

When Plans Shift

Notice how a narrator builds tension, action, and insight.

9-10W3b "Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, reflection, and plot line(s) to develop experiences, events, and/or characters."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each line of dialogue, circle each reflection, and number 1, 2, and 3 beside the beginning, problem, and outcome of the event to trace how the narrative develops.

The Silent Rover

- ① At 6:40, the auditorium smelled of dust and hot cables. I stood behind the curtain with the prototype rover balanced in both hands, listening to the judges settle into their seats. "Battery check," Maya whispered. I tapped the indicator. One green light blinked, then went dark. My throat tightened. For six weeks, our team had treated this moment like a finish line, but the silent rover made me realize how quickly a plan can become a problem in front of everyone who had come to watch us.
- ② Maya pulled a spare battery from her backpack, but its connector was too wide. The announcer said our school's name. Once. Then again. Each second seemed to stretch as I searched the worktable: tape, screws, a bent paper clip. "Use the adapter from the charger," I said. Maya froze, then sprinted to the outlet. I remembered my grandfather repairing radios at his kitchen table, patient even when a tiny part rolled away. Waiting could be work, he used to say. That memory steadied my hands.
- ③ The adapter clicked into place just as the announcer reached the final syllable of our name. Maya slid beneath the curtain, breathing hard, and handed it to me. "Go," she said. I set the rover on the taped course. Its wheels shuddered, caught, and moved forward. The room was suddenly very quiet, then loud with applause when it lifted the foam block. We did not win first place, but as Maya and I carried the rover home, I understood that the project had changed us before the judges ever scored it.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 How does the dialogue in the first paragraph help develop the problem?

2 Copy one detail from paragraph 2 that slows the pace. Explain how that detail builds tension.

3 What does the narrator's memory of the grandfather reveal, and how does it affect the narrator during the crisis?

4 How does the final reflection show that the narrator has changed because of the event?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Write a 90-120 word scene about a plan that suddenly fails. Use at least one line of dialogue, sensory description, a slowed-down moment of action, and a final reflection that shows what the narrator learns.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline each line of dialogue, circle each reflection, and number 1, 2, and 3 beside the beginning, problem, and outcome of the event to trace how the narrative develops. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How does the dialogue in the first paragraph help develop the problem?	Maya's "Battery check" leads the narrator to test the rover, revealing that the battery has failed just before the presentation.
2	Copy one detail from paragraph 2 that slows the pace. Explain how that detail builds tension.	Possible detail: "The announcer said our school's name. Once. Then again." The short sentences make the waiting feel longer and increase the pressure.
3	What does the narrator's memory of the grandfather reveal, and how does it affect the narrator during the crisis?	The memory reveals that the grandfather was patient while solving problems. It steadies the narrator's hands and helps the narrator keep working instead of panicking.
4	How does the final reflection show that the narrator has changed because of the event?	The narrator realizes that the project mattered even without winning because the team changed through facing the problem together.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Rain hammered the bus shelter as I opened my portfolio and saw the empty plastic sleeve. "My sketch is gone," I said. Lena checked the sidewalk while I flipped through every page, faster each time. The wet air smelled like pavement and diesel, and my fingers shook against the paper. Then I remembered leaving the drawing under the library scanner. We ran back through the rain, our shoes splashing at each curb. Inside, the librarian held up my sketch. I laughed so hard I had to lean on the desk. I had thought preparation meant packing everything, but it also meant retracing my steps when plans failed.

Accept equivalent evidence-based explanations for the four questions. In the student scene, look for a clear event sequence and purposeful use of dialogue, pacing, description, and reflection.