

I. Reading Comprehension (6 points):

1. **What has recently happened to Roald Dahl's books? (1 pt)**

Roald Dahl's books have been edited to remove or change words, phrases, and sentiments that might be considered offensive, such as references to a character's appearance, race, or gender.

2. **What does "Inclusive Minds" (paragraph 2) try to achieve? (1 pt)**

Inclusive Minds is an organization that aims to promote diversity and inclusivity in children's books, ensuring that the language used is sensitive and free from harmful stereotypes.

3. **According to the author, what attitude should be adopted when it comes to children and reading? (2 pts)**

The author believes that children should not be shielded from the realities of the world by altering texts. Instead, they should be trusted with the truth and taught that certain words and ideas were once common but are now recognized as wrong. Books should serve as teachable moments rather than being sanitized.

4. **What does the author mean when she writes: "If Dahl says a character is ugly, it's a teachable moment" (paragraph 3)? (1 pt)**

The author means that when a book uses language or ideas that are now considered inappropriate or offensive, it provides an opportunity to educate children about how societal views have changed and why such language is no longer acceptable.

5. **What does the author imply when she writes: "If I were looking for where trouble starts, I'd check the families before the bookshelves" (paragraph 4)? (1 pt)**

The author implies that negative behaviors and attitudes in children are more likely to originate from their family environment than from the books they read. She suggests that family influence is more significant than the content of literature when it comes to shaping a child's character.

II. Writing (14 points):

Should children be protected from the horrors of the world?

The question of whether children should be protected from the horrors of the world is a complex and nuanced one. On one hand, it is natural for parents and society to want to shield children from the harsh realities of life, allowing them to enjoy a period of innocence. On the other hand, overprotecting children can prevent them from developing the resilience and understanding necessary to navigate the world as they grow older.

One argument in favor of protecting children from the horrors of the world is that exposure to violence, cruelty, and other harsh realities at a young age can be psychologically damaging. For instance, children who are exposed to war or domestic violence may experience trauma that affects their mental health and development. Shielding them from such experiences can help preserve their emotional well-being during their formative years.

However, it is equally important to prepare children for the realities they will inevitably face. In many cases, gradual exposure to difficult topics, such as death, injustice, and human suffering, can help children develop empathy and a realistic understanding of the world. For

example, literature that addresses these themes in an age-appropriate way can serve as a tool for parents and educators to discuss complex issues with children, helping them to process and understand these topics.

Moreover, in a world where information is easily accessible, trying to completely shield children from unpleasant truths can be both impractical and counterproductive. Instead of attempting to create a bubble around children, it is more effective to guide them through difficult topics, offering support and context as they learn about the world.

In conclusion, while it is important to protect young children from experiences that may be too overwhelming or traumatic, it is equally crucial to gradually introduce them to the realities of the world. This approach helps children build the emotional and intellectual tools they need to navigate life's challenges, fostering a balance between innocence and awareness.