

Ponds With Purpose

Use important details to identify a passage's key idea.

3.6.G "evaluate details read to determine key ideas;"

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline three details that help you figure out the passage's most important idea. Write 1, 2, and 3 beside the details you think give the strongest support.

How Beavers Change a Stream

- ① Beavers spend much of their time near streams, where they gather branches, mud, and stones. Using their sharp teeth, they cut small trees and carry pieces to the water. Then they pack the materials together to build a dam. A dam slows the moving water. Behind it, water spreads out and forms a pond that can become the center of a busy habitat.
- ② The new pond helps many living things. Fish can find quieter water, and frogs may lay eggs among water plants. Ducks and herons can search the shallow edges for food. The pond also gives beavers a safer place to swim because water surrounds the entrance to their lodge. These details show that a beaver dam does more than make a home for one animal.
- ③ Sometimes a pond made by beavers reaches roads, farms, or yards. When this happens, people may place a pipe through the dam so some water can flow out. In other places, workers protect nearby trees with wire around their trunks. These choices can lower flooding while allowing the beavers to stay. Beaver dams change a stream, so people often look for ways to share the space.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 What is the key idea of the whole passage? Write one sentence.

2 Which two details from paragraph 2 best support the idea that a beaver pond helps many animals?

3 How does paragraph 3 add to the key idea of the passage?

4 A student says the passage is mostly about beavers using sharp teeth. Which detail best shows that this is not the key idea?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Choose one important detail from each paragraph. Write one key idea that all three details support, then list the three details you chose.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline three details that help you figure out the passage's most important idea. Write 1, 2, and 3 beside the details you think give the strongest support. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What is the key idea of the whole passage? Write one sentence.	Beaver dams change streams into ponds that help many animals, and people sometimes manage the ponds' effects.
2	Which two details from paragraph 2 best support the idea that a beaver pond helps many animals?	Fish can find quieter water, and ducks and herons can search the shallow edges for food.
3	How does paragraph 3 add to the key idea of the passage?	It shows that beaver ponds can affect roads, farms, and yards, so people may manage water or protect trees.
4	A student says the passage is mostly about beavers using sharp teeth. Which detail best shows that this is not the key idea?	People may place a pipe through a dam when a pond reaches roads, farms, or yards. This shows the passage is also about how dams affect places and people.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Key idea: Beaver dams affect animals and people by changing streams into ponds. Details: Beavers build dams that slow water. Ponds give fish quieter water. People use pipes when ponds reach roads or yards.

Accept key ideas that combine the main effects of beaver dams, including ponds, animal habitat, and effects on people. For the open task, accept different details if they clearly support the student's stated key idea.