Beavers Build Change

Trace main ideas and the details that build them.

5.RI.1.A "Summarize the main ideas of texts and specific paragraphs within them, including how they are developed through the details."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB In each paragraph, underline the sentence that best states or suggests its main idea. Circle two details that develop that idea, so you can see how the author builds each paragraph's message.

How Beavers Change Streams

1. Beavers are known for building dams, but their work changes more than a stream's path. When a beaver piles branches, mud, and stones across moving water, a pond forms behind the dam. The deeper, slower water can spread into nearby low areas. This new pond becomes the center of a small wetland habitat for many animals.

2. The pond can help many living things. Frogs lay eggs in calm water, and young fish may find shelter among underwater plants. Ducks and herons can feed near the pond's edge. Trees and grasses growing in wet soil offer food and cover to insects, mammals, and birds. By creating several kinds of places to live, beavers increase habitat choices.

3. Beaver ponds can also change what happens downstream. A dam slows water during ordinary flows, so some soil carried by the stream settles in the pond instead of rushing farther away. The pond may hold water after rain, releasing it slowly through leaks, channels, or overflow. These changes can reduce erosion in some places, although a dam can also flood land nearby.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What is the main idea of paragraph 1? Name two details that develop it.

2. What main idea does paragraph 2 develop? Explain how two animal or plant details support that idea.

3. Write a 20 to 30 word summary of paragraph 3. Include both a helpful change and a possible problem caused by a dam.

4. How does each paragraph help develop the main idea of the whole passage? Describe the role of all three paragraphs.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a 40 to 55 word summary of the whole passage. State the overall main idea, then explain how all three paragraphs develop it with details from the text.

ANSWER KEY

Beavers Build Change

GRADE 5 · 5.RI.1.A

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

In each paragraph, underline the sentence that best states or suggests its main idea. Circle two details that develop that idea, so you can see how the author builds each paragraph's message. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What is the main idea of paragraph 1? Name two details that develop it.	**Beavers build dams that form ponds and wetlands. Details include that they pile branches, mud, and stones across moving water, and the deeper, slower water spreads into nearby low areas.**
2	What main idea does paragraph 2 develop? Explain how two animal or plant details support that idea.	**Paragraph 2 explains that beaver ponds create habitats for many living things. Frogs can lay eggs in calm water, and wet-soil plants provide food and cover for insects, mammals, and birds.**
3	Write a 20 to 30 word summary of paragraph 3. Include both a helpful change and a possible problem caused by a dam.	**Beaver dams slow streams, trap soil, and store rainwater, which can reduce erosion downstream, but the ponds may flood nearby land.**
4	How does each paragraph help develop the main idea of the whole passage? Describe the role of all three paragraphs.	**Paragraph 1 explains how dams form ponds and wetlands. Paragraph 2 shows how ponds help living things. Paragraph 3 explains how dams change water and soil downstream, with both benefits and a possible problem.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Beavers reshape streams by building dams that form ponds. These ponds create wetland homes for frogs, fish, birds, and other animals. Dams also slow water, trap soil, and hold rainwater, which can reduce erosion, though they may flood nearby land.

Accept summaries that state that beaver dams change streams and include accurate support from all three paragraphs. Students may use different details, as long as they explain how those details develop the main idea.