Coffee Across Borders

How shipping technology connects jobs, prices, and people

8.P.2.4.C "Explain how technology and trade impact standard of living and economic interdependence, using historical or contemporary examples."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline one shipping technology, circle two effects on people's standard of living, and number two examples of people in different countries depending on one another.

The Journey of a Coffee Bean

1. In a Brazilian coffee-growing region, workers harvest beans that may end up in a café in the United States. After the beans are dried, exporters load sacks into steel shipping containers. Since the mid-1900s, standard-size containers have made it easier to move goods between ships, trains, and trucks without unloading each sack. Cranes lift the sealed containers at ports. This technology can lower the time and cost of moving coffee across oceans. It does not grow coffee, but it helps distant buyers and sellers trade it.

2. Trade connects jobs and choices in both countries. Brazilian growers sell beans to exporters, who sell them to roasters in the United States. Cafés buy roasted beans and serve customers. When shipping costs fall, roasters may spend less to bring in beans, and customers may find coffee at a lower price. Sales can provide income for growers, dockworkers, roasters, and café employees. Income helps families pay for needs such as food and housing. Yet lower shipping costs do not guarantee higher wages for every worker.

3. These links also create economic interdependence: people in each country rely on work and goods from the other. A U.S. roaster needs beans from abroad, while a Brazilian exporter needs buyers abroad. Imagine a port strike delays container ships for several weeks. Roasters might run short of beans, and cafés might have to change prices or menus. Exporters could wait longer for orders or payments. Faster shipping can expand trade and improve some lives, but a problem at one port can affect people far away.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How do standard-size shipping containers make coffee trade easier, and how might that affect customers?

2. How can selling coffee across borders affect a family's standard of living? Name one limit to that benefit.

3. Explain how a U.S. roaster and a Brazilian exporter depend on trade with each other.

4. If a port strike delays container ships, how could the problem affect people in both countries?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Choose a product you use that is not coffee. In 4 to 5 sentences, explain how one technology could help trade it across borders, how that trade could affect people's standard of living, and how people in two places could depend on each other.

ANSWER KEY

Coffee Across Borders

GRADE 8 · 8.P.2.4.C

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline one shipping technology, circle two effects on people's standard of living, and number two examples of people in different countries depending on one another. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How do standard-size shipping containers make coffee trade easier, and how might that affect customers?	**Containers make it easier and less costly to move coffee between ships, trains, and trucks. Lower shipping costs may help customers find coffee at a lower price.**
2	How can selling coffee across borders affect a family's standard of living? Name one limit to that benefit.	**Coffee sales can provide income that helps a family pay for food and housing. Lower shipping costs do not guarantee higher wages for every worker.**
3	Explain how a U.S. roaster and a Brazilian exporter depend on trade with each other.	**The roaster needs beans from abroad, and the exporter needs buyers abroad.**
4	If a port strike delays container ships, how could the problem affect people in both countries?	**U.S. roasters might run short of beans, causing cafés to change prices or menus. Brazilian exporters could wait longer for orders or payments.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

A phone may contain chips made in Taiwan and be assembled in Vietnam before it is sold in the United States. Digital tracking systems help companies follow shipments of parts and finished phones across borders. Selling the phones can provide wages for factory workers, while buyers gain a tool for communication. U.S. stores depend on overseas suppliers, and those suppliers depend on orders from U.S. stores.

Accept other passage-supported effects, including jobs, income, prices, and changes to café menus. For Part 3, look for a clear link between a technology, cross-border trade, standard of living, and dependence between places.