The Puddle Problem

Trace two ideas from a discovery to a lasting plan

7.RC.5 "Analyze the development of two or more central ideas over the course of a text; provide a detailed, objective summary of the text."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline details that show how Maya's understanding of the puddle changes. Circle details that show how responsibility for the path spreads beyond Maya.

The Path to the Garden

1. On Monday, Maya noticed a puddle stretching across the path to the school garden. By Wednesday, it was still there, although the sky had been clear for two days. Most students stepped around it and blamed the heavy rain from the weekend. Maya saw that the grass beyond the path was dry. She sketched the puddle's edge in her notebook each afternoon and found that it kept widening. She wondered why water stayed on one patch of pavement when the rest of the yard had dried.

2. At lunch, Maya showed her sketches to Eli, who pointed out a drain beneath a mat of wet leaves. They asked the custodian, Ms. Chen, whether they could help. With her watching, they pulled leaves away using gloves. Water began slipping through the grate, but Ms. Chen warned that the drain could clog again after the next storm. Maya realized her sketches had revealed more than a strange puddle. They had helped the group find its cause, and clearing it once would not be enough.

3. The next day, Eli invited classmates to check the path after rain, and Ms. Chen agreed to collect any leaves they gathered. Maya posted a simple list showing when each pair would check the drain. At first, some students forgot, so Eli added a reminder to the garden club's meeting notes. After another storm, the path was clear, and the group found a fresh pile of leaves beside the grate before it blocked the water. Maya kept drawing the path, not just to spot trouble, but to see whether their plan worked.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How does Maya's use of sketches change from the first paragraph to the last? What does this change show about careful observation?

2. How does the group's response change between clearing the leaves and the next storm? Give two details.

3. How does finding the cause of the puddle make the group's longer-term plan possible? Use details from the text.

4. Write a three-sentence objective summary that includes the problem, what the group learns, and how it responds over time.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine the story ended just after Ms. Chen warned that the drain could clog again. In one paragraph, explain how removing the final paragraph would change the development of two central ideas. For each idea, use a detail from the first two paragraphs and explain what the actual ending adds.

ANSWER KEY

The Puddle Problem

GRADE 7 · 7.RC.5

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline details that show how Maya's understanding of the puddle changes. Circle details that show how responsibility for the path spreads beyond Maya. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How does Maya's use of sketches change from the first paragraph to the last? What does this change show about careful observation?	**At first, Maya sketches the puddle to track its growth and help find its cause. By the end, she draws the path to check whether the group's plan works. Observation helps both identify a problem and test a solution.**
2	How does the group's response change between clearing the leaves and the next storm? Give two details.	**They first clear the drain once. Then classmates take turns checking it after rain, and Eli adds a reminder when some students forget.**
3	How does finding the cause of the puddle make the group's longer-term plan possible? Use details from the text.	**Eli finds leaves covering the drain, and water flows through when they remove them. Knowing leaves cause the blockage lets the group plan to check the drain and gather leaves before another clog forms.**
4	Write a three-sentence objective summary that includes the problem, what the group learns, and how it responds over time.	**Maya notices that a puddle remains on a school path and uses sketches to track it. After Eli spots leaves blocking a drain, they clear it with Ms. Chen's help and learn that it may clog again. The students arrange regular checks and reminders, and their plan keeps the path clear after another storm.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

If the story ended after Ms. Chen's warning, careful observation would still help Maya understand the puddle: her sketches showed it was widening, and Eli noticed the leaves covering the drain. Readers would not see Maya use her drawings to check whether a solution lasts. The group would have cleared the drain once, but its shared responsibility would remain only a possibility. The actual ending shows classmates taking turns and adding reminders. They find leaves before the drain clogs again, so both observation and cooperation become ongoing habits.

Accept other accurate descriptions of the ideas, such as using evidence to solve problems and working together to maintain a solution. Summaries should include the problem, discovery, and continuing plan without personal opinions.