Alabama Land Clues

Sort clues about two of Alabama's major geographic regions.

SS24.AS.1 "Identify the location of Alabama's major geographic regions and describe the characteristics that distinguish them from each other. 1a Summarize how the geography and biodiversity of Alabama formed and evolved during the Paleozoic..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

APPALACHIAN HIGHLANDS

The Appalachian Highlands lie mainly in northern and northeastern Alabama. Ancient rocks, rocky uplands, and ridges reflect a history that includes Paleozoic mountain building.

Rocky slopes rise above the Tennessee River near Scottsboro.

COASTAL PLAIN

The Coastal Plain covers much of southern Alabama. Sediments deposited during Mesozoic and Cenozoic time underlie its generally lower land, which includes many kinds of habitats.

The Wiregrass area lies in southeastern Alabama.

1 SORT

8 items

Circle HIGHLANDS or PLAIN for each clue, then choose two items and explain how you knew where they belong.

1.	Parallel ridges and valleys near Gadsden	HIGHLANDS PLAIN
2.	Fertile, chalk-derived soils of the Black Belt	HIGHLANDS PLAIN
3.	Sandy pine woodlands near Mobile	HIGHLANDS PLAIN
4.	Level-topped uplands of the Cumberland Plateau	HIGHLANDS PLAIN
5.	Ancient metamorphic rocks near Wedowee	HIGHLANDS PLAIN
6.	Coal-bearing rocks near Birmingham	HIGHLANDS PLAIN
7.	Bays along the Gulf Coast that collect new sand and mud	HIGHLANDS PLAIN
8.	Folded rocks of the Talladega Mountains	HIGHLANDS PLAIN

2 PROVE IT

Explain your thinking

Pick two items from Part 1. For each one, tell how you knew where it belonged.

ITEM # _____ **HOW I KNEW** _____

ITEM # _____ **HOW I KNEW** _____

3 MAKE YOUR OWN

One of each

Write one new Alabama location or landform for each category, and give one clue that supports each choice.

HIGHLANDS _____

PLAIN _____

CHALLENGE

In two sentences, explain how the regions' different geologic histories helped create different habitats.

ANSWER KEY

Alabama Land Clues

HIGH SCHOOL · SS24.AS.1

PART 1 · SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	Parallel ridges and valleys near Gadsden	**HIGHLANDS**	Gadsden lies in the Appalachian Valley and Ridge region.
2	Fertile, chalk-derived soils of the Black Belt	**PLAIN**	The Black Belt is part of Alabama's Coastal Plain.
3	Sandy pine woodlands near Mobile	**PLAIN**	Mobile lies in the southern Coastal Plain.
4	Level-topped uplands of the Cumberland Plateau	**HIGHLANDS**	The Cumberland Plateau is part of the Appalachian Highlands.
5	Ancient metamorphic rocks near Wedowee	**HIGHLANDS**	Wedowee lies in the Piedmont, an Appalachian Highlands province.
6	Coal-bearing rocks near Birmingham	**HIGHLANDS**	Coal-bearing Paleozoic rocks occur in the Appalachian Highlands near Birmingham.
7	Bays along the Gulf Coast that collect new sand and mud	**PLAIN**	The Gulf Coast is the southern edge of Alabama's Coastal Plain.
8	Folded rocks of the Talladega Mountains	**HIGHLANDS**	The Talladega Mountains are part of the Appalachian Highlands.

PART 2 · PROVE IT

Accept any explanation that names the deciding feature from the rule box for the chosen item.

PART 3 · MAKE YOUR OWN (SAMPLE ANSWERS)

- **HIGHLANDS**: Bankhead National Forest has rocky uplands in northwestern Alabama.
- **PLAIN**: Conecuh National Forest has longleaf pine habitat in southern Alabama.

Challenge: Paleozoic mountain building helped shape the Appalachian Highlands, where rocky streams provide habitat for freshwater species. Mesozoic and Cenozoic sediments underlie much of the Coastal Plain, where sandy ground and wetlands support different plant and animal communities.

For Part 2, a student might use item 4's uplands as evidence for HIGHLANDS and item 7's Gulf Coast location as evidence for PLAIN. Accept other accurate clues that connect a location, landform, rock, or habitat to its region.