Name _____ Date _____

Central Ideas That Build on One Another

Directions: Read the essay, then answer questions about its two central ideas: what they are, where they grow and how the writer ties them together.

The Depot on Water Street

The railroad depot in Carver Mills is a long brick building at the end of Water Street, a block from the river. My grandmother stepped off a train there in 1958 with one suitcase and an address written on an index card. For the rest of her life she could describe that afternoon in remarkable detail: the hiss of the brakes, the smell of coal smoke, the patient clerk who walked her to the right street corner. In her telling, the depot was never just a building. It was the doorway to the life she eventually built.

Her experience was hardly unusual. Nearly every family in Carver Mills has a depot story of its own. The stories describe a cousin's arrival, a graduate's departure or a championship team's triumphant welcome home. Our neighbor across the street still keeps the ticket stub from the morning she departed for nursing school. Taken together, these stories make the depot larger than any one of them. It is where the town keeps its memory of meeting the rest of the world.

The last passenger train stopped in Carver Mills in 1979, and the railroad locked the depot the following spring. When I was a child, I believed the padlock on its front door was protecting it. I was wrong. With no one inside to notice a leak, water ran through the roof for years before anyone saw the damage, and by the time the county purchased the building in 2016, the floor of the waiting room had rotted through in two places.

In 2019 the county reopened the depot as a branch library and a stop for the regional bus. Since then, the county has replaced the roof, rebuilt the platform and restarted the clock above the front door. None of that work happened while the building stood empty. A building that people use every day gets its leaks reported and its broken windows repaired, because someone is always there to notice.

Some residents worried that shelves and computers would erase what made the waiting room special. Instead, the library invited longtime residents to record their depot stories, and it now plays the recordings at a listening station beside the old ticket window. Students complete their homework a few feet from where their great-grandparents once waited for trains, and several of them have recorded stories of their own.

I used to think that remembering a place meant preserving it exactly as it was. The depot taught me otherwise. The town did not save the building by remembering it; it saved the building by using it, and using it is now how the town remembers.

1. Which choice identifies the two central ideas that the depot essay develops side by side, each one strengthening the other?
   A. The county replaced the depot's roof, and the library now plays recorded stories beside the old ticket window.
   B. The writer's grandmother arrived with one suitcase, and the waiting room floor later rotted through in two places.
   C. The last passenger train stopped in Carver Mills in 1979, and the county reopened the depot as a library in 2019.
   D. The depot holds the town's shared memory, and it was saved because people began to use it again.

2. How does the opening paragraph first introduce the idea that the depot holds memories for the people of Carver Mills?
   A. By retelling the grandmother's story of arriving there by train in 1958
   B. By recording the years when the depot originally opened and eventually closed
   C. By quoting a county official who explains the building's architectural history
   D. By describing the water damage that spread through the abandoned waiting room

3. Which sentence from the essay widens the idea of memory from a single family to the entire community?
   A. "The last passenger train stopped in Carver Mills in 1979, and the railroad locked the depot the following spring."
   B. "In 2019 the county reopened the depot as a branch library and a stop for the regional bus."
   C. "Nearly every family in Carver Mills has a depot story of its own."
   D. "The railroad depot in Carver Mills is a long brick building at the end of Water Street, a block from the river."

4. The writer recalls, "When I was a child, I believed the padlock on its front door was protecting it." According to the essay, why was that childhood belief mistaken?
   A. The padlock prevented county workers from entering to repair the leaking roof.
   B. The padlock was broken, so anyone could wander inside whenever they wanted.
   C. With no one inside to notice, a leaking roof damaged the building for years.
   D. The railroad removed the roof before the county purchased the building.

5. Which two sentences develop the idea that the depot has survived because people are using it again?
   ☐ A. "It is where the town keeps its memory of meeting the rest of the world."
   ☐ B. "Since then, the county has replaced the roof, rebuilt the platform and restarted the clock above the front door."
   ☐ C. "For the rest of her life she could describe that afternoon in remarkable detail: the hiss of the brakes, the smell of coal smoke, the patient clerk who walked her to the right street corner."
   ☐ D. "The railroad depot in Carver Mills is a long brick building at the end of Water Street, a block from the river."
   ☐ E. "A building that people use every day gets its leaks reported and its broken windows repaired, because someone is always there to notice."

6. "Some residents worried that shelves and computers would erase what made the waiting room special." How does the essay respond to this worry?

A. It shows the library collecting residents' recorded stories and playing them for visitors.

B. It agrees that the waiting room lost its history once the library's shelves and computers arrived.

C. It argues that the waiting room was never especially remarkable in the first place.

D. It reports that the library eventually moved its shelves to a newer building farther up Water Street.

7. Why does the writer mention students who do homework "a few feet from where their great-grandparents once waited for trains"?

A. To demonstrate that passenger trains still stop at the depot every day

B. To suggest that students prefer the library to their own high school

C. To show new memories forming in the same place as the old ones

D. To emphasize that the waiting room still requires additional repairs

8. How does the final paragraph bring the essay's two central ideas together into a single conclusion?

A. It encourages readers to record their own depot stories for the library.

B. It demands that the waiting room be restored exactly as it appeared in 1958.

C. It argues that using the depot is now the way the town remembers it.

D. It describes the final passenger train departing from Carver Mills in 1979.

9. Which choice gives the most accurate objective summary of the essay about the Carver Mills depot?

A. The writer's grandmother arrived at the Carver Mills depot by train in 1958, carrying one suitcase and an address on an index card.

B. In a moving essay, the writer shows how the beloved depot decayed while locked and was rightly reopened as a library that keeps the town's memories alive.

C. The Carver Mills depot holds many families' memories; after decaying while locked, it was reopened as a library, and the writer argues that using it keeps those memories alive.

D. The Carver Mills depot holds many families' memories; after decaying while locked, it was reopened as a railroad museum, and the writer argues that its exhibits keep those memories alive.