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Question: 1

Which choice best describes the tone of the passage?

- A. Detached
- B. Solemn
- C. Mysterious
- D. Light-hearted

Answer: C

Explanation:

The tone of this passage can be described as mysterious, beginning with a description of a "stranger" that both looks and acts odd. The author proceeds to add to the tone of mystery by introducing Mrs. Hall, whose curiosity grows but is unsatisfied. The tone is not detached (A), like a scientific treatise, or solemn (B), as though describing a very serious subject or warning the audience. While there is a bit of humor, the tone is not light-hearted (D). The description of "biting wind" and "driving snow" and the man nearly dead from cold are too serious.

Question: 2

The word "lymphatic" in line 29 most nearly means

- A. Sluggish
- B. Sloppy
- C. Stingy
- D. Sullen

Answer: A

Explanation:

The word "lymphatic" is an adjective that was used to mean "sluggish" or "lacking energy." Though it is not a common term today, we can infer the meaning from context. Mrs. Hall "brisked up" Millie, implying that she was being slow or lazy. While sloppy (B), stingy (C), and sullen (D) all have negative connotations, they do not fit the context clues.

Question: 3

How does the author use Mrs. Hall's character to provide insight into the stranger's personality?

- A. Answering the reader's questions by having the stranger answer Mrs. Hall's questions

- B. Showing his surliness by contrasting it with Mrs. Hall's good nature
- C. Proving that the stranger was an important person because of Mrs. Hall's reaction
- D. Highlighting the stranger's mystery and silence by Mrs. Hall's curiosity and conversation

Answer: D

Explanation:

The author creates an air of mystery by introducing an odd stranger who looks and acts in an unusual way. This illusion is enhanced by the way he interacts with Mrs. Hall. She is curious and at first speaks politely, but when he responds briefly or not at all, she speaks in annoyance. Since the stranger does not give any enlightening answers, choice A is incorrect. While he does appear to be surly, Mrs. Hall is not very good-natured, so choice B is incorrect. While Mrs. Hall does treat him as important, this is because he is a paying customer, and not because she knows anything about him, so choice C is incorrect.

Question: 4

From context, we can infer that *éclat* in line 34 most nearly means

- A. Lavish display
- B. Annoyance
- C. Careful slowness
- D. Utter disdain

Answer: A

Explanation:

Éclat means an ostentatious display. We can infer this from the context, as Mrs. Hall is very anxious to make a good impression on the well-paying stranger. Her annoyance is toward Millie at this point, not the guest, so choice B is incorrect. Millie is the one who was slow until Mrs. Hall "brisked" her up, so choice C is incorrect. And Mrs. Hall feels interest and respect at this point, not disdain, so choice D is incorrect.

Question: 5

Why does the author emphasize that Mrs. Hall prepares the stranger's meal "with her own hands" (lines 23-24)?

- A. To show that she runs a humble business and serves all of the patrons herself
- B. To show that his business is important to her and make sure the food is prepared correctly
- C. To show that she is a hard-working businesswoman, not merely curious
- D. To show that she is capable and skilled and deserving of more respect than the stranger has offered

Answer: B

Explanation:

Lines 27-29 best explain Mrs. Hall's motivation: "she was resolved to show herself worthy of her good fortune." She has just received an unexpected and high-paying guest and wants to make sure that everything is perfect for him. There is no evidence that she does all the serving herself normally (A); rather, the author seems to emphasize that it is unusual for her to do it herself. She is likely hard-working (C), especially in contrast to her servant Millie, but that is not the author's point. Nor does the author imply that she deserves more respect than the stranger offers due to her skills (D), though she is disappointed at the lack.

Question: 6

What is meant by Mrs. Hall laying things down "in a quick staccato" (lines 59-60)?

- A. She is intimidated by the stranger's lack of response and is working as quickly as she can.
- B. She is annoyed that the stranger ignored her and sets each item down with a bang.
- C. She is impressed by the stranger's money and is doing a very careful job.
- D. She is excited to have a customer and is working enthusiastically.

Answer: B

Explanation:

In the last paragraph, we can see that the stranger's rather rude refusal to respond to Mrs. Hall annoys her. "Staccato" is a musical term referring to short, emphatic notes, so Mrs. Hall emphasizes her irritation at his rudeness by placing things on the table forcefully. She may be intimidated and is working quickly (A), but this is not what the author is trying to show. She is impressed by his money, as seen in lines 26-28, but banging things on the table is not being as careful as she could be (C). She is initially excited to have a customer, but now is expressing irritation, not enthusiasm (D).

Question: 7

What can be deduced about the stranger from his interaction with Mrs. Hall?

- A. He is emotionless and has difficulty engaging in conversation.
- B. He is ill or injured and thus it is physically painful for him to speak.
- C. He is extremely shy and attempts to avoid human interaction whenever possible.
- D. He is trying to hide something and thus attempting to discourage conversation. Correct

Answer: D

Explanation:

The stranger makes a clear effort to keep conversation to a minimum. He does not haggle over the price and gives short responses, or none at all, to Mrs. Hall's questions. Additionally, he keeps his hat and coat on and keeps his back turned to her, hiding any view of his body from her. The reader can infer that he is being secretive and intentionally cutting conversation short for this purpose. We cannot suppose he is emotionless (A) after his impassioned opening remarks (lines 14-15). There is no evidence that speech is physically painful (B) or that he is painfully shy (C).

Question: 8

Based on context, what underlying reason might Mrs. Hall have in asking to take the guest's coat and hat?

- A. She wants him to be as comfortable as possible.
- B. She wants to know what he looks like.
- C. She wants to protect her carpet from the moisture.
- D. She wants to check the pockets for loose change.

Answer: C

Explanation:

In lines 40-44 the author notes that Mrs. Hall sees that melted snow is dripping off of the guest's coat onto her carpet, and she then asks to take his coat and hat into the kitchen to dry them. The reader can infer that she is concerned for her carpet. She does want her guest to be comfortable (A), but this is not an underlying reason. She may well wonder what he looks like (B), but the passage does not give any evidence of this. Likewise, there is no evidence that she wants to steal from his pockets (D).

Question: 9

As used in line 18, the word "strike" most nearly means

- A. To strongly affect
- B. To collide with
- C. To agree upon
- D. To deliberate over

Answer: C

Explanation:

From context, we can see that the stranger is seeking to agree on a deal with Mrs. Hall. We also know that he is eager to settle the matter with no haggling (line 26), so answer choice D is incorrect. The literal meanings of strike (A, B) do not apply in this instance.

Question: 10

Which of the following selections best illustrates the stranger's desire for privacy?

- A. Lines 6-9 ("He was wrapped ... tip of his nose")
- B. Lines 24-28 ("A guest... her good fortune")
- C. Lines 38-40 ("His gloved hands... lost in thought")
- D. Lines 49-53 ("I prefer ... cheeks and face") Correct

Answer: D

Explanation:

The clearest place in the passage that shows the stranger's desire to remain hidden is in lines 49-53, when he tells Mrs. Hall that he wants to keep his coat and hat even though he is in front of a fire. This part also notes that his glasses and beard completely hide his face. Lines 6-9 (A) also mention how he is completely covered, but in this case, it is not just for privacy but a logical protection from the weather. Lines 24-28 (B) have nothing to do with the guest's privacy. Lines 38-40 (C) mention that his hands are covered, but the passage does not at this point imply that it is a privacy issue.



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