Cause and Effect in Texts

Grade 5 Reading Worksheet

Name _____ Date _____

Circle the answer.

READ THIS FIRST

Why Venice Floods

Venice, Italy, is a city built on water. Instead of streets, it has about 150 canals, and people travel by boat. For centuries, visitors have admired its palaces and bridges. But Venice has a growing problem. More and more often, seawater pours into its squares and homes. Venetians call these floods acqua alta, which means "high water."

Several causes work together to create acqua alta. The first is the city's location. Venice sits on 118 small islands in a shallow lagoon. The lagoon is connected to the Adriatic Sea by three openings. Twice a day, tides push seawater into the lagoon and pull it back out.

The second cause is that Venice is slowly sinking. The city stands on wooden posts driven into soft mud long ago. Over time, the mud has packed down under the weight of the buildings. In the 1900s, factories near Venice also pumped huge amounts of water from underground. As a result, the ground beneath the city sank even faster. The pumping was stopped in the 1970s, but the land did not rise again.

The third cause is that the sea itself is rising. As Earth's climate warms, ice melts and ocean water expands. Each year, the Adriatic creeps a little higher.

The worst floods happen when all of these causes combine with the weather. In autumn and winter, a warm wind called the sirocco blows up the Adriatic from the south. It pushes extra water toward Venice just as a high tide arrives. In November 2019, this combination raised the water about six feet above its usual mark. More than 80 percent of the city was flooded. Shops were ruined, and water filled the famous St. Mark's Basilica.

To protect the city, Italy built a system called MOSE. It is a row of 78 giant yellow gates lying on the floor of the lagoon's three openings. When a dangerous tide is predicted, air is pumped into the gates. Consequently, they rise up and form a wall that holds back the sea. MOSE was first used in October 2020, and it kept the city dry.

The gates are not a perfect solution. Each time they close, ships cannot enter the lagoon. As the sea keeps rising, the gates may need to close more and more often. Venice will need new ideas to stay above the water.

1. What is one reason Venice floods more often than it used to?

   Factories are pumping water into the lagoon.

   The city has fewer canals than before.

   The ground beneath the city is sinking.

   The tides now come in only once a day.

2. What was an effect of factories pumping water from underground?

   The ground under Venice sank faster.

   The land rose again after the 1970s.

   The wooden posts floated to the top.

   The lagoon's tides grew much weaker.

3. Which signal words in the third paragraph introduce an effect?

   the second cause As a result In the 1900s long ago

4. According to the text, why is the sea around Venice rising?

   The MOSE gates trap water inside the lagoon.

   Factories pumped underground water into the sea.

   The sirocco wind adds more water every day.

   Melting ice and warming water raise the ocean.

5. What part does the sirocco play in the worst floods?

   It makes the mud under the city pack down.

   It pushes extra water toward Venice during a high tide.

   It blows water out of the lagoon twice each day.

   It warms the lagoon so the ice around it melts.

6. What caused the November 2019 flood to be so severe?

   The city's wooden posts suddenly broke.

   Factories began pumping groundwater again.

   A strong wind and a high tide came together.

   The MOSE gates failed to rise that day.

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Answer Key - Grade 5 Reading Worksheet

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