Beyond the Clearing

Trace how land use affects a region

6.C.4.4 "Identify environmental challenges (e.g., air pollution, acid rain, deforestation) and explain how they can impact a region (e.g., oil spills, Amazonia's ranching and logging operations, Mexico City's urban sprawl)."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline three actions that damage the environment, then circle one effect of each action. Write matching numbers beside each action and its effect to show the connections.

Changes in Amazonia

1 At the edge of the Amazon rainforest, a road leads to a newly cleared patch of land. Some trees were cut for valuable wood. After the logs leave, other trees may be cleared to make pasture for cattle. These changes bring income to some families, but they also shrink the forest. Birds and other animals lose shelter and food when many kinds of trees disappear. A patch of pasture cannot support the same mix of forest plants and animals that once lived there.

2 The changes reach beyond the cleared patch. Tree roots help hold soil in place, while leaves soften the force of heavy rain. Without that cover, rain can wash loose soil into streams. Cloudy water can harm fish and make it harder for nearby communities to use the water. To clear land quickly, people sometimes burn cut plants. Smoke from these fires can drift to towns, making the air unhealthy to breathe, especially for children and people with breathing problems.

3 Forests also help shape the region's rainfall. Amazon trees release water vapor into the air, and that moisture helps form rain. If large areas lose trees, parts of the region may receive less rain, which can stress crops and forests that remain. The effects do not stop at the place where trees fall. A logging road can open more land to clearing, and a fire's smoke can travel far from the flames. In Amazonia, a choice about land can affect water, air, wildlife, and people's lives.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How can cutting trees for wood affect birds and other forest animals?

2. How can clearing trees for cattle pasture affect streams and nearby communities?

3. How can burning cut plants affect people who live far from the fire?

4. If large areas of forest are cleared, how might the region's rainfall and crops change?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine a tanker leaks oil near a coastal fishing village. In three sentences, explain how this environmental challenge could affect wildlife and people's work, and show how one effect leads to another.

ANSWER KEY

Beyond the Clearing

GRADE 6 · 6.C.4.4

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline three actions that damage the environment, then circle one effect of each action. Write matching numbers beside each action and its effect to show the connections. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How can cutting trees for wood affect birds and other forest animals?	**Cutting trees shrinks the forest, so animals lose shelter and food.**
2	How can clearing trees for cattle pasture affect streams and nearby communities?	**Without tree cover, rain can wash soil into streams. The cloudy water can harm fish and make the water harder for communities to use.**
3	How can burning cut plants affect people who live far from the fire?	**Smoke can drift to towns and make the air unhealthy to breathe.**
4	If large areas of forest are cleared, how might the region's rainfall and crops change?	**With fewer trees releasing water vapor, parts of the region may receive less rain. Less rain can stress crops.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

An oil spill could coat seabirds' feathers, making it hard for them to stay warm. Oil in the water could also harm fish near the village. If fish die or cannot be sold, fishing families could lose income.

For the marking job, accept any three damaging actions paired with effects supported by the passage. For the open task, accept plausible effects on wildlife and work if the three sentences clearly connect the oil spill to those effects.