Garden After Rain

Analyze how word choices shape a scene's tone.

10.T.SS.2.a "Analyze how the use of figurative, connotative, and/or rhetorical language contributes to the development of meaning, tone, or mood in a wide variety of texts. (I)"

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline one figurative, connotative, or rhetorical phrase in each paragraph. In the margin, write one or two words that name the mood each phrase helps create.

After the Storm

1 By dawn, the community garden looked as if a giant had shaken it upside down. Rainwater pooled between the raised beds, and snapped sunflower stalks lay across the path like fallen flagpoles. Mara stepped through the gate with a shovel over her shoulder. The air smelled of wet soil and bruised mint. For months, neighbors had coaxed tomatoes, beans, and marigolds from stubborn ground. Now the garden seemed wounded, but not silent. A robin hopped along the fence, tilting its head at the wreckage, while gray clouds loosened above the rooftops.

2 Mr. Alvarez, who ran the corner bakery, arrived carrying a crate of salvaged wooden stakes. He studied the broken plants, then began pressing loose soil around their roots. "Could one night of wind erase all the hands that built this place?" he asked. No one answered, because the question was not really a request for words. It was a challenge. Soon, Lena gathered bent wire, and two children carried buckets from the spigot. The work was slow, yet the garden changed from a scene of defeat into a busy workshop. Mud streaked every sleeve, but no one called it a funeral.

3 By noon, sunlight poured through a break in the clouds, turning drops on the leaves into small coins. Mara tied the tallest surviving sunflowers to new stakes. Around her, neighbors spoke in short, practical bursts, but their voices had lost the earlier heaviness. The garden was still scarred. Its paths were rutted, and many seedlings would not recover. Still, fresh rows of beans stood ready beside the damaged beds. When Mara opened the gate for a visitor, she did not see a ruined plot. She saw a promise with dirt under its fingernails, waiting for the next clear day.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How does the comparison of the garden to something a giant "had shaken... upside down" shape the mood in paragraph 1?

2. What is Mr. Alvarez asking with the rhetorical question in paragraph 2, and how does it affect the tone of the paragraph?

3. Compare the connotations of "funeral" and "busy workshop" in paragraph 2. How do these phrases develop the passage's meaning?

4. What does the phrase "a promise with dirt under its fingernails" suggest about the garden and the people caring for it?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a four-sentence description of a place recovering from damage or change. Use one figurative comparison or personification and one rhetorical question to create a hopeful, determined, or uneasy tone, then explain in the fourth sentence how your language choices create that tone.

ANSWER KEY

Garden After Rain

GRADE 10 · 10.T.SS.2.a

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline one figurative, connotative, or rhetorical phrase in each paragraph. In the margin, write one or two words that name the mood each phrase helps create. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How does the comparison of the garden to something a giant "had shaken… upside down" shape the mood in paragraph 1?	**It creates an uneasy, damaged mood by making the garden seem violently disrupted and disordered.**
2	What is Mr. Alvarez asking with the rhetorical question in paragraph 2, and how does it affect the tone of the paragraph?	**He is challenging the neighbors not to let one storm destroy their shared work. The question creates a determined, action-focused tone.**
3	Compare the connotations of "funeral" and "busy workshop" in paragraph 2. How do these phrases develop the passage's meaning?	**"Funeral" suggests final loss, while "busy workshop" suggests productive effort and repair. Together, they show the garden changing from apparent defeat to recovery.**
4	What does the phrase "a promise with dirt under its fingernails" suggest about the garden and the people caring for it?	**It suggests that the garden has a hopeful future that will be built through continued hard work by the community.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

After the storm, the playground crouched beneath a quilt of branches and wet leaves. Who would believe that this muddy silence could become laughter again? Parents and students lifted splintered boards, and the swings began to shine in the afternoon sun. The personification of the playground crouching and the rhetorical question make the scene feel wounded at first, then determined and hopeful.

Accept equivalent analyses that connect a specific word, phrase, comparison, or rhetorical question to mood, tone, or meaning. For the open response, accept varied settings and tones if the student includes both required techniques and accurately explains their effect.