

Desert Choices

Trace how a dry landscape shapes settlement and human choices.

SS.5.G.3 "Environment and Society"

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline details that show how the environment affected where people settled. Circle details that show how people adapted to or changed the environment.

Living in the Salt River Valley

- ① The Salt River Valley in central Arizona is hot and dry for much of the year. The Salt River and its nearby streams made farming possible in part of this desert. More than 1,000 years ago, Hohokam people built canals to carry river water to fields. Their communities grew near water and fertile soil rather than far across the dry desert.
- ② Today, Phoenix and nearby cities use dams, reservoirs, wells, canals, and pipes to store and move water. These changes help supply homes, farms, and businesses in a dry region. Roads and air-conditioned buildings also help people live with heat. However, the water supply is limited. Long droughts and heavy water use can lower reservoir levels and make planning harder.
- ③ People's choices continue to change the valley. Paved streets, parking lots, and roofs keep rain from soaking into the ground as easily. During storms, fast runoff can cause flooding, so cities build drainage channels and basins. Saving water, planting desert-adapted plants, and protecting river habitats can reduce some problems while allowing communities to meet human needs.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 Which two features of the Salt River Valley helped the Hohokam choose places to settle?

2 How did Hohokam canals change what people could do in the dry desert?

3 Which action in the passage helps people adapt to heat, and which action changes how water is stored or moved?

4 What can happen during storms when paved surfaces keep rain from soaking into the ground?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Choose a community in a snowy, rainy, coastal, mountain, grassland, or desert environment. Write 4 or 5 sentences explaining one environmental feature that could influence settlement, one way people could adapt, one way they could modify the environment, and one possible benefit or problem.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline details that show how the environment affected where people settled. Circle details that show how people adapted to or changed the environment. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Which two features of the Salt River Valley helped the Hohokam choose places to settle?	The Salt River and nearby streams provided water, and fertile soil supported farming.
2	How did Hohokam canals change what people could do in the dry desert?	The canals carried river water to fields, making farming possible in the dry desert.
3	Which action in the passage helps people adapt to heat, and which action changes how water is stored or moved?	Air-conditioned buildings help people adapt to heat. Dams, reservoirs, canals, and pipes change how water is stored or moved.
4	What can happen during storms when paved surfaces keep rain from soaking into the ground?	Rain can run off quickly and cause flooding.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

A town may grow in a mountain valley where a river provides water and a flatter place for homes. People can adapt to snowy winters by using insulated houses and snowplows. They may modify the environment by building a road through a mountain pass. The road can connect the town to supplies, but it can also disturb wildlife habitat.

Accept equivalent passage-based details for adaptations and environmental modifications. For the open response, accept a reasonable environment, settlement influence, adaptation, modification, and benefit or problem.