The River Record

Summarize pivotal events before tracing a theme.

11-12.RL.2.b "Provide an objective summary of the text to support thematic analysis."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Number three actions that move the story from the flood damage to the posted notice. Underline details that show how the information was checked and shared.

Above the Waterline

1 The river had dropped by morning, leaving a brown line across the door of Bell Street Library. Inside, shelves were dry, but the basement storeroom was not. Leila, a student volunteer, helped Mr. Chen carry boxes up the stairs while the custodian checked the wiring. In one box, Leila found a notebook filled with dates, water heights, and sketches of streets that had flooded. For thirty years, neighbors had recorded what the river did after heavy rain. The library director planned to send the notebook to the town archive for safekeeping as soon as the roads reopened.

2 At noon, a delivery driver stopped outside to ask which bridge was open. The town's website had not been updated since the power failed. Leila opened the notebook to a page from a storm twelve years earlier and found a warning: when the water covered the third step of the library, the low bridge usually flooded next. The river had reached the fourth step overnight. Mr. Chen pointed out that an old pattern could not confirm today's road conditions, so they called the road crew. The crew reported that the low bridge was closed.

3 Leila wanted to tape the notebook's warning to the front door, but Mr. Chen said the damp pages might tear if people handled them. Together they copied the relevant entries and wrote the road crew's confirmed closure beneath them. They posted the notice at the library entrance and sent a photograph of it to the town office for its updates. When the archive van arrived that evening, Leila placed the original notebook inside a dry box. Through the window, she watched a cyclist stop to read the notice, turn around, and take the higher road.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. In one sentence, summarize the situation and discovery that set the story in motion.

2. Summarize how Leila and Mr. Chen respond to the driver's question. Include why they contact the road crew.

3. In one or two sentences, summarize how the characters share the information while preserving the notebook.

4. Which is the more objective summary, A or B? Explain why. A: After a flood, Leila and Mr. Chen consult a neighborhood flood notebook, confirm a bridge closure, and share a notice while preserving the original. B: Leila brilliantly saves everyone because officials irresponsibly ignored the flood.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a 75 to 100 word paragraph that objectively summarizes the whole story. End with one sentence explaining how two events in your summary support a possible theme about information and responsibility.

ANSWER KEY

The River Record

HIGH SCHOOL · 11-12.RL.2.b

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Number three actions that move the story from the flood damage to the posted notice. Underline details that show how the information was checked and shared. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	In one sentence, summarize the situation and discovery that set the story in motion.	**While helping clean up Bell Street Library after a flood, Leila finds a notebook containing decades of neighbors' records about river levels and flooded streets.**
2	Summarize how Leila and Mr. Chen respond to the driver's question. Include why they contact the road crew.	**Leila finds an old warning about the low bridge that seems relevant to the current river level. Because the past record cannot confirm present conditions, she and Mr. Chen call the road crew, which confirms the bridge is closed.**
3	In one or two sentences, summarize how the characters share the information while preserving the notebook.	**They post copies of the relevant entries with the road crew's confirmed update and send the notice to the town office. Leila places the original notebook in a dry box for the archive.**
4	Which is the more objective summary, A or B? Explain why. A: After a flood, Leila and Mr. Chen consult a neighborhood flood notebook, confirm a bridge closure, and share a notice while preserving the original. B: Leila brilliantly saves everyone because officials irresponsibly ignored the flood.	**A is more objective because it reports events supported by the story. B adds judgments about Leila and officials and claims she saved everyone, which the story does not establish.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

After a flood damages Bell Street Library's basement, Leila finds a notebook in which neighbors recorded past river levels and flooded streets. When a driver asks about an open bridge, she finds an older warning that matches the river's height, but Mr. Chen cautions that the old record cannot establish current conditions. They call the road crew, confirm the bridge is closed, and post copied entries with the confirmed update while sending the original to the archive. By checking the notebook's warning and sharing a verified notice, they show that useful records require responsible use.

Accept concise summaries that retain the sequence and distinguish the notebook's past observations from the road crew's current confirmation. The final sentence may express a different defensible theme if it connects two accurately summarized events.