Bridge Under Pressure

Trace how a narrative problem grows and is solved.

5.W.1.A "Write personal or fictional narratives in prose or poetic form that organize the writing around a central problem, conflict, or experience using descriptions or dialogue to develop the experience(s)."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the sentences that show Maya's problem. Number 1, 2, and 3 beside details that show what happens first, next, and last as she deals with it.

The Bent Bridge

1. On Saturday, Maya carried her paper bridge to the library contest. She had built it from index cards, tape, and string, hoping it would hold a stack of books. At the check-in table, a gust of wind slipped through the open door. The bridge lifted from her hands, bumped the floor, and bent sharply in the middle.

2. Maya's throat tightened. The judges would begin testing bridges in ten minutes, and hers now sagged like a wet noodle. "I can fix it," she whispered, though she was not sure how. Her friend Eli pointed to the supply box. "Use the string as a support," he said. Maya studied the bent cards and pictured a triangle beneath them.

3. Her fingers shook as she taped the string from one side of the bridge to the other. The first knot slipped loose, so she tied it again, pulling hard enough to wrinkle the card. When the judge placed one book on top, Maya held her breath. The bridge stayed level. Then it held three more books, and Maya grinned at Eli. "The triangle worked," she said.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Which event creates Maya's central problem?

2. Write two details that show Maya is worried while she works.

3. How does Eli's dialogue move Maya toward solving the problem?

4. How does the final paragraph show that Maya's problem is resolved?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write one paragraph of 7 to 9 sentences about a time you faced a problem during an activity. Organize the events from beginning to end, include at least two action or sensory descriptions and one line of dialogue, and show how the problem is solved or changed.

ANSWER KEY

Bridge Under Pressure

GRADE 5 · 5.W.1.A

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the sentences that show Maya's problem. Number 1, 2, and 3 beside details that show what happens first, next, and last as she deals with it. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Which event creates Maya's central problem?	**A gust of wind drops Maya's bridge and bends it in the middle before the contest.**
2	Write two details that show Maya is worried while she works.	**"Maya's throat tightened" and "Her fingers shook."**
3	How does Eli's dialogue move Maya toward solving the problem?	**Eli tells Maya to use the string as a support, which leads her to make a triangle beneath the bridge.**
4	How does the final paragraph show that Maya's problem is resolved?	**Maya reties the string, the bridge stays level under one book, and then it holds three more books.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

During recess, I carried my model volcano across the blacktop for science day. A sudden rain shower splashed onto the paper sides, and red paint ran down my hands. I hurried under the picnic shelter, but the volcano began to sag. "We need it dry before class," my partner Nora said. I found paper towels in my backpack and pressed them gently against the wet spots. Then we used a sheet of cardboard to make a roof over the volcano. By the time the bell rang, the sides were firm again. We carried it inside carefully, smiling at our dry, standing volcano.

Accept equivalent evidence from the passage when students identify the problem, describe feelings, and explain how dialogue or actions move the plot. For the writing task, look for one clear problem, sequenced events, descriptive details or dialogue, and an ending that addresses the problem.