Food for Survival

How American Indian knowledge helped colonial settlements

5.C.1.10.A "how American Indian knowledge of the environment, agricultural practices (e.g., three sisters), and hunting skills contributed to the sustenance of colonial settlements"

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline one example of American Indian knowledge in each paragraph. Circle a food that settlers could get by using that knowledge.

Learning to Find and Grow Food

1. In 1620, English settlers arrived at Plymouth, where the seasons and food sources were unfamiliar to them. Wampanoag people had long known the local land and waters. Tisquantum, a Patuxet man who spoke English, showed settlers where to catch eels and how to use fish to help corn grow. This knowledge gave the settlement ways to find food and raise crops in its new home.

2. Across parts of North America, American Indian farmers grew corn, beans, and squash together. This method is often called the Three Sisters. Corn stalks gave bean vines a place to climb. Bean plants helped keep the soil fertile, while squash leaves shaded the ground and slowed the growth of weeds. Settlers who learned these farming methods could grow several kinds of food on the land around them.

3. In many regions, American Indian hunters knew the habits of local animals. They used tracks and seasons to find deer and birds. Some shared this knowledge with settlers, who could then hunt for meat in unfamiliar places. Along with crops and food from streams, hunted animals helped settlements survive. Sharing knowledge did not mean settlers treated American Indian peoples fairly. Colonists later took their land.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did Tisquantum's knowledge of local waters help Plymouth settlers find food?

2. How did Tisquantum use a resource from the water to help settlers raise food?

3. How did growing the Three Sisters together help settlers get food from their fields?

4. How could knowledge of animal tracks and seasons help feed settlers?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a four-sentence plan for feeding a new settlement. Use knowledge of local waters, a farming practice, and a hunting skill from the passage, then explain how having several food sources could help if one ran low.

ANSWER KEY

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GRADE 5 · 5.C.1.10.A

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline one example of American Indian knowledge in each paragraph. Circle a food that settlers could get by using that knowledge. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did Tisquantum's knowledge of local waters help Plymouth settlers find food?	**He showed settlers where to catch eels.**
2	How did Tisquantum use a resource from the water to help settlers raise food?	**He showed them how to use fish to help corn grow.**
3	How did growing the Three Sisters together help settlers get food from their fields?	**Corn supported bean vines, beans helped keep soil fertile, and squash leaves shaded the ground and slowed weed growth.**
4	How could knowledge of animal tracks and seasons help feed settlers?	**It could help settlers find deer and birds to hunt for meat.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

I would listen to local American Indian guides to learn where to catch eels. I would grow corn, beans, and squash together so the plants help one another. I would use knowledge of tracks and seasons to hunt deer for meat. If our fields produced little food, eels and deer could still help feed the settlement.

Accept plans that connect knowledge of local waters, Three Sisters farming, and hunting to food for settlers. The final sentence should explain how another food source could help when one source ran low.