A Phone's Journey

Trace how resources, jobs, and trade routes connect countries.

7.C.8.3 "Explain patterns of global interdependence, including the impact of changing technology on trade routes, dependence on resources, use of low-cost labor, and the outsourcing of technological and manufacturing jobs to developing regions."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two places where a problem in one country could cause a delay in another, circle two technologies that affect shipping routes, and number the two kinds of jobs the company outsources.

Before a Phone Reaches the Store

1 A phone sold in Canada may begin far from the store. Some phone batteries use cobalt mined in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, while chips may be made in Taiwan. A factory needs these materials and parts before it can assemble a phone. If a mine closes or chip production slows, factories in other countries can face delays. This is global interdependence: people in different places rely on one another for goods and work. The phone's journey links a resource source, a parts maker, a factory, and a buyer.

2 Technology changes how those links work. Standard shipping containers let cranes move boxes quickly between ships, trains, and trucks. A chip can travel by ship from Taiwan to an assembly plant in Vietnam, then a finished phone can cross an ocean to Canada. Digital tracking helps companies see where shipments are and choose another port when one is crowded. Fast air freight offers a different route for parts needed urgently, though it usually costs more than shipping by sea. These choices change which routes companies use and how quickly goods arrive.

3 A company may hire a factory in Vietnam to assemble phones because wages there can be lower than in Canada. This is outsourcing manufacturing: paying another company to make goods. The same company may hire a team in India to test phone software, outsourcing a technology job as well. Lower labor costs can reduce a company's expenses, but workers' pay and safety still matter. Jobs and income spread across borders, while a delay at the factory or software team can affect a phone launch in Canada.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How could a problem at a cobalt mine affect a phone factory in another country?

2. How can digital tracking change the route a phone shipment takes?

3. Why might the company outsource phone assembly to Vietnam, and what work would happen there?

4. How does hiring a software team in India create a connection between that team and a phone launch in Canada?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine a Canadian company sells electric bicycles. In 4 to 5 sentences, explain how it could depend on a resource from another country, outsource manufacturing and a technology job to developing regions, and use a shipping technology to choose or change a trade route. Explain one effect of a delay in this network.

ANSWER KEY

A Phone's Journey

GRADE 7 · 7.C.8.3

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two places where a problem in one country could cause a delay in another, circle two technologies that affect shipping routes, and number the two kinds of jobs the company outsources. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How could a problem at a cobalt mine affect a phone factory in another country?	**The factory needs cobalt for some phone batteries, so a mine closure could delay the materials it needs to assemble phones.**
2	How can digital tracking change the route a phone shipment takes?	**It lets a company see where a shipment is and choose another port if the planned port is crowded.**
3	Why might the company outsource phone assembly to Vietnam, and what work would happen there?	**Wages there can be lower than in Canada, reducing costs. Workers at the hired factory would assemble the phones.**
4	How does hiring a software team in India create a connection between that team and a phone launch in Canada?	**The team tests phone software, so a delay in its work can affect when the company launches the phone in Canada.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

A Canadian electric bicycle company could buy lithium from Chile for its batteries. It could hire a factory in Vietnam to assemble the bicycles because labor costs may be lower there. It could also hire a team in India to test the bicycles' control software. Shipping containers would make it easier to move parts by ship and train, while digital tracking could help the company switch ports if one becomes crowded. If lithium shipments were delayed, the factory might finish fewer bicycles, leaving Canadian stores waiting for stock.

Accept other plausible countries, resources, and outsourced jobs if the response explains each connection and the effect of a delay. Students should connect a shipping technology to a route choice, not just name the technology.