Light in the Library

Read a storm story through its literary devices

8.CL.4 "Analyze the use of literary devices, including simile, metaphor, personification, onomatopoeia, hyperbole, imagery, tone, symbolism, irony, mood, and allusion, to support interpretations of literary texts..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline three phrases that use literary devices, number them 1 to 3, and write each device's name beside it to track how the language shapes your view of the storm or library.

The Return Book

1 By the time the storm knocked out the streetlights, the library was already locked. Rain rattled against the bus stop roof like handfuls of gravel. I stood beside my little brother, Eli, holding the return book he refused to leave behind. Across the street, the library's dark windows watched us. Dad was working late at the hospital, and our apartment had no candles. Then Ms. Vega, the librarian, appeared under a bright yellow raincoat. She lifted a small lantern and called, "The books can wait. Come inside."

2 Inside, the emergency lights gave the shelves a pale glow. Ms. Vega set the lantern on the front desk while Eli and I helped her move chairs away from a leak. Drip, drip, drip went the water into a metal pail. Soon a neighbor arrived with two blankets, and another brought a thermos of soup. The storm was a giant hand pressing against the building, but the library held. Eli placed his return book beside the lantern, as if it belonged on display.

3 When the rain finally slowed, people still sat together among the shelves. Ms. Vega carried the lantern to the window and turned its light toward the street. From the bus stop, a soaked cyclist saw it and came in to dry off. Eli whispered that the library looked open again, even though its sign said CLOSED. I thought about the return book beside that steady flame. Before the storm, I had seen the library as a place to borrow things. Now its light seemed to offer something no one had to return.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What does the simile “like handfuls of gravel” help you imagine about the rain? Explain using words from the passage.

2. How does “Drip, drip, drip” affect the scene inside the library? Use a detail from the passage in your answer.

3. The narrator calls the storm “a giant hand pressing against the building.” What does this metaphor suggest about the storm and the library?

4. What might the lantern symbolize by the end of the story? Support your interpretation with two details from different paragraphs.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write four or five sentences explaining how the mood changes from outside to inside the library. Include two short quotations from different paragraphs, name one literary device, and explain how each quotation supports your interpretation.

ANSWER KEY

Light in the Library

GRADE 8 · 8.CL.4

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline three phrases that use literary devices, number them 1 to 3, and write each device's name beside it to track how the language shapes your view of the storm or library. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What does the simile "like handfuls of gravel" help you imagine about the rain? Explain using words from the passage.	**It makes the rain seem loud and forceful, as though hard pieces are striking the bus stop roof.**
2	How does "Drip, drip, drip" affect the scene inside the library? Use a detail from the passage in your answer.	**The repeated sound draws attention to the leak and shows that the storm is still getting inside, even as people take shelter.**
3	The narrator calls the storm "a giant hand pressing against the building." What does this metaphor suggest about the storm and the library?	**The storm seems powerful and threatening, while "the library held" suggests that the building provides protection.**
4	What might the lantern symbolize by the end of the story? Support your interpretation with two details from different paragraphs.	**It symbolizes welcome or safety. Ms. Vega sets it on the desk as neighbors gather, then puts it in the window, where its light draws a soaked cyclist inside.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Outside, the mood is uneasy when "the library's dark windows watched us." This personification makes the building seem distant and unsettling. Later, Ms. Vega "turned its light toward the street," and a cyclist enters to dry off. That action changes the mood to welcoming because the library has become a place where strangers can find shelter.

Accept interpretations grounded in the quoted language and the events of the story. For the open task, check that the response names a device and explains evidence from two different paragraphs.