

Chapter 2 Test Questions

Multiple Choice Questions

1. Archeological evidence dating from around 3000 B.C.E. from Hambledon Hill in England most likely indicates:
- a. that humans of that era held enormous parties because an ice age was coming.
 - b. that failed attempts at herding animals and farming led people back to foraging and hunting.
 - c. that humans of that era combined hunting and gathering with newer practices related to farming and production.
 - d. that humans of that era imported most of their food because they could not find enough locally.

Ans: c

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2. Farming and herding revolutionized the place of humans in their ecosystems by
- a. making human beings independent of the species we eat.
 - b. making human beings dependent on the species we eat.
 - c. making human beings interdependent with the species we eat.
 - d. making human beings reliant on certain species for reproduction.

Ans: c

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3. Domestication of crops and animals
- a. had no effect on the evolution of species.
 - b. caused what might be called an “unnatural selection” that interfered with the evolutionary process.
 - c. had an effect only on the evolution of animals.
 - d. had an effect only on the evolution of plants.

Ans: b

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4. What evidence exists that aboriginal Australians could have chosen to develop agriculture?
- a. planting and irrigating of crops
 - b. use of fire to control grazing areas and the watering and weeding of certain crops
 - c. domestication of the kangaroo
 - d. No such evidence exists.

Ans: b

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5. The earliest permanent settlements arose about

- a. 15,000 to 14,000 years ago.
- b. 11,000 to 10,000 years ago.
- c. 9,000 to 8,000 years ago.
- d. 7,000 to 6,000 years ago.

Ans: a

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6. Which of the following is true about early agricultural societies?

- a. The food supply becomes more reliable.
- b. Diet becomes more varied.
- c. Social and economic inequality and exploitation grow.
- d. Disease becomes less of a problem.

Ans: c

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7. African grasslands are called

- a. prairie.
- b. pampa.
- c. sahel.
- d. steppe.

Ans: c

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8. Which of the following statements is most true about the diets of herding communities compared with those of agrarian communities?

- a. Herders' diets are more varied but less nutritional than those of agrarians.
- b. Agrarian communities have less nutritional and less varied diets than herding communities.
- c. Agrarian communities have more nutritional and more varied diets than herding communities.
- d. Herders' diets, although lacking in variety, are not nutritionally deficient.

Ans: d

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9. What three types of land were best suited for agriculture?

- a. tundra, alluvial plains, lowlands
- b. swampland, alluvial plain, uplands
- c. swampland, forests, steppe
- d. alluvial plain, prairies, uplands

Ans: b

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10. A reason that New Guinea was never home to large centralized states is because of
- a. the wide variety of crops grown in different locations there.
 - b. the few crops that can be grown there.
 - c. the poor soil that led to small populations.
 - d. the failure of the people of New Guinea to adopt agriculture.

Ans: a

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11. The earliest archaeological evidence for farming in Western Africa dates to about
- a. 6,000 years ago.
 - b. 5,000 years ago.
 - c. 4,000 years ago.
 - d. 3,500 years ago.

Ans: b

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12. The “trinity” of crops that developed in Central American societies was
- a. beans, rice, and potatoes.
 - b. beans, maize, and turnips.
 - c. rye, squash, and maize.
 - d. beans, maize, and squash.

Ans: d

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13. From where did the earliest agriculturalists enter Europe?
- a. Asia
 - b. Africa
 - c. Europe
 - d. the Americas

Ans: a

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14. Some of the earliest archaeological evidence for agriculture in Southern Asia includes
- a. cotton threads.
 - b. potato skins.
 - c. fossilized grape vines.
 - d. chicken bones.

Ans: a

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15. Agriculture in North America developed
- a. as a result of contact and communication with communities in Central America.
 - b. as a result of experimentation with local plants.
 - c. a wide variety of domesticated animals.
 - d. as a result of contact and communication with South American communities.

Ans: a

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16. The expansion of agriculture can be traced across sub-Saharan Africa through the spread of what language group?

- a. Swahili
- b. Ndebele
- c. Semitic
- d. Bantu

Ans: d

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17. People first began to cultivate foods in the Nile Valley about

- a. 12,000 years ago.
- b. 9,000 years ago.
- c. 7,000 years ago.
- d. 2,000 years ago.

Ans: b

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18. What animals and plants made up the staple foods in the Pacific islands?

- a. chicken and yams
- b. cattle and tomatoes
- c. pigs and sweet potatoes
- d. sheep and grain

Ans: c

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19. An objection to abundance theory is that

- a. agriculture was more likely the consequence of an accident.
- b. people would not take on an unnecessarily labor-intensive practice.
- c. agriculture was more a cause than a consequence.
- d. agriculture was more a consequence than a cause.

Ans: b

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20. Which of the following is NOT a reason to connect the development of agriculture with religion?

- a. use of animals for sacrifice
- b. use of plants in religious ceremonies
- c. stories of floods and natural disasters
- d. use of alcohol

Ans: c

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21. According to the theory of climatic instability, people developed agriculture because

- a. climate change increased populations.
- b. people wanted to preserve their food supply in the face of climate change.
- c. political authorities used climatic changes to force people into agricultural production.
- d. people increasingly believed that climatic instability was caused by supernatural forces.

Ans: b

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22. A common element in the political and religious theories of the development of agriculture is a focus on

- a. feasting.
- b. myth.
- c. prestige.
- d. ceremonies.

Ans: a

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23. Charles Darwin supported the theory that agriculture developed as a result of

- a. abundance.
- b. population growth.
- c. accident.
- d. evolution.

Ans: c

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24. Archaeologist Brian Fagan said, "Even the simplest hunter-gatherer society knows full well that seeds germinate when planted." That statement suggests

- a. that all societies will eventually develop agriculture.
- b. that all societies can potentially develop agriculture.
- c. that it is surprising that all human societies have not developed agriculture on their own.
- d. that the relatively recent development of agriculture is especially odd.

Ans: b

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25. The theory that agriculture developed as an outgrowth of procurement argues that
- a. increased contact between groups of foragers led to the development of agriculture.
 - b. the development of new food sources late in the Paleolithic period led to agriculture.
 - c. changes in the methods of food gathering led to the development of agriculture.
 - d. the rise of powerful chiefs compelled people to adopt agriculture.

Ans: c

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26. The earliest animals selected by humans as a primary food source were
- a. dogs.
 - b. cattle.
 - c. pigs.
 - d. snails.

Ans: d

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In Perspective

27. Anthropological studies of modern cultures making the transition to agriculture in Botswana and Lesotho support the
- a. abundance theory of the development of agriculture.
 - b. religious theory of the development of agriculture.
 - c. political theory of the development of agriculture.
 - d. population pressure theory of the development of agriculture.

Ans: d

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28. Which of the following justifies thinking of the development of agriculture as a revolution?
- a. It happened over a long period of time.
 - b. It occurred in many different places in different ways.
 - c. Many societies held onto foraging practices while also practicing agriculture for long periods.
 - d. The agricultural societies were more complex and profoundly different from their predecessors.

Ans: d

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29. The term “climacteric” means
- a. a long period of critical change in a world poised between different possible outcomes.
 - b. a short period of critical change in a world poised between different possible outcomes.
 - c. a period of change in a world poised between two possible outcomes.
 - d. a long period of stability.

Ans: a

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30. In Africa about 4,500 to 5,000 years ago, agriculture spread to the south from
- Egypt.
 - East Africa.
 - West Africa.
 - None of the above. It arose in southern Africa spontaneously.

Ans: c

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31. The naturalist David Rindos explained early farming as a
- conquest by people over the environment.
 - symbiosis, which means that plants and people were mutually dependent on one another.
 - type of behavior explained because of its natural superiority to hunting and gathering.
 - situation in which elites compelled non-elites to grow food.

Ans: b

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32. Climate change at the end of the last Ice Age had the effect of
- creating conditions that were stable around the world and favorable to agriculture.
 - beginning a divide between more innovative thinkers who adopted agriculture and more conservative ones who retained hunting and gathering.
 - causing climatic instability that created a common, conservative mentality among early farmers and hunters.
 - forcing many people to question their ancient traditions.

Ans: c

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Essay Questions

1. What are the positive and negative elements of agriculture for a human society? What effects could these elements have on a society's development?
2. For what reasons might a society choose to avoid agriculture? What is an example of such a society? For what specific reasons did they not develop into an agricultural society?
3. What common features characterize the areas where agriculture emerged after the Ice Age? What environmental constraints limited the invention and spread of agriculture?
4. How did the environments of pastoral societies differ from those of agrarian societies? How did these differences affect relations between these two types of communities?
5. How did the cultures of pastoral and agrarian societies differ from one another? How might these differences have affected communication between these societies?
6. In what ways were the differences between pastoral and agrarian societies complementary? How did these two different types of societies have formed symbiotic systems?

7. How and when did agriculture begin in Southwestern Asia compared with its beginnings in South Asia and in East Asia? What different staple crops developed in these different regions?
8. From where and how did agriculture spread in the Americas, in sub-Saharan Africa, and in the Pacific? What different staple crops developed in these regions?
9. What implications for population growth and social structure did the different sets of staple crops and animals have for people in different areas of the world?
10. What are the main ideas behind the theories that agriculture arose because of population pressure or as a result of an abundance of food resources in certain areas? What are the objections that could be raised to these theories?
11. Why are theories about the origins of agriculture so difficult to prove definitively? What is the nature of the sources we have for early agrarian societies?
12. What is a climacteric, and how might it be a useful way of understanding the development of agriculture and the changes it brought about?
13. What were the relationships between foragers, herders, and farmers, and how did they develop over time?

In Perspective

14. How can agriculture be seen as a development caused by politics or religion? What are the main ideas behind these theories?
15. How did environment affect the development of agriculture in Mesopotamia and Mesoamerica?
16. How did human migration lead to the spread of agriculture into Europe and the South Pacific?
17. Why can the beginning of food production be explained as a climacteric revolution?
18. Write an essay that discusses why early peoples gradually adopted agriculture as a substitute for foraging and hunting. What pressures encouraged or discouraged agriculture? Your answer should compare at least two regions.
19. Despite the advantages of agriculture for growing populations, not all societies elected to make the transition. Discuss at least one example of a society that retained hunting and foraging and explain why this may have been advantageous.

Part One: Foragers and Farmers, to 5,000 B.C.E.

Thinking Critically Across Chapters 1-2

1. What were the most important transformations in human physiology and social organization between a million years ago and 5000 B.C.E.? What drove these transformations, and why were they important?
2. Once the transition to agriculture began, why did it affect the global human population so much more unevenly than hunting and gathering had? What are the ongoing effects, even today, of that uneven development?
3. Why is the environment so central to the evolution of humans and human society? How did changes in climate help drive evolution, migration, and the shift from foraging to agriculture in some human populations?
4. What is the “problem of agriculture”? To resolve this problem, why is it better to think about agriculture as a “climacteric” rather than as a revolution?
5. In a well-written response, explore the major ecological changes that directly impacted humans during and following the Ice Age. How did the end of the Ice Age signal possibilities for sedentary agriculture? How can the various geographical terrains to which early humans migrated sustain life?
6. Did the spread of human agriculture match the spread of human migratory patterns during the Ice Age? What factors affected the diversity of migratory patterns?
7. Discuss how nomadic and early agrarian cultures before 5000 B.C.E are thought to have explored art, religion, and social organization. Were such early peoples cultured? Compare examples from three different regions.