Pond Punctuation Clues

Notice how punctuation changes a reader's response.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.4.3b "Choose punctuation for effect.*"

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Circle each question mark, exclamation mark, and ellipsis in the passage. Beside each one, write S for strong feeling or a sudden sound, Q for a question or unsure feeling, or P for a pause.

Beavers at Dusk

1 At sunset, Nia joined Ranger Cole beside a pond. Small rings spread across the water. "Do you see the tiny nose near the reeds?" the ranger asked. Nia leaned closer. A beaver swam past, carrying a willow branch. Its wet fur shone in the last light. "It is building a home!" Nia whispered. The animal paddled quietly toward a pile of sticks at the shore.

2 Ranger Cole pointed to a low dam of mud and branches. "The dam slows the water," he said. Nia watched the pond edge. A dragonfly landed on a cattail, then lifted away. The beaver disappeared beneath the dark surface… Nia held still. Could it be swimming under the dock? She listened for a splash nearby.

3 Then the water bumped against the dock. Plop! A second beaver climbed onto a log beside the first one. Nia grinned and opened her notebook. "Two beavers share this pond," she wrote. The first beaver slapped its tail on the water. "Was that a warning?" Nia asked. Ranger Cole nodded as ripples raced toward shore in wide circles.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Why does Nia's sentence "It is building a home!" end with an exclamation mark instead of a period?

2. What effect does the ellipsis after "dark surface" create?

3. What effect does the question mark in "Was that a warning?" create?

4. The author could have written "Plop." Why is "Plop!" a stronger choice?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a three-sentence nature scene. Use one ellipsis, one question mark, and one exclamation mark to create a pause, a question, and a strong reaction or sound.

ANSWER KEY

Pond Punctuation Clues

GRADE 4 · L.4.3b

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Circle each question mark, exclamation mark, and ellipsis in the passage. Beside each one, write S for strong feeling or a sudden sound, Q for a question or unsure feeling, or P for a pause. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Why does Nia's sentence "It is building a home!" end with an exclamation mark instead of a period?	**The exclamation mark shows Nia's strong excitement about seeing the beaver build a home.**
2	What effect does the ellipsis after "dark surface" create?	**It creates a pause and makes the reader wonder what will happen next.**
3	What effect does the question mark in "Was that a warning?" create?	**It shows that Nia is unsure and invites the reader to wonder with her.**
4	The author could have written "Plop." Why is "Plop!" a stronger choice?	**The exclamation mark makes the water sound feel sudden and important.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The trail was quiet... What snapped that twig? A deer burst from the bushes!

Accept answers that connect each punctuation mark to a reasonable effect supported by the sentence and nearby details. For the open task, check for three sentences and purposeful use of an ellipsis, question mark, and exclamation mark.