Two Mound Centers

Compare daily life, leadership, and ceremonies in Mississippian Alabama

SS24.3.8b "Describe key characteristics of different tribes in Alabama in the Mississippian Period, contrasting social customs, political organization, and religious practices."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline details about daily life, circle details about leaders, and put a star beside details about ceremonies or burials so you can compare the two centers.

Moundville and Bottle Creek

1. Long ago, during the Mississippian Period, Native peoples built towns across Alabama. They grew corn, made pottery, and raised flat-topped earthen mounds. A mound could hold a leader's building or be a place for gatherings. Two important centers were Moundville, beside the Black Warrior River, and Bottle Creek, near Mobile Bay. We do not know the tribal names of all the people who lived at these centers.

2. At Moundville, families farmed near the river and made decorated clay pots. The town was the center of a large group of linked towns. A chief held power, while other leaders helped guide nearby towns. People built many mounds, and some ceremonies took place on them. Archaeologists have found special objects in some graves. These objects show that burial was important to the people there.

3. At Bottle Creek, families lived among streams and wet ground. They fished, gathered shellfish, and grew crops on higher ground. People traveled by boat to this mound center. Leaders likely brought people from nearby settlements together there, but we do not know exactly how they ruled. People held ceremonies at its mounds. The exact steps of those ceremonies are unknown.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How were families' ways of getting food alike and different at the two centers?

2. How does what we know about leaders at Moundville differ from what we know about leaders at Bottle Creek?

3. What did people at both centers use mounds for, and what does this tell you about their religious practices?

4. How is the evidence for burial at Moundville different from what we know about ceremonies at Bottle Creek?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine a child from Moundville visiting Bottle Creek. Write three sentences about what might feel different in daily life, how leaders brought people together, and what the child could recognize about ceremonies. Use only facts in the passage.

ANSWER KEY

Two Mound Centers

GRADE 3 · SS24.3.8b

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline details about daily life, circle details about leaders, and put a star beside details about ceremonies or burials so you can compare the two centers. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How were families' ways of getting food alike and different at the two centers?	**Both grew crops. Moundville families farmed near the river, while Bottle Creek families also fished and gathered shellfish.**
2	How does what we know about leaders at Moundville differ from what we know about leaders at Bottle Creek?	**We know a chief held power over linked towns at Moundville. Leaders likely gathered people from nearby settlements at Bottle Creek, but exactly how they ruled is unknown.**
3	What did people at both centers use mounds for, and what does this tell you about their religious practices?	**People at both centers held ceremonies at mounds, so ceremonies were part of life in both places.**
4	How is the evidence for burial at Moundville different from what we know about ceremonies at Bottle Creek?	**Archaeologists found special objects in some Moundville graves. They do not know the exact steps of ceremonies at Bottle Creek.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

A child from Moundville might notice more boats and shellfish at Bottle Creek. At home, a chief led linked towns, while leaders at Bottle Creek likely gathered people from nearby settlements. The child might recognize mounds used for ceremonies, even though the exact steps at Bottle Creek are unknown.

Accept comparisons supported by the passage, including that both groups grew crops and held ceremonies at mounds. Do not require students to name a tribe, since the passage explains that not all tribal names are known.