Portion of the Text

But in 1988 the rains of summer did not come. The Shoshone and other fires blazed and spread. By mid-July, 8,600 acres had burned. Park officials decided that all fires should be put out, no matter whether they were wildfires or caused by human carelessness.

Firefighters arrived by the hundreds to attack fires from the ground. Helicopters and airplanes attacked from above. But new fires started in the park. In 1988 Yellowstone had more than 50 lightning strikes, twice the normal number. Fires in neighboring national forests swept into the park. Old fires burned on. And still the rains did not come.

Cold fronts passed through, bringing winds of hurricane force with gusts of 60 to 80 miles an hour. Winds whipped and spread the fires and fed them oxygen, which fires must have to keep burning. Big fires met, merged, and became even bigger fires. In forests flames galloped through the tops, or crowns, of trees, through the canopy. Snags—dead trees that are still standing—burned like Roman candles. Boulders exploded in the heat. Sheets of flame leaped forward. Gigantic clouds of smoke ringed the horizon, looking like thunderheads, only bigger. There were days when the sun was no brighter than a full moon.

Fires jumped rivers, roads, canyons, parking lots. Glowing embers, some the size of a man's fist, shot a mile or more ahead, starting new fires. Flames were roaring through the park at a rate of four or five miles a day. One fire, 14 miles in only four hours. On August 22, a day known as Black Saturday, more than 150,000 acres burned inside the park and neighboring forests. The 2,000 fire fighters could no more put out these fires than could have stopped a hurricane. But what

Text-Dependent Questions

Find examples in the text!

1. The fires in Yellowstone Park in 1988 were described as very devastating. Firefighters could stop or control the fires. Locate and explain details that would support this claim.

2. Very damaging
Close Read Questions  "Summer of Fire"  by Patricia Lauber

1. Reread page 116. Use evidence from the text to describe the setting. Why does the author start with this description?

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2. On page 117, the author says, "Many people thought you couldn't set fire to the forest if you tried". Use evidence from the text to explain what this means.

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3. What details on page 118 does the author include to show us how devastating and harmful this fire was?

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4. Personification means giving human characteristics to something nonhuman. What are some examples of personification on page 118? What are the effects of personifying fire?

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5. As the fire approached Old Faithful, it was especially horrifying. How does the author convey that horror to the reader? (page 119)

6. As appeared to be, there was hope for the forests and for Yellowstone. Use evidence from the text to explain why there was hope.