Name _____ Date _____

Theme in a Short Story: The Borrowed Bike

Directions: Read the story about Nico and the bike he borrows. Check each answer against what the story says.

The Borrowed Bike

Nico's bike had a flat tire, and the library would close at five o'clock. He hurried next door and knocked.

"Take my bike," said Priya. "Just bring it back the way you found it."

Priya's blue bike was fast, and Nico reached the library with minutes to spare. On the way home, he took a shortcut across a gravel lot. The front wheel slid sideways, and the bike went down hard.

Nico was fine, but the bike was not. A long white scratch ran across the blue frame, and the bell hung loose.

He pushed the bike home slowly. Maybe Priya would not look closely. He could lean it against her fence with the scratched side hidden. His stomach felt like a knot.

At her gate, Nico stopped for a long moment. Then he rang the doorbell.

"I fell on the gravel," he said when she opened the door. "I scratched your bike and broke the bell. I'm sorry, and I'll pay to fix it."

Priya knelt and ran her thumb along the scratch. For a moment she said nothing.

"Thank you for telling me," she said at last. "The bell only needs a new screw. Come help me put it on."

They worked together on the porch until the bell rang clear.

"I'm walking to the park on Saturday," Priya said. "You can borrow the bike that morning if you need it."

Nico grinned. This time, he would stay off the gravel.

1. What is the theme, or central message, of "The Borrowed Bike"?
   A. When you break something, paying for it is what matters most.
   B. If you admit a mistake, you will have to fix it all by yourself.
   C. Telling the truth about a mistake can keep someone's trust.
   D. If you damage something you borrowed, you should not borrow it again.

2. Nico thinks about a way to keep Priya from seeing the scratch. Which sentence from the story shows this most clearly?

A. "A long white scratch ran across the blue frame, and the bell hung loose."

B. "Nico was fine, but the bike was not."

C. "He pushed the bike home slowly."

D. "He could lean it against her fence with the scratched side hidden."

3. Nico finds it hard to face Priya. Which two details does the story use to show this? Select two.

☐ A. He walks past her house two times.

☐ B. His stomach feels like a knot.

☐ C. He stops at Priya's gate for a long moment.

☐ D. He asks his sister to come with him.

☐ E. His voice shakes when he starts to speak.

4. Which action shows that Nico has made up his mind to tell Priya the truth?

A. He waits on her porch until she comes out.

B. He calls to her over the fence.

C. He rings her doorbell.

D. He writes her a note about the scratch.

5. Which detail near the end shows that Priya is ready to leave something of hers in Nico's care again?

A. She tells him the bell only needs a new screw.

B. She asks him to help her fix the bell.

C. She says he can borrow the bike on Saturday morning.

D. She thanks him for telling her about the bike.

6. At the start, Priya says, "Just bring it back the way you found it." Why does this line matter to the story's message?

A. It shows that Priya does not really want to lend the bike.

B. It warns the reader that Nico will lose the bike.

C. It sets up the hard choice Nico faces after he damages the bike.

D. It hints that the bike has been damaged before.

7. Which summary of "The Borrowed Bike" is complete and correct?

A. Nico borrows Priya's bike, and another rider scratches it at the library. He thinks about hiding the damage, then tells Priya the truth and offers to pay. She offers to lend him the bike again.

B. Nico borrows Priya's bike and scratches it in a fall. He thinks about hiding the damage, then tells Priya the truth and offers to pay. She offers to lend him the bike again.

C. Nico borrows Priya's bike and scratches it in a fall. He thinks about hiding the damage, then tells Priya the bike was already scratched and offers to pay. She offers to lend him the bike again.

D. Nico borrows Priya's bike and scratches it in a fall. He thinks about hiding the damage, then tells Priya the truth and pays for the repair. She offers to lend him the bike again.