From Wild to Farm

How people changed plants, animals, and food supplies

SS24.7.5c "Describe the agricultural innovations that developed as a result of the Neolithic Revolution, including the domestication of plants and animals."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the steps people took to domesticate plants, circle the steps they took to domesticate animals, and draw a box around two ways they handled harvested grain.

A New Way to Get Food

1. About 10,000 years ago, some communities in Southwest Asia began raising food instead of relying only on wild plants and animals. Imagine a family beside a patch of wild wheat. They gather grain from plants whose heads hold on to their seeds instead of scattering them quickly. The family plants some of those seeds near home. Over many generations, people keep saving and planting seeds from useful plants. This human choice gradually changes the crop. It helped turn wild wheat into a domesticated plant that farmers could harvest more easily.

2. People also began keeping herds of wild ancestors of sheep and goats. They chose animals that were easier to handle and allowed them to have young. Over generations, these choices helped produce domesticated herds that lived near people. Herders could guide the animals to grazing areas, then bring them back. Sheep and goats provided meat and hides; people also used their milk. Keeping herds gave families a more predictable source of food than hunting alone, although animals still needed water, grazing land, and care.

3. Farming called for new ways to handle the harvest. People used sickles with sharp stone blades to cut grain stalks, then ground the grain with stones to make flour. They stored dried grain in containers or storage pits, protecting some of it for later meals and for planting. Farming did not end gathering or hunting everywhere. It changed how many communities got food and used land. A village needed fields, places for animals, and enough stored grain to last between harvests. These practices grew during the long shift called the Neolithic Revolution.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Describe how people changed wild wheat into a crop that was easier to harvest.

2. Describe how people developed domesticated sheep and goat herds. How did the herds help them get food?

3. How did sickles and grinding stones change the way people prepared grain for food?

4. Why was storing dried grain an important farming practice?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine a village has a short harvest season and a long stretch before the next harvest. In four sentences, propose a plan using plant domestication and one other agricultural innovation from the passage, and explain how each helps the village keep food available.

ANSWER KEY

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GRADE 7 · SS24.7.5c

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the steps people took to domesticate plants, circle the steps they took to domesticate animals, and draw a box around two ways they handled harvested grain. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Describe how people changed wild wheat into a crop that was easier to harvest.	**They repeatedly saved and planted seeds from wheat whose heads held on to their grain. Over generations, this choice produced wheat that was easier to harvest.**
2	Describe how people developed domesticated sheep and goat herds. How did the herds help them get food?	**People chose easier-to-handle animals and allowed them to have young. Over generations, they developed herds that provided meat and milk.**
3	How did sickles and grinding stones change the way people prepared grain for food?	**Sickles helped people cut grain stalks, and grinding stones turned the grain into flour.**
4	Why was storing dried grain an important farming practice?	**It kept grain for meals between harvests and saved seeds for the next planting.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Our village will save seeds from wheat plants whose heads keep their grain, then plant those seeds each year. Over many generations, this choice will make the crop easier to harvest. We will also dry grain and place it in storage pits after each harvest. Stored grain will feed us when fields are bare and leave seeds to plant next season.

Accept accurate descriptions in students' own words. For Part 3, look for four sentences that explain gradual plant domestication, a second innovation, and how both support the village's food supply.