Beyond the Gate

Read a garden story through its writer's cultural perspective.

10.CL.3 "Analyze how an author's cultural perspective influences style, language, and themes."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two details that reveal the writer's family perspective, circle two language or style choices shaped by it, and number one line that develops a theme about community.

The Garden Gate

1 The city notice was taped to the fence of our garden: the empty lot would become a parking area by June. I read it while my grandmother loosened soil around the marigolds. In my Mexican American family, a garden is not only a place to grow food. It is where neighbors trade seeds, news, and the names of people who need a meal. Abuela glanced at the notice and said, "Pues, we have work to do." She did not mean digging. She meant gathering everyone who had ever carried a watering can through that gate.

2 On Saturday, we set a folding table outside the gate. Ms. Chen brought photographs of the first planting day. Mr. Alvarez brought a list of families who took home tomatoes last summer. Abuela brought a pot of beans and called to each visitor, "Pase, eat before you speak." I kept writing down their stories, one after another, until the page looked crowded as a harvest basket. The city notice had counted parking spaces; our list counted people. No single voice could explain what the garden meant, so I let their voices fill my notebook.

3 At Monday's meeting, I could have read a speech about square feet and traffic. Instead, I read the names of neighbors who had shared tools, meals, and shade. I spoke first in English, then repeated Abuela's invitation, "Pase." A council member asked what the word meant. "Come in," I said, and looked toward the garden gate. The council postponed its vote so residents could propose another site for parking. That was not a victory yet, but it was an opening. I went home thinking that a gate can keep people out or teach them to enter together.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How does the writer's use of "Pase" reflect her family perspective and add meaning to the meeting scene?

2. How does the contrast between counting parking spaces and counting people show what the writer values?

3. Why does the writer include several neighbors and their contributions instead of telling only her own story? Explain how this choice shapes the passage's style.

4. How does the final image of the gate develop a theme connected to the writer's perspective? Use a detail from earlier in the passage.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine a writer telling this garden conflict through a different cultural or family tradition you know or have studied. In one paragraph, describe a specific language or style choice that writer might make and explain how it would shift the theme, without claiming that everyone from that tradition thinks alike.

ANSWER KEY

Beyond the Gate

GRADE 10 · 10.CL.3

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two details that reveal the writer's family perspective, circle two language or style choices shaped by it, and number one line that develops a theme about community. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How does the writer's use of "Pase" reflect her family perspective and add meaning to the meeting scene?	**The word echoes Abuela's invitation to visitors. When the writer explains that it means "Come in," she presents the garden as a place where neighbors are welcomed.**
2	How does the contrast between counting parking spaces and counting people show what the writer values?	**The contrast places the city's focus on parking beside the writer's focus on neighbors. It shows that she values the relationships formed in the garden.**
3	Why does the writer include several neighbors and their contributions instead of telling only her own story? Explain how this choice shapes the passage's style.	**The list gives the passage a collective feel. It reflects the writer's view that the garden's meaning comes from many neighbors, not one person.**
4	How does the final image of the gate develop a theme connected to the writer's perspective? Use a detail from earlier in the passage.	**The gate becomes a symbol of welcome rather than a barrier. Earlier, Abuela invites visitors in, and the writer hopes the garden will remain a place where neighbors come together.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

A writer whose family makes lanterns for a yearly neighborhood walk might focus on the garden at dusk. She could repeat the phrase "one light, then another" as neighbors hang lanterns along the fence. That repetition would make the sentences feel like people arriving together. At the meeting, she might describe the parking plan as a loss of a place where their art can be shared. Her family tradition would shift the theme toward keeping public space open for shared celebrations.

Accept interpretations supported by details in the passage that connect a cultural perspective to language, style, or theme. For the open task, look for a specific choice and a plausible explanation of its effect, not a generalization about a group.