

Light Beyond Walls

Trace how setting, symbols, and change shape a scene.

11.T.T.1.e “Effectively apply a variety of narrative techniques to develop complex character(s) who change, use setting to create mood, develop an idea or theme across the text using metaphors and symbolism, achieve specific purposes...”

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Read this original classroom fiction. Underline two setting details that create mood. Circle the EXIT sign when it appears, and mark any one detail in paragraph 2 that complicates Mara's anger.

The Last Showing

- ① By the time Mara reached the shuttered Rialto, rain had turned the sidewalks into black mirrors. Demolition would begin the following week, and her father, its last projectionist, had asked her to collect his tools. She had agreed only because refusing would invite another argument. Inside, damp velvet breathed out the smell of dust and old perfume. A single red EXIT sign glowed above the lobby. Mara gripped the brass key he had left on the counter, wishing it opened a door to somewhere else.
- ② Her father stood in the projection booth. “Your mother filmed this after the last show one night,” he said, lifting a small reel from a box of home movies. Mara remembered those nights: waiting in the back row while he finished work. He threaded the reel and handed her a flashlight to find the switch beside the doorway. Its beam was a narrow bridge between them. Onscreen, Mara at seven slept against his shoulder in the empty auditorium. His coat covered her, and his hand shielded her eyes from the light. This single image did not erase all the evenings he had missed at home. Yet it made her old account of those years less certain.

- ③ When the film snapped, the screen went dark. Her father set the broken strip beside the key. “I should have come home earlier,” he said. Mara looked back through the booth doorway toward the red EXIT sign. It no longer seemed only an order to leave; it was an ember in a house she had thought entirely cold. She placed the key in his palm, then picked up the reel. “Show me how to mend it,” she said. They still had boxes to pack, and more to say. For now, she stayed beside him while he found the splicing tape.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE Use the passage

- ① How do two details in paragraph 1 establish mood before Mara speaks to her father?

- ② Why is Mara's reaction to the home movie more complex than simply forgiving her father?

- ③ Compare what the EXIT sign means to Mara at the beginning and end.

- ④ Explain the “narrow bridge” metaphor and how Mara's final choice develops the same idea.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a 120–150 word scene in three short paragraphs about meeting someone after a strained relationship. Use setting to create mood, repeat one concrete object as a symbol, include at least one metaphor and show a believable change in attitude through action. The relationship need not become perfect.

Paragraph 1

Establish the meeting, mood and initial attitude.

Paragraph 2

Introduce an action or discovery that complicates the character's view.

Paragraph 3

Show a believable choice; return to the symbolic object.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Read this original classroom fiction. Underline two setting details that create mood. Circle the EXIT sign when it appears, and mark any one detail in paragraph 2 that complicates Mara's anger. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How do two details in paragraph 1 establish mood before Mara speaks to her father?	The rain-dark sidewalks, damp velvet, dust and lone red sign suggest neglect and an uneasy ending. Accept two precise details with an explanation of their effect.
2	Why is Mara's reaction to the home movie more complex than simply forgiving her father?	She sees evidence of his care, but explicitly recognizes that one image does not erase his absences. Her certainty softens while the hurt remains.
3	Compare what the EXIT sign means to Mara at the beginning and end.	It first suggests escape from an unwanted visit. Later she compares it to an ember in a cold house, suggesting warmth or connection may remain.
4	Explain the "narrow bridge" metaphor and how Mara's final choice develops the same idea.	The beam is directly described as a bridge, suggesting a possible connection. Staying and asking to mend the film extends that possibility through a shared action; the relationship is not fully repaired.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

At the bus station, Devon held his grandmother's blue umbrella shut. Rain rattled the roof. After three years of unanswered calls, he had agreed to meet her, but the room was a locked box of things he could not say.

She arrived carrying his favorite sesame rolls. "I should have listened," she said. Devon studied the umbrella's crooked handle, still wrapped in the green tape she had used when he was small. He had remembered her criticism so clearly that he had almost forgotten those walks home. Neither memory canceled the other.

Outside, he opened the umbrella over both of them. "Tell me about the trip," he said. He was not ready to discuss everything. But he slowed his steps to match hers and moved the handle between them.

TEACHER ASSESSMENT NOTES

The model has three short paragraphs. “The room was a locked box” is a metaphor; rain and the enclosed station establish tension. The umbrella moves from something held shut to shared shelter, while Devon remains uncertain. Accept other supported interpretations. Assess setting, recurring symbol, an actual metaphor and a credible action showing change within 120–150 words.