

**SKILL: Identify and infer stated and implied character traits**  
**6<sup>th</sup> Grade Nonfiction: Maintaining Cultural Continuity**

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Fidelis Umeh was born in Nigeria and lived there through his high school years. Fidelis Umeh grew up with strong family values of the traditions of the Ibos, a culture within Nigeria. "One thing that we Nigerians, particularly the Ibos, have taught us from youth is the value of education. It is paramount. And the drive to succeed--my culture says that each person must work very hard and that is essential to success, which is very important. And we have support from family that keeps us going when things are difficult. Sometimes perseverance can make the difference between success and failure."

He moved to the United States when he went to college. After he finished college, he stayed connected to his family in Nigeria. He returned to Nigeria at least once a year. But he made his home and career in this country. He became a business leader.

Fidelis Umeh has succeeded in the business community, which some people see as a separate culture all of its own. He planned projects. He designed systems. He brought new ideas to businesses. He has been president of a computer company that employs hundreds of highly skilled individuals. At the same time, he kept his commitment to his original culture.

In 1991, he founded a group to support Nigerians in Chicago. "I formed a group of Nigerians to be an anchor for them that will fit into the American society but at the same time will give them something to fall back on in times of adversity. I feel it is a strength, it allows us to be individuals."

"It has one goal, which is to bridge the gap between our people and the people in America. The target is to build an anchor where the Nigerians can feel their identity and at the same time become more connected to the Chicago scene. The problem that we have with our children is that either our children don't have an understanding of the Nigerian culture or an understanding of the American culture. The focus is on children through adolescence. The adults get to benefit from the network."

"We started with story-telling. We are telling the children the stories that our families have told for generations. Each story has a moral, an idea that it teaches the children. The children learn the moral. They also learn more about their own heritage. They will appreciate their heritage. They will realize that they have to work hard, too, to achieve progress."

With more than 15,000 Nigerians in Chicago today, the potential is very great. Fidelis Umeh said that "The vision of Enumbra is that the Nigerian community will bring the traits that are valued in their heritage as they join the American society. They will in fact be able to enrich the American culture."

*Directions: Choose the best answer for each question*

1. What is a trait that is valued in the Nigerian culture?

- a. hardworking
- b. lucky
- c. American
- d. culture

2. What is a trait that Fidelis Umeh showed in his career?

- a. computers
- b. creativity
- c. president
- d. education

3. What is a trait that Fidelis Umeh showed in starting his Nigerian group.

- a. individuality
- b. family
- c. leadership
- d. community

4. What is a trait that the Nigerian group helps children to develop?

- a. responsibility
- b. heritage
- c. enrich
- d. diversity

5. *Write your own answer to this question.*

*How do you figure out what a person's character traits are?*

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**TEACHER NOTES: Develop Students' Skills: Exercise Thinking**

These questions have not been validated, so decisions about student's achievement should not be made based on their responses. They are intended to exercise skills. Recommended activities include: students work in pairs to choose the best response; give students the questions without the responses so they generate their own answers; students make up additional questions; students make up questions like these for another passage.

**Answers:** *You can remove this answer key and then give it to students and ask them to figure out the basis for the correct response.*

Item	1	2	3	4
Answer	a	b	c	a

Question 5 is open-ended. Here is a suggested response.

5. Here are suggested responses. By thinking about what the person says and does.

**Skill: Identify and infer stated and implied character traits**

**6<sup>th</sup> Grade Fiction: African Fable—The Lion and the Spider**

Text Source: Adapted from public domain Anansi fables by CUE©2009

It was a sunny day in the grassland. The lion had slept well. It was fierce when it hunted. But today it was not hungry yet. It would hunt for food later in the day. Right now, all it wanted to do was relax. It stretched out and watched the grass.

Then it noticed a spider. The spider was climbing on a plant. Then the spider jumped to the next plant and left a string between them. It was making a web. The lion watched for a while. “How clever you are,” it said to the spider. How did you learn to do that?

The spider said, “My mother showed me how to do this. I learned from her. And I have taught my children. How to make webs.”

The lion watched a while longer. Then it asked the spider, “But why do you do that when you could just grab your food, the way I do?”

“I am just a small animal. I cannot run fast. So I do not eat insects that run. I cannot fly. I eat flies. So with my web I can catch them.”

The lion said, “Could you make me a web that could catch an animal for me to eat? Then I would not have to run after them either.”

The spider thought about that. At first she thought the lion was joking. But he was not.

“I can’t do that,” she said. My web can catch a fly. But it could not catch a big animal. And you could not live by eating flies.”

Just then a fly flew into the spider’s web. She went to get it. She wrapped it up for her children. Then she went back to spinning more of the web.

The lion was very selfish. It was jealous of the spider. It did not have to work hard for its food. And it would not help him get his food. So it slapped at the spider web and broke it. But the spider jumped onto the lion’s back. And it bit the lion.

“Now you will remember me,” said the spider as she hopped off and into the grass. “Think before you are mean to another animal. We are all special. And some of us may be small but very smart.”

The lion tried to scratch its back but could not reach the spider bite. It itched for days. The lion remembered the smart spider for a long time.

*Directions: Choose the best answer for each question*

6. What is a trait of the lion that is literally stated?

- a. lazy
- b. fierce
- c. angry
- d. mean

7. What is a trait of the spider that is stated literally and that the spider shows?

- a. insect
- b. web-maker
- c. clever
- d. bite

8. What is a trait of the lion that you infer?

- a. old
- b. tired
- c. lazy
- d. jealous

9. What is a trait of the spider that you infer?

- a. brave
- b. worried
- c. fast
- d. kind

10. *Write your own answer to this question.*

*When you read a story, how do you figure out what a character's traits are?*

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**Answers:** *You can remove this answer key and then give it to students and ask them to figure out the basis for the correct response.*

Item	6	7	8	9
Answer	b	c	c	a

Question 10 is open-ended. Here is a suggested response.

10. By reading about what the character does and what the writer tells about the character.