***Questions for The Gift of the Magi Name:***

**Reading Comprehension Questions**

1. “Pennies saved one or two at a time by bulldozing the grocer and the vegetable man and

the butcher until one’s cheeks burned with the silent imputation of parsimony that such

close dealing implied.”

This quote suggests that Della \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

a. tries to haggle prices with store vendors

b. is ashamed of the fact that she is poor

c. both a and b

d. neither a nor b

2. “It did not exactly beggar description, but it certainly had that word on the lookout for the

mendicancy squad.”

A good substitute for the underlined word would be \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

a. defy

b. request

c. include

d. solicit

3. The narrator suggests that James’ uses his middle name, Dillingham,

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

a. as a fake identity

b. to sound more dignified

c. to confuse the mailman

d. all of the above

4. This story takes place on \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

a. Christmas morning

b. Christmas Eve

c. the day after Thanksgiving

d. a Tuesday

5. King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba are both \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

a. known for their notorious wealth

b. characters in the Bible

c. used to illustrate the value of Jim and Della’s possessions

d. all of the above

6. Della chooses the platinum fob chain for Jim because of its \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

a. expensive price tag

b. understated authenticity

c. old-fashioned look and feel

d. all of the above

7. “If Jim doesn’t kill me,” she said to herself, “he’ll say I look like a Coney Island chorus girl.”

We can infer from this quote that Della sees Coney Island chorus girls as

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

a. undignified

b. admirable

c. untalented

d. strange

8. Which of the following statements about Jim and Della is NOT true?

a. They are both concerned about their image.

b. They are both willing to make sacrifices for each other.

c. They are both self-conscious about their poverty.

d. They are both working full-time jobs.

9. Jim initially reacts to Della’s new, hair-less appearance with \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

a. anger

b. shock

c. bemusement

d. joy

10. “They were expensive combs, she knew, and her heart had simply craved and yearned

over them without the least hope of possession. And now, they were hers, but the tresses

that should have adorned the coveted adornments were gone.”

We can infer that the underlined word above means \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

a. jewels

b. ribbons

c. locks of hair

d. chains

***Directions:*** A*ddress the text based questions below in complete sentences. Use quote and/or specific information from the literature to support your opinion.*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Text-Based Question | Evidence-Based Answer |
| What evidence can you site from the story to prove that Della wanted to buy her husband something but could not?  |  |
| What possessions were important to the family of James Dillingham Young? Why?  |  |
| Explain the following metaphorical statement from the text, “Her intoxication gave way a little to prudence and reason.”  |  |
| How does the author create suspense (anticipation, tension) in this area of the story?  |  |
| Carefully consider the line, “Out of his trance Jim seemed quickly to wake. He enfolded his Della.” What put Jim into the “trance” and why has he “enfolded his Della?” |  |
| What ironic information does Jim share with Della in the next to last paragraph?  |  |
|  |  |

**Extended Response**:

Were Della and Jim’s actions reasonable? Why or why not? Make sure to back your opinion with evidence from the text.