When Shadows Shift

Trace how a problem changes a performance and its storyteller.

6.RL.3 "Explain how the plot of a story or drama progresses through its series of events and analyze how characters respond or change as the story moves towards its resolution."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Circle three events that change the direction of the performance, then underline how Tessa responds to each one.

The Story Without a Speaker

1 On the night of the library's story festival, Tessa arranged her paper silhouettes behind a white sheet. She had practiced every move of her grandfather's tale about a fox crossing the sea. Her partner, Malik, offered to tell one part aloud, but Tessa shook her head. "The recording has his real voice," she said, checking the speaker again. When the audience took its seats, rain rattled the windows. Tessa pressed play. Halfway through the first scene, the lights flickered, and the speaker fell silent.

2 Tessa jabbed the play button, then checked the cord, though the room had gone dark. A child near the front asked if the story was over. Tessa's hands shook; without the recording, she feared she could not tell the story well enough. Malik pulled a flashlight from his bag and aimed it at the sheet. A bright fox appeared, but he couldn't remember what came next. Tessa knew the tale by heart. She took a breath and began to speak.

3 At first, Tessa copied her grandfather's voice exactly. Then the flashlight slipped, and the fox's shadow stretched across the ceiling. The children gasped, so Tessa changed the next line: the fox had found a giant wave. Malik tilted the light to make the wave rise, and Tessa gave him a turn at the ending. When the lights returned, nobody asked for the recording. Tessa packed the speaker away and asked Malik if they could make a new story together for the next festival.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How does Tessa's decision to use the recording make the speaker's failure a problem for her?

2. How does Tessa's response change between the speaker falling silent and Malik shining his flashlight?

3. How does the slipping flashlight change the performance, and how does Tessa react differently than she did when the speaker stopped?

4. How does Tessa's choice at the end show a change from her choice at the beginning?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine Malik's flashlight goes out just as Tessa begins speaking. In five or six sentences, show how Tessa reacts, what she and Malik do next, and how their choices bring the performance to a new ending that shows whether Tessa has changed.

ANSWER KEY

When Shadows Shift

GRADE 6 · 6.RL.3

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Circle three events that change the direction of the performance, then underline how Tessa responds to each one. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How does Tessa's decision to use the recording make the speaker's failure a problem for her?	**She has planned to use her grandfather's recorded voice instead of telling the tale herself, so she fears she cannot perform well when the speaker stops.**
2	How does Tessa's response change between the speaker falling silent and Malik shining his flashlight?	**She first tries to fix the speaker and shakes with worry. Once Malik lights the sheet, she takes a breath and begins telling the tale herself.**
3	How does the slipping flashlight change the performance, and how does Tessa react differently than she did when the speaker stopped?	**The fox's shadow stretches across the ceiling. Instead of trying to fix the problem, Tessa turns the unexpected shadow into a giant wave in the story.**
4	How does Tessa's choice at the end show a change from her choice at the beginning?	**At first she refuses Malik's offer to tell part of the tale. By the end, she gives him a turn and asks him to create a new story with her.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

When Malik's flashlight went out, Tessa reached for the silent speaker, then stopped. She knew her grandfather's tale by heart, even without the shadows. She asked Malik to make wave sounds by tapping the table while she told the fox's journey. Soon the children joined in, and Tessa invited one of them to decide where the fox landed. Their choices led the fox to a surprising new island. After the applause, Tessa thanked Malik for helping her turn the failed puppet show into a shared story.

Accept different circled turning points if students connect each event to a supported response from Tessa. For Part 3, look for a new sequence of connected events and a clear sign of whether Tessa now accepts help or returns to working alone.