Under the Oak

Read one decision through three viewpoints.

7.RL.10.c "Read widely to understand diverse perspectives and viewpoints."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline one detail that explains each character's view of the oak, then circle the action each character wants someone to take.

The Courtyard Oak

1 Maya stopped beneath the courtyard oak when she saw the orange notice tied to its trunk: TREE TO BE REMOVED FRIDAY. At lunch, its shade held the chess club, two teachers, and anyone who needed a break from the bright concrete. Maya had learned to play chess there with her grandfather before he moved away. She ran a finger over a square of bark and imagined the courtyard without its broad leaves. The notice said nothing about those afternoons, so she began a petition to save the tree.

2 Mr. Ortiz, the school custodian, had put up the notice. On Monday, a heavy branch had dropped into the courtyard just minutes before the lunch bell. No one was hurt, but he had carried it away himself. He had also watched students stumble where roots pushed up the paving stones. He liked the cool shade, especially while sweeping on hot days. Still, when he pictured a crowded lunch break beneath the oak, he saw the empty spot where the branch had landed. He wanted the tree gone before someone was injured.

3 Leila, who had joined the school that month, read Maya's petition beside the raised stones. At her old school, a smaller tree had survived after workers trimmed weak limbs and repaired the path around it. She knew that might not work here, and the fresh break above her showed why Mr. Ortiz worried. But the oak shaded the only benches near the lunch doors, where she ate while learning her classmates' names. Leila wrote a question beneath Maya's petition: Could an expert check the tree before anyone decided?

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How do Maya and Mr. Ortiz see the oak differently? Use one detail that helps explain each viewpoint.

2. Maya and Leila both value the oak. Why does Leila suggest a different next step?

3. Which detail near Leila helps her understand Mr. Ortiz's concern, even though she does not agree that the oak must be removed?

4. If the school removed the oak without having an expert check it, how might each of the three characters react? Explain why.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine a student who uses the courtyard after school for an activity not mentioned in the story. In four sentences, describe what this student thinks should happen to the oak, using two story details and explaining how their experience shapes a view different from Maya's or Mr. Ortiz's.

ANSWER KEY

Under the Oak

GRADE 7 · 7.RL.10.c

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline one detail that explains each character's view of the oak, then circle the action each character wants someone to take. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How do Maya and Mr. Ortiz see the oak differently? Use one detail that helps explain each viewpoint.	**Maya values the oak's shade and her memories of playing chess there. Mr. Ortiz values the shade too, but the fallen branch and raised stones make him see the tree as a danger.**
2	Maya and Leila both value the oak. Why does Leila suggest a different next step?	**Leila wants an expert to check the oak before a decision is made. She has seen another tree saved by trimming and path repairs, but she knows that may not work here.**
3	Which detail near Leila helps her understand Mr. Ortiz's concern, even though she does not agree that the oak must be removed?	**Leila sees the fresh break above her, which shows where a branch fell. It helps her understand his worry about someone getting hurt.**
4	If the school removed the oak without having an expert check it, how might each of the three characters react? Explain why.	**Mr. Ortiz might feel relieved because he fears an injury. Maya would object because she wants to save the tree and the place where she played chess. Leila would question the decision because she wants an expert to check whether the tree can be saved.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

I practice jump rope in the courtyard after school, so the ground matters more to me than Maya's chess memories. The roots have lifted the paving stones, and a heavy branch fell near lunch, so I would not leave the courtyard as it is. I want workers to repair the path and have an expert check the tree before removing it. Maya wants to save the oak, but I think keeping it must also mean making the space safe.

Accept reasonable inferences grounded in the passage, including different explanations of why a character might object to removal. For the open task, look for a distinct after-school activity, two accurate story details, and a clear contrast with Maya or Mr. Ortiz.