

# guns, germs, and steel essay sample

[Science](#), [Agriculture](#)



What was great about the “ Fertile Crescent”?

The big four livestock animals; cows, pigs, sheep, and goats, were native to the Middle East. Also, due to its fertile land, the Fertile Crescent housed the best crops in the world. The great crops and animals it had benefited the civilizations it reached.

Why do the people in New Guinea struggle to thrive (what holds them back)?

New Guinea’s geography didn’t have as many advantages as other civilizations. They didn’t acquire the same raw materials as Americans and Europeans (cows, sheep, goats, horses, wheat, barley). New Guinea agriculture was not productive enough to generate food surpluses. As a result, New Guineans were too busy farming, instead of specializing in something (no metalworkers, no metal tools). Westerners, on the other hand, were able to supply their population with a surplus amount of food, leading to more advanced technology.

How are people domesticating crops to get bigger, tastier yields? People interferes with nature by planting an harvesting anytime they think is suitable. They also choose the type of crop they want to replant to increase the following year’s harvest.

According to Diamond, livestock also play a huge role in a civilization’s ability to become rich and powerful. How did the domestication of animals help people? Give examples:

- The use of animals such as a horse as transportaion and warfare
- They provided fertilizer for feilds
- Animals were used to make clothing

List 4 of the animals that have been domesticated

a. pig  
b. cow  
c. sheep  
d. goat

What do they have in common?

They are all resourceful.

How did the ability to domesticate animals help a civilization's ability to become rich and powerful? a. Allowed people to stay in one area

b. People didn't have to hunt.

What happened to the " Fertile Crescent" over time? What caused this? It was abandoned, because the climate was too dry and its ecology was not suitable for continuous intensive farming.

Episode 2

At the time that the Spanish conquistador's invaded the Inca Empire, they were armed with state of the art weaponry. Describe this weaponry:

The Toledo sword was long, sharp and deadly. It was used for slashing and stabbing and was able to kill dozens within a short time. The Spanish Conquistadors rode on horses, which made them seem more god like.

What is Jared Diamond's explanation for why the Spanish had advanced to steel swords while Inca's were still making tools and weapons from bronze? Europe was geographically closer to the Fertile Crescent, so they inherited 7,000 years of metal technology. They had more time to devote on a specialization so they spent more effort developing stronger weapons.

b. How did their diversified society help with this cause?

There were people specializing in specific fields, so there were people who were specialized in metal work. Those people made weapons, while others are farming or doing something else.

What battle tactics were used by the conquistadors to help them defeat the large Inca army?

The Spaniards surprised the Incas by riding on horseback and firing gunshots. All these factors were foreign to Incas. As the Incas were fleeing rather than fighting back, the Spaniards killed many.

b. What did the Incas need to do to be successful in war? Fight back despite the contrast of weaponry, because the Incas greatly outnumbered the Spaniards.

According to Diamond, what made the Europeans “accidental conquerors”? The location of Europe allowed them to be the first to have guns, germs, and steel, which was a great advantage in conquering less developed civilizations.

Guns, Germs, and Steel Episode 3

Europeans were able to develop guns, germs, and steel to help them conquer the world. What does Diamond think helped them the most in developing those factors? Germs, because they spread the fastest without any effort.

Why were Europeans successful on the South African cape? How was it similar to back home? The temperature and climate was similar to back home. That allowed Europeans to grow the same type of crops and raise the same livestock as they did back home.

Why did people in the African cape and Americas struggle so much with the germs that the Europeans brought? The people of the African Cape were never exposed to these germs before, so their body is not naturally immune to them as the Europeans are. The germs killed a massive amount of the African cape population.

How did the native African eventually protect themselves from the germs causing Smallpox and Malaria? Smallpox: Their bodies developed immunity due to repeated exposure to this disease

Malaria: They knew how to prevent them by living in high and dry climates.

What is the number one public health problem in Zambia? Malaria How has this problem effected the poverty level in Zambia?

The average life span was 35 years. Since Malaria affects children very frequently, mothers are nursing them, instead of contributing to society.

How have other countries such as Malaysia and Singapore developed rich economies despite having many of the same geographic problems face by African nations? Understanding the environment the burden germs can cause, allowed Malaysians and people in Singapore to eliminate diseases and focus in positive aspects of their environment.