

Facts That Flash

See how facts, definitions, and details build an explanation.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.3.2b "Develop the topic with facts, definitions, and details."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the definition in the passage. Circle three facts or details that explain how fireflies make light, communicate, or need safe places.

Why Fireflies Flash

- ① Fireflies are small beetles that flash on warm evenings. Their light is called bioluminescence, which means light made by a living thing. A firefly makes light in a special organ near the end of its abdomen. Oxygen mixes with chemicals inside that organ. This reaction creates light with very little heat, so the firefly's body does not get hot.
- ② Flashing helps fireflies communicate. Each kind of firefly has its own pattern of flashes. A male may fly and blink a certain number of times, while a female watches from a plant below. If she sees the pattern from her kind, she can flash back. The signals help fireflies find mates on dark summer nights.
- ③ Fireflies need safe places to live. They often rest in tall grass, shrubs, and trees during the day. At night, bright outdoor lights can make their flashes harder for other fireflies to see. People can help by turning off extra porch lights and leaving some natural plants in a yard. These details show why dark, leafy spaces are useful to fireflies.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 What does the word "bioluminescence" mean?

2 Which fact explains why a firefly does not get hot when it makes light?

3 Write two details that show how flashing helps fireflies communicate.

4 How do the details in paragraph 3 develop the idea that fireflies need safe places?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Write a three-sentence informational paragraph about an animal or plant you know. In sentence 1, name the topic and define one important word. Add at least two accurate facts or details in sentences 2 and 3 to develop your topic.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline the definition in the passage. Circle three facts or details that explain how fireflies make light, communicate, or need safe places. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What does the word "bioluminescence" mean?	It means light made by a living thing.
2	Which fact explains why a firefly does not get hot when it makes light?	The reaction that creates light makes very little heat.
3	Write two details that show how flashing helps fireflies communicate.	A male blinks a certain pattern while flying, and a female can flash back when she sees the pattern from her kind.
4	How do the details in paragraph 3 develop the idea that fireflies need safe places?	They explain that bright lights make flashes hard to see and that natural plants and fewer porch lights can help fireflies.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

An octopus is a cephalopod, which is an ocean animal with arms around its mouth. It has eight arms with suckers that help it hold and taste things. When it feels threatened, it can squirt ink and change color to hide.

Accept answers that correctly identify the definition and use accurate details from the passage. For the writing task, accept any clear three-sentence paragraph with a definition and at least two accurate facts or details.