Compost Story Choices

Notice how a clear model uses organization, strong words, and smooth sentences.

4.W.3 "Usage and Mechanics With guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by revising for quality of ideas, organization, sentence fluency, and word choice..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the first sentence of each paragraph, circle transition words or phrases, and box vivid action verbs. These writing choices help readers follow ideas and picture the action.

Our Compost Bin

(1) On Monday, our class began a compost bin behind the school garden. We layered dry leaves, fruit peels, and a little soil in a wooden box. Then Maya sprayed the pile with water until it felt damp, not soggy. The mixture needs air, so we will turn it with a shovel each week. Soon, tiny decomposers will help change the scraps into dark compost.

(2) First, we checked the bin during science time. A warm smell rose when we lifted the lid, and steam curled above the pile. Jordan gently mixed the materials, bringing the cooler edges toward the center. After that, we added more dry leaves because the pile looked too wet. These careful steps keep the compost pile working well.

(3) By Friday, the class noticed a change. The pile had shrunk, and the fruit peels were harder to see. Our teacher explained that worms, fungi, and bacteria break down old materials. In a few months, the finished compost can be spread around flowers and vegetables. It will return nutrients to the soil and help the garden grow.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Which sentence in paragraph 1 introduces the main topic of the passage?

2. How do the words “After that” help organize paragraph 2?

3. Which verb in paragraph 2 makes the steam’s movement easy to picture?

4. Copy the sentence in paragraph 3 that joins two complete ideas with a comma and the word “and.”

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a 4-sentence paragraph about caring for a classroom plant. Begin with a clear topic sentence, use at least one transition word, include a vivid action verb, and write one sentence that joins two complete ideas with a comma and and, but, or so. Then read your draft with a partner or adult. Improve one vague word or unclear idea; show the original and revised wording and explain why it is clearer. Check capitals, sentence-ending punctuation, and the joined sentence together. Correct errors if needed, or explain one choice you confirmed. Keep your final paragraph at four sentences; use an extra sheet for the draft and change record if needed.

ANSWER KEY

Compost Story Choices

GRADE 4 · 4.W.3

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the first sentence of each paragraph, circle transition words or phrases, and box vivid action verbs. These writing choices help readers follow ideas and picture the action. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Which sentence in paragraph 1 introduces the main topic of the passage?	**On Monday, our class began a compost bin behind the school garden.**
2	How do the words "After that" help organize paragraph 2?	**They show that adding dry leaves happened after checking and mixing the bin.**
3	Which verb in paragraph 2 makes the steam's movement easy to picture?	**curled**
4	Copy the sentence in paragraph 3 that joins two complete ideas with a comma and the word "and."	**The pile had shrunk, and the fruit peels were harder to see.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Each Wednesday, I care for the spider plant near our window. First, I test the soil with my finger and pour in a small cup of water if it feels dry. The long leaves stretch toward the light, so I turn the pot slowly. Finally, I snip one brown tip with clean scissors.

Change record: I changed "The leaves go toward the light" to "The long leaves stretch toward the light" to give a more precise verb and detail. My partner and I confirmed the comma before so joins two complete ideas, and checked the capitals and ending marks.

Accept reasonable choices for vivid action verbs, such as layered, sprayed, mixed, curled, shrunk, or spread. For Part 3, check for four sentences, clear order, a transition, precise word choice, correct capitalization and punctuation, and a correctly joined compound sentence. Observe the learner's actual draft review with a partner or adult. Check the shown original/revised wording and clarity reason, plus a real self/peer convention check. An accurate no-change judgment is valid for a convention already correct; do not require an error quota. Keep the final paragraph at four sentences; the change record is separate.