# Leave Some Leaves

Trace how an author supports a schoolyard plan

**RI.4.8** "Explain how an author uses reasons and evidence to support particular claims the author makes in a text."

NAME _____ DATE _____

## 1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

**YOUR JOB** Underline the author's main claim, circle two reasons for it, and number the details that support each reason. Use matching numbers to show which details go with which reason.

### A Place for Fallen Leaves

1. When autumn leaves cover our schoolyard, they do not all belong in trash bags. Our school should leave some leaves in its garden beds. Fallen leaves form a loose layer over the soil. Beetles and other small animals can hide beneath that layer when the weather turns cold. Leaving leaves in the beds gives these animals a place to shelter instead of clearing away every hiding spot.

2. Leaves can help the garden in another way, too. Over time, fungi and other decomposers break dead leaves into smaller pieces. The broken-down material adds nutrients to the soil, which plants need to grow. A layer of leaves can also slow the drying of soil by shading it. These facts are reasons to keep a useful layer of leaves where garden plants grow.

3. Leaving some leaves does not mean leaving them everywhere. Wet leaves can make a paved walkway slippery, so paths should be cleared. A thick layer of leaves can also block sunlight from lawn grass. Students could rake leaves off the paths and lawn and place some in garden beds. That way, the school can protect walking areas and grass while still helping the garden and its tiny visitors.

## 2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What does the author want the school to do? Which detail about small animals supports that claim?

2. How does the detail about decomposers support the author's claim?

3. Which detail shows that leaves can help garden plants before they break down? Explain how it supports the author's claim.

4. The author says leaves should not stay everywhere. Which two details support that idea, and how?

## 3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a new claim about why the school should put a sign beside its leaf-filled garden beds. Use two details from the passage as evidence, and explain how each one supports your claim.

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## PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the author's main claim, circle two reasons for it, and number the details that support each reason. Use matching numbers to show which details go with which reason. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

## PART 2 · ANSWERS

| # | QUESTION | ANSWER |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | What does the author want the school to do? Which detail about small animals supports that claim? | **The author wants the school to leave some leaves in garden beds. Beetles and other small animals can hide beneath the leaves when it gets cold.** |
| 2 | How does the detail about decomposers support the author's claim? | **Decomposers break down leaves, adding nutrients to the soil. This shows that leaves in garden beds can help plants grow.** |
| 3 | Which detail shows that leaves can help garden plants before they break down? Explain how it supports the author's claim. | **A layer of leaves shades the soil and slows its drying. This gives another reason to leave some leaves where garden plants grow.** |
| 4 | The author says leaves should not stay everywhere. Which two details support that idea, and how? | **Wet leaves can make paved paths slippery, and thick leaves can block sunlight from lawn grass. These details support clearing leaves from paths and lawns.** |

## PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The school should put a sign by the garden beds so people understand why the leaves are there. The sign could explain that leaves give small animals shelter, showing that the leaves protect living things. It could also explain that broken-down leaves add nutrients to soil, showing that the leaves help garden plants grow.

Accept different wording when students connect a passage detail to the claim it supports. For Your Turn, look for a claim about the sign and an explanation of how each of two distinct passage details supports it.