

Identify and infer stated and implied character traits

The election of Barack Obama.

Fiction: A New Day

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I visit my grandparents in Mississippi in the summers. It is hot there, but it is fun. And it was hot in Chicago, too. I liked the change. I listen to my grandfather tell stories about the way things were. He had met Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. He tells about the marches he joined. He tells about the changes he had seen.

My grandmother says to me, and my cousins, “Your grandfather was a hero. He stood up for civil rights. It was dangerous. But he went to the marches. He was one of the first African Americans to register to vote in this county. At first I was so worried that I would start to cry if he was not home by nighttime. But I joined him. I marched, too.”

My grandfather is humble, though. He doesn't take credit for being brave. He says, “It was Dr. King who was the hero. We all did it together. He was the man who brought all the change. He inspired the freedom marches.”

When I went to last summer, my grandparents kept us busy. They took me, and my cousins into town every day. We would go door to door to check that people were registered to vote. If they weren't registered, we would ask if we could get them to register. If they said yes, then my grandfather would come to drive them to the office to register. Everyone said yes. So we got a lot of people to register.

When we came back to Chicago, there were signs all over about the election. It was exciting. My teacher said that this was an unprecedented time. Never before had an African American been nominated by a major political party to be President of the United States. I felt proud that I had been part of the election.

Then it was election day. We were watching the news on the TV. One by one the states were counting the votes and reporting who won. It was getting clear that Barack Obama was going to be elected.

At 9:00 pm, my grandfather called from Mississippi. He said, “Jerome, now it is a new country. We have made the really big change.” I heard my grandmother in the background. She was crying. I asked if she was sad. “No,” he said, “those are tears of joy. We have overcome.”

Directions: Choose the best answer for each question

1. What is a trait that is literally stated about the grandfather?

- a. old
- b. brave
- c. voter
- d. march

2. What is a trait you infer about the grandfather?

- a. determined
- b. sad
- c. discouraged
- d. happy

3. What is a trait you infer about the grandmother?

- a. worried
- b. doubtful
- c. courageous
- d. sad

4. What is a trait you infer about Jerome?

- a. respectful
- b. studious
- c. careless
- d. angry

5. *Write your own answer to this question. How do you infer the traits of a character in a story?*

TEACHER NOTES: Develop Students' Skills: Exercise Thinking

These questions have not been validated, so decisions about student's achievement should not be made based on their responses. They are intended to exercise skills. Recommended activities include: students work in pairs to choose the best response; give students the questions without the responses so they generate their own answers; students make up additional questions; students make up questions like these for another passage.

Answers: *You can remove this answer key and then give it to students and ask them to figure out the basis for the correct response.*

Item	6	7	8	9
Answer	b	a	c	a

Question 5 is open-ended. Here is a suggested response.

5. By the person's actions and what the writer tells about the person.

Plus: What is the theme of the story? How does the writer help you understand it by what the characters and narrator say?