

Compost With Purpose

Study how details and word choice build a focused model paragraph set.

5.W.2.A.ii "Engage in writing as a process to compose well-developed paragraphs. This includes: Developing, selecting, and organizing ideas relevant to topic, purpose, and genre..."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline one sentence in each paragraph that gives an important detail about compost. Circle three precise words or phrases that help you picture the process or its results.

From Scraps to Soil

- ① Behind the cafeteria, a wooden bin holds banana peels, dry leaves, and bits of apple core. This is the school compost pile, not a trash can. Tiny organisms, including bacteria and fungi, break down these leftovers over time. With air, moisture, and a mix of green and brown materials, the pile slowly becomes dark, crumbly compost that can help garden soil.
- ② Compost improves soil by helping it hold water and by adding nutrients that plants use. In the garden, it can give bean roots a softer, richer place to grow. Using compost also keeps some food scraps out of landfills, where buried waste can release methane, a gas that warms Earth's atmosphere. Our small bin connects lunchtime choices to a larger environmental problem.
- ③ To make useful compost, the garden club layers fruit and vegetable scraps with fallen leaves, then turns the pile with a shovel. Meat, dairy foods, and oily leftovers stay out because they can attract animals and create odors. By sorting scraps carefully, students protect the pile's balance. The finished compost will feed spring seedlings, turning yesterday's lunch into tomorrow's flowers.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE Use the passage

- 1 What central idea is developed across all three paragraphs? Use details from at least two paragraphs in your answer.

- 2 How does paragraph 2 build on the information in paragraph 1?

- 3 Why is the information about methane relevant to the passage's central idea?

- 4 How do the phrases "larger environmental problem" and "protect the pile's balance" affect the tone of the passage?

3 YOUR TURN Your own words

Choose a useful school or neighborhood improvement, such as a rain garden, bike rack, or book swap. Write one 5-sentence informational paragraph that states a clear central idea, presents details in a logical order, and uses at least three precise, topic-specific words.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline one sentence in each paragraph that gives an important detail about compost. Circle three precise words or phrases that help you picture the process or its results. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What central idea is developed across all three paragraphs? Use details from at least two paragraphs in your answer.	Compost turns food scraps and leaves into useful soil material. It helps plants grow and can keep some waste out of landfills.
2	How does paragraph 2 build on the information in paragraph 1?	Paragraph 1 explains how scraps become compost, and paragraph 2 explains why compost is useful for gardens and the environment.
3	Why is the information about methane relevant to the passage's central idea?	It shows an environmental reason to compost because keeping scraps out of landfills can reduce waste that releases methane.
4	How do the phrases "larger environmental problem" and "protect the pile's balance" affect the tone of the passage?	They create a serious, responsible tone by showing that careful composting matters beyond the school garden.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

A rain garden is a shallow planted area that collects water after storms. Instead of rushing across pavement, rainwater soaks slowly into loose soil around the plants. Deep roots help hold the soil in place and filter some pollution from the water. Bright purple coneflowers and tall grasses also give bees and butterflies places to find food. A rain garden makes a neighborhood greener while helping protect nearby streams.

Accept equivalent descriptions of the central idea, organization, relevance, and tone when they are supported by passage details. For the open response, look for exactly five sentences, a focused central idea, logical order, and at least three precise words related to the chosen improvement.