

Following the Rails

Use geographic clues to explain migration patterns.

S.USII.b “applying geographic skills to determine and predict patterns and trends of people, places, and events;”

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline details about location, transportation, and jobs that explain where migrants went. Then write 1, 2, and 3 beside three clues that could help you predict where people might move next.

The Great Migration

- ① Beginning around 1916, many African Americans left the rural South in a movement called the Great Migration. Jim Crow laws enforced segregation and limited rights in southern states. At the same time, factories in northern cities needed workers, especially during World War I. Families often learned about jobs from relatives or newspapers. This movement did not send people evenly across the country. Most travelers chose destinations that offered industrial jobs and could be reached by established railroad routes.
- ② Rail lines linked southern places such as Mississippi, Alabama, and Georgia to cities including Chicago, Detroit, Pittsburgh, and New York. Chicago became a major destination because trains connected it to the Mississippi Delta, and its meatpacking and steel industries hired large workforces. Detroit drew people toward automobile factories. Some migrants first moved to a nearby southern city, then traveled farther north. Their choices formed clusters: people from the same hometown often settled near one another, creating neighborhoods with shared churches, stores, and newspapers.
- ③ Geography helps historians explain this pattern and make careful predictions. If a new factory opened in a northern city with rail connections to the South, that city would probably attract more migrants than an isolated town with few jobs. If factory work declined, fewer newcomers might choose that city or some residents might leave for another job center. These predictions use location, transportation, and resources together. They do not mean every person made the same choice, since family ties and personal goals also mattered.

2

ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1

Which two geographic factors made Chicago a likely destination for many migrants?

2

How did railroad routes help create clusters of people from the same hometown in northern cities?

3

A town has few jobs and no railroad connection to the South. Predict whether it would attract many migrants, and explain why.

4

What might happen to migration into Detroit if automobile factory work declined?

3

YOUR TURN

Your own words

Invent two northern places during the Great Migration. For each place, give a clue about jobs or transportation and predict whether it would attract many, few, or fewer migrants.

PLACE	JOBS OR TRANSPORTATION CLUE	MIGRATION PREDICTION

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline details about location, transportation, and jobs that explain where migrants went. Then write 1, 2, and 3 beside three clues that could help you predict where people might move next. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Which two geographic factors made Chicago a likely destination for many migrants?	Rail connections to the Mississippi Delta and industrial jobs in meatpacking and steel made Chicago likely.
2	How did railroad routes help create clusters of people from the same hometown in northern cities?	Railroads connected southern hometowns to particular northern cities. People from the same hometown could travel to the same destination and settle near one another.
3	A town has few jobs and no railroad connection to the South. Predict whether it would attract many migrants, and explain why.	It would probably attract few migrants because it has few jobs and no railroad connection from the South.
4	What might happen to migration into Detroit if automobile factory work declined?	Fewer newcomers might choose Detroit, and some residents might leave for another job center.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

PLACE	JOBS OR TRANSPORTATION CLUE	MIGRATION PREDICTION
Lakeport	A steel mill is hiring, and railroad lines connect Lakeport to Alabama.	Many migrants would likely move there.
Hilltown	It has few jobs and no railroad connection to southern states.	Few migrants would likely move there.

Accept predictions that logically connect migration to industrial jobs, railroad access, and location. For the open task, accept varied invented places when each prediction matches the geographic clues provided.