Where Rain Goes

Notice how details make a main idea clear.

6.SL.4.a "Use pertinent descriptions, facts, and details to accentuate main ideas or themes."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline one main idea in each paragraph. Circle two details in that paragraph that help explain its main idea.

A Garden for Rainy Days

1 After a heavy rain, water can rush off a school roof and across the pavement. It may collect near the front doors, where students step around puddles. A rain garden could turn part of that runoff into something useful. A rain garden is a shallow planted area that catches rainwater for a short time. Water enters the garden, then slowly soaks into the soil. Instead of pooling beside a walkway, some water can flow toward the garden. This change could make a wet walkway easier to use.

2 To build the garden, workers could choose a low spot away from the building. A shallow channel could carry water from a roof downspout into that spot. Soil that lets water pass through would help keep the garden from staying flooded. Plants with deep roots could take up some water and help hold the soil in place. Imagine tall stems bending over a bowl-shaped patch after a storm, while water slowly sinks beneath them. These details show why a rain garden needs more than just a hole in the ground.

3 A rain garden can offer more than drainage. Flowers suited to the local area can provide nectar for bees and butterflies. Students might count visiting insects or record how long water remains after a storm. Those observations would turn the garden into an outdoor study site. The plants would need care, too. Students or groundskeepers could pull weeds and remove litter so water has room to enter. A patch that handles some runoff, supports visiting insects, and invites close observation would help the school in several ways.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How does the detail about students stepping around puddles help explain the need for a rain garden?

2. How does the detail about a channel from the downspout help explain how the garden would work?

3. How does the detail about nectar for bees and butterflies add to the passage's main idea about rain gardens?

4. Which detail from the passage best supports the idea that students could learn from a rain garden? Explain your choice.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Propose a rain garden for a school like the one in the passage. In four sentences, say where you would put it, use at least two accurate details from the passage in your plan, and explain how your plan would help the school.

ANSWER KEY

Where Rain Goes

GRADE 6 · 6.SL.4.a

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline one main idea in each paragraph. Circle two details in that paragraph that help explain its main idea. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How does the detail about students stepping around puddles help explain the need for a rain garden?	**It shows that rainwater collects where students walk. A rain garden could catch some runoff and make the walkway easier to use.**
2	How does the detail about a channel from the downspout help explain how the garden would work?	**The channel would carry roof runoff into the garden, where the water could soak into the soil.**
3	How does the detail about nectar for bees and butterflies add to the passage's main idea about rain gardens?	**It shows that a rain garden could support visiting insects as well as handle runoff.**
4	Which detail from the passage best supports the idea that students could learn from a rain garden? Explain your choice.	**Students might count visiting insects or record how long water remains after a storm. Either activity would let them study the garden through observation.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

I would put a rain garden in a low spot away from the school building. A shallow channel could carry water from a roof downspout into the garden. Flowers suited to the area could provide nectar for bees and butterflies. The garden would help manage some roof runoff and give students a place to watch visiting insects.

Accept different main-idea sentences and supporting details if the student explains the connection accurately. For Your Turn, check that the four-sentence plan includes at least two accurate passage details and explains a school benefit.