**

Different places : **1." dentist's " 2." café " 3." pavement "**

5. WEATHER ?  sunny  stormy  windy  **rainy**  snowy

Justify by quoting from the text : **l.6 'It had started to rain.'**

**l.8 'It was raining.'**

6. WHAT CLOTHES ARE THEY WEARING ? **'ordinary hats and coats'**

7. WHAT DO THEY WANT ? **the mother wants a taxi.**

**the daughter wants a banana split**

8. Trouve les 5 phrases du passage qui font l'histoire (= ce qui relève du factuel – les faits - et non de l'anecdotique) :

**'Yesterday afternoon, my mother... the dentist.' (l.3)**

**'After that we went to a café.' (l.4)**

**'When we came out of the café /.../ rain.' (l.6)**

**'We stood on the pavement.' (l.10)**

**'A man came up to us.' (l.12)**

## B. READ FROM LINE 13 TO LINE 37.

1. Write the different parts of an eye : eyebrows eyelash eyelid



2. Find synonyms of the underlined words : “He was pretty old.”  beautiful  **quite**  not  
“She was very cool and distant.”  friendly  **cold**  calm

3. Find the sentences which show that :

a. The man is polite : **(l.13) 'He raised his hat politely.'**

**(l.13) 'Excuse me, I do hope you will excuse me.'**

**(l.16) 'I wonder if I could'**

b. The little man is asking for a favour : **(l.16) 'I wonder if I could ask a small favour.'**

c. He is asking for a very little favour : **'It is only a very small favour.'**

d. He is very insistent : **'I do need it.' 'He didn't bat an eyelid.'**

4. Lines 16 to 18 : How is the mother reacting in front of the man ?

a. 'cool'      b. 'distant'      c. 'suspicious'

5. Read the passage from line 20 to line 24 and find the two 'golden rules' :

1. 'The nicer the man seems to be...'
2. 'You can always spot a gentleman...'

6. How is the man described ?

- |                  |                        |                |
|------------------|------------------------|----------------|
| a. 'well-spoken' | b. 'quite embarrassed' | c. 'gentleman' |
| d. 'old'         | e. 'nice'              | f. 'polite'    |

7. Knowing what we know about the two characters, imagine what might happen :

- O The mother is going to help the old man.    **O The mother is not going to help the old man.**

**C. READ FROM LINE 38 TO LINE 81.**

- |                                       |                         |                   |                      |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|----------------------|
| 1. The man has forgotten              | <b>O his wallet</b>     | O his hat         | O his umbrella       |
| 2. He says he needs money in order to | O go to the <i>café</i> | O buy an umbrella | <b>O take a taxi</b> |
| 3. He offers to give the mother       | <b>O his umbrella</b>   | O his hat         | O his coat           |

4. Right or wrong ? Justify by quoting from the text :

- a. It wasn't raining anymore.    O right    **O wrong**

Justification : '**soaked to the skin**' / '**come under here and keep dry**'

- b. The mother was not ready to accept the deal.    O right    **O wrong**

Justification : '**I was very pleased**'

- c. The mother wanted an explanation.    **O right**    O wrong

Justification : '**If only what?**'

- d. The man had difficulties in walking.    **O right**    O wrong

Justification : '**old legs**'

- e. The umbrella costs a lot of money.    **O right**    O wrong

Justification : '**over £20**'

- f. The mother finally gives him the money, but she refuses the umbrella.    O right    **O wrong**

Justification : '**handed her the umbrella**'

5. Pick out the sentence which explains the little man's proposition :

- (l.75-77) : 'I'm offering you this umbrella ... a pound.'**

6. Why is this a clever strategy ? Think of four arguments :

- |                                 |                                 |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <b>a. he has old legs</b>       | <b>b. she needs an umbrella</b> |
| <b>c. it is a silk umbrella</b> | <b>d. he has no money</b>       |

7. When does the mother start hesitating ?    O between lines 62 and 64    O line 55    **O lines 57 to 60.**

8. The mother says : 'I don't think... I should...' (lines 62-63)

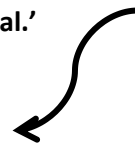
She doesn't say :    1. "I don't think I will."    2. "I won't."    3. "Of course, I will."    4. "I think I shouldn't."

\* Classify these four sentences from 'Yes, immediate acceptance.' to 'No, definite refusal.'

- 'Yes, immediate acceptance.'** = "Of course, I will."  
"I don't think I will."  
"I think I shouldn't."

**'No, definite refusal.'** = "I won't."

\* 'I don't think... I should...' means : O je crois que je devrais    **O je ne crois pas que je devrais**    O je ne crois pas que je dois



9. What does the little girl think of the deal ? Answer in French and justify by quoting the text :

Justification : 'You mustn't take advantage of a tired old man in this way.'

10. Read from lines 75 to 81 and find the three sentences expressing the mother's triumph :

- a. (l.75-76) : 'I am very pleased I was able to help him.'
- b. (l.79) : 'This will be a good lesson to you.'
- c. (l. 80-81) : 'Then you'll never make mistakes'

**D. READ FROM LINE 81 TO THE END.**

Repérons à quoi joue le monsieur !!!

1. Pick out the key sentences from the text telling the man's game :

- a. He went to the pub. (l.109)
- b. He gave his order ('light brown liquid'). (l.119-121)
- c. He placed a pound note on the counter. (l.122)
- d. He drank his treble whiskey. (l. 125 - 130)
- e. He put on his coat and hat. (l.139)
- f. He stole one of the umbrellas. (l. 140)

2. What are the mother's reactions ? Justify from the text (lines 100-101 + line 152):

At first she is furious. (l.101) 'He's a liar ! He's a crook!'

Then she is admiring.(l.152) 'How clever he is!'

3. The little girl's revenge. Pick out two words or expressions showing the little girl has a revenge on her mother :

- a. (l.101-102) 'You mean he's not a titled gentleman?'
- b. (l.147) 'Neat' I said 'Super.'

**E. READ THE WHOLE TEXT AGAIN.**

1. Explain why the text is ironical :

The irony of the story is that the mother isn't taking advantage of the old *man*--in fact, he is taking advantage of them to get more money for another drink.

2. Read the text from lines 40 to 56 again and find three clues (indices) that should have alerted you :

- a. 'I know you are (getting soaked) /.../ and that is why I'm offering you this umbrella'. (l.43-44)
- b. 'If you had no money in the first place then how did you get here?' (l. 47)
- c. 'I walked.' /.../ 'Why don't you walk home now?' (l. 49)

**F. YOUR OPINION.**

What did you think of the short-story ? Did you like it ? Why ?

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