Reading Earth Maps

Use map clues to identify physical features and resources.

6.1a "Maps can be used to represent varied climate zones, landforms, bodies of water, and resources of the Eastern Hemisphere."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each sentence that tells what a map can show. Then circle examples of a climate zone, landform, body of water, and resource to connect map information to real places.

Four Kinds of Map Clues

1. Maps of the Eastern Hemisphere help readers compare places across Africa, Europe, Asia, and Australia. A climate map uses colors or patterns to show broad zones, such as tropical, dry, temperate, and polar. For example, much of central Africa lies in tropical zones near the Equator, while northern Siberia has a polar climate. A map key explains what each color or pattern means. Without the key, a reader cannot tell whether a shaded area represents climate, elevation, or another feature.

2. Physical maps can represent landforms and bodies of water. Mountain symbols may mark the Himalayas in Asia, and a raised or darker pattern may show high elevation. Blue lines or areas often represent rivers, lakes, seas, or oceans. The Nile River is a major waterway in northeastern Africa, and the Mediterranean Sea lies between Europe and Africa. Readers use the map key and labels to identify the feature and locate it in relation to nearby places.

3. Resource maps show where useful materials or energy sources are found. A resource symbol might stand for oil, iron ore, forests, or fertile soil. In Southwest Asia, some maps mark oil fields near the Persian Gulf. In parts of Australia, resource maps may show iron ore deposits. These maps do not tell every detail about a place. Instead, they help readers see patterns, such as a resource located near a coast, river, mountain area, or dry region. Comparing different map types builds a fuller picture of a region.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Why does a reader need a map key when looking at a shaded area on a climate map?

2. What map symbol or pattern could help a reader identify the Himalayas as a high landform?

3. Name the two bodies of water in the passage and tell where each is located.

4. Which type of map would help a reader locate iron ore in Australia? What would that map show?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Create a map key for an imaginary region in the Eastern Hemisphere. Use one row each for a climate zone, landform, body of water, and resource, and choose a different black-and-white symbol or pattern for each one.

FEATURE TYPE	SYMBOL OR PATTERN	MAP KEY LABEL

ANSWER KEY

Reading Earth Maps

GRADE 6 · 6.1a

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline each sentence that tells what a map can show. Then circle examples of a climate zone, landform, body of water, and resource to connect map information to real places. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Why does a reader need a map key when looking at a shaded area on a climate map?	**A map key explains what the color or pattern means. Without it, the reader cannot tell whether the shaded area shows climate, elevation, or another feature.**
2	What map symbol or pattern could help a reader identify the Himalayas as a high landform?	**Mountain symbols could mark the Himalayas, and a raised or darker pattern could show high elevation.**
3	Name the two bodies of water in the passage and tell where each is located.	**The Nile River is in northeastern Africa. The Mediterranean Sea lies between Europe and Africa.**
4	Which type of map would help a reader locate iron ore in Australia? What would that map show?	**A resource map would help. It could show iron ore deposits in parts of Australia.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

FEATURE TYPE	SYMBOL OR PATTERN	MAP KEY LABEL
Climate zone	diagonal stripes	dry zone
Landform	triangle symbols	mountains
Body of water	wavy lines	river
Resource	black drop symbols	oil field

Accept accurate map-key symbols or patterns that can be clearly distinguished in black and white. The student should include all four required feature types and match each symbol or pattern to a logical label.