

Canal Through Time

Track key ideas and keep events in order.

7.6.D "paraphrase and summarize texts in ways that maintain meaning and logical order;"

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the details that explain how builders solved problems. Number the major events 1 through 5 in the order they happened so you can summarize the passage clearly.

Building the Panama Canal

- ① Before the Panama Canal opened, ships traveling between New York and San Francisco often sailed around South America's southern tip, a journey of about 13,000 miles. French builders first tried to cut a sea-level canal through Panama in the 1880s, but disease, difficult terrain, and financial problems stopped the project. In 1904, the United States took over construction. Engineers decided to use locks, chambers that raise and lower ships, instead of digging a channel at sea level.
- ② Workers faced another major obstacle: the tropical climate. Mosquitoes spread yellow fever and malaria, illnesses that had killed many earlier workers. Under physician William C. Gorgas, sanitation crews drained standing water, covered water containers, and sprayed areas where mosquitoes bred. These efforts greatly reduced mosquito populations and disease. Meanwhile, workers dug the Culebra Cut and built Gatun Dam across the Chagres River. The dam created Gatun Lake, which became a central part of the canal route.
- ③ The canal opened on August 15, 1914, when the cargo ship Ancon made the first official transit. A ship entering the canal travels through a series of locks, crosses Gatun Lake, and passes through additional locks before reaching the other ocean. The route is about 50 miles long and cuts thousands of miles from some voyages. Today, the canal remains an important trade route, although newer locks opened in 2016 to allow larger ships to pass.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

- 1** Paraphrase this idea from paragraph 1 in your own words: Engineers chose locks instead of a sea-level canal.

- 2** Write a one-sentence summary of paragraph 2. Include the problem, the response, and an important result.

- 3** Put these events in order by writing 1 through 4: the Ancon made the first official transit; French builders began a canal project; the United States took over construction; sanitation crews reduced mosquito populations.

- 4** Write a two-sentence summary of the whole passage. In the first sentence, explain the construction challenges and solutions. In the second sentence, explain the canal's opening and importance.

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Write a 45-55 word summary of the passage. Include three important details in chronological order, and leave out minor details.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline the details that explain how builders solved problems. Number the major events 1 through 5 in the order they happened so you can summarize the passage clearly. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Paraphrase this idea from paragraph 1 in your own words: Engineers chose locks instead of a sea-level canal.	Engineers planned chambers that would lift and lower ships rather than digging a canal at the same level as the oceans.
2	Write a one-sentence summary of paragraph 2. Include the problem, the response, and an important result.	To overcome mosquito-borne disease, sanitation crews removed breeding sites and reduced illness, while other workers dug the Culebra Cut and created Gatun Lake for the route.
3	Put these events in order by writing 1 through 4: the Ancon made the first official transit; French builders began a canal project; the United States took over construction; sanitation crews reduced mosquito populations.	1. French builders began a canal project. 2. The United States took over construction. 3. Sanitation crews reduced mosquito populations. 4. The Ancon made the first official transit.
4	Write a two-sentence summary of the whole passage. In the first sentence, explain the construction challenges and solutions. In the second sentence, explain the canal's opening and importance.	French work failed, so United States builders used locks, disease-control efforts, digging, and dam building to construct the canal. It opened in 1914, shortened some ocean voyages, and later gained larger locks.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

After a French effort failed, the United States built the Panama Canal using locks and public-health measures that reduced mosquito-borne disease. Workers created Gatun Lake and completed the route in 1914. The canal shortened voyages between oceans, and expanded locks later allowed larger ships to use this trade route.

Accept accurate paraphrases that preserve the original meaning without copying its wording. For summaries, accept varied details if students maintain chronological order, include central ideas, and omit minor information.