

Collections Online Assessment

Once Upon A Time By Nadine Gordimer

Comprehension

Read each of the following questions. Then choose the letter of the best answer.

1. In the introduction to the fairy tale (lines 1–48), how does Gordimer compare herself to other white people in South Africa?

- a. She is poorer than most other white people.
- b. She takes more steps to protect herself.
- c. She has the same fears as other white people.
- d. She lives in a safer part of the country.

2. In the fairy tale, the husband and wife fear that

- a. they will not be able to find trusted servants.
- b. their neighbors will be jealous of them.
- c. their little boy will be shot at school.
- d. they will be attacked by people of another color.

3. Because burglar alarms are often set off by pet cats, people in the neighborhood

- a. get rid of their cats.
- b. do not hear intruders breaking in.
- c. change to better alarm systems.
- d. pay more for insurance.

4. The wife wants her housemaid to offer "bread and tea" to the unemployed people who linger on the street near the house (line 126). Why does the housemaid refuse?

- a. She thinks the people will be offended if they do not offer a complete lunch.
- b. She does not trust the people and fears they will break into the house.
- c. She feels this task is beyond the scope of her duties as a housemaid.
- d. She is told by the husband that it is not safe to talk to the people.

5. What theme does Gordimer communicate through the ending of the fairy tale?

- a. Animals know how to protect themselves.
- b. Parents should not read fairy tales to their children.
- c. Actions motivated by extreme fear can be harmful.
- d. Children are more open-minded than adults.

Vocabulary

Choose the answer that best explains the meaning of each underlined word.

6. When something distends, it gets

- a. bigger.
- b. colder.
- c. louder.
- d. softer.

7. What are intentions?

- a. conflicts
- b. methods

- c. plans
- d. warnings

8. When people act audaciously, they act

- a. aimlessly.
- b. boldly.
- c. cleverly.
- d. honestly.

9. What is an intrusion?

- a. an assault
- b. a break-in
- c. an idea
- d. a retreat

10. When an object is serrated, it is

- a. bright.
- b. flat.
- c. jagged.
- d. harmless.

Written Response

Answer the following questions based on your knowledge of the story.

11. What is the connection between the events Gordimer describes in the introduction (lines 1–48) and the events in the fairy tale? Include two details from the text to support your answer.

12. How is the use of the phrase “happily ever after” in this story different from its use in traditional fairy tales? Include at least one detail from the text to support your answer.