

Name _____

Date _____

Physical Geography and Power in Ancient Rome

Answer Key

For each physical feature, describe how it could strengthen an ancient society’s economic or military power in general. Then use the map of the Roman Empire to identify the specific feature in ancient Rome. Finally, explain whether or not the same feature would strengthen a society today and explain your reasoning.

General Feature of Physical Geography	How could this type of feature strengthen an ancient society’s economic or military power?	Name the specific feature in the Roman Empire.	Would the same feature strengthen a society today? Explain.
Rivers	Rivers allow for trade from the sea to inland areas, which has economic benefits. Rivers also can be used by the military for transport during battle or for supplying armies.	Po River Tiber River	Rivers may still bring economic strength to a city or society today, since fishing, trade, and protection are offered by water. However, the extent to which rivers determine economic strength and military protection is lessened by the variety of modern options: e.g., trade by air, the computer industry, and military protection by air.
River Valleys	River valleys are critical for agriculture because they have easy access to water. They can make a society more economically powerful.	Po River Valley Tiber River Valley	River valleys can still increase a society’s power due to access to water. However, since water can now be transported long distances, the presence of river valleys does not necessarily determine a society’s strength relative to other societies.

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Answer Key, continued

General Feature of Physical Geography	How could this type of feature strengthen an ancient society's economic or military power?	Name the specific feature in the Roman Empire.	Would the same feature strengthen a society today? Explain.
Mountains	Mountains protect areas from military invasion and could also be used to defend from attacks.	The Alps The Appenines	Mountains may still protect areas from military invasion and could be used to defend from some attacks. However, modern war is not limited to ground transport, so the importance of mountains is diminished.
Ocean, Sea	Oceans and seas can allow certain industries, like fishing and trade, to thrive and benefit a society economically. They can also allow the military to travel via ship and conquer other areas.	Mediterranean Sea	Oceans and seas can still allow industries like fishing and trade to thrive and benefit a society economically. They also can allow the military to travel. The large number of options for modern industry and military action lessens the power of oceans and seas to strengthen a society.

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