A River Divided

Build an agreement that weighs needs on both sides of a border.

SS24.CWI.12a "Construct a possible solution to a global issue or conflict."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each country's needs, circle possible tools for an agreement, and number two trade-offs so you can build a solution that addresses more than one concern.

Who Gets the River Water?

1. Imagine two neighboring countries, Alder and Bay, sharing the Vale River. Alder's dam stores water upstream and produces electricity when water passes through turbines. Bay uses the river for drinking water, farms, and a fishery near its coast. During a long drought, Alder wants to hold more water in its reservoir so it can keep generating power later. Bay asks for steadier releases now because low flows threaten its water treatment plant and fish habitat. Neither country controls the drought, but each controls decisions that affect people across the border.

2. Each choice has costs. A large release from the reservoir could help Bay's treatment plant, but Alder might have less stored water for dry months ahead. A small release could protect Alder's reserve while allowing salt water to push farther into Bay's river mouth, damaging freshwater habitat. Bay's farmers could switch some fields to drip irrigation, which delivers water near plant roots, but equipment costs money. Alder's power company could shift some electricity production to less dry periods, yet that requires planning for peak demand. These trade-offs make a single demand unlikely to settle the conflict.

3. Before bargaining, both countries could measure reservoir levels, rainfall, river flow at the border, and salt levels near the coast. Independent scientists could check the measurements so neither government has to accept the other's word alone. Negotiators could set different rules for ordinary months and severe drought, state which water uses receive priority, and name a way to settle disagreements. They would also need to decide who pays for changes, such as irrigation equipment or backup electricity. A workable agreement would say what happens if measurements show that the plan is failing, rather than treating the first deal as permanent.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Propose a short-term dam release rule that addresses Bay's drinking-water risk without ignoring Alder's need for stored water. Which two details support your rule?

2. Design one change that could reduce Bay's water demand during drought without placing the full cost on farmers. Use a trade-off from the passage.

3. Propose a way both governments could check whether a dam release rule is working. Name two measurements and who should check them.

4. If the countries disagree about a low-flow reading, propose a step that could keep their agreement in place. Ground your answer in the passage.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Two neighboring coastal countries find plastic packaging washing onto both shores after storms. Write one paragraph proposing a joint solution. Include two specific actions, who will carry them out or pay for them, how to check progress, and one trade-off your plan addresses.

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PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline each country's needs, circle possible tools for an agreement, and number two trade-offs so you can build a solution that addresses more than one concern. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Propose a short-term dam release rule that addresses Bay's drinking-water risk without ignoring Alder's need for stored water. Which two details support your rule?	**Set a steady minimum release for Bay's treatment plant, with larger releases only when reservoir levels allow. Bay needs reliable flow, while Alder needs water stored for later power generation.**
2	Design one change that could reduce Bay's water demand during drought without placing the full cost on farmers. Use a trade-off from the passage.	**Bay could help farmers pay for drip irrigation. It delivers water near plant roots, but the equipment costs money.**
3	Propose a way both governments could check whether a dam release rule is working. Name two measurements and who should check them.	**Measure river flow at the border and salt levels near Bay's coast, and have independent scientists check the results.**
4	If the countries disagree about a low-flow reading, propose a step that could keep their agreement in place. Ground your answer in the passage.	**Have independent scientists check the reading, then use an agreed process to settle the disagreement before changing the release rule.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The countries could require ports to collect loose packaging before storms and place covered bins near busy markets. Local governments would run the bins, while shipping companies would help pay for port collection. Teams from both countries could count plastic items in the same shoreline sections each month and publish the totals. This plan would cost businesses money, so the countries could phase in fees over two years. If the counts do not fall, officials could add collection days where the most waste appears.

Accept other workable proposals supported by passage details. For the open task, look for two concrete joint actions, assigned responsibility, a way to measure progress, and a realistic trade-off.