Standard: Geography 2a  Grade Cluster 6-8

**Western States**

The states of Washington, Oregon, and California average more rainfall than the states of Montana, Wyoming, and Colorado.

![Western States Map](http://www.allaboutretreats.com/assets/images/maps/retreats/map_west.gif)

**Brief Constructed Response Prompt:**

What physical feature (natural feature) accounts for the difference in the amount of rainfall the states receive? Explain your answer.

**Desired Response(s):**

- Mountains
- Winds

**Desired Response(s): 3 examples**

- **Mountains**: block the winds and as the air rises (cools) it drops it moisture. As the air moves over the mountains it has less moisture to fall as precipitation (rain/snow).
- **The air dries out as it moves over the mountains.**
- **California, Oregon, and Washington are on the windward side of the mountains. Colorado, Wyoming, and Montana are on the leeward (rain shadow) side of the mountains. The leeward side receives less rain.**

**Rubric**

- 2 = This response gives a valid answer with an accurate and relevant response
- 1 = This response gives a valid answer with an inaccurate, irrelevant, or no response
- 0 = Inaccurate or no answer.

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*Social Studies Coalition of Delaware*