

When Water Stops

Trace how choices and events reveal a theme.

8.7.A “analyze how themes are developed through the interaction of characters and events;”

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each character choice that changes another character's actions. Number the events that show a change in how people respond to the water shortage.

The Dry Fountain

- ① On the morning the town fountain stopped, Mara found her neighbor, Mr. Vale, filling a cart with bottled water from his store. The heat had already browned the community garden, and residents waited in a long line at the dry fountain with watering cans. Mara asked Mr. Vale to share the bottles before he sold them. “I paid for this stock,” he said, pulling the cart away. Mara watched an elderly woman leave the line empty-handed, then ran to the school’s rain barrels with two empty buckets.
- ② At school, Mara met her friend Inez, who was loading art supplies into a van for the afternoon festival. Inez sighed when Mara explained the problem. “The festival can wait,” she said, but the principal had promised the artists a crowd. Together, the girls asked the principal to move the festival to the shaded garden. He refused, worried that the empty fountain would embarrass the school. Mara pointed to the wilting plants and suggested that visitors carry water from the rain barrels. After a pause, Inez offered her van to haul the buckets.
- ③ By noon, festival guests formed a new line beside the garden. Some carried buckets, while others filled small pails at the barrel spouts. Mr. Vale arrived with his cart, expecting customers. Instead, he saw the elderly woman from earlier watering seedlings with Mara. Quietly, he opened his bottles and placed them on a table marked FREE. The principal moved the artists’ displays under the trees, where people gathered to paint signs for the garden. When clouds finally gathered that evening, Mara noticed that no one was waiting alone.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 What does Mara’s response after Mr. Vale refuses to share reveal about her priorities? Use one event from paragraph 1.

2 How does the interaction between Mara, Inez, and the principal help develop the passage’s message?

3 How does Mr. Vale change by the end of the passage, and which event helps cause that change?

4 What theme is developed through the final scene, when people gather beside the garden and no one is waiting alone?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Write a four-sentence analysis of how the passage develops a theme through character interactions and events. State a theme, then explain how events from the beginning, middle, and end develop it.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline each character choice that changes another character's actions. Number the events that show a change in how people respond to the water shortage. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What does Mara's response after Mr. Vale refuses to share reveal about her priorities? Use one event from paragraph 1.	Mara puts the community garden's needs ahead of convenience or profit. After Mr. Vale refuses, she goes to the school's rain barrels to find another water source.
2	How does the interaction between Mara, Inez, and the principal help develop the passage's message?	Mara and Inez work together to solve the problem despite the principal's worry about the festival. Their plan turns the festival into a way for people to help water the garden.
3	How does Mr. Vale change by the end of the passage, and which event helps cause that change?	Mr. Vale changes from protecting his bottles to giving them away. Seeing the elderly woman watering seedlings with Mara helps cause his change.
4	What theme is developed through the final scene, when people gather beside the garden and no one is waiting alone?	The passage develops the theme that communities become stronger when people work together to meet a shared need.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The passage develops the theme that a community becomes stronger when people choose shared needs over personal plans or profit. At first, Mr. Vale protects his bottles, and Mara responds by seeking water from the school rain barrels. When the principal worries about the festival, Mara and Inez work together to make the event help the garden. Seeing the elderly woman water seedlings leads Mr. Vale to give away bottles, and the final shared line shows that people no longer face the crisis alone.

Accept a clearly stated, supportable theme about cooperation, responsibility, or putting community needs before personal interests. Students should connect the theme to character interactions and events across the passage, not simply summarize the plot.