Find the Theme

Grade 4 Reading Worksheet

Name _____ Date _____

Read the story. Circle what the words or the detail show.

READ THIS FIRST

Diego's Big Solo

Diego played the drums in the Lincoln Elementary band. For the spring concert, Ms. Okafor gave him eight measures to play alone in the middle of the last song. Diego could hardly sleep that night. He imagined the whole gym cheering just for him.

Every day after school, Diego practiced his solo in the garage. He made it louder and faster each time. He added extra crashes on the cymbal. His older sister covered her ears and laughed. "The neighbors can hear you on the next street," she said.

At band practice, though, something went wrong. Diego was so focused on his solo that he stopped paying attention to the rest of the song. He came in too early after the flutes. He drummed so loudly that nobody could hear the trumpets. Twice, Ms. Okafor tapped her music stand to stop the band.

After practice, Ms. Okafor asked Diego to stay. "Your solo is exciting," she said. "But a drummer's main job is to keep everyone together. If the band falls apart, your solo has nothing to stand on."

Diego felt his face grow hot. He wanted to argue, but he remembered the flutes trying to find their place. He remembered the trumpet players frowning at him.

That week, Diego practiced differently. He played along with a recording of the song and counted every measure. He listened for the flutes and the trumpets. He even took out two of the extra cymbal crashes so the solo would fit the music.

On the night of the concert, the band sounded smooth and steady. When Diego's eight measures came, he played them clearly and confidently. Then he slid right back into the beat. The trumpets came in exactly on time.

Afterward, a trumpet player named Sung-min gave Diego a high five. "That was the first time we all finished together," he said. Diego grinned. He realized the cheering had been for the whole band, and that felt even better.

1. What does Ms. Okafor mean when she says the solo "has nothing to stand on"?

   The solo is too short for anyone to notice.

   Diego needs a taller stand for his drums.

   The solo only works if the band stays together.

   The audience will not be able to see Diego.

2. Diego feels the cheering for the whole band is "even better." How does this connect to the theme?

- It shows he wishes his solo had been longer.
- It shows he plans to leave the band soon.
- It shows he now values the group's success.
- It shows he is upset that nobody noticed him.

3. Ms. Okafor says, "Your solo is exciting. But a drummer's main job is to keep everyone together." What does this show?

- She likes his solo but wants him to listen to the band.
- She wants the solo to be louder.
- She thinks the other players are better drummers than he is.
- She wants him to stop playing solos for the rest of the year.

4. Diego wanted to argue, but he remembered the flutes trying to find their place. What does this show?

- He thinks Ms. Okafor is being unfair to him.
- He begins to see how his playing affected others.
- He is ready to quit the band after the practice.
- He is angry at the flute players for not keeping up.

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Answer Key - Grade 4 Reading Worksheet

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