



Reading Comprehension Worksheet

Grade 11

Answer Key

The Acceptance Letter

Characters: Elaine, Margot, Renee

Setting: A kitchen table, evening. An acceptance letter sits open between MARGOT, seventeen, and her mother, ELAINE. Margot's older sister, RENEE, twenty-four, leans against the counter, having already lived through this exact conversation seven years earlier.

ELAINE:

State school is four hours away. This one is across the country. I need you to help me understand why that distance is worth it to you.

MARGOT:

Because their program is the best in the country for what I want to study, Mom. That's not a small thing.

ELAINE:

Renee wanted the state school's business program, stayed close, and look at her now. Successful, stable, twenty minutes away for Sunday dinner.

RENEE shifts uncomfortably, not making eye contact with either of them.

RENEE:

Mom, don't use me as the example here. That's not fair to Margot, or to me, honestly.

ELAINE:

I'm not saying anything bad about you. I'm saying it worked. Why take the bigger risk when the safer path clearly works?

MARGOT:

Because Renee's path isn't my path. She never wanted what I want. You keep comparing us like we're supposed to end up the same person.

ELAINE opens her mouth to respond, then stops herself, glancing at Renee.

RENEE:

She's right, Mom. I stayed close because I wanted to, not because it was the responsible choice and anything else would have been reckless. You've never actually said that out loud, but it's what you've always implied.

ELAINE:

That is not what I meant to imply.

RENEE:

Maybe not on purpose. But I heard it for years, and now Margot's hearing it too.

ELAINE is quiet for a long moment, looking down at the acceptance letter.

ELAINE:

I suppose I'm more afraid of you being far away than I am against the school itself. That's probably closer to the truth.

MARGOT:

That, I can actually talk about with you. The other version of this conversation, I can't.

Circle the Correct Answer

1. What is the central conflict of this scene?

Answer: a) Margot wants to attend a distant college and Elaine is resistant

2. How does Elaine initially use Renee in the argument?

Answer: a) As proof that staying close to home leads to success

3. What does Renee reveal about her own past experience?

Answer: b) She chose to stay close because she wanted to, but felt implied pressure that leaving would have been reckless

4. What does Elaine ultimately admit is the real source of her resistance?

Answer: a) She is afraid of Margot being far away, more than she disapproves of the school

True or False

5. Renee stays silent and agrees with her mother throughout the entire scene.

Answer: False

6. Elaine eventually admits her real fear is Margot being far away.

Answer: True

7. Margot and Renee want the same things out of life, according to the dialogue.

Answer: False

Fill in the Blank

8. Margot says Renee's path isn't her _____.

Answer: path

9. Elaine says she is more afraid of Margot being _____ away than against the school itself.

Answer: far

Think and Explain

10. Renee functions as a foil character in this scene, a character whose choices and perspective highlight something about another character by contrast or comparison. Explain how Renee's presence shapes the audience's understanding of both Elaine and Margot.

Sample answer: Accept reasonable answers noting that Renee's firsthand experience of the same implied pressure Margot now faces validates Margot's perspective and exposes a pattern in Elaine's parenting that Elaine herself may not have fully recognized, while also showing that Renee's outward success does not mean she experienced her mother's expectations as entirely benign.

11. Trace the shift in Elaine's position from the beginning of the scene to the end. What causes this shift, and what does it suggest about the difference between a character's stated argument and their underlying motivation?

Sample answer: Accept reasonable answers tracing Elaine's shift from citing Renee's success as an argument for staying close, to admitting her real motivation is fear of distance, caused specifically by Renee's intervention naming the unspoken pressure, suggesting that Elaine's stated argument (about safety and success) was a surface justification masking a more personal, emotional motivation underneath.