

Regions Under Pressure

Analyze how regional issues create physical, economic, and political effects.

SS.8.G.2.2 "Use geographic terms and tools to analyze case studies of regional issues in different parts of the United States that have had critical economic, physical, or political ramifications."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline geographic terms that locate or describe each regional issue, and circle tools or evidence used to study an issue. Next to each effect you find, write 1 for a physical effect, 2 for an economic effect, or 3 for a political effect.

Three Regions, Connected Effects

- ① In the Southwest, a long drought has lowered water levels in the Colorado River system. The river supplies cities, farms, and hydropower dams in several states, including Arizona, Nevada, and California. Less snowpack in the Rocky Mountains and hotter temperatures reduce runoff, the water that flows into streams after snow melts. Stream gauges and reservoir measurements track these changes. Reservoirs such as Lake Mead store water for dry periods, but falling reservoir levels have forced states, tribes, cities, and irrigation districts to negotiate how much water each user can take.
- ② On the Gulf Coast, hurricanes can push storm surge, seawater driven onto land by strong winds, into low-lying communities. In Louisiana, wetlands and barrier islands can absorb some wave energy, but erosion and sea-level rise have reduced this protection in many places. After Hurricane Katrina struck in 2005, flooded neighborhoods, damaged ports, and displaced residents showed how a physical hazard could disrupt regional life. Rebuilding levees, homes, roads, and businesses required public decisions about funding, land use, and where people could safely live.

- ③ In the Great Lakes region, factories and cities once released sewage and industrial waste into rivers and lakes. The Cuyahoga River in Ohio became so polluted that it caught fire in 1969. Public concern helped build support for stronger national water-pollution laws, including the Clean Water Act of 1972. Today, water-quality tests measure pollutants, while shoreline observations track harmful algal blooms. Cleaner water supports fishing, recreation, and tourism, although runoff from farms and cities still creates problems in parts of the region.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

- 1** How do conditions in the Rocky Mountains affect water levels in the Colorado River system? Include the geographic process named in the passage.

- 2** Which coastal features in Louisiana can reduce hurricane wave energy? Why has their protection decreased in many places?

- 3** Identify one economic effect and one political effect of the Colorado River drought described in the passage.

- 4** What tools or observations are used to monitor water problems in the Great Lakes region, and what does each one track?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Use the teacher-provided geographic source for one case in the passage. Actually locate the named region and read the map legend or data units. On separate paper, record the source title/date, one observed mapped feature or dated value, and how it helps explain one ramification. Then choose one regional case from the passage. In 4 to 5 sentences, explain the issue using at least two geographic terms, name one tool or source of evidence, and describe one physical, one economic, and one political ramification.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline geographic terms that locate or describe each regional issue, and circle tools or evidence used to study an issue. Next to each effect you find, write 1 for a physical effect, 2 for an economic effect, or 3 for a political effect. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How do conditions in the Rocky Mountains affect water levels in the Colorado River system? Include the geographic process named in the passage.	Less snowpack and hotter temperatures reduce runoff from melting snow. Less runoff lowers water levels in the Colorado River system and its reservoirs.
2	Which coastal features in Louisiana can reduce hurricane wave energy? Why has their protection decreased in many places?	Wetlands and barrier islands can absorb wave energy. Erosion and sea-level rise have reduced their protection.
3	Identify one economic effect and one political effect of the Colorado River drought described in the passage.	An economic effect is reduced water available to farms and hydropower dams. A political effect is that states, tribes, cities, and irrigation districts must negotiate water use.
4	What tools or observations are used to monitor water problems in the Great Lakes region, and what does each one track?	Water-quality tests measure pollutants. Shoreline observations track harmful algal blooms.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Drought in the Southwest reduces runoff from snowpack in the Rocky Mountains and lowers Lake Mead. Stream gauges and reservoir measurements can show changes in water supply. Lower reservoir levels are a physical ramification, and less water for farms and hydropower can harm the regional economy. States, tribes, cities, and irrigation districts must negotiate water allotments, which is a political ramification.

Accept equivalent cause-and-effect explanations that use evidence from the passage. For the open response, check for two geographic terms, a relevant tool or evidence source, and accurate physical, economic, and political ramifications. Before teaching, supply one accessible sourced geographic output for the chosen case, such as a dated Colorado River basin/reservoir map, Louisiana coastal flood map, or located Great Lakes water-quality data. Explain the legend/units and geographic coverage. Require a correctly located observation and supported link to a ramification, checking the actual source. Separate observed evidence from passage explanations or inferred causes. Keep the original four-to-five-sentence response/model; its tool description does not replace the actual source record.