Ideas That Connect

Read a model proposal and trace how its ideas fit together.

8.W.6.b "Present relationships between ideas efficiently."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline one cause-and-effect link, circle two words or phrases that signal sequence or contrast, and number the two groups assigned different upkeep jobs.

A Garden for Rainy Days

1 After heavy rain, water rushes across the paved school courtyard and collects beside the main doors. Students track puddles inside, and the wet pavement makes the entrance slippery. A rain garden could address both problems. Unlike a regular flower bed, this shallow planted area is designed to collect runoff from nearby hard surfaces. Its soil lets water soak in gradually instead of sending it straight to a storm drain. Placing one beside the courtyard would turn a troublesome puddle into a source of water for plants.

2 Building the garden would require more than digging a hole. First, the school would need to check where water flows and whether underground utility lines are nearby. Then workers could shape a shallow basin and fill it with soil that drains well. Plants suited to both brief flooding and dry spells would go in last. Because these steps address the site before the planting, the garden would be more likely to work as intended. Skipping the site check, by contrast, might put a garden where little runoff reaches it.

3 Even a well-placed rain garden would need care. During its first growing seasons, someone would have to pull weeds and water new plants during dry periods. Once the plants are established, their roots can help keep the soil porous, but they cannot remove litter from a blocked inlet. A student team could inspect the inlet after storms while maintenance staff handle larger repairs. This division of work would keep the project manageable and show students how a small patch of ground connects to the whole courtyard.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How does the first paragraph connect the courtyard puddle to a benefit for plants?

2. Why does the writer describe the site check before the planting? How does the word “Because” clarify that order?

3. What contrast does “by contrast” make between checking the site and skipping that step?

4. How does the final paragraph connect each group’s job to the plan for maintaining the garden?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write one paragraph of 5 to 6 sentences proposing a way to reduce wasted paper at school. Connect a problem to a solution, put two steps in order, and explain how to handle one possible obstacle.

ANSWER KEY

Ideas That Connect

GRADE 8 · 8.W.6.b

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline one cause-and-effect link, circle two words or phrases that signal sequence or contrast, and number the two groups assigned different upkeep jobs. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How does the first paragraph connect the courtyard puddle to a benefit for plants?	**A rain garden would collect runoff from the courtyard, and its soil would let that water soak in for the plants.**
2	Why does the writer describe the site check before the planting? How does the word “Because” clarify that order?	**Checking water flow and utility lines first helps workers choose a suitable site. “Because” shows that preparing the site makes the garden more likely to work.**
3	What contrast does “by contrast” make between checking the site and skipping that step?	**Checking the site helps workers place the garden where runoff reaches it, while skipping the check risks placing it where little runoff arrives.**
4	How does the final paragraph connect each group’s job to the plan for maintaining the garden?	**Students would inspect the inlet after storms, while maintenance staff would handle larger repairs. Dividing the work makes upkeep more manageable.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Many students print drafts they later throw away, so our school could set up a scrap-paper station near the printers. First, a volunteer could collect clean, one-sided sheets from designated trays. Next, students could use the blank sides for notes and rough drafts. The station would reduce demand for new paper while giving discarded sheets another use. However, some pages might contain private information, so those should go into secure disposal bins instead. A sign beside each printer could explain which pages are safe to reuse.

Accept other passage-supported explanations of the cause, sequence, contrast, and division of work. For the writing task, look for clear links between ideas rather than particular transition words.