

Ponds With Purpose

Study how a model article introduces and organizes information.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.5.2a "Introduce a topic clearly, provide a general observation and focus, and group related information logically; include formatting (e.g., headings), illustrations, and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the sentence that introduces the topic and states the focus. Circle the three headings and number them 1, 2, and 3 to show how the writer groups related information.

Beaver Ponds

- ① **BEAVERS AT WORK** Beavers are skilled builders whose dams create ponds that change nearby habitats. A beaver uses its strong front teeth to cut small trees and branches. It carries sticks, mud, and rocks to a stream. By placing these materials across moving water, the animal slows the current and begins forming a pond there.
- ② **HOW A DAM HELPS** Water spreads behind a dam, making a deeper pond where beavers can build a lodge. The pond also gives beavers a safer place to swim and store food. [Illustration labels: dam; sticks, mud, and rocks; water spreading behind the dam.] This illustration helps readers picture how the dam holds back water.
- ③ **CHANGES FOR OTHER LIVING THINGS** A beaver pond can become home to frogs, fish, ducks, and water insects. Wet soil near the pond may help some plants grow. However, pond water can cover areas where land animals once traveled or where certain trees grew. A dam can also change how water moves downstream, so its effects reach beyond the beaver's lodge.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE Use the passage

1 Copy the sentence that introduces the topic and tells the focus of the article.

2 What broad observation does the opening sentence make, and what is the article's focus?

3 Which heading helps you find information about effects on living things other than beavers? Give one detail from that section.

4 What three labels appear in the illustration description, and how would the illustration help readers?

3 YOUR TURN Your own words

Write a three-paragraph informational mini-article about an animal that changes its habitat. Start with a sentence that gives a general observation and focus, use a heading for each paragraph, and include an idea for a labeled illustration that would help readers.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline the sentence that introduces the topic and states the focus. Circle the three headings and number them 1, 2, and 3 to show how the writer groups related information. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Copy the sentence that introduces the topic and tells the focus of the article.	Beavers are skilled builders whose dams create ponds that change nearby habitats.
2	What broad observation does the opening sentence make, and what is the article's focus?	It says beavers are skilled builders. The article focuses on how their dams create ponds and change habitats.
3	Which heading helps you find information about effects on living things other than beavers? Give one detail from that section.	CHANGES FOR OTHER LIVING THINGS. A beaver pond can become home to frogs, fish, ducks, and water insects.
4	What three labels appear in the illustration description, and how would the illustration help readers?	The labels are "dam," "sticks, mud, and rocks," and "water spreading behind the dam." The illustration helps readers picture how a dam holds back water.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

SEA OTTERS HELP KELP Sea otters are important ocean animals that help keep kelp forests healthy. They eat sea urchins, which feed on kelp. URCHINS AND KELP When too many sea urchins eat kelp, fewer kelp plants remain. By eating urchins, sea otters can help kelp grow. A HELPFUL DRAWING [Illustration labels: sea otter; sea urchin; kelp forest.] The drawing would show an otter near urchins and tall kelp, helping readers see the food connection.

Accept equivalent wording for the broad observation, focus, and illustration purpose when it matches the passage. For the writing task, look for a clear introduction, logical groups with headings, and a useful labeled illustration idea.