

Routes That Connect

How geography shaped ancient transportation networks

SS.6.G.5.2 "Use geographic terms and tools to explain why ancient civilizations developed networks of highways, waterways, and other transportation linkages."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each transportation linkage, circle each geographic feature that shaped it, and write 1, 2, or 3 beside a reason the linkage helped connect people or places.

Geography Creates Connections

- ① Ancient Egypt grew along the Nile River, a long, narrow corridor through dry desert. Each year, the river's flood left rich soil on its banks, so many farms and towns stood close to the water. Boats could carry heavy grain downstream and travel upstream with sails when winds blew from the north. Egyptians used the Nile as a transportation linkage, connecting settlements hundreds of miles apart. River travel let rulers collect taxes, workers move supplies, and traders exchange goods more easily than they could across the desert.
- ② Near the Mediterranean coast, the Phoenician city-states built ports where ships could stop, repair, and load cargo. The sea linked coastal settlements more quickly than rough land routes did. Phoenician sailors followed coastlines and used islands as stopping places, creating a network across the Mediterranean. Ships carried cedar wood, purple dye, metal, and glass to distant markets. In return, cities received raw materials they lacked. Ports grew where protected harbors gave ships safer access to land and water routes.
- ③ The Inca Empire stretched along the Andes Mountains of South America. Steep slopes, deep valleys, and fast rivers made travel difficult, yet the Inca built roads, stairways, bridges, and storehouses. These linkages joined highland villages with valleys and distant parts of the empire. Runners carried messages on the roads, while llamas moved supplies. The network helped leaders send armies, share food during shortages, and govern a large area. In every case, people chose routes that worked with local landforms and connected places with needed resources.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 Why was the Nile River a useful transportation linkage for ancient Egyptians? Use one geographic detail and one benefit from the passage.

2 How did the Mediterranean coast and protected harbors help Phoenician city-states create a transportation network?

3 Name two transportation linkages built by the Inca. What travel problems did these linkages help people overcome?

4 Compare Egypt's Nile network with the Inca road network. How did each network help leaders manage their civilization?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Invent an ancient civilization in a place with one geographic feature and a needed resource. In 70 to 90 words, explain which two transportation linkages it builds, where they go, and how each helps people trade, travel, or govern.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline each transportation linkage, circle each geographic feature that shaped it, and write 1, 2, or 3 beside a reason the linkage helped connect people or places. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Why was the Nile River a useful transportation linkage for ancient Egyptians? Use one geographic detail and one benefit from the passage.	The Nile ran through dry desert beside many farms and towns. Boats carried grain and supplies, connected settlements, and helped rulers collect taxes.
2	How did the Mediterranean coast and protected harbors help Phoenician city-states create a transportation network?	The coast and islands gave sailors routes and stopping places, while protected harbors gave ships safer places to reach land, repair, and load cargo.
3	Name two transportation linkages built by the Inca. What travel problems did these linkages help people overcome?	The Inca built roads, stairways, bridges, and storehouses. These helped people travel through steep slopes, deep valleys, and fast rivers.
4	Compare Egypt's Nile network with the Inca road network. How did each network help leaders manage their civilization?	Egyptian river travel helped rulers collect taxes and move supplies. Inca roads helped leaders send armies, share food during shortages, and govern a large area.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Lake Arin lies beside Hillan Kingdom, where copper mines stand beyond steep hills. The kingdom builds a stone road from the mines to the lakeshore and uses switchbacks to cross slopes safely. It also creates a lake route with docks and cargo boats. Boats carry copper to farming villages, while the road brings food back to miners. Together, these linkages connect resources, support trade, and allow royal messengers to reach distant settlements more quickly.

Accept answers that accurately connect a geographic feature or obstacle to a transportation linkage and a specific purpose from the passage. For the open response, accept varied fictional settings if the student explains two plausible linkages, their routes, and their benefits.