

R 3.5

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Read the passage and answer the following question(s).

The Kimono



Keiko was ashamed of the kimono. Aunt Fumika had presented it to her tonight after dinner. This visit from Aunt Fumika had been long awaited by the family. Keiko's parents had sacrificed much to arrange for Aunt Fumika's journey, and now Aunt Fumika would be here for six weeks. Now, the kimono from faraway Japan hung forlornly in the closet. It seemed to wonder if Keiko would ever wear it. Its intricate embroidery of red and pink floral design was embarrassing to Keiko. She was distressed by her inner rejection of something that represented her ethnic heritage.

The kimono was traditional. Its flowery brightness was perfectly suited for spring and summer. Summer vacation had just begun and her aunt was delighted to have given her special niece such an appropriate present. Now all of her niece's friends would know that Keiko's people came from Japan. The red and pink blossoms and green bamboo on her kimono were sure to bring her good fortune. Aunt Fumika had expressed these things that night at dinner, her ink-black eyes shining as Keiko had unfolded the kimono from its musty box.

Now Keiko lay in bed, agonizing. How would her friends react to seeing her in traditional Japanese dress instead of her usual California summer attire of a tank top, shorts, and sandals? Would her friends mock her or appreciate her ethnic pride? Each night for the next week, Keiko lay in bed staring at the moonlit patterns on the kimono in the closet. It seemed to reproach her.

Eight nights after Aunt Fumika's arrival, Keiko served a traditional Japanese dessert of *ohagi*. As the family savored the rich warmth of the sweet rice balls, Aunt Fumika began to talk of life in Japan. Aunt Fumika spoke perfect English, though accented. Keiko could understand every precise word. Keiko listened intently to the cadences of her aunt's sentences. They seemed to be swept along by a tide of emotion. In Aunt Fumika's voice, she could hear fierce pride, deep homesickness, and bittersweet nostalgia.

Keiko pictured the kimono in her closet, smothered behind a thick section of tank tops, sundresses, shorts, and swimsuits. Suddenly, the shame burning in Keiko's throat became painful.

Pushing away her plate of half-eaten *ohagi*, she jumped up and ran from the room, tears streaking her cheeks. She pounded up the stairs, ignoring her aunt's confused cries and her mother's worried questions. In her bedroom, she gently took the kimono from the closet, slipped it off its hanger, and pulled it on. Her tears of shame became tears of pride, the same pride she'd heard in Aunt Fumika's voice.

Smiling, she emerged from her bedroom, and walked triumphantly down the stairs into the dining room. Aunt Fumika stood with a gasp of pleasure and came toward her, arms outstretched.

"Beautiful, Keiko," she murmured, her voice catching as she clasped her niece to her in a warm embrace. In that moment, Keiko knew she had done exactly the right thing.

(Question 1)

1

One recurring theme in literature is *bildungsroman*, which means a "coming-of-age" story. In a *bildungsroman*, the main character grows — morally and psychologically. How is the story in the passage an example of *bildungsroman*?

- A** Keiko was afraid of being mocked by her friends.
- B** Keiko realizes that it is important to accept her heritage and have pride in who she is.
- C** Keiko is finally old enough to wear a traditional kimono.
- D** Keiko learns about her heritage.

Read the passage and answer the following question(s).

From the Diary of Anne Frank

Saturday, 11 July, 1942

Dear Kitty,

I expect you will be interested to hear what it feels like to 'disappear;' well, all I can say is that I don't know myself quite yet. I don't think I shall ever feel really at home in this house, but that does not mean that I loathe it here, it is more like being on vacation in a very peculiar boardinghouse. Rather a mad idea, perhaps, but that is how it strikes me. The 'Secret Annex' is an ideal hiding place. Although it leans to one side and is damp, you'd never find such a comfortable hiding place anywhere in Amsterdam, no, perhaps not even in the whole of Holland. Our little room looked very bare at first, with nothing on the walls; but thanks to Daddy who had brought my film-star collection and picture post-cards on beforehand, and with the aid of paste pot and brush, I have transformed the walls into one gigantic picture. This makes it look much more cheerful, and, when the Van Daans come, we'll get some wood from the attic and make a few little cupboards for the walls and other odds and ends to make it look more lively.

(Question 2)

2

One theme that is expressed throughout the excerpt "From the Diary of Anne Frank" is

- A** to make the best of a bad situation.
- B** that there is always a sadness of life.
- C** the power of friendship.
- D** to treat others that way you would like to be treated.

Read the passages and answer the following question(s).

The Sound

"Gee Grandpa, I've never heard that hissing sound before. What is that?" asked Randolph during an evening walk through the forest.

"Legend has it that the hissing began over a hundred years ago," responded Grandpa Luke. As Grandpa Luke began telling the story, Randolph listened intently to every word. He strained to understand the story's relationship to the eerie sound that continued to echo through the trees.

According to Grandpa Luke, this local legend involved a woman named Agatha and her son, Charles, who resided together in a nearby house in the late 1800s.

"Legend has it that Charles and Agatha argued about everything they ever did, whether it was something important or something insignificant. One day, they were so angry that they said appalling things to each other. Angered and frustrated, Agatha left the house to journey through the woods alone. She decided that a walk in the snow would cool her off both inside and out.

When Agatha was nearly a mile from her house, the ground beneath her started to shake tremendously. The volcano, which had not been noticed in thousands of years, had decided to show off its power once again. Agatha ran as fast as a fox in an effort to find Charles, whom she believed was at home feeling as dreadful as she did.

'I'm being punished for the despicable things I said to poor Charles!' she yelled loudly in desperation.

After what seemed like hours, Agatha reached her home, and could not find Charles anywhere. She ran outside in a state of panic and advanced up the mountain where Charles liked to spend his afternoons exploring. Agatha struggled to make her way through the snow, which was like powder. She caught sight of Charles in the distance, holding onto a tree and crying audibly. Just as the words 'I'm sorry' exited both of their mouths, the hissing sound of boiling lava melting the snow overpowered them both. No one has ever seen either one of them again."

"So what does that have to do with the hissing sound we're hearing now?" questioned Randolph.

"It is the sound of Agatha and Charles saying that they are sorry and that they love each other," concluded Grandpa Luke.

As Randolph walked back to Grandpa Luke's cabin, he was unable to speak. His mind was occupied with the thoughts of Agatha and Charles, and of all the mean things Randolph had ever said to Grandpa Luke. "I love you, Grandpa, and...I'm sorry," was all he could vocalize. Grandpa Luke glanced in Randolph's direction and smiled with content.

The Harmful Sting

Without remorse, he decided to flee
After the sting of her tongue
Had hardly begun
To insist he had no right to be. Loneliness arrived and forced her to see
The harm she had done
To her special someone.
Did she not know he would disagree? Several years passed by
Until one faithful moment
When he happened to drift her way. As she tried to justify
What she really had meant
He hugged her and announced he would stay.

(Questions 3-4)

3

How does the retelling of the story of Agatha and Charles within the passage "The Sound" immortalize the story's theme?

- A** Randolph tells his grandfather that he loves him and that he is sorry.
- B** Randolph realizes that his grandfather was not telling the whole truth about the story of Agatha and her son.
- C** Agatha and Charles both die before either of them could tell each other they were sorry.
- D** The sound within the forest is a reminder to all who hear it that Agatha and Charles will forever be sorry for the way they acted.

4

Which theme is supported by the *ending* of the poem "The Harmful Sting"?

- A** Time heals all wounds.
- B** Words can do great harm.
- C** "Sorry" is a hard word to say.
- D** True friendship is very rare.

Read the passage and answer the following question(s).

The Cottage

"In life, you can reject change or go with the flow, and you'll be content if you can learn to roll with it, Francisco," his grandmother had always advised.

"Easier said than done," Francisco muttered to himself as he stopped his bike with a gentle pat of his foot against the dirt path that led to the cottage.

He was stopping to sit back on the seat of his bike and just look at the cottage. He tried to look without seeing the "For Sale" sign that his father had just driven into the rose garden last night. Watching Pops drive the sign into the ground was like having a cold knife driven into his back. The prospect of leaving the cottage made Francisco feel like he'd been slapped down by a cold wave on a hot beach; this little house by the sea had been his home since he was two.

His family had moved to this seaside town twelve years ago when it had still just been a village. Now, developers were slowly encroaching on the town's limits. Francisco thought the developers were monsters, greedily devouring the wide stretches of unsoiled beaches and empty, grassy meadows. The thing that seemed so wrong to him was that they were only going to fill these beautiful, clean spaces with malls, grocery stores, gas stations, and fancy hotels. Why such destruction, and not even to give people homes? He knew that because he'd been listening furtively at his door as his parents and grandmother had talked late into the night. He should've been sleeping, but he had to know, had to listen to the plans, the reasons, to try to make some sense of this senseless farewell.

"I want to get out before the developers knock on the door," his mother had said, "and I don't want to be here when I see the bulldozers come into town."

There had been a note of despair in her voice, oddly mixed with a smile. She always smiled when she was worried about something. Francisco wished he could be as positive about the sale of the cottage. After a few minutes of just looking at the cottage, memorizing its smallness, its brown roof, white sides, red door, and brass knocker, he pedaled off toward the beach. He'd brought a bucket and spade with him. Digging on the beach had been a favorite pastime for all the years he'd been living at the cottage, for as far back as he could remember. His grandmother told him it was childish. He didn't care. It comforted him. The sea always gave him something from its depths. It wouldn't fail him today.

An hour later he'd found a brimming bucketful of treasures, including an enormous purple-gray conch that spoke in ocean waves to him every time he held it to his ear. The conch would go with him, he'd already decided. When they... left... yes, left the cottage behind forever, the conch would be his reminder of all those joyful, sun-filled days of his childhood by the sea.



(Questions 5-6)

5

Which of the following sentences from the passage, "The Cottage," best identifies the theme of the passage?

- A "In life, you can reject change or go with the flow, and you'll be content if you can learn to roll with it, Francisco..."
- B Watching Pops drive the sign into the ground was like having a cold knife driven into his back.
- C Now, developers were slowly encroaching on the town's limits.
- D When they... left... yes, left the cottage behind forever, the conch would be his reminder of all those joyful, sun-filled days of his childhood by the sea.

6

What is the theme of "The Cottage"?

- A** struggle between family members
- B** big changes in life
- C** destruction of the environment
- D** man versus nature

Read the passage and answer the following question(s).

Paper Route

Jameson decided that he despised his newspaper route and always would. It was piercingly cold that morning and a winter storm rumbled threateningly overhead.

"It's like I'm stuck in Dad's generation! Who delivers newspapers anymore, and why do I have to get up at four in the morning just because he says it builds character?!" he raged for the hundredth time that morning. He flung a paper, angrily, much too hard, and it glanced off Mrs. Lincolnshire's porch, striking one of her terra cotta planters. It shattered, scattering the rich, dark soil around a thriving miniature rosebush.

"Great," fumed Jameson sarcastically, "there goes part of my measly paycheck for this route."

"When I was your age, I had a paper route. It did me good, and besides, it gave me an appreciation for the miracles that happen in nature so early in the morning. Take a look around you between deliveries, Jameson, and you'll see what I mean," his father had advised just last night at dinner.

"Pass the green beans," Jameson had muttered back, with a surly expression.

It was five o'clock now and there was no miracle in sight. He sighed, wishing that he hadn't thrown that paper so hard and broken Mrs. Lincolnshire's pot. It would be like getting water from the moon, if she didn't hold him responsible for it.

Steering his bicycle into Larchmont Alley, the shortcut to the last street on his route, Jameson rubbed his sleepy eyes with one hand and yawned immensely. He'd give his right hand to be back in his warm bed right now, beneath the quiet comfort of his goose-down comforter. A small meow from a dark corner of the alley jerked him from his reverie. Stopping his bicycle, Jameson peered into the early morning gloom and watched as a greasy cardboard box shifted slightly in the corner. Suddenly curious, Jameson parked his bike and moved toward the box. Looking inside, he saw a scrawny, damp mother cat and a full litter of newborn kittens nestling blindly and anxiously beside her. She opened her mouth, her jaw shivering, and cried out to him piteously. Her eyes pleaded with him, and Jameson suddenly realized that he had just encountered his first paper route miracle.

"It's amazing you're alive," he murmured reassuringly at the mother cat, "but, I'll be back in a few minutes with milk and blankets for you and your kittens."

Bicycling home after delivering papers to the last street on his route, Jameson thought about the mother cat's plight. His heart filled with an odd mixture of shame, relief, and gratitude; he decided then that he would ask his parents if he could bring the cat family home with him later after he'd fed and blanketed them. He pedaled faster, realizing that he'd need to hurry before the storm broke. The mother cat, with her perseverance and sense of responsibility, had just taught Jameson an important lesson.

(Questions 7-8)

7

Which of the following BEST describes the theme of this passage?

- A** Paper routes do not pay very much.
- B** You should always take care of your animals.
- C** Fathers and sons have a hard time relating to one another.
- D** You might be surprised at the joys responsibility can bring.

8

Which of the following excerpts from the passage *best* supports the theme of the passage and shows that Jameson appreciates his paper route?

- A** Jameson decided that he despised his newspaper route and always would.
- B** "When I was your age, I had a paper route. It did me good, and besides, it gave me an appreciation for the miracles that happen in nature so early in the morning..."
- C** Her eyes pleaded with him, and Jameson suddenly realized that he had just encountered his first paper route miracle.
- D** Bicycling home after delivering papers to the last street on his route, Jameson thought about the mother cat's plight.

Read the following passage and answer the question(s).

Modesty/The Leaves and the Roots

Adapted from *The Leaves and the Roots* by Lida Brown McCurry and *Modesty* by John Kendrick Bangs , public domain

Modesty

"What hundred books are best?" I said,
Addressing one devoted to the pen.
He thought hard a moment, then he raised his head:
"I hardly know—I've written only ten."

The Leaves and the Roots

The undulated leaves murmured proudly, "We cast cool shade upon the withering blades of grass." They also added, "We clothe the trees in a salubriously quiet green. If it weren't for us, the tree would be naked and brown. The most tired of travelers and winded creatures are ever thankful for the shade we provide. Youths are able to rekindle their imagination while playing underneath our refuge. As the day darkens into night, the beasts of the air make nests in us for their protection. Valiant soldiers are we, for we protect the nests of mother birds. Breezes reside with us and peacefully caress us." And the leaves felt of the most importance.

"Don't think of yourselves all too distinguished, for you are not unaccompanied," said a wise voice from beneath the earth, "we are indeed worth something."

With great conceit the leaves retorted, "Who do you think you are, and where do you grow?"

The roots prudently answered, "Although you may not distinguish us, we are masked underneath the earth, far far below the leaves; however we nourish the stalk and make you grow. Your impressive beauty is not a result of you alone; you owe your exquisiteness to us. Although our splendor is not the same as yours, we do not wither away. Unlike you, winter does not transform us, nor do we fall. We hold the tree trunk in place, so it firmly endures, and if we should wither, the tree would wither and you would wither with it."

(Questions 9-10)

9

Which of the following *best* supports the passage "The Leaves and the Roots" theme?

- A "We clothe the trees in a salubriously quiet green."
- B "Your impressive beauty is not a result of you alone; you owe your exquisiteness to us."
- C "Unlike you, winter does not transform us, nor do we fall."
- D "We cast cool shade upon the withering blades of grass."

10

Which of the following is a theme within the passage "The Leaves and the Roots"?

- A man vs. nature
- B strength vs. weakness
- C good vs. evil
- D pride vs. humility