

TCAP/WA

Directions

In a few moments, you will see a passage and a prompt. You are to plan and write an essay about the passage according to the instructions provided in the prompt. This activity will show how well you write. Express your thoughts clearly and make your writing interesting to the reader. Your essay will be scored as a rough draft, but you should watch for careless errors.

Before writing, spend some time reading the passage, thinking about the prompt, and planning your thoughts.

WRITE ONLY ON THE PROMPT AND PASSAGE YOU ARE GIVEN.

The time you have for writing is 60 minutes.

Leaving the Farm

by Bill Carey



Photograph source: Tennessee State Library and Archives

Take a look at this photograph, which was taken in West Tennessee around 1890. If you look closely, you will see clues that tell you what life was like for many people at that time. During this period after the Civil War, many people were leaving family farms such as this one and moving to towns and cities. They were going to work as miners, factory workers, and even office workers. They were moving away from their grandparents, aunts, and uncles. They were turning toward the promise of a regular paycheck and turning away from dependence on the family and the family farm.

This was a completely new life, and it affected the kids.

Life on a Farm Around 1890

Let's say that you live on a farm in Tennessee in 1890. As soon as you are old enough, you are working on the farm. Every day you get up to milk the cows, feed the animals, and get the eggs from the henhouse. Every spring you help plow the fields. Every fall you help bring in the crops. School is something you do if you can. But working on the farm comes first.

You see a lot of your uncles, cousins, and grandparents, because they live nearby. But you don't live in a town or a neighborhood, so you spend a lot of time with your brothers and sisters. And you spend a lot of time alone, hunting and fishing. You can catch and skin a catfish faster than a person could today. You know your brothers and sisters better than most people today do. And somehow the family keeps itself entertained every night.

Moving to the City

Now imagine it is 1892. Your family has left the farm because your dad took a job at a factory or a mine. You live in a small house near many other small houses. You don't see as much of your dad because he leaves home for work in the morning and doesn't come home until night. Meanwhile there is no farm to work on. You can no longer wander around and hunt and fish like you used to.

You used to get in trouble for hunting on your neighbor's farm. Now you get in trouble for things you do with your new friends. And you have to go to school more than you used to. Not every family went through this change, because today there are still kids who live on farms. But many families did go through a change such as this at some time during the last century and a half.

READ THIS WRITING PROMPT CAREFULLY BEFORE YOU BEGIN YOUR WRITING.

After reading the passage “Leaving the Farm”, imagine it is 1890 and your parents are trying to decide if they should move to the city or remain on the farm. Write an essay to persuade your family to either stay on the farm or move to the city. Use details from the passage to help you write your essay. Be certain to support your point of view with reasons and information from the passage. Also, remember to use correct grammar, usage, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing your essay.

You may use the space below for prewriting. You will have a time limit of 60 minutes.