

# Reading Comprehension Worksheet: Structure

Read the short story and answer each question.



## How Forest Fires Start and Spread

Forest fires, also called wildfires, can be powerful and dangerous. They can destroy trees, homes, and wildlife habitats—but they also help forests grow back healthier. To understand how forest fires affect nature, it's important to learn how they start and spread.

Some forest fires start naturally. One of the most common causes is **lightning**. When lightning strikes a dry tree, it can spark flames. If the weather is hot and dry, the fire spreads quickly. **As a result**, nearby trees and plants may catch fire too.

Other fires are started by people. Campfires, fireworks, and even a cigarette left on the ground can cause flames. That's why parks and forests often have fire safety rules. When people don't follow them, the risk of fire grows.

Once a fire begins, it follows a pattern. **First**, the flames burn the driest parts of the forest, like grass and leaves. **Then**, the fire spreads to bushes and low tree branches. **Next**, the heat rises and can catch tall trees on fire. **Finally**, firefighters use tools, water, and firebreaks (gaps with no plants) to stop the flames from moving forward.

Although fires can cause damage, they also clear out dead plants and return nutrients to the soil. New plants often grow stronger after a fire. That's one reason forest fires, though dangerous, are part of the natural life cycle of forests.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## How Forest Fires Start and Spread

1. What is one cause of forest fires mentioned in the text?

- A. Lightning striking dry trees
- B. Too much rain falling in a forest
- C. Trees growing too close together
- D. Cold air reaching the ground

2. What does the author explain in a sequence?

- A. The way a fire moves through the forest
- B. The names of forests in the U.S.
- C. How to build a campfire safely
- D. Where to plant new trees

3. Fill in the blank:

If a fire burns dry grass, **then** it may spread to nearby \_\_\_\_\_ and branches.

4. What are two different causes of forest fires described in the passage?

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5. How does the author help readers understand the order of how fires spread?

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# Parent and Teacher Guide

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**Guide Reading Level:** O

**Lexile Level:** 590L-740L

**Grade Level:** 3rd Grade, Middle of the Year

**Genre:** Informational / Environmental Science

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## Introducing the Text

"Today we're reading about how forest fires start and spread. As we read, we'll focus on cause-and-effect relationships and how the author uses sequence to show the steps in the fire's path. These clues help us understand both how fires begin and how they move."

**Vocabulary:** wildfire, lightning, firebreak, flames, spread

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## Before Reading Discussion Questions

1. What do you know about forest fires?
  2. Have you seen any news stories or photos about wildfires?
  3. What might cause a fire to start or grow?
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## During Reading Discussion Questions

1. What are two different causes of forest fires?
  2. What steps are described in the way a fire spreads?
  3. What signal words show cause and sequence?
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## After Reading Discussion Questions

1. How does the author connect events using cause and effect?
  2. Why is it helpful to explain the steps of how a fire moves?
  3. What might happen if firefighters didn't make firebreaks?
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## Activity Idea

Have students create a "Fire Spread Sequence Strip" using four labeled boxes: 1) fire starts in dry grass, 2) moves to bushes, 3) climbs to trees, 4) firefighters create firebreaks. In each box, they write one cause-and-effect sentence and illustrate the step.

