The Painted Star

Use story details to support what you know and what you infer.

RL.8.1 "Cite relevant textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two details that state what the characters do, and circle two details that help you infer how they feel; use your marks to support your answers.

The Bridge in Blue

1 On the first Saturday after the old footbridge closed for repairs, I met Dad at the barricade. He carried a tin of blue paint and two brushes. "The town says they'll replace the boards in spring," he said, tapping the rail where my sister June had once carved a crooked star. June had moved three states away in August. I wanted to ask why we were painting a bridge nobody could cross, but Dad was already spreading newspaper beneath the rail.

2 The paint smelled sharp in the cold air. Dad dipped his brush, then paused at June's star. "She always put it where people had to look twice," he said. I remembered how June hid jokes in the margins of my math notes, and I pressed my glove against the carving. A cyclist stopped at the barricade and asked when the bridge would reopen. Dad told him about the spring repairs, but his brush stayed in his hand until the cyclist rode away.

3 At first I made slow, careless strokes along the lower rail. Then I noticed Dad leaving a narrow square of bare wood around the star. I took the smaller brush and painted the corners so the blue would frame it without covering a line. When we finished, the bridge was still blocked, and the star was easier to spot from the path. Dad snapped a picture and sent it to June. Before we left, I asked him to send me a copy, too.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What does the story say about why people cannot cross the bridge? Cite a detail from the text.

2. What can you infer about how Dad feels when he sees June's star? Support your inference with a detail from the story.

3. How does the narrator's attitude toward painting the bridge change? Use one detail from the beginning and one from the end.

4. What does the story suggest about June's personality? Support your inference with a detail about something she did.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Invent a new title that hints at what the bridge means to the family. In three sentences, explain your title using two specific details from the story.

ANSWER KEY

The Painted Star

GRADE 8 · RL.8.1

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two details that state what the characters do, and circle two details that help you infer how they feel; use your marks to support your answers. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What does the story say about why people cannot cross the bridge? Cite a detail from the text.	**The bridge is closed for repairs. The narrator says it "closed for repairs," and Dad says the town will replace its boards in spring.**
2	What can you infer about how Dad feels when he sees June's star? Support your inference with a detail from the story.	**He misses June or is thinking fondly of her. He pauses at the star and recalls how she placed it where people had to look twice.**
3	How does the narrator's attitude toward painting the bridge change? Use one detail from the beginning and one from the end.	**The narrator is reluctant at first, wondering why they are painting a bridge nobody can cross and making careless strokes. Later, the narrator carefully paints around June's star and asks for a copy of its photo.**
4	What does the story suggest about June's personality? Support your inference with a detail about something she did.	**June seems playful or clever. She hid jokes in the margins of the narrator's math notes.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

I would title the story "The Star That Stays." Dad paints around June's carving instead of covering it, which suggests he wants to keep a memory of her close while she lives far away. He sends June a photo of the painted bridge, so she can share in what they made.

Accept reasonable inferences supported by relevant story details. For Part 3, look for a title that suggests a meaning beyond the repair work and an explanation that uses two specific details.