

West Texas Changes

Trace how agriculture and settlement reshaped a region.

7.6.D "explain the political, economic, and social impact of the agricultural industry and the development of West Texas resulting from the close of the frontier."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each economic impact, circle each political impact, and write S beside each social impact. Use your marks to explain how agriculture and settlement changed West Texas after the frontier closed.

After the Frontier Closed

- ① By 1890, the U.S. Census reported that a distinct western frontier line could no longer be identified. In Texas, this change did not mean West Texas was empty. Ranchers, farmers, railroad workers, and merchants continued to move into the region. Rail lines carried cattle, cotton, wheat, and supplies between West Texas and distant markets. Barbed-wire fences and windmills made it easier for owners to control land and water. Agriculture increasingly tied the region's economy to railroads, banks, and market prices.
- ② Farmers and ranchers needed roads, rail connections, and access to water. As settlements grew, residents organized counties and towns, elected local officials, and sought public schools and other services. Agricultural producers also paid attention to railroad freight rates and land rules because these policies affected their profits. Their growing numbers gave West Texas communities a stronger voice in state and local politics. The close of the frontier therefore changed who participated in government and what issues leaders had to address.
- ③ Development brought new communities but did not benefit everyone equally. Railroad towns became places where people traded, attended school, and met neighbors. Farm and ranch work created jobs, yet drought, low prices, and debt could force families to leave. Fences limited the open range and contributed to disputes over land and water. Anglo settlers, Mexican Americans, Black Texans, and immigrant workers all helped build West Texas, while unequal access to land and power shaped daily life. Agriculture changed social relationships as well as land use.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 How did rail lines affect the economy of West Texas agricultural producers?

2 Explain two ways that growing settlements changed political life in West Texas.

3 What was one social benefit and one social difficulty that came with development in West Texas?

4 Why did barbed-wire fences affect more than just the work of ranching and farming?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Write a three-sentence explanation of one agricultural or development change named in the passage. Explain its economic impact and its political or social impact using specific details from the passage.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline each economic impact, circle each political impact, and write S beside each social impact. Use your marks to explain how agriculture and settlement changed West Texas after the frontier closed. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did rail lines affect the economy of West Texas agricultural producers?	Rail lines moved cattle, cotton, wheat, and supplies to and from distant markets. Producers became connected to railroad freight rates and market prices.
2	Explain two ways that growing settlements changed political life in West Texas.	Residents organized counties and towns, elected local officials, and sought services such as public schools. Their larger population also gave West Texas a stronger voice in state and local politics.
3	What was one social benefit and one social difficulty that came with development in West Texas?	Railroad towns gave people places to trade, attend school, and meet neighbors. Difficulties included drought, low prices, debt, and disputes over land and water.
4	Why did barbed-wire fences affect more than just the work of ranching and farming?	Fences helped owners control land and water, but they also limited the open range and led to disputes over land and water.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The spread of railroads changed West Texas agriculture. Economically, railroads carried cattle, cotton, and wheat to distant markets, although freight rates affected profits. Socially, railroad towns gave people places to trade, attend school, and meet neighbors.

Accept equivalent explanations that correctly connect a change in agriculture or settlement to an economic, political, or social result stated in the passage. For the open response, accept any named change with an accurate economic impact and an accurate political or social impact.