

Fear vs. Freedom Test Answer Key

True Theme: *Growth and confidence often come from taking calculated risks rather than always choosing safety.*

Possible Counter-Theme: *Playing it safe is always the best way to avoid regret.*

Text Evidence That Disproves the Counter-Theme:

1. "She wanted to feel that rush too—but her heart pounded with doubt."
2. "She took one deep breath, then leaped."
3. "It was terrifying, but worth it. I didn't want fear to choose for me."

Explanation: The story shows that staying safe would have left Lena with regret. By taking the risk, she gains joy and self-assurance, proving that the counter-theme ("Safety is always best") is false in this context. The author emphasizes that facing fear can lead to empowerment and personal growth.

Reflection Sample: The author includes both risk and safety to show balance. Safety protects us, but too much of it can prevent new experiences. The story teaches that courage doesn't mean avoiding fear—it means choosing to act despite it.

Teacher Notes / Guide

Objective: Students will strengthen their understanding of **theme identification** by exploring both the *true message* and its *opposite*. This encourages critical thinking, evidence-based reasoning, and deeper comprehension of author intent.

Teaching Tips:

- Model how to construct a counter-theme:
 - Example: "Courage brings reward" → Counter-theme: "Fear keeps you safe."
- Encourage students to debate both sides before finding textual proof to support the story's true stance.