Rooted in Resilience

Presqu'ile's Nursery & Tree Planting Program

Preserving our canopy, one seed at a time.

Reading Passage

Presqu'ile Provincial Park has a tree nursery program to help restore sections of its forest that have been damaged by storms, invasive species, and changing climate conditions. Over the past 3 decades, the park has seen a noticeable decline in the number of young trees able to survive on the forest floor. Many seedlings are eaten by wildlife, out-competed by fast-growing invasive plants, or unable to take root in soil that has been disturbed by flooding. Park staff realized that without human support, the forest would struggle to replace itself.

To address this problem, staff began collecting seeds from healthy native trees such as oak, maple, and pine. These seeds are carefully sorted and planted in a protected outdoor nursery area. In this controlled environment, the seeds have a much higher chance of germinating and growing into strong saplings. Once the young trees reach a certain height, they are planted in the forest.

The program has also become a community effort. Volunteers, including local students, help care and plant the trees. Park staff say that involving the community not only helps with the workload but also encourages people to care more deeply about the natural spaces around them.

According to the park's restoration team, the nursery allows them to grow thousands of saplings each year—far more than would survive naturally. These saplings are planted in areas where the forest has thinned or where certain species have nearly disappeared. Staff hope that, over time, the project will increase biodiversity and create a healthier, more resilient forest. They believe that by taking action now, they can help ensure that future generations will be able to enjoy the shade, wildlife, and beauty that a thriving forest provides.

Multiple-Choice Questions

1. What is the main idea of this passage?

A. Volunteers are learning how to plant trees in their community
B. A park is using a nursery program to restore damaged forest areas
C. Climate change has permanently destroyed parts of the forest
D. Volunteers are replacing invasive species with new plants

2. Why do park staff collect seeds from native trees?

A. Native trees grow faster than non-native trees
B. Native trees are more likely to survive in the park's environment
C. Non-native trees are illegal to plant in Ontario
D. Native trees are easier for volunteers to measure

3. What evidence from the text shows that the program is effective?

A. Volunteers enjoy helping with the project
B. The nursery can grow thousands of saplings each year
C. The forest floor is too dark for seeds to grow
D. Storms have damaged parts of the forest

4. What is the meaning of the word "resilient" as used in the passage?

A. Able to grow quickly
B. Able to resist damage and recover
C. Easy to measure and track
D. Difficult to plant

5. Which sentence best shows the long-term goal of the program?

A. "Volunteers help water, measure, and track the growth of the young trees."
B. "Park staff collect seeds from healthy native trees."
C. "They hope the project will create a healthier forest for future generations."
D. "The nursery allows them to grow thousands of saplings each year."

Open-Response Questions

6. Explain one reason why volunteers are important to the success of the nursery program. Use information from the text to support your answer.

7. What is one benefit of using a tree nursery instead of relying on natural growth in the forest?

8. Based on the information in the passage, explain why biodiversity is important for a forest ecosystem.

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Answer Key

1. What is the main idea of this passage?

Correct answer: B — A park is using a nursery program to restore damaged forest areas

2. Why do park staff collect seeds from native trees?

Correct answer: B — Native trees are more likely to survive in the park's environment

3. What evidence from the text shows that the program is effective?

Correct answer: B — The nursery can grow thousands of saplings each year

4. What is the meaning of the word "resilient" as used in the passage?

Correct answer: B — Able to resist damage and recover

5. Which sentence best shows the long-term goal of the program?

Correct answer: C — "They hope the project will create a healthier forest for future generations."

6. Explain one reason why volunteers are important to the success of the nursery program. Use information from the text to support your answer.

Sample correct answer:

Volunteers help care for and plant the young trees, which reduces the workload for park staff. Their involvement also helps build community support for protecting natural spaces.

7. What is one benefit of using a tree nursery instead of relying on natural growth in the forest?

Sample correct answer:

A nursery gives seeds a protected environment where they are more likely to germinate and grow into strong saplings, increasing the number of trees that survive.

8. Based on the information in the passage, explain why biodiversity is important for a forest ecosystem.

Sample correct answer:

Biodiversity helps create a healthier and more resilient forest. Having many different species makes the ecosystem stronger and better able to recover from threats like storms or invasive species.