Storm Gate Choices

Track how scenes move a crisis toward resolution.

8.8.C "analyze how playwrights develop dramatic action through the use of acts and scenes;"

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline one line of dialogue or stage direction in each scene that changes what the characters must do. Number your three underlined details 1, 2, and 3 to show how the action moves forward.

The Spillway

1. ACT I, SCENE 1. The control room of a riverside dam, late afternoon. Rain taps the windows. MIRA studies a map while her brother, LEO, coils a radio cord. MIRA: The upstream gate is stuck. If the water rises, it will flood the market. LEO: The repair crew cannot arrive before dark. A siren sounds outside. MIRA grabs the emergency key. MIRA: We can open the old spillway by hand. LEO looks toward the storm. LEO: Then we have one chance before the bridge disappears.

2. ACT I, SCENE 2. At the bridge entrance, night. Wind jerks the warning flags. Mira and Leo reach the hand wheel, but a fallen sign blocks it. LEO: I will move it. MIRA: No, the water is too close. The radio crackles. VOICE: Evacuations have begun, but the school bus is still at the market. Leo wedges a metal bar under the sign. Together, they lift. The sign slides aside, revealing the wheel. MIRA: Turn with me. They begin to crank as water rushes under the bridge.

3. ACT II, SCENE 1. Dawn. The control room is quiet except for dripping coats. The river has dropped, and the market is safe. Leo enters, limping, with the bus driver. DRIVER: The spillway lowered the water just in time. Mira places the emergency key on the table. MIRA: We saved the town, but the gate still needs repair. A distant engine rumbles. LEO: The crew is here. Mira opens the door to gray morning light. MIRA: This time, we will fix it before the next storm.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How does Act I, Scene 1 establish the main problem and the characters' goal?

2. What obstacle in Act I, Scene 2 delays Mira and Leo, and what event moves the action past that obstacle?

3. How does the change from Act I to Act II show a new stage of the dramatic action?

4. Why does the playwright set Act II at dawn in the quiet control room instead of continuing the action at the bridge?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a mini-play in 6 to 10 lines with two scenes, one in Act I and one in Act II. Include dialogue and at least one stage direction, make Act I show a problem or obstacle, and make Act II show a changed situation caused by the earlier action. Use extra paper if needed.

ANSWER KEY

Storm Gate Choices

GRADE 8 · TEKS 8.8.C

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline one line of dialogue or stage direction in each scene that changes what the characters must do. Number your three underlined details 1, 2, and 3 to show how the action moves forward. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How does Act I, Scene 1 establish the main problem and the characters' goal?	**The stuck upstream gate could flood the market, so Mira and Leo decide to open the old spillway by hand.**
2	What obstacle in Act I, Scene 2 delays Mira and Leo, and what event moves the action past that obstacle?	**A fallen sign blocks the hand wheel. Leo and Mira lift the sign aside, revealing the wheel so they can begin cranking it.**
3	How does the change from Act I to Act II show a new stage of the dramatic action?	**Act I shows the urgent danger and the effort to open the spillway. Act II shows the result, the market is safe, and introduces the remaining problem of repairing the gate.**
4	Why does the playwright set Act II at dawn in the quiet control room instead of continuing the action at the bridge?	**The calmer dawn setting contrasts with the stormy bridge scenes and lets the audience see the consequences of the characters' actions after the crisis.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

ACT I, SCENE 1. School greenhouse, afternoon.
[Water drips from a broken pipe.]
NIA: The seedlings will drown before the science fair.
OMAR: I will get the custodian. The valve is behind that locked shed.
ACT II, SCENE 1. Same place, ten minutes later.
[Omar returns with the custodian.]
CUSTODIAN: I opened the shed. Turn the valve now.
[Nia turns it, and the dripping stops.]

Accept answers that identify how each scene introduces, complicates, advances, or resolves the crisis using passage details. For the mini-play, look for a clear action change between acts that results from a character's earlier choice or effort.