



Reading Comprehension Worksheet

Grade 6

Answer Key

The Lighthouse Cipher

The old lighthouse had been locked for as long as Theo could remember, its rusted door chained shut since a storm damaged the tower a decade earlier. So when Theo and his cousin Nadia found the door unlatched during their weekend visit to their grandfather's coastal cottage, curiosity beat out good judgment almost instantly.

Inside, dust coated a narrow spiral staircase, and at the top, a small room held a weathered logbook chained to a desk. Its final entry, dated the night of the storm, was written in strange symbols instead of ordinary letters. Nadia, who loved puzzles more than anyone Theo knew, immediately began sketching the symbols into her notebook. "This isn't nonsense," she said. "Someone wanted this hidden, not thrown away. That means it's a code."

They spent the rest of the afternoon testing ideas. Nadia noticed that certain symbols repeated in patterns similar to common English letters, and by comparing the frequency of each symbol to how often letters like E and T usually appear in writing, they slowly began to crack it. Two hours later, sweaty and triumphant, they had decoded a single chilling sentence: "The light was extinguished on purpose. Ask the harbor master."

Their grandfather, when they showed him the translated message that evening, went unusually quiet. He explained that the lighthouse keeper had disappeared the same night as the storm, and many in town had always whispered that something felt wrong about the official story. The next morning, Theo, Nadia, and their grandfather brought the logbook to the local historical society, where a records keeper confirmed that the harbor master at the time had a long-running dispute with the lighthouse keeper over shipping routes. The mystery, dormant for ten years, was finally getting the attention it had always deserved. Theo and Nadia never learned exactly what happened that stormy night, but

they had, in their own way, given a decade old mystery its first real chance at being solved.

Circle the Correct Answer

1. What did Theo and Nadia find in the locked lighthouse?

Answer: a) An old logbook written in symbols

2. How did Nadia begin to crack the code?

Answer: b) She compared symbol frequency to how often letters like E and T usually appear

3. What did the decoded message say?

Answer: b) The light was extinguished on purpose, and to ask the harbor master

4. What happened to the lighthouse keeper the night of the storm?

Answer: b) He disappeared

True or False

5. The lighthouse had been locked for about ten years.

Answer: True

6. Nadia decoded the message by comparing symbols to how often certain letters usually appear in writing.

Answer: True

7. The mystery is completely and fully solved by the end of the story.

Answer: False

Fill in the Blank

8. Nadia said someone wanted the logbook hidden, not _____.

Answer: thrown away

9. The story says the town's mystery had been _____ for ten years.

Answer: dormant

Think and Explain

10. This mystery does not get fully solved by the end of the story. Why do you think the author chose to end it this way instead of revealing exactly what happened? Explain your reasoning.

Sample answer: Accept reasonable answers noting that leaving the mystery partially unsolved feels more realistic, since real mysteries are not always neatly resolved, and it emphasizes that Theo and Nadia's real accomplishment was reopening the investigation, not personally solving the whole case.

11. Identify one clue or detail early in the story that hints something suspicious happened the night of the storm, before the code is even decoded. Explain how this detail foreshadows what the characters discover later.

Sample answer: Accept reasonable answers identifying details such as the lighthouse being locked and chained immediately after the storm, or the logbook's final entry being written in code rather than plain language, both of which suggest something was being deliberately hidden.