Name _____ Date _____

Analogy and Tone in a Poem: Unpacking

Directions: Read the poem carefully. Notice the comparisons the speaker makes and how the feeling changes from stanza to stanza. Then answer each question.

Unpacking

The boxes say KITCHEN, BOOKS and FRAGILE
in my mother's thick black marker,
but not one box is labeled FRIENDS,
and not one says THE WAY HOME FROM SCHOOL.

I tape my posters to a wall that echoes.
Outside, the street is wide and empty,
and at night the house makes sounds I don't know yet,
a heater ticking like a stranger's watch.

My dad says a new town is like new sneakers:
stiff at first, rubbing your heels raw,
pinching in places you didn't know you had,
until one morning you forget you're wearing them.

Today the girl next door waved at me, once.
I waved back, stiff as a new shoe, a little awkward,
but I unpacked one more box tonight,
and I left my window open, just a crack.

1. The third stanza begins, "My dad says a new town is like new sneakers" and continues for three more lines. What two things does this analogy compare?

A. The speaker's dad and the girl next door

B. A pair of shoes and a moving box

C. Moving to a new town and breaking in new sneakers

D. A new house and an old house

2. The analogy ends with the line "until one morning you forget you're wearing them." What does the whole analogy suggest about moving to a new town?

A. The speaker needs to buy new sneakers for school.

B. The speaker's dad likes shopping for shoes.

C. Moving is painful, and it never gets any easier.

D. A new town feels uncomfortable at first but starts to feel natural with time.

3. In the first stanza, the speaker notices that "not one box is labeled FRIENDS" among all the labels on the moving boxes. What does this detail suggest?

A. The speaker wants to move back right away.

B. The things the speaker misses most cannot be packed in a box.

C. The speaker's mother ran out of marker.

D. The speaker forgot to pack some of the boxes.

4. Which two details from the poem make the speaker's new house and neighborhood feel empty and unfamiliar? Select two.

☐ A. "I unpacked one more box tonight"

☐ B. "Today the girl next door waved at me"

☐ C. "a wall that echoes"

☐ D. "the street is wide and empty"

☐ E. "in my mother's thick black marker"

5. At night, the speaker hears "a heater ticking like a stranger's watch." How does this comparison add to the tone of the second stanza?

A. It shows that even the small sounds of the house feel unfamiliar, as if they belong to someone else.

B. It shows that a stranger left a watch in the house.

C. It makes the house sound cozy and familiar.

D. It shows that the heater is broken and needs to be repaired.

6. In the last stanza, the speaker waves back to the girl next door "stiff as a new shoe" and a little awkward. How does this phrase connect to Dad's analogy?

A. It shows that Dad's analogy turned out to be wrong.

B. It shows that the speaker's shoes hurt after walking outside.

C. It shows that the speaker refuses to make new friends.

D. It shows that the speaker is in the early, stiff stage of getting used to the new town.

7. How does the tone of the poem change in the last stanza, compared with the stanzas that come before it?

A. It shifts from lonely to cautiously hopeful.

B. It stays lonely and gloomy from start to finish.

C. It shifts from hopeful to hopeless.

D. It becomes wildly excited and joyful.

8. The poem ends, "and I left my window open, just a crack." What does this final image suggest?

A. The speaker plans to sneak out of the house at night.

B. The speaker forgot to close the window before bed.

C. The speaker is starting to let the new place in, a little at a time.

D. The speaker is trying to hear the old neighborhood.