



## SYRIA THROUGH THE LENS OF HISTORY & MUSIC

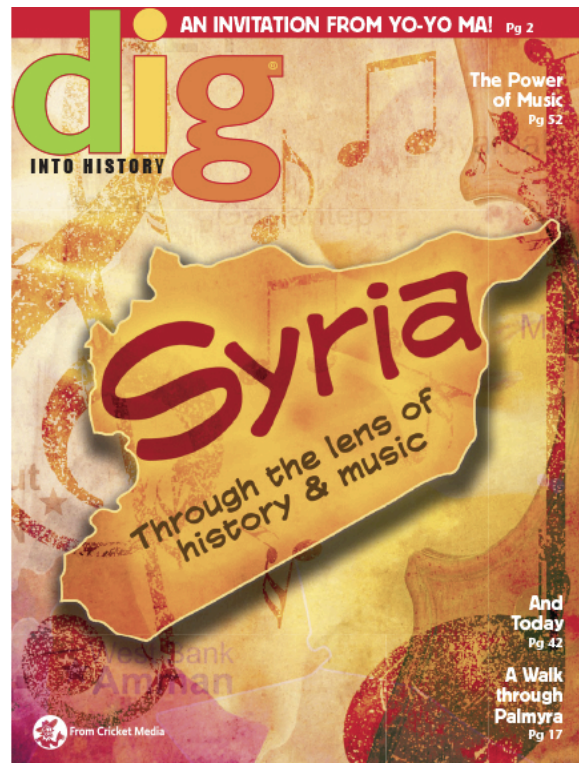
Students dive into the history of Syria by examining the country's geographical importance in the ancient world, and how religion and trade affected conflicts in the region.

### CONVERSATION QUESTION

How has the importance of trade influenced the development of Syrian history?

### TEACHING OBJECTIVES

- Students will learn about Syrian history
- Students will learn about the geography of Syria
- Students will use maps to explain relationships between the locations of places and regions and their environmental characteristics
- Students will explain how cultural and environmental characteristics affect the distribution and movement of goods
- Students will explain how cultural patterns and economic decisions influence environments and the daily lives of people
- Students will use details from a text to create a timeline
- Students will use details from a text to annotate a map
- Students will conduct research using print and digital sources



In addition to supplemental materials focused on core Social Studies skills, this flexible teaching tool offers vocabulary-building activities, questions for discussion, and cross-curricular activities.

### SELECTIONS

- **Power Grabs**  
Expository Nonfiction, ~1150L
- **At the Crossroads**  
Expository Nonfiction, ~1050L
- **Allegiance to the Sublime Porte**  
Expository Nonfiction, ~1050L

## Power Grabs

pp. 8–9, Expository Nonfiction

Discover how a conquering army led to changes in Syria that made it an important center of trade and learning.



## RESOURCES

- Where We Are (map)

## OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a nonfiction article
- Students will learn about Syrian history
- Students will learn about the geography of Syria
- Students will use maps to explain relationships between the locations of places and regions and their environmental characteristics
- Students will use details from a text to create a timeline

## KEY VOCABULARY

- **Mesopotamia (p. 8)** ancient name for land between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers
- **nation states (p. 8)** independent states populated by people from one particular group
- **incorporated (p. 9)** included as a part of a unified whole

## ENGAGE

**Conversation Question:** How has the importance of trade influenced the development of Syrian history?

Ask students to think about all the aspects of trade. What is necessary to conduct trade? How are items brought from place to place? Then ask them to hypothesize how ancient city-states and empires traded with one another.

<http://www.cricketmedia.com/classroom/Dig-magazine>

## INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Together, review the vocabulary words and read them aloud. Then ask students to make predictions about the topic of the text using the vocabulary words. If necessary, help students guess the topic by revealing the title of the article.

## READ & DISCUSS

Have students read the article with a partner. Then use these prompts for discussion:

- Why did ancient Syria's city-states war with one another?
- How did conquest by the Akkadian Empire affect Syrians?
- How did the death of Alexander the Great affect the political organization of ancient Syria?

## SKILL FOCUS: Explain Relationships

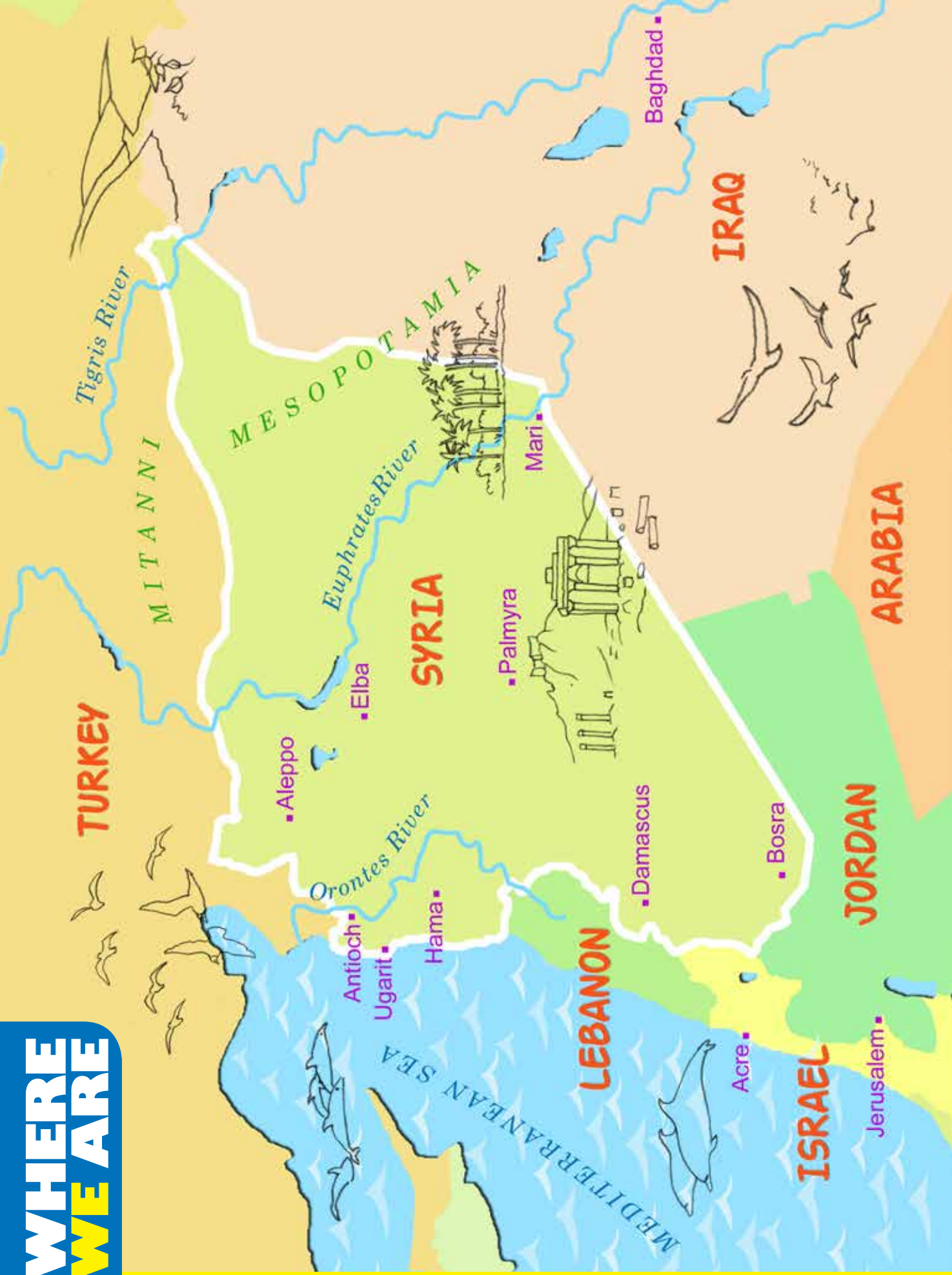
**INSTRUCT:** Distribute copies of the map to students. Instruct them to locate the places and regions mentioned in the article (e.g., Syria, Elba, Mari, Mitanni, etc.). Also point out places not mentioned in the article. Then have them identify the key environmental characteristics, including those mentioned in the article (i.e., Mediterranean Sea) and not mentioned (i.e., Euphrates and Tigris rivers). Explain that the relationship between places and regions and environmental characteristics can be analyzed using a map by noting where they are in relation to one another.

**ASSESS:** Arrange students in pairs. Ask each pair to work together to come up with hypotheses explaining why various places they identified were located near certain environmental characteristics. Ask pairs to revisit the article for clues.

## EXTEND

**Social Studies** Arrange students in pairs and ask them to reread the article for key events affecting the lands now known as Syria. Then have them create a timeline with at least ten key events mentioned in the article. Tell students that it is okay to estimate the date of an event based on details provided in the text.

# WHERE WE ARE

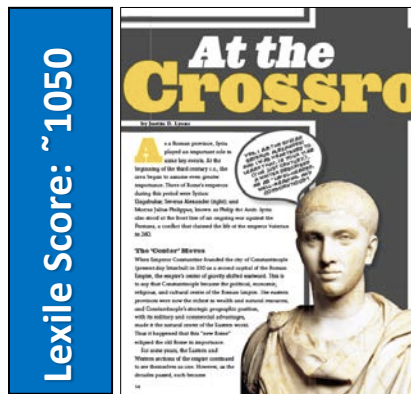




## At the Crossroads

pp. 14–15, Expository Nonfiction

Explore the importance of trade in ancient Syria and the role Syria played in the history of the Roman Empire and Christianity.



## RESOURCES

- Location, Location, Location (map)

## OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a nonfiction article
- Students will learn about Syrian history
- Students will learn about the geography of Syria
- Students will explain how cultural and environmental characteristics affect the distribution and movement of goods
- Students will use details from a text to annotate a map

## KEY VOCABULARY

- **commercial** (p. 14) related to or used in the buying and selling of goods and services
- **merchants** (p. 15) people who buy and sell goods especially in large amounts
- **imported** (p. 15) brought into a country from somewhere else to be sold

## ENGAGE

**Conversation Question:** How has the importance of trade influenced the development of Syrian history?

Ask students how trade in Canada and Mexico might have been affected by sharing a border with the United States. Guide students to understand that wealth in the United States promotes the movement of goods out of Canada and Mexico and into the United States.

## INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Together, review the vocabulary words and read them aloud. Then ask students to choose two or more words from the vocabulary list and use them to write a sentence about trade in ancient Syria.

## READ & DISCUSS

Have students read the article with a partner. Then use these prompts for discussion:

- How did the Byzantine Empire help trade in Syria to flourish?
- What goods were imported and exported from Syria?
- What geographic features influenced trade in Syria?

## SKILL FOCUS: Explain Movement

**INSTRUCT:** Explain that the movement of goods is affected by both cultural and environmental characteristics. Distribute copies of the *Location, Location, Location* map. Have students identify the geographic origin of goods that were traded as well as the directions these goods were moved by merchants. Next, tell students that one example of a cultural characteristic that affected the movement of goods through the regions shown on the map was Indians' demand for Syrian glass.

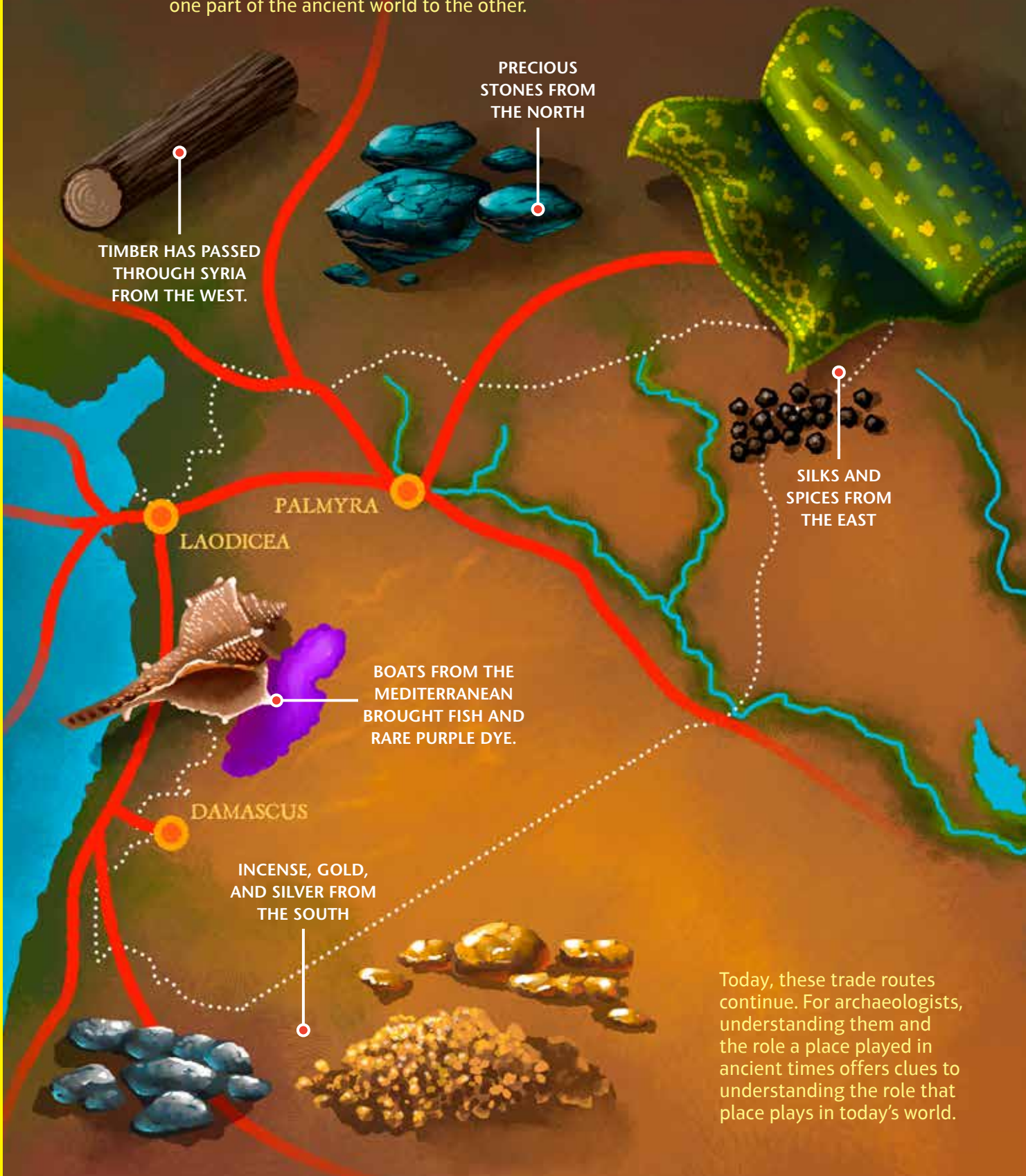
**ASSESS:** Have students work in pairs to reread the article, noting various cultural and environmental characteristics that affected the movement of goods through the regions shown on the map. Check for understanding as pairs work together.

## EXTEND

**Social Studies** Have students reread the article, noting goods that were traded that are not included on the map. Have students annotate the map with these goods, placing their annotations in the approximate locations where the goods originated from. Finally, have students write a caption for each good they added to the map, explaining where it came from or was moved to by traders.

# Location, Location, Location

Location is a significant factor in understanding why certain places become important in history. Syria was at the crossroads of some of the major trade routes of the ancient world, with merchants carrying valuable goods from one part of the ancient world to the other.



TIMBER HAS PASSED THROUGH SYRIA FROM THE WEST.

PRECIOUS STONES FROM THE NORTH

SILKS AND SPICES FROM THE EAST

BOATS FROM THE MEDITERRANEAN BROUGHT FISH AND RARE PURPLE DYE.

INCENSE, GOLD, AND SILVER FROM THE SOUTH

Today, these trade routes continue. For archaeologists, understanding them and the role a place played in ancient times offers clues to understanding the role that place plays in today's world.

## Allegiance to the Sublime Porte

pp. 31–33, Expository Nonfiction

Learn how the Ottomans transformed the cities of Aleppo and Damascus in ancient Syria.



## ENGAGE

**Conversation Question:** How has the importance of trade influenced the development of Syrian history?

Invite students to imagine a city that becomes a center of international trade. Ask students, “How might the city change as a result of becoming an important trading center?” Guide students to understand that in addition to economic changes that might occur, environmental changes (e.g., changes to architecture, landscape, etc.) would likely occur as well.

## INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Write the following sentences on the board. Then ask students to decide which two words from the vocabulary list should be used to complete the sentence.

- Due to its role as a \_\_\_\_\_ of trade, Damascus flourished.
- The Ottoman Empire built great \_\_\_\_\_ in the city so \_\_\_\_\_ could be conducted easily.

## OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a nonfiction article
- Students will learn about Syrian history
- Students will learn about the geography of Syria
- Students will explain how cultural patterns and economic decisions influence environments and the daily lives of people
- Students will conduct research using print and digital sources

## KEY VOCABULARY

- **commerce** (p. 31) activities that relate to the buying and selling of goods and services
- **hub** (p. 32) the central and most active part or place
- **complexes** (p. 32) groups of buildings that are located near each other and used for a particular purpose

## READ & DISCUSS

Have students read the article with a partner. Then use these prompts for discussion:

- What was the relationship between Aleppo and the Silk Road?
- How did the Ottoman rulers change Aleppo?
- What type of structures were built in Aleppo?

## SKILL FOCUS: Explain Influence

**INSTRUCT:** Explain to students that they will be using the answers to the questions in the Read & Discuss section above to analyze how economic decisions made by the Ottoman Empire affected the daily lives of people living in Aleppo. Then invite students to identify changes that occurred in Aleppo because of Ottoman rule.

**ASSESS:** Have students draw a T-chart with the headings “Before Ottoman Rule” and “After Ottoman Rule.” Then tell students to draw a simple sketch of Aleppo in each section. Inform them that their sketches must reflect what they learned about Aleppo from the article.

## EXTEND

**English Language Arts** Have students choose a major city in early American history and use print and digital sources to research how trade affected the daily lives of people living there. Have students work in small groups to develop and deliver short multimedia presentations of their findings.