

Global Connections: The Journey of Trade

Learning objective: To understand how global trade links countries and the role of imports and exports in the UK economy.

Read the text carefully and answer the questions below. Think deeply about how the goods you use every day travel across the globe to reach your home.

Finn the dolphin has spent his life travelling the world's oceans, observing the vast cargo ships that navigate the globe. He has noticed that the items we find in our shops, from tropical fruits to complex electronic components, rarely originate in the country where they are sold. This process is called trade. When the United Kingdom sells goods or services to other nations, this is known as an export. Conversely, when we purchase items from overseas—such as bananas from Ecuador or cotton from India—these are imports. Trade relies on complex logistics, involving ports, lorries, and aeroplanes to ensure products reach consumers efficiently. For example, a laptop might be designed in one country, contain minerals mined in another, and be assembled in a third before arriving at a British retailer. This interconnectedness means that countries rely on one another for resources they cannot produce themselves. Whilst this global exchange provides us with a wide variety of goods, it also requires careful consideration regarding the environmental impact of transporting items across thousands of miles. Through trade, our world has become a closely linked community of nations.

Word bank: export · import · globalisation · logistics · commodity · consumer

1. Identify two specific examples of goods mentioned in the text that the UK might import from other countries. (2 marks) (2 marks)

2. According to the text, what is the main difference between an 'export' and an 'import'? (2 marks) (2 marks)

3. Why might a single product, like a laptop, involve more than two countries in its production process? (3 marks) (3 marks)

4. Explain why the author suggests that global trade makes the world a 'closely linked community'. (3 marks) (3 marks)

5. Do you think the benefits of having access to global goods outweigh the environmental cost of transporting them? Justify your answer with reasons. (3 marks) (3 marks)

Draw: Draw a map of the world and use arrows to show how different products (like fruit, clothes, or technology) travel from one continent to the UK. Label your arrows with the type of transport used.



Extension challenge: Research a product in your classroom or at home. Identify where it was made. Write a short paragraph explaining the journey that product might have taken to reach your desk, considering the different modes of transport involved. What might happen to the price of this item if the cost of fuel for cargo ships increased by £500 per journey?