

Machines Change America

Trace how inventions changed work, travel, and daily life.

USI.8.e "explaining technological advancements and innovations and their effects on life in America including, but not limited to the cotton gin, the reaper, the steam engine, and the steam locomotive;"

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the name of each advancement, circle an effect it had on life in America, and number the four advancement-effect groups 1 through 4.

New Tools, New Lives

- ① In the early 1800s, Americans looked for faster ways to make goods, grow food, and travel. Inventors improved machines that changed daily work. These changes did not affect everyone in the same way. A machine could save time for one group while creating harder or unfairer conditions for another. Understanding an invention means asking what it did and how it changed people's lives.
- ② The cotton gin, patented by Eli Whitney in 1794, separated cotton fibers from seeds much faster than hand work. It made growing cotton more profitable, so cotton production spread in the South. Plantation owners demanded more enslaved laborers to plant and pick the larger cotton crops. The reaper, developed by Cyrus McCormick, cut grain faster than workers with hand tools. Farmers could harvest more wheat with fewer workers.
- ③ Steam engines used heat from burning fuel to power machines and vehicles. Factories used them to run equipment without depending on waterpower from a nearby river. Steam locomotives carried people and freight on railroads faster than wagons could travel on rough roads. Railroads helped farmers and businesses send goods to distant markets. They also helped people move west, while railroad building changed land and displaced many Native Americans.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 Explain how the cotton gin changed cotton growing and the demand for enslaved labor.

2 How did the reaper change the way farmers harvested wheat?

3 How did steam engines change where factories could run equipment?

4 Name two effects that steam locomotives and railroads had on life in America.

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Choose the cotton gin, reaper, or steam locomotive. Write a three-sentence newspaper notice: tell how it works, name one benefit, and explain one change or problem it caused.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline the name of each advancement, circle an effect it had on life in America, and number the four advancement-effect groups 1 through 4. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Explain how the cotton gin changed cotton growing and the demand for enslaved labor.	It separated seeds from cotton faster, making cotton more profitable and causing cotton production to spread. Plantation owners then demanded more enslaved laborers for larger crops.
2	How did the reaper change the way farmers harvested wheat?	The reaper cut grain faster than hand tools, so farmers could harvest more wheat with fewer workers.
3	How did steam engines change where factories could run equipment?	Steam engines let factories run equipment without needing to be near a river for waterpower.
4	Name two effects that steam locomotives and railroads had on life in America.	They moved people and freight faster, helped farmers and businesses reach distant markets, and helped people move west. Railroad building also changed land and displaced many Native Americans.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

A steam locomotive uses a steam engine to pull cars of people and freight along railroad tracks. It can move goods to faraway markets faster than wagons on rough roads. As railroads expand west, building them changes Native American land.

Accept equivalent cause-and-effect explanations that are supported by the passage. For the newspaper notice, check that all three sentences identify the advancement, a benefit, and a change or problem.