Land Shapes Livelihoods

Read how the land and climate influenced work in the colonial regions.

SS24.6.4a "Explain how climate and geography shaped the economic identities of the colonial regions."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB In each paragraph, underline two details about climate or geography and circle an economic activity each detail helped shape. Write the same number beside each linked detail and activity to show the connection.

Three Regions, Different Work

1 On a New England shore, a family might see fishing boats return while neighbors split logs for a shipyard. Much of the region had thin, rocky soil and a short growing season, so growing large amounts of grain was difficult. Forests supplied timber for houses and ships. Deep coastal harbors made it easier to launch boats and trade goods. Some families kept small farms, but fishing, shipbuilding, and ocean trade helped give New England an economy tied closely to the sea.

2 Farther south, a Middle Colonies farmer might load sacks of wheat onto a riverboat. The region had more fertile soil and a longer growing season than New England, which helped farmers raise wheat and other grains. Wide rivers carried crops from inland farms to busy ports. Merchants there sold grain to other colonies and places across the Atlantic. With land that favored farming and waterways that helped move harvests, the Middle Colonies became known for both grain production and trade.

3 In the Southern Colonies, long, warm growing seasons and broad areas of fertile land supported large farms. In places such as Virginia, planters raised tobacco. Along parts of the warmer, wetter coast, rice grew well in low fields. Rivers allowed growers to move crops toward ports for sale. Some planters made great profits, but their wealth depended heavily on the forced labor of enslaved Africans. The region's climate and land helped build an economy focused on growing crops for sale, although many southern families also farmed on a smaller scale.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did New England's forests and harbors help shape two kinds of work there?

2. Why did the Middle Colonies become known for both grain production and trade?

3. How did conditions along parts of the Southern coast support a crop grown for sale?

4. Why were large grain farms more practical in the Middle Colonies than in New England?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine a new colony with a long, warm growing season, flat, fertile land, a river boats can travel, and no sea harbor. Write four sentences explaining two likely ways people could earn money, how the setting supports each, and one activity the lack of a sea harbor would make harder.

ANSWER KEY

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GRADE 6 · SS24.6.4a

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

In each paragraph, underline two details about climate or geography and circle an economic activity each detail helped shape. Write the same number beside each linked detail and activity to show the connection. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did New England's forests and harbors help shape two kinds of work there?	**Forests supplied timber for shipbuilding, while deep harbors made it easier to launch boats and trade goods.**
2	Why did the Middle Colonies become known for both grain production and trade?	**Fertile soil and a longer growing season helped farmers raise grain, while wide rivers carried harvests to ports for trade.**
3	How did conditions along parts of the Southern coast support a crop grown for sale?	**The warmer, wetter coast had low fields where rice grew well, and growers could move crops toward ports by river.**
4	Why were large grain farms more practical in the Middle Colonies than in New England?	**The Middle Colonies had more fertile soil and a longer growing season. New England's rocky soil and short growing season made raising large amounts of grain difficult.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Farmers could grow crops for sale because the flat, fertile land and long growing season would support large fields. Other people could earn money carrying those crops to markets by riverboat. The river would let them move harvests without a sea harbor. Ocean fishing would be harder without a harbor for fishing boats.

Accept other activities when students connect each one to a stated feature of the imagined colony. For the marking job, accept any two accurate climate-or-geography and economic-activity links in each paragraph.