The Stronger Bridge

Trace a theme through words and actions

RL.4.2 "Analyze how the theme is reflected in a text, and cite relevant implicit and explicit evidence from the text, including but not limited to poems, stories and dramas."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline a line of dialogue that points to a lesson about working with others, then circle two actions that show how Nia learns that lesson.

The Bridge That Bent

1 On Friday, Nia carried a cardboard model of the town bridge into class. It was for the science fair, and she had spent all week cutting tiny railings. As she set it on a desk, one side sagged under its own weight. Nia pressed the deck back into place, but it drooped again. "I'll fix it myself," she told Mateo, who had come over to look.

2 Mateo did not reach for the model. Instead, he asked, "What if the deck needs something underneath?" Nia glanced at the pile of scrap cardboard. Together, they folded two strips into narrow columns. Nia held the deck steady while Mateo slid the columns into place. The bridge stood for a moment, then tipped sideways. Nia sighed, but she picked up another strip instead of putting the model away.

3 This time, Nia added a wide cardboard base while Mateo taped the columns to it. The bridge stood firm when they lifted it. At the fair, a younger student pointed to the columns and asked how the bridge worked. Nia looked at Mateo, then showed the student how to fold a strip. "We figured it out together," she said, handing him a piece of cardboard to try.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What lesson about working with others does Nia learn? Give one event that supports your answer.

2. How do Nia's words at the start and at the fair show a change in her thinking? Use both lines of dialogue.

3. What action in paragraph 2 hints that Nia is willing to work with Mateo? Explain what you can tell from it.

4. How does Nia's choice to help the younger student reflect the lesson she learned? Use a detail from the ending.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Find a different theme about facing a problem. Write three sentences that state the theme, cite one line of dialogue as direct evidence, and explain what one action suggests without saying it outright.

ANSWER KEY

The Stronger Bridge

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline a line of dialogue that points to a lesson about working with others, then circle two actions that show how Nia learns that lesson. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What lesson about working with others does Nia learn? Give one event that supports your answer.	**Working together can help solve a problem. Nia holds the deck while Mateo puts the columns in place.**
2	How do Nia's words at the start and at the fair show a change in her thinking? Use both lines of dialogue.	**At first, Nia says, "I'll fix it myself." At the fair, she says, "We figured it out together," showing that she now values Mateo's help.**
3	What action in paragraph 2 hints that Nia is willing to work with Mateo? Explain what you can tell from it.	**Nia holds the deck steady while Mateo puts the columns in place. Her action shows that she has accepted his help.**
4	How does Nia's choice to help the younger student reflect the lesson she learned? Use a detail from the ending.	**Nia shows the student how to fold a strip and gives him cardboard to try. She shares what she learned instead of keeping the work to herself.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Another theme is that you should keep trying when a plan fails. Nia says, "I'll fix it myself," which shows she wants to solve the problem. After the bridge tips, she picks up another strip instead of putting the model away, showing that she does not give up.

Accept other themes supported by both a line of dialogue and an action from the passage. For the questions, students may use different relevant details if they explain how those details support the theme.