

Name _____

A **realistic fiction** story is about events that can actually happen. The setting is usually in the present and in a place that could be real. The details in a realistic fiction story are consistent with conditions in the real world.

This is a description of a realistic fiction story:

A boy has to miss his best friend's birthday party because he has the flu.

This is a description of story that is not realistic fiction:

A boy has to miss his best friend's birthday party because he has transformed into a giant bug.

Read the pair of sentences. Circle the pair that is from a realistic fiction story.

1. Min looked out the car's window at the big bear lumbering through the woods. "I wonder what he's thinking," Min thought.
2. A large bear drank some water from the stream. A strange feeling came over the bear and, to his shock, he suddenly knew how to speak Russian, Japanese, and English.
3. Jose did a research report on grizzly bears. He wrote about their diet, habitat, behavior, appearance, and other aspects of their lives.

Read the pair of sentences. Then state whether or not it is from a realistic fiction story. Explain your answer.

4. All of the bear leaders got together at a conference. They were discussing a persistent problem that their communities had been dealing with: humans invading their territories.

5. The nature expert had spent five days alone in the woods when he stumbled upon a baby bear that had fallen into a hole. She could hear the baby bear whimpering and decided to help the poor creature out, as it was probably weak, hungry, and thirsty.

Name _____

A Common Language

When Caneze's grandfather moved to the United States last month, the family threw a big party, but Caneze didn't spend much time with him that day. He didn't speak English, so how could she have any sort of conversation with him? Caneze spent most of that day in the den, texting her best friend, Maya, and watching her cousins play video games. There was a huge art competition coming up at school, and Caneze and Maya were planning to compete.

"I wish you'd spent time with your grandfather instead of your phone, Caneze," Mom said on the way home.

"But I don't even know him," Caneze said, "and he doesn't speak any English."

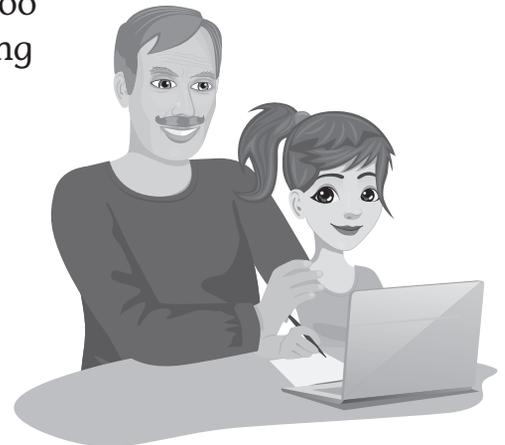
"And you don't speak any Ukrainian, Caneze, but he'd love to get to know you. I think you may find that you two have a lot in common."

Two weeks later, Caneze came home from school in the afternoon to find her grandfather sitting at the kitchen table with Mom. On the table sat some books. The old man smiled warmly at Caneze, and she smiled back as she sat down at the table. As Grandpa and Mom spoke in Ukrainian, Caneze let her mind wander. An idea for a picture came to her, so she fetched her sketchbook. Sitting at the table, she sketched while the adults talked. Then Caneze heard Mom say, "I have to run out for a few minutes. You can stay here with Grandpa."

Caneze suddenly felt unsure and shy. What would the two of them talk about? "This is going to be awkward," she thought. She gave Grandpa a polite smile and then returned to the lines and shapes she'd drawn on the page.

She could sense Grandpa watching her. "This is a sketchbook," Caneze said, pointing at her page. The old man nodded. Then he stood up and walked away, returning a moment later with a laptop. He typed as Caneze sketched. After a few minutes, Grandpa tapped Caneze on the shoulder and pointed to the laptop screen. So Caneze scooted her chair closer to his so she could see better. The open page was an online portfolio. Caneze could tell from the name that it was Grandpa's portfolio.

"This is beautiful—I didn't know you were an artist," Caneze said. Caneze showed her grandfather some of her own work. He smiled, giving her a thumbs-up. Later, when Mom returned, neither Caneze nor Grandpa seemed to notice. They were too busy drawing together.



Name _____

A Common Language

A **realistic fiction** story is about things that can actually happen. Even though it's a fictional story, it is believable.

These are important details to remember about realistic fiction:

The events usually take place in the present time.

The characters have problems that real people deal with.

The characters' actions and dialogue are realistic and believable.

Answer the items about the story you read.

1. Describe in detail Caneze's problem in the story. Can real people have this problem?

2. Write three details from the story that suggest that this story takes place in the present.

3. How does Caneze feel at first when she's alone with her Grandpa? Are her feelings realistic? Explain why or why not.

4. Explain why this story is realistic fiction.

5. Have you ever been in a situation similar to Caneze's? yes no

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Answer the items.

1. Explain what makes a story realistic fiction.

2. How is realistic fiction different from other genres?

3. Write about a problem that a character might have in a realistic fiction story.

4. Write about a problem that a character would not have in a realistic fiction story.

Read the paragraph. Then answer the item.

5. Wida was getting ready for school when she saw something that seriously concerned her in the mirror. “Oh my goodness, I have a gray hair!” she exclaimed to herself. “No way, I’m only twelve years old!” She took some tweezers and plucked out the gray hair, and she tried not to think about it again for the rest of the day. At school, though, she couldn’t forget it. She told all her friends about the gray hair at lunch. As her friend Tammy was listening, her eyes became fixed on Wida’s head. “What are you looking at, Tammy?” Wida asked. “Not another gray hair?” Tammy nodded. Now Wida was really freaking out. At dinner that night, she told her mom, who was a nurse, the whole story. Her mom said that this was nothing to worry about at all and that it was actually not that unusual. Wida felt relieved.

Write two details from the story that show that it is realistic fiction.
