# The Beat Goes On

Trace how a story's ending grows from its events.

**6.W.3.e** "Provide a conclusion that follows from and/or reflects the narrated experiences or event (when appropriate to the genre)."

NAME _____ DATE _____

## 1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

**YOUR JOB** Underline the two sentences at the end that show how the narrator's thinking changes. Circle two earlier moments that help explain that change.

### The Missing Drum

1 On Friday afternoon, our class lined up backstage for the school talent show. I was in charge of the drumbeat that started our dance. I had practiced it so often that my hands tapped the pattern on my lunch tray. Then I opened the instrument case. The drum was gone. Someone had moved it while clearing the hallway, and the custodian was still searching. Behind the curtain, the audience began to clap for us. My classmates looked at me, waiting for the first beat.

2 I wanted to ask the teacher to skip our turn. Instead, I remembered how our shoes had squeaked in time during rehearsal. I whispered, "Follow my feet," and stepped twice on the wooden floor. Mara joined me, then the rest of the class. The sound was softer than a drum, but it filled the quiet stage. When the music started, we kept the rhythm with our steps. Once, I lost the pattern, and Mara's steady steps helped me find it again.

3 After the dance, we bowed while the audience cheered. The custodian appeared at the side door holding the drum, but our turn was already over. I thanked him as he placed it in its case. On the bus ride home, Mara tapped our step pattern against the seat, and I tapped it back. I had thought the beat depended on the drum in my hands. Now I knew it could begin with my feet and stay steady because someone else was listening.

## 2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How does the narrator's thinking about keeping the beat change by the end?

2. Which event supports the idea that the beat could begin without a drum? Which event supports the idea that someone else helped keep it steady?

3. Why does the writer include Mara and the narrator tapping the pattern on the bus just before the final two sentences?

4. Would "I learned that a louder drum always makes a better dance" fit this ending? Explain using an event from the story.

## 3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a four-sentence scene about a small problem you solve with another person. Show what happens, then end with a sentence that reflects what the experience taught you.

**ANSWER KEY**

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**GRADE 6 · 6.W.3.e**

## PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the two sentences at the end that show how the narrator's thinking changes. Circle two earlier moments that help explain that change. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

## PART 2 · ANSWERS

| # | QUESTION | ANSWER |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | How does the narrator's thinking about keeping the beat change by the end? | **The narrator first thinks the beat depends on holding the drum, then realizes it can start with footsteps and continue with a classmate's help.** |
| 2 | Which event supports the idea that the beat could begin without a drum? Which event supports the idea that someone else helped keep it steady? | **The narrator starts the beat by stepping on the floor. When the narrator loses the pattern, Mara's steady steps help them find it again.** |
| 3 | Why does the writer include Mara and the narrator tapping the pattern on the bus just before the final two sentences? | **Their tapping shows that they can still share the beat without the drum, reinforcing the narrator's final realization.** |
| 4 | Would "I learned that a louder drum always makes a better dance" fit this ending? Explain using an event from the story. | **No. The class completes the dance using softer footsteps instead of a drum, so that statement does not follow from what happened.** |

## PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

When my poster tore just before the science fair, I stared at the split running through its title. Eli found a spare sheet of paper, and we covered the tear with a new heading. We carried the repaired poster to our table together. I had wanted my work to look perfect, but I felt prouder knowing we had found a way forward.

Accept different circled moments if students can explain how those moments support the narrator's changed thinking. For the writing task, look for a final sentence that reflects the specific events in the student's scene.