A Park, Many Priorities

How changing needs shape views of one waterfront

WG.P.2.2.B "Analyze complex and interacting factors that influence multiple perspectives during different historical eras and contemporary events."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Number the three time periods in the passage, circle the groups of people whose views are described, and underline two factors that shape those views in each period.

East River Park Through Time

1 In the 1930s, New York City built East River Park beside a developing highway along Manhattan's Lower East Side. The park opened in 1939, giving people in a crowded neighborhood space to play and rest. City planners saw public recreation and road travel as linked goals: a park could improve daily life while a highway moved cars. Yet a highway could also make the river harder to reach on foot. A parent who wanted safe play space might welcome the park but worry about crossing busy streets. A driver might value the road more than easy river access.

2 In October 2012, Hurricane Sandy pushed seawater into the Lower East Side. East River Park and nearby streets flooded, and many residents lost electricity. People living on upper floors of public housing faced another problem: elevators stopped working. For residents with limited mobility, a long climb changed what evacuation or returning home required. Shop owners worried about damaged goods and lost income, while residents wanted safe housing and reliable power. City officials had to weigh those immediate needs against the risk of future storms. The same flood could feel different depending on a person's health, home, and work.

3 In the 2020s, the city began rebuilding East River Park as part of a flood protection project. Plans called for raising much of the park and adding barriers to reduce flood damage in nearby neighborhoods. Some residents supported the work because another storm could threaten homes and power systems. Others objected to removing mature trees and losing access to sections of the park during construction. A person could even hold both views: flood protection matters, but so does shade during hot summers. The disagreement is not simply about liking or disliking a park. It reflects how past floods, present needs, and future risks interact.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. In the 1930s, why might a parent and a driver have viewed the park and highway differently? Explain two factors behind their views.

2. How did the 2012 flood create different concerns for a resident with limited mobility and a shop owner?

3. How did the experience of Sandy help shape both support for and objections to the park project in the 2020s?

4. Compare a concern about reaching the river in the 1930s with a concern about using the park in the 2020s. What other goal competed with access in each period?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Suppose the city proposes a flood gate at a park entrance that would close for two days during storm warnings. In four sentences, explain why two people might view this plan differently, using at least two factors from the passage. End with a practical question the city should ask before deciding.

ANSWER KEY

A Park, Many Priorities

HIGH SCHOOL · WG.P.2.2.B

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Number the three time periods in the passage, circle the groups of people whose views are described, and underline two factors that shape those views in each period. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	In the 1930s, why might a parent and a driver have viewed the park and highway differently? Explain two factors behind their views.	**A parent might have valued play space but worried about crossing busy streets. A driver might have valued faster road travel more than easy access to the river.**
2	How did the 2012 flood create different concerns for a resident with limited mobility and a shop owner?	**Stopped elevators made evacuation or returning home harder for a resident with limited mobility. A shop owner faced damaged goods and lost income.**
3	How did the experience of Sandy help shape both support for and objections to the park project in the 2020s?	**Sandy showed the danger of flooding, so some residents supported stronger protection. Others also valued mature trees and continued park access, which construction would disrupt.**
4	Compare a concern about reaching the river in the 1930s with a concern about using the park in the 2020s. What other goal competed with access in each period?	**In the 1930s, the highway could make the river harder to reach while improving road travel. In the 2020s, construction could limit park access while improving flood protection.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

After Sandy, a resident with limited mobility might welcome a gate that could keep floodwater away from nearby homes. Yet if it closes the easiest path, that resident might struggle to reach a bus during a warning. A shop owner might also favor protection but worry that a two-day closure would keep customers away even if the storm misses the city. Could the city keep an accessible alternate entrance open without weakening flood protection?

Accept other passage-supported comparisons that explain how at least two factors interact. For Your Turn, look for two distinct perspectives, a connection to passage factors, and a practical question about the proposed gate.