

Storm at the Theater

Notice how a writer builds a tense moment.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.3b "Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, and description, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each line of dialogue, circle words that create a picture or sound, and write F (faster) or L (slower) beside three actions to notice how these techniques develop Maya and the event.

The Festival Lantern

- ① Rain tapped the skylights as Maya hurried into the community theater. In her backpack, the paper lantern she had built for the festival bumped against her books. At the door, she stopped short. A gust of wind had blown the poster table across the lobby. "My lantern cannot get wet," she whispered. Mr. Chen, the stage manager, pointed toward the dry wings. "Set it there first," he said. "Then we can rescue the posters together."
- ② Maya placed the lantern on a wooden crate and raced after the nearest poster. It skidded beneath a row of folding chairs. She dropped to her knees. One by one, she pulled the damp corners free. The clock above the ticket booth clicked loudly. "Five minutes," Mr. Chen called. Maya gathered the last poster, but its blue tape curled away from the wall. Her fingers trembled as she pressed it flat. "Hold this, please," she said to Mr. Chen.
- ③ Mr. Chen held the poster while Maya smoothed the tape. The wind rattled the glass doors again, but the lobby was nearly ready. Warm light glowed through the lantern's cutout stars, scattering small gold shapes across the floor. A family stepped inside and looked up. "Did you make that?" a little boy asked. Maya nodded, her breath finally steady. "I made it with my class," she said. The boy smiled, and the doors opened for more guests.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 What does Maya's statement, "My lantern cannot get wet," reveal about her at that moment?

2 Which descriptive detail creates a warm, calm feeling near the end of the passage? What does it help show?

3 How does the pacing change in the second paragraph? Use two details from the passage.

4 How do Maya's dialogue and actions show that she changes from the beginning to the end?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Write a five-sentence scene in which a problem appears and is solved. Include one line of dialogue, at least two sensory description details, one short sentence to speed the action, and one longer sentence to slow an important moment.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline each line of dialogue, circle words that create a picture or sound, and write F (faster) or L (slower) beside three actions to notice how these techniques develop Maya and the event. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What does Maya's statement, "My lantern cannot get wet," reveal about her at that moment?	It shows that Maya is worried about protecting the lantern she made for the festival.
2	Which descriptive detail creates a warm, calm feeling near the end of the passage? What does it help show?	"Warm light glowed through the lantern's cutout stars, scattering small gold shapes across the floor." It shows that the lobby is ready and the earlier tension has eased.
3	How does the pacing change in the second paragraph? Use two details from the passage.	The action begins quickly when Maya "raced" after a poster, then slows as she works "one by one" and carefully presses the tape flat.
4	How do Maya's dialogue and actions show that she changes from the beginning to the end?	At first, Maya whispers worriedly about the lantern. At the end, her breath is steady and she calmly tells the boy that she made it with her class.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The lights blinked out. "Keep the door open," Maya called as the crowd murmured in the dark. She hurried toward the storage room, her shoes splashing through a thin puddle from the storm. Inside, the air smelled of dust and warm metal, and her flashlight beam rested on the silver switch while rain drummed on the roof. She flipped it, and the stage burst into yellow light.

Accept equivalent evidence-based explanations of how dialogue, description, and pacing reveal Maya's feelings or develop the event. For Part 3, look for exactly five sentences with dialogue, sensory details, a short fast-paced sentence, and a longer slowed-down moment.