

Land Shapes History

Read how North American land and water influenced early communities and travel.

USI.1.b "locating and describing major geographic regions and bodies of water of North America and their impact on the early history of the United States; and"

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline every named geographic region and body of water. Then number, in order, each sentence that explains how a place affected travel, trade, settlement, or farming.

Routes, Barriers, and Homes

- ① Along the Atlantic coast, the Coastal Plain offered flat land, rivers, and good harbors. English colonies grew near the Atlantic Ocean because ships could bring people, tools, and goods. Tidewater rivers such as the James let ships travel inland. In the South, warm weather and fertile soil supported tobacco plantations, while many northern settlers used harbors for fishing, trade, and shipbuilding.
- ② West of the Coastal Plain, the Appalachian Mountains formed a long, rugged barrier. For a time, they slowed settlement moving west from the thirteen colonies. Passes and river valleys gave travelers routes through the mountains. Beyond them lay the Interior Plains, with wide grasslands and rich soil. Farmers later raised crops there, and rivers carried farm products toward markets.
- ③ To the north, the Great Lakes held fresh water and connected through rivers to the Atlantic. French traders traveled these waterways to exchange goods and build trading posts. The Mississippi River drained much of central North America and provided a travel route for Native peoples, explorers, and settlers. Farther west, the Rocky Mountains rose high and steep, making travel and settlement more difficult.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 Where did many English colonies grow, and why was that location useful?

2 What region was west of the Coastal Plain, and what region lay beyond it? Explain how both regions affected settlement or farming.

3 How did the Great Lakes affect French traders?

4 How did the Mississippi River and the Rocky Mountains affect travel differently?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Choose two geographic features from different paragraphs. Write exactly three sentences explaining where each feature is and how it could affect your choice of a place to live or trade.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline every named geographic region and body of water. Then number, in order, each sentence that explains how a place affected travel, trade, settlement, or farming. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Where did many English colonies grow, and why was that location useful?	Many colonies grew near the Atlantic Ocean. Ships could bring people, tools, and goods, and harbors supported trade.
2	What region was west of the Coastal Plain, and what region lay beyond it? Explain how both regions affected settlement or farming.	The Appalachian Mountains were west of the Coastal Plain, and the Interior Plains lay beyond them. The mountains slowed westward settlement, while the plains had rich soil for farming.
3	How did the Great Lakes affect French traders?	The Great Lakes and connecting rivers gave French traders waterways for travel, exchanging goods, and building trading posts.
4	How did the Mississippi River and the Rocky Mountains affect travel differently?	The Mississippi River provided a travel route for Native peoples, explorers, and settlers. The high, steep Rocky Mountains made travel and settlement more difficult.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

I would trade near the Atlantic Ocean, east of the Coastal Plain, because harbors let ships bring goods. I would also trade with farmers on the Interior Plains beyond the Appalachian Mountains, where rich soil supports crops. These locations would connect my town to people and products.

Accept equivalent descriptions of location and effects when they match the passage. For the open response, check for exactly three sentences, two features from different paragraphs, locations, and reasonable effects on living or trade.