

“The Street of the Cañon” from *Mexican Village* by Josephina Niggli**Selection Test****Critical Reading**

In the blank, write the letter of the one best answer.

- _____ 1. What might readers logically predict about the stranger after reading the details presented in the opening lines of the story?
- He plans to dance at the party with a certain person.
 - He is deliberately going where he will be unwelcome, where his presence could cause a commotion.
 - He is carrying cheese to a party.
 - He is on a casual walk through a neighboring town.
- _____ 2. Why is the stranger drawn to the young girl at the party with “laughing black eyes”?
- She is his relative.
 - She seems frightened and unsure of herself.
 - He recognizes her and plans to dance with her.
 - She is the only person at the party who seems friendly.
- _____ 3. When the stranger asks the orchestra to play the *Virgencita*, the favorite song of Hidalgo, Sarita thinks the stranger is
- making a foolish and tasteless joke.
 - unaware of the significance of the song.
 - a man from the village of Hidalgo.
 - trying to embarrass and upset her.
- _____ 4. What is the stranger, Pepe Gonzalez, hiding from the young woman as the two dance?
- that he is enjoying her company
 - that he has never been to San Juan Iglesias before
 - that he is from Hidalgo
 - that he is not enjoying the party
- _____ 5. What is the most recent cause of tension between Hidalgo and San Juan Iglesias?
- It is a land dispute.
 - Both claim ownership of a chest full of gold that was found.
 - Both claim ownership of the bones of a famous historian.
 - Both want to be leaders in cheese production.
- _____ 6. Based on what Sarita says as she dances with Pepe, what logical prediction can a reader make about what her reaction will be when she learns she has danced with a person from Hidalgo?
- She will want to meet other Hidalgo people.
 - She will be pleasantly surprised.
 - She will be shocked and confused.
 - She will leave the party.
- _____ 7. Why does the author include the following passage, written from Pepe’s point of view?
- The Hidalgo man twisted his mouth remembering how Rubén the candymaker had ridden across the whitewashed line high on the cañon trail that marked the division between the Three Marys’ and the Sabinas’ sides of the mountains, and then had

fallen in a faint from his saddle because his left arm was broken. There was no candy in Hidalgo for six weeks.

- a. to discount Sarita's perspective on the situation
 - b. to introduce Rubén as a character
 - c. to show the brutality of the fight
 - d. to present Pepe's perspective on the events described by Sarita
- ___ 8. What do Pepe Gonzalez's actions reveal about his personality?
- a. He is gentle and kind.
 - b. He is bold and manipulative.
 - c. He is a coward.
 - d. He is interested only in parties.
- ___ 9. What is Sarita's attitude as she describes Pepe's reputation for "doing the impossible"?
- a. contempt for his escapades
 - b. fear of his wildness
 - c. amusement at the rumors
 - d. admiration for his courage
- ___ 10. At the end of the story, what causes an uproar among the guests?
- a. They realize Pepe is dancing at the party.
 - b. Pepe makes his identity known to Don Roméo.
 - c. The goat cheese brought by Pepe is spoiled.
 - d. The goat cheese brought by Pepe is found.
- ___ 11. Which of the following is a logical deduction as to why Pepe leaves the party?
- a. He needs to get home.
 - b. He knows the crowd will figure out that he and the cheese are from Hildago.
 - c. He feels Sarita will think he likes her if he stays.
 - d. He feels guilty for being at a party at San Juan Iglesias.
- ___ 12. Why does the author reveal Pepe's identity through the thoughts of Sarita?
- a. to show that Sarita is not angry but intrigued with the idea that she danced with Pepe
 - b. to show Sarita's rage over the incident
 - c. to show she is the only one left at the party
 - d. to show the reaction of Don Roméo to the incident
- ___ 13. Which of the following creates suspense in the story?
- a. the package of cheese
 - b. the historian's remains
 - c. the birthday party
 - d. the song *Virgencita*
- ___ 14. Which of the following lines from the story best explains Pepe's motivation for crashing the party?
- a. ". . . Don Rómolo Balderas was the greatest historian in the entire Republic."
 - b. "When all the world says a thing cannot be done, he does it to prove the world wrong."
 - c. "But most of all there were cheeses, for the Three Marys was a cheese-eating valley."
 - d. "Such fine manners were not common to the town of San Juan Iglesias."
- ___ 15. At the end of the story, the reader does not know if the young stranger really is
- a. interested in marrying Sarita.
 - b. able to do the impossible.
 - c. from the village of Hidalgo.
 - d. the son of Don Timotéo.

- ___ 16. Which of the following statements best expresses the theme, or central idea, of “The Street of the Cañon”?
- a. A man clever enough to pat the lamb has a right to play with the sheep.
 - b. An excessive preoccupation with the dead spoils the lives of the living.
 - c. A girl who is overly friendly with strangers risks damage to her reputation.
 - d. The feelings of the young will always challenge the prejudices of their elders.

Vocabulary and Grammar

- ___ 17. Which of the following is the best meaning of the word *nonchalantly*?
- a. timidly
 - b. arrogantly
 - c. slowly
 - d. casually
- ___ 18. Which of the following sentences does not contain a prepositional phrase?
- a. As the music began to play, the stranger slipped his arm around Sarita’s waist.
 - b. Little by little the stranger edged Sarita closer to the door.
 - c. Before the stranger could answer, the chattering in the patio swelled to louder proportions.
 - d. She realized to her own amazement that she was more apprehensive than angry.
- ___ 19. Which of the following is the best meaning of the word *audaciously*?
- a. calmly
 - b. angrily
 - c. boldly
 - d. nervously
- ___ 20. An infinitive always ends with a _____, and a prepositional phrase always ends with a _____.
- | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. verb; noun or pronoun | c. noun; pronoun |
| b. verb or adverb; preposition | d. noun or pronoun; verb |

Essay Questions

21. In an essay, explain how the author uses third-person omniscient point of view in “The Street of the Cañon.” What does she accomplish by using this point of view? Support your response with details from the story.
22. In an essay, explain the following quotation from “The Street of the Cañon”: “When all the world says a thing cannot be done, he does it to prove the world wrong.” What is the thing Pepe is trying to do? How does this relate to the theme of the story?
23. In an essay, analyze the character of Sarita and her feelings toward Pepe Gonzalez. How do her feelings relate to the theme of the story? In what way is the ending of the story unexpected?