

The Notice on the Maple

Facilitator note: A fictional loss of a neighborhood tree. Do not ask students to share personal losses in class; the planning activity uses a made-up case. In this story the settled fact is real and sad, and nobody is asked to be glad about it - the split between settled and still-to-choose is this family's way of talking, not a rule for everyone. The adults do the asking (the foreman) and the experts are honest and bounded (the arborist shows what he found). The useful actions are ordinary ones: name the settled part out loud, list what is still to choose, and let continuity be small and real.

Teacher answer key

1. A, B, C, D, E, F, G. Step C turns the story: without it, Chayala could have spent the whole week quietly re-asking "can't someone check again" in her head, and Tuesday would have arrived with the week unspent. With it, the settled part is named and the still-to-choose list can exist - the drawing, the wood, the seeds, the light all come from that naming. Naming the fact does not make it pleasant; it makes the week usable.
2. 1 S; 2 S; 3 S; 4 C; 5 C; 6 C. Feelings about 1-3 are real and allowed - settled means unchangeable, not unimportant. Nobody in the story is asked to be glad.
3. Settled: the rot, the ownership of the strip, Tuesday itself. Still to choose: the drawing, the wood section, the seeds, the light. The arborist who grew up on the street shows her the hollow core - and seeing ends the argument because the fact she was quietly fighting becomes visible: "See how little was holding it up." Her mother means that some parts of the week are already decided and grieving them is allowed, but the week itself is not decided - what they do with it is still theirs.
4. $2/6 =$ one third sprout. $120 - 100 = 20$ centimeters left over. Wednesday to the next Tuesday = 6 days.
5. "Can't someone check again?" - its job is to test whether the fact is really a fact; asked once, it is fair, and the answer is that two arborists already checked. "The tree comes down Tuesday. I can't change it." - its job is to say the settled part flat, so the week can start. Asking again stops being a question when the asker already has the answer - then it is a way of not saying the second sentence, and it can fill a whole week.
6. Open. The drawing should show the observable scene: branches at the window, the white notice, the desk. Strong captions quote "the tree tells her the season before the calendar does" or "the tree comes down Tuesday." Any honest rendering counts.
7. Open. Sample: Settled - "The lot is sold; building starts next month, and neither is mine to change." Still to choose - "We can play there until the fence goes up; we can ask the builder's sign where the children should play next; we can plan a last game and invite the little ones." Person - "She talks with her father, who knows which choices are real." Useful action - "Toba

organizes the last game for Sunday and asks the neighbor mothers where the children can meet after."

8. SETTLED row 1 columns 1-7; CHOICE row 2 columns 3-8; TUESDAY row 3 columns 2-8; SEEDS row 4 columns 4-8; TRUNK row 5 columns 1-5; LIGHT row 6 columns 3-7; HOLLOW row 7 columns 2-7; DRAW row 8 columns 4-7. The arborist found the trunk HOLLOW; the SEEDS are for potting - for what can carry forward.