

Name: _____

Date: _____

Let's Practice TEXT STRUCTURES

CAUSE AND EFFECT

WHEN WOLVES DISAPPEARED FROM YELLOWSTONE

Nearly a century ago, the grey wolf was hunted to near extinction throughout most of the United States. This included Yellowstone National Park. Many people were happy to be rid of the wild carnivore. They viewed wolves as scary predators that killed ranchers' livestock, like cattle and sheep. They believed things would be better without wolves around. Few anticipated the impact the wolf's disappearance would have on Yellowstone's ecosystem.

The elimination of wolves had a cascading effect in Yellowstone National Park. A cascading effect means that one change caused something else to change, which in turn, led to another change, etc. In Yellowstone, the chain reaction started with the elk. Wolves had been predators of elk. By preying on elk, wolves helped regulate the size of the herd. Therefore, without the wolves, the elk population grew. The increased number of elk ate a greater amount of vegetation. The elk's over-browsing young trees and shrubs affected not only the plant life but other animals, as well.

Young willow saplings were gobbled up before they could develop into sturdy trees. Consequently, beavers had less full-grown willow trees to eat and build their dams out of. As a result, the beaver population declined dramatically. Songbirds had fewer tall trees to build their nests in. The elk also ate the berries that grizzly bears relied on as a food source. Due to this lack of resources, the population of songbirds and grizzly bears decreased, as well.



Ravens and eagles also suffered the consequence of the wolves' elimination. The reason ravens and eagles were impacted is that they fed on the carcasses of the elk that the wolves had killed. Wolves were no longer hunting elk, so that food source was scarce.

People realized that wolves played a vital role in maintaining Yellowstone's ecosystem. Between 1995 – 1996, wildlife officials relocated 31 wolves from Canada to Yellowstone National Park. Since their reintroduction, wolves have contributed to restoring balance to the Yellowstone ecosystem.

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TEXT STRUCTURE → Cause & Effect

DIRECTIONS: Read the passage "When Wolves Disappeared From Yellowstone" and complete the chart below.

CAUSE
The grey wolf was hunted to near extinction and disappeared from Yellowstone Park.



EFFECT

CAUSE
Young willow saplings were gobbled up before they could develop into sturdy trees.



EFFECT

CAUSE



EFFECT
Ravens and eagles lost their food source.

List key words and phrases from the passage that show the text structure is cause and effect.

What was the author's main purpose for writing this passage?
