

Gary Soto The Jacket Comprehension Questions Workbook

gary soto the jacket comprehension questions are a popular topic among educators and students studying the works of Gary Soto, particularly his compelling short story "The Jacket." Understanding this story and its key themes is essential for deep comprehension and effective discussion. This article provides a comprehensive guide to the story's main ideas, themes, and potential comprehension questions to enhance your understanding and prepare you for assignments or classroom discussions.

Overview of "The Jacket" by Gary Soto

Gary Soto's "The Jacket" is a poignant autobiographical story that explores themes of childhood, peer pressure, self-identity, and societal expectations. The narrative follows a young boy who receives a new jacket, which initially makes him feel proud and confident. However, as the story unfolds, he faces challenges related to peer perception, teasing, and self-acceptance.

Understanding the context of Soto's story is crucial for answering comprehension questions. The story reflects Soto's own experiences growing up in a Mexican-American community, providing authentic insights into adolescent life and cultural identity.

Common Types of Comprehension Questions for "The Jacket"

To deepen your understanding of Soto's story, educators often craft questions that examine various aspects, such as plot, character development, themes, and author's purpose. Here are some common question types:

1. Plot-Based Questions

- What is the main event that occurs when the narrator receives the jacket?
- How does the narrator feel about the jacket at the beginning of the story?
- What happens when the narrator encounters the teasing from his peers?
- How does the story resolve, and what does the narrator learn?

2. Character Analysis Questions

- Describe the narrator's feelings about himself at the start and end of the story.
- How do the narrator's friends influence his perception of the jacket?
- What role does the narrator's family play in his experience?

3. Theme and Message Questions

- What are the main themes presented in "The Jacket"?
- How does Soto portray peer pressure and societal expectations?
- What message do you think Soto is trying to convey about self-acceptance?

4. Vocabulary and Language Questions

- What does the word "embarrassed" mean in the context of the story?
- Find a sentence where Soto uses descriptive language to create a mood.

5. Personal Reflection and Critical Thinking Questions

- Have you ever experienced a situation similar to the narrator's? How did you feel?
- Do you agree with the narrator's feelings about the jacket? Why or why not?

Sample Comprehension Questions and Answers for "The Jacket"

To illustrate how to approach these questions, here are some sample comprehension questions along with detailed answers:

Q1: Why does the narrator initially feel proud of his jacket?

Answer: The narrator feels proud of his jacket because it is new and represents a sense of status and belonging. It makes him feel more confident and accepted among his peers, especially since it distinguishes him from others who do not have such a jacket.

Q2: What causes the narrator to feel embarrassed later in the story?

Answer: The narrator feels embarrassed after being teased and ridiculed by his classmates about his jacket. Their teasing makes him feel self-conscious and ashamed of wearing it, highlighting how peer opinion influences his self-esteem.

Q3: How does Soto explore the theme of self-identity in "The Jacket"?

Answer: Soto explores self-identity by showing how the narrator's feelings about himself change based on external validation. The jacket initially boosts his confidence, but peer teasing causes him to question his worth. The story suggests that true self-acceptance comes from within, regardless of appearances or others' opinions.

Q4: What lesson does the narrator learn by the end of the story?

Answer: The narrator learns that external appearances, like a jacket, are not what truly define him. He realizes that his self-worth should not depend on peer approval or material possessions, emphasizing the importance of self-acceptance.

Q5: How does Soto use descriptive language to evoke emotions in the story?

Answer: Soto uses vivid descriptions, such as when he describes the jacket as "bright" and "new," which initially evoke feelings of pride. Later, phrases like "feeling small" or "trembling" depict his embarrassment, effectively conveying his emotional journey.

Strategies for Answering Comprehension Questions Effectively

To excel in answering comprehension questions about "The Jacket," consider these strategies:

- **Read carefully:** Pay attention to details in the story, especially descriptions and dialogue.
- **Identify key themes:** Recognize the central messages related to self-esteem, peer pressure, and identity.
- **Use evidence from the text:** Support your answers with direct quotations or specific references.
- **Reflect on personal experience:** Relate the story to your own life to deepen understanding and provide meaningful responses.
- **Practice summarization:** Be able to concisely summarize plot points and character motivations.

Additional Resources for "The Jacket" Comprehension

For students seeking further practice, consider the following resources:

- **Study guides:** Many educational websites offer detailed summaries and question sets for Gary Soto's stories.
- **Discussion questions:** Engage with classmates or teachers using open-ended questions to explore themes more deeply.

- **Writing prompts:** Practice writing essays or reflections based on the story to enhance comprehension and critical thinking.
- **Vocabulary lists:** Create flashcards for unfamiliar words encountered in the story to improve language skills.

Conclusion

Understanding **Gary Soto's "The Jacket"** through comprehension questions helps students grasp the story's deeper meanings and relate its themes to their own lives. By practicing various question types?ranging from plot and character analysis to thematic discussions?readers can develop a nuanced appreciation for Soto's storytelling. Remember to support your answers with evidence from the text, reflect on the story's messages, and consider personal experiences to enrich your understanding. Whether for classroom assignments, discussions, or personal growth, mastering comprehension questions about "The Jacket" will enhance your literary analysis skills and foster a greater appreciation for Soto's work.

Keywords: Gary Soto, The Jacket, comprehension questions, story analysis, themes, character development, peer pressure, self-identity, literary analysis

Gary Soto The Jacket Comprehension Questions: An In-Depth Analysis

Introduction

In the realm of contemporary American literature aimed at young readers, Gary Soto's works stand out for their heartfelt portrayal of adolescence, cultural identity, and everyday struggles. Among his notable writings is the short story "The Jacket," which has been widely included in school curricula and reading comprehension exercises. This article aims to provide an exhaustive investigation into the comprehension questions associated with Gary Soto's "The Jacket," exploring their significance, pedagogical value, and the thematic elements they encourage students to analyze.

Understanding the Context of "The Jacket"

Before delving into the comprehension questions themselves, it is essential to understand the story's background. "The Jacket" tells the story of a young boy who receives a new jacket, which he initially perceives as a symbol of pride and status but eventually recognizes as a reminder of social disparities and personal humility. Soto's narrative captures the nuances of childhood experiences, peer relationships, and self-awareness.

The Role of Comprehension Questions in Literary Analysis

Comprehension questions serve multiple purposes in educational settings:

- Assessing understanding of the plot, characters, and themes
- Encouraging critical thinking and personal interpretation
- Developing vocabulary and contextual comprehension
- Connecting literary themes to students' own experiences

In the case of "The Jacket," well-crafted questions can deepen students' appreciation of Soto's message and foster empathy.

Key Themes Explored in the Comprehension Questions

Major Themes in "The Jacket"

Gary Soto's story touches on several interwoven themes, which comprehension questions aim to highlight:

- Social Class and Identity
- Pride and Humility
- Childhood Innocence and Maturity
- Peer Influence and Self-Perception
- Materialism and Self-Worth

By designing questions around these themes, educators encourage students to analyze not just the plot but also the underlying messages Soto conveys.

Sample Comprehension Questions and Their Analysis

Basic Comprehension Questions

These questions verify students' grasp of the story's fundamental elements.

- What is the main event that happens in "The Jacket"?
- How does the narrator feel about receiving the new jacket?
- What does the jacket symbolize for the narrator at the beginning of the story?
- How does the narrator's perception of the jacket change by the end of the story?

Analysis:

These questions guide students to identify the plot, character emotions, and symbolic elements. They serve as a foundation for more in-depth analysis.

Analytical and Interpretive Questions

These questions prompt students to think critically about the themes and characters' motivations.

- Why do you think the narrator initially feels proud of his new jacket?
- What does the story suggest about the influence of peers on the narrator's self-esteem?
- How does Soto use the jacket as a symbol to communicate larger ideas about social status?
- What is the significance of the narrator's realization at the end of the story?

Analysis:

Such questions encourage students to interpret symbolism and thematic messages, fostering a deeper understanding of Soto's literary techniques and social commentary.

Discussion and Personal Reflection Questions

These questions aim to connect the story's themes to students' personal experiences and societal issues.

- Have you ever experienced a moment where material possessions affected how others viewed you? How did it make you feel?
- Do you think Soto's portrayal of childhood experiences is realistic? Why or why not?
- How can understanding stories like "The Jacket" help us better understand issues of social inequality?
- In your opinion, what lesson does the narrator learn by the end of the story?

Analysis:

By prompting personal reflection, these questions make the story relevant and encourage empathy, critical awareness, and social consciousness.

The Pedagogical Value of Comprehension Questions About "The Jacket"

Developing Critical Thinking Skills

Questions that challenge students to analyze symbolism, character motivation, and societal themes cultivate critical thinking. For example, asking students to interpret the jacket's changing significance pushes them to consider how material objects can symbolize broader societal issues.

Enhancing Language and Vocabulary

Many comprehension questions include prompts for students to define or use specific words from the story, such as "pride," "humility," or "symbol." This expands vocabulary and comprehension skills.

Encouraging Personal Connection and Empathy

Discussion prompts that relate the story to students' own lives foster empathy and social awareness. Recognizing the universality of feelings about social status and material possessions helps students develop emotional intelligence.

Sample Extension Activities Based on Comprehension Questions

- Debate: "Is materialism harmful or harmless?" using examples from "The Jacket."
- Creative Writing: Write a story about a personal object that has special significance.
- Role-Play: Act out scenes from the story to explore character perspectives.
- Research: Investigate social class issues in contemporary society and relate findings to the story.

Thematic and Cultural Significance

Soto's Cultural Perspective and Its Reflection in Comprehension Questions

Gary Soto's background as a Mexican American author influences his storytelling, often highlighting themes of cultural identity, community, and social challenges. Comprehension questions that incorporate these elements can deepen students' understanding of cultural context.

For instance, questions might ask:

- How does Soto portray the narrator's cultural background?
- In what ways do societal expectations within the story reflect real-world cultural dynamics?

Incorporating such questions broadens the scope of literary analysis beyond surface-level understanding.

Conclusion

Gary Soto's "The Jacket" is a compelling narrative that offers rich material for comprehension questions aimed at fostering literary analysis, critical thinking, and personal reflection. Thoughtfully designed questions serve as vital tools in educational settings to unpack the story's themes of social class, pride, and humility. They also help students develop empathy and cultural awareness, making "The Jacket" not just a story about a jacket but a reflection on societal values and personal growth.

In sum, the comprehension questions associated with Gary Soto's "The Jacket" are more than mere assessment tools—they are gateways to meaningful discussion, deeper understanding, and lifelong skills in literary appreciation and social consciousness. As educators continue to utilize and develop these questions, they contribute significantly to students' intellectual and emotional development, ensuring Soto's storytelling remains relevant and impactful for generations to come.

Question/Answer What is the main theme of 'The Jacket' by Gary Soto? The main theme is the struggle with self-acceptance and the desire to fit in, especially related to the narrator's feelings about his body and appearance. How does the narrator feel about the jacket at the beginning of the story? At the beginning, the narrator is self-conscious and embarrassed about wearing the jacket, feeling it makes him stand out and wish he could hide his body. What does the jacket symbolize in the story? The jacket symbolizes the narrator's insecurities and desire to conceal his true self, as well as the social pressures to fit in. How does the narrator's perspective on the jacket change by the end of the story? By the end, the narrator begins to accept himself and realizes that his feelings about the jacket are more about his insecurities than the jacket itself. What lesson can readers learn from 'The Jacket' about self-acceptance? Readers can learn that embracing one's unique qualities and accepting oneself is more important than trying to hide or change who they are to fit in. What role does the narrator's family play in the story's development? The narrator's family provides support and perspective, helping him understand that he is valued regardless of his appearance, which aids in his journey toward self-acceptance. What are some literary devices Gary Soto uses in 'The Jacket' to convey the narrator's feelings? Soto uses imagery, symbolism, and internal monologue to express the narrator's emotions and inner conflicts about self-image and acceptance.

Related keywords: Gary Soto, The Jacket, comprehension questions, summary, themes, character analysis, plot, setting, vocabulary, literary devices

Gary Soto Jessie De La Cruz

gary soto jessie de la cruz

Introduction

Gary Soto Jessie de la Cruz is a name that may evoke curiosity among readers interested in Latin American literature, poetry, and cultural stories. While it might seem to refer to two separate individuals, this phrase often intertwines two prominent figures: Gary Soto, a celebrated American poet and novelist, and Jessie de la Cruz, a notable figure in the history of Mexican-American communities. Understanding their backgrounds, contributions, and significance requires a comprehensive exploration of each personality, their cultural contexts, and the potential intersections of their lives and works. This article aims to delve into the lives, achievements, and influences of both Gary Soto and Jessie de la Cruz, highlighting their relevance in American and Mexican-American history and literature.

Who is Gary Soto?

Early Life and Background

Gary Soto was born on January 12, 1952, in Fresno, California. Growing up in a working-class Mexican-American family, Soto's childhood experiences deeply influenced his writing. His early years were marked by struggles common to many immigrant families, including economic hardships and cultural assimilation.

Literary Career and Themes

Soto emerged as a prominent voice in American literature during the late 20th century. His works often focus on the Latino experience in the United States, exploring themes such as identity, community, family, and the struggles of adolescence. Some key aspects of his literary style include:

- Use of colloquial language and humor
- Depictions of everyday life and struggles
- Exploration of cultural roots and assimilation

Notable Works

Gary Soto has authored numerous books, including:

- "Living Up the Street" (1985) ? A collection of autobiographical essays and stories about his childhood.
- "Buried Onions" (1997) ? A novel that tackles urban violence and the hopes of young Mexican-Americans.
- "A Winter Life" (2004) ? Poems reflecting on aging, family, and cultural identity.
- "The Afterlife" (2010) ? A novel about a young boy's experiences with death and spirituality.

Contributions and Recognition

Soto's work has earned him several awards, such as the American Book Award and the Pura Belpré Author Award. His influence extends beyond literature into education, where he advocates for literacy and cultural awareness among Latino youth.

Who is Jessie de la Cruz?

Historical Context and Background

Jessie de la Cruz (also known as Jesusa de la Cruz) was a Mexican-American woman who played an important role in the labor and civil rights movements in the United States. She was born in Mexico and migrated to the U.S. seeking better opportunities, like many others during the early 20th century.

Contributions to Labor Rights

Jessie de la Cruz is best known for her activism and leadership within the farmworker movement. She was involved in organizing workers, advocating for fair wages, and fighting against exploitation in agriculture. Her efforts contributed significantly to the broader Chicano movement and labor rights advocacy.

Role in Civil Rights

De la Cruz's activism extended beyond labor issues; she was also a prominent figure in advocating for Latino civil rights, education, and community empowerment. She often worked alongside other notable activists and organizations to promote social justice.

Legacy and Recognition

Though less widely known than some other figures, Jessie de la Cruz's contributions have been recognized in various historical accounts and community histories. Her work helped lay the groundwork for subsequent generations of activists fighting for immigrant and worker rights.

Potential Connections and Cultural Significance

While Gary Soto and Jessie de la Cruz are distinct figures—one a celebrated author and poet, the other a community activist—they share a common thread rooted in Mexican-American identity and cultural resilience. Their lives exemplify different ways in which Latino heritage and experiences have shaped American history and culture.

Shared Themes

- Identity and Cultural Roots: Both figures embody a deep connection to Mexican heritage, whether through Soto's literary exploration or de la Cruz's activism.
- Advocacy and Representation: They serve as voices?Soto through storytelling and poetry, de la Cruz through activism?that highlight Latino experiences and struggles.
- Community Impact: Their work and efforts have contributed to greater awareness and progress within their communities.

Impact on Latino American Culture

Their contributions help to:

- Promote cultural understanding and appreciation
- Inspire future generations of writers, activists, and community leaders
- Highlight ongoing social issues such as immigration, labor rights, and cultural identity

The Broader Context of Mexican-American History

Migration and Community Formation

The stories of individuals like Gary Soto and Jessie de la Cruz are embedded within a larger narrative of Mexican-American migration. This history includes:

- Waves of migration primarily in the early 20th century
- Formation of vibrant communities in California and the Southwest
- Struggles for civil rights, fair labor practices, and cultural recognition

Cultural Contributions

Mexican-American communities have significantly impacted American culture through:

- Literature and arts
- Labor movements
- Political activism

Both Soto's literary works and de la Cruz's activism are part of this rich tapestry.

The Significance of Their Legacies Today

Educational and Cultural Impact

In contemporary America, both figures symbolize:

- The importance of cultural representation
- The power of storytelling and activism in social change
- The ongoing fight for equality and justice for Latino populations

Inspiration for Future Generations

Young Latinos and activists look up to figures like Soto and de la Cruz as exemplars of resilience, creativity, and dedication to community.

Conclusion

Gary Soto *Jessie de la Cruz* encapsulates two vital facets of Mexican-American life and history: literature and activism. Soto's poetic voice and storytelling have helped illuminate the Latino experience in the United States, fostering understanding and appreciation. Meanwhile, Jessie de la Cruz's activism exemplifies the relentless pursuit of justice and equality for farmworkers and immigrant communities. Together, their legacies underscore the importance of cultural identity, community activism, and the enduring strength of Latino heritage. As ongoing conversations about immigration, cultural recognition, and social justice continue, the contributions of figures like Soto and de la Cruz remain profoundly relevant, inspiring future generations to honor their roots and advocate for positive change.

Gary Soto Jessie De La Cruz: Exploring the Intertwined Lives of Latino Writers and Their Impact on American Literature

In the rich landscape of American literature, the stories and voices of Latino writers have profoundly shaped contemporary narratives, offering insights into cultural identity, community struggles, and personal growth. Among these influential figures, Gary Soto and Jessie De La Cruz stand out as pivotal contributors whose work reflects the Latino experience in the United States. While Gary Soto is renowned for his poetic and autobiographical writing, Jessie De La Cruz holds significance as a labor organizer and community leader whose activism contributed to social change. Exploring their lives, works, and legacies provides a compelling window into the diversity and depth of Latino American voices.

The Life and Work of Gary Soto

Early Life and Cultural Roots

Gary Soto was born in 1952 in Fresno, California, a city with a significant Latino population. His upbringing in a working-class Mexican-American family deeply influenced his worldview and creative expression. Growing up amidst economic hardships and cultural challenges, Soto's experiences became the foundation for much of his literary work.

Literary Themes and Style

Soto's writing often centers on themes of:

- Coming of age
- Cultural identity
- Family and community
- Socioeconomic struggles

His style blends humor, poignancy, and accessibility, making his work relatable to both young and adult readers. Soto's poems and stories frequently depict everyday life in Latino neighborhoods, capturing the vibrancy, pain, and resilience of his community.

Notable Works

Some of Soto's most influential publications include:

- "Living Up the Street" (1985): A collection of autobiographical stories reflecting childhood and adolescence in Fresno.
- "Poetry and the Personal" (1995): An exploration of poetic craft intertwined with personal narrative.
- "A Summer Life" (1990): A poetry collection that vividly portrays summer experiences and cultural identity.

Impact and Recognition

Gary Soto's contributions extend beyond literature; he has been an educator, teaching creative writing and inspiring young Latino writers. His work has garnered numerous awards, including the American Book Award and the Pura Belpré Honor, recognizing his role in enriching American literary canon with Latino perspectives.

The Legacy of Jessie De La Cruz

Who Was Jessie De La Cruz?

Unlike Gary Soto, Jessie De La Cruz is less widely known in mainstream literary circles but holds a significant place in American history as a labor activist and community organizer. Born in 1919 in California, she dedicated her life to advocating for farmworkers' rights, fighting against exploitation, and improving working conditions.

Contributions to Labor Rights and Social Justice

De La Cruz's activism was characterized by:

- Leading strikes and protests for fair wages
- Organizing farmworkers to unite against oppressive practices
- Advocating for better living conditions and legal protections

Her efforts contributed to the broader Chicano Movement and labor rights advancements during the mid-20th century.

Significance in Latino History

Jessie De La Cruz exemplifies the intersection of cultural identity and activism. Her work not only empowered farmworkers but also helped elevate Latino voices in the fight for civil rights. Her leadership demonstrated the importance of grassroots organizing and community solidarity.

Comparing and Contrasting Their Contributions

Different Mediums, Shared Goals

While Gary Soto expressed the Latino experience through literature—poetry, stories, autobiographies—Jessie De La Cruz embodied activism through organizing and social movement leadership. Their work, though in different arenas, aimed to:

- Elevate Latino voices
- Address social injustices
- Foster community resilience

Impact on Latino Identity and Representation

- Gary Soto's literary work helped shape cultural identity, offering authentic stories that resonate with Latino youth and communities.
- Jessie De La Cruz's activism brought tangible social change, influencing policies and public perceptions about farmworkers and Latino communities.

Legacy and Influence

Their legacies continue to inspire new generations:

- Soto's writings serve as educational tools and cultural touchstones.
- De La Cruz's activism underscores the importance of community organizing and political engagement.

Broader Context: Latino Contributions to American Society

Literature and Arts

Latino writers like Gary Soto have enriched American literature by providing diverse narratives that challenge stereotypes and celebrate cultural heritage. Their work has opened doors for more Latino authors and artists.

Social Movements and Civil Rights

Activists like Jessie De La Cruz laid groundwork for ongoing social justice efforts, highlighting issues of labor rights, immigration, and racial equality.

Interconnection of Culture and Activism

The lives of Soto and De La Cruz exemplify how cultural expression and activism often intertwine, each reinforcing the other to foster social change and cultural pride.

Key Takeaways

- Gary Soto is a celebrated poet and storyteller whose work captures the everyday realities of Latino communities.
- Jessie De La Cruz was a pioneering labor organizer advocating for farmworkers and social justice.
- Both figures emphasize the importance of cultural identity, community resilience, and activism in shaping American society.

- Their legacies demonstrate how individual contributions can influence broader social and cultural landscapes.

Final Thoughts

Understanding Gary Soto Jessie De La Cruz offers valuable insight into the multifaceted nature of Latino contributions to America. Through literature and activism, they exemplify resilience, creativity, and social commitment, inspiring ongoing conversations about identity, justice, and community. Their stories remind us that the fight for recognition, equality, and cultural preservation is ongoing and that every voice, whether expressed through words or action, plays a vital role in shaping a more inclusive society.

Note: For further exploration, consider reading Gary Soto's poetry and autobiographies, as well as researching the history of Jessie De La Cruz's activism to gain a deeper appreciation of their enduring legacies.

Question Who is Gary Soto and how is he connected to Jesse de la Cruz? Gary Soto is a renowned Mexican-American author and poet, known for his works depicting Latino culture. Jesse de la Cruz is a fictional character or a subject featured in Soto's writings or interviews, representing themes of community and identity. What are some notable works by Gary Soto that include themes related to Jesse de la Cruz? Gary Soto's notable works such as 'Living Up the Street' and 'Latinos in School' explore themes of Latino identity and community, which may feature characters similar to Jesse de la Cruz or inspired by real individuals like him. Has Gary Soto ever written specifically about Jesse de la Cruz? There is no publicly known work by Gary Soto that specifically centers on Jesse de la Cruz; however, his writings often reflect stories and characters inspired by Latino youth and community members. Why is Jesse de la Cruz a significant figure in Gary Soto's literature? If Jesse de la Cruz appears in Gary Soto's works, he likely represents the everyday experiences and cultural background of Latino youth, serving as a symbol of community and resilience. Are there educational resources or lesson plans focusing on Gary Soto's works involving Jesse de la Cruz? Yes, many educational programs analyze Gary Soto's stories that depict Latino communities, which may include discussions about characters like Jesse de la Cruz to promote cultural understanding. What impact has Gary Soto had on Latino literature through characters like Jesse de la Cruz? Gary Soto has significantly contributed to Latino literature by portraying authentic stories of Latino youth and community members, with characters like Jesse de la Cruz helping to highlight cultural identity and social issues. Are there interviews where Gary Soto discusses characters similar to Jesse de la Cruz? In interviews, Gary Soto often talks about his inspiration from real people and communities, which may include references to characters like Jesse de la Cruz or themes surrounding such figures. How does Gary Soto's background influence his portrayal of characters like Jesse de la Cruz? Gary Soto's Mexican-American heritage deeply influences his storytelling, allowing him to authentically depict characters like Jesse de la Cruz as representations of Latino youth and community life. Is Jesse de la Cruz a real person or a fictional character created by Gary Soto?

There is no concrete evidence that Jesse de la Cruz is a real person; he is likely a fictional character or a symbolic figure representing Latino youth within Gary Soto's literary themes. What are the main themes explored in Gary Soto's stories related to Jesse de la Cruz? Themes such as community, cultural identity, youth experiences, resilience, and social challenges are commonly explored in Soto's stories that may involve characters like Jesse de la Cruz.

Related keywords: Gary Soto, Jessie de la Cruz, Mexican-American writers, Chicano literature, California authors, Latino poets, Hispanic American writers, bilingual literature, Latino heritage, contemporary American authors

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