

Fifth Grade Packet

ELA

Slavery, the Civil War & Reconstruction - Surrender at Appomattox

by ReadWorks



McLean House in Appomattox, Virginia

On April 9, 1865, General Robert E. Lee and the Army of Northern Virginia (the largest part of the Confederate Army) surrendered. This was a major event leading to the conclusion of the Civil War. Lee met the Union's Commanding General, Ulysses S. Grant, at the McLean House in Appomattox, Virginia. There the two generals discussed the terms.

One of the men who witnessed the scene was a general in the Union Army. His words show some of the most striking differences between the two men. What can you tell about the characters of the two generals from reading the passage?

"The contrast between the two commanders was striking and could not fail to attract marked attention as they sat ten feet apart facing each other. General Grant, then nearly forty-three years of age, was five feet eight inches in height, with shoulders slightly stooped. His hair and full beard were a nutbrown, without a trace of gray in them. He had on a...blouse...unbuttoned in front....He wore an ordinary pair of top-boots....The boots and portions of his clothes were spattered with mud....His felt "sugar-loaf" stiff-brimmed hat was thrown on the table beside him. He had no sword, and a pair of shoulder straps was all there was about him to

designate his rank....

Lee, on the other hand, was fully six feet in height, and quite erect for one of his age, for he was Grant's senior by sixteen years. His hair and full beard were a silver-gray, and quite thick, except that the hair had become a little thin in front. He wore a new uniform of Confederate gray, buttoned up to the throat, and at his side he carried a long sword of exceedingly fine workmanship, the hilt studded with jewels....His boots were comparatively new, and seemed to have on them some ornamental stitching of red silk. Like his uniform, they were singularly clean...."

From "The Surrender at Appomattox Court House" by Horace Porter, Brevet Brigadier General, U.S.A.

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. What was the reason for the meeting between Lee and Grant at McClellan House in Appomattox?

- A. Lee and Grant met to exchange gifts.
- B. Grant was forced to hand over power to Lee.
- C. Lee and the Confederates surrendered to Grant and the Union.
- D. Lee and Grant met to decide the future of the Union army.

2. In the witness's description of the two generals, what information does the witness provide about the two men?

- A. The witness describes how they had been injured in battle.
- B. The witness describes the two men's physical appearance and clothing.
- C. The witness shows the similarities between the two men.
- D. The witness provides information about how the war was won.

3. Which of these statements best describes the witness's impression of the two generals?

- A. The witness describes Lee as having a cleaner and more impressive appearance.
- B. The witness thinks Grant appears to be a much better general than Lee.
- C. The witness is shocked by the similarities between the two generals.
- D. The witness thinks that Lee appears much younger than Grant.

4. Read the sentence:

""The contrast between the two commanders was **striking** and could not fail to attract marked attention as they sat ten feet apart facing each other."

In this sentence the word **striking** means:

- A. disappearing
- B. violent
- C. tiny
- D. easy to notice

5. The passage "Surrender at Appomattox" is mostly about

- A. why General Lee surrendered and why he chose Appomattox
- B. the difference between the two generals who met at Appomattox
- C. how Robert E. General Lee's uniform and sword were made
- D. the witnesses at Appomattox and the different ways they tell the story

6. Describe at least 2 differences between General Grant and General Lee.

7. Why does the witness describe the appearances of the two generals?

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

General Grant was dressed plainly, while General Lee was dressed in newer, more formal clothes, _____ he had lost the war.

- A. before
- B. even though
- C. thus
- D. because



Name _____

Darnell Searches for the Truth

The recess bell rang and Darnell reached for his lucky hat, but it wasn't there. "Odd, no hat." Darnell took out the papers and books from his desk and put them in neat piles. Then, he carefully put them away. James rolled his eyes as he stared at the explosion of papers inside his own desk.

Darnell glanced over at James, remembering that he had put gravy in James's milk carton last week. That had made them both laugh. This was different, Darnell had to have his hat for the game because unlike James, Darnell needed his lucky hat for the win. James, Darnell noticed, was hiding a smile.

Mr. Fenton, who disliked being interrupted, stared at Darnell "Is there a problem, Darnell?"

James could see Darnell fidgeting and suddenly things didn't seem so funny anymore. James spoke up, "Darnell was just looking for his hat, Mr. Fenton. Here you go, Darnell."

Mr. Fenton eyed James and asked, "Anything you want to add, James?" James looked at Darnell without smiling and said, "Sorry I took your hat."

Instructions: In the top circle, write characteristics about Darnell. In the bottom circle, write characteristics about James. In the middle circle, write what is true about both boys. On the back of this paper, write a two-paragraph character analysis of either Darnell or James. Use evidence from the story to support your claims.



Name _____

Gamel's Realization

Starship pilots Gamel and Luna were assigned to the ship *Voyager* on their first mission together. Today, Luna was piloting the ship. Gamel was second in command. Gamel had been telling the other pilots about his latest feats when Luna quietly ordered him to the ship. Everyone thought Luna was a skilled pilot, but Gamel narrowed his eyes as he turned to face her. "Fine, let's go," Gamel muttered.

Gamel couldn't wait to be in charge tomorrow. Luna had suggested the two trade off piloting for this mission. Gamel wanted to dazzle everyone with how quickly he completed the mission. He'd use several new moves he learned to speed up the ship. After all, at the end of the year the All-Star Award was given to the pilot who showed the most potential.

The *Voyager* blasted off. Suddenly, an unexpected meteor shower pounded the ship. Gamel's hands shook. Luna remained in control. She issued commands in a cool, firm voice. With steady hands, she guided the ship from danger and safely to base.

Later, at dinner, Gamel said, "You're a good pilot." Luna smiled and said, "Thanks."

Instructions: Find clues in the text that tell about Luna's and Gamel's traits. Complete the character chart by listing three traits for each character and the clues that support the trait. Also include two traits that tell about both characters. Then write two paragraphs on the back of this paper about the characters and their traits, supporting your writing with evidence from the text.

Luna	Both	Gamel

Snow Day Fever

by W.M. Akers



Snow stuck to Ned's window in bunches-like clumps of cotton in a washing machine's lint trap. The sun was coming up slowly, and the sky had a strange reddish, purple tinge that could only mean one thing: a snow day. Ned eased open his window, coughing from the effort, and stuck a ruler into the powder.

"Four inches," he said. "Four!"

As he said it, he heard cheers from downstairs. The school superintendent must have a ruler too, he thought. Jamie and Ellen were glued to the local news, and they must have just heard that school was canceled. What he wouldn't give to be down there sharing in the good news.

Ned pressed his knuckles to his forehead. It didn't feel hot to him. He raided his closet and came out with all the heaviest clothes he could find. He tugged on two or three sweaters, a pair of sweatpants and snow pants, and as many hats as his head could hold.

"I am going outside to play," he said.

"Oh no you're not," said his mother from the hallway. She sounded much more confident than he did, and he knew he couldn't beat her. He felt too tired to even argue. He took off his hats and cast them on the floor, defeated.

Ned's school district got one snow day a year, if they were lucky. Usually it came in February after the worst of the winter weather was behind them. The weatherman would forecast two inches, the sky would probably provide only half an inch, and the superintendent would cancel class anyway. Ned's mother said they were being timid, but Ned knew better. Those halfhearted snow days came out of pity for the children stuck in class. Even the superintendent was a child

once, and he knew how important a snow day could be. It's not often that the whole world decides to take a break, that even grown ups go out and play, that children are called crazy if all they want to do is stay inside. A snow day is a rare and beautiful thing, something special, something not to be missed.

"Unless you have a temperature of 103 degrees."

"102.7, Mom. It's only 102.7."

"I'm rounding up."

"That's math class talk. I don't have to go to school today. No math!"

"Fine, no math. And no snow pants either. Get back in bed and eat your soup."

"Soup for breakfast?"

"Soup for sick kids."

"I feel fine, Mom. Really! I can go out and play just for a little while."

"You don't look fine. You're clammy. You're sweating."

"Probably because of all the soup I've had to eat!"

"Eat up, Ned, and get some sleep. I'll be back later. I'm taking Jamie and Ellen to the park."

Ned watched his little brother and sister squeeze into their snow gear and waddle out the front door. He choked down his soup, burning his tongue to spite his mother. He was angry. He was frustrated. He was...very, very tired.

Ned woke up, his soup at his side, snow still falling outside his window. He wasn't sweating. He wasn't clammy. He was feeling pretty good!

His hand shot out from under the blankets and jammed the electric thermometer into his mouth. After a few tense minutes, the answer came back: 99.8 degrees. Better. Much better!

"Mom! My fever broke! Can I go outside now?"

"When you get to 98.6 degrees, you can go outside."

Ned pulled on his pants, sweaters and hats. He waddled downstairs, the thermometer clutched in his hand. He crept into the kitchen, as sneaky as someone wearing four layers could be, and

filled a glass with ice water. The thermometer beeped as it slid into the water.

"You can see the thermometer, Mom!" he shouted. "I'm in the kitchen. Ninety-eight-point-six, right on the nose."

Ned heard his mother coming down the hall. The thermometer wasn't finished taking a reading yet, but there wasn't time to wait. He jammed it into his mouth just as she came around the door. It beeped, finished, and he handed it to her.

"See?" he said.

"Oh dear. Oh dear, Ned-we have to get you to the hospital!"

"What?"

The digital display told the story. Ned had a temperature of 48.7 degrees-cold enough to be legally dead.

"Oh sweetheart, you must be the first kid ever who cheated to make his temperature lower."

Defeated, Ned started tugging off his hats, until he felt his mother's hand stop him.

"Let's go outside," she said. "For a lie that lousy, you deserve a fifteen-minute snowball fight."

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. What does Ned conclude when he hears cheers from downstairs at the beginning of the story?

- A. At least four inches of snow has fallen.
- B. School is canceled.
- C. School is not canceled.
- D. His mom will let him go outside.

2. What main problem does Ned face?

- A. He can't find enough warm clothes to play outside.
- B. He has a temperature of 98.6 degrees.
- C. He is sick with a fever, so his mother won't let him play outside in the snow.
- D. His soup is so hot it burns his tongue.

3. Ned is desperate to play outside in the snow. What evidence from the text supports this conclusion?

- A. "She sounded much more confident than he did, and he knew he couldn't beat her."
- B. "Ned's mother said they were being timid, but Ned knew better."
- C. "He wasn't sweating. He wasn't clammy. He was feeling pretty good!"
- D. "Oh sweetheart, you must be the first kid ever who cheated to make his temperature lower."

4. Why does Ned's mother finally let him play outside?

- A. He promises to eat more soup and take a rest afterwards.
- B. She feels sorry for him.
- C. His temperature finally falls to 98.6 degrees.
- D. She takes him to the hospital, and he feels better.

5. What is the main idea of this text?

- A. Ned is so sick that if he goes outside, his temperature could drop.
- B. Ned wants to have a snowball fight outside rather than go to math class.
- C. Ned tries to convince his mother he is well enough to play outside so that he won't miss the snow day.
- D. Ned is so excited about the snow day that he forgets he is sick with a fever.

6. Read these sentences from the text.

He was angry. He was frustrated. He was... very, very tired.

Why does the author include a pause in the last sentence?

- A. to emphasize how tired Ned feels
- B. to emphasize how angry Ned feels
- C. to show how confused Ned is
- D. to show how quietly Ned is speaking

7. Choose the answer that best completes the sentence.

_____ Ned's fever is not completely gone, his mother lets him have a snowball fight outside.

- A. On the contrary
- B. Even though
- C. Specifically
- D. For example

8. What does Ned want to do when he learns school is canceled?

9. How many snow days does Ned's school district get?

10. Apart from school being canceled, why are snow days so important to Ned? Support your answer with evidence from the text.



Name _____

Rainforest's Rich Resources

Rainforests are a valuable resource. Native peoples live in and depend on the rainforest's rich resources to survive. If rainforests disappear, these communities may also disappear.

Almost half of the medicine in the United States comes from rainforest plants. For instance, scientists use rainforest flowers to make medicine for people with leukemia, a type of cancer, as well as many other diseases.

Rainforests help keep the world's climates from changing. Rainforest trees help lower temperatures and absorb carbon dioxide. Too much carbon dioxide can harm the environment.

Thousands of species depend on healthy rainforests. In Costa Rica, about 500,000 species of animals, birds, and plants live in the rainforests.

Rainforests are facing big threats. Farmers burn rainforests to plant crops. The burning wood releases carbon into the atmosphere. Loggers cut down rainforest trees for wood. Miners discover gold, iron and oil. Thus, rainforests are destroyed.

When rainforests vanish, so does Earth's future.

Instructions: In the top box, use your own words to tell the author's point of view on the topic of this passage. In the bottom box, list clues from the passage that support your answer. Then, write about the author's point of view using the information in the graphic organizer.

Point of View
Clues

Thanksgiving in London

by W.M. Akers



They didn't even have turkey on the airplane. The coach cabin was long and wide, and it smelled like a stuffy old minivan. The lights were off even though it was just past sunset. This had something to do with helping the passengers get used to the time change, but it just made Carrie feel sad. Back home it was Tuesday night, and her friends were getting ready to celebrate a few days off from school. But Carrie was stuck inside a metal tube with the lights turned down, waiting for a boiled chicken dinner. This was not how she had imagined her Thanksgiving vacation.

The trouble began that spring, when her older brother announced he was going to "study abroad" during his junior year of college. He told Carrie while she was doing homework, calling her on her cell phone and shouting, like she was the one who was supposed to be excited.

"Guess what, Sis?" he said, forgetting that no one over ten years old likes to be called 'Sis.' "I'm going to London!"

"Why? Are you going to marry someone in the royal family?" She could think of no reason to go overseas, unless it was to marry someone whose family members wore crowns.

"I don't think Jessica would like it if I suddenly got married to some English princess."

"You're still dating?"

"Obviously."

Obviously. Obviously Brian and Jessica would never break up. They had been going out since before he got his driver's license, and they had stayed together all through the first two years of college. Because Jessica knew Carrie when Carrie was still a kid, she never stopped treating her like one. She bought Carrie dolls, pinched her cheeks, and looked surprised whenever Carrie did something to show she was older than five-something like reading a newspaper. Carrie felt guilty about disliking her brother's girlfriend, especially when Mom said they were probably going to be getting married sometime soon. But she couldn't help it. Jessica was boring. Jessica was unpleasant. And Jessica was never going away.

"So are you two going to London together?" Carrie asked. "Like on some kind of big stupid, romantic vacation?"

"Nope," said Brian, his voice suddenly far too serious. "She's not coming. I'm going alone."

"I think she'll be all right without you for a week or two."

"It's not just a week. It's the whole semester. From August until New Year's."

"Are you nuts?! That's way too long to leave the country."

"Nah," scoffed Brian, lighthearted again. "It'll be cool."

"Are you crazy? What are you going to watch on TV?"

"They have TV in England."

"Yeah, weird TV with English accents and tea and crumpets and who knows what. And I bet they have all kinds of weird candy and weird soda and-oh my gosh! Brian, they drive on the wrong side of the road. What is that even about?"

"I don't know. You can find out for yourself in November."

"What do you mean?"

"I talked to Mom and Dad this morning. Instead of me coming home for Thanksgiving, you're going to meet me in London. It's gonna be awesome!"

Carrie laughed a funny kind of laugh, very sure that this Thanksgiving was not going to be awesome at all.

As she picked at her boiled chicken dinner on the plane, Carrie's stomach squirmed at the thought of an English Thanksgiving. Doing some pre-trip research on the Internet, she had come across some really horrible stories about English food. They boiled everything and didn't use enough salt. They ate terrifying sausages, with blood and guts and stuff all stuffed inside. And worst of all, they didn't know the first thing about dessert-or, as they would say, "pudding."

"They don't even know how to make pies!" Carrie told her mother, who was already halfway through some paperback she had bought at the airport bookstore.

"I'm sure they know how to bake a simple pie," said Mom.

"No. They don't. They put meat in their pies. Gross meat, like lamb and I don't even know what."

"They also make sweet pies."

"The worst is this thing called Stargazy pie."

"I've never heard of that."

"You're lucky! It's a fish pie. Do you hear me? A pie made of fish. And on top of it, they cut a huge, ugly shrimp or lobster or something in half, and set it on the pie with its claws pointing up in the air, like it's breaking through the crust to gaze at the stars."

"How original."

"Sure. Original. That's what you say when I think of something that freaks you out. So don't pretend this isn't gross. And they think it's great. It's like a delicacy or something."

"Eat your chicken, Carrie. I'm trying to read."

She poked at her chicken, wishing it were turkey; a great big one with skin that crackled and had meat oozing with flavor. And brown gravy and cornbread stuffing and-oh no. What if they didn't have cranberry sauce in England? *You can't trust a country that puts fish in pie. What they call cranberry sauce, she thought as she picked through her sad little airplane salad in search of a crisp piece of lettuce, is probably just blood and pomegranate seeds*

Or something even worse

Carrie and her parents stood outside Brian's apartment, freezing under a cold fluorescent light. Her brother did not pick up his phone. He did not answer his doorbell. He did not respond to rocks thrown against his window. And when someone finally came to let them in, it wasn't Brian. It was Jessica. This was not the worst surprise that London had to offer.

"Hey, little girl!" Jessica squealed, as she forced Carrie into a hug. "Welcome to Britsgiving!"

As Jessica led Carrie's dad upstairs, Carrie hung back to whisper to her mom. "You didn't tell me she was going to be here!"

"We wanted to surprise you. Isn't it great? This way you'll have a girl closer to your age to hang out with while we're here. Maybe she can take you shopping!"

Carrie seethed. She clenched her fists and screwed up her eyes and breathed loudly through her teeth. Since Brian left for college, she had gotten very good at seething. He had always been the best part of her family-the part that kept her parents from doing crazy stuff, like not warning her about the presence of horrible girlfriends at family functions. If their family was an engine, Brian was the lubricant-the thing that kept the machine running smoothly. Without him there, the family had started to overheat. It was shaking itself to pieces. It was going to explode -if Carrie didn't explode first.

Once she was finished seething, she marched up the stairs, dragging her suitcase behind her and wishing she hadn't brought so many heavy books.

"Brian's just tied up," shouted Jessica. "He'll be here in a minute. Let me show you the place!"

The apartment was terrifying. It wasn't even an apartment, really. It was a fancy kind of dorm owned by the school, but all the furniture was really cheap, scratched up, and smelled just like the airplane. There were ten people living in this tiny little place, although none of them seemed to be around, so the apartment was mostly empty except for all the junk on the floor.

Jessica showed Carrie the filthy hallways, crowded bedrooms, and one of the bathrooms that seemed way too dirty, even for college students. The whole time she was giggling, saying stuff like, "Isn't this fantastic?" and "I bet you can't wait to go to college and get a place like this." But nothing prepared Carrie for the kitchen. It was the size of a coffin, with a toaster oven and two electric burners, and a fridge smaller than the ones they put in hotels.

"Where are we going to cook?" asked Carrie.

"Oh, I don't know," said Jessica. "We'll find a way."

Carrie spun around to stare her down. Cooking was the best part of Thanksgiving. The whole

family would gather in their kitchen, with Mom making stuffing and Dad fussing over the turkey while Brian and Carrie peeled potatoes and snapped the ends off green beans*It is appropriate that this kitchen is the size of a coffin, because Thanksgiving is dead*Carrie thought.

Carrie was about to scream to let out all the anger she had been feeling ever since she unwrapped her boiled chicken dinner on the airplane, when something grabbed her from behind. She spun around in the air, her feet out in front of her, with the smell of pine nettle body wash in her nose.

"Hey, Sis! Welcome to London!"

Brian set her down, and then she realized that no matter how many changes had happened, her brother was the same as ever. Carrie hugged him back, and she knew Thanksgiving was going to be okay.

She Gets to Go

by ReadWorks



"She gets to go? She doesn't deserve it. She doesn't even know what it means to go abroad. Not really; not like me or my friends. She won't appreciate it; she's going to complain. Look, she's whining about it already, and you only told her about it ten seconds ago. You really want to bring that with you on an eight-hour plane ride? You really think she's going to know what she's seeing on the other side?"

The house shook when I went back upstairs to my bedroom in order to hide from the cries of my sister. I knew I'd been mean, but I didn't feel bad about it. I was angry. Nora and Teeny were just as much her cousins as mine, but Bev didn't care about anything but playing with toy horses and eating ice cream, and she could do that in our Midwestern backyard. She didn't need to go to Spain to goof around with plastic and junk food.

My middle school only offered three languages. I was taking beginner's French, and I was suddenly sorry I hadn't elected to take Spanish instead. But who could have known at the start of the year that my aunt would get a job working overseas and take my cousins with her, or that my parents would decide my mom, sister, and I should visit? I'd seen pictures of the house they lived in, and it was huge and on a hill that overlooked the city and had a spiral staircase in it. I was jealous. Our house was small and had a regular staircase. The only hill around was a short one we used for sledding, and it didn't have any views of Barcelona.

As much as I envied them, though, I told myself I didn't want to be them. Nora and Teeny were

as spoiled as they came, and they didn't seem to treasure anything. They liked shopping and when I talked to them on the phone after I found out we were going to visit, that's all they gabbed about. Didn't they realize they were in another country? Didn't they know they could shop for clothes anywhere? Nora was my age and spoke excitedly about this store and that, and suggested we sneak out one night and go dancing at a club that her high-school boyfriend had taken her to. I didn't have a high-school boyfriend or a middle-school boyfriend but told myself it was okay because at least I could spell, and I knew how to use commas correctly. I'd read some of Nora's school papers, and they were awful.

I knew what mattered.

It wasn't shopping.

Especially not in Barcelona.

We had to drive to a passport agency to get our passports quickly, since the trip was coming up faster than we thought, and it would take too long to get our documents by mail.

"If this car ride is anything like the plane ride is going to be," I said, "then you should change your mind fast."

Bev was whining in the back seat about the drive being too long, the bumps in the road being too high, and the sun through the window being too bright. When we got to the agency, the lines were long and Bev wiggled and whined about her feet hurting and her stomach rumbling. I stood quietly, took my passport photo with a serious smile, and told my sister to shut up as we clambered back into the car to head home. I knew what mattered. A long drive was worth it.

We were going to be traveling over the American holiday, Thanksgiving, and I wished more than anything that I could be thankful for the company of my best friend on this trip instead of that of my sister.

"Miriam would appreciate this way more than Bev does, Mom," I argued. "Bev doesn't even want to go." I was standing in the kitchen a few weeks out from the trip, making a case for changing my sister's ticket to my friend's name. "She's taking Spanish, too, so she'd be really helpful when we go exploring around the city." Mom said no, but at least she was nice about it. I apologized to Miriam a couple times about her not being able to join us. "Maybe next time. You should get a passport just in case we go there again."

One week before the trip, I started to set things aside to pack. There was a ledge underneath the windows in my room, and I'd pushed all of my books and my rock and coin collections out of the way to make room for the things I'd need in Spain. I had my sneakers and one pair of nice

shoes, a pair of jeans, a skirt, and a few T-shirts, a tank top and a sweater. I also had some empty journals because I'd need to write down my travel thoughts. I'd need to have them for later, when I'd be writing stories, and would need characters and scenes and events to draw from. I did not bring anything too fancy. I didn't want to go to Nora's high-school boyfriend's dance club. I knew what mattered.

It wasn't dance clubs.

The plane ride was long and actually three plane rides. We had to fly to New York first to catch a flight to London, and then we'd wait for some hours before a plane departed for Barcelona. The flight to New York was bumpy, and I cried quietly in my seat. What if we crashed? What if I died at age 14, not an author, without having seen Europe, having never been kissed? It upset me. Romance, art and travel were the most important things. My sister cried. She didn't want to crash, she said, because then she wouldn't be able to see her pet hamster again. What do you expect from a 4th grader, I thought, and pinched her and told her it was going to be okay. I knew what mattered, and it wasn't hamsters.

We landed just fine in London, and my mom took our hands as we walked through the airport. Everyone spoke like a fairytale sounds in your head. We found some couches and a food court. Bev ate a Toblerone and I ate a Twix, and after we'd wiped the chocolate from our hands, we both fell asleep while my mom read a magazine. She woke us up when we had to hurry to the gate for the last leg of the trip. Butterflies in my stomach wouldn't calm down, and I was sorry I'd eaten the Twix bar.

When we got to the house in Barcelona, I was tired. Nora and Teeny were watching TV, and they didn't run to meet us at the door. I gave them both half-hearted hugs and went to my guest room to nap. The window had iron bars on it. I felt like I was in a movie. When I woke up, it was three hours later, and Nora asked if I wanted to go explore.

"Of course!" I put on sneakers, and Nora put on sandals, and even though it was November, she didn't wear a coat; instead, she had on a high-necked sweater and a fitted black jacket like an office worker wears. She looked pretty in her makeup, and I felt shabby without mine, so I put on some colored lip gloss-it was all I owned. I thought about my sporty coat and how it didn't really match with the situation. "I need something better, something more sleek," I said out loud. Nora grabbed a leather jacket from her closet.

"I don't really wear this anymore," she told me, and I put it on. It fit. I looked really different in it, and I liked it. I felt important.

We took a bus to the city and walked a lot. Nora showed me sculptures and pointed out her

school. She mentioned, but did not drag me to, her favorite clothing store. Instead, we went inside a market where hundreds of people speaking Spanish hustled from stall to stall, buying bread and cheese and rabbit, and when we left, gnawing hard rolls, she pointed out a stall that sold horse meat.

Gross, I thought, and cool.

Nora took me to the ocean before we had to go back home. The wind made it colder than the rest of the city, but we threw our shoes behind us and sprinted for the water. I'm in the Mediterranean! I thought very loudly in my head. Before our toes turned blue, we left and I filled an empty Fanta bottle with water from the sea. I'd give it to Miriam. Here, I'd say, I got you the Mediterranean as a souvenir. I knew what mattered. Miriam would love it.

The next day was Thanksgiving, although no one in Barcelona cared except for us. My mom and my aunt spent the day in the giant kitchen, cooking turkey and potatoes for an expatriate holiday with my aunt's housekeeper, who didn't speak English. Some people were coming over for dinner that night—other Americans away from home for the holiday. Nothing in the city was closed, so Nora, my uncle and I went exploring again. I saw more artwork and some street graffiti, and we ate a small lunch at a café. I was in Spain on Thanksgiving! This was a situation that seemed to happen only in books. I wrote it down, so I could put it into one of mine.

That night, I fussed upstairs; disappointed in everything I'd packed for the trip. Bev marched out of the bedroom she was sharing with Teeny, wearing a jumper with a long-sleeved shirt underneath it. She had these crazy blonde curls that puffed out of her head like a clown wig, but it looked good, and I was jealous. My hair was plain brown and didn't know whether it was curly or straight. Nora watched me try on my skirt and saw me throw it off in frustration. She gave me one of hers which was a lot shorter than anything I owned.

"It looks great on you!" she said, and then told me to hurry up because everyone was there, and dinner was ready and holy cow, was she hungry!

The dining room table was beautiful. Eight other people had joined us, and candles lit their faces in the dim room and made them all look like good friends. Two older couples, a single older gentleman, and a mother and father with their teenage son were there. We stood around the table and held hands, said grace, and dug in. All the adults were here because of work, and the teenage son was going to a school for American kids abroad. I felt butterflies in my stomach when he talked. I wanted to go to school abroad. My cousins got to, and they didn't seem to care how amazing it was. Nora talked about taking me shopping the next day. You look so good in my clothes, she said, so cute. We need to get you some of your own.

Dinner wrapped up. Teeny and Bev brought pies from the kitchen. The adults made coffee, and even the teenage boy drank some. I asked for a cup but could only drink from it a few times, and I had to eat a bite of pie between each sip. My stomach was still full of butterflies. I thought about how wonderful it would be to grow up and travel for a living. I thought of how Bev would never want to do that, since she liked being comfortable too much. I thought about how when I grew up and made my life abroad, I wouldn't spend so much time in dance clubs or trying on cute clothes.

I knew what mattered. I did like the clothes, though.

The adults began to leave. One couple bid us goodnight, then the other. The single gentleman actually tipped his hat as he stood in the doorway, and my aunt shook his hand. My mom and Teeny and Bev had begun to clear some dishes, and Nora and I blew out candles. The mother and father and their teenage son folded their napkins on the table and began to leave as well.

I guess it's European, to kiss your hosts on the cheek goodbye. My aunt did so, and so did Nora; I did, too, when it was my turn at the door. Goodbye to the father, goodbye to the mother, and then the son put his face against mine. I kissed each cheek as he did mine, I think, but I know I floundered a little bit, because I wasn't expecting it. No one in America said goodbye like that—especially not teenagers. It was novel when these parents did it, but it was very different to me when this boy did it, even though it wasn't, and he was just saying goodnight like the rest of them. Nora made fun of me upstairs.

I'd spent the night listening to travel stories and noticing, over pumpkin pie, the little indications that I was in another country. That's what that was, I said to myself. In French class, I'd learned that kissing on the cheek was a common European way of greeting people. I had just experienced culture first hand. I'd felt my cheeks flush, but it was only from the adventure, from the culture. I knew what mattered. That's all that it was.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Use the article "She Gets to Go" to answer questions 1 to 2

1. What city does the main character visit?

2. Summarize the plot of this story.

Use the article "Thanksgiving in London" to answer questions 3 to 4.

3. What city is Carrie visiting?

4. Summarize the plot of this story.

Use the articles "Thanksgiving in London" and "She Gets to Go" to answer question 5.

5. Compare the plots of these stories.
