At the Garden Gate

Read a story through the perspectives of its characters.

8.RL.10 "By the end of the year, independently read and comprehend literary texts representing a variety of genres, cultures, and perspectives that exhibit complexity appropriate for at least grade 8..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline one detail that shows what Nani values, and circle one detail that shows what Eli values. Number two moments when Mina notices a difference between their experiences.

The Blue Leaves

1. On Saturday, the city crew taped a yellow line across the garden steps. "Mina, hold this end of the string," Nani said. She had set the blue tiles into the wall beside those steps when the garden first opened. Each tile carried a small white leaf, and she could name the neighbor who had painted it. The crew planned to replace the steps with a ramp. I traced a cracked leaf with my finger while Nani folded the string around her wrist, as if she could measure what might be lost.

2. Eli rolled up beside us, stopping where the steps began. He was on the garden committee, but he could enter only if someone lifted his wheelchair over the steps, a solution he had stopped accepting. "People keep calling this a garden for everyone," he said. "I would like to decide when I come in." Nani showed him a photograph of the wall before the leaves faded. Eli studied it, then pointed to a tile near the bottom. "That one is beautiful. I have never seen it from here."

3. At the meeting, the crew leader proposed saving the tiles and setting them along the ramp's outer edge. Nani asked who would remove them. Her hands had placed each one, but her hands shook now. Eli offered to help number the tiles before the work began. Nobody promised that every leaf would survive. On our way home, Nani slipped the measuring string into my pocket. "Bring this tomorrow, Mina," she said. I looked back at the closed gate and imagined Eli entering without waiting for someone to lift him.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How does Mina's view of the planned ramp change from the first paragraph to the last? Use a detail from each paragraph.

2. What does Eli mean when he says he wants to decide when he comes in? How does his comment about the tile deepen that meaning?

3. Why might Nani ask who will remove the tiles instead of simply agreeing to the crew leader's plan? Use two details about her from the story.

4. Does the ending suggest that the problem is solved? Explain using Nani's request and one other detail from the final paragraph.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Choose Nani or Eli. Write a first-person paragraph set the next morning, before work begins. Include two accurate details from the story, and show a thought your chosen character has not spoken aloud.

ANSWER KEY

At the Garden Gate

GRADE 8 · 8.RL.10

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline one detail that shows what Nani values, and circle one detail that shows what Eli values. Number two moments when Mina notices a difference between their experiences. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How does Mina's view of the planned ramp change from the first paragraph to the last? Use a detail from each paragraph.	**At first, Mina worries about losing the tiles as she touches a cracked leaf. By the end, she imagines Eli entering the garden on his own.**
2	What does Eli mean when he says he wants to decide when he comes in? How does his comment about the tile deepen that meaning?	**Eli wants to enter without relying on someone to lift his wheelchair. His comment shows that the steps have also kept him from seeing part of the garden up close.**
3	Why might Nani ask who will remove the tiles instead of simply agreeing to the crew leader's plan? Use two details about her from the story.	**Nani placed the tiles herself and remembers their painters, so she cares about their preservation. Her shaking hands may make her concerned about whether she can help remove them.**
4	Does the ending suggest that the problem is solved? Explain using Nani's request and one other detail from the final paragraph.	**Not completely. Nani asks Mina to bring the string, suggesting she will return to help, but nobody can promise that every tile will survive.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

I waited beside the garden steps while Mina stretched out the string. The blue tiles looked smaller than they had when I pressed them into the wall years ago. Eli had offered to help number them, so I handed him a pencil and told him each leaf had a painter. I hoped we could find a place for every tile along the ramp. I was afraid one might break, but I did not want the steps to keep Eli outside any longer.

Accept interpretations supported by specific passage details. For the open task, check that the first-person voice fits the chosen character, the two story details are accurate, and the unspoken thought is plausible.