Fields to Factories

Trace how changes in farming shaped industrial growth.

9-12.WC.44 "Analyze the causes and consequences of the Second Agricultural Revolution and the early Industrial Revolution."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two changes in farming and circle two changes in industry. Number the cause-and-effect links that connect a change to a result.

A Changing British Landscape

1. In eighteenth-century Britain, a farmer might once have planted grain in one field while another lay fallow. Landowners increasingly rotated grain with crops such as clover and turnips. Clover helped restore soil fertility, while turnips fed animals through winter. Better-fed livestock supplied more manure and, through selective breeding, more meat or wool. These changes raised output per acre and helped support a growing population. Yet the gains were uneven: large landowners often had the money to experiment, while small farmers faced new costs. Greater food production did not mean that every family gained secure access to land.

2. Parliamentary enclosure laws allowed owners to consolidate scattered fields and fence land that villagers had used in common. A landowner could now manage a larger farm more efficiently, but a household that had grazed a cow on common land might lose that right. Some rural workers then sought wages in towns, although enclosure alone did not cause industrialization. Growing populations supplied both workers and customers. Merchants also invested profits in machines, and Britain's coal deposits provided fuel. Thus, changes in farming helped create conditions for factory growth alongside trade, capital, and energy resources.

3. Consider a cotton mill in early nineteenth-century Manchester. Machines spun yarn much faster than hand spinners, and steam engines powered by coal let many mills operate beyond fast-flowing rivers. Factory owners could produce cheaper cloth and hire people who needed wages, including migrants from the countryside. At the same time, workers faced long hours, dangerous equipment, and crowded housing. Coal smoke worsened urban air. Cotton supplies also linked British mills to enslaved labor in the United States, so cheap cloth could depend on exploitation far from Manchester. Industrial growth expanded goods and jobs, but its costs fell unevenly.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How could rotating crops help support a growing population? Trace the steps between the farming change and the result.

2. Why could enclosure make farms more efficient while also leading some rural workers to seek wages in towns?

3. How did changes in the countryside and access to coal each help factories grow?

4. How did cotton mills produce benefits and costs for people in Britain and beyond?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine a British village in 1800 considering enclosed fields and a coal-powered cotton mill. In 80 to 105 words, recommend one rule the village should require, use two cause-and-effect links from the passage to defend it, and explain a trade-off the rule creates.

ANSWER KEY

Fields to Factories

HIGH SCHOOL · 9-12.WC.44

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two changes in farming and circle two changes in industry. Number the cause-and-effect links that connect a change to a result. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How could rotating crops help support a growing population? Trace the steps between the farming change and the result.	**Clover helped restore soil fertility, and turnips fed livestock through winter. Healthier soil and livestock increased farm output, which helped support more people.**
2	Why could enclosure make farms more efficient while also leading some rural workers to seek wages in towns?	**Consolidated fields were easier for owners to manage, but some households lost access to common grazing land and sought other ways to earn a living.**
3	How did changes in the countryside and access to coal each help factories grow?	**Population growth and the loss of some common-land rights increased the supply of potential workers and customers. Coal fueled steam engines that powered mills.**
4	How did cotton mills produce benefits and costs for people in Britain and beyond?	**Mills made cheaper cloth and offered wages, but workers faced dangerous jobs and crowded housing, while coal polluted the air. British mills also used cotton linked to enslaved labor in the United States.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

I would require the mill owner to provide well-ventilated housing for workers before the mill opens. Enclosure may remove families' grazing rights, pushing some people to seek wages; housing would help newcomers settle without worsening crowding. Coal power lets the mill run away from a fast river, but burning coal also adds smoke to the air. The housing rule might raise the price of cloth or slow hiring. Even so, cheaper cloth should not depend on workers bearing all the costs of growth.

Accept other historically plausible rules if the response uses two accurate cause-and-effect links from the passage and identifies a reasonable trade-off. Students should not claim that enclosure was the sole cause of industrialization.