Name: _____ Date: _____

Two Sides of the Story

Grades 5-6 | Fiction

1 When Ms. Okafor announced the class debate topic, "Should our school have a longer recess?", Jamal grinned. Finally, a debate he was sure to win. Then she read out the teams, and his grin vanished. He had been assigned to argue for the other side.

2 "But I agree with longer recess," he protested. "How can I argue against something I believe?"

3 "That's exactly the point," Ms. Okafor replied. "A good thinker can explain an idea fairly, even one they disagree with."

4 That evening, Jamal grudgingly started researching. He interviewed the lunch staff, who worried about a longer schedule, and he read about how class time is planned. Slowly, the other side stopped looking silly. It looked complicated.

5 On debate day, Jamal presented his points carefully, using real reasons instead of jokes. His opponent, Lucia, argued for longer recess with passion, but when Jamal asked how the school day would fit together, she had no answer.

6 Jamal's team won. Afterward, he admitted to Lucia that he still loved recess. "I just understand now why it's not so simple," he said. Lucia laughed. "Next time, I'm researching the other side first."

Draw your favorite part of the story.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Questions: Two Sides of the Story

Read the passage again if you need to. Circle the best answer.

1. Why was Jamal upset when the teams were announced?

(a) He was on a team alone
(b) He had to argue against what he believed
(c) He did not like debates
(d) He wanted to be the judge

2. What does "grudgingly" suggest about how Jamal started his research?

(a) He was excited
(b) He was unwilling at first
(c) He was very fast
(d) He was confused

3. How did Jamal's view of the other side change?

(a) He thought it was silly
(b) He saw that the issue was more complicated
(c) He stopped caring
(d) He decided recess should end

4. What lesson did Lucia learn?

(a) Recess is not important
(b) Understanding the other side makes an argument stronger
(c) Debates are unfair
(d) Winning is everything

5. How does Ms. Okafor's statement connect to the story's theme? Use evidence from the text.

_____

_____

_____

Reading Comprehension: Answer Key

Two Sides of the Story

1. b) He had to argue against what he believed
2. b) He was unwilling at first
3. b) He saw that the issue was more complicated
4. b) Understanding the other side makes an argument stronger
5. Sample answer: She says a good thinker can explain an idea fairly even when they disagree. Jamal proves this by researching the other side, and it helps him win and understand the issue better.