Determine the Theme

Grade 5 Reading Worksheet

Name _____ Date _____

Circle the answer.

READ THIS FIRST

The Water-Stained Book

Arash knew something was wrong the moment he picked up the library book. The cover of Stars Over the Sahara was wrinkled, and the pages near the end were stuck together. A dark ring showed where a glass of water had tipped over.

His little brother, Kian, stood in the doorway looking guilty. "I just wanted to see the pictures," Kian whispered. "I'm sorry."

Arash sighed. The book was due tomorrow. He imagined the librarian, Ms. Okafor, frowning at the damage. He imagined paying for a new book with his birthday money.

Then a different idea crept into his mind. The library had a return slot by the front door. Books slid through it into a bin, and no one saw who dropped them in. He could return the book before school, and nobody would know it had been damaged at his house.

That night, Arash could not fall asleep. He kept thinking about the next person who would check out the book. That reader would open it and find the pages stuck together. They might even be blamed for the damage.

In the morning, Arash carried the book past the return slot and walked up to the front desk. His heart was pounding. "Ms. Okafor," he said, "my brother spilled water on this. I wanted to tell you instead of just dropping it off."

Ms. Okafor turned the book over in her hands. "Thank you for telling me," she said. "Most people would have used the slot." She explained that the library could repair some water damage. The stuck pages could be separated with a special tool and dried flat.

"Would you like to help me fix it?" she asked.

That afternoon, Arash sat beside her in the back room. He learned to slide a thin, flat tool between the pages and press them under heavy books. The repair was not perfect, but the book could be read again.

Before he left, Ms. Okafor handed him a green badge. It said Library Helper. "We need people we can trust back here," she said. "Come on Thursdays if you like."

Walking home, Arash thought about how close he had come to using the slot. He had been afraid that telling the truth would cost him something. Instead, it had given him something new.

1. Which theme best fits this story?
   - Younger children should never touch library books.
   - Libraries are good places to learn about deserts.
   - Keeping quiet is the easiest way to fix a problem.
   - Telling the truth can build trust, even when it is hard.

2. What challenge does Arash face?
   - finding a book about the Sahara for a report
   - teaching his brother how to read the pictures
   - earning money to buy a new library card
   - deciding whether to admit the book was damaged

3. Why could Arash not fall asleep that night?
   He was angry that Kian had ruined his favorite book.
   He was trying to finish the book before it was due.
   He was excited to visit the library in the morning.
   He worried the next reader might be blamed.

4. Which detail best shows how Arash responds to his challenge?
   He imagined Ms. Okafor frowning at the damage.
   He carried the book past the return slot to the desk.
   The cover of the book was wrinkled.
   The library had a return slot by the front door.

5. "A different idea crept into his mind." What does crept mean here?
   was forgotten right away
   was explained by someone else
   jumped in suddenly and loudly
   came slowly and quietly

6. What does Ms. Okafor suggest when she says, "Most people would have used the slot"?
   She wishes Arash had used the slot instead.
   Arash's choice took courage.
   She believes Kian should have come too.
   She thinks the return slot is broken.

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Answer Key - Grade 5 Reading Worksheet

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