

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

## Legacies

By Nikki Giovanni  
1972

*Nikki Giovanni is a well-known African American poet, writer, commentator, activist, and educator. Her work ranges from writings about race and social issues to children's literature. In this poem, a grandmother wants to teach her granddaughter a recipe. As you read, take notes on what the dialogue reveals about the characters.*

- [1] her grandmother called her from the playground  
"yes, ma'am"  
"i want chu to learn how to make rolls" said the  
old  
woman proudly
- [5] but the little girl didn't want  
to learn how because she knew  
even if she couldn't say it that  
that would mean when the old one died she  
would be less  
dependent on her spirit so
- [10] she said  
"i don't want to know how to make no rolls"  
with her lips poked out  
and the old woman wiped her hands on  
her apron saying "lord
- [15] these children"  
and neither of them ever  
said what they meant  
and i guess nobody ever does



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## Text-Dependent Questions

**Directions:** For the following questions, choose the best answer or respond in complete sentences.

1. PART A: Which of the following identifies the theme of the poem? [RL.2]
  - A. Even when family members care for each other, they do not always communicate openly.
  - B. Food is the most important way a family member can express their love for their children and grandchildren.
  - C. Children are not as respectful to their elders as they used to be.
  - D. Older people often don't understand how children communicate their thoughts and worries.
  
2. PART B: Which detail from the poem best supports the answer to Part A? [RL.1]
  - A. "i want chu to learn how to make rolls' said the old / woman proudly" (Lines 3-4)
  - B. "but the little girl didn't want / to learn how because she knew / even if she couldn't say it that" (Lines 5-7)
  - C. "i don't want to know how to make no rolls' / with her lips poked out" (Lines 11-12)
  - D. "and the old woman wiped her hands on /her apron saying 'lord / these children'" (Lines 13-15)
  
3. What does learning how to make rolls represent for the girl? [RL.3]
  - A. the eventual absence of her grandmother
  - B. taking on more responsibility
  - C. learning how to take care of herself
  - D. spending less time with her grandmother
  
4. How does the phrase "dependent on her spirit" in line 9 develop the meaning of the poem? [RL.4]
  - A. This conveys how much the granddaughter wants to be free from the grandmother.
  - B. This illustrates how needy and vulnerable the granddaughter is as a young girl.
  - C. This emphasizes how important the grandmother is to the granddaughter.
  - D. This shows how important cooking is in the maintenance of family life.

5. How does the author's use of dialogue in the poem contribute to its meaning? [RL.5]

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