

KEY * Post-Test – Narrative * KEY

Name _____ Hour _____ Date _____

Directions: Read the following passages and answer the questions that follow. Choose the one best answer to each question and write the letter in the blank.

***Betsy on the Farm* by Dorothy Canfield**

The following passage is taken from the novel Understood Betsy, set around 1917 on a farm in a medium-sized city in a medium-sized state in the middle of this country. In many farmhouses at that time, the kitchen was located on the main floor, and the dining room was on the second level so that everyone could stay warm during the cold winters. When the family sat down to dinner after working in the fields, fresh meats like chicken were a welcome luxury. In this passage, the main character, Elizabeth Ann (who is called by her nickname Betsy), visits her Aunt Abigail, her Uncle Henry, and her Cousin Ann.

Betsy was very much surprised to hear Cousin Ann's voice calling, "Dinner!" down the stairs. It did not seem possible that the whole morning had gone by. "Here," said Aunt Abigail, "just put that pat on a plate, will you, and take it upstairs as you go." The little girl smiled and skipped up the stairs proudly with her butter.

Dinner was smoking on the table, which was set in the midst of a great pool of sunlight. A very large black-and-white dog, with a great bushy tail, was walking around and around the table, sniffing the air. He looked as big as a bear to Betsy; and as he walked his great red tongue hung out of his mouth and his white teeth gleamed horribly. Betsy shrank back in terror, clutching her plate of butter with tense fingers. Cousin Ann said, over her shoulder: "Oh, bother! There's old Shep, got up to pester us begging for scraps! *Shep!* You go and lie down this minute!"

To Betsy's astonishment and immense relief, the great animal turned, drooping his head sadly, walked back across the floor, got up on the couch again, and laid his head down on one paw very forlornly, turning up the whites of his eyes meekly at Cousin Ann.

Aunt Abigail, who had just pulled herself up the stairs, panting, said, between laughing and puffing: "I'm glad I'm not an animal on this farm. Ann does boss them around so."

"Well, *somebody* has to!" said Cousin Ann, advancing on the table with a platter. This proved to have chicken fricassee on it, and Betsy's heart melted at the smell. She loved chicken gravy on hot biscuits beyond anything in the world, but chickens are so expensive when you buy them in the market that Aunt Harriet hadn't had them very often for dinner. And there was a plate of biscuits, golden brown, just coming out of the oven! She sat down very quickly, her mouth watering, and attacked with extreme haste the big plateful of food which Cousin Ann passed her.

At Aunt Harriet's she had always been aware that everybody watched her anxiously as she ate, and she had heard so much about her light appetite that she felt she must live up to her reputation, and had a very natural and human hesitation about eating all she wanted when there happened to be something she liked very much. But nobody here knew that she "only ate enough to keep a bird alive," and that her "appetite was so capricious!" Nor did anybody notice her while she stowed away the chicken and gravy and hot biscuits and currant jelly and baked potatoes and apple pie — when did Betsy ever eat such a meal before? She actually felt her belt grow tight.

KEY * Post-Test – Narrative * KEY

In the middle of the meal Cousin Ann got up to answer the telephone, which was in the next room. The instant the door had closed behind her, Uncle Henry leaned forward, tapped Betsy on the shoulder, and nodded toward the sofa. His eyes were twinkling, and as for Aunt Abigail, she began to laugh silently, shaking all over, her napkin at her mouth to stifle the sound. Betsy turned wonderingly and saw the old dog cautiously and noiselessly letting himself down from the sofa, one ear cocked rigidly in the direction of Cousin Ann's voice in the next room. "The old tyke!" said Uncle Henry. "He always sneaks up to the table to be fed if Ann goes out for a minute. Here, Betsy, you're nearest, give him this piece of skin from the chicken neck." The big dog padded forward across the room, evidently in such a state of terror about Cousin Ann that Betsy felt for him. She had a fellow-feeling about that relative of hers. Also, it was impossible to be afraid of so abjectly meek and guilty an animal. As old Shep came up to her, poking his nose inquiringly on her lap, she shrinkingly held out the big piece of skin, and though she jumped back at the sudden snap and gobbling gulp with which the old dog greeted the tidbit, she could not but sympathize with his evident enjoyment of it. He waved his bushy tail gratefully, cocked his head to one side, and, his ears standing up at attention, his eyes glistening greedily, he gave a little, begging whine. "Oh, he's asking for more!" cried Betsy, surprised to see how plainly she could understand dog-talk. "Quick, Uncle Henry, give me another piece!"

Uncle Henry rapidly transferred to her plate a wing-bone from his own, and Aunt Abigail, with one deft swoop, contributed the neck from the platter. As fast as she could, Betsy fed these to Shep, who woofed them down at top speed, the bones crunching loudly under his strong, white teeth. How he did enjoy it! It did your heart good to see his gusto!

There was the sound of the telephone receiver being hung up in the next room — and everybody acted at once. Aunt Abigail began drinking innocently out of her coffee cup, only her laughing old eyes showing over the rim; Uncle Henry buttered a slice of bread with a grave face, as though he were deep in conjectures about who would be the next President; and as for old Shep, he made one plunge across the room, his toenails clicking rapidly on the bare floor, sprang up on the couch, and when Cousin Ann opened the door and came in he was lying in exactly the position in which she had left him, his paw stretched out, his head laid on it, his brown eyes turned up meekly so that the whites showed.

I've told you what these three did, but I haven't told you yet what Betsy did. And it is worth telling. As Cousin Ann stepped in, glancing suspiciously from her sober-faced and abstracted parents to the lamb-like innocence of old Shep, little Betsy burst into a shout of laughter. It's worth telling about, because, so far as I know, that was the first time she had ever laughed out heartily in all her life. For my part, I'm half surprised to know that she knew how. Of course, when she laughed, Aunt Abigail had to laugh, too, setting down her coffee cup and showing all the funny wrinkles in her face screwed up hard with fun; and that made Uncle Henry laugh, and then Cousin Ann laughed and said, as she sat down, "You are bad children, the whole four of you!" And old Shep, seeing the state of things, stopped pretending to be meek, jumped down, and came lumbering over to the table, wagging his tail and laughing too; you know that good, wide dog-smile! He put his head on Betsy's lap again and she patted it and lifted up one of his big black ears. She had quite forgotten that she was terribly afraid of big dogs.

- D (2.1.1)** 1. At the end of the story, Betsy's feelings toward Shep have changed from scared to
- A. angry.
 - B. impatient.
 - C. surprised.
 - D. affectionate.

KEY * Post-Test – Narrative * KEY

D (2.1.1) 2. Cousin Ann is different from Betsy because Cousin Ann is

- A. cheery.
- B. patient.
- C. helpful.
- D. confident.

B (1.4.11) 3. In the second paragraph, the author uses phrases like “as big as a bear” and “white teeth gleamed horribly” to

- A. bring out the reader’s sympathy for the dog.
- B. make Betsy’s fear of the dog apparent to the reader.
- C. explain to the reader why the dog is dangerous.
- D. make the reader think Cousin Ann is brave to confront the dog.

D (1.4.6) 4. The author uses sequence in the passage **mainly** to show

- A. when the table is set for dinner.
- B. how slowly Uncle Henry butters his bread.
- C. which foods the dog likes to eat.
- D. how Betsy becomes more comfortable around the dog.

B (2.1.1) 5. When Cousin Ann says, “Well, somebody has to!” this suggests that

- A. she feels she has to do all the work in the house.
- B. other people in the house are not strict with the dog.
- C. she wants another person to help serve the dinner.
- D. other people in the house do not like living on a farm.

C (2.1.3) 6. Which **best** describes the climax of the story?

- A. Cousin Ann puts a big platter of chicken on the table.
- B. Betsy brings a plate of butter up the stairs.
- C. Cousin Ann comes back into the room after talking on the phone.
- D. Betsy jumps back when the dog grabs the chicken from her hand.

D(1.3.4) 7. What does the phrase “Betsy’s heart melted at the smell” probably mean?

- A. She disliked Aunt Harriet’s cooking.
- B. She felt her belt grow tighter.
- C. Betsy only ate enough to keep a bird alive.
- D. She loved chicken gravy on hot biscuits.

A (1.4.9) 8. Which **best** summarizes the passage?

- A. Betsy is about to have dinner with Aunt Abigail, Uncle Henry and Cousin Ann. She is frightened by a large dog near the table. After she eats a large meal, Uncle Henry encourages her to feed the dog and everyone laughs. *
- B. Cousin Ann calls to Betsy from upstairs. A large dog is walking around the dinner table and frightens her. Cousin Ann tells the dog to lie down. Aunt Abigail and Uncle Henry feed the dog scraps from the table.
- C. Betsy eats a large meal with Aunt Abigail, Uncle Henry, and Cousin Ann. Cousin Ann leaves the room to answer the telephone. Then the dog gets down from the couch to beg for scraps from the dinner table.
- D. Cousin Ann brings chicken to the dinner table. Betsy eats a large meal including hot biscuits and baked potatoes. Aunt Abigail and Uncle Henry laugh when the dog gets off the couch and comes to the table.

KEY * Post-Test – Narrative * KEY

B (2.1.2) 9. Which **best** describes the atmosphere of the setting?

- A. loud and scary
- B. warm and inviting
- C. distant and empty
- D. large and exciting

D (2.1.2) 10. Which element of the setting is **most** important to the plot?

- A. There are biscuits on the dining room table.
- B. Sunlight is shining onto the dining room table.
- C. A couch is placed near the dining room table.
- D. The telephone cannot be seen from the dining room.

A (2.1.3) 11. Which event **most** helps Betsy overcome her fear of Shep?

- A. feeding Shep table scraps
- B. lifting up one of Shep's ears
- C. watching Shep sit on the couch
- D. seeing Shep walk around the table

D (2.1.1) 12. Why does Uncle Henry wait to give Shep chicken until Cousin Ann leaves the room?

- A. He wants to be helpful to Cousin Ann by feeding Shep.
- B. He does not want Cousin Ann to think her food is only good for dogs.
- C. He wants to surprise Cousin Ann when she comes back into the room.
- D. He knows Cousin Ann would not allow Shep to eat food from the table.

B (1.3.4) 13. This sentence contains an example of what type of figurative language?

He looked as big as a bear to Betsy; and as he walked his great red tongue hung out of his mouth and his white teeth gleamed horribly.

- A. idiom
- B. simile
- C. onomatopoeia
- D. personification

A (1.3.4) 14. This sentence contains an example of what type of figurative language?

She jumped back at the sudden snap and gobbling gulp with which the old dog greeted the tidbit.

- A. onomatopoeia
- B. hyperbole
- C. idiom
- D. analogy

KEY * Post-Test – Narrative * KEY

Standards Alignment:

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1.3.4 figurative language							X						X	X
1.4.6 text structure				X										
1.4.9 summary								X						
1.4.11 literary devices			X											
2.1.1 character	X	X			X							X		
2.1.2 setting									X	X				
2.1.3 plot						X					X			