Cities in Motion

How urban growth changed life for two social classes

SS24.WH.4c "Describe the effects of urbanization on Europe during the nineteenth century, including the evolution of the middle and working classes."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two reasons cities grew, circle two effects of city growth on working-class families, and number two ways city growth changed middle-class life. Use your marks to trace how urbanization affected each class.

A Changing City Street

1 In the 1850s, a family arriving in Manchester might follow the sound of factory bells to a crowded street. Across nineteenth-century Europe, factories and new rail links drew people from rural areas into cities. Mills, workshops, and construction sites offered wages, but housing often failed to keep pace. Several families might share a building with poor drainage and little clean water. Waste could spread disease through crowded neighborhoods. In cities such as Berlin and Paris, growth also changed streets and transport. Urbanization created jobs and markets, yet it made the problems of housing, sanitation, and disease harder to ignore.

2 A textile worker might spend long hours at a machine while a spouse took in laundry or earned wages in another workplace. Children in many working-class families also worked, although laws in several countries gradually limited child labor. Factory workers increasingly relied on wages rather than land or home production. Living close together helped them form unions and organize strikes for better pay and safer conditions. Employers and governments often resisted these efforts, and gains were uneven. As the century went on, some workers won higher wages or shorter hours, but many still faced insecure work and cramped homes.

3 City growth also expanded a middle class of shopkeepers, clerks, teachers, managers, and professionals. Many earned salaries or profits instead of doing factory labor; education and office skills could help them advance. Some lived in roomier homes away from industrial districts and could pay for services, though not every middle-class household was wealthy. Middle-class residents often backed paved streets, sewer systems, and schools, both to improve city life and to protect their own health and businesses. Governments and local councils gradually built water and sewer networks in some cities. These improvements reduced certain health risks, but benefits reached neighborhoods at different times.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did new jobs draw people into cities while creating a problem for those who arrived?

2. How did moving into factory work change what working-class families depended on and how some workers sought better conditions?

3. How did city growth expand the middle class, and how could its work and housing differ from those of factory workers?

4. Why might middle-class residents support new sewers, and why would that change not help every city neighborhood at once?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine you advise the council of a growing European factory city in 1880. Write one paragraph proposing two changes to city life; explain how each would affect working-class families and how at least one would affect the middle class, using evidence from the passage.

ANSWER KEY

Cities in Motion

GRADE 9 · SS24.WH.4c

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two reasons cities grew, circle two effects of city growth on working-class families, and number two ways city growth changed middle-class life. Use your marks to trace how urbanization affected each class. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did new jobs draw people into cities while creating a problem for those who arrived?	**Factories and other workplaces offered wages, drawing rural people to cities. Housing did not keep pace, so many newcomers faced crowded homes and poor sanitation.**
2	How did moving into factory work change what working-class families depended on and how some workers sought better conditions?	**Families increasingly depended on wages instead of land or home production. Workers living close together formed unions and organized strikes.**
3	How did city growth expand the middle class, and how could its work and housing differ from those of factory workers?	**City growth created or expanded jobs for clerks, managers, shopkeepers, teachers, and professionals. Many earned salaries or profits rather than factory wages, and some could afford roomier homes.**
4	Why might middle-class residents support new sewers, and why would that change not help every city neighborhood at once?	**Sewers could protect residents' health and businesses. Water and sewer networks were built gradually, so improvements reached neighborhoods at different times.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

I would ask the council to build a clean-water system and fund low-cost housing near factories. Clean water would help working-class families avoid illnesses linked to poor sanitation. It would also protect middle-class shopkeepers and their customers. Low-cost homes near workplaces would give workers more space without adding a long trip to work. Shopkeepers might gain steady customers if workers stayed healthier and had more money left to spend. Both changes would address problems caused by the city's rapid growth, although the council would need to make sure poorer neighborhoods received the improvements.

Accept other historically plausible proposals if the response explains the effects of two distinct changes on working-class families and the effect of at least one on the middle class. The response should connect its reasoning to urban conditions described in the passage.