

Reading Comprehension Worksheet: Word & Phrase Meanings

Read the short story and answer each question.



The Memory Lantern

The festival was always held on the first night of fall, when the trees dressed in red and gold and the wind spoke in soft, chilly sighs.

Every year, Lian and her grandmother lit a paper lantern together and sent it floating across the lake. "Each flame carries a memory," her grandmother would say, "like a star drifting home."

But this year, Lian stood alone at the water's edge. The crowd murmured softly behind her, their lanterns glowing like fireflies stitched into the dusk. Her hands trembled as she held her lantern close.

She had painted it with their favorite flower—jasmine—and written a message on the side in careful strokes: *Thank you for the stories and the songs.*

When Lian released the lantern, it bobbed gently on the lake, then caught the breeze and began to drift. Its reflection shimmered across the surface like a golden tear.

For a moment, the air felt still. Lian closed her eyes. She could almost hear her grandmother's voice, warm and steady as a drumbeat: *You carry the light now.*

And she did. Not just in her hands, but in her heart.



Name: _____

The Memory Lantern

1. What does the phrase *"fireflies stitched into the dusk"* suggest about the lanterns on the lake?

- A. They glow gently and beautifully in the dark, like part of the sky.
- B. They are dangerous and hard to catch.
- C. They light up too brightly to look at.
- D. They fly through the air like insects.

2. What does Lian mean when she says *"You carry the light now"*?

- A. She holds on to her grandmother's memory and love even after her passing.
- B. She has to carry all the lanterns herself.
- C. She wants to find a flashlight.
- D. She is going to light more fires.

3. Fill in the blank:

Lian's lantern shimmered across the surface like a golden _____.

4. How does the author use figurative language to help us understand Lian's emotions?

5. Which lines or phrases best show the connection between the lantern and Lian's memories?



Parent and Teacher Guide

Guide Reading Level: R

Lexile Level: 790L-940L

Grade Level: 4th Grade, Middle of the Year

Genre: Realistic Fiction with Poetic Language

Introducing the Text

"In this story, a girl named Lian participates in a lantern festival while reflecting on the loss of her grandmother. The author uses rich figurative language to express emotion and describe scenes. As we read, we'll look closely at those phrases to explore how they deepen the meaning of the story."

Vocabulary: drifting, shimmered, dusk, murmured, reflection

Before Reading Discussion Questions

1. What do you know about lantern festivals or traditions that involve memory?
 2. How can light be used as a symbol in stories?
 3. What does it mean to carry someone's memory?
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During Reading Discussion Questions

1. What emotions is Lian feeling at the beginning of the story?
 2. What does she write on her lantern, and why is it important?
 3. How does the setting help create a peaceful, reflective mood?
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After Reading Discussion Questions

1. What figurative language stood out to you? What did it mean?
 2. How does the author use imagery to show Lian's connection to her grandmother?
 3. What does the ending suggest about how Lian is moving forward?
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Activity Idea

Invite students to design their own symbolic lanterns. They should choose a shape, color, and symbol that represent a memory or emotion, then write a short paragraph using a simile or metaphor to describe the light it would carry.

