

Ancient civilization essay

Government



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Ancient Civilizations Essay: Understanding Geography and History Amanda
Honors World History Period 2 Mrs. Ocasio October 15th, 2012 People.

Mountains. People. Culture. People. Water. Ever wonder why history and geography very often studied together? Well it is because geography has a lot of influence on the worlds' overall history and how it all connects together. Learning geography is also important in understanding history because people need to know where and how were the locations are and why the civilizations formed there.

To continue, all civilizations are connected in some way, from trading to religious beliefs or wars to traditions; some of the civilizations that are going to compared are very similar. That is why the understanding of geography is crucial to the understanding of history because it impacted the development of city-states, caused isolation, and allowed cultural diffusion between the civilizations. To begin, geography impacted the development of many city-states. India and the Nile River Valley had been majorly impacted by the Earths geography in early civilizations.

Many rivers flowed through India, which included the Indus and the Ganges Rivers. Most Indian city- states were close to these rivers because the people wanted to be near water making it easier to get excess to it. It was also important for Indians to be near the Ganges River because that river was sacred to them and "...one Indian name for " river": lok-mata, or " mother of the people. " (World History Book, page 52). Now the Nile River Valley was very fertile, which made "...farmers take advantage of the fertile land of the Nile Valley to grow wheat and flax, a plant whose fivers were used for clothing. and have excess to water in the dry Egyptian heat. The " Black

Land” was the rich and irrigated area of the Nile Valley and “ no more than 10 miles wide, lay the ‘ Red Land,’ a sun-baked desert that stretches across North Africa. ” (24). All these physical features impacted where the Indian and Egyptian city-states were set up and governed. Following that, most geographical features caused isolation. China and Egypt had a lot of isolation because of the mountain ranges and deserts that surrounded and bordered them. China had the “...high mountain ranges- the Tien

Shan and the Himalayas-and brutal deserts blocked the easy movement of people...southeast, thick jungles divided China from Southeast Asia...the north lay the forbidding desert, the Gobi...to the east, the fast Pacific Ocean. ” (59). Because China was so isolated by many physical features caused by the geographical movement they believe that they were the center of the Earth and the sole source of civilization. But Egypt was isolated from other civilizations by a vast stretch of desert and large bodies of water, making it a peninsula. This desert is the Sahara Desert, the largest desert in the world.

The Sahara is difficult to get through making it harder to reach Egypt, thus making it isolated from migrating people and trade. Although the bodies of water created some isolation, it however helped with Egypt’s trade and excess to many ports. This shows that geographical knowledge is also important to understand history because if one did not know what type of physical features were available thou would now know what to expect. Lastly, geography allowed cultural diffusion between civilizations. Greece and China had a lot of cultural diffusion because both civilizations depended on trade to grow and prosper.

The Greeks had "...hundreds of bays, the Greek coastline provided safe harbors for ships. " (105). This shows that the Greek economic system highly depended on trading overseas; Greeks became skilled sailors, who carried cargoes of olive oil, wine, and marble around the Mediterranean area. Because the Greeks were traveling so much to other areas to trade they went back home with new ideas and different traditions, some making their lives easier. For example, " Greeks expanded the Phoenician alphabet. The resulting Greek alphabet became the basis for all western alphabets. (105). All of the trading and traveling overseas made Greece become more populated and prosperous forcing many Greeks to leave their own overcrowded valleys and vineyards and when they left they brought the Greek culture and ideas with them. Now moving eastward toward China to the Silk Road to the West, which was very important link to China and the rest of the world. " During the Han period, new foods such as grapes, figs, cucumbers, and walnuts flowed to China from western Asia. " (95) Making this region grow even more culturally more than ever.

Although China is very isolated, it still traded as much as Greece would have; the Silk Road eventually stretched for 4, 000 miles linking China to the Fertile Crescent. " China also traded tons of silk westward to fill a growing demand for the prized fabric" (95) and in return China would return with furs from Central Asia, muslin from India, or glass from Rome. The Silk Road was not only an important trade route it was also had many controllers making it more likable; " at the western end, trade was controlled by various people, including the Persians. " (95).

This makes geography even more important to understand history. In conclusion, the study of geography is very important to the understanding of history. People. Mountains. People. Culture. People. Water. Everything is connected. The development of city-states, suspended isolation, and cultural diffusion all has to do with ancient civilizations history and geography. It also has effect on today's environment. In the end it is important to know both subjects even though that knowledge may not be applied to lives in any way, shape, or form it is still something useful to know.