Beyond the Line

Reading competing perspectives in a story set in Dakar

10.CL.1 "Read, analyze, and evaluate complex literary and informational texts written from various cultural perspectives, with an emphasis on works originating outside the United States and the British Isles from 1600 to the present."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline one detail that supports Father's view and one that supports Mariama's view. Circle a sentence that challenges a simple choice between them.

Where the Water Goes, a fictional story set in present-day Dakar, Senegal

1 By the time I reached Aunt Mariama's fruit stall, rain had turned the Dakar street into a shallow brown stream. She lifted her oranges onto wooden crates while my father, still wearing his city engineer's badge, studied a drain clogged with plastic bags. "The council wants to clear this row of stalls for a wider channel," he said. Mariama held an orange above the water. "Where will we sell while they build it?" Father pointed to the painted line on the pavement, the proposed edge of the channel. I noticed that the line ran straight through her empty chair.

2 At home, Father spread his plans beside our dinner plates. He said the old channel was too narrow for heavy rain, and last month's flood had reached the clinic steps. "Keeping things as they are is a decision too," he told me. Yet his drawing showed stalls as small gray squares, with no names and no prices. Mariama phoned to say she had missed the meeting about the plan because she was buying fruit before dawn. "They call it public," she said, "but some of us cannot afford to be away when the doors open."

3 On Saturday, I went with Mariama to the council meeting. Father had brought a revised plan: the channel would bend around part of the market, but several stalls would still have to move. Mariama asked whether sellers could use the bus depot lot during construction. No one at the table knew who controlled the lot. I wrote her question in my notebook, then crossed out the sentence I had started: Father versus Mariama. The water did not choose sides, but people had to decide who would carry the cost of keeping it away.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How does the painted line in paragraph 1 help you understand Mariama's concern?

2. How does the narrator show that Father's plan is both needed and incomplete? Use one detail for each.

3. What does Mariama's comment about the "public" meeting suggest about whose views the council may miss? Support your answer with a detail.

4. Why does the narrator cross out "Father versus Mariama"? Explain what that label leaves out.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a 75 to 100 word statement from the viewpoint of a clinic worker at the next council meeting. Use two details from the story, propose one specific next step not already proposed, and acknowledge a drawback of your step.

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PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline one detail that supports Father's view and one that supports Mariama's view. Circle a sentence that challenges a simple choice between them. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How does the painted line in paragraph 1 help you understand Mariama's concern?	**The line runs through her chair, making the proposed loss of her selling space concrete.**
2	How does the narrator show that Father's plan is both needed and incomplete? Use one detail for each.	**The flood reached the clinic steps, showing a need to manage the water. His drawing reduces stalls to gray squares without showing sellers or their income.**
3	What does Mariama's comment about the "public" meeting suggest about whose views the council may miss? Support your answer with a detail.	**The council may miss the views of sellers who cannot leave work to attend. Mariama missed the meeting because she was buying fruit before dawn.**
4	Why does the narrator cross out "Father versus Mariama"? Explain what that label leaves out.	**The label makes the problem seem like a contest between two people. The flood threatens places such as the clinic, while construction could displace sellers, even under Father's revised plan.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

I work at the clinic, and last month's flood reached our steps. We cannot treat a wider channel as optional when patients might struggle to enter. But the engineer's drawing shows stalls as gray squares, not the sellers whose income depends on them. Before approving construction, the council should visit every stall and record what each seller would lose during a closure. That survey would take time and could delay flood protection, but a plan that ignores lost income might protect one doorway while closing many others.

Accept different interpretations when students support them with accurate passage details. For the statement, check that the proposed step is new, responds to both flooding and its human costs, and includes a plausible drawback.