

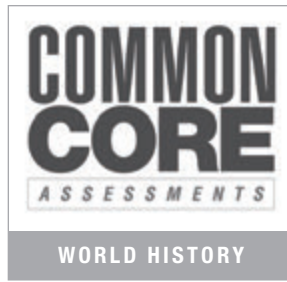
WORLD HISTORY

Early Humans

COMMON CORE

ASSESSMENTS

MindSparks
CHALLENGING STUDENTS TO THINK HISTORICALLY



Early Humans

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Teacher Introduction

These Common Core History Assessments are designed to help your students develop key literacy and history thinking skills as they learn about early humans. The assessments are intended to be *formative* more than *summative*. That is, they are meant to be part of the instructional process itself, providing you and your students with information at a point when timely adjustments in teaching and learning can be made.

Similar sets of assessments are available (or planned) for each unit in a typical world history class.

★ *Historical Thinking and the Challenge of the Common Core*

This set includes nine assessments aligned with the first nine Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standards. We have left out the tenth Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard, which does not lend itself to assessments of the sort provided here. The set also includes two writing tasks aligned with two key Common Core History/Social Studies Writing Standards.

These Common Core standards challenge history teachers to develop in students the complex literacy skills they need in today's world and the ability to master the unique demands of working with historical primary and secondary source texts. The Common Core standards are supportive of the best practices in teaching historical thinking. Such practices include close reading, attending to a source's point of view and purpose, corroborating sources, and placing sources in their historical context. These are the skills needed to make history less about rote learning and more about an active effort to investigate and interpret the past.

These assessments are also useful in many ways for ELA teachers. They assess many of the skills specified in the College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards, which put a good deal of emphasis on the reading of informational texts. The Anchor Standards form the basis for all of the various Common Core standards for English Language Arts.

★ *What Are These Assessments Like?*

- **A group of nine reading skills assessments and two writing tasks for each major era of world history**

Each reading skills assessment is based on one of the key Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standards—Assessment 1 addresses Common Core Reading Standard 1, Assessment 2 addresses Common Core Reading Standard 2, and so on. Two writing tasks are based on the first two College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Writing, which are the basis for the Common Core History/Social Studies Writing Standards. The two writing standards focus on writing arguments to support claims and writing informative/explanatory texts.

- **Based on primary or secondary sources**

In most cases, one primary source is used. In some cases, an assessment is based on more than one primary source or on a primary and a secondary source. The sources are brief. In most cases, texts have been slightly altered to improve readability, but without changing meaning or tone. Links to online versions of print media are available in the Bibliography. Please note that these links were valid at the time of production, but the websites may have since been discontinued.

Teacher Introduction

- **Brief tasks promoting historical literacy**

For each assessment, students write brief answers to one or two questions. The questions are not tests of simple factual recall. They assess the students' mastery of the skills addressed by that assessment's Common Core History/Social Studies Standard.

- **Two versions of each of the nine reading standards assessments**

A *basic* and an *advanced* version of each assessment are provided. The *basic* assessment addresses the Common Core Standard for grades 6–8. The *advanced* assessment is based on the Common Core Standard for grades 9–10 and grades 11–12 combined. Each version uses the same source or sources. In some cases, sources have been somewhat shortened for the *basic* version.

- **Easy to use as both learning and assessment tools**

These assessments do not take valuable time away from instruction. The primary sources and background information on each source make them useful mini-lessons as well as tools to assess students' historical thinking skills. The sources all deal with themes and trends normally covered when teaching the relevant historical era.

- **Evaluating student responses**

Brief but specific suggestions are provided, defining acceptable and best responses to each question asked in the assessment. The suggestions are meant to aid in evaluating students, but even more importantly, they are a way for teachers to help students better understand and master the skills on which the assessment is focused.

Assessment 1 *Basic Level*

Two Views of the Long Human Past

★ Key Ideas and Details

1. (6–8) Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.

★ Using This Assessment

These Common Core History Assessments are intended to help your students develop key literacy and history thinking skills as they study and master the content covered in their ancient history coursework. The assessments are intended to be *formative* more than *summative*. That is, they are meant to be part of the instructional process itself, providing you and your students with information at a point when timely adjustments in teaching and learning can be made.

Assessment 1 is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 1 for grades 6–8. It asks students to cite specific textual evidence from two documents. It also challenges students to adapt that reading skill to the unique demands of thinking historically as they carefully interpret textual evidence in two secondary source accounts of a time in the past. The Common Core standard here calls for primary as well as secondary sources. However, because no written primary sources exist for this era, secondary sources only are used instead.

★ Evaluating Student Responses to This Assessment

Acceptable responses to the first assessment question should define an “invariable sequence” as meaning a series of steps that is unalterable, with the steps always in the same order. With that definition, they should see that Westropp claims that each human society goes through the same set of “necessary transitional stages,” as he puts it. He defines the stages as going from simple and primitive to more advanced and complex. He compares them to the stages of an individual developing from infancy to adulthood. Acceptable responses to the second assessment question should see that Scarre rejects Westropp’s invariable stages as too rigid. He also implies they are too negative in the way they describe earlier societies. That is, he rejects the idea of an invariable progression from “savagery” to “civilization.” As an example, he mentions seafarers from simple societies exploring the Pacific Islands many centuries ago, a feat as amazing as the Egyptian pyramids or Mayan temples. However, he suggests we should evaluate each society in terms of its own “full range of human behavior,” not merely its special accomplishments.

Two Views of the Long Human Past

Directions: This exercise asks you to read two secondary source documents carefully and answer questions about specific details in the documents. In order to better understand the documents, read and make use of the source information located just below each document. When you have studied the documents and the source information, answer the two assessment questions that follow.

CCS Standard 1: Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.

Document 1: A Secondary Source

It appears as if there were but one history for every separate people, one uniform process of development for every race. Each passes through successive phases before attaining its highest social development. For every race must pass through the necessary transitional stages before it can arrive at a higher development. These successive phases are the rude and barbarous, the hunting, the pastoral, and the agricultural. They correspond with and are similar to the stages of infancy, childhood, youth, and manhood in the individual man. This sequence is invariable in man, as an individual and collectively.

Source Information: Adapted from Hodder M. Westropp's *Prehistoric Phases: Introductory Essays on Prehistoric Archaeology* (London: Bell and Doldy, 1872), pp. 2–3.

Document 2: A Secondary Source

Author Chris Scarre edited and wrote parts of a book called *The Human Past*. In one passage in it, he disagrees with many nineteenth century scholars about the past 11,600 years. These scholars described a steady progress from simple to advanced societies. They describe a shift from hunter-gatherer “savagery” to early farming “barbarism” to urban “civilization.” Scarre calls this a “progressivist” view. He says it leaves out far too much. For one thing, it ignores the great achievements of simpler societies. “Maya temples or Egyptian pyramids may impress us,” he tells us. However, he points out that skilled seafarers from simple societies were just as amazing. Several thousand years ago, they colonized many Pacific Islands using simple twin-hulled or outrigger canoes. In any case, Scarre feels that such “spectacular” accomplishments are less important than “the full range of human behavior” in each past society. It is this, he argues, that we should most try to understand.

Source Information: This is a secondary source document written in 2014 specifically for use in this activity. This document summarizes views expressed in one passage from an article by Chris Scarre, titled “The World Transformed: From Foragers and Farmers to States and Empires.” This article is Chapter 5 in *The Human Past: World Prehistory & the Development of Human Societies*, edited by Chris Scarre (London: Thames & Hudson, 2005), p. 177. The actual passage from Scarre is reproduced for the *advanced level* of this assessment.

Assessment Questions

1. In Document 1, Hodder Westropp says all human societies develop in an “invariable sequence.” Cite details from the text that explain what this sequence is and what it means to say it is “invariable.”

2. Scarre in Document 2 does not agree with Westropp that all human societies develop in an invariable sequence. Cite details in the document that explain why he does not accept this view?

Assessment 1 *Advanced Level*

Two Views of the Long Human Past

★ Key Ideas and Details

- 1. (9–10)** Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, attending to such features as the date and origin of the information.
- 1. (11–12)** Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.

★ Using This Assessment

These Common Core History Assessments are intended to help your students develop key literacy and history thinking skills as they study and master the content covered in their ancient history coursework. The assessments are intended to be *formative* more than *summative*. That is, they are meant to be part of the instructional process itself, providing you and your students with information at a point when timely adjustments in teaching and learning can be made.

Assessment 1 is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 1 for grades 9–10 and 11–12 combined. It asks students to cite specific textual evidence from two documents. It also challenges students to adapt that reading skill to the unique demands of thinking historically as they carefully interpret textual evidence in two secondary source accounts of a time in the past. The Common Core standard here calls for primary as well as secondary sources. However, because no written primary sources exist for this era, secondary sources only are used instead. As called for by the Common Core standard for grades 11–12, it also prompts students to relate the textual details to “an understanding of the text as a whole.”

★ Evaluating Student Responses to This Assessment

Acceptable responses to the first assessment question should note that Westropp sees each human society as going through the same series of “necessary transitional stages,” as he puts it. He defines the stages as moving from simple and primitive to more advanced and complex. Scarre rejects Westropp’s view of invariable stages as too rigid and also as too negative in what it implies about earlier societies. He rejects the idea of an invariable progression from “savagery” to “civilization.” As an example, he cites an amazing accomplishment by a simpler society: the seafarers who colonized Pacific Islands long before the West’s voyages of discovery. However, he mainly suggests we should evaluate each society in terms of its own “full range of human behavior,” not merely its special accomplishments of any sort. Acceptable responses to the second assessment question should note that Scarre compares his inevitable stages of social evolution to the stages of an individual from infancy to adulthood. The analogy expresses a definite point of view, one implying that earlier and simpler societies are less mature, capable, rational, or wise.

Two Views of the Long Human Past

Directions: This exercise asks you to read two secondary source documents carefully and answer questions about specific details in the documents. In order to better understand the documents, read and make use of the source information located just below each document. When you have studied the documents and the source information, answer the two assessment questions that follow.

CCS Standard 1: (9–10) Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, attending to such features as the date and origin of the information. **(11–12)** Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.

Document 1: A Secondary Source

It appears as if there were but one history for every separate people, one uniform process of development for every race. Each passes through successive phases before attaining its highest social development. For every race must pass through the necessary transitional stages before it can arrive at a higher development.

These successive phases are the rude and barbarous, the hunting, the pastoral, and the agricultural. They correspond with and are similar to the stages of infancy, childhood, youth, and manhood in the individual man. This sequence is invariable in man, as an individual and collectively.

Source Information: Adapted from Hodder M. Westropp's *Prehistoric Phases: Introductory Essays on Prehistoric Archaeology* (London: Bell and Doldy, 1872), pp. 2–3.

Document 2: A Secondary Source

It would be misleading . . . to regard the human story of the past 11,600 years simply as one of progress from scattered bands of hunters and gatherers to complex, densely peopled cities and states, as 19th century writers saw it. Around 1800, for example, both American anthropologist Lewis Henry Morgan and his British counterpart Edward Tylor described the development of human society as moving from Paleolithic “savagery,” to the “barbarism” of early farming societies, finally culminating in the civilization of Mesopotamia and Egypt. Such a simplistic “progressivist” view fails to account for the full diversity of human experience, or for the record left by hunter-gatherers and other less complex societies during these millennia. It should be borne in mind, for example, that while Maya temples or Egyptian pyramids may impress us by their size and sophistication, one of the greatest human achievements was the colonization of the far-flung Pacific islands by skilled seafaring horticulturalists using twin-hulled or outrigger canoes. Furthermore, the true significance of the archaeological record lies not in studying the spectacular, but in seeking to understand the full range of human behavior and experience in their material setting.

Source Information: This passage is from an article by Chris Scarre titled “The World Transformed: From Foragers and Farmers to States and Empires,” Chapter 5 in *The Human Past: World Prehistory & the Development of Human Societies* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2005), p. 177.

Assessment Questions

1. In Document 1, Hodder Westropp says all human societies develop in an “invariable sequence.” Explain what he means and why Chris Scarre (in Document 2) does not agree with him. Cite details from both documents to support your answer.

2. Westropp uses an analogy in describing his “invariable sequence” for human societies. Explain that analogy and evaluate the point of view it reveals?

Assessment 2 *Basic Level*

Humans: What Makes Them Unique?

★ Key Ideas and Details

- 2. (6–8)** Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.

★ Using This Assessment

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Assessment 2 is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 2 for grades 6–8. It asks students to summarize the central ideas in a source from the text itself without imposing ideas or attitudes external to the text. This is not easy to do. This activity assesses the ability to read closely in order to build an overall understanding of the source out of the text itself.

★ Evaluating Student Responses to This Assessment

Acceptable responses to the assessment question should note that although Leakey sees the importance of the human hand, he says it is the brain that is the truly crucial factor in making us fully human. Hands make the “detailed manipulation” of objects possible. Only the brain can guide the hands in using this skill in unlimited and highly creative ways. Best answers should also note and explain Leakey’s remarks about other creatures that construct things and manipulate their environment. His point is that they can only do certain things in preset ways. They cannot choose to alter their manipulative behavior to accomplish new tasks. Only greater intelligence allows humans to put the hand’s manipulative abilities to many different uses.

Humans: What Makes Them Unique?

Directions: This exercise asks you to study one secondary source document carefully and answer one question about specific details in the document. In order to better understand the document as an historical source, read and make use of the source information located just below the document itself. When you have studied the document and the source information, answer the Assessment Question that follows.

CCS Standard 2: Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.

A Secondary Source Document

Our forelimbs, being freed from helping us to get about, possess a very high degree of manipulative skill. Part of this skill lies in the anatomical structure of the hands, but the crucial element is of course, the power of the brain. No matter how suited the limbs are for detailed manipulation, they are useless in the absence of finely tuned instructions delivered through nerve fibers. The most obvious product of our hands and brains is technology. No other animal manipulates the world in the extensive and arbitrary way that humans do. The termites are capable of constructing intricately structured mounds which create their own “air-conditioned” environment inside. But the termites cannot choose to build a cathedral instead. Humans are unique because they have the capacity to choose what they do.

Source Information: For many years, Richard Leakey searched for fossils of early hominids, our closest human-like ancestors. Leakey briefly discusses what it is that makes modern humans unique among other hominids in this passage from his *The Making of Mankind* (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1981), p. 18.

Assessment Question

Richard Leakey’s central idea here has to do with two human features—the hand and the brain. Sum up his idea about these two features and explain how the passage as a whole supports this idea.

Assessment 2 *Advanced Level*

Humans: What Makes Them Unique?

★ Key Ideas and Details

- 2. (9–10)** Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text.
- 2. (11–12)** Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.

★ Using This Assessment

These Common Core History Assessments are intended to help your students develop key literacy and history thinking skills as they study and master the content covered in their ancient history coursework. The assessments are intended to be *formative* more than *summative*. That is, they are meant to be part of the instructional process itself, providing you and your students with information at a point when timely adjustments in teaching and learning can be made.

Assessment 2 is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 2 for grades 9–10 and 11–12 combined. It asks students to summarize the central ideas in a source from the text itself without imposing ideas or attitudes external to the text. This is not easy to do. Moreover, when it comes to the unique demands of thinking historically we do also want students to use knowledge of historical context to help them interpret sources. But that sort of contextualizing also demands that students suspend their own present-day ideas while studying a source. This activity assesses the ability to read closely in order to build an overall understanding of the source out of the text itself.

★ Evaluating Student Responses to This Assessment

Acceptable responses to the assessment question should note that Leakey does stress the crucial importance of “the anatomical structure of the hands.” By this he means its gripping power and the ability the opposable thumb gives humans to manipulate tools and other objects in very precise ways. Hands make the “detailed manipulation” of objects possible, especially by grasping an object between the fingers and the opposing thumb. However, Leakey’s main point is that only the brain can guide the hands in using this ability in unlimited and highly creative ways. Answers should note Leakey’s point that although other creatures can construct things and manipulate their environment, they only do this in genetically programmed or preset ways. They cannot choose to alter their manipulative behavior to accomplish other tasks. Only greater intelligence allows humans to put the opposable thumbs’ manipulative potential to many different uses.

Humans: What Makes Them Unique?

Directions: This exercise asks you to study one secondary source document carefully and answer one question about specific details in the document. In order to better understand the document as an historical source, read and make use of the source information located just below the document itself. When you have studied the document and the source information, answer the Assessment Question that follows.

CCS Standard 2: (9–10) Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text. **(11–12)** Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.

A Secondary Source Document

Our forelimbs, being freed from helping us to get about, possess a very high degree of manipulative skill. Part of this skill lies in the anatomical structure of the hands, but the crucial element is of course, the power of the brain. No matter how suited the limbs are for detailed manipulation, they are useless in the absence of finely tuned instructions delivered through nerve fibers. The most obvious product of our hands and brains is technology. No other animal manipulates the world in the extensive and arbitrary way that humans do. The termites are capable of constructing intricately structured mounds which create their own “air-conditioned” environment inside. But the termites cannot choose to build a cathedral instead. Humans are unique because they have the capacity to choose what they do.

Source Information: For many years, Richard Leakey searched for fossils of early hominids, our closest human-like ancestors. Leakey briefly discusses what it is that makes modern humans unique among other hominids in this passage from his *The Making of Mankind* (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1981), p. 18.

Assessment Question

Many archaeologists speak of the central role of the opposable thumb for human beings. Summarize Richard Leakey’s central idea in this passage and explain how the passage supports yet qualifies these views about the opposable thumb.

Assessment 3 *Basic Level*

The Art of the Lascaux Caves

★ Key Ideas and Details

- 3. (6–8)** Identify key steps in a text’s description of a process related to history/social studies (e.g., how a bill becomes law, how interest rates are raised or lowered)

★ Using This Assessment

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Assessment 3 is designed to measure students’ ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 3 for grades 6–8. It asks students to follow the way a set of ideas or sequence of events in a text interact to describe a process or develop a central idea. This activity assesses the students’ ability to read closely in order to understand various connections between each detail and the next in a text.

★ Evaluating Student Responses to This Assessment

Answers to the first assessment question should note that the passage details the impressive works of art in the Lascaux cave complex and then says efforts to understand the purpose of that art have not succeeded. That is, the passage’s central claim is that the meaning of Lascaux’s “magnificent works of art remains a mystery in many ways.” Answers to the second assessment question should see that the passage offers several explanations for the Lascaux art, but it then shows how each explanation is inadequate. The idea that the paintings were “art for art’s sake” seems unlikely given that only certain animals are depicted. The idea that the paintings were for hunting ceremonies fails to account for the appearance of some predators, which were not hunted. Nor do any explanations account for the mysterious symbols that are also found throughout the caves. Therefore, the mystery of the art of Lascaux remains unsolved.

The Art of the Lascaux Caves

Directions: This exercise asks you to read one primary source document and one secondary source document carefully and answer two questions about specific details in the document. In order to better understand the document as a historical primary source, read and make use of the source information just below the document itself. When you have studied the document and the source information, answer the assessment questions that follow.

CCS Standard 3: Identify key steps in a text’s description of a process related to history/social studies (e.g., how a bill becomes law, how interest rates are raised or lowered).

A Visual Primary Source



Source: Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons

Source Information: This painting of a horse is one of thousands of animals drawn on the walls of the Lascaux cave complex in southwestern France. These caves contain artwork estimated to be about 17,000 years old. This means they were produced long before the end of the last ice age and well before the first agricultural societies appeared.

A Secondary Source

In France, we have the Lascaux cave complex and artwork from 15,000 years ago or more This cave complex contains hundreds of realistic cave-wall paintings and engravings, mainly of horses, but also of musk-ox, bulls, cows, bears, and more Along with paintings are patterns of dots, circles, and other simple designs. One human figure is shown, a man who appears to have been killed by an angry bison The paintings are deep inside this cave. The cave contained artifacts suggesting it was used regularly, but not occupied continuously as a living space. Just what it was used for is not clear. Some scholars think the paintings are done for the sheer beauty they provide—“art for art’s sake” as the saying goes. However, then why are only some animals depicted? No plants or mountains are shown. No human social gatherings are shown. Some scholars think the cave and its paintings had a religious or ceremonial purpose, possibly connected with hunting. However, not all the animals depicted were hunted. Some were predators, like bears or wolves. Many scenes have nothing to do with hunting. And what about all the symbols? Perhaps the art is related to some other kind of ceremony. Or the paintings may have been ways to store information in an age before the invention of writing. Since these Stone Age peoples left no written records, the meaning of such magnificent works of art remains a mystery in many ways.

Source Information: This is a secondary source document about the paintings in the Lascaux cave complex. The passage is adapted and expanded from passages in *From Hunter-Gatherers to Farmers and Herders* by Jonathan Burack, *Debating the Documents* (Culver City, CA: MindSparks, 2007).

Assessment Questions

1. This passage’s central claim is about attempts to understand the Lascaux paintings. In a sentence or two, explain its central claim?
2. The passage supports its central claim by considering several possible ideas about the Lascaux cave art. Explain how those ideas help to develop and support the passage’s central claim.

Assessment 3 *Advanced Level*

The Art of the Lascaux Caves

★ Key Ideas and Details

- 3. (9–10)** Analyze in detail a series of events described in a text; determine whether earlier events caused later ones or simply preceded them.
- 3. (11–12)** Evaluate various explanations for actions or events and determine which explanation best accords with textual evidence, acknowledging where the text leaves matters uncertain.

★ Using This Assessment

These Common Core History Assessments are intended to help your students develop key literacy and history thinking skills as they study and master the content covered in their ancient history coursework. The assessments are intended to be *formative* more than *summative*. That is, they are meant to be part of the instructional process itself, providing you and your students with information at a point when timely adjustments in teaching and learning can be made.

Assessment 3 is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 3 for grades 9–10 and 11–12 combined. It asks students to follow the way a set of ideas or sequence of events in a text interact to describe a process or develop a central idea. The activity assesses the students' ability to read closely in order to understand various connections between each detail and the next in a complex text. It also asks them to evaluate the explanation offered in the passage and consider how adequate it is

★ Evaluating Student Responses to This Assessment

Answers to the first assessment question should see that the passage starts off by summarizing various kinds of evidence we have about humans prior to about 5,000 years ago. Since no written records exist from before then, scholars can only make inferences about the art, artifacts, and bones they find. The challenge then is to be as imaginative as possible in making such inferences in a reasonable and logical way. Answers to the second assessment question should note that the Lascaux artworks are detailed and shown to be impressive evidence of prehistoric skill and thought. However, because their creators left no written account of them, no clear explanation of them can be inferred from the art or the cave complex as a whole. The idea that the paintings were “art for art’s sake” seems unlikely given that only certain kinds of animals are depicted. The idea that they were for hunting ceremonies fails to account for the depiction of some predators, which were not hunted. Nor do such explanations account for the mysterious symbols that are also found throughout the caves. Therefore, the mystery of the art of Lascaux remains unsolved.

The Art of the Lascaux Caves

Directions: This exercise asks you to read one primary source document and one secondary source document carefully and answer two questions about specific details in the document. In order to better understand the document as a historical primary source, read and make use of the source information just below the document itself. When you have studied the document and the source information, answer the assessment questions that follow.

CCS Standard 3: (9–10) Analyze in detail a series of events described in a text; determine whether earlier events caused later ones or simply preceded them. **(11–12)** Evaluate various explanations for actions or events and determine which explanation best accords with textual evidence, acknowledging where the text leaves matters uncertain.

A Visual Primary Source



Source: Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons

Source Information: This painting of a horse is one of thousands of animals drawn on the walls of the Lascaux cave complex in southwestern France. These caves contain artwork estimated to be about 17,000 years old. This means they were produced long before the end of the last ice age and well before the first agricultural societies appeared.

A Secondary Source

Many scholars say modern humans, *Homo sapiens sapiens*, descended from an ancestor who lived about 200,000 years ago. Until the appearance of written language about 5,000 years ago, the only clues we have to our past are skeletons, stone tools, animal bones, the remains of campsites, and a few other things that managed to survive over many millennia. We also have a little evidence of what humans thought and felt—mostly in the form of rock drawings, cave paintings and designs, ritual figurines, ceremonial burials, etc. However, what any of these things mean is not that clear.

In France, for example, we have the Lascaux cave complex and artwork from 15,000 years ago or more. This cave complex contains hundreds of realistic cave-wall paintings and engravings, mainly of horses, but also musk-ox, bulls, cows, bears, and more. Along with paintings are patterns of dots, circles, and other simple designs. One human figure is shown, a man who appears to have been killed by an angry bison. The paintings are deep inside this cave. The cave contained artifacts suggesting it was used regularly, but not occupied continuously as a living space. Just what it was used for is not clear. Some scholars think the paintings are done for the sheer beauty they provide—“art for art’s sake” as the saying goes. Yet then why are only some animals depicted? No plants or mountains are shown. No human social gatherings are shown. Some scholars think the cave and its paintings had a religious or ceremonial purpose, possibly connected with hunting. However, not all the animals were hunted. Some were predators, like bears or wolves. Many scenes have nothing to do with hunting. And what about all the symbols? Perhaps the art is related to some other kind of ceremony. Or the paintings may have been ways to store information in an age before the invention of writing. Since these Stone Age peoples left no written records, the meaning of such magnificent works of art remains a mystery in many ways.

Source Information: This is a secondary source document about the paintings in the Lascaux cave complex. The passage is adapted and expanded from passages in *From Hunter-Gatherers to Farmers and Herders* by Jonathan Burack, *Debating the Documents* (Culver City, CA: MindSparks, 2007).

Assessment 4 *Basic Level*

From Foragers to Farmers

★ Craft and Structure

4. (6–8) Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.

★ Using This Assessment

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Assessment 4 is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 4 for grades 6–8. It asks students to recognize that words and phrases must be understood in relation to the meaning of the text as a whole. In seeking to understand historical sources, this is an especially important challenge. Words and phrases need to be understood as they were used within their historical context. This activity assesses the students' ability to read closely in order to understand terms in these ways.

★ Evaluating Student Responses to This Assessment

Answers to the first assessment question should note that LeBlanc believes the term “hunter-gatherer” is confusing because it is used for two slightly different types of groups. Some hunter-gatherer bands move regularly from place to place, whereas other hunter-gatherer bands have permanent villages and more complex social organization. LeBlanc uses the term “foragers” for the first of these groups, the one without permanent villages. Answers to the second assessment question should see that the main reason some hunter-gatherers settled down was an abundance of wild plants and animals in a location. This abundance allowed some hunter-gather groups to settle down even though they were not yet full-fledged farmers who sowed, tilled, and harvested domesticated crops. Best answers will see that studying these transitional groups could help us to see how hunting and gathering could evolve into farming slowly over time.

From Foragers to Farmers

Directions: This exercise asks you to read one secondary source document carefully and answer two questions about specific details in the document. In order to better understand the document as a historical primary source, read and make use of the source information just below the document itself. When you have studied the document and the source information, answer the assessment questions that follow.

CCS Standard 4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.

A Secondary Source Document

“Band” refers to the group’s social organization, but such societies are also often termed hunter-gatherers — referring to their lifestyle or lifeway — because they do not farm. Farming of domesticated plants and animals — a process that involves sowing, tilling, harvesting, and storing — is a recent human invention. I prefer the term “forager,” because in the recent past, some social groups were hunter-gatherers but lived in permanent villages and were more complexly organized. So foragers are hunter-gatherers who do not have permanent settlements and are organized as bands. I use this distinction because many hunter-gatherers farm “wilds.” The plants and animals in their region were so dense and abundant and were used so intensively that the people were able to live in one place and harvest the plants and wild animals as if they were domesticated. They wound up with lifestyles very similar to those of farmers, and can also be termed sedentary collectors.

Source Information: The Neolithic Age began around 10,000 BCE. “Neolithic Age” means “New Stone Age.” The term originally referred to the appearance of new and improved stone tools. In time, scholars realized these tools were actually part of a major shift from hunting and gathering to the farming and herding of domesticated plants and animals. So “Neolithic” now refers mainly to this agricultural transformation. Describing the “bands” of hunter-gatherers that gave way during the Neolithic Age to more settled, agricultural communities, Document 1 is from *Constant Battles: The Myth of the Peaceful Noble Savage* by Steven A. LeBlanc, with Katherine E. Register (New York: Saint Martin’s Press, 2003), pp. 103–104.

Assessment Questions

1. Steven LeBlanc prefers the term “forager” to “hunter-gatherer.” Explain why.

2. According to LeBlanc, why were some hunter-gatherer groups able to live in one place?

Assessment 4 *Advanced Level*

From Foragers to Farmers

★ *Craft and Structure*

- 4. (9–10)** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary describing political, social, or economic aspects of history/social science.
- 4. (11–12)** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including analyzing how an author uses and refines the meaning of a key term over the course of a text (e.g., how Madison defines *faction* in *Federalist* No. 10).

★ *Using This Assessment*

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Assessment 4 is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 4 for grades 9–10 and 11–12 combined. It asks students to recognize that words and phrases must be understood in relation to the meaning of the text as a whole. In seeking to understand historical sources, this is an especially important challenge. Words and phrases need to be understood as they were used within their historical context. This activity assesses the students' ability to read closely in order to understand terms in these ways.

★ *Evaluating Student Responses to This Assessment*

Answers to the first assessment question should see that LeBlanc rejects a simple classification of groups into “hunter-gatherers” and “farmers.” He believes the term “hunter-gatherer” is confusing in that it is used for two slightly different types of groups. Some hunter-gatherer bands moved regularly from place to place, whereas other hunter-gatherer bands had permanent villages and more complex social organization. LeBlanc uses the term “foragers” for the first of these groups, the one without permanent villages. Answers to the second assessment question should see that LeBlanc’s three-part classification calls attention to the way some hunter-gather groups settled down in permanent villages even though they were not yet full-fledged farmers who sowed, tilled, and harvested domesticated crops. This transitional group implies that the switch to farming did not take place all at once; it evolved slowly over time. This could focus our attention more fully on the many skills farming societies needed to discover and master. It makes it easier to see how such societies could have done this in a slow, gradual way rather than all at once in a flash of insight.

From Foragers to Farmers

Directions: This exercise asks you to read one secondary source document carefully and answer questions about specific details in the document. In order to better understand the document as a historical primary source, read and make use of the source information just below the document itself. When you have studied the document and the source information, answer the two assessment questions that follow.

CCS Standard 4: (9–10) Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary describing political, social, or economic aspects of history/social science. **(11–12)** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including analyzing how an author uses and refines the meaning of a key term over the course of a text (e.g., how Madison defines *faction* in *Federalist* No. 10).

A Secondary Source Document

“Band” refers to the group’s social organization, but such societies are also often termed hunter-gatherers — referring to their lifestyle or lifeway — because they do not farm. Farming of domesticated plants and animals — a process that involves sowing, tilling, harvesting, and storing — is a recent human invention. I prefer the term “forager,” because in the recent past, some social groups were hunter-gatherers but lived in permanent villages and were more complexly organized. So foragers are hunter-gatherers who do not have permanent settlements and are organized as bands. I use this distinction because many hunter-gatherers farm “wilds.” The plants and animals in their region were so dense and abundant and were used so intensively that the people were able to live in one place and harvest the plants and wild animals as if they were domesticated. They wound up with lifestyles very similar to those of farmers, and can also be termed sedentary collectors.

Source Information: The Neolithic Age began around 10,000 BCE. “Neolithic Age” means “New Stone Age.” The term originally referred to the appearance of new and improved stone tools. In time, scholars realized these tools were actually part of a major shift from hunting and gathering to the farming and herding of domesticated plants and animals. So “Neolithic” now refers mainly to this agricultural transformation. Describing the “bands” of hunter-gatherers that gave way during the Neolithic Age to more settled, agricultural communities, Document 1 is from *Constant Battles: The Myth of the Peaceful Noble Savage* by Steven A. LeBlanc, with Katherine E. Register (New York: Saint Martin’s Press, 2003), pp. 103–104

Assessment 5 *Basic Level*

Human and Animal Migrations

★ *Craft and Structure*

5. (6–8) Describe how a text presents information (e.g., sequentially, comparatively, causally).

★ *Using This Assessment*

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Assessment 5 is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 5 for grades 6–8. It asks students to pay attention to a text's "structure"—that is, to the overall pattern or organizational arrangement of its headings, sentences, paragraphs, stanzas, and chapters, as well as its various stylistic features. These formal elements can contribute to a text's meanings in many ways. This activity assesses the students' ability to read closely in order to understand the impact of the way one historical primary source is structured to present its information.

★ *Evaluating Student Responses to This Assessment*

Acceptable responses to the first assessment question should see that the passage identifies the difference in the fact that genetic change played the major role with other animals but not with humans. That is, other animals needed to change biologically in order to adapt to different environments. Humans, on the other hand, relied on intelligence and technology—for example, on clothing and fire—to adapt to colder regions. Acceptable responses to the second assessment question should see that the text structure here is basically one of "compare and contrast." The unique spread of human beings is described in the first paragraph. The second paragraph then compares this spread to that of other animals that moved to new regions only by evolving and changing their biological makeup. The passage does suggest as a "problem/solution" the question of why human migrations were so unique, and it does also in part explain the causes of this human success at migrating all over the world. However, the text mainly deals with these matters within a basic compare and contrast structure.

Human and Animal Migrations

Directions: This exercise asks you to read one secondary source document carefully and answer questions about specific details in it. In order to better understand the document as a historical primary source, read and make use of the source information located just below it. When you have studied the document and the source information, answer the two assessment questions that follow.

CCS Standard 5: Describe how a text presents information (e.g., sequentially, comparatively, causally).

A Secondary Source Document

Between 100,000 and 10,000 years ago, humans migrated to new environments within Africa. Even more importantly, some humans also moved out of Africa into Eurasia, Australia, and eventually the Americas. These migrations took humans into new environments. This required new survival skills and lifeways. This globe-encircling movement of humans has no parallel in the histories of other species. It demonstrated that there was something unique about our species, an adaptability and a level of technological genius that no other species could match. This exceptional creativity is what makes human history so different from that of other species.

Of course, some other animals have managed to move to radically new environments. But they have done so only after undergoing significant biological changes. An example is the hairy mammoth. It is closely related to the African elephant, an animal adapted to tropical environments. But the mammoth could survive in the tundra lands of ice-age Siberia because it had changed genetically. Specifically, it acquired a hairy covering that kept it warm. In contrast, humans remained the same biologically but developed new technologies and ways of doing things. For example, humans adapted to the cold of ice-age Siberia by learning to hunt animals such as mammoths, to warm themselves with fire, and to clothe themselves in tailored animal skins. While animals adapt by changing genetically, our distant human ancestors adapted much more quickly by changing their behaviors.

Source Information: This secondary source document is a brief passage in the lesson “Human Beings around the World,” Chapter 5 in *Early History: Human Beings around the World*, The Big Eras, edited by Ross E. Dunn (Culver City, CA: Social Studies School Service, 2014), p. 105.

Assessment Questions

1. Over the past 100,000 years, humans have moved from Africa to regions all over the world. Some animals have also moved from the places where they first appeared. However, human migration differs from that of other animals. How does this passage explain that difference?

2. “Text structure” refers to the way paragraphs and longer texts are organized, with different structures serving different purposes. Here are three types of text structure:
 - *Problem/Solution: A problem or question is presented and a solution or series of steps in a solution follows.*
 - *Compare and Contrast: A pattern showing what is similar and what is different in two events, examples, processes, etc.*
 - *Cause and Effect: A pattern showing what factors caused an effect or set of effects.*

Of these three text structures, choose the one you think most accurately describes the text structure of this document. Explain your choice.

Assessment 5 *Advanced Level*

Human and Animal Migrations

★ *Craft and Structure*

- 5. (9–10)** Analyze how a text uses structure to emphasize key points or advance an explanation or analysis.
- 5. (11–12)** Analyze in detail how a complex primary source is structured, including how key sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text contribute to the whole.

★ *Using This Assessment*

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Assessment 5 is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 5 for grades 9–10 and 11–12 combined. It asks students to pay attention to a text's "structure"—that is, to the overall pattern or organizational arrangement of its headings, sentences, paragraphs, stanzas, and chapters, as well as its various stylistic features. Students should see how structure is deliberately used to enable the text to achieve certain goals. Such formal elements can contribute to a text's meanings in many ways. This activity assesses the students' ability to read closely in order to understand the impact of the way one historical primary source is structured to present its information.

★ *Evaluating Student Responses to This Assessment*

Acceptable responses to the first assessment question should see that the text structure here is basically one of "compare and contrast." The unique worldwide migration of human beings is described in the first paragraph. The second paragraph then compares this movement to the spread of some other animals. These other animals only moved to new regions by evolving and changing their biological makeup, whereas humans did this by intelligently adapting to new environments. The passage does fit a "cause-and-effect" structure somewhat in that it also explains the genetic causes of animal migrations and the role of intelligence and technological creativity in making human migrations possible. However, these cause-and-effect observations are included in a text organized within a basic compare-and-contrast structure. Acceptable responses to the second assessment question should see that climate change would be a major factor forcing humans to adapt via technology to changing environments. Since climate did change drastically over the past 100,000 years, with ice ages followed by interglacial warm eras, humans had plenty of incentives to adapt creatively. These adaptations made it easier for humans to migrate from one climate and environment to another.

Human and Animal Migrations

Directions: This exercise asks you to read one secondary source document carefully and answer questions about specific details in it. In order to better understand the document as a historical primary source, read and make use of the source information located just below it. When you have studied the document and the source information, answer the two assessment questions that follow.

CCS Standard 5: (9–10) Analyze how a text uses structure to emphasize key points or advance an explanation or analysis. **(11–12)** Analyze in detail how a complex primary source is structured, including how key sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text contribute to the whole.

A Secondary Source Document

Between 100,000 and 10,000 years ago, humans migrated to new environments within Africa. Even more importantly, some humans also moved out of Africa into Eurasia, Australia, and eventually the Americas. These migrations took humans into new environments. This required new survival skills and lifeways. This globe-encircling movement of humans has no parallel in the histories of other species. It demonstrated that there was something unique about our species, an adaptability and a level of technological genius that no other species could match. This exceptional creativity is what makes human history so different from that of other species.

Of course, some other animals have managed to move to radically new environments. But they have done so only after undergoing significant biological changes. An example is the hairy mammoth. It is closely related to the African elephant, an animal adapted to tropical environments. But the mammoth could survive in the tundra lands of ice-age Siberia because it had changed genetically. Specifically, it acquired a hairy covering that kept it warm. In contrast, humans remained the same biologically but developed new technologies and ways of doing things. For example, humans adapted to the cold of ice-age Siberia by learning to hunt animals such as mammoths, to warm themselves with fire, and to clothe themselves in tailored animal skins. While animals adapt by changing genetically, our distant human ancestors adapted much more quickly by changing their behaviors.

Source Information: This secondary source document is a brief passage in the lesson “Human Beings around the World,” Chapter 5 in *Early History: Human Beings around the World, The Big Eras*, edited by Ross E. Dunn (Culver City, CA: Social Studies School Service, 2014), p. 105.

Assessment Questions

1. “Text structure” refers to the way paragraphs and longer texts are organized, with different structures serving different purposes. Here are descriptions of two kinds of text structure.

- *Compare and Contrast: A pattern showing what is similar and what is different in two events, examples, processes, etc.*
- *Cause and Effect: A pattern showing what factors caused an effect or set of effects.*

Which of these structures best fits this passage? Defend your choice, while also explaining how both structures do describe some aspects of the way this passage is organized.

2. Aside from human creativity, climate is another factor often cited to explain why humans spread to many regions over the past 100,000 years. Why might climate have been a key factor in explaining that movement?

Assessment 6 *Basic Level*

Hunter-Gatherers: Were They Better Off?

★ *Craft and Structure*

- 6. (6–8)** Identify aspects of a text that reveal an author’s point of view or purpose (e.g., loaded language, inclusion or avoidance of particular facts).

★ *Using This Assessment*

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Assessment 6 is designed to measure students’ ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 6 for grades 6–8. It asks students to note a text’s point of view as expressed by looking closely at details in the text itself. These details may take the form of emotional language, distorted or exaggerated descriptions, stereotyped labeling, etc. However, even a text with a neutral tone may express bias or point of view by selectively emphasizing some facts while omitting others. Therefore, students also need to go outside the text to interpret point of view by considering sourcing information such as the author’s background, purpose, and audience. In addition, students need to see that when sources express conflicting points of view they may still be reliable in certain ways—for example, by what they share in common or by backing up their claims with solid evidence.

★ *Evaluating Student Responses to This Assessment*

Acceptable answers to the first assessment question should see that Document 1 views hunter-gatherers as better off mainly because of the small amount of labor time it took for them to obtain food. The document suggests that as a result, hunter-gatherers enjoyed an easier and healthier life. Document 2 takes a less positive view of hunter-gatherers by focusing on levels of violence among such groups. It finds that hunter-gatherers had very high levels of violence that made their way of life particularly insecure and dangerous. Acceptable answers to the second assessment question should note that the documents rely on different kinds of evidence. In both cases, the evidence is limited. Opinions as to which document uses evidence most effectively may vary. Document 1 relies on only two modern-day hunter-gatherer societies for its evidence as to workloads. It refers to some ancient skeletons from one region, but it does not consider all the factors that might explain the height differences it notes between hunter-gatherers and farmers in that region. Document 2 also relies heavily on figures about modern-day hunter-gatherers. It challenges Document 1 by suggesting that ancient hunter-gatherers were taller and healthier only because the weak among them never survived at all. However, it also offers little evidence to back up this view other than the fact that these societies were far less dense per square mile.

Hunter-Gatherers: Were They Better Off?

Directions: This exercise asks you to read two secondary source documents carefully and answer questions about specific details in them. In order to better understand these documents as historical sources, read and make use of the source information located just below each document. When you have studied the documents and the source information, answer the two assessment questions that follow.

CCS Standard 6: Identify aspects of a text that reveal an author’s point of view or purpose (e.g., loaded language, inclusion or avoidance of particular facts).

Document 1: A Secondary Source

Are twentieth century hunter-gatherers really worse off than farmers? Scattered throughout the world, several dozen groups of so-called primitive people, like the Kalahari bushmen, continue to support themselves that way. It turns out that these people have plenty of leisure time, sleep a good deal, and work less hard than their farming neighbors. For instance, the average time devoted each week to obtaining food is only 12 to 19 hours for one group of Bushmen, 14 hours or less for the Hadza nomads of Tanzania. . . .

Skeletons from Greece and Turkey show that the average height of hunter-gatherers toward the end of the ice ages was a generous 5’ 9” for men, 5’ 5” for women. With the adoption of agriculture, height crashed, and by 3000 B.C. had reached a low of only 5’ 3” for men, 5’ for women. By classical times heights were very slowly on the rise again, but modern Greeks and Turks have still not regained the average height of their distant ancestors.

Source Information: Comparing the diet, health, labor, and lifestyles of hunter-gatherer bands and settled agricultural societies, Document 1 is a brief passage from Jared Diamond’s “The Worst Mistake in the History of the Human Race,” *Discover Magazine* (May 1987), pp. 64–66.

Document 2: A Secondary Source

The Several archaeologists and anthropologists now argue that violence was much more pervasive in hunter-gatherer society than in more recent eras. From the !Kung in the Kalahari to the Inuit in the Arctic and the aborigines in Australia, two-thirds of modern hunter-gatherers are in a state of almost constant tribal warfare, and nearly 90% go to war at least once a year. War is a big word for dawn raids, skirmishes and lots of posturing, but death rates are high—usually around 25-30% of adult males die from homicide

Constant warfare was necessary to keep population density down to one person per square mile. Farmers can live at 100 times that density. Hunter-gatherers may have been so lithe and healthy because the weak were dead. The invention of agriculture and the advent of settled society merely swapped high mortality for high morbidity, allowing people some relief from chronic warfare so they could at least grind out an existence, rather than being ground out of existence altogether.

Source Information: Also dealing with comparisons between hunter-gatherer societies and more settled agricultural societies, this passage is from an article titled “Noble or Savage,” *The Economist*, December 22, 2007.

Assessment Questions

1. Not all scholars agree as to who was better off, ancient hunter-gatherers or the farming societies that replaced them. In general, how do these two documents differ in their views about that?
2. Which document makes the best use of evidence to support its view? Explain your answer by citing details from both documents.

Assessment 6 *Advanced Level*

Hunter-Gatherers: Were They Better Off?

★ *Craft and Structure*

- 6. (9–10)** Compare the point of view of two or more authors for how they treat the same or similar topics, including which details they include and emphasize in their respective accounts.
- 6. (11–12)** Evaluate authors' differing points of view on the same historical event or issue by assessing the authors' claims, reasoning, and evidence.

★ *Using This Assessment*

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★ *Evaluating Student Responses to This Assessment*

Acceptable answers to the first assessment question should see that Diamond (Document 1) claims that hunter-gatherers were better off than early farming societies. He says this was mainly due to the small amount of labor time they devoted to obtaining food, resulting in an easier and healthier life for them. *The Economist* (Document 2) does not challenge Diamond directly on these claims. Instead, it focuses mainly on the high levels of violence among hunter-gatherers, suggesting this made their way of life particularly insecure and dangerous. It also implicitly criticizes Diamond's approach by challenging his view that ancient skeletons prove hunter-gatherers were taller and healthier. *The Economist* suggests those skeletons only appear better because weaker hunter-gatherers never survived at all. Acceptable answers to the second assessment question may vary. They should note that these short passages rely on different kinds of evidence and that in both cases the evidence is not extensive. Some might suggest we need more evidence about labor time or about violence levels among ancient hunter-gatherers, not modern ones. Some might question the usefulness of measures of just a few skeletons in Greece and Turkey. Some may suggest other kinds of evidence about well-being or lack of well-being, such as the quality of houses, clothing, tools, etc. Answers should be discussed thoroughly.

Hunter-Gatherers: Were They Better Off?

Directions: This exercise asks you to read two secondary source documents carefully and answer questions about specific details in them. In order to better understand these documents as historical sources, read and make use of the source information located just below each document. When you have studied the documents and the source information, answer the two assessment questions that follow.

CCS Standard 6: (9–10) Compare the point of view of two or more authors for how they treat the same or similar topics, including which details they include and emphasize in their respective accounts. **(11–12)** Evaluate authors' differing points of view on the same historical event or issue by assessing the authors' claims, reasoning, and evidence.

Document 1: A Secondary Source

Are twentieth century hunter-gatherers really worse off than farmers? Scattered throughout the world, several dozen groups of so-called primitive people, like the Kalahari bushmen, continue to support themselves that way. It turns out that these people have plenty of leisure time, sleep a good deal, and work less hard than their farming neighbors. For instance, the average time devoted each week to obtaining food is only 12 to 19 hours for one group of Bushmen, 14 hours or less for the Hadza nomads of Tanzania. . . .

Skeletons from Greece and Turkey show that the average height of hunter-gatherers toward the end of the ice ages was a generous 5' 9" for men, 5' 5" for women. With the adoption of agriculture, height crashed, and by 3000 B.C. had reached a low of only 5' 3" for men, 5' for women. By classical times heights were very slowly on the rise again, but modern Greeks and Turks have still not regained the average height of their distant ancestors.

Source Information: Comparing the diet, health, labor, and lifestyles of hunter-gatherer bands and settled agricultural societies, Document 1 is a brief passage from Jared Diamond's "The Worst Mistake in the History of the Human Race," *Discover Magazine*, May 1987, pp. 64–66.

Document 2: A Secondary Source

Several archaeologists and anthropologists now argue that violence was much more pervasive in hunter-gatherer society than in more recent eras. From the !Kung in the Kalahari to the Inuit in the Arctic and the aborigines in Australia, two-thirds of modern hunter-gatherers are in a state of almost constant tribal warfare, and nearly 90% go to war at least once a year. War is a big word for dawn raids, skirmishes and lots of posturing, but death rates are high—usually around 25-30% of adult males die from homicide

Constant warfare was necessary to keep population density down to one person per square mile. Farmers can live at 100 times that density. Hunter-gatherers may have been so lithe and healthy because the weak were dead. The invention of agriculture and the advent of settled society merely swapped high mortality for high morbidity, allowing people some relief from chronic warfare so they could at least grind out an existence, rather than being ground out of existence altogether.

Source Information: Also dealing with comparisons between hunter-gatherer societies and more settled agricultural societies, this passage is from an article titled “Noble or Savage,” *The Economist*, December 22, 2007.

Assessment Questions

1. Jared Diamond, in Document 1, makes a claim about early human societies. In what ways does Document 2 challenge Diamond’s view? Cite details from each document to support your answer.

2. What other kinds of evidence might help to more fully resolve the overall question these two documents pose?

Assessment 7 *Basic Level*

The Big Change since the Last Ice Age

★ Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

- 7. (6–8)** Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.

★ Using This Assessment

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Assessment 7 is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 7 for grades 6–8. It asks students to do something historians must do all the time—integrate evidence found in several primary sources presented in a variety of visual and textual formats.

★ Evaluating Student Responses to This Assessment

Acceptable answers to the assessment question should see that all three of the documents are evidence of the increasing size of settlements and overall populations following the introduction of agriculture. The second paragraph of Document 1 describes the ability of farming societies to support large populations on much smaller amounts of land compared with hunter-gatherers. In fact, it suggests farming communities could support one hundred times as many people per square mile. This certainly made rapid overall increase in population possible, and likely. Document 2's multiple-story, tightly interconnected structures make clear how compact and densely populated one group of Native American agricultural communities could be. Document 3 shows how population began to accelerate rapidly in the centuries after the switch from forager to farming societies got under way.

The Big Change since the Last Ice Age

Directions: This exercise asks you to study three documents carefully and answer two questions focused on what these sources have in common. In order to better understand the documents and their importance as historical evidence, read and make use of the source information located just below or next to each document. When you have studied the documents and the source information, answer the assessment questions that follow.

CCS Standard 7: Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.

Document 1: A Secondary Source

The last ice age ended about 12,000 years ago. Until then, humans were foragers engaged in various forms of hunting and gathering. In other words, they obtained their food by hunting wild animals and gathering in wild plants. Many archeologists and anthropologists say this is actually efficient. What they mean is that foragers can get all the food they need with less labor and time than it would take to produce it by farming or herding domesticated plants and animals. Moreover, these experts say, the hunter-gatherer diet was healthier than the one early farming societies provided. Yet since about 10,000 BCE, as the world warmed up, humans in fact did turn to agriculture. They did so independently of one another in several places. Why did they make this change if it meant more work and less nutritious food?

There is no simple, single answer to this question. However, what is clear is that hunter-gatherer bands could never build up big surpluses of food. Each band had to roam over a very large territory just to find enough food to support them day by day. Also, hunting and gathering only supported a very low population density — that is, a very small number of people per square mile. By contrast, even early forms of farming and herding could supply a far larger population on the same amount of land — perhaps one hundred times more people per square mile. This allowed population to soar. Food could be stored for use in bad times, or to support craftsmen, priests, warriors, and others. As larger and more powerful agricultural societies developed, it would not take long for them to sweep the hunter-gatherers aside. Today, such foragers exist in very small numbers and only in very remote parts of the earth.

Source Information: This document is a secondary source dealing with the question of why, starting about 12,000 years ago, most humans made the big change from hunting and gathering to farming. A secondary source is an account of past events written later by someone who did not experience or take part in those events. This particular historical account was written in 2014 specifically for use as part of this activity.

Document 2: A Visual Primary Source



Source: Reproduced with permission from Jonathan Burack

Source Information: This photo shows densely packed, multi-storied structures in some of the ruins in Chaco Canyon in New Mexico. From 850 to 1250 CE, this canyon was a major center for religious ceremonies and trade among the Native American communities of the region. The Chaco people were a part of the Anasazi culture of sedentary farmers in the southwest of what is now the United States.

Document 3: A Comparative Secondary Source

Estimated World Population	
10,000 BCE	4 million
5,000 BCE	5 million
3,000 BCE	14 million
2,000 BCE	27 million
1,000 BCE	50 million

Source Information: This table shows changes in world population since the appearance of farming based on domesticated plants and animals. The estimates are from *Traditions and Encounters: A Global Perspective on the Past* by Jerry H. Bentley and Herbert F. Ziegler (Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2000), pp. 21–22.

Assessment Question

The shift from hunting and gathering to settled agriculture brought about huge changes in human society. Explain how all three of these documents provide evidence of one aspect of that change.

Assessment 7 *Advanced Level*

The Big Change since the Last Ice Age

★ *Integration of Knowledge and Ideas*

- 7. (9–10) Integrate quantitative or technical analysis (e.g., charts, research data) with qualitative analysis in print or digital text.
- 7. (11–12) Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.

★ *Using This Assessment*

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Assessment 7 is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 7 for grades 9–10 and 11–12 combined. It asks students to do something historians must do all the time—integrate evidence found in a wide variety of primary sources presented in many visual and textual formats. It also asks them to judge the relative strengths and weaknesses of visual as compared with written sources.

★ *Evaluating Student Responses to This Assessment*

Acceptable answers to the first assessment question should see that Document 1's first paragraph raises the question of why human societies adopted agriculture if hunter-gatherer lifestyles were actually efficient, healthy, and satisfying, as some scholars claim. The answer offered in the second paragraph is that agriculture allowed societies to grow in population using much smaller amounts of land more intensively and productively. The claim is that farming communities could support one hundred times as many people per square mile as hunter-gatherer bands. This certainly made rapid overall increases in population possible, and likely. The photo (Document 2) shows multiple-story, tightly interconnected structures. These make clear how compact and densely populated one group of Native American agricultural communities could be. Document 3 shows how population began to accelerate rapidly in the centuries after the switch from forager to farming societies got under way. Acceptable answers to the second assessment question may vary. Answers should not deal merely with whether or not such societies were healthier and happier, but also with the issue of resources. Could such hunter-gatherer bands have made more efficient use of land so as not to crowd one another out? Could they have managed wildlife in such a way as to prevent overharvesting of game animals, causing their extinction, etc.? This is a speculative question that should be discussed thoroughly.

The Big Change since the Last Ice Age

Directions: This exercise asks you to study three documents carefully and answer two questions focused on what these sources have in common. In order to better understand the documents and their importance as historical evidence, read and make use of the source information located just below or next to each document itself. When you have studied the documents and the source information, answer the assessment questions that follow.

CCS Standard 7: (9–10) Integrate quantitative or technical analysis (e.g., charts, research data) with qualitative analysis in print or digital text. **(11–12)** Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.

Document 1: A Secondary Source

The last ice age ended about 12,000 years ago. Until then, humans were foragers engaged in various forms of hunting and gathering. In other words, they obtained their food by hunting wild animals and gathering in wild plants. Many archeologists and anthropologists say this is actually efficient. What they mean is that foragers can get all the food they need with less labor and time than it would take to produce it by farming or herding domesticated plants and animals. Moreover, these experts say, the hunter-gatherer diet was healthier than the one early farming societies provided. Yet since about 10,000 BCE, as the world warmed up, humans in fact did turn to agriculture. They did so independently of one another in several places. Why did they make this change if it meant more work and less nutritious food?

There is no simple, single answer to this question. However, what is clear is that hunter-gatherer bands could never build up big surpluses of food. Each band had to roam over a very large territory just to find enough food to support them day by day. Also, hunting and gathering only supported a very low population density—that is, a very small number of people per square mile. By contrast, even early forms of farming and herding could supply a far larger population on the same amount of land—perhaps one hundred times more people per square mile. This allowed population to soar. Food could be stored for use in bad times, or to support craftsmen, priests, warriors, and others. As larger and more powerful agricultural societies developed, it would not take long for them to sweep the hunter-gatherers aside. Today, such foragers exist in very small numbers and only in very remote parts of the earth.

Source Information: This document is a secondary source dealing with the question of why, starting about 12,000 years ago, most humans made the big change from hunting and gathering to farming. A secondary source is an account of past events written later by someone who did not experience or take part in those events. This particular historical account was written in 2014 specifically for use as part of this activity.

Document 2: A Visual Primary Source



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Source Information: This photo shows densely packed, multi-storied structures in some of the ruins in Chaco Canyon in New Mexico. From 850 to 1250 CE, this canyon was a major center for religious ceremonies and trade among the Native American communities of the region. The Chaco people were a part of the Anasazi culture of sedentary farmers in the southwest of what is now the United States.

Document 3: A Comparative Secondary Source

Estimated World Population	
10,000 BCE	4 million
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Source Information: This table shows changes in world population since the appearance of farming based on domesticated plants and animals. The estimates are from *Traditions and Encounters: A Global Perspective on the Past* by Jerry H. Bentley and Herbert F. Ziegler (Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2000), pp. 21–22.

Assessment Questions

1. Document 1 basically frames a question in its first paragraph and suggests an answer in its second paragraph. Sum up its question and answer, and explain how the other two documents support that answer.

2. As population grew after the last ice age, could humans have continued to organize their lives based mainly on hunting and gathering strategies? Why or why not?

Assessment 8 *Basic Level*

Ancient versus Modern Foragers

★ Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

8. (6–8) Distinguish among fact, opinion, and reasoned judgment in a text.

★ Using This Assessment

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Assessment 8 is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 8 for grades 6–8. It asks students to pay attention to the way a text reasons about its factual claims and to distinguish between these and expressions of opinion. This could mean paying close attention to the factual evidence offered or to the reasoning process and logic used to support a claim—as well as an ability to distinguish these from the text's biases or expressions of opinion. This activity assesses the students' ability to read closely in order to understand a text in these ways.

★ Evaluating Student Responses to This Assessment

Responses to the first assessment question should see that Barker offers two kinds of evidence. He says present-day forager societies differ from ancient ones in that they only occupy the “marginal” lands that farming and industrial societies do not want. He also says modern foragers often adopt some farming and herding activities and depend somewhat on trade with others. These practices might improve life for them in ways not available to ancient foragers. Responses to the second assessment question will vary. Answers should consider whether any lands exist that are truly untouched by modern societies or unaffected by them. They also should consider whether people living in such areas would be able to avoid any outside contact that might change their societies. The question is highly speculative, and answers should be shared and discussed.

Ancient versus Modern Foragers

Directions: This exercise asks you to read one secondary source document carefully and answer two questions about specific details in the document. In order to better understand the document as a historical source, read and make use of the source information located just below the document itself. When you have studied the document and the source information, answer the assessment questions that follow.

CCS Standard 8: Distinguish among fact, opinion, and reasoned judgment in a text.

A Secondary Source

In *The Agricultural Revolution in Prehistory*, author Graeme Barker makes an important claim about modern forager societies—that is, about modern hunter-gatherers. He says we can't learn that much from them about how ancient foragers lived. By "ancient," he means foragers from thousands of years ago, before farming began. At that time, foragers occupied a huge share of the globe. Even as late as 1500, they took up a third of the globe—all of Australia and huge parts of Africa, the Americas, and Northeast Asia. Only since then, he says, have they retreated, "occupying only those areas where farmers simply cannot go, or where farming is marginal." Many textbooks present modern-day groups like the !Kung-San of the Kalahari as examples of forager societies. Barker says this is a mistake. Such societies often also farm or herd a bit. And they trade with neighbors for food. Barker concludes it is an error to base theories about prehistoric foragers on the life ways of these present-day societies.

Source Information: This is a secondary source document written in 2014 specifically for use in this activity. The document summarizes views expressed in one passage from Graeme Barker's *The Agricultural Revolution in Prehistory: Why Did Foragers Become Farmers?* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), p. 42. The actual passage from Barker is reproduced as-is for the *Advanced level* for this assessment.

Assessment Questions

1. Graeme Barker says it is wrong to think that ancient foragers were like those that exist in the modern age. Cite details from the document that help explain his reasoning on this issue.

2. Despite what Barker says, could a forager society exactly like the ancient ones survive today? Why or why not?

Assessment 8 *Advanced Level*

Ancient versus Modern Foragers

★ Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

- 8. (9–10) Assess the extent to which the reasoning and evidence in a text support the author's claims.
- 8. (11–12) Evaluate an author's premises, claims, and evidence by corroborating or challenging them with other information.

★ Using This Assessment

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Assessment 8 is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 8 for grades 9–10 and 11–12 combined. It asks students to pay attention to the way a text backs up or seeks to explain its factual claims. This could mean paying close attention to the factual evidence offered in the text as compared with expressions of opinion. Or it could mean paying attention to the reasoning process and logic used to support a claim. It may also require students to examine underlying assumptions and bias in order to see how they shape or distort the reasoning process presented by the text. This activity assesses the students' ability to read closely in order to understand a text in these ways

★ Evaluating Student Responses to This Assessment

Responses to the first assessment question should see that Barker's claim is that present-day foragers cannot be taken to be exactly like ancient foragers. His reasoning is that present-day forager societies only occupy the "marginal" lands that farming and industrial societies do not want. He also says modern foragers often adopt some farming and herding activities and depend somewhat on trade with others. These practices might improve life for them in ways not available to ancient foragers. This means they will probably not be typical of ancient foragers in other ways as well. Responses to the second assessment question will vary. Some might ask why it makes a difference that foragers today occupy marginal areas when they are otherwise living as foragers did in the past. Others may ask whether ancient foragers did not also trade with others, especially as farming slowly spread. Some may wonder which kinds of interaction with outsiders most alter a forager society and which ones do not alter them all that much. Many questions are possible. They should be shared and discussed.

Ancient versus Modern Foragers

Directions: This exercise asks you to read one secondary source document carefully and answer two questions about specific details in the document. In order to better understand the document as a historical source, read and make use of the source information located just below the document itself. When you have studied the document and the source information, answer the assessment questions that follow.

CCS Standard 8: (9–10) Assess the extent to which the reasoning and evidence in a text support the author’s claims. **(11–12)** Evaluate an author’s premises, claims, and evidence by corroborating or challenging them with other information.

A Secondary Source

At the end of the Pleistocene, forager societies peopled most regions of the world, at most latitudes. By the middle of the second millennium AD, foragers still occupied a third of the globe including all of Australia and most of North America, and large tracts of South America, Africa, North and Northeast Asia. Yet in recent centuries, foragers have “retreated precipitously in the face of the steamroller of modernity” . . . , occupying only those areas where farmers simply cannot go, or where farming is so marginal as to be uneconomic. Many societies frequently cited in archaeological textbooks as examples of forager societies today, like the !Kung-San of the Kalahari, in fact also practice cultivation or herding on a small scale, and others depend heavily on trade with neighboring farmers for staple foods. It is extremely difficult to translate foragers’ behavior as recorded today or in the recent past into theories of general applicability to the world’s prehistoric foraging population prior to farming..

Source Information: This document is a secondary source passage from Graeme Barker’s *The Agricultural Revolution in Prehistory: Why Did Foragers Become Farmers?* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), p. 42.

Assessment Questions

1. What does Graeme Barker claim here, and what evidence does he use to support his conclusion?

2. Is Barker’s reasoning here sound? What additional questions could someone who is critical of Barker ask as a way to challenge his conclusion?

Assessment 9 *Basic Level*

Those Warlike Pastoralists

★ *Integration of Knowledge and Ideas*

9. (6–8) Analyze the relationship between a primary and secondary source on the same topic.

★ *Using This Assessment*

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Assessment 9 is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 9 for grades 6–8. It asks students to understand the relationship between primary and secondary sources. However, no written primary sources exist for this era of early human history. Therefore, in this case, secondary sources only are used instead. These sources offer slightly differing interpretations of the same topic. This should lead students to adopt a critical approach to secondary sources themselves. That is, such secondary accounts should not be regarded as final and complete. They are interpretations of the past, not the past itself.

★ *Evaluating Student Responses to This Assessment*

Answers to the first assessment question should explain that the term “pastoralist” refers to societies that raise livestock. Both documents are mainly discussing societies that do this. Hence, the term “pastoralist” is more appropriate. These societies were also nomads in that they did move from place to place regularly. Answers to the second assessment question should see that Document 1 explains pastoralists' warlike behavior and skill as due to their greater insecurity about their wealth and safety. Document 2 identifies other general characteristics of nomads that make them warlike—in particular a tendency to grow too rapidly. However, its main difference from Document 1 is the stress it places on the horse. It views nomadic or pastoralist societies without horses as less warlike and more dependent on settled, farming societies. It is the horse and horse-riding skill that, in this view, led to the most warlike behavior by such societies.

Those Warlike Pastoralists

Directions: This exercise asks you to read two documents carefully and answer questions about specific details in them. In order to better understand the documents, read and make use of the source information located just below each document. When you have studied the documents and the source information, answer the assessment questions that follow.

CCS Standard 9: Analyze the relationship between a primary and secondary source on the same topic.

Document 1: A Secondary Source

Why were pastoralist societies so warlike? The pastoral way of life favored warrior cultures. Livestock was a less secure resource than agricultural crops. Disease could swiftly destroy a large herd, and rival nomad rustlers might steal an entire herd. Herders had to be vigilant and able to react quickly in a crisis. Controlling large animals also required the physical skills of a rodeo rider and the logistical skill of a cattle driver. This means that they had to have a system of military readiness both to protect their animals and to raid their neighbors. It requires physical strength, endurance, and a great tolerance for hardship. Pastoral societies had to be able to transform themselves easily into armies capable of fighting with skill, spirit, and ferocity. Military resources had to be concentrated in relatively sparse populations. Therefore, training in how to ride and shoot had to begin at an early age..

Source Information: This secondary source document is a brief passage from Susan Douglass and Jean Johnson's "Differences between Settled Agriculturalists and Pastoral Nomads," Chapter 4 in *Rise of Civilizations: Farming and the Emergence of Complex Societies*, The Big Eras, edited by Ross E. Dunn (Culver City, CA: Social Studies School Service, 2014).

Document 2: A Secondary Source

Whenever they occurred, nomadic societies grew faster than peasant societies, and if we can conclude that the nomads at regular intervals experienced serious demographic pressure this would help explain their “irresistible penchant for the raid”—as an earlier and naive psychology of the nomads had it. In addition, we have to consider that the relations between nomads and sedentaries take different forms according to the level of social, political and military organization of the time. Up to the first millennium BC the nomads which lived on the margins of the Fertile Crescent were mere shepherds and, without horses or dromedaries, lived in a state of dependence vis-à-vis the sedentary society which they could slowly infiltrate but not conquer But after the nomads began to mount horses and dromedaries, their dynamism was enhanced in such a way that invasion and conquest of the sedentary world became possible.

Source Information: This is a secondary source passage from *Nomads in the Sedentary World*, edited by Anatoly M. Khazanov and André Wink (New York: Routledge, 2001), p. 223.

Assessment Questions

1. Document 1 speaks of “pastoralist” societies, whereas Document 2 refers to “nomads.” Define “pastoralist” and explain why it is better to use than “nomad” for the groups discussed in these documents.
2. Both documents seek to explain the warrior behavior of pastoralists. Does Document 2 mainly support Document 1’s explanation? Or does it undercut it by offering an entirely different explanation? Cite details from the documents to support your answer.

Assessment 9 *Advanced Level*

Those Warlike Pastoralists

★ *Integration of Knowledge and Ideas*

- 9. (9–10)** Compare and contrast treatments of the same topic in several primary and secondary sources.
- 9. (11–12)** Integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources.

★ *Using This Assessment*

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Assessment 9 is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 9 for grades 9–10 and 11–12 combined. It asks students to understand the relationship between primary and secondary sources. However, no written primary sources exist for this era of early human history. Therefore, in this case, secondary sources only are used instead. These sources offer slightly differing interpretations of the same topic. This should lead students to adopt a critical approach to secondary sources themselves. That is, such secondary accounts should not be regarded as final and complete. They are interpretations of the past, not the past itself.

★ *Evaluating Student Responses to This Assessment*

Answers to the first assessment question should see that Document 1 explains why in general pastoralists were more insecure about their wealth and safety and more likely to develop warlike skills. Document 2 identifies some other general characteristics of nomads that make them warlike—in particular a tendency to grow too rapidly. However, its main difference from Document 1 is the stress it places on the horse. It sees nomadic or pastoralist societies without horses as less warlike and more dependent on settled, farming societies. It is the horse and horse-riding skills that, in this view, led to the most warlike behavior by such societies. Answers to the second assessment question will vary. The documents do suggest that nomadic pastoralists were more warlike than sedentary people. Conditions unique to the pastoralists pushed them to feel insecure and to emphasize warrior skills and attitudes. According to Document 2, the mastery of the horse also gave them an extra incentive to become raiders and warriors. However, neither document explores other factors that might have led sedentary societies to adopt warrior attitudes as well. A need to protect stored food supplies, for example, might be such a factor. Answers to this question will vary and should be shared and discussed.

Those Warlike Pastoralists

Directions: This exercise asks you to read two documents carefully and answer two questions about specific details in them. In order to better understand the documents, read and make use of the source information located just below each document. When you have studied the documents and the source information, answer the assessment questions that follow.

CCS Standard 9: (9–10) Compare and contrast treatments of the same topic in several primary and secondary sources. **(11–12)** Integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources.

Document 1: A Secondary Source

Why were pastoralist societies so warlike? The pastoral way of life favored warrior cultures. Livestock was a less secure resource than agricultural crops. Disease could swiftly destroy a large herd, and rival nomad rustlers might steal an entire herd. Herders had to be vigilant and able to react quickly in a crisis. Controlling large animals also required the physical skills of a rodeo rider and the logistical skill of a cattle driver. This means that they had to have a system of military readiness both to protect their animals and to raid their neighbors. It requires physical strength, endurance, and a great tolerance for hardship. Pastoral societies had to be able to transform themselves easily into armies capable of fighting with skill, spirit, and ferocity. Military resources had to be concentrated in relatively sparse populations. Therefore, training in how to ride and shoot had to begin at an early age..

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Document 2: A Secondary Source

Whenever they occurred, nomadic societies grew faster than peasant societies, and if we can conclude that the nomads at regular intervals experienced serious demographic pressure this would help explain their “irresistible penchant for the raid”—as an earlier and naive psychology of the nomads had it. In addition, we have to consider that the relations between nomads and sedentaries take different forms according to the level of social, political and military organization of the time. Up to the first millennium BC the nomads which lived on the margins of the Fertile Crescent were mere shepherds and, without horses or dromedaries, lived in a state of dependence vis-à-vis the sedentary society which they could slowly infiltrate but not conquer But after the nomads began to mount horses and dromedaries, their dynamism was enhanced in such a way that invasion and conquest of the sedentary world became possible.

Source Information: This is a secondary source passage from *Nomads in the Sedentary World*, edited by Anatoly M. Khazanov and André Wink (New York: Routledge, 2001), p. 223.

Assessment Questions

1. Both documents seek to explain warrior behavior of nomadic pastoralists. Does Document 2 mainly support Document 1’s explanation? Or does it contradict it? Cite details from the documents to support your answer.
2. Based on these two documents alone, do you think nomadic pastoralists are inherently more warlike than sedentary peoples? Why or why not?

Writing Assessment 1

Early Humans

★ The College and Career Readiness Anchor Standard for Writing

1. Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

This standard is the basis for the corresponding No. 1 Common Core Writing Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects.

★ Using This Assessment

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Writing Assessment 1 is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in the College and Career Readiness Anchor Standard for Writing 1. The Anchor Standards are the basis on which the various Common Core History/Social Studies Standards are based. This assessment asks students to write an essay that makes meaningful claims and that develops those claims using relevant evidence and sound reasoning. The essay should make clear the strengths and limitations of the claims it makes while also considering possible challenges or counter claims.

★ Evaluating Student Responses to Writing Assessment 1

- Essays for this assignment should be scored according to these criteria.
- How well does the essay state a claim addressing all elements of the prompt?
- Does the essay use evidence from all or most of the documents assigned for this task?
- Is the evidence explained effectively using careful reasoning and a logical flow of one idea to the next?
- Does the essay defend the claim in relation to any relevant alternative claims?
- Are ideas presented using precise language, effective transitions, and domain-specific vocabulary?
- Does the essay include an effective conclusion supporting its claims?
- How well does the essay follow rules of usage, spelling, and punctuation?

Early Humans

The Standard: Write a brief essay that presents a well-reasoned argument focused on historical content.

The Question

Using your background history knowledge and the source documents listed here, explain why you do or do not agree with the following statement:

“Jared Diamond was right when he said the switch from hunting and gathering to farming was the worst mistake in the history of the human race.”

Documents: Base your essay on your general background knowledge and all of the primary and secondary source documents in *Early Humans* assessments.

Instructions

- Write a brief, well-organized essay that includes an introduction, one to three internal paragraphs, and a conclusion.
- Introduce a specific claim that you can defend in response to the question.
- Support your claim with an argument based on evidence from the documents and sound reasoning about that evidence.
- Consider other possible claims that may differ from your own.
- Include related outside information based on your background knowledge of history.
- Use transitions and a logical arrangement of ideas to connect all parts of your essay to the claim you are making.
- Write a conclusion that follows from the argument your essay has made.

Writing Assessment 2

Early Humans

★ The College and Career Readiness Anchor Standard for Writing

2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

This standard is the basis for the corresponding No. 2 Common Core Writing Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects.

★ Using This Assessment

These Common Core History Assessments are intended to help your students develop key literacy and history thinking skills as they study and master the content covered in their ancient history coursework. The assessments are intended to be *formative* more than *summative*. That is, they are meant to be part of the instructional process itself, providing you and your students with information at a point when timely adjustments in teaching and learning can be made.

Writing Assessment 2 is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in the College and Career Readiness Anchor Standard for Writing 2. The Anchor Standards are the basis on which the various Common Core History/Social Studies Standards are based. This assessment asks students to write an essay that uses sources effectively to provide strong support and evidence clarifying and explaining a central idea or set of ideas and concepts.

★ Evaluating Student Responses to Writing Assessment 2

- Essays for this assignment should be scored according to these criteria.
- How well does the introduction address the prompt with a clear, well-defined central idea and a preview of supporting ideas?
- Does the essay use evidence from many of the documents assigned for this task?
- Is the evidence used effectively to support the essay's key ideas and concepts?
- Does the essay engage in careful reasoning and a logical flow of one idea to the next?
- Are ideas presented using precise language, effective transitions, and domain-specific vocabulary?
- Does the essay include an effective conclusion supporting its key ideas?
- How well does the essay follow rules of usage, spelling, and punctuation?

Early Humans

The Standard: Write an informative/explanatory essay clearly describing and explaining historical events and trends.

The Question

The first written languages appeared about 5,000 years ago. To learn about history from before then, historians, archaeologists, anthropologists, and other scholars have to rely on other kinds of evidence to understand the earliest human societies. Your task in this essay is to explain how this limits what scholars can learn about such societies. You should also describe the main kinds of evidence they use and what the advantages and disadvantages of those kinds of evidence are. To do this, choose five documents from the entire set of the Early Humans assessments. Choose the five you think best illustrate the points you wish to make. Write an essay analyzing in detail your choices.

Documents: Base your essay on your general background knowledge and on your selection of sources from all the source documents in *Early Humans* assessments.

Instructions

- Write a brief, well-organized essay that includes an introduction, one to three internal paragraphs, and a conclusion.
- Introduce the topic with a clear, well-defined central idea and preview in a general way other key ideas your essay will develop.
- Support each of your key ideas with evidence from many of the documents and with sound reasoning about that evidence.
- Include related outside information based on your background knowledge of history.
- Use transitions and a logical arrangement of ideas to connect the major parts of your essay.
- Write a conclusion that follows from and summarizes the main points your essay has made.

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