

Reading Comprehension Worksheet: Character, Setting, or Event

Read the short story and answer each question.



The Fire Tower Trail

Marisol didn't want to hike.

Her dad had been planning this weekend trip for months, but all Marisol could think about was what she'd be missing—her friend's birthday party, the new movie release, even just being *home*.

"This is your chance to unplug," her dad said as they stood at the trailhead. "Clear your head a little."

Marisol huffed and tightened her shoelaces. "I'd rather clear it at the mall."

The trail wound through tall trees that filtered sunlight like stained glass. Birds called above. Marisol kept her eyes down, counting roots and stones. Her dad walked ahead, humming.

About halfway up, the climb grew steeper. Marisol's legs burned, and sweat trickled down her neck. She wanted to complain but didn't. Instead, she looked up—and froze.

There, high above the trees, stood the old fire tower. Its rusty frame stretched into the clouds.

"We're almost there," her dad said. "Wait till you see the view."

Marisol didn't expect to like it. But as she climbed the metal stairs and reached the top, wind tugged at her hair and the forest stretched out in all directions. She saw lakes glimmering in the distance and valleys curling like soft green waves.

"I get it now," she said quietly.

Her dad smiled. "Sometimes the best views come after the hardest climbs."



Name: _____

The Fire Tower Trail

1. How does Marisol change over the course of the story?

- A. She moves from resisting the hike to appreciating the experience.
- B. She stays angry the whole time.
- C. She only pretends to enjoy the view.
- D. She becomes upset that her dad brought her along.

2. What does the setting of the fire tower symbolize in the story?

- A. A new perspective and personal growth
- B. A fear of heights
- C. A dangerous old structure
- D. A boring place to take a photo

3. Fill in the blank:

Marisol's feelings shift as she moves from frustration to _____.

4. How do Marisol's thoughts and actions help show her character development?

5. What specific details about the setting help you understand why the hike mattered in the end?



Parent and Teacher Guide

Guide Reading Level: P

Lexile Level: 645L-795L

Grade Level: 4th Grade, Beginning of the Year

Genre: Realistic Fiction

Introducing the Text

"Today we'll read about a girl named Marisol who goes on a hike she doesn't want to take. As we read, we'll focus on how her character changes and how the setting plays an important role in helping her grow."

Vocabulary: trailhead, filtered, huffed, glimmering, perspective

Before Reading Discussion Questions

1. Have you ever done something you didn't want to do—but ended up enjoying it?
 2. Why might nature change the way we feel?
 3. What do you expect from a story with a character who's reluctant?
-

During Reading Discussion Questions

1. What clues show how Marisol feels at the start of the hike?
 2. How does her reaction to the fire tower shift?
 3. What does her silence during the climb suggest?
-

After Reading Discussion Questions

1. How does the setting help shape Marisol's change in attitude?
 2. What does the final quote from her dad tell us about the theme of the story?
 3. How might Marisol view future challenges differently after this?
-

Activity Idea

Ask students to draw or describe their own "fire tower moment"—a time when something difficult led to a positive result. They should include a short paragraph describing how the setting or situation helped them change their thinking or grow.

