

Directions: Read the story and answer the questions that follow.

Pole Bean Pursuit

- 1 "Beans," Mr. Chiba said seriously, "grow like any other plant. How fast they grow depends on two factors: environment and heredity. What a plant receives from its surroundings and what it receives from previous generations are equally important." That is how the science teacher introduced the "Pole Bean Pursuit." It was a contest to see which variety of pole bean would grow the fastest and the tallest. "Think of it as the Bean Olympics," Mr. Chiba joked.
- 2 Antonio knew immediately which type of pole bean he would enter in the contest. For as long as Antonio could remember, his family had planted a special "family bean." It was a flat bean that an ancestor had brought from Sicily generations ago. His grandmother planted the beans and harvested them, but she always saved some seeds from the biggest plants. She planted those seeds the next year. Everyone in his family talked about these family beans so often and served them at many meals, Antonio assumed they would be unbeatable beans. They would give him an edge in the race.
- 3 However, the plan did not work out that way. Although Antonio's beans looked healthy, they did not grow as fast or climb as high as any of the other students' bean plants. Antonio's beans obeyed their own special calendar. They refused to be rushed by the other beans. "Come on, you guys! Let's get moving," Antonio scolded his bean plants when no one was looking.
- 4 The other students selected beans from seed catalogs. Their beans had promising names like "Wonder" or "Top Crop." One variety was even named "Meteor." That was the bean Cynthia planted, and her plants climbed almost to the top of the fence. Antonio's plants lingered near the middle of the fence. He and his plants were in last place.
- 5 Still, Antonio's beans attracted plenty of attention. They had fluffy, purple blossoms that stood out against other drab, white blossoms. When Antonio's beans began to form, they were large, flat, and wide, unlike the pencil-thin beans that dangled from the fence. Antonio was used to the appearance of the beans, but the other students were interested in them.
- 6 On the day of the final measurements, Antonio was not surprised that his beans placed last. *If Mr. Chiba awarded a prize for the slowest, shortest pole bean, I would win,* he thought.
- 7 Mr. Chiba handed out blue ribbons for the fastest-growing and the tallest bean plants. "Now there remains only one final test, and it is just as important: the taste test."
- 8 Mr. Chiba used a Bunsen burner to heat water. He steamed a few of the beans from each of the students' vines. When he finished preparing the beans, he had three students serve as judges. "You have to wear blindfolds," Mr. Chiba said, "to make the judging as scientific as possible."

- 9 Antonio could not stop thinking about how slowly his bean plants grew. *I should have chosen one of the beans from a seed catalog, like "Rocket" or "Shooting Star." I bet those varieties would have really climbed.*
- 10 After the three judges tasted the beans, Mr. Chiba counted the results. "We have a winner," Mr. Chiba announced. "The judges all agree that Antonio's beans are the winner."
- 11 Sherry said she loved the taste, though she did not even like green beans. Mr. Chiba said, "I tasted the beans, and I agree with the results. What can you tell us about this variety, Antonio?"
- 12 Antonio grinned at this unexpected turn of events. "We call it our 'family bean.' It doesn't grow fast or very tall, but it tastes good. This bean is not new. In fact, it's a very old bean. The beans were saved by my grandmother from beans her great-grandmother brought over from Sicily. The flavor reminded her of home."
- 13 "I think I can tell you something else about this bean, Antonio," Mr. Chiba said.
- 14 "What's that?" Antonio asked.
- 15 "If you'll let me have some of the seeds, I'm going to make this my family bean too!"

22 Which word *best* describes Antonio's mood in paragraph 3?

- F** Impatient
- G** Fearful
- H** Unsure
- J** Embarrassed

Directions: Read the flier and answer the questions that follow.

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