Carthage Takes Shape

Trace how a Phoenician settlement became a western Mediterranean power.

AWH.C.4.3 "Describe the Phoenician settlement of Carthage circa 900 BC, the expansion of Carthaginian economic and political power in the Western Mediterranean, Carthaginian colonization, and Carthage's wars with the Greek city-states."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline one detail about Carthage's origins and circle two details showing how trade or settlements expanded its power. Number two details about conflict with Greek city-states: 1 for a cause and 2 for a result.

From Harbor to Rival Power

1. Picture a ship approaching a sheltered harbor on the coast of North Africa. Around 900 BC, Phoenician sailors from the eastern Mediterranean were establishing settlements along this coast. Carthage, near present-day Tunis, grew from this movement; ancient tradition dates its founding by settlers from Tyre to 814 BC. The site gave sailors access to routes linking the eastern and western Mediterranean. At first, Carthage was one Phoenician settlement among many. Over generations, its harbor and ties to other coastal communities helped it become a major center of trade and political power.

2. Ships carried goods between Carthage, North Africa, Iberia, and Mediterranean islands. Metals from Iberia, along with food, pottery, and other products, moved through these networks. Carthaginian merchants gained wealth by connecting distant buyers and sellers. Carthage also founded or expanded settlements on coasts and islands, including parts of North Africa, Sardinia, and Iberia. Some became ports where ships could stop, trade, and obtain supplies. As its influence grew, Carthage made alliances and used fleets and armies to defend routes and shape decisions in nearby communities. Economic reach and political control often strengthened each other.

3. Sicily brought Carthage into direct competition with Greek city-states that had also built settlements there. Both sides wanted access to land, ports, and trade routes. Their rivalry led to repeated wars over centuries, not one continuous war. In 480 BC, a Greek alliance defeated a Carthaginian army at Himera. Carthage later sent new armies to Sicily and captured Greek cities, including Selinus in 409 BC. Control shifted through further fighting and agreements. These struggles show how a network built to move goods could also become a source of political rivalry and military conflict.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Describe when and where Carthage developed, and explain why its location mattered.

2. How did Carthage's trade help it gain both wealth and political power?

3. Describe where Carthage founded or expanded settlements and explain one way those settlements supported its power.

4. Explain why Carthage fought Greek city-states in Sicily, and describe one result of that rivalry.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a 70 to 90 word museum label titled "A Port With Two Faces." Connect Carthage's Phoenician origins, western settlements, and wars with Greek city-states to explain how a trading network could bring both wealth and conflict. Include a cause-and-effect link and a contrast.

ANSWER KEY

Carthage Takes Shape

HIGH SCHOOL · AWH.C.4.3

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline one detail about Carthage's origins and circle two details showing how trade or settlements expanded its power. Number two details about conflict with Greek city-states: 1 for a cause and 2 for a result. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Describe when and where Carthage developed, and explain why its location mattered.	**Carthage developed near present-day Tunis as Phoenicians established North African settlements around 900 BC; tradition dates its founding to 814 BC. Its harbor connected eastern and western Mediterranean sea routes.**
2	How did Carthage's trade help it gain both wealth and political power?	**Merchants gained wealth by connecting distant markets. As Carthage's influence grew, it used alliances, fleets, and armies to defend routes and shape decisions in nearby communities.**
3	Describe where Carthage founded or expanded settlements and explain one way those settlements supported its power.	**Carthage founded or expanded settlements in parts of North Africa, Sardinia, and Iberia. Some served as ports for trade and supplies, extending its reach.**
4	Explain why Carthage fought Greek city-states in Sicily, and describe one result of that rivalry.	**Both sides wanted access to Sicilian land, ports, and trade routes. A Greek alliance defeated Carthage at Himera in 480 BC, but Carthage later captured Selinus in 409 BC.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

A Port With Two Faces

Founded by Phoenician settlers from Tyre, Carthage grew into a powerful port on the North African coast. Ships linked its merchants to markets as far away as Iberia, while coastal settlements offered places to trade and resupply. These connections brought wealth, and Carthage used fleets and alliances to protect its influence. Yet ports and routes were valuable to Greek city-states too. Competition in Sicily caused wars, including the Carthaginian capture of Selinus in 409 BC.

Accept other passage-supported causes and results of the Sicilian wars. For the museum label, look for an accurate connection among origins, settlements, and conflict, plus a clear cause-and-effect link and contrast.