Ponds With a Purpose

Study how a writer uses sources and details to explain a topic.

3.LF.34 "Write informative or explanatory texts about a topic using sources, including an introduction, facts, relevant details with elaboration, and a conclusion."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Circle the opening sentence, underline two facts credited to sources, write a 1 beside a detail that explains a fact, and box the concluding sentence.

What a Beaver Builds

1. A beaver can change a stream without using any machines. It builds a dam that slows moving water and makes a pond. According to the National Park Service, beavers use branches, rocks, and mud to build dams. The pond spreads water over a wider area, so some places near the stream stay wet even when rain is scarce.

2. The pond can also become a home for other animals. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service reports that beaver ponds provide places for fish, frogs, and birds to live. Frogs can lay their eggs in the water, and birds may search for food along the pond's edge. These animals benefit because the dam turns a narrow stream into a larger wet place.

3. Beavers do not build dams to help every animal nearby. They build them to create deeper water around their homes, called lodges. A lodge has an entrance under the water, which can make it harder for some land animals to reach a beaver inside. By making a safer home for itself, a beaver also creates a pond where many other animals can find what they need.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How does the opening sentence introduce the topic?

2. Name one fact credited to a source. Which source gives it?

3. Which detail shows how a beaver pond helps frogs? How does it add to the sourced fact?

4. How does the last sentence bring the passage's ideas together?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write one paragraph about how a rain garden can help a neighborhood: introduce the topic, use both source notes, explain why each fact matters, and end with a conclusion. Source notes: The EPA says rain gardens collect rainwater that runs off roofs and streets; the National Wildlife Federation says native plants give pollinators food and shelter.

ANSWER KEY

Ponds With a Purpose

GRADE 3 · 3.LF.34

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Circle the opening sentence, underline two facts credited to sources, write a 1 beside a detail that explains a fact, and box the concluding sentence. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How does the opening sentence introduce the topic?	**It introduces beavers and the idea that they can change a stream.**
2	Name one fact credited to a source. Which source gives it?	**The National Park Service says beavers use branches, rocks, and mud to build dams. Also accept the fact about beaver ponds providing places for animals to live, credited to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.**
3	Which detail shows how a beaver pond helps frogs? How does it add to the sourced fact?	**Frogs can lay eggs in the pond water. This shows one way the pond provides a place for frogs to live.**
4	How does the last sentence bring the passage's ideas together?	**It connects the safer home a beaver makes for itself with the pond that helps other animals.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

A rain garden can help a neighborhood in two ways. The EPA says rain gardens collect rainwater that runs off roofs and streets. The soil soaks up some of this water instead of letting it all rush down the street. The National Wildlife Federation says native plants give pollinators food and shelter. For example, bees can visit the flowers to find nectar. A rain garden can help manage rainwater and give small animals a place to visit.

For marking, accept either an egg-laying or bird-feeding detail if the student connects it to a sourced fact. For the paragraph, look for an introduction, both credited facts, an explanation of each fact, and a conclusion.