Storm Shelter Stories

Notice how nonliteral language builds meaning.

ELA.6.R.3 "Reading Across Genres"

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline three phrases that are not meant literally. Number them 1, 2, and 3, then write in the margin what each phrase helps you imagine or understand.

The Library During the Storm

1. When the power failed, Maya stood at the library window and watched the storm. Rain drummed on the roof, and the wind worried the loose sign above the door. Each flash of lightning stitched a white line across the sky. Inside, the building seemed to hold its breath. Maya had planned to finish a history project, but the dark computer screen was as useless as a map with no labels. She found the librarian, who was gathering lanterns from a supply closet.

2. "People will need a dry place to wait," the librarian said. Soon, neighbors arrived with wet coats, crying toddlers, and worried pets. Maya set out chairs while the librarian called the town office. The library's quiet rooms became a small harbor during the storm. No one sailed there, yet people could rest safely until the streets cleared. When a boy asked whether the lights would return, Maya answered, "The repair crews are working. We will know more soon."

3. At midnight, the electricity returned with a click, and the computers blinked awake. Cheers bounced from the ceiling like rubber balls. Maya looked through the window. The rain had softened to a whisper, and puddles reflected the streetlamps. She opened her history file and smiled. The project could wait until morning. Tonight, she understood that the library was more than shelves and screens. It was a steady candle for the neighborhood, bright when people needed one another.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Which phrase compares the library to a safe place during the storm?

2. What does the phrase "the building seemed to hold its breath" mean in the first paragraph?

3. How does the comparison of cheers to rubber balls contribute to the scene?

4. What does the metaphor "a steady candle for the neighborhood" reveal about the library?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write two sentences about a familiar place after a busy event. In the first sentence, use one phrase that is not meant literally. In the second sentence, explain how that phrase adds meaning.

ANSWER KEY

Storm Shelter Stories

GRADE 6 · ELA.6.R.3

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline three phrases that are not meant literally. Number them 1, 2, and 3, then write in the margin what each phrase helps you imagine or understand. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Which phrase compares the library to a safe place during the storm?	**"The library's quiet rooms became a small harbor during the storm."**
2	What does the phrase "the building seemed to hold its breath" mean in the first paragraph?	**The library was very quiet and tense as people waited during the storm.**
3	How does the comparison of cheers to rubber balls contribute to the scene?	**It shows that the cheers were lively and seemed to fill the room when the power returned.**
4	What does the metaphor "a steady candle for the neighborhood" reveal about the library?	**It reveals that the library gave people safety, comfort, and support during the outage.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

After the concert, the auditorium was a tired giant, quiet except for a few programs rustling on the floor. This comparison makes the empty room seem large and worn out after a busy event.

Accept any three correctly identified nonliteral phrases with reasonable notes about the images or ideas they create. For the open task, accept varied original phrases if the second sentence accurately explains the phrase's contribution to meaning.