Details That Work

Use phrases and clauses to make a scene clearer.

10.5.W.2 "Students will add clarity, variety, and/or style to their writing and presentations with parts of speech and various types of phrases and clauses."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two dependent clauses that begin sentences, and circle two prepositional phrases that describe a noun. Notice how these choices vary sentence openings and add detail.

The Repair Station

1. Before the first customer arrived, Mara spread the tools across a folding table in the school courtyard. A wrench with a rubber grip lay beside a shallow tin of mismatched screws. Students had advertised a Saturday repair station for bicycles, and several neighbors had rolled in bikes that rattled or refused to shift gears. Mara, who had learned basic repairs from her grandfather, checked the air pump twice. The courtyard looked ordinary, but the neat rows of tools promised something unusual: a place where people could learn why a part failed instead of simply paying someone to replace it.

2. When a blue bicycle skidded to the table, its owner pointed to a chain that kept slipping. Mara turned the pedals slowly while another student watched the rear gears. The chain jumped each time it reached one bent tooth. Rather than announce a fix, Mara asked the owner to describe what she noticed. She heard a click, then saw the chain lurch sideways. With a piece of chalk, the bicycle's owner marked the troublesome tooth on a quick sketch of the gear. They could not straighten the metal safely there, so Mara explained which part needed replacement.

3. Although the repair was unfinished, the owner left with a clearer plan than she had brought. At the next table, a boy adjusted a loose brake cable under a volunteer's watchful eye. He tested the brake before riding, rolling the bike a few steps and stopping it firmly. By noon, the station had fixed several small problems and identified others that required new parts. The students did not claim to be expert mechanics. Instead, they used precise explanations, patient questions, and careful tests to make each visitor a partner in solving a problem.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What does the opening clause of paragraph 1 tell you before Mara acts? How does placing it first shape the scene?

2. In paragraph 1, what detail does “with a rubber grip” add to “a wrench”?

3. In paragraph 2, how does “Rather than announce a fix” clarify Mara’s approach?

4. In paragraph 3, how does the opening clause connect the unfinished repair to the owner’s new plan?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write four sentences about someone figuring out a household problem other than a bicycle repair. Begin one sentence with a dependent clause, include a prepositional phrase that describes a noun, and use a contrast to show how the person’s understanding changes.

ANSWER KEY

Details That Work

GRADE 10 · 10.5.W.2

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two dependent clauses that begin sentences, and circle two prepositional phrases that describe a noun. Notice how these choices vary sentence openings and add detail. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What does the opening clause of paragraph 1 tell you before Mara acts? How does placing it first shape the scene?	**It establishes that no customer has arrived yet. Placing it first shows Mara preparing for the station to open.**
2	In paragraph 1, what detail does "with a rubber grip" add to "a wrench"?	**It identifies a physical feature of the wrench, making the tool easier to picture.**
3	In paragraph 2, how does "Rather than announce a fix" clarify Mara's approach?	**It contrasts giving the owner an answer with asking her to observe the problem herself.**
4	In paragraph 3, how does the opening clause connect the unfinished repair to the owner's new plan?	**It signals a contrast: the bike is not fixed, but the owner now knows what needs to happen next.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

When the flashlight flickered, I checked its batteries. The switch with a loose screw wobbled under my thumb. Although the batteries were fresh, I now understood that the loose switch caused the problem. I tightened the screw, and the beam held steady.

For the marking job, accept any two sentence-opening dependent clauses and any two prepositional phrases that describe nouns. For the open task, check that all three required language choices serve the meaning of the four-sentence scene.