Where Rain Goes

Follow the water, then test a claim about runoff.

RI.8.10 "Routinely and flexibly develop and apply background knowledge along with a variety of comprehension strategies to understand and analyze grade-appropriate, complex informational text independently."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two details that explain how a rain garden changes runoff, circle two conditions that could limit its success, and number three steps in the water's path from pavement into the ground.

Can a Garden Handle a Storm?

1. After a hard rain, a school parking lot can look like a shallow lake. Asphalt blocks most water from soaking into the ground, so water rushes toward storm drains. In some towns, those drains carry runoff straight to a creek rather than to a treatment plant. Along the way, the water can pick up oil, grit, and other pollutants. A rain garden, a shallow planted area, gives some runoff a different route. Water flows into its soil, where it can slowly soak downward instead of racing across pavement.

2. The garden's success depends on details that are easy to miss. A curb opening must guide water into the planted area, and the soil must let it drain. Plant roots help keep soil open, while soil and living organisms can trap or break down some pollutants. Yet a rain garden does not make pollution disappear. If runoff carries more water than the garden can hold, extra water needs a safe path to a drain. Designers also check how quickly the ground absorbs water so it does not remain pooled for days.

3. Suppose two schools have the same size parking lot. One has deep, loose soil and room for a planted basin. The other has compacted ground and a basement next to the proposed site. A rain garden might suit the first school, but water collecting near the second school's basement could cause damage. That school might need a different location or another runoff plan. The lesson is not that rain gardens always work or never work. Their value depends on where the water goes after it leaves the pavement.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Use what you know about paved surfaces and a detail from paragraph 1 to explain how a hard rain could carry pollutants into a creek.

2. In paragraph 2, what does the phrase "safe path" suggest about a rain garden's limits? Use a nearby detail to support your inference.

3. Trace water into and through the rain garden. Which two features help it move, and how do they work together?

4. A reader says schools with equally sized parking lots should use the same runoff plan. Which details challenge that claim, and what conclusion follows?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

A library plans a rain garden beside a sloped sidewalk where water collects after storms. In four sentences, explain what you would check before building it, connect two different passage details to your reasoning, and name one assumption you would test.

ANSWER KEY

Where Rain Goes

GRADE 8 · RI.8.10

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two details that explain how a rain garden changes runoff, circle two conditions that could limit its success, and number three steps in the water's path from pavement into the ground. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Use what you know about paved surfaces and a detail from paragraph 1 to explain how a hard rain could carry pollutants into a creek.	**Asphalt keeps much of the rain from soaking in. Runoff can pick up oil and grit before a storm drain carries it to a creek.**
2	In paragraph 2, what does the phrase "safe path" suggest about a rain garden's limits? Use a nearby detail to support your inference.	**A garden may overflow when runoff exceeds what it can hold, so extra water needs a route to a drain.**
3	Trace water into and through the rain garden. Which two features help it move, and how do they work together?	**A curb opening guides runoff into the garden, and soil that drains lets the water soak downward.**
4	A reader says schools with equally sized parking lots should use the same runoff plan. Which details challenge that claim, and what conclusion follows?	**One school has loose soil and room for a basin, while the other has compacted ground and a nearby basement. The second school may need another location or plan.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

I know water runs downhill, so I would check whether the sloped sidewalk sends runoff toward the library door. The passage says a curb opening can guide water into a garden, so I would look for a way to direct the runoff there. It also warns that water near a basement could cause damage, so I would check for a basement beside the proposed site. I would not assume the soil drains well without testing how quickly it absorbs water.

Accept other supported inferences and markings that trace runoff and identify site conditions. For the open task, look for a four-sentence recommendation that applies two distinct passage details and identifies an assumption to test.