

Small Choices

Study how a personal moment becomes a focused story.

7W4 “Create a poem, story, play, art work, or other response to a text, author, theme, or personal experience.”

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline every use of the word *bench* in the three paragraphs. Notice how repeating one concrete detail helps the writer hold a personal moment together.

The Bench at 4:15

- ① At 4:15, I found a blue mitten on the bench outside the library. Rain tapped the roof, and the parking lot shone like a dark mirror. I almost carried the mitten to the lost-and-found box, but its wet thumb pointed toward the bus stop. I set it on the bench beside me instead. For ten minutes, I watched students hurry past, each one clutching a backpack or phone. The mitten waited, bright as a small flag.
- ② Then a second grader ran around the corner, crying so hard that he could not speak. His older sister searched the sidewalk, calling, “Eli, check your pockets.” I lifted the mitten from the bench. The boy grabbed it, pressed it to his cheek, and finally laughed. His sister thanked me, but I had done almost nothing. As their bus pulled away, the bench looked ordinary again. Still, the empty space beside me seemed warmer than before.
- ③ That evening, I wrote this scene in my notebook because I wanted to remember the choice to pause. In the story, the blue mitten becomes more than clothing. It represents the small chances people have to notice one another. The bench appears at the beginning, middle, and end to hold the moment in one place. I do not say that helping matters. Instead, the boy’s laugh and the warmer empty space show what that quiet choice meant.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 What small event does the writer turn into a scene in the notebook?

2 What object becomes a symbol in the story, and what does it represent?

3 How does repeating the bench help the writer shape the scene?

4 Which two details show the meaning of the narrator’s quiet choice without directly stating a lesson?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Write a 70-100 word scene based on a small moment from your own life. Repeat one concrete object at least twice, include one sensory detail, and show why the moment matters without directly stating the lesson.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline every use of the word *bench* in the three paragraphs. Notice how repeating one concrete detail helps the writer hold a personal moment together. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What small event does the writer turn into a scene in the notebook?	The writer turns the moment of finding Eli's blue mitten and returning it to him into a scene.
2	What object becomes a symbol in the story, and what does it represent?	The blue mitten becomes a symbol for small chances to notice and help other people.
3	How does repeating the bench help the writer shape the scene?	The bench appears at the beginning, middle, and end, keeping the moment focused in one place.
4	Which two details show the meaning of the narrator's quiet choice without directly stating a lesson?	The boy's laugh and the warmer empty space beside the narrator show the meaning of the choice.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Yesterday, I waited after practice while my father finished work. A crushed paper cup rolled across the empty gym floor each time the heater started. I wanted to leave it there, but I picked it up and found the recycling bin. When Dad arrived, he noticed the cup was gone and asked why I was smiling. I shrugged, listening to the heater hum. The quiet gym did not feel quite as lonely.

Accept equivalent descriptions of the event, symbol, repeated setting detail, and implied message. For the open response, check for a personal scene, a repeated concrete object, a sensory detail, and an implied meaning.