

Railroads of the West

Curriculum Unit for Grades Three-Five

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Written by Erica Christie

Curriculum That Matters, LLC

Eiteljorg Museum of American Indians and Western Art

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Curriculum Overview

The *Railroads of the West* curriculum introduces students to and engages students with the history, culture, and impact of the railroads in the American West from 1850-1900. Though the curriculum focuses primarily on the latter half of the nineteenth century, there is an extension activity offered for students to continue learning about the development of railroads in the twentieth century and today.

The unit features four exploratory, hands-on lessons that can be taught in sequence for an integrated thematic unit or separately as stand-alone lessons if desired. A brief description of each lesson is provided below.

Lesson One: An Introduction to the Railroads of the West

This lesson introduces students to the history of railroads in the American West during the time period of 1850-1900. Students watch a short video about the Transcontinental Railroad, work together to create a timeline of historical events about the development of the railroad in the West, and engage in a map activity tracking the construction of the railroad. Extend the lesson by adding events from the twentieth and twenty-first centuries to the timeline and discussing the role of railroads in the United States today.

Lesson Two: “I’ve Been Working On The Railroad”: An Exploration of Railroad Jobs

In this lesson, students explore four common jobs on the railroad in the late nineteenth century. After listening to and analyzing the classic song, “I’ve Been Working on the Railroad,” students work together in teams to learn about one of four railroad jobs—Chinese railroad builders, porters, conductors, and engineers—through investigating a hands-on job bag filled with primary source documents, images, artifacts, and a fact sheet. Students then creatively share what they learned about their job with the rest of the class and complete a Venn diagram comparing and contrasting two railroad jobs.

Lesson Three: What was it like to travel west on the railroads circa 1880? An Inquiry Exploration

This lesson features a classroom inquiry exploration of the essential question, “What was it like to travel west on the railroads circa 1880?” After making initial predictions, students explore five centers, working with primary source documents, maps, images, first-hand accounts, and online simulations to build historical knowledge. The class revisits the essential question and share what they have learned about the experience of traveling on the railroads at this time.

Lesson Four: How did the railroads impact the American West?

In this lesson, students observe and analyze primary source images of people, places, and animals that were impacted by the development of railroads in the American West during the latter half of the twentieth century. Students construct a T-Chart about the positive and negative impacts of the railroads on West, comparing multiple perspectives on these environmental, economic, and cultural changes. Finally, students write a letter or diary entry from the perspective of one entity they studied throughout the unit, utilizing historical information and detail to bring their perspective to life.

Curriculum Standards

Railroads of the West was designed to meet Indiana Core Academic Standards in Social Studies and English Language Arts for Third, Fourth, and Fifth Grades.

Grade Three, Social Studies

- *Chronology, Analysis and Interpretation.* Identify important events in the region by creating and using timelines. Distinguish fact and fiction in historical accounts and use a variety of resources to learn about regional communities. [Standard Indicators: 3.1.5, 3.1.6, 3.1.8, 3.2.7]
- *Maps and Globes.* Identify the hemispheres and use cardinal and intermediate directions to determine the direction from one place to another. Use simple grid systems, symbols and other information to locate the physical and political features of places in the Midwest on maps and globes. [Standard Indicators: 3.3.1, 3.3.2, 3.3.3]

Grade Three, English Language Arts

- *Key Idea and Details.* Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers. Determine the main idea of a text; recount the key details and explain how they support the main idea. Describe the relationship between a series of historical events, scientific ideas or concepts, or steps in technical procedures in a text, using language that pertains to time, sequence, and cause/effect.
- *Integration of Knowledge and Ideas.* Use information gained from illustrations (e.g., maps, photographs) and the words in a text to demonstrate understanding of the text (e.g., where, when, why, and how key events occur). Describe the logical connection between particular sentences and paragraphs in a text (e.g., comparison, cause/effect, first/second/third in a sequence). Compare and contrast the most important points and key details presented in two texts on the same topic.
- *Text Types and Purposes.* Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.
- *Research to Build and Present Knowledge.* Conduct short research projects that build knowledge about a topic. Recall information from experiences or gather information from print and digital sources; take brief notes on sources and sort evidence into provided categories.

Grade Four, Social Studies

- *Chronology, Analysis and Interpretation.* Interpret timelines to show the relationship of people and events. Distinguish historical fact from opinion. Describe the importance of artists and writers to state history and culture.[Standard Indicators: 4.1.15, 4.1.16, 4.1.18]

Grade Four, English Language Arts

- *Key Ideas and Details.* Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text. Determine the main idea of a text and explain how it is supported by key details; summarize the text. Explain events, procedures, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text, including what happened and why, based on specific information in the text.
- *Integration of Knowledge and Ideas.* Interpret information presented visually, orally, or quantitatively (e.g., in charts, graphs, diagrams, time lines, animations, or interactive elements on Web pages) and explain how the information contributes to an understanding of the text in which it appears. Integrate information from two texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.
- *Text Types and Purposes.* Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.
- *Research to Build and Present Knowledge.* Conduct short research projects that build knowledge through investigation of different aspects of a topic. Recall relevant information from experiences or gather relevant information from print and digital sources; take notes and categorize information, and provide a list of sources.

Grade Five, Social Studies

- *Chronology, Analysis and Interpretation.* Create and interpret timelines showing significant people and events in early United States history. Read primary and secondary sources to interpret historical events. Use primary sources to ask questions and interpret early United States culture.[Standard Indicators: 5.1.17, 5.1.20, 5.1.21]
- *Geography, Maps and Globes.* Demonstrate the use of latitude and longitude. Identify regions states, cities and natural features on maps and describe climate regions. [Standard Indicators: 5.3.1, 5.3.2, 5.3.3, 5.3.6, 5.3.7]
- *Human and Physical Systems.* Explain how land features, climate and the location of resources affected the settlement patterns of the United States. Describe how early settlers and Native American Indians adapted to and altered the physical environment. [Standard Indicators: 5.3.4, 5.3.8, 5.3.9, 5.3.11, 5.3.12]

Grade Five, English Language Arts

- *Key Idea and Details.* Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text. Determine two or more main ideas of a text and explain how they are supported by key details; summarize the text. Explain the relationships or interactions between two or more individuals, events, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text based on specific information in the text.
- *Craft and Structure.* Analyze multiple accounts of the same event or topic, noting important similarities and differences in the point of view they represent.
- *Integration of Knowledge and Ideas.* Draw on information from multiple print or digital sources, demonstrating the ability to locate an answer to a question quickly or to solve a problem efficiently. Explain how an author uses reasons and evidence to support particular points in a text, identifying which reasons and evidence support which point(s). Integrate information from several texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.
- *Text Types and Purposes.* Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.
- *Research to Build and Present Knowledge.* Conduct short research projects that use several sources to build knowledge through investigation of different aspects of a topic. Recall relevant information from experiences or gather relevant information from print and digital sources; summarize or paraphrase information in notes and finished work, and provide a list of sources.

Railroads of the West Children's Literature and Online Resource Suggestions

Children's Literature

Curlee, Lynn. *Trains*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2009.

Evans, Clark. *The Central Pacific Railroad*. New York: Children's Press, 2003.

Fraser, Mary Ann. *Ten Mile Day and the Building of the Transcontinental Railroad*. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1993.

Galford, Ellen. *The Trail West: Exploring History Through Art*. Chanhassen, MN: Two-Can Publishing, 2005.

Graham, Ian. *You Wouldn't Want to Work on the Railroad! A Track You'd Rather Not Go Down*. New York: Children's Press, 2000.

Halpern, Monica. *Railroad Fever: Building the Transcontinental Railroad 1830-1870*. Washington, D.C.: National Geographic, 2004.

Judge, Lita. *Yellowstone Moran: Painting the American West*. New York: Viking, 2009.

Metzler, Milton. *Hear that Train Whistle Blow! How the Railroad Changed the World*. New York: Random House, 2004.

Murphy, Jim. *Across America on an Emigrant Train*. New York: Clarion Books, 1993.

Newman, Patricia. *Jingle the Brass*. New York: Farrar Straus Giroux, 2004.

O'Brien, Patrick. *Steam, Smoke, and Steel: Back in Time with Train*. Watertown, MA: Charlesbridge: 2000.

Perritano, John. *The Transcontinental Railroad*. New York: Scholastic, 2010.

Thompson, Linda. *The Transcontinental Railroad*. Vero Beach, Florida: Rourke Publishing, 2005.

Todd, Traci. *C is for Caboose*. San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2007.

Tuttle, Liza. *A Multicultural Portrait of the Railroads*. New York: Marshall Cavendish, 1994.

Wadsworth, Ginger. *Camping with the President*. Honesdale, PA: Calkins Creek, 2009.

Yep, Laurence. *Dragon's Gate*. New York: Harper Collins, 1993.

Yin. *Coolies*. New York: Philomel Books, 2001.

Online Resources

A. Phillip Randolph Pullman Porter Museum: <http://www.aphiliprandolphmuseum.com/>

California State Railroad Museum: <http://www.csrnf.org/>

Central Pacific Railroad Photographic History Museum: <http://www.cprh.org/>

Library of Congress, American Memory Project: Chinese in California 1850-1925:
<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/award99/cubhtml/cichome.html>

Library of Congress, American Memory Project: History of the American West 1860-1920:
<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/award97/codhtml/hawphome.html>

Library of Congress, American Memory Project: Railroad Maps:
<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/gmdhtml/rrhtml/rrhome.html>

National Railroad Museum: <http://www.nationalrrmuseum.org/>

PBS website to accompany the Ken Burns and Steven Ives series, "New Perspectives on the West": <http://www.pbs.org/weta/thewest/>

PBS website to accompany the *American Experience* series on the Transcontinental Railroad:
<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/films/tcrr/>.

Smithsonian National Museum of American History, "America on the Move" Exhibit,
<http://americanhistory.si.edu/onthemove/>

Union Pacific Railroad Museum: <http://www.uprrmuseum.org/>

Washington State History Museum, "The West The Railroad Made" Exhibit,

<http://stories.washingtonhistory.org/Railroads/>

Lesson One: An Introduction to the Railroads of the West

Lesson Overview:

This lesson introduces students to the history of railroads in the American West during the time period of 1850-1900. Students watch a short video about the Transcontinental Railroad, work together to create a timeline of historical events about the development of the railroad in the West, and engage in a map activity tracking the construction of the railroad. Extend the lesson by adding events from the twentieth and twenty-first centuries to the timeline and discussing the role of railroads in the United States today.

Objectives:

Students will:

- Construct a timeline of historical events about the development of the railroad in the American West.
- Identify which events on the timeline are the most historically significant.
- Track railroad routes on a historic map.
- Create map symbols, a map key, and a compass rose.

Time: 45-60 minutes

Materials:

- Computer with internet access and projector
- Chalk or markers
- Tape or magnets
- Colored pencils or markers
- Printed copy of Railroads of the West Timeline—cut each fact into separate slips of paper
- Copies of 1883 railroad map, 1 for each partnership: [http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/gmd:@field\(NUMBER+@band\(g3701p+rr003300\)\)](http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/gmd:@field(NUMBER+@band(g3701p+rr003300)))
- “Follow the Tracks: A Map Activity” student directions sheet, 1 for each partnership

Lesson Procedures:

Part One: Engagement

1. Begin class by asking students for their own travel experiences. Have they ever been on a train, flown on a plane, or taken a long car trip? Has anyone taken a trip to the Atlantic or Pacific Oceans? Discuss the length, ease, and expense of these modern-day trips.

2. Ask students to imagine what life was like before planes and cars. How did people travel? In what ways was travelling easier? How was travelling more difficult? How has transportation changed over time?

3. Inform students that over the next few days we are going to be learning about the development of railroads that connected our country from coast to coast during the latter half of the twentieth century. We will be learning about the people who rode the rails and their diverse experiences on the train. We will also be learning about the people who worked on the trains and the impact that the railroad had on our country, the environment, and the economy.

Part Two: Exploration

4. Show students a short video (3:27 minutes) about the history and impact of the Transcontinental Railroad, available at: <http://www.history.com/topics/transcontinental-railroad/videos#transcontinental-railroad>.

5. Discuss video with class. What did students find most interesting? What information did students find surprising? What questions do they have about the railroad?

6. Next, have students work together to learn more about the history of railroads in the West by constructing a timeline. Draw a long horizontal line on the board to represent a timeline. Place markers with 1841 on the left side and 1889 on the right side of the time line, with arrows pointing in both directions indicating that time is ongoing into the past and future. Be sure to include the current year on the timeline as well.

7. Pass out slips of paper with historical events to students. Each student should have at least one historical event. The timeline provided in this lesson features 33 historical events related to the development of the railroad in the West during the latter half of the twentieth century. If desired, simplify the timeline and select fewer events for students to place on the timeline.

8. Give students time to read about the historical event. Draw student's attention to the timeline on the board and ask who thinks they have the first event on the timeline. Ask this student to read their event aloud and place it on the correct spot on the timeline using tape or a magnet. Continue building the timeline by having students share their information and place it on the timeline at the correct spot. There are several years with multiple events so students will have to look closely at the month and day to build the timeline.

9. After constructing the timeline, ask students what events they think they were most important in the development of the railroad and explain their rationale for selecting these events. Place stars next to these "turning-point events." If desired, continue tracing the history of railroads through the twentieth century and up to today. A suggested extension is provided below.

10. Next, ask students to find a partner. Pass out a copy of the 1883 map of the transcontinental railroad routes to each partnership, as well as a copy of the "Follow the Track: A Map Activity" student direction sheet. Review directions of the map activity with students. Students should work together to label the Central Pacific and Union Pacific construction routes, create map symbols, and make a simple map key and compass rose.

Part Three: Synthesis

11. After students have completed the map activity, have each partnership join with one other partnership and share their maps. Ask groups to notice how each other marked routes, created symbols, and made a key and compass rose.

12. After a few moments, gather back together as a class and lead a discussion about the map activity. Ask students what new information they learned about the railroad by constructing their maps. What important connections do you notice between the timeline and the map?

13. Revisit the previously-created list of questions that students had about railroads in the West. Add new questions to the list that have arisen over the course of the lesson.

Assessment:

Informal assessment can be conducted during the timeline activity. Keep a class list handy and jot down a check mark or quick notes next to each student's name regarding their ability to place their historical fact in the correct place on the timeline. If desired, the maps can also be collected and assessed in a more formal way to see if students followed directions in marking the railroad routes and symbols, as well as creating a map key.

Extension Activity:

Though this curriculum is primarily focused on the history, culture, and impact of the railroads during the latter half of the nineteenth century, it is important for students to understand that railroads continued to develop throughout the twentieth century and remain a significant form of transportation today. Have students research the modern development of railroads and add key events to the timeline. Some helpful resources to help students extend the timeline include: <http://www.ambrosevideo.com/resources/documents/Railroads%20in%20U%20S%20%20History%20Timeline.pdf>, <http://www.american-rails.com/railroad-history.html>, and http://www.inrd.com/documents/news_releases/Mileposts_25-1_web.pdf.

In addition, show students a short video clip (2:41 minutes) about the history of the railroads in the United States from 1830 through the 1990s: <http://youtu.be/a8lX5A2q-Eo>. If desired, show students another video clip (2:51 minutes) about the history of Amtrak over the last 40 years: <http://youtu.be/vYQcpDlXXiE>.

After reviewing the videos, lead a discussion with students about railroads today. What role do railroads play in modern America? In what ways can railroads be considered a form of "green" transportation? How can we encourage more people to ride railroads and other forms of public transportation? What are some positives and negatives of building more railroads in the United States today?

Railroads of the West Timeline

Teachers: Cut each historical event into separate slips of paper prior to class.

September 9, 1850--Gold-rich California becomes the 30th state admitted into the Union.

June 1859--Discovery of the massive Comstock Lode lures miners to Virginia City, Nevada, in search of gold and silver ore. The news revitalizes the California mining economy, and urges exploration of a road east across the Sierra Nevada.

July 1860--Engineer and enthusiast Theodore Judah reaches Donner Pass (named for the ill-fated emigrants of 1846). Judah immediately recognizes the location as ideal for constructing a railroad line through the Sierra Nevada.

November 1860--Judah meets with Sacramento merchant Collis P. Huntington, who agrees to invest in his railroad project. Huntington brings in four other investors: Mark Hopkins, James Bailey, Charles Crocker, and Leland Stanford. The six men organize themselves as the first Board of Directors of the Central Pacific Railroad Company.

July 1, 1862--Congress passes and Lincoln signs the Pacific Railroad Bill. The document endorses Central Pacific efforts to build the California line while simultaneously chartering a Union Pacific Railroad Company to build west from the Missouri River. The bill grants each enterprise 6,400 acres of land and \$48,000 in government bonds per mile built. It does not designate a meeting point for the lines.

October 26, 1863--The Central Pacific spikes its first rails to ties.

October 30, 1863--Thomas C. Durant, who has illegally manipulated a controlling interest in the Union Pacific Railroad Company, gets himself appointed the railroad's vice president and general manager.

December 2, 1863--The Union Pacific breaks ground in Omaha, Nebraska, although it is some time before the railroad will go anywhere.

July 1, 1864--As lobbyists -- among them Durant, who hands out upwards of \$400,000 -- distribute cash and bonds among legislators, Congress passes a revised Pacific Railroad Bill. It doubles the land grant, cedes all natural resources on the line to the railroads, and removes limitations on individual stock ownership.

October 1864--Union Pacific crony Herbert M. Hoxie wins the Union Pacific construction bid, then signs the contract over to Durant's new company, Credit Mobilier. The move allows Durant to pay himself for construction, generating giant profits without congressional oversight.

November 29, 1864--The Sand Creek Massacre. Cavalrymen led by Colonel John Chivington slaughter 150 unarmed Cheyenne and Arapaho Indians, most of whom are women and children.

January 7, 1865--Cheyenne, Arapaho, and Sioux raiders ravage the would-be railroad town of Julesburg, Colorado, in retaliation for Sand Creek. They destroy telegraph wire in Platte Valley, then return and raze Julesburg to the ground.

January 20, 1865--President Abraham Lincoln asks Massachusetts senator Oakes Ames to help manage the Union Pacific Railroad. Oakes Ames soon invests in Credit Mobilier and promotes its interests in Washington, D.C. Around the same time, contractor Charles Crocker convinces Central Pacific foreman James Harvey Strobridge to try Chinese workers as a means of expanding their labor force, which at this time numbers just a few hundred Irishmen.

April 9, 1865--Robert E. Lee surrenders to Ulysses S. Grant. The Civil War ends. Masses of soldiers demobilize, many of whom will soon move west. The Union Pacific has yet to spike a rail. Five days later, on April 14, President Lincoln is assassinated. His body will be carried back to Illinois by rail, on a special Pullman car.

July 10, 1865--With Durant's activities facing increased scrutiny in D.C., the first rails of the Union Pacific line are spiked in Omaha.

Late Summer 1865--Central Pacific crews begin the slow job of hand-drilling 12 tunnels through the Sierra Nevada, averaging a few inches through the rock a day. By year's end approximately 6,000 Chinese men will work in and around the tunnels. They will constitute up to 80% of the workforce throughout the project.

October 6, 1866—Union Pacific crews pass the 100th Meridian line on the prairies of Nebraska, guaranteeing the Union Pacific the irrevocable right to continue westward, as stipulated in the Pacific Railroad Act. Durant throws a grand "100th Meridian Excursion" for dignified guests, featuring a mock Pawnee ambush.

December 21, 1866--Upset by increased military presence in the Powder River Valley, the most sacred and fertile hunting ground remaining in their possession, a group of Sioux warriors draws cocky Captain William J. Fetterman and his troops into a deadly ambush on the Bozeman trail.

May 1867--Led by the Ames brothers, officers of the Credit Mobilier remove Durant from the Union Pacific presidency. Thus begins a flurry of legal action initiated by Durant against both Credit Mobilier and the Union Pacific, even though he continues to exert nominal leadership over both companies.

June 25, 1867--Summit work in the Sierras grinds to a halt as Chinese workers strike for better wages and shorter hours. Crocker and Strobridge cut off food, supplies, and communication to the Chinese camps. One week later, the men will go back to work at the same wage.

August 28, 1867--Central Pacific workers blast through the rock of the Summit Tunnel, completing the most arduous of their tasks in the mountains.

November 30, 1867--As the Chinese lay track, Central Pacific directors lead a ceremonial train excursion to the eastern side of the Sierra Nevada.

April 16, 1868--Union Pacific construction surmounts the highest point on both lines: Sherman Summit, at an elevation of 8,200 feet in the Rockies. The race for completion -- and territorial holdings -- is on.

June 18, 1868--The first passenger train rumbles across the Sierras into Reno.

November 6, 1868--After months of skirmishes known as "Red Cloud's War," the government suggests a treaty, but Native American leader Red Cloud will not condescend to meet until the military have removed themselves from the Bozeman Trail. They agree, and Red Cloud signs the Powder River Treaty, which guarantees the Sioux their massive hunting ground in perpetuity. Red Cloud is thus considered the only native leader to have won a war with the United States.

April 8, 1869--After months of increased tension, closed-door Washington lobbying, Congressional pressure, and aborted meetings between the two companies, Dodge and

Huntington settle upon a meeting place for their two lines. It takes two days' worth of tempestuous argument, but the men negotiate convergence at Promontory Summit, Utah.

April 28, 1869--Victory Day. Charles Crocker decides he has one last thing to show the Union Pacific and the world. In a remarkable feat of strength and organization, his Central Pacific crews lay an unheard-of 10 miles of rail between sunrise and sunset.

May 6, 1869--As Pullman cars move westward toward Promontory Summit, unpaid tie workers block the line and a bridge washes out at Devil's Gate. These developments delay the arrival of Durant and Union Pacific dignitaries by two days.

May 10, 1869--Amidst a crowd of dignitaries and workers, with the engines No. 119 and Jupiter practically touching noses, the Central Pacific and Union Pacific railroads join together. Telegraph operators transmitting to both coasts transmit the blows of the hammer as they fall on a golden spike. The nation listens as west and east come together in undivided union.

1880--By this time, the Pacific railroad carries \$50 million worth of freight annually. It has served as artery for 200 million acres of settlement between the Mississippi and the Pacific. The Plains Indians have been scattered to reservations, and little over 1,000 buffalo remain of the millions that once populated the grasslands. A trip between San Francisco and New York, which once might have occupied six grueling months, now takes a few days.

1882--Ignoring the crucial role Chinese immigrants played in constructing the California infrastructure, Congress passes the Chinese Exclusion Act, banning further immigration of Chinese laborers into the United States for a period of 10 years. Congress will extend this Act in 1892, and again indefinitely in 1904.

February 1873--A Congressional committee investigates the Credit Mobilier. The scandal creates public disillusionment with elected leaders, but the committee hands out very little punishment. All major players escape unscathed, save scapegoat Oakes Ames, who is voted out of Congress and leaves Washington in shame. He will die just months later.

1889--An agreement with the U.S. government divides up Sioux territory in the Powder River Valley, once promised to Native Americans in perpetuity by the Treaty of 1868. The Sioux disperse to six smaller disconnected reservations, and the last great holding of an indigenous people is thrown open to white settlement.

Timeline Events from: <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/timeline/tcrr-timeline/>

Follow the Tracks: A Map Activity

Directions

1. In order to build the Transcontinental Railroad, the Union Pacific Railroad began building in Omaha, Nebraska and moved west and the Central Pacific Railroad Company began building in Sacramento, California and moved east. The two railroad lines finally connected in Promontory Summit, Utah in 1869.
2. Use this map to show how the two railroad lines were constructed. Mark the Union Pacific Route in one color and the Central Pacific Route in a different color.
3. Mark the spot where the two railroads met with a symbol for a golden spike, as they did in 1869. Create other symbols to represent mountains, oceans, and rivers.
4. Create a key for your map. Indicate the colors used to represent each railroad route and the meaning of the golden spike symbol, as well as any other symbols you created.
5. Create a compass rose to indicate directions (North, South, East, West).

Railroad Construction Routes

The Union Pacific Railroad

1. Omaha, Nebraska
2. Columbus, Nebraska
3. Plum Creek, Nebraska
4. North Platte, Nebraska
5. Julesburg, Nebraska
6. Sidney, Nebraska
7. Cheyenne, Wyoming
8. Laramie, Wyoming
9. Benton, Wyoming
10. Piedmont, Wyoming
11. Bear River City, Wyoming
12. Devil's Gate
13. Ogden, Wyoming

14. Promontory Summit, Utah The Central Pacific Railroad

1. Sacramento, California
2. Roseville, California
3. Newcastle, California
4. Colfax, California
5. Alta, California
6. Cisco, California
7. Truckee, California
8. Reno, Nevada
9. Wadsworth, Nevada
10. Promontory Summit, Utah

Lesson Two: “I’ve Been Working On The Railroad”: An Exploration of Railroad Jobs

Lesson Overview:

In this lesson, students explore four common jobs on the railroad in the late nineteenth century. After listening to and analyzing the classic song, “I’ve Been Working on the Railroad,” students work together in teams to learn about one of four common railroad jobs—Chinese railroad builders, porters, conductors, and engineers—through investigating a hands-on job bag filled with primary source documents, images, artifacts, and a fact sheet. Students then creatively shares what they learned about their job with the rest of the class and complete a Venn diagram comparing and contrasting two railroad jobs.

Objectives:

Students will:

- Analyze a classic railroad song.
- Investigate primary source documents, images, and artifacts to build historical knowledge.
- Work collaboratively as a team to create a poster and present it to class.
- Discuss race and social issues at the time.
- Compare railroad jobs using a Venn diagram.

Time: 60-90 minutes

Materials:

- Computer with Internet access
- Poster board or chart paper
- Markers
- Board with chalk or dry-erase markers
- Student copies of Exit Slip
- Four Railroad Job Bags (*Note: These bags require advance preparation on the part of the teacher. You will need to print fact sheets, images, and primary source documents, as well as gather artifacts if you wish. See page 21 for details.*)

Lesson Procedures:

Part One: Engagement

1. Play the classic song “I’ve been working on the Railroad” for students. Song lyrics and recording available at: <http://kids.niehs.nih.gov/lyrics/railroad.htm>. After listening to the song, ask students to share their thoughts about the lyrics and the feelings evoked by the song.
2. Ask students to consider what it might have been like to work on the railroad in the late nineteenth century. Brainstorm and record a list of jobs that students think might have been involved with the early railroads.

Part Two: Exploration

3. Divide class into four groups. Inform students that today each group is going to become experts on one common type of railroad job or group of people who worked on the railroads. We will be exploring Chinese railroad builders, porters, conductors, and engineers. It is important for students to understand that in addition to these four groups there were other important groups of people and jobs who worked on the railroad and made significant contributions to railroad history. If desired, create job bags around other occupations or groups of people, such as Irish railroad builders, maids, firemen, or tower operators.
4. Explain the task to students: Each group will be assigned one of these four common railroad jobs and given a bag full of information about the job. Inside each bag students will find a fact sheet with helpful background information and history about the job and the people who did this job. Students will also find pictures, primary source documents, and artifacts related to this job. Together as a team, students’ task is to investigate all of these materials and become experts on their railroad job.
5. In addition to the bags, give each team a piece of chart paper or piece of poster board and markers. After students have had time to explore their bags, ask students to work together as a team to record what they have learned in a creative way. They might draw a concept map, write a bulleted list, or make a graffiti board with images and text.
6. Provide students time to explore their bags and complete their posters (approximately 30 minutes).

Part Three: Synthesis

7. Bring class back together. Have each group share their posters and teach the rest of the class about the job they studied. If desired, have groups share the most interesting artifacts or images from their bags in addition to their posters.
8. Lead a discussion with the class about working on the railroad in the late nineteenth century. Possible discussion questions include:
 - If you could be a railroad worker, which job would you have chosen? Why? Describe a day in your life.

- What examples of racism and discrimination did you notice among the different railroad jobs? Why do you think this racism existed?
- Did you find any examples of activism or people fighting to improve their working conditions?
- None of these jobs featured female employees. Why not?

9. To extend this conversation, complete a Venn diagram comparing two of the contrasting jobs students learned about today, such as comparing porters to conductors or Chinese railroad builders to engineers. Draw two large, overlapping circles on the board and label the Venn diagram with the chosen jobs. Ask students to contribute ideas for ways in which each job was similar and different from the other.

Part Four: Assessment

9. Ask students to complete the “I’ve Been Working on the Railroads” Exit Slip. An exit slip is a short assessment that allows teachers a glimpse into student understanding of the lesson. It should take students no more than five minutes to complete and can be turned in to the teacher on the way out of the class or before moving on to the next subject.

Railroad Jobs Bags

Prior to class, the teacher will need to create four Railroad Jobs bags. Each bag will house information, images, and artifacts about one common railroad job.

Though any bag can be used, creativity is encouraged and will increase student engagement in the activity. Consider what bag a person working this job might have carried. Perhaps a porter would have had an old, yet polished, piece of luggage to match his uniform. Maybe a Chinese railroad builder had a knapsack that they used to transport supplies from their base camp to work each day. A tool box might make a unique “bag” for an engineer, while a conductor would likely carry a small briefcase aboard for his accounting paperwork.

Inside each bag, place the fact sheet, primary source documents, and images. All of these can simply be printed from links provided. Consider adding artifacts to the bags to add a hands-on, tactile element. Artifacts, many of which can be found around your home or classroom, are suggested for each job.

Chinese Railroad Builder’s Bag

- Fact Sheet
- 1874 Chinese Newspaper http://cpr.org/Museum/Chinese_Newspapers.html
- Chinese Labor Pay Roll Ledger
http://cpr.org/Museum/Chinese_Laborers.html#China_Labour
- Chinese Exclusion Act:
<http://www.pbs.org/weta/thewest/resources/archives/seven/chinxact.htm#act>
- Image: <http://sunsite.berkeley.edu/cgi-bin/flipomatic/cic/images@ViewImage2?img=HN001637a>
- Image: <http://sunsite.berkeley.edu/cgi-bin/flipomatic/cic/images@ViewImage2?img=HN000004a>
- Image: http://sunsite.berkeley.edu/cgi-bin/flipomatic/cic/images@ViewImage?img=brk00003107_16a
- Copy of children’s book: *Coolies* by Yin, Illustrated by Chris Soentpiet (optional)
- *Suggested Artifacts*: chopsticks, small rice bowl, tea pot, tea cup, Chinese soup spoon, blue and white Chinese pottery, bamboo cooking tools, dominos

Porter’s Bag

- Fact Sheet
- Images: http://americanhistory.si.edu/onthemove/exhibition/exhibition_9_6.html
- Image: http://americanhistory.si.edu/onthemove/collection/object_520.html
- Porter Service Card: http://americanhistory.si.edu/onthemove/collection/object_184.html

- Union Membership Card:
http://americanhistory.si.edu/onthemove/collection/object_183.html
- Pullman Porter Cap: <http://museumca.org/picturethis/pictures/pullman-porter-cap>
- *Suggested Artifacts*: metal keys, small broom, carafe, clothing brush

Conductor's Bag

- Fact Sheet
- Image: http://americanhistory.si.edu/onthemove/collection/object_518.html
- Image: http://americanhistory.si.edu/onthemove/collection/object_517.html
- Ticket Punch: http://americanhistory.si.edu/onthemove/collection/object_75.html
- Conductor's Cap: http://americanhistory.si.edu/onthemove/collection/object_74.html
- Conductor's Ticket and Cash Case:
http://americanhistory.si.edu/onthemove/collection/object_76.html
- Conductor's pocket watch:
http://americanhistory.si.edu/onthemove/collection/object_73.html
- Book of Operating Rules:
http://americanhistory.si.edu/onthemove/collection/object_521.html
- *Suggested Artifacts*: pocket watch, hole punch, cash box, conductor figurine (from toy train set)

Engineer's Bag

- Fact Sheet
- Images of tool box, oil can, torch, wrench, hammer, chisel:
http://americanhistory.si.edu/onthemove/collection/object_15.html
- Image of conduct and engineer comparing watches:
http://americanhistory.si.edu/onthemove/collection/object_517.html
- Images of early engineers: http://cpr.org/Museum/Engineer_CDVs_Restored/
- Image: <http://www.rrmuseumpa.org/about/rrpeopleandsociety/engineer.htm>
- Certificate of Membership in Brotherhood of Engineers and Life Insurance Policy:
http://cpr.org/Museum/Ephemera/BLE_Life_Insurance.html
- Artificial Legs for Railroad Worker poster:
http://cpr.org/Museum/Ephemera/BLE_Life_Insurance.html
- Copy of children's book: *Steam, Smoke, and Steel: Back in Time with Train* by Patrick O'Brien
- *Suggested Artifacts*: tool box, wrench, hammer, miniature locomotive (from toy train set)

Fact Sheet: Chinese Railroad Builders

- Chinese peasants began arriving in California in masses in 1850s. Most of these immigrants came from the Canton Province in southern China, a place that was devastated by poverty, war, and overpopulation. These immigrants, mostly men, also heard about gold mines in California and made the journey across the ocean in search of jobs and money for their family.
- In 1856, the Central Pacific Railroad Company had a huge need for laborers to build railroads. At first, there was discrimination against the Chinese immigrants, but Charles Crocker, one of the main businessmen of the railroad, advocated for hiring the Chinese.
- The Chinese men who were hired to build the railroad proved to be hard-working, reliable, and punctual. By 1868, over 80% of Central Pacific's workers were Chinese immigrants. The company even advertised in China to attract more workers for its railroad projects.
- The Chinese workers often did very dangerous work. They blasted explosives through mountains to build tunnels, laid railroad ties across the Sierra Nevada Mountains, and hung in baskets from steep cliffs to chip away to granite. Many men did not survive the harsh winters and dangerous tasks.
- Workers lived in canvas tents or bunkhouses. While working on the railroad, each "gang" of twenty of workers had a chef who prepared traditional Chinese meals, including vegetables, chicken, pork, and seafood that was brought in from Chinatowns in San Francisco and Sacramento. To

stay hydrated while working, the Chinese men drank lukewarm tea instead of water.

- Even though the company recognized how hard the Chinese men worked, they were also discriminated against and faced a great deal of racism. Chinese employees received \$27 and later \$30 each month, minus the cost of food and board, while Irish employees received \$35, with living expenses provided. Many people worried that the Chinese workers were taking jobs away from native-born Americans. These fears became so strong that the U.S. government passed the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1882, stopping Chinese immigration.

Resources:

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/general-article/tcrr-cpr/>

<http://stories.washingtonhistory.org/Railroads/People/RailConflict/ChineseImmigrants.aspx>

<http://cpr.org/Museum/Chinese.html>

Fact Sheet: Porters

- The main task of a porter was to turn the day-time seating of a passenger car into comfortable night-time berths for passengers to sleep each night and transform it back to seating each morning. Porters also woke up passengers, handled baggage, shined shoes, and responded to any requests or needs that a passenger had. Porters were required to smile and formally greet passengers. Porters were never allowed to disagree with a passenger or defend themselves—the passenger was always right.
- Most porters were African American men. Many porters were former slaves. By 1893, the Pullman Palace Car Company was the largest employer of African American men in the country.
- Porters received extensive training before they could begin working. For example, Pullman porters received a manual explaining every task in precise detail. There were pages of directions about how to make a bed and twelve steps about how to properly pour a drink. New porters went on to apprentice on short train trips and eventually moved on to longer cross-country trips.
- Porters were paid twenty to twenty-five dollars per month plus tips from passengers. They had to pay for their own uniforms and boot polish. Porters were required to work 400 hours per month. Porters rarely had their own bed—they slept in the lounge where white passengers came in and out all night long.

- Most porters were nicknamed “George” and were not called by their real names. This nickname was humiliating and degrading for porters.
- For 70 years, porters worked on the railroads. Though they served with pride, they also grew tired of the low pay and mistreatment. In 1925, they formed the first all-black labor union, the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters. After a 12-year battle, the Pullman company recognized the union and negotiated a contract with the porters in 1937. African American porters continued to serve until the late 1960s.

References:

<http://www.aphiliprandolphmuseum.com/>

http://americanhistory.si.edu/onthemove/collection/object_519.html

A Multicultural Portrait of the Railroads by Liza Tuttle

Fact Sheet: Conductors

- The conductor was the “captain” of the train. On passenger trains, the railroad conductors oversaw the entire train and supervised the crew. On Pullman company trains, the conductor also supervised the porters on the sleeping cars.
- One of the main jobs of a conductor was to punch tickets and collect money from passengers. Each conductor had a different shaped punch with a specific shape hole. If a passenger said they already paid and used a ticket punched by a conductor on a different train, the conductor would know if they were lying because their punch would look different.
- Conductors were also responsible for keeping the train on time. Each day, the entire crew set their pocket watches to the same time. Before taking off, the conductor and engineer would compare watches to make sure they were both set to “standard time.” It was required that employees have a reliable and accurate watch.
- Conductors also made sure it was safe to stop or depart a station and handled emergencies onboard the train.
- At this time, train conductors were typically white men. Many of them had previously worked as steam boat captains before becoming conductors.

Resources:

http://americanhistory.si.edu/onthemove/exhibition/exhibition_9_5.html

<http://www.rrmuseumpa.org/about/rrpeopleandsociety/conductor.htm>

Fact Sheet: Engineers

- Railroad engineers had two main tasks—managing the steam boiler and driving the train.
- To operate the locomotive, the engineer had to be skilled at controlling the speed of the train. Each engineer was in charge of a short section or division of the rails, about 100-150 miles long. Within this section, the engineer had to know every turn, signal, stop, and change in uphill, or downhill grade. By dividing the route up in this way, each engineer became an expert on his section and he was better at avoiding accidents and safely driving the train.
- The engineer also made sure that the steam boiler was operating properly. The boilers were often quite hot, dirty, and loud. Being an engineer was one of the most dangerous jobs on the railroad. Many engineers lost their arms or legs and suffered severe burns in boiler explosions. Worse, some engineers even died on the job.
- The engineer also worked with the conductor to make sure that the train was on time. Every day, the conductor and the engineer coordinated their watches. Even though the engineer drove the train, he had to wait for the signal from the conductor before he could depart from each station.
- Locomotive engineers were mostly white men at this time.

Resources:

<http://www.rrmuseumpa.org/about/rrpeopleandsociety/engineer.htm>

http://americanhistory.si.edu/onthemove/exhibition/exhibition_9_8.html

“I’ve Been Working On the Railroads” Exit Slip

Name:

What job did you explore today?

Share two interesting facts you learned about your job:

1.

2.

What was the most surprising thing you learned about your job?

Draw a picture of one of the artifacts related to your job.

Write down one question you still have about railroad jobs.

Name:

What job did you explore today?

Share two interesting facts you learned about your job:

1.

2.

What was the most surprising thing you learned about your job?

Draw a picture of one of the artifacts related to your job.

Write down one question you still have about railroad jobs.

Lesson Three:

What was it like to travel west on the railroads circa 1880?

Lesson Overview:

This lesson features a classroom inquiry exploration of the essential question, “What was it like to travel west on the railroads circa 1880?” After making initial predictions, students explore five centers, working with primary source documents, maps, images, first-hand accounts, and online simulations to build historical knowledge. The class revisits the essential question and share what they have learned about the experience of traveling on the railroads at this time.

Objectives:

Students will:

- Make educated predictions.
- Analyze primary source documents to build historical knowledge.
- Write letters utilizing historic information.
- Accurately depict scenery of a Western railroad trip.
- Participate in an online simulation activity.
- Create a railroad board game based on a primary source.

Time: 90-120 minutes (center rotations can be split over 2-3 days)

Materials:

- Images of Life on the Railroad:
 - Photo of Pullman Sleeping Car:
http://cpr.org/Museum/carletonwatkins/Watkins_1534.html
 - Etchings of Interior of Pullman Palace Car, Dining Room, Cooking Car, and Sleeping Car: <http://cpr.org/Museum/Nordhoff.html>
 - Etching of Working-Class Pullman Sleeping Car:
<http://cpr.org/Museum/Leslie%202-9-1878%20p389.html>
- Primary Sources to Print for Centers:
 - Railroad map: [http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/h?ammem/gmd:@field\(NUMBER+@band\(g3701p+rr000620\)\)](http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/h?ammem/gmd:@field(NUMBER+@band(g3701p+rr000620)))
 - Railroad pamphlets: http://cpr.org/Museum/Ephemera/CP-UP_Timetable_1881/index.html and <http://quod.lib.umich.edu/m/moa/afk1140.0001.001/1?view=image&size=100>

- Game Board:
<http://imgzoom.cdlib.org/Fullscreen.ics?ark=ark:/13030/tf409nb5ps/z1&&brand=calisphere#>
- Documents to Print from this Lesson Plan:
 - “Voices from the Rails” Quotations
 - Student Copies of “Out My Window” Drawing Sheet
 - Student Copies of “Come West!” Graphic Organizer
 - Student Copies of “Ride the Rails” Travel Guide
- Computer with Internet Access (at least one)
- Game-making supplies: dice, markers, glue, scissors, paper, etc.
- Writing Paper

Lesson Procedures:

Part One: Engagement

1. Place students in small groups and pass out one image of life on the railroad to each group. Ask students to examine the image. What do they notice? Who or what is in the picture? What feeling is evoked by the image? What surprises them about the picture?
2. Ask each group to share their images and key observations with the class.
3. Share with students that today they will be conducting an *inquiry* exploration. Inquiry is a problem solving method. In the field of history, inquiry refers to historical interpretation or reasoning and this is the main way that we develop new knowledge. Inquiry starts with an essential question to which we elicit hypothesis or predictions. Then we gather information through a variety of sources and organize and interpret the information to make informed conclusions.
4. On the board, write today’s essential question: “*What was it like to travel west on the railroads circa 1880?*” Review with students the meaning of the word “circa” and discuss the overall meaning of the question.
5. Elicit initial student hypothesis or predictions to this question. Encourage students to use the insights they gleaned from the images and previous lessons. Record predictions on the board.

Part Two: Exploration

6. The essential question will be explored through five hands-on, student-led centers. Each center features a student direction sheet and an activity for students to complete. A short description of each center, the materials needed, and suggested teacher set-up is provided below. Introduce centers to students. Briefly model what students should do at each center. Review expectations for independent and small group work.

7. Divide class into five groups. Assign each group to a center. Provide students sufficient time to explore the materials and complete the task (approximately 15 minutes per center). Rotate each group through all five centers over the course of the lesson.

- **Center One: Voices from the Rails.** At this center, students read passages from diaries and letters of travelers on the Transcontinental Railroad. Then students imagine what it was like to be a passenger on the railroad and write a letter describing their travel experiences.

Teacher Set-Up: Place student direction sheet, “Voices from the Rails” quotations, and blank writing paper at the center.

- **Center Two: Out My Window.** At this center, students examine a railroad map from 1883. Students discuss the railroad route, the terrain, and the sights that passengers might have seen. Then students imagine that they were passenger on the train and draw and label four images of scenery they might have seen out their window while riding on the railroad headed west.

Teacher Set-Up: Print several copies of the railroad map from [http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/h?ammem/gmd:@field\(NUMBER+@band\(g3701p+rr000620\)\)](http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/h?ammem/gmd:@field(NUMBER+@band(g3701p+rr000620))). Make copies of the “Out My Window” drawing sheet. Place student direction sheet, railroad maps, and copies of drawing sheet at the center.

- **Center Three: Come West!** At this center, students examine two railroad pamphlets and travel guides. In addition to providing travel information, these pamphlets aimed to persuade people to travel west. Students explore the materials then complete a graphic organizer.

Teacher Set-Up: Print copies of railroad pamphlets available at: http://cpr.org/Museum/Ephemera/CP-UP_Timetable_1881/index.html and <http://quod.lib.umich.edu/m/moa/afk1140.0001.001/1?view=image&size=100>. As these texts are long and can be difficult for students to read, consider using sticky notes or a highlighter to flag certain passages or images for students to focus on during their explorations. Make copies of the “Come West!” graphic organizer . Place student direction sheet, railroad pamphlets, and copies of the graphic organizer at the center.

- **Center Four: “Ride the Rails” Online Simulation.** At this center, students will complete an online simulation activity entitled “Ride the Rails.” Students will choose to be a doctor, porter, child, or photographer and follow their journey on the railroad to the Pacific Northwest. Students will take notes about their journey along the way on a “Ride the Rails” Travel Guide handout.

Teacher Set-Up: For this center, you will need at least one computer with internet access, though it would be preferable to have several computers. On each computer open the online simulation: <http://stories.washingtonhistory.org/Railroads/Flash/FlashInteractive.aspx>. Make sure the volume is turned on. Place the student direction sheet and copies of the “Ride the Rails” Travel Guide handout at the center.

- **Center Five: Create A Railroad Board Game.** At this center, students will create their own board game using a real game board from 1872. The board depicts the journey from New York City to San Francisco with numerous stops and key scenery along the way. Students will write instructions, create game pieces, and make any cards or materials that are needed for others to play their game.

Teacher Set-Up: Print copies of the game board, preferably in color: <http://imgzoom.cdlib.org/Fullscreen.ics?ark=ark:/13030/tf409nb5ps/z1&&brand=calisphere#>. If desired, glue game board on to poster board or cardboard to make it more sturdy. At the center, place the student direction sheet, extra paper, dice, and craft supplies, such as markers, scissors, and glue, for students to construct their game.

Part Three: Synthesis

8. Come back together as a class and revisit the essential question: “*What was it like to travel west on the railroads circa 1880?*” Ask students to share what they learned about life on the railroads through the five centers. Record class findings on the board or chart paper.

9. Revisit students’ initial predictions. How did students’ understanding of life on the railroads change after exploring the centers?

10. Make a list of questions students still have about the railroad experience. These questions could become starting points for future inquiries.

11. Have students take a “Gallery Walk” of the classroom to see what classmates created in the centers. Have each student place their Out My Window and “Voices from the Rails” letters on their desk. Provide students five minutes to walk around and view each other’s work. Come back together and discuss what they noticed and what surprised them. If you have extra time, allow students to play each other’s board games.

Assessment:

Students create five different products in this lesson: the historic diary entry/letter, the “Out my Window” drawings, the “Come West!” graphic organizer, the “Ride the Rails” travel guide, and the game board. Inform students that you would like them to select the one piece that they are most proud of from their work today. If necessary, give students extra time to fully complete this piece before they turn it in. On the back, ask students to write a short reflection on why they

selected this piece, what they learned today, and why they found this center to be the most informative and engaging.

Center One: Voices from the Rails

Directions:

1. In your group, take turns reading each passage aloud. Each passage was written in a letter or diary by an actual traveler heading west on the Transcontinental Railroad in the 1870s.
2. Imagine you were a passenger on the railroad. Write a short letter describing the scenery that you pass and your experiences on the train. Be creative and include historical details.
3. Share your letter with your partners.

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To view the complete letters and primary source documents excerpted in this activity, visit these sites:

William Smith Letter: http://cpr.org/Museum/Ephemera/Travel_Letter_1875.html

Gretchen Schafer's Diary: http://cpr.org/Museum/Gretchen_Schafer_1871.html

Hattie Douglas Letter:

http://cpr.org/Museum/Ephemera/Emigrant_letter_1877.html

Robert Louis Stevenson Account:

<http://www.eyewitnesstohistory.com/emigrantrain.htm>

Voices from The Rails Quotations

“One week ago today at 5:30 PM I left Geneseo for this city with Amos and Lillie and we arrived here on Friday evening at dark. Just think of it, we travelled nearly 2,000 miles in five days. We travelled night and day and left the [railroad passenger] cars, once, and sometimes twice a day for meals, and then for a few minutes only. Well, I think I hear you say how awful tired you must all have been, when you got through, but to my astonishment we were not ... We got used to the motion of the cars and I was as comfortable all the day through as I could have been ... in our parlor. We occupied a splendid sleeping car all the way and had a jolly lot of passengers. There was some three or four hundred of them. There was eight cars with passengers, besides the other cars for baggage with two powerful engines to draw us. So you see we had a crowd of our own, and for hundreds of miles we saw no other persons except now and then a station with a few hovels about it.”

Letter written by William Smith, a Genesco, Illinois attorney and real estate broker, to his sister Mrs. Celia Cooley Graves Graves, Franklinville, New York. Mailed from San Francisco, California on May 8, 1875.

“I had read a great deal about the desert plains, but I have a very imperfect idea about their appearance and the immensity of their extent, and no one can form anything of a correct idea about them by reading. They must be passed over to realize their extent and utter desolation. For hundreds of miles there is neither tree or shrub except sage bush and geese wood... But of all the scenery I ever saw before, it appears tame by the sight of what we passed through. It is impossible to give any kind of an idea about the immensity of [the Rocky Mountains and Sierra Nevadas].... I got up at half past three in the morning to see the sights, for the conductor informed me that early in the morning we would pass the finest sights on the road, so I was up to see them. It was quite cool and chilly, so I put on overcoat and shell and took a seat on the platform to see ... Soon we came upon fresh snow and then to snow banks...From there we struck a down grade and ran

very fast and soon came to the American River and the scenery was far above anything we had before seen...so on we went and was soon below the snow and in a few miles everything was in full bloom...before noon we passed gardens filled with cherry trees, red with ripe fruit and at the stations the boys were selling strawberries and cherries just picked.. How is that for a change of climate? I tell you Sis, it seemed to me as though I had just dropped from the clouds to a tropical climate.”

Letter written by William Smith, a Genesco, Illinois attorney and real estate broker, to his sister Mrs. Celia Cooley Graves Graves, Franklinville, New York. Mailed from San Francisco, California on May 8, 1875.

“At 8 or 9 in the evening we crossed the North Platte River having seen nothing except a great, unending prairie. That and once in a while a little hut made out of mud...In the morning of the 14th we still were crossing over prairies, just once in a while one could see rocks, sand, hills and big herds of cattle...We had a coach just for ourselves. Leather covered chairs. During the day they serve as seats and at night for sleeping by putting the seats of two chairs against each other and the pillows across. On the 14th at 3 in the afternoon we saw the Rocky Mountains for the first time...On the 17th in the morning we lost one of our passengers. He was a funny chap. He went outside for a breath of fresh air. The train left and he had to stay behind. Everybody was sorry.”

This is from 21-year old Gretchen Schafer’s Diary about her travels on the Transcontinental Railroad from Madison, Wisconsin to Washington Territory in 1871. Translated from German.

“We left there the 7th of Dec, and arrived here the 17th, 10 o’clock at night on Sunday. We should have got through on Saturday if we had not been detained on the road by a freight train running off the track and through a snow shed demolishing several cars. It took some time to clear the track for us. We ought to be very thankful that we came through so safely, & no greater hindrance, when there was such a terrible accident so soon to follow on the same road over

which we passed in safety – that at Ashtabula, Ohio, we came over the same bridge little knowing the danger. I suppose it was not safe at that time.”

Letter written by Hattie Douglas in December, 1876 describing her family’s trip from Little Falls, New York to Sacramento, California.

“We had a delightful journey and a very interesting one, so new and different from any. Just think of it over the Rocky Mountains. The scenery was splendid. The first that attracted our attention after leaving home was a burning prairie in the evening. It was a magnificent sight, one I had many times wished to see. It seemed on a straight line for miles and miles. We were on the race a long time. The romantic scenery of the R. Mts. [Rocky Mountains] was the picturesque towering rocks some like castles with arched doors, and windows, some standing out like sentinels, some like cologne bottles, some like wild animals... We like our new home very much so far & the church & people. They received us very cordially... Sacramento is a pleasant city of over 20,000 inhabitants well laid out. Street cars pass our door. You will find us N.E. corner of 13th & H. Come to see us anytime.”

Letter written by Hattie Douglas in December, 1876 describing her family’s trip from Little Falls, New York to Sacramento, California.

“It was a tight jam; there was no fair way through the mingled mass of brute and living obstruction. Into the upper skirts of the crowd, porters, infuriated by hurry and overwork, clove their way with shouts.... People pushed - and elbowed - and ran, their families following how they could. Children fell, and were picked up to be rewarded by a blow. One child, who had lost her parents, screamed steadily and with increasing shrillness, as though verging towards a fit; an official kept her by him, but no one else seemed so much as to remark her distress; and I am ashamed to say that I ran among the rest... There was no waiting-room, no refreshment-room; the cars were locked; and for at least another hour, or so it seemed, we had to camp upon the draughty, gas-lit platform.”

Travel experiences of author Robert Louis Stevenson in 1879, describing his experiences on the emigrant train from New York City to California.

“The benches are too short for anything but a young child. Where there is scarce elbow-room for two to sit, there will not be space enough for one to lie. Hence the company, or rather, as it appears from certain bills about the Transfer Station, the company's servants, have conceived a plan for the better accommodation of travellers. They prevail on every two to chum together. To each of the chums they sell a board and three square cushions stuffed with straw, and covered with thin cotton. The benches can be made to face each other in pairs, for the backs are reversible. On the approach of night the boards are laid from bench to bench, making a couch wide enough for two, and long enough for a man of the middle height; and the chums lie down side by side upon the cushions with the head to the conductor's van and the feet to the engine. When the train is full, of course this plan is impossible, for there must not be more than one to every bench, neither can it be carried out unless the chums agree, neither can it be carried out unless the chums agree.”

Travel experiences of author Robert Louis Stevenson in 1879, describing his experiences on the emigrant train from New York City to California.

Center Two: Out My Window

Directions:

1. Examine the railroad map provided by your teacher. With your partners discuss these questions:

- What states and cities did the railroad go through?
- What kind of terrain did the railroad have to cross?
- How did the terrain change as the railroad headed from east to west?
- What are some of the interesting or beautiful sights that travelers might have seen out their window?

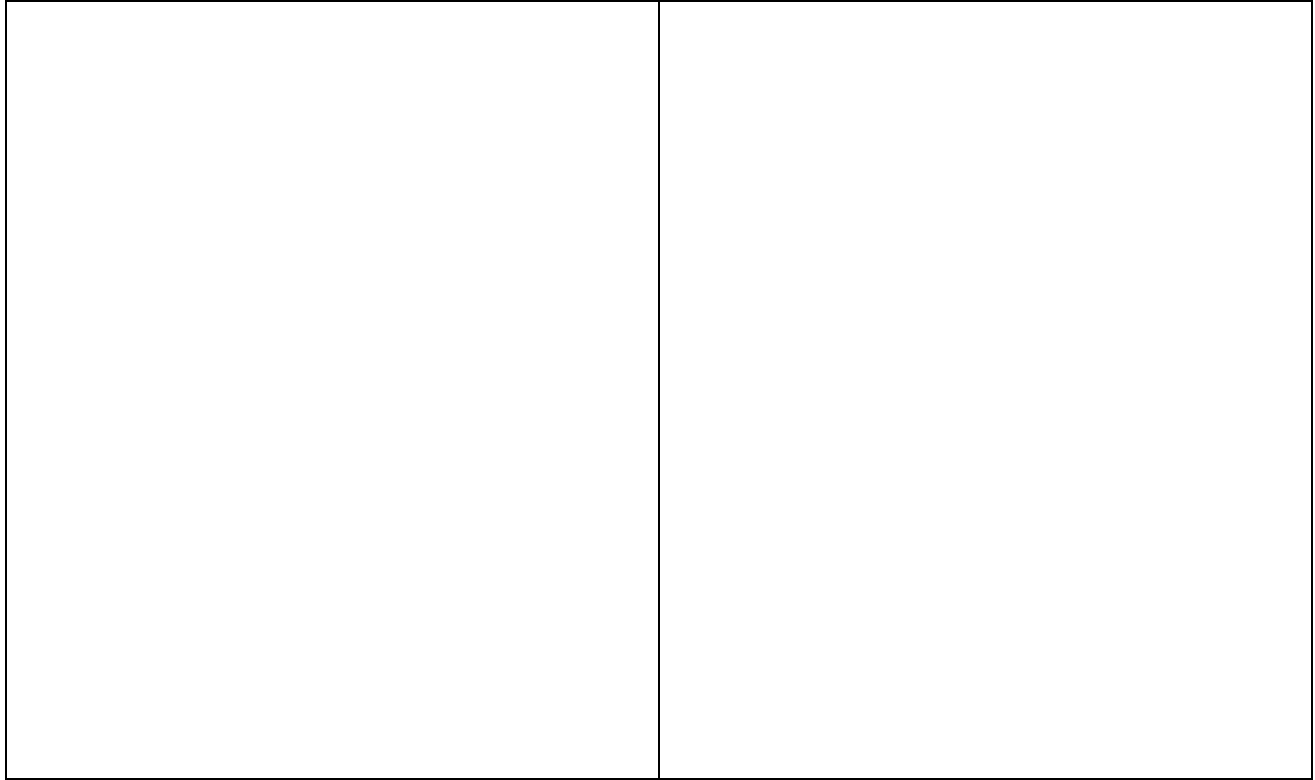
2. Imagine that you were a traveler on the railroad heading west to California. What sights do you think you would have seen out of your window?

3. Draw four pictures showing the changing terrain and interesting sights you witnessed during your railroad travels. Label each picture with a brief description of what you drew, such as Rocky Mountains or San Francisco.

Out My Window

Draw four pictures showing the changing terrain and interesting sights you witnessed during your railroad travels. Label each picture.

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Center Three: Come West!

Directions:

1. At this center you will find two primary source documents.
 - The Union and Central Pacific Line is a pamphlet that provided information to travelers about schedules, fares, and baggage.
 - The Pacific Tourist is a travel guide that was distributed to people interested in travelling west on the railroads.

2. With your group, take some time to explore each of the documents. Look at the pictures and skim the text.

3. Complete the questions on Come West! handout.

Come West!

<p>What do you think was the purpose of these documents?</p>	<p>Write 3 interesting facts you learned.</p>
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<p>Provide at least 2 examples of persuasive writing in these documents.</p>	<p>Write 2 questions you still have.</p>
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“Ride the Rails” Online Simulation

Directions:

1. Read the introduction to the “Ride the Rails” online simulation. When you are ready to get started, click BEGIN.

2. Roll your mouse over the four people to learn about each of them. Decide which person you want to learn more and click on this person.

3. The next screen will display your travel itinerary. Click BEGIN to get started on your adventures.

4. Keep track of your trip by completing the “Ride the Rails” Travel Guide during the online simulation.

“Ride the Rails” Travel Guide

Background Information:

Who are you travelling with?

Why is this person travelling west?

The Trip:

Stop 1: _____

Share two facts you learned about this first location.

Stop 2: _____

Draw a small picture of this location.

Stop 3: _____

Write one descriptive sentence about what it is like to be at this place.

Stop 4 or 5: _____

Describe your feelings about reaching the final stop.

Center Five: Make Your Own Railroad Board Game

Directions:

1. This game board is from a real board game made in 1872. It shows a railroad travelling from New York to San Francisco. Unfortunately, the directions and game pieces have been lost over the years. *Your task is to create a new game using this board.*
2. With your team, brainstorm ideas for your game. Once you decide on your game, work together to develop:
 - A name for your game
 - Rules or Directions for how to play your game
 - Game pieces for moving around the board
 - Cards or other materials needed to play the game
3. Use the materials provided to create your game. Remember to include what you have already learned about life on the railroads in your game.
4. If you have extra time, play your game with each other!

Lesson Four:

How did the railroads impact the American West?

Lesson Overview:

In this lesson, students observe and analyze primary source images of people, places, and animals that were impacted by the development of railroads in the American West during the latter half of the nineteenth century. Students construct a T-Chart about the positive and negative impacts of the railroads on West, comparing multiple perspectives on these environmental, economic, and cultural changes. Finally, students write a letter or diary entry from the perspective of one entity they studied throughout the unit, utilizing historical information and detail to bring their perspective to life.

Objectives:

Students will:

- Analyze historical quotes.
- Understand the idea of perspective and multiple perspectives.
- Investigate primary source images to build historical knowledge.
- Construct a T-Chart about the impact of the railroad.
- Write a letter or diary entry from a historical perspective.

Time: 60 minutes

Materials:

- Printed copies of primary source images (*See page 49 for list of images.*)
- Student copies of “Photograph Analysis” graphic organizer
- Sticky notes
- Board and markers or chalk
- Writing paper

Lesson Procedures:

Part One: Engagement

1. Ask for two student volunteers to come to the front of the class to read aloud the following quotes about the railroad:

- “The one moral, the one remedy for every evil, social, political, financial, and industrial, the one immediate vital need of the entire Republic, is the Pacific Railroad.”- Rocky Mountain News, 1866
- “They made us many promises, more than I can remember, but they kept only one; they promised to take our land, and they did.” -Chief Red Cloud, Sioux leader

2. Discuss the meaning of each quote with students.

3. Introduce students to the word *perspective*. Ask students what they already know about this word. Encourage students to provide examples of perspective-taking or multiple perspectives in their own lives or in history.

4. Return students’ attention to the two quotes. Ask students what perspectives they can identify. Why do Red Cloud and the Rocky Mountain News have such different perspectives on the development of the railroad in the American West?

Part Two: Exploration

Prior to class, randomly hang or place primary source images around the room. Assign each picture a number.

5. Inform students that today they will be learning about the impact of the railroads on the American West by exploring the many ways the railroad changed the West. Change can be positive or negative depending on one’s perspective. Share with students that these images are all of people, places, or animals who were impacted or changed by the development of the railroad in the West.

7. Pass out the “Photograph Analysis” graphic organizer to students. Review the directions. Each student needs to observe and analyze *four* photographs of their choosing. At each photograph, students should write down the number of the photograph and answer the analysis questions. Encourage students to be thoughtful and thorough in their responses. Students should also be encouraged to discuss the images with others, though it might be helpful to make a guideline about how many students can work with one image at a time to avoid a crowd around one photograph.

8. Before students begin working, select one image and model how to analyze the photograph and answer the four questions.

9. Provide students time to walk around the room and select images to observe and analyze (approximately 20-30 minutes).

Part Three: Synthesis

10. Draw a T-Chart on the board. Label the left side “positive impacts of the railroad” and the right side “negative impacts of the railroad.” Give each student two sticky notes. On separate sticky notes, ask students to write one positive impact and one negative impact of the railroads expanding West, using knowledge gained from the photograph analysis activity. Have students place their sticky note on the T-Chart.

11. Discuss T-Chart. Ask students to clarify and share their sticky notes as needed. How did students decide if the change they identified was positive or negative? What perspectives did they recognize or value in making this decision? Why did some students think a change was positive, while other identified it as negative? How can a change be positive and negative, depending on your perspective?

12. Extend this discussion by asking students to consider the impact of railroads in the United States today. What role do railroads play in our transportation system? How could railroads be better utilized? What are some positive and negative impacts of expanding rail travel and transportation today?

Part Four: Assessment

13. For a final assessment, have student select one perspective that they have learned about in this unit (Chinese railroad worker, porter, conductor, engineer, passenger, settler, miner, farmer, American Indian, tourist, emigrant, etc.). Students should write a letter or diary entry from the perspective of this person, incorporating historical information and details they learned throughout the unit. Select one perspective and model how to write from a historical perspective. Depending on time, this could be a quick writing assignment or a longer writing project that students edit, revise, and publish.

How did the railroads impact the American West? Primary Source Images

Prior to class, print some or all of these images of people, places, and animals that were impacted by the railroad's development in the American West.

- American Indians
 - Red Cloud: http://www.pbs.org/weta/thewest/resources/archives/four/64_10.htm
 - Cheyenne people under guard: http://www.pbs.org/weta/thewest/resources/archives/four/64_13.htm
 - Lakotas gather to receive government rations on reservation: http://www.pbs.org/weta/thewest/resources/archives/seven/w67i_stdrc.htm
 - Transformation of Navajo boy at Carlisle Indian school: http://www.pbs.org/weta/thewest/resources/archives/seven/w67i_nav.htm
 - Indian Room at the Alvarado Hotel, Albuquerque, New Mexico: http://econtent.unm.edu/cdm4/item_viewer.php?CISOROOT=/acpa&CISOPTR=1744
- Buffalo (and other wildlife)
 - Cheyenne women and buffalo hides: http://www.pbs.org/weta/thewest/resources/archives/five/65_06.htm
 - Buffalo killed by hunters' rifles: http://www.pbs.org/weta/thewest/resources/archives/five/65_08.htm
 - General Custer before a buffalo hunt: http://www.pbs.org/weta/thewest/resources/archives/five/65_07.htm
 - Buffalo Hide Yard: http://www.pbs.org/weta/thewest/resources/archives/five/65_09.htm
 - Custer's first grizzly: http://www.pbs.org/weta/thewest/resources/archives/six/66_07.htm
- Environment
 - Copper Smelting Facility in Montana: http://www.pbs.org/weta/thewest/resources/archives/eight/68_04.htm
 - Grading the Central Pacific Railroad: <http://content.cdlib.org/ark:/13030/kt9489q3jf/>
 - Pollution from Steam Engine: <http://stories.washingtonhistory.org/Railroads/Machine/Default.aspx>
 - Sheep crossing the Grand Coulee Dam: http://digitum.washingtonhistory.org/cdm4/item_viewer.php?CISOROOT=/genphotos&CISOPTR=142
- Industry/Trade

- Loading apples onto the train in Washington:
http://digitum.washingtonhistory.org/cdm4/item_viewer.php?CISOROOT=/curtis&CISOPTR=139
- “Worlds largest shipment of washers”:
http://digitum.washingtonhistory.org/cdm4/item_viewer.php?CISOROOT=/curtis&CISOPTR=129
- Logging in the Pacific Northwest:
http://digitum.washingtonhistory.org/cdm4/item_viewer.php?CISOROOT=/ephemera&CISOPTR=134
- Cattle
 - Cover of the Beef Bonanza, a book that fueled the cattle boom:
http://www.pbs.org/weta/thewest/resources/archives/seven/w67i_beef.htm
 - Prize Cattle in Colorado:
http://cdm15330.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm4/item_viewer.php?CISOROOT=/p15330coll22&CISOPTR=10586
 - Cattle at a watering hole:
http://cdm15330.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm4/item_viewer.php?CISOROOT=/p15330coll22&CISOPTR=1519
- Settlers
 - Former Slaves:
http://www.pbs.org/weta/thewest/resources/archives/seven/w67i_shores.htm
 - Nebraska homesteaders:
http://www.pbs.org/weta/thewest/resources/archives/seven/w67i_melon.htm
 - Webster family of Kansas: <http://www.kansasmemory.org/item/14>
- Miners
 - http://www.pbs.org/weta/thewest/resources/archives/four/64_03.htm
 - http://www.pbs.org/weta/thewest/resources/archives/six/66_09.htm
- Tourists
 - Visiting a national park:
http://www.pbs.org/weta/thewest/resources/archives/eight/68_14.htm
 - On back of a train:
http://digitum.washingtonhistory.org/cdm4/item_viewer.php?CISOROOT=/genphotos&CISOPTR=95
- Mail Delivery/Pony Express
 - http://www.pbs.org/weta/thewest/resources/archives/four/64_02.htm
- Farmers
 - Colorado wheat farmer at turn of century:
http://cdm15330.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm4/item_viewer.php?CISOROOT=/p15330coll22&CISOPTR=8448

- Colorado farmers stacking oats:
http://cdm15330.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm4/item_viewer.php?CISOROOT=/p15330coll22&CISOPTR=77510
- Advertisement for farming in Montana and Idaho:
http://digitum.washingtonhistory.org/cdm4/item_viewer.php?CISOROOT=/ephemera&CISOPTR=7
- Wheat farming in Washington:
http://digitum.washingtonhistory.org/cdm4/item_viewer.php?CISOROOT=/ephemera&CISOPTR=80

Photograph Analysis

Photo Number	Describe what you see in the picture.	How does the picture make you feel?	What do you already know about this picture?	What questions do you have about this picture?

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