



#8846

THE OREGON TRAIL: ONE FAMILY'S JOURNEY

Grade Levels: 3-8

16 minutes

NEW DIMENSION MEDIA 1999

DESCRIPTION

Journal entries and reenactments create a sense of what traveling on the Oregon Trail was like for one family. After readying the wagon with carefully chosen supplies, they leave with high spirits. They are, however, soon faced with boring routine, hardships, and danger. Major landmarks and a succession of forts help mark the journey until they arrive in Oregon City.

ACADEMIC STANDARDS

Subject Area: United States History

- ◆ Standard: Understands the United States territorial expansion between 1801 and 1861, and how it affected relations with external powers and Native Americans
 - Benchmark: Understands the origins of Manifest Destiny and its influence on the westward expansion of the United States (e.g., its role in the resolution of the Oregon dispute with Great Britain, how it led to the Mexican-American war)

INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS

1. To study the lure and danger of the Westward Movement.
2. To describe the effect of settlers moving west on the life of Native Americans.
3. To depict the living conditions and daily routines of American pioneers in the middle 1800s.

VOCABULARY

- | | |
|----------------------|-------------------|
| 1. caulk | 12. migration |
| 2. cholera | 13. missionaries |
| 3. coffee mill | 14. obliged |
| 4. coverlet | 15. oilcloth |
| 5. desolate | 16. paramount |
| 6. embark | 17. pitch |
| 7. featherbed | 18. prosper |
| 8. harsh | 19. Sabbath |
| 9. landmarks | 20. wearisome |
| 10. Manifest Destiny | 21. well-seasoned |
| 11. manpower | |



BEFORE SHOWING

Display a map or globe. Locate Missouri and Oregon. Estimate the distance between the two areas. Begin a discussion on driving that distance in a car. Then, guide the discussion to the middle 1800s and the idea of crossing the country in a wagon and on foot.

AFTER SHOWING

Discussion Items and Questions

1. Why were people moving west? Include as many reasons as you can.
2. What does "Manifest Destiny" mean? How does this term apply to the settlers moving west?
3. When packing to move west, the settlers had many things to decide upon. Explain the details that had to be considered when packing and joining a wagon train.
4. What was the journey like for the travelers such as traveling conditions, daily life, responsibilities, etc.? Discuss how these applied to children.
5. Describe the kinds of dangers the travelers found while traveling west.
6. How did the Westward Movement affect the Native Americans? Describe their behavior towards the settlers.
7. The narrator said that he thought the Native American would be angry. Why did he think they would feel that way?
8. What did the narrator mean by "landmarks"? Describe some of these landmarks and their significance.
9. Why were forts located along the Oregon Trail? Why did the travelers enjoy seeing these forts?
10. How long did the journey from Independence, Missouri, to Oregon City last?

Applications and Activities

1. Compare the Oregon Trail journey to a modern move to another city. What items are/were taken? How long does/did it take to move? List other comparisons.
2. Build a model of the trip to Oregon City. Include the various physical features encountered by the travelers of the 1800s. Gather as much information as possible in order to make a realistic model.

RELATED RESOURCES



Captioned Media Program

- Across the Plains #3099
- Beginnings #3107
- The Final Steps #3122
- Through the Rockies #3189



World Wide Web



The following Web sites complement the contents of this guide; they were selected by professionals who have experience in teaching deaf and hard of hearing students. Every effort was made to select accurate, educationally relevant, and “kid-safe” sites. However, teachers should preview them before use. The U.S. Department of Education, the National Association of the Deaf, and the Captioned Media Program do not endorse the sites and are not responsible for their content.

- **END OF THE OREGON TRAIL**

<http://www.teleport.com/~eotic/histhome.html>

Numerous facts about the history of the Oregon Trail. “Oregon Trail 101,” a diagram of a typical wagon, what the emigrants brought and how much it cost, pioneer history, and many other topics.

- **PIONEER LIFE IN AMERICA**

<http://library.thinkquest.org/j001587/left.htm>

Click on “Hardships,” “Life,” “Town,” “Real Pioneers,” and other links to read about what traveling to the west was like.

- **OREGON TRAIL ADVENTURE**

<http://www.connectingstudents.com/ot/>

Go on an interactive Oregon Trail adventure! Research landmarks on the trail and stock up supplies before you choose your own adventure story.

