

- Primary Activities
- Agriculture Systems and Types
- Mining: Factors and Methods
- Solved Examples
- Practice Set
- Answer Key
- Quick Reference
- Glossary
- Chronology of Primary Activities

Primary Activities

Primary activities are economic activities that involve the direct use of natural resources from the earth. These activities depend heavily on the water, vegetation, minerals, and other natural resources.

Hunting, Gathering, Pastoralism and Herding

Hunting and gathering are the oldest forms of primary activities where early humans hunted animals and gathered edible plants for survival.

Pastoral nomadism or nomadic herding is a subsistence activity where herders rely on animals for food, clothing, shelter, and transport. Non-temperate regions, such as the Himalayas.

Commercial livestock rearing is a more organized and capital-intensive activity practiced on permanent ranches, producing meat, wool, hides, and other products.

Exam Questions

Q1: What are primary activities and why are they dependent on the environment?

A1: Primary activities involve the direct use of natural resources such as land, water, and minerals. They depend on the environment because they are directly affected by natural conditions.

Q2: Differentiate between pastoral nomadism and commercial livestock rearing.

A2: Pastoral nomadism is a subsistence activity where herders move with their animals to find pastures, relying on animals for their livelihood. Commercial livestock rearing is a more organized and capital-intensive activity practiced on permanent ranches, producing meat, wool, hides, and other products.

Agriculture Systems and Types

Agriculture is the practice of farming, including soil cultivation and animal rearing. It is practiced under various physical and socio-economic conditions.

Subsistence Agriculture

Subsistence agriculture is where farmers grow food primarily for their own consumption. It includes:

- **Primitive Subsistence Agriculture (Shifting Cultivation):** Vegetation is cleared by fire (slash and burn), and primitive tools are used. After
- **Intensive Subsistence Agriculture:** Characterized by high labor input and small landholdings. It has two types: dominated by wet paddy

Commercial Agriculture

Commercial agriculture involves farming for sale and profit, often with large capital investment and mechanization. Types include:

- **Plantation Agriculture:** Large estates growing single crops like tea, coffee, or rubber, requiring scientific methods, cheap labor, and good
- **Extensive Commercial Grain Cultivation:** Large mechanized farms growing wheat, barley, oats, and rye.
- **Mixed Farming:** Moderate-sized farms growing crops and rearing animals, using crop rotation and inter-cropping.
- **Dairy Farming:** Capital and labor-intensive rearing of milch animals for milk production.
- **Mediterranean Agriculture:** Specialized commercial farming producing fruits, vegetables, olives, and grapes in Mediterranean climates.
- **Market Gardening and Horticulture:** Cultivation of high-value crops like vegetables and flowers for urban markets, often using advanced
- **Co-operative Farming:** Farmers pool resources voluntarily for efficient farming while retaining individual land ownership.
- **Collective Farming:** Social ownership of land and collective labor, with small plots retained for personal use.

Exam Questions

Q1: What is shifting cultivation and why is it also called slash and burn agriculture?

A1: Shifting cultivation involves clearing vegetation by burning, which adds nutrients to the soil. It is called slash and burn because the vegeta

Q2: Describe the key features of plantation agriculture.

A2: Plantation agriculture involves large estates, capital investment, scientific cultivation methods, single crop specialization, cheap labor, ar

Mining: Factors and Methods

Mining is the process of extracting valuable minerals and metals from the earth's surface or subsurface for economic purposes. Its developm

Factors Affecting Mining

- **Physical Factors:** Size, grade, and mode of occurrence of mineral deposits.
- **Economic Factors:** Demand for minerals, available technology, capital for infrastructure, labor, and transport costs.

Methods of Mining

- **Surface Mining (Open-cast Mining):** Extraction of minerals near the surface by removing layers of soil and rock. It is cheaper and easier.
- **Underground Mining (Shaft Mining):** Used when minerals lie deep below the surface. It requires lifts, drills, ventilation, and is riskier due to

Developed economies are reducing mining activities due to high labor costs, while some countries in Africa, South America, and Asia rely he

Exam Questions

Q1: What are the two main types of mining and how do they differ?

A1: Surface mining involves extracting minerals near the surface by removing overlying material, while underground mining extracts minerals from beneath the ground.

Q2: What physical and economic factors influence mining activities?

A2: Physical factors include the size and quality of mineral deposits. Economic factors include demand, technology, capital, labor, and transportation costs.

Solved Examples

Example 1: Explain why shifting cultivation is practiced in tropical forest regions.

Solution: Shifting cultivation is practiced in tropical forest regions because the dense vegetation is cleared by burning, which adds nutrients to the soil. This method is suitable for areas with high population density.

Example 2: Describe the characteristics of dairy farming.

Solution: Dairy farming is capital and labor-intensive, involving the rearing of milch animals for milk production. It requires animal sheds, storage facilities, and veterinary services.

Practice Set

Easy

- Define primary activities.
- What is pastoral nomadism?

Moderate

- Explain the difference between primitive subsistence agriculture and intensive subsistence agriculture.
- List the factors affecting mining activities.

Challenging

- Discuss the advantages of cooperative farming.
- Compare and contrast open-cast mining and underground mining.

Answer Key

- **Primary activities:** Economic activities involving direct use of natural resources.

- **Pastoral nomadism:** A subsistence activity where herders move with their livestock in search of pastures.
- **Primitive vs Intensive Subsistence Agriculture:** Primitive involves shifting cultivation with primitive tools; intensive involves high labor input.
- **Factors affecting mining:** Physical (deposit size, grade), economic (demand, technology, capital, labor, transport).
- **Advantages of cooperative farming:** Resource pooling, efficient farming, shared profits, and retaining individual land ownership.
- **Open-cast vs Underground mining:** Open-cast is surface mining, cheaper and safer; underground mining is deep mining, more expensive.

Quick Reference

- **Primary Activities:** Hunting, gathering, pastoralism, agriculture, mining.
- **Subsistence Agriculture:** Primitive (shifting cultivation), Intensive (wet paddy and other crops).
- **Commercial Agriculture:** Plantation, extensive grain, mixed farming, dairy, Mediterranean, market gardening.
- **Mining Methods:** Surface (open-cast), underground (shaft).

Glossary

- **Primary Activities:** Economic activities involving direct extraction of natural resources.
- **Pastoral Nomadism:** A form of subsistence herding involving seasonal movement of livestock.
- **Shifting Cultivation:** Agricultural system where land is cleared by burning and cultivated temporarily.
- **Plantation Agriculture:** Large-scale commercial farming of a single crop.
- **Open-cast Mining:** Surface mining method involving removal of surface layers.
- **Underground Mining:** Mining method involving extraction from deep below the surface.
- **Cooperative Farming:** Farming system where farmers pool resources but retain individual land ownership.

Chronology of Primary Activities

Time Period / Year	Event / Change
Prehistoric Era	Hunting and Gathering
Ancient Times	Domestication of Animals
Medieval Period	Development of Shifting Cultivation
Industrial Revolution	Expansion of Mining
Modern Era	Commercial Agriculture and Cooperative Farming

Example: Early humans using primitive tools for hunting.

Hunting and Gathering

Nomadic Herding (e.g., cattle in tropical Africa, camels in Sahara)

Commercial Livestock Rearing (e.g., sheep, cattle, and goats in commercial ranches)

Pastoralism

Primitive Subsistence Agriculture (e.g., shifting cultivation in tropical regions)

Intensive Subsistence Agriculture (e.g., wet paddy dominant in monsoon Asia)

Plantation Agriculture (e.g., tea and coffee plantations introduced by Europeans)

Extensive Commercial Grain Cultivation (e.g., wheat in the Canadian Prairies)

Mixed Farming (e.g., crops and animal husbandry in Northwestern Europe)

Dairy Farming (e.g., highly developed near urban centers like North Western Europe)

Mediterranean Agriculture (e.g., citrus fruits, viticulture in Mediterranean regions)

Market Gardening and Horticulture (e.g., high value crops near urban markets in Western Europe)

Surface Mining (e.g., open-cast mining for minerals close to the surface)

Underground Mining (e.g., shaft mining for deep-seated minerals)

Mining



1. Types of Primary Activities

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