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In Group W, pinned on the wall was a huge piece of paper. Written on the top of the paper was the question: What makes man human? Going down vertically it was numbered 1, 2, 3, ... 18, 19. What the purpose was for was for different pupils to write different answers next to a blank number. The answers were like: the way they celebrate, their sense of humor, etc. I thought this was silly, so I wrote:

② nothing - human is just another word for a person

Everybody saw except for Mrs. Harward and Miss Edwards. Laura saw it first. She read it out loud. She said in

a loud voice, "Did Mrs. Harward tell you that you could write that?"

I began to think of what to answer. I hadn't known that you need your teacher's approval of the answer to write it up. However, I would never have gotten her approval for Mrs. Harward's thought that the What Makes Man Human business was simply fascinating.

I decided not to answer. Laura continued, "You're not supposed to write things down that unless Mrs. Harward tells you you can." Then everybody crowded around. They were saying: "NOTHING?" "NOTHING?" and Fatima said, "After we've studied so hard

you say it is nothing?
After they try so hard
to teach you the truth
you write 'nothing'?!
I said, "Well, it's true."

"No it isn't," said Laura.
Everybody lined up for
gym. Everybody, that is,
except for Fatima,
Sonia, Laura and some other
girls. They were erasing
no. 20 on the What Makes
Man Human. We went
outside. Laura was talking
to Fatima about no. 20.
I heard her saying,
"Not the right sort of
person." But I felt
dignified and very proud
of myself.