

Historical Fiction Clubs Grade 4: Fiction, Unit 4

Postassessment Sample Responses

Following are sample responses for each question, at a range of levels. These samples will help students notice if they have done similar work in their responses, and thus will be a helpful part of their self-assessment. These can also serve as mentor texts to help your students to identify specific ways they can lift their work to the next level.

Question	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
<p>1. What kind of person is Chet?</p> <p><i>Inferring About Characters and Other Story Elements: Character Traits and Supporting Thinking with Text Evidence</i></p>	<p>Chet is selfish. He gets rid of the welcome cat sign on his grandma's gate post just so people won't come to her house for food and he can eat more.</p> <p><i>Responses at this level tend to identify a character trait and to use evidence to support this thinking.</i></p>	<p>Chet is selfish. He gets rid of the welcome cat sign on his grandma's gate post just so people won't come to her house for food and he can eat more. But Chet is also caring. For example, he gives his grandma the drumstick and takes the tiny wing. Also, he puts the welcome cat sign back.</p> <p><i>Responses at this level tend to show how characters are complicated. They discuss more than one trait and/or motivation. Students also use and discuss details from different parts of the text to support their answers.</i></p>	<p>I think that Chet can seem selfish. He gets rid of the welcome cat sign on his grandma's gate post so he won't have to share his food. But deep down, Chet really does care about other people. He gives the drumstick to his grandma and takes the tiny wing. He tells her he "filled up on apples today" so she won't feel bad. Also, when he gets all the people to stay away, he feels guilty. The text says, he was "trying not to think about askers going hungry." And he does put back the welcome sign.</p> <p><i>Responses at this level show how the character is complicated or contradictory, including hidden sides to the character in addition to obvious or external traits. Students provide more than one motivation for a character's actions. They also provide a theory about the character that is built from the character's complexities.</i></p>

Question	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
<p>2. Grandma has strong feelings about the people that show up at her door. How would you describe Grandma's perspective?</p> <p><i>Analyzing Perspective</i></p>	<p>Grandma cares about the people that come to her house. She shares food with them and asks them to stay over.</p> <p><i>Responses at this level will focus on the character's feelings about something important in the story. They will draw on what the character did, said, or thought to support this thinking.</i></p>	<p>Grandma cares about the people that show up at her door. She calls them guests. She puts a sign out to welcome them. She shares food with them and asks them to stay over. Her own family had to look for a job so she knows how they feel.</p> <p><i>Responses at this level tend to explain how the character feels about something important in the story. Students will draw on information about the character's life experiences or the roles he or she plays to explain why the character feels this way.</i></p>	<p>Grandma cares about the people that show up at her door. She puts a sign out to welcome them. She shares food with them and asks them to stay over. She thinks it is wrong to call them "askers" or "hoboes." She calls them "guests." Her own family had to look for a job so she knows how they feel. She tells Chet, "If your dad hadn't gotten the job at Uncle Will's shop in Florida, he could be riding the rails, too."</p> <p>Chet doesn't want them to take his food, but he is just a kid and probably doesn't realize they need help.</p> <p><i>Responses at this level explain a character's perspective based on his or her life experiences and/or roles. These responses address the character's perspective about events, characters, settings, and/or issues. You might also notice that, at this level, students include quotations of the text. Though it is not called for in the question, students at this level can talk or write about the perspectives of multiple characters in this way if asked to do so.</i></p>
<p>3. Reread lines 53–55 from the story.</p> <p>When I crawled into bed, I had a hard time falling asleep. I'd eaten too much, and my thoughts kept returning to the sign on the gatepost. Part of me wanted to go outside and scrub it off. But I finally drifted to sleep.</p> <p>Think about the parts of every story. What part is this section of the story? Explain how it fits with the rest of the story.</p> <p><i>Analyzing Parts of a Story in Relation to the Whole</i></p>	<p>This part of the story shows Chet changing. He feels bad he got rid of the welcome cat sign and wishes he could fix it.</p> <p><i>Responses at this level tend to name which story element was featured in a particular part in the story (in this case, "change"). Student responses also include the importance of the particular part to the rest of the story.</i></p>	<p>This part of the story shows Chet changing. Chet feels bad he got rid of the welcome cat sign and wishes he could fix it. Even though he got to eat a big dinner he isn't happy. He knows that making people stay away was wrong. He will go and change the sign back.</p> <p><i>Responses at this level discuss how a particular part affects or is affected by other parts of the story. Students name the story element that is featured in this part and also include specific details from other parts of the story, perhaps to explain a decision or change.</i></p>	<p>This part of the story is a turning point and shows Chet is starting to change about how he feels about people coming to their door. It shows that he really does have empathy for others. He got to stuff himself at dinner because no one showed up. But now he is having a hard time falling asleep. His "thoughts keep returning to the sign on the gatepost." This shows he feels guilty that he scrubbed off the welcome sign. He is changing how he feels about people coming to their house. He will go and change the sign back.</p> <p><i>Responses at this level use literary language to explain how a particular part of the story is important to the whole story. In addition to discussing the story element(s) featured in this part, students may also discuss how this part supports a larger idea or theme in the text. Fifth-grade responses may also consider the author's word choice or craft techniques, and often quote the text.</i></p>

Question	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
<p>4. Identify a theme that seems important in the story "The Sign of the Cat" and explain which details best develop that theme.</p> <p><i>Determining Themes/Cohesion</i></p>	<p>This story shows that it is good to help other people. Chet realized he should welcome other people and help them just like his grandma does.</p> <p><i>Responses at this level tend to name a life lesson that a character in the story learns, most likely at the end. Students can tell about a part of the story that shows this lesson.</i></p>	<p>This story teaches that helping other people is important. At the start of the story, Chet tried to keep other people away so he could have more food, but then he realizes that people helped his dad when his dad needed help. He knows that it is right to help others so he changes the sign back to welcome them.</p> <p><i>Responses at this level explore one theme across the story. Students are not yet able to name multiple themes, but can explain how one theme emerges in more than one part of the text. Some students may do this by showing the absence of the theme at the start of the story, and the presence of it by the end, while other students may cite a couple of examples of the theme developing across the story.</i></p>	<p>One theme the story teaches is that helping other people is important. At the start of the story, Chet tried to keep other people away so he could have more food, but then he realizes that people helped his dad when his dad needed help. He knows that it is the right thing to do to help others and he changes the sign back to welcome them.</p> <p>Another theme in the story is that bad times can happen to anyone. Even Chet's dad hardly had any money and had to hop trains. The text says he came home and he had "tattered clothing." Chet didn't expect his dad to have to ask for food but he did.</p> <p><i>Responses at this level name more than one theme that the story develops. Students can explain how parts of the text develop each theme and will reference specific details or quote the text. If asked, they can discuss the techniques that the author uses to highlight at least one of the themes.</i></p>