Through the Dust

How Oklahoma families faced the Dust Bowl

3.C.3.2.E "Describe challenges faced by citizens during the Dust Bowl, focusing on how Oklahomans adapted to harsh environmental conditions and survived economic hardships."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two problems caused by dust or drought, circle two ways people protected their homes or land, and number two ways families dealt with too little food or money.

Living Through the Dust Bowl

1. In the 1930s, drought struck Oklahoma. Little rain fell, and dry soil blew across farms in huge dust storms. The sky could turn dark in the middle of the day. Dust got into homes and made it hard to breathe. Families stuffed cloth into cracks around doors and windows. Some hung damp sheets over windows to catch dust before it spread through a room.

2. The dust also hurt farms. Wind carried away rich topsoil, and crops could not grow well without rain. Many farm families had little food to eat or crops to sell. They planted gardens when they could and shared food with neighbors. Some farmers left strips of grass in their fields or planted trees to slow the wind and help hold soil in place.

3. With fewer crops to sell, many Oklahomans struggled to pay for food and other needs. Some families took short jobs to earn money. Others moved to new places to look for work, often traveling west. Leaving home was hard, and a new job was not promised. These choices did not end the drought, but they helped some families get through years of dust and lost income.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did dust make life hard inside homes, and what did families do about it?

2. What made it hard to grow crops, and how did some farmers try to protect their soil?

3. When farms produced less food, how did some families find food to eat?

4. Why did some families move west, and what was one risk of moving?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine you are an Oklahoma child during the Dust Bowl. Write three sentences to a cousin about a dust or farm problem, what your family does about it, and one way your family deals with having less money. Use details from the reading, but make up your own family situation.

ANSWER KEY

Through the Dust

GRADE 3 · 3.C.3.2.E

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two problems caused by dust or drought, circle two ways people protected their homes or land, and number two ways families dealt with too little food or money. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did dust make life hard inside homes, and what did families do about it?	**Dust got into homes and made breathing hard. Families stuffed cloth into cracks or hung damp sheets over windows.**
2	What made it hard to grow crops, and how did some farmers try to protect their soil?	**There was little rain, and wind blew away topsoil. Some farmers left strips of grass or planted trees to slow the wind and hold soil in place.**
3	When farms produced less food, how did some families find food to eat?	**They planted gardens when they could and shared food with neighbors.**
4	Why did some families move west, and what was one risk of moving?	**They moved to look for work because they had fewer crops to sell. They might not find a new job.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Today a dust storm made our kitchen dark while I was helping make lunch. We pushed cloth into the door cracks to keep dust out. Since our crops brought in little money, Dad took a short job fixing a neighbor's fence.

For the questions, accept other passage-supported examples that match each challenge. For Your Turn, look for three sentences that connect a Dust Bowl problem, a fitting response, and a way to manage lost income.