

Reading Comprehension Worksheet: Theme

Read the short story and answer each question.



The Piano in the Attic

Liora had never heard the attic make a sound—until the day it did.

It happened on a rainy afternoon. The kind of day when the sky felt like a soggy gray blanket and the whole world went silent. With her book finished and her phone charging downstairs, Liora wandered up to the attic, hoping to find something—anything—interesting.

She didn't expect a piano.

It sat in the far corner, under a drop cloth, the wood carved with patterns of ivy and birds. When she lifted the cover, dust swirled in the light like soft fog. She touched a key. It sang out a soft, slightly off-tune note.

Liora had stopped playing piano after her mom passed. The music reminded her of too many things—morning duets, lullabies, her mom's humming as she cooked. So, she let silence fill the space where music used to be.

Now, in the attic, the silence felt ready to break.

She pressed another key. Then a chord. Her fingers remembered what her heart had tried to forget.

By the time her dad called for dinner, Liora had played a full song. It wasn't perfect, but it filled the attic with something warm. Something like memory. Something like hope.



Name: _____

The Piano in the Attic

1. What is the theme of this story?

- A. Healing often begins when we reconnect with something meaningful from the past.
- B. You should always explore your attic when you're bored.
- C. Playing music perfectly is the most important goal.
- D. Attics are scary and full of secrets.

2. Why had Liora stopped playing piano before finding the one in the attic?

- A. It reminded her too strongly of her mother, who had passed away.
- B. She never liked the piano in the first place.
- C. She wanted to try guitar instead.
- D. The piano was locked in a storage unit.

3. Fill in the blank:

Liora finds the piano under a dusty _____ in the attic.

4. How do Liora's emotions change throughout the story, and what clues help you see that change?

5. What does the act of playing the piano again symbolize for Liora?



Parent and Teacher Guide

Guide Reading Level: S

Lexile Level: 850L-1000L

Grade Level: 4th Grade, End of the Year

Genre: Realistic Fiction

Introducing the Text

"This story is about a girl who reconnects with music after a loss. As we read, we'll pay attention to how the character grows and what the story is trying to teach us. We'll use details from the story to help us identify its theme and summarize how the main character changes."

Vocabulary: attic, duet, carved, silence, memory

Before Reading Discussion Questions

1. What does music mean to you or someone you know?
 2. How can an object or place remind us of a person?
 3. Why might someone stop doing something they once loved?
-

During Reading Discussion Questions

1. What does the attic setting add to the story's mood?
 2. What clues show that Liora is beginning to reconnect with music?
 3. How does her playing change from the beginning to the end?
-

After Reading Discussion Questions

1. What is the theme of this story?
 2. How does Liora's relationship with music mirror her feelings about her mother?
 3. What message could this story give to someone going through a difficult time?
-

Activity Idea

Have students create a "Soundtrack of Healing" by choosing (or imagining) three songs that might represent Liora's emotional journey—one for before the attic, one for during, and one for after. They should write a short paragraph explaining how each "track" reflects a different stage of growth or emotion.

