Beaver Builders

Study how a source, facts, and transitions explain a topic.

ELA.3.C.1.4 "Write expository texts about a topic, using one or more sources, providing an introduction, facts and details, some elaboration, transitions, and a conclusion."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the sentence that introduces the topic and the sentence that concludes the text. Circle transition words or phrases, then number three facts or details that explain how beavers affect their habitat.

How Beavers Help Ponds

1. Beavers are busy animals that can change a small stream. They use sticks, mud, and stones to build dams. A dam slows the water and can form a pond. According to the National Park Service, beavers build dams to make deep water around their homes. This deep water can help keep beavers safer from some predators.

2. Beaver ponds help other living things, too. The still water gives frogs, fish, and ducks places to rest or find food. In addition, ponds can hold water after rain. This may slow flooding farther downstream. Beavers also cut trees, but their work can open sunny spaces where new grasses and wildflowers grow. Their dams shape a habitat for many animals.

3. Because beavers change water and land, people sometimes call them ecosystem engineers. Their work is not always easy for people, since a dam can flood a road or field. However, communities can often move a beaver or use a pipe to control water. In conclusion, beavers are more than builders. By making ponds, they create useful places for wildlife.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Which sentence introduces the topic of the text? What topic does it introduce?

2. What source does the writer name? What fact does the source support?

3. Find two transition words or phrases in the text. How does each one help connect the ideas?

4. What two details elaborate on the idea that beaver ponds help wildlife?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Choose an animal that interests you and use a book, class text, or safe website as a source. Write 6 sentences that introduce the animal, name the source, give at least three facts with detail, use at least two transition words or phrases, and end with a conclusion.

ANSWER KEY

Beaver Builders

GRADE 3 · ELA.3.C.1.4

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the sentence that introduces the topic and the sentence that concludes the text. Circle transition words or phrases, then number three facts or details that explain how beavers affect their habitat. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Which sentence introduces the topic of the text? What topic does it introduce?	**"Beavers are busy animals that can change a small stream." It introduces beavers and how they can change a stream.**
2	What source does the writer name? What fact does the source support?	**The writer names the National Park Service. It supports the fact that beavers build dams to make deep water around their homes.**
3	Find two transition words or phrases in the text. How does each one help connect the ideas?	**"In addition" adds another benefit of beaver ponds. "However" shows a contrast between problems for people and ways communities can manage water.**
4	What two details elaborate on the idea that beaver ponds help wildlife?	**The still water gives frogs, fish, and ducks places to rest or find food. Beaver work can also open sunny spaces where grasses and wildflowers grow.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Honeybees are important insects in gardens and farms. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture pollinator page, bees help pollinate many plants. As a bee drinks nectar, pollen can stick to its body. Then it may carry the pollen to another flower, helping the plant make seeds and fruit. In addition, bees collect pollen and nectar for food. In conclusion, honeybees help plants grow and provide food for people and animals.

Accept equivalent wording when students correctly identify the introduction, conclusion, source, transitions, and supporting details. For the writing task, check for all required parts, accurate facts connected to a named source, and a clear explanatory structure.