Follow the Runoff

Read an informative model for thesis, evidence, and structure.

10.3.W.2 "Students will compose informative essays, reports, or technical writing that: • objectively introduce and develop topics • include a defensible thesis • incorporate evidence • maintain an organized structure • use sentence variety and word..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the thesis, circle two details that support it, and write I, E, or Q beside each paragraph to mark its role: introduction, explanation, or qualification.

A Different Route for Rain

(1) After a hard rain, water often races across a school parking lot toward a storm drain. The drain moves water away from the pavement, but it does not remove the oil, grit, and other material the water carries. A rain garden offers a different route: a shallow, planted depression receives runoff from nearby hard surfaces. Where soil and space permit, schools should use rain gardens to manage some parking-lot runoff because these planted areas can slow water, filter some pollutants, and make drainage visible to students. This approach does not replace storm drains; it gives rainwater another place to go.

(2) During a storm, a curb opening can direct runoff into the garden instead of sending every drop straight to a pipe. Water collects briefly, then passes through soil; some soaks into the ground, while plants also take up water. Soil and plant roots can trap some particles before water moves farther. A garden designed for heavy rain also needs an overflow route, since no planted area can hold unlimited water. These steps explain the proposal's value: slow the flow, spread the water, and give the soil time to absorb it.

(3) Location and upkeep determine whether the idea works. A rain garden placed too close to a building could create drainage problems, so its site and design require careful planning. Sediment and litter may also collect where runoff enters; removing them helps water reach the soil. These limits do not cancel the proposal, but they narrow it. A school should begin with a suitable area and a maintenance plan rather than treating a planted depression as a cure for every flood. The goal is not to stop rain, but to guide where it goes and what it carries.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. State the passage's thesis. Which words keep it from making an absolute claim?

2. Which two details in paragraph 2 explain how a rain garden handles runoff?

3. How does paragraph 3 qualify the thesis, and why does that paragraph belong after the explanation?

4. Quote the three parallel phrases near the end of paragraph 2. How do they make the explanation clearer?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write one formal paragraph of 80 to 110 words arguing whether schools should install motion-sensor lights in restrooms. Use these facts: sensors can turn lights off when no motion is detected, and installation costs money; include a defensible thesis, both facts as evidence, a reasonable limitation, and a three-part parallel phrase modeled on the passage.

ANSWER KEY

Follow the Runoff

GRADE 10 · 10.3.W.2

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the thesis, circle two details that support it, and write I, E, or Q beside each paragraph to mark its role: introduction, explanation, or qualification. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	State the passage's thesis. Which words keep it from making an absolute claim?	**Schools should use rain gardens to manage parking-lot runoff where soil and space permit. "Where soil and space permit" and "some parking-lot runoff" limit the claim.**
2	Which two details in paragraph 2 explain how a rain garden handles runoff?	**A curb opening directs runoff into the garden, and water passes through soil, where some soaks into the ground.**
3	How does paragraph 3 qualify the thesis, and why does that paragraph belong after the explanation?	**It explains that a rain garden needs a suitable site and maintenance. Placing these limits after the explanation lets readers understand how the garden works before considering where it would work well.**
4	Quote the three parallel phrases near the end of paragraph 2. How do they make the explanation clearer?	**"Slow the flow, spread the water, and give the soil time to absorb it." The three action phrases summarize the garden's effects in a clear sequence.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Schools should install motion-sensor lights in restrooms if the lights can be set to stay on while people are inside. Sensors can turn lights off when they detect no motion, so lights need not remain on throughout an empty evening. This change could reduce unnecessary electricity use, although installing the sensors costs money. Schools must also choose settings carefully because a light that switches off while someone is inside would create a problem. A practical plan should test the sensors, adjust their timing, and check their performance before expanding the project.

Accept equivalent evidence and explanations grounded in the passage. For the open response, check that the limitation narrows the claim and that the three-part phrase uses parallel grammatical structure.