Read the short story and answer each question.

Cloudy with a Chance of Jellybeans

Liam had always been a daydreamer, but this week, his imagination was on overdrive. It started when his teacher, Mrs. Bixby, announced, "This week's weather will be wild! So bring your best ideas to writing class."

Liam raised his hand. "What do you mean by *wild*?"

Mrs. Bixby grinned. "Use your imagination!"

That night, Liam wrote his wildest weather report yet:

> "Today in Sprinklesville, the sky will open up and rain jellybeans by noon. Winds will blow like wild roller coasters, twisting umbrellas into pretzels. By afternoon, sidewalks will be rivers of raspberry syrup. Make sure your raincoat is made of marshmallows!"

The next day, he read it aloud. Everyone laughed.

Mrs. Bixby clapped. "That's what I meant by *wild!* You used nonliteral language like a pro!"

Liam beamed. He didn't just write the weather—he made it come alive.

Name: _____

Cloudy with a Chance of Jellybeans

1. What does Mrs. Bixby mean when she says the weather will be "wild"?

  A.   That there will be a hurricane

  B.   That students should use their creativity

  C.   That they need to study hard

  D.   That school is canceled

2. What phrase is an example of nonliteral language?

  A.   "It will rain jellybeans"

  B.   "Bring your umbrella"

  C.   "The wind is strong today"

  D.   "Wear your jacket to school"

3. Fill in the blank:

Liam used _____ language to make his story sound creative and funny.

4. What are two examples of nonliteral language in Liam's story? What do they really mean?

_____

_____

_____

5. How does using nonliteral language help readers picture the story in a fun way?

_____

_____

_____

Parent and Teacher Guide

Guide Reading Level: M
Lexile Level: 425L-575L
Grade Level: 3rd Grade, Beginning of the Year
Genre: Humorous Realistic Fiction

Introducing the Text

"In this story, Liam turns a weather report into a fun and silly piece of writing using **nonliteral language**—phrases that don't mean exactly what they say. As we read, we'll explore how he uses these phrases and what they really mean."

Vocabulary: nonliteral, wild, twist, syrup, imagination

Before Reading Discussion Questions

1. What do you think it means when someone says something "rains cats and dogs"?
2. Have you ever heard a phrase that didn't mean exactly what it sounded like?
3. What kind of language do writers use to make stories fun or silly?

During Reading Discussion Questions

1. Which parts of Liam's story are literal, and which are nonliteral?
2. What clues help you figure out what the silly phrases really mean?
3. How does Mrs. Bixby respond to Liam's writing?

After Reading Discussion Questions

1. Why do authors use nonliteral language?
2. How can you tell the difference between literal and nonliteral phrases?
3. What would happen to Liam's story if it only used literal language?

Activity Idea

Have students create their own **"Wild Weather Forecast"** using nonliteral language. First, brainstorm literal phrases (e.g., "It's raining hard") and brainstorm ways to say the same thing with imagination (e.g., "Raindrops are falling like jellybeans from space!"). Then students write a silly paragraph that uses at least two nonliteral phrases. Share and decode together!