The Leaking Skylight

Trace how a theme grows through actions and outcomes.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.9-10.2 "Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline three details that show how Maya's understanding of responsibility changes. Number the details 1, 2, and 3 in the order they appear so you can track the theme's development.

A Place to Contribute

1 On Friday afternoon, rain pushed through a cracked skylight in the town library's reading room. Water spotted the tables and soaked a box of donated photographs waiting to be cataloged. Maya, a student volunteer, wanted to move the box to a dry shelf and leave the larger problem to adults. Mr. Ortiz, the librarian, handed her towels and asked her to call the facilities office. "The roof inspection cannot happen until Monday," he said. Maya heard the building creak in the storm and wondered what one student could possibly do before then.

2 By Saturday morning, the rain had stopped, but the skylight still dripped whenever wind shook the frame. Maya returned with plastic bins from her garage. She and Mr. Ortiz carried the photographs downstairs, then placed buckets beneath the leak. A neighborhood baker arrived with coffee and offered clean delivery crates. Soon, two classmates came to sort dry books away from damp ones. Maya noticed that each person brought a different useful thing, not a complete solution. She stopped waiting for someone else to take charge and began assigning tasks from Mr. Ortiz's desk.

3 On Monday, a facilities worker inspected the skylight and placed a temporary cover over it. He explained that a repair crew would replace the cracked panel later that week. The library reopened the reading room that afternoon because the photographs were safe, the books had been separated, and the floor was dry. Maya thanked the baker and her classmates, but Mr. Ortiz thanked Maya for starting the calls and organizing the work. Looking at the labeled bins, Maya understood that her small decision had not solved the roof. It had helped other people see where they could contribute.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. In paragraph 1, what belief keeps Maya from doing more than moving the photographs? Cite one detail that shows this belief.

2. State a theme of the passage. Then give two details from paragraph 2 that help develop that theme.

3. How does Maya's realization in the final paragraph refine the theme? Explain the difference between what Maya does and what the facilities worker does.

4. Write an objective summary of the passage in exactly two sentences. Include the problem, the main response, and the outcome without stating an opinion.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a six-sentence analysis. In sentence 1, state a theme; in sentences 2 through 4, explain how one detail from each paragraph develops or refines it in order; in sentences 5 and 6, give an objective summary that does not state the theme.

ANSWER KEY

The Leaking Skylight

HIGH SCHOOL · RL.9-10.2

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline three details that show how Maya's understanding of responsibility changes. Number the details 1, 2, and 3 in the order they appear so you can track the theme's development. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	In paragraph 1, what belief keeps Maya from doing more than moving the photographs? Cite one detail that shows this belief.	**Maya believes the larger problem should be handled by adults. She wonders what one student could possibly do before the inspection on Monday.**
2	State a theme of the passage. Then give two details from paragraph 2 that help develop that theme.	**A theme is that one person can begin a shared effort by helping others contribute. Maya brings plastic bins and begins assigning tasks, while the baker and classmates offer crates, coffee, and help sorting books.**
3	How does Maya's realization in the final paragraph refine the theme? Explain the difference between what Maya does and what the facilities worker does.	**Maya realizes that leadership does not mean doing every job alone. She starts calls and organizes volunteers, while the facilities worker temporarily covers the skylight and a repair crew will replace the panel.**
4	Write an objective summary of the passage in exactly two sentences. Include the problem, the main response, and the outcome without stating an opinion.	**A leaking library skylight threatens photographs and books, so Maya, Mr. Ortiz, and volunteers move materials, separate books, and manage the leak. On Monday, a facilities worker temporarily covers the skylight, and the reading room reopens while a repair crew is scheduled to replace the panel later that week.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Community problems are best addressed when one person begins a shared effort and others contribute what they can. In paragraph 1, Maya's belief that the problem belongs to adults shows why she has not yet acted. In paragraph 2, she uses bins, welcomes others' supplies, and assigns tasks, showing that leadership can connect separate contributions. In paragraph 3, she realizes she did not fix the roof herself, which refines the theme by showing that her action made group help possible. During a storm, a library skylight leaks and threatens donated photographs and books. Maya organizes volunteers to protect the materials until a facilities worker covers the skylight and a repair crew is scheduled.

Accept theme statements that focus on shared responsibility, initiative, or leadership that enables others to help, if supported by details across the passage. Objective summaries should include the leak, the group response, and the Monday outcome without personal judgment or unnecessary minor details.