A Stronger Bridge

Trace how a character's choices develop a theme.

6.RC.2 "Determine how a theme or central idea of a work of literature is conveyed through particular details; provide a detailed, objective summary of the text."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline one detail showing how Nia treats Leo at first and one showing how she treats him later, then circle a detail showing the result of their work together.

The Second Fold

1 Nia carried her paper bridge to the library's invention fair in a shoe box. The challenge was to span the gap between two desks with only paper and tape. Nia had worked alone all week, folding strips into stiff beams. At home, her little brother, Leo, had asked to help, but she had waved him away. "If it breaks, at least it will be my own mistake," she had said. Now, as the judge placed a stack of coins at its center, one beam bent and the coins slid onto the floor.

2 Nia reached for the box, ready to hide the bridge. Leo, who had come to watch, pointed at the bent beam. "What if we fold a second strip and slide it inside?" he asked. Nia started to say that the fair was almost over, but she noticed another team was still testing. She pulled the box closer and handed Leo a sheet of paper. While he folded, she carefully peeled away a piece of tape. Together they tucked the new strip into the beam and taped the opening shut.

3 At the next test, the judge set down the coins one at a time. The bridge held the same stack that had fallen before, then carried three more coins. Nia grinned, but the judge's blue ribbon went to a bridge that held twice as many. When someone asked whether she was disappointed, Nia looked at Leo, who had a bit of tape on his sleeve. "I came here to prove I could do everything myself," she said. On the walk home, she gave Leo the box and asked what they should build next.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What theme does Nia's experience suggest? Support your answer with one detail from the story.

2. How does Nia's response to Leo at home help develop the theme?

3. How does Nia's choice after the bridge bends show a change in her thinking?

4. Why does it matter to the theme that Nia does not win the blue ribbon?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a detailed, objective summary of the story in four or five sentences. Include the challenge, Nia's decision after the first test, and what happens at the end, without adding your opinion.

ANSWER KEY

A Stronger Bridge

GRADE 6 · 6.RC.2

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline one detail showing how Nia treats Leo at first and one showing how she treats him later, then circle a detail showing the result of their work together. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What theme does Nia's experience suggest? Support your answer with one detail from the story.	**Accepting help can make an idea stronger. After Nia works with Leo, their bridge holds more coins.**
2	How does Nia's response to Leo at home help develop the theme?	**Nia waves Leo away because she wants the bridge to be entirely her own work. This sets up a contrast with her later choice to accept his help.**
3	How does Nia's choice after the bridge bends show a change in her thinking?	**Instead of hiding the bridge, Nia pulls the box closer and hands Leo paper. She is willing to try his idea and work with him.**
4	Why does it matter to the theme that Nia does not win the blue ribbon?	**Nia still invites Leo to build something else with her. Their shared work matters to her even though they did not win.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Nia brings a paper bridge she built alone to an invention fair, but it bends when the judge tests it with coins. Her brother Leo suggests adding a folded strip inside the weak beam. Nia accepts his help, and they repair the bridge together. At the next test, it holds the original stack of coins and three more. Another bridge wins the blue ribbon, but Nia asks Leo what they should build next.

Accept other supported themes, such as working together can matter more than winning. Summaries should cover the main events in order and leave out personal judgments.