Clues Around a Text

Use context to understand a historical news report.

4.P.ST.1 "Context: Develop and apply knowledge of key components of context such as background information, geographic location, cultural influences, time period, and contemporary events when interpreting and constructing texts."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Circle details about location, box details about time, underline details about communities, and number details about how news traveled. These context clues help you understand the report.

San Francisco, 1906

1 On April 18, 1906, a powerful earthquake shook San Francisco, California. The city stands near the San Andreas Fault, where parts of Earth's crust can move. Buildings swayed, streets cracked, and water pipes broke. Soon, fires spread because firefighters had little water to use. The quake happened before modern emergency systems and strong earthquake building rules were common.

2 At that time, San Francisco was a busy port city on the West Coast. Ships carried people and goods across the Pacific Ocean. Neighborhoods included families with roots in China, Italy, Ireland, Mexico, and many other places. In Chinatown, residents worked together to find food, shelter, and relatives after the disaster. Knowing who lived there helps readers understand the city's many communities.

3 In 1906, there were no televisions or internet connections. Telegraphs sent short messages over wires, and newspapers printed reports and photographs. Readers far from California could learn that the city had been badly damaged. This information did not change the disaster, but it helped people elsewhere understand what had happened and send aid to survivors.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How does San Francisco's location help explain why an earthquake could happen there?

2. What time-period detail helps explain why the fires were difficult to fight?

3. How does the information about Chinatown help you understand San Francisco after the disaster?

4. How did telegraphs and newspapers affect what people far from California knew about the disaster?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a three-sentence news brief about an invented community event. Include a geographic detail, a time-period or current-event detail, and a cultural or community detail that helps readers understand the event.

ANSWER KEY

Clues Around a Text

GRADE 4 · 4.P.ST.1

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Circle details about location, box details about time, underline details about communities, and number details about how news traveled. These context clues help you understand the report. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How does San Francisco's location help explain why an earthquake could happen there?	**The city is near the San Andreas Fault, where parts of Earth's crust can move.**
2	What time-period detail helps explain why the fires were difficult to fight?	**The earthquake happened before modern emergency systems and strong earthquake building rules were common, and water pipes had broken.**
3	How does the information about Chinatown help you understand San Francisco after the disaster?	**It shows that San Francisco had many different communities and that Chinatown residents worked together to find food, shelter, and relatives.**
4	How did telegraphs and newspapers affect what people far from California knew about the disaster?	**They carried messages, reports, and photographs so people elsewhere could learn that San Francisco had been badly damaged. Accept source-context reasoning; news technology spread information, not the disaster or its damage.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

On Saturday, heavy rain closed the bridge over Pine River in the mountain town of Alder. Because the bridge links the town to its only grocery store, families had trouble getting supplies. The community center opened its kitchen, where neighbors shared foods from their family traditions while they waited for the road to reopen.

For the open task, accept three sentences about a coherent invented community event with geographic, time-period or current-event, and cultural or community details that help explain it. Details may differ from the model. Evaluate the learner's event, not whether it repeats San Francisco or Question 4.