5TH GRADE READING · FICTION

The Secret Ingredient

Name _____ Date _____

Fiction | 206 words | Theme

I read it: ☆ to myself ☆ to a grown-up ☆ to a friend

1 Every Saturday, Zain helped his uncle at the bakery on Elm Street. Uncle Tariq's bread was famous. People lined up before sunrise for his golden loaves, and Zain was sure there was a secret ingredient hidden somewhere in the kitchen.

2 This Saturday, Uncle Tariq let Zain make a batch by himself. Zain measured the flour, salt, yeast and water exactly as the recipe said. He **kneaded** the dough for two minutes, put it in a bowl and waited. After ten minutes, he peeked. The dough hadn't changed. He shoved it into the oven anyway.

3 The loaves came out flat and as heavy as bricks. Zain's face fell. "I used the same recipe," he said. "What's the secret?" Uncle Tariq smiled and handed him an apron. "Watch."

4 Uncle Tariq **kneaded** his dough for ten full minutes, folding and pressing until it was smooth and **springy.** Then he covered the bowl with a towel and left it alone for an hour while it slowly doubled in size. "The secret ingredient," he said, sliding perfect loaves onto the rack, "is time. Good bread can't be **rushed,** and neither can most good things." The next Saturday, Zain set a timer and waited. His bread was the first to sell out.

How did I do? ☆ ☆ ☆

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The Secret Ingredient: questions

Name _____ Date _____

I can find answers in the text. Look back at the story to check.

1 Circle the best answer

1. Why was Zain's first bread flat?

(a) he forgot the salt (b) the oven broke (c) he rushed the dough

2. What was the secret ingredient?

(a) time (b) sugar (c) butter

3. What is the theme of the story?

(a) good things take time (b) bakers wake up early (c) follow every recipe

2 Put the events in order. Write 1, 2, 3, 4.

☐ Zain's bread sold out first.

☐ Uncle Tariq showed him how to knead.

☐ Zain measured the ingredients.

☐ Zain baked the dough too soon.

How did I do? ☆ ☆ ☆

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The Secret Ingredient: words and writing

Name _____ Date _____

1 Match each word to its meaning. Draw a line.

kneaded	○	○ done too quickly
springy	○	○ pressed and folded dough with your hands
rushed	○	○ bouncing back when pressed

2 Write your answer in a full sentence.

What did Uncle Tariq mean when he said, "Good bread can't be rushed, and neither can most good things"?

_____

_____

_____

_____

3 Draw your favorite part of the story.

How did I do? ☆ ☆ ☆

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FOR TEACHERS AND PARENTS

Answer key: The Secret Ingredient

1 Circle the best answer

1. c) he rushed the dough
2. a) time
3. a) good things take time

2 Order of events

Numbers as printed, top to bottom: 4, 3, 1, 2

1. Zain measured the ingredients.
2. Zain baked the dough too soon.
3. Uncle Tariq showed him how to knead.
4. Zain's bread sold out first.

3 Word meanings

kneaded: pressed and folded dough with your hands

springy: bouncing back when pressed

rushed: done too quickly

4 Written answer (sample)

He meant that patience matters. Bread needs time to rise, and many things in life need time and care to turn out well.

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