Routes and Power

Trade, transportation, and military posts in the developing region

OKH.C.2.1 "Analyze the role of early trade centers and transportation to the development and growth of the region, by describing the impact of mercantile settlements..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB As you read, underline two ways transportation helped trade or settlement, circle each military post, and number two ways military posts served U.S. goals. Use your marks to explain how regional growth affected different groups.

Growth at Three Forks

1 At Three Forks, where the Arkansas, Verdigris, and Grand rivers meet, boats could bring goods to a trading place linked to the Chouteau family. Traders exchanged manufactured goods for furs and other products with Native nations. The river junction made it easier to move supplies than hauling everything across rough ground. Trade drew merchants, workers, and travelers, creating a place where routes and businesses connected. Yet a busy market did not mean equal power. As U.S. settlement expanded, merchants and officials increasingly treated Native homelands as land to be controlled, while Native communities faced growing pressure.

2 Military posts shaped this network for different reasons. Fort Gibson, established near Three Forks in 1824, stood where soldiers could watch travel and conflicts in the area. Fort Towson, farther south, and Fort Washita, built later, served near lands assigned to removed Native nations. Officials described peacekeeping as a major goal: troops were to reduce fighting among groups and protect people along routes. Some posts also helped make forced removals work by guarding routes and supporting arriving groups. Later posts maintained U.S. authority in the region. Their presence made expansion safer for newcomers, not necessarily for Native residents.

3 Roads and rivers tied markets to military power. Boats carried cargo along the Arkansas River when water levels allowed; wagons then carried goods between waterways, trading places, and forts. These links helped towns and farms grow because people could obtain supplies and send products to buyers. They also helped U.S. officials move troops and supplies into lands where Native peoples had been forced to relocate. A fort might limit violence in one dispute while still serving a policy that displaced families from their homes. To explain regional growth, consider both who gained access to trade and who bore the costs.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did Three Forks' location help the Chouteau trading place attract activity?

2. Why did Fort Gibson's location near Three Forks matter to U.S. officials?

3. How could a military post serve both a peacekeeping goal and the U.S. policy of forced removal?

4. Explain how the same transportation links supported regional growth and increased U.S. control over Native lands.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a 65 to 85 word museum label for an exhibit titled “Routes and Power.” Explain how the Chouteau trading place, one named fort, and transportation shaped regional growth. Include a benefit and a cost for different groups, and explain why “peacekeeping” does not tell the whole story.

ANSWER KEY

Routes and Power

HIGH SCHOOL · OKH.C.2.1

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

As you read, underline two ways transportation helped trade or settlement, circle each military post, and number two ways military posts served U.S. goals. Use your marks to explain how regional growth affected different groups. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did Three Forks' location help the Chouteau trading place attract activity?	**The meeting of three rivers let boats bring goods to the trading place more easily than overland hauling. Trade then drew merchants, workers, and travelers.**
2	Why did Fort Gibson's location near Three Forks matter to U.S. officials?	**Soldiers there could watch travel and conflicts near a river junction and trading place.**
3	How could a military post serve both a peacekeeping goal and the U.S. policy of forced removal?	**Troops could reduce fighting or protect people along routes while some posts also guarded removal routes or supported arriving groups.**
4	Explain how the same transportation links supported regional growth and increased U.S. control over Native lands.	**Boats and wagons moved goods between markets and forts, helping towns and farms grow. They also moved troops and supplies into lands where Native peoples had been forced to relocate.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

At Three Forks, the Chouteau trading place depended on rivers that brought goods and connected buyers. Nearby Fort Gibson helped U.S. soldiers monitor movement and respond to conflict. Boats and wagons also brought supplies to forts and settlers, helping new businesses grow. For merchants, these links opened markets. For Native families, the same military network supported forced relocation and expanded federal control. Calling the posts only “peacekeeping” hides how order for newcomers could come at the expense of people already living there.

Accept supported explanations that distinguish a post's stated peacekeeping role from its part in removal or expansion. The museum label should connect all three required elements and identify different effects on merchants or newcomers and Native peoples.