

# Waterways Build Worlds

Read how rivers and oceans shaped settlement, farming, and trade.

**SS.6.G.1.6** "Use a map to identify major bodies of water of the world and explain ways they have impacted the development of civilizations."

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

## 1 READ AND MARK \_\_\_\_\_ Read it twice

**YOUR JOB** Underline each named body of water, then circle each phrase that explains how water helped or challenged a civilization.

### Water Connects Civilizations

- ① A world map helps geographers connect water to human settlement. Blue areas show oceans, seas, rivers, and lakes, while nearby land shows where people lived. The Nile River flows north through northeastern Africa to the Mediterranean Sea. Each year, floods once spread rich silt across its banks. In ancient Egypt, farmers used this fertile soil to grow crops. The river also served as a travel route, letting villages exchange goods and ideas more easily than travel across the desert.
- ② Farther east, the Tigris and Euphrates rivers cross Southwest Asia and join before reaching the Persian Gulf. Their water supported farming in ancient Mesopotamia, a region between the rivers. Communities dug canals to carry water to dry fields. Surplus grain helped some people become traders, craftworkers, and leaders instead of farmers. However, floods could damage fields, and salty soil sometimes reduced harvests. These rivers aided civilization, but people had to manage water carefully for survival.
- ③ The Indian Ocean lies between Africa, Asia, Australia, and Antarctica. Seasonal monsoon winds helped sailors cross parts of this ocean at predictable times. Ports on the coasts of East Africa, Arabia, India, and Southeast Asia became centers of trade. Ships carried spices, cloth, metals, and new beliefs between these places. The ocean did not create one civilization by itself. Instead, it linked many societies, allowing coastal cities to grow through trade and cultural exchange over time.

2

ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1

Which river flows north through northeastern Africa, and which sea does it reach?

2

How did annual Nile floods help ancient Egyptian farmers?

3

Name one benefit and one challenge of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers for people in ancient Mesopotamia.

4

Why did ports around the Indian Ocean grow into important centers of trade?

3

YOUR TURN

Your own words

Use a world map or atlas to find two major bodies of water not named in the passage. Complete the table with each body's location and one way it affected the development of a civilization.

| BODY OF WATER | LOCATION ON A WORLD MAP | EFFECT ON CIVILIZATION |
|---------------|-------------------------|------------------------|
|               |                         |                        |
|               |                         |                        |

**PART 1 • READ AND MARK**

Underline each named body of water, then circle each phrase that explains how water helped or challenged a civilization. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

**PART 2 • ANSWERS**

| # | QUESTION                                                                                                 | ANSWER                                                                                                                                                           |
|---|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | Which river flows north through northeastern Africa, and which sea does it reach?                        | <b>The Nile River flows north through northeastern Africa and reaches the Mediterranean Sea.</b>                                                                 |
| 2 | How did annual Nile floods help ancient Egyptian farmers?                                                | <b>The floods spread rich silt across the riverbanks. Farmers used the fertile soil to grow crops.</b>                                                           |
| 3 | Name one benefit and one challenge of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers for people in ancient Mesopotamia. | <b>A benefit was water for farming, including water carried by canals to dry fields. A challenge was damaging floods or salty soil that reduced harvests.</b>    |
| 4 | Why did ports around the Indian Ocean grow into important centers of trade?                              | <b>Monsoon winds helped sailors travel across parts of the Indian Ocean at predictable times. Ships connected coastal societies by carrying goods and ideas.</b> |

**PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)**

| BODY OF WATER | LOCATION ON A WORLD MAP                           | EFFECT ON CIVILIZATION                                                       |
|---------------|---------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Yellow River  | Northern China, flowing east to the Bohai Sea     | Water and fertile soil supported farming, but floods threatened settlements. |
| Yangtze River | Central China, flowing east to the East China Sea | The river supported rice farming and trade, helping cities grow.             |

Accept equivalent map-based locations and accurate explanations of how water supported farming, transportation, trade, settlement, or created hazards. For Part 3, each row should name a body of water not used in the passage and connect it to a specific civilizational impact.