# Lines Left Visible

Use background knowledge and story details to test an inference.

**RL.9-10.10** "Routinely and flexibly develop and apply background knowledge along with a variety of comprehension strategies to understand and analyze grade-appropriate, complex literary text independently."

NAME _____ DATE _____

## 1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

**YOUR JOB** Underline two details that help you infer why Mara hesitates, circle a detail that complicates your first inference, and number two moments that show how her thinking changes.

### The Doorframe

1 The first Saturday after the river fell, Mara found three pencil lines on the community hall's doorframe. Her grandfather had drawn the lowest before she was born; each line had a year beside it. The new line, still dark, reached above the brass handle. Inside, volunteers stacked dry chairs for the winter market. Outside, Mr. Bell rolled a bucket of white paint across the porch. "The hall has to look ready," he told Mara. She touched the highest line with one finger, then looked toward the street, where damp cardboard still leaned against a trash bin.

2 Mara had spent the week carrying ruined books out of the hall. She knew the river could rise again, but Mr. Bell had a point: the market paid for repairs, and nobody wanted to shop in a room that smelled of mud. When he offered her a brush, she painted the wall beside the door. At the frame, she stopped. Her grandfather used to say the lines were not warnings from the past but instructions for the future. Mara had laughed at that, because a pencil mark could not lift a chair or close a road.

3 By noon, the porch was bright enough to make the wet street look older than the hall. Mr. Bell climbed down from his ladder and held out the smaller brush. Mara laid it across the bucket instead. She took her phone from her pocket, photographed the three lines, and copied their dates and heights onto the back of a market flyer. Then she painted around the frame, leaving a narrow strip of bare wood. When the first shoppers arrived, one paused at the doorway and asked what the marks meant. Mara set down her brush before she answered.

## 2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What does the newest line's position above the door handle suggest about the flood? Use another detail from the story to support your inference.

2. What did Mara once think about the pencil lines? Which later actions suggest she has reconsidered?

3. Why is painting the hall not simply a bad choice? Explain using two details from the story.

4. How does Mara's decision to set down her brush before answering the shopper deepen the meaning of her choice to leave the frame unpainted?

## 3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a 70 to 100 word scene from Mr. Bell's point of view just after the shopper asks about the marks. Include a detail from the story, his assumption about what makes a public space welcoming, and a moment when he reconsiders it.

ANSWER KEY

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HIGH SCHOOL · RL.9-10.10

## PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two details that help you infer why Mara hesitates, circle a detail that complicates your first inference, and number two moments that show how her thinking changes. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

## PART 2 · ANSWERS

| # | QUESTION | ANSWER |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | What does the newest line's position above the door handle suggest about the flood? Use another detail from the story to support your inference. | **The water rose high enough to cause serious damage. Mara carried ruined books out of the hall.** |
| 2 | What did Mara once think about the pencil lines? Which later actions suggest she has reconsidered? | **She thought the lines were not useful because they could not prevent damage. She later records their dates and heights and leaves them visible.** |
| 3 | Why is painting the hall not simply a bad choice? Explain using two details from the story. | **The winter market pays for repairs, and a muddy room might keep shoppers away.** |
| 4 | How does Mara's decision to set down her brush before answering the shopper deepen the meaning of her choice to leave the frame unpainted? | **Leaving the marks visible preserves them; stopping to answer suggests Mara also wants people to understand what they record.** |

## PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Mr. Bell watched the shopper stop at the doorway. He had wanted a clean entrance because the winter market would pay for repairs. A frame striped with flood lines might make the hall look unfinished. Yet Mara had painted beside it and left the dates visible. “The river came that high,” he said, surprised that he was the one explaining. Perhaps a public place did not have to hide every sign of damage to welcome people back. The shopper studied the lines, then stepped inside.

Accept inferences that distinguish what the story states from what a reader can reasonably conclude. For the scene, accept a different reaction from Mr. Bell if it fits his stated concern about the market and shows him reconsidering an assumption.