

Storm Story Paths

Track time shifts, clues, and parallel actions in a rescue story.

8.7.C “analyze non-linear plot development such as flashbacks, foreshadowing, subplots, and parallel plot structures and compare it to linear plot development; and”

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the sentences that tell about an earlier time, circle the detail that hints at a later solution, and write N or V in the margin beside present-time actions by Nia or Mr. Vale. These marks will help you trace the story's non-linear structure.

The Library Roof

- ① At 6:10 p.m., Nia stood on the dark roof of the town library, watching floodwater climb the front steps. Her little brother, Owen, was trapped in the upstairs study room after the evacuation alarm failed. Across town, their neighbor Mr. Vale pedaled toward the library with a toolbox. Nia noticed a coil of blue climbing rope beside the roof hatch. Its frayed end snagged on a rusted vent, and she tugged it free. “Maybe this will matter,” she thought, then searched for a safe way down.
- ② Two summers earlier, before Owen began school, Nia had visited the library during a fire-safety tour. A librarian showed her the old service stairwell behind a painted map. Its metal door sometimes stuck, so the librarian kept a brass key at the circulation desk. Back on the roof, Nia remembered that key and saw water pouring through the main entrance below. Meanwhile, Mr. Vale reached the desk, but the key hook was empty. He heard Owen calling from above.
- ③ Nia looped the rope around the vent and lowered herself to the second-floor balcony. The balcony door led directly into the study room, where Owen waited on a table above the rising water. At the same time, Mr. Vale spotted the brass key under a fallen desk calendar, unlocked the service stairwell, and climbed toward them. Nia and Owen met him in the second-floor hall. Together, they used the stairwell to reach the dry back exit. The rope, first noticed as a small detail, had given Nia the route that joined the two story lines.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE Use the passage

- 1 Which paragraph is a flashback? What earlier event does it describe, and how does that event help explain Nia's thinking in the present?

- 2 What detail foreshadows part of the rescue? Explain what later event makes it a clue.

- 3 What two plot lines happen at the same time near the end of the story? Where do those plot lines join?

- 4 How does the flashback make the plot different from a linear version of the story?

3 YOUR TURN Your own words

Write a four-sentence plot sketch that begins with a present problem. Include a clearly signaled flashback, a separate action happening at the same time, and a clue that later helps solve the problem.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline the sentences that tell about an earlier time, circle the detail that hints at a later solution, and write N or V in the margin beside present-time actions by Nia or Mr. Vale. These marks will help you trace the story's non-linear structure. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Which paragraph is a flashback? What earlier event does it describe, and how does that event help explain Nia's thinking in the present?	Paragraph 2 is a flashback. It describes Nia's fire-safety tour and what she learned about the service stairwell and brass key. It explains why she remembers the key during the flood.
2	What detail foreshadows part of the rescue? Explain what later event makes it a clue.	The blue climbing rope foreshadows the rescue. Nia later uses it to lower herself from the roof to the second-floor balcony.
3	What two plot lines happen at the same time near the end of the story? Where do those plot lines join?	Nia works to reach Owen from the roof and balcony, while Mr. Vale finds the key and climbs the service stairwell. The plot lines join in the second-floor hall.
4	How does the flashback make the plot different from a linear version of the story?	A linear version would begin with Nia's fire-safety tour before the flood emergency. The flashback interrupts the rescue to reveal needed information later, which builds suspense and explains Nia's memory.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

During the blackout, Taro searched the school theater for his missing cousin. Years earlier, he had watched the stage manager store a flashlight beside the curtain controls. In the gym, his cousin followed the glowing exit signs, while Taro found a loose cable that could power the lights. The cable later lit the stage, and the cousins met at the exit.

Accept responses that correctly identify the flashback, the rope as foreshadowing, and the two parallel rescue actions. For the open task, accept varied settings and conflicts if the response has four sentences and includes all required non-linear plot elements.