The Missing Wheel

Track how partners' choices shape a science-fair problem.

ELA.6.R.1.1 "Analyze how the interaction between characters contributes to the development of a plot in a literary text."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline words or actions that show Maya and Eli responding to each other. In the margin, number three moments when their interaction changes what happens next.

The Telescope Test

1. On Saturday, Maya brought her grandmother's donated telescope to the school science fair. When she opened the case, the small brass focusing wheel was missing. Her partner, Eli, frowned. "You probably left it at home," he said. Maya snapped that she had checked twice. Mr. Chen announced that judging would begin in forty minutes, and Maya wanted to search alone. Eli quietly picked up the case and noticed a line of gray dust along its edge.

2. Eli followed the dust trail to a supply table, although Maya told him not to waste time. Beneath a stack of poster boards, he found the wheel beside a jar of magnetic sand. "I did not put it there," Maya said, more softly. Eli explained that the wheel may have rolled off when they tested the sand that morning. Maya remembered bumping the table while rushing to class. Instead of arguing, she asked Eli to hold the telescope steady while she attached the wheel. Together, they tested the focus on a poster of Saturn.

3. The telescope produced a sharp image just as the first judge reached their table. Maya told Eli she was sorry for blaming him. Eli admitted that his first comment had sounded accusing. Their honest exchange gave them time to explain the magnetic-sand test to the judge. The judge asked why the wheel had been loose, and Maya described the bump at the table. Eli added how the dust trail led him to it. By working together after their conflict, the partners were ready when judging began.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How does Eli's first comment about the missing wheel affect Maya's actions?

2. Maya tells Eli not to waste time, but Eli follows the dust trail anyway. How does this interaction move the plot forward?

3. What changes after Maya remembers bumping the table, and how does that change help solve the problem?

4. How does Maya and Eli's honest exchange in the last paragraph contribute to the ending?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a four-sentence mini-scene about two characters facing a problem. Show one character responding to the other, then explain in the final sentence how their interaction changes what happens in the plot.

ANSWER KEY

The Missing Wheel

GRADE 6 · ELA.6.R.1.1

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline words or actions that show Maya and Eli responding to each other. In the margin, number three moments when their interaction changes what happens next. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How does Eli's first comment about the missing wheel affect Maya's actions?	**His comment makes Maya angry and defensive, so she wants to search alone.**
2	Maya tells Eli not to waste time, but Eli follows the dust trail anyway. How does this interaction move the plot forward?	**Eli's choice to keep searching leads him to find the missing focusing wheel.**
3	What changes after Maya remembers bumping the table, and how does that change help solve the problem?	**Maya stops arguing and asks Eli to help. They work together to reattach and test the wheel.**
4	How does Maya and Eli's honest exchange in the last paragraph contribute to the ending?	**They apologize and explain their test clearly to the judge, showing they are ready for judging.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Jordan wanted to leave the community garden when rain began. Nia told him that the new seedlings would wash away without a cover. Jordan changed his mind and helped her stretch a tarp over the bed. Their interaction moved the plot forward because working together saved the plants before the storm.

Accept answers that identify a character interaction and accurately explain its effect on a later event. For the open task, accept varied situations if the response has four sentences, includes two characters, and explains how their interaction changes the plot.