Before the Doors Open

Trace how a narrator sets the scene and connects events.

C.7.3.b "Engage the reader by establishing a context and point of view and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline details that show when and where the story begins, and circle the first mention of the narrator and another character. Number three actions that lead from the accident to the sale opening.

The Book Sale

1 At nine on Saturday, the library basement smelled like old paper and cinnamon rolls. I had promised Ms. Vega that my friend Eli and I would set up the book sale before the doors opened at ten. Eli stacked mysteries while I arranged the handwritten price signs. I wanted our table to look perfect, mostly because Ms. Vega had trusted us without checking every move. Then a draft slammed the side door. Three signs slid under a shelf, and Eli jumped, bumping a stack of books onto the floor.

2 I crawled under the shelf for the signs, but two had torn in half. Without those signs, shoppers would not know what some books cost. Eli spotted small pencil marks inside each front cover, numbers Ms. Vega had written the night before. I asked her what they meant. "Prices in dollars," she said, pointing to a two inside a mystery. I found spare paper at the checkout desk while Eli gathered the scattered books into neat piles. We had only minutes to replace the signs.

3 I wrote new signs as Eli checked the pencil marks, then we placed each book beside its price. Just as I set down the last cookbook, the first shoppers gathered at the basement door. Ms. Vega opened it, and an older man picked up a mystery. I expected her to notice the crooked signs, but she thanked us for keeping the sale on schedule. Eli grinned at me over a pile of books. The table was not perfect, yet every shopper could find a price without asking.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What do the opening details tell you about the setting and the narrator's goal?

2. How does the narrator's point of view help you understand why the accident matters to them?

3. Why does Eli's discovery come after the signs tear, and how does it change what the characters do next?

4. How does the ending connect to the goal established at the start?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write one paragraph of five or six sentences about a small problem you and another character solve. Establish when and where it happens, tell the story from your point of view, and show at least three connected actions that lead to an outcome.

ANSWER KEY

Before the Doors Open

GRADE 7 · C.7.3.b

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline details that show when and where the story begins, and circle the first mention of the narrator and another character. Number three actions that lead from the accident to the sale opening. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What do the opening details tell you about the setting and the narrator's goal?	**It is Saturday morning in a library basement. The narrator wants the book sale ready before the doors open at ten.**
2	How does the narrator's point of view help you understand why the accident matters to them?	**The narrator says they want the table to look perfect because Ms. Vega trusted them, so the accident threatens a goal that matters to them personally.**
3	Why does Eli's discovery come after the signs tear, and how does it change what the characters do next?	**The torn signs leave some books without visible prices. Eli finds pencil marks inside the covers, which lets the characters write replacement signs.**
4	How does the ending connect to the goal established at the start?	**The sale opens on schedule, and shoppers can find prices. The table is not perfect, but the narrator and Eli have met their main goal.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

At the school garden on Thursday afternoon, I found a seedling tipped out of its pot after a gust of wind. My friend Talia held the small plant while I gathered the spilled soil. Because the pot was cracked, we found a spare one in the shed. Talia filled it with soil, and I settled the seedling inside. We pressed soil gently around its roots and set the pot on a low shelf. When our teacher came to collect us, the seedling stood upright, and I felt relieved.

Accept different sets of three numbered actions if they follow the passage's cause-and-effect sequence. For the writing task, look for a clear first-person narrator, an established setting and character, and actions that lead logically to the outcome.