Routes That Changed Cities

Trace how trade shaped learning, wealth, and culture.

WH.3.1 "Analyze the impact of trade networks, such as the Silk Road and Indian Ocean trade network."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline a travel condition or exchange on each network, circle a resulting change, and number the steps in one cause-and-effect chain.

What Traveled Beyond Goods

1 In the ninth century, a trader reaching Samarkand could meet caravans heading toward China or toward the lands of the Abbasid caliphate. The Silk Road was not one highway but linked routes with stops where goods changed hands. Horses and silk brought profits, yet knowledge could travel too. Papermaking, first developed in China, spread westward into Abbasid lands. There, paper helped make books less costly to produce than books written on parchment. More scholars and officials could copy texts, keep records, and share ideas. A trade route could reshape learning even for people who never saw a caravan.

2 By the twelfth century, merchants at Kilwa on the East African coast took part in another network: Indian Ocean trade. Sailors timed voyages to seasonal monsoon winds, which made travel between distant ports more predictable. Kilwa's merchants exchanged gold brought from inland Africa for goods such as cloth and ceramics from across the sea. As trade grew, the town became wealthier, and its rulers could support stone buildings. Trade also connected people. Muslim merchants and local communities shaped a Swahili coastal culture that included mosques and a language with words borrowed from Arabic.

3 The networks did not stay neatly apart. Pepper grown in India could travel by ship to Arabian ports and then continue by caravan toward markets farther inland. At each stop, merchants might pay fees to local rulers, giving those rulers money to protect routes or improve ports. These connections created opportunities but also risks. A ship that missed the seasonal winds might wait months before sailing, delaying sales. Meanwhile, a city far from the sea could still gain access to overseas goods through caravan exchange. Trade changed what people could buy, how cities earned money, and which ideas crossed borders.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did the spread of papermaking through Silk Road connections change learning in Abbasid lands?

2. How did monsoon winds help Kilwa's merchants, and what economic change followed as trade grew?

3. Trace how pepper could move through both sea and land trade networks. How might its journey benefit local rulers?

4. Compare one effect of Silk Road trade on learning with one effect of Indian Ocean trade on coastal culture.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine that monsoon winds became too unreliable for sailors to plan voyages to Kilwa. Write four sentences predicting effects on merchants, Kilwa's wealth, and one feature of coastal culture, then compare this disruption with one effect of the Silk Road.

ANSWER KEY

Routes That Changed Cities

HIGH SCHOOL · WH.3.1

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline a travel condition or exchange on each network, circle a resulting change, and number the steps in one cause-and-effect chain. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did the spread of papermaking through Silk Road connections change learning in Abbasid lands?	**Papermaking spread westward into Abbasid lands. Less costly paper made it easier to produce books, copy texts, keep records, and share ideas.**
2	How did monsoon winds help Kilwa's merchants, and what economic change followed as trade grew?	**Seasonal winds made voyages between ports more predictable. Kilwa's merchants exchanged inland gold for overseas goods, and the town grew wealthier.**
3	Trace how pepper could move through both sea and land trade networks. How might its journey benefit local rulers?	**Pepper could travel from India by ship to Arabian ports, then by caravan inland. Merchants might pay fees at stops, providing income for local rulers.**
4	Compare one effect of Silk Road trade on learning with one effect of Indian Ocean trade on coastal culture.	**The spread of papermaking helped scholars in Abbasid lands produce and share texts. Indian Ocean connections helped shape Swahili coastal culture, including mosques and Arabic words in the language.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Fewer ships might reach Kilwa if sailors could not plan voyages around reliable winds. Its merchants would exchange less gold for imported goods, so the town might earn less money for stone buildings. Fewer visiting merchants might also mean fewer opportunities for Arabic words to enter coastal speech. By contrast, Silk Road connections spread papermaking westward and made books less costly to produce in Abbasid lands.

Accept other supported cause-and-effect explanations. For the open task, look for a plausible prediction about cultural contact and an accurate comparison with a Silk Road effect.