Routes Through Challenges

How transportation technology shaped trade across land and sea.

6.7c "Complex societies and civilizations adapted and designed technologies for transportation that allowed them to cross challenging landscapes and move people and goods efficiently."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline transportation tools or features. Circle the travel challenges they helped solve.

Moving Goods Across Difficult Places

1. Between 600 and 1450, merchants crossed the Indian Ocean, a sea with seasonal monsoon winds. They planned departures when winds blew toward their destination, then returned when the winds changed months later. Ships carried pepper, cotton cloth, porcelain, and other goods between East Africa, Arabia, India, and China. Still, sailors faced storms, hidden reefs, and the risk of losing their way far from land.

2. Chinese shipbuilders produced large wooden junks for long voyages. Many junks used watertight bulkheads, walls that divided the hull into separate sections. If water entered one section, the other sections could help the ship stay afloat. A sternpost rudder, fixed at the back of a ship, gave crews better control while steering. Chinese sailors also used the magnetic compass to find direction when clouds or open water hid familiar landmarks. Together, these technologies made sea travel safer and more dependable for people and valuable cargo.

3. Transportation technology also supported travel across dry regions. In the Sahara, camel caravans linked trading towns in North and West Africa. Camels could travel for days with little water and carry heavy loads over sand. Traders traveled in groups because a caravan offered help with navigation, protection, and supplies. On the ocean and in deserts, transportation choices matched the landscape. Ships used wind and steering tools on water, while caravans used animals adapted to heat and distance. These systems helped move salt, gold, textiles, ideas, and religious beliefs across wide areas.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did sailors use monsoon winds to make Indian Ocean travel more efficient?

2. How did watertight bulkheads help a junk survive damage at sea?

3. Name two Chinese ship technologies from the passage. What travel problem did each one help solve?

4. How did ships and camel caravans each match the landscape they crossed? Include one type of item moved by these systems.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Choose either a stormy sea route or a hot desert route. Write exactly two sentences that name two transportation technologies or adaptations, explain the challenge, and tell how your plan would move people or goods efficiently.

ANSWER KEY

Routes Through Challenges

GRADE 6 · 6.7c

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline transportation tools or features. Circle the travel challenges they helped solve. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did sailors use monsoon winds to make Indian Ocean travel more efficient?	**They planned departures when winds blew toward their destination and returned when the winds changed months later.**
2	How did watertight bulkheads help a junk survive damage at sea?	**Bulkheads divided the hull into sections, so if water entered one section, the other sections could help the ship stay afloat.**
3	Name two Chinese ship technologies from the passage. What travel problem did each one help solve?	**Watertight bulkheads helped a damaged ship stay afloat. A sternpost rudder improved steering, and a magnetic compass helped sailors find direction when landmarks were hidden.**
4	How did ships and camel caravans each match the landscape they crossed? Include one type of item moved by these systems.	**Ships used wind and steering tools to travel on water, while camel caravans used animals adapted to heat, sand, and long distances. They moved goods such as salt, gold, textiles, pepper, cotton cloth, or porcelain.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

For a hot desert route, I would send a camel caravan carrying salt and cloth. Camels can cross sandy land with little water, and traveling in a group provides navigation and supplies, so the caravan can move goods more safely.

Accept equivalent descriptions of the passage's cause-and-effect relationships. For Your Turn, accept any historically reasonable transportation plan that names two relevant technologies or adaptations and clearly connects them to the chosen landscape.