What Gets Kept

Three short texts about the stories communities preserve

11-12.RC.5 "Analyze the development of similar central ideas across two or more texts and determine how specific details shape and refine the central idea."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB In each text, underline what people first choose to preserve. Circle a later detail that expands what future people could learn.

For the Record

1. Text A. When the Rialto Cinema closed, the town museum asked Lena to help choose objects for a display. The owner suggested a bright poster from opening night. Lena, who had swept the aisles for twenty years, brought a dented flashlight instead. Its switch had been taped twice, and a strip of paper inside its handle listed the seats she had checked each evening for lost gloves and keys. At the unveiling, visitors admired the poster from across the room. Then they leaned close to read Lena's cramped list, and someone asked what it had felt like to close the theater alone.

2. Text B. At Westbrook High, a time capsule committee spread its proposed contents across a table: a championship medal, a dance ticket, and a photograph of the principal cutting a ribbon. Noor noticed there was nothing from the cafeteria, where her aunt knew nearly every student by name. She added a handwritten menu stained with tomato sauce and recorded her aunt describing the morning they handed out bananas during a power outage. The committee kept the medal but placed the menu beside it. Years later, a student opening the capsule might learn not just what Westbrook celebrated, but how it cared for people.

3. Text C. After the river flooded, the council ordered a stone marker engraved with the highest water level. Mateo, whose apartment building had been evacuated, approved of the number but worried about what it could not say. On the marker's dedication day, he brought a notebook filled with neighbors' accounts: one woman carried a stranger's dog upstairs, and two boys translated evacuation notices for families new to the area. The council placed a copy in the library beside its flood maps. The stone would show how high the water rose; the notebook would show who reached for whom.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How do Lena's seat list in Text A and the cafeteria menu in Text B change the stories told by the objects first selected?

2. Text B keeps the medal as well as the menu. Text C keeps the water level as well as the neighbors' accounts. How does each pairing develop a similar central idea?

3. Compare the questions raised by the flashlight in Text A and the notebook in Text C. How does each detail refine what a public display can tell visitors?

4. Across all three texts, whose experiences become visible when someone adds a new object or record? What shared idea do those details develop?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a 70 to 85 word microtext set in a new place where someone chooses what to preserve. Include two concrete details that change what the choice means, then add one sentence comparing your central idea with one of the texts above.

What Gets Kept

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

In each text, underline what people first choose to preserve. Circle a later detail that expands what future people could learn. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How do Lena's seat list in Text A and the cafeteria menu in Text B change the stories told by the objects first selected?	**The seat list adds Lena's routine work to the cinema's opening-night celebration. The menu adds the cafeteria's care for students, especially during a power outage, to the school's record of achievements.**
2	Text B keeps the medal as well as the menu. Text C keeps the water level as well as the neighbors' accounts. How does each pairing develop a similar central idea?	**Neither text rejects the first record. Each shows that adding less visible experiences gives future readers a fuller understanding of the community.**
3	Compare the questions raised by the flashlight in Text A and the notebook in Text C. How does each detail refine what a public display can tell visitors?	**The flashlight makes visitors wonder about Lena's work and solitude, which the poster cannot show. The notebook records neighbors helping one another, which the flood level cannot show.**
4	Across all three texts, whose experiences become visible when someone adds a new object or record? What shared idea do those details develop?	**Lena's work, the cafeteria staff's care, and the flood survivors' help become visible. Together, the details suggest that choices about what to preserve shape how future people understand a community.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

At the bus depot's closing auction, Iris reached for the polished brass clock that had hung above the ticket window. Then she found a clipboard of drivers' notes: “Wait for Mr. Vale at the corner; he walks slowly.” On its last page, a route had been redrawn in pencil to pass the clinic after its hours changed. Iris gave the clock to the buyer and took the clipboard to the neighborhood center, where riders began adding their own notes about the routes they still needed.
Like Text C, my story contrasts a public object with personal records, but the clipboard also helps people plan for the future.

Accept different interpretations when students connect specific details to how each text develops its central idea. For Your Turn, check that the microtext is 70 to 85 words and that the final sentence makes a meaningful comparison.