‘The Best Christmas Present in the World’: Study Guide

1. The start of the book sees the writer use both short and longer sentences. Why do you think he uses this technique? What is the impact upon the reader? Support your answer with the use of a short quotation.
2. The writer uses an adverb n page 3. What is that adverb? What does the use of adverbs add to the quality of one’s writing?
3. Can you find where the writer repeats some ‘hard’ consonants at the start of the letter? What is the impact of this upon the reader?
4. Can you find an example of imagery used beneath the picture of the football match?
5. The writer uses two adverbs when Hans Wolf walks away. Why do you think? What is the impact upon the reader?
6. He writer uses the word ‘drifting’ on this page – why, do you think?
7. Can you find an example of repetition on page 24? What is the effect of this repetition?
8. What does ‘shameful intrusion’ imply, do you think?
9. Why do you think the writer has used first person?
10. The adverb ‘lovely’ on page 29 might seem a bit of an obvious word to use – but it has a poetic effect. Can you see why?
11. What do you think the word ‘suffused’ means on page 35?
12. When you comprehended the old lady’s confusion, what impact did that have upon you?

Was it an emotional one as well as an intellectual one?

1. What is the impact upon the reader of the book ending so abruptly?
2. The writer has chosen to avoid the use o techniques such as metaphors and similes – why do you think?
3. Now imagine that you were there at the football match – write a letter home describing the events. Make it descriptive.
4. Now be an officer who has to censor letters home. Go through your letter and cross out anything that says where you are or says anything that says you are not happy or says anything that says you have been friends with the enemy.
5. Then re-write your first piece following the censorship.
6. Now hand in both your letters.