Sayings in the Garden

Use context clues to explain familiar sayings.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.4.5b "Recognize and explain the meaning of common idioms, adages, and proverbs."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each idiom, adage, or proverb in the passage, then number the sayings in the order you find them. Use the nearby details to help you figure out what each saying means.

The School Garden Team

1. On Saturday, Maya joined the school garden team. Mr. Lee carried trays of seedlings, while Maya hauled a hose across the yard. "We have our hands full today," he said as wind scattered empty pots. Soon, six families arrived with shovels and rakes. Mr. Lee smiled and said, "Many hands make light work." Everyone chose a job and began planting.

2. At first, Maya wanted to water each row again before lunch. Her brother pointed to the dark, wet soil and said, "A watched pot never boils." Maya put down the hose and checked the labels instead. She had read books about basil, beans, and sunflowers before the workday. When a neighbor asked how she knew where to plant each seedling, Maya answered, "I hit the books."

3. That afternoon, a hard rain knocked over two tomato cages. Maya frowned at the muddy paths, but the seedlings stood taller after the rain. The team used fallen twigs to support the cages until new ones arrived. Mr. Lee said, "Every cloud has a silver lining." Maya helped place a small sign beside the tallest seedlings and wrote down how much rain had fallen.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What does Mr. Lee mean when he says, "We have our hands full today"? Use one detail from the passage.

2. Explain the meaning of "Many hands make light work" in the first paragraph.

3. Why does Maya's brother say, "A watched pot never boils"? Explain what he wants Maya to understand.

4. What does Mr. Lee mean by "Every cloud has a silver lining" after the rain?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a three-sentence mini-scene that uses a common idiom, adage, or proverb that does not appear in the passage. In the final sentence, explain what the saying means.

ANSWER KEY

Sayings in the Garden

GRADE 4 · L.4.5b

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline each idiom, adage, or proverb in the passage, then number the sayings in the order you find them. Use the nearby details to help you figure out what each saying means. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What does Mr. Lee mean when he says, "We have our hands full today"? Use one detail from the passage.	**He means the team has many jobs and problems to handle. The wind scattered empty pots, and they still needed to plant seedlings.**
2	Explain the meaning of "Many hands make light work" in the first paragraph.	**When many people help with a job, the work becomes easier or gets done faster.**
3	Why does Maya's brother say, "A watched pot never boils"? Explain what he wants Maya to understand.	**He wants Maya to stop worrying about the wet rows and wait instead of checking or watering them again right away.**
4	What does Mr. Lee mean by "Every cloud has a silver lining" after the rain?	**Even though the rain caused trouble, it also helped the seedlings grow taller.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

When Tia spilled juice on the floor, she quickly grabbed paper towels. Her dad said, "Don't cry over spilled milk," and they cleaned the mess. This proverb means not to stay upset about a mistake that cannot be changed.

For Part 3, accept any appropriate common idiom, adage, or proverb that is used correctly and explained accurately.