

English Comprehension – Respect your name

"Now, what I want is facts. Teach these boys and girls nothing but facts. Facts alone are wanted in life. Plant nothing else and root out everything else. You can only form the minds of reasoning animals upon facts. Nothing else will ever be of any service to them. This is the principle on which I bring up these children. Stick to facts."

The speaker was Mr Thomas. The place was a typical school classroom. Mr Thomas' tone of voice was inflexible and dictatorial. At the back of the classroom was the school headmaster, who had come to watch how Mr Thomas conducted his classes.

"Girl number twenty. I'm afraid I do not know you. Could you please introduce yourself," said Mr Thomas.

"Sissy Jupe, sir," replied number twenty as she stood up, blushed and curtsied.

"Sissy is not a name," said Mr Thomas. "Don't call yourself Sissy. Cecilia is the name." As he spoke, the class started imagining Mr Thomas as a cannon loaded with facts, ready to blast at them anytime.

"It's my friends who always call me Sissy, sir," replied the little dark-haired girl in a trembling voice. Her large brown eyes fixed upon Mr Thomas, barely daring to blink.

"Then do tell them that you should not be called Sissy anymore."

"Yes, sir. I shall do that."

"Children, you must all understand that we are each given a name. This name must be respected and no one should make fun of this name of yours. We must address each other politely and changing someone's name is definitely not the right thing to do. I want you to bear this in mind. Understood?"

"Yes, sir. Understood, sir." replied the class in unison.

1. Why did Mr Thomas believe that facts is most important?

2. Which phrase showed that Mr Thomas meant every word he said.

3. Why did number twenty called herself "Sissy"? What was her real name?

4. Who was the other adult in the classroom and why was he there?

5. What is the meaning of the word "unison"?
