

Reading Comprehension Worksheet: Analyze Visuals

Read the short story and answer each question.



The Window Garden

In the heart of a tall, crumbling city building, Mia leaned her chin on the windowsill and stared at a view of gray walls and rusted fire escapes. Her world felt small—like a cardboard box someone had forgotten to decorate.

Then one morning, a flicker of green caught her eye. A neighbor across the alley had placed a single potted plant on their windowsill. Just one.

By the next week, Mia noticed two. A trailing vine joined the pot. Then a tiny paper sign, shaped like a heart.

Mia got an idea. She found an old yogurt container, filled it with soil, and planted a dry bean she found in the pantry. She waited.

Days passed. Nothing. Then—*sprout*.

She added a painted rock beside it. Then a paper sun taped to the glass. When she looked out her window, other neighbors had begun doing the same. A row of colors bloomed between buildings like a garden in the sky.

The alley still echoed with sirens and car horns. But now, the windows whispered something brighter.



Name: _____

The Window Garden

1. How does the illustration of the windows at the end of the story support the theme?

- A. It shows how the neighbors' small actions created a shared sense of hope and connection.
- B. It shows that Mia felt completely alone and her efforts were ignored.
- C. It highlights only the problems in the neighborhood.
- D. It focuses more on noise than on the characters' choices.

2. What mood is created by the colors and details in the final illustration?

- A. A mood of warmth and quiet joy
- B. A feeling of confusion and frustration
- C. A tone of darkness and fear
- D. A serious and formal atmosphere

3. Fill in the blank:

The wide window illustration helps the reader understand the _____ that Mia helped create.

4. What details in the illustration helped you understand how the neighborhood changed over time?

5. How does the artwork deepen your understanding of Mia's emotional journey?



Parent and Teacher Guide

Guide Reading Level: U

Lexile Level: 925L-1075L

Grade Level: 5th Grade, Middle of the Year

Genre: Realistic Fiction

Introducing the Text

“In this story, a lonely city window becomes a starting place for connection and beauty. The included illustration supports the story’s tone and meaning by showing how the community responds to one small act of hope. As students read, encourage them to examine how the visual reinforces mood, character change, and theme—without using any words.”

Vocabulary: windowsill, crumbling, pantry, sprout, echo

Before Reading Discussion Questions

1. How can visuals in a story change or support the meaning of the text?
 2. Have you ever seen an image that helped you understand someone’s emotions without needing words?
 3. What role might a window or a single object play in a story?
-

During Reading Discussion Questions

1. How does the mood of the story shift after the first plant appears?
 2. What visual details would help show that shift in an illustration?
 3. Why does Mia’s choice to decorate her window inspire others?
-

After Reading Discussion Questions

1. How does the illustration enhance the tone of the ending?
 2. What does the image suggest about how one person’s actions can impact others?
 3. How would the story feel different without the artwork?
-

Activity Idea

Have students design their own “window” artwork showing a hopeful scene using collage or colored pencil. Then, write a short paragraph explaining how the image adds to a story’s tone or message—just like a book illustration might.

