Maps and More

Track how setting, conflict, and character choices build a message.

ELA.8.R.1 "Reading Prose and Poetry"

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline details that reveal Lena's choices or thoughts, and number three events that move the conflict forward. Use your marks to analyze how character and events develop the passage's message.

The Free Shelf

1 On Saturday morning, Lena reached the town library expecting to collect old maps for her history project. Instead, she found the basement hallway blocked by boxes, donated after a storm damaged several homes. Ms. Bell, the librarian, was trying to sort them before an afternoon book sale. Lena glanced at the clock. Her project outline was due Monday, and the maps waited on a cart beyond the clutter. She considered slipping past Ms. Bell and taking only what she needed.

2 Ms. Bell did not ask Lena for help. Still, when a box split and paperbacks scattered across the floor, Lena knelt to gather them. She noticed labels for families whose houses had been flooded, and she imagined searching for a familiar book after losing so much. “Could we make a free shelf?” Lena asked. Ms. Bell paused, then smiled. Together they placed the best books near the entrance and saved the damaged ones for recycling. The maps remained out of reach.

3 By noon, several shoppers stopped at the free shelf before entering the sale. A boy chose a mystery novel and held it tightly against his jacket. Lena had not finished her outline, but she asked Ms. Bell whether she could return after dinner with friends to organize the remaining boxes. Ms. Bell said she would contact the school service club and the families who had made donations. Lena finally collected her maps, realizing that her project could wait until she had helped create a plan.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How does the library basement setting contribute to Lena's conflict?

2. Which event begins to change Lena's decision, and how does it affect her?

3. What do Lena's choices reveal about her character? Include what she says she can do later.

4. What theme does the passage develop? Explain how Lena's final choice supports it.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write exactly three sentences about a different fictional story or one you have read. Name its setting and conflict, describe one event or character choice, and explain a theme those elements develop.

ANSWER KEY

Maps and More

GRADE 8 · ELA.8.R.1

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline details that reveal Lena's choices or thoughts, and number three events that move the conflict forward. Use your marks to analyze how character and events develop the passage's message. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How does the library basement setting contribute to Lena's conflict?	**The blocked basement hallway keeps Lena's maps out of reach while she faces a deadline and sees Ms. Bell sorting storm donations.**
2	Which event begins to change Lena's decision, and how does it affect her?	**When a box splits and books scatter, Lena gathers them, notices the labels for flooded families, and suggests creating a free shelf.**
3	What do Lena's choices reveal about her character? Include what she says she can do later.	**Lena is empathetic and responsible. She helps without being asked and says she can return after dinner with friends to organize more boxes.**
4	What theme does the passage develop? Explain how Lena's final choice supports it.	**A person may need to put others' urgent needs before a personal plan. Lena lets her project wait until she has helped make a plan for the donated books.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

In a story set in a crowded apartment during a citywide blackout, Andre wants to study for an exam, but his neighbor needs help carrying medicine upstairs. When Andre chooses to help, the event reveals that he is responsible and caring. The setting and conflict support the theme that people should put urgent needs ahead of personal plans.

Accept equivalent answers that connect the setting, events, conflict, and Lena's characterization to a reasonable theme. For Question 3, students must distinguish Lena's plan to return with friends from Ms. Bell's plan to contact the service club and donating families.