

A Garden Story Meets the Facts

Compare fiction and nonfiction about the same topic.

4.RL.3 "Integration of Concepts Set a purpose for reading by activating prior (experience) and background (content) knowledge. Compare and contrast details in paired literary and informational nonfiction texts including their treatment of similar..."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Before reading, tell a partner one thing you know or wonder about plant care. Set this reading purpose: find how the nonfiction explains choices made in the story. Underline one matching detail in each text.

Read the Paired Texts

Text A: Nia's Garden Plan: fiction, part 1

Nia arrived at the garden hoping to pick pole beans for her grandfather's soup. After a windy night, some vines had slipped from their supports. She remembered helping her aunt guide climbing plants. With her grandfather, she checked that the poles were sturdy and guided the fallen vines back onto them. Then she noticed dry soil. The hose nozzle was missing, so she filled a watering can at the tap and watered near the roots.

Text A: part 2

Nia worried that the soil would dry out again. Her grandfather brought straw, and together they spread it over the bare soil around the plants. Over the next week they checked the soil and watered when needed. The following Saturday, Nia found the vines climbing and picked beans for soup. She decided to keep helping with the regular garden checks.

Text B: Helping Beans Grow: informational nonfiction

Pole beans are climbing plants and need sturdy supports. During dry periods, gardeners water deeply to keep the root area moist. Covering bare soil with mulch, such as straw, slows water loss by evaporation. Mulch can help soil stay moist longer, but gardeners still need to monitor soil moisture and water when needed.

Adapted from University of Maryland Extension: "Growing Beans in a Home Garden" and "Conserve Water In Your Landscape."

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 What goal and problems shape Nia's story?

2 Choose an action from A that B helps explain. Use one detail from each text.

3 How are A and B organized differently? Give an example from each.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Return to your reading purpose. Write a comparison that uses evidence from both texts, then reflect on how your understanding changed.

Compare the texts

Explain one important similarity and one difference in how A and B teach about caring for plants. Support your comparison with a specific detail from EACH text.

Connect and reflect

State one thing you knew or wondered before reading. Explain what you learned or clarified from A and B, using a detail from each.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Before reading, tell a partner one thing you know or wonder about plant care. Set this reading purpose: find how the nonfiction explains choices made in the story. Underline one matching detail in each text. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What goal and problems shape Nia's story?	She wants beans for soup. Fallen vines, dry soil and a missing hose nozzle lead her to restore the vines with her grandfather and use a watering can.
2	Choose an action from A that B helps explain. Use one detail from each text.	Nia and her grandfather cover bare soil with straw in A. B explains that mulch such as straw slows evaporation, helping soil stay moist longer. Other valid pairs include sturdy supports and watering near roots.
3	How are A and B organized differently? Give an example from each.	A follows a character's problems, actions and outcome over time: first fallen vines, then care, then harvesting. B groups factual explanations about supports, water and mulch; it does not tell Nia's events.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)**Possible comparison**

Both texts show ways to care for beans. A tells how Nia and her grandfather spread straw and keep checking the soil. B explains why mulch helps: it slows evaporation. A teaches through a character's experiences over time, while B directly explains plant-care facts.

Possible reflection

I wondered whether mulch replaces watering. Nia keeps checking and watering in A. B says mulch slows water loss but gardeners still monitor moisture. Together, the texts clarify that mulch helps without removing the need to check.

TEACHER ASSESSMENT NOTES

Require a comparison across the supplied fiction and nonfiction, not only comparisons within the story. Valid similarities concern supports, moisture or regular care; differences may concern structure, purpose or character-based events versus factual explanation. Prior knowledge may be limited: an honest question counts. Reflections need details from both texts. The story is invented; it is not scientific proof of cause. Nonfiction checked against University of Maryland Extension: <https://extension.umd.edu/resource/growing-beans-home-garden> and <https://extension.umd.edu/resource/conservewater-your-landscape>. Accept equivalent supported wording without an exact sentence count.