Cloth and Change

Trace how northern markets changed work and daily life.

SS24.US1.9a "Explain how the Market Revolution fostered economic, cultural, and demographic changes in northern states."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two changes in how goods were made or moved, circle two changes in where people lived or worked, and number two changes in daily life. Use your marks to explain how the changes were connected.

A Mill Town Transformed

1 In the 1830s, a merchant in Lowell, Massachusetts, could order cotton grown by enslaved workers in the South and sell cloth to distant buyers. Canals and, later, railroads carried raw materials and products more quickly than wagons. Water-powered mills gathered workers and machines under one roof, raising cloth production and tying northern factories to markets far beyond their towns.

GOODS CONNECTED TO LOWELL MILLS

Mill input	Mill output
Cotton from the South	Cloth sold to distant buyers

2 Lowell's mills offered wages to young women from New England farms, who often lived in company boardinghouses. Irish immigrants also moved to northern cities during and after the potato famine of the 1840s. As factories and trade expanded, more people lived in growing towns instead of farming communities. Crowded housing and long shifts made that growth difficult for workers.

3 Wage work changed more than paychecks. Mill bells set schedules, while boardinghouse rules shaped life outside the mills. Workers read newspapers and petitioned for shorter hours. Cheaper factory-made cloth gave more families access to goods once costly to make at home. These shifts in daily routines, buying habits, and public debate grew alongside expanding northern factories and towns.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did canals and railroads help northern mills reach more buyers?

2. How did mill wages change where some young women lived?

3. How did mill work change workers' routines and their public actions?

4. Explain how factory growth contributed to a change in northern towns and one problem there.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a four-sentence diary entry as a young farmworker who has moved to a northern mill town. Show how a market change affects your work, your new community, and your daily life, using at least two details from the passage.

ANSWER KEY

Cloth and Change

GRADE 10 · SS24.US1.9a

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two changes in how goods were made or moved, circle two changes in where people lived or worked, and number two changes in daily life. Use your marks to explain how the changes were connected. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did canals and railroads help northern mills reach more buyers?	**They moved raw materials and finished products more quickly than wagons, connecting mills to distant markets.**
2	How did mill wages change where some young women lived?	**Some left New England farms for mill towns such as Lowell and lived in company boardinghouses.**
3	How did mill work change workers' routines and their public actions?	**Mill bells set daily schedules, and workers read newspapers and petitioned for shorter hours.**
4	Explain how factory growth contributed to a change in northern towns and one problem there.	**Factory jobs drew people from farming communities into growing towns, where crowded housing became a problem.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

I left my family's New England farm to earn wages at a Lowell cloth mill. Cotton arrives from the South, and our mill turns it into cloth for distant buyers. In the boardinghouse, I meet other young women who also left farms for factory jobs. The mill bell now sets my day, and I have signed a petition for shorter hours.

Accept other accurate links among northern production or trade, movement into towns, and changes in daily life. Diary entries may include reasonable invented personal details if their historical claims fit the passage.