

Reading Comprehension Worksheet: Word & Phrase Meanings

Read the short story and answer each question.



The Bridge Between Trees

The rope bridge swayed gently, creaking like a song only the forest could hear.

Noah stood at the edge, staring across the ravine. The other side shimmered in golden light, while behind him, shadows stretched long and cool. His summer at the forest retreat was nearly over, and this hike—this final crossing—felt like more than just a walk.

It felt like a goodbye.

As he stepped onto the first board, the wind brushed past him like an old friend in a hurry. Leaves rustled above like whispered encouragements.

Halfway across, he paused.

He remembered the first day here, when the trees had seemed like giants and the bugs louder than his thoughts. He remembered missing home so fiercely it felt like a stone in his chest.

But now the trees were friends. The silence was peace. He had learned to cook over fire, sleep under stars, and listen—really listen—to the rhythm of the world.

The bridge groaned beneath his feet, but he didn't turn back.

With one final step, Noah reached the other side. The path ahead bent through golden leaves, and the air smelled of pine and promise.



Name: _____

The Bridge Between Trees

1. What does the phrase *"the wind brushed past him like an old friend in a hurry"* suggest?

- A. The wind felt familiar and comforting, but fleeting.
- B. The wind was trying to push him off the bridge.
- C. The wind was a person Noah knew.
- D. The wind was strong and freezing.

2. Why does the author describe the trees as "giants" at first and "friends" later?

- A. To show how Noah's perspective changed as he became more comfortable.
- B. To prove that trees can actually move.
- C. Because the trees shrank over time.
- D. Because the author forgot how they were described earlier.

3. Fill in the blank:

Noah paused on the bridge, thinking about how the silence had become his _____.

4. How does the figurative language in this story help show how Noah has changed?

5. Which simile or metaphor did you connect with most, and why?



Parent and Teacher Guide

Guide Reading Level: S

Lexile Level: 850L-1000L

Grade Level: 4th Grade, Middle of the Year

Genre: Realistic Fiction with Poetic Language

Introducing the Text

"In this story, a boy named Noah reflects on how he's grown during a summer in the forest. The author uses figurative language—like metaphors and similes—to describe Noah's experience in a poetic, powerful way. As we read, we'll think about how those phrases show us more about his emotions and growth."

Vocabulary: ravine, creaked, fierce, rhythm, promise

Before Reading Discussion Questions

1. Have you ever changed how you felt about a place or experience over time?
 2. What kinds of feelings might someone have at the end of a meaningful experience?
 3. How can figurative language help show emotion?
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During Reading Discussion Questions

1. What do the bridge and forest represent to Noah?
 2. What images or comparisons stand out to you?
 3. How do Noah's thoughts change as he crosses the bridge?
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After Reading Discussion Questions

1. What theme or message is the author trying to express?
 2. How does the figurative language add beauty or depth to the story?
 3. What does the "other side" of the bridge symbolize for Noah?
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Activity Idea

Invite students to write a personal reflection about a time they were nervous to try something new—but ended up feeling proud. Ask them to include at least one simile or metaphor to describe their feelings before and after the experience.

