Dams, Facts, Decisions

Compare how writers use evidence to support different viewpoints.

7.RI.3.B "Compare and contrast how two or more authors writing about the same topic shape their presentations or viewpoints of key information by emphasizing different facts, opinions, and reasoning."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline facts that Ortiz emphasizes, put a box around facts that Bell emphasizes, and circle each author's recommended action. Use your marks to compare how their choices shape their viewpoints.

Two Views on Beaver Dams

1 In Riverton, beavers have built dams along Willow Creek, a stream beside a bike trail and several homes. The dams slow water, creating ponds and wetlands. They can also cause water to spread onto paths or private land. After a spring flood closed part of the trail, the town newspaper printed two opinion articles about what to do. Both writers used information about the same beaver dams, but they urged town leaders to make different choices.

2 Author Lena Ortiz argues that the town should leave the dams in place whenever possible. She emphasizes that beaver ponds hold water after storms and give frogs, ducks, and other animals places to live. Ortiz notes that wetlands can filter some pollution from runoff before it reaches larger rivers. In her view, the town can protect the trail by adding a raised walkway near the pond. Because the dams offer benefits that a walkway can address without removing them, she calls removal a last choice.

3 Author Marcus Bell recommends taking out the dams near homes and the trail. He focuses on the flood that forced the trail to close and on the cost of repairing water-damaged paths. Bell agrees that beavers support wildlife, yet he argues that public safety must come first. He proposes removing problem dams and planting native shrubs along the creek for birds and insects. Since a blocked trail and flooded yards affect people now, Bell reasons that removal is the most responsible plan.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What shared point about beavers appears in both authors' presentations? Explain how each author uses that point differently.

2. Compare the facts each author emphasizes. What does Ortiz focus on, and what does Bell focus on?

3. How do Ortiz's and Bell's opinions about what the town should do differ?

4. Explain how each author's reasoning supports that author's recommendation.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write exactly three sentences comparing Ortiz's and Bell's presentations. Include their shared topic, one difference in the facts they emphasize, and a difference in their reasoning or recommended actions.

ANSWER KEY

Dams, Facts, Decisions

GRADE 7 · 7.RI.3.B

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline facts that Ortiz emphasizes, put a box around facts that Bell emphasizes, and circle each author's recommended action. Use your marks to compare how their choices shape their viewpoints. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What shared point about beavers appears in both authors' presentations? Explain how each author uses that point differently.	**Both writers show that beavers support wildlife. Ortiz uses this benefit as a reason to keep the dams, while Bell accepts the benefit but gives greater importance to safety.**
2	Compare the facts each author emphasizes. What does Ortiz focus on, and what does Bell focus on?	**Ortiz focuses on stored storm water, animal habitat, and wetlands filtering runoff. Bell focuses on the trail closure, flooded yards, and the cost of repairing damaged paths.**
3	How do Ortiz's and Bell's opinions about what the town should do differ?	**Ortiz thinks the dams should stay whenever possible and the town should add a raised walkway. Bell thinks problem dams near homes and the trail should be removed.**
4	Explain how each author's reasoning supports that author's recommendation.	**Ortiz reasons that a walkway can protect the trail without losing the dams' benefits. Bell reasons that current flooding and blocked public spaces make removal the more responsible choice.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Both Ortiz and Bell write about what Riverton should do with beaver dams on Willow Creek. Ortiz emphasizes water storage and animal habitat, while Bell emphasizes closed trails and repair costs. Ortiz reasons that a walkway can solve the trail problem, but Bell reasons that flooding makes dam removal more responsible.

Accept accurate paraphrases that distinguish each author's emphasized facts, viewpoint, and reasoning. For Part 3, accept any three-sentence comparison supported by the passage and containing all requested elements.