

# Independent Reading Guide: The Short Story

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions to the Student:** Use the questions below to clarify your understanding of and response to a short story. Reflect on each question before answering. If you are keeping a *Reader's Response Journal* or wish to start one, use one of the suggested activities to make an entry.

Story Title \_\_\_\_\_ Author \_\_\_\_\_

This story was (circle one) assigned a personal selection.

This story was found in the (circle one) textbook library other \_\_\_\_\_.

## Elements of the Short Story

1. Who is the protagonist—the main character— in the story?

\_\_\_\_\_

2. What challenge or conflict does the protagonist encounter? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. How is the conflict resolved? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. What other important characters are involved in the conflict? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5. What kind of person is the protagonist? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

6. What evidence in the story leads me to this opinion of the protagonist? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

7. Where does this story take place? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

8. How would I describe the mood? How does the author establish this mood?

\_\_\_\_\_

9. Summarize the theme or central idea of this short story. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

10. Is there a sentence or short passage that states or strongly implies the theme?

If so, what is it? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Response to the Short Story

Rate this short story by circling the appropriate word.

- |   |      |      |        |
|---|------|------|--------|
| 11. The characters and dialogue are believable, and the plot engages my interest. | weak | fair | strong |
| 12. This story is written in a style that is clear and interesting.               | weak | fair | strong |
| 13. This story helps me understand people and events.                             | weak | fair | strong |
| 14. The details in this story could be easily visualized as I read.               | weak | fair | strong |
| 15. Overall, I rate this story as   | weak | fair | strong |

Reasons for my rating: \_\_\_\_\_

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16. What predictions and questions occurred to me as I read this story? Were my predictions accurate? Were my questions answered?

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### *Reader's Response Journal*

- Was there one passage or event you found puzzling in this short story? If so, write one or more questions you would like to ask the author to explain.
- In a short paragraph, describe an element of the short story that reminds you of something in your own life.