

Geography Shapes Life

Trace how Southwest Asia's geography affects people and places.

SS7G7 "Explain the impact of location, climate, physical characteristics, distribution of natural resources, and population distribution on Southwest Asia (Middle East)."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each geographic factor, such as location, climate, landform, resource, or water source, and circle the words that tell its effect on trade, jobs, farming, or settlement.

Connected by Land and Water

- ① Southwest Asia lies where Asia, Africa, and Europe meet. Its location beside the Mediterranean Sea, Red Sea, Persian Gulf, and key sea routes has made trade and travel important for centuries. The Strait of Hormuz, a narrow waterway at the entrance to the Persian Gulf, is especially important because much oil shipped from Gulf countries passes through it. Control of ports and waterways can bring income, but it can also cause political tension when countries compete for access.
- ② Much of the region has a hot, dry climate, and large deserts such as the Arabian Desert have little rainfall. Water is limited, so farming and large settlements often depend on rivers, underground water, or irrigation. The Tigris and Euphrates rivers support farming in parts of Iraq and nearby areas. Mountain ranges can block moist air, while fertile valleys and river plains offer better soil. These physical characteristics influence where people can grow food, travel, and build communities.
- ③ Natural resources are not spread evenly across Southwest Asia. Saudi Arabia, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, and several Gulf states have major petroleum and natural gas reserves. Oil wealth has supported jobs, cities, roads, and trade, and it has attracted migrant workers to some Gulf cities. Other places have fewer energy resources or less water and farmland. As a result, population is uneven: dense settlements are common near coasts, rivers, and fertile land, while deserts and high mountains usually have fewer people.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE Use the passage

1 How has Southwest Asia's location near seas and major sea routes affected the region?

2 Why do farming and large settlements often depend on rivers, underground water, or irrigation in Southwest Asia?

3 What are two effects of oil wealth in some Gulf countries?

4 Why is population unevenly distributed across Southwest Asia?

3 YOUR TURN Your own words

Choose one place type named in the passage, such as a coast, river valley, desert, or mountain area. Write two sentences explaining how its physical setting and one climate condition or resource could affect where people live and what work they do.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline each geographic factor, such as location, climate, landform, resource, or water source, and circle the words that tell its effect on trade, jobs, farming, or settlement. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How has Southwest Asia's location near seas and major sea routes affected the region?	It has made trade and travel important. Ports and waterways can bring income, although competition for access can cause political tension.
2	Why do farming and large settlements often depend on rivers, underground water, or irrigation in Southwest Asia?	Much of the region has a hot, dry climate and little rainfall, so water is limited.
3	What are two effects of oil wealth in some Gulf countries?	Oil wealth has supported jobs, cities, roads, and trade, and it has attracted migrant workers to some Gulf cities.
4	Why is population unevenly distributed across Southwest Asia?	People are more likely to live near coasts, rivers, and fertile land with water and better soil. Deserts and high mountains usually have fewer people because conditions are less suitable for settlement and farming.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

In a river valley with reliable water, people may build farms and towns because crops can grow there. The valley may have more residents than a nearby desert, where dry conditions make farming harder.

Accept responses that accurately connect a named physical setting with a climate condition or resource, then explain effects on settlement and work. Students may use a different valid example from the passage.