Harbor After Dark

Interpret personification in a nighttime harbor scene.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.6.5a "Interpret figures of speech (e.g., personification) in context."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline six phrases that give a nonhuman thing a human action, feeling, or trait. Number them and use the surrounding details to infer what each phrase means.

Evening at the Harbor

1 At sunset, Maya stood on the wooden pier as the last ferry crossed the bay. The harbor began its evening work. Ropes hummed against metal rings, and the water slapped the posts below. A gull scolded the departing boat from a lamp pole. Maya watched the orange sky melt into the water and imagined the town taking a deep breath after a busy day. Shops along the shore closed their doors, while windows blinked on one by one.

2 Then a cool wind hurried through the marina, tugging at loose flags. "Time to go," it seemed to whisper as it brushed Maya's hair. On the dock, an old sailboat waited patiently beside newer boats. Its blue paint was chipped, but its tall mast still pointed proudly toward the first stars. Maya thought the boat looked like a tired traveler resting before another journey. The waves tapped a steady drumbeat against its side near the shore.

3 Before Maya left, she opened her sketchbook and drew the harbor. The moon laid a silver path across the bay, leading from the pier to the dark horizon. Behind her, the town yawned awake as restaurant lights glowed and late buses groaned along the street. Maya wrote one line under her drawing: "Night gathers the harbor in its quiet hands." Then she packed her pencils and walked home, while the bay kept the moon's reflection safe.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What does the phrase “the town taking a deep breath” suggest about the town after its busy day?

2. In “Time to go,” it seemed to whisper, what nonhuman thing is given the ability to speak? What does this suggest about the wind?

3. Which words personify the old sailboat, and what do they suggest about it?

4. What does Maya mean when she writes, “Night gathers the harbor in its quiet hands”?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write two sentences about a familiar outdoor place at a particular time. Include one example of personification and underline it, then explain in 8 to 12 words what your personification suggests.

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PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline six phrases that give a nonhuman thing a human action, feeling, or trait. Number them and use the surrounding details to infer what each phrase means. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What does the phrase “the town taking a deep breath” suggest about the town after its busy day?	**The town is settling down and becoming quieter after a busy day.**
2	In “Time to go,” it seemed to whisper, what nonhuman thing is given the ability to speak? What does this suggest about the wind?	**The wind is given the ability to whisper. It suggests that the breeze is soft and quiet.**
3	Which words personify the old sailboat, and what do they suggest about it?	**“Waited patiently” personifies the sailboat. It suggests that the boat is still and seems ready for a future trip.**
4	What does Maya mean when she writes, “Night gathers the harbor in its quiet hands”?	**She means that darkness gently covers or surrounds the harbor in silence.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

At dawn, the _sleepy park stretched its arms_ beneath the pale sky. This suggests the park is becoming active after a quiet night.

Accept any correctly identified personification phrase and a reasonable interpretation supported by nearby details. For Part 3, accept varied settings and wording if the nonhuman subject has a human action or trait and the explanation has 8 to 12 words.