Winter Break Reading Packet

Name: _____

One story a grade

Pick your grade (or one below for an easy day). Read, answer, then write.

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Winter Break Reading Packet

Name: _____

Grade 1: An Ice Cube Changes

Read to learn what happens when an ice cube melts.

An ice cube is water that has frozen.
In a warm room, the cube starts to melt.
It gets smaller as water spreads around it.
Only a puddle of water is left when all the ice melts.

1. What is an ice cube made of?

( ) Sand ( ) Water ( ) Paper

2. What is left when all the ice melts?

( ) A shell ( ) Dry ground ( ) A puddle of water

3. You see a small bit of ice in water. What might you see next? Point to a clue and tell.

Write: Draw the ice cube before and after it melts, then add a caption.

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Grade 2: A Better Lost-and-Found

Read to find out how a school makes lost things easier to find.

The lost-and-found box at Oak School was too full to close.
Children could not see the small things at the bottom.
On Friday, two classes sorted the lost items.
They put mittens in a basket and hung coats on low hooks.
They set lunch boxes on a shelf with the handles facing out.
By Monday, more children had found their things.
Now a picture sign shows where each kind of item belongs.

1. Why was the box hard to use?

( ) It was empty ( ) It was locked ( ) It was too full

2. Where did the classes put mittens?

( ) In a basket ( ) On coat hooks ( ) In a drawer

3. Why might more children find their things after the sorting? Point to the clue and tell why.

Write: Write one sentence for a sign near the lost-and-found.

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Name: _____

Grade 3: Room for a Pause

Read to discover how Lena notices what another person needs.

Lena and her dad took their groceries to the checkout line. The store was busy. Cart wheels rattled, and a machine beeped each time the clerk scanned something.
Ahead of them, a boy dropped a small bag of oranges. The fruit rolled beneath a shelf. The boy froze and looked at the growing line behind him.
Lena reached toward an orange, then stopped. "Would you like help?" she asked.
The boy nodded. Lena gathered two oranges while his aunt found the others. One had rolled behind a heavy box, so Lena asked the clerk to move it.
"Thanks for asking first," the boy said.
Back in line, Lena noticed that Dad had left space between their cart and the boy's basket. Nobody needed to hurry around them.
At home, Dad asked what had made the trip special.
"I helped find the oranges," Lena said. Then she thought about the quiet space in the noisy store. "And we gave someone time."

1. What fell out of the boy's bag?

( ) Potatoes ( ) Oranges ( ) Apples

2. Who moved the heavy box?

( ) Lena ( ) Dad ( ) The clerk

3. Why might the boy freeze when he looks at the line?

Write: Write 3 to 5 sentences about the same moment from the boy's point of view.

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Name: _____

Grade 4: Before the First Footstep

Read to notice how the speaker responds to a changing scene.

The snow has filled the sidewalk cracks
and softened every stair.
A branch supports a narrow sleeve
of white it did not wear.
The empty lot looks twice as wide.
The fence has lost its feet.
I hold my mitten near my mouth
and listen to the street.
Then one small dog rounds the corner,
its person close behind.
Their footprints write a winding line
the next two walkers find.
A neighbor clears a porch step.
A shovel scrapes the ground.
The morning, wrapped in cotton,
begins to fill with sound.
I make the first mark by our gate,
a print beside the post.
I wanted all that white to stay,
but now I love these most,
the separate paths of everyone
who has a place to go,
and all the little stories
that their footsteps leave in snow.

1. What does the speaker hold near their mouth?

( ) A sleeve ( ) A mitten ( ) A shovel

2. What makes a scraping sound?

( ) A shovel ( ) A branch ( ) A gate

3. How does the speaker's view of the footprints change?

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Write: Write 3-5 sentences about one person whose footsteps appear in the poem.

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Grade 5: Five Quiet Beats

Read to notice how a musician's feelings change as she understands her part.

Elena's part in the neighborhood band concert fit on half a sheet of paper. She would strike the triangle once near the end of the final song. Before that note, she had to count five quiet beats while the other instruments rested.

At rehearsal, Elena watched the trumpet players turn pages. The drummer carried three sticks and two brushes. Elena had one small metal instrument and a beater. She wondered whether anyone would notice if she stayed home.

During the break, she asked the conductor for a busier part.

"Let's hear this one first," he said. "Then tell me what you think it does."

Elena counted too quickly on the next attempt. Her triangle rang before the flute's last note had faded. Nobody scolded her, but the ending sounded crowded. The conductor asked everyone to try again.

This time, Elena stared at the measure before her entrance. She heard the flute stretch its final sound, the room settle, and a chair creak somewhere behind her. She almost lifted her beater early. Instead, she followed the conductor's small, steady gestures through all five beats.

Her note rang into the open space. The players waited until its shimmer disappeared. Elena lowered her hand.

"Again?" asked the conductor.

"Please," she said.

At the concert, Elena still wished she could play more than one note. But she no longer wanted to trade this one away. When her family asked which song was her favorite, she pointed to the half sheet on her stand.

Afterward, her little brother tried to imitate the triangle's sound. He clinked two spoons together and frowned.

"There's a part before the note," Elena told him. She raised her hand, waited, and showed him how to listen for it.

1. What happens when Elena first counts too quickly?

( ) The conductor ends rehearsal ( ) Her triangle rings before the flute note fades ( ) The drummer takes her instrument ( ) She forgets to play her note

2. Why does Elena initially ask for a busier part?

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3. How does Elena's view of her part change without all her feelings changing?

Write: In 3-5 sentences, explain what Elena learns about her part.

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Grade 6: Window at the Laundromat

Read to interpret how repeated images connect a quiet observer with the people nearby.

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The window holds the whole street
in a square of evening light.
Inside, our shirts turn slowly,
blue sleeve following yellow sleeve,
as though each has remembered
something the other forgot.
My father reads the noticeboard.
A woman folds a sheet
until a field of white
fits between her two hands.
Beside her, a child counts socks
and starts again at seven.
I have brought a book,
but the window keeps offering
another page.
A cyclist pauses at the corner.
The delivery driver checks a number.
Someone with a paper bag
holds it close against the wind.
Each person enters the glass,
crosses our reflection,
and leaves without closing anything.
At first I think
we are the ones staying still.
The machines turn.
The street moves.
Our chairs hold us
in the warm bright room.
Then my father points
to a notice for a missing mitten.
It has been drawn carefully,
with one striped thumb
and a small dark button.
Underneath, someone has written,
Found. Ask at the counter.
The woman folds her final sheet.
The child reaches eight.
My father smiles at a drawing
made by a person
we may never meet.
Our laundry finishes.
We carry it toward the door,
warm weight resting in our arms.
Outside, the wind has changed.
I look back through the window
and find the room still full

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1. What does the added note say about the mitten?

( ) It belongs to the speaker. ( ) It has been found and is at the counter. ( ) It is still in a washing machine. ( ) It should be drawn again.

2. Why might the mitten notice matter to the speaker's view of the room?

3. How does the poem develop its comparison between the window and a book?

Write: Write a paragraph interpreting the change from watching movement to noticing connection.

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Winter Break Reading Packet

Name: _____

Answer key for grown-ups

Grade 1, question 1: Water

Grade 1, question 2: A puddle of water

Grade 1, question 3: The last bit of ice may melt, leaving only a puddle of water.

Grade 2, question 1: It was too full

Grade 2, question 2: In a basket

Grade 2, question 3: The old pile hid small things, so putting items in separate places makes them easier to see.

Grade 3, question 1: Oranges

Grade 3, question 2: The clerk

Grade 3, question 3: He may feel worried or embarrassed about holding up the waiting shoppers.

Grade 4, question 1: A mitten

Grade 4, question 2: A shovel

Grade 4, question 3: The speaker first wants the snow to stay untouched, then appreciates the paths as signs of people going about their lives.

Grade 5, question 1: Her triangle rings before the flute note fades

Grade 5, question 2: She worries that a part with only one note makes her contribution unimportant.

Grade 5, question 3: She still wants more to play, but she has learned to value the timing and effect of the note she has.

Grade 6, question 1: It has been found and is at the counter.

Grade 6, question 2: The notice reveals a connection between strangers, making the shared room more than a place to wait.

Grade 6, question 3: People passing the window become changing scenes to read, completing the earlier image of the window offering another page.

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