Garden Fence Lesson

Trace a lesson as a character changes her choices.

ELA.3.R.1.2 "Explain a theme and how it develops, using details, in a literary text."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two details that show Maya's thinking changes. Circle two details that show how working with others solves the problem.

The Pumpkin Fence

1. Maya hurried to the community garden after school. Her class was growing pumpkins for the fall fair, and today they needed to build a small fence. Maya saw wooden stakes, a spool of string, and a hammer beside the garden bed. "I can finish this before anyone else arrives," she said. She picked up the hammer and began pounding a stake.

2. The stake leaned sideways. Maya hit it again, but it sank at an angle and knocked over two young bean plants. Her face grew hot. Mr. Ortiz, the garden helper, walked over with Jordan and Lila. Maya wanted to hide her mistake. Then she remembered that the fence had to protect everyone's pumpkins, not prove what she could do alone.

3. "Could you show me how to make it straight?" Maya asked. Mr. Ortiz showed the three children how to pull the string tight between two stakes. Jordan held the string, Lila checked the space, and Maya tapped each stake carefully. Soon, the fence stood strong around the pumpkin patch. Maya smiled when the others thanked her for asking them to help.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What theme, or lesson, does Maya learn in the story?

2. How do Maya's words and actions in the first paragraph begin to show the theme? Use one detail.

3. What happens in the second paragraph that helps Maya change her thinking? Explain using a detail.

4. How does the ending develop the theme? Use two details from the last paragraph.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a four-sentence mini-story about a character who faces a problem, changes a choice, and learns a lesson. Then write one sentence that states the theme and names two details from your story that show it.

ANSWER KEY

Garden Fence Lesson

GRADE 3 · ELA.3.R.1.2

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two details that show Maya's thinking changes. Circle two details that show how working with others solves the problem. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What theme, or lesson, does Maya learn in the story?	**Asking for help and working with others can solve a problem.**
2	How do Maya's words and actions in the first paragraph begin to show the theme? Use one detail.	**Maya says she can finish before anyone arrives, showing that she first thinks she must work alone.**
3	What happens in the second paragraph that helps Maya change her thinking? Explain using a detail.	**Her stake leans and knocks over bean plants, and she remembers the fence is meant to protect everyone's pumpkins, not prove she can work alone.**
4	How does the ending develop the theme? Use two details from the last paragraph.	**Maya asks for help, and the children each do a job to build a strong fence together.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Devin tried to carry all the library books at once, even when his friend Nia offered a bag. The books slipped, and he had to pick them up from the floor. Devin accepted the bag, and they carried the books together. They returned every book before the library closed. Theme: Accepting help can make a hard job easier, shown when Devin drops the books and then shares the load with Nia.

Accept theme statements about cooperation, asking for help, or not needing to do everything alone when supported by story details. For the open task, accept a clear problem, a changed choice, and two details that support a reasonable theme.