

Building like a Beaver

Assessment Letter

Goal: I can demonstrate my understanding of the impact of beavers on an ecosystem

Role: You are the beaver expert in your watershed

Audience: Local landowners or beavers (your choice, see below)

Situation: There is an unhealthy section of your watershed in great need of the benefits beavers can provide. It is your job to convince everyone that beavers can improve the health and functioning of the river. You have two options: you may convince landowners to allow beavers (or BDAs) on their property, OR convince the beavers to move in.

Product: A written argument in the form of a letter.

Standards for Success: Your letter will introduce claims on the benefits of beavers and support these claims with clear reasons and evidence from the reading handout, infographic and video, your experience with BDAs, and class discussions. See rubric.

Example Sentence Starters:

You may use these sentence starters if you find them helpful. Please provide additional detailed sentences to support your statements.

Dear [Landowner OR Beaver Family],

Please allow me to introduce myself. I am....a local beaver expert. I am writing to convince you...

Based on my reading/research, I know that beavers...

As demonstrated with my BDA, beaver structures...

In conclusion...

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
[your name]

Rubric

Criteria	1-2	3-4	5-6
Introduce claim and organize the reasons and evidence clearly CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.6.1.A	My letter is disorganized	My letter is mostly organized with my claim and reasons	My letter is clearly organized with my claim and reasons
Support claim with clear reasons and evidence, demonstrating an understanding of the topic CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.6.1.B	I do not support my claim with reasons OR my reasons do not connect to my claim	I support my claim with basic reasons	I support my claim with relevant and detailed reasons
Provide a concluding statement that follows from the argument presented CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.6.1.E	I do not provided a concluding statement at the end of my letter OR my conclusion is unclear	I provide a simple concluding statement which somewhat links to my claim and reasoning	I provide a thoughtful concluding statement which clearly links to my claim and reasoning
Demonstrate how presence/absence of beavers affects other populations in the ecosystem MS-LS-2-4. Demonstrate how changes to physical and biological components of an ecosystem affect populations	I do not accurately explain how beavers affect other populations in the ecosystem	I explain mostly accurately how beavers affect other populations in the ecosystem	I describe accurately and in detail how beavers affect other populations in the ecosystem
Use relevant sources of information	I include 1 of the following sources (check all that apply) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Reading handout <input type="checkbox"/> Infographic and video <input type="checkbox"/> My BDA 	I include 2 of the following sources (check all that apply) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Reading handout <input type="checkbox"/> Infographic and video <input type="checkbox"/> My BDA 	I include all of the following sources (check all that apply) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Reading handout <input type="checkbox"/> Infographic and video <input type="checkbox"/> My BDA