



Name \_\_\_\_\_

## The 90-Second Journey

**Directions:** You will read this story in **three timed “slices.”** Read each section for 30 seconds, then stop and summarize what you understood. In the final “slice”, write a complete summary. Don’t reread earlier parts during the timed reading; focus on what happens in each new “slice.”

### “The Midnight Train Mystery”

1. The old train station was nearly silent except for the hum of the lanterns hanging from the beams. Ellie waited on the wooden bench, clutching her backpack. She had come to visit her grandmother, but when she arrived, the ticket clerk whispered that “something strange” was happening on the midnight train. No one had dared to board it for three nights straight. The clock struck eleven forty-five. The rails began to tremble ever so slightly. Ellie felt a chill run down her spine as a whistle echoed through the fog.

→ **Stop and Summarize Slice 1:**

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2. The train rolled into the station, but its windows were dark and its doors creaked open on their own. Ellie hesitated, then remembered her grandmother’s mysterious letter: *“You’ll find the truth on the last car.”* Gathering her courage, she stepped inside. The air smelled of metal and dust. As she walked through the empty cars, her footsteps echoed. A faint light flickered ahead. She could almost hear whispering, though she couldn’t tell if it was the wind or voices from the past.

→ **Stop and Summarize Slice 2:**

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3. When Ellie reached the final car, she found an old suitcase sitting on one of the seats. Its tag read her grandmother’s name. With trembling hands, she opened it—and inside was a stack of photographs showing the same train station, but from decades ago. In one photo, her grandmother stood smiling beside a man who looked exactly like the ticket clerk. Ellie turned around, but the train was empty again. The whistle blew once more, and when she stepped off, the station was bathed in dawn light. The midnight train had vanished, leaving only the echo of mystery behind.

→ **Stop and Summarize Slice 3:**

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