

Small Stories, Big Ideas

Find short personal stories and explain what they add to a text.

4.10.G "identify and explain the use of anecdote."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each short story about a specific person, and write 1 or 2 beside the two stories. Think about the larger idea each story helps you understand.

The Riverbend Seed Library

- ① At the Riverbend Library, the new seed library lets families borrow packets of seeds. After planting, gardeners may save seeds from some plants for the next year. The library also holds Saturday gardening talks. Staff members say the project gives neighbors a low-cost way to try growing vegetables, herbs, and flowers in small yards or pots.
- ② During the first spring, Nia borrowed basil seeds. She planted them in a sunny pot beside her apartment door. A few weeks later, she clipped leaves for tomato soup and brought a small bunch to her neighbor, who had never tasted fresh basil. Nia returned to the library to ask which seeds might grow well in shade.
- ③ Volunteer Mr. Chen remembers meeting a boy at a gardening talk. The boy said he had no yard, so Mr. Chen showed him how to plant lettuce in a recycled milk jug with holes in the bottom. Later that summer, the boy brought in a photo of green leaves on his windowsill. The seed library continues to collect donated packets and share planting tips.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 Which two parts of the passage are short stories about specific people? Name the people in each story.

2 What details in Nia's story show that it is about one person's experience instead of a general fact?

3 What larger idea about the seed library can readers understand from Nia's story? Use one detail from the story.

4 How does the boy's story help readers understand who can grow food with help from the seed library?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Write a three-sentence mini story about a person using a community program, such as a library, park, food pantry, or recycling center. In a fourth sentence, explain how your story would help readers understand a larger idea, such as sharing, learning, or solving a problem.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline each short story about a specific person, and write 1 or 2 beside the two stories. Think about the larger idea each story helps you understand. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Which two parts of the passage are short stories about specific people? Name the people in each story.	Nia's story about planting basil, and Mr. Chen's story about helping a boy plant lettuce in a milk jug.
2	What details in Nia's story show that it is about one person's experience instead of a general fact?	It names Nia and tells what she did, planted basil by her apartment door, used it in soup, shared it with a neighbor, and asked for more seed advice.
3	What larger idea about the seed library can readers understand from Nia's story? Use one detail from the story.	The seed library can help people grow and share fresh food in small spaces. Nia grew basil in a pot by her apartment door and shared it with her neighbor.
4	How does the boy's story help readers understand who can grow food with help from the seed library?	It shows that even someone without a yard can grow food in a container. The boy grew lettuce in a recycled milk jug on his windowsill.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Luis visited the bookmobile because he did not have books at home. He borrowed a book about planets and read it with his little sister that night. The next week, he returned to borrow another science book. This story helps readers see how a bookmobile can bring learning to families.

Accept the full Nia sequence and the full Mr. Chen and boy sequence as the two short stories. Accept explanations of purpose that are supported by passage details, even when students use different words.