"Flower Power"

Reading Comprehension – Short Stories Directions: Read the story. Then answer the questions below

When her grandmother's health began to deteriorate in the fall of 1994, Mary would make the drive from Washington, DC to Winchester, VA every few days.

She hated highway driving, finding it ugly and monotonous. She preferred to take meandering back roads to her grandmother's hospital. When she drove through the rocky town of Harpers Ferry, the beauty of the rough waters churning at the intersection of the Shenandoah and Potomac rivers always captivated her.

Toward the end of her journey, Mary had to get on highway 81. It was here that she discovered a surprising bit of beauty during one of her trips. Along the median of the highway, there was a long stretch of wildflowers. They were thin and delicate and purple, and swayed in the wind as if whispering poems to each other.

The first time she saw the flowers, Mary was seized by an uncontrollable urge to pull over on the highway and yank a bunch from the soil. She carried them into her grandmother's room when she arrived at the hospital and placed them in a water pitcher by her bed.

For a moment her grandmother seemed more lucid than usual. She thanked Mary for the flowers, commented on their beauty and asked where she had gotten them. Mary was overjoyed by the ability of the flowers to wake something up inside her ailing grandmother.

Afterwards, Mary began carrying scissors in the car during her trips to visit her grandmother. She would quickly glide onto the shoulder, jump out of the car, and clip a bunch of flowers. Each time Mary placed the flowers in the pitcher, her grandmother's eyes would light up and they would have a splendid conversation.

One morning in late October, Mary got a call that her grandmother had taken a turn for the worse. Mary was in such a hurry to get to her grandmother that she sped past her flower spot. She decided to turn around, head several miles back, and cut a bunch.

Mary arrived at the hospital to find her grandmother very weak and unresponsive. She placed the flowers in the pitcher and sat down to hold her grandmother's hand. She felt a squeeze on her fingers. It was the last conversation they had.

Questions:

1) As used at the beginning of the story, which is the best antonym for deteriorate? A. improve B. increase C. adjust D. accumulate	2) As used in the beginning of the story, which is the best definition for captivated? A. energized B. fascinated C. humbled D. relaxed
3) "She hated highway driving, finding it ugly and monotonous." Which of the following is the best way to rewrite the above sentence, while keeping its original meaning?	4) "They were thin and delicate and purple, and swayed in the wind as if whispering poems to each other." Which of the following literary techniques is used in the above sentence? A. vernacular, suggesting the dialect of a particular geographical area

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A. She hated highway driving, finding it ugly and tedious. B. She hated highway driving, finding it ugly and confusing. C. She hated highway driving, finding it ugly and nerve-wracking. D. She hated highway driving, finding it ugly and time-consuming.	B. assonance, characterized by the repetition of identical or similar vowel sounds in successive words C. foreshadowing, characterized by the use of hints to suggest what is to come D. personification, characterized by a thing or object being endowed with human qualities
5) Which best describes what the act of stopping for flowers on the side of the highway became for Mary? A. monotonous B. a ritual C. a regret D. torturous	6) What other title would best fit this passage? A. “The Fall” B. "On the Road" C. “Wildflower Poetry” D. "Living for Tomorrow"
7) In the final paragraph, the author writes, “She felt a squeeze on her fingers. It was the last conversation they had.” Which of the following best describes what the author is trying to communicate in these sentences? A. Mary and her grandmother held hands and had a splendid conversation B. Mary’s grandmother was too weak to communicate with Mary C. Mary and her grandmother communicated through touch D. Mary’s grandmother liked the flowers that Mary brought	8) Which of the following accurately describe Mary’s personality? I. impatient II. drawn towards beauty III. loving A. I only B. I and II C. II and III D. I, II, and III
9) As used in the middle of the story, which is the best antonym for lucid? A. false B. realistic C. muddled D. determined	10) What do the flowers come to signify most for Mary? A. the natural beauty of U.S. highways B. an opportunity to compose herself before visiting her grandmother C. a final chance to connect with her grandmother D. a way to make the hospital room more pleasant.

Do you have many routines? Do you like routines? Explain.

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