

Economic Frustrations in Mud Village

Scenario

It is 1810. You live in a community that is located between an ocean and a large lake. There are hills between these bodies of water. There are some people who are farmers, but most of the inhabitants either work in the shops or in the factories. The factories are located on the western side of the mountains. There are people in your community who are called traders. They move the cloth that is manufactured in the factories from their higher elevation down to the shopkeepers in the lower elevation areas. The traders must also transport some of the cloth along treacherous paths through the hills and down to the ocean port. Ocean-going ships can take the cloth so that it can be exported to locations far from your community. The traders will then buy imported tea to sell to the shopkeepers. The shopkeepers sell goods to the residents of the community, many of whom are the laborers. The laborers work on either the farms or in the factories. The laborers buy cloth and tea from the shopkeepers.

Your community is hilly and heavily forested. Often, trees fall down because the weather is frequently windy and rainy. Sometimes it seems like all it does is rain! There are many ponds and lakes in and around the community. In fact, your community has been nicknamed "Mud Village." In spite of the weather, there are many immigrants who desire to move here and work in the factories.

Your community is going to have a village meeting to discuss any matters that may be important to the various groups of people living there. The factory owners will meet together before the general meeting to see if they have any common

concerns to discuss. The shopkeepers, traders, and laborers will also meet in their respective groups to discuss common concerns or problems. Each of these special or “expert” groups will discuss their issues and try to come up with solutions to their problems. Then, after the group meetings, there will be a general community meeting to decide what actions might be taken to solve problems and improve the whole community.

--End of scenario--

Expert readings on the following pages