The Lantern Chase

Notice how word choice brings a brief chase to life.

7.W.3.d "Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and figurative and sensory language to capture the action and convey experiences and events."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two precise action verbs, circle two sensory details, and draw a box around one figurative comparison to see how the writer makes the chase feel immediate.

A Gust at the Fair

1 At the Saturday street fair, I carried a paper lantern toward the booth where my sister waited. A gust whipped the string across my palm. The lantern shot upward, bumped the edge of a striped tent, and tumbled into the narrow alley beside the bakery. I squeezed between two carts to follow it. Behind me, a vendor shouted, but his words vanished beneath the rattle of metal trays. The air smelled of warm cinnamon, and the loose string dragged along the pavement like a tiny snake.

2 The lantern skittered past a stack of empty crates. I lunged for the string, but my fingers closed on nothing. At the alley's far end, a delivery cyclist rang her bell and slowed. The lantern bounced off a drainpipe and sailed toward her front wheel. My stomach tightened. I called out, "Watch your tire!" She braked; the tires scraped the gritty pavement. For one breath, the lantern hovered between her handlebars and the wall, its red paper shaking in the wind.

3 Then the string snagged on a splinter of wood sticking from a crate. I caught it and wrapped it twice around my wrist before the gust could pull again. The cyclist rolled her bike past me and grinned. "Fast lantern," she said. Back at the booth, my sister pressed a finger against a tear near its rim. The lantern sagged like a tired flower. We patched it with a square of clear tape, and I held the string more gently as we walked home.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Choose two verbs in paragraph 1 that show the lantern moving. What does each verb help you picture?

2. Find one smell and one sound in paragraph 1. How do they help you imagine the fair?

3. What does the comparison "like a tiny snake" help you picture about the string?

4. How do the cyclist's bell and the sound of scraping tires change the feeling of paragraph 2? Use both details in your answer.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write four or five sentences about a small object slipping out of reach somewhere other than a fair or alley. Show what happens with at least two precise action verbs, sensory details from two different senses, and one figurative comparison.

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PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two precise action verbs, circle two sensory details, and draw a box around one figurative comparison to see how the writer makes the chase feel immediate. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Choose two verbs in paragraph 1 that show the lantern moving. What does each verb help you picture?	**"Shot" shows the lantern rising suddenly, while "tumbled" shows it turning as it falls into the alley.**
2	Find one smell and one sound in paragraph 1. How do they help you imagine the fair?	**The warm cinnamon suggests food nearby, and the rattle of metal trays makes the busy fair sound loud.**
3	What does the comparison "like a tiny snake" help you picture about the string?	**It helps the reader picture the loose string trailing or twisting along the pavement.**
4	How do the cyclist's bell and the sound of scraping tires change the feeling of paragraph 2? Use both details in your answer.	**The bell signals that the cyclist is close to the lantern. The scraping tires make her stop feel sudden, adding tension.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

At the bus stop, my mitten slid off the bench and sailed toward a puddle. I darted after it as a bus hissed at the curb. Cold rain tapped my neck, and the mitten floated on the dark water like a little boat. I hooked it with my umbrella and shook off the muddy drops.

Accept other passage-based verbs or sensory details when students explain their effects accurately. For the writing task, look for a clear sequence of action and details that make the moment vivid.