When Water Rises

Use evidence and perspectives to examine an enduring public question.

8.P.1.2.A "Investigate and propose answers to essential questions representing complex enduring issues across the social studies disciplines."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline one detail about past land use, circle the concerns of two different residents, and number two types of evidence the council could collect. Use your marks to trace how the town might investigate its decision.

A Parking Lot or a Rain Garden?

1. After two heavy storms, water pooled on Market Street in the town of Willow Bend. Shop owners swept muddy water from their doors, while people who rent basement apartments lost furniture. The town council is considering turning a paved riverside parking lot into a rain garden. Soil and plants could absorb some stormwater that now runs off the lot. But drivers use the lot to visit nearby shops, and some owners worry that fewer spaces would mean fewer customers. The council has not decided what to do.

2. This choice reaches beyond one storm. Decades ago, builders covered much of the ground near the river with pavement, so less rain could soak into the soil. A rain garden would change that land use, but it would not stop every flood. The council could also repair storm drains or ask buildings to add water storage. Each option has a cost, and the town has a limited budget. Residents disagree about whether public money should protect homes first, support businesses, or serve both.

3. At a council meeting, a shop owner asked how customers would arrive without the lot. A renter asked why homes that flood repeatedly should wait for help. A town engineer said that measuring how water moves during storms could show which changes would help most. Council members could compare flood records, parking use, and the costs of each option before voting. Even with those facts, they would still need to weigh whose needs count most. Other towns face similar choices when they plan for heavy rain.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What essential question could guide Willow Bend's decision and apply to other towns facing heavy rain?

2. How do a past land-use choice and Willow Bend's location help explain why the council faces this decision?

3. Whose needs might conflict if the council removes the parking lot? Explain using the shop owner's and renter's concerns.

4. Propose a first step the council should take before voting. Which evidence named in the passage would help with that step?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

A school district is considering opening its library on weekends, but staff time is limited and some students lack a quiet place to study. Write an essential question about this choice, propose a possible answer using two different social studies perspectives, and name evidence you would need before deciding.

ANSWER KEY

When Water Rises

GRADE 8 · 8.P.1.2.A

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline one detail about past land use, circle the concerns of two different residents, and number two types of evidence the council could collect. Use your marks to trace how the town might investigate its decision. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What essential question could guide Willow Bend's decision and apply to other towns facing heavy rain?	**How should a town balance flood protection, business needs, and public costs when it changes land use?**
2	How do a past land-use choice and Willow Bend's location help explain why the council faces this decision?	**Builders paved much of the ground near the river, leaving less soil to absorb rain. The town is now considering changing a riverside lot to reduce runoff.**
3	Whose needs might conflict if the council removes the parking lot? Explain using the shop owner's and renter's concerns.	**The shop owner worries that losing parking could keep customers away. The renter wants action for homes that flood repeatedly.**
4	Propose a first step the council should take before voting. Which evidence named in the passage would help with that step?	**The council could compare options for reducing flooding before voting. Flood records, parking use, and the cost of each option would help it weigh the choices.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

How should a district decide who gets access to a shared space when resources are limited? From a civic perspective, opening the library could give more students a place to study. From an economic perspective, the district must consider the cost of staffing it. I would compare weekend student interest with staffing costs before recommending which hours, if any, to offer.

Accept other broad questions and tentative answers grounded in the passage. For Part 3, look for a question that extends beyond this one school, two distinct social studies perspectives, and evidence that could inform a decision.