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Student Reading 1.3: Cincinnati Grows and Changes

Thousands of years ago, Cincinnati did not exist. In fact, the area where we live now was part of a sea. Visit Cincinnati's Bi-Centennial Commons at Sawyer Point and you will find a timeline that includes ancient fossils found in our area. These include fossils of plants and animals that only lived in the water! The Earth has changed a lot in all those years. This was a very big change that nature made to our local environment.

Of course, there are many other changes that have happened in our area. Some changes have been big and some small. Nearly all these changes have been made by humans. People make changes to their communities for many reasons. Usually, it is to help make the area better for those who live there.

In the beginning stages of our country's development, Ohio was **wilderness**. A wilderness is land that has not been changed by humans. Native Americans lived in the area as long ago as 13,000 B.C. The Native Americans used the **natural resources** they found in the area to help them survive. They ate from plants that grew wild, they fished, and they hunted. The Fort Ancient people, who



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lived in the area over 800 years ago, are thought to be the first Native Americans to change the land by planting and growing specific foods. This was a reasonably small change.

In 1787, John Cleves Symmes bought two million acres of wilderness along the Ohio River. He sold pieces of it. In 1788, Israel Ludlow, Matthias Denman, and Robert Petterson bought eight hundred acres of the land, and this became the **settlement** of Losantiville. In order for people to build homes and businesses, the wilderness had to be cleared. This was a big change!

By 1790, Losantiville had grown, and it was renamed Cincinnati by the territory's governor. Other small communities started nearby such as North Bend and Columbia. It was difficult to travel because there were not roads. Even in the early 1800s, travel in the area was still difficult. River travel, which was the best way for settlers to get across the vast wilderness, took time. If the water level in the river was low, the boats could not travel quickly. Eventually, roads and streets were constructed to make travel easier. This was a big change, and brought many other changes.



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In the early days of Cincinnati's settling, people lived near the river. As more people moved into the city, and it became crowded and dirty, people who had the ability to move away from the city center (which meant they had money), began to move up into the hills that surrounded the city. However, travel up and down the hills was difficult. A series of inclines was built to move people and **goods** up and down the hills. Now, those inclines are gone. What changes were made that allow people to easily travel around the city's many hills today?

As a city grows, changes have to occur to meet the needs of the people who live there. In 1803, the **population** of Cincinnati was around one thousand people. By 1820, it had grown to around ten thousand people. Today, there are close to 297,000 people living in Cincinnati. Just like in those beginning days, people move to areas they find more appealing. That means our city has expanded over the years. There are many smaller communities that are a part of the larger city. For example, Avondale, Camp Washington, Clifton, Price Hill, Walnut Hills, Mount Lookout, and Northside are all a part of Cincinnati.



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People have to travel from different parts of the city for work, school, and recreation. The city has built streets to allow travel by car and bus. In 2014, work on a new street car began to help people travel more easily in and around the downtown area. For these things to occur, land is often moved. Hills may be flattened, curves straightened, or routes made to go around places, like businesses, parks, or homes that people do not want moved or destroyed. Think about all the bridges that cross the Ohio River near Cincinnati's downtown. These changes have been both big and small and have allowed travel and growth all over the area.

Cincinnati has grown in population and in the amount of space that is taken up by people, homes, businesses, and recreation areas. In the beginning, eight hundred **acres**, or $1 \frac{1}{4}$ square miles, was purchased for the new settlement. In 2014, the amount of area taken up by Cincinnati is just about 80 square miles. That's a big change!

