Restore the Wetland

Trace how evidence and reasoning support a science-based claim.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.WHST.6-8.1 "Write arguments focused on discipline-specific content."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Circle the writer's main claim, underline each piece of evidence, and write 1 beside the counterclaim and 2 beside the response to it. These marks show how the writer builds a science-based argument.

A Better Use for Willow Creek

1 Riverton should restore the Willow Creek wetland instead of turning the site into a parking lot. Wetlands are areas where water covers the soil for all or part of the year. At Willow Creek, rainwater from nearby streets now rushes through a pipe into the river. Restoring the wetland would give that water space to spread out and soak into the ground. This plan would address flooding while protecting an important part of the local watershed.

2 Scientists have measured how wetlands reduce flood damage. Wetland plants slow moving water, and their roots help hold soil in place. When water moves more slowly, less soil washes into streams. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency explains that wetlands can store floodwater and improve water quality by trapping some sediment and pollutants. Because Willow Creek receives runoff from paved streets, a restored wetland could reduce the muddy, polluted water that reaches the river after heavy rain.

3 Some residents may favor a parking lot because businesses need convenient spaces for customers. However, a parking lot would add another paved surface, so more rainwater would run off quickly. The city could look for parking in an already developed area, but the wetland cannot easily be replaced once its soil, plants, and water connections are removed. Restoring Willow Creek is the stronger choice because it uses natural processes to reduce flooding and keep the river cleaner.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What is the writer's main claim?

2. Name two pieces of evidence the writer uses to support wetland restoration.

3. What counterclaim does the writer include, and how does the writer respond to it?

4. How does the explanation about paved surfaces strengthen the writer's argument?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a 100 to 120 word argument that states whether a town should protect a six-acre native prairie or build soccer fields there. Use at least two source facts, address the counterclaim that residents need places to play, and explain why your evidence supports your claim. Source notes: A city ecology survey found 24 native plant species in the prairie. Native prairie plants can have deep roots that help water soak into soil. Residents want soccer fields close to downtown.

ANSWER KEY

Restore the Wetland

GRADE 7 · WHST.6-8.1

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Circle the writer's main claim, underline each piece of evidence, and write 1 beside the counterclaim and 2 beside the response to it. These marks show how the writer builds a science-based argument. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What is the writer's main claim?	**Riverton should restore the Willow Creek wetland instead of building a parking lot there.**
2	Name two pieces of evidence the writer uses to support wetland restoration.	**Wetland plants slow water and roots hold soil in place. Wetlands can store floodwater and trap some sediment and pollutants.**
3	What counterclaim does the writer include, and how does the writer respond to it?	**The counterclaim is that businesses need convenient customer parking. The writer responds that a parking lot adds runoff and that parking could be located in an already developed area.**
4	How does the explanation about paved surfaces strengthen the writer's argument?	**It explains why a parking lot would make runoff worse, while a wetland would help slow and absorb rainwater.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The town should protect the six-acre prairie rather than build soccer fields there. A survey found 24 native plant species in the prairie, so removing it would destroy a habitat that cannot be recreated quickly. Native prairie plants have deep roots that help water soak into soil. That process can reduce runoff after storms. Some residents want fields close to downtown, and their need for places to play matters. Still, the town can consider a different location for fields, while the prairie's plants and soil are already established at this site. Protecting the prairie is the sounder environmental decision for the community.

Accept equivalent wording for the claim, evidence, counterclaim, and reasoning questions. For the open response, look for a clear claim, at least two accurate source facts, an acknowledged counterclaim, a response to it, and reasoning that connects evidence to the claim.