**LIT 3: [3] Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact (e.g., how setting shapes the characters or plot).**

Kali reached for the apple at the top of the slanted shelf in the produce section of the Fresh Market grocery. She did it methodically and without passion, not like she used to when she was younger. *What did I know then*, she thought as she put the apple into a reusable cloth tote. She pushed her cart, but as she did her mind seemed to travel back to her first few visits to the grocer’s. The feeling of doing something helpful, of taking care of everyone had been a giddy sort of feeling. It had made her feel important and powerful; a woman in charge of her own destiny. Kali laughed silently to herself as she stopped to automatically pull down a box of macaroni and cheese and put it into the buggy.

With three years and countless trips to the store, and to the doctor, no one was surer of the final outcome than Kali. Her mother was not getting better. Everyone was trying to put on a brave face around her, but they didn’t have to get up in the middle of the night to help her mother to the bathroom, or rise just as early the next morning to make sure that her brother and sisters got to school okay and had some breakfast. Working on the computer to finish her education wasn’t the same as being there. She immediately felt guilty for missing her friends and her school. Most of them were talking about prom right now. Of what importance were those, really, when you thought about death and dying?

“Oh! Sorry, about that,” said the teen pushing the shopping cart who’d just run into her. “I was totally not looking where I was going.”

Kali started to be annoyed but it was obvious that he really didn’t mean to crash into her. She shrugged, “S’okay. No need to call the authorities.”

He smiled and Kali realized that she’d seen him before. “Hey, don’t you go to Ridgeview High?”

“Yeah,” the boy said pushing the hair out of his eyes. “Well, I did. I’m doing that virtual school thing, now. How ‘bout you? What’s your sich?”

Kali swallowed, then decided to play ‘shock the boy and make him run away game’. “I’m doing the virtual school thing, too. My Mom’s dying of cancer. You?” She smiled wickedly in anticipation of the awkward escape that the boy was now going to be forced to endure. To her surprise he shook his head.

“Yeah, I know a thing or two about that.” A far away look came into his eyes. “So, how’re you doing with it all? Must stink to have to take all of that on, you know?”

“It’s all good. I manage,” was all Kali could manage to say. “So, what do you know about it, anyway. You have someone at home who’s sick, too? I’m so tired of everyone trying to act as if they know what I’m going through.”

The boy reached into Kali’s cart and took out the apple, then handed it to her as he turned to walk away, saying “I know more than you think. It’s me. I’m the one’s dying.”

Question: What specific clues from the text indicate how Kali feels about her mother’s illness?

1. She talks about feeling guilty because she misses getting to be in school with her friends.
2. Kali is handling it well as she is organized enough to do the shopping, continue with school, and to help with her younger brother and sisters.
3. Kali feels happy that she can help, and being able to help makes her feel important and powerful.
4. She feels as if she is making a difference.

Question: What is Kali probably more aware of after her chance meeting with the boy at the grocery?

1. Kali now knows that there are people out there that are in worse situations than she is.
2. Kali is more aware of the prevalence of cancer.
3. Kali feels badly that she was rude to the boy.
4. Kali believes that she should be able to do everything herself without asking for any help from anyone.