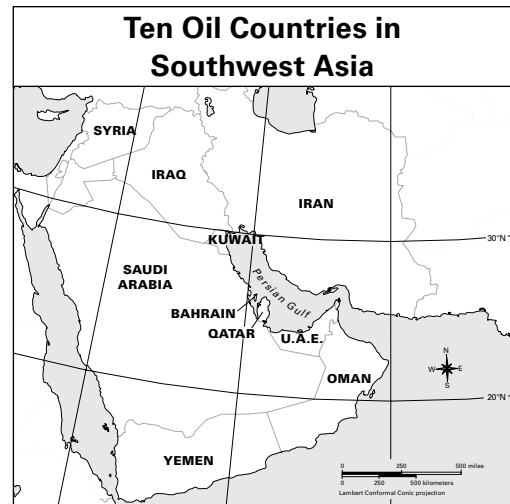


Investigating the Geology and Geography of Oil

Land Area of Oil Countries of Southwest Asia

Examine the map at right. It shows the locations of 10 oil countries in Southwest Asia. Then discuss these questions in your group:

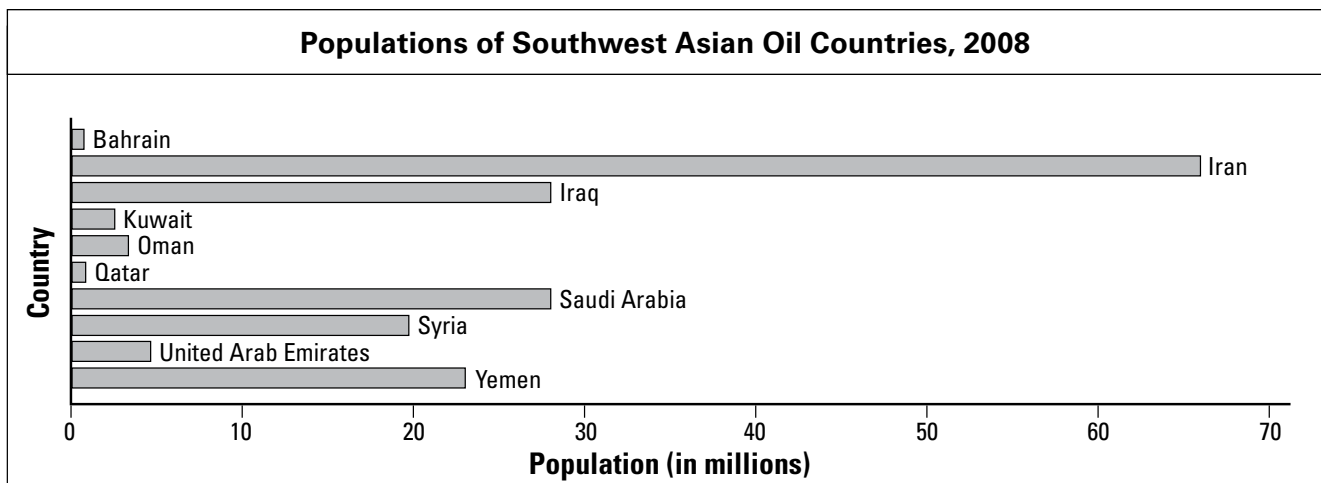
- Name 10 oil countries in Southwest Asia. Which is the largest? Which is the smallest?
- What might be the relationship between a country's size and the amount of its oil reserves?



Population of Oil Countries of Southwest Asia

Study the graph below. It reflects the size of the population of each of 10 oil countries in Southwest Asia. Then talk about these questions:

- Which oil country has the largest population in Southwest Asia? Which has the smallest?
- What might be the relationship between a country's population and the amount of its oil reserves?



Source: Central Intelligence Agency.

Critical Thinking Question A

Think about what you have discovered about the size and population of oil countries in Southwest Asia. Based on that information, which set of countries below do you think has the largest oil reserves? Why? Be ready to justify your group's choice to the class.

Set 1: Iran, Qatar, United Arab Emirates

Set 2: Oman, Yemen, Syria

Set 3: Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Kuwait

Investigating Oil Wealth and People's Well-Being

Gross Domestic Product

Gross domestic product (GDP) is the value of all the goods and services produced in a country in a year. The table lists the GDP of each of 10 oil countries in Southwest Asia, from highest to lowest. Analyze the table, and discuss these questions in your group:

- Which oil countries have the highest GDP? Which have the lowest?
- What might be the relationship between a country's GDP and the well-being of its people?

GDP of Ten Southwest Asian Oil Countries, 2008		
Rank	Country	GDP (in U.S. dollars)
1	Iran	\$859,700,000,000
2	Saudi Arabia	\$600,400,000,000
3	United Arab Emirates	\$186,800,000,000
4	Kuwait	\$157,900,000,000
5	Iraq	\$113,900,000,000
6	Syria	\$96,530,000,000
7	Qatar	\$83,290,000,000
8	Oman	\$67,450,000,000
9	Yemen	\$60,480,000,000
10	Bahrain	\$26,750,000,000

Source: Central Intelligence Agency.

Per Capita GDP

Per capita GDP is a country's total GDP divided by its population. The next table lists the per capita GDP of these 10 oil countries, from highest to lowest. Analyze the table and discuss these questions in your group:

- Which oil countries have the highest per capita GDP? Which have the lowest?
- Are the rankings on this table the same as on the GDP table above? Why or why not?
- Which type of information—GDP or per capita GDP—do you think might give better information about the well-being of a country's people? Why?

Per Capita GDP of Ten Southwest Asian Oil Countries, 2008		
Rank	Country	Per Capita GDP (in U.S. dollars)
1	Qatar	\$101,000
2	Kuwait	\$60,800
3	United Arab Emirates	\$40,400
4	Bahrain	\$37,200
5	Saudi Arabia	\$21,300
6	Oman	\$20,400
7	Iran	\$13,100
8	Syria	\$4,900
9	Iraq	\$4,000
10	Yemen	\$2,600

Source: Central Intelligence Agency.

Critical Thinking Question B

One way to measure people's well-being is through the Human Development Index, or HDI. This index is used by the United Nations. It combines a variety of information, including per capita GDP, life expectancy, literacy, and level of education.

Think about what you've discovered about the GDP and per capita GDP of these 10 oil countries. Based on that information, which set of countries below do you think would rank the highest in the Human Development Index? Why? Be ready to justify your group's choice to the class.

Set 1: Syria, Yemen, Iran

Set 2: Oman, Saudi Arabia, Qatar

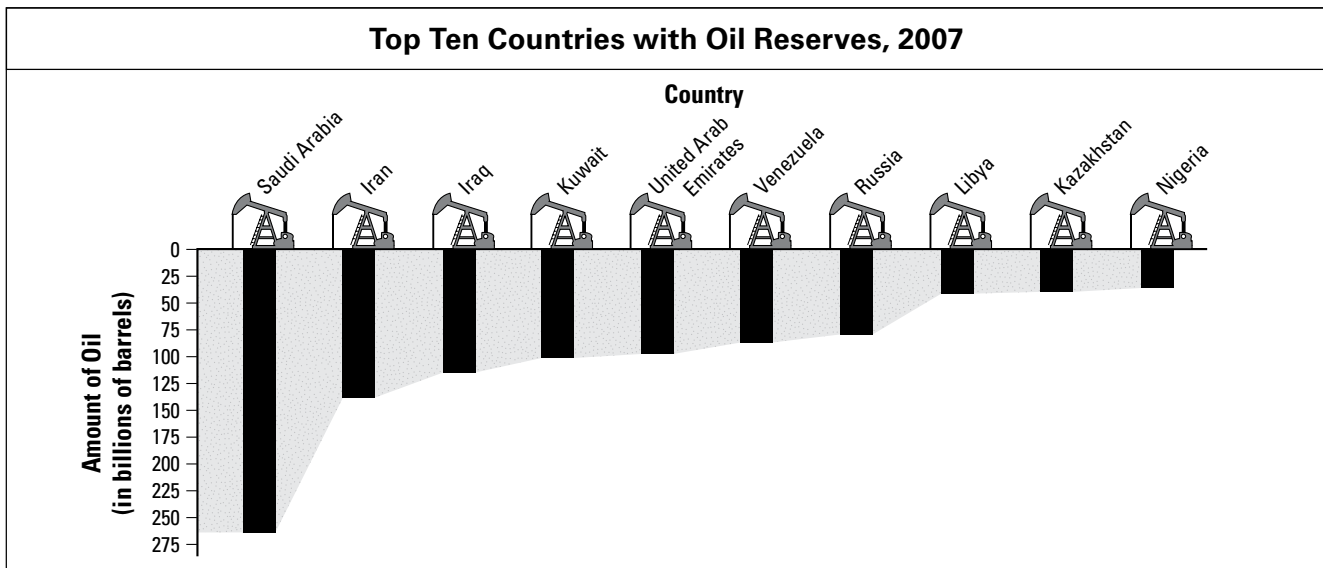
Set 3: Bahrain, United Arab Emirates, Kuwait

Investigating the Price and Flow of Oil

World Oil Reserves

The bar graph below highlights the countries around the world with the largest known oil reserves. The length of the bars show the size of each country's reserves. Closely examine the graph, and discuss these questions in your group:

- Which countries have the largest oil reserves?
- Why might countries with large oil reserves be interested in controlling the price and supply of oil?



Source: BP Statistical Review of World Energy 2008.

Critical Thinking Question C

In 1960, several oil-producing countries around the world decided to join together to better control the price and supply of oil. These countries founded the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries, or OPEC. The majority of oil countries in Southwest Asia are members of OPEC. Some OPEC members are countries outside of Southwest Asia, such as Venezuela, Indonesia, Libya, Nigeria, and Algeria.

Based on what you have investigated, which set of countries below do you think are *not* OPEC members? Why? Be ready to justify your group's choice to the class.

Set 1: Iran, Iraq, Kuwait

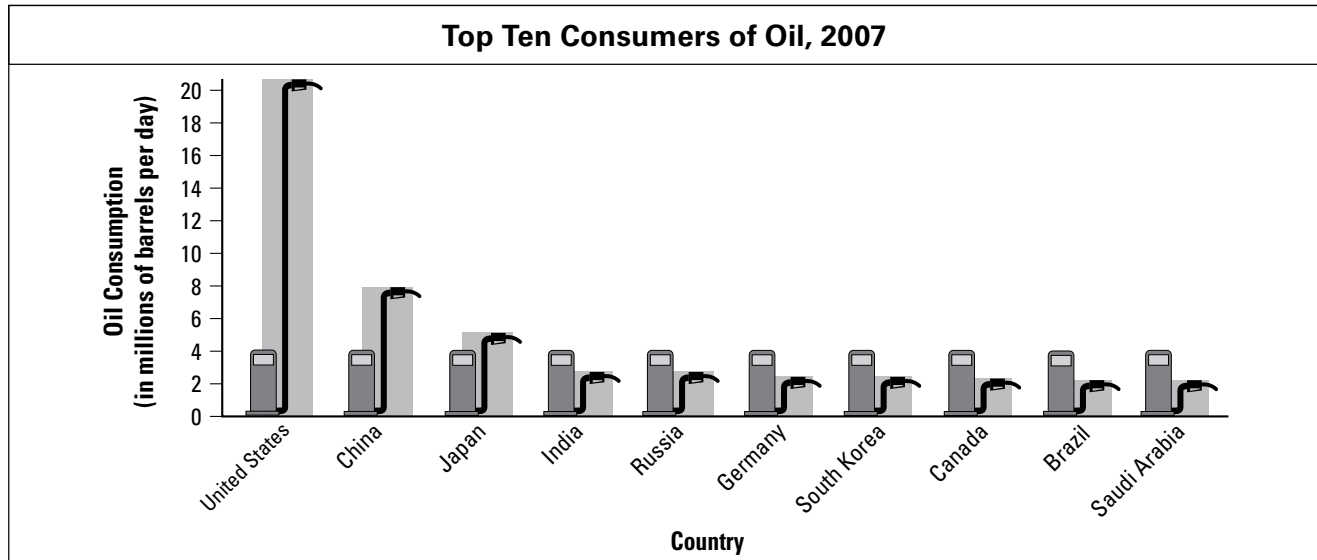
Set 2: Oman, Syria, Yemen

Set 3: Qatar, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates

World Oil Consumption

The graph below highlights the countries in the world that consume the most oil. The height of the bars reflects the amount of oil each country uses each day. Analyze the graph, and discuss these questions in your group:

- Which countries consume the most oil? What is similar about them?
- Why might countries that consume a lot of oil be interested in controlling the price and supply of oil?
- Analyze the two graphs. What generalization can you form from the two sets of data?



Source: BP Statistical Review of World Energy 2008.

Critical Thinking Question D

In 1990, Iraq invaded the neighboring country of Kuwait. This invasion threatened the flow of oil from this part of Southwest Asia. In response, the United States and many other countries worked together to drive Iraq out of Kuwait. This became the 1991 Persian Gulf War. Some countries contributed soldiers, equipment, and money to the war. Top contributors included the United States, Germany, and Japan. Many oil countries in Southwest Asia were also big contributors.

Based on what you have learned, which set of countries below do you think contributed the most toward the costs of the Persian Gulf War? Why? Be ready to justify your group's choice to the class.

Set 1: Iran, Oman, Qatar

Set 2: Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, United Arab Emirates

Set 3: Yemen, Bahrain, Syria