

6th form entrance and scholarship exam: English question

Read the following poem, and answer the two questions that follow.

Half-Past Two

Once upon a schooltime
He did Something Very Wrong
(I forget what it was).

And She said he'd done
Something Very Wrong, and must
Stay in the school-room till half-past two.

(Being cross, she'd forgotten
She hadn't taught him Time.
He was too scared of being wicked to remind her).

He knew a lot of time: he knew
Gettinguptime, timeyouwereofftime,
Timetogohomenowtime, TV time,
Timeforemy kisstime (that was Grantime).

All the important times he knew,
But not half-past two.

He knew the clockface, the little eyes
And two long legs for walking,
But he couldn't click its language,

So he waited, beyond onceupona,
Out of reach of all the timefors,
And knew he'd escaped for ever

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Into the smell of old chrysanthemums on Her desk,
Into the silent noise his hangnail made
Into the air outside the window, into ever,

And then, *My goodness*, she said,
Scuttling in, *I forgot all about you.*
Run along or you'll be late.

So she slotted him back into schooltime,
And he got home in time for teatime,
Nexttime, notimeforthatnowtime,

But he never forgot how once, by not knowing time,
He escaped into the lockless land of ever,
Where time hides tick-less waiting to be born.

U A Fanthorpe

1. (Inference)

Explain carefully, in your own words, the differences between the world of the child and the world of adults that the poem suggests.

(Reference your points with evidence from the text.)

2. (Analysis)

How does the poet use language and poetry to present these ideas?