

Light Before Storm

Trace how causes and clues build a plot.

10.RL.1.B “Analyze how authors structure texts to advance the plot, explaining how each event gives rise to the next or foreshadows a future event.”

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline and number three events that form a defensible cause-and-effect chain. Draw arrows and explain each link in a few margin words. Circle one earlier clue that prepares for a later event; several choices can be justified. A clue need not cause the event it foreshadows.

The Observatory Tag

- ① On the morning of the town’s annual lantern parade, Mara climbed the hill to open her grandfather’s closed observatory. She wanted its brass telescope for the school display, but the dome door would not move. A cold wind slipped through a crack and set a loose metal tag tapping against the frame. The tag read, “Turn the east wheel before sunset.” Mara pocketed it, assuming it was an old instruction left by her grandfather. Below the hill, volunteers hung paper lanterns across Main Street, and the mayor tested the parade’s battery-powered lights. Dark clouds gathered beyond the river, though nobody paused their work.
- ② At lunch, Mara showed the tag to Mr. Vale, the school custodian. He recognized the east wheel as the control that once opened the dome. Because the wheel was frozen with rust, Mara borrowed his oil can and worked until it turned. The dome swung aside, revealing the telescope and a hand-cranked signal lamp on a stand. Beside the lamp lay her grandfather’s note: “If the parade loses power, send light from the hill.” Mara tested the lamp, then angled the observatory’s old mirror toward Main Street. Thunder rolled closer over the river.

- ③ Just as the parade began, wind blew the first lantern string sideways, and rain swept over Main Street. The battery-powered lights flickered once and went out, leaving marchers and spectators in darkness. Mara remembered the note, raced up the hill, and directed two volunteers to crank the signal lamp. Its beam struck the old mirror, which she had aimed toward the street that afternoon. The reflected light lit the parade route until the storm passed. Later, Mara realized the tapping tag had not merely opened a door. It had placed a working lamp within reach before the blackout.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

- ① How does finding the metal tag give rise to Mara's actions in the second paragraph?

- ② Choose one clue that foreshadows the blackout or its solution. Explain the later event it prepares readers for, using details from both points.

- ③ Explain how Mara's work with the east wheel and mirror makes the solution in the last paragraph possible.

- 4** Why does the author end with Mara's realization about the tag? Explain how that ending changes the reader's understanding of the opening.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Create a four-event outline for an original community-event story. Make each event cause the next through a character's response. Plant a clue in Event 1 that gains meaning in Event 4. After the outline, explain one causal link and one foreshadowing link; distinguish the two.

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 is no handwriting or other markings on the paper.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline and number three events that form a defensible cause-and-effect chain. Draw arrows and explain each link in a few margin words. Circle one earlier clue that prepares for a later event; several choices can be justified. A clue need not cause the event it foreshadows. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How does finding the metal tag give rise to Mara's actions in the second paragraph?	The tag leads Mara to ask Mr. Vale about the east wheel, oil the frozen wheel, and open the observatory dome.
2	Choose one clue that foreshadows the blackout or its solution. Explain the later event it prepares readers for, using details from both points.	The grandfather's note about power loss prepares readers for the blackout and the lamp's use. The clouds and thunder also foreshadow the storm. Accept another defensible clue if the student explains the later payoff; foreshadowing does not mean the clue caused the storm.
3	Explain how Mara's work with the east wheel and mirror makes the solution in the last paragraph possible.	Turning the wheel opens the dome and reveals the signal lamp. Aiming the mirror toward Main Street allows the lamp's beam to reflect onto the parade route.
4	Why does the author end with Mara's realization about the tag? Explain how that ending changes the reader's understanding of the opening.	The ending makes the tag more than an old instruction for obtaining a telescope. It links the opening obstacle to the later discovery and use of the lamp, emphasizing preparation and the connected structure of the plot.

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

1. While preparing a reading-night display, Imani finds a faded map marked “Spare stories: blue chest.” 2. Curious about the note, she follows the map to the chest and finds children’s scripts. 3. Reading the scripts gives her the idea to invite younger children to perform them. 4. Because she organizes a rehearsal, the children present those stories at reading night and explain the old chest’s label.

Finding the scripts causes Imani to propose and organize a performance. The label “Spare stories” foreshadows the scripts’ later use. The clue’s meaning is fulfilled at the ending, while the causal chain works through Imani’s choices.

Accept different three-event chains when every arrow names a supported causal connection. Do not require a unique set of annotations. Weather clues prepare for the storm but do not cause it; the tag, oiling and opened dome form one strong chain. The open model’s discovery leads to an idea, rehearsal and performance. Assess the explicit causal explanation and foreshadowing payoff separately.