Ideas That Build

Trace how an explanation grows from problem to plan

W.9-10.2.a "Introduce a topic; organize complex ideas, concepts, and information so that each new element builds on that which precedes it to create a unified whole; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., figures, tables)..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the sentence that introduces the problem, circle one phrase in each later paragraph that connects to an earlier idea, and number the three headings to track how the explanation builds.

A Place for the Rain

1 **Where the rain goes** During a heavy storm, a city sidewalk can become a shortcut for water. Rain that lands on roofs and pavement cannot soak through those hard surfaces, so it flows toward street drains. The drains carry much of that water into storm sewers or nearby streams. As runoff travels, it can pick up oil, litter, and loose soil. A single block may seem too small to matter, but many blocks send water downhill at once. That combined flow explains why city planners look for places to slow rain before it reaches a drain.

2 **How a rain garden works** One such place is a rain garden, a shallow planted area set below nearby pavement. A curb opening or a sloped path directs runoff into the garden instead of sending it straight to a drain. Water collects briefly on the surface, then moves through soil that can trap some pollutants. Plant roots help keep that soil open, allowing more water to soak in. The garden's shape matters: if the ground is too high, water will pass it by. The problem of fast runoff, then, determines both where the garden goes and how it is built.

3 **From one garden to a system** A rain garden can handle only the water that reaches it, so its location must match the paths water takes across a block. Several small gardens may intercept runoff at different points, while drains still carry away water during intense storms. The gardens also need care: sediment can clog the surface, and plants may need replacement. Those limits do not erase their value. They show why a useful plan combines placement, drainage, and maintenance rather than treating one planted patch as a complete fix. The solution grows from a single design to a connected system.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Why does the writer explain roofs, pavement, and drains before introducing a rain garden?

2. How does the curb opening in the second paragraph build on what you learned about drains in the first?

3. How do the three headings help you follow the order of ideas? Explain what changes from one heading to the next.

4. The second paragraph explains how soil helps a garden work. How does the third paragraph add a limit to that explanation?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Choose a familiar school or community process other than managing rainwater. In 70 to 95 words, write one paragraph with a heading that introduces the topic and explains at least three steps, showing how each step makes the next possible.

ANSWER KEY

Ideas That Build

HIGH SCHOOL · W.9-10.2.a

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the sentence that introduces the problem, circle one phrase in each later paragraph that connects to an earlier idea, and number the three headings to track how the explanation builds. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Why does the writer explain roofs, pavement, and drains before introducing a rain garden?	**These details establish the runoff problem, so readers understand why a place to slow water is needed.**
2	How does the curb opening in the second paragraph build on what you learned about drains in the first?	**The first paragraph shows water flowing toward drains. The curb opening gives that water another path, into the garden.**
3	How do the three headings help you follow the order of ideas? Explain what changes from one heading to the next.	**The headings move from where rain goes, to how one rain garden slows it, to how multiple gardens fit into a larger plan.**
4	The second paragraph explains how soil helps a garden work. How does the third paragraph add a limit to that explanation?	**Sediment can clog the garden's surface, so the garden needs maintenance to keep working.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

From Idea to Club Event A school club can turn a lunchtime event into something students can attend by planning in the right order. First, members choose an activity and estimate how much space it needs. That estimate helps them request a room large enough for the group. Once the room is confirmed, they can announce a time and place without risking a last-minute change. Finally, members assign setup jobs so the room is ready before guests arrive. Each decision supplies information needed for the next one.

Accept other well-supported connections between paragraphs in Parts 1 and 2. For Part 3, look for an introduced topic, a useful heading, and at least three steps whose order is explained rather than merely listed.