

GRADE 5 READING COMPREHENSION

The Mystery of the Whispering Oak

Student Name: _____

Date: _____

 **Reader's Clue Box (Strategies for Success):** 1. Chunk your reading (read one paragraph at a time). 2. Underline words in **bold**—they appear in the Vocabulary Check! 3. Check back in the passage to find proof for every answer.

Read the Story

At the far edge of the school playground stood an enormous, twisted tree that students called the Whispering Oak. For decades, a legend claimed the tree could talk whenever the autumn wind blew through its branches. Ten-year-old Maya was **skeptical**. She believed that mysterious sounds almost always had a natural, logical cause rather than a magical one. Armed with her spiral notebook and a magnifying glass, she decided to investigate during afternoon recess.

Maya approached the tree carefully. As she got closer, she heard a soft, repeating click-clack accompanied by a low hum. It sounded remarkably like faint murmuring. She peered upward into the **dense** canopy of golden leaves. The branches were thick and tightly packed, blocking most of the afternoon sunlight.

Maya walked around the broad trunk until something shiny caught her eye: a flash of metallic blue. Wedged tightly inside a hollow split in the bark was a handmade wind chime crafted from old aluminum keys and fishing wire. Whenever a gentle breeze swept across the yard, the keys swung together, creating a rhythmic whispering vibration. Maya smiled and recorded the **evidence** in her notebook. She had not found magic, but her detective work had solved the mystery once and for all.

Vocabulary Check

Directions: Match each vocabulary word from the text to its correct meaning. Write the matching letter (A, B, or C) on the blank line.

Vocabulary Word	Answer	Definition & Context Clue
1. skeptical (adjective) • Found in Paragraph 1	—	A. Thick, crowded, and packed closely together. (Clue: 'branches were thick and tightly packed')
2. dense (adjective) • Found in Paragraph 2	—	B. Facts, signs, or objects that prove the truth. (Clue: 'recorded the proof in her notebook')
3. evidence (noun) • Found in Paragraph 3	—	C. Having doubts; not easily convinced without proof. (Clue: 'believed sounds had a logical cause')



Multiple-Choice Questions

Directions: Circle the best answer choice. Use the hint provided under each question to help you find the correct answer.

1. What did the school legend claim about the Whispering Oak?

 *Hint: Reread the second sentence of Paragraph 1.*

- A) It lost all its leaves during the spring.
- B) It could talk whenever the autumn wind blew.
- C) It was planted over a hundred years ago by students.
- D) It held hidden treasure beneath its roots.

2. Which tool did Maya bring to help her investigate the tree?

 *Hint: Look at the last sentence of Paragraph 1.*

- A) A flashlight and a camera
- B) A pair of binoculars and a ladder
- C) A spiral notebook and a magnifying glass
- D) A metal detector and a tape measure

3. What was actually causing the tree's mysterious 'whispering' sound?

 *Hint: Check what Maya found wedged inside the split bark in Paragraph 3.*

- A) A flock of small birds nesting in the high branches
- B) An old radio left behind on the playground
- C) A student hiding behind the trunk making noises
- D) A handmade chime made of aluminum keys swinging in the breeze

4. Based on Paragraph 1, what character trait best describes Maya?

 *Hint: Consider how Maya relies on logical facts rather than magical beliefs.*

- A) Curious and scientific
- B) Fearful and hesitant
- C) Playful and careless
- D) Easily frightened by ghost stories

Written Response

5. How did Maya's point of view about the Whispering Oak differ from the legend believed by other students?

 **Sentence Starter (Support Guide):**

While the legend said that the tree was magical and could talk, Maya believed that

In the text, she showed this by _____

6. What steps did Maya take to solve the mystery of the tree, and why was her recording of evidence important?

 **Sentence Starter (Support Guide):**

First, Maya investigated by _____

Then, she found _____

Writing down the evidence was important because _____



 Educator Answer Key & Differentiation Notes (For Teacher Reference)

- Part 2 (Vocabulary): 1 = C (skeptical), 2 = A (dense), 3 = B (evidence).
- Part 3 (Multiple Choice): 1 = B | 2 = C | 3 = D | 4 = A.
- Part 4 (Sample Responses):
 - Q5: Other students believed the tree had magical talking powers, whereas Maya believed there was a logical, scientific cause. She looked for proof with her notebook and magnifying glass instead of accepting the legend.
 - Q6: Maya approached the tree, listened closely, looked into the canopy, and walked around the trunk until she found the wind chime. Recording evidence was important so she could prove her findings to others using facts rather than rumors.
- Struggling Reader Accommodations Included: Paragraph numbers in brackets, bold/underlined target vocabulary, text-specific location hints for MCQs, and structured sentence frames for written responses.

