PREVIEW

The Last Repair

Selected activities and teaching excerpts from the full learning pack

From the original reading texts

The Last Repair · At the shed

An original short story for Aspire Learning Resources

[01] At nine o'clock, Rosa clipped up a new sign beside the door of the repair shed. It said *Take a number if you are ready*. She had drawn the arrow herself. It was thick, and pointed, with the cheerful authority of an arrow that didn't have to leave the wall.

[02] ‘Read the second line out,’ she said.

[03] ‘If we call twice, we'll move to the next number.’

[04] ‘And before that?’

[05] ‘First come, first served.’

[06] Every Saturday that winter I had written the numbers and carried the mugs. Rosa paid me in old bike parts. I had enough parts for most of a bicycle and enough Saturday mornings to know that Rosa had started the numbering after two people shouted at each other over a wheel. I still thought it was a little like handing out hats at the door and calling everyone the same height.

[07] Jude arrived at half past nine with a small yellow bike and took number four. He worked at the bakery by the station. When he wheeled the bike past me, the back wheel rubbed the frame with a regular, soft sound, as if it were trying to rub out a word.

[08] ‘That's for your kids, is it?’ I asked.

[09] ‘It's mine.’ He swung one leg over the low frame and put a boot down on either side. His trousers lifted clear of his socks. ‘Looks worse when I do that, doesn't it?’

[10] He laughed and parked it where I told him to. I was still thinking about the size of the bike when he asked if we took card. I said the parts were donated, and he put his bank card back into his phone case so gently that I wondered how many places he had already taken it out.

From the core workbook

Annotated model

Prompt. How does the story complicate what it means for a queue to be fair?

> The story gives the numbered queue a reasonable purpose before showing the kind of need it cannot measure. Leah remembers that two people ‘shouted at each other over a wheel’ [06], making a visible turn system an understandable response to a conflict. Yet she compares numbering everyone with ‘handing out hats at the door and calling everyone the same height’. The comparison keeps the appearance of an equal procedure separate from the circumstances people bring to it. Later, Leah sees Alma’s slip held up and Jude’s slip on the sill [15]. She briefly treats the difference as if it decides the case, while her later account lets us know that Jude had been helping another person. His absence is real and still misleading. The queue can prevent arguments about whose turn was first, while fairness in this situation also requires someone to find out what a missing person was doing.

The model’s decision	How it strengthens the reasoning
It grants the rule a purpose in its first sentence.	A fair account of the rule makes the later criticism more convincing.
It compares two details from [06].	The word *yet* identifies tension in the evidence instead of rejecting one part of it.
It notices when the narrative supplies information in [15].	The paragraph can explain how readers share and then recover from Leah’s assumption.
Its conclusion uses *also*.	This leaves room for a queue that remains useful once its gaps are addressed.

Put that method to work

Write two sentences on how the trolley scene changes what Rosa’s help amounts to. Begin with an accurate detail that shows both a benefit and a cost.

From the support workbook

Slow down before you judge

Read [11]-[20]. Notice the difference between a detail and a possible interpretation.

Story detail	Possible reading	What makes the reading provisional?
Alma raises her slip while Jude's rests on the sill [15].	To Leah, Alma seems the person who should be next.	Leah learns later that Jude left to walk someone to another door.
Jude puts his bank card away 'so gently' [10].	He may have been expecting another expense he could not easily meet.	Leah wonders what happened earlier but does not know.
Alma repeats 'next week' [16].	Waiting may be possible and still bring a cost.	We learn why she needs transport later.

Try one together

Look at [17]-[19]. The writer gives us the number of paper frogs and the mark on Alma's hand. Which detail helps you see why she is carrying the bag? Which shows a cost the other people could overlook?

Try one on your own

What did your early impression say? Use [15] or [18] to refine it. First give the detail in your own words. Then say how it confirms, limits or changes your first view.

From the extension workbook

Put two plausible claims under pressure

Read **The Last Repair**, **While I was gone** and **Number five, by the door**. Begin by distinguishing the decision a character makes from the pattern of approval or discomfort the text creates.

A. Rosa's decision is an example of practical attention to needs a formal rule cannot measure.
B. Rosa makes a defensible private decision, while the shed's structure still leaves users guessing about its public rules.

1 Find one detail each claim explains particularly well. Which detail does the claim handle less successfully?

2 Identify a part of the text that both claims can explain, but for different reasons. Test [21]-[22], [25]-[26] or [30] if you need a starting point.

3 Write a third claim that preserves the most useful insight of each. Make yourself leave out a weaker claim you cannot support.

Claim	Strongest evidence and why	Evidence that limits it
A		
B		
My revised claim		