

Answer Key

The Gift of the Magi

Selection Test, pp. 27–28

A. (8 points each) Answers will vary but should suggest that

1. Jim had sold his watch and no longer had any use for a fob.
2. Della got the treasured combs after she had cut off her hair and could no longer use them.
3. Jim had just given her the gift that she had longed for, but then, instead of accepting her gratitude, he had to comfort her.

Accept other ideas if they show a clear understanding of situational irony.

B. (5 points each)

1. b
2. a
3. d
4. c

C. (4 points each)

1. b
2. a
3. c
4. c
5. b

D. (20 points; students should answer one of the two)

1. Answers will vary but could include
 - a. Yes, because each of them had only one possession of value and each sold that possession to get a special gift for the other.
 - b. No, because they still had their love for each other and their youth and their future together.
2. Answers will vary but might include that O. Henry believes they are the wisest because
 - a. their gifts were given from true love and required a sacrifice.
 - b. they cared more for each other than for themselves.
 - c. their happiness was in giving, not receiving.

Opinions as to whether they agree could include:

- a. Yes, because Jim and Della embody the true spirit of Christmas, as O. Henry implies by calling them the Magi.
- b. Yes, because gifts that can easily be exchanged for something else are not true gifts of the heart; they are not as meaningful.
- c. No, because, in the end, both Della and Jim were poorer than they had been before; they had lost things of true value and gained possessions they could not use.

E. (16 points) Answers will vary. Accept any answers that state a clear position and defend it by using examples or details from the literature or from life.