The Cracked Lens

Read the story. Then answer the questions in full sentences.

Name _____ Date _____

Eli had signed out the school's most expensive camera to photograph the soccer game for the yearbook, and Mr. Delgado, the yearbook adviser, had reminded him twice to keep the strap around his neck. During the second half, though, Eli removed the strap to get a better angle from the top of the bleachers. When the crowd jumped up to celebrate a goal, someone bumped his elbow, the camera struck the metal step, and a thin crack spread across the lens.

On the walk home, Eli considered his choices. Nobody had seen the camera fall, so he could quietly return it to the cabinet on Monday, and the next student to use it might be blamed. Or he could tell Mr. Delgado the truth and probably lose his position as a photographer.

He barely slept that night. On Monday, he arrived early, set the camera on Mr. Delgado's desk and explained exactly what had happened, including the part about the strap. He offered to pay for the repair with the money he had saved from walking his neighbors' dogs.

Mr. Delgado examined the lens carefully for a long moment. A replacement lens would cost eighty dollars, he said, and he accepted Eli's offer to pay half, while the yearbook budget would cover the rest. "You told me before I discovered it myself," he said. "That is exactly the kind of person I want holding our cameras." Two weeks later, Eli photographed the championship game, and he kept the strap around his neck the entire time.

1. **What is a theme of this story?**

2. **What does "examined" mean in the last paragraph? What in the sentence shows it?**

3. **How did Eli's choice to tell the truth lead to the ending of the story?**

4. **Was it fair for Eli to pay half the cost of the new lens? Support your answer with details from the story.**

Answer key

The Cracked Lens

1. What is a theme of this story?
   Owning up to a mistake, even when nobody saw it, builds trust.

2. What does “examined” mean in the last paragraph? What in the sentence shows it?
   It means looked at closely. The sentence says Mr. Delgado looked carefully, for a long moment.

3. How did Eli’s choice to tell the truth lead to the ending of the story?
   Because Eli told Mr. Delgado before he discovered the crack himself, Mr. Delgado trusted him more. Eli kept his place and photographed the championship game.

4. Was it fair for Eli to pay half the cost of the new lens? Support your answer with details from the story.
   Sample answer: Yes. The camera broke because Eli took off the strap after being reminded twice to keep it on, so part of the cost was his to pay. But someone else bumped his elbow, so it was also fair for the yearbook budget to cover the rest.