Reading Ex. – The New Megalopolis

Identifying details > **Read the sentences below. Decide if each statement is true (T) or false (F) based on the information provided in the article below.**

..... 1. Across the globe, nations create economic growth more than regions.
..... 2. Major international institutions such as the United Nations have been systematically collecting information about megacities.
..... 3. There are about 20 megacities scattered around the globe.
..... 4. The biggest mega-region is Chicago to Pittsburgh, in the United States.
..... 5. Mega-regions sometimes ignore borders and include more than one country.
..... 6. The three major Megas in China account for almost all of China's economic power.
..... 7. When older cities get too large, new cities emerge in the middle of nowhere.
..... 8. According to urbanologist Jane Jacobs, people become more productive and creative when they gather together in cities.

The New Megalopolis

Our focus on cities is wrong. Growth and innovation come from new urban corridors.

China isn't the world's most ferocious new economic competitor—the exploding east-coast corridor, from Beijing to Shanghai, is. India as a whole is not developing high-tech industries and attracting jobs, but the booming mega-region stretching from Bangalore to Hyderabad is. Across the world, in fact, nations don't spur growth so much as dynamic regions—modern versions of the original "megalopolis," a term coined by the geographer Jean Gottman to identify the sprawling Boston–New York–Washington economic power corridor.

The New Megas are the real economic organizing units of the world and the **major sources of global** wealth, attracting a large share of its talent and generating the most innovation. They take shape as powerful complexes of multiple cities and suburbs, often stretching across national borders—forming a vast expanse of trade, transport, **communications**, and talent. Yet, **despite** the fact that the rise of regions has been apparent for more than a decade, no one has collected systematic information on them—not the World Bank, not the IMF[1], not the United Nations, not the global consulting firms.

That's why a team of geographers set about building a world map of the New Megas shaped by satellite images of the world at night, using light emissions to **define** the outlines of each region, and additional data in categories such as population and economic growth to chart their relative peak strengths and dynamism[2]. The result is the topographical map you see here.

The map makes it clear that the global economy takes shape around perhaps 20 great Megas—half in the United States and the rest scattered throughout the world. These regions are home to just 10 percent of total world population, 660 million people, but produce half of all economic activity, two thirds of world-class scientific activity, and three quarters of global innovations. The great urbanologist Jane Jacobs was the first to describe why megalopolises grow. When people **migrate** to one place, they all become

[1] *IMF*: International Monetary Fund, a financial monitoring and regulating organization
[2] *dynamism*: the pattern or process of change, growth, and activity

Taken from Rubin, B. (2009) Inside Reading 3 *The Academic Word List In Context*. Oxford University Press. NY, USA. pp. 18-21
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more productive. And the place itself becomes much more productive, because collective creativity grows exponentially[3]. Ideas flow more freely, are honed[4] more sharply, and can be put into practice more quickly.

There is, however, a tipping point[5]. The forces of price and congestion begin pushing people away from the center. But make no mistake, this has nothing to do with the "decentralization of work," as many have argued. The huge economic advantages of clustering still guide the process, which is why second cities emerge near big cities or in the corridors between them, not in the middle of nowhere.

The first region to achieve Mega **status** and still the biggest Mega in economic terms is the Boston-to-Washington corridor. In 1961 it was home to about 32 million people; today its population has risen to 55 million, more than 17 percent of all Americans. The region generates $242.5 trillion in economic activity, making it the world's fourth largest economy, bigger than France or the United Kingdom. Next in line is Chi-Pitts, the great Midwestern Mega running from Chicago to Detroit, Cleveland, and Pittsburgh, with $242.3 trillion in economic activity. Three of the power centers of the U.S. economy even stretch beyond American borders: So-Cal runs from Los Angeles to San Diego across the Mexican border to Tijuana; Tor-Buff-Chester sprawls from Toronto to Rochester, and Cascadia from Portland, Oregon, to Vancouver.

Aside from the island-bound financial center of Greater London, Europe's major economic engines do not **rely** on old borders to define themselves. The Euro-Lowlands cuts across four nations: the Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, and France. The Euro-Sunbelt stretches from Barcelona to Marseille, attracting people and firms with competitive costs and the Mediterranean lifestyle. Japan is less a country than a **network** of linked Mega-regions, anchored by Greater Tokyo: indeed, a close look at the light-emissions map shows that its three major Megas may well be blurring into one super-Mega of more than 100 million people.

While Mega-regions power advanced economies, they literally define the emerging nations. If you **removed** its Megas, China would be virtually meaningless as an economic category. What matters are Shang-King (Shanghai to Nanjing), with more than 50 million people; Hong-Zen (Hong Kong to Shenzhen), 40 million; Greater Beijing, 36 million. These three Megas account for most of Chinese economic output, attract most of its talent, and generate the great majority of its innovations.

Instead of technology helping to spread economic opportunity and lift many more boats, economic power is concentrating in a small number of key regions. It's time for political and economic leadership to wake up to this new reality. It makes little sense to dwell on countries anymore, when the real engines of **survival**, innovation, and growth are the New Megas.

[3] ***exponentially***: extremely rapidly

[4] ***hone***: sharpen

[5] ***tipping point***: the moment at which a trend reaches its peak and starts to decline

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Identifying Main Ideas vs. Supporting Details > **Read the excerpts below from the previous text. Write (MI) if the statement is a main idea or (SD) if it is a supporting detail.**

> Writers offer specific details and examples to clarify and support their general ideas. When reading a text, it is helpful to identify both the main ideas and the supporting details and note these in a simple outline form.

..... Nations don't spur growth as much as dynamic regions.

..... Today, its population has risen to 55 million.

..... Europe's major economic engines have even less respect for old borders.

..... The New Megas are the real economic organizing units of the world.

..... The global economy takes shape around perhaps 20 great Megas.

..... What matters are Shang-King (Shanghai to Nanjing); Hong-Zen (Hong Kong to Shenzhen); and Greater Beijing.

..... The region generates $242.5 trillion in economic activity.

Identifying the writer's purpose > **The article above has nine paragraphs. What is the main purpose in each? Write some notes or sentences about the focus of each paragraph. <u>One example has been given for you</u>.**

Paragraph 1: *explain idea of "mega," give some examples of megas*

Paragraph 2: .....

Paragraph 3: .....

Paragraph 4: .....

Paragraph 5: .....

Paragraph 6: .....

Paragraph 7: .....

Paragraph 8: .....

Paragraph 9: .....

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