Grade 6G Language Arts: Plot & Character Analysis

Reading Assessment — Total Points: 15

Name: _____

Date: _____

The Golden Key

By: J.M. Sterling

The afternoon sun beat down mercilessly on the dusty streets of Oakridge. Maya stood outside the old, abandoned history museum, tapping her foot nervously. She was known across her town for being incredibly **inquisitive**—a trait that often got her into tight spots, but also made her an excellent amateur sleuth. In her right hand, she tightly gripped an antique brass key she had discovered in her grandfather's attic that morning. Her grandfather had always told tales of a hidden archive inside the museum that held the town's original, forgotten charter. Maya's deepest desire was to prove his wild stories were true and restore his tarnished reputation among the town elders.

Taking a deep breath, she pushed past the rusted iron gates. The heavy oak doors of the museum groaned as she slipped inside. The air was thick with dust and the smell of ancient paper. Maya navigated the shadowy corridors using only her flashlight, her heart hammering against her ribs. She reached the basement archives, exactly where her grandfather's old map indicated. There stood a massive, iron-reinforced vault door.

She inserted the brass key into the lock. *Click*. The heavy cylinders turned, and the door swung open to reveal a single, velvet-lined box resting on a pedestal. But just as her fingers brushed the box, a loud, metallic slam echoed behind her. The heavy vault door had swung shut, trapping her inside the pitch-black room.

Panic threatened to overtake her. The air felt instantly tighter. Maya closed her eyes, forced herself to breathe slowly, and remembered who she was. She wasn't a quitter. She carefully felt along the cold iron surface of the inner door until her fingers caught on an emergency release lever. With every ounce of strength in her small frame, she threw her weight against the iron bar.

With a deafening screech, the mechanism gave way, and the door cracked open, flooding the room with light. Maya grabbed the velvet box, hurried out of the dark basement, and burst through the museum doors into the warm evening air. Safe on the steps, she opened the box to find the golden-sealed charter. She smiled, knowing her grandfather's legacy was safe.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

PART A: FILL-IN-THE-BLANK

Directions: Complete each sentence using the words from the word bank below. (1 mark each)

Climax	**Motivation**	**Exposition**	**Traits**	**Rising**	**Action**

1. The part of the story where Maya enters the dusty museum and searches the dark hallways represents the _____ .

2. Personality qualities like being brave, curious, or nervous are known as character _____ .

3. Maya's clear desire to clear her grandfather's name and protect his legacy is her primary _____ .

4. The _____ of the story occurs when the heavy vault door suddenly slams shut, trapping Maya inside the pitch-black room.

5. In the _____ of the plot, the author introduces Maya, the setting of Oakridge, and the mysterious antique key.

PART B: STRUCTURED SHORT ANSWER

Directions: Answer the following questions using complete sentences and evidence from the text. (2 marks each)

6. Identify the Setting: Where and when does this story take place?

7. Analyze Character: Name one distinct character trait Maya displays when she is trapped inside the vault, and explain how her actions demonstrate that trait.

8. Determine the Resolution: How does the story end? Explain how the main conflict is resolved.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

PART C: SHORT ESSAY QUESTION

Directions: Write a well-organized paragraph answering the prompt below completely. (4 marks)

9. The Power of Motivation

Analyze Maya's motivation throughout the story. Explain *what* she wants to achieve, *why* she wants to achieve it, and how this specific motivation keeps her from giving up when she faces a dangerous obstacle inside the vault.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Teacher Answer Key & Rubric

Grade 6G Language Arts Assessment — Master Copy

Part A Key

#	Correct Answer	Target Concept
1	**Rising Action**	Plot progression / Building tension
2	**Traits**	Characterization terminology
3	**Motivation**	Internal driving forces behind action
4	**Climax**	Peak turning point of conflicts
5	**Exposition**	Initial setup of characters and setting

Part B Key & Standard Criteria

6. Setting: Afternoon, hot/merciless sun; Oakridge, inside an old abandoned history museum basement vault. *(1 mark for time elements, 1 mark for location elements)*

7. Character Trait: Brave, determined, resilient, or resourceful. Actions show she forces herself to breathe, stays calm, feels around for the lever, and throws all her strength into it. *(1 mark for identifying accurate trait, 1 mark for citing correct text action)*

8. Resolution: Maya successfully resets the emergency latch, open the doors, exits the building safely with the box, and retrieves the charter to save her grandfather's name. *(1 mark for physical escape, 1 mark for text confirmation of resolving the conflict)*

Part C Paragraph Rubric (4 Marks Total)

- **1 Mark:** Clearly identifies Maya's goal (recovering the lost original charter).
- **1 Mark:** Articulates her deeper underlying reason (clearing her grandfather's tarnished reputation among elders).
- **1 Mark:** Directly connects her motivation to her refusal to quit when the vault locks (proves inner motivation overcomes obstacle).
- **1 Mark:** Structural mechanics (complete sentences, capitalization, appropriate paragraph unity).

LIVEWORKSHEETS