

# Detroit Changes Course

Analyze how location, movement, and land use shaped one American city.

**SS.8.G.4.5** "Use geographic terms and tools to analyze case studies of the development, growth, and changing nature of cities and urban centers in the United States over time."

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

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

**YOUR JOB** Underline geographic terms that explain location, movement, or land use. Number three details that show Detroit changing over time, with 1 for the earliest change and 3 for the latest.

### A City Shaped by Connections

- ① Detroit began as a French settlement in 1701 at a strategic site on the Detroit River, a water route between Lake Erie and Lake St. Clair. Its situation near the Great Lakes connected it to inland waterways and, later, rail lines. These transportation networks moved people, lumber, grain, and manufactured goods. As trade grew, the riverfront became an urban center with docks, warehouses, and businesses. Geographic location helped Detroit grow before automobiles made the city internationally known.
- ② In the early twentieth century, automobile factories changed Detroit's land use and population. Ford's Highland Park plant and other factories stood near rail corridors, where parts and workers could arrive efficiently. Jobs drew migrants from the rural South, including many Black Americans during the Great Migration, and immigrants from other countries. Neighborhoods near factories became densely settled. New housing, streetcar routes, shops, and schools spread outward from the industrial core. By 1950, Detroit's population had reached about 1.85 million.
- ③ After World War II, highways and suburban development changed the metropolitan area. Many residents moved to suburbs, where newer homes and jobs were often easier to reach by car. At the same time, factory jobs declined as production became more automated or moved elsewhere. Detroit's population fell, while some suburbs gained residents. This pattern is called suburbanization. The city did not disappear: downtown, medical centers, and new businesses later attracted investment. Detroit's case shows that an urban area's growth and change depend on transportation, migration, land use, and economic decisions.

**2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE** \_\_\_\_\_ Use the passage

**1** How did Detroit's site and situation help the settlement grow before the automobile industry?

**2** Why did automobile factories locate near rail corridors, and how did that location support urban growth?

**3** What migration pattern increased Detroit's population in the early twentieth century? Include where migrants came from.

**4** Explain two reasons Detroit's population fell after World War II while some suburbs gained residents.

**3 YOUR TURN** \_\_\_\_\_ Your own words

Write a five-sentence geographic explanation of Detroit's changing nature as an urban center. Use at least three geographic terms from the passage and include at least two accurate details about location, migration, transportation, land use, or economic change.

**PART 1 • READ AND MARK**

Underline geographic terms that explain location, movement, or land use. Number three details that show Detroit changing over time, with 1 for the earliest change and 3 for the latest. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

**PART 2 • ANSWERS**

| # | QUESTION                                                                                                                | ANSWER                                                                                                                                                                      |
|---|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | How did Detroit's site and situation help the settlement grow before the automobile industry?                           | <b>Its site on the Detroit River provided a water route, and its situation near the Great Lakes and later rail lines connected it to trade and transportation networks.</b> |
| 2 | Why did automobile factories locate near rail corridors, and how did that location support urban growth?                | <b>Rail corridors allowed parts and workers to arrive efficiently. Factory jobs then attracted people and helped nearby neighborhoods become densely settled.</b>           |
| 3 | What migration pattern increased Detroit's population in the early twentieth century? Include where migrants came from. | <b>Jobs drew migrants from the rural South, including many Black Americans during the Great Migration, as well as immigrants from other countries.</b>                      |
| 4 | Explain two reasons Detroit's population fell after World War II while some suburbs gained residents.                   | <b>Highways and car travel made suburban homes and jobs easier to reach, and factory jobs declined as production became automated or moved elsewhere.</b>                   |

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

Detroit's strategic site on the Detroit River first supported trade and urban growth. Its situation near Great Lakes waterways and rail corridors connected factories to workers and parts. Migration from the rural South increased the city's population and dense factory neighborhoods. After World War II, suburbanization moved many residents toward car-oriented suburbs. Declining factory jobs also changed Detroit's land use and population.

Accept equivalent explanations that accurately connect Detroit's location, transportation networks, migration, land use, and economic changes. For Part 3, check for five sentences, at least three geographic terms, and at least two accurate passage-based details.