

The Tapping Door

Trace clues, suspense, and plot movement in a mystery scene.

7.7.C “analyze plot elements, including the use of foreshadowing and suspense, to advance the plot; and”

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline details that hint at a later event, circle details that create suspense, and number 1, 2, and 3 beside the beginning, rising action, and resolution. Your marks should show how the clues and suspense move the plot forward.

Weather Station Mystery

- ① At dusk, Mira climbed the hill behind the community garden to check the weather station. Her science club had promised to record the wind before the town's outdoor movie began. The path was empty except for a red scarf snagged on a thorn bush. Mira knew no one in her group wore red. Near the station, its metal door stood slightly open, though she remembered locking it after school. From inside came a slow, uneven tapping.
- ② Mira called, “Leo? Ms. Chen?” No one answered. She pushed the door wider and found the room dark. The tapping stopped. Her flashlight beam crossed the desk, where a clipboard lay under a dripping raincoat. A line of muddy footprints led from the back window to a narrow storage closet. The closet door was shut, but its handle quivered once. Mira reached for her phone, then saw that the battery symbol was flashing red. Outside, the first drops of rain struck the roof.
- ③ Before Mira could move, the closet opened. Leo stumbled out, clutching a small tool kit. “The wind sensor broke,” he said. “I came back to fix it, but the storm locked the window open.” He pointed to the raincoat. “That belongs to the groundskeeper. I found it here.” A gust rattled the station, and the lights flickered on. Mira laughed shakily, then helped Leo close the window. Together, they secured the sensor just as thunder rolled over the hill. The movie was delayed, but their weather report warned everyone to move indoors.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 What situation begins the main conflict? Use one detail from the first paragraph.

2 Which detail foreshadows the storm? Explain how the later events prove that it was a clue.

3 Identify two details from paragraph 2 that create suspense. How do they make the reader feel uncertain about what will happen?

4 How does Leo's appearance change the conflict and move the plot toward its resolution?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Write a 5 to 7 sentence mystery scene about a character solving a problem. Include one clue that foreshadows a later event and at least two details that create suspense before the problem is resolved.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline details that hint at a later event, circle details that create suspense, and number 1, 2, and 3 beside the beginning, rising action, and resolution. Your marks should show how the clues and suspense move the plot forward. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What situation begins the main conflict? Use one detail from the first paragraph.	Mira finds the weather station door open even though she locked it, and she hears tapping inside. This creates a mystery as she tries to check the station.
2	Which detail foreshadows the storm? Explain how the later events prove that it was a clue.	The first drops of rain striking the roof foreshadow the storm. Later, a gust, flickering lights, and thunder show that the storm has arrived and affects the station and movie.
3	Identify two details from paragraph 2 that create suspense. How do they make the reader feel uncertain about what will happen?	Possible details include the dark room, the tapping stopping, muddy footprints, the quivering closet handle, and Mira's low phone battery. These details suggest an unknown danger or person may be inside.
4	How does Leo's appearance change the conflict and move the plot toward its resolution?	Leo explains that he is repairing the broken wind sensor, so the mystery is no longer an immediate threat. Mira helps him close the window and secure the sensor, allowing them to warn people about the storm.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Jalen unlocked the school greenhouse before the plant sale and noticed a puddle beneath the seed trays. A thin drip tapped somewhere above him. When the lights went out, he heard a shelf scrape across the tile floor. He followed the sound with his phone light and found a loose pipe swinging near the trays. Jalen shut off the water valve and called the custodian. The plants stayed safe, and the sale could begin on time.

Accept other reasonable suspense details if students explain how the details create uncertainty. For the open task, look for a complete plot movement, a clue that connects to a later event, and at least two suspense-building details.