Fog Signal Evidence

Trace explicit details, inferences, and uncertainty in a literary passage.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.11-12.1 "Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline four details that state what Mara sees or does, number two pairs of details that support an inference, and circle one detail that leaves the outcome uncertain.

The Signal House

1 At 5:40 each morning, Mara climbed the cliff path to the disused signal house above Greyhook Harbor. The building had no electricity, but its brass telescope still faced the bay. Her grandfather had taught her to record the tide, wind, and names of boats before he died the previous winter. Now Mara copied the harbor log into a blue notebook, although the harbor master had told her the records were no longer needed. On this foggy Tuesday, she wrote down only one boat, a small trawler moving east before sunrise.

2 Near noon, a bell rang once from the water, then stopped. Mara found no bell buoy listed on the old chart, and the trawler she had seen was gone. Through the telescope, she noticed a square of red cloth tied to a piling beyond the breakwater. Her grandfather had used red cloth to signal that a boat needed help, but fishermen also tied scraps to pilings to mark crab pots. Mara lifted the station's hand lamp from its hook. She cleaned its cloudy lens with her sleeve and watched the fog thicken.

3 At dusk, the harbor master arrived in his truck and called from the road that the Coast Guard had reported no distress signal. Mara did not answer at first. She turned the lamp's handle until a narrow beam crossed the water, then covered it with her palm. Below, an engine coughed once beyond the breakwater. The harbor master shouted that the tide was turning and that she should come down. Mara looked at the blue notebook, tore out the morning's page, and folded it into her coat pocket. When she finally left the signal house, the lamp was dark, but the red cloth was no longer visible.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What did Mara explicitly record in her notebook that morning? Cite the sentence that supports your answer.

2. What can you infer Mara thinks the red cloth might mean? Use two details from the passage to support your inference.

3. What evidence shows that Mara considers responding to a possible problem but hesitates? Cite two actions or statements.

4. What important matter does the passage leave uncertain? Explain how at least two details create that uncertainty.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a three-sentence paragraph making a claim about how Mara responds to her grandfather's legacy. Cite at least two details, explain one inference, and name one point the passage does not settle.

ANSWER KEY

Fog Signal Evidence

HIGH SCHOOL · RL.11-12.1

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline four details that state what Mara sees or does, number two pairs of details that support an inference, and circle one detail that leaves the outcome uncertain. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What did Mara explicitly record in her notebook that morning? Cite the sentence that supports your answer.	**She recorded only one boat, "a small trawler moving east before sunrise."**
2	What can you infer Mara thinks the red cloth might mean? Use two details from the passage to support your inference.	**Mara may think the cloth signals that a boat needs help. Her grandfather used red cloth for that purpose, and Mara takes down and cleans the hand lamp after seeing it.**
3	What evidence shows that Mara considers responding to a possible problem but hesitates? Cite two actions or statements.	**She "did not answer at first" when the harbor master called, and she shines the lamp across the water but then covers it with her palm.**
4	What important matter does the passage leave uncertain? Explain how at least two details create that uncertainty.	**It is uncertain whether anyone actually needed help. The red cloth could be an emergency signal or a crab-pot marker, the Coast Guard reports no distress signal, and an engine coughs beyond the breakwater.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Mara treats her grandfather's work as personally important, even though the harbor master says the records are no longer needed. She keeps the log, recognizes the red cloth because her grandfather used it as a help signal, and takes the morning page with her, suggesting that she feels responsible for his unfinished duty. The passage does not settle whether she believes the cloth truly signaled danger or whether she will act on what she recorded.

Accept varied inferences when students support them with strong, relevant details from the passage. For the open response, require a defensible claim, at least two accurate citations or references, an explanation of inference, and a valid uncertainty.