Rebuilding the Reef

Trace how a central idea develops across a text.

6.RI.2 "Determine the central idea(s) of a text. Analyze its development over the course of the text. Identify key textual details to support the analysis. Provide an objective summary of the text."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline one sentence in each paragraph that shows what is happening to oyster reefs. Number your choices 1, 2, and 3 to trace how the central idea develops.

A Reef Built of Shells

(1) At low tide, an oyster reef may look like a rough pile of shells. Underwater, it is a busy home. Young oysters settle on hard shells and grow together, building a reef that gives small fish and crabs places to hide. Oysters also pull water through their bodies to eat tiny floating particles, removing some material from the water. In places such as the Chesapeake Bay, these reefs once covered large areas. Their many layers made the shoreline habitat more complex than a flat, muddy bottom.

(2) Over time, many oyster reefs in the Chesapeake Bay shrank. People harvested oysters faster than new oysters could replace them, and boats sometimes scraped away the shells that young oysters needed. Pollution and disease also made survival harder. As reefs disappeared, fish and crabs lost some hiding places, and fewer oysters remained to filter water. A reef is not just a collection of animals, it is a structure those animals build. Once the shell base is gone, young oysters have fewer safe places to attach.

(3) Today, restoration groups try to rebuild that missing base. Workers place cleaned shells or other safe, hard materials in suitable water, then add young oysters raised in hatcheries. The new oysters need time to grow and form layers. Scientists check whether they survive and whether other animals use the reef. Restoring a reef does not instantly fix pollution or disease, so protecting water quality still matters. When the conditions are right, rebuilding the shell base can help oysters return and create shelter for other bay animals.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What central idea connects all three paragraphs?

2. How does a detail in the first paragraph help explain why the loss of reefs matters?

3. How do two details in the second paragraph explain why oyster reefs have trouble recovering?

4. What does the final paragraph add to the central idea about rebuilding reefs? Support your answer with a detail.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a 55 to 75 word objective summary in four sentences. Trace the reefs from their original role through their decline to restoration, and include a limit on restoration.

ANSWER KEY

Rebuilding the Reef

GRADE 6 · 6.RI.2

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline one sentence in each paragraph that shows what is happening to oyster reefs. Number your choices 1, 2, and 3 to trace how the central idea develops. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What central idea connects all three paragraphs?	**Oyster reefs provide valuable habitat, but damage has reduced them, and restoring them takes more than adding new oysters.**
2	How does a detail in the first paragraph help explain why the loss of reefs matters?	**The first paragraph says reefs give small fish and crabs places to hide. Their loss means those animals have fewer hiding places.**
3	How do two details in the second paragraph explain why oyster reefs have trouble recovering?	**People harvested oysters faster than they could be replaced, and boats scraped away shells that young oysters need in order to attach.**
4	What does the final paragraph add to the central idea about rebuilding reefs? Support your answer with a detail.	**Rebuilding reefs requires suitable conditions as well as a shell base and young oysters. The paragraph explains that restoration does not instantly fix pollution or disease.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Oyster reefs in the Chesapeake Bay provide shelter for fish and crabs, and oysters remove some material from the water as they feed. Harvesting, damaged shell beds, pollution, and disease caused many reefs to shrink. Restoration workers add hard material and young oysters so reefs can grow again. Because pollution and disease still threaten oysters, rebuilding reefs must be paired with care for water quality.

Accept different supporting details when students accurately explain their connection to the central idea. Summaries should cover the reefs' role, decline, and restoration without adding opinions or claims the passage does not support.