

Name _____ Date _____

Manners

David stood up and smiled at the older lady who was coming down the aisle of the bus, letting her know that he was giving her his seat. She thanked him and sat down, setting her grocery bags on the floor in front of her.

"Thank you, young man," she said. "Where did you learn such nice manners?" "My parents, I guess," said David.

"Well, they taught you well," observed the lady. "What's your name?"

"David, ma'am."

"You even say ma'am!" she exclaimed. "I'm Mrs. Watson. Pleased to meet you, David." "You, too, ma'am," answered David.

At the next stop, several people got off the bus, including the person sitting next to Mrs. Watson. "Here, son," she said to David. "Have a seat. There are plenty of seats now."

Once David was seated, Mrs. Watson looked at him and asked, "What else did your parents teach you about manners?"

"They taught me about saying yes, ma'am and no, sir—and please and thank you and you're welcome, of course," replied David. "And they taught me to address grown-ups by their last names, like Mr. or Mrs. Smith."

"Good," said Mrs. Watson, nodding her head in approval. "Did they teach you about opening doors for other people?"

"Yes, ma'am, they did," said David. "The other kids look at me funny sometimes when I open doors for them, but I don't mind. Grown-ups always like it."

"Well, you keep opening doors for the other kids, David," said Mrs. Watson. "You're setting a good example for them."

The next bus stop was in front of the city library. "This is where I get off," said David, standing up. "It was nice to meet you." A young woman came down the aisle toward the back exit, and David stepped aside to let her pass.

"Thank you," said the woman. "You're welcome," said David.

"This is my stop, too," said Mrs. Watson, gathering up her grocery bags. "I live just a short distance from the library. It's nice for a book lover like me!"

As Mrs. Watson stood to move into the aisle, she stumbled a bit, and grabbed the back of the seat to catch herself.

"May I hold your bags while you get off the bus?" asked David, stepping forward to help. "That would be very nice. Thank you, David," said Mrs. Watson.

David took the bags with one hand, stepped off the bus, and turned to give his hand to Mrs. Watson as she came down the steps.

"Thank you, son," said Mrs. Watson. "I'm not as steady on my feet as I was when I was young."

"Neither is my grandmother," said David. "She uses a walking cane, but I think it makes her feel better to hold my arm when we walk."

"You're a good grandson," said Mrs. Watson, reaching for her grocery bags. "Here, I'll take those now."

"I'll be glad to carry them to your house for you, Mrs. Watson," said David. "It's not that far."

Mrs. Watson smiled at David and nodded her head. "It's very nice of you to offer," she said, "and I gladly accept! Thank you."

They began to walk in the direction of Mrs. Watson's house, and David changed his usually fast walk to match Mrs. Watson's slower pace.

"So, David, what do you do when you're not helping ladies carry their groceries?" asked Mrs. Watson.

"I read a lot, and I play baseball with my dad and my brother," said David. "I like to cook, too, so I help my mom in the kitchen sometimes. She's a really good cook, and she's taught me a lot."

"Those are all good things," said Mrs. Watson. "You sound like a very interesting young man. What are you going to do at the library today?"

David stopped, and Mrs. Watson noticed that he looked shy.

"I'm doing some reading for a story I'm writing," he said. "It's about a boy who grows up in the woods but gets adopted by a rich man he meets. The man recognizes how smart the boy is and wants to help him go to school and have a better life."

"Is this for a school assignment?" asked Mrs. Watson.

"Sort of," said David. "My history teacher knows I like to write stories, so she gives me extra credit for any stories I write that relate to what we're studying.

This story is set in the late 1800s, so I need to learn more about life back then—like what schools were like and how people lived."

"Well, they made a much bigger fuss about manners back then," said Mrs. Watson, "and I happen to have a book about manners that belonged to my great-grandfather and was written in the 1800s. I think the book will help you make your characters more true to life. I'd be glad to let you borrow it."

"That would be great!" said David. "I promise to take good care of it."

"I know you will," said Mrs. Watson. "You've shown that you can be trusted, and I'm glad to help. There's only one condition."

"What?" asked David.

"You have to let me be the first to read your story when it's finished," said Mrs. Watson, smiling. "Deal?" "Deal," said David. "Thank you!"

1. What is the central message of the selection?
 - A Having good manners is a lot of trouble and never appreciated.
 - B Having good manners makes people more willing to help.
 - C Good manners take a lot of time and work.
 - D Good manners are always practiced at school.
2. Which sentence from the selection supports the central message?
 - A. "The man recognizes how smart the boy is and wants to help him go to school and have a better life."
 - B. "My history teacher knows I like to write stories, so she gives me extra credit for any stories I write that relate to what we're studying."
 - C. "I think the book will help you make your characters more true to life."
 - D. "You've shown that you can be trusted, and I'm glad to help."
3. Which sentence from the selection supports that David uses good manners?
 - A. "At the next stop, several people got off the bus, including the person sitting next to Mrs. Watson."
 - B. "'This is where I get off,' said David, standing up."
 - C. "'May I hold your bags while you get off the bus?' asked David, stepping forward to help."
 - D. "'I read a lot, and I play baseball with my dad and my brother,' said David."
4. Which sentence from the selection supports the idea that David is not bothered by what his friends think about him?
 - A. "David stood up and smiled at the older lady who was coming down the aisle of the bus."
 - B. "'Here, son,' she said to David. 'Have a seat. There are plenty of seats now.' "
 - C. "'The other kids look at me funny sometimes when I open doors for them, but I don't mind.' "