The Quiet Bell

Track clues from concrete detail to larger meaning.

12.P.EICC.3.f "Make, track, and support inferences about different levels of meaning within the text. (I)"

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline three details that show a change in how people value the bell. Number the details 1, 2, and 3 in the order they occur to track how the passage builds its meaning.

Harbor Bell

1 At dawn, Mara unlocked the small maritime museum before the town council arrived. On a table rested the harbor bell, green with corrosion and split along one edge. For eighty years, it had rung when fog hid the channel, warning fishing crews away from the rocks. Now a developer had offered to buy the building and replace it with a glass hotel. Mara polished the bell with a cloth, although the crack could not be repaired. Outside, workers measured the adjacent lot, their orange flags snapping in the wind.

2 Council member Reed entered with a folder of tax estimates. He praised the hotel plan as a way to keep young residents from leaving, then glanced at the bell. "A photograph in the lobby would honor the past," he said. Mara did not argue. Instead, she opened the museum's logbook to a page dated October 14, 1962. Her grandfather had written that the bell rang through a night storm until every boat returned. Reed read the entry twice. He set his folder on a chair rather than on the table, as if the bell now occupied more space than before.

3 During the public meeting, a teenager named Sol proposed moving the bell to a warehouse so construction could begin immediately. Mara asked him to hold the striker, the heavy piece that once struck the bell. Sol lifted it with both hands and fell silent. Then he suggested a different plan: restore the museum's front room as a public archive and build apartments on the unused lot behind it. The council did not vote that evening. As people left, several residents copied the date from the logbook into their phones. The bell remained quiet, but the room no longer felt like a place waiting to be cleared.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What does Mara's decision to polish the bell, even though its crack cannot be repaired, suggest about what the bell means to her? Use one detail from the passage.

2. What can you infer about how Reed's view of the bell changes after he reads the logbook entry? Cite two details that support your inference.

3. How does Sol's proposal at the end reveal a change in his understanding? Explain what caused the change.

4. What larger idea about a community's past and future does the passage suggest? Support your inference with two details.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a four-sentence museum exhibit label explaining why the harbor bell matters today. Use two details from the passage, and explain how at least one detail supports a broader meaning about the town.

ANSWER KEY

The Quiet Bell

GRADE 12 · 12.P.EICC.3.f

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline three details that show a change in how people value the bell. Number the details 1, 2, and 3 in the order they occur to track how the passage builds its meaning. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What does Mara's decision to polish the bell, even though its crack cannot be repaired, suggest about what the bell means to her? Use one detail from the passage.	**Mara sees the bell as valuable beyond its practical use. Her polishing of an irreparable bell shows care and respect for its history.**
2	What can you infer about how Reed's view of the bell changes after he reads the logbook entry? Cite two details that support your inference.	**Reed begins to see the bell as more than an obstacle to development. He reads the entry twice and moves his folder to a chair rather than placing it on the bell's table.**
3	How does Sol's proposal at the end reveal a change in his understanding? Explain what caused the change.	**Sol comes to see that preservation and new housing can coexist. Holding the heavy striker makes him pause, and he then proposes keeping a public archive while building apartments on the unused lot.**
4	What larger idea about a community's past and future does the passage suggest? Support your inference with two details.	**The passage suggests that communities can use shared history to guide change rather than erase the past. The 1962 logbook gives the bell human importance, and Sol's revised plan combines preservation with development.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The harbor bell matters today because it connects the town's safety, memory, and future choices. The 1962 logbook records that it rang until every boat returned during a storm. Residents also copied that date after the meeting, showing that the story still affects them. Together, these details suggest that preserving an object can preserve the shared experiences a community uses to decide what progress should look like.

Accept defensible inferences that move beyond literal events and are supported by accurate passage details. Students may express the broader meaning in different language, but their evidence should show how attitudes toward the bell change.