Voices Above Water

Use what a story states and suggests to support your ideas.

8.RC.1 "Analyze what a text says explicitly as well as draw inferences through strong and supportive textual evidence."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two facts about what Imani and Ms. Chen save. Circle two clues that help you infer how Imani feels, even when the story does not name her feeling.

The Interviews

1 At the town library, a storm had knocked out the lights, but water was the bigger problem. It crept under the basement door while Imani and the librarian, Ms. Chen, carried boxes up the stairs. The boxes held recorded interviews with longtime residents, each labeled in careful blue ink. Imani reached for a carton marked "Founders Day," then stopped at a familiar name: her grandfather, who had died last spring. She had never heard his recorded voice. Above them, thunder shook the windows, and Ms. Chen called, "Two more trips before we leave."

2 Imani lifted her grandfather's carton onto the highest shelf instead of taking it upstairs. "The water hasn't reached here," she said, though a dark line was already spreading along the wall. Ms. Chen pointed to a small plastic case near the stairs. Inside were memory cards holding copies of every interview, made the week before. "Take those first," she said. Imani hesitated, then slipped the case into her jacket. On their next trip, she carried two lighter boxes while Ms. Chen dragged the heavy carton toward the stairs.

3 By the time they reached the front desk, the basement steps had disappeared beneath muddy water. Imani set down the boxes and checked the case in her jacket. Ms. Chen called the fire department, then handed Imani a pencil and a dry receipt. Together they listed the cartons still below. When Imani wrote her grandfather's name, her hand shook. She folded the receipt around the plastic case and said, "He always told me to listen to other people first. I think he'd like that we kept their voices safe."

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Why do Imani and Ms. Chen need to work quickly? Support your answer with two details from the story.

2. What does Imani seem to hope when she puts her grandfather's carton on the highest shelf? Which detail suggests her plan may not work?

3. Why might Ms. Chen tell Imani to take the memory cards before another box? Use a detail from the story to support your inference.

4. After Imani reaches the front desk, what shows that she is still worried about the cartons left below? Give two clues.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a four-sentence note Imani might leave for library visitors about why the interviews matter. Include two different details from the story as evidence, and explain what those details suggest about the community.

ANSWER KEY

Voices Above Water

GRADE 8 · 8.RC.1

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two facts about what Imani and Ms. Chen save. Circle two clues that help you infer how Imani feels, even when the story does not name her feeling. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Why do Imani and Ms. Chen need to work quickly? Support your answer with two details from the story.	**Water is entering the basement, and Ms. Chen says they have only two more trips before they must leave. By the end, muddy water covers the basement steps.**
2	What does Imani seem to hope when she puts her grandfather's carton on the highest shelf? Which detail suggests her plan may not work?	**She seems to hope the carton will stay dry on the high shelf. A dark line is already spreading along the wall, showing that the water is rising.**
3	Why might Ms. Chen tell Imani to take the memory cards before another box? Use a detail from the story to support your inference.	**The cards hold copies of every interview, so taking the small case protects all the recordings at once.**
4	After Imani reaches the front desk, what shows that she is still worried about the cartons left below? Give two clues.	**She helps list the cartons still in the basement, and her hand shakes when she writes her grandfather's name.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The boxes hold recorded interviews with longtime residents, including my grandfather. During the flood, we saved memory cards containing copies of every interview. Those recordings let people hear neighbors whose stories might otherwise be lost. I hope visitors listen and learn about the people who helped shape this town.

Accept other well-supported inferences that distinguish what the story states from what it suggests. For Part 3, look for four sentences, two accurate story details, and an explanation of why the interviews matter to the community.