

## Answer Key

1. What is a raised bed garden?  
**Permanent beds which are raised a few inches above the soil level and arranged just wide enough to reach across by hand.**
2. When did the idea of planting crops in single file begin?  
**When the horse and plow needed space between rows to cultivate crops on a large scale.**
3. Even though raised beds are expensive and time consuming to build, what are two advantages of having them?  
**Raised beds will keep soil in place during heavy rains and will stay neater looking in the landscape.**
4. Benefits (briefly describe each in your own words)
  - a) Higher Yields – **More square feet of garden space is used to grow plants and less is used for pathways. Due to wide rows, individual plant yields may be slightly less but more plants can be grown in a given space.**
  - b) Better Soil – **Amendments such as compost and fertilizer are only spread on beds and not wasted on pathways. Soil can have higher organic matter levels, remain untrodden — and thus remain uncompacted and better drained.**
  - c) Decreased Water Use – **Plants grown close together shade the soil, decrease evaporation and keep roots cooler. Water is only provided to the beds and not to the pathways.**
  - d) Fewer Weeds – **High-plant population in the bed keeps weeds crowded out. Pathways can be covered in landscape fabric or mulch to choke out weeds. The need to frequently rototill the garden can be eliminated.**
  - e) Extended Season – **Soil in raised beds can be worked earlier in the season and warms up earlier than traditional gardens. Rainy weather is less of a hindrance to getting into the garden.**
  - f) Better Pest Control - **Raised bed gardens are easy to cover with insect screening fabric. Crops are easy to rotate from bed to bed — preventing a buildup of pests. Plants are healthier and more resistant to insect and disease attack.**

5. Should the raised bed be one long and narrow bed or a few shorter beds? Why?  
**Several beds of identical dimension are easier to manage than a longer single bed; several separate beds in the garden will make crop rotation and pest control easier.**
6. How should the beds be laid out?  
**For best light exposure, plan to build beds in a north to south orientation. Paths between beds can be as narrow as one foot wide but make them wide enough to comfortably work.**
7. Before you stake and string an area, what must you do?  
**Eliminate all weeds and turf.**
8. If you are building a framed bed, what can the frame be made of?  
**Treated lumber, treated landscape timbers, concrete blocks, rock or bricks.**
9. Why should railroad ties not be used?  
**The chemicals used in railroad ties are considered toxic and can burn tender plants.**
10. What vegetables or types of vegetable could be grown in a raised bed garden?  
**No special varieties are needed for raised bed gardens; however, the more compact types of vegetables will leave room for a larger harvest.**