Read the passage. Use the ask and answer questions strategy to check your understanding of new information or difficult facts.

### Building a Green Town

On May 4, 2007, a tornado demolished the town of Greensburg, Kansas. Nearly all the townspeople survived, but 95 percent of the town’s buildings were destroyed. With their town gone, the residents of Greensburg might have given up and moved away. Instead, they chose to stay and rebuild.

Within days of the storm, the people of Greensburg chose not only to rebuild their town but to remake it. They resolved to reinvent their town so that it lived up to its name. They would make Greensburg a green town.

### What Does It Mean to Be Green?

Being green means being environmentally friendly. A person can be green by recycling or composting. A person can use energy-saving lightbulbs or public transportation. For a town, being green is more complicated. It means using efficient and renewable power sources. It means constructing buildings without harming the environment. It means making sure the buildings use energy efficiently. It means gathering and recycling everything from newspapers to rain water. It means making the town walkable to reduce the use of cars and buses.

Greensburg residents knew what they wanted to do, but they did not know how to do it. So they built a team. They brought in experts to guide and teach them. Together, the residents and the experts set goals for the new Greensburg and made a plan to reach those goals. They found private companies and government agencies to help them pay for the reconstruction. The greening of Greensburg began.
The Greening of Greensburg

The first step in rebuilding the town was to clean up the wreckage from the storm. Reducing waste is an important part of being green. The townspeople did not want simply to throw away the broken pieces of their old town. They saved and reused as much as they could. Fallen trees were used to make furniture. Bricks were collected and used to build city hall. Cabinets, farm tools, and metal were also reused.

Next, the residents of Greensburg made a remarkable commitment: to use “100 percent renewable energy, 100 percent of the time.” This meant generating enough power for the whole town using natural resources such as the sun and wind year-round. To accomplish this, homes and public buildings were given geothermal heat pumps and solar panels. Geothermal pumps use heat from inside the earth. Solar panels turn sunlight into electricity or heat. The town partnered with an energy company to build a wind farm a few miles outside of town. Today, the wind farm provides more energy than the town uses. The “extra” energy is shared with other towns in Kansas.

In addition to using renewable energy, the town of Greensburg vowed to consume less energy overall. The new city buildings use 42 percent less energy than they had before the tornado. Greensburg’s new homes use 40 percent less energy. The new streetlights use special lamps that are 40 percent more efficient than the old ones.

The efforts of Greensburg’s residents worked. Their town is now a model sustainable community. It offers tours and information for people who want their towns to be more environmentally friendly. Greensburg is, as its citizens claim, “stronger, better, greener.”
A. Reread the passage and answer the questions.

1. What are two key details in the first paragraph?

   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________

2. How are these details connected to the rest of the text?

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   ______________________________________________________
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3. What is the main idea of the third paragraph?

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B. Work with a partner. Read the passage aloud. Pay attention to rate. Stop after one minute. Fill out the chart.

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