The Blue Atlas

Trace what the text states and what its details suggest.

RL.9-10.1 "Cite relevant and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two actions by Mr. Velez, circle the limit on what can move to the school, and number two details you could use to support an inference about Lila's role.

One More Book

1 The city had given the Bell Street library one week to empty its shelves before the roof crew arrived. On Friday evening, Lila found Mr. Velez standing beside a cart of books marked DISCARD. He had worked at the library for thirty years and knew which stairs complained before anyone stepped on them. "Take what you want," he said, without looking up. Lila reached for a blue atlas with a cracked spine. Inside its cover, a penciled note read, "For anyone who needs another way home." Below it were three different names and dates.

2 Lila asked whether the atlas could go to the temporary library at the school. Mr. Velez tapped the DISCARD label. "The school has room for six carts, not seven," he said. He turned the atlas over and flattened its bent corner with his thumb. Then he pulled a pencil from his pocket and copied the three names onto the back of a packing list. When Lila offered to carry the book home, he shook his head. "Those names aren't yours to keep," he said, sliding the atlas beneath a stack of dictionaries.

3 Near closing, Lila returned with a strip of tape for the atlas's torn cover. The discard cart stood by the door, but the atlas was gone. In the last box bound for the school, she spotted its blue spine between two newer books. Mr. Velez pressed the box flaps together before she could speak. "That dictionary was missing half its pages," he said, nodding toward the discard cart. Lila had not asked about a dictionary. Outside, the moving truck idled in the rain. Mr. Velez carried the box himself, holding it flat so the books would not shift.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What reason does Mr. Velez give for not sending the atlas to the school at first? Cite the detail that states his reason.

2. What do Mr. Velez's actions suggest about how he feels about the atlas? Support your inference with one action from paragraph 2 and one from paragraph 3.

3. Why might Mr. Velez refuse Lila's offer to take the atlas home? Support your inference with his words and a detail about the book.

4. What does Mr. Velez's unasked explanation about the dictionary suggest he thinks Lila has noticed? Use two details from the last paragraph.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

What role do you think Lila plays in the atlas's fate? Write one paragraph with a claim, two details from different paragraphs, and an explanation of how each detail supports your inference. Make clear what the text shows and what you infer.

ANSWER KEY

The Blue Atlas

HIGH SCHOOL · RL.9-10.1

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two actions by Mr. Velez, circle the limit on what can move to the school, and number two details you could use to support an inference about Lila's role. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What reason does Mr. Velez give for not sending the atlas to the school at first? Cite the detail that states his reason.	**He says the school lacks space: "The school has room for six carts, not seven."**
2	What do Mr. Velez's actions suggest about how he feels about the atlas? Support your inference with one action from paragraph 2 and one from paragraph 3.	**He seems to value it. He flattens its bent corner, then sends it to the school and carries its box carefully.**
3	Why might Mr. Velez refuse Lila's offer to take the atlas home? Support your inference with his words and a detail about the book.	**He may feel the book should remain available to others, rather than belong to one person. He says, "Those names aren't yours to keep," and the note inside addresses "anyone who needs another way home."**
4	What does Mr. Velez's unasked explanation about the dictionary suggest he thinks Lila has noticed? Use two details from the last paragraph.	**He likely thinks she noticed that he made room for the atlas by discarding a dictionary. She sees the atlas in a box for the school, and he points out a dictionary on the discard cart.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Lila may help persuade Mr. Velez to save the atlas, although the story does not say why he changes his mind. In the first paragraph, she opens it and discovers the note and names, which brings its history to her attention. In the second paragraph, she asks whether it can go to the school, giving Mr. Velez a reason to reconsider the DISCARD label. The text shows that the atlas later goes to the school. I infer that Lila's interest helped prompt his decision, but Mr. Velez never says so.

Accept other plausible inferences when students cite relevant details and explain the connection. For the open task, students should distinguish Lila's observable actions from an unconfirmed claim about her influence.