

Where People Settle

How Africa's environments shape population patterns

SS7G3 "Explain the impact of location, climate, and physical characteristics on population distribution in Africa."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each detail that explains why people may settle in one place or avoid another, then write L, C, or P beside it for location, climate, or physical characteristic.

Africa's Uneven Population

- ① People in Africa do not live evenly across the continent. Population is often dense near coasts, rivers, lakes, and major cities because these locations can provide water, transportation, trade, and jobs. The Nile River valley and delta are examples. Although much of Egypt is dry desert, many people live close to the river, where water supports farming and daily life. Coastal cities, such as Lagos, also attract people through ports, businesses, and related services.
- ② Climate also shapes where people settle. The Sahara has extremely low rainfall and very high daytime temperatures, so it supports few large settlements away from oases and river valleys. In contrast, moderate temperatures and dependable rainfall can support farming. Parts of the Ethiopian Highlands have cooler conditions than nearby lowlands because elevation lowers temperature. Farmers may choose highland areas where crops can grow, although steep slopes can limit the amount of land that can be farmed.
- ③ Physical characteristics can create both opportunities and barriers. Fertile volcanic soils around some East African highlands can support crops, drawing people to nearby land. However, rugged mountains, thick forests, and swampy ground can make travel, building, and farming harder. Disease risk also matters in some wet tropical areas where mosquitoes spread malaria. Population patterns change over time as roads, health care, irrigation, and jobs improve. Still, location, climate, and landforms continue to influence where communities grow.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 Why do many people live near the Nile River even though much of Egypt is desert?

2 Compare how the climate of the Sahara and the Ethiopian Highlands affects settlement.

3 Name one physical characteristic that can attract people and one that can discourage settlement. Explain the effect of each.

4 How does Lagos's coastal location help explain why it attracts people?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Imagine you are planning a new town in Africa. Write 3 sentences that name a location type and explain how one climate factor and one physical characteristic would affect the town's population.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline each detail that explains why people may settle in one place or avoid another, then write L, C, or P beside it for location, climate, or physical characteristic. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Why do many people live near the Nile River even though much of Egypt is desert?	The Nile provides water for farming and daily life in a dry desert region.
2	Compare how the climate of the Sahara and the Ethiopian Highlands affects settlement.	The Sahara's very low rainfall and high daytime temperatures support few large settlements. The Ethiopian Highlands are cooler than nearby lowlands, and dependable rainfall can support farming.
3	Name one physical characteristic that can attract people and one that can discourage settlement. Explain the effect of each.	Fertile volcanic soil can attract people because it supports crops. Rugged mountains, thick forests, or swampy ground can discourage settlement because travel, building, and farming are harder.
4	How does Lagos's coastal location help explain why it attracts people?	Its coastal location provides access to a port, transportation, trade, businesses, and related jobs.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

I would place a town near Lake Victoria on gently sloping land. The lake's water and transportation links could help the town grow. Reliable rainfall and fertile soil could support farms, but planners would need mosquito control because malaria can reduce health.

Accept any realistic African location type and accurate explanation of how location, climate, and a physical characteristic could affect settlement. Responses may describe a benefit, a barrier, or both.