

“Guns, Germs, and Steel” Movie Guide

Episode 1: Into the Tropics

Directions: Answer the following questions on a separate sheet of paper

1. How did the people of the Middle East survive during times of scarcity?
2. Why was it considered a turning point in human history?
3. Why did the type of crop the people of New Guinea plant, alter their civilization and cause it to be ‘less successful’?
4. Why did farming and the type of products farmed dictate the success of a civilization?
5. Explain this idea of ‘geographic luck’.
6. Why is animal domestication important to these differing societies?
7. How were animals used to help their civilization?
8. Why were the lack of animals in New Guinea detrimental to their society?
9. What are the characteristics of the best animals to domesticate? (3 characteristics)
10. Why does the Middle East become known as the ‘fertile crescent’?
11. Why is it that in some societies people could produce advanced technology whereas in others there was no time to do this?
12. How did the Fertile Crescent lose power?
13. How was geographic luck important to the new settlers?
14. Do you agree with Diamond’s argument? Why or why not?
15. Summarize this first episode and describe this first part of Jared Diamond’s argument.