Connections That Count

Trace how an argument links claims, evidence, and objections.

11-12.WHST.1.c "Use appropriate and varied transitional words, phrases, and clauses to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships between claim(s) and reasons, between reasons and evidence..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the words, phrases, and clauses that connect ideas within and between paragraphs, then number them in the order they appear.

A Place for Rain Gardens

1 After a heavy storm, water can rush across pavement and overwhelm street drains. Cities should replace selected stretches of unused pavement with rain gardens, shallow planted areas that collect runoff. One reason is that these spaces slow water before it reaches a drain. For example, soil and plant roots hold some rain while the rest filters downward, rather than racing across asphalt. As a result, less water reaches the drainage system all at once. This approach cannot prevent every flood, but it can reduce pressure on drains during ordinary storms. Location matters: a rain garden must be designed for its soil and surrounding streets.

2 Beyond easing runoff, rain gardens can make neglected blocks more useful to residents. Native flowers may support pollinators, and planted spaces can offer a more inviting place to walk past than cracked pavement. To make that benefit real, however, a city must choose plants suited to local conditions and arrange regular care. For instance, clearing litter and removing weeds help keep inlets open and plants healthy. In this way, maintenance connects the promise of a better streetscape to what neighbors actually experience. Without a care plan, even a well-built garden can become an eyesore.

3 Admittedly, some residents may object that replacing pavement takes away parking spaces. That concern deserves attention, especially on blocks where parking is already scarce. Nevertheless, it does not rule out every rain garden: planners can start with unused paved corners rather than heavily used spaces. They can also ask neighbors which locations flood and which spaces people rely on. Because placement affects both drainage and access, community input should guide each project before construction begins. In short, targeted rain gardens offer a practical way to manage runoff, provided cities select sites carefully and commit to upkeep.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. In paragraph 1, what does “For example” connect, and how does that connection support the claim?

2. How does “Beyond easing runoff” connect paragraph 2 to paragraph 1?

3. What does “Admittedly” signal about parking, and how does “Nevertheless” change the direction of the argument?

4. In paragraph 2, what does “In this way” refer to, and how does it link the maintenance example to the paragraph’s reason?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write one paragraph of 5 to 6 sentences arguing whether your school should add a water bottle refill station. Include a claim, a reason with a concrete example, a counterclaim and response, and at least three different transitions that clarify those connections.

ANSWER KEY

Connections That Count

HIGH SCHOOL · 11-12.WHST.1.c

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the words, phrases, and clauses that connect ideas within and between paragraphs, then number them in the order they appear. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	In paragraph 1, what does "For example" connect, and how does that connection support the claim?	**It connects the reason that rain gardens slow runoff to evidence about soil and roots holding rain. That evidence supports the claim that rain gardens can reduce pressure on drains.**
2	How does "Beyond easing runoff" connect paragraph 2 to paragraph 1?	**It signals an additional reason for rain gardens: they can make neglected blocks more useful, not just reduce runoff.**
3	What does "Admittedly" signal about parking, and how does "Nevertheless" change the direction of the argument?	**"Admittedly" introduces a counterclaim about lost parking. "Nevertheless" shifts to the response that planners can choose unused paved corners.**
4	In paragraph 2, what does "In this way" refer to, and how does it link the maintenance example to the paragraph's reason?	**It refers to caring for the garden by clearing litter and removing weeds. That care helps the planted space remain useful and inviting to residents.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Our school should add a water bottle refill station near the gym. One reason is that students could refill bottles without waiting for water from a drinking fountain. For example, athletes could fill their bottles before practice. Some people may argue that installing a station would cost too much. Even so, the school could get a price estimate and compare the cost with other facility needs. Therefore, a refill station is worth considering if its cost fits the budget.

Accept equivalent explanations that identify the ideas each transition connects and accurately describe their relationship. For Part 3, look for distinct transitions linking the claim to a reason, the reason to an example, and the counterclaim to a response.