Pond Change Detectives

Use text evidence to analyze changes in a habitat.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.4.9 "Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two details that show how a beaver dam changes an area. Number 1 and 2 beside the details you would use to support the idea that beavers reshape habitats.

How Beavers Change a Stream

1. At dusk, a beaver may carry branches to a narrow stream. It places the branches, mud, and stones across the water. This dam slows the stream and can form a pond behind it. Beavers build dams partly to create deeper water near their lodges. Deep water helps them swim to the entrance of a lodge while staying safer from some land predators.

2. The new pond can change the area around it. Water may spread into low ground, creating a wetland. Frogs, ducks, and insects can use the pond or wetland as habitat. Trees near the water may die if their roots stay underwater too long. Even so, the pond can hold water during dry times and slow water moving after heavy rain.

3. Scientists study beaver ponds to learn how animals reshape habitats. In one study, researchers may measure water depth, count kinds of insects, and compare areas with and without dams. These observations are evidence, or information that supports an idea. A scientist should not claim that every beaver pond helps every animal. Instead, the scientist can use observations to explain what happened in the area studied.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Use a detail from paragraph 1 to support this idea: A dam can help protect a beaver. What detail supports the idea?

2. Use two details from paragraph 2 to support this idea: A beaver dam can create homes for living things.

3. How does paragraph 2 support the idea that a dam can have both helpful and harmful effects? Use two details.

4. A scientist sees insects at one beaver pond. Why should the scientist not claim that every beaver pond helps every animal? Use paragraph 3.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write exactly three sentences explaining whether you think a beaver dam is mostly helpful, mostly harmful, or both. Use two details from the passage as evidence, and include one possible downside.

ANSWER KEY

Pond Change Detectives

GRADE 4 · W.4.9

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two details that show how a beaver dam changes an area. Number 1 and 2 beside the details you would use to support the idea that beavers reshape habitats. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Use a detail from paragraph 1 to support this idea: A dam can help protect a beaver. What detail supports the idea?	**Deep water helps beavers swim to the entrance of a lodge while staying safer from some land predators.**
2	Use two details from paragraph 2 to support this idea: A beaver dam can create homes for living things.	**A dam can create a wetland, and frogs, ducks, and insects can use the pond or wetland as habitat.**
3	How does paragraph 2 support the idea that a dam can have both helpful and harmful effects? Use two details.	**The pond can hold water during dry times or provide habitat, but trees may die if their roots stay underwater too long.**
4	A scientist sees insects at one beaver pond. Why should the scientist not claim that every beaver pond helps every animal? Use paragraph 3.	**The scientist only has observations from the area studied, so the evidence does not prove what happens at every beaver pond or to every animal.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Beaver dams can be helpful to a habitat because they create wetlands where frogs, ducks, and insects can live. They can also hold water during dry times. However, trees can die when their roots remain underwater, so dams change habitats in both helpful and harmful ways.

Accept equivalent details from the passage when they clearly support the stated idea. For Part 3, accept a three-sentence response with a clear position, two accurate text details, and a possible harmful effect.