The Gate Again

Track a story that moves into the past and returns.

C.5.3.b "Orient the reader by establishing a situation and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that reflects linear, nonlinear or circular structure."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the words that establish when and where the story begins, circle the narrator and Theo when they are introduced, and write 1, 2, and 3 beside the latch discovery, the rabbit's arrival, and the rabbit's exit in the order they happened.

The Garden Gate

1 The wind pushed against the garden gate. On Saturday morning, I stood beside my friend Theo, holding a tray of bean seedlings for our class plot. The gate swung open with a squeal, and a rabbit darted between the rows. "If it gets to the seedlings, our garden will be its lunch," Theo said. I set down the tray and reached for the broken latch.

2 Two days earlier, on Thursday, I had noticed that the latch was hanging by one screw. Our teacher, Ms. Lin, had asked me to tell the garden club, but I forgot when the lunch bell rang. Now, watching the rabbit nose toward the lettuce, I wished I had spoken up. Theo found a spare twist tie in his pocket, and I pulled the gate closed.

3 Theo held the gate steady while I looped the tie around the latch. Before I tightened it, we stepped aside and waited. The rabbit hopped past our shoes and out through the opening. I fastened the tie, then tested the gate with one careful push. It stayed shut. The wind pushed against the garden gate. This time, I heard only leaves rustling behind it.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What does the opening tell you about when and where the story begins, and who is telling it?

2. Why does the story move back to Thursday after beginning on Saturday?

3. What does the word "Now" in the second paragraph tell you about the order of events?

4. The first sentence appears again near the end. What is different when the wind pushes the gate the second time?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a six-sentence story about a problem you invent. Begin by showing the time, place, narrator, and another character; move back to an earlier event with a time clue, return to the present, and repeat your first sentence at the end.

ANSWER KEY # The Gate Again

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the words that establish when and where the story begins, circle the narrator and Theo when they are introduced, and write 1, 2, and 3 beside the latch discovery, the rabbit's arrival, and the rabbit's exit in the order they happened. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What does the opening tell you about when and where the story begins, and who is telling it?	**It begins on Saturday morning at the class garden gate. The narrator is a student who is there with Theo.**
2	Why does the story move back to Thursday after beginning on Saturday?	**Thursday shows that the narrator noticed the broken latch before the rabbit entered on Saturday but forgot to report it.**
3	What does the word "Now" in the second paragraph tell you about the order of events?	**It tells the reader that the story has returned from Thursday to the events happening on Saturday.**
4	The first sentence appears again near the end. What is different when the wind pushes the gate the second time?	**The gate swung open the first time, but it stays shut after the narrator fastens the latch.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

At dawn, Dad and I stood under the porch light. Yesterday, we had hung our birdhouse beside the noisy back door, where birds kept flying away. Now Dad held the ladder while I moved the birdhouse to the quiet apple tree. A chickadee slipped inside, and we grinned at each other. We returned to the porch to watch without making a sound. At dawn, Dad and I stood under the porch light.

For the marking task, accept the Thursday latch discovery as 1, the rabbit's arrival as 2, and its exit as 3. In Part 3, look for a clear present-to-past-to-present sequence and an opening sentence repeated at the end.