

Changing Texas Land

Compare benefits and costs of changes people make to Texas environments.

4.8.C “compare the positive and negative consequences of human modification of the environment in Texas, past and present.”

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each positive consequence of a human-made change. Circle each negative consequence so you can compare how people and nature are affected.

People Change Texas Environments

- ① More than a century ago, farmers in the Lower Rio Grande Valley dug canals to carry river water to dry fields. The canals helped growers raise crops such as cotton and vegetables. More farms and jobs grew from this change. However, taking water from the river left less water for natural areas, including some wetlands where plants and animals live.
- ② Texas communities have also built dams across rivers to make reservoirs. Reservoirs can store water for homes and farms during dry times. Some dams also reduce flooding or produce electricity. Yet a dam can cover land with water and change a river's flow. Fish may not reach places where they feed or lay eggs, and people may lose homes or farms when land floods.
- ③ Today, Texas has many wind farms, groups of tall turbines that use moving air to make electricity. Wind power can reduce the need to burn fuels that pollute the air. It can also bring jobs to a community. On the other hand, turbines, roads, and power lines can change open habitat. Some birds and bats can be harmed if they collide with turbines.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE Use the passage

- 1 What was one positive consequence and one negative consequence of digging canals in the Lower Rio Grande Valley?

- 2 How could a reservoir help people, and how could a dam harm fish?

- 3 What positive consequence did canals and wind farms have in common?

- 4 Compare one negative consequence of dams with one negative consequence of wind farms.

3 YOUR TURN Your own words

Invent a different change people could make to a Texas environment. Write three sentences that name the change, tell one positive consequence, and tell one negative consequence.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline each positive consequence of a human-made change. Circle each negative consequence so you can compare how people and nature are affected. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What was one positive consequence and one negative consequence of digging canals in the Lower Rio Grande Valley?	Positive: The canals helped farmers grow crops and created more farms and jobs. Negative: Less river water was left for natural areas such as wetlands.
2	How could a reservoir help people, and how could a dam harm fish?	A reservoir can store water for homes and farms during dry times. A dam can change river flow, so fish may not reach places where they feed or lay eggs.
3	What positive consequence did canals and wind farms have in common?	Both changes brought jobs to communities.
4	Compare one negative consequence of dams with one negative consequence of wind farms.	Dams can cover land with water and change river flow, affecting fish and people. Wind farms can change open habitat and harm birds or bats that collide with turbines.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

A town in Texas could build a walking trail through an unused field. The trail would give families a place to exercise outdoors. Construction could remove some grass and disturb animals that live there.

Accept consequences stated in the passage, even if students choose different correct examples. For the open response, accept a reasonable Texas environmental change with one clear positive and one clear negative consequence.