***Don Quixote* by Miguel de Cervantes**

**Directions: Read the following excerpt from *Don Quixote* and answer the questions that follow.**

*Although the age of chivalry had long passed, stories about knights-errant were still popular in the early 1600s. The heroes of these stories were brave knights who traveled far and wide performing noble deeds. Miguel de Cervantes’s novel* Don Quixote *satirizes such romances. His hero, the elderly Don Quixote, has read too many tales of chivalry. Imagining himself a knight-errant, he sets out across the Spanish countryside with his practical servant, Sancho Panza. In this famous excerpt, Don Quixote’s noble motives give dignity to his foolish battle with the windmills.*

Just then they came in sight of thirty or forty windmills that rise form that plain, and no sooner did Don Quixote see them than he said to his squire: “Fortune is guiding our affairs better than we ourselves could have wished. Do you see over yonder, friend Sancho, thirty or forty hulking giants? I intend to do battle with them and slay them. With the spoils we shall begin to be rich, for this is a righteous war. . . “

“What giants?” asked Sancho Panza.

“Those you see over there,” replied his master, “with the long arms; some of them have well-nigh [nearly] two leagues in length.”

“Take care, sir,” cried Sancho. “Those over there are not giants but windmills, and those things that seem to be armed are their sails, which when they are whirled around by the wind turn the millstone.”

“It is clear,” replied Don Quixote, “that you are not experienced in adventures. Those are giants, and if you are afraid, turn aside and pray whilst I enter into fierce and unequal battle with them.”

Uttering these words, he clapped spurs to Rozinate, his steed, without heeding the cries of his squire, Sancho, who warned him that he was not going to attack giants, but windmills. But so convinced was he that they were giants that he neither heard his squire’s shouts nor did he notice what they were, though he was very near them. Instead, he rushed on, shouting in a loud voice: “Fly not, cowards and vile caitliffs [cowardly person]; one knight alone attacks you!” At that moment a slight breeze arose and the great sails began to move. . .

He ran his lance into the sail, but the wind twisted it with such violence that it shivered the lance in pieces and dragged both rider and horse after it, rolling them over and over on the ground, sorely damaged.

**Questions:**

1. What values of chivalry motivated Don Quixote’s attack on the windmills?
2. How does Cervantes show the noble side of Don Quixote in this excerpt?
3. How does Cervantes show the foolish side of Don Quixote in this excerpt?
4. The phrase “tilting at windmills” literally means “jousting at windmills,” like Don Quixote did. Figuratively, this phrase means foolishly attacking imaginary or perceived enemies. It was inspired from this story. Underline in the excerpt where you think this phrase came from.
5. A word in English has been adapted from Don Quixote’s name. “*Quixotic*” means idealistic, romantic, or impractical. Based on what you know about Don Quixote, where do you think this word’s meaning came from?