Choices Across Worlds

Compare a historical novel excerpt with a fantasy excerpt.

6.T.T.1.d "Compare and contrast literary texts in different modes and genres (e.g., historical novels and fantasy texts) in terms of their approaches to similar themes and topics. (I)"

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two details that make Mara's story seem historical and circle two details that make Niko's story fantasy. Number one action each character takes to help someone else, then use your marks to compare the stories.

Two Stories, One Choice

1. Historical novel excerpt: In 1918, twelve-year-old Mara carried a basket of bread through the crowded streets of Philadelphia. An influenza outbreak had closed her school, and neighbors stayed behind their doors. At the corner, Mr. Bell, the grocer, called that Mrs. Ortiz had not collected food for two days. Mara remembered her father's warning to avoid sick homes. Still, she set the basket on the Ortiz porch, knocked, and stepped back to the gate. From there, she heard a weak voice answer.

2. The next morning, Mara saw a red notice on the Ortiz door. City workers planned to take Mrs. Ortiz to a hospital, but her little brother Tomas would be left alone until his aunt arrived by train. Mara asked the grocer for a spare key to the store's back room. She brought Tomas there, gave him soup, and wrote a note for the workers. When her father found her, he did not praise the risk. He washed her hands and sent her upstairs to change clothes.

3. Fantasy text excerpt: On the island of Veyra, Niko watched black smoke curl from the mountain. The smoke-beasts had followed the village bell's sound and were searching for the hidden children. Niko owned a copper flute that could call wind, but each tune left frost on his fingers. He climbed the old watchtower and played a sharp, rising song. A gale swept the beasts toward the sea. Niko could no longer feel his hands, yet he kept playing until every child reached the boats below.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How does each genre create its setting? Give one historical detail from Mara's story and one fantasy detail from Niko's story.

2. Both characters respond when younger people need help. Compare what Mara does with what Niko does.

3. What shared theme do the two texts explore? Explain your answer with one detail from each text.

4. Compare how the historical novel and the fantasy text present danger. How do the genre details change the way the danger feels?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a four-sentence comparison of the two excerpts. State a shared theme, use one detail from each text, and explain how the historical and fantasy genres present that theme differently.

ANSWER KEY

Choices Across Worlds

GRADE 6 · 6.T.T.1.d

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two details that make Mara's story seem historical and circle two details that make Niko's story fantasy. Number one action each character takes to help someone else, then use your marks to compare the stories. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How does each genre create its setting? Give one historical detail from Mara's story and one fantasy detail from Niko's story.	**Mara's story uses 1918 Philadelphia and an influenza outbreak. Niko's story uses the imaginary island of Veyra and smoke-beasts.**
2	Both characters respond when younger people need help. Compare what Mara does with what Niko does.	**Mara brings Tomas to the grocer's back room, gives him soup, and leaves a note. Niko plays his wind-calling flute to drive the smoke-beasts away from the children.**
3	What shared theme do the two texts explore? Explain your answer with one detail from each text.	**Both texts explore the idea that protecting others can require a difficult choice. Mara helps Tomas despite the danger of illness, and Niko keeps playing even when his hands become numb.**
4	Compare how the historical novel and the fantasy text present danger. How do the genre details change the way the danger feels?	**The historical novel presents a realistic danger, an influenza outbreak and possible illness. The fantasy text presents a supernatural danger, smoke-beasts and a magical flute, making the danger more imaginative and dramatic.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Both texts explore the idea that protecting others can require a difficult choice. In the historical novel, Mara brings Tomas to the grocer's back room even though she has been warned to avoid sick homes. This realistic setting makes her danger feel like a problem people could face during an outbreak. In the fantasy text, Niko uses a wind-calling flute until his hands are numb, so magic makes the danger larger and more dramatic.

Accept equivalent themes about courage, responsibility, sacrifice, or protecting others when students support them with details from both excerpts. For the open response, require four sentences, a comparison of both texts, and an explanation of how the genres shape the theme.