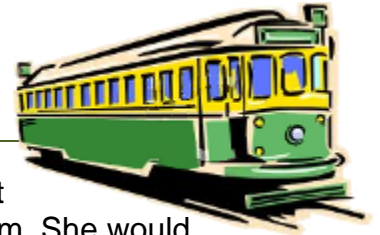


“Love Train”

Reading Comprehension – Short Stories

Directions: Read the story. Then answer the questions below.



When I was a little girl, I loved for my mom to tell me stories about herself. No matter how tired she was, she never **adumbrated** them. She would fill the tales with the minutest details, and they were always fascinating.

Another thing she did was tell the stories with such **grandiloquence**! Then she would stop and say, “Now what do you think that word means?” I would try to piece together what was happening in the story and make my best guess.

To this day, when I want to bug my friends, I use the huge words I first learned leaning on Mom's shoulder as she recounted a snippet of her life.

My favorite story was the one about how my mom met my dad:

“I was 17-years-old, but I already knew the kind of man I would marry. Take note:”

“He would not be too **garrulous**. I tell you, Rosa, it’s important for a man to take time to listen to what you have to say.”

“And never **impertinent**. I’ll never forget when I was 16; a boy from my church named Joe Turner came and knocked on our door. He didn’t look my momma in the eye, and didn’t say, ‘Hello.’ He just leaned against the door jam and said, ‘Rosa here?’”

“My momma raised her brow and said, ‘She is, but not for boys such as yourself.’”

“But I **digress**. I’m supposed to be telling you about the day I met your daddy, right?”

“Okay, so I was riding the Amtrak train between Providence and Philadelphia during my freshman year at Brown, and the door at the end of my car rattled open.”

“He was tall and swarthy. He wore a thick ivory cable knit sweater with a gray wool scarf wrapped firmly around his neck. I couldn’t tell what his heritage was and that intrigued me. What was he -- Indian, Portuguese, Peruvian?”

Mom would pause here and I would shout, “Cape Verdean!”

She’d continue.

“Well, if I had been shy, I might have just looked out the train window. But then where would I be now? You wouldn’t even be here! So I let my eyes lock with his as he wobbled down the moving train.”

“He smiled a slight smile, not a big one. His eyes raised just enough to let me know he had spotted me too.”

I always loved this line and would smile at the image of my dad stumbling down the train and then noticing my radiant mom.

“So Rosa, once we spotted each other, your dad found infinite reasons to walk past me to go to the café car.”

“I was sitting by myself along the aisle. So finally, I just slid over to the window, leaving the seat next to me empty.”

“Your dad came back with two cups of hot cocoa and sat down with a smile. And we had the most delightful conversation!”

“I could tell right then that this was no **ephemeral** crush – this was the real deal. I was going to end up loving this man forever.”

Here comes the part I loved best about the story.

“We pull into the train station in Philadelphia, and it’s time for me to get off. He was heading on to Washington where he was going to school.”

“I prepared myself for some **hackneyed** expression as I got off the train. You know, ‘Great meeting you,’ or ‘You’re the apple of my eye.’”

“I also worried he might try to sneak a smooch, which would have been a big turn off. We’d just met!”

“Instead, he took my hand gently and gave it a little squeeze. He said, ‘If it’s the thought that counts, consider yourself kissed.’”

Mama said she just about died when he said that! Then she said to herself, “That man will be my husband.”

And so he is.

Questions:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>1) As used in this passage, which is the best antonym for adumbrated?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">A. detailedB. lengthenedC. inventedD. simplifiedE. understated | <p>2) As used in the passage, what is the meaning of grandiloquence?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">A. technical jargonB. archaic speechC. pithy expressionD. pompous languageE. foreign word or phrase |
|---|--|

Questions (continued):

3) What is ironic about the title of this passage?

- A. Rosa's mother does not like clichés.
- B. The passage has nothing to do with a song.
- C. It is where Rosa's mother meets her husband-to-be.
- D. The train only went a short distance but their love was forever.
- E. Rosa's mother could not have possibly loved her father after such a short train ride.

4) Why might the author have chosen Rosa as the narrator even though it is her mother who is telling the main story?

- A. to make the story harder to follow
- B. to make the story seem more straightforward
- C. to make it clear that Rosa's mother has passed away
- D. to make it clear that the story happened a long time ago
- E. so that the reader could learn the story from Rosa's perspective

5) As used in the passage, what is the meaning of **garrulous**?

- A. conceited
- B. loquacious
- C. narrow-minded
- D. obsequious
- E. patronizing

6) Which best situation describes someone who has been **impertinent**?

- A. A man crashes into the car in front of him.
- B. A student gestures rudely to his teacher.
- C. A child rushes out the door, forgetting to say good-bye to his mom.
- D. A woman refuses to let her son play video games before school.
- E. A dog chases all the cats in the neighborhood.

Questions (continued):

7) Which is the best antonym for **digress**?

- A. stop
- B. stray
- C. shorten
- D. remember
- E. stay on course

8) What may Rosa be meaning to convey to her child by telling this story?

- A. advice on what to look for in a partner
- B. a regret that she met her husband on a train
- C. the suggestion that Rosa might find her husband on a train
- D. a yearning to go back to that time and place
- E. the idea that education should come before marriage

9) Judging from the passage, what does Rosa's mother find most important in a husband?

▼ Check three that are correct.

- A. humor
- B. politeness
- C. originality
- D. respectfulness
- E. heroism

10) What is implied in the following paragraph?

"Well, if I had been shy, I might have just looked out the train window. Where would I be now? You wouldn't even be here! But I let my eyes lock with his as he wobbled down the moving train."

- A. that Rosa really wanted to just look out the window
- B. that it is best to be outspoken in all circumstances
- C. that as soon as they locked eyes they fell in love
- D. that a slight change in circumstances could have greatly altered her life
- E. that the story took place before technology allowed trains to offer a smooth ride

