

Fire With Purpose

Read a science text and trace its important ideas.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.10 "By the end of the year, read and comprehend informational texts, including history/social studies, science, and technical texts, at the high end of the grades 4-5 text complexity band independently and proficiently."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline one sentence in each paragraph that states an important idea, and circle two details that explain or support it, so you can track how the passage builds its message.

Why Planned Fires Matter

- ① Some forests need fire to stay healthy. For centuries, lightning and carefully tended cultural burns set parts of many North American forests alight. These low, slow fires usually moved through dry grass, fallen needles, and small branches. They often left large, thick-barked trees alive. By clearing crowded plants, the fires opened space, light, and nutrients for new growth.
- ② Today, land managers sometimes use prescribed fires, which are planned burns set under specific conditions. Before a burn, crews study weather forecasts, map the area, and prepare firebreaks, strips where little or no fuel can burn. They choose days with suitable wind, temperature, and humidity. These conditions help smoke rise and help crews keep the fire within planned boundaries. Managers also notify nearby communities.
- ③ Prescribed fire is not used everywhere or in every season. A sudden wind change can carry sparks beyond a firebreak, and smoke can affect people with breathing problems. However, avoiding all fire can allow dry fuel to build up for years. When a wildfire starts in heavy fuel, it may burn hotter and spread faster. Managers weigh these risks when deciding whether a planned burn can reduce future danger.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE Use the passage

- 1 What important idea does the first paragraph explain about low, slow fires in forests? Use two details from the paragraph in your answer.

- 2 How does paragraph 2 build on the information in paragraph 1?

- 3 What does the word "fuel" mean in this passage? Use information from paragraph 2 or 3 to explain.

- 4 What is the central idea of the whole passage? Explain how paragraph 3 adds an important point to that idea.

3 YOUR TURN Your own words

Write a 3-4 sentence annotation note for this passage. State the central idea, then explain how one detail from two different paragraphs supports it. Do not copy complete sentences from the passage.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline one sentence in each paragraph that states an important idea, and circle two details that explain or support it, so you can track how the passage builds its message. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What important idea does the first paragraph explain about low, slow fires in forests? Use two details from the paragraph in your answer.	Low, slow fires can help forests stay healthy. They clear dry plants and small branches while often leaving large, thick-barked trees alive, which opens space, light, and nutrients for new growth.
2	How does paragraph 2 build on the information in paragraph 1?	Paragraph 1 explains how low fires can help forests, and paragraph 2 explains how land managers plan prescribed fires to create and control those conditions.
3	What does the word "fuel" mean in this passage? Use information from paragraph 2 or 3 to explain.	Fuel means material that can burn, such as dry grass, fallen needles, small branches, or other dry plants.
4	What is the central idea of the whole passage? Explain how paragraph 3 adds an important point to that idea.	The passage explains that prescribed fires can help protect forest health and reduce future wildfire danger. Paragraph 3 adds that managers must also consider risks, including wind changes, smoke, and escaping sparks.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The passage explains why planned fire can protect forests and communities. Paragraph 1 shows that mild fires clear away small plants while saving many large trees. Paragraph 2 shows that crews control a burn by preparing the site and choosing weather conditions. Paragraph 3 explains that managers compare the dangers of smoke or escaping sparks with the danger of too much dry fuel.

Accept accurate paraphrases supported by the passage. For the open task, look for a central idea and relevant supporting details from at least two different paragraphs.