

“The Gift of the Magi” by O. Henry
Open-Book Test

Short Answer Write your responses to the questions in this section on the lines provided.

- O. Henry describes the name card attached to the letter-box at the beginning of “The Gift of the Magi.” Based on the details, what inference can you make? What details help you make this inference?

- In the first part of “The Gift of the Magi,” the author refers to the Queen of Sheba and King Solomon to make a point about Della’s hair and Jim’s watch. What does Della’s hair outshine? What is more valuable than King Solomon’s treasures? Why do you think the author makes these comparisons?

- Reread the paragraph found early in “The Gift of the Magi” that describes Della’s loosened hair as a cascade of brown waters. In the chart, list two details or adjectives from that paragraph that describe Della’s appearance and the inference you make from each detail. Then, on the line below the chart, write a sentence about the inference you make about how Della feels about her hair.

Della’s Appearance	Inference From Detail

4. Jim Young in "The Gift of the Magi" is a serious, responsible man. What details about his name on the letter-box, his arrival for dinner, and his clothing tell you this?
- _____
- _____
5. Irony is a difference between what someone expects and what actually happens. Near the end of "The Gift of the Magi," what is the gift that Jim offers Della? How is this gift ironic?
- _____
- _____
6. At the end of "The Gift of the Magi," how does Jim react to Della's gift to him? What does this reveal about Jim?
- _____
- _____
7. Reread the last paragraph of "The Gift of the Magi." What conclusion does O. Henry draw about the Youngs' exchange of gifts? Why is this conclusion ironic?
- _____
- _____
8. Do you think the hair combs and the watch chain depreciate in value at the end of "The Gift of the Magi"? Base your answer on the meaning of *depreciate*.
- _____
- _____
9. In the beginning of "The Gift of the Magi," the author writes that "life is made up of sobs, sniffles, and smiles, with sniffles predominating." In your opinion, does the story support or contradict the author's statement? Give an example from the story to support your answer.
- _____
- _____
10. What early clue about possessions did the author build into "The Gift of the Magi" that makes the surprise ending believable?
- _____
- _____