

Question 1-11 are based on the following passage.

This passage is excerpted from Kate Chopin, "The Awakening," originally published in 1899.

"Would you like to hear Mademoiselle Reisz play?" asked Robert, coming out on the porch where she was. Of course Edna would like to hear Mademoiselle Reisz play; but she feared it would be useless to entreat her.

"I'll ask her," he said. "I'll tell her that you want to hear her. She likes you. She will come." He turned and hurried away to one of the far cottages, where Mademoiselle Reisz was shuffling away. She was dragging a chair in and out of her room, and at intervals objecting to the crying of a baby, which a nurse in the adjoining cottage was endeavoring to put to sleep. She was a disagreeable little woman, no longer young, who had quarreled with almost every one, owing to a temper which was self-assertive and a disposition to trample upon the rights of others. Robert prevailed upon her without any too great difficulty.

She entered the hall with him during a lull in the dance. She made an awkward, imperious little bow as she went in. She was a homely woman, with a small weazened face and body and eyes that glowed. She had absolutely no taste in dress, and wore a batch of rusty black lace with a bunch of artificial violets pinned to the side of her hair.

"Ask Mrs. Pontellier what she would like to hear me play," she requested of Robert. She sat perfectly still before the piano, not touching the keys, while Robert carried her message to Edna at the window. A general air of surprise and genuine satisfaction fell upon every one as they saw the pianist enter. There was a settling down, and a prevailing air of expectancy everywhere. Edna was a trifle embarrassed at being thus signaled out for the imperious little woman's favor. She would not dare to choose, and begged that Mademoiselle Reisz would please herself in her selections.

Edna was what she herself called very fond of music. Musical strains, well rendered, had a way of evoking pictures in her mind. She sometimes liked to sit in the room of mornings when Madame Ratignolle played or practiced. One piece which that lady played Edna had entitled "Solitude." It was a short, plaintive, minor strain. The name of the piece was something else, but she called it "Solitude." When she heard it there came before her imagination the figure of a man standing beside a desolate rock on the seashore. . . His attitude was one of hopeless resignation as he looked toward a distant bird winging its flight away from him.

Another piece called to her mind a dainty young woman clad in an Empire gown, taking mincing dancing steps as she came down a long avenue between tall hedges. Again, another reminded her of children at play, and still another of nothing on earth but a demure lady stroking a cat.

The very first chords which Mademoiselle Reisz struck upon the piano sent a keen tremor down Mrs. Pontellier's spinal column. It was not the first time she had heard an artist

at the piano. Perhaps it was the first time she was ready, perhaps the first time her being was tempered to take an impress of the abiding truth.

She waited for the material pictures which she thought would gather and blaze before her imagination. She waited in vain. She saw no pictures of solitude, of hope, of longing, or of despair. But the very passions themselves were aroused within her soul, swaying it, lashing it, as the waves daily beat upon her splendid body. She trembled, she was choking, and the tears blinded her.

Mademoiselle had finished. She arose, and bowing her stiff, lofty bow, she went away, stopping for neither thanks nor applause. As she passed along the gallery she patted Edna upon the shoulder.

"Well, how did you like my music?" she asked. The young woman was unable to answer; she pressed the hand of the pianist convulsively. Mademoiselle Reisz perceived her agitation and even her tears. She patted her again upon the shoulder as she said:

"You are the only one worth playing for. Those others? Bah!" and she went shuffling and sidling on down the gallery toward her room.

1

- Over the course of the passage, the main focus shifts from
- A) a description of one woman to a detailed characterization of a group of people.
 - B) a depiction of a place to a statement of one character's opinions about that place.
 - C) opinions shared by many laypeople to opinions held by a great artist.
 - D) the setup of a situation to one character's reaction to that situation.

2

- In paragraph 4 (lines 22–28), the words "satisfaction" and "expectancy" serve mainly to
- A) show that those in attendance have fixed ideas about Mademoiselle Reisz's performance.
 - B) characterize Mademoiselle Reisz's feelings about being asked to play for the group.
 - C) indicate that Edna has been waiting for Mademoiselle Reisz to acknowledge her presence.
 - D) demonstrate that the listeners anticipate that Mademoiselle Reisz will not be able to play the pieces well.

3

The primary purpose of paragraphs 2 and 3 (lines 5–21) is to

- A) characterize Mademoiselle Reisz as someone who delights in making people uncomfortable solely for her own amusement.
- B) emphasize that Madame Reisz has changed a great deal in the time Edna has known her.
- C) describe Mademoiselle Reisz’s interaction with Robert, which reflects her general interest in social pleasantries.
- D) establish Mademoiselle Reisz’s unpleasant attitude and appearance, which contrast with the beautiful music she makes.

4

It can be reasonably inferred that Edna refuses to choose the music that Mademoiselle Reisz will play because she

- A) feels that her musical education is insufficient for the honor of making the selection.
- B) is uncomfortable with being treated differently than the other guests.
- C) does not know what music the other guests would prefer to hear.
- D) wants to hear “Solitude” but doesn’t know how to ask for it.

5

Which choice provides the best evidence for the answer to the previous question?

- A) lines 28–30 (“Edna . . . favor”)
- B) lines 32–42 (“Edna . . . music”)
- C) lines 34–35 (“She . . . practiced”)
- D) lines 35–37 (“One . . . strain”)

6

As used in line 33, “rendered” most nearly means

- A) covered.
- B) made.
- C) provided.
- D) performed.

7

The imagery in paragraph 5 (lines 38–42) mainly serves to

- A) show that Edna’s imagination is not influenced by her surroundings.
- B) demonstrate Edna’s inability to distinguish reality from fantasy.
- C) characterize the vivid scenes music brings to Edna’s mind.
- D) make it clear that Edna longs to be alone in an isolated environment.

8

The “dainty young woman clad in an Empire gown” (lines 43–44) is best understood to be

- A) a member of the group.
- B) someone about whom Mademoiselle Ratignolle is singing.
- C) an imaginary woman.
- D) Edna as a child.

9

It can be reasonably inferred that Mademoiselle Reisz considers Edna to be worth playing for because

- A) only Edna has received enough training to fully appreciate the music.
- B) Edna feels passionately and deeply about the music.
- C) Edna has never had the opportunity to hear her play before.
- D) only Edna understands how it feels to be a musician.

10

Which choice provides the best evidence for the answer to the previous question?

- A) lines 50–51 (“It was . . . piano”)
- B) lines 54–55 (“She . . . imagination”)
- C) lines 63–64 (“As she . . . shoulder”)
- D) lines 67–68 (“Mademoiselle . . . tears”)

11

The passage suggests that Edna views Mademoiselle Reisz as someone who is

- A) intimidating but profound.
- B) cold and uninviting.
- C) motherly and inspiring.
- D) misguided but irresponsible.