

**EXCERPT ADAPTED FROM "YOUTH" BY ISAAC ASIMOV**

Answer the following questions about the story. **Sample answers**

1. The word **malevolence** in paragraph 1 indicates that the boys now believe the "people" in the cage \_\_\_\_\_.  
 A. are curious about them      **B. want to harm them**  
 C. are afraid of them          D. want to communicate
  
2. The characters in the story have knowledge and understanding that the readers do not have until the end. What effect does this create at the end of the story?  
 A. heartbreak                      B. suspense  
**C. surprise**                          D. horror
  
3. In Chapters IX and X, Red's mother does not know what the boys know about the creatures in the cage. Describe how this affects her reaction to seeing the "animals" and how this reaction advances the plot.  
**Because she does not know that the strange "animals" are actually the aliens they were expecting, she screams in fear and runs to tell her husband. This is how the Astronomer and the Industrialist find out that the aliens are there.**
  
4. Describe how Asimov leads the reader to assume that the Industrialist, the Astronomer, and the boys are humans on planet Earth. Include at least **two** ways he attempts to do this, citing specific text evidence.
  1. **The boys have familiar nicknames, Slim and Red, and behave and speak like "normal" Earth children might.**
  2. **The setting includes familiar Earth things like a country estate, a barn, a circus, ground meat, grass, and nuts.**
  
5. In the introduction before the story, it is noted that the aliens communicate **telepathically**. Based on the dialogue in Chapter XI, what does this mean?  
 A. They communicate through a universally understood sign language.  
 B. They send coded messages through the metal objects they carry.  
 C. They speak words that are instantly translated into any native language.  
**D. They communicate mind-to-mind by projecting and receiving thoughts.**
  
6. The Industrialist is initially skeptical of supporting a trade alliance with the aliens. How and why does his attitude change by the end of the story? Cite specific text evidence.  
**In the end, the Industrialist enthusiastically supports trade with the aliens. He says that he will "move sky and earth to have the world accept them" because the aliens did not harm the children.**
  
7. What does the dialogue in Chapter XIII reveal about the Merchant and the Explorer's characters?  
**The Merchant values the natives of the alien planet only for business. He refers to them as "horrible-looking" and to Red as a "monstrosity." He says that not harming the young ones was "a good business stroke." But the Explorer silently scoffs at the reference to business. He says the natives are "pleasant" and "friendly." He values them for their nature, not just for business.**
  
8. Both the Astronomer and the Explorer demonstrate an ability to see things through another's perspective. Identify a paragraph from the story in which each character demonstrates this trait. Explain your answers.  
 The Astronomer: **In paragraph 52, he tells the Industrialist that the aliens must also find them strange and repulsive.**  
 The Explorer: **In paragraph 86, he says the Merchant may have acted like Red upon finding such a strange creature on Earth.**
  
9. Which of the following is a theme of the story?  
**A. People's love of their young is universal, and respect for that common value can build bridges.**  
 B. The youth of a society cannot be trusted on their own; they must always be closely monitored by elders.  
 C. It is the youth of a civilization that have the vision and courage to create technology that will change the world.  
 D. It is inevitable that space exploration of the future will lead to tragedy for the youth of all civilizations.
  
10. Explain how the story reflects the theme you chose in question 9.  
**Despite his initial distrust of the aliens, the Industrialist agrees to a trade alliance with them after they do not harm the children even when provoked.**