Mend an Idea

Notice how an informational article develops one controlling idea.

8.11 "Composition: listening, speaking, reading, writing, and thinking using multiple texts--genres. The student uses genre characteristics and craft to compose multiple texts that are meaningful..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the article's controlling idea, circle the topic sentence in each body paragraph, and number three transition words or phrases that help the article move from one idea to another.

The Repair Table

1 Lincoln Middle School's Repair Table reduces waste, builds useful skills, and gives students a reason to help one another. Twice each month, it opens in the library. Students bring loose backpack straps, torn book covers, and buttons that have fallen from coats. Instead of throwing these items away, volunteers show visitors how to make simple repairs. The table also collects donated fabric, thread, and spare parts for use at future repair sessions in the library.

2 First, repairing an item can keep it useful for months or years. A student whose binder ring snaps may replace the ring instead of buying a new binder. Volunteers also sort donated fabric, thread, and spare parts so students can choose materials without paying. These choices matter because producing and shipping new goods use energy and resources. When many people repair what they own, fewer usable items enter trash cans, and school families may spend less money.

3 Just as important, the Repair Table changes how students see problems. At first, a ripped pocket or broken zipper may seem like a reason to replace something. However, a volunteer can ask what caused the damage and demonstrate a safe next step. Students leave with a repaired item and the confidence to try another fix later. The program cannot solve every problem, but it shows that careful choices can protect resources and strengthen a community.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What is the article's controlling idea?

2. How does the binder-ring example in paragraph 2 develop that paragraph's topic sentence?

3. Name two transition words or phrases from the article. What role does each one play in the organization?

4. What limitation does the author acknowledge in the final paragraph, and what point follows that limitation?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a three-paragraph informational article about a useful school program or improvement. In paragraph 1, state a clear controlling idea. In paragraphs 2 and 3, use topic sentences, specific details, and at least one transition word to explain it. Use extra paper if needed.

ANSWER KEY

Mend an Idea

GRADE 8 · TEKS 8.11

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the article's controlling idea, circle the topic sentence in each body paragraph, and number three transition words or phrases that help the article move from one idea to another. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What is the article's controlling idea?	**The Repair Table reduces waste, builds useful skills, and gives students a reason to help one another.**
2	How does the binder-ring example in paragraph 2 develop that paragraph's topic sentence?	**It gives a concrete example of repairing an item instead of replacing it, which can keep the item useful and save money.**
3	Name two transition words or phrases from the article. What role does each one play in the organization?	**"First" introduces the first benefit of the Repair Table. "Just as important" introduces another major benefit.**
4	What limitation does the author acknowledge in the final paragraph, and what point follows that limitation?	**The author acknowledges that the program cannot solve every problem. The author then explains that careful choices can protect resources and strengthen a community.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

A quiet lunch table can give students a calm place to eat and reset during a busy school day. It is not a punishment table. It is an optional space for students who prefer lower noise and fewer conversations.

First, the table needs clear routines. A small sign can explain that students may read, draw, or eat quietly there. A staff member can check the table during lunch, while students choose the space for themselves.

Just as important, the table can make lunch more welcoming for different needs. Some students feel tired after loud classes or need time to focus before afternoon lessons. By offering one quiet option, the cafeteria can serve more students without changing everyone else's lunch.

Accept equivalent statements that accurately identify the controlling idea, explain how details support it, and describe the transitions' organizational roles. For the writing task, accept varied school topics if the response has three paragraphs, a clear controlling idea, topic sentences, relevant details, and a transition.