Where Newcomers Settled

Trace how immigration waves shaped communities.

8.C.9.1.D "Analyze the impact of the waves of immigration from Northern Europe on settlement patterns."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline one reason newcomers chose where to settle in each wave. Then number two effects on where communities grew, using 1 for eastern cities and 2 for Upper Midwest farming areas.

Two Waves, Different Destinations

1. In the 1840s and 1850s, a large wave of people left Ireland as potato crops failed and hunger spread. Many arrived at Atlantic ports such as New York and Boston. Without money for farmland or a long trip inland, many settled near those ports and found work building streets, working on docks, or serving in homes. Friends and relatives sometimes followed letters from earlier arrivals to the same neighborhoods. As Irish families settled close together, these growing cities gained larger Irish communities, churches, and businesses.

2. Later in the 1800s, many people from Norway and Sweden moved to the United States. Some sought farmland they could not afford or find at home. Railroads and offers of land drew many inland to the Upper Midwest, especially Minnesota, Wisconsin, and the Dakotas. Relatives already there sent letters naming nearby towns and describing farming opportunities. New arrivals often chose farms near people they knew. This wave helped turn some rural areas into clusters of Scandinavian farms and towns, though settlers also claimed land long used by Indigenous peoples.

3. These waves did not spread newcomers evenly across the country. Irish arrivals often increased the population of eastern cities, while many Norwegian and Swedish arrivals expanded farming communities farther west. Work and affordable land mattered, but so did transportation and information from family. Each new settlement could attract more arrivals, creating a chain of migration that reinforced the first pattern. Not every person followed these routes: some Irish families farmed, and some Scandinavians lived in cities. Still, the two waves changed where communities grew and how crowded particular places became.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Why did many Irish arrivals help eastern cities grow instead of moving inland?

2. How did letters from relatives affect where some Norwegian and Swedish newcomers settled?

3. How did the two waves change settlement patterns in different parts of the United States?

4. How did railroads and offers of land help make the Upper Midwest a settlement center?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine two families arriving in 1880. One has little money and a cousin working in Boston. The other wants a farm and has a cousin in Minnesota. Predict where each family might settle, explain how their choices could affect where communities grow, and give one reason these predictions are not certain.

ANSWER KEY

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GRADE 8 · 8.C.9.1.D

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline one reason newcomers chose where to settle in each wave. Then number two effects on where communities grew, using 1 for eastern cities and 2 for Upper Midwest farming areas. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Why did many Irish arrivals help eastern cities grow instead of moving inland?	**Many arrived at eastern ports and lacked money for farmland or the trip inland, so they settled and found work near the ports.**
2	How did letters from relatives affect where some Norwegian and Swedish newcomers settled?	**Letters named towns and described farming opportunities, leading some newcomers to choose farms near relatives in the Upper Midwest.**
3	How did the two waves change settlement patterns in different parts of the United States?	**Irish arrivals helped eastern cities grow, while many Norwegian and Swedish arrivals expanded farming communities in the Upper Midwest.**
4	How did railroads and offers of land help make the Upper Midwest a settlement center?	**Railroads helped newcomers travel inland, and land offers attracted people seeking farms, so more settled in the Upper Midwest.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The family with little money might settle in Boston, where its cousin could help it find work. Its arrival could add to the city's growing population. The family seeking a farm might settle near its cousin in Minnesota, adding to a farming community there. Neither choice is certain because people sometimes settled outside the most common areas for their group.

Accept predictions that connect each family's resources and relatives to a likely location and explain an effect on community growth. Students should also recognize that these patterns did not determine every family's choice.