Beaver Word Detectives

Use word parts and context clues to unlock precise meanings.

3.L.V.2 "Word Analysis: Acquire and apply word analysis skills to determine the meanings of words and to communicate with precision in a variety of settings."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each word whose meaning is explained in the passage, and circle the nearby words that give its meaning so you can use context clues.

Builders of the Pond

1. Beavers are busy builders that live near ponds, streams, and rivers. Their wide, flat tails help them swim and balance on land. A beaver uses its sharp front teeth to gnaw, or chew, through wood. It carries branches to the water and piles them together. The growing pile can slow the water and form a deep pond.

2. In the pond, a beaver may build a lodge, a home made of sticks and mud. The entrance is often underwater, which helps protect the beaver from some predators. Beavers spread oil through their fur to make it waterproof. Waterproof means that water cannot soak through it. This oily coat also helps the animal stay warm while it swims.

3. Beavers are nocturnal, so they usually sleep during the day and are active at night. They often become active around dusk, when daylight fades. A beaver must inspect its dam, or look at it carefully, after heavy rain. If fast water makes a hole, the beaver brings mud and branches to repair it. By changing water flow, beavers can create habitat for many other living things.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What does gnaw mean? Which words in the passage help you know?

2. What does lodge mean in this passage?

3. How do the parts water and proof help you figure out the meaning of waterproof?

4. What does nocturnal mean? Use a detail from the passage to support your answer.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write two sentences about an animal that is not a beaver. Use one precise word that is not in the passage, and add a context clue that explains the word.

ANSWER KEY

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GRADE 3 · 3.L.V.2

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline each word whose meaning is explained in the passage, and circle the nearby words that give its meaning so you can use context clues. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What does gnaw mean? Which words in the passage help you know?	**Gnaw means to chew through wood. The clue words are "or chew."**
2	What does lodge mean in this passage?	**A lodge is a beaver's home made of sticks and mud.**
3	How do the parts water and proof help you figure out the meaning of waterproof?	**They show that waterproof means water cannot soak through it.**
4	What does nocturnal mean? Use a detail from the passage to support your answer.	**Nocturnal means active at night. The passage says beavers sleep during the day and are active at night.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

A penguin is aquatic, meaning it spends much of its life in water. Its flippers help it steer as it swims after fish.

Accept accurate meanings supported by nearby context clues or word parts. For the writing task, accept two sentences about a different animal that use a precise new word and clearly explain it with a context clue.