Snake Story Map

Trace structure to make sense of a complex informational text.

8.DSR.E "Use reading strategies as needed to aid and monitor comprehension when encountering challenging sections of text. These sense-making strategies attend to text structure, common organizational structures, summarizing..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline one sentence in each paragraph that states its central idea. Circle words or phrases that signal causes, effects, or solutions, so you can trace how the text is organized.

Guam's Unwanted Predator

1. On Guam, a Pacific island, the brown tree snake became an unexpected threat after it arrived in cargo sometime after World War II. Native birds had evolved without this nighttime predator, so many nested where snakes could reach them. As the snake population grew, several bird species disappeared from the island. The loss was not only a wildlife problem. Birds had carried seeds and eaten insects, jobs that helped forests function.

2. Scientists studying Guam noticed another effect: forests changed after birds vanished. Some native trees depend on birds to move their seeds away from the parent tree. Without birds, seeds often fall in crowded piles, where seedlings compete for light and water. Fewer birds also means more spiders and insects in some areas because fewer animals eat them. These connected changes show why ecologists describe an ecosystem as a network rather than a collection of separate species.

3. To limit the snakes, workers use several approaches. Specially trained dogs inspect cargo at ports, since ships and planes can carry snakes to other islands. On Guam, traps and poison-filled bait tubes reduce snake numbers in selected areas. Researchers also protect some birds in breeding programs and release them only where risks are lower. No single method can quickly rebuild the island's earlier food web. Instead, the response combines prevention, population control, and long-term protection.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How is the passage organized? Name the main focus of each paragraph in order.

2. In paragraph 2, what cause-and-effect relationship does the phrase "Without birds" introduce?

3. A reader asks, "Why did bird losses affect Guam's forests?" Answer the question using details from the passage.

4. Write a 25- to 35-word summary of the passage that includes the problem and the response.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Choose one sentence from the passage that was hard to understand. Write a 40- to 60-word note that paraphrases it, asks a question about it, and answers your question using another detail from the passage.

ANSWER KEY

Snake Story Map

GRADE 8 · 8.DSR.E

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline one sentence in each paragraph that states its central idea. Circle words or phrases that signal causes, effects, or solutions, so you can trace how the text is organized. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How is the passage organized? Name the main focus of each paragraph in order.	**Paragraph 1 introduces the snake problem and bird losses. Paragraph 2 explains effects on the forest ecosystem. Paragraph 3 describes responses to limit the snakes and protect birds.**
2	In paragraph 2, what cause-and-effect relationship does the phrase "Without birds" introduce?	**Without birds to move seeds, seeds can fall in crowded piles where seedlings compete for light and water.**
3	A reader asks, "Why did bird losses affect Guam's forests?" Answer the question using details from the passage.	**Birds moved seeds away from parent trees and ate insects. When birds disappeared, seed dispersal declined and some areas had more spiders and insects.**
4	Write a 25- to 35-word summary of the passage that includes the problem and the response.	**Brown tree snakes on Guam caused bird losses that disrupted seed dispersal and insect control. Workers use cargo inspections, traps, bait, and bird breeding programs to reduce harm.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Paraphrase: The island cannot recover its original relationships among living things fast because one action will not solve every snake-related problem. Question: Why do workers combine methods? Answer: Inspections stop snakes from traveling, traps and bait lower their numbers, and breeding programs protect birds.

Accept reasonable central-idea sentences and any correctly circled cause, effect, or solution signals. For the open task, accept a faithful paraphrase, a relevant comprehension question, and an answer supported by a different passage detail.