Lights Along the Way

Trace how an author builds a case for safer buildings.

6.RC "Students analyze the author's technique, structure, main ideas, purpose, and perspective in grade-level fiction and nonfiction text, using textual evidence to support analysis."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline one sentence that states a danger to birds, circle two details that explain the danger, and write a short note beside each paragraph to show its role in the article.

When City Lights Mislead Birds

1 At midnight, the windows of an office tower still shine. High above, small birds cross the city on their way to distant feeding or nesting grounds. Many songbirds migrate at night, when the air is often cooler and calmer. A bird passing the tower may turn toward its bright windows instead of continuing across the dark sky. It might circle the building or fly into glass. The lights that help people see inside can create a dangerous detour for travelers outside.

2 Why can a glowing building cause trouble? Birds use several clues to travel, including stars and Earth's magnetic field. Artificial light can pull some migrating birds off course, especially when clouds or fog make the night sky harder to read. Glass adds another risk: a bird may not recognize a clear window as a barrier. This is not a story about birds making foolish choices. Human-made hazards now sit along their route, and the hazards can be hard for them to detect.

3 A safer city does not have to go completely dark. Building managers can turn off lights in empty rooms during migration seasons and aim outdoor lamps down where people need them. They can also add patterns to glass so birds can see the barrier. Some groups organize "lights out" efforts during busy migration nights. Each step starts with a simple question: Is this light helping anyone right now? For a bird flying overhead, the answer could mean the difference between moving on and circling a building.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Why does the author begin with a glowing office tower instead of a list of facts? Use a detail from the first paragraph in your answer.

2. What main idea does the author develop about buildings and migrating birds? Support your answer with two different details from the passage.

3. How does the shift from paragraph 2 to paragraph 3 help the author build the article's message?

4. What is the author's point of view about changing building lights? Give one phrase from the passage that supports your answer.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a three-sentence replacement opening from a building caretaker's point of view. Then write two sentences explaining how that viewpoint changes what readers notice, using one detail from the passage as evidence.

ANSWER KEY

Lights Along the Way

GRADE 6 · 6.RC

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline one sentence that states a danger to birds, circle two details that explain the danger, and write a short note beside each paragraph to show its role in the article. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Why does the author begin with a glowing office tower instead of a list of facts? Use a detail from the first paragraph in your answer.	**The tower gives readers a concrete way to picture the danger. A bird may turn toward its bright windows, then circle the building or fly into glass.**
2	What main idea does the author develop about buildings and migrating birds? Support your answer with two different details from the passage.	**Buildings can endanger migrating birds in ways people can reduce. Artificial light can pull birds off course, and patterns on glass can help birds see the barrier.**
3	How does the shift from paragraph 2 to paragraph 3 help the author build the article's message?	**Paragraph 2 explains how lights and glass create hazards. Paragraph 3 follows with actions, such as turning off lights in empty rooms, showing that people can reduce those hazards.**
4	What is the author's point of view about changing building lights? Give one phrase from the passage that supports your answer.	**The author supports changing unnecessary lighting to help birds while keeping useful lights. The phrase "A safer city does not have to go completely dark" shows this balanced view.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

When I lock the office tower at night, I check that the halls are safe and the lights are off in empty rooms. I used to leave every floor glowing because I thought more light meant more safety. Now I look up at the windows and wonder what a traveling bird sees. This caretaker's viewpoint makes readers notice that people must decide which lights are needed. The passage says managers can turn off lights in empty rooms, so a caretaker can protect birds without leaving people in the dark.

Accept different paragraph notes and interpretations when students connect them to accurate passage details. The replacement opening should have three sentences in the caretaker's voice, followed by two sentences explaining its effect with passage evidence.