

Changes Around Us

Read how weather, food chains, and fossils connect living things to environments.

3.12 "Organisms and environments. The student describes patterns, cycles, systems, and relationships within environments. The student is expected to: explain how temperature and precipitation affect animal growth and behavior through migration..."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each environmental change, circle each organism response, and number the energy path from the Sun to the heron, 1 through 5, to show how environments affect living things.

A Texas Pond Through Change

- ① At a Texas pond, sunlight gives energy to water plants. Snails eat the plants, frogs eat snails, and herons eat frogs. This food chain shows energy moving from the Sun to plants and then to animals. If frogs disappear, more snails may eat more plants. With fewer plants, other pond animals may have less food and shelter.
- ② Weather changes living things. When autumn becomes colder and food is scarce, some birds migrate to warmer places. Some animals, such as ground squirrels, hibernate during cold months, using very little energy. During a dry season, low precipitation can make plants dormant. A dormant plant slows its growth until water returns. Seeds may wait in dry soil, then sprout after rain.
- ③ Floods and droughts also change habitats. A flood can leave new water where mosquitoes and frogs thrive, but animals in burrows may drown or move away. During a long drought, fish may perish as ponds shrink, while animals that can travel may find wetter places. Fossils are preserved remains or traces of past life. Texas fossils include ammonites, petrified wood, and dinosaur footprints. They give evidence about past organisms and environments.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 What may happen to the pond plants if frogs disappear? Explain why.

2 Describe one response to cold weather and one response to a dry season.

3 Name one organism that may thrive after a flood and one organism that may be harmed by a flood.

4 Name two Texas fossils from the passage. What do fossils show?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Draw a grassland food chain in Panel 1 using the Sun, grass, rabbit, and coyote. In Panel 2, show a drought, label what happens to the grass and rabbit, and write one sentence that predicts what may happen to the coyote.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline each environmental change, circle each organism response, and number the energy path from the Sun to the heron, 1 through 5, to show how environments affect living things. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What may happen to the pond plants if frogs disappear? Explain why.	More snails may eat more pond plants because frogs are no longer eating the snails. There may be fewer plants.
2	Describe one response to cold weather and one response to a dry season.	In cold weather, birds may migrate or ground squirrels may hibernate. In a dry season, plants may become dormant and slow their growth.
3	Name one organism that may thrive after a flood and one organism that may be harmed by a flood.	Mosquitoes or frogs may thrive. Animals in burrows may drown or move away.
4	Name two Texas fossils from the passage. What do fossils show?	Answers include ammonites, petrified wood, and dinosaur footprints. Fossils give evidence about past organisms and environments.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Panel 1: Sun → grass → rabbit → coyote. Panel 2 labels: drought, dormant grass, rabbit moves away. The coyote may have less prey because fewer rabbits stay in the dry grassland.

Accept accurate food-chain arrows showing energy from the Sun to grass, rabbit, and coyote. Accept reasonable drought effects, such as dormant grass, rabbits moving or having less food, and coyotes having less prey.