Beavers, Benefits, Balance

Combine details from several sources to form a balanced conclusion.

7.12.F "synthesize information from a variety of sources;"

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline three details from at least three different sources that explain what beavers can do, then circle details that show a problem or limit.

A Creekside Decision

1. After heavy rains flooded parts of Mapleton, the city asked whether beavers could help. In a report to the council, watershed engineer Lena Ortiz noted that beaver dams slow moving water and spread it across wetland soil. She cited stream gauges from a nearby restored creek, where peak flow after storms was lower than before dams were installed. Ortiz warned that dams can also block culverts, so the city would need to inspect sites near roads.

2. A state wildlife agency guide explains that wetlands made by beavers can provide habitat for frogs, fish, birds, and insects. It also says that the results depend on the location. At a park upstream from Mapleton, volunteer Maya Chen recorded more duck and frog sightings after a beaver pond formed. However, she also photographed a walking trail under water for several weeks. Her observations support Ortiz's point that beavers can help a landscape while creating problems that people must manage.

3. To learn what residents thought, a local newspaper interviewed people living near the creek. One homeowner wanted the dam removed because water reached her garden. A school science teacher wanted it left in place, saying students had begun observing tadpoles there. The newspaper also published a city map showing that the dam sits far from major roads but close to the flooded trail. Taken together, the sources suggest a middle plan: protect the pond, move the trail, and check the dam regularly.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What shared idea is supported by Ortiz's report and the state wildlife agency guide? Give one detail from each source.

2. How do Chen's observations and the newspaper interviews together show both a benefit and a challenge of the beaver pond?

3. How do the city map and Ortiz's warning explain why regular checks of the dam could be useful?

4. Why would a decision based only on the homeowner's view be incomplete? Use information from two other sources.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a 45 to 60-word recommendation to the Mapleton city council. State your claim, use details from at least two different sources, and address one concern about the beaver pond.

ANSWER KEY

Beavers, Benefits, Balance

GRADE 7 · TEKS 7.12.F

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline three details from at least three different sources that explain what beavers can do, then circle details that show a problem or limit. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What shared idea is supported by Ortiz's report and the state wildlife agency guide? Give one detail from each source.	**Beavers can benefit an area, but their effects must be managed based on the location. Ortiz says dams slow water but can block culverts, and the guide says beaver wetlands provide habitat but results depend on location.**
2	How do Chen's observations and the newspaper interviews together show both a benefit and a challenge of the beaver pond?	**Chen observed more ducks and frogs, showing a wildlife benefit. The interviews describe flooding in a homeowner's garden, showing a challenge for nearby people.**
3	How do the city map and Ortiz's warning explain why regular checks of the dam could be useful?	**The map shows that the dam is near a flooded trail, even though it is far from major roads. Ortiz warns that dams can create blockages, so checks could help identify and manage problems.**
4	Why would a decision based only on the homeowner's view be incomplete? Use information from two other sources.	**The homeowner's view focuses on garden flooding, but other sources show benefits and other concerns. The wildlife guide and Chen's observations show habitat benefits, while the map shows the trail is also affected.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Mapleton should keep the beaver pond and manage its effects. Ortiz's report says dams can slow floodwater, and Chen observed more ducks and frogs after the pond formed. Because the homeowner's garden and the trail have flooded, the city should inspect the dam, help protect the garden, and reroute the trail.

Accept supported recommendations that combine information from at least two sources and address a concern. For the open response, check that the response is 45 to 60 words and includes a clear claim, source-based details, and a practical response to a problem.