

Why Towns Grow

Read how land, water, weather, and hazards affect where people settle.

SS.3.G.4.1 "Explain how the environment influences settlement patterns in the United States, Canada, Mexico, and the Caribbean."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each detail about the environment. Circle the nearby words that tell how that detail affects where people live, then draw a line between each pair.

Land Shapes Communities

- ① People often choose places to live where they can get water, food, and ways to travel. In the United States, many early towns grew beside rivers. Rivers gave people fresh water and a route for boats carrying people and goods. Flat, fertile land near some rivers also helped farmers grow crops, so more families settled nearby.
- ② Canada has very cold land in its far north, where long winters make farming and travel harder. Fewer people live there. Many Canadians live farther south, near the border with the United States, where the weather is milder. Large lakes and rivers provide water and travel routes, and the land supports cities, farms, and many jobs.
- ③ Mexico has dry deserts in the north and mountains in many areas. People often settle where rivers, rain, or underground water can be found. In the Caribbean, people live on islands. Coastal towns grow near harbors, where boats can bring supplies and visitors. Some island areas have steep hills or hurricanes, so people may build homes in safer places away from flood water.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 How did rivers influence settlement in the United States? Give two ways.

2 Why do fewer people live in far northern Canada than in southern Canada?

3 How does water affect where people settle in Mexico?

4 How do harbors and hurricanes affect settlement in the Caribbean?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Write three sentences about a new town near a lake, forest, or dry plain. Name one environmental feature that could attract settlers and one feature that could make them choose a safer or better place to build.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline each detail about the environment. Circle the nearby words that tell how that detail affects where people live, then draw a line between each pair. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did rivers influence settlement in the United States? Give two ways.	Rivers provided fresh water and routes for boats. Fertile land near some rivers also helped farmers grow crops.
2	Why do fewer people live in far northern Canada than in southern Canada?	Far northern Canada has very cold land and long winters that make farming and travel harder. Southern Canada has milder weather, water routes, and land for cities, farms, and jobs.
3	How does water affect where people settle in Mexico?	People often settle where they can find rivers, rain, or underground water, especially because some areas are dry deserts.
4	How do harbors and hurricanes affect settlement in the Caribbean?	Harbors help coastal towns grow because boats can bring supplies and visitors. Hurricanes can lead people to build homes in safer places away from flood water.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

A town may grow beside a lake because people can get water and travel by boat. Nearby forests can provide wood for homes and work. People may build on higher ground to stay safer during floods.

Accept answers that correctly connect an environmental feature to where or why people settle. For Part 3, accept any logical settlement choice and challenge connected to the chosen environment.