***My Father and the Fig Tree* by Naomi Shihab Nye**

**1. Which statement characterizes the mother’s attitude toward her husband?**

1. She is proud that he retains the memory of his native land.
2. She is fearful that his obsession with figs will cause further troubles.
3. She is frustrated by his unwillingness to take firm actions to finish things.
4. She is supportive of his connecting figs with happy memories of his native land.

**2. How does the mother feel about her husband’s dreams?**

1. She is frustrated by them.
2. She shares them with him.
3. She worries about them.
4. She admires them.

**3. “At age six I ate a dried fig and shrugged.” (stanza 2)**

**This line from the poem can be restated as**

1. I hated the figs my father grew.
2. Eventually, I learned to love the taste of figs.
3. I didn’t see why figs were so important to my father.
4. I ate the first fig and then gestured to have more of them.

**4. A line in stanza 3 says, “He tended garden half-heartedly, forgot to water.”**

**Which phrase means the same as half-heartedly?**

1. to try one’s best to accomplish something, but fail
2. to do something with little real interest in it.
3. to go about doing something with great dedication.
4. to try and make something fail because of intense dislike for it.

5. **Identify** the main conflict in this poem.

The poet is describing her father’s inner conflict. He has left his homeland and is not accepting life in the west as he is always nostalgic and longing for his homeland, Palestine.

**6. Identify** a possible theme for this poem. **Justify** your answer with an example from the poem. Remember to use proper **in-text citation.**

The theme of this poem, *My Father and the Fig Tree*, is the nostalgia and, consequently, the feeling of separateness that envelops a person who is far from his homeland. The line “Here he’d stop and close his eyes” (2.7) reflects how her father would close his eyes to capture an image of his homeland in his mind. The poet’s father could not find peace until he finally moved to a house that had a fig tree and filled a missing part of himself by finding a connection between both his worlds.