The Long Way

A story about choices and what happens next

3.RC.3 "Describe characters in a story (e.g., their traits, motivations, or feelings), and explain how their actions contribute to the plot."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two choices Nia makes. Circle a clue about why she makes each choice so you can explain what happens because of it.

The Seedling Tray

1. On Friday, Nia carried a tray of bean seedlings to the school garden. Her class would plant them before lunch. Nia liked having a plan, so she had counted every cup twice. At the garden gate, she stopped. A fallen branch lay across the narrow path. The soil in the cups was already drying in the warm sun.

2. Her friend Luis pointed toward the office, but Nia shook her head. "We can carry the tray around the branch," she said. Nia did not want to waste time asking an adult for help. They took the long way past the playground. Halfway there, Nia tripped over a root. The tray tipped, and three cups spilled onto the path.

3. At first, Nia stared at the muddy cups. She wanted to save every seedling. Then she took a breath and asked Luis to help gather the soil. Luis fetched a small shovel from the garden shed. Together they filled the cups again and planted every seedling before lunch. Nia thanked Luis. Asking for help kept the spilled seedlings from being left behind.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What does counting every cup twice show about Nia? Use that detail to describe her.

2. Why does Nia choose the long way instead of going to the office?

3. How does Nia's choice to take the long way change what happens to the seedlings?

4. What does Luis do after the cups spill, and how does his help affect the ending?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine Nia makes a different choice when she sees the branch. Write 3 or 4 sentences explaining what she chooses, why she chooses it, and how that choice changes what happens next.

ANSWER KEY

The Long Way

GRADE 3 · 3.RC.3

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two choices Nia makes. Circle a clue about why she makes each choice so you can explain what happens because of it. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What does counting every cup twice show about Nia? Use that detail to describe her.	**Nia likes to be prepared and careful. Counting the cups twice shows she wants to follow her plan.**
2	Why does Nia choose the long way instead of going to the office?	**She does not want to spend time asking an adult for help.**
3	How does Nia's choice to take the long way change what happens to the seedlings?	**On the long way, Nia trips over a root, and three cups spill.**
4	What does Luis do after the cups spill, and how does his help affect the ending?	**Luis gets a shovel and helps Nia refill the cups. They are able to plant every seedling before lunch.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Nia could ask an adult at the office to move the branch because she wants to keep the seedlings safe. While they wait, she and Luis set the tray in the shade. The adult clears the path, and they carry the cups straight to the garden. No cups spill, so they plant the seedlings before lunch.

Accept other traits or motivations when students support them with passage details. For Your Turn, look for a new choice, a reason for it, and a clear effect on the story.