Rain Shapes Oklahoma

How climate connects plants and work

3.C.2.2.E "Describe the state's climate and various natural vegetation zones, explaining how climate can affect natural vegetation and economic activities."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two clues about rain and circle the three kinds of natural vegetation. Draw an arrow from one rain clue to the vegetation it helps explain.

From Forests to Prairie

1. In Oklahoma, summers are often hot, and winters can be cold. Rain does not fall evenly across the state. The eastern part usually gets more rain than the western part. After a spring storm, you might see muddy paths in the east while the west stays dry. These patterns help explain why different wild plants grow in different parts of Oklahoma.

2. In eastern Oklahoma, more rain helps oak and pine forests grow. Trees need enough water to grow tall. In the middle of the state, tallgrass prairie grows where there is less rain than in the east. Its grasses can grow taller than a child. Farther west, drier land has shortgrass prairie. Short grasses can live with less water than many trees.

3. Climate and plants also shape work. In the wetter east, some people cut trees for wood, then plant new trees. In the middle, some farmers cut prairie grasses to make hay for cattle. In the drier west, ranchers raise cattle on grassland, but dry years can leave less grass for the animals to eat. Rainfall changes what grows and how people earn money.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How does eastern Oklahoma's rainfall help some people earn money?

2. How do rain and natural vegetation in the middle of Oklahoma differ from those in the east?

3. How does the drier climate in western Oklahoma affect both its plants and ranchers' work?

4. Why might a dry year make work harder for a western Oklahoma rancher?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine western Oklahoma has several rainy years in a row. Write three sentences predicting a possible change in the grass and a possible change in a rancher's work. Explain how the rain connects the two changes.

ANSWER KEY

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GRADE 3 · 3.C.2.2.E

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two clues about rain and circle the three kinds of natural vegetation. Draw an arrow from one rain clue to the vegetation it helps explain. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How does eastern Oklahoma's rainfall help some people earn money?	**More rain helps forests grow, and some people cut trees for wood.**
2	How do rain and natural vegetation in the middle of Oklahoma differ from those in the east?	**The middle gets less rain and has tallgrass prairie. The wetter east has oak and pine forests.**
3	How does the drier climate in western Oklahoma affect both its plants and ranchers' work?	**Shortgrass prairie grows in the drier west, and ranchers raise cattle on its grassland.**
4	Why might a dry year make work harder for a western Oklahoma rancher?	**Less rain can leave less grass for the rancher's cattle to eat.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

After several rainy years, more short grass may grow in western Oklahoma. Ranchers may have more grass for their cattle to eat. The extra rain could help the grass grow and make it easier to feed the cattle.

Accept predictions that connect increased rain to more grass and explain how that change could affect ranchers. Do not require students to predict a new vegetation zone.