Where Water Went

Use different sources to investigate change around the Aral Sea

USH.P.2.3.A "Actively engage in asking and answering geographic questions by acquiring, organizing, and analyzing multiple sources of data and information about the world's past and present."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the geographic question in the passage and circle three different kinds of evidence. Write C beside a circled source that helps explain a cause and E beside one that shows an effect.

Investigating the Aral Sea

1. Where did the Aral Sea go? In the 1960s, this inland sea stretched across parts of Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. Two rivers, the Amu Darya and Syr Darya, fed it. Soviet planners redirected much of their water into canals to irrigate cotton fields. Planning records show where canals were built and what officials hoped to grow. But those records alone cannot show how the shoreline changed. To investigate that change, a geographer could ask: Did the sea retreat equally along every shore, and what happened to towns that once depended on its water?

2. Researchers comparing satellite images from 1977 and 2014 found that the sea had split and much of its southern basin had dried. Images help locate water and exposed lakebed at different dates, but they cannot explain why water disappeared. The north and south did not change in exactly the same way. A dam completed in Kazakhstan in 2005 helped the smaller North Aral Sea retain water, while much of the southern basin remained dry. Pairing the images with records of river diversions and the dam helps separate the location of change from its possible causes.

3. Accounts from people who once fished near the southern shore describe lost work as the water pulled away from ports. Their accounts connect a changing shoreline to daily life, but one person's experience cannot represent every town. To test whether the effects differed by location, a researcher could compare accounts from several ports with population records for those towns. Dates matter, too: a record from before the dam cannot measure its later effects. Together, planning records, satellite observations, and local accounts answer different parts of a geographic question without making any one source do every job.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What geographic question could you ask about the dam's effects in the north and south? Which source in the passage could help you compare those places?

2. Why would a researcher use both planning records and satellite images to investigate the sea's retreat?

3. Which source connects shoreline change to lost work, and why is that source not enough to describe every town?

4. What two kinds of records does the passage suggest comparing to test whether ports were affected differently? What would each contribute?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Ask a new geographic question about how the Aral Sea's retreat affected two different places. Name two kinds of evidence not described in the passage that you would seek, explain what each could show, and identify one limitation.

ANSWER KEY

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HIGH SCHOOL · USH.P.2.3.A

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the geographic question in the passage and circle three different kinds of evidence. Write C beside a circled source that helps explain a cause and E beside one that shows an effect. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What geographic question could you ask about the dam's effects in the north and south? Which source in the passage could help you compare those places?	**Did the dam affect the North and South Aral Sea in the same way? Satellite observations could help compare where water remained in each basin.**
2	Why would a researcher use both planning records and satellite images to investigate the sea's retreat?	**Planning records show where water was redirected for irrigation. Satellite images show where the shoreline changed, but not why.**
3	Which source connects shoreline change to lost work, and why is that source not enough to describe every town?	**Accounts from former fishers connect the retreating water to lost work. Experiences near one shore may not represent every town.**
4	What two kinds of records does the passage suggest comparing to test whether ports were affected differently? What would each contribute?	**Compare accounts from several ports with population records for those towns. The accounts describe local experiences, while population records help compare changes among towns.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Did access to drinking water change differently in a northern town and a southern town as the Aral Sea retreated? I would seek dated water-quality test results from each town to compare conditions over time. I would also seek town water-supply budgets to see whether spending on new wells or treatment changed. Test results from only one well might miss differences across a town, so I would check where each sample was taken.

Accept geographic questions that compare locations and identify a passage source suited to the comparison. For Your Turn, accept feasible new sources if the student explains what each could reveal and gives a relevant limitation.