

Lights Out, Voices Up

Interpret figurative language and allusions using story details.

7L5.a "Interpret figurative language, including allusions, in context."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each figurative phrase or allusion in the passage. In the margin, number each mark and write its meaning in one or two words.

The Concert Blackout

- ① On the evening of the school concert, rain hammered the auditorium roof. Twenty minutes before the first song, the lights blinked out. In the dark, Maya gripped her music folder and listened to the crowd murmur. The room became a sleeping giant, holding its breath. Mr. Chen, the band director, clicked on a flashlight. Its narrow beam cut through the darkness like a silver needle. "Stay with your groups," he said, while volunteers hurried to find the custodian.
- ② Then the emergency generator rumbled awake, but it could power only a few lamps. Maya's friend Luis raced down the hall to tell the choir about the change of plans. He was a modern Paul Revere, carrying news instead of riding a horse. Backstage, Maya watched the singers arrange themselves near the lit exit sign. Their voices rose softly, and hope spread through the auditorium. The audience's worried whispers melted away as the first melody filled the room.
- ③ When the concert ended, the principal thanked everyone for adapting. Maya thought the performers had shown Herculean patience. They had waited quietly, changed their positions, and sung without the usual microphones. Outside, the rain had slowed to a drizzle. Families stepped into the cool air, talking about how the unexpected darkness had made them listen more closely. Maya tucked her folder under her arm. The night had begun as a storm, but it ended as a shared story.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 What does the phrase “the room became a sleeping giant, holding its breath” suggest about the auditorium after the lights went out?

2 What does the comparison of the flashlight beam to “a silver needle” help you picture?

3 What does calling Luis “a modern Paul Revere” suggest about what he did?

4 What does “Herculean patience” mean in this situation? Use one detail from the paragraph to support your answer.

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Write a four-sentence scene about an unexpected problem. Use one figurative comparison and one allusion, underline both, and make the fourth sentence explain what one of them means.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline each figurative phrase or allusion in the passage. In the margin, number each mark and write its meaning in one or two words. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What does the phrase “the room became a sleeping giant, holding its breath” suggest about the auditorium after the lights went out?	The auditorium was very still and quiet as people waited anxiously.
2	What does the comparison of the flashlight beam to “a silver needle” help you picture?	It helps the reader picture a thin, bright beam cutting through the dark.
3	What does calling Luis “a modern Paul Revere” suggest about what he did?	It suggests that Luis quickly carried important news to warn or inform the choir about the changed plans.
4	What does “Herculean patience” mean in this situation? Use one detail from the paragraph to support your answer.	It means the performers showed extraordinary patience. They waited quietly, changed positions, and sang without the usual microphones.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

At dawn, the bus stop was an island in the fog. Nia searched like Sherlock Holmes, studying muddy footprints near the bench. She discovered that a dog had dragged its leash through a puddle. The Sherlock Holmes allusion means that Nia observed clues carefully.

Accept figurative interpretations that fit the surrounding details, even if students use different wording. For the allusion, accept an explanation that connects Luis to urgently sharing news or connects Herculean to unusually great patience.