

Light Before Storm

Trace how causes and clues build a plot.

10.RL.1.B "Analyze how authors structure texts to advance the plot, explaining how each event gives rise to the next or foreshadows a future event."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each major event that causes another event, circle the clue that hints at a later problem, and number the major events in the order they happen so you can trace the plot's build.

The Observatory Tag

- ① On the morning of the town's annual lantern parade, Mara climbed the hill to open her grandfather's closed observatory. She wanted its brass telescope for the school display, but the dome door would not move. A cold wind slipped through a crack and set a loose metal tag tapping against the frame. The tag read, "Turn the east wheel before sunset." Mara pocketed it, assuming it was an old instruction left by her grandfather. Below the hill, volunteers hung paper lanterns across Main Street, and the mayor tested the parade's battery-powered lights. Dark clouds gathered beyond the river, though nobody paused their work.
- ② At lunch, Mara showed the tag to Mr. Vale, the school custodian. He recognized the east wheel as the control that once opened the dome. Because the wheel was frozen with rust, Mara borrowed his oil can and worked until it turned. The dome swung aside, revealing the telescope and a hand-cranked signal lamp on a stand. Beside the lamp lay her grandfather's note: "If the parade loses power, send light from the hill." Mara tested the lamp, then angled the observatory's old mirror toward Main Street. Thunder rolled closer over the river.
- ③ Just as the parade began, wind blew the first lantern string sideways, and rain swept over Main Street. The battery-powered lights flickered once and went out, leaving marchers and spectators in darkness. Mara remembered the note, raced up the hill, and directed two volunteers to crank the signal lamp. Its beam struck the old mirror, which she had aimed toward the street that afternoon. The reflected light lit the parade route until the storm passed. Later, Mara realized the tapping tag had not merely opened a door. It had placed a working lamp within reach before the blackout.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 How does finding the metal tag give rise to Mara’s actions in the second paragraph?

2 What future event does the grandfather’s note foreshadow? Use one detail from the passage to support your answer.

3 Explain how Mara’s work with the east wheel and mirror makes the solution in the last paragraph possible.

4 Why does the author end with Mara’s realization about the tag instead of ending when the storm passes?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Create a four-event plot outline for an original story about a community event. In Event 1, plant a clue that foreshadows the final event, and show how each event causes the next one.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline each major event that causes another event, circle the clue that hints at a later problem, and number the major events in the order they happen so you can trace the plot's build. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How does finding the metal tag give rise to Mara's actions in the second paragraph?	The tag leads Mara to ask Mr. Vale about the east wheel, oil the frozen wheel, and open the observatory dome.
2	What future event does the grandfather's note foreshadow? Use one detail from the passage to support your answer.	It foreshadows the parade blackout. The note warns that the parade may lose power, and later the battery-powered lights go out during the storm.
3	Explain how Mara's work with the east wheel and mirror makes the solution in the last paragraph possible.	Turning the wheel opens the dome and reveals the signal lamp. Aiming the mirror toward Main Street allows the lamp's beam to reflect onto the parade route.
4	Why does the author end with Mara's realization about the tag instead of ending when the storm passes?	Her realization clarifies the tag's larger purpose. It shows that the early clue prepared Mara to solve the later blackout problem.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

1. Before the town's bake sale, Imani finds a cracked recipe card that warns, "Keep the oven vent clear." 2. She saves the card and notices that boxes have been stacked near the kitchen vent. 3. Because of the warning, she moves the boxes before the sale begins. 4. When smoke fills the kitchen during the sale, the clear vent prevents a fire, proving that the card foreshadowed the danger.

Accept equivalent explanations that accurately trace cause-and-effect relationships among the tag, wheel, lamp, mirror, storm, and reflected light. For the open task, accept varied original plots if the first event includes a meaningful clue and each later event follows logically from the event before it.