

6th Grade
Reading/Literature
Week 2 - Day 3

Checklist for Day 3

- Jenna and the Black Cat**

- April Fool's Day**

- BrainPop Video: Theme + Quiz**
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Jenna and the Black Cat



"Eek! That's bad luck!" Jenna said when Erica walked under the ladder that leaned up against the card-store wall. "Quick! We've got to find some salt to shake over your right shoulder."

Erica was used to her friend's superstitions. Jenna had many of the usual ones, like not stepping on cracks. She also had a slew of superstitious beliefs that were unique. She wouldn't wear the same-color shirt two days in a row. She believed that you couldn't experience each day as a new day if you wore yesterday's color. Erica overlooked Jenna's quirks, though she kidded her about them sometimes. What she liked about Jenna was that she was thoughtful and that she liked to help. She volunteered as a tutor after school and, on Saturdays, she worked at an animal shelter.

After getting the salt to toss over her shoulder, Jenna and Erica began the walk from the mall back to Jenna's house. Their route took them through the park, where a soccer game was going on. That meant that they had to take a longer route, around the field and past the "ghost" tree. The ghost tree was just a maple tree whose limbs grew in a pattern that looked like arms reaching to the sky. When its leaves fell off, the ends of the branches pointed like sharpened fingers in all directions. It had been called the ghost tree as long as anyone in town could remember. On Halloween, some kids would put streamers in the tree to make it look especially spooky. Jenna usually stayed away from the tree. It gave her the creeps.

Jenna quickened her pace. That's when they heard a small cry.

"It's coming from the tree," Erica said. While Erica went to the base of the tree, Jenna held back. "It's a kitten," Erica called to her friend. "I can't reach it."

Jenna stepped closer and saw the animal on a low branch. It seemed scared. "If you cup your hands, I can climb up and get it," she said.

Erica was surprised to see Jenna reach for the black cat.

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. According to the passage, Jenna does all of the following EXCEPT

- A. volunteer as a tutor
- B. work at an animal shelter
- C. toss salt over her shoulder
- D. walk under ladders

2. The passage describes Jenna's problem of finding a black kitten in a tree. How does Jenna solve the problem?

- A. She lets Erica climb up and get the cat.
- B. She and Erica coax the kitten out of the tree.
- C. She walks quickly past the tree and runs away.
- D. She climbs up the tree and gets the cat.

3. After reading the passage, what can you conclude about Jenna?

- A. She has many superstitious beliefs, but she isn't afraid of black cats.
- B. She is very superstitious but also thoughtful and kind.
- C. She wants to become less superstitious and more like Erica.
- D. She is so superstitious that she is impossible to be around.

4. Read this sentence from the passage:

"She also had a slew of superstitious beliefs that were unique."

In this sentence, the word **unique** means

- A. funny
- B. unusual
- C. exciting
- D. creepy

5. The primary purpose of the passage is to describe

- A. how Erica and Jenna became friends and make a good team
- B. the importance of being a good friend and helping others
- C. why people who are superstitious are afraid of so many things
- D. how a superstitious girl deals with finding a black cat

6. What did Jenna make Erica toss over her shoulder after she walked under a ladder?

7. Why do you think that Jenna "held back" when she first saw the kitten?

8. The question below is an incomplete sentence. Choose the word that best completes the sentence.

Jenna screamed, "That's bad luck!" _____ she saw Erica walk under a ladder.

- A. and
- B. unless
- C. until
- D. when

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. Erica considers Jenna to be the kind of person who
 - A. is proud of her schoolwork.
 - B. cannot think straight.
 - C. doesn't like soccer.
 - D. often helps others.

2. One theme of the story is that
 - A. bad luck comes in threes.
 - B. fears can be put aside in an emergency.
 - C. good friends always help each other.
 - D. superstitions are ridiculous.

3. Which of the following sentences supports the theme of the passage?
 - A. Jenna was afraid of the ghost tree, but she still helped the kitten.
 - B. Jenna told Erica to shake salt over her right shoulder after Erica walked under a ladder.
 - C. Jenna wouldn't wear the same color shirt two days in a row.
 - D. Jenna volunteered as a tutor after school and worked at an animal shelter.

4. In the sentence, "After getting the salt to toss over her shoulder, Jenna and Erica began the walk from the mall back to Jenna's house," the pronoun "her" refers to
 - A. Jenna.
 - B. Erica.
 - C. both Jenna and Erica.
 - D. none of the above.

5. Write a paragraph about a different story you know that illustrates the same theme. If you can't think of a story, make one up.

April Fool's Day

"Ah, ha! Gotcha!"

People say, whenever April
Rolls around. A ritual of trickery.
It's always the same. We say,
"Look!" when nothing's there. Everyone

5

Forgets for a second that today is not like
Other days. It seems that no
One tells the truth today. Do you
Like to play tricks?
So do I.

10

Don't look now. There's
A hairy spider on your head. Ah, ha! Made
You look!

Please, don't get mad. I'm
Only kidding around. Nothing serious.
Eek! Why did you say there was a spider on
Me?

15

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. On April Fool's Day, the poet likes all of the following EXCEPT

- A. playing tricks
- B. kidding around
- C. being tricked
- D. the ritual of trickery

2. Read this stanza from the poem:

Don't look now. There's

A hairy spider on your head. Ah, ha! Made

You look!

What is the purpose of this stanza?

- A. It explains how someone might enjoy getting tricked.
- B. It describes a spider landing on the author's head.
- C. It is an example of an April Fool's Day trick.
- D. It shows how much the author dislikes spiders.

3. Which of the following conclusions about the poet is supported by the poem?

- A. The poet wishes that every day were April Fool's Day.
- B. The poet is trying to put an end to April Fool's Day.
- C. The poet thinks April Fool's Day is very childish.
- D. The poet likes to celebrate April Fool's Day.

4. Read these lines from the poem:

People say, whenever April

Rolls around. A ritual of trickery.

Based on the text, the word **trickery** means

- A. friendship
- B. happiness
- C. honesty
- D. deceit

5. The primary purpose of this poem is to describe

- A. the kinds of people that enjoy playing April Fool's Day tricks
- B. why April Fool's Day has such ridiculous rituals
- C. the ways that people can mislead and trick others
- D. how the poet feels about April Fool's Day

6. How did the poet react when a trick was played on her?

7. Whom is the poet speaking to in the poem? How do you know? Cite evidence from the text to support your answer.

8. The question below is an incomplete sentence. Choose the word that best completes the sentence.

According to the poet, _____ people play tricks on April Fool's Day, they are just kidding around.

- A. after
- B. when
- C. as
- D. since

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. The theme of the poem includes the suggestion that

- A. April Fool's Day is the best holiday.
- B. nobody likes to be made a fool of.
- C. it's okay to lie to your parents.
- D. it can be fun to play jokes on others.

2. The poem both explains and shows a perfect example of

- A. what an April Fool is.
- B. the kind of April Fool tricks people play.
- C. the title of the poem.
- D. all of the above.

3. From the poem, we can assume the author is

- A. playful.
- B. serious.
- C. frustrated.
- D. boastful.

4. All of the following contribute to the theme of the poem except:

- A. some people are hurt on April Fool's Day.
- B. the author likes to play tricks.
- C. many people do not tell the truth on April Fool's Day.
- D. people say "gotcha" on April Fool's Day.

5. Why do you think the author used the first letter of each word in "April Fool's Day Poem" to write the lines of the poem?

1. A story's main theme might be difficult to figure out because:

- a. Authors rarely want the reader to figure it out
- b. It has little to do with plot, characters, and other story elements
- c. It is rarely stated explicitly
- d. Only complicated, adult stories have themes

2. What does theme add to a story?

- a. A sense of location.
- b. An important message.
- c. Motivation for the characters.
- d. Dialogue for the characters.

3. Knowing what a motif is in fiction, what must a "leitmotif" be in music?

- a. A long pause
- b. A quiet interlude
- c. A repeated tune
- d. A song's ending

4. Why do the themes in fables tend to be simpler and easier to determine?

- a. They are intended for children
- b. They were written a long time ago
- c. Most have appeared as movies
- d. Most weren't written in English

5. Which best describes the relationship between "themes" and "morals?"

- a. Morals are communicated through action; themes are communicated through dialogue
- b. Themes are designed to teach morals
- c. A moral is one kind of theme
- d. A theme is made up of repeated morals

6. Which characterization best reinforces the theme of the importance of being prepared?

- a. The hero spends a great deal of time training to defeat a villain
- b. The hero lives in a society where every part of your life is planned out in advance
- c. The hero fights a villain who can control minds
- d. The hero keeps dreaming about the problems he faces

7. What is the best definition of theme?

- a. The events that occur in a story.
- b. The narrator's opinion of events.
- c. An underlying idea.
- d. An author's purpose in writing the story.

8. Three flies notice an overturned honey pot. Two of the flies decide to land in the honey and start eating it. But the oldest fly stays back. The two flies tease the older fly, but then get stuck in the honey. What is the moral of this story?

- a. Some prizes aren't worth it.
- b. Overeating leads to illness.
- c. Insects value food over safety.
- d. Always send in a tester.

9. Which of these aspects would be least useful in characterizing a villain as greedy?

- a. They always grab the last slice of pizza
- b. They refuse to help others
- c. They look down on charity
- d. They are very wealthy

10. Which of the following is least likely to be a theme in a novel about young people going to war?

- a. Loss of innocence is the first casualty of violence
- b. Stealth bombers aren't worth their high cost
- c. Friendship is essential to surviving terrible conflict
- d. Violence is rarely the right answer

