Name: _____ Date: _____

The Letter in the Library Book

Year 6 reading comprehension · Story · 13 marks · About 30 minutes

The book smelled like rain on an old coat. Amara had chosen it only because the cover was torn, which made it feel as though it had a story to tell before she even opened it.

She curled up in the beanbag in the corner of the school library and turned to the first page. A folded square of paper slid out and landed in her lap.

It was a letter, written in blue ink that had faded to the colour of a bruise. Amara glanced around. Nobody was watching. She unfolded it carefully, as if it might crumble.

Dear stranger, it began. If you are reading this, then you have found my favourite book, and that means we have something in common. I am writing this on my last day at this school. I am nervous about moving to a new town, where I will not know a single person. I hope that one day somebody will read this and feel a little less alone than I did. Whoever you are, I hope you are brave. Yours sincerely, Edie.

Amara read it three times. Edie had sat in this very library, perhaps in this very beanbag, with her heart pounding in the same way Amara's did on the first day of every school term. Somewhere, years later, Edie was probably a grown-up with a house and a job. And yet her words had travelled through time and found their way into Amara's hands.

Amara thought about the lonely feeling she had carried around since the summer, when her best friend had moved away. She hadn't told anyone about it. Now, strangely, she felt as though somebody understood.

She took a pencil from her bag and turned the letter over. Dear Edie, she wrote. I found your book. Thank you. I am trying to be brave. When she had finished, she folded the page back into its square and slipped it between the pages, ready for the next reader.

1. Where was Amara sitting when she found the letter? (1 mark)

2. Find and copy one word that means "moved without a sound or with ease". (1 mark)

3. The ink had faded "to the colour of a bruise". What does this simile suggest about the letter? (2 marks)

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4. Why did Amara fold the letter back up “carefully, as if it might crumble”? (1 mark)

5. How did Amara feel about the new school term at the start of the story? Use evidence from the passage. (2 marks)

6. Why do you think Amara felt “as though somebody understood”? (2 marks)

7. Why do you think Amara decided to write back to Edie instead of keeping the letter? (2 marks)

8. Write two sentences to sum up what happens in the story and what it is about. (2 marks)

Writing task: Write the letter that Amara hopes the next reader will find. What does she want them to know?

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