Fields of Change

Goals, leadership, and results of the United Farm Workers movement

USH.C.7.2.D "Describe the goals and effectiveness of the United Farm Workers movement, including the leadership of César Chávez and Dolores Huerta to improve working conditions for migrant laborers."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two goals, circle one action by Chávez and one by Huerta, then write 1 beside a success and 2 beside a limit to help you judge the movement's effectiveness.

A Stronger Voice in the Fields

1 At dawn in California's Central Valley, farmworkers often began long days picking crops for low pay. Many moved with the harvest, making it difficult to keep steady housing or challenge an employer. In the 1960s, workers faced unsafe pesticide exposure, limited access to drinking water or toilets in some fields, and little power to bargain over wages. The United Farm Workers movement sought higher pay, safer conditions, and a voice in workplace decisions through a union. Its goals were not simply to help one crew. Organizers wanted growers to recognize workers' right to bargain together across farms and seasons.

2 In 1965, Filipino grape workers led by Larry Itliong struck in Delano, California. César Chávez and Dolores Huerta helped bring their organization of mostly Mexican American farmworkers into the strike. Their groups later joined to form the union known as the United Farm Workers. Chávez led marches and urged consumers to boycott grapes, using nonviolent pressure to draw national attention. Huerta organized workers, negotiated with growers, and helped build support for the boycott. Their different roles turned a local labor conflict into a national campaign: workers withheld labor while shoppers refused to buy grapes until growers negotiated.

3 By 1970, the grape boycott and strike helped win contracts with major California grape growers. These agreements recognized the union and brought higher wages and benefits to covered workers; some included pesticide protections. In 1975, California passed a law protecting farmworkers' right to vote in union elections and bargain collectively. Yet a contract did not cover every farmworker, and organizing remained difficult as growers and unions contested elections and contracts. Migrant workers still faced low pay and hazardous work in many places. The movement won important changes, but its success was uneven: legal rights and agreements did not erase every danger in the fields.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did two problems farmworkers faced shape the movement's goals?

2. How did Chávez's actions help workers pursue their goal of bargaining with growers?

3. How did Huerta's work help move the strike toward the movement's goals?

4. What evidence shows the movement made progress, and what evidence shows its success was limited?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a 75- to 100-word museum label arguing whether the movement's greatest achievement was improved working conditions or greater bargaining power. Support your choice with actions by both Chávez and Huerta, one result, and one continuing limit from the passage.

ANSWER KEY

Fields of Change

HIGH SCHOOL · USH.C.7.2.D

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two goals, circle one action by Chávez and one by Huerta, then write 1 beside a success and 2 beside a limit to help you judge the movement's effectiveness. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did two problems farmworkers faced shape the movement's goals?	**Low pay led to a goal of higher wages, while pesticide exposure and other field hazards led to a goal of safer conditions.**
2	How did Chávez's actions help workers pursue their goal of bargaining with growers?	**His marches and call for a grape boycott drew national attention and put pressure on growers to negotiate.**
3	How did Huerta's work help move the strike toward the movement's goals?	**She organized workers, negotiated with growers, and built boycott support, helping turn the strike into a broader campaign for change.**
4	What evidence shows the movement made progress, and what evidence shows its success was limited?	**Contracts brought union recognition and higher wages to covered workers, and a California law protected union elections. Not every worker had a contract, and low pay and hazardous work continued in many places.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Visitors to this exhibit should see greater bargaining power as the movement's greatest achievement. César Chávez led marches and urged shoppers to boycott grapes, while Dolores Huerta organized workers and negotiated with growers. Those actions helped turn the Delano strike into national pressure for contracts. By 1970, major grape growers recognized the union, and a 1975 California law protected farmworkers' right to union elections. Contracts also raised pay for covered workers. Yet many migrant laborers still faced low wages and hazardous work. The movement gained a stronger voice, not a complete solution.

Accept either choice of greatest achievement if the label supports it with passage evidence about both leaders, a result, and a continuing limit. The sample label is 93 words.