Worms at Work

Find a main idea and groups of related information.

3.W.3.a "State the topic, develop a main idea for the introductory paragraph, and group related information together."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the topic in paragraph 1, circle the sentence that states the main idea, and write a short label beside paragraphs 2 and 3 to show what each group of facts is about.

Earthworms in the Garden

1. Earthworms are busy helpers in a school garden. They help plants grow by changing the soil in two ways. Their tunnels make room for air and water, and their waste adds nutrients to the soil. You might not see them working because they spend most of their time below the ground. Still, the signs of their work can be found in a garden bed.

2. As an earthworm moves, it pushes through the soil and makes a tiny tunnel. Air can enter these spaces, and rainwater can move through them. Plant roots also have more room to spread. After a rainy day, a gardener may spot a worm near the top of the soil. Its paths below the surface are helping the plants above.

3. Earthworms also eat dead leaves and other bits of old plants in the soil. As they digest this food, they leave behind waste called castings. Castings contain nutrients that plants can use. A gardener may mix old leaves into a garden bed, giving worms more food to break down. This work returns some of the old plants' nutrients to the soil.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What topic does the first sentence name?

2. What main idea about that topic does the introduction state?

3. Write a short heading for the facts in paragraph 2. Give one fact that fits your heading.

4. Write a short heading for the facts in paragraph 3. Give one fact that fits your heading.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Choose a place you know well that is not a garden. Write a four-sentence introduction that names the place, states one main idea about it, and names two different groups of information you could explain in later paragraphs.

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PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the topic in paragraph 1, circle the sentence that states the main idea, and write a short label beside paragraphs 2 and 3 to show what each group of facts is about. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What topic does the first sentence name?	**Earthworms in a school garden.**
2	What main idea about that topic does the introduction state?	**Earthworms help plants grow by changing the soil in two ways.**
3	Write a short heading for the facts in paragraph 2. Give one fact that fits your heading.	**Worm Tunnels. The tunnels let air enter the soil.**
4	Write a short heading for the facts in paragraph 3. Give one fact that fits your heading.	**Worm Castings. Castings contain nutrients that plants can use.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Our neighborhood library is a useful place for families. It helps people find stories and learn new things. Its shelves hold books about many subjects. Librarians help visitors find books and use computers.

Accept other accurate headings and supporting facts for paragraphs 2 and 3. In Part 3, look for a named place, a clear main idea, and two distinct groups of related information.