Ideas Across Centuries

Trace how Hebrew teachings influenced later societies

9-12.WC.16 "Analyze the Hebrew tradition and its influence on Western Civilization."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two Hebrew teachings or practices, circle two ways later societies carried or adapted them, and put a 1 beside a sentence that challenges a simple "direct copy" claim.

From Ancient Texts to Later Choices

1. Imagine a community deciding whether a merchant may delay paying a laborer. Ancient Hebrew texts did not supply a modern labor code, but they raised questions that later societies kept asking. The Torah, the first five books of the Hebrew Bible, presents a covenant between God and the people of Israel. Its laws link worship to duties toward other people, including fair treatment of workers, strangers, and those in poverty. In Deuteronomy, an employer is told to pay a needy worker on the day the work is done. This is a religious command with a social consequence.

2. Hebrew prophets pressed the same concern beyond individual acts. Amos criticized people who performed religious rituals while exploiting the poor. His message treated justice as a measure of a community's faithfulness, not a favor granted by the powerful. Centuries later, Christians included the Hebrew Bible in their scriptures and carried these texts across Europe. European writers and reformers drew on prophetic language when criticizing oppression, although their arguments also came from other sources and did not always produce just policies. The influence was a continuing argument about public responsibility, not a single law copied unchanged.

3. Another strand of the tradition shaped how people thought about time. The weekly Sabbath, observed by Jews from Friday evening to Saturday evening, sets aside time for rest and worship. In Exodus, rest extends even to servants and resident foreigners. Christianity developed Sunday worship and rest practices, which affected calendars and laws in many European societies. Modern weekends also grew from industrial labor struggles and government decisions, so they cannot be traced to the Sabbath alone. Together, these examples show influence traveling through reinterpretation: an ancient religious practice or teaching can inspire later choices without being identical to them.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How does the instruction about paying a worker show a connection between religious belief and social duty?

2. How did Amos's teaching reach later European arguments about injustice?

3. How did the practice of weekly rest change as it influenced European societies?

4. Why would it be inaccurate to say that modern weekends came only from the Sabbath?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

A museum plans to display the claim, "Western civilization simply copied the Hebrew tradition." Write a 65 to 85 word replacement label. Explain two influences from the passage, how at least one reached later societies, and why "simply copied" is misleading.

Ideas Across Centuries

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two Hebrew teachings or practices, circle two ways later societies carried or adapted them, and put a 1 beside a sentence that challenges a simple "direct copy" claim. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How does the instruction about paying a worker show a connection between religious belief and social duty?	**The Torah presents duties toward others as part of the covenant. Paying a needy worker promptly makes that religious duty a concrete social obligation.**
2	How did Amos's teaching reach later European arguments about injustice?	**Christians included the Hebrew Bible in their scriptures and carried it across Europe. Later writers and reformers drew on its prophetic language to criticize oppression.**
3	How did the practice of weekly rest change as it influenced European societies?	**Jewish Sabbath rest runs from Friday evening to Saturday evening. Christianity developed Sunday worship and rest practices that affected European calendars and laws.**
4	Why would it be inaccurate to say that modern weekends came only from the Sabbath?	**Modern weekends also developed through industrial labor struggles and government decisions.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Hebrew texts connected worship with duties to other people. Deuteronomy's instruction to pay a needy worker promptly is one example. Amos also condemned worshippers who exploited the poor. Christians carried these texts across Europe, where some writers and reformers used prophetic language to challenge oppression. The Jewish Sabbath offers another influence: Christian Sunday practices affected European calendars and laws. Yet later societies did not simply copy these traditions. Other beliefs, labor struggles, and government choices also shaped their practices.

Accept accurate explanations that trace an idea or practice through later interpretation, not just statements that two traditions are similar. The museum label should identify two influences, explain a path of transmission, and name another factor or change that limits the direct-copy claim.