

Name _____
Date _____

English 7

“Thank You Ma’am” By Langston Hughes

Part I Directions: During or after your reading, complete the chart below.

Time in the story	How is Roger feeling? (Use an adjective as your answer)	How do you know this? (Use a concrete detail/quote from the text)
Beginning of the story		Line(s) _____
Middle of the story		Line(s) _____
End of the story		Line(s) _____

Part II Directions: After reading the short story, answer these questions by putting your answers on the lines provided.

- _____ 1. Which is the best summary of the first paragraph of the story “Thank You Ma’am”?
- a) Late at night a woman is carrying a very large bag. A boy attempts to steal it, but the woman notices before he gets a good grasp on the bag and she is able to stop him.
 - b) Late at night a boy attempts to steal a woman’s purse. He loses his balance, falls to the ground, and the woman is able to reprimand him.
 - c) Late at night a woman is carrying a very large bag. A boy tries to steal it, but it is too heavy for him to carry, so he falls down to the sidewalk.
 - d) Late at night a boy attempts to steal a woman’s purse. However, another boy witnesses the situation and comes to her assistance.

- _____ 2. Re-read the line below:

He looked as if he were fourteen or fifteen, frail and willow-wild, in tennis shoes and blue jeans. (line 26)

Which is the best *synonym* for **willow-wild** in this sentence?

- a) strong
- b) solid
- c) delicate
- d) robust

_____ 3. In lines 44-46, the woman finally turns Roger loose. "Roger looked at the door-looked at the woman-looked at the door-*and went to the sink.*" Why did the author choose to italicize this part of the text?

- a) The author may have chosen to italicize this part of the text in order to demonstrate an important part of the setting.
- b) The author may have chosen to italicize this part of the text to demonstrate that it was Roger's own decision to stay.
- c) The author may have chosen to italicize this part of the text in order to demonstrate an important detail about the woman's apartment.
- d) The author may have chosen to italicize this part of the text in order to demonstrate that Mrs. Jones had given up on the boy.

_____ 4. What reason does Roger give for attempting to steal Mrs. Jones's purse?

- a) He wanted to buy a pair of blue suede shoes.
- b) He did not have any money for dinner.
- c) He wanted to give it to his mother.
- d) He wanted to buy tickets to a baseball game.

_____ 5. What is the most likely reason why Mrs. Jones left her purse on the daybed (lines 73-74) where the boy could have grabbed it?

- a) She was old and forgetful.
- b) She didn't have any money in the purse.
- c) She wanted to give the boy a chance to make the right decision.
- d) She wanted the boy to help himself to the money he needed.

_____ 6. Re-read lines 84-85:

The woman did not ask the boy anything about where he lived, or his folks, or anything else that would embarrass him.

Which character trait best describes Mrs. Jones in these lines?

- a) arrogant
- b) superior
- c) compassionate
- d) unsociable

_____ 7. In line 91 Mrs. Jones states, "Shoes come by devilish like that will burn your feet." Which is the best paraphrasing of what Mrs. Jones meant?

- a) Things you get wrongfully will bring you harm.
- b) Desiring material things is immoral.
- c) Stealing shoes will get you arrested.
- d) You're always punished for doing the right thing.

_____ 8. Which answer best explains the significance of the woman not turning the boy over to the police?

- a) The woman felt sorry for the boy.
- b) The woman wanted to punish the boy herself.
- c) The woman wanted to frighten the boy.
- d) The woman wanted to teach the boy a lesson.

_____ 9. Re-read lines 95-96:

The boy wanted to say something else other than “Thank you, m’am” to Mrs. Luella Bates Washington Jones, but he couldn’t do so.

- a) Roger is baffled by the experience in Mrs. Jones’s apartment.
- b) Roger is speechless at this unexpected act of kindness.
- c) Roger is unappreciative of what Mrs. Jones did for him.
- d) Roger is worried about what his mother will say when he gets home.

Part III Directions: Answer the questions below using complete sentences.

10. How did Mrs. Jones’s own background affect her decision to show kindness towards Roger? Use two details from the text to support your answer.

11. How do Roger’s actions change throughout the story? Use two details from the text to support your answer.

11. What is a major theme of “Thank You Ma’am” by Langston Hughes? Use two details from the text to support your answer.

12. Reader Response: What do you think this story shows us about people who commit wrongdoings or crimes?
