Leaves With a Purpose

Trace how details support a garden proposal.

RI.5.8 "Explain how an author uses reasons and evidence to support particular claims in a text, identifying which reasons and evidence support which claim(s)."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the author's garden plan and circle one reason for it in each paragraph. Number a supporting detail to match each circled reason: 1, 2, or 3.

Keep Some Leaves in the Garden

(1) Every autumn, the school garden fills with leaves. Instead of bagging every leaf, we should use some as mulch around our plants. This layer could help the garden need less watering. Sun and wind pull moisture from bare soil, but leaves cover the surface and slow that loss. After a rainy day, soil under a leaf layer may stay damp longer than uncovered soil.

(2) Leaf mulch can also make weeding easier. Many weed seeds sprout best when light reaches the soil. A layer of leaves blocks some of that light, so fewer seeds may sprout in covered spots. Leaves will not stop every weed, and the layer should not bury small garden plants. Still, fewer new weeds mean the garden club can spend more time caring for its vegetables.

(3) Using leaves in the garden can help the soil, too. Earthworms and other small creatures eat bits of dead leaves. As they break the leaves down, nutrients return to the soil, where plants can use them. This is one reason leaves are more useful in garden beds than sealed inside trash bags. We should use leaves from healthy trees and keep the layer thin enough for rain to pass through.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Which detail supports the claim that leaf mulch could reduce watering? Explain how it supports the claim.

2. Which detail supports the claim that leaf mulch can make weeding easier? Explain how it supports the claim.

3. Which detail supports the claim that leaves can help the soil? Explain how it supports the claim.

4. The author says leaves will not stop every weed. Which claim does this detail belong with, and what limit does it show?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

The principal asks whether to try leaf mulch in one garden bed before using it everywhere. Write 3 or 4 sentences recommending a trial, using details from two different paragraphs to explain two possible benefits, and naming one question the text does not answer about the trial.

Leaves With a Purpose

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the author's garden plan and circle one reason for it in each paragraph. Number a supporting detail to match each circled reason: 1, 2, or 3. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Which detail supports the claim that leaf mulch could reduce watering? Explain how it supports the claim.	**Leaves cover the soil and slow moisture loss. Soil that stays damp longer may need less watering.**
2	Which detail supports the claim that leaf mulch can make weeding easier? Explain how it supports the claim.	**Leaves block some light from reaching weed seeds. With less light, fewer seeds may sprout.**
3	Which detail supports the claim that leaves can help the soil? Explain how it supports the claim.	**Small creatures eat and break down dead leaves, returning nutrients to the soil that plants can use.**
4	The author says leaves will not stop every weed. Which claim does this detail belong with, and what limit does it show?	**It belongs with the claim that leaf mulch makes weeding easier. The mulch may reduce new weeds, but it will not prevent all of them.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

I recommend trying leaf mulch in one garden bed. Leaves slow moisture loss from soil, so that bed might need less watering. They also block some light from weed seeds, so fewer weeds may sprout. The text does not say how thick the leaf layer should be.

Accept accurate details that students clearly connect to the matching claim. For the open response, look for two benefits supported by different paragraphs and a question the passage leaves unanswered.