

Geography DBQ

Homework Due _____

Learning Target: I can extract evidence from primary and secondary source documents to create a list of main ideas that could answer the question: How does geography impact the way people live?

Document 1Source: The British Museum http://www.ancientgreece.co.uk/geography/home_set.html

Mainland Greece is a mountainous land almost completely surrounded by the Mediterranean Sea. Greece has more than 1400 islands. The country has mild winters and long, hot and dry summers.

The ancient Greeks were a seafaring people. They traded with other countries around the Mediterranean. Many cities created settlements overseas known as colonies. Greek cities were founded around the Black Sea, North Africa, Italy, Sicily, France and Spain.

Many tales and legends grew up about the strange lands and creatures that could be found across the sea.

1. Highlight the sentence that describes the **climate** of mainland Greece
2. Using the information in this document, give an example of how the physical geographic features of Greece shape the lives of the people who live there.

Document 2Source: Canadian Museum of History, Research and Writing, Fred Corcoran
<http://www.historymuseum.ca/cmhc/exhibitions/civil/greece/gr1010e.shtml>

The Greeks have often been described as “independent-minded” and there seems no doubt that geography played a major role in shaping that character. It was the mountains and the sea that molded Greece and Greeks into what they were.

Mountains in Greece don't soar to the heights of other mountain ranges such as the Andes, Rockies, Alps or Himalayas - but they are extensive. In fact, about 80% of Greece is covered with mountains with the result that most settlements were less than 10 miles from a mountain. These mountain ranges isolated regions from each other more effectively than fences because what they lack in height they make up with steepness and ruggedness preventing or discouraging overland travel and communication.

No matter where people settled in Greece, they were rarely more than 50 miles from the sea. The philosopher Plato noted that the Greeks lived around the sea “like frogs around a pond.” A deeply indented coastline held between its rocky fingers a sea that could vary from tranquil to turbulent depending on the season and the weather. Most Greek mariners had experienced firsthand the sea's treacherous currents and diabolical whirlpools.

Surrounded by water, the Greeks nevertheless faced a shortage of fresh water. Compared to many countries, there is a real scarcity of rivers and these often dry up to a trickle in the hot summer months. (Summer temperatures, because of the cloudless skies, are often hotter than in the Tropics.) The lack of rivers is offset somewhat by a plentiful supply of fresh water springs. These were precious and life giving and it is not surprising that they were considered to be sacred sites.

3. What reason(s) does the author give for the “independent-minded” nature of the Greeks?

4. According to Document 2, how did a lack of an important resource impact the beliefs of the Greek people?

Document 3

Source: Anthony Kendall, China’s Sorrows, <http://www.damninteresting.com/chinas-sorrow/>

Natural disasters are tragedies that usually strike randomly and infrequently – unless you happen to live in the Huang He River (colonially referred to as the Yellow River) valley in China. In the space of just over 50 years between 1887 and 1943, some 10 million people drowned or died of famine and disease as the result of catastrophic floods. While particularly deadly, those floods were nothing new to the Huang He. Since 600 BC, the Chinese have recorded over 1,500 floods from the Huang He, earning it the name "China's Sorrow."

5. Why is the Huang He (the Yellow River) called “China’s Sorrow”

Document 4

Source: Sandra Postel excerpt from Pillar of Sand, <http://www.waterhistory.org/histories/nile/t1.html>

For nearly 1,500 years Egyptian farmers cultivated about 800,000 hectares a system of basin irrigation. The shaduf, a water-lifting device already in use in Mesopotamia appeared in Upper Egypt sometime after 1500 BC. This technology enabled farmers to irrigate crops near the river banks and canals during the dry summer. This would have allowed the cultivated area to expand by 10-15 percent. So, by the time Egypt had become a breadbasket for the Roman Empire, some 1 million hectares of land were effectively under cultivation in the course of a year. Local temples appear to have played an important role in redistributing grain supplies to help cope with the periodic famines. From very early times, boats traveled the Nile River and were used to transport grain from one district to another. The surplus from several districts might be stored in a central granary and shared to secure food supplies for the whole region. Fekri Hassan, a professor in the department of Egyptology at the University of London, speculates that the emergence of kingship in Egypt was linked to the need for larger coordination in collecting grain and providing relief supplies to districts experiencing crop failure.

6. Using the document above, list 3 things that resulted from fertile farm land in Egypt:

Document 5

Source: National Geographic, Margery G. Dunn (Editor) "Exploring Your World: The Adventure of Geography." 1993
http://education.nationalgeographic.com/education/encyclopedia/oasis/?ar_a=1

An oasis is an area made fertile by a source of freshwater in an otherwise dry and arid region. Oases (more than one oasis) are irrigated by natural springs or other underground water sources. They vary in size from a cluster of date palms around a well or a spring to a city and its irrigated cropland. Dates, cotton, olives, figs, citrus fruits, wheat and corn (maize) are common oasis crops. Underground water sources called aquifers supply most oases. In some cases, a natural spring brings the underground water to the surface. At other oases, manmade wells tap the aquifer. In some oasis settlements, these wells might be centuries old and might have been diligently maintained for generations to preserve access to their life-giving water. Sands blown by desert winds threaten wells as well as agricultural areas in oases. Sand can destroy crops and pollute water. Communities have traditionally planted strong trees, such as palms, around the perimeter of oases to keep the desert sands from their delicate crops and water.

7. Highlight the foods that can grow as a result of an oasis.

8. Why are palm trees planted around this type of water source?

MAIN IDEAS:

Document	Provides evidence that geography impacts:
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	

Grade breakdown: Your score has been circled and multiplied by 5

0	1	2	3	4
Incomplete. Please finish and submit as soon as possible	Student has not successfully extracted evidence from documents or identified the main idea of those documents. Errors in logic and conclusions are present. Student can redo for additional practice and points.	Student shows the ability to extract evidence from documents by answering the questions, but has not successfully determined the main idea for each document. Can redo for additional practice and points.	You mostly have it! Answers to questions show that student has the ability to extract evidence from documents and determine main ideas.	

