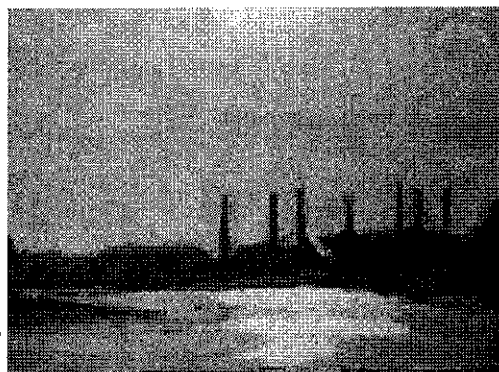


Name \_\_\_\_\_

### The River Thames

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<sup>1</sup>Rivers have played an important role in human history. Since ancient times, towns, cities, and entire civilizations have thrived around rivers, which provide people with many of life's necessities. One such river, the River Thames, has been instrumental in the founding and development of London.

<sup>2</sup>The River Thames stretches 215 miles across southern England. More than eighty islands are scattered throughout its length. The Thames runs right through the center of London. This made the river essential to the growth and success of both London and the United Kingdom.

<sup>3</sup>Having the Thames flow through the city allowed trade ships from around the world to come and go with ease, making London the major transportation hub of England for centuries. The amount of money brought in by both national and international trade made London one of the major commerce centers of Europe.

<sup>4</sup>While the Thames is important to many businesses, it also affects the daily lives of the city's seven million citizens. Over the years, the river has provided London's people with food, drinking water, transportation, and a place to relax. For centuries, artists like Claude Monet, Charles Dickens, and Edmund Spenser have looked to the Thames for inspiration. These men used the river as a central figure in several of their works. In addition, some of the most well-known national symbols of the United Kingdom are located on the river's banks. Historic sites like Big Ben, the Palace of Westminster, the London Eye, and the Tower Bridge are all located near the Thames.

<sup>5</sup>The River Thames has played a significant role in military operations throughout the country's history. In ancient times, the Romans set their sights on expanding their empire by using the navigable waters of the Thames to invade the British Isles. From the sea, they could easily enter the mouth of the river and move inward. After a failed attempt at defeating the British tribes the year before, Julius Caesar broke through their defenses along the River Thames in 54 B.C. Although the British fought against the Romans nearly a century later, Roman forces remained in England until the fall of the empire.

<sup>6</sup>The Thames was vital to the defense of Great Britain during World War II. In 1940, the German Air Force started bombing London. German pilots followed the river up into the center of the city, where they dropped their bombs. The first attack destroyed almost all of the docks in London's port and killed hundreds. The British also used the Thames to help defend their city. Water was pumped out of the Thames to put out fires started by the bombs and volunteers patrolled the river to ensure that the German ships didn't enter the Port of London. Supplies and troops often traveled up and down the Thames when bombings obstructed the roads.

<sup>7</sup>Over the years, the river has been the source of a number of problems. In the nineteenth century, Londoners dumped waste from their homes into the Thames. This made the water so smelly that the House of Commons had to relocate for a time. The pollution of the river also contributed to an outbreak of disease that killed many people and to the disappearance of most of the river's fish. Luckily, various clean-up efforts during the twentieth century have greatly improved the river's water quality and allowed fish to return. Flooding is another concern. In 1928, a major flood killed fourteen people and left many citizens homeless. Events like this led to the creation of the Thames Barrier, a moveable flood barrier that helps stop floodwaters from reaching central London.

<sup>8</sup>Though people no longer rely on the Thames as the only way to get around, the river is still important to many Londoners. These few examples represent only a small number of ways in which the Thames has affected London over the years. If not for the Thames, the world as we know it would be a very different place.

ELA HW Due 12/8/17

1) What would MOST LIKELY happen if the Thames Barrier failed?

- A) The fish population would decrease.
- B) London would be in danger of flooding.
- C) There would not be enough drinking water.
- D) Ships would not be able to leave the docks.

- 2) What would MOST LIKELY happen if the Thames experienced a drought in the twenty-first century?
- A) The city would start to smell.
  - B) Businesses would be forced to close.
  - C) The city's water supply would decrease.
  - D) People would be unable to leave the city.
- 3) What is the MOST LIKELY reason that Londoners no longer rely on the Thames as their main mode of transportation?
- A) Modern forms of transportation are more convenient.
  - B) The river is too polluted for people to travel across.
  - C) Military personnel have blocked off parts of the river.
  - D) Unpredictable floods make traveling the Thames dangerous.
- 4) What is the MOST LIKELY reason the Germans followed the Thames during their air raids?
- A) They didn't want to lose their way.
  - B) They didn't want to harm innocent citizens.
  - C) They knew the Thames led to the center of London.
  - D) They knew the British were defending the riverbanks.
- 5) What would MOST LIKELY happen if Londoners started putting household waste in the Thames again?
- A) The city's residents would move away.
  - B) The House of Commons would close.
  - C) The water would become polluted.
  - D) The river would flood.
- 6) What is the MOST LIKELY reason the British tribes built defenses along the River Thames?
- A) They thought that the Thames was going to flood.
  - B) They knew that the Romans needed food and water.
  - C) They thought that the waters would be too rough for the Romans.
  - D) They knew that the Thames would allow the Romans to move inland.
- 7) What is the MOST LIKELY reason that Londoners no longer rely on the Thames as their main mode of transportation?
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  - C) Military personnel have blocked off parts of the river.
  - D) Unpredictable floods make traveling the Thames dangerous.
- 8) What would be the BEST way to show people how the quality of the river's water has improved since the nineteenth century?
- A) read an excerpt from one of Edmund Spenser's poems about the beauty of the river
  - B) examine how the Thames River was described by playwrights during the time of Shakespeare
  - C) demonstrate how there are greater toxins in the Thames today than in past century's
  - D) describe the increase in fish in the river since the clean-up efforts in the twentieth century
- 9) What would be the BEST response to the question, "How did the Thames help the United Kingdom flourish?"
- A) The Thames supplied the country with fresh drinking water.
  - B) The Thames prevented many enemies from invading the country.
  - C) The Thames inspired many of the country's artists and writers.
  - D) The Thames provided the country with a center for international trade.
- 10) What would be the BEST response to the question, "How did the Thames help the United Kingdom flourish?"
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