

A Place Takes Shape

Identify how land, people, and traditions characterize a place.

SS.7.G.2 "Understand physical and cultural characteristics of places."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline physical characteristics and circle cultural characteristics in the passage. Number one detail that shows how a physical characteristic affects how people live.

El Paso: Land and Life

- ① El Paso, Texas, sits in the Chihuahuan Desert along the Rio Grande, across from Ciudad Juárez, Mexico. The Franklin Mountains rise through the city, creating steep slopes and rocky land. Rainfall is low, summers are hot, and the river provides an important water source. These physical characteristics affect where people build roads, homes, parks, and businesses. They also make shade, water conservation, and protection from flash floods important parts of daily planning throughout the year.
- ② El Paso's cultural characteristics grew from connections among Indigenous peoples, Mexico, and the United States. Many residents speak English and Spanish, and bilingual signs appear in stores and public offices. Families may gather for quinceañeras, Día de los Muertos observances, school sports, and neighborhood events. Restaurants serve foods such as tamales, tacos, and Texas barbecue. Murals, music, religious communities, and local traditions show how people have shaped the city's identity over many generations in this border region.
- ③ Physical and cultural characteristics work together in El Paso. The desert climate encourages people to plan outdoor events for cooler times of day and to value water-saving landscapes. Its location at an international border supports trade, travel, and family connections with Ciudad Juárez. At the same time, the mountains and river give residents shared places for recreation and stories. A visitor who studies both the land and the people can better understand why El Paso looks, sounds, and functions as it does.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

- 1** Name two physical characteristics of El Paso. Then explain one way that one of them affects life in the city.

- 2** Identify two cultural characteristics from the passage. What do these details show about El Paso's identity?

- 3** How does El Paso's desert climate influence activities and landscaping? Use two details from the passage.

- 4** How does El Paso's location at an international border affect the city? Give two effects from the passage.

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Choose a place you know well, such as your community, a neighborhood, or a nearby park. Write four sentences that describe two physical characteristics, two cultural characteristics, and one way the physical characteristics affect how people use the place.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline physical characteristics and circle cultural characteristics in the passage. Number one detail that shows how a physical characteristic affects how people live. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Name two physical characteristics of El Paso. Then explain one way that one of them affects life in the city.	Answers may include the Chihuahuan Desert, Rio Grande, Franklin Mountains, low rainfall, hot summers, steep slopes, or rocky land. One effect is that people plan for shade, conserve water, protect against flash floods, or build around steep and rocky land.
2	Identify two cultural characteristics from the passage. What do these details show about El Paso's identity?	Answers may include English and Spanish, bilingual signs, quinceañeras, Día de los Muertos observances, foods, murals, music, religious communities, or local traditions. They show connections among Indigenous peoples, Mexico, and the United States.
3	How does El Paso's desert climate influence activities and landscaping? Use two details from the passage.	People plan outdoor events for cooler times of day and value water-saving landscapes.
4	How does El Paso's location at an international border affect the city? Give two effects from the passage.	Its border location supports trade, travel, and family connections with Ciudad Juárez.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

In my community, Cedar Ridge, a wooded hill rises near a small creek. The hill and creek are physical characteristics that affect where homes and trails are built. Our community holds a fall harvest festival at the park, and families visit a weekend farmers market. These cultural activities use the park near the creek, so the land helps shape community life.

Accept any accurate passage-based details for Parts 1 and 2. For Your Turn, accept a real or reasonable local example if the student clearly distinguishes physical characteristics from cultural characteristics and explains a connection between land and human activity.