

An illustration of a vintage lantern in a field at night. The lantern is a dark, weathered metal with a glass lens and a handle. It sits on a base with a small knob. The scene is set in a field of tall grass and reeds, with a bright, glowing light source in the background, possibly the moon or a distant light, creating a soft glow on the grass and the lantern. The sky is a deep blue with a few clouds.

The Lantern at the Edge of the Field

The Focused Reading Series by Lessons with Mr. B

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Instructor Guide

The Focused Reading Series

Band B (Grades 2-3)

Estimated time: 12-25 min

Standards Alignment

RL.2.1, RL.2.3, RL.2.10, RL.3.1, RL.3.3, RL.3.10, RF.2.4, RF.3.4, W.2.3, W.3.3, L.2.4, L.3.4

What This Builds

- Reading stamina and comprehension
- Evidence based thinking
- Structured short writing
- Vocabulary in context

How to Run and Monitor

- Read independently or aloud, then complete the worksheet
- Students should use details from the text for every answer
- Use the answer key to check evidence and accuracy quickly
- Watch for clearer evidence use and stronger writing over time

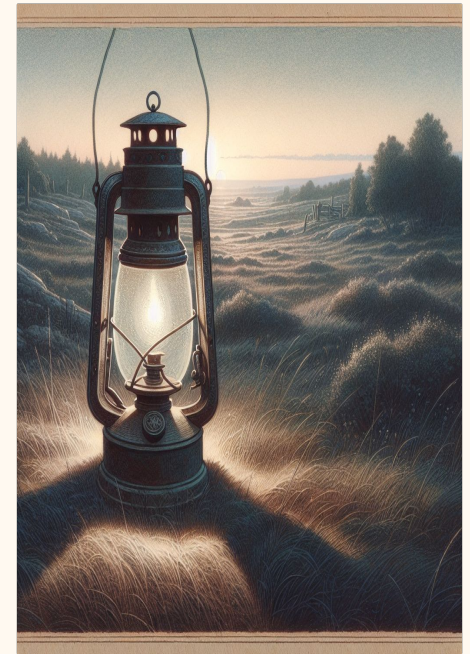
Milo found the lantern in the tall grass behind the soccer field, where the ground sloped down toward a line of trees. It was old, metal, and dented, with a cloudy glass window and a handle that squeaked when he lifted it. “Someone left camping gear out here,” he said. Ava stepped closer and squinted. The lantern was not on. There was no flame. No switch had been flipped. And yet, inside the glass, a faint glow sat like a sleepy firefly. Milo turned it in his hands. The glow brightened for a second, then softened again. Ava’s eyebrows lifted. “That’s not normal.”



Milo swung the lantern slightly toward the trees. The glow strengthened, like it approved. He turned the lantern back toward the school. The glow thinned, almost disappearing. Milo stopped moving. “Did you see that?” Ava nodded once. She reached for the handle carefully, as if the lantern might start talking. She took three slow steps toward the trees. The glow grew steady again. Then she stepped sideways. It dimmed. “It likes one direction,” Milo said. “Or it’s pointing,” Ava replied. They looked at the tree line the way you look at a door that might be unlocked.



They did not run. Running made it feel like a trick. Milo walked first, holding the lantern low, watching the light through the cloudy glass. Ava stayed beside him, counting their steps without saying the numbers out loud. When they drifted too far left, the glow weakened. When they corrected their path, it strengthened. “It’s like a compass,” Milo said. “A compass doesn’t glow,” Ava answered. She leaned closer and noticed scratches on the lantern’s metal. Not words. Not numbers. Just small lines, like someone had scraped it against rock again and again.



The field ended at a patch of tall weeds that brushed their knees. The trees ahead looked thicker than the ones near the playground, and the air smelled cooler there. Milo pushed through first. The lantern brightened, then flickered when his foot snagged on a root. Ava caught his arm. “Slow down,” she said. Milo steadied himself. The lantern’s glow settled again, calm and firm. “Fine,” he muttered, but he listened. They moved with smaller steps, watching where the weeds bent and where the ground dipped.

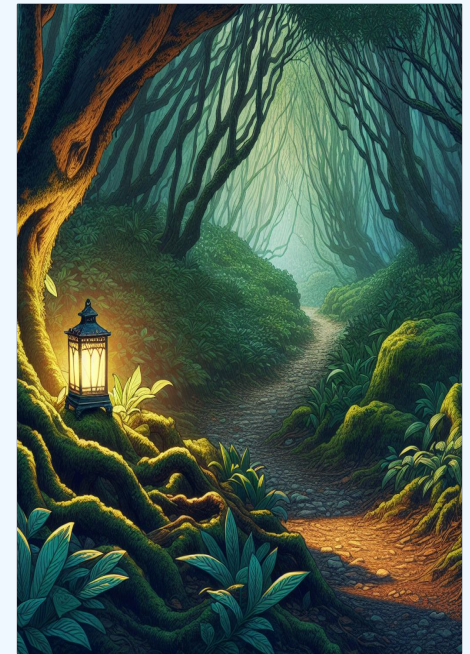


A shallow creek cut across their path, only a few feet wide, with water sliding over smooth stones. Milo crouched and tested a rock with his shoe. It wobbled. The lantern dimmed slightly, as if it disliked hesitation. “It’s not going to carry us,” Ava said. She scanned upstream and spotted a narrow wooden footbridge half hidden by branches. One rail was missing, and the boards looked faded, but the bridge was still there. Ava stepped onto it first. The lantern brightened again, stronger than before. Milo followed, gripping the handle with both hands now.

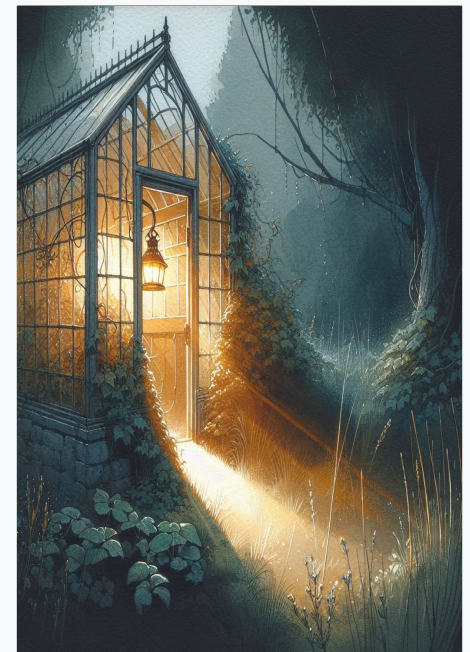


On the other side, a gravel path appeared, thin as a pencil line, cutting through the trees. It did not look like a trail people used. It looked like something the woods had almost swallowed. The lantern's glow stayed steady, pulling them forward. Milo tried to guess what they would find.

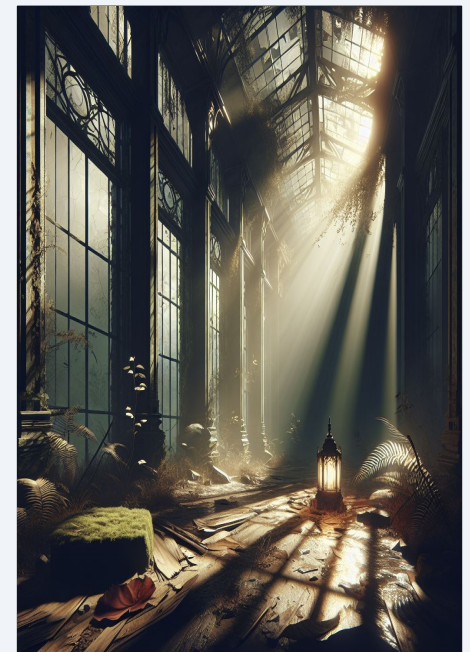
Treasure. A clubhouse. A secret message. Ava said nothing. She kept her eyes on the ground and the lantern and the way the shadows changed when they moved. "Do you think someone dropped it?" Milo asked. "Or placed it," Ava said quietly.



The trees opened into a clearing, and something boxy rose from the weeds like a forgotten room. A greenhouse. Most of its glass panes were cracked or missing. Vines crawled over its frame, and one corner sagged, as if the building had gotten tired. Milo stopped short. The lantern brightened so much that the cloudy glass looked warm. Ava stepped closer. “This place is real,” she said, as if she had expected it to be pretend. Milo lifted the lantern higher. The light did not fill the clearing. It pointed. Straight at the greenhouse door.



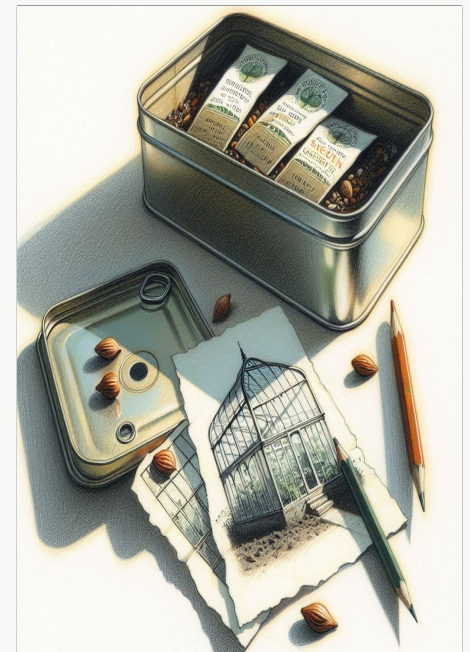
The door was stuck at first. Milo pulled too hard, and the lantern dimmed, like it disapproved of yanking. Ava tried next. She pressed her shoulder against the door and pushed slowly, little by little. The hinges complained, but the door finally swung inward with a long creak. Inside, the air smelled like wet soil and old leaves. Sunlight slipped through broken glass overhead in thin bright strips. The lantern's glow softened again, as if it had led them to the right page in a book. Milo took one step inside. Ava followed, careful and quiet.



They walked between rows of overturned pots and tangled stems. Most of the plants were dead, but not all. Near the far wall, something green still climbed a thin wire. The lantern brightened when Ava turned toward it. “Over there,” she said. At the base of the wire, a small plot of soil looked different from the rest. It was smoother, as if someone had patted it down. Milo crouched and brushed away a layer of dry leaves. Underneath, the soil was dark. Fresh looking. “Someone was here,” he whispered.



A flat stone sat at the edge of the plot. Milo lifted it carefully. Under the stone was a small metal tin, round and shallow, like the kind that once held mints. Ava held her breath without meaning to. Milo opened it. Inside lay a folded piece of paper and three seed packets, faded but still readable. The paper was not a note with words. It was a simple sketch of the greenhouse, drawn in pencil, with one spot marked by a small circle. Ava's eyes went to the sunlight above. "Look," she said. "The light is hitting right there."



They turned together and saw it. A broken pane of glass overhead had been wedged at an angle, not fallen by accident. The sunbeam that slipped through it landed exactly on the garden plot, warming it like a spotlight. The lantern had not been glowing by magic. It had been catching that same sunbeam and reflecting it, growing brighter when they moved toward the angle that mattered. Milo stared at the tilted glass, then at the plot, then back at the lantern. “Someone built a light path,” he said. Ava nodded, slow and impressed. “So the plants wouldn’t be forgotten.”



Milo wanted to tell someone right away. He could already imagine the hallway story, the crowd, the attention. Then he looked at the small plot again and imagined too many feet, too many hands, too many voices. Ava folded the sketch and placed it back in the tin with the seed packets. “We can come back,” she said. “We can fix one thing at a time.” Milo swallowed his excitement and nodded. They set the stone back carefully, the way you close a secret without locking it away. As they walked out of the greenhouse, the lantern’s glow faded to a gentle flicker, like a quiet agreement.



Student Worksheet

Band B

STUDENT NAME: _____ **DATE:** _____

SECTION 1: PROVE IT

Instruction: Use details and direct evidence from the text to support your answers.

1. Where was the lantern found? Give evidence from the story.
2. What was near the place where the lantern was discovered?

Use a quote from the text.

SECTION 2: WHAT CHANGED

Instruction: Describe how something changed from the beginning to the end of the story.

3. How did the location of the lantern change during the story?

SECTION 3: THINK DEEPER

Instruction: Explain your thinking using clues from the story.

4. Why do you think the lantern was in the tall grass behind the soccer field?

SECTION 4: QUICK BUILD WRITING

Instruction: Write 2 to 3 complete sentences using clear details from the story.

5. Describe what happened when the lantern was found and where it was discovered.

Answer Key

Band B

SECTION 1: PROVE IT

1. The lantern was found "in the tall grass behind the soccer field, where the ground sloped down toward a line of trees."
2. Near the place where the lantern was discovered was "a line of trees." (Quote: "Milo found the lantern in the tall grass behind the soccer field, where the ground sloped down toward a line of trees.")

SECTION 2: WHAT CHANGED

3. At the beginning, the lantern was hidden in the tall grass behind the soccer field, but by the end, it had been found.

ANSWER KEY

SECTION 3: THINK DEEPER

4. The lantern might have been left in the tall grass behind the soccer field because someone lost it or hid it there, as it was in a place that was not easily seen.

SECTION 4: QUICK BUILD WRITING

5. The lantern was found in the tall grass behind the soccer field, near a line of trees. It was discovered when someone noticed it where the ground sloped down.