Water, Two Ways

How one resource led to conflict between a city and a valley

6-9.WH.2.7 "Explain how the resources of an area can be the source of conflict between competing groups."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline what each group needed the water for, then circle the actions or effects that led to conflict. Number the two groups in the passage so you can track how each was affected.

The Owens Valley Water Dispute

1 In the early 1900s, Los Angeles was growing fast. Its local water supply could not keep up with its homes and businesses. About 200 miles away, the Owens Valley had water from streams fed by snow in the Sierra Nevada. Farmers in the valley used stream water to grow crops and care for animals. Los Angeles officials saw the same water as a way to support their growing city. A resource that seemed plentiful in one place had become important to two groups with different plans.

2 Los Angeles bought land and water rights in the valley and built an aqueduct, a channel that carries water, to the city. Water began flowing through it in 1913. City residents gained a more dependable supply, but less water remained for some valley farms. As farming became harder in parts of the valley, many residents felt that the city's purchases had taken away their future. Some valley residents protested, and a few even damaged parts of the aqueduct in the 1920s.

3 The dispute was not simply about who owned a pipe. Snowmelt entered a limited network of streams, so sending more water toward Los Angeles meant that less could stay in the valley. City leaders wanted water for people and growth; valley farmers needed it for fields and animals. Money from land sales did not replace a steady water supply for everyone affected. The conflict shows how moving a resource can help one group while harming another, especially when the groups depend on it in different places.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Why did Los Angeles officials and Owens Valley farmers both want the valley's water?

2. How did the aqueduct help one group but create a problem for the other?

3. Why could sending more water to Los Angeles increase conflict, even if the city bought water rights?

4. Why did money from land sales not end the disagreement over water?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine an island with one sheltered bay. Fishers need it to dock boats, while a ferry company wants to build a terminal there. In four or five sentences, explain why the bay could cause conflict, describe one possible effect on each group, and propose a fair way to share it.

ANSWER KEY # Water, Two Ways

GRADES 6-9 · 6-9.WH.2.7

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline what each group needed the water for, then circle the actions or effects that led to conflict. Number the two groups in the passage so you can track how each was affected. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Why did Los Angeles officials and Owens Valley farmers both want the valley's water?	**Los Angeles officials wanted water for a growing city. Valley farmers needed it for crops and animals.**
2	How did the aqueduct help one group but create a problem for the other?	**It gave Los Angeles a more dependable water supply, but it left less water for some Owens Valley farms.**
3	Why could sending more water to Los Angeles increase conflict, even if the city bought water rights?	**The streams had limited water, so sending more to the city meant less could remain for valley farms.**
4	Why did money from land sales not end the disagreement over water?	**Money did not give everyone affected the steady water supply they needed, and farming became harder in parts of the valley.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The sheltered bay has limited docking space, so the two groups may disagree about who can use it. Fishers could lose safe places to dock if the ferry terminal takes up the best spots. The ferry company could have trouble bringing passengers ashore if fishing boats block its dock. The groups could set aside separate docking areas and agree on times when each has priority.

Accept answers that connect the limited resource to the groups' different needs and explain how one group's use affects the other. For the open task, accept other workable sharing plans that address both groups.