

KEY

HUSHED WHISPERS

The apartment would be a tight squeeze for Alice and her family, but they had no other choice. This 400 square foot apartment was going to be their new life. Alice was just going to have to get used to it. They all had to get used to it. They had a charming home and upstate New York, and now, they were bogged down in this tiny shack; who knows if they would ever leave.

After Alice's dad lost his job, she noticed that things were getting tough for her family, but she never dreamed it was this inferior. The cops had even shown up once; they rummaged through the house. But her dad was still here; they didn't take him.

She heard her parents constantly talking in hushed voices. It seemed to be more than just a lost job. Alice's dad worked at a local bank. Everyone loved him. She couldn't understand why he had lost his job.

Something deeper was happening underneath the surface. The police seized Alice's dad's computer. They just tucked it in a bag, and despite her dad's rationalization, the police still took it.

A few days after her dad came home in a bad mood, Alice could feel the whispers. People would point in the grocery store, and Alice's mom would rush through the grocery aisles. Things felt off, but at the same time, Alice was starting to put all of the pieces together in her head. The whispers, the pointing, the police, the investigation. It was all pointing to her dad having done something he, and her entire family, would regret.

1. "They had a charming home and upstate New York, and now, they were bogged down in this tiny shack." What do the words **bogged down** mean as they are used in the sentence?

- a. The family was now living in a cute little house.
- ☒ b. The family was stuck in a small house.
- c. The family chose to sell their old house.
- d. The family decided together to move.

B

2. "A few days after her dad came home in a bad mood, Alice could feel the whispers. People would point in the grocery store, and Alice's mom would rush through the grocery aisles." What do the words "**feel the whispers**" mean as used in the sentence?

- ☒ a. Alice knew people were talking about her even though she couldn't hear their words.
- b. Alice felt very supported by the people in the store even though she couldn't hear their words.
- c. Alice actually heard people talking badly about her family.
- d. Alice didn't hear anything bad about her family.

A

3. "They just tucked it in a bag, and despite her dad's rationalization, the police still took it." What does the word **rationalization** mean as it is used in the sentence?

- a. Begging
- b. Crying
- ☒ c. Explaining
- d. Anger

C

4. "The cops had even shown up once; they rummaged through the house." How does the word **rummaged** affect the meaning of the excerpt?

- a. The word shows that the cops were careful while checking through their belongings.
- b. The word shows that the cops allowed the family to show them around the house.
- c. The word creates a positive connotation in the passage that shows the police had a cooperative search of the house.
- ☒ d. The word creates a negative connotation that shows the police were not careful when searching the house.

D

5. How does the line "**Something deeper happening underneath the surface**" help create a suspicious mood?

- ☒ a. The line causes the reader to wonder what is beneath the surface.
- b. The line explains what everyone is wondering.
- c. The line demonstrates the purpose of the story.
- d. The line shows Alice's distrust of her father.

A