Where Rain Goes

Trace how an explanation builds from problem to process to limits.

C.11-12.2 "Compose informative/explanatory texts to examine and/or convey complex ideas, concepts and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization and analysis of content..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the sentence that introduces the runoff problem, number three linked steps that explain how a rain garden handles water, and circle two transitions that connect causes, limits, or conclusions. Use your marks to trace how each part of the explanation builds on the last.

A Garden Built for Rain

1. After a heavy rain, water can race across a parking lot instead of soaking into the ground. This runoff carries soil, oil, and other pollutants toward storm drains, which often empty into nearby waterways. A rain garden offers a different route. It is a shallow planted area that collects runoff from roofs, sidewalks, or pavement. Rather than acting like a permanent pond, the garden holds water briefly while it sinks into the soil. Its purpose is not simply to make a street look greener. Its design changes where stormwater goes and how quickly it gets there.

2. The process begins when a curb opening or downspout directs runoff into the garden. A dip in the ground slows the moving water, giving sediment time to settle. Beneath the plants, loose soil allows water to filter downward; roots help maintain spaces through which water can move. Some water also returns to the air when plants release moisture, a process called transpiration. These steps work together rather than independently: slowing the flow gives the soil time to absorb water, while the plants help the soil stay able to receive future storms. The garden functions as a temporary holding space, not a drain with leaves.

3. A rain garden, however, cannot handle every storm by itself. If water stays for too long, the soil may be too compacted to drain well, or the garden may be too small for the area that feeds it. Designers therefore consider both the amount of runoff and the soil's ability to absorb it; they also plan an overflow route for unusually heavy rain. These limits do not cancel the garden's value. They show why its size, location, and soil matter as much as its plants. When those parts fit together, a rain garden can reduce the volume and speed of runoff reaching a storm drain.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Why does the writer explain runoff before defining a rain garden? Cite one detail from the opening paragraph.

2. How does the sentence beginning “These steps work together” clarify the relationship between two earlier details?

3. What shift does “however” signal in the final paragraph, and which design details develop that shift?

4. How does the final sentence follow from both the process and the limits explained earlier?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Use these facts to write one formal, 90- to 110-word paragraph for a younger student explaining how a bicycle helmet reduces injury: the outer shell spreads impact force, the foam liner compresses and increases stopping time, and a fastened strap holds the helmet in place. Introduce the topic, connect the parts in a logical order, and end with a conclusion supported by your explanation.

ANSWER KEY

Where Rain Goes

HIGH SCHOOL · C.11-12.2

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the sentence that introduces the runoff problem, number three linked steps that explain how a rain garden handles water, and circle two transitions that connect causes, limits, or conclusions. Use your marks to trace how each part of the explanation builds on the last. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Why does the writer explain runoff before defining a rain garden? Cite one detail from the opening paragraph.	**The runoff problem establishes why the garden is needed. For example, water can carry pollutants toward storm drains that empty into waterways.**
2	How does the sentence beginning "These steps work together" clarify the relationship between two earlier details?	**It explains that slowing the water gives soil time to absorb it, while plant roots help keep spaces in the soil open for future runoff.**
3	What shift does "however" signal in the final paragraph, and which design details develop that shift?	**It shifts from how the garden works to its limits. Soil that drains poorly, a garden that is too small, and the need for an overflow route develop those limits.**
4	How does the final sentence follow from both the process and the limits explained earlier?	**The process shows how the garden slows and absorbs water; the limits show that its size, location, and soil must fit the runoff it receives.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

A bicycle helmet reduces the risk of head injury by managing what happens during a crash. First, the hard outer shell spreads the force of an impact over a wider area instead of concentrating it at one point. Beneath that shell, the foam liner compresses, increasing the time it takes the head to stop and reducing the force on it. A fastened, snug strap keeps the helmet positioned so the shell and foam can do their jobs. These parts work together, rather than serving as separate decorations. A properly worn helmet cannot prevent every injury, but its design can make an impact less severe.

Accept other accurate links between the passage's details and its organization. For Part 3, look for a connected explanation of all three helmet parts, a formal tone, and a conclusion that does not claim helmets prevent every injury.