Beavers Build Habitats

Modeling focus, sourced details, and logical groups.

5.W.1.B "Write expository texts to examine a topic and convey ideas that develop the focus with relevant facts, concrete details, and examples from multiple sources and are grouped logically."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the sentence that states the passage's focus. Circle each source name, and number the paragraphs 1, 2, and 3 to show how the writer groups the ideas.

How Beaver Dams Change a Stream

1 Beavers are often called nature's engineers because their work changes moving water. This passage explains how beaver dams change streams, create habitats, and affect people. Scientists combine observations from the National Park Service with research summaries from the U.S. Forest Service. Both sources explain that beavers build dams from branches, mud, and stones. A dam slows a stream and can create a pond, changing the land around it.

2 First, the new pond holds water that once rushed downstream. Forest Service materials note that pond edges and wet ground can support water-loving plants. For example, willow and cattail may grow where soil stays wet. These plants can give insects, fish, birds, and other animals places to find food or shelter. In this way, one dam can help form a wetland habitat.

3 Beaver ponds can also affect people. The National Park Service explains that ponds may store water and slow some flooding, while the Forest Service describes wetlands as places that can trap sediment. However, a dam may flood a road, field, or trail. Communities sometimes protect valuable areas with devices that guide water through a dam, allowing beavers and people to share the stream.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What is the main focus of the passage?

2. Which source provides information about wet ground supporting plants? Give one detail from that source.

3. How does each paragraph help organize the writer's ideas?

4. Choose one concrete example from paragraph 2. How does it support the passage's focus?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a three-paragraph explanation of how native plants can help pollinators in a community garden. Use at least one fact or detail from each source note: Source A, the Garden Club observation log, says that students saw bees on bee balm and butterflies on purple coneflower in June; Source B, a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service guide, explains that native flowers provide nectar and pollen for pollinators. Use extra paper if needed.

ANSWER KEY

Beavers Build Habitats

GRADE 5 · 5.W.1.B

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the sentence that states the passage's focus. Circle each source name, and number the paragraphs 1, 2, and 3 to show how the writer groups the ideas. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What is the main focus of the passage?	**How beaver dams change streams, create habitats, and affect people.**
2	Which source provides information about wet ground supporting plants? Give one detail from that source.	**The U.S. Forest Service. It says pond edges and wet ground can support water-loving plants.**
3	How does each paragraph help organize the writer's ideas?	**Paragraph 1 introduces beaver dams and the sources. Paragraph 2 explains habitat changes. Paragraph 3 explains effects on people, including benefits and problems.**
4	Choose one concrete example from paragraph 2. How does it support the passage's focus?	**Willow and cattail may grow where soil stays wet. This shows how a beaver dam can change an area and help create habitat.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Native plants can make a community garden more useful for pollinators. A U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service guide explains that native flowers provide nectar and pollen. These foods can help pollinators as they visit flowers.

The Garden Club observation log gives a local example. In June, students saw bees on bee balm and butterflies on purple coneflower. These observations show that pollinators used native flowers in the garden.

Gardeners can plant several native flowers that bloom at different times. Then bees and butterflies may find food during more of the growing season. Bee balm and purple coneflower are concrete examples of plants that can help make the garden a useful habitat.

Accept equivalent statements of the focus, source details, and paragraph organization when they match the passage. For the writing task, look for a clear focus, details from both source notes, concrete examples, and three logically grouped paragraphs.