The Unexpected Vine

Read for theme, then trace the details that support it.

5.RL.2 "Determine a theme of a literary text and explain how it is supported by details in the text; summarize the text using supporting details."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline Leo's mistake and the choice he makes afterward. Circle two details that help you figure out a theme about handling mistakes.

The Bench Outside the Library

1. On Saturday, Leo and his cousin Mara helped paint a bench outside the neighborhood library. Mara painted bright leaves while Leo filled in the blue sky behind them. When he reached for a fresh jar, his elbow knocked over the green paint. A wide streak slid across Mara's careful leaves. Leo grabbed a rag, but the paint had already soaked into the wood.

2. Mara returned with clean brushes and stopped. Leo could have blamed the wind, which had been rattling the jars, but he told her what happened. Mara stared at the streak. Then she traced its curve with one finger and said it looked like a climbing vine. They asked the librarian for a smaller brush and painted tiny branches along the streak, giving the scattered leaves a place to grow.

3. By late afternoon, the bench was dry. A little girl waiting for her father pointed to the vine and counted each leaf. Leo noticed that the streak he had feared now held the picture together. “Next time, I'll move the jars first,” he said. Mara handed him a brush for the second bench, and they began by setting every jar safely on the ground.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How does Leo respond to the spill at first, and what does he choose to do when Mara returns?

2. What is one theme of the story? Give a detail that supports it.

3. How does Mara's response to the spill help develop a theme? Use two details.

4. Summarize the story in three sentences. Include the problem, what Leo and Mara do, and how it ends.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a four- or five-sentence continuation set the next time Leo and Mara paint together. Invent a new problem and show what they do, then explain how one detail in your new scene supports a theme from the story.

ANSWER KEY

The Unexpected Vine

GRADE 5 · 5.RL.2

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline Leo's mistake and the choice he makes afterward. Circle two details that help you figure out a theme about handling mistakes. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How does Leo respond to the spill at first, and what does he choose to do when Mara returns?	**He first grabs a rag to clean up the paint. When Mara returns, he tells her what happened instead of blaming the wind.**
2	What is one theme of the story? Give a detail that supports it.	**Admitting a mistake can help people solve it together. Leo tells Mara about the spill, and they turn the streak into a vine.**
3	How does Mara's response to the spill help develop a theme? Use two details.	**Mara sees that the streak looks like a vine, and she helps paint branches along it. Her actions show how working together can turn a mistake into something useful.**
4	Summarize the story in three sentences. Include the problem, what Leo and Mara do, and how it ends.	**Leo spills green paint across the leaves on a library bench. He tells Mara what happened, and they turn the streak into a vine. After the bench dries, they begin another bench and put the paint jars safely on the ground.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The next Saturday, Leo and Mara found that their brushes were stiff with dried paint. Leo suggested asking the librarian if there were spare brushes. Mara soaked the stiff brushes while Leo started painting with the spares, and soon they could both work. Together, they finished the bench before the library closed. Their choice to share the work supports the theme that people can solve problems by helping each other.

Accept other themes supported by passage details, such as learning from mistakes or finding a creative solution to a problem. Summaries should include the spill, Leo and Mara's response, and the finished bench without adding events that did not happen.