

CCT Weekly Practice (English)

The Three Old Ladies

There was an old lady, all dressed in silk,
Who lived upon lemons and buttermilk.
And thinking the world was a sour old place,
She carried its acid all over her face.

Another old lady, all dressed in patches,
Lived upon nothing but safety matches.
So the world it made her strangle and cough,
And sure as you rubbed her, you set her off

Another old lady, all sunny and neat,
Who lived upon sugar and everything sweet,
Exclaimed, when she heard of their troubles, "I never!
For the world is so nice. I could live on for ever!"

Now, children, take your choice
of the foods your heart shall eat;
They are sour thoughts and nasty thoughts
And thoughts all good and sweet.

And whatever the heart feeds on,
Dear children, trust me,
Is precisely, what this queer, old world
Will seem to be.

Mary Mapes Dodge (adapted)

On the basis of your understanding of the poem answer the questions given below:

Q1. Who are the characters in this poem?

Q2. What comparison has been drawn between the lemons, buttermilk and acid in the first stanza?

Q3. Describe the character, on the basis of the description given in the second stanza.

Q4. The character described in the third stanza finds the world to be a nice place because-

- a) she lived upon sugar and everything sweet
- b) she was sunny and neat
- c) she harboured good thoughts
- d) everything around her was nice

Q5. The poet's advice is to-

- a) eat the right things
- b) feed to your heart's content
- c) make the right choice
- d) feed your heart with good and sweet thoughts

Q6. The message given by the poem is-

- a) We should always eat the right kind of food.
- b) Our food decides our mood.
- c) The world seems to us, as we think of it.
- d) The world is full of sour and nasty thoughts.

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Answer Key-The Three Old Ladies

1. There are three characters /three old ladies in the poem.
2. The comparison drawn between the buttermilk, lemons and acid is that they all are sour in taste.
3. The character described in the second stanza is a poor old lady. She is not happy with the world. She has been compared to a matchstick, as she too sparks off at the slightest pretext.
4. c. she harboured good thoughts
5. d. feed your heart with good and sweet thoughts
6. c. The world seems to us, as we think of it.

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