

## Steamboats and Railroads



Long ago, the United States was new. People traveled by foot and horse. They also traveled in boats powered by paddles or wind. Those trips took a long time.

Then steam engines were invented. The steam engine used the power of boiling water. That invention made it possible for boats to go much faster.

Before long, steam engines were used in railroads, too. These trains could go even faster than steamboats. Now people could travel long distances more quickly. Steamboats and railroads made it easier for Americans to go places!

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** For questions 1-4, circle the correct answer.

1. How did people travel across America when the country was new?

- a) by foot, horse, or boat
- b) by steamboat
- c) by railroad

2. What was invented after steamboats?

- a) the steam engine
- b) trains that used steam engines
- c) boats with paddles

3. Long ago, people traveled in boats powered by paddles or wind. Those trips took a long time.

What does this information tell us about the boats powered by paddles or wind?

- a) These boats could not travel long distances.
- b) These boats had steam engines.
- c) These boats did not have steam engines.

4. What is the theme of "Steamboats and Railroads"?

- a) the fastest way to travel
- b) how steamboats and railroads were invented
- c) how people traveled across America

5. A) What did people invent so that boats and trains could travel more quickly?

People invented the

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B) Draw a picture of a boat with a steam engine and a boat without a steam engine.



6. What did you learn from "Steamboats and Railroads"?

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**7. Class Discussion Question:** Put the following in order from slowest to fastest and discuss when people began to travel this way.

- Horse
- Train with steam engine
- Foot
- Steamboat
- Boat (sail or paddle boat)

**Teacher Guide & Answers**

**Note to Teacher:** Read each question out loud to your students and have each student complete the worksheet independently. For questions 5 A) and 6, you can have students draw their answers, answer orally, or write their answers depending on your students' progress. If you have them write their answers, you may want to write the word(s) on the board for them to copy. Question 7 is a class discussion question.

**Passage Reading Level:** Lexile 580

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1. How did people travel across America when the country was new?

- a) **by foot, horse, or boat**
- b) by steamboat
- c) by railroad

2. What was invented after steamboats?

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- b) **trains that used steam engines**
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3. Long ago, people traveled in boats powered by paddles or wind. Those trips took a long time.

What does this information tell us about the boats powered by paddles or wind?

- a) These boats could not travel long distances.
- b) These boats had steam engines.
- c) **These boats did not have steam engines.**

4. What is the theme of "Steamboats and Railroads"?

- a) the fastest way to travel
- b) how steamboats and railroads were invented
- c) **how people traveled across America**

5. A) *Note to Teacher: See note at the top of the first page.*

What did people invent so that boats and trains could travel more quickly?

**Suggested answer:** People invented the *steam engine*.

- B) Draw a picture of a boat with a steam engine and a boat without a steam engine.

**Suggested answer:** Students' pictures may vary but should include two boats: a more complex boat with a steam engine and a simple boat without a steam engine. Advanced answers will show the steamboat moving quickly and the paddle/sail boat moving slower.

6. *Note to Teacher: See note at the top of the first page.*

What did you learn from "Steamboats and Railroads"?

**Suggested answer:** Answers may vary and should be supported by the passage.

7. *Note to Teacher: See note at the top of the first page.*

**Class Discussion Question:** Put the following in order from slowest to fastest and discuss when people began to travel this way.

- Horse
- Train with steam engine
- Foot
- Steamboat
- Boat (sail or paddle boat)

**Suggested answer:** Students should order the modes of transportation as follows:

- Foot
- Horse/boat (the order of these two is debatable and therefore irrelevant)
- Steamboat
- Train with steam engine

Students should explain that people could always move by foot. Eventually, they learned to ride horses and make boats that traveled through water. Then they invented the steam engine and were able to make steamboats. Finally, they learned how to use the steam engine in a train. Advanced answers will recognize that the oldest modes of transportation are the slowest, and that as transportation develops, it gets faster.