

Creek Clue Detectives

Use text clues to support unstated ideas.

5.6.F “make inferences and use evidence to support understanding;”

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline details that give you clues about an idea the author does not state directly. In the margin beside each paragraph, write one short inference you can make from its clues.

A New Pond at Willow Creek

- ① Each spring, volunteers in the town of Maple Glen walk along Willow Creek with notebooks and measuring sticks. They record water depth, photograph muddy banks, and count young willow trees. This year, the group noticed a new pile of branches across a narrow part of the creek. Water moved slowly behind the pile, and a small pond had formed where there had been only a shallow channel.
- ② The volunteers did not see the animal that built the branch pile. Still, they found fresh tooth marks on several sticks, and some nearby trees had been cut into pointed stumps. A local wildlife officer explained that beavers use branches and mud to make dams. By holding back water, a dam can create a deeper pond that gives beavers a safer place to swim and store food.
- ③ At the next meeting, the volunteers discussed leaving the dam alone while they continued to observe the creek. The new pond had already attracted frogs, dragonflies, and a pair of ducks. However, the group also planned to check whether rising water reached a nearby walking path after heavy rain. Their notes would help the town decide whether the dam benefited the area without causing problems for people.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 What can you infer built the pile of branches? Use two clues from the passage to support your inference.

2 Why did the volunteers decide to leave the dam alone for now? Support your answer with evidence.

3 What can you infer is the author's main idea about the beaver dam? Use two details to support your answer.

4 What might happen to the walking path after a heavy rain? What detail gives you that clue?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Imagine that several heavy rains pass and the walking path stays dry. Write exactly two sentences explaining what the volunteers could infer about the dam's effects. Use two details from the passage.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline details that give you clues about an idea the author does not state directly. In the margin beside each paragraph, write one short inference you can make from its clues. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What can you infer built the pile of branches? Use two clues from the passage to support your inference.	A beaver likely built it. Fresh tooth marks on sticks and nearby trees cut into pointed stumps are clues.
2	Why did the volunteers decide to leave the dam alone for now? Support your answer with evidence.	They inferred that the dam might help the creek habitat because the pond attracted animals, but they needed to keep checking for problems such as water reaching the path.
3	What can you infer is the author's main idea about the beaver dam? Use two details to support your answer.	The dam may benefit the area, but it should be monitored. It formed a pond that attracted frogs, dragonflies, and ducks, while rising water could possibly reach the walking path.
4	What might happen to the walking path after a heavy rain? What detail gives you that clue?	Water might reach or flood the path. The volunteers planned to check whether rising water reached the nearby path after heavy rain.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The volunteers could infer that the dam benefits the area without causing a problem for people. The pond has attracted frogs, dragonflies, and ducks, and the group had been watching to see whether water reached the path.

Accept reasonable inferences that are supported by accurate passage details. For the open task, accept any exactly two-sentence response that states a logical inference and uses two relevant details, including the path staying dry from the situation.