

“Guermo’s Surprise”

Reading Comprehension – Short Stories

Directions: Read the story. Then answer the questions below.



Liz was just about finished wrapping up the final details for the surprise party she was planning for her husband. She had been **meticulously** preparing for this event, and was very excited about it.

Family members who Guermo hadn’t seen in years were flying in from Peru in a few days. Liz had tracked down several college friends, and they were coming in from various places across the country. The caterer and band were set.

The best part for Liz: she knew Guermo had not a clue about the party. She could not wait to see the look on his face when he walked into a big “Surprise!” in his own home.

The party was to be on Saturday. As Liz was daydreaming about picking relatives up at the airport the next day and taking them to their hotel, Guermo walked into the kitchen and said, quite certainly, “Sweetheart, I don’t want anything special done for my birthday.”

“What do you mean?” Liz responded **nonchalantly**, though her heart was beginning to pound.

“I mean that I don’t want a surprise party.”

“Okay,” Liz said with a shrug. “Not a problem.”

Liz’s mind raced. There was nothing she could do about Guermo’s request now. And, frankly, she didn’t want to. Liz had been planning this for more than a year. The party would go off as she intended. She did not want all of her effort to be for naught.

When Guermo came home Saturday evening from playing soccer with friends, he was shocked. Tears filled his eyes. (This response had been something Liz had not predicted). He saw among the crowd friends who he had not seen in nearly 20 years and family members who had come from Peru just for this evening.

But along with being deeply moved, he was also angry with his wife. He felt **ambushed**. He knew he could be emotional, and he did not like people to see him that way. That’s why he did not like being surprised.

Salsa music filled the home of Liz and Guermo. Guests filled up on ceviche, lomo soltado and empanadas. Liz whispered an “I love you” in Guermo’s ear, they shared a kiss, and the two danced the night away.

Questions:

1) Which is the best antonym for **meticulously**?

- A. angrily
- B. carelessly
- C. overtly
- D. quickly

2) Which is the best antonym for **nonchalantly**?

- A. assuredly
- B. slowly
- C. truthfully
- D. worriedly

3) Given what was going on in the passage at the time, what is the most likely reason Liz's heart began to pound?

- A. She was angry.
- B. She was confused.
- C. She was nervous.
- D. She was heartbroken.

4) What does it mean to **ambush** someone?

- A. to make someone cry
- B. to lie to someone repeatedly
- C. to attack someone in a surprise manner
- D. to present someone with all their friends and family

5) Why might have Liz decided not to tell Guermo about the party?

- A. She was embarrassed.
- B. She would have had to cancel the party.
- C. She had done a lot of work to make it a surprise.
- D. The guests would have been disappointed.

6) *"Salsa music filled the home of Liz and Guermo. Guests filled up on ceviche, lomo soltado and empanadas."*

▼ Which is the best way to combine the above sentences, keeping their meaning the same?

- A. Salsa music filled the home of Liz and Guermo, guests filled up on ceviche, lomo soltado and empanadas.
 - B. While salsa music filled the home of Liz and Guermo, guests filled up on ceviche, lomo soltado and empanadas.
 - C. Salsa music filled the home of Liz and Guermo; nevertheless, guests filled up on ceviche, lomo soltado and empanadas.
 - D. Salsa music filled the home of Liz and Guermo; however, guests filled up on ceviche, lomo soltado and empanadas.
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Questions (continued):

- 7)** What is the most likely reason Guermo did not want to be surprised?
- A.** He does not like to dance.
 - B.** He does not like to get emotional.
 - C.** He did not want people to know his age.
 - D.** He did not want to see his family and friends.

- 8)** What could the author have done to add more tension to the passage?
- A.** described Peruvian cuisine in more detail
 - B.** written about the guests' opinions of the party
 - C.** included a scene where Guermo storms out of the party
 - D.** let the reader know about Liz's plans for Guermo's birthday next year

- 9)** What can the reader best assume happens at the end of the passage?
- A.** Guermo forgives Liz.
 - B.** Guermo plans to get Liz back.
 - C.** Liz never tries to surprise Guermo again.
 - D.** Guests drink too much and cannot drive home.

Do you like surprises? Why or why not?
