

Beacon at the Reef

Track cause and effect, character contrast, and audience speech in a short play.

10.RL.1 “Key Ideas and Plot Details Analyze the development of universal themes (e.g., survival of the fittest, coming of age, power of love) prevalent in world literature (e.g., short stories, poems, plays, novels...)”

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline any three details that cause or foreshadow later events; number your choices in plot order. Circle Nia's two direct addresses and Bako's aside. In your answers, distinguish what the scene states from what you infer.

The Harbor Lamp

- ① [A moonlit dock in an invented coastal town. This is an original classroom scene.] Nia sees a fishing boat beyond the reef as clouds cover the moon. She runs to the signal tower, but her uncle Bako blocks the stairs. “The council forbids anyone to light the beacon before dawn,” he says. Nia answers, “My brother is on that boat.” Bako points to the tower’s frayed rope. “Pull it, and the old lamp may fall.” He exits to fetch the council. Alone, Nia turns to the audience: “If I obey, I may lose him. If I act, I may harm us all.” The rope snaps softly above her.
- ② Bako returns carrying a council sash, yet no council members follow him. “They will decide soon,” he says. Nia knots her headscarf around the broken rope, making a rough loop. Bako catches her wrist. “Your brother chose the water. Do not risk the town for one person.” Aside to the audience, Bako whispers, “When my father drowned, I promised never to challenge the sea again.” Nia frees her hand. “I am not challenging the sea. I am warning those upon it.” She climbs. Below, a gust swings the unlit lamp toward the rocks.

- ③ Nia reaches the platform as the boat drifts closer to the reef. The repaired rope holds long enough for her to raise the lamp to the platform. She lights its wick from a sheltered candle. The lamp shines across the water, and the boat changes course toward the harbor. Bako rushes up after her, carrying a second lantern. “I feared loss so much that I nearly caused it,” he says. Nia faces the audience. “Love is not only keeping someone near. It is choosing what may keep many people safe.” As dawn arrives, village bells answer from shore, and Bako helps her secure the lamp before the next storm.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

- ① What universal theme does the scene develop? Explain how Nia’s choices or words develop that theme.

- ② Trace the warning, broken rope, repair and light in plot order. What does the text state about the boat, and what can you infer about the light’s effect?

- ③ How is Bako a foil to Nia? Explain how their contrast affects the theme.

4 How do Bako’s aside and Nia’s direct addresses to the audience contribute to the play’s effect?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Create a short scene in a different setting. Include a protagonist, a contrasting foil, an aside or direct address, and an event that causes or foreshadows a later event. Then analyze how your choices develop a universal theme.

Write the scene

Write 6-8 dramatic entries. Each entry is one speaker's turn or one bracketed stage direction; an entry may wrap over more than one writing line. Label speakers and the aside/direct address.

Explain the theme

Write exactly two sentences explaining how the character contrast and the causal or foreshadowing link develop your theme. Refer to specific entries in your scene.

Compare with world drama

Antigone, by Sophocles (ancient Greek tragedy, about 442 BCE; abridged classroom adaptation of R. C. Jebb's English translation). Context: King Creon forbids burial of Antigone's brother, whom he views as an enemy. She honors her brother despite the ban. Adapted dialogue: CREON: An enemy is never a friend, even after death. ANTIGONE: I am here to share love, not hatred. CREON: Then go love them among the dead. No woman will rule me while I live. In 3-4 sentences, compare how this ancient Greek dialogue and the original classroom scene develop a theme about care and authority. Use one specific detail from each and explain how the character contrasts produce a similarity or difference.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline any three details that cause or foreshadow later events; number your choices in plot order. Circle Nia's two direct addresses and Bako's aside. In your answers, distinguish what the scene states from what you infer. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What universal theme does the scene develop? Explain how Nia's choices or words develop that theme.	The scene develops the theme that love can require courageous action for the safety of others. Nia risks climbing the tower to warn the boat, and she says love means choosing what may keep many people safe.
2	Trace the warning, broken rope, repair and light in plot order. What does the text state about the boat, and what can you infer about the light's effect?	Bako warns that the frayed rope may fail; it snaps; Nia repairs it, raises the lamp and lights it. The text states that the lamp shines and the boat changes course toward the harbor. It suggests the crew responds to the light, but does not directly state that they see it or reach safety.
3	How is Bako a foil to Nia? Explain how their contrast affects the theme.	Bako is Nia's foil because his fear makes him want to wait and avoid risk, while Nia acts to warn the boat. Their contrast shows that love can mean facing fear to protect others.
4	How do Bako's aside and Nia's direct addresses to the audience contribute to the play's effect?	Bako's aside reveals that his fear comes from his father's drowning, so the audience understands his motives. Nia's direct addresses reveal her difficult choice and later state the theme directly to the audience.

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Seven-entry model scene.

[At a community hall. The emergency exit gate is stuck.]

Lina: A storm is coming. People need a clear route home.

Tomas: Someone else can fix it. Let us leave now.

Lina [aside to audience]: Leaving is easy, but these neighbors helped us yesterday.

[She calls the caretaker, who unlocks the gate.]

Tomas: Now everyone can leave safely. I will guide them.

Lina: We can protect one another if we act together.

Two-sentence analysis. Lina's concern for her neighbors contrasts with Tomas's initial wish to leave, developing the theme that responsibility can grow from care for others. Her call causes the gate to open, while the aside reveals her motive and Tomas's change shows that care can spread.

TEACHER ASSESSMENT NOTES

Accept supported themes, including courage, responsibility and care overcoming fear. Valid ordered annotations include the frayed-rope warning, snap, scarf repair, lamp raising and lighting; other justified causal or foreshadowing details also count. Do not require a unique set. Nia addresses the audience in paragraphs 1 and 3; Bako's aside is in paragraph 2. Count dramatic entries, not typeset line wraps. The supplied modern-English adaptation of *Antigone* makes the comparison self-contained. Sample comparison: Both works contrast care for family with resistance from an authority figure. *Antigone* insists on loving her brother while Creon threatens death, whereas Nia acts to protect her brother and others despite Bako's objections. Creon's response sharpens the conflict, while Bako changes and helps Nia, showing that similar themes can develop through different character outcomes. Accept other supported comparisons; do not infer the complete plot from this short excerpt. Adaptation source: Sophocles, *Antigone*, translated by R. C. Jebb, Internet Classics Archive, classics.mit.edu/Sophocles/antigone.html (public-domain translation; the three-turn Creon-*Antigone* exchange beginning with the claim that a foe cannot become a friend). The student dialogue modernizes and abridges Jebb; it is not a verbatim quotation. The source dates the play to 442 BCE; the exact ancient date is approximate. The Harbor Lamp is an original modern classroom scene, not a historical cultural document.