

A Trip to Town

Think about our imaginary trip back in time yesterday, to a farm in the country during the 1700s. What was life like? What are some of the different chores that had to be completed by family members? Which jobs sounded the most difficult or complicated? Would you rather make cheese or butter? Would you rather make bread or clothes? Do you think it would be easier to shear a sheep or pick cotton?

A Trip to Town

People who lived in the country sometimes traveled to towns to pay expert workers, called tradespeople, to do some of this work for them or to make some of their work easier to do. Tradespeople became experts in their jobs so that other people didn't have to do these jobs as often at home. For example, dressmakers became experts at sewing dresses so that women could buy dresses from dressmakers instead of making their own dresses.

A Trip to Town

Today, we still rely on the help of workers who become experts at their jobs so that they can help us do things we can't do by ourselves. Some of today's workers work with their hands to make things using specialized tools and knowledge, just like colonial tradespeople.

A Trip to Town

Tradespeople:

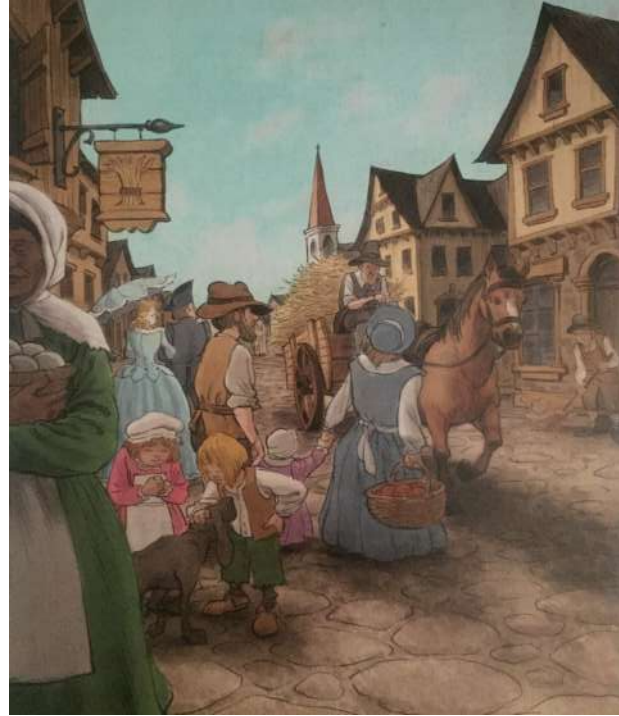


A Trip to Town

Listen for the different types of tradespeople that lived in colonial towns long ago.

A Trip to Town

Imagine you lived in the country long ago and were preparing to visit the nearest town. A trip to town was not an everyday event, you didn't go to town every day. Three hundred years ago, there were no cars or trains.



A Trip to Town

Your parents would have taken you by horse and wagon, as seen in the picture, and the going was slow. Because you wouldn't have wanted to leave your animals alone or your crops uncared for at home for a very long time, trips to town were pretty rare.



A Trip to Town

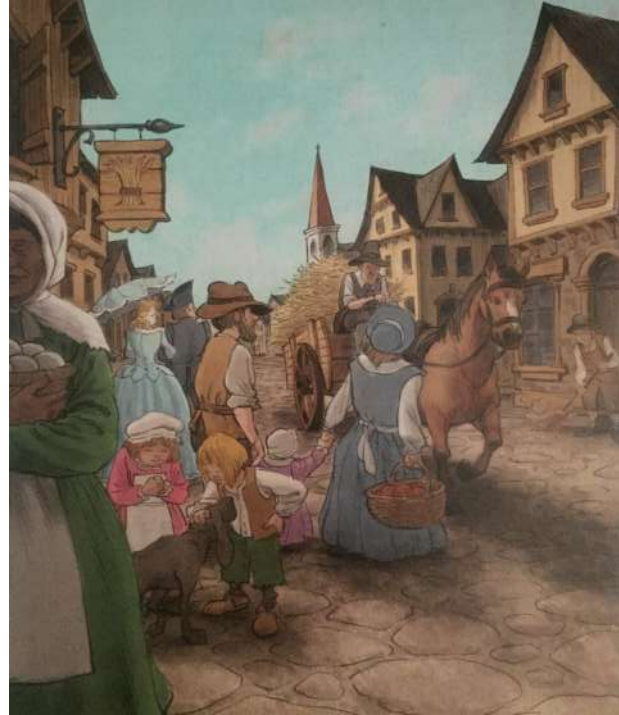
Rare is the opposite of everyday.
If something is rare, it doesn't
happen very often.

Why might you have needed to go
to town? Normally, everyone in
your family helped to make most
of what you needed on your farm.



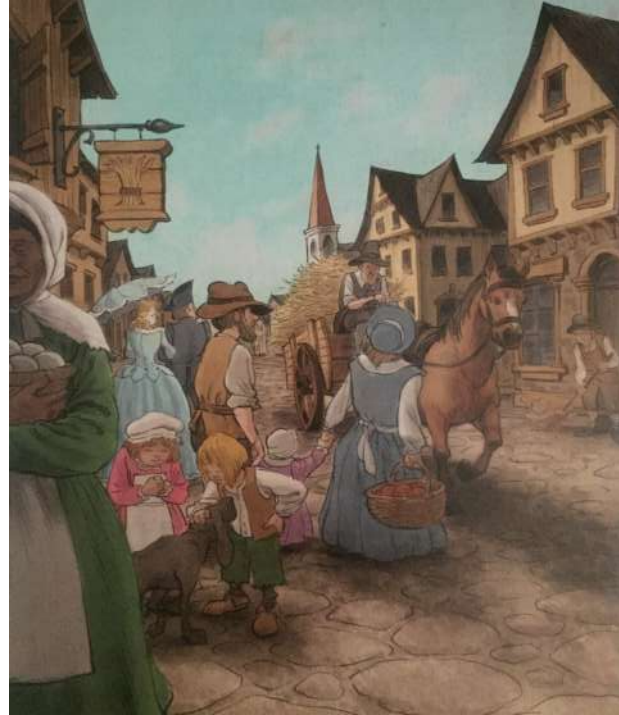
A Trip to Town

But there were always a few things that your family couldn't make themselves, like some iron nails or a new pair of shoes, or that would have simply taken too much time to make at home, like grinding wheat into flour, or making cloth for a new shirt.



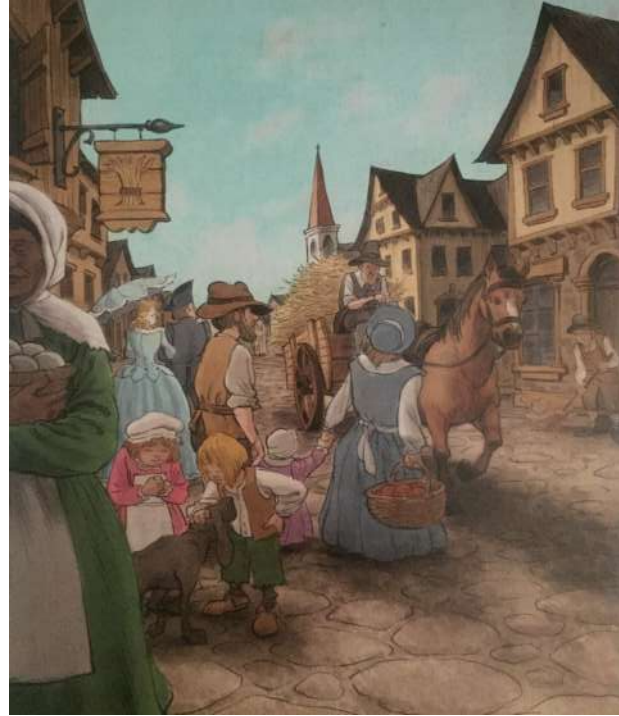
A Trip to Town

Fortunately, there were different kinds of tradespeople in town who were specialists, or experts at many of these jobs--jobs that couldn't have been done at home or that took too long.



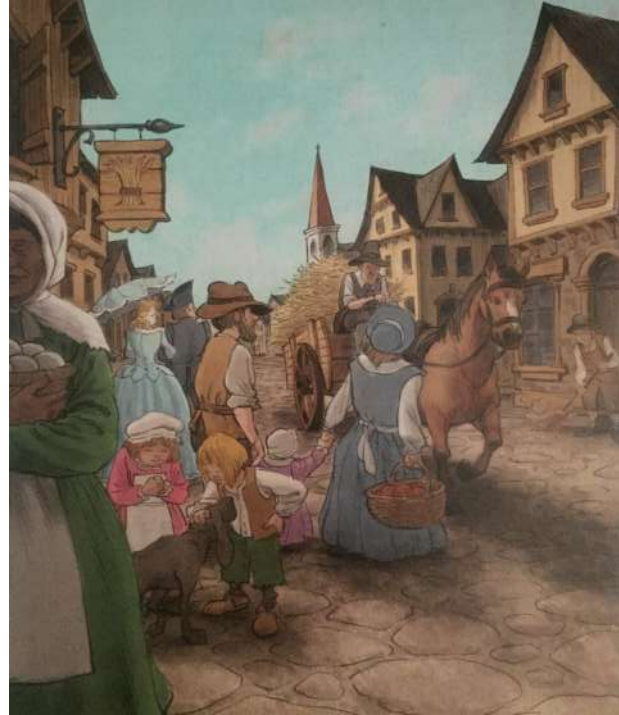
A Trip to Town

How would you have paid these tradespeople for the things you needed? Farmers usually brought a load of goods to sell. People in colonial times did not use money as often as we do today. Or he might have bartered, or exchanged, some eggs or butter for the cloth you needed to make new clothes.



A Trip to Town

If you bartered products that you brought from your farm, you swapped or traded what you brought for something you wanted from that tradesperson. You would not pay money; you would trade. Trade means to exchange. But trade also refers to a special skill or job.



A Trip to Town

You may have brought along some vegetables or even chickens to trade.



A Trip to Town

The first stop on your trip to town, at least in a large town, most likely would have been at the town square. Most of the shops and important buildings were located in or around the town square. Unlike the country, buildings in town were close together, which made it possible for you to visit several shops on the same day.



A Trip to Town

The town square was the place where the mayor and other town leaders made speeches or important announcements. The town square was also where townspeople met to talk and gossip with their friends. This was how people learned the latest news.



A Trip to Town

From the town square, you probably headed to the nearby trading post or general store. This was where farmers could buy, sell, or trade all kinds of things. At the trading post or general store you might have traded the vegetables, grains, or dairy products you brought with you for tools, cloth, or supplies that you needed.



A Trip to Town

If you were visiting a typical town in colonial days, here is where your trip to town would end. Most smaller towns had only one general store--a place where farmers could trade their crops to get basic tools and supplies they could not make at home.

However, let us imagine that you were visiting a very large town, where you could see and do much more.



A Trip to Town



A Trip to Town

If you looked near the river, you may have seen a mill, a building where wheat was ground, or crushed between large stones to make large amounts of flour. Mills were almost always on the river, because flowing water was needed to turn the huge waterwheel that made the large, flat stones inside turn and grind the wheat.



A Trip to Town

If you had visited the miller, no doubt you would have brought freshly harvested wheat or corn from your farm for the miller to grind into flour. Once it was ground into flour, you would have been able to take it home to bake bread, cakes and other good things to eat.

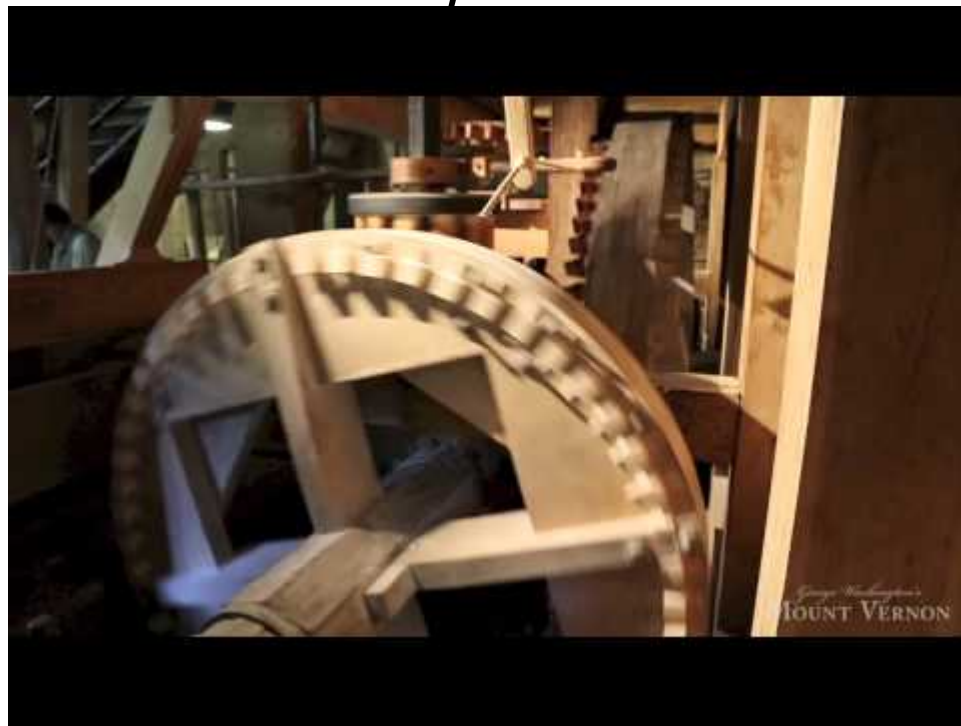


A Trip to Town

Next you may have stopped in the baker's shop and bought freshly baked rolls and bread. What a treat for your family! Remember how much work it was to make a loaf of bread back on the farm?



A Trip to Town



A Trip to Town

If you were a rich farmer, you may have visited the hatter for a new hat, or the dressmaker to buy a new dress for your daughter. Instead of buying cloth, you may just have bought yourself a new shirt from the tailor. A tailor is a person who makes or fixes clothing. And you would have had to visit the all important cobbler, who would have made you a new pair of strong, leather shoes.



A Trip to Town



A Trip to Town



A Trip to Town

The blacksmith was an important specialist in town, with his own set of tools and skills. The blacksmith built fires to melt iron so he could pound it into the horseshoes and nails that you needed. He also worked hard to make many of the same metal tools that you used back on your farm.



A Trip to Town



A Trip to Town

In the busy town, each of these tradespeople and merchants had something special to offer people who lived in the country, just as you had much-needed fresh food to offer them. For the next few days, you'll be learning more about some of these special people.



A Trip to Town

Comprehension Questions:

Literal

PLEASE answer in
COMPLETE sentences.

Why did farmers go to town? Why were trips to town rare instead of everyday?

A Trip to Town

Comprehension Questions:

Inferential

PLEASE answer in
COMPLETE sentences.

Describe what you might see in a town.

A Trip to Town

Comprehension Questions:

Inferential

PLEASE answer in
COMPLETE sentences.

What might a farmer bring to barter or sell in town? What place would he go to sell these things?

A Trip to Town

Comprehension Questions:

Literal

PLEASE answer in
COMPLETE sentences.

What is the center of town called, where people went to hear news and announcements?

A Trip to Town

Comprehension Questions:

Literal

PLEASE answer in
COMPLETE sentences.

Why would a farmer go to the mill?

A Trip to Town

Comprehension Questions:

Inferential

PLEASE answer in
COMPLETE sentences.

*Why would only successful or rich farmers
visit the tailor?*

A Trip to Town

Comprehension Questions:

Literal

PLEASE answer in
COMPLETE sentences.

What could a farmer get from a cobbler?

A Trip to Town

Comprehension Questions:

Literal

PLEASE answer in
COMPLETE sentences.

What could a farmer get from a blacksmith?

Word Work

Explicit Vocabulary Instruction

A Trip to Town

*In the read aloud you heard, “A trip to town was not an
everyday event.”*

*Say the word **everyday** with me.
Whisper everyday to the ceiling.
Whisper everyday to your neighbor.
Let's clap it out.*

A Trip to Town

*An **everyday** event is something ordinary that always happens.*

Brushing your teeth is an everyday event.

A Trip to Town

Give me an example of something that is an everyday event. Use the word everyday when you tell about it.

“_____ is an everyday event.”

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*What's the word we have been talking
about?*

Let's clap it out.

A Trip to Town

The opposite of everyday is rare, something that is special because it hardly ever happens. If the event I describe is everyday, stand up. If the event I describe is rare, clap your hands.

A Trip to Town

Eating breakfast.

A Trip to Town

Eating your birthday cake.

A Trip to Town

Putting on shoes.

A Trip to Town

Putting on a costume.

A Trip to Town

Seeing a bug.

A Trip to Town

Seeing a giraffe.