

REVIEW OF THE STORY ‘ CRIME AND PUNISHMENT’

R.K.Narayan is famous for his universal stories with informative and colorful description.His ‘Crime and Punishment’ is a story about an impatient teacher who slapped his student on impulse, then was exploited by the child, resulting in an unexpected ending later.

In the story, we find the teacher punishes the boy and it seems to be a crime for the parents who gives much or over care to the boy. The boy also punishes the teacher for punishing him. He threatens the teacher. It is another crime in the story. Teacher’s purpose behind the punishment here takes reverse turn as the boy doesn’t understand his mistake or obeys the teacher. But he turns to be quite adamant and authoritative. It is sarcastic that the teacher here has to obey the boy. The boy is described to be ‘a little angel, all dimples, smiles and sweetness-’ only wings lacking . In contrast to this, the boy is not a little angel but a boy who blackmailed his teacher. In the end, the boy is protected by the teacher. When the parents enquire about the preparation for his test in arithmetic, he says he (the boy) is all right and they are playing just to keep up his spirits. This is the real punishment for the student.

The story focuses more on the character than on its settings. The teacher and the student here plays not the usual role assigned to them where as there is role reversal. One character becomes another, their actions are different from their usual selves. It gives the readers a good laugh and adds on to the irony of the story. The characters are also given no names. So it can be any teacher or boy. This makes the story universal and popular.

The title of the story is apt. The humour and sarcasm in the story lies in the crime that the teacher committed – hitting the boy, and the punishment – dancing to the boy’s tune to avoid the parents’ wrath. The Changing trends in our life system is also represented through the characters – the teacher and the boy.

UNIT 5 ACTIVITY 1V Essay Writing

‘Spare the rod and spoil the child’ was a dictum prevalent in the past. What is your opinion about it? Should there be any type of corporal punishment in a learning environment? If so what should be the mode? Discuss this topic in groups and prepare an essay.

Punishment is a disciplinary technique. It aims at making the children realize their mistake and correcting it. It is given to bring children under control, to make them obedient, respectful, polite etc. In its absence they go wild. But, if there is a fear of punishment, it will make them obey. In such situations educational institutions adopt corporal punishment.

Corporal punishment is a kind of physical torture. It is efficient with certain students in certain situations. Though it is physically damaging, it is not always immoral. With appropriate safeguards and restrictions it becomes possible in achieving the purpose. Sometimes it has adverse effects. The fear of getting whipped may create depression or frustration in children leading to ‘drop out’. Not all students have the same level of learning and grasping power. So the result of punishment may vary.

Any punishment given to children should aim at reformation of their behaviour not ‘deterrence’. Some steps taken strictly will enable this. Teachers should not be friendly but be familiar to the students. So that the students may feel free to talk or reveal their problems. In my opinion, schools should use corporal punishments for extremely bad behaviour and when all other methods fail. Then students will understand or realize their mistake.

Instead of thinking of new mode of punishment, new modes of positive reinforcement with students can be thought of. When there is realization of mistake, understanding of values there is less possibility for them to go wrong. Hence, life skill education can be given to improve their inter- personal, intra- personal communication skills, sympathy, empathy, decision making and critical thinking skills, coping and self management skills. It will refine their mind and attitude. Apart from this conducive environment for learning should be created. Giving verbal appreciation or award for students for demonstrating values will surely motivate them internally. As a result, students will develop good, effective behavioural outcomes.