

Communities Then and Now

Grade 3 • SOCIAL-STUDIES • Students compare how communities change over time in areas such as transportation, buildings, jobs, and daily life. • Standards: D2.His.2.3-5, D2.His.5.3-5

Read each question about how communities have changed over time. Write your answer on the line, thinking carefully about what is different between the past and the present.

1. In the past, most people traveled by horse and wagon. Today, most people travel by car. What changed?
2. Long ago, children wrote on small chalkboards at school. Now children write in notebooks and on computers. What stayed the same?
3. One hundred years ago, a town had a blacksmith shop where people brought horses to be fitted with metal shoes. Today, that same building is an auto repair shop where people bring cars to be fixed. What is one thing that changed about this building?
4. In 1920, a neighborhood had dirt roads and wooden sidewalks. In 2020, the same neighborhood has paved roads and concrete sidewalks. The houses are still in the same places. What is one thing that stayed the same?
5. Long ago, a farmer sold vegetables from a cart on the street. Today, a grocery store in the same spot sells vegetables on shelves inside a building. How did the way people buy vegetables change?
6. In the past, a town library had only books made of paper. Now the same library has paper books, electronic books, and computers for research. What is one way the library changed and one way it stayed the same?
7. Fifty years ago, most mothers and fathers in a community worked in a nearby factory that made furniture. Today, that factory is closed, and most parents work in offices, hospitals, and schools in different parts of the city. How did jobs in this community change?

8. In 1950, a neighborhood had small one-story houses with large yards where families grew food. By 2020, many of those houses were replaced with tall apartment buildings where many families live, and people buy food from stores. Compare daily life in this neighborhood between 1950 and 2020.

9. Long ago, a town square had a water well where people gathered to get water and talk with neighbors. Today, the well is gone, but people still gather in the same square at a coffee shop to talk with neighbors. What is one important thing that stayed the same about this community space?

10. In the early 1900s, a community had a train station, a post office, a general store, and a school all within walking distance, so people did not need to travel far for work or errands. Today, the train station is closed, the general store is now a parking lot, but the post office and school are still open. People now drive cars to shopping centers outside of town. Explain how transportation needs changed in this community.

Answer Key — Communities Then and Now

For the teacher / parent. Do not distribute with the worksheet.

1. Transportation changed from horse and wagon to car.
2. Children still write at school.
3. The type of work done in the building changed from fixing horses to fixing cars.
4. The houses stayed in the same places.
5. People changed from buying vegetables from a cart on the street to buying them inside a store.
6. The library changed by adding electronic books and computers, but it stayed the same by still having paper books.
7. Jobs changed from most people working in one factory to people working in many different places doing different kinds of work.
8. Daily life changed because people went from living in small houses and growing their own food to living in apartments and buying food from stores.
9. People still gather in the same place to talk with neighbors.
10. Transportation needs changed because people used to walk to nearby places for everything, but now they need cars to drive to stores and other places outside of town.