Find the Theme

Grade 4 Reading Worksheet - Challenge Me

PencilGo

Name _____ Date _____

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

READ THIS FIRST

The Gap in the Stone Wall

High in the mountains of Nepal, two families farmed side by side. Tenzin grew barley and potatoes on the upper slope. His neighbor Dawa grew the same crops on the lower slope. Between their fields ran a low stone wall that their grandfathers had built.

One summer, no rain fell for six weeks. The stream that watered both farms shrank to a trickle and then disappeared. Dawa's barley turned yellow and curled. Every morning he carried buckets up from the river far below, but he could never carry enough. Up the hill, Tenzin had a small spring bubbling out of the rocks near his house. It gave just enough water for his own field.

One morning, Dawa came to the wall with an empty bucket. He did not ask for anything. He only looked at his drooping plants and then at the bright green rows above.

That night, Tenzin's wife, Pema, spoke quietly. "If we share the spring, our own crop may be smaller," she said. "But if Dawa's family loses everything, how will they get through the winter?"

Tenzin lay awake a long time. He thought about the wall his grandfather had built with Dawa's grandfather, stone by stone, side by side in the cold. The next day, he took his shovel and dug a narrow channel from the spring to the wall. Then he lifted out three stones so the water could slip through to Dawa's field. Dawa saw the water arrive and stood very still. Then he walked up the hill and helped Tenzin dig the rest of the channel.

That autumn, both harvests were smaller than usual, but neither family went without. The children of both houses carried baskets together, laughing. In the evenings, both families sat by one fire and talked about next year's planting.

Two years later, a hard frost came early, before Tenzin had finished his harvest. One cold night could ruin his whole crop. Tenzin looked at the long rows still waiting in the ground, and his heart sank. Tenzin and Pema could never gather it alone in time. At dawn, they heard voices in the field. Dawa, his wife, and their three sons were already there with baskets. They worked until the stars came out, and every potato was brought in safely.

When Tenzin tried to thank him, Dawa pointed at the gap in the old stone wall. Water still trickled through it. "We never put those stones back," he said. "I hope we never do."

1. Dawa "did not ask for anything." What can the reader infer?

   - He was angry with Tenzin about the old stone wall.
   - He had already found another spring to use.
   - He did not need any water for his crops.
   - He needed help but was too proud or polite to ask.

2. What does the gap in the wall stand for at the end?

   - the trust and kindness the families now share
   - the damage the early frost did to both farms
   - the work that is still left to be done
   - the line that keeps the two farms apart

3. Dawa says, "I hope we never do." What does he mean?

   - He hopes the whole stone wall will be torn down soon.
   - He hopes Tenzin will never dig another channel.
   - He hopes it will never rain on the farms again.
   - He hopes the families will always help each other.

4. Both harvests were smaller than usual, but neither family went without. What does this show?

   - Sharing meant both families had enough to eat.
   - Dawa's family had a good harvest without any help.
   - Tenzin's family had plenty to sell at the market.
   - Sharing made both families much poorer than before.

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Answer Key - Grade 4 Reading Worksheet - Challenge Me

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