Signals in Italics

Read a model scene and track three uses of italics.

8.5.W.10 "Students will use underlining or italics to indicate titles of works, thoughts in narratives, and words in a foreign language."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the italicized titles of works, circle the italicized private thoughts, and number the italicized Spanish words in the order they appear.

The Lighthouse Light

1 On Thursday, our school library smelled of cardboard and fresh paint. My friend Luz and I were building a tiny harbor for the reading festival. A paper lighthouse stood beside a painted backdrop called *Harbor at Dawn*. Luz had also made a booklet, *Signals After Dark*, with stories about sailors finding their way home. I was in charge of a small battery-powered light inside the lighthouse. When I switched it on, nothing happened. *What if the light stays dark during the festival?* I thought.

2 Luz noticed my frown and said, "*Tranquilo*, take it one step at a time." She uses that Spanish word when she wants me to stay calm. I checked the switch, then the battery case. The battery had slipped out of place, so I pressed it against the metal contact and tried again. This time the lighthouse glowed. *One loose battery nearly fooled me*, I thought. Luz whispered "*despacio*" as we carried the model across the room, and we walked slowly enough to keep the cardboard waves from bending.

3 At the festival, visitors stopped to read *Signals After Dark* while the lighthouse shone beside it. One student pointed at *Harbor at Dawn* and asked whether the orange streaks were sunrise. Luz nodded and explained how she had mixed yellow and red paint. A younger child leaned toward the model, and I moved the light closer so the painted boats were easier to see. *They are noticing all the little details*, I thought. Before we packed up, Luz told me, "*Gracias* for checking the light."

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Which two titles are italicized in the passage? What kind of work does each title name?

2. Copy the narrator's italicized thought from before the light works. How can you tell it is a thought rather than spoken dialogue?

3. Which italicized Spanish word means to move slowly? What does its formatting tell the reader?

4. Why are *They are noticing all the little details* and *Gracias* both italicized, even though they have different roles in the scene?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a four- to five-sentence scene about preparing for a different school event. Include an original title of a work, one private thought, and one word from a language other than English, using italics for all three and making their roles clear from context.

ANSWER KEY

Signals in Italics

GRADE 8 · 8.5.W.10

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the italicized titles of works, circle the italicized private thoughts, and number the italicized Spanish words in the order they appear. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Which two titles are italicized in the passage? What kind of work does each title name?	***Harbor at Dawn*** **names a painted backdrop.** ***Signals After Dark*** **names a booklet.**
2	Copy the narrator's italicized thought from before the light works. How can you tell it is a thought rather than spoken dialogue?	**"What if the light stays dark during the festival?" The narrator follows it with "I thought," and it is not presented as spoken dialogue.**
3	Which italicized Spanish word means to move slowly? What does its formatting tell the reader?	***despacio*****. The italics show that it is a word from a language other than English.**
4	Why are *They are noticing all the little details* and *Gracias* both italicized, even though they have different roles in the scene?	**The first is the narrator's private thought.** ***Gracias*** **is a Spanish word Luz says aloud.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Before the school science fair, I set my booklet, *Seeds in the City*, beside our tray of bean sprouts. One label slid off the tray. I thought, *The visitors might mix up the sprouts.* My cousin said *listo*, the Spanish word for ready, after we taped the label back on.

For Part 1, accept markings of both appearances of each title, all three thoughts, and the Spanish words numbered *Tranquilo*, *despacio*, *Gracias*. In Part 3, check that each italicized item has the role required by the prompt.