Wetlands at Work

Study how facts, definitions, and details explain a topic.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.5.2 "Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the sentence in each paragraph that states its main idea. Circle details that explain or support that idea, so you can see how an informative text makes ideas clear.

Beavers Build Wetlands

1. Beavers are large rodents that change streams by building dams, walls of sticks, mud, and stones. A dam slows moving water and can create a pond. This change may seem small, but it can reshape an area of land. The pond and the wet ground around it are called a wetland, a place where water covers or soaks the soil.

2. First, the pond behind a beaver dam gives animals a safer place to live. Fish can rest in deeper water, while frogs lay eggs near shallow edges. Ducks and herons may find food there, too. In addition, wetland plants grow along the pond. Their roots hold soil in place, which can reduce erosion, the wearing away of land by water.

3. Beaver wetlands also help people and other living things during heavy rain. Because the pond stores water, it can slow some water that would otherwise rush downstream. This does not stop every flood, but it can lower flooding in certain places. Over time, a beaver dam may break or be abandoned. Even then, the wetland it created can continue supporting many plants and animals.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What is the main topic of the passage, and what change do beavers make?

2. What two words does paragraph 1 define? Write each word and its meaning.

3. Give two details from paragraph 2 that show how a beaver wetland helps animals.

4. How does paragraph 3 make its explanation about flooding accurate instead of making an overstatement?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a 60 to 80 word informative paragraph explaining how a rain garden helps a neighborhood. Include a clear topic sentence, define one important word, give at least two supporting details, and end with a concluding sentence.

ANSWER KEY # Wetlands at Work

GRADE 5 · W.5.2

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the sentence in each paragraph that states its main idea. Circle details that explain or support that idea, so you can see how an informative text makes ideas clear. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What is the main topic of the passage, and what change do beavers make?	**The passage explains how beavers build dams that slow streams and create ponds and wetlands.**
2	What two words does paragraph 1 define? Write each word and its meaning.	**A dam is a wall of sticks, mud, and stones. A wetland is a place where water covers or soaks the soil.**
3	Give two details from paragraph 2 that show how a beaver wetland helps animals.	**Fish can rest in deeper water, frogs can lay eggs near shallow edges, and ducks and herons may find food there. Any two are correct.**
4	How does paragraph 3 make its explanation about flooding accurate instead of making an overstatement?	**It says a pond does not stop every flood, but it can lower flooding in certain places.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Rain gardens help neighborhoods manage water after storms. A rain garden is a shallow planted area that collects runoff, water that flows over streets and sidewalks. Its loose soil lets some water soak underground instead of rushing into drains. Native plants also slow water with their stems and roots. As a result, rain gardens can reduce puddles and help keep nearby streams cleaner.

Accept equivalent wording for passage answers when it matches the text. For the open response, accept accurate information with a clear topic, a definition, at least two supporting details, and a conclusion within the stated word range.