

Falcons Above Cities

Use important details to determine a key idea.

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

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the one detail in each paragraph that you think matters most for the passage's overall key idea. Number your underlined details 1, 2, and 3 to show how the author builds that idea.

Peregrines in the City

- ① Long before skyscrapers, peregrine falcons nested on high cliffs and hunted birds in open air. Their steep dives can reach more than 200 miles per hour, helping them catch prey. During the mid-1900s, however, the pesticide DDT built up in their bodies after they ate contaminated birds. It caused many females to lay thin-shelled eggs that broke during incubation. By the 1970s, peregrines had disappeared from much of the eastern United States, where their cliff homes were limited.
- ② After DDT was banned in the United States in 1972, recovery programs raised young falcons and released them in places where populations were low. Some birds chose city buildings as nesting sites. A skyscraper ledge is similar to a cliff, and nearby pigeons and other birds provide food. In New York City, for example, peregrines nest on bridges, apartment buildings, and office towers. People can sometimes watch adults carry prey to their chicks on busy streets below.
- ③ City life also creates dangers for falcons. Young birds may strike glass windows when learning to fly, and some nests are disturbed by construction. Wildlife experts and building managers may place a nest box on a quiet ledge or close an area during nesting season. They also track nests to learn whether chicks survive. These actions show that tall buildings alone do not guarantee a successful falcon population. Safe nesting spaces, food, and careful human choices all matter.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 What key idea does paragraph 1 develop about why peregrines declined?

2 Which two details from paragraph 2 best support the idea that cities can meet peregrines' needs?

3 How does paragraph 3 refine the idea that cities can be good places for peregrines?

4 What is the passage's overall key idea?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Write a three-sentence explanation of a key idea from the passage. State the key idea in your first sentence, then use details from all three paragraphs to explain how the author develops it.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline the one detail in each paragraph that you think matters most for the passage's overall key idea. Number your underlined details 1, 2, and 3 to show how the author builds that idea. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What key idea does paragraph 1 develop about why peregrines declined?	DDT caused peregrines to lay thin-shelled eggs that often broke, leading to a major population decline.
2	Which two details from paragraph 2 best support the idea that cities can meet peregrines' needs?	Skyscraper ledges are similar to cliffs, and nearby pigeons and other birds provide food.
3	How does paragraph 3 refine the idea that cities can be good places for peregrines?	It explains that cities provide dangers, so safe nest sites and human protection are also needed.
4	What is the passage's overall key idea?	Peregrines can recover and live in cities when they have safe nesting places, food, and protection from dangers.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Peregrine falcons can recover and live in cities when the conditions they need are protected. DDT caused broken eggs in the past, while skyscraper ledges and nearby birds can provide nesting and food today. Because windows and construction can still harm falcons, people must protect nest sites and monitor chicks.

Accept reasonable key ideas that connect peregrine recovery, city habitats, and the need for safe conditions. For the open response, look for a clear key idea and accurate evidence from all three paragraphs.