The Sound Behind

Read how colons reveal the details behind a scene.

10.5.W.8 "Students will use a colon to reveal information."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the complete clause before each colon, then circle the information the colon reveals.

Making a Storm

1. At the neighborhood theater, the storm begins long before anyone hears rain. During rehearsal, Mara, the sound designer, lays ordinary objects across a table beside the stage. Her goal is simple: make a dry room sound like a ship at sea. She tests three possible rain sounds: dried beans in a tin, fingertips on a drum, and rice poured into a tray. The beans rattle too sharply, but the rice makes a gentle hiss. Mara writes a cue beside the script so the actor can time a whispered line with the first drops.

2. The next problem is thunder. Mara hangs a thin sheet of metal from a sturdy frame and shakes it when the lights dim. The result surprises the cast: a deep rumble rolls across the empty seats. She changes the speed of each shake, since a single steady rhythm sounds less like a storm than a machine. To suggest wind, she brushes a stiff broom across a canvas panel. No one in the audience will see the broom, but its rough scrape gives the actors something vivid to react to during the scene.

3. At the final rehearsal, Mara discovers a problem: the rice lands too loudly in the tray and covers an important line. She places a folded towel under the tray, then tries the cue again. This time, the audience can hear both sounds clearly: the soft hiss of rain and the captain's warning. Mara does not add every effect she can invent. She keeps only what serves the scene, leaving a few seconds of silence before the metal thunders. In that pause, the actors stare toward the painted horizon, and the room seems to wait with them.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. In paragraph 1, what does the colon after "Her goal is simple" reveal?

2. What information does the colon after "She tests three possible rain sounds" introduce? Name all three sounds.

3. In paragraph 2, copy the complete clause before the colon. What does the colon reveal about the result?

4. In paragraph 3, how does the colon after "both sounds clearly" make the sentence more precise?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write three sentences about preparing for an event outside a theater. Use one colon to reveal a list of at least three specific items and another colon to reveal one surprising detail. Put a complete clause before each colon.

ANSWER KEY # The Sound Behind

GRADE 10 · 10.5.W.8

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the complete clause before each colon, then circle the information the colon reveals. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	In paragraph 1, what does the colon after "Her goal is simple" reveal?	**It reveals Mara's goal: to make a dry room sound like a ship at sea.**
2	What information does the colon after "She tests three possible rain sounds" introduce? Name all three sounds.	**It introduces a list: dried beans in a tin, fingertips on a drum, and rice poured into a tray.**
3	In paragraph 2, copy the complete clause before the colon. What does the colon reveal about the result?	**"The result surprises the cast" is the complete clause. The colon reveals that a deep rumble rolls across the empty seats.**
4	In paragraph 3, how does the colon after "both sounds clearly" make the sentence more precise?	**It identifies the two sounds the audience can hear: the soft hiss of rain and the captain's warning.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Before the science fair opened, our team checked three supplies: spare batteries, blank labels, and safety goggles. Then we noticed an unexpected problem: the model bridge would not stand on its own. We reinforced its base with cardboard before the first visitors arrived.

For the marking task, accept underlining that stops at each colon and circles the information that follows it through the end of the sentence. In Part 3, check that both colons follow complete clauses and reveal the requested kinds of information.