

Once on a sunny hill in the woods grew many violets. They had slept quietly through the long winter, tucked up snug and warm in the soft, white snow-blankets that King Winter had sent Mother Nature for her flower babies. Jack Frost had gone pouting over the hills because the little sunbeams would not play with him, and they spoiled his fancy pictures. The tiny raindrops knocked at the door of Mother Nature's great, brown house; and the birds called to the flowers to wake up.

The violets raised their strong, hardy leaves, lifted up their dainty heads, and were glad because spring had come again. While they were so happy, a little girl named Ruth came to the woods in search of wild flowers. "How pretty those violets are," she said. "I wish I could stay and watch the buds open, but I will take some of them with me and keep them in water, and they will remind me of this sunny hill. Perhaps they will blossom."

Then the violets were frightened and whispered, "Please don't take us!" Ruth did not hear them. She pulled stem after stem until her small hands were full.

When Ruth got home, she put the buds into a vase of water, and set them in an open window where they could see the blue sky and feel the kisses of the sunbeams. But, the poor little violets drooped for a time, they were so homesick, and whispered to each other, "Let us give up and die!" A beautiful canary in a cage over their heads sang "Cheer up! Chirrup!" but they would not listen to him at first. By and by, they said, "Why do you sing that to us? How can we be happy away from our beautiful home?"

Still the bird sang, "Cheer up! Chirrup! The sun is smiling at you and I am singing to you. We are trying to make you glad. How nice it would be if you would only blossom and make some one happy instead of hanging your heads and trying to die. Do you think I like to be shut up in here? If someone would leave the door of my cage open, I would spread my wings and fly out of the window, far away to the green woods and the blue sky. But, while I am here, I may as well sing and be glad. Cheer up! Chirrup!"

"Perhaps he is right," said the buds, and they lifted up their heads and began to grow. One bright spring morning Mother Nature passed by the window and gave them each a lovely violet cap. Then they were glad, and Ruth was happy, too, because her buds had blossomed.

The cheery canary sang his sweetest song to them. The whole day was bright because Mother Nature's little violet children had tried their best to be happy and so had made others happy, too. As the great red sun went down into the west, he heard the happy bird still singing, "Cheer up! Chirrup!"

## Identify and Analyze Tone, Mood, Voice, Plot, and Setting - Fiction

Questions developed by Center for Urban Education for use by Chicago Public Schools 2008-2009.

*Choose the best answer for each question.*

1. Where does most of the story take place?

- a. outdoors
- b. in a home
- c. on a hill
- d. in a tree

3. Why does the writer end with Cheer up?

- a. The bird kept singing.
- b. It really is chirp.
- c. To have a happy ending.
- d. To show that things worked out well.

2. What is the climax of the story?

- a. Ruth picks the violets.
- b. The canary sings to the violets.
- c. The violets bloom.
- d. Ruth is happy.

4. How does the writer show you how the violets feel?

- a. They are purple.
- b. The bird cheers them up.
- c. They say what they feel.
- d. They are happy at the end.

5. *Write your own answer to this question. How does the writer show that the story has a happy ending?*

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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	b	c	d	c

Question 5 is open-ended. Here is a suggested response.  
Answers should include that the writer says everyone is happy.