Canal Clues

Use three sources to explain how the Erie Canal worked and whom it helped.

4.P.3.1 "Comprehend, evaluate, and synthesize textual sources to acquire and refine knowledge in the social studies. Use information accurately from a text when explaining the text explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two details in each source that show what the canal made possible. Circle one detail that shows a limit or challenge.

The Erie Canal

1. Source A, a history note: In 1825, the Erie Canal opened across New York State. It linked Lake Erie near Buffalo to the Hudson River near Albany. Before the canal, moving heavy goods over land could be slow and costly. Canal boats offered another route. The canal helped connect farms near the Great Lakes with markets along the Hudson River and in New York City.

2. Source B, a geography note: The canal did not run in a straight line. Builders chose a route where they could dig a waterway between Buffalo and Albany. At places where the land rose or fell, boats entered locks. A lock fills or drains to raise or lower a boat. This system let boats travel across parts of New York State with different elevations.

3. Source C, a work and travel note: Horses or mules pulled many early canal boats from paths beside the water. Boats carried wheat and lumber east and manufactured goods west. People also traveled on passenger boats. In winter, ice could stop canal traffic. Workers kept boats moving and repaired the waterway, so a busy canal depended on more than the goods inside its boats.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. A trader wants to send heavy goods from near Buffalo to New York City. Use Sources A and B to explain how the canal could help, even where the land changes height.

2. What might happen to goods moving on the canal during a cold winter? Use a detail from Source C and a detail from Source A to explain.

3. Someone says only goods moved on the canal. Which source challenges that claim? Give a detail that shows why.

4. A student says the canal was useful only because it was a waterway. Use Sources B and C to explain why other things mattered, too.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

A classmate says the Erie Canal helped only farmers. Write three sentences explaining why this claim is incomplete. Use details from at least two sources and make one inference about someone else who benefited.

ANSWER KEY

Canal Clues

GRADE 4 · 4.P.3.1

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two details in each source that show what the canal made possible. Circle one detail that shows a limit or challenge. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	A trader wants to send heavy goods from near Buffalo to New York City. Use Sources A and B to explain how the canal could help, even where the land changes height.	**Source A says the canal linked Lake Erie near Buffalo to the Hudson River, which led to markets in New York City. Source B explains that locks raised or lowered boats where the land changed height.**
2	What might happen to goods moving on the canal during a cold winter? Use a detail from Source C and a detail from Source A to explain.	**Ice could stop canal traffic, according to Source C. Goods traveling to the markets described in Source A might be delayed.**
3	Someone says only goods moved on the canal. Which source challenges that claim? Give a detail that shows why.	**Source C challenges the claim because it says people traveled on passenger boats.**
4	A student says the canal was useful only because it was a waterway. Use Sources B and C to explain why other things mattered, too.	**Source B says locks raised and lowered boats. Source C says horses or mules pulled many boats and workers repaired the waterway. The canal needed these things to keep boats moving.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Source A says the canal connected farms near the Great Lakes with markets in New York City. Source C says boats also carried manufactured goods west and took passengers. I infer that people who made those goods benefited because the canal helped them reach buyers farther away.

Accept different reasonable inferences when students support them with accurate details from the named sources. For the open task, look for three sentences, evidence from at least two sources, and an inference about someone besides farmers.