

Records Come Alive

Trace how details develop a central idea in a literary text.

9-10R2 “Determine one or more themes or central ideas in a text and analyze its development, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; objectively and accurately summarize a text. (RI&RL)”

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline three details that reveal an idea about what makes a historical record meaningful, number them 1 to 3 in the order they appear, and circle the detail that most changes or expands that idea.

The Flood Ledger

- ① On her first Saturday at the Riverton library's historical room, Mara was assigned to sort a box of papers saved after a basement leak. Most were receipts and meeting notes, but one ledger listed the names of families who had donated food during a 1934 flood. The book's stained pages seemed fragile and distant. Mara planned to scan it quickly, file it, and return to her robotics project. Then she noticed her great-grandmother's name beside the words “two loaves, no charge.” For the first time, the ledger felt less like clutter than a record of choices people had made.
- ② Library director Mr. Alvarez asked Mara to choose one item for a small display. She first selected a polished mayoral photograph, assuming visitors would prefer it. Then an older patron, Mrs. Chen, recognized her family's name in the ledger and described neighbors carrying soup through floodwater. Mara replaced the photograph with the ledger, a typed quotation from Mrs. Chen, and blank cards for visitors' family stories. As she worked, she understood that the book did not preserve the flood by itself. Its meaning grew when someone connected its brief entries to memories and questions.
- ③ At the display opening, several visitors read the names aloud and added notes about relatives who had shared shelter, tools, or meals. One child asked why the donors had expected no payment. Mara pointed to Mrs. Chen's quotation, then admitted she did not know every answer. She wrote the child's question on a card and placed it beside the ledger for future research. By closing time, the display held more than a damaged book. It showed that historical records can invite a community to investigate its values, rather than simply admire its past.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 State one central idea of the passage.

2 Which two details in the first two paragraphs begin to develop this central idea? Explain what each detail shows.

3 How does the child's question in paragraph 3 refine the passage's central idea about historical records?

4 Write an objective two-sentence summary of the passage.

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Write a 90 to 110 word analytical paragraph that states a central idea and explains how it develops across the passage. Use at least three specific details from different parts of the passage.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline three details that reveal an idea about what makes a historical record meaningful, number them 1 to 3 in the order they appear, and circle the detail that most changes or expands that idea. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	State one central idea of the passage.	A community preserves history most fully when people connect records with memories and continued questions about shared values.
2	Which two details in the first two paragraphs begin to develop this central idea? Explain what each detail shows.	Mara finds her great-grandmother's name and sees the ledger as a record of people's choices. Mrs. Chen's story about neighbors carrying soup shows that memory adds meaning to the ledger's brief entry.
3	How does the child's question in paragraph 3 refine the passage's central idea about historical records?	The question shows that records should lead people to investigate the reasons behind past actions and consider the values those actions reveal, even when every answer is not known.
4	Write an objective two-sentence summary of the passage.	While sorting papers at a library, Mara finds a flood ledger containing her great-grandmother's name and chooses it for a display after Mrs. Chen shares a related memory. Visitors add family stories and questions, leading Mara to see the ledger as a starting point for community research rather than only a record of the past.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

One central idea is that a community preserves history most fully when people connect records with memories and ongoing questions. This idea begins when Mara sees her great-grandmother's name in the flood ledger and realizes that the book records human choices. It develops after Mrs. Chen explains the neighbors' actions, showing how a brief written entry gains meaning through memory. At the opening, visitors add their own family notes, so the display becomes a shared record. Finally, Mara saves the child's unanswered question for research, refining the idea: history also asks a community to examine its values.

Accept closely supported central ideas about records gaining meaning through community memory, participation, and inquiry. Objective summaries should include the major events without opinions, invented details, or excessive minor details.