River Fire Change

Identify central ideas, then summarize only what the source says.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.2 "Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline one sentence in each paragraph that states or strongly supports an important idea. Number your three underlined sentences 1 through 3 to help you use key information, not opinions, in a summary.

The Cuyahoga River Fire

1. On June 22, 1969, oil and debris floating on Ohio's Cuyahoga River caught fire near Cleveland. The blaze lasted about thirty minutes and caused limited damage, but it drew attention because the river had burned before. Factories and cities had released waste into the water for decades. By the late 1960s, many residents could see oily films, floating trash, and dead fish. The fire became a powerful example of the pollution affecting American waterways at the time.

2. Public concern about dirty water was already growing when the Cuyahoga fire occurred. Newspapers reported the event, and photographs of polluted rivers helped people picture the problem. In 1970, the United States created the Environmental Protection Agency, or EPA, to enforce environmental laws. Two years later, Congress passed the Clean Water Act. The law gave the federal government a larger role in limiting pollution released into rivers, lakes, and streams. These actions reflected a national effort to protect water quality.

3. Changes did not make the Cuyahoga River instantly clean. Cleaning a river required cities to improve sewage treatment and industries to reduce harmful discharges. Over time, water quality improved, and fish and other wildlife returned to some sections. The river's history is often used to show how public attention, government rules, and local work can combine to address an environmental problem. It also shows that laws can guide change, while long-term restoration depends on continued action.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What is the central idea of paragraph 1?

2. Which two details from paragraph 1 best support its central idea?

3. What central idea does paragraph 2 present?

4. How do paragraphs 2 and 3 together develop a central idea about solving environmental problems?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write an objective summary of the whole source in 50 to 60 words. Include the river fire, the national response, and the long-term cleanup, but do not add opinions or outside information.

ANSWER KEY # River Fire Change

GRADE 7 · RH.6-8.2

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline one sentence in each paragraph that states or strongly supports an important idea. Number your three underlined sentences 1 through 3 to help you use key information, not opinions, in a summary. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What is the central idea of paragraph 1?	**The 1969 Cuyahoga River fire exposed long-standing, visible water pollution.**
2	Which two details from paragraph 1 best support its central idea?	**Factories and cities had released waste into the river for decades, and residents saw oily films, floating trash, and dead fish.**
3	What central idea does paragraph 2 present?	**The fire was part of growing public concern that led to national action to control water pollution.**
4	How do paragraphs 2 and 3 together develop a central idea about solving environmental problems?	**They show that laws and enforcement can limit pollution, but cities and industries must continue working over time to restore a river.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

After a 1969 fire on the polluted Cuyahoga River, public attention focused on pollution in American waterways. The United States created the EPA and passed the Clean Water Act to limit water pollution. Cities and industries later reduced waste, helping improve water quality and restore wildlife in parts of the river.

Accept central-idea responses that focus on pollution, the government response, and the need for continued cleanup. For the summary, accept 50 to 60 objective words that accurately include all three required parts without added claims.