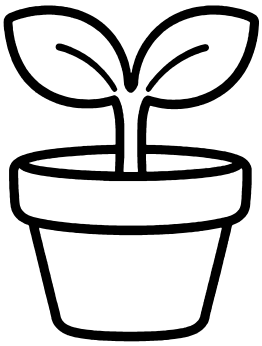
Name _____ Date _____

# Theme and Summary

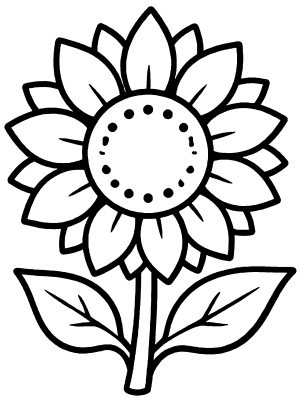
**Read the story. The questions are on the next page.**

## The Seed Jar



On the first warm morning of spring, Grandma Rosa handed Mira a glass jar full of sunflower seeds. “These came from the flowers I grew last year,” she said. “Plant them by the fence, water them every day, and you will see something wonderful.”

Mira pushed each seed into the soil with her thumb and watered the row until the dirt turned dark. The next morning she raced outside before breakfast. The row was exactly as bare as it had been the day before.



After four days of bare dirt, Mira could not stand it any longer. She knelt by the fence and dug up one seed to see what was happening. It had split open, and a tiny white root was curling out of it. Feeling guilty, she pressed it back into the ground, but the root had snapped.

That afternoon she told Grandma Rosa what she had done. Grandma did not scold her. Instead she said, “The most important part of growing happens where you can't see it. A seed has to trust the dark for a while.”

Mira kept watering. A week later, a row of green loops pushed up through the soil, all except one empty spot near the gate. By the end of summer, the sunflowers stood taller than Grandma. Mira saved their seeds in the glass jar, and she left the empty spot by the gate just as it was, so she would always remember.


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Name _____ Date _____

# Theme and Summary

**The Seed Jar: look back at the story to answer.**

**1.** Why did Mira dig up one of the seeds?

Grandma Rosa asked her to check it.

She wanted to plant it somewhere else.

She could not wait to see if it was growing.

**2.** How did Mira feel after the root snapped? Which words tell you?

_____

_____

_____

**3.** What did Grandma Rosa mean when she said a seed "has to trust the dark for a while"?

_____

_____

_____

**4.** Why did Mira leave the empty spot by the gate? What does it show about how she changed?

_____

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**5.** Which theme fits the story best?

Good things take time, so be patient.

Always do what your grandmother says.

Sunflowers are the tallest flowers.

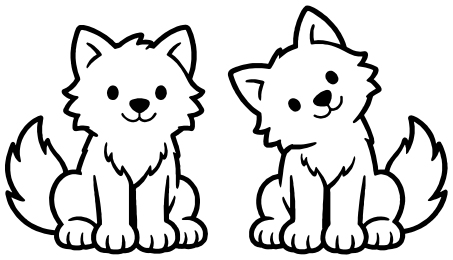

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Name _____ Date _____

# Theme and Summary

**Read the story. The questions are on the next page.**

## The Quietest Pup



Every evening, the wolf pack gathered on the hill above the valley to howl. The pups joined in with yips and squeaks, all except Ash. Ash was the smallest pup in the pack, and the sound that came out of his throat was so thin and wobbly that his brothers and sisters laughed.

So Ash stopped trying. While the others howled, he sat at the edge of the den and listened. He learned the deep voice of his mother, the rough voice of his uncle and the high, sharp voice of his oldest sister. He could tell every wolf apart, even from far away.



One autumn day, the grown wolves went hunting and left the pups near a rocky ridge. A thick fog rolled in, and soon the pups could not see their own paws. They wandered in circles, whimpering. Then, very faintly, a howl drifted through the fog.

“Which way did it come from?” cried his sister. Nobody knew, except Ash. “That's Mother,” he said, “and she is calling from the old pine.” He led the pups step by step, stopping to listen, until the dark shape of the pine rose out of the fog and their mother was waiting beneath it.

That night on the hill, Ash lifted his head and howled. His voice was still thin and wobbly. This time, nobody laughed.


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Name _____ Date _____

# Theme and Summary

**The Quietest Pup: look back at the story to answer.**

**1.** Why did Ash stop howling with the pack?

**2.** What did Ash learn while he sat and listened? Why does it matter later?

**3.** The story ends, “This time, nobody laughed.” What does this tell you without saying it?

The pack now respects Ash.

The other pups were too tired to laugh.

Ash's voice became deep and strong.

**4.** Describe Ash. Use two details from the story.

**5.** What is a theme of the story? Which details show it?


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Name _____ Date _____

# Theme and Summary

**Read the story. The questions are on the next page.**

## The Last Lap



Jonah had trained for the school's mile race for two whole months. Every morning before school, he ran four laps around the park while his dad timed him. His goal was simple: win the gold medal that hung in the trophy case by the gym.

On the day of the race, Jonah settled into second place behind a tall girl named Kai. On the third lap, he stayed right on her heels, saving his energy. On the final lap, he would sprint past her. He had planned it a hundred times.



As they rounded the last curve, Kai's foot caught the edge of the track, and she fell hard. She clutched her ankle, and her face crumpled. Jonah heard the crowd gasp. The finish line was only a few seconds away, and nobody else was close.

Jonah slowed down. Then he stopped. He knelt beside Kai and helped her stand, and with her arm over his shoulders, the two of them limped down the last stretch together. Three runners sprinted past them before they crossed the line.

Jonah finished fifth. There was no gold medal for fifth place, but when he got home, his dad pinned a newspaper photo of the finish to the refrigerator. In the photo, Jonah and Kai were both smiling.


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Name _____ Date _____

# Theme and Summary

**The Last Lap: look back at the story to answer.**

**1.** What was Jonah's goal at the beginning of the story?

_____

_____

**2.** Which detail shows how much the medal mattered to Jonah?

He trained every morning for two months.

Kai was a tall girl.

The race was four laps long.

**3.** Why is Jonah's choice to stop a hard one? Explain using the text.

_____

_____

_____

**4.** Why did Jonah's dad put the photo on the refrigerator?

_____

_____

_____

**5.** Which theme fits the story best?

Practice makes you the fastest.

Being kind matters more than winning.

Races are dangerous.


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Name _____ Date _____

# Summarize a Story

**A summary tells the most important events in a few sentences, in order.**

**1.** Which is the best summary of “The Seed Jar”? **A** **B** **C**

A. Mira plants seeds and waters them. She goes outside before breakfast.

B. Mira plants sunflower seeds but digs one up because she is impatient. Grandma explains that seeds grow in the dark first. Mira waits, the flowers grow tall, and she keeps the empty spot to remember.

C. Grandma Rosa grew sunflowers last year. She keeps the seeds in a glass jar.

**2.** Which is the best summary of “The Quietest Pup”? **A** **B** **C**

A. Wolves howl on a hill. Ash's sister has a high voice.

B. A thick fog rolls in near a rocky ridge.

C. The pups laugh at Ash's howl, so he only listens. When the pups are lost in fog, Ash knows his mother's howl and leads them to her. That night he howls again, and no one laughs.

**3.** Read this summary of “The Last Lap”: “Jonah trains to win the mile race. Kai is a tall girl. On the last lap, Kai falls. Jonah stops to help her, and they finish together.” Which sentence does not belong in a summary? Why?

_____

**4.** Write a summary of “The Last Lap” in two or three sentences.

_____

_____

_____


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Name _____ Date _____

# Find a Theme and Summarize

**Use this page with any story you read.**

## Title

## Main character

## Problem or challenge

## How the character changes or what they learn

## Details that point to the theme

## Theme *a message about life, in a full sentence*

## Summary *the most important events, in order*


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# Theme and Summary

**The Seed Jar: look back at the story to answer.**

**1.** Why did Mira dig up one of the seeds?

Grandma Rosa asked her to check it.

She wanted to plant it somewhere else.

She could not wait to see if it was growing.

**2.** How did Mira feel after the root snapped? Which words tell you?

She felt guilty and sorry. The story says she was "feeling guilty" and that she told Grandma what she had done.

**3.** What did Grandma Rosa mean when she said a seed "has to trust the dark for a while"?

A seed grows under the soil before you can see it, so you have to be patient and wait.

**4.** Why did Mira leave the empty spot by the gate? What does it show about how she changed?

It reminds her of the seed she dug up. It shows she learned to be patient.

**5.** Which theme fits the story best?

Good things take time, so be patient.

Always do what your grandmother says.

Sunflowers are the tallest flowers.


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# Theme and Summary

**The Quietest Pup: look back at the story to answer.**

**1.** Why did Ash stop howling with the pack?

His voice was thin and wobbly, and the other pups laughed at it.

**2.** What did Ash learn while he sat and listened? Why does it matter later?

He learned every wolf's voice. Later it lets him know his mother's howl in the fog and lead the pups to her.

**3.** The story ends, "This time, nobody laughed." What does this tell you without saying it?

- The pack now respects Ash.
- The other pups were too tired to laugh.
- Ash's voice became deep and strong.

**4.** Describe Ash. Use two details from the story.

Ash is quiet and a careful listener. He sits and learns every voice, and he stays calm in the fog to lead the others.

**5.** What is a theme of the story? Which details show it?

Everyone has a strength, even if it is not the one others notice. Ash cannot howl well, but his listening saves the pups.


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# Theme and Summary

**The Last Lap: look back at the story to answer.**

**1.** What was Jonah's goal at the beginning of the story?

He wanted to win the gold medal in the mile race.

**2.** Which detail shows how much the medal mattered to Jonah?

He trained every morning for two months.

Kai was a tall girl.

The race was four laps long.

**3.** Why is Jonah's choice to stop a hard one? Explain using the text.

He had trained for two months and planned to pass Kai, and the finish line was only seconds away. Stopping meant losing the medal.

**4.** Why did Jonah's dad put the photo on the refrigerator?

He was proud of Jonah for helping Kai, even though Jonah did not win.

**5.** Which theme fits the story best?

Practice makes you the fastest.

Being kind matters more than winning.

Races are dangerous.


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# Summarize a Story

**A summary tells the most important events in a few sentences, in order.**

**1.** Which is the best summary of "The Seed Jar"? A (B) C

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**3.** Read this summary of "The Last Lap": "Jonah trains to win the mile race. Kai is a tall girl. On the last lap, Kai falls. Jonah stops to help her, and they finish together." Which sentence does not belong in a summary? Why?

"Kai is a tall girl." It is a small detail that does not change what happens.

**4.** Write a summary of "The Last Lap" in two or three sentences.

Jonah trains for months to win the mile race. On the last lap, the leader, Kai, falls, and Jonah stops to help her finish. He comes in fifth, but his dad is proud of him.


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