

The Story of My Life

Helen Keller

What changes when a word becomes more than a signal?

TOTAL TIME	TUMBLETA PASSAGE LOCATION
30 minutes	Chapter IV - the well-house / water breakthrough

TEACHER SETUP

Open the work in the Enhanced Reader and cue the span using the START and END anchors below.

START	We walked down the path to the well-house, attracted by the fragrance of the honeysuckle with which it was covered.
END	That living word awakened my soul, gave it light, hope, joy, set it free!
PASSAGE ID	sec-keller-01

THE MOVE

Trace a turning point through before-and-after language

WHY THIS PASSAGE

The scene does more than show Keller learning one vocabulary word. It records a change in how she understands symbols themselves: the finger-spelled pattern becomes connected to experience, and that connection opens a new way of understanding the world.

MARK

Underline physical sensations and actions at the pump. Circle words that describe mental or emotional change. Draw an arrow from the repeated spelling of water to the first sentence that shows a new understanding. Star the strongest before-and-after contrast.

NOTICE

- What was the finger-spelled word before this moment?
- Which details show that Keller recognizes a relationship between symbol and experience?
- How does the language of awakening and freedom enlarge the importance of the scene?

THINK

Answer provisionally: What changes when a word becomes more than a signal? Choose the strongest interpretation you can defend from this passage alone.

WRITE

Write a short evidence-based response. Use at least two details from the assigned passage and explain how they support your interpretation.

CLOSE

Name the single detail that most changed or sharpened your interpretation, and say why.

STRONG ANSWER

The word becomes more than a signal when Keller connects the finger-spelled pattern to the living experience of water. That insight reveals that things have names and transforms language from imitation into a system for understanding and communicating about the world.

EVIDENCE

Use the physical experience at the pump and one sentence describing Keller’s mental or emotional change.

WATCH FOR

Do not summarize the scene only as “Helen learns the word water.” Explain the larger change in what words now mean to her.

SOLO

Read independently.

SUPPORTED

Narration + highlighting.

LISTENING

Listen; same evidence task.

STUDENT PAGE · GRADE 6 · LESSON 267

The Story of My Life

Helen Keller

What changes when a word becomes more than a signal?

WORK	The Story of My Life
------	----------------------

TUMBLETA PASSAGE LOCATION	Chapter IV - the well-house / water breakthrough
PASSAGE ID	sec-keller-01

Your teacher will open or cue the work in the Enhanced Reader. Use the location and verbatim anchors below to confirm the assigned span.

START

We walked down the path to the well-house, attracted by the fragrance of the honeysuckle with which it was covered.

END

That living word awakened my soul, gave it light, hope, joy, set it free!

READ / LISTEN TO THE ASSIGNED PASSAGE SOLO: read independently. SUPPORTED: use narration and highlighting. LISTENING: listen to the assigned passage. The question and evidence task stay the same.

1. **MARK** Underline physical sensations and actions at the pump. Circle words that describe mental or emotional change. Draw an arrow from the repeated spelling of water to the first sentence that shows a new understanding. Star the strongest before-and-after contrast.
2. **NOTICE** What was the finger-spelled word before this moment? Which details show that Keller recognizes a relationship between symbol and experience? How does the language of awakening and freedom enlarge the importance of the scene?
3. **THINK** Answer provisionally: What changes when a word becomes more than a signal?
4. **WRITE** Write a short response using at least two pieces of evidence from this passage.
5. **CLOSE** Name the single detail that most changed or sharpened your interpretation, and say why.