

Judy Brady, "I Want a Wife"

MULTIPLE CHOICE

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I belong to that classification of people known as wives. I am A Wife. And, not	1
altogether incidentally, I am a mother.	2
Not too long ago a male friend of mine appeared on the scene fresh from a	
recent	3
divorce. He had one child, who is, of course, with his ex-wife. He is looking for	4
another wife. As I thought about him while I was ironing one evening, it suddenly	5
occurred to me that I, too, would like to have a wife. Why do I want a wife?	6
I would like to go back to school so that I can become economically	
independent,	7
support myself, and, if need be, support those de pendent upon me. I want a wife who	8
will work and send me to school. And while I am going to school I want a wife to take	9
care of my children. I want a wife to keep track of the children's doctor and dentist	10
appointments. And to keep track of mine, too. I want a wife to make sure my children	11
eat properly and are kept clean. I want a wife who will wash the children's clothes and	12
keep them mended. I want a wife who is a good nurturant attendant to my children,	13
who arranges for their schooling, makes sure that they have an adequate social life	14
with their peers, takes them to the park, the zoo, etc. I want a wife who takes care of	15
the children when they are sick, a wife who arranges to be around when the children	16
need special care, because, of course, I cannot miss classes at school. My wife must	17
arrange to lose time at work and not lose the job. It may mean a small cut in my wife's	18
income from time to time, but I guess I can tolerate that. Needless to say, my wife will	19
arrange and pay for the care of the children while my wife is working.	20
I want a wife who will take care of my physical needs. I want a wife who will	
keep	21
my house clean. A wife who will pick up after my children, a wife who will pick up	22
after me. I want a wife who will keep my clothes clean, ironed, mended, replaced	23
when need be, and who will see to it that my personal things are kept in their proper	24
place so that I can find what I need the minute I need it. I want a wife who cooks the	25
meals, a wife who is a good cook. I want a wife who will plan the menus, do the neces-	26
sary grocery shopping, prepare the meals, serve them pleasantly, and then do the	27
cleaning up while I do my studying. I want a wife who will care for me when I am sick	28
and sympathize with my pain and loss of time from school. I want a wife to go along	29
when our family takes a vacation so that someone can continue to care for me and my	30
children when I need a rest and change of scene.	31
I want a wife who will not bother me with rambling complaints about a wife's	32
duties. But I want a wife who will listen to me when I feel the need to explain a rather	33
difficult point I have come across in my course of studies. And I want a wife who will	34
type my papers for me when I have written them.	35
When I am through with school and have a job, I want my wife to quit working	36
and remain at home so that my wife can more fully and completely take care of a wife's	37
duties.	38
My God, who <i>wouldn't</i> want a wife?	39

1. The capitalization of "A Wife" (line 1) emphasizes which of the following?
 - a. The speaker in the passage sees being a wife as her entire identity and wants nothing more.
 - b. The word "wife" is similar to a proper name.
 - c. "Wife" is the proper title of a category of people defined by their common duties.
 - d. In the historical period discussed in the passage, wives were rarely called by their proper names.

- e. Being a wife contrasts and conflicts with being a mother.
2. In line 5, the speaker mentions that she was ironing in order to
- demonstrate that she is a dutiful wife
 - provide an example of a task she could give up if she had a wife
 - remind the reader that women are better suited to domestic chores than men are
 - help the reader picture the scene, since the task itself has no particular significance
 - challenge the reader's understanding of what wives do
3. The rhetorical question, "Why do I want a wife?" (line 6) serves which of the following functions?
- It sets up the argument by asking a question that the rest of the passage will answer.
 - It makes an implied statement about the speaker's reason for wanting a wife.
 - It suggests that it is absurd for someone who is already a wife to want a wife of her own.
 - It implies that the question is unanswerable.
 - It directs a question at the audience in order to make readers reconsider their own beliefs.
4. The third paragraph of the passage (lines 7–20) relies heavily on which of the following rhetorical devices?
- allusion
 - flowery diction
 - metaphor
 - understatement
 - repetition
5. The tone of the sentence that begins "It may mean" (lines 18–20) can best be described as
- affectionate
 - grudging
 - angry
 - accepting
 - despondent
6. In the fourth paragraph of the passage (lines 21–31), the wife's role is depicted as comparable to the role of a
- spoiled child
 - beloved partner
 - honored advisor
 - domestic employee
 - unwanted guest
7. In lines 32–35, the speaker implies which of the following?
- I. Wives are expected to be consistently pleasant and keep negative feelings to themselves.
II. Wives support and assist their spouses in their work or schooling.
III. Wives' work and feelings are not valued as highly as the work and feelings of their spouses.
- I only
 - II only
 - I and II only
 - II and III only
 - I, II, and III

8. The primary purpose of the passage is to
- draw attention to the enormous amount of undervalued work wives do for their families
 - argue in favor of adding an additional wife to most households
 - persuade the speaker's husband to hire more household help to assist the speaker in her duties
 - challenge the argument that women do not belong in the workforce
 - convince women not to get married
9. The rhetorical question at the end of the passage, "My God, who *wouldn't* want a wife?" (line 39), serves which of the following functions?
- It implies that virtually everyone would want a wife given everything that wives do.
 - It suggests that *having* a wife is more desirable than *being* a wife.
 - It provides a succinct conclusion to the main argument of the passage.
 - all of the above
 - none of the above
10. Although the speaker is a wife herself, she chooses to write from the perspective of someone who *wants* a wife rather than from the perspective of someone who *is* a wife. What are the effects of this choice of perspective?
- It highlights the ways in which gendered expectations of husbands and wives benefit men.
 - It allows for a provocative satirical approach rather than a simple list of a wife's complaints.
 - It allows the author to trick the audience into believing that she's a man so that she'll be taken more seriously.
- I only
 - I and II only
 - I and III only
 - II and III only
 - I, II, and III