What the Boxes Mean

Read closely when evidence supports more than one explanation.

11-12.RC.1 "Analyze what a text says explicitly and implicitly (e.g., inferences and interpretations) by citing strong and thorough textual evidence to support and explain how the evidence develops the analysis..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two details the narrator can directly observe, circle two details that suggest a reason for moving the books, and number one detail that leaves that reason uncertain.

The Library Boxes

1 At 6:10, the library's front door wore a sheet of printer paper: CLOSED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE. The town website called the closure "temporary" and blamed a cracked water pipe, though the notice had not changed in nine days. I had come to return a book, but the slot was sealed with packing tape. Through the glass, I could see three empty shelves where the local history books had stood. A yellow caution sign leaned against the circulation desk. No water showed on the carpet from where I stood, but the room beyond the desk was hidden.

2 Behind the building, a white van idled beside the loading door. Mr. Vale, who usually repaired the library's computers, carried out a box marked LOCAL HISTORY. He set it beside six others, all taped shut. "Are the books coming back?" I asked. "We are keeping them dry," he said, without looking up. A woman in a gray coat stood by the van, checking a list against each box. When Mr. Vale reached the last one, she crossed something out. I could not read the list, and neither of them explained why only the history shelves were empty.

3 On my way home, I passed the council building. A flyer on its door announced a public meeting Tuesday to discuss "the future of municipal spaces," but it did not mention the library. My neighbor Mrs. Lin was taping a smaller notice below it: "Bring your library stories." She said she had heard the building might be sold, then added that her cousin had heard it from someone else. I photographed both notices. In my notebook, I wrote "pipe leak" in one column and "sale" in another, leaving room beneath each. A van can move books for more than one reason.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What does the passage explicitly establish about the library's closure, and what does it leave unconfirmed? Cite two details.

2. What might the removal of the local history books suggest about the library's future? Support one inference with details from two different paragraphs, and explain why it is not certain.

3. How does Mr. Vale's reply support one explanation for moving the boxes while leaving another possible? Use his words and one other detail.

4. Why is Mrs. Lin's report weaker evidence of a sale than an official announcement would be? Explain what the council flyer does and does not establish.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a paragraph interpreting the woman in the gray coat's role in the scene. Use two specific details, explain how they support your interpretation, and identify one fact about her that the text does not establish.

ANSWER KEY

What the Boxes Mean

HIGH SCHOOL · 11-12.RC.1

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two details the narrator can directly observe, circle two details that suggest a reason for moving the books, and number one detail that leaves that reason uncertain. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What does the passage explicitly establish about the library's closure, and what does it leave unconfirmed? Cite two details.	**The door says "CLOSED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE," and the town website calls the closure "temporary" because of a cracked pipe. Neither establishes when the library will reopen.**
2	What might the removal of the local history books suggest about the library's future? Support one inference with details from two different paragraphs, and explain why it is not certain.	**Their removal could suggest preparations for a longer closure: the history shelves are empty, and Mrs. Lin has heard the building might be sold. The report is secondhand, however, and the books could instead be moving to stay dry.**
3	How does Mr. Vale's reply support one explanation for moving the boxes while leaving another possible? Use his words and one other detail.	**"We are keeping them dry" supports moving books because of the reported pipe leak. His reply does not say whether they will return, and the taped boxes could also be part of a longer move.**
4	Why is Mrs. Lin's report weaker evidence of a sale than an official announcement would be? Explain what the council flyer does and does not establish.	**Mrs. Lin heard about a possible sale through her cousin, who heard it from someone else. The council flyer announces a meeting about municipal spaces, but it does not mention the library or announce a sale.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The woman in the gray coat appears to be overseeing the removal of the books rather than simply watching it. She checks a list against each box, which suggests she is tracking what leaves the library. She also crosses something out when Mr. Vale reaches the last box, as if confirming an item. The text never identifies her or says who gave her the list, so her authority remains uncertain.

Accept other interpretations grounded in the cited details, including that the woman is recording boxes for temporary storage. Do not treat the sale, the books' destination, or the woman's identity as established facts.