

Lines of Control

Tracing how imperial competition reshaped borders, communities, and trade.

10.4c "International conflicts developed as imperial powers competed for control. Claims over land often resulted in borders being shifted on political maps, often with little regard for traditional cultures and commerce (e.g., Berlin Conference)."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline an imperial motive. Circle a rule for claims. Mark C beside a cultural effect and T beside a trade effect of borders.

Competition and Colonial Borders

- ① European powers competed for African territory in the late nineteenth century. Governments and businesses sought ports, trade routes, raw materials, and prestige. Rival claims could create international disputes. Yet a European claim on a map did not mean effective control: African states and communities governed lands that Europeans sought to seize. Conquest involved resistance, negotiation, and violence, not simply drawing lines.
- ② At the Berlin Conference of 1884–1885, participating powers agreed on trade and navigation arrangements and rules for new colonial claims on African coasts. Claimants were to notify other powers and establish sufficient authority in occupied coastal areas. African representatives were excluded. The conference encouraged partition but did not draw every later boundary or grant Europeans legitimate ownership of African homelands. Subsequent treaties and conquests extended imperial control.
- ③ Colonial boundaries often disregarded languages, political relationships, seasonal movement, and commerce. They could split one community between colonies or combine societies with different histories. A route from inland farms to a market might cross a new customs border, increasing obstacles to exchange. Such borders could disrupt existing authority and relationships. Many colonial boundaries later became national borders, leaving territorial disputes, though borders alone do not explain later conflicts. Comparing maps requires distinguishing imperial claims from actual control and considering the people whose territories were being divided.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE Use the passage

1 What economic and strategic goals led European powers to claim territory in Africa?

2 What did the Berlin Conference establish, and who was excluded from its decisions?

3 Explain two ways colonial borders could affect African communities or commerce.

4 How could competition for territory lead to later conflict? Use the passage to trace the connection.

3 YOUR TURN Your own words

Invent a disputed region. In four sentences, give two imperial goals, a cultural effect and a trade effect of a proposed border, and a decision shaped by local people that reduces harm.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline an imperial motive. Circle a rule for claims. Mark C beside a cultural effect and T beside a trade effect of borders. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What economic and strategic goals led European powers to claim territory in Africa?	They sought raw materials, investment opportunities, markets, strategic ports, trade routes, minerals, and crops.
2	What did the Berlin Conference establish, and who was excluded from its decisions?	It set trade and navigation arrangements and rules for new coastal claims, including notification and sufficient authority. African representatives were excluded.
3	Explain two ways colonial borders could affect African communities or commerce.	Borders could divide one cultural group among several colonies, combine communities with different histories, disrupt established authority, or force trade routes to cross a border controlled by another empire.
4	How could competition for territory lead to later conflict? Use the passage to trace the connection.	European powers competed for territory and feared rivals gaining stronger positions. Their claims and border changes created tensions, disrupted communities and trade, and later territorial disagreements could continue to fuel conflict.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Empire A seeks the Kalo valley's copper while Empire B wants its port route. Their proposed border separates related villages. It also puts the market road across two customs zones. Local communities could reject foreign control and negotiate access arrangements protecting their ties and trade.

Accept evidence-based explanations of imperial motives and border effects. For the fictional scenario, require goals, cultural and commercial effects, and meaningful local participation; do not assume any imposed border was legitimate.