

The Locked Gate

Notice how a narrator and character draw readers into a scene.

6W3.a “Engage the reader by introducing a narrator and/or characters.”

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Circle the words that introduce the narrator. Underline the words that introduce Mr. Bell, then write 1, 2, and 3 beside three details that make either character interesting to a reader.

A Key at Willow Park

- ① At 6:15 on Saturday morning, I pedaled my bike to Willow Park with a key rattling in my pocket. My name is Tessa Morales, and I had promised my grandfather I would open the community garden before the seedling sale. Fog curled around the fence. Then I saw Mr. Bell, the garden keeper, standing beside the locked gate. His red raincoat was soaked, and his hands searched every pocket. “Tessa,” he called, “I cannot find the gate key.”
- ② I stopped beside him and held up my key. Mr. Bell's worried face relaxed, but a sharp clatter came from inside the garden. We both stared through the iron bars. “That sounds like a raccoon,” he said. I knew he was trying to sound calm. Mr. Bell had taught me how to plant tomatoes, yet he always asked someone else to move a spider. I pushed the key into the lock while he stepped behind me.
- ③ The gate swung open, and a gray raccoon scrambled from beneath the potting bench. It carried a paper bag of sunflower seeds in its mouth. Mr. Bell yelped, then laughed so hard that his rain hood slipped over his eyes. I laughed too. Together, we watched the raccoon squeeze through a gap in the fence and disappear into the fog. “We need a stronger latch,” I said. Mr. Bell nodded and handed me a small toolbox. The sale could wait ten minutes.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 Who is the narrator? What words introduce the narrator by name?

2 What phrase tells Mr. Bell's role? Name two details that help you picture him at the gate.

3 What goal does Tessa state in the first paragraph? How does this goal help begin the scene?

4 Which detail reveals something about Mr. Bell's personality? What does that detail suggest about him?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Write a five-sentence opening for a real or imagined story. Introduce yourself as the first-person narrator and introduce one other character. Include the narrator's name, an immediate goal or problem, and one specific detail that helps readers picture the other character.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Circle the words that introduce the narrator. Underline the words that introduce Mr. Bell, then write 1, 2, and 3 beside three details that make either character interesting to a reader. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Who is the narrator? What words introduce the narrator by name?	The narrator is Tessa Morales. The words are "My name is Tessa Morales."
2	What phrase tells Mr. Bell's role? Name two details that help you picture him at the gate.	He is "the garden keeper." He wears a soaked red raincoat, and his hands search every pocket.
3	What goal does Tessa state in the first paragraph? How does this goal help begin the scene?	Tessa plans to open the community garden before the seedling sale. Her goal gives a reason for her to be at the locked gate and makes the problem matter.
4	Which detail reveals something about Mr. Bell's personality? What does that detail suggest about him?	Mr. Bell teaches Tessa to plant tomatoes but asks someone else to move a spider. This suggests that he knows gardening well but is afraid of spiders.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

My name is Devon Lee, and I had ten minutes to return a lost library book before the rain started. At the library door, my cousin Marisol waited with her bright yellow umbrella and a worried frown. She had found the book under the bus seat, but its cover was dripping. "We can dry it," I said, although I was not sure how. Marisol pulled me inside, and we hurried toward the return desk.

Accept answers that cite accurate words or details from the passage and explain how those details introduce or reveal a character. For the writing task, accept varied settings and characters if the response has five sentences and clearly introduces a first-person narrator, another character, and an immediate goal or problem.