

Seeds Before Noon

Study how a short narrative builds urgency and character.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.3b "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 description details, circle each line of dialogue, and put a star beside sentences that speed up or slow down the action. These choices show how the writer develops the event and the characters.

The Missing Seed Packets

- ① Rain tapped the metal roof of the community garden shed as Lila searched for the seed packets needed for Saturday's planting. The shelves smelled of damp wood and soil. Outside, volunteers waited beneath umbrellas, and the clock on the wall clicked toward noon. Lila opened one box, then another. Empty. Her fingers brushed a folded map at the back of a crate. "Why would the seeds be in here?" she whispered, pulling it free carefully.
- ② Just then, Mateo pushed through the shed door, shaking water from his yellow jacket. "The rain is getting harder," he said. "Can we start without the beans?" Lila studied the map. A blue circle marked the old tool shed near the fence. She remembered the gardener, Ms. Ortiz, saying that mice had chewed a bag last spring. "Bring the flashlight," Lila said. Mateo grabbed it, and they ran through puddles toward the fence together quickly.
- ③ The old shed stood behind a row of tomato cages, its door swollen from weeks of rain. Mateo aimed the flashlight across dusty rakes and curled hose. For one quiet second, nothing moved. Then Lila spotted a plastic bin under a bench. She lifted the lid slowly. Inside, dry seed packets were lined up beside a note: KEEP FROM MOISTURE. Mateo laughed. "Ms. Ortiz planned ahead," he said. Lila tucked the beans into her jacket and hurried back to the waiting volunteers.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 Copy two description details that help you picture the garden sheds or the weather.

2 How does Mateo’s question, “Can we start without the beans?” affect the pace of the scene?

3 How does the short sentence “For one quiet second, nothing moved” affect the moment before Lila finds the bin?

4 What do Lila’s dialogue and actions show about her character? Use one detail from the passage.

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Write an 80 to 100 word scene about solving a small problem at school or in your community. Include one line of dialogue, at least two sensory description details, and one very short sentence to control the pace.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline description details, circle each line of dialogue, and put a star beside sentences that speed up or slow down the action. These choices show how the writer develops the event and the characters. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Copy two description details that help you picture the garden sheds or the weather.	Possible answers include "metal roof," "shelves smelled of damp wood and soil," "yellow jacket," "door swollen from weeks of rain," "dusty rakes," or "curled hose."
2	How does Mateo's question, "Can we start without the beans?" affect the pace of the scene?	It makes the situation feel urgent because the volunteers are waiting and the rain is getting harder.
3	How does the short sentence "For one quiet second, nothing moved" affect the moment before Lila finds the bin?	It slows the action and creates suspense before Lila discovers the seed packets.
4	What do Lila's dialogue and actions show about her character? Use one detail from the passage.	Lila is observant and takes charge. She studies the map, tells Mateo to bring the flashlight, and finds the bin.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

At the science fair, Nia heard a faint buzzing from the model bridge on her table. The gym smelled of poster board and popcorn, and the silver wires trembled beneath the bright lights. "Do you see that?" she asked her partner, Eli. He shook his head. The buzzing grew louder. Nia held her breath, reached behind the display, and found a loose battery clip. Click. The lights steadied, and the tiny bridge glowed blue as the judges approached their table.

Accept varied annotations when students correctly identify description, dialogue, and sentences that change the pace. For the writing task, check for an original scene with dialogue, sensory description, and a deliberate pacing choice.