

## Early Trade Instructions and Answers for Teachers

- Venue: Colonial Garden
- Estimated duration to complete all questions: 1 hour

### Level / Subject:

- Lower Secondary (Geography and History)

### Learning Objectives:

- State the uses of cash crops
- Understand Singapore's role in the region's maritime trade from the 14th to 19th century



### ACTIVITY 1: Crops with Profits (30 mins)

At the *Colonial Garden* at the Heritage Gardens, you will find some plants that were highly sought-after for centuries. Identify them and state their uses. Where did these plants come from?

(a)

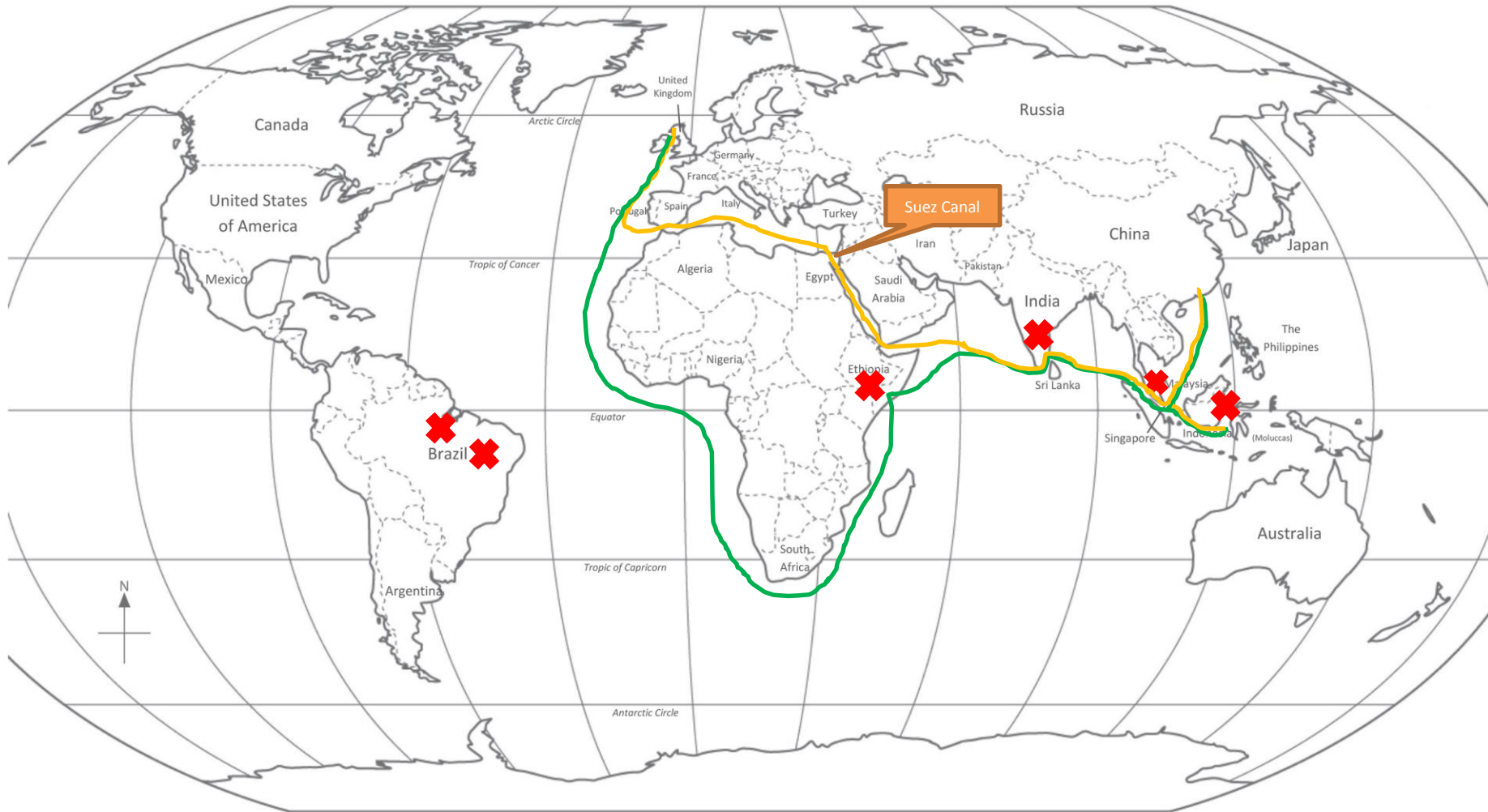
Answer:

| No. | Name of Plant | Uses  | Native Country  |
|-----|---------------|---|---|
| 1   | Pepper        | Spice   | South India   |
| 2   | Gambier       | Tanning and dying materials, as a stimulant                             | Southeast Asia (Malaysia and Indonesia)                                       |
| 3   | Clove         | Spice, perfume, medicine  | Moluccas (Indonesia)  |
| 4   | Rubber Tree   | Car tyres, other rubber products e.g. boots, gloves, rubber tubes, etc. | Brazil / South America (Tropical America)                                     |
| 5   | Nutmeg        | Spice   | Moluccas (Indonesia)  |
| 6   | Cocoa Tree    | Chocolate (eating and drinking)   | Mexico, Brazil / Central, North and South America (Tropical parts of America) |
| 7   | Coffee        | As a beverage that contains caffeine, to increase vitality              | Ethiopia / Central and West Africa (Tropical parts of Africa)                 |

Hint: Additional information can be found on the interpretive panels and respective plant labels at the Colonial Garden.

(b) Mark a cross on the native countries of the plants identified in (a), on the map provided here.

Answer:



(c) Observing the location of the countries of origin in (b), identify a common characteristic of these habitats.

**Answer:** They are located near the equator and experience a tropical climate (high temperature and rainfall).

### **ACTIVITY 2: Be a Trader (30 mins)**

(a) Imagine that you are a wealthy British trader living in the 14<sup>th</sup> century. The demand for spices such as nutmeg, clove and pepper, as well as coffee and silk has increased in the UK. However, these can only be obtained from their countries of origin. What would you do to obtain these materials?

**Answer:** Accept any reasonable answer. Here are some suggested ones: increase the price of these materials; increase the supply of these materials by venturing out to their countries of origin to buy / trade; colonise the countries of origin; attempt to grow the plants in greenhouses in the UK or colonies that experience a tropical climate, etc.

(b) You have been tasked to go on a voyage to trade in the various materials. The main mode of transport between the 7<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> century was maritime. On the map in 1(b), draw the shortest possible maritime route you can take to obtain the materials from their countries of origin.

**Answer:** Students may submit the green line drawn in the map as their answer. From the UK, traders would need to travel to Ethiopia for coffee, South India for pepper, Indonesia for clove and nutmeg and China for silk.

**Note:** The Suez Canal (see location on map) was not opened till 1869. However, it is important to note that traders did consider a mixture of overland and maritime routes (orange line) for a shorter journey.

(c) You are required to move to India to manage the trading business for the materials you need from India, Indonesia and China. You have been told that Temasek (Singapore) is a suitable stopover port along one of the important maritime trade routes. From the route you have mapped out in 2(b), why is a stopover port required and why is Singapore a suitable location?

**Answer:** Stopover ports are required for ships to refuel, and replenish their stocks of food and fresh water. Any repair works may also be done at these points. Singapore was strategically located at the centre of the main China - Indonesia - India maritime route and along the Straits of Melaka (which is a shorter route preferred by traders). Traders from different countries could gather and trade their goods in Singapore instead of having to travel all the way to each other's countries to obtain what was needed.

**Suggestions to Teacher:** As a post-visit programme, you may get the students to research and present on other factors that contributed to the growth of Temasek and its status as an important port-of-call from the 14<sup>th</sup> century. This could be done individually or as a group activity. Set aside some time for students to critique each other's work.

### **Note to Teacher:**

For more on the *History of Trade and the Establishment of Singapore as a British trading settlement*, check out these Secondary School programmes:

- Trees: Our Natural Heritage
- Crop-commodity
- Trading Places