

# Geographical Understandings

## Chapter 13

**SS7G5** *The student will locate selected features in Southwestern Asia (Middle East).*

*a. Locate on a world and regional political-physical map: Euphrates River, Jordan River, Tigris River, Suez Canal, Persian Gulf, Strait of Hormuz, Arabian Sea, Red Sea, and Gaza Strip.*

*b. Locate on a world and regional political-physical map the nations of Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey.*

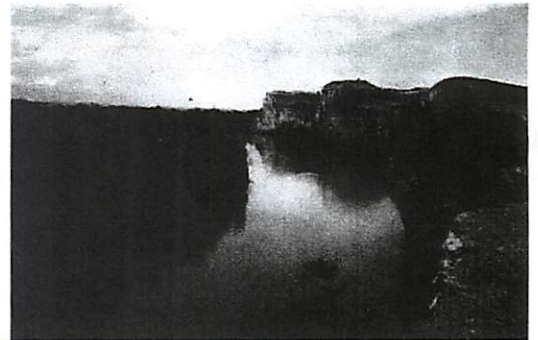
### Lots of Sand!

The Middle East is often called the “crossroads of the world” because it lies at the intersection of three continents—Europe, Africa, and Asia. **Deserts, the most common landform, comprise nearly 66 percent of the area.** Here are some important physical features of the Middle East:

**Jordan River:** Originating in the mountains of Israel, Lebanon, and Syria, the Jordan flows into the Dead Sea. **This river is the key water source for Israel, Lebanon, and Syria.** It is only 20 feet wide in some parts and only 17 feet deep at its deepest point.

**Tigris River:** The Tigris and Euphrates Rivers are like twins, starting in the mountains of Turkey and running parallel to each other in some places. **Along with the Euphrates, the Tigris was part of the cradle of the ancient Middle Eastern civilizations.** The Tigris River flows through Turkey to Iraq.

**Euphrates River:** Flowing into the Persian Gulf, the Euphrates is the birthplace of the ancient civilizations of Assyria, Babylon, and Sumer. **Today, Turkey, Syria, and Iraq compete for its water.**



Jordan River



Tigris River

**Suez Canal:** The Suez Canal connects the Mediterranean Sea to the Red Sea. It is called the “crossroads of Europe, Africa, and Asia” because it allows trade between all three continents. During military disputes in the 20th century, Egypt closed the canal twice by sinking ships in it.

**Persian Gulf:** This shallow arm of the Arabian Sea between Iran and the Arabian Peninsula holds some of the most important oil fields in the world. Western countries call it the Persian Gulf, but most Arab countries call it the Arabian Gulf.

**Strait of Hormuz:** This narrow waterway between the Gulf of Oman and the Persian Gulf is a critically important shipping channel. Much of the world’s oil supply passes through this strait.

**Arabian Sea:** This region of the Indian Ocean is bordered by India to the east, Pakistan and Iran to the north, and the Arabian Peninsula to the west. For centuries, the Arabian Sea has been part of the trade route between India and Europe.

**Red Sea:** The Red Sea is an arm of the Indian Ocean between northeast Africa and Asia. It is linked to the Mediterranean Sea by the Suez Canal.



Gaza Strip

**Gaza Strip:** This area of 146 square miles is bordered on the south by Egypt, on the west by the Mediterranean Sea, and on the north and east by Israel. Disputes over this territory continue between Israel and the surrounding nations.



**Quick Quiz**

Answer the questions below.

Use the word bank to help you.

*DO this!*  
*Answers only. Go back and look!*

**WORD BANK**

- Red Sea
- Suez Canal
- Gaza Strip
- Tigris
- Persian Gulf
- Strait of Hormuz
- Jordan River
- Euphrates

1. Much of the world’s oil supply is shipped through this narrow waterway. \_\_\_\_\_
2. This river is the key water source for Israel, Lebanon, and Syria. \_\_\_\_\_
3. This small territory has been a source of dispute between Israel and its neighbors for many years.  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. A body of water between northeast Africa and Asia. \_\_\_\_\_
5. Man-made structure that connects the Mediterranean Sea to the Red Sea. \_\_\_\_\_
6. Two rivers that were the birthplace of ancient Middle Eastern civilizations and provide valuable water to the Middle East today. \_\_\_\_\_
7. Massive reserves of oil are found here. \_\_\_\_\_