Name _____ Date _____

How a Theme Develops Across a Story: Grandpa's Garden

Directions: Read the story. Then answer each question.

Grandpa's Garden

Every spring, Grandpa planted a garden in the narrow strip of dirt behind his building, and every spring Nora wondered why he bothered. Tomatoes cost two dollars a pound at the grocery store, but Grandpa's took three months to grow. "A garden is mostly waiting," he liked to say, as if that were a good thing.

In June, Grandpa had surgery on his knee, and the garden suddenly became Nora's job. Every evening after soccer practice, she dragged the hose down the rows, swatting mosquitoes and searching the plants for anything new. For weeks the tomato plants grew taller and greener, but not a single tomato appeared.

By the Fourth of July, Nora was ready to quit. "It isn't doing anything," she complained to Grandpa on the phone. "I'm just pouring water on leaves." Grandpa laughed. "That's how it looks from the outside," he said. "Check under the leaves tomorrow, and bring your patience."

The next evening, Nora knelt in the dirt and lifted the lowest branches. Hidden underneath were dozens of tiny green tomatoes, hard as marbles, that she had walked past for days without noticing.

She kept watering. In August, the first tomato turned red, and Nora carried it to Grandpa's kitchen as carefully as a trophy. He sliced it and sprinkled it with salt, and it tasted better than anything from the store, though she couldn't have explained exactly why.

Before school started, Grandpa showed her how to scoop the seeds from the best tomato and dry them on a paper towel. "For next year," he said. Nora folded the towel carefully and slipped it into an envelope. Next year felt like a long time to wait, but for the first time, she didn't mind.

1. Which statement expresses a theme that develops across the story?

A. Food from a store is always better than food from a garden.

B. Things that matter often take patience and steady care.

C. Gardening

D. Nora waters Grandpa's tomato plants while his knee heals.

2. Early in the story, Grandpa likes to say, "A garden is mostly waiting," and the story adds that he says it "as if that were a good thing." How does this moment begin to develop the theme?

A. It explains why tomatoes cost two dollars a pound.

B. It shows that Grandpa is too tired to work in the garden.

C. It shows that Nora already agrees that waiting is good.

D. It introduces the idea of patience while showing that Nora does not value it yet.

3. Which two details show Nora losing patience in the middle of the story? Select two.

☐ A. "carried it to Grandpa's kitchen as carefully as a trophy"

☐ B. "Hidden underneath were dozens of tiny green tomatoes"

☐ C. "for the first time, she didn't mind"

☐ D. "I'm just pouring water on leaves"

☐ E. "Nora was ready to quit"

4. Under the leaves, Nora finds "dozens of tiny green tomatoes, hard as marbles, that she had walked past for days without noticing." How does this discovery develop the theme?

A. It shows that growth was happening all along, even when Nora could not see it.

B. It shows that Grandpa had secretly planted new tomatoes.

C. It shows that the tomatoes were ready to eat right away.

D. It shows that Nora had been watering the wrong plants.

5. The first tomato "tasted better than anything from the store, though she couldn't have explained exactly why." What does the story suggest about why it tasted so good?

A. It was the only tomato that grew all summer.

B. Nora had cared for it and waited for it herself.

C. Grandpa covered it with a special sauce.

D. Store tomatoes are picked by machines.

6. How does the last paragraph complete the development of the theme?

A. Nora decides that she will never plant a garden again.

B. Nora saves seeds for next year and, for the first time, doesn't mind waiting.

C. Grandpa gives up gardening because of his knee.

D. Nora learns that seeds must be kept cold to grow.

7. An objective summary tells the main events without adding opinions. Which sentence is an objective summary of the story?

A. Nora plants her own garden after Grandpa moves away.

B. Nora is the most patient gardener in her whole family.

C. Nora takes care of Grandpa's garden while his knee heals, nearly quits when no tomatoes appear, and ends the summer saving seeds for next year.

D. Nora finds tiny green tomatoes under the leaves of the plants.

8. How does the theme develop over the course of the story?

A. Nora starts out patient and slowly loses interest in the garden.

B. Grandpa states the theme at the start, and Nora never changes her mind.

C. Nora starts out doubting that waiting is worth it, struggles with it, and ends up not minding it.

D. Nora's feelings about waiting stay the same from beginning to end.