**“The Question” from Frindle by Andrew Clements**

1. **The first day of school was always a get-acquainted day. Books were** **passed out, and there was a lot of chatter. Everyone asked, “What did you do over the summer?”**
2. **Periods one through six went by very smoothly for Nick.**
3. **But then came period seven. Mrs. Granger’s class was all business.**
4. **The first thing they did was take a vocabulary pretest to see how many of the thirty-five words for the week the kids already knew. *Tremble, circular, orchestra -* the list went on and on. Nick knew most of them.**
5. **Then there was a handout about class procedures. After that there was a review paper about cursive writing, and then there was a sample sheet showing how the heading should look on every assignment. No letup for thirty-seven minutes straight.**
6. **Nick was an expert at asking the delaying question – also known as the teacher-stopper, or the guaranteed-time-waster. At three minutes before the bell, in that split second between the end of today’s class work and the announcement of tomorrow’s homework, Nick could launch a question guaranteed to sidetrack the teacher long enough to delay or even wipe out the homework assignment.**
7. **Timing was important, but asking the right question – that was the hard part. Questions about stuff in the news, questions about the college the teacher went to, questions about the teacher’s favorite book or sport or hobby – Nick knew all the tricks, and he had been very successful in the past.**
8. **Here he was in fifth grade, near the end of his very first language arts class with Mrs. Granger, and Nick could feel a homework assignment coming the way a farmer can feel a rainstorm.**
9. **Mrs. Granger paused to catch her breath, and Nick’s hand shot up. She glanced down at her seating chart, and then up at him. Her sharp gray eyes were not even turned up to half power.**
10. **“Yes, Nicholas?”**
11. **“Mrs. Granger, you have so many dictionaries in this room, and that huge one especially….where did all those words come from? Did they just get copied from other dictionaries? It sure is a big book.”**
12. **It was a perfect thought-grenade – KaPow!**
13. **Several kids smiled, and a few peeked at the clock. Nick was famous for this, and the whole class knew what he was doing.**
14. **Unfortunately, so did Mrs. Granger. She hesitated a moment, and gave Nick a smile that was just a little too sweet to be real. Her eyes were the color of a thundercloud.**
15. **“Why, what an interesting question, Nicholas. I could talk about that for hours, I bet.” She glanced around the classroom. “Do the rest of you want to know, too?” Everyone nodded yes. “Very well then, Nicholas, will you do some research on that subject and give a little oral report to the class? If you find out the answer yourself, it will mean so much more than if I just told you. Please have your report ready for our next class.”**
16. **Mrs. Granger smiled at him again. Very sweetly. Then it was back to business. “Now, the homework for tomorrow can be found on page twelve of your *Words Alive* book…”**
17. **Nick barely heard the assignment. His heart was pounding, and he felt small, very small. He could feel the tops of his ears glowing read. A complete shutdown. An extra assignment. And probably a little black mark next to his name on the seating chart.**
18. **Everything he had heard about his teacher was true – don’t mess around with The Lone Granger.**

**Questions:**

1. **Which of these could be another title for this passage?**
   1. **“Nick’s Plan Goes Wrong”**
   2. **“An Oral Report on Dictionaries”**
   3. **“Nick’s Embarrassment”**
   4. **“A Teacher’s Nickname”**
2. **How does Nick try to keep his class from receiving homework?**
   1. **He asks the teacher about her favorite book.**
   2. **He tells the teacher what he did over the summer.**
   3. **He asks the teacher about a big dictionary she has.**
   4. **He agrees to do an oral report the next day.**
3. **Paragraphs 3-5 present Mrs. Granger as –**
   1. **a curious teacher**
   2. **an unfair teacher**
   3. **a good-humored teacher**
   4. **a no-nonsense teacher**
4. **The author uses the words “the first day of school” and “period seven” to indicate the –** 
   1. **problem**
   2. **setting**
   3. **plot**
   4. **characters**
5. **Read this sentence from paragraph 15: “*I could talk about that for hours, I bet.”*  In this sentence, the author uses –** 
   1. **alliteration**
   2. **hyperbole**
   3. **a simile**
   4. **rhyme**
6. **In paragraph 12, “a perfect thought-grenade” is a metaphor that shows –**
   1. **Nick is easily confused during language arts class.**
   2. **Nick is trying to make his classmates laugh at him.**
   3. **Nick thinks his comment has distracted the teacher.**
   4. **Nick thinks he has done something to impress the teacher.**
7. **Which of these is a result of trying to trick Mrs. Granger?**
   1. **Mrs. Granger gives Nick a special assignment.**
   2. **The class has to practice their cursive handwriting.**
   3. **Mrs. Granger goes over a handout about class procedures.**
   4. **The class has to do a homework assignment.**

**Open Response**

**Explain how Nick feels at the beginning of his Language Arts class? How does he feel at the end of the class? Use evidence from the passage to support your response.**

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