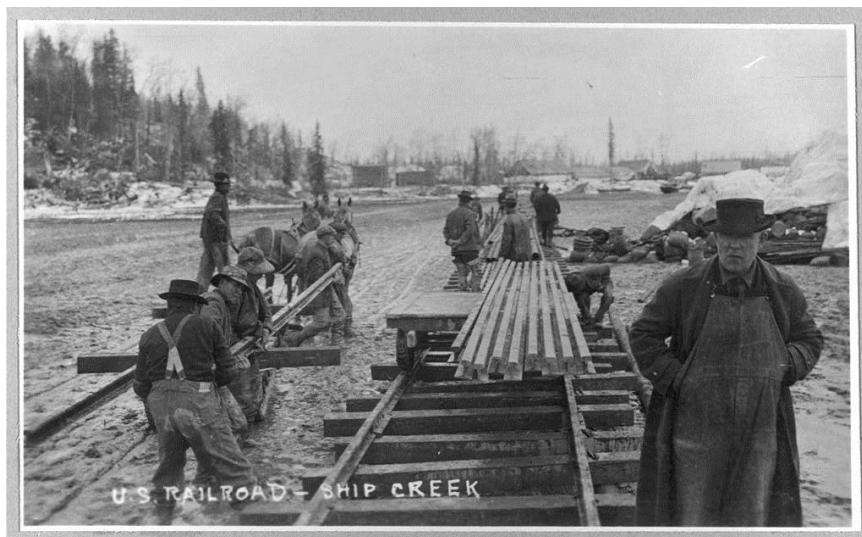


## Building a Railroad to Cross the Country



*Photo Credit: Library of Congress*

Over 200 years ago, it was difficult to travel across the United States. There were a few railroad trains, but none of those railroads crossed the country. People traveling across the United States went by horse and wagon. It took months to travel that way.

So 150 years ago, people started building a new railroad. This railroad would connect the East Coast to the West Coast. Building the railroad was hard work. People worked in bad weather. They had to blast holes in mountains to make tunnels.

The railroad took six years to complete. When it was done, people could travel across the country much more easily.

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

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

1. Where was it difficult for Americans to travel over 200 years ago?

- a) across the United States
- b) from their house to a store
- c) from town to town

2. What problem made it difficult to travel across the United States?

- a) People got lost because there were no maps to show them the way.
- b) Traveling by horses and wagons took a long time.
- c) There were not enough gas stations for people to fill their car up with gas.

3. Building the railroad across the United States was hard work. What part of the passage shows us that this is true?

- a) People could travel across the country more easily when the railroad was done.
- b) People started building the railroad 150 years ago.
- c) People worked in bad weather.

4. What is the main idea of "Building a Railroad to Cross the Country"?

- a) Travel across the United States by horse and wagon was slow.
- b) The railroad that was built across America took six years to complete.
- c) A railroad was built in the United States to connect one side of the country to the other.

5. A) Why was building the railroad hard work?

Building the railroad was hard work because people had to work in bad weather and

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B) Draw a picture of people building a railroad across the country.



6. What did you learn from “Building a Railroad to Cross the Country”?

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7. **Class Discussion Question:** Explain why the new railroad was helpful.

**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 610

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

1. Where was it difficult for Americans to travel over 200 years ago?

- a) **across the United States**
- b) from their house to a store
- c) from town to town

2. What problem made it difficult to travel across the United States?

- a) People got lost because there were no maps to show them the way.
- b) **Traveling by horses and wagons took a long time.**
- c) There were not enough gas stations for people to fill their car up with gas.

3. Building the railroad across the United States was hard work. What part of the passage shows us that this is true?

- a) People could travel across the country more easily when the railroad was done.
- b) People started building the railroad 150 years ago.
- c) **People worked in bad weather.**

4. What is the main idea of "Building a Railroad to Cross the Country"?

- a) Travel across the United States by horse and wagon was slow.
- b) The railroad that was built across America took six years to complete.
- c) **A railroad was built in the United States to connect one side of the country to the other.**

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

Why was building the railroad hard work?

**Suggested answer:** Building the railroad was hard work because people had to work in bad weather and *blast holes in mountains*.

B) Draw a picture of people building a railroad across the country.

**Suggested answer:** Students' pictures may vary but should include people working hard to build a railroad. They might show the workers blasting holes in mountains to make tunnels or working in bad weather (heavy rain, thunderstorms, etc.).

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

What did you learn from "Building a Railroad to Cross the Country"?

**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:** Explain why the new railroad was helpful.

**Suggested answer:** Answers may vary but students should explain that once the railroad was complete, people could travel across the country much more easily. Trains were faster than horses and wagons.