Rain Garden Blueprint

Notice how organization and features guide a reader.

7.T.SS.1.b "Design texts, flexibly employing a variety of text structures and text features to convey information and add style, as appropriate to purpose and audience. (C)"

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline words or phrases that connect ideas or move events forward. Circle two text features that help readers find or notice information.

A Garden That Drinks Rain

After a hard rain, water once rushed across the blacktop behind Maple Middle School, carrying soil and litter toward a storm drain. In spring, students helped build a rain garden there, a shallow planted area that collects runoff. Its bowl-shaped surface slows the flow, while deep roots open spaces in the soil. Instead of vanishing down the drain, some water soaks into the ground. "Where does rain go after it lands?" asks the garden's sign.

First, volunteers outlined the garden area with a hose and removed compacted soil. Next, they shaped a low basin, leaving a gentle edge where rainwater could enter from the pavement. Then, they added compost and placed native plants in groups. Purple coneflowers attract pollinators, and switchgrass helps hold soil in place. A small stone path lets caretakers reach the plants without stepping on wet ground. By summer, the garden looked like a patch of prairie beside the school.

The garden does more than brighten the schoolyard. Because its plants and soil catch runoff, less water may race across pavement during a storm. This can reduce puddles and keep some pollution out of nearby waterways.

Quick fact

A rain garden is not a pond. It is designed so water drains into the soil within a day or two, which helps prevent mosquito breeding. Students now record rainfall and watch for birds, bees, and butterflies.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How does the first paragraph introduce the topic and prepare readers for the rest of the passage?

2. What order do the details in paragraph 2 follow? Cite two words that show this order.

3. How does the QUICK FACT feature help the reader understand the rain garden?

4. What cause-and-effect connection does paragraph 3 make?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a 90-110 word, two-paragraph mini article for your school community about a useful school improvement. In the first paragraph, explain a problem and its effect. In the second, present a plan in time order, use at least two transition words, and include one text feature, such as a labeled Quick Fact or a question.

ANSWER KEY

Rain Garden Blueprint

GRADE 7 · 7.T.SS.1.b

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline words or phrases that connect ideas or move events forward. Circle two text features that help readers find or notice information. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How does the first paragraph introduce the topic and prepare readers for the rest of the passage?	**It begins with the runoff problem near the school, then introduces the rain garden as a way to collect and soak up some of that water.**
2	What order do the details in paragraph 2 follow? Cite two words that show this order.	**The details follow the order in which volunteers built the garden. Signal words include "First," "Next," and "Then."**
3	How does the QUICK FACT feature help the reader understand the rain garden?	**It draws attention to the important clarification that a rain garden is not a pond and that its water drains into soil within a day or two.**
4	What cause-and-effect connection does paragraph 3 make?	**Because the plants and soil catch runoff, less water may race across pavement, which can reduce puddles and keep some pollution out of waterways.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Lost pencils and markers often pile up in classroom bins during busy class periods, while students search for supplies or borrow from classmates. This clutter wastes learning time and makes usable materials seem unavailable.

What if each hallway had a supply return station? First, student volunteers could label a small box for pencils, markers, and glue sticks. Next, they could check the box at the start of each class and sort supplies for teachers. QUICK FACT: Reusing one working marker keeps it out of the trash and saves money for new materials.

Accept answers that identify the passage's problem-solution, chronological, and cause-and-effect organization with accurate evidence. For the writing task, accept varied topics when the response meets the length, paragraph, organization, transition, and text-feature requirements.