Types of coastal settlement

Use an atlas or the Internet to find how many of the world’s largest cities are on the coast. As well as cities, there are also large ports, industrial towns, villages and holiday resorts on the coast. By building and developing these settlements, people have changed the environment of parts of the coast.

Why do settlements develop on the coast?

• **Natural harbours**: Parts of the coast are sheltered from the open sea and have natural deep-water harbours. These are the best places to launch a boat and so villages, and later ports, have developed in places like this. Portsmouth in southern England, Sydney in Australia, New York in the United States, Kingston in Jamaica and Vancouver in Canada all developed around natural harbours.

• **Estuaries**: An estuary is where a river widens out as it reaches the sea. Estuaries are excellent sites for ports because they are sheltered from the main force of the waves and tides. Some of the biggest ports in the world, including Dublin in Ireland and Buenos Aires in Argentina, developed in the shelter of river estuaries.

• **River crossings**: Villages also grew into towns and cities near the mouths of rivers, where they could be crossed by a bridge or ford. In these places, where land and sea routes joined, large cities often developed, including London, Lisbon, Montreal and Alexandria.

• **Important resources and industries**: Other coastal towns and cities grew because there were important resources or industries nearby. San Francisco in the United States grew into a city and port because gold was found nearby. Tromso in Norway started life as a port based on fishing and the capture of whales. Newcastle in Australia grew into a major port city because large supplies of coal were found nearby.

The city of Perth in Australia, and its port Freemantle, developed rapidly after gold was discovered nearby in 1893.
• **Holiday resorts**: Beautiful places along the coasts, especially those with wide sandy beaches, sometimes develop into holiday resorts. They include some of the world’s best-known resorts, such as Miami Beach in Florida, Sharm el Sheikh in Egypt, Dubai in the United Arab Emirates, Acapulco in Mexico and Benidorm in Spain. Which coastal holiday resorts do you know?

Why do you think this holiday resort in Brazil grew? Do holiday resorts damage the environment?

**How do ports affect the environment?**

With the development of a port comes the growth of oil refineries and industries that use the port to bring in their **raw materials** or to **export** their products. However, as a port develops, the habitats of plants and animals are destroyed by the building work and pollution. This pollution can make nearby beaches unusable for tourists and holidaymakers.

Tromso in Norway began life as a port based on fishing and the capture of whales.

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**Did you know?**

Many coastal settlements have developed into capital cities, such as Abu Dhabi, Dublin, Lisbon, Oslo, Stockholm, Athens, Helsinki, Tokyo, Muscat, Bangkok and Wellington.

**Activities**

1. **a** Use an atlas or the Internet to find the estuaries of the world’s major rivers, such as the Amazon, Nile, Ganges, Volga, Yangtze, Niger and Congo.

   **b** Name the large towns or cities on each of these estuaries.

   **c** Which rivers flow into these estuaries?

   **d** Can you find any large bridges or tunnels crossing these estuaries?

2. Some newspapers record the number of hours of sunshine each day for holiday resorts. Choose five resorts and write down the number of hours of sunshine for each resort for a month. Draw a bar chart of your results. Which is the sunniest seaside resort in your sample?
Benidorm, on Spain’s south coast, is Europe’s biggest holiday resort. Can you find Benidorm on the map below? Benidorm has a warm, sunny climate all the year round, thanks to the mountains which shelter the town. The average temperature in winter is 15°C, and 26°C in summer.

Benidorm is a seaside resort on the south-east coast of Spain.

**A fishing village**

Before the 1950s, Benidorm was a small fishing village. Fishermen in Benidorm specialised in catching tuna, but in 1952 the biggest tuna fishery there closed down because the number of fish being caught fell.

Members of the town council looked for ways to encourage tourists to visit Benidorm. They wanted people to enjoy Benidorm’s pleasant climate and sandy beaches that stretch for 6 kilometres along the coast. Until 1959, Benidorm only had four hotels, but soon many new hotels and apartment blocks were built. Benidorm was one of the first holiday resorts to have ‘package holidays’. This is where flights and hotel or apartment accommodation are sold together, and special flights, called charter flights, carry the tourists to their destination.

As Benidorm had excellent travel connections, by land, sea and air, many holidaymakers travelled there from all over Europe. The nearest airport, at Alicante, was only two hours flight away from most European capital cities, such as London, Paris, Brussels, Amsterdam, and Berlin.

Playa Levante, one of Benidorm’s sandy beaches, is backed by huge hotels.

**Did you know?**

With more than 8000 kilometres of sandy beaches, Spain is one of the most popular tourist destinations in Europe.
Today, Benidorm is the most popular holiday resort in Europe, with 5 million tourists visiting every year.

**Tourist attractions at Benidorm**
The things that attract tourists and holidaymakers to Benidorm include:

- the warm climate, warm seawater and sandy beaches
- leisure activities such as sailing, walking, horse riding, cycling and boat trips
- four theme parks – one, called Terra Natura, shows visitors the wonders of the animal kingdom; and Terra Mitica, the largest theme park in Europe, has rides, and shows that include acrobats, stuntmen and circus acts.

The roller coaster at the Terra Mitica theme park is 1252 metres long and 36 metres high.

**Activities**

1. **a** Find Benidorm on a map or in an atlas. How far away is it from your home? In which direction does it lie from your home?
   
   **b** What is the nearest seaside resort to your home? How far away is it and in which direction?

2. **a** Use the Internet to find out how the temperature in Benidorm varies throughout the year.
   
   **b** Draw a line graph of your results.
   
   **c** Which is the warmest month?
   
   **d** Draw a line graph showing the number of hours of sunshine in Benidorm each month.
   
   **e** Which is the sunniest month?

3. Describe a holiday you have taken at the coast. What was the coast like? What was there to do? If you have never been to the coast, choose a seaside resort and imagine what a visit would be like.
The coastal city of Aqaba

Aqaba is a city on the coast of Jordan at the north-eastern tip of the Red Sea. It is Jordan’s only coastal city and its only port. Aqaba first developed about 4000 years ago at the meeting point of two major trade routes that at the time linked Africa and Asia. Today, Aqaba is famous as a holiday resort and port.

Aqaba holiday resort

Aqaba is one of the main tourist resorts of Jordan. Its tourist attractions include:

- a pleasant desert climate, with warm winters and hot, dry summers
- sandy beaches and warm seawater, which are enjoyed by bathers and windsurfers
- the rich sea life which attracts scuba divers and snorkelers
- trips in glass-bottomed boats to see the corals and fish life
- many hotels, holiday villas, a golf course and marinas for pleasure boats.

The port of Aqaba

Aqaba is a busy container port. Most of Jordan’s export goods leave the country from this port. It is also a busy ferry port, with ferries carrying passengers, cars and trucks between Aqaba and ports in Egypt. There are many factories around the port. Some make heavy machinery, such as motor vehicles. Others handle chemicals such as phosphate, which is used in industry and as a fertiliser. Phosphate is one of over 200 different kinds of coral and about 1000 different kinds of fish live in the sea around Aqaba. For people who do not dive or snorkel, there are trips in glass-bottomed boats to see the coral and sea life.
Jordan’s most important exports. Cruise ships regularly use the port of Aqaba.

**Transport links**

Aqaba is connected to the rest of Jordan by two major highways, the Desert Highway and the King’s Highway. There are many bus services between Aqaba and Amman and the other large cities in Jordan. Aqaba also has an airport, the Aqaba King Hussein International Airport, with flights to Amman and several airports in Egypt and Europe.

A railway is being built that will connect Aqaba with all of Jordan’s main cities and with several neighbouring countries.

**Did you know?**

The Red Sea is one of the warmest, saltiest and reddest seas in the world. It gets its name because it contains algae that are reddish-brown in colour.

**Activities**

1. **a** Find Aqaba on a map in an atlas or on the Internet.
   **b** What is the distance from your home to Aqaba?
   **c** In which direction does Aqaba lie?
   **d** How would you get to Aqaba from your home or school?

2. **a** What are some of the buildings found only in seaside resorts? Think about buildings that protect the coast, buildings used by people who help keep you safe at the coast, and buildings used to entertain people using the coast or beaches.
   **b** Where are these special seaside buildings likely to be?

3. **a** Ask your friends which holiday resorts they have visited.
   **b** Draw a bar chart of your results.
   **c** Which resorts have been visited most often?
   **d** Are these the resorts that are nearest to your home area?
The container port of Jebel Ali

The port of Jebel Ali, near the city of Dubai in the United Arab Emirates, is the world’s largest man-made harbour and the biggest port in the Middle East. It was built in the late 1970s when the nearby Port Rashid could no longer handle the largest cargo ships. Jebel Ali is the largest container port between Rotterdam and Singapore. It is close to the main east–west trade routes, so it can act as a link between the countries of Europe and the Far East.

**Jebel Ali Port**

The port of Jebel Ali is not located in a sheltered inlet on the coast or in the mouth of a river. It was built by reclaiming land from the sea. The new land was formed by dredging up sand and other materials from the seabed. The port was then sheltered from the wind and waves by long breakwaters built of rock and concrete.

Large ships, such as bulk carriers, supertankers and container ships, all need deep water and special equipment for handling their cargo. Jebel Ali Port handles large amounts of bulk cargoes, such as oil, gas and chemicals. It is one of the ten busiest container ports in the world. It handles over 6500 ships a year and in 2013 it handled 13.6 million tonnes of cargo.
One of the world’s largest container ships, the Marie Maersk, is 398 metres long and 58 metres wide, and can carry more than 18 000 containers.

Roll-on roll-off ships have large doors at the bow (front) and stern (back), allowing cars and trucks to be driven straight on or off of the ship to load and offload cargo.

Jebel Ali harbour is a good cargo port because it:

• is very deep – deep enough for the largest ships in the world
• has berths for 22 large cargo ships at any one time, including 10 of the largest container ships afloat
• has 78 large cranes that allow it to handle up to 19 million containers a year
• has a separate section that deals with roll-on/roll-off ships
• can handle 500 000 cars in a year
• has close links to the cargo area of Dubai Airport, so that small urgent cargoes can be moved from ship to aircraft in just four hours, faster than any other port in the world.

Activities

1. a Look at a map showing Dubai and Jebel Ali Port.
   b Why is Jebel Ali in a good position for a port?
   c What other ports share the same coastline along the Arabian Gulf as Jebel Ali Port?

2. Look at a map or atlas and find Dubai. How far away is it from your home and in which direction?

3. Find out what work is carried out at a port by:
   a coastguards
   b immigration officers
   c customs officers.
Singapore is a small island state, made up of over 60 islands. Most of the smaller islands are uninhabited. Can you find Singapore on the map below?

Singapore is an island state off the coast of Malaysia.

Singapore City

Singapore City is the capital of Singapore. It is on Singapore Island, the largest of the Singapore islands. More than 90 per cent of the population of Singapore live in Singapore City. It is a crowded city with many tall apartment blocks, and high-rise offices, banks and hotels.

Climate and wealth

Singapore lies just north of the Equator, and its climate is hot and humid with frequent heavy rains. Singapore is so small and so crowded that it cannot produce enough food for all its people. Most of its food has to be imported from other countries. Singapore’s water supplies are piped in from Malaysia. As there is a shortage of land, marshy ground is being drained to provide more space for homes and factories. However, in spite of its small size, Singapore is one of the richest countries in South-East Asia. Its wealth comes from shipping, international trade, electronics manufacture and banking.

The Port of Singapore

Singapore is the world’s second-busiest port, after Shanghai in China. It is a busy port because it:

- has a sheltered, deep-water harbour
- is positioned between the Indian Ocean and the South China Sea
- has berths for ships, over 200 cranes, and warehouses and storage areas
- can handle cruise ships and the world’s largest container ships
- can handle large numbers of cars
- can handle bulk cargo, such as oil, petroleum, natural gas, cement and steel products
- can supply fuel, water, food and other provisions for ships
- can repair and maintain ships.

This is Singapore’s main shopping street.
Traders from all around the world send their goods to Singapore. From there the goods are sent on to other parts of the world. On any given day, there are about 1000 ships in the port, and a ship sails in or out of the harbour every few minutes. They connect Singapore to over 600 ports in 123 countries, spread across 6 continents. In 2012, more than 120 000 ships arrived at the port, over half of which were container ships. They carried nearly 500 million tonnes of cargo and over 1 million cruise-ship passengers.

**Transport links**

Singapore has a modern system of roads and motorways. It also has an underground railway, with over 40 stations that link the city to its suburbs. The island is joined to Malaysia by a causeway and a bridge. There is also a ferry between Singapore and Malaysia. Singapore’s airport, like its port, is one of the busiest in the world. It has flights to more than 200 other airports.

**Did you know?**

Singapore is the second most densely populated country in the world after Monaco in Europe. About 5.4 million people are crowded into 716 square kilometres of land. That is 7669 people for every square kilometre.

**Activities**

1. Write four reasons why Singapore is in a good location for a port.
2. Ferries travel between neighbouring islands and Singapore.
   - a Use travel guides, the Internet or an atlas to find as many ferry ports around the world as you can.
   - b Find out where each ferry travels to.
   - c Label these routes on an outline map of the world.
   - d What is the longest ferry crossing you can find?
Rotterdam, gateway to Europe

Rotterdam is the largest city in the Netherlands, and the biggest port in Europe, even though it lies 30 kilometres from the North Sea.

The development of Rotterdam

Rotterdam began to develop more than 600 years ago. It started when a small group of fishermen built their huts at a marshy place where the River Maas was joined by a small stream called the Rotte. In 1340 the fishermen dug a canal so that they could send the fish they had caught to other villages inland. In return, the inland villages sent wheat, cheese and other farm produce to be sold in the fishing village. They sent these farm products by boat because that was the only safe way to travel in that marshy landscape. Trade grew and so did the fishing village. Eventually it became the city of Rotterdam.

The New Waterway

In 1872, a deep-water channel, known as the New Waterway, was dug between Rotterdam and the North Sea. The New Waterway bypassed the narrow, winding course of the River Rhine and allowed ocean-going ships to reach Rotterdam. Cargo could be unloaded at Rotterdam and put on barges which could take it up the River Rhine to Germany, France and Switzerland. At the same time, goods from those countries could be carried down the Rhine to Rotterdam. From there, they were exported all over the world. Trade increased greatly as a result of the New Waterway.
Rotterdam is also a focus for a network of roads and motorways, railway lines and oil pipelines that fan out all over the Netherlands and neighbouring countries. They provide more ways of distributing cargo.

**The port of Rotterdam**

The port of Rotterdam now stretches all the way to the sea, making it more than 40 kilometres long. Docks, warehouses, stores of coal and metal ores, flour mills, factories, shipyards and oil refineries line the banks of the waterway.

The part of the port nearest the sea is now called Europoort. The word ‘poort’ in Dutch means gateway. When Europoort was built in 1958, it was seen as ‘the Gateway to Europe’. Europoort has expanded greatly, and can now handle the world’s largest bulk carriers of oil, coal, metal ores, chemicals and grain, as well as large container ships and roll-on roll-off ships and ferries.

![Image: Loading barges from a container ship at Europoort.]

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**Did you know?**

The port of Rotterdam handles about 30,000 sea-going ships, 100,000 barges and 450 million tonnes of cargo a year.

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**Activities**

1. Use an atlas and reference books or the Internet to find out:
   - a. the names of two countries that border the Netherlands
   - b. the names of three large cities in the Netherlands
   - c. the names of two rivers that reach the sea in the Netherlands
   - d. the name of the sea they flow into
   - e. what the flag of the Netherlands is like, then draw it
   - f. the language spoken in the Netherlands
   - g. the population of the Netherlands.

2. Collect pictures and items connected with the Netherlands. Here are some suggestions: coins, postage stamps, photographs, labels from cheese packets, garden plant packets, travel tickets.