

Threads & Themes Grade 8, Unit 2, Investigation 2 Summative Assessment

Name: _____ Date: _____ Class: _____

PASSAGE 1

“The Garden’s Rule”

(1) The Riverside Community Garden had been Maya’s idea. Three years ago, she had convinced the neighborhood association to transform the abandoned lot on Fifth Street into something shared and beautiful. Families arrived with seeds and soil. Teenagers painted a mural on the western fence. An older woman named Mrs. Chen taught anyone who would listen about companion planting—which plants grew best alongside each other, which ones fought for nutrients, which ones thrived in the shade. The garden became a place where neighbors who had never spoken began to recognize each other.

(2) Eli had arrived six months in, with a shovel and quiet enthusiasm. He had noticed that the irrigation system was inefficient, that the compost pile was poorly positioned, that the harvest could be organized better. Maya noticed too. Within a year, Eli had built three new raised beds, installed drip lines that cut water usage by half, and created a schedule so that harvests happened on predictable days. He had transformed chaos into something sustainable. At the association meetings, his voice grew louder, and Maya found herself serving as the intermediary between the neighborhood association and Eli’s growing list of proposals.

(3) When Eli proposed a rule that only people who actively participated could harvest vegetables, Maya felt her first hesitation. Participation, he explained, meant showing up at least twice a month for work days. He would keep a list. The garden had to run efficiently. Nobody argued. Efficiency was hard to argue against.

(4) Then came the day Maya arrived at the garden and found the western fence repainted. The community members’ names, which had been lettered in a dozen colors, were covered with a single gray coat. Eli explained at the next meeting that the original mural had been unprofessional. Distracting. A well-run garden required focus. Focus required order.

(5) Mrs. Chen stopped coming. When Maya asked her why, the old woman’s jaw tightened. “The garden does not feel like ours anymore,” she said simply. “It feels like his.”

(6) By the second year of Eli’s leadership, the rules had multiplied. A person who failed to show at a work day twice would lose their plot. A person who planted something unapproved—anything Eli thought might compromise the garden’s design—would find their seedlings pulled up by morning. The harvest was no longer shared equally but allocated by a points system that Eli controlled and explained in ways nobody quite understood.

(7) One evening, Maya stood at the fence and remembered the girl she had been when she proposed the garden. She had imagined a place where nobody was in charge, where knowledge flowed freely, where everyone belonged. Now she stood looking at the raised beds in neat rows, the irrigation lines running with perfect precision, the carefully sorted harvest waiting in crates to be distributed according to points nobody could quite calculate. The garden was more beautiful than ever. Its beauty had the quality of something deliberately arranged to be looked at rather than lived in. It was a monument to something she no longer recognized.

(8) She bent down to examine a single seedling from her own plot—a tomato volunteer that had pushed through the soil on its own, unscheduled and unplanned—but did not move to plant it in the undesignated row beside her. Eli walked past, clipboard in hand, his expression unreadable. The question formed in her mind but did not reach her lips: When did the garden stop belonging to everyone?

ITEMS — PASSAGE 1

Item 1

What was Maya’s MAIN reason for starting the garden?

- A) She wanted to create a shared space for her community.
- B) She needed a place for her family to grow their plants.
- C) She thought young people in the neighborhood had too few activities.
- D) She was concerned that the abandoned lot was dangerous.

Item 2

Based on paragraphs 2 through 4, how does Eli’s approach to the garden change over time?

- A) He begins to focus on making improvements that match what the community values.
- B) He becomes less concerned with control and more interested in strengthening relationships.
- C) He shifts from solving practical problems to setting rules that limit what others can do.
- D) He moves from working for his own benefit to requiring all members to follow a formal schedule.

Item 3

Read this excerpt from paragraph 2 of “The Garden’s Rule.”

Maya found herself serving as the intermediary between the neighborhood association and Eli’s growing list of proposals.

The word “intermediary” contains the Latin prefix inter-, meaning “between.” Based on this information, what does Maya do as an “intermediary”?

- A) Maya writes speeches for Eli to give to the neighborhood association.

- B) Maya carries messages to and from Eli and the neighborhood association.
- C) Maya has disagreements with Eli and the neighborhood association.
- D) Maya observes conversations Eli has with the neighborhood association.

Item 4

What does Mrs. Chen’s response in paragraph 5 MOST reveal about her views regarding the changes in the garden?

- A) Mrs. Chen thinks that rules are unnecessary in a community garden.
- B) Mrs. Chen feels that the garden regulations are unfair to older members.
- C) Mrs. Chen believes she has taught others at the garden all she can about companion planting.
- D) Mrs. Chen dislikes that the garden has shifted from a shared community space to the domain of one person.

Item 5

Read this sentence from paragraph 6 of “The Garden’s Rule.”

The harvest was no longer shared equally but allocated by a points system that Eli controlled and explained in ways nobody quite understood.

What does the word “allocated” mean as it is used in this sentence?

- A) distributed
- B) hidden
- C) challenged
- D) grown

Item 6

Read this sentence from paragraph 7 of “The Garden’s Rule.”

It was a monument to something she no longer recognized.

What does the word “monument” suggest about how Maya views the garden at this point in the story?

- A) The garden has become a tourist attraction for outsiders to visit.
- B) The garden is more important to the community than Maya dared hope it would be.
- C) The garden has become an imposing symbol of something that has been lost.
- D) The garden is a symbol of the ways Eli improved on the original vision.

Item 7

Read this sentence from paragraph 7 of “The Garden’s Rule.”

Its beauty had the quality of something deliberately arranged to be looked at rather than lived in.

Which phrase from the paragraph MOST helps the reader to understand the phrase “deliberately arranged”?

- A) “nobody was in charge”
- B) “knowledge flowed freely”
- C) “raised beds in neat rows”
- D) “more beautiful than ever”

Item 8

Which statement correctly describes an effect of the dramatic irony present in paragraph 9 of “The Garden’s Rule”?

- A) It creates sympathy for Eli by revealing that he is unaware of the harm his rules have caused Maya and the others, making his rigidity seem less intentional than it appeared earlier in the story.
- B) It signals that Maya is about to plant the seedling in the undesignated row as a quiet act of resistance against Eli’s control of the garden.
- C) It suggests that Eli senses Maya’s hesitation but chooses to walk past without engaging, showing that he values the garden’s efficiency over her concerns.
- D) It deepens the sense of Maya’s loss because when Eli passes by without speaking it makes the distance between what the garden has become and what it meant to her feel more complete.

Item 9

Which sentence provides the BEST summary of “The Garden’s Rule”?

- A) A community garden that Maya founded is gradually taken over by Eli, whose rules transform the space into something highly controlled, leaving Maya questioning what the garden has become.
- B) Maya and Eli disagree about how a community garden should be run, leading to conflict that drives away longtime members like Mrs. Chen and leaves the garden’s future in the neighborhood uncertain.
- C) Eli improves a struggling community garden by creating efficient systems, but his strict rules make Maya realize the garden was better when it was informally managed.
- D) A community garden succeeds under Eli’s leadership, but Maya discovers that rules and community are in conflict, causing her to regret starting the garden.

Item 10

Which statement BEST expresses the theme of “The Garden’s Rule”?

- A) Efficiency and good organization are essential for any successful community project.
- B) Strong leadership requires making difficult decisions that some people may dislike.
- C) Systems built around efficiency and control can undermine the human values they were meant to support.
- D) Communities fail when members prioritize personal authority over shared responsibility.

Item 11

Read this film adaptation of paragraph 4 of “The Garden’s Rule.”

[EXT. COMMUNITY GARDEN — MORNING]

[MAYA enters through the garden gate and stops. Her eyes fix on the fence. CLOSE-UP: a wall of flat gray paint. Splashes of color peek through where the gray did not fully cover. One name — CHEN — is faintly legible beneath the gray.]

[MAYA stares. She does not move. She does not speak. Her hand tightens on the strap of her bag.]

[ELI walks past in the background, clipboard in hand, surveying the raised beds.]

Based on the written passage and the film script excerpt, what does the visual adaptation convey that the written text does NOT?

- A) Maya’s realization that the garden she once loved has been changed
- B) the traces of the name Chen beneath the gray paint, which suggests the community’s history
- C) Eli’s satisfaction with the new appearance of the fence after the repainting
- D) the contrast between Eli’s approach and the garden’s original informal character

Item 12

Read this film adaptation of paragraph 8 of “The Garden’s Rule.”

[EXT. COMMUNITY GARDEN — DUSK]

[MAYA crouches beside her raised bed, examining a small tomato seedling that has pushed through the soil on its own. She cups it in both hands but does not plant it.]

[CLOSE-UP: Her hands. The seedling’s roots dangle in the air. The soil of the undesignated row beside her is undisturbed.]

[ELI moves through the frame behind her — clipboard, eyes on his list. He does not slow. He does not look at Maya.]

[MAYA’s eyes remain on the seedling. FADE TO BLACK.]

How does the script’s choice to end on a close-up of the seedling’s dangling roots create a different effect from the written passage?

- A) It reveals that Eli is choosing to avoid Maya, which makes his authority appear more threatening than the written passage suggests.

- B)** It shows viewers the garden’s beauty, creating a more hopeful ending than the written passage provides.
- C)** It allows viewers to notice the silence of the garden, which helps them feel Maya’s isolation in a way the written text cannot.
- D)** It replaces Maya’s unspoken question with an image, leaving viewers to infer the sense of loss that the written text states directly.

PASSAGE 2

“How Revolutions Betray Themselves”

(1) Throughout history, some revolutionary movements have followed a strikingly similar pattern. A group of people, united against an oppressive system, overthrows the existing power structure. The revolution succeeds. The leaders announce that a new, more just system will be built—one based on equality, shared power, and the common good. And then the revolution begins to betray itself.

(2) Historians have identified several mechanisms by which this kind of transformation occurs. First, the leaders who orchestrated the revolution must consolidate power to manage the change. This concentration of power, intended to be temporary, becomes permanent. The revolutionary leaders justify their growing authority by citing the need for order during a turbulent time. They argue that efficiency requires centralized decision-making. Citizens, exhausted from the upheaval of revolution, often accept this explanation.

(3) Second, the revolutionary leaders often distinguish between true revolutionaries—people who fully commit to the new order as defined by the leadership—and those who resist or question. This division creates an in-group and an out-group. The in-group gains privileges. The out-group faces suspicion and exclusion. What began as a movement toward equality may fracture into a power structure that mirrors or even exceeds the system it replaced.

(4) Third, revolutionary leaders may rewrite the movement’s original ideals to justify their own authority. If the original revolution promised equality, the leaders might proclaim that some forms of equality are more important than others or that true equality requires complete obedience to those who understand it best. Language becomes a tool. Words are redefined. History is rewritten so that the current leadership appears to have always been the true voice of the revolution. These three mechanisms operate primarily through the control of language and institutional structure. Yet revolutionary movements have also long understood the persuasive power of images.

(5) Revolutionary movements have also recognized the power of visual symbols to shape public identity. Flags, monuments, and public ceremonies become central to the way new governments establish their presence. When the French revolutionaries replaced the royal insignia with the tricolor flag, they signaled that a new era had begun. The Soviet Union covered public squares with heroic sculptures and murals depicting workers as paragons of strength and purpose. In

Cuba, the image of Che Guevara became a global emblem of revolutionary aspiration. These visual elements operate through emotion and association rather than argument. They can inspire shared loyalty, giving citizens a felt sense of belonging to something larger than themselves.

(6) The French Revolution provides a vivid example. In 1789, the revolutionaries abolished the feudal system, promising liberty, equality, and fraternity. By 1792, they had abolished the monarchy itself. Yet within a decade, the revolutionary government had descended into authoritarian rule—thousands were executed not by the old king but by the revolution’s own leadership, in the name of protecting the revolution. By 1799, Napoleon Bonaparte had seized sole power, becoming precisely the kind of ruler the revolution had promised to eliminate. Similar patterns emerged in the Russian Revolution, the Chinese Revolution, and many others. The structure that people believed they were destroying was not destroyed—it was merely relocated into the hands of new leaders who had learned its techniques.

(7) The core cause of this pattern lies in the concentration of power. When any group of people gains the ability to make decisions without meaningful accountability—without checks, without transparency, without input from those affected by their choices—the temptation to maintain and expand that power can become almost irresistible. The revolutionary leaders convince themselves, often sincerely, that they are acting in the best interests of the people. The people, meanwhile, discover that they have exchanged one form of domination for another.

(8) Understanding this pattern does not require giving up on the possibility of positive change. Rather, it requires that people pay careful attention. It requires systems of power that are explicitly designed to be temporary and accountable. It requires that people who lead revolutions remain answerable to the people they serve, not the other way around. When revolutionary ideals are protected by structures that actively prevent the concentration of power, the revolution has a chance of remaining true to itself.

ITEMS — PASSAGE 2

Item 13

Select the **TWO** statements that **BEST** describe how the three mechanisms described in paragraphs 2 through 4 work together to allow revolutionary leaders to maintain power.

- A) Each mechanism removes a source of accountability and allows for movement away from the original goals of the revolution.
- B) The three mechanisms are effective because citizens actively choose to support the revolutionary leadership.
- C) Each mechanism creates conditions in which challenging the leadership becomes increasingly difficult over time.
- D) The mechanisms succeed primarily because revolutionary citizens are too worn out to resist any new form of authority.

E) Each mechanism targets a separate aspect of society, which makes resistance on any single front insufficient.

Item 14

Read this sentence from paragraph 2 of “How Revolutions Betray Themselves.”

First, the leaders who orchestrated the revolution must consolidate power to manage the change.

What is the meaning of the word “consolidate”?

- A) temporarily suspend
- B) bring together
- C) divide equally
- D) document carefully

Item 15

Read this sentence from paragraph 3 of “How Revolutions Betray Themselves.”

What began as a movement toward equality may fracture into a power structure that mirrors or even exceeds the system it replaced.

What does the word “fracture” suggest about how a revolutionary movement may change?

- A) The movement strengthens through struggle.
- B) The movement becomes more practical.
- C) The movement invites new ideas.
- D) The movement undergoes a sudden split.

Item 16

Which paragraph in “How Revolutions Betray Themselves” does NOT directly support the central argument that revolutionary movements may betray their ideals?

- A) paragraph 2, which explains how leaders protect their power and prevent it from being shared
- B) paragraph 3, which describes how leaders create divisions between those who support them and those who question them
- C) paragraph 5, which describes how revolutionary movements use visual symbols such as flags and monuments to inspire shared loyalty
- D) paragraph 8, which argues that accountability and watchfulness are tools to prevent corruption

Item 17

Read this excerpt from paragraph 7 of “How Revolutions Betray Themselves.”

...the temptation to maintain and expand that power can become almost irresistible.

How does the phrase “almost irresistible” contribute to the author’s argument in paragraph 7?

- A) It suggests that most revolutionary leaders successfully resist the temptation to abuse power.
- B) It implies that the concentration of power is a natural and therefore acceptable part of any revolution.
- C) It conveys that the pull toward maintaining power is so strong that resisting it requires effective structural safeguards.
- D) It shows sympathy toward revolutionary leaders who struggle to maintain good intentions.

Item 18

Which detail from paragraph 8 BEST supports the author’s claim that revolutionary movements can remain true to their original ideals?

- A) Understanding this pattern means doubting the possibility that revolution can lead to meaningful improvements in society.
- B) A revolution has a chance of achieving its goals when systems of power are designed to remain temporary and accountable.
- C) People who lead revolutions are unlikely to abuse their power if they began with genuine ideals.
- D) The attention required to protect revolutionary ideals is greater than the strength of any single leader.

Item 19

How does the French Revolution example in paragraph 6 develop the author’s central argument?

- A) It provides historical information showing that the patterns described earlier in the text have occurred in real societies.
- B) It introduces political punishment as a new category of evidence to be considered.
- C) It shows that this revolution was unique because its betrayal happened more quickly than in other revolutions.
- D) It demonstrates that revolutionary ideals can succeed if original leaders remain in power long enough.

ITEMS — BOTH PASSAGES

Match each mechanism described in "How Revolutions Betray Themselves" to the event in "The Garden's Rule" that best illustrates it.

Mechanisms (from "How Revolutions Betray Themselves"):

1. Consolidation: leaders who began as managers of change become permanent authorities
2. In-group / out-group division: the new leadership decides who belongs and who does not
3. Authority over evidence: the new leadership controls what counts as truth

Events from "The Garden's Rule":

- A) Eli's role expanding from a helpful newcomer to the unquestioned authority over all garden decisions.
- B) Mrs. Chen leaving after declaring the garden no longer felt like it belonged to everyone.
- C) Eli proposing a points system that he controls and explains in ways nobody else can verify.

Item 21

Which statement BEST explains how both passages develop the idea that well-intentioned systems can become tools of control?

- A) Both passages suggest that the original goals behind a community project or revolution are flawed from the beginning.
- B) Both passages end by recommending that citizens confront leaders who misuse power.
- C) Both passages show how the slow rise of a leader can change a shared system into one that mainly serves that leader rather than the ideals of the group.
- D) Both passages focus on how visual symbols and physical changes are used to signal new authority to a community.

SPELLING.

Item 22

Write the spelling word you heard: _____

Item 23

Write the spelling word you heard: _____

Item 24

Write the spelling word you heard: _____

Item 25

Write the spelling word you heard: _____