The Mended Lantern

Track character interactions to infer a theme.

ELA.7.R.1 "Reading Prose and Poetry"

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline words or actions that show how Nia or Tomas responds to the lantern. Circle two details that help reveal the passage's message about family and imperfection.

Lantern Light

1. On the morning of the neighborhood lantern festival, Nia found her grandfather's brass lantern crushed beneath a box in the garage. Its paper panels had torn, and one wire rib bent inward. Nia had promised to carry it in the parade, just as her mother had when she was young. Her older brother, Tomas, glanced at the damage and said, "Use a new lantern. Nobody will notice." Nia pushed the box away and began gathering tape, thin wire, and colored paper.

2. Grandfather Eli entered carrying a tray of warm bread. When Nia showed him the lantern, he did not reach for it. Instead, he asked, "What part can still be saved?" Nia traced the unbroken metal base. Tomas snorted, but Eli handed him pliers and asked him to straighten the rib. Tomas hesitated, then knelt beside Nia. While they worked, Eli told them that the lantern mattered because their family had repaired it after every festival, not because it looked perfect.

3. By afternoon, the lantern leaned slightly, and one panel was a shade darker than the others. Nia frowned at it. Tomas lifted the lantern carefully and said, "The dark panel makes the light look warmer." Nia laughed, surprised that he had stayed to help. At the parade, their lantern cast a soft gold square on the sidewalk. Nia walked between Eli and Tomas, noticing that people watched the light, but her family watched one another.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How does Tomas's response to the damaged lantern change from the first paragraph to the last paragraph?

2. How do Eli's words and actions influence Tomas and Nia?

3. What theme does the passage develop about family traditions? Use two details from the passage to support your answer.

4. What does the final sentence suggest about how the repair affected the family?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a 4 to 6 sentence scene in which two characters respond differently to a problem, then one character changes. Use dialogue or actions to reveal a message about working together, but do not state the message directly.

ANSWER KEY

The Mended Lantern

GRADE 7 · ELA.7.R.1

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline words or actions that show how Nia or Tomas responds to the lantern. Circle two details that help reveal the passage's message about family and imperfection. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How does Tomas's response to the damaged lantern change from the first paragraph to the last paragraph?	**At first, Tomas wants Nia to use a new lantern because no one will notice. Later, he helps repair the lantern and speaks positively about its dark panel.**
2	How do Eli's words and actions influence Tomas and Nia?	**Eli asks what can be saved and gives Tomas pliers, which moves them from focusing on damage to working together to repair the lantern.**
3	What theme does the passage develop about family traditions? Use two details from the passage to support your answer.	**Family traditions gain meaning through shared care, not perfection. Eli says the lantern mattered because the family repaired it, and Tomas stays to help Nia fix it.**
4	What does the final sentence suggest about how the repair affected the family?	**It suggests that repairing the lantern brought the family closer together, because they watch one another instead of only watching the lantern.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Rosa's model bridge snapped the night before the science fair. "We should start over," Jamal said, pushing the broken pieces aside. Rosa shook her head and began sorting the strongest sticks into a new pile. Jamal studied her plan, picked up the glue, and helped her build a smaller bridge that held twice as much weight.

Accept supported theme statements about valuing family connection, shared effort, or repair over perfection. For the open task, accept 4 to 6 sentences with a clear problem, differing responses, a change in one character, and dialogue or actions that imply a message.