

The Missing Folder

Notice how a writer builds a tense moment through narrative techniques.

8W3.b "Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, and reflection to develop experiences, events, and/or characters."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each line of dialogue, circle two sensory details, and number three places where the action slows down or a character reflects. These choices show how the writer develops the event and Maya's character.

After the Storm

- ① Rain hammered the library windows as Maya tugged the last drawer of the card catalog. Her history club had promised to display letters from the town's first factory workers, but the box of copies was missing. Dust coated her fingertips, and the brass handle bit into her palm. "Check the return cart," Jonah said, holding his phone light over the narrow aisle. Maya listened to the storm and the clock's uneven tick, wondering whether their exhibit would open with an empty case.
- ② Jonah crouched beside the cart and lifted a stack of atlases. One slipped, thudding onto the tile. Under it lay a blue folder, swollen at the corners. "There," he whispered. Maya reached for it, then stopped. The label read Mill Street Oral Histories, yet a dark streak crossed the paper. For a second, neither of them spoke. Maya imagined the careful voices on the recordings, people describing long shifts and hot machines. If rain had ruined the pages, those voices might fade again.
- ③ "The folder is dry," Jonah said, opening it only a crack. Inside, the pages smelled of old paper and cedar. Maya laughed once, sharply, then pressed the folder to her chest. The clock kept ticking, but now each beat seemed to push them forward. "We can still set up," she said. As they hurried toward the display case, Maya realized the exhibit was more than an assignment. Saving these stories felt like making room for the workers in the town's memory.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 What does Jonah's line, "The folder is dry," show about the problem, and how does it move the event forward?

2 Which two moments in paragraph 2 slow the pacing before Jonah says the folder is dry? What uncertainty do they create?

3 Choose one sensory detail from the passage. What mood or feeling does that detail create?

4 What does Maya realize in the final sentence? Explain how this reflection develops her character.

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Write a 6 to 8 sentence scene about finding and returning an important lost item. Include dialogue, one sensory detail, a pause that slows the action, and a final reflection about why the moment matters.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline each line of dialogue, circle two sensory details, and number three places where the action slows down or a character reflects. These choices show how the writer develops the event and Maya's character. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What does Jonah's line, "The folder is dry," show about the problem, and how does it move the event forward?	It shows that the papers were not ruined by rain. It resolves the immediate worry and lets Maya and Jonah begin setting up the exhibit.
2	Which two moments in paragraph 2 slow the pacing before Jonah says the folder is dry? What uncertainty do they create?	Maya "reached for it, then stopped," and "For a second, neither of them spoke." These pauses build uncertainty about whether rain damaged the folder and how the characters will react.
3	Choose one sensory detail from the passage. What mood or feeling does that detail create?	Possible answer: "the pages smelled of old paper and cedar" creates a feeling that the documents are old, preserved, and valuable.
4	What does Maya realize in the final sentence? Explain how this reflection develops her character.	Maya realizes that preserving the workers' stories matters beyond earning a grade. Her reflection shows that she values the town's history and feels responsible for honoring it.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

At the bus stop, I spotted a silver key ring beneath the bench. "That looks like Mr. Lee's," my sister said, pointing to the tiny guitar charm. I bent down slowly while cold rain darkened the concrete around my shoes. For a moment, I held the keys and pictured him searching the parking lot after practice. Then a bus sighed at the curb, and I ran toward the school office. When Mr. Lee opened his hand for the keys, I understood that a small choice could rescue someone's whole afternoon.

Accept accurate references to the passage and reasonable explanations of how dialogue, pacing, description, or reflection affects the scene. For the writing task, look for all four required techniques used to develop a clear event and character response.