

Choices Shape Economies

Identify how customs and government direction shape economic decisions.

SS.6.E.1.2 "Describe and identify traditional and command economies as they appear in different civilizations."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline details that show customs guiding economic choices, and circle details that show rulers or officials directing economic choices.

Customs and Commands

- ① An economy is the way a society decides what to produce, how to produce it, and who receives goods. In a traditional economy, customs passed down over time guide many of these choices. Families often use familiar tools and teach children the work of their parents. For example, in many medieval European villages, farmers followed local customs about planting, sharing grazing land, and giving part of their harvest as rent or taxes. These practices did not come from one central economic plan.
- ② In a command economy, a central government makes major economic decisions. Officials may direct workers, collect resources, and distribute goods. The Inca Empire in the Andes used a command system for many large tasks. Instead of paying regular money taxes, many households owed labor to the state through the mita. Officials organized workers to build roads, farm state lands, or mine. The government stored crops and cloth, then sent supplies to armies, workers, or communities facing shortages.
- ③ To identify the systems, look for who makes the important choices. If customs, family roles, and long-used practices guide work and trade, the economy is traditional. If rulers or government officials set production goals and direct resources, it is command. Real civilizations could include both systems. Inca families used traditions in daily life, while the state commanded labor for empire projects. Medieval villagers also traded in markets, even though many daily choices followed custom. An economy is rarely only one type.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE Use the passage

1 What details from the medieval European villages show a traditional economy?

2 What was the mita, and who organized the workers who performed it?

3 How is the person or group making economic choices different in a traditional economy and a command economy?

4 How did the Inca Empire include both traditional and command economic features?

3 YOUR TURN Your own words

Invent a civilization with either a traditional economy or a command economy. Write four sentences that name the type of economy, explain who makes economic choices, and include two specific details that prove the type.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline details that show customs guiding economic choices, and circle details that show rulers or officials directing economic choices. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What details from the medieval European villages show a traditional economy?	Farmers followed local customs for planting, sharing grazing land, and giving part of their harvest as rent or taxes.
2	What was the mita, and who organized the workers who performed it?	The mita was labor owed to the Inca state. Officials organized the workers.
3	How is the person or group making economic choices different in a traditional economy and a command economy?	Traditional economies are guided by customs and family roles. Command economies are directed by rulers or government officials.
4	How did the Inca Empire include both traditional and command economic features?	Inca families used traditions in daily life, while the state commanded labor for empire projects.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

In the island kingdom of Luma, the ruler uses a command economy. Royal officials tell fishing crews how many boats must fish each week. They send some of the catch to soldiers and store the rest for storms. The government, not family custom, makes these choices.

Accept equivalent evidence-based descriptions of traditional economies as guided mainly by customs and command economies as directed by a central government. For the open task, accept either type when the student clearly names it and provides two matching details.