Streets in Change

Immigration and American life before and after the Civil War

8.H.19 "Give examples of how immigration affected American culture in the decades before and after the Civil War, including growth of industrial sites in the North; religious differences; tensions between middle-class and working-class people…"

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline three ways immigrants changed Northern life, circle two sources of tension, and write a 1 beside a sentence that contrasts Northern and Southern life.

A Changing City Street

1. In the 1840s and 1850s, many Irish and German families crossed the Atlantic and settled in Northern cities. Irish workers helped build canals and railroads, while newcomers from both groups found jobs in mills and factories. Their labor helped industrial sites grow around cities such as New York and Philadelphia. After the Civil War ended in 1865, more immigrants arrived, and factory districts expanded. On a busy street, workers might leave a textile mill while nearby shops sold foods brought by immigrant families.

2. On those same streets, faith and class could bring conflict. Many Irish immigrants were Catholic, while many established residents were Protestant. Irish families opened Catholic churches and schools, but some Protestants feared that Catholic institutions would change public life. In Northeastern cities, some middle-class residents blamed working-class immigrants for crowded neighborhoods and strikes. Workers, including immigrants, argued that long hours and low pay made protests necessary. These disputes shaped neighborhood politics, even as immigrant and longtime residents shared markets, workplaces, and city services.

3. Before the Civil War, enslaved people did much of the labor on Southern plantations, while immigrant labor increasingly supported Northern industry. After emancipation, many Southern farms relied on sharecropping, and far fewer immigrants settled in the South than in Northern cities. In the Northeast, immigrant communities added churches, newspapers, and languages to fast-growing city neighborhoods. Because immigrant settlement was uneven, these changes widened differences between the industrial, increasingly diverse North and the more agricultural South. This contrast does not mean that all Northerners or Southerners lived alike.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did immigrant labor affect Northern industrial sites before the Civil War, and what happened to factory districts after the war?

2. Give one example of how Irish immigration changed religious life and one example of a reaction to that change.

3. How did some middle-class residents and working-class immigrants view strikes differently?

4. How did uneven immigrant settlement widen differences between the North and the South after the Civil War?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine a new rail depot and factory opening in a Northern city after the Civil War. Write a four-sentence museum label explaining two ways immigrant families might change life nearby, one possible tension, and one way the neighborhood might differ from a Southern farming community.

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PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline three ways immigrants changed Northern life, circle two sources of tension, and write a 1 beside a sentence that contrasts Northern and Southern life. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did immigrant labor affect Northern industrial sites before the Civil War, and what happened to factory districts after the war?	**Before the war, immigrants worked in mills and factories and helped industrial sites grow. After the war, more immigrants arrived and factory districts expanded.**
2	Give one example of how Irish immigration changed religious life and one example of a reaction to that change.	**Irish families opened Catholic churches and schools. Some Protestants feared these institutions would change public life.**
3	How did some middle-class residents and working-class immigrants view strikes differently?	**Some middle-class residents blamed working-class immigrants for strikes, while workers argued that low pay and long hours made protests necessary.**
4	How did uneven immigrant settlement widen differences between the North and the South after the Civil War?	**Many immigrants settled in Northern cities, adding to industrial work and neighborhood culture. Far fewer settled in the more agricultural South.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Immigrant workers might take factory jobs near the depot, helping the industrial district grow. Their families might open shops that sell foods from their home countries. Some middle-class neighbors might object when workers strike for better pay. This busy factory neighborhood would differ from a Southern community where farming remained a major source of work.

Accept other passage-supported examples of industrial growth, religious differences, class tensions, or regional contrasts. For the museum label, look for four sentences that apply these ideas to the imagined setting rather than simply repeat the passage.