

Rainbow Readers Grade 4

A Disaster Called Drought

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Step 1. Key Words

Read the words and write the meaning of the words in your mother tongue.

drought n. a long period of time when there is little rain _____

You might think drought is just a period of very little rain.

lack n. a situation where you have less of something than is necessary _____

suffer v. to be affected by a bad event _____

Jamie and the land around him are suffering from drought.

plow v. to turn over soil before planting seeds _____

melt v. to change from solid to liquid _____

disaster n. a very bad event, often one which kills many people _____

population n. the number of people living in an area _____

But in the 20th century the population in the Sahel began to grow and grow.

wither v. to dry up _____

climate n. the type of weather that a region has _____

Drought can happen in any climate, all over the world.

reservoir n. a lake where water is stored _____

Large river dams, water towers, reservoirs, and wells are good sources of water during droughts.

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Step 2. Comprehension Questions

Choose the best answer.

1. What causes drought in the mountains?
 - a. There is too little water after a storm.
 - b. There is not enough snow in winter.
 - c. There are not enough rivers.
 - d. There is too much dust in the air.

2. What can a city government ask people to do to save water?
 - a. Water their lawns every day
 - b. Help build a reservoir
 - c. Take shorter showers
 - d. Share water with their neighbors

3. Where is the Sahel located?
 - a. Europe
 - b. North America
 - c. South America
 - d. Africa

4. Which was a cause of the Dust Bowl?
 - a. There were fires burning on the Great Plains.
 - b. The farmers removed the grass roots in the soil.
 - c. There were too many animals in the Great Plains.
 - d. The soil was not good for growing crops.

5. Why didn't people in the Sahel have enough water during droughts?
 - a. There were too many people living in the area.
 - b. There were no rules about conserving water.
 - c. They used too much water to grow food.
 - d. The lakes and streams in the area dried up.

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6. What did an amusement park do to save water?
 - a. Build a water tower
 - b. Close its water slide.
 - c. Stop putting ice in drinks
 - d. Open on weekends only

Step 3. Summary

Put the following sentences in order from 1 (first) to 5 (last).

1. _____ They farmed the same way they did on the East Coast of America.
2. _____ Thousands of families had to leave their homes.
3. _____ Sometimes people can make the effects of a drought worse than usual.
4. _____ They didn't know how important a protective web of grass roots was.
5. _____ Drought and dust-storms killed the crops in the Great Plains.