# Where Water Goes

Notice how a writer builds a case for change.

**6.CL.1** "Identify and explain an author's rhetorical choices, including point of view, purpose, anecdotes, and figurative, connotative, and technical word meanings, to develop central and supporting ideas."

NAME _____ DATE _____

## 1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

**YOUR JOB** Underline the author's personal experience, circle the terms *rain garden* and *runoff* where they are defined, and number two vivid phrases that help make the author's case.

### A Better Place for Rain

1 Last spring, a hard rain turned our school sidewalk into a shallow stream. I watched a plastic wrapper sail past my shoes and disappear into a storm drain. The next day, our science club stood beside the same sidewalk, planning a rain garden. A rain garden is a shallow planted area that holds rainwater for a short time so it can soak into the ground. I had thought a puddle was just a nuisance. Now I saw that water on the move could carry litter along with it.

2 When rain lands on pavement, it cannot soak through easily. Instead, it flows across the surface as runoff. Runoff can pick up dirt and litter on its way to a drain. A rain garden gives some of that water a place to pause. Its soil acts like a sponge, absorbing water while plant roots help keep the soil in place. This does not make every storm harmless, but it can reduce the amount of water rushing across a paved area. That is a practical change, not a magic trick.

3 Our club wants to plant one beside the sidewalk, where water already gathers. We would ask the school to check that the spot is safe for digging and that water will drain away from the building. Then we could choose plants that fit our local weather and help care for them. Some classmates call the project "just a flower bed," but that phrase misses its purpose. A rain garden can turn a soggy trouble spot into a useful place for water to sink in. Our school should give it a try.

## 2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What does the author want the school to do? Quote a phrase that shows this purpose.

2. Why does the author tell the story about the wrapper? Explain how it supports the main idea.

3. What does “Its soil acts like a sponge” mean? How does that comparison help the author's case?

4. What does *runoff* mean in the passage? Why is defining it useful to the author's argument?

## 3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write four sentences persuading your school to make one small change to a different outdoor space. Include a personal observation and a figurative phrase, then explain how each choice helps your main idea.

**ANSWER KEY** # Where Water Goes

**GRADE 6 · 6.CL.1**

## PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the author's personal experience, circle the terms *rain garden* and *runoff* where they are defined, and number two vivid phrases that help make the author's case. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

## PART 2 · ANSWERS

| # | QUESTION | ANSWER |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | What does the author want the school to do? Quote a phrase that shows this purpose. | **The author wants the school to plant a rain garden beside the sidewalk. "Our school should give it a try" shows this purpose.** |
| 2 | Why does the author tell the story about the wrapper? Explain how it supports the main idea. | **The wrapper shows that rainwater can carry litter into a drain, giving the school a reason to slow the water with a rain garden.** |
| 3 | What does "Its soil acts like a sponge" mean? How does that comparison help the author's case? | **The soil absorbs water. The comparison helps readers picture how a rain garden can reduce water flowing across pavement.** |
| 4 | What does *runoff* mean in the passage? Why is defining it useful to the author's argument? | **Runoff is water that flows across a surface instead of soaking in. Defining it helps readers understand the problem the rain garden could reduce.** |

## PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

At recess, I saw three students standing in the bright sun while they waited to sit on the benches. Our school should add a canopy over the benches, a cool roof for our break spot. My observation shows that students already use the benches and would benefit from shade there. The phrase "cool roof" helps readers picture how the canopy would change that space.

Accept equivalent explanations that connect each rhetorical choice to the author's proposal. In the four-sentence response, look for a different outdoor change, an observation, a figurative phrase, and an explanation of how each choice supports the proposal.