

Name	
Class	

CATEGORY 3_GRADE 7

DATE:

Task 1: Below is an excerpt from the article "The Good Earth". Fill in the blanks with the appropriate word from the choices in the yellow box. (2 points/ 0.25 per question)

loess	starvation	damage	soil
erosion	steep slopes	rock	deposition

China's Loess Plateau was formed by _____. (1) For thousands of years, wind has blown silt into vast heaps of yellowish soil, called _____. (2) (pronounced "less"). The plateau is the largest deposit of loess in the world. It covers an area about the size of France, Belgium, and the Netherlands combined. Generations of farmers have squeezed a living from the land — even living in the land, in caves dug into the steep hillsides.

The Loess Plateau provides a clear example of how people can _____. (3) soil. In the 1950s, farmers started building thousands of terraces to increase the amount of land available to farm. As they carved out terraces, they removed all of the native grasses and small trees growing on the _____. (4)

When dry, loess is as hard as _____. (5) The terrace walls held up and crop yields improved for a while. During each rainy season, though, the wet loess crumbled and terraces collapsed. Without native vegetation, soil washed away by the ton. Villagers couldn't rebuild the terraces fast enough, and the problem continued for decades. Eventually thousands of people were forced to leave or face _____. (6) The plateau had become one of the fastest-eroding places on Earth.

Since then, the Chinese government has worked with farmers to slow _____. (7) by planting trees and grasses that can hold _____. (8) in place, but erosion is still a problem. Other measures are needed if farming in this region is to succeed.

Task 2: Answer the following questions. (4 points/1 point per question)

1. How did the Native Americans make the *terra preta*?

2. Name and describe the layers of the soil.

3. What is a landslide? What causes landslides? List 8 damages landslides cause.

4. Summarize the article "China's Loess Plateau" in 50 words. (task 1)

Task 3: Column A contains the vocabulary. Column B contains the definition. Match the following words to their definition. (3 points/0.25 per question)

Column A	Column B
1. sediment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the matter that settles to the bottom of a liquid
2. prosperity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> upward or downward slant or inclination or degree of slant
3. erosion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a careful preservation and protection of something
4. absorb	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the condition of being successful or thriving
5. loess	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to suffer extreme hunger
6. vegetation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> heaps of yellowish soil
7. survivor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> people or animals who remain alive or in existence
8. slope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to take in in a natural way
9. responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> happens when soil is removed
10. catastrophe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> plant life or total plant cover
11. starve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> something for which one is responsible
12. conservation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a tragic or bad event

Task 4: Multiple Choice. Choose the best answer. (6 points/0.2 per question)

1. What does "*terra preta*" mean?
a. black earth b. blue earth c. green earth
2. What was the important source of wealth of ancient farmers in Syria?
a. broccoli trade b. olive trade c. wheat trade
3. What does "chew the fat" mean?
a. chat in a leisurely and prolonged way
b. eat the fat
c. walk faster to reduce the fat
4. Below are ways to take care of the soil EXCEPT:
a. conserve by planting more trees
b. give pollution to the soil
c. build terraces
5. Should people be allowed to leave where a landslide might strike?
a. Yes. When they are prepared, they can stay.
b. No. Not all engineering measures work.
c. Yes. They own the land so they need to stay.