

D Literary Element: Theme

Read the passage below from "The Medicine Bag." As you read, think about what the sentences reveal about the theme of the story that people should respect their culture and try to preserve it. Then answer the questions that follow.

I closed my eyes and waited for him to slip it over my head.¹ But he spoke.²

"No, you need not wear it."³ He placed the soft leather bag in my right hand and closed my other hand over it.⁴ "It would not be right to wear it in this time and place where no one will understand."⁵ Put it safely away until you are again on the reservation.⁶ Wear it then, when you replace the sacred sage."⁷

1. How do sentences 1–5 show that Grandpa knows life is different away from the reservation?

2. How do sentences 6–7 show that Grandpa expects Martin to carry on the tradition of wearing the medicine bag?
