

Discussion Two

- A. In a paragraph, summarize "Half a Day."
- B. In one sentence state what you see as Mahfouz's main theme in "Half a Day."
- C. Write a persuasive paragraph in which you explain the extent to which Mahfouz has succeeded in achieving his purpose in this short story.

1. Half Day as you are reading it gives the impression that you are reading about a child going to school for the first time and, it depicts the feelings of being anxious and scared of the unknown very well as the child is under the beliefs that he's being sent away from home as a punishment and. The father quickly re-assures him that it isn't a punishment, rather a place for him to learn and develop on how to become a fine man in the future. Despite this the boy is still anxious when they get to the gates and hesitates to leave his father's side. His father gives him a little nudge and re-assuring him once more that it's time for him to grow up and face his fears. The child ends up loving it. As he makes new friends and even love interests, but after all of that we come to the point where it is time for him to leave and he walks out of the gates waiting patiently for his father for what seems like hours and eventually leaves making his way to the street. But as the reader we at this point are left to insinuate that he isn't a child but an elderly man who was reminiscing about his early childhood as the boy across the shop comes to help him across the road, he says "grandpa let me take you across".
2. The main theme in believing in Half a Day has been that life goes by quick or that human life is too short.

3. Mahfouz succeeded in getting his point across very well with my second read of this, I realized more things each time like how when he meets the elderly man, he says he knows him and recognizes him it's not necessarily that he is meeting them for the first time but if you look deeper I feel like this is himself viewing his older self at that point in the story and starting to come out of the daze of his younger youth, as he then at the end the grandpa, I love how even though it's subtle it depicts how we worry about trivial things when in reality the movement of time is a lot quicker than we think to be worried about such small things. Mahfouz brilliantly tells of how life is precious, and we should cherish every moment because time is like the current in the ocean always moving and always staying constant. Even if we don't want it to move there is no stopping it, we can only cherish and appreciate the time while we have it until our time runs out. The symbolism he uses to depict the time change is immaculate and very clever as it was very effective.