Severe storms happen in low-pressure weather systems. Warm, wet air begins rising into the air. The higher it rises, the cooler it becomes. Water vapor in the air forms drops, a process called condensation. The drops join together to form clouds, and then precipitation of some kind (rain, sleet, snow, or hail) will fall down to Earth’s surface.

Although conditions must be very specific for a thunderstorm to develop, thunderstorms remain the most common kind of extreme weather. Before a thunderstorm can develop, there have to be three conditions present: the air has to be full of moisture, there must be either an intensely heated portion of Earth’s surface sending warm air up quickly or an approaching cold front, and the warm air that is rising must be warm enough to stay warmer than the air it passes through as it rises. The moisture in the rising air condenses, clouds form and a storm begins.

A cold front happens when cold air is moving near the surface of Earth, and it pushes warm air up very quickly. This is often the beginning of a thunderstorm. Clouds form, and heavy rains begin falling. Opposite electrical charges inside storm clouds separate, causing lightning to flash towards Earth. Lightning has enough energy to heat the air all around it. This sudden burst of heat is what causes the noise we know as thunder. Thunderstorms often bring disasters with them, including floods, fires caused by lightning, damage from hailstones or strong winds, and even tornadoes. A tornado is a spinning mass of air over land that can destroy virtually everything in its path.

A blizzard is a combination of strong winds and extremely low temperatures. Snowfall increases until it is so heavy it is difficult or impossible to see. People can become lost in the snow and freeze to death. Homes can be covered over with snow, trapping people indoors.

A hurricane is the most powerful storm known on Earth. Forming over warm ocean waters off the coast of the tropics, they can become gigantic swirling mixtures of air and water between 100 and 900 miles wide. Wind speeds can average about 75 miles per hour. Hurricanes do the worst damage to coastal cities because they quickly lose their strength when they move over land. Hurricanes are so large and powerful that their swirling clouds can be seen from space.

Organizations like FEMA (the Federal Emergency Management Agency) and the American Red Cross help victims of severe weather to deal with its aftermath.

What Does It Mean?

According to the text, what is thunder?

____________________________________

____________________________________

____________________________________

____________________________________

____________________________________

____________________________________

____________________________________

____________________________________
Galileo and His Telescope

Galileo Galilei was born in the year 1564 in the town of Pisa, Italy. When he was 20 years old, he was studying in Pisa. His father wanted him to be a doctor, but Galileo was bored with school except for math. Because math was the one subject where he was doing well, the court mathematician offered to tutor him privately so he could become a qualified mathematician. Galileo’s father was disappointed, but he agreed.

Because he needed to earn money, Galileo began experimenting with different things, trying to come up with some sort of invention that he could sell for money. He had a little bit of success with his invention that was like a compass that could be used to measure plots of land. He had already experimented with pendulums, thermometers, and magnets.

When he heard that a Dutch inventor had invented something called a spyglass, but was keeping it a secret, Galileo decided to work on one of his own. Within 24 hours, he had invented a telescope that could magnify things to make them appear ten times larger than real life.

One night, he pointed his telescope toward the sky, and made his first of many space observations: the moon was not smooth, like everyone thought. The moon was covered in bumps and craters. As technology has improved, first Galileo, and then many others, have made improvements on the telescope, the wonderful device that allows us to see from a distance.

A painting of Galileo showing his telescope to a nobleman.

Why Is It Important?

The text says: “Within 24 hours, he had invented a telescope that could magnify things to make them appear ten times larger than real life.” Why is this sentence important in order to understand Galileo?
In the wild, it often comes down to predator and prey, the hunter and the hunted. As you can imagine, most organisms want to stay alive. They have developed ways of adapting to severe habitats, and hiding or escaping from those who would like to eat them. So how do they do it?

One very helpful adaptation is called camouflage. You may have been surprised by an animal that was using camouflage in the past. It blended into its surroundings so well that you nearly missed seeing it at all. Its coloring, markings, or other physical features resemble its habitat so much that you can look directly at it without seeing it at first. This is often good enough to fool a predator that is scanning an area to look for food. This helps prey to hide from its predator. But did you know that it often works the other way around, too? Predators can use camouflage to trap their prey.

If a predator wants to eat a certain animal, and that animal cannot see it lying in wait, it can pounce on its prey unexpectedly, devouring it before it even knows what is happening.

Another popular adaptation is mimicry. Mimicry is when an animal has markings or other physical characteristics that allow it to look like some other kind of animal or plant. If it can make its predators believe that it is something that preys on them, or would at least be difficult or painful to catch, its predator will often go off in search of an easier target.

Sometimes animals are able to survive when their habitat changes because they adapt to the new conditions. For example, birds that were accustomed to nesting on high cliffs or in tall trees have survived industrialization of their habitat by learning to nest in the crevices of tall buildings. Raccoons easily adapt to residential areas that have taken over their woodland homes. They often help themselves to any food they can grab, whether it is in trashcans, or inside people’s homes!

What's the Main Idea?

What is the main idea of the text?

List two supporting details for the main idea.
Dolphins are mammals that live in the ocean. Mammals are different than fish, reptiles or birds. As a mammal, dolphins breathe oxygen, even though they live in water. Because they are mammals, a dolphin mother gives birth to a live baby, unlike reptiles and birds who lay eggs. A dolphin mother also feeds her baby milk like other mammals.
Narrator and Point of View

In every story there is a storyteller, called a narrator. The narrator tells the actions, the characters and the setting of the story. In fiction, the narrator is not the same as the author. An author creates a narrator. For example, in Treasure Island the narrator who tells the story is Jim Hawkins, the son of an innkeeper. The author who wrote the book is Robert Louis Stevenson. Jim says in the first lines of the book:

He goes on to mention that he is writing the story in the 1700s. Robert Louis Stevenson was not born until 1850, and wrote Treasure Island in 1883.

There are two main types of narrators: first person and third person. A first person narrator is usually a part of the story. This narrator uses I and me in the text. Treasure Island is a first person narration, or story told by Jim, who is a character in the story and uses I and me. Another example from the book:

“I was standing at the door for a moment, full of sad thoughts about my father, when I saw someone drawing slowly near along the road.”

A third person narrator is the most common in fiction. This narrator is not a character or at least not a main character. This narrator watches what goes on, but does not take a part in it. A third person narrator only uses he, she or it, never me or I. Like a first person narration, the author still creates the narrator. An example of a third person narration is The Wonderful Wizard of Oz by L. Frank Baum.

“When Dorothy stood in the doorway and looked around, she could see nothing but the great gray prairie on every side.”

The author uses she when talking about Dorothy, the main character. The only time that I or me is used in the story is in conversations.

Remember: In first person, the narrator is usually a main character and uses I and me.

In third person narrations, the narrator is not a main character and uses she, he, they or it. I and me is used only in conversations.

Below are some passages from books. Read them and write what type of narration it is: first person or third person.

1. At half-past nine, that night, Tom and Sid were sent to bed, as usual. They said their prayers, and Sid was soon asleep. Tom lay awake and waited, in restless impatience.  
   (The Adventures of Tom Sawyer by Mark Twain)

2. There were six young colts in the meadow besides me; they were older than I was; some were nearly as large as grown-up horses. I used to run with them, and had great fun; we used to gallop all together round and round the field as hard as we could go.  
   (Black Beauty by Anna Sewell)

3. To begin my life with the beginning of my life, I record that I was born (as I have been informed and believe) on a Friday, at twelve o’clock at night. It was remarked that the clock began to strike, and I began to cry, simultaneously.  
   (David Copperfield by Charles Dickens)

4. Since his papa’s death, Cedric had found out that it was best not to talk to his mamma about him. When his father was ill, Cedric had been sent away, and when he had returned, everything was over...  
   (Little Lord Fauntleroy by Frances Hodgson Burnett)

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Fact and Opinion: Switch It Up!

A fact is something that is true and can be proven. It does not change, no matter who says it. Opinion is something that someone thinks or feels. It may change from person to person.

Read each statement below. Decide if it is a fact or opinion and write your decision in the blank.

Then switch it up! If the statement is an opinion, write a fact about the topic in the space provided. If it is a fact, write an opinion about the topic.

Example:

Ursula is very pretty.  
Adam thinks Ursula is pretty.

1. Abraham Lincoln was president during the U.S. Civil War.

2. Going to the doctor is scary.

3. Beethoven was the greatest composer.

4. Water is made of hydrogen and oxygen.

5. Pizza with black olives is delicious.

6. Elephants are the largest land mammals.

7. Mercury is the closest planet to the Sun.

8. The best vacation is going camping.
Common Nouns & Proper Nouns

A noun can be a common noun, or a proper noun.

Proper nouns are the names of specific people, places, things, or ideas. They are capitalized, because they are names.

- Johnson Elementary School.
- Mr. Blackwell
- Maggie Jones
- Timmy

Common nouns are general, not specific. They are not names, so they are not capitalized unless they are the first word in a sentence.

- school
- man
- girl
- boy

Write Common or Proper on the line next to each noun.

1. restaurant
2. SaveMore Groceries
3. book
4. teacher
5. Samantha
6. lunchbox
7. Mrs. Walker
8. eraser
9. homework
10. Aunt Jane

Write 3 common nouns:
1. 
2. 
3. 

Write 3 proper nouns:
1. 
2. 
3. 

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Singular Nouns & Plural Nouns

Nouns are **singular** when they refer to just one person, place, thing, or idea.

![book], ![girl], ![pencil]

Nouns are **plural** when they refer to two or more people, places, things, or ideas.

![books], ![girls], ![pencils]

The regular plural form of nouns is made by simply adding an “s” to the end of the word.

If the noun is singular, write the plural form. If the noun is plural, write the singular form.

1. car
   ___________
2. hair
   ___________
3. plants
   ___________
4. table
   ___________
5. chair
   ___________
6. lakes
   ___________
7. animals
   ___________
8. baseball
   ___________
9. house
   ___________
10. desks
    ___________
11. video
    ___________
12. students
    ___________

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An action verb shows what a noun in the sentence has done, is doing, or will do. It is called an action verb because there is someone or something taking an action.

Annie writes on the board.

The students will play in the band concert.

The puppy ran down the road.

---

Read the words below. Circle the action verbs. Cross out the words that are not action verbs.

1. book
2. sing
3. talked
4. people
5. apple
6. paintbrush
7. cook
8. clock
9. search
10. ocean
11. trees
12. wolf
13. discover
14. astronaut

candle
desk
car
museum
shirt
smiled
chair
kitten
carpet
kicked
mountain
door
piano
teacher
dance
boy
bookshelf
visit
purse
dishes
notebook
listen
ladder
kicked
climb
oven
eraser

table
pencil
zoo
shoes
bought
monkey
bed
cat
foot
paper
snow
flashlight
servant
sell
Adjectives Describe

Adjectives are words that describe other words such as nouns.

Example: A red apple. The adjective is red.
Example: The man was tall. The adjective is tall.

Write an adjective in the blank.

1. A ______________________________ dog

2. She has a __________________________ hat.

3. The house was ____________________________.

4. A _______________________________ cake

5. That blanket is ____________________________.

6. We played a _____________________________ game.

7. The ___________________________ bird sat in the ___________________________ tree.

8. He gave the ___________________________ lady a ___________________________ flower.
The ending punctuation you choose to put on a sentence depends on the type of sentence that it is. There are three major kinds of sentences.

1. **Declarative** sentences are making a statement, perhaps to provide information. A **period (.)** is the proper ending punctuation for a declarative sentence.
2. **Interrogative** sentences are asking a question. A **question mark (?)** is the proper ending punctuation for an interrogative sentence.
3. **Exclamatory** sentences express emotion or excitement. An **exclamation point (!)** is the proper ending punctuation for an exclamatory sentence.

- **Decide whether the sentence is making a statement, asking a question, or expressing emotion.**
- **Add the proper punctuation to the end.**

1. There are 33 students in my class______
2. What time does the class start ______
3. The house is on fire ______
4. The shop on the corner sells notebooks and paper_____
5. Each class will have an assigned time to go to the library______
6. My dad said he is going to double my allowance ____
7. Why aren’t you coming on the field trip______
8. How long will it take us to get to the museum ______
9. I returned the books to the bookcase______
10. Where is the school office ______
11. What is your favorite sport ______
12. James scored the winning touchdown ______
13. Mom is making my favorite meal for dinner ______
14. Is Emily your best friend ______
Finding the Meaning with Clue Words

Certain special words in a sentence will tell you exactly what a word or phrase means. For example:

A typhoon is also called a hurricane.

The word **called** sometimes tells you that the meaning for typhoon is coming up. That meaning is hurricane. If you know that a hurricane is a strong storm over water, then you know that a typhoon is the same thing!

**Clue words that may help you:**
- called
- is/are/was/were
- like
- include/including

Circle the clue word in each of the following sentences. Underline the two words or phrases that have a similar meaning.

1. Mars is the fourth planet from the sun.
2. We learned about octagons, or 8-sided shapes.
3. James was irritated, meaning he was cross.
4. Many nations of South America, including Brazil and Ecuador, are on the Equator.
5. Many pioneers rode in a covered wagon, known as a Conestoga wagon, on the westward journey.
6. Leafy green vegetables, such as lettuce and spinach, are good to eat.
7. The process of turning light into energy, called photosynthesis, is the reason most plants need sunlight.
8. All mammals, like humans, whales, and lions, feed their babies milk.
Nonfiction Reading Test

Google

Directions: Read the following passage and answer the questions that follow. Refer to the text to check your answers when appropriate.

You know that you're doing something big when your company name becomes a verb. Ask Xerox. In 1959 they created the first plain paper copy machine. It was one of the most successful products ever. The company name Xerox grew into a verb that means "to copy," as in "Bob, can you Xerox this for me?" Around 50 years later, the same thing happened to Google. Their company name grew into a verb that means "to do an internet search." Now everyone and their grandma knows what it means to Google it.

Unlike Xerox, Google wasn't the first company to invent their product, not by a long shot. Lycos released their search engine in 1993. Yahoo! came out in 1994. AltaVista began serving results in 1995. Google did not come out until years later, in 1998. Though a few years difference may not seem like much, this is a major head start in the fast moving world of tech. So how did Google do it? How did they overtake their competitors who had such huge leads in time and money? Maybe one good idea made all the difference.

There are millions and millions of sites on the internet. How does a search engine know which ones are relevant to your search? This is a question that great minds have been working on for decades. To understand how Google changed the game, you need to know how search engines worked in 1998. Back then most websites looked at the words in your query. They counted how many times those words appeared on each page. Then they might return pages where the words in your query appeared the most. This system did not work well and people often had to click through pages and pages of results to find what they wanted.

Google was the first search engine that began considering links. Links are those blue underlined words that take you to other pages when you click on them. Larry Page, cofounder of Google, believed that meaningful data could be drawn from how those links connect. Page figured that websites with many links pointing at them were more important than those that had few. He was right. Google's search results were much better than their rivals. They would soon become the world's most used search engine.

It wasn't just the great search results that led to Google becoming so well liked. It also had to do with the way that they presented their product. Most of the other search engines were cluttered. Their home pages were filled with everything from news stories to stock quotes. But Google's homepage was, and still is, clean. There's nothing on it but the logo, the search box, and a few links. It almost appears empty. In fact, when they were first testing it, users would wait at the home page and not do anything. When asked why, they said that they were, "waiting for the rest of the page to load." People couldn't imagine such a clean and open page as being complete. But the fresh design grew on people once they got used to it.

These days Google has its hands in everything from self-driving cars to helping humans live longer. Though they have many other popular products, they will always be best known for their search engine. The Google search engine has changed our lives and our language. Not only is it a fantastic product, it is a standing example that one good idea (and a lot of hard work) can change the world.
1. Which event happened last?
   a. Lycos released their search engine.  
   b. Yahoo! released their search engine. 
   c. Google released their search engine.  
   d. Xerox released their copy machine. 

2. Which statement would the author of this text most likely disagree with?
   a. Part of Google's success is due to the design of their homepage. 
   b. Google succeeded by following examples of others in their field. 
   c. Google wasn't the first search engine, but it was the best. 
   d. Google's success may not have been possible without Larry Page. 

3. Which best expresses the main idea of the third paragraph?
   a. There are lots and lots of websites connected to the internet. 
   b. Google created a better way to organize search results. 
   c. Many smart people have worked on search engines over the years. 
   d. Older search engines used unreliable methods to order results. 

4. What is the author's main purpose in writing this article?
   a. To explain how Google overtook its rivals 
   b. To compare and contrast Google and Xerox 
   c. To persuade readers to use Google for internet searches 
   d. To discuss how companies can influence language over time 

5. Which statement would the author most likely agree with?
   a. Google became successful because its founders were well-connected. 
   b. Google was the world's first and best search engine. 
   c. Google changed the world by solving an old problem in a new way. 
   d. Google's other products are now more important to its success than search. 

6. Which best expresses the main idea of the fourth paragraph?
   a. Links allow people to surf from one website to the next. 
   b. Larry Page's ideas about links helped Google get to the top. 
   c. Larry Page contributed to the internet by inventing the link. 
   d. Google is a website that serves important links to users. 

7. Which best explains why the author discusses Xerox in this text?
   a. He is discussing big companies that came before Google. 
   b. He is explaining how companies must change with the times. 
   c. He is showing how companies can affect our language. 
   d. He is comparing and contrasting Google and Xerox.
   a. They counted how many times queries appeared on each page.
   b. They looked more closely at the words in search queries.
   c. They linked to more pages.
   d. They studied the relationships of links.

9. Which was cited as a reason why Google became so popular?
   a. Google's homepage was clean.
   b. Google provided catchy news stories on their homepage.
   c. Google homepage loaded quickly.
   d. Google provided useful stock quotes on their homepage.

10. Which title best expresses the author's main purpose in writing this text?
    a. Xerox Vs. Google: Battle of the Titans
    b. Search Engines: How They Work and Why They're Important
    c. A Better Way: How Google Rose to the Top
    d. Search Engines: A Short History of Important Tools

Long Response

1. What can readers learn about Google's approach to doing business based on reading this article? Use information from the text to support your response.

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
2. Explain how Google was able to overcome its competitors. Cite information from the text to support your response.

3. What do Google and Xerox have in common? Support your answer with information from the text.
I found the kitten sitting on my front porch in the toy bin. He was black and white and crying like a human baby. Where did he come from? I noticed he had no collar. Who would be so irresponsible?

I went inside and opened a can of tuna fish. After I placed the tuna in the doorway, the kitten hungrily lapped it up and then walked right inside the house.

"Hey, kitten! I didn't say you could come in!" I yelled.

The kitten seemed unconcerned with this information. He plopped down onto a bunch of pillows on the couch and began to groom his paws.

My older brother Michael walked into the room, saw the kitten, and started laughing. "What the heck? You brought home a cat?" he asked.

"I didn't exactly bring him home," I explained. "He just kinda walked in through the front door and made himself at home."

"Aw, Mom is gonna be so angry!" Michael said. "You'd better call her."

"Okay," I said. "I promise I'll call right now."

At that moment, I had every intention of doing the right thing and calling my mother. What happened next was slightly different, though.

I picked up the kitten and put him into a box. I gave him a blanket and a toy. And then I brought him to
my bedroom and shut the door.

Our family never owned pets, but I had always wanted one. I knew a little bit about taking care of them. I knew he wasn't a newborn kitten because he was big and fluffy, and his eyes were open. Newborn kittens are not supposed to be separated from their moms. When a human finds them, they have to be extra careful.

I knew he was going to need a litter box. Of course, since I don't own a cat, I didn't have one. So I took a cardboard box and ripped up an old newspaper into shreds. I learned this trick from an Internet video.

Immediately, the kitten jumped into the box to do his business. I knew this meant he was already litter box trained.

I really should call my mom about this, I thought, as the kitten meowed and jumped up onto my lap. Well, he sure did seem to like me! Maybe I didn't have to give him back after all!

If someone can't take care of their kitten, they deserve to lose him! I thought.

The kitten kept meowing quite a lot. It wouldn't stop. And then, it started trying to bite my hand.

"Hey, kitten! I'm not food!" I said.

"Meow!" yelled the kitten, trying again to bite my finger.

I knew I had to go to the store and get some cat food. I opened my piggy bank to see what was inside.

Five dollars and 98 cents. Well, that would certainly be enough to buy a can of cat food.

"You stay put, kitten!" I told him. "I'm going to get you food!"

I bet his last owners never gave him food. They probably didn't love him at all!

I made sure he had plenty of water and shut the bedroom door. I put on my coat and grabbed my keys. I headed out to Whiskers Organic Pet Supply up the street from my house in Astoria, Queens.

On my way out the door, I spotted a sign on the telephone pole:

**LOST KITTEN**

Black and White, very friendly. If you find him, please call us. We are worried sick.

"Hmm," I thought. "Well, if you were so worried about your kitten, maybe you should have taken better care of him!"

I laughed to myself and headed into the pet store. People are so irresponsible! It's a good thing I found that kitten and took him in. Now, I'm buying him food! Thank goodness he found me!

When I walked into the pet store, I could barely get through the door. The place was packed! A group of kids were hanging up flyers about this same cat.
In the back of the store, I saw a little boy in a wheelchair. He was about five years old, and he was crying.

"I can't believe I lost my kitten!" he said to his parents. "I couldn't get to the open door in time!"

I looked at the flyers on the wall. It was definitely the cat I had back at home, sitting in my bedroom, behind a closed door.

Then the truth of the situation hit me. I had stolen a little boy's cat!

In my mind, I had made up a whole story about the people who lost the kitten, and how they deserved to lose him. Now I realized there was a lot I didn't understand. I tried to justify why I should keep the kitten by convincing myself the owners deserved to lose him. Now I saw that it was all a big mistake.

I approached the little boy in the wheelchair. He blew his nose and looked up at me.

"I have your kitten," I told him. "I'm sorry. I just found him and fed him. He's at my house."

The little boy began to cry with laughter. He stretched his arms out and gave me a great big hug. "Thank you so much! I was just about to put a new flea collar on him when he ran out the door. I couldn't chase him! Because of my... you know... my legs."

"I'll be right back," I told him. I ran home to get the kitten and reunite owner and pet.

A situation isn't always as simple as it seems on the outside. I thought for sure the kitten's owners deserved to lose him, but I didn't have all the information. In the end, I was the one who didn't deserve to keep the kitten.
1. What does the narrator find on her front porch?
   A. a dog
   B. a kitten
   C. a can of tuna
   D. a lost boy

2. How do the narrator's feelings about the kitten's owner change in the story?
   A. At first she thinks the owner is irresponsible, but then she realizes she is wrong.
   B. At first she thinks the owner is responsible, but then she realizes she is wrong.
   C. At first she thinks the owner misses his or her kitten, but then she realizes she is wrong.
   D. Her feelings do not change. She thinks the owner is irresponsible throughout the story.

3. The narrator assumes that the kitten's owner did not take care of the kitten. What evidence from the story best supports this conclusion?
   A. "Well, he sure did seem to like me! Maybe I didn't have to give him back after all!"
   B. "It's a good thing I found that kitten and took him in. Now, I'm buying him food!"
   C. "I laughed to myself and headed into the pet store. People are so irresponsible!"
   D. "I bet his last owners never gave him food. They probably didn't love him at all!"

4. Why does the narrator convince herself that the kitten's owner was irresponsible?
   A. because she thinks the kitten looks skinny
   B. because she is worried about the kitten
   C. because she wants to keep the kitten
   D. because her mom won't let her keep the kitten

5. What is this story mostly about?
   A. The narrator makes an assumption, then realizes that she was wrong.
   B. The narrator finds a lost kitten that was neglected by its previous owner.
   C. The narrator finds a lost kitten and learns how to care for it.
   D. The narrator finds a lost kitten, hides it from her mother, and gets in trouble.
6. Read the following sentences: "In my mind, I had made up a whole story about the people who lost the kitten, and how they deserved to lose him. Now I realized there was a lot I didn't understand. I tried to justify why I should keep the kitten by convincing myself the owners deserved to lose him."

As used in this sentence, what does the word "justify" most nearly mean?

A. tell the truth about a situation before a judge
B. realize that you have been wrong about something
C. pretend that a situation does not exist
D. come up with a good reason for something

7. Choose the answer that best completes the sentence below.

The narrator tells herself that the kitten's owner must not have loved him; ________, she later learns that her assumption was wrong.

A. meanwhile
B. however
C. for instance
D. therefore

8. What does the narrator see at the pet store?
9. At first, the narrator thinks that the kitten's previous owner was irresponsible, but then she realizes that she was wrong. What causes her to change her opinion?

10. What is the main theme or message of the story, and why? Support your answer using information from the story.