
Professional Detachment

Curtis L. Todd
Atlanta Metropolitan State College

Thanks for offering, but no,
I can't take any those fresh eggs
They're beautiful
Nor any of those mustard greens
Though I'm sure they would be delicious for dinner

Yes, my mother is doing well
Thank you for asking
Yes, she told me she saw you at the drug store
Oh, no, thank you
Her garden is overflowing – we can't keep them picked fast enough
And her chickens keep the *fridge* well stocked
Yes, it is great being back
No, I don't miss the city

I'm cutting down on sweets
But no, I'm sure the pound cake is still divine – as I remember
Nothing to drink – thank you for offering

No, not married or any children yet
Yes, I'll be in church this Sunday
Sister and brother are fine, papa too
Thank you for asking

This is a professional visit
I'm the new social worker for the county
Working with the elderly, making sure you have everything you need
There are few questions I need to ask

Yes, I remember
Yes, you are still my favorite Sunday School teacher

Well yes, of course, I will save you a seat
On the third pew right?
Near the Madonna and Child stained glass window
You're welcome
God bless you too

Discussion questions for the Poem *Professional Detachment*:

1. For rural social workers, is this a situation that arises often?
 2. How would you work with the issue of dual relationships in this situation?
 3. How do you think his former Sunday School teacher felt about his new role in her life?
 4. Was there another way for the social worker to approach this client that might have made this first interaction easier?
 5. Was it appropriate to agree to save his client a seat in church? Explain.
-