Streams, Dams, Evidence

Use details from an informational text to support an analysis.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.9 "Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline details that show a benefit of a beaver dam. Circle details that show a possible problem, then use both kinds of evidence in your answers.

Beavers Change a Stream

1 Beavers are often called nature's engineers because they change the flow of water. Using branches, mud, and stones, they build dams across small streams. Water slows behind a dam and forms a pond. These ponds can provide shelter for fish, frogs, birds, and the beavers themselves. A dam may look messy to people, but its gaps and layers help it hold back water while allowing some water to pass through during periods of heavy rain.

2 Beaver ponds can also affect land beyond the stream. When water spreads into nearby soil, it can keep the ground wetter during dry weeks. Wet soil may help certain plants grow, and those plants can offer food or cover to animals. The ponds also trap some sediment, tiny pieces of soil carried by moving water. By slowing that sediment, a pond can reduce the amount that travels farther downstream during a storm or fast snowmelt.

3 However, beaver dams do not solve every water problem. A dam near a road or field can cause unwanted flooding, and people sometimes remove it. In some places, workers install a pipe through a dam so water can continue moving without destroying the beavers' home. This response shows that people can use evidence about both habitat benefits and flooding risks when deciding how to manage a stream and protect nearby homes, roads, and fields safely.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What claim can you make about how beaver ponds help animals? Use two details from the passage to support your claim.

2. How does paragraph 2 support the idea that a beaver dam affects more than the stream itself? Use evidence from the paragraph.

3. Which sentence best supports the claim that a beaver pond can reduce soil movement? Copy the sentence.

4. What balanced conclusion can you draw about beaver dams near people? Support your conclusion with one benefit and one risk from the passage.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a three- or four-sentence recommendation for a town deciding what to do about a beaver dam near a road. State your recommendation and support it with at least two details from the passage, including one benefit and one risk.

ANSWER KEY

Streams, Dams, Evidence

GRADES K-12 · CCRA.W.9

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline details that show a benefit of a beaver dam. Circle details that show a possible problem, then use both kinds of evidence in your answers. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What claim can you make about how beaver ponds help animals? Use two details from the passage to support your claim.	**Beaver ponds help animals by providing shelter and food or cover. The passage says ponds shelter fish, frogs, birds, and beavers, and wet-soil plants can offer food or cover to animals.**
2	How does paragraph 2 support the idea that a beaver dam affects more than the stream itself? Use evidence from the paragraph.	**It explains that water can spread into nearby soil and keep it wetter, which may help plants grow. It also says ponds trap sediment and reduce the amount that moves downstream.**
3	Which sentence best supports the claim that a beaver pond can reduce soil movement? Copy the sentence.	**"By slowing that sediment, a pond can reduce the amount that travels farther downstream during a storm or fast snowmelt."**
4	What balanced conclusion can you draw about beaver dams near people? Support your conclusion with one benefit and one risk from the passage.	**Beaver dams can be helpful but may need management near people. They create habitat or keep soil wet, but they can cause unwanted flooding near roads or fields.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The town should install a pipe through the beaver dam instead of removing it right away. The pond can provide shelter for animals and can help keep nearby soil wetter during dry weeks. However, the dam could cause flooding near the road. A pipe could let water keep moving while protecting the beavers' home.

Accept reasonable claims and recommendations that are supported by accurate details from the passage. For the open response, look for a clear recommendation, at least two relevant pieces of evidence, and attention to both a benefit and a risk.