River Choices

How people use and protect a dry region's water

4.C.2.5 "Analyze how humans interact with their environments in order to meet their needs and wants. Explain how humans adapt to the physical environment (e.g., food, shelter, earning a living) by identifying historical and contemporary examples..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two ways people adapt to dry land. Circle one way people changed the river, and number two effects of that change.

Living Along the Colorado River

1. The land near the Colorado River is often hot and dry. Long before Hoover Dam, some Native communities planted crops on the river's floodplain. River floods left wet soil where food could grow. By choosing fields near the water, people adapted to a dry place. Some farmers today choose crops that need less water to fit the dry climate.

2. In the 1930s, workers built Hoover Dam across the Colorado River. The dam holds back water in Lake Mead. Stored water helps supply farms and cities, and water moving through the dam makes electricity. Building the dam changed the river to meet people's needs. Its power helped businesses grow in the Southwest, while stored water helped people live and work in dry areas.

3. The changes have costs. Below the dam, natural floods happen less often, so some plants and animals lose the conditions they need. Farms also need water to earn money, but taking too much river water can leave less for habitats and other people. Some farmers use drip hoses to waste less water. This lets them grow food while helping protect a limited resource.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did some Native communities adapt to the dry land to grow food?

2. Explain two ways Hoover Dam helped people live or work in the Southwest.

3. How did the dam change conditions for some plants and animals below it?

4. Why can drip hoses help farmers earn a living while protecting the river?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine you run a small vegetable garden near a dry river. In three sentences, explain how you would adapt to the dry land, what you would build to get water, and how you would protect river plants or animals while selling your crops. Use ideas different from the passage.

ANSWER KEY

River Choices

GRADE 4 · 4.C.2.5

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two ways people adapt to dry land. Circle one way people changed the river, and number two effects of that change. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did some Native communities adapt to the dry land to grow food?	**They planted crops on the river's floodplain, where floods left wet soil.**
2	Explain two ways Hoover Dam helped people live or work in the Southwest.	**It stored water for farms and cities and made electricity that helped businesses grow.**
3	How did the dam change conditions for some plants and animals below it?	**Natural floods happened less often, so some plants and animals lost conditions they needed.**
4	Why can drip hoses help farmers earn a living while protecting the river?	**They deliver water to crops with less waste, helping farmers grow food while using less river water.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

I would grow my vegetables in cooler months, when they need less water. I would build a tank to collect rain from my shed roof for the garden. I would leave the plants along the riverbank in place so animals keep their homes while I sell my vegetables.

For Part 3, accept feasible ways to adapt, collect or move water, and protect a habitat while earning a living. The response should use three sentences and ideas not given in the passage.