

Why Cities Grow

Use site, situation, migration, and changing functions to explain urban development.

WG.15 “The student will apply history and social science skills to analyze the patterns of rural and urban migration and development by applying the concepts of site and situation to major cities in each region...”

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline clues about each city’s physical place, circle clues about its connections to other places, and write 1 beside each sentence that describes a change in a city’s function.

Cities, Connections, and Change

- ① In the Northeast, Boston grew on a protected harbor beside the Atlantic Ocean. That site gave ships a safer place to load cargo. Its situation, close to Atlantic trade routes and nearby New England towns, linked it to markets and people. In the colonial period, Boston’s waterfront supported shipping and trade. Today, its universities, hospitals, technology firms, and government offices draw commuters and new residents. The city still uses its harbor, but its leading functions have expanded beyond moving goods.
- ② In the South, Atlanta developed where rail lines met, making its situation important to travel and trade across the region. Its Piedmont site offered land above the coastal plain, rather than a deep seaport. After the Civil War, railroads, warehouses, and factories brought jobs. Later, highways and the airport strengthened Atlanta as a transportation and business center. People from rural Georgia and other places moved toward these jobs, while some residents later moved outward to suburban communities. The city’s function shifted from rail hub to a broader service, business, and transportation center.
- ③ In the Midwest, Chicago’s site on Lake Michigan supplied fresh water and a harbor, while its situation connected Great Lakes shipping, railroads, and farm country. Grain, meatpacking, and manufacturing once dominated its economy. In the West, Los Angeles grew on a coastal plain near a Pacific harbor. Railroads, highways, and links across the Pacific helped it become a center for trade, entertainment, and technology. These examples show a pattern: rural migrants often seek urban work, and cities change as transportation, resources, and new industries change what they do.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 For Chicago, name one site feature and one situation connection described in the passage.

2 How did transportation connections affect Atlanta's development over time?

3 What rural-to-urban migration pattern does the passage describe, and what pulled people toward cities?

4 How did Boston's main functions change from the colonial period to today?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Choose a city you know. Write 5 or 6 sentences that name its region, explain one site feature and one situation connection, describe one way its function has changed or could change, and explain one effect of migration on the city.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline clues about each city's physical place, circle clues about its connections to other places, and write 1 beside each sentence that describes a change in a city's function. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	For Chicago, name one site feature and one situation connection described in the passage.	Site feature: its location on Lake Michigan, which supplied fresh water and a harbor. Situation connection: it connected Great Lakes shipping, railroads, and farm country.
2	How did transportation connections affect Atlanta's development over time?	Atlanta first developed where rail lines met. Later, highways and the airport strengthened it as a transportation and business center, helping its function expand beyond a rail hub.
3	What rural-to-urban migration pattern does the passage describe, and what pulled people toward cities?	People often moved from rural areas to cities. Urban jobs in railroads, warehouses, factories, businesses, and services pulled them toward cities.
4	How did Boston's main functions change from the colonial period to today?	Colonial Boston mainly supported shipping and trade at its waterfront. Today it also functions as a center for universities, hospitals, technology, and government offices.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Denver is in the West. Its site is on the South Platte River at the foot of the Rocky Mountains. Its situation links the Great Plains with routes through the mountains. Denver first served nearby mining settlements and later became a rail center. Today it is also a center for government, business, technology, and tourism. Jobs can draw people from rural Colorado to the city, increasing the need for housing and services.

Accept equivalent site details that describe a city's physical location and situation details that describe its connections to routes, markets, or nearby places. For the open response, accept any accurate city example that clearly distinguishes site from situation and explains both a changing function and a migration effect.