

## **My Oedipus Complex**

### **Study Questions**

- 1. What is the Oedipus complex? What specific features of this complex are recognizable in Larry?**
  - A. Oedipus complex is the tendency of a boy to become attached to his mother and to resent his father. The specific features of this complex on Larry are the special relationship between him and his mother and how he interested with her and his happiness because his father was away in the war.**
- 2. How old is Larry at the time of the events he relates?**
  - A. He is five years old.**
- 3. Why was the 1st World War the most peaceful period in the boy's life?**
  - A. Because his father was away from home, he could spend all the time with his mother doing their daily routines and no one was bothering him.**
- 4. During the war years when his father returns only for brief intervals, why does Larry identify him as Santa Claus? In terms of what happens later, why his concept of his father ironic?**
  - A. Larry identified his father as Santa Claus because he came and went mysteriously.**
- 5. In attempting to explain his dislikes for his father, Larry states, "I had never met anyone so absorbed in himself as he seemed". Does the story as a whole confirm this judgment or is this another of Larry's misconceptions?**
  - A. It is another of Larry's misconceptions because he disliked his father and refused him, thinking that his father was sharing his mother's love, care and attention.**
- 6. What brings the father – son conflict into the open? How do they torment one another? What dilemma does this situation create for the mother?**
  - A. When the parents lost control on Larry, he used to misbehave with them and bother them especially his father by kicking him in the bed and waking him up in the early mornings. Finally, this made his father angry, shouting at him and even beat him. Eventually, their relations became worse and they became enemies, open and avowed. They conducted serious conflict, the father trying to steal Larry's time with his mother and so did Larry. This situation made his mother's heart break between them.**

7. What point does O'Connor make by having the mother say, "You mustn't play with daddy's toys unless he lets you, Larry. Daddy doesn't play with yours"?

A. Father – son conflict became clear and the father created a terrible scene when he discovered that Larry was playing with his box. Larry's mother took the box from him telling him that he shouldn't play with his father's toys unless he let him, that made the father become very angry, looking at her as if she had struck him and turning away with a scowl. Because some of the curios were very rare and valuable.

8. How does the birth of Sonny help to solve the mother's dilemma? What new complications does the baby create for Larry and his father? Why do they ultimately form an alliance?

A. The birth of Sonny helps to solve the mother's dilemma by fixing the problem between Larry and his father, because now she has time only for Sonny. The new complication is that the boy gets all the mother's attention. Because they have both been sent out from the big bed and now they feel the same about each other then, their relation became well.

9. Does Larry have a firmer grasp of reality at the end of the story that at the beginning? Consider especially what, if anything, he has learned about his mother, his father, and himself?

A. No, he doesn't

At the beginning he thought that his father was the cause of his sufferings, but at the end of the story he realized that not the father who made the problems but his mother's care

10. Describe Larry and his daring life.

A. (No answer).