Skills That Sell

Compare how people earned a living across three eras in Indiana.

IS.4.3 "Identify the skills needed to be economically successful in pioneer Indiana. Compare those skills to the skills needed to be successful in other eras: Industrial Revolution, modern economy."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Circle at least two useful skills in each paragraph, then write the same number beside skills from different eras that serve a similar purpose.

A Table for Sale

1. In the 1820s, a pioneer Indiana family might sell a handmade table after finishing the farm work. A woodworker needed to select sturdy local timber, sharpen tools, and join boards so the table would last. Because many roads were muddy and markets were far away, carrying a heavy table to buyers could cost time and effort. A maker who understood what nearby households needed could arrange a sale or trade close to home. Economic success depended on practical craft, careful use of limited supplies, and the ability to negotiate with neighbors, not simply on working hard.

2. By the late 1800s, rail lines connected Indiana towns to larger markets, and factories produced furniture with powered machines. A factory worker could earn wages by operating equipment accurately, following written directions, and keeping pace with other workers. A manager needed to organize supplies, work shifts, and deliveries so orders could be filled on time. Rail shipping made distant customers possible, but it also made reliable production and coordination more important. Unlike a pioneer maker who handled many steps alone, a factory worker often specialized in one part of a larger process. Both still needed to make goods buyers would use.

3. Today, an Indiana furniture shop may use computer design software, automated cutting tools, and an online store to reach customers beyond its town. A designer needs digital skills to revise a plan and communicate measurements to the shop. A seller must describe products clearly, respond to customers, and track orders. Workers may need to learn new software as equipment and buying habits change. Modern technology does not erase older economic skills: makers still need to judge materials, meet buyers' needs, and coordinate with others. The tools and markets have changed, but earning a living still depends on producing something people value.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did knowing nearby households' needs help a pioneer maker deal with distant markets?

2. Compare the tool skills a pioneer woodworker needed with those a factory worker needed.

3. How did transportation affect the skills needed to sell furniture in pioneer Indiana and in the late 1800s?

4. Compare how a factory manager and a modern seller help orders get filled.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine you make and sell candles in pioneer Indiana, an industrial Indiana town, and today. Write one paragraph of 90 to 110 words explaining one useful skill for each era and why it fits, plus one skill that matters in all three.

ANSWER KEY

Skills That Sell

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Circle at least two useful skills in each paragraph, then write the same number beside skills from different eras that serve a similar purpose. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did knowing nearby households' needs help a pioneer maker deal with distant markets?	**The maker could arrange a sale or trade close to home instead of carrying a heavy table to a distant market.**
2	Compare the tool skills a pioneer woodworker needed with those a factory worker needed.	**The pioneer selected timber, sharpened tools, and joined boards by hand. The factory worker operated powered equipment accurately.**
3	How did transportation affect the skills needed to sell furniture in pioneer Indiana and in the late 1800s?	**Muddy roads and distant markets made it useful for pioneers to know nearby buyers and negotiate local sales. Rail shipping opened distant markets, making reliable production and coordination more important.**
4	Compare how a factory manager and a modern seller help orders get filled.	**The factory manager organizes supplies, shifts, and deliveries. The modern seller communicates with customers and tracks orders.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

In pioneer Indiana, I would learn to pour candles evenly using locally available tallow. Since muddy roads could make travel slow, I would trade with nearby households that needed light. In an industrial town, I would learn to run a candle-making machine safely and keep a steady pace so a factory could fill larger orders shipped by rail. Today, I would post accurate descriptions online and track orders with a computer. Across all three eras, I would listen to buyers and adjust the candles to meet their needs. Knowing what people want would help me sell candles in any era.

Accept other passage-supported comparisons, including examples of meeting buyers' needs across eras. For the open task, look for distinct skills tied to each era's conditions and a plausible skill that remains useful in all three.