Sounds of the Storm

Read how language shapes a story's mood.

7.RL.4 "Interpret words and phrases as intended by the author of a text. Determine the meaning of words and phrases including how figurative and connotative meanings affect tone and mood..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB As you read, underline two phrases that show how the greenhouse is threatened, circle two sounds, and number the words that signal a change in mood.

A Harbor for Seedlings

1 At four o'clock, the sky above our school garden turned the color of a bruise. Wind worried the plastic roof of the greenhouse, and its loose corner went flap, flap, flap. Inside, trays of tomato seedlings leaned toward the weak light. Tomorrow, our class would carry them to the neighborhood plant sale. I was supposed to lock the door and go home, but a thin stream of rain was already slipping through the roof. The drops struck a metal watering can: ping, ping, ping.

2 I ran to the supply shed and found a roll of tape, a sheet of clear plastic, and a box of clips. The wind shoved at the door as I dragged everything back. From the sidewalk, the greenhouse looked like a paper boat facing a giant wave. I thought of David facing Goliath, except my only weapon was a roll of tape. My friend Leo arrived, took one look at the shaking roof, and held the plastic steady. Together, we pressed the sheet over the gap and clipped it to the frame.

3 The rain kept coming, but the sharp ping inside the greenhouse faded to a soft patter on the new plastic. Leo and I checked each tray, lifting the seedlings out of the puddles. One bent stem slowly straightened when I propped it against a craft stick. The clouds thinned, and a stripe of evening light crossed the garden path. I looked at the little plants behind their patched roof. They were not safe from every storm, but for tonight, they had a harbor.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What does “the color of a bruise” suggest about the sky? How does that phrase set the mood at the start?

2. What does the comparison between the greenhouse and “a paper boat facing a giant wave” suggest about the storm?

3. How does the change from “ping, ping, ping” to “a soft patter” affect the mood near the end?

4. Why does the narrator think of David facing Goliath? How does that allusion affect this moment?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine you visit the patched greenhouse at sunrise. Write three sentences about that moment using a sound word or repeated sound, a figurative phrase, and words that create a hopeful mood, then add a fourth sentence explaining how one of your choices shapes the mood.

ANSWER KEY # Sounds of the Storm

GRADE 7 · 7.RL.4

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

As you read, underline two phrases that show how the greenhouse is threatened, circle two sounds, and number the words that signal a change in mood. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What does "the color of a bruise" suggest about the sky? How does that phrase set the mood at the start?	**It suggests a dark, threatening sky and creates an uneasy mood.**
2	What does the comparison between the greenhouse and "a paper boat facing a giant wave" suggest about the storm?	**The greenhouse seems small and fragile against the powerful storm.**
3	How does the change from "ping, ping, ping" to "a soft patter" affect the mood near the end?	**The sharp sound makes the leak feel urgent. The softer sound suggests the patch is working and brings a calmer mood.**
4	Why does the narrator think of David facing Goliath? How does that allusion affect this moment?	**The narrator feels small against a much stronger force. The allusion makes the attempt to protect the greenhouse seem brave.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Chirp, chirp, called the sparrows outside the greenhouse. Sunlight spilled over the seedlings like warm honey. Their leaves stood tall in the bright morning. The honey comparison makes the morning feel gentle and hopeful.

Accept interpretations supported by the passage, including answers that describe the opening mood as tense or worried. For Part 3, look for four sentences with a sound, figurative language, hopeful word choices, and an explanation of one choice's effect.