



Grade 4 Waterways and Settlement

Standard 5 – People and Land Students compare and contrast the physical and human characteristics of each United States region in order to understand their similarities and differences.

GLE 4.5.1 Compare and contrast the distinguishing physical characteristics of the five regions of the United States

GLE 4.5.3 Identify and explain how the physical characteristics of a region influenced human settlement

Item 4: Extended Response

Based on the sources and your knowledge of social studies, describe how the geography of the Mississippi River basin is different from the geography of the rest of the country and how it affected the settlement of the region.

As you write, follow the directions below.

- Address all parts of the prompt.
- Include information and examples from your own knowledge of social studies.
- Use evidence from the sources to support your response.





Scoring

The response should be scored **holistically** on its adherence to two dimensions: Content and Claims. Each response should be given the score that corresponds to the set of bulleted descriptors that **best** describes the response.

Dimension: Content				
Score	Description			
4	 Reflects thorough knowledge of how the geography of the Mississippi River basin is different from the geography of the rest of the country and how it affected the settlement of the region, by incorporating ample focused factual information from prior knowledge and the sources Contains accurate understandings with no errors significant enough to detract from the overall content of the response Fully addresses all parts of the prompt 			
3	 The student's response: Reflects general knowledge of how the geography of the Mississippi River basin is different from the geography of the rest of the country and how it affected the settlement of the region, by incorporating adequate factual information from prior knowledge and the sources Contains mostly accurate understandings with minimal errors that do not substantially detract from the overall content of the response Addresses all parts of the prompt 			
2	 The student's response: Reflects limited knowledge of how the geography of the Mississippi River basin is different from the geography of the rest of the country and how it affected the settlement of the region, by incorporating some factual information from prior knowledge and the sources Contains some accurate understandings with a few errors that detract from the overall content of the response Addresses part of the prompt 			
1	The student's response: Reflects minimal knowledge of how the geography of the Mississippi River basin is different from the geography of the rest of the country and how it affected the settlement of the region, by incorporating little or no factual information from prior knowledge and the sources Contains few accurate understandings with several errors that detract from the overall content of the response Minimally addresses part of the prompt			
0	The student's response is incorrect or does not address the prompt.			





Dimension: Claims				
Score	Description			
4	 The student's response: Develops a valid claim which effectively expresses a solid understanding of the topic Thoroughly supports the claim with well-chosen evidence from the sources Provides a logically organized, cohesive, and in-depth explanation of the connections, patterns, and trends among ideas, people, events, and/or contexts within or across time and place 			
3	 The student's response: Develops a relevant claim which expresses a general understanding of the topic Supports the claim with sufficient evidence from the sources Provides an organized explanation of the connections, patterns, and trends amon ideas, people, events, and/or contexts within or across time and place 			
2	 The student's response: Presents an inadequate claim which expresses a limited understanding of the topic Includes insufficient support for the claim but does use some evidence from the sources Provides a weak explanation of the connections, patterns, and trends among ideas, people, events, and/or contexts within or across time and place 			
1	The student's response: Does not develop a claim but provides evidence that relates to the topic; OR Develops a substantially flawed claim with little or no evidence from the sources Provides a vague, unclear, or illogical explanation of the connections among ideas, people, events, and/or contexts within or across time and place			
0	The student's response is incorrect, too brief to evaluate, or lacks a claim that addresses the prompt.			





Scoring Notes for Claims Rubric

A response that develops a **valid** claim expresses a **solid** understanding of the social studies topic. The response is supported by **ample and well-chosen** evidence from the sources. The explanation is logical, organized, and cohesive, as demonstrated by connections, patterns, or trends among ideas, people, events, and contexts within or across time and place. A **valid** claim shows a deep understanding of the complexity of social studies themes that is supported by convincing evidence. The analysis may include the ability to discuss cause-and-effect relationships; analyze the importance of and connection between source documents; classify patterns of continuity and change; evaluate differing perspectives; provide in-depth interpretations of historical events, etc.

A response that develops a **relevant** claim expresses a **general** understanding of the social studies topic. The response is supported by **sufficient** evidence from the sources. The explanation is organized and includes connections, patterns, or trends among ideas, people, events, and contexts within or across time and place but fails to reach the valid level. A **relevant** claim shows an accurate understanding of social studies themes but is less complex and includes more generalized evidence. The explanation may identify cause-and-effect relationships; describe patterns of continuity or change; recognize perspectives on a single topic or theme; identify the importance of or connection between source documents; provide general interpretations of historical events, etc.

A response that includes an **inadequate** claim expresses a **limited** understanding of the social studies topic and uses insufficient evidence from the sources to develop the claim. The explanation includes weak connections, patterns, or trends among ideas, people, events, and contexts within or across time and place. An **inadequate** claim shows some understanding of social studies themes but is limited in its analysis and evidence. The explanation may include insufficient understanding of cause and effect relationships; little recognition of patterns of continuity or change; limited knowledge of perspectives on a single topic or theme; misconceptions regarding the importance of or connections between source documents; limited interpretation of historical events, etc.

A response that develops a **substantially** flawed claim expresses **little** understanding of the social studies topic. The explanation, if present, may include vague or illogical connections, patterns, or trends among ideas, people, events, and contexts within or across time and place. It fails to reach the inadequate level for a variety of reasons. For example, the response may provide some evidence that relates to the topic, but is ineffective in supporting a claim, if one is made.





Characteristics of a Strong Response

A strong response is logically organized into several paragraphs. Any errors in spelling, punctuation, grammar, or capitalization do not interfere with the ability of the reader to understand the ideas presented.

A strong response may develop one or more lines of reasoning to support the claim. Here are some examples.

- The Mississippi River basin has more fertile soil, minerals, and navigable rivers than many other parts of the country. These features attracted settlers, who founded cities and towns that thrived on agriculture, mining, and trade.
- The geography of the Mississippi River basin (watershed) makes up about 40% of the country. It is largely lowlands with forests in the northern, eastern, and southern parts of the basin. The northeastern part of the basin also has the rolling hills and touches the western slopes of the Appalachian Mountains. The western part of the Mississippi basin is made up of the grasslands of the Great Plains. The southern part of the Mississippi basin is also noted for swamps and wetlands. The rich soil of the basin and natural resources of the region attracted settlers who wanted to establish farms or to harvest timber.
- The northern part of the Mississippi basin has abundant iron ore deposits and timber reserves. The northeastern part of the basin has large coal reserves. The iron ore deposits and the coal deposits of the region attracted settlers in the midnineteenth century following the opening of the Erie Canal the building of railroads.
- The Mississippi River system is the largest river system in the United States and is comprised of four major rivers: the Mississippi River, the Arkansas River, the Ohio River, and the Missouri River. The navigable river network of the Mississippi Basin made it attractive to settlement. Cities emerged along the river basin at key points where rivers met, such as St. Louis, Pittsburgh, Cincinnati, and New Orleans. Because transportation of goods along the river network was possible, trade developed and cities such as New Orleans grew rapidly.
- The Mississippi Basin differs from other regions in the United States by being a navigable river network. Flat bottom boats can travel along most of the Mississippi and its tributaries. The river basin has some of the most fertile soil in the country for growing crops. The rich fertile soil and the flatlands of the basin made it attractive for settlement. Farmers began to migrate to the northern and central part of the basin in the eighteenth century. They settled the southern part of the basin during the early nineteenth century.

A strong response shows understanding of the topic by analyzing the required sources and including well-chosen evidence from the sources, such as:





- The river basin was made up of four major rivers: the Mississippi River, and three tributaries—the Missouri, the Arkansas, and the Ohio. Other important rivers are the Tennessee, the Cumberland, and the Wabash. These rivers made travel up and down the basin quicker than it was in other regions (Source 1 and Source 3).
- The river network of the river basin was easily traversed on flat-bottomed boats. This promoted settlement and trade in the region (Source 2 and Source 3).
- All of the rivers on the basin eventually flowed reach the Mississippi delta. This made the region an integrated economic region. It led to New Orleans becoming one of the largest ports in the United States (Source 3 and Source 4).
- The introduction of steam powered river boats allowed trade to grow and flourish along the river network of the basin (Source 4).

A strong response also includes important information beyond what is presented in the sources, such as:

- The building of the Erie Canal and railroad networks in the Midwest increased settlement the Mississippi River basin as it became easier to transport farm products from the Midwest to the Northeast.
- New Orleans became a major port for international trade between the United States and other countries because goods flowed down the Mississippi River and were later exported from New Orleans to other parts of the world.
- The Mississippi River basin has a temperate continental climate, particularly in the lower part of the basin that made it attractive to settlers. The region has a longer growing season than the upper basin or the Northeast.





Response 1

 Follow the steps on the Checklist as you write your re Hiver basin is different from the around Miver basin also grow crabs and

goods along the viver. The Mississippi River has the needs for humans which makes it easy for humans to live.

This is how and why the Mississippi River basin is different from the geography of the rest of the country. This is also how and why the Mississippi River basin affected the settlement of the region

Score Points: Content 4 / Claims 4

This student's response demonstrates a thorough knowledge of how the geography of the Mississippi River basin is different from the geography of the rest of the country, how the river affected the settlement of the region, and it fully addresses all parts of the prompt. A valid claim ("The Mississippi River has the needs for humans which makes it easy to live") is provided and shows a solid understanding of the topic. The claim is also supported with evidence, for example: "made the land more fertile,," "perfect for growing crops," "water power for industries nearby," and "you could grow crops and water them." Use of evidence from sources is not explicit, but "you could trade your goods along the river" shows an understanding and connections made using source 4. The response is logically organized. It focuses on how the geography impacted settlement using ample and well-chosen evidence.





Response 2

In the Missisipi River basin, the land is				
more fertile, allowing more to grow there.				
This may have prought settlers to				
the reason so that they could seize				
the rich land for their crops.				
Another reason the Missisipi River				
basin's geography is different from				
thei rest of the countrys is because				
the basin's land is lower, the basin				
is more prone to floods because of				
this, and it may have driven a few				
settlers away.				
The state of the s				

geography of the Missisipi River basin affected settling in the region

Score Points: Content 4 / Claims 3

This response provides a clear and strong claim: "In the Mississippi River basin, the land is more fertile, allowing more to grow there. This may have brought settlers to the reason that they could seize the rich land for their crops." The claim is then supported with clear connections to how the geography affected the settlement. The evidence used ("rich land"; "land is lower"; "more prone to floods") supports the claim about fertile soil. Ample background knowledge is provided, but the lack of evidence from the sources hinders the student from achieving a 4 in claims. The response is organized and presented in a logical manner.





Response 3 ade routes in America.

continued)

boats to get places alot faster, so they

can trade and bargan with different

states in the U.S.A., and it helped people

to get to places to settle like New Unleads

Louisiana.

Score Points: Content 3 / Claims 3

The response reflects general knowledge of how the geography of the Mississippi River basin is different from the geography of the rest of the country and of how the region's geography affected its settlement. A relevant claim ("It is one of the biggest trade routes in America") provides a general understanding of how the geography of the area impacted its settlement. The response is limited in the explanation of the geography but does include some prior knowledge of the states the Mississippi River flows through, for example, "Minnesota, passed Wisconsin, Missouri, and Arkansas, through Louisiana." A misconception of the Mississippi being the "longest river in America" is noted, but it is not enough to detract from the overall response. The student provides an organized explanation with general evidence of how settlement was affected, i.e., "and it helped people to get places to settle like New Orleans, Louisiana."





Response 4
I think the Mississippi find basin is affecting
the settlement because the river helps
with trading. Also it helps with a buisnesses.
The river imports and exports goods. The
basin helps bring goods for other contries.
Its a huge river. Mississippi River leads
to the Golf of Mexico, lito a huge Ocean.
The River is super important to
our contry.
That is what I think of
the river. It helps alot of people.
Also helps a buissy place.
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Score Points: Content 2 / Claims 2

The response presents a limited understanding of how the geography affected the settlement of the region. The claim that "the river helps with trading" expresses a limited understanding of the topic. Some accurate content understanding is presented, for example, "river imports and exports goods" and "leads to the Golf of Mexico," but this is not presented with clear connections or further development.





Resnance 5

	Response 3	
	Follow the steps on the Checklist as you write your response. He Mississippi River busin is different from the rest of the country by some ways. One way is it was very by and loto of other rivers nan into the river another way is the river and its	because it floods. The ships goods to other is how the Mississippi R. the settlement of the
	branches drained more than 1.2 million	
	Aguare miles of the country. This is	
,	different from the rest of the	
	also affected the sottlement of the	

Score Points: Content 2 / Claims 1

The response answers only a portion of the question, focusing on a limited understanding of how the geography is different from the rest of the country. Evidence from sources is general to the prompt, i.e., "1.2 million square miles" and "ships goods to other countries." The student makes a limited connection to how the geography affected the settlement ("you couldn't settle around it because it floods"), and no further evidence to support or develop this idea is offered.





Response 6

To begin with the Mississippi Mississippi River drain more than Shows norther.

Flan into the Mississippi River. In 1885 the were many boildings and factories along the bank of the Mississipi River.

In conclusion, that is how the Mississipi River is different.

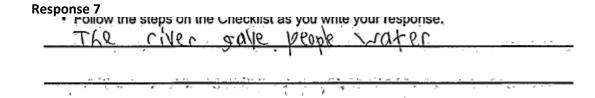
From the rest of the country. Also, those are the many way they are different.

Score Points: Content 1 / Claims 1

The response consists of mostly repeated information from sources. Although no clear claim made is made, some evidence that relates to the prompt is included. "Some people used the Mississippi River to trade things" alludes to how settlement of the area was affected, but there is no specific supporting evidence to earn higher scores.







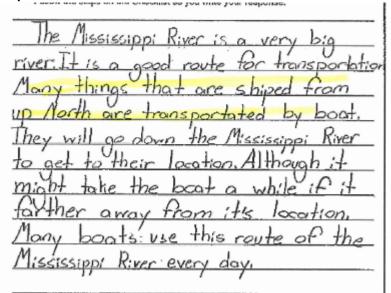
Score Points: Content 1 (low)/ Claims 1

This student's response reflects minimal knowledge of how the river affected the settlement of the region. The response is just enough to earn points because the supporting evidence also counts as the claim.





Response 8



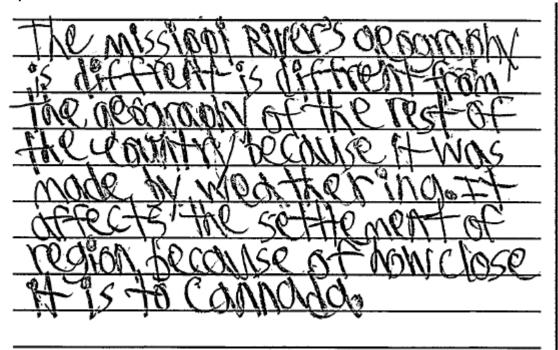
Score Points: Content 1 / Claims 0

This response provides a minimal understanding of the geography of the Mississippi River, and lacks a claim. "Go down the Mississippi River" and "many things that are shipped from up North" relate to the prompt and is connected to the sources. The response does not make a clear connection to settlement, nor does it provide any additional background knowledge.





Response 9



Score Points: Content 0 / Claims 0

The response is incorrect and insufficient enough to earn credit. "The rest of the country because it was made by weathering" and "how close it is to cannada" are both too vague to receive a score.





Respons	se 10
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The Mississippi River is different from the other region because The Mississippi River has a mouth

Score Points: Content 0 / Claims 0

The response provides a correct fact but neither addresses the prompt nor makes a claim that relates to the prompt.