

Shelter in Stories

Read how narrative details reveal a place's changing meaning.

12.P.EICC.2.a “Share real or imagined experiences by interpreting and constructing texts that tell or include stories. (I/C)”

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Read this original classroom fiction. Underline three details that show the library becoming more than a place to borrow books. Circle the final sentence of each paragraph to trace the narrator's changing understanding.

The Library After the Storm

- ① At 6:12 on the first Monday after the storm, the library's front doors opened without their familiar bell. I was shelving returns when rainwater slid under the threshold and pooled around my shoes. Outside, the streetlights were dark, but a line of neighbors curved past the bike rack. They carried flashlights, thermoses, and folded camping chairs. Mr. Alvarez, who usually complained about late fees, held a cardboard sign that read, “Phone charging upstairs.” I understood then that people had not come for books alone. They had come looking for a room that still felt connected to the rest of the city.
- ② By noon, the children's room had become a quiet station for news. A nurse taped a handwritten map beside the puppet theater, showing where ice and bottled water were being distributed. My supervisor asked me to read aloud the city's emergency updates, then translate the confusing parts into ordinary language. Each time the power flickered, everyone looked toward the windows. When it failed completely, a teenager named Nia placed her battery lantern on the circulation desk. Its small blue light made the overdue notices and library cards seem briefly important, as if keeping track of one another were also a kind of shelter.

- ③ Near closing, the generator outside coughed to life. The ceiling lights returned, and I restarted a public computer. A man in a soaked suit stood by the history shelves, staring at a photograph of an old river flood. “My grandmother was here for that,” he said, though he did not seem to be speaking to me. I found an oral-history recording in the archive and played it for him on the computer. An elderly voice described strangers passing soup through a church window. Before leaving, the man copied the recording's title onto a damp receipt. I realized that stories could preserve more than a record of damage. They could give frightened people accounts of others who had endured, helped, and begun again.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

- ① What new purpose does the narrator recognize for the library in paragraph 1? Use one detail from the paragraph to support your answer.

- ② How does Nia's lantern help develop the story's idea of shelter in paragraph 2?

- ③ What does the man copying the oral-history title onto his receipt suggest about why the recording matters to him?

- ④ How does the narrator's understanding of stories change from paragraph 1 to paragraph 3?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a 180-220 word, three-paragraph narrative about a real or imagined experience when a familiar place took on a new meaning during a problem, change or community event. Include at least two sensory details, one recurring object that carries meaning, and a final sentence explaining what the experience revealed to the narrator.

Write your scene

Write three paragraphs. Leave a blank line between them; choose where each paragraph ends.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Read this original classroom fiction. Underline three details that show the library becoming more than a place to borrow books. Circle the final sentence of each paragraph to trace the narrator's changing understanding. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What new purpose does the narrator recognize for the library in paragraph 1? Use one detail from the paragraph to support your answer.	The narrator sees the library as a place for connection after the storm, not only for books. Neighbors bring flashlights and chairs, and Mr. Alvarez offers phone charging upstairs.
2	How does Nia's lantern help develop the story's idea of shelter in paragraph 2?	The lantern gives light during the outage and makes ordinary library materials seem important. It suggests that shared care and organization can provide shelter.
3	What does the man copying the oral-history title onto his receipt suggest about why the recording matters to him?	It suggests that he wants to keep or find the story again because it connects his grandmother's experience to the present emergency.
4	How does the narrator's understanding of stories change from paragraph 1 to paragraph 3?	The narrator first recognizes the library as a place of practical connection. By the end, the narrator sees that stories can also connect people across time through accounts of endurance and help.

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

On the morning our apartment building lost heat, I crossed to the laundromat because its windows glowed across the street. Usually I hurried past, bothered by the warm, soapy air escaping through the door. Inside, dryers thumped and wet coats steamed over chairs. Mrs. Chen gave me tea. A child sat nearby drawing yellow windows on a sheet of paper. I moved my cup away so it would not spill on her picture.

At noon my father arrived with bread. He had found no space heaters at the shops, but at least we could share lunch. Mrs. Chen brought extra chairs. Someone offered a phone charger; another neighbor helped an older man contact his daughter. The child added people to her drawing, carefully joining their hands. Nobody had planned a gathering. Still, we stayed and made room for each person who entered.

That evening, our building manager called to say the heat was working again. Before leaving, I saw the drawing taped beside the laundromat door, now labeled “Warm place.” I had first protected it from a spilled drink; now I stopped to study who it held together. The next week, I waved through the window instead of hurrying past. I understood that a familiar room could become a promise to look after one another.

TEACHER ASSESSMENT NOTES

Accept supported interpretations, with relevant passage evidence. The model uses three paragraphs, sensory details (soapy air, thumping dryers), and a recurring drawing whose meaning develops from a child's project to a record of shared care. Its final sentence reflects on the experience. Accept real or imagined narratives meeting all components and 180-220 words. The library events and oral history are invented for this classroom story, not attributed historical records.