Connected, But Unevenly

Technology and daily life in 1920s Indiana

IS.1.19 "Describe technological developments during the 1920s and explain their impact on rural and urban Indiana."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each technology named in the passage, circle one effect it had in rural Indiana, and box one effect it had in urban Indiana. Write matching numbers beside the rural and urban effects of each technology so you can compare them.

New Connections Across Indiana

1 In 1926, a family in Indianapolis could flip a switch at home and listen to a radio plugged into an outlet. Electric service also powered shop lights and factory machines, allowing some businesses to work after dark. On many Indiana farms, however, wires had not reached the house. Bringing power over long distances to scattered customers cost utilities more than connecting homes close together. A farm family might use kerosene lamps, pump water by hand or with an engine, and run a radio on batteries. Electricity changed daily life in cities sooner than it did in much of the countryside.

2 Automobiles and trucks changed travel across Indiana, but pavement did not reach every doorstep. Farmers could take milk or produce to town more quickly by truck, widening the markets they could reach. Still, a dirt road could become nearly impassable after heavy rain, and buying a vehicle was expensive. In cities such as Fort Wayne, cars helped residents reach jobs and stores beyond their own neighborhoods. They also competed for street space with pedestrians and streetcars. State and local road projects made travel between towns easier, yet the benefits depended on which roads were improved.

3 Radio broadcasting offered another connection between Indiana's farms and cities. During the 1920s, stations in Indianapolis and other cities sent music, news, and weather reports through the air. A farmer with a battery-powered set could hear a weather forecast without waiting for a newspaper to arrive; a city listener could hear the same program from a set plugged into an outlet. Radios could bring distant events into both homes, but sets and replacement batteries cost money. New technology did not erase the divide between rural and urban life: access to electricity, usable roads, and household income shaped who benefited most.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did electric service change work in Indiana cities, and why did many farms have less access to it?

2. How could a truck help an Indiana farmer, and how could cars change a city resident's travel? Name one limit on the benefits of road travel.

3. How could radio connect rural and urban listeners, and how might the way they powered their sets differ?

4. Why might a farm family benefit from radio but still have less convenient access to broadcasts than a family in Indianapolis?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a five-sentence diary entry from a fictional rural or urban Indiana resident in the 1920s. Show how two technologies from the passage affect specific moments in the day, and explain one limit on who can benefit.

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PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline each technology named in the passage, circle one effect it had in rural Indiana, and box one effect it had in urban Indiana. Write matching numbers beside the rural and urban effects of each technology so you can compare them. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did electric service change work in Indiana cities, and why did many farms have less access to it?	**Electricity powered city shop lights and factory machines, allowing some businesses to work after dark. Connecting scattered farms cost utilities more than connecting nearby city homes.**
2	How could a truck help an Indiana farmer, and how could cars change a city resident's travel? Name one limit on the benefits of road travel.	**A truck could help a farmer reach more markets with milk or produce, while a car could help a city resident reach jobs and stores farther away. Muddy dirt roads or the cost of a vehicle limited those benefits.**
3	How could radio connect rural and urban listeners, and how might the way they powered their sets differ?	**Both could hear the same broadcasts, including news, music, or weather. A farm listener might use batteries, while a city listener could plug a set into an outlet.**
4	Why might a farm family benefit from radio but still have less convenient access to broadcasts than a family in Indianapolis?	**Radio signals could reach the farm, but without electric service the family would need batteries and have to pay to replace them. An Indianapolis family with electricity could plug in its radio.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

I live on a farm outside Fort Wayne, and this morning I loaded eggs into my uncle's truck. The truck got us to a larger market while the eggs were still fresh. On our way home, rain made the dirt road slick, and we crawled through deep ruts. After supper, our battery-powered radio brought us music from a city station. We can hear the same show as town families, but replacing batteries costs money because electric lines have not reached our house.

Accept other passage-supported rural and urban effects and limits. For the diary entry, check for exactly five sentences, two technologies, specific daily activities, and an accurate limit on access or benefit.