

Name: _____

Date: _____

6B- _____

Reading: "Dear Future..." and "On turning 10": Short Answers & Essay

I. **Short Answers: Directions:** USE PENCIL to answer the following questions. Your answers should fill the blank lines. Each answer should be 3+ sentences in length. Echo the question in your answer.

"Dear Future: Does It Get Any Better" by Nicholas Montemarano

1. **Character Change:** How does James' attitude about the future change over the course of the story. Use **two** specific details / quotes from the text to support your answer.

2. **Setting + Theme:** How does James' description of the bookstore in the beginning of the story relate to the theme of the story? Use **two** specific details / quotes from the text to support your answer.

3. **Making inferences:** James notices his mother blocking the aisle, reading, and shares his feelings: "I am relieved that she has lost herself completely in her book." Why do you think James feels this way? Use **two** specific details / quotes from the text to support your answer.

(over)

4. **Author's Craft:** How does the author's reference to Ray Bradbury's novel *The Night* add to this story? Use **two** specific details / quotes from the text to support your answer.

5. **Author's Craft:** After reading A's journal, James shares his thoughts with the reader:

...Written beside the address is a note: "If found, please return."

My first question is: What happened to A?

My second question is: How did her journal end up here, in this church basement, in my hands?

My third and fourth and fifth questions are: Did she lose it? Did she throw it away?

If so, why?

*My sixth question is: **How can I get it back to her?***

What mood does the author create here? Use **two** specific details / quotes from the text to support your answer.

6. **Making Inferences:** When James speaks with Annie, she asks him how he's doing at the moment, and James replies, "To be honest, today started off awful... But it's better now." Why does James say this? Use **two** specific details / quotes from the text to support your answer.

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7. **Theme:** A. At the end of the story, during the family dinner, the author seems to provide an explicit statement of one of the theme messages of the story. Quote this explicit theme message below:

B. Now, name **two** examples of how James' mother illustrates this theme. For each, explain why you think it illustrates the theme message.

“On Turning 10” by Billy Collins

1. **Character:** In Stanza 1, which poetic device does the speaker use repeatedly, and what does this tell you about the speaker? Use **two** specific quotes from the text to support your answer.

2. **Character:** In Stanza 2, the speaker says, “You tell me it is too early to be looking back, / but that is because you have forgotten / the perfect simplicity of being one / and the beautiful complexity introduced by two. “Here, the speaker addresses his audience with the term “you.” To whom is the speaker talking, and why do you think his listener has given him this advice: “...It is too early to be looking back”? Use **two** specific examples from the rest of the poem to support your answer.

(over)

3. **Theme:** Writers establish their themes using various methods. **Juxtaposition** is a poetic device that occurs when a writer puts two opposite subjects, ideas, images, or people (etc.) next to each other. For example, the British author Charles Dickens is famous for his opening line in the novel *A Tale of Two Cities*:

*It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom,
it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of
incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was
the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, we had everything before us,
we had nothing before us, we were all going direct to Heaven, we were all
going direct the other way...*

This naturally invites readers to compare the juxtaposed items and maybe even draw conclusions about them.

In stanzas 3 and 4, Billy Collins uses juxtaposition. What does this juxtaposition tell you about the speaker's attitude toward **growing up**? Use **two** specific quotes from Stanza 3 and 4 to support your answer.

4. **Character Change:** In the Stanza 5, the poet uses a metaphor to conclude his poem. What does this **metaphor** tell you about the way the speaker has changed since he was younger? Use **two** specific quotes from Stanza 5 to support your answer.

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II. Extended Response / Essay: Directions: **USE PENCIL** to answer this question. Make sure you answer all parts of the question in your answer.

Compare and contrast 13-year-old James from the short story “Dear Future: Does It Get Any Better” by Nicholas Montemarano and the 10-year-old speaker of the poem “On Turning 10” by Billy Collins. Specifically, discuss each character’s **fears** and the **lessons** his experiences have taught him about getting older. Use details from **both** texts to support your response.

In your response, be sure to do the following:

- describe James’ **fears** and the 10-year-old speaker’s **fears** of getting older
- describe the **lessons** each boy’s experiences have taught him about getting older
- use details, examples, and/or quotes from **both** texts to support your response

Plan your essay here...

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