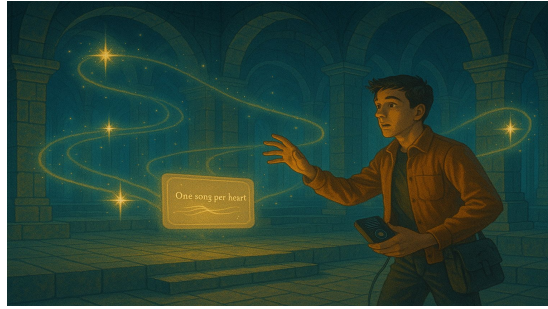


Reading Comprehension Worksheet: Compare and Contrast

Read the short story and answer each question.



The Song Cache

In the towering city of Sonara, music wasn't just entertainment—it was power. Every home, vehicle, and streetlamp ran on musical energy, stored in glowing "song caches." Jasper Martinez was a rhythm engineer, designing loops to keep his neighborhood lit. One night, while testing a new echo-bridge, he stumbled across an ancient chamber underground: a forgotten archive of pure, untouched melodies. The melodies shimmered in the air like starlight. A message appeared: *"One song per heart. Take what you need."* Tempted, Jasper reached for more—he could boost his fame, light an entire district. But then he paused. He took just one, recorded it, and left the rest untouched. The next day, a new line of melody lit the skies across the city. Wordless, but full of warmth. Jasper never told anyone—but he knew: generosity sings farther than greed ever could.



Drop of the Future

Water was rare. One drop could grow food for a family. Zayden Yilmaz was chosen to test a new invention—the "Aqua Seed." It could turn one drop into a year's worth of clean water. But only if used for the community. He entered the testing chamber, where a single drop hovered above the seed. As he approached, a voice spoke: *"You may keep this for yourself—or share it."* Zayden imagined his family, their dusty storage bins, his little sister's dry lips. But then he thought of the fields. The neighbors. The empty tanks. He placed the seed on the platform and let the drop fall. It multiplied. Vines burst through the floor. Fresh water poured into the soil. The colony rejoiced. Zayden went home with nothing in his hands—but everything in his heart.



Name: _____

The Song Cache & Drop of the Future

1. What is one theme shared by both stories?

- A. Fame and fortune come from music
- B. Being brave in danger helps you win
- C. Sharing leads to greater rewards than keeping everything
- D. Rules are meant to be broken

2. What do Jasper and Zayden both choose to do?

- A. They each secretly take something extra
- B. They keep the power for themselves at first
- C. They use what they find to help their whole community
- D. They destroy the items to protect others

3. Fill in the blank:

Both stories show that _____ grows when it is shared, even if the reward isn't immediate.

4. How are the settings different, and how does each setting shape the way generosity is tested?

5. What would have happened if the characters had chosen to keep everything for themselves? How would that change the story's message?



Parent and Teacher Guide

Guide Reading Level: S

Lexile Level: 850L-1000L

Grade Level: 4th Grade, End of the Year

Genre: Sci-Fi with Folklore Elements & Futuristic Fable

Introducing the Text

“These two stories take place in very different settings—one in a city powered by music, and one on a water-scarce planet. But they both show characters who must choose between selfishness and generosity. As we read, we’ll compare how the authors use their settings and story events to teach similar lessons.”

Vocabulary: melody, shimmered, archive, generosity, colony

Before Reading Discussion Questions

1. What does generosity mean to you?
 2. Have you ever read a story set in the future or on another planet?
 3. How might a setting affect the way a theme is shown?
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During Reading Discussion Questions

1. What temptation does Jasper face in the archive?
 2. Why is Zayden’s decision hard, even though it helps others?
 3. What symbols do both stories use to show power or value?
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After Reading Discussion Questions

1. What is similar about how each story shows the reward for generosity?
 2. How do the settings help us understand what’s at stake in each story?
 3. What do these stories suggest about how we treat limited resources?
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Activity Idea

Have students create a comic strip retelling *either* story from the point of view of a different character (e.g., a city resident in Sonara or a farmer in Zayden’s colony). They should include the moment when the character notices the effect of Jasper’s or Zayden’s choice. Then compare the comic strips and discuss how perspective adds to theme.

