Bridge Before Rain

Trace how details shape a first-person story.

9.P.EICC.2.a "Share real or imagined experiences by interpreting and constructing texts that tell or include stories. (I/C)"

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline three details that reveal the narrator's feelings, and number 1, 2, and 3 beside the moments that begin, complicate, and resolve the story.

The Showcase Table

1 At 6:10 on Friday, I stood in the school lobby beside our robotics team's display, watching rain stripe the glass doors. The regional showcase opened in twenty minutes, and our model bridge still leaned like a tired elbow. I had designed the sensor system, but Maya had built the supports, so I waited for her with a knot in my stomach. When the lights flickered, the bridge's small warning lamp blinked red. Parents began arriving with umbrellas dripping onto the tile. I kept checking the door, wishing my phone had one more bar of battery.

2 Then Maya rushed in, soaked to the sleeves and carrying a roll of cardboard. "The bus stopped for a fallen branch," she said. Before I could answer, she slid beneath the table and examined the bridge. "The left brace is loose." I wanted to explain that I had followed the plan exactly, yet her calm voice made my defense sound small. We worked without speaking for several minutes. I held the frame steady while she cut a new brace and taped it in place. Outside, thunder pressed against the windows. Inside, the warning lamp changed from red to green.

3 At 6:30, the judges gathered around our table. Maya stepped back and nodded for me to begin. My hands shook as I described how the sensor detected strain, but the bridge stayed level under the test weight. One judge asked why we had chosen cardboard instead of wood. I looked at Maya, then told them we wanted people to see that careful design matters as much as expensive materials. After they moved on, she grinned. The rain had slowed to a hush. Our bridge was still imperfect, but I no longer felt alone in front of it.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How does the narrator's feeling change from the first paragraph to the ending? Use one detail from each part of the story.

2. How do the weather and the warning lamp help build tension before the story's resolution?

3. What do Maya's words and actions reveal about how she handles the problem?

4. What idea does the narrator communicate by explaining the choice to use cardboard?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a 120 to 160-word first-person story about a moment when a plan changed. Build the story with a setting, a complication, at least two concrete details, and an ending that shows how the experience changed the narrator's thinking.

ANSWER KEY

Bridge Before Rain

GRADE 9 · 9.P.EICC.2.a

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline three details that reveal the narrator's feelings, and number 1, 2, and 3 beside the moments that begin, complicate, and resolve the story. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How does the narrator's feeling change from the first paragraph to the ending? Use one detail from each part of the story.	**At first, the narrator is anxious and isolated, shown by the "knot" in their stomach and constant checking of the door. At the end, the narrator feels supported, saying, "I no longer felt alone."**
2	How do the weather and the warning lamp help build tension before the story's resolution?	**The flickering lights, thunder, rain, and red warning lamp create uncertainty about whether the bridge will work. The green lamp and quieter rain signal that the problem has eased.**
3	What do Maya's words and actions reveal about how she handles the problem?	**Maya stays calm, identifies the loose brace, and works with the narrator to repair it instead of blaming anyone.**
4	What idea does the narrator communicate by explaining the choice to use cardboard?	**The narrator communicates that thoughtful design is as important as costly materials.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

On Saturday morning, I carried my sketchbook to the park, planning to draw the old fountain before the art club meeting. Fog hung over the grass, and the stone benches shone with rain. When I reached the fountain, a city crew had fenced it off for repairs. I almost turned around, annoyed that my careful plan had disappeared. Then I noticed a child pressing her mitten against the fence and tracing the fountain's shape in the air. I sat on a nearby bench and drew the fence, the puddles, and her bright red coat. At the meeting, my classmates said the picture felt quiet but alive. I had expected a perfect view of the fountain. Instead, I learned that an interruption can give a story more to notice.

Accept supported interpretations that connect story details to feelings, tension, cooperation, or meaning. For Part 3, accept real or imagined first-person stories of 120 to 160 words that include the required narrative elements and a reflective ending.