The Changed Cue

Follow how one event leads to the next in a narrative.

9-10.W.3.b "Create a smooth progression of experiences or events."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Number three turning points in the passage: the blocked entrance, the revised cue, and the successful entrance. Circle two words or phrases that help connect one turning point to the next.

The Door That Would Not Open

1. Ten minutes before the curtain rose, I checked the painted door at the back of our school stage. In the first scene, Mara was supposed to enter through it carrying a tray of paper cups. I pulled the handle, but the door would not move. Someone had painted its frame that afternoon, and a tacky strip along the edge had glued it shut. I tried again, gently, while the orchestra tuned beyond the curtain. Mara appeared with the tray and stopped when she saw my hand on the handle. We had no time to force the door without damaging the set.

2. At first, I told Mara to use the side entrance instead. She took three steps toward it, then froze: that path crossed the audience's view before her cue. I glanced at the script in my pocket. Just before Mara entered, Leo had to shout, 'Where are the cups?' I asked him to move that line to the far side of the stage, then asked Mara to enter from the opposite wing. Now his question would draw every eye away from her new route. We practiced the change once behind the closed curtain, using an empty tray.

3. When the curtain opened, I watched from the wing, holding my breath through Leo's first lines. He crossed to the far side just as we had practiced and called out his question. Mara slipped in from the opposite wing, lifting the tray as if she had been there all along. Only after the scene ended did I look back at the painted door. A thin line of white paint still sealed its edge, untouched. I left it that way until the final bow; opening it now would not help the play, and it might ruin the set.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How does the stuck door change what must happen next in the scene?

2. Why does the narrator reject the side entrance, and what change follows?

3. How does moving Leo's line help Mara's new entrance fit smoothly into the scene?

4. How does the final look at the door bring the story back to its opening problem?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write one paragraph of 6 to 8 sentences about a small problem during an event you invent. Show an initial plan, a setback, an adjustment, and an outcome; use at least two time or cause links so each event leads clearly to the next.

ANSWER KEY

The Changed Cue

HIGH SCHOOL · 9-10.W.3.b

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Number three turning points in the passage: the blocked entrance, the revised cue, and the successful entrance. Circle two words or phrases that help connect one turning point to the next. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How does the stuck door change what must happen next in the scene?	**Mara cannot make her planned entrance through the door, so the narrator must find another route for her.**
2	Why does the narrator reject the side entrance, and what change follows?	**The side entrance would put Mara in the audience's view before her cue. The narrator instead has Leo move his line and Mara enter from the opposite wing.**
3	How does moving Leo's line help Mara's new entrance fit smoothly into the scene?	**Leo's question draws the audience's attention to the far side of the stage while Mara enters from the opposite wing.**
4	How does the final look at the door bring the story back to its opening problem?	**The door is still sealed, confirming that the new entrance solved the problem without forcing the door or damaging the set.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

On Saturday, I arranged handmade postcards on a table at the neighborhood fair. A gust swept the top row into the grass just before visitors arrived. First, I weighed down each corner with a pebble, but the cards still flipped when the wind changed. Because the table stood beside a fence, I borrowed string and clipped the postcards to a line between two posts. Soon the cards hung at eye level instead of skidding across the table. A visitor stopped to ask who had drawn the creek on one postcard. I called the artist over, glad our rushed change had given her work a better view.

For the marking job, accept turning points that identify the blocked door, the changed entrance and cue, and Mara's successful entrance. Accept any accurate time or cause phrases that connect events, and accept varied Part 3 scenarios when each change follows clearly from what came before.