Stream Shapers

Trace how a beaver changes a stream and the land around it.

RI.4.3 "Explain the individuals, events, procedures, ideas or concepts in a historical, scientific or technical text, including what happened and why, based on specific information over the course of a text."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline three actions the beaver takes. Circle and number three changes those actions cause in the order they happen.

A Beaver Builds a Pond

1. On a narrow stream, a beaver cuts branches with its sharp front teeth. It drags them into the current and piles them across the stream. Then it pushes mud and small stones into the gaps. Water can still pass through, but it moves more slowly. Behind the dam, water backs up and forms a pond. The beaver keeps adding materials when water washes pieces away.

2. Why build a pond? Some beavers make a home called a lodge in the deeper water. Its entrance is below the surface. A beaver can swim into the lodge while a fox on shore cannot easily follow. The pond also lets beavers float branches closer to home. In winter, they may store branches under the water and eat the bark when other food is hard to reach.

3. As the pond spreads, it covers low ground beside the stream. Shallow water along the edge gives frogs a place to lay eggs. Insects living near the water become food for birds. The pond also holds water after rain, so the ground nearby can stay wet longer in a dry spell. One beaver's building project can change where several kinds of animals find food and shelter.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How does the beaver's work cause a pond to form?

2. Why is an underwater lodge entrance useful to a beaver?

3. How does the pond help beavers bring branches home and eat during winter?

4. Why can the ground beside the stream stay wet longer in a dry spell after a beaver builds a dam?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine a frog and a bird arrive after the dam is built. In four sentences, explain how the beaver's actions created a useful place for each animal. Link at least three events from the passage.

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PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline three actions the beaver takes. Circle and number three changes those actions cause in the order they happen. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How does the beaver's work cause a pond to form?	**The beaver piles branches across the stream and fills gaps with mud and stones. The water slows and backs up behind the dam.**
2	Why is an underwater lodge entrance useful to a beaver?	**The beaver can swim into the lodge, but a fox on shore cannot easily follow.**
3	How does the pond help beavers bring branches home and eat during winter?	**Beavers can float branches closer to home and store them underwater to eat the bark in winter.**
4	Why can the ground beside the stream stay wet longer in a dry spell after a beaver builds a dam?	**The dam forms a pond that spreads over low ground and holds water after rain.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

A beaver piles branches across a stream and fills gaps with mud. This slows the water and makes a pond that spreads over low ground. The shallow edge gives a frog a place to lay eggs. Insects living near the water give a bird a place to find food.

Accept other accurate cause-and-effect explanations supported by the passage. For the marking job, students may choose any three beaver actions and three changes in a logical order.