Station #1

The Middle East is known as the "cultural crossroads" because of its geographic location. The most prevalent natural resource available in the Middle East is oil. Due to the large desert land that makes up the Middle East, there is little food available to its inhabitants and a scarcity of water, which is the greatest obstacle to development in the region. Islam is the major religion in the Middle East, and Arab is the primary ethnic group living in the region. The Suez Canal is the link to the Persian Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz. These bodies of water are all major trade routes for petroleum exports. After World War I, the Middle East was divided amongst the winning Allied Powers into territories called mandates. However, a common history, language and culture led to nationalism in the Middle East and eventual conflict over resources, land and the right to self-determination that continues to this day.

The Suez Canal is a narrow, artificial waterway in Egypt that joins the Mediterranean and Red seas. The main canal is just under 100 miles long. Including entrance canals at both ends, the Suez Canal is about 118 miles long. The canal shortens sea voyages between the Atlantic and Indian oceans. A ship sailing between London and Mumbai saves about 5,100 miles by using the canal rather than traveling around Africa.

North Atlantic Ocean
London
Europe
Asia
SUEZ CANAL
7,200 Miles
11,600 Km
Mumbai
Africa
Equator
12,300 Miles
19,800 Km
South Atlantic Ocean
Indian Ocean

Geography Influences Culture

Bulgaria — Black Sea — Russia — Uzbekistan
Istanbul — Georgia — Caspian Sea — Azerbaijan
Greece — Ankara — Pontic Mts. — Armenia — Turkmenistan
Turkey — Taurus Mts. — Elburz Mts. — Tehran — Afghanistan
Cyprus — Syria — Tigris — Iran — Zagros Mts.
Mediterranean Sea — Lebanon — Damascus — Baghdad — Pakistan
Israel — Iraq — Shatt al Arab
Jerusalem — Jordan — Euphrates
Cairo — Kuwait — Persian Gulf
Suez Canal — Bahrain — Qatar — Muscat
Libya — Riyadh — United Arab Emirates
Egypt — Nile — Saudi Arabia — Rub al Khali — Oman
Aswan High Dam — Mecca — Arabian Sea
Lake Nasser — boundary undefined
Sahara — Red Sea — Yemen
Eritrea — Sanaa — Socotra — Indian Ocean
Sudan — Blue Nile — Aden
Djibouti — White Nile
Ethiopia — Somalia
500 Miles
500 Kilometers