# Land Shapes History

Trace how natural features influenced communities in three regions.

**6-9.WG.2.14** "Give examples of how landforms, water, climate, and natural vegetation have influenced historical trends and developments in regions throughout the world."

NAME _____ DATE _____

## 1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

**YOUR JOB** In each paragraph, underline one natural feature and circle a human development it helped cause. Write the same number beside each matched pair so you can trace the connection.

### Three Regions, Three Connections

1 Long before modern dams, the Nile River flooded fields in ancient Egypt each year. Its rising water left behind rich mud that helped crops grow in a dry climate. Farmers dug channels to guide water onto fields, and food harvests supported villages and cities. Along the river, papyrus plants grew in wet ground. Egyptians used their stalks to make writing sheets, which helped officials keep records of grain and taxes. The same river that carried boats also linked farms to towns, making it easier to move food and goods.

2 In the Andes of South America, steep mountains made wide, flat fields scarce. For centuries, Andean farmers cut terraces into hillsides to create places for crops. They grew potatoes at high elevations, where cooler conditions suited these hardy plants. Mountain trails connected communities, and llamas carried loads along many routes. Travel across rugged slopes took effort, so people built paths and managed food supplies carefully. The Inca later linked large parts of their empire with roads and storehouses, which helped move messages and supplies through difficult terrain.

3 Across the Indian Ocean, sailors on the East African coast watched the seasons. Monsoon winds blow in different directions at different times of year. These winds helped ships travel between East Africa, Arabia, and India, then return during another season. Coastal towns such as Kilwa became centers of trade, where merchants exchanged goods including gold and cloth. In some coastal areas, mangrove trees provided strong poles for buildings. Access to sea routes, predictable winds, and local building materials helped these trading towns grow over many centuries.

## 2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did the Nile's floods help cities grow in ancient Egypt?

2. How did papyrus plants along the Nile help Egyptian officials?

3. Why did Andean farmers cut terraces into hillsides?

4. How did monsoon winds help East African coastal towns become trade centers?

## 3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Invent a region with two natural features from different categories: landforms, water, climate, or vegetation. In three sentences, explain how each feature could shape a different historical development there.

ANSWER KEY

# Land Shapes History

GRADES 6-9 · 6-9.WG.2.14

## PART 1 · READ AND MARK

In each paragraph, underline one natural feature and circle a human development it helped cause. Write the same number beside each matched pair so you can trace the connection. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

## PART 2 · ANSWERS

| # | QUESTION | ANSWER |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | How did the Nile's floods help cities grow in ancient Egypt? | **Floods left rich mud that helped crops grow. The resulting food harvests supported villages and cities.** |
| 2 | How did papyrus plants along the Nile help Egyptian officials? | **Egyptians made writing sheets from papyrus stalks, allowing officials to keep records of grain and taxes.** |
| 3 | Why did Andean farmers cut terraces into hillsides? | **Steep mountains had few wide, flat fields, so terraces created places to grow crops.** |
| 4 | How did monsoon winds help East African coastal towns become trade centers? | **Seasonal changes in wind direction helped ships travel between East Africa, Arabia, and India and return later. This travel brought merchants and goods to coastal towns.** |

## PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

My invented region has a sheltered bay and thick cedar forests. The bay could let sailors anchor safely, so a trading port might grow there. People could use cedar to build ships, creating work for shipbuilders.

For the marking job, accept any correctly matched natural feature and resulting development in each paragraph. For Part 3, accept plausible cause-and-effect links between two features from different categories and two distinct developments.