Shoreline Sentence Craft

Analyze sentence patterns and tone in a model conservation text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.6.3 "Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the first three words of every sentence, and circle each sentence with five words or fewer. Use your marks to see how the writer varies sentence openings and lengths while keeping a serious, helpful tone.

A Night at the Hatchery

1 Before sunrise, workers at a sea turtle hatchery check the sand above each nest. A small flag marks the place where eggs rest below the surface. Because hatchlings usually emerge at night, the team watches for tiny tracks leading toward the water. The work is careful, not hurried. By recording the date, nest location, and number of tracks, workers can learn which beaches give young turtles the safest start for their first journey to sea.

2 At dusk, the beach changes. Waves erase many tracks, while moonlight helps the workers spot fresh ones. If a hatchling has become tangled in a piece of plastic, a trained worker removes the trash and carries the turtle to the edge of the surf. Then the worker steps back. The hatchling must crawl across the sand on its own, using the same natural signals that guide other young turtles along the shore toward the ocean.

3 Although hatcheries can protect nests, they cannot solve every danger. Bright lights from buildings may draw hatchlings away from the ocean, and loose plastic can block their path. For this reason, some coastal towns ask residents to shield outdoor lights during nesting season and carry reusable bags to the beach. Small choices matter. When people leave the shore darker and cleaner, more hatchlings have a chance to begin their lives in the sea each year.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How does beginning the first sentence with "Before sunrise" help the reader?

2. Which sentence begins with an if clause? What action does that sentence describe?

3. Why might the writer use the short sentence "Then the worker steps back" after a longer sentence?

4. How do the openings "Although," "For this reason," and "When" organize ideas in the last paragraph?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a three-sentence public-service note about protecting a local animal. Begin each sentence a different way, include one sentence with five words or fewer, and use a serious, helpful tone.

ANSWER KEY

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GRADE 6 · L.6.3

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the first three words of every sentence, and circle each sentence with five words or fewer. Use your marks to see how the writer varies sentence openings and lengths while keeping a serious, helpful tone. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How does beginning the first sentence with "Before sunrise" help the reader?	**It immediately tells when the workers begin checking the nests.**
2	Which sentence begins with an if clause? What action does that sentence describe?	**"If a hatchling has become tangled in a piece of plastic..." It describes a trained worker removing the trash and carrying the turtle to the edge of the surf.**
3	Why might the writer use the short sentence "Then the worker steps back" after a longer sentence?	**The short sentence emphasizes the worker's pause and makes clear that the hatchling must continue on its own.**
4	How do the openings "Although," "For this reason," and "When" organize ideas in the last paragraph?	**"Although" introduces a limit, "For this reason" introduces a response, and "When" introduces the result of people's choices.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Near the river, herons need quiet places to hunt. Keep dogs on marked trails. By packing out litter, visitors protect the fish and insects herons eat.

Accept answers that accurately explain how sentence openings, sentence length, and connecting words shape meaning and tone. For the writing task, accept any accurate animal-protection message that has three differently begun sentences, one sentence of five words or fewer, and a serious, helpful tone.