



Grade 6

**Think Smart
for Smarter Balanced Assessments**

Unit Assessments



**Assessing the California
Common Core State Standards**

Read the text. Then answer the questions.

Going to America

A young passenger named Jonas kept his balance and managed to stay upright on the deck of the ship. But it was a challenge as the wind screamed and howled and tried to throw him into the water. From below the deck came the moans and cries of seasick Pilgrims. They had been on the ship for weeks already and could not last much longer. The captain of the *Mayflower* maneuvered the ship through huge swells in the Atlantic Ocean on his way to America. He knew he was close to land because he could feel it in his bones. Their journey was almost over. However, the captain did not realize that his ship was about 600 miles off course. The Pilgrims would not be landing where they had planned.

The people going to America were not called Pilgrims when they were living in England in the early 1600s. They were Puritans who became supporters of Separatism. They wanted to separate from the Church of England. They did not feel free to follow their own religious beliefs.

In 1608, a group of these Separatists left England and relocated to the city of Amsterdam in Holland. A year later, they moved again to the Dutch city of Leiden. Though they found some religious freedom there and stayed for a number of years, they were not allowed to govern themselves. They had to obey the rules and laws of Holland. Also, they could not earn enough money to support themselves. In 1617, members of the group decided to move to America. At that time, there were several small settlements in Virginia and in the New York area. The Leiden group got permission from the London Company, which controlled those colonies, to settle on part of their land.

That year, about half of the people in the Leiden group boarded a ship called the *Speedwell* and sailed back to England, where they joined up with another group of Separatists. They added a second ship, the *Mayflower*, to take them all to America. The *Speedwell* was a 60-ton ship, which is rather small for such a long voyage. The *Mayflower* was three times the size of the *Speedwell* and only about 12 years old. It had already proved itself on long voyages as a trading ship.

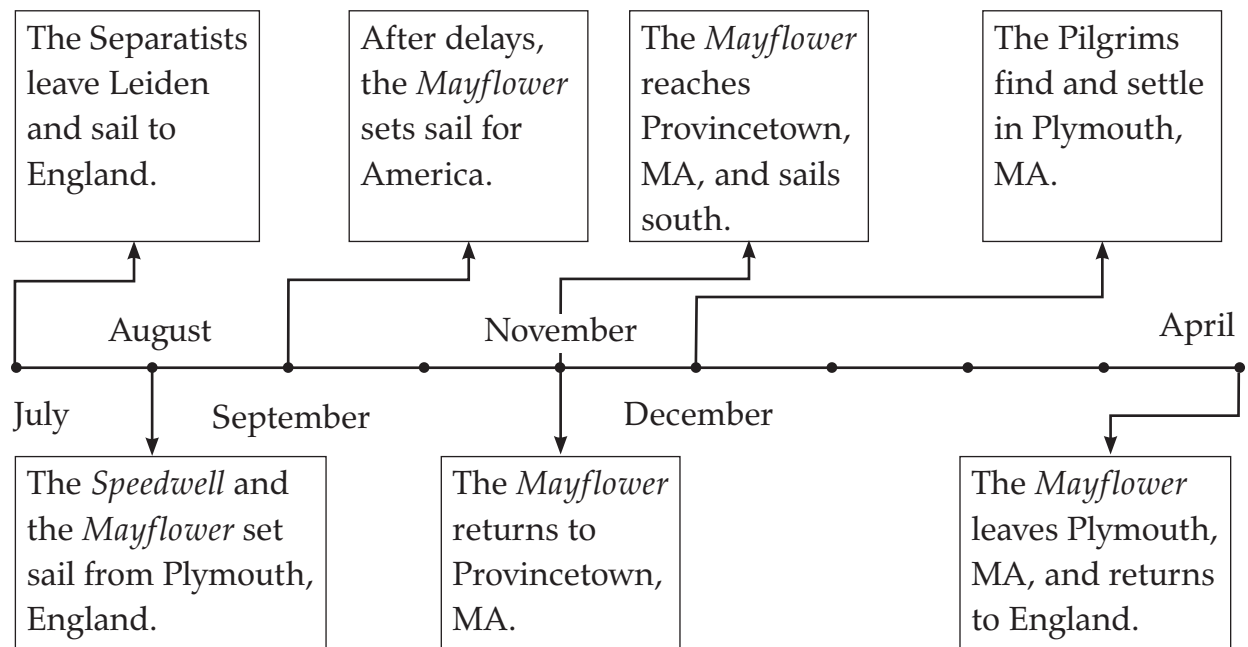
When all was ready, the group set sail from Plymouth, England, bound for the New World. Unfortunately, the *Speedwell* soon began to leak. Both ships returned to the harbor in England for repairs. When the ships departed a second time, the *Speedwell* again leaked. A full month later, the entire group of 102 passengers crowded onto the *Mayflower* and set sail once again.

Through many North Atlantic storms and 65 days at sea, the passengers on the *Mayflower* survived, finally reaching land near present-day Provincetown at the end of Cape Cod, Massachusetts. It was late November, and winter was approaching. They had permission to settle near Virginia, but that is not where they had landed. So they steered south for another day, hoping they could make it at least as far as New York. But the weather and the rocky shores were too dangerous, so they turned back and landed at Provincetown.

Soon after their arrival, these Separatists created a document called the Mayflower Compact. This was an agreement among the men on the ship as to how they would live and govern themselves. Led by a man named William Bradford, 41 men on the *Mayflower* signed this paper. All agreed to follow the rules of the group. Bradford was the first person to refer to these people as Pilgrims. With this document, the Pilgrims also agreed to settle in Massachusetts instead of in Virginia as they had planned.

Over the next few weeks, the Pilgrims searched for a good place to live. In late December, they found a harbor on the other end of Cape Cod at a place they called Plymouth. That is where they made their home that first winter, but they faced a number of obstacles. They had no shelter from the weather, and winter had already begun. They had very little food and could not plant any crops in December. By the following spring, about half of the colonists had died. In April of 1621 the *Mayflower* returned to England.

The Pilgrims' Voyage (1620–1621)



1 Read the sentence from the text.

But it was a challenge as the wind screamed and howled and tried to throw him into the water.

What mood does the author create by using personification in the sentence? Select **all** that apply.

- ☐ (A) steady
- ☐ (B) chaotic
- ☐ (C) dangerous
- ☐ (D) frightening
- ☐ (E) playful
- ☐ (F) puzzling

2 Read the sentence from the text.

The captain of the *Mayflower* maneuvered the ship through huge swells in the Atlantic Ocean on his way to America.

The origin of the word maneuvered is the Latin words *manus*, meaning “hand,” and *operari*, meaning “operation.” What does the word maneuvered **most likely** mean?

- ☐ (A) to go against
- ☐ (B) to look carefully
- ☐ (C) to find a solution
- ☐ (D) to guide skillfully

- 3** The following question has two parts. First, answer part A. Then, answer part B.

Part A: How does the first paragraph add to the main idea of the text?

- ☐ **A** It shows how skilled the captain of the *Mayflower* was.
- ☐ **B** It gives details about the *Mayflower's* size and appearance.
- ☐ **C** It describes the type of people that chose to set sail on the *Mayflower*.
- ☐ **D** It provides a description of what the Pilgrims experienced on the *Mayflower*.

Part B: Which detail from the text **best** provides evidence for your answer in part A?

- ☐ **A** Many passengers were seasick below the deck.
- ☐ **B** The ship had to battle against huge swells of water.
- ☐ **C** The captain could feel when the ship was approaching land.
- ☐ **D** Passengers on the deck sometimes had to be careful to hold on.

- 4** The following question has two parts. First, answer part A. Then, answer part B.

Part A: How does the author help the reader understand the Pilgrims' determination to succeed?

- (A)** by describing the Pilgrims' daily lives
- (B)** by comparing the Pilgrims to previous settlers
- (C)** by showing how the Pilgrims overcame problems
- (D)** by explaining the Pilgrims' reasons for leaving Europe

Part B: Which detail from the text **best** supports your answer in part A?

- (A)** The remaining Pilgrims returned to England after winter passed.
- (B)** The entire group squeezed onto one ship and spent 65 days at sea.
- (C)** The group set sail from England a month after they originally planned.
- (D)** All 41 men signed an agreement about the laws they would live by in America.

- 5 Read the sentence from the text.

In 1608, a group of these Separatists left England and relocated to the city of Amsterdam in Holland.

What does the word relocated **most likely** suggest about what the Separatists did in Amsterdam?

- (A) They visited Amsterdam again.
- (B) They found Amsterdam on a map.
- (C) They made a new home for themselves in Amsterdam.
- (D) They created connections with people in Amsterdam.

- 6 Using information found in the text and the timeline, write a number from 1-6 next to each event to show the order in which they occurred.

_____ The group received permission to settle in Virginia.

_____ The group wanted to leave the Church of England.

_____ The *Mayflower* returned to England with the *Speedwell*.

_____ The group found Plymouth, MA.

_____ The Mayflower Compact was written and signed.

_____ The group became known as Pilgrims.

Name: _____ Date: _____

- 7** Compare and contrast the Pilgrims' settlements and how they lived at Leiden in Holland and at Plymouth in America. Support your answer with evidence from the text.

Read the text. Then answer the questions.

My Adventures Through Time

I was recently vacationing in a desert near Arizona. I stretched my long body over a warm rock to enjoy the heat from the sun. Just as I was about to nap, a fellow reptile scuttled by and extended himself across the rock near mine. We exchanged polite “hellos” but before long, began to swap stories of our travels. I went on for what must have been hours, for the sun moved across the sky and disappeared beneath the horizon while I was yet still describing my early years. Wide-eyed, the young comrade asked me my age. I responded with a chuckle and told him that the year I hatched, the calendar to which he referred had not yet been invented. I told the lizard of a meal of exotic berries that I had eaten, and of the strange, long sleep that ensued. I slept for thousands of years—yet when I awoke it seemed as if I’d not aged a day. The berries had somehow made me immune to the effects of time.

“Were you scared?” the young lizard asked, his tiny jaw nearly hitting the ground.

“At first, but I decided that an adventure through time was an adventure worth taking, so I set out to explore the new world into which I’d awoken.”

The young lizard begged me to tell him more of my adventures, and so I did.

In my early years, time as I knew it fell into two categories: day or night. Every morning the sun would ascend high into the sky and every night it would disappear beneath the earth.

“There were no clocks?” the young lizard asked.

I told him that my first memory of a time device was of a great sundial, built by the Egyptians. It divided the day into six segments and relied upon a shadow to reveal the time. Though I quite liked the way it looked, I was not a fan of precise methods to track time. Why did it matter if it was segment two or three of daylight? As long as I ate and slept, I was one content lizard.

The little lizard implored me to continue, and so I told him of how the Romans captured sundials from the Samnites and of how the Greeks built upon those inventions with their knowledge of geometry. Segments of time continued to be refined until Apollonius of Perga further developed the accuracy of the sundial by adding lines representative of hours. Eventually, engineers began to create smaller, portable sundials.

“But when did the sundial become a clock?” the young lizard asked impatiently.

I explained that the first time I noticed what I would call an actual “clock” had to have been around 1300 AD when I was traveling across Europe. I happened upon a beautiful monastery in England and found a rock with a splash of sunlight, perfect for an afternoon nap. I was startled when a loud gong blasted through the air; I quite almost lost my tail!

I scurried inside the tower to search out the source of the loud noise and found a large, iron-framed structure with weights that were connected to a massive object. I interviewed some of the local wildlife to learn all I could about the strange structure that bellowed every hour. It was odd to me how the humans made plans to meet and disassemble based on the number of gongs.

I thought the mechanical clock would be the pinnacle of timepieces—until I met Galileo. He added a feature I quite liked: a great pendulum swung back and forth to mark time. For a lizard like me, it was a fun form of entertainment. Oh how high the pendulum would swing! It was an exhilarating ride.

But alas, time went by and people once again began to prefer smaller clocks and watches. The little gadgets did not afford me an entertaining ride. I had to wait until the train came along in the 1800s.

Oh, how I loved the feeling of the wind blowing through my scales. The train riders were very particular about schedules. They wanted to know exactly when a train would arrive and depart. Train time became the anchor to which all the citizens in a city would set their clocks, at the sound of a whistle.

“Wow,” the small lizard yawned, his fatigue overtaking his enthusiasm. “So, how does time work today?” he asked.

“The tiniest fractions of seconds matter today; take air travel, for example. It relies on time that is accurate and fixed,” I told the young lizard, whose eyes were getting heavier by the moment. “I’ve even heard some say in this modern era that time does not actually exist.”

The young lizard began to snore.

“Whether we created time or time created us, I know one thing for sure,” I whispered. “It is time for bed.”

Name: _____ Date: _____

- 8** Select the option that **best** shows what the Latin root of **each** underlined word means, and write it in the correct blank.

Sentence 1: At the stadium, they implored their team to score once more and win the game.

The Latin root of implore is *plore*, which means _____.

to cry out or wail to take or seize to blame or accuse

Sentence 2: James packed a portable stove so he and his family could cook hot meals on their trip to the cabin.

The Latin root of portable is *port*, which means _____.

to carry to spend to lose

- 9** Read the sentence from the text.

“But when did the sundial become a clock?” the young lizard asked impatiently.

What does the use of the word impatiently suggest? Select **two** options.

- ☐ **A** The young lizard is eager.
- ☐ **B** The young lizard is rushed.
- ☐ **C** The young lizard is childish.
- ☐ **D** The young lizard is restless.
- ☐ **E** The young lizard is interested.
- ☐ **F** The young lizard is confused.

- 10** How does the author’s use of first-person narration help the reader better understand the text? Select **two** options.

- ☐ (A) by offering detailed historical information
- ☐ (B) by giving the narrator’s thoughts and feelings
- ☐ (C) by stressing the habits and preferences of reptilians
- ☐ (D) by highlighting the narrator’s unique perspective as a lizard
- ☐ (E) by explaining the narrator’s relationship with the young lizard

- 11** Read the sentence from the text.

He added a feature I quite like: a great pendulum swung back and forth to mark time.

The Latin root *pend* means “hang.” Based on this information, what does the word pendulum **most likely** mean?

- ☐ (A) a floating rope
- ☐ (B) a spinning wheel
- ☐ (C) a complex machine
- ☐ (D) a suspended weight

- 12** The following question has two parts. First, answer part A. Then, answer part B.

Part A: Select the statement that **best** explains how the narrator's point of view develops over the course of the text.

- (A)** In his early years, he is puzzled by time-keeping; later, he starts to understand it.
- (B)** In his early years, he is entertained by time-keeping; later, he is bored by it.
- (C)** In his early years, he is uninformed about time-keeping; later, he is shocked by it.
- (D)** In his early years, he is unappreciative of time-keeping; later, he is enthusiastic about it.

Part B: Which set of sentences from the text **best** supports your answer in part A?

- (A)** "I responded with a chuckle and told him that the year I hatched, the calendar to which he referred had not yet been invented."/"I was startled when a loud gong blasted through the air; I quite almost lost my tail!"
- (B)** "Though I quite liked the way it looked, I was not a fan of precise methods to track time."/"I thought the mechanical clock would be the pinnacle of timepieces—until I met Galileo."
- (C)** "It was odd to me how the humans made plans to meet and disassemble based on the number of gongs."/"But alas, time went by and people once again began to prefer smaller clocks and watches."
- (D)** "For a lizard like me, it was a fun form of entertainment."/"The little gadgets did not afford me an entertaining ride."

Name: _____ Date: _____

13 Which statement **best** summarizes the theme of the text?

- ☐ **A** Telling time requires education.
- ☐ **B** Keeping track of time yields success.
- ☐ **C** Traveling through time offers unique opportunities.
- ☐ **D** Society's awareness of time has increased over the years.

14 How does the author use the relationship between the narrator and the young lizard to develop the theme of the text? Provide at least **two** details from the text to support your answer.

Read the texts. Then answer the questions.

A City of Aztecs



The Aztec people, who lived hundreds of years ago in today's central Mexico, recorded their history with a pictographic and ideographic writing system. This means they did not use an alphabet to make words and sentences. Instead, they used pictures to represent ideas, and the documents they created looked somewhat like maps. The pictured ideas were connected to show a sequence of events.

The map-like quality of Aztec documents is appropriate for answering some important questions. Specifically, it helps us understand why the Aztecs chose to settle in the area of modern-day Mexico City. Archeological records show their ancestors came from north of the Colorado River, an area that is now part of the western United States. For unknown reasons, they began to move south. Around the year 1200 they arrived in the Valley of Mexico.

According to surviving documents, the Aztec priests told the people they must keep moving until they saw a special sign. The priests said the sign would be an eagle holding a snake in its mouth and sitting on a cactus. This sign would mark the place where they should build a glorious city. They searched for the sign for

more than 100 years. In 1325, a band of weary Aztecs was resting next to a large lake called Texcoco, when they saw the sign they had been waiting for. There they built Tenochtitlan, which means “near the cactus.”

The Aztecs started to build Tenochtitlan on a small island in the lake. As the city outgrew the island, more land was made by loading rafts with earth, sinking the rafts, and then piling more earth on top. Using this method of construction, the city continued to grow. They created a complex network of canals, floating gardens, and an excellent water transportation system. They also built great pyramids and temples by floating huge stone blocks through wide canals. The population grew and the edges of the city continued to push out into the lake.

When Spanish explorers came to Mexico in 1519, they were amazed by Tenochtitlan. Looking down from a mountain pass, they saw a gleaming city surrounded by a lake. It looked like a moat around a giant castle. They crossed the large bridge into one of the richest and most beautiful cities in the world.

Tenochtitlan, with its bustling markets and impressive pyramids, was home to over 250,000 people. This was twice the number of people in London or Rome, and three times more than in any city in Spain. Great bridges and aqueducts connected the city with the rest of the Aztec empire. People came from miles around to visit the markets and the brightly painted temples.

The pictographic records of the Aztecs are open to interpretation. However, the Spanish records about the Aztecs and Tenochtitlan are quite detailed, and there is little doubt about their meaning. The leader of the explorers, Hernando Cortés, wrote letters to the Spanish king to tell him that capturing Tenochtitlan would bring them great wealth and power.

For two years, Cortés formed alliances with other indigenous groups. He gathered a large army with many horses and cannons. Cortés and his troops besieged and conquered Tenochtitlan in 1621. The magnificent bridges and causeways leading to the island city made it fairly easy to cut off supplies. Cortés quickly tore down most of the Aztec buildings and monuments. The Aztec empire was destroyed. Over its ruins, they began to build a Spanish metropolis in the New World.

Today Mexico City is located where the ancient city of Tenochtitlan once stood. It is the capital of Mexico. There are few remaining signs to commemorate one of the most influential societies in Central America. However, in some important ways, modern Mexico preserves some of the former Aztec glory. Aztec art and architecture are still imitated throughout the country, and the Aztec symbol of the eagle perching on a cactus and holding a snake is now the national symbol of Mexico.

Play Ball

"Coach Gonzales asked me to be the new forward for the Ravens," Sonia muttered, slumping next to her best friend.

"All right!" cried Annie, the Ravens' goalie, raising her hand for a celebratory high-five. But Sonia's hand did not meet hers.

"What if I don't hear a teammate calling out a play, or the referee blowing a whistle on a foul?" asked Sonia, her apprehension obvious.

Annie gently turned Sonia's face toward her. "Do you remember third grade? You asked to sit up front so you could read Ms. Denton's lips more easily. Do you remember what you told her?"

"I remember," Sonia responded. "I said that I hear with my eyes."

"You'll do that on the field, too," Annie reassured Sonia. Just then, Coach Gonzales arrived.

After introducing Sonia and the other new players, the coach questioned his team, asking "What do we want to do?"

The returning players fervently cried, "Win!"

"How?" the coach asked.

"Play hard!" the players hollered in unison.

"And . . ." Coach Gonzales held his hand to his ear.

"Play fair!" The field erupted in applause from players old and new.

As a strenuous practice concluded, the coach gathered his exhausted players around him. "Team," he said, "if we want to succeed, we have to be good students of the game. I want you all to strive to learn something new about soccer. Watch a video of a World Cup championship, or read about the game's history, or ask your parents about the best player they've ever seen. You never know what will be an advantage during a game." Ducking her head as the redness of her cheeks intensified, Sonia couldn't help but feel that her new coach was speaking directly to her.

But she was too exhausted from practice, and she went to bed ashamed that she hadn't followed the coach's advice. Around dawn, Sonia dreamed that she and Annie were walking to their school soccer field. The bleachers had disappeared, though, and in their place was a large enclosure surrounded by a stone wall covered

with intricate carvings of running athletes. One runner looked exactly like Coach Gonzales, but not in his customary cap, shirt, and jeans. Instead, he wore a headband and strange-looking shorts with leather guards tied at his hips.

The soccer field had transformed into a narrow, dirt court, with wide sloping walls on either side. A black leather ball rested at the center of the court. Hundreds of spectators stood by the wall, all wearing colorful garments constructed of animal hides, with feathers, beads, and strands of gold or silver woven into extraordinary head-dresses.

Suddenly, the figures on the carving began to move, forming two distinct teams around the ball. The crowd cheered as the teams began to play—one player leaping to hit the ball with his shoulder, and another knocking it with his leather-padded hip. As in soccer, the players never touched the ball with their hands. But Sonia was astonished to see that, unlike in soccer, the ball never touched the ground.

Sonia turned to Annie, “What game is this?”

“Coach Gonzales told us about it,” said Annie. “It’s an ancient game called *ullamaliztli*. The Aztecs played it on a court exactly like this.” Annie’s excitement grew as she continued, “The Aztecs built the largest court in their capital city, Tenochtitlan, right next to a great pyramid that honored their gods.”

Sonia watched the game, scrutinizing every detail. Noticing two stone-carved rings on either side of mid-court, she said to Annie, “They’re trying to knock the ball through those rings!” She also observed the players using complex hand signals to communicate with each other. Perhaps they couldn’t hear each other over the crowd noise. Sonia waved her arms wildly at the player who looked like Coach Gonzales. “Play hard! Play fair!” she yelled at him.

The coach was giving Sonia a thumbs-up, when a teammate kicked the ball to him. The coach leapt up and headed the ball through a ring for a score.

“Play hard, play fair, win!” Sonia was shouting as her father woke her up.

“You have practice before school today,” he said, looking at Sonia so she could read his lips. “Sounds like you’ve already started.”

“Oh, no, I was dreaming about this cool game,” said Sonia, laughing. “It wasn’t soccer, but you never know what will be an advantage during a game.”

Answer these questions about “A City of Aztecs.”

- 15** The following question has two parts. First, answer part A. Then, answer part B.

Part A: The author describes different kinds of written evidence that historians use to answer questions about the history of Tenochtitlan. How does the author show the main difference between Aztec and Spanish records?

- (A)** by explaining how the Aztec evidence was destroyed, while the Spanish evidence was well-preserved
- (B)** by explaining how the Aztecs represented ideas with pictures, while the Spanish represented ideas with words
- (C)** by explaining how the Aztec records were written on stones, while the Spanish records were written on paper
- (D)** by explaining how the Aztec records were written by priests, while the Spanish records were written by soldiers

Part B: Which excerpt from the text **best** supports your answer in part A?

- (A)** “The map-like quality of Aztec documents is appropriate for answering some important questions. Specifically, it helps us understand why the Aztecs chose to settle in the area of modern-day Mexico City.”
- (B)** “According to surviving documents, the Aztec priests told the people they must keep moving until they saw a special sign. The priests said the sign would be an eagle holding a snake in its mouth and sitting on a cactus.”
- (C)** “The pictographic records of the Aztecs are open to interpretation. However, the Spanish records about the Aztecs and Tenochtitlan are quite detailed, and there is little doubt about their meaning.”
- (D)** “There are few remaining signs to commemorate one of the most influential societies in Central America. However, in some important ways, modern Mexico preserves some of the former Aztec glory.”

- 16** Read the sentences from the text.

As the city outgrew the island, more land was made by loading rafts with earth, sinking the rafts, and then piling more earth on top. Using this method of construction, the city continued to grow.

The origin of the word construction is the Latin root *struct*, meaning “build.” Which word **most likely** has the same root as construction?

- (A)** constant
- (B)** manufacture
- (C)** struck
- (D)** structure

- 17** The text says that the city of Tenochtitlan outgrew the small island in the middle of Lake Texcoco. How did the Aztecs solve this problem? Use evidence from the text to support your response.

Answer these questions about “Play Ball.”

- 18** The following question has two parts. First, answer part A. Then, answer part B.

Part A: Which statement **best** describes how Sonia feels at the beginning of the text?

- (A)** She is worried that she will not do well on the soccer team because she dislikes the coach.
- (B)** She is worried that she will not do well on the soccer team because she listens with her eyes.
- (C)** She is worried that she will not do well on the soccer team because she cannot rely on her friend.
- (D)** She is worried that she will not do well on the soccer team because she is not a good student of the game.

Part B: Which excerpt from the text **best** supports your answer in part A?

- (A)** “‘All right!’ cried Annie, the Ravens’ goalie, raising her hand for a celebratory high-five. But Sonia’s hand did not meet hers.”
- (B)** “‘What if I don’t hear a teammate calling out a play, or the referee blowing a whistle on a foul?’ asked Sonia, her apprehension obvious.”
- (C)** “Ducking her head as the redness of her cheeks intensified, Sonia couldn’t help but feel that her new coach was speaking directly to her.”
- (D)** “But she was too exhausted from practice, and she went to bed ashamed that she hadn’t followed the coach’s advice.”

- 19** Read the sentence from the text.

The bleachers had disappeared, though, and in their place was a large enclosure surrounded by a stone wall covered with intricate carvings of running athletes.

The prefix *en-* means “into.” What does enclosure mean?

- (A)** a space that is closed in
- (B)** a space that is closed again
- (C)** a space that is often closed
- (D)** a space that is partly closed

- 20** Coach Gonzales urges his players to be “good students of the game.” How does Sonia follow his advice, and what does she learn that could help her during a soccer game? Use details from the text to support your response.

The text below needs revision. Read the text. Then answer the questions.

My (1) restaurant specializes in pasta. Pasta is an ancient food, but where did it come from? Marco Polo, (2) supposedly brought pasta back to Italy from China in 1295. But 25 years before he returned to China, several pasta (3) were mentioned in printed Italian recipes. So there must have been pasta in Italy before (4) time. Other evidence points to pasta as a food that came from ancient Greece or from Arab lands during the fifth century.

At our restaurant, we have (5) filled with notebooks of special pasta recipes, including some for national holidays. For (6), we create red and blue pasta with white cheese. Now that's an interesting way to celebrate the Fourth of July and the (7) of American history!

Do you have a favorite pasta dish? Mine is a recipe that calls for three different kinds of (8). My brother's favorite dish, (9) is made with layers of flat pasta and lots of cheese. In the hot summer (10), we like to make cold pasta salads with lots of vegetables. We love pasta all year round!

22 Which answer should go in blank (1)?

- ☐ A families
- ☐ B family's
- ☐ C familys'

23 Which answer should go in blank (2)?

- ☐ A an Italian Explorer
- ☐ B an Italian explorer
- ☐ C an Italian explorer,

24 Which answer should go in blank (3)?

- ☐ A dishes
- ☐ B dishies
- ☐ C dishs

25 Which answer should go in blank (4)?

- ☐ A Marco Polos
- ☐ B Marco Polo's
- ☐ C Marco Polos'

26 Which answer should go in blank (5)?

- ☐ A shelf
- ☐ B shelves
- ☐ C shelves

27 Which answer should go in blank (6)?

- ☐ (A) Independence day
- ☐ (B) independence day
- ☐ (C) Independence Day

28 Which answer should go in blank (7)?

- ☐ (A) hero
- ☐ (B) heros
- ☐ (C) heroes

29 Which answer should go in blank (8)?

- ☐ (A) fish
- ☐ (B) fishes
- ☐ (C) fishies

30 Which answer should go in blank (9)?

- ☐ (A) (lasagna)
- ☐ (B) Lasagna
- ☐ (C) lasagna,

31 Which answer should go in blank (10)?

- ☐ (A) months
- ☐ (B) months'
- ☐ (C) Months



Explanatory Performance Task

Task:

Even thousands of years later, ancient civilizations continue to fascinate and inspire us. It is always interesting to imagine what your life would have been like if you lived in the ancient world. Many great accomplishments from those days still influence how we live today.

For this task, you will be writing an explanatory article related to the topic of ancient civilizations. Before you write your article, you will review three sources that provide information about the first emperor of China, the Silk Road, and the legend of the Hanging Gardens.

After you have reviewed these sources, you will answer some questions about them. Briefly scan the sources and the three questions that follow. Then, go back and read the sources carefully to gain the information you will need to answer the questions and write an article.

In Part 2, you will write an explanatory article on a topic related to the sources.

Directions for Part 1

You will now read several sources. You can re-examine any of the sources as often as you like.

Research Questions:

After reading the research sources, use the remaining time in Part 1 to answer three questions about them. Your answers to these questions will be scored. Also, your answers will help you think about the research sources you have read, which should help you write your explanatory article. You may refer to the sources when you think it would be helpful.

You may also refer to your notes. Answer the questions in the space provided.

Source #1: The First Emperor of China

Between 426 and 221 BCE, China was a very unstable place to live. The Zhou dynasty (pronounced “Joe”) had ended. It seemed that every state in the country wanted to take control. This time became known as “The Warring States” period because there was constant fighting among the seven states. In the year 221 BCE, a man named Zheng from the Qin dynasty (pronounced “Chin”) was in a perfect position to conquer all of the other states and unify China as a whole. Once he accomplished this, he renamed himself Shi Huang or “first emperor” and began his eleven-year reign over China.

Shi Huang came from a strong empire. The Qin were allies with the previous rulers of the Zhou dynasty. While the Zhou were still in power, they rewarded the Qin with extra wealth and even improved their noble status. This helped the Qin gain more power over the other states. Their location was also a key factor in their success. With mountains on one side, their lands were easy to defend. None of the other empires were close by, so the Qin had plenty of room to roam and collect resources. The Qin were also known for their extreme skills in battle. They had a lot of practice fighting during “The Warring States” period and they were willing to do whatever it took to win a battle. All of these factors put Shi Huang in the perfect position to conquer a nation. He had already been ruling as King of the Qin empire for years when he became the first emperor of China.

Although Shi Huang’s reign was rather short, only a little over ten years, he accomplished a great deal. His biggest achievement was simply that he brought together such a large group of people. Before this point, China had never in history been united as one nation. To make this work, Shi Huang changed the entire system of government that had been in place for years. He wanted to eliminate an upper and lower class by limiting the power of the rich. He also freed farmers from their working contracts so they could make a living for themselves. As a result, Shi Huang expected everyone within China to look out for everyone else. He demanded that all people take responsibility for the actions of others. If one person saw his neighbor break the law, it was his duty to report this. If he didn’t, he would be punished too. Shi Huang believed that it was important to take pride in your work. Anyone considered to be lacking in value was assigned to work on one of Shi Huang’s building projects to make up for it. He strongly believed that if a person had nothing to give to the state, then he had no value at all.

Along with giving China a sense of unity and pride, Shi Huang was a very artistic man. Under his rule, he ordered the Great Wall of China to be built. This is the most famous structure in all of China. It spans thousands of miles across the country. Shi Huang wanted to have a road linking China's cities to the countryside. He also designed an elaborate tomb filled with an army of Terracotta warriors. Approximately 8,000 life-size statutes were buried with him in his tomb.

Shi Huang also had an impact on education. During his rule, he strongly opposed reading and learning. He wanted to keep the people of China uneducated so that they would follow his rules without question. Many books were burned around this time, and even teaching was banned in China. The only subjects that could be taught had to be approved by Shi Huang; more often than not, the subjects centered on his empire.

The people of China hated the policies Shi Huang had put in place. When he died mysteriously while traveling in 210 BCE, the prime minister tried to hide the news from the public as long as possible. He even brought the emperor's body back to the capital to try to convince the people of China that he was still alive and able to rule. People finally revolted and the Qin authority was defeated four years later.

Although many people of China disagreed with most of Shi Huang's rules, it was hard to deny what he had accomplished. Overall, his policies improved China as a nation. He had created a strong central government, and it ruled over a very obedient group of people. He had created a large army and had organized the government so that it could conduct business efficiently. Some of his organizational models are still a standard for Chinese government today. Although his impact is not always considered positive, it has been lasting in some regards.

Source #2: The Silk Road

The Silk Road was made up of a series of pathways that linked China to the rest of the ancient world. It was first established during the Han dynasty. This was one of China's longest lasting dynasties, from 206 BCE to 220 CE. There were many possible routes that travelers could use. These paths stretched all the way across Mesopotamia (modern day Iraq and Iran) into Africa and even into parts of Europe. Because the Silk Road covered so much land, the routes were not well cared for, which made traveling difficult. Merchants trying to reach faraway lands risked severe weather conditions and the possibility of being robbed by bandits. What influenced so many travelers to brave these dangers? They were spurred on by the promise of unique goods that couldn't be found anywhere else in the world.

Ancient Romans and Greeks were extremely fond of silk. As soon as they discovered that it came from China, they began to send their merchants there to make trades. They referred to China as Seres, which means "the land where silk came from." In ancient Rome, both men and women wore silk clothing. It was a very popular item and became a sign of luxury and wealth. Because the demand for silk was so high, it was also expensive. Only the Chinese knew where it came from and how to make it. They worked hard to keep this knowledge a secret. For a while, Ancient Romans believed that silk had to be combed out of trees. It took hundreds of years for them to discover that silk was actually spun by silk worms.

Although the Silk Road was named after silk because it was the most popular product, merchants traded many other goods along with it. Merchants often set up trading posts right along the roads. Gold, silver, ivory, iron, cotton, wool, glass, salt, spices, and tea were all traded on the Silk Road. Fruits, flowers, horses, ceramics, furs, and even musical instruments were traded too. Some of these items even became more important than silk. Paper is a great example. Paper was invented in China during the Han dynasty, and it eventually became much more useful than silk. Another great contribution was gunpowder, invented years later during the Tang dynasty. Each of these inventions became extremely important and even influenced history.

The Silk Road created an important link between major civilizations in the east and west. Having new commercial goods available helped many economies to grow. At the same time, these groups gained access to new and foreign ideas. While traveling between continents, merchants shared their religions, philosophy, and languages with other people they met and with whom they traded. They also shared creative ideas about art, technology and architecture with one another.

Chinese styles of Martial arts, calligraphy (the art of writing), tile-making, and painting inspired other artists across the continent. Every part of life was shared between different groups of people with the help of the Silk Road. China's capital city of Chang'an became a center for this cultural exchange of ideas. At this point in history, it was also the largest city on earth. Many traders were drawn to it in hopes of experiencing a variety of cultures.

Along with goods and ideas, disease also traveled along the Silk Road. When the bubonic plague of 542 CE spread, the Silk Road was closed and the merchants were forced to use various sea routes to continue trading. This was not the only time that the Silk Road would be shut down and reopened. Closures occurred many times throughout the centuries. This eventually led to a weakening of China's reign as the sole provider of silk. When civilizations found out about China's secret silkworms, other silk industries emerged. This meant that other empires no longer relied on China to get silk to their region. They were free to limit trading any time they wanted to. Like the Silk Road, China's silk industry had its ups and downs. But no other silk throughout the continent ever matched the quality of the silk that China could produce.

Source #3: The Legend of the Hanging Gardens

The Hanging Gardens of Babylon are considered one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. Many believe that they were built in the city of Babylon around 605 BCE by King Nebuchadnezzar, who built them for his wife, Amyitis. She was unfamiliar with her new surroundings in Babylon and longed for home. It didn't help that she came from a lush, green land filled with mountains. The flat desert-like terrain in this new city just did not compare to it.

Babylon, however, was described by ancient historians as one of the greatest and richest cities of its time. The walls, large and strong, made some lists of Ancient Wonders simply because of their overwhelming size. Babylon also had many temples and palaces with gold statues. These artifacts from the city show that the King was wealthy enough to be able to create artificial gardens in the middle of a desert. The trouble is that there are only a few records describing the gardens as actually existing in Babylon. It is quite possible that the gardens were merely a legend.

In the past century, archaeologists have tried to find proof that the gardens did exist. Unfortunately, instead of finding answers, the search has only led to more questions. For example, how would the gardens have been properly watered? Babylon received very little rainfall throughout the year. Any living garden would need a constant supply of water to survive. While Babylon was built along the Euphrates River, the gardens sat high up on rising terraces. In order for water to reach any plants hanging over these terraces, it would have to be pumped up to the highest terrace and then let down over the plants like rain. Without the help of modern engines, this was no easy task. Laborers probably had to work constantly to haul and dump water above the gardens.

Another issue with the gardens was the material from which they were made. Like the Tower of Babel, most structures in Babylon were made from clay bricks. Clay worked well in the desert because there was so little rain to dissolve the bricks. However, it would have been nearly impossible for the hanging gardens to have been built from these same bricks with the amount of water that was constantly being used. When wet, the bricks would crumble and break, leaving a less than sturdy structure.

Written records are also unclear about the existence of the Hanging Gardens. In fact, not all historians have included them in their descriptions of the impressive city. The gardens were so rare and unlike any other structures during that time that some historians doubt their existence. The King of Babylonia himself left them off his accomplishments. This seems strange for such a proud ruler. It is also possible that some historians may have been confused about the location of the Hanging Gardens. There are records from Greek scholars that describe similar gardens in the city of Nineveh, only 350 miles away from Babylon. These scholars writing about unique gardens would have been recounting events that took place hundreds of years before they were alive. It would have been easy for them to have made a mistake. If they had, that would mean that the gardens were in fact real and had actually been built somewhere in Mesopotamia.

There is no way to know if the gardens existed for sure. An earthquake in the second century BCE would have destroyed any possible remains that might have been left. Even without any evidence, the story of the Hanging Gardens has been fascinating people for centuries. The mystery surrounding their existence only adds to the amazement. The story of the gardens will certainly continue to inspire people well into the future.

Name: _____ Date: _____

- 1** Source #1 describes Shi Huang's philosophy that keeping his citizens uneducated would create a better empire. Select **two** sentences from Source #2 that contradict this belief. Circle your answers.

China's capital city of Chang'an became a center for this cultural exchange of ideas.

Along with goods and ideas, disease also traveled along the Silk Road.

This eventually led to a weakening in China's reign as the sole provider of silk.

Having new commercial goods available helped many economies to grow.

At the same time, these groups gained access to completely new and foreign ideas.

- 2** Explain what Source #1 and Source #3 say about the importance of historical records. Provide **one** piece of evidence from **each** source. Identify the source of each piece of information by title or number.

Name: _____ Date: _____

- 3** The invention of paper in ancient times has had lasting effects on society. Provide **one** piece of evidence from **two** different sources and explain how each piece of evidence supports this claim. Identify the source for each piece of evidence by title or number.

Directions for Part 2

You will now look at your sources, take notes, and plan, draft, revise, and edit your article. You may use your notes and refer to the sources. Now read your assignment and the information about how your explanatory article will be scored; then begin your work.

Your assignment:

Now that you have completed research on a variety of ancient civilizations, the journalism club sponsor has asked you to write an explanatory article about the ways people lived in ancient times for the next issue of the school newspaper. The audience for your article will be other students, teachers, and parents.

Using more than one source, develop a thesis/controlling idea about how the people of the past lived or what was most important to them. Once you have a thesis/controlling idea, select the most relevant information to support your thesis/controlling idea. Then, write a multi-paragraph explanatory article explaining your thesis/controlling idea. Clearly organize your article and elaborate on your ideas. Develop your ideas clearly and use your own words, except when quoting directly from the sources. Be sure to reference the source title or number when quoting or paraphrasing details or facts from the sources.

Explanatory Article Scoring:

Your explanatory article will be scored using the following:

- 1. Organization/purpose:** How well did you state your thesis/controlling idea and maintain your thesis/controlling idea with a logical progression of ideas from beginning to end? How well did you narrow your thesis/controlling idea so you can develop and elaborate the conclusion? How consistently did you use a variety of transitions? How effective was your introduction and your conclusion?
- 2. Evidence/elaboration:** How well did you integrate relevant and specific information from the sources? How well did you elaborate your ideas? How clearly did you state ideas using precise language that is appropriate for your audience and purpose?
- 3. Conventions:** How well did you follow the rules of grammar usage, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling?

Now begin work on your explanatory article. Manage your time carefully so that you can plan, write, revise, and edit the final draft of your article. Write your response on a separate sheet of paper.



Answer Key

Name: _____

Question	Correct Answer	Content Focus	CCSS	Complexity
1	B, C, D	Personification	L.6.5a	DOK 2
2	D	Latin Roots	L.6.4b	DOK 1
3A	D	Text Structure: Compare and Contrast	RI.6.5	DOK 2
3B	A	Text Structure: Compare and Contrast/ Text Evidence	RI.6.5/ RI.6.1	DOK 2
4A	C	Text Structure: Problem and Solution	RI.6.5	DOK 2
4B	B	Text Structure: Problem and Solution/ Text Evidence	RI.6.5/ RI.6.1	DOK 2
5	C	Greek and Latin Prefixes	L.6.4b	DOK 1
6	see below	Text Feature: Timeline	RI.6.7	DOK 1
7	see below	Text Structure: Compare and Contrast	RI.6.5	DOK 2
8	see below	Latin Roots	L.6.4b	DOK 1
9	A, E	Connotation and Denotation	L.6.5c	DOK 2
10	B, D	Point of View	RL.6.6	DOK 3
11	D	Latin Roots	L.6.4b	DOK 1
12A	D	Point of View	RL.6.6	DOK 3
12B	B	Point of View/Text Evidence	RL.6.6/ RL.6.1	DOK 3
13	D	Theme	RL.6.2	DOK 3
14	see below	Theme	RL.6.2	DOK 3
15A	B	Text Structure: Compare and Contrast	RI.6.5	DOK 2
15B	C	Text Structure: Compare and Contrast/ Text Evidence	RI.6.5/ RI.6.1	DOK 2
16	D	Latin Roots	L.6.4b	DOK 1
17	see below	Text Structure: Problem and Solution	RI.6.5	DOK 2
18A	B	Point of View	RL.6.6	DOK 3
18B	B	Point of View/Text Evidence	RL.6.6/ RL.6.1	DOK 3
19	A	Greek and Latin Prefixes	L.6.4b	DOK 1
20	see below	Theme	RL.6.2	DOK 3

Question	Correct Answer	Content Focus	CCSS	Complexity
21	see below	Compare Across Texts	W.6.9	DOK 4
22	B	Possessive Nouns	L.6.1	DOK 1
23	C	Appositives	L.6.2a	DOK 1
24	A	Singular and Plural Nouns	L.6.1	DOK 1
25	B	Possessive Nouns	L.6.1	DOK 1
26	C	Singular and Plural Nouns	L.6.1	DOK 1
27	C	Kinds of Nouns	L.6.1	DOK 1
28	C	More Plural Nouns	L.6.1	DOK 1
29	A	More Plural Nouns	L.6.1	DOK 1
30	C	Appositives	L.6.2a	DOK 1
31	A	Kinds of Nouns	L.6.1	DOK 1

Comprehension: Selected Response 3A, 3B, 4A, 4B, 6, 10, 12A, 12B, 13, 15A, 15B, 18A, 18B	/16	%
Comprehension: Constructed Response 7, 14, 17, 20, 21	/12	%
Vocabulary 1, 2, 5, 8, 9, 11, 16, 19	/16	%
English Language Conventions 22-31	/10	%
Total Unit Assessment Score	/54	%

- 6 Students should write the following numbers: 2, 1, 3, 6, 4, 5.
- 7 **2-point response:** Living in Leiden allowed some religious freedom, but the Pilgrims could not govern themselves. They had to follow Dutch laws. They also could not make enough money to support themselves. In Plymouth, they had complete religious freedom and were able to govern themselves. But they faced other problems, including a lack of shelter and lack of food.
- 8 Students should write “to cry out or wail” for *plore* and “to carry” for *port*.
- 14 **2-point response:** The author uses the relationship between the narrator and the young lizard to explain how time keeping has changed throughout history. The young lizard is interested and enthusiastic, and the narrator just so happens to know a lot about the subject through his time travels. The young lizard’s curiosity drives the story forward, allowing the narrator to reveal his unique experiences and knowledge. Through the narrator’s tale, the author shows how timekeeping started with the sundial, built by the Egyptians, and advanced to more precise forms throughout the years, like clocks and trains.
- 17 **2-point response:** The Aztecs made their island city bigger by using rafts piled up with earth. They let the rafts sink along the shores of the island. When the piles of rafts and earth rose above the water surface, the island became larger. They also built bridges to connect the island to the rest of the Aztec empire.

- 20 **2-point response:** Coach Gonzales encourages his players to be “good students of the game,” noting, “You never know what will be an advantage during a game.” In her dream, Sonia notices how the players of the ancient game of *ullamalitzli* use complex hand signals to communicate with each other, rather than words. Since Sonia hears with her eyes, this is an unexpected advantage for her. She learns that it is most important to play hard and to play fair, as Coach Gonzales encouraged his players to do earlier. Sonia even tells Coach Gonzales the same thing when he is playing in her dream.
- 21 **4-point response:** Many forms of evidence from the past can provide opportunities for learning about ancient civilizations. For example, “A City of Aztecs” discusses the pictographic writing system of the Aztecs. Instead of using an alphabet to make words and sentences, the Aztecs used pictures to represent thoughts and ideas. “Play Ball” also mentions the carvings of the Aztecs. Images like these help us understand why the Aztecs settled in modern-day Mexico City and built Tenochtitlan on the island in Lake Texcoco.

Other forms of evidence the Aztecs left behind include the physical remains of cities. The Aztecs constructed a network of canals, floating gardens, and a water transportation system. Both texts also reference the great pyramids and temples built by the Aztecs. In “Play Ball,” Annie tells Sonia how the Aztecs built the largest *ullamalitzli* court in Tenochtitlan next to a great pyramid to honor their gods. The story also references the elaborate costumes the Aztecs wore.

Some forms of evidence are more reliable than others. As “A City of Aztecs” mentions, the pictographic writing system leaves room for interpretation. The Spanish left behind many written accounts using words, rather than pictures, so there is little doubt as to their meaning. Hernando Cortés, who led the exploration, wrote to the Spanish King about the Aztecs and their wealthy society. Written accounts like this are very reliable.

Explanatory Performance Task				
Question	Answer	CCSS	Complexity	Score
1	see below	RI.6.1, RI.6.2, RI.6.7, RI.6.9 W.6.2a-f, W.6.4, W.6.7 L.6.1, L.6.2	DOK 3	/1
2	see below		DOK 3	/2
3	see below		DOK 3	/2
Explanatory Article	see below		DOK 4	/4 [P/O] /4 [E/E] /2 [C]
Total Score				/15

- Students should circle “China’s capital city of Chang’an became a center for this cultural exchange of ideas” and “At the same time, these groups gained access to completely new and foreign ideas.”
- 2-point response:** Many things were written down and recorded in ancient history, so it can be hard to identify whether a historical record is entirely accurate. According to “The Legend of the Hanging Gardens,” historians have heard mention of a beautiful garden in the desert, but the accounts aren’t always consistent. Archaeologists have even attempted to find it buried but haven’t been successful. In “The First Emperor of China,” Shi Huang left behind actual objects to confirm records about him. The most important are the Great Wall of China and the Terracotta army he had built and then placed in his tomb after he died.
- 2-point response:** “The Silk Road” first mentions the existence of paper as it developed from trade along the Silk Road. This being an ancient Chinese invention, it contributed greatly to Chinese culture. The author even states that it became more useful than silk, which the route was named after. “The First Emperor of China” discusses this in more detail while describing Shi Huang’s specific viewpoints about paper and its connections to learning and having knowledge. His rule to ban many books really showed just how important paper had become. Shi Huang believed that access to books led to better-educated people, something he wanted to avoid.

10-point anchor paper: Ancient people are a lot like people today because they placed a lot of importance on material items. However, they had different reasons to value their possessions than we do today. At the height of the Han dynasty when the Silk Road was its busiest, many different objects were traded. Most people wanted to get their hands on silk, a product that was thought to only be found in China. Many other goods were also traded along the Silk Road, whether it was a specific metal, fabric, fur, or fruit. People seemed to enjoy variety, according to records of the city of Chang’an at this time. In “The Silk Road,” the author states that people used the material objects they traded to share their cultures as well.

Another reason why people might have placed high values on material objects in ancient times was because they used these items to be remembered in history. Many leaders wanted to be remembered long after they were gone. Thousands of years ago, there were very few ways of doing that. In “The Hanging Gardens of Babylon,” the King tried a few different options. The author states that he wrote down his biggest achievements on stone tablets, built a miraculously strong-looking city with thick walls, and filled his temples with gold statues. Shi Huang, who united the people of China in “The First Emperor of China,” also chose to build structures in order to be remembered. He began working to build the Great Wall of China during his reign. He also made a point to publish books about his reign as emperor so that people would never forget. Shi Huang’s largest collection of material possessions, his tomb with thousands of Terracotta soldiers, is a famous attraction to this day.

A third reason ancient people valued material possessions is because they gave their civilization an advantage. In "The Silk Road," the author describes how when silk first became popular it could only be found in China. Ancient Greeks and Romans traveled far to get it. During ancient civilizations, people did not purchase things with money in the same way that we do today. Instead, they traded. The more exotic an item someone had, the more they could ask for it in return. The Chinese realized how valuable silk was so they made an effort to keep its origin a secret for hundreds of years. The invention of paper gave people the ability to educate each other, and without gunpowder, the history of the world might be totally different. Without its advantage, the battles fought over the last two thousand years might have ended differently.

In ancient times, having access to new materials helped ancient people to survive and live longer lives. The more objects ancient people discovered in nature or even invented, the more knowledge they gained about the world. Without these, we would not be where we are today.