

## The Red Apples

## 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Fiction

Source: Public Domain, adapted by Center for Urban Education, may be used with citation.

One windy day in March, Kitty Miller was on her way to school when she glanced into a store window and saw a great pile of lovely red apples. "Oh", she exclaimed, "how lovely! If only Mamma could have one!"

Kitty's mother was extremely poor. She had been a dressmaker ever since Kitty's father died, and had to work hard to earn a living for herself and Kitty. Unfortunately, she had recently become very sick and was obliged to lie in bed all day long. When Kitty was away at school, the house was incredibly lonesome. She missed her little angel—that is what she called Kitty. Kitty took great care of her mother. She cooked her food, mostly soup. They could not afford fresh fruit. Kitty would even sing to her mother at night.

When Kitty reached the school that day, her thoughts were full of her sick mother and the lovely red apples. She was usually an excellent student, but that day she made so many blunders that the teacher looked at her in surprise. The little girl could only sit at her desk, with her book before her, and dream of those red apples.

When school was dismissed, Kitty started slowly homeward. She had walked only a short distance when she saw a man in front of her drop his wallet. Running quickly forward, she picked it up. The wallet felt quite heavy in Kitty's little hand.

"There must be a good deal of money in it," thought Kitty. "How I wish I could keep it, so that I would then be able to purchase a red apple for Mamma, and so many other things she needs."

Kitty knew this would not be right, so she hurried after the man. Touching him on the arm, she said, "Please, Sir, you dropped your wallet back there."

"Thank you, dear," said the man taking the wallet. Then, noticing how poorly she was dressed, he said, "Why did you not keep the wallet, my child?"

"Because that would be stealing," replied Kitty. "But," she confessed honestly, "before I thought I must give it back to you, I did wish I could keep it, for then I could buy Mamma a red apple."

The gentleman smiled kindly and said, "You are a good little girl to return my wallet. I would like to give you a little present and then you can buy a red apple." He handed her a dollar and then said goodbye.

Kitty was so surprised that she started hastily for home, forgetting all about the red apples until she stood in front of the store. The store owner happened to look out and saw the same little girl who stood looking so longingly in at his window in the morning. He quickly picked out the biggest, roundest, reddest apple he could find. He took it out to Kitty and said, "Would you like this one, my dear?"

She took the apple and gave him the dollar. "No charge," he said, returning it. She thanked him—"for my mother," and the good man thought of it for many a day. When Kitty reached home with her treasures, she found her mother fast asleep. She put the apple and dollar on a plate where her mother could see them when she awoke.

When Mrs. Miller was told the wonderful story, she kissed her little daughter and said, "What have we learned from this wonderful day?"

## Analyze Author's Techniques, including Figurative Language - Fiction

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

Choose the best answer for each question.

1. Why does Kitty's mother call her a little angel?

- a. She is a small child.
- b. She takes care of her mother.
- c. She is very patient.
- d. She sings to her.

3. How does the writer help you know how the store owner feels?

- a. what he asks
- b. what he says and does
- c. what he thinks
- d. what Kitty says about him

2. How does the writer keep you interested in the story?

- a. with dialogue
- b. with the setting
- c. with money
- d. with information

4. Why does the writer call what Kitty brings home treasures?

- a. They are money.
- b. They are things she wants.
- c. They are free.
- d. They are very valuable.

5. Write your own answer to this question. What is the main idea that the writer wants you to understand?

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Why do you think that is what the writer wants you to understand?

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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.

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|--------|---|---|---|---|
| Item   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Answer | b | a | b | b |

Question 5 is open-ended. Here is a suggested response.  
The idea should be that it is important to care but also to be honest.