Beneath the Waves

Use text evidence to explain and protect a coastal habitat.

5.W.9 "Cite evidence from literary or informational texts to support written analysis, reflection, and research, applying one or more grade 5 standards for Reading Literature or Reading Informational text as appropriate."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two details that show why seagrass matters, and circle two details that show what can harm it. Use your marks as evidence in your answers.

An Underwater Meadow

1 Seagrass is not seaweed. It is a flowering plant that grows in shallow salt water. Its long leaves form underwater meadows. Young fish and crabs hide among the leaves while they grow. The roots hold sand in place, even when waves stir the water. Many animals depend on these meadows, though a person standing on the beach may not notice them.

2 Like plants on land, seagrass needs sunlight. Mud washed from bare ground can cloud coastal water and block that light. Without enough light, seagrass may stop growing. Boats can cause a different problem. In shallow water, a spinning propeller can cut a long path through the leaves and roots. The open path may take years to fill with new growth.

3 Some communities try to restore damaged meadows by planting seagrass shoots. But planting will not solve every problem. If muddy water keeps sunlight from reaching the shoots, they may die. If boats continue to cross the same shallow areas, new plants can be torn up. Protecting a meadow can mean caring for both the water that flows into it and the boats that travel over it.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What might happen to young fish if a seagrass meadow disappears? Use a detail from the passage to support your answer.

2. Why can muddy water slow seagrass growth? Cite a detail from the passage.

3. Why can one boat trip leave a lasting mark on a meadow? Support your answer with a detail from the passage.

4. A group plants new seagrass, but it does not grow. What are two possible reasons? Use evidence from the passage.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a short note to a town council suggesting one rule that could protect a seagrass meadow. Support your rule with details from two different paragraphs, and explain how it would help.

ANSWER KEY # Beneath the Waves

GRADE 5 · 5.W.9

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two details that show why seagrass matters, and circle two details that show what can harm it. Use your marks as evidence in your answers. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What might happen to young fish if a seagrass meadow disappears? Use a detail from the passage to support your answer.	**Young fish would lose a hiding place. The passage says they hide among seagrass leaves while they grow.**
2	Why can muddy water slow seagrass growth? Cite a detail from the passage.	**Mud can cloud the water and block sunlight. The passage says seagrass may stop growing without enough light.**
3	Why can one boat trip leave a lasting mark on a meadow? Support your answer with a detail from the passage.	**A propeller can cut a path through seagrass leaves and roots. The passage says the path may take years to fill with new growth.**
4	A group plants new seagrass, but it does not grow. What are two possible reasons? Use evidence from the passage.	**Muddy water might block sunlight from the shoots, or boats might tear up the new plants.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Please ask boats to use marked routes away from shallow seagrass meadows. The passage says a propeller can cut a path through leaves and roots that may take years to fill in. It also says young fish and crabs hide among seagrass leaves. Keeping boats away would protect the plants and the animals that depend on them.

Accept accurate paraphrases as evidence. For the note, accept any practical rule supported by details from two different paragraphs and an explanation of how the rule would protect seagrass.