

A Choose the correct answer for the following questions.

- 1 We can infer from paragraphs 1–3 that the author is a _____.
 a teacher b poet c student d painter
- 2 Why does the author not consider the 50-word story in paragraph 8 a "short story"?
 a It is not really complete.
 b It is too easy to read.
 c It doesn't have a conclusion or point.
 d It doesn't lead to a life-changing experience.
- 3 Which does NOT matter when defining what a short story is?
 a the number of words
 b the number of characters
 c a consistent theme
 d its effect on the reader
- 4 Which statement is Isabelle Allende most likely to agree with?
 a Short stories need to be refined and perfected.
 b Short stories don't need to have details.
 c Novels are not as good as short stories.
 d Authors should try to write more short stories.

B Answer the following questions using information from the passage.

- 1 What does the title of the passage suggest about people's understanding of short stories?

- 2 How are poems and short stories similar? Give two examples.

- 3 How does the author feel about word forms like anecdotes and vignettes?

- 4 What does the author mean when he says *Great writers can do in 600 words what a solid writer might manage in 1,100* (lines 39–40)?

C Discuss the following questions with a partner.

- 1 Do you agree with Isabelle Allende that short stories are harder to write than novels? Why, or why not?
- 2 Do you believe that reading a good story can be a life-changing experience? Why, or why not?

Reading Comprehension

Check Your Understanding

 Critical Thinking

Vocabulary Comprehension

Words in Context

A Choose the best answer. The words in blue are from the passage.

- 1 Which decision is more likely to be **arbitrary**?
a choosing which car to buy b choosing which elevator to enter
- 2 Which has **facets**?
a a bathroom b someone's personality
- 3 Which task requires **precision**?
a making a sandwich b making a watch
- 4 Something **exquisite** is usually of ____ quality.
a high b low
- 5 Someone whose hair is **sparse** is probably ____.
a younger b older
- 6 People usually tell **anecdotes** about ____.
a themselves b the news
- 7 When you **presume** something, it is ____.
a proven b unproven
- 8 Someone with **insight** has more ____.
a money b knowledge
- 9 How would you feel if you had a **profound** experience?
a inspired b indifferent
- 10 To **reinforce** an idea, you ____.
a repeat it several times b think of other alternatives

B Complete the following sentences using the words in blue from A. You might have to change the form of the word.

- 1 The soldiers put bags of sand behind the seawall in order to _____ it before the storm arrived.
- 2 My father likes to tell us funny _____ about his childhood.
- 3 Nelson Mandela, the former president of South Africa, said that his experience in prison had a(n) _____ effect on his life.
- 4 We need _____ sales figures for the meeting because they'll be included in an official report. Please don't pick some _____ numbers out of thin air.
- 5 Recent reports on melting glaciers in the Arctic have given us more _____ into how our actions can cause global warming.
- 6 It's important for entrepreneurs to be familiar with all _____ of a company.
- 7 The population of the town has grown _____ because many people are moving to the city.
- 8 She has _____ taste in clothes and is always very well-dressed.
- 9 In court, the person facing trial is always _____ innocent until proven guilty.