

Strategic Places

Analyze how land, resources, and shared water shape conflict and cooperation.

WG.17 "The student will apply history and social science skills to analyze strategic geographic features and resources by identifying and describing examples of disputed borders and explaining the reasons for the disputes..."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each reason a place or water source is important, circle each type or action of conflict, and number the cooperation actions in paragraph 3.

Land, Borders, and Shared Water

- ① Borders can become disputed when governments claim the same land or disagree about where a boundary lies. India and Pakistan both claim Kashmir, a mountainous region near the Himalayas. The dispute began during the 1947 partition of British India and has continued because the region has strategic mountain routes, water sources, and different political claims. Each country controls part of Kashmir, and their forces have fought wars and smaller clashes there. A disputed border can therefore involve history, security, resources, and national identity.
- ② Conflicts between nations take more than one form. A territorial conflict centers on control of land, such as Kashmir. A resource conflict may grow when countries want the same oil field, fishing area, or freshwater supply. Economic conflict can include tariffs or trade limits meant to pressure another government. Political or ideological conflict occurs when governments oppose each other's systems or goals. These conflicts may involve diplomacy, sanctions, cyberattacks, or armed fighting. Several types can happen at once, making a dispute harder to solve.
- ③ Rivers often connect countries, so one country's decisions can affect people downstream. Ethiopia built the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam on the Blue Nile to produce electricity. Egypt worries that filling and operating the dam could reduce water available for its farms and cities, especially during drought. Sudan has interests in dam safety and reliable water flows. The countries have negotiated, but they have not reached a final binding agreement on long-term operation. Shared waters can also create cooperation through data sharing, drought plans, and agreements about releases.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE Use the passage

1 Which four factors named in paragraph 1 help explain why Kashmir remains disputed?

2 What type of conflict is the Kashmir dispute? Use one detail from the passage to support your answer.

3 How does an economic conflict differ from a political or ideological conflict between nations?

4 State one concern about the Blue Nile dam and two ways countries can cooperate over shared water.

3 YOUR TURN Your own words

Write 4 to 5 sentences about two fictional nations that dispute a strategic geographic feature or resource. Identify the type of conflict, explain why both nations want the feature or resource, and include one possible conflict action and one cooperation action.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline each reason a place or water source is important, circle each type or action of conflict, and number the cooperation actions in paragraph 3. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Which four factors named in paragraph 1 help explain why Kashmir remains disputed?	Its history of partition, strategic mountain routes, water sources, and different political claims help explain the dispute.
2	What type of conflict is the Kashmir dispute? Use one detail from the passage to support your answer.	It is a territorial conflict because India and Pakistan both claim Kashmir and each controls part of it.
3	How does an economic conflict differ from a political or ideological conflict between nations?	An economic conflict can use tariffs or trade limits to pressure another government. A political or ideological conflict happens when governments oppose each other's systems or goals.
4	State one concern about the Blue Nile dam and two ways countries can cooperate over shared water.	Egypt is concerned that dam operations could reduce water for farms and cities, especially during drought. Cooperation can include data sharing, drought plans, or agreements about water releases.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Arden and Bellora both claim Beacon Island because it controls access to a busy harbor. This is a territorial dispute, and the harbor also provides valuable fishing access. The countries could send patrol boats to enforce their claims, which could raise tension. They could instead share harbor data and create a joint fishing agreement.

Accept equivalent descriptions that accurately connect a geographic feature or resource to territorial, resource, economic, or political conflict. In the open response, look for a clear reason for the dispute plus both a conflict action and a realistic cooperation action.