Beavers Build Change

Identify a central idea and choose details for an informational summary.

ELA.5.R.3.2 "Summarize a text to enhance comprehension. a. Include plot and theme for a literary text. b. Include the central idea and relevant details for an informational text."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the sentence that best states the central idea. Number three details that explain how beavers change their habitat, so you can use them in a summary.

Beavers Shape a Habitat

1. Beavers are large rodents that live near ponds, rivers, and streams. Using their strong teeth, they cut branches and gather mud, stones, and plants. They pile these materials across moving water to build dams. A dam slows the flow and can create a pond. Beavers also build lodges, which are homes with underwater entrances that help protect them from predators.

2. By holding back water, a beaver dam changes the area around it. The new pond may give fish, frogs, insects, and water birds places to live. Water that spreads beyond the original stream can soak into nearby ground. This moisture may support wetland plants. However, dams can also flood trails, roads, or fields, so people sometimes manage where beavers can build.

3. Beavers are often called ecosystem engineers because their building affects many living things. Their ponds can store water during dry times and slow water after heavy rain. Over time, a pond may fill with soil and plant material. If beavers leave, the dam can break down, and the stream may flow through the area again. These changes show how one animal can reshape a habitat.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What is the central idea of the passage?

2. List three relevant details that support the central idea. Use details from different paragraphs.

3. Which detail would be more useful in a summary: the names of all four kinds of animals near a pond, or the fact that ponds give animals places to live? Explain.

4. How does the last paragraph strengthen a summary of the passage?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a 45 to 55 word summary of "Beavers Shape a Habitat." State the central idea and include at least three relevant details, but do not list every detail from the passage.

ANSWER KEY

Beavers Build Change

GRADE 5 · ELA.5.R.3.2

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the sentence that best states the central idea. Number three details that explain how beavers change their habitat, so you can use them in a summary. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What is the central idea of the passage?	**Beavers reshape habitats by building dams that change how water moves and affect living things nearby.**
2	List three relevant details that support the central idea. Use details from different paragraphs.	**Beavers build dams from natural materials, dams create ponds that can support animals and wetland plants, and beaver ponds can store water during dry times.**
3	Which detail would be more useful in a summary: the names of all four kinds of animals near a pond, or the fact that ponds give animals places to live? Explain.	**The fact that ponds give animals places to live is more useful because it states the broad effect of a beaver pond. Listing every animal is less important.**
4	How does the last paragraph strengthen a summary of the passage?	**It explains the larger effects of beaver ponds, including storing water, slowing rainwater, and changing again when beavers leave.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Beavers reshape habitats by building dams across streams. Their dams slow water and create ponds that provide homes for animals and support wetland plants. The ponds can store water during dry times, but dams may flood nearby trails or fields. When beavers leave, streams may eventually flow through the area again.

Accept summaries that state that beavers change habitats through dam building and include at least three accurate, relevant details. Answers may use different supporting details if they are accurate and focused on the central idea.