Two Sides of the Story

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

Name _____ Date _____

Lena: For five days in a row, the seat beside Lena in the cafeteria had stayed empty. Kayla had been her best friend since second grade, but now, as soon as the bell rang, Kayla grabbed her trumpet case and hurried away without a word. Lena decided that Kayla must have found new friends in the band. On Friday, she wrote a short note: "If you don't want to be friends anymore, just tell me." She almost slipped it through the vents of Kayla's locker, but at the last moment she pushed it into her pocket and walked toward the band room instead.

Kayla: Kayla had a secret that embarrassed her. The band director had given her a solo for the spring concert, and she kept cracking the highest note, no matter how carefully she practiced. Every lunch period, she rehearsed alone in the band room, hoping to fix the problem before anyone heard her fail. When the door opened and Lena walked in, Kayla's stomach dropped. She was certain Lena would laugh at her. Instead, Lena asked quietly why she had disappeared all week, and Kayla took a deep breath and told her the truth.

Lena pulled the crumpled note out of her pocket and showed it to her. The two girls realized that each of them had been afraid of something imaginary. After that, Lena ate lunch in the band room every day, listening patiently to the solo until Kayla finally hit the high note.

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

2. **What does "Kayla's stomach dropped" mean here? What in the paragraph shows it?**

3. **Why did the author tell the story from both girls' points of view?**

4. **Was Lena right to go to the band room instead of leaving the note? Support your answer with details from the story.**

Answer key

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1. What is a theme of this story?
   Talking honestly with a friend is better than guessing what the friend is thinking.

2. What does “Kayla’s stomach dropped” mean here? What in the paragraph shows it?
   It means she suddenly felt afraid. The next sentence says she was certain Lena would laugh at her.

3. Why did the author tell the story from both girls’ points of view?
   To show that each girl misunderstood the other: Lena thought Kayla had found new friends, but Kayla was really rehearsing her solo alone because she was embarrassed.

4. Was Lena right to go to the band room instead of leaving the note? Support your answer with details from the story.
   Sample answer: Yes. The note said “If you don’t want to be friends anymore, just tell me,” which was based on a wrong guess and could have hurt Kayla. By going to the band room, Lena learned the truth, and the girls ended up closer than before.