Schools Take Shape

How education changed in Alabama from 1819 to 1860

SS24.4.12d "Describe the development of educational institutions in Alabama from statehood through 1860."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Number these three stages in the passage from earliest to latest: local schools, the university, and the statewide public school system. Underline one detail that shows not every child could attend school.

Learning in a Growing State

1. When Alabama became a state in 1819, it did not have one school system for all children. Families sometimes paid a teacher to hold lessons in a small schoolhouse. Churches and towns also started schools, and some communities opened academies with classes beyond basic reading and writing. Land set aside for schools could bring in money, but that money did not build a school in every town.

2. As Alabama's population grew, its leaders made plans for a college. The state chartered the University of Alabama in 1820, and it opened in Tuscaloosa in 1831. Its students studied subjects such as math and languages. The university offered more advanced learning than a small local school. Still, going to college was possible for only a small part of Alabama's population.

3. In 1854, Alabama passed a law to set up a statewide public school system. Local communities still had to arrange schools, and money for them was often scarce. By 1860, more children had a chance to attend school, but opportunities were deeply unequal. Most schools served white children. Enslaved Black children were kept from these schools, and many other children had no nearby school.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did people start and pay for schools in Alabama soon after statehood?

2. How did the University of Alabama add to the kinds of education available in the state?

3. What changed about Alabama's plans for schools in 1854, and what problem remained?

4. Why would it be wrong to say every Alabama child could attend school by 1860?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a four-sentence museum label about how education in Alabama changed from statehood through 1860. Include two steps in its development and one limit on who could attend.

ANSWER KEY

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GRADE 4 · SS24.4.12d

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Number these three stages in the passage from earliest to latest: local schools, the university, and the statewide public school system. Underline one detail that shows not every child could attend school. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did people start and pay for schools in Alabama soon after statehood?	**Families paid teachers, while churches and towns started schools. Land set aside for schools could also bring in money.**
2	How did the University of Alabama add to the kinds of education available in the state?	**It offered advanced subjects, such as math and languages, beyond lessons at a small local school.**
3	What changed about Alabama's plans for schools in 1854, and what problem remained?	**The state set up a statewide public school system, but money for local schools was often scarce.**
4	Why would it be wrong to say every Alabama child could attend school by 1860?	**Enslaved Black children were kept from the schools, and many other children had no school nearby.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

When Alabama became a state, families, churches, and towns started many local schools. The University of Alabama opened in 1831 and offered more advanced learning. In 1854, the state set up a public school system. Even by 1860, enslaved Black children were kept from these schools.

Accept other passage-supported descriptions of local schools and limits on attendance. The museum label should show change over time, name two developments, and identify one limit.