Reading Comprehension Worksheet: Compare and Contrast

Read the short story and answer each question.

Maya's Garden

Maya loved her little backyard garden. She had planted carrots, lettuce, and sunflowers, but lately, her plants weren't growing. She didn't want anyone to know. Every day, she watered them and checked the soil, but nothing helped. Her neighbor, Mr. Jenson, peeked over the fence one day. "Need a hand?" he asked. Maya shook her head. "No thanks. I've got it." But after another week with no change, Maya gave in. "Okay… maybe I do need help." Mr. Jenson came over and showed her how to check the roots and add the right compost. In just a few days, her garden perked up. Maya smiled as a sunflower stretched toward the sky.

Maya's Stage Fright

Maya loved her little backyard garden. She had planted carrots, lettuce, and sunflowers, but lately, her plants weren't growing. She didn't want anyone to know. Every day, she watered them and checked the soil, but nothing helped. Her neighbor, Mr. Jenson, peeked over the fence one day. "Need a hand?" he asked. Maya shook her head. "No thanks. I've got it." But after another week with no change, Maya gave in. "Okay… maybe I do need help." Mr. Jenson came over and showed her how to check the roots and add the right compost. In just a few days, her garden perked up. Maya smiled as a sunflower stretched toward the sky.

Name: _____

Maya's Garden & Maya's Stage Fright

1. What do both stories show about Maya?

   A.   She learns to accept help when she needs it.

   B.   She likes to work alone and never changes.

   C.   She always wants to be in charge.

   D.   She only likes gardening.

2. How are the endings of both stories similar?

   A.   Maya succeeds after accepting help.

   B.   Maya quits and goes home.

   C.   Maya wins a prize.

   D.   Maya becomes a teacher.

3. Fill in the blank:

Maya was nervous to speak in the school _____, but she practiced until she felt ready.

4. How are the settings different in *Maya's Garden* and *Maya's Stage Fright*?

_____

_____

_____

5. What is a similar theme that both stories share?

_____

_____

_____

Parent and Teacher Guide

Guide Reading Level: M
Lexile Level: 425L-575L
Grade Level: 3rd Grade, Beginning of the Year
Genre: Realistic Fiction / Series

Introducing the Text

"Today we'll read two short stories about the same character, Maya. As we read, we'll compare how Maya grows in each story, what problems she faces, and how the settings and endings are different or the same."

Vocabulary: garden, compost, rehearse, stage fright, neighbor

Before Reading Discussion Questions

1. What do you know about stories that have the same character in more than one book?
2. Have you ever learned a lesson in one situation that helped you later?
3. Why might an author want to write about the same character more than once?

During Reading Discussion Questions

1. What problem does Maya face in the first story?
2. What challenge does Maya face in the second story?
3. How does Maya get help in each story?

After Reading Discussion Questions

1. What is the same about the lessons Maya learns in both stories?
2. How are the settings and plots different?
3. What do these stories tell us about how people grow?

Activity Idea

Have students create a two-part comic strip or picture book about a character who learns the same lesson in two different situations. They should illustrate the problem, how the character reacts, and how the resolution connects to both settings or plots.