When Villages Grew

How farming changed work, community life, and settlement size

WH.1.1 "Describe and evaluate social, cultural, and economic changes of small agriculture communities which led to the development of large agricultural settlements, such as the movement from hunting and gathering societies to civilization."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline one economic, one social, and one cultural change in the passage, and label them E, S, and C. Circle one benefit and one cost of living in a larger settlement.

A Village Grows at Çatalhöyük

1 Before farming spread in Southwest Asia, many groups obtained food by hunting animals and gathering wild plants. They moved when seasons and local supplies changed, although some foragers also lived in one place for long periods. Around 10,000 BCE, people in parts of the region began growing crops and tending animals. Farming did not replace foraging overnight. Families could save seeds, plant near dependable water, and store grain for later. A more reliable supply in some years helped communities grow, but staying near fields also meant that a poor harvest could threaten many neighbors at once.

2 At Çatalhöyük, in what is now Turkey, thousands of people lived close together during parts of the period from about 7400 to 6200 BCE. Residents grew wheat and barley, kept sheep and goats, and still gathered or hunted some foods. Houses stood tightly packed, and people often entered through openings in their roofs. Building and repairing homes, storing grain, and managing herds required steady work. Neighbors could share tools and skills, while exchange brought materials such as obsidian, a volcanic glass used for sharp blades. A settled population could support more specialized activities than a small, moving group.

3 Living close together changed more than the food supply. People buried some dead beneath house floors, and wall paintings and other objects suggest shared customs and beliefs. Yet a dense settlement also created problems: waste was harder to manage, disease could spread, and crops needed protection from drought or pests. Çatalhöyük was a large agricultural settlement, but archaeologists have not found clear evidence of kings or palaces there. Its history shows that farming could help settlements expand and daily work become more varied, without every large village developing the same political system or becoming a city-state.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How could growing and storing food help a small community become a larger settlement?

2. Describe one way living close together changed how people worked at Çatalhöyük.

3. What evidence suggests that people at Çatalhöyük developed shared cultural practices?

4. Was becoming a large agricultural settlement only beneficial? Evaluate its growth using one advantage and one limit or cost from the passage.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine a small farming community on a floodplain growing into a large settlement. In five or six sentences, propose a new way to organize work and a new shared custom, explain how each responds to growth, and weigh one benefit against one risk. Use details from the passage as evidence, but invent a plan rather than describing Çatalhöyük.

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PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline one economic, one social, and one cultural change in the passage, and label them E, S, and C. Circle one benefit and one cost of living in a larger settlement. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How could growing and storing food help a small community become a larger settlement?	**Growing crops and storing grain could provide food for more people, allowing the community to grow while families remained near their fields.**
2	Describe one way living close together changed how people worked at Çatalhöyük.	**Neighbors could share tools and skills, and a settled population could support more specialized work.**
3	What evidence suggests that people at Çatalhöyük developed shared cultural practices?	**Some people buried their dead beneath house floors, and wall paintings and other objects suggest shared customs and beliefs.**
4	Was becoming a large agricultural settlement only beneficial? Evaluate its growth using one advantage and one limit or cost from the passage.	**No. A settled population could support specialized activities, but dense living made waste harder to manage and allowed disease to spread. Size alone also did not mean the settlement had kings or palaces.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

As our floodplain village grows, families could take turns maintaining shared irrigation channels so more fields receive water. A council chosen by households could organize that work and decide how to distribute stored grain during shortages. Each harvest, families might hold a meal to welcome new neighbors and build a shared tradition. More reliable harvests could support skilled makers who trade useful tools with nearby villages. Yet a flood could damage many fields at once, so the council should keep some grain for emergencies.

Accept other passage-supported benefits, costs, and examples of cooperation. For the open task, accept plausible invented practices that address a growing settlement, even if they differ from the sample.