

Comparing Stories in the Same Genre

Name: _____

Date: _____

Score: _____ / 10



Quick Review

Two stories in the same genre (for example, two adventure stories) often share themes — but each writer treats those themes a little differently. Compare **HOW** each story handles the same idea, not just whether they share it.

PART 1 — READ

Read the passage. Then answer the questions.

Two adventure-story openings

PASSAGE 1 — "The Map under the Floorboard". Tomás had lived in his grandmother's house for thirteen summers before he ever noticed the loose floorboard under the kitchen sink. He noticed it the morning after her funeral, when he sat on the cold tiles trying not to cry and felt the wood shift beneath his heel. Inside the small space below was a tin lunchbox, a roll of yellow paper, and a single brass key with no chain. The yellow paper, when he unrolled it, was a map. Half the streets had names he did not recognize. The other half were the streets of his own town, but the river was drawn going the wrong way. At the bottom of the map, in his grandmother's slanted handwriting, were six words: "Bring this back when you understand." Tomás folded the map carefully, put the key in his pocket, and stood up. He did not know what the words meant. He knew, though, that he was going to find out.

PASSAGE 2 — "The Boat at the End of the Street". Anika lived four houses from the canal, close enough that on hot nights she could hear the boats tap their ropes against the dock. She had been told a hundred times never to take a boat out alone — but the morning she found the small green rowboat tied at the **END** of the street, with no name on its side and no owner in sight, every one of those hundred warnings went very quiet in her head. She ran home and packed three things: a sandwich, a notebook, and the compass her grandfather had given her for her tenth birthday. She did not have a plan. She had a feeling. The feeling was that the boat had been left there for **HER**. By noon she had untied the rope. By half past noon she was a small green dot moving slowly down the canal, and the houses were beginning to look like houses she had never seen before.

PART 2 — PRACTICE

Use **BOTH** passages to answer each question.

- Both passages can **BEST** be described as belonging to which genre?
 - mystery / detective stories with a clear crime to solve
 - fantasy stories set in invented worlds
 - historical fiction set hundreds of years ago
 - realistic adventure stories about a young person leaving the familiar



2. Which idea is treated as a THEME in BOTH passages?
 - A. Children should always obey the warnings adults have given them.
 - B. Curiosity can pull a person out of safety and into the unknown.
 - C. Family secrets must always be kept hidden from outsiders.
 - D. The best adventures happen during the winter.
3. How is the START of the adventure DIFFERENT in the two passages?
 - A. Passage 1 starts with a stolen object; passage 2 starts with a borrowed object.
 - B. Passage 1 starts with a friend; passage 2 starts with an enemy.
 - C. Passage 1 starts with a map left by family; passage 2 starts with a boat left by no one Anika knows.
 - D. Passage 1 starts with a death in the family; passage 2 starts with a death in the family.
4. Which sentence BEST describes how the two passages handle the idea of "leaving safety behind"?
 - A. Passage 1 leaves quietly with a folded map; passage 2 leaves more dramatically by untying a rope and floating away.
 - B. Both passages end before the main character actually leaves.
 - C. Passage 1 leaves in fear; passage 2 leaves in anger.
 - D. Both passages show the main character leaving with a friend along for safety.
5. What is ONE major SIMILARITY in how the two main characters are shown?
 - A. Both characters are shown ignoring an adult's warning out loud before leaving.
 - B. Both characters are shown deciding to act, even though they do not yet know what they are walking into.
 - C. Both characters are shown telling another person about their plan before leaving.
 - D. Both characters are shown finding a written message that explains everything they need to do.
6. How are the OBJECTS that pull each character into the adventure DIFFERENT?
 - A. The map is something Tomás CHOOSES to find; the boat is something Anika is sent to find.
 - B. The map is from a stranger; the boat is from a relative.
 - C. The map and the boat are both gifts handed to each character directly.
 - D. The map is from someone Tomás KNEW (his grandmother); the boat is from someone Anika does NOT know.
7. Based on details from BOTH passages, which sentence BEST captures the DIFFERENCE in TONE between the two openings?
 - A. Both passages have an angry tone that builds toward an argument with an adult.
 - B. Both passages have the same flat, neutral tone, as if reporting facts.
 - C. Passage 1 has a quieter, more tender tone (family loss, careful folding); passage 2 has a brighter, more reckless tone (warnings going quiet, a feeling instead of a plan).
 - D. Passage 1 has a humorous tone, while passage 2 has a frightening tone.



8. Both passages end with the main character _____ the next, unknown step. (Use ONE word that fits both endings.)

Answer: _____

9. Choose ONE theme both passages share. Then explain in 2-3 sentences how each passage treats that theme DIFFERENTLY. Use one detail from EACH passage.

10. Anika acts on "a feeling" with no plan; Tomás folds the map carefully and stands up. Which character's start to the adventure do YOU think is better — and why? Use evidence from BOTH passages, and use what you know about adventure stories.



Answer Keys

- 1 A B C D
- 2 A B C D
- 3 A B C D
- 4 A B C D
- 5 A B C D

- 6 A B C D
- 7 A B C D
- 8
- 9
- 10

Explanations


1. D	Both have a present-day, realistic setting (a kitchen, a canal) and an ordinary kid stepping into the unknown — that is realistic adventure. A is wrong (no crime); B is wrong (no invented world); C is wrong (no historical setting given).
2. B	Both kids leave a familiar place (kitchen, street) because something pulls them on — the curiosity-and-unknown theme. A is the OPPOSITE of what passage 2 dramatizes; C invents a secrecy theme; D is wrong about both settings (one is summer, the other a hot morning).
3. C	Passage 1 begins with a discovery left by Tomás's grandmother; passage 2 begins with an unowned boat appearing at the end of Anika's street — a family-tied start vs. a stranger start. A is wrong — the map is left, not stolen; the boat is taken, not borrowed. B invents friend/enemy; D is wrong about passage 2.
4. A	Passage 1 ends with Tomás folding a map and standing up — quiet, deliberate; passage 2 ends with Anika already a green dot moving down the canal — faster, more dramatic. B is wrong — both DO leave by the end; C reads emotions the texts do not give; D is wrong — both are alone.
5. B	"He did not know what the words meant. He knew, though, that he was going to find out." / "She did not have a plan. She had a feeling." — both kids commit before they understand. A is partly true of Anika alone; C is wrong (neither tells anyone); D is wrong about Anika (no message).
6. D	The map carries Tomás's grandmother's handwriting (a person he knew); the boat has no name, no owner, and Anika finds it by chance (no known sender). A reverses the texts; B reverses them too; C is wrong — neither is handed directly.
7. C	"Trying not to cry," "folded the map carefully" — quiet, tender; vs. "every one of those hundred warnings went very quiet," "a small green dot moving slowly down the canal" — bright, reckless. A invents anger; B contradicts both passages' careful word choices; D swaps the moods.
8.	Answer: Strong one-word answers: "taking," "choosing," "beginning," "starting," "facing." Tomás "stood up" and decided he was going to find out; Anika has already untied the rope and is moving down the canal — both are at the moment of taking the next step. NOT acceptable: "refusing," "avoiding," "sleeping," or any word that means the OPPOSITE of acting; multi-word phrases. Look at what each character actually DOES in the last sentence of each passage.



9.	<p>Answer: Strong answer: names a shared theme (e.g., "curiosity pulling a person from safety into the unknown," "the unknown can call to a person," "acting on instinct before understanding") and contrasts the treatments — passage 1 treats it tenderly through a family object Tomás was MEANT to find someday (the grandmother's map and message), while passage 2 treats it more recklessly through a chance discovery and ignored warnings (the unowned boat, hundred warnings going quiet). Acceptable variations as long as both passages are quoted/paraphrased and the contrast is real. NOT acceptable: answers that only describe ONE passage; answers that name a theme but do not show the difference; one-word "theme" answers like "adventure." Same theme + different TREATMENT — show one quiet/family detail and one bold/chance detail.</p>
10.	<p>Answer: Strong answers commit to ONE character with reasoned text-based justification: e.g., (a) Tomás's start is better because adventure stories work best when the hero takes a careful, thoughtful first step — folding the map and pocketing the key shows he can be trusted not to lose what he just found; or (b) Anika's start is better because adventure stories often need the hero to act quickly on instinct — "every one of those hundred warnings went very quiet" gets her IN the boat while Tomás is still standing in the kitchen. Either choice can earn full credit if the answer (1) names ONE character, (2) gives a specific detail from EACH passage, and (3) connects to the genre. NOT acceptable: "both are good" with no commitment; preferences with no text evidence; reasoning based on outside stories only. Pick one. Defend with one specific detail from each passage AND one thing you know about how adventure stories usually work.</p>



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