

Name _____

Story and Poem

Practice

Write your answers on the lines and then print this page.

Read the short story and the poem.

Grassy Lake

When the first warm breeze hints of spring—*Yo-meni* to the Maidu people—I like to sit near the lake on the Reservation. To be honest, it's not much of a lake. I can easily swim across it from end to end. And when the waves lap onto the pebbled shore, they carry things: soda cans, bottle tops, an old sneaker, a chewed-up baseball bat, all splashing and bobbing like they belong. Still, I sit and imagine I'm at Grassy Lake.

Two centuries ago my ancestors camped all summer long at Grassy Lake, where nothing splashed and bobbed but the salmon. Back then, life and sustenance flourished in the foothills, streams, and mountains. Clear, clean water cascaded down the falls, and fish swam along fresh streams that carved out narrow canyons.

When *Yo-meni* settles over the Reservation, I try to see in the murky water and hardscrabble grounds the same spirits—*kakini*—the old Maidu saw at Grassy Lake. If I listen long enough, I can hear them whispering through the tall weeds that overrun the field behind the school. Mostly though, I just hear a used-up wind, proclaiming its loneliness.

Name _____

My Words Are Tied in One

My words are tied in one
With the great mountains,
With the great rocks,
With the great trees,
In one with my body
And my heart.

Do you all help me
With supernatural power,
And you, day,
And you, night!
All of you see me
One with this world!

Traditional poem of the Yokuts, a Nation of Native Americans in California

Now answer the questions.

1. How are the topics of the short story and the poem similar and/or different?

2. How are the themes of the short story and the poem similar and/or different?
