

## Threads & Themes Grade 7, Unit 4, Investigation 1 Summative Assessment

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_

### PASSAGE 1

#### ***Carriers of Culture: How Heritage Languages Travel Between Generations***

**(1)** A heritage language is a language a person learns at home or from family members that differs from the dominant language of the wider community. In the United States, Spanish is the most widely spoken heritage language, but the list is long and growing. Families pass along Korean, Tagalog, Vietnamese, Arabic, Haitian Creole, Navajo, and many other languages across kitchen tables, conversations with grandparents, and the quiet corners of daily life. For some young people, a heritage language can be many things. It could be the sound of a lullaby, a list of dishes for a family gathering, or a voice on the end of a long-distance call. Researchers say it is also one of the most fragile forms of cultural knowledge a family carries.

**(2)** Linguists who study how languages move between generations describe a pattern called intergenerational transmission. In a typical case, grandparents arriving in a new country speak the heritage language fluently. Their children, raised between two worlds, often grow up bilingual. But they lean more heavily on the dominant language at school and work. By the third generation, the heritage language often narrows to a smaller set of uses: greetings, food words, prayers, terms of affection. Without purposeful effort, the language can fade within three generations. Sociolinguists call this the “three-generation rule.”

**(3)** Still, fading is not the only possibility. Across the country, families and communities are actively reshaping the arc. In Korean American households, weekend schools called *hagwon* have grown into a wide network where children practice reading and writing in Korean. In Mexican American communities, some families speak Spanish in the home as a matter of principle. They treat the language as a daily promise rather than a holiday tradition. Haitian American families in Miami and Boston have built community centers where Kreyòl is spoken in homework clubs, cooking classes, and radio shows. In Navajo Nation schools, Diné bizaad—the Navajo language—is now taught through immersion programs. Tribal educators designed these programs to restore what boarding-school policies once tried to erase.

**(4)** These efforts reflect a shift in how families think about their languages. For much of the twentieth century, teachers and doctors often told immigrant parents that speaking a heritage language at home would confuse children and slow their English. Research from the last thirty years has largely overturned that advice. Large studies have found that children who grow up speaking more than one language tend to develop strong academic skills when both languages are supported. Linguists now argue that bilingualism is not a burden on learning. It is a resource that can strengthen it.

(5) One feature of heritage-language life that researchers find especially interesting is code-switching. Code-switching includes the practice of moving between two languages in a single conversation, sometimes in a single sentence. A Vietnamese American teenager might text a cousin in a blend of both languages, each one carrying a different shade of meaning. Linguists once dismissed this kind of switching as a sign of weak ability. Most now see it as a skilled form of communication. It allows speakers to signal closeness, humor, identity, and audience all at once.

(6) Another pattern involves what researchers call receptive bilinguals. These are people who understand a heritage language but do not always speak it back. A young person may nod along to a conversation in Arabic or Tagalog, pick up the jokes, and track the gossip, while answering in English. Linguists note that receptive bilingualism is not failure. It is a stage on a longer path. Many adults who grew up as receptive bilinguals return to active speaking later in life, often when they become parents themselves.

(7) Heritage languages also shape what families remember. Certain ideas, like particular forms of politeness or terms of respect, live more comfortably in one language than another. The Korean term *jeong* describes a deep emotional bond between people and has no exact English equivalent. The Arabic phrase *inshallah*, meaning “if God wills,” carries layers of meaning that translation cannot fully capture. When a heritage language weakens, these cultural tools can weaken with it.

(8) Researchers studying how languages are kept across communities agree on one key finding. Heritage languages are not preserved by accident. They travel only when families, schools, and communities choose, again and again, to carry them forward. The language a grandparent speaks at the dinner table is not merely a link to the past. For the children listening, it can become a resource for the future.

---

## ITEMS — PASSAGE 1

---

### Item 1

Read this sentence from paragraph 1 of “Carriers of Culture: How Heritage Languages Travel Between Generations.”

Researchers say it is also one of the most fragile forms of cultural knowledge a family carries.

**What does the word *fragile* mean as it is used in paragraph 1?**

- A) easy to lose
- B) hard to share
- C) kept at home
- D) passed on by families

**Item 2**

Read this sentence from paragraph 2 of “Carriers of Culture: How Heritage Languages Travel Between Generations.”

Linguists who study how languages move between generations describe a pattern called intergenerational transmission.

Read the dictionary entry below.

**transmission** (*noun*)

1. the act of passing something from one person, place, or thing to another
2. a series of gears by which an engine sends power to the wheels
3. the broadcast of a radio or television signal
4. the spread of a disease from one person or animal to another

**Which definition BEST matches the meaning of transmission as it is used in the passage?**

- A) definition 1
- B) definition 2
- C) definition 3
- D) definition 4

**Item 3**

**The author describes the “three-generation rule” and offers counterexamples to that rule.**

**Drag each detail into the column that MATCHES the idea it supports.**

- 1) Supports the “Three-Generation Rule”
- 2) Counterexample to the Rule

- A) Korean American families send children to weekend hagwon schools.
- B) Children who are raised bilingual tend to use the dominant language at school and work.
- C) Navajo Nation immersion programs restore Diné bizaad.
- D) People arriving in a new country speak their heritage language fluently.
- E) The heritage language may be used mainly for greetings and food words.
- F) Haitian American community centers use Kreyòl in homework clubs.

**Item 4**

Read this sentence from paragraph 4 of “Carriers of Culture: How Heritage Languages Travel Between Generations.”

For much of the twentieth century, teachers and doctors often told immigrant parents that speaking a heritage language at home would confuse children and slow their English.

**What is the function of the phrase “For much of the twentieth century” in this sentence?**

- A) It tells who was giving the advice.
- B) It identifies when the claim was common.
- C) It explains why parents listened to the advice.
- D) It shows what the teachers and doctors believed.

**Item 5**

**How do paragraphs 4 and 5 MAINLY develop the author’s argument about heritage languages?**

- A) They tell why bilingual children may tend to struggle at school.
- B) They give examples of communities that keep heritage languages alive.
- C) They describe how researchers have changed their views on bilingualism.
- D) They explain that some people can communicate in two languages at once.

**Item 6**

**Which option provides the BEST objective summary of paragraph 6 of “Carriers of Culture: How Heritage Languages Travel Between Generations”?**

- A) Receptive bilinguals are people who can understand a language they do not speak. These people may eventually learn how to speak their heritage language, which is really cool.
- B) Receptive bilinguals are people who can understand jokes in a language they do not speak. This is not a failure, and it is actually okay.
- C) Receptive bilinguals are people who can understand a heritage language they do not speak. These people may return to speaking the language later in life, typically when they have their own children.
- D) Receptive bilinguals are people who can pretend to understand a language they do not speak. This is an expected stage for people whose parents and grandparents speak a heritage language.

**Item 7**

**Which statement BEST expresses the central idea of “Carriers of Culture: How Heritage Languages Travel Between Generations”?**

- A) Spanish is the most common heritage language in the United States.
- B) Heritage languages survive when speakers choose to keep them alive.
- C) Bilingual children learn more slowly than children without an additional heritage language.
- D) Most heritage languages fade over time in the United States.

## ***The Second Chop***

**(1)** The onion sat on the cutting board like a small, stubborn moon. Nour stared at it. Behind her, the kitchen smelled of warm cardamom and lamb, and Baba was humming something low and off-key, the way he did every evening in Ramadan when the sun had not quite finished setting. On the counter, the clock told her there were forty minutes until *iftar*. The onion was calling to her now.

**(2)** “Like this,” Mona said, appearing at Nour’s shoulder with the quiet authority of a thirteen-year-old who had been allowed to use the big knife for two whole summers. She picked up the knife—the one with the dark handle that their mother had brought from Beirut—and held it the way Teta had shown her, thumb curled against the blade, fingers tucked back like a little cave. “Your hand is a turtle. The turtle protects itself.”

**(3)** Nour tried. The knife felt heavier than she remembered, heavier than it had any right to be. The turtle of her left hand was too brave, flattening instead of curling. Mona reached over and folded Nour’s knuckles gently.

**(4)** “Slower,” Mona said. “You are not chopping. You are listening to the onion.”

**(5)** That was something Teta used to say, back when she still came to stay for Ramadan, back before the long flight from Beirut became too hard on her knees. Teta used to stand at this counter and chop onions so thin they curled like wood shavings. Her knife would hover over the board like a bird deciding whether to land. When she finally brought it down, the sound was one clean note. Tak. A promise kept.

**(6)** Nour’s first cut was not a promise. It was a thud. The knife slid, the onion rolled, and a crescent of it skidded across the board toward the edge.

**(7)** “It’s fine,” Mona said, catching it. She did not laugh, which was kinder than laughing would have been. “Try again. The second chop is always better than the first.”

**(8)** The second chop was better. Barely. The third was better still. By the tenth, Nour had found something like a rhythm—not Teta’s rhythm, which had been a song, and not Mona’s, which was confident and quick, but her own: careful, uneven, determined. The onions piled up in soft, translucent ribbons that she could see through and made her eyes sting.

**(9)** “You are crying,” Mona said, teasing now.

**(10)** “I am not. It is chemistry.” Nour had learned this in fifth grade from a teacher who loved explaining things. When you cut an onion, the cells release a compound that drifts up and irritates the eyes. It was science. It was not sadness.

**(11)** And yet, as she blinked through the sting, Nour thought about Teta’s hands—the thin gold ring she always wore, the small scar on her thumb from a long-ago knife, her skin softer than cotton. Teta had taught Mona to chop onions last summer, the summer she had been comfortable flying. On a video call two days ago, Teta had sat in her kitchen in Beirut and held up

a lemon, rotating it slowly in front of the camera so Nour could see how to slice it for the lentil soup.

(12) “Mona,” Nour said, her voice smaller than she meant it to be, “do you think Teta would say I’m doing it right?”

(13) Mona looked at the board for a long moment. She considered the uneven ribbons, the crescents that had almost escaped, the little turtle of Nour’s left hand that was finally, stubbornly, remembering.

(14) “I think,” Mona said slowly, “that Teta would say your hands are learning to remember her.”

(15) Nour kept chopping. The kitchen kept its warm, patient noise—the oil murmuring, Baba humming, the refrigerator’s small breath. Somewhere in Beirut, maybe, her grandmother was slicing a lemon and thinking of them. Somewhere in the pan behind her, the lamb was becoming dinner. Her turtle hand held its shape. The knife, steady now, made its small and imperfect promises.

(16) Tak. And then, a little later, tak again.

---

## ITEMS — PASSAGE 2

---

### Item 8

Read this sentence from paragraph 6 of “The Second Chop.”

The knife slid, the onion rolled, and a crescent of it skidded across the board toward the edge.

**What quality of the onion does the word crescent refer to?**

- A) the way the onion smells
- B) the size of the piece of onion
- C) the shape of the piece of onion
- D) the way the onion feels

### Item 9

Read this sentence from paragraph 2 of “The Second Chop.”

“Your hand is a turtle.”

**What is the meaning of this metaphor?**

- A) Nour’s hand is turning green.
- B) Nour is feeling shy.
- C) Nour’s hand should be rounded.
- D) Nour is moving slowly.

**Item 10**

In paragraph 5, the narrator shifts backward in time to show Teta chopping onions. Drag each statement into the column to indicate whether or not it describes the role of this paragraph.

Table Headings:

- 1) Describes the Role of Paragraph 5
  - 2) Does Not Describe the Role of Paragraph 5
- A) It establishes the ideal Nour is trying to match.
- B) It introduces a new character who appears later in the story.
- C) It connects Mona’s current instruction to Teta’s past instruction.
- D) It explains how many hours away Beirut is from where Nour lives.
- E) It shows Teta performing the skill with ease before Nour attempts it.
- F) It compares Teta flying in a plane to a bird flying above the board.

**Item 11**

Read this excerpt from paragraph 6 of “The Second Chop.”

Nour’s first cut was not a promise. It was a thud.

**What does the author’s choice of the word thud MOST likely suggest about Nour’s first cut?**

- A) It was light.
- B) It was clumsy.
- C) It was careful.
- D) It was confident.

**Item 12**

Read this sentence from paragraph 8 of “The Second Chop.”

The onions piled up in soft, translucent ribbons that she could see through and made her eyes sting.

**Which context clue from the sentence BEST helps the reader determine the meaning of translucent?**

- A) “piled up”
- B) “soft”
- C) “ribbons”
- D) “see through”

**Item 13**

**How does Nour change from the beginning to the end of “The Second Chop”?**

- A) She learns to master Teta’s technique by the final paragraph.
- B) She becomes a faster and cleaner chopper than her sister.
- C) She decides to stop chopping and let Mona finish the onions.
- D) She moves from an unskilled first cut to a steady rhythm of her own.

**Item 14**

Read this sentence from paragraph 7 of “The Second Chop.”

She did not laugh, which was kinder than laughing would have been.

**What is the structure of this sentence?**

- A) simple sentence
- B) complex sentence
- C) compound sentence
- D) compound-complex sentence

**Item 15**

**The word *tak* appears in paragraph 5 and again in paragraph 16. What does this structural choice MOST likely accomplish?**

- A) It links Teta’s chopping to Nour’s growing skill.
- B) It reminds the reader that Nour’s chopping is noisy.
- C) It suggests that Nour has become as skilled as her grandmother.
- D) It shows that Teta is a more important character in the story than Nour.

**Item 16**

**Which detail would be MOST important to include in a summary of “The Second Chop”?**

- A) The kitchen smells like cardamom and lamb.
- B) Baba hums while preparing the Ramadan dinner.
- C) Mona shows Nour how to hold the knife.
- D) Chopping onions can irritate the eyes.

**Item 17**

**Which statement BEST expresses a theme of “The Second Chop”?**

- A) Cooking together is an important family tradition.
- B) People should listen to the advice of their older siblings.
- C) It is meaningful to pass skills through family even if they change over time.
- D) Learning something well takes many years of deliberate practice and effort.

---

**ITEMS — BOTH PASSAGES**

---

**Item 18**

How do “Carriers of Culture: How Heritage Languages Travel Between Generations” and “The Second Chop” DIFFER in how they describe the way information is passed between generations? Select the TWO statements that BEST describe a difference between the passages.

- A) “Carriers of Culture” focuses on language transmission; “The Second Chop” focuses on a physical skill.
- B) “Carriers of Culture” describes a broad research-based pattern; “The Second Chop” describes one family’s scene.
- C) “Carriers of Culture” argues against maintaining family cultures; “The Second Chop” argues in favor of maintaining them.
- D) “Carriers of Culture” suggests that formal learning is most effective; “The Second Chop” recommends informal ways of learning.
- E) “Carriers of Culture” focuses on the role of younger family members; “The Second Chop” focuses on the responsibilities of older people.

**Item 19**

Which statement correctly compares how the two passages describe what it takes to pass a heritage on?

- A) Both passages claim that family traditions will fade over time.
- B) Both passages argue that grandmothers value passing on traditions more than other family members.
- C) “Carriers of Culture” argues that languages are too difficult to preserve; “The Second Chop” argues that traditions be maintained without change.
- D) “Carriers of Culture” focuses on purposeful preservation efforts; “The Second Chop” shows that imperfect practice can still carry a tradition forward.

---

**SPELLING**

---

**Item 20**

Write the spelling word you heard:

---

**Item 21**

Write the spelling word you heard:

---

**Item 22**

Write the spelling word you heard:

---

**Item 23**

Write the spelling word you heard:

---