

What Makes a Place?

Identify how land, water, climate, and culture shape a city.

SS.8.G.2 "Understand physical and cultural characteristics of places."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline details about land, water, or climate. Circle details about people's traditions or choices, then number one sentence that connects physical and cultural characteristics.

New Orleans: Land, Water, and Culture

- ① New Orleans, Louisiana, sits beside the Mississippi River near the Gulf of Mexico. Much of the city lies at or below sea level, and nearby wetlands once absorbed some floodwater. The flat, low land and humid subtropical climate shape daily life. Heavy rain and hurricanes can bring flooding. To reduce risk, engineers built levees, floodwalls, pumps, and drainage canals. These physical features and water-control systems make location important to everyone who lives in the city today.
- ② New Orleans has cultural characteristics that grew from many communities, including people of African, French, Spanish, Caribbean, and Native American heritage. Music is heard in jazz clubs, street parades, and second-line celebrations. Local food traditions include gumbo, jambalaya, and beignets. The city holds Mardi Gras each year, when krewes organize parades and many residents gather along parade routes. These traditions reflect shared history, creativity, languages, foods, and ways of celebrating together across the city in neighborhoods.
- ③ Physical and cultural characteristics often connect. The river and port helped New Orleans become a trading center, bringing goods and people from many places. Those contacts influenced the city's food, music, and languages. At the same time, its low elevation requires constant flood protection. After Hurricane Katrina caused severe flooding in 2005, residents, workers, and governments rebuilt homes, schools, and businesses while improving some protection systems. A place includes both its natural setting and the human choices people make there.

2

ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1

Name two physical characteristics of New Orleans described in the passage.

2

What are two cultural characteristics of New Orleans?

3

Why does New Orleans need levees, floodwalls, pumps, and drainage canals?

4

How did the Mississippi River and the port influence New Orleans culture?

3

YOUR TURN

Your own words

Choose a place you know. Complete both rows to show how one physical characteristic connects to one cultural characteristic of that place.

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTIC	CULTURAL CHARACTERISTIC	HOW THEY CONNECT

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline details about land, water, or climate. Circle details about people's traditions or choices, then number one sentence that connects physical and cultural characteristics. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Name two physical characteristics of New Orleans described in the passage.	Any two: location beside the Mississippi River, location near the Gulf of Mexico, low elevation, nearby wetlands, flat land, humid subtropical climate, heavy rain, or hurricanes.
2	What are two cultural characteristics of New Orleans?	Any two: jazz music, street parades, second-line celebrations, gumbo, jambalaya, beignets, Mardi Gras, or krewes organizing parades.
3	Why does New Orleans need levees, floodwalls, pumps, and drainage canals?	Much of the city is low or below sea level, and heavy rain and hurricanes can cause flooding.
4	How did the Mississippi River and the port influence New Orleans culture?	They helped make the city a trading center that brought goods and people from many places. These contacts influenced its food, music, and languages.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTIC	CULTURAL CHARACTERISTIC	HOW THEY CONNECT
Warm, sunny coastal climate	Beach tourism and oceanfront hotels	Warm weather and beaches draw visitors, so tourism businesses developed.
Location near Caribbean and Latin American trade routes	Cuban restaurants and Spanish-language businesses	Migration and trade brought people who shaped local food and language.

Accept accurate physical characteristics such as landforms, climate, water features, or location, and accurate cultural characteristics such as traditions, foods, languages, buildings, or human activities. Each table row should explain a reasonable connection between the two characteristics.