

# Specialization and Interdependence

To increase the production of goods and services, workers often **specialize**, or become good at one kind of job. As workers specialize, they become more dependent on one another for products, services, and resources. **How will this lesson improve your understanding of how businesses work and depend on one another in North Carolina?**

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A black and white photograph of a worker in a warehouse. The worker is wearing a safety vest and is operating a forklift. The forklift is carrying a large stack of boxes. The worker is looking towards the camera. The background shows the interior of a warehouse with various equipment and structures.

A WORKER IN A NORTH CAROLINA  
WAREHOUSE



NORTH CAROLINA  
STANDARD COURSE OF STUDY

6.07 Describe the ways North Carolina specializes in economic activity and the relationship between specialization and interdependence.

## Division of Labor

❶ How do the words that make up the term *division of labor* give you clues to its meaning?

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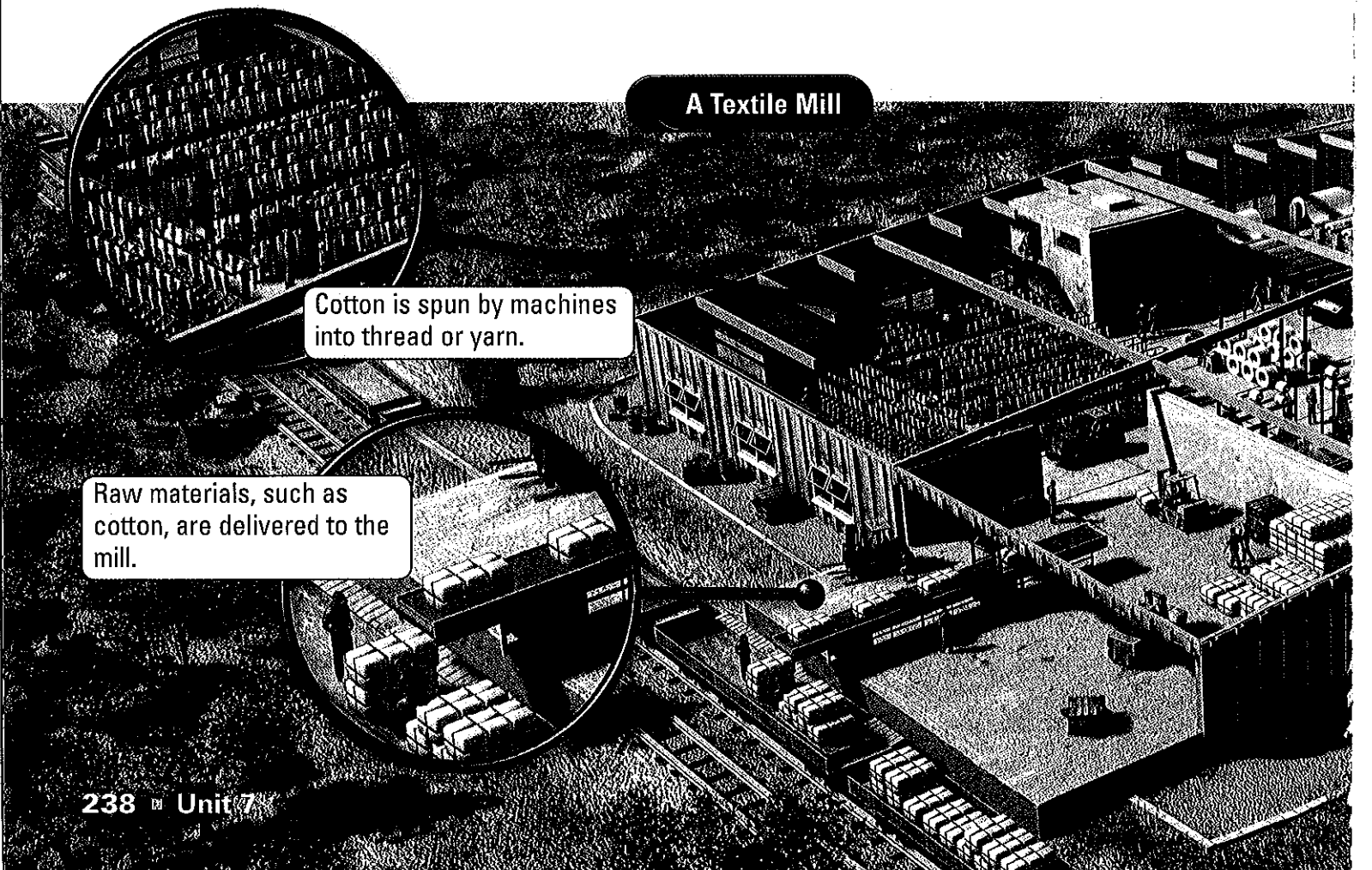
❷ Study the illustration. Place an X over two examples of division of labor.

Many businesses in North Carolina specialize in making one kind of product or providing one kind of service. To increase production, work is often divided into different jobs or tasks. This is called **division of labor**.

Division of labor allows businesses to provide products and services more quickly and for less money. Instead of making items one at a time, workers make several at the same time by using different steps. Each worker specializes in one part of a larger job.

In North Carolina's textile industry, for example, some workers specialize in running machines that spin raw cotton into threads. At the same time, other workers specialize in using machines to weave threads into cloth. Still others specialize in coloring or printing patterns on the finished cloth.

A Textile Mill



Cotton is spun by machines into thread or yarn.

Raw materials, such as cotton, are delivered to the mill.

# Interdependence

As businesses specialize, they depend on other businesses for raw materials, products, and services. Depending on one another for products and services is called **interdependence** (in•ter•dih•PEN•duhns).

For example, textile mills in North Carolina depend on cotton farmers for raw materials. They also depend on chemical manufacturers for synthetic (sin•THET•ik) fibers and dyes. *Synthetic fibers* are made from chemicals, not from plants or animal hairs. Dyes are used to color cloth.

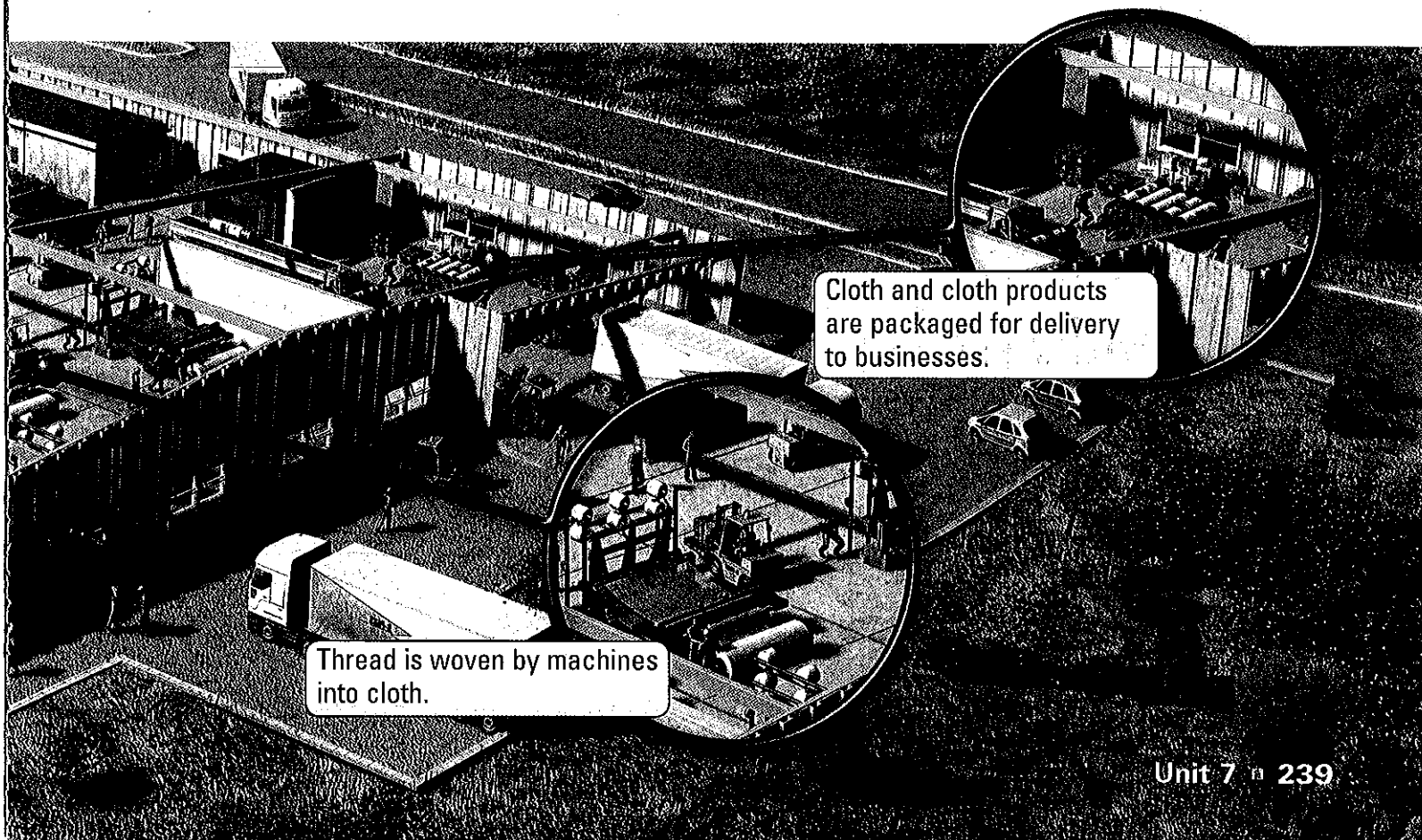
Textile mills often depend on transportation companies to bring raw materials to them. They also use transportation companies to deliver finished products to stores, customers, and other businesses. Textile mills sometimes depend on other businesses to sell their products to stores and customers.

3 Write down the subject to which the context clues refer.

- mills depend on cotton farmers
- mills depend on transportation
- mills depend on chemical manufacturers

Subject: \_\_\_\_\_

4 Classify two details from this page under the category of interdependence.



Thread is woven by machines into cloth.

Cloth and cloth products are packaged for delivery to businesses.

1. **SUMMARIZE** Why do North Carolina workers and industries specialize?

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2. What does **interdependence** mean?

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3. What are the effects of specialization?

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4. How are specialization and interdependence related?

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**Circle the letter of the correct answer.**

5. Which of these is an effect of division of labor?

- A Products costs more.
- B Workers make more goods.
- C Work takes a longer time.
- D Workers make fewer products.

6. How do most industries use division of labor?

- A Workers depend on others to do their work for them.
- B Workers perform all the steps in making a product.
- C Workers in the company perform one part of a larger job.
- D Workers divide natural resources to make more products.

7. Which of these supplies raw materials to textile mills?

- A dairy farmers
- B cotton farmers
- C lumber mills
- D tobacco farmers

### *activity*



**Draw an Illustration** Using information from this lesson, draw an illustration showing the steps needed to make a product.