The History of Salt

Listen to the story and fill in the blanks with the correct word.

We ________ salt every day. It keeps us alive and enhances the taste of ________. Salt is cheap and plentiful. Long ago, things were different. Salt was so important, it influenced ________, government and empires.

The history of salt goes back ________ of years.

People in early societies boiled ocean water to get salt. That ________ great effort. Although difficult to produce, it was essential for survival. Salt mixed with meat or __________ preserved food. That is how people were able to eat during the ________ months when food was not always easy to find.

The historical ____________ of salt can be appreciated by looking at three empires. During the Roman Empire, road networks were __________ in order to simplify transport to and from distant salt fields. Because of its high __________, soldiers were paid with salt instead of money. When Rome wanted to start a ________, they collected money by raising salt taxes.

Two thousand years ago in China, ________ of all the tax money collected by the Tang dynasty came from the ________ of salt. It also played an important role in the development of __________ weapons. Without saltpeter, a kind of salt, the Chinese might not have __________ gunpowder.

Salt also played an important ________ in India when it was controlled by the British. Salt taxes and bad laws in the 1930s made people ________ at the British Empire. In order to protect British companies, the government ________ a law that said individual people could not make or sell salt.

People like Gandhi protested. He led a salt march that attracted __________ followers. The salt march helped make Gandhi an important ________.

The next time you eat food with salt, think about how that ________ rock has fed people, built empires and triggered social ________.