

himself.

- So please, oh please, we beg, we pray,
Go throw your TV set away,
And in its place you can install
A lovely bookshelf on the wall.
Then fill the shelves with lots of books,
Ignoring all the dirty looks,
The screams and yells, the bites and kicks,
And children hitting you with sticks-*

*Fear not, because we promise you
That, in about a week or two
Of having nothing else to do,
They'll now begin to feel the need
Of having something to read.*

And once they start -- oh boy, oh boy!
You watch the slowly growing joy
That fills their hearts. They'll grow so keen
They'll wonder what they'd ever seen
In that ridiculous machine,
That nauseating, foul, unclean,
Repulsive television screen!
And later, each and every kid
Will love you more for what you did.

POEM - TELEVISION by ROALD DAHL

Date _____
Page _____

2-
71-78

In the first two lines of the poem, the poet exhorts the parents to throw out their television sets. His request to parents is propelled by his perception that their children's habit of watching television for long and continuous hours is dangerous and unproductive. The poet requests the parents to replace their television sets with bookshelf. The reason lies in the time-tested assumption that books alone will save the natural, imaginative, sensitive and curiously passionate inner self of a child from the blunting and barren practice of watching television. Thus, the fundamental motive is to save the childhood and ensure that children will have a better future. At the beginning, it would be difficult for the children to accommodate with the practice of reading. They might fail to understand the significance of a bookshelf filled with books. As a result, they might protest against it. Despite all this, the parents must go ahead with their decision as they know that this will change the lives of their dear children for the better.

79-83

This stanza is addressed to the parents where the poet assures the parents that their children would not accept the change at once, but gradually without finding anything else to do, they would start reading. They will start to realise the urgency to read something. He promises the parents that they will find a positive change in their children. The poet's approach is thoroughly conversational and his tone seems to be that of a public speaker addressing a gathering of parents. It reflects a high level of understanding, insight and confidence.

84-92

Here the poet starts commenting about how the children

got used to the practice of reading and gradually starts enjoying it. They will eventually compare the habit of reading and watching television and they will repent that how they have wasted their precious time by the unproductive practice of watching television. The phrase 'ridiculous machine' here refers to the television set. It is followed by another that refers to the television screen as 'That nauseating, foul, unclear, repulsive television screen'. The poet believes that books will make its own place in their hearts and they will become fond of reading. Subsequently showing a mature understanding. The children will soon realise that their parents did a wonderful thing for them by throwing away the television and instead inserting a bookshelf containing lovely books to entertain and enrich them. The parents should grow patient and be determined to replace their children's old habit of watching television which is unproductive by something that is more productive and enriching. Furthermore, they should also be absolutely caring and sensitive to the needs of their children.