

Creek Care Detectives

Track changes and choices in an ecosystem.

3.8 "The student will investigate and understand that natural events and humans influence ecosystems. Key ideas include human activity affects the quality of air, water, and habitats; water is limited and needs to be conserved; fire, flood..."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Circle each human action, underline each natural event, and number the choices that protect water, soil, or habitats.

Changes at Maple Creek

- ① At Maple Creek, families noticed that the water looked cloudy after people left trash near storm drains. Oil and soap washed from streets into the creek. These pollutants made the water less healthy for minnows and frogs. Litter also spoiled the animals' habitat, the place where they find food, shelter, and space to live safely. Smoke from burning trash can make the air less healthy to breathe.
- ② Natural events can change an ecosystem too. A hard rain can cause a flood, covering land with water and carrying soil into the creek. Flowing water can also cause erosion, which happens when soil is moved away. A fire may remove plants, and a disease can make plants or animals sick. After these events, food and shelter may be harder to find.
- ③ Water is limited, so people should use only what they need. At Maple Creek School, students turn off faucets tightly and tell an adult about leaks. They plant grass along bare ground to hold soil in place. They put trash in bins and use less fertilizer near the creek. These choices help save water, protect soil, and keep habitats healthier.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 What human activity in the passage makes the air less healthy to breathe?

2 How did oil and soap affect the creek ecosystem?

3 How can natural events such as floods, fire, or disease change an ecosystem? Use two details from the passage.

4 Name one action that saves water and one action that helps conserve soil.

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Imagine a pond near your school. Write exactly four sentences: tell one harmful human action and its effect, tell one natural event and its effect, and give two actions that would protect the pond.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Circle each human action, underline each natural event, and number the choices that protect water, soil, or habitats. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What human activity in the passage makes the air less healthy to breathe?	Burning trash makes the air less healthy to breathe.
2	How did oil and soap affect the creek ecosystem?	They polluted the creek water and made it less healthy for minnows and frogs.
3	How can natural events such as floods, fire, or disease change an ecosystem? Use two details from the passage.	Answers may include that a flood carries soil into the creek, a fire removes plants, or disease makes plants or animals sick. Food and shelter may become harder to find.
4	Name one action that saves water and one action that helps conserve soil.	Saving water: turn off faucets tightly or report leaks. Conserving soil: plant grass along bare ground to hold soil in place.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

At Oak Pond, people leave plastic bottles near the water, which can harm ducks' habitat. A flood can wash soil from the bank into the pond. Students can pick up litter and put it in bins. They can plant grass on the bank and turn off a running faucet.

Accept equivalent passage-based descriptions of human effects, natural-event effects, and conservation actions. For the open response, check for four sentences that include all required parts and scientifically reasonable effects or protections.