Map Message Makers

Track how sections guide a reader's understanding.

ELA.8.R.2.1 "Analyze how individual text sections and/or features convey a purpose and/or meaning in texts."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Circle the three uppercase section headings. In each section, underline one sentence that explains what the section helps readers understand, then number the sections 1 through 3 to show how they build the article's message.

Reading a Wildfire Map

1 THE BIG PICTURE. When a wildfire burns near a community, an online map can turn a complicated event into a quick visual report. The map may show the fire's current perimeter, roads, towns, and evacuation areas. A wide view helps residents see which places are close to the fire, while a zoomed view can show street names and landmarks. This section introduces the map's main purpose: helping people locate the fire in relation to familiar places.

2 READING THE KEY. A map's key, sometimes called a legend, explains the symbols and colors used on that particular map. For example, a solid line might mark a reported fire perimeter, and a shaded area might show an evacuation zone. The key prevents readers from guessing what a color or shape means. By placing these explanations together, this section lets readers interpret the map's visual details accurately instead of treating every marked area as the same kind of danger.

3 WHY UPDATES MATTER. Wildfires can change direction or grow quickly when wind and dry vegetation affect the flames. For that reason, map makers add time stamps and update notices. A time stamp tells readers when the information was last reported, which helps them judge whether it may still describe current conditions. This final section does not tell readers where to go during an emergency. Instead, it explains why they should check official local alerts and use the map as one source of information.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How do the heading "THE BIG PICTURE" and the details in that section convey the section's purpose?

2. Why does the article place explanations of symbols and colors in the "READING THE KEY" section instead of mixing them throughout the article?

3. What meaning does the detail about a time stamp add to the final section?

4. How does the final section change or extend the reader's understanding of the map's purpose?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Create a two-section mini-guide for reading a flood map. Write a heading and one sentence under each section, then write one sentence explaining how the two sections together help readers use the map.

ANSWER KEY

Map Message Makers

GRADE 8 · ELA.8.R.2.1

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Circle the three uppercase section headings. In each section, underline one sentence that explains what the section helps readers understand, then number the sections 1 through 3 to show how they build the article's message. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How do the heading "THE BIG PICTURE" and the details in that section convey the section's purpose?	**They frame the map as a tool for locating the fire near familiar places. The wide and zoomed views show how readers can see both nearby communities and specific streets or landmarks.**
2	Why does the article place explanations of symbols and colors in the "READING THE KEY" section instead of mixing them throughout the article?	**Keeping the explanations together helps readers accurately interpret the map's visual details and avoid guessing what colors or shapes mean.**
3	What meaning does the detail about a time stamp add to the final section?	**It shows that readers need to know when map information was reported so they can judge whether it may still reflect current conditions.**
4	How does the final section change or extend the reader's understanding of the map's purpose?	**The first section presents the map as a location tool, while the final section explains that the map may not be current and should be used along with official local alerts.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

FLOOD DEPTHS. A color key can show how deep floodwater may be in different areas. ROAD CLOSURES. Symbols can identify roads that are closed or unsafe to use. Together, these sections help readers understand both water conditions and travel limits.

Accept responses that accurately explain how a heading, key, detail, or final section helps readers understand the map. For Part 3, accept any relevant emergency-map topic if the student includes two purposeful sections and explains how they work together.