Story Structure

Grade 5 Reading Worksheet - Challenge Me

Name _____ Date _____

Circle the answer.

READ THIS FIRST

The Clock Without Hands

Chapter 1: Boxes

The moving truck was coming at noon, and Grandpa Youssef's apartment was a maze of cardboard boxes. Amira, who was eleven, had been given one job: pack the hall closet.

At the very back, behind the winter coats, she found a wooden clock the size of a loaf of bread. Its face was painted with tiny blue flowers. It had numbers, but no hands.

"Grandpa," she called. "Is this broken?"

He came to the doorway, and for a long moment he did not answer. Then he sat down on a box and held out his hands for the clock. "Not broken," he said. "Unfinished."

Chapter 2: The Shop on Al-Muizz Street

In 1962, Youssef was twelve years old and lived in Cairo. Every day after school, he swept the floor of a clock shop on Al-Muizz Street. The shop belonged to Mr. Hamdi, a tall, quiet man who wore a magnifying glass on a band around his head.

At first, Youssef only swept. Then he sorted screws by size. After a year, Mr. Hamdi let him oil the gears of old clocks while he watched. "A clock is patient," Mr. Hamdi liked to say. "You must be more patient than the clock."

On Youssef's thirteenth birthday, Mr. Hamdi gave him a wooden case, a painted face and a small bag of parts. "Build your own," he said. "Take as long as you need."

Chapter 3: Unfinished

Youssef worked on the clock every evening for months. He fit the gears. He fixed the spring. By the next summer, only the hands were left to attach.

That was the summer his family moved to the United States. They packed in a hurry, and there was no time for a proper goodbye. Youssef wrapped the clock in a shirt and put it in his suitcase. In the new country, there was a new school and a new language to learn. Then came work, a family and grandchildren. The clock stayed wrapped in the shirt, at the back of one closet after another.

He never found hands that seemed right. Or perhaps, he admitted to himself, he never really looked.

Chapter 4: Noon

"So it's been waiting sixty years," Amira said.

Grandpa Youssef turned the clock over in his hands. "Mr. Hamdi would say it was being patient."

Amira looked at the boxes around them, then at the clock. "Your new apartment has a shelf by the window," she said. "We could finish it there. Together."

He was quiet. Then he smiled, and the lines around his eyes deepened. "I know a shop on Fourth Street that sells clock hands," he said. "Small ones. Brass."

At noon, the moving truck arrived. Amira carried the clock down the stairs herself. She held it carefully with both hands, the way you would carry something that was almost done.

1. Why does the author begin and end the story in Grandpa's apartment on moving day?
   - The present-day frame lets the past explain why the clock matters now.
   - Moving day is when Mr. Hamdi first gave Youssef the parts.
   - The clock shop from Cairo was in the same building.
   - The apartment is where young Youssef first built the clock.

2. How do Chapters 2 and 3 answer the question raised in Chapter 1?
   - They explain why the clock has numbers but no hands.
   - They explain why Grandpa wants to sell the clock.
   - They explain how Amira learned to repair clocks.
   - They explain why the moving truck came at noon.

3. Grandpa says the clock is 'Not broken… Unfinished.' How does Chapter 3 develop this difference?
   - It shows that the clock's spring snapped on the trip.
   - It shows he stopped before the last step, not that the clock failed.
   - It shows Mr. Hamdi dropping the clock by accident.
   - It shows that the clock never worked at any point.

4. In Chapter 3, the story moves from the family's move to 'grandchildren' in a few sentences. What is the effect?
   - It shows that the family moved back to Cairo.
   - It shows how decades passed while the clock waited.
   - It shows the clock shop closing that same year.
   - It shows that Youssef finished the clock quickly.

5. Mr. Hamdi's saying about patience appears in Chapter 2. How does Chapter 4 reuse it?
   - Grandpa applies it to the clock's sixty years of waiting.
   - Amira uses it to explain why she packed so slowly.
   - Amira repeats it to the movers carrying the boxes.
   - Grandpa uses it to explain why the truck is late.

6. Which sentence in Chapter 3 hints that the clock stayed unfinished partly by choice?
   - They packed in a hurry, and there was no time for a proper goodbye.
   - Or perhaps, he admitted to himself, he never really looked.
   - By the next summer, only the hands were left to attach.
   - Youssef wrapped the clock in a shirt and put it in his suitcase.

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Answer Key - Grade 5 Reading Worksheet - Challenge Me

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