Year 4 English Reading Comprehension

A short mystery story with retrieval, inference and evidence

Student: _____ Date: _____

Suggested time: 30–40 minutes. Show your thinking. You may ask an adult to read instructions, but try the questions independently.

Read the story: The Missing Garden Sign

1. On Tuesday morning, the children of Willow Class found a handwritten note beside their classroom window. It said, “Something important has disappeared from the school garden. Look closely, but do not disturb the plants.”

Amira noticed that the small wooden sign beside the butterfly patch was missing. Leo immediately blamed the strong wind from the night before. However, the soil around the sign was smooth, and no broken wood lay nearby.

The children asked the caretaker, Mr Patel, whether he had seen anything. He explained that he had moved the sign into the shed because its paint was peeling. “I was going to repaint it after lunch,” he said.

Amira smiled. “We thought it was a mystery, but we forgot to ask the person who looks after the garden!” Their teacher suggested making a weatherproof sign together. The next day, the class designed a new sign using recycled materials and wrote a short explanation of why butterflies need flowering plants.

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Understanding the text

1. What was missing from the garden? Give one detail from the story.

2. Why did Leo think the wind was responsible?

3. Find two clues that suggest the sign had not simply blown away.

4. What does the word “weatherproof” most likely mean? Explain using the story.

5. Why did Amira change her understanding of the mystery?

Inference and response

1. What can you infer about Mr Patel’s attitude towards the garden? Support your answer with evidence.

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2. What lesson might the children have learned about solving problems? Explain.

3. Write a different title for the story and explain why it fits.

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How to use this assessment

Allow a quiet, relaxed sitting with breaks. Avoid giving the answer. Record whether responses were independent, prompted, or supported. This is a learning snapshot, not a fixed ability label.

Suggested responses

1. The wooden sign beside the butterfly patch. 2. There had been strong wind overnight. 3. The soil was smooth and there was no broken wood nearby.

4. Able to withstand rain or outdoor weather without being damaged. 5. She learned the caretaker had moved it for repainting.

6. He cares for the garden: he noticed peeling paint and planned to repaint the sign. 7. Investigate evidence and ask relevant people rather than assuming. 8. Accept justified alternatives such as “The Garden Mystery”.

What to observe

Separate literal retrieval from inference. Ask the child to point to words that support each answer.

Look for complete responses, vocabulary interpretation and the ability to revise an initial prediction.

Home support

Read short fiction and non-fiction passages together; ask “Which sentence made you think that?” before confirming answers.

Observation notes

Strengths: _____

Next steps: _____

Student explanations or questions worth revisiting: _____

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