

Dede and the Community Garden

AGES 9-10

Read the passage. Answer each question with details and complete thoughts.

When Dede’s class visited the neighborhood garden, she noticed that the tomato plants near the fence looked healthy, but the plants in the middle had drooping leaves. Her classmate Malik thought insects had damaged them. Dede looked closely and saw no holes in the leaves. The soil around those plants felt dry, while the soil near the fence was damp. She remembered that the fence stood beside a rain barrel that collected water from the community center’s roof. The class asked Ms. Green, the garden leader, before changing anything. Ms. Green explained that a loose connection had stopped water from reaching the middle row. She showed the students how to check the soil before watering so they would not give every plant too much water. Dede and Malik helped reconnect the hose with an adult. Then the class made a weekly garden chart. Each team recorded which rows were watered and whether the soil felt dry or damp. Two weeks later, the middle plants had stronger leaves. Dede was glad they had investigated the problem before deciding what was wrong. The chart also helped the next class care for the garden without guessing.

1. What evidence helped Dede question Malik’s idea about insects? Use two details from the passage.

2. Explain how the rain barrel was connected to the problem in the middle row.

3. Why did Ms. Green teach the class to check the soil before watering every plant?

4. What lesson did Dede learn about solving a problem? Support your answer with an event from the passage.

