Across the Atlantic

Trace how goods and customs moved between societies.

6.C.3.6.A "Identify examples of cultural diffusion (e.g., Columbian Exchange: availability of new commodities and technology; assimilation of American Indian into colonial societies)."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two examples of foods, animals, or tools moving between continents. Circle one example of American Indians adopting a custom of colonial society.

New Goods, Changing Customs

1. Imagine a market in Spain where a shopper sees maize for the first time. Before ships crossed the Atlantic in the late 1400s, maize grew in the Americas, not Europe. American Indian farmers had raised it for generations. Europeans carried maize across the ocean, and some European farmers began growing it. This movement of crops, animals, and ideas between the Americas and other parts of the world is called the Columbian Exchange. People did not simply exchange objects. Their choices about what to grow and eat also changed.

2. The exchange also went west, toward the Americas. Europeans brought cattle and wheat, which became new sources of food in some places. They brought iron plows as well. On some farms, a plow pulled by an animal helped turn heavy soil before planting. American Indian communities did not all respond in the same way to new goods. Some traded with colonists for metal knives and used the knives in daily work. These changes show cultural diffusion because people gained and used goods or technology from another society.

3. Movement of goods was not the only kind of cultural diffusion. In Spanish colonies, some American Indians took Spanish names or joined the Catholic Church. Missionaries and colonial officials often pressed them to change, and some people faced force. Taking a new name or joining a church could help a person live within colonial society, but it did not mean that every older custom disappeared. This kind of adopting customs from a dominant society is called assimilation. Many families kept parts of their own languages, beliefs, and traditions.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Which crop moved from the Americas to Europe, and what new practice followed there?

2. Name one food source Europeans carried to the Americas. Why is its arrival an example of cultural diffusion?

3. How did trading for metal knives show cultural diffusion among some American Indian communities?

4. Which change in the Spanish colonies is an example of assimilation? Explain what made it assimilation.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write four sentences about two examples of cultural diffusion not named in the passage: one crop or animal moving across the Atlantic and one way an American Indian person might adapt to colonial society. Explain what changed in each example, and show that adapting did not erase every older custom.

ANSWER KEY

Across the Atlantic

GRADE 6 · 6.C.3.6.A

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two examples of foods, animals, or tools moving between continents. Circle one example of American Indians adopting a custom of colonial society. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Which crop moved from the Americas to Europe, and what new practice followed there?	**Maize moved to Europe, where some farmers began growing it.**
2	Name one food source Europeans carried to the Americas. Why is its arrival an example of cultural diffusion?	**Cattle or wheat. Europeans brought it to a place where it became a new source of food.**
3	How did trading for metal knives show cultural diffusion among some American Indian communities?	**Some communities gained metal knives from colonists and used them in daily work.**
4	Which change in the Spanish colonies is an example of assimilation? Explain what made it assimilation.	**Some American Indians took Spanish names or joined the Catholic Church, adopting a custom of colonial society.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Tomatoes from the Americas reached Europe on ships. European cooks began using them in new dishes. An American Indian trader learned Spanish to bargain with settlers in a colonial town. The trader still practiced family traditions, so learning a new language did not erase an older culture.

Accept other historically plausible examples that identify what moved or changed. For the assimilation example, accept a clear explanation that adopting a colonial custom did not necessarily replace all earlier customs.