Do Humans Still Settle for the Same Reasons Today?

Students will evaluate the geography aspects of first Afro-Eurasian and Meso-American civilizations and compare it to contemporary life. They will question and answer whether or not the human race still responds to geography the same as early humans. The importance of this inquiry is to show the progression and influence of geographical features on human life.

Supporting Questions

1. Why did ancient humans settle?
2. What factors contribute to where modern day people choose to live?
Do Humans Still Settle for the Same Reasons Today?

<table>
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<th>Inquiry Standard</th>
<th>Supporting Question 1</th>
<th>Supporting Question 2</th>
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<td><strong>SS.G.2.6-8.LC:</strong> Explain how humans and their environment affect one another.</td>
<td>Why did ancient humans settle?</td>
<td>What factors contribute to where modern day people choose to live?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SS.G.3.6-8.LC:</strong> Explain how environmental characteristics impact human migration and settlement.</td>
<td><strong>Formative Performance Task</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>RH.6-8.1:</strong> Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.</td>
<td>Identify, by listing the factors that contributed to the development of early agrarian communities.</td>
<td>Students will evaluate an excerpt of the article, “Why People Live Where They Live”, by Richard Florida, in order to conclude which factors contribute to where modern day people choose to live.</td>
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<td><strong>RH.6-8.4:</strong> Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.</td>
<td><strong>Featured Sources</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Students will preface this inquiry by posing these questions to their family: “What made you decide to live in Berwyn?”, “What are some challenges that they face in Berwyn”, and “What reasons made you choose this town?”. They will then record their conversations via Screencastify (3-5 minutes), and write a transcript from the conversation. Students will bring their stories the next day to share with their group members.</strong></td>
<td>Source A: Agriculture Emerges (5,000-500 B.C.E.) Source B: The Olmec World Source C: Olmec Map Source D: The Fertile Crescent</td>
<td>Source A: England 2015 Analysis Source B: England Figure 13 Source C: England Graphic 1 Source D: England Graphic 2 Source E: England Figure 3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Summative Performance Task

**ARGUMENT**
Students will create an argumentative product to answer the compelling question, “Do Humans Still Move for the Same Reasons Today?”

**EXTENSION**
Students will take their claims, evidence and judgments to create a short 5-10 minute documentary using Screencastify.

### Taking Informed Action

**UNDERSTAND**
Students will research some geographical, social or economic challenges (pick one problem from one category) that affect their city and its residents, and they may also sway future residents from residing there as well.

**ASSESS**
Students will compare Berwyn’s challenges to those of the Olmecs. They will also brainstorm and list solutions for Berwyn.

**ACTION**
Students will meet with a Berwyn public official to present a challenge and a possible solution to this threat.
Overview

Inquiry Description

Students will evaluate the geography aspects of first Afro-Eurasian and Meso-American civilizations and compare it to contemporary life. They will question and answer whether or not the human race still responds to geography the same as early humans. The importance of this inquiry is to show the progression and influence of geographical features on human life.

Structure

The formative tasks, that will be assigned, were chosen to help students identify their strengths and weakness and help teachers monitor the progress of students. The sources, that have been chosen for this inquiry, are a mix of primary and secondary sources. They were selected based by the credibility of the source.
The staging of the compelling question provides the students an opportunity to understand why the question is intellectually rigorous and relevant to students. It incorporates their family’s own narrative, it proves it is a question not easily explained and that there are many different factors for migration.
Supporting Question 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Supporting Question</th>
<th>Why did ancient humans settle?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Formative Performance Task</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Source B: The Olmec World</td>
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<td>Source C: Olmec Map</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Source D: The Fertile Crescent</td>
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Students will determine the factors that contributed to human settlement in the ancient Mesopotamian region and in contemporary human settlement.

SS.G.3.6-8.LC. Explain how environmental characteristics impact human migration and settlement.

SS.G.2.6-8.LC. Explain how humans and their environment affect one another

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.1 Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies

Formative Performance Task

Students will be provided with a graphic organizer that they will have to complete. It is the student’s goal to identify the factors that they have identified during their research of early agrarian community in the Mesopotamian region.


**Supporting Question 1**

**Featured Source A**  
Agriculture Emerges (5,000-500 B.C.E.)

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**Excerpt**

**Compelling Question: Is Where You Live The Best Place for Your Family?**

**Supporting Geography: Why Did Hunter-Gatherers Stop Moving?**

**Directions:** Use the provided atlas with the map above to help you answer these questions.

1. Identify at least two areas in the world where humans first settled. (Atlas page 9)

2. Identify some landforms that are around those areas you identified in #1. (page 11)

3. Discuss possible theories why humans choose those places to settle and start communities. Write some ideas down to share with the class. Make sure you have some evidence from the map to justify your theories.

**Source:**
The Olmec World

Compelling Question: Is Where You Live The Best Place For Your Family?

Supporting Question: How Did The Olmecs Overcome the Challenges of the Land?

...The greater part of Olmec history took place in the small area. To the north the ocean is a fixed boundary. On the east the enormous swamps are located. To the south lie the mountains and to the west are the rivers. It is true that culture can overcome geographical barriers, but the Olmec were definitely a coastal culture.

To the west the rivers of San Juan and Papaloapan and the lakes connected by the Limón and the Cacique (ke-seq) rivers form a region practically covered by water or at least by swamps, which not only make expansion difficult but admit few possibilities for an economy. On the east the same is true, since the enormous swamps of Tabasco make agriculture impossible without drainage of the swamps, a feat never achieved by Pre-Hispanic cultures. It is only now that works of this type are being undertaken.

The area is limited, but possesses a basic consistency broken only by the mountainous mass of the Tuxtlas (Toos-la) which rises from the plains. The Olmec region is no more than 300 feet above sea level. Therefore, it is all hot country, an ample tropical coastal plain formed by alluvial land containing no stone.

Since the land is flat except in the Tuxtlas and in minor spots, flooding is a peril when the great rivers of the area overflow. The region possesses an enormous volume of water—the largest in Mesoamerica. Probably nowhere else in Mesoamerica did rivers so dominant culture as here.

The Olmec region possesses, like others in the ancient world, not one but several great rivers, on the other hand its type of rainfall, soil, and vegetation are entirely different. While other ancient world civilizations, like Mesopotamia, had to struggle against the dryness of the land and therefore their great problem was irrigation, the Olmecs had to fight against the jungle and against the water. Their greatest problem was the vegetation, which when not controlled suffocated all the serious attempts at agriculture, as did the floods.

Source:


Source:

KEEP IN MIND YOUR COMPELLING AND SUPPORTING QUESTIONS.

Compelling Question: Is Where You Live The Best Place For Your Family?

Supporting Question: How Did The Olmecs Overcome the Challenges of the Land?
Focus Questions

Directions: Use the map to answer the Focus Questions by restating the question while using complete sentences. When answering question #3, please use evidence from the map to support your answer. Use the atlas provided to help interpret the map above.

1. Name three different ▲ (archaeological site) NORTH of “Cruz Del Milagro”.

1. What landforms do these three areas have in common?

1. After analyzing the three sites and the surrounding landforms, discuss your theory as to why the Olmecs choose to settle in this area of Mesoamerica?

Source:
Supporting Question 1

Featured Source D
The Fertile Crescent

Excerpt

Mesopotamia comes from a Greek word meaning "between rivers," referring to the land between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, north or northwest of the bottleneck at Baghdad, in modern Iraq, eastern Syria and southeastern Turkey. However, in the broader sense, the name Mesopotamia has come to be used for the area surrounded on the northeast by the Zagros Mountains and on the southwest by the edge of the Arabian Plateau.

The flat alluvial river valley of the Mesopotamian civilization was framed by the Zagros mountains to the north, desert to the east and the sea to the west. Life was largely dependent on the flow and behavior of the two rivers -- the Tigris and Euphrates. When the winter snows melted, the rivers flooded frantically and unpredictably, simultaneously enriching the land with fertility while causing great destruction. The slow flow of the water causes heavy deposits of silt. Since the ground is extremely fertile and, with irrigation and the necessary drainage, will produce in abundance. Southern Mesopotamia became a land of plenty that could support a considerable population.

Through ancient climate analysis, scientists have determined that the climate and temperatures of ancient Mesopotamia was not vastly different than it is in the region today -- hot and dry summers coupled with cool and wet winters. Summers in Ancient Mesopotamia were hot and dry while winters were cooler and wetter. Average summer temperatures fluctuated between 70 to 85 degrees Fahrenheit, but could get hotter. Winter temperatures sank as low as 15 degrees in the mountains and 50 degrees in the plains to 60 degrees. The Mesopotamian plains received rainfall sufficient enough to allow for a rich agricultural industry.

Source:

Information from this reading was compiled from

## Supporting Question 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Supporting Question</th>
<th>What factors contribute to where modern day people choose to live?</th>
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**SS.G.3.6-8.LC.** Explain how environmental characteristics impact human migration and settlement.  
**SS.G.2.6-8.LC.** Explain how humans and their environment affect one another  
**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.1** Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.  
**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.4** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies

### Formative Performance Task

Student goal is to read, analyze and conclude why the citizens of England settle where they settle. Students will come up with a general claim, in terms of modern day settlement, and support that claim with evidence and craft an interpretation of this claim.
I’ve long believed that choosing a place to live is the single most important decision we make. It has an impact on everything from our career and bank accounts to the people we meet, the relationships we forge, and where we send our kids to school, not to mention our overall happiness and well-being.

A new report from the Centre for Cities—a London-based research and policy institute—takes one of the most detailed looks at this question I’ve seen to date. It uses comprehensive survey data from urban areas across Great Britain to examine what urbanites and suburbanites value the most (and like the least) about the neighborhoods they live in, including key factors like housing costs, proximity to jobs, transit, amenities, open space, and quality of both built and natural environments. The report draws from two YouGov surveys: a national survey of more than 2,000 people across 59 cities in Great Britain and a more targeted survey of 1,725 people in Brighton, Manchester, Sheffield, and Swindon.

What matters most

Not surprisingly, the key things that matter to people about the neighborhoods they live in include a mix of housing costs, being close to family, and proximity to where they work. More than a quarter (28 percent) of respondents cited housing costs and proximity to friends as key factors in the neighborhoods where they live, followed by the size and type of available housing (22 percent), and proximity to their workplace or their partner’s workplace (21 percent).

I have long argued that people make three big moves: in our mid 20s when we complete school and embark on careers (this is the age group that is most likely to move), when we have kids and start a family, and when the kids leave home and we become empty nesters.

The study finds considerable variation by age and stage of life, as Figure 1 clearly shows.

For young people between the ages of 18 and 24, the leading factor (at 28 percent) is simply that they live in the same neighborhoods where they grew up. This make sense, of course, since many in this age group are still living at home with their parents: 17 percent said they were studying in the neighborhood. Close behind was proximity to friends and family at 26 percent, while just 17 percent said being close to their workplace or their partner’s workplace matters (which makes sense, as fewer in this age group work). But living at home has its drawbacks. This young cohort reported being dissatisfied by a lack of available public transit (19 percent) and living too far away from restaurants and other leisure facilities (17 percent). Of course, being close to schools matters little to this age group, and just 7 percent said they valued being close to green space.

People between 25–34 years of age—the group that is most likely to move to embark on their careers—are more drawn to jobs and amenities than their younger counterparts. Nearly a third of them (31 percent) valued being close to their workplace or their partner’s workplace. This is about the same as those who said they still lived in the neighborhood where they grew up (32 percent), and those for whom the cost of housing (30 percent) was a key factor. A smaller share of this age group (9 percent) said that being close to restaurants, cultural, and leisure facilities are important attributes of where they choose to live. Eleven percent valued being close to green space and 8 percent said that the quality of the natural and built environment was a factor. Nine percent said safety and security was a key factor in their choice of neighborhood.

Those in the 35–54 age group—the group most likely to be having families and raising kids—placed a high value on the cost of housing (30 percent), the size and type of housing (21 percent), safety and security (17 percent), and proximity to good schools (13 percent). With kids in the household, 27 percent valued being close to family and friends. And after fully entering the working years, a quarter (25 percent) said that being close to their workplace or their partner’s workplace was important. Twenty percent said that being close to green space was important, and another 11 percent valued the quality of the natural and built environment. But considerably fewer respondents (just 4 percent) reported access to restaurants and other cultural amenities as a factor.

People over 55—retirees and empty-nesters whose kids are out of the household—had different priorities. Topping their list was proximity to the countryside and green spaces (30 percent), followed by the size and type of housing (29 percent). Still, nearly a fifth of people in their retirement or close-to-retirement years valued proximity to their workplace or their partner’s workplace. More than a quarter (27 percent) of people in this age group said being close to family and friends was important. Many older parents, after all, value being close to their adult children. And 17 percent of older respondents said that the safety and security of
the neighborhood was another key factor.

City versus suburb

What about the preferences for cities versus suburbs? What kinds of people prefer these options, and at what ages? What is it about cities and suburbs that draw people in?

The study notes that large cities have seen the biggest population growth in Britain over the past decade or so. From 2001-2011, large city centers grew by 108 percent, medium city centers increased by 35 percent, and small city centers grew by just 22 percent. The growth of large cities was driven by students and young people, with more than half the overall growth from 2001-2011 attributable to an influx of students, and another third attributable to young grads under 35 years old. In fact, by 2011, over a third of British residents in large city centers had a college degree, and most of them were between 25 and 34 years old. While residents of large city centers tended to work in high-skilled professions, residents of small and medium-sized cities tended to work in low-skilled professions, but were more likely to have a family and commute to jobs in the suburbs.

The chart below summarizes the key results for three groups: city dwellers, suburbanites, and those living in more rural hinterlands.

City dwellers placed greater importance on proximity to restaurants, leisure, and cultural facilities, public transit, local shops, and living close to their workplace. Suburbanites and those in rural hinterlands placed higher value on the cost of housing, the size and type of housing, safety and security, good schools, green space, and being close to family and friends. They were also more likely to live in the neighborhood where they grew up and were much less concerned with being close to where they worked.

The next chart shows the factors or qualities that urbanites, suburbanites, and rural dwellers found least favorable about their neighborhoods. For urbanites, their least favorite qualities were housing costs (31 percent), followed by pollution (25 percent), and distance to the countryside and green space (21 percent). Also high on the list of urbanites’ least favorite things were living too far from family and friends, poor safety and security, and the size and type of housing.

Suburbanites and rural dwellers had fewer complaints about their neighborhoods. They were more likely than urbanites to identify the availability of public transit and being too far away from restaurants and amenities as their least favorite things about their neighborhoods. They also cited housing costs and being too far away from family and friends as among their least favorite things about where they live.

The case of London

London is not just the UK’s most dominant city. Alongside New York, it is one of the world’s two leading superstar cities. London has grown substantially in recent years, drawing in young, talented, and skilled residents (by 2011, 48 percent of its residents had college degrees, according to the report), in addition to becoming a choice location for the global super-rich. At the same time, it has developed a vibrant tech economy to complement its long-established finance and media clusters. All of this has put considerable pressure on its housing prices.

The chart below shows the main reasons why Londoners chose the neighborhoods where they live. Access to public transit was the top-ranked factor overall. This makes sense, given that 90 percent of workers in central London either use public transit or walk or cycle to work and 30 percent of London’s jobs are located in its core. Next in line was cost of housing in that neighborhood. Other factors that matter include being close to family and friends, proximity to their workplace, and—perhaps surprisingly—having grown up in that neighborhood.

Changing priorities

While some of us are inherent urbanites or suburbanites, our preferences change over the course of our lifetimes. Many young people may prefer big cities, with their vibrant job and dating markets and abundant amenities and things to do. Those with families prioritize bigger homes with better schools and more parks and green space. Ultimately, we look for the cities and neighborhoods that fit us best at the time. That said, most of us put the same things at the top of our lists: housing we can afford, being close to family and friends, and living not too far away from where we work. As much as our preferences may differ by who we are or the stage of life we’re in, all of us—urbanites, suburbanites, and country-dwellers alike—tend to value the same basic things in the places we choose to live.
**Pay attention to "What Matters Most" Section**
**Figure 13:** The main reasons why Londoners chose to live in their neighbourhood

- Availability of public transport
- The cost of housing available
- To be close to my friends/family
- I grew up in the neighbourhood
- To be close to my workplace
- The safety and security of the neighbourhood
- The size or type of housing available
- To be close to local shops
- To be close to restaurants/leisure or cultural facilities
- The quality of the built or natural environment
- To be close to countryside/green spaces
- To be close to good schools
- To be close to my partner's workplace


Figure 3: The main reasons why respondents chose to live in their neighbourhood

- To be close to restaurants / leisure or cultural facilities
- Availability of public transport in the neighbourhood
- To be close to local shops
- To be close to my workplace
- The cost of housing available in the neighbourhood
- The size or type of housing available in the neighbourhood
- To be close to my friends/ family
- The quality of the built or natural environment of the neighbourhood
- To be close to my partner’s workplace
- The safety and security of the neighbourhood
- To be close to countryside / green spaces
- I grew up in the neighbourhood
- To be close to good schools

- city centre
- suburb
- hinterland

Share of respondents choosing this as one of three options (%)

Source: YouGov, 2015, 1725 residents from four city regions.

Summative Performance Task

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<tr>
<th>Compelling Question</th>
<th>Do Humans Still Settle for the Same Reasons Today?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Argument</td>
<td>Students will create an argumentative product to answer the compelling question, “Do Humans Still Move for the Same Reasons Today?”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Extension</td>
<td>Students will take their claims, evidence and judgments to create a short 5-10 minute documentary using Screencastify.</td>
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**Argument**

After researching various sources on the ancient settlement in Mesopotamia and Olmec regions, students will write an essay in which they will determine one factor for ancient human settlement and argue whether the factor still has influence on modern human migration. Students will support their position with evidence of any source from the inquiry.

**Extension**

After researching various sources on the ancient Mesopotamian, Olmec geography and contemporary British settlement, create a short 5-10 minute documentary. Students will argue if humans still settle for the same reasons today as they did in ancient times by using examples and comparisons to Mesopotamia, Olmec and contemporary England. Students will support their discussion with evidence from their research.
Taking Informed Action

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Understand</th>
<th>Students will research some geographical, social or economic challenges (pick one problem from one category) that affect their city and its residents, and they may also sway future residents from residing there as well.</th>
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<td>Assess</td>
<td>Students will compare Berwyn's challenges to those of the Olmecs. They will also brainstorm and list solutions for Berwyn.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Action</td>
<td>Students will meet with a Berwyn public official to present a challenge and a possible solution to this threat.</td>
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Students will research one social, geographical or economic challenges that might push future residents away from choosing Berwyn as their home today. Students will brainstorm some possible and realistic solutions to these challenges. After creating a short Google Slides or presentation then the students will present the challenge and possible solution informally to an elected public official.