

A topographical map of Southwest Asia, showing the Middle East region. The map features the Persian Gulf, the Red Sea, and the Mediterranean Sea. The landmasses are colored in shades of brown, tan, and green, indicating different elevations and vegetation. The text "Southwest Asia's Geography" is overlaid in a large, orange, bold font with a black outline.

# Southwest Asia's Geography

**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.**

# Middle East

- The Middle East is also known as the “crossroads of the world” because of its location in the center of three continents – Asia, Africa, and Europe.
- Deserts are the most common physical feature here and make up 66% of the area.
- Water is scarce in the region, with countries often competing over access to the rivers and seas.





# Euphrates River

- The Euphrates and Tigris Rivers both start in the mountains of Turkey and run parallel to each other in some places.
- In southern Iraq, the Euphrates River joins with the Tigris River to form one waterway called the Shaat al-Arab.
- It then flows along the border between Kuwait and Iran and empties into the Persian Gulf.



# Euphrates River

- The Euphrates is the birthplace of the ancient civilizations of Sumer, Babylon, & Assyria.
- It is a source of water for Iraq, Syria, and Turkey today.







# Tigris River

- Along with the Euphrates, the Tigris was part of ancient Middle Eastern civilizations.
- The rivers provide water for both drinking and farming.
- The Tigris River flows through Turkey to Iraq.
- The countries that share these rivers have had problems over how the water should be shared.



# Jordan River

- The Jordan River starts in the mountains of Israel, Lebanon, and Syria, and flows south until it reaches the Dead Sea.
- It is only 20 feet wide at some parts and only 17 feet deep at its deepest point.
- This river is a main source of water for Israel, Lebanon, Jordan, parts of Syria, & many of those living in the West Bank & the Gaza Strip.
- The Jordan River is also important because it is the political boundary between Israel, the West Bank, & Jordan.









# Suez Canal

- The Suez Canal connects the Red Sea to the Mediterranean Sea.
- It is a 120-mile man-made waterway that is used to transport goods to and from Asia, Africa, & Europe.
- The Suez Canal is important shortcut because it allows trade between all three continents.
- At the northern end of the Red Sea, ships can enter the canal and can get to the Mediterranean Sea without having to sail all around the continent of Africa.



1956

*Mediterranean Sea*

SYRIA

Tel Aviv-Yafo

Jerusalem

★ Amman

Gaza Strip

ISRAEL

JORDAN

Port Said

Suez Canal

Bi'r al Jifjafah  
(Bir Gifgafa)

Mitla Pass

Sinai

1949 Armistice Line

★ Cairo

Suez

EGYPT

Nile

Gulf of Suez

Gulf of Aqaba

SAUDI  
ARABIA

Strait of  
Tiran

*Red Sea*

0 25 50 Kilometers  
0 25 50 Miles

Boundary representation is  
not necessarily authoritative.

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# Persian Gulf

- The Persian Gulf is a shallow body of water between Iran and the Arabian Peninsula.
- This area holds some of the most important oil fields in the world.
- It is one of the main ways oil is shipped from the rich fields of Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Iran, and other countries that line its shores.
- All of the countries that produce oil in that region depend on the Persian Gulf as a shipping route.













# Strait of Hormuz

- The Strait of Hormuz is a narrow waterway that connects the Persian Gulf to the Arabian Sea.
- It is a critically important shipping channel because much of the world's oil supply passes through this strait.
- Any ships coming out of or into the Persian Gulf must navigate through this very narrow waterway.









# Arabian Sea

- The Arabian Sea is located north of the Indian Ocean and is bordered by India to the east, Pakistan and Iran to the north, and the Arabian Peninsula to the west.
- For centuries, it has formed a key shipping route between Europe and India through the Suez Canal.







# Red Sea

- The Red Sea is an arm of the Indian Ocean that lies between northeast Africa and Asia.
- It is linked to the Mediterranean Sea by the Suez Canal.
  - Because of the Red Sea's location between Europe and East Asia, heavy shipping traffic takes place here.
- During the Middle Ages, it was a key part of the Spice Trade.















# Gaza Strip

- The Gaza Strip is located along the southeastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea, and is bordered on the south by Egypt, and on the north and east by Israel.
- The Gaza Strip is a rectangular territory that is about 25 miles long and 4 to 5 miles wide.
- It's one of the world's most densely populated areas.

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# Gaza Strip

- The Gaza Strip is often politically unstable and there have been many outbreaks of violence over the last 60 years.
- Disputes over this territory continue between Israel and surrounding countries.

## GAZA STRIP

-  Built-up area
-  Refugee Camp
-  Crossing Point

Kilometres  
0 2 4 8

MEDITERRANEAN  
SEA

ISRAEL

Beit Lahia  
Jaballa  
Gaza  
Beit Hanoun  
Nahal Oz  
Karni  
Deir al-Balah  
Kissufim  
(Closed in Aug 2005)  
Khan Yunis  
Abasan al-Kabera  
Rafah  
Yasser Arafat International Airport  
(Inoperable since Jan 2002)  
▲105 Abu Auda  
Rafah  
Kerem Shalom

EGYPT



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