

Choices Build Cities

How village economic decisions shaped later city-states

SS.6.E.2.1 "Evaluate how civilizations through clans, leaders, and family groups make economic decisions for that civilization providing a framework for future city-state or nation development."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB In paragraphs 1 and 2, underline the four specific economic decisions: canal work, bringing grain to storage, organizing storehouse workers, and rules for taking grain. Circle every family group, clan, or leader connected to each underlined decision, circling more than one group when needed.

Village Choices, City-State Foundations

- ① Long before Mesopotamian cities grew large, farming villages stood near the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers. Families planted barley and kept animals, but river water did not always reach every field. Several related families formed clans. Clan members decided when to dig and repair small canals together. By sharing labor, they could water more land than one household could manage. This choice affected the whole village because a larger harvest could feed workers, children, and elders through the year.
- ② As harvests increased, villages needed ways to save grain for dry months. Family groups brought part of their grain to a shared storehouse. Leaders, chosen or accepted by the community, helped organize workers to build and guard it. The community agreed on rules for taking grain when a family faced a poor harvest. These decisions used resources, labor, and rules to meet needs. They also required trust, since families gave up some control of food in order to gain help later.
- ③ Over time, these village practices gave later city-states a useful framework. Organizing canal work showed how leaders could direct public projects. Collecting grain in one place showed how a community could prepare for shortages and support people doing jobs beyond farming. Agreed rules helped groups settle claims about shared supplies. A city-state was larger and more complex than a village, but it still needed people to decide how to use land, labor, water, and stored food. Economic choices shaped its government and daily life.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 What problem led clan members to decide when to dig and repair canals? How did their decision help the village?

2 How did family groups and leaders each contribute to the shared storehouse?

3 What did families give up by placing grain in a shared storehouse, and what did they gain?

4 Explain how two village practices gave later city-states a framework for making economic decisions.

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Invent a river village with one resource problem. In three or four sentences, explain an economic decision made by families, clans, or leaders, and tell how that practice could help a future city-state.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

In paragraphs 1 and 2, underline the four specific economic decisions: canal work, bringing grain to storage, organizing storehouse workers, and rules for taking grain. Circle every family group, clan, or leader connected to each underlined decision, circling more than one group when needed. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What problem led clan members to decide when to dig and repair canals? How did their decision help the village?	River water did not always reach every field. Working together on canals watered more land and could produce a larger harvest.
2	How did family groups and leaders each contribute to the shared storehouse?	Family groups brought part of their grain to the storehouse. Leaders organized workers to build and guard it.
3	What did families give up by placing grain in a shared storehouse, and what did they gain?	Families gave up some control of their food. They gained help from stored grain if they had a poor harvest.
4	Explain how two village practices gave later city-states a framework for making economic decisions.	Organizing canal work showed leaders how to direct public projects. Collecting grain prepared for shortages and supported people with jobs beyond farming. Agreed rules also helped settle claims about shared supplies.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

A river village has too little water during a dry season. Clan members decide to repair a canal, while leaders organize the work days. This practice could help a future city-state direct workers on larger water projects and grow enough food for more people.

Accept reasonable village scenarios that identify a resource problem, a decision maker, an economic choice involving resources or labor, and a clear connection to a later city-state. For passage questions, accept only ideas stated in the text, including organized canal labor, stored grain, agreed rules, and leader-organized workers.