Garden Mood Shift

See how word choices guide a reader's feelings.

6.T.SS.2.a "Determine how figurative and connotative language choices contribute to meaning, mood, or tone in a wide variety of texts. (I)"

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline figurative phrases, circle words with strong positive or negative feelings, and number each place where these choices help create a mood.

After the Rain

1 On Saturday morning, Lena pushed open the gate to the community garden. Rain from the night before clung to the leaves, and the paths shone like brown ribbons. At first, the garden felt sleepy and hushed. Then Lena saw the tomato bed. Its stems lay flat in the mud, and several young plants had snapped. A heavy worry settled in her chest as she imagined the empty baskets at next week's food pantry on Tuesday.

2 Ms. Ortiz, the garden leader, did not let the damage become a gloomy cloud over the group. She handed Lena a tray of seedlings and asked neighbors to bring stakes, string, and compost. Soon, children pressed roots into the soil while adults tied weak stems upright. The garden began to wake up, one careful hand at a time. Lena noticed that the sharp smell of wet earth now seemed clean and promising. She smiled quietly.

3 By noon, the tomato bed stood in neat rows, though a few leaves still wore muddy stains. Lena looked across the garden and thought of the morning's silence. Now the place buzzed with shovels, voices, and the tap of water against metal cans. The storm inside her had eased into a small, bright spark. When the first ripe tomatoes appeared weeks later, Lena carried a full basket to the pantry, feeling proud of what the neighborhood had grown together.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What does the comparison “like brown ribbons” suggest about the garden paths? How does it add to the mood at the beginning?

2. What does the phrase “a gloomy cloud over the group” mean? How does this phrase show the feeling the group could have had?

3. How do the words “clean and promising” change the feeling of the wet earth for Lena?

4. In paragraph 3, what does the narrator mean by “The storm inside her had eased into a small, bright spark”? How does this figurative language show a change in Lena's feelings?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a four-sentence scene about a place changing from disappointing to hopeful. Use one comparison with like or as and at least two connotative words, then name the mood your word choices create in the fourth sentence.

ANSWER KEY

Garden Mood Shift

GRADE 6 · 6.T.SS.2.a

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline figurative phrases, circle words with strong positive or negative feelings, and number each place where these choices help create a mood. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What does the comparison “like brown ribbons” suggest about the garden paths? How does it add to the mood at the beginning?	**It suggests the wet paths look long, smooth, and brown. It helps create a quiet, calm mood.**
2	What does the phrase “a gloomy cloud over the group” mean? How does this phrase show the feeling the group could have had?	**It means the damage could have made everyone feel discouraged or sad. “Gloomy cloud” gives the problem a negative, heavy feeling.**
3	How do the words “clean and promising” change the feeling of the wet earth for Lena?	**They make the wet earth seem fresh and full of possibility instead of unpleasant. The words help create a hopeful mood.**
4	In paragraph 3, what does the narrator mean by “The storm inside her had eased into a small, bright spark”? How does this figurative language show a change in Lena's feelings?	**Lena's strong worry has become a small feeling of hope. The image changes the mood from troubled to hopeful.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The empty playground looked gray after the rain. Then sunlight slipped through the clouds like a golden flashlight. Laughter returned, and the bright swings seemed cheerful instead of lonely. My word choices create a hopeful mood.

Accept reasonable explanations that connect a figurative or connotative choice to meaning, mood, or tone. For Part 3, check for four sentences, a comparison using like or as, at least two connotative words, and a stated mood.