

Name _____

Class _____

The Stolen Party

Liliana Heker

About this Text

Liliana Heker (b. 1943) is an Argentine author who has been writing professionally since she was 17. In this short story, a young girl in Argentina argues with her mother about attending a birthday party.

Read the following story and respond to the questions in the margins in the “during reading questions” section.

DURING READING QUESTIONS

[1] As soon as she arrived she went straight to the kitchen to see if the monkey was there. It was: what a relief. She wouldn’t have liked to admit that her mother had been right. Monkeys at a birthday? Her mother had sneered. Get away with you, believing any nonsense you’re told! She was cross, but not because of the monkey, the girl thought; it’s just because of the party.

[2] “I don’t like you going,” she told her. “It’s a rich people’s party.”

[3] “Rich people go to Heaven too,” said the girl, who studied religion at school.

[4] “Get away with Heaven,” said the mother. “The problem with you, young lady, is that you like to fart higher than your a—.”

[5] The girl didn’t approve of the way her mother spoke. She was barely nine, and one of the best in her class.

[6] “I’m going because I’ve been invited,” she said. “And I’ve been invited because Luciana is my friend. So there.”

[7] “Ah yes, your friend,” her mother grumbled. She paused. “Listen, Rosaura,” she said at last. “That one’s not your friend. You know what you are to them? The maid’s daughter, that’s what.”

[8] Rosaura blinked hard: she wasn’t going to cry. Then she yelled: “Shut up! You know nothing about being friends!”

[9] Every afternoon she used to go to Luciana’s house and they would both finish their homework while Rosaura’s mother did the cleaning. They had their tea in the kitchen and they told each other secrets. Rosaura loved everything in the big house, and she also loved the people who lived there.

[10] “I’m going because it will be the most lovely party in the whole world, Luciana told me it would. There will be a magician, and he will bring a monkey and everything.”

[11] The mother swung around to take a good look at her child, and pompously put her hands on her hips.

[12] “Monkeys at a birthday?” she said. “Get away with you, believing any nonsense you’re told!”

[13] Rosaura was deeply offended. She thought it unfair of her mother to accuse other people of being liars simply because they were rich. Rosaura too wanted to

Paragraphs 6-9

A. Write: Explain the different understandings Rosaura and her mother have about the rich family.

B. Find Evidence: Highlight three pieces of evidence to support your answer. (You can use a highlighter or underline the text).

be rich, of course. If one day she managed to live in a beautiful palace, would her mother stop loving her? She felt very sad. She wanted to go to that party more than anything else in the world.

[14] "I'll die if I don't go," she whispered, almost without moving her lips.

[15] She wasn't sure whether she had been heard, but on the morning of the party she discovered that her mother had starched her Christmas dress. And in the afternoon, after washing her hair, her mother rinsed it in apple vinegar so that it would be all nice and shiny. Before going out, Rosaura admired herself in the mirror, with her white dress and glossy hair, and thought she looked terribly pretty. Señora Ines also seemed to notice. As soon as she saw her, she said: "How lovely you look today, Rosaura."

[16] Rosaura gave her starched skirt a slight toss with her hands and walked into the party with a firm step. She said hello to Luciana and asked about the monkey. Luciana put on a secretive look and whispered into Rosaura's ear: "He's in the kitchen. But don't tell anyone, because it's a surprise."

[17] Rosaura wanted to make sure. Carefully she entered the kitchen and there she saw it: deep in thought, inside its cage. It looked so funny that the girl stood there for a while, watching it, and later, every so often, she would slip out of the party unseen and go and admire it. Rosaura was the only one allowed into the kitchen. Señora Ines had said: "You yes, but not the others, they're much too boisterous, they might break something." Rosaura had never broken anything. She even managed the jug of orange juice, carrying it from the kitchen into the dining room. She held it carefully and didn't spill a single drop. And Señora Ines had said: "Are you sure you can manage a jug as big as that?" Of course she could manage. She wasn't a butterfingers, like the others. Like that blonde girl with the bow in her hair. As soon as she saw Rosaura, the girl with the bow had said: "And you? Who are you?"

[18] "I'm a friend of Luciana," said Rosaura.

[19] "No," said the girl with the bow, "you are not a friend of Luciana because I'm her cousin and I know all her friends. And I don't know you."

[20] "So what," said Rosaura. "I come here every afternoon with my mother and we do our homework together."

[21] "You and your mother do your homework together?" asked the girl, laughing.

[22] "I and Luciana do our homework together," said Rosaura, very seriously.

[23] The girl with the bow shrugged her shoulders.

[24] "That's not being friends," she said. "Do you go to school together?"

[25] "No."

[26] "So where do you know her from?" said the girl, getting impatient.

[27] Rosaura remembered her mother's words perfectly. She took a deep breath.

[28] "I'm the daughter of the employee," she said.

[29] Her mother had said very clearly: "If someone asks, you say you're the daughter of the employee; that's all." She also told her to add: "And proud of it."

Paragraph 14:

Predictions: Should Rosaura go to the party? Write a defense of your answer below.

- A. Yes
- B. No

Why or why not?

Paragraphs 17-25

Write: How does the girl with the bow view Rosaura's friendship with Luciana?

But Rosaura thought that never in her life would she dare say something of the sort.

[30] “What employee?” said the girl with the bow. “Employee in a shop?”

[31] “No,” said Rosaura angrily. “My mother doesn’t sell anything in any shop, so there.”

[32] “So how come she’s an employee?” said the girl with the bow.

[33] Just then Señora Ines arrived saying shh shh, and asked Rosaura if she wouldn’t mind helping serve out the hot dogs, as she knew the house so much better than the others.

[34] “See?” said Rosaura to the girl with the bow, and when no one was looking she kicked her in the shin.

[35] Apart from the girl with the bow, all the others were delightful. The one she liked best was Luciana, with her golden birthday crown; and then the boys. Rosaura won the sack race, and nobody managed to catch her when they played tag. When they split into two teams to play charades, all the boys wanted her for their side. Rosaura felt she had never been so happy in all her life.

[36] But the best was still to come. The best came after Luciana blew out the candles. First the cake. Señora Ines had asked her to help pass the cake around, and Rosaura had enjoyed the task immensely,¹ because everyone called out to her, shouting “Me, me!” Rosaura remembered a story in which there was a queen who had the power of life or death over her subjects. She had always loved that, having the power of life or death. To Luciana and the boys she gave the largest pieces, and to the girl with the bow she gave a slice so thin one could see through it.

[37] After the cake came the magician, tall and bony, with a fine red cape. A true magician: he could untie handkerchiefs by blowing on them and make a chain with links that had no openings. He could guess what cards were pulled out from a pack, and the monkey was his assistant. He called the monkey “partner.” “Let’s see here, partner,” he would say, “turn over a card.” And, “Don’t run away, partner: time to work now.”

[38] The final trick was wonderful. One of the children had to hold the monkey in his arms and the magician said he would make him disappear.

[39] “What, the boy?” they all shouted.

[40] “No, the monkey!” shouted back the magician.

[41] Rosaura thought that this was truly the most amusing party in the whole world.

[42] The magician asked a small fat boy to come and help, but the small fat boy got frightened almost at once and dropped the monkey on the floor. The magician picked him up carefully, whispered something in his ear, and the monkey nodded almost as if he understood.

[43] “You mustn’t be so unmanly, my friend,” the magician said to the fat boy.

[44] The magician turned around as if to look for spies.

¹ **Immensely** (*adverb*): hugely; very much

Paragraphs 26-32

Write: Why doesn’t Rosaura say “and proud of it”?

Paragraphs 33-36

A. Find Evidence: Highlight two details that show how Señora Ines treats Rosaura during the party.

B. Write: How does the way Señora Ines treats Rosaura during the party make her feel?

[45] “A sissy,” said the magician. “Go sit down.”

[46] Then he stared at all the faces, one by one. Rosaura felt her heart tremble.

[47] “You with the Spanish eyes,” said the magician. And everyone saw that he was pointing at her.

[48] She wasn’t afraid, neither holding the monkey, nor when the magician made him vanish; not even when, at the end, the magician flung his red cape over Rosaura’s head and uttered a few magic words... and the monkey reappeared, chattering happily, in her arms. The children clapped furiously. And before Rosaura returned to her seat, the magician said: “Thank you very much, my little countess.”²

[49] She was so pleased with the compliment that a while later, when her mother came to fetch her, that was the first thing she told her.

[50] “I helped the magician and he said to me, ‘Thank you very much, my little countess.’”

[51] It was strange because up to then Rosaura had thought that she was angry with her mother. All along Rosaura had imagined that she would say to her: “See that the monkey wasn’t a lie?” But instead she was so thrilled that she told her mother all about the wonderful magician.

[52] Her mother tapped her on the head and said: “So now we’re a countess!”

[53] But one could see that she was beaming.

[54] And now they both stood in the entrance, because a moment ago Señora Ines, smiling, had said: “Please wait here a second.” Her mother suddenly seemed worried.

[55] “What is it?” she asked Rosaura.

[56] “What is what?” said Rosaura. “It’s nothing; she just wants to get the presents for those who are leaving, see?”

[57] She pointed at the fat boy and at a girl with pigtails who were also waiting there, next to their mothers. And she explained about the presents. She knew, because she had been watching those who left before her. When one of the girls was about to leave, Señora Ines would give her a bracelet. When a boy left, Señora Ines gave him a yo-yo. Rosaura preferred the yo-yo because it sparkled, but she didn’t mention that to her mother. Her mother might have said: “So why don’t you ask for one, you blockhead?” That’s what her mother was like. Rosaura didn’t feel like explaining that she’d be horribly ashamed to be the odd one out. Instead she said: “I was the best-behaved at the party.”

[58] And she said no more because Señora Ines came out into the hall with two bags, one pink and one blue.

[59] First she went up to the fat boy, gave him a yo-yo out of the blue bag, and the fat boy left with his mother. Then she went up to the girl and gave her a bracelet out of the pink bag, and the girl with the pigtails left as well.

[60] Finally she came up to Rosaura and her mother. She had a big smile on her face and Rosaura liked that. Señora Ines looked down at her, then looked up at her mother, and then said something that made Rosaura proud:

[61] “What a marvelous daughter you have, Herminia.”

²a noblewoman, a woman with power, wealth, and status

Paragraph 48

Write: How does the name “countess” relate to the way Rosaura feels during the party?

[62] For an instant, Rosaura thought that she'd give her two presents: the bracelet and the yo-yo. Señora Ines bent down as if about to look for something. Rosaura also leaned forward, stretching out her arm. But she never completed the movement.

[63] Señora Ines didn't look in the pink bag. Nor did she look in the blue bag. Instead she rummaged³ in her purse. In her hand appeared two bills.

[64] "You really and truly earned this," she said handing them over. "Thank you for all your help, my pet."

[65] Rosaura felt her arms stiffen, stick close to her body, and then she noticed her mother's hand on her shoulder. Instinctively she pressed herself against her mother's body. That was all. Except her eyes. Rosaura's eyes had a cold, clear look that fixed itself on Señora Ines's face.

[66] Señora Ines, motionless, stood there with her hand outstretched. As if she didn't dare draw it back. As if the slightest change might shatter an infinitely⁴ delicate⁵ balance.

Paragraphs 65-66

A. Find Evidence: Highlight two details that reveal how Rosaura feels about Señora Ines's offer.

B. Write: How do Señora Ines's actions make Rosaura feel?

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³ **Rummage** (*verb*): to search around in an unorganized way

⁴ **Infinitely** (*adverb*): unendingly; extremely

⁵ **Delicate** (*adjective*): easily broken or damaged

Further Analysis Questions

Directions: Complete the questions using complete sentences. Each response should be 3 sentences minimum.

1. In “What is ‘community’ and why is it important?”, the author says, “a community is a group with a shared identity-forming narrative.” How does this idea explain the tension between Rosaura and the girl with the bow in **paragraphs 17-32**?

2. **Paragraph 65:** What does Rosaura's response in this paragraph reveal about how her understanding of community has changed?

3. In “What is ‘community’ and why is it important?”, the author explains that a community informs its members’ understanding of “how we should treat people.” Explain how this idea contributes to Señora Ines’s treatment of Rosaura.

4. **Paragraph 66:** Consider what you have learned about community and belonging. What does the author mean when she writes: “the slightest change might shatter an infinitely delicate balance”?

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Independent Practice

Directions: Answer the multiple choice questions for “The Stolen Party”

1. How does the invitation to Luciana’s birthday party create conflict in the story? **[RL.3]**
 - A. It causes Rosaura to disagree with her mother’s opinion.
 - B. It causes Señora Ines to bring a monkey into the house.
 - C. It causes the girl with the bow to be jealous of Rosaura.
 - D. It causes the magician to hurt a boy’s feelings.

2. How is the conflict in the story resolved? **[RL.3]**
 - A. Luciana makes it clear that she does not think of Rosaura as a friend.
 - B. Rosaura realizes her mother was right about her friendship with Luciana.
 - C. Señora Ines makes it clear that she sees Rosaura and her mother as friends.
 - D. Rosaura’s mother realizes Rosaura was right about her friendship with Luciana.

3. Which statement *best* identifies a theme of the text? **[RL.2]**
 - A. Adults are sometimes cruel to children for no reason.
 - B. Adults are unaware of how harmful class barriers can be.
 - C. Class differences can negatively impact the way people are treated.
 - D. Class differences are unimportant so people usually look beyond them.

4. Which piece of evidence *best* demonstrates that Rosaura and Luciana are not part of the same community? **[RL.1]**
 - A. “That one’s not your friend. You know what you are to them? The maid’s daughter, that’s what.” (Paragraph 7)
 - B. “They had their tea in the kitchen and they told each other secrets. Rosaura loved everything in the big house, and she also loved the people who lived there.” (Paragraph 9)
 - C. “Rosaura remembered a story in which there was a queen who had the power of life or death over her subjects.” (Paragraph 36)
 - D. “Rosaura didn’t feel like explaining that she’d be horribly ashamed to be the odd one out. Instead she said: ‘I was the best-behaved at the party.’” (Paragraph 57)

Independent Practice

Directions: Answer the short response prompt for “The Stolen Party.” *15 minutes*



PROMPT: You have just read “The Stolen Party” by Lilitiana Heker. How does the author use the resolution (the end of the story) to reveal a theme about belonging? **[RL.2, RL.3]**

In your response, make sure to include all parts of a complete paragraph:

- a claim that clearly answers the prompt
- at least two pieces of evidence
- reasoning to explain how your evidence proves your claim

CHECKLIST FOR WRITING A COMPLETE PARAGRAPH:

- Circle or bold your **claim**.

Does your claim clearly answer all parts of the prompt?

- a. Yes
- b. No; I will go back and revise my claim.

- Underline each piece of **evidence** you included.

Do you have two pieces of evidence?

- a. Yes
- b. No; I will go back and revise my evidence.

- Highlight your **reasoning**.

Does your reasoning explain how your evidence proves your claim?

- a. Yes
- b. No; I will go back and revise my reasoning.

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How the Need to Belong Influences Human Behavior and Motivation

People need personal connections to feel accepted and supported

Kendra Cherry

About this Text

Kendra Cherry is an expert on psychology and the author of *The Everything Psychology Book: An Introductory Guide to the Science of Human Behavior*. In this text, Cherry explores how people behave when trying to fit into groups.

Purpose for Reading

To learn about the human need for belonging within a community and build our understanding about how this desire to belong influences our decisions.

Vocabulary

Define the following words:

Acceptance [ak-sep-tuhns]

Conform [kuhn-fawrm]

Motivate [moh-tuh-veyt]

Specific [spi-sif-ik]

Read the following article and complete the during reading questions in the margin where it is labeled, "During Reading Questions".

DURING READING QUESTIONS

[1] The need to belong, also often referred to as belongingness, refers to a human emotional need to affiliate with and be accepted by members of a group. This may include the need to belong to a peer group at school, to be accepted by co-workers, to be part of an athletic team, and to be part of a church group.

[2] The need to belong involves more than simply being acquainted with¹ other people. It is instead centered on gaining **acceptance**, attention, and support from members of the group, as well as providing the same attention to other members.

How the Need to Belong Influences Behavior

[3] The need to belong is a natural **motivation** to socialize with others to gain **acceptance**. This need plays a role in many of people's social behaviors, such as self-presentation and social comparison. This need to belong to a group can also lead to changes in behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes as people strive² to **conform** to the standards and norms of the group.

[4] For example, people often present themselves in a particular way in order to belong to a **specific** social group. For example, a new member of the high school football team might adopt the dress and mannerisms³ of the other members of the team in order to fit in with the rest of the group.

Paragraphs 1-2

Opinion: What **motivates** people to belong to a group?

Paragraphs 3-5

A. Find Evidence: Highlight the claim (argument) in paragraph 3.

¹ "Being acquainted with" someone means knowing them a little bit, but not being close to them.

² **Strive** (*verb*): to try very hard to achieve a goal

³ ways of acting or speaking that are habits of a **specific** person

[5] People will also spend a great deal of time comparing themselves to other members of the group in order to determine how well they fit in. This social comparison might lead an individual to adopt some of the same behaviors and attitudes of the most prominent⁴ members of the group in order to **conform** and gain greater **acceptance**.

[6] So what inspires people to seek out **specific** groups? In many cases, the need to belong to certain social groups results from sharing some point of commonality.⁵ For example, teens who share the same taste in clothing, music, and other interests might seek each other out to form friendships.

[7] In other instances, factors such as shared goals, socioeconomic status,⁶ religious beliefs, political beliefs, and pop culture interests can lead individuals to seek out groups that share these interests.

Why the Need to Belong Is an Important Motivator

[8] Our need to belong is what drives us to seek out stable, long-lasting relationships with other people. It also **motivates** us to participate in social activities such as clubs, sports teams, religious groups, and community organizations.

[9] By belonging to a group, we feel as if we are a part of something bigger and more important than ourselves.

B. Write: How do paragraphs 4 and 5 support this claim?

Paragraphs 6-9

A. Write: Why is it important that groups have a "point of commonality?"

B. Opinion: Is it helpful or harmful for a person to change their behavior to match the group? Be prepared to defend your response.

- A. Helpful
- B. Harmful

"How the Need to Belong Influences Human Behavior and Motivation" by Kendra Cherry, © 2019. Used with permission.

⁴ **Prominent** (*adjective*): well-known

⁵ **Commonality** (*noun*): a feature or trait that two individuals have in common

⁶ "Socioeconomic status" is the level of society a person is in, influenced by their education, wealth, and background; similar to class.

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Independent Practice

Directions: Answer the multiple choice questions for “How the Need to Belong Influences Human Behavior and Motivation.”

1. What is the *best* meaning of “affiliate” as it is used in paragraph 1? **[RI.4]**
 - A. back away from
 - B. become part of
 - C. learn about
 - D. control
2. Which quotation from the article *best* supports the idea that people change the way they act so they can fit in? **[RI.1]**
 - A. “This may include the need to belong to a peer group at school, to be accepted by co-workers, to be part of an athletic team, and to be part of a church group.” (Paragraph 1)
 - B. “people often present themselves in a particular way in order to belong to a specific social group.” (Paragraph 4)
 - C. “For example, teens who share the same taste in clothing, music, and other interests might seek each other out to form friendships.” (Paragraph 6)
 - D. “It also motivates us to participate in social activities such as clubs, sports teams, religious groups, and community organizations.” (Paragraph 8)
3. Which statement *best* expresses the central idea of the article? **[RI.2]**
 - A. Conforming to a group can hurt people’s emotional well-being.
 - B. People usually select groups based on shared traits or interests.
 - C. The desire to belong to a social group affects how people behave.
 - D. People often compare themselves to other members of their social groups.
4. How do paragraphs 6-7 develop the central idea? **[RI.5]**
 - A. by illustrating how people can become part of a new group
 - B. by showing that some people choose not to join social groups
 - C. by showing that people choose groups based on shared behaviors
 - D. by giving examples of the different kinds of groups that one can join

Independent Practice

Directions: Answer the short response prompt for “How the Need to Belong Influences Human Behavior and Motivation.”



PROMPT: You have just read “How the Need to Belong Influences Human Behavior and Motivation” by Kendra Cherry. How does the need to belong influence human behavior? **[RI.2]**

SELF CHECKLIST

Did I...

- fully answer the prompt
- include at least two details from the text?
- incorporate relevant unit vocabulary?

