Culture in the Heat

How people and places shape one another

SS24.HG.12 "Explain how interaction between people and the environment affects culture in today's society."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two ways heat changes how people gather, circle two ways people change their surroundings, and number one example of each as a cause-and-effect pair.

A Hot Day in Phoenix

1 On a July afternoon in Phoenix, Arizona, heat shapes where people meet. Summer temperatures often exceed 100°F, and pavement and buildings store warmth after sunset. At an apartment complex, neighbors might shift a potluck from a sunny courtyard to a shaded room and serve cold dishes instead of grilling outside. Some families plan walks or pickup basketball for early morning. These choices are cultural, not just personal: shared schedules, gathering places, and food traditions change as people respond to their surroundings. Yet the city itself affects the heat. Dark pavement and sparse tree cover can make some blocks hotter than others.

2 Residents also reshape the places where they live. In some Phoenix neighborhoods, people plant drought-tolerant trees along sidewalks and build shade over bus stops. Shade makes an afternoon conversation or a wait for a ride more comfortable, so public spaces can become gathering places again. But trees need water and care, especially while they are young. Because the region is dry, some community groups choose native plants and collect rainwater for gardens. Decisions about shade and water show that adapting to heat can create new habits of working together and weighing limited resources.

3 Access to cooling is not equal. A family with reliable air conditioning can host an indoor gathering, while a neighbor facing high electricity costs may depend on a library or cooling center during dangerous heat. When a neighborhood has few shaded sidewalks, its residents may have fewer comfortable places to meet outdoors, even at the same hour as people elsewhere in the city. Community organizers sometimes respond by sharing information about cooling sites and asking the city for more shade. Heat, city design, household resources, and collective choices all influence which customs people can keep and which ones they change.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How might Phoenix heat change two parts of a neighborhood potluck?

2. How can city design make the heat affect gathering places differently from one block to another?

3. How could planting trees change social life, and what environmental limit must residents consider?

4. How can household resources affect where people gather during dangerous heat, and how might organizers respond?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine a neighborhood where heavy rain regularly floods a street beside a market. In 4 to 5 sentences, explain how flooding might change a shared custom, describe one change people could make to the street or market, and explain how that change might shape the custom later.

ANSWER KEY

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HIGH SCHOOL · SS24.HG.12

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two ways heat changes how people gather, circle two ways people change their surroundings, and number one example of each as a cause-and-effect pair. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How might Phoenix heat change two parts of a neighborhood potluck?	**Neighbors might move the potluck from a sunny courtyard to a shaded room and serve cold dishes instead of grilling outside.**
2	How can city design make the heat affect gathering places differently from one block to another?	**Dark pavement and sparse tree cover can make some blocks hotter, leaving residents with fewer comfortable places to gather outdoors.**
3	How could planting trees change social life, and what environmental limit must residents consider?	**Tree shade can make sidewalks and public spaces more comfortable for meeting, but the trees need water and care in a dry region.**
4	How can household resources affect where people gather during dangerous heat, and how might organizers respond?	**People with reliable air conditioning can gather indoors, while those facing high electricity costs may rely on libraries or cooling centers. Organizers may share information about cooling sites and ask the city for more shade.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

When heavy rain floods the street beside a neighborhood market, families may stop holding their weekly outdoor food fair there during the wet season. Vendors and residents could work with the city to add raised walkways that help people reach the market. Easier access might let the fair return on rainy weekends and make visiting local stalls a regular habit again. During severe floods, the community might still need to move the fair indoors.

Accept other passage-supported cause-and-effect explanations. For Your Turn, look for a plausible change to a shared custom, a physical response to flooding, and an explanation of how that response could affect the custom.