

ANSWER KEY > Growing Up

by Gary Soto • 1990

1. PART A: Which statement best expresses a theme of the short story? RL.KID.2
 - A. **Being a teenager can be a difficult and confusing time.**
 - B. Family vacations are a good way to keep family members close.
 - C. The world encourages kids to grow up too quickly.
 - D. Most teenagers aren't ready for the independence they are given.

2. PART B: Which detail from the text best supports the answer to Part A? RL.KID.1
 - A. "She felt stricken by poverty. All the screaming kids in nice clothes probably came from homes with swimming pools in their backyards, she thought." (Paragraph 4)
 - B. "'I work all year, and if I want to go on a vacation, then I go. And my family goes too.' He took a swallow of ice water, and glared." (Paragraph 12)
 - C. "'Let the girl stay. She's big now. She don't want to go on rides no more. She can stay with her nina.'" (Paragraph 21)
 - D. **"Her eyes filled with tears. For the first time in years, she hugged a doll, the one her grandmother Lupe had stitched together from rags to old clothes." (Paragraph 68)**

3. Which option describes the main purpose of paragraphs 14-16 in the story? RL.CS.5
 - A. They suggest that Maria and her father have never had a good relationship.
 - B. They suggest that Maria gets her short temper from her father.
 - C. **They show how Maria and her father struggle to understand each other's experiences.**
 - D. They show how Maria is a spoiled child who has never had to listen to her parents.

4. How does Maria's attitude towards her family change throughout the text? RL.KID.3
 - A. Maria's attitude swings between feeling loved by her family to feeling unappreciated.
 - B. **Maria's attitude shifts from worrying about her family to being incredibly angry with them.**
 - C. Maria remains angry with her family from when they leave for vacation until they return.
 - D. Maria feels guilty throughout the text, for being mean to her family and not going on vacation with them.

5. How does Maria's changing attitude emphasize the theme of the short story? Use details from the text to support your answer. RL.KID.2

Answers will vary; students should discuss how Maria's changing attitude shows how difficult and confusing it can be to be a teenager. Throughout the passage, Maria struggles with many emotions that clash and confuse her. For instance, she gets incredibly angry with her father and decides that she's too old for family vacations. However, when her family leaves the narrator says, "an ill feeling stirred inside her. She felt awful about arguing with her father" (Paragraph 29). Maria worries about her family for the rest of their trip and imagines awful things happening to them, such as, "her family's overturned Malibu station wagon" (Paragraph 44). But upon their safe return, "Maria stared at the floor, miffed. How dare they have so much fun?" (Paragraph 66). This rollercoaster of emotions that the narrator describes Maria experiencing is a significant and difficult part of growing up. In all, Maria's changing emotions and attitude towards her family is important to the theme of the story, as it conveys the confusion that comes with being a teenager and growing up.