Greenhouse Before Sale

Notice how a narrator sets the scene and moves events forward.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.3a "Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and point of view and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline details that establish when and where the story begins, circle the words that introduce the narrator, and number the three paragraph-opening sequence signals 1, 2, and 3.

The Morning Shift

1 On Thursday morning, rain tapped the windows of Room 214 while I stood beside our school's old greenhouse. I am Maya Ortiz, an eighth grader on the garden club, and I had promised to bring its wilted tomato plants to the spring plant sale. My partner, Leon, was home sick, so the job felt twice as large. At 7:15, I unlocked the greenhouse with the key our adviser had left in the office for me.

2 First, I rolled up the side panels and checked the trays. Several plants drooped because the soil was dry, but their stems were still green. I filled a watering can at the sink, then moved from tray to tray, giving each plant a slow drink. When the rain softened outside, I carried the weakest plants to a bench near the door, where they could get more light. By 7:40, the greenhouse smelled like wet earth instead of dust.

3 Then the office door opened, and Leon hurried in, holding an umbrella that dripped onto the floor. He apologized for missing the early work, but I handed him a towel and showed him the plants near the door. Together, we tied the tallest stems to thin stakes and placed price tags in each tray. At 8:00, our adviser arrived with the first shoppers. As students stepped inside, I saw leaves lifting toward the brighter sky and knew the sale could begin.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What details establish the setting at the beginning of the story?

2. Who tells the story, and what point of view does the narrator use? Use one detail from the passage as evidence.

3. What does Maya do first after she enters the greenhouse, and what does she do next to help the plants?

4. How do the events in the last paragraph lead logically to the plant sale beginning?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a 6 to 8 sentence first-person scene about completing a task before an event. Establish when and where the scene happens, introduce yourself and one other character, and organize the actions in a clear order using at least two sequence words.

ANSWER KEY

Greenhouse Before Sale

GRADE 8 · W.8.3a

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline details that establish when and where the story begins, circle the words that introduce the narrator, and number the three paragraph-opening sequence signals 1, 2, and 3. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What details establish the setting at the beginning of the story?	**The story begins on Thursday morning in Room 214 beside the school's old greenhouse.**
2	Who tells the story, and what point of view does the narrator use? Use one detail from the passage as evidence.	**Maya Ortiz tells the story in first person. She uses words such as "I" and introduces herself as Maya Ortiz.**
3	What does Maya do first after she enters the greenhouse, and what does she do next to help the plants?	**She rolls up the side panels and checks the trays. Next, she fills a watering can and gives the plants water.**
4	How do the events in the last paragraph lead logically to the plant sale beginning?	**Leon arrives, and he and Maya stake the plants and add price tags. Their adviser brings the first shoppers, so the prepared sale can begin.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

On Saturday afternoon, I arrived at the community library carrying a box of donated mysteries. I am Devin, a volunteer, and my friend Asha was waiting near the return desk. First, we sorted the books into two stacks by author. Next, Asha found several books with torn covers, so I placed them on a repair cart. Then we shelved the undamaged books in alphabetical order. When the clock reached four, the librarian checked our work. We left as a family entered the library, ready to choose books from the neat shelves.

Accept setting details that identify Thursday morning, Room 214, the school, or the greenhouse. For the open response, look for a clear first-person narrator, an established context, another character, and events that unfold in a logical sequence.