Crossing the Divide

Notice how the order of ideas shapes an explanation.

10.3.R.6 "Students will analyze how informational text structures support the author's purpose."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the road problems, circle words that signal a comparison of designs, and number the planning steps. Use your marks to consider how the author builds a case for wildlife crossings.

A Safer Way Across

1 At dusk, a mule deer reaches a highway that cuts across its seasonal route. Cars move too quickly for a driver to stop safely if the deer steps onto the pavement. The danger affects people as well as animals: a collision can injure travelers and kill wildlife. Roads can also divide habitat, making it harder for animals to reach food, mates, or seasonal shelter. Watching for animals can help drivers, but it cannot remove the risk. Wildlife crossings are built to give animals another path, but their design matters as much as their location.

2 A fence by itself can keep animals off one stretch of pavement, yet it may block their usual route or push them toward a gap. A crossing without a guiding fence can be hard for animals to find. Together, fencing and an overpass or underpass address both limits: the fence steers animals toward a place where they can pass above or below traffic. An overpass looks like a planted bridge, while an underpass runs beneath the road. Neither option fits every site; planners consider the terrain and the species that use it.

3 First, planners examine where animals travel and where crashes have occurred. Next, they choose a crossing site and design fences to connect the route to it. After construction, cameras can record whether animals use the passage, while crash records can help show whether collisions decline nearby. If animals avoid the crossing or move toward a fence end, planners may need to adjust the approach. The steps make the project more than a bridge placed at random: they link a specific road hazard to a design that can be checked and improved.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Why does the author describe the road problem before introducing wildlife crossings?

2. How does comparing a fence alone with a crossing alone help explain the combined design?

3. How does the order of the steps in the final paragraph support the author's point about planning?

4. Why does the passage end with checking and adjusting the crossing instead of ending when construction is complete?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine you want a town council to fund monitoring after a wildlife crossing is built. In one paragraph, describe how you would reorder or reshape at least two details from the passage for that audience, and explain why your order would help your purpose. Do not quote the passage.

ANSWER KEY

Crossing the Divide

GRADE 10 · 10.3.R.6

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the road problems, circle words that signal a comparison of designs, and number the planning steps. Use your marks to consider how the author builds a case for wildlife crossings. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Why does the author describe the road problem before introducing wildlife crossings?	**Beginning with the risks to drivers and animals shows why another path is needed before the author explains the proposed design.**
2	How does comparing a fence alone with a crossing alone help explain the combined design?	**Each has a limit on its own: a fence can block an animal's route, and a crossing can be hard to find. The comparison shows why fences guide animals toward a crossing.**
3	How does the order of the steps in the final paragraph support the author's point about planning?	**The steps move from studying animal travel and crashes to choosing a site, then checking results. This order shows that the design responds to a specific hazard and can be evaluated.**
4	Why does the passage end with checking and adjusting the crossing instead of ending when construction is complete?	**The ending emphasizes that building a crossing does not guarantee animals will use it. Monitoring can reveal problems that planners need to address.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

I would open with the risk that an animal might move toward a fence end and return to traffic, so council members see why construction alone may not be enough. Then I would describe how cameras record use of the crossing and how crash records help measure changes nearby. I would close with the option to adjust the approach if animals avoid it. Moving from a specific risk to ways of measuring and responding presents monitoring as part of the safety plan, not an optional extra.

Accept responses that connect a specific structural choice to the author's purpose using accurate passage details. For Part 3, look for at least two reshaped or reordered details and a clear explanation of why that arrangement suits the council audience.