Routes of Exchange

Trace how goods and ideas connected three continents

7.H.4 "Analyze how the Silk Road created economic interdependence and cultural exchange between Asia, Europe, and Africa."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two places where people in different regions depend on one another for goods or sales, circle two examples of an idea or skill moving between regions, and number the stops in the silk route from China to European buyers.

More Than One Road

1. At a market in Samarkand, in Central Asia, merchants might exchange some silk from China for horses raised nearby. Other merchants carried silk farther west to ports on the Mediterranean Sea, where European buyers paid for it. Each stop needed people who knew local roads, languages, and prices. Silk sellers relied on distant buyers, while buyers relied on many traders to deliver goods they could not easily get nearby. The route was not one road or one long trip by a single merchant; it was a network of exchanges.

2. The network also reached Africa by sea. Ships crossed the Indian Ocean from India to Red Sea ports in Egypt. There, merchants bought pepper and cotton cloth that had come from India. Traders moved these goods north to Alexandria, where ships could take them to European buyers. Along the East African coast, traders exchanged ivory for cloth from India. African ports gained goods to sell and use, while sellers in Asia gained customers. If storms stopped the ships, merchants in several regions could lose sales.

3. People carried more than goods. Buddhist monks and travelers brought teachings from India through Central Asia to China. As local people studied those teachings, they built communities with ideas from distant places. Papermaking began in China and spread west into West Asia, then to North Africa and Europe over many centuries. Makers in new places learned and adapted the skill. Trade gave travelers reasons to meet, but an idea did not need to be sold like pepper. It could spread when people taught, watched, and tried a new method.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did the silk trade connect people in Central Asia with buyers in Europe?

2. If storms kept ships from reaching Egypt, how might sellers in India and buyers in Europe each be affected?

3. How could traders on the East African coast and traders from India each benefit from exchanging ivory and cloth?

4. How was the spread of papermaking different from the movement of pepper between regions?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a four-sentence plan for a trade deal not described in the passage. Use goods from at least two regions, explain how people in both regions could benefit, and describe one idea or skill that could spread when they meet.

ANSWER KEY

Routes of Exchange

GRADE 7 · 7.H.4

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two places where people in different regions depend on one another for goods or sales, circle two examples of an idea or skill moving between regions, and number the stops in the silk route from China to European buyers. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did the silk trade connect people in Central Asia with buyers in Europe?	**Central Asian merchants exchanged or carried silk from China. Traders moved silk west through Mediterranean ports, where European buyers paid for it.**
2	If storms kept ships from reaching Egypt, how might sellers in India and buyers in Europe each be affected?	**Indian sellers could lose sales of pepper and cotton cloth. European buyers might have less access to those goods.**
3	How could traders on the East African coast and traders from India each benefit from exchanging ivory and cloth?	**East African traders gained cloth to use or sell, while Indian traders gained ivory to use or sell.**
4	How was the spread of papermaking different from the movement of pepper between regions?	**Pepper was a good that merchants moved and sold. Papermaking was a skill that people taught, learned, and adapted.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

I will bring silk from Asia to an Egyptian Red Sea port and trade it for ivory carried there from East Africa. The African merchant gets silk to sell, and I get ivory to sell to a European buyer. These sales give both of us a reason to keep trading with people in other regions. A visitor from West Asia might teach us to make paper so we can record our prices.

Accept reasonable inferences about who gains goods or loses sales when trade is disrupted. For the final task, look for a plausible new deal, benefits to people in two regions, and an idea or skill spreading through contact.