Routes That Shaped Indiana

Read how waterways and roads connected Indiana to distant places.

IS.3.5 "Explain the importance of major transportation routes, including rivers, in the exploration, settlement and growth of Indiana and in the state's location within the country, continent, and world."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline transportation routes and circle places they connect. Write E, S, or G beside one sentence showing how a route helped exploration, settlement, or growth, respectively.

From River Paths to World Trade

1. Long before Indiana became a state, Native peoples used the Wabash and Ohio Rivers as travel and trade routes. Canoes could carry people and goods farther than travelers could easily carry them overland. In the early 1700s, French traders followed connected waterways into the region and established a trading post at Vincennes on the Wabash. Its riverside location made it a meeting place for trade between French traders and Native communities. Rivers did more than point explorers toward Indiana: they helped determine where people gathered and where European settlements took root.

2. As farms and towns grew, river routes connected Indiana to places far beyond its borders. Boats could carry farm products down the Wabash to the Ohio River, then down the Mississippi River toward the Gulf of Mexico. That connection gave farmers access to distant buyers instead of only nearby markets. River travel had limits, however: water levels and currents could slow a trip or make a route difficult. In the nineteenth century, railroads offered more reliable overland links, helping towns away from navigable rivers grow. Transportation routes could change which communities had the best access to trade.

3. Today, Interstate 65 links the Indianapolis area with northern Indiana and the Lake Michigan shore region; Interstate 70 runs east and west through Indianapolis. Trucks use these roads to reach markets in other states. Indiana's Lake Michigan ports also connect to the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence Seaway. Ships can travel from there through Canadian waters to Montreal, Canada, and onward toward the Atlantic Ocean. This route links a Midwestern state to another country and overseas trade. Roads and waterways together help Indiana businesses send goods across the United States, North America, and the wider world.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did waterways help French traders enter the region, and how were Native peoples already using those routes?

2. Why did the Wabash River make Vincennes a useful place for a trading post?

3. How did railroads change where Indiana towns could grow compared with river routes?

4. How do roads and water routes connect Indiana to markets in other states and to Canada?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine starting a bicycle company near Indianapolis. In four sentences, trace a shipment by road and water from your factory to Montreal, Canada, and explain one way these connections could help your town grow.

ANSWER KEY

Routes That Shaped Indiana

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline transportation routes and circle places they connect. Write E, S, or G beside one sentence showing how a route helped exploration, settlement, or growth, respectively. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did waterways help French traders enter the region, and how were Native peoples already using those routes?	**French traders followed connected waterways into the region. Native peoples already used rivers for travel and trade.**
2	Why did the Wabash River make Vincennes a useful place for a trading post?	**Its riverside location allowed people and goods to reach the post by water, making it a meeting place for trade.**
3	How did railroads change where Indiana towns could grow compared with river routes?	**Railroads provided more reliable overland links, so towns away from navigable rivers could gain access to trade and grow.**
4	How do roads and water routes connect Indiana to markets in other states and to Canada?	**Interstates 65 and 70 help trucks reach markets in other states. Lake Michigan ports link ships to the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Seaway, which lead to Montreal, Canada.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

My company would send bicycles from Indianapolis by truck on Interstate 65 toward northern Indiana. Local roads would take the trucks to a port on Lake Michigan. A ship could carry the bicycles through the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence Seaway to Montreal, Canada. Reaching buyers across the border could increase sales and create jobs in Indianapolis.

Accept other accurate route explanations supported by the passage. For Part 3, look for a plausible road-to-port connection, a water route to Montreal, and a specific benefit to the community.