Where Water Went

Investigate change using evidence from different places and times

7.P.2.3.A "Answer geographic questions and conduct investigations by acquiring, organizing, and interpreting information about the modern world and historical events."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each source of information, circle the years, and number the events that explain the sea's change from earliest to latest.

The Changing Aral Sea

1 In 1960, the Aral Sea stretched across a dry region of Central Asia, between Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. Two rivers fed it, the Amu Darya from the south and the Syr Darya from the east. Fishing towns stood along its shores. A geographic question is: Why did the shoreline move so far from these towns? An old map can show where the water once reached, while a recent satellite image can show its later edge. Neither source alone explains why the change happened. For that, investigators need evidence about the rivers.

2 During the Soviet period, irrigation canals took large amounts of water from both rivers to grow crops, including cotton. Less river water reached the sea, but water continued to evaporate in the dry climate. By the 1990s, the sea had split into separate northern and southern parts. River diversion records help explain the change, and maps made in different years show where it happened. Together, these sources show that the canals changed river flow before the shoreline retreated. The maps show a pattern, while the records help explain a cause.

3 In 2005, Kazakhstan completed the Kok-Aral Dam to hold more water in the northern part of the sea. As the northern water level rose, fish returned and fishing grew there. The southern part did not recover in the same way because it still received too little river water. Comparing satellite images from different years could reveal the contrast, while fishing records could show changes in people's work. Yet those sources cannot tell whether every family benefited. That question would require interviews or other evidence about households.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Which two sources could help you compare the sea's shoreline in 1960 and later years? What would each show?

2. How do river diversion records and maps work together to explain why the shoreline moved away from fishing towns?

3. Compare the northern and southern parts of the sea after 2005. What difference in water supply helps explain what happened?

4. A researcher claims the dam helped every family near the northern sea. Which sources in the passage cannot prove that claim, and what additional evidence would help?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Choose a place near your home or school where land use may have changed. In three sentences, write a geographic question about it, name two sources you could collect, and explain how you would organize and compare their information.

ANSWER KEY

Where Water Went

GRADE 7 · 7.P.2.3.A

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline each source of information, circle the years, and number the events that explain the sea's change from earliest to latest. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Which two sources could help you compare the sea's shoreline in 1960 and later years? What would each show?	**An old map could show where the water reached in 1960. A recent satellite image could show its later edge.**
2	How do river diversion records and maps work together to explain why the shoreline moved away from fishing towns?	**The records show that canals took water from the rivers. Maps from different years show that the shoreline later retreated.**
3	Compare the northern and southern parts of the sea after 2005. What difference in water supply helps explain what happened?	**The dam held more water in the north, where the water level rose and fishing grew. The south did not recover in the same way because it still received too little river water.**
4	A researcher claims the dam helped every family near the northern sea. Which sources in the passage cannot prove that claim, and what additional evidence would help?	**Satellite images and fishing records cannot show whether every family benefited. Interviews or other evidence about households would help.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

How did the land at the corner of Pine Street and Oak Street change between 2010 and 2025? I would collect dated aerial photographs and city building permits for that corner. I would sort both sources by year and compare what occupied the site with the dates and types of building projects.

Accept other accurate descriptions of how the sources show change and help explain its causes. For Part 3, look for a question about a specific place, two useful sources, and a clear plan to organize and compare them.