

Name: _____

Date: _____

This story tells about long-ago times and a girl named Minna. She cannot go to school. To find out why, read the story and then answer the questions that follow.

from **The Rag Coat**

by Lauren Mills

The summer I was eight, Papa called me over to his rocking chair. I climbed on his lap and he said, "You're getting big, Minna."

"Too big for laps?" I asked.

"Not too big for mine," he said softly, "but too big to still be at home. It's nearing time you went to school."

I could hardly hold back my smiling just thinking about all the friends I would have. But I didn't want to leave Mama without a helper. "Papa," I said, "I can't go to school. Mama needs me here."

Papa just looked at me real steady and said, "They have books at school, Minna. You can learn things from those books that you can't learn at home."

"But I don't have a coat, Papa," I quietly reminded him. . . .

School started in September. Mama said I could go, but I decided not to. I still didn't have a coat to wear, and I knew it was no use starting something I'd have to quit when the weather turned cold.

Other mothers who had children in school came over to quilt with Mama. I called them the Quilting Mothers. That fall they were all working on a pattern called Joseph's Coat of Many Colors. I looked at it and said, "That Joseph sure was lucky to have such a coat. I wish I had one like that."

"Why do you say that, Minna?" Mrs. Miller asked me.

"Because then I could go to school," I said, a little embarrassed that I had mentioned it.

"Well now, Minna," said Mrs. Miller, "I don't know that any of us has a spare coat we could hand you down, but I'm sure we have some scraps to spare. We could piece them together, and you'd have a coat like Joseph's after all." Mrs. Miller looked around the room, and the other mothers nodded. . . .

My eyes filled with tears, but I wasn't embarrassed anymore. . . . Mama smiled and shook her head, and I saw tears in her eyes, too.

1.

Minna decided not to go to school.

Which word means the same as *decided*?

- A. thought
 - B. begged
 - C. asked
 - D. chose
-

2.

I don't know that any of us has a spare coat we could hand you down...

In the sentence above, the word *spare* means

- A. thin.
 - B. extra.
 - C. heavy.
 - D. warm.
-

3. Minna needed a coat so that she could

- A. go to school.
 - B. help her mother.
 - C. sit in her father's lap.
 - D. help the mothers make quilts.
-

4. Why did Minna look forward to school?

- A. She liked homework.
 - B. She would be warmer there.
 - C. She wanted to make new friends.
 - D. She wanted to read lots of books.
-

5. Papa wanted Minna to go to school so she could

- A. play sports.
 - B. read books.
 - C. meet people.
 - D. learn math.
-

6. What happens first in the story?

- A. Minna decides not to go to school.
 - B. The Quilting Mothers come to quilt with Mama.
 - C. Minna and her mother both get tears in their eyes.
 - D. Papa tells Minna that it is time for her to go to school.
-

7. A good title for this story is

- A. Papa and Minna.
 - B. How Minna Got Her Coat.
 - C. The Quilting Mothers.
 - D. A Coat for Joseph.
-

8. Minna decided not to start school because

- A. she would have to quit when it got cold.
 - B. it was a long way for a little girl to walk.
 - C. she was needed at home, to help Mama.
 - D. she liked to be home when the Quilting Mothers came.
-

9. How did Papa feel about Minna going to school?

- A. He thought school was very important.
 - B. He did not want her to go because he would miss her.
 - C. He felt sad because she was getting old enough to go.
 - D. He thought school was not for girls.
-

10. Another word that has the same root word as EXCITING is

- A. exit.
- B. exiting.
- C. excitement.

Answer Key

1. D) chose
2. B) extra.
3. A) go to school.
4. C) She wanted to make new friends.
5. B) read books.
6. D) Papa tells Minna that it is time for her to go to school.
7. B) How Minna Got Her Coat.
8. A) she would have to quit when it got cold.
9. A) He thought school was very important.
10. C) excitement.