Signal in the Fog

Compare how print and film shape the same suspenseful scene.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.7.7 "Compare and contrast a written story, drama, or poem to its audio, filmed, staged, or multimedia version, analyzing the effects of techniques unique to each medium (e.g., lighting, sound, color, or camera focus and angles in a film)."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline details about the written story, circle details about the film, and number each film technique that affects the mood or shows Mara's feelings.

The Last Signal: Story and Film

1. In the written story "The Last Signal," Mara rows through thick fog to reach a lighthouse after hearing its warning bell stop. The narrator stays close to Mara's thoughts: she worries that ships may strike the rocks, yet she remembers her grandfather teaching her to listen for waves. Readers imagine the fog and decide how frightening the silence feels. The story reveals the lighthouse only when Mara touches its cold stone wall, making the building seem hidden and uncertain at first.

2. The film version begins differently. Before Mara appears, a wide camera shot shows black water and a small lighthouse beam sweeping across the screen. Blue-gray color and low drumbeats make the storm feel dangerous right away. When Mara hears the bell stop, the sound cuts out completely. Instead of giving her thoughts, the camera moves close to her clenched hands on the oars. Viewers infer her fear from her face, the music, and the dark water around her boat during the crossing.

3. At the lighthouse, both versions show Mara finding a fallen rope that has jammed the bell. In the story, she pulls the rope while the fog lifts slowly, and the narrator says she feels "small but steady." The film saves a close-up for the final moment: Mara's hand pulls the rope, then the bell rings over a bright orange sunrise. This camera focus, sound, and color make the ending feel more immediate and hopeful, while the written words emphasize Mara's private change.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How does the written story show Mara's fear, and how does the film show it differently?

2. Compare how the two versions first reveal the lighthouse. What effect does each choice create?

3. Name two film techniques that make the storm feel dangerous, and explain their effect.

4. How do the written and filmed endings create different effects? Use one detail from each version.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Read this new classroom story excerpt: “Mara felt her hands tighten on the oars. What if the ships could not see the rocks? She remembered Grandfather’s calm voice and kept rowing.” Teacher reads the exact excerpt aloud with a brief pause after the question and a slower, steadier final sentence. Listen without looking, then reread. In two sentences, compare print’s access to thoughts with one actually heard pacing choice and its effect. Then retain the exactly three-sentence original story/film plan with two film techniques and a different effect; use another sheet if needed.

ANSWER KEY

Signal in the Fog

GRADE 7 · RL.7.7

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline details about the written story, circle details about the film, and number each film technique that affects the mood or shows Mara's feelings. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How does the written story show Mara's fear, and how does the film show it differently?	**The story tells Mara's worries and memories through narration. The film shows her clenched hands and face and uses music and dark water so viewers infer her fear.**
2	Compare how the two versions first reveal the lighthouse. What effect does each choice create?	**The story waits until Mara touches the wall, making the lighthouse seem hidden and uncertain. The film shows the lighthouse beam in an opening wide shot, establishing the setting immediately.**
3	Name two film techniques that make the storm feel dangerous, and explain their effect.	**The blue-gray color and low drumbeats make the storm feel dangerous right away. A wide shot of black water also makes the setting seem threatening.**
4	How do the written and filmed endings create different effects? Use one detail from each version.	**The written ending says Mara feels "small but steady," emphasizing her private change. The film uses a close-up, ringing bell, and orange sunrise, making the ending feel immediate and hopeful.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Observed comparison: The printed question directly tells me Mara's worry. The heard pause makes that worry linger, while the slower ending suggests steadiness.
Three-sentence film plan: In a written story, a boy opens an old map and wonders whether it will lead him home. In a film, a tight camera shot shows the torn map while a single violin note rises and green light glows from the paper. The written version lets readers share his question, while the film makes the discovery feel magical and urgent.

Accept accurate comparisons that use details from the passage and explain how a medium choice affects mood, information, or characterization. For the open task, accept any original three-sentence response that includes writing, at least two film techniques, and a clear comparison of effects. Teacher actually reads the supplied newly authored classroom excerpt with the prescribed pacing, repeating if needed. Require an observed two-sentence print/audio comparison separately from the three-sentence film plan. Accept supported different impressions. The passage's film descriptions remain analysis scaffolds, not a supplied actual film.