Beavers Shape Streams

Read a model that uses sources, details, and transitions to explain a topic.

ELA.4.C.1.4 "Write expository texts about a topic, using multiple sources, elaboration, and an organizational structure with transitions."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the fact from each named source. Circle the transition words that connect the ideas.

How Beaver Dams Help

1. Beavers can change a stream into a wetland, a place where water covers the ground for much of the year. According to the National Park Service, beavers build dams from branches, mud, and stones. Water slows behind a dam and spreads into a pond. This new pond can become a home for fish, frogs, ducks, and other animals.

2. First, the pond holds water during dry times. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service explains that wetlands can store water and slowly release it. As a result, beaver ponds may keep nearby soil wetter when rain is scarce. The deeper water also gives some animals places to hide from predators. In this way, a dam changes both the land and the living things around it.

3. Finally, beaver work can affect people as well as wildlife. A fact sheet from Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife notes that beaver dams sometimes flood roads, trails, or yards. However, people can use special pipes called flow devices to lower pond water without removing a dam. Therefore, learning about beavers helps communities protect both wetlands and nearby places.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What is the main idea of paragraph 1? Give one detail that explains the idea.

2. Name the source in paragraph 1 and the source in paragraph 2. What fact does each source provide?

3. How does the transition phrase "As a result" help connect ideas in paragraph 2?

4. How are the three paragraphs organized? Use the words "First" and "Finally" as evidence.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write an 80 to 100 word explanation titled "Why Beaver Ponds Matter." Use one fact from the National Park Service and one fact from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, name both sources, and use at least two transitions to organize your ideas.

ANSWER KEY

Beavers Shape Streams

GRADE 4 · ELA.4.C.1.4

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the fact from each named source. Circle the transition words that connect the ideas. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What is the main idea of paragraph 1? Give one detail that explains the idea.	**Beavers can change streams into wetlands. Their dams slow water and spread it into a pond.**
2	Name the source in paragraph 1 and the source in paragraph 2. What fact does each source provide?	**The National Park Service says beavers build dams from branches, mud, and stones. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service explains that wetlands store water and release it slowly.**
3	How does the transition phrase "As a result" help connect ideas in paragraph 2?	**It connects wetlands storing water to the effect that nearby soil may stay wetter during dry weather.**
4	How are the three paragraphs organized? Use the words "First" and "Finally" as evidence.	**The first paragraph introduces how dams create ponds. "First" introduces effects on water, land, and animals, and "Finally" introduces effects on people and a possible solution.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Beaver ponds matter because they change streams and help living things. According to the National Park Service, beavers build dams with branches, mud, and stones. When a dam slows a stream, water spreads into a pond. First, this pond can give fish, frogs, and ducks a place to live. In addition, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service says wetlands store water and release it slowly. As a result, soil near a pond may stay wetter during dry weather. Beaver dams can help create useful wetland habitats.

Accept accurate facts from the two required sources, clear source names, a topic sentence, and at least two transitions. The response should explain how the facts support the idea that beaver ponds matter, not simply list facts.