Beach Changes

Use text evidence to explain how habitat changes affect sea turtles.

L.3.4 "Students will demonstrate an understanding of how adaptations allow animals to satisfy life needs and respond both physically and behaviorally to their environment..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline one change caused by a storm and one change caused by people. Circle what each change does to turtle eggs or hatchlings, then give each change and its effect the same number.

A Changing Nesting Beach

1. On a Florida beach, a sea turtle digs a nest in the sand and lays eggs. Weeks later, the hatchlings come out at night. They move toward the brighter, open view over the sea. This behavior helps them reach water, where they can swim away. But a beach can change, and the same behavior may lead them into danger.

2. During a strong storm, waves can wash away sand and uncover turtle eggs. The storm may also tear out sea oats, plants whose roots hold dune sand in place. With fewer sea oats, wind can blow more sand away. A nest that stays buried has a better chance of keeping its eggs safe. People can replant sea oats, but new plants need time to grow.

3. Beach houses can change the beach, too. Bright porch lights may draw hatchlings away from the sea and toward roads. A town can use low lights that shine down, away from the sand. Volunteers can count how many hatchlings reach the water before and after the change. If some still head toward houses, the town can turn off more lights on nights when hatchlings leave their nests.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How can a storm make a turtle nest less safe? Use evidence from the text.

2. Why might replanting sea oats help protect turtle eggs after a storm?

3. Why might bright porch lights lead hatchlings toward roads instead of the sea?

4. What could volunteers count to test the town's new lights? What could the town try if hatchlings still head toward houses?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

A new walking path cuts through sea oats near turtle nests. In three sentences, explain one risk, suggest a way to protect the habitat, and tell what you would count to test your plan.

ANSWER KEY

Beach Changes

GRADE 3 · L.3.4

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline one change caused by a storm and one change caused by people. Circle what each change does to turtle eggs or hatchlings, then give each change and its effect the same number. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How can a storm make a turtle nest less safe? Use evidence from the text.	**Storm waves can wash away sand and uncover the eggs, leaving the nest less protected.**
2	Why might replanting sea oats help protect turtle eggs after a storm?	**Sea oat roots hold dune sand in place. More sand can stay over the eggs and keep the nest buried.**
3	Why might bright porch lights lead hatchlings toward roads instead of the sea?	**Hatchlings move toward a bright view. Porch lights may draw them away from the sea and toward roads.**
4	What could volunteers count to test the town's new lights? What could the town try if hatchlings still head toward houses?	**Volunteers could count hatchlings that reach the water before and after the lighting change. The town could turn off more lights when hatchlings leave their nests.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The path could damage sea oats, so wind might blow sand off turtle nests. I would move the path around the plants and replant sea oats where people stepped. I would count how many nearby nests stay covered before and after the new plants grow.

Accept other text-supported explanations of storm damage and artificial light. For Your Turn, accept a practical way to protect dune plants or nests and a count that could show whether it helps.