Words Paint Night

Notice how precise words create a mood and picture.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.3.3a "Choose words and phrases for effect.*"

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline three words or phrases that help you see, hear, or feel the nighttime garden. In the margin, write Q for quiet words and E for exciting or surprising words.

A Garden at Dusk

1. At dusk, Maya carried a small paper lantern to the garden. The path was quiet, but the leaves whispered above her shoes. A silver snail slid across a wet stone, leaving a shining trail. Maya held her breath as the tiny traveler curled its soft feelers toward the lantern light. Maya paused carefully beside it.

2. Then a cool breeze bent the tall grass. The lantern flame flickered like a nervous firefly, and Maya cupped her hands around it. From the dark fence came a scratch, scratch, scratch. A hedgehog waddled out, its round back bristling with tiny spikes. Maya smiled when it sniffed the snail and marched into the moonlit grass.

3. Maya set the lantern on a flat rock and watched the two animals disappear. The snail glided slowly, but the hedgehog bustled through the grass like a little broom. Soon, the garden grew still again. Maya walked home under the bright moon, carrying the warm picture of the night in her mind for many days.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Which words make the leaves seem as if they can speak? What feeling do those words create?

2. How do the words “glided slowly” and “bustled” help you picture the snail and the hedgehog?

3. Why did the author write “scratch, scratch, scratch” instead of just saying that Maya heard a sound?

4. What phrase compares the hedgehog to something else? What picture does that phrase create?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write three sentences about an animal in a place at night. Choose at least three vivid words or phrases that make the place feel quiet, exciting, or mysterious.

ANSWER KEY

Words Paint Night

GRADE 3 · L.3.3a

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline three words or phrases that help you see, hear, or feel the nighttime garden. In the margin, write Q for quiet words and E for exciting or surprising words. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Which words make the leaves seem as if they can speak? What feeling do those words create?	**"the leaves whispered"; they create a quiet, gentle, slightly mysterious feeling.**
2	How do the words "glided slowly" and "bustled" help you picture the snail and the hedgehog?	**"Glided slowly" shows the snail moving gently and slowly. "Bustled" shows the hedgehog moving in a busy, quicker way.**
3	Why did the author write "scratch, scratch, scratch" instead of just saying that Maya heard a sound?	**The repeated word helps the reader hear the sound and builds suspense before the hedgehog appears.**
4	What phrase compares the hedgehog to something else? What picture does that phrase create?	**"like a little broom"; it makes the hedgehog seem small, bristly, and moving through the grass.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

A blue moth fluttered around the porch light. Below it, a sleepy cat padded across the chilly steps. The dark yard held its breath while the moth danced in the glowing circle.

Accept reasonable words or phrases that create a clear sensory picture or mood. In Part 3, look for three connected sentences and deliberate word choices that create the stated effect.