Pier Lantern Problem

Trace how story parts move a plot forward.

ELA.4.R.1.1 "Explain how setting, events, conflict, and character development contribute to the plot in a literary text."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline words that show the setting, circle the conflict, and number 1, 2, and 3 beside three events that move the plot forward. These details show how the problem begins and gets solved.

The Harbor Lantern

1 On the foggy evening before the harbor festival, Lena crossed the wooden pier with her grandfather's blue lantern. The wind pushed cold drops against her coat, and waves slapped the posts below. At the end of the pier, neighbors were hanging paper flags for the parade. Lena had promised to bring the lantern, which would guide the first boat into shore.

2 Then her cousin Milo raced down the pier, chasing a loose flag. He bumped Lena's elbow, and the lantern slipped from her hands. Its glass door cracked on the boards, and the flame went out. Lena wanted to scold Milo, but she saw his frightened face. The festival boat was already leaving the far dock, so there was little time to fix the problem.

3 Lena took a slow breath and asked Milo to hold the lantern steady. Using a strip from the loose flag, she tied the cracked door closed and sheltered a new candle from the wind. Milo ran to get a match from Grandfather. When the lantern glowed again, Lena waved it high. The boat turned toward the foggy pier, and Milo thanked her for giving him a job.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How does the foggy, windy harbor setting affect the plot?

2. What is the main conflict, and how does it change what Lena must do?

3. How does Lena change from paragraph 2 to paragraph 3? How does her change help solve the problem?

4. What event from paragraph 2 helps Lena solve the conflict later? Explain how it helps.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a four-sentence mini-story about a character with a problem. Include a setting that affects the problem, an event that creates conflict, and a character change that helps solve it.

ANSWER KEY

Pier Lantern Problem

GRADE 4 · ELA.4.R.1.1

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline words that show the setting, circle the conflict, and number 1, 2, and 3 beside three events that move the plot forward. These details show how the problem begins and gets solved. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How does the foggy, windy harbor setting affect the plot?	**The fog makes the lantern important for guiding the boat, and the wind makes it harder for Lena to keep the new candle lit.**
2	What is the main conflict, and how does it change what Lena must do?	**Milo bumps Lena, causing the lantern to crack and its flame to go out. Lena must repair and relight it before the boat leaves.**
3	How does Lena change from paragraph 2 to paragraph 3? How does her change help solve the problem?	**At first, Lena wants to scold Milo. Then she stays calm, asks for his help, and works with him to repair the lantern.**
4	What event from paragraph 2 helps Lena solve the conflict later? Explain how it helps.	**The loose flag helps because Lena uses a strip from it to tie the lantern's cracked door closed.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

During a hot afternoon at the community garden, Omar had to carry a basket of tomatoes to the market. When a wheel fell off his cart, the tomatoes rolled toward a muddy ditch. Omar first blamed his sister for packing the cart too full, but then he asked her to help him stack flat stones under the cart. The hot, muddy setting made the problem harder, and Omar's choice to work with his sister helped them save the tomatoes.

Accept answers that connect each story element to a plot change, not just identify the element. For the open response, accept varied realistic settings, conflicts, and resolutions if the student clearly shows how each affects the plot.