

Compare and contrast the different presentations of school and schooling in 'The English Teacher'

Firstly, Narayan presents the Headmaster's school as one that is full of happiness. Students are 'digging down into the sand, running up the ladder, swinging, sliding down the slope' all of which suggests that they are playing and having fun. The continuous tense in these quotations shows that it will keep going, almost as if it will never end. Additionally, the 'glittering alphabets' and 'coloured dresses' create a lively atmosphere in this school which emphasised the 'joy' that they have.

Comment [k1]: Good 'straight in' start. Clear focus on the author and the question

Comment [k2]: Good identification of a key feature smoothly included in the sentence

Comment [k3]: Good development of point

Comment [k4]: Good smooth inclusion of quotations

In contrast, Narayan creates the impression of Krishna's college as boring and dull. The teachers and students follow the rules as they have to 'take the attendance' first and 'the bell' suggests that they are slaves to routine as they end a task not when the task is finished but when the time allocated to it is up.

Comment [k5]: Clear topic sentence that indicates the point behind this paragraph and a good alternating structure between the two types of schooling

Comment [k6]: Good detailed exploration of this idea

Furthermore, Narayan portrays the difference in style of teaching of Krishna and the Headmaster. The Headmaster has a free-style of teaching that could be described as 'the game-way of studies'. This suggests that he is not strict or over-bearing as teaching involves playing 'games' and not worrying about exams. Moreover, the children are excited to hear the story of a tiger. They come 'running in' and are 'uttering shrieks of joy' when the Headmaster calls them which emphasises their happiness and how enthusiastic they are about education. The children also get involved in studying as there is 'a discussion among the children' and the book is 'passed around' so that the children at the back can get involved too. The children furthermore get into the story as everyone sits in 'dead silence' which shows that they are really interested in the story and really want to know it.

Comment [k7]: Nice connectives used to link ideas together – good long paragraphs as well, which suggest detailed and developed ideas

Comment [k8]: Lots of relevant quotations suggest this candidate knows the novel very well

Comment [k9]: A little too informal

Krishna's teaching style, on the other hand, is very serious. He comes into the class, reads the play and the students just 'write down whatever [he] may say.' without any joy or happiness as they 'mug up' to pass the exam. The fact that they are 'made to pass examinations' accentuates how serious the students in Krishna's college are as the aim of the school is to make the students pass the exam, not teach them the result of which is that the students won't know anything about the real life and will be little better than, in the Headmaster's words, 'sturdy idiots.'

Comment [k10]: Nice varied structure – the connective does not always have to come at the front of the sentence

Comment [k11]: Good development word – showing how ideas are working together

Narayan additionally portrays the Headmaster as if he has a passion for teaching. The conviction in his tone when he says 'I hate holidays' suggest that he loves his job and his children and nothing will take him away from them. Moreover, the fact that he came to school on Sunday and he makes 'stories for the children' when he can't sleep at night shows that he dedicates his life to the children. He also admires the children as they are 'wonderful creatures.'

Comment [k12]: Again, good specific feature identified

Dissimilarly, Krishna has no enthusiasm. He teaches just because he wants to get paid his mere 'one hundred rupees a month' and there is no passion for teaching inside him as, in at least one of his lessons he turns up to class admitting that he 'hadn't prepared even a page of lecture.' His apathy for teaching is finally reinforced when his moment of 'greatest relief' is when the bell rings emphasising that he is not willing to teach but only counting down the minutes until he can escape his lessons.

Comment [k13]: Good vocabulary

Comment [k14]: This ending, however, is too blunt. There needs to be some kind of summing up / concluding paragraph that draws together the key differences between these two types of school