After the Dams

Use an objective summary to examine a changing river.

11-12.RI.2.b "Provide an objective summary of the text to support analysis."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the main development in each paragraph, circle one consequence of dam removal, and number three details you would need for an objective summary.

The Elwha River After Dam Removal

1 For nearly a century, two dams on Washington State's Elwha River supplied electricity to nearby communities. Built in the early twentieth century, the Elwha and Glines Canyon dams also blocked migrating salmon from reaching spawning grounds upstream. Sediment that once traveled downriver accumulated behind the structures, changing the river and the coast where it meets the Strait of Juan de Fuca. The Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe, whose history and fishing practices are closely tied to the river, advocated for its restoration. In 1992, Congress authorized a plan to remove both dams and restore the river's ecosystem.

2 Crews began taking down the dams in 2011 and completed removal in 2014. As reservoir water levels fell, large amounts of stored sediment moved downstream. For a time, the water became cloudier, and sediment affected habitat near the river mouth. Those changes were not simply signs of damage: moving sediment also helped rebuild riverbanks, estuary areas, and nearby beaches that had received less material while the dams stood. Workers had to manage practical concerns as well, including protecting the area's drinking-water supply from unusually high sediment levels. Removing a barrier changed several connected parts of the watershed at once.

3 With the barriers gone, salmon and other fish could move into stretches of river that had been inaccessible for decades. Their return did not mean the ecosystem immediately matched its earlier condition. Scientists and tribal researchers continued to track fish populations, river channels, and vegetation as the landscape changed. For the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe, renewed salmon runs also carried cultural importance beyond fish counts. The Elwha project shows why river restoration cannot be measured by a single event: dam removal opened a route, while sediment movement, habitat recovery, and community interests shaped what happened afterward.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. In one sentence, objectively summarize two ways the dams changed the river before their removal.

2. In two sentences, summarize both a short-term challenge and a longer-term effect of the sediment released during removal.

3. In one sentence, summarize the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe's connection to the restoration project without adding your opinion.

4. In one or two sentences, summarize why the end of dam removal did not mark the end of restoration.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write five sentences totaling 65 to 85 words. In the first four, objectively summarize the whole passage using details from all three paragraphs; in the fifth, explain what those details help a reader analyze about restoration. Do not quote the passage or include your opinion.

After the Dams

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the main development in each paragraph, circle one consequence of dam removal, and number three details you would need for an objective summary. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	In one sentence, objectively summarize two ways the dams changed the river before their removal.	**The dams blocked salmon from upstream spawning grounds and trapped sediment that would otherwise have traveled downriver.**
2	In two sentences, summarize both a short-term challenge and a longer-term effect of the sediment released during removal.	**Released sediment temporarily clouded the water and created concerns for habitats and drinking water. Over time, it helped rebuild riverbanks, estuary areas, and nearby beaches.**
3	In one sentence, summarize the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe's connection to the restoration project without adding your opinion.	**The tribe advocated for restoration of a river tied to its history and fishing practices, and renewed salmon runs held cultural importance for the community.**
4	In one or two sentences, summarize why the end of dam removal did not mark the end of restoration.	**Although fish could reach upstream areas after removal, the ecosystem did not recover immediately, so scientists and tribal researchers continued tracking changes.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

For decades, the Elwha River's dams produced electricity but blocked salmon and held back sediment. The Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe advocated for restoration, and crews removed both dams between 2011 and 2014. Released sediment temporarily clouded the water while helping rebuild downstream habitats, and fish regained access to upstream areas. Researchers continued to monitor changes because recovery did not end when the structures disappeared. Together, these developments show that evaluating restoration requires considering ecological change over time and the river's importance to local communities.

Accept accurate paraphrases that distinguish temporary effects from continuing recovery. Part 3 should remain neutral, cover all three paragraphs, and use its final sentence to connect the summary to an analysis of restoration.