



*Dr. Blosa Science*

Sponsored by  
**The Science Foundation College**  
**Uganda East Africa**  
Senior one to senior six  
+256 778 633 682, 753 802709  
**Based On, best for science**

[digitalteachers.co.ug](http://digitalteachers.co.ug)



## Comprehension story 19

Read the passage below and answer the questions that follow, using your own words wherever possible.

My grown children are causing me a great deal of concern. My worries pale when I recall my grandmother, who found in popular wisdom an appropriate dictum for each event. She liked to repeat: “The mother of a family has no time to travel. But she has time to die.” She would lament when, despite her sleepiness, she still to carry out her share of the duties. “Ah, if only I had a bed on which to lie down.” 05

Mischievously, I would point to the three beds in her room. In irritation she would say: “You have your life before and not behind you. May God grant that you experience what I have gone through.” And here I am today, “going through” just that experience. 10

I thought a child was born and grew up without any problem. I thought one mapped out a straight path and that he would step lightly down it. I now saw, at first hand, the truth of my grandmother’s prophecies: “the fact that children are born of the same parents does not necessarily mean that they will resemble each other.” 15

‘Being born of the same parents is just like spending the night in the same bedroom.’

To allay the fear of the future that her words might possibly have aroused, my grandmother would offer some solutions: ‘Different personalities required different forms of discipline. Strictness here, 20

comprehension there, smacking which is successful with the very young ones, annoys the older ones. The nerves daily undergo severe trials! But that is the mother's lot.

Courageous grandmother, I drew from your teaching and example the courage that galvanizes one at the times when difficult choices have to be made. 25

The other night I surprised the trio (as they are popularly known) Arame, Yacine and Dieynaba, smoking in their bedroom. Everything about their manner showed that they were used to it. Their way of holding the cigarette between the fingers or raising it gracefully to their lips, of inhaling like connoisseurs. Their nostril quivered and let out smoke. And these young ladies inhaled and exhaled while doing their lessons and homework. They savored their pleasure greedily, behind the closed door, for I try as much as possible to respect their privacy. 30

People say that Dieynaba, Arame and Yacine take after me. They are bound by their friendship and willingness to help, as well as by a multitude of similarities; they form a block, with the same defensive or distrustful reactions, before my other children; they swap dresses, trousers, tops, being nearly the same size. I have never had to intervene in their conflicts. The trio has a reputation of hard work at school. 35

But to grant themselves the right to smoke! They were dumbfounded before my anger. The unexpectedness of it gave me a shock. A woman's mouth exhaling the acrid smell of tobacco instead of being fragrant! A woman's teeth blackened with tobacco instead of sparkling with whiteness! Yet their teeth were white. How did they manage the feat? 40

I considered the wearing of trousers dreadful in view of our build, which is not that slim Western women. Trousers accentuate the ample figure of the black woman and further emphasize the curves of the small of the back. But I gave in to the rush towards this fashion, which 45

constricted and hampered instead of liberating. Since my daughters wanted to be “with it”, I accepted the addition of trousers to their wardrobes. 50

Suddenly I became afraid of the flow of progress. Did they also drink? Who knows, one vice leads to another. Does it mean that one cannot have modernism without lowering moral standards?

Was I to blame for having given my daughter a bit of liberty? My grandfather did not allow young people in his house. At ten o’clock at night, with a bell in his hand, he would warn visitors of the closure of the entrance gate. He punctuated the ringing of the bell with the same instructions: “Whoever does not live here should scam.” 55

As for myself, I let my daughters go out from time to time. They went to the cinema without me. They received male and female friends. There were arguments to justify my behavior. Unquestionably, at a certain age, a boy or girl opens up to love. I wanted my daughters to discover it in a healthy way, without feelings of guilt, secretiveness or degradation. I tried to penetrate their relationship. I created a favorable atmosphere for sensible behavior and for confidence. 60 65

And the result is that under the influence of their circle they have acquired the habit of smoking. And I was left in the dark, I who wanted to control everything. My grandmother’s wise words came to me: ‘You can feed your stomach as well as you please; it will still provide for itself without your knowing.’ 70

I had to do something. There was a need for some re-organization to stop the rot. My grandmother would perhaps have suggested, “For a new generation, a new method.”

I did not mind being a ‘stick-in-the mud’, I was aware of the harmful effect of tobacco, and I could not agree to its use. My conscience rejected it, as it rejected alcohol. 45

From then on, relentlessly, I was on the lookout for its odor. It played hide-and-seek with my watchfulness. Sly and ironic, it would tease my nostrils and then disappear. Its favorite hiding place was the toilet, especially at night. But it no longer dared to expose itself openly, 80 with jaunty shamelessness,

## Questions

- (a) Suggest a suitable title for the passage (02 marks)
- (b) What were the writer's initial expectations about children? (03marks)
- (c) In not more than 100 words, summarize the author's arguments for giving her children liberty (12marks)
- (d) Explain the meaning of the following words and phrases as used in the passage, using your own words wherever possible
- (i) my worries pale (line 01) (02 marks)
  - (ii) allay the fear (line 18) (02 marks)
  - (iii) inhaling like connoisseurs (line 29) (02 marks)
  - (iv) savor their pleasure (line 31) (02 marks)
  - (v) manage the feat (line 44) (02 marks)
  - (vi) flow of progress (line 51) (02 marks)
  - (vii) scam (line 41) (02 marks)
  - (viii) stick-n-mud (line 74) (02 marks)
  - (ix) played hide-and-seek (line 78) (02 marks)
  - (x) jaunty (line 80) (02 marks)
- (20 marks)

Spellings, Punctuation and Grammatical Expression (SPGE) (10 marks)

## Suggested answers

- (a) Suggest a suitable title for the passage (02 marks)  
Children's discipline  
Mother's lot  
Courageous grandmother
- (b) What were the writer's initial expectations about children? (06marks)  
She thought a child was born and grew up without any problem. She expected that children should be given liberty but did not expect girls to wear trousers
- (c) In not more than 100 words, summarize the author's arguments for giving her children liberty (12marks)

### AUTHOR'S ARGUMENTS FOR GIVING HER CHILDREN LIBERTY

She believed that at a certain age, a boy or girl opens up to love. She wanted her daughters to discover love in a healthy way, without feelings of guilt, secretiveness or degradation. And she wanted to create a favorable atmosphere for sensible behavior and for confidence.

- (d) Explain the meaning of the following words and phrases as used in the passage, using your own words wherever possible
- (i) my worries pale (line 01) (02 marks)  
Becoming pale due to shock and fear/being shocked
- (ii) allay the fear (line 18) (02 marks)  
alleviate/dispel/ease fear
- (iii) inhaling like connoisseurs (line 29) (02 marks)  
smoking like specialists
- (iv) savor their pleasure (line 31) (02 marks)  
enjoy themselves/enjoy their happiness
- (v) manage the feat (line 44) (02 marks)  
succeed to maintain their white teeth
- (vi) flow of progress (line 51) (02 marks)

- developments
- (vii) scram (line 41) (02 marks)  
go way /vacate quickly
- (viii) stick-in-mud (line 74) (02 marks)  
conservative/old fashioned/ unprogressive
- (ix) played hide-and-seek (line 78) (02 marks)  
she evaded/avoided being seen
- (x) jaunty (line 80) (02 marks)  
carefree/freely
- (20 marks)

Spellings, Punctuation and Grammatical Expression (SPGE) (10 marks)

**Please obtain free downloadable notes of general paper, biology, economics, geography etc. from [digitalteachers.co.ug](http://digitalteachers.co.ug) website**

**Thanks**

**Dr. Bbosa Science**