

Compass at Dusk

Trace how dialogue and events shape a character's choice.

8R3 "In literary texts, analyze how particular lines of dialogue or events propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision. (RL) In informational texts, analyze how individuals, events, and ideas are introduced..."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each line of dialogue or event that changes what happens next, circle words that reveal a character's thoughts or values, and number the three most important action-changing moments in order.

The Last Ferry

- ① At the harbor museum, Mina sorted weathered logbooks for an exhibit opening the next morning. Her grandfather, a retired ferry captain, had loaned the museum a brass compass found in his old locker. When Mina lifted it, a folded note slipped out. It said, "Return this before the tide turns." The note was signed by Elias Venn, the captain who disappeared during a storm forty years earlier. Museum director Ms. Cole called from the office: "Lock up when you finish."
- ② Mina hurried to the pier and found her grandfather checking ropes on the last ferry of the day. "Elias Venn was blamed for abandoning passengers," he said after reading the note. "But he saved us by steering toward the rocks." Mina pointed to the compass. "Then why hide this?" Her grandfather looked toward the darkening water. "Because the compass could lead people to the wreck, and the wreck holds proof that he was innocent." A foghorn sounded, and crew members began pulling in the ramp.
- ③ Mina remembered Ms. Cole's instruction, but she also noticed the tide sliding toward the harbor mouth. She gave the compass to her grandfather. "We can reach the wreck before dark if we use the ferry's old route," she said. He hesitated, then called to the crew, "Wait one minute." Mina ran aboard with a museum flashlight and the note. As the ferry pulled away, she understood that finding the wreck might change not only Elias Venn's story, but her grandfather's silence about that storm.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 How does the note from Elias Venn introduce the main problem Mina faces?

2 What does the grandfather's statement that Elias "saved us by steering toward the rocks" reveal about him? Use one detail from the passage.

3 Which line of dialogue most directly leads Mina to choose to board the ferry? Explain how it affects her decision.

4 How do the foghorn and the crew pulling in the ramp propel the action?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Write a three-sentence scene about a character who hears one important line of dialogue and then makes a decision. Include the dialogue, the decision, and an action that moves the scene forward.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline each line of dialogue or event that changes what happens next, circle words that reveal a character's thoughts or values, and number the three most important action-changing moments in order. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How does the note from Elias Venn introduce the main problem Mina faces?	The note connects the compass to Captain Venn's disappearance and urges action before the tide turns, creating a mystery Mina must investigate.
2	What does the grandfather's statement that Elias "saved us by steering toward the rocks" reveal about him? Use one detail from the passage.	It reveals that he was present during the storm and knows Venn may have been wrongly blamed. His knowledge suggests he has kept an important secret.
3	Which line of dialogue most directly leads Mina to choose to board the ferry? Explain how it affects her decision.	Her grandfather says that the compass can lead people to the wreck, where proof of Elias's innocence may be found. This gives Mina a reason to reach the wreck before dark.
4	How do the foghorn and the crew pulling in the ramp propel the action?	They create urgency because the ferry is about to leave. This pushes Mina and her grandfather to decide quickly whether to take the ferry to the wreck.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The librarian said, "The flood will ruin the town records unless someone moves them tonight." Jalen chose to stay after closing, even though he had promised to meet his brother. He grabbed empty boxes and ran toward the basement stairs as rain struck the windows.

Accept equivalent explanations that connect a specific line or event to a later action, decision, or character trait. For Part 3, accept any original three-sentence scene with dialogue, a clear decision, and a resulting action.