

# Storm at the Garden

Notice how a writer builds suspense and brings a scene to a close.

**6.T.T.1.e** “Apply narrative techniques to enhance writing, engage audiences, and achieve specific purposes. (C)”

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

## 1 READ AND MARK \_\_\_\_\_ Read it twice

**YOUR JOB** Circle each line of dialogue, underline two sensory details, and number 1, 2, and 3 beside three actions that slow the most tense moment. These techniques help the writer create suspense and relief.

### The Rolling Pot

- ① At the community garden, Maya carried a tray of bean seedlings toward the tool shed. Gray clouds pressed low over the fence, and the air smelled like wet pavement. Then a hard gust tipped the tray. Tiny pots skidded across the gravel. “Catch them!” Maya called. Her brother Leo dropped his watering can and ran. One pot rolled toward the open gate, where rainwater already rushed along the curb. Maya chased it, her shoes crunching sharply behind her.
- ② Leo reached the gate first, but the pot bounced past his fingers. Maya stopped. She saw the small plant teeter at the curb's edge. Water curled around the pot, pulling loose gravel with it. “I have it,” Leo said, stretching flat on the sidewalk. He inched one hand forward, then another. Maya held her breath. His thumb touched the rim. He grabbed the pot and lifted it before the current could carry it into the storm drain.
- ③ Inside the shed, Maya set the rescued pot beside the others. Rain drummed on the metal roof, but the beans stood upright in their dark, damp soil. Leo wiped mud from his sleeve and laughed. “Next time, we carry the tray together,” he said. Maya nodded, feeling the tight knot in her stomach loosen. By saving one small plant, they had protected the work their garden club had done all spring. Outside, the storm kept roaring, yet the shed felt safe and warm.

## 2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE Use the passage

1 How does Leo's line, "I have it," affect the tense scene?

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2 Choose one sensory detail that helps you picture or hear the storm. Explain the effect it creates.

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3 Which actions slow down the moment before Leo saves the pot? How does this pacing build suspense?

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4 How does the final sentence create a feeling of relief? Use the contrast in the sentence in your answer.

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## 3 YOUR TURN Your own words

Write a six-sentence narrative about a small problem that becomes tense and is solved. Include one line of dialogue, two sensory details, and three actions that slow down the most important moment so the reader feels suspense and then relief.

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**PART 1 • READ AND MARK**

Circle each line of dialogue, underline two sensory details, and number 1, 2, and 3 beside three actions that slow the most tense moment. These techniques help the writer create suspense and relief. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

**PART 2 • ANSWERS**

| # | QUESTION                                                                                                 | ANSWER                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|---|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | How does Leo's line, "I have it," affect the tense scene?                                                | <b>It gives Maya and the reader a brief feeling of hope while the pot is still in danger.</b>                                                                                                        |
| 2 | Choose one sensory detail that helps you picture or hear the storm. Explain the effect it creates.       | <b>Answers may cite details such as "the air smelled like wet pavement," "shoes crunching sharply," or "Rain drummed on the metal roof." These details make the storm feel real and add tension.</b> |
| 3 | Which actions slow down the moment before Leo saves the pot? How does this pacing build suspense?        | <b>Leo stretches flat, inches his hands forward, and touches the rim before grabbing the pot. The small, separate actions make the reader wait to see whether he will save it.</b>                   |
| 4 | How does the final sentence create a feeling of relief? Use the contrast in the sentence in your answer. | <b>The storm is still "roaring" outside, but the shed feels "safe and warm," showing that the danger has passed for Maya and Leo.</b>                                                                |

**PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)**

During art club, I carried our paper-mache bridge to the display table. The hallway smelled of glue, and rain tapped against the windows. Suddenly, one support bent with a soft crack. "Hold the other side," Nia whispered. I set down my paintbrush, slid my hands under the bridge, and lifted it slowly. When the bridge stayed whole, we laughed and carried it together.

Accept supported responses that identify how dialogue, sensory details, pacing, or contrast affects the reader. For Part 3, accept varied situations if the response has six sentences and includes all required narrative techniques.