Rivers and Routes

How water and trade helped Indus cities grow

SS24.7.12b "Describe how geographic conditions in South Asia, including monsoons, and trade with neighboring regions contributed to the growth of civilization in the region."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two geographic conditions, circle two examples of trade with neighboring regions, and write the number 1 beside one condition and the number 1 beside its effect on city growth.

Life Along the Indus

1. Imagine arriving at Mohenjo-daro, a city near the Indus River, about 4,000 years ago. The river and its branches carried water from mountain snowmelt and seasonal rain across the dry plains. Summer monsoon rains brought much of the year's water, though their strength changed from year to year. Floods could spread fresh soil over nearby fields, helping farmers grow crops such as wheat and barley. Reliable harvests supported people who did other work, including making pottery, building houses, and trading goods.

2. Water was useful, but it was not easy to control. A weak monsoon could leave fields dry, while strong rains and swollen rivers could damage homes or crops. People built parts of settlements on raised ground and dug wells for water. At Mohenjo-daro, carefully planned streets and drains helped carry away wastewater. The Indus River system also linked communities across the plains. People and supplies could move along its waterways and nearby land routes, connecting farms to towns. These connections helped cities gather food and materials from beyond their own fields.

3. The same region was connected to lands farther away. Traders brought lapis lazuli, a blue stone from the area of present-day Afghanistan, to Indus communities, where skilled workers could make valued objects. Indus traders sent carnelian beads toward Mesopotamia, a civilization west of South Asia. Some goods traveled across the Arabian Sea; changing seasonal winds could help sailors plan their trips. Trade gave craft workers materials and customers beyond their cities. Together, fertile riverlands, ways to manage water, and exchange with neighbors supported the growth of Indus cities.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How could monsoon rains and river floods help an Indus city grow?

2. How could a weak monsoon or strong rains threaten a settlement? Explain one way people responded to a water problem.

3. How did the Indus River system help towns grow beyond what their own fields could supply?

4. How could trade with the area of present-day Afghanistan and with Mesopotamia support workers in Indus cities?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine a new Indus town beside a river during a summer with weak monsoon rains. In four or five sentences, explain one way the town could handle the water problem and how its location and trade with a neighboring region could still help it grow.

ANSWER KEY

Rivers and Routes

GRADE 7 · SS24.7.12b

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two geographic conditions, circle two examples of trade with neighboring regions, and write the number 1 beside one condition and the number 1 beside its effect on city growth. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How could monsoon rains and river floods help an Indus city grow?	**Monsoon rain supplied water, and floods spread fresh soil on fields. Better harvests supported people who built, made goods, and traded.**
2	How could a weak monsoon or strong rains threaten a settlement? Explain one way people responded to a water problem.	**A weak monsoon could dry fields, while strong rains could damage crops or homes. People dug wells for water or built parts of settlements on raised ground.**
3	How did the Indus River system help towns grow beyond what their own fields could supply?	**Its waterways and nearby land routes connected farms to towns, allowing cities to gather food and materials from other communities.**
4	How could trade with the area of present-day Afghanistan and with Mesopotamia support workers in Indus cities?	**Trade brought lapis lazuli from the area of present-day Afghanistan for workers to use and gave bead makers customers in Mesopotamia.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The town could dig wells to give people another source of water during the weak monsoon. Its river location could help people move supplies between farms and town. Workers could make carnelian beads and trade them with people in Mesopotamia. Those customers could support more skilled workers in the town.

Accept other passage-supported links between geography, trade, and city growth. For the open task, look for a response to weak rains, a benefit of the river location, and a specific trade connection.