Name _____ Date _____

Situational and Dramatic Irony: The Surprise Party

Directions: Read the story carefully, paying attention to what you know that the characters do not. Then answer each question, checking every choice against the words of the story.

The Surprise Party

"Rule one," Priya said, holding up a finger at the back table of the library. "Nobody says the word *Saturday* in front of Jasmine. Rule two: nobody posts anything, not even a picture of a cake. Rule three: everybody acts completely normal. If she suspects anything at all, it's ruined."

Leo and Sam nodded solemnly, as if they were swearing an oath. Jasmine's sixteenth birthday was five days away, and Priya had been planning the party, at Jasmine's own house with her mother's help, since August.

For Jasmine, it was the strangest week of the whole school year. On Monday, Priya canceled their usual lunch with a vague excuse about a chemistry test, then spent the whole period in the library with Leo and Sam. On Tuesday, the group chat that normally buzzed until midnight went completely silent. On Wednesday, Jasmine walked into the art room and found Leo and Sam bent over a sheet of paper. "Nothing!" Sam said, much too loudly, crumpling it into his pocket. "We were talking about nothing." On Thursday, when Jasmine mentioned that her birthday was on Saturday, Priya studied her shoelaces and said she had a family thing that night.

By Friday, Jasmine had worked it out, or thought she had. Her friends had simply moved on, the way people sometimes do, and they were too polite to say so. She was not going to sit at home on her birthday waiting for a text that would never come, so she signed up to help at the animal shelter's adoption night, from six until nine.

Her mother took the news strangely, as though Jasmine had announced that she was moving to another country. She set down her coffee, picked it up, and set it down again. "On your birthday? Wouldn't you rather stay home? We could order food and watch a movie."

"I'd rather be useful," Jasmine said, and she went upstairs before her mother could see her face.

At seven o'clock on Saturday, twenty people crouched in the dark of Jasmine's living room, clutching balloons and trying not to giggle. At 7:20, Priya's phone lit up with a text from Jasmine's mother: *I went to the shelter to bring her home, but she won't leave until nine. I tried.* Priya stared at the screen. Every rule had worked perfectly. That was the problem.

At 8:15, Jasmine was hosing out an empty kennel when the lobby door banged open and twenty people spilled in with balloons and a lopsided cake, followed by one very confused shelter manager.

"Surprise!"

A puppy began to howl, and Jasmine dropped the hose. "I thought you all forgot," she said.

Priya, who had planned everything except this, hugged her, wet sleeves and all. "We were too busy remembering."

1. "The Surprise Party" opens with Priya's rules for keeping the party secret, ending with "If she suspects anything at all, it's ruined." Only then does the story follow Jasmine through her week. What is the effect of letting readers in on the plan first?

A. It makes Priya seem careless about keeping the secret.

B. It shows that Jasmine already knows about the party.

C. It spoils the story, since readers already know exactly how the evening will end.

D. Readers understand the friends' strange behavior while Jasmine does not, which creates dramatic irony and tension.

2. On Wednesday, Sam crumples a sheet of paper, shouts "Nothing!" much too loudly and insists that they were talking about nothing. What do readers understand at this moment that Jasmine does not?

A. Sam is hiding something about her party, not shutting her out.

B. Sam is embarrassed about a bad grade in art class.

C. Sam has started a new friendship that does not include Jasmine.

D. Sam is planning a party for someone else.

3. The narrator says that by Friday Jasmine "had worked it out, or thought she had." What do the final words "or thought she had" add to this moment in the story?

A. They prove that her friends really have moved on.

B. They show that Jasmine has figured out the surprise.

C. They warn readers that her conclusion is mistaken, deepening the dramatic irony.

D. They suggest that Jasmine is joking about her friends.

4. The story follows Jasmine's week day by day, from Monday through Thursday, adding one strange moment each day. What is the effect of organizing this part of the story in this way?

A. It proves that her friends no longer care about her.

B. It shows that the party plans keep changing from day to day.

C. Each day adds another clue that Jasmine misreads, so her hurt and the readers' tension build together.

D. It reveals that Jasmine has guessed the surprise by Thursday.

5. When Jasmine announces her plans to volunteer at the animal shelter, her mother "set down her coffee, picked it up, and set it down again." Why is this small moment tense for readers?

A. Readers learn that her mother is angry about the animal shelter.

B. Readers know that her mother is helping with the party, so they can see her trying to save it without giving it away.

C. Readers suspect that her mother has forgotten the birthday too.

D. Readers realize that her mother has told Jasmine about the party.

6. At seven o'clock on Saturday, "twenty people crouched in the dark of Jasmine's living room," waiting to surprise her. How has the dramatic irony in the story shifted by this point?

A. Now the friends are the ones in the dark, since readers know Jasmine has other plans and the people waiting for her do not.

B. Now Jasmine knows about the party, but the friends do not know that she knows.

C. Now readers know less than any of the characters.

D. Now the friends know where Jasmine is, but readers do not.

7. After the text from Jasmine's mother arrives, the narrator observes that every rule "had worked perfectly" and calls that success "the problem." What makes this an example of situational irony?

A. The rules failed, so Jasmine found out about the party early.

B. The friends forgot to follow their own rules.

C. The rules succeeded so completely that the secret kept Jasmine away from her own party.

D. Jasmine broke the rules on purpose to ruin the surprise.

8. After Priya reads the text, the story jumps straight to 8:15 at the shelter, without showing the friends deciding what to do next. What effect does leaving out that decision create?

A. It reveals that Jasmine's mother canceled the party.

B. It shows that the friends gave up and went home.

C. Readers, like Jasmine, do not see the friends coming, so their arrival at the shelter is a surprise.

D. It leaves readers uncertain about whose birthday is being celebrated.

9. When Jasmine says, "I thought you all forgot," Priya answers, "We were too busy remembering." What does Priya mean by this reply?

A. The friends want Jasmine to remember this party forever.

B. The friends were busy remembering their own plans for the weekend.

C. The friends forgot her birthday until the last minute.

D. The effort to plan a celebration for Jasmine is exactly what made her feel forgotten.

10. How does the ending give the title "The Surprise Party" an ironic second meaning that readers might not expect at first?

A. The title shows that Jasmine knew about the party all along.

B. The title is ironic because the party never happens.

C. The title means that only Jasmine's mother is surprised.

D. The planners are the ones caught off guard by Jasmine's absence before they finally surprise her somewhere else.