



A New Route across the Top of the World

The New Ocean Route between Europe and Asia



Prereading Preparation

- 1 Look at the map above. Where does this trip begin? _____
Where does this trip end? _____
- 2 How do people travel on this route?
 - a. By plane
 - b. By ship
 - c. By train
- 3 Read the title of this story and look at the map.
 - a. Why do you think this is a **new** route?

 - b. Which ocean is at the **top of the world**?

Reading

Directions: Read each paragraph carefully. Then answer the questions.

A New Route across the Top of the World

For the first time in history, the most direct shipping route between Europe and Asia is clear of ice. The Northeast Passage, which connects the Atlantic Ocean and the Pacific Ocean, used to be covered in ice all year. In the past, ships could not travel in this direction because of all the ice. However, the ice cover has steadily decreased, so now travel is possible.

- 1 A **route** is
 - a. a direction
 - b. a large boat
 - c. an ocean

- 2 **Clear of ice** means
 - a. there is only a little ice
 - b. there is no ice
 - c. the ice is very clear

- 3 What two oceans does the Northeast Passage connect?

- 4 In the past, ships could not travel in the Northeast Passage. Why not?
 - a. It was a difficult trip.
 - b. It was covered in ice.
 - c. It was too long.

- 5 The ice cover has steadily **decreased**.
Decreased means
 - a. became larger
 - b. stayed the same size
 - c. became smaller

- 6 Can ships travel in the Northeast Passage now? _____ Yes _____ No

The Northeast Passage is a shortcut between Europe and Asia through the Canadian Arctic. Part of the Arctic sea ice melts each summer and freezes again in the winter. Still, too much ice covered the sea, even in the summer. Over the last several years, the ice cover has decreased. This shrinking is a result of global warming. Global warming is the increase in the average temperature of the Earth's near-surface air and oceans since the 1950s. Scientists report that the Arctic Ocean ice cap has decreased to its lowest levels in the past few summers.

- 7 The Northeast Passage is a **shortcut** from Europe to Asia through the Canadian Arctic.

What does **shortcut** mean?

- a. A faster way to do something
- b. A longer way to do something
- c. A new way to do something

- 8 **Over the last several years, the ice cover has decreased.**

Why did this happen?

- a. Global warming makes temperatures higher.
- b. Global warming makes temperatures lower.

- 9 This **shrinking** is a result of global warming.

Shrinking means to

- a. get a result
- b. increase in size
- c. decrease in size

- 10 Scientists report that the Arctic Ocean **ice cap** shrank to its lowest levels in the past few summers.

This **ice cap** is

- a. ice on top of a mountain
- b. ice on top of a ship
- c. ice on top of an ocean

Two German ships were the first to cross the Arctic's Northeast Passage. They traveled from Ulsan, South Korea, to Yamburg, Siberia. Traditionally, shippers traveling from Asia to Europe had to go through the Gulf of Aden and through the Suez Canal into the Mediterranean Sea and then into the Atlantic Ocean. Using that traditional route, a journey from South Korea to the Netherlands, for example, is about 12,700 miles. However, the same route through the Northeast Passage is approximately 9,200 miles. It is a lot faster, too—about ten days shorter. This not only saves time, but also saves fuel.

11 **Traditionally** means

- a. in the past
- b. now
- c. recently

12 If you are traveling from South Korea to Siberia, which trip takes longer?

- a. A journey through the Northeast Passage
- b. A journey through the Suez Canal

The opening of the passage is already causing disagreements among several countries. Canada says that it wants to control the parts of the Northeast Passage that go through its country. The United States and many European countries disagree. They believe that the new route is an international passage and that any ship can use it.

In the future, the route may become even more open. However, scientists don't believe that it will be open year-round because weather patterns sometimes change. This could freeze the passage up again for long periods of time.

13 What do several countries disagree about?

- a. When to use the Northeast Passage
- b. Who controls the Northeast Passage
- c. How long the Northeast Passage is open

14 In the future, the **route** may become even more open.
What is the **route**?

- 15 Scientists don't believe that the Northeast Passage will be open **year-round**.

What does **year-round** mean?

- a. Only in the summer months
- b. Only in the winter months
- c. All 12 months of the year

- 16 **Scientists don't believe that the Northeast Passage will be open year-round.**

Why not?

- a. The route is very crowded.
- b. The water may freeze up again.
- c. It's a very long route.

Directions: Read the complete passage. When you are finished, answer the questions that follow.

Track 10



A New Route across the Top of the World

- 1 For the first time in history, the most direct shipping route between Europe
2 and Asia is clear of ice. The Northeast Passage, which connects the Atlantic
3 Ocean and the Pacific Ocean, used to be covered in ice all year. In the past, ships
4 could not travel this route because of all the ice. However, the ice cover has
5 steadily decreased, so now travel is possible.
- 6 The Northeast Passage is a shortcut between Europe and Asia through the
7 Canadian Arctic. Part of the Arctic sea ice melts each summer before freezing
8 again in the winter. Still, too much ice covered the sea, even in the summer. Over
9 the last several years, the ice cover has decreased. This shrinking is a result of
10 global warming. Global warming is the increase in the average temperature of
11 the Earth's near-surface air and oceans since the 1950s. Scientists report that the
12 Arctic Ocean ice cap has decreased to its lowest levels in the past few summers.
- 13 Two German ships were the first to cross the Arctic's Northeast Passage.
14 They traveled from Ulsan, South Korea, to Yamburg, Siberia. Traditionally,

15 shippers traveling between Asia and Europe had to go through the Gulf of
16 Aden and through the Suez Canal into the Mediterranean Sea and then into
17 the Atlantic Ocean. Using that traditional route, a journey from South Korea to
18 the Netherlands, for example, is about 12,700 miles. However, the same route
19 through the Northeast Passage is only approximately 9,200 miles. It is a lot
20 faster, too—about ten days shorter. This not only saves time, but also saves fuel.

21 The opening of the passage is already causing disagreements among several
22 countries. Canada says that it wants to control the parts of the Northeast Passage
23 that go through its country. The United States and many European countries
24 disagree. They believe that the new route is an international passage and that
25 any ship can use it.

26 In the future, the route may become even more open. However, scientists
27 don't believe that it will be open year-round because weather patterns sometimes
28 change. This could freeze the passage up again for long periods of time.

View of the North Pole Area of the Earth



Scanning for Information

Read the questions. Then go back to the complete passage and scan quickly for the answers. Write your answer in the space provided.

1 What is the Northeast Passage?

2 Why is travel on this route possible today?

3 What has caused this to happen?

4 What was the route of the first ships to use this passage?

5 What are the advantages of this new route?

6 What do several countries disagree about?

Word Forms

In English, some words can be either a noun (n.) or a verb (v.), for example, *cause*. Read the sentences below. Decide if the correct word is a noun or a verb. Circle your answer.

- 1 Travel / Travel to another country can be very expensive.
(n.) (v.)
- 2 Every summer, I travel / travel to Mexico with my family.
(n.) (v.)
- 3 Many large ships / ships cross the Pacific Ocean every day.
(n.) (v.)
- 4 My uncle's company ships / ships heavy equipment from the U.S. to Mexico.
(n.) (v.)
- 5 A meteorologist reports / reports the weather on the news every morning.
(n.) (v.)
- 6 I always listen to several news reports / reports before I leave for school.
(n.) (v.)
- 7 The temperature in the U.S. increases / increases in the spring and summer.
(n.) (v.)
- 8 There is an increase / increase in the number of students in my class this year.
(n.) (v.)
- 9 Heat causes / causes ice to melt.
(n.) (v.)
- 10 Heavy rain or snow are often the cause / cause of traffic accidents.
(n.) (v.)

Word Partnership

Use **increase** with

adv.	increase dramatically , increase rapidly
n.	population increase, price increase, salary increase, increase in crime , increase in demand , increase in spending , increase in temperature , increase in value
adj.	big increase, marked increase, sharp increase

Vocabulary in Context

Read the following sentences. Choose the correct word or phrase for each sentence. Write your answers on the blank lines.

route (n.)

shortcut (n.)

temperature (n.)

- 1 The distance from Robert's house to his friend's house is three miles, but if he takes a _____, the distance is only two miles.
- 2 What is the quickest _____ from the library to the college? I'm in a hurry.
- 3 Many people are most comfortable when the _____ is about 65° Fahrenheit.

cause (v.)

freeze (v.)

shrink (v.)

- 4 If I wash my sweater in hot water, it will _____. I need to wash it in cold water.
- 5 Will increasing temperatures _____ the ice to melt at the South Pole, too?
- 6 I like to _____ fresh vegetables. Then I can eat them whenever I want.

decrease (v.)

global warming (n.)

melt (v.)

traditionally (adv.)

- 7 There are many causes of _____. One cause is the burning of coal and oil.
- 8 _____, most Americans have a cake on their birthday.
- 9 That chocolate will _____ if you leave it on the table in the sun.
- 10 You need to _____ the amount of water you are giving the flowers. Too much water will harm them.

D

Topics for Discussion and Writing

- 1 The ice in the Arctic Ocean is melting because of global warming. Do you think this increase in temperature affects the animals that live in the Arctic? How?
- 2 What do you think are some causes of global warming? Discuss some possible reasons with your classmates.
- 3 Some companies use ships to transport their products. Why do you think they use ships instead of airplanes? Discuss some possible reasons with your classmates.
- 4 **Write in your journal.** Do you think global warming is dangerous to the environment? Why or why not? Explain your reasons and give examples.

Follow-up Activities

Look at the map below. Answer the questions that follow.

Ocean Routes between Europe and Asia



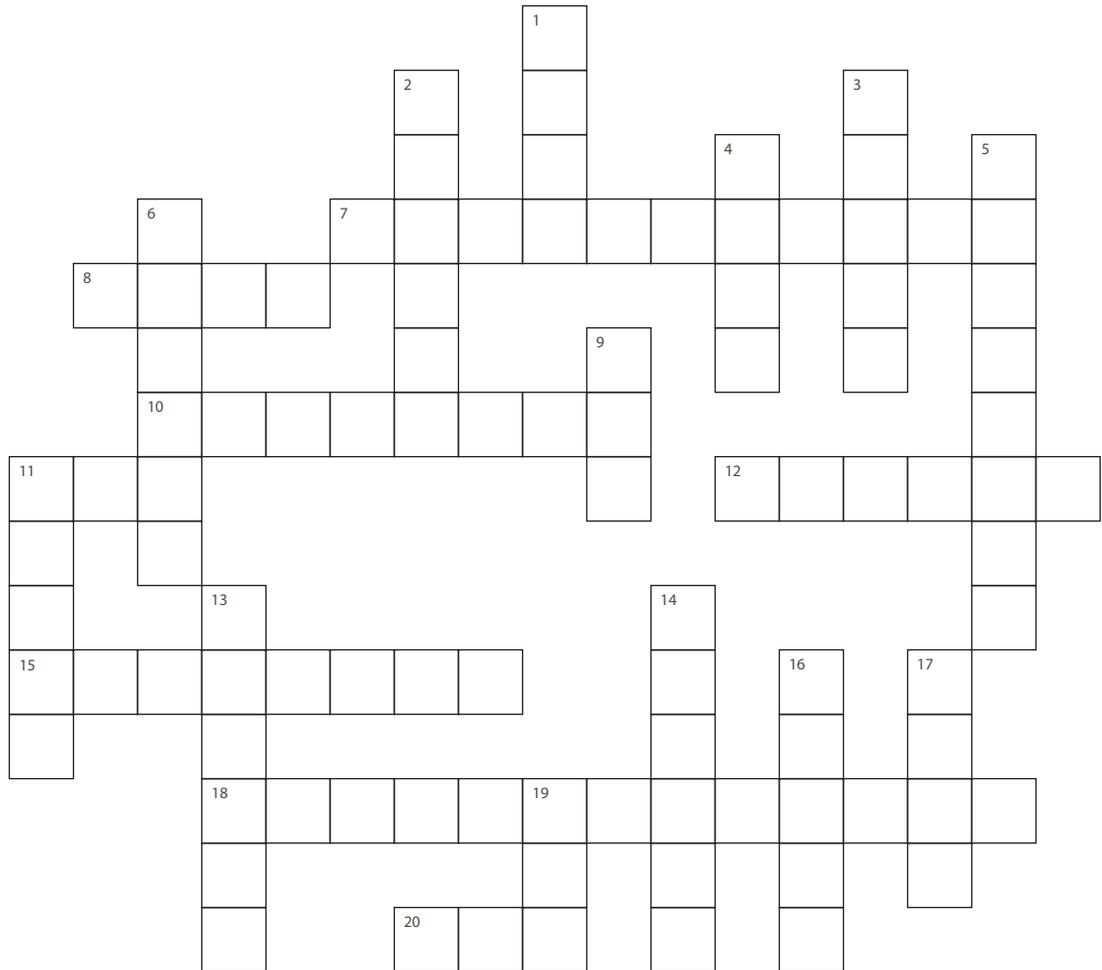
— The new route between Europe and Asia
— The traditional ocean route between Europe and Asia

- 1 What is the distance from Yokohama to Rotterdam using the southerly route? _____ miles
- 2 What is the distance from Yokohama to Rotterdam using the Northeast Passage? _____ miles
- 3 Which route is shorter? _____
- 4 Why is it shorter? _____

- 5 What are some advantages of a shorter route? _____

Crossword Puzzle

Read the clues on the next page. Write the answers in the correct spaces in the puzzle.



Crossword Puzzle Clues

ACROSS CLUES

7. The ____ outside is 65 degrees.
8. I enjoy traveling by _____. I love the ocean!
10. You can ____ your strength by exercising every day.
11. I ____ swim very well.
12. Many scientists worry that ____ warming will cause the ocean level to rise.
15. The children took a ____ across the park to get home.
18. Our family has ____ had New Year's Day dinner at five o'clock, but this year we will eat at seven o'clock.
20. A ____ is a drawing of a city, a country, or even the whole world.

DOWN CLUES

1. Voyage; journey
2. Water will ____ at 32° Fahrenheit.
3. Here are the directions to my house. It is a very direct ____.
4. The past tense of **give**
5. When fall turns into winter, the temperature will ____.
6. If you wash that sweater in hot water, it will _____. Then it will not fit you anymore.
9. The opposite of **no**
11. Very cold weather can ____ your skin to become red.
13. The ____ Ocean is at the top of the world.
14. The newspapers will ____ on the accident in tomorrow's paper.
16. The opposite of **big**
17. Butter will ____ if you put it on a hot dish.
19. Your hair is on ____ of your head.

Cloze Quiz

Read the following paragraphs. Fill in the blanks with the correct words from the list. Use each word only once.

air	lowest	result	years
between	melts	sea	
increase	report	winter	

The Northeast Passage is a shortcut _____⁽¹⁾ Europe and Asia through the Canadian Arctic. Part of the Arctic sea ice _____⁽²⁾ each summer before freezing again in the _____⁽³⁾. Still, too much ice covered the _____⁽⁴⁾, even in the summer. Over the last several _____⁽⁵⁾, the ice cover has decreased. This shrinking is a _____⁽⁶⁾ of global warming. Global warming is the _____⁽⁷⁾ in the average temperature of the Earth's near-surface _____⁽⁸⁾ and oceans since the 1950s. Scientists _____⁽⁹⁾ that the Arctic Ocean ice cap has decreased to its _____⁽¹⁰⁾ levels in the past few summers.

approximately	faster	saves	traveled
cross	route	through	
example	same	traditionally	

Two German ships were the first to _____⁽¹¹⁾ the Arctic's Northeast Passage. They _____⁽¹²⁾ from Ulsan, South Korea, to Yamburg, Siberia. _____⁽¹³⁾, shippers traveling from Asia to Europe

had to go through the Gulf of Aden and _____⁽¹⁴⁾ the Suez Canal into the Mediterranean Sea and then into the Atlantic Ocean. Using that traditional _____⁽¹⁵⁾, a journey from South Korea to the Netherlands, for _____⁽¹⁶⁾, is about 12,700 miles. However, the _____⁽¹⁷⁾ route through the Northeast Passage is _____⁽¹⁸⁾ 9,200 miles. It is a lot _____⁽¹⁹⁾, too—about 10 days shorter. This not only saves time, but also _____⁽²⁰⁾ fuel.