What We Keep

Trace how details develop two themes across a story.

9-10.RC.2 "Analyze in detail the development of two or more themes over the course of a work of literature, including how they emerge and are specific and refined by specific details."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline one detail in each paragraph about what Lena thinks should happen to the books. Circle one detail in each paragraph that shows how she responds to help, then number each set 1, 2, and 3 to track the changes.

The Blue Card

1 On the morning the bookshop's ceiling began to drip, Lena stacked her grandmother's novels beneath a plastic tarp. The shop had been closed since her grandmother died, but Lena still kept the shelves in their old order. A blue card marked the poetry section: "For anyone who needs a quieter day." When Mr. Ortiz from the apartment upstairs offered to help move the books, Lena blocked the doorway with a box. "I know where everything belongs," she said. She hated the thought of strangers carrying away the last arrangement her grandmother had made.

2 By noon, the tarp sagged with water, and a dark stain crossed the blue card. Lena could not lift the wet boxes alone. Mr. Ortiz returned with his daughter, who brought dry crates and asked which books mattered most. Lena almost said all of them. Then she found a list inside the register: names of neighbors beside titles her grandmother had set aside for them. She pointed to the poetry shelf and asked the two to carry those books first. As they worked, she told them why each name was on the list.

3 The landlord said repairs would keep the shop closed for months. Outside, Mr. Ortiz's daughter lined the rescued books along the hallway, where neighbors began reading the spines. Lena held the damp blue card until its ink stained her thumb. Instead of putting it back in a drawer, she copied its message onto a clean sheet and taped it above the crates. She asked the daughter to choose a book for the first hallway loan. When a neighbor asked whose library it was, Lena named her grandmother, then Mr. Ortiz and his daughter.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How do the shelves and Lena's words in paragraph 1 establish her first idea of preserving her grandmother's memory?

2. How does the list Lena finds in paragraph 2 complicate her first idea of what matters about the books?

3. How does Lena's response to help change across the three paragraphs? Use a detail from each paragraph.

4. How do two details in the final paragraph bring together the story's ideas about memory and accepting help?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine Lena instead stores all the rescued books in a locked room. In one paragraph, explain how that ending would change the development of both themes. Support your interpretation with one detail from paragraph 1 and one from paragraph 2.

What We Keep

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline one detail in each paragraph about what Lena thinks should happen to the books. Circle one detail in each paragraph that shows how she responds to help, then number each set 1, 2, and 3 to track the changes. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How do the shelves and Lena's words in paragraph 1 establish her first idea of preserving her grandmother's memory?	**Lena keeps the shelves in their old order and says she knows where everything belongs. She initially treats preserving her grandmother's arrangement as a way to preserve her memory.**
2	How does the list Lena finds in paragraph 2 complicate her first idea of what matters about the books?	**The list connects specific books to neighbors, suggesting that her grandmother valued sharing books with people, not just keeping them in place.**
3	How does Lena's response to help change across the three paragraphs? Use a detail from each paragraph.	**She first blocks Mr. Ortiz at the doorway. Next, she asks him and his daughter to carry the poetry books. Finally, she asks the daughter to choose a book for the first hallway loan.**
4	How do two details in the final paragraph bring together the story's ideas about memory and accepting help?	**Lena copies her grandmother's message above the shared books, keeping its purpose alive. She also invites the daughter to choose a book and names both helpers as part of the library.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

If Lena locked the books away, the story would return to her first belief that keeping her grandmother's shelves in their old order is the best way to remember her. But the list of neighbors and titles in the register shows that her grandmother connected books to people. A locked room would stop that practice. It would also undo Lena's growing trust: after asking Mr. Ortiz and his daughter to carry the poetry books, she would refuse to share the result of their work.

Accept other supported interpretations that trace change over the story rather than naming themes alone. For the open task, look for an explanation of how the altered ending affects both memory and accepting help, supported by details from the specified paragraphs.