

Runoff to Renewal

Trace a problem, response, and balanced conclusion.

8.9.B “analyze how the use of text structure contributes to the author's purpose;”

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline sentences that describe the runoff problem, circle sentences that describe rain gardens or their limits, and label each paragraph Problem, Response, or Balance to track how the author builds a purpose.

A Sponge Beside the Street

- ① During a hard rain, water rushes from roofs, parking lots, and streets into storm drains. Because these surfaces do not absorb much water, the flow can pick up oil, litter, and soil before it reaches a nearby stream. Fast runoff may also flood intersections and erode stream banks. Cities often build larger pipes to move the water away quickly. That approach can prevent some street flooding, but it does not remove many pollutants or restore water to the ground.
- ② Rain gardens offer a different path. A rain garden is a shallow planted area placed where runoff can flow into it, such as beside a parking lot or at the edge of a schoolyard. Its soil and plant roots slow the water, allowing some of it to soak downward. As the water moves through the soil, particles and some pollutants can be trapped or broken down by natural processes. During dry periods, native plants in the garden can provide habitat for insects and birds.
- ③ Rain gardens are not a perfect cure for every drainage problem. City planners must measure how each site drains and choose plants that fit local conditions. A garden also needs space, maintenance, and soil that can absorb water. Still, the contrast between rushing runoff and slowed, filtered water shows why a small planted space can matter. By describing both limits and benefits, the article gives readers a realistic reason to consider rain gardens as one tool for protecting local streams.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 How does the author organize the three paragraphs, and what does each paragraph do?

2 Why does the author describe polluted, fast-moving runoff before introducing rain gardens?

3 How does the third paragraph support the author's purpose? Use one detail from that paragraph in your answer.

4 What is the effect of contrasting "rushing runoff" with "slowed, filtered water"?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Choose a school or neighborhood problem that could have a practical response. Write a three-paragraph mini article of 90 to 120 words that presents the problem, explains a response, and includes one limit or condition. After the article, write one sentence that names your structure and explains how it supports your purpose.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline sentences that describe the runoff problem, circle sentences that describe rain gardens or their limits, and label each paragraph Problem, Response, or Balance to track how the author builds a purpose. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How does the author organize the three paragraphs, and what does each paragraph do?	Paragraph 1 presents the runoff problem, paragraph 2 explains rain gardens as a response and describes how they work, and paragraph 3 balances their benefits with limits.
2	Why does the author describe polluted, fast-moving runoff before introducing rain gardens?	The opening establishes the problem, so readers can understand why a solution that slows and filters water is needed.
3	How does the third paragraph support the author's purpose? Use one detail from that paragraph in your answer.	It makes the explanation realistic and credible by admitting that rain gardens need space, maintenance, and suitable soil while still showing their benefits.
4	What is the effect of contrasting "rushing runoff" with "slowed, filtered water"?	The contrast makes the difference between the problem and the response clear, helping explain how rain gardens can help protect streams.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

At lunch, many students buy bottled water and toss the empty bottles into trash cans. Those bottles take resources to make and can add to landfill waste when they are not recycled. One response is to install refill stations near the cafeteria and gym. Students can fill reusable bottles, and staff can post signs that show where the stations are. Stations need cleaning, and students need bottles to use them. Even so, convenient refill stations could reduce the number of single-use bottles the school throws away each busy school day. The problem-to-solution-with-limits structure shows why the stations are needed while making the proposal sound realistic.

Accept responses that accurately explain how the order of ideas helps the author explain the value of rain gardens. For Part 3, accept varied topics if the student uses a clear problem, response, and limit or condition, then connects that structure to a purpose.