Read Passage A carefully, and then answer A1 to A5

Passage A: Aunt Pegg

Our parents were over-indulgent towards us, and we were happy but not particularly well-behaved

children. Maybe they felt guilty because, on one occasion, they had to leave home for two weeks on

business and invited our Aunt Pegg to look after us. She accepted the challenge eagerly.

Vile Aunt Pegg! Leering, sneering, peering Aunt Pegg! We would be enjoying a friendly fight or just

sitting doing nothing when she would pounce on us like a cat, and savage retribution would follow. As

we stood in the corner of the room with hands on heads, she would snarl, ‘How dare you! Making my

tidy room messy, wasting your time. I saw you!’

Aunt Pegg had eyes on sticks. How she saw us we never knew: one moment she wasn’t there, the

next she was on top of us. She was a wizened, tiny woman of great muscular strength and energy,

and her mouth was like an upside-down new moon without the hint of a smile.

She constantly spoke of her ‘philosophy of life’ but we only experienced the superficial features of it.

She kept us occupied at all times, sweeping the yard, tidying the house and learning to cook

tasteless, crumbling cakes. On the first day she blew a whistle to order us downstairs to a breakfast of

chewy, sugarless oat cereal. The sugary, salty foods we loved were locked away, and eating our

morning bowlful was a lonely marathon. If we didn’t eat it all up, we were given extra cleaning to do.

By day two we were very mournful children. Nostalgia set in as we remembered our happier past. We

went about our daily tasks like little zombies. We became uncommunicative and even forgot (to our

Aunt’s extreme pleasure) to insult each other. Both of us longed for the day when our dear parents

would return and unlock the barred doors of our prison.

On day three we were introduced to our educational programme. She set us impossible mental

arithmetic sums at tremendous speed and always finished with ‘And twenty-nine, add ’em all together

and take away the number I first said’. Then there was ‘Reading Improvement’, which consisted of

moral tales from the nineteenth century, and ‘Practical Farmwork’, which mostly involved the

identification and eradication of weeds. We were not allowed to re-enter the house until we had

successfully whispered the name of the plant into Aunt Pegg’s good ear. If we did not use the official

Latin name she would snap at us. ‘You wicked child! It is certainly not Hairy Stinkweed. I’ll not have

swearing in my house!’

Of course we attempted to break free. It happened on a visit to town, while we were carrying the

heavy bags with Aunt Pegg marching behind, tapping her walking stick like an officer in the army. At a

mutual sign we dropped the bags and ran for it. Our Aunt seemed prepared for this. She blew her

whistle and shouted ‘Stop thief!’ and we were painfully restrained by several burly members of the

public.

When we reached home we were given a stern lecture on ‘philosophy’ and ‘morals’ and sent to bed

with just a slice of bread, some cheese and a lettuce leaf. We hated lettuce. Apparently much of Aunt

Pegg’s philosophy was connected with diet.

She must have thought that we were lazy, naughty children who needed strong routine and discipline

to prevent the rot from setting in. How we cried with joy when our smiling parents returned, bearing

presents and hugging us tight.

Questions:

**A1 - List 5 things the children dislike about Aunt Pegg (5)**

**A2 - How does the writer show the relationship between the children and Aunt Pegg? (5)**

***write about language used***

**A3 – What impressions are you given about Aunt Pegg in paragraphs 2-3 (10)**

**A4 – How is tension and drama built in the extract? (10)**

**A5 - Aunt Pegg is doing a good job at looking after** **naughty lazy children. How far do you agree with this? (10)**