Use Context Clues

Grade 4 Reading Worksheet - Challenge Me

Name _____ Date _____

Read the text. Circle what the word means.

READ THIS FIRST

Lanterns at the Night Market

Every Friday in summer, Mei Lin helped her grandmother sell paper lanterns at the night market. The market was always bustling. Hundreds of people squeezed between the stalls, and music and voices filled the warm air.

Grandmother Wu made each lantern by hand. She was meticulous. She measured every strip of bamboo twice, and she smoothed each fold until no wrinkle remained. A single lantern could take her two whole days. Mei Lin, on the other hand, was a novice. She had only started learning that spring, and her first lanterns leaned to one side.

This Friday, the crowd was thinner than usual. A new stall across the path sold plastic lanterns that lit up in six colors. They cost only three dollars each. People lined up there, and Grandmother Wu's pile of lanterns did not dwindle at all. By nine o'clock, she had sold only two.

Mei Lin felt her stomach sink. "Maybe we should lower our prices," she said.

Grandmother Wu shook her head. "Our lanterns take days of work. If we sell them for three dollars, we cannot buy more paper." She was frugal, and she never wasted money or materials. Even the paper scraps went into a box to become tiny lantern charms.

Mei Lin looked at the scrap box, and an idea came to her. "What if we sell the charms?" she asked. "They're quick to make. People could buy one for a dollar and see how special our paper is."

Grandmother Wu thought for a long moment. At first she frowned, because she wanted every customer to buy a full lantern. Then she nodded slowly. It was a fair compromise. They would keep the big lanterns at their usual price, and they would add the little charms.

Mei Lin hung the charms on a string across the front of the stall. Each one was ornate, covered with tiny cut-out flowers and swirls. They swayed and sparkled in the lamplight.

Soon a girl stopped to look. Then her father stopped too. He bought three charms, and then he noticed the large lanterns above them. "Did you make all of these by hand?" he asked. Grandmother Wu proudly explained how she folded the paper. He bought a big red lantern for his porch.

By the end of the night, every charm was gone, and so were six lanterns. The plastic lanterns across the path still glowed in six colors. However, people kept stopping at the Wu stall to ask questions and touch the paper.

As they packed up, Grandmother Wu handed Mei Lin a bamboo strip. "Next week," she said, "you will make the charms. Your hands are getting steadier."

Mei Lin smiled. Maybe she would not be a novice for long.

1. Grandmother Wu was meticulous. What does meticulous mean?
   very careful about every small detail
   fast and eager to finish
   proud of her success
   worried about money

2. What does novice mean in this story?
   a paid helper an expert a seller a beginner

3. The pile of lanterns did not dwindle. What does dwindle mean?
   change color grow larger fall over get smaller

4. The crowd was thinner than usual. What does thinner mean here?
   quieter and calmer smaller in number made of lighter paper less wide in body

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Answer Key - Grade 4 Reading Worksheet - Challenge Me

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