

Reef Connections

Build knowledge across three related readings.

5.DSR.D "Regularly engage in reading a series of conceptually related texts organized around topics of study to build knowledge and vocabulary (These texts should be at a range of complexity levels so students can read the texts independently...)"

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Read A on your own, B with a partner and C with help as needed. In each text, underline a new fact and circle a topic word. Pause after each to answer its question, connecting earlier learning.

Read and Use the Texts

Text A: A Meadow Under Water

Seagrasses are flowering plants that grow in shallow coastal water. Like other plants, they need sunlight to make food. A large patch is called a meadow or bed. Clear water lets light reach these underwater plants. Many young fish and other animals use seagrass beds as habitat, a place to live.

Adapted from NOAA, Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary, "Seagrass Meadow."

Text B: Oysters Change the Water

Oysters gather on hard surfaces and grow together into reefs. As oysters feed, they filter algae out of the surrounding water. Clearer water can support underwater grasses. A reef also has crevices, narrow spaces where fish and crabs hide from predators. Depending on its location, a reef can reduce wave energy and help prevent erosion, the wearing away of shore material. These benefits connect the reef with nearby habitats.

Adapted from NOAA Fisheries, "Oyster Reef Habitat."

Text C: Plants Help Hold the Bottom

Although seagrass depends on its surroundings, it can also change them. Roots and rhizomes, horizontal stems beneath the bottom, trap and hold sediment such as sand. Above the bottom, blades of seagrass slow currents, allowing suspended sediment to settle. Suspended means carried in the water rather than resting on the bottom. Oyster reefs can also slow waves and currents. Together, these processes help explain why protecting coastal habitats involves more than protecting one kind of organism.

Adapted from NOAA Fisheries, "Coastal Resiliency."

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

- 1** After A: record one fact and explain habitat. Predict why clearer water might matter in the next reading.

- 2** After B: explain crevice, then connect oyster feeding with one fact learned in A.

- 3** After C: explain suspended sediment. What NEW role of seagrass does C add to A?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Use knowledge and vocabulary from the full reading sequence to reason about a new situation.

Apply the connections

A class asks why protecting both a seagrass bed and a nearby oyster reef might help a coastal habitat. Explain using evidence from A, B and C. Use two topic words accurately and name each text you draw from.

Extend your learning

Write one question the readings do not answer. Explain which fact made you ask it and what information you would look for in another related text.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Read A on your own, B with a partner and C with help as needed. In each text, underline a new fact and circle a topic word. Pause after each to answer its question, connecting earlier learning. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	After A: record one fact and explain habitat. Predict why clearer water might matter in the next reading.	Seagrass needs sunlight and grows in shallow water. Habitat means a place where an organism lives. Clearer water may let more light reach underwater plants.
2	After B: explain crevice, then connect oyster feeding with one fact learned in A.	A crevice is a narrow space where animals can hide. Oysters filter algae, making water clearer; A explains that seagrass needs light, so clearer water can help it.
3	After C: explain suspended sediment. What NEW role of seagrass does C add to A?	Suspended sediment is material carried in water instead of resting on the bottom. C adds that seagrass roots and stems hold sediment and its blades slow currents, helping sediment settle.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)**Possible application**

A explains that seagrass needs sunlight and gives animals habitat. B explains that oysters filter algae, so the reef may help light reach the plants. C adds that seagrass holds sediment and slows currents. These connected habitats can help water conditions and provide places for organisms to live. B says reef effects depend on location, so the same results are not guaranteed everywhere.

Possible next question

How much clearer must water become for seagrass to grow in a particular bay? A says the plants need light, while B says oysters can improve water clarity. I would look for a study measuring water clarity and seagrass growth at that site.

TEACHER ASSESSMENT NOTES

Use this as one sequence within regular reading across a topic. A uses shorter sentences and one defined word; B adds causal links and vocabulary; C adds denser syntax, contrast and interacting processes. Offer partner talk for B and modest vocabulary support for C. Require actual reading of all three, a pause after each, and evidence that earlier knowledge supports new understanding. Accept supported connections and unanswered questions; do not claim guaranteed restoration outcomes. Sources: <https://floridakeys.noaa.gov/plants/seagrass.html>; <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/habitat-conservation/oyster-reef-habitat>; <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/news/coastal-resiliency>. Texts are classroom adaptations, not direct quotations. No exact sentence count is required.