Words at Work

Read a story and notice how its language shapes meaning.

3.LF.27 "Read prose, poetry, and dramas, identifying the literary devices used by the author to convey meaning."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline a comparison with *like* or *as*, circle a human action given to something nonhuman, and box a word that sounds like the noise it names. Write 1 and 2 beside the two repeated phrases.

Mira's Paper Boat

1. On Saturday, Mira carried a paper boat to the creek behind her house. Rain had filled the creek, and its surface shone like a silver ribbon. Mira set the boat down. Plop! It landed beside a smooth stone. The boat spun once, then rushed under the footbridge. Mira ran along the bank, keeping its white sail in sight.

2. The wind tugged at Mira's jacket and whispered through the reeds. Around the bend, the boat caught on a branch. Mira reached for it, but the mud held her boots tight. "Not yet, not yet," she said as the current pulled at the little boat. She found a long stick and stretched it toward the branch, careful not to step into the creek.

3. The stick nudged the boat free. It sailed past a line of pebbles and into a quiet pool. Mira scooped it up before it could drift away. "Now, now!" she laughed. Its sail was soggy, but the boat still floated. She tucked it under her arm and walked home, thinking of another trip when the creek was calm.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What is the creek's surface compared to? What does the comparison help you picture?

2. Which words make the wind act like a person? What do they help you imagine?

3. Why might the author use “Plop!” instead of only saying that the boat landed?

4. How do “Not yet, not yet” and “Now, now!” show a change in Mira's feelings?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a three-sentence scene about a lost mitten in a snowy yard, using a comparison with *like* or *as* and giving something nonhuman a human action. Add one sentence that names both devices and explains what each helps a reader imagine.

ANSWER KEY

Words at Work

GRADE 3 · 3.LF.27

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline a comparison with *like* or *as*, circle a human action given to something nonhuman, and box a word that sounds like the noise it names. Write 1 and 2 beside the two repeated phrases. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What is the creek's surface compared to? What does the comparison help you picture?	**It is compared to a silver ribbon. The comparison helps the reader picture a long, shining surface.**
2	Which words make the wind act like a person? What do they help you imagine?	**The wind "whispered through the reeds." This helps the reader imagine a soft sound.**
3	Why might the author use "Plop!" instead of only saying that the boat landed?	**"Plop!" helps the reader hear the sound of the boat landing in the water.**
4	How do "Not yet, not yet" and "Now, now!" show a change in Mira's feelings?	**"Not yet, not yet" shows that Mira is waiting and worried about the boat. "Now, now!" shows her relief when she gets it back.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

A red mitten stuck out of the snow like a tiny flag. The wind searched the yard for the mitten's owner. Lena saw the mitten by the fence and picked it up. The simile shows how the mitten stands out, and the personification makes the wind seem busy.

Accept other supported explanations of what each device helps the reader imagine. For the marking job, "tugged" or "held her boots tight" can also count as a human action given to something nonhuman.