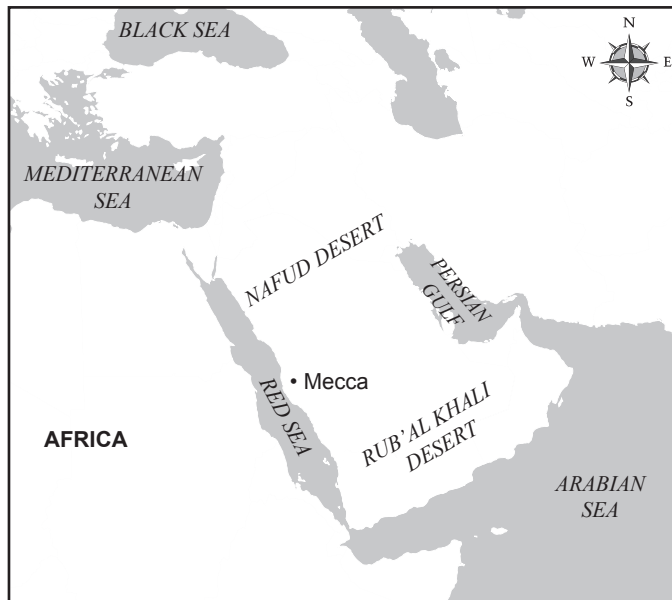


## 52. Geography of Arabia



**A** <sup>1</sup>Arabia is a large peninsula more than 1,000 miles long and located between Africa and Asia. <sup>2</sup>It is a giant desert, with the Nafud Desert in the north and the Rub al-Khali, or “Empty Quarter,” in the interior and south. <sup>3</sup>It is nearly surrounded by water: to the north is the Mediterranean Sea, to the west is the Red Sea, to the south is the Arabian Sea, and to the east is the Persian Gulf. <sup>4</sup>Arabia’s location and deserts helped it avoid being conquered by foreigners in the ancient world.

**B** <sup>5</sup>There are no permanent rivers in Arabia. <sup>6</sup>For survival during Europe’s Middle Ages, Arabians relied on different oases. <sup>7</sup>An oasis is a fertile place with a spring. <sup>8</sup>Small towns originated near these oases, and the towns grew into cities.

**C** <sup>9</sup>Traders crisscrossed Arabia on camels. <sup>10</sup>Camels are excellent for travelling in the desert because they are able to drink as many as 100 liters of water at once, and then go without water for several weeks. <sup>11</sup>The Arabian camel is the only animal in the world that was not replaced by the wheel. <sup>12</sup>However, the invention of the combustible engine in the 1900s did make them used less.

**D** <sup>13</sup>Throughout ancient times, Arabians organized themselves into tribes. <sup>14</sup>Many Arabs were nomads, called *Bedouins*. <sup>15</sup>Bedouin means a person raised, or living, in the desert. <sup>16</sup>They constantly travelled with their goat herds. <sup>17</sup>Bedouins were fierce warriors who lived by an honor code. <sup>18</sup>A quote attributed to Bedouins explains their loyalties: <sup>19</sup>“I against my brother. <sup>20</sup>I and my brother against our cousin. <sup>21</sup>I, my brother, and our cousin against the neighbors. <sup>22</sup>All of us against the foreigner.”



**E** <sup>23</sup>Traders used the cities near the oases as their trading bases. <sup>24</sup>The city of Mecca was one of Arabia's most important trading cities. <sup>25</sup>Trade goods from Bedouin tribes and even goods from Africa and the Far East passed through Mecca so they could be transported by camel caravans throughout Arabia. <sup>26</sup>Mecca remains one of the most important religious sites for Muslims because

it is where their prophet Muhammad was born (in 570) and where the Koran (sacred text of Islam) was written.

**F** <sup>27</sup>Since the time Muhammad founded the religion of Islam and began the conquest and conversion of Arabia, Islamic dynasties have dominated the Arabian Peninsula.

## Questions

- In the desert, what would have been found close to a town?
  - a forest
  - mountains
  - an oasis
  - a river

Which sentences best support the answer?

\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_

- A traveler in the desert who came upon a Bedouin would least want to be:
  - a neighbor
  - his brother
  - his cousin
  - a foreigner

Which sentence best supports the answer?

\_\_\_\_\_

- Camels can go without water for:
  - one week
  - over a month
  - a year
  - three days

Which sentence best supports the answer?

\_\_\_\_\_

- An Arabian trader on a journey in the desert is thirsty. What would he be looking for?
  - an oasis
  - a mountain stream
  - a camel
  - Persian Gulf

Which sentence best supports the answer?

\_\_\_\_\_

- What made it difficult for foreign armies to invade Arabia?
  - its desert location
  - its mountains
  - its camels
  - its oases

Which sentence best supports the answer?

\_\_\_\_\_

- What would you most likely find in Arabia?
  - mountains
  - caves
  - sand
  - ice

Which sentence best supports the answer?

\_\_\_\_\_

- Mark each statement T for true or F for false.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Bedouins raised goats in the desert. Which sentence best supports the answer?

\_\_\_\_\_

- \_\_\_\_\_ Traders used horses to travel the deserts.

Which sentence best supports the answer?

\_\_\_\_\_

- \_\_\_\_\_ Mecca was important for commerce. Which sentence best supports the answer?

\_\_\_\_\_

- \_\_\_\_\_ Arabia is desert surrounded by water. Which sentences best support the answer?

\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_

8. Mecca was important to Muslims because:
- a. Bedouins brought merchandise to sell.
  - b. Mohammad wrote the Koran there.
  - c. Camels left from there carrying goods.
  - d. all of the above.

Which sentences best support the answer?

\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_

9. Based on the map, the Red Sea borders:
- a. the Mediterranean Sea
  - b. Asia
  - c. Arabia and Asia
  - d. Africa and Arabia

### Written Response Question

10. Explain two ways the geography of Arabia influenced the life of Arabians. Please use complete sentences to answer the question.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Complete the concepts maps by using the words from the choice boxes below.

Nafud      Mediterranean      Red Sea      oasis  
Rub al-Khali      Persian      Arabian Sea

