Four Ways to See

How genre shapes a reader's understanding

9.2.R.2 "Students will identify characteristics of genres and analyze how they enhance comprehension of fiction, poetry, drama, and nonfiction."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Read the four labeled pieces in the passage. Underline one clue to each piece's genre, then circle a detail that the piece helps you understand about the rain garden.

The Path Beside the Library

(1) After weeks of rain, the path beside Westbrook High's library stayed muddy. Students proposed a rain garden, a shallow planted area that lets stormwater sink into soil instead of racing across pavement. Their class planned four short pieces for a display about the project. Piece A read: "Mara balanced a tray of seedlings against her hip. At the path, a wheel from the cart sank into the mud. She pictured next spring: roots gripping the ground, her sneakers finally clean." By lunch, several students had stopped to look at the muddy trail and the trays of plants waiting near the library doors.

(2) Piece B read: "Rain taps the glass / roots drink slowly / the path keeps its shoes." On the card, each slash marked the start of a new line. Beside it, Piece C read: "NIA: (holding a shovel) This corner still floods. OMAR: Then let's start here. (They step around a puddle.)" Some visitors read the words aloud, taking turns as Nia and Omar. Others looked from the cards to the wet corner of the path. The class had left the puddle in place until the display opened, so visitors could see the problem the students hoped to solve.

(3) Piece D came from a handout: "A rain garden is a shallow planted area. It collects water from roofs and pavement and allows some of that water to soak into the ground. Plant roots can help hold the soil in place." The handout also advised gardeners to check for buried utility lines before digging. At the display, a visitor asked whether any single piece could answer every question about the muddy path. A student pointed toward the seedlings, then toward the four cards. Someone planning where to dig might need different information from someone wondering what a less muddy path would feel like.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Which feature of Piece A identifies it as fiction? How does that feature help you understand Mara's view of the project?

2. Which feature of Piece B identifies it as poetry? How does it change the way you picture the path?

3. Which features of Piece C identify it as drama? What do they help you understand about where Nia and Omar might begin?

4. Which feature of Piece D identifies it as nonfiction? What can you learn from it that Piece A does not explain?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Choose a new school improvement. Write a short poetry version and a short nonfiction version about it, using one or two lines or sentences for each. Then write two sentences explaining how the genre features help readers understand the improvement in different ways.

ANSWER KEY

Four Ways to See

GRADE 9 · 9.2.R.2

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Read the four labeled pieces in the passage. Underline one clue to each piece's genre, then circle a detail that the piece helps you understand about the rain garden. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Which feature of Piece A identifies it as fiction? How does that feature help you understand Mara's view of the project?	**Its narration shows Mara imagining next spring. That imagined moment helps readers understand her hope for a path that is no longer muddy.**
2	Which feature of Piece B identifies it as poetry? How does it change the way you picture the path?	**Its short lines and image of a path that "keeps its shoes" are poetic features. They invite readers to picture a path without mud clinging to their shoes.**
3	Which features of Piece C identify it as drama? What do they help you understand about where Nia and Omar might begin?	**Speaker names, dialogue, and stage directions identify drama. The words and actions show Nia and Omar considering the corner that still floods.**
4	Which feature of Piece D identifies it as nonfiction? What can you learn from it that Piece A does not explain?	**Piece D gives factual explanations and practical advice. It explains how a rain garden handles water or why gardeners should check for buried utility lines.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Poetry: The bus stop bakes / A shelter spreads its shade.
Nonfiction: A shelter roof blocks direct sunlight from reaching people at the bus stop. It can also offer some protection from rain. The poem uses an image of heat and shade to help readers imagine waiting there. The nonfiction explains two practical ways a shelter helps people.

Accept other accurate genre clues and interpretations supported by the labeled pieces. For Part 3, look for a poetic feature, a factual explanation, and a distinct explanation of what each helps readers understand.