From Camps to Villages

Trace how food production changed where people lived.

6-9.WH.1.3 "Describe how hunter-gatherer communities developed into agricultural sedentary settlements."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two actions that helped people grow crops, circle two reasons people could stay in one place, and number three sentences that show the change from moving camps to village homes in time order.

A Longer Stay

1. About 12,000 years ago, groups in the Fertile Crescent gathered wild wheat and barley and hunted animals such as gazelles. Many groups moved between camps as plants ripened and herds traveled. Near dependable streams, some people returned to the same places each season. They cut wild grain, carried it home, and stored it for months when little food grew. A camp beside a stream could stay occupied longer because nearby water and stored grain made it easier to remain there. At first, staying longer did not mean people had stopped gathering and hunting.

2. Over time, some families began to scatter saved seeds near their camps and tend the growing plants. They cleared unwanted plants and protected the grain until harvest. Seeds from plants with useful traits, such as grains that stayed on their stalks, were more likely to be saved and planted again. Across many generations, this helped produce domesticated crops that depended more on people. Some communities also raised sheep or goats. Farming grew gradually alongside hunting and gathering, rather than replacing those ways of finding food all at once.

3. Fields needed regular care, so families had reasons to remain near them through much of the year. People built longer-lasting homes and places to keep harvests. Stored food could support more people and allow some to spend time making tools or weaving instead of finding food each day. Yet a village also faced problems: a failed harvest could leave many people short of food, and crowded homes could help illness spread. Not every community changed in the same way or at the same time.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did returning to streamside camps and storing wild grain make longer stays possible before farming began?

2. How did planting saved seeds help change wild plants into crops across generations?

3. Why did tending fields encourage families to build longer-lasting homes?

4. As farming spread, how could village life change people's work and create a new risk?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine a community in a different river valley that gathers wild grass seeds and follows deer each year. In five sentences, describe a step-by-step change toward a farming village, including why people might stay, how they begin producing food, and one challenge they might face.

ANSWER KEY

From Camps to Villages

GRADES 6-9 · 6-9.WH.1.3

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two actions that helped people grow crops, circle two reasons people could stay in one place, and number three sentences that show the change from moving camps to village homes in time order. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did returning to streamside camps and storing wild grain make longer stays possible before farming began?	**The streams provided water, and stored wild grain provided food when little grew, so people could remain at a camp longer.**
2	How did planting saved seeds help change wild plants into crops across generations?	**People planted and tended saved seeds. Repeatedly saving seeds from plants with useful traits helped produce domesticated crops over many generations.**
3	Why did tending fields encourage families to build longer-lasting homes?	**Fields needed regular care, so families had a reason to remain nearby through much of the year and build homes there.**
4	As farming spread, how could village life change people's work and create a new risk?	**Stored food could allow some people to make tools or weave instead of finding food each day. A failed harvest could leave many villagers short of food.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

At first, the group follows deer and gathers wild grass seeds near the river. Some families save seeds and plant them beside a camp with steady water. They tend the plants and return to harvest while others still hunt. As harvests grow, families build homes near the fields and store some grain. If a dry season ruins the crop, the village may face a food shortage.

Accept other plausible sequences that show a gradual shift from gathering and hunting to producing food and living near fields. For question 4, illness spreading in crowded homes is also a valid risk.