



7th Grade World History

Lesson # 41, May 18, 2020



I can compare and contrast the geography of the societies we have studied this year.

Supplies Needed

Paper
and
pencil



Internet
access



Your
brain

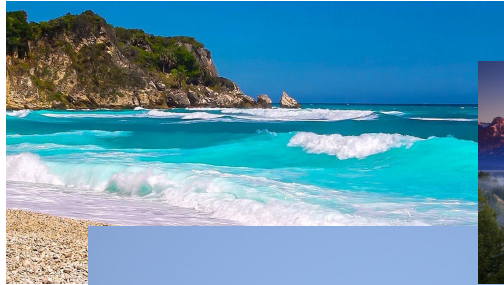


Warm Up:

As you have seen this year, physical geography and climate have played a major role in the development of civilizations around the world. There are both benefits and disadvantages to each of the major geographic features and each type of climate. Think back on what you have learned this year and list 2 benefits and 1 disadvantage for for each of the following.

Physical Features

- Mountains
- Rivers
- Plains
- Oceans



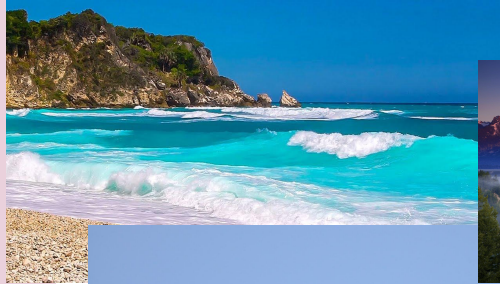
Climate types

- Tropical
- Mediterranean
- Temperate
- Subarctic

Warm Up:

Benefits

- *Mountains*
 - *Natural barrier*
 - *Coal, precious metals*
- *Rivers*
 - *Fresh water*
 - *travel*
- *Plains*
 - *Good for farming*
 - *Easy to build on*
- *Oceans*
 - *Seafood*
 - *Connects continents*



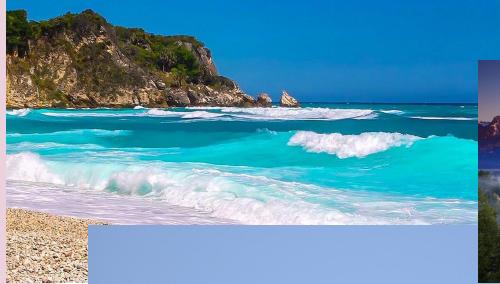
Disadvantages

- *Mountains*
 - *Hard to cross*
- *Rivers*
 - *Enemies can travel too*
- *Plains*
 - *No natural defenses*
- *Oceans*
 - *Hard to travel without strong ships*

Warm Up:

Benefits

- *Tropical*
 - *High rainfall*
 - *Diverse ecosystem*
- *Mediterranean*
 - *Warm temps*
 - *Mild, wet winter*
- *Temperate*
 - *Moderate temps*
 - *Good for farming*
- *Subarctic*
 - *Natural barrier*
 - *Mild summer temps*



Disadvantages

- *Tropical*
 - *Dense jungle hard to travel/build in*
- *Mediterranean*
 - *Summers dry/drought*
- *Temperate*
 - *People often go to war for land in this climate*
- *Subarctic*
 - *Harsh winters*

Activity 1:

Watch this video to see an explanation of how geography allowed Europe to be a world power. Look for examples of how climate, topography, and crops/animals helped Europe and what resulted from this combination. Jot these down on your paper.



Activity 1:

Climate

- *It gets the right amount of rain for lots of crops*
- *Temps rarely extreme allowing for year round farming*
- *Winter kills many bacteria and insects*

Topography

- *Coast full of natural harbors*
- *Long rivers allow trade*
- *Plains great for farming*



Crops/animals

- *Ancient crops and domestic animals from Middle East can live there easily*
- *Crops can grow almost anywhere in Europe*

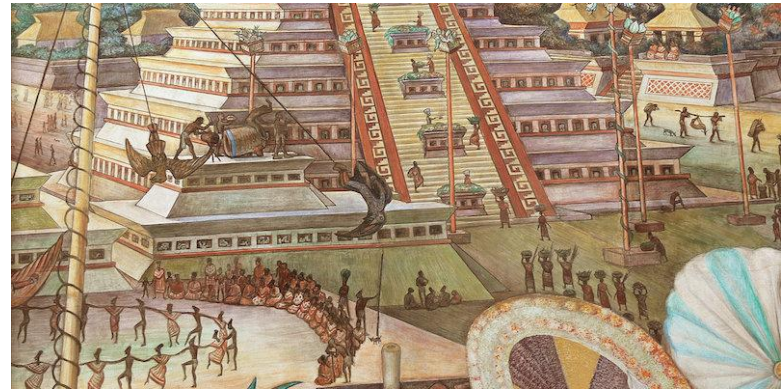
Combined Results

- *Extensive food production*
- *Not everyone needed to be farmers*
- *Population growth*
- *Trade centers developed*
- *Technology*
- *Germs (and resistance to them)*

Activity 2:

The Ancient Greeks flourished and not only influenced the development of Rome, but also of Europe as a whole. The Aztec Empire was strong, but their influence was restricted mostly to Mexico and they were technologically behind the Spanish Conquistadors. Use the factors described in the video (climate, topography, crops/animals) to explain why the Greeks became world influencers and the Aztecs remained a regional power. Gather information from your notes and materials from the previous units. You can also use google to help you out.

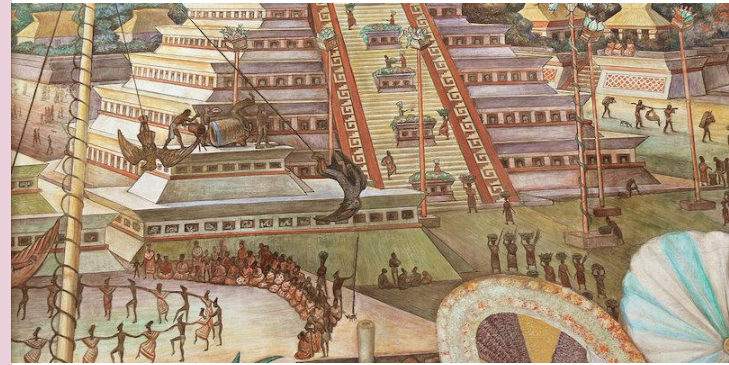
For information on the Greeks, you can start [here](#).
For information on the Aztecs, you can start [here](#).



Activity 2:

The Ancient Greeks became world influencers while the Aztecs didn't because of geographic advantages in Greece. Greece has many mountains which act as natural defensive barriers against invasion. Although these barriers restricted travel, the many natural harbors along the coastline allowed the Greeks to become excellent seafarers. This allowed them to trade with different cultures in Europe, Africa, and the Middle East. The mediterranean climate was good for growing crops like wheat and olives. And animals like sheep and goats could graze freely on the mountainsides.

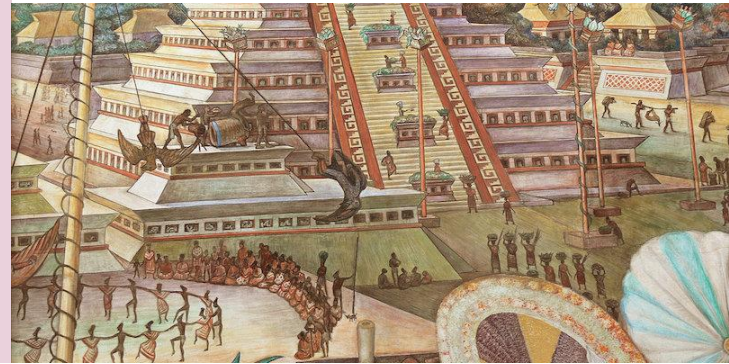
This combination of things meant that the Greeks had access to plenty of food, as well as ideas and products from other cultures. A large portion of their population could become philosophers, scientists, artisans, and educators who would influence the world.



Activity 2:

The Aztecs, on the other hand, weren't as lucky. They did have mountains that provided a defense for their empire, but with little access to the ocean and rivers that were difficult to travel, they could not extend their trade outside of Mesoamerica. The subtropical climate has a lot of rain. That meant that the ground was too wet for agriculture and the Aztecs had to invent ways to grow crops. This took a lot of people to keep the farms productive and prevent them from flooding or sinking into the marsh. The Aztecs didn't have very many domesticated animals, so they got meat by hunting or fishing.

These combined factors meant that more Aztecs were required for food production. Since fewer Aztecs could specialize, there was less chance that they could develop new technologies. And so, when the Spanish arrived, the Aztecs were easily conquered.



Extend Your Learning

Geography can give a culture, like the Ancient Greeks, a leg up. But as we saw with the Aztecs, it can also hold a culture back. However, some cultures have managed to overcome their poor geographic luck to become powerhouses. Check out this video about Japan to see one such example.

