Behind the Beaver Dam

Find the main idea and key details before paraphrasing.

6.2.R.3 "Students will paraphrase a paragraph in their own words to demonstrate comprehension."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB In each paragraph, underline words that express the main idea and circle two details you would include when explaining it in your own words.

How Beavers Change a Stream

1. At dusk, a beaver drags a branch toward a narrow stream. It wedges the branch between rocks, then adds sticks, mud, and leaves. Over time, these materials form a dam that holds back some of the flowing water. Beavers build dams where deeper water helps protect the entrances to their homes. Their homes, called lodges, can sit in the pond behind the dam. A beaver can swim underwater to reach a lodge entrance, while many land predators cannot easily follow it.

2. A dam does not stop a stream completely. Water still passes over, through, or around it, but it moves more slowly nearby. As the current slows, some soil carried by the water settles on the streambed. The pond also gives water more time to soak into the ground. During a dry spell, that stored moisture can help nearby plants survive. One dam may change only a short stretch of stream, but a series of dams can affect a much larger area.

3. Beaver ponds can cause problems for people, too. Water may cover a path or flood a field when a dam raises the stream level. In some places, workers put a pipe through a dam to let extra water flow out without draining the whole pond. In other places, they wrap wire around valuable trees so beavers cannot chew the trunks. These steps can limit damage while leaving some pond habitat in place. The best choice depends on where the water goes and what needs protection.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. In your own words, explain how the beaver makes a dam in paragraph 1.

2. In your own words, explain how deeper water helps protect a beaver's home.

3. In your own words, explain what happens to the water and soil near a dam.

4. In your own words, explain how a beaver pond can help plants during a dry spell.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Paraphrase paragraph 3 in three sentences. Explain the problem beaver ponds can cause, two ways people respond, and what guides their choice. Use your own words.

ANSWER KEY

Behind the Beaver Dam

GRADE 6 · 6.2.R.3

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

In each paragraph, underline words that express the main idea and circle two details you would include when explaining it in your own words. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	In your own words, explain how the beaver makes a dam in paragraph 1.	**The beaver braces a branch in the stream and piles on sticks, mud, and leaves until the materials hold back some water.**
2	In your own words, explain how deeper water helps protect a beaver's home.	**The beaver can swim underwater to its lodge entrance, but many predators on land cannot easily reach it.**
3	In your own words, explain what happens to the water and soil near a dam.	**Water keeps moving past the dam but slows down, allowing some of the soil it carries to sink to the streambed.**
4	In your own words, explain how a beaver pond can help plants during a dry spell.	**The pond gives water time to soak into the ground, where the moisture can help nearby plants survive when conditions are dry.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

When a beaver dam raises the water level, nearby paths or fields might flood. Workers may add a pipe that releases extra water while keeping the pond, or they may put wire around trees to protect them from chewing. People choose a solution based on where the water travels and what they need to protect.

Accept paraphrases that preserve the passage's meaning without repeating its wording. For Part 3, look for the flooding problem, both responses, and the reason the best response may vary.