

## TEXT 1 — SHORT STORY

Questions 1–5

### Miscounted

At four in the morning the bakery on Tory Street is the only lit window on the whole block. I tie my apron, push my hair under the net and breathe in the smell of warm yeast, the one smell in my life that has never let me down.

Uncle Dai is already at the bench, forearms white with flour, shaping loaves with the quick, careless movements of a man who has done the same thing forty thousand times. He does not look up when I come in. He never does. "Tray three is yours," he says to the dough. This is how he says good morning.

The ovens roar like something alive. Trays slide out in clouds of steam, and for an hour neither of us speaks. We do not need to. Dough is shaped, scored and slid in; loaves are tipped out, tapped on the base and set on the racks to crackle as they cool. By six o'clock the shelves are full and the window has fogged to white.

I have worked here for three weeks, ever since Mum and I moved into the flat above the dairy. Mum thinks I am saving for a laptop. I have not told her that the laptop money went on rent in the first week, or that I keep my shoes by the door in case the landlord comes early. I have not told her many things lately.

On Friday, as I am leaving, Uncle Dai drops a paper bag on the bench without looking up. Two loaves, still warm. "Miscounted again," he mutters. "Take them, or they'll only go stale." It is the fourth time this month.

I walk home through the grey streets with the bag held against my chest like a hot-water bottle. The crust crackles against my jacket. All the way up the stairs I rehearse what I will say to Mum: that Uncle Dai is getting forgetful, that it is a shame to waste good bread.

It is only when I am turning the key that I remember the board by the oven. Forty loaves a tray, every tray, every day. He has never once miscounted. I stand there in the stairwell, holding the bag, while the smell of warm bread rises around me like an answer.

#### 1. Why does the writer use first-person narration ("I") in this story?

- A The reader finds out the truth when the narrator does.
- B The narrator knows everything that happens in the bakery.
- C The reader can hear what Uncle Dai is thinking.
- D It makes the story read like a news report.

**2. What does the line “‘Tray three is yours,’ he says to the dough” suggest about Uncle Dai?**

- A He dislikes the narrator and wants her to go away.
- B He says little and simply gets on with his work.
- C He is too busy to notice that she has come in.
- D He is talking to himself because he feels lonely.

**3. The story ends with the simile “the smell of warm bread rises around me like an answer.” What is the effect of this simile?**

- A It shows the narrator has finally understood his kindness.
- B It shows the narrator is too hungry to think about anything.
- C It suggests the bread has been left too long in the oven.
- D It shows the narrator is angry at Uncle Dai for tricking her.

## THE WORKED ANSWERS TO THOSE 3 QUESTIONS

### 1. Why does the writer use first-person narration (“I”) in this story? [Perspective]

**Correct answer: A — The reader finds out the truth when the narrator does.**

- What is the question asking? It asks whose point of view the text gives and how.
- Go back to the text and find the evidence: “I stand there in the stairwell, holding the bag, while the smell of warm bread rises around me like an answer.”
- Because we see through the narrator’s eyes, we realise what Uncle Dai has been doing at the same moment she does.
- So the correct answer is A (The reader finds out the truth when the narrator does).
- Why the other options are wrong:
- B: The narrator misses the truth about Uncle Dai until the end.
- C: We only see Uncle Dai from the outside.
- D: First-person narration is personal, not factual reporting.

*LOS: Reading: whose perspective a text presents and how*

#### KEY TAKEAWAY

Ask who is telling the story and what they can and cannot know.

### 2. What does the line “‘Tray three is yours,’ he says to the dough” suggest about Uncle Dai? [Character]

**Correct answer: B — He says little and simply gets on with his work.**

- What is the question asking? It asks about a character's feelings or nature.
- Go back to the text and find the evidence: “This is how he says good morning.”
- The narrator explains that this brief, gruff instruction is how Uncle Dai greets her.
- So the correct answer is B (He says little and simply gets on with his work).
- Why the other options are wrong:
- A: He gives her a job, which shows he accepts her.
- C: The narrator says this is his usual way of saying good morning.
- D: The text does not suggest loneliness.

**KEY TAKEAWAY**

What a character says and does shows how they feel.

**3. The story ends with the simile “the smell of warm bread rises around me like an answer.” What is the effect of this simile? [Feature]**

**Correct answer: A — It shows the narrator has finally understood his kindness.**

- What is the question asking? It asks what a language or text feature does for the reader.
- Go back to the text and find the evidence: “while the smell of warm bread rises around me like an answer.”
- An answer is something that solves a puzzle. The bread solves the question of why Uncle Dai keeps ‘miscounting’.
- So the correct answer is A (It shows the narrator has finally understood his kindness).
- Why the other options are wrong:
  - B: The simile is about understanding, not hunger.
  - C: The bread is warm and comforting.
  - D: She is not angry; she has just understood.

LOS: Reading: how language and text features shape meaning

**KEY TAKEAWAY**

Name the feature first (simile, hyperbole, contrast, repetition), then ask what effect it has on the reader.

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