From Alone to Connected

Trace how events reveal a theme and build an objective summary.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.7.2 "Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline one event in each paragraph that shows how Maya's feelings about belonging change. Number the underlined events 1, 2, and 3 to show the order in which the theme develops.

The Mural Club

1 On Monday, Maya carried her lunch to the far end of the courtyard, where a cracked stone bench faced the bicycle racks. She had transferred to Harbor Middle the week before and still did not know where to sit. During art class, she noticed a cardboard box beside the supply shelf. It held dried markers, bent paper, and a sign that read, "For the mural club." Maya liked drawing, but she put the box back. Joining a group felt harder than eating alone.

2 The next afternoon, rain forced everyone indoors. Maya saw two students carrying the mural box toward the library, but its bottom split near the door. Markers rolled across the floor. Before she could change her mind, Maya knelt to gather them. She suggested sorting the colors into cups from the art room. The other students, Eli and Noor, thanked her and asked what she liked to draw. Maya described the harbor at sunset, and they invited her to sketch waves on the mural.

3 By Friday, the mural showed blue water, bright boats, and a long bench beneath a row of lanterns. At lunch, Eli saved Maya a seat at a crowded table. Maya looked toward the bicycle racks, where the real stone bench stood empty. She did not suddenly know everyone at Harbor Middle, and she still missed her old school. Yet when Noor asked whether they should add gulls to the mural, Maya opened a fresh marker and began to draw. The courtyard no longer seemed like a place she had to cross alone.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. State one theme of the story in a complete sentence.

2. What action in paragraph 1 shows Maya's starting problem with belonging?

3. How does the spilled marker box in paragraph 2 change Maya's situation? Explain using details from the paragraph.

4. Write an objective summary of the story in exactly two sentences.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write exactly four sentences that explain how one theme develops from the beginning to the end of the story. State the theme in the first sentence, then use one event from the beginning, middle, and end in the next three sentences.

ANSWER KEY

From Alone to Connected

GRADE 7 · RL.7.2

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline one event in each paragraph that shows how Maya's feelings about belonging change. Number the underlined events 1, 2, and 3 to show the order in which the theme develops. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	State one theme of the story in a complete sentence.	**One theme is that taking a small risk to participate can help a person feel connected to others.**
2	What action in paragraph 1 shows Maya's starting problem with belonging?	**Maya puts the mural club box back because joining a group feels harder than eating alone.**
3	How does the spilled marker box in paragraph 2 change Maya's situation? Explain using details from the paragraph.	**Maya helps gather and sort the markers, which starts a conversation with Eli and Noor and leads them to invite her to work on the mural.**
4	Write an objective summary of the story in exactly two sentences.	**Maya, a new student who feels alone, notices the mural club but initially avoids it. After she helps Eli and Noor when their supplies spill, she joins their mural work and begins to feel connected at school.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

A theme is that taking a small risk to connect with others can lessen loneliness. At the beginning, Maya avoids joining the mural club because she feels uncertain. In the middle, gathering markers and offering to sort them allows her to talk with Eli and Noor. By the end, she accepts a seat and continues working on the mural, showing that she feels more connected.

Accept themes about belonging, participation, or taking a risk to make connections when students support them with accurate events. Objective summaries should include Maya's initial isolation, her help with the mural supplies, and her growing connection without personal opinions.