One Park, Two Views

Compare how authors use evidence to explain the same changes.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.7.9 "Analyze how two or more authors writing about the same topic shape their presentations of key information by emphasizing different evidence or advancing different interpretations of facts."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline evidence Chen emphasizes and circle evidence Ruiz emphasizes. Write C or R beside each author's main explanation of what caused changes in Yellowstone.

Wolves Return to Yellowstone

1 In 1995, wildlife managers released gray wolves into Yellowstone National Park after wolves had been absent there for about 70 years. Researchers expected the predators to affect elk, an animal wolves hunt. Two writers later studied the return. Both used reports showing that elk numbers fell after 1995, but they chose different details to explain what the change meant. Their articles ask whether wolves reshaped the park's plants and animals or were one influence among many.

2 Ecologist Mara Chen argues that wolves triggered a trophic cascade, a chain of changes across a food web. She highlights observations from streamside areas where fewer browsing elk allowed young willow and aspen to grow taller. Chen also points to beavers, which use willow for food and dams. By connecting wolf predation, less elk browsing, and new beaver activity, Chen presents wolves as a major force behind a healthier stream habitat for local wildlife there.

3 Historian David Ruiz examines the same years but treats the park as a changing system with several causes. He gives special attention to drought records, hunting outside the park, and changes in grizzly bear numbers, which can affect elk behavior and survival. Ruiz notes that plant growth differed from one valley to another, and that scientists continued collecting data for decades. He does not deny that wolves mattered. Instead, his article warns readers not to claim that one event alone explains every later change.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What evidence does Chen emphasize, and how does that evidence support her explanation of wolves' role?

2. Which details does Ruiz emphasize that Chen does not, and how do those details shape Ruiz's explanation?

3. Both writers use the fact that elk numbers fell after 1995. How does each writer use that fact differently?

4. Which author presents the more direct, single-cause explanation? Use two details from the passage to support your answer.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write 3 sentences, 45 to 60 words. Imagine a third writer using two details from the passage to explain Yellowstone's changes in a different way, then compare that writer's presentation with Chen's or Ruiz's.

ANSWER KEY

One Park, Two Views

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline evidence Chen emphasizes and circle evidence Ruiz emphasizes. Write C or R beside each author's main explanation of what caused changes in Yellowstone. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What evidence does Chen emphasize, and how does that evidence support her explanation of wolves' role?	**Chen emphasizes taller willow and aspen, less elk browsing, and beaver activity. This chain of evidence supports her view that wolves were a major force in improving stream habitats.**
2	Which details does Ruiz emphasize that Chen does not, and how do those details shape Ruiz's explanation?	**Ruiz emphasizes drought, hunting outside the park, grizzly bear numbers, different valley results, and long-term data. These details support his view that several causes shaped Yellowstone's changes.**
3	Both writers use the fact that elk numbers fell after 1995. How does each writer use that fact differently?	**Chen connects lower elk browsing to plant and beaver changes in a direct chain. Ruiz treats changes involving elk as part of a system affected by more than one cause.**
4	Which author presents the more direct, single-cause explanation? Use two details from the passage to support your answer.	**Chen presents the more direct explanation. She connects wolf predation to less elk browsing and then to taller plants and beaver activity.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

A third writer could emphasize the uneven plant growth among valleys and argue that Yellowstone changed in different ways. That writer could use the long-term data collection and shifts in bear numbers to question a single-cause explanation. Unlike Chen, this presentation would make the evidence seem less certain and more varied.

Accept responses that accurately identify each writer's selected evidence and explain how that selection shapes the writer's interpretation. For Part 3, accept varied interpretations if the student uses two accurate passage details and makes a clear comparison.