

Sentence Sea Change

Revise sentence length and structure for clear, interesting writing.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.5.3a "Expand, combine, and reduce sentences for meaning, reader/listener interest, and style."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline paragraph 1's sentence with so. Circle from boats or shore in paragraph 3.
Consider what the reason and place phrase contribute.

Sea Otters and Kelp Forests

- ① Sea otters float in kelp forests along the Pacific coast. They may wrap themselves in kelp before sleeping, so they are less likely to drift away. An otter has thick fur, not a thick layer of blubber. Its fur traps air close to the skin and helps the animal stay warm in cold water. Otters also use rocks to crack open hard-shelled prey.
- ② Otters eat sea urchins. The urchins eat kelp. When otters keep urchin numbers lower, more kelp can grow. This chain matters because kelp forests give many animals food and shelter. A group of resting otters is called a raft. The animals float together on the surface, where an observer can count them.
- ③ Scientists monitor sea otters by watching the water from boats or shore. They count animals. They record where the animals rest and feed. The notes can show changes over time. For example, fewer otters in one area may lead scientists to look for possible causes, such as disease, food changes, or harmful spills. Careful records help people protect coastal ecosystems.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

- ① Copy paragraph 1's sentence that joins an otter action to its reason.

- 2** Combine paragraph 2's first two sentences, preserving both facts.

- 3** Shorten paragraph 3's first sentence while keeping its main idea.

- 4** Expand "They count animals." with observer and location details from paragraph 3.

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Choose a familiar place. Complete all three revision tasks below: expand, combine and reduce. Show both the original wording and the revision in each section. Keep the important meaning and use complete sentences. Then explain which revision most improves interest or style.

Expand

Write a short sentence, then an expanded version with useful detail. Label them Before and After.

Combine

Write two related sentences, then combine their ideas into one. Label the pair Before and the new sentence After.

Reduce and explain

Write a sentence with an extra detail, then a shorter version that keeps its main idea. Label them Before and After. Add one sentence explaining which of your three revisions most improves interest or style.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline paragraph 1's sentence with so. Circle from boats or shore in paragraph 3. Consider what the reason and place phrase contribute. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Copy paragraph 1's sentence that joins an otter action to its reason.	They may wrap themselves in kelp before sleeping, so they are less likely to drift away.
2	Combine paragraph 2's first two sentences, preserving both facts.	Sea otters eat sea urchins, which eat kelp.
3	Shorten paragraph 3's first sentence while keeping its main idea.	Scientists monitor sea otters.
4	Expand "They count animals." with observer and location details from paragraph 3.	Scientists count sea otters from boats or shore.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Expand: Before: Children played.

After: Children played tag beside the tall slide.

Combine: Before: The bell rang. The children lined up.

After: When the bell rang, the children lined up.

Reduce and explain: Before: Our teacher, who wore a bright red hat, opened the gate.

After: Our teacher opened the gate.

Effect: The expanded sentence interests me most because it helps me picture the game and its location.

TEACHER ASSESSMENT NOTES

Check visible originals and revisions: expansion adds useful detail, combination keeps both ideas, and reduction keeps the main idea. Accept clear alternatives and a justified effect. Passage sources: NOAA Ocean Today, NOAA National Marine Sanctuaries and Monterey Bay Aquarium.