Stars Without a Projector

Notice how story details build a problem and its solution.

6.CL.7.a "Write narratives incorporating key literary elements, including characters, plot, setting, point of view, resolution of a conflict, dialogue, and sensory details."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two sensory details, circle one line of dialogue, and write 1 beside the problem, 2 beside an attempt to solve it, and 3 beside the resolution. These marks will help you see how the writer builds the scene.

The Star Show

1 On Friday evening, our school library smelled of paper and orange peels. My friend Lena and I were setting up a star show for families. I had drawn the patterns of three constellations on a sheet of dark cardboard and punched tiny holes where the stars belonged. Lena carried our small projector to the front table. When she pressed its switch, the screen stayed black. She tried again. The projector made a soft click, but no light appeared. Our audience was already finding seats.

2 I stared at the cardboard in my hands. The room buzzed with quiet voices, and rain tapped against the tall windows. "We can still show them the stars," Lena whispered. She took a flashlight from the supply drawer while I asked the librarian to dim the ceiling lights. I held the cardboard high, and Lena aimed the flashlight through its holes toward the white wall. Bright dots appeared, but my hands shook so much that the stars danced across a shelf of dictionaries.

3 Lena rested her elbow on the table to keep the beam steady. I set the cardboard against a stack of books, then pointed to the dots on the wall. "These make a pattern called Orion," I told the families. A little boy raised his hand and asked if we could make another shape. I slid the cardboard so the beam passed through a second group of holes, and he called out what it reminded him of. Soon everyone was finding shapes, and I forgot about the broken projector.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What point of view does the narrator use? Give one word from the passage that shows it.

2. Choose one sensory detail. How does it help you picture or hear the library?

3. What does Lena's first line of dialogue show about how she responds to the problem?

4. How do the characters solve their problem? What happens after their solution works?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a 6- to 8-sentence scene set somewhere other than a library. Use first person, two characters, a problem that gets solved, one line of dialogue, and details from two senses.

ANSWER KEY

Stars Without a Projector

GRADE 6 · 6.CL.7.a

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two sensory details, circle one line of dialogue, and write 1 beside the problem, 2 beside an attempt to solve it, and 3 beside the resolution. These marks will help you see how the writer builds the scene. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What point of view does the narrator use? Give one word from the passage that shows it.	**First person. The narrator uses "I."**
2	Choose one sensory detail. How does it help you picture or hear the library?	**For example, rain tapping against the windows helps the reader hear the room on a rainy evening.**
3	What does Lena's first line of dialogue show about how she responds to the problem?	**She does not give up when the projector fails. She thinks they can find another way to show the stars.**
4	How do the characters solve their problem? What happens after their solution works?	**They shine a flashlight through holes in the cardboard to put star patterns on the wall. The audience begins finding shapes in the patterns.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

At the crowded swimming pool, I smelled sunscreen as my cousin Jo and I prepared for our race. Then Jo's swim cap split, and she stared at the water in dismay. "I can't race with my hair in my eyes," she said. I offered my spare cap, but it was too small. I pulled the elastic band from my wrist and helped her tie her hair back. Jo grinned as the whistle shrilled above the splashing water. We dove in together and reached the far wall.

Accept different sensory details and locations in the passage if students explain their effects accurately. For the writing task, check that the dialogue, sensory details, and resolution belong to one clear scene.