When Water Rises

Trace how a place, a problem, and choices shape a story.

RL.7.3 "Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama influence one another."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two details about the rain or the garden's location. Circle two choices Tessa makes, then put a star beside an event each choice helps cause.

The Ditch

1 At the bottom of Maple Street, the community garden sat beside a steep parking lot. After three days of rain, water raced off the pavement and cut a brown channel between the tomato beds. Tessa had promised to bring ripe tomatoes to Saturday's neighborhood supper, but the plants leaned toward the muddy stream. She grabbed a shovel and pushed soil into its path. The water sliced through her little wall in seconds. Across the fence, her neighbor Malik watched, holding the wooden boards he had planned to use for a birdhouse.

2 Tessa usually preferred solving problems alone. When Malik offered his boards, she shook her head. "Your birdhouse needs those," she said, and dug faster. Another rush of water buried the lowest tomato stem. Malik pointed to a narrow strip of bare ground leading away from the beds. "A channel there could send the water toward the drain," he said. Tessa looked at her collapsed wall, then at the boards. She asked him to lay them along the strip while she dug. Together they made a shallow ditch and lined its sides with wood.

3 The stream turned into the ditch. Mud still splashed Tessa's shoes, but the tomato stems stood clear of the moving water. Malik lifted one soaked board and frowned at its split edge. Tessa offered him the spare wood stacked in her family's shed for a new birdhouse. By Saturday, the tomatoes were bright enough for the supper table, though one plant had lost its lowest branch. As neighbors filled their plates, Tessa told them how Malik had spotted the route for the ditch. She had never mentioned someone else's help at the garden before.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How do the garden's location and the rain create Tessa's problem?

2. How does Tessa's wish to solve the problem alone affect what happens when Malik first offers help?

3. What events lead Tessa to change her mind about working with Malik?

4. How does Malik's help affect both the tomatoes and Tessa's actions at the supper?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine Malik has empty buckets instead of boards. In 3 to 4 sentences, explain how this change could affect Tessa's next choice, their way of protecting the tomatoes, and their relationship. Keep the heavy rain and Saturday's supper.

When Water Rises

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two details about the rain or the garden's location. Circle two choices Tessa makes, then put a star beside an event each choice helps cause. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How do the garden's location and the rain create Tessa's problem?	**Rainwater runs down the steep parking lot beside the garden, threatening the tomato plants Tessa promised to bring to the supper.**
2	How does Tessa's wish to solve the problem alone affect what happens when Malik first offers help?	**She refuses his boards and keeps digging by herself, so the water continues to reach the tomato plants.**
3	What events lead Tessa to change her mind about working with Malik?	**Her soil wall collapses, another rush of water buries a tomato stem, and Malik points out a route for a ditch.**
4	How does Malik's help affect both the tomatoes and Tessa's actions at the supper?	**The ditch they make together moves water away from the stems, leaving tomatoes for the supper. Tessa then tells the neighbors that Malik spotted the ditch's route.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

If Malik had buckets instead of boards, Tessa might ask him to scoop water away while she digs the ditch. Without boards to hold its sides, the ditch might collapse in places, so they would need to keep clearing it. They might save fewer tomatoes for Saturday's supper. Working together could still help Tessa trust Malik and tell the neighbors about his help.

Accept answers that accurately connect a story element to its effect, even if students choose different supporting details. For Your Turn, accept plausible changes that keep the rain and supper and address all three requested effects.