A Canal Changes Towns

Trace how an introduction and supporting details build an explanation.

5.P.4.1.A "Compose informative written products by introducing and developing a topic, supported by evidence (e.g. facts, examples, details) and maintaining an organized structure."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the sentence that introduces the main idea, then circle two supporting facts or examples in each later paragraph. Mark the later paragraphs T for travel and C for communities to show how the ideas are ordered.

How the Erie Canal Changed New York

1. In 1825, the Erie Canal opened a new route across New York State. This waterway stretched about 363 miles from Albany, on the Hudson River, to Buffalo, on Lake Erie. Before the canal, moving heavy loads over land was slow and costly. The canal changed how people and goods traveled, and it helped towns along its banks grow.

2. Boats on the canal carried flour, lumber, and other goods between inland towns and eastern markets. Horses or mules walked on a path beside the water and pulled many of the boats. A boat could hold far more cargo than a wagon. Because water travel cost less than a long wagon trip, farmers and merchants had a better way to move what they sold.

3. The new route also reshaped communities. Towns such as Rochester grew as canal traffic brought workers, shoppers, and businesses. Mills near the canal could send products to more buyers. People traveling by boat stopped to buy food or stay overnight. The canal did not just shorten trips. By linking farms, towns, and markets, it helped change daily life across the state.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Which sentence in the first paragraph states the main idea? What two changes does it name?

2. Choose two details from paragraph 2 that support the idea that the canal changed how goods traveled. Explain how each detail helps.

3. Which two details from paragraph 3 show ways the canal affected communities? Explain what each detail shows.

4. Why does the writer explain travel in paragraph 2 before explaining communities in paragraph 3?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write one paragraph explaining how a public library helps a community. Introduce the topic, support your idea with two specific examples, and put the examples in an order that makes sense.

ANSWER KEY

A Canal Changes Towns

GRADE 5 · 5.P.4.1.A

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the sentence that introduces the main idea, then circle two supporting facts or examples in each later paragraph. Mark the later paragraphs T for travel and C for communities to show how the ideas are ordered. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Which sentence in the first paragraph states the main idea? What two changes does it name?	**The last sentence states the main idea. It names changes in travel and in the growth of towns.**
2	Choose two details from paragraph 2 that support the idea that the canal changed how goods traveled. Explain how each detail helps.	**A boat held more cargo than a wagon, so it could move larger loads. Water travel cost less than a long wagon trip, so moving goods became cheaper.**
3	Which two details from paragraph 3 show ways the canal affected communities? Explain what each detail shows.	**Rochester grew as traffic brought people and businesses, showing town growth. Mills could send products to more buyers, showing a new opportunity for local businesses.**
4	Why does the writer explain travel in paragraph 2 before explaining communities in paragraph 3?	**The writer first shows how the canal moved people and goods, then shows how that movement helped communities grow.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

A public library helps a community by making learning easier to reach. First, people can borrow books to read at home without buying them. Next, a student can use a library table to work on a school project in a quiet place. These two services give neighbors useful ways to read and study.

For questions 2 and 3, accept other accurate details from the named paragraph when the explanation connects them to the main idea. For Part 3, look for an introduction, two specific examples, and a clear order.