Rain Garden Routes

Read a model of clear, evidence-based writing.

6.3.W.2 "Students will compose informative essays or reports that: • objectively introduce and develop topics • incorporate evidence (e.g., specific facts, details, charts and graphs..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the sentence that explains what a rain garden is, circle two details showing how it handles water, and number the paragraphs 1 to 3 to track the explanation.

When Sidewalks Drink Rain

1 After a hard rain, water can race across a parking lot toward a storm drain. A rain garden offers some of that water another route. It is a shallow, planted dip in the ground, often placed where runoff from a roof or paved surface can reach it. Instead of rushing away at once, water pools for a short time and then soaks into the soil. Picture a small pause button beside the pavement. That comparison describes the delay, not a garden that stops every drop.

2 Several parts of the garden work together. A low edge guides runoff into the dip, and loose soil lets water move downward. Plant roots help create spaces in the soil as they grow. The plants also take up some water. During a heavy storm, extra water may flow out through an overflow opening, so the garden does not have to hold it all. These details explain why a rain garden needs more than flowers: its shape, soil, plants, and outlet each have a job.

3 Rain gardens can also keep some pollutants from reaching nearby streams. As runoff passes through the soil, soil particles can trap bits of dirt and some other materials. This does not make the water safe to drink, and a rain garden cannot remove every pollutant. Still, reducing runoff and filtering some of it can ease pressure on storm drains. The path from pavement to planted soil changes what happens after a storm: water has time to sink in instead of traveling straight to a pipe.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How do the first two sentences introduce the topic without stating an opinion?

2. Which two details in paragraph 2 explain how the garden manages water? Tell what each part does.

3. What does the comparison to a small pause button help you understand? What limit does the writer give for that comparison?

4. How does the order of the three paragraphs help you understand rain gardens?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Choose a familiar place at your school, such as the library or cafeteria. Write one informative paragraph of five or six sentences explaining how something there works. Include two details you have observed, a clear order, varied sentence beginnings, and one comparison that helps explain your topic.

ANSWER KEY

Rain Garden Routes

GRADE 6 · 6.3.W.2

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the sentence that explains what a rain garden is, circle two details showing how it handles water, and number the paragraphs 1 to 3 to track the explanation. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How do the first two sentences introduce the topic without stating an opinion?	**They describe water moving across a parking lot, then introduce a rain garden as another route for some of that water. Neither sentence judges the garden.**
2	Which two details in paragraph 2 explain how the garden manages water? Tell what each part does.	**For example, the low edge guides runoff into the dip, and loose soil lets water move downward.**
3	What does the comparison to a small pause button help you understand? What limit does the writer give for that comparison?	**It helps the reader understand that the garden delays runoff. The writer notes that it does not stop every drop.**
4	How does the order of the three paragraphs help you understand rain gardens?	**The passage first introduces a rain garden, then explains how its parts manage water, and finally describes another possible effect on runoff.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

In my school's library, a return slot helps books move back to the shelves. Students place finished books in the slot near the door. Each morning, a library worker collects the books and checks their labels. Next, the books go on a cart before they return to their places. Like a sorting lane, the cart keeps books moving in order. This routine helps students find books that other readers have returned.

For question 2, accept any two accurate parts from paragraph 2 with their roles explained. For the writing task, look for an objective explanation grounded in the student's own observations, not details copied from the passage.