

Journey, Storm, Seed

Analyze how an epic hero, a quest structure, and a theme work together.

ELA.9.R.1.4 "Analyze the characters, structures, and themes of epic poetry."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Read this original classroom poem in three numbered stanzas. It uses epic conventions in a short free-verse episode; it is not an excerpt from a historical epic. Underline character-revealing choices, circle the invocation and two supernatural interventions, and mark two details that support a theme.

Song of the Seed Jar

- ① Sing, Memory, of Asha, bearing the sealed seed jar,
three days beyond the city and its wells of dust.
Behind her, towers dwindled to a broken crown;
ahead, the ravine opened its black mouth.
Her brother's plea still tugged against her cloak.
She ran toward Namar, where the hidden spring was kept,
counting each footfall as a promise she could carry,
though no hand from the city held her own.
- ② Ilyra rose, a wind with a woman's voice:
Give me the seeds; your wells will fill by morning,
but your brother's name will vanish from the city songs.
Asha shut her fingers on the jar's rough lip.
No, she said; the goddess shattered the last bridge.
Like a hawk that folds its wings against a gale,
Asha bent, tied her cloak around a cedar,
and lowered herself where thunder hid the river.

- ③ At dawn the lion of Namar unbarred the spring.
Scatter what you carry, said the lion; let it grow.
Asha broke the seal, and water followed scattered seeds,
threading the dry channels down toward home.
At the gate she raised her hand; no victory sword was there.
She called for shovels, and her brother brought the first.
Then neighbors crossed the threshold bearing tools and grain;
the furrows lengthened farther than her single shadow.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

- ① Compare Asha's isolation in stanza 1 with her action at the gate in stanza 3. What change in her role do these details suggest?

- ② How do the invocation and the opening after the journey has begun establish an epic mode of storytelling?

- ③ How does Ilyra's bargain test more than Asha's physical courage? Explain what Asha risks by refusing it.

- ④ How do the final two lines develop a theme? Connect their image to an earlier part of the quest.

In 90 to 110 words, analyze how the quest's structure connects Asha's character to a theme. Use evidence from all three stanzas, including the supernatural test and the final image. Explain the connections rather than only retelling events.

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 poem in three numbered stanzas. It uses epic conventions in a short free-verse episode; it is not an excerpt from a historical epic. Underline character-revealing choices, circle the invocation and two supernatural interventions, and mark two details that support a theme. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Compare Asha's isolation in stanza 1 with her action at the gate in stanza 3. What change in her role do these details suggest?	She travels without another hand to help her in stanza 1. At the gate she calls others to work, and her brother and neighbors join. She moves from carrying the task alone toward organizing shared recovery.
2	How do the invocation and the opening after the journey has begun establish an epic mode of storytelling?	The appeal to Memory gives the quest a formal, remembered significance. Beginning three days into the journey places readers amid a dangerous mission rather than showing all its preparation; the threatened city gives the quest communal stakes.
3	How does Ilyra's bargain test more than Asha's physical courage? Explain what Asha risks by refusing it.	The bargain offers public relief at the cost of erasing her brother's remembered identity. Refusing shows that she will not accept that sacrifice for an easy success; she loses the bridge and must attempt a dangerous crossing.
4	How do the final two lines develop a theme? Connect their image to an earlier part of the quest.	The neighbors' tools and furrows extending beyond one shadow suggest that lasting recovery needs more than one hero. This contrasts with Asha traveling alone and carrying every promise herself earlier. Accept other text-supported themes about courage, belonging and shared effort.

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The journey tests what Asha will accept as victory. At first she carries the city's hopes alone, with her brother's plea pulling against her mission. Ilyra then offers relief at the price of erasing his name. Asha's refusal makes the quest a test of loyalty as well as bravery, because it costs her the safe crossing. The return changes the pattern: she calls others to work instead of displaying a conqueror's weapon. Furrows extending beyond her shadow suggest that recovery exceeds one person's achievement. The departure, trial and shared return develop a theme of courage joined to community.

This is original classroom free verse using epic conventions, not a claim of historical authorship or a complete long epic. Stanzas and authored verse lines must remain visible. Invocation, an already-started communal quest, supernatural intervention, a test and a return are relevant conventions; a simile is a language device, not by itself a narrative structure. Asha's brother survives and joins the final work; she rejects the proposed erasure of his name. The magical water belongs to the poem's fictional world. Accept supported interpretations, and require analysis linking structure, character and theme rather than a new composition or a plot-only summary.