Island Choices

How people use, change, and protect Puerto Rico's coast

6.C.4 "Analyze the interactions of humans and their environment in the Western Hemisphere. Explain how humans adapt to the environment (e.g., types and location of housing, clothing and food choices, methods of transportation…"

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two ways people use or prepare for island conditions, circle one change people make to the coast, and number two effects of Hurricane Maria. Your marks will help you trace how the environment shapes people's lives.

Living with the Coast

1 On Puerto Rico, the sea shapes daily choices. For centuries, people in coastal communities have caught fish for food and work. Today, fishers still head out by boat, while many other residents work in shops and hotels near the shore. Because hurricanes can bring powerful winds and rain, some families put shutters over windows before storms. These choices connect people to both the benefits and risks of island life. A boat can provide a living, but it also needs a safe place when a storm approaches.

2 In September 2017, Hurricane Maria struck Puerto Rico. Strong winds damaged homes and knocked out much of the electric grid. Flooding and fallen trees blocked roads, slowing deliveries of food, fuel, and medicine. Some families left their homes to stay with relatives or moved away from the island. The storm and its aftermath caused thousands of deaths. With power lines down and roads blocked, some shops could not open and fishers could not easily sell their catch. The same coast that supports jobs also faces serious storm risks.

3 Along some coasts, people have cleared mangrove forests to make room for buildings and roads. This change creates space for businesses, but it also removes habitat for fish and a natural buffer against waves. Mangrove roots slow moving water, though they cannot stop a major hurricane. In Puerto Rico, residents and conservation groups can protect remaining mangroves and restore damaged ones. Visitors can support guided nature trips that avoid harming the trees. Protecting this habitat helps wildlife and may reduce some storm damage while supporting local jobs.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How do fishing and storm shutters show two different ways people respond to Puerto Rico's environment?

2. How did damage from Hurricane Maria affect both supplies and people's work?

3. What is one benefit and one environmental cost of clearing mangroves for buildings and roads?

4. Why might guided nature trips be a better long-term choice than clearing more mangroves for businesses?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine a Caribbean island town where heavy rain floods streets and new buildings threaten a beach where sea turtles nest. Write a three-sentence public notice recommending one way residents can adapt to flooding and one way they can protect wildlife. Explain how each action helps.

ANSWER KEY

Island Choices

GRADE 6 · 6.C.4

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two ways people use or prepare for island conditions, circle one change people make to the coast, and number two effects of Hurricane Maria. Your marks will help you trace how the environment shapes people's lives. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How do fishing and storm shutters show two different ways people respond to Puerto Rico's environment?	**Fishing uses the sea for food and work. Shutters help protect homes from hurricane winds.**
2	How did damage from Hurricane Maria affect both supplies and people's work?	**Blocked roads slowed deliveries of food, fuel, and medicine. Damage to roads and power lines kept some shops closed and made it hard for fishers to sell their catch.**
3	What is one benefit and one environmental cost of clearing mangroves for buildings and roads?	**Clearing mangroves makes space for businesses, but it removes fish habitat and a buffer against waves.**
4	Why might guided nature trips be a better long-term choice than clearing more mangroves for businesses?	**Guided nature trips can support local jobs without harming the trees. Keeping mangroves protects wildlife and may reduce some storm damage.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Before heavy rain, move important supplies onto high shelves so floods do not ruin them. Keep new buildings away from the nesting beach so sea turtles have space to lay eggs. These choices help families prepare for floods while protecting wildlife.

Accept other passage-supported cause-and-effect explanations for the short answers. For the public notice, accept realistic actions if the student explains how one reduces flood harm and the other protects wildlife.