

WORLD HISTORY READERS

Level 2 - G

The Agricultural Revolution

Rob Waring



Series Editor Rob Waring

Seed
Learning



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The Story of Food

What are your favorite foods? Where do they come from? How did farming develop?

This is the story of how we make enough food to feed our 7.5 billion people and all of our animals.



Meats and cheeses



Ingredients for cooking



Nuts, fruits, and vegetables

Hunting and Gathering

For thousands of years, humans ate what we could find or kill. We ate plants, nuts, and berries in the forest. We killed and ate animals. We were hunters and gatherers.



Picking mushrooms

Hunting men from the Vedda tribe, Sri Lanka



Picking berries



A man hunting in the Amazon

Hunting and gathering was hard work and dangerous because your life depended on finding or catching food, and that depended on the seasons and luck.

Humans needed a more reliable system where there would be food all the time. We did not want to depend on nature and luck. We needed to find a way to grow our food where we lived, rather than find it.



A bushman cave painting

Forming Societies

Over time, we learned how to plant crops such as corn and wheat, and how to keep animals on a farm. This allowed us to have food when we needed it.



Keeping goats

Humans could live together to form groups in villages and towns. We did not need to spend so much time hunting animals or gathering food from the forests.



Farm animals



Growing our own food

As societies grew, people ate better and got healthier. People lived longer. We could now grow many different kinds of foods and eat a wider variety of things.



A healthy meal, China

The problem was that this was also hard work, and we could only grow food for ourselves.



Baskets of spices



A Maasai woman feeding her cows

Large Farms

Over time, rich farmers bought out small, family-run farms. They made the small farms into very large farms, so they could grow food more effectively. This meant they needed fewer people to grow their food.



A tobacco farm, USA



A sheep farm, UK



A large wheat farm, Australia

Comprehension Questions

1. How did we first get our food?
 - (a) Cooking
 - (b) Stealing
 - (c) Farming
 - (d) Hunting and gathering
2. Why was hunting and gathering a problem?
 - (a) It was hard work.
 - (b) It depended on luck.
 - (c) It depended on the weather.
 - (d) All of the above
3. After we made farms, we could live...
 - (a) with animals.
 - (b) in homes.
 - (c) in societies and communities.
 - (d) in cities.
4. We got ... as we learned how to farm and grow more foods.
 - (a) special
 - (b) poorer
 - (c) healthier
 - (d) weaker
5. What led to the Industrial Revolution?
 - (a) People farming together
 - (b) People moving to towns and cities
 - (c) People hunting for food
 - (d) People living longer
6. During the Agricultural Revolution...
 - (a) no machines were used.
 - (b) farms got smaller.
 - (c) potatoes did not grow.
 - (d) farms got larger.
7. The Industrial Revolution made machines do the work of...
 - (a) factories.
 - (b) people.
 - (c) rivers.
 - (d) crops.
8. ...changed the countryside in England.
 - (a) Forests
 - (b) The climate
 - (c) Food
 - (d) Stone walls
9. Farmers used too many ... and poisoned the rivers.
 - (a) farms
 - (b) yields
 - (c) chemicals
 - (d) farmers
10. What do many scientists say about GMOs?
 - (a) They are good for hunters.
 - (b) They are fertilizers.
 - (c) They harm people.
 - (d) They are organic.

Glossary

- **agriculture** the work of growing plants and taking care of animals that are used for food
- **crop** a plant such as corn that is grown in large amounts
- **effectively** in a way that uses little effort or resources
- **fertilizer** something you put in soil to help plants grow
- **gather** to collect or put together in one place
- **GMO** genetically modified organism; a plant or animal whose genes have been scientifically changed
- **hunter** a person who looks for wild animals to kill and eat
- **nutrient** any substance that helps living things grow
- **nutrition** the substances our bodies need to live that we get from eating food
- **organically** in a natural way; without chemicals
- **pesticide** a chemical used to kill insects
- **poison** to kill things with chemicals
- **season** a time of year such as summer or winter
- **soil** the earth that plants grow in
- **spray** to put a mist of liquid on something
- **wheat** a cereal crop we grow to make flour

Key 1. (d) 2. (d) 3. (c) 4. (c) 5. (b) 6. (d) 7. (b) 8. (d) 9. (c) 10. (c)