

Rivers and Needs

How early civilizations used and changed their environments.

9.1b "Complex societies and civilizations adapted to and modified their environment to meet the needs of their population."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each action that meets a need. Label it F (food), C (clothing), or S (shelter). Circle two actions that physically change land or water.

Meeting Needs in River Valleys

- ① In southern Mesopotamia, the Tigris and Euphrates supplied water, but rainfall was scarce and floods could be destructive. Farmers dug canals to carry water to fields for growing food. This physically changed water flow. Families also used marsh reeds to weave roof mats for shelter. Canal maintenance required people to clear silt, repair banks, and coordinate water use. Local resources and organized work helped support growing settlements.
- ② Shang communities in northern China used fertile river-valley soils for farming. Silk production provided clothing: silkworms fed on mulberry leaves, and workers unwound thread from cocoons. Cultivating mulberry trees changed the landscape, while spinning and weaving used the resulting resource. Shang rulers organized workers for farming, walls, and workshops. These activities show how meeting everyday needs involved both using available resources and changing the environment.
- ③ Indus communities faced seasonal rains and river floods. Builders raised brick platforms that could help protect buildings from floodwater, changing the surface of settlements to improve shelter. Workers also spun locally grown cotton into cloth for clothing. Many cities used standardized bricks and planned streets. Adapting to environmental conditions and modifying surroundings could overlap: raised platforms changed the land precisely to help people live with flooding.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 Which Mesopotamian action redirected water, and what population need did it meet?

2 How did using reeds for roof mats meet a need with a local resource?

3 How did Shang silk production use and change the environment to meet a need?

4 Compare the Indus and Mesopotamian modifications. What did each society change, and what need did each action meet?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

A community lives on a dry plain near a river. In three or four sentences, propose two actions that meet different needs. Explain the local resource each uses and how at least one changes land or water.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline each action that meets a need. Label it F (food), C (clothing), or S (shelter). Circle two actions that physically change land or water. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Which Mesopotamian action redirected water, and what population need did it meet?	Farmers dug irrigation canals to carry river water to dry fields. The canals met the need for food.
2	How did using reeds for roof mats meet a need with a local resource?	Families used reeds available in nearby marshes to make roof mats for shelter.
3	How did Shang silk production use and change the environment to meet a need?	Cultivating mulberry trees changed the landscape; their leaves fed silkworms whose cocoons supplied thread for clothing.
4	Compare the Indus and Mesopotamian modifications. What did each society change, and what need did each action meet?	Indus builders raised brick platforms for shelter from flooding. Mesopotamian farmers redirected river water through canals to grow food.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The community could dig a canal to irrigate grain fields for food. This redirects river water across dry land. It could also weave reeds from nearby marshes into roof mats for shelter. Both actions use local resources, and the canal physically changes water flow.

Accept canals F, reeds S, silk or mulberry cultivation C, raised platforms S, and cotton cloth C. Canals, cultivated groves, and raised platforms change land or water. Adaptation and modification can overlap; reward accurate explanations rather than rigid either-or labels.