

Lanterns at Low Tide

Track how setting, symbols, and choices reveal change.

12.T.T.1.e "Effectively apply a variety of narrative techniques to develop complex character(s) who change, use setting to create mood, develop an idea or theme across the text using metaphors and symbolism, achieve specific purposes..."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline details that create the harbor's mood, circle each reference to the lantern, and number three moments that show Inez changing. Use your marks to trace how the setting and symbol develop the character and idea.

The Last Lantern

- ① By dusk, the harbor town had folded itself behind plywood shutters. Rain tapped the boarded windows of the old ferry terminal, and the tide shoved brown water against the steps. Inez stood beneath the departure board, holding her father's brass lantern by its cracked handle. She had come to sell the terminal's last working boat, not to remember him. Yet the lantern's weak flame made the empty ticket hall resemble a throat trying to speak. When a volunteer asked whether she needed help, Inez said no too quickly and turned toward the dock.
- ② At the pier, Inez found the boat's engine cover lifted and a teenage volunteer kneeling beside it. His hands shook as he admitted that he had flooded the engine while trying to move supplies. Inez almost repeated the sharp instructions her father had used on her, words that could close a room like a slammed door. Instead, she set the lantern on the railing and asked the boy what he had noticed before the engine stopped. Together they traced a loose fuel line. The rain eased to a mist, but the harbor remained black, waiting. As Inez tightened the clamp, she realized she was not repairing his mistake alone.
- ③ When the engine finally caught, its cough became a steady pulse beneath the dock. The volunteer grinned, but Inez looked at the lantern. Its flame had burned low, and for the first time she understood why her father had carried it through every storm, not as proof that he could work alone, but as a signal that someone was still waiting. She gave the lantern to the boy and told him to hold it at the bow. Then she started the boat toward the flooded streets, where neighbors waved from porches. Behind her, the terminal lights vanished in rain, yet the small brass glow traveled forward.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 How does the setting in the first paragraph create a mood of isolation and danger? Use two details from the passage.

2 Explain how Inez changes from the beginning of the passage to the end. Use her actions as evidence.

3 What does the lantern symbolize by the final paragraph? Explain how its meaning develops across the passage.

4 What does the comparison of her father's instructions to words that could "close a room like a slammed door" reveal about Inez's choice to question the volunteer instead?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Write a 180-220-word, three-paragraph scene in which a character faces a strained relationship in a setting that creates a clear mood. Use a recurring object as a symbol, include at least two metaphors, and show the character making a meaningful change through actions and dialogue.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline details that create the harbor's mood, circle each reference to the lantern, and number three moments that show Inez changing. Use your marks to trace how the setting and symbol develop the character and idea. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How does the setting in the first paragraph create a mood of isolation and danger? Use two details from the passage.	The boarded windows, brown water, rain, and empty terminal create an isolated, threatening mood.
2	Explain how Inez changes from the beginning of the passage to the end. Use her actions as evidence.	At first, Inez avoids help and wants to sell the boat without remembering her father. By the end, she collaborates with the volunteer and uses the boat to help neighbors.
3	What does the lantern symbolize by the final paragraph? Explain how its meaning develops across the passage.	The lantern comes to symbolize connection, shared responsibility, and hope. It begins as a painful link to Inez's father and ends as a signal guiding people toward help.
4	What does the comparison of her father's instructions to words that could "close a room like a slammed door" reveal about Inez's choice to question the volunteer instead?	The comparison shows that harsh words can shut down communication. Inez rejects that approach by asking the volunteer a useful question and working with him.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

At closing time, Leena unlocked the greenhouse behind her apartment building, expecting to collect the pots her mother left. Snow pressed against the glass, turning the city into a blurred charcoal drawing. On a shelf sat a blue ceramic bowl, chipped at the rim, holding one dry seed packet. Leena had avoided the place since the argument about moving away. The silent rows of benches felt like an accusation. Her mother entered carrying a watering can and did not apologize. Leena wanted to say that leaving for college did not mean abandoning her, but the sentence stayed locked behind her teeth. She filled the blue bowl with soil instead. Her mother opened the seed packet, and together they planted basil seeds, each one small as a withheld word. Water darkened the soil. The greenhouse, once a sealed jar, began to smell alive. Leena finally told her mother that she was afraid the distance would make every call feel formal. Her mother laughed softly, then admitted she had treated departure like betrayal because she feared being unnecessary. Leena moved the blue bowl to the sunny window, where its chip caught the light. It was not repaired, but it could still hold a future. Outside, snow covered the streets, while inside the first wet seeds waited beneath the soil, patient as promises.

Accept defensible interpretations that cite relevant details from the passage. For the writing task, look for a purposeful setting, a recurring symbolic object, metaphors, and an observable shift in the character's choices or understanding.