Names in the Flood

Trace how a discovery changes what people know and do.

11-12.RC.6 "Analyze a complex set of ideas or sequence of events and explain how specific ideas, events, and individuals develop throughout the text."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two details that change Mara's understanding of the ledgers. Circle an action Luis takes after each discovery, then number the discoveries and actions in the order they happen.

The List in Mara's Pocket

1 By dusk, the river had reached the bottom stair of the town archive. Mara, its volunteer keeper, packed old flood ledgers into cardboard boxes. She believed the ledgers mattered because they preserved the names of people earlier storms had displaced. Luis arrived in a school van to collect spare blankets for the shelter. "Paper won't keep anyone dry," he said, watching Mara tape another box. Then a town alert declared Mill Court empty and listed the addresses checked. Mara opened a ledger from the last flood: its Mill Court entries included basement apartments missing from the alert's list.

2 Mara wanted to take the ledger straight to the shelter as proof that the alert was wrong. Luis stopped her: the entries were six years old, and the apartments might be empty. Instead, they drove to Mill Court. They found five residents still in the basement units, filling bags with clothes but unaware of the shelter van. One resident, Tessa, said three neighbors were working the late shift and might return to flooded rooms. Mara wrote down their names, then crossed out the word "safe" beside the five residents. She had written it before asking whether they had a way out.

3 At the shelter, Luis helped the five residents inside while Mara told the dispatcher about the three absent neighbors. The dispatcher could send a driver to meet the late shift, but only if someone knew where the workers would arrive. Tessa supplied a bus stop; Luis offered to wait there with the van. Mara added "unconfirmed" beside the three names and recorded who had supplied each detail. She left the old ledgers on the archive's upper shelves, where floodwater might still reach them. In her pocket was a new list, useful precisely because it showed what no one yet knew.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How does Mara's reason for valuing the ledgers change when she reads the town alert? Use a detail from before and after the alert.

2. How does Luis's view of the ledgers affect what he and Mara do, first at the archive and then at the end?

3. Why does Mara cross out “safe” at Mill Court, and how does her later note about the three workers show a change in her thinking?

4. How does Tessa's information change the plan after the five residents are found? Trace the steps that follow.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write one paragraph explaining how the ending complicates the choice between saving old records and helping people now. Use at least two details from different paragraphs, and explain why Mara's new list is more useful than a simple count of evacuees.

ANSWER KEY

Names in the Flood

HIGH SCHOOL · 11-12.RC.6

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two details that change Mara's understanding of the ledgers. Circle an action Luis takes after each discovery, then number the discoveries and actions in the order they happen. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How does Mara's reason for valuing the ledgers change when she reads the town alert? Use a detail from before and after the alert.	**At first, Mara values the ledgers for preserving the names of people displaced by past storms. When she sees basement apartments in a ledger but not on the alert's list, the old record becomes a reason to check whether people have been overlooked now.**
2	How does Luis's view of the ledgers affect what he and Mara do, first at the archive and then at the end?	**Luis initially dismisses the paper and warns that six-year-old entries cannot prove the apartments are occupied, so they visit Mill Court. By the end, he acts on the new information by offering to meet the absent workers at the bus stop.**
3	Why does Mara cross out “safe” at Mill Court, and how does her later note about the three workers show a change in her thinking?	**Finding the five residents did not mean they had a way out. Later, Mara marks the absent workers “unconfirmed” rather than assuming they are safe, and she records where her information came from.**
4	How does Tessa's information change the plan after the five residents are found? Trace the steps that follow.	**Tessa tells them three neighbors are on the late shift. Mara alerts the dispatcher, Tessa identifies the workers' bus stop, and Luis offers to wait there with the van.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

At first, Mara treats the ledgers as objects worth saving because they preserve the names of people displaced by earlier floods. Yet an old entry cannot prove that someone still lives at Mill Court, as Luis points out. Their visit reveals five residents who need a ride and three workers who might return to danger. By leaving the ledgers upstairs and carrying a new list, Mara does not abandon recordkeeping. Her list guides action because it names people who may need help, identifies who supplied the information, and marks what remains unknown instead of counting everyone as safe.

Accept interpretations that distinguish evidence of past occupancy from verified information about current residents. Responses should connect specific discoveries to later decisions, not just list events.