Wild Water Editors

Read a model draft for clarity, detail, and conventions.

10.W.3 "Usage and Mechanics Revise writing for clarity of content, accuracy, and adequate elaboration. Use peer- and self-evaluation to edit writing for clarity and quality of information…"

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline precise details that strengthen the explanation. Circle vague or general statements, and number the one sentence with a punctuation error so you can plan revisions.

How Beavers Reshape Waterways

1. Beavers reshape waterways by building dams from branches, mud, and stones. A dam slows a stream, causing water to spread into a pond. The pond can give beavers deeper water around their lodge, which may help protect them from some predators. Beavers have webbed hind feet for swimming and broad, flat tails that help them steer. This is a big deal for the forest. In one place, a new pond can change where water flows, where sediment settles, and which nearby plants receive enough moisture.

2. When a beaver dam holds water on a floodplain, the pond may store water after rain or snowmelt. Some researchers study these ponds because they can slow runoff and trap sediment. The ponds also create wetland habitat for frogs, insects, fish, and waterbirds. This helps nature in many ways. However, a dam can flood roads, fields, or yards when it is built near human development. Communities sometimes install devices that guide water through a dam instead of first removing the animals from the area entirely.

3. To decide how to manage a beaver site, land managers examine the location, nearby property, and the species that use the water. They may protect a pond, move a beaver, or use a flow device. The best choice depends on the situation. Beavers are not a solution for every dry stream, they need enough water and woody plants to survive. Careful observations give people information for balancing habitat benefits with possible damage. For example, managers can measure water levels and map nearby culverts before acting.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Which sentence in paragraph 1 is too vague? Use two precise details from that paragraph to explain what it should say instead.

2. Replace “This helps nature in many ways” with one clear sentence that uses two details from paragraph 2.

3. Which sentence has a comma splice? Rewrite it correctly.

4. The sentence “The best choice depends on the situation” is general. What three factors from paragraph 3 could elaborate on what the situation includes?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a three-sentence explanatory paragraph about an animal changing its habitat. Include at least two precise facts, then write a two-sentence peer-style revision note that names one strength and suggests one specific improvement.

ANSWER KEY

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GRADE 10 · 10.W.3

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline precise details that strengthen the explanation. Circle vague or general statements, and number the one sentence with a punctuation error so you can plan revisions. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Which sentence in paragraph 1 is too vague? Use two precise details from that paragraph to explain what it should say instead.	**The vague sentence is "This is a big deal for the forest." It could explain that a pond changes where water flows and sediment settles, and it affects which nearby plants receive enough moisture.**
2	Replace "This helps nature in many ways" with one clear sentence that uses two details from paragraph 2.	**Sample: "The pond creates wetland habitat for frogs and fish, and it can slow runoff after rain or snowmelt."**
3	Which sentence has a comma splice? Rewrite it correctly.	**"Beavers are not a solution for every dry stream, they need enough water and woody plants to survive." Correct revision: "Beavers are not a solution for every dry stream because they need enough water and woody plants to survive."**
4	The sentence "The best choice depends on the situation" is general. What three factors from paragraph 3 could elaborate on what the situation includes?	**The location, nearby property, and the species that use the water.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Sea otters eat sea urchins in kelp forests along the Pacific coast. By limiting urchin grazing, they can help kelp grow, and kelp provides shelter for fish and other animals. Otters also wrap themselves in kelp while resting so currents do not carry them away. A strength is that the paragraph explains a food-web effect with specific details. Add the name of a coastal location where sea otters and kelp forests occur to give readers a concrete example.

Accept equivalent revisions that make vague ideas more precise, add accurate elaboration, and correct the comma splice. For Part 3, accept any accurate animal-and-habitat explanation with two precise facts and a revision note containing both a strength and a specific suggestion.